



LEGISLATIVE POLICY AGENDA 2014

**Adopted
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TOPIC	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	4
ALIGNMENT	4
FORT COLLINS LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE	5
LEGISLATIVE REVIEW PROCESS	5
2014 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES	6
LEGISLATIVE POLICY STATEMENTS	11
CULTURE, PARKS AND RECREATION	
CULTURAL SERVICES	11
PARKS AND RECREATION	11
ECONOMIC HEALTH	
FINANCE	12
INVESTMENTS	13
PRIVATIZATION	13
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	14
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH	
AIR QUALITY	15
CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	16
NATURAL AREAS AND OPEN LANDS	16
OIL AND GAS	17
RECYCLING AND SOLID WASTE	18
HIGH PERFORMING GOVERNMENT	
HOME RULE	19
HUMAN RESOURCES	20
RISK MANAGEMENT	20
SOVEREIGN AND GOVERNMENTAL IMMUNITY	21
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	21
UTILITY SERVICES	22
ENERGY	22
WATER SUPPLY AND QUALITY	23
NEIGHBORHOOD LIVABILITY	
AFFORDABLE HOUSING	24
DEVELOPMENT REVIEW AND INSPECTION	24
PLANNING AND LAND USE	25
SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY	25

SAFE COMMUNITY	
FIRE PROTECTION	26
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS MANAGEMENT	27
MARIJUANA	28
PUBLIC SAFETY	28
TRANSPORTATION	
TRANSPORTATION	30
CITY LEGISLATIVE STAFF	32

INTRODUCTION

Fort Collins is a community of 151,000 residents located at the foot of the Rocky Mountains along Colorado's Front Range. Incorporated in 1873, the City has grown to become the commercial, educational and cultural hub of northern Colorado. The City adopted a home rule charter in 1954 and operates under a Council-Manager form of government.

The 2014 City of Fort Collins Legislative Policy Agenda identifies issues of importance to the City of Fort Collins. The Agenda expresses policies and positions on issues that affect the quality of life and the governance of our community. Our policy agenda is structured to address areas of local concern and to also reflect the strategic planning that guides resource allocation and other decision making within the City organization.

Fort Collins is a data-driven municipal organization that strives to fulfill its mission, "Exceptional service for an exceptional community", through a vision of providing world-class municipal services through operational excellence and a culture of innovation. City leaders seek innovative solutions to issues facing the community and are often willing to leverage emerging technologies.

We offer this Agenda to residents, the business community and our Legislators as a guide when considering legislation that impacts Fort Collins. We encourage Legislators to contact Fort Collins City Council Members and our Legislative Policy Manager should they have specific questions regarding our policy positions when considering specific legislation.

Alignment

The 2014 City of Fort Collins Legislative Policy Agenda identifies issues of importance to the City of Fort Collins. The Agenda expresses policies and positions on issues that affect the quality of life and the governance of our community. Our policy agenda is structured to address areas of local concern and to also reflect the strategic planning that guides City of Fort Collins organizational resource allocation and decision making.

Seven outcome areas have been identified by the City to ensure appropriate and effective resource allocation to support the community's priorities. Fort Collins' outcome areas include High Performing Government, Transportation, Culture, Parks and Recreation, Economic Health, Neighborhood Livability, Environmental Health, and Safe Community.

The Policy Agenda identifies specific City Council-adopted goals associated with the policy statements. This alignment is important for City staff to ensure that advocacy supports specific desired outcomes.

CITY OF FORT COLLINS LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Legislative Review Committee (LRC) is a representative group of Council members that reviews and reacts to proposed legislation on behalf of City Council and the City. In taking a position on particular bills, the LRC interprets and applies the various policies that are included in the Legislative Policy Agenda. The policies are written in terms of supporting or opposing particular kinds of legislation; however, the policies are intended to guide positions of either support or opposition, depending upon how a bill is written and whether the LRC believes that, if approved, the bill would advance or impede the City's interests. If a bill is governed by two or more competing policies, then the LRC may decide how to balance those policies in taking a position. If a bill falls outside of the Legislative Policy Agenda, the LRC refers the bill to the full Council for consideration before a position is taken on behalf of the City.

Council Members presently serving on the Legislative Review Committee are:

- Councilmember Wade Troxell, Chair
- Councilmember Lisa Poppaw
- Councilmember Ross Cunniff

LEGISLATIVE REVIEW PROCESS

This document may be used as a guide to assess City positions on bills offered during the Colorado General Assembly session and in the United States Congress. Positions are adopted that reflect the community and approved by City Council prior to the start of the General Assembly session. Bills introduced in the Colorado General Assembly are reviewed by the Legislative Policy Manager and brought to the Legislative Review Committee (LRC) for discussion of an official City position. Once a position is adopted on a bill, the Legislative Policy Manager will convey that information to the appropriate state or federal representative and will also advocate for the City's adopted position.

Staff liaisons support the LRC by contributing expertise in various areas of municipal service. The input offered by staff experts is invaluable in analyzing impacts of proposals to Fort Collins operations and the community. Fort Collins also works with community partners to support local projects and staff collaborates with representatives of other municipalities on mutually-held priorities. Fort Collins actively seeks innovative partnerships to leverage positive outcomes for residents.

The City works closely with the Colorado Municipal League on many legislative items facing cities. Fort Collins works with Colorado Association of Municipal Utilities (CAMU) which represents 29 municipal utilities throughout the state on utility issues. Fort Collins actively participates in the Colorado Water Congress State Affairs Committee to address water-related issues.

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Objective: Support retention of Urban Renewal Authority

Issue: Urban Renewal Authority (URA) is a statewide tool in place to identify and revitalize areas of the city deemed blighted and provide a funding mechanism to encourage redevelopment. The main funding tool for URA is Tax Increment Financing (TIF) generated through property taxes. In its best intention, urban renewal restores economic vitality and improves the safety of a designated area. Redeveloping urban areas is much harder and more expensive than new development in “greenfield sites”, thus responds to larger, more costly infrastructure needs. The state of Colorado has empowered local authorities to use Urban Renewal Authorities to encourage revitalization and the elimination of blight in these areas.

URA law has been frequently modified by the General Assembly, including many changes supported by the City. This year it is anticipated that several bills could be introduced to further modify the use of URA and TIF. Fort Collins attempts to use URA and TIF judiciously but also recognizes the concerns raised by counties, special districts and school districts about the use of TIF. URA is an important and useful tool for Fort Collins in addressing community blight and encouraging redevelopment rather than sprawl.

Fort Collins supports dialogue on URA enhancements but does not support bills that would eliminate the use of URA or TIF.

Objective: Support increasing local control of oil and gas operations

Issue: Fort Collins, like many other Colorado communities, has taken steps to address oil and gas extraction. Those efforts have been limited by the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (COGCC) rules that limit restrictions communities can impose and the information available to residents about potentially harmful practices.

Fort Collins seeks the following:

- Increased local flexibility to regulate oil and gas activity within its incorporated borders
- Additional information about the chemicals being injected into the ground, especially during hydraulic fracturing
- Greater knowledge and control of air emission from extraction processes and production equipment
- Enhanced right for communities to regulate oil and gas as an industrial practice and therefore apply local zoning practices to operators
- Better balance between surface land ownership and mineral right ownership

Fort Collins intends to use existing programs like the Local Government Designee (LGD) to their fullest potential but will also seek legislative remedies to areas of greatest concern. Fort Collins will also work with other interested communities to address oil and gas operation concerns.

Objective: Implement solutions for railroad horn noise

Issue: In June 2005 the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) implemented a new federal Train Horn Rule that significantly increased the duration, frequency and volume level of train horns at all public grade crossings. Fort Collins is one of many communities across Colorado and the United States that was built along rail lines. The increased noise from the horns has resulted in mounting citizens' complaints and threatens the economic viability of our community. "Quiet Zones" are offered as a way to mitigate the loud horn noise however studies and mitigation actions are costing many hundreds of thousands of dollars.

In order to clean our air, reduce auto congestion and improve quality of life, several federal agencies including the EPA, HUD and the Federal Transit Administration are encouraging Transit Oriented Development. The Mason Corridor Bus Rapid Transit, which will begin operation in 2014, is one example and we very much appreciate federal support of this project. The idea behind Transit Oriented Development is to bring residents closer to mass transit lines so that they can use mass transportation, and so that downtown revitalization can occur. At the same time, the FRA train horn rule in effect is discouraging the development community and residents from locating around transit. Reform is needed.

FRA has discussed the rule in terms of ensuring automobile safety – that blasting a horn as the train nears an intersection will prevent accidents. The alternative is expensive quiet zones or approved countermeasures. Fort Collins accident data along Mason Street in Downtown demonstrates that accidents are rare and typically involve risk-taking behavior.

Objective: Support allowing local governments to provide broadband and enhanced communication services

Issue: In 2005, the Colorado General Assembly passed SB 152, "Competition in Utility and Entertainment Services." The legislature's stated intent behind the act was predictability, uniformity, and fairness in the cable television, telecommunications, and high-speed Internet access industries, especially where affected by municipal actions.

SB 152 prohibits local governments from directly or indirectly providing cable television service, telecommunications service, or advanced service. "Advanced service" is defined as "high-speed internet access capability in excess of two hundred fifty six kilobits per second both upstream and downstream." Wired and wireless broadband services are included in this category.

Fort Collins Information Technology Department can provide wired and wireless broadband services to City offices and City-owned facilities but is precluded from doing so. The City supports modifying or repealing the provisions of SB05-152 to allow municipalities to provide this “advanced service” in their own buildings and facilities.

Objective: Support clarity and consistency between state and federal marijuana laws

Issue: The passage and implementation of Amendment 64 legalized adult use marijuana in Colorado.

Fort Collins seeks clarification on the following items:

- Conflicts exist between state and federal laws regarding marijuana possession
- The extent communities can regulate and tax marijuana
- Enforcement of the new law and its impacts on local staff and public safety resources
- Rules pertaining to packaging and labeling marijuana and products containing marijuana
- The amount and portion shared locally of sales and excise taxes
- Hours and standards for operation for marijuana businesses
- Effectively funding prevention of under-21 possession and use

In addition to adult use marijuana, communities across the United States that have authorized medical marijuana are struggling with implementation and the need for a single, viable distribution system. At the core of the issues with both medical and adult use marijuana is the classification of the drug. Because marijuana is currently classified as a Schedule 1 drug, it cannot be researched, prescribed by a doctor or handled through the same distribution channels as other prescribed drugs. As a result, different states have adopted different approaches and experience conflicts with federal laws. In Colorado, medical marijuana is recommended by a doctor but not prescribed.

Work is needed at the federal level to clarify this issue. The federal classification should be re-evaluated and possibly changed in order to allow more medical research. If it is determined that marijuana fits one of the other classifications and does have medical benefits, it could be included in the existing drug delivery system.

Objective: Support necessary resources to aid Northern Colorado recovery from 2013 flooding

Issue: Northern Colorado sustained significant flooding that left many people dead, thousands displaced, and infrastructure severely compromised. Fort Collins and its regional partners will seek funding to rebuild infrastructure. Roads, bridges, stormwater and wastewater systems were damaged in many communities throughout Northern Colorado. Residents need to have transportation, sanitary systems and safe housing.

Rebuilding the roads and bridges is also critical to restoring tourism and access to the environmental assets of the region.

Fort Collins stands alongside its neighbors in supporting funding needed to replace or repair needed systems.

Objective: Support funding for transportation infrastructure with an emphasis on building an integrated, multi-modal system

Issue: Funding for vital transportation infrastructure will continue to be a high priority for the City of Fort Collins. We strongly support preservation of federal levels of funding and allocation of all federal motor fuel taxes and other federal transportation trust funds for their intended purposes. In addition, we urge development of a new, more stable, long range transportation funding mechanism that doesn't rely upon fuel tax revenues. This is no longer a sustainable method of funding the nation's transportation infrastructure needs.

The City applauds the reauthorization of the nation's surface transportation law with a focus on transit, livable communities, comprehensive regional planning, revitalization of existing infrastructure, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and other approaches that decrease petroleum consumption and reduce carbon pollution. S.1813 – Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP 21) – has many positive attributes however more work is needed to ensure that funding for transit, bicycling, and walking is protected and enhanced, especially at the local level. While MAP-21 provides funding for many Federal and State programs and needs, it appears to further localize the cost of many multi-modal projects and programs.

Objective: Emphasize federal policies and resources needed to sustain local cleaner energy progress

Issue: The "Empowering Local Clean Energy Action" federal policy agenda identifies key policies and resources needed for local governments to sustain cleaner energy progress. These include investments in federal programs such as the Department of Energy's Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants, EPA's Climate Showcase Communities, HUD's Sustainable Communities, and other programs that provide direct support for local sustainability initiatives.

Objective: Support integrated waste management planning, including the potential for waste-to-energy benefits

Issue: The Fort Collins community is just one member of a regional "waste shed" in Northern Colorado. The City acknowledges this interdependence, and the role that state legislation can, and should, play in applying broad measures such as setting a state waste diversion goal and helping to support related strategies, which could also

serve to reduce carbon emissions and create opportunities for waste-to-energy applications when ultra-low pollution conversion technology is used.

The City relies on regional and state-wide infrastructure and systems for conventional landfill disposal alternatives such as commercial-scale composting, bio-digesters, recycled-content manufacturers, and specialty landfills. We can only be effective at meeting the community's waste reduction goals if facility managers have confidence to develop and expand in Colorado, guided by new legislation that drives waste diversion.

HB07-1288, the Recycling Resources Economic Opportunity Act, will sunset in 2017. The City supports extending the provisions of this bill, which established a grant fund for recycling projects using revenue from a seven-cents/ton surcharge on trash placed in Colorado landfills. The City supports the grant program and further seeks steps to increase funding for this high-performing recycling program.

LEGISLATIVE POLICY STATEMENTS

Cultural, Parks and Recreation

Strategic Outcome

Fort Collins provides diverse cultural and recreational amenities

Strategic Objectives

1. Provide exceptional programs and facilities that contribute to the health and cultural vibrancy of the community
2. Provide outstanding customer service and operational excellence
3. Provide programs that are diverse, innovative and tailored to our unique community
4. Maintain and enhance a world class regional interconnected system of parks, trails and open lands
5. Promote the arts and make Fort Collins the cultural destination in northern Colorado

CULTURAL SERVICES

The City recognizes that art and culture are vitally important to the quality of life in our community and is committed to providing the citizens of Fort Collins with excellent cultural services.

Therefore, the City supports the following policy statements:

1. Support funding for cultural services for the education, entertainment and enrichment of the community.
2. Support legislation that facilitates the creation, performance and presentation of the arts.
3. Support legislation that protects and preserves our cultural heritage.

PARKS AND RECREATION

The City is committed to providing the community with excellent parks and recreation services and facilities. Our citizens enjoy a better quality of life, improved health, less crime and a greater sense of community because of our quality parks and recreation programs.

Therefore, the City supports the following policy statements:

1. Support legislation that maintains or enhances funding for parks, trails, forestry, horticulture and recreation services and facilities.
2. Support use of Great Outdoors Colorado and other sources for full funding of municipal government projects, with maximum local discretion regarding local needs and priorities.
3. Support continued availability of Great Outdoors Colorado grants to municipalities in equal or greater funding levels.
4. Support legislation that enhances the City's ability to provide quality parks and recreation services and facilities for its citizens.
5. Support measures that offer enhanced protection for community trees and natural assets against invasive species, pests and other threats.

ECONOMIC HEALTH

Strategic Outcome

Promote a healthy, sustainable economy reflecting community values

Strategic Objectives

1. Enhance opportunities for both businesses and the local workforce
2. Foster a diverse mix of employment and retail opportunities
3. Focus and invest in the downtown area, river district, Lincoln triangle and midtown corridor
4. Ensure adequate staff to provide timely review and critique of development opportunities
5. Revitalize and strengthen business centers

FINANCE

As a municipality, the City of Fort Collins faces many complex financial issues. Strong fiscal planning, prudent debt management and preservation of the City's revenue base are vital in maintaining and improving the City's financial health. Considering the known impacts of legislation on the City's business community can help foster a stronger tax base and retain a strong quality of life.

Therefore, the City supports the following policy statements:

1. Support legislation that maintains or expands municipal authority to establish alternative funding mechanisms, including financing tools such as public improvement fees (PIF) and certificates of participation (COP).

2. Support increased funding and budgetary autonomy for Colorado State University and Front Range Community College.
3. Support legislation promoting the equitable treatment of sales and use taxes to residents and corporations residing or doing business in Colorado. The City strongly recommends that taxes be as broad-based as possible and that exemptions be limited.
4. Support federal legislation that recognizes the importance of sales and use tax to local, self-collecting municipalities and equitably distributes sales tax collections on e-commerce transactions.
5. Support legislation that would maintain or increase the City's revenue base (sales, use and property tax).

INVESTMENTS

The Fort Collins City Council has adopted investment policies to be used by the City. The policies are reviewed and updated periodically to ensure the safety and quality of the portfolio to maintain liquidity and to maximize portfolio earnings.

Therefore, the City supports the following policy statements:

1. Support legislation designed to protect, without unnecessarily restricting, the investments of government entities.
2. Support legislation that provides for adequate transparency of the City's investment activity.
3. Support legislation that would provide municipalities freedom to participate in investments that meet their objectives.
4. Oppose restrictions on the City's ability to adopt its own investment policies.

PRIVATIZATION

The City of Fort Collins utilizes outside contracts for procurement of many goods and services. This practice of privatization provides citizens with a balance of quality and cost efficiency.

Therefore, the City supports the following policy statements:

1. Support legislation enabling provision of services through private enterprise in a manner that fosters cost effective, sustainable, quality services.

2. Support local control of the awarding of contracts and the accountability of local officials for those actions.
3. Oppose mandates that increase the complexity and cost of services without improving those services.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Fort Collins seeks to maintain a healthy and resilient economic base of businesses. The City works closely with businesses to retain and invest in alignment with the Council's Action Plan. A healthy and resilient economy for Fort Collins will include:

- Diverse jobs that enable citizens and businesses to thrive.
- Reflects the values of our unique community in a changing world.
- An innovative, creative, and entrepreneurial atmosphere.
- Strong partnerships and collaboration with the private sector, educational institutions, and other organizations.

Therefore, the City supports the following policy statements:

1. Support legislation that promotes sustainable economic development.
2. Support retaining local governments' use of tax increment financing as a tool to support Downtown Development Authorities and Urban Renewal Authorities, taking into consideration the land use impacts of such legislation (e.g., sprawl) and the compelling interests and concerns of other taxing entities.
3. Support programs and policies that apply innovative solutions to governmental and community problems.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Strategic Outcome

Promote, protect and enhance a healthy and sustainable environment

Strategic Objectives

- a. Maintain and improve air and water quality
- b. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 20% below 2005 levels by 2020 and 80% below 2005 levels by 2050
- c. Conserve and restore natural habitat and promote biological health and diversity
- d. Reduce waste and resource consumption
- e. Increase energy conservation, efficiency and renewable energy
- f. Align water quantity with storage and conservation policies

AIR QUALITY

The City's Air Quality Plan establishes a strong overall goal to "continually improve Fort Collins air quality."

Therefore, the City supports the following policy statements:

1. Support legislation and regulations adopting programs and policies that improve public health and air quality.
2. Support legislation that maintains or increases the stringency of air quality standards.
3. Support legislation that enhances local government authority to improve air quality beyond minimum State or Federal requirements.
4. Support legislation that promotes regional improvement of air quality, recognizing that air pollution does not follow jurisdictional boundaries.
5. Support legislation to assure that Federal, State and County agencies have adequate authority and resources (funding and personnel) to enforce air quality regulations.
6. Support legislation that removes barriers and promotes voluntary actions to reduce air pollution.
7. Support legislation and regulations that reduce vehicle emissions by:
 - Using the price mechanisms of the free market to shift citizen and business travel behavior toward actions that reduce vehicle emissions and vehicle miles of travel, including removing hidden cost subsidies to motor vehicle users
 - Employing economic incentives and disincentives and other market approaches
 - Encouraging behavior changes, such as limiting unnecessary idling of vehicles
 - Implementing State motor vehicle emissions testing programs consistent with City air quality goals
8. Support legislation and regulations that provide authority for local governments to implement vehicle emissions reductions programs.
9. Support legislation and regulations that make tailpipe emissions and fuel economy standards more stringent for all vehicles.

10. Support programs and policies that promote advanced low emission vehicle technology; and encourage or promote alternative fuels such as biodiesel, cellulosic ethanol, hydrogen and compressed natural gas.
11. Support legislation and regulations that reduce residential wood smoke emissions in order to achieve compliance with air quality standards.
12. Support legislation that helps to reduce fossil fuel consumption in the transportation and building sector.

CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

The City of Fort Collins encourages local, state and national efforts to protect and enhance our environment. Additionally, the City has a policy goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 20% below 2005 levels by 2020 and 80% below 2005 levels by 2050.

Therefore the City supports the following policy statements:

1. Support legislation and regulation that reduce Fort Collins' vulnerability to climate change impacts.
2. Support legislation that establishes reduction targets for greenhouse gas emissions.
3. Support legislation that establishes market-based mechanisms to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including providing incentives to business and citizens to reduce emissions and for green building and sustainable design.
4. Support legislation and regulations to promote pollution prevention.
5. Support the Colorado self-audit law.

NATURAL AREAS AND OPEN LANDS

The City has a vigorous program to protect natural areas and other important open lands within Fort Collins, within our Community Growth Management Area, and regionally. The City works in partnership with other communities, Larimer County, private land trusts, Great Outdoors Colorado, community groups, and state and federal agencies to achieve community and regional conservation goals.

Therefore, the City supports the following policy statements:

1. Support legislation that maintains or enhances tax incentives for voluntary land conservation by private landowners.

2. Support legislation that expands the effectiveness of existing protection for wetlands, wildlife habitats, and other sensitive natural areas.
3. Support additional funding for land conservation programs.
4. Support legislation protecting the Cache la Poudre River.
5. Support legislation that would increase the availability of Great Outdoors Colorado grants to municipalities in amounts equal to or greater than are currently offered.

OIL AND GAS

Oil and gas extraction activity and associated health and environmental impacts are a concern for Fort Collins and many communities in the Front Range of Colorado. Fort Collins has a portion of a small oil field within its incorporated boundaries and has entered into an Operator Agreement (MOU) that stipulates the operations, maintenance and inspection process for that operator's local holdings. Citizens in Fort Collins have expressed continuing concern about the human and environmental health impacts from oil and gas operations and particularly from the hydraulic fracturing treatment used on most Colorado wells.

Therefore, the City supports the following policy statements:

1. Supports the development and execution of human health impact studies of oil and gas operations.
2. Support programs and policies that allow local officials to establish baseline levels and understand the ongoing contributions of the oil and gas industry to air pollution.
3. Support legislation that provides local government the authority to inspect oil and gas sites and ensure operator compliance through enforcement of federal, state and local regulations.
4. Support programs and policies that allow communities to understand impacts of oil and gas on water quality. Specifically provide disposition of produced water, and clearly understand the ongoing impacts of the oil and gas industry to water quality.
5. Support legislation allowing greater local regulation of oil and gas exploration activities within municipal boundaries.
6. Support legislation to better balance surface ownership with mineral right ownership.

RECYCLING AND SOLID WASTE

The City of Fort Collins endorses a multi-pronged approach to waste minimization that includes recycling, re-use, composting and source reduction. Additionally, the City has adopted a goal of diverting 50% of the community's waste stream from landfill disposal.

Therefore, the City supports the following policy statements:

1. Support legislation that clarifies and broadens the regulatory authority of local government to ensure the efficient management of recyclable material and solid waste.
2. Support legislation that encourages integrated waste management planning and implementation, including but not limited to creation of a State waste diversion goal.
3. Support legislation that provides incentives and funding for programs that promote waste reduction, reuse and recycling and development of related infrastructure.
4. Support legislation that enables “buy recycled” or “environmentally preferable purchasing” policies for government agency procurement.
5. Support legislation that continues or increases funding for programs to collect and monitor data on trash volumes, rates of diversion from landfill disposal and economic impacts of recycling.
6. Support legislation to require greater producer responsibility, such as “take back” regulations that assist consumers to appropriately recycle electronic equipment (e-waste.)
7. Support legislation that establishes a deposit fee on beverage containers and that would be used to pay for recycling programs.
8. Support legislation that strengthens the “renewable energy” standard; oppose expanding the definition to include pyrolysis (burning of materials).

High Performing Government

Strategic Outcome

Deliver an efficient, innovative, transparent, effective and collaborative city government

Strategic Objectives

1. Improve leadership capability and increase leadership effectiveness
2. Improve organizational fiscal literacy, financial management & fiscal strength
3. Implement a systematic approach to identify, organize, & communicate performance measures
4. Attract, engage and retain a high quality, creative workforce with a diverse set of skills
5. Promote and invest in employee health and safety
6. Develop and foster key community partnerships
7. Establish a culture of exceptional customer service and deliver services that exceed community expectations.

HOME RULE

The City of Fort Collins is a home rule municipality under Article XX (Article 20) of the Colorado Constitution, which grants home rule municipalities “full right of self-government in local and municipal matters.” Home rule authority affords the citizens of Fort Collins greater access to government and increased opportunity for participation and contribution to the decision making process.

Home rule is of utmost importance to the City of Fort Collins. The City recognizes, however, that there are particular areas in which insistence on local control may be untimely or unwise. Therefore, proposed legislation must be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine when it is in the City's best interest to assert home rule authority and when the City should support statewide intervention. For example, the City must be free to regulate local activities that primarily impact the area within the City's boundaries, such as the speed of local traffic or the effects of particular land use developments. On the other hand, the cumulative effect of these and other activities has substantial statewide ramifications which may call for statewide regulation, so that, for example, state regulation may be needed to effectively manage overall growth and development in the state, traffic congestion in major transportation corridors and environmental quality.

Therefore, the City supports the following policy statements:

1. Support legislative efforts to strengthen home rule authority of municipal governments.

2. Oppose legislation that requires State or Federal intervention in matters of local concern and which unnecessarily or adversely affect the City's ability to manage pursuant to its home rule authority.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The City of Fort Collins is committed to the safety and well-being of its employees. The City works diligently to be an efficient and responsible steward of tax dollars while ensuring that employees receive fair and competitive compensation and benefits. The City believes that its citizens, through their elected representatives on City Council, are in the best position to determine appropriate City employee compensation, benefits, and policies.

Therefore, the City supports the following policy statements:

1. Support legislation that enhances the City's ability to decide employment issues, including collective bargaining, arbitration, compensation, benefits and leaves.
2. Support legislation that expands the City's ability to offer health, welfare and wellness services for employees.
3. Support legislation that maintains current state funding for police officer death and disability benefits.
4. Oppose legislation that would permit employees with defined contribution plans to return to defined benefit plans if there is a cost to local government.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The City of Fort Collins recognizes the dual purpose of the workers' compensation system – providing benefits promptly to injured employees in a cost-effective manner and minimizing costly litigation. Council also recognizes that the City's self-insurance program is a cost efficient method to insure workers' compensation and that government intervention or taxation can negatively impact the City.

Therefore, the City supports the following policy statements:

1. Support legislation that improves administrative efficiency of the Division of Workers' Compensation.
2. Support legislation that prevents increased insurance premium costs to employers.
3. Support legislation that would limit or reduce administrative burdens or taxes to self-insurance programs.

4. Support legislation that would check insurance claim litigation.
5. Support legislation that increases the City's options and ability to manage workers' compensation claims; oppose actions like removing existing off-sets to workers' compensation benefits or limiting the City's ability to designate treating physicians.
6. Oppose legislation that presumptively expands workers compensation coverage to illnesses or injuries that are not work related.

SOVEREIGN AND GOVERNMENTAL IMMUNITY

The Fort Collins City Council recognizes that the complexity and diversity of City operations and services required to meet the needs of the citizens of Fort Collins may expose the City and its officers and employees to liability for damage and injury. The Council further recognizes that City officers and employees must be confident that they have the City's support in the lawful and proper performance of their assigned duties and responsibilities.

Therefore, the City supports the following policy statements:

1. Support legislation that protects the interests of municipalities and their officers and employees in the lawful and proper performance of their duties and responsibilities.
2. Support legislation that discourages baseless and frivolous claims and demands made against municipalities, their officers and employees.
3. Support legislation that limits or enhances municipal liability protections, or expands municipal immunity.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

The City of Fort Collins encourages a competitive, open market for cable and telecommunications services in order to ensure the public has access to a variety of programming and services at the lowest cost possible.

Therefore, the City supports the following policy statement:

1. Support legislation that maintains and enhances local franchising authority. This helps ensure local governments' ability to negotiate, in the public interest, for cable channel space, institutional networks and public education and government programming.

2. Support legislation that re-establishes the rights of municipalities to provide low cost, accessible telecommunications services and related infrastructure.
3. Support legislation that allows municipalities to provide telecommunication services within City-owned facilities and on City property.
4. Support legislation that would allow communities to offer high speed internet, Wi-Fi and other enhanced telecommunication services to residents, schools, academic institutions and businesses.

UTILITY SERVICES

It is critical that the City operate its electric distribution, drinking water, stormwater and wastewater services in a financially sound, reliable, safe and environmentally acceptable manner. Like other municipal utilities across the country, Fort Collins is faced with many new and evolving challenges associated with changes in the industry, the age and security of its infrastructure and the necessity of managing a changing workforce.

Therefore, the City supports the following policy statements:

ENERGY

1. Support legislation that recognizes the importance of infrastructure security while minimizing restriction to the Utility's ability to manage security as an integral part of the system.
2. Support programs that provide assistance to local government, and that encourage and allow for local design and implementation of greenhouse gas reduction strategies.
3. Support legislation that establishes uniform standards for the reduction of carbon emissions.
4. Support legislation that removes barriers to financing for energy efficiency, and encourages and funds energy efficiency and conservation while allowing local design and implementation of the programs.
5. Support legislation that reduces community energy use and net energy use of existing buildings.
6. Support legislation and regulations that provide incentives to encourage renewable energy production, including wind power, and provide for "State Implementation Plan" credits for renewable energy (excluding residential wood burning and corn-based ethanol) and energy efficiency.

7. Oppose legislation that attempts to prevent or inhibit provision of municipal electric service in newly annexed areas.
8. Support legislation that encourages grid modernization and smart grid technologies

WATER SUPPLY AND QUALITY

1. Support legislation that maintains or expands the authority delegated to the State to administer federally mandated water, stormwater and wastewater environmental regulatory programs (primacy).
2. Support water quality legislation that results in reasonable water quality control regulations that are cost effective and can show identifiable benefits.
3. Support legislation that enables local development of watershed protection.
4. Support legislation that provides the City the flexibility to enhance in-stream flows to preserve or improve the natural environment of the stream while protecting the integrity of Colorado's appropriation doctrine and City water supply.
5. Support legislation that recognizes the importance of infrastructure security while minimizing restriction to the Utility's ability to manage security as an integral part of the system.
6. Support adequate funding of mandated programs.
7. Support legislation that removes barriers to financing for water conservation projects.
8. Support legislation that would fund recovery and treatment of Cache la Poudre and other waterways impacted by 2012 wildfires.

Community and Neighborhood Livability

Strategic Outcome

Provide a high quality built environment and support quality, diverse neighborhoods

Strategic Objectives

1. Develop innovative enforcement efforts and voluntary compliance with City codes
2. Provide, enhance & maintain attractive public spaces
3. Preserve the character of neighborhoods and enhance/maintain the attractiveness of neighborhoods

4. Encourage partnerships with private entities and public agencies for housing, and other programs
5. Improve neighborhood parking management

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The City of Fort Collins supports policy and funding mechanisms that help the City develop and maintain affordable housing for our community's lowest income families.

Therefore, the City supports the following policy statements:

1. Support legislation that maintains or enhances current levels of funding for affordable housing throughout Colorado.
2. Support legislation that increases local government's ability to regulate, manage or generate alternative sources of funding for affordable housing, including public-private partnerships.
3. Support legislation that protects the rights of low-income and/or disabled residents in tenant-landlord disputes, especially as it relates to safety issues.
4. Support legislation that retains flexibility for City to adopt and enforce rental terms that allow it to appropriately maintain and manage City-owned affordable rental properties.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW AND INSPECTION

Fort Collins City Council adopts a land use code, zoning and new and existing property inspection protocol. The City supports retention of home-rule control in aligning development review and inspections with local priorities. In recent sessions, state legislators have introduced measures aimed at having local inspectors provide inspection for building types outside existing responsibilities without additional resources provided to conduct this work.

Therefore, the City supports the following policy statements:

1. Support legislation that financially compensates a jurisdiction or agency for additional work of inspectors through fees or other means.
2. Support legislation that gives the local government a choice in accepting additional inspection work.

PLANNING AND LAND USE

Effective local land use planning and land development regulation contributes to the quality of life enjoyed primarily by Fort Collins residents, yet shared regionally within Larimer County. State legislation can influence local governments' ability to develop and implement land use plans for their communities.

Therefore, the City supports the following policy statements:

1. Support legislation that requires regional cooperation in land use and transportation planning, and legislation that fosters sustainable development, without unduly constraining the City's home rule powers.
2. Support legislation that prohibits the annexation of land that is located within the boundaries of a Growth Management Area that was legally established by an intergovernmental agreement between a municipality and a county by any municipality not a party to the agreement.
3. Support legislation to limit the definition of a compensable taking and/or the definition of vested property rights beyond the provisions of existing law.
4. Support legislation that would retain local government authority to impose development impact fees.
5. Support legislation that would increase cities' ability to regulate industrial land uses like oil and gas exploration and extraction.
6. Support public housing policies that equitably balance protection of tenants and landlords.

SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Fort Collins has implemented a triple-bottom line-oriented Sustainability Service Area in an effort to ensure community resources are allocated by considering equally human, environmental and economic benefits. Social sustainability focuses on housing and human services.

Therefore the City supports the following policy statements:

1. Support maintaining or increasing the funds available through the state and federal government for community-focused non-profits to provide human services and housing support.

2. Support appropriate educational funding for K-12 and public post-secondary institutions to ensure opportunity for youth.
3. Support funding for after school programs aimed at at-risk population.
4. Support programs and policies that seek to improve neighbor relations and the resources available to community mediation programs.
5. Support programs and policies that provide communities with resources to address chronic homelessness.

Safe Community

Strategic Outcome

Provide a safe place to live, work, learn and play

Strategic Objectives

1. Proactively Support prevention and community safety through education and outreach initiatives
2. Improve response times to collisions, crimes, fires, utility emergencies and medical services
3. Improve the safety and reliability of the City's built environment
4. Support community wide planning, preparedness and recovery from community disasters

FIRE PROTECTION

The Fort Collins City Council recognizes the critical importance of maintaining a safe environment and protecting the lives and property of the citizens of Fort Collins from fire.

Therefore the City supports the following policy statements:

1. Support legislation adopting a State fire code, the code of choice being the 2012 International Building and Fire Code, and allow municipalities to adopt their own amendments.
2. Oppose legislation that limits local enforcement of the International Fire Code as adopted with local amendments, or imposes inspection requirements or prevents collection of permit or inspection fees as required by the local jurisdiction.

3. Support legislation that requires the installation of fire protection systems in structures to enhance life safety and property protection when appropriate.
4. Support legislation that strengthens the City's ability to prohibit the use and sale of fireworks and that allows counties and fire districts to prohibit and otherwise control fireworks.
5. Support legislation that promotes fire safety, education and prevention with the goal of reducing injury, loss of life and property damage.
6. Support legislation that allows local jurisdictions to implement open burning restrictions.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

It is an important concern of the City to safeguard Fort Collins' health and environmental safety by reducing risks from the unauthorized release of hazardous materials or hazardous waste.

Therefore, the City supports the following policy statements:

1. Support legislation that allows the City to continue controlling risks from hazardous materials use, storage and transportation through the International Building and Fire Code and related local amendments.
2. Support legislation that allows Fort Collins adopt local regulations for hazardous materials, including review and approval of the location of facilities that use or store hazardous materials or hazardous waste.
3. Support legislation that strengthens the enforcement of hazardous materials regulations.
4. Support legislation strengthening the diversion of hazardous waste from landfills.
5. Support policies or legislation to establish greater flexibility and more options for local government in the management of publicly-owned areas thought to have asbestos containing soils.
6. Support policies and legislation to prevent and penalize improper storage and disposal of hazardous or exploration and production (E&P) wastes from oil and gas operations within municipal boundaries.

MARIJUANA

In 2012, Colorado voters approved Amendment 64 which legalizes the possession of adult-use or recreational marijuana in the state. During the same election Fort Collins residents voted to approve the use of medical marijuana within the City. Federal law maintains that marijuana is a schedule 1 drug and, as such, can neither be possessed and used nor researched.

Therefore, the City supports the following policy statements:

1. Support legislation that regulates medical marijuana manufacture, distribution and dispensaries.
2. Support legislation to clarify the implementation and local rights and responsibilities related to Amendment 64.
3. Support clarification of the conflict between federal and state law with respect to marijuana enforcement.
4. Support legislation and policies that protect communities' ability to raise necessary funds to maintain public safety and enforce marijuana possession laws.
5. Support legislation and policies that prevent under-21 access to marijuana.
6. Support legislation that clarifies the rights of individuals, landlords and homeowner associations in limiting or preventing growing or consuming marijuana in multi-family dwellings.

PUBLIC SAFETY

The Fort Collins City Council recognizes the critical importance of maintaining public order, providing a safe environment, and protecting the lives and property of the citizens of Fort Collins.

Therefore, the City supports the following policy statements:

7. Support legislation that has the potential to reduce incidents of violence in the community, especially through the development of treatment and intervention programs for youth.
8. Support legislation and funding that provides greater protection to victims of crime.

9. Support legislation that maintains or enhances the City's right to use camera enforcement of traffic laws, reduces operational restrictions on the use of camera enforcement, and increases the fines associated with violations.
10. Support legislation establishing protocols and funding for shared, statewide emergency response communications.
11. Oppose programs that have the potential to compromise officer safety.
12. Support legislation that formally legitimizes the field of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) by establishing minimum training criteria and professional mediator certification.
13. Support legislation that regulates the use of cell phones by a motorist while operating a vehicle.
14. Support legislation that preserves or increases funding for treatment of mental illness and substance abuse disorders.
15. Support legislation that maintains or enhances a statewide database of concealed weapons permits.
16. Support legislation to reduce community flood risks.
17. Support legislation that reduces City liability for prisoners' self-inflicted wounds while in police custody or detention facility.
18. Support legislation and policies restricting access to illegal substances.
19. Support legislation to require greater producer responsibility such as "take back" for prescription drugs to avoid these substances being abused or being disposed of into the water supply.
20. Support clarification of the qualifications for what types and purposes a business may obtain and use a state liquor license.
21. Support defining what qualifies as a "meal" when calculating the percentage of meals served for a liquor license.

Transportation

Strategic Outcome

Provide for safe & reliable multi-modal travel to, from, and throughout the city

Strategic Objectives

1. Provide safe, well-functioning, high quality streets, bikeways, sidewalks, trails & infrastructure
2. Provide long-term transportation planning to enhance citizen mobility and improve traffic flow
3. Limit the rate of increase or reduce vehicle traffic and enhance alternative travel modes
4. Address long-term maintenance & operations cost of transportation infrastructure
5. Enhance the sustainability of the physical assets as well as the operations of transportation systems

TRANSPORTATION

The City actively promotes the safety and ease of traveling to, from and throughout the community using a variety of modes of transportation. Additionally, the City's policy is to encourage the use of alternative transportation whenever appropriate.

Therefore, the City supports the following policies:

1. Support legislation that facilitates cooperative programs among government agencies in order to help the City meet its basic transportation needs, including transit, street, highway, road and bridge construction and maintenance, and safe corridors for bicyclists and pedestrians.
2. Oppose legislation that seeks to reduce the present allocation formula of 60% state, 22% counties, and 18% municipalities for Highway User Tax Fund (HUTF) or any appropriations from the State using the same formula.
3. Support exploration and analysis of alternative methods of funding transportation infrastructure needs.
4. Support legislation to fund analysis and implementation of inter- and intra-regional transit linkages, including future commuter rail connectivity.
5. Support legislation that facilitates regional planning for various modes of transportation with the goal of providing practical solutions to reduce reliance on single occupant vehicles.

6. Support efforts to encourage flexibility in federal funding and regulations in order to better meet the needs of small to medium size communities.
7. Support preservation of the federal guaranteed levels of funding for transportation, and allocation of all federal motor fuel taxes and other federal transportation trust funds for their intended transportation purposes.
8. Support legislation broadening the definition of the gasoline tax to a “fuel tax” that encompasses other fuel options as they become more prevalent.
9. Support legislation that limits the ability of railroad trains to block street and highway grade crossings for unreasonable periods.
10. Support legislation that facilitates the implementation of railroad quiet zones in municipalities and that reduces current train horn decibel and duration requirements.
11. Oppose legislation intended to divest key highway roads in urban areas from the State and make them the sole responsibility of local jurisdictions.

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