MEALS ON WHEELS OF BOULDER – FAQ

Why move?
With the passage of the original 2A Sales Tax in 2014, the City of Boulder began planning a new Civic Area. This project includes our current location in the West Boulder Senior Center. Per the Director of Human Services for the City, “… the West Senior Center will become an integrated facility. In this vision, we would not anticipate a continued co-location partnership with MOW into the future.”

Upon learning we would not be able to remain in the West Senior Center, we began looking at all available options in 2015.

But why leave central Boulder?
Our primary objective was to stay in the downtown Boulder area. We met with churches, the school district, Boulder Shelter for the Homeless and catering companies. We even looked outside of Boulder. Since we prepare nearly 80,000 specialized meals per year and need offices for staff and storage, we could find no suitable partner with whom to share kitchen space.

Starting in 2015, we looked at more than 95 properties, parcels of land, warehouses, existing buildings, the former Boulder Community Hospital and any place that might work for our growing operation. Land and property in central Boulder is extremely expensive and we could not find a suitable solution.

Why go to the north edge of Boulder?
Allison Management approached us in 2016 and offered to donate land in the new McKenzie Junction development. Working with our Board of Directors and other advisors for several months, we determined building our own facility is our best option. Because the land was donated (a value of approximately $2 million), we can realistically build a new home for our future.

Once completed, the project will secure Meals on Wheels of Boulder’s service delivery into the future and allow us to serve the growing needs in our community.

We are honored and excited to be included in this development that will combine our new facility plus low and middle-income housing, green space, walking and bike paths, an art studio, a restaurant, and a community space -- just to name a few of the features.

We expect to break ground in late 2017 or early 2018 and move to the new facility in late 2018.

Why such a big new facility?
We are very crowded in our current facility and we also rent storage space off-site. The new facility will be about 10,000 square feet, with over 2000 feet dedicated to unfinished basement storage. This equates to an increase in useable square footage of a modest 31%. This space will
comprise our kitchen, kitchen storage, office and meeting space and a small market to serve our new neighborhood and to generate revenue to help fund the new facility.

This larger facility will allow us to function efficiently now, with room to grow as needed in the future. All demographic predictions indicate the need for our services in Boulder will continue to increase. Owning our own facility will also allow us to expand our production schedule if that is necessary. We can also cater events, rent our kitchen and meeting space, pursue social ventures and possibly share office space with other nonprofits as ways to fund our core work. This “sustainability through entrepreneurism” model and mindset serves us, and Boulder, well.

*What about Café Classico?*
There will be a coffee shop and a restaurant in McKenzie Junction. We do plan to operate a small market but do not have plans to continue with a sit-down café at this time. (Plans may change.)

*What about volunteers?*
Meals on Wheels of Boulder is one of the most volunteer-centric organizations in town. Our neighbors in Boulder depend on our volunteers, and that will never change. This new location might not seem convenient for some, but we sincerely hope everyone in our “small army of volunteers” will give this new plan a chance. While not in central Boulder, our new facility will be located in an area that is easier to access due to significantly less traffic and congestion. Additionally, there will be parking for everyone at the new facility – this is a big plus! Finally, our new lay-out will be more functional so there will be even more opportunities for volunteers to join in the vital services we provide. Volunteers keep our wheels turning and we will continue to create a warm and inviting atmosphere for them to “bring health and humanity to the table” with us.

*How much will it cost?*
We will be looking to our community to help support this project. Initial estimates put the total project at approximately $5.2 million of both in-kind and monetary support. With the donated land value of $2 million, we will need to raise approximately $3.2 million. We are part of the upcoming 2M and 2N ballot initiatives to extend 2014’s 2A Sales Tax. If passed, $1.6 million will be funded by these sales tax revenues in the form of a dollar-for-dollar match. We are applying for private and public capital grants as well. Ultimately, we expect to need to raise $1 million to $1.5 million from supporters in our community.

*Questions?*
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