

2020 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



2020 was a year unlike any other. Fort Collins responded to the COVID-19 crisis, devastating wildfires, and important calls for social justice – while also continuing to deliver 24/7 municipal services. This report highlights just a few of the City's significant accomplishments from 2020. For much more, visit fcgov.com/StateOfTheCity.

COVID-19

On March 9, the first COVID-19 case in Larimer County was announced. Within a week, as cases rose throughout the county, state and nation, Fort Collins saw school, business and public space closures followed by a statewide Stay-at-Home Order through April.

The City of Fort Collins responded both to the immediate crisis and the ongoing response in the months since, and will continue to support the community through recovery in the months and years ahead.

MODIFIED CITY POLICIES to support local businesses

- **Outdoor dining** permitted in right-of-way
- Allowing temporary signs or banners
- Converting parking spaces to **curbside pickup**
- **Three free hours** in parking structures during the summer
- Drive-up services for places of worship

MODIFIED CITY OPERATIONS

- **Public facilities closed** during Stay-at-Home order
- Many staff working **remotely**
- **City services** offered online, by phone, or by limited appointment
- Customer Service counters implemented **safety protocols**
- **Council Meetings** held remotely or hybrid online/in-person with safety protocols
- Digital Development Review process
- **Online** recreation & cultural programming
- Declining revenue spurred a \$20 million **budget reduction** in 2020; \$13 million for 2021

TRANSFORT

- modified routes
- eliminated fares
- buses disinfected nightly

CITY SUPPORT FOR VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

- **Northside Aztlan Community Center converted to 24-hour shelter** for people experiencing homelessness, accommodating distancing requirements.
- **Connexion** deployed wireless broadband to four **mobile home communities**, enabling students to access online education.
- **Adopt-a-Neighbor** paired residents in need with neighbors who could help with tasks like grocery pick-up, snow shoveling and pet care.
- **VirtuVisit** gives seniors a free tablet device and tech support to help them connect digitally with loved ones.

UTILITIES

Suspended disconnects for non-payment since mid-March

FEDERAL CORONAVIRUS AID, RELIEF AND ECONOMIC SECURITY (CARES) ACT

The City of Fort Collins received approximately \$9 million from the CARES Act passed in March.

2/3 went to small businesses, nonprofits and local community programs

1/3 supported safe delivery of City services

\$3.2 million for resident recovery, including:

- \$1 million in rent and housing support
- \$500,000 in utility bill support
- human services, childcare, food security, and homelessness services

\$2.5 million to support businesses in reopening and recovery

including personal protective equipment, enhanced cleaning, and equipment needed to ensure safe operations

4TH OF JULY

A non-traditional, COVID-responsible **Independence Day celebration** included a hot air balloon launch, airplane parade, musical pop-up performances, and a **Chalk Your Walk** contest.

MUSEUM EXHIBIT

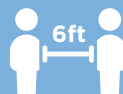
The Fort Collins Museum of Discovery hosted **Mental Health: Mind Matters** to build greater understanding about mental health. Admission was provided free of charge.

OUTDOOR ACTIVITY

- More than 84,000 rounds of golf played
- **94%** increase in **Natural Area visits** through the spring

BUSINESS SUPPORT

- **NoCoRecovers.com** and **ForFortCollins.com** created to house business resources about available relief funds, safety protocols, reopening guidance, marketing materials, and more.
- **NoCo Nosh partnership** to encourage take-out orders from local restaurants – the City paid delivery fees and operations costs.
- **Art in Public Places** hired local artists to paint 15 murals on the **new outdoor dining concrete barriers**.
- Keep NoCo Open campaign & messaging shared regionally.
- More than **200 businesses received funds** to help off-set the cost of sanitation and personal protective equipment.



CAMERON PEAK FIRE

- Began Aug. 13 and became **largest in state history**, burning nearly 209,000 acres.
- **Extreme fire behavior** due to:
 - high temps
 - low humidity
 - challenging terrain
 - 70 mph winds
 - beetle kill
 - drought
- **2,000+ personnel responded**, including Poudre Fire Authority and wildland firefighters from 46 states & Puerto Rico.
- Fire was 100% contained Dec. 2 after **112 days of work** on a 325-mile perimeter.
- Utilities monitored the City's high-mountain water infrastructure and water quality throughout the fire, and will continue to monitor and respond during spring runoff and beyond.

RACIAL JUSTICE & EQUITY

- **Equity Indicators:** developing a framework to measure and understand equality gaps in Fort Collins, and to more proactively address systems that perpetuate racism or oppression.
- **City Council Ad Hoc Community Impact Committee:** created to ensure the City is creating an environment that provides safety and equity for all residents and to advise Council on possible actions.
- **Police Transparency webpage** created to make information about training, policies and practices easily accessible.
- A new, collaborative **community advisory initiative** will focus on police services and engagement with communities of color, LGBTQIA+ and other historically underserved populations.
- **The Police Co-Responder Team** partners officers with specialized training with UCHHealth co-responders on calls related to mental and behavioral health.



OTHER KEY INITIATIVES

The updated **HOUSING STRATEGIC PLAN** establishes a vision that everyone in Fort Collins will have healthy, stable housing they can afford. The plan is a comprehensive guide to the City's housing policy and goals, and creates a framework for investments in the community's housing system.

The City partnered with local nonprofits to rent space to shelter people experiencing homelessness during inclement weather.



Fort Collins Connexion launched streaming television service, offering three packages with a robust channel lineup, along with sports and Spanish-language add-ons and premium channels like HBO, Showtime and more. To date, Connexion has installed 378 miles of fiber, 5,205 vaults, and 11,105 flowerpots (i.e., small vaults).



During this project to repair and upgrade the Solider Canyon Dam outlet, Utilities could only draw water from the Poudre River, prompting temporary water restrictions. Average daily use was reduced by 2 million gallons.

City Council is gathering input to help inform a possible ordinance or ballot measure to **reduce the use of single-use plastics** to help protect river health and achieve community climate goals.

RēCreate: The **PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN** outlines a vision and strategies to shape the future of Fort Collins' parks and recreation system.

Through a partnership with First United Methodist Church, **Eastside Park** saw several improvements, including safer pathway lighting, new benches and picnic tables, bike racks and more.

Our Climate Future completed its final phases to update three environmental plans, designing equitable solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve renewable electricity and energy efficiency, and achieve waste reduction goals.

Regional law enforcement agencies collaborated on the **Combined Regional Information Systems Project (CRISP)**. Through shared software systems, agencies can better manage dispatch, records and booking information.

Education regarding ongoing train issues expanded, including signs installed at major train crossings and publicizing an online Federal Railroad Administration tracking tool to report blocked crossings.



MEDIATION & RESTORATIVE JUSTICE celebrated its 20th anniversary, working with 75 mediation participants and 103 restorative justice participants in 2020.

The new 1.8-mile **Ridge to Ridge Trail** connects the City of Loveland's new **Prairie Ridge Natural Area** and the City of Fort Collins' **Coyote Ridge Natural Area** on the west side of town, offering wildlife and wildflower viewing.



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