

# Trends and Best Practices in Comprehensive Plans

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# Conventional vs. Cutting-Edge Plans

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## Conventional Plans:

1. Generally have worked well
2. Model has not changed much for the past 50+ years
3. Often do not fully embrace many of today's new realities

# Conventional vs. Cutting-Edge Plans

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## Key Themes to Examine:

1. Using a Systems Approach
2. Incorporating Contemporary Themes
3. Using “Big Ideas” to Organize the Structure

# 1

## How are Plans Changing?

- Traditional Plan structure:
  - Vision
  - Goals & Policies
  - Separate Elements (sometimes in separate documents):
    - Land Use
    - Transportation
    - Open Space
    - Etc.

# How are Plans Changing?

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- Disadvantages:
  - Challenging to prioritize implementation and public investments across different elements
  - Loss of synergy or misalignment between elements on strategic goals

# “Systems, not Silos”

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Best practice plans create a stronger linkage between related topics:

- Land Use
- Housing
- Transportation
- Economy & Finance
- Energy
- Utilities
- Community Health & Safety

# Typical Plan Elements

- Air Quality
- Appearance and Design
- Arts and Culture
- Community Facilities and Infrastructure
- Economic Development
- Environmental Conservation/ Stewardship
- Historic and Cultural Resources
- Housing/ Neighborhoods
- Land Use
- Parks & Recreation
- Transportation

# Typical Plan Elements Regrouped

## Community

- Appearance and Design
- Arts and Culture
- Economy
- Parks and Recreation

## Built Environment

- Community Facilities & Infrastructure
- Housing/ Neighborhoods
- Land Use
- Transportation

## Natural Environment

- Air Quality
- Environmental Resources
- Environmental Hazards
- Open Space



# New Topics Added

## Community

- Appearance and Design
- Arts and Culture
- Economic Development
- Parks and Recreation
- Community Health & Safety
- Fiscal Sustainability
- Diversity
- Housing Choices








## Built Environment

- Community Facilities & Infrastructure
- Housing/ Neighborhoods
- Land Use
- Transportation/ Mobility
- Energy Conservation & Green Building
- Green Infrastructure
- Renewable Energy

## Natural Environment

- Air Quality
- Environmental Resources
- Environmental Hazards
- Open Space
- Waste Stream Reduction/Reuse
- Food Production & Security

# Policy Linkages

	Economic Health	Environmental Health	Community and Neighborhood Livability	Safety and Wellness	High Performing Community	Transportation
						
Arts and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vibrant and innovative economy (EH 1, 2)</li> <li>Local and creative businesses (EH3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunities on open lands (ENV 2)</li> <li>Energy efficiency in public facilities (ENV 5, 6)</li> <li>Poudre River corridor cultural aspects (ENV 25, 27, 28)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Infill and re-development and public investment (LIV 5)</li> <li>Appearance and design of streetscapes, public areas, and gateways (LIV 10-13)</li> <li>Preservation of historic resources (LIV 17-18)</li> <li>Entertainment and noise (LIV 19)</li> <li>Character of Downtown (LIV 33)</li> <li>Diverse segments of Poudre River (LIV 46)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Culture and art to support active living (SW 2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteerism and philanthropy (HI 1)</li> <li>Learning community (HI 2)</li> <li>Cultural acceptance and inclusion (HI 3)</li> <li>Public-private collaboration and partnerships (HI 4)</li> <li>Clear and transparent budgeting (HI 7)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Street and Enhanced Travel Corridor design and amenities (T 4, 24)</li> </ul>

# Example: Transportation

## Traditional planning approach:

- Adequate road capacity
- Measures:
  - VMT
  - Intersection LOS
  - Mode shift



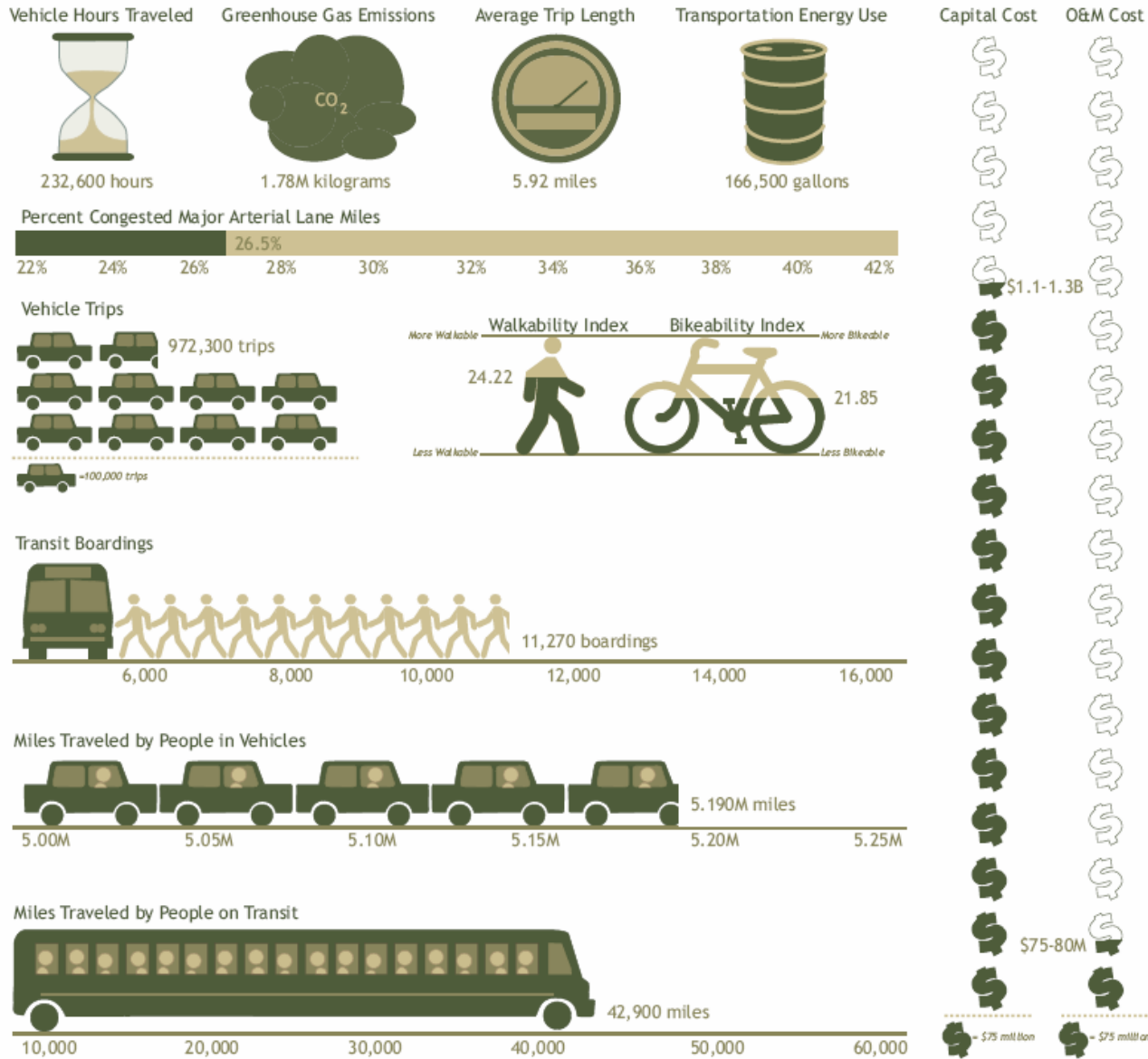
# Example: Transportation

## “Linked issues” approach:

- New mobility performance measures
- Complete Streets
- Relationship to:
  - Energy use
  - Land consumption
  - Priority development areas
  - GHG emissions
  - Travel cost/social equity
- Measures:
  - Quality of access
  - LOS for all travel modes
  - System resiliency



# New Metrics



## 2 Contemporary Themes

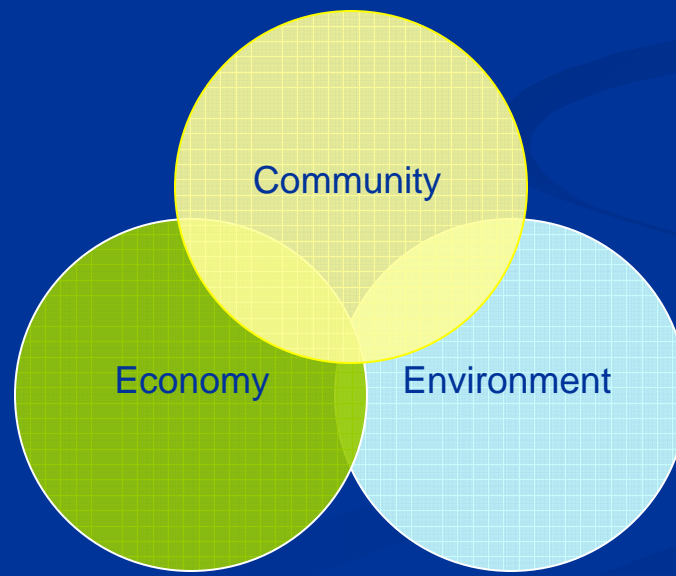
- New Urbanism
- Transit-Oriented Development
- Activity Centers
- Sustainability
- Form-Based Plans



# Sustainability

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A system of practices that are healthy for the economy, environment, and community and can be maintained for current and future generations.



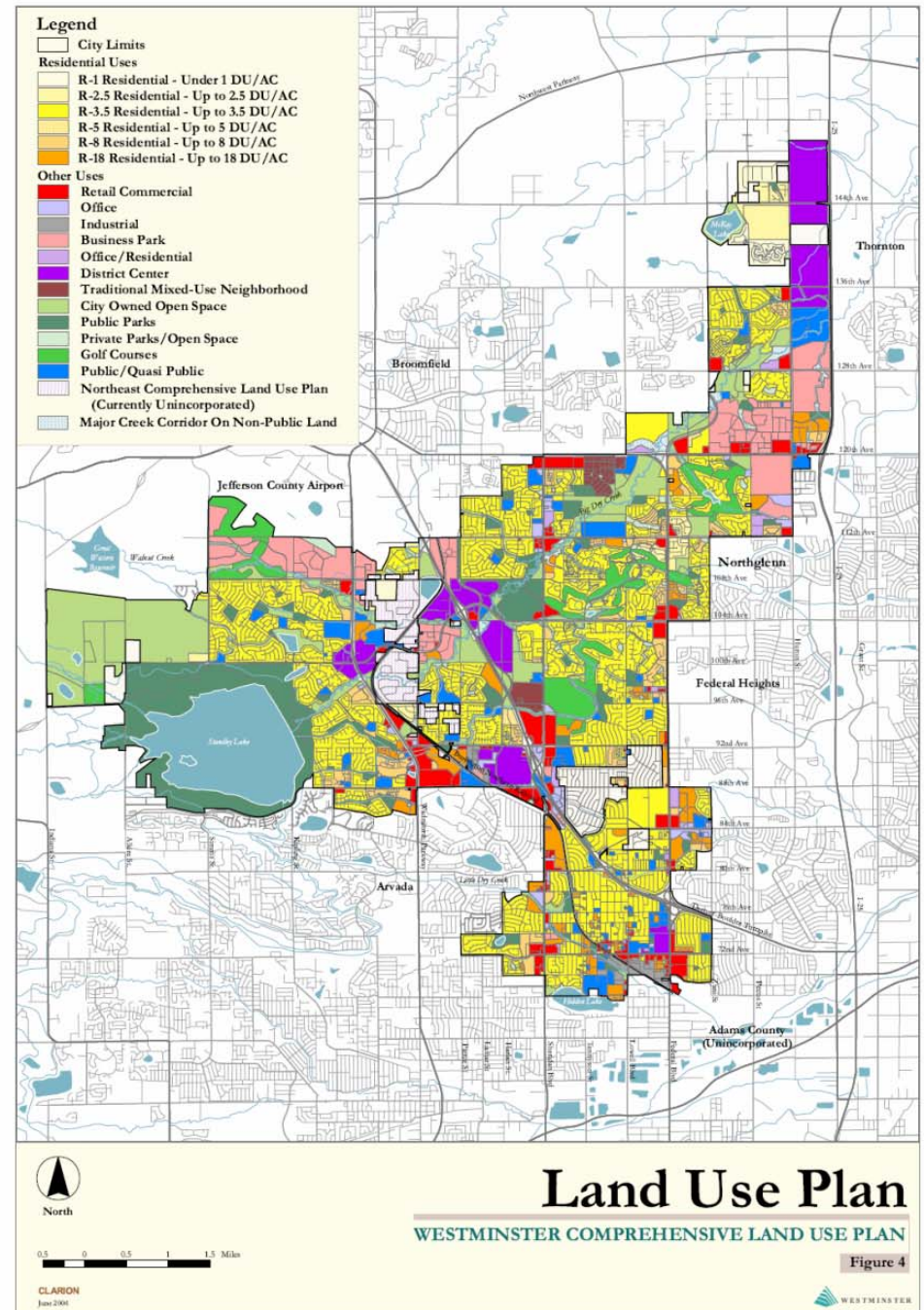
# Key Sustainability Topics

- Economic Resiliency
- Energy Conservation
- Water Conservation
- Transportation Modes
- Housing Choices
- Community Health & Wellness
- Waste Reduction & Reuse
- Local Food Production





# Traditional Parcel-Based Plan

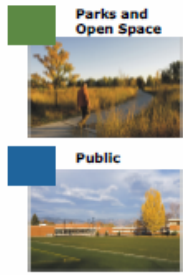


# Form-Based Plan

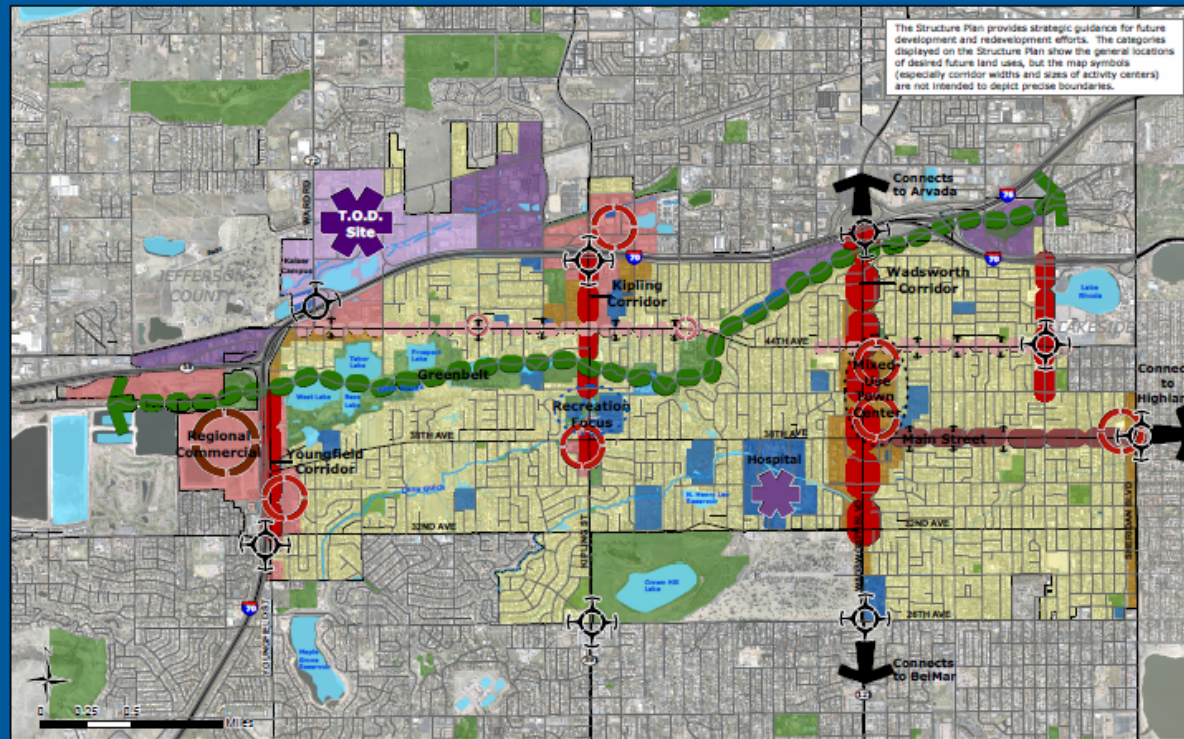
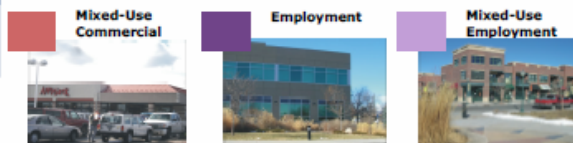
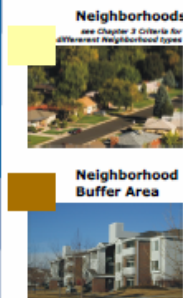


## WHEAT RIDGE STRUCTURE PLAN

### 1. ASSETS



### 2. FOUNDATION



### 3. CORRIDORS, GATEWAYS



### 4. ACTIVITY CENTERS

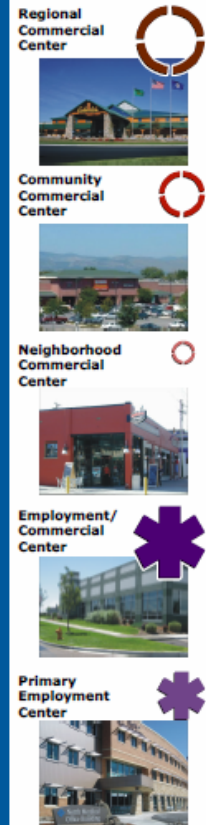


Figure 6: Structure Plan  
Adopted October 2009  
Source: City of Wheat Ridge, Jefferson County, Colorado Department of Transportation, Denver Regional Council of Governments, Denver Associates

# 3

## Theme-Based Approach

- Build Plan around big, compelling ideas.



- ① **A Balanced Land Use Pattern**
- ② **Equitable Distribution of Recreational Opportunities**
- ③ **Economic Vitality**
- ④ **Livable Neighborhoods & Activity Centers**
- ⑤ **A Connected City**



# Comprehensive Plan Themes

## Theme 1: Balanced Land Uses

A community with a balance of land uses has long-term economic stability. Residents need to have employment opportunities as well as a diverse choice of housing and retail services to maintain the city as a vital community. Henderson's goal is to ensure that an adequate inventory of commercial and industrial lands are available so that the city is able to continue to recruit new businesses and provide space for locally expanding companies.

### Balanced Land Use Principles

The Balanced Land Use principles focus on:

- Providing a citywide mix of land uses to accommodate future housing, jobs, recreation, preservation areas, and other needs;
- Promoting economic vitality of the city by targeting and reserving industrial and office land uses;
- Promoting a diverse mix of housing types and neighborhood experiences; and
- Promoting infill and redevelopment.



## Five Themes of the Comprehensive Plan



The Comprehensive Plan themes highlight areas where Henderson aims to make this an even stronger community than it is today. As our city continues to grow and change, different needs will emerge and we must continually chart a new direction to successfully adapt and continue to thrive. This summary highlights the five major themes of the Comprehensive Plan.

Henderson aims to build community through...

1. Balanced Land Uses,
2. Quality Development,
3. Integrated Desert Environment,
4. Connected Places, and
5. Arts and Culture.

## Theme 5: Arts and Culture

Henderson's arts and culture are important aspects of the quality of life in the community. Serving as a basic part of educational and recreational offerings, arts and culture has the ability to strengthen neighborhoods and community involvement. Community art and culture also helps to foster new perspectives and appreciation while making the city a more attractive and appealing environment. For example, this can be as simple as an artistic sign or fence post, a statue, or a public art expression built into the everyday surroundings of the city. Community art and culture should be accessible to the public and have aesthetic, educational, or community-enriching qualities.



### Arts and Culture Principles

The Arts and Culture principles focus on:

- Encouraging community art and culture by strengthening support of public programs;
- Creating public spaces for arts and cultural events to take place; and
- Bringing arts and culture to everyday settings in our city, making it an enriching and vital place to live and work.

## Theme 2: Quality Development

Promoting Quality Development is the theme focused on raising the bar on the quality of new design and development. By emphasizing quality development, the city will foster creativity and variety in development projects, promote stable neighborhoods that retain their quality over time, create beautiful public places within our city, and encourage variety rather than "sameness." Good design also adds economic value to neighborhoods and commercial areas and contributes to reinvestment.



### Quality Development Principles

The Quality Development principles focus on:

- Achieving unique and long-lasting neighborhoods;
- Promoting superior business districts and commercial centers (including Downtown Henderson);
- Integrating new infill and redevelopment projects with older districts in a seamless fashion;
- Promoting vibrant and attractive mixed-use developments;
- Taking advantage of transit-related opportunities by promoting Transit-Oriented Design in appropriate locations; and
- Encouraging lively, welcoming public spaces throughout our community.

## Theme 3: Integrated Desert Environment

The Mojave Desert is home to many unique desert animals and plants. Especially notable in the desert are its lush washes—the lifelines for the animals and plants. To conserve its natural resources for today and tomorrow and to provide beauty and access to the desert landscape, Henderson desires to protect, restore, and conserve these resources. We also recognize in an age of drought and energy shortages, we can ill afford to waste precious resources if Henderson is to continue to thrive.

### Integrated Desert Environment Principles

The Integrated Desert Environment principles focus on:

- Weaving open space and natural areas within the city's built areas;
- Using beautiful desert-inspired and drought-tolerant landscaping;
- Designing environmentally-sensitive buildings that provide comfort and energy efficiency in the desert environment; and
- Conserving energy and water resources and improving air quality.



## Theme 4: Connected Places

A connected community brings us together through a local and citywide system of pedestrian walkways, hike trails, equestrian trails, public transit opportunities, and functional streets for vehicles. In a connected community, the transportation system is designed in such a way that alternatives to automobile use are possible, and vehicular congestion throughout the community is minimized. Public transit is designed so citizens find it convenient and feel safe and comfortable using it. Connectivity also provides a means of linking neighborhoods and places to one another, as well as providing important connections to open space, hike trails, transit, and other desirable amenities.



### Connected Places Principles

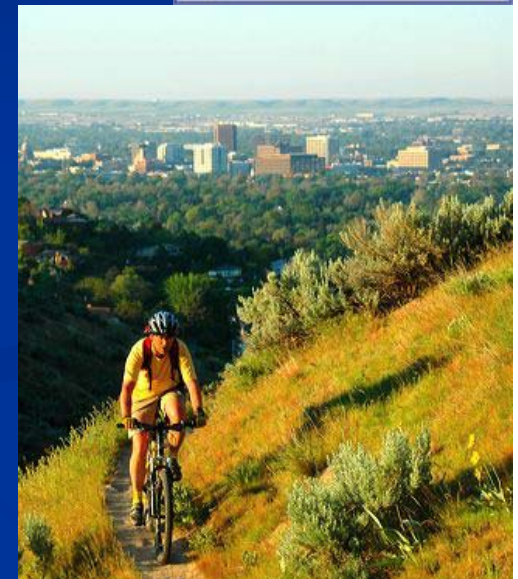
The Connected Places principles focus on:

- Ensuring connections at the local and regional levels through local streets and sidewalks that link neighborhoods together; and
- Promoting development of public transportation and land uses to support it.

# Boise, Idaho



- ❖ A Sustainable Community
- ❖ A Predictable Development Pattern
- ❖ A Community of Stable Neighborhoods and Vibrant Mixed-use Activity Centers
- ❖ A Connected Community
- ❖ A Community that Values Culture, Education, and the Arts
- ❖ A Strong, Diverse Economy
- ❖ A Safe, Healthy, And Caring Community



# Pros and Cons

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- Powerful vision
- Resonates well with officials and citizens
- Strongly integrates all elements



- Harder to do!
- Traditionalists are skeptical
- Requires significant staff involvement (interdepartmental)

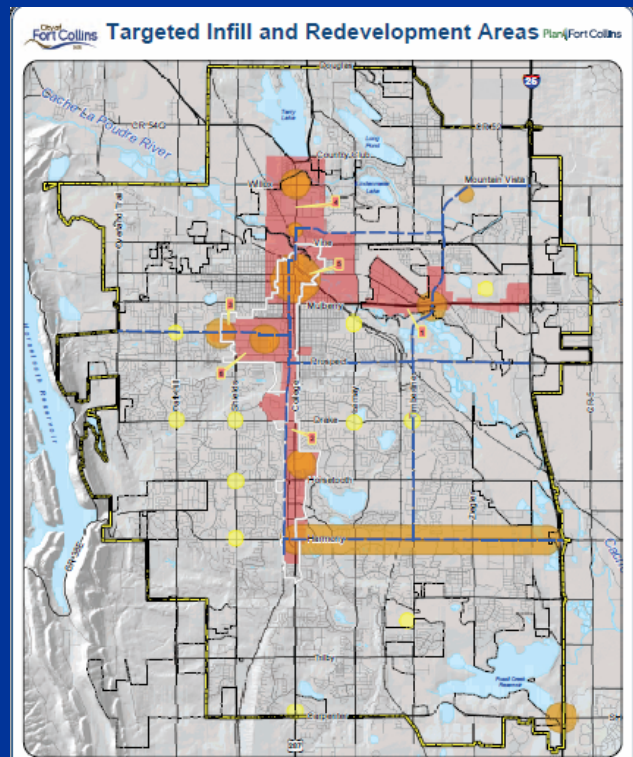
# Plan Fort Collins

innovate · sustain · connect



- Major update to City Plan and Transportation Master Plan
- Key Themes in Plan:

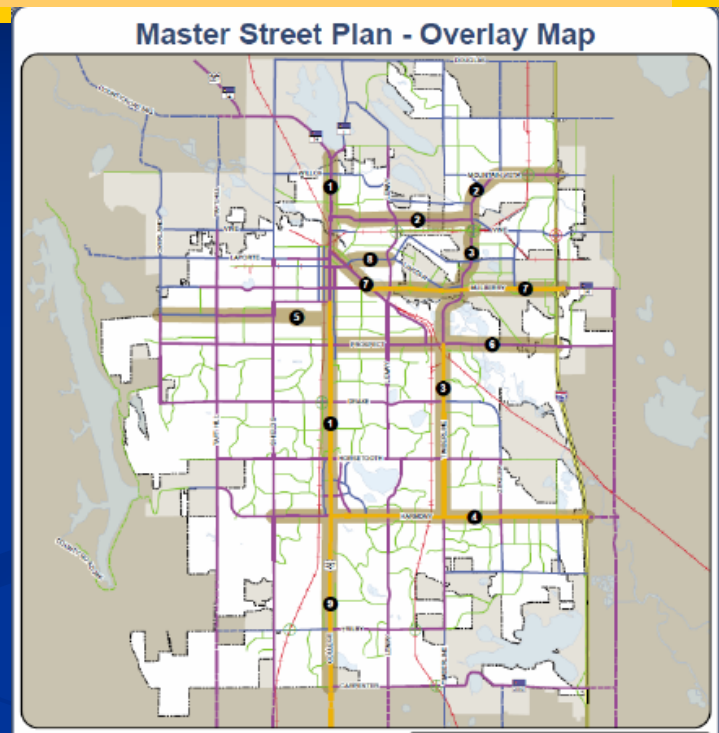
- *Innovate*
- *Sustain*
- *Connect*



# Example: Focus on Major Corridors

## Enhanced Travel Corridors

- Transit priority investments (BRT)
- Targeted infill & redevelopment areas
- Higher density housing
- Transit-Oriented Development Overlay District
- Complete Streets demonstration project
- Colorado State University Research Park (CSURF)
- FortZED





# New Plan Topics

- Integrated Topics
  - Land Use and Transportation
  - Economy and Fiscal Sustainability
  - Health and Wellness
  - Arts and Culture
  - Utilities and Green Infrastructure
  - Energy and Environment
- Focus on connections between topics (systems approach)



# Plan Structure



Economic Health



Environmental Health



Community and Neighborhood Livability



Safety and Wellness



Culture, Parks, and Recreation



High Performing Community



Transportation

# Policy & Budget Alignment



Economic Health



Environmental Health



Community and Neighborhood Livability



Safety and Wellness



Culture, Parks, and Recreation



High Performing Community



Transportation

# Creative Process



- ▶ eNETWORK
- ▶ CommunityNETWORK
- ▶ EventNETWORK

Plan Fort Collins  
innovate.sustain.connect

#### Question of the Week - Streets

Hello! Over the next few months, you'll receive a "Question of the Week" related to the Plan Fort Collins effort. We pose a question; you pose ideas. You weigh in on important topics that need extra attention and direction; we enrich our community vision for the future of Fort Collins. Please take a few minutes and add your ideas.

#### THIS WEEK'S QUESTION

**One of our long-term goals is to "reshape" certain streets to better accommodate functions beyond automobile travel. On what streets do you think it would make sense to do this, and what functions should be enhanced there?** (See examples below.)

- More bicycle lanes or bike-only boulevards
- More sidewalks or pedestrian-only boulevards
- Enhanced transit service
- Landscaped medians or boulevards designed to treat and carry stormwater in areas with no or limited storm sewers



This photo simulation, from Long Beach CA, shows how curbs and landscaped medians can separate bike lanes from through traffic.



This photo simulation shows one example of how an existing street (Magnolia Street) could be reshaped to incorporate a new landscaped median for stormwater purposes. Photo simulation by Urban Advantage.

# Plan Directions

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**What examples/ideas might best meet the current and future needs of Cary?**