

# EAST MULBERRY PLAN

## SUMMER 2021 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

August 18, 2021

### Engagement Process Summary

The East Mulberry Plan update process is intended to develop and implement a community-engaged vision for the East Mulberry enclave, which is planned for annexation into the City of Fort Collins. In the summer of 2021, the City hosted six public engagement meetings, two per month, in June, July, and August. Residents and business community members were invited to attend the events to learn more about the annexation process, to ask questions, and to share their concerns and aspirations around future annexation efforts. Four meetings were conducted virtually and two were conducted in-person. Meetings took place on the following occasions (in-person meetings marked with an asterisk\*):

- June 29<sup>th</sup> : 12:00 – 1:30pm (business-focused) & 6:00 - 7:30pm (resident-focused)
- July 14<sup>th</sup>: 12:00 - 1:30pm\* (business-focused) & 6:00 - 7:30pm (resident-focused)
- Aug. 4<sup>th</sup>: 12:00 – 1:30pm (business-focused) & 6:00 – 7:30pm\* (resident-focused)

The City presented an overview of the annexation history and participants were invited to ask questions and to respond to a series of questions from the City.

### Key Concerns

Shared concerns were raised by residents and the business community. The most prominent of those themes, roughly in order of their prevalence included the following:

- Loss of affordability and rising costs (including gentrification);
- Fear of increased restrictions and regulations;
- Loss of diversity, both in uses and demographics /reservation of the industrial and agricultural character;
- Having a voice and involvement in the decision-making processes;
- Maintaining and improving flow of traffic, streets, and business access;
- Ongoing and increasing experiences of crime, homeless/transient population, flooding and drainage; and
- Aesthetic appeal of the corridor.

### Suggestions

Participants provided suggestions for the plan update process, as summarized below.

*Ongoing involvement of the business community:* The business community would like to have increased opportunities to have input into the process, and a business association may be independently formed for the area with the help of the Chamber of Commerce (no association for this area currently exists). In

addition, they have requested that the City host more conversations with the business community throughout the process and even into the phases of implementation.

*Ongoing residential engagement:* The residential community also requested increased involvement and City staff has agreed to set up meetings with individual Home Owner’s Associations (HOAs) and neighborhood groups to discuss the specifics of the plan for their neighborhoods.

*Integrate with scenic byway efforts:* Current effort to designate the Cache la Poudre Scenic Byway along Colorado Highway 14 (Mulberry Street) may be an opportunity for collaboration, funding, and a way to fulfill business, resident, and City desires to improve the aesthetic appeal of the East Mulberry corridor, make it more appealing “gateway to the City.”

## Community Responses to City Questions

The development of the themes above were derived from the following observations synthesized from the community meetings. The following four tables synthesize and summarize the input provided by the community at those meetings, as well as important overlaps between the business and residential communities:

*What is valued most by the community?*

<b>Business Community</b>	<b>Shared</b>	<b>Residential Community</b>
Streets, flow of traffic to allow big trucks	Low taxes	Housing affordability
This area is where businesses can “get dirty & make noise”	Diversity (of people, of uses, of business types)	Culture of the community
Proximity to I-25 & ease for customers & workers from other areas of Larimer/Weld counties	Affordability	
Space for storage, fueling, etc.	Character of place	

*What needs work in this community?*

<b>Business Community</b>	<b>Shared</b>	<b>Residential Community</b>
It is difficult to know what’s going on and be involved when they are busy and involved in their own businesses – need good info and repeated contact	Homeless population	Schools are too far away
Work to keep industrial and agricultural businesses here	Crimes like theft and vandalism and drug-use (needles, etc.)	No safe parks and/or bike paths/sidewalks to get to parks
	Traffic flow (confusing, congested, dangerous for pedestrians and bikes) – improvements to frontage roads	Streets
	Flooding & drainage	

*What are their fears/concerns?*

<b>Business Community</b>	<b>Shared</b>	<b>Residential Community</b>
Tractor-trailer access will be splintered, restricted or made more difficult	Gentrification	The time it will take to get the annexation implemented
More restrictions on parking and/or signage	Rising rent and other costs	
Residential and/or retail will push out the industrial businesses	Higher taxes and/or restrictions (e.g. building standards, code compliance, etc.)	
Unease in opening/closing businesses because of transients sleeping in building entrances, etc.	Adjusting to the new requirements imposed by the City	
Increased traffic volume, difficulty “breaking in” to the traffic stream on Mulberry	City will just overlay plans and requirements on them that aren’t right for their area	

*What do they hope for?*

<b>Business Community</b>	<b>Shared</b>	<b>Residential Community</b>
Opportunities to provide additional primary employment	More opportunities to be involved and have a voice (advisory board, working groups, business association?)	Keep and/or provide more attainable housing options
Keep the diversity of uses allowed	Knowing what is going on as this process unfolds	Keep the diversity of the communities
	Better aesthetic appeal of the area	Help with improving & maintaining roads
	Better connectivity for bikes and pedestrians, as well as transit	
	That the City will really listen to them and include them in the planning and decision-making	
	Aesthetic improvements along the Mulberry corridor, especially at the interchange with I-25. Opportunity to create a gateway effect more like the Harmony interchange.	
	Mulberry is the eastern terminus of a scenic byway and could be improved to honor/fit	