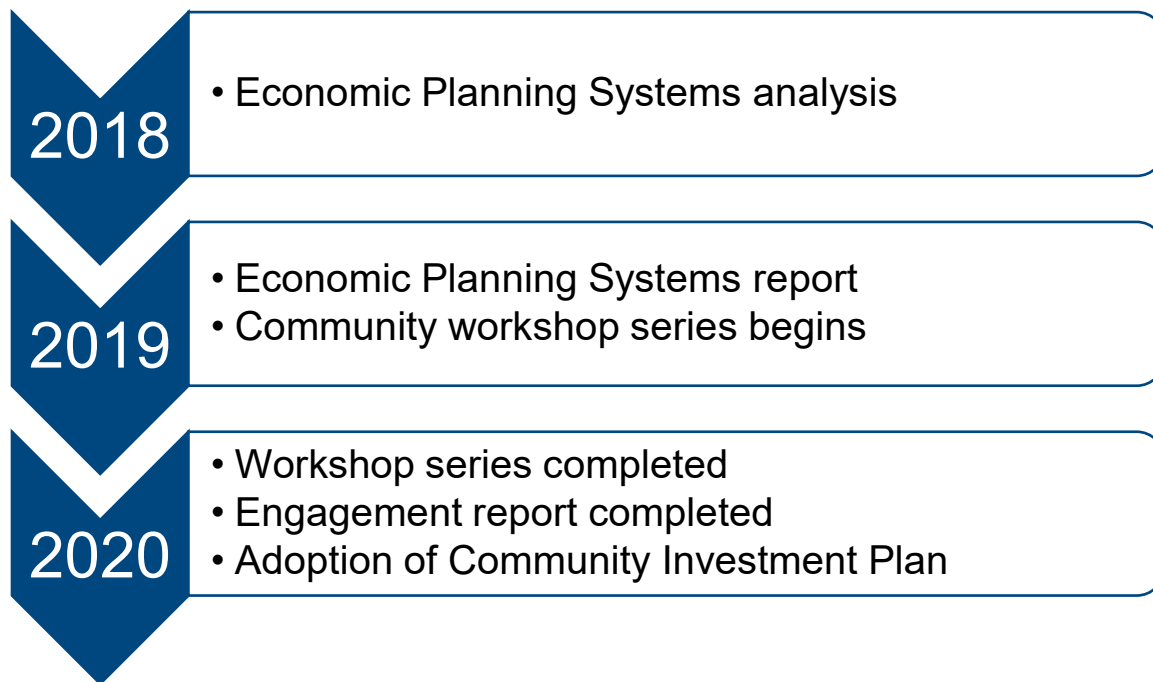


Introduction

The Community Investment Plan for North College is the culmination of years' worth of study and engagement on the North College Urban Renewal Plan Area. This plan unites a data driven, analytical approach to redevelopment and the lived experience of community members and what they would like to see the plan area become in the future. This document is a guide for the Urban Renewal Authority Board's investment decisions in the plan area.

Analysis and Engagement



In 2018, staff worked with Economic Planning Systems (EPS) on identifying the best opportunities for investment within the plan area. EPS analyzed the real estate market for the plan area to determine what kinds of development are most likely in the plan area. EPS then also analyzed the development potential of six districts within the plan area. Three focus areas for investment emerged based on EPS's analysis of market demand and development potential. EPS's report provides guidance for each focus area. The EPS report concludes with three overarching recommendations for the plan area:

1. The URA should take a more proactive role in land assembly of vacant and underutilized parcels into larger and more efficient development sites.
2. The City should consider land banking property suitable for affordable housing within the North College Plan Area.
3. The URA should consider establishing and funding a retail building improvement program.

A series of community workshops followed EPS's analysis to gain a better understanding of what the North College community would like to see the URA invest in over the next ten years.

Over the course of a year, staff worked with the Institute for the Built Environment (IBE) and The Family Center/La Familia (TFC/LF) on a series of workshops to better understand how the URA can invest in ways to better the North College community. IBE's engagement consisted of six workshops with participants representing neighborhoods, businesses, service providers, City staff, and others. TFC/LF engaged with mobile home park residents and consisted of three workshops. Nearly 60 community members participated in this process between the two groups. Overarching themes both groups identified included:

- Increase vibrancy through maintaining and adding services and amenities that the community wants.
- Enhance and celebrate cultural needs and opportunities, including artistic expression.
- Increase access to a variety of recreation options.

From this, IBE produced a report synthesizing the findings of both series of workshops. The report highlights four key areas of investment. These four categories of investment are:

1. Complete, vibrant neighborhood
2. Latinx community hub
3. Stormwater improvements
4. Recreation and connectivity

Appendix A contains a detailed overview of IBE's findings and recommendations.

Equitable Development Framework

North College is the one of the most diverse areas of Fort Collins. Since the beginning, immigrants have called the neighborhoods north of the Poudre River home. Immigrants flocked to the area north of the river to work on sugar beet farms and at the Great Western Sugar Beet Company factory. Today, North College is home to a large Latinx community. According to the American Community Survey, 5,188 people live in the North College corridor. 2,288 of these people identify as being Hispanic/Latino, making up 44% of the population in the North College corridor. People who identify as being Latinx make up 13% of the City's population. This high concentration of Latinx households is unique in Fort Collins and thus requires an approach to community building and investment that is uniquely tailored to this community.

Communities north of the river were the last to receive services from the City. The industrial heritage of the North College community has also led to inequitable health outcomes. Our highest priority areas in Fort Collins for increased health equity are North College and the East Mulberry corridor according to the City Plan Trends & Forces Report. Hispanic/Latino households earn less money and are more likely to be in poverty than the average household in Fort Collins according to American Community Survey data. This confluence of factors means investment must also focus on equitably building community so that race ceases to be a predictor of economic and health outcomes.

The URA has guiding principles of inclusion and co-creating plans with the community. The Government Alliance on Race & Equity (GARE) developed a framework for equitable development to address situations like the one on North College. The GARE Equitable Development Framework consists of the following elements:

1. Advance economic opportunity

2. Prevent displacement
3. Preserve and expand affordable housing options
4. Understand and respond to local context
5. Promote broader mobility and connectivity
6. Practice meaningful community engagement
7. Develop healthy and safe communities
8. Promote environmental justice
9. Achieve full accessibility

This framework serves as a guide for this investment plan and ensures the work of the URA is rooted in equity, leading with race.

Investment Plan



Complete, Vibrant Neighborhood

A complete, vibrant neighborhood is one where community members can complete most of their day-to-day tasks without having to leave the neighborhood. Workshop participants identified several amenities that would make North College a more complete neighborhood. Some of these amenities include:

- More small business opportunities
- Affordable housing
- Food and entertainment
- Professional development and education opportunities
- Affordable childcare
- A library branch

By investing in these amenities, the URA will promote context sensitive investment and economic opportunities for businesses and residents of the plan area.

Short Term Strategies

Cultivate partnerships

The URA will act as a convener of community members, developers, representatives from all taxing entities (City, County, School District, Library District, etc.), and others. This will be an opportunity for all stakeholders to develop a shared vision for specific kinds of development that will help make North College a more complete, vibrant neighborhood. Staff will look to other communities that have had success in community led development and apply lessons these communities have learned to the work on North College.

Small business support

Many small businesses are struggling amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. The URA could build upon the grant programs offered by the City as part of the CARES Act. This would allow the URA to help stabilize small businesses until the end of the pandemic.

Medium Term Strategy

Identify & Pilot community hub programs

In the medium term, community partners can work with the URA on identifying and piloting programs that would be integrated into a future community hub. This would provide services desired by the community and present an opportunity to test services in a cost-effective way. Pilot programs would also provide an indication of the cost to provide these services on an ongoing basis.

Long Term Strategies

Acquire property for re-development

Acquiring property would allow the URA to issue a RFP and find and work with qualified development partners that could deliver a development program consistent with community desires and opportunities.

Repayments fund community objectives

As development occurs and taps into stormwater infrastructure and takes access from Mason Street, the URA and City will seek repayment from developers. Repayments to the URA can go into a fund that helps fulfill other community objectives. If a development meets objectives identified by the community, such as affordable housing, the URA could waive its repayment to incentivize the type of development desired by the community. Any projects seeking a waiver for a repayment would request a waiver from the URA Board. The URA Board would decide on any waiver in a similar fashion to a TIF assistance request. This system would help achieve legacy projects for the plan area and incentivize the kind of development desired by the community in the North College plan area.



Community Hub

Various community members have noted that North College lacks a focal point. Latinx community members feel an acute need for a community gathering place. Outside of the Northside Aztlan Community Center, there are few locations on the northside of Fort Collins that provide a space for community members to get together. There are also few cultural and educational amenities in the plan area. Workshop participants developed the idea of a community hub that could bring these amenities together in one location potentially along with other forms of development that would then act as the focal point of North College. The community hub would be something available and open to all. While the community hub would serve anyone, the community hub should also address unmet needs of the Latinx community.

For the community hub to be successful, the community must lead in designing the hub, with a particular focus on elevating the voices of the Latinx community. The URA will act as a convener at first to bring together stakeholders. Once the community has designed the community hub, the URA can act as a financial partner to help bring the community hub to fruition.

Short Term Strategy

Begin community-based design process

For a community space such as this to be successful, the community must buy-in and feel a sense of ownership over the space. The URA could act as a convener for facilitating a community-based design process. The first year would focus on developing relationships and building a shared vision for the community hub while identifying opportunities to improve existing services in the interim. This will provide the foundation to find the appropriate partners that can help develop the community hub in year two.

Medium Term Strategy

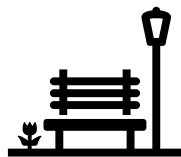
Forge development partnerships

The URA will not have all the funds necessary to develop a community hub on its own. Community and development partners will help bring capital and expertise to the community hub to help make the community hub a reality.

Long Term Strategy

Develop community hub

Continue work with community and development partners to develop community hub that aligns with the needs and vision established by the community. Community members will continue to drive the design and programming of the community hub.



Infrastructure Improvements

One of the focus areas of the North College Corridor Plan from 2007 and adoption of the North College Urban Renewal Plan was addressing infrastructure deficiencies throughout the North College corridor. In 2010, City Council adopted the North College Infrastructure Funding Plan to guide implementation of the North College Corridor Plan. This plan identified infrastructure improvements within the plan area, estimated costs, funding sources, and priority levels for

each project. This document has successfully guided tens of millions of dollars in public infrastructure investment in the corridor. A handful of projects identified in the Infrastructure Funding Plan remain unbuilt that help inform the investment plan and can form the foundation of the Board's investment in infrastructure.

Short Term Strategy

Continue support of existing projects

The City's Stormwater and Engineering departments have begun work on stormwater improvements and establishing the Mason Street corridor west of College Ave. Stormwater completed 10% design of the stormwater improvements earlier in 2020. Engineering staff are in the process of acquiring right-of-way for the Mason Street corridor. The URA contributed \$300,000 to the combined stormwater and Mason Street project in 2019 with the City contributing \$467,800. Stormwater submitted a budget offer as part of the City's Budgeting for Outcomes process to continue this project in 2021. The budget offer requests \$1.5 million for final design of the stormwater system south of Hickory Street as well as construction of the outfall into the Poudre River. The budget offer also states that this project will only remain a priority if the URA contributes to the project financially.

Medium Term Investment Strategies

Complete existing projects

Depending on funding levels, the west side stormwater and Mason Street project will likely extend into 2023-2024. Completing this project would create an asset that could spur additional private investment and tax increment generation.

Support outcomes of plan updates

Planning efforts underway today will likely finish in the next two years. Agencies conducting planning efforts that impact North College include Transfort and Parks Planning. The URA can collaborate on implementation items articulated in completed plans that align with the Urban Renewal Authority's strategic plan in the medium term.

Long Term Investment Strategy

Invest in legacy projects

At the end of the plan area's tax increment generation, the Board can consider infrastructure projects that will leave an enduring legacy on the North College community. These projects could also provide repayment opportunities that will give the URA a revenue source that lasts

beyond the tax increment generation period of the plan area and enable investment in other community priorities.

Recommended Revenue Allocation

	Complete, Vibrant Neighborhood	Community Hub	Infrastructure Improvements
Short Term 2021 - 2022	Cultivate partnerships Small business support	Community based design process	Continue existing projects
Medium Term 2023 - 2024	Pilot community hub programs	Forge development partnerships	Complete existing projects
Long Term 2025 and beyond	Acquire property Repayments fund community objectives	Develop community hub	Fund legacy projects
Total Allocation	25%	50%	25%

The allocations presented above represent a balanced approach to investment. All three objectives will act in concert to achieve the objectives from our community engagement and the GARE Equitable Development Framework while meeting statutory requirements to remediate blight and prevent its further spread. Infrastructure improvements will honor previous investments made by the URA, help generate economic opportunity for area residents and businesses, and enhance mobility and connectivity for all community members. Developing a complete, vibrant neighborhood and a community hub will support development that addresses the unique needs of the North College area in a culturally attuned way.

Recommended Revenue Allocation by Timeframe

The allocations above indicate the rough proportion of the URA's revenues that should go to each community objective. Another important consideration is when to invest in each objective. Infrastructure investment could lead to redevelopment that increases the tax base and provides additional revenue for the URA to spend on its objectives. It is also important to retain enough tax increment revenue to support potential redevelopment and the community hub. The table below provides guidance on how to spend tax increment within each timeframe.

	Short Term 2021 - 2022	Medium Term 2023 - 2024	Long Term 2025 and beyond	Total
Complete, Vibrant Neighborhood	10% \$238,849	25% \$424,480	30% \$2,914,064	\$3,577,393
Community Hub	10% \$238,849	25% \$424,481	60% \$5,828,127	\$6,491,457
Infrastructure Improvements	80% \$1,910,791	50% \$848,961	10% \$971,355	\$3,731,107
Total	\$2,388,489	\$1,697,922	\$9,713,546	\$13,799,957

Finance Options

The URA may fund improvements as it generates tax increment or issue debt to fund projects. This investment plan does not provide guidance on how to finance the improvements in this plan. Rather, financing decisions are at the discretion of the URA Board. The URA Board will have the opportunity to discuss financing options when these projects and others go before the URA Board for discussion. At that time, the Board may decide the best mechanism for financing these projects.

Metrics and Indicators

As stated earlier, this investment plan aims to invest the URA's remaining tax increment revenue into projects that improve the North College corridor for all. Often times, investment by government can inadvertently lead to displacement of people, businesses, and culture. For this investment plan to be a success, investment must lead to all members of the North College community sharing in the growth in prosperity from the URA's investments. The following metrics and indicators will provide signs of how well the URA's investments are supporting the goal of developing in an equitable way. Staff will monitor the following data:

Metric/Indicator	Data Source	Target
Leverage rate	URA	Increase or maintain historic leverage rate
Property values	County Assessor	Stable growth
Property ownership	County Assessor	Varied ownership, few properties owned by LLCs that own 3+ properties
Residential rents	Department of Local Affairs	Stabilize rents
Business rents	CoStar	Stabilize rents
Household income	HUD, American Community Survey	Stable growth
Cost burdened households	American Community Survey	Decrease percentage of households that are cost burdened
Residential building permits issued	City of Fort Collins	Mix of unit types that match community needs
Households by race	American Community Survey	Prevent displacement of Latinx community

This suite of metrics and indicators will provide a strong overview of the economic vitality and the composition of businesses and residents in the plan area. Early signs of significant change in any of the metrics will send a signal to the URA to act before the issue becomes too difficult to address. Many of these metrics are not within the URA's control. While the URA cannot control things like rent or who chooses to live in the plan area, the URA can influence factors that would result in change or potential displacement of people, businesses, and culture.

Plan Alignment

Beyond fulfilling the objectives identified by the community during our engagement process, this investment plan will support the objectives of all entities collecting property tax in the plan area. This section identifies relevant policies and goals of each taxing entity with which this investment plan aligns.

City of Fort Collins

The City of Fort Collins has a comprehensive plan called City Plan that provides an overall vision for the development of the community. Sub-area plans then clarify that vision for different parts of town. The North College Corridor Plan (NCCP) provides finer grain detail and specific goals for how North College will develop over time.

City Plan

Principle LIV 2 – Promote infill and redevelopment

Policy LIV 3.6 – Context-sensitive development

Policy LIV 4.4 – Culturally relevant gathering places

Principle LIV 7 – Promote a more inclusive and equitable community that encourages and celebrates diversity

North College Corridor Plan

Goal STN 2 - Adapt the pattern and details of new streets to fit circumstances and facilitate development projects consistent with the vision and goals

Goal CAD 2 - Build up a distinct image and city character in evolving places along the corridor

Goal CAD 4 - Promote the positive attributes of the whole North College corridor area with a unique image and identity program

Goal FAD 1 - Solve drainage system needs where required to allow street and development projects

Goal FAD 2 - Leverage and stimulate further investment with infrastructure projects

Goal FAD 3 - Leverage City investments with additional financing derived from land value, as needed to make necessary infrastructure feasible

Goal FAD 4 - Foster a positive investment climate for projects that contribute to the vision and goals

Goal COM 1 - Continue the broad public support which prompted this plan and much of the progress in the corridor since 1992 will continue

Goal COM 2 - Increase collaboration and mutual understanding among multiple owners and City Departments

Goal COM 3 - Public support, civic discussions, and citizen initiative will continue to lead to financing solutions and other property agreements to implement goals.

Larimer County

Larimer County utilizes a Strategic Plan to guide its operations in the short term. Larimer County's Comprehensive Plan provides policy direction over the long term. Below are policies from the Strategic Plan and Comprehensive Plan with which this investment plan aligns.

Strategic Plan

Goal 2 - Everyone in Larimer County has access to economic opportunities and a vibrant quality of life. We work together to remove barriers.

Comprehensive Plan

Policy E1.3 - Support investments in workforce development, training, technology, and education for the evolving needs of a diverse workforce and changing economy.

Policy E1.4 - Encourage small-business development and entrepreneurship in non-residential locations.

Policy I1.7 - Collaborate with state, regional, and local entities to develop a more efficient, connected trail, transit, rail and multi-modal transportation system.

Poudre School District

Poudre School District uses the concept of District Ends to define success. District Ends are aspirational goals that help the district achieve its vision and drives policy. The District Ends this investment plan will help the school district achieve are:

Success in a Changing World: PSD students are prepared for college and workforce success. PSD ensures access and encourages participation in a wide range of experiences that reflect expectations of a changing world.

Connections: PSD students are academically and socially connected to their school and community. PSD provides engaging opportunities to support students' individual pursuits and interests.

Poudre River Library District

Meet & Collaborate - We are a catalyst for positive, social interactions. We provide inclusive, welcoming spaces to bring together a growing and diverse community. Our libraries are trusted destinations that anchor the community. We build collaborative partnerships with local organizations, businesses, and nonprofits that allow us to provide service in alternative ways.

Reimagine the Future - We foster a culture of possibility and stewardship. We anticipate the needs of our growing community and align our resources to those needs. We recognize that the current demand for library services in our District exceeds our available public spaces. We look for opportunities to expand and build efficiency, sustainability, and creativity in our operations.

Appendix A: Engagement Overview

Community members who participated in the workshops had the opportunity to better understand the URA's function, and to explore the context and desired future in and around the North College Plan Area. The Family Center/La Familia (TFC/LF) conducted three community workshops with an average of 30 participants—primarily from the Latinx community—who included members of Mi Voz (a civic engagement leadership program organized by TFC/LF), North College Latinx residents, business owners, advocates, and parents. IBE conducted six workshops that included an average of approximately 25 participants who included residents, City of Fort Collins and Larimer County staff, Fort Collins Police Department representatives, members of the North College Plan Area Citizen Advisory Group, North Fort Collins business owners, and non-profit and community organizations. Within each of the two workshop tracks (IBE and TFC/LF), attendance was relatively consistent across all workshops.

Overarching themes between the two groups were as follows:

- Increase vibrancy through maintaining and adding services and amenities that the community wants.
- Enhance and celebrate cultural needs and opportunities, including artistic expression.
- Increase access to a variety of recreation options.

Complete & Vibrant Neighborhood

- Support and encourage small businesses
- Affordable housing, including preservation of mobile home parks
- Assets reflective of, supporting, and attuned to Latinx culture, businesses, and families
 - Food and entertainment
 - Health services
 - Additional affordable child care
 - Library/community college branch
 - Highlight local art / artist throughout corridor
 - Spanish language / Latinx movies

Approach A: Proactively encourage mixed-use (re)development through issuing an RFP.

Approach B: Distribute resources to support small businesses and target community-prioritized amenities.

Latinx Community Hub

- Indoor community and recreation space
- Space for seniors to gather, and for quinceañeras and other cultural celebrations
- Economic stability and job training opportunities
- Space for youth activities
- Family and community health support services
- Possible incubator space
- Community skills and asset sharing

Approach: Facilitate and support a community-driven design process with potential funding from non-profit, philanthropic, and possibly grants or an angel investor.

Stormwater Improvements

- Continue to invest in stormwater improvements on the west side of College Avenue to enable real estate development

Approach: Continue to partner with City of Fort Collins Engineering Services to help deliver improvements. Leverage stormwater improvements to help support bike/pedestrian connectivity. Potentially explore stormwater improvements serving as a source for future revenues through repayments as development occurs along Mason Street.

Recreation & Connectivity

- Increase access, connectivity, and community-desired activities
- Improve connection between parks and neighborhoods
- Outdoor recreation spaces (e.g. soccer, outdoor grilling)
- Additional outdoor grilling areas
- Indoor soccer fields
- Plaza and mercado

Approach: Relatively low-cost investment can provide impact improvements in residents' quality of life and will help support multimodal transportation in the corridor. Work with City of Fort Collins Parks and Recreation, as appropriate.