



06-02-26

Council Priority – Connect Community to Council Actions

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Engagement Officer



Agenda

01

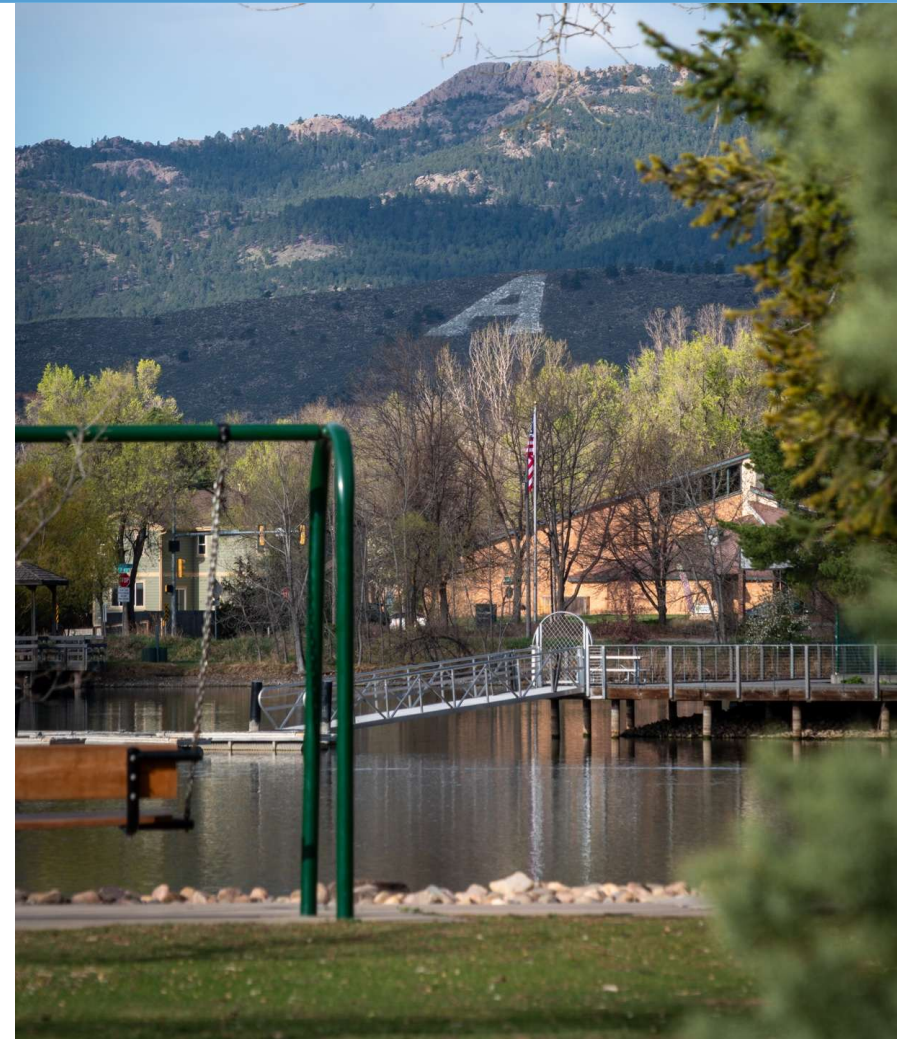
Workplan update

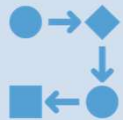
02

Council and community feedback

03

Proposed strategy and next steps





Does the proposed workplan align with Council's goals and the feedback you have provided?



Are there any additional topics Council would like to highlight?

Connect Community to Council Actions



Description:

By leveraging a variety of communication strategies and channels, we create more proactive and accessible avenues for everyone in the community to stay informed, provide input, and feel connected to their local government. This includes communication before, during and after Council policy development, allowing the community to have a clear and consistent understanding of Council discussions, decisions, and the data-driven policies that shape them.



The “Why”:

Council wants to better communicate the “why” behind Council policy work ahead of policy decisions to bring people along while also building more overall community connection and understanding of the work Council is doing.



Success Metrics:

- Social media reach and engagement
- Annual Community Survey (informing, listening to and welcoming community input)

Connect Community to Council actions



Timeline of Workplan:

	Q1/2 2026	Q3 2026	Q4 2026	Q1 2027	Q2 2027	Q3 2027	Q4 2027
“City in :60” video series	Work underway/ongoing						
Digital media content & messaging strategy	Work underway/ongoing						
Council Listening Sessions and Community Event Participation	Work underway/ongoing						
Council Priority updates in City Manager’s Quarterly Report	Work underway/ongoing						
Council consultation on social media best practices							
Community input on preferred Council communication topics and methods							
Explore options to more proactively share policy work and intended outcomes							
Council Priority Communications Strategy (written, digital, video, etc.)							
Implement, test and refine tactics based on Council and community feedback							

Feedback



- Opportunity for Council to fill communication gaps in early policy development
- More generally share what Council is doing and why
- Identify key audiences – who are we reaching and who are we missing?
- Provide simple definitions and plain language
- Options to reach people who aren't on social media
- Engaging other local voices or authorities who can help tell our story
- Creative approaches and having fun

CONNECT WITH YOUR COUNCIL



Emily Francis
efrancis@fortcollins.gov

Fort Collins City Councilmembers are your elected representatives and they are eager to talk about the issues that matter to you. Connect with your Council representative by email, at their Listening Sessions, or during public comment at City Council meetings. We want to hear from you!



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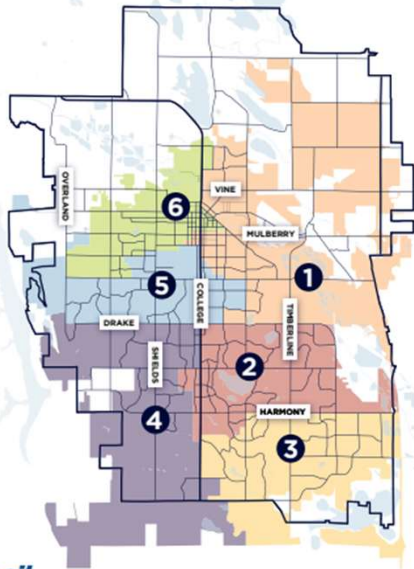
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FortCollins.gov/council

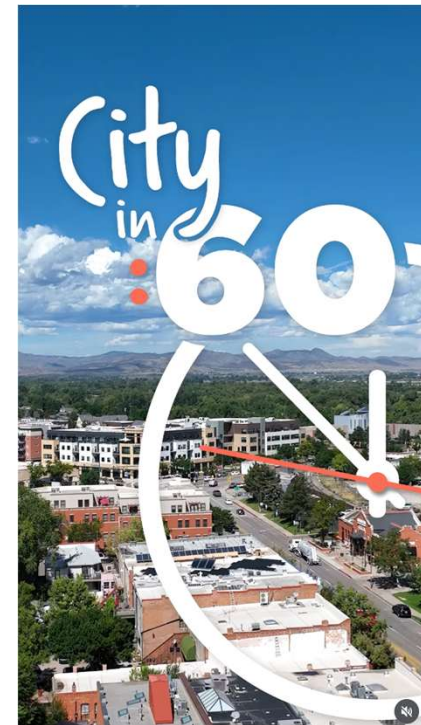


Connect Community to Council Actions

Work Underway

Leverage & adapt existing communication channels & programs

- City in: 60 monthly video series
- Pre-Council meeting posts
- Recurring Our City project updates
- Align messaging with Council priorities
- Other channels and print materials
- Optimize social media video shorts and more in-the-moment storytelling



Community events, feedback & partnerships

- Listening Sessions
- City and community event activations
- Community Survey
- Focus groups with community members and marketing leaders
- Local media partnerships (KRFC, Collegian Council meeting recaps, etc.)
- Community organizations and other agency partnerships (County podcast, Rotary presentations)



March city council recap: Housing needs, transit overhaul, parking decisions

Maci Lesh, Staff Reporter
April 13, 2026



2026 - 2027
COUNCIL PRIORITIES
 ADOPTED MARCH 3, 2026



1. PROMOTE AFFORDABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH BY MAKING DEVELOPMENT PREDICTABLE, EFFICIENT, AND COST-EFFECTIVE:

City Plan sets forth a bold vision of livable and sustainable growth for Fort Collins. This priority will remove, replace or fix the systems and regulatory layers creating the biggest challenges to build. We will evaluate programs, incentives, and costs and fees through a lens of a simplified customer experience, to provide growth and development that supports community resilience, creates jobs, provides housing choices, and contributes to cleaner air.

2. BOLSTER A THRIVING ECONOMY, WITH A FOCUS ON SMALL BUSINESSES, NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS, AND QUALITY JOB CREATION:

A thriving economy is a key factor in the City's ability to provide municipal services. The City aims to create an environment where small businesses and residents thrive, and where companies can grow, creating quality jobs in high opportunity industries. We support vibrant commercial hubs and neighborhood centers, energized by the creative and nighttime economy, that will position Fort Collins as a regional destination of choice to live, work and play.

3. ACCELERATE PROGRESS TOWARD VISION ZERO:

The City's Vision Zero Plan aims to eliminate all traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries by 2032. This data-driven approach focuses on safer street designs, lower speeds and community education, emphasizing efforts that benefit the most vulnerable road users (cyclists, pedestrians and motorcyclists), such as updating speed limits and accelerating improvements near schools and on arterial roads.

4. CONNECT COMMUNITY TO COUNCIL ACTIONS:

By leveraging a variety of communication strategies and channels, we create more proactive and accessible avenues for everyone in the community to stay informed, provide input, and feel connected to their local government. This includes communication before, during and after Council policy development, allowing the community to have a clear and consistent understanding of Council discussions, decisions, and the data-driven policies that shape them.

5. ENSURE THE CITY ORGANIZATION'S LONG-TERM FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY:

Rising costs, aging infrastructure, and economic uncertainty make long-term planning essential to the City's ability to ensure it can provide the services the community relies on, both now and in the future. This priority includes modernizing financial processes and systems, allowing the City to use public funds wisely and to make informed, transparent financial decisions to realign service levels with long-term financial capacity.

CITY COUNCIL PRIORITIES

are the areas Council will dedicate extra time and focus. They are one component of the policy and operational work the City does. These priorities work in tandem with the Council-adopted Strategic Plan (FortCollins.gov/StrategicPlan), which outlines goals and objectives in seven key areas.

Other community plans—such as Our Climate Future, the Housing Strategic Plan, and the Transit Plan, to name just a few—also align with these priorities and objectives. City Council and staff continue work to implement the goals identified in these initiatives, including important environmental goals, that contribute toward the long-range core values identified in Fort Collins' 20-year community visioning document, City Plan: livability, community and sustainability.

All of this work is rooted in community priorities identified in the annual Community Survey, and in the City's mission, vision and value.

ADDITIONAL WORKPLAN ITEMS

AI-Ready Leadership Update Marijuana Laws Creative/Nighttime Economy

FortCollins.gov/Council



2026



Recommended Communication Strategies for Council Priorities & Policy Development

Key Messaging Examples & Strategies



Category

Purpose

Tools & Approach

Why This Matters

Develop shared values and meaning – why we are doing this work and why it matters

Short videos, City in :60, social media, City Manager's Quarterly & Annual Report

How It Works

Build understanding of complex issues and processes, ensure transparency and address confusion or misinformation

Explainer videos/animations, City View, website hubs, newsletters, social media

What's Happened & What's Next

Explain Council policy decisions, impacts and next steps

Recap posts, short videos, summaries, email updates

Council & Community

Being present in the community, listening and gathering feedback; community events

Day-of social posts/stories, promoting Listening Sessions, event promos & recaps

Get Involved

Share opportunities to participate, share feedback and celebrate milestones

Promote public meetings and engagement opportunities

Why This Matters | Council Priorities



Vision Zero

Messages

- We're targeting resources where they'll save the most lives.
- By focusing improvements on these areas, your tax dollars have the greatest impact on community safety.

Strategy

- Plain Language | Community Impact | Safety | Stewardship

Thriving Economy

Messages

- Small businesses shape our culture, create jobs and play a big role in what makes our community unique.
- When you shop at a local business, nearly 80 cents of each dollar stays in our community.

Strategy

- Call to Action | Values | Community Impact & Identity

Long-Term Financial Sustainability

Messages

- It's important that our budget reflects the priorities of our community and funds services the community relies on.
- We closely monitor City finances, identifying short-term cost-saving strategies and proactively planning for the future.

Strategy

- Plain Language | Engagement | Stewardship & Planning

Utility Rates & Water Storage

Messages

- Utility-rate increases have been unusually low for about a decade – which kept bills affordable but left the City behind on inflation and replacing aging infrastructure.
- We want to protect our water supply today, tomorrow and for decades to come – while being good stewards of ratepayers' funds and seriously examining risks.

Strategy

- Plain Language | Equity | Transparency | Innovation

What's Happened & What's Next | Council Priorities



Policy & Development

Messages

- We want to make clear why we're doing the work we're doing and how we're working to improve your daily life in Fort Collins.
- We're working to make sure the code is easier to use, supports local businesses and promotes mixed-use development.
- You can always provide feedback directly to your Councilmember, to the City Manager or to specific City departments. *We're all ears!*

Strategy

- Plain Language | Impact | Engagement | Transparency & Access

Investing in Infrastructure

Messages

- Smoother, safer roads. Expanded access. Connected community.
- New improvements coming soon. Your tax dollars hard at work.

Strategy

- Celebration | Safety | Access | Real-time Updates | Impact

Feedback & Connection

Messages

- One of City Council's top priorities is making it easier for you connect with your local government.
- Councilmembers hosts Listening Sessions in their districts so they can understand what matters most to the people they represent.
- Want to chat with your Councilmember? Email them, attend a City Council Meeting, or drop by a Listening Session to share your thoughts!

Strategy

- Call to Action | Access | Friendly & Welcoming | Reduce Barriers

Community Events

Messages

- Happening now! Check out the map to plan your route.
- History made: Your support was overwhelming, and it makes Fort Collins a brighter, more welcoming place for all!
- Another record-setting year! Thanks to everyone who came out!

Strategy

- Real-time Updates | Belonging | Local Pride | Humor & Fun!

Public Meetings

Messages

- How do we make growth in Fort Collins more affordable and sustainable? Join the conversation at the next meeting!
- Got questions? We have answers! Learn the basics. Get expert advice. Ask your questions in a one-on-one session.

Strategy

- Transparency & Access | Education | Service & Support

Engagement Opportunities

Messages

- We've got dinner, childcare and Spanish interpretation covered. BYO curiosity about the feedback your fellow community members have shared so far + any new or bright ideas!
- If you live in Fort Collins, we have a feeling you've got opinions – we want to hear them!

Strategy

- Community Input | Reduce Barriers | Invite Conversation

2026 Focus Areas



Council Priorities

- Promote affordable and sustainable growth
- Bolster a thriving economy
- Accelerate progress toward Vision Zero
- Ensure long-term financial sustainability
- Connect community to Council actions

Community & Policy Conversations

- Utilities rates and services
- Land Use Code
- Water supply
- Surveillance in the community
- 2027-2028 Budget
- Downtown parking
- Infrastructure maintenance and investment
- Service levels and tradeoffs

Other Considerations

- Resourcing and capacity
- Level of engagement
- Production time
- Cadence and frequency
- Demand and reach
- Shaping the narrative



Next Steps



Continue leveraging existing and emerging strategies



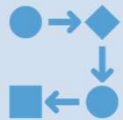
Finalize priority strategies based on tonight's feedback



Implement, test and refine



Check back in with Council in quarterly check-ins



Does the proposed workplan align with Council's goals and the feedback you have provided?



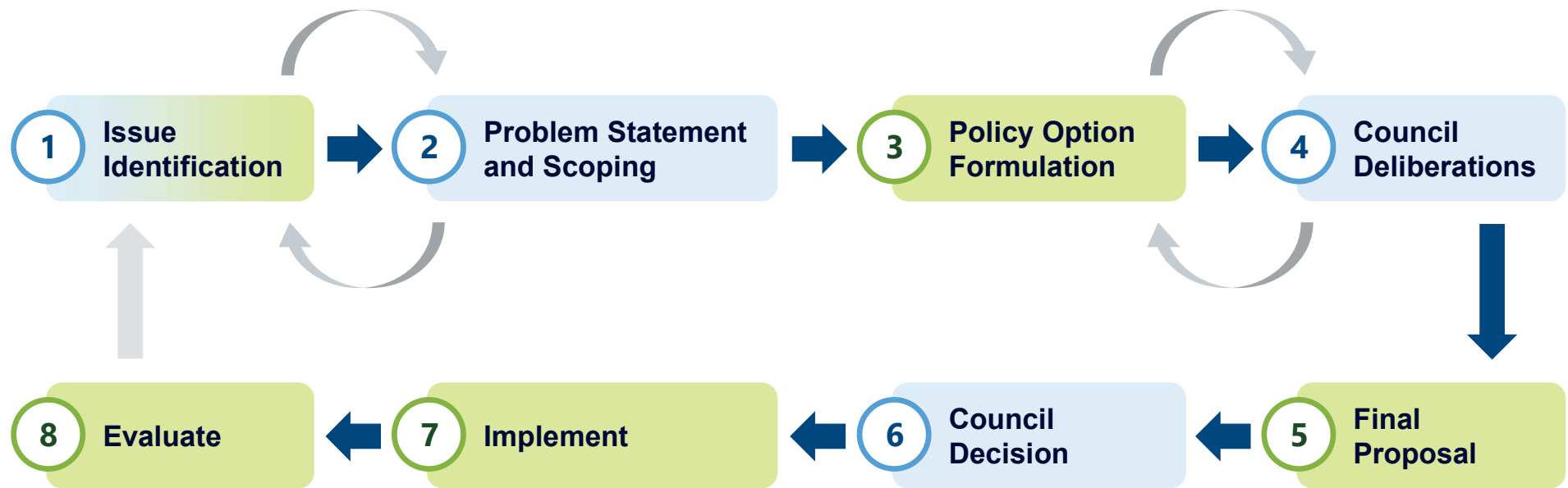
Are there any additional topics Council would like to highlight?



Thank you!

Policy Development Process

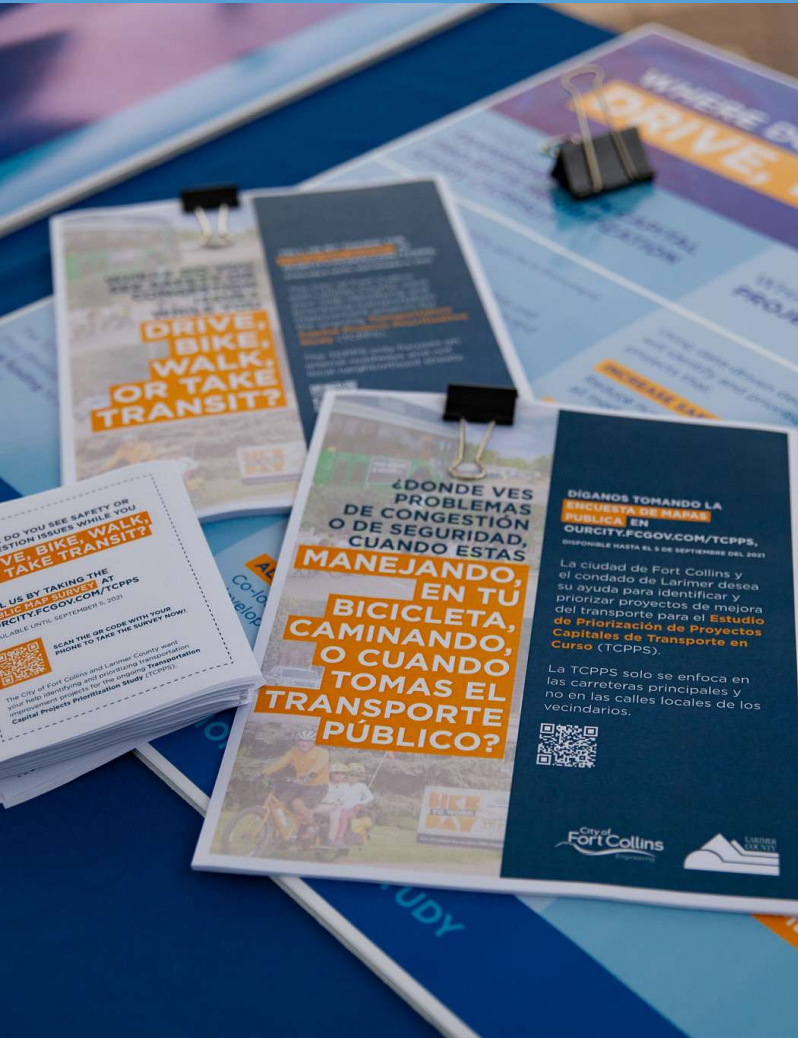
City staff manages process



Council touchpoint



Possible community touchpoint / check-in



There are four key factors we consider when assessing language needs and determining the next steps:

- The number or proportion of English Language Learning (ELL) persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by a program, activity, or service of the City
- The frequency with which ELL persons come in contact with the program, activity, or service
- The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the City
- The resources available to the City and the associated costs