

**CITY OF FORT COLLINS
FUTURES COMMITTEE MEETING**

Date: February 14, 2022

Location: Zoom

Time: 04:00pm-06:00pm

Committee Members present:

Mayor Jeni Arndt

Councilmember Susan Gutowsky (District 1)

Councilmember Emily Francis (District 6)

Councilmember Tricia Canonico (District 3)

Additional Council members present:

City Staff:

Jackie Kozak-Thiel

Presenter:

Elizabeth Garner, State Demographer, Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Additional Staff present:

Kevin Wilkins, Information Services

Ginny Sawyer, City Manager's Office

Michelle Finchum, Environmental Services

Kai Kleer, CDNS

Meaghan Overton, Social Sustainability

Rachael Johnson, City Manager's Office

Seve Ghose, CDNS

Megan DeMasters, Environmental Services

Claudia Menendez, City Manager's Office

Kyle Stannert, City Manager's Office

Carolyn Conant, Utilities

Derek Bergsten, Poudre Fire Authority

Others present:

Kevin Jones, Fort Collins Chamber of Commerce

Carrie Van Horn, community member and graphic recorder

Melanie Ward, City of Centennial

Ann Hutchinson, Fort Collins Chamber of Commerce

Tina Harkness, Employers Council

Denise McFann

Meeting called to order at 4:01pm

Approval of Minutes:

Councilmember Francis moved to approve the January 27th minutes. Councilmember Gutowsky seconded. Motion passed 4-0-0

Chairman Comments:

N/A

Summary

Think Tank Item 2-2022 Growing Forward: Population Trends Impacting the State, North Front Range, and Fort Collins, *Elizabeth Garner, State Demographer, Colorado Department of Local Affairs*

- 5 population trends identified and discussed:
 - Population growth is slowing
 - Migration is slowing
 - Growth is becoming concentrated along the Front Range
 - Aging is increasing
 - Increase in racial and ethnic diversity
- As we continue to think about the future need to consider the following:
 - How a decrease in population growth will affect job growth
 - Consider how working from anywhere trends will affect migration and the workforce
- Action: Review full 2020 Census data once it is available and consider how it will continue to shape Fort Collins and the Region
 - Ask State to come back at a future time to share insights
 - Consider how Census data will relate to other City dashboards such as the Equity dashboard

Trend 1 Population growing at a slowing rate

- Review of 2020 Census on how growth is transitioning to less growth
- Peak growth in 2015 and since has dropped significantly
 - Began slowing down pre-covid
- Important to think about narrative around growth
 - Largest piece of growth is not migration, it is birth
- Change from 2010-2020—Fort Collins grew almost 18%, more than the state but less than Larimer County
- Decline in birth has an impact on:
 - K-12 education
 - Higher-ed
 - Workforce of the future
- Due to decline in birthrates, states are competing for college age kids
 - This is because it is part of economic growth strategy—if people go to college there, they tend to stay which can contribute to the workforce

Trend 2 Migration slowing

- See quite a few people come in from the age group of 18-25 due to college student population
- What traditionally drives migration is job growth
- If there is a desire for job growth, need population growth—the two go hand in hand
- Between last decade and this decade, about a million people will be aging out to the labor force

Trend 3 Concentrated growth

- Of all the people working in Fort Collins about 56% live outside of City
- 43% live in the area
- 37,000 people leaving Fort Collins for jobs and about 48,000 people coming in
- North Front Range is very popular for transportation, living, etc.
- Housing—this last decade housing units decreased while population continued about the same.
- 2010-2020 only build 278,000 housing units
- 2000-2010 built 405,000 housing units
- Housing problem is because we didn't build enough
- 5th highest median home values in the County and 12th highest median household income—makes it difficult for people to live and work here

- Larimer and Fort Collins housing unit creation from 2010-2020
 - Built more housing from 2000-2010 than 2010-2020
- Factors influencing housing supply:
 - Fewer units built from 2010-2020 by 126,000
 - Aging—older adults move less often
 - Slow industry to start and stop
 - Supply chain and tight labor
 - Public will—NIMBY, anti-growth/Density
- Demand side factors influencing housing:
 - Job growth = workers = people
 - Aging, smaller household size, age in place
 - Millennials—prime home buying and second home buying
 - Gen Z—entering first time apartment and home buying
 - More money
 - Short time rental s
 - Investors—institutional investors buying up homes and holding them
 - Increase in vacant units over time

Trend 4 Aging

- Impacts economy, housing and public finance
- Median age in Fort Collins 29.3
- Over the next decade we will see an increase in 25-44 age group if we can attract young adults to CO and will see growth 65+ which is forecasted to be the largest increase

Trend 5 Increase in racial and ethnic diversity

- Over the last decade becoming more racially and ethnically diverse
- Diversity is coming from younger population
- Fort Collins is a little bit less diverse than the State and County as a whole

Forecast for the Future

- Birth continues to slow, deaths up
- Migration?
 - Slowing pre-pandemic and during pandemic
 - International migration down 70% --slow to return
 - Work from anywhere will affect migration and workforce trends
- Continues to be concentrated growth on the front range

Q&A/Discussion

- The reason that the State is feeling aging so much is because the State has never been this “old” before—CO is a relatively young state (6th in the nation) but with 65+ group getting higher, we are feeling it and by 2040 will be about the same in terms of aging as the rest of the Country
- Changes the way you think about a City if people work here and don’t work here—consider how we rethink boundaries
- In the chat, discussion around how it is challenging to find people for entry level positions.
- Would like a larger conversation around cost of living in Fort Collins—challenge for retaining people in Fort Collins—Consider what we can do to lower cost of living

Additional Items

- Updates from Harvard Mayors Leadership program
 - Fort Collins participating in the data track as part of the Bloomberg leadership program

- There has been a kick-off meeting and another meeting with full team
- Staff report on March 1st to share how data will be used (equity indicators project)?
- Reminder that March Futures is cancelled

Meeting adjourned by Mayor Arndt at 5:18pm

Meeting chat:

From Seve Ghose to Everyone:

Seeing the downward trend in young entering the workforce, we in Fort Collins Community Services will continue to struggle to fill entry level positions.

From Meaghan Overton | Housing Manager | she/ella to Everyone:

Finding candidates for all entry level positions is particularly hard. And, many of our customer-facing jobs require physical presence (like driving buses or running recreation programs) - so people also need to find places to live. Those jobs can't necessarily work from anywhere.

From Seve Ghose to Everyone:

As shared by Elizabeth, being creative may involve bursting the typical model of hiring specifically qualified candidates. It may be time to reach out to willing workers who may not have the specific qualifications per job descriptions, but may prove to be the best future candidates-- versatile, nimble, flexible, etc.-- possibly reaching out to the refugee population and inviting them to move to this area, with some housing subsidies. They will probably take the jobs many are shunning.

