



Board of County Commissioners

August 31, 2022

Dear Superior Town Board Members,

We appreciate the letter you sent to us earlier this month in advance of our joint meeting on Aug. 31. It was helpful for us to hear your perspectives and learn about the financial struggles you are facing. We share your desire to help Marshall Fire survivors recover as quickly and effectively as possible, and we want all Superior, Louisville and Boulder County residents to enjoy an exceptional quality of life, with the support of local government.

As context for our August 31 meeting, we thought it might be helpful to share with you a summary of Boulder County's work in the Superior area, including cooperative work we have done together with the Town. We hope this information illustrates the long history of collaboration between our local governments and clarifies the county's role and work that benefits Superior residents.

Among the most recent collaborations, we'd like to highlight:

- The successful **Private Property Debris Removal** program, which concluded last week and aided 242 Superior property owners, out of the 566 total properties that were cleared of debris. This program was completed ahead of schedule in just four months and at a cost lower than originally estimated. Boulder County coordinated the program, with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) picking up 90% of the cost, the state of Colorado funding 5% of the cost, and Superior responsible for the remaining 5%, plus any additional work you chose to fund on behalf of your residents that didn't meet FEMA requirements.
- Other [Marshall Fire Recovery](#) work, including coordination among the planning staff of Superior, Louisville and unincorporated Boulder County to provide similar processes and timelines for rebuilding. The creation of the [RebuildingBetter.org](#) website, led by the county's Office of Sustainability, Climate Action and Resilience, to provide incentives, discounts and financing for survivors who want to rebuild high-performance homes. The county's Housing and Human Services Department also distributed more than \$2.8 million to nearly 1,600 Superior households in immediate cash assistance through donations to the Community Foundation of Boulder County and Elevations Credit Union through the Disaster Assistance Center (DAC). County staff supported the DAC with more than 27,000 hours of staff time while it operated January-March. Recently the county partnered with the Foundation to establish a [Recovery Navigation](#) service that is free for survivors to help them access funding and other resources including mental health supports.

Matt Jones County Commissioner **Claire Levy** County Commissioner **Marta Loachamin** County Commissioner

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- **Regional Transportation Projects**, including development of the US36 Bikeway, which included Boulder County participating as a funding partner for the underpass between Superior and Louisville. Upcoming projects in the proposed extension of the county transportation sales tax include safety improvements to the McCaslin/Marshall Road intersection and additional US36 bikeway connections. If the tax passes, we look forward to having Superior's input on future projects including opportunities for co-funding grant applications together beyond the current planning horizon.

- Expansion of **transit and other multimodal services** to Superior. This includes the free Eldo Shuttle, providing weekend and holiday service through Labor Day from US36 and McCaslin to Eldorado Canyon State Park and other trailheads in the area. In addition, the county's [Mobility for All](#) program provides accessible, affordable and equitable multimodal transportation options for Superior residents of all ages and abilities, including travel training, coordination with agencies providing much needed human services, and multilingual community outreach and education.

- Exploration of the potential for a transit-oriented development as the first ever affordable housing community in Superior. The Town has discussed amending the Superior Marketplace Planned Development to include residential uses and has identified Regional Transportation District's (RTD's) 36 & McCaslin Park-n-Ride as a potential site for future affordable housing. Boulder County Housing Authority agrees that this is an ideal site to discuss a permanently affordable Transit Oriented Development, where residents can take advantage of nearby shopping, businesses, and RTD's regional bus system to access services along the U.S. Highway 36 corridor. We look forward to engaging with the Town as this proposed development makes its way through the public decision-making process. Beyond this specific project, please see the attachments for details on human services supports that Boulder County has provided to Superior residents.

- The newly launched **co-responder program** provides highly trained mental health professionals who respond with law enforcement to 9-11 calls or at an officer's request where a mental health issue is present. In January to June of this year, Boulder County co-responders were dispatched 52 times to Superior addresses. Countywide, about 44 percent of co-responder calls required de-escalation services, and about 30 percent required a full behavioral health assessment. More than 80 percent of calls resulted in referrals for other services. The Town of Superior provides funding for the co-responder team as local jurisdictions work together to prevent individuals experiencing mental health crises from unnecessarily ending up in the criminal justice system.

- Our **Parks and Open Space** program has worked with the Town of Superior on regional trails and trail connections, joint acquisitions and road widening, wildlife, flood and fire recovery and agricultural and water management. A current project is the partnership with the Trust for Public Lands and the City of Boulder to complete the first phase of improving the Coalton Trail, which will start at the trailhead and proceed west. The project, expected to start in November and be completed next year, includes extensive drainage improvements and resurfacing the trail with recycled asphalt. The connection eventually will extend to the City's High Plain Trail

and the soon-to-be-built underpass that will connect with the Rocky Mountain Greenway. We also were pleased that the Town sponsored a Boulder County Youth Corps Team again in 2022, after a two-year hiatus because of COVID. This team got accolades from Superior residents for their dedication and hard work on a Marshall Fire boundary fencing project. Finally, partnerships to acquire open space in the vicinity of Superior have totaled more than \$27M since 2006, with the county contributing \$7.2M, most recently for the acquisition of the 182-acre Century Link property in 2020.

Beyond these collaborations, we'd like to specifically address the questions you raised in your letter around three topics:

1. Direct financial support to the Town of Superior. Although partnerships as illustrated above historically have resulted in tremendous benefit for the Town and Superior residents, direct financial support to the Town is not the role of county government. The county's fund balance is not only required by state statute and government accounting principles, it also is necessary for disaster response and recovery work. Without a healthy fund balance, the county would not have been able to begin recovery in advance of asking for voter support for funding the \$225M recovery associated with historic flooding in 2013. Nor would we have been able to advance the funds necessary for this year's Marshall Fire recovery efforts, while federal reimbursement is pending.

Boulder County did provide technical assistance to small communities after the 2013 flood event to help secure additional state and federal funding. Jamestown, for example, received full funding from the state to cover the local match requirement of FEMA projects. If Superior is interested in support from the county to request additional state or federal funding, we would be happy to suggest strategies and support any applications you make.

We'd also like to clear up any confusion about the [American Rescue Plan Act](#) work by the county. Instead of using those federal funds on infrastructure, as you have suggested, the county partnered with the Community Foundation of Boulder County on a robust public engagement program to determine how best to invest the funds to support residents most impacted by COVID-19. All but \$11,000 of our \$63M federal allocation has been designated through this engagement process, with an emphasis on Economic Challenges, Housing Affordability, and Mental and Social Resilience. Project proposals were initiated by community members and vetted by Working Groups of local volunteers interested in pandemic recovery. These projects will benefit Superior residents and range from providing direct cash assistance to families with young children to manufactured housing park acquisition and upgrades to vouchers for families to pay for mental health services. We encourage you to visit the county website to see how these funds were allocated in a community-based manner.

2. Prior to receiving the letter from the Town, the Commissioners have been considering a **use tax rebate** program for Marshall Fire survivors who owned their home on Dec. 30, 2021, and are working to rebuild. As you know, use tax is paid at the end of the building permit process, so we are taking appropriate time to pin down

the details of this program to make sure it makes sense not only for Marshall Fire survivors but also for people whose homes were destroyed by the CalWood Fire or other disasters we expect to happen in the future.

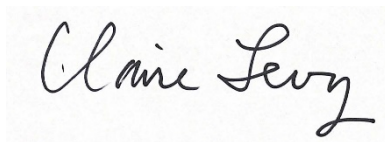
3. Finally, in addition to the Youth Corps program mentioned above, we have worked with Town staff to **actively manage open space** in the Superior area. This includes cooperative management of water resources for agricultural properties, mosquito control efforts in response to community concerns, expanded mowing of grasslands near the town, and support for grazing management activities on ag land. We also have a dedicated open space staff person, Joe Swanson, that the Town or neighbors can contact for specific requests for mowing on open space adjacent to their property or neighborhood. Joe can be reached at (303) 678-6200. If the November 2022 ballot issue for wildfire protection passes, the county will be able to invest additional funding in grassland management efforts in the Superior area.

We hope this information helps to address some of your questions and concerns, and we look forward to meeting with you.

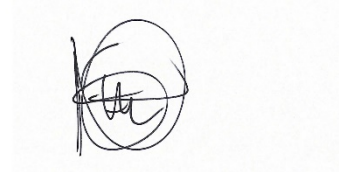
Sincerely,



Matt Jones



Claire Levy



Marta Loachamin

Boulder County Commissioners