

# 9. SERVE

## Meeting Community Needs



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- Challenges and Opportunities
- Policy Direction
- How We Will Achieve Our Vision
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Cary strives to be a leader in excellent service by ensuring current and future infrastructure remains on the cutting edge. While endeavoring to provide services at affordable rates, Cary will implement long-term sustainable practices and solutions that maintain a high quality of life for generations to come.

### CARY VALUES:

#### **Providing an Equitable and Inclusive Government**

Cary will lead by example to ensure that all citizens, regardless of race, ethnicity, income, or other factors, have access to services and resources by promoting equity and inclusion in all aspects of operations. Cary will work with citizens to involve them in decision-making so everyone feels welcome and included.

#### **Providing High-Quality Public Services**

Cary will continue to provide high-quality public services and customer support that exemplify excellence, including being one of the safest midsize communities in the nation. Cary's high-quality services yield a clean and attractive community, a reputation for open communication and responsiveness, and a supportive environment for residents and businesses.

#### **Providing Comprehensive and Top-Quality Facilities and Infrastructure**

Cary will provide comprehensive facilities and utility services to residents, businesses, and institutions. Cary will ensure current and future infrastructure needs are well-planned to maintain system success as service demands evolve. Public infrastructure will be provided in conjunction with development and coordinated with private investments, and it will remain well-maintained.

# 9. SERVE

## Challenges and Opportunities

Acknowledging that an increasing population is a natural outcome of being part of an economically thriving region, Cary has a responsibility to plan and provide its essential public services for this growing residential and commercial community. Services include maintaining roads, transit, water, wastewater, solid waste, emergency services and mitigating the effects of all of these on the environment. Population growth will require meeting the needs of today without compromising the ability to meet the needs of the future. Cary must consider the impacts of decisions across all town-provided systems and innovate to be as efficient as possible in delivering the services that citizens and businesses rely on. Anticipating and planning for threats to the community, such as natural disasters and health crises, helps to guide Cary's organizational thinking as it continues to be a leader in resilience planning.

In the coming years, public safety will grapple with a dynamic environment marked by unprecedented challenges and promising opportunities. Technological advancements offer avenues for improved emergency response, community engagement, and overall safety measures. However, the escalating complexity of cyber threats, including sophisticated digital crimes and potential misuse of emerging technologies, poses significant challenges to safeguarding public well-being. Striking a delicate balance between embracing innovation and protecting individual rights and privacy becomes imperative. Furthermore, the growing emphasis on transparency and accountability demands that public safety entities adapt to build trust with the communities they serve.

### Fiscal Impacts of Development and Aging Infrastructure

Just as Cary's housing and commercial developments are beginning to age, the vast infrastructure network that serves these developments, including streets and utilities, is also aging. These networks will need not only routine maintenance but also rehabilitation or replacement over time.

Cary must consider the fiscal and social impacts of land development patterns on aging public infrastructure. Having experienced rapid outward growth over the past half-century, Cary has benefited from new high-value development that typically covered the cost of the additional infrastructure needed to support new developments. As opportunities for new greenfield development become limited and demand for denser urban redevelopment increases, Cary will face a paradigm shift; it will need to find a sustainable way to meet the challenge of replacing, expanding, and maintaining infrastructure within developed areas in the face of increasing capacity demands and maintenance costs.

A large and growing number of studies have determined that collective fiscal implications are tied to the way that cities grow and develop. Municipal fiscal impacts are largely determined by land use types, property value, forms and size of housing, density of development, location, and distance from community facilities. These development characteristics impact the cost of municipal services, including roads, transit, water/wastewater, stormwater, fire and police protection, and solid waste collections. Long-term costs associated with future services and maintenance must be considered.

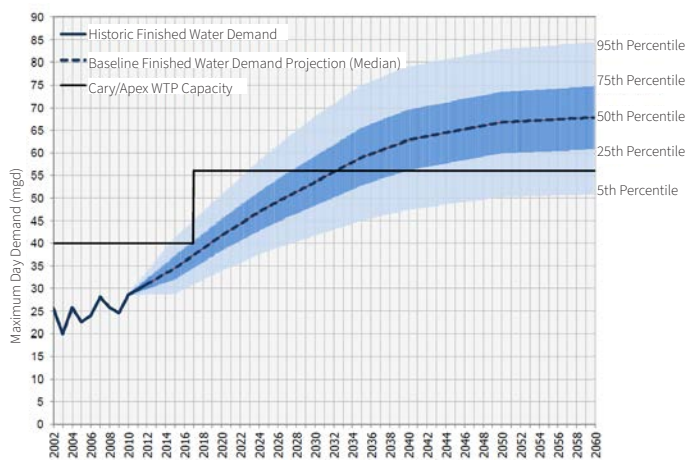


*Long-term maintenance costs of infrastructure systems are important to consider when planning for future growth.*

## Future Water and Wastewater Needs

Providing high-quality and safe drinking water is one of Cary's important service directives. Cary's utilities department operates the jointly owned Cary/Apex Water Treatment Facility, supplied with water from Jordan Lake, to serve about 290,000 people in Cary, Apex, and Morrisville, along with the Raleigh-Durham International Airport and the Wake County portion of Research Triangle Park. Wastewater is treated at the North and South Cary Water Reclamation Facilities, as well as at the Western Wake Regional Water Reclamation Facility co-owned with the Town of Apex. Cary has an extensive reclaimed water system and distributes reclaimed water to businesses and residents near the North and South water reclamation facilities and in a portion of western Cary, including Research Triangle Park and the USA Baseball National Training Complex. Cary regularly updates its long-range water resources plans and system master plans to ensure rightsized infrastructure and capacity for water, wastewater, and reclaimed water is in place. Continued population growth and development in the region requires smart management of Cary's water resources. Employing innovative solutions and working closely with neighboring communities will play an increasingly critical role in ensuring adequate water resources.

### Maximum Daily Finished Water Demand Forecast



This chart displays the maximum day finished water demand forecast for the Towns of Apex, Cary, and Morrisville, plus RDU Airport and RTP South, through 2060. The service area will likely require additional water supply and treatment capacity by 2032.

## System Challenges

Cary's public works department manages many of the systems responsible for delivering core services to Cary. As previously mentioned, with the expected population growth and evolution of the community, Cary will need to develop ways to scale its operations to sustain and build on the high level of services and systems important to citizens. Using smart systems, Cary has already built a framework of connected technologies to efficiently manage facilities, fleet, and waste management. Cary could expand this framework by integrating more predictive analytics that optimize maintenance schedules for vehicles and facilities and by increasing the use of smart waste technologies that improve waste collection methods.

As part of its long-term planning process, Cary's public works department will work toward the future by using renewable energy sources for town facilities, encouraging green stormwater infrastructure, building a holistic approach to waste management, and prioritizing resiliency in the community. To achieve this, the department will need to proactively prepare for and provide an array of services that include immediate storm response, community event support, and traffic maintenance. Cary will continue to examine technological and operational opportunities to become more efficient and resilient so that all citizens have access to a connected system of affordable and reliable services.



Cary offers many opportunities to compost and recycle materials. Cary provides residential curbside collection for a wide assortment of recyclable materials, as well as two location to drop off food waste for composting.

## Innovative Technology

In recent years, communities have seen an accelerated adoption of new technologies. When the COVID-19 pandemic occurred, prior planning and installation from fiber internet providers ensured Cary citizens had access to high-speed internet for their homes and businesses. Cary has continued to leverage technology to round out the Internet of Things to keep citizens engaged and aware of services. At the beginning of 2020, Cary launched 311, which makes it simpler for citizens to interact with their local government, to give the citizens of today and tomorrow a richer, more authentic service experience. Originally designed to alleviate overwhelmed 911 centers nationwide, 311 harnesses the power of data and performance metrics to serve citizens. Technology will continue to play an important role in future communities by promoting economic development, enhancing consumer choices by diversifying modes of communication, improving efficiency in services and utility through the smart grid, and extending multiple modes of high-speed internet access. The 5G mobile network will support the next series of

advancements for communities, providing more efficiency and automation and improving security with real-time flow of data. Continuing to learn through involvement in regional partnerships, such as the North Carolina Next Generation Network, will allow Cary to lay out a digital transformation plan that will guide investments in digital technology and infrastructure.

Cary recognizes the importance of harnessing technology to better serve constituents, drive economic development, enhance sustainability, and bolster resilience, all with the goal of making a future-ready community. By not only embracing technology and innovation but also ensuring that the community can adapt to the ever-evolving needs and challenges of tomorrow, building a smart and connected community is not merely an aspiration but a requirement for Cary's well-being. This signifies the dedication to unleashing the full potential of technology, transforming Cary into a beacon of innovation, efficiency, and progress that provides an unparalleled quality of life.



Access to fiber-optic cable networks is growing throughout Cary.



## Development and Inspections

Cary has been a regional leader in its adoption of technology to streamline and advance development in the community. Over a decade ago, technology was implemented to electronically submit and review development plans. Since then, this system has grown to accept all development-related applications, creating a paperless process. Most of these applications were online prior to the pandemic, which helped Cary do business as usual when restrictions were put in place. Development and inspections continue to evolve with the use of digital technologies and data analytics. Leveraging technology to automate and streamline reviews and inspections can help us further reduce review times and increase process efficiency.

In 2019, Cary inspectors were asked by the North Carolina Department of Insurance to test conducting remote inspections. Prior to this request, remote inspections had not been allowed in North Carolina. Cary's success in implementing this new program established a replicable program for other municipalities. The development and inspections teams have also played a critical role in the expansion of residential solar installations by streamlining processes and effectively communicating them to citizens and solar installers. Cary will continue to play a key role in working with the development community to enforce the energy code and implement sustainable practices.

## Resilience and Adaptation

Resilience is the ability to return to normal after an upset or disturbance. A community proves its resiliency not only during a time of need but also through a proactive planning process. Resilience planning is used to consider possible risks and prepare for how to return to normal within a period of time. Adaptation considers when it might be prudent to adjust to a new set of conditions. These concepts can be applied to any number of unplanned upsets that can affect municipalities and the services they provide. By leading the community conversation and proactively planning, Cary serves as a regional leader through the work of multiple departments, including fire, police, public works, stormwater, and transportation. These planning efforts will allow Cary to continue to involve a diverse group of stakeholders to make informed decisions and implement sustainable infrastructure and social systems to ensure the ability to thrive even during times of uncertainty. Types of resiliency planning to consider and continue to advance include disaster response, climate action, health crises, fiscal upsets, community cohesion, and infrastructure disruptions.



*Cary's A-Team sits ready for future winter storms.*



*Cary Fire Station 8, on Mills Park Drive, implemented Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) principles. These include the use of high-efficiency equipment to reduce energy usage, using the Town's reclaimed water line to reduce water usage, and bicycle storage. Fire Station 8 is also the office for one of the Police Department's GeoPolicing districts.*

## Public Safety

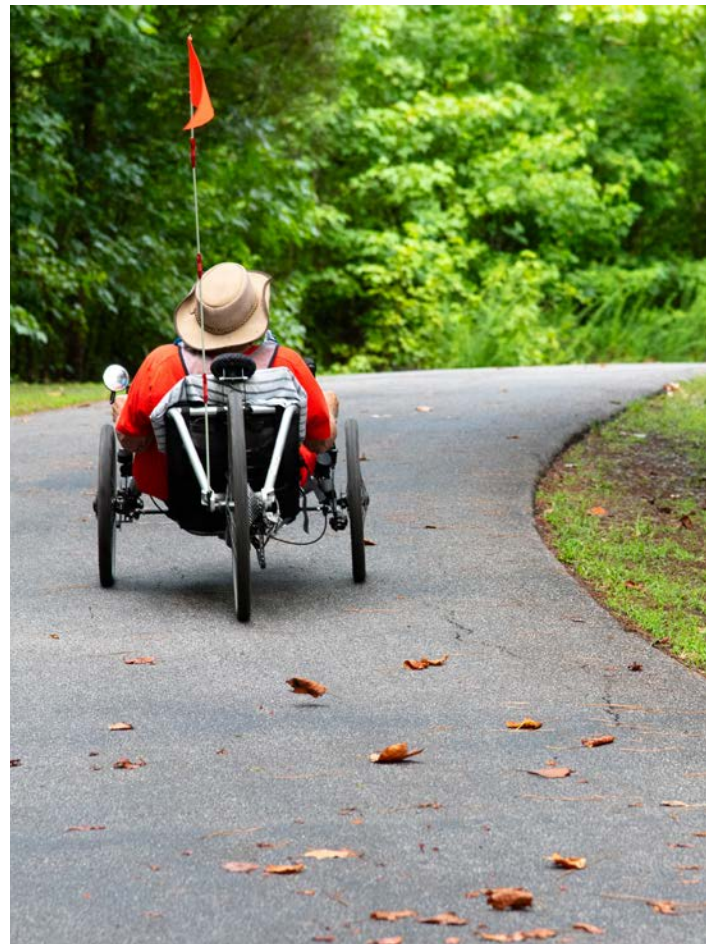
Cary is considered one of the safest cities in the nation, ranking in the top five for midsize cities with the lowest crime rates in the United States. It has achieved this through well-coordinated efforts between the fire and police departments. The fire department provides an all-hazard emergency response to fire, technical rescue, hazardous materials, and medical incidents. This dedicated team employs advanced technologies and continuous training to effectively mitigate hazards and swiftly respond to emergencies. Simultaneously, the police department maintains a community-minded, data-driven, proactive approach to law enforcement. Officers employ equitable community policing strategies, engage with the public, and strive to build trust, ensuring a safe community for everyone. This includes comprehensive officer training to recognize and mitigate biases alongside an emphasis on de-escalation techniques for peaceful conflict resolution.

With Cary's aging and diversifying population along with growth and outward expansion, it becomes increasingly important for public safety providers to analyze the distribution and concentration of staff and facilities to provide optimal service. It will be vital for public safety providers to routinely conduct strategic workforce planning to remain ahead of the curve in a changing landscape. Cary's strategic focus remains on transparency, accountability, and delivering fair and impartial service to all residents and visitors. Furthermore, partnerships with local businesses and adjacent counties and municipalities will be critical to maintaining a secure and thriving community. By continuing to work together through evidence-based initiatives, public safety can address shared challenges, promote economic development, and build a safe and resilient environment for everyone.



## Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Universal Design

As Cary's population and built environment continue to evolve, so must its ability to accommodate and serve all users. Services and development should be implemented through the lens of ADA and the principles of Universal Design. Universal Design is defined as a way to make products and environments usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. Universal design consists of seven principles: equitable use, flexibility in use, simple and intuitive use, perceptible information, tolerance for error, low physical effort, and size and space for approach and use. Applying these principles to Cary's evolving services and built environment will ensure that the design will work for as many people as possible, regardless of their age or ability. This is important to consider as the population continues to age and becomes more diverse.



# Policy Direction

In order to respond to the challenges and opportunities for Cary’s public services and to provide reliable, affordable, and excellent services and facilities to the community in a way that protects the environment and anticipates growth and changes occurring throughout the region, the Serve policies are:

| <b>Policy</b>  | <b>Policy Intent</b>  |
|--|---|
| <b>Policy 1: Provide Services and Facilities for Current and Future Generations That Balance High Quality and Affordability</b>  |   |
| <b>Provide public services, utilities, and facilities that meet the short-term and long-term needs of residents and businesses while remaining responsible to the environment. Balance high quality and affordability of service.</b>  | The intent of this policy is to maintain a balance of high quality and affordability in providing public facilities and services to members of the community today while ensuring that resources and services will be available to a growing regional population. Services and infrastructure will support development; however, development patterns should help to ensure high-quality provision of services. Development patterns should support infill, redevelopment, compact development, and traditional development. Cary facilities will be constructed to be high performing, “green” buildings with a commitment to lifecycle costing, energy efficiency, water conservation, and waste reduction.   |
| <b>Policy 2: Provide Safe, Reliable Water and Wastewater Service</b>   |   |
| <b>Prepare for future population increases by maintaining and adding to Cary’s foundation of sustainable water and sewer services. Continue to provide reliable services, protect and maintain high-quality drinking water and wastewater infrastructure. Continue to maintain high-quality reclaimed system and water conservation programming.</b> | The intent of this policy is to proactively address the issue of water and wastewater service provision, which will be affected by growing populations, redevelopment and infrastructure needs, and volatile weather patterns that will subject the region to threats like flooding and droughts. Sustainable and environmentally responsible approaches to water and wastewater service provision should be the standard in Cary. This is exhibited through processes and programs that convert waste to usable resources; reduce emissions through greater efficiencies and alternative sources; and use natural and biological agents in place of chemical-based options when possible. Provision of water and wastewater service is a regional issue, and interjurisdictional coordination is necessary to maintain adequate service while reducing risk. |

## Policy

## Policy Intent

### *Policy 3: Integrate Concepts of Resiliency and Adaptation into Planning Practices*

**Support the resiliency of all municipal services by identifying potential risks and planning ahead for solutions.**

With regard to Cary’s municipal operations and provision of public services, resiliency refers to the ability to provide and maintain acceptable levels of service in the face of exceptional circumstances that could otherwise impede those operations and services. Adaptation refers to making changes or adjustments in the methods, manner, or type of services provided in order to respond to changing conditions over time. The intent of this policy is to proactively plan for resiliency and adaptability when developing facility and operational plans for town services in order to maximize the ability to respond to predictable and unpredictable change. For example, planning for and adapting to predictable change might include planning Cary services for an aging population, climate change, or planning for replacement of aging water and sewer lines. Examples of planning for resiliency in the event of unpredictable change might include planning for service delivery in the event of loss of a major town employer, major swings in fuel or energy prices, or even a market crash or recession.

### *Policy 4: Support Expansive and Cutting-Edge Information Technology Infrastructure*

**Expand technology infrastructure to support effective communication with the community and collect real-time data to develop efficient and automated service.**

The intent of this policy is to allow for the provision of high-quality, affordable, and competitive communication services for personal and business use by working with providers to implement evolving technologies, expand efficient delivery of services on behalf of local consumers, and continue to be an active member in the North Carolina Next Generation Network. The intent of this policy also provides support for expanding wireless technologies.

### *Policy 5: Provide Exemplary and Timely Public Safety Services*

**Manage health and safety through provision of exemplary public safety services, such as police, fire, and rescue services, throughout the Cary’s evolving community.**

The intent of this policy is to support public safety services provided by Cary while ensuring that these services are provided in an efficient, sustainable and timely manner. Cary prioritizes ongoing dialogue with community leaders to ensure our policies reflect community needs and values and fosters transparency and trust. Building partnerships with local businesses and adjacent counties and municipalities will be critical to maintaining a secure and thriving community. Cary will continue to keep up with the pace and type of growth, and with the varying needs of our changing population, by being proactive instead of reactive. Fostering a feeling of personal safety through public education, as well as a visible, responsive public safety presence will continue to develop relationships with citizens and actively engage the community.



## Policy

## Policy Intent

### ***Policy 6: Provide Accessible, Equitable, Inclusive, and High-Quality Services to Support Citizens and Development***

Support citizens and development by providing world-class services that advances Cary as the “Local Government that Doesn’t Exist.”

The intent of this policy is to commit to providing services to citizens and development through outstanding customer service in a timely manner in order to implement the vision of the Imagine Cary Community Plan. Providing accessible, equitable, inclusive, and high-quality services advances trust within the community and Cary’s ability to work with citizens and development to impact change and keep Cary at the top of the arc.



# How We Will Achieve Our Vision

## 1 Provide and Promote Safe, Reliable, Technologically Progressive, and Environmentally Responsive Public Services.

Cary will continue to be a service leader by integrating technology into the delivery of our services to achieve efficiency, reduce impacts on the environment, and to improve the quality of life for our community. When possible, Cary will work with public and private sector partners to implement technologies in a practical manner that is in keeping with our core values. Cary will look for opportunities to work with local universities to take advantage of their academic and technical knowledge.

### Major Actions:

- Identify and implement policies, programs, and practices needed to place Cary in the top 10% of comparable communities for key measures of quality of life. Cary should determine and select quality-of-life indicators or metrics to be tracked over time that will ensure Cary is staying at the top of the arc. Example indicators include:
  - Feet of pipe (storm drain, water, wastewater)
  - Miles of roads
  - Water produced for consumption
  - Wastewater treated
  - Energy consumed
  - Protected open space
  - Habitat protected/restored
  - Number of stormwater retention devices
  - Air quality
  - Water quality
  - Tree canopy
  - Vehicles miles traveled
  - Average vehicle miles per gallon efficiency
  - Average distance to a greenway or park
  - Solid waste diversion rate
  - Miles of greenway
  - Miles of sidewalk
  - Miles of bike lanes
  - Walk score
  - Crime rate
  - Response time to emergency calls
  - Housing costs
  - Transportation costs
  - Median income
  - High-speed internet access
  - Annual public transit service hours
- Identify pressing public service challenges facing Cary and recommend approaches for addressing them on an ongoing basis.
- Create a Cary Smart City/Strategic Innovation Plan to identify and remove barriers to innovation. This cross-functional plan — with an emphasis on emerging technologies — will unify organizational efforts and create cohesive strategic direction.

## 2 Respond in an Exemplary Manner to Present-Day Emergencies While Anticipating Future Challenges

### Major Actions:

- Identify new service needs or service areas that may be necessary to address shifts in population, demographics, and the environment.
- Expand support for homeless and high-cost-burdened families.
- Identify opportunities to integrate emerging technologies or alternative service models into emergency operations.
- Advance organizational planning to develop resiliencies around disaster response, climate action, health crises, fiscal upsets, community cohesion, and infrastructure disruptions.



*The construction of new water towers and other infrastructure is an example of how facilities will be implemented based on Cary's changing development patterns and the use of data to consider future needs.*



# Related Policy Direction in Other Chapters

This plan has been organized to address specific topics in specific chapters; however, the policies listed throughout this plan are very much interrelated. Listed here are the policies included in other plan chapters that relate to the Town’s policies on public services and facilities.

|   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| <b>Live:</b><br>Fostering Strong Neighborhoods                        |  |  |  |
| <b>Work:</b><br>Assuring Continued Prosperity                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Policy 1:</b> Grow A Sustainable and Diversifying Workforce</li> <li>▪ <b>Policy 2:</b> Enhance Locational Appeal to Businesses and Workers</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Policy 3:</b> Retain and Grow Existing Cary Businesses</li> <li>▪ <b>Policy 5:</b> Attract New, High Value Businesses</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Policy 7:</b> Ensure the Economic Growth and Vitality of Downtown</li> <li>▪ <b>Policy 12:</b> Transform Selected Office Parks into Employment Mixed Use Campuses</li> </ul> |
| <b>Shop:</b><br>Creating Vibrant Destinations                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Policy 1:</b> Facilitate Redevelopment of Under-performing Commercial Centers</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Policy 2:</b> Focus Commercial Uses within Commercial Mixed Use Centers, Destination Centers, Downtown, and Commercial Centers</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Policy 3:</b> Support the Development of a Limited Number of Destination Centers and Commercial Mixed Use Centers</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Engage:</b><br>Experiencing the Cary Community                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Parks, Recreation &amp; Cultural Resources Master Plan</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Public Art Master Plan</b></li> </ul>   |  |  |
| <b>Shape:</b><br>Guiding Community Growth                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Policy 1:</b> Distribute Commercial Centers, Commercial Mixed Use Centers, and Destination Centers Across Town</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Policy 4:</b> Support and Facilitate Redevelopment and Infill Development</li> <li>▪ <b>Policy 5:</b> Support the Revitalization of Targeted Redevelopment Corridors</li> </ul>                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Policy 8:</b> Preserve and Maintain Cary’s Attractive Appearance and Quality of Development</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Move:</b><br>Providing Transportation Choices                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Policy 1:</b> Ensure Safety for All Users and Modes</li> <li>▪ <b>Policy 2:</b> Apply Multimodal Street Designs</li> <li>▪ <b>Policy 3:</b> Design Transportation Infrastructure to Address Land Use Context</li> </ul>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Policy 4:</b> Focus Investments on Improving Connections and Closing Gaps</li> <li>▪ <b>Policy 5:</b> Minimize Thoroughfare Widths</li> <li>▪ <b>Policy 6:</b> Improve Pedestrian and Bicycle Crossings</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Policy 7:</b> Target Transit Investments</li> <li>▪ <b>Policy 8:</b> Ensure a Well-Maintained System</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Enrich:</b><br>Meeting Sustainability and Environmental Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Policy 1:</b> Involve the Community in Environmental Stewardship Strategies for a Sustainable Future</li> <li>▪ <b>Policy 3:</b> Supporting Environmentally Responsible Waste Disposal and Circularity in the Waste Cycle</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Policy 5:</b> Improve Air Quality and Reduce Emissions</li> <li>▪ <b>Policy 6:</b> Improve Energy Efficiencies and Sustainable Energy Practices</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Policy 7:</b> Implement and Promote Green Building Principles</li> <li>▪ <b>Policy 8:</b> Preserve and Protect the Urban Tree Canopy</li> </ul>                              |