

BBCO Community Meeting Overview

Thornton – April 22, 2019

On April 22nd, 2019, the non-partisan “Building a Better Colorado” project hosted a 2-hour meeting with 40 civic leaders in Thornton to solicit their input on how Colorado might improve state fiscal policy to support Colorado’s quality of life. Specifically, BBCO raised for discussion the three fiscal amendments which Coloradans have adopted into the state constitution: the Gallagher Amendment (1982), the TABOR Amendment (1992) and Amendment 23 (2000).

Attendees were seated at round tables of 8 to facilitate small-group discussion of the issues and potential policy options. Each participant was equipped with a keypad voting device to enable them to anonymously vote their opinion on the questions posed to the audience.

While BBCO defined the scope of the discussion, BBCO gave control of both the input and the outcome of this conversation to the participants.

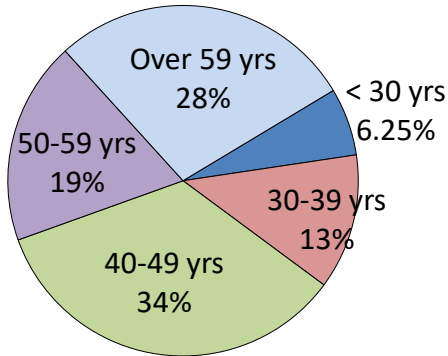
- BBCO worked with established community leaders to build the guest list for this meeting of individuals in the community who were respected, influential and constructive and who collectively represented the diversity of the community.
- After presenting a brief explanation of each policy issue, the first option which BBCO asked participants to consider in each policy area was the option of doing nothing. BBCO made clear that if a majority of participants supported this option of status quo, then no additional policy options would be considered for that policy.
- BBCO invited participants to propose their own additional policy options and presented those organic ideas to the full group for consideration.



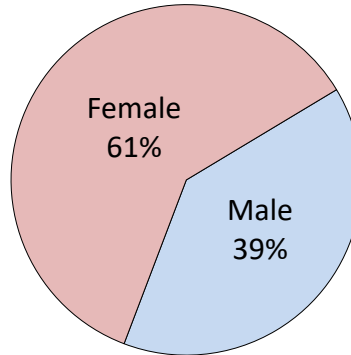
Audience Demographic

The political mix of the audience leaned strongly left with a Democrat/Republican/Unaffiliated ratio of 52/15/30 compared to the actual voter registration of 34/24/40. While the Gender, Age and Profession demographics were fairly mixed, the audience was disproportionately Caucasian (82% in attendance compared to 57% actual).

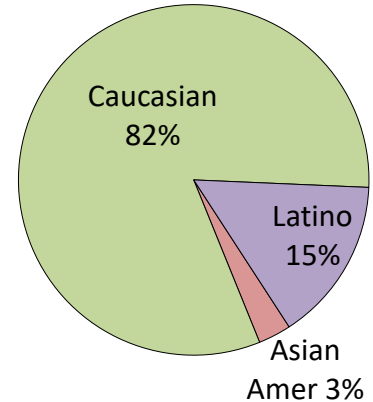
Age



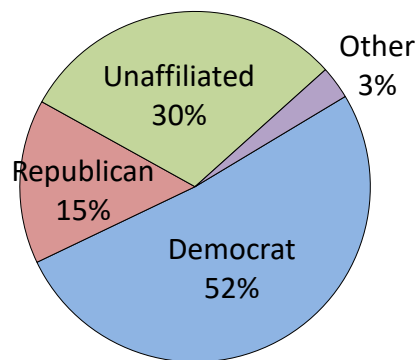
Gender



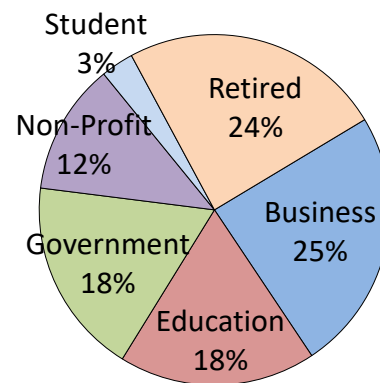
Ethnicity



Politics



Profession



What's RIGHT with Colorado?

(Most frequent responses in Wordcloud exercise.)

Culture / Mountains / Sunshine / Weather

What's WRONG with Colorado?

(Rank top three concerns from predefined list.)

1. Transportation infrastructure/ Longer commute times
2. Cost of housing
3. K12 education/ 4-day weeks
4. Cost of college tuition

Consensus Policy Recommendations

After engaging in small-group discussion before each vote, the group realized consensus on a number of policy ideas. Only those policy options for which at least 56% of the audience supported are shown here.

Policy Option	Support (56% to 65%)	Strong Support (66% to 75%)	Strongest Support (76% +)
GALLAGHER AMENDMENT (Learn more at http://buildingabettercolorado.org/understanding-the-gallagher-amendment/)			
Change status quo. (86%)			✓
Repeal Gallagher’s frozen ratio between Residential and Non-Residential property to stop the decline in the Residential Assessment Rate. (78%)			✓
Reclassify “non-primary residences” and/or “vacation rentals” at a higher assessment rate to slow the growth in value of Residential Property and slow the decline in the Residential Assessment Rate. (61%)	✓		
Amend TABOR to allow taxing authorities to automatically increase/decrease their mill levies to sustain a constant revenue stream in response to decreases/increases in the Residential assessment rate. (71%)		✓	
Organic Option #1: Any residential property over \$1 million in value is taxed at 29% (not 7%) like other property. (58%)	✓		
TABOR AMENDMENT (Learn more at http://buildingabettercolorado.org/understanding-tabor/)			
Change status quo. (88%)			✓
Amend TABOR to allow taxing authorities to automatically increase/decrease their mill levies to sustain a constant revenue stream in response to decreases/increases in the Residential assessment rate. (64%)	✓		
Modify the state revenue cap to correlate with growth in the ECONOMY rather than INFLATION. (66%)		✓	
Eliminate the state revenue cap as most LOCAL governments have done, and allow the state to retain revenues during times of economic growth and invest in state services. (83%)			✓
Restore ability of legislature to increase taxes without voter approval under certain circumstances. (57%)	✓		

If you believe the legislature’s ability to raise taxes should be restored to some degree, with what restrictions should that come?	1. Super-majority (37%) 2. Limited amount/year (23%) 3. At their discretion (20%)		
If fiscal policy changes resulted in additional revenues to the State, in what program areas do you think the State should prioritize investment? (Please rank your top three.)	1. Education (full spectrum) (32%) 2. Transportation (30%) 3. Mental Health (17%)		
ORGANIC OPTION #1: Repeal all of TABOR (both the revenue limit and the citizens right to vote on taxes). (57%)	✓		
AMENDMENT 23 (Learn more at http://buildingabettercolorado.org/understanding-amendment-23/)			
Change status quo. (77%)			✓
Restore full-funding for K-12 as Amendment 23 was originally interpreted. (Eliminate the “Negative Factor”.) (56%)	✓		
Restore full-funding for K-12 as Amendment 23 was originally interpreted, but RECESS K-12 funding mandate during times of economic recession. (65%)		✓	
ORGANIC OPTION #1: Don’t amend Amendment 23 until we address Gallagher and TABOR first. (96%)			✓
ORGANIC OPTION #2: Don’t place any additional mandates on K-12 without funding them. (89%)			✓
ORGANIC OPTION #3: Couple full-funding of A23 with full repeal of TABOR. (67%)		✓	

Participant Feedback regarding Presentation, Materials and Meeting Format

At the conclusion of the meeting, BBCO invited participants to take a brief online survey to provide their feedback on the material presented and format of the meeting. 26 people responded to this survey.

Performance Metric	Average Level of Agreement 1 = Do NOT Agree 10 = Agree Strongly
This meeting was worth my time.	8.38
The material was understandable.	8.25
The outcome of this conversation was determined by the audience and not predetermined.	7.75
The presentation and material appeared neutral and not biased.	8.38