

Aaron Brockett – Council Candidate

1. With housing affordability an ever-increasing challenge across Colorado, rent control has come up in discussions. This is evidenced by this year's proposal at the state legislature. Have you researched the topic of rent control? If so, do you think that it is something that makes sense for Boulder?

For starters, I think this is an abstract question for the next several years, as I think it's extremely unlikely that Governor Polis would sign a bill that allows for rent control of any kind. But if that does somehow happen, I think folks in Boulder would want to explore the options. Old fashioned rent control like was put into place in San Francisco and New York has not been successful and should not be considered. But I would be willing to explore some form of rent stabilization for older properties. The one area I would look at in particular is rent stabilization for lot rents in mobile home parks because of the power imbalance there. Manufactured home owners are typically unable to move their house and so they don't have a choice to pick a different mobile home park if the lot rent is raised too high.

1. Who is responsible for tenant behavior whether good or bad? The tenant, the police, the university (if student), the landlord? How is responsibility determined? How can you ensure that any remedies are fair to all involved?

This is an issue we need to look at very carefully as we consider updating our nuisance ordinance later this year. Fundamentally, tenants are responsible for their own behavior. But, for students that are new to town, I think the university bears some responsibility for educating them about city rules and ordinances as well as what constitutes acceptable behaviors. And while penalties for ordinance violations should fall primarily on the people actually doing the violations, there should be some actions taken by landlords if their tenants are repeatedly misbehaving.

1. With the passage of HB23-1255 that prohibits growth caps, thus repealing the growth cap in Boulder, how do you intend to support both staff and citizens in streamlining the building process?

That bill doesn't really change things in town as there were enough exceptions to the growth cap that it hadn't had a real effect in over 20 years. But regardless, we need to work to streamline the building permitting process in Boulder as it takes far too long to get even minor permits approved. At our mid-term retreat, I asked Planning staff to look for bottle-necks in their processes and find ways to unplug those, and if they required ordinance changes, to bring those back to council for approval. I asked my council colleagues whether they agreed and there was unanimous support. Since then, Planning has brought several streamlining changes forward, and I hear from Planning Director Brad Mueller that another suite is coming forward in January. So I think we are making progress here.

1. Just recently there was a bill introduced in the legislature entitled HB23-1171 Just Cause Eviction. If passed it would have prohibited the landlords ability to “Non – renew” a tenant. A non-renewal is simply the landlord not offering the tenant the ability to renew at the end of a lease term. Notice is given. This bill did not pass. We would like to hear your thoughts on the ability of a landlord to “non-renew”?

In general, landlords should have discretion in their leasing choices. But that shouldn't be completely unlimited, which is why we have Fair Housing laws and other minimum leasing requirements. In terms of renewing a lease, in most cases that should be up to the landlord. But, there should be some consideration for people's life circumstances. For example, a single mom with two kids living at the poverty line that's been a good tenant shouldn't be thrown out on the streets arbitrarily.