

A Report of the Boulder Transition Advisory Committee (BTAC)
to the
MONTANA DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER (MDC) TRANSITION PLANNING
ADVISORY COUNCIL

February 24, 2016

Chairman Villa and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to present an update on the activities of the Boulder Transition Advisory Committee - or BTAC. Drew Dawson, who was recently selected as the BTAC Chair, is traveling out-of-state and expresses his regrets for not being here today.

The BTAC, which meets monthly, is representative of various sectors of business, education, local government, general public and others. The meetings have been well attended both by its members and by interested community members.

The BTAC is vigilant about receiving MDC TRANSITION COUNCIL updates from Mr. Mullens. The BTAC meeting have provided an excellent forum for the exchange of information about community development activities.

At the last meeting, we had a candid discussion about the purposes of the BTAC and agreed that they include:

- i. Providing a forum for Boulder area citizen input to the MDC Transition Committee and to Federal, State and local elected officials about mitigating the short-term and long-range impact of the MDC transition on its clients, its employees and the Boulder area community;
- ii. Serving as a forum for community discussion and subsequent action on community-led support for the MDC employees and businesses impacted by the MDC transition;
- iii. Serving as the catalyst for the community discussion and action on ideas and opportunities for improving the economy and well-being of the Boulder area
- iv. Providing a forum for the exchange of community development/enhancement information among community leaders and organizations

We agreed that we need to do a better job of involving the thoughts and suggestions of MDC employees as we move forward and assess how we, as a community, can help them and their families. And, how we, as a state, can help them to adjust to this potentially serious disruption in their lives. In future meetings, we will have discussions of how we can all, working together, intelligently and continuously assess and evaluate the ongoing impact on the Boulder community

which includes the MDC clients of this legislative decision. This is not something whose consequences are just felt once and then it is over. It has a lifetime of consequences - for many.

We discussed the need for ongoing involvement of officials from MDC/DPHHS with the BTAC. I am pleased that we have had very fruitful discussions with DPHHS leadership about methods to make this happen.

And, BTAC will continue to provide a forum for the candid discussion of ways to improve the economic stability and viability of the Boulder community during the transition of the MDC...and beyond. Boulder is a terrific community and has a culture of caring - including toward the MDC clients. This is a culture that has been inculcated after many years of a symbiotic relationship.

The "Making Boulder's Future Bright" project, supported by the MSU Extension Service and the Jefferson County Commissioners, will kick off on March 1 and, during the next several months, will provide an opportunity for Boulder area citizens to give their input and suggestions about the future of Boulder. This is a terrific opportunity to learn from the community and to build support and establish momentum toward a Boulder that is healthy, vibrant and economically stable.

The BTAC will focus on more specific recommendations to the Council. We would appreciate knowing how we can be most helpful to the Council. What information or suggestions could we provide to you?

Thank you for the opportunity to present and for the work you are doing in addressing the difficult challenges with which you have been tasked.