

Growing Up Boulder

Year End Summary for Growing Up Boulder - 2010

Reflecting at the close of 2010 on what Growing Up Boulder (GUB) has accomplished this past year, we see significant progress on several fronts. This brief summary highlights some of the key projects, including some that we've completed and others that will carry over into 2011.

The GUB kick-off event at the end of 2009 spawned three action groups: Public Art, Teen Nightlife, and Business. The action groups are on-going and have accomplished a significant amount this year.

Public Art Action Group:

Groups of middle-, elementary-, and pre-school students painted 9'x 2' banners to express what they like about growing up in Boulder and what changes they wish to see in the future. The banners are part of a rotating art exhibit that has been shown at the Boulder Creek Festival, the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art, and the Hill Flea. They can also be seen on www.growingupboulder.org.

In addition, we are working with 4th grade students at Uni Hill Elementary School and artists from the University of Colorado to design a mural for the pedestrian underpass that will be built at Euclid and Broadway in 2011. The elementary-school students have created ceramic tiles for the mural around the theme of history and excavation.

Teen Nightlife Action Group:

After numerous youth identified the lack of safe and accessible nighttime activities as a major challenge in Boulder, several high-school teens created and analyzed a "teen nightlife survey" that was administered in the spring and completed by 527 students from most of the public and private high schools in Boulder. The full report was shared with City Council members and city staff. An executive summary of the results is available on the GUB website.

As a result of this survey and in collaboration with local youth, we are recommending the development of a youth-friendly website that can act as a portal for information about what youth activities and services are available in Boulder.

Business Action Group:

Meeting weekly with an adult mentor and business owner, high-school students are working with the Boulder business community to: 1) make Boulder an easier place for teens to find jobs; and 2) make businesses more youth-friendly. The students have created an application for youth-friendly business certification and have piloted it with ten downtown businesses. The group will soon finalize its process and, once approved, will begin marketing the youth-friendly business award throughout the community in the spring of 2011.

In addition to the three GUB action groups, GUB youth have participated in the five-year update of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP). Five groups of students, ranging in age from elementary school through high school, worked with college-age and

Growing Up Boulder

A Child- and Youth-Friendly City Initiative

adult facilitators to draft their input. Youth circled their favorite and least preferred places on aerial maps of Boulder, then summarized and explained their findings in brainstorming sessions.

On October 9 we held the second annual GUB youth event at the YMCA at Mapleton Avenue and 28th Street. During this event, attendees re-designed three different areas of Boulder: the Diagonal Plaza at Iris and 28th, a portion of 13th Street where the farmer's market is held, and Arapahoe Avenue near the intersection with 55th Street. City planners will take these ideas and incorporate them into the Comprehensive Plan update and other current planning projects. The event was a huge success and was attended by close to 100 middle- and high-school students.



Participants at the 2nd annual GUB event.

Last spring, GUB staff talked with approximately 20 teen mothers about what they like and don't like about Boulder. The teen mothers wrote letters to City Council about their ideas and two City Council members went to their classroom to follow up on their letters. This fall, the teen mothers also brainstormed suggestions for the proposed Mapleton Early Childhood Center.

In September, we began working with international researchers associated with UNICEF and ChildWatch International to administer a child-friendly community assessment as part of the GUB goal to serve as a US example of a child- and youth-friendly city. In November, we piloted the assessment in northeast Boulder at the Family Learning Center which serves many low-income families. We plan to continue with the assessment at the Family Learning Center next spring and summarize the results.

In November, we created and distributed an online community survey to people of all ages in Boulder to determine what they like about their neighborhood and what could make it better for children, youth and families. We closed the survey on December 15 and have begun to analyze the results. We should have a full report ready by late January, and will make it available to download from the GUB website.

On November 30, the Boulder City Council held a study session to discuss child and youth needs. Data we've collected through GUB was used to inform some of the issue areas, including the preliminary results of the community survey, the results of the teen nightlife questionnaire, and other outreach work we've done with children and youth.

We will continue this momentum in 2011 as we work together to make Boulder a better place for all. Please contact us if you have any questions or would like more information about the work described above.

Debbie Flanders Cushing and Mara Mintzer, GUB Coordinators
growingupboulder@gmail.com

Phone: (303)735-5199
Fax: (303)492-6163
University of Colorado, CB 314
Boulder, CO 80309-0314 USA
growingupboulder@gmail.com
www.growingupboulder.org

