

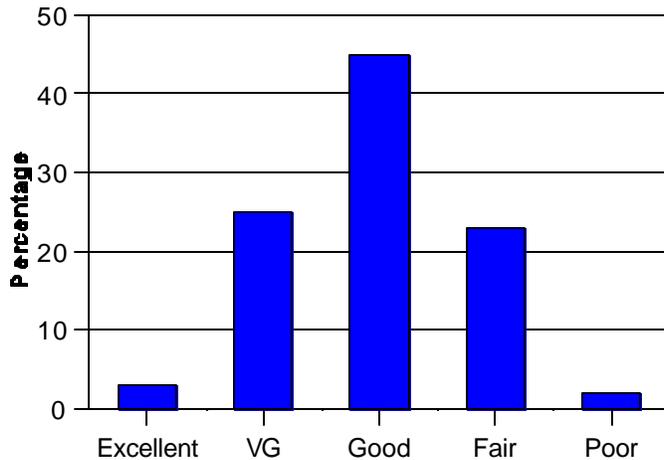
# **GENERAL AIR QUALITY SURVEY**

**REPORT**

**JULY 1997**

## Citizens rate FTC air quality

Chart #1

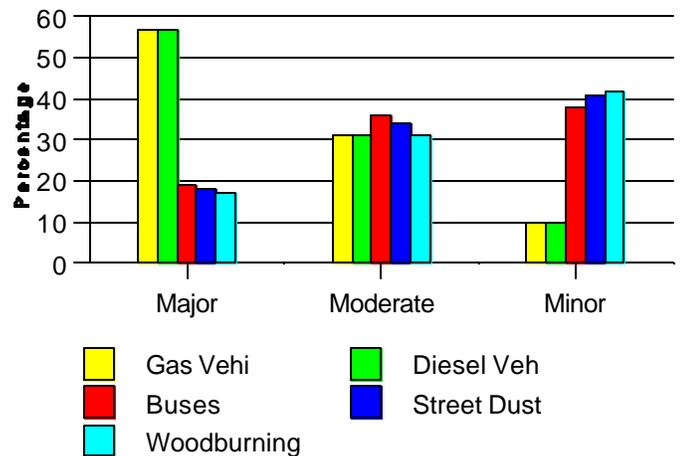


Most Fort Collins (FTC) residents consider FTC air quality to be good. This is consistent with current monitoring data for criteria pollutants. However, this opinion does not reflect the fact that FTC violates the visibility standard each month of the year.

According to residents, the MAJOR sources of air pollution in FTC are motor vehicles, followed by buses, street dust, and woodburning. Fifty-seven percent (57%) of residents picked motor vehicles, both gasoline and diesel vehicles, as major sources of air pollution. This coincides with the Air Quality Action Plan, which also calls out motor vehicles as Fort Collins' major source of air pollution.

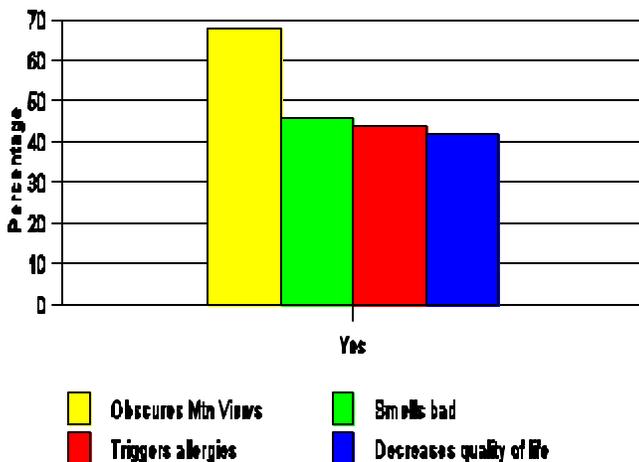
## Major sources of air pollution

Chart #2



## How residents are affected by Air Pollution

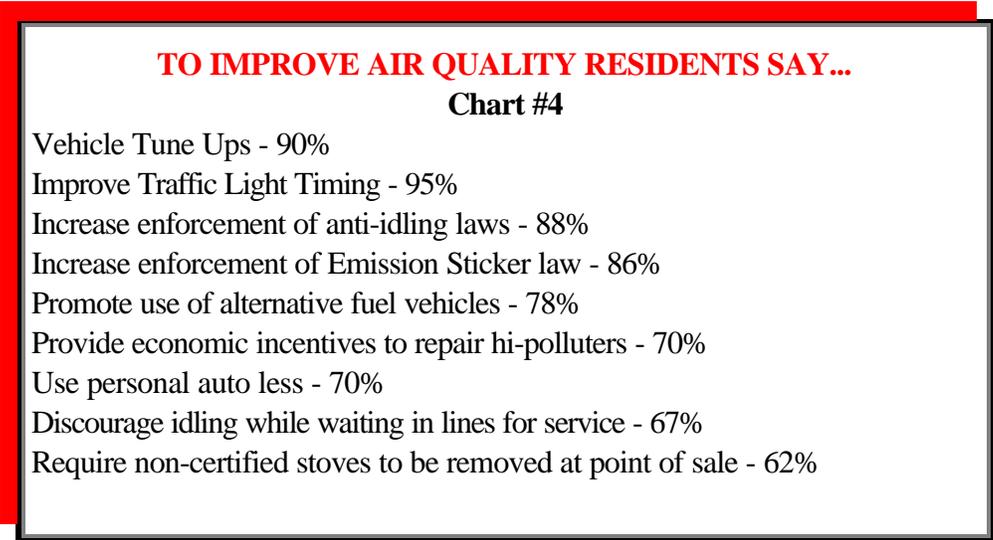
Chart #3



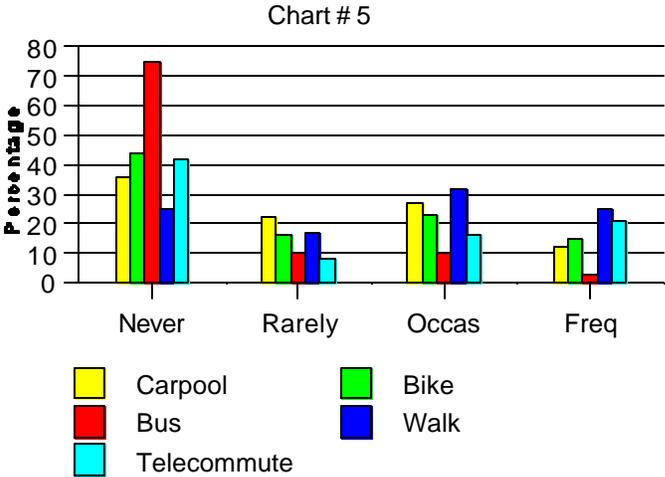
Surprisingly, residents are most affected by the fact that air pollution obscures mountain views and smells bad, followed by allergic and respiratory aggravation, and a decrease in quality of life. Next in order of importance are burning/itchy eyes and nose, local economic impacts, and creation of the brown cloud.

A little over half (53%) of the respondents feel we adequately control auto emissions, and 74% target trucks passing through Fort Collins as the major source of air pollution for them. It should be noted that the truck issue is a major concern on the north end of the city where trucks are re-routed through the edge of the Old Town business district, which is also adjacent to residential areas. A plan has been in the works for several years to move the truck route further northeast and away from the downtown area.

Sixty-eight percent (68%) of respondents feel their vehicles contribute to air pollution, and 83% feel a strong personal obligation to help improve air quality. In order to improve air quality, residents suggest the following:



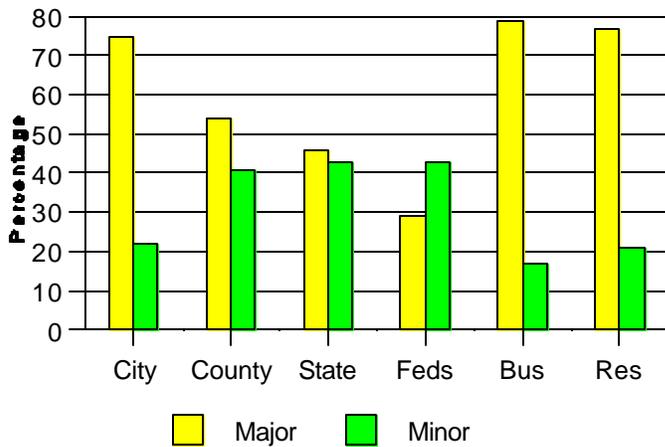
### Use of Alt Modes



While the motor vehicle is the major air pollution source in Fort Collins, and 70% of residents say THEY should reduce use of their autos to counteract this, only half (50%) support alternative modes such as biking or mass transit as a suitable solution to auto pollution. Even fewer use such methods of transportation on a regular basis. Walking and telecommuting are the most-used modes, with mass transit, biking, and carpooling next in order of use.

# Who's Responsible?

Chart #6

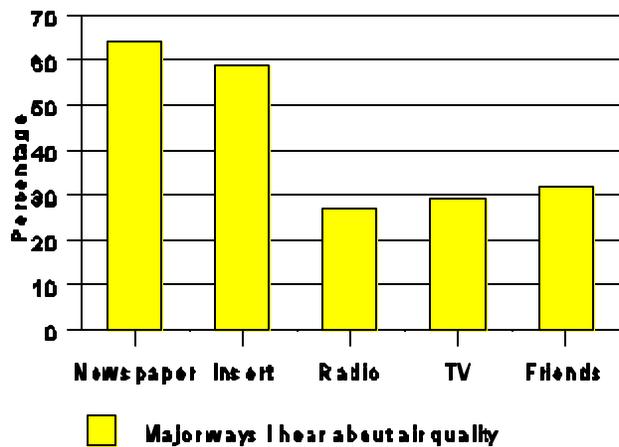


The responsibility for reducing air pollution must be borne by all and respondents say the City, local business, and residents have the biggest responsibility for maintaining air quality, with business having the most responsibility. This seems to support the a long-standing attitude regarding business's contribution to environmental woes, a belief that goes back to the beginning of the environmental movement in the 70s. That being said, respondents also believe it's up to "us", locally, to solve our own AQ problems.

Respondents (74%) feel that education is an effective tool in reducing air pollution and 56% are satisfied with the amount of information the city provides on air quality issues. In assessing how residents get their information, it appears the local newspaper is first followed by the City utility bill insert. The City utility bill insert has been a very useful tool in promoting radon testing and mitigation and the new radon information law.

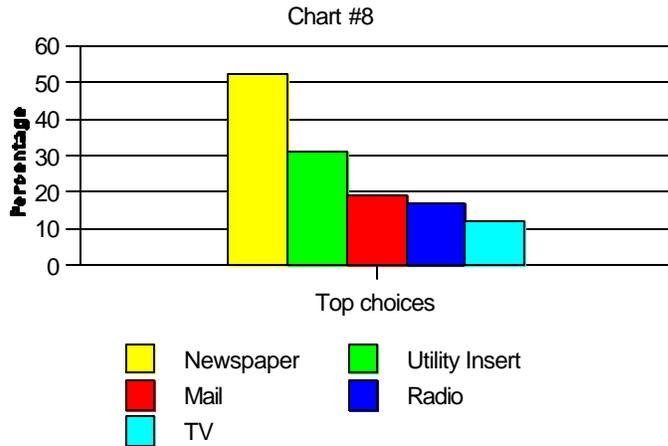
# Sources of AQ information

Chart#7



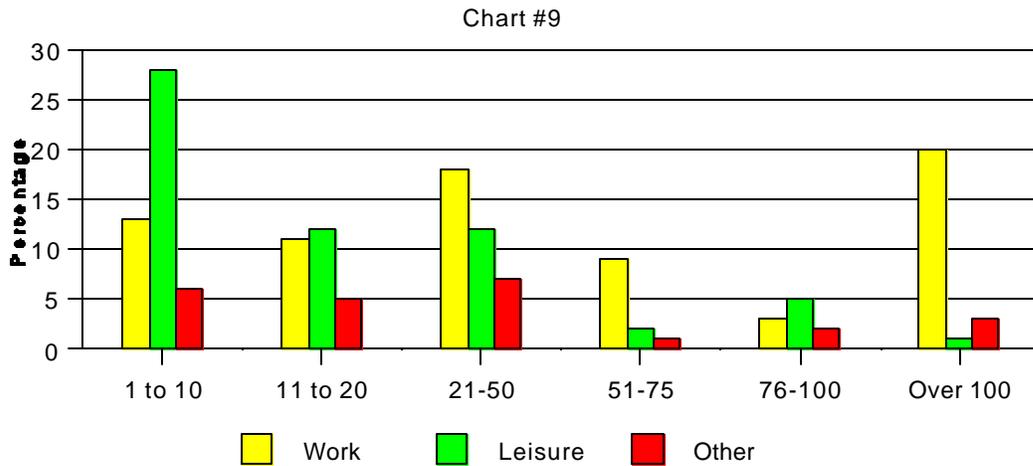
What's the best way to get information to residents about air quality? Apparently, newspapers are still number one, followed by the utility bill insert, with direct mail, radio, and TV distant thirds. Billboards, telephone, Internet, work, and schools reach 4% to 8% of residents.

## Perfer to get information through...



The City uses the newspaper, utility bill insert, and direct mail heavily, with some money spent on radio ads and very little spent on TV. The City does have a cable channel that is used to televise City Council meetings and other government events. The City also operates a City Line phone service that residents can access to get information on a variety of topics. However, this service is not widely used.

## Miles driven each week



Forty-seven percent (47%) of respondents own at least two gasoline-powered vehicles, three percent (3%) own a diesel vehicle, one has an alt fueled vehicle, and 75% own bikes, with 23% owning three or more. Most residents say they keep their cars tuned up (93%), and miles driven to work each week tops out at over 100 (20%), leisure driving at one to ten miles/week, and other trips top out at 21-50 miles/week.

## **<sup>1</sup>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Fort Collins residents believe the air is good in the Choice City and site diesel and gasoline vehicles as the major source of air pollution. They say air pollution affects them most by obscuring mountain views, producing unpleasing odors, and aggravating allergies and respiratory problems.

Only half of the respondents feel air pollution is adequately controlled in the city and 74% site trucks passing through the city as the major cause of aggravation for them. Two-thirds of the respondents feel their vehicles contribute to air pollution and 83% say its their responsibility to keep the air clean. However, they also say that business is most responsible for the over all air pollution problem and for its clean up.

While residents say they should reduce the use of their vehicles, only 50% support alternative transportation, and less than 20% use alt modes on a regular basis. Most residents own at least two motor vehicles and 20% drive over 100 miles a week to work, followed by the 16% who drive 21-50 miles per week. Three-quarters of respondents own bicycles, with 23% owning three or more, but only 15% use them on a regular basis. Seventy-five percent (75%) of residents feel that education is an effective way to combat air pollution and 56% are satisfied with the amount of information the city provides. Residents prefer to get their environmental information from the newspaper and utility bill inserts, with direct mail, radio and TV distant thirds. Billboards, telephone, Internet, work and schools reach approximately 4% to 8% of respondents.

A complete list of comments is attached.

---

<sup>1</sup>The survey was mailed to a random sampling of 1,500 Fort Collins residents. The survey was designed by staff and refined by Dr. Jerry Vaske, a Colorado State University professor. This is the first general air quality survey the city has conducted since 1991. The results of the survey will be used to select issues to benchmark against other communities of similar size and geographic location.

# COMMENTS

## AIR QUALITY SURVEY

### 4. What do you think is the biggest source of air pollution in Fort Collins?

Cars (69)  
Trucks(30)  
Pollen(2)  
Diesel(18)  
Vehicle traffic (84)  
Unregulated commercial vehicles.  
Stop and go traffic  
Poorly timed street lights  
Industry(6)  
Fireplaces(3)  
Street dust, Leaves(9)  
From outside of our town(2)  
Buses(2)  
Brown cloud from other Front Range cities(3)  
Construction work  
Poorly tuned autos and trucks.  
Vehicles that spew blue/black smoke.(2)  
Moves north from Denver area.(4)  
Temperature inversion(2)  
Wood burning(5)  
Vehicles idling at major street stoplights i.e. College, Taft, Shields, Lemay(2)  
City hall  
Cement plants  
Too many people/population growth(3)  
Yard equipment(2)  
Politicians talking about it!

8. What one suggestion would you make about the best way to reduce air pollution in Fort Collins?

Don't push so much city growth.

Develop a positive and encouraging publicity program to help our city excel in policy control.

Enforce existing laws and develop and consider new effective laws.

Anti-idling laws for any vehicle would make me feel better - in winter in our neighborhood this is a big problem - but all year this should be implemented.

Reduce choices to residents e.g. garbage disposal, choice of schools, balance out development of shopping.

Stop Cruising.

Have one garbage company service a set area, neighborhood.

Make new vehicles affordable so people can afford to buy them and get rid of their high polluting old ones.

Build more through streets so we are not idling in traffic so much.

Why not start with boats and lawn equipment that can belch out emissions at a much higher rate than an automobile.

Promote the use of alternative fuel vehicles along with mass transit line.

Incentives and rebates.

Change lifestyle.

Staggered work times so not so many vehicles on same street at same time.

Build streets around outside of town to help commuters stay off main streets.

Do truck bypass - this has been discussed for years - but nothing done!

Clean the dust off the streets with a more effective device.

Sweep streets especially in winter more often (pick up sand put down for ice).

Stop using gravel on streets in winter, on snow. Go to salt!

Reduce driving emission stickers are useless - cars and trucks can stay on the road even if they don't pass.

Raise gasoline prices high enough to reduce driving.

Electric rapid transit.

Street patterns

Clean up pollution on city buses. I ride the bus and some of them smoke badly.

More right hand turn lanes.

Get rid of stop light car sensors on small cross streets and go back to timed lights.(2)

Outlaw wood burning.(2)

Ban wood burning to diesels !!

Stop the brown cloud from coming up the Front Range from Denver, Boulder and Longmont.

Reduce vehicle miles traveled by limiting population growth and road construction/expansion.

Education.(6)

Accessible education about what individuals and industries can do.

Provide more information to residents and business owners about causes of air pollution and ways to reduce.

More information that is more consumer friendly. Need more research.

Enforcement by the Police Dept of smoking vehicles.(2)

Proper vehicle maintenance along with emissions.

Enforce auto emission sticker laws (e.g.: out of state students with cars)(2)

Get the high polluting vehicles off the streets.(3)

Make laws and enforce them for ALL pollution generators.

Drive more efficient vehicles.

Too many stop lights - ties up traffic which causes delays and adds to the problem.

Teach in elementary schools- these kids already are recyclers through education - this could be the same.

Improve roads with lanes to reduce gridlock.

Improve bike lanes.(2)

Improve public transportation.(7)

Develop rapid transit system.(5)

Develop a good public transport system - how about the RR tracks that will be available down Mason?.

Immediate program to improve streets and use BN tracks for trolley.

Make commuter mandatory. Longer bus hours (ex: Campus)

Provide free bus service all over town paid by property taxes.

Improve bus system.(4)

Increase public means of transportation.(3)

Smaller city buses - never have seen a full one.

Educate citizens re: car pools and alternatives to driving everywhere.(3)

Reduce population growth.(6)

Improve bike safety to encourage more people to bike instead of driving.(2)

More tightly monitored emissions regulations.(2)

Make bicycling safer in town as an alternative to cars and make bicycling more convenient transportation than cars.

Have north and south bike paths in Ft Collins; have bike paths go somewhere i.e. to HP, CSU.

Excavation earth should be kept damp to prevent high winds from blowing it.

Control trucking (commercial).(2)

Plant more trees

Reduce street litter

Encouragement for people to ride public city buses more.

Improve North/South biking - motor traffic and driver attitudes limit my bicycle commuting.

Use ethanol gas more.

Mandatory carpooling.

Re-route 18 wheelers off 287 to and from Laramie WY. Keep them on I-25.(2)

Keep trucks passing through Fort Collins off College - They have to make to many stop

and go's.(3)

Reduce driving.(7)

Reduce high density building along foothills.

Develop a track for a rail to go from one end to the other. Something unique to make people want to use it such as a trolley.

Economic incentives for improving emission controls.

Make traffic move more steady. Being able to make more than one stop light at a time.

Progressive stop lights. (9)

Our traffic lights are too long and we spend much too much time stopping and idling.(3)

Time traffic lights better, Mulberry St is bad around College Ave early in morning- a 6 second green light is stupid.

Move toward electric vehicles for in-town use as they become affordable and practical.

Provide community centers to reduce driving. Include shopping for basic goods and services within these centers.

Tax both vehicles and stationary sources in proportion to emission.

Have better bus service on propane.

I see a lot of smoking vehicles and wonder how they ever pass emission tests. Why is this?

Also Diesel powered vehicles are heavy polluters.

Stricter enforcement of vehicles that blow blue smoke and emissions standards.

Don't allow drivers of vehicles that pour smoke out to drive those vehicles.

Carpool more.

It is hopeless. Real estate developers have spoken of Fort Collins as the "path of progress" for years. Now they can join us choking on it.

Commuter system to Denver.

Alternative power sources (i.e. wind for electricity)(2)

Reroute truck traffic.(6)

Reduce large diesel trucks in city.

Limit train traffic, switching or reroute.

Do away with wood burning stoves and fireplaces.(2)

Remove wood fireplaces. Remove cottonwoods. Remove leaves as soon as they're down on street. Use salt - not sand on snowy streets.

Reroute trucks passing through Fort Collins - charge them for current emissions.

Cessation of exemption from emission requirements.

Better transportation system.(2)

Other transportation so people would not have to be driving 3-4 cars in their family.

Promote vanpools to work.

Plan for an alternative transportation system.(2)

Make regulations for burning fire wood days like in Denver.

Have waste pickup become a city function like Loveland.

Paved dirt roads in and near the city.

More bikes, less cruising, college kids

Residents and government working together to reduce pollution.

All city and government vehicles should be run by propane.

First the city must admit that the growth of Ft Collins has created a situation where air pollution will continue to get worse.

Work with major employers such as CSU. For instance, CSU has several hundred of people working at major research facilities at Foothills campus. As far as I know everyone of them has to take their own car to work. Bus service was discontinued about 6 years ago.

Give low income residents with high polluting cars free bus passes.

There is too much on air pollution and no one to enforce it.

Realign the land and change the weather patterns, especially in winter. Increase hours of bus service, so night workers can use it; like 24 hours a day.

Appeal to citizens

Turn out the lights, the party is over, vacate the city and never use this area for any thing again.

I think we're doing OK.

I don't think it is bad.

3. What do you think are the best two ways for the City of Fort Collins to reach you with information on reducing air pollution?

Newspaper (112)

Local radio (40)

Utility bill insert (68)

Internet(4)

Phone(7)

Mail(44)

TV(25)

Fines

Prohibitions

Word of mouth

Billboards ads (i.e. buses)(6)

Use printed materials in mailers but use print shops far from Ft Collins and deliver only by foot or bike.

Environmental fairs

Through work(3)

Active “emissions index” displays at busy intersections.

Simple graph comparing last year with current year in Utility bill and comparison statement with vehicle registration.

Educate children at schools.(2)

Regulation

Social affairs like earth day or a special booth or affair to personally speak to residents.

## COMMENTS

If you get the Transfort buses off the streets it would solve what you call pollution! Hardly anyone except students ride them as they are inefficient. It's bad transportation and smokey.

We must educate the public about the fact that they can have an impact on air quality and an improved quality of life. We all must be willing to sacrifice for better air quality. An education/advertising program stating the facts about: driving low mileage vehicles; driving less; walking more; living closer to work and other amountities; bicycling; and carpooling. Each citizen must do his/her part for improved air quality. If we don't do out part we should have no right to complain.

I enjoy living in Ft Collins very much. I appreciate all Ann Azari and the other City employees do for our city. I think it's a great place to live. Keep up the good work. God Bless all of you.

I'm originally from Northeastern Colorado. Many times when coming back to Ft Collins on Hwy 14 I have noticed a light brown cloud hanging over Ft Collins. This is visible from as far away as 10 to 15 miles east of Ault. Thus, Ft Collins does have air pollution problem. Thank you for sending this survey to me.

I live outside of the city limits and have to drive to get almost everywhere. However, I would consider using the bus it ran out to the Waverly, Wellington, Laporte areas.

Fort Collins is experiencing intense urban sprawl which has created an impossible situation to economically serve with mass transit. The city is powerless to control this sprawl and powerless to consider options such as elimination of parking, congestion pricing, toll streets, etc. Until the city can acknowledge that there is nothing it can do to stop the increase in traffic and resultant air pollution, it can never develop the public trust to implement innovative program. The "duplicity" of the city in this survey was striking.

After moving here from Atlanta I find the air quality in Ft Collins very good - But - I don't have to look too far southward to see the now famous brown cloud. The industry in Aurora flat out stinks! Fort Collins better get a grip on industry before we have our own brown cloud. I was shocked to learn about the "no wood burning" days in the Denver metro area. If this ever happens in Larimer county (Front Range) I'm moving.

I strongly support Timberline extension plus additional thoroughfares as needed to move traffic ie. Prospect Street widening to east and a truck by pass - this could have been done so easily many years ago (truck bypass) and it certainly is needed now! Growth has been so substantial that bikes are not feasible with children to day care, etc - so plan for the vehicle traffic.

What is the total cost to the taxpayers for this questionnaire, and was it budgeted. You can keep your coupon for drawing. That's why its not been returned.

Bus service not adequate on east to west or north and south. Buses must run later hours 1000 or 1030 pm, especially for Riverside Ave out to the hospital both going and coming on the same route. If you charge a pollution tariff on large trucks passing through town, they will stay on the Interstate from Wyoming through Colorado. The tariff must be stiff enough to have the desired effect.

Air pollution is a growing problem globally. I hope city staff stays vigilant but out city staff often overacts and seeks to over control. Enforcement of current regulations will go a long way toward curbing pollution. Strong case needs to be built before recommending new regulations.

I think road dust is the biggest source of visible air pollution. Carbon monoxide emissions from cars are the most harmful. However, I do believe that this city has gotten almost everyone they will get out of their cars. Anything else will be a losing battle. I am convinced that there is a problem with the mind-set of the city council, IE. An arrogant insistence the we can get out of our automobiles more it is made more difficult to get around. I think if Fort Collins was an easier city to get around in, there would be less idling at intersections, and thus less pollution. I realize this may seem paradoxical, but I think more through streets and fewer cul-de-sacs, would make auto trips shorter.

The greatest problem to use is a 1930 street system trying to do the job of 1990's traffic. Put the tracks over on Vine using Summit View. Use the tracks of BN for a trolley system north and south. Use the old rail buildings as a parking area and dept. Create our own San Francisco.

Deeply concerned as so many friends and acquaintances really suffer and so much change as traffic increases daily. Also street cleaners not efficient. Amount of present and recent repair work has added much to our problem. Supervision of all the inside information is costly and necessarily inadequate. Seemingly increase number of people renting rather than owning and on temporary basis care less. In general most families I know have as many or more cars, trucks, vans etc, than family members.

Please do something about putting in a good public transport system!

My answers are based on the fact that we make too many changes, that are costly, but do not solve any problems. Fireplaces are not anymore harmful than gas heat etc. We pass the emissions law, only the law abiding pay. The city is got cars in and out of our county, smoking up the town.

No one enforces anything ref pollution. With the population explosion here, we must have some laws ref driving of gasoline vehicles. Also, the buses are big polluters.

The city cannot regulate air quality control, as well as it can provide incentives for consumers to regulate or decide, for themselves. Enlightened self-interest, rather than governmental controls, will provide a better long term solution. Better mass transit, better bike trails and routes, and localized commercial area will reduce car usage.

I believe older "worn out" vehicles cause a lot of pollution. But you can not possibly believe that we

drive them because we WANT TO! If we could afford new vehicles we would buy them. New vehicles need to be more affordable!

I have observed that the Transfort buses put out big clouds of black smoke when they take off from a stop. Do they have to meet emissions standards? Other suggestions to reduce air pollution: - Impose a stiff tax on the registration of gas guzzlers, including SUVs. - Substantially increase the local gas tax. - Divide the city into trash collections zones and allow only one company per zone.

I'm glad to see concern for our environment!

External sources of air pollution are serious. The State, County and the City should be acting to limit the # of density of livestock (cattle) in a given area of land. Furthermore cities such as Greeley should be held responsible for degrading the air quality of the entire region. The cattle harvesting and slaughter in this state is creating problems. The cattle processing plants stink and produce air pollution that ends up in our town. Those plants processing cattle must use better pollution controls or limit the # of cattle they process. In addition, over grazing in the foot hills to the west of Fort Collins is causing more soil erosion and dust in the air. Clean up industry, stop Greeley, Stop old cars.

Is it true that the highest gas mileage cars pollute less? Maybe a list of the best cars in terms of least pollution from year to year.

Property owner violating the weed control. Lack of speed control by city law enforcement. Some of our worst drivers are city employees!

I would use my vehicle less, but I can't. I work in the evenings when buses stop running. I work 5 miles from home which is too far to walk and not safe at night. The roads are too congested for me to feel safe on a bicycle even if I could afford one. How about some funding for roadworthy bikes for low income people? I'd much rather take public transportation to and from work. That would require more frequent stops, hours until midnight and a reduced fee for frequent riders. Taking some of the cars off the roads would reduce air and noise pollution as well as increasing traffic safety. Also, all lawnmowers need to have mufflers to reduce air and noise pollution in summer. Large trucks need to be routed around the city unless they are making a delivery in town. Noise and air pollution go together. All newly purchased city vehicle should have electric motors.

I feel reducing the number of cars on the road is important for air quality, safety and improving quality of life in Fort Collins. The following are some ideas other than what I mentioned inside: 1) Have free bus going up and down College Ave that could be subsidized by local business and city tax. 2) Organize city of Fort Collins youth sports by participants address as much as possible to reduce distance athletes and family have to drive for practice and events. I usually have to drive clear across town for my son's games. 3) Offer incentive to employees that bike, carpool, walk or take bus to work. If monetary incentive isn't possible maybe an afternoon (paid) leave from work once a month or gift certificate from local business (donated). 4) Make bike lane separate from car lanes on all main streets. 5) Make Fort Collins a model for other cities by using creative ways to get cars off the streets!

6) If volunteers are needed I'd be interested (if we actually did something other than talk).

Ban drive through services. Encourage cycling by economic incentives every week.

Appeal to our pride. Find an excellent logo/advertising wordage (if Joe Camel can so effectively do us harm - let's use the power of the advertising media to do some good). Give us clearly written descriptions of proposed legislative actions, with plenty of advance time to consider the action and a number of opportunities to provide input to the process.

The fleecing of Ft Collins, RE Pushing the use of bicycles. The city of Ft Collins spending millions of dollars to promote the use of bicycles is nothing but the fleecing of the taxpayers of Ft Collins to improve and support the sport of a few persuasive people who happen to hold the proper job or political position to push for public change or projects to further enhance their own sport. There is no way in the world that there could ever be enough bicycle use in this city or country to even make a difference in the air quality. I know this note will be laughed at because I don't have the education of most of you and I am not as articulate as you. But many people in this city and country are over educated and under wise. I say if the people who would like to live in a bicycle oriented society, let them move to Boulder or even better to Europe, leave our city alone!