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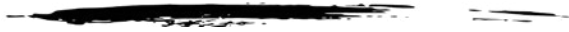
THE SWEEP REPORT 2.0

HOUSING FROM BELOW

in Broomfield, Colorado, USA

By Marrton Dormish

Feel free to
EXPLORE the other
Part of the Building



The community we know today as the City and County of Broomfield occupies the ancestral homelands of the Hinono'eiteen, the Tsitsistas and the Nú-uci, known more widely as the Arapaho, the Cheyenne and the Ute nations. Despite their forcible displacement from the Front Range, these sovereign peoples are alive and strong today, in both local urban and suburban communities, and in reservation-based settings in Oklahoma, Wyoming, Montana and Southwestern Colorado.

The Sweep Report 2.0

HOUSING FROM BELOW

in Broomfield, Colorado, USA

Marrton Dormish

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Editorial contributions by David Allison, Kent Davies, Bette Erickson, Linda Fahrenbruch, Jesús Gutierrez, Milan Hancock, Katie Hinshaw, Lori Lane, Carolyn Love, Fred Mosqueda, Jennifer Sage and Jennifer Waines

Proofreading by Lane Claxton

Edited by Julia Vermeulen and Chris Bollegar

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Sketches by Maegan Dormish

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This text, where possible, follows the [Associated Press Stylebook](#) and blog-writing style. In-sentence hyperlinks reference relevant original sources. Unattributed statements, interpretations and opinions are the author's own, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions or perspectives of his housing catalyst sponsors, publishers, quoted sources or those featured via "Local Perspectives."

Read the full *Sweep Report 2.0* or download it as a PDF at EverydayEpics.com/Sweep-Report. Printed versions of *The Sweep Report 2.0* are available for checkout at the Broomfield Library. On-demand printed copies can be ordered at [Lulu.com](https://lulu.com). All proceeds will be directed to the Broomfield Community Foundation's [Collaborative Emergency Sheltering Fund](#).

Dedicated to
James Wasielewski, whom I didn't get the chance to know,
and to
Brittany Markham, David Mausner and Randy Snyder,
whom it was my privilege to know.



James Wasielewski



Brittany Markham



David Mausner



Randy Snyder

May these late Broomfielders who lost their lives while unhoused in our community
find rest and peace in the life to come.

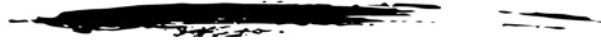
[#RIP](#) [#WeWillRemember](#)

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Thank you, all!

PREFACE



Broomfield wasn't our first choice. It wasn't our second or third or fourth or fifth choice, either.

In 2004, with our 19-month-old daughter in tow, my pregnant wife, Angela, and I moved to Colorado. We worked together back then, and had accepted a job whose headquarters was on Front Street in downtown Louisville. Despite our first-time homebuyer status, we couldn't afford to buy even a two bedroom there or a studio in Boulder. Housing prices were so high, in fact, that we had to cross off our entire Top-5 list of preferred communities: ~~Louisville~~, ~~Boulder~~, ~~Erie~~, ~~Lafayette~~, ~~Superior~~. A short commute remained our priority though, so we turned to Broomfield and barely qualified for a 5:1 ARM (adjustable-rate mortgage) loan on a '70s-era bilevel. Our job's headquarters then promptly moved to Boulder, but that's another story.

I couldn't be happier that we settled for our *sixth* choice. I couldn't be more grateful for the 17-and-counting years we've had to "put down roots" here in Broomfield. I could do without a few of the non-features of our house (cough, cough) and the years we spent with an upside-down mortgage during the Great Recession, but we're thankful to have been able to grow our family of three into a family of six, plus an assortment of pets and, once-upon-a-time, backyard chickens.

Our oldest attended the Presbyterian Church of Broomfield's preschool. Our younger three kids went to Birch Elementary and Aspen Creek K-8. Two of them now go to Broomfield High School. One played for Broomfield Soccer Club. Another trained with the Broomfield Flyers.

We have enjoyed the dog-jumping contest at Broomfield Days, programs and performances at the Broomfield Library and Amphitheater, and frequent trips to Paul Derda and the recently rebuilt Broomfield Community Center. A few years ago, I even started attending city council meetings.

I sent my first-ever [petition](#) to Broomfield City Council last summer, "Services NOT Sweeps in Broomfield, Colorado." As of last fall, 225 people had signed, but not everyone was happy about it. One Nextdoor poster even suggested one of my pastimes was "rollin doobies" in my van down by the river. Just to clear the air and with all due respect to Saturday Night Live's [Chris Farley](#), I don't know how to roll a doobie, although I've

seen people do it on TV. I smoked a joint on my 40th birthday and I once ate a square of an edible bar. I enjoyed the joint, but the edible gave me nightmares and a hangover.



Before I dropped out of graduate school, I learned about “reflexivity” in research and writing — it’s just a fancy way of saying it’s important to let your readers know where you’re coming from at the outset of your journey together. So, this is me being reflexive.

I’m a minister of presence, justice and memory at The Refuge, a hub for healing community, social action and creative collaboration. We’re Jesus-inspired and non-denominational and have been serving Broomfield and the North Metro region since 2006.

I co-direct our Refuge Café day shelter at 11600 Quay St., #200, where our staff, volunteers and guests, alike, cultivate low-barrier hospitality and resources, three days a week. We serve free lunch and offer first-come-first-served showers, WIFI, space to rest, severe weather supplies, and household items not covered by [SNAP](#) aka “food stamps.” Our advocates help guests, by request, to navigate the alternately confusing and maddening layers of social safety-net bureaucracies.

I also co-facilitate the fledgling Broomfield Cares Outreach Van effort through which volunteers distribute survival supplies to our unhoused neighbors, make referrals to area services and generally raise awareness of suburban homelessness.

From October 2019 through September 2021, I served as a part-time “Broomfield housing catalyst,” thanks to a grant from [A Precious Child](#) (APC), the [Broomfield Department of Human Services](#) (BDHS) and [Broomfield FISH](#) (which stands for “Fellowship In Serving Humanity”). The [Broomfield Community Foundation](#) (BCF) administered and disbursed my grant funds. My charge: to “move the needle” on local housing support efforts and coordination between network partners.

I tried. I helped spearhead the Code Blue Warming Center/Hotel Voucher effort, the sub-regional Built For Zero initiative, Point-in-Time (PIT) counts, “Broom-Spark” housing conferences and safe-spot parking. I attended council meetings and advisory committee meetings. I stayed abreast of local housing-related issues and initiatives, and shared relevant ideas and connections with Broomfield stakeholders. I helped create summaries of local housing challenges and participated in various panel discussions. Now I’ve written this report as a sort of (belated) capstone to my catalyst work.

My perspective was already informed (and formed) by more than a decade of listening to and accompanying residents “on the margins” of our community. Two years of “catalyzing” reinforced for me the far-reaching implications of our local and regional housing crisis, and my affinity for identifying gaps and making connections and starting things.

If our local housing support needle has moved a few ticks from empty since 2019, it's mostly because of a few dozen dedicated advocates from area non-profits and city entities. It's been a privilege to learn and serve alongside them all, especially my fiercely compassionate colleagues Ian Fletcher of [Community Solutions](#), Dayna Scott of FISH and Sharon Tessier, the new housing program manager for the City and County of Broomfield.

To be completely honest, though, and I'm going to speak for my fellow housing advocates here, we're exhausted from taking up, carrying and advancing a burden (and responsibility) that properly belongs to our entire community. We've done about all we can do on our own. To "move the needle" any further toward meaningful Broomfield-wide housing stability we need A LOT more help.

I originally intended this project to mirror [my first Sweep Report](#) in length, tone and scope — add updated statistics and a few new stories and voilà, done. But the more I wrote, the more I found I had to say. Sooner or later, every topical trail I pursued — history, demo- graphics, environment, the economy, education, community life, build out — circled back to housing as our No. 1 local concern. So my planned, drag-and-drop review of general trends, indicators and needs became a consideration of our collective identity, a chronicle of our community "from below," a summary of housing past and present, and a near-future vision of housing stability for all Broomfielders. Along the way, its tone and posture reflect my multifaceted resident-homeowner-minister-advocate-catalyst-(amateur-)historian relationship with my community.

I hope this report does what it was meant to do: foster self- and community awareness, challenge stereotypes, promote dialogue and prompt action, in Broomfield and beyond.

Trauma survivors, because this report is interspersed with descriptions of human suffering (and resilience), please take special care of yourselves as you read.

Regarding style, I prefer the moniker "Broomfielders" over the alternatives "Broomfieldians," "Broomfieldites," "Broomfieldans" and "Broomfieldanders." I abbreviate "City and County of Broomfield" as "CCOB." I've inserted hyperlinks within the text instead of adding footnotes or endnotes to ease reader engagement. Unlinked statements represent my personal opinion or research, what I consider to be general knowledge, or facts easily confirmed by an online keyword search. The Resources section beginning on p. 223 suggests many avenues for further research.

May we who love this place, in different and diverse ways, live to see it become a better, more livable and more housing-stable version of itself. [#WeAreBroomfield](#).

Marrton Dormish
near Midway & Main
March 25, 2022

INTRODUCTION



*“Oikonomia is the science or art of efficiently
producing, distributing, and maintaining concrete
use values for the household and community over the long run.*

*Chrematistics is the art of maximizing the accumulation by
individuals of abstract exchange value in the form of money in the short run.*

*Although our word ‘economics’ is derived from oikonomia,
its present meaning is much closer to chrematistics.*

*The word chrematistics is currently relegated to unabridged dictionaries,
but the reality to which it refers is everywhere present and
is frequently and incorrectly called economics...*

*In replacing chrematistics by oikonomia we not only
refocus on a different reality but also embrace the purposes
served within that different reality —
community, frugality, efficiency, and
long-term stewardship of particular places.”*

from award-winning economist [Herman Daly](#)’s foreword to the essay collection
What Matters?: Economics for a Renewed Commonwealth by Wendell Berry

This is probably the most important report I've ever written. It's certainly the longest, so I divided it into three parts — "Broomfield Yesterday," "Broomfield Today" and "Broomfield Tomorrow." To smooth your way through, consider reading each part with family, friends or coworkers, and discussing with each other: "What did I like or not like about this part?", "What, if anything, did I learn?" "What story, paragraph, statistic or phrase most stood out to me?", and "What should I do about it?"

If there's a most important word in this report, it's the noun "neighbor." The Online Etymology Dictionary defines it as "[one who lives near another](#)," from the Middle English "neighebor" and the Old English "neahgebur" (West Saxon) and "nehebur" (Anglian). So, by my frequent references to "our neighbors," I mean those who live next door to us and down the street from us, those who frequent our favorite shops and those who work there, and really all those who care in a special way about Broomfield.

I also and especially mean "neighbor" in the sense of a well-known story told by Jesus of Nazareth, as recorded in chapter 10 of [The Gospel According to Luke](#). Jesus is teaching his disciples about the importance of loving God and loving their neighbors as themselves as the path to what the late philosopher Dallas Willard called "the eternal kind of life," but an expert in the religious law is listening in and he wants to justify himself to Jesus (and himself). So he asks Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?"

In response, Jesus tells a story. *A man is traveling on a familiar route, and he gets attacked, robbed, stripped and left for dead on the side of the road. When two religious and community leaders see him lying there, they pass by on the other side. Later, a Samaritan walks by, sees him, cares for his wounds, places him on his donkey, puts him up in a nearby motel room to recuperate, and promises on his return trip to reimburse any additional expenses the motel-keeper may incur.* So Jesus asks the religious expert, "Which of these three do you think became a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" And the expert says, "The one who showed mercy to him." Jesus replies, "Go and do the same."

Since Jesus' audience intuitively placed themselves in the position of the victim, the subversive twist of the story is that the hero who rescues the victim is not another Jewish person, not a religious leader like the priest or the Levite, who both see the victim and pass him by. The hero of the story is a Samaritan — a contemporary of another race who was despised and perceived as an enemy by both the expert in the law and Jesus' disciples.

No matter how we identify ourselves, Jew or Gentile, Protestant or Catholic, religious or non-religious, spiritual or non-spiritual, this sacred story simultaneously hints at our foundational human vocation and interrogates our deeply held fears, biases, justifications, prejudices and stereotypes of "the Other." In our modern-day context, the priest and the Levite could be cast as "a non-profit board chairman," "an HOA president," "a city councilmember" or "a minister" like me, and the Samaritan might become

“a member of the Taliban” or “an undocumented resident” or, in light of 2021 debates on Broomfield social media threads, “a homeless person.”

The Parable of the Good Samaritan challenges our individual sensibilities to be sure, but it also confronts our collective assumptions. It makes me wonder, beyond all the demographics I’ve been poring over this last year or so, when is it that someone becomes a Broomfielder? When and how do we count, not just in a statistical sense, but in the intangible sense of “belonging” in and to this community?



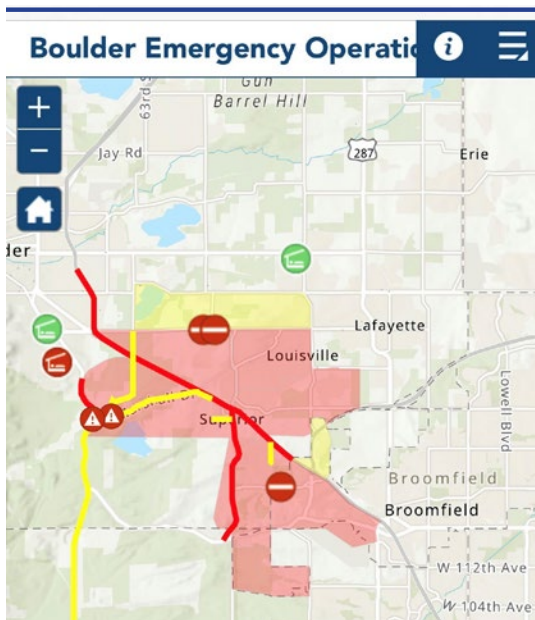
According to the [2021 Broomfield Community Survey](#), 96 percent of respondents rated Broomfield as providing an excellent or good “Overall Quality of Life,” 95 percent rated it as an excellent or good “Place to Live” and 94 percent of respondents rated it as an excellent or good “Place to Raise Children.” Respondents’ top words to describe Broomfield were: “safe” and “friendly,” followed by “clean,” “quiet,” “beautiful” and “convenient.” Nearly 1,500 Broomfielders completed the survey, almost uniformly echoing the opinion that our community is a special place with a hometown feel. We even have our own method of how things are done here — “The Broomfield Way.”

I believe our very best qualities as a community flow from a reciprocal dynamic: *both* steadfastly maintaining tried-and-true values, relationships and responsibilities, *and* continually expanding our circle of belonging, benefits and resources. Here are several examples of how Broomfield already embodies that far-reaching “*both-and*”:

- Each September, firefighters, police officers, city employees and members of the community-at-large gather in Broomfield to remember 9/11/2001. The attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, and the crash of Flight 93 in Shanksville, Pa., happened more than 1,000 miles from here and directly involved few members of our immediate families or friends. But we remember 9/11 like they did, because we immediately grasped and still intuitively recognize our interconnectedness with the 2,996 U.S. citizens and members of many other nations who lost their lives that day, as well as the thousands more who were injured, sickened or otherwise traumatized. (I, for one, have yet to watch any 9/11 footage, documentaries or movies based on that terrible day. The live TV image of the hijacked airliner striking the second tower remains indelibly etched in my memory.)
- In 1956, Dwight D. Eisenhower founded [Sister Cities International](#) to promote citizen diplomacy and peace through mutual respect, understanding, cooperation and long-term relationship — “one individual, one community at a time.” Last Nov. 21, Broomfield celebrated its 20th anniversary of friendship with Ueda, Japan. [Broomfield Sister Cities](#) encourages cultural, educational,

municipal, business, professional and technical exchanges and projects through which both communities creatively learn, work, and solve problems together. Ueda students visit Broomfield in odd numbered years and Broomfield ambassadors visit Ueda in even numbered years.

- Since Afghanistan's late-summer 2021 upheaval, U.S. Army veteran and Broomfield resident Scott Henkel and his wife, Heidi, a Ward 5 city councilmember, have been on a mission. At first, it was to get Ahmad Siddiqi, Scott's Afghan interpreter from his 2008-2009 Army tour there, and Ahmad's family, to Broomfield. [In a month's time](#), the Henkels put out a call for help, raised \$39,196, received a donated car, toys, computers, clothes, bikes, and \$1,000 in gift cards for groceries and settling-in expenses, found the Siddiqis lower-than-market-rate housing, and [greeted the Siddiqis](#) upon their arrival. Later, the Henkels joined local stakeholders to discuss how best to [welcome more Afghan refugee families](#) to our community. Perhaps most significantly, Heidi says she received a \$6,000 donation for their ad-hoc humanitarian efforts from a resident she knows would never vote for her!
- We just survived the most destructive firestorm in state history. It [killed two people](#), caused the emergency [evacuations of 30,000](#) people, and destroyed seven commercial structures and more than [1,000 homes](#) in Marshall, Superior, Louisville and unincorporated Boulder County. On Dec. 30, 2021, the Broomfield



I took this screenshot of the Boulder Emergency Operation Center's online evacuation map at 10:47 p.m. on the night of Dec. 30, 2021.

Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and [Broomfield VOAD](#) opened the 1st Bank Center to 150 evacuees in need of a temporary resting place, Internet access, snacks and water. Since that horrific day, [Broomfield officials](#), [non-profits](#) and [businesses](#) have mobilized to help with [recovery](#) and [resources](#). Area Episcopalians quickly raised \$11,000 in gift cards for fire-affected families. Many members of our community at large, in countless large and small ways, continue to [lend a helping hand](#) to our Boulder County neighbors. (*Important note to homeowners: You might consider re-evaluating your home insurance policy, as many Marshall Fire victims have discovered they were [significantly underinsured](#).*)

When disaster strikes, Broomfielders help with cleanup and everyday supplies, adopt affected schools and neighborhoods, and donate toys and wardrobes and furniture and kitchen appliances. When a resident's father needs help paying his cancer treatment deductible we share the fundraiser link and we donate. When friends of friends have a sick child in the hospital, we join meal trains and we donate.

There's much to appreciate about our community spirit and our willingness to respond to sudden adversity. Yet, we have at the same time chosen not to apply a similar level of solidarity and unanimity to more drawn-out crises happening right here within our borders, such as housing instability and homelessness.

In the last two years at least four people have died while experiencing homelessness in Broomfield. Their names were James Wasielewski, age 59; Randy Snyder, age 55; Brittany Markham, age 36; and David Mausner, age 67. It was my privilege to know Randy, Brittany and David through the Refuge Café, and, over time, to call them my friends. Like the rest of us who call Broomfield home, they were dear, generous people made in the image of God. The Refuge and our community as a whole are worse off because they're gone.

Three of these "Broomfield Four" grew up here and attended Broomfield High School, and all of them lived here for many years. Their four deaths are four too many.

Their deaths were preventable. Had their own resources been supplemented by more comprehensive and effective local housing, income and healthcare supports, they would likely still be alive.

Their deaths are lamentable. They expose our tendency to ignore or dismiss certain "undesirables" from the life of our community.

Their deaths cannot be forgotten. That only a few local faith communities, caseworkers and agency representatives have until now known about and acknowledged their deaths should unsettle us. That too few local resources exist to prevent others from sharing their fate should prompt us to action.



The Parable of the Good Samaritan suggests to us that the only requirement for a person in desperate need to receive help from those around them is to be a person in desperate need. What is *not* at issue is where they last lived or how long they've been here or what they look like or how much baggage they have with them or whether they're in need because of poor choices they've made. The responsibility of the passersby in Jesus' story is so obvious and self-evident as to be assumed.

But he goes further. The innkeeper receives two day's wages from the Samaritan, perhaps implying the man from Samaria is a day laborer and therefore someone who lives on the margins himself. It takes new eyes to envision ourselves in the guise of the unnamed victim and to see ourselves as worthy of "neighboring" any stranger, let alone a despised or feared one. It takes new ears to hear that those we tend to look down upon are often more generous and reflecting of the ways of true humanity, hospitality and community than the rest of us.

It's time for us Broomfielders to see with new eyes and to hear with new ears. In the words of U2's song "Invisible," and in the deepest human sense, "There is no them, only us." That is where and how we must begin, together.



I wrote [the first Sweep Report](#) — in collaboration with Karen Smith, the former executive director of the Broomfield Community Foundation — to highlight key local trends and needs. Here's a summary of our conclusions, and what progress, if any, has been made since the original's publication in 2012:

✓ = this has happened or is happening, 🚧 = "under construction"/in process, ⌚ = this has not yet happened

Main Trends

- Our population is growing ✓
- Our population is aging ✓
- Our population is becoming more diverse ✓

Main Needs

- We urgently need to create affordable and alternative housing 🚧
- We urgently need to fill the gaps in our local social safety net 🚧
 - [Accessible and readily available rides for seniors](#) ✓
 - More mental health resources and collaboration 🚧
 - [Mentors for at-risk youth](#) 🚧
 - [Real-time, community-wide resource guide](#) ✓
 - Local hotline for emergency housing ⌚
 - Resources for residents who "fall through the cracks" 🚧
 - Low-income health clinic in Broomfield ⌚
 - Support for new and existing non-profits 🚧
 - [Enhance community-wide collaboration](#) 🚧

- Center the voices of our at-risk neighbors 🚧
- Increase interest and involvement from the community at large 🚧
- Integrate the perspective, energy and resources of our local business community 🚧

In The Sweep Report 2.0, I examine these and other trends and needs *from below*, meaning I intentionally privilege the stories and perspectives of our neighbors on the proverbial margins. I do so *through a housing-centered lens*, because if Broomfield has an ongoing, widely recognized, central concern, it is our beyond-urgent need for affordable housing, not just for our neighbors who are unhoused, but for residents across our full housing spectrum. The first Sweep Report helped publicize it, Broomfield’s city council has for several years prioritized it, and [2021 community survey](#) participants identified it as their No. 1 concern. Of course, the phrase “affordable housing and full-spectrum housing supports” encompasses all kinds of complex and multi-layered practices, realities and challenges that deserve detailed examination. To that end:

- Part 1, “Broomfield Yesterday,” explores the Native displacement and U.S. settlement-development of our area up to the present.
- Part 2, “Broomfield Today,” examines ongoing local realities through three housing-related lenses — Neighborhood Ecology, Household Wealth and Hometown Life.
- Part 3, “Broomfield Tomorrow,” envisions three interrelated trends, three opportunities and three calls to action relevant to a more housing-stable future.

By way of recognizing that the statistics cited in these pages represent real flesh-and-blood Broomfielders, each of these sections ends with “Local Perspectives” from people with strong ties to our community.

Thank you for joining me on this journey.

PART 1

BROOMFIELD

YESTERDAY



*“Where common memory is lacking,
where people do not share in the same past,
there can be no real community.
Where community is to be formed,
common memory must be created.”*

— Georges Erasmus, member and past president of the Dene Nation of Canada,
as quoted at The Refuge on Feb. 25, 2018,
by Navajo author and speaker [Mark Charles](#)

*Each sub-section of “Broomfield Yesterday” is accompanied by
a representative audio song-link.*

Local Western histories tend to begin with descriptions of military expeditions, pioneer survival stories, settler dreams or all of the above, consigning everything (and everyone) before them to a primordial soup of prehistory — earth’s tectonic shifts, roaming dinosaurs, virgin paradise, abundant wildlife. If they acknowledge Indigenous people at all, it’s only in passing, and I regret to say that includes [the original Sweep Report](#).

I say “prehistory” because, with the exception of visibly “advanced” Indigenous civilizations at places like Mesa Verde, we members of Colorado’s majority culture have been taught to perceive First Nations as primitive. For example, our historical summaries often refer to the Plains Indian nations of our area as “nomads” or “hunter-gatherers,” implying “archaic,” “backward,” or even, “proto-human.” Perhaps their ongoing preference for storytelling, songs and ceremonies to transmit and maintain knowledge, and their former favored mode of mobile living in harmony with nature offend our sensibilities. We have long preferred written documentation and fixed, permanent, climate-controlled shelters to protect us from the elements.

The epic misnomer “Indians,” given to the Indigenous people of this continent by Christopher Columbus, has been subsequently adopted by some members of the [574 federally recognized tribes](#) in the United States and its territories. Yet many familiar names assigned to Native communities reflect misunderstandings and linguistic distance. As in, they were originally transliterated from descriptions of them by their enemies or from mispronunciations by agents of encroaching U.S., British, Spanish or French interests.

Present-day Broomfield occupies the ancestral lands of the Arapaho, the Cheyenne and the Ute nations. Their names for themselves in their own language are, respectively, “Hinono’eiten,” [“Tsitsistas”](#) and, according to Sondra G. Jones’s *Being and Becoming Ute*, “Núu-ci.” Each name translates as something like “Our People’s Nation,” “Our People” or “The People.”

While other sovereign First Nations such as the Apache and Comanche also have trans-generational memories of Colorado’s Front Range, the Arapaho in particular have an enduring relationship with the land in and between the cities we now know as Boulder and Denver. For an Arapaho perspective on this land and on several remarkable individuals who lived here in the traditional way — Niwothi, Hóuusóó, Hoxei Kookuteeneiht and Mahom — see “Homecoming” on p. 36.

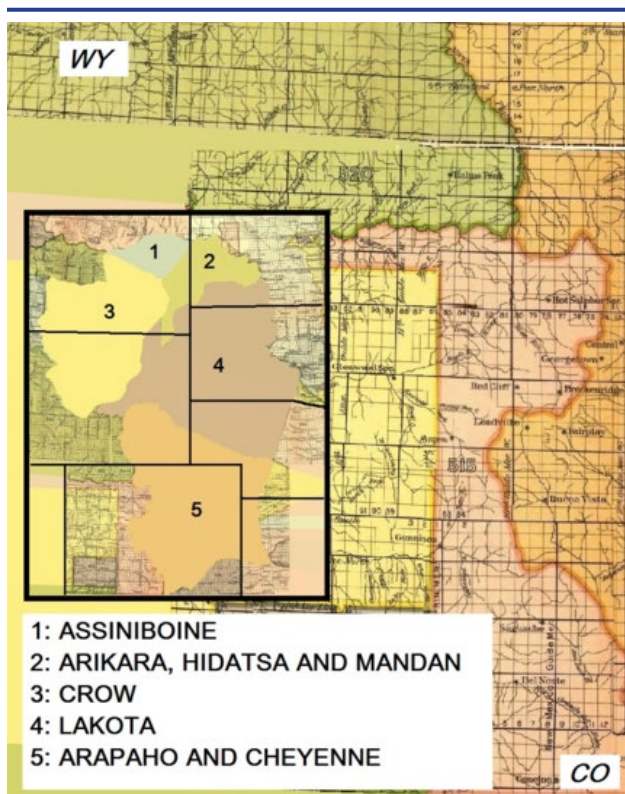


Native Homelands

(“[First Flute Song](#)” by Joseph Fire Crow, Northern Cheyenne.)

According to the biography *Chief Left Hand* by former “One Book, One Broomfield” honoree Margaret Coel, by 1846, with the once-vast buffalo herds they relied on for their livelihood dwindling and with their camps decimated by epidemics of smallpox and cholera brought by westward explorers and migrants, the Arapaho nation had declined by 70 percent to an estimated 3,000 people.

In 1851, U.S. government commissioners and representatives of the Arapaho, the Cheyenne and six other Plains Indian nations signed what is known as the Treaty of Fort Laramie or the [Horse Creek Treaty](#). In it, the United States received permission to establish roads and outposts for West Coast-bound settlers passing through Native lands. The eight nations received U.S. recognition of wide swaths of territory — in the case of the allied Arapaho and Cheyenne nations, everything between the headwaters of the Platte and the Arkansas rivers east to notable landmarks on the Oregon and Santa Fe trails.



The 1851 Fort Laramie Treaty-acknowledged territory of the Cheyenne and Arapaho nations included roughly half of what is now Colorado, as well as southeastern Wyoming, southwestern Nebraska and northwestern Kansas. Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#).

That same year, Hispanic families from New Mexico Territory established San Luis de la Culebra, or San Luis for short, “[the oldest continuously occupied town](#)” in what is now the state of Colorado.

In 1854, the U.S. Congress created the Kansas and Nebraska territories, which were divided by the 40th parallel north and which encompassed the Pike’s Peak region, a shorthand term for what is now Colorado’s Front Range.

In 1857, railroad securities and land speculation and the sinking of a ship carrying gold reserves for New York banks contributed to a nationwide [financial panic](#) that, among other things, decreased the price of grain and forced farmers to default on mortgage payments.

In 1858, just seven years after the signing of the Treaty of Fort Laramie, prospectors struck gold at the mouth of Little Dry Creek (in present-day Englewood), igniting the [Pike's Peak Gold Rush](#). As in late-1820s Georgia, late-1840s California, late-1860s Montana and 1870s South Dakota, the U.S. government and its surrogates tacitly allowed, and even outright encouraged, fortune-seeking pioneers to illegally settle on Native land.

Settler Homesteads

(“[Ashokan Farewell](#)” by Jay Ungar, Molly Mason, Fiddle Fever.)

Coel noted in *Chief Left Hand* that more than 100,000 newcomers had flooded this area by 1859. Boomtowns like Boulder City, Auraria and Denver City sprouted up on favorite Arapaho campgrounds. Town centers outfitted hopeful companies of miners, who fanned out across the Pikes Peak region.

In mid-February 1861, with civil war looming in the East and territorial status pending here in the West, the U.S. government crafted a new treaty that reduced by 90 percent the acknowledged lands of the Arapaho and Cheyenne nations. A handful of Arapaho and Cheyenne chiefs signed the treaty for their bands at [Fort Wise](#), a U.S. military base in what is now southeastern Colorado. (After the fort's namesake, Virginia Gov. Henry A. Wise, sided with the Confederacy, the fort was renamed after Union Brig. Gen. Nathaniel Lyon, who died in August 1861 at the Battle of Wilson's Creek in Southwest Missouri.)

“[Colorado](#),” the Spanish word for colored, ruddy or reddish, associated with the river of the same name, became an official, incorporated U.S. [territory](#) on Feb. 28, 1861. The [Colorado Organic Act](#) enabled settlers from the United States to make “legal” claims on unceded land in the public domain. Among Colorado's first 17 designated counties was Boulder County, whose [southeastern corner](#) encompassed much of what is now Broomfield.

Surveyors began delineating the territory based on a rectangular, snake-like pattern of range, townships and sections established by Congress in 1785. Today's [Baseline Road](#) on the northern border of Broomfield, runs almost exactly along the 40th parallel — it provided the primary latitude of reference for the eastern Colorado Territory. Each township included 36 numbered sections of one square mile or 640 acres. For example, “1N, 70W, 36” denotes 1 township north of baseline, 70 ranges west of the standard 6th meridian, and 640 acres of land in section 36.

As long as [homesteaders](#) “improved” the land they settled on — constructing a house, digging wells, planting crops, clearing trees or building fences — they could obtain its patent or title, officially making them a landowner.

Tensions heightened between U.S. settler-immigrants and the Arapaho, Cheyenne and other Native peoples already living in the region in 1864, prompting Colorado's second territorial governor, John Evans, to issue two proclamations. [The first](#), in June, ordered "friendly Indians" to report to specified forts for their safety and provision. [The second](#), in August, sought to protect settlements from what were rumored to be imminent Indian attacks. Since the territory's other U.S. volunteer soldiers were mostly fighting Confederates in Kansas and Missouri or protecting the Santa Fe Trail, the Overland Trail and other westward travel routes across the Plains, the latter proclamation promised payment and spoils to those who attacked and killed "hostile Indians," and called for the raising of militia to "do their duty for the defence [sic] of their homes and families."

Newspaper ads for "Indian Fighters" ran in places like Central City. Underemployed miners from mountain counties and able-bodied men from the Pueblo, Colorado City (now Colorado Springs), Pueblo and Boulder City areas, soon joined volunteers and conscripts from Arapahoe County (which then included Denver City) to become the [3rd Colorado Cavalry Regiment](#). Its Company D of 111 Boulder Valley men mustered and trained that August and September at Valmont's sod-walled Fort Chambers. Boulder County's sheriff, David Nichols, resigned his post to become the company's captain.

On Sept. 28, 1864, Gov. Evans and Col. John Chivington, Colorado's Military District Commander, had already been publicly and privately fomenting for war when lately-informed Cheyenne chiefs Black Kettle and White Antelope, and other Cheyenne and Arapaho leaders arrived in Denver from the Smoky Hills to discuss peace terms. The parties held council at [Camp Weld](#), whose historical marker resides just east of I-25 and 8th Avenue, after which Cheyenne and Arapaho leader-participants understood themselves to have made peace and to have placed themselves and their people under the protection of the U.S. government. They returned to their Smoky Hills camps and began leading their people toward Fort Lyon in southeastern Colorado Territory to complete their surrender.

The men of Company D, meanwhile, had left Fort Chambers on Sept. 15 to begin linking up with other 3rd Colorado units. While competing for resources and authority with other military commanders in the region, Chivington carefully orchestrated an early-winter campaign. A well-known Methodist minister-turned-Union-soldier, Chivington had gained promotion and fame fighting Confederates at the 1862 [Battle of Glorieta Pass](#) in New Mexico Territory. He believed a decisive late-1864 victory over hostile Indians would earn him the rank of brigadier general and strengthen his candidacy for elected office.

On Nov. 28, Chivington and the 3rd Colorado arrived unexpectedly at Fort Lyon, where the 1st Colorado Cavalry, many of them veterans of Glorieta Pass, were charged with protecting the mostly "white" homesteaders and travelers on the nearby Santa Fe Trail.

Chivington quickly made it known he was on his way to attack the nearest Indians, who happened to be led by Black Kettle and other Camp Weld Council attendees. The recently appointed post commander, Maj. Scott Anthony, had ordered them to camp a day's journey northeast of the fort on Sand Creek, in part because he had been unable to supply them with promised government annuities. When several 1st Colorado officers, who knew the Sand Creek camps to be peaceful, objected to Chivington's plan, he [reportedly raged](#), "Damn any man who is in sympathy with an Indian!"

That frigid night, Chivington's 675-man cavalry force rode from Fort Lyon to a staging point near a distinctive bluff on the Big Sandy Creek. Spread below the bluff along the creek were around 150 tipi-lodges, the winter homes of 750 Cheyenne and Arapaho people. Those present were mostly chiefs, elders, women and children.

Early on the morning of Nov. 29, 1864, without warning or discussion, Chivington ordered his troops to attack. Camp residents who ran to tell the soldiers they had already surrendered were shot down. Some elders and women joined the few men on hand to defend themselves and their families, while many others fled into the open prairie with soldiers in pursuit. By the end of the day, the Colorado cavalry had [massacred](#) at least 230 people. Of the 60 or so Arapahos present at Sand Creek, only a small number survived.

Troopers plundered Cheyenne and Arapaho possessions and mutilated the bodies of the dead for war trophies. The next day, Chivington ordered the lodges and their contents, including family heirlooms, food, clothing, buffalo robe blankets and all other belongings left behind in the camps, to be burned to the ground.

When "veterans" of Sand Creek returned to Denver, they were hailed as heroes by citizens and newspapers alike. Many defended their actions along the Big Sandy to their dying day.

[Scott Anthony](#), who enthusiastically joined Chivington's march to Sand Creek, later made his fortune as a land speculator.

[William Byers](#) continued editing the *Rocky Mountain News* and promoting the cause of Colorado. He presided over headlines such as this one from Dec. 8, 1864: "500 INDIANS KILLED / Our Loss 9 Killed, 38 Wounded / Full Particulars / The Savages Dispersed!"

[John Chivington](#) resigned from the military soon after the Massacre at Sand Creek. Despite two Congressional inquiries and one Army investigation, neither Chivington nor any of his troopers were ever formally convicted of wrongdoing. Chivington later lived in Nebraska, California, New York, and Ohio, where he edited a local newspaper and ran unsuccessfully for office. He eventually returned to Denver, where he worked as a deputy sheriff.

[Morse Coffin](#), a "59er" and a sergeant in Co. D, 3rd Colorado, farmed in Weld County and wrote an account of his experiences.

[Jacob Downing](#), a major at Sand Creek, practiced law, served as an Arapahoe County judge, acquired more than 2,000 acres of land for farming and raising cattle, and advocated for public parks in Denver.

[John Evans](#) resigned his governorship and accompanying role as superintendent of Indian affairs amidst the political fallout from Sand Creek. He joined the private sector and worked to bring railroads to the Colorado Territory. (Prior to Sand Creek, he helped found both Northwestern University in Chicago and the Colorado Seminary, now the University of Denver.)

[Irving Howbert](#), a corporal in Co. G, 3rd Colorado, also wrote about his experiences. His father, a Methodist minister in Iowa, had applied to church authority for six months' vacation in 1860 in order to join a mining party heading to Colorado. Irving, then 14, joined him. After Sand Creek, Howbert became El Paso County clerk and recorder, was elected to the Colorado State Senate, owned a silver mine, became president of First National Bank of Colorado Springs, invested in the Colorado Midland Railway and built the Colorado Springs Opera House.

[David Nichols](#), commander of Co. D, 3rd Colorado, returned to Boulder, helped found the University of Colorado and went on to become Colorado's lieutenant governor.

[George Shoup](#), a colonel and cavalry commander at Sand Creek, became the first elected governor of Idaho and later a U.S. senator.

By 1865, Colorado miners had processed an estimated [1.25 million](#) troy ounces of gold. Placer deposits associated with "panning for gold" accounted for 60 percent of the total. At a [reported value](#) on Jan. 1, 1866, of \$28.26 per ounce, the cumulative worth of Colorado-extracted gold equaled approximately \$35,325,000 or more than \$609 million [in today's currency](#).

"This America
has been a burden
of steel and mad
death,
but, look now,
there are flowers
and new grass
and a spring wind
rising
from Sand Creek..."

Simon J. Ortiz, [from Sand Creek](#)

Many Cheyenne and Arapaho warriors went to war with settlers and soldiers after Sand Creek, but their displaced people never collectively returned to their Colorado homelands. Survivors were forced onto reservations in Oklahoma, Wyoming and Montana. Subsequent generations have endured assimilation-focused policies that suppressed their languages and traditional customs, and compelled their children to attend religious [boarding schools](#) designed to “[kill the Indian](#) and save the man.”

Every year since 1999, Cheyenne and Arapaho survivor-descendants have participated in annual “[spiritual healing runs](#)” from the Sand Creek Massacre site near Eads, Colo., to the State Capitol in Denver.

In 2007, Cheyenne and Arapaho leaders, in partnership with the U.S. Park Service, Congress, environmental and land banking organizations, and local landowners, formally dedicated the [Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site](#).

[Only last summer](#), on Aug. 17, 2021, were John Evans’s two 1864 proclamations authorizing Colorado citizens to pursue, kill and plunder Indians officially rescinded — by current governor Jared Polis at a State Capitol ceremony with Cheyenne, Arapaho and other Indigenous leaders.

Despite these milestones, Sand Creek and historical sites related to it have yet to be adequately recognized in our state and local histories, and more importantly, in our collective consciousness.

Fort Chambers, for example, where Company D of the 3rd Colorado Cavalry prepared for their campaign against “Indians” is an often unseen, but crucial chapter in the story of Sand Creek. Without places like Fort Chambers, located within Boulder’s city limits just 11 miles northwest of Broomfield, the massacre at Sand Creek might not have happened. Without eager recruits responding to calls for “Indian Fighters,” many lost Cheyenne and Arapaho family lines would likely have continued to this day. Without long-held but inherently exploitative and dehumanizing ideas such as the [doctrine of discovery](#) and the myth of [manifest destiny](#), traditional Native lifeways may have been able to survive and even thrive.

In a sense, Fort Chambers is Sand Creek. Because it’s literally in our Front Range backyard, within the city limits of Boulder, one of the most prominent towns in Colorado, and not a three-and-a-half hour-drive away in what most of us consider “the middle of nowhere,” it is a place and a story we can no longer ignore. It’s time for us 21st-century Broomfield and Boulder-Valley residents, especially, to grapple with the tension embodied in the obvious geography of our lives: we live here, on Arapaho land, and Arapahos as a people do not.

Farms & Ranches

(*"The Banjo"* performed by Eugene List, composed by Louis Moreau Gottschalk.)

A stone's throw from the intersection of Old Wadsworth, the BNSF Railroad and Walnut Creek, and surrounded by gnarled cottonwoods and wild plants like smooth brome, gumweed and goosefoot, rests a low-lying circular structure with a weathered bronze plaque inset into its base. It reads:

"1864 GEORGE H. CHURCH HAND DUG THIS ROCK LINED WELL...
THIS SITE WAS FIRST STAGE COACH STATION BETWEEN DENVER
AND CHEYENNE THE OLD OVERLAND ROUTE TO CALIFORNIA..."

George Henry Church had been a wheat farmer in Iowa before traveling to the Pikes Peak country in 1859, according to *Snapshots of History: Church Ranch and the Church Family*. He invested in mining claims at Spanish Bar above Idaho Springs, but finding them unprofitable, he returned to Iowa in 1861 and married school teacher Sarah Henderson Miller. The couple spent their honeymoon on a nine-week trip to Colorado Territory, where they traded three oxen for a tract of land near Mt. Vernon Canyon and tried dairy farming. After the homestead they built burned down, they headed for Denver. Halfway there, in the spring of 1864, they stayed at the Childs' house, a crude 18' x 22' structure built in 1860 by Walnut Creek. It had a large fireplace, a dirt floor and an accompanying stable. The Childs wished to sell. With their mining claims still unsold, the Churches bought out the Childs for \$1,000, squatters' right to the land and 100 cords of cottonwood.

With the Arapaho, Cheyenne and other Indigenous peoples who had often camped in and traveled through the area lately removed, the Churches expanded their new property. They organized the construction of a 12-room building, a livery and numerous lean-tos to accommodate stagecoaches traveling the western route of the Overland Trail (also known as the Cherokee Trail). Soon Church's Crossing Stage Stop joined Rock Creek Station (near present-day Rock Creek Farm) as a regular waystation of the Central Overland Express. The Churches steadily bought out nearby homesteads, acquired water rights, built irrigation ditches and plowed nearby fields, claiming a series of Colorado firsts: harvesting the first successful crop of winter wheat, building the first irrigation storage reservoir and being the first to introduce Hereford cattle.

Present-day landmarks such as Church's Stage Stop Open Space, Lower Church Lake, Lower Church Lake Open Space and Church Ranch Boulevard recognize the early and ongoing local influence of the Church family.



Following early homesteaders like the Churches, other immigrants arrived in our area, mostly from Germany, Scandinavia and the British Isles. They built homes, grew crops and raised cattle. My great-grandfather, Andrew Stengel, having escaped conscription into the German Kaiser's army, immigrated to Boulder in 1892. He and his two half-brothers, who predated him here, never quite lost their accents or achieved full fluency in English, but they successfully farmed a many-acred spread along what is now 75th Street, south of Arapaho Road.

Having soon endured threats to their livelihoods in the forms of droughts and plagues of locusts, early European-American settlers cultivated a sorghum crop called broom-corn that helpfully resisted both. While paradoxically not a corn plant, broomcorn's bristles trap fine dust particles, making it an ideal material for the (still-practical) chore of sweeping.

Over time, stagecoaches gave way to trains, trains gave way to automobiles, and the unincorporated farming community of "Broomfield" added a post office, a schoolhouse, a train depot, a grocery store, a church and a bank.

In 1893, Colorado became the second state to grant [women's suffrage](#) and the first to do so via referendum, which passed with 55 percent voting in favor.

In 1898, according to Sylvia Pettem's *Broomfield: Changes Through Time*, local farmers rallied against high railroad shipping costs and bank loan interest rates by organizing a local chapter of the Patrons of Husbandry, a national agricultural advocacy movement better known as the "Grange." In 1916, they built the Crescent Grange #136 near Broomfield's prominent grain elevators and railroad depot. Early members included Sarah H. Church and "second-generation pioneers...Mr. and Mrs. L.C. Brunner," who [joined in 1930](#). The Grange hall remains in use today between 120th Avenue and State Highway 128.

Another organization made inroads locally: the Ku Klux Klan (KKK). Long-time resident Miles Crawford typed the following testimony, now preserved in Broomfield's museum archives, "In the 1920's, as in the rest of Colorado, the Klue Klux Klan [sic] was strong in Broomfield. They used to meet on the Hill North of Broomfield where the water tank is now on Main Street." Crawford noted they were "dressed in white robes" and they would "burn a fiery cross that could be seen for miles."

Like the mountaintop beacons in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, members of the KKK also burned crosses in those days on Table Mountain in Golden and at the Pillar of Fire highpoint in Westminster. Their not-so-subtle message: keep local communities white and Protestant, or else.

In addition to agriculture, extractive mining remained an important industry in the Broomfield area into the 1920s. According to [LafayetteHistory.com](#), coal miners seeking

better working conditions went on strike in the autumn of 1927, focusing their picket lines on the Columbine Mine in Serene, Colo., five miles northeast of Lafayette. Local strikers demonstrated daily outside Serene, population 1,100, where mine owners had installed a tall searchlight, enclosed the town in barbed wire and ordered armed guards to patrol 24 hours a day.

On Monday, Nov. 21, 1927, more than 500 picketers confronted guards outside one of Serene's two main gates. Shots were fired and chaos ensued. At least 23 wounded protestors, including two women, were evacuated to nearby hospitals. Three men died at the scene and within the next eight days three more died from their wounds. Colorado's governor, William "Billy" Adams, blamed strikers, declared martial law and called out National Guard companies from Fort Collins, Loveland and Denver. Protests nationwide decried the bloodshed in Serene, prompting stories in the *New York Times*, *American Mercury*, *Nation* and *Literary Digest*.

The defunct site of Serene is now a landfill visible from the northern reaches of Broomfield's Anthem neighborhood.

Model Hometown

([*Bandstand Boogie*](#) performed by Les Elgart.)

Broomfield experienced its first population boom after World War II. "Guys came back from the war looking for a place to build a home," says Linda Fahrenbruch, a former member of Broomfield City Council and the Broomfield Housing Advisory Committee. "Some of them survived the [USS Indianapolis](#). That's why there's a memorial in the park [by the library]. They really took ownership and worked together. Their wives started FISH."

Historian and blogger Carol Turner [noted](#) that with the help of investors such as Bal Swan and Pres. Dwight D. Eisenhower, the Turnpike Land Co. acquired farm and ranchland in Broomfield in the mid-'50s. Their intent: to create a "City by the Turnpike." They named their suburban, master-planned community "Broomfield Heights," and created the Broomfield Mutual Service Co. to provide water and sewer services, sourced by nearby Great Western Reservoir.

Many early Broomfield Heights resident-breadwinners worked at the nearby Rocky Flats Nuclear Weapons Plant. Construction of the site began in 1951 under the code-word "Project Apple," according to the website of the [Rocky Flats Cold War Museum](#). The U.S. Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) operated the plant with Dow Chemical as its primary contractor, and the site's nearly 2,600 acres included 1,200 forcibly acquired from descendants of George and Sarah Church, according to the "Excerpts from the Historic Contexts Report" of the aforementioned *Snapshots of History*.

Rocky Flats produced the plutonium “triggers” or cores “for virtually every U.S. nuclear weapon from 1952-1989.” It also attracted controversy: nuclear-weapons protests, on-site fires involving hazardous waste, contamination of Great Western Reservoir, and employees’ attempts to unionize and maintain their [health insurance](#) benefits post-employment, while dealing with high incidences of cancer and other diseases. The plant closed in 1993 and has since been converted into a wildlife refuge open to hikers and cyclists. Litigation and contaminant [monitoring](#) continue to this day.

According to a CCOB [history page](#), after incorporation Broomfield annexed additional properties from: Jefferson County in 1969, Adams County in 1971 and Weld County in 1988 and 1989, including land east of Main Street, Greenway Park, and the Westlake Village subdivision. Broomfield acquired the area now known as Interlocken in piecemeal fashion — in 1983, 1986, 1995, 1996 and 1998.

Tech Center, Consolidated Community & Wealthy Suburb

(“[One](#)” by U2.)

In the ‘80s and ‘90s, land Broomfield annexed south of U.S. Highway 36 became home to Interlocken Business Park and the Flatiron Crossing mall, which was constructed over the tunnels of the defunct Monarch coal mine, according to Nicholas Bernhard’s [article](#) “Mornings at the Monarch” in *Yellow Scene Magazine*.

Annexations expanded Broomfield’s land borders, but overlapping Boulder, Adams, Jefferson and Weld counties proved increasingly inconvenient and burdensome to residents and municipal workers alike.

Linda Fahrenbruch keeps a file of newspaper articles and memorabilia commemorating Broomfield’s important, late ‘90s effort to consolidate municipal services into a city-and-county structure. For more details, see her local perspective, “A View of Consolidation,” on p. 30.

“In just a few years, this motivated group of residents had gone from talking about Broomfield county in someone’s living room to running a statewide campaign,” stated a Nov. 15, 2001, feature in the *Broomfield Enterprise*, quoting one public policy expert as lauding the “level of collaboration, much less partnership, that’s unheard of” displayed by Broomfield leaders and residents.

The successful 1998 “[Creation of Broomfield](#)” referendum changed Colorado’s constitution. As of November 2001, it authorized the newly consolidated city and county to “...grant franchises; ...purchase, receive, hold, and enjoy, or sell and dispose of real and personal property; ...receive bequests, gifts, and donations of real and personal property, or real and personal property in trust for public, charitable, or other purposes...and...to

construct, condemn, purchase, acquire, lease, add to, maintain, conduct, and operate water works, water supplies, sanitary sewer facilities, storm water facilities, parks, recreation facilities, open space lands, light plants, power plants, heating plants, electric and other energy facilities and systems, gas facilities and systems, transportation systems, cable television systems, telecommunication systems, and other public utilities or works or ways local in use and extent, in whole or in part, and everything required therefore, for the use of said city and county and the inhabitants thereof; to purchase in whole or in part any such systems, plants, works, facilities, or ways, or any contracts in relation or connection thereto that may exist, and may enforce such purchase by proceedings at law as in taking land for public use by right of eminent domain; and to issue bonds in accordance with its charter in any amount necessary to carry out any said powers or purposes, as the charter may provide and limit.”

With local resources and status burgeoning, Broomfield policy-makers paved the way toward fiscal viability by intentionally zoning for affluence. Their approach succeeded in the sense that emphasizing the construction of high-end, single- and multi-family housing provided steady municipal revenue through associated fees and taxes. But it failed in the sense that with every new market-rate and executive-friendly development, housing prices and housing costs increased, making our community less and less and less affordable for thousands of local households.



Like many other communities in the West, Broomfield has continually reinvented itself these past seven [generations](#). Each generation has expressed its own distinct vision of prosperity and “home.” Each has experienced its share of tragedies, such as violence, droughts, floods, fires, plagues, pandemics, recessions, racism, nativism, classism and housing distress. And in their wake, each generation has rallied to rebuild, remember and reimagine this place for itself.



Local Perspectives

- “A View of Consolidation” with Linda Fahrenbruch (p. 30)
- “As Perfect as Men Can Conceive” by David Allison (p. 33)
- “A Question of Homecoming” with Fred Mosqueda (p. 36)

Dates to Remember

Sept. 17, 1851 – [Treaty of Fort Laramie](#)
(Horse Creek Treaty)

U.S. treaty commissioners and representatives of the Arapaho, Cheyenne, Sioux, Crow, Assiniboiné, Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara nations sign an agreement that acknowledges Indian territory in return for allowing safe passage for westward travelers.

1858-1861 – [Pike's Peak Gold Rush](#)

“Gold fever” produces 150,000 ounces of gold in 1861 and 225,000 troy ounces in 1862. This leads Congress to establish the Denver Mint. Cumulative Colorado production by 1865 equals 1.25 million ounces, of which sixty percent is placer gold.

Feb. 18, 1861 – [Treaty of Fort Wise](#)

With civil war looming in the East and territorial status pending here in the West, U.S. treaty commissioners negotiate a new treaty with just six Cheyenne and four Arapaho leaders. It reduces by 90 percent the 1851 Treaty of Ft. Laramie-acknowledged lands of the Arapaho and Cheyenne nations and legally confines them to a “reservation” in eastern Colorado.

May 20, 1862 – [Homestead Act](#)

Enables any head of a family or person 21 years old or over to acquire up to 160 acres of land from the public domain, with no cost except filing fees. The process: make a claim, reside on the land for five years, build a home, make improvements, farm the land, and be or become a citizen. After six months, an entrant could forego the five-year residency requirement by paying \$1.25 per acre for the land's patent or title, transferring the property to their private ownership.

Nov. 29, 1864 – [Sand Creek Massacre](#)

The 3rd Colorado Cavalry and elements of the 1st Colorado Cavalry, under the command of Col. John Chivington, attack peaceful Cheyenne and Arapaho camps at Sand Creek in Eastern Colorado. A few officers of the 1st Colorado refuse the order to attack and became key witnesses of the ensuing horrors — including the murders of at least 230 Cheyenne and Arapaho elders, women, children and men, some of their bodies mutilated, and the homes and possessions of survivors and victims, alike, plundered and destroyed.

Aug. 1, 1876 – [Statehood](#)

Ulysses S. Grant signs a proclamation making Colorado the 38th state in the Union.

Sept. 26, 1884 – Postal Recognition

The U.S. Post Office names this area “Broomfield” after a signature, locust-resistant crop.

June 6, 1961 – [Incorporation](#)

Broomfield becomes an official municipal corporation.

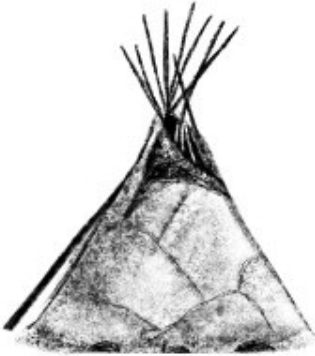
Nov. 3, 1998 – [Constitutional Amendment](#)

Colorado voters approve Referendum C with a vote of 670,781 to 423,603, amending Article XX of the State Constitution “*concerning the creation of the city and county of Broomfield.*”

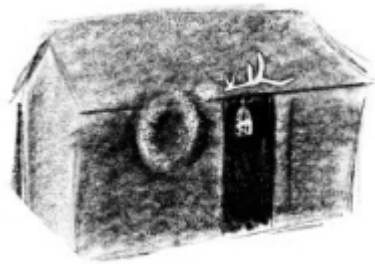
Nov. 15, 2001 – [Consolidation](#)

Broomfield officially becomes the 64th county and 2nd city & county in Colorado, and the newest county in the United States.

Homes of Yesterday



Buffalo-skin lodge, 1800s



Sod homestead, 1860s



Denver's [Four Mile House](#), 1859



[Cabin](#), 1894-1900



[Boulder County Poor Farm](#), late 1800s & early 1900s

Sketches by Maegan Dormish

Local Perspective

“A VIEW OF CONSOLIDATION”

An Aug. 9, 2021 interview with Linda Fahrenbruch

Tell me about your connection to Broomfield.

Well, I came to Broomfield in 1978. In 1991, I was elected to city council to represent Ward 5 residents and I served for 12 years (from 1991-2003). That was before term limits. I have remained active and involved.

What was your role during Broomfield’s transition from an incorporated city to a consolidated city and county?

The amendment to the state constitution, Referendum C, that allowed for Broomfield to consolidate into a city and county, passed in 1998.



Pictured in this photo are: Bottom row, from left – Tonya Haas, Kathy Brown; Second row – Colleen Stevenson, Kathy Anders, Karen Stuart and Linda Fahrenbruch; Top row – Joan Cox, Roxy Huber and Karen Beye. Source: *Broomfield Enterprise*, “Countdown to County” cover, July 25, 2001.

As a member of city council, I was one of a group of council members, city staff and community volunteers working on the campaign. Councilmember Larry Cooper was sort of the de facto head of the “Yes on C” campaign. We lobbied state legislators to put the referendum on the state ballot for the 1998 election. Because of Broomfield’s location in four counties (Adams, Boulder, Jefferson and Weld), services to the city were fractured and Broomfield residents were not benefitting locally from sales tax revenue in the form of services. For example, before consolidation, Broomfielders had to go to Brighton for Adams County business, Golden for Jeffco business, Greeley for Weld County, and Boulder for Boulder. The Broomfield Police Department (BPD) really had a hard time because they were constantly traveling outside Broomfield to other county seats for police business.

What were some of the challenges you faced in the consolidation process?

The main challenge was our lack of services and our need to bring services closer to home and control our own tax revenue. We discussed consolidating school districts, too, but that was dropped because of single-subject legislation restrictions [Taxpayer’s Bill of Rights, aka [TABOR](#) passed in 1992]. We knew that 15 cities in California had tried to consolidate and failed.

Counties have to build a detention center, which was originally planned to be built north of the Walnut Creek neighborhood, and those residents were very concerned. We held public hearings and just had to take our time to listen to and address their concerns.

Boulder County courts, which we initially thought we would join, were District 18. We ended up joining District 17 in Adams County. Then there was the need for a courthouse and we were also building a new library.

It really was our chance to reinvent our local government and to try to do things better.

Why do you think Broomfield's consolidation effort was successful, where so many others failed?

Leadership was a big part of it. At that time, George DiCiero was city manager, and Charlie Ozaki was assistant city manager. Hank Stovall and Al Jeffries were really helpful in envisioning and reinventing our local government. We had Karen Beye, who had been director of social services for the state, come here to help us design our Health and Human Services Department. Jennifer Hoffman worked on the consolidation of the courts. All these years, I've kept a copy of this Enterprise article "Countdown to County," about women in leadership in Broomfield at that time. That was a powerhouse group.

The other thing is our sense of community was really strong. It all goes back to community. We were all so fractured from a municipal border standpoint and we were annexing land. We asked ourselves, "How do we strengthen that core feeling?" You have to have people who are willing to fight for change. We were really in the middle of it. We were at the statehouse a lot.

Historically, Broomfield has had a strong core community. Back when Broomfield was first incorporated, guys came back from WWII looking for a place to build a home and those city "founders" took ownership and they worked together. Their wives started FISH. Some of those veterans served on the [USS Indianapolis](#), whose story was made into a movie. We have a memorial to it in the park across from the city offices. Some of those founding families included the Brunners and the Moyers and the Koziseks. It was those veterans who shepherded the community. They hired George [DiCiero], who is the reason we have good water!

And also, I'd say it required foresight. We focused on core facilities, started from scratch, and you figure things out as you go along. I remember our first wedding license, our first marriage certificate. One thing we did that was really smart, I think, was that a county sheriff is normally an elected position, responsible to voters, and doesn't report directly to the county manager. So, to remove a sheriff you have to have a vote of the people. We made a conscious decision to keep that position under the city manager. We also hired our assessor and county clerk instead of making those elected positions.

What do you see as Broomfield's biggest current challenges?

Things change and at the same time they haven't. Even back in 2001, affordable housing was an issue, not around consolidation, but just something in the community. That was the beginning of the housing boom, and I kept an Enterprise article about affordable housing from 2001. We have the same issues today.

I know there's fear out there regarding things like homelessness, and the mentality that "If you build it [affordable housing], they will come." This was really prevalent even when I was on council. I see [recent] social media posts and posts on the Broomfield Voice, where some negative comments are made. The thing for me is how important wraparound and supportive services are to help folks get back on their feet.

How has zoning affected Broomfield's current housing situation?

There was a definite tendency to zone for large single-family homes. I think it's crucial that we address zoning issues now. Our zoning has been "ca-chunk," where lots are smaller and houses are bigger, but that's not sustainable. And really, homeownership is how Americans get their foot in the door. It creates wealth. So why not consider things like tiny homes on slabs, to go along with wraparound services, combined water and sewer and utilities, and allow a rent-to-own option for people who are experiencing homelessness or housing instability. Some tiny homes are around 300-400 square feet and they offer a new kind of starter home and a sense of ownership, where parents can pass them down to their children. We've seen models in Detroit and other places that have innovative and unique designs. I think we really need to change our zoning to allow for smaller structures and more diversity in product type.

Most importantly, I still believe in the strength of our community, and how, by working together, we can come up with reasonable solutions.

Linda Fahrenbruch lives in Willow Park and is a member of the Broomfield chapter of [100 Women Who Care](#). She also serves as one of five commissioners of the newly independent Broomfield Housing Authority.

Local Perspective

“AS PERFECT AS MEN CAN CONCEIVE”

By David Allison

As World War II ended, Broomfield was a small, rural crossroads community of fewer than 200 souls. In 1955, however, the Broomfield Heights Association — led by a group of white businessmen from Denver — started building a planned suburban community along the Denver-Boulder Turnpike. Like many planned communities in the post-World War II era, Broomfield Heights was marketed to veterans and their families with home loan financing through either the Federal Housing Authority (FHA) or the Veterans Administration (VA). Marketed as “country living” in the “most perfectly planned community in America,” the Turnpike Land Company sought to attract middle- and upper-class Denverites longing to escape the rapidly changing city. An early marketing video from this era titled, “[Birth of a City](#),” solemnly intoned that Broomfield was destined to become a city that was, “as perfect as men can conceive.”



As Broomfield Heights grew to a population of nearly 6,000, evidence from editorials and articles in the *Broomfield Star-Builder* from 1960-1961 show that Broomfield residents fiercely debated the question of whether Broomfield should incorporate as a city or not. Broomfield had undergone significant change in a very short time. The first vote for incorporation as a city came in February of 1960 and failed by a scant three votes. The anti-incorporation faction was mostly opposed to the higher taxes that would ensue and argued that the town should be larger and have more businesses locally before it incorporated. One resident on the “con” side of the debate claimed that he thought that incorporation was a good idea, but that the time wasn’t right, so he urged his fellow citizens to vote the issue down.

Similarly, other north Denver suburbs debated incorporation and trajectory for development during the 1950s and ’60s. With disagreements over a range of issues, including water rights, annexations and commercial development opportunities, citizens in these towns developed their own unique identity and approach to city planning. Northglenn, which had been pinched by annexations initiated by neighboring Thornton and Westminster, positioned itself as a family-oriented, low-cost suburb with an anchor commercial center at the mall off the I-25 exit. Broomfield became known for its central location between Boulder and Denver and for its nostalgic, small-town feel.

Advocates for incorporation in Broomfield trumpeted the additional services that could be provided by an incorporated city. From the status afforded by incorporation to the services and infrastructure that would attract new business development, the pro-incorporation arguments were much more extensive. A letter to the editor from the “pro” side of the debate spoke to the importance of having resources and support for young people by providing a library, recreation facilities, and streets safeguarded by a police department.

On June 6, 1961, the vote came up again to incorporate. This time the pro-incorporation faction rallied support from the Jaycees civic group and also flooded the *Broomfield Star-Builder* with editorials and pleas to support the formation of Broomfield as a city. In another close tally, the motion to incorporate passed by only 23 votes and Broomfield began on its current path. After incorporation succeeded, the *Broomfield Star-Builder* headline read in bold type, “Incorporation Wins!” The victory was not without controversy, as opponents questioned the election results and complained that some ballots were improperly marked.

Despite these objections, the citizens of Broomfield quickly began to view themselves as a growing, thriving community—one that according to the 1960 census boasted the third-highest birth rate in the state and an even split between people aged 19 and older and children under the age of 19. A June 8, 1961, *Star-Builder* editorial perhaps said it best, “original Broomfield and Broomfield Heights...are one community, a thriving, happy, busy neighborly community of homes and vigorous young families. We like the census profile of our town. It sounds like just about the ideal place to live anywhere in the state of Colorado. But we already knew that, didn’t we?”

However, this seeming unity and ideal setting came at the cost of diversity and on the coattails of housing discrimination. The opportunity to buy a home in Broomfield Heights was not open to all people. During the 1950s, as institutional racism gripped American society, most Black individuals and families could not get an FHA loan. By 1959, less than 2 percent of new FHA-financed housing was available for Black families. Moreover, although housing discrimination was no longer baked into laws by the mid-1950s, the ongoing impact of redlining in Denver-area neighborhoods effectively prevented Black people from owning homes in suburban areas. Redlining was the practice of designating certain neighborhoods (with primarily minority-owned homes) more high-risk for offering loans than other neighborhoods. A 1962 document from the Broomfield Chamber of Commerce titled, “Facts about Broomfield,” lists population statistics for the town. A note underneath the statistics reads, “percentage of population that is native white—100%.”

As the community debated, some of those opposed to incorporation apparently used the threat of selling their homes to Black people as a way to intimidate pro-incorporation advocates. Broomfield Heights resident Marion Finn wrote in a Jan. 18, 1962, letter to

the editor of the *Broomfield Star-Builder*, “what happened to your...columnist who wrote about the ‘lady’ who called her neighbors to tell them how to vote [on the issue of Broomfield’s incorporation as a city] (if they did not vote for incorporation she would sell to colored people).”

In 1965—just three years later—as the Civil Rights Movement swept through the nation, an April 29 *Broomfield Star-Builder* editorial shared that a group of ministers in town had asked their parishioners what they would do if a home in Broomfield were sold to “a member of a minority race.” The description of the resulting fear and discontent from the congregants, speaks to Broomfield’s monolithic ethnic makeup and racial discontent at the time.

Broomfield continued on a demographically similar trajectory through the 1970s and ’80s, but slowly became more diverse due to the arrival of immigrants from Southeast Asia, as well as Asian-Americans and a growing Latinx population. These decades also saw zoning and affordable housing become difficult issues for the growing city to negotiate. As Broomfield experienced a surge in population growth in the 1990s, city leaders began to notice the difficulty of existing smack in the middle of four separate counties. Leading to the creation of the youngest county in the nation in 2001, Broomfield’s rise as a distinctive City and County revealed its ambitions and position as a burgeoning north-Denver suburb.

Today Broomfield seeks to be a welcoming, inclusive place for all people. We must change our definition of what it means to be, “as perfect as [we] can conceive” to uphold values of community connectivity, diversity and a dedication to social justice through treating people with dignity, respect and equity. While the history of Broomfield still echoes with racism and injustice, it is important for us to carve out a new route forward into a more equitable future.

*David Allison is the [museum coordinator](#) for the City and County of Broomfield. He edited and contributed to the book *Controversial Monuments and Memorials: A Guide for Community Leaders*, published by Rowman & Littlefield in 2018.*

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Local Perspective

“HOMECOMING”

A compilation of 2019-2021 conversations with Fred Mosqueda

What is the proper way to refer to your people?

Just use Hinono'eiteen which is “Arapaho Tribe.” That covers both the Southern and Northern Arapaho.

What do you call this part of Colorado's Front Range?

The Northern Arapaho did a map project in which they recognized Arapaho names for places in Colorado. Boulder is Héétoh-bíí3oonóó' or “Where it is steep”, and the Boulder area, including Broomfield, is Híí3einóón nít-bíí3i-hí-3i' hoh'éni' or “Buffaloes where they graze on the mountain.” But really, it's “home.”



When we lived in Colorado for many generations, we camped all along the Front Range, from Fort Collins to Colorado Springs. Arapahos often dispersed into smaller bands to make it easier for their horses to find forage, especially in the winter. That way each group would have fewer mouths to feed. A lot of times small family bands joined together to visit and members of different bands would get married. The Cheyennes are our allies. The U.S. government even put us together down here in Oklahoma on the reservation, but we are two different people with unique languages and cultures.

Who are some Arapaho people Broomfield readers should know about?

Hóusóó (Little Raven or Young Crow) was not a chief but was a respected Water Sprinkling Old Man of the Arapaho. He was an advisor to the chiefs and officiated all ceremonies for the tribe. He was the last to be called a priest and was also the leader of the Wóoxu'ei3i or Ugly Faces, which was the largest band of Southern Arapaho. When all the Plains tribes came together to sign the 1851 Treaty of Ft. Laramie, the U.S. government wanted all the tribes to name one head chief in charge of each tribe. No such individual existed, as all chiefs were equal, but the Indian agent picked Hóusóó as head chief, so he signed all the treaties for the Southern Arapaho from 1851 to 1867.

Hóusóó led the largest camp of the Ugly Faces. They wintered at the confluence of Cherry Creek and the South Platte, which is now downtown Denver. Niwothi (Left Hand) was a chief within the Ugly Faces, and his family band wintered in the Boulder area, near Valmont Butte. Another Ugly Faces family band, under the leadership of Hoxei Kookuteeneiht (Spotted Wolf), could have wintered in the Broomfield area. His

great-grandson is alive today, and is a Marine Corps veteran and also our oldest Arapaho chief in Oklahoma. And Rory Little Raven is my neighbor.

How is it that you have come to help tell the story of the Sand Creek Massacre?

Well, back in the '90s, there was research done on the site and the tribes got involved. And the U.S. government. When I was initially asked to serve as Sand Creek representative, I said "No," because we Arapahos don't do anything without our wife or sister or mother, and my mother told me, "We are Arapahos. Let them lie." Meaning the victims of the massacre, let them rest and don't bring up the terrible things that happened to them. But then our lieutenant governor came to me, and said, "They are leaving out a lot of things. Could we appoint you to go and see what they're doing?" More than 50 Arapahos were with Niwothi there, peacefully camped near the larger Cheyenne camps, on Nov. 29, 1864. Only a handful of Arapahos survived the soldiers' attack.

We tell those stories. My friend Henry Littlebird tells about Tom Whiteshirt, a little Arapaho boy who soldiers found hiding inside a camp stove after the massacre. John Antonelli and his mother, Sandy, tell the story of Jabene, a young girl who helped her 4-year-old little brother, Mixed Hair, escape. We still have one elder, Eldridge Poisal, who is the descendant of Left Hand's sister Mahom (Snake Woman) and John Poisal, a white trader. The Poisals are a huge family today.

Until [Gov. Jared] Polis officially rescinded it on Aug. 17, 2021, that second [1864] proclamation of [Colorado territorial governor] John Evans was still on the books. You could still have used it to legally justify killing an Indian in Colorado.

For many years now, other [Native] representatives and I have been meeting with leaders in Colorado. In Boulder, Estes Park, Colorado Springs, Broomfield, Longmont, to re-establish connections with the land, raise awareness about our full history, and build new partnerships. A lot of our stories are still tied to Colorado because our ancestors are buried there. We have songs for everything, too, and we put them in our language.

We did not come to Oklahoma by choice. It's important to have our elders visit Colorado and sit and listen and pray, because when they come back to Oklahoma they can tell our people. If you really think about it, it's bringing them home when they go to the Front Range. That's the way we feel as Arapahos when we get there. It's a good thing, because people see us, and even though we wear blue jeans and boots, we're still going to speak the same language that was spoken there in the 1800s. We still sing the same songs that were sung back then, in the same language. It's a healing process.

Fred Mosqueda serves as the Sand Creek Massacre Representative for the Southern Arapaho people. Fred and I met in 2019 during Boulder's Indigenous Peoples' Day celebration. He lives with his family in Geary, Okla.

PART 2

BROOMFIELD

TODAY



“No. 18, Broomfield, Colorado”,
[“The Best Places to Live in America,”](#)

Money’s Best 2020, Money.com

Rankings are nice, but sometimes they don't tell the full story. For example, "[Money's Best 2020](#)" nationwide ranking methodology accounted for:

- *Housing Distress* — "both as a result of COVID-19 economic disruptions; and demographics, to ensure locations we picked were racially diverse and well-integrated."
- *Housing Market* — "based on measures of housing affordability, supply and demand, and housing problems like overcrowding or overspending."
- *Cost of Living* — "based on tax rates, insurance costs, cost of owning a house, cost of renting, and an index that considers everyday expenses including transportation."

If, after incorporating the above metrics, Broomfield still deserves [Money's ranking as the No. 18](#) best place to live in America, then...wow!

It's not that Broomfield isn't a [great place](#) to live. (U.S. News & World Report and the Aetna Foundation also ranked Broomfield County highly. According to their "[Healthiest Communities 2021](#)" report, Broomfield is the 5th-healthiest county in the country according to measures that include community vitality, housing, education, equity, population, infrastructure, food and nutrition, and the local economy and environment.) It's just that we're also in the midst of an [ongoing housing crisis](#) here. Too many professionals who work here can't afford to live here. Many families who live here either can't afford to stay here or can't afford to move. Some retirees can't afford to sell because their livelihood depends on rental income from one or two local properties. Others couldn't afford to buy their own residence at today's prices. If they had to move and needed to stay in Broomfield the only properties available to them would be foreclosures. At the same time, "market-rate" rent hikes further stretch the already thin financial margins of many families who lease their home.

These unsettling dynamics are not unique to Broomfield. Similar scenarios play out every day all over the Front Range. In fact, Colorado ranks as the No. 1 most *unaffordable* state in the nation for seniors, according to [a Sept. 26, 2021, article](#) in *The Denver Post*. Not since the Front Range's Native residents were forcibly displaced in the 1860s has local housing been as distressed as it is today.



In “Broomfield Today,” I examine Broomfield’s housing spectrum through three interconnected lenses:

- “Neighborhood Ecology” — *How we relate to and rely on each other and the world around us*
 - Air, Land & Water
 - Demographics
 - Basic Needs
 - Build Out
 - *Local Perspectives*
- “Household Wealth” — *Where we live and how we sustain our lives and livelihoods*
 - Glossary
 - Residences
 - Income
 - *Local Perspectives*
- “Hometown Life” --- *How our places of residence become our homes*
 - Policy
 - Health
 - Safety
 - *Local Perspectives*

Five Digits of Separation

Broomfield is one of only five so-named towns worldwide. The others are one civil township in Isabella County, Mich., and three villages in the United Kingdom. All Broomfield, Colo., addresses reside in one of the following postal zip codes, which we share with other Colorado and worldwide communities:

80020

Curitiba, Paraná, Brazil
Parnu, Estonia
Hauts-De-France, Somme, France
Sinaloa, México
Campania, Napoli, Italy
Osmaniye, Turkey
Lvivska, Ukraine

80021

Parnu, Estonia
Hauts-De-France, Somme, France
Campania, Napoli, Italy
Gdansk, Poland
Lvivska, Ukraine

80023

Parnu, Estonia
Hauts-De-France, Somme, France
Campania, Napoli, Italy
Lvivska, Ukraine

80026

Lafayette, Colorado
Parnu, Estonia
Hauts-De-France, Somme, France
Campania, Napoli, Italy
Sinaloa, México
Gdansk, Poland
Lvivska, Ukraine

80027

Louisville, Colorado
Parnu, Estonia
Hauts-De-France, Somme, France
Campania, Napoli, Italy
Sinaloa, México
Gdansk, Poland
Lvivska, Ukraine

80234

Denver, Colorado
Westminster, Colorado
Šiaulių Apskritis, Lithuania
Lvivska, Ukraine

80516

Erie, Colorado
Gdansk, Poland

Sources: Wikipedia, "[Broomfield, Colorado](#)", "[Broomfield Township, Michigan](#)," "[Broomfield, Essex](#)" and "[Broomfield, Maidstone](#)"; [WorldPostalCode.com](#).

“Neighborhood Ecology”

How we relate to and rely on each other and the world around us



Air, Land & Water | Demographics | Basic Needs | Build Out

Local Perspectives



Key Points

Our limited supply of natural resources underlines the importance of responsible stewardship.

- Broomfield continues to grow, age and become more diverse.
- The basic-needs-related challenges facing local residents regularly overwhelm the resources available to meet them.
- We have less than a generation to find some middle ground regarding “buildout.”

“Remember the sky that you were born under,
 know each of the star’s stories.
 Remember the moon, know who she is.
 Remember the sun’s birth at dawn, that is the
 strongest point of time. Remember sundown
 and the giving away to night...
 Remember the wind. Remember her voice. She knows the
 origin of this universe...
 Remember all is in motion, is growing, is you.
 Remember language comes from this.
 Remember the dance language is, that life is.
 Remember.”

Excerpt from “[Remember](#)” by [Joy Harjo](#), poet laureate of the
 United States, 2019-present



[According to Wikipedia](#), the English word “ecology” comes from two Greek words: “οἶκος” (house) and “-λογία” (the study of). The root “οἶκος” refers here to the spaces shared by all life, including human beings. The title “neighborhood ecology” incorporates our common division for local spaces into our relationships with each other and with the resources we rely on and share here in Broomfield.

As 21st-century Broomfield citizens, we often take modern amenities for granted, such as stocked grocery shelves, prompt package deliveries, reliable WIFI signals, clean water and ready electrical power. Technology so mediates our lives, in fact, that we often fail to recognize the more foundational sources of our communal wealth. It is nothing less than a marvel that we’re still able to rely on the same energy sources as the First Peoples who called this place home thousands of years ago: the sun, the moon, the wind, the seasons.

The very reliability and longevity of these great cosmological givens point to perhaps the central ongoing concern of every human community including ours: sustainability. How do we sustain our lives here — ecologically, environmentally, socially, culturally, economically, vibrantly — in the days, months, years and generations ahead?

Broomfield Basics

Elevation	5,420 feet
Elevation Range	5,096-5,856 feet
Elevation Gain/Loss	760 feet
Total Land & Water	21,471 acres (33.548 square miles)
Total Water	371 acres (0.58 square miles)
Total Land	21,100 acres (32.968 square miles)
Total County Planning Area^	24,043 acres
Current Open Space: 35.1%^	8,439 acres
Future Open Space Goal: 40%^	9,617 acres
Remaining Open Space Goal: 4.9%	1,178 acres
Current Trails	316 miles

Sources: City and County of Broomfield, [“Open Space & Trails”](#) and [“Maps & Statistics”](#); Wikipedia, [“Broomfield, Colorado”](#); and Topographic-Map.com, [“Broomfield Colorado.”](#)

^Includes land governed by a Broomfield County/Boulder County Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA).

AIR, LAND & WATER

Smoke has been an unpleasant constant in Broomfield for the last two summers. Unprecedented fires in Western [Colorado](#) in 2020 and in [California](#) and other Western states in 2021 often obscured our visibility and polluted the air we breathed. Our local air quality suffered to the point that residents were temporarily encouraged not to leave their homes and to [wear masks](#) to protect their normal breathing. (As if the SARS-CoV-2 “COVID” pandemic wasn’t enough reason to wear a mask!) On Aug. 7, in fact, [local media](#) confirmed the Denver area’s dubious honor of recording the highest global air pollution [rating](#) for the day. As in, No. 1 worst air quality anywhere in the world.

Clean air is, literally, life. Polluted air correlates to all kinds of bad things: sick days, poor health, birth defects and psychological distress, as residents of nearby [Commerce City](#) know all too well. Of course, Broomfield residents in Wildgrass and elsewhere are no stranger to air pollution, either, as fossil fuel spudding, drilling, fracking and production have been happening off and on in their backyards for years. (At least we can be thankful that defunct area coal mines haven’t been reopened.) That our air quality depends in part on local [regulations](#), wildfire [mitigation](#), safe [campfire](#) practices and forest [management](#) many miles from here is, like the air in Wildgrass for too long and like the air in all of Broomfield too often last summer, truly staggering.

Local and regional air quality also depends on the extent of seasonal allergens and emissions from industry, utilities and traffic. State and federal pollution-reduction [legislation](#) since the '70s has helped mitigate our “Brown Cloud” reputation, but with few feasible public transportation options and low-emission, battery-powered vehicles still relatively [expensive](#), the majority of Broomfield residents still drive gasoline-powered, carbon-monoxide-emitting automobiles.

It doesn't help that only 14.1 percent of Broomfielders currently live and work here, according to a CCOB transportation [webpage](#), accessed in late 2021. The rest commute to Denver, Boulder and other metro-area cities. These and other factors, like troubling summer 2021 ozone readings, prompted the World Health Organization to join area scientists and environmental groups in pushing for more stringent air pollution-restriction [policies](#) in Front Range counties.

A 2020 University of Colorado Denver (UCD) inventory of local greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, provided Broomfield's Advisory Committee on Environmental Sustainability (ACES) with a basis from which to develop emissions reduction plans. The UCD analysis showed the largest proportion of our emissions come from the transportation sector (42 percent), mostly due to single-occupancy vehicle travel, commercial and institutional buildings (26 percent), and residential buildings (17 percent). Data also showed Broomfield residents spend approximately 53 percent of their household income on housing and transportation, suggesting programs and policies emphasizing sustainability could save local families money.

In September 2020, Broomfield's city council adopted GHG reduction and zero waste targets. By 2050:

- Reduce community-wide GHGs by 90 percent and municipal GHGs by 100 percent, and,
- Achieve 50 percent diversion from the city landfill by 2025 and 100 percent diversion by 2035. Camille Pollan's [CCOB summary of these efforts](#) contains perhaps my all-time favorite editorial comment from an official report — in a graphic emphasizing our 2035 diversion-rate goal, below a large-type-size “100%,” it says in smaller letters and I quote, “(or Darn Near!)”.

Colorado Public Radio's Nathaniel Minor [reported](#) last Dec. 16 that a new rule approved by the Colorado Transportation Commission “could shift some \$6.7 billion by 2050 toward public transit, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, construction emission reduction, and other environmentally friendly strategies” and “incentivize local governments toward more efficient land use, with denser housing and commercial developments that require less travel.” Shorter commutes? Better public transportation options? Better live-work balance? Yes, please. How much simpler, safer and healthier would

our lives and environment become if our office, school, gym, grocery store, post office and hardware store, as well as our favorite bakeries, coffee shops, restaurants and pubs, were just a short walk, bike ride or low-emissions bus trip away!

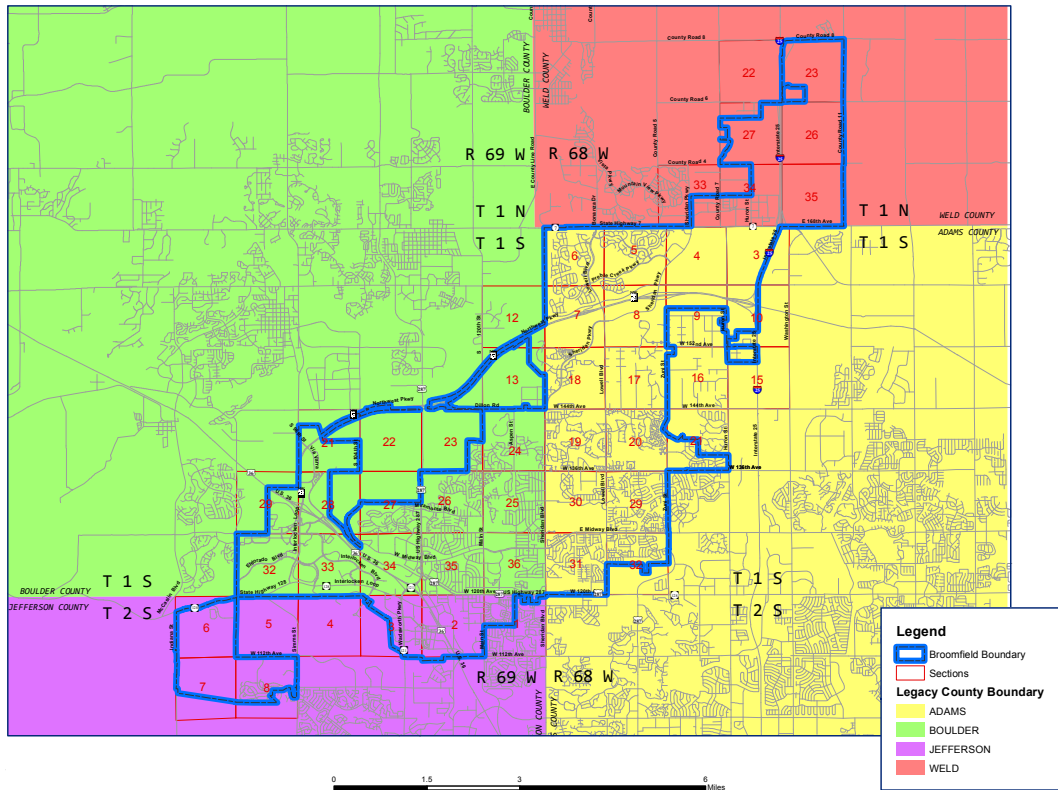
Commute

For Workers 16 Years and Over in Households	2009 Population	2009 % of Population	2019 Population	2019 % of Population	Change
Car, truck or van - drove alone	22,574	77.3	28,536	75.1	-2.2%
Car, truck or van - carpooled	2,552	8.7	2,633	6.9	-1.8%
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	1,334	4.6	1,692	4.4	-0.2%
Walked	399	1.4	404	1.0	-0.4%
Taxicab, motorcycle, bicycle, or other means	588	1.9	668	1.8	-0.1%
Worked at home	1,785	6.1	*4,083	*10.8	+4.7%
Total	29,202	100.0	37,971	100.0	—
Average travel time to work	27.7 minutes	—	*30-34 minutes	—	*+2.3-6.3 minutes

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 ACS Estimates, Broomfield County, Colorado, “Means Of Transportation To Work” and 2019 ACS Estimates, Broomfield County, Colorado, [“Means Of Transportation To Work By Vehicles Available”](#) and [“Travel Time To Work.”](#)

*Very likely, the number and percentage of Broomfielders working from home increased significantly during the last two years due to the COVID pandemic and the pervasiveness of households paying for high-speed home Internet.

Broomfield Legacy County Boundaries Map



Source: [City & County of Broomfield](#)

Broomfield's land now totals 21,471 acres east of the Northern Front Range and its most notable landmark 14,259-foot Long's Peak — known in Arapaho, with its sister peak Mt. Meeker, as [Nenĩisótoyóúu](#) (Two Guides). We are Colorado's [smallest](#) county by area and the fifth smallest county in the entire United States. Our borders connect us to four adjacent counties — Boulder, Weld, Adams and Jefferson — and seven neighboring municipalities — Lafayette, Erie, Thornton, Northglenn, Westminster, Arvada, Superior and Louisville.

As with most other modern communities, we do not cultivate or possess within our geographical boundaries the food or supplies we need to live, let alone thrive. Our limited acreage, natural resources and modes of production make our reliance on intercounty, interstate and international partnerships even more pronounced. In other words, Broomfield is a dependent community, not a self-sufficient one.

Still, the land on which we reside is, like clean air, literally, life. As any farmer knows, land is fine-tuned to its climate and conditions. It needs careful consideration and attention. It nurtures seeds sown within its soil (although little Broomfield land remains

devoted to farming). It rests in the winter, flowers in the spring, grows in the summer and colorizes in the fall, yet it's easily polluted, as at Rocky Flats and in Commerce City and elsewhere in our region. The Marshall Fire taught us how sensitive and susceptible our [land](#) is to extreme weather even in December and even in [suburbia](#).

Our primary terrain feature, a continuous ridgeline flanked by two local creek systems, extends like an index finger from hints of foothills in the southwest to little-developed prairie in the northeast. In between, our growing network of parks, trails and open spaces enhances our quality of life, preserves our spectacular views of the Front Range and attracts new residents and businesses to our community.

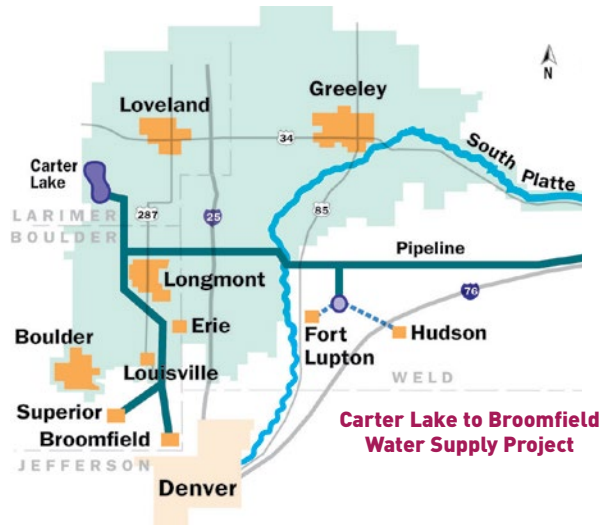
That network hasn't always existed though. It needed concerted citizen advocacy to take root, as Daniel Ziskin's YouTube [video](#) "Broomfield Open Space Foundation History" attests. The first attempt to institute the quarter-percent sales tax that still sustains local open spaces failed by 28 votes in 1993. Its companion measure passed, authorizing the city to buy what is now The Field Open Space northeast of the Main Street and Midway Avenue intersection. However, since the property purchase required the tax, volunteer resident-supporters had no other choice but to redouble their efforts through a subsequent door-to-door "Yes" campaign. It succeeded in November 1994, and Broomfield formally purchased "The Field" for \$4.6 million on April 4, 1997.

"The whole history of Broomfield was different from that point," says Linda Fahrenbruch, whose perspective on consolidation can be found on p. 30. In the early 2000s, thanks to sales tax revenue gleaned from residents and other stakeholders, Broomfield purchased 10 open-space-designated properties, including Metzger Farm and Wottge Open Space. As Linda recalls it, "Broomfield has always led the way and we've never been shy about taking an uncharted path."

"[Open Lands](#)," including open spaces and parks, accounted for 35.1 percent of the total Broomfield County Planning Area as of January 2021. The CCOB hopes to reach its 40-percent open-lands goal by acquiring 1,178 more intra-county acres through land purchases, conservation easements, joint acquisitions and private-sector dedications. "Public or Quasi Public" land — including the library, government offices, community centers, schools, fire stations and churches — accounts for another 2 percent of our planning area, according to the CCOB's [2016 Comprehensive Plan](#). That means, at this point, about 62.9 percent of Broomfield's total land is privately owned.



Like clean air and healthy land, safe water, too, is life. (I know, I'm starting to sound like [Ted Lasso's](#) Dani Rojas, played by Cristo Fernández — "Fútbol is life!") We can live without yellow gold, the mineral. We're learning to live without oil, which is sometimes referred to as "black gold." But we literally cannot live without the "blue gold" of water, either individually or collectively. It's a basic ingredient to all life. Ever since the United States set its sights on the West, local water has been fought over, by miners and settlers, by farmers and ranchers, by urban centers and rural communities, by business concerns and local [residents](#), and by upstream, high-elevation states and [downstream](#), low-elevation states.



Source: [2020 Water Quality Report](#).

If we modern Broomfielders think of water at all it's likely as the clear stuff that comes out of our showerheads and faucets and garden hoses, as if out of thin air. Precipitation-laden storm systems help replenish local water tables, of course, which in turn affects our soil and the structural foundations of our homes, but our main water supply comes from elsewhere. Or, in our case, multiple somewheres. According to the CCOB [website](#), 40 percent of Broomfield's main water supply is treated water purchased from Denver Water, and [60 percent](#) is raw water from high country snowmelt and the headwaters of the Colorado and Fraser rivers west of the Continental Divide. During high river flows, the [Windy Gap](#) and [Colorado-Big Thompson](#) (C-BT) regional infrastructure projects divert water through a series of pipelines and storage reservoirs to taps in Broomfield and other Front Range communities.

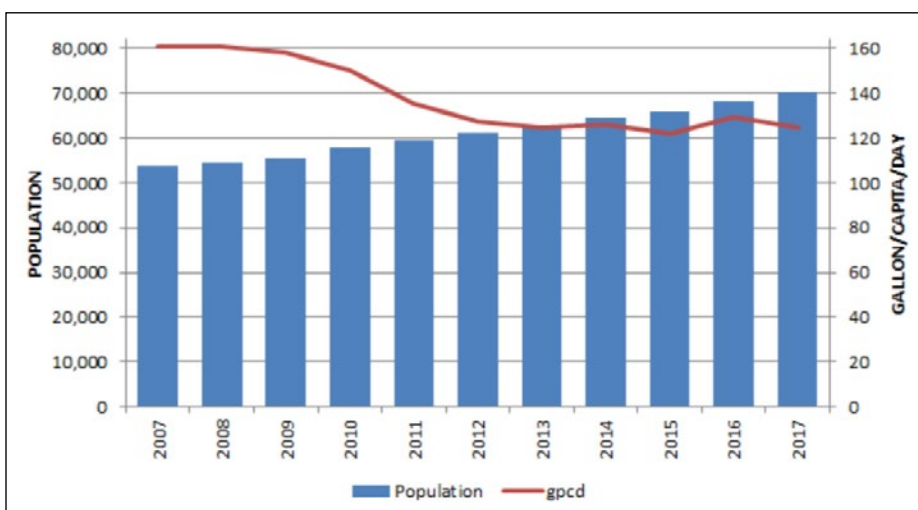
An Oct. 20, 2021, [article](#) in *The Colorado Sun* highlights how prolonged, drought-caused, below-average precipitation years along the Colorado River Basin increase "pressure on Colorado to conserve water immediately to avoid future demands from down-river states." Bad water years threaten Colorado's legal allocation of water, 80-85 percent of which is used for agriculture, but interstate water compacts still require us and other upstream states to deliver millions of acre-feet of water each year into Lake Powell for agriculture and cities in Nevada, Arizona and California. If recent weather patterns continue and more and more people tap into less and less available "blue gold," our region could be headed for mandatory [rationing](#), water shares reduction and stakeholder litigation.

Here at home, tiny streams like Buffalo Gulch, Quail Creek and Community Ditch connect ponds and reservoirs within our neighborhoods and open spaces to the waterways that geographically bracket Broomfield — Rock Creek and Coal Creek to the north and Big Dry Creek to the south. They, in turn, eventually join the larger tributaries of the [South Platte River](#) watershed, which flows generally north and east from the Continental Divide into the Northern Front Range area and eventually into the Missouri and Mississippi rivers.

While local watercourses run on the inconspicuous side compared to, say, the wide languid rivers of the Midwest, they are prone to fierce, periodic flooding. Flash floods hit parts of what is now the Front Range in 1864, 1876, 1885, 1894, 1904, 1921, 1938, 1951, 1955, 1956, 1965, 1969, 1976 and 1997, according to Nolan Doesken’s March 2007 [presentation](#) “Climatological Perspectives on Flooding in Colorado.”

Then, there was [2013](#). As Jennifer Sage recalls in her column “Mud, Sweat and Tears” on p. 70, the [Sept. 11-17](#), 2013, rains that swelled regional drainages destroyed properties both in and beyond recognized floodplains. They also killed eight people, displaced and destabilized hundreds of families, and caused an estimated \$1 billion in damage. While Broomfield itself was only marginally affected, the floods’ proximity and extent prompted local leaders to create Broomfield Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster ([VOAD](#)) in 2014. It’s now led by Karen Steele, Carina Martin, Dave and Sarah Little and other local stakeholders, including Refuge co-pastor Kathy Escobar. Its purpose: to prepare local agencies, faith communities and non-profits for future crises and mobilize them in partnership with the CCOB, if and when they’re needed.

Gallons per Capita per Day



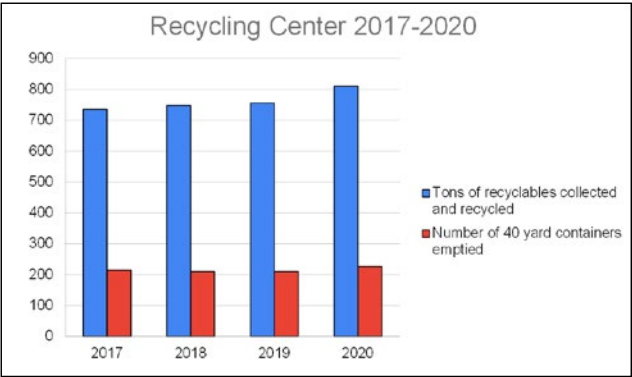
Source: [2020 Broomfield Water Efficiency Plan](#), p. 19, City and County of Broomfield. Last year, the CCOB completed phase-three [expansion](#) of its main water treatment facility on 144th Avenue.

Recycling

	2017	2018	2019	2020
Tons collected/recycled at Recycling Center	736.18	748.54	756.65	810.42
Number of 40 yard containers emptied	215	210	210	227

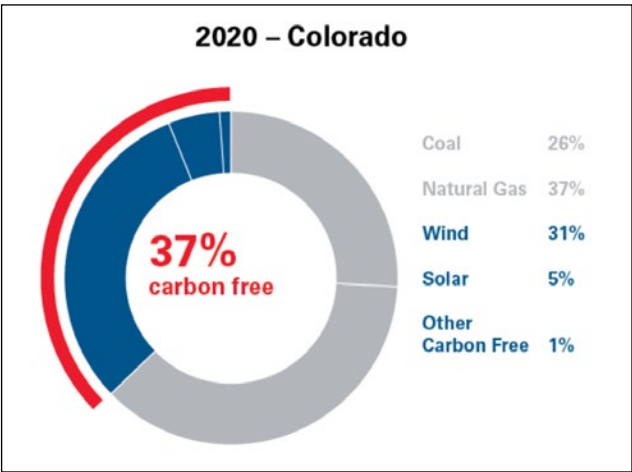
In 2020, the recycling center saw an increase of cardboard recycling from 276.64 tons in 2019 to 358.1 tons in 2020. That is an increase of 29%.

Source: Lesa Julian, superintendent, Environmental Services, City and County of Broomfield.



Source: “[Power Generation Energy Portfolio](#)” for Colorado, Xcel Energy.

Note: Some Broomfield customers receive electricity from United Power.



DEMOGRAPHICS

I can think of no better introduction to this important sub-section than the following quote from Kentucky farmer-essayist-poet Wendell Berry’s 2012 Jefferson [Lecture](#) in the Humanities, “It All Turns On Affection”: “...Imagination thrives on contact, on tangible connection. For humans to have a responsible relationship to the world, they must imagine their places in it. To have a place, to live and belong in a place, to live from a place without destroying it, we must imagine it. By imagination, we see it illuminated by its own unique character and by our love for it. By imagination, we recognize with sympathy the fellow members, human and nonhuman, with whom we share our place.

By that local experience, we see the need to grant a sort of preemptive sympathy to all the fellow members, the neighbors, with whom we share the world. As imagination enables sympathy, sympathy enables affection.”

The nonhuman members of our community to which Berry refers are many. Our native shortgrass prairie [ecosystem](#), for example, boasts blue grama, buffalo grass, sweetgrass, wheatgrass, wildflowers and chokecherry bushes. Our neighborhoods host native and non-native trees; swallowtails, stoneflies and bumblebees; resident mallards, hawks, blackbirds and chickadees; and Canada geese and American pelicans, who have second homes elsewhere. Our flood mitigation, irrigation and storage reservoirs (Brunner, Glasser, Le Gault, Plaster, Siena, Tom Frost) and ponds (Ellie’s, Josh’s and Metzger’s) also serve as nature reserves for waterfowl and various stocked freshwater fish. The massive wild buffalo herds that trekked across the Front Range before U.S. settlement are long gone, but our open spaces and trails still serve as wildlife corridors and habitat for prairie dogs, rabbits, squirrels, chipmunks, skunks, raccoons, muskrats, bats, foxes, coyotes, and an [occasional elk](#), deer or moose. Gardeners still grow crops and small-scale farmers still raise non-native domesticated livestock (cattle, horses, goats, pigs, sheep and chickens). And, of course, many households care for family pets (and vice versa).

As for Broomfield’s human residents, the 2020 U.S. Census counted 74,112 of us. Relative to the population of other communities in our region, Broomfield isn’t very large, but relative to 1945, our population has exploded. Between 1945 and 2020 we grew by 8.2 percent per year.

Broomfield is one of six counties comprising the greater Denver Metro Area — home to 2,905,164 people or just over half the population of our state. We are second only to Denver as the most densely populated county in Colorado. At the same time, at 2,248 people per square mile, Broomfield is the second least densely populated among adjacent municipalities.

Demographics do more than tally things. They reflect aspects of our personal and community distinctness. It is no small thing to be counted or to feel as if we count.

- *Where we were born* — The 2019 American Community Survey estimated just over 9 out of every 10 Broomfield residents to be “Native Born” in Colorado, another U.S. state, Puerto Rico, U.S. Island areas, or born abroad to an American parent or parents. Half of us were born in other states, while less than 40 percent were born here in Colorado. Just over half of local residents born outside the United States entered the country in 2000 or before. Three in 5 of those born outside the United States are naturalized citizens. About 1 in 25 Broomfielders are non-U.S. citizens.

Colorado and Denver Metro Area communities like ours have lately been at the forefront of welcoming displaced-asylum-seeker-immigrant-newcomers in need, as my introductory anecdote on p. 9 illustrates. This is Broomfield at its collective best, embodying the famous phrases of Emma Lazarus's 1883 [ode](#) to the Statue of Liberty:

“Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free...
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”

- *How long we've been alive* — Our community continues to age. As of 2020, the median Broomfield resident was 36.7 years old, a slight increase from 2010 and a significant increase from 1990. (I take some consolation from not being alone in graduating from the “25 to 44” demographic to the “45 to 64” one.) Broomfield shows marked decreases in our under-30 percentages and noticeable increases in our over-60 population.
- *Who served in the armed forces* — An estimated 7.1 percent of Broomfield's 2020 civilian population have spent time on active duty in the armed services.
- *How we self-identify* — As in 2000 and 2010, the U.S. Census Bureau adjusted its 2020 categories quantifying race and ethnicity. “Asian alone” was added as a distinct category. Those who identify as “Hispanic or Latino” were counted separately from the “Race” category. Previous counts combined “Asian” and “Pacific Islander” in one category, but the 2020 Census categorized “Native Hawaiian” with “Other Pacific Islander.” Whereas in 1990 approximately 19 of every 20 Broomfield residents identified as “White,” only about 15 of every 20 identified as “White alone” in 2020. That means almost 1 of every 4 residents identified as “American Indian/Native Alaskan,” “Asian alone,” “Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander alone,” “Black/African American alone,” “Hispanic or Latino alone,” “Some Other Race alone” or “Two or More Races.” Broomfield isn't 100 percent “native white” like in 1962, but we're not exactly swimming in racial and ethnic diversity when three-quarters of our population still identify as “White alone.”

In its 2020 count, the Census Bureau followed its practice since 1790 by asking whether respondents identified as “male” or “female,” and listing those two identities under “Sex.” Hopefully, future decennial efforts will mirror recent re-categorizations of race and ethnicity by integrating more gender-sensitive categories and choices.

Other aspects of our human distinctness are absent or under-reported in official census measures. For instance, [Gallup.com](#) reported on March 29, 2021,

that 47 percent of adults nationwide belonged to a church, synagogue or mosque. I would say our local percentage is even lower than that. What's more, while Broomfield is home to dozens of churches from different streams of the Christian faith, as far as I'm aware Broomfield is not yet home to any formal, non-Christian faith communities. The nearest Jewish congregations and Buddhist temple are located in Westminster, the nearest Islamic center is in Northglenn, and the nearest Hindu temple is in Brighton, not to mention other faith communities farther afield.

- *What our physical or other limitations are* — Our percentages of residents with disabilities increase as we age. Additionally, Broomfielders with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their family members often struggle to maintain adequate housing and caregiving support. Enhanced census specificity could make new funding available to them.
- *What language we speak at home* — We human beings routinely celebrate a toddler's first spoken or signed word, because we intuitively know language as a crucial purveyor of knowledge and reality. The p. 61 table entitled, "Languages" estimates the percentages of human languages spoken locally, but Broomfield's Emerald Elementary School is home to both "the Dragons" and my favorite linguistically-related metrics of diversity. According to Emerald's principal Samara Williams, as of Sept. 29, 2021, her students' countries of origin include: Chile, China, El Salvador, England, Ghana, Honduras, Kuwait, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Venezuela, Saudi Arabia and the United States. The list of the languages students and their family members speak at home include: Arabic, Chinese, Darjla, English, French, five dialects from India, Nepalese, Spanish and Twi.

The top three most common non-English languages spoken by Broomfielders are Spanish, Chinese (including Mandarin and Cantonese), and Vietnamese. Although they represent 3 of every 25 residents, non-English speakers and first-generation immigrants, especially, often lack awareness of and access to local networks and resources. We can say, "They need to learn English," but as Emily Hutton of the Image Restoration Center [observes](#), from the founding of the United States on, adult, non-English-speaking immigrants have tended to maintain their native language and culture, and have relied on their children or younger relatives to interpret the English language and U.S. culture for them.

Last October, I attended several online Indigenous Peoples' Day seminars led by elder Arapaho language speakers. Their wealth of Arapaho stories and phrases handed down to them by their own grandparents and great-grandparents revealed to me and my fellow Zoom participants how deeply their language reflects their

culture, history, wisdom, values, and even their very identity as a people. American English fills a similar, although perhaps less all-embracing, role for the majority culture in the United States, Colorado and Broomfield.

Technically speaking, our primary language branched out from the Germanic tree, but Owen Barfield's *History in English Words* shows how heavily it's been influenced by Norman French and other non-Germanic languages. We speak English because the already inhabited eastern seaboard of what many Indigenous people still refer to as "Turtle Island," was primarily colonized by England and English immigrants, and because England outmaneuvered its main rivals, France and Spain, for control of what later became the continental United States. English has, since the latter half of the last century, largely superseded other imperially driven, "world-wide" languages, such as French, Latin and Greek, as well as other more regional dynastic and nationalistic languages, such as Mandarin and German.

Municipal Density (2020)

City	Population	People/Square Mile
Broomfield	74,112	2,248
Lafayette	24,453	3,331
Erie	30,038	1,522
Thornton	141,867	3,949
Northglenn	38,608	5,281
Westminster	116,317	3,683
Arvada	124,402	3,197
Superior	12,483	3,332
Louisville	18,376	2,617
Boulder	108,250	4,112
Ft. Collins	169,810	2,968
Denver	715,522	4,674
Miami, Fla.	442,241	12,286

Source: [Wikipedia](#) and [Colorado Demographic Profiles](#).

CENSUS

Since WWII

Year	Population	Annual Growth Rate (%)
1945	<200	22.1
1960	4,000	6.14
1970	7,261	11.06
1980	20,730	1.74
1990	24,638	4.50
2000	38,272	3.86
2010	55,889	2.86
2020	74,112	—

Average annual growth rate = 8.2%:
Total Growth Rate = 36,956%

Sources: “As Perfect as Men Can Conceive” by David Allison, p. 33; Colorado Department of Local Affairs, [Historical Census Lookup](#); Calculator Academy, [Percent Growth Calculator](#).

Population in 2020

USA	331,449,281
Colorado	5,773,714
Denver Metro Area	2,905,164
Broomfield	74,112

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, [Geography Profile, Colorado](#) and [Geography Profile, USA](#). The Denver Metro Area total includes [Wikipedia](#) 2020 population numbers from Adams, Arapahoe, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas and Jefferson counties.

County Density (2020)

County	Population	People/Square Mile
Broomfield	74,112	2,248
Boulder	330,758	460
Weld	328,981	83
Adams	519,572	445
Jefferson	582,910	763
Denver	715,522	4,674

Source: [Wikipedia](#).

Place of Birth - U.S.A.

	2009	2019	2009-2019
Location	% of total population	% of total population	change (+/-)
"Native" Born	91.8	91.1	-0.7
In Puerto Rico, U.S. Island areas, or born abroad to American parent(s)	0.6	1.3	+0.7
In Different State	51.2	50.6	-0.6
In Colorado	40.6	39.1	-1.5
"Foreign Born" outside the United States	7.6	8.6	+1.0

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, [2009 Social Data profile](#) and 2019 ACS Estimate, Broomfield County, Colorado, ["Place of Birth For The Foreign-Born Population in the United States."](#) These estimated percentages do not quite add up to 100.

Place of Birth - Elsewhere

	2009	2009	2019	2019	2009-2019
	Population	% of Total Foreign-born Population	Population	% of Total Foreign-born Population	% Change as Proportion of Population
Naturalized U.S. citizen	1,712	41.0	3,573	59.0	+18.0
Non-U.S. citizen	2,468	59.0	2,482	41.0	-18.0
Entered 2010-2019	–	–	1,072	17.7	–
Entered 2000-2009	916	21.9	1,892	31.2	+9.3
Entered 2000 or before	3,264	78.1	3,090	51.1	-27.0
Total foreign-born population	4,180	100	6,055	100	–

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, [2009 Social Data profile](#); [Census - Table Results](#) 2019 ACS Estimate, Broomfield County, Colorado, "Place of Birth By Year Of Entry By Citizenship Status For the Foreign-Born Population."

Age

	1990, % of Total	2000, % of Total	2010, % of Total	2020, % of Total	% Change as Proportion of Population, 1990-2020
Under 5	8.6	7.8	7.1	4.8	-3.8
5-9	9.4	8.3	7.8	5.5	-3.9
10-14	8.3	8.5	7.2	6.4	-1.9
15-19	7.4	7.1	6.3	6.6	-0.8
20-24	5.6	5.4	5.6	5.8	+0.2
25-29	19.9	16.2	6.5	8.0	-11.9
30-34	Combined w/ above	Combined w/ above	7.4	8.4	+1.0
35-39	18.9	20.1	8.0	7.4	-0.6
40-44	Combined w/ above	Combined w/ above	8.0	6.8	-1.2
45-49	10.0	13.9	8.0	6.6	-1.4
50-54	Combined w/ above	Combined w/ above	7.4	6.1	-1.3
55-59	3.5	3.7	6.0	5.7	-0.3
60-64	3.2	2.5	4.8	5.1	+0.3
65-69	3.7	4.1	3.3	4.9	+1.6
70-74	Combined w/ above	Combined w/ above	2.3	4.2	+1.9
75-79	1.4	2.1	1.8	3.2	+1.4
80-84	Combined w/ above	Combined w/ above	1.4	2.4	+1.0
85 and over	0.3	0.4	1.1	2.1	+1.0
Median Age	30.9	33.3	36.4	36.7	+5.8 years

Sources: All listed statistics before 2020, Elizabeth Garner, Colorado State Demographer; all others, State of Colorado Demography Office, "[Population By Single Year of Age, Broomfield, Colorado, 2020](#)" and "[Median Ages.](#)"

Veterans

2019	Civilian Population (18+)	%
Veterans	3,876	7.1
Non-Veterans	51,047	92.9
Total	54,923	100.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS Estimates, Broomfield County, Colorado, "[Sex By Age By Veteran Status For The Civilian Population 18 Years and Over.](#)"

Self-Identification

Year	1990 (%)	1990 (#)	2000 (%)	2000 (#)	2010 (%)	2010 (#)	2020 (%)	2020 (#)	% Change as Proportion of Population, 1990-2020
American Indian/ Alaska Native alone	0.7	159	0.5	176	0.4	244	0.6	435	-0.1
Asian alone	2.1	528	4.2	1,592	6.1	3,411	6.9	5,146	+4.0
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander alone	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.01	89	—
Black/African American alone	0.7	166	0.9	329	0.9	530	1.3	989	+0.6
Hispanic or Latino alone	*	*	9.1	3,471	11.1	6,216	13.4	9,919	+4.3*
White alone	94.3	23,236	83.7	32,023	79.4	44,358	76.0	56,334	-14.9
Some Other Race alone	—	—	—	—	—	—	4.1	3,017	—
Two Or More Races	—	—	1.7	645	1.9	1,064	10.9	8,102	+0.2
Other	2.2	549	0.1	36	0.1	66	—	—	—
Totals	100.0	24,638	100.0	38,272	100.0	55,889	—	74,112	—

*In 1990, 1,381 or 5.6 percent of Broomfield residents were considered of “Hispanic” origin, but were also categorized as: 792 “White,” 8 “Black,” 29 “American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut,” 15 “Asian or Pacific Islander,” and 537 “Other Race.” Subsequent censuses included a separate designation for “Hispanic” and “Two or More Races.” Technically, the U.S. Census Bureau considers Hispanic or Latino origin to reflect ethnicity, so “Hispanic” is not listed in normal categories for “Race.” “Native Hawaiian” and “Asian alone,” as distinct categories, are new to the 2020 census. Previous counts combined “Asian” and “Pacific Islander” in one category.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Broomfield, Colorado, 2020, “[Race](#)” and “[Hispanic or Latino, and Not Hispanic or Latino By Race](#).”

“Race is the child of racism, not the parent.”

([Regan Byrd](#), Oct. 15, 2020, presentation at The Refuge)

“Disability” Status

Age (years)	Female “With a Disability” (%)	Female “No Disability” (%)	Male “With a Disability” (%)	Male “No Disability” (%)	% of Overall Population
5-17	2.8	97.2	6.6	93.4	–
18-34	3.0	97.0	3.7	96.3	–
35-64	5.4	94.6	6.7	93.3	–
65-74	13.0	87.0	21.0	79.0	–
75+	43.7	56.3	33.9	66.1	–
All people with disabilities in Broomfield	–	–	–	–	7.6
All people with disabilities in Colorado	–	–	–	–	10.6

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS Estimates, Broomfield County, Colorado, [“Sex By Age By Disability Status”](#) and [“Broomfield city, Colorado.” Disability types](#) include hearing, vision, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care and independent-living difficulties.

Languages

Broomfield, Colorado	2009	2019	2009-2019
Language/s Spoken at Home (age 5 and over)	% of Total Population	% of Total Population	% Change
English only	86.8	87.8	+1.0
Language other than English	13.2	12.2	-1.0
Spanish	6.1	5.1	-1.0
Chinese (incl. Mandarin, Cantonese)	–	1.0	–
Vietnamese	–	0.8	–

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 ACS Estimates, Broomfield, Colorado, “Language Spoken At Home For The Population 5 Years and Over”; 2019 ACS Estimates, Broomfield, Colorado, [“Language Spoken At Home For The Population 5 Years and Over.”](#) By comparison, 17 percent of Coloradans speak a language other than English at home, 11.4 percent of Coloradans speak Spanish at home, and one-third of those Spanish speakers report they speak English less than “very well,” according to 2019 ACS estimates [cited](#) in The Colorado Sun.

BASIC NEEDS

U.S. psychologist Abraham Maslow introduced his famous “[hierarchy of needs](#)” in a 1943 paper entitled “A Theory of Human Motivation.” While he revised his theory multiple times, food, clothing and shelter remain key “physiological needs” at the base of his conceptual pyramid. In order to survive, we must secure food (and water), and protection from the elements in the form of clothing and shelter appropriate to our individual circumstances and the climate in which we live. With notable exceptions, we’re born with the instinct, the desire and the resilience to meet those needs, but we still need others to provide for us until we’re able to do so for ourselves. We in turn help others do the same, and so the life cycle continues (unless and until it’s interrupted by tragedy or trauma).

Beyond the basic care and sustenance provided within most immediate family units, counties bear significant “social service” responsibilities in the U.S. governmental system. When we consolidated we voluntarily assumed those responsibilities. For our first 20 years as a city and county, they were primarily carried out by Broomfield’s Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Last year, HHS split into separate, but still closely aligned, departments — the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Department of Public Health and Environment (DPHE). DHS, in particular, oversees self-sufficiency and government benefit programs. DHS and DPHE are key partners in the Broomfield Community Services Network (BCSN) and our wider humanitarian-focused “social safety net,” which informally integrates the resources at the disposal of the county (and city) government, service agencies and faith communities, and their various connections to larger regional, state and national entities.

Food

Broomfield FISH noted during last November’s designated “Hunger and Homelessness Awareness and Action Week” that 1 in 3 Coloradans struggled with hunger in the past year, [tweeting](#) “Children & seniors are the most likely to be affected by it, but it impacts everyone in our community!”

Broomfield had 1,928 participants in the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in 2019, according to an [estimate](#) by the U.S. Census Bureau. As a COVID relief measure, Coloradans’ [SNAP](#) benefits increased by 21 percent last October.

Public school districts regularly distributed free food staples to local families during the COVID-affected 2020-2021 school year, and they continue to provide food assistance to local students through the free and reduced-price [lunch program](#).

The Colorado Health Foundation recently helped launch the Boulder and Broomfield Counties Food Security Network to help end area [food deserts](#) and improve coordi-

nation, collaboration and understanding among local food pantries and hunger-relief systems. Among the network's partners are large-scale pantries [North Denver Cares Food Pantry](#) and [FISH](#), which also serves as Broomfield's official [Family Resource Center](#).

Broomfield Senior Services provides low-cost meals through [Meals on Wheels](#) and the [Lakeshore Café](#) at the Broomfield Community Center. Small-scale, supplemental food pantries located at [Joyful Journeys Thrift Store](#), [Salvation Army](#) and The Refuge help expand food access. Free outdoor food boxes have been installed at [Cross of Christ Lutheran Church](#) and the [Broomfield Depot Museum](#).

Free & Reduced Lunch

School	PK-12 Students	Free & Reduced	% Free & Reduced
Aspen Creek K-8	736	126	17.1%
Birch Elementary	325	88	27.1%
Broomfield Heights Middle	522	152	29.1%
Broomfield High	1,540	246	16.0%
Emerald Elementary	384	174	45.3%
Kohl Elementary	310	72	23.2%

Source: Colorado Department of Education, "2020-2021 PK-12 Pupil Membership Free and Reduced Lunch Eligibility by School," Broomfield's Boulder Valley School District (BVSD) schools only (revised Jan. 20, 2021).

Food Banks

Food Distributed (pounds/year)	2016	2018	2020	% Increase (2016-2020)
Broomfield FISH	629,389	889,107	1,547,365	+146
North Denver Cares Food Pantry	2,600,000	3,800,000	5,200,000	+100

Source: [Broomfield FISH's 2020 Annual Report Video](#) and Bryan Decker, executive director, [North Denver Cares Food Pantry](#).

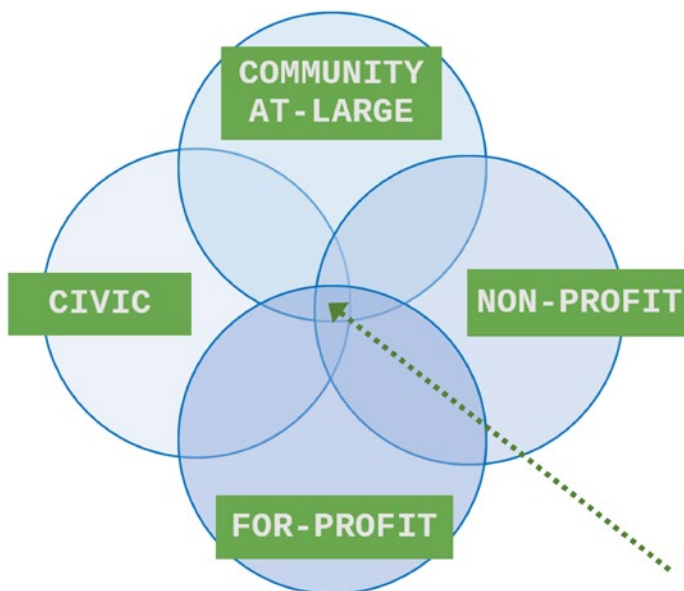
Note: FISH serves Broomfield residents, while North Denver Cares serves residents of Boulder and Broomfield counties. Both agencies receive the bulk of their food from Louisville-based [Community Food Share](#), an affiliate of [Feeding America](#).

Clothing

Broomfield is home to four thrift stores: the Arc, Goodwill, Habitat for Humanity Restore and Joyful Journeys, all of which resell donated clothing. The Broomfield-based non-profit [A Precious Child](#) (APC) provides “precious essentials” in the form of clothing, coats, shoes, household goods, hygiene items and other resources to families in need throughout the Front Range. [In 2019](#), APC served 57,497 children and 7,562 adults, distributed 15.8 million in-kind goods and 20,103 backpacks and supplies, worked with 497 agency partners, and fulfilled 14,066 children’s gift wishes in eight metro-area counties.

Shelter

Broomfield does not have a 24-hour emergency shelter. However, in 2019, local volunteers opened an overnight “warming center” on extremely cold nights, and for the last two winters, local agencies and advocates have pooled resources to provide hotel vouchers for unhoused local residents who are able to pass a background check. For more details about local housing needs and supports, see the following section entitled “Household Wealth.”



All the resources we need to more fully humanize and supply our local safety net already exist right here in Broomfield.

BUILD OUT

As communities within communities, neighborhoods sometimes get named after overlapping landmarks, like business or shopping districts, apartment complexes, subdivisions, mobile home parks, recreational parks, streets and schools. For example, one Broomfielder might say, “I live in the Birch neighborhood.” Another might say, “I live in Northmoor.” One refers to a nearby school and street (and tree) and the other to a nearby park and subdivision (and tract of land). But they could be near-neighbors talking to each other from their front doors.

Here’s an alphabetical but not exhaustive list of current Broomfield neighborhoods irrespective of their dwelling types (single-family housing, senior housing, multi-family apartments, mobile homes communities): Amherst, Anthem, Arista, Aspen Creek, Brandywine, Broadlands, Broomfield Greens, Broomfield Heights, Catania, Chalet, Cimarron Village, Columbine Meadows, Country Estates, Country Vista, Courtyard, Crofton Park, Deer Crest, Eagle Trace, Flatirons, Front Range, Garden Center, Gate ‘N’ Green, Greenway Park, Harvest Station, Highland Park, Interlocken, Industrial Lane, Ivanhoe, Lac Amora, McKay, Maryel Manor, Miramonte, Northmoor, Palisade, Pony Estates, Redleaf, Ridgeview Heights, Royal Village, Schultz Estates, Skystone, Silvercrest, Stonegate, Sunrise, The Avenues, The Marquis, The Outlook, The Ridge, The Trails, Town Centre, Via Varra, Village at Palisade Park, Village Square, Vista Highlands, Westlake Village, Wilcox, Wildgrass, Willow Park and Willow Run.

How many others will join the list? Local leaders have been considering that question since before consolidation via the idea of “[build-out](#).” Wikipedia defines it as “an urban planner’s estimate of the amount and location of potential development for an area. Sometimes called a ‘lot-yield analysis’, build-out is one step of the land use planning process. Evaluation of potential development impacts begins with a build-out analysis.”

The CCOB’s 2005 Comprehensive Plan estimated Broomfield’s build-out population at 83,300 people, although it stressed that figure shouldn’t be construed as a “policy cap.” In its 2013 Long-Range Financial Plan Update, the CCOB revised its build-out estimate based on the Colorado State Demography Office’s projected 2040 population for Broomfield. The new number, accounting for natural increases and immigration: 95,453. For more details, see “Three Trends” on p. 178.

Part of the buildout equation is logistical. How many people could our 32.968 square miles of land and attainable resources sustain long-term? In [Miami, Fla.](#), for example, 442,241 people live on a comparable, 36 square miles of land.

Obviously, more intangible considerations also factor into the equation. The CCOB and its relevant citizen committees clearly plan on further population growth over the next few decades, but how much growth is enough? How much is too much?

These questions are especially fraught in our area because Boulder municipal voters approved growth restrictions in 1976. Colorado Public Radio's Andrew Kenney noted in his [Feb. 8, 2022 story](#) the main talking points surrounding that campaign from two generations ago. Supporters believed restricting growth would preserve "all the desirable qualities" of their community while still allowing for affordable housing. Opponents said growth restrictions would transform Boulder into "an exclusionary community open only to well-to-do residents."

Boulder's current median single-family home price is \$785,000, by far the highest on the Front Range.

Hopefully, we'll find some middle ground and figure out a way to avoid the build-out extremes of both faraway Miami, Fla., and nearby Boulder, Colo.



Local Perspectives

- "Finding Home" by Bette Erickson (p. 67)
- "Mud, Sweat and Tears" by Jennifer Sage (p. 70)

Local Perspective

“FINDING HOME”

By Bette Erickson

(Written in the Spring of 2021)

When my roommates and I graduated from college in Kalamazoo, Mich., we all went our separate ways – Janice to Los Angeles, Francine to Chicago, Shirley to Houston. I landed in Broomfield. How very lucky I was. I’ve called Broomfield home for nearly four decades — raising a son and daughter here with my husband, Paul. The four of us found friendship and a sense of purpose living in this community. Paul coached little league, was a scout leader and served on the City and County of Broomfield’s Master Plan Update Taskforce, among other activities. I was also on a number of boards and commissions, was a scout leader and served 12 (not consecutive) years on the Broomfield City Council, the last two years as mayor pro-tem. Like many of you, I love our community.



A couple of years into my daughter’s career following college, she was living all over the world: Moscow, Copenhagen, Seattle, even South Beach, Miami.

“Come back to Broomfield,” I urged. She replied, “I will Mom, when I’m ready to get married and start a family.” She added, “Broomfield raises good kids.”

Being a self-proclaimed history buff, as I think of Broomfield I consider its history in three eras: 1850 to 1900, when European settlers considered this area a windy wilderness traversed by stagecoaches and railroads; 1900 to 1950, a period of prosperity and depression for farmers and miners; and 1950 to 2001, when the Boulder-Denver Turnpike (US 36) was built as a toll road (in 1952), and when a city came of age with its first big housing development, Broomfield Heights, in 1955. Fast forward to Thursday night, Nov. 15, 2001 — to that festive gala in the Mamie Doud Eisenhower Library lobby and auditorium. Hundreds of people from state legislators to grassroots activists gathered to celebrate Broomfield becoming its own city and county – a process that began years earlier. I had just been elected to city council for the first time, and an attendee brought a bottle of Dom Pérignon vintage champagne to mark the occasion. (There are many perks and not nearly enough allowable word count here to enumerate all the benefits of becoming our own city and county.)

Growing up in material poverty

Did you know that eggs are priced 131 percent higher today than they were in 1988? Or that houses cost 194 percent more?

People are struggling.

My two brothers and I were raised by a single mom in Battle Creek, Mich. It was decidedly tough and stressful for all of us. Still, I knew kindness and charity. I learned that nothing at all compares to the experience of being poor and yearning for a kindly word or charitable deed.

One of my fondest memories is that of a cold, blustery night in December when a group of people from the Salvation Army knocked on our third-floor apartment door to deliver several boxes of nonperishable food, toys and a huge frozen turkey for my mother, my brothers and me. It was magical witnessing the commotion while they handed the boxes to my mother. Peeking out from behind her, I could barely catch my breath. Surely my heart would escape the cage of my ribs. I received my very first Barbie doll that night. What I remember most about the occasion was watching my mother weep as the people handed her the boxes. I didn't understand why she was crying.

I've never felt bitter over our modest economic level back then, only been impatient to improve it. It's genuinely a fluke that my mother, brother and I were not homeless. We were in Michigan, and the economic pulse of the nation was different than it is today. Being raised in poverty, moving from apartment to apartment, is a part of my past and without a doubt shaped who I am today. To be sure, while the passage of time creates an ungovernable distance, I'll always remember being poor. It humbles you.

Hiking, finding inner strength

The trail up Boulder's Green Mountain weaves through fragrant forests, connects with other routes, and cuts past rocky outcrops, ultimately leading to one of the best views overlooking the city. Green Mountain was one of the first hikes I did with Paul. We were dating at the time. Trying to impress him, I challenged him to a race back to the trailhead. Midway down the mountain I heard my name called. I quickly turned and rested my hand on what I thought was a rock behind me to steady myself.

It was a huge cactus. We spent the next 20 minutes picking 1-inch thorns out of the palm of my hand.

My husband Paul died suddenly and unexpectedly 10 years ago on one of Broomfield's [crusher fine](#) trails. I was lucky enough to be with him that bright and sunny morning; he had hiked 12 miles by himself the weekend before in the Indian Peaks Wilderness Area. While his death was devastating and it changed me, as pain changes people, I consider our 28 years together to be a deep, deep blessing.

Hiking in Broomfield, in Boulder and elsewhere feeds my soul like nothing else. I've written six hiking books, authored thousands of hiking columns, and have summited half of Colorado's 58 fourteeners. My very good fortune is something I do not take for granted. My time outside, whether spent with others or alone, is mentally and physically nurturing.

We all have the capacity to live beyond whatever may have broken us. Indeed, there is nothing stronger than people who have rebuilt themselves.

Bette Erickson is a former city councilwoman and mayor pro-tem, teacher, author and freelance writer. She currently serves on the board of directors for [Senior Resources of Broomfield](#) (SRB).

Local Perspective

“MUD, SWEAT AND TEARS”

Stay-at-Home Moms & 2013 Flood Relief and Recovery

By Jennifer Sage

Monday, Sept. 9, 2013

It was a Monday when we heard about all the flooding. My friend and her kids and my three youngest boys had that day off of school for a teacher work day, and we were supposed to take the kids to a park and then go to lunch. But I said to my friend, “I feel really hypocritical going to lunch when people have lost their homes and they’re digging out,” and I was thinking it would be such a great lesson for our kids if we did something to help.

So I got on Facebook and posted that we’ll do whatever and asked if anyone knew anyone whose home had gotten flooded. My Broadlands neighbor Greg Stokes responded that the big relief agencies won’t let you in because of safety concerns, but he suggested contacting churches, other local organizations, and his friend Liz Law-Evans.

People were calling and texting and posting to Facebook as things came up and we heard there’s a neighborhood in Longmont that needs help. So I Mapquested it and we put stuff in our car and three of my boys and I took off. (Our oldest had school that day.) We would get somewhere and there would be church organizations there, and we just jumped in to help. That first day it

was just washing things off, but some people really wanted to talk about what had happened and what they lost or how they were rescued. And I felt like sometimes that was our job more than to clean the mud out of homes. People were so desperate, I’m telling you it was like nothing we’d ever seen.



After the floods in Lyons, Colo. (Jennifer Sage)



After the floods in Longmont, Colo. (Jennifer Sage)

By Monday night, I was getting more names of people who needed help. I put a call out to Facebook friends saying if anyone wants to skip the gym tomorrow, I have a great shoulder workout for you.

Tuesday, Sept. 10, 2013

The first house we went to Tuesday was in Lafayette and belonged to a single woman named Susan. The whole first level had been flooded. Some of her carpet had already been pulled. Some guy from her church brought over a power-washer, so we did a lot of cleaning off of her furniture. She couldn't bear to go through her personal stuff, so she asked us to sort through it to decide what could be saved and what was lost. As the day progressed and Susan realized we were willing to do whatever, we ended up moving furniture and ripping up carpet.

None of the people we helped backed up to a creek, pond or reservoir, and I think that was the most shocking piece of this. Susan had returned from her book club to a flooded neighborhood with torrents of water running down the street. She had to open her garage to let water flow through it. Then she went to a neighbor and by time she had bagged up a couple of things, the fire department was in a boat in the street rescuing people and using a bullhorn to enforce a mandatory evacuation.

Susan didn't want to accept our help initially. She kept saying to us, "Everyone else has it so bad," but I said, "But we're here. Let us help you!"

The government and FEMA wouldn't give out any information about areas that needed help. Logically I get that, but my heart was like "These people need help and were not going into areas that were still flooded, so what are they going to do?"

My son Nate was 14 at the time, and he was as upset as I was. He asked to stay out of school at Westlake to help with relief efforts. I talked it over with my husband, John, and we decided what a great life lesson it would be, so we said yes. By Tuesday night people had gotten my information and were calling me asking for help and asking how they could help.

Wednesday, Sept. 11, 2013

We finished up at Susan's and then went to Longmont and Boulder. By Wednesday night we had a dozen volunteers and four houses to visit.

There was this crazy underground network of helpers, and they would say, "If you're going to get there, go this way and tell them that you're with this or that organization." We had four houses and volunteers for those different houses, and the volunteers were all women, no men. All of them, for the most part, were stay-at-home moms. And they're all texting me pics of the damage they see and they're in shock. They felt the same thing I did on the first day and wondered why in the world aren't other

people aware of this? Why isn't there some agency here helping? There was a girl I went to college with who moved to the area two weeks before the floods and when she called to get together I said to her, "I can't meet you for lunch, but if you want to come help shovel we can catch up there."

The destruction by this point was mostly in people's basements where most water heaters, furnaces, washers and dryers are. Most people store their photos and most important papers there. They aren't maybe so tangible, but those are huge losses.

Wednesday night we came home to regroup. I had a list of more people who needed help than I knew what to do with. The next morning a group of us caravanned out. I would give out addresses where help was needed, and we all had to leave at different times to pick up our kids from school. Really it was more helping neighborhoods than specific houses, and I got to the point where I said to myself "I'm getting my days mixed up."

Thursday, Sept. 12, 2013

We made so many connections through Facebook. A friend put out that neighbors of her parents live alone and don't have family in the area and their basement was demolished. So I decided that's where we're going. Three women and I pulled up at this retirement community in Longmont called "Golfer Green" or something. Their house backed to a golf course and behind that were railroad tracks. It's so hard to describe, but there was this huge pile of debris and bulldozers on hand. And it looked like everything you've seen in a warzone movie trailer, just mass destruction.

So this woman in her 60s is sitting in the garage on a lawn chair talking on the phone and I said to her, "Hey Connie, I'm Jenn. We got your name from so and so and heard you need some help." She says, "Well, we do, but it's pretty bad." And I say, "Well, we've seen some things this week."

Connie was pretty hesitant to let us go in and help, so I asked if she had any shovels or buckets, because we didn't have any supplies or tools that day. She walks us down to her basement and there is a pile of mud that's around three feet high, just in her basement. She didn't have any shovels, so we found some Home Depot buckets. We eventually got a shovel from somewhere, but we couldn't go up and down with heavy debris and didn't want to trash the rest of the house.

Connie and her husband Rich were in their house during all the rain. Then she heard a little noise in the basement and went down to investigate and saw that their window wells were leaking. She went upstairs to get a tea towel to clean it up, but by the time she got back down the stairs the window wells on the outside were completely filled with water. She ran upstairs to tell Rich, and then the wells burst. Within 20 minutes their basement was filled floor to ceiling with water.

So we're bucketing mud out of Connie's and Rich's basement and I honestly wanted to look at her and say, "This is too much." There were huge rocks in the mud from the nearby railroad ties. I called a friend who couldn't help that day but could contribute money, so I sent her to Home Depot on 120th and Sheridan in Broomfield to buy a wheelbarrow, buckets, shovels and plywood and hazmat suits and masks and gloves. Because at that point we knew it wasn't going to be a one-day job. It helped to send pictures as motivation, but everything was in short supply.

So the four of us were digging. Connie and Rich wanted to help, but the mud had become really slimy, so we said you just can't be down here. And eventually we couldn't go up the steps ourselves, so we had to break out the rest of the glass from a window well. We found a fire escape ladder outside, and two of us shoveled, while one of us was in the window well with a bucket.

And some guy sees me crawling out the window and asks, "Do you need some help?" My first thought was to protect Connie and Rich, because there had been some reports of looting. The guy says, "I'm with Convoy of Hope. I have some guys that could help you." It turned out Halliburton had paid their guys to help with cleanup in their off time. So these guys come in and holy hell it was like a miracle. They gave us hazmat suits and wheelbarrows and they stepped in.

Friday, Sept. 13, 2013

On Friday, we went back to Connie's and Rich's because it was the worst we had seen at that point and they were pretty hopeless. If we didn't get all the mud out soon, then the mold gets in, and we weren't sure the foundation of the house was okay, honestly. We went back and helped through Sunday with the Haliburton guys and got all the mud out, tore all the carpet out, tore all the drywall down. Connie had to throw away her wedding dress, her family quilts and her mother's Bernina sewing machine. Rich had to throw away his awards from being in the service.

Rich and Connie ended up refinishing their basement in March 2014. Their insurance didn't cover basement damage, but they did get some FEMA money. It turned out nobody we helped had flood insurance because it was too expensive, and even the people who had insurance, their policies didn't cover their damages. It jaded me a little bit, the whole experience.

Our next stop was Lyons with Convoy of Hope, who took over a vacant auto dealership as a headquarters. And that was the first time we signed waiver forms. At this point John was concerned, but pretty supportive even though we ate a lot of pizza and grilled cheese those nights. It rained the day we were in Lyons and there are not words to describe what it was like. We had to have our Convoy of Hope T-shirt on to get in. The National Guard was there. Most of the streets were literally gone.

There was this guy who lived on the river before the flood. He was kind of a loner, an aerospace engineer, and his house was pretty small and all on one level. When we walk in we're watching the river fill again while we're working. He has three feet of mud in every room of his house. There are cars sideways in trees next to his house, and this guy is just shoveling on his own with this shell-shocked-beyond-belief look.

Some of the newer volunteers kept saying "I don't know why we're going to keep shoveling." And I said, "He's going to keep shoveling whether we do or not and this is a mission of mercy." FEMA hadn't come to evaluate his house yet, so we shoveled. That time we had to shovel mud from the electrical outlets before FEMA could decide whether or not to condemn the house. Anyway, the flood had moved his oven into the center of his kitchen. A couple guys from Convoy of Hope were rocking the oven to try to move it, but even between all of us we couldn't move it. We open the oven door, and it's completely full of mud. We had to shovel it out. Eventually, we emptied his house of mud and I don't know what happened to him or his house. FEMA required that we take all the appliances out, the furnace, the water heater, and put them in the front yard there by the river.

Saturday, Sept. 14, 2013

Each day got worse, I have to tell you. We went to Jeremy's house on Left Hand Creek in Jamestown. He had just finished improving his house in stages and was on his last piece of bathroom trim when the flood hit. He got stuck in his car a mile away but even from that far the creek sounded like raging, Class 5 rapids.

Meanwhile, I'm still hearing on all the official websites, "Do not help, no help is needed," which was contrary to what was really going on. Convoy of Hope worked through local churches. Flatirons Church also had a list and people put needs on Craigslist, too. But those people were in their houses doing it themselves and they needed help. I remember one of the volunteers from Convoy of Hope thought FEMA was going to shovel mud, because isn't that what FEMA does? The reality is FEMA assesses and offers financial assistance, but doesn't provide physical labor. The National Guard provided safety but no cleanup labor. The only people I saw doing the actual cleanup were homeowners and volunteers.

Sometimes we would just sit and have a beer or have lunch with people. Sometimes we brought lunch or people would drop by and leave food or cookies or bottles of water or PBJ sandwiches. Same with supplies like gloves and masks. My husband, John, helped on weekends.

Sunday, Sept. 15, 2013, and beyond

We got an email from Ben and Shannon who owned a farmhouse in Niwot that had been totaled and condemned by FEMA, because it had moved off its foundation. When the floods came, they ran to their pickup in disbelief and had to drive away while leaving

their chickens and other livestock behind. A couple of days later when they returned, Ben finds their goat Barry alive in a feed shed despite water up to his head. And their pig survived, too. They had just installed a new fence and sprinklers the year before, but it had fallen, so we fixed and secured the fence and worked on their pasture, which had been destroyed. They stayed in their garage for a while. We helped seal their garage floor. Ben plays at Oskar Blues at night and he lost everything, all of his instruments and equipment. They got some FEMA assistance and borrowed a neighbor's backhoe to get by. I think we went there every week through almost Christmas. They broke ground and framed a new house in the spring (of 2014).

I still keep in touch with that network of people, mostly from Broomfield, that came together during the flood recovery process. Some took time off work to help, some donated money, one friend set up an emergency food pantry. Some of them are still Facebook friends of mine. I know if I had a problem or emergency, those are people I could call and they'd be there in a heartbeat. What amazed me the most was that people came when I asked, and they did what I asked, no questions asked. They went wherever. If I needed something, they brought it.

A lot of people just ignored my posts, too, and offered a lot of excuses. I don't think people knew it was as bad as it was. We are so numb by what we see on TV that it doesn't seem real. And in Broomfield, the floods didn't affect our daily life as much. When we were driving from Broomfield up to where the damage was, we couldn't believe we were in the same country. I know some people were afraid of getting hurt or sick, but I don't know how people couldn't help in some way.

It was a wake-up call for our kids. We talked a lot about things not being important, because they all saw people throw away damaged possessions. We had a lot of discussions that people are grateful that they have their lives and they're happy to have their family and friends. I think it inspired the kids to want to help people. I see more willingness from them to maybe put someone else first instead of themselves.

I'm not discounting the government agencies. Obviously, they have rules, but in an emergency like that you have to count on other people to help that aren't associated with an office or agency. It was eye-opening. I started attending Broomfield emergency planning meetings after the floods.

Our little grassroots recovery network included Pam Connelly, Lana Henningson, John McCarthy, Heidi Saunders, Marci Olson, Judy McKinsey, Jennifer Christensen, Laura Dunham, Amy Weigert, David and Sunny Glaister, and many others whose names I never learned.

Jennifer Sage is an Ironman athlete who moved with her family to Broomfield in 2004. This autobiographical piece is based on a May 9, 2014, phone interview with the author.

“Household Wealth”

Where we live and how we sustain our lives and livelihoods

Glossary | Residences | Income

Key Points

- Our community is home to an estimated 200 people who are unhoused at any one time.
- In 2020, our local family resource center Broomfield FISH distributed an unprecedented \$2 million in rent and mortgage assistance to 673 residents, and through its various programs served around 17 percent of Broomfield’s total residents.
- Broomfield has a shortage of at least 2,566 affordable and attainable housing units.
- The upward trajectory of housing values, our high local cost of living and relatively stagnant wages for those households earning less than the area median income (AMI), make housing instability an everyday reality for thousands of Broomfielders.

“There is a fence
to keep us in
and a fence
to keep us out

and there are gatekeepers
and those who debate
the requirements
for entry or exit

But you and I, my friend
we are birds
we have wings.”

[Jessica Kantrowitz](#), author of *The Long Night*, *365 Days of Peace*,
and *Blessings for the Long Night*

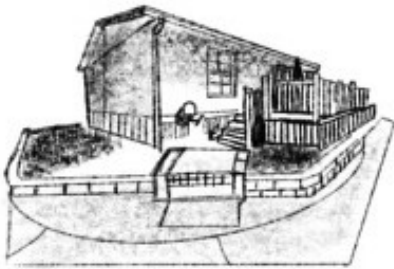


The word “[house](#)” comes from the Old English “hus” meaning “dwelling, shelter, building designed to be used as a residence,” from Proto-Germanic “hūsan” (the source of Old Norse and Old Frisian “hus”, Dutch “huis,” German “Haus”), which is of unknown origin, but is perhaps connected to the root of “hide,” according to the Online Etymology Dictionary (OED). The adjective “[household](#)” is from the late 14th century and means “of or pertaining to house and family, domestic,” while the familiar noun “[homestead](#)” comes from the Old English “hamstede” meaning “home, town, village.” It has been used in the United States since the 1690s to refer to “a lot of land adequate for the maintenance of a family,” and is “defined by the Homestead Act of 1862 as 160 acres.” The mid-13th-century word “[wealth](#),” meaning “happiness” and “prosperity in abundance of possessions or riches,” comes from the Middle English word “wele” (or “weal”), signifying “well-being” and “health.”

The linguistic roots of this section’s title reflect our daily struggles to survive, and having survived, to thrive: where we maintain a residence, how much it costs to live there, how much we earn to live there, how our well-being affects the way we live there (and vice versa), and what efforts we undertake to improve ourselves, our world and our ability to make a living there. “Wealth” conjures images of money, net worth and possessions belonging primarily to individuals (or perhaps to families of individuals). Generally speaking, people with easier access to high-quality food, health care and

living conditions do maintain better health relative to people without such access. However, “wealth” also encompasses non-material human dynamics, such as those reflected in the upper levels of [Maslow’s hierarchy](#) — safety, friendship, belonging, love, esteem, and self-actualization.

Today’s Homes



Mobile Home



Apartments/Multi-Family Homes



Single Family Homes



Recreational Vehicle

Sketches by Maegan Dormish

Words shape worlds, as the first paragraphs of the book of Genesis, the last paragraphs of Norman Maclean’s *A River Runs Through It* and spiritual leaders like [Abraham Joshua Heschel](#) attest, which is why reshaping our everyday grammar is no small step toward reimagining Broomfield housing from below. Consider the following three ways we can linguistically neighbor one another:

1. Let adjectives be adjectives, and let nouns be nouns. The words “wealthy,” “poor” and “homeless” are adjectives. They describe but do not represent people, places or things. When we convert them into nouns that do, they tend to de-substantiate and dehumanize the image-of-God-bearing people to whom they refer. A person’s financial means or housing status has no bearing on their essential humanity.

2. Let “I-You” replace “I-It”. About a hundred years ago, the Austrian-Jewish-Israeli philosopher Martin Buber proposed that true meaning in life comes through relationships of recognition and respect — “I-Thou” or “I-You” ones with the Divine and with each other, and “I-It” experiences of the world around us. Civil Rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr., noted in his [final speech](#) before his assassination, how “I-It” thinking applied to interpersonal and inter-community relationships can objectify injured victims on the side of life’s proverbial road. But like the Good Samaritan, he exhorted us to instead “project the ‘I’ into the ‘Thou’” by seeing ourselves in the guise of our vulnerable neighbor. The only thing as potentially dehumanizing as an adjective turned into a noun, then, is an adjective turned into a noun accompanied by an objectifying article or determinative, as in “*the* wealthy,” “*the* poor” or “*the* homeless.”
3. Let people be people first. Beneath our occupations and bank balances and residences and sizes and genders and complexions and eye color, we 74,112-and-counting Broomfielders are all human beings. Our individual and collective human dignity should always come first. People-first language affirms both the humanity of those with whom we are in conversation and the humanity of those who routinely have little say in decisions affecting their own lives and livelihoods. Even if we can’t yet acknowledge the basic lesson of the Good Samaritan, even if we can’t call those who are battered, naked and unconscious on the side of the road our “neighbors,” we can at least acknowledge, before anything else, that they are people — “people with material wealth” or “people without material wealth” and “people who are unhoused” or “people experiencing homelessness.” They are not problems to be solved. They are not their circumstances. They’re people with names and faces, memories and dreams, families and friends, traumas and stories.



Imagine for a moment one of those pristine Front Range days. Having worked hard for weeks, you and your loved ones take a day off. You go outside, spread out blankets, set out food and games. You spend the day soaking in the sun, eating and playing.

Around dusk, an all-wheel-drive vehicle pulls up and a few tired-looking people get out and stretch. They don’t have anywhere else to stay so they ask to park nearby to rest for a time until they’re ready to continue their journey into the mountains. It’s getting dark, so you agree.

You remain on friendly terms until day two, when your guests cut down a stand of nearby trees and start building what looks like some kind of shelter. You immediately contact your local authorities. In the meantime, other all-terrain vehicles arrive. In alarm, you and your neighbors and the local authorities urge the new arrivals to move on. They say they're leaving but they keep constructing shelters. More and more and more ATVs appear until a rough-cut wooden frame occupies your family's favorite picnic spot.

Soon, new authorities funded, appointed and armed by the newcomers, tell you and your family you have to leave your home for good.



Now imagine that you're Arapaho.



It's important to acknowledge the irony here.

If even one small group of "squatters" arrived in Broadlands this weekend, it certainly wouldn't take two days for residents to flood the BPD and Broomfield City Hall with urgent demands to remove them.

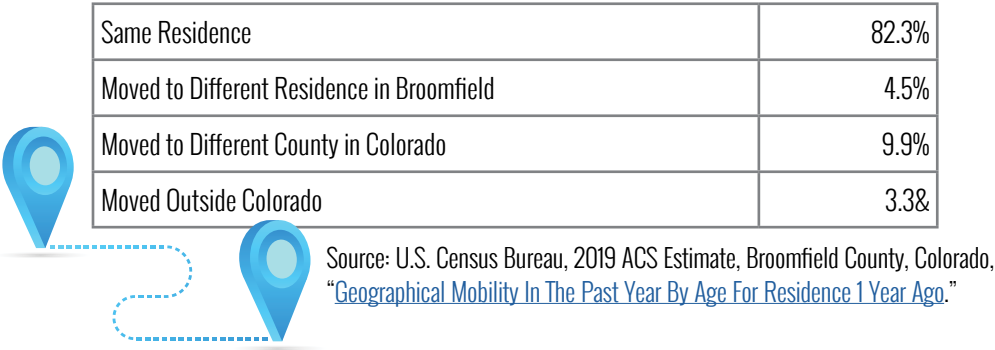
Our 21st-century land-and housing-related wealth, and the equity and inequity that comes with it, have 19th-century foundations. We live on treaty-acknowledged land. The [original patents](#) granted to U.S. settlers in our area were relatively low-cost or free, except for filing fees.

The advantages of these policies to the United States and its citizens (or soon-to-be citizens) were real: a viable alternative to slave-based economics, integration of the West into the American empire, and the creation of private wealth "[ex nihilo](#)" from recently acquired and designated public domain. U.S. citizens, religious leaders and politicians, alike, brandished well-honed mechanisms of legitimacy for the above approach to acquisition, development and expansion. God ordained it. The fertile landscape ached for it. The march of progress demanded it. Rifles and cannon "defended" it, "from sea to shining sea."

I often wonder if some of us propertied (and mortgaged) modern-day residents of Broomfield react so vehemently to proposals for "affordable housing" on one hand and "encampments" on the other, because we fear the proximity in our neighborhoods of realities that could burst the bubbles of our carefully sanitized lives, and because, at some unconscious level, we fear the displacement forced upon the Indigenous communities of the Front Range six or seven generations ago could somehow be forced upon us today.

For many residents, and in a limited, geographical sense, it already has. Not simultaneously, en masse, and by the force of arms, terror and massacre, like in the 1800s, but here and there, since the turn of the 21st-century, many thousands of Broomfield residents, in particular those earning less than the area median income (AMI), have struggled to [make ends meet](#) or been forced to relocate to other Colorado communities or other states altogether.

Geographic Mobility



Gabriela Gutierrez lived at the Highlander Apartments on 9th Avenue from 2009 until March 2014, when she and her then-fiance, Victor Salas determined they could no longer afford to stay. Gaby had hoped to one day send their toddler Edna to Birch Elementary School, but instead they moved to a Montbello apartment. Five months later, they moved to a mobile home in Aurora, where they stayed for three years.

In July 2017, the day after Gaby formally received her U.S. citizenship, Victor, Edna, her mother, Josefina, and she got the keys to their townhome near Mississippi Avenue and Sable Boulevard. She and Victor got married there and they still live there today. Victor works in construction and Gaby earns \$14.50-\$17 per hour as a patient care provider (PCP) for a home health company. Her clients live throughout the metro area. (She runs “Gaby’s Grub” catering on the side.)

Recalling their 2013-2014 search for a more affordable Broomfield apartment, Gaby says, “We tried to find one, but they were too expensive. We even signed up for an affordable housing program, but their waiting list was really long — over one year — and they never called us back.

“Broomfield is a really nice place to live, and I would love to go back. Broomfield is different. It’s quiet and has a lot of kind people. It would be a good place to raise kids — Edna will turn 8 in February.

“But there’s hardly a place there that’s affordable for people like me who don’t have a high wage.”



A different kind of housing instability forced Anastasia Weatherford and her family out of their Broomfield neighborhood of 17 years. Annie and her two small children had originally moved to the Front Range Manufactured Home Community, owned by Utah-based Kingsley Corporation, to escape an abusive relationship. Two years later, they moved within Front Range to a three-bedroom, two-bathroom home and were joined by Annie’s boyfriend, Adam Weatherford, and his two children. Annie and Adam married in 2006.

“It was nice to live there,” Annie says. “Except for the management.”

Her list of grievances includes: an unnecessary demand to replace their trailer awning, a posted warning over lawn grass that was three inches high (Annie measured), restrictions on whether Adam could move into the park, restrictions on whether they could move into a different trailer in the park, constant bullying and threats of eviction for non-existent or minor park infractions, items from residents’ yards stolen by workers contracted by the park, an order to remove their fence and to pay the park \$200, being overcharged on their water bill by \$150 in one month (Annie tracked their meter readings), retaliation for reaching out to Broomfield authorities for relief, and threats not to release her \$450 deposit over an accusation she owed \$30 for a gas bill incurred after she moved out.

“One of my neighbors had given the park six months’ notice, in writing, for when she planned to move her trailer out of the park,” Annie recalls. “And the moment they split her trailer and were getting ready to move it out, [the park manager], blocked her in and demanded \$1,500.”

Annie decided to go back to school to help their family make ends meet. She earned her degree in computer science and networking from Everest College in 2008, and got her first quality assurance/software analyst job in Aurora in 2013. Later, she worked full-time contract jobs with Time-Warner Cable (now Charter Communications), and Level 3 Communications (now Centurylink).

On the home front, Annie joined and later helped lead the Colorado Mobile Home Residents' Alliance (COMHRA). When she started [advocating](#) for her family and their neighbors at Front Range and other parks, things got worse. "I had a target on my back. Plus, we could never get through to the [Front Range] office. If we did, it was to leave a message and they would never call back. Ever."

In 2018, Annie found a lump during a self-check, but she ignored it. Things got so stressful with Front Range management, that the Weatherfords eventually felt they had no choice but to move. That October, Adam's parents sold them their three-bedroom, two-bathroom single-family house in Thornton, at well below market value. (Adam's parents decided to become "snowbirds" in Arizona during the winter and spend their summers in a basement apartment with its own entrance at a relative's house in Elizabeth, Colo.)

Annie was diagnosed with Stage 1 breast cancer in June 2019. Thankfully, she had been working at her first full-time-with-benefits quality assurance job with the Louisville, Colo., engineering firm Cardinal Peak. "They were fantastically supportive," Annie says, detailing the flowers, meal trains, care packages and gift cards her coworkers sent during her surgeries and subsequent recovery.

While things worked out for the Weatherfords — Adam works on the floor crew at CU-Boulder, Annie's cancer is in full remission and she now works as a software analyst for Ball Aerospace — they never wanted to leave Broomfield. "I miss it," Annie says. "I was homesick for Broomfield for probably the first year and a half. I've heard of cities kicking these big management companies out. So why can't we do that with Kingsley or any other big company that abuses their residents like that?"



Even nearby [Federal Heights](#), home to 14,282 people, a population density of 8,099 people per square mile, and a recent [ranking as Colorado's No. 1 most affordable community](#), has been affected by the ongoing housing squeeze.

In 2020, three weeks before interstate travel temporarily shut down due to the COVID pandemic, retired corporate trainers Donna Green and her wife, Nick Nicholson, moved to Canton, Ohio, because [they could no longer afford](#) their mobile home lot rent at Holiday Hills Village on 92nd Avenue. They had lived in Holiday Hills for five years and made their ends meet on fixed incomes plus occasional earnings from odd jobs. Over time, though, they realized their ability to do extra work, and their rent and cost of living were going in opposite directions.

Donna, the only person I've ever heard dramatically recite *from memory* Edgar Allan Poe's poem "[The Raven](#)," says, "We would have stayed. We wanted to stay, absolutely, but we couldn't. It was traffic congestion, it was the economy, it was lot rent, it was crime, just all one big tornado of stuff that hit us all at one time."

Since Donna and Nick were part of The Refuge faith community, they looked at mobile home parks in Broomfield and other North Metro Area suburbs, but found them to be either comparable in costs and fees or lacking the peace and quiet they had mostly enjoyed in their age-55-or-over Holiday Hills neighborhood.

"It's not like we're a straight white married couple, so we had to take a lot of other factors into account," Donna says. "We're senior citizens. We're a biracial couple. We're lesbians with children and grandchildren. That's a lot of potential hate crimes right there if you're in the wrong neighborhood. What we loved about Denver was nobody cared who we were, except for the little pockets that you have to look out for."

"I remember [a recent CBS story](#) prompted, I think, by Black Lives Matter, as in 'Why are you bringing up stuff [i.e. slavery] that happened 400 years ago?' They interviewed a Black lady named Alicia Ford who, when she was just 11 years old in 1964, her parents Corbett and Sallye Rachal tried to buy a 4-bedroom house in Bergen County, New Jersey. They were successful salespeople and they wanted to settle in. They had a hidden camera and they went from real estate office to real estate office, and got different excuses as to why they couldn't look at the homes they were interested in. 'Oh, that home sold,' 'I'll have to call the homeowner, and ask if it's okay,' 'Well, I think this other home would be more your style or liking.' They ended up moving to Florida where Alicia still lived as an adult, and where her three kids lived. She said in essence 'My parents never gained the real estate equity that would have been part of my inheritance, or the resources to borrow on or capitalize on or rent out or improve on a home or pass on generational equity. Ours is just one family that happened to.'

"The New Jersey home the Rachals wanted to buy is now worth almost \$1 million."

"If the Rachals had gotten that home, Alicia and her boys would have equity, credit, resources. This is all the result of what happened less than 60 years ago."



It's one thing when former residents choose to leave their long-time hometown for a better job or a better opportunity elsewhere. It is quite another when they're compelled to leave, for whatever reason. "Broomfield Tomorrow," is still several sections away, but it offers tangible solutions to these realities. Here's a Part 3 teaser, by way of a question: What if Broomfielders facing these sorts of hardships didn't have to move to find relief?

GLOSSARY

No matter how we pay for (or don't pay for) our places of residence, the shelter they provide sustains our lives. The relative availability, affordability, livability and amenities (internal and external) of our residences and our wider community help determine how well, or whether, we're able to thrive. In that sense, housing is really pretty basic.

In other ways, however, it's not basic at all. It's so multi-layered, complex and inter-connected with different aspects of our way of life, that my housing-expert colleague Ian Fletcher of [Community Solutions](#) often stresses the importance of "level setting" — the act of establishing a mutual understanding among parties — to lay the groundwork for discussion of perceived challenges and potential responses.

Glossaries usually reside at the end of reports like this, but housing vocabulary is so dense that I'm including mine here in the middle, lest, on our journey together, we lose our way. Like most professionalized arenas of modern society, the housing assistance industry has its own language, and I still sometimes get lost in its landscape of acro-technicalities: "Our CoC MDHI posted an RFP about our PEH, COL, AMI, and our need for TH." (The whole thing is so SOS and WTH, BTW, it's enough to need some CBD — or THC!)

- At-Risk/Cost-Burdened — These roughly equivalent terms are used by government agencies and housing advocates to measure housing stability. Households that spend 30-50 percent of their income on their housing are considered to be "moderately" cost-burdened or "at-risk" of housing instability. Households that spend more than 50 percent of their income on housing are considered to be "severely" cost-burdened or "at-risk" of homelessness.
- Built For Zero (BFZ) — A national campaign facilitated by Community Solutions that partners with regional and local stakeholders to measurably end homelessness, one sub-group and one community at a time.
- By Name List (BNL) — An on-the-ground, dignity-affirming feature of the BFZ effort that streamlines local and regional efforts to help people who are unhoused take positive steps toward permanent housing.
- Congregant Shelter — A term used for emergency and transitional programs that offer shared sleeping space for people in need.
- Consumer Price Index (CPI) — A weighted, "average market basket" of consumer goods and services purchased by households. Used to track prices over time.
- Continuum of Care (CoC) — A group that organizes and delivers housing and housing-related services for people who are unhoused, including outreach, intake and assessment, emergency shelter, transitional housing and permanent housing.

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development ([HUD](#)), “A CoC should be composed of representatives of organizations including: non-profit homeless providers, victim service providers, faith-based organizations, governments, businesses, advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals, universities, affordable housing developers, law enforcement, organizations that serve homeless and formerly homeless veterans, and homeless and formerly homeless persons.” Our CoC lead agency is the Metro Denver Homeless Initiative ([MDHI](#)).

- [Cost of Living](#) (COL) — Measures what it takes financially to maintain a certain lifestyle standard in a particular geographic area.
- [Eviction](#) — The legal removal of a tenant by a landlord or property manager.
- [Foreclosure](#) — The legal process by which a lender recovers its loaned balance from a homeowner in default via the forced sale of the home.
- [Functional Zero](#) — BFZ’s stated [goal](#) for homelessness in a community. No program can completely eliminate the possibility of anyone ever becoming unhoused, but a community that achieves “functional zero” means homelessness there is rare, brief and non-recurring.
- [Housing Authority](#) — A city- or county-level organization that oversees the provision of affordable housing.
- [Housing First](#) — Prioritizes [permanent](#) housing for people experiencing homelessness in the belief that meeting their basic need for shelter before things like employment or recovery, gives them a better chance at ongoing stability.
- [Lease](#) — A legal contract where a tenant pays a landowner for the time-defined use of a residence in return for a landowner’s promise to maintain livable conditions.
- [Living Wage](#) — A “theoretical [income level](#) that allows individuals or families to afford adequate shelter, food, and other necessities...and prevent them from falling into poverty. Economists suggest it should be enough to ensure that no more than 30% of this income gets spent on housing. As such, living wages are often substantially higher than the legal minimum wage.”
- [Market-Rate](#) — “The ‘[going rate](#)’ for goods or services is the usual price charged for them in a free market. If demand goes up, manufacturers and laborers will tend to respond by increasing the price they require, thus setting a higher market rate. When demand falls, market rates also tend to fall.”

- Mortgage — A “legal [agreement](#) by which a bank or similar organization lends you money to buy a house, etc., and you pay the money back over a particular number of years; the sum of money that you borrow.”
- Multi-Family Residence (MFR) — Housing with separate residential units, stacked on top of each other or next to each other, within one building or complex. Examples include apartment buildings, condominiums, townhomes and cohousing.
- NIMBY — Stands for “Not In My BackYard,” a sentiment expressed at times by residents adjacent to proposed temporary, transitional or affordable housing.
- Non-Congregant Shelter — A term used for emergency and transitional programs that offer separate living spaces for people in need of shelter.
- People Experiencing Homelessness (PEH) — See below for two government definitions of who qualifies as “homeless.”
- Request For Proposal (RFP) — Housing lingo for an organization’s public solicitation of bids for contractors to complete a certain project.
- Single-Family Residence (SFR) — A stand-alone, detached dwelling.
- Transitional Housing (TH) — HUD defines this as “[temporary housing](#) with supportive services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness with the goal of interim stability and support to successfully move to and maintain permanent housing. TH projects can cover housing costs and accompanying supportive services for participants for up to 24 months.”

Two of the most common standards used by advocates and housing providers, alike, are “area median income” or AMI, and the “30-Percent Rule.” If all local household income figures were lined up in a row, the exact middle figure would be the AMI — our’s is \$111,400 (plus or minus \$11,467), according to a 2019 U.S. Census Bureau [estimate](#). The [30-percent rule](#) comes from a [1969 federal law](#) that capped rent in public housing projects at a quarter of a family’s income. In 1981, Congress increased the cap to 30 percent, which remains the rule of thumb for housing affordability and housing stability. That is, each family should spend no more than 30 percent of their income on housing-related expenses. For example, if a household earns \$100,000 per year combined, the maximum amount they should spend on rent/mortgage payments, insurance, fees, utilities and maintenance is \$2,500 per month.

AMI and the 30-Percent Rule inform the main segments of our local housing spectrum:

- Affordable Housing — Refers to programs and residences considered “affordable” for households earning less than or equal to 60 percent AMI or roughly \$60,000 per year in Broomfield (if we lowball our AMI at \$100,000). These households typically rent their homes.

- Workforce Housing — Refers to residences considered “affordable” for households that earn 61-120 percent AMI or between \$61,000-120,000 per year. Some households in this category rent their homes and some own their homes, so households in this category are sometimes called the “missing middle.” (Please note: All my references to “affordable and attainable” housing also incorporate 61-80 AMI units and households.)
- Attainable Housing — Refers to residences considered “affordable” for households that earn 80-120 percent AMI or between \$80,000-120,000 per year. These households typically own their homes.
- Market-Rate Housing — Applies to the majority of Broomfield residences, for which mortgage valuation and rent payments are based on current real estate numbers. The “affordability” of these residences depends on market forces and skews toward the higher end of our housing spectrum and beyond.

Because the federal government finances most state, regional and local efforts to address housing instability and homelessness, most state, regional and local agencies who administer those efforts accept and enforce two definitions of what it means to be “homeless” — one by HUD and one by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987.

HUD

There are “[four categories](#) of the homeless definition” according to this U.S. cabinet-level, executive branch department:

1. Literally Homeless — An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:
 - Has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not meant for human habitation; or
 - Is living in a publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state and local government programs); or
 - Is exiting an institution where (s)he has resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution.
2. Imminent Risk of Homelessness — An individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that:
 - Residence will be lost within 14 days of the date of application for homeless assistance;

- No subsequent residence has been identified; and
- The individual or family lacks the resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing.

This category includes individuals and families who are within 14 days of losing their housing, including housing they own, rent, are sharing with others, or are living in without paying rent.

3. Homeless Under Other Federal Statutes — Unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families with Category 3 children and youth, who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition, but who:

- Are defined as homeless under the other listed federal statutes;
- Have not had a lease, ownership interest in permanent housing during the 60 days prior to the homeless assistance application;
- Have experienced persistent instability as measured by two moves or more during in the preceding 60 days; and,
- Can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time due to special needs or barriers.

Note: HUD has not authorized any CoC to serve “the homeless” under Category 3.

4. Fleeing/Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence — Any individual or family who:

- Is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence;
- Has no other residence; and
- Lacks the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing.

“Domestic Violence includes dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or family member that either takes place in, or him or her afraid to return to, their primary nighttime residence (including human trafficking).”

According to [HUD Exchange](#) the definition of chronically homeless is:

- A homeless individual with a disability as defined in section 401(9) of the McKinney-Vento Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11360(9)), who:
 - Lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter, and
 - Has been homeless and living as described for at least 12 months* or on at least 4 separate occasions in the last 3 years, as long as the combined occasions equal at least 12 months and each break in homelessness separating the occasions included at least 7 consecutive nights of not living as described.

- An individual who has been residing in an institutional care facility, including jail, substance abuse or mental health treatment facility, hospital, or other similar facility, for fewer than 90 days and met all of the criteria of this definition before entering that facility**; or
- A family with an adult head of household (or, if there is no adult in the family, a minor head of household) who meets all of the criteria of this definition, including a family whose composition has fluctuated while the head of household has been homeless.

*A “break” in homeless is considered to be 7 or more nights.

**An individual residing in an institutional care facility does not constitute a break in homelessness.”

Additionally, HUD defines three categories of people “[at risk of homelessness](#)” (not to be confused with “imminent risk” of homelessness, detailed above):

Category 1

1. An individual or family who:
 - Has an annual income below 30 percent of AMI;
2. Does not have sufficient resources or support networks, (e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks), immediately available to prevent them from moving to an emergency shelter or another place as already described; and
3. Meets one of the following conditions:
 - Has moved because of economic reasons two or more times during the 60 days immediately preceding the application for homelessness prevention assistance;
 - Is living in the home of another because of economic hardship;
 - Has been notified in writing that their right to occupy their current housing or living situation will be terminated within 21 days after the date of application for assistance;
 - Lives in a hotel or motel and the cost of the hotel or motel stay is not paid by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals;
 - Lives in a single-room occupancy or efficiency apartment unit in which there reside more than two persons or lives in a larger housing unit in which there reside more than 1.5 persons reside per room, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau;
 - Is exiting a publicly funded institution, or system of care (such as a health-care facility, a mental health facility, foster care or other youth facility, or correction program or institution); or

- Otherwise lives in housing that has characteristics associated with instability and an increased risk of homelessness.

Category 2

A child or youth who does not qualify as “homeless” under this section, but qualifies as “homeless” under Section 387(3) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5732a(3)), Section 637(11) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9832(11)), Section 41403(6) of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 14043e– 2(6)), Section 330(h)(5)(A) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b(h)(5)(A)), Section 3(m) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012(m)), or Section 17(b)(15) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786(b)(15)).

Category 3

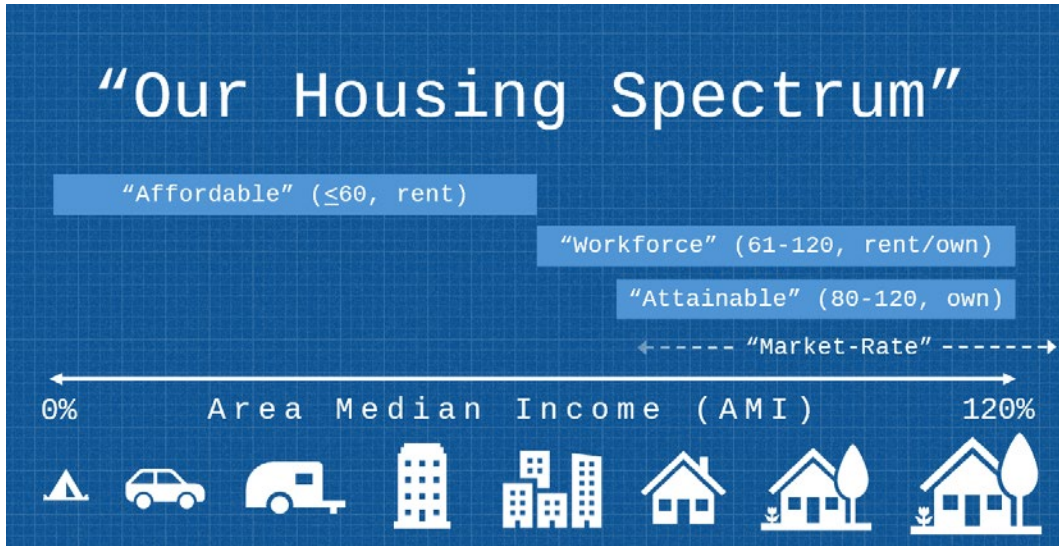
A child or youth who does not qualify as “homeless” under this section, but qualifies as “homeless” under Section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a(2)), and the parent(s) or guardian(s) of that child or youth if living with her or him.

McKinney-Vento

Through several iterations and reauthorizations since 1987, Congress has recognized “the Nation faces an immediate and unprecedented crisis due to the lack of shelter for a growing number of individuals and families, including elderly persons, handicapped persons, families with children, Native Americans, and veterans,” and defined homeless children as “individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence [including]:

- a. Children sharing housing due to economic hardship or loss of housing;
- b. Children living in “motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camp grounds due to lack of alternative accommodations”;
- c. Children living in “emergency or transitional shelters”;
- d. Children whose primary nighttime residence is not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation (e.g. park benches, etc.); and,
- e. Children living in “cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, sub-standard housing, bus or train stations.”

For obvious reasons, public school districts nationwide have become the primary stewards of McKinney- Vento-related programs.



RESIDENCES

The series of eight images at the bottom of the housing spectrum diagram (above) represent the different forms of shelter-housing in current use by residents of Broomfield.



My best estimate from incorporating the above definitions and comparing local agency datasets is that *at least* 200 residents at any one time are experiencing homelessness in Broomfield. They include people sleeping outside, in tents, in vehicles, in places not intended for human habitation (storage units, abandoned buildings, dumpsters), and people temporarily sleeping on friends’ or family members’ couches. They include adults and children. They include people who identify as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and people who identify as LGBTQ+. They include veterans, seniors, people with disabilities, unaccompanied minors, students at local schools, single moms and their kids, and victims of abuse.

Some of them have been unhoused for years. Some have experienced multiple episodes of homelessness. Some find themselves on the street for the first time. Most have strong ties to Broomfield, meaning before they lost their housing, they grew up here, lived or worked here, had their last permanent address here, or they or their kids went to school

here. Most work at low-paying service, retail, construction or janitorial jobs, although many have worked as engineers, carpenters, electricians, truck drivers, entrepreneurs or business executives.

I say “some,” “most” and “many,” because the vicious cycle of suburban homelessness makes statistical precision difficult. It goes like this. *Deny* we have a problem. When the problem becomes undeniable, *deny* the responsibility for and capability of addressing it. Send the affected elsewhere ASAP for plausible deniability. And around and around we go.

Point-In-Time

Includes people who were unhoused but “sheltered” on the night of Feb. 25, 2021, in Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas and Jefferson counties	2020	2021	Difference	Percent Change (+/-)
Newly Homeless	1,273	2,530	+1,257	+99%
Chronic Homeless	901	1,035	+134	+15%
Veterans	462	418	-44	-10%
Families	1,411	1,548	+137	+10%
Individuals	3,126	3,958	+832	+27%
Unaccompanied Youth	188	180	-8	-4%
Emergency Shelter	2,911	4,072	+1,161	+40%
Transitional Housing	1,582	1,426	-156	-10%
Safe Haven	50	32	-18	-36%
Non-Nursing Home and Non-Chronic	2,369	2,120	-249	-11%
Total Sheltered Count	4,543	5,530	+987	+22%

Source: [Metro Denver Homeless Initiative](#). PIT counts have routinely and significantly underestimated our overall number of unhoused residents since 2013. Local advocates instead aggregate the alternative metrics listed below when estimating our current number of residents experiencing homelessness. No more accurate estimates currently exist. Hopefully, the 2022 Denver Metro Area PIT count’s new methodology and the nationwide [Built For Zero](#) effort will yield more precise measures of local homelessness.

Local resources for residents who lose their home are, to put it kindly, intentionally sparse, forcing them to seek shelter and help in [Denver](#) or [Boulder](#) and conveniently removing the eyesore of their persons from our premises. When they arrive at perhaps the most vulnerable moment of their lives, we wash our hands of them, and tacitly pass them off into the care of an already inadequate and overwhelmed network of regional shelters. What’s worse, in our collective irresponsibility as a community, we have over the last several decades, paid just \$32,245 to the Boulder Shelter for the Homeless and \$0 to Denver shelters or the City and County of Denver for the care and support of those we no longer count as our own. All local safety net agencies combined employ only a handful of full-time housing program workers. For our community of 74,112-and-counting people.

We love metrics when they suit our purposes, but like many other suburban communities, when they reflect poorly on us and our bottom lines, we deny, deny, deny. Voilà, Broomfielders become another community’s responsibility. If those experiencing homelessness themselves didn’t often find ways to return to the place they still call home, we would almost be able to pretend as if they had never lived here at all.



Our Unhoused Neighbors

Broomfield Residents (Including Children)	2019	2020	2021
Broomfield Cares Outreach Van (started August 2021)	not applicable	not applicable	15
Broomfield FISH	145	204	214
Broomfield Safe Parking Initiative (started Spring 2020)	not applicable	20	51
Clinica Family Health	62	not available	84
Code Blue Warming Center/Hotel Voucher Program	21	42	45
McKinney Vento, Adams-12 Five Star School District	*112	*67	*70
McKinney Vento, Boulder Valley School District students	*37	*47	*19
Total (includes an undetermined number of interagency duplications)	377	380	498

* These McKinney-Vento fall school-year counts do not include the standard multiplier of 2.5 household members per student. The Jeffco School District did not release its Broomfield numbers for this report.

Sources: Lisle Reed, coordinator of Whole Child Initiatives, Adams 12 Five Star Schools; Ema Lyman, McKinney Vento specialist, Boulder Valley School District; Broomfield Department of Human Services; Broomfield FISH; Janine Lange, case manager, Broomfield Safe Parking; Jennifer Snyder, vice president of Process Improvement, Clinica Family Health; and The Refuge.

Several springs ago during a severe late-afternoon snowstorm, my Refuge Café colleagues and I were in the middle of triaging shelter options for our unhoused friends when a 30s-ish man named Jason arrived, soaking wet. His tent in Broomfield had collapsed and he was soaked to the bone. He literally had nowhere to go. The weather forecast called for more snow and overnight temperatures in the low teens. Regional shelters were already full. The Refuge's landlord didn't (and doesn't) allow overnight indoor stays or overnight parking and Jason didn't have a car anyway. He only carried a small drawstring shower bag with a few belongings, because his regular pack and his wallet with it had recently been stolen. Having heard about the Café, he asked for a change of clothes and a motel room for the night. We already knew most of them require a current photo ID, so we concentrated on others on our well used list. Finally, a non-Broomfield motel agreed to accept a copy of Jason's expired ID, which he happened to have with him, and accept payment over the phone. We Ubered Jason there. Before long, I got a call from D., the motel's shift manager, who informed me he had canceled Jason's reservation and that he was refunding my money. Apparently, C., the front desk attendant who made our reservation and accepted our payment was new and he hadn't yet learned all the motel's policies. I asked to speak to D.'s boss, and eventually got transferred to C., the motel owner. He ultimately agreed to lodge Jason if I drove there in person to present my actual plastic state-issued ID and my actual plastic church debit card to his shift manager D. No online transaction, emailed photos or phone payment would suffice, even though they already had all my information. "Doesn't your church have rules?" C. asked, before signing off with "God bless." It took a while, but I eventually presented my person, my ID and my card at the hotel's front desk. Jason only had to wait for two and a half hours before he was able to get into a room for the night.

That motel wasn't unique. It followed industry standards, and if anything, it was more flexible than its competitors. But shouldn't our systems and procedures and policies exist for people instead of the other way around?



When residents fall through the cracks of both their individual and community support systems and find themselves without housing, their lives become precariously fluid. Many initially access regional shelter resources through the VA, Denver's network of shelters or Boulder's "coordinated entry," but they often return. Some request help from agencies like BDHS, Broomfield FISH or the Refuge. Some don't.

It took three years from the beginning of his "episode" of homelessness for my friend and qualified Air Force veteran Rodney Inskeep to become permanently housed through the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program. A year and a half after his most recent application, he moved out of the back of his truck and into temporary housing in the form of six months in a hotel room shared with roaches, bedbugs and a volatile roommate. Rod and his wife, Carol, finally moved into a one-bedroom Westminster apartment last Sept. 3.

Everyone's situation-while-unhoused is unique, which is why cookie-cutter [approaches](#) to sheltering and evaluating levels of vulnerability often prove less than helpful to people seeking help. But just for the heck of it, here's what a week of suburban homelessness might look like for "Fifty-One," a composite character I've created from people I've known over the years. Fifty-One got his name from a fellow unhoused companion on his 51st birthday. In his 40s, Fifty-One endured a series of personal tragedies, some self-inflicted, some not, that eventually put him on the street. He has family in the area but only keeps in touch with his older sister. He's lived outside, in shelters, and here and there for five years. Fifty-One starts off his week with an overnight stay at a friend's house, then spends two nights outside with his unhoused friends in a different suburb. The next day, he shoulders his frayed backpack and takes a two-hour bus ride to yet another suburb for three days of temporary construction work. He works hard and practices his Spanish. He camps out near the job site on his first night there, and rides the bus all night on the next night. When the job is done, his foreman offers him cash for only two days' work. He argues but eventually takes the cash. The next day, he takes a two-and-a-half-hour bus ride back to his regular haunts, and finds a new half-hidden, half-sheltered spot for his one-man tent. He sleeps there for a few nights. Just after dark on the second night, his cell phone dies. He leaves his spot for half an hour to charge the phone at a nearby outdoor outlet, but when he returns, his tent and backpack, which contained his ID have disappeared — either stolen, discarded or confiscated, Fifty-One isn't sure which. He endures a fitful night of sleep. The next morning, he is told three times in quick succession to "move on" — first, by a resident walking her dog, next by the manager of a nearby business who told him he was trespassing, and last by local authorities, who run Fifty-One's self-reported data through their system, give him with a one-page sheet entitled "Resources in [you-fill-in-the-blank suburb]," and order him to move along.

	CITY AND COUNTY OF BROOMFIELD <small>One DesCombes Drive • Broomfield, CO 80020 • 303.438.3301 • www.broomfield.org</small>	<small>Main: 303.438.6400 Fax: 303.438.6490 Website: www.broomfield.org</small>
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7-DAY NOTICE

Pursuant to Broomfield Municipal Code (BMC) § 9-52-010, with consent of the property owner, the City and County of Broomfield will:

ON: November 11, 2021

REMOVE ALL ITEMS LOCATED IN APPROXIMATE AREA OF
250 E. 1st Avenue
Broomfield, CO 80020

If these items are not removed within 48 hours of the date below and are unattended, the City and County of Broomfield will remove and dispose of them on November 11, 2021.

POSTED: 11/4/21
(Date)

By: _____
(Print name)

Our 200-plus unhoused residents represent only 0.27 percent of our total population, but it's an especially significant quarter-percent, because it embodies the visible tip of our proverbial iceberg of housing instability. Our local, relatively small iceberg, in turn, is one of many interconnected [regional icebergs](#) of instability that originate from a gigantic, nationwide glacier of housing instability. Denver's less-than-successful camping ban, [arrests](#) and "sweeps" of people who are unhoused, the ongoing global pandemic, and other distressing economic and social factors have made the reality of homelessness more visible than ever [in every county](#) and most municipalities in our region.

Due to COVID transmission concerns, the Metro Denver Homeless Initiative canceled its planned, "unsheltered" 2021 Point in Time (PIT) count, but on Feb. 25, 2021, area partners still counted 5,530 unhoused people staying in emergency shelters, transitional housing and safe havens in the Metro Denver Area. That included 26 people with "strong ties to Broomfield," who were temporarily "sheltered" through the Code Blue Hotel Voucher program.



In the fall of 2019, Marianna Williamson of the Broomfield Community Foundation and Steve Cuss and Nancy Movick of Discovery Christian Church were among those who initiated a community conversation about how to support and resource Broomfield Police Department (BPD) patrol officers when they contact unsheltered people. Part of that discussion revolved around the concern that someone might [die from exposure](#) during the upcoming winter. Local stakeholders started to organize. City council soon (unanimously) passed an amendment to Broomfield's municipal code to allow local faith communities to offer temporary shelter. Staff from the City Manager's Office (CMO), Emergency Services, Public Works and other departments, worked with non-profit and community partners to gather supplies, cots, welcome kits, trailer storage and much more. The North Metro Fire Rescue District and Broomfield Code Compliance expedited facility inspections. It all coalesced into the Code Blue Warming Center, a volunteer-fueled effort to provide a safe place for our unhoused neighbors to sleep on extremely cold nights. That winter, Code Blue hosted 21 different people, in turn, at three local faith communities: Salvation Army, Broomfield United Methodist Church and Holy Comforter Episcopal Church. Lutheran Church of Hope signed on to host, too, but then COVID hit.

On Monday, March 16, 2020, the CCOB declared a local [state of emergency](#) to stop the spread of the virus. On March 25, the governor issued a statewide "stay-at-home" [order](#), but of course that wasn't an option for people without housing. With "congregant"

sheltering options like warming centers no longer safe for guests or volunteers, Code Blue joined emergency sheltering programs nationwide by turning to the “non-congregant” option of hotel vouchers. Local faith communities raised \$14,250 in just over two weeks to bolster an already existing, small-scale, emergency hotel voucher effort inherited by FISH and the BPD after the Emergency Family Assistance Association ([EFAA](#)) left Broomfield [in 2017](#). Those funds successfully sheltered 29 of our neighbors until the COVID-prompted statewide public health order expired.

Last winter, with \$74,905 of combined COVID emergency relief grant funding from Broomfield FISH and the CCOB, Code Blue sheltered 48 unduplicated guests with strong connections to Broomfield on 106 nights meeting our cold weather threshold. The added bonus — we kept our Broomfield hotel partner from having to lay off or furlough its staff due to diminished demand for corporate lodging.

This winter, [Code Blue](#) has had renewed funding, enhanced wraparound services and accountability for recipients, and an additional intake site. We’re also exploring future partnerships with Adams County and Jefferson County agencies.

These things should go without saying, but common [assumptions](#) make them necessary to say again. Each and every one of our neighbors who is unhoused is a human being. Each and every one of their lives has inherent worth. They, too, bear God’s image. They, too, are someone’s child, sibling, parent, relative, friend or coworker.



The 1989 baseball-themed film *Field of Dreams* was nominated for three Oscars and features the famous disembodied whisper, “If you build it, he will come.” For some reason, that conditional statement about a cornfield, “Shoeless” Joe Jackson and the main character’s father, has become an automatic refrain when it comes to safe camping, temporary and transitional shelter efforts and affordable housing, as in, “If we offer more resources, we’ll be overrun by tent cities! We don’t want them dirtying our streets, spreading disease and crime, damaging our property values, and siphoning off resources better spent elsewhere. Damn anyone in sympathy with ‘the needy’ or ‘the homeless!’”

I suspect many housed residents don’t know a single unhoused person yet somehow maintain strong opinions about the motivations, character and life circumstances of “the homeless,” as in, “The ‘unhoused’ and ‘the poor’ choose that lifestyle,” “They panhandle because they don’t want to work a real job,” “They’re just scamming the system,” “They talk to themselves because they’re crazy,” “They spend all their money on drugs or alcohol,” and my personal favorite, “If you care so much, let them stay at your house/on your street/in your neighborhood.”

Those [stereotypes](#) aren't helpful. They foment fear of "the Other," put neighbors at odds and hinder humanitarian efforts like Code Blue. We all need to ask ourselves how we would have navigated the COVID pandemic if we had to sleep in a car or a tent or an occasional hotel room at night. We also need to recognize the following on-the-ground realities:

- The number of people who reported experiencing first-time homelessness in our region [nearly doubled](#) between 2020 and 2021.
- There have been people living unhoused in Broomfield for decades. They've just mostly obeyed the unspoken rules of suburban homelessness and stayed out of sight while sleeping in vehicles, parking lots, playground structures, under bridges and overpasses, and in various out-of-the-way open spaces.
- Very few, if any, people experiencing homelessness in Broomfield "choose" that lifestyle.
- More than half of Broomfield's roofly challenged residents have traditional, although usually low-paying, jobs. Temporary pandemic-prompted, back-to-work grants administered by the [Broomfield Workforce Center](#) are helping a handful of unhoused, unemployed residents get back on their feet.
- Most non-working people experiencing homelessness have disabilities, health conditions or criminal records that make it difficult to find a job or earn a living wage once they find work.
- Our system is fraught with disincentives to work. Eligible residents often receive more in benefits than they could earn at a minimum-wage job or they lose important benefits as soon as they start working. Minimum wage earnings from an entry-level job might suffice for a teenager living under her parents' roof, but they're not nearly enough for a working adult to stably rent even a market-rate room in a single-family Broomfield dwelling.
- People who are unsheltered spend the majority of their time at the base of Maslow's hierarchy of needs — planning their next meal, waiting in line, fixing a torn tent, riding the bus or walking places, waiting in line, paying for their next bus pass or tank of gas, replacing tattered clothes, waiting in line. They work hard minute by minute and hour by hour, just to survive, and often don't have the mental, emotional or physical energy to do more.
- Because they lack the easy access to a shower and a clean wardrobe that most of us assume by right, people who are unhoused find alternative ways to bathe, such as using wet wipes or quick wet-downs at sinks of opportunity. Every day at the Refuge Café, we see how something as simple as a shower and a clean change of clothes helps our guests feel more human. Because we're not open seven days a week, we refer on off-days to Broomfield faith communities that offer showers by appointment and distribute CCOB rec center shower vouchers for use during specific low-use time blocks.

- Washing their clothes clean is a constant struggle for roofly challenged residents. There is only one laundromat in Broomfield. It's located in the Mountview strip mall on 120th Avenue, alongside a liquor store, a loan-and-pawn shop and other specialty shops.
- Some people who are unhoused do stand at local intersections with handwritten placards asking for help. They call that "flying a sign." Like some housed residents of our community, some people who are unhoused do struggle with [mental illness](#), substance abuse, and the after effects of trauma.
- Some people experiencing homelessness have family in the area, but aren't able to stay with or rely on them for a host of reasons.
- Many of our unhoused neighbors have never abused drugs or alcohol, or if they have, they're actively seeking sobriety. Sadly, some of them don't succeed. [My first Sweep Report's](#) p. 29-article entitled "Blown to Broomfield" featured a couple named Mercy and Dustin Johnson. Their real names were Mollie Ellender Bradlaw and Dennis Bradlaw. Mollie was a poet, a sometimes-unhoused resident of Broomfield and adjacent counties, and a beloved member of The Refuge community from 2011-2013. Both she and her husband, Dennis, likely died from heroin overdoses — Dennis on April 2, 2011, in Broomfield, and Mollie on April 9, 2013, in Westminster. They were 27 and 35, respectively, at the time of their deaths.
- Broomfield housing supports are not nearly robust enough to attract significant numbers of non-residents here. Contrary to current stereotypes of Broomfield as a uniformly well-to-do suburb, even in non-pandemic years the shelter-related challenges facing local residents routinely overwhelm the resources of local agencies attempting to meet them. (Our one exception: As of the end of 2021, our three [safe-spot parking](#) sites were the most of any city in Colorado.)
- Even if our resources were as extensive as they could and should be, most people who become unhoused prefer to stay in or near the community they last called home.
- Suburban service providers are increasingly recognizing the synergistic and reciprocal benefits of low-barrier partnerships with neighboring communities. It's not just about Broomfield anymore, it's about Broomfield *and beyond*. We can provide more than referrals to non-Broomfield residents who happen to find themselves in need here, because we know agencies elsewhere are doing the same (and have been) for Broomfielders who happen to find themselves in need there.
- A June 2017 National Alliance to End Homelessness [infosheet](#) listed the indirect cost to taxpayers of allowing people to remain "chronically" homeless at \$35,578 per year, compared to the direct cost of \$12,800 per year on average for permanently housing those same people.



[Paid storage facilities](#) have proliferated in Broomfield and nearby communities in recent years. This reflects housed residents' need for extra space, as well as, in my opinion, unhoused and housing unstable residents' need to store what heirlooms, furniture and other belongings are left to them. If they fail to pay their rent, the contents of their storage unit are often removed and sold at auctions. Source: Marrton Dormish.



Source: Heidi Henkel, for a fall 2021 Refuge Suburban Poverty Tour.

Most of the people I've known who are unhoused are like most of the people I've known who are housed — hard-working and inventive. David Mausner was stockpiling discarded electrical equipment to start a [Bombas](#)-like, one-for-one business benefiting people in need when he passed away. The last time I talked to him, he was advocating with the CCOB for a homebound friend who had just had a leg amputated and needed special accommodations. Brittany Markham's poor health constantly plagued her, but she never stopped striving in life or with her art. Randy Snyder was a trained electrician who helped us troubleshoot our decades-old electrical circuits at the Refuge facility.

Randy, Brittany and David, along with James Wasielewski, represent Broomfield's share of the hundreds of people who have [died](#) while unhoused in our wider area since 2019. Among those hundreds was Jessica Aldama, 33, "[of Colorado](#)" and her newborn baby, who passed away in Boulder last October.

A [recent analysis](#) of 20 U.S. urban areas by *The Guardian* and a University of Washington researcher found the number of deaths among people living without housing increased 30 percent in Denver and 77 percent overall from 2016-2020.



Thankfully, 99.73 percent of Broomfield households live in a residence intended for human habitation, from recreational vehicles and mobile homes to apartments, duplexes and condos, to single-family dwellings.

Regretfully, many Broomfield residents, especially those who earn less than the area median income, have been disproportionately destabilized by things like the trickle down effects of our state's [construction defects law](#), Boulder's [skyrocketing](#) housing sector and local, consolidation-adjacent, zoning-for-affluence fever. Since at least the late '90s, Broomfield has catered to successful corporations and financially resourced, equity-laden households (often from other states), making it reciprocally expedient to export residents who lose their housing and to ignore local housing instability. We have successfully sold ourselves as a safe, affluent, business- and family-friendly alternative to urban centers, keeping our bottom lines safely "in the black."

However, our preferential option for well-to-do residents has become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Executive-level residential development has boomed. We now have "market-rate" neighborhoods such as Anthem, Arista, Aspen Creek, Broadlands, Crofton Park, Harvest Station, McKay, Redleaf, Skyestone and Wildgrass, among

others. Many Broomfield homeowners who lost equity during the economic downturn of 2008-2011 have since recovered those losses and then some, as single-family housing values nationwide have more than doubled since 2001. As a result, families like the Gutierrez-Salases, the Weatherfords and the Green-Nicholsons have been “[priced out](#)” of our community.

Many low- to middle-income households — with working professional-residents like teachers, nurses, ministers, paramedics, firefighters and police officers, as well as Broomfield-raised graduates, retirees and disabled veterans on fixed incomes, households with intellectually and developmentally disabled (IDD) family members, and single-parent families — lack the financial margins of and opportunities available to their upper-middle-income and upper-income neighbors.

According to [2021 research](#) by LendingClub and PYMNTS, 77 percent of millennials (nearly 40 percent who earn more than \$100,000 per year) and 54 percent of all Americans live “paycheck to paycheck.” They struggle “to pay bills and are not saving enough amid [a] prolonged period of tepid wage growth and rising living costs.” Living paycheck to paycheck makes people especially vulnerable to unemployment, underemployment, [household debt](#), unexpected injury or illness, chronic health conditions, car problems, credit issues, issues with documentation, loss of benefits, legal troubles, substance abuse, wage garnishment and relational breakdowns.

Because many of these same individuals and families are also “cost-burdened” — that is, they spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing — they constantly struggle to make ends meet. Many, having seen the “handwriting on the wall,” move to a more affordable community. Those who stay risk one or two emergencies that could lead to [eviction](#), [emergency refinancing](#) or foreclosure in a matter of months.



The aftermath of a 2016 eviction in Broomfield.

Finding truly affordable housing is hard enough under “normal” circumstances. People with an eviction or foreclosure on their credit record, a disability, a criminal record, or one or more pets find it even harder.

Eight-year Broomfield resident Beatriz Gonzalez’s day job as a vice president of community lending and diverse markets at Bank of the West, combined with her lived experience of housing instability growing up, led to her appointment to the statewide Strategic Housing Working Group and the governor’s Eviction Prevention Task Force. She and other housing experts have recommended moratoriums on evictions and late fees during the pandemic, and explored ways to stabilize tenants *and* landlords, alike. As she noted in a September 2020 Zoom call with local stakeholders, “Some mom-and-pop landlords put their whole life savings into 1-4 units and count on rental income and social security to make ends meet.”

An [Oct. 14, 2021, tweet](#) by the Colorado Eviction Defense Project encapsulates the debate over COVID-related assistance and regulation: “Advocates: ‘People can’t pay rent!’ / Apartment Assoc.: ‘Yes they can’ / Gov: ‘This is serious.’ / Also gov: *Pays billions to cover unpaid rent* / Apartment Assoc: *Accepts billions in payments* / Also apartment Assoc: ‘People can pay- there’s no crisis.’”

Thankfully, metro-area evictions remain [below pre-pandemic levels](#). In Broomfield, 161 and 230 evictions (and only a handful of foreclosures) were filed in 2020 and 2021, respectively, compared to 485 in 2019. However, due to their lack of familiarity with the legal system, many households continue to “pre-evict themselves” as soon as they receive an eviction notice, meaning they vacate the premises before official proceedings begin. Although it means they forfeit their rental deposit, this prevents the letter “E” for “Eviction” from being added to their credit record. Anecdotally speaking, pre-eviction is the preferred method for removing non-paying or otherwise troublesome tenants, because it evades the hassle of official court proceedings. I say, “anecdotally speaking,” because I personally know families who left their Broomfield home in that way. To my knowledge, no current metrics track “pre-evictions.”

Residential Eviction Filings

2019	485
2020	161
2021	230

Source: Colorado Judicial Branch
Eviction Filings ([FED](#)).

Source: Colorado Department of
Local Affairs, Division of Housing,
[“Foreclosure Reports and Statistics.”](#)

Residential Foreclosure Filings

Broomfield County, Colorado	
2005	124
2007	246
2009	337
2011	213
2019	48
2020	13
2021 (through 1st quarter)	2

It takes a long time for working families to save enough money for a new rental deposit. As my colleague Jennifer Ramirez, a Broomfield single mom and non-profit worker in Broomfield, often says, “It’s expensive to be poor. There are a lot of late fees or overdraft fees, because you’re trying to get caught up all the time. If I’m \$5 short, it’s a \$45 credit card fee for paying a day late. If I’m late on a car payment that costs me an extra \$20. So not quite having enough money, when you’re living paycheck to paycheck, it’s hard to balance things. It costs you more money when you don’t have money.”

Knowing this, local family resource center Broomfield FISH and the CCOB have since the onset of the COVID pandemic allocated recovery and stimulus funds toward “keeping families housed.” In 2020, FISH distributed [\\$2 million](#) in rent and mortgage assistance to 673 residents, served 12,601 people or 17 percent of Broomfield residents through its various programs and noted that its client-households spent, on average, more than 70 percent of their combined income on housing. According to executive director Dayna Scott, FISH distributed more than \$2 million in housing assistance to more than 1,200 Broomfielders in fiscal year 2021, thanks to a grant contract with the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) and other funds.

For its part, the CCOB received more than 150 coronavirus assistance applications and [awarded](#) \$313,500 to 72 businesses from March-May 2020. According to Broomfield’s director of human services, Dan Casey, the city also distributed \$103,893.14 in “Bridge the Gap” rent and mortgage assistance to more than 60 residents between March and June of 2020. The CCOB’s ongoing Tenant-Based Rental Assistance ([TBRA](#)) program, managed by the indomitable Sharon Farrell, subsidizes two years of rent for qualified, working families. TBRA uses funds from the Boulder-Broomfield Housing Consortium, which originate from the federal government, to help 8-10 families at a time work toward self-sufficiency. The program is currently seeking new participants who meet its [six criteria](#). Beyond TBRA, the Broomfield Housing Authority supports qualified [homeowners](#) with down payments and repairs.

The Broomfield Community Foundation, the St. Vincent de Paul Society hosted by Nativity of Our Lord Catholic Parish, Discovery Christian Church and other local, regional and state organizations and agencies also provide different forms of financial assistance to qualified residents. Ad-hoc help happens through other faith communities, area fraternal organizations, social media threads on Nextdoor and the Broomfield Moms Facebook page, and myriad local networks.



[Section 8](#) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 amended the Depression-era Housing Act of 1937 and created Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) to subsidize fair-market rent for qualified households. Initially, Section 8 funded “project-based” vouchers at specific locations. Later, it expanded to include “tenant-based” vouchers paid for by HUD and administered by public housing authorities. Tenant-based vouchers are portable — if a recipient moves, their voucher moves with them. Most housing authorities have long wait lists and periodically conduct lotteries for newly available vouchers.

Here's how they work: let's say the Smiths applied for and received a voucher last year. They earn \$2,100 per month and live in Jefferson County. Ordinarily they wouldn't be able to lease a \$1,200-a-month apartment, but their HCV makes it affordable. Each month, they pay their landlord \$630, which is 30 percent of their monthly income, while Jeffco's housing authority pays the remaining \$570.

According to long-time Broomfield housing program manager-turned-contract-employee Cheryl St. Clair, 60 or so Broomfield households hold housing vouchers issued by the Jefferson County and Boulder County housing authorities, the non-profit [IMAGINE!](#) and [Mental Health Partners](#). Broomfield also currently administers about [20 vouchers](#) for the Colorado Division of Housing (CDOH). Unlike other counties across Colorado and the United States, however, Broomfield does not receive *any* income-based housing voucher funds from the federal government. As in, \$0 per year. Broomfield's housing authority applied for Housing Choice funds after consolidation, but HUD wasn't, and still isn't, funding new voucher agencies. In fact, Congress has actually begun to reduce funding nationally for voucher program administration.



Our current inventory of affordable, workforce and attainable housing available to local households earning 120 percent AMI or less, is, in a word, sparse.

Academy Place (49 units), Anchor House (8 units), Habitat for Humanity-Neighborhood Stabilization Program ([NSP](#)) (3 units), Red Leaf (15 units) and Village Square Apartments (108 units) total 183 total units available to qualified members of the community-at-large. For seniors, Broomfield Greens (50 units), Cottonwood Senior Co-living, (8 rooms with bathrooms), Maryel Manor Senior Apartments (50 units), Town Centre Senior Apartments (88 units), and Silver Crest Senior Apartments (86 units) add another 282 units.

That comes out to a total of 465 current, attainable or affordable housing units for a community of 74,112-and-counting people. Assuming one unit per household,

attainable or affordable units represent an estimated 1.57 percent of our overall housing units. If we're feeling generous, we can round up to 2 percent, making it 1 of every 50 units.

The [2018 Broomfield Housing Needs Study](#), commissioned by the CCOB and conducted by BBC Research and Consulting, found:

- 3,691 renter households or 42 percent of Broomfield renting households are at least “moderately cost-burdened,” meaning they spend 30 or more of their income on housing, and,
- 3,480 households or 25 percent of all Broomfield households — 2,281 renter households and 1,199 owner households — are “severely cost-burdened,” meaning they spend 50 percent or more of their income on housing. This puts them at risk of homelessness due to their vulnerability to “temporary or even minor disruptions to their housing or income situations.”

That's a total of at least 4,890 moderately or severely cost-burdened households.

The Broomfield Housing Advisory Committee shared last year that 220 Broomfield senior households are among those severely cost-burdened Broomfielders. On-the-ground caseworkers have heard anecdotes of Broomfield seniors using almost their entire income on rent while foregoing things like food and underclothes.

According to the CCOB's 2018 Community Development Block Grant [Consolidated Plan Draft](#) for Public Comment, we have:

- A shortage of 1,382 units “affordable” to households earning less than \$35,000 per year, and,
- A shortage of 1,184 units “attainable” to families who earn more than \$75,000 per year.

That's a total shortage of 2,566 affordable and attainable units. If anything, our collective instability has worsened since 2018.

Mobile Home Communities

Name	Location	Number of Units
Broomfield Mobile Home Park	11800 Colmans Way	41
Cimarron Village	12205 N. Perry Street	327
Front Range Manufactured Home Community	2885 E. Midway Blvd.	578

Sources: ApartmentFinders.com, Apartments.com and BroomfieldVoice.com.

Affordable & Attainable Inventory**Completed Units**

Residents	Project Name	Location	Level of Affordability	# of Affordable/ Attainable Units	Rent/Own	Status
Open-to Any	Academy Place	7105 W 120 TH Ave	100% @ 60% AMI	49	Rent	Complete*
Young Adults Aging Out of Foster Care	Anchor House	1305 W 10 TH Ave	100% @ 60% AMI	8	Rent	Complete
Open-to Any- Qualifying- Households	Habitat for Humanity - NSP	North of 132 nd Ave, West of Zuni	100% @ 80% AMI	3	For Sale (Occupied)	Complete
Open-to Any- Qualifying- Households	Red Leaf	North of Broomfield Common Open Space	100% @ 80% AMI 80% AMI	15	For Sale (Occupied)	Complete
Open-to Any- Qualifying- Households	Village Square Apartments	615 Alter Street	100% @ 60% AMI	108	Rent	Complete
Completed Units Open-to-Any-Qualifying-Households				183		
Seniors	Broomfield Greens Senior Apartments	12451 Sheridan Bld	100% @ 60% AMI	50	Rent	Complete
Seniors	Cottonwood Senior Co-living	Northmoor	100% @ 60% AMI	8	Rent	Complete
Seniors	Maryel Manor Senior Apartments	12555 Sheridan	100% @ 60% AMI	50	Rent	Complete
Seniors	Silver Crest Senior Apartments	1110 E 10 th Ave	100% @ 60% AMI	86	Rent	Complete
Seniors	Town Centre Senior Apartments	999 E 1 st Ave	100% @ 60% AMI	88	Rent	Complete
Completed Units for Seniors				282		
TOTAL of Completed Units				465		

*New residents were still waiting to move in when this report went to print.

Affordable & Attainable Inventory (continued)**Approved & Proposed Units**

Project Name	Location	Level of Affordability	# of Affordable/ Attainable Units	Rent/ Own	Status	Est. Beginning of Construction	Est. End of Construction
Century Grand Vue at Interlocken	Interlocken	10% @ 80% AMI	16	For Sale Condos	Approved	Late 2021	Late 2023
Dillon Point	Aspen Creek	100% @ 60% AMI	28	For Sale Townhomes	Approved	Early 2022	2026
Discovery Townhomes	Northeast Corner of 144 th / Zuni	100% @ 60% AMI	12	Rent/For Sale Townhomes	Approved	Late 2021	2024
Flatiron Marketplace Phase I	West Half of Flatiron Marketplace	10% @ 80% AMI, 5% @ 70% AMI	49	Rent	Approved	Ongoing	2021
Northwest Apartments	Broomfield Business Center (Via Varra Area)	100% @ 60% AMI	50	Rent	Approved	2022	2024
Palisade Park	Palisade Park-Lennar	20% @ 80% AMI	28	For Sale Paired Homes	Approved	Late 2021	Mid 2022
Approved Units			183				
Baseline/North Park	Baseline/North Park	TBD	1,059	Rent/For Sale	Proposed	2022	2040
Broomfield Town Square	Broomfield Town Square	20% AMI	To Be Determined	Rent	Proposed	2022	2028
Crosswinds at Arista	Arista	100% @ 60% AMI	159	Rent	Proposed	Early 2022	2023
Flatiron Marketplace Phase II	East Half of Flatiron Place	10% @ 80% AMI, 5% @ 70% AMI	85	Rent	Proposed	2023	2025
Velo Interlocken	Northwest Corner of 287 and 128	20% @ 60 % AMI	60	Rent	Proposed	2022	2024
Proposed Units			1,363				
GRAND TOTAL of Completed, Approved and Proposed Units			2,011				

Source: Carolyn Romero, City and County of Broomfield, July 27, 2021.

The CCOB has approved another 183 affordable or attainable housing units, and proposed projects with a total of 1,363 more units are planned for completion by 2040.

Not represented in the “Affordable & Attainable Inventory” charts (p. 108-109) are Broomfield’s three manufactured home neighborhoods. Mobile home living became popular in the ‘70s for its relative affordability, but contemporary versions of it are too often not “mobile,” not sound “homes,” or not “affordable.” Most current residents of these communities own their trailers and only rent the “lot” or land their home occupies, but [corporate takeovers](#) and [dubious fee hikes](#) have made many mobile homes far less economical and livable than advertised. The experience of the Weatherfords at the 578-unit Front Range Manufactured Home Community is a case in point.

Despite being in the news for [predatory towing](#) and other exploitative practices, Front Range management nevertheless sought city approval in April 2019 to expand its footprint north and west of Midway Boulevard and Zuni Street. City council [unanimously](#) rejected Front Range’s request in August 2020. Former Ward 1 councilperson Liz Law-Evans even punctuated her vote with a very appropriate remark, “I’m not just a ‘no,’ I’m a ‘hell, no,’ on this one.”

I address our need for increased housing accountability and oversight in more detail in the “Hometown Life” and “Broomfield Tomorrow” sections. For now, I’ll say this — Broomfield desperately needs a more effective and responsive continuum of services for temporary, transitional and permanent affordable housing, but unlike people, not all self-proclaimed “affordable” housing options are created equal.



For generations, government leaders, chambers of commerce, real estate brokers, mortgage lenders and financial planners, alike, have sold homeownership as both an ideal of the American Dream and a source of financial wealth and stability for U.S. households. Tenants work toward it. Owners maintain it. Landlords capitalize and manage it (or hire others to do so for them).

Because our primary shelter-residence is often our single-most valuable asset, we U.S. homeowners have a vested interest in preserving and cultivating our property values.

When they grow as they have, more than steadily for the last decade, so does our ability to favorably refinance our mortgage, cash-out equity and make large purchases. Tenants rent their homes from property owners who have similar interests and options, so in a larger sense homeownership affects all of us. It is the sun around which our modern housing system orbits and the energy source that sustains much individual and collective (financial) wealth in the United States.

If homeownership fits the role of our housing system’s sun, the part of gravity could be played by the entity we call “the market.” Gravity regulates earth’s tides, makes objects fall and bends light, at least in our known corner of the multiverse. That’s pretty much what the market does to housing and other sectors of our economic life. Like gravity, we can’t see “the market.” We can only see its projection of and influence on human emotions and perceptions, collective forces like supply and demand, and financial instruments like commodities, mutual funds and mortgages.

“The market” doesn’t just exist, however. It has to be willed into existence. We have certainly done that here in the United States and the so-called “developed” world, to the point of giving “the market” sovereignty over our individual and collective finances. Network newscasts across the political spectrum, for instance, report daily on how market investors are “feeling” and what “The Dow” “S&P” and “NASDAQ” are “doing.” The fact that we use [anthropomorphic](#) language for “the market” is significant, as Harvard professor Harvey Cox explores in his March 1999 article in *The Atlantic* entitled, “[The Market as God](#): Living in the new dispensation.”

Longevity in Broomfield

	Renter-Occupied Housing Units	Owner-Occupied Housing Units	% of Total
Moved in 2017 or later	7,609	3,490	39.6
Moved in 2010-2016	2,461	5,315	27.7
Moved in 2000-2009	202	5,228	19.4
Moved in 1990-1999	0	2,568	9.1
Moved in 1989 or earlier	162	1,027	4.2
Subtotal (quantity)	10,434	17,628	-
Total (quantity)	28,062		-
Total (percentage)	37.2	62.8	100

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS Estimate, Broomfield County, Colorado, “[Tenure By Year Householder Moved Into Unit](#).”

Occupancy

Occupied	29,682
Vacant	1616
Total	31,298

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020, Broomfield County, Colorado, "[DEC Redistricting Data](#)."

Median Home Values

Year	Median Home Value
2011	\$256,035
2021	*\$458,333

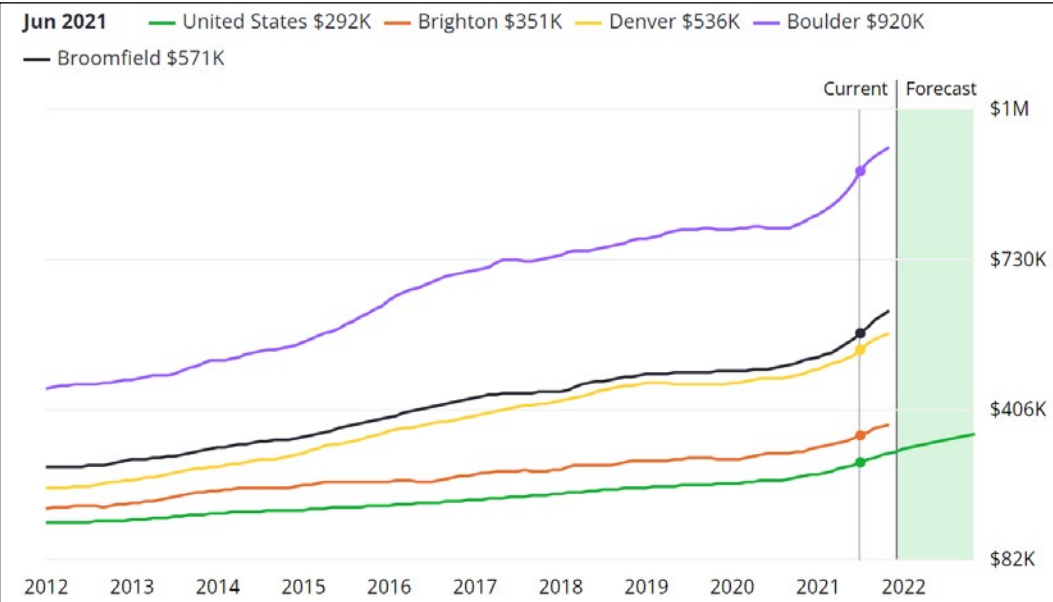
*Calculated from values provided for "Single Family Residential Condo," which increased 5.3 percent on average, from \$317,000 in 2019 to \$329,000 in 2021; "Single Family Residential (Economic Area 1, south of 136th Avenue)," which increased 7 percent on average, from \$388,000 in 2019 to \$413,000 in 2021; and "Single Family Residential (Economic Area 2, north of 136th Avenue)," which increased 7.1 percent on average, from \$590,000 in 2019 to \$633,000 in 2021.

Source: [Sweep Report 1.0](#), p. 26, and [2021 Reappraisal Fact Sheet](#), City & County of Broomfield.

Home Value Trends

Region	6/30/2001	6/30/2007	6/30/2009	6/30/2011	6/30/2013	6/30/2021
United States	\$139,741	\$216,010	\$182,267	\$166,661	\$175,302	\$292,730
Denver Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)	\$237,062	\$264,651	\$246,043	\$235,236	\$265,620	\$537,440
Boulder Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)	\$298,039	\$337,592	\$333,006	\$329,335	\$349,872	\$673,044
Pueblo Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)	\$116,042	\$140,031	\$131,306	\$124,869	\$124,713	\$248,739

Source: [Zillow Home Value Index](#), "Home Values," ZHVI All Homes (SFR, Condo/Co-op), Time Series, Smoothed, Seasonally Adjusted.



Source: “[United States Home Prices & Home Values](#),” Zillow Home Value Index (ZHVI), a “smoothed, seasonally adjusted measure of the typical home value” in the 35th to 65th percentile range “and market changes across a given region and housing type.”

Rent

Year	Location	Measure	Efficiency/ Studio	One- Bedroom	Two- Bedroom	Three- Bedroom	Four- Bedroom
2011	Denver-Aurora-Broomfield MSA	Fair Market Rent (FMR)	\$698	\$796	\$1007	\$1,430	\$1,667
2021	Denver-Aurora-Lakewood MSA	Fair Market Rent (FMR)	\$1,179	\$1,304	\$1,605	\$2,186	\$2,486
2021	Denver-Aurora-Lakewood MSA	Median Rent	\$1,286	\$1,422	\$1,750	\$2,383	\$2,710
2021	Broomfield Only	Average Rent	\$1,708	\$1,791	\$2,200	—	—

Source: [Sweep Report 1.0](#), p. 24; [RentData.org](#), 2021, “Denver-Aurora-Lakewood Fair Market Rent” and “Median Rent Prices in Denver-Aurora-Lakewood”; and Dayna Scott, Broomfield FISH, Sept. 16, 2021, Powerpoint, “Average Rents in 2021.” The Denver-Aurora-Lakewood MSA includes Broomfield.

All that to preface the most influential segment of our local housing spectrum — market-rate housing. It’s represented in the diagram on p. 92 by a fading line pointing toward the “lower” end of the spectrum and a solid line extending beyond the “higher” end. Not surprisingly, the CCOB reported [across-the-board](#) increases in single-family and condo residential values in 2021.

“The market” doesn’t “distinguish” between households that earn this or that AMI or “care” when lower-income Broomfielders get priced out of the local market by upward-pointing arrows on property value charts. In its minute-by-minute judgments regarding goods and services, “the market” is amoral. It’s indifferent to or unaware of important, on-the-ground [human considerations](#). It’s our job as community stakeholders to add moral considerations to the equation when market forces have detrimental effects on real people and real communities, such as when families like the Green-Nicholsons and the Gutierrez-Salases.

The 18th-century Scottish philosopher and economist [Adam Smith](#), often considered the father of modern capitalism, carefully explored the need to mitigate market forces in his not-famous-enough book *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*: “How selfish soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it except the pleasure of seeing it. Of this kind is pity or compassion, the emotion which we feel for the misery of others.”

Movies like *Margin Call* and *The Big Short* portray the shadow side of housing markets and market manipulators who contributed to the [Great Recession](#) of 2007-2009, during which millions of Americans struggled to sustain their livelihoods. Local market-rate housing dynamics, too, have their shadows:

- *Investment properties* — Given time and opportunity, “the market” commodifies everything. It happened early on in U.S. history with land. It happened early in Colorado history with water and minerals. It’s happening with energy and space. “The market” doesn’t care, for example, if real estate investors buy multiple somewhat affordable apartment complexes near Birch Elementary School to max out their unit-by-unit profits. “The market” doesn’t care if investors flip all the houses on one side of a whole street in the neighborhood known to locals as “First Filing.” “The market” doesn’t care if “investing” and “flipping” prices out or ultimately displaces a neighborhood’s small-margin residents. In fact, it actually feeds on squeezing them out, because that generally means residents with larger margins and more money to spend move in. We Broomfielders should care, though, because market practices like these threaten the makeup and character of our neighborhoods far more than someone sleeping nearby in a tent. According to a [Dec. 10, 2021, article](#) in *The Denver Post*, only 2 percent of Colorado homeowners are “seriously underwater on their loans and 93 percent have positive equity...Aside from turning to a specialized lender, the resale market does offer troubled borrowers with equity a quick out. About half of listings that hit the metro Denver market sold in five days or less last month, according to a report last week from the Denver Metro Association of Realtors. But those struggling borrowers need to replace

the homes they are leaving. And unlike during the housing crisis [of 2007-2009], the rental market is much less favorable and vacancy rates much lower.” There’s likely no changing our society’s commodification of real estate and housing, but in the midst of that commodification we cannot forget why housing exists in the first place — for living, breathing people who need shelter and the opportunity to make a home.

- *Misleading assumptions* — Multiple studies, such as [this one](#), [this one](#), [this one](#) and [this one](#), and [this bibliography](#), have found affordable housing development *does not* negatively affect housing values. Similarly, a 1999 Urban Institute [study](#) found no evidence that 14 supportive housing facilities in Denver increased neighborhood crime rates.
- *Echo chambers* — The affordable housing and housing supports industry is a small world. Professionals with decades of executive-level experience in housing or business or both seem to periodically circulate between paid and non-paid roles at state agencies, county housing programs, municipal housing authorities and local advisory boards. Their perspectives and expertise certainly have their place, but when they’re not balanced by other strong voices, they create a narrow, “this is how it’s always been done” dynamic to which all other stakeholders defer. [Someone once said](#), “We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them,” and that certainly applies here. The affordable housing world’s echo chamber undervalues what it most desperately needs: creativity and innovation. When professionals long trained in accommodating bottom-line revenues and market-rate realities always have the final say, all the “solutions” sound something like, “Let’s build more housing units using this or that funding stream, let’s offer incentives to developers, let’s respond to scarce resources by restricting access to these services.” (By the way, even Section 8 vouchers are indexed to fair market rental value.) What’s often missing in these conversations are the voices of the housing-crisis experts who have slept for months in their car, or had to choose at the end of the month whether to pay their rent or make their car payment or people who have entered their names in a housing voucher lottery. What’s missing are the voices of innovators and creatives and systems thinkers, from whatever background, who could help reform our cracked, inadequate and sometimes destructive market-driven housing system. Above all, what’s missing are accommodations to these latter voices, such as working around multiple-jobs-to-make-ends-meet schedules, and equal agenda-shaping and decision-making weight to assigning new ideas, perspectives and proposals.
- *Power Imbalances* — As of December 2021, Broomfield’s average rent was [\\$1,914 per month](#). Landlords set their prices, charge application fees and run credit and

background checks of prospective tenants. Many landlords also regularly raise their rent. If tenants don't pay their rent on time, landlords charge late fees. When outstanding rent accrues, propertied parties (or their managers) post non-payment notices on tenants' doors, and eventually issue eviction notices backed, if necessary, by law enforcement. These matters are adjudicated in local courts. (As of last Nov. 15, there had been 17,867 [evictions](#) in Colorado in 2021, according to a tweet by [9to5 Colorado](#).) For their part, tenants agree to the amount of their rent by signing their lease. Some unpropertied parties wreck their residences, whether in retaliation for poor living conditions, rent hikes or reasons unrelated to their landlord. It can be a stressful dance that disillusiones people on all sides. But it doesn't have to be that way. Tenants need a place to live. Landlords have a place to rent. Tenants benefit from not having to pay out of their own pocket to fix things that break in their home, from not having to pay for property improvements and from the possibility of a good reference from their landlord. (Perhaps it's time for tenants to request references from their landlords.) Landlords benefit from tenants essentially paying their mortgage and property tax for them. They also benefit when their tenants take good care of their property. All things considered, there's a workable dynamic at the core of all this, even when landlords need income from their properties, but like any human-adjacent relationship, it's all too easy to [take advantage](#). "The market" provides landlords in particular with a ready, "economic" justification for [price gouging](#), rent and other fee increases (just as it backstops policymakers when they bail out over-leveraged financial institutions). Some landlords even delude themselves into thinking they're doing their tenants a favor by charging them market-rate-or-more rent. In actuality, tenants don't need a lesson on "how the world works," they need stability in the form of reasonable and affordable rent. They don't need another value-neutral market force jeopardizing their margins, they need to make ends meet. They don't need condescension masked as benevolence, they need the mutuality implied by any social contract and the respect that comes from reciprocal human relationships. Just because departing tenants could leave holes in the walls and trash in the yard, doesn't mean they should. Just because landlords could squeeze more money out of their tenants, doesn't mean they should. Self-interest has its place, but so does the common good. After all, isn't that one of the things that's supposed to make Broomfield special?

INCOME

“The disposition to admire, and almost to worship, the rich and powerful, and to despise, or, at least, to neglect persons of poor and mean condition, though necessary both to establish and to maintain the distinction of ranks and the order of society, is, at the same time, the great and most universal cause of the corruption of our moral sentiments.”

Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 1790



The possibility of eventually obtaining personal (or family) wealth, whether via hard work, ingenuity, happenstance, fame or a special skill is another of the twinkles in the star we call “the American Dream.” It’s why I think many Americans don’t begrudge billionaires their extravagances — they hold out hope that one day they, too, might rocket off into outer space. It’s why lotteries are so popular — they echo the allure of “striking it rich” from the ol’ days. Of course, compared to most other nations around the world basically everyone in Broomfield is financially “rich,” which is where the simultaneously self-deprecating and haughty term “First-World problems” comes from, but I digress.

Whether or not we agree with the conclusions of economists like [Raj Chetty](#) regarding the state of [upward mobility](#) in the United States, we can all agree that we as a society are at least upwardly mobile-facing. That is, or at least has been, particularly true of Broomfield. Upward mobility usually requires an infusion of money, and the most common way to get money around here is to work for it. At least that’s what I tell my kids, but it’s hard when a lot of their friends get allowances for just being themselves. (Come to think of it, maybe there’s more common ground for universal basic income than I thought...Sorry, another digression.)

As I pointed out earlier, if all Broomfield household income figures were lined up in a row, the exact middle figure would be the area median income or “AMI.” Ours, as I’ve said, is \$111,400 (plus or minus \$11,467), according to the [U.S. Census Bureau](#).

Personal and family income, the lode beneath our actual financial means and the source of our everyday survival and rainy-day savings, alike, comes in many forms, including business revenue, wages, self-employment, stipends, allowances, pensions, fundraising, rent, social security, disability insurance, child support, interest, investments, inheritance, trust funds and prizes.

Not incidentally, Colorado ranks second after Wyoming among U.S. states for the size of our inter-county gap in “per capita asset income.” That type of income is derived not from wages or benefit payments, but from dividends, interest, rents and royalties, says *Denver Post* reporter Aldo Svaldi in an [August 27, 2021, article](#). He notes, “Old mining towns are again enclaves of wealth, not from their mines, but because they have the amenities and homes needed to attract rich outsiders...Increasingly, the residents who staff the amenities that make those enclaves so attractive find themselves priced out of the housing market.”

Figures provided by Svaldi show Broomfield County’s per capita asset income from dividends, interest and rent was \$12,700 in 2019, compared to Boulder’s \$22,800, Gilpin’s \$10,000, Jefferson’s \$13,800, Pitkin’s \$98,500, and Weld’s \$7,200.



I’ve held 19 wage-earning jobs since I started working 31 years ago (!!!) as a high school sophomore. My favorites: my current job and delivering for Pizza Hut. One night during my senior year, I parked in the roundabout of a swanky convention center, and pizzas in hand, headed for the elevator to the second floor. I went in expecting a big tip, and came out knowing I had to find another job, because I had mistakenly left my car in neutral. It rolled down an incline and hit a hotel van.

My least favorite jobs: telemarketing and being a server at Shoney’s. I hated cold calling at the former — I only lasted two weeks at that one. I could never keep close enough track of all the things dine-in guests needed at the latter — “Can I have some more water?”, “More ketchup please,” “Do you have any Splenda?”, “My steak isn’t done, could you take it back?” (Please tip your servers well, folks!)

My family and I did okay financially for a few years after we moved to Broomfield. After the recession hit though, and for a 10-year period thereafter, Angela and I each worked multiple jobs to make ends meet. That’s almost a third of our working lives. A lot of families in Broomfield and elsewhere have similar stories. You do what you have to do, right?

Unless you can’t.

Maybe you develop a debilitating, adult-onset disease and can’t keep your job as a teacher.

Maybe you’re a single, working parent who affords daycare for your two small children by foregoing medical and dental care for yourself. One night your car inexplicably gets

towed from your driveway. You don't have enough money in savings to pay the impound lot to get it back.

Maybe you're seriously injured while working overtime, but your employer's insurance company and its paid physicians won't "certify" your traumatic brain injury (TBI) or your other real and permanent disabilities. You apply for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), but like most applicants for their first several tries, you get denied. You scrape by on a small worker's comp "settlement," savings and a low-paying delivery job. One day, you deliver a package to a local mansion. While making small talk with the woman of the house as she digs in her purse for a tip, you learn the house was custom built by an executive of the company that denied your disability claim.

Maybe your partner starts abusing drugs, maxes out all your credit cards, withdraws your joint savings and runs off with a 23-year-old, leaving you to manage endless calls from debt collectors.

Maybe your diabetes worsens and your foot has to be amputated. Your work demands easy mobility, so you're forced to retire early with fewer benefits than you need to make ends meet.

Maybe PTSD from childhood abuse or a tour in Iraq makes it hard for you to hold a steady job.


Maybe you're a woman who works twice as hard as your male counterparts, but you get paid 30 percent less and routinely get passed over for promotion. When your boss propositions you in return for a raise, you quit. Your self-respect is intact, but your job prospects within your industry are slim.

Maybe you get divorced, you rack up thousands in consumer debt, and after two years of sobriety, you relapse with drugs and alcohol. You eventually lose your license to practice your profession and what wages you do earn get garnished.

Maybe you lose your pension because its portfolio managers over-invested in risky financial instruments. You have trouble sleeping at night, because your pension was your only plan for retirement.

Sometimes the destabilizing things that happen to us in life are permanent. Sometimes we just need time — physically, emotionally or financially — and some "outside" help to truly recover. Sometimes we never recover. We all do what we have to do, until we can't "do" any longer.

I know a lot of my fellow Broomfielders just want to live their lives, do their own thing and be left well enough alone. I get that. "I'm okay, you're okay." It's just, how can we say we're this amazing hometown community in one breath and absolve ourselves of acknowledging and addressing the plight of our struggling neighbors in the next?



As of January 2020, the District of Columbia and 29 states had minimum wages higher than the federally mandated minimum of [\\$7.25 per hour](#). We live in such a state — Colorado’s minimum wage for 2021 was \$12.32 per hour, with a tipped employee minimum of \$9.30 per hour.


Denver is the first and only local government to enact a [minimum wage](#) ordinance that preempts the state minimum. Its minimum wage started out at \$12.85 per hour in 2020, jumped to \$14.77 per hour in 2021, and grew to \$15.87 per hour this Jan. 1. In 2023, it will begin adjusting annually based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Colorado’s current minimum wage also [adjusts annually](#) for cost of living increases, as measured by the CPI, so it also rose this Jan. 1, from \$12.32 to \$12.56 per hour.

According to a [2021 report](#) by the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE), the annual average cost of living (COL) statewide was \$57,714.31. The CDLE report is based on a [2019 study](#) by the Colorado Legislative Council Staff, which presents the “cost of living by each school district within each county, except for Broomfield,” undoubtedly because our school districts aren’t specific to our county and overlap our boundaries. (See, even the state knows we’re special!) We required our own separate calculation, in fact, culminating in BestPlaces.net’s [cost of living](#) for Broomfield (132.2% of the U.S. average) divided by the cost of living [for Colorado](#) as a whole (121.1% of the U.S. average), for a ratio of 1.09.

Colorado’s minimum-wage workers need to work almost 13 hours a day/91 hours per week/30 days each month to earn the average state COL of \$57,714.31 per year. Broomfield’s minimum-wage workers need to work more than 14 hours a day/98 hours per week/30 days each month to earn our average COL of \$62,838.74.

A \$15 per hour minimum wage would be enough for single adults to achieve “[a living wage](#)” in half of U.S. states, but not nearly enough for most other households in any state. It’s the dollar amount of the wage, yes, but more so its buying power that’s most relevant here. In the 1950s for example, “minimum wage workers could pay rent for a month for less than a week and a half of full-time work — or catch Disney’s Cinderella for just over a half-hour of labor,” according to an April 2012 [post](#) in *The Fiscal Times*. With the ‘50s-era minimum wage of \$0.75 an hour, it took only 22 minutes of work to pay for a \$0.27 gallon of gas, 38 minutes to pay for a \$0.48 movie ticket and 52 hours to earn enough to pay the median rent of \$42 per month.

By comparison, at today’s state-mandated minimum wage it takes 136 hours of work or 2.6 times as long as in the ‘50s to pay Broomfield’s median rent of \$1,708 per month.



Broomfield's Consumer Price Index (CPI) is incorporated into the wider Denver-Aurora-Lakewood Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Denver area prices [rose 6.5 percent](#) between November 2020-November 2021, including 1.2 percent from October to November 2021, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. In twelve months, the index for all items less food and energy increased 5.2 percent, led by bumps in "shelter" prices (up 4.9 percent), used cars and trucks (up 32.6 percent), and medical care (up 5.6 percent). Food prices rose 4.4 percent, mainly because of price hikes for [meats](#), poultry, fish and eggs. Energy prices spiked 36.6 percent, mostly due to higher gasoline costs.

Similarly, The Federal Reserve's preferred inflation barometer — known as the Personal Consumption Expenditure (PCE) index — rose 5.8 percent in 2021, its [biggest spike](#) since 1981.

According to the most recent [Self-Sufficiency Standard for Colorado](#), completed for the Colorado Center on Law and Policy (CCLP) in 2018, a Broomfield adult caring for a preschooler needs to earn \$27.53 per hour/\$4,845 per month/\$58,139 per year and save \$167 per month in emergency savings "to make ends meet...without public or private assistance." In contrast to the difficult-to-sustain work schedule of minimum-wage workers seeking to earn the average Broomfield COL, the Self-Sufficiency Standard "assumes adults work eight hours per day for 22 days per month and 12 months per year." A 2018 CCLP fact sheet outlines "the income families need to pay basic expenses in Broomfield County, such as housing, child care and food" and notes it is "much higher than the government's official federal poverty level."

The incomes of more than 6,000 households or 1 of every 5 Broomfield households (22.2 percent) fall below our 2018 Self-Sufficiency Standard.

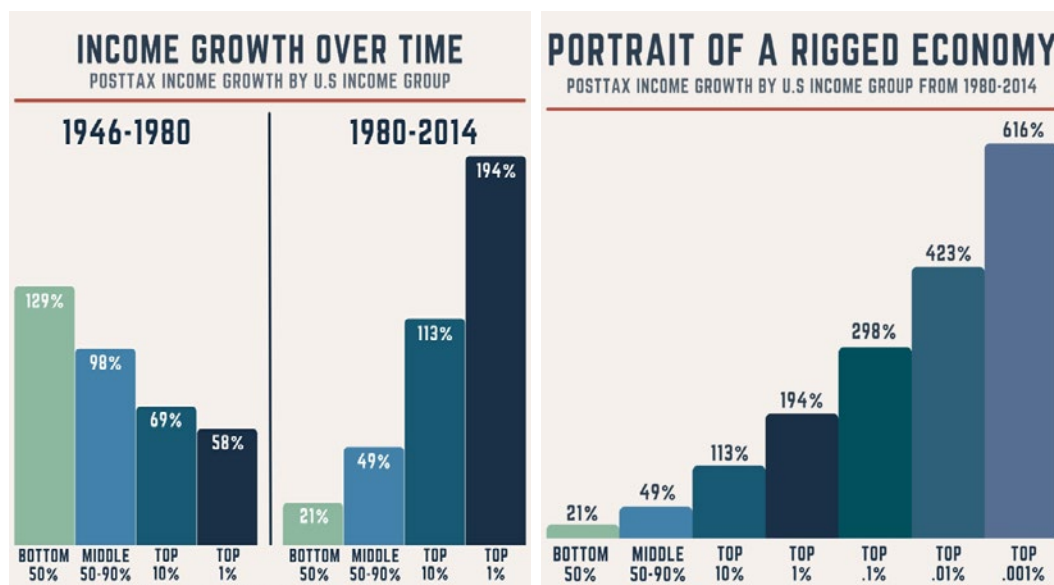
Like the annual average cost of living, this standard can also be reverse-engineered so to speak, to illuminate the gap between a truly livable wage and the lived reality of too many Broomfielders. Let's say the same Broomfield adult caring for a preschooler actually earns [\\$18 per hour](#) as a certified medical assistant. At that lower wage, they need to work 26 days of 10.4-hour shifts to earn \$4,845 in a month.

A 62.4 hour, six-day work week at \$18 per hour allows for a healthier [life-work](#) balance than a 98-hour, seven-day work week at minimum wage, but it's still not ideal.



On the other end of the income spectrum, an August 2021 Economic Policy Institute (EPI) [report](#) found CEO pay at the largest U.S. firms has skyrocketed 1,322 percent since 1978. In 1965, the CEO-to-worker compensation ratio was 21-to-1. In 1989, it was 45-to-1. It peaked at 366-to-1 in 2000, and as of 2020, it hovered at 351-to-1. The EPI

report also notes, “While millions were out of work [due to the COVID pandemic], CEOs’ realized compensation jumped 18.9% in just one year. Typical worker compensation, of those who remained employed, did rise 3.9% over that year — and even that wage growth is overstated: Perversely, high job loss among low-wage workers skewed the average wage higher.” (I don’t believe CEO-to-worker numbers are as yet publicly available for Broomfield companies, but it would be very illuminating for a local journalist or economist to research and release such a metric.)



Source: [@progressforthepeople](#) on Instagram.

A recent CBS News MoneyWatch story [listed](#) strikes or attempts to organize by employees of such familiar companies as Amazon, John Deere, Kellogg’s, Nabisco and Starbucks, noting The Kroger Co., which operates King Soopers and other grocery retail stores nationwide, as another case in point. In 2020, Kroger’s CEO received a \$22 million compensation bonus. In May 2021, Kroger ended a \$2-an-hour “hero-pay” bonus to its 500,000-plus workers. A recent [report](#) released by the Economic Roundtable, found 78 percent of Kroger employees struggle to put food on the table, 45 percent can’t afford rent and 14 percent either are or have been unhoused in the last year.

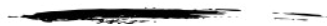
King Soopers front-line workers in Broomfield and across Colorado went on [strike](#) for 10 days [this January](#), leading to [union-negotiated](#) pay raises, expanded benefits and improved safety measures.

The CCOB's "[Budget 101 Workshop](#)" from last September shared that Broomfield wages and salaries increased a healthy 8.7 percent in 2020. The [average hourly wage](#) of workers in our Denver-Aurora-Lakewood MSA stood at \$31.19 in May 2020. That's about 15 percent higher than the nationwide average of \$27.07. Broomfield's [average weekly wage](#) in the first quarter of 2021 was \$2,114, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Financially speaking, Broomfield out-distances the national and state averages in pretty much every category, so our income-related statistics aren't surprising. What we know intuitively but don't often take time to consider (or re-consider) though are the monetary values placed on different jobs in our area. The "Wages and Occupations" chart (p. 126) represents these value-laden choices through hourly wage figures. Most of the chart's listed job categories show earnings close to or higher than \$31.19 per hour. The few remaining categories show earnings significantly less than \$31.19 per hour, which means the largest number of workers fall into lower-earning categories.

The King Soopers [strike](#) for [better wages](#) and [working conditions](#), for example, points to a larger reality. The four lowest-paid categories in the Denver MSA are among the ones our society has been praising as "essential" since the beginning of the COVID pandemic: "Healthcare Support," "Food Preparation and Serving Related," "Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance," and "Personal Care and Service." It's not just people who are unhoused flying signs at local intersections and parking lots, anymore, it's also frontline workers and their families.

In spite of our area's obvious, ongoing income disparities, our Denver-Aurora-Lakewood MSA jumped [seven spots](#) to 11th in 2021 on the Milken Institute's Best-Performing Cities (BPC) index. The BPC compares the economic performance of U.S. cities, each of which "has unique characteristics generated through a combination of investment and policy choices that influence the community's economic outcomes." The index's 2021 version "emphasizes jobs, wages, and high-tech growth while incorporating new measures of housing affordability and household broadband access." We ranked 7th in one-year wage growth, 19th in high-tech industries and 11th in households with broadband access, but 141st in housing affordability: "Traditionally, Denver had a cost advantage over the coastal tech clusters, but the increasing cost of living — especially housing — may be eroding this advantage."



The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported Broomfield's unemployment rate decreased from 6.1 percent of our total population in 2020 to 3.8 percent in 2021. In raw numbers, that's 2,464 people in 2020 and 1,586 in 2021, suggesting unemployment isn't as much of a contributor to local housing instability as underemployment and a lack of living wages.

As of three years ago, and based on Census Bureau estimates of our [total population](#) and our percentage of people with [extremely low incomes](#), 2,467 Broomfielders “officially” lived in poverty.

Minimum Wage & Cost of Living

County	% of Colorado Population	Cost of Living	Applicable Minimum Wage, CO or Local	Wage that is Equivalent to Colorado Minimum, Based on County Cost of Living	Actual Minimum Wage as % of Cost-Of-Living Wage Equivalent to Colorado Minimum
Adams	9.01	\$57,753.83	\$12.32	\$12.33	99.93%
Arapahoe	11.38	\$57,793.05	\$12.32	\$12.34	99.86%
Boulder	5.64	\$59,734.12	\$12.32	\$12.75	96.62%
Broomfield	1.24	\$62,838.74	\$12.32	\$13.41	91.85%
Denver	12.66	\$61,509.10	\$14.77	\$13.13	112.49%
Jefferson	10.06	\$58,278.10	\$12.32	\$12.44	99.03%

Source: Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, [Local Minimum Wage Report 2021](#), Table 7, “Wages Equivalent to Statewide Minimum Wage, Based on County Cost of Living.”

Median Income

	Broomfield	Colorado	USA
Median annual household income	\$111,400	\$77,127	\$65,712
+/-	\$11,467	\$791	\$118

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS Estimate, “[Broomfield County, Colorado](#).”

Financial Poverty

Place	Persons with Income Below Federal Poverty Line, Estimated % of Total Population			% Change, Persons with Income Below Poverty, 1999-2019
Year	1999	2009	2019	
Broomfield	4.2	4.9	3.5	-0.7
Colorado	9.3	12.6	9.3	0
U.S.A.	12.4	14.3	12.3	-0.1

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS Estimate, “[Broomfield County](#),” “[Colorado](#),” and “[United States](#).”

Federal Poverty Guidelines

Family Size	2011	2021
1	\$10,890	\$12,880
2	\$14,710	\$17,420
3	\$18,530	\$21,960
4	\$22,350	\$26,500
5	\$26,170	\$31,040
6	\$29,990	\$35,580
7	\$33,810	\$40,120
8	\$37,630	\$44,660*

These guidelines are updated annually and used to determine eligibility for federal programs.

*For families or households with more than 8 people, add \$4,540 for each additional member.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, "[HHS Poverty Guidelines for 2021](#)."

TABLE 8. The Self-Sufficiency Standard for **Broomfield** County, CO 2018

	Adult	Adult Preschooler	Adult Infant Preschooler	Adult Preschooler School-age	Adult School-age Teenager	2 Adults Infant	2 Adults Infant Preschooler	2 Adults Preschooler School-age
MONTHLY COSTS								
Housing	\$1,152	\$1,451	\$1,451	\$1,451	\$1,451	\$1,451	\$1,451	\$1,451
Child Care	\$0	\$1,193	\$2,536	\$1,798	\$605	\$1,343	\$2,536	\$1,798
Food	\$314	\$476	\$625	\$718	\$832	\$741	\$877	\$966
Transportation	\$255	\$262	\$262	\$262	\$262	\$501	\$501	\$501
Health Care	\$148	\$376	\$392	\$399	\$426	\$441	\$453	\$460
Miscellaneous	\$187	\$376	\$527	\$463	\$358	\$448	\$582	\$518
Taxes	\$437	\$927	\$1,540	\$1,167	\$785	\$1,066	\$1,476	\$1,243
Earned Income Tax Credit (-)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Child Care Tax Credit (-)	\$0	(\$50)	(\$100)	(\$100)	(\$100)	(\$50)	(\$100)	(\$100)
Child Tax Credit (-)	\$0	(\$167)	(\$333)	(\$333)	(\$333)	(\$167)	(\$333)	(\$333)
SELF-SUFFICIENCY WAGE								
Hourly	\$14.17	\$27.53	\$39.20	\$33.09	\$24.35	\$16.40	\$21.14	\$18.48
						per adult	per adult	per adult
Monthly	\$2,493	\$4,845	\$6,899	\$5,825	\$4,285	\$5,774	\$7,442	\$6,503
Annual	\$29,918	\$58,139	\$82,786	\$69,894	\$51,425	\$69,283	\$89,307	\$78,040
Emergency Savings Fund (Monthly)	\$53	\$167	\$370	\$295	\$148	\$69	\$91	\$85

Source: Colorado Center on Law and Policy, [Self-Sufficiency Standard for Colorado 2018 report](#), Table 8, p. 57. Courtesy of Charles Brennan.

Wages & Occupations

Major Occupational Group	Percent of Total Employment		Mean Hourly Wage		
	United States	Denver	United States	Denver	Percent Difference
Total, all occupations	100.0	100.0	\$27.07	\$31.19	15
Management	5.7	4.9	60.81	71.93	18
Business and financial operations	6.0	9.6	38.79	41.51	7
Computer and mathematical	3.3	5.7	46.53	49.26	6
Architecture and engineering	1.8	2.7	43.41	45.82	6
Life, physical, and social science	0.9	1.1	38.15	39.21	3
Community and social service	1.6	1.4	25.09	26.30	5
Legal	0.8	1.2	54.00	58.91	9
Educational instruction and library	6.1	4.8	28.75	30.38	6
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	1.6	30.96	29.77	-4
Healthcare practitioners and technical	6.2	5.4	41.30	42.90	4
Healthcare support	4.6	3.4	15.50	17.44	13
Protective service	2.4	2.0	25.11	27.51	10
Food preparation and serving related	8.1	7.8	13.30	15.35	15
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	2.9	2.8	15.75	16.39	4
Personal care and service	1.9	2.5	15.68	17.48	11
Sales and related	9.4	10.4	22.00	28.71	31
Office and administrative support	13.3	12.1	20.38	22.32	10
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.2	16.02	16.71	4
Construction and extraction	4.3	4.9	25.93	26.63	3
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	3.7	25.17	26.94	7
Production	6.1	3.4	20.08	21.05	5
Transportation and material moving	8.7	8.4	19.08	22.24	17

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "[Occupational Employment and Wages in Denver-Aurora-Lakewood-May 2020](#)," Table A.

Home Prices & AMI

Home Price	% AMI Needed to Afford Home	Wages Needed to Earn this Level of AMI (1 full-time worker)	Wages Needed to Earn this Level of AMI (2 full-time workers)
460,000	120%	\$57.70/hour	\$28.85/hour
385,000	100%	\$48.08/hour	\$24.04/hour
320,000	80%	\$38.46/hour	\$19.23/hour
255,000	60%	\$28.86/hour	\$14.43/hour
190,000	40%	\$19.22/hour	—

Source: “[Economic Vitality Workshop](#),” City and County of Broomfield. Based on 2019 statistics, a 20-percent down payment and an estimated \$100,000 per year AMI for a family of four in our seven-county metro-area.

Unemployed Residents, Denver MSA and Selected Component Counties

Area	Sep 2020	Sep 2021	Change from Sep 2020 to Sep 2021	
			Number	Percent
Denver-Aurora-Lakewood, Colo. MSA	122,272	82,376	-39,896	-32.6
Adams	21,532	15,543	-5,989	-27.8
Arapahoe	28,887	19,470	-9,417	-32.6
Broomfield	2,464	1,586	-878	-35.6
Denver	34,930	22,638	-12,292	-35.2
Jefferson	22,269	14,737	-7,532	-33.8
Colorado	213,829	148,515	-65,314	-30.5
United States (in thousands)	12,277	7,366	-4,911	-40.0

Note: State, metropolitan area, and county data for both the current and prior year are subject to revised inputs, reestimation, and new statewide controls early in the following calendar year.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, “[Denver-Aurora-Lakewood, Colo. Metropolitan Area Data Tables](#).”

Unemployment Rate, Denver MSA and its Component Counties

Area	Sep 2020	Sep 2021	Change from Sep 2020 to Sep 2021
Denver-Aurora-Lakewood, Colo. MSA	7.3	4.8	-2.5
Adams	7.8	5.5	-2.3
Arapahoe	7.8	5.1	-2.7
Broomfield	6.1	3.8	-2.3
Denver	8.1	5.2	-2.9
Jefferson	6.6	4.3	-2.3
Colorado	6.8	4.6	-2.2
United States	7.7	4.6	-3.1

Note: State, metropolitan area, and county data for both the current and prior year are subject to revised inputs, re-estimation, and new statewide controls early in the following calendar year.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "[Denver-Aurora-Lakewood, Colo. Metropolitan Area Data Tables](#)."

Covered⁽¹⁾ Employment and Wages, Denver MSA and Selected Component Counties, 1st Quarter 2021⁽²⁾

Area	Establishments		Employment			Average Weekly Wages ⁽³⁾		Total Wages (in thousands)	
	1st qtr 2021	12-month net change	March 2021	12-month net change	12-month percent change	1st qtr 2021	12-month percent change	1st qtr 2021	12-month percent change
Denver-Aurora-Lakewood, Colo. MSA	115,524	5,126	1,456,801	-56,642	-3.7	\$1,514	4.3	\$28,503,276	-0.4
Adams	12,557	582	223,504	-2,637	-1.2	1,140	1.2	3,303,059	-0.2
Arapahoe	24,108	835	321,106	-10,565	-3.2	1,539	2.4	6,398,472	-1.4
Broomfield	3,144	154	38,560	-2,239	-5.5	2,114	-2.4	1,055,974	-8.4
Denver	37,649	1,945	498,689	-31,297	-5.9	1,753	8.1	11,268,675	0.6
Jefferson	22,348	874	231,050	-10,040	-4.2	1,284	3.0	3,841,719	-2.0
Colorado	224,743	9,653	2,634,650	-94,446	-3.5	\$1,335	4.1	\$45,409,146	-0.4
United States	10,755,389	400,287	140,455,819	-6,609,296	-4.5	1,289	5.6	2,336,243,610	-0.1

(1) Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

(2) Data are preliminary.

(3) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "[Denver-Aurora-Lakewood, Colo. Metropolitan Area Data Tables.](#)"



Local Perspectives

- “Opened Eyes” by Milan Hancock (p. 131)
- “A Question for Broomfield” with Lori Lane (p. 134)
- “El Pueblo Que Conozco” with Jesús “Chuy” Gutierrez (p. 140)

Local Perspective

“OPENED EYES”

By Milan Hancock

My parents moved from Arizona to Colorado in 2003 for employment — my dad works in telecom. I’m 17 and have lived in Broomfield all my life. I have a twin brother, and a sister who is two years younger than us. My brother and I homeschooled for middle school and have been at Peak to Peak [Charter School] since ninth grade, so three years so far. I really want to write and direct movies and create a TV show in the future, but will probably study English and philosophy at a liberal arts college.



In eighth grade, my brother and I joined a youth photography and storytelling program called “Photovoice.” The goal of the program was to take pictures in Broomfield that tell a story that is personal to us and to our peers. At the end of the program, Jennifer (Mackender, coordinator of Broomfield’s [Communities That Care](#) program) and some of us youths wanted to continue what we had done over the summer, and so we started “[Youth for Youth](#),” an advocacy group.

In November 2020, my brother and I picked a random topic — homelessness — for a virtual [hackathon](#). Our intent was to come up with some ideas to solve problems related to it. We called it “hack for the homeless.” We made a flyer and posted it in a few groups, but didn’t get many responses because it was Thanksgiving weekend and it was last minute. As a last resort, my mom posted an ad on Craigslist looking for high schoolers to participate.

The hackathon didn’t pan out, but something more interesting came out of it. We received lots of phone calls and emails. A homeless guy named “Oak” left me a voicemail. I called him back and we chatted for three hours. While he talked with me, he was “flying a sign” in Denver at the I-70/Quebec exit. I could hear his interactions with people that were giving him food, money and some useless things like gum. He really opened my eyes to a world that I hadn’t given any thought to before. Oak told me about the troubles that people who are homeless face both in Colorado and all over the country. He explained issues with certain nonprofits and charity organizations that do less for the homeless than they say they do. He also informed me that a lot of what we, the general public, do for people like him is redundant. He gave me a list of things people like him could use. Socks were No. 1 on that list.

A few weeks later, I became really interested in starting my own business (a product of the COVID stay-at-home order, I guess). My mom agreed to support me and post on Reddit explaining that I wanted to start a business and was looking for a partner. I was able to connect with a CU-Boulder sophomore named Omar, who is from Kuwait. We brainstormed different business ideas and decided that building a clothing brand would be the most fun. While coming up with the brand, the Tom's Shoes-inspired idea of a business model that could benefit people who are homeless popped into my head, and we ran with it. I came up with our "Ugly Goose" name in the shower. So far, we've sold 28 T-shirts and made our first trip to donate 28 pairs of socks to Denver's Samaritan House, a ministry of Catholic Charities.

My dream is that [Ugly Goose](#) becomes known for its one-for-one business model. I plan on giving away more than just socks in the future, such as health products and things that can help protect against the cold. I'm just starting to get interested in fashion and the actual creation of T-shirts, pants, hoodies and original fashionable clothes that I design.

Last summer, I dipped my toes into documentary filmmaking by creating a short YouTube compilation of interviews with people from different minority groups. I named the project "Stories Are Us." This summer, I decided to focus on the homeless in Colorado. I started filming interviews and I'm currently in a class at Peak to Peak called "Humanities Capstone." So, the documentary is for me as a filmmaker, but also for Ugly Goose, for a school project, and for telling others about an issue that is so misunderstood.

The more I learn about the daily lives of people who are unhoused, the more I'm able to sympathize. I think many people don't understand what it's like to be homeless and are misguided by stereotypes. They don't realize how hard it is to break out of homelessness. It bothers me that some believe our homeless citizens are in complete control of their circumstances — that being homeless is a choice made by those who are too lazy to get a paying job.

I'm aware that most recent college graduates who grew up in Broomfield can't afford to move back here after graduation, but I'm lucky to have been born into a family that has a fair degree of financial security. That gives me some comfort that they can provide a safety net should I get into financial trouble as a young adult. It's a privilege that I was born with, rather than something I earned.

I feel like adults in charge have trouble making changes that matter. Whenever a proposed change is up for debate, the push of progressives and the pull of conservatives in our society ends up in a stalemate. Each adult in the room is entrenched in their side's corner, with no willingness to compromise. I was in a government class a few years ago just after a school shooting in some community I don't remember now.

I remember the teacher set up a controlled debate to help us see each side of the gun control and school safety issue from different viewpoints. That's what I like about Peak to Peak.

We need to stop viewing each other as "Republicans" or "Democrats." Especially after such a polarizing [2020] election, we need to view each other as people, instead of opinions behind a screen. Communities That Care's ongoing efforts to create a community in which youth feel included are extremely important in Broomfield. I think young people today are more likely to learn about issues that plague minorities and actively change their ways to make everyone's experiences better — for example, accepting those among us of a different sexual orientation or a different race.

Milan Hancock is a documentary filmmaker and a senior at Peak to Peak Charter School in Lafayette, Colo. This piece is based on a late summer 2021 email exchange with the author.

Local Perspective

“A QUESTION FOR BROOMFIELD”

A Sept. 28, 2021, interview with Lori Lane

How did you end up in Colorado?

We moved here on June 14, 1997, for my ex-husband's new job. Our choices were here, Florida or San Jose and I chose here. It was the best thing ever. We had been in LA County, Calif., and I was glad to get out of there, because I got tired of the crime and the gangs and the earthquakes and the high taxes. We only had one car out there and a motorcycle, and our insurance cost the same as we paid here in Colorado for four cars, two teenage drivers and a motorcycle!



We chose Broomfield because my ex-husband had been staying at the La Quinta Inn on 120th Avenue and talking to coworkers about the best local places for schools and baseball. Our son Joe was a baseball player. We moved here for his senior year, and he graduated from Broomfield High School in '98. My niece Paige, when she started as a freshman at BHS, she made a point to look in the trophy case for her uncle's name. It's still there. He'll be 41 in November.

Could you unpack for me how you ended up on the street?

Sure, I don't mind being the face of people experiencing homelessness in Broomfield. The short version is the house I was renting on Iris, the owner wanted to move back in. To do that, he had to break our lease and evict me, because a month's notice wasn't enough time for me to find a place. I lived there from 2011-2018. I got evicted in May 2018.

I had worked as a student finance specialist for Westwood College, the one across from Super Target on Church Ranch, for eight years, but it closed six months before I got evicted. So I did side jobs like financial audits and worked for my now-39-year-old daughter Jennifer. She had started her own business after working for 14 years in the liens industry. One day she asked herself, "Why punch a clock for someone else when I can do my own thing?"

After I got evicted, I went to the Boulder Shelter first. But to get in I had to relinquish my dogs. I went into a suicide spin. Thanks to a referral from FISH, I ended up at the [Bridge House](#) crisis stabilization unit in Lakewood. I said to them, "I almost did this last night," because I had just gotten all my meds refilled, and I had probably 400 pills

in my hand. I was teetering right on the edge. After that, I was at Bridge House's Path to Home for a couple of months and then [SPAN](#)'s [Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence] shelter for a couple of months.

I had to leave SPAN in September 2018, so from then to May 2019, I was literally sleeping on the street in Broomfield. I slept outside, over by the At Home Store. Randy [Snyder, a long-time unhoused resident of Broomfield and one of the Broomfielders to whom this report is dedicated] is actually the one that showed me that spot. I met him at the Girl Scout Shelter on my second day on the street. It was early in the day and I had just gotten my stuff kind of set up there — I had my laptop, my coffeemaker, my mini Crockpot and my heating pad for heating frozen foods. I was toting all that stuff around with me. And Randy comes by. We became buddies.

I went to the Girl Scout Shelter every day to work, because I was still working for Jennifer then. She and her girls lived with her dad, my ex, at that point. Later, I got my 31-inch monitor from my son, which helped, and a portable ice maker, because Randy would meet me there and we had to have cold things. When neighborhood kids saw me there, after they found out I was diabetic, they would put oranges, Cuties and Halos, on my workstation while I was away for a walk or a smoke or to go to the bathroom.

In May 2019, Jennifer bought me my used Jeep Cherokee, so I started sleeping in there, and I'm still there now. The day I got my truck, I started coming to the Refuge [Café] regularly. Prior to that, Rodney [Inskeep, an Air Force veteran and long-time unhoused resident of Broomfield, who recently found housing through the HUD VASH program] would bring me. I met Rodney in October 2019 at the Girl Scout Shelter.

Can you describe what it's been like for you on the streets?

Well, that's where I met most of the cops, was at the Girl Scout Shelter. The first time, I had fallen asleep, because I was charging my phone — it was one of those Obama phones that took forever to charge — and it was like 12:30 at night. Someone was walking a dog and they saw legs and got worried. I only ever had a problem with one female officer, who showed up one day to look at all my stuff, and then the next day the power to the outlets at the Shelter was turned off. It stayed off for five weeks.

That's when I got portable solar panels and my battery bank. The only place left in that area that had power was the light pole in the alleyway there by the Shelter. That was before I got the car, so I would sit there and work. But then I met Sharon [Tessier, at the time one of Broomfield's two Ward 2 council members] at The Refuge candidates' forum, and we arranged to meet the next day at the park so I could show her what was going on. She got the power turned back on the next day. It's still on a 5 a.m.-to-11 p.m. timer to this day.

Would you be willing to share more of your backstory? Before you became unhoused?

Well, I was born in 1961. I grew up all over because my dad was in logistics in the Air Force. I've lived in every state in the United States, but two. We moved about every two months. I consider my home to be Las Vegas, because that's where my family is, my brother, my sister, nieces and nephews.

I was that kid with the silver spoon, the middle child of three. My mother sold real estate in California, and she did very well. She could sell anything. She was a talker and wasn't afraid of anything. She would put herself out there. Didn't care one bit what people thought. When she passed away, we found her first two paychecks that she earned from real-estate deals. She had gotten four paychecks in the same week, but she didn't cash two of them. She framed them, because she didn't need them. Anything I wanted, I pretty much got. I was considered the perfect child, always seen and never heard. I never got spanked.

I also never got good grades, and I grew up being told, "You have to marry a rich man because you're not smart enough to take care of yourself." So I didn't have a lot of self-confidence. My mom never said the words "I love you, sweetie" to me until I was 23 years old, and then she slapped me five seconds later, because she wanted me to go out to bars with her and I wasn't willing to let someone else watch my two little babies. Both my parents were alcoholics.

I got married in 1979, two weeks after I turned 18 to a man I had only known for two months. That's how badly I wanted out of my house, although I didn't realize it at the time. And as it happened, my ex-husband became an alcoholic, too. I've never touched the stuff, not even on holidays.

My ex-husband controlled every aspect of my life. After we moved to Broomfield, every morning I had to get up, put my makeup on, get properly dressed, and then I had exactly seven minutes to go get a gallon of milk from Safeway on 120th and Main and then get back home. I had to give him a receipt and change.

My great-grandparents were amazing. One was Cherokee and one was Chippewa. When I would see them, it was always something new I learned. They always talked about the importance of family and reaching for the stars. My grandma had grown up on "the Rez" and she hated it. "We will not discuss it," she said. My mom used to take me to visit my great grandparents on the Rez, but she wouldn't stay. She would just drop me off. I liked that life, they had purpose. They had something to learn and teach. But my momma hated it. I learned my knitting skills from my grandmas. Also sewing, cross-stitch and embroidery. I got my first sewing machine when I was 7. A real one. A 1967 Singer. I made a full wedding dress at 14 and seven bridesmaids dresses. After my great-grandparents passed away, though, we weren't allowed to talk about them or where they lived anymore.

How have you been perceived by others in Broomfield these last few years?

Being a “gig worker,” I didn’t qualify for COVID unemployment. While I was outside, I was saving up money to get a place, but then COVID hit. At one point, Jennifer had three employees, but then it got down to just me and then we lost most of our business.

I have two associates degrees from Parks College, one in criminal justice and another in accounting. I had a 4.0-grade point average. (Parks sold out and became Everest College and now I think it’s Zephyr or something. They had to sell, because the government caught them charging too much for tuition and offering useless degrees.)

Anyway, one of the Broomfield cops I met at the Girl Scout Shelter knew me from when I was in corrections. For a while, I worked as a case management line staff member at Thornton Community Services Center on 84th and Conifer. I did drug testing and accounts receivable, and this guy had been a Thornton police officer, and then moved to Broomfield. One day he walks up and looks at me, and says, “What are you doing here? We got a call from a dog walker that there’s a homeless person out here smoking weed.” And I said, “Yeah, that’s me. I am homeless but I don’t smoke weed.” And I pulled out my Little Filtered Cigars to prove it. No sir, I don’t do that stuff. He was really surprised to find me in that situation.

I have Type 2 Diabetes. I will go blind without insulin. I have neuropathy and both forms of IBS [Irritable Bowel Syndrome]. I can’t be more than 10 feet away from a bathroom. I’ve got vertigo, so sometimes I can look and sound and walk like I’m drunk, but it’s all because of bad equilibrium in my left eardrum. With most insulin, it has to be refrigerated, so if you have limited space, how do you store your insulin? I have to poke my finger four times a day. I used to need 4 shots a day. Now I give myself one or two shots a day, and thanks to my SCL Health doctor, my new insulin lasts 47 days and I don’t have to refrigerate it. By law, all I have to do is have it in a bottle with a cap on it.

For a while, I was known [by local authorities] as “The Computer Lady at Midway Park.” Even a previous mayor, Randy Ahrens, knew me as that. I met him in person at the Broomfield Days Lions Club breakfast in 2018. The Lions Club people knew I was homeless, but since I got a good WIFI signal there, they let me be there to work. I was going to pack up and leave for the breakfast, but they told me to stay, so I did. They even brought me a plate and wouldn’t let me pay for it. And Randy came over and sat down beside me. And I asked him, “So what’s something you think really needs to be worked on in Broomfield?” He said, “Really, I don’t think I need to work on anything. Things run pretty smoothly here.” So I asked, “What about the homeless?” He said, “We don’t have a problem with ‘homeless’ here.” And I said, “Oh really? You see all that stuff over there? That’s mine. I’m homeless.” At first, he didn’t quite know what to say. He asked me who I’d contacted for help and I told him FISH and Health and Human Services, and he said “Okay then, you’re in the right place.” And then he got up and he left our table.

It wasn’t until the Refuge’s candidate forum in 2019, that I saw him again, and he came up to me and said, “I owe you an apology.” After that, Jennifer and I saw him at

Wal-Mart and he waved and said, “Hi, Lori!” And I turned to Jennifer and said, “The mayor knows my name!”

You’ve become an amazing advocate for the Refuge Café, the Broomfield Cares Outreach Van and the Code Blue program, Lori. When would you say your own perspective on people experiencing homelessness changed?

Well, I wrote a paper about “the homeless” in college. It was in connection with the term “curtilage,” which is a term used in search warrants. Curtilage is the part of a property that includes land and outbuildings and stuff, so a warrant will give permission to search main buildings and “curtilage.” At that point I was like most people. I thought the homeless were all lazy or addicts or drunks.

Then I started meeting others, like Randy and Rod. And I thought, okay, they’re homeless, too. This guy lost his place because of a fire in his apartment complex. This other guy got behind on his child support, so they revoked his driver’s license and his electrician’s license and he eventually lost his home. And he just started drinking to cope. I’m out here because of an eviction.

My ex-husband used to make all my decisions for me, so when I first became homeless, I didn’t know what to do or how to do it. I knew how to take care of everyone else, but not myself. I actually sleep well in my truck now. It makes no sense, but I’m not the only one that feels that way, either. You really have to get tough. You learn to survive. It’s an icky situation, but it’s not all bad. I have Raebym, my stuffed teddy bear. His name is just “My Bear” spelled backward. I’ve had him since the day before Thanksgiving 2018. He has been my pillow, cry buddy, confidant, best friend. Because when I first became homeless, I had no one to talk to.

I’ve learned not to worry about tomorrow until tomorrow gets here. And I try to always see the good in every day. I *never* did that before in my entire life. I have learned so much about myself, too, and speaking up for myself and speaking up for others. As I said, I’ve never had a lot of self-confidence. My entire life, almost. But everything changed when I started coming here [to the Refuge Café]. I asked God, “Show me my truth, give me my voice,” and everything started to change. Nothing was expected of me here, other than to be appropriate and be me.

I’ve actually learned about other needs, too. I learned about the mobile home nightmares people are going through from Billy [Bear, another Refuge Café advocate] after he first started volunteering. I’d probably end up in jail if I got involved in mobile home advocacy.

There actually is a real community of unhoused people I’ve met in Broomfield. We’ve got each other’s backs. If you need to go to the bathroom, you can ask someone, “Watch my stuff?” To this day, I’ve never had anything stolen from me. So I’m learning to trust people. I didn’t trust anybody before, because of the way I was raised.

Most of us that I've met who are homeless just want a compassionate, helping hand up. Our hand is not out for freebies. I give back. I think I've shown that here. Not everyone is like me and I get that. But I want people to look at me as one person and maybe form a different opinion. I'm the type of person they *want* as a neighbor. They can go on vacation and I'll keep my eyes open to call the cops if something suspicious is going on.

What do you think it will take to overcome the societal stigma attached to homelessness?

People in this situation have got to quit hiding. We, the unhoused, live on the curtilage of society. I've always wanted to say that. But it's time for that to change. A lot of us are ashamed of our situation. I'm not ashamed. I'm not proud of it either, but I'm not ashamed.

We had a lot of people yell at us at [Midway] park. There was this one guy who called the cops and took pictures of me all the time when I was working at the Girl Scout Shelter. He had two dogs and he walked them morning and night. And he would walk right up to me and take a picture and call the police while he was standing there, "There's this homeless lady here and she's scaring the kids."

I always cleaned up trash around my workstation. I kept the Girl Scout Shelter bathroom somewhat clean. I had a rolling suitcase with bungee cords that I'd pop open and I kept my boombox in there or I'd play music from a CD on my laptop. Neighborhood kids liked to come over and talk. I'm very friendly. So the cops got to know me and they'd come over and drive through the alley and if I didn't see them, they'd hit their siren and wave and keep going.

I don't know how to word this, but at [a summer 2021] city hall meeting, we see 100 people sitting there wanting to complain about people who are homeless. I want to see all the rest who don't have a problem with the homeless. There are 74,000-some people that live in Broomfield, but we're only hearing from a hundred that don't like us. What about those who don't have a problem with us? When will they speak up?

At Bridge House, they taught me about trauma-informed care, and that made so much sense when I started researching that a little bit. We need to get to know people's stories, because we never know what's there and how that informs their situation.

Not everybody on the streets is mentally ill to the point of needing institutionalization, but we *all* have mental health issues, especially after the last year and a half. It's like, "Really, people?" I want them to look at us like they would at their neighbor. All we want is a chance. Any one of those people who complain about us could be where we are.

Lori Lane is a long-time Broomfielder, an avid knitter and a tireless advocate for our neighbors who are unhoused.

Perspectiva Local

“EL PUEBLO QUE CONOZCO”

Una entrevista de 2021 Octubre con
Jesús “Chuy” Gutierrez

¿Cuántos años vive Ud. en Colorado? ¿Vive Ud. en Broomfield o cerca?

He vivido en Colorado desde el 2007, y vivo en Thornton.

¿Dónde nació Ud.? ¿De dónde es Ud.? ¿Porque le mudó aquí o su familia le mudó aquí, si era antes de su nacimiento?

Nací en Seattle, Washington, pero viví toda mi infancia en un pueblito en Jalisco (México) llamado “Ayutla.” Mis papas se mudaron a Estados Unidos en 1984 en busca de un futuro mejor, y yo nací en Abril de 1986.

¿Cuántos años trabaja Ud. en Broomfield?

Tengo trabajando en Broomfield desde 2016.

¿Qué le gusta Ud. sobre Broomfield? ¿Qué no le gusta?

De Broomfield me gusta su gente. Todas las familias que viven ahí son muy amables y de buen corazón, y lo que no me gusta es que el costo de vida es muy alto.

¿Qué son los desafíos destacados con viviendo en Broomfield para Ud.? ¿Y, en su opinión, para la comunidad Latina?

Es una buena ciudad para criar una familia. La mayoría de los latinos trabajamos con salarios mínimos y es difícil encontrar vivienda en esta ciudad tan bella. Hemos tenido algunos percances viviendo por el alto costo de vivienda.

¿En su opinión, hay clases sociales diferentes en Broomfield? Explica como Ud. las ve.

En mi opinión, si hay diferentes clases sociales en Broomfield. Hay mucha gente que tiene ingresos económicos muy altos y otros que tienen el salario mínimo y se nota la diferencia.

¿Cómo empieza Ud. su restaurante? ¿Lo posee? ¿Cuántos empleados tiene Ud.?

¿Como ve Ud. su responsabilidad como un jefe a sus empleados?

Fue un restaurante que mi Tio me vendió, y sí, es una empresa de mi familia. Tenemos alrededor de 35 empleados. La responsabilidad que siento por mis empleados es como



si fueran miembros de mi familia. Yo haría lo que fuera por ellos, porque ellos diario hacen algo por mi también.

¿Qué es la historia de su “app”?

“[Chamba App](#)” empezó durante la pandemia con la misión de ayudar a la comunidad Latina a encontrar trabajo y recursos para sobrevivir la pandemia.

¿Qué los quiere conocer y saber los ciudadanos de Broomfield sobre la vida de gente hispanica que vive aquí?

Le quiero dar a conocer a la comunidad de Broomfield que la gente Latina está muy feliz y agradecida de vivir en esta comunidad especial. Es gente honrada, trabajadora y de muy buen corazón.

¿Qué más quiere decir a compañeros de Broomfield? ¿Me perdí algo importante?

Solo dar las gracias a la comunidad de Broomfield por apoyar mi pequeño negocio durante todos estos años y especialmente durante esta pandemia. No solo estaban ayudando a un solo negocio, estaban ayudando a muchas familias que los necesitaban. ¡Muchas Gracias!

Jesús “Chuy” Gutierrez es el dueño del restaurante Three Margaritas, situado a la esquina sudeste del calle Main y la avenida 120th. Leer la traducción en ingles de esta entrevista, vaya a pagina 225.



Author's Note: Jesús Gutierrez speaks fluent English. For the English translation of this interview with Jesús, see p. 225 of the Resources section.

“Hometown Life”

How our places of residence become our homes



Policy | Health | Safety



Key Points

- A re-examination of our community values and regulations must accompany our work toward housing stability.
- The coronavirus pandemic continues to threaten the lives and livelihoods of Broomfielders. When the pandemic ends, recent infusions of federal and state funds into local communities will also likely end.
- Our proximity to a certain demographic profile influences our perspective on community safety.

“All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others.”

A proclamation by the pig elites in
George Orwell’s allegorical novella *Animal Farm*



More than a decade ago, when I was early on in my local housing advocacy work, I could count on one hand the number of civic leaders willing to acknowledge housing instability and homelessness as issues needing to be addressed in Broomfield. Most of them seemed too busy rolling out the red carpet for developers and corporations to bother. One caseworker’s boss even forbade her from talking to me, because her department head felt I stirred up unnecessary trouble.

At the same time, I kept hearing from long-time residents how special a place Broomfield was to grow up and raise kids and put down roots. There was the prosperity-seeking suburb on the cutting edge of corporate recruitment and development, and there was the quintessential hometown where neighbors pitched in to help each other in times of need. Financial bottom lines dictated the former. Relationships formed through intergenerational networks, neighborhood schools and extracurricular activities, and other shared interests, acquaintances and experiences shaped the latter. They still do.

The problem isn’t with either of these expressions of our community, in and of themselves. It’s with how they each in their own way tend to appraise residents based on their proximity to a certain profile — “white,” middle-class-and-up, English-speaking, families with kids preferred, relative-wealth-in-lieu-of-missing-criteria considered, bonus points in ascending order for growing up here, being born here and having family settle here before you were born.

When unexamined, preferred-resident prototypes — whether conscious, semi-conscious or unconscious — can contribute to things like [steering](#), [redlining](#), [undervaluation](#), NIMBYism, police brutality and massacres. Local and Broomfield-adjacent examples, from “Broomfield Yesterday” and David Allison’s “As Perfect as Men Can Conceive” on p. 33, and [this](#), [this](#) and [this](#) article about the death of 23-year-old Elijah McClain, get at a telling cultural question — who really belongs in our community and who is worthy of help?

In August 2019, Elijah was walking home from a convenience store in Aurora, when a 911 caller saw him and perceived him to be dressed and acting strangely. Police were dispatched. They contacted and quickly “restrained” him. Paramedics later sedated

him with ketamine, after which he went into cardiac arrest. He died three days later. The Adams County Coroner's Office and the 17th Judicial District Attorney's Office, which also oversees Broomfield, have been intricately involved in [the case](#) and its [aftermath](#).

No human community is exempt from the insidious effects of racism, classism and other forms of prejudice, discrimination and abuse of power. As now-Boulder mayor Aaron Brockett [tweeted](#) last Oct. 24, "We were fortunate to have a chance today to see a rough-cut version of an important new documentary *This Is [Not] Who We Are*, which explores the wide gap between Boulder's progressive self-image and the lived experiences of its Black residents." I've not yet seen *This is [Not] Who We Are*, but Boulder's reputation for racism is well known. Similarly, Loveland, Louisville, Golden and Colorado Springs have been identified as "[sundown towns](#)," where Black people were in the not-so-distant past banned from city limits after dark.

[George Floyd's](#) murder by Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, [Ahmaud Arbery's](#) murder by three Georgia men who claimed to be conducting a citizen's arrest, [Breonna Taylor's](#) shooting by police in Louisville, Ky., and a [litany](#) of other BIPOC deaths prompted nationwide protests during the summer of 2020 and since.

Here in Broomfield, Jody and Aaron Britton of Gospel Life Church helped Makenzie McLernon and Bahar Nabiyyar organize the "[Solidarity Walk for Black Lives](#)" in June 2020. It featured speeches from local residents and civic leaders, [a march](#) down Spader Way, west on 1st Avenue, north on Main and east through the park to the Broomfield Amphitheater, and 8 minutes and 46 seconds of fist-raised silence in memory and protest of how long Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin



Solidarity Walk participants on Monday evening, June 8, 2020.

held his knee against George Floyd's neck. BPD estimated 500-600 participants at the Solidarity Walk, and organizers, 600-700. I thought it was closer to a thousand. More and more people just kept joining in.

The question of belonging swirled around the Walk, and it continues to swirl around charged events like Kyle Rittenhouse's November 2021 [acquittal](#) of homicide and other charges related to the Aug. 2020 shooting deaths of two people in Kenosha, Wisc. In any human community, there are layers of perceived, acknowledged and felt belonging or lack of belonging. What I'm exploring here is our baseline sense of collective belonging. As the "wealth-in-lieu" criteria I identified above suggests, our unwritten rules have some pliability.

Let's start with how a lot of us transplants convey our connection to a place — when we move there. My family and I are among the Census Bureau-estimated 86.7 percent of residents who have moved to Broomfield since 2000. In that sense, I could say I became a Broomfielder when we pulled into the driveway of our home on Mother's Day 2004. If I wanted to be more *laissez-faire*, I'd back-date my belonging to the day we signed our ream of mortgage papers. If I wanted to be more of a stickler, I'd date my belonging to when I got my temporary paper Colorado driver's license at 1 Descombes Drive or when I received my plastic ID card in the mail. I expect most other 86.7-percenters could document their belonging with titles or leases processed by representatives of the housing industry or IDs issued by the State of Colorado via the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). Same for people who live elsewhere but work, go to school or send others to school here. Maybe they don't "belong" in the same sense as residents do, but they have paystubs, transcripts or other documentable connections to Broomfield.

It doesn't take much, though, for these accepted baselines of belonging to crumble, at least in an ethical or moral sense.

Regarding "residents": Let's say the Taylors moved from Orange County, Calif., into their newly purchased house in Ridgeview Heights three weeks ago. They received their Colorado driver's licenses confirming their Broomfield residency in the mail just yesterday. Mr. Taylor just got promoted and Mrs. Taylor just got a raise and learned she's pregnant! Let's also say the Garcias arrived in Broomfield from San Diego, Calif., three months ago. But somehow their lease paperwork and their deposit got "lost," and their apartment was leased to another family. Mr. Garcia's promised job got downsized, and Mrs. Garcia's pays minimum wage. They couldn't afford to stay in a hotel for more than a week, so for the last 11 weeks they've returned to Broomfield each evening to sleep in their Dodge Caravan in a safe parking lot. Mr. Garcia has worked on a few day-labor sites, but hopes his all-day job searches will soon land him a full-time position. Mrs. Garcia sleeps hard from her 12-hour shifts, but she's been getting sick the last few mornings.

Regarding non-residents and our standard of local humanitarian hospitality: Long-time resident Kent Davies notes in his “local perspective” on p. 166, how the CCOB employs staff to prepare for worst-case scenarios like pandemics, natural disasters and severe weather emergencies. These preparations include provision for blizzard-related, humanitarian sheltering, at the city’s expense, for any non-resident commuters or other motorists stranded on local highways. However, the city does not currently provide blizzard-related, humanitarian sheltering for any non-residents who might become stranded while “flying a sign” on the side of those same highways.



When it comes to every human community’s responsibility to offer care and hospitality to helpless strangers on the sides of their roads, borders on a map should dissolve into relative unimportance. It shouldn’t matter if a person in need is from Broadlands or Boston, or if their last permanent address was in Town Centre or Tijuana! The only criteria for someone to receive life-preserving humanitarian assistance should be: 1) They’re a human being (although sheltering a human sometimes means sheltering their pet or pets, but that’s a detail to unpack another time), and (2) They’re in need. That’s it.

In an intangible, but very real way, when the (over-)resourced among us ignore our under-resourced fellow residents and non-resident neighbors, regardless of what it says on their ID or whether they even have an ID, we imperil our own humanity. When we dehumanize “others,” whose lives we have not lived, whose names we do not care to know and whose stories we ignore, we jeopardize the moral fabric that binds together the very community and the very homes we seek to preserve.

At the Refuge, we try to create an atmosphere “where everybody knows your name” in the words of the title song of the ‘80s sitcom *Cheers*. We sometimes say we try to be “like *Cheers*, just without the alcohol.” (That’s not because we have moral reservations against drinking. It’s because we choose to abstain, in community, alongside friends working their sobriety.) Really, a lot of what we do is about striving for home, in the best sense of the word. I think that same sentiment is implicit in the affection we Broomfielders have for our hometown.

Home is the place where we eat, rest, sleep, shelter, relate, love and entertain. It’s where we (should) feel safe and where we let down our guard. It’s the place where our most distinct memories reside.

When I think of my childhood home, I think of playing catch in the backyard with my dad and meals of peanut butter and honey sandwiches, ring soup and milk with Strawberry Quik with my mom and watching Broncos games with my older siblings and opening Christmas presents by our fireplace. It's where my dad died.

My family's Broomfield home is where my wife tutors kids with dyslexia, where our oldest daughter recovered from brain surgery, where my oldest son took his first steps, and where our two youngest starred in their first YouTube video. It's where we've received amazing and terrible news, and where it once snowed so much we could barely open our backdoor. (Our dogs loved it. The designated snow shovelers among us did not.)

The Online Etymology Dictionary says, "...in the full range and feeling of [Modern English] [home](#) is a conception that belongs distinctively to the word *home* and some of its [Germanic] cognates and is not covered by any single word in most of the [Indo-European] languages. That's kind of beautiful. Our lexicon, movies and songs suggest the pull of "home" strengthens in its absence: homeward bound, homecoming, homeless, homesick, "There's no place like home" (*The Wizard of Oz*), "I'll be home for Christmas" (Bing Crosby, et. al.), and the opening lines of Diddy - Dirty Money's 2010 song "[Coming Home](#)" (featuring Skylar Grey):

"I'm coming home
I'm coming home
Tell the world I'm coming home
Let the rain wash away all the pain of yesterday
I know my kingdom awaits and they've forgiven my mistakes
I'm coming home, I'm coming home
Tell the world that I'm coming..."



POLICY

Policies come in all shapes and sizes depending on who's doing the policymaking. Pets have them: Each time one of us Dormishes exits our front door and returns inside, our golden retriever-blue heeler mix named Sassie (short for Sasquatch), greets us with her propeller tail wagging and wet kisses. We could be taking out the trash or we could have been gone for a week, but we get the same greeting.

Families have policies: "In this house, we put our cell phones away during dinner. And, no, you can't leave it on your lap in case you get a text."

Larger groups of stakeholders have policies, too, of course. For a long time, Broomfield's collective affordable housing and housing support policies were as scant as our housing resources. However, I'm happy to say that's changing.

As the circle graphic on p. 64 suggests, a lot can happen at intersections. The most synergistic housing-related policies tend to come from collaboration, dialogue and the proper projection of power, resources and values. The more often representatives from two, three or all four stakeholders groups of our community gather at the same table, the better chance our policies and programs have to succeed:

- **Broomfield Housing Opportunity Coalition (BHOC)** — On Oct. 23, 2012, faith leader Deb Meyer organized a cafe-style seminar on “just models for community development.” Those conversations led to the formation of an ad-hoc network promoting “housing opportunity” here in Broomfield. And the Broomfield Housing Opportunity Coalition (BHOC) was born. The energy behind BHOC helped create the important “Housing Advisory Committee” (see below). Until COVID, it also fostered Q&A candidate panels and periodic community conversations around housing-related issues.
- **Broomfield Housing Advisory Committee (BHAC)** — In November 2016, the CCOB [launched a housing advisory effort](#) with seven community appointees and two city council members. Led through multiple terms by Tony Kassel, Alan Feinstein and Bob Munroe, and advised by Broomfield's now-former housing manager Cheryl St. Clair, BHAC commissioned the 2018 Housing Report, met with developers, reviewed proposals and recommended important changes to the city charter, such as inclusionary housing and converting our housing authority into an independent entity.
- **Mobile Homes** — Perhaps more than any group of local residents, mobile home advocates like Anastasia Weatherford helped awaken Broomfield leaders to the need for housing oversight in our community. Their work led to city council's [unanimous support](#) for [new local regulations](#) regarding resident privacy, retaliation by park management and mediation between the two parties. State legislators also recently proposed a [rent-stabilization bill](#) that would cap annual rent increases at mobile home parks.
- **Inclusionary Housing** — In 2020, Broomfield joined other area communities in approving an [“inclusionary housing” ordinance](#). Ours requires new residential developments to make 10 percent of for-sale units permanently attainable at 80 percent AMI and 20 percent of rental units permanently affordable at 60 percent AMI or pay cash-in-lieu or donate land-in-lieu to the CCOB.

- **Cracks of the Cracks Hotel Voucher Fund** — Local faith communities have helped close the humanitarian gap left by Code Blue’s current required background checks and “strong connections to Broomfield.” Contributors to an ad-hoc “Cracks of the Cracks” hotel voucher fund include Ascent Church (Louisville), Cross of Christ Lutheran Church, Discovery Church, Family in Christ Community Church (Westminster), Holy Comforter Episcopal Church, Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Lutheran Church of Hope, Mile High Vineyard, The Refuge and the St. Vincent de Paul Society. The Refuge manages these funds. We issued “Cracks of the Cracks” vouchers from November 2021 through early January this year when funds were exhausted, “reactivated” after a special offering from Broomfield United Methodist Church in February, and went into deficit after several prolonged late-winter cold spells.
- **Afghan Refugee Resettlement** — The stories of the first few recently displaced Afghan families [to become Broomfielders](#) have become widely [known](#), but theirs are just the opening chapters of a larger humanitarian story. Last fall, the resettlement agency [Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains](#) requested Broomfield resettle 20-25 Afghan families totaling an estimated 100-150 people, a number roughly proportional to our population share of the Denver metro area. (Thousands of Afghan refugees are being resettled on the Front Range.) Heidi Henkel continues to lead a local task force seeking temporary host families and co-sponsors willing to raise or allocate funds to pay six months of rent for additional families. Current co-sponsors include Holy Comforter Episcopal Church and several other Broomfield faith communities. “I’m in tears every day because of how things work and have worked and how hard it is,” Heidi says. “And I’m also happy because Ahmad’s kids have toys they get to play with.”
- **Independent Housing Authority** — On Jan. 1, 2022, the Broomfield Housing Authority (BHA) became independent and received [\\$3 million in seed money](#) from the inclusionary zoning ordinance’s cash-in-lieu fund. The BHA’s five newly appointed commissioners will soon begin [advancing](#) affordable and attainable housing in Broomfield in collaboration with public and private partners.
- **“Housing for All”** — Local stakeholders concerned about our lack of affordable housing and housing support efforts have gathered to brainstorm and plan on a number of occasions over the last several years. At one of those gatherings, we identified what Dayna Scott called a “big, hairy, audacious goal” — “safe, sound and affordable housing for everyone in Broomfield.” (I’d add “sustainable” and “accessible” in there somewhere, too.) The CCOB did that goal one better. In anticipation of a yet-to-be-created comprehensive housing plan, the CCOB called its related community engagement process, “Housing For All.” To that I say, “Hell, yes, on that one!” I’m relieved and encouraged that Broomfield’s civic

leaders, from our city council to our city manager's office to our departments of human services and public health and beyond, acknowledge and embrace our current and future housing challenges. We may not always see our housing crisis or its solutions in the same way, but their sincere engagement is a very welcome change from the era of the Sweep Report 1.0!

Of course, our four stakeholder groups can be well represented, with their associated power and resources synergistically intersecting, but if we fail to discern and apply the proper community values to a particular situation, we can lose our way. I believe that's what happened last summer during community-wide debates over a local [camping ban](#). With the heightened visibility of people staying outside in tents, the CCOB briefly [considered](#) four safe-spot camping sites modeled after [programs](#) in downtown Denver and at Regis University. Around the same time, rumors about a tent set up by "a homeless woman" near Broomfield Commons prompted more citizen complaints than any recent issue not named "oil and gas." There was particularly vocal opposition to a possible safe camping site at the southwest corner of 144th and Sheridan, adjacent to a high school ironically named for a very special family who once became unhoused refugees to escape a murderous tyrant.

CCOB leaders scrapped the safe-spot camping idea and found instead on enforcing an existing city code that prohibits camping in open spaces and parks. The primary concern being enforcement in such a way as to prevent possible future lawsuits. The resulting five-step notification, resourcing and removal procedure instituted by the city includes the formal offer of a hotel voucher for two nights and the informal hope that the person or persons displaced from dismantled encampments will subsequently leave Broomfield.

I'm still not sure why we didn't remove, amend or simply choose not to enforce the camping ban, at least until we have more substantial, year-round temporary and transitional housing resources in place. Who cares if the Boy Scouts decide to camp out for a few days near Broomfield Commons? Maybe a dry run to set up their tents and equipment before a winter trip in the mountains somewhere would be helpful to them. The relatively few people (perhaps one or two dozen) camping outside for non-recreational reasons in Broomfield are not proclaiming a lifestyle choice. They are not, in 1850s Colorado pioneer fashion, staking claim to land for a "tent city." They're just trying to survive, folks.

Any one of the above policy alternatives would have saved *hundreds* of CCOB staff hours better and more profitably spent elsewhere, like exploring sustainable temporary and transitional housing supports for our unhoused neighbors or partnering with adjacent counties to develop regional solutions for our shared housing challenges. In my opinion, [hotel vouchers](#) are better options than safe camping sites for our particular

suburban context, but what's been hard to accept is the marked contrast between last summer's resident pushback on money being spent on "the homeless," and the relative crickets heard when, for example, the CCOB spent [\\$120,000 on mold mitigation](#) for an abandoned building.

My friend Billy Bear Jarrett often notes that we as a society provide obligatory long-term shelter, albeit in confinement and less than optimal conditions, for people convicted of crimes and prisoners of war, but none for our own residents experiencing homelessness. That, too, is hard to accept.

Since last summer, BPD, Code Enforcement and members of other departments have coordinated efforts to remove the campsites of a handful of people residing outside in Broomfield. Despite the attempts of city employees to do so in a professional and compassionate manner, the removals aggravated the already unstable situations of each camper who was displaced. I know one of them inadvertently drew attention to other secluded Broomfield sleep-sites last fall, thereby putting them all more clearly on the radar of local authorities. Several campers receiving notices moved their campsites before their 7-day removal notice was up, but few if any permanently left Broomfield. They just found other semi-secluded places to "stay."

These painful realities have a few silver linings. First, our community is finally talking about local homelessness. That's not nothing. Second, a number of Broomfield civic, non-profit and community leaders have recently aligned with larger regional and national efforts to proactively address homelessness and housing distress.

Our recently elected mayor, Guyleen Castriotta, has been appointed to the [Housing, Hunger, & Homelessness Committee](#) (H3C) of the [Metro Mayors Caucus](#).

Broomfield stakeholders have also joined the nationwide Built For Zero (BFZ) effort to end local veteran homelessness by the end of this year and to end all homelessness here by 2025. As U.S. Congresswoman Cory Bush of St. Louis [tweeted last Veteran's Day](#), more than 30,000 current or former members of the armed forces "have died by suicide since 9/11" and "40,000 veterans are unhoused on any given night... let's not just thank those who have served. Let's commit to building a country where our veterans have the support they need to thrive." Since 2020, Broomfield FISH, the Broomfield Workforce Center, The Refuge and regional partners have placed four local veterans in permanent housing. One more is in the process of getting a HUD VASH voucher.

We estimate a dozen more remain unhoused in our hometown, and hope to rehouse them all by Dec. 31.

BFZ amplifies, expands and outfits already existing programs with helpful tools to support our unhoused neighbors in their progress toward permanent housing.

Stakeholders who value metrics should appreciate BFZ, because it prioritizes real-time information and nimble case management. Stakeholders who value humanizing homelessness should appreciate BFZ, because its “by-name list” offers clients the trauma-informed dignity of only having to tell their story once to one community agency, not 10 times to 10 different agencies. Stakeholders concerned with bottom lines should love BFZ, because national corporate sponsorships mean Broomfield’s cost to participate is \$0. What’s more, every county in the metro area has joined the BFZ effort, giving our most vulnerable residents the best available access to housing resources like HUD VASH vouchers, rapid rehousing (RRH), permanent supportive housing (PSH) and transitional housing. Community Solutions [reports](#) that so far 12 U.S. communities, including [Fremont County, Colo.](#), have ended veteran homelessness, five have ended chronic homelessness and three have ended both.

These promising efforts aren’t just about our estimated 200 residents who are currently unhoused at any one time, either. It’s about the next 200 and the next and the next, and reforming all levels of our system and the conditions that lead to homelessness and keep people there. It’s about making it easier for resident homeowners and renters to stay housed, and improving oversight of and relationships between landlords and tenants and between lenders and mortgage recipients.

Henry David Thoreau’s famous existential observation, “the mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation,” is certainly true in regard to residents living in the midst of housing instability. There are few things human beings won’t do to safeguard or return safely to their homes.

In the 1997 movie [Amistad](#), John Quincy Adams (played by Anthony Hopkins) eloquently argues before the U.S. Supreme Court on behalf of an 1839 slave-ship-revolt leader, a Mende man named Cinque (played by Djimon Hounsou): “...I put it to you thus: This is the most important case ever to come before this court. Because what it, in fact, concerns is the very nature of man...[and] the natural state of mankind is...and I know this is a controversial idea – is freedom...And the proof is the length to which a man, woman, or child will go to regain it, once taken. He will break loose his chains. He will decimate his enemies. He will try and try and try against all odds, against all prejudices, to get home...”

I have a friend in his 30s who has been unhoused in the Broomfield area since his release from jail — I’ll call him S. He’s tried as hard as anyone to do what “the system” asks of him. He communicates regularly with his P.O. (probation officer) and has been forthright about his record in job and housing interviews. Even though he doesn’t have a vehicle, he shows up on time to his job, works his butt off, and doesn’t ask for help unless he needs it. Most of his former friends have ghosted him for working too hard and “staying clean.” Last December, he got his unit number for permanent housing! His coworkers threw him an impromptu party, they were all so happy for him, but two

days later, his promised housing was withdrawn. It turns out his prospective property manager had forgotten to run his full background check. A few weeks later, the Marshall Fire chased him from his Louisville hotel room. No buses were running. No Lyft or Uber drivers were accepting passengers. It was hard to tell which direction was which because smoke was so thick he could hardly see street signs right in front of him. S. ended up walking out of town on foot, finally reaching safety with his eyes watering, his face covered with soot and his clothes smelling like smoke.

I have a friend in his 50s who lives in a mobile home park near Broomfield — I’ll call him O. He has spent the better part of five years fighting for housing dignity for himself and his fellow residents. He’s endured and documented (illegal) threats of eviction, rent hikes, quasi-legal towing and constant harassment by his park’s management and ownership. On multiple occasions, he has reported illegal actions by the park to his local police department and state oversight agencies, yet no substantial enforcement measures have been taken against the park.

I have another friend in his 50s who has been a regular guest at the Refuge Café for years — I’ll call him S. He’s a good guy who’s had a hard life. He lives under a bridge. On many occasions, he has helped us maintain our safe space for staff, volunteers and guests. Every once in a while though, S. feels disrespected and gets verbally abusive and knocks things over. So he’s on his second extended break from the Refuge — this time for a year. I worry about him. Where will S. go now to rest or be among friends?

HEALTH

It would be hard to overstate the impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The numbers of people killed by the virus and its side effects are mind-numbing, and the scourge is not over. The loss of loved ones is incalculable. Through his Twitter account [@FacesOfCOVID](#), Alex Goldstein [curates stories and photos](#) of people worldwide who have died of COVID. His tweets are often hard to read, but it’s even harder to read an entry for a loved one — my father-in-law, Bob Atkison, passed away on Oct. 19, 2020, in a Springfield, Mo., hospital.

COVID-19

	Tests	Cases	Hospitalizations	Deaths
Broomfield	180,311	9,306	369	98
Colorado	4,413,634	989,409	52,048	10,773
U.S.A.		59,521,277		834,077
Worldwide		298,915,721		5,469,303

Sources: [World Health Organization](#) (WHO), [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC), [Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment](#) (CDPHE) and [City and County of Broomfield](#) (CCOB). Based on available data as of Jan. 9.

COVID-19 VACCINATION

	People Who Have Received At Least One Dose	% of Eligible Population	People Who Have Been Fully Vaccinated	% of Eligible Population	People Who Have Been Boosted	% of Eligible Population
Broomfield	61,800*	83.4	55,259	77.93	28629	38.6
Colorado	4,255,903	78.3	3,833,850	70.54	–	–
U.S.A	246,812,939	74.3	207,662,071	62.5	75,356,579	36.3
Worldwide	4,567,405,833	57.8*	3,864,889,174	48.9*	–	–

*Approximations based on a [CCOB graph](#) and a world population estimate of [7.9 billion people](#).

Sources: WHO [Vaccination Data](#), CDC [COVID Data Tracker](#), CDPHE [Vaccine Data](#), and CCOB [COVID-19 Vaccination Data](#). Based on available data as of Jan. 9.

As of last March, an Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research [poll](#) found that 1 in 5 Americans had lost a relative or close friend to the coronavirus.

As of this Feb. 16, the CCOB’s “COVID-19 Data for Broomfield” page showed [111 Broomfielders had died of COVID](#). They include my friend, neighbor and long-time stalwart of the Broomfield Council on the Arts & Humanities, Sherill Bunetta, who passed away last winter. On Memorial Day 2021, local faith leaders led a community “Remembrance & Blessing” at the Brunner House east garden for Sherill and our other Broomfielders lost to COVID. May they rest in peace in the arms of their Creator.

Over these last two years, businesses have lost revenue, residents have lost jobs and survivors have lost their sense of taste or smell or developed “long COVID.” One in 3 people infected with the virus have experienced subsequent [neurological or mental health disorders](#). Our daily work, home and play routines have been disrupted. The coronavirus has re-shaped three distinct school years, derailing cherished activities and rites of passage for students and leading to shortages of [substitute teachers](#), bus drivers and full-time staff. All this while Colorado’s per-pupil [funding](#) and teacher [salaries](#) remain embarrassingly low.

Mental health was an official Broomfield city council priority in 2019. It’s become even more important since the pandemic hit in March 2020. There’s no denying the mental strain COVID has wrought, no matter our political persuasions. Almost 1 in 5 U.S. households have had to forego health care for serious illnesses, according to [an Oct. 14, 2021, story](#) by National Public Radio. We’ve all had to negotiate masking and social distancing and restrictions on public gatherings. Many of us have gotten shots in the arm. Still, more of us have had Q-tips thrust up our nose to obtain COVID test samples.

The [exhausted](#) healthcare and public health professionals doing all that poking and prodding have been nothing short of heroic these last 22 months. Among its other pandemic mitigation efforts in 2021, Broomfield's Department of Public Health and Environment (DPHE) launched a grant-funded "[Vaccine Ambassador](#)" effort to distribute PPE (personal protective equipment), promote COVID safety practices, testing sites and nearby drive-through, mobile and site-specific vaccine clinics. Its goal: keep as many Broomfielders as possible healthy and reduce our COVID hospitalization and death toll.

COVID has also taken its toll in other ways. According to [a Nov. 17 article](#) in the New York Times, the number of drug overdose deaths rose nearly 30 percent last year, from 78,000 to 100,000, a death toll that surpasses those of gun violence and car crashes combined. Among the culprits of our ongoing [opioid crisis](#) are the abuse of [fentanyl](#) and the "[new meth](#)," which specialize in destroying their users' physical and mental health and contribute to homelessness both nationally and locally.


The coronavirus has destabilized many residents' housing to be sure, but it also prompted housing moratoriums and unprecedented funds being directed toward unemployment insurance, mortgage and rent support, recovery funds to qualifying families, and [cash payments](#) to child-tax-credit eligible families. Local partners have been able to offer and maintain Code Blue Hotel Vouchers, for instance, because the CCOB earmarked ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) and other federal funds for that purpose, but no one is sure what will happen with future funding once the pandemic ends.

In light of all we've endured before and since COVID — we're now on the Greek letter "[omicron](#)" — it's no surprise that [public health experts](#) consider housing a "social determinant of health." When people enjoy regular income, ready access to emergency resources, good relationships and stable housing, they are more likely to seek preventive care and their health tends to thrive. However, when a virus steals jobs, unemployment runs out and people lose their housing, their health tends to suffer. When anyone doesn't have a place to safely rest, retreat or be with friends or family, their health tends to suffer. When housing comes with constant outside harassment, poor living conditions or abuse, its residents feel more imprisoned than at home. And their health (and their overall quality of life) tend to suffer.

SAFETY


What makes a community safe? More to the point, what makes the residences we work so hard to turn into homes safe?

Our proximity to either the Taylors or the Garcias, and to the "preferred profile" I outlined on p. 145 likely shapes our answers to those questions.



My parents taught me when I was little that if I ever got lost I should find a police officer or someone with a uniform on and tell them I needed help. Growing up in Southeast Denver, I saw police cruisers driving around occasionally. My uncle and two of my cousins worked for the Longmont Police Department, but other than admiring the tactical belts they wore I didn't give the police much thought. I only remember actually being in the presence of on-duty police officers when they visited my elementary school to encourage us to "just say no to drugs," and two times when I got pulled over as a young driver. The second time wasn't very dramatic — I was delivering pizzas and going "a little fast" and I got off with a warning. But the first time I got pulled over was also the first time I ever drove a vehicle. I had just gotten my permit, and my dad had driven us out to the (then-)dirt roads on the west side of Cherry Creek Dam to teach me how to drive. I drove in first gear down my first strip of dirt road, and, at my dad's direction, pulled slowly into a well-to-do neighborhood to turn around. As soon as I turned back onto the dirt road for my first try at manually shifting my dad's green '52 Chevy pickup, I saw lights flashing in my rear-view mirror. "Dad! What'd I do?! I didn't do anything wrong, did I!?" I exclaimed in a panic. "Just slow down and pull over there," he said calmly, pointing to the edge of the dirt road. I did, awkwardly, and the police cruiser parked behind me, lights still whirling. My dad then opened his passenger door and got out of the truck. He sauntered over to the police car where he had a brief, casual-looking conversation with the single officer inside. I watched them anxiously from my side mirror. They didn't talk long, before my dad walked back to the truck. The officer turned off his lights, pulled up next to me, waved and drove off.

As I've become more aware of our society's ongoing need for racial and social justice, I've learned many People of Color, and African-Americans in particular, have had far-more-frequent and far-less-pleasant experiences with law enforcement than I. In fact, "The Talk" has long been a rite of passage for Black parents and their children — "If you ever encounter police, stay calm, keep your hands visible, ask for permission to reach for your wallet or into your purse, do what they tell you without talking back, don't get angry, don't talk loudly," and in the era of cell phones, "Call us right away." The Talk has personal meaning for me because Angela and I have four kids — two by birth and two by adoption — and our two youngest are Black.



One police-related detail I do remember clearly from my younger days is the motto emblazoned on the doors of law enforcement cruisers: "To Serve and Protect." I always

assumed that meant “serve and protect people,” which, as intended, instilled in me a sense of security and appreciation. It wasn’t until a few years ago that I learned to my surprise the motto’s fuller expression: “To serve and protect people *and property*.”

Our distant and recent history as a nation, state and region make a certain kind of sense when property’s importance is properly acknowledged. The Founders of our country took their stand against a system elevating divine-imperial rights, inherited and stewarded titles, and aristocratic wealth. They replaced it with a system privileging discoverer-settler rights, land and property titles, and accumulated wealth. Newly minted states generally limited [voting rights](#) to white male, tax-paying property-owners. It took generations for some to legally become citizens instead of property, and further generations for others to earn the right to vote. Some citizens still struggle to maintain that right.

The east-west trajectory of U.S. expansion into regions already inhabited by Indigenous peoples arrives squarely in 21st-century Broomfield and my p. 145 hypothetical featuring the Taylors and the Garcias. The Taylors “belong” here because they can produce a piece of paper that says they own property here. They, therefore, have “a permanent address.” They have easy access to state recognition of their presence and rights in the form of official IDs and other advantages. The Garcias have been physically present for more time than the Taylors, but they don’t officially “belong” to Broomfield, because they own no property and have no documentation of an active lease confirming their residency. They have no permanent address, no place to receive mail. Once their California driver’s licenses expire, they’ll not only be marked as outsiders, their presence here will become suspect.

Our social, economic and criminal justice system is less-than-equitable for people like the Garcias because its primary purpose is to preserve the resources and viability of property-owning citizen-residents and the institutions they run. It’s why “possession is nine-tenths of the law.” It’s why we piously allow “fair-market” forces to displace cost-burdened households from our communities, but give massive bailouts to banks, institutions and large employers who have “more to lose.” It’s why we express concern over “[property crimes](#)” like [theft](#) and trespassing, “crimes against morality” like illegal drug use, and the misdemeanor or civil offense of “[illegal immigration](#)” — all disproportionately enforced in low-income or racially diverse neighborhoods. It’s why we express correspondingly little concern over crimes like “[unlawful employment](#)” or “exploiting an individual through [unjust employment](#).” It’s why we call people without proper documentation of their residency here “illegal aliens,” while at the same time upholding legal concepts like “[corporate personhood](#).”

Non-U.S. citizens who overstay their visas or enter the country without permission aren't the only ones who suffer from a lack of proper documentation. Victims of domestic violence sometimes aren't "allowed" by their partners to keep their own ID or other official documents, or they're forced to let their ID expire. Between 2011-2021, Broomfield averaged 154 annual domestic violence (DV) incidents with an arrest charge, according to Kristy O'Hayre of the Broomfield Police Department. BPD and other Broomfield organizations continue to refer to Boulder-based Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence (SPAN) and other area agencies, because no 24/7 resources exist to help local DV survivors safely stay in our community.

Domestic Violence Incidents			
with an arrest charge			
Year	Male	Female	Total
2011	92	36	128
2012	96	47	143
2013	99	51	150
2014	118	38	156
2015	103	62	165
2016	152	81	233
2017	106	40	146
2018	57	27	84
2019	118	46	164
2020	112	59	171
2021	89	65	154
2022	6	3	9
Total	1148	555	1703
* Year to Date 01/26/2022			

Source: Kristy O'Hayre, Broomfield Police Department, City and County of Broomfield.

Lack of a valid photo ID also forces many citizen-residents who are unhoused into the margins of our communities. We stably housed residents take it for granted, but having a current, legally issued ID gives us access to all kinds of services and privileges in our society, from official, stable employment to maintaining our vehicles' license plates to access to our favorite social activities. Without an ID, our neighbors who are unhoused often can't stay in either temporary lodging or work toward permanent housing. As I detailed on p. 95, most hotels will not rent a room to a guest without a valid photo ID. To make matters worse, the process of obtaining alternative proof of their existence via a social security card or birth certificate isn't easy to navigate either. Those systems, too, default to applicants with a permanent address.

As for how our local law enforcement and justice system fits into all this talk of community safety, in recent years city leaders and the BPD have sought resident feedback, been among early adopters nationwide of the “[8 Can’t Wait](#)” policing policies, and been open to necessary reforms, such as those resulting from the 2012 fatal police shooting of [21-year-old Kyle Miller](#). In 2018, BPD officers began responding to mental-health-related calls with clinicians from the area non-profit Community Reach, via their joint [BCORE \(Broomfield Co-Responder\)](#) program. Additionally, the CCOB’s new Office of Diversity, Equity and Organizational Development led by Vanessa Oldham-Barton recently partnered with the 17th Judicial District Attorney’s Office to expand a long-running [restorative justice unit to Broomfield](#). It diverts teenagers accused of low-level crimes toward need-based services and offers them a chance to graduate without a criminal record.



Local Perspectives

- “The Bell Still Rings” with Katie Hinshaw (p. 160)
- “Between Fourth & Fifth” by Jennifer Waines (p. 163)
- “That’s One of the Davies Boys” by Kent Davies (p. 166)

Local Perspective

THE BELL STILL RINGS

An Oct. 2, 2021 interview with Katie Hinshaw

Tell me about your connections to Broomfield.

I've lived in Broomfield for 9 years with my husband and three children. My husband works full-time in the construction field. I've taught K-8 English Language Learners (ELL) at Prospect Ridge Academy (PRA) for six years. I've also taught as a classroom teacher in Denver Public Schools and Adams 12 [Five Star Schools].



What's been most challenging about COVID in your role as a teacher?

Just trying to be aware of who I'm around. Trying to stay healthy, so as not to be a spreader and to try and not need to use a sick day. It is so much work for my coworkers and me with the current lack of substitutes. Needing to call in sick causes a domino scenario for the school about who can cover what and for when.

PRA does a great job at community engagement and helping others. Last spring, we were able to raise enough money for a child's Make-A-Wish! Also, PRA is one of the few schools that trains its K-5 teachers in the [Orton-Gillingham](#) structured reading approach, and uses a "science of reading" curriculum.

How are your fellow teachers and other educators holding up?

I personally am hearing from coworkers in Adams 12 and other districts, the stress of business as usual with more demands. Demands being covering classrooms and not blending class in some schools. I hear my educator friends literally asking themselves what they could do to leave the school setting and how many more years they think they will be able to make it. I know of several working on exit plans.

What sorts of things are you seeing mental health-wise as you enter your third school year in a pandemic?

My own kids hate having five days of non-stop go, go, go. My elementary student really misses his horseback riding lessons he was able to do on his flex day. I've asked a few other teachers and learning objectives are still the same for each grade level. Yet we now have some students who are two years behind. Teachers are expected to move them all through our curricula quickly, and with no training on how to handle the sort of mental health issues so many students are coming in with.

Teacher morale is very low. Often more things get pushed onto already stretched-thin teachers. Also, our education system itself has lost so many teachers this last year. Many

staff are new and because of everything else, we have very little time for team building and training, so it feels as if our profession is becoming even more isolated.

Students are also coming back with low morale, and they are struggling with so many social/emotional issues that aren't being addressed. Teachers are being told to teach and close the gap. On a more basic level, kids are often left wondering, when do I wear a mask? Or when can I give a classmate a hug or high five?

What do people need to know about kids of this generation?

I suspect this generation will want a better work-life balance. I think if you ask many to compare five days in person to four days, most liked having the flexibility. My boys both loved being able to get work done and then go for a bike ride, come back and hop on for extra group time online with their teachers/tutors.

There are so many amazing projects happening at our school. The National Junior Honor Society and National Honor Society do some great work. Last year, they did a hugely successful toy drive for Children's Colorado and a book collection for foster children. They have already hit the ground running this year with a blood drive. This generation is resilient and wants to help serve their community.

According to the whitepaper "The Economic Impact of Dyslexia on California" by the Boston Consulting Group and the UCSF Dyslexia Center, "Dyslexia is the trillion-dollar problem we don't know we have...Addressing the needs of children with dyslexia will positively impact a range of issues that concern Californians deeply. It will reduce homelessness, improve the economy, raise test scores in the lowest-performing majority-minority schools, lower incarceration rates, and increase access to higher education." Obviously, California isn't Colorado, but I think the concern of the whitepaper is applicable to us. Please tell me about your involvement with local dyslexia tutoring and educational advocacy.

As an educator, and then as a parent, I realized very early on that my second child learned very differently from my oldest. I knew it in my gut when he was 6 months old. At 18 months, he qualified for speech and occupational therapy from Medicare Part C. According to the guidelines for qualification, at the age of 3, he had closed the gap and "no longer needed service." But I still heard him dropping sounds when trying to correct words or saying words on his own. It was subtle, but although I knew he should have qualified for an IEP [Individualized Education Program] in preschool, he didn't. The line is very black and white. That's when I went back to my educational background, and thought, maybe he needs to be in a Montessori program. I would get reports that they think he has hearing issues and struggles with learning the basic letters in his name, and yet they would see how bright and or smart he was in his math skills.

We had him evaluated both years he went to a Montessori school, and he passed all the tests. I then got pregnant with our third child, and I had to stay home, as there was

no way we could afford a 4 year old and an infant in daycare on my teacher's income. Deep down, I was happy to be able to be home and work with our second child. (I was able to replace my teaching income by working online five to six mornings a week from 3-7 a.m. teaching English to students in China.)

By the time, my 4 year old went off to kindergarten, I realized there was something going on with our middle child, but even with two education degrees, I could not pinpoint it. I had a friend survey me about what I was taught about dyslexia through my elementary education studies and I almost laughed at her on the phone. I told her that we read about two paragraphs on it in my undergraduate studies and nothing in my Master's studies, and that I was told it was rare and that we would maybe have one to two dyslexic students over the course of our teaching career.

She told me her 6th grader had been diagnosed with dyslexia. I just brushed the conversation off till I had a conference with my middle son's kinder teacher. She told me he was not making connections to the letters and the sounds and that he struggled to still write and read his own name, and yet he had amazing story details and was scoring high in his math skills. I had a panicked night of wondering what was "wrong" with our second child and happened to Google "dyslexia." The top 10 things listed, my middle son had signs of nine of them, including not being able to rhyme. My mind was blown at what I was reading. I went running to his kinder teacher going, "Oh my word, I think he might be dyslexic." She laughed and said, "No, he just needs to try harder and focus."

I dove headfirst into educating myself on dyslexia and asking my friend a thousand questions. The more I learned, the more I was like, "This is my child!" I learned that I was taught to teach reading using the "Whole Language approach." By doing so, I was teaching so many wrong things to students about how to read, and I had taken intense guided-reading classes in Denver Public Schools while working as a Kinder/1st-grade teacher. It took me a little while to accept that I was teaching reading in a way that would work for only one-third of my students! [Statewide data shows this](#). I have since learned that 1 in 5 people worldwide have a "dyslexic brain," and that [a structured literacy approach](#) — like the Orton-Gillingham method, for example — really helps young, dyslexic readers learn.

During this whole process, I came across a very active group of parents and educators called [COKID](#) (Colorado Kids Identified with Dyslexia). That's how I learned I could help tutor my own son with an appropriate curriculum at the free Refuge Reads program here in Broomfield. The founders and I believe that if you want to learn to read, you can! We are here to help, whether you're 5 years old or 99 years old. My dyslexic son is in 3rd grade and is now a proficient reader!

Katie Hinshaw co-leads the [Refuge Reads](#) with Savannah Smith. My wife, Angela, a certified teacher and advanced dyslexia screener and tutor, founded Refuge Reads in 2019.

Local Perspective

BETWEEN FOURTH & FIFTH (ESTATES)

By Jennifer Waines

September 25, 2021

My first impression of Broomfield was that it was a quiet, relatively small town north of Denver. Having covered a murder trial in Gunnison, Colo., I heard the judge in that case review options for district courts in the state that were A.) far enough away from the location of the first trial (which ended in a hung jury) and B.) had a clear docket that could accommodate a lengthy trial. Broomfield's was one of them.



As a crime reporter, that instantly gave me the impression the city was relatively crime-free since the courthouse could accommodate a trial from a different jurisdiction. In October 2013, I visited and found Broomfield to be a pleasant place with pleasant people. Nearly two years later I moved to Colorado and was hired as the *Broomfield Enterprise* reporter.

The local newspaper, which I left in November 2020, is still printed twice a week and has an online presence. Unlike the small daily where I previously worked, I quickly noticed community members were engaged and valued their small town paper. It was a welcome sentiment that I continued to see the five years I was a reporter at the *Enterprise*. It was not unusual for residents to come up to me during breaks at council meetings to ask insightful questions, share news tips for stories/subjects I should look into, and to compliment my work and the work of other local journalists.

Familiarizing oneself with community leaders, people in elected offices and government officials is a good way to take the pulse of a place, so my editor (who was also new to the role) and I scheduled meetings and made the rounds. As someone with a strong background as a crime and courts reporter in Texas, I remember being somewhat surprised, when meeting some people I would later seek out official comments from, that they told me the *Enterprise* focused more on community pieces and the sunnier side of things than hard news.

I wasn't sure how much truth that statement held, but I knew I wanted to pursue stories that people needed to hear. That meant spending six hours at a council meeting and then writing for another two or three to file stories that could make it to print for the next edition of the paper. It meant doing my best to understand all sides of a controversial topic — from oil and gas issues to affordable housing and, more recently in my last few years at the paper, to homelessness.

At my very first city council focus session, an annual meeting at the beginning of the year where council reviews the past year, solicits public input and sets priorities for the upcoming year, I listened as Councilmember Sharon Tessier talked passionately about affordable housing. It didn't make the council's top 10 list, but it was acknowledged. I eventually saw a committee formed to study that complex issue and make recommendations to the city council. It became clear it would take partnerships — such as those among local government, nonprofits, businesses and places of worship — to make some of those plans a reality.

One example of a successful new affordable housing project is Anchor House, which helps young people who have recently been emancipated from the foster care system. While it was widely supported by Broomfield City Council and voted on by members of Lutheran Church of Hope's faith community, I recall public meetings where neighbors voiced concern over crime and light issues from the home, and questioned whether drug tests would be a condition to stay there.

Those glimpses became a trend when other affordable housing projects were proposed — nearby residents were in favor of affordable housing projects, but “not in my backyard,” otherwise known as “NIMBY.” NIMBYism was not a new concept to me, but as someone who had never covered local government before, it was the first time I heard people oppose development because they feared it could potentially affect the resale value of their house.

An oft-repeated lament about Broomfield's housing market is that young adults who grew up in Broomfield are unable to buy a home here — in part because of lack of available affordable properties. My husband and I were no different. Although we were a dual-income household with no children, and no student loan debt, we would not have been able to buy a house in Broomfield without a family member's generous offer to sell the home she built in 1996 at well below market rate. Although at times I miss the cultural diversity of our last neighborhood in Thornton, I am honored to finally call Broomfield home.

Another interesting thing I quickly sensed about Broomfield is that people saw it as a small “safe” town. Obviously, crime is committed everywhere people are, and while Broomfield does have lower crime rates than neighboring municipalities, it does still experience a range of criminal activity. Because of my background, I was particularly sensitive to this, but the Broomfield Police Department (BPD) did have a reputation among journalists for being stingy with arrest data compared to, say, the weekly online booking report Boulder publishes with an option to search going back 21 years. BPD also relies mostly on social media instead of press releases to disseminate important information on crimes, crashes or other events concerning public safety, which is hard for a short-staffed newsroom to track.

As a former member of the media, I've always been wary of government entities asking the public to rely solely on them for information. Yes, departments and government agencies should release information to the public, but journalists need to be able to scrutinize it, ask questions of authorities, and glean information from other sources and public records to tell a more complete story.

I heard the term “fake news” — or at least similar sentiments — long before it became common parlance. I never minded people criticizing my journalistic work — it made me a better journalist and had me constantly checking my own biases and striving to be as fair and accurate in my work as possible. Although I no longer work at a news organization, I deeply value the work of those in that industry. They fight daily — often on little sleep, little pay and little respect — to make this world a better place. Journalism truly is a calling.

I believe Broomfield cares about community, including quality journalism, and as a new resident that includes me. I'm proud to be among neighbors who help their fellow neighbors by donating to nonprofit organizations, who help the earth by composting and preserving open space, and, maybe most importantly, who help future generations by staying informed, voting for issues they're passionate about, and studying issues and finding solutions to complicated problems.

Jennifer Waines covered Broomfield for five years for the Broomfield Enterprise (under the byline Jennifer Rios). She has been a Broomfield resident for more than a year.

Local Perspective

THAT'S ONE OF THE DAVIES BOYS

By Kent Davies

My family and I moved to Broomfield in 1964 when I was 4 years old. My dad, Delbert, grew up in Lafayette. He pitched at the Colorado Teachers College, which became the University of Northern Colorado (UNC). He signed a pro baseball contract before getting drafted into the military. My mom, Ellie, grew up in Frederick. She was a secretary at IBM for more than 20 years. She was a full-blooded Italian lady and was a wonderful cook. Her recipes were featured many times in the *Broomfield Enterprise* back when it was truly a local paper. Mom died in 2001 from CJD, a one-in-a-million disease, which is fitting because she was a one-in-a-million person.



My dad was teaching in Holyoke when he was offered a position at the newly opened Broomfield Junior High (the Vikings!). In 1964, we moved into a triplex on Laurel Street. We lived there for our first year or so in Broomfield, then moved into our house on 1st and Agate, which my dad still lives in today. He taught for 32 years at Broomfield Junior High, and was on the committee that transitioned it to Broomfield Heights Middle School and its new building. He also coached football and baseball for many years.

I have two brothers. My older brother Gary was active in sports growing up. In high school and college, he pitched at UNC, just like my father. He was also the head football coach at Broomfield High School for 27 years. I was an assistant coach at BHS prior to him getting the job and then coached offense and defense with him for more than 20 years. (Go Eagles!) My younger brother Robert was a musician and an actor growing up. He's now a psychiatrist and the associate director of medical student education and director of psychiatry residency training at CU Medical School. All three of us attended Emerald Elementary School, Broomfield Junior High and Broomfield High School. All five of my kids went to the same schools, too, but that's getting ahead of myself.

Since my dad was a teacher, our teachers always had the inside scoop on us. (Being a teacher in a small town has its pros and cons.) When I was young, we had our mailbox blown out one time by an M-80, and we were experts at cleaning up toilet paper after our house got "TP'd." We were always a prime target.

Growing up on the 100 block of Agate Way was kind of cool. Every year we had a block party on the Fourth of July. The street would get blocked off and we had a big picnic,

a parade and an East Side v. West Side wiffle ball game. We're West Side, baby. People called us the "ringers" because we were baseball players, but I remember when you were a little kid you waited to be old enough to play, I guess about 10 years old.

My first job was through the Lions Club, which ran the youth baseball program in town. I took care of the baseball fields by the current HHS building and the library. I lined and dragged them. My dad and I built the pitching mound on those fields. There's George Hall Field, Bill Hosey Field and George Stratton Field — those are all old-time Broomfield baseball guys that coached and ran the youth leagues here.

I played football, baseball and basketball at BHS. When I was 15, I played catcher (because I liked being involved in every play) on the A Legion team. The BHS varsity baseball team had finished second in the state in the spring and they needed an extra player so they asked me to join them for the summer season. It was a thrill to be asked and to have a chance to play with my brother Gary. My dad was the pitching coach. I will always remember that summer. At a big tournament in Longmont with teams from all over the country, I had a really good game and a scout from the Cincinnati Reds was there. (That was back before the Rockies existed.) Buzz Campbell was the scout's name. He came and told me, "I'm keeping my eye on you." I have to say that until I turned 40, I always checked the MLB draft to see if the Reds had finally picked me up. LOL.

I started coaching at BHS when I was 21, after my very short UNC baseball career ended.

But I'm getting ahead of myself again. I met my future wife, Deanne, when we were sophomores at BHS. Her parents had nine kids and had moved from Thornton, after Holy Cross Catholic School closed down, so that her younger siblings could go to Nativity.

Our first date was on Nov. 4, 1976. We went to the Shakey's Pizza Hut, which used to be where Highway 287 and Midway meet, on the SW side, behind what is now a Shell gas station. It was a little bit farther west of where the Arby's used to be. It was all-you-could-eat by weight, and they had really good root beer. Anyway, we went there after a football game. Deanne had just moved here and she brought a friend along. I was driving already — a dark blue '74 Ford Bronco. Back in the day, Broomfield was small enough that you knew everybody by their car. *Who was that going down Main Street? Oh, that's one of the Davies boys.*

In high school, we actually hung out at night in what's now the Broomfield FISH parking lot. That temperature display on the bank, that was always there. It would be like four below but we sat in the back of our pickups, with our Tasty Freeze drinks and Shakey's Pizza.

Deanne and I ended up dating almost non-stop through high school. We broke up once or twice, then got back together. Our senior year Deanne was voted “Most Popular,” and we were voted “Best Couple,” but the only reason I was half of the best couple is because Deanne was the most popular!

I was raised Baptist. My family attended First Baptist Church. My parents were very faith-based. Mom was Catholic until she married Dad, and then she became Baptist and taught Sunday School. We used to walk to church. It was difficult seeing that church community dissolve. When I started dating Deanne, I also started attending Mass with her at Nativity.

Deanne and I got married in the Catholic Church in 1980. Even when we were young, we would have long talks about our faith, so I knew it would be a key part of our relationship. Most of our kids are devout in some way or another, so faith continues to be really important to us as a family. At one point, I almost became a youth minister. I ran the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) at BHS for 12 years, and taught middle school religion classes at Nativity in the early ‘90s.

Anyway, after we got married we lived in Greeley and I went to UNC for two quarters before we ran out of money. We moved into my parents’ house for a little bit. I worked at IBM, saved up some money, and then we went back to Greeley. I played the fall baseball season, and Deanne worked at a hardware store and went to Aims Community College. After one quarter, I transferred to the fire academy at Aims Community College and Deanne landed a job with an oil company.

After I graduated from the fire academy, we rented a house in Greenway Park, and I went back to school at CU and studied exercise physiology. We moved to a house on Daphne Way, four blocks from my parents. Deanne’s parents live by BHS, so we were centrally located to start our family. We eventually bought our first house in Lac Amora, and then we moved to Highland Park on Ash Street, where we live now.

In 1984, I was hired by the Englewood Fire Department. Deanne went from the oil company to a bank that handled loans and stuff for oil companies, and she did that until after we had our second kid, after which she decided she didn’t want to work in business and decided to become a teacher.

Back in the day there weren’t student loans, so you saved to go to school. You went as many semesters as you could and then you worked and saved and then you went back to school. Deanne gave birth to our daughter Deborah four days after she finished her student teaching at an elementary school in Lafayette. Deanne’s always been a driven, intense woman, She has a go-go-go attitude. She’s now had two knee replacements, but she’s still hard to rein in.

We have five kids: Beau, Adam, Deborah, Emily and Angela. I remember being a paramedic and you'd be in there with a patient and ask, "What's your child's date of birth?" and I would go to myself, "I don't know mine for sure. I think I know which month and the years." All five of our kids still live close by, and we have five grandkids. We hope to have more soon.

I worked for 16 years as an Englewood firefighter paramedic. Then, when Broomfield was ready to consolidate as a city and county, I heard about the "emergency manager" position. My oldest son, Beau, ran around in high school with [Broomfield Police] Chief [Tom] Deland's oldest son, and one day he asked me what I was doing at the fire department. I told him I was in charge of training and public education at the time, and he asked me if I would be interested in applying to become the emergency manager, who would take over the training division at the PD. I was really into training, so I applied. The prospect of coming back and serving the town I grew up in was pretty appealing, and I knew being a line firefighter was a young man's job. And there was the commute.

I started as emergency manager in April 2001. Obviously, 9/11 happened during that front-end of my career. Back in the day, emergency management wasn't much of a profession. There were only two universities in the nation where you could get a degree in it, even though every county had a manager, and there were two people at the state level. 9/11 changed emergency management and my career. Prior to that, emergency management focused on natural disaster preparedness. The crises we primarily dealt with during my time were winter storms and hazardous material, and then came COVID.

In our risk assessment process, we always said the No. 1 risk for impact and frequency is a public health hazard, so it didn't completely catch us off guard. But we didn't plan for something to this scale. I basically worked for Public Health during my last couple of years as manager, even though I was still assigned to the PD. We streamlined congregant shelter planning. I know of several area EOCs (emergency operations centers) that actually ended up arguing about who was responsible for what, and we've had none of that here.

The problem is a local government can't have 100 percent of all possibly needed resources just sitting around waiting for the worst-case scenario. So then it's, "How do you quickly and efficiently expand your resources to meet the needs of a crisis?" I think on a macro level COVID has been a huge challenge. I told Jenn [Hoffman], our then-new city manager, "Talk about getting thrown into the deep end!" What a remarkable job she's done.

We obtained PPE (personal protective equipment), developed alternate care facility plans, and Public Health expanded its resources. Then there were partners doing great work in getting unhoused people into a hotel. What I learned about myself is that I'm a perfectionist living in an imperfect world. You have to be adaptable.

I think professionally the accomplishment that I'm proudest of is the school safety program I helped develop with our school district partners. When I first got hired, within a month the governor's commission on Columbine came out with its findings. The Chief [Tom Deland] came in and said to me, "I want to know where we're at on every one of these proposals, and where we're going to go with them."

My wife was a teacher by this time, and so was my dad, my brother and his wife, so I was really tied into the education system. We started putting together a school safety program here with our two school resource officers (SROs), and worked with multiple school districts on protocols. We partnered with the [I Love U Guys Foundation](#), which was created after Emily Keyes was killed at Platte Canyon [High School in Bailey, Colo.]. Our sergeant in charge of SROs, Heidi Walts, was her aunt, and she had been helping build our program here. The name of the Foundation comes from the final two text messages Emily sent to her parents, Ellen and John-Michael Keyes, before she was killed. I Love U Guys came to us and took our stuff and refined it and "locks, lights, out of sight" has now been implemented in the vast majority of the school districts across the country. I've always been proud of adopting that early on. I'm still very passionate about that.

The Emergency Management Unit had a staff of five at one point, but when I retired in April it was down to just me. There were ebbs and flows. We're lucky to live in a pretty safe community. Now there's an influx of educated, degreed young people coming into the emergency management profession, and the thought process and all of that is growing. We're finding out how important social services are, and now that's folded into the new emergency management model — the whole community is what emergency management is. It's not an office or a team, it's a community doing it and coordinating, so thanks to meetings prompted by the floods of 2013 we now we have things like Broomfield VOAD (Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters) and the [Code Blue] Warming Center for people who are unhoused. We're kind of at ground zero with that. The Broomfield I grew up in was in denial about that. You would never admit that anyone here was in that situation.

Twenty years is a long time to be sitting and writing plans for things that may or may not happen or may not be followed. I think God has some other plans for me. I know my Dad needs more of my attention, and I'm ready to get my boots on the ground again.

There were 4,000 people in Broomfield when we moved here. The EOC I worked in used to be a cornfield. The hometown feel that we had is still here to a certain extent. There's still that core group. I heard Sam Novak passed away and people started sharing stories on Facebook about how he was a dentist and how they remembered their experiences at his office when they were kids. We all had the same dentist. That's gone away. We used to be that little farm town. Now we're stuck in the metropolis, but

the odds of me running into somebody I know at the grocery store are still really high, even when we're wearing masks.

Broomfield is still trying to hang on to that old small-town feel, but I think it's just a fact of life that all things change. As I get older, it's all about turning pages. Things don't stay the same. It's not good or bad, it just is what it is. Not all change is good, but I love the fact that we still hold onto the Brunner House, for example, even though it's not currently located where it originally was. It was their corn farm that I used to walk to. A lot of my generation of Broomfield people are still in town, and their parents are still in town.

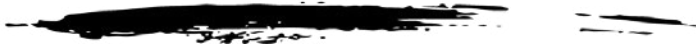
In my entire life, I've only lived for 18 months outside of Broomfield. It's been a great place to grow up and live. I've really enjoyed and was honored to serve this community. Whether that's through emergency management, as a youth sports coach, a high school coach, at church. I just want to find a new way to hang out in the background and plug in where I can.

Kent Davies reluctantly attended his own retirement party on April 6, 2021, and was celebrated by a roomful of colleagues, family and friends. This autobiographical piece is based on an October 17, 2020, interview with the author.

PART 3

BROOMFIELD

TOMORROW



*“...we need to have the courage to look ahead
a hundred years or a thousand years.”*

John Fielder, Colorado outdoor photographer,
as quoted in a Dec. 12, 2012 “Love Knobby Knees” [blog post](#)

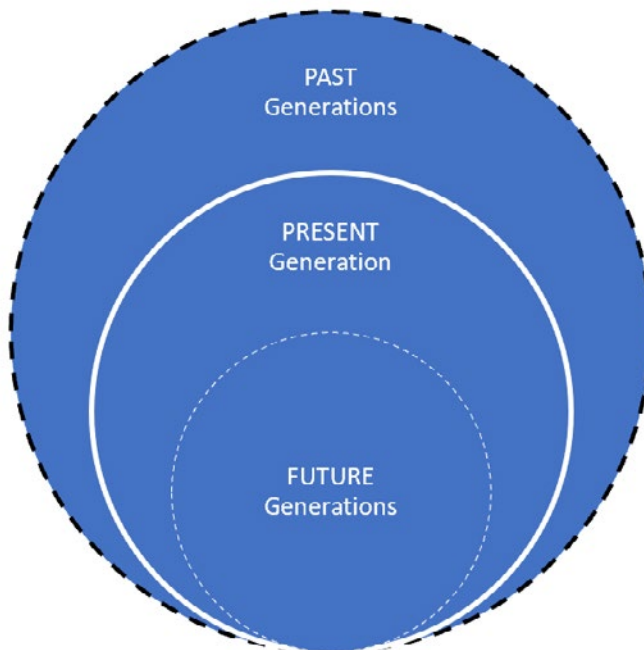
One hundred years ago, our community was home to fewer than 200 people. In 2020, the U.S. census counted 74,112 Broomfield people. How many residents will live here in another 100 years?



This place we call home has many identities, past and present: the homeland of Native peoples, a stagecoach trail between homesteads, a farming community, a model hometown, a center of technological enterprises, a consolidated community and a wealthy suburb. What identity or identities will we embrace in the future? And is there a way to preserve cherished aspects of our past while at the same time co-creating a better Broomfield moving forward?

The Haudenosaunee or Iroquois Confederacy of the Eastern United States live and work for the benefit of their [seventh generation into the future](#) — that is, for their great-great-great-great-great-grandchildren.

How would we Broomfielders think, plan and act if we attempted similar foresight? How would we preserve our best features, revitalize or repurpose others and re-envision the rest?



According to Jason Swanson of the education-focused non-profit KnowledgeWorks, the “[Cone of Plausibility](#)” tool can help learning communities envision “potential futures.” In our context, it’s *possible* but not likely that we someday find ourselves in [Dwight Schrute’s dystopian future](#) from the “cold open” of Season 7, Episode 17 of *The Office*, “Snowy ash drizzles from the sky, a rabid pack of dogs surrounds you as the flame at the end of your stick dies out...” It’s also *possible* but unlikely that we someday become a mostly gated community like Cherry Hills Village.

It’s *plausible* that we continue our trajectory from the last 10-plus years, with many thousands of Broomfielders thriving and several thousand struggling.

It’s *probable* that the planned construction by 2040 of 1,546 affordable and attainable housing units (plus our 465 already completed units) will help us meet our future housing needs.

It would be *preferable*, however, if our current affordable housing inventory matched or even exceeded our current affordable housing need, instead of being overshadowed and outdistanced by it. We already had a [shortage](#) of 2,566 affordable and attainable housing units several years ago.

It would be *preferable* if we didn’t have to wait almost two decades for significant numbers of units to actually become available to residents.

It would be *preferable* if we resolved our respective affordable and attainable housing shortages now, paving the way for future generations.

It would be *preferable* if all Broomfielder stakeholders, especially those making decisions in regard to current and upcoming housing projects, adopted a sense of urgency proportionate to the desperation our housing unstable neighbors currently feel every day.

It would be *preferable* if the efforts we undertake helped local government, businesses, non-profits and families, alike, reach and sustain healthy financial margins.

It would be *preferable* if our entire community mobilized toward “housing for all,” so that every current Broomfielder experienced housing stability and every future Broomfielder enjoyed its promise, to the seventh generation.



A housing-stable Broomfield means:

- People “flying signs” could soon find wraparound supports and transitional housing.
- Couch-hopping families could afford a place of their own.
- Seniors on fixed incomes could buy necessary clothing and be able to eat three square meals a day.

- Cost-burdened households could earn and accrue disposable income that benefits our local economy through purchases at local stores, new business startups or job retraining.
- Struggling local businesses could expand their pool of prospective customers.
- Parents working multiple jobs to make ends meet could quit a job or two, giving them more time with their families, more time to rest and relax, more time to maintain and care for their homes, and more time to invest in their health and favorite hobbies.
- Near neighbors could have more time to get to know each other.
- Long-time residents could stay here and not have to relocate to an unfamiliar community.
- Citizens could get more involved in policy-making, civic engagement, volunteering and helping their neighbors.
- Rush-hour traffic could ease because more people could afford to live and work here.
- “Graduates” from housing instability could help their neighbors graduate, as well.
- Residents could have more time for each other, for caring for this land and its resources, for using and sustaining our beautiful parks and open spaces and other amenities, for walking or biking to work, and for generally seeing and hearing and experiencing what is going on in the world around us.
- Neighborhoods could take advantage of expanded public transportation options (either via RTD or a greatly expanded Easy Ride-like service) conveniently linked to local coffee shops, grocery stores, hair salons, restaurants, art galleries, and other businesses.
- Broomfielders could enjoy an overall improved quality of life.

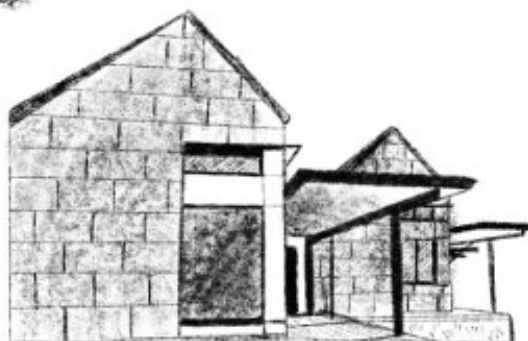


Civic Center concept sketch for the area around 1st Avenue.
Source: City and County of Broomfield.

Homes of Tomorrow



Sketches by Maegan Dormish,
from Emu System photo originals.



Imagine how community-wide housing stability could free all of us up to become better homeowners, renters, landlords, neighbors, professionals, coworkers, teammates, students, friends, family members, caregivers, caretakers, citizens.



The question is: Are we willing to do what's necessary to make "Housing for All" a near-term reality here in Broomfield, Colorado, USA?

Local advocates and agencies are willing, but we can barely sustain current housing supports, let alone accomplish "Housing For All" on our own. So I'm sending up an SOS in the form of this report, hoping my fellow Broomfielders will see it and bring help, lots of help.

The following three sets of threes outline a viable path toward "Housing For All." The first set traces the trajectories of our demographic diversity, housing distress and stagnant incomes. The second embraces customized-to-Broomfield policies and supports. The third challenges us to consider what "functional housing stability" is worth to us and the community we call home and identifies the financial cost of reaching it by 2025.

THREE TRENDS

“To attach oneself to place is to surrender to it, and suffer with it.”

— Kathleen Norris, *The Cloister Walk*



(1) Demographics — Our community will continue to grow, age and become both more diverse and more dispersed.

The State of Colorado Demography Office projects that Broomfield will grow to 93,720 people by 2050, with a plateau around 2030 and a slight decline beginning around 2045. That puts our possible maximum “build out” population at just under 96,000 people, a 29 percent increase from 2020.

Population Projections

2020 Actual & 2025-2050 Projected							
	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
Broomfield County	74,112	85,021	94,152	95,647	95,750	94,926	93,720
Boulder County	330,860	339,361	354,742	369,056	381,848	391,554	396,765
Adams County	520,070	552,931	604,681	657,323	708,646	757,295	802,623
Denver County	717,632	761,528	802,307	836,498	859,004	859,562	850,634

Source: Colorado State Demography Office, [Population Totals for Colorado Counties](#), “5 year increments, 2000-2050.”

Our median age increased almost six years in the last three decades, according to the “Age” table on p. 59. If it continues on the same trajectory, our median age in 2050 would approach the mid-40s.

As shown in the “Self-Identification” table on p. 60, the percentage of Broomfield residents self-identifying as “white alone” decreased from 94.3 percent in 1990 to 76 percent in 2020. If that trend continues, fewer than 3 of every 5 residents will identify

as “White alone” in 2050, and more Broomfielders than ever will identify as “American Indian/Alaska Native alone,” “Asian alone,” “Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander alone,” “Black/African American alone,” “Hispanic or Latino alone,” “Some Other Race alone,” and “Two Or More Races.” (Four Afghan refugee families arrived in Broomfield in the closing months of 2021 — if, as requested, our community successfully resettles 16-21 more Afghan refugee families for a total of 100-150 new Broomfielders, they would account for roughly one-tenth of 1 percent of our current population.)



Concept sketch for the new Butterfly Pavilion, to be located in north Broomfield.
Source: Butterfly Pavilion.

Broomfield as we know it coalesced into a city center near the intersection of what is now Highway 287, Midway Boulevard and 120th Avenue, and has since expanded in all directions. Before the publication of the original Sweep Report, the only notable landmark in Broomfield’s northeast corridor was Children’s Hospital North, which itself has undergone a phased expansion. Formerly open fields and agricultural land between Northwest Parkway, Baseline Road and I-25 have seen the construction of schools such as Prospect Ridge Academy (K-12) and Thunder Vista (P-8). Growth plans include the new home of the [Butterfly Pavilion](#), the world’s first stand-alone, non-profit invertebrate zoo, and the beginnings of the “pollinator-friendly” [North Park/Baseline](#) development.

According to its website, [Baseline is](#) “envisioned as a new economic center that completes the Denver/Boulder triangle. Part dining district, part business hub, part science campus, and a new way to live in Broomfield, Colorado.” Last fall, its online ads promoted for-sale “homes starting in the 300s.” While \$300,000 is a decidedly low purchase price in our housing market, it’s one that’s still out of reach for many of thousands of Broomfield households, including most of the decidedly underserved residents I interact with on a daily basis.



Map is not to scale and is intended for informational and illustrative purposes only. Plans, uses, zoning, amenities, features, availability, acreage, sizes, dates, vehicle counts, listed owners/tenants, and other elements are subject to change by McWhinney Real Estate Services, Inc. or its affiliates without notice, and shall not be relied upon. August 2021

Source: [Baselinecolorado.com](https://baselinecolorado.com).

Growth in north Broomfield will likely re-shape city council ward boundaries and create a commercial and residential complement to Flatirons and Interlocken to the southwest. Our challenge will be to integrate new neighborhoods into our wider community and keep prominent roadways from dividing us as they have in other [cities](#) across the country.

Any forward-looking, comprehensive “housing for all” plan local stakeholders create, therefore, needs to prepare for 21,000 new residents in Broomfield in the next generation.

(2) Housing — Instability and distress will continue to increase alongside local home values.

The CCOB’s “[2021 Reappraisal Fact Sheet](#)” divides single-family residential values into two “economic areas.” In 2021, the median home value in Economic Area 1, south of 136th Avenue, was \$413,000, while north of 136th in Economic Area 2 the median home value was \$633,000. Home values in each area increased 7 percent between 2019-2021. Further [appreciation](#) is likely moving forward, at least in the near term.

The [2018](#) Broomfield Housing Needs Study predicted significant decreases in affordability:

- A home-owning household earning 150 percent of our AMI, could afford 44 percent of local homes in 2017 but will likely only be able to afford 3 percent of local homes by 2032, and,
- A renting household earning right at AMI could afford 74 percent of rentals in 2017 but likely will only be able to afford 34 percent of local rentals by 2032.

The same study identified a shortage of 2,566 affordable and attainable units, but it did so based on 2016 statistics. If anything, our shortage has worsened since then. Conservatively speaking, we likely now lack at least 3,000 affordable and attainable units for our [CCOB-estimated 75,800](#) current residents. If recent housing trends and status-quo market practices continue until 2040 when our population approaches 96,000 people, our corresponding housing shortage will reach at least 3,800 units. Even if, as the CCOB calculated last July, 2,011 new affordable and attainable units go online by 2040, we would still at that point have a shortage of 1,789 units.

Current shortage: 3,000 affordable or attainable units.

Projected 2040 shortage: 1,789 units. And that's assuming all 2,011 approved and proposed affordable or attainable units listed in the table on pages 108-109 proceed as planned. It's not uncommon for builders to adjust their affordable housing numbers down as they go, which is what happened with Red Leaf — its [original MOU](#) with the CCOB listed 49 affordable units, not 15.

Our inclusionary housing policy and independent housing authority will certainly advance new affordable and attainable housing development, but those projects are unlikely to open quickly enough or be numerous enough to meet our 2016-based, 2018-identified needs, let alone our current and future real-time needs. From start to finish, affordable housing developments can take a decade to complete, as demonstrated by the [four triplexes](#) long-planned for construction by Flatirons Habitat for Humanity and Broomfield's Discovery Christian Church. According to a [July 2016 Urban Land Institute blog post](#), "It's not uncommon...for developers to rely on upward of 20 financing sources as they try to fill the gap between what it costs to build affordable housing and the money they have available." What's more, while the Baseline project is an exception, most local projects designed for housing affordability have typically included 150 units or less.

Every community's affordable housing supply should include traditional bid-fund-develop-construct projects, *but not only those types of projects*. They tend to monopolize resources to such an extent as to eliminate all other affordable housing possibilities. An over-reliance on new development, especially during times of advancing housing distress such as we continue to experience, condemns communities like ours to

perpetual affordable housing shortages. It simply takes too long and costs too much for traditional-model projects to ever get us where we collectively need to go.

Shifts in architectural design and the materials used in built environments could also factor into future Broomfield development calculations, as suggested by a globally oriented article in the Architizer Journal entitled “[10 Projects That Showcase the Future of Affordable Housing](#).”

An Arvada firm called [Emu Systems](#) takes these concepts a step further, envisioning the mainstream adoption of the international [Passive House \(PH\) standard](#) for the construction of healthy indoor environments. “As far as I am aware,” says Emu co-founder and CEO Mariana Pickering, “the Passive standard is the most stringent codified, performance-based set of criteria – actual metrics to which someone can model a project. Also, it doesn’t cost a fortune to certify.”

“I’m passionate about training builders because they have a heavy burden to bear and a potentially exponential impact on the future of this planet...And Passive level standards are proven to be attainable and affordable. We would love to see Passive House affordable housing in Colorado. It’s just a matter of someone being the first to do it, and then the dominoes will fall. It’s really what makes more sense, and it’s how Passive – as a standard – has grown in other regions.”

The world of affordable housing and housing support is changing. “Portable” Section 8 vouchers once widely accepted by multi-family apartments and private owners for their guaranteed income are now accepted by fewer and fewer landlords, in Broomfield at least. They also come with a slew of federal requirements and regulatory restrictions. The coronavirus exposed our emergency sheltering system’s less-than-ideal-for-human-dignity-and-public health congregant settings, so communities across the country are pivoting toward [non-congregant](#) emergency sheltering options like hotel vouchers, and, in some cases, [leasing](#), purchasing or renovating hotels for use as temporary and transitional housing. Local-turned-regional challenges require local and regional responses.

Hopefully, “[omicron](#)” will be the last letter of the Greek alphabet in mainstream usage and the COVID pandemic will ease enough this year to join the common flu as a serious but rarely deadly seasonal illness. When that happens, though, federal stimulus-recovery funding and lender forbearance programs will likely do what most eviction moratoriums have done — end. At that point, will the substantial rent and mortgage assistance struggling residents have received from local agencies during COVID also end? What about our non-congregant Code Blue Hotel Voucher effort to provide emergency shelter for our most vulnerable residents?

(3) Income — Rising cost of living and comparably stagnant wages will further cost-burden many of Broomfield’s low- to middle-income wage-earners.

Societal prospects for returning to a mid-20th-century-like correlation between minimum and living wages will remain poor, especially if status-quo housing and employment trends continue. Housing price increases will bolster homeowners’ equity. As the Income section starting on p. 118 suggests, high-wage earners will likely see their pay keep pace with inflation and enjoy greater access to non-wage income than their lower-earning neighbors.

At the same time, our growing cost of living will further cost-burden most low- to middle-income renters, including many [essential service workers](#), educators, people who maintain and sanitize our homes and places of business, and caregivers who watch our children and feed and bathe our sick or home-bound loved ones.

Are we okay with 2,467 Broomfielders living in “official” poverty?

Are we okay with even one resident having to work sweat-shop-like hours to make ends meet? (It takes 14 hours of work per day for 30 days each month for a minimum-wage earner to earn our \$62,838.74 average cost of living.)

Are we okay with the annual incomes of thousands of Broomfield households residing below the Self-Sufficiency Standard?

Are we okay with at least 4,890 moderately or severely cost-burdened local households barely scraping by? (I round this number up to 5,000 in the following section.)

If not, we need to make some serious changes.

There’s this extraordinary practice detailed in the Hebrew Scriptures called “Jubilee,” which among other things, calls for the redistribution of wealth, land and property every 50 years. (Sometimes a community needs a hard reset.) I know “redistribution” is a trigger word for a lot of people, but I bring it up because if we all pull together we could voluntarily declare a sort of mini-Jubilee (or a soft reset) right here in Broomfield, and we could start preparing for it *this year*.

THREE OPPORTUNITIES

*“We have inherited a large house, a great ‘world house’ in which
we have to live together...[as] a family unduly separated
in ideas, culture and interest...”*

from *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community*
by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

*“Once the values of things refer only to their future usefulness,
then an infinite withdrawal of value from the living present has begun.
Nothing (and nobody) can then exist that is not theoretically replaceable
by something (or somebody) more valuable.*

*The country that we (or some of us) had thought to make our home
becomes instead ‘a nation rich in natural resources’;
the good bounty of the land begins its mechanical metamorphosis
into junk, garbage, silt, poison, and other forms of ‘waste.’*

*“The inevitable result of such an economy is that no farm or
any other usable property can safely be regarded by anyone as a home,
no home is ultimately worthy of our loyalty, nothing is ultimately worth doing, and
no place or task or person is worth a lifetime’s devotion.
‘Waste,’ in such an economy, must eventually include several categories of humans...
the old...the unemployed, the ‘unemployable.’”*

from *What Matters?: Economics for a
Renewed Commonwealth* by Wendell Berry

*“Look, the pay you have held back from the workers who mowed your fields
cries out against you, and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord.”*

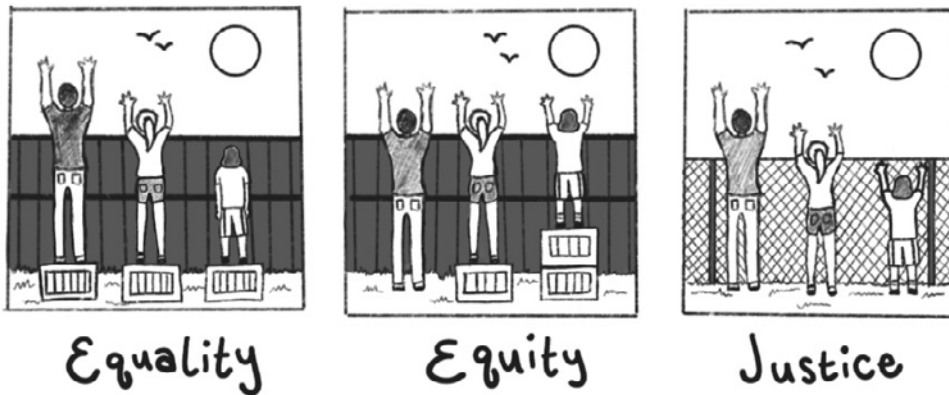
from the *Epistle of James*



We don't have to accept that what has been necessarily will be.

If we recall our local history, we didn't just wake up one day in a community where most residents magically identify as "white." Broomfield was shaped that way. [Essential workers](#) didn't suddenly begin receiving less-than-living wages for their labor. They've been increasingly under-compensated for generations. Our neighbors down the road didn't all of a sudden develop end-of-the-month insomnia. They've barely made rent every month for years. People didn't suddenly decide to sleep in a vehicle or a tent for the fun of it. (Well, maybe in California or Summit County they do, but not here.) They likely slid into homelessness over time and sleeping in a tent or vehicle just represents their latest and most visible stage of instability.

We have, at least in part, created the monster our housing crisis has become. Spoken (and unspoken) values in the forms of a "preferred profile" and a preferential option for the financially wealthy became intentions, became codified policies, became enforced practices, became embodied realities, became an engrained system that fatalistically accepts as unsolvable the suffering of thousands. Our system privileges the lives, cultures and lifestyles of certain people, professions and modes of housing over others. At the same time, it lauds sops disguised as "philanthropy" and "charity" and "giving back" that make donors feel good but never interrogate or solve any societal problems.



Source: Adapted sketches by Maegan Dormish.

What our system does not often tolerate are calls for actual structural reform or progress toward anything "for all." In the [words of Dom Hélder Câmara](#), the late Catholic Archbishop of Olinda and Recife in northeast Brazil, "When I feed the poor, they call me a saint, but when I ask why the poor have no food, they call me a Communist."

I'm not a communist or a Marxist, but I do appreciate social security, public education and universal health care for veterans and children. I like the unconventional reciprocity of Marx's [maxim](#) "From each according to his ability, to each according to

his need.” It actually echoes Adam Smith’s emphasis on [moral sentiments](#), something called the [Golden Rule](#), “In everything, treat others as you would want them to treat you,” and the custom of “gleaning” from the Book of Leviticus, “When you gather in the harvest of your land, you must not completely harvest the corner of your field, and you must not gather up the gleanings of your harvest. You must leave them for the poor and the resident foreigner.”

We have the privilege, in this generation, of working to redress and redeem the unsavory aspects of our collective past and present. What’s more, based on my work as a local housing catalyst, my decade-plus interacting with and running various housing and basic-needs support programs, and my belief in the deep generosity and resilience of mobilized Broomfielders, I believe we could realize “functional housing stability for all,” as soon as 2025. The steps are simple, really, although they won’t be easy. Let’s start now, today, by pursuing the following three interconnected pathways.

Opportunity-Pathway #1 — Embrace “commonwealth.”

The word “[commonwealth](#)” comes from the mid-15th-century words “commoun” and “welthe,” meaning “a community, whole body of people in a state.” From the 1550s on, it’s meant “any body of persons united by some common interest.” The trusty Online Etymology Dictionary notes commonwealth “forms a part of the official name of Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Virginia, Kentucky, and Puerto Rico but has no special significance.”

I like the 1550s-on part, but I beg to differ with that final phrase, “has no special significance.” “Commonwealth” as a generic noun for a group of people may not be all that significant. If a particular group of people united by a common interest intentionally adopted “commonwealth” as an identity-value-ethic, however, they would suddenly, by definition, exclude no one.

“Commonwealth” breathes hope into the nostrils of the struggling and altruism into the lungs of the thriving. Safe, sound, affordable, accessible and sustainable “housing for all” looks right at home in a commonwealth. We could even say it’s preferred, past, present and future.

So, in the tradition of people and communities on the cusp of a special calling, let’s consider renaming ourselves “The Commonwealth of the City and County of Broomfield.” That sounds pretty cool to me — it connotes purpose, dignity and, yes, stability. Whether it’s official or unofficial, adopting “commonwealth” thoughtfully orients us toward housing stability for all.

It’s easy to feel overwhelmed by a challenge like “housing stability for all by 2025,” not to mention such an unconventional and intangible proposal to begin meeting it. It’s

easy to accept the sovereignty of the market-ruled status quo. It's easy to say our housing crisis is too big, too complex, too nuanced, too expensive, too-whatever to truly and comprehensively address.

Except we all know great things don't often happen without a willingness to wrestle with larger-than-life obstacles. Our nation didn't become the first in human history to put people on the moon by doing what was easy. We embraced a common interest with confidence and took on a massive, complicated, expensive fantasy. We dreamed dreams, pooled resources, tapped our ingenuity and creativity, and made what had been thought to be impossible, possible.

Solving our ongoing housing crisis is the same sort of undertaking. It's on a smaller scale, of course, but it's more relevant than space travel to basic human needs, and it's certainly no small thing to our neighbors who are struggling. They needed help yesterday, and they shouldn't have to wait decades for the possibility of stable housing.

Our reality and the possibilities ahead are not unlike the Depression-era supports narrated by the inimitable U.S. historian David McCullough in the movie *Seabiscuit*, "They called it 'relief,' but it was a lot more than that. It had dozens of names: NRA, WPA, the CCC. But it really came down to just one thing. For the first time in a long time, someone cared. For the first time in a long time, you were no longer alone."

Opportunity-Pathway #2 — Plan full-spectrum housing assistance.

We could debate the short- and long-term effectiveness of New Deal relief programs, but Depression-era leaders did at least one thing right almost a century ago. They took the right approach. Instead of shoehorning their challenge into status quo programs and resources, they started with the nation's suddenly profound need and envisioned ways to meet it. We need to do the same.

Here is our principal housing-related challenge distilled into two principal figures:

200 unhoused residents, and,
5,000 cost-burdened households.

Here are two best-practice solutions to our principal challenge:

Temporary and transitional lodging, and,
Local housing vouchers.

Properly applied and funded, I'm convinced the latter solutions would propel the former figures toward zero — that is, zero unhoused residents and zero cost-burdened households, aka 100 percent housing stability (or darn near!), in just a few years.

Temporary & Transitional Lodging

Our 200 or so most vulnerable residents need the most help, at least initially. They include families and individuals sleeping outside, in vehicles or in other places not

meant for human habitation, and people doubling or tripling up with friends or family. Many of them have strong ties to Broomfield, but no matter where they're from, they need adequate shelter.

The best and most preferable practice for sheltering nationwide is non-congregant shelter, not congregant shelter with blankets and pillows and cots lined up next to each other. Non-congregant basically means separate rooms for separate households, [as in hotel rooms](#). As I detailed in “Household Wealth,” local Code Blue partners shifted from a congregant “warming center” model in 2019 to a non-congregant hotel voucher partnership last winter and this winter. We’ve learned first-hand why non-congregant shelter is preferable to congregant shelter, especially in our suburban context:

- It’s safer from both a public health and personal security standpoint.
- It keeps households together in the same room.
- It offers people privacy, the dignity of their own space, a shower or bath, familiar amenities, and a better chance for a good night’s sleep.
- It’s more in keeping with our professed community values.
- It enables network partners to serve more people.
- It’s less time- and human-resource-intensive.
- It’s more emotionally, psychologically and physically sustainable for providers and recipients.
- It promotes [community connections](#) and supports local businesses.

Since it’s unlikely all our unhoused neighbors seek emergency shelter at the same time, we allocate 50 rooms (twice as many as Code Blue’s current maximum) for temporary lodging. Those who receive special consideration include: veterans, retirees, families with children, people with disabilities and victims of domestic violence. No one in distress is turned away, including people affected by extreme weather, disasters, house fires, eviction, foreclosure, or the loss of utilities. Reciprocity with similar efforts in neighboring counties provides us with system backup should more people ever need shelter than we have rooms to offer, and vice versa.

Our Built For Zero (BFZ) partnership and By Name List (BNL) tool have the potential to help a dozen or more unhoused Broomfielders receive regional VASH, PSH and RRH housing assistance. (See p. 85 if you need to decode that string of acronyms.) Our many remaining unhoused residents who are ready to transition off the streets but don’t qualify for federal-, state- or regionally administered programs, need local housing options. Transitional housing programs like TBRA typically last two years, but that’s often not long enough for a participating family to reach housing stability —

what is lost in a moment, can take years to regain. With that in mind, we reserve 25 hotel suites with small kitchens for residents with the highest obstacles to housing stability, and make their program participation extendable for up to three years. We refer our unhoused neighbors — especially those who maintain jobs or receive regular income in the form of disability, retirement or other benefits — to the housing voucher program detailed below.

We start preparing now for the winter of 2022-2023 by addressing a major flaw in Code Blue’s present structure — the community partners maintaining it (Broomfield FISH, The Refuge, various CCOB departments, Broomfield VOAD and a few others) all have other major, time-consuming roles, responsibilities and vocations other than running an emergency cold weather hotel voucher program. We’ve “built the plane as we’ve flown it” with spare parts, duct tape and humanitarian concern. Together, we’ve accomplished some great things since the “early days” of 2019, but our ad-hoc structure isn’t sustainable beyond this winter.

Current partners and community stakeholders have a crucial decision to make about the future of Code Blue and any ramped up temporary and transitional lodging effort here in Broomfield. Either:

- A. An existing organization with appropriate expertise expands into Broomfield (and two area agencies have already expressed interest), or,
- B. Local stakeholders create and fund a new agency to manage “Code Blue 2.0” or whatever it ends up being called.

Integrating Code Blue into the work of a dedicated entity is the natural and most appropriate next step for temporary and transitional lodging efforts in Broomfield. Such an integration promises to advance both the effort’s short-term effectiveness and long-term health *and* free up current Code Blue network partners to focus on what they and their agencies do best. FISH keeps families housed and feeds people. The Refuge offers day-shelter hospitality, navigation help and basic resources. The CCOB facilitates benefit programs for qualified residents. Broomfield VOAD mobilizes local agencies and volunteers to respond to disasters.

It’s time to entrust the special endeavor that Code Blue has become to a community partner (or partners) who can give it the focus and energy it needs and deserves. No matter who ends up running things, its wraparound services should include live-in program liaisons, participant oversight and feedback, transportation assistance, case management, mental health counseling, benefits reviews, support groups, resource navigation, strong partnerships with the local hospitality industry, workforce partnerships, and a small, temporary income [allowance](#) to help participants get back on their feet.

An annual “buy-out” of local hotel suites for on-demand use would offer enough flexibility and capacity to launch this proposed effort next winter. The outright purchase of an existing structure or the construction of a hotel-style facility offers a more sustainable option for the long term. Broomfield-adjacent partners with similar emergency and transitional lodging needs have already expressed an interest in pooling resources toward such a project.

Local Housing Vouchers

In other counties, although they often come with many restrictions and long waiting lists, Housing Choice or Section 8 vouchers offer a significant form of housing relief for qualified families and individuals.

For comparison, in Adams County, [Maiker Housing Partners](#) is able to provide housing vouchers for 1 of every 5 eligible applicants with its almost \$19 million in annual federal funds, according to Maiker’s executive director Peter LiFari.

Our unique history has severely limited our supply of housing vouchers, leaving almost all of our nearly 5,000 moderately and severely cost-burdened households without ready housing stabilization assistance. We could apply for [special state funding](#) for vouchers, but there’s no guarantee our application would be accepted.

Rather than wait, likely in vain, for our state or federal governments to fill our gap for us, *I propose we create and customize our very own housing voucher program right here in Broomfield.*

Sometimes, when none are available or likely to become available it really is necessary to recreate the wheel. This one could very well roll thousands of local individuals and families toward healthier financial margins in the form of paying no more than 30 percent of their income on housing.

This brand-new housing voucher program could be administered by our brand-new (or at least newly independent) housing authority. Here’s how it could work. (I’m just making up a name and an acronym to make it sound official.)

The Broomfield Housing Stability Voucher (HSV) Program:

- Recruits and employs a stellar team commensurate to this task. (No understaffing!)
- Puts housing-unstable residents first in its decision-making and system design.
- Minimizes red tape.
- Researches and adapts best practices for our local context.
- Adopts incentives for local landlords to participate and to recruit their fellow landlords to apply and participate.
- Arranges for the inspection of prospective housing units — condos, townhomes, apartment buildings, duplexes and single-family structures. Once deemed

safe-and-sound-for-habitation, they become eligible for immediate enrollment in the voucher program.

- Streamlines an easy-to-navigate, multi-lingual voucher eligibility, application, approval, payment and oversight process.
- Adopts *minimal and non-burdensome criteria* for local recipients to participate *for as long as needed*.
- Adopts incentives for local recipients to become former recipients (perhaps through grants for job training, re-training, advanced trade certifications and degrees, etc.).
- Makes vouchers “tenant-based,” meaning they “belong” to qualifying Broomfielders as long as they maintain their qualifying relationship with our community. While the vast majority of those suffering from housing instability reside in the less than 120 percent AMI segments of our housing spectrum, anyone who lives, works, goes to school or otherwise maintains strong connections here, while navigating demonstrable housing instability even temporarily, is eligible for a voucher.
- Makes vouchers locally “portable,” meaning they transfer anywhere recipients move within (the Commonwealth of) the City and County of Broomfield.
- Makes vouchers voluntary, meaning once-qualified households can defer their benefit without losing their place in the program. If voucher funds aren’t needed, they go back into the program-fund’s pot. If their circumstances change, recipients can submit whatever documentation is necessary and reactivate their voucher.
- “Adjusts” vouchers based on a household’s cost-burden (30-50%, 50%+) and “indexes” the specific amount of a recipient’s benefit to Broomfield County’s Self-Sufficiency Standard. (The Colorado Center on Law and Policy’s updated, 2021 Standard and Report will be published later this spring.) In other words, the assistance available to local households depends on their corresponding need and income, as represented by the above indicators and their current location on our housing spectrum, whether affordable, attainable, workforce or market-rate. Let’s say the main breadwinner of the Garcia family of six gets downsized and, at least in the short term, works a lower-paying job. The Garcias had been paying 30 percent of their income on housing, but now they’re paying 52 percent. They’ve also dropped from 60 percent AMI to 38 percent. The Garcias would necessarily receive a greater monthly “voucher,” “benefit,” “stipend,” “allowance,” or whatever we want to call it, to get them back to paying 30 percent of their income on housing than the Taylors, a couple who earn 120 percent AMI, but devote 40 percent of their income toward housing.

- Bases its budget on the current and projected numbers of moderate and severely cost-burdened households in Broomfield — as of now, it's 5,000.
- Budgets to disburse an average of \$750 per month to local landlords on behalf of recipient households, but understands some households will need more and some will need less than that amount.
- Pledges *never*, repeat *never*, to maintain a waiting list or conduct a housing lottery. If additional vouchers become needed, additional vouchers become funded.

Remember, the ultimate goal of all this is to achieve “functional stability,” which I’m modeling after Built-For-Zero’s “functional zero” milestone. “[Functional zero](#)” means a community has measurably ended homelessness and is sustaining that end. “Functional stability,” then, means 100 percent of our community becomes stably housed and stays that way.

By issuing vouchers based on our actual, real-time need, and “repurposing” 5,000 already diverse housing units or roughly 17 percent of our existing [inventory](#), *our community could effectively approach functional stability in the next few years, not in the next few decades*. Because it will certainly take time to properly and fully fund, staff and structure things, we set our sights on achieving functional stability (or darn near!) by Jan. 1, 2025.

Opportunity-Pathway #3 — Fund housing stability for all Broomfield households.

This brings us to the matter of dollars and cents. To keep things simple, here are my cost estimates, considered annually, for the “principal” solutions I’ve proposed —

Starting Jan. 1, 2023:

Temporary & Transitional Lodging

- Agency staffing, supplies and reimbursements for five full-time employees (FTEs): \$500,000
- Financial assistance, including a “pilot” basic income allowance of \$500/month for six months for transitional program participants: \$200,000
- “Buy-out” of 75 local hotel rooms/suites: \$2,000,000-\$2,300,000 (based on a preliminary estimate by a hospitality industry source)

Subtotal: \$2,700,000-\$3,000,000

Local Hotel Voucher Program

- Staffing, supplies and reimbursements for 10 FTEs: \$1,000,000
- Operations and third-party billing: \$1,000,000
- Full-spectrum voucher disbursements for cost-burdened households: \$45,000,000

Subtotal: \$47,000,000

Total: \$49,700,000-\$50,000,000

Let's take the higher number and make it at an even \$50 million beginning in 2023, and CPI-adjusted each Jan. 1 in perpetuity thereafter. That makes my key Sweep Report 2.0 numbers three: 200, 5,000 and \$50 million.

With \$50 million, we could shelter our most vulnerable neighbors who end up on the literal and proverbial side of our roads *and* achieve housing stability for every cost-burdened household in Broomfield.

For reference, \$50 million amounts to 4.7 percent of Broomfield employees' first quarter 2021 "covered" wages ([\\$1,055,974,000](#)), based on p. 129 data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

THREE CALLS TO ACTION

“A hundred times every day I remind myself that my inner and outer life is based on the labors of other men, living and dead, and that I must exert myself in order to give in the same measure as I have received and am still receiving.”

Albert Einstein, *The World As I See It*



A committed core of advocates and local caseworkers at on-the-ground agencies have been pushing the same boulder up the same hill, fighting the effects of ballooning housing costs and relatively stagnant blue-collar wages, over and over and over again, for years. It’s often rewarding work. At the same time, it’s discouraging to unceasingly encounter the same snafued system of income and housing disparities alongside successive waves of newly disoriented and long-disillusioned residents.

Some non-profits, city leaders and members of the community at large have lately joined this [Sisyphuan](#) push, but much more help is needed to propel our stubborn rock of instability over the hill and down the other side. There’s never been a better time for our community-at-large and for-profit stakeholders [to link up](#) with our non-profit and civic vanguard. Affordable housing was the No. 1-concern voiced by respondents to the CCOB’s 2021 community survey. It’s been on our city council’s top priority list for several years running. We all know how important housing stability is. It’s time put up or shut up, Broomfield. Now is the time.

Three concrete, collective actions toward ending homelessness and housing instability in Broomfield by 2025 are:

(1) Contribute 1 percent of our annual income or revenue for 100 percent housing stability, or “1 for 100,” for short.

Community Member-at-Large Stakeholders (\$28 million) — As of 2019, Broomfield had just over 28,000 households, and our AMI was nearly \$100,000. If all local households made annual “1-percent contributions,” we would raise about \$28 million per year. Households residing elsewhere with members who work or go to school in Broomfield would be more than welcome to contribute, as well!

Non-Profit Stakeholders (\$700,000) — In 2021, Broomfield was home to [more than 700](#) non-profits, faith communities and charities. If they each contributed 1 percent of their, say, \$100,000 average annual budget, they would collectively raise \$700,000.

For-profit stakeholders (\$19 million) — As of [2019](#), Broomfield had 2,285 “employer establishments” and 6,398 “nonemployer establishments.” If the annual revenue of employer establishments averaged, say, \$500,000, their 1-percent contributions would equal \$11 million. If annual nonemployer establishment revenues averaged, say, \$50,000, their 1 percent contributions would equal more than \$3 million. At the same time, let’s say the executive teams at Broomfield’s 50 largest businesses receive an average of \$10 million in annual and discretionary bonuses. One percent contributions from their bonuses would amount to \$5 million.

Civic Stakeholders (\$4.5 million) — The CCOB’s approved budget for 2022 is [\\$457,493,600](#). By creating a permanent housing-stability-for-all line item and devoting just 1 percent of each prior year’s annual budget to it, the CCOB would contribute more than \$4.5 million a year to meet our most urgent community need. The city could either re-prioritize existing funds within its current budget structure or take the more preferable step of raising new money. A quarter-percent sales tax increase, modeled after our existing open space sales tax and added to this fall’s ballot, could fund this new CCOB budget line item in perpetuity, starting in 2024. (If you’re a Broomfield voter, please [“sign” this online petition](#) to add a sales tax measure to our upcoming election ballot. Number of signatures needed: at least 600.) Our open spaces add all kinds of intrinsic and extrinsic value to our community, and so will greater housing stability for our most vulnerable local households.

Other feasible, non-burdensome sources of funding undoubtedly exist (grants, legacy wishes, voluntary rounding-up of property taxes and utility bills, etc.), but just these all-stakeholder contributions (I detailed above) already total \$52.2 million, *without one penny of federal or state money*.

Broomfield stakeholders, please direct your annual “1 for 100” contribution (whether one-time or monthly) to one of two Broomfield Community Foundation (BCF) funds:

1. [“Collaborative Emergency Sheltering,”](#) for enhanced temporary and transitional housing efforts to begin next winter — GOAL: \$3 million per year.
2. [“Affordable Housing,”](#) for our new “housing voucher program,” likely to be administered by our newly independent housing authority once its financial infrastructure is up and running — GOAL: \$47 million per year.

Area creatives, email your “1 for 100” campaign logo mockups to the [Broomfield Council on the Arts & Humanities](#) for review. Your logo could adorn campaign ads (printed and online), brochures, utility and property tax inserts, “I took the pledge” bumper stickers, water bottle decals, signs to display on our front doors. A web presence (maybe a Facebook page?) with one of those thermometers to track our progress toward \$50 million for 2023 would be helpful, too.

Let’s use the rest of 2022 to donate to spread the “1 for 100” word, to develop infrastructure so both the above housing stability efforts can be launched in earnest on Jan. 1, 2023!

(2) Pay Broomfield workers living wages.

Too many breadwinners receive less than a living wage, making them more susceptible to housing instability, overworking and reduced quality of life. This happens because of things like:

- Misclassification — Employers avoid having to pay overtime and benefits, designating full-time workers as independent contractors,
- Undervaluation — As in low wages assigned to the roles many caregivers and food service workers,
- Low wage “floors” — Epitomized by the \$7.25-per-hour federal minimum wage and even our \$12.56-per-hour state minimum wage, and,
- Exploitation of undocumented workers — They are often paid less than living wages because they have no legal recourse or bargaining power — ironically, they are often among those who perform “essential” societal functions, even as they fall through the cracks of our social safety nets and [disaster recovery efforts](#).

Living wages would give local households more disposable income, greater stability and promote healthier lifestyles. Both the 14 percent of Broomfielders who live and work here, and the 86 percent who live here but work elsewhere would benefit, because employers outside of Broomfield would surely take note. Who knows? Living wage synergy could actually start trending regionally, giving metro-area employers a competitive advantage over other regions and eliminating the conditions that lead to costly worker strikes.

Precedents already point in this direction. Some U.S. employers, including locally headquartered [Vail Resorts](#), have already responded to income disparities on their own by preemptively [raising their employees’ hourly pay](#). A [Seattle-based company](#) even enacted a \$70,000 per year minimum wage for its [200-plus employees](#).

Living wages aren't cheap. Although "traditional" benefits like health insurance and 401k's aren't on the table here, a voluntary wage increase alone could still cost-burden some local employers. Let's say Acme Broomfield has 50 minimum-wage workers who each log 50 hours a week. It would cost \$193,200 a year for Acme to voluntarily increase its lowest-paid workers' wages by just \$1.61 per hour.

Ways for-profit businesses, city departments and non-profit organizations that employ people could make living wages work by Jan. 1, 2023, include:

- Starting a "Broomfield Living Wage Network." Members publicly pledge to pay living wages to all their employees or otherwise ensure their employees earn living wages without excessive hardship (as in, they work less than a maximum agreed-upon number of hours per week). Individual employees who don't need or want their living wage increase have the option of voluntarily deferring it back to the organization for another coworker. Members receive encouragement from their peers and recognition from the community. They adorn their storefronts and websites with badge decals that read, "Proud member of the Broomfield Living Wage Network." (Creatives, [more design mockups](#) and another Facebook campaign page needed!) Each member pays annual dues based on its number of employees, say, \$1,000 for organizations with 1-50 employees; \$5,000 for 50-100; \$10,000 for 100-500; \$25,000 for 500 or more. Assuming an 50-40-9-1-percent distribution among the above groups, full buy-in, and 2,285 Broomfield employer establishments, annual dues alone would total more than *\$10 million per year*.
- Finding viable ways to increase wages besides layoffs, hour reductions or simply raising consumer-facing prices to fund the entire increase. The point here isn't unnecessary inflation.
- Developing a rating system for how to equitably distribute dues-funded, living-wage grants to employers who most need assistance, minus, say, 5 percent for network administration. Perhaps dues and other living wage contributions could live in the Broomfield Community Foundation/Broomfield Chamber of Commerce Small Business Fund. Revenue-healthy employers could make additional contributions to their struggling (non-competitor) counterparts, and both public and anonymous donations would be accepted at any time.
- Diverting another percentage point or two from annual executive team bonuses (in addition to annual "1 for 100" contributions). The contributions of executives who live in Broomfield but work elsewhere would be more than welcome, as well!
- Employers with staff used to bi-vocational side hustles publicly posting the ways their team members earn a living wage. At The Refuge, for example, two of my teammates earn regular income outside their small Refuge stipends. Other

teammates of mine get paid by grant funds received from local partners like the Broomfield Workforce Center and the Colorado Safe Parking Initiative. We're not all earning a living wage, though, so we're among Broomfield employers that have a lot of work to do in this area!

- Indexing voluntary wage increases to the updated Self Sufficiency Standard for Broomfield County, set to be released this spring. Our lowest hourly self-sufficiency wage from the 2018 standard, for a single adult working eight hours a day for 22 days each month, was \$14.17. The standard adjusts according to household size, the number of working adults in a household, and the ages of any children in a household.

(3) Identify and fill once and future gaps.

The title of John Steinbeck's *[Of Mice and Men](#)*, a novella about two migrant workers during the Great Depression, is taken from the Robert Burns poem "To a Mouse." The pertinent line reads "the best-laid schemes o'mice an' men / Gang aft agley." Translation: "The best laid plans of mice and men / Often go awry," referring to a field mouse preparing its nest for winter only to have it plowed asunder.

Should we successfully implement the principal housing stability efforts outlined above, they hopefully won't be destroyed by some unforeseen actor. They will, however, inevitably leave gaps and cracks that need to be identified and filled, fixed or mitigated. Other worthwhile housing projects and [best practices](#) will need to be adapted to Broomfield's unique context. New ideas will need to be imagined, tested and re-imagined.

With-and-alongside dialogues form a hub around which the spokes of our local resources can dynamically revolve. Dialogue means getting to know each other in new ways and having hard and thought-provoking conversations, and both recognizing and mobilizing the extensive human and financial resources that already exist in our community. It means asking good questions and seeking to understand each other. It means dreaming dreams and figuring things out as we go. It means living into a new kind of hometown mutuality.

Here's where the grammatical creations called [prepositions](#) perform special community-shaping tasks. Prepositions describe how people, places and things relate to each other. Some are decidedly more preferable than others regarding matters of commonwealth — dialogue "with" and "alongside" each other encourages recognition and advocacy; talking "to," "at" or "over" each other furthers disdain and opposition.

The Broomfield Housing Opportunity Coalition (BHOC) fostered community conversations toward "Accessible, Available, Diverse" housing for several years, but unfortunately, COVID sapped BHOC's momentum and infrastructure to the point where it now needs an infusion of energy and a re-activated website.



Thankfully, later this spring, are leader-advocates will begin facilitating monthly all-stakholder housing-related “learning parties” featuring local challenges, lived-experience testimonials and tangible action steps. (Check my [blog](#) for details.) Learning party topics could include:

- “The Scarlet Letters of Modern Housing”
- “Fungible Budgets: A Guide for How Cities, Businesses and Households Can Adjust or Add Line Items to Meet Community Needs”
- “In the Zone: How Zoning Shapes Local Housing”
- “Our Pipes Just Broke, Can You Get Them Fixed, Like, Today?: A Week in the Life of a Local Landlord”
- “Life in My Mobile Home Park...Since Local Regulations Passed”
- “Watch Your Language: Deconstructing (and Reconstructing) our Medieval Housing Vocabulary”
- “What’s My Level of NIMBYism? Measuring Our Tolerance for Affordable Housing”
- “9-1-1, What is Your Emergency?” ‘Yeah, there’s a homeless person on my walking trail...’ — What not to do (and what to do) when you encounter a resident who appears to be unhoused.”
- “Never Been Done...But Might Be Worth Trying: A Night of Community Brainstorming”

As for filling current and yet-to-be-determined housing gaps, here’s a list of promising cross-spectrum housing projects, policies and partnerships worth our consideration in the months and years to come:















 = “under construction”/in process,  = this has not yet happened

Projects

- *Mapping Parcels & New Developments*  — Before new affordable housing developments can be built in Broomfield, appropriate land needs to be (re-)zoned, repurposed, acquired or donated. Except there’s not much available land that’s accessible to amenities and transportation in central Broomfield. I’ve compiled a [list](#) of possible parcels for future [infill](#) projects, but it needs to be vetted and expanded by people who know local real estate.
- *Specialized Communities*  — My friend John Patrick Hall, a member of the Anglican Brotherhood of Saint Gregory, runs the [Rocky Mountain Refuge For End of Life Care](#) (originally known as Lazarus Gate). Its mission: to provide compassionate shelter for unhoused neighbors with terminal illnesses. J.P. and his team are beginning their work with one rented room, while maintaining hope for a permanent home someday. My colleague Kathy Escobar has long dreamed of converting a small (yet-to-be) donated apartment building or old motel into a community for adults “orphaned

by life.” It would feature live-in staff-hosts, regular cleaning services, shared meals and kitchen space, and “deep affordability,” meaning it would be tailored to people earning less than 40 percent AMI. Repurposed dwellings and project-based, deed-restricted development offer viable housing solutions for other “hard-to-house” residents, such as individuals with IDD people with felonies on their records.

- *Vested Neighborhood Housing* 🕒 — With existing manufactured home parks nationwide becoming less and less livable for residents, it’s imperative we explore other options. My Refuge teammate Billy Bear Jarrett’s “Vested Neighborhood Housing” proposal offers an intriguing low-cost, resident-owned, public-private partnership-based workaround. It involves repurposing storage lots (or empty land) owned by financially struggling VFWs, American Legions or other fraternal organizations, acquiring salvageable RVs and mobile homes, donated building materials, donated home and infrastructure blueprints and donated utility hookups, and putting them all together with volunteer labor. (The locally owned B & B Mobile & RV Park in Longmont has a perpetually long waiting list because it has for years cultivated and sustained just this sort of deeply affordable mobile home and RV community, complete with its own solar panel farm.) For more details on vested housing, see the [two-page summary](#) on my blog.

<div>  Retraumatization  </div>	
WHAT HURTS?	
SYSTEM (POLICIES, PROCEDURES, “THE WAY THINGS ARE DONE”)	RELATIONSHIP (POWER, CONTROL, SUBVERSIVENESS)
 HAVING TO CONTINUALLY RETELL THEIR STORY	 NOT BEING SEEN / HEARD
 BEING TREATED AS A NUMBER	 VIOLATING TRUST
 PROCEDURES THAT REQUIRED DISROBING	 FAILURE TO ENSURE EMOTIONAL SAFETY
 BEING SEEN AS THEIR LABEL (I.E. ADDICT, SCHIZOPHRENIC)	 NONCOLLABORATIVE
 NO CHOICE IN SERVICE OR TREATMENT	 DOES THINGS FOR RATHER THAN WITH
 NO OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE FEEDBACK ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE WITH THE SERVICE DELIVERY	 USE OF PUNITIVE TREATMENT, COERCIVE PRACTICES AND OPPRESSIVE LANGUAGE

Source: Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care, 2015, via the [Buffalo Center for Social Research](#) at the University of Buffalo.

Policies

- *Zoning Review* 🚧 — Now that our inclusionary housing and independent housing authority are in effect, it's time for a comprehensive review of current Broomfield codes and zoning requirements. Amending or overturning unhelpful [land use regulations](#) or creating new ones could promote housing stability.
- *Trauma-Informed Care* 🚧 — The manner in which housing and other basic-needs supports are provided is as crucial as the actual supports themselves. A conscious commitment to and concerted integration of the principles of trauma-informed care — safety, choice, collaboration, trustworthiness and empowerment — could humanize our often sterile and impersonal social safety net systems and prevent households in need from being constantly retraumatized. That would mean (re-)training for local agency board members, staff, volunteers and advocates, alike.
- *Systems Change* ⌚ — Paul Batalden, senior fellow of the Institute for Health-care Improvement (IHI), famously said, “Every system is perfectly designed to get the results it gets.” When people become the objects of systems instead of the subjects for whom systems (and policies and practices) exist, suffering inevitably results, and always from the bottom-up. What we call “human service systems,” in fact, tend to carefully limit and control interpersonal contacts and to erect physical, professional and psychological barriers that insulate “providers” from “clients.” If you’ve ever visited the Social Security Administration office in Louisville, for example, you know exactly what I mean. People seeking various forms of help are routinely made to feel they are “less than,” and people administering various forms of assistance are misled into believing they are “more than.” Bad things happen when people stop counting and become numbers. People in need are presumed guilty until they prove themselves innocent. “Cost per person” gains an outsized influence. A sort of top-down suspicion seeps in like bentonite and cracks everything, forcing people in need to navigate a hellscape of inflexible and disincentivizing eligibility criteria, arcane technicalities and documentation requirements to access what help is available. It's time to re-emphasize the “human” in the “human service system,” so that people, not policies and procedures and structures, come first.
- *Full Funding* ⌚ — Local agencies need to stop telling our donors, grantors and wider community how great they are to provide us with Band-Aids when we know the victim at our door needs an organ transplant and a safer highway. We need to stop settling and start pursuing resources commensurate to the level of actual and projected housing-related needs in our community. We need to challenge decision-makers, who enjoy financial security and housing stability themselves, when they piously parrot statements like, “That’s just not

in the budget” or “Budgets aren’t as fungible as they seem” or “We choose to focus on other priorities.” Thousands of Broomfielders are suffering from housing instability *right now*. It’s time to consign lip service, half-measures and deference to gradualism in the form of convenient financial and social doctrines to the past where they belong.

- *Voluntary Moratorium on Rental Increases* 🕒 — While Broomfield employers (hopefully) work toward paying living wages and our new housing voucher program (hopefully) gets up and running, local landlords could ease the cost burden on local households by adopting a voluntary moratorium on rent increases through the end of 2024.
- *Tenant Services Unit* 🕒 — among other things, the CCOB’s [Code Compliance](#) unit monitors and enforces the safe and proper modifications of homes. BPD’s three-officer [Animal Services Unit](#) enforces laws that protect the health and safety of the general public and protect pets “from cruel treatment, neglect, and injury.” No current units of our local government, however, enforce laws protecting the living conditions of human tenants or their treatment by landlords. Here in Broomfield, and certainly beyond, a lack of effective oversight and enforcement of [housing ordinances](#) continues to plague many renters, from mobile home parks to multi-family housing complexes to single-family homes. [Ombuds](#) offer a potential solution. The CCOB [recently proposed](#) hiring one, but our community of 74,112-and-counting needs *at least* three. Whether the CCOB creates a new “Tenant Services Unit” charged with investigating [complaints](#) and enforcing housing-related laws or repurposes some other entity for that purpose, on-the-ground regulation must happen. Otherwise, law-breaking landlords will continue ignoring health conditions and maintenance requests, pressuring tenants to sign new leases, making threats or retaliating against outspoken residents, and issuing eviction notices with incorrect court dates and times (with the result that tenants appear after they have been legally evicted), all with impunity.
- *Group Living & Homesharing* 🕒 — Nearby cities in need of new affordable housing solutions have begun to consider loosening restrictions on the number of unrelated people allowed to live in the same residence. Denver already permits [up to five](#) unrelated residents in one single-family home. An attempt to expand Boulder’s occupancy limits [narrowly failed](#) last November. Organizations like [Sunshine Home Share](#) take a different approach to the same affordability challenge, connecting vetted applicants with homeowners in need of extra income or help with daily tasks.

- *Client Ratings* 🕒 — A public rating system of local safety net agencies (including the Refuge, of course) would go a long way toward correcting power imbalances and promoting system change. Yelp and Amazon do it. Why not Broomfield social service agencies? Metrics do have their place.
- *Accessory Dwelling Units* 🚧 — In October 2019, city council [passed an ordinance](#) allowing [accessory dwelling units](#) (ADUs) on residential properties in Broomfield. As of last October, a grand total of [one accessory dwelling unit](#) had been completed in compliance with the ordinance. Clearly, the policy needs an overhaul. Perhaps we should look to the West Denver Renaissance Collaborative (WDRC) that is already piloting ways to make the [design-finance-build process for ADUs](#) more manageable and affordable.
- *Homeless Memorial Day* 🚧 — Two handfuls of Broomfielders gathered outside Holy Comforter Episcopal Church on Dec. 23, 2021, for a second-annual remembrance of local residents who died while unhoused during the preceding calendar year. (We lost Brittany Markham and David Mausner in 2021.) Its timing closely coincided with [National Homeless Persons' Memorial Day](#), held every year on the [shortest day of the year](#). Vigils were also held in [Denver](#), [Boulder](#), [Longmont](#) and [Colorado Springs](#). Please mark your calendars for our third annual vigil on Wednesday, Dec. 21, 2022, and check [my blog](#) for details on the exact time and location. Hopefully, more of us will attend, and, more importantly, our “Broomfield Four” will remain only four at next winter’s vigil.

Partnerships

- *Vacant Units* 🕒 — According to [Census redistricting data](#), 1,616 of Broomfield’s 31,298 housing units were vacant in 2020. I’m not aware of an existing list of those units, but it would be good to have because some property owners may be willing to add their vacant units to our local hotel voucher inventory. Maybe a vacation-home rental business like Vrbo and Airbnb would be willing to explore transitional housing options benefitting homeowners needing income and households needing stability. Some vacant units in Boulder County have been utilized during Marshall Fire recovery efforts.
- *Tiny Homes* 🕒 — The non-profit [Veterans Community Project](#), with the help of the City of Longmont and HMS Development, is building a [26-unit tiny home community](#) on two acres of land in Longmont. A similar effort could literally end veteran homelessness in Broomfield and then some.
- *Day Shelter* 🚧 — The Refuge Café day shelter/navigation center that I co-manage fills an important niche for residents who are unhoused or otherwise in need in Broomfield and the North Metro area. We offer a safe place for people to be without having to pay for anything or being asked to leave, and that includes guests who like “coworking” in the midst of our eclectic atmosphere. Recent sponsors, including the McKay Lake and Red Leaf wards

of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS), Roots Restaurant, the Starbucks on 287 and Midway, and the new Broomfield Chick-fil-A, help us serve healthy on-site lunches. Novation Church, Family in Christ Community Church, the Broomfield Community Foundation, the Arc Thrift Store, and area residents Dee Whiteley and Michele Borseth stock us with things like to-go snacks, laundry packs, bus passes, in-store vouchers and everyday household items. The thing is we only have enough people power, resources and sponsors to open three days a week, mostly during daytime hours. We really need to be open six or seven days a week with some evening hours for residents who can't visit during the day. (The Broomfield Library is open every day and does a great job helping some of our same patrons with computer access, printouts and other miscellaneous tasks. Broomfield Easy Ride also recently stepped up to help The Refuge and other Code Blue partners provide transportation for vehicle-less hotel voucher recipients. Holy Trinity Anglican Church also partners with FISH to provide hospitality on Code Blue activation and intake days.)

- *Outreach Van* 🚐 — Last summer, local partners created the new Broomfield Cares Outreach Van program. (Shoutout to Khari Hunt, Broomfield's deputy director of Human Services, for the idea!) Hubbed out of The Refuge, volunteer advocates use a borrowed 15-passenger van from Joyful Journeys Thrift Store — shoutout to executive director Tasha VanMarter — to visit local unhoused residents, learn about their circumstances and offer supplies and referrals to appropriate services. With more resources, this outreach effort could complement the existing [BCORE](#) co-responder partnership between the Broomfield Police Department and Community Reach mental health clinicians, and relieve at least some of the burden on the BPD and other city staff tasked with responding to calls about "the homeless." Similar programs have seen success in [Aurora](#) and [Denver](#).



Local Perspective

- "Toward a Culture of Belonging" with Carolyn Love (p. 206)

Local Perspective

TOWARD A CULTURE OF BELONGING

An Aug. 23, 2021 Interview with Carolyn Love

How long have you lived in Broomfield and what brought you here?

If you've ever seen the *Green Acres* TV show — it's where this man brought his wife out of city life and brought her to the country — that



Carolyn Love is pictured second from left.

was my husband, David, and me. I had lived in Aurora, where I experienced an active, vibrant, diverse community, and then I moved here to Broomfield in 1984. Flatirons Mall didn't exist, Target didn't exist. That whole Westminster corridor and movie theaters didn't exist. I was the typical city girl, enjoying what Aurora and Denver had to offer. David enjoyed the slower pace.

He worked in the lab at IBM in Niwot, and we were looking for homes in Niwot and Gunbarrel, but that area around Boulder priced so many people out of the market. David had lived in Broomfield already for a long time, so when we got married, we decided to rent his Westlake house, and we bought and moved into a house in Lac Amora. Our daughter is married and lives in Denver, and we have three granddaughters.

David passed away in 2010. When he became ill, we started going to Broomfield United Methodist Church, where [Pastor] Ken Brown and his family were. Ken was the reason why I started going to BUMC. We had been going to church in Denver, because African American culture is very important to me, but after David was diagnosed, a friend who visited BUMC told us about Ken. David and Ken hit it off instantly. We got to know Ken really well. He's at Trinity United Methodist Church in downtown Denver now.

I'm originally from Gary, Indiana. I got my undergraduate degree in Terre Haute. From my perspective, Indiana is geographically mislocated — it belongs next to Mississippi in its politics and ideology. After I graduated, I stayed in Gary for one more year to vote for Richard Gordon Hatcher, the first African-American mayor of Gary. This was the era of African Americans moving into municipal leadership in major cities across the United States. There was also Mayor Stokes in Detroit and Mayor Maynard Jackson in Atlanta.

We had a real culture of belonging in Gary. I'm very proud that I was born and raised there. We had a pure water system, a strong educational system and a good community. When drugs entered the community, I saw the change. A high school colleague of mine was found behind a building and had overdosed. That wasn't him. I know that that was not who he was. When I saw that happening, I wanted to leave. I remember it so distinctly. I remember being in my mom's bedroom, and I said to her, "I want to leave." She said, "Well, you have an uncle in Denver, why don't you go see what's there?" And I said, "Okay, I'll run out there for a minute, but I'll be right back." That minute has lasted nearly 50 years.

I came to Colorado in 1972, in May. I really liked the outdoors, and I found a job and the rest was history. I've lived in Northeast Denver, Park Hill, Capitol Hill, in Aurora, and now in Broomfield.

What's it been like for you to live in Broomfield and try to find work here?

Broomfield sees itself as this hometown, folksy community. From my perspective, it's only hometown and folksy if you fit their demographic. And I didn't. When I moved here to Broomfield in 1984, I had worked in banking for 10 years and for the state of Colorado for four years. Additionally, I worked for the City of Gary while in Indiana. So I came into this community with some skill sets, but there was no employment here for me. From a cultural perspective, it was an all-white community, with minimal places to shop, recreate and gather as a community. So I couldn't connect, and I didn't fit in in Broomfield.

I don't know if we're taking an honest look at Broomfield. It is a really nice community. It's a caring community. However, we have blinders on in terms of some of the challenges in this community. Drug addiction, homelessness, poverty exists in Broomfield. While not to the extent of larger communities, the fact that these and other issues exist is problematic. From an economic perspective, working in Denver made sense because more job opportunities, at a higher salary, existed. I chose to maintain a social life in Denver because there are vibrant diverse communities to experience and enjoy. There are several cultural amenities to experience. I am able to do work in Denver that is meaningful, relevant and personally gratifying.

What would you like to share about your work?

I'm an affiliate faculty member in the Master's in Nonprofit Management program at Regis University. The classes I've taught are "Leading From Within," "Governance and Organizational Leadership" and "Social Justice in the Non-Profit Sector." As an independent consultant, the focus of my training is working with organizations interested in creating cultures of belonging and expanding the circle of human concern. These concepts originate from John A. Powell [lowercase intentional], director of the [Othuring and Belonging Institute](#) in California.

In 2004, I founded [Kebaya Consulting](#), which focuses on “next-level leadership and creating inclusive work cultures.” “Kebaya” is a West African term that means “leadership.” I consult with non-profit organizations, foundations, municipalities and the private sector around organizational change and do training and coaching in the areas of equity, diversity, inclusion and creating a culture of belonging.

I was in the private sector for a number of years, and went through several training programs, and what I found to be true is you go to these training classes and come back and try to implement what you learned, but all you have is the academic knowledge. And you can’t translate it to the real world. So I went to the Coaches Training Institute [now [Co-Active Training Institute](#)], to learn how to take training from theory to action.

I also have a Ph.D. in leadership and change from Antioch University in Ohio.

Why did you choose that sort of work?

After experiencing white flight in my Gary, Indiana, neighborhood, I struggled to understand racism. At age 15, I said I wanted to end racism in my lifetime.

My client list includes the City & County of Denver, the City of Boulder, Colorado Housing and Finance Authority, The Denver Foundation, and the Colorado Health Foundation. My work centers on using an equity mindset to create change that embraces the humanity of the people involved. When working with municipalities, I have facilitated meetings where well-intentioned people wrestled with the difficult issues, like equitable procurement practices and affordable housing.

Finally, through a colleague I knew who raises awareness about World War II Japanese internment camps like [Camp Amache](#) [in Eastern Colorado], I went to [former Broomfield City Manager] Charles Ozaki, and I said to him, “I do so much work in Denver. I really want to do some work here in the community. I’m tired of hitting the Boulder Turnpike. One of my largest clients is the City and County of Denver, and I want to cultivate relationships in Broomfield. I’m aging, and I have a lot of gifts to give, and I really want to connect with this community.”

When meeting with Charles I mentioned that, “I do a lot of facilitation work, but nothing’s available here.” He suggested I do some volunteer work and apply to serve on a commission. And I was interested in seeing what that would be like. Now I serve on the Broomfield Library board.

What title do you like to go by?

When I started my doctoral program, I got six months into it, and David was diagnosed with a terminal illness. So while I worked on my Ph.D., I was taking care of David. He died while I was writing my final concept paper. I love to go by “Dr. Carolyn,” but in certain environments, to connect human to human I just go by “Carolyn.” But the other thing is when people say “Dr. Love,” they want to romanticize it and sexualize it.

I worked very hard for my degree. I took care of my husband and cleaned him up when he got sick, while getting a Ph.D. I'm not going to let you denigrate my name.

What might help your fellow Broomfielders understand what your experience of Broomfield has been like?

To me, the story is the fact that there were only a handful of other [African-American] families in Broomfield, including the Howells, the Stoudemires and the Jacksons.

I know my daughter had a poor experience at BHMS in the '80s. The students were cruel. People didn't know how to embrace different cultures. So when she first started going there, people wouldn't sit with her at the cafeteria. It was hard to make friends. She didn't get asked to dance at school dances. Over time she did form some relationships with other students, primarily through sports, but it was more exclusionary than inclusive.

I know people say, "Oh, at that age, it's difficult for all kids to make friends." That's one way to look at it, but the other is how do you understand and embrace diversity and how do you welcome someone who is different from you? It was from the teachers on down. For me, it just was not welcoming. I think people thought that they were, but they were not.

I remember there was this anti-smoking poster at school that displayed an African-American female smoking a cigarette. It did what a poster should do. But this school is 99.9% white and you're going to put up a poster of a black girl smoking a cigarette to discourage people from smoking? What are the other messages being communicated there? I talked to the principal and to his credit, he took it down. I know it wasn't the intent, but when you only have a few black students in a class, then you're subtly conditioning those kids not to be that or to look down on that. We decided our daughter would not attend Broomfield High School. She went to Manual High School [in Denver] instead.

How would you describe Broomfield to a friend from outside the area?

Broomfield really is a good community. It has a good community ethos of wanting to have a culturally rich and vibrant community. I would also say, it's a community that's in denial. And it may be headed toward a perfect storm without realizing it.

How do we create a culture of belonging in Broomfield?

As Broomfield continues to grow, it will change not only racially and ethnically but socially and economically as well. We are separating ourselves by class and being protective of our space. We don't want to let those people in because we think they will bring down property value or alter our quality of life. Broomfield residents may be slow to realize that problems exist here like they exist in other communities. Women

and children are most likely being abused in Anthem. Abuse, drugs, poverty are social ailments that flow through all communities, not just low-income communities. We've forgotten when Doug French killed his mother. It is part of our history. We have "well-to-do" kids right now at BUMC's lunch program who are talking about killing themselves. These kids are in need, too. How do we create a beloved community? It's a work in progress. It's listening with a compassionate ear to different vantage points to gain an understanding of another person's lived experience. It's expanding our social safety net and acknowledging that we already have a strained social safety net... but we must move forward.

There are middle-class folks that can't afford a house in Broomfield. David had two Master's degrees and I had my degrees, but Broomfield is an expensive place to live. It's not only low-income people that need affordable housing. What's been missing is looking at the public policies that are put in place that prevent people from being able to afford a house in Broomfield. Have we thought through long-term strategies and their implications? Boulder looks like Boulder because of how it structured its policies over 20 years ago. And Louisville, Superior and Lafayette look like they do in part because of the "No-Growth" [policies] of the '70s. That laid the groundwork for everything else we've seen and we need to be clear about how we got to where we are. We have got to see that we are all interconnected communities. I hear people say, "We're not like Denver." Oh yes, you are. Broomfield is just like Denver. We got a little more sophisticated, but there is tremendous need in Broomfield.

What are your thoughts in regard to the Broomfield Solidarity Walk from June 2020?

I'm going to take it out of the [Black Lives Matter] movement piece and use a broader lens. What happened to Mr. [George] Floyd was not new. This has been happening to black men and women since 1619. It was just that we have gotten so arrogant now that we put it on TV in plain view. So white people were like "Oh my God! This is really happening?" I sat and watched it in horror and I cried. But why is it that white people are surprised about this? Why didn't you know that this is going on? We've been telling you this for decades and you have not listened. It took someone dying for you to listen. If we didn't have a video camera you wouldn't listen or see. Like with Breonna Taylor [in Louisville, Ky.] We are at a critical point as a society and as a community. What will be our legacy and how will the next generation talk about us and the work we did to create a civil society 50 years from now?

I think Black Lives Matter is a wonderful movement, but what is more important to me is how do we advance legislation and policies that better serve the public? What can we do to prevent this from happening again? It's not an anti-police statement, but it's how do we hold people accountable when they do something wrong?

In your opinion, to echo Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream Speech," what would the "New Broomfield" look like?

I think Dr. King's "[I Have a Dream](#)" speech is a good one, and I encourage everyone to listen to the first part of the speech. I encourage you to read his book *Where Do We Go From Here?* Because that's one of the essential questions for today. John A. Powell (sic) is doing some magnificent work around othering and belonging. His position is "othering" people who are different from you prevents us from being in meaningful relationships with one another. It's difficult to create a culture of belonging when some are excluded from the circle of human concern.

How do we engage in conversations around public policy where we can shift our perspective of what we want our community to look like? I recommend that people first of all get in touch with who they are and what their belief systems are, what do you believe to be true? Read works from not just the African-American community, but the Indigenous communities and Latinx communities. Start reading and understanding the vantage point of different people. Educate yourself, whether you agree or not. Let's establish a common base of knowledge of how to talk about these challenging issues.

We need to have people with lived experience at the table so they can share with us. So we can co-create something that's going to be beneficial to them and to us as a community. How do we shift our mindset from "I live here in this covenant-controlled community, therefore I'm not touched by that" to "Yes you are, 'I am because you are...Ubuntu?'" I'm clear about that. If there's a child at A Precious Child who is struggling, I need to help them because that child's life is going to impact my life and your life somehow. They may become a doctor and find a cure for some illness I have down the road. Or they may become a non-profit leader that changes the world based on their experience. We are all connected and we cannot deny that fact.



The Front Range to the northwest as viewed from the water tanks off Kohl Street.

CONCLUSION



*And so the first question that the priest asked,
the first question that the Levite asked was,*

“If I stop to help this man, what will happen to me?”

But then the Good Samaritan came by, and he reversed the question:

“If I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to him?”

from Martin Luther King, Jr.’s

[“I’ve Been to the Mountaintop” speech](#),

April 3, 1968


I sometimes wonder about the unlikely hero of Jesus' "Parable of the Good Samaritan." It's unclear from the text if Jesus makes him up, if he's a composite of multiple people, or if he's a real person Jesus had encountered during his walking travels. Contrary to custom, Jesus interacted with Samaritans on several occasions and he knew the Jericho road, so it's possible the "Good Samaritan" is at least based on a real person or experience.

Jesus never adds to this parable, at least not as recorded in the four canonical Gospels, but it makes me wonder. How old is the Samaritan? Is he traveling alone, as the story implies? Where is he going? Does he safely arrive? Does he return to the inn as promised and reimburse the innkeeper for the injured, presumably Jewish, guest's care? Does he soon notice other injured victims left for dead on the side of the dangerous road from Jerusalem to Jericho? If so, does he help them, too? Does he help so many that he runs out of funds for himself and whatever purpose made him take to the road in the first place? Does he later encounter the priest or the Levite and if so, what is their interaction like? Does the Samaritan himself later end up naked and bloodied by the side of the road or had he already been robbed before helping the injured man in Jesus' story?

What about the robbers? Do they stay to see what happened to their victim? Were they self-styled revolutionaries who funded their work by robbing their fellow Jews and other passersby? How does the injured man react when he regains consciousness and finds himself safe in an inn? What is his conversation like with the innkeeper? Does he accept that a Samaritan helped him? Is he grateful or indifferent or angry? What does he say to the Samaritan when he returns to settle accounts with the innkeeper? Does a despised Samaritan "neighboring" him change the man?

What of the innkeeper? Do they care about hospitality toward strangers? Do they consider it an honor to be asked to serve the injured man? Do they honor the charge given to them by the Samaritan or do they use the Samaritan's money to buy something for themselves? Do they know the Samaritan from a prior encounter?

Had the details of the story at some point happened to Jesus himself? Had he shared those details with his disciples, perhaps? If so, does Jesus choose to veil his identity from the religious expert by making himself into a despised Samaritan? (Remember, it was the expert's question that prompted the parable in the first place.) Does Jesus' return question to the expert in the law — "Which of these three do you think became a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" — stay with him after their encounter? (The religious expert seems jarred by the story, because he can't even bring himself to say the word "Samaritan." Instead he responds to Jesus' question with "The one who showed mercy to him.") Does the religious expert receive the message of the parable? Does he respond to Jesus' closing charge, "Go and do the same."




I've lived most of my life in Colorado's only two "cities and counties" — 18 years in Denver and 17 years and counting in Broomfield.


Denver raised me and gave me community pride. Sadly, none of my family members live there anymore.

Broomfield taught me and is teaching me the good, the bad and the ugly of what "hometown" and "community" can mean. We're good at responding to short-sudden [local crises](#). We're not bad at providing food and clothing for families in need. But we've been the opposite of good at long-slow crises like homelessness and housing instability and lack of living wages.

Why the disparity? Maybe we circle our proverbial wagons around people like the victims of 9/11, the 2013 floods and the 2021 Marshall Fire because it's easier to see ourselves or our preferred profile in them. Maybe we assume investments of time, talent and treasure in the more diverse faces of housing crisis victims mean fewer of all of the above for the rest of us. Or maybe we just feel safer and more comfortable among more familiar kinds of people.



A few years ago at the Refuge Café, a guest without current legal residency documents, who happened to also be escaping domestic violence, said something that's stuck with me ever since, "There's just not a place for some people in this world."



Some of our neighbors just down the road need help getting out of the ditches our indifference and policymaking and housing market and cost of living and lack of living wages and overworking and complicated life circumstances have left them in. There's never been a better time for us to start perceiving those factors not as "their problem" but as "our challenge." There is no them, only us.

There's never been a better time to become a neighbor to wounded, image-bearing travelers, even if, and maybe, especially if, they're our worst enemy.



Girl Scout Troop #60594 has issued an open invitation to anyone who would like to add a special painted rock to their garden project on the west side of the Brunner House, 640 Main St.

Broomfield isn't alone in wrestling with the necessity of altruism and mutuality. Cities and counties up and down the Front Range are grappling with many of the same issues we are. So it's both sensible and essential to respond to our housing challenges locally *and* regionally alongside neighboring communities.

We know (or at least I've tried to prove) that achieving functional stability is the central challenge of our time. Our full-spectrum housing and income realities, our pathways to housing for all and our principal financial cost to get there are pretty straightforward. Now it's time to ask ourselves two questions: "What is all this worth to us?" and "What are we prepared to do about it?"



Commonwealth, living wages and "1 for 100" position us to meet our current housing-related needs and sustain our ability to meet those needs in future generations. The "1 for 100" challenge [belongs to all of us](#) — kids running lemonade stands, teenagers working part-time, families making ends meet, employees bringing in paychecks, neighborhoods cultivating quality of life, employers serving their customers, and the city and county maintaining our infrastructure.

Every local stakeholder has a budget (whether they realize they do or not). Each of our budgets is a moral and ethical document reflecting our true priorities. In fact, it's all ethics and interdependence, from our neighborhood ecology to our household wealth to our hometown life, all the way up and all the way back down.

This isn't an us-for-them endeavor, either. The roles of giver and receiver have a way of shifting and interweaving, so it's hard to tell who gains and benefits and is helped the

most. I help run the Refuge Café, but our guests often offer me as much or more than they receive. They shake my hand when they see me, and a few insist on praying for me when they know I've had a bad day. They watch out for our advocates and make us handmade gifts and surprise us with donated supplies they bought with their last \$20 bill. When a visitor shows up in the winter without shoes or a jacket, they are the first to gather blankets and clothes or share their small supply of bus passes.

Randy Snyder reminded me it's okay to let go sometimes when he took his turn whacking a party piñata decorated like the COVID virus. Brittany Markham taught me never to give up, even when you have to sleep under a flight of stairs at night. David Mausner showed me how to troubleshoot and connect a TV antenna amplifier.

None of us know for certain what the future will bring — a [100-year flood](#), [senseless violence](#), [airplane parts](#) falling from the sky like a scene from *Breaking Bad*, or [higher than expected](#) quarterly earnings, multiple [state titles](#), or an idea for important [new legislation](#). A family, a business or a community could [help newcomers](#) in need one moment and then [need help](#) themselves the next.

Imagine how committed households receiving temporary, transitional and long-term housing assistance will be to sustaining those same resources for their neighbors and for future generations. Imagine the elation and pride we'll all experience if we choose to mobilize toward and eventually reach functional stability (or darn near!) by 2025. Imagine if neighboring communities followed our example.

—

200, 5,000, \$50 million.

—

In my introduction, I listed Broomfield's Sister Cities relationship with Ueda, Japan, as a both-and example of our community at its best. It's a particularly poignant one because four generations ago our nation was at war with Japan, and 7,500 Japanese-descended people were being forcibly imprisoned at the [Granada Relocation Center](#) (aka Camp Amache) in southeastern Colorado.

I'm proud of Broomfield's 20-year partnership with Ueda, and inspired by the City of Longmont's more recent [Sister City](#) agreement with the Northern Arapaho Tribe of Wyoming. I'm so inspired, in fact, that I believe it's time for Broomfield to seek a new

(and of course, additional) Sister Cities relationship with the [Cheyenne & Arapaho Tribes](#) of Oklahoma. Such an accord would tie us to further-distant generations of our history (and our housing history), and set us on a path of friendship with other former “enemies.” (Shoutout to my fellow members of Confluence, a Refuge-hubbed group advocating for this new partnership to happen!)

We’ve been in the midst of hostilities long enough — settlers against Indigenous nations, “whites” against “non-whites,” upstream states against downstream states, landlords against tenants, housed residents against unhoused residents, economically thriving against economically struggling. It’s past time to try redemptive reciprocity and life-affirming mutuality on a community-wide scale.

Let’s do it for Niwothi, Hóusóó, Hoxei Kookuteeneiht and Mahom.

Let’s do it for the Churches, the Eisenhowers and the Brunners.

Let’s do it for the Howells and the Jacksons.

Let’s do it for all the Broomfielders and would-be Broomfielders who have failed to fit a “preferred profile.”

Let’s do it for Donna and Nick; Gaby, Victor, Josefina and Edna; and the Weatherfords.

Let’s do it for James, Randy, Brittany and David.

Let’s do it for Mollie and Dennis.

Let’s do it for Linda, David, Fred, Bette, Jennifer S., Milan, Lori, Chuy, Katie, Jennifer W., Kent and Carolyn.

Let’s do it for our neighbors, for our families and for ourselves.

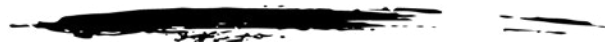
Let’s do it for generations of Broomfielders yet to be.

There’s a scene in the movie [Seabiscuit](#), when racehorse owner Charles Howard (played by Jeff Bridges) can’t sleep because of a rival owner’s public pronouncement that he had the “perfect horse.” Charles fumes to his wife Marcela (played by Elizabeth Banks), “You show me something that’s perfect, I’ll show you something that’s not.” Emphatic and accurate, if not revolutionary.

Functional stability isn’t about perfection. It’s about doing the right thing and co-creating something that’s good, even very good. It’s about living and working and learning to thrive in ways that extend the promise of this place to everyone, regardless of their job description or the neighborhood they live in or their current circumstances.

Whenever the larger Refuge community gathers, we read aloud an acknowledgement of those who lived here before us and still call this place, “Home.” Its final sentence reads, “These things are important to know and remember and to act upon in a good way, because we are part of this story.”

BENEDICTION



Spirit of Life, thank you for the givens —

may we never take them for granted.

Give us eyes to see and ears to hear,

that we may choose not to pass by, and,

Grant us wisdom and courage to imagine a land

called “Welcome Home.”

Amen.

RESOURCES



Calls to Action

“The Town I Know” (translation)

Broomfield Yesterday

Broomfield Today

Broomfield Tomorrow

Pronunciations

Calls to Action Checklist for Broomfield Stakeholders

- ☐ Choose to (linguistically) neighbor each other (p. 78)
- ☐ Embrace “commonwealth” (p. 187)
- ☐ Plan full-spectrum housing assistance (p. 188)
 - ☐ Enhance temporary and transitional lodging and wraparound services (p. 190)
 - ☐ Create and customize a local “Housing Stability Voucher” program (p. 191)
- ☐ Fund housing stability for all (p. 193)
 - ☐ Make first annual contribution to the “1 for 100” campaign (p. 196)
 - ☐ Submit logo mockups for the “1 for 100” campaign and the “Broomfield Living Wage Network” (creatives only) (p. 197)
 - ☐ Sign the [this petition](#) to get a quarter-percent sales tax for housing stability on the Fall 2022 ballot (*registered Broomfield voters only*) (p. 196)
 - ☐ Fund a “Broomfield Living Wage Network” (*employers only*) (p. 197)
- ☐ Adopt a voluntary moratorium on rent increases through 2020 (*landlords only*) (p. 203)
- ☐ Resurrect the Broomfield Housing Opportunity Coalition website and participate in monthly “learning party” dialogues and share your housing story (p. 199)
- ☐ Identify once and future gaps in our housing safety net (p. 200)
- ☐ Seek a Sister Cities relationship with the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma. (p. 219)

English Translation of the Local Perspective on p. 140

“THE TOWN I KNOW”

An October 2021 interview with Jesús “Chuy” Gutierrez

How many years have you lived in Colorado? Do you live in Broomfield or nearby?

I’ve lived in Colorado since 2007 and I live in Thornton.

Where were you born? Where are you from? Why did you and your family move here, if you were born elsewhere?

I was born in Seattle, Washington, but I lived my infancy in a little village in Jalisco, México, called “Ayutla.” My parents moved to the United States in 1984 to look for a better life, and I was born in April of 1986.

How many years have you worked in Broomfield?

I’ve worked in Broomfield since 2016.

What do you like about Broomfield? What don’t you like?

I like Broomfield’s people. All the families that live here are very friendly and have a good heart. What I don’t like is the cost of living is really high.

What are your biggest challenges related to housing in Broomfield? And in your opinion, for the Latino community?

It’s a good city to raise a family. The majority of the Latinos work for minimum salaries and it’s difficult to find housing in this beautiful city. We have a lot of setbacks due to the high cost of living.

In your opinion, are there different social classes in Broomfield? Explain how you see it.

In my opinion, yes, there are different social classes in Broomfield. There are a lot of people that have really high financial bills to pay on small salaries and the difference shows.

How did you start your restaurant? Are you the owner? How many employees do you have? How do you see your responsibility to your employees as a boss?

Three Margaritas was a restaurant that my cousin sold to me, and yes, it’s a family restaurant. We have around 35 employees. The responsibility I feel toward my employees is just as if they were members of my family. I would do anything for them, because they do the same for me every day.

What is the history of your “app”?

“[Chamba App](#)” started during the pandemic with the mission of helping the Latino community find work and resources to survive the pandemic.

What do you want the citizens of Broomfield to know about the lives of Hispanic people who live here?

I want the Broomfield community to know that the Latino people are very happy and grateful to live in this special community. It’s a proud, hard-working and very good-hearted group of people.

What more do you want to say to your fellow Broomfielders? Did I miss something important?

I just want to thank the Broomfield community for its support of my small business over the years and especially during the pandemic. You weren’t only helping one business, you were helping many families that needed it. Thank you so much!

Jesús “Chuy” Gutierrez is the owner of the Three Margaritas Restaurant, on the southeast corner of Main Street and 120th. To read the Spanish translation of this interview, turn to p. 140.

**Broomfield Yesterday****Books, Manuscripts & Visuals**

- *A Misplaced Massacre: Struggling Over the Memory of Sand Creek* by Ari Kelman
- *An Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States* by Roxanne Dunbar-Orti
- [Birth of a City - 1950s American History \(YouTube, Nov. 8, 2013\)](#), Charlie Dean Archives
- *Broomfield: Changes Through Time* by Sylvia Pettem
- [Broomfield: Spirit of the American Dream \(YouTube, July 8, 2011\)](#), City & County of Broomfield
- [Colorado Experience: Sand Creek Massacre \(YouTube, Nov. 28, 2014\)](#), Rocky Mountain PBS
- *Colorado Stagecoach Stations* by Heather King Peterson (master’s thesis)
- *Denver from the Bottom Up: A People’s History of Early Colorado* by Phil H. Goodstein
- *Full Body Burden: Growing Up in the Nuclear Shadow of Rocky Flats* by Kristen Iversen

- *Gem of the Mountain Valley: A history of Broomfield* by Laura L. Spitler & Lou Walther
- *History in English Words* by Owen Barfield
- [One Book One Broomfield Author Talk with Margaret Coel \(YouTube, Dec. 8, 2014\)](#), The Broomfield Channel
- [Only the Earth and the Mountains](#) Documentary Film Screening and Panel Discussion (Insight Series, Dec. 1, 2021), presented by Creative Broomfield, the City and County of Broomfield Open Space and Trails and the Broomfield Open Space Foundation
- *Snapshots of History: Church Ranch and the Church Family*
- *The Utes Must Go: American Expansion and the Removal of a People* by Peter R. Drucker

Online

- [A Brief Historical Overview of Affordable Rental Housing \(PDF\)](#), National Low Income Housing Coalition
- [Captain Silas S. Soule letter to Major Edward Wynkoop regarding the \[Sand Creek\] massacre](#), KCLoneWolf.com (Warning: Explicit Descriptions of Violence and Mutilation)
- [Homestead Records](#), National Park Service
- “[Maybe They Should Call it the Kansas Flu](#)” (Lost Highways: Dispatches from the Shadows of the Rocky Mountains, Dec. 23, 2020), History Colorado
- [Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site](#), National Park Service
- [Seeing Red: The unethical practice of redlining in Pueblo \(History Colorado, Jan. 29, 2019\)](#) by Dawn DiPrince
- [The Broomfield Connection: Civic Engagement and the Creation of a Consolidated City and County \(National Civic League, Spring 2020\)](#) by Charles Ozaki, former CCOB city manager
- [The Influenza Pandemic of 1918-1919 and COVID-19 \(Friends of Broomfield History, Aug. 15, 2020\)](#) by David Allison
- [The Mobility Myth \(The New Yorker, Feb. 23, 2014\)](#) by James Surowiecki
- [The New Empire of the Rockies: A History of Northeast Colorado \(BLM Cultural Resource Series, Colorado: No. 16\)](#), National Park Service
- [The Sand Creek Massacre database \(KCLoneWolf.com\)](#) compiled by Kevin I. Cahill
- [The Sweep Report \(2011-2012\): A look at key indicators, trends and needs in Broomfield, Colorado, USA](#) by Marrton Dormish, with Karen Smith

Broomfield Today

Books, Manuscripts & Visuals

- *An American Sunrise: Poems* by Joy Harjo
- [Colin in Black & White](#) (2021), TV-14
- [Coco](#) (2017), PG
- *from Sand Creek* by Simon J. Ortiz
- *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City* by Matthew Desmond
- [How past housing discrimination is still affecting Americans today: 'It's a story of our country'](#) (CBS News, Sept. 23, 2021) with Tony Dokoupil
- *Journeys Out of Homelessness: The Voices of Lived Experience* by Jamie Rife and Donald W. Burnes
- [Language Lessons](#) (2021), not rated
- [Maid](#) (2021), rated TV-MA
- [Reservation Dogs](#) (2021), rated TV-MA
- [Rutherford Falls](#) (2021), rated TV-14
- [She did it for all of us: Colorado's Hmong community reacts to historic gold medal](#) (YouTube, July 29, 2021), 9News
- *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* by Patricia Nelson Limerick
- *The Market as God* by Harvey Cox
- [The Public](#) (2018), rated PG-13
- *The Street Lawyer* by John Grisham

Online

- Annual reports from [A Precious Child](#) (2019), [Broomfield Community Foundation](#) (2020-2021), [Broomfield FISH](#) (2021), [The Refuge](#) (2021, scroll to bottom of page)
- [Arapaho Narratives](#) & [Place Names](#), Center for the Study of Indigenous Languages of the West, University of Colorado Boulder
- [Best-Performing Cities 2021: Foundations for Growth and Recovery](#) by Misael Gildamez, Charlotte Kesteven and Aaron Melaas, for the Milken Institute
- [Census Profile](#), Broomfield, Colorado, U.S. Census Bureau
- [Colorado Demographic Profiles](#), Department of Local Affairs, State of Colorado
- [Colorado Housing Affordability Data Explorer \(March 14, 2019\)](#) by Connor Everson
- [Colorado leaders must enact lasting reform to prevent evictions and promote an equitable recovery](#) (*Colorado Sun*, March 20, 2021) by Beatriz Gonzalez, et. al.
- [Denver Area Economic Summary \(Dec. 6, 2021\)](#), U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

- [Denver-Aurora-Lakewood, Colo., Metropolitan Area Data Tables](#), U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
- [Hungry at the Table: White Paper on Grocery Workers at The Kroger Company \(Economic Roundtable, Jan. 11, 2022\)](#) by Daniel Flaming, Peter Dreier, Patrick Burns and Aaron Danielson
- [“If you’re gonna help me, help me”: Barriers to housing among unsheltered homeless adults \(Evaluation and Program Planning, October 2019, Vol. 76\)](#) by Christina Wusinich, Lynden Bond, Anna Nathanson and Deborah K. Padgett
- [Mobile Homes: Last Week Tonight with John Oliver \(HBO via YouTube, April 8, 2019\)](#) (*Warning: Explicit Language*)
- [Private Equity Giants Converge on Manufactured Homes: How private equity is manufacturing homelessness & communities are fighting back \(February 2019\)](#) by Jim Baker of Private Equity Stakeholder Project, Liz Vogt of Manufactured-Housing Action and Linda Jun of Americans for Financial Reform Education Fund
- [Quarterly Workforce Indicators \(QWI\) Explorer](#), U.S. Census Bureau
- [San Francisco Homeless Project](#) (2016-2021), *San Francisco Chronicle*
- [Sand Creek is all around us \(Everyday Epics, May 24, 2019\)](#), by Marrton Dormish
- [Shroud, Destruction, and Neglect \(History Colorado, Jan. 24, 2022\)](#) by Lucha Martínez de Luna
- [State of Homelessness: Summary of Homelessness in Metro Denver, 2021-2022](#), Metro Denver Homeless Initiative
- [The housing theory of everything](#) by Sam Bowman, John Myers & Ben Southwood
- [The Rise and Fall of Denver’s Chinatown](#), History Colorado
- [The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Colorado 2018](#) by Diane M. Pearce, for the Colorado Center on Law and Policy
 - The CCLP released two supplements in conjunction with the above report:
 - The first, “On the Road: Exploring Economic Security Pathways in Colorado,” details how individuals and families can move from “surviving to thriving” — through retirement savings, educational attainment, and more stable housing/home ownership.
 - The second, “Overlooked and Undercounted: Struggling to Make Ends Meet in Colorado,” examines factors such as age, education, ethnic background and household size.
 - Access the full 2018 report and its supplements on the Self-Sufficiency Standard for Colorado 2018 [webpage](#). The 2021 report will be released sometime this spring.

- [The State of the Nation's Housing 2018](#), Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University
- [What Census Calls Us](#), 2020, Pew Research Center
- [What You Need to Know About How Section 8 Really Works \(ProPublica, Jan. 9, 2020\)](#) by Maya Miller

City & County of Broomfield

- [Broomfield Housing Needs Study](#), BBC Research & Consulting
- [Broomfield's Vaccine Ambassador Success \(YouTube, July 19, 2021\)](#)
- [Community Survey](#), 2021
- [Comprehensive Plan](#), 2016
- [Open Space and Trails Map](#), 2021
- [Reappraisal Fact Sheet](#), 2021
- [Water Quality Report](#), 2020

Broomfield Tomorrow

Books & Manuscripts

- *A Ditch in Time: The City, the West and Water* by Patricia Nelson Limerick
- *Ending Homelessness: Why We Haven't, How We Can* edited by Donald W. Burnes and David L. DiLeo
- *What Matters?: Economics for a Renewed Commonwealth* by Wendell Berry, with a foreword by Herman Daly

Online

- [A 401k for homeownership? Colorado housing leaders offer up solutions to affordability problem \(Colorado Sun, Jan. 10, 2022\)](#) by Daniel Ducassi
- [A Framework to Build \(Community\) Resilience](#), Community Psychology
- [Best Practices in Homeless Services \(Tarrant County Homeless Coalition, June 14, 2017\)](#) by Ken Kraybill, Center for Social Innovation
- [Built For Zero](#), Community Solutions
- [Citizens: Ending homelessness, locally and nationally](#), Community Solutions
- [Climate protection at municipal level: ten-point plan for the building sector](#), Passive House Institute
- [Colorado will receive \\$2.4 million to implement change in National Suicide Prevention Lifeline \(Denver Post, Dec. 22, 2021\)](#) by Tayler Shaw --- *Coming this July 2022, dial 9-8-8 for help!*

- [Denver Has Spent Decades Trying To End Homelessness. Can It Do Better? \(Westword, Dec. 14, 2021\)](#) by Conor McCormick-Cavanaugh
- [From Conflict to Compassion: A Colorado Housing Development Blueprint for Transformational Change \(Common Sense Institute, June 2021\)](#) by Evelyn Lim and Peter LiFari
- [Key Considerations for Implementing Emergency Shelter Within an Effective Crisis Response System \(August 2017\)](#), U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness
- [Mayors and America's Homelessness Crisis: Menino Survey of Mayors 2021 \(Boston University Initiative on Cities\)](#) by Katherine Levine Einstein and Charley E. Willison
- [Podcast 409: Pro Talk With Passive House Trainer Mariana Pickering \(Fine-Homebuilding, Nov. 23, 2021\)](#) hosted by Patrick McCombe
- [Swept to Nowhere: Experiences and Recommendations from Unhoused People During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#), Denver Homeless Out Loud
- [The Value of Ending Veteran and Chronic Homelessness in Built For Zero Communities: A Framework for Measuring Community-Wide Costs and Benefits \(Urban Institute, Aug. 3, 2021\)](#) by Samantha Batko, Claudia D. Solari and Nicole DuBois

Pronunciations

“Cross-referenced to first appearance in the main text.”

Beye — BUY (p. 30)

Brunner — BREW-ner (p. 24)

Chuy — CHEW-ee... (p. 140)

Fahrenbruch — FAIR-un-brook (p. 25)

Granada — gruh-NAY-duh (p. 219)

Hinono'eiteen — hi-NUH-nuh-ay-teen. (p. 36)

Haudenosaunee — ho-di-no-SHOW-nee (p. 174)

Hóuusóó — HO-oosoo (p. 36)

Hoxei Kookuteeneiht — HO-chay koo-ku-TEEN-it (p. 36)

Mahom — Mah-HOME (p. 37)

Marianna — mary-ANN-uh (p. 97)

Milan — MILL-un (p. 131)

Movick — MOW-vick (p. 97)

Mosqueda — Mus-QUEE-duh (p. 27)

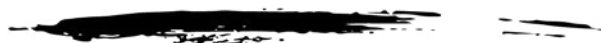
Niwothi — ni-WOTH-ee (p. 36)

Núu-ci — NEW-chee (p. 16)

Soule — SOLE (p. 227)

Tsitsistas — sit-SIS-tus, also, phonetically spelled “Tsétséhéstâhese” (p. 16)

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“...That dream
Shall have a name
After all,
And it will not be vengeful
But wealthy with love
And compassion
And knowledge.
And it will rise
In this heart
Which is our America.”

Simon J. Ortiz, *from Sand Creek*



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THE SWEEP REPORT 2.0

HOUSING FROM BELOW

in Broomfield, Colorado, USA

More than a decade ago, author Marrton Dormish began learning about the everyday realities faced by his neighbors on the margins. It quickly became clear to him how many of those realities intersect with the basic human need for shelter.

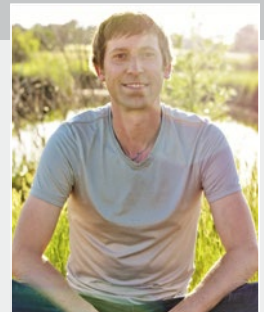
His latest publication, *The Sweep Report 2.0: Housing from below in Broomfield, Colorado, USA*, is a chronicle of stories, statistics and analysis that traces how housing shaped and continues to shape his hometown of Broomfield, the Denver metro area and beyond. His from-the-ground-up critique of existing housing dynamics centers the realities of suburban homelessness and housing instability and concludes with a call to all local stakeholders to undertake near-future actions toward comprehensive housing stability.

The challenge of this generation is its beyond-urgent, cross-spectrum need for affordable housing. It is a challenge that belongs to each and every resident, not just people who are sleeping in their vehicles or struggling to make ends meet. And despite its complexity, it is a challenge that can be met.



MARRTON DORMISH is a fourth-generation Coloradan and a mostly self-published writer. He serves as a minister of presence, justice and memory at [The Refuge](#), a hub for healing community, social action and creative collaboration at 11600 Quay Street, #200. Marrry and his family live in a Broomfield bi-level not far from city-designated open space.

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