



Don Cameron <cameron2021don@gmail.com>

GFD Mill Levy, Unhoused individuals, What I learned on Vacation, Election Links

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Dear Neighbors,

I was away for a couple weeks traveling in a small part of France near the Pyrenees mountains. I biked with my wife, ate a lot of cheese and bread, toured castles and cathedrals, and learned a lot of history. If you really want to know more, [see this link](#). As a result of the trip I did miss the city council meeting and DDA meeting at the beginning of the month. Meanwhile, here are some updates for you all.

Homelessness Discussion - At the 9/26 CC study session [we talked about this packet](#) of information on all the ways COG is dealing with the unhoused. We are taking *as aggressive actions as we legally can* to deal with citizen's concerns. If you don't like that answer, sorry, but the unhoused are people too, and they have rights. Still, we are looking at other actions we can take long term and short term, but they will require spending either more city money, or getting grants for federal or state money. Yes, we are applying for grants, but have not yet received any for homelessness prevention or response. One of the main issues short term is to try to help people stay in their homes now. [Evictions are back](#) after some delays during COVID, and we literally have people in *our* community at risk of losing their homes due to rent increases on a fixed income. Our new Thriving Communities coordinator, Sarah Vaine, along with police chief Joe Harvey handled the presentation. [You can watch it here](#). Also, later in the meeting after public comment I reiterated that trespassing on private property, as we saw recently on Burger King property, is NOT something the city can be involved in, unless the landowner asks us too. We finally got approval from the California-Dentist-401K-owner-of-BK, to do just that. I'm happy to discuss this with people if they want, but I will request that you watch the video and read the packet to be better informed. I'm done with uninformed rants.

Buffalo Bill Days - Speaking of uninformed. At no time did City Council propose eliminating Buffalo Bill Days. People have claimed that based on a poorly vetted memo from staff that implied we are looking at it. No, we're looking at how to

manage all our events in our limited space and not have our parks destroyed by being over-loved. Spreading out events, making better use of other venues (like the Celebration Plaza at 13th and Arapahoe), 304 10th (well used in the last two weeks for the Civic Foundation and Coors celebrations) are all in the mix. Find a resolution that cancels Buffalo Bill days, or a recommendation for staff to cancel it and I'll eat crow. *But referring to a staff memo that led to further discussion* doesn't equate to what the city council has been accused of.

Outdoor Seating in 2024 - During the early September meeting, city council basically decided to keep in place the outdoor dining barriers from April to Late October, charge fees for setup and takedown, and a use fee spread over the season. Staff was given direction but no votes were taken on this.

Golden Fire Mill Levy Question - I have dug in as much as any city councilor to the challenges of staffing our fire department. I was, with Rob Reed, on a council subcommittee looking at merger and staffing questions since the start of 2023. The future is now. We have seen our volunteer numbers fade from a desired goal of 92, to a more steady mid-40s for numbers. For two stations, at least two people per apparatus (3 is better), 24/7, 365, you just can't do it without paid firefighters. When it comes to GFD, to have an acceptable level of risk (response times, number of people on scene, safe for the firefighters themselves), takes a steady amount of revenue. Paying for GFD from our general funds, as we have done adds a layer of risk. If revenues go down, do you just fire people? That may sound nice on paper, but it increases recruitment costs, lowers moral, removes capacity, etc. The expression "penny wise, pound foolish" comes to mind. A mill levy on property taxes is pretty rock solid. It is for this and many other reasons that I voted with the rest of council to put the question on the ballot. And I will be supporting the mill levy to ensure our GFD is well funded, we have adequate staffing, and we keep our firefighters, both paid and volunteer, safe on the job. People can debate funding cuts and priorities in the general fund. But by moving to a mill levy model for our GFD, we are putting our public safety on a more sound footing. Frankly, it is the way most other municipalities do this, and about time for Golden.

Visitors Destroying our Town? - Despite a lot of hard work by city council and city staff (and citizens), we still get complaints that we're not doing anything to address our town being overrun. This month's Informer has an article on what we have done so far with respect to tubers. It is a Wicked problem (see below). I delayed my email this month so I could link the official release of the Informer, Please read pages 6 and 7 if you have not done so.

Sound Walls - On October 11th, a Wednesday there will be a meeting with Public Works on prioritizing sound walls around town. I don't have the final details as to location and time yet. Mostly this affects north Golden near HW58 and HW93. If you want to give your opinion please stay tuned. It is likely to come out in the Golden Weekly. You can subscribe here.

Predictions from 2019 - Another mayor's race had me looking back and reflecting on my race for mayor four years ago. I ran a very traditional door-knocking, card-writing, fund-raising, lawn-sign-polluting, volunteers-supported campaign. Unconventionally however, when given the opportunity to write my positions in the Golden Informer, I chose to do it as a reflection back from 2024 on my last four years as mayor. Now I have looked back on those predictions and reflected on my first two years on city council.

Ballot questions and input from Citizens Budget Advisory Committee on why to support all the referred measures. Lodging Tax, Charter Changes, Golden Fire Mill Levy

Election Websites for Candidates - Underlined names (or however your browser renders links) have websites I can find, they are not endorsements, just links.

For Mayor - Waquim Filsaime, Joseph Macdonald, Heather Schneider, Charlie Sturdavant, Laura Weinberg

For District 1 - Matt Duncan, Jacob Luria, Lisa Vitty, Mary Weaver

For District 2 - Patty Evans, Ben Moline

While I am not providing public endorsements here, I'm happy to discuss one-on-one my opinions on the issues and the candidates.

Quick Hits and Things I've been reading

This is [NOT] Who We Are - Friday October 6th, Golden Mountaineering Center 6:00 PM -->A movie about our neighbor Boulder. Synopsis: Boulder, Colorado, prides itself on being beautiful, welcoming, and inclusive. However, in 2019, racially-charged and dangerous policing involving a Black university student made national news. The documentary film, This Is [Not] Who We Are, explores the gap between Boulder's self-image and the more complex lived experiences—both historical and contemporary—of its Black citizens.

Community Conversations about Housing - A group of citizens is working to have some meaningful conversations around housing in Golden. Here is a flyer with a QRcode to sign up. They want new people for each conversation, so the October 5th meeting is still available to apply to be part of the conversation.

How 32 hour work week is working in some other places besides Golden

Food Trucks have left downtown areas vacated by work at home rules

Five minute video from People for Bikes about riding safely. Drivers may learn something too.

Thoughts on Wicked Problems as shared by former councilor Saoirse Charis-Graves. Can we find common ground on goals or values, as a path to finding solutions to problems?

Being a friend - An article that resonated with me about helping out friends in their time of need. You should do so on their schedule, not yours! I was reminded of this when I got a phone call while in Europe that I did not give the attention I should have.

Or just talking to strangers- "Yet at least this much is true: a capacity to engage with new people in civilised, humane and meaningful ways is a necessary condition for social peace, even if it is not a sufficient one."

Tiny Homes - Permanent tiny homes could be coming to a town near you. Golden has not addressed this yet to my knowledge. But my guess is that if someone came with a tiny home idea, met all our existing building codes, there is nothing to preclude their use as we have no minimum square feet requirements. Though, some HOAs/PUD areas do, for primary residences, so they can't just go anywhere.

If you have input for city council, please use councilcomments@cityofgolden.net. Always feel free to reach me at my website, [set up a meeting](#). Or, let's run, walk or bike together if you'd like and just have a chat!

Peace,

Don

Feel free to forward this to friends or neighbors who may like to get more information. To join the list fill out the contact form at cameronforgolden.org



Join me and save lives by giving blood (or platelets or plasma). Here's a referral code SaveLife-0814-Z you can add to your appointment, so we know the impact we are both making for hospital patients. Go to vitalant.org or call 1-877-25-VITAL to get started.

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