

PHASE TWO PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT REPORT

NORTH COLLEGE MAX PLAN

April 14, 2022



Prepared by:



**INSTITUTE FOR THE
BUILT ENVIRONMENT**
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

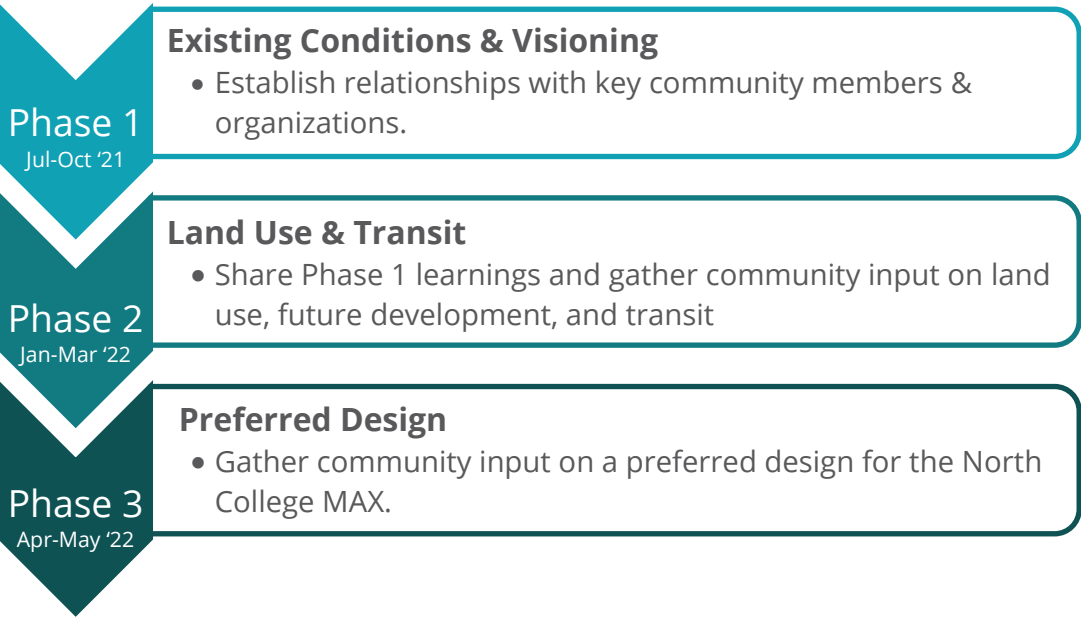
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

The purpose of this report is to summarize the results from Phase Two of public engagement for the North College MAX planning process, conducted January to March 2022. This phase of engagement focused on community perspectives related to the relationship between land use (e.g., density of housing and jobs) and the level of transit service (e.g., hours and days of service, dedicated travel lanes, quality of amenities). The outcomes presented in this report will be used to inform the development of the overall North College MAX Plan.

Public Involvement Process

The public will be engaged throughout the planning and design process, starting in 2021 through mid-2022. Public involvement is being conducted through three phases:



PHASE TWO PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

A team based at Colorado State University (CSU), comprised of the Institute for the Built Environment (IBE) and the Rojas Public Health Lab, designed and implemented public engagement activities with guidance from City of Fort Collins staff and in partnership with Fehr & Peers. The focus of Phase Two engagement centered on the relationship between

land use (e.g., density of housing and jobs) and the level of transit service (e.g., hours and days of operation, dedicated bus lanes, quality of amenities, etc.). Phase Two engagement took place from January through early March 2022.

The team encouraged public participation by leveraging relationships developed in Phase One of engagement. Over 50 businesses, organizations, and residential communities were provided shareable content for social media and newsletters, with the option to distribute print collateral (postcards and posters). In addition, the City mailed a postcard to 4,700 residential and commercial addresses within the area between Laporte Avenue, Shields Street, Lemay Road, and Gregory Road.

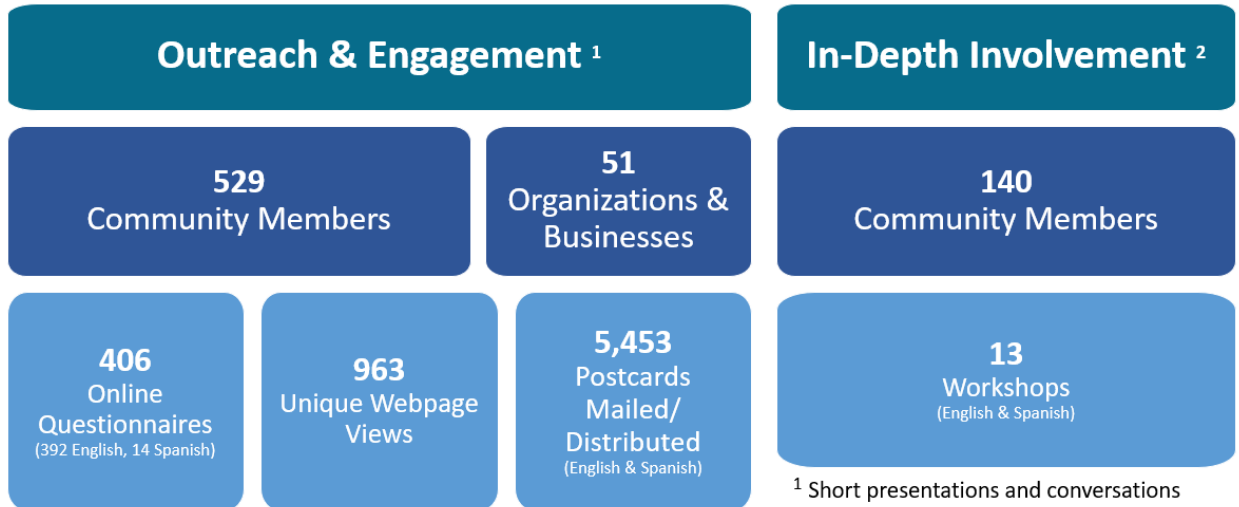
Participation incentives (\$45 Visa gift cards) were provided to residents whose participation in a 90-minute workshop fell outside of their typical job responsibilities.

Public Involvement Reach & Engagement

Nearly 700 individuals were directly engaged through in-person and online community workshops; short presentations; in-person, on-board transit questionnaires; or brief interactions with the City's Community Connectors volunteers, who also distributed postcards. Postcards encouraging participation in workshops and the questionnaire were mailed to residential and commercial addresses in and adjacent to the plan area; distributed by Community Connectors; and provided to community organizations for distribution. In addition, an online questionnaire was available. Across activities, participants included residents, community-based organizations, area businesses, and select committees and advisory boards. The workshops, questionnaire, postcards, and website were offered in both English and Spanish.



Figure 1. Community Connectors volunteers engage fellow community members.



¹ Short presentations and conversations

² 45- to 90-minute workshops

Figure 2. Phase 2 outreach metrics

PHASE 2 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT OUTCOMES

Overall Summary

The results below summarize the outcomes from all workshops and the online questionnaire. A full report from the online questionnaire is included as an appendix. Individual workshop summaries have been provided to the City of Fort Collins and are available upon request.

Desired Destinations & Connectivity

- The highest priority connection was to Downtown Fort Collins.
- The second and third highest priority connections were on Lemay Avenue: Poudre Valley Hospital / Safeway shopping center, and the Walmart/Home Depot shopping center. When combined, the destinations on Lemay have slightly higher priority than the downtown connection.
- Many, particularly in the workshops, expressed a desire to provide a park-n-ride for those coming from the north of town, especially residents to the northeast of the plan area.

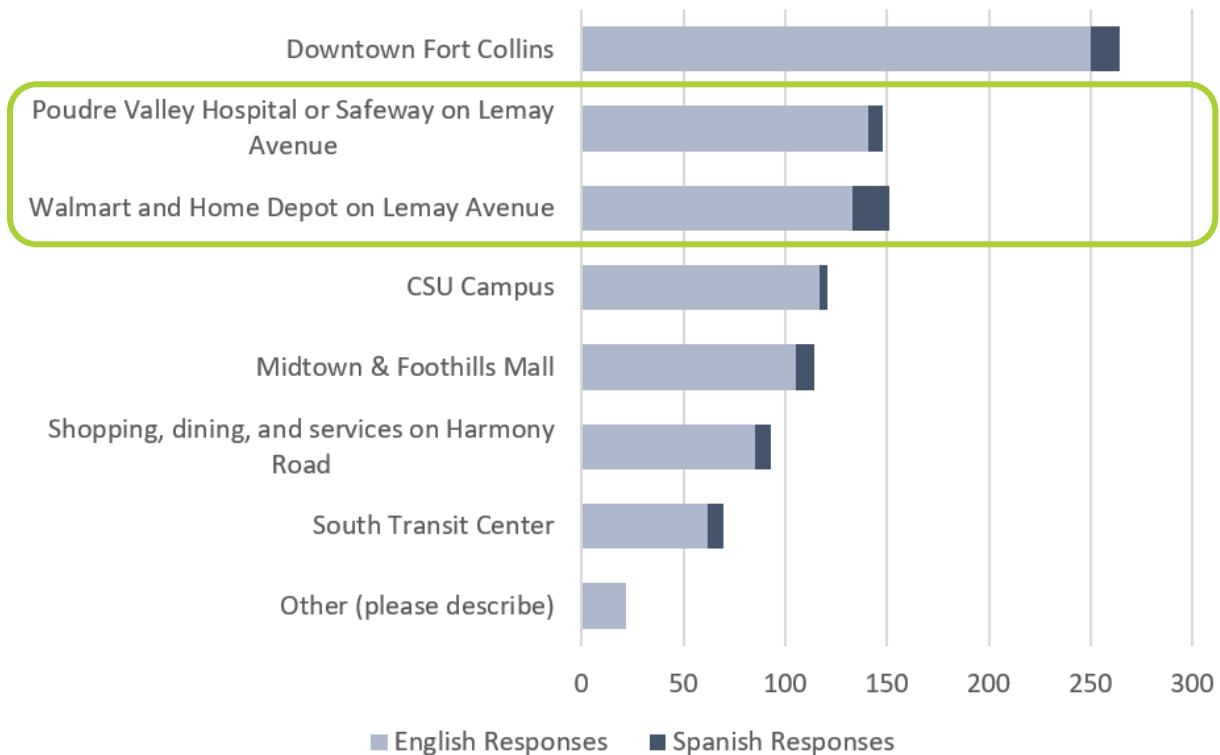


Figure 3. Combined online questionnaire and workshop polling responses to the question “What are the two transit connections you would most like to see to/from the North College corridor?” Note that combined, there are slightly more responses for destinations on Lemay than for Downtown.

New Development Density & Level of Transit Service

Overall, the community was supportive of adding housing and jobs to the area, particularly when that density helped to achieve multiple community goals, including better transit options, affordable and attainable housing, small businesses, restaurants, and other community amenities.

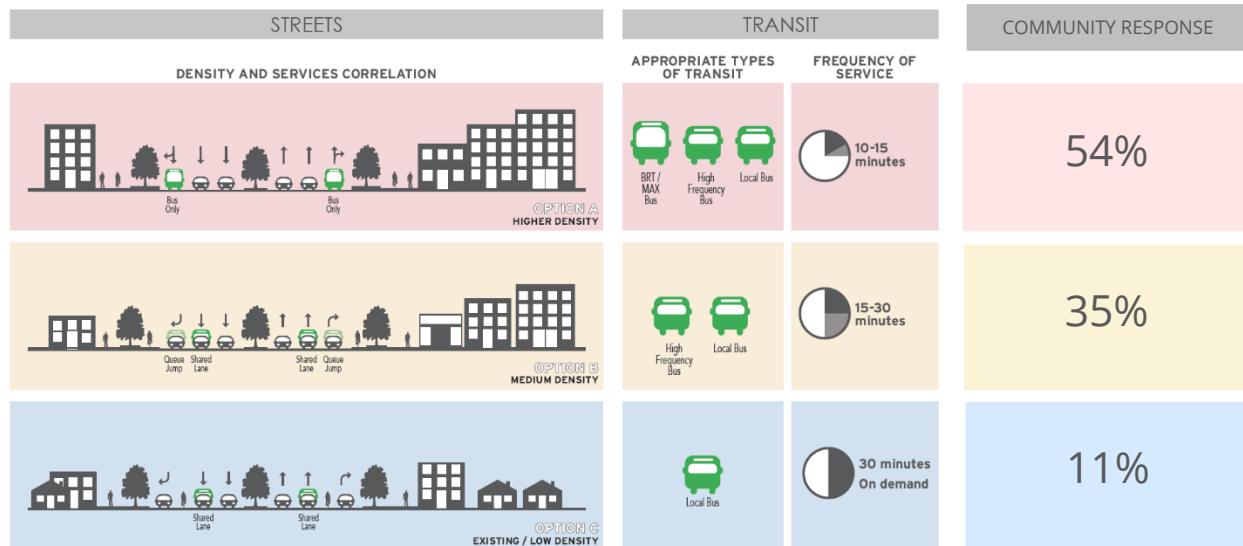


Figure 4. Combined online questionnaire and workshop polling responses regarding preferred option of density and related level of transit service.

Priorities for Types of Land Uses

The community values a mix of new and existing land uses, with a strong preference for maintaining and expanding residential affordability and encouraging small businesses. Top priorities include the following:

- Affordable and attainable housing, including preserving existing affordable housing (currently, primarily mobile homes)
- Restaurants
- Local business incubator
- Mixed income housing
- Arts & Entertainment

Location & Height of New Development

The community expressed openness to new residential and commercial development throughout the corridor, with some emphasis on developing vacant lots and buildings. While there are some who would rather not see new development, they were the minority.

Assuming higher density would help achieve their goals (see above), about 40% of the community indicated that they preferred building heights up to three stories. The remaining participants expressed interest in buildings up to five stories (over 30%) or up to

eight stories (over 20%), indicating that the community may be open to exploring building heights higher than three stories.

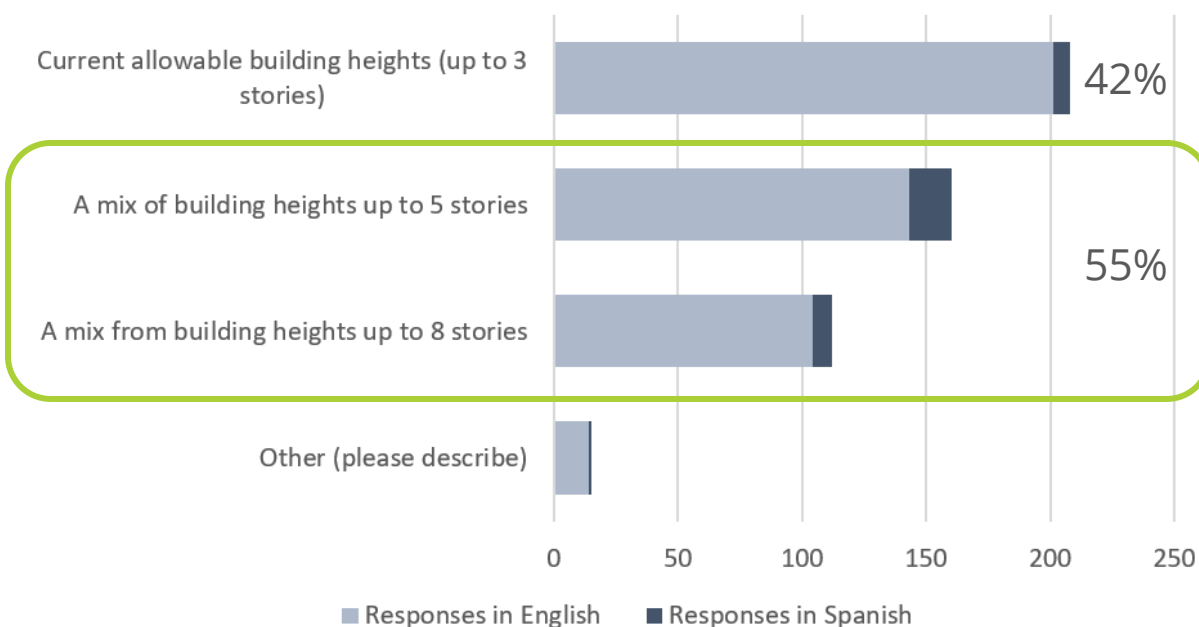


Figure 5. Combined online questionnaire and workshop polling responses to the question “If a higher density of housing and commercial buildings helped to meet the priorities that you identified above, what height of buildings would be acceptable to you? (Choose one.)” Of note, collective responses for a mix of building heights of up to 5 stories and up to 8 stories is greater than the response for heights limited up to 3 stories.

Concerns Regarding Unhoused People in the Area

Many community members expressed a variety of perspectives and concern related to those experiencing homelessness, addiction, and mental health challenges. Some expressed a desire for additional support services and community education, while others expressed fears about safety, both on and off public transit. Many expressed the need for ongoing service on transit routes 8/81 to provide front-door access to the services in the area.

Audience-Specific Concerns

The sentiments above reflect consistent messages across all populations who participated in the workshops and online questionnaire. Because the majority of respondents were area residents, the overall summary above also reflects the perspectives of this audience. The comments below reflect nuances unique to different populations.

Spanish-Speaking Community

- Higher importance placed on a Hispanic/Latino community center and an affordable childcare center

- Higher desire to connect to Walmart/Home Depot on Lemay
- Most likely to express a range of safety concerns, ranging from confrontations with unhoused people, safety boarding the bus, and pedestrian safety accessing and crossing College Avenue

Business Community

- Higher concern for preserving existing businesses and greatest support for a small business incubator
- Higher preference for development on properties facing or next to College Avenue than other populations, but still highest preference for development throughout the corridor (not just along College Avenue)
- Interest in seeing North Fort Collins extend from downtown with a similar level of density, but while maintaining an eclectic and different feel

Responses from Those Outside the Area

- Most open to five- and eight-story buildings
- More concerned with preserving and adding affordable and attainable housing than overall respondents

Social Service Organizations

- Particular interest in greater regional connectivity, as they are currently using services like Uber to transport clients
- Interest in seeing connectivity to the medical services on Lemay Avenue

Summary of Open-Ended Questions from Questionnaire

A summary, including individual responses from the open-ended questions from the online questionnaire can be found in Appendix A. Key highlights included:

- Support for MAX service and new development
- Concerns about displacement due to new investments
- Need for safe and comfortable infrastructure for walking and biking along, crossing, and connecting into North College Avenue
- Complex concerns regarding unhoused people in the area
- Desire to preserve and create parks and open spaces
- Desire to preserve unique and authentic character of the area
- Among Spanish-language respondents, desire for a bus stop at Hickory Village and concerns regarding MAX service frequency and hours

NEXT STEPS

Input from Phase One and Phase Two public engagement will inform design options for the North College MAX Plan. The team will continue to engage key stakeholders and the public in Phase Three, focused on the final plan.