

Northwest Subarea Plan



Northwest Subarea Plan
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Chapter 1

Introduction

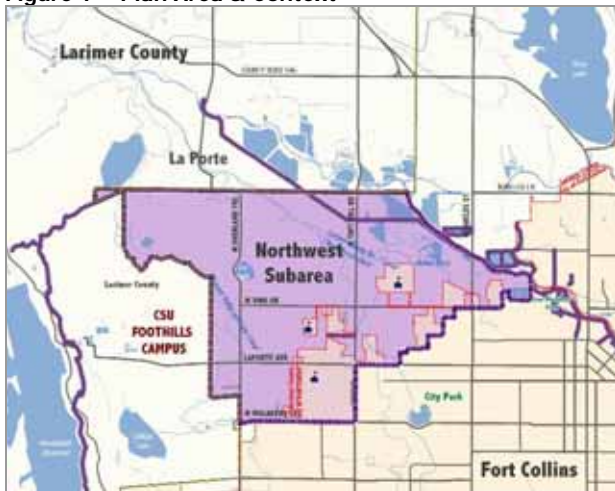
Purpose of this Plan

The Northwest Subarea Plan, initiated by the City of Fort Collins and Larimer County, represents a joint planning effort of the City and County involving residents, landowners, businesses in the area, and other interested parties to create a shared vision and plan for the future.

The City and County have a history of joint subarea-level planning to achieve a finer level of detail in goals, policies, and land use planning for areas within the Growth Management Area (GMA) boundary. This boundary, established in 1980 through a formal agreement between the City and County, represents the planning area for the City. Each subarea-level plan is distinct and public-driven.

Extensive public involvement— including Northwest Subarea residents, landowners, businesses, and others— shaped the priorities and policies of this Plan. It establishes a focused “roadmap” for the area’s future through clearly defined goals, policies, and strategies. An overarching theme of this Plan is to retain and enhance the area’s existing character. This Plan, strongly based in citizen involvement, takes major strides in helping achieve that aim.

Figure 1 - Plan Area & Context



Source: Clarion Associates

Plan Contents

This Plan consists of the following chapters and appendices:

VISION & KEY STRATEGIES

Chapter 2 contains a concise “big ideas” statement and graphic image representing the shared vision for the future of the area, as defined by citizens and members of the public who participated. It also contains key strategies to achieve the vision.

LAND USE FRAMEWORK PLAN

Chapter 3 contains the Framework Plan, both the plan map and descriptions for each category it displays. The Framework Plan illustrates future land use patterns, and identifies locations for recommended open lands conservation and gateway enhancement in the Subarea.

OPEN LANDS & TRAILS PLAN

Chapter 4 contains the Open Lands and Trails Plan. The map and descriptions identify and discuss future locations for the conservation of open lands and creation of trail connections.



The Open Lands and Trails Plan proposes connections to the Foothills Trail, protection of natural features, among other recommendations. (See Chapter 4 on page 23.)

TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Chapter 5 contains the Transportation Plan map and describes the long-term improvements to the transportation system of the area— its streets, bicycle routes, and transit stops and service.

GOALS, POLICIES, STRATEGIES

Chapter 6 provides the goals, policies, and strategies of this Plan for each of its main subjects:

- Community and Culture;
- Land Use and Neighborhoods;
- Open Lands and Natural Areas;
- Parks, Recreation, and Trails;
- Transportation;
- Utilities and Services; and
- Appearance and Design.

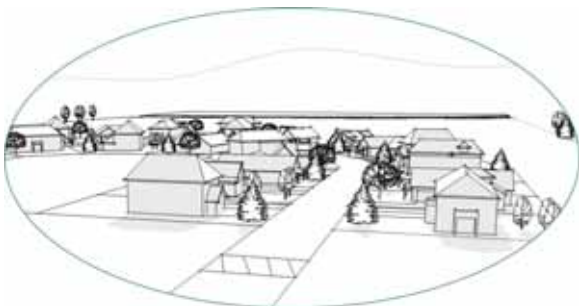
The Goals state what the neighborhoods hope to accomplish over the life of this Plan. This includes a variety of subjects— from open space, to development patterns, to trails.

The Policies describe the specific course or direction to achieve the goals of this Plan. They provide ongoing guidance to elected and appointed officials, staff, citizens and neighborhood groups, businesses, and others about investments and development patterns.

The Strategies are the specific actions the City, County, and others will take to implement this Plan and its policies.

GUIDELINES FOR THE URBAN/RURAL EDGE

Chapter 7 contains residential design guidelines for the Residential Foothills and Urban Estate districts in the Northwest Subarea at the urban/rural edge. The guidelines provide direction to the City, County, developers, and residents about how future development can help retain the area's character through design.



See Chapter 7 on page 43 for Guidelines at the Urban/Rural Edge for design recommendations for Residential Foothills and Urban Estate districts.

ACTION PLAN MATRIX

Chapter 8 contains a list of strategies, assigns responsibility for implementing them, and identifies priorities. It also outlines various roles and responsibilities to carry out this Plan.

APPENDICES

This Plan contains detailed information on the Subarea and the planning process in the following appendices:

- Appendix A: Existing Conditions and Issues;
- Appendix B: Related Plan and Policy Summary;
- Appendix C: Citizen-Based Land Conservation Initiatives;
- Appendix D: Guide to Annexation;
- Appendix E: Taft Hill Workshop Results; and
- Appendix F: Adoption Resolutions.

About the Northwest Subarea

The Northwest Subarea is an area of 2,680 acres (4.3 square miles) located northwest of the City of Fort Collins. (See Figure 1 – Plan Area & Context on page 1.) It is bounded to the north by the community of Laporte, to the west by the foothills and the CSU Foothills Campus, to the south by West Mulberry Street, and to the southeast by the city of Fort Collins in a “staircase” pattern that runs northeast from City Park Nine Golf Course to West Vine Drive. Approximately 5,200 residents currently live within the planning area.



Small farms and agricultural buildings are a distinct feature of the landscape and character of the Northwest Subarea.

The Northwest Subarea has been within Fort Collins' Growth Management Area (GMA) since 1980. Because it is in the GMA, it is part of the City's planning area and is intended to be annexed eventually. For this reason, the County's Master Plan

does not address land uses within the GMA. While GMAs are established to make potential annexation areas of cities clear, it does not necessarily mean that all land within a GMA will be annexed into the municipality. The annexation process is regulated by certain rules and eligibility criteria. (See Appendix D on page 95 for more information about how and when annexation occurs.) In the Northwest Subarea, the majority of the land (85%) is within unincorporated Larimer County and will likely remain in county jurisdiction for many years unless it becomes eligible for annexation.

Northwest Subarea Issues

The following sections provide an overview of the Northwest Subarea— the conditions, key issues and opportunities that shape the priorities and policies of this Plan. The information presented below is intentionally brief; detailed descriptions of the background information summarized below are located in Appendix A: Existing Conditions and Issues on page 55. Appendix A also contains related inventory maps.

COMMUNITY AND HISTORY

While agricultural activity does not have the economic prevalence it once did in the area, the irrigation ditches and fields still define the history and character of the area. Numerous historic farm homesteads and barns are eligible for inclusion on the National Historic Register. Overland Trail and Cherokee Trail are historic trails or transportation routes that once traversed the area. While the trails are no longer visible, they left a lasting path for the area's history.

This Plan contains strategies for highlighting the historic structures and trails through historic inventory and interpretative signage.

Only a small number of subdivisions in the area are governed by formal organizations, such as Homeowners' Associations, and many residents appreciate the independence as well as the tradition of a low level of government service and oversight. When residents want change, they make it happen through locally-initiated actions. For instance, the Northwest Neighbors, a group of residents throughout the Subarea, recently organized to plan trail improvement projects and apply for grants to fund projects.



The Michaud Farm in the northwest portion of the subarea has been operating since the late 1870s.

This Plan recommends that this self-reliant tradition of the area continue; the City and County assist with services and other improvements or recommend local financing methods in response to neighborhood or resident requests for assistance.

OPEN LANDS AND NATURAL AREAS

Several natural features contribute to the scenery, natural diversity, and open feel enjoyed by residents and wildlife. First, the Poudre River skirts the northeastern edge of the area, providing wildlife habitat, open space, and recreation opportunities. Second, the foothills at the western edge afford scenic views of the mountains. The City has purchased a large parcel west of Overland Trail as a Natural Area. While currently most of the land west of Overland Trail is developed at very low densities or is in agricultural production, this Natural Area is the only formal open space area. Conservation of key natural areas and open space is a high priority for residents.

The location of the Northwest Subarea between the foothills and Poudre River means the area hosts a variety of wildlife moving between these two areas. Several streams, canals, and ditches flow through the area, creating wildlife corridors.

This Plan includes goals and policies for retaining and restoring corridors for recreation and wildlife movement; including along canals, ditches, and Soldier Creek (for more information on Soldier Creek, see page 26).

LAND USE AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Some of the homes and businesses in the Northwest Area date back to the early days of the Fort Collins/Laporte communities. Despite its history of early and scattered development and close proximity to both downtown Fort Collins and the neighborhoods of Old Town, the Subarea has grown slowly compared to the rest of the City and other areas along the Front Range.

An Eclectic Mix of Styles

Subdivisions and neighborhoods have filled in over the years, resulting in an eclectic mix of styles and types of development intermixed with fields and farms. This eclectic mix is a defining attribute of the area and one that many of the 5,200+ residents value most. Neighborhoods vary in the type, density, design, and age of housing. Near or within City limits, housing is on smaller lots and is more urban, whereas homes and subdivisions in the unincorporated area generally have a country feel, with larger lots, barns and outbuildings, and horses. However, some subdivisions, such as Stagecoach and Poudre Overlook, at the fringes of the area do contain smaller lots. Future development should remain consistent with the character of surrounding development and retain some of the rural qualities enjoyed by residents.

This Plan provides guidance to new development through the Framework Plan, residential design guidelines, and various goals and policies, as to the desired future location, density, and site and building characteristics.

Small Businesses

The Northwest Subarea contains a few scattered commercial and retail businesses. They are small in number and tend to be concentrated along Laporte Avenue as far west as Taft Hill Road and at the intersection of Shields Street and Vine Drive. In-home and farm related businesses comprise most of the area's non-residential activity. Many participants in the process expressed an interest in retaining the low levels of commercial activity and home and farm-related businesses. Any new commercial activity should be small in size and directed to specific, appropriate locations within the Subarea.

The Framework Plan, goals, and policies of this Plan provide guidance on appropriate locations for neighborhood-serving commercial establishments and redevelopment.

PARKS, RECREATION, AND TRAILS

Residents have access to two City parks: City Park (including City Park Nine Golf Course) to the southeast and Huidekopper Park, a future neighborhood park, next to Lincoln Junior High in the eastern portion of the subarea. Larimer County does not provide urban parks but does provide and manage regional open spaces, parks, and trails, such as Lions Park north of the area.



The trailhead to the Foothills Trail provides direct access to a regional recreation asset.

In addition to parks, trailheads at Lions Park, Taft Hill Road, and Michaud Lane provide access to the Poudre River and Foothills multi-purpose trails. Residents also use many informal trails throughout the area— both on foot and horseback. Some residents are interested in establishing a network of local and community-wide trails to connect neighborhoods with open space, regional trails, and civic destinations within and beyond the subarea.

This Plan identifies potential trail alignments in the Open Lands and Trails Plan, and provides goals and policies for how to locate and maintain future trails and parks.



Canals and ditches that traverse the subarea including Larimer County No. 2 Canal, above, create an opportunity for additional trails.

TRANSPORTATION

Four major arterial streets serve the area: Overland Trail and Taft Hill Road run north-south and Vine Drive and Laporte Avenue run east-west. A small portion of Shields Street also crosses the area from north to south. Aside from these major roads, all other streets serve neighborhoods; some do not connect. This makes walking and bicycling into and across neighborhoods more circuitous, but local streets benefit from low levels of traffic.

Streets within the area vary in widths and paving materials (i.e., from narrow gravel roadways to multi-lane streets with designated bike lanes). In general, residents enjoy the country feel of streets without sidewalks, curbs, or gutters.

This Plan does not promote any large-scale changes to the current streets system. However, it does identify improvements that are either already planned or under consideration.

UTILITIES AND SERVICES

The area is served by a variety of utility and service districts. Water is provided by the City of Fort Collins, East Larimer County Water District, Sunset Water District, and the Fort Collins-Loveland Water District. Wastewater service is provided by the City of Fort Collins but some homes are still on septic tanks. Xcel Energy, Poudre Rural Electric Association (REA), and the City of Fort Collins provide electric and gas service.

This Plan addresses ways in which residents can coordinate with the City and County to ensure their utility and service needs are met.

The numerous streams, ditches, and canals that traverse the area serve one of two purposes: they either provide vital irrigation water for agriculture or are part of the stormwater drainage system for the area. The Northwest Subarea is part of two drainage basins: (1) the West Vine Basin and (2) the Poudre River Basin. The West Vine Basin, which covers half of the subarea, floods periodically along Soldier Creek due to the incremental nature of development and urbanization that left inadequate stormwater outlets. A Stormwater Master Plan has been adopted in the West Vine Basin by the City and County who jointly manage the floodplain in this basin. The City has been evaluating options for stormwater improvements to Soldier Creek to further reduce flooding problems in the area.

This Plan includes goals and policies for the creation of an open space corridor along Soldier Creek drainage to reduce flooding, provide wildlife movement corridors, and opportunities for trails and recreation.

APPEARANCE AND DESIGN

Residents and business owners of the Northwest Subarea value its country feel and appearance, including the presence of wildlife and livestock, agricultural fields and views, an eclectic variety of housing styles and neighborhoods, and low-density/low-intensity types of development.

This Plan provides guidelines for how new development can be designed to fit the character of the area. This plan also identifies a number of ways for residents and business owners to enhance existing areas through neighborhood-driven efforts



The Planning Process

The Northwest Subarea is a unique and diverse area with highly engaged residents. The City and County tailored a public participation process to ensure frequent and meaningful opportunities for interested parties to be involved in the Plan development. This broad and inclusive public participation process provided opportunities for involvement to all interested stakeholders at events throughout the planning process.



One of the first public open house/workshops for the plan attracted many participants in Fall 2005.

This Plan is the result of an 18-month planning process involving the City, County, consultants, residents, landowners/farmers, business owners, utility districts, and other affected stakeholders. The City/County planning team shared information with and sought input from these participants each step of the way. The ideas from the public helped to shape this Plan's big ideas.

The multi-faceted participation strategy is described below.

Interviews

Early in the process, and then periodically as needed, the planning team interviewed landowners, developers, business owners, and residents in and around the area to share information relating to

property and activities as they would either affect or be affected by the outcome of this Plan.

Public Workshops

Throughout this process, the City and County held workshops and open houses to share information, interact with the public to hear ideas, and confirm plan directions. These events were well-attended, with over 200 participants at early meetings and 50-60 members of the public attending each subsequent meeting. Ideas from the public are integral to this Plan, particularly the Vision Tomorrow and Key Strategies.



An ice cream social/open house in July 2006 offered citizens an opportunity to review plan directions and give comments.

Elected and Appointed Officials Briefings

At key stages in the process, the planning team met independently with the Larimer County's Board of County Commissioners and Planning Commission, and Fort Collins' City Council and Planning and Zoning Board to report on the planning process, present key questions and directions of the plan, and receive direction for next stages of the process. With information on public concerns in-hand, the elected and appointed officials also helped guide the plan's direction.

Technical Advisory Committee

A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) comprised of staff from City and County departments, CSU, the school district, and other agencies, met periodically throughout the process to review planning materials and inform the planning team about plans for and current conditions in the area. The TAC also reviewed the final Plan document.

Bulletins and Mailings

The planning team prepared and distributed three bulletins to residents of the area during the process. The bulletins presented overviews of the most current information on the plan in advance of workshops. The City then mailed these bulletins and other announcements to a list of residents who had either signed-up on the project website or attended a prior workshop.



Members of the public helped develop the future land use pattern, goals, and policies of the plan at workshops.

Local Newspapers

The City/County planning team issued press releases to announce upcoming events and developments during the planning process. Several newspapers published articles about the Plan, including in the North Forty News and the Fort Collins Coloradoan. These papers also posted announcements of upcoming public workshops and meetings.



Northwest Subarea Bulletin, February 2006.



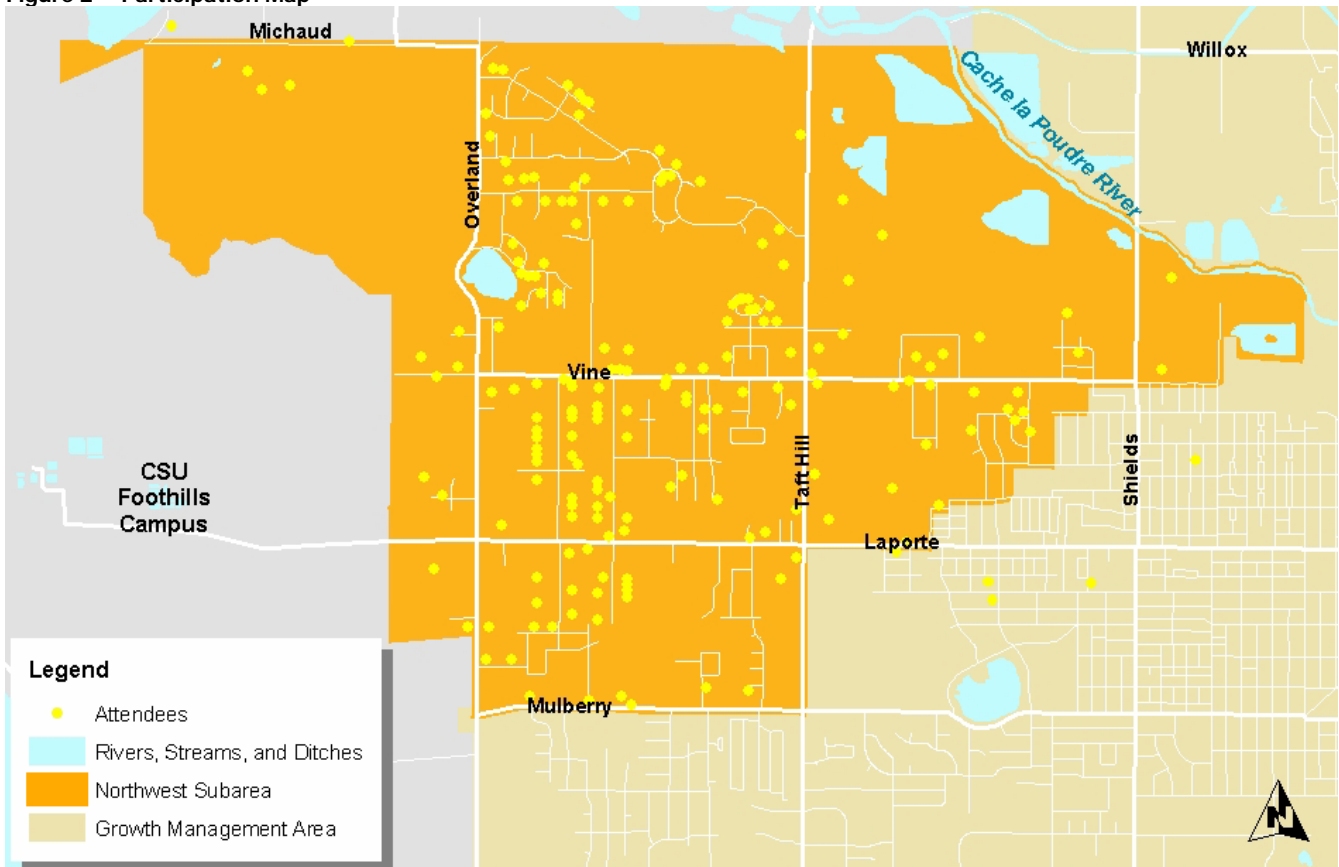
Newspapers covered the project throughout the planning effort, including this July 14, 2006 article in The Coloradoan.

Website Information

The City maintained project information on the City website (www.fcgov/advanceplanning.com). The site housed all current work products, announced upcoming events, posted meeting summaries, and contained an ongoing "Listening Log" summary of public input.

Widespread and diverse representation occurred during this planning process. This map shows the location of residents, businesses, or others who participated during planning events.

Figure 2 - Participation Map



Chapter 2

Vision & Key Strategies

Vision: What This Area Should be in the Future

The following statement represents the citizen-based vision for the future. It expresses values shared by most residents, landowners, businesses, and others who participated in the planning effort.

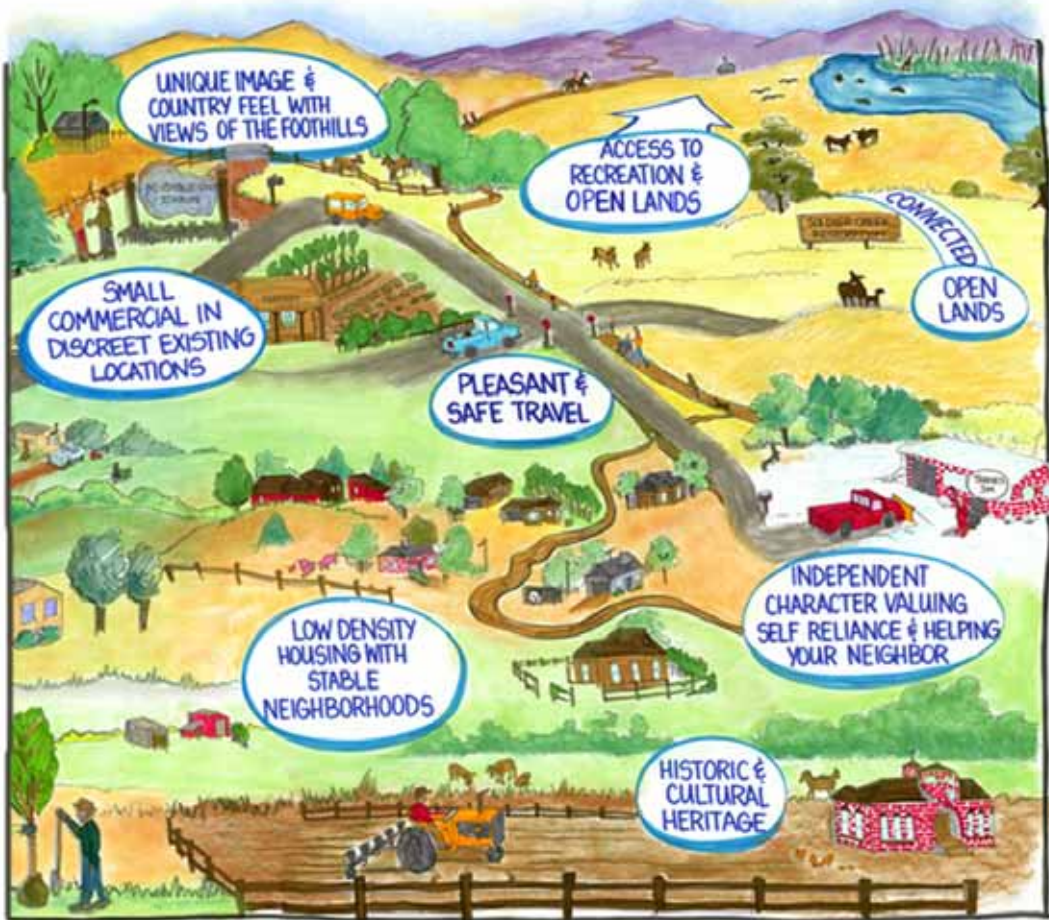
The Northwest Subarea should continue to be predominately a low density residential area at the edge of Fort Collins with stable neighborhoods. The area should also retain aspects of its semi-rural heritage including historic structures, small farms and irrigation ditches, natural areas, foothills vistas, and open fields. As new development or change occurs, it should occur slowly and be of low intensity and fit in with the diversity and country feel of the area. New development should safeguard natural features and protect wildlife habitats. The Northwest Area should encompass permanently protected open lands and connected trail corridors to provide better access to the foothills, Poudre River, and local destinations, and to restore Soldier Creek as a functional drainage system with natural areas and recreational trails. The area should have a safe and functional transportation system for pedestrians, equestrians, bicyclists, and motorists in the area. Finally, residents value independence and self-reliance and the City and County should recognize the citizens' role to initiate and take responsibility for the future of the area (with government assistance). As the City and County move forward with trails and open lands projects, the agencies should continue to respect rights of property owners.

Vision Tomorrow

Key ideas of Vision Tomorrow are:

1. **Historic and Cultural Heritage Maintained.**
Preserve historic structures, small farms, and open fields, and expand access to interpretive information.
2. **Connected Open Lands.**
Expand protected open lands to conserve the Poudre River corridor and Foothills vistas, protect wildlife, provide separation between Fort Collins and Laporte, and restore Soldier Creek.
3. **Unique Image and Country Feel with Views.**
Protect the diverse area at the edge of the City and small farms, as new development occurs.
4. **Access to Recreation and Natural Areas.**
Expand connected trails for walking, bicycling, and equestrians. Some local trails will be neighborhood-initiated. The City and County will work with willing landowners.
5. **Low-Density Housing with Stable Neighborhoods.**
Allow predominately low density housing consistent with the land use/framework plan. Protect stable neighborhoods from incompatible development.
6. **Small Commercial in Discrete Existing Locations.**
Existing commercial and independent businesses will remain, but proliferation of large commercial development will not occur.
7. **Pleasant and Safe Travel.**
Improve trail connections to local destinations such as schools and CSU and improve safety for pedestrians and bicycles on major roads.
8. **Valuing Self Reliance and Helping Neighbors.**
Agencies will rely on neighborhoods or special districts to initiate projects and will work with property owners or developers to achieve trails and open space.

Figure 3 - Vision Tomorrow



Key Strategies

Key Strategies to implement the plan, illustrated below, are:

- Coordinate efforts of agencies and neighborhoods;
- Share timely information;
- Make development approvals consistent with this Plan;
- Encourage development to be consistent with design guidelines that reflect the area's character;
- Use a variety of tools to achieve new open space and trails; and
- Support neighborhood-based initiatives and action.

The Action Plan on page 51 provides detailed strategies, responsibilities, and timing for actions to implement this Plan.

Figure 4 - Key Strategies



Chapter 3

Land Use Framework

Overview

This chapter contains the Framework Plan— the plan for future land uses in the Northwest Subarea. The Land Use Framework Plan is not a plan to force change in the area; rather, it is a plan to respond proactively to change as it occurs. It puts policies in place for the City and County to follow when private property owners come forward with development proposals. This chapter contains the plan map (See Figure 5 - Framework Plan on page 12) and descriptions of the land use categories on the map.

The Framework Plan should be used together with the guidelines contained in Chapter 7 to prepare and review development proposals for the Northwest Subarea. The guidelines address how to design new development to be compatible with the complex and diverse characteristics of subdivisions that exist today.

The Framework Plan

PURPOSE OF THE FRAMEWORK PLAN

The Framework Plan proposes land uses for areas that may develop in the future. Having a plan in place for the area guides the City and County as to whether future proposed developments are appropriate. The Framework Plan also creates some level of predictability in what type and intensity can be expected for one's own property as well as neighboring properties.

EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS

This Plan does not promote change in existing neighborhoods; they will remain in their current configuration and pattern. One of the primary objectives of the Framework Plan is to ensure that future development is compatible with the density, uses, and character of existing neighborhoods. The Northwest Subarea is predominately a low density residential area with subdivisions in the City of Fort Collins and unincorporated Larimer County.

Characteristics of existing subdivisions vary quite a bit. For instance, Stagecoach has an average lot size of 8,300 square feet and net density of 4 units per acre. Lin Mar Acres has an average lot size of almost one-acre and a density of less than one unit per acre. (For more information about lot sizes, densities, and other characteristics of subdivisions, see Figure 24 on page 59.)

THE FRAMEWORK PLAN AND ZONING

The City and County staff and officials will use the Framework Plan as they review development proposals. The Framework Plan provides guidance to land uses, activities, and density levels, but it is not regulatory. It is to be used in conjunction with City and County zoning and development standards.

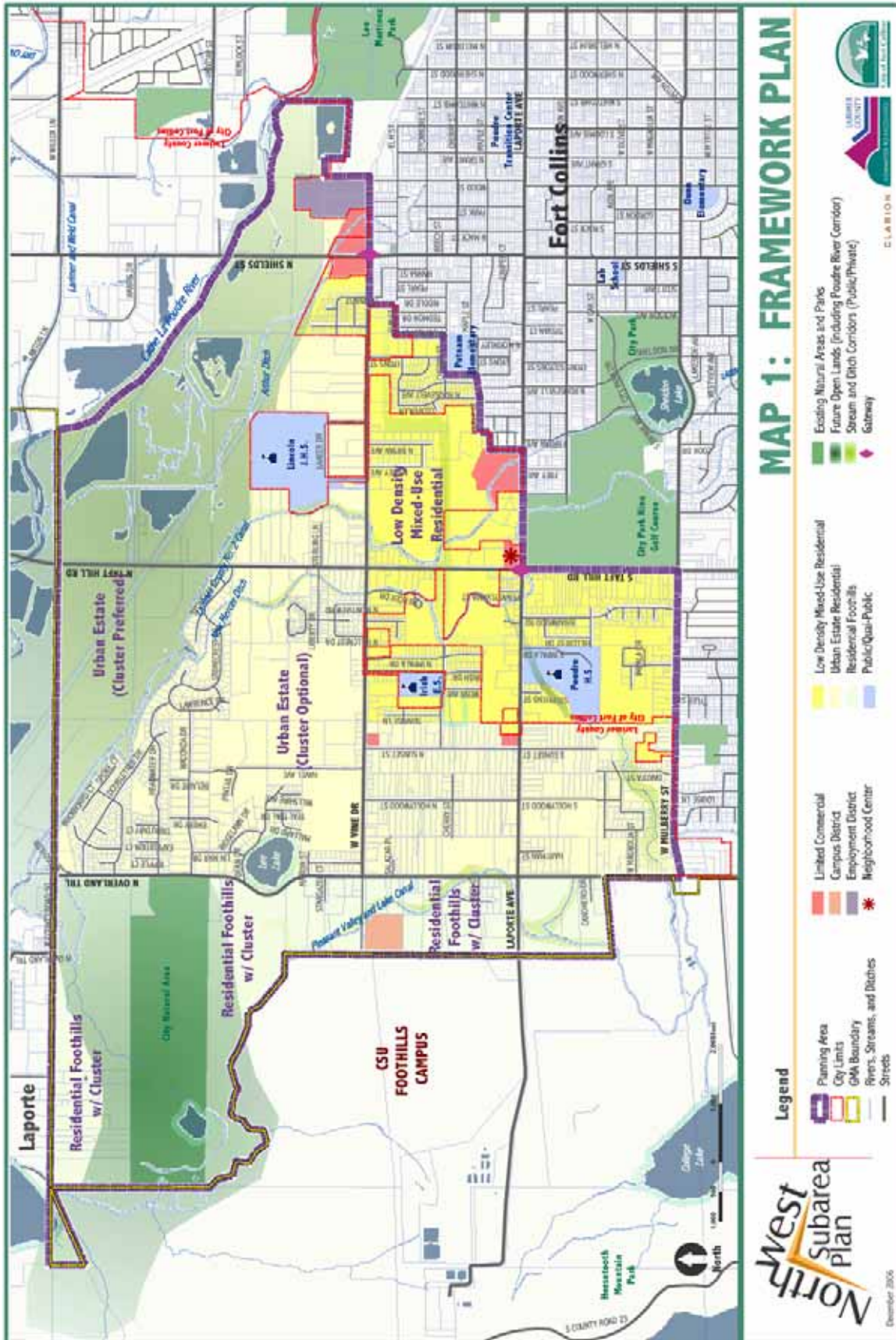
Guide to Future Land Uses

The following sections describe the future uses planned for the Northwest Subarea. Each land use designated on the map is described in the following section. Category descriptions provide the following information:

- A description and illustration of where the land use applies;
- Purpose and intent for designating the land use in the particular location;
- Allowable density and uses of the category; and
- The current underlying zoning.

The Open Lands and Poudre River Corridor land use categories are described in Chapter 4 - Open Lands & Trails on page 23.

Figure 5 - Framework Plan



Residential Categories

Three residential land use categories are depicted on the Framework Plan map (See Figure 5 - Framework Plan on page 12):

- Residential Foothills,
- Urban Estate, and
- Low Density Mixed-Use Residential.

RESIDENTIAL FOOTHILLS

Where It Applies

The Framework Plan designates lands in the unincorporated County west of Overland Trail as Residential Foothills. Along the foothills, the subarea currently has low levels of development and contains active agricultural uses. This Plan aims to retain the open feel, natural features, and scenic views of the foothills and mountains.

Figure 6 - Residential Foothills location on the Framework Plan



Purpose and Intent

The Residential Foothills (RF) designation within this area helps achieve a number of goals of the community while balancing property owner interests, including allowing low density residential development pattern that is appropriate in an urban/rural transition area. The RF designation west of Overland Trail adjacent to the Foothills will help retain views of mountains and provide contiguous open space and access to foothills. It also allows opportunities to protect natural features, including marsh and wet meadows and riparian forests, which are frequented by a variety of wildlife. Base density is the same as underlying County zoning; however, the one-unit per acre overall density with cluster development allows higher density than current County zoning of one (1) unit per 2.29 acres. The Residential Foothills category also helps “feather

out” density from the city to transition to the foothills to the west and to the edge of the Laporte community to the north.

Related Goals – page 31

For related goals and policies, see the following goals in Chapter 6:

- Goal LU-1, Neighborhood Character (Policy LU-1.3),
 - Goal OL-1, Open Lands (Policies OL-1.1, OL-1.3),
 - Goal AD-1, Unique Image (Policy AD-1.1).
- See Chapter 7 guidelines.

What Residential Foothills Allows

In the RF category, future development must be clustered away from sensitive natural areas and provide a minimum of 50 percent open space (i.e., residual or common open space). Clusters should occur near Overland Trail, but should also be designed in a way to retain foothills views from the road and protect natural areas. No commercial development is allowed in the RF category (other than home occupations), but this Plan encourages existing agriculture and rural uses to continue.



Development in the Residential Foothills category must cluster lots and buildings to provide open space and protect views. (See Guidelines for the Urban/Rural Edge on page 43.)

The City’s Natural Areas program may also acquire portions of the area as open lands— as future funding and landowner willingness allow. Priority areas for acquisition are indicated on Figure 5 - Framework Plan on page 12) as green areas called Future Open Lands. Where acquisition is not possible, the property may develop to the allowable density as permitted by the underlying zoning of the appropriate jurisdiction. Development in this area should be clustered away from natural features and habitats with a focus on retaining contiguous open lands adjacent to the foothills.

Current Underlying Zoning

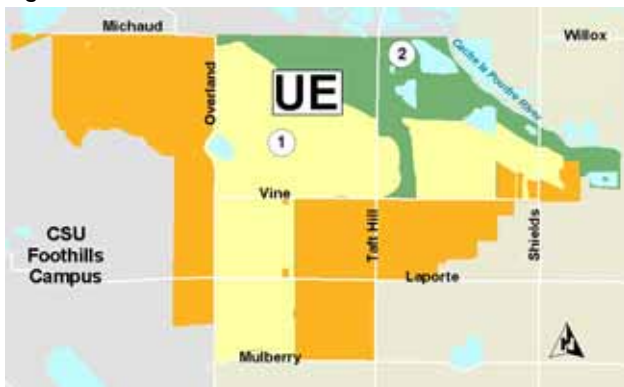
The Residential Foothills is a new designation for this area. It corresponds with the City's Residential Foothills zoning district that allows single family housing at a maximum density of one (1) unit per acre if clustered or 2.29 if not clustered. The County zoning for this area is FA-1 Farming, which allows agricultural uses or single family residential on 2.29 acre minimum lots.

URBAN ESTATE

Where it Applies

The Framework Plan designates the central portion of the Northwest Subarea (outside of City limits and generally east of Overland Trail) and most of the land along the Poudre River and Bluffs (in the unincorporated County) as Urban Estate (UE).

Figure 7 - Urban Estate location on the Framework Plan



1. The Central Urban Estate Area

The area east of Overland Trail and south of the Poudre River bluffs area is referred to as the Central area. This Plan suggests that new residential subdivisions developing here be compatible with surrounding existing subdivisions— in terms of lot sizes, building massing, setbacks, and open space. Clustering is optional but encouraged.

2. The Poudre River and Bluffs

Most of the land along the Poudre River and Bluffs is unincorporated. This Plan makes clustering development “preferred” where the Poudre River 100-year floodplain and gravel mining reclamation will constrain future development. These constraints may mean that development will occur in a less intense fashion than the maximum density of two (2) units per acre.



Example of Urban Estate Residential.

Purpose and Intent

The Urban Estate designation for this area is consistent with the City's current Structure Plan designation. Existing subdivisions within the Central Area have established a low-density residential pattern. (See Appendix A on page 55 for more information about existing subdivision characteristics.) Continuation of Urban Estate development here will help safeguard the character of these existing neighborhoods. The level of development and natural features in this area do not make land conservation within the Central area as high a priority as in the area west of Overland Trail and along Poudre River. Clustering of new development is optional and would be one means of achieving trail connections through the neighborhoods, an important goal of this Plan. In addition, residential development should be sited and designed to provide private and public open space and should be wildlife friendly. (See the Open Lands and Trails Plan on page 27 for more information on planned trails and open space corridors. For design guidelines, see Chapter 7 on page 43.)

The City's Natural Areas program may also acquire portions of the area along the Poudre River Corridor as open lands— as future funding and landowner willingness allow. Priority areas for acquisition are indicated on Figure 5 - Framework Plan on page 12) as green areas called Future Open Lands. In areas where acquisition is not practicable, the recommendation for clustering within the Poudre River and Bluffs area will enable property owners to develop as allowed by underlying zoning while at the same time help retain contiguous open space, protect riparian forests, protect water quality, and add to the Poudre River regional open space corridor.

Related Goals - page 31

For related goals and policies, see the following goals in Chapter 6:

- Goal LU-1, Neighborhood Character (Policy LU-1.3),
- Goal LU-2, Limited Commercial (Policy N-2.3),
- Goal AD-1, Unique Image (Policy AD-1.1),
- See Chapter 7 guidelines.

What Urban Estate Allows

This Plan suggests optional clustering in the central area and recommends clustering (as the preferred approach) in the Poudre River and Bluffs area. Urban Estate developments should provide some common (private and/or public) open space (per regulatory requirements). The City's Urban Estate district allows a few low-intensity commercial uses, subject to Planning and Zoning Board review, including child care, bed and breakfast establishments (up to 6 beds), plant nurseries and greenhouses, animal boarding, adult day care, and reception centers. The County allows agricultural uses, but limits commercial uses in the FA-Farming district. Existing agriculture, rural uses, home occupations, and existing legal uses can continue.



Existing agricultural uses can continue in the Urban Estate district.

Current Underlying Zoning

The Urban Estate (UE) category corresponds with the City's Urban Estate zoning district and the County's current zoning of FA-Farming, both of which allow single family housing at a maximum density of two (2) units per acre with public water and sewer. (See Map A-5 on page 75.)

LOW DENSITY MIXED-USE RESIDENTIAL

Where it Applies

The Framework Plan designates the area generally east of Sunset Street and south of Vine Drive as Low Density Mixed-Use Residential. Some lands are currently in city limits and have City zoning; others are in unincorporated Larimer County and would be zoned by the City if and when they are annexed (i.e., when development is proposed). The intent is to ensure that future development is compatible with the integrity and density of existing neighborhoods, as determined by location and infill parcel size. Future development density may be up to 8 units per acre overall (or up to 12 units per acre for affordable housing). The permitted density depends on each specific location as described in the sections below.

Figure 8 - Low Density Mixed-Use Residential location on the Framework Plan.



(See Figure 9 on page 17 for recommended locations for RL and LMN Zone Districts in the Low Density Mixed-Use Residential Area— a more detailed study of properties.)

Purpose and Intent

The designation of Low Density Mixed-Use Residential in this area is consistent with the current Structure Plan and existing neighborhoods and provides a transition between adjacent Old Town neighborhoods in the city and lower density subdivisions to the west. New neighborhoods should entail creative master planning to lead to visually attractive, pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods that have nearby services, parks, and other amenities.

Related Goals - page 31

For related goals and policies, see the following goals in Chapter 6:

- Goal LU-1, Neighborhood Character (Policy LU-1.1, 1.4),
- Goal LU-2, Limited Commercial (Policy LU-2.1),
- Goal AD-1, Unique Image (Policy AD-1.1, AD-1.3).

What Low Density Mixed-Use Residential Allows
 This Plan recommends that most of the Low Density Mixed-Use Residential category will be appropriate for LMN zoning, if annexed. However, parcels zoned FA-Farming that are seeking annexation will be zoned RL if they meet the following criteria:

- If they are five (5) acres or less in size;
- If they are adjacent to an existing single family neighborhood.

(See Figure 9 on page 17 for recommended locations for the RL and LMN zone districts.)



Low Density Mixed-Use Residential example (single-family homes allowed in RL and LMN zone districts).

Residential Low (RL) allows single family housing up to five units per acre, which may be more appropriate for small infill parcels in this area than the LMN district.

Larger parcels will be zoned, upon annexation, as Low Density Mixed-Use Neighborhood (LMN) allowing up to eight (8) units per acre (or up to 12 units per acre for affordable housing).

The LMN district allows small scale neighborhood services, such as convenience shopping, medical office, day care, or other similar uses; some light industrial uses and workshops; as well as amenities and public spaces. These non-residential uses should occur in the commercial Neighborhood Center designated on the Framework Plan.

Parcels that do not annex, but that develop in the County, are zoned as Planned Development using the City densities and standards.



Low Density Mixed-Use Residential (townhomes allowed in L-M-N zone district only)

Current Underlying Zoning

The Low Density Mixed-Use category corresponds with two different City zoning districts:

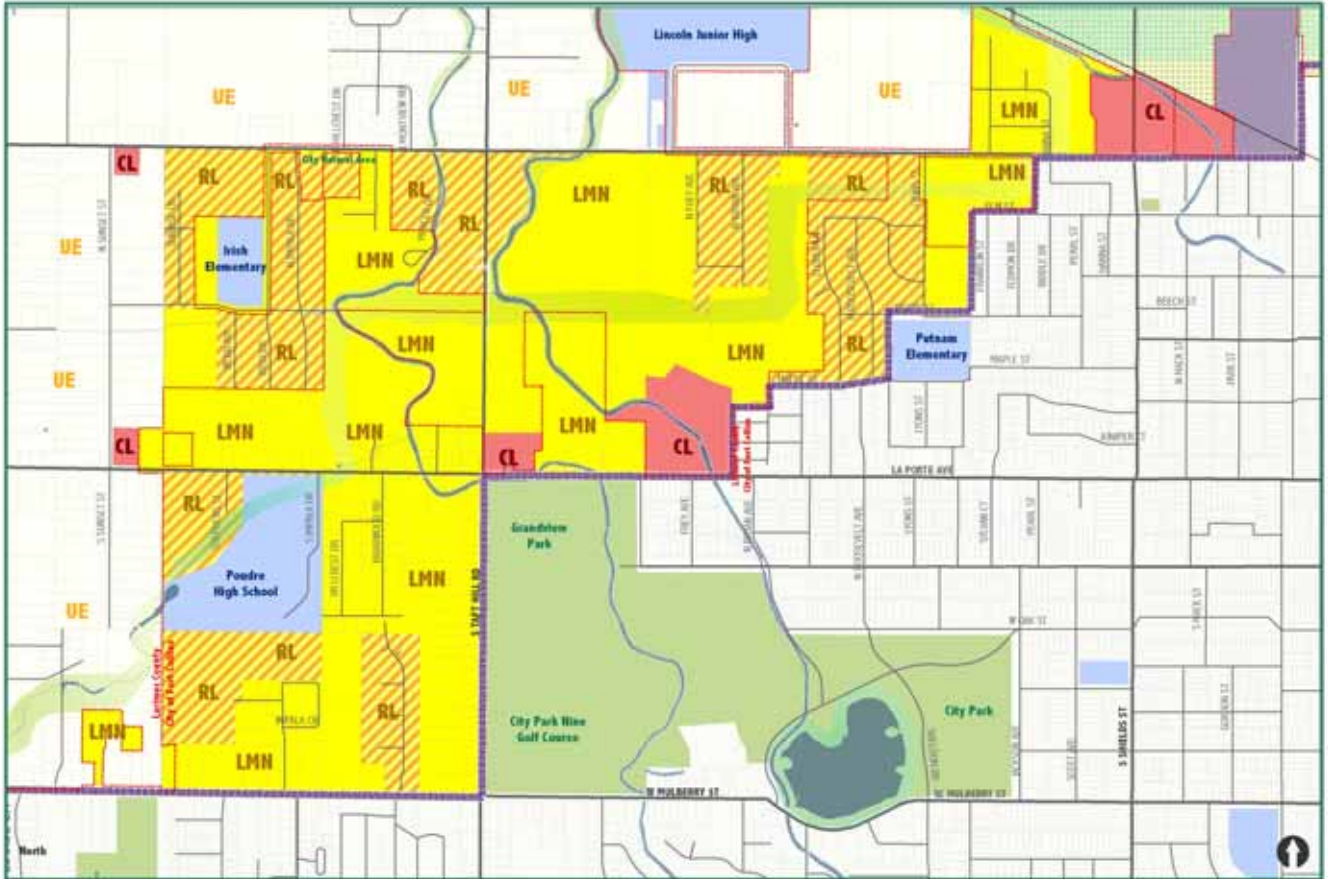
1. Residential Low (RL) district in some existing single family areas, which allows density up to five (5) units per acre (or minimum lot size of 6,000 square feet); and,
2. Low Density Mixed-Use Neighborhood (LMN) district, which allows housing up to eight (8) units per acre, including single family homes and townhomes with no minimum lot size and also some commercial development.

Some of the area is currently unincorporated with county zoning of FA-Farming. If a developer petitions to be annexed, the City typically allows a rezone to the LMN district.

Taft Hill Workshop

The City hosted a workshop with residents, property owners, and other interested participants of the area immediately west of Taft Hill Road and north of Mulberry Street, to determine appropriate land uses for that area. (See Appendix E on page 97 for more information about this workshop.)

Figure 9 - Recommended Locations for RL and LMN Zone Districts in the Low Density Mixed-Use Residential Area



Non-Residential Categories

The Framework Plan designates two non-residential categories in specific, discreet locations within the Subarea described in the following sections. They are Employment and Limited Commercial.

Outside of these locations, existing non-residential uses in the area are illegal, non-conforming and legal, or home occupations. This Plan addresses how the City and County will handle those situations.

EMPLOYMENT

Where it Applies

The Framework Plan designates Employment on Vine Drive just east of Shields Street. This location contains existing City facilities including the City Utilities building and Fleet Maintenance.

Figure 10 - Employment district location on the Framework Plan



Purpose and Intent

The Employment designation allows offices and light industry. It does not allow businesses that would generate excessive traffic, odors, noise, or those that would be visually incompatible with what is currently there.

Related Goals – page 31

For related goals and policies, see the following goals in Chapter 6:

- Goal LU-2, Limited Commercial (Policy LU-2.4),
- Goal AD-1, Unique Image (Policy AD-1.3).

What Employment Allows

The Employment category allows offices and light industrial uses designed in a campus-like setting.

The Plan does not propose changes to the existing designation.



Offices are allowed in the Employment District.

Current Zoning

This location is predominately zoned Employment.

LIMITED COMMERCIAL

Where it Applies

The Framework Plan designates Limited Commercial in discreet portions of the Subarea (along Laporte, North of the cemetery, near Shields and Vine and Taft Hill and Laporte intersections). These locations generally correspond to existing commercial activities, where additional infill or redevelopment may be possible. Any new commercial development would be small in scale and designed to be compatible with the adjacent neighborhoods it serves.

These designated areas contain a mix of activities and uses, including a distribution company, a furniture store, a gas station and other uses, most of which are independently owned and have been in the area for many years.

Figure 11 - Commercial Limited location on the Framework Plan



Purpose and Intent

The City and County anticipate and will encourage reinvestment and redevelopment on these sites, as properties begin to change hands, to ensure that new uses are compatible with nearby residential neighborhoods. The intent for future development is to recognize pre-existing commercial uses in the Northwest Subarea while at the same time allowing flexibility for private reinvestment. Uses and activities beneficial to and compatible with the neighborhoods should continue to occur. New development should be screened, have only limited amounts of outdoor storage, and be attractive.

Related Goals – page 31

For related goals and policies, see the following goals in Chapter 6:

- Goal LU-2, Limited Commercial (Policies LU-2.1 through LU-2.5),
- Goal AD-1, Unique Image (Policy AD-1.3).

What Limited Commercial Allows

The City amended its Limited Commercial (CL) zoning district to allow it to be applied in these locations. However, some of the vehicle intensive uses (i.e., RV sales, vehicle and truck sales) are not allowed; some new uses are allowed (i.e., workshops and custom small industry).

Current Zoning

These locations are currently zoned FA-Farming, I-Industrial, C-Commercial, LMN- Low Density Mixed-Use Neighborhood, and O-Open.

Neighborhood Center

The Framework Plan also indicates a Neighborhood Center near the Laporte and Taft Hill intersection. A center is proposed here because of the existing commercial uses and the close proximity to City limits and future Low Density Mixed-Use Neighborhoods. The neighborhood center would be a maximum of five acres in size.

The site identified in this Plan for a neighborhood center may not meet some of the access and location standards required by the City's Land Use Code. However, the site could be adapted to meet other important characteristics of neighborhood centers, including direct access from a network of local streets, the inclusion of at least two non-residential uses, density and access, outdoor spaces, and the appropriate development standards. The

intent is to allow some new neighborhood services within existing residential areas in or near city limits. This Plan makes the Neighborhood Center optional, not required.



Small neighborhood-serving retail and services are allowed in the Limited Commercial district, such as the preschool shown above.



Examples of established neighborhood centers at Lemay and Conifer Street and Horsetooth and Lochwood.



This sketch shows the location around Forney Industries if it should redevelop (if and when Forney Industries moves). This is a conceptual ideal. The property owner would ultimately decide how to develop the property.



This is a conceptual sketch of Neighborhood Commercial if added near the Taft/Laporte gas station in the future.

Scattered Commercial Uses and Home Occupations

The Northwest Subarea has numerous commercial activities, largely home occupations and some low-intensity rural uses such as landscape nurseries. The intent is to continue to allow existing legal non-conforming uses that are in the area but not to promote additional proliferation of commercial uses on sites other than those defined, and within existing commercial locations.

Current County Home Occupation Regulations

The County allows by right home occupations in the resident's dwelling unit. Home occupations that exceed what is allowed by right require County Commissioner approval by Minor Special Review. Home occupations in the County must not change the residential character of the lot or dwelling. These uses will continue to be allowed.

See the County's website for details
www.larimer.org/planning



The area includes plant nurseries and other scattered commercial uses that will remain.



Frank's Trout Pond is another example of the scattered commercial uses.

Figure 12 - Land Use Summary for Potential Development

	Avg (du/ac)	Ratio	(Acres) ¹	Housing	Population (People)
Residential Foothills	1.0	0.8	265	212	530
Urban Estate Residential	2.0	0.8	176	282	704
Low Density Neighborhood	5.0	0.75	198	741	1,852
Total			639	1,234	3,086

Source: Clarion Associates, Framework Plan, June 2006.

Terms for Table 12

Density Average (avg) - Units per acre (gross)

Ratio - Provides development ratio of properties, to reduce out the non-building areas of the site, including but not limited to streets and utilities, drainage areas, and parks.

Housing - Units of housing that could potentially develop in the Land Use Category on vacant and agricultural lands.

Population - New people that could occupy housing units. These calculations assume 2.5 people per household

Public Uses

CSU FOOTHILLS CAMPUS

The Foothills Campus is located west of the Northwest Subarea. It is part of Colorado State University and is governed by a state agency. This makes it exempt from most local jurisdiction regulations. However, under State statutes, the local jurisdictions (City and County) have Location, Character, and Extent Review authority for proposed development on the CSU Foothills Campus. While the CSU Foothills Campus is not inside the Northwest Subarea, it is relevant because activities that take place on the campus affect the Subarea. Citizens in this effort are optimistic that CSU will be a good neighborhood and will keep them informed about future plans for the area.

CSU Foothills Campus Master Plan

The CSU Foothills Campus Master Plan (2005) recommends primarily low intensity agricultural uses to continue, but suggests some intensification of developed research facilities will occur south of Laporte Avenue. (See Appendix A for more information.)

Related Goals – page 31

For related goals and policies, see the following goals in Chapter 6:

- Goal LU-3, Collaborative Planning, and
- Goal P-2, Trails Planning.

SCHOOLS

Where it Applies

The map shows the existing schools that are and will remain in the Subarea, including Poudre High School, Lincoln Junior High School, and Irish Elementary.

Purpose and Intent

The Framework Plan does not show future school sites and no new schools are proposed at this time. If future schools will be located in the area, they should have a strong relationship with surrounding neighborhoods— including playground and field use, trail connections, and property maintenance and landscaping. The School District, City, and County work closely together to determine future sitings of schools.

Related Goals – page 31

For related goals and policies, see the following goal in Chapter 6:

- Goal LU-3, Collaborative Planning.

Chapter 4

Open Lands & Trails

Overview

This chapter contains the Open Lands and Trails Plan for the Northwest Subarea. The plan map illustrates the locations for future open lands and trails. City and County staff, neighborhood groups, including the Northwest Neighbors, and other participants, attending public events or otherwise providing input and feedback throughout the process helped refine the plan.

The Open Lands & Trails Plan

The Northwest Subarea contains many natural features, scenic mountain views, and habitat areas. A number of large parcels, some of which are still agricultural, remain undeveloped. Retention of the open feel and environmental qualities of the area is an important element of this Plan. While many residents would like to have all vacant or agricultural properties conserved, not all property owners have that objective. Local government, land trusts, and conservation groups cannot buy all properties for protection. Strategic priorities should be established.

The Open Lands and Trails Plan identifies locations for open lands conservation and trail creation through the area. These general priorities for the area reflect City plans and goals, well as the desires of citizen stakeholders in the Northwest Subarea. The County's 2001 Open Lands Master Plan does not include this portion of the county as a priority area for open space protection; therefore, the Open Lands Program does not plan to acquire land within this part of the County. However, residents and organizations of the Northwest Subarea are welcome to apply for grant dollars through the Open Lands' Small Grants Program for both open space and trail projects, including those outlined in this Plan.

OPEN LANDS

Retaining open lands throughout the Northwest Subarea is a priority of this Plan. While it is understood that funding limitations will constrain the ability for all properties to be conserved through acquisition, the Open Lands and Trails Plan illustrates the priority locations for retaining open space. In some cases, conservation may be achieved through purchase by a public entity (i.e., City) with a willing landowner. In other cases, landowners can voluntarily retain open space while retaining private ownership.

TRAILS

The planning and implementation of a connected system of trails through the Northwest Subarea is another priority of this Plan. The Open Lands and Trails plan illustrates conceptual trail alignments for three categories of trails as described later in this chapter. More detailed trail alignments, particularly for the less formal, local pedestrian connections, will be an evolving process as development proposals and/or grant funding permits planning move to that level of detail.

Open Lands

Figure 14 - Open Lands & Trails Plan on page 27 illustrates existing and desired future open lands and corridors. It shows three main components of the existing and future system of open lands and natural areas in the Northwest Subarea, including:

- City Natural Area, west of Overland Trail,
- Open lands, including the Poudre River Corridor, lands west of Overland Trail, and the Soldier Creek drainage, and
- Open space corridors along streams and ditches that are mostly private lands.

NATURAL AREAS WEST OF OVERLAND TRAIL

The City owns a 146-acre natural area west of Overland Trail and continues to discuss conservation of additional lands in the area with property owners. The Open Lands and Trails Plan illustrates the general location of open lands that could expand the existing natural area.

Regardless of whether lands west of Overland Trail are publicly acquired or privately managed, these properties contain marsh and wet meadow, aquatic

features, and riparian forest (according to Map A-7 on page 77), that are important to retain and protect. Current regulations require some protection of these features if development takes place.

FUTURE CONNECTED OPEN LANDS

Priorities for future open land include lands along the Poudre River Corridor, west of Overland Trail, and along the Soldier Creek drainage.

Poudre River Corridor and Foothills Open Lands

The City’s Land Conservation and Stewardship Master Plan designates the Poudre River and foothills lands as potential natural areas. They have natural resource values, are part of a connected system, and have community-wide public benefit. The Natural Habitat and Features map (Map A-7 on page 77) notes several natural features, including marsh, wet meadow, grasslands, and riparian forest.



Retaining views of and access to the Foothills is a goal of this Plan.

Priority locations for future open lands are illustrated on Figure 14 - Open Lands & Trails Plan on page 27. These locations are indicated for planning purposes. Until such a time as formal acquisition is achieved by the City, properties retain the development rights of the underlying land use plan and zoning designations of the appropriate jurisdiction. Any development must be clustered away from natural features to provide priority open areas.

Soldier Creek Restoration

South of Vine Drive (i.e., the West Vine Basin), stormwater drains into the Poudre River along the former Soldier Creek. Once a natural stream similar to Spring Creek, Soldier Creek is now a combination of ditches, pipes, and undefined channels through the area.

Developments over time have narrowed the creek flow area, and nearby properties are prone to flooding. To solve the flooding in the basin, the City/County Stormwater Master Plan identifies drainage improvements consisting of a series of pipes, channels, and detention ponds.

This Plan recommends broadening the Soldier Creek drainage improvement project to allow for natural areas restoration and a multi-purpose trail. In addition to flood safety, the Soldier Creek Restoration project would restore habitat and provide recreation opportunities and connected open lands.

The Soldier Creek restoration effort will require a combination of public and private initiative and sponsorship. Part of the future restoration/trail crosses the Poudre School District’s property just north of Poudre High School. If the school property redevelops in the future, the City and Poudre School District should work together to restore the creek. Such a restoration project would be a beneficial educational opportunity for nearby students who could participate in the project.



Restoration of Soldier Creek will provide trails and open space in addition to accomplishing drainage objectives.

OTHER PRIVATE AND PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

Ditches and Canals

Pleasant Valley and Lake Canal, the New Mercer Ditch, and Larimer County No. 2 Canal are open space corridors through the Northwest Subarea that will likely remain in private hands, but that are important wildlife and open space connections nonetheless.

Related Goals – page 31

For related goals and policies, see the following goals in Chapter 6:

- Goal C-1: Historic Past Retained (Policies OL-1.1 through OL-1.4)

Current regulations of the City and County require protection of natural features and habitat as part of development projects. All future development in the Northwest Area must also comply with community plans and standards.

Laporte Community Separator

During this planning process, residents expressed a desire to create a separator between Laporte and the Northwest Subarea. This concept is consistent with the establishment of separators in other parts of Fort Collins, such as between Fort Collins and Loveland, Fort Collins and Wellington, and Fort Collins and Timnath. The Laporte Area Plan suggests a community separator be implemented through clustering of residential and non-residential uses away from the eastern edge of the Laporte Plan area.

This Plan reinforces the separator concept by making clustering of Urban Estate “preferred” in the Poudre River corridor and by identifying the areas as a priority of Open Space acquisition. It is likely plans for gravel mining and subsequent water storage ponds in the River Corridor between Laporte and the Northwest Subarea will help to reinforce distinct boundaries of the Fort Collins and Laporte communities.

Trails

Trails provide opportunities for transportation and recreation for pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians. Figure 14 - Open Lands & Trails Plan on page 27 illustrates the conceptual alignments for additional trails and trail extensions through the area. Two types of trails are identified and discussed below:

- **Multi-Purpose Trails (and Trailheads):** these larger paved trails accommodate high volumes of use and multiple types of uses (e.g., bicycles, pedestrians, equestrians), and connect into a larger, regional trail network.
- **Local Neighborhood Connections:** these smaller, more informal trails focus on providing local connections between residential neighborhoods and other destinations such as schools, parks, and Multi-Purpose Trails.

In addition to these two trail types, the Open Lands and Trails Plan illustrates a proposed conceptual alignment for the Soldier Creek Restoration Project and Trail. The proposed naturalization and restoration of Soldier Creek would help stormwater drainage and flooding in the area while providing a trail amenity. It is one of the “big ideas” of this Plan. All trails identified in this Plan, particularly those publicly-funded, may need to be ADA-accessible.

MULTI-PURPOSE TRAILS (AND TRAILHEADS)

Multi-purpose trails are the major trails that connect community-wide destinations. They are primarily recreational but they also enhance the transportation system, providing alternative routes for bicycles or pedestrians. For instance, the existing Poudre Trail is a multi-purpose trail. This kind of trail is generally paved or of hard surface (e.g., crusher fines gravel) and is suitable for equestrians, bikes, and pedestrians and accessible for people with disabilities. While the Foothills Trail is not paved, it does connect regional or community-wide destinations.

Proposed future multi-purpose trail connections, shown on Figure 14 - Open Lands & Trails Plan on page 27, are more on the order of the Poudre River Trail and include the following segments:

- Overland Trail to the Foothills Trail through the existing City natural area;
- Larimer County No. 2 Canal and existing neighborhoods to the Poudre River Trail; and,
- Lincoln Junior High to the Poudre River Trail.

The Open Lands and Trails Plan shows existing trailheads at the end of Michaud Lane and on North Taft Hill Road. It indicates a proposed future trailhead for the Foothills Trail on Overland Trail.

The City and this Plan also propose a trails underpass at Overland Trail/Michaud Lane to allow safe passage between the Foothills Trail and the Poudre River Trail.



Multi-purpose trails, like the Poudre River Trail, are paved trails that accommodate a variety of users, including bicyclists and pedestrians.

LOCAL NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS

The Plan shows a number of local neighborhood connections through neighborhoods and along some ditches in the area. Local neighborhood connections would be shorter and narrower than multi-purpose trails, would have less traffic, and would connect local destinations within the area—for instance neighborhoods to schools. These trails are part of the transportation network—they help people travel safely and conveniently through the area on foot, by bicycle, or on a horse. These local trails would be provided either through developments or local initiatives, such as the recent Northwest Neighbors/ Progressive Living Structures

Partnership to provide a trail between Stagecoach and Lin-Mar subdivision.

SOLDIER CREEK RESTORATION PROJECT AND TRAIL

The Plan shows the proposed Soldier Creek restoration project and trail connecting from just southwest of Poudre High School to the Poudre River Trail. The restoration and trail-building effort will require a combination of private and public funding. The City and County anticipate that developers will provide some of the segments of the trail, resident initiatives may help assemble other segments, and the City and County will assist with portions of the project.

Figure 13 - Soldier Creek Locator

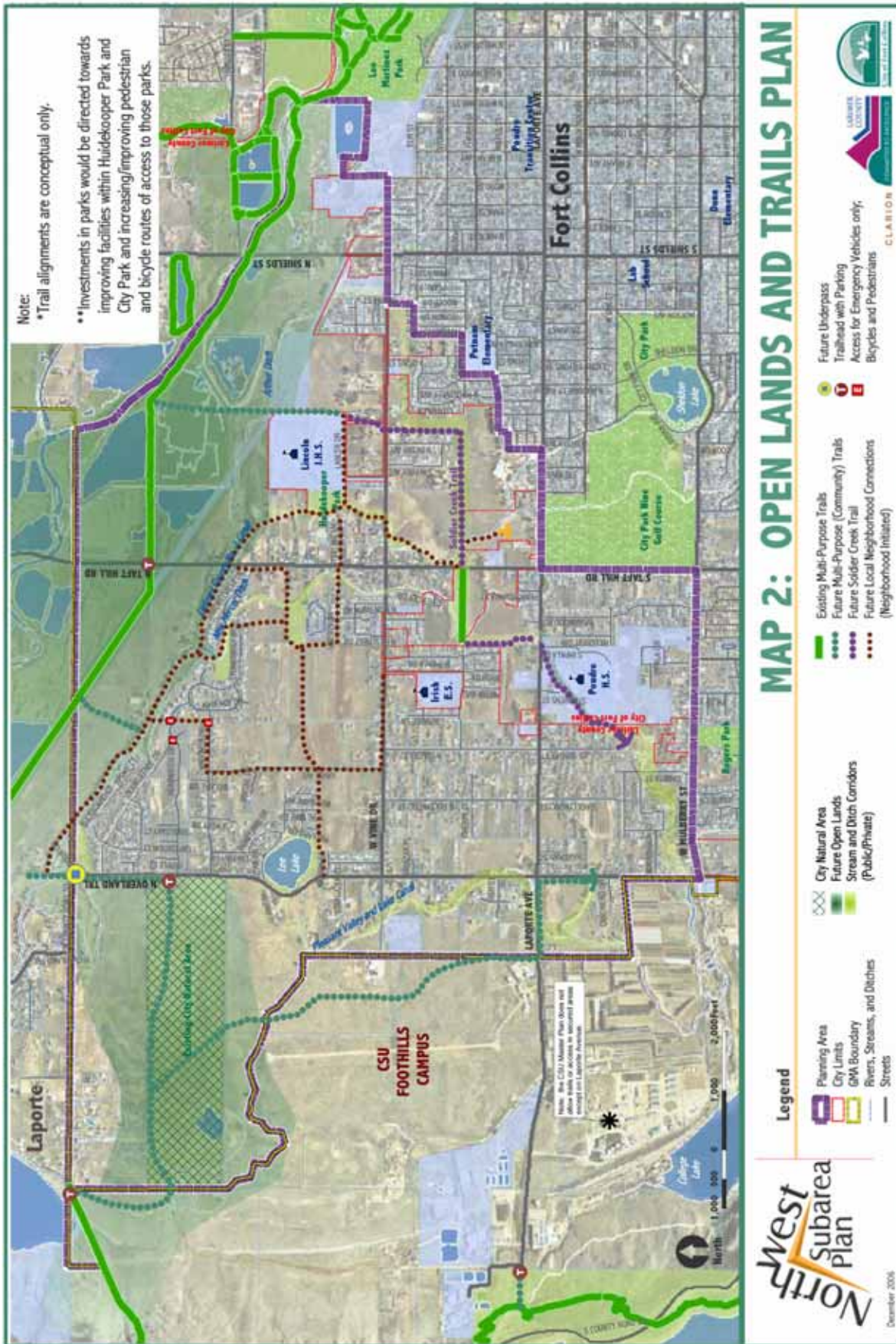


Related Goals - page 31

For related goals and policies, see the following goals in Chapter 6:

- Goal P-1: Access to Parks and Recreation Facilities (Policy P-1.2)
- Goal P-2, connected trails (P-2.1 through P-2.2)

Figure 14 – Open Lands & Trails Plan



Chapter 5

Transportation

Overview

This chapter contains Figure 15 - Transportation Plan on page 30 for the Northwest Subarea. The plan map illustrates existing street plans contained within the City's Master Streets Plan. Given the low-densities of the area and that much of the area is and may remain in the unincorporated County, planned improvements focus on targeted street upgrades and widening to arterial roadways rather than the development of new streets.

The Transportation Plan

The Transportation Plan and associated goals and policies (see Chapter 6, pages 39-40) illustrate planned improvements to the transportation system of the Northwest Subarea including: street improvements, bicycle routes, and transit. Pedestrian connections, aside from street-related sidewalk improvements, are discussed in Chapter 4 - Open Lands & Trails on page 27.

STREET IMPROVEMENTS

This Plan is consistent with the City's and County's Master Street Plans— with their proposals for long-term improvements to arterial and collector streets, as follows:

- West Vine Drive is proposed as a 2-lane arterial.
- Laporte Avenue is proposed as a 2-lane arterial west of Taft Hill Road, a 2-lane collector between Taft Hill Road and Wood Street, and a 4-lane arterial east of Wood Street.
- West Mulberry Street is proposed as a 4-lane arterial.
- North Overland Trail is proposed as a 2-lane arterial north of Laporte Avenue and a 4-lane arterial south of Laporte Avenue.
- North Taft Hill Road is a 2-lane arterial north of Vine Drive and a 4-lane arterial south of Vine Drive.
- North Shields Street is a 2-lane arterial north of Vine Drive and a 4-lane arterial south of Vine Drive.

This Plan proposes one new possible connection between Vine Drive and Laporte Avenue, which would occur when development occurs on the vacant properties. (See Figure 15 – Transportation Plan on page 30.) This connection could be either a collector or a local street depending on the level of development in the vicinity of the new street.

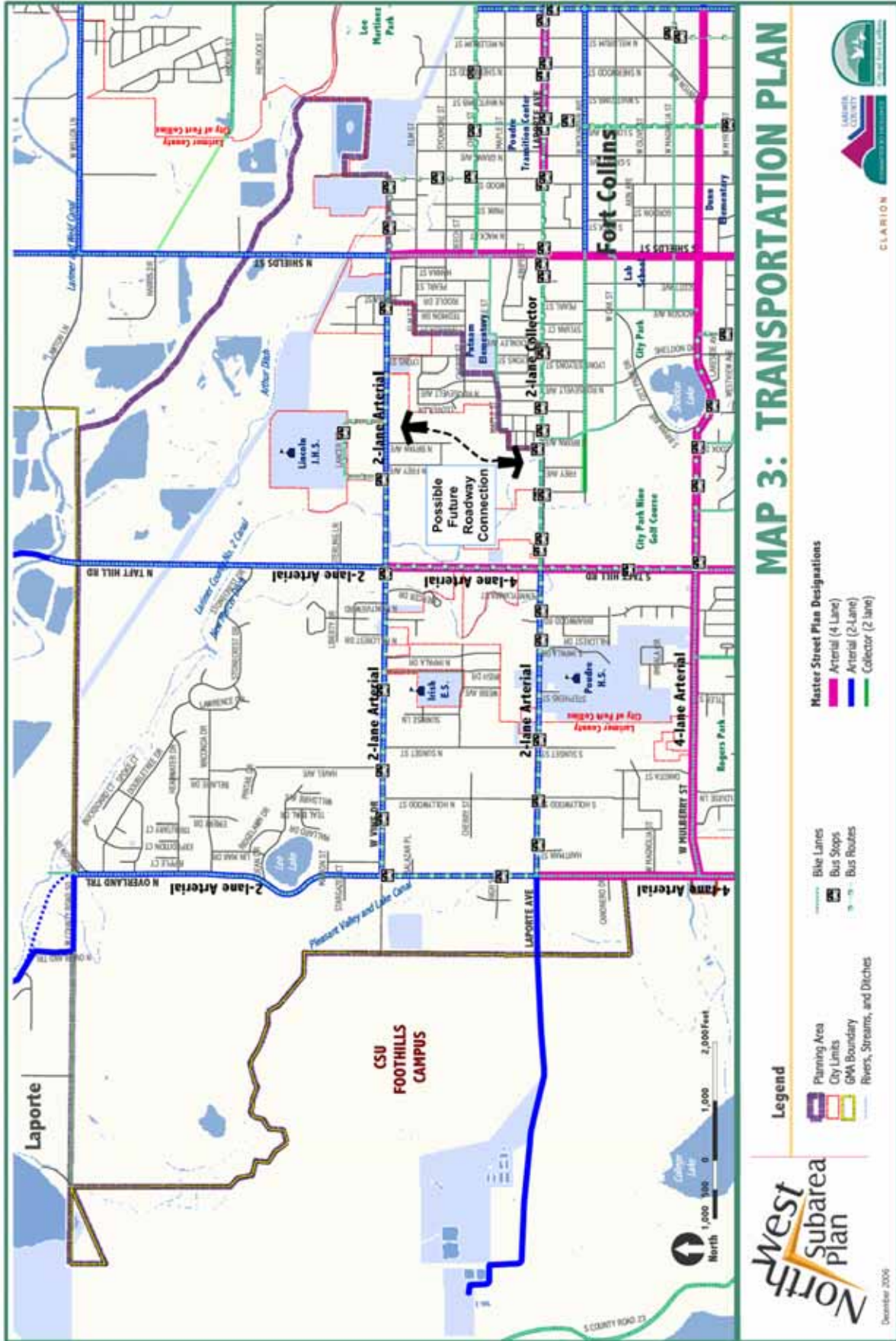
BICYCLE ROUTES

Recent improvements to Overland Trail added bike lanes to this major north-south arterial. Similarly, as planned improvements occur, bike lanes and sidewalks should be provided on other arterial and collector streets, and sidewalks should be provided on local streets. Further improvements to bicycle circulation through the area would be achieved through the implementation of the planned Multi-Purpose Trails and the Soldier Creek Trail. These potential trails are shown on Figure 14 - Open Lands & Trails Plan on page 27.

TRANSIT

The plan does not propose new transit routes, though additional routes are not precluded in this Plan. It does, however, make recommendations for improvements to current bus stops and the coordination of pedestrian routes and trails with bus routes and stops to facilitate safe and convenient transit use.

Figure 15 – Transportation Plan



Chapter 6

Goals, Policies & Strategies

Introduction

This chapter contains goals, policies, and strategies for the following subjects:

- Community and History,
- Land Use and Neighborhoods,
- Open Lands and Natural Areas,
- Parks, Recreation, and Trails,
- Transportation,
- Utilities and Services, and
- Appearance and Design.

Chapters 3 through 5 contain the physical plans for land use, open lands and trails, and transportation, respectively. Please refer to those chapters for additional information about those subjects.

Community and History

The vision for the Northwest Subarea is to retain the semi-rural heritage and history and maintain independent and self-reliant neighborhoods.



The Northwest Subarea has a number of farms and homesteads eligible for the National and/or City Landmark register.

OVERVIEW

Farms and homes in the Northwest Subarea trace back to early days of Fort Collins' settlement. While some new development has occurred, many of the historic structures, irrigation ditches, and much of the past century's landscape remains intact due to the slow change that has occurred.

Many residents and businesses in the area have deep roots and long tenure. They appreciate the slow pace of change, sense of independent living, and diverse mix of businesses and neighborhoods. Neighborhood groups work actively to protect qualities of the area that they value and to provide desired improvements such as trails. Information on any proposed changes should be shared with neighborhood groups in a timely manner.

GOALS AND POLICIES

Goal C-1 Historic Past Retained

The Northwest Subarea will retain aspects of its historic cultural past. This Plan aims to protect and interpret the historic resources and landscape of the area.

Policy C-1.1

Protected Historic Resources

Identify and protect historic resources with the participation of willing property owners or as part of development proposals.

Policy C-1.2

Cultural/Historical Interpretation Opportunities

Identify opportunities to interpret the historic landscape and heritage of the area as part of public open lands or rights-of-way.

Goal C-2 Neighborhood-Driven Initiatives

Local neighborhoods will be the catalyst for changes and improvements in the area.

Policy C-2.1

Self-Reliance and Neighborhood-Initiated Projects

Existing neighborhoods will continue to function with minimal change. Community members will initiate projects and requests for government assisted utilities and services.

Policy C-2.2

Neighborhood Groups Involved through Outreach
Keep neighborhood groups informed about public and private development projects.

STRATEGIES

The following strategies will help achieve historic preservation and community involvement goals:

Historic Preservation Strategies	
C-1.1A	Prepare a survey of the area's historic resources for potential preservation of historic structures. <i>Who: City</i>
C-1.2A	Explore opportunities for historic interpretation and education in the area. <i>Who: Residents</i>
Community Involvement Strategies	
C-2.1A	Provide technical and financial support for neighborhood organizations. <i>Who: City (for City neighborhoods)</i>
C-2.1B	Seek small grants to fund neighborhood-initiated projects. <i>Who: Residents</i>
C-2.2A	Facilitate communication between owners of large undeveloped properties and surrounding residents to provide more certainty over plans on these sites. <i>Who: Residents, City, County</i>
C-2.2B	Provide residents and neighborhood groups with information and resources to assist them in local initiatives to carry out this Plan. Information on conservation easements, risk mitigation, liability insurance, wildlife habitat enhancement, resource protection, and advice on finding and writing grants would be useful. (See also Appendix C on page 91.) (Note: The City's Neighborhood Services includes: neighborhood support, mediation, community liaison, and grants for city neighborhoods). <i>Who: City, County, Residents</i>
C-2.2C	Evaluate potential to incorporate the neighborhood information and resources (C-2.2b) into the City's "Free Seminar Series" (e.g. grant writing). <i>Who: City</i>
C-2.2D	Create a "Citizen's Guide to Planning and Development" which clearly explains how plans relate to each other, what are design guidelines, what is zoning, and their roles in the land use decision making of both City/County. <i>Who: City, County</i>
C-2.2E	Work to ensure consistent, ongoing communication between residents and neighborhood groups and City/County staff to assist with plan implementation, and to inform residents of the area about public and private development projects. (See Appendix C on page 91 for contact information.) <i>Who: City, County, Residents</i>
C-2.2F	Ensure response to neighborhood groups when they initiate contact. Outreach may include neighborhood meetings, workshops, website information, and mailings. <i>Who: City, County</i>

Land Use and Neighborhoods

The vision for the Northwest Subarea is to continue to have low density housing in a mix of stable neighborhoods, with small neighborhood-serving businesses in limited locations.

OVERVIEW

The Northwest Subarea is a predominately low density residential area with a number of existing stable neighborhoods and some small businesses in limited locations.

Some future development is likely to occur in the Northwest Subarea. Most of the area is currently planned and zoned for very low or low density residential development (on City Structure Plan and existing City/County zoning). While residents have indicated interest in keeping vacant and agricultural properties "open," it is not possible to conserve all lands. Therefore, as new development occurs, it should be of low intensity to be compatible with the diversity and semi-rural feel of the area. Cluster development can be a positive design approach that supports these goals. New non-residential development (e.g., commercial businesses or industry) will be very limited, with existing businesses remaining or redeveloping in their current locations and new small-scale establishments locating in the areas shown on Figure 5 - Framework Plan on page 12).

GOALS AND POLICIES

Goal LU-1
Neighborhood Character Retained
 The Northwest Subarea will retain its character and integrity through the appropriate placement and density of new housing that is compatible with existing neighborhoods.

Policy LU-1.1
 Stable County and City Neighborhoods
 Maintain existing stable County and City subdivisions and neighborhoods.

Policy LU-1.2
 Framework Plan Guides Development
 Adhere to the Framework Plan for the Northwest Subarea in the design and review of developments. (See Figure 5 - Framework Plan on page 12.) All new development and redevelopment activity in the

Northwest Subarea should follow this Plan and its guidelines and applicable regulations.



The Northwest Subarea has many established neighborhoods.

Policy LU-1.3

Low Intensity Residential Development
Ensure that new development outside City limits is generally low intensity residential development (and other uses allowed in residential districts), as defined on the Framework Plan (i.e., in Urban Estate and Residential Foothills districts). Neighborhood densities generally should become lower toward the western edge of the Plan area to provide a transition between urban and rural areas, foothills, and Laporte; to buffer agricultural operations; and, to provide opportunities to protect natural features. (See Chapter 7 – Guidelines for the Urban/Rural Edge on page 43.)

Policy LU-1.4

Compatible Infill in Low Density Mixed-Use Residential Areas

In areas designated as Low Density Mixed-Use Residential areas, protect existing single family neighborhoods by ensuring that infill development on parcels to be annexed is appropriate density and design. Parcels which are smaller than five acres and are adjacent to existing single-family developments, will be zoned as Residential Low (RL). (See Figure 9 on page 17 for recommended locations for the RL and LMN zone districts.)

Policy LU-1.5

Access to New Development on Parcels Which Currently Front South Taft Hill Road Between Laporte Avenue and West Mulberry Street
New transportation access points to South Taft Hill Road will be limited to prevent traffic safety problems that arise from too many access points along an arterial. New development will be required to provide right-of-way for a future north-south street

west of Taft Hill Road between Laporte Avenue and Mulberry Street. New development taking access directly off of Taft Hill Road will be required to close that access to Taft Hill Road when the new north-south street is constructed and when the new street connects the development to Laporte Avenue, West Mulberry Street, or West Oak Street. Access points in a few limited locations that benefit multiple properties will be allowed to remain open.



Some older neighborhoods within or near the City limits, have large lots with potential for additional development. It is important that new development be compatible with the existing neighborhoods, such as shown above.

New buildings will be oriented to new internal street where feasible. New multi-family or attached housing should be buffered from existing single-family homes fronting Taft Hill Road with methods including, but not limited to, stepped down building masses and enhanced landscaping, with larger buildings located near Ramblewood Apartments of to the interior of the site south of Oak Street.

Goal LU-2

Non-Residential Uses Limited

New non-residential uses will be located in the areas designated on the Framework Plan, generally where they exist already.

Policy LU-2.1

Commercial is Limited Overall
Limit neighborhood-serving or neighborhood compatible commercial development and redevelopment to locations designated on the Framework Plan (i.e., where it currently exists, but where some redevelopment and infill may occur), including:

- Taft Hill and Laporte,
- Shields and Vine, and
- Along Laporte just north of the cemetery.

Small scale commercial establishments (in these designated locations) should provide convenient access to goods and services and should be compatible with adjacent neighborhoods in terms of circulation, use, and design. (Note: City and County Land Use Codes permit some limited non-residential uses in Low Density Mixed-Use Neighborhoods and Urban Estate residential Districts, such as plant nurseries, animal boarding, small B&B establishments, and child care centers.)

Policy LU-2.2

Revitalized Existing Commercial
 Ensure continued compatibility with the area and promote small retail that serves nearby neighborhoods by encouraging reinvestment and improvements to existing older commercial and industrial sites. Explore opportunities for unique and specialty retail and/or light industrial activities (e.g., “arts and crafts” theme such as sculpture foundry).



This sketch shows potential future redevelopment of some industrial/commercial areas which would be compatible with the area’s low density residential qualities.

Policy LU-2.3

Small Farms/Home Occupations Retained
 Allow the continued operation and expansion of small farmstead uses and home occupations in the area. These small independent businesses are viable uses that add to the uniqueness of this area.



The small farms that dot the landscape of the Northwest Subarea are characteristic of the area.

Policy LU-2.4

Current Legal Businesses Continued
 Allow and encourage existing legal small independent businesses or home occupations to continue operating in the area.

Policy LU-2.5

Non-Residential Building Footprints Size Limited
 Limit the maximum building footprint size of non-residential structures to 20,000 square feet (e.g., recreation facilities, places of worship, and stables).

Goal LU-3

Collaborative Planning and Information Sharing

Share plans with neighborhoods on a regular basis.

Policy LU-3.1

Coordination with Other Jurisdictions for Planning and Communication
 Encourage agencies other than the City and County (e.g., Colorado State University, Federal government, and Poudre School District) to share planning and information with neighborhood groups.

STRATEGIES

The following strategies will help maintain the character and guide future development:

Residential Land Uses Strategies	
LU-1.1A	Include guidelines to address urban/rural edge in City's Design Manual. <i>Who: City</i>
LU-1.2A	Amend the City Structure Plan to be consistent with land uses shown on the Northwest Subarea Framework Plan. <i>Who: City</i>
LU-1.2B	Amend County zoning to Planned Development (PD) during a development application, to be consistent with land uses shown on the Framework Plan. <i>Who: County</i>
LU-2.1A	Change zoning to be consistent with designated Limited Commercial areas on the Framework Plan. <i>Who: City</i>
Non-Residential Land Use Strategies	
LU-2.2A	Work with owners of industrial or transitioning properties to identify future uses which will be compatible and will serve nearby neighborhoods. <i>Who: City, County</i>
LU-2.2B	Provide gateway signage and enhanced intersection design to encourage property-owner investment/renovation/redevelopment of the commercial properties identified in "gateways" locations (i.e., Laporte/Taft Hill and Shields/Vine intersections). <i>Who: City</i>
LU-2.2C	Identify regulatory strategies or incentives to support non-residential land uses at Laporte Avenue east of Taft Hill Road and Shields/Vine which enhance and benefit surrounding residential areas. <i>Who: City</i>
LU-2.3A	Continue to review the Land Use Code to consider agricultural and rural economic uses in the area, such as roadside stands, equestrian facilities, or broader home-occupations. <i>Who: City (Land Use Code Team)</i>
CSU Foothills Campus Strategies	
LU-3.1A	Continue to work with Colorado State University on early notification to residents about development plans on the Foothills Campus and to accomplish goals related to land use and development compatibility. <i>Who: City, County (with CSU)</i>

Open Lands and Natural Areas

The vision for the Northwest Subarea is to expand and connect open lands to conserve natural features, wildlife habitat, and environmentally sensitive areas.

OVERVIEW

The Northwest Subarea contains many natural features and is home to a large variety of wildlife, plants, and birds. Open pastures, marshes and wet meadows, scenic mountain views, streams and wetlands, nearby foothills, large mature trees, and the Poudre River riparian corridor all define the area. These features contribute to not only the scenery, natural diversity, and country-feel, but also lend themselves to education, interpretation, and recreation opportunities for equestrians, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

The protection of these natural features and wildlife habitat is a priority of this Plan. These natural areas should be retained and restored as a system of connected open lands through a variety of conservation approaches described in this Plan. The successful achievement of natural features goals will require broad and sustained participation of the City, County, neighborhood groups, landowners, non-for-profits, and other agencies. This is especially true for the Soldier Creek Restoration project, which has the potential to become a major community-wide as well as local asset.



The existing City Natural Area along Overland Trail provides views of the foothills.

GOALS AND POLICIES

Goal OI -1: Connected Open Lands and Conserved Resources

The Northwest Subarea will have a connected system of open lands (linked to the foothills, Poudre River, and Soldier Creek restoration project) that conserves natural areas, scenic views, and wildlife corridors.

Policy OL-1.1

High Priority Connected Open Lands

Conserve open lands having community-wide significance as natural areas, wildlife habitat or corridors, and views, and those providing opportunities for education and recreation (i.e., near foothills and along the Poudre River, as shown on the Framework Plan, page 12 and Open Lands & Trails Plan, page 27). Protect open lands between Laporte community and Fort Collins.

Policy OL-1.2

Soldier Creek Restoration

Restore Soldier Creek as a connected drainage (with trails, flood control, and natural areas) using a variety of means including acquisition with willing sellers, easements, willing donors, or set asides as part of development projects. (See Figure 13 on page 26.)

Policy OL-1.3

Property Rights and Conservation

Balance the rights of property owners with the community's desire for conservation.

Policy OL-1.4

Private Open Space and Resource Protection

New developments must comply with City and County regulations to protect natural features and provide private open space.

STRATEGIES

The following strategies will help achieve open lands and natural areas goals in this Plan.

Open Lands & Natural Areas Strategies	
OL-1.1A	Continue to pursue acquisition of or easements on priority open lands (i.e., Poudre River Corridor and Foothills locations) from willing landowners. <i>Who: City, Residents</i>
OL-1.1B	Explore the idea of establishing an east-west wildlife corridor between the foothills, Lee Lake, open lands north of Vine, and the Poudre River. <i>Who: Residents</i>
OL-1.1C	Work with developers west of Overland Trail to set aside common open space to conserve natural areas and foothills views (per development code requirements). <i>Who: City, County, Developers</i>
OL-1.2A	Coordinate departments and disciplines within the agencies to pursue the Soldier Creek flood control projects along with stream restoration and construction of neighborhood trails (e.g., Utilities—Stormwater Services, Natural Resources, Advance Planning, and other departments as necessary). Identify properties, landowners, and potential connections along Soldier Creek. Work with developers and residents to provide stormwater drainage areas, natural areas, and a trail along Soldier Creek. <i>Who: City, County, Developers</i>
OL-1.2B	Work with Poudre School District to implement the Soldier Creek restoration project on the PSD property near Poudre High School. <i>Who: City, PSD</i>
OL-1.3A	Coordinate with Colorado State University on Foothills Campus to protect important natural features and scenic views of the foothills. <i>Who: City, County</i>
OL-1.3B	Coordinate with Lafarge and landowners on long-term goals for open lands and trail connections within the Poudre River Corridor. <i>Who: City</i>

Parks, Recreation, and Trails

The vision for the Northwest Subarea is to expand access to the connected system of trails and to parks and recreation facilities.

OVERVIEW

The Northwest Subarea has numerous recreation opportunities for equestrians, bicyclists, and pedestrians, including several nearby City parks (i.e., City Park, Huidekooper, Lee Martinez, and Rogers Parks), golf, and major community/regional trails, including the Poudre River Trail and Foothills Trail. Because many residents in the area have horse properties and stables, equestrians are prevalent on the trails.

The area has limited options for developing new parks. Most of the Subarea is unincorporated County, and the County does not typically develop or maintain neighborhood parks.

The focus of this Plan for recreation is to improve the trails system to connect destinations and provide a safe network for bicycles, pedestrians, and equestrians and to provide access to parks, as shown in Figure 14 - Open Lands & Trails Plan on page 27. Some members of the public are concerned about potential trail impacts on neighboring properties and want to ensure that the City and County work with willing landowners. This Plan addresses those concerns.



City Park and City Park Nine Golf Course, adjacent to the Northwest Subarea along Taft Hill Road, is a major public park and recreational amenity for nearby residents.

GOALS AND POLICIES

Goal P-1

Access to Neighborhood Parks and Recreation Facilities

All residents in the Northwest Subarea will have access to neighborhood parks and recreation facilities— some private and some publicly provided.

Policy P-1.1

Park or Open Space Area North of Vine Drive
Encourage a developer-provided park or open space north of Vine Drive (if new development occurs). The park should be accessible to surrounding neighborhoods.

Policy P-1.2

Huidekooper Park Access Improved/East-West Trail Connections
Improve public access to Huidekooper Park for bikes and pedestrians to make it easier to get to from surrounding neighborhoods, including via east-west local neighborhood connections. (Figure 14 - Open Lands & Trails Plan on page 27 does not show exact locations.)

Policy P-1.3

Equestrian Facilities through Private Initiatives
Encourage private initiatives to build equestrian facilities in appropriate locations. Small stables and riding areas should minimize impacts of noise, odors, and dust on neighboring properties.

Goal P-2: Connected System of Trails

The Northwest Subarea will contain a system of connected trail corridors that provide access to the Foothills, Poudre River, the Soldier Creek trail, between neighborhoods, and to local parks, schools, and other destinations. This connected trail system will be achieved with willing participants.

Policy P-2.1

Multi-Purpose Trails Connect Major Destinations
Provide new multi-purpose recreation trails that connect neighborhoods and schools with the Foothills and Poudre River Trails, as shown Figure 14 - Open Lands & Trails Plan on page 27.

Policy P-2.2

Local Neighborhood Connections as Safe Routes for Travel
Provide local neighborhood connection trails that are safe routes for travel between schools, parks, natural areas, and homes; and that connect to other

major destinations within the community, including CSU and Downtown.



The Foothills Trail is accessible from this trailhead off of County Road 50 in the northwestern portion of the Subarea.

Policy P-2.3
Soldier Creek Trail

Establish Soldier Creek Trail, as indicated on the Open Land and Trails Plan, through partnerships, acquisitions, and development agreements.

Policy P-2.4
Proper Design and Screening of Trails Limits Impacts

Limit impacts of trails on neighboring properties through proper design, setbacks, and screening of trails.

Policy P-2.5
Trails Designed and Sited to Minimize Impacts
 Design and locate new trails to minimize impacts on wildlife, native plant communities, aesthetics, and other visitors' enjoyment of public open lands.

Policy P-2.6
Trails Established with Willing Landowners
 Establish future trail locations with property owner willingness and public acquisition, or as part of future developments.

STRATEGIES

The following strategies will help achieve the parks, recreation, and trails goals.

Parks, Recreation, and Trails Strategies	
P-1.1A	Work with developers to provide parkland and open space in future residential projects. <i>Who: Residents, County, City</i>
P-1.1B	Work with developers to support a developer-provided neighborhood park or open space north of Vine Drive. <i>Who: County, Residents, City</i>
P-2.1A	Amend Parks & Recreation Policy Plan – Master Plan (according to Open Lands and Trails Plan) to identify multi-purpose trails and Soldier Creek). enue <i>Who: City</i>
P-2.2A	Work with Colorado State University, developers, residents, community groups, and landowners to provide local neighborhood connection trails. <i>Who: Residents</i>
P-2.2B	Pursue grants to fund an informal network of trails generally shown on the Open Lands and Trails Plan, working with property owners to identify connections. <i>Who: Residents</i>
P-2.2C	Work with Colorado State University, developers, and community groups to provide a trail connection between the Foothills Trail, Laporte Av, and destinations south within the Foothills Campus. <i>Who: City, Residents, CSU</i>
P-2.2D	Require future developments to provide local pedestrian and bicycle connections. <i>Who: City, County</i>
P-2.3A	Pursue grants to fund trails in Soldier Creek Restoration project. <i>Who: City, County, Residents</i>
P-2.3B	Work with developers, residents, and community groups to provide a trail along Soldier Creek. <i>Who: City, Developers, Residents, Community Groups</i>

Transportation

The vision for the Northwest Subarea is to have a transportation system that provides safe, pleasant, and convenient travel for pedestrians, bicycles, equestrians, and motorists.

OVERVIEW

The Northwest Subarea does not have major transportation problems, although improvements need to be made to fix smaller issues. Most vehicular traffic in the Northwest Subarea occurs on the arterial streets: Overland Trail, Taft Hill Road, Vine Drive, Laporte Avenue, and Mulberry Street. The public would like these streets to be safer for pedestrians and bicycles, particularly for children traveling to and from school.

Future transportation improvements to arterial and local streets in the Northwest Subarea should improve safety and retain the semi-rural character of the area. Streets should accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, cars, and transit and should connect with recreational and local trails. Future improvements will depend on collaboration between residents, citizen groups, developers, the City, and the County. (Figure 15 - Transportation Plan on page 30.)

GOALS AND POLICIES

Goal T-1
Safe, Pleasant Transportation System
 The Northwest Subarea will contain a safe and functional system of streets, sidewalks, and bicycle lanes that allows for pleasant and safe and convenient travel by pedestrians, equestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit users.

Policy T-1.1
Local Trail Connections in Addition to Street Connections

Allow flexibility, consistent with code/standards, to provide local neighborhood trail connections (bike and pedestrian) to supplement local street connections.

Policy T-1.2
Streets Fit Character
 Allow flexibility to modify street standards for lower density developments to fit the character and context of the subdivisions in the area.



Many of the local neighborhood streets experience very little traffic and have somewhat rural street characteristics such as no sidewalks, curb, or gutter.

Policy T-1.3
Safe, Connected Routes to Bus Stops
 Coordinate street, sidewalk, and trail improvements to improve safe routes to and from bus stops.

Policy T-1.4
Bus Stops Improved
 Improve bus stops to meet current standards with improved shelters, benches, and bicycle racks.

Policy T-1.5
Crosswalks near Schools and Other Safety Improvements
 Monitor pedestrian traffic near schools to determine if additional crosswalk improvements will be warranted to improve pedestrian safety (i.e., south of Poudre High School on Mulberry Street and south of Lincoln Junior High on Vine Drive).



One aim of this Plan is to improve pedestrian safety near schools. (Photo by LSA)

STRATEGIES

Strategies to achieve a safe, efficient, and compatible transportation system include:

Transportation Strategies	
T-1.1A	Require future developments to provide local pedestrian and bicycle connections, particularly when the improvement will enhance access to schools, parks, and activity centers. <i>Who: City, County</i>
T-1.1B	Use the current street standards (Larimer County Urban Area Street Standards) to provide the highest levels of mobility for all users and modes throughout the Northwest Subarea, but consider the character of the area (Policy T-1.2). <i>Who: City, County</i>
T-1.3A	Undertake major capital improvement projects when grants or other funding opportunities present themselves. <i>Who: City</i>
T-1.3B	Enhance access to transit (via trails and sidewalks) and improve bus stops as funding becomes available through either the City's Pedestrian Plan or Safe Routes to School grants. <i>Who: City</i>
T-1.3C	Explore the possibility of incorporating additional criteria into the City's Capital Improvement Project ranking process to highlight projects identified in this and other subarea plans for inclusion in future Transportation Master Planning efforts. <i>Who: City</i>

(See Park, Recreation & Trails Strategies on page 38.)

Utilities and Services

The vision for the Northwest Subarea is to provide utilities and services that promote and protect health and safety, with an emphasis on local autonomy and self-reliance.

OVERVIEW

Currently, multiple public and private service districts provide utilities and services in the Northwest Subarea (i.e., water, wastewater, electricity, and stormwater management). Some residential properties in the County are serviced by individual well and septic systems.

It is important to monitor and maintain all utilities for health and safety purposes, but it is likely that many developed County neighborhoods may not need a change in utility services. On-going coordination and cooperation between residents, service providers, and government agencies will be necessary to address utility needs.

GOALS AND POLICIES

Goal U-1
Safe and Reliable Services
 Neighborhoods in the Northwest Subarea will have access to safe and reliable water and sewer service.

Policy U-1.1
 Existing County Neighborhood-Initiated Request for Services
 Work with County neighborhoods that initiate requests for services with the County, and form Improvement Districts for financing improved water, sewer, or streets— as needed.

Policy U-1.2
 New Neighborhoods with Safe and Reliable Services
 Require new development in the City or County to connect to public water and wastewater systems and “pay its fair share” for public utilities.

Goal U-2
Reduced Flood Risk
 The Northwest Subarea will have reduced flooding potential.

Policy U-2.1
 Michaud Drainage Basin Flooding Potential Reduced

Resolve flooding for the Michaud Drainage Basin (north of Vine Drive), as identified in a Stormwater Master Plan, and require new development to comply with the master plan once developed.



Additional planning and stormwater improvements will help reduce flooding potential in the area.

Policy U-2.2
 West Vine Basin Plan
 Resolve flooding for West Vine Basin, as proposed through the West Vine Basin Stormwater Master Plan, by requiring new development in the City and County to comply with the stormwater master plan. In addition, restore Soldier Creek to achieve natural areas and recreation objectives.

Policy U-2.3
 Development Complies with Floodplain Regulations to Avoid Hazards
 Require new development in the City and County to comply with floodplain regulations.

Goal U-3
 Service Provider Coordination
 Continued coordination will take place between the City, County, and other utility and service providers in the Northwest Subarea.

Policy U-3.1
 Electric Lines Underground
 Coordinate with Xcel Energy or electric service providers in the GMA to bury relocated electric lines in public right of way when feasible.

Policy U-3.2
 City-Maintained Utilities and Services
 Continue City maintenance of water, wastewater system, streets, electric utilities, parks, and other services currently provided by the City. (See Map A-9: Water and Sewer Utilities.)

Policy U-3.3
 Sunset Water District
 The City and County will continue discussions with Sunset Water District to address issues as they arise.



As development or equipment repairs or replacements occur, it may be possible gradually to bury electric lines.

STRATEGIES

The following strategies will help achieve utilities and services goals. (See additional Park, Recreation & Trails Strategies on page 38.)

Utilities and Services Strategies	
U-1.1A	Monitor sewer needs and work with neighborhoods that initiate discussions to connect to public wastewater treatment systems. <i>Who: Residents (with City, County)</i>
U-1.1B	When neighborhoods need new or improved services, initiate discussions with the County or City about how to provide services and how to establish local funding mechanisms. <i>Who: Residents</i>
U-2.1A	Develop a Stormwater Master Plan for the Michaud Drainage Basin (north of Vine Drive), to resolve flooding problems in that area. Prioritize this project on City and County Capital Improvements Plans. <i>Who: City, County</i>
U-2.2A	Require new development to comply with the West Vine Basin Stormwater Master Plan. (See additional Soldier Creek strategies in Chapters 4 and 5--Open Lands and Trails.) <i>Who: City, County</i>
U-3.1A	Continue to work in the GMA with electric service providers to bury electric lines in right of way when feasible. <i>Who: Residents, County, Electric Service providers</i>

Appearance and Design

The vision for the Northwest Subarea is for new development to fit in with the low density and country-like image of the area and to safeguard natural features.

OVERVIEW

The Northwest Subarea character has a country-feel and distinctive image in the broader Fort Collins/Larimer County community with a wide variety of styles, lot sizes, and activities.

New development should fit the pattern and character of the area in terms of scale, use, lot sizes, setbacks, and landscaping, and should provide connected open space and avoid natural areas. Public projects (e.g., gateways, streets, and trails) should also enhance the area's identity and image.

GOALS AND POLICIES

Goal AD-1: Unique Image and Identity

The Northwest Subarea will continue to have a unique image and identity, with a wide variety of compatible styles and activities.

Policy AD-1.1

Compatibility— Residential Guidelines

Encourage site-specific and contextual design and planning to promote new development that is compatible with the area. (See additional Land Use Strategies on page 35.)

Policy AD-1.2

Gateway Enhancements

Enhance key gateways at intersections shown on the Framework Plan— including Taft Hill and Laporte and Shields and Vine— to be a catalyst for reinvestment in businesses and to improve identity and image of the area.

Policy AD-1.3

Quality of Commercial Spaces and Appearance

As commercial redevelopment occurs in the area it should be of high quality and compatible in scale and use with adjacent residential neighborhoods.

STRATEGIES

The following strategies will help achieve consistent appearance and design of the area. (See additional Land Use Strategies to implement the Framework Plan on page 35.)

Appearance and Design Strategies	
AD-1.1A	Residential design guidelines (see next chapter) to achieve compatible residential development site plans and buildings to fit the neighborhoods and character in the Residential Foothills and Urban Estate Districts in the Northwest Subarea. <i>Who: County (primarily), Developers, Residents, City</i>
AD-1.2A	Identify priorities for gateways and provide funding, as available, for some limited signage and right-of-way landscaping improvements. <i>Who: City, County</i>
AD-1.2B	Work with Homeowner Associations and neighborhood groups to coordinate tree planting along major arterials such as Laporte and Overland Trail. <i>Who: Residents, City, County</i>
AD-1.2C	Work with the Poudre School District to improve landscape and streetscape along school properties. <i>Who: Residents</i>

Chapter 7

Guidelines for the Urban/Rural Edge

A Handbook for Residential Design in the Northwest Area

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THESE GUIDELINES?

The Northwest Subarea is made up of a diverse and eclectic variety of homes, horse properties, open fields, and scenic mountain views. For over a century, scattered, small scale developments have cropped up, coexisting with traditional agricultural uses and farms.

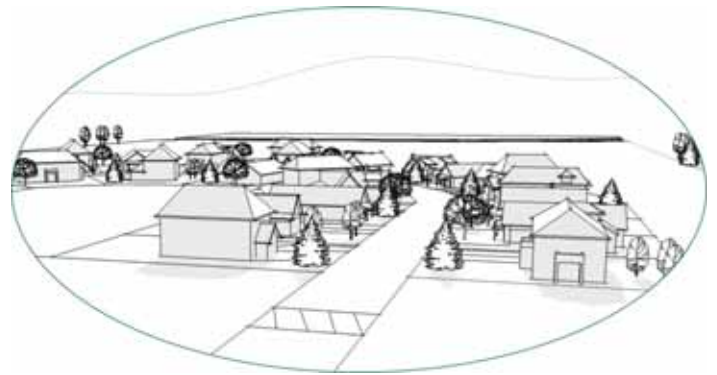
As new development occurs, subdivisions may be larger in scale than past developments and could be very different in character from existing neighborhoods. Developers can, however, take measures to retain certain valued traits (such as natural features and scenic views), and design neighborhoods in a way that shows variety, preserves foothills vistas, and retains and conforms with many of the “semi-rural” characteristics of the area.

The purpose of these guidelines is to offer future developers in the area clear guidelines to use in designing context-sensitive developments.

These guidelines, as part of the Plan, are not mandatory at this time. However, they can:

- Clarify for developers how existing residents would like new developments to look;
- Guide developers to create site plans, structures, and landscapes that are site- and context-sensitive and fit the community’s expressed interests;
- Ease the process of obtaining approvals for development applicants who follow the guidelines;
- Form a foundation for standards that could refine current code requirements in these areas; and
- Provide flexibility to make developments compatible.

The City or County may make certain of these guidelines mandatory after the Northwest Subarea Plan is adopted.



Relationship of buildings to the street

WHERE DO THE GUIDELINES APPLY?

Residential Foothills (RF): West of Overland Trail

The lands west of Overland Trail are characterized by large undeveloped or agricultural properties, natural areas (such as wetlands and areas with rare plant species), scenic views of the foothills, and access to nearby trails and open spaces. There are a few scattered residences. The area is designated as Residential Foothills (RF), with mandatory clustered development.

Urban Estate District (UE): East of Overland Trail, Outside City Limits

The area outside of City limits and generally east of Overland Trail is characterized by scattered smaller undeveloped or agricultural properties that are surrounded by subdivisions. The existing neighborhoods contain a variety of lot sizes, home styles and sizes, setbacks, densities, and other characteristics. This area contains fewer natural features than west of Overland Trail, but residents’ value the “elbow room” that the undeveloped parcels currently provide. Much of the area will continue to be classified as Urban Estate (UE). Clustered development is optional— not mandatory— for new development.

Contents

This guide contains the following sections:

- Steps to Prepare a Site Plan (including Clustered Development)
- Residential Foothills District – Site Planning
- Urban Estate District – Site Planning
- Design and Placement of Buildings (All Areas)

1. Steps to Prepare a Plan for the Site

(including Clustered Development)

A. IDENTIFY THESE FEATURES

First, identify the following:

- Roads, trails, utility easements and rights-of-way
- Topography (steep slopes and ridgelines)
- Sensitive environmental areas (as defined by the City /County or an Ecological Characterization Study prepared as part of a development proposal), including but not limited to streams, ditches, drainages wetlands, and wildlife habitat
- Geologic hazard areas
- Public lands
- Existing conservation easements/protected lands
- Adjacent property lot sizes, setbacks, and building sizes
- Built features, including driveways, farm roads, buildings, fences, walks, barns or sheds, drainage fields, utilities and utility easements
- Historically/culturally significant sites/structures

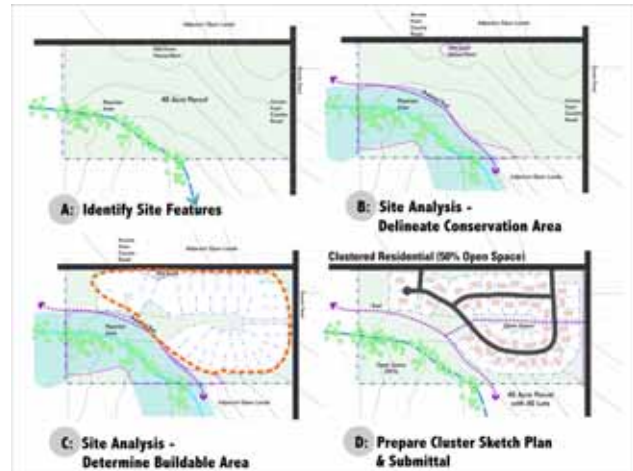
A thorough site analysis is a key first step for development of any property in this area. The City and County land use review processes both recommend Sketch Plan/Conceptual Review and neighborhood meetings for conservation development or cluster projects.

B. DELINEATING CONSERVATION AREAS

Next, delineate the conservation areas. They should:

- Provide contiguity with adjacent open lands, conservation areas and agriculture lands.
- Protect unique natural, historic, or cultural site features.
- Provide a minimum buffer of 100 feet between any residential structure and adjacent agricultural activities or open lands.
- Provide a minimum buffer of 100 feet along arterial roads.
- Avoid fragmentation of conservation areas within the site.
- Protect conservation areas in perpetuity by conservation easement or deed restriction. HOA may oversee management.

Figure 16 - Example of Site Analysis for the Residential Foothills Area (west of Overland Trail)



HOW DO THE COUNTY AND CITY APPROACH CLUSTERING NOW?

Larimer County's Conservation Development (CD) process encourages clustering on parcels of 30 acres or more outside the Growth Management Area. Many of the County's CD provisions could apply "at the edge."

The City of Fort Collins allows clustering in the Foothills Residential District and in the Urban Estate District. Both require a minimum of 50% open space. Certain criteria apply, as listed on following pages.

Site Planning Process (Before Submittal)

1. Pre-submittal Meeting - Prior to submitting a plan, the development applicant meets with representatives of the relevant planning departments (City/County).
2. Site Analysis Map - Before formal submittal of application, the applicant prepares a site analysis map that provides information about site conditions and context of subject site and on lands within 500 feet of the site boundaries. The site analysis should delineate conservation and buildable areas.
3. Staff Site Visit - City or County staff will visit the site with the applicant to discuss specific site features and/or concerns.
4. Sketch Plan - In the County, this is part of the regular process.
5. Neighborhood Meeting or Design Workshop - Ideally, the development applicant, neighbors, and other stakeholders will work together to find common ground before the developer prepares a Conceptual Review plan. The City or County may be able to participate in a design workshop effort depending on resources.

2. Residential Foothills District

(West of Overland Trail)

The guidelines for Residential Foothills emphasize clustering, conservation areas, and vista protection.



Residential Foothills development should leave open space for views and around natural areas.

GUIDELINES

1. Lot Sizes - Provide a variety of lot sizes within new RF clustered subdivisions.

Average lot size	20,000 sf
Minimum lot size	8,000 sf
Lot Mix	20% of lots 40,000 sf
	20% of lots 8,000 sf
	60% of lots approx. 20,000 sf

2. Vary Setback or Openings along Overland Trail - Provide varied development setbacks and open space to maintain foothills views.

3. Conserve Natural Features - Design site plans to protect natural features and provide conservation areas (minimum 50%): Provide at least 100 feet between natural features and future development.

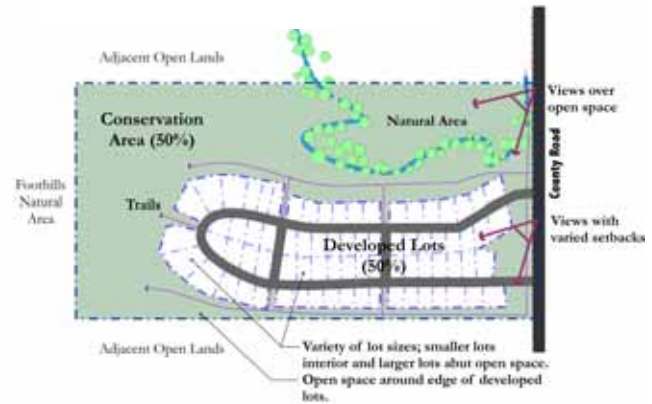
4. Contiguous Open Lands - Provide contiguous open space within a site connecting to adjacent open land.

5. Development Away from Natural Features - Concentrate development lots away from natural features into one or more clusters.

Desired Character in Residential Foothills

This area should continue to have agricultural lands or open lands with unobstructed views of the foothills, to the extent possible and residential density comparable to or lower than residential areas east of Overland Trail as development occurs.

Figure 17 – Example of 76-acre site with 76 units



6. Useable Common Open Space - Design interior open space to be useful to residents of the proposed development and visible or accessible from adjoining developments.

7. Relationship of Lots to Common Open Space - Design lots within a subdivision to abut interior open space.

8. Streets and Driveways - Locate streets, driveways, and buildable lots to work with the natural topography and avoid disturbing natural features.

WHAT IS CURRENTLY REQUIRED?

Site Planning

The "RF District" has general design criteria for clustering:

- Preserve natural features.
- Provide amenities (e.g., parks, trails).
- Minimize visual intrusion/blocking foothills vistas.
- Protect adjacent development (e.g., screening, fencing, landscaping).
- Conform to terrain; minimize grading and filling.
- Select building envelopes to protect structures from high winds and maximize energy conservation.
- Indicate areas for keeping farm animals and mitigation measures.

Lots/Building Placement

Requirements from "RL District" apply to clusters:

Density/Minimum Lot Size	3 times total building floor area, lots not less than 6,000 sf
Lot Width	60 feet
Yards	Front 20 ft, Rear/Side 15 ft, Interior 5 ft
Building Height	28 feet

3. Urban Estate District

(Outside City Limits/East of Overland Trail)

The guidelines for Urban Estate emphasize compatibility with neighborhoods and common open space.



New residential developments should leave open space at the edge near neighbors

GUIDELINES

1. Lot Size - Provide a variety of lot sizes within new Urban Estate subdivisions. Lot sizes should relate to lot sizes in adjacent subdivisions.

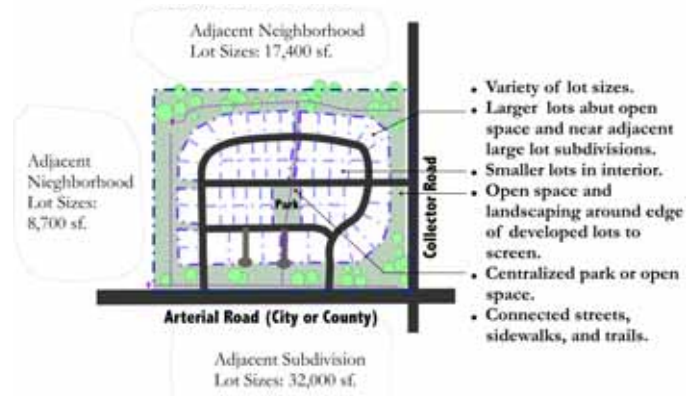
Average lot size	9,600 sf
Minimum lot size	6,000 sf
Lot Mix	20% of lots 15,000 sf
	20% of lots 6,000 sf
	60% of lots 9,600 sf

2. Common Open Space - Provide contiguous blocks of open space that connect to adjacent open lands.

3. Useable Open Space/Amenities - Design common open space to benefit residents of the proposed development and to buffer adjoining developments.

4. Relationship of Lots to Open Space - Design lots within a subdivision so they abut interior open space.

Figure 18 – Example of a 33-acre site with 66 Units



WHAT USES ARE POTENTIALLY ALLOWED IN RF AND UE

UE District - Allows parks, open land, farm animals, single family, two-family dwellings, single family attached homes, group homes, public/private schools, places of worship, public facilities, and wireless telecommunication facilities.

RF District - The above uses may also be approved in the RF District, except for two-family or attached dwellings and cemeteries.

WHAT IS CURRENTLY REQUIRED?

Site Planning

The “UE District” contains similar criteria for clustering as in the “RF District,” except for No. 6 (i.e., Selecting building envelopes to protect structures from winds or to maximize energy conservation).

Lots/Building Placement

The requirements from “UE District” apply to clusters:

Density/Minimum Lot Size	One-half acre, but can be smaller in a cluster - up to 5 units/ac in area of cluster
Lot Width	100 feet
Yards	Front 20 ft, Rear/Side 25 ft or varies, Interior 5 ft
Building Height	3 stories (38 feet)

Desired Character in Urban Estate

This area should continue to have a variety of stable neighborhoods (predominately in Larimer County). As new development occurs, it should fit the context of what is there now and provide buffers, screening, and landscaping to protect existing development. Clustering is optional but is preferred in areas along the bluffs and the Poudre River.

4. Design and Placement of Buildings

(All Areas)

For more information, see detailed guidelines below.

This image shows:

1 - Home "footprint" not more than 25% of lot.

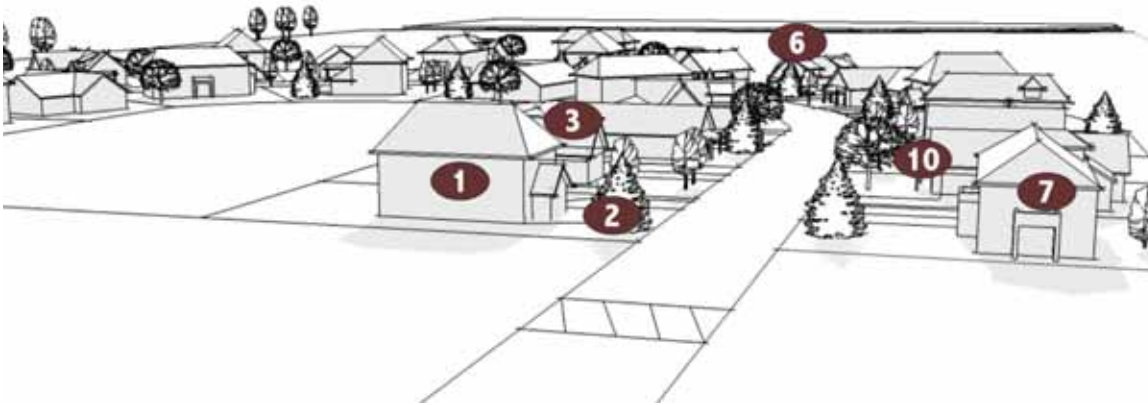
2 - Varied lot sizes.

3 - Varied roof planes.

6 - Varied orientation of buildings.

7 - Use of different models of buildings.

10 - Varied setback from local street.



GUIDELINES

1. House Footprint Relative to Lot Size - House sizes should relate to lot sizes— so building does not dominate. For RF: Building footprint will be no larger than 20% of lot size, ideally. For UE: no larger than 25% for exterior lots and 40% for interior lots.

2. House Size Relative to Adjacent Homes and Public Areas - Include a variety of sizes within a subdivision (as noted in site plan section) Relate size of buildings to lot sizes and adjacent properties (e.g., 2 stories maximum, with 1 story preferred near edge of property or no more than 20% difference in height.) Locate taller and larger structures on interior portions of a site, screened from adjacent developments or public rights-of-way.

3. Building Massing and Roof Planes - Vary building massing and roof planes, with lower profile buildings near adjacent properties.

4. Durable Materials - Construct buildings of durable materials (e.g., stone, masonry, and treated wood).

5. Colors - Use predominately muted colors with brighter colors for accent only. Use a variety of colors in a subdivision (with at least three different colors within a subdivision).

6. Building Orientation to Street - Vary orientation of buildings to local street.

7. Style and Types of Buildings - Use at least 3 model types in all developments. (Note: current standard requires at least 3 types with 10 homes or more.)

8. Garage Placement - Design a variety of garage placement. (Note: not comprising more than 30% of ground floor street-facing facade. Recessed, detached, or side or rear-facing garages preferred.)

9. Building Setbacks from Arterials - For RF: Setbacks should be larger than RL standards and more consistent with arterial-street setbacks of existing developments (i.e., at least 100 feet). For UE: Setbacks should be larger than current UE standards and more consistent with setbacks of existing developments (i.e., At least 50 feet)

10. Building Setbacks from Local Street - For RF: Vary setbacks (i.e., 40 feet preferred instead of 25 feet). At least 20% of buildings should be setback 50 feet or more. For UE: Vary setbacks. At least 20% of buildings should be setback 40 feet or more.

Current Standards Require

The City standards for the LMN District require a variety of styles, orientation, and building types. Generally, these standards apply only if a development has at least 10 units, or more stringent standards apply for 100 units or more.

5. Landscape Design and Environment

(All Areas)

These guidelines emphasize a semi-rural character of landscape and environment.



Design landscaping to appear more natural or informal with clusters of plants and trees.



Use native or drought-tolerant grasses and plants.



Use fencing that is open, not solid or opaque.

GUIDELINES

1. Landscaping with Natural Appearance - Design common landscaping to appear more natural or informal, with clusters of plants and trees. Hedgerows or windbreaks may be appropriate for screening buildings.
2. Native/Drought-Tolerant Plants - Use native and/or drought-tolerant grasses and plants.
3. Accessory Structures - Design sheds and stables to resemble agricultural structures of the area.
4. Fencing - Use fencing that is open, not solid (maximum of 30% opacity). Use predominately natural materials— wood/wire, stone, or brick. Fences over 100 feet in length should have openings and/or lower heights height every 100 feet to allow wildlife and trails to pass-through.
5. Signs and Gateways - Construct subdivision identification signs and gateways of natural materials; could be ranch-or equestrian-style to portray western ranch feel.
6. Lighting - Use only low-level down-cast lighting.
7. Footpaths and Trails - Include local footpaths or trails through common open spaces--designed to avoid natural features and to connect to existing trails.

WHAT NOT TO DO! UNDESIRABLE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Large houses on small lots. The proportion of the building to the lot size is an important factor in the area.

- Homogenous “cookie cutter” development, including uniform model types, roofs, and color schemes.
- Houses with prominent front-facing garages.
- Houses with shallow and uniform setbacks.

Neighborhoods in the Area & The Context

The planning team has prepared an analysis of the existing subdivisions in the Northwest Subarea (e.g., looking at characteristics such as density, lot size, and setbacks). The area has a lot of variation. For example, the density of Stagecoach Subdivision averages about 4 units per acre, whereas Lin Mar has lot sizes closer to 1 acre average. (See Figure 24 on page 59.) The intent of these guidelines is to guide new development to fit the context of what is around it— density, lot sizes, and setbacks. Therefore, the analysis may be useful for a developer starting to prepare a site plan in the Northwest Subarea.

Chapter 8

Action Plan

Overview

The following pages, (Figure 20 – Action Plan pages 51-54) list the strategies or actions the City, County, and other partners should take to implement the goals of this Northwest Subarea Plan. The list includes a combination of regulatory approaches, new programs, partnerships, possible new funding mechanisms, and other actions. For each strategy, the table lists the responsible or lead agency or partner— the City (within City limits), County (in unincorporated areas), or residents. In some cases, the strategy will involve more than one of these parties. Coordination and strong communication between the City, County, and residents will be an important part of implementation.

Types of Actions

Actions that will be necessary to implement this plan are: regulatory approaches; coordination and partnerships; policy directions; capital improvements, and design guidelines. Each of these types is briefly described below.

REGULATORY APPROACHES

The City and County development regulations will need to be consistent with the goals, policies, and land use directions of this Plan. This Plan suggests new Residential Foothills classification west of Overland Trail and includes guidelines that the City may implement through regulatory revisions.

COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

Many actions identified in this Plan will take better means of communication between the City, County, Colorado State University (CSU) and the area residents, businesses, and landowners.

POLICY DIRECTIONS

The City and County will carry out a number of the policies in this Plan through day-to-day policy decisions (of planning staff, board members, and elected officials), particularly regarding development

proposals in the Subarea. This Plan will guide decisions occurring for the area.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

This Plan recommends the City and County work with neighborhood groups to plan for improvements to services, facilities, and trails. This Plan also suggests coordinating the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) of the City with the transportation needs and long range growth and development goals for the area.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

This Plan recommends the guidelines (Chapter 7) be included in the Fort Collins Design Manual (2000) and considered as code revisions occur. It recommends the County use the suggested residential guidelines to achieve compatible site plans and buildings to fit the neighborhoods and character in the Residential Foothills and Urban Estate Districts.

Key Strategies of this Plan

Based on public input and ideas, the key strategies, or priorities for implementing the Northwest Subarea Plan, are as follows:

- Coordinate efforts of agencies and neighborhoods;
- Share timely information;
- Encourage development to comply with design guidelines that are consistent with area's character;
- Make development approvals consistent with the plan;
- Support neighborhood-based initiatives and action;
- Use a variety of tools to achieve new open space and trails.

Roles and Responsibilities

Throughout the planning process, a basic premise has been that this Plan should be fair to all the parties involved and that multiple entities will be responsible for carrying out the plan recommendations. The table below summarizes the roles and responsibilities that each agency, resident, landowner, or business has and will have in planning for the area and implementing this Plan.

Figure 19 - Roles and Responsibilities for Implementing the Northwest Subarea Plan

ENTITY	ROLE IN DEVELOPING THIS PLAN	ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY IN IMPLEMENTING THIS PLAN
Residents/ Homeowners/ Neighborhood Groups	Participated in plan events, interviews, and comment forms	Inform neighbors about this Plan
	Informed other neighbors about the process	Maintain upkeep of properties
	Provide ideas and input to City/County planning team to help shape the plan, including needs for infrastructure and services, ideas to maintain the area, and suggestions for acceptable types of future development (taking into consideration property owner development rights)	Monitor City and County implementation of this Plan Form local groups to make ideas in this Plan happen (e.g., Northwest Neighbors -- build a trail, organize groups, raise funds, form districts)
Property Owners/ Developers	Participated in plan events and interviews Provided ideas to City/County planning team, including acceptable development restrictions or directions for future use of vacant properties (taking into consideration current rights to develop and resident and homeowner interests)	As properties develop, follow relevant plan recommendations and comply with applicable City and County standards Meet with surrounding residents to discuss development proposals
Businesses	Participated in plan events and interviews	Maintain upkeep of properties
	Informed other businesses in the area about the process	Monitor City and County implementation of this plan
	Provide ideas to City/County planning team	Participate in local efforts to implement plan recommendations
Larimer County	Hosted public events and provide opportunities for the public to share ideas	Continue to work with City (per Intergovernmental Agreement) to jointly carry out recommendations of this plan
	Prepared plan document jointly with the City, taking into consideration public input	Revise development code if necessary to reflect plan recommendations for future development patterns and characteristics
	Larimer County Planning Commission adopted the plan	Review development proposals (in County) to make sure new development projects are consistent with this plan
		Coordinate and construct necessary infrastructure improvements. (Note: major new improvements are limited to available funding.)
		Provide code enforcement
		Provide services including police protection and public road maintenance Work with neighborhood groups and developers to develop Local Improvement Districts and other resources to fund projects and maintenance
City of Fort Collins	Hosted public events and provide opportunities for the public to share ideas	Continue to work with the County (per Intergovernmental Agreement) to jointly carry out recommendations of this Plan
	Prepared plan document jointly with the County, taking into consideration public input	Revise development code if necessary to reflect plan recommendations for future development patterns and characteristics
	City Council adopted the plan	Review development proposals (in City limits) to make sure new development projects are consistent with this Plan
		Coordinate and construct necessary infrastructure improvements (Note: major new improvements are limited to available funding)
		Provide code enforcement (City neighborhoods)
		Provide water, sewer, police protection and other services (City neighborhoods) Assist local organizations with implementation efforts
Colorado State University	Provided technical guidance to City and County during plan preparation	Bring project development proposals to City and County for Location and Extent Review Share plans with residents and neighbors in the area

Action Plan

The Action Plan identifies all the strategies the City, County, residents, and others should implement to carry forward this Plan.

Figure 20 - Action Plan Summary

STRATEGY	ACTION	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY (AGENCY OR OTHER)	START TIME IN YEARS				RESOURCES OR CAPITAL COSTS	POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES
			ON-GOING	0-2	3-5	5+		
Community and History								
C-1.1a	Prepare a survey of historic resources.	City		✗			\$35K – staff	Colorado Historical Society
C-1.2a	Explore opportunities for historic interpretation and education.	Residents			✗		staff	
C-2.1a	Provide technical/financial support for neighborhood organizations.	City (for City neighborhoods)	✓					City Neighborhood Services Office
C-2.1b	Seek small grants for neighborhood-initiated projects.	Residents	✓					County, City Neighborhood Services Office
C-2.2a	Facilitate communication between owners of large undeveloped properties and surrounding residents.	Residents, City, County	✓				staff	
C-2.2b	Provide residents and neighborhood groups with information and resources. (Note: The City Neighborhood Services Office provides services.)	City, County, Residents	✓					City Neighborhood Services Office
C-2.2c	Evaluate incorporating neighborhood information and resources into the City's "Free Seminar Series."	City		✗				
C-2.2d	Create a "Citizen's Guide to Planning and Development."	City, County		✗			staff	
C-2.2e	Ensure consistent, ongoing communication between residents, neighborhood organizations, and the City and County (re: this Plan and public and private development projects).	City, County, Residents	✓				staff	
C-2.2f	Ensure response to neighborhood groups when they initiate contact about current events and projects (e.g., neighborhood meetings, workshops, website information, and mailings).	City, County	✓				staff	
Land Use								
LU-1.1a	Include guidelines to address urban/rural edge in City's Design Manual	City		✗				
LU-1.2a	Amend the City Structure Plan to be consistent with land uses shown on the Northwest Subarea Framework Plan map.	City		✗			staff	

STRATEGY	ACTION	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY (AGENCY OR OTHER)	START TIME IN YEARS				RESOURCES OR CAPITAL COSTS	POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES
			ON-GOING	0-2	3-5	5+		
LU-1.2b	Amend County zoning, as requested during a development application, to be consistent with land uses shown on the Framework Plan.	County	✓				staff	
LU-2.1a	Change zoning to be consistent with designated Limited Commercial areas on the Framework Plan.	City		✗			staff	
LU-2.2a	Work with owners of industrial or transitioning properties to identify future uses that will be compatible and will serve nearby neighborhoods.	City, County	✓					
LU-2.2b	Provide gateway signage and enhanced intersection design to encourage property-owner investment/renovation/redevelopment of the commercial properties.	City			✗			
LU-2.2c	Identify regulatory strategies or incentives to support non-residential land uses at Laporte east of Taft Hill and Shields/Vine that enhance and benefit surrounding residential areas.	City		✗				
LU-2.3a	Continue to review the Land Use Code to consider agricultural and rural economic uses in the area.	City (Land Use Code Team)		✗			staff	City Land Use Code Team
LU-3.1a	Continue to work with CSU on early notification to residents about development plans on the Foothills Campus and trails and open lands.	City, County (with CSU)	✓					
Open Lands and Natural Areas								
OL-1.1a	Continue to pursue acquisition of or easements on priority open lands from willing landowners.	City, Residents	✓					Natural Areas Fund
OL-1.1b	Explore establishing an east-west wildlife corridor.	Residents		✗				
OL-1.1c	Work with developers west of Overland Trail to provide open space that conserves natural areas and foothills views.	City, County, Developers	✓				staff	n/a
OL-1.2a	Soldier Creek: Coordinate agencies and developers to pursue the flood control projects, stream restoration, natural areas, and construction of neighborhood trails.	City, County, Developers			✗			Great Outdoors Colorado Grant
OL-1.2b	Collaborate to implement restoration of the creek on the PSD property near Poudre High.	City, PSD				✗		
OL-1.3a	Coordinate with CSU to protect natural features and views.	City, County			✗			
OL-1.3b	Coordinate with Lafarge and landowners on goals for open lands and trails in the Poudre River Corridor.	City		✗				
Parks, Recreation, and Trails								
P-1.1a	Work with developers to provide parkland and open space in future residential projects.	Residents, County, City	✓				staff	n/a

STRATEGY	ACTION	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY (AGENCY OR OTHER)	START TIME IN YEARS				RESOURCES OR CAPITAL COSTS	POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES
			ON-GOING	0-2	3-5	5+		
P-1.1b	Work with developers to support a small developer-provided neighborhood park or open space north of Vine Drive.	County, Residents, City	✓				staff	n/a
P-2.1a	Amend Parks and Recreation Policy Plan -- Master Plan section (to be consistent with this Plan's Open Lands and Trails Plan).	City		✗			staff	
P-2.2a	Provide local neighborhood connection trails.	Residents		✗				County Small Grants, private donations
P-2.2b	Pursue grants to fund an informal network of trails; work with property owners to identify connections.	Residents	✓					County Small Grants, private donations
P-2.2c	Collaborate to provide a trail connection between the Foothills Trail, Laporte Avenue, and destinations south within the Foothills Campus.	City, Residents, CSU				✗		
P-2.2d	Require future developments to provide local pedestrian and bicycle connections.	City, County	✓					
P-2.3a	Pursue grants to fund Soldier Creek trails.	City, County, Residents			✗			Great Outdoors Colorado Grant
P-2.3b	Provide a trail along Soldier Creek. (see OL 1.2b)	City, Developers, Residents, Community Groups			✗			
Transportation								
T-1.1a	Require future developments to provide local pedestrian and bicycle connections.	City, County	✓					
T-1.1b	Use the current street standards (Larimer County Urban Area Street Standards), but consider the character of the area (Policy T-1.2).	City, County	✓					
T-1.2a	Undertake major capital improvement projects when grants or other funding opportunities present themselves.	City	✓					
T-1.2b	Enhance access to transit (via trails and sidewalks) and improve bus stops as funding becomes available.	City		✗				
T-1.2c	Explore the possibility of incorporating additional criteria into the City's CIP ranking process to highlight projects identified in this Plan.	City			✗			
Utilities and Services								
U-1.1a	Monitor sewer needs and work with neighborhoods that initiate discussions to connect to public wastewater treatment systems.	Residents (with City, County)	✓					
U-1.1b	Neighborhoods initiate discussions with the County or City about services and local funding mechanisms.	Residents	✓					Improvement Districts

STRATEGY	ACTION	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY (AGENCY OR OTHER)	START TIME IN YEARS			RESOURCES OR CAPITAL COSTS	POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES
			ON-GOING	0-2	3-5		
U-2.1a	Develop a Stormwater Master Plan for the Michaud Drainage Basin. Prioritize on City & County CIPs.	City, County		✘			
U-2.2a	Require new development to comply with the West Vine basin Stormwater Master Plan.	City, County	✓				
U-3.1a	Continue to work in the GMA with Electric service providers to bury electric lines in right of way when feasible.	Residents, County, Electric Service Providers	✓				
Appearance and Design							
AD-1.1a	Use residential design guidelines (Chapter 7) to achieve compatible residential development site plans and buildings.	County (primarily), Developers, Residents, City	✓				
AD-1.2a	Identify priorities for gateways and provide funding for some limited signage and right-of-way landscaping improvements.	City, County		✘			Capital Improvement Program
AD-1.2b	Coordinate tree planting along major arterials.	Residents, City, County		✘			
AD-1.2c	Collaborate to improve landscape and streetscape along school properties.	Residents		✘			

Appendix A

Existing Conditions & Issues

Overview

Early in the planning process, the planning team prepared a thorough inventory of existing conditions to inform and guide the development of this Plan. This information makes clear the various conditions, priorities, and dynamics operating within the community and helped shape the recommendations of the plan.

The inventory provides background information on the following topics:

- The People and Neighborhoods of the Northwest Subarea
- Land Use and Development
- Commercial/Industrial Market Analysis
- Colorado State University (CSU) Foothills Campus
- Environmental Features and Natural Areas
- Parks, Recreation, and Trails
- Transportation and Access
- Schools
- Water and Sewer
- Stormwater Management and Floodplain Administration
- Electricity
- Public Safety
- Appearance and Design
- Annexation

NORTHWEST SUBAREA LOCATION

The Northwest Subarea is an area of approximately 4.3 square miles (2,680 acres) that is located in the northwestern portion of the Fort Collins Growth Management Area. The majority of the Subarea - almost 2,300 acres (85%) - is unincorporated Larimer County, with 390 acres of the Subarea (15%) in the 2007 City limits. (See Map A-1on page 71.)

The Subarea is an irregular shape, but generally has the following boundaries:

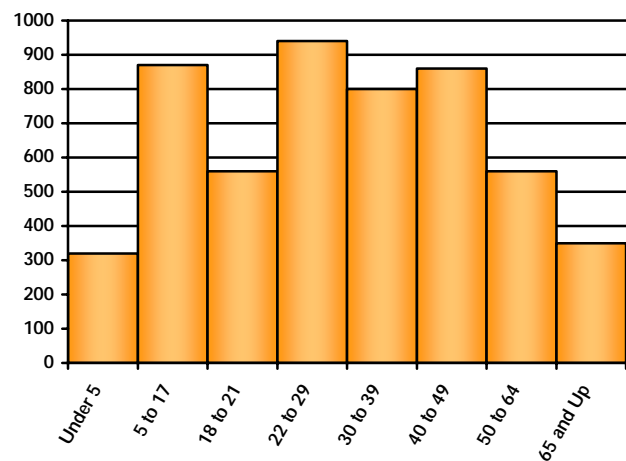
- North: County Road 50.
- Northeast: Cache la Poudre River.
- Southeast: Staircase northeast from City Park Nine Golf Course to West Vine Drive.
- South: West Mulberry Street.
- West: CSU Foothills Campus.

The People & Neighborhoods of the Northwest Subarea

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

At the 2000 U.S. Census, the Northwest Subarea was home to approximately 5,200 residents living in just over 2,100 homes. The average household size was 2.55 people per household, slightly higher than in the City as a whole (2.45). Residents tend to be either white (74%) or Hispanic (13%). Age distribution within the Subarea follows a normal curve with the exception of a drop off in the number of college-aged residents.

Figure 21 - Age Distribution of Residents within the Subarea



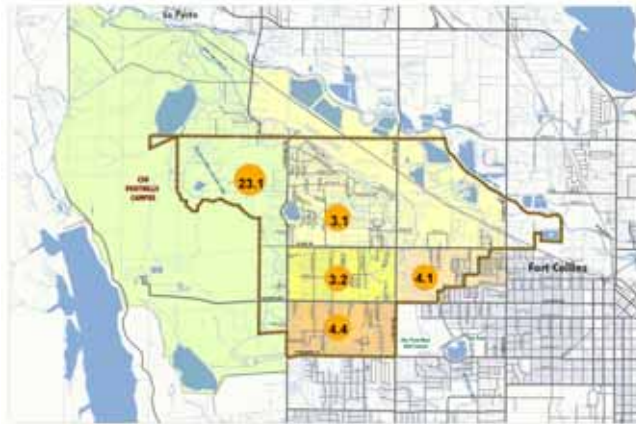
Source: US Census 2000, Clarion Associates, August 2005

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

The Northwest Subarea represents a unique spectrum of housing and neighborhoods in the Fort Collins Growth Management Area, because it contains residential types ranging from rural or country lots to traditional urban neighborhoods. The 2000 US Census block group boundaries were used for analysis. While the Northwest Subarea has not yet experienced the growth and development found in the central and southern portions of Fort Collins, a

number of subdivisions containing apartments and single-family residences have expanded through this area in the past 30-40 years.

Figure 22 - Census Block Groups of the Northwest Subarea



Source: 2000 U.S. Census, Clarion Associates August 2005

The following sections describe the Subarea according to US Census Block Groups.

Block Group 3.1

This area lies north of Vine Drive and east of North Overland Trail, and includes the Poudre River Corridor. With the exception of Lincoln Junior High School and the Granada Heights Subdivision, this entire area is in Larimer County. Subdivisions in this area include Greyrock Commons (pictured on this page), Stagecoach, Poudre Overlook, Lin Mar Acres, Solar Ridge, Terra Vista and others. (See Figure 23 below and Map A-2 on page 72.)



Greyrock Commons (in Block Group 3.1).

Block Group 3.2

This area includes the area north of Laporte Avenue and south of West Vine Drive, in between Overland Trail and Taft Hill Road. These County subdivisions are somewhat physically separate from City neighborhoods and commercial or services. The Rostek subdivision lacks wastewater facilities and paved roads, giving it rural qualities, despite its close proximity to the City. Other subdivisions in this area include the Rostek Addition, West Acres, Crawford Acres, Green Acres, and others.

Block Group 4.1

This area along the southeastern edge of the Subarea contains the Vine Drive, Mountain View Heights, and Schmidtberger subdivisions. The majority of the remaining land of this area is agricultural, and is transected by Larimer County Canal No. 2. A number of commercial activities are scattered along the major arterial streets near the intersections of West Vine Drive and Shields Street, and Laporte Avenue and Taft Hill Road.

Figure 23 - Housing Characteristics by Census Block Group

	3.1	3.2	4.1	4.4	23.1	Fort Collins
Homeownership Rate	77%	73%	52%	28%	76%	57%
Median Home Value	161,100	139,100	121,800	130,800	211,800	169,600
% Income Spent on Mortgage	19.6	22.1	18.1	25.3	28.1	20.0
Median Gross Rent	749	741	673	588	694	689
% Income Spent on Rent	26.1	19.9	23.4	30.5	30.6	29.4
Median Household Income	54,635	47,065	36,581	26,750	66,188	44,459

Note: Due to geographic limitations of the data, these numbers include some lands adjacent to the Subarea but that generally contain open space or undeveloped lands.

Source: 2000 U.S. Census, Clarion Associates August 2005



Farms north of Vine Drive.

Block Group 4.4

The southernmost portion of the Subarea, within or directly near City limits, is similar to the general pattern of development in the City's older neighborhoods, such as the West Central neighborhood. This area is more densely developed with older, bungalow-style residences, shorter blocks, and a high concentration of rental units. It is closer to amenities and public spaces like the three schools and City Park Nine Golf Course.

Block Group 23.1

Most of this area, located west of North Overland Trail, is still semi-rural, with large agricultural lots, open fields, and horses and livestock. A large portion of this area is a City natural area.

EXISTING HISTORIC RESOURCES

To date, no comprehensive survey has been conducted of the historic resources in the Northwest Subarea. However, two historical studies completed in 1995 covering the entire Growth Management Area identified resources or historical information for the Northwest Subarea. The first, "Agriculture in the Fort Collins UGA, 1862 – 1994" by Cultural Resource Historians, surveyed and assessed agriculturally-related resources. Several properties were surveyed intensively and most of these were found to be individually eligible for the National and/or the City's Local Landmark Register:

- Michaud Farm (VerStraeten Farm), late 1870s, 3317 West County Road 50 (eligible)
- Taft House, 1870, 1120 North Taft Hill Road (eligible)
- Knight Farm, 1881, 910 North Shields Street (eligible)
- Prenzlów (Watrous) House, late 1880s, 1337 West Vine Drive (eligible)

- Scott Farm, 1902, 911 North Shields Street (eligible)
- Empire Grange, 1911, 2306 West Mulberry (eligible)
- Rogers Barn, 2515 West Mulberry (not eligible)



A number of the historic structures within the Subarea, like the Mountainview Schoolhouse above, have not yet been surveyed.

Other properties identified but not surveyed included:

- 2912 West Vine Drive – Farm Complex (potentially eligible)
- 3039 West Vine Drive – Farm Complex (potentially eligible)
- 325 North Taft Hill Road – House/Barn (eligibility not assessed)
- 709 North Taft Hill Road – House (potentially eligible)
- 921 North Taft Hill Road – Farm Complex (potentially eligible)
- 1041 North Taft Hill Road – House (eligibility not assessed)
- 1800 block North Taft Hill Road (eligibility not assessed)
- 2631 West Mulberry Street – Barn (potentially eligible)

Since the historic study only identified agricultural properties, the area should be comprehensively surveyed to identify and assess other types of properties. A few of the known historic resources not yet surveyed include:

- 2540 Laporte Avenue (Mountainview Schoolhouse)
- 2704 West Vine Drive
- 3039 West Vine Drive
- 3040 West Vine Drive
- 2630 Laporte Avenue (historic storefront)

The second historical study was “An Historical and Archaeological Survey of the Overland/Cherokee Trails Through the Fort Collins Urban Growth Area, Larimer County, Colorado” by Retrospect (in June, 1995). This survey provided historical background on two major historic transportation routes providing passage through the Rocky Mountains. The Cherokee Trail followed the base of the Front Range foothills from Denver to LaPorte, where it connected with the Overland Trail. The Overland Trail followed the South Platte River and the Cache la Poudre River before continuing northward into Wyoming. Portions of both historic routes passed through or near Northwest Fort Collins. Today, no evidence of these historic roads remain within the Northwest Subarea, although the survey found trail ruts and limited scatter of fragmentary historic artifacts near the Cathy Fromme Prairie and Pineridge Open Space.



Michaud Farm, in the northwestern corner of the subarea, dates back to the mid-1870s.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION ISSUES

Many Historic Structures Dot the Area

The Northwest area contains a number of historic structures scattered throughout the area. Some are over 100 years old and were home to early residents and founders of Fort Collins, including the Historic Taft House (circa 1899). Very little is known about these early structures and their inhabitants, although historical information exists for the research to take place. None of these resources are protected, either through the City’s local landmark program or through the National Register of Historic Places.

Land Use and Development

EXISTING LAND USE

As indicated in Table A-2, the Northwest Subarea, while nearly 40 percent residential, still has nearly 25 percent of its land devoted to agricultural uses (601 acres). Ten percent of the Subarea is industrial—primarily Forney Industries— and one percent is commercial. Public uses, largely consisting of the schools, occupy eight percent of the total land area. Conserved open space covers seven percent. Within the Subarea, 177 acres are vacant (7%). (See Map A-3 on page 73.)

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL— STRUCTURE PLAN / ZONING

The City’s Structure Plan designates land uses for all lands within the Growth Management Area, even though the City does not zone land uses for the unincorporated area. While currently zoned for agricultural uses, future development in the County, must conform to the City’s comprehensive plan (Structure Plan) and the County’s GMA Overlay Zone District. The Structure Plan shows 200 acres of vacant and agricultural lands planned for Low Density Mixed-Use neighborhood and 441 acres planned for Urban Estate residential. With these types of development, the Subarea could accommodate approximately 1,450 new housing units and 3,760 new residents. The Structure Plan does not designate any future industrial or commercial development in the area (except for one small employment district along West Vine Drive).

In addition, if the existing large residential parcels in the area (larger than 1 acre) are split and developed over time, the 160 parcels ranging from one to five acres could allow another 170 housing units and 490 people. The 20 parcels that are larger than 5 acres could provide capacity for 200 new housing units and 886 new people. (See Maps A-4 and A-5 on pages 74-75)

Figure 24 - Existing Subdivisions Characteristics

	Subdivision Size (ac)	Average Lot Size (ac)	Number of Lots	Developed area (ac)	Gross Density (du/dev ac)	Net Density (du/total ac) streets and o.s. taken out	Average Building Footprint Size (sf)	Proportion of Lot Size to Bldg Footprint	Amt. common OS (ac)	% common open space	Avg setback from local street edge	Avg setback from arterial street edge	Variation in setback from local (ft)	Variation in setback from arterial (ft)	Typical lot width (ft.)
Stagecoach	35.56	0.19	142	28	5.07	3.99	1500	5.5	0	0%	31	81	14	53	60-70
	Does not include open space along New Mercer Ditch and Larimer County Canal No. 2; subdivision contains cul-de-sacs and sidewalks.														
Lin Mar Acres	41.37	0.96	35	33.8	1.04	0.85	2,700	15.5	0	0%	54	62.5	27	40	130-200
	Only 2 bldgs along Overland Tr, lots of sheds and accessory buildings, different orientation of buildings, including diagonal.														
Dean Acres	27.00	0.408	52	21.25	2.45	1.93	2,490	7.1	0	0%	39	84.5	31	40	85
	Open space does not include Lee Lake open space, larger lots and setbacks near Overland Tr. Many lots on south end of subdivision are .2 acres (more similar to Bonnaview).														
Rostek	62.37	0.74	80	59.79	1.34	1.28	1,400	23.0	0	0%	45	35	150	5	100
	Lots of accessory units on lots. Abundance of cars and other items. Much variation in setbacks (2 -200 feet from local street) - makes it hard to come up with an average.														
Greyrock Commons	16.20	0.076	30	4.8	6.30	6.90	3,000	0.7	11.8	72%	36.2	n/a	20	n/a	36
	Need to verify number of units. Most units are 2-3 per building. Many garages are separate. Common open space in the middle of the grounds is not included in open space calculations. Garages are closer to street than buildings.														
Bonnaview	8.95	0.28	22	6.74	3.26	2.46	2,710	4.5	0	0%	45	66	10	45	80
	Not much variation in setback or building orientation from local street, Theo Av.														
Solar Ridge	34.71	0.35	72	25.79	2.79	2.07	2,840	5.4	2.85	8.21%	55	n/a	96	n/a	90
	Few sheds or accessory structures. Common open space along New Mercer Ditch. Streets narrower than Stagecoach with sidewalks. Wide variation in lot depth.														
Delehoy MLD	14.69	3.67	4	14.69	0.27	0.27	1,000	159.9	0	0%		n/a		n/a	90
Poudre Overlook		0.2	0.2	0.4											
Bellweather	14.41	0.13	44	7.18	3.05	320.00			5.63	39%		n/a		n/a	50
	Approved City LMN subdivision. Density is similar to older subdivisions in the Subarea.														

Note: Saddleback is very similar to Solar Ridge, though no common open space. Liberty Heights, Shirley Heights and Green Acres are similar to Bonnaview.

Figure 25 - Summary of Existing Land Use within the Subarea

Land Use	Fort Collins		Larimer County		Northwest Subarea	
	Acres	% Total	Acres	% Total	Acres	% Total
Agricultural	41	10%	561	25%	601	22%
Commercial	1	0%	20	1%	21	1%
Industrial	5	1%	259	11%	264	10%
Open Space	0	0%	185	8%	185	7%
Public	153	39%	67	3%	220	8%
Residential	118	30%	906	40%	1,025	38%
Right-of-Way	43	11%	140	6%	183	7%
Vacant	29	7%	149	7%	177	7%
Total	390	100%	2,287	100%	2,676	100%

Source: City of Fort Collins' parcel data, Clarion Associates, August 2005

LAND OWNERSHIP

Land ownership in the area is predominately private— with 2152 acres (80%) of the land in private hands. The City, other public entities, and school district own 523 acres (20%) of the land. (See Figure 26 below and Map A-6 on page 76.)

Figure 26 - Northwest Subarea Land Ownership

Ownership	Acres	% Total
Private	2,153	80%
Public (incl. ROW)	192	7%
City	202	8%
School District	129	5%
Total	2,676	100%

Source: City of Fort Collins' parcel data, Clarion Associates, Land Ownership map, August 2005.

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

The Subarea Could Face New Growth and Development in the Future, Making the Time to Plan Now

This part of Fort Collins is one of a handful of remaining areas within the City of Fort Collins Growth Management Area (GMA) with significant large open parcels or vacant lands. The presence of this supply of developable land means that the area can anticipate facing increasing pressures for growth and development. This plan can provide direction to help guide future land use patterns to ensure that the desired character of the area is retained.

“Checkerboard” Land Development Pattern Necessitates Careful Attention to New Development on Vacant Lands

Vacant and agricultural lands are interspersed with developed subdivisions, making a checkerboard land pattern. Approximately 800 acres are either vacant or in agricultural use with potential for more development. This constitutes almost a third of the Subarea. The smaller vacant sites may be challenging to develop because of access and adjacent developments. Some of the lots have difficult access; for example, lots along Mulberry and Taft Hill have challenging access conditions because they are long and narrow.

The Plan Can Address Appropriate Residential Densities

City Plan Structure Plan designates land uses for all lands within the City of Fort Collins Growth Management Area, including the portion of this Subarea that is within Larimer County. This plan is an opportunity to fine-tune the land use types to address future development at a finer grain so it is compatible. Current County zoning in the area west of Overland Trail allows densities of 1 unit per 2.29 acres— significantly lower density than the Urban Estate classification in the Structure Plan. The plan explores appropriate densities and land use categories for different parts of the Subarea.

Residential Developments are in the Works

At this time of this Plan, various residential development projects are underway or proposed (including Poudre Overlook, Bellwether Farm, Adrian and some smaller subdivision plats). Some residents believe that subdivision developments are not in line with the semi-rural, agricultural, and

eclectic development patterns and styles that constitute the older and predominant pattern of the area. How these newer developments are integrated into the larger area and how new developments are planned and designed will affect the future character of the area.



New residential development will change the character of the area.

Commercial/Industrial Market Analysis

Existing Conditions

The Subarea includes several small businesses, such as landscaping and excavating companies, two gas stations, a liquor store, and other small retailers. It also is home to a few major private and public sector industries and employers, such as:

- Forney Industries (150 employees; 300 additional nationwide); and
- Poudre School district (1,500 employees).

Currently, no land is planned for future commercial development or industry.

Market Analysis

Ray Real Estate Services, Inc. provided an abbreviated market analysis of the Northwest Subarea and provided the following conclusions and recommendations.

The Northwest Subarea will likely experience development pressure for residential uses, because of its proximity to the core of Fort Collins and as development and redevelopment in closer-in areas becomes more expensive. The Subarea has modest commercial redevelopment potential at Shields/Vine and Laporte/Taft Hill intersections because of:

- Demographics in the area (i.e., the now 5,200 residents may grow by another 1,500 to 2,000 residents and the vacancy rates and income levels of the area are generally in-line with City of Fort Collins averages);
- Traffic from local population and commuters to areas north could support modest commercial development; and
- Limited employment activities could add to the base market for convenience retail.

However, the area's proximity to Downtown Fort Collins and North College Avenue puts it at a competitive disadvantage to become a major redevelopment area or for major commercial potential. The Northwest Subarea is unlikely to face commercial development pressure for large scale commercial, such as a big box or grocery store. The area does not have a strong commercial market now, so a major concern is the attraction of appropriate neighborhood-enhancing retail or commercial activities.

ISSUES RELATED TO POTENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT

Ensuring Limited Commercial is Compatible with the Area and is in Specific Locations Only.

Some members of the public are concerned about potential impacts of commercial development in the area and want to ensure that significant commercial development does not occur. However, some redevelopment in existing locations would be appropriate for the Subarea if it is compatible. "Compatible" low intensity commercial uses include:

- Day-care,
- Nursery,
- Small scale offices such as vet, real estate/professional offices or medical dental
- Bank,
- Gas convenience, and
- Small custom workshops

Potentially incompatible uses are:

- Mini-storage if it is not well integrated into a neighborhood or screened adequately,
- Businesses larger than 20,000 square feet,
- Businesses with outdoor storage, and
- Large vehicle-related uses.

Encouraging Redevelopment at Current Locations

Some of current businesses have been located in the Subarea for many years and may relocate or transition soon.

The northwest corners of Laporte/Taft Hill and Vine and Shields have neighborhood convenience retail that serves the neighborhood but that are somewhat functionally obsolete in terms of design and appearance. These locations could redevelop to be more attractive and include some additional neighborhood-serving businesses.

The most significant opportunity and challenge will be the potential for the Laporte corridor to the east of Taft Hill as current businesses transition to other activities. The area could provide an opportunity for a unique “arts and crafts” specialty retail and/or light industrial (e.g., sculpture foundry) or similar uses.



Forney Industries is located in the area shown as potential Limited Commercial.

Appropriate Level of Retail or Commercial Services

The area is primarily agricultural and residential and currently lacks any significant neighborhood retail services. Only one percent of the land in the area is currently designated for commercial development. Existing commercial activity is small in scale and consists of two gas stations and other local businesses. The nearest grocery stores are to the east in Downtown and on North College Avenue, or to the south on Taft Hill Road.

A lot of residents would prefer the area to stay as it is— with very few commercial developments— and have expressed strong concern over the likelihood for large commercial establishments. Some residents see benefits of some new smaller-scale

neighborhood establishments if they respect the unique character of the area. Colorado State University (CSU) Foothills Campus

EXISTING CONDITIONS AND PLANS

The Foothills Campus of Colorado State University (CSU) is located just west of the Subarea. CSU is currently planning for future improvements to this agricultural research campus, but anticipates slow-paced growth over the next 10-15 years. The campus, which currently contains less than one million square feet of buildings, could incrementally expand its research buildings and facilities over the next 10 years, according to the CSU Master Plan for the Foothills Campus (2005). However, the CSU Master Plan focus is on expanding animal research facilities, not on expanding learning facilities or residence halls. While CSU does not plan to provide residences on this west campus, a possible shuttle from the Main Campus to the Foothills Campus could enhance the transportation connections between the campus and elsewhere.

Most of the anticipated development will consist of infill between existing research structures south of Laporte Avenue. However, several revised plans have shown new research buildings clustered north of LaPorte Avenue just east of the water treatment facilities.



A view of the CSU Foothills Campus across the City's Natural Area.

CSU FOOTHILLS CAMPUS ISSUES

CSU Foothills Campus will Grow Slowly CSU, as a state entity, operates autonomously and can make development decisions without City or County approval. The County, however, has Location and Extent review authority over development on the Foothills Campus.

Development on the campus, when it occurs, will affect the street system and other infrastructure in the area (e.g., stormwater, sewer, and electricity lines). Without careful planning, even a limited amount of development could create land use conflicts; for example, residential development near livestock areas can pose a conflict. Buffer uses may be necessary for animal odors or noise.

The CSU Foothills Campus is currently working with the City of Fort Collins to annex into the City so the campus can buy electricity from the City. All or just a portion of the Campus may be annexed. Depending on the extent of annexation, properties adjacent to the Campus could become eligible for annexation if they undergo development. Subarea residents want to ensure that CSU keeps the public informed about current plans and developments on the Foothills Campus.

CSU Expansion Will Require Increased Gas and Electric Capacity

Larger gas lines are necessary for CSU research facility expansion as well as growth in and west of Fort Collins. Xcel Energy will complete expansion of gas distribution system by the end of 2006. CSU will need additional electric capacity from either Xcel Energy or the City by 2008.

The Subarea is not Facing Immediate Water Capacity Problems, but May with CSU Growth

The Subarea does not have water capacity problems at this time (as discussed later in the "Water and Sewer" section). However, as the Foothill Campus grows, CSU may become concerned about wastewater capacity issues and the system may have to be expanded at that time.

CSU Foothills Campus Growth May Lead to Transportation Impacts

CSU's long-term plans will affect traffic levels on the street network in the subarea, depending on levels of intensity. No short-term traffic impacts are predicted.

Environmental Features & Natural Areas

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Open Space and Natural Areas

The Subarea contains or is bordered by two key natural areas, recognized by the City and County as priority areas for conservation due to their ecological, scenic, and recreational values. They are: the Poudre River Regional Open Space Corridor, and the Foothills and Horsetooth Mountain Park.

Water Features and Floodplains

Cache la Poudre River - The Cache la Poudre River and its floodplain is the major water feature in the community and it borders the Subarea. Reclaimed gravel mines in the floodplain will eventually leave a series of ponds after Lafarge completes its mining operations and land reclamation. Current plans are to utilize the ponds for water storage after they are mined.

West Vine Basin: The City and County have identified a floodplain along the major flow paths in the West Vine Drainage basin.



A view of the foothills across Lee Lake.

Lee Lake - This small lake, located east of Overland Trail, is the only surface water feature within the developed portions of the Subarea.

Irrigation Canals - The Subarea includes five irrigation canals that cross generally from north to south as described below. The three most prominent irrigation canals in the area are: Pleasant Valley and Lake Canals (PV&L), the New

Mercer Ditch (NMD), and the Larimer County Canal No. 2 (LC2).

Wet Meadows and Riparian - West of Overland Trail, the area contains a network of marsh and wet meadows and aquatic areas, according to City natural habitat and features inventory. Riparian forest is also identified along most of the major canals in the area, including Pleasant Valley and Lake, New Mercer, and Larimer County No. 2 Canal. (See Map A-7 on page 77.)

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

“Open Space” and Natural Resources are not Permanently Conserved

The Northwest Subarea is rich with natural resources, including wetlands, views, natural features, agriculture, and mature trees— all of which contribute significantly to the area’s character. However, many of these resources are on private property, and are not necessarily permanently conserved.

The City’s Natural Habitats & Features map (dated January 5, 2005) shows raptor nests and urban forest in the Subarea. These resources are not conserved. The City once required a 1,320-foot buffer for raptor nests, but it no longer has the same buffer requirement. The area has a great deal of wildlife— residents spot deer, fox, and other wildlife on a regular basis. New developments and fencing have potential to create obstacles to wildlife if they are designed as long, unbroken, solid fences.



The large City Natural Area west of Overland Trail offers scenic views of the foothills.

Parks, Recreation, & Trails

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Northwest Subarea has only one established City park within its boundaries— Huidekopper Park, adjacent to Lincoln Junior High School. However, the Subarea is bordered on three sides by some of the most prominent regional parks and open space features within the City. They are:

- the Poudre River Regional Open Space Corridor,
- the Foothills and Horsetooth Mountain Park, and
- City Park and City Park Nine Golf Course.

The Poudre River Corridor

This corridor runs along the northeastern boundary of the Subarea. This section of the river corridor is planned in City Plan as Rural Open, intended for conservation and restoration as a rural and natural habitat offering scenic and recreational opportunities after the completion of gravel mining operations. The Poudre River Trail trailheads are a major recreation amenity of the Subarea. Lee Martinez Park is just east of the Subarea and provides access to the Poudre Trail.

Horsetooth Reservoir Hogbacks

The foothills and CSU Foothills Campus to the west contain unique landforms that the County and City have prioritized for conservation.

City Park and City Park Nine Golf Course

City Park and City Park Nine Golf Course are just southeast of the Subarea. The park and the golf course are defining features and keystones within the City of Fort Collins and a major draw for the surrounding residential areas.



City Park Nine Golf Course is directly adjacent to the Subarea.

Other Community and Neighborhood Parks

The Subarea is surrounded by larger community parks, including: City Park, Lee Martinez Park, as well as the Poudre River corridor. The closest neighborhood park is Rogers Park— just south of the area. The City will eventually purchase the 8.6-acre Huidekooper Park, located adjacent to Lincoln Junior High School, from the School District. Huidekooper will serve as a neighborhood park for nearby residents of the area.

Regional Multi-Purpose Trails

Residents of the Subarea value its proximity to several significant community and regional trails including the multi-use paved Poudre River Trail, which extends for 8.4 miles along the Poudre River. The river trail has trailheads with parking at the river and Shields Street and at N. Overland Trail and the river. To the west, the Foothills Trail is a 5.8 mile earthen trail that travels along the foothills parallel to Horsetooth reservoir through rugged terrain.

Within the Subarea, residents use an informal system of trails or footpaths to get from place to place, but no other formal trails have been established and the local trails do not connect to the community trails.

PARKS, RECREATION, AND TRAILS ISSUES

County Residential Development Creates Demand for Urban Parks

The County does not provide urban parks for existing County neighborhoods, yet residents of these neighborhoods still participate in organized recreation, such as softball. Given that the lot sizes are larger for many of the homes in the area, residents may not need neighborhood parks and

public play areas to the same extent as denser urban neighborhoods. Future parks in the unincorporated County will require joint resident-developer efforts.

Residents would like to Improve Off-Street Trails and Neighborhood Connections

Residents have noted that the Poudre River Trail should ideally be accessible from surrounding areas via one-half to one mile connections. Some residents have also expressed an interest in seeing additional off-street local trails to connect residential areas to the schools in the area to provide a safe off-street means for children to walk to and from school. Most streets do not have sidewalks or bike paths and many members of the public do not wish to see the country-feel and character of the streets changed. This plan explores possible trail connections that could supplement the presence of sidewalks and bike paths— providing the desired connections without upgrading the streets to an urban standard.

Access to CSU Lands Restricted

Security has increased on the CSU Foothills Campus since 2001 with new Homeland Security measures, making trail access challenging.

Participants in the process have questioned whether Colorado State University (CSU) could provide better trail access through the Foothills Campus. Possible routes of public access to that property should be explored in conjunction with CSU officials.

Transportation and Access

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Streets

Streets in the area have expanded incrementally over time and encountered physical barriers such as the Poudre River and the foothills. Currently, the east-west and north-south arterial streets (including Vine Drive, Mulberry Street, Overland Trail, Taft Hill Road, and Shields) are continuous and connected, but the collector streets are not connected at all. The arterial streets are generally 2-lanes wide.

The City's Master Street Plan (MSP) is a map of the City's long-range vision of the major street network.

It designates the arterial streets in the area generally as 2-lane arterials, and does not designate any collectors in the area except for Laporte Avenue east of Taft Hill Road. The City's 2004 Transportation Master Plan lists a number of capital projects for the Subarea. Only one project in the Subarea is prioritized as a "high" priority - the intersection of Taft Hill Road and Laporte Avenue. A number of other projects rank as "medium" priority (ranging from No. 35 on the list to No. 134). Larimer County has recently made improvements to intersections and lanes on Overland Trail and, in 2004, was working on improvements to Taft Hill Road between Laporte and the Poudre River.

Some local streets in the area are in rough condition and even unpaved, such as Hollywood Street. The County generally is not responsible for maintaining local streets in subdivisions because it does not have enough funds to pay for local streets as well as county roads. Neighborhoods have the option to form a Local Improvement District (LID) to fund local projects. Lin Mar, Saddleback, and Solar Ridge have LIDs that pay for road improvements and maintenance. Stagecoach and Dean Acres had LIDs that expired.

Bike Routes and Lanes

Laporte Avenue has designated bike lanes, as does West Mulberry Street and Taft Hill Road from Laporte to Mulberry. North Taft Hill Road from Vine to Laporte is a designated bike route along with W. Vine Drive just south of Lincoln Junior High. Overland Trail is also a designated bike route.

TransFort Bus

The City operates Transfort bus service in the Subarea along Vine Drive as far west as Overland Trail. No bus service is offered north of Vine Drive. (See Map A-8 on page 78.)



Local streets within the Subarea are not all connected; this street allows emergency and pedestrian and bicycle access only.

TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

Major and Local Streets are Not Connected and Many Existing Residents Do Not Want Them

Aside from the major arterial streets in the area (including Overland Trail, Taft Hill Road, Shields, Vine Drive, and Mulberry), none of the collector or local streets are continuous or connected through the neighborhoods, making travel through the area somewhat challenging. City and County transportation master plans do not address collector streets in the area. Some local streets are unpaved or discontinuous. Despite the broader community benefits of a more connected street network, many established neighborhoods do not want streets to connect through the neighborhoods because of potential traffic and safety impacts. In addition, the public is not generally willing to pay the cost to upgrade streets to an urban standard particularly when they are satisfied with the function and appearance of the streets under the rural standard. For example, residents of the Solar Ridge, Lin Mar, and Rostek subdivisions have, in the past, opposed connecting local through-streets and would likely do so again.

Major and Local Streets are More "Rural" than City Streets

Under current annexation provisions, county roads would eventually be required to be brought up to the City's "urban" level standards with curb and gutter and sidewalks in order to receive City maintenance. The current chip seal treatment that the County provides on these roads means that over the long-term they are likely to fail structurally. Existing residents have expressed resistance to upgrading county local streets to the City's urban standards because of the higher fees, wider cross-

sections, and curbs and sidewalks that it would entail. They generally prefer the more “rural” character of swales and ditches and walking in the street rather than on a sidewalk.

Timing of Street Connections and Improvements is Uncertain

How and when connections will happen depends on available funding. Currently, new development provides funding to make connections, and other means of funding in the City are extremely limited.

Transfort Service is Limited in the Subarea and Not Likely to Expand

The southern part of the Subarea is served by Fort Collins Transfort bus service with stops along Vine, Mulberry, and Overland Trail streets. Due to Transfort funding limitations, it is unlikely that bus service will expand in the area in the near future.

Schools

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Schools

Poudre School District operates three public schools within the Northwest Subarea:

Irish Elementary School (and Other Elementary Schools that Serve the Area)

Irish Elementary is located at 515 Irish Drive. This elementary school educated 401 students in the 2004-2005 school year. Irish Elementary is a magnet school for English Language Learners and offers special literacy and math programs for native Spanish speakers. The school offers Head Start, full-and extended-day kindergarten, Before and After School Care (BASE), a homework extension learning lab, and Spanish language classes for English speakers.

Three other elementary schools serve the area, including Moore, Dunn, and Putnam. The school district provided additions and remodels to Irish, Moore, and Dunn. All four elementary schools have capacity for additional students. Irish’s addition helped to provide capacity.

Lincoln Junior High School

Lincoln Junior High School is located at 1600 West Lancer Drive. This Junior High School educated

761 students in the 2004-2005 school year. This school offers accelerated and special education programs and is home to a successful instrumental and vocal music programs and visual arts.

Poudre High School

Poudre High School is located at 201 Impala Drive, and is one of three schools in the state to receive an “exemplary” rating from the North Central Accreditation Transition. This school, one of five senior high schools within the district, had an enrollment of 1,900 students in the 2004-2005 school year, and it offers an International Baccalaureate Program of advanced studies, Advanced Placement (AP) courses, an after school assistance program, English Language Learners support, and a variety of extracurricular activities such as community service and sports.

School Capacity and Administration

The schools have adequate capacity for students, and the school district is undertaking minor expansions at some of the elementary schools that serve the area to accommodate more students. No new schools are planned in the area. Preliminary planning is underway for perhaps a combo junior high/high school. A new high school is probably not needed for this area for another 15 to 20 years. Poudre School District’s main Administrative Offices are on Laporte Avenue in the Subarea. In the long-range, the administrative offices will remain in the area, but the School District may eventually provide a warehouse and small administration office to the south.

SCHOOL ISSUES

No major school issues need to be addressed through this Plan.

Water and Sewer

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Water

While the majority of water service within the Subarea is provided by the City of Fort Collins, other providers operate at a smaller scale in the Subarea, including:

- Fort-Collins-Loveland Water District;
- Sunset Water District; and
- East Larimer County Water District.

The main issues are the older pipes and system in the area that the water providers will need to replace eventually, potentially at a high cost. Some customers have experienced discolored water and low pressure, most likely due to these aging and undersized water lines. Over time, it appears most efficient for the City to provide water to the whole area.

Sewer

The City is the only wastewater provider in the Subarea. However, some of the larger lots and subdivisions are still using septic systems. The older septic systems are beginning to fail, potentially creating water quality problems and other health and sanitation problems for the area. (See Map A-9 page 79.)

WATER AND SEWER ISSUES

The Subarea has a Variety of Water Service Providers.

The City of Fort Collins provides water to most of the subarea, but East Larimer County Water District (ELCO), Sunset Water District, and Fort Collins-Loveland Water District also provide water to parts of the area. In addition, some residences and businesses are on well and/or septic systems. Given that the City has stronger water pressure and more consistent service, it would ultimately make sense for the City to provide water to the entire area. In addition, ELCO wants to restrict its service to East Larimer County. Other considerations are:

- Customers in the Sunset Water District generally do not want to be connected to City water.
- The Rostek Subdivision has some homes on wells. Rostek developed in the 1930's with deep lots using the Sunset Water District. The district uses copper pipes and will need to replace them. Some lots are still on septic.
- Coffee Park subdivision gets water from Fort Collins-Loveland Water District (at Magnolia/Olive north of Mulberry).
- ELCO has a few customers along Vine Drive.

Aging Water Systems

The original old water main lines pass through the area within the Sunset Water District. Older 4-inch lines, limited number of taps, copper lines, and lead fittings may become an issue for Sunset Water District when they eventually need to be replaced.

At present, customers in the district do not want to become part of the City's water system.

The City is the Only Wastewater Provider, but Some Lots are Still on Septic

The City is the only wastewater provider, but some residential neighborhoods and lots remain on septic and are not connected to public sewer. In some cases, the neighborhoods desire to remain on septic. In Lin Mar Acres, for example, a past effort on the part of a resident to connect to public sewer did not succeed in gaining the general support of neighbors in that area. Rostek subdivision may have some homes on septic systems. Failing septic systems on half-acre lots could be a problem in the future.

Stormwater Management & Floodplain Administration

EXISTING CONDITIONS

West Vine Basin

The portion of the Subarea south of Vine Drive is predominantly within the West Vine Basin. This basin drains water from the foothills east to the Poudre River. The basin has historically experienced many flooding problems over the years, particularly within the Irish Green Subdivision, the residential development at the northwest corner of Taft Hill Road and LaPorte Avenue, and the Second filling of the Hanna Subdivision. The drainage channels are poorly defined and not very visible due to the combined forces of development and the fact that the irrigation ditches intercept some of the water flowing down the channels. The City of Fort Collins and Larimer County completed an update of their Stormwater Master Plan in 2004, which recommends improvements for the West Vine Basin. (See Map A-10 on page 80.)

Michaud Basin

The Michaud Basin occupies the northern portion of the Subarea and is outside of City limits. This is predominantly undeveloped and drains into the Cache la Poudre River. It is transected by the same three irrigation ditches as the West Vine Basin, diverting some flow and increasing flooding to this basin. A stormwater plan was developed for this basin in 2006.

Floodplain Administration
City and County floodplain regulations are similar for the basins in this area.



Several irrigation and stormwater drainage ditches cross through the subarea.

Canals and Ditches
Five irrigation ditches cross the Northwest Subarea. The Arthur, Larimer #2, New Mercer, and Pleasant Valley and Lake Canals divert irrigation flows out of the Poudre River north of the Subarea and transport these flows to irrigation canals, parks, schools, and open spaces to the south. Over time, urbanization has encroached on these canals, as well as discharging urbanized runoff into the ditches.

STORMWATER ISSUES

The Area has a History of Flooding – More Basin Planning and Improvements are Needed
The area has two basins: (1) West Vine and (2) the Michaud Basin to the north in the County. Master planning is needed in the Northwest basin. The West Vine Basin, which covers half of the subarea, has flooded periodically in the past along Soldier Creek because the incremental nature of development and urbanization did not leave adequate stormwater outlets. Three canals in the northwest basin eventually flow into the West Vine Basin – worsening potential flood hazards in that basin.

Electricity

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Electricity in the Subarea is provided by Xcel Energy and the City of Fort Collins. Xcel would need to upgrade its facility to provide additional capacity for an expanded Foothills Campus and for further development of the Subarea.

The City has a 115,000 volt line and purchases power from Platte River Power Authority. The City has the capacity to serve the CSU Foothills Campus. CSU may request annexation by the City for the primary benefit of additional electric power and lower rates.

ELECTRICITY ISSUES

The Subarea has Many Overhead Wires, and New Ones Under Construction

Xcel Energy is building some new overhead lines in the area. The City's policy is to build new underground lines only, but if the City takes over existing aboveground lines it is often cost prohibitive to bury the lines. It generally costs between \$2,000 and \$4,000 per lot to place lines underground. Due to this cost, undergrounding of wires within the Subarea would take a long time.

Public Safety

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Fire Emergency Response service is provided by Poudre Fire Authority. Station No. 7 is located on Laporte Avenue in the Subarea, providing a quick response time to the area.

Police service is provided by the Fort Collins Police Department for incorporated areas. The Larimer County Sheriff Department covers the majority of the unincorporated areas.

PUBLIC SAFETY ISSUES

No major public safety issues appear to be necessary to address at this time.

Other Issues

APPEARANCE AND DESIGN ISSUES

The Northwest Area has a Unique Eclectic Quality

The existing developed areas have a blend of semi-“rural” and “suburban” characteristics. The County residences tend to be older, on larger lots, with open fencing, barns and stables, a variety of building styles and structures, and mature landscaping. “Suburban” residences, which comprise one third of the residences in the area, are on lots smaller than 10,000 square feet and are generally found in neighborhood subdivisions. Some residents are concerned that the newer subdivision developments are not compatible with the country-feel and natural characteristics valued in older neighborhoods.

ANNEXATION ISSUE

Existing County Residents Do Not Want Annexation

Currently the City has no immediate plans for annexation in the area. Existing IGAs between the City and County require the City to annex property when eligible. If the City were to annex land, it would do so under three conditions:

- A development proposal and land must be contiguous to City limits and inside the Fort Collins Growth Management Area.
- Land entirely surrounded by City limits (i.e., an enclave) can be annexed. There are no enclaves in the Northwest Subarea and no plans to create future enclaves.
- Some property owners have petitioned to be annexed in exchange for access to City utility service or to fulfill an agreement. These properties must be contiguous to City limits.

(See Appendix D - A Guide to Annexation on page 95, for more information.)

It is likely that many properties within this area will never be annexed, particularly existing subdivisions. The plan should therefore address how to provide County services to those areas, given that the County does not have funding to provide services and it is not the County’s intent to manage areas with urban level development.

County Versus City Policies and Fees

Some residents associate their lifestyle with living in the County and value a bit more independence associated with the perception of fewer regulations and lower fees and taxes, as compared to the City. Those residents who share this sentiment are extremely opposed to annexation because of the different rules and fee structures that would result (i.e., relating to gun use, livestock and animals, sales and use taxes, and perceived higher fees for other services).

Figure 27 – Map A-1 Planning Area

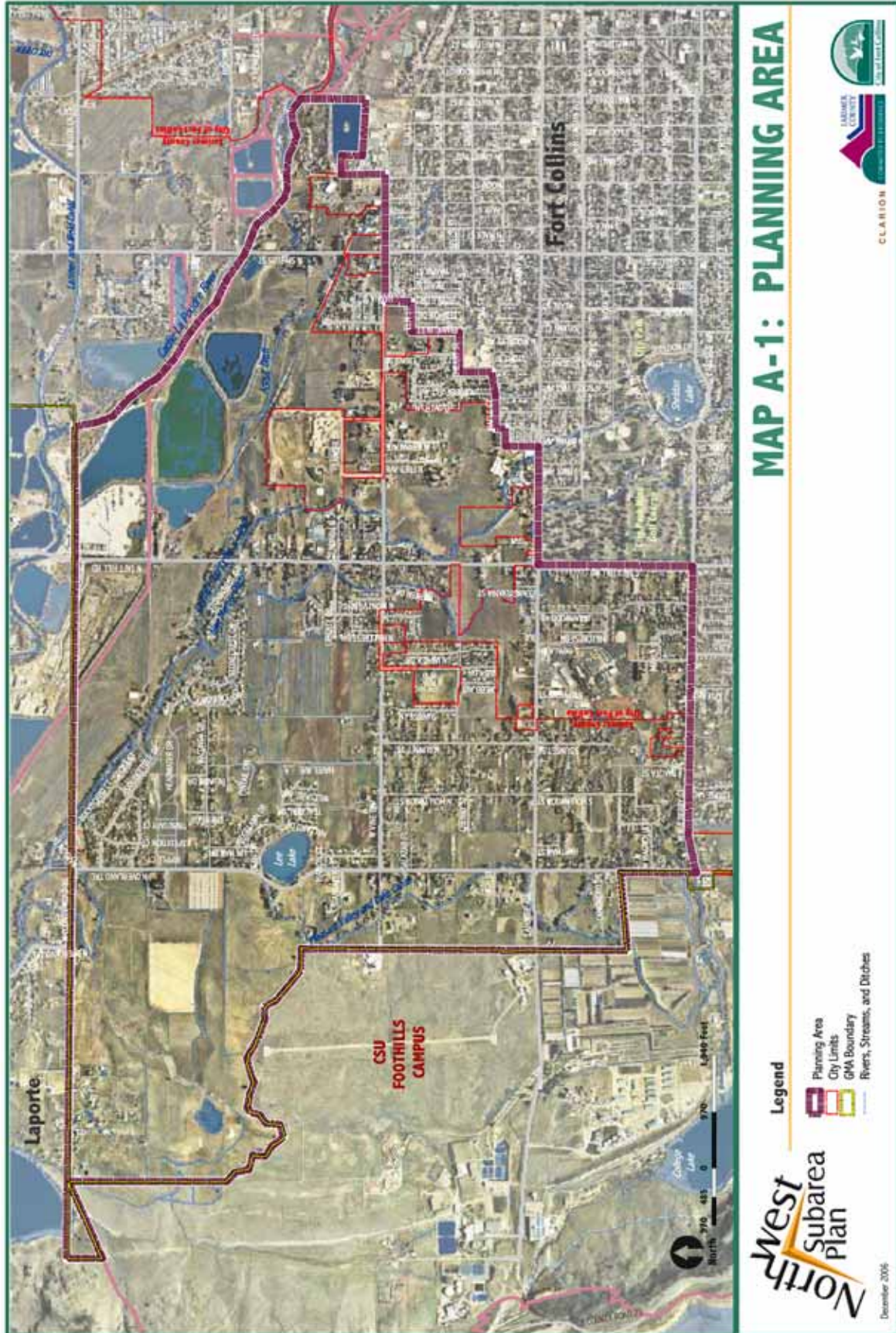


Figure 28 – Map A-2 Subdivisions

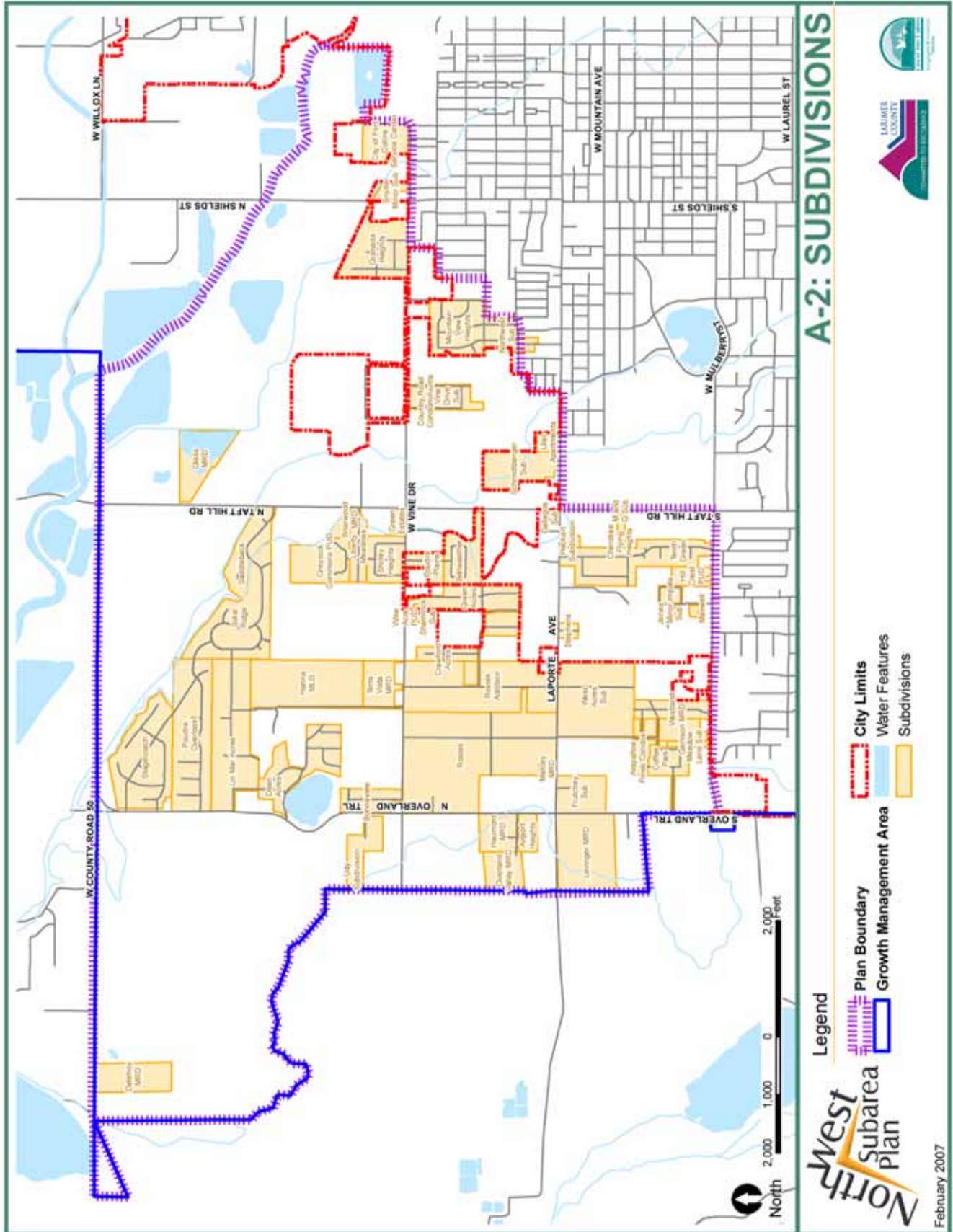


Figure 29 – Map A-3 Existing Land Use

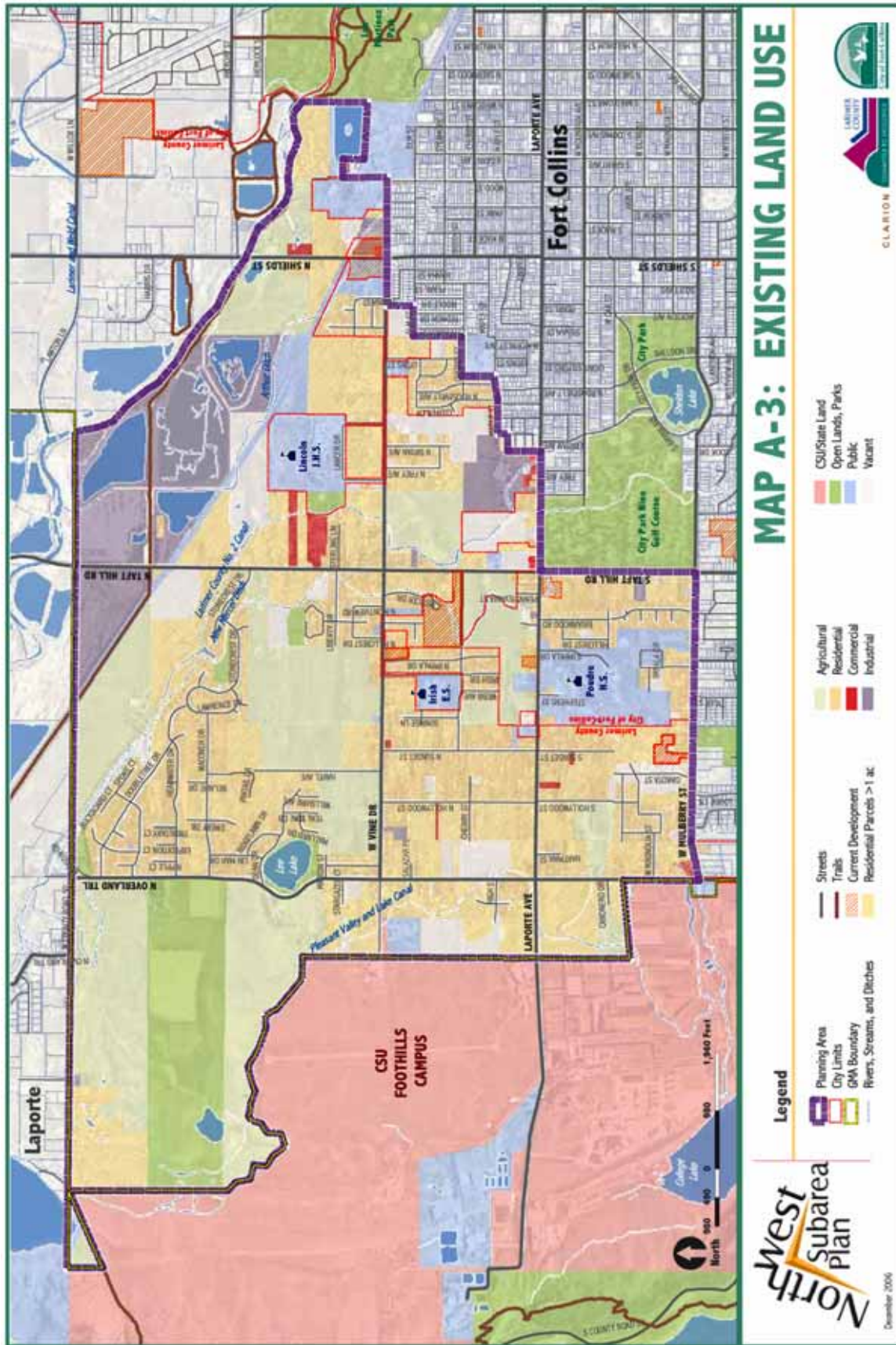


Figure 30 – Map A-4 City Structure Plan

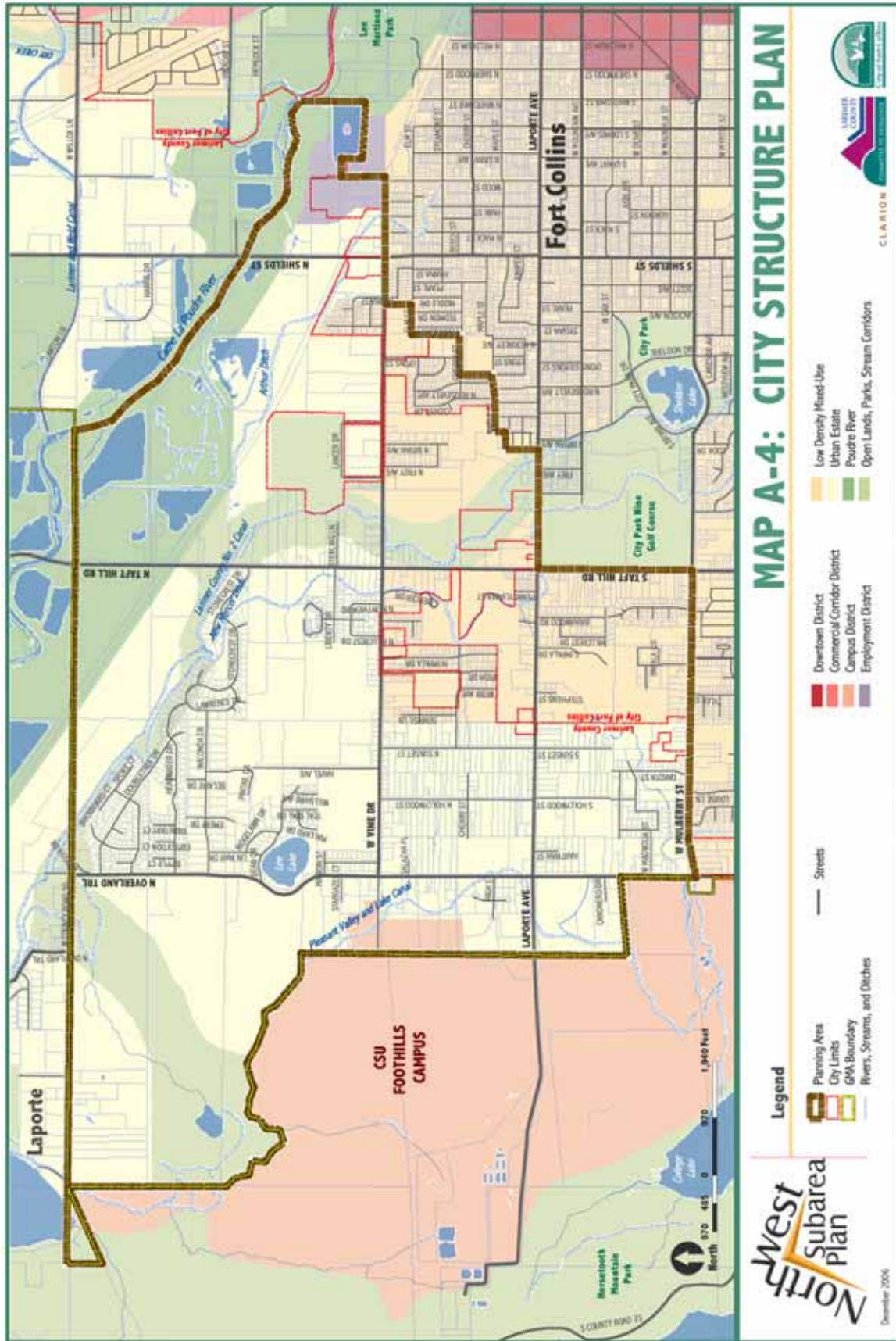


Figure 31 – Map A-5 Current Zoning

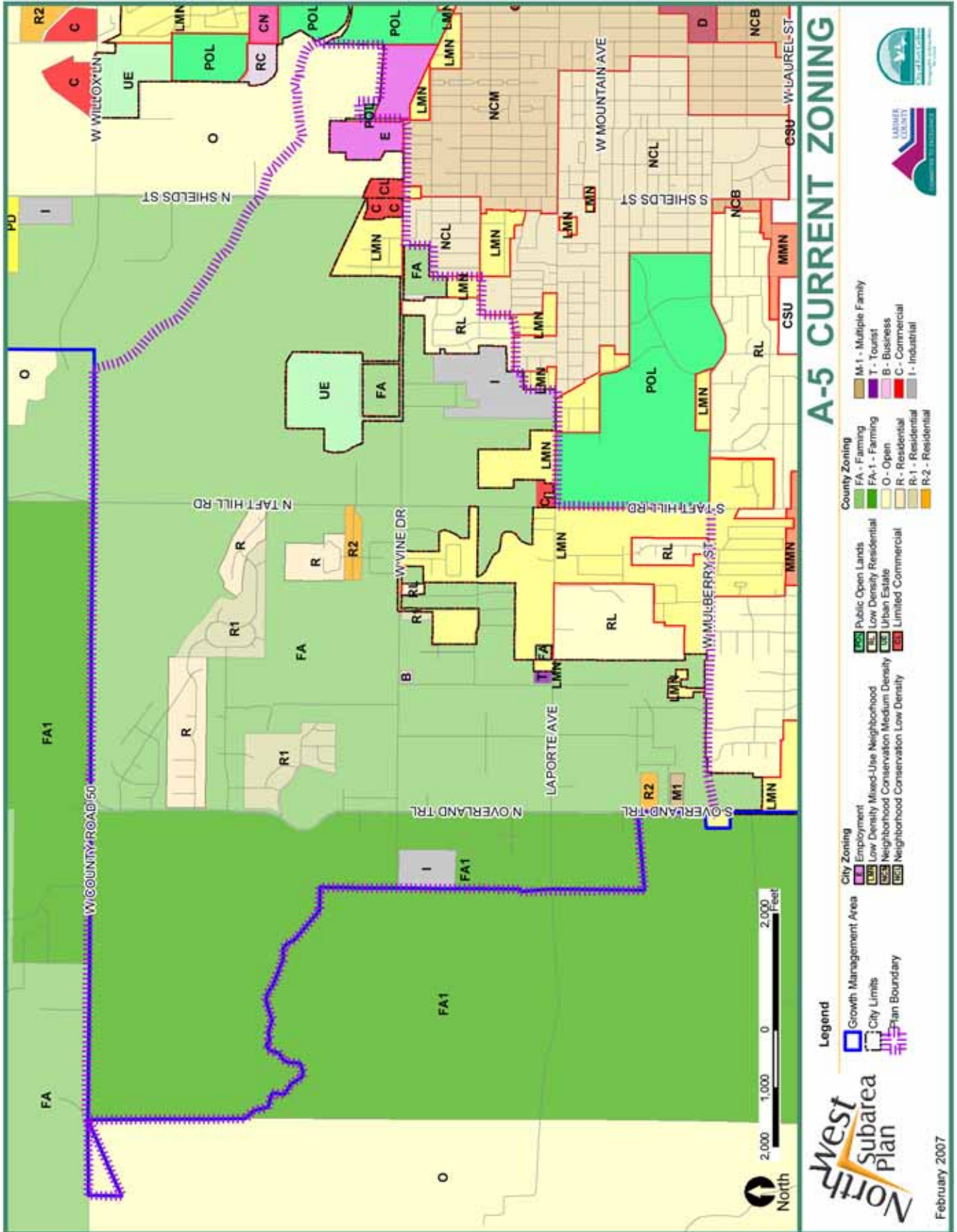


Figure 32 – Map A-6 Land Ownership

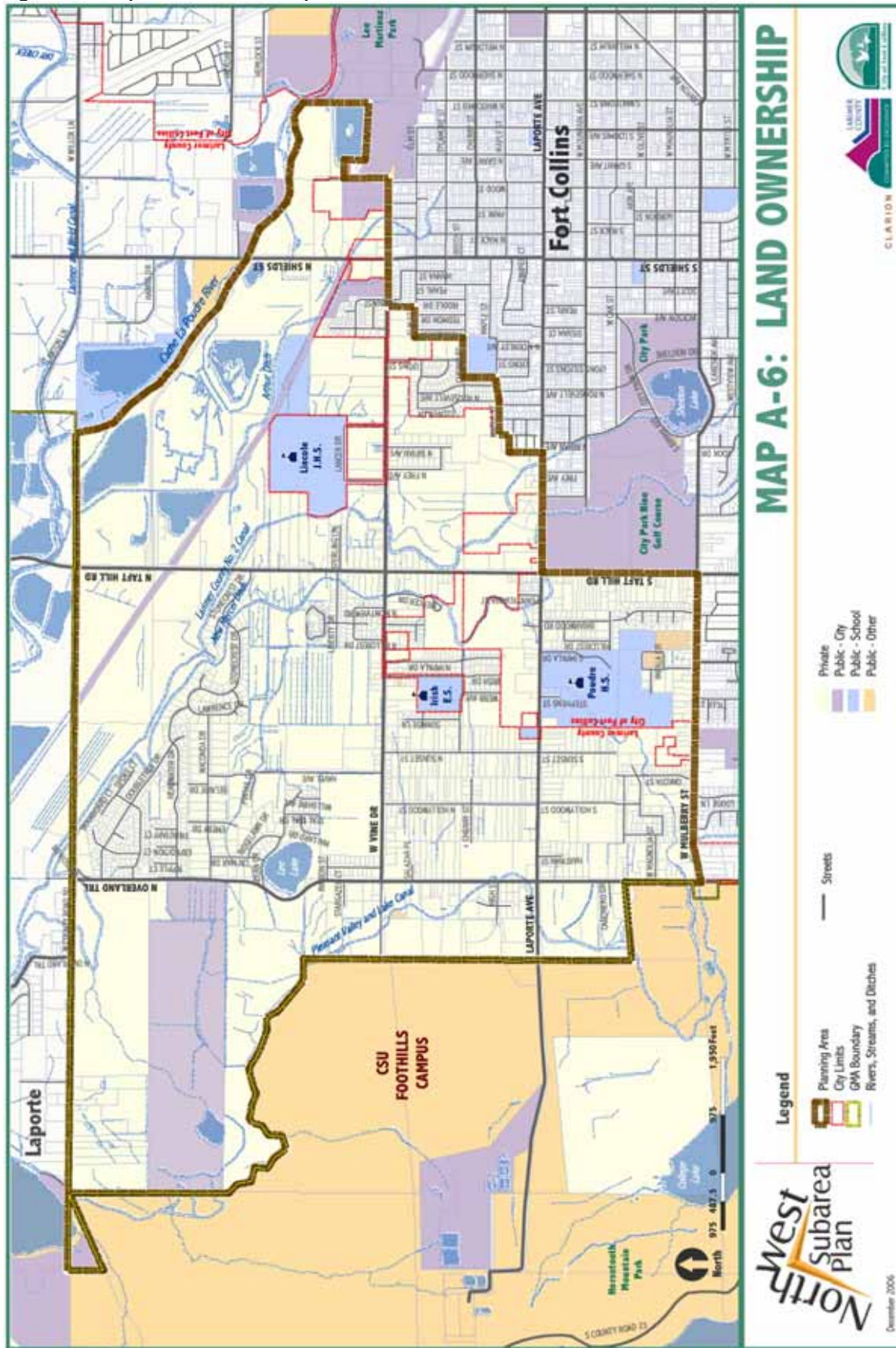


Figure 33 – Map A-7 Natural Habitat & Features

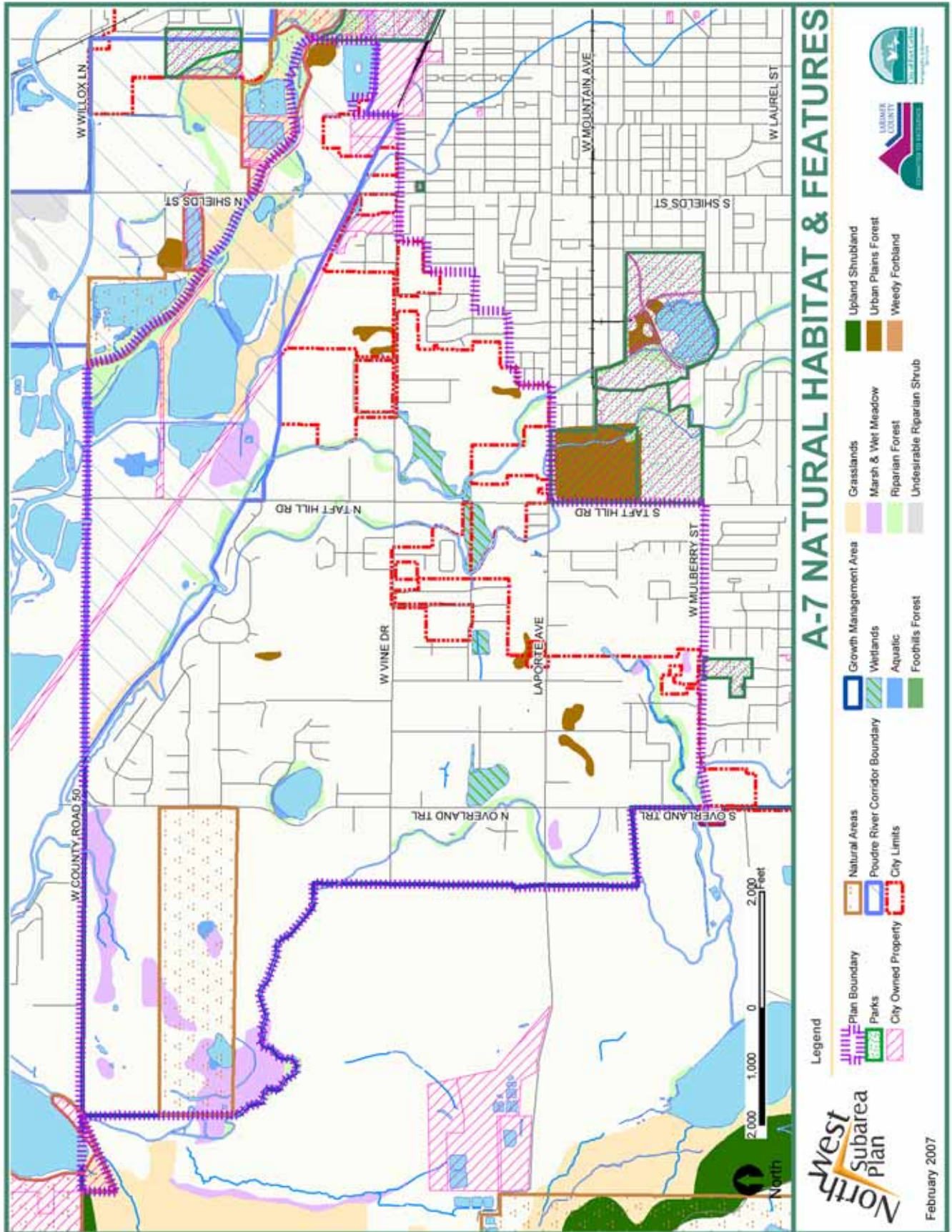


Figure 34 – Map A-8 Existing Transportation & Trails

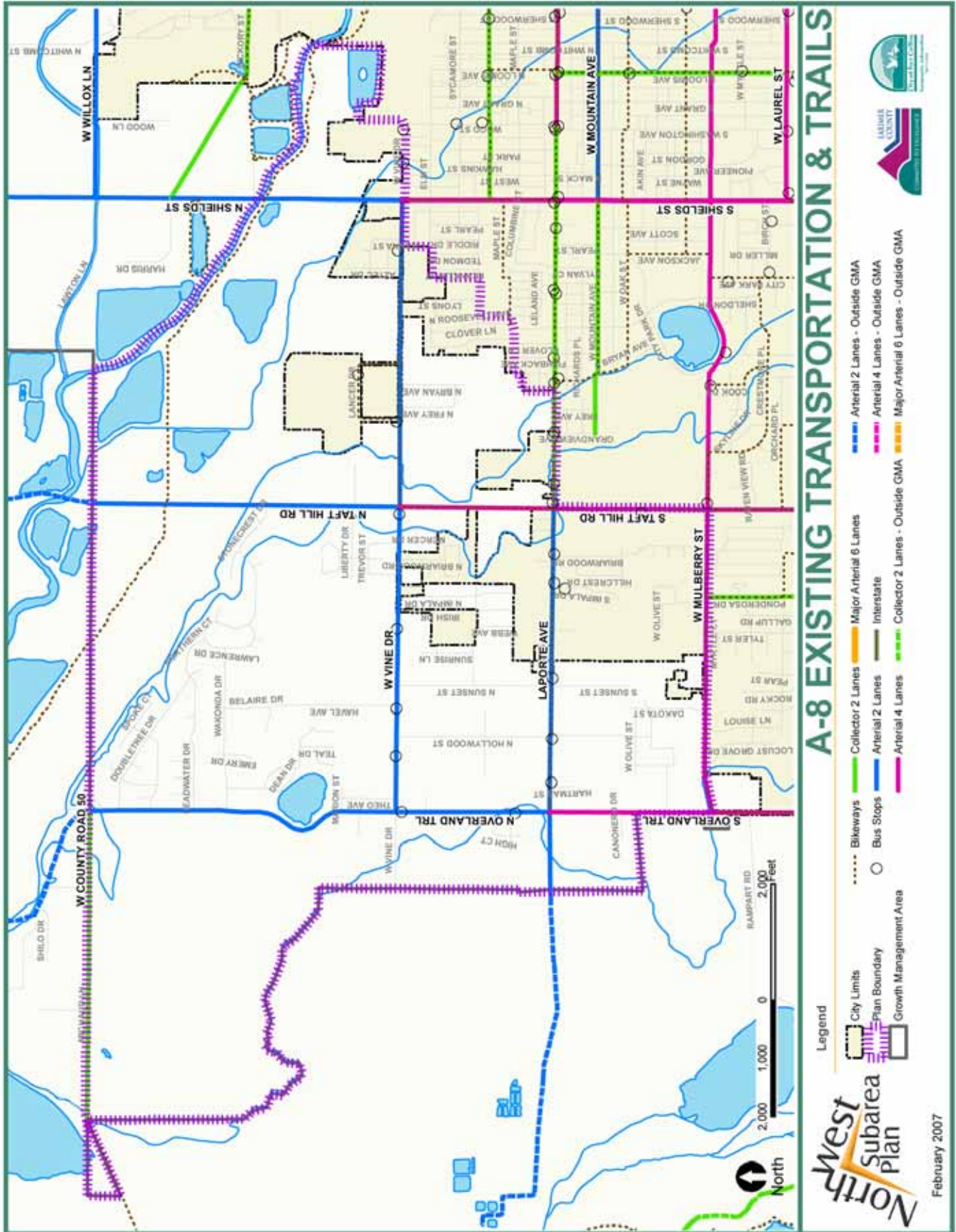


Figure 35 – Map A-9 Water & Sewer Utilities

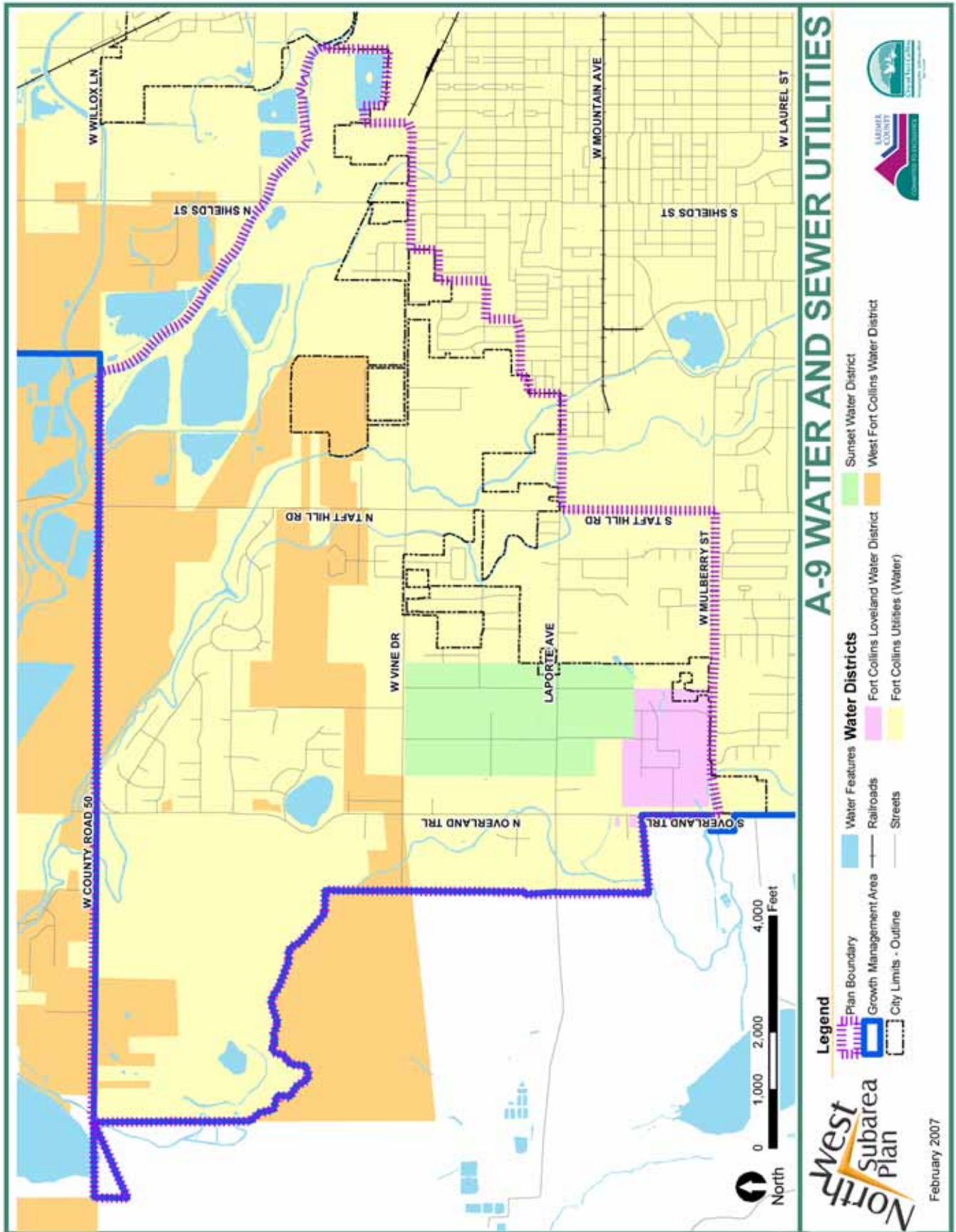
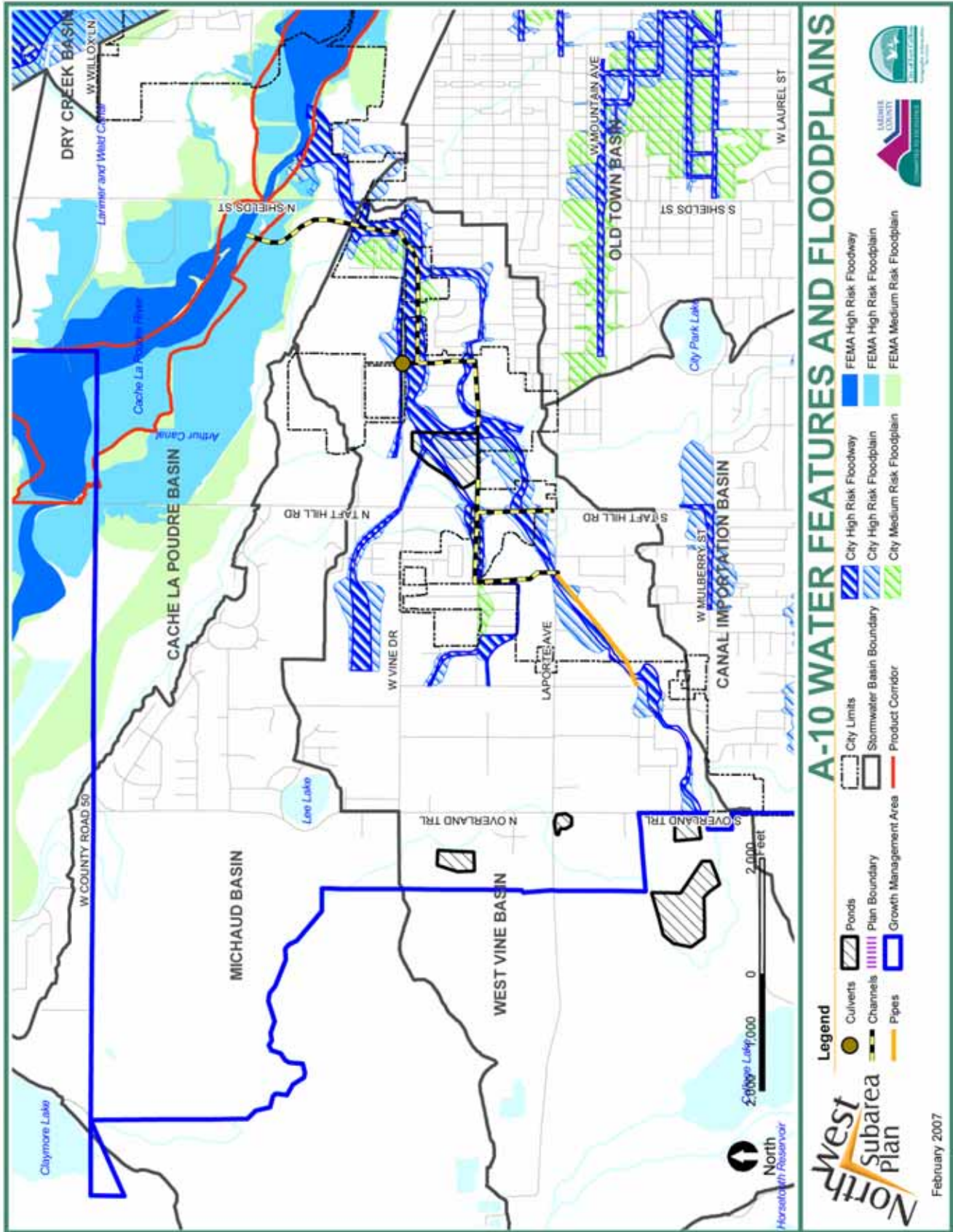


Figure 36 – Map A-10 Water Features & Floodplains



Appendix B

Related Plan & Policy Summary

Community Plans

LARIMER COUNTY MASTER PLAN (1997)

Purpose and Overview

The Larimer County Master Plan applies to all County lands outside of city and town boundaries and is intended to manage growth through four general themes: Consistency, Concurrence, Cooperation, and Compatibility.

Land Use Component

The Plan divides land in the County into three general categories:

Urban Lands - Designated as those lands within a Growth Management Area of a city or town, the specific land uses for these areas are determined by an adopted community plan. Compatible county development is intended to facilitate the eventual annexation of that land into the city. The Northwest Subarea is part of the City of Fort Collins Growth Management Area as governed by an intergovernmental agreement.

Rural Lands - The intent for the rural lands is to conserve the open and scenic quality of the western landscape and agricultural and ranching practices outside of urban lands. Development should be clustered and emphasize natural patterns of the landscape and ensure that sensitive natural areas are not developed. The rural policies do not apply to the Northwest Subarea.

Parks and Public Open Lands - These are existing publicly-owned parks and open lands.

County's Guiding Principles for all New Development

The County Plan establishes a number of principles to guide development. These principles address development in a floodway, compatibility and transitions between uses, environmentally sensitive areas, wildfire hazard areas, site design and community gateways including I-25, US Highways 34 and 287, and Colorado Highway 14, energy efficiency, and construction and maintenance of roadways.

The County Plan also establishes a number of Guiding Principles for the general protection of wetlands, wildlife habitats, hazard areas, mineral resources, air quality, water quality and quantity, noise glare and odors, and special places.

CITY PLAN

Purpose and Overview

This Comprehensive Plan for the City of Fort Collins establishes the City Structure Plan, a general guide to future land use patterns, and contains principles and policies for the development or redevelopment of each category on the Structure Plan Map. It addresses the entire GMA, including the Northwest Subarea.

Land Use Component

Most existing residential developments are largely unaffected by the City Plan principles and policies. The Plan guides future changes within existing neighborhoods, including broad guidelines for infill development and redevelopment, the addition of non-residential uses, and specifying that any significant changes to a neighborhood would need to result for a resident-driven subarea plan for the neighborhood.

The land uses within the Northwest Subarea include the following use areas and associated guiding principles for new development:

Urban Estate Neighborhoods (UE) - The Urban Estate neighborhoods will develop as low density, single family and large-lot housing. The area north Vine Drive and westward from ½ mile west of North Taft Hill Road is classified as UE. This district encompasses most of the unincorporated portions of the subarea and acknowledges presence of county subdivisions

City's "UE" Guiding Principles

These neighborhoods will have a maximum average density of two dwelling units per acre achieved with single family housing.

They will provide transitions physical transition between urban development and rural or open lands.

New Low Density Mixed-Use Neighborhoods (LMN) - These neighborhoods provide low density housing along with neighborhood-serving secondary uses that are in harmony with the residential character. The area south of Vine Drive and eastward from ½ mile east of North Overland Trail is classified as LMN. This area represents the majority of the incorporated area within the subarea.

City's "LMN" Guiding Principles

These neighborhoods will have an overall average density of five dwelling units per acre, achieved with a mix of housing types, including single-family homes, duplexes, and townhomes.

Neighborhood size, layout, and design should be conducive to walking, with all dwellings sharing the street and sidewalk system and a Neighborhood Center.

Employment District - Employment Districts provide locations for basic employment uses such as offices and manufacturing and may also include a variety of complementary uses. The City property north of West Vine Drive and east of Shields is categorized as Employment.

City's "E" Guiding Principles

These districts will be major employment centers for the community.

These districts will be accessible to the community's multi-modal transportation system.

Open Lands, Parks, Stream Corridors – Open lands are for areas that contain water corridors with natural and man-made waterways, wildlife habitat corridors, and recreation trails. These areas comprise a larger network of connectivity between open lands any other developed neighborhoods and use areas. Portions of the northwest corner of the subarea, along the Larimer County No. 2 Canal,

connecting southwards to City Park Nine Golf Course are shown as Open Lands and Parks.

City's "OL" Guiding Principles

These districts surround water corridors and open space for drainage, water conveyance, recreational, educational, and environmental uses.

Where appropriate these corridors should be coordinated with a Transportation Corridor to provide a functional and accessible network.

Poudre River Corridor- The Poudre River designation is intended to maintain a mixed-use corridor in which the river and surrounding lands are carefully managed to:

- Protect and enhance a diverse set of public values; and
- Allow appropriate private uses within the corridor.

Within the Plan, the Poudre is divided into five management segments (Rural Open Lands, Community River, Historic and Cultural Core, Science and Education, and Conservation Open Lands). The majority of the Poudre River within the subarea is classified under the Rural Open Lands category, except for the portion east of Shields Street, which is classified as Community River. These segments are defined as:

Rural Open Lands - "Opportunity for large scale open lands conservation to maintain the predominantly rural character of the area, preserve and protect the natural habitat and floodplain values of the river, and restore natural, scenic and recreational opportunities after gravel mining."

Community River - "Existing neighborhoods are located in close proximity to existing public parks, natural areas, and the recreational trail along the river. This segment should emphasize convenient access for residents to the river corridor for both active and passive recreational and leisure opportunities. Natural habitat and floodplain values will be preserved."

The Poudre River designation includes the northeastern edge of the subarea.

Guiding Principles

Land uses must be carefully managed to protect and enhance the diverse community values of the river

Protect, enhance, and restore the wildlife habitats and natural area values of the corridor.

Enhance the recreation opportunities within the river corridor with an emphasis on scenic values, heritage education, and interpretation.

Manage for the preservation of the floodplain values and minimization of damage due to flood, erosion, and channel movement.

Protect historic and cultural landscapes and scenic and aesthetic qualities within the river corridor.

Encourage integrated heritage and environmental learning opportunities about the Poudre River Corridor and its historic, cultural, and natural heritage.

Work with gravel mining interests to review opportunities to maintain and manage gravel mining operations to ensure they meet applicable laws and reclamation activities to be completed in line with community values.

The City will permit a variety of land uses within the Poudre River Corridor that are consistent with the protection of ecological, floodplain, historic, scenic, recreational, and other public values.

LAPORTE AREA PLAN (2004)

Purpose and Overview

The LaPorte community, located just north of the Northwest Subarea, is an unincorporated town within Larimer County. The Area Plan for this town plans and manages the growth and development as a designated urban area within the County. LaPorte is predominantly occupied by agriculture and residential development, which together account for three-quarters of the land in the LaPorte planning area.

Land Use Component

The Future Land Use Plan for the LaPorte area includes the following features:

Town Core - Higher density residential uses and commercial activities are concentrated around the intersection of CR 54G and Overland Trail.

Entryway Transition Area - Additional commercial activity centered along the CR54G and Taft Hill intersection. This area is intended to be a commercial center, as opposed to strip commercial along the roadway, and marks the beginning of an entryway transition area between Fort Collins and the main Town center.

Community Separator - This area along CR 54G, is intended to preserve some separation between Fort Collins and the town. Clustering of new residential development away from the eastern edge of the Plan Area and the clustering of non-residential development at the Taft Hill intersection will help to create a visual break in development between the two areas.

Cache la Poudre River Corridor - This riparian corridor is regional asset with environmental and recreational value. The Larimer County Open Lands program and the Fort Collins Natural Areas program as well as several non-profit preservation organizations have prioritized the acquisition of open space along this corridor. County Land Use Code requirements protect the river and its resources.

Natural/Environmental Features

The LaPorte planning area contains the following areas identified by the Open Lands Program as priority areas:

- Bellvue/Mouth of Poudre Canyon; and
- Poudre River Corridor.

In addition, the LaPorte area contains three sites identified through the Colorado Natural Heritage Program as Conservation Sites, important locations of biological diversity:

- Cache la Poudre-La Porte site;
- Curtis Lake Ridge; and
- Horsetooth Reservoir Hogbacks.

Transportation

The Area Plan identifies the following roadway improvements as necessary to meet forecasted daily traffic volumes at buildout:

Taft Hill (between CR 54G and US 287) - improve from minor to major collector.

Taft Hill (between CR 54G and the Poudre River) - widen for a third lane to accommodate access movements for new developments.

Overland Trail (south of CR 54G) - predicted to double its traffic volume in 20 years, but due to a restrictive alignment, is not planned for improvements. Rather, any future development should be required to dedicate right of way in accordance with the Master Street Plan and make the appropriate improvements as needed.

CR 54G - will require widening between US 287 and the eastern portion of downtown LaPorte.

Adjacent Area Plans

CSU MASTER PLAN (2005)

Purpose and Overview

The Colorado State University Master Plan creates a long-term strategy for the three Fort Collins campuses of the University: Main Campus, South Campus, and Foothills Research Campus. The Master Plan addresses university-wide issues such as staffing, funding, enrollment, technological resources, and physical facilities planning. The Foothills Research Campus is viewed as an integral component of the long-term growth and programmatic excellence of CSU in Fort Collins. The Campus currently is home to the following academic, state and federal research programs and tenants:

- Engineering Research Center (ERG)
- Agricultural Engineering Research Center (AERC)
- Atmospheric Science Cooperative Institute for Research in the Atmosphere (CIRA)
- Judson M. Harper Research Center: Center for Environmental Toxicology and Technology (CETT), Biosafety Level 3 Laboratories (BSL), Animal Infectious Disease Lab (AIDL)
- Equine Sciences: Equine Reproduction Center, B.W. Pickett Equine Center
- Animal Reproduction and Biotechnology
- Colorado State Forest Service Nursery
- Fisheries
- National Wildlife Research (NWRC)
- Center for Disease Control (CDC)

Strategies and Recommendations

The long term strategies and vision for the 1,544-acre Foothills Research Campus include the possible addition of 2 million square feet of additional research facility space over a 20 year time horizon. All of this development is envisioned to occur south of Laporte Avenue. North of Laporte Avenue, the campus could accommodate approximately 5.5 million square feet of building space, but is intended to serve as open space supportive of the agricultural and animal research activities. This land is considered as a possible future growth area for the university, but no growth is planned for this area within the 20-year scope of the Master Plan.

For the area south of Laporte Avenue, the Master Plan makes the following recommendations regarding future site construction and design:

- Clustered development pattern of research centers.
- Vegetated buffers between the residential areas and the campus facilities.
- Aggregated parking lots to encourage pedestrian movement between buildings.
- Environmentally-friendly building design, achieving a Leadership in Energy and Environmental design (LEEDS) platinum rating where possible through the following: energy efficient buildings, clustered development for land conservation, sustainable construction materials, on-site reclamation activities, and on-site energy generation.
- Security-minded design would place higher security uses further away from the eastern edge of the campus near town, and reserve this eastern area for higher-traffic, lower security uses.

DOWNTOWN STRATEGIC PLAN (2004)

Purpose and Overview

The Downtown Strategic Plan creates a 5-year set of strategic goals and activities to be pursued by the City, the Downtown Business Association (DBA), and the Downtown Development Authority (DDA). The two objectives of the plan are:

- To study current conditions and trends; and
- To recommend steps the City and business leaders should take together to protect and enhance Downtown viability.

The plan establishes three principles for the Downtown:

- Protect and manage the Downtown retail/entertainment district;
- Use the energy from the core to leverage and attract new development; and
- Blend the Downtown retail/entertainment district with adjacent neighborhoods.

Strategies and Recommendations

The plan looks at the Downtown through three principle lenses: Urban design, market activity, and transportation and recommends the following strategies for each.

Urban Design

- Encourage ground level uses for dining, retail and entertainment.
- Create gateways at both ends of College Avenue and other key entry points.
- Encourage public art and civic spaces.
- Maintain visual distinctness of Downtown and promote infill, including higher density redevelopment.
- Enhance use of the river corridor, including incorporating Jefferson Street as a connection between Downtown and the River.
- Blend the Downtown with adjacent neighborhoods.

Market Activity

- Create a unified business support system and business attraction packaging.
- Strategically build upon existing body of commercial activities in the Downtown to reinforce and enhance the Downtown as a day and night activity center for the City.

Transportation

- Increase parking availability and use of long-term parking structures.
- Create a way-finding plan and signage system, including pedestrian crossings, parking and transit.
- Mason street corridor should be taken advantage of as a long-term transit corridor.
- Support pedestrian, bicycle, and public transit within the Downtown core.

NORTH COLLEGE AVENUE CORRIDOR PLAN (1995)

Purpose and Overview

The plan for this corridor, located just north of the Downtown area, seeks to better integrate this portion of College Avenue with the Downtown and larger community through revitalization and economic development. The plan addresses the corridor in terms of an economic area that should relate not only to the Downtown, but also to surround neighborhoods. This area is directly northeast of the Northwest Subarea. Commercial activity within this area, as in the Downtown, would create a local center for commercial activity, services, and employment opportunities for residents of the Northwest Subarea.

Strategies and Recommendations

- Foster the Corridor as a business incubator and “small local business” area.
- Revitalize the commercial strip.
- Highlight important gateways and nodes.
- Support a mix of land uses.
- Establish and balance the following districts within the corridor: Highway Commercial District, Business Center District, and Neighborhood Mixed-Use District.

NORTH COLLEGE URBAN RENEWAL PLAN (2004)

In 2004, the North Fort Collins Business Association asked the City to recognize the North College Avenue Corridor as an urban renewal project area and to create an urban renewal plan for it. On December 21, 2004, the City Council approved the North College Urban Renewal Plan. This Plan recognizes the North College Corridor requires a coordinated strategy, with financing possibilities, to eliminate blight and prevent the spread of blight, and accomplish the City's development objectives for improving the viability of the area. Development and redevelopment in the area is anticipated to occur incrementally over a substantial period of time.

WEST SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN (1989)

Purpose and Overview

This Plan creates a more specific analysis and land use strategy for the West Side Neighborhood in the City of Fort Collins. This neighborhood is located along the southeastern border of the Northwest Subarea, extending south and east to include City Park, Lee Martinez Park, Mountain Avenue and its surrounding neighborhoods to the north and south. It also abuts the western boundary of Downtown. This plan aims at reinforcing the existing development and multi-modal circulation patterns for one of the older and more stable neighborhoods within the city.

Strategies and Recommendations

The Plan divides the neighborhood into the eight areas with strategies and land use direction for each. The areas adjacent to the Northwest Subarea include:

- Conservation Areas: Primarily single-family areas where some multi-family redevelopment.

These areas are encouraged to remain low density residential areas. Higher intensity uses and redevelopment in the form of new construction are not encouraged. This area creates a two-block buffer to the transition area of Downtown and extends north of Mountain Avenue and west of Shields Street.

- Multi-Family Residential Areas: Retain existing zone districts.
- Single-Family Residential Areas: Retain existing zone districts.
- City Park Edge: Located at the northern edge of City Park, this area is encouraged to develop as a high-end multi-family area that integrates itself with the park and surrounding single-family residential development.
- Mountain-Shields Commercial Area: Commercial development and renovation is encouraged along this commercial area to provide services that are well-integrated to the neighborhood and attractive.

WEST CENTRAL NEIGHBORHOODS PLAN (1999)

Purpose and Overview

This Neighborhood Plan addresses the more detailed land use strategy for the enhancement of the West Central Neighborhoods, the area south of City Park and the areas to the east and south of the CSU Main Campus. Strategies for this area aim to balance the high concentration of college student short-term renters, commercial uses, and the needs of year-round residents.

Strategies and Recommendations

The Plan recommends a number of strategies and goals for the Neighborhoods to pursue. These strategies generally aim to create a stronger level of neighborhood cohesion between the campus community and the rest of the neighborhood. Included in these strategies is a strengthening of commercial and office activity, particularly along West Elizabeth Street to provide jobs and services for nearby residents. This commercial corridor is within close proximity to the Northwest Subarea, accessible from Shields Street or Taft Hill Road.

Parks and Open Space Plans

LARIMER COUNTY OPEN LANDS MASTER PLAN (2001)

Purpose and Overview

This plan identifies the Open Land Program priority areas for Larimer County. The Priority Open Lands are divided into four basic categories, reflecting the goals and priorities identified through a public process with county residents:

- River Corridors,
- Important Natural Resource Areas,
- Important Agricultural Areas, and
- Regional Trail Corridors.

These goals and priorities identified by county residents are:

- Concern over the rapid rate of development of agricultural and open lands,
- The most important open space areas should be identified and protected,
- Land should be acquired through acquisition, donation, and conservation easements,
- Balance land protection with public access,
- Develop a system of regional trails that connect open spaces and public lands,
- Maximize open space protection through partnerships with municipalities and other organizations.

Strategies and Recommendations

The priority areas identified within the plan as key areas to target efforts for land acquisition and conservation within or near the Northwest Subarea include:

- Continue to work to preserve open space along the Poudre River corridor.
- Work to preserve the important natural resource areas of Bellvue/and the mouth of the Poudre River and the Devil's Backbone to Horsetooth.
- Land Conservation and Stewardship Master Plan, City of Fort Collins (2004)

Purpose and Overview

This plan details the evaluation, prioritization, and goals setting that the Fort Collins Natural Areas Program conducted for program management and land acquisition activities for the 2004-2013 time period. As part of this process ecological and

environmental data from the City of Fort Collins, Larimer County, the Larimer County Open Lands Master Plan, the Nature Conservancy, and the Colorado Natural Heritage Program were mapped to discern the location of key resource areas and any areas of overlap. This led to the identification of 16 key resource areas that were then divided into three broad management categories:

- Local Areas
- Regional Areas, and
- Community Separators.

The Northwest Subarea contains two Key Conservation Areas within the Local Areas category:

- Poudre River Corridor Resource Values: Habitat, Floodplain, Watershed. This area follows the Poudre River and its floodplain.
- Core Natural Areas Resource Values: Habitat, Viewshed. This area includes all lands within the Fort Collins Growth Management Area.

Strategies and Recommendations

The ten year conservation framework allocates \$20 million to each of the three Conservation Area categories. Anticipated accomplishments within the plan timeframe for Local Conservation Areas include:

- Add more natural areas, trails and recreation opportunities,
- Focus on areas near Bellvue and the Poudre River,
- Conserve an additional 3,000 acres.

Land acquisition decisions are to be made using the City Council adopted set of land acquisition considerations including the willingness of the property owner, the ecological value of the land, potential recreational value, acquisition cost, and the level of threat to the integrity of the natural resource values of the land. These have been packaged by staff into a "Land Evaluation Guidance System".

PARKS AND RECREATION POLICY PLAN, CITY OF FORT COLLINS (1996)

Purpose and Overview

The Parks and Recreation Policy Plan presents the recommended policies and projects for the City of Fort Collins for a ten to fifteen year period. Recommendations are based on the analysis of community needs and inventory of existing conditions conducted in 1996.

Strategies and Recommendations

The plan recommends:

- developing a balanced park system of recreation areas, parks, natural areas, and trails;
- dedicating more area within neighborhood and community parks for non-programmed or passive uses;
- increasing the overall park stand to 7 acres/1,000 people, with 4.5/1,000 population for community parks and 2.5 acres/1,000 population for neighborhood parks;
- making neighborhood parks usable and accessible for the neighborhoods they serve;
- continuing to improve and expand the trails system; and
- other strategies to improve the citywide parks and recreation system.

For the Northwest Subarea, the plan indicates the area bounded by Shields Street, Vine Drive, Taft Hill Road and Laporte Avenue would potentially have a shortage of 5.4 acres of neighborhood parkland by 2005. The City and the School District have pursued the Plan's recommendation to develop a park site along Vine Drive, and have developed the 8.6-acre Huidekooper Neighborhood Park to address this shortage. The Parks and Recreation Policy Plan Master Plan also shows a proposed off-street trails from City Park north to connect to the Poudre Trail via the canals.

Transportation Plans

LARIMER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION PLAN (2000)

Purpose and Overview

The Larimer County Transportation Plan serves to plan for a transportation system that will move people and goods in a safe and efficient manner through the county and prepare for future growth and its associated travel demands. The plan establishes a roadway network for the county with a hierarchy of functional classifications.

Strategies and Recommendations

The plan shows:

- North Shields outside city limits (LCR17) and is a major collector;
- North Taft outside city limits (LCR19) is a Major collector to the Poudre River; and
- Overland Trail is a Minor Arterial.
- Vine Drive is local street.

Short-Term Capital Improvement Needs Identified for the Subarea

- The plan identifies Overland Trail for a lane and shoulder widening project south of Vine Drive. The county recently completed this project in summer of 2005.
- It identifies Taft Hill Road and Overland Trail bridges across the Poudre River as functionally obsolete, where they have acceptable load carrying capacity, but impose unacceptable physical restrictions such as narrow width, restricted vertical clearance, limited sight distances, speed reducing curves, or insufficient waterway clearance.
- Finally, it identifies intersection improvements for Intersections of Vine Drive and on Overland Trail.

2020 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT NEEDS IDENTIFIED FOR THE SUBAREA

The Plan shows additional lanes for Overland Trail north of Vine Drive, for Taft Hill north of the city limits (scheduled for 2006). Vine Drive is shown as a lane/shoulder widening project from Taft Hill to Shields. Overland Trail to the north also merits lane and shoulder widening according to the plan.

These streets are all classified as future arterials on the Roadway Plan. The Proposed Bikeway Plan does not designate new bikeways within the subarea.

FORT COLLINS TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN (2003)

Purpose and Overview

The Transportation Master Plan serves a variety of purposes. It is a vision document that defines the long-range transportation system. It also provides policy direction regarding the transportation system. It is a physical plan and comprehensive guide to transportation, and it provides priorities for implementing projects. The Master Street Plan is a component of the Transportation Plan and is a map-based representation of the city's long-range vision of its major street network.

Strategies and Recommendations

The Master Street Plan (MSP) designates the arterials in the area generally as 2-lane arterials and it does not designate any collectors in the area except for Laporte Avenue west of Taft Hill Road.

The 2004 Transportation Master Plan lists a number of capital projects for the subarea. Only one project in the subarea is prioritized as a "high" priority. That is the intersection of Taft Hill and Laporte. A number of other projects rank as "medium" priority (ranging from No. 35 on the list to No. 134), including improvements to the Taft/Mulberry interchange, the Shields/Mulberry interchange, improvements to Overland Trail from Mulberry to Laporte, LaPorte Avenue from Taft Hill to Shields, Taft Hill, from Laporte to Vine, and others.

Utility Plans

STORMWATER MASTER PLAN UPDATE (2004)

Purpose and Overview

The Stormwater Plan update aims at creating cost-effective strategies for stormwater management within the eleven identified drainage basins of the City of Fort Collins and adjacent Larimer County. Each basin is addressed in terms of location and flooding history; and offers solutions for reducing flood damage within the basin. Attention is devoted to the cost-benefit ratio of the work done and costs of flood damage that would be avoided. It quantifies potential costs of not taking action.

Strategies and Recommendations

The West Vine Basin plan offers a number of recommendations to reduce flood damage from a 100-year storm event in the basin. The following capital improvements would cost \$10.4 million and include:

- Five detention ponds west of Overland Trail;
- A detention pond east of Taft Hill Road;
- A channel from the Poudre School District outfall at Impala Drive and Laporte Avenue;
- A channel from New Mercer Ditch and Cherry Street to Taft Hill and the West Vine regional detention pond;
- Spill structures on New Mercer Ditch and Larimer County No.2 Canal; and
- Flood warning gage.
- An open channel from the regional detention pond to the Poudre River.

The City and County are in the process of implementing these improvements.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT FOR THE GROWTH MANAGEMENT AREA (2000)

Larimer County and the City of Fort Collins developed an Intergovernmental agreement for the Growth Management Area originally in 1980 and amended in 2000. The intent of the agreement is to provide better coordination between the City and County and to concentrate urban development in areas designated for such development to afford greater efficiency in the delivery of such services as water, stormwater, and sanitary sewerage disposal systems, transportation, fire and police protection and other services.

According to the IGA, the City and County agree to establish and recognize the GMA and acknowledge the County's overlay zoning district (Section 4.2 of the Larimer County Land Use Code). The GMA is the area for urban development with urban levels of public services and facilities.

Appendix C

Citizen-based Land Conservation Initiatives

Introduction

This appendix contains information that should be useful to citizen-based groups in the Northwest Subarea that are interested in advancing the open lands and trails goals in this Plan.

The planning team did extensive Internet research to find information on citizen-initiated conservation of small farms, trails and/or open spaces, and rural land parcels in places similar to the Northwest Subarea. A broad range of conservation public-private partnerships exist nationwide; however, the majority of these projects are large-scale— with funds exceeding \$100,000 and/or conservation land parcel size typically larger than 100 acres. A lot of examples exist for urban areas (e.g., stream restoration projects in Portland). But, only a few good models were readily accessible that demonstrate citizen-based in developed semi-rural areas. Those examples are contained in this appendix.

Contents

The first part of this appendix includes a small sample of projects recently undertaken with successful results. While we recognize that not all of these methods are transferable to the Northwest Subarea, these models may generate ideas about how citizens may creatively start projects. The second part contains a list of Resources, which identifies potentially helpful contact information applicable to the Fort Collins/Larimer County area. While this list is not comprehensive, and other alternatives should be considered (e.g., an affiliation with Colorado State University or other local volunteer organizations), it is an up-to-date account of resources to pursue.

Project Examples

This section includes recent project examples.

DELINE ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP ACTIVITIES

Larimer County, CO

Ken and Steve DeLine were nominated in 2001 for a Larimer County Environmental Stewardship Award by the Northeast Neighborhood Coalition for their commitment to preserving a working agricultural landscape, ensuring open spaces, protecting wildlife habitat, and maintaining the rural character of Larimer County while at the same time pursuing a limited amount of residential development. The DeLines have accomplished this, the nominators write, by working with the county's Rural Land Use Center in the development of several properties northeast of Fort Collins. The projects include the Westview and Cottonwood Farms Rural Land Use Projects and the Douglas Road Farms Exemption. Each provides new clustered rural residential lots while preserving the majority of the property in working agriculture.

CONSERVATION OF NATURAL AREAS

Fort Collins, CO

Colorado Open Space Alliance worked with the City of Fort Collins to conserve over 22,000 acres of land for the City's Natural Areas Program in 2004, bringing the total land conservation effort by the City to over 33,000 acres. The land conserved is located along the foothills, Fossil Creek, and the Poudre River, in the core area of Fort Collins, and in the community separator areas between Fort Collins and our surrounding communities. Regional sites conserved are located near Masonville and north of Fort Collins in the Mountains to Plains project.

NORTHWEST NEIGHBORS' TRAIL CONNECTION PROJECT

Fort Collins, CO

The group Northwest Neighborhoods, a group comprised of residents from Greyrock Commons, Solar Ridge, Lin-Mar, Stagecoach, Saddleback, and Dean Acres (led by Mary Elizabeth Lenahan) was awarded \$1,700 in 2005 from the Larimer County Open Lands Small Grants Program. The group used the fund to create a biking/hiking trail that connects several subdivisions is the start of a local

trail system that will eventually connect to the Poudre River Trail. Residents, CSU students (Network CSU) and Progressive Living Structures helped build and fund the trail. (See Larimer County – Open Lands Small Grants Program in Resources section below.)

RURAL LAND PRESERVATION GROUP (RLPG)

Teller County, CO

www.trailsandopenspaces.org

In 1999, a group of concerned citizens organized the Rural Land Preservation Group in an effort to preserve the rural character, scenic beauty, and natural resources that make the land in and around Teller County, Colorado an ideal place to live. The RLPG is made up of ranchers, landowners, interested citizens, county officials, and representatives of parks, trails, and open space organizations. The goal of the RLPG is to provide clear and reliable information on land preservation options to rancher and other landowners who wish to keep their land in agriculture and ranching, not only for their benefit, but also as a vital asset to the community as a whole.

WILDLIFE COMMONS COMMITTEE

Larimer County, CO

Dr. Robert Streeter, Chair of the Trappers Point Homeowners Association, led the effort to transform a parcel of reverted farmland covered with weeds to a seasonal wetland surrounded by a mosaic of native grasses, wildflowers and shrubs. The revegetation plan was designed to attract breeding and migrating birds to a semblance of native prairie that was no longer present in the surrounding farmlands and developments. Management of the area, especially weed control, will be an ongoing homeowner's association responsibility.

LAZY J BAR S RANCH – LOVELAND, CO

Jon and Susanne Stephens actively performed land stewardship activities on their Rocky Mountain Lazy J Bar S Ranch in 2004. The Ranch is located at the upper end of Ryan's Gulch in southwest Loveland. The Stephens provided a conservation easement for the Ranch in 2002 which will permanently preserve 327 acres, balancing the historic agricultural operation with protection of important wildlife and plant habitat. Examples of wildlife enhancement including the planting of over 2,800 berry-producing trees and shrubs in buffer areas between fields, establishment of non-traditional slash piles to attract burrowing wildlife such as the eastern cottontail, and modification of their tractor with an attachment to flush out birds while cutting hay. The Ranch is an excellent example of preservation of functional open space adjacent to an urban area.

Resources

AMERICAN FARMLAND TRUST

www.farmland.org

Since its founding in 1980, American Farmland Trust has helped win permanent protection for over a million acres of American farmland. Three strategies used for saving farmland are:

- Protect the best land through publicly funded agricultural conservation easement programs;
- Plan for growth with agriculture in mind through effective community planning and growth management;
- Keep the land healthy for farmland through encouraging stewardship and conservations practices.

In addition to campaigning for U.S. farm policy, research, and education, the American Farm Trust sponsors a \$10,000 Steward of the Land Award to a family farm each year. They also offer a variety of consulting services to help communities build support for land protection and create effective land protection programs.

COLORADO COALITION OF LAND TRUSTS (CCLT)

www.cclt.org

A not-for-profit organization whose mission is to promote and support land conservation excellence in Colorado through leadership, advocacy, education, and outreach. Working with municipal open space programs, and regional and statewide conservation organizations, there are 39 local land trusts in Colorado working to preserve Colorado's agricultural land, open space, and wildlife habitat.

City of Fort Collins Natural Resources

Mark Sears

281 North College Avenue

PO Box 580

Fort Collins, CO 80522

970-221-6600

msears@fcgov.com

Larimer County Parks and Open Lands

K-Lynn Cameron

1800 South County Road 31

Loveland, CO 80537

970-679-4575

kcameron@larimer.org

Larimer County Rural Land Use Center

Jim Reidhead

PO Box 1190

Fort Collins, CO 80522

970-498-7686

jreidhead@larimer.org

COLORADO CONSERVATION TRUST (CCT)

www.coloradoconservationtrust.org

Colorado Conservation Trust is a statewide non-profit organization passionate about keeping the very special places of Colorado special forever. The Trust places a special urgency on uniting Colorado's forces of conservation throughout the state to help conserve two million acres of the Colorado in the next decade. The Trust's role is to bring together conservation dollars, the great works of local, state and national conservation groups, and the latest information and expertise to make the greatest impact on Colorado's threatened landscapes. Colorado Conservation Trust is where philanthropy and effective action come together. It is the only organization in Colorado working with all conservation groups on all kinds of land preservation projects.

COLORADO NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

www.conps.org

The Colorado Native Plant Society works to encourage the appreciation and conservation of the native plants and ecosystems of Colorado. The Society identifies habitat, ecosystems, and threatened or endangered plants; acquires land; participates in governmental and educational programs; encourages the State of Colorado to enter into cooperative agreements with the United States concerning threatened or endangered plants; and cooperates with other organizations with similar purposes.

Colorado Native Plant Society

Fort Collins Chapter contact:

Denise Culver

970-491-2998

COLORADO OPEN SPACE ALLIANCE (COSA)

www.coloradoopenspace.org

The "Colorado Open Space Alliance" (COSA) is a statewide organization of publicly funded local and regional open space programs, working cooperatively to share information, create public awareness and foster partnerships needed to protect and preserve the special places of Colorado. To accomplish this mission, COSA members will:

- Share Information - Provide networking, information, skills, and resource sharing, training, mentoring, technical assistance, clearing house activities and communication among publicly funded open space programs.
- Create Public Awareness - Promote land conservation benefits and program successes by identifying needs, audiences and messages for landowners, decision makers and the public. Publicize and advocate for clearly defined and agreed on positions.
- Foster Partnerships - Create and nurture partnerships to assist in program implementation, fund raising and large-scale projects among open space programs, landowners, land trusts, conservation and land use organizations and other government programs.

LARIMER COUNTY – SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM

www.larimer.org

Ernst Strenge 970-679-4560

Larimer County has developed a Small Grants Program. The program which is funded by the Help Preserve Open Spaces quarter-cent sales tax initially approved by Larimer County citizens in 1995 and extended by the citizens in 1999. The funds are earmarked to "preserve and provide significant open space, natural areas, wildlife habitat, parks and trails". Since 1998, the Larimer County Open Lands Small Grants Program has provided funds to a variety of individuals, neighborhood groups, homeowners' associations, irrigation companies, school groups, non-profit organizations, and other appropriate local organizations for projects on public and private lands that enhance natural areas, improve open spaces, and provide opportunities for environmental and outdoor education. Since the program began in 1998, 58 projects have been awarded over \$70,000.

These funds are available again in 2006; individual projects may be awarded up to \$2000 per year. To qualify for funding through the Small Grants Program, your project must meet one or more of the criteria established by the Citizens of Larimer County in the Help Preserve Open Spaces initiative ballot language and outlined in the 2001 "Larimer County Open Lands Master Plan". These criteria are:

- Provides, restores, or enhances natural areas, including wildlife habitat, forests, prairies, riparian areas, and wetlands;
- Provides linkages with existing open lands; and/or
- Provides opportunities for environmental education, outdoor recreation, or nature interpretation.

Larimer County Open Lands staff and the Open Lands Advisory Board will review each proposal to ensure that the specific criteria are met and to determine which projects will be funded. The maximum dollar amount awarded is \$2000 per project per year.

LEGACY LAND TRUST

www.legacylandtrust.org

The Legacy Land Trust is a local, private, non-political, non-profit corporation established in 1993. The Land Trust is qualified as a charitable

organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service code and its mission is to protect important natural, scenic and agricultural lands in northern Colorado by working closely with landowners, public agencies, and other non-profit organizations. Legacy Land Trust is dedicated to enabling landowners and diverse groups to achieve the shared goal of preservation of Northern Colorado's rich natural and agricultural heritage. The Legacy Land Trust has completed 82 conservation projects protecting nearly 24,000 acres of agricultural lands, wildlife habitat, wetlands, scenic views and open space in Larimer, northern Weld and Jackson counties. Each of these easements represents a collaborative effort between the Land Trust and private landowners, and in many cases, local government agencies and other organizations.

TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE COALITION

www.trailsandopenspaces.org

The Trails and Open Space Coalition is a non-profit organization working to preserve open space and rural land; and create a network of trails, bikeways and greenways in the Pikes Peak region. One of their major efforts is creating volunteer citizen groups that can provide advocacy for particular open space parcels or trails. The Trails and Open Space Coalition provides information on conservation methods, advocacy techniques, fundraising methods, public/private partnerships and much more.

CITY OF FORT COLLINS - NATURAL AREAS ENHANCEMENT FUND

www.fcgov.com/naturalareas

970-221-6600

The City's Natural Areas Enhancement Fund provides financial assistance to encourage site management and protecting, restoring, and enhancing native animal and plant communities. Projects should enhance or restore public or private natural areas in Fort Collins (or within the Growth Management Area). Examples include native tree and shrub plantings, removal of non-native vegetation, wetland creation and enhancement, or native grassland revegetation. Eligible projects must be within the limits of the Fort Collins Growth Management Area, but need not be within the City limits. The program considers projects from private citizens, neighborhood groups, nonprofit organizations, school groups, and corporations.

Appendix D

A Guide to Annexation

Introduction

During development of the Northwest Subarea Plan, residents of the area expressed concern about whether this Plan will recommend immediate annexation. This Plan does not recommend City annexation of existing County neighborhoods and subdivisions in the area. This Plan will also not change annexation policies. The current Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) says the city will annex properties within the GMA as expeditiously as possible when eligible (see page 5 of IGA). Annexation policy is subject to state law and an existing agreement between the City and County.

What is the Growth Management Area (GMA)?

The Northwest Subarea is within the county's Growth Management Area (GMA) for Fort Collins. The GMA has been in place since 1980, and it defines the extent of urban development. An agreement between the City and County states the City will pursue annexation of eligible properties in the area.

Figure 37 – GMA Boundary



HOW DOES ANNEXATION OCCUR?

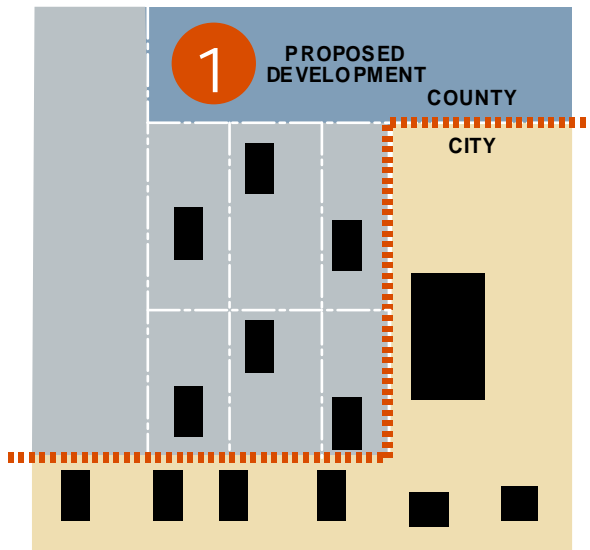
State statutes provide the City with the authority to pursue annexation under certain conditions. If the City were to annex land, it would do so under three conditions:

1. **Proposed Development.** Properties must be contiguous to City limits and inside the Fort Collins Growth Management Area.
2. **Enclaves.** Land entirely surrounded by City limits can be annexed. There are no existing enclaves in the Northwest Subarea.
3. **Annexation Agreements.** Some property owners have petitioned to annex in exchange for access to City utility service or to fulfill an agreement. These properties must be contiguous to City limits.

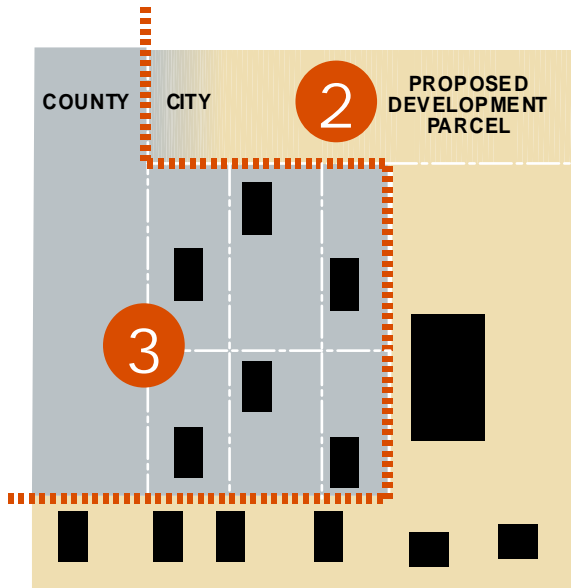
MANY PROPERTIES IN THE NORTHWEST SUBAREA MAY NEVER BE ANNEXED

Some properties might never annex because of the City's policy that properties must meet eligibility requirements for annexation and many of the properties in the Subarea may never become eligible. (See "How Does Annexation Occur".) The Subarea is within the Growth Management Area (GMA) where the County's policy is to work with cities to encourage eventual annexation of existing development. The County has this policy because it is unable to provide urban-level services, such as parks, trails, utilities, and increased police protection. However, many parts of the Subarea may never become eligible for annexation. In most cases, it is outside the City's power to annex existing subdivisions in the County.

Figure 38 - Example of How the Annexation Process Applies to a Parcel of Land



1. Development is proposed on land adjacent to city limits.
2. The developer petitions to annex into the city limits and City Council must approve (i.e., Proposed Development Parcel).
3. Surrounding County subdivision lots are NOT included in the annexation.



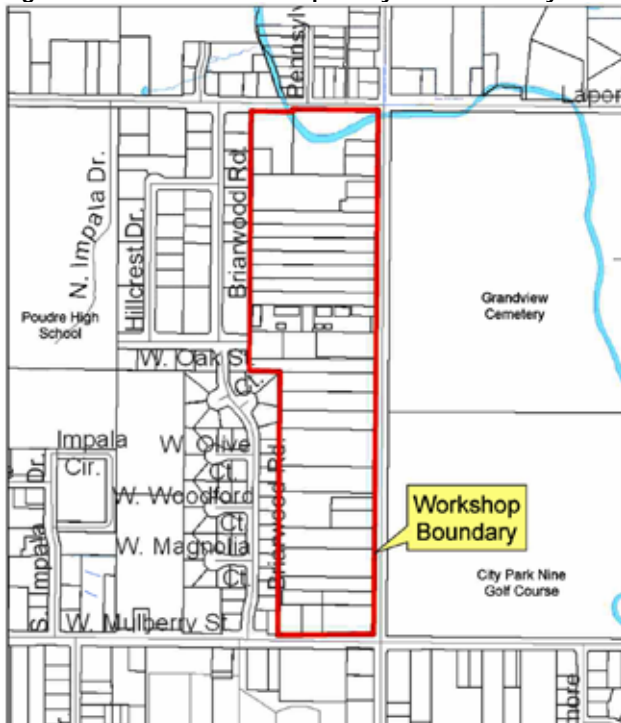
Appendix E

Taft Hill Workshop Results

Overview

The area along Taft Hill Road between Laporte Avenue and West Mulberry Street is characterized by long, narrow lots with single family homes and several businesses. Homes are occupied by both owners and renters in roughly equal numbers. Each of the lots has direct access onto Taft Hill and the lots are separated from the street by a narrow sidewalk.

Figure 39 - Taft Hill Workshop Study Area Boundary



The area has become attractive to developers over the past few years. Two projects have been approved – Cherokee Flying Heights and the Farmstead – with the former under construction in 2006. The area is appealing to developers due to the current zoning, Low Density Mixed-Use Neighborhoods (LMN), the amount of vacant land behind the houses fronting Taft Hill, and the proximity to local attractions (e.g., City Park, downtown, etc.). The current zoning permits a

considerably higher density than is present on the properties and also allows multi-family housing.

In response to neighborhood concerns over new development projects and developer concerns over access to projects and stormwater, the City sponsored a series of meetings with residents and other stakeholders in July, 2006. The intent was to generate design ideas to solve pertinent issues, and then determine the best design and zoning solution to guide future growth.

Design Workshop Process

Four stakeholder meetings were held to identify neighborhood, architecture/design and market, transportation, and utility issues. The primary neighborhood issues revolved around concern over the semi-rural character of the area and compatibility of new developments. The architecture/design and market group described the current market as supporting low- to moderate priced housing within attached or multi-family housing. The transportation group brought up concerns with allowing additional access onto Taft Hill Road and the need for fire safety measures. Finally, the utility group brought up issues related to local floodplains and the need for better or shared stormwater detention facilities as new development occurs.

DESIGN OPTIONS

Taking into account all of the issues brought up during the stakeholder meetings, schematic design solutions were developed. The designs showed a range of options including:

Continue As-Is - Continue to allow piecemeal, lot-by-lot development with access onto Taft Hill Road.

Limited new development- Downzone the area, thereby limiting the amount and feasibility of new housing units by reducing the allowable density.

Limited housing types and density, with partial north-south street - Housing types would be limited to single family homes or duplexes, arranged along a north-south street.

Limited density, with partial north-south street - Density would be limited to 8 dwelling units/acre, with single family homes, duplexes, or townhomes arranged along a north-south street.

Major, comprehensive redevelopment - Redevelopment across all properties, with different housing types arranged along a north-south street between Laporte and Mulberry.

COMMERCIAL USES

Another topic discussed was commercial uses at the northwest corner of Mulberry and Taft Hill. No design schematic was developed for this area. A neighborhood center is possible at this location, although infeasible at this time due to the lack of neighborhood connections, access issues, and floodplain constraints. The center may also conflict with a neighborhood center recommended by the Northwest Subarea Plan at the northeast corner of Taft and Laporte.



Meeting attendees worked through the design options and offered their feedback.

Residents attending the first public meeting in July, 2006 overwhelmingly favored the downzoning option. After this meeting, the options were refined and the comprehensive redevelopment design option was removed from consideration. A follow-up meeting was held in September, 2006 to determine if there was consensus on a particular option. The options presented by staff included:

The Options

Null Option - Continue As-Is, with existing zoning and piecemeal development.

Option 1 - Downzone to Low-Density Residential (RL).

Option 2 - Limit housing types to single-family and duplexes and density to 5 dwelling units/acre, with development occurring along a partial north-south street.

Option 3 - Limit housing types to single-family, duplexes and townhomes and limit density to 8 dwelling units/acre, with development occurring along a partial north-south street.

These options are illustrated on pages 99-102.

This second meeting was more broadly attended by residents and property owners. Attendees were evenly split between favoring the Null alternative and Option 1. (These two options were also evenly disliked.) The Workshop organizers did not anticipate that attendees would vote for the Null Alternative since it represented the problem stakeholders were convened to solve. The Null Alternative was not even presented as an option that could be voted on. The fact that it drew such a large vote indicated that a substantial number of attendees prefer keeping the allowable density as high as it is currently. On the other hand, there was also substantial support for downzoning. City Staff could recommend downzoning when there was not consensus for it. However, staff recommended some solutions to access and buffering issues that help address stakeholders concerns, even if allowable density is kept as is.

Figure 40 - Taft Hill Workshop Null (Leave as is) Option



Figure 41 - Taft Hill Workshop Option 1

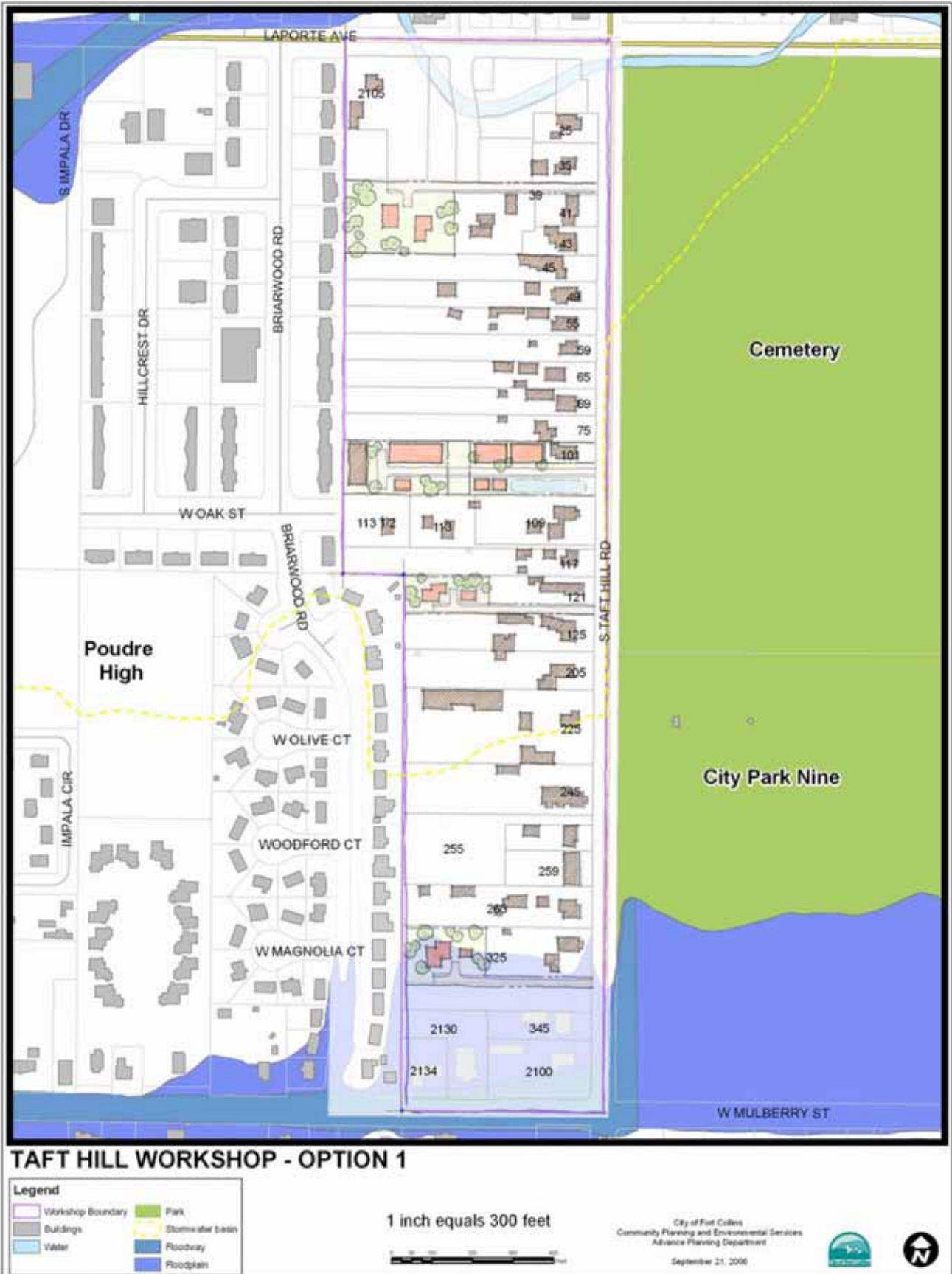


Figure 42 - Taft Hill Workshop Option 2

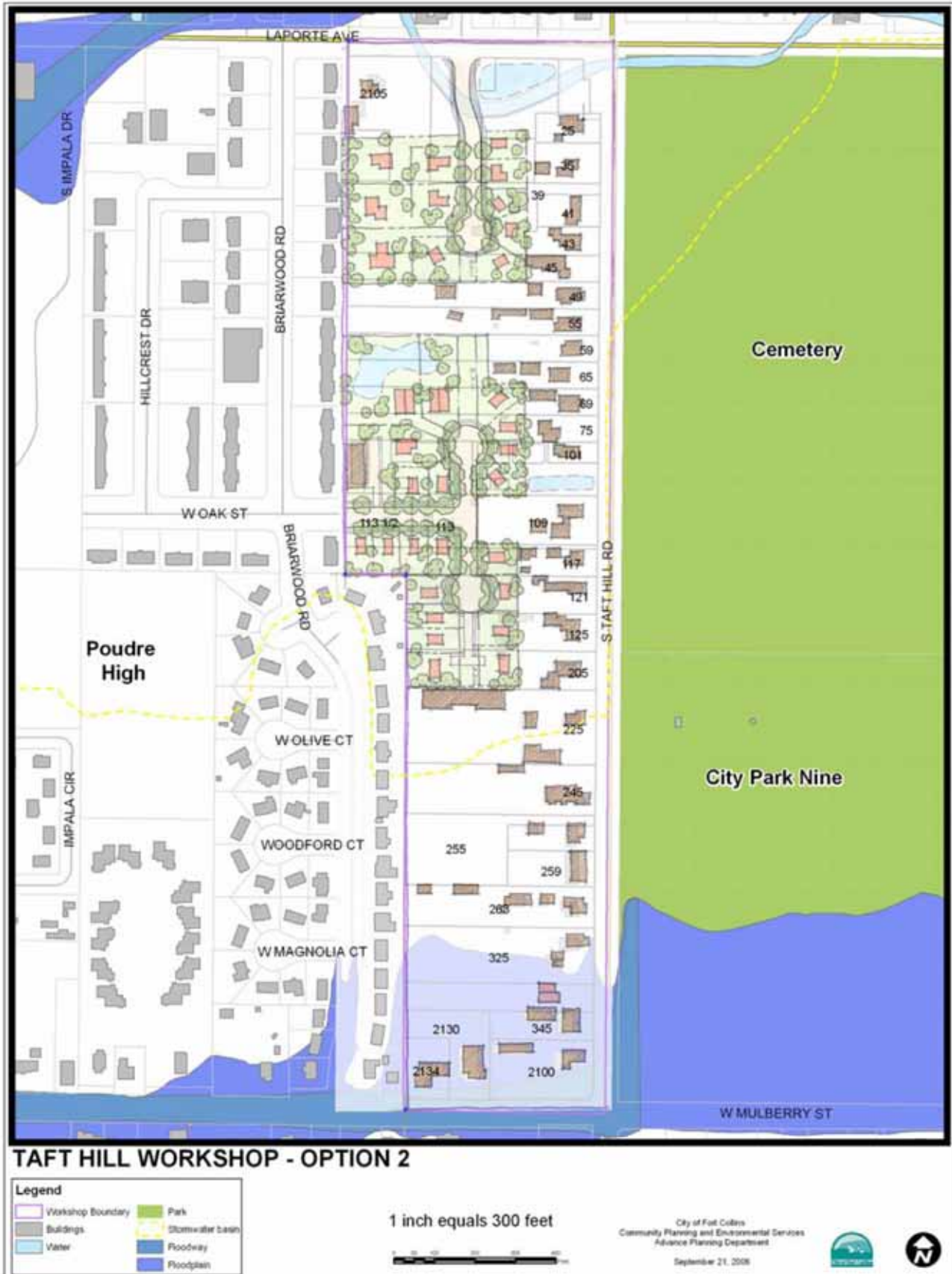
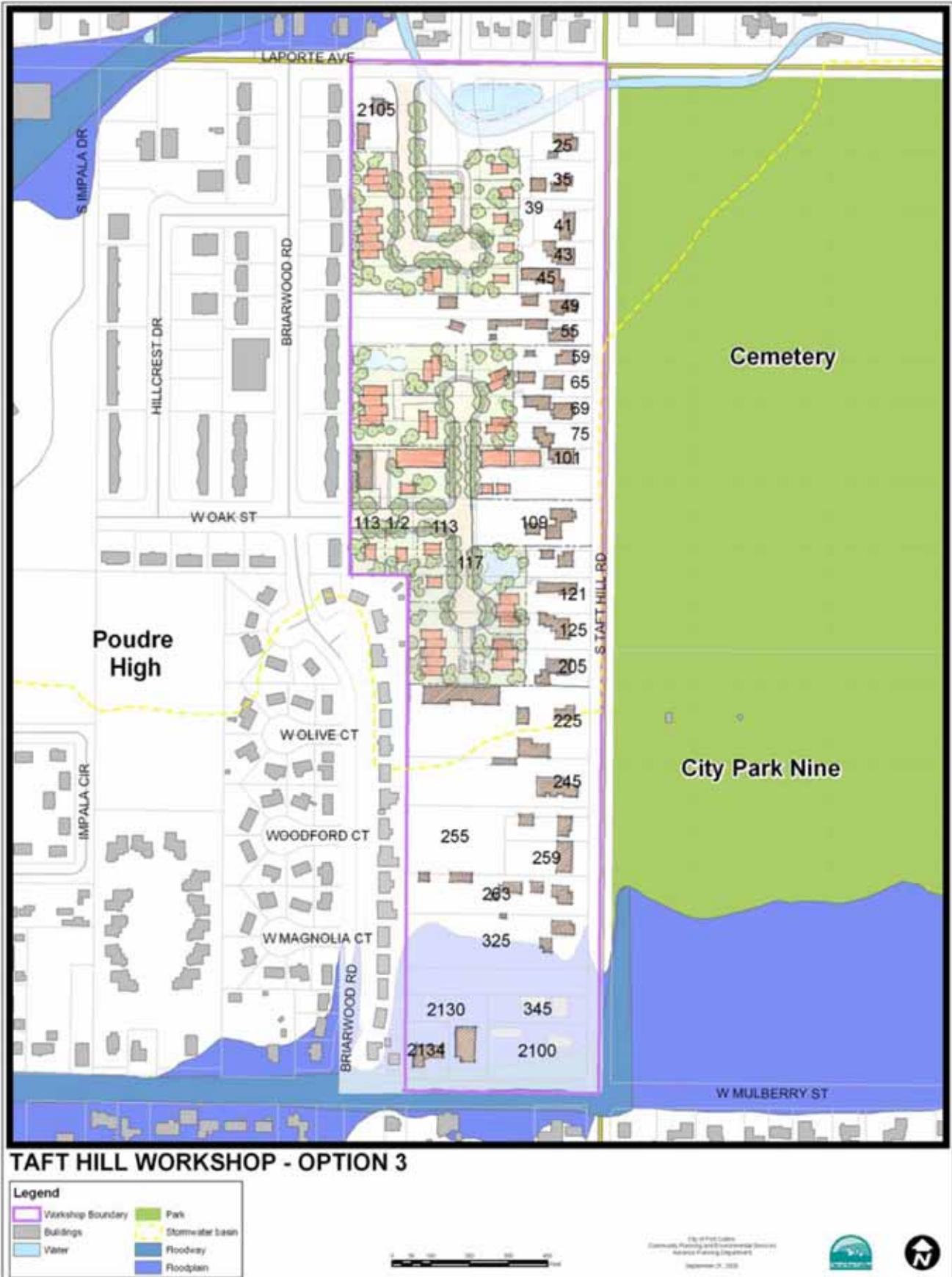


Figure 43 – Taft Hill Workshop Option 3



Recommendations

SITE DESIGN

Design and Plan Across Parcel Boundaries

Developments should be cohesively planned and designed across property boundaries.

Developers/property owners are strongly encouraged to assemble properties to maximize ability to provide coordinated access, appropriate buffering and coordinated stormwater detention.

Limit Access Points onto Taft Hill Road

New access points onto Taft Hill Road will be limited. Fewer access points on Taft Hill Road will prevent additional safety problems. Developing properties should share access to Taft Hill Road as much as possible. Access to Taft from developments will be closed when all or part of north-south street is constructed.

Internal North-South Circulation

Dedication of right-of-way for a new internal north-south street will continue to be acquired as new development occurs. A north-south street or parts thereof can allow new, compatible developments without the need for multiple new access points on Taft Hill Road.

Extend Oak Street to the East

Work with developers and owners of properties east of where Oak Street ends in order to provide for the extension of Oak Street to the east. This extension would provide an alternative access point to Taft Hill and would enable development to occur in the interim with connectivity to the West.

Buffer New Multi-Family Developments

New multi-family housing should be buffered from existing single family homes fronting Taft Hill Road by either scaling building mass down, enhanced landscaping or both. Larger buildings could be located near Ramblewood Apartments or to the interior of the site on parcels south of Oak Street. Most new development is likely to contain multi-family buildings, given the market feasibility.

An enhanced landscape buffer should be provided between developments containing new, multi-family structures and existing single family homes fronting on Taft Hill Road. Enhanced landscaping will help to soften the visual impact of larger buildings in the neighborhood.

LAND USE

Since there was not consensus among residents of the area, this Plan recommends no changes to the Land Use Code zoning, uses and development standards in this area. The LMN allows an overall residential density of up to 8 dwelling units per acre, or 12 dwelling units per acre for qualified affordable housing projects. There is no minimum density required in this area if projects are less than 20 acres in size. A variety of housing types are allowed. Some limited commercial uses are also allowed.

Instead of code changes, this Plan contains Policy LU-1.5: Access to New Development on Parcels Which Currently Front South Taft Hill Road between Laporte Avenue and West Mulberry Street. The policy contains language to limit new access points onto Taft Hill Road and to provide for a more compatible development layout.

A p p e n d i x F

Adoption Resolutions

RESOLUTION 2006-120
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FORT COLLINS
ADOPTING THE NORTHWEST SUBAREA PLAN AS AN ELEMENT OF THE
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF THE CITY

WHEREAS, on February 18, 1997, the Council of the City of Fort Collins, by Resolution 1997-025, adopted the Comprehensive Plan of the City, to be known as "City Plan"; and

WHEREAS, City Plan, in its principles and policies, identified the Northwest Subarea Plan area as a priority subarea for planning efforts; and

WHEREAS, the Northwest Subarea Plan has been developed to assist in the implementation of City Plan by tailoring City-wide policies concerning land use, open lands and trails, transportation, infrastructure, and community appearance to the Northwest Subarea Plan area; and

WHEREAS, the Northwest Subarea Plan is a joint project between the City of Fort Collins and Larimer County, developed over the past 18 months jointly between the City and the County; and

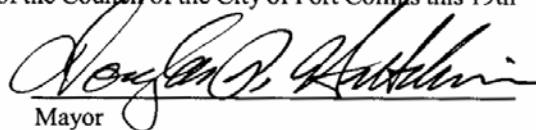
WHEREAS, citizen participation and public process was critical to the development of the Plan, and many opportunities for gaining public input were utilized including large public meetings, public workshops, open house meetings and a neighborhood charrette, along with interaction between City and County boards and commissions and appointed and elected officials; and

WHEREAS, since the Northwest Subarea Plan represents a joint planning effort between the City and Larimer County, both the City Council and the Larimer County Planning Commission will need to adopt the Plan before it can go into effect; and

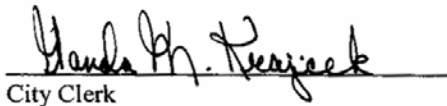
WHEREAS, the Council has determined that the adoption of the Northwest Subarea Plan is in the best interests of the citizens of the City.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FORT COLLINS that the Northwest Subarea Plan, attached hereto as Exhibit "A" and incorporated herein by this reference, is hereby adopted as an element of the City's Comprehensive Plan; provided, however, that said Plan shall become effective only upon its adoption by the Larimer County Planning Commission.

Passed and adopted at a regular meeting of the Council of the City of Fort Collins this 19th day of December, A.D. 2006.


 Mayor

ATTEST:


 City Clerk

LARIMER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION
ADOPTING THE NORTHWEST SUBAREA PLAN
AS AN ELEMENT OF THE LARIMER COUNTY MASTER PLAN

WHEREAS, pursuant to C.R.S. 30-28-106, it is the duty of a county planning commission to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the unincorporated territory of the County; and

WHEREAS, the Northwest Subarea Plan for the Fort Collins Growth Management Area is partially in unincorporated Larimer County for which the County has responsibility and authority for land use planning; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Northwest Subarea Plan ("Plan") was developed in a manner consistent with the guidance of the Master Plan concerning special area plans; and

WHEREAS, the proposed plan was developed with considerable input from area residents and landowners, including several community meetings and open houses; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of Larimer County considered the Plan at an open hearing on November 6, 2006, and voted to recommend adoption of the Plan as part of the Larimer County Master Plan.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

1. The Northwest Subarea Plan is hereby adopted as an element of the Larimer County Master Plan.
2. A copy of this Plan shall be and is hereby certified to the Board of Larimer County Commissioners.

ADOPTED this 15th day of November, 2006.

LARIMER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION


Chairperson


Secretary

RECEPTION#: 20070001431, 01/05/2007 at
11:33:28 AM,
1 OF 1,
Scott Doyle, Larimer County, CO