



WORK SESSION AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

City Council

STAFF

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SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION

Draft Active Modes Plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this work session is to present the draft Active Modes Plan to Council for feedback in advance of December adoption hearings. The Active Modes Plan combines and updates the 2011 Pedestrian Plan and 2014 Bicycle Plan as well as incorporating micromobility devices such as skateboards and scooters. The plan identifies key opportunities to significantly improve and expand the city's active modes networks, support facilities, policies, and programs. The project team has incorporated feedback received from the community during the July 25 – August 24 public comment period into the draft Active Modes Plan.

GENERAL DIRECTION SOUGHT AND SPECIFIC QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

1. Do Councilmembers support the plan vision and goals?
2. Do Councilmembers support the plan recommendations?
3. What feedback do Councilmembers have on the plan implementation strategy?

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

The City is developing an Active Modes Plan, which combines and updates the City's 2011 Pedestrian Plan and 2014 Bicycle Plan. The plan incorporates not only pedestrians and bicyclists, but also micromobility devices such as scooters and skateboards. The geographic scope of the plan is the City of Fort Collins' Growth Management Area. The recommendations were developed with an eye towards aligning with key regional connections beyond the city's jurisdictional boundaries. This update is focused on identifying key opportunities to significantly improve and expand the City's existing active modes networks, support facilities, policies, and programs.

The Active Modes Plan is a joint effort between the City of Fort Collins and Colorado State University and is funded by both entities. The City funding is derived from bicycle and pedestrian Community Capital Improvement Program funds. The consulting firm Toole Design Group was selected to support the development of the plan through a competitive request for proposals process. The project kicked off in September 2021 and is anticipated for Council adoption in December 2022.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The Active Modes Plan is strategically aligned with other key plans and initiatives including:

2022 Strategic Plan

- *Objective 6.1:* Improve safety for all modes and users of the transportation system to ultimately achieve a system with no fatalities or serious injuries.
- *Objective 6.3:* Invest in equitable access to, and expansion of, all sustainable modes of travel with emphasis on growing transit ridership.

City Council 2021 – 2023 Priorities

- Implementation of 15-minute community concept
- Improved air quality

City Plan

- *Principles T 6 & 7:* Support walking and bicycling as safe, easy, and convenient travel options for all ages and abilities by building connected networks of facilities.
- Other outcome areas including Environmental Health and Neighborhood Livability & Social Health

Our Climate Future

- *Big Move 4:* Convenient Transportation Choices
- *Big Move 5:* Live, Work and Play Nearby

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community feedback informed every aspect of the plan. The project team sought broad feedback from the community, with an emphasis on elevating the voices of historically underrepresented groups. A Technical Advisory Committee, composed primarily of City staff and partner agencies, and a Community Advisory Committee, composed of pedestrian and bicycle advocates and community members of diverse backgrounds, provided feedback at key junctures throughout the plan development. The Bicycle Advisory Committee, Transportation Board, and other interested City Boards and Commissions were also engaged and provided input. The project team utilized both traditional engagement methods such as visioning workshops and focus group meetings as well as non-traditional methods that “meet people where they are” such as pop-up events along trails and at community events.

Two examples of engagement methods that have focused on reaching historically underrepresented groups include conducting focus groups with middle school students and contracting with Community Connectors, a local Latina-owned business which hires mobile home community residents to survey their neighbors. Thanks to the work of the Community Connectors, 294 Spanish-speaking residents of mobile home communities in and around Fort Collins participated in the community survey. This represents 38% of all survey responses received. The Colorado Chapter of the American Planning Association honored the City with a merit award for Active Modes Plan community engagement.

The project team estimates that 3,500 people contributed feedback to the plan. Total public participation in each engagement opportunity is as follows:

- **Visioning questionnaire** = ~350 participants
- **Community Survey** = 771 participants
- **Mapping activity #1** = 879 participants; 1,376 submissions
- **Prioritization questionnaire** = 1,182 participants
- **Mapping Activity #2** = 559 participants; 1,449 submissions
- **Draft plan review** = 800 comments

ENVISIONING THE FUTURE

The plan vision and goals serve as an overarching framework guiding recommendations, project prioritization, and the implementation strategy. The plan is oriented around the year 2032, ten years after the anticipated adoption date. The plan vision and goals were informed by responses to the visioning questionnaire and community survey.

Vision

Active transportation is an integral part of daily life and the local cultural experience. Fort Collins is a place where walking, bicycling, and using other active modes are safe, accessible, convenient, joyful, and desired by people of all ages and abilities.

Goals

Mode Share: Achieve 50% active modes share of all trips by 2032

- The mode share goal was set to align with the 15 minute city concept. Based on the 2022 Residential Travel Diary Study, 51% of car trips are three miles or less. Most people can travel three miles by bike or e-micromobility device in 15 minutes. The active modes share goal is based on converting a majority of short car trips to active modes of transportation.
- Achieving 50% active modes share will help the City is expected to result in a 13.5% reduction in vehicle miles traveled, which would result in a reduction of approximately 7,500 metric tons of CO₂ equivalent. This supports the Our Climate Future Goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions 80% below 2005 baseline levels.

Vision Zero: Eliminate active modes fatalities and serious injuries by 2032

- The Active Modes Plan is focused on projects that improve safety for active modes users. Replacing vehicular trips with walking and biking trips is also one of the most effective methods to improve the safety of all road users.

Big Moves & Next Moves

The Active Modes Plan is oriented around five Big Moves and related Next Moves. The Big Moves describe the intended outcomes of the plan, and the Next Moves are tactics and methods for achieving them. The Big Moves and Next Moves were also informed by responses to the visioning questionnaire and community survey.

A Complete and Connected Network

- Provide direct connections.
- Locate and fill network gaps.
- Connect to the trail system.

- Expand the wayfinding system.

Comprehensive Access to Destinations

- Upgrade facilities to meet ADA standards.
- Connect to mobility hubs.
- Repair sidewalks and bikeways.
- Manage parking and placement of micromobility, bikeshare, and carshare.
- Reevaluate snow removal procedures.

Safe and Comfortable Travel

- Support the implementation of Vision Zero goals.
- Install traffic calming improvements.
- Provide increased street lighting that complies with the City's Night Sky Initiative.
- Frequently evaluate safety.

A Healthy and Equitable Community

- Create appropriate programming.
- Increase diverse community involvement.
- Improve network equity by using the Health Equity Index.
- Expand multimodal options.

A Supportive and Inclusive Culture

- Advance active transportation culture and coordinate with the Shift Your Ride travel options program.
- Build active modes awareness.
- Increase active school trips.

POLICY AND PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

Policies and programs, when combined with infrastructure improvements, are key ingredients in achieving the Active Modes Plan vision and goals. Community responses to the prioritization questionnaire helped identify the policy and program improvements that have the greatest potential impact. The recommendations are organized into five categories:

1. Prioritizing Active Modes

- a. Adopt the Transportation Hierarchy as the overarching framework for Fort Collins' transportation system.
- b. Ensure that the percent of transportation funding allocated to active modes aligns with the City's strategic outcomes related to mode shift, safety, climate action, and equity.
- c. Prioritize the safety and efficiency of Active Modes users by expanding the Neighborhood Traffic Mitigation Program.

2. Update Land Use Policies to Support Active Modes

- a. Evaluate how the active modes network can increase 15-minute communities.
- b. Adopt development practices that support active modes.
- c. Establish motor vehicle parking policies that encourage and support active modes.

3. Aligning Standards with Active Modes Goals

- a. Update Larimer County Urban Areas Street Standards (LCUASS).
- b. Update Multimodal Levels of Service framework.
- c. Evaluate opportunities to improve the City's sidewalk maintenance program and asset management plan.
- d. Revise signal timing and intersection design standards along integral pieces of the active modes network.
- e. Revise standards to support micromobility in Fort Collins.

4. Expanding and Creating Programs that Support Active Modes

- a. Build and expand the Safe Routes to School program for high school students.
- b. Create a transportation demand management program that provides resources and strategies for employers and residents in Fort Collins.

5. Engaging Communities Meaningfully Around Active Modes

- a. Conduct equitable engagement that meaningfully involves and values participation by historically underserved groups.
- b. Continue to promote and grow Fort Collins' Open Streets and Asphalt Art programs.
- c. Increase the visibility and importance of the role of walking and rolling and access for people with disabilities in Fort Collins.
- d. Take action to move Fort Collins towards being a Vision Zero city.

INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Active Modes Plan infrastructure recommendations were informed by two community mapping activities, staff expertise, and data analysis, which identified gaps and barriers that affect walking, bicycling, and rolling in Fort Collins. The plan recommends two types of improvements:

1. **Spot treatments:** high-priority intersection and crossing improvements
2. **Bicycle network improvements:** linear bicycle facilities

The Active Modes Plan does not supersede the:

- **Pedestrian Needs Assessment** which prioritizes sidewalk and ADA improvements, or
- **Paved Recreational Trail Plan** which recommends future paved trails.

The following themes guided network planning and analysis:

1. Adapt to growth,
2. Consider varying travel needs,
3. Unlock active modes for more trips,
4. Design safe streets and intersections, and
5. Plan with context sensitivity.

Recommended **spot treatments** include:

- **24** changes to signal operations
- **19** high-visibility markings and signage
- **37** signals or beacons
- **15** median refuge islands, intersection diverters, or offset crossings
- **49** geometric redesign

- **21** new connections or crossings

Recommended **bicycle network improvements** include:

- **21** miles of neighborhood bikeways
- **3** miles of conventional bike lanes
- **11** miles of buffered bike lanes
- **64** miles of separated bike lanes
- **45** miles of sidepaths

IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation strategy translates the Big Moves into an actionable set of projects and phases, as well as an order of magnitude assessment of what resources are needed to deliver on the plan's goals.

Prioritization

Infrastructure projects were prioritized and phased based on a two-step process. Outcomes-based criteria are directly aligned with the Big Moves. Community responses to the prioritization questionnaire helped to weight the outcomes-based prioritization criteria.

- **Step 1: Outcomes-based prioritization**

- Network Connectivity
 - Number of connections to existing and planned active modes facilities
 - Number of priority destinations within ¼ mile
- Access
 - Number of transit stations or stops within ¼ mile (weighted by service frequency)
- Safety and Comfort
 - Pedestrian or bicycle high-injury network
 - Distance to low-stress crossing (pedestrian)
 - Difference between existing and proposed comfort designation (bicycle)
- Health and Equity
 - Health-Equity Index score

- **Step 2: Implementation-based prioritization**

- Cost: Planning-level opinion of probable cost
- Readiness: Whether or not additional study or planning is needed, based on implementation action
- Multimodal benefit: Coincides with another modal network plan (e.g. pedestrian, bicycle, or transit)
- Synergy: Overlap with planned or programmed projects (e.g. Transportation Capital Project Prioritization Study, Street Maintenance Program)

Phases

Based on the project prioritization and the Active Modes Plan goals for active modes share and safety, the projects are broken into three phases. In reality, some projects in a later phase may be implemented sooner if opportunities such as incorporating improvements in a new development or collaborating with utilities work arise, but when prioritizing locally-controlled funding, the City will focus on implementing projects according to the following phased approach:

1. **Phase 1: High Priority/Readiness** - This phase is focused on strengthening the downtown and urban core network while implementing strategic crossing improvements citywide.
2. **Phase 2: Medium Priority/Readiness** - This phase is focused on expanding the core network to a larger geography of the city and includes more complex projects.
3. **Phase 3: Low Priority/Readiness** - This phase is focused on completing the “full-build” network and includes transformational projects to complete the citywide network.

Funding

Opinions of probable cost were developed based on the anticipated improvement type and local bid tabs, with contingencies built in to reflect rising costs for project implementation. Overall, the Active Modes Plan proposes the following relative funding levels over each phase of the plan:

- Phase 1: \$30.4 million
- Phase 2: \$57.1 million
- Phase 3: \$71.2 million

In addition to the capital costs of implementing new facilities, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure requires maintenance and should be incorporated into standard maintenance programs to ensure continued safety and usefulness. Because bicycles and people walking put less force and wear on roadways, these costs are overall considerably less than general roadway maintenance.

While the prioritization of projects into phases reflects a strategic roll-out based on the Active Modes Plan goals, values, and practicality based on current conditions, opportunities may arise that shift the prioritization over time. This prioritization exists as just the first part of a three-part implementation approach:

1. **Grow** funding
 - a. Extend Community Capital Improvement Program
 - b. Budgeting for Outcomes
 - c. State and federal grants
 - d. Consider bond funding
 - e. Identify new revenue sources
2. **Maximize** existing programs
 - a. Street maintenance program
 - b. Major capital projects
 - c. Utilities work

3. **Leverage** partnerships and development

- a. Colorado State University
- b. Larimer County
- c. New development and redevelopments

CONCLUSION

While the analysis, action planning, and engagement for developing the Active Modes Plan occurred over the span of just one year, the plan is the result of many years of dedication and intentional actions towards improving walking, bicycling, and sustainability outcomes. Through implementation, the Active Modes Plan will help Fort Collins achieve the vision for the future of active modes and create a place where walking, bicycling, and rolling are safe, accessible, convenient, joyful, and desired. The plan and its projects, policies, and programs provide a framework for implementing this citywide vision and enhancing opportunities for using active modes in Fort Collins. The plan presents a detailed roadmap for how the City of Fort Collins and its partners can strategically plan for innovations, infrastructure improvements, and investments in the active transportation network, and create a vibrant, dynamic, and accessible community for all.

NEXT STEPS

The project team will incorporate feedback from Councilmembers into the Active Modes Plan in preparation for December adoption hearings. Council is scheduled to consider the Active Modes Plan for adoption, with first reading on December 8.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Executive Summary
2. Draft Plan
3. Presentation