

Local Government

REIMAGINED CONFERENCE

FEBRUARY 26-28, 2025 DENVER, COLORADO

Centering Historically Excluded Communities in City Decision-making

Adela Aguirre, Adriana Paola Palacios Luna,
Angela Maria Ortiz Roa, Ryan Hanschen
City of Boulder

ICMA | conference

Our Agenda

Welcome & Context

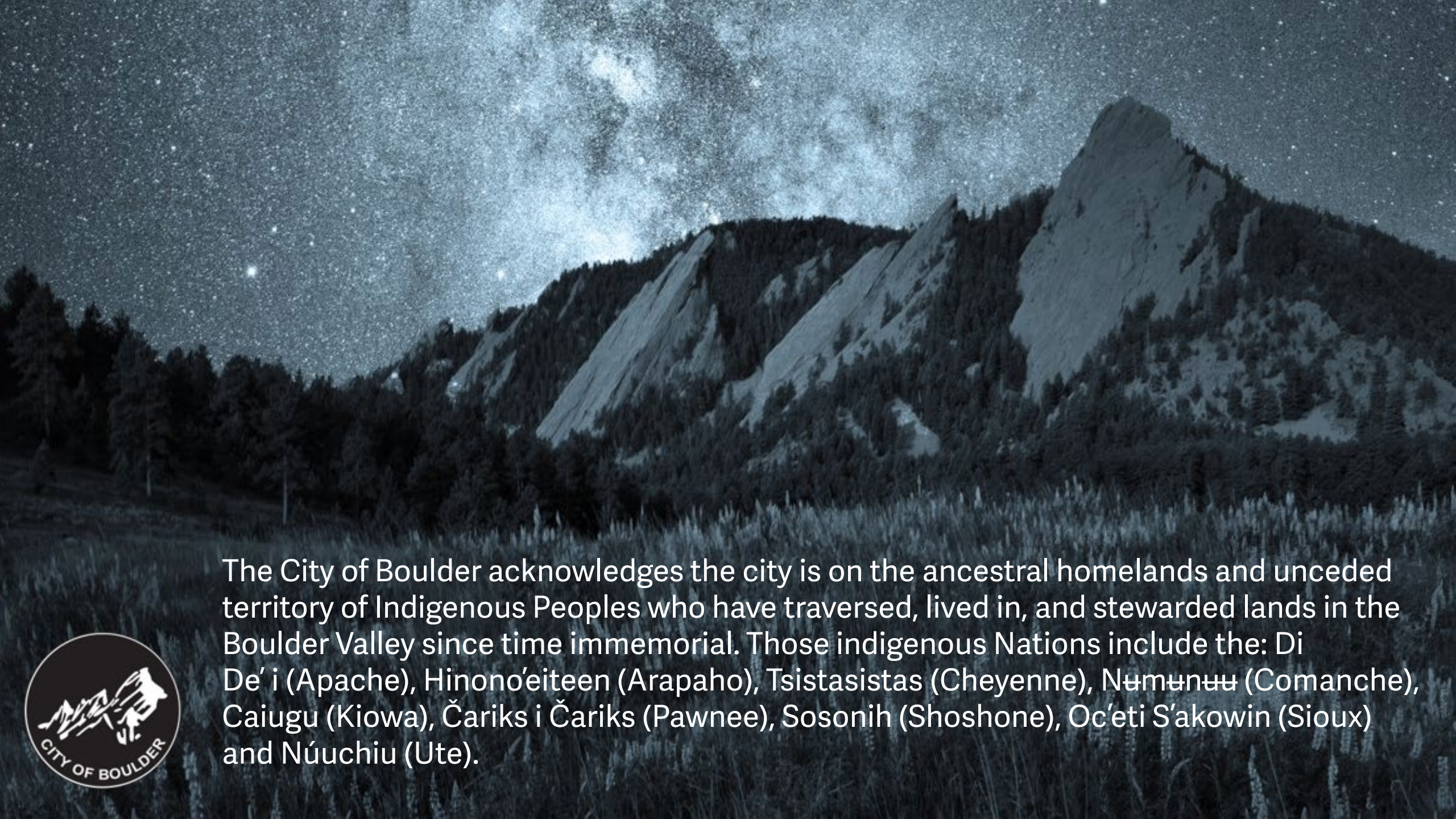
Community Connectors Model

Community Connectors-in-Residence

Project Connectors

Questions

Action Planning & Closing

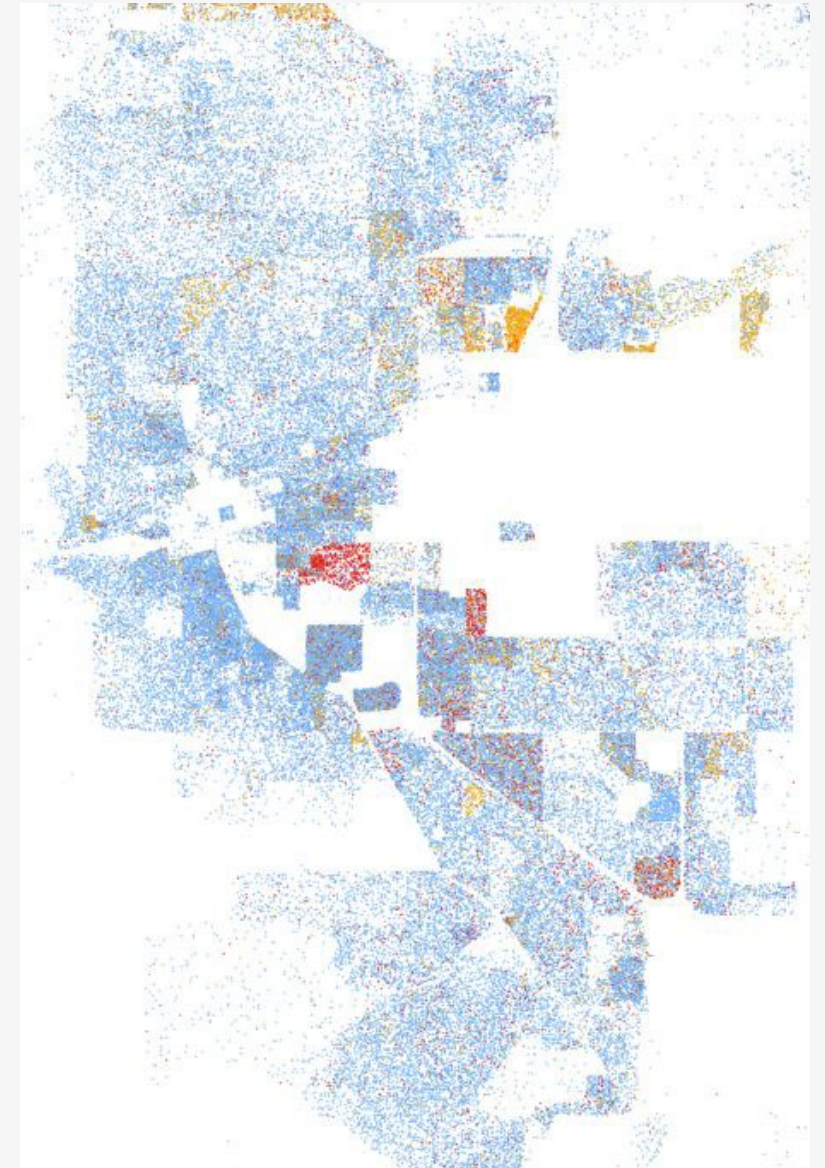


The City of Boulder acknowledges the city is on the ancestral homelands and unceded territory of Indigenous Peoples who have traversed, lived in, and stewarded lands in the Boulder Valley since time immemorial. Those indigenous Nations include the: Di De' i (Apache), Hinono'eiteen (Arapaho), Tsistasistas (Cheyenne), Nʌmʌnʌʌ (Comanche), Caiugu (Kiowa), Čariks i Čariks (Pawnee), Sosonih (Shoshone), Oc'eti S'akowin (Sioux) and Núuchiu (Ute).



City of Boulder

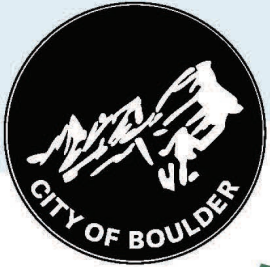
- Population (2021): 108,250
- In-commuters daily (2019): 45K-60K
- City square miles: 27.8
Open Space square miles: 71
- Demographics: 79% White; 10% Latine; 6% Asian;
1% Black or African American; 4% two or more races
- Bachelor's degree or higher: 76%
- Median single-family home value: \$875,000
- Individuals in poverty: 21%



Community Connectors

- Community Connectors empower the City of Boulder to make better decisions by elevating the experiences and voices of historically excluded communities.





Community Connectors Manual



Manual para Conectores Comunitarios

Community Connectors-in-Residence

Community Connectors-in-Residence elevate the voices and build power of historically excluded communities by:

- reducing barriers to community engagement
- advancing racial equity
- co-designing programming
- surfacing the ideas, concerns, and dreams of community members

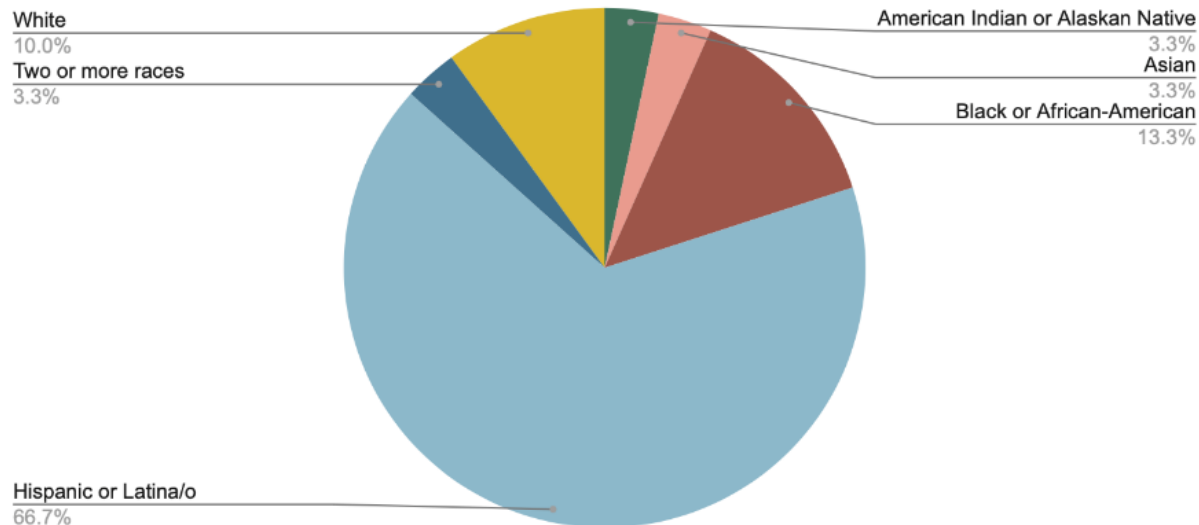


'Building Power & Raising Voices' Sessions

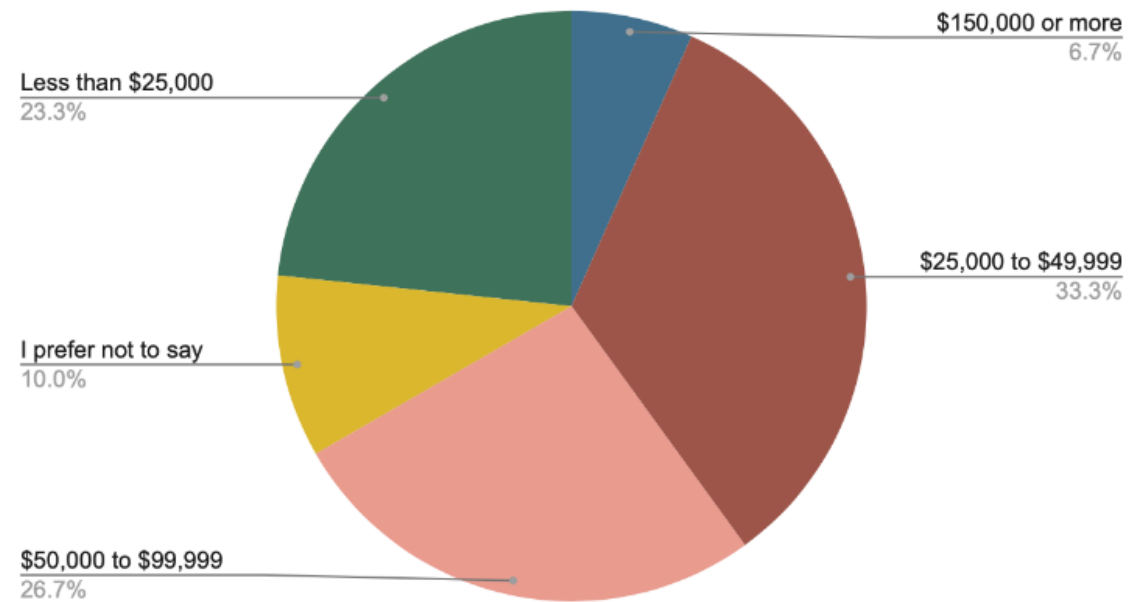
Pre/post-assessment analysis found that 85% of participants in three sessions in 2024 reported an increase in one or more of the following:

- I feel that my voice/perspective matters to city government.
- I know the various services that the city offers.
- I know at least one way in which I can participate to offer my opinion during a decision-making process at the city.

Which race or ethnicity do you identify with most?



How would you describe your annual household income?



CC-in-R City Budget Engagement

- Feb – budget team education sessions with CC-in-Rs
- March & April – community education & engagement sessions
- May – presentation to department directors
- June – department budget proposals due
- September – presentation to city council
- October – update session and public hearing training with community
- October – public hearing at council meeting
- December – feedback loop with community



Community Strengths

- Our Natural Setting
- People of Boulder
- Some Local Government Services

Community Issues

- Racial Equity
- Economic Opportunity
- Affordable Housing
- Youth Opportunities
- Healthcare and Mental Health



Project Connectors

Project Connectors are recruited from populations that will be impacted by a specific city project. They have the community knowledge, networks and life experiences that can shape engagement to be more inclusive and diverse. They collaborate with city staff to:

- co-design inclusive engagement plans;
- reach historically excluded communities; and
- provide guidance on project impacts and opportunities for improvement.



Questions?

Action Planning



Respira. Estamos en un mundo doliente.
Pero HOY nos convoca lo POSIBLE.
Voces diversas se convierten en un nosotros.
Música de diálogos polifónicos crean una visión compartida.
Encuentros comunitarios siembran semillas para el bien común.
Nutrimos un árbol de fuertes raíces y ramas frondosas,
Para en colectivo, crear un bosque de perenne bienestar.
Acción consciente e intencionada
La escucha activa de voces históricamente silenciadas.
Reconocer la sabiduría ancestral y la creatividad contemporánea.
Celebremos la ocasión de crear en colectivo una mejor historia.
Desde la posibilidad creativa por el bien común.
Quedan desafíos por vencer.
Habla desde la sonrisa amable frente a la otredad.
Un foro público al que entramos con temor,
La posibilidad de pertenecer.
Con la confianza de que en colectivo... podemos construir un mundo mejor, desde las más legítimas y diversas formas de la democracia.

Breathe. We are in a hurting world.
But TODAY we are summoned by the POSSIBLE.
Diverse voices become a we.
A light torrent, becomes a flowing, but channeled stream.
Music of polyphonic dialogues create a shared vision.
Community gatherings sow seeds for the common good.
The possibility of shaping lush landscapes for well-being.
We nurture a tree with strong roots and leafy branches,
To collectively create a forest of perennial well-being.
Conscious and intentional action
Active listening of historically silenced voices.
Acknowledging ancestral wisdom and contemporary creativity.
Let us celebrate the opportunity to collectively create a better history.
From the creative possibility for the common good.
Challenges remain to be overcome.
Speak from a friendly smile in the face of otherness.
A public forum we enter with fear,
The possibility of belonging.
With the confidence that collectively...we can build a better world, from the most legitimate and diverse forms of democracy.

Thank you!

Angela Maria Ortiz Roa, ortizroaa@bouldercolorado.gov

Ryan Hanschen, hanschenr@bouldercolorado.gov