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**Minutes
City of Fort Collins
Futures Committee Meeting
Regular Meeting
CIC Room, City Hall
300 LaPorte Ave
December 22, 2014
2:00–4:00pm**

Committee Members Present:

Wade Troxell, Chair
Bruce Hendee
Gino Campana
Darin Atteberry

Committee Members Absent:

Gerry Horak

City Staff:

Dianne Tjalkens, Admin/Board Support
Cameron Gloss, Planning Manager
Jeff Mihelich, Deputy City Manager
Karen Cumbo, Director of PDT
Sam Houghteling, Graduate Management Assistant
Travis Machalek, Graduate Management Assistant

Invited Guests:

Community Members:

Kevin Jones, Fort Collins Area Chamber of Commerce

Wade Troxell called meeting to order at 2:10pm

Chairman Comments: Bruce and Cameron put together a presentation on land use planning that builds on previous conversations.

Approval of October Minutes:

Gino moved to approve both the October 13 and November 24 minutes as presented. Wade seconded. Motion passed unanimously, 3-0-0.

Think Tank Item 21: Land Use Planning & Build Out Revisited—Cameron Gloss and Bruce Hendee

Bruce noted upcoming work sessions on Climate Action Plan and City Plan. There are tough decisions coming up around GMA, transportation, urban infrastructure and asset management. This group previously discussed how, if we hold growth within the GMA and don't have a strategy that fuels growth outside, this may lead to the need for more transportation linkages. The decisions we make with regard to land use are the biggest we make that impact our carbon footprint. The larger context is the community's future.

Cameron presented a PowerPoint on how Fort Collins fits in the regional context and about decisions we must make regarding future trends. City Plan at its core has sustainability. We place scrutiny on land development. Carbon is the measuring stick we use for sustainability. He showed a map of the U.S.'s carbon footprints. The major cities are having the greatest impact on carbon production. The real story, however, is impact per capita. There are communities that are growing. The larger cities have lower carbon per capita than more rural areas. Utilities, CAP, FC Moves, etc., reduce the impact of housing, transportation, efficiency of appliances, etc., but ultimately it gets down to density patterns. We have growth on the Front Range and are projected to have more. We must decide if we grow in a sprawling low density pattern, or a denser pattern that reduces VMT and carbon emissions. Silver Tsunami, those 65 and up, are the largest growth cohort. These people drive less and require services to be closer to them. Also, the 18-24 age group is driving less, which is documented regionally. The number of jobs is increasing, and will be primarily within the I-25 sub-region. Fort Collins will have diminishing job growth relative to the region, as a result of land availability. Geographically, the I-25 corridor has job growth around Johnstown and Loveland, between Centerra and Greeley, the Foothills campus has capacity, and east of Greeley to Evans and northern Denver have projected growth. We will see more employment growth along I-25 and 85, Harmony and Mountain Vista. Regarding trends in travel patterns for commuting to work, Fort Collins has a balance that allows people to live and work in the community, whereas in Loveland and Greeley more people commute out of the community to work. Fort Collins has done a good job thus far in balancing housing and jobs. A concern is that if we continue with job growth and the cost of housing goes up, then people will be forced to go outside the community for housing. If we are not expanding geographically outward, do we plan to go higher, and how high is high?

Bruce added that he does not know many who live in high density units in Fort Collins. But that is where we may be heading. We should analyze whether this is what we really want.

Cameron presented a map on residential growth. Ault, Eaton, Timnath, south Greeley, Johnstown, Milliken, far west Loveland, Laporte, Bellvue, and Wellington and many areas in the east have significant projected growth based on the policies we have today. Based on the Housing Affordability Policy Study, the components that contribute to cost of housing include land (which has been increasing), fees that have remained consistent over time, and hard costs. The big change over time has been in hard costs: labor and materials. Profits have been squeezed. Land cost, fees, and taxes are the places the City has the most control.

Based on percentage of growth, we can look at the pace of change and when the growth can occur. The available land for infill and redevelopment is in Mountain Vista and Mulberry. Our conversations about growth must happen in regard to those two areas.

Fort Collins has partners such as the school district. PSD has purchased land in the Mountain Vista area, which may become a high school that can serve the south Wellington area. PSD is working on a master plan now. Parks has also looked into purchasing a large tract of land in Mountain Vista. There have also been significant public improvements that are far along in acquisition and design in the area.

Midtown Master Plan and Downtown Master Plan will have major public outreach. Building height will be a large part of the conversation. The regulations have not been fine-tuned yet. There are projects waiting in the wings and we need a conclusion with community buy-in and that we stick with. The Downtown Plan will include a 3D model so citizens can understand building height from a pedestrian perspective. When we talk about height, we can determine how it will impact fees, streets, etc.

City Plan speaks to mixed use, mixed density neighborhoods. Complete neighborhoods have a variety of density with retail in close proximity. In recent months we have had conversations where people don't know the plan exists. We have not told the story of the great policy we already have in place.

Comments/Q & A:

- If you plan ahead knowing growth is coming, you can reduce overall emissions as well as per capita.
- If you have more manufacturing, that requires more floor space than knowledge workers.
- We are having a little spike now, so we have more people who have jobs than can find housing.
- Compared to other college towns, we are unusual in that faculty want to live in the community. In other university towns, they don't.
- Median home prices in Boulder are \$600,000–\$800,000. Bottom line is that they fixed their GMA many years before we did. We have very similar communities and have a crystal ball here for what can happen here. Do we really want that kind of median home price in Fort Collins?
- The in-migration of vehicles has become a huge problem for Boulder that they are not yet able to figure out how to fix.
- At a macro scale you could schematically depict patterns. You can build everywhere, have core cities, have malleable urban growth boundaries, or any number of other options.
- Boulder has a boundary of the city, then an area that gets services, an area that cannot be developed, and areas that cannot be annexed. It is based on services and the supply of land is very tight.
- It is also encircled by purchased open space.
- They had limited the number of building permits that can be issued on a quarterly basis. That system was used for several years and had impact on predictability.
- Those limitations drove the creation of Superior.
- Did they get challenged on a moratorium on building permits?
- No. It was done away with when there was a downturn, but the damage was already done. The growth had been exported and the trends set.
- Fort Collins fixing its GMA has given other communities the drive to grow.
- The migration westward was predicted and it happening now. By the Supreme Court ruling, we cannot stop growth.
- We are moving toward both transit and Nature in the City. We can give a high quality of life through nature.
- Another instructive lesson from Boulder is that the large growth in Superior came from Boulder; the families wanted a house with a yard as Boulder became denser. We need to

keep this in mind. There is a population that will still want a single family home with a yard.

- As we try to determine where we are, as we have done with the Bicycle Master Plan, we could look at our city and decide we need housing with yards and some higher density areas and adjust our transportation and density areas accordingly.
- Growth is projected in transit corridors, but maybe there is more adjustment that needs to be made.
- Singapore is fixed as an island, and has been very intentional in terms of economic growth and in terms of nature with high density.
- Successful cities have great parks as well.
- Vancouver is a great example of livability with density.
- The notion of de-annexing, I don't understand.
- Regional growth is all interrelated. The growth will go somewhere.
- If you de-annex, you can grow in the core of the city and have the same population growth.
- Gentrification is also occurring. Choices we make could slow or speed up that process.
- In terms of management, if the land is in someone else's GMA, they control the land uses and their values may be very different from ours.
- If we de-annex, it can be within the Wellington or Timnath GMA and they will control the land use and Fort Collins will have the impacts.
- Capital Parkland Fee should be kept in place to identify places along the corridors where density will be increased.
- Parks planning is working on a master plan right now using the build out data. They are keeping in mind the needs for community parks, regional parks, etc. and are looking for where to acquire parcels. They may need to look in Midtown.
- Max is only one of urban transit corridors. We should look at parks, transit, etc., in a more comprehensive way.
- We have never really had the discussion about height.
- If you look at DMA Plaza and Howes Street housing, no one ever complains about them. It is good urban planning to have those. Once you get passed the flack, and you get them built, it doesn't feel so bad.
- A lot of it is about compatibility and buffering. Regarding the Grove, one concern was around scale. It was built and isn't so bad, and is not horribly out of place. It is a perception problem.
- When you plan correctly, your supply and demand is balanced.
- We know that 65 year and older empty nesters are not necessarily looking for larger lots. We need to adjust to the demographics as well.
- That is only a 15 year trend which will cycle through and change, though.
- We may not need a major shift in thinking on City Plan, but a broader discussion. Growth or no growth is not our choice. We want to drive our own future, rather than having it imposed on us.
- We can have a lower flatter city, taller denser city, or a hybrid. We are heading for a hybrid as we have a downtown core. But the overlay is the city moving toward being an environmentally sustainable community that is reducing carbon.
- Having some flexibility is important too. Our code is rather prescriptive now.

- This is the only community I've worked in that doesn't have a planning development process. This is negotiated land use planning with flex zones within. Everything is master planned, with various zoning within. The plan runs with the land at all times. A new builder cannot completely change this. Based on the particulars of the development the plans can be flexed.
- Here, if you are a developer and look at City Plan, that is what you get. The land development guidance system (LDGS) had ultimate flexibility, but neighbors were uncertain what they would get. Developers found the same unpredictability, which led to the code we have today.
- Tools like addition of permitted use allow flexibility. These modifications can make it better.
- That's why we need broader discussions, so the public understands additional permitted uses (APUs).
- Instead of going back to LDGS, find additional tools to use like APUs. Part of the issue is not knowing what we want to be when we grow up. Just knowing the population at full build out is huge. We like the livability we have now. We want to be able to access nature. We are now working on Nature in the City. The more we work on that vision, the better we can adjust.
- If you develop all of College, you no longer have mountain views. We can choose to protect views there.
- The code has not kept up with the infill and redevelopment part of the plan.
- PDOD (Planned Development Overlay District) was a good tool, but no one took advantage of it. It was too complex and expensive.
- How can we enable great, large scale projects? Sometimes we kill good projects by over planning.
- The studies we are doing help. We can have context for the projects. We can determine what we want and how to get there.
- If we could develop some multiple modelling scenarios and bring them back, the committee can look at various options.
- The planning development process can have flexibility for extraordinary projects that can help you get where you want to be, but we must be careful with how it is used.
- We talked about tying preferential concepts to our economic development.
- This vision also takes away debates around job creation, such as helping businesses develop particular areas. If our vision around that area was clearer, the discussion of corporate welfare would be mute.
- I hear enough in the community that there are people who do not want growth at all. We need Council to have the discussion about how to manage growth.
- There are people who say that, but what they are really saying is, "I don't want change. I don't want traffic," etc. They don't want the negative aspects of no growth. We can design to the look and feel we want.
- We can't determine we don't want the growth. It will still come to the region and we deal with the impacts. And then we cannot control the carbon emissions.
- We should have a study of Old Town to determine at what point are we at capacity for visitors, and at what point do we look for another town center south or north?
- In the stadium discussion, there is no talk of how it impacts our community.

- Can we map out and invest with developers to create what we want?
- The mall has some public spaces and it was the developer's intention to create an enlivened place.
- It will become an activity center but is not big enough for a town center.
- What will Council think if there is another place in the city with more 10 story buildings?
- South of Harmony can become a high tech area.
- We have a tech corridor, but we haven't supported them with the urban amenities.
- In Denver, Highland Park is connected with transit. We have struggled with creating those types of neighborhoods with shopping.
- On our high tech corridor, you cannot get connected to anything else without a vehicle. If you created a low-stress corridor for transit, you can take a lot of cars off the road. It has to be high enough speed to get back to work from a lunch break.
- In Mountain Vista, if we did a lot of good land use planning, we can create the town center there, but you can't do it without transit. People don't want to get in their cars to go to lunch.
- At Intel, if you have to cross the street, you are going to get into your car to do it. The area is not pedestrian friendly.
- We are trying to retrofit a more urban pedestrian-friendly vision onto the Harmony corridor.
- If we don't do the thinking about Mountain Vista now, every corner will get a gas station and convenience store, rather than what we want.
- The new Vine would connect to the Mountain Vista neighborhood center, and connect all the way to I-25 with transit. You have high density residential along with a park, school, etc. Perhaps it should be intensified?
- We need to have an active street naming program. We have not captured the potential of names that would be representative of the community.
- We have a list.
- It has been happenstance. The historical community we have, to pump history and get vetted and framed up.
- You could task the Landmark Preservation Committee with street naming.
- It is important to have some bold strokes in the plan that define the city as a great place. The opportunity in the Mountain Vista area for boulevards is dramatic.
- We have to be intentional and have a plan.
- The City Hall campus vision, with connection to the CSU administration building, is something that speaks to alignment of the city architecture. It looks beyond the building to how spaces work together.
- Can we take our activity and urban centers and connect them with these grand boulevards. If you talk about Lincoln it is heading in that direction.
- That area has been underserved historically.
- Where is our Ferris wheel or Eiffel Tower?
- It's the trail of breweries. How do we get connectivity through our breweries like Napa? Lincoln could be part of that.

DO 21: Next Steps

- There will be another presentation to this group in March on Mountain Vista alternative development options, including reducing development.
- APU is going to work session in January.
- Would it be better to have bigger conversation about Mountain Vista first?
- There has been a push nationally for vacation rental by owner and there are neighbor concerns about Air B&B. These will be packaged with APU in January. Should we separate these issues?
- We need to address APU and Air B&B, but is the fourth agenda item for that night.
- We could move the APU conversation to a later date.
- It would be good to discuss these larger issues with Council before having the conversations about APU and Air B&B.
- We could create a broader discussion with the community and Council about our future.
- That is the forerunner to City Plan.
- The baseline should be an update to City Plan. We'll let Karen's group work on how to have these community conversations leading up to City Plan.
- Some members of Council have not had the opportunity to discuss the greater vision.
- University Connections has a series of speakers who will touch on the same topics. There is a specific section on attainable housing. They are bringing in top experts from around the country to talk about community growth.
- Could that group come to Futures to give a pitch?
- Creative Innovations and Economic Health, and Jeni Cross presented urban lab concepts and are talking about community. Maybe we can roll some of those things into the greater conversation about urban planning.
- We should be developing scenarios that allow you to take a look at potential.
- We are beyond whether or not we want to achieve carbon goals, now we are talking about how. If we can get beyond population, we can have good conversations about housing affordability. We can stay our course and create balance within the scheme of our plan.
- January 13 Incubation Strategy may not need its work session, so this topic could take its place and ask Council if staff should have more community conversations about the overall vision.
- We can engage conversations on Net Zero, beautiful cities, livable cities, etc.
- If we are really going to have 90% electric vehicles in 20 years, what does that mean for our streets planning?
- If we work with CSU and other organizations, we can get speakers to help frame the broader conversation.
- We need to determine when Boulder fixed their Urban Growth Boundary.
- How do we do a PD or PED process or modify existing code?
- Can Futures Committee help prepare Council for an updated City Plan? We can prepare a list of attributes of the city and have speakers on each topic.
- Wade and Bruce will create a list of topics for future meetings and bring it back to the committee for review.

- January 12—UniverCity Connections
- February 9—Community Dashboard
- March—Mountain Vista Planning

Meeting adjourned at 3:50pm.