



City News

From Councilwoman Jeanne Faatz

Contact us at:

Bear Valley Shopping Ctr.
3100 S. Sheridan Blvd.
Unit D
Denver, CO 80227

Phone: 720.337.2222

Fax: 720.337.2226

E-mail: Jeanne.Faatz@denvergov.org
Dana.Montano@denvergov.org

Denver was smart to say ‘whoa’ to stock show exit plan

For a town rich in Western heritage, you’d think Denver would have a little more horse sense about letting the National Western Shock Show gallop away at taxpayer expense.

What would happen to the buildings taxpayers put \$30 million into back in 1989 as part of an agreement that the stock show would stay in Denver for 50 more years?

How would all the Denver hotels and restaurants that depend on stock show business every January make up the financial loss?

And would residents really be OK with going to Aurora to admire Denver’s Western heritage?

The former mayor must have been feeling his oats the day he hopped in the buckboard with Aurora and jointly applied to the state for \$100 million worth of Regional Tourism Act (RTA) money to support the stock show’s departure. It was a contingent arrangement. Denver voters would have to shell out \$150 million in bonds to hitch the show to an entertainment complex on a site favored by Gaylord, a resort-building company.

The former mayor’s office didn’t ask Council or look thoroughly at the economic and cultural implications. It just signed on, perhaps assuming Denver voters wouldn’t mind raising taxes to say good-bye.

They do. In my district certainly and in other districts, too. That’s why council was right to ask Mayor Michael Hancock to withdraw Denver’s support for the RTA application, which last month he did. Promising money Denver can’t deliver and hurting businesses is folly; stepping away was wise.

But it doesn’t end there. The National Western is a valuable resource hugely challenged. Acreage at its I-70 and 46th Avenue location is cramped, parking is tough and buildings are aging. Denver and stock show officials need to work through the problem, get substantial public input and form a detailed plan. The city, our heritage and the 106-year-old stock show deserve no less.