



WESTMINSTER

*THRIVING COMMUNITY
HEALTHY PLACES
GREAT NEIGHBORHOODS
MANAGED GROWTH*

**2040
Comprehensive Plan**

**Community
Engagement
2018-2020**



A Community-Driven Plan

To develop a meaningful and community-based plan, citizens need to be engaged throughout the planning process through a variety of opportunities. Input from City officials as well as residents, businesses, City and regional agencies, and the overall Westminster community was a key element of the planning process. As part of the *Westminster Forward* coordinated community engagement process, the Comprehensive Plan team joined five other concurrent City planning efforts to integrate efforts and public participation across disciplines. *Westminster Forward* sought input with broad community outreach from Summer 2018 through Winter 2020 to assist with the development of policies and actions. This includes online questionnaires, plan-specific events, targeted outreach and large community events.

Community engagement kicked off in summer 2018, with the *Imagine Westminster* event, stakeholder and agency interviews, and the first online survey. This initial phase focused on understanding key issues, opportunities, and challenges that would influence policy direction in the Comprehensive Plan. The most common themes that were initially brought up centered on sustainably managing resources, balancing urban and suburban environments, and being an inclusive community. Comments relative to neighborhood planning, land use, design and sustainable development were also noted to inform *Code Forward*, the parallel project to unify development related standards into a Unified Development Code for Westminster.



Planning Process by the Numbers

- 9 Large Public Events
- 12 Community Meetings
- 5 Online Activities
- 32 Interviews
- 15,000+ Unique Website Views
- 11 City Edition/Westy Connection articles
- 21 “The Weekly” articles
- 13 Westy Forward Newsletters

Responses show that the Westminster community values the parks, recreation, open space, trail network and mountain views in Westminster, while indicating that improvements could be made in regard to transit service, walkability, and support for local businesses. Input from the public and city staff key themes which were then translated into the Plan’s Guiding Principles of *Thriving Community, Healthy Places, Great Neighborhoods* and *Managed Growth*.

Online questionnaires, public event activities, and City Staff workshops helped identify areas in the city that had the most opportunity for new development, infill or redevelopment. These areas were analyzed based on quantitative and qualitative data, and were referenced consistently throughout the planning process to understand future desired character and how City policies and strategies might influence these areas. This analysis and process updated the Focus Areas and highlighted additional Transition Areas that merit special considerations for future

planning, whether the vision of these areas is for new parks, trails, residences or commercial uses.

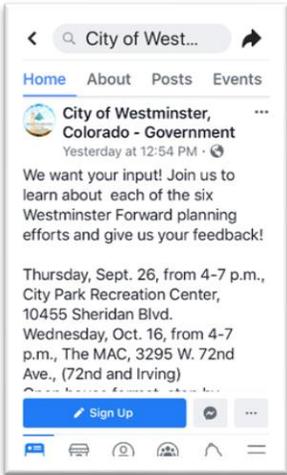
Going into 2019, the process continued to actively engage Westminster’s residents, business owners, and local and regional partners to assist with the development of City policies. With the preliminary visioning priorities and opportunities identified, the outreach activities dug deeper into each issue such as housing, retail, transportation and neighborhoods.

Questionnaire results, written-in comments, and in-person discussions were synthesized and insights translated into the Plan’s goals, policies, and potential implementation actions. Throughout community engagement in 2018 and 2019 online questionnaires resulted in greater response than plan-specific meetings, and participation increased with each survey offering, starting with 149 responses, growing to 170, then 200, then 358 and significantly to 598 responses with the online questionnaire #5.

Communications

City staff employed various communication avenues to elicit outreach during community engagement, including online and digital media, print media, and displays at various locations.

Communication Avenue	Location	Audience
Project Website	www.cityofwestminster.us/forward	20,000+ hits; 15,000+ unique views
Informational Displays	College Hill and Irving Street Libraries; City Park and Westview Rec Centers; the MAC	2,400/ day
City Edition/Westy Connection – 11 bi-monthly editions from August 2018 to December 2020	Every residence and business within the City	56,750+
The Weekly – 21 editions from July 2018 to December 2020	Email newsletter – citywide	3,300+
Westminster Forward Newsletter – 13 editions	Email newsletter – Westminster Forward	800+
Social Media	Facebook, Next Door	6,600+



2040 Comprehensive Plan guides Westminster's next decade

WESTMINSTERFORWARD
one community, one vision, one future

The Comprehensive Plan is just one of several plans that will lead the city into the future. Westminster Forward was developed as a coordinated community engagement program to identify policies and actions to form: an updated Comprehensive Plan; the first Sustainability Plan; a Transportation & Mobility Plan; a Parks, Recreation & Libraries Plan; Water Supply Plan, and Code Forward to provide development standards to support the policies of these plans.

Westminster Forward is not one final plan or product. The outcome will be a suite of individual plans to establish guidance for policy and programming based on resource availability.

Comprehensive Plan Purpose

The Comprehensive Plan will lay the foundation for livability, accessibility, community identity and growth for the next two decades. As the city nears buildout, the Plan creates a framework and standards to ensure future development is adequately served by municipal services and infrastructure. The 2040 Comprehensive Plan will take into account changed conditions since 2013 including greater demographic diversity; an aging population; housing needs; transit improvements; diminishing land inventory and changing market conditions; an interest in public health; and a reconsideration of land use assumptions to align with the city's water supply.



How does the 2040 Comprehensive Plan reflect these changes?

- The 2013 Plan's nine themes were reevaluated and pared down to emphasize the mature nature of the city with development opportunities; the responsible management of water and other limited resources; and the desire to be one of the most sustainable, safe and healthiest cities in America.
- In tandem with water supply planning, the updated Plan revises the land use categories and their distribution. This evaluation was necessary to ensure a balance of opportunities to provide for employment opportunities, housing and accessible locations for goods and services.
- Several topics were identified through the public engagement process that are not addressed in the existing Plan. Some of these include:
 - Predictable and transparent development process
 - Healthy living, including food access
 - Reinvestment in existing neighborhoods
 - Housing to address changing demographics, such as seniors and intergenerational households
 - Resiliency of the water supply system
 - Water conservation

We encourage the public to review the Draft Comprehensive Plan. Here's how you can be involved now:

1. Stay tuned for ways to review the draft at www.cityofwestminster.us/forward.
2. Sign up online to be notified by email of Westminster Forward updates and events at www.cityofwestminster.us/forward.
3. Email us at westminsterforward@cityofwestminster.us.

www.cityofwestminster.us/Forward

WESTMINSTER
CITY EDITION
JUNE/JULY 2019

<ARE YOU PREPARED?
Don't be a victim
PAGE 2

PROTECT YOUR WATERWAYS >
Here's how you can help
PAGE 3

Moving Forward with Westminster Forward

The city continues efforts to form a framework for the future of Westminster. This effort is called "Westminster Forward" and incorporates a family of coordinated citywide plans: the Comprehensive Plan (land use); Parks, Recreation and Libraries Plan; Sustainability Plan; Trans-

portation and Mobility Plan; Unified Development Code; and Water Supply Plan.

To date, planning outreach efforts have reached nearly 10,000 people through the city website, City Edition articles, one-on-one interviews, public events and meetings, and online surveys.

Throughout late winter and spring, the city and consultant team have worked to identify opportunity areas - those areas of vacant land and/or appropriate areas for redevelopment - and determine land use concepts within those areas.

A next step in this process is to correlate land uses with water demand, which will allow the city to proactively plan future development to meet anticipated water supply. The first products of this effort are Please see **FORWARD** on page 3

Summarized information on community engagement is organized within this document in the following sections:

1. 2018 Community Engagement
2. Stakeholder Interviews
3. 2019 Community Engagement
4. 2020 Activities
5. Planned 2021 Activities

Through each stage of engagement ideas were synthesized to inform key topics and themes for the plan to address and items requiring further discussion were identified for future engagement topics.

1. 2018 Community Engagement

Community engagement in 2018 was deliberately limited and strategic in consideration of other major community engagement activities underway at the time, with 2019 planned for the bulk of engagement efforts.

2018 Events

Date	Event	Location	Attendees/ Respondents
3 Jun	Imagine Westminster	Historic Westy	150
Ongoing	Stakeholder Interviews	Westminster	32
June -August	Online Questionnaire #1	Online	149
14 Aug	Visioning Workshops (3 offerings)	City Hall	52
18 Aug	Mayor's Youth Advisory Panel	City Hall	21
August	Online Questionnaire #2	Online	170
18 Sept	Design Workshop	City Park Rec. Center	9
20 Oct	Harvest Festival	Downtown	34,000, w/ 2,086 dot votes
October - November	Online Questionnaire #3	Online	200
8 Nov	Taste of Westminster	Ice Center	400

Engagement in 2018 started at *Imagine Westminster* with a few basic questions about the community to identify strengths, assets and challenges. The questions including asking participants what they love about Westminster, what could be improved and what does the City's Vision statement mean to them.

What do we **LOVE** about Westminster?



Top 10:

- Parks/Recreation
- Open Space
- Bike/Trail Network
- Mountain Views
- Convenience of the B-Line
- Proximity to Denver & Boulder
- Local Shops
- Sense of Community
- Standley Lake
- Clean Water

What do we want to *IMPROVE* about Westminster?

Below is a word cloud showing what should be improved in Westminster, based on comments received from public events, stakeholder interviews, and steering committee meetings. Public transportation components were indicated by many participants as areas where Westminster could be improved. Adding bike paths and increasing transit service were the two most popular responses. Opportunities for adding affordable housing, investing in local businesses, and addressing water & sewer concerns were also common themes.

Top 10:

- Increase Transit Service
- Add Bike Paths
- Promote Walkability
- Invest in Local Business
- Diversify Recreational Opportunities
- Add Affordable/Attainable Housing
- Repair Roads/Infrastructure
- Address Water
- Expand Public Art
- Grow Art/Food Trucks/Brewery



What does the Vision mean?

Participants were asked “How would you define and/or illustrate the Vision?” *[It is recognized that the City’s Vision Statement has changed since the time of this 2018 input, however the feedback received remains relevant to understanding community sentiments and concepts informative to both the future Comprehensive Plan and Code Forward.]*

Summary of Comments

The most common themes of the responses centered on having one or more defined urban centers in Westminster, sustainably managing resources, balancing the urban and suburban environments, and being an inclusive community. Other comments relating to the Vision emphasized financial sustainability, affordable housing, walkability, and a high quality of life.

Based on input from the public and additional vetting with City staff an outline of key components of the City’s vision have been identified:



Next Urban Center of the Colorado Front Range

- Needs an identity and identifiable center
- Define “center”; whole city? Or 5 focus areas?
- Define what “Urban Center” means to the rest of the city (seems downtown focused)
- Urban Center: One or many? – Traditional Downtown
- Concentrated Urban Center

Vibrant

- Quality of life and continued improvement
- Increasing choice for residents/lifestyle options
- I like it. It’s aspirational and progressive. I would want to live here.

Inclusive

- Key: inclusive for all, not just for the “haves” like Boulder
- Internal inclusivity, creativity, and connectivity within city staff departments
- Community engagement at an authentic level to achieve equity and inclusivity

Well-Connected

- Need more transportation (multi-modal) options and safe ways to get to the B-Line by foot or bike
- Walkable and bike-able throughout
- Need more transportation options for people that actually use, such as roads.
- Retrofitting suburbia to ease mobility
- How and when will we realize true connectivity?

Distinct Neighborhoods

- Needs an identity and identifiable center
- Complete downtown
- “Neighborhood downtown” areas
- Need a balance between dense, “urban” centers and the traditional suburban lifestyle that brought so many existing residents to Westminster.
- Westminster should strive to be unique and distinct. Who is the City’s competition?

Quality Educational Opportunities

- Education disparities among three districts

Resilient Local Economy

- Local jobs and employee housing
- Long-term financial sustainability – Urban density supports economic resiliency
- Expand opportunities to enhance workforce

Embraces the Outdoors

- Green space access for all
- The environment is changing and we have to plan accordingly
- The City should try to achieve the perfect blend of urban and natural

- Westminster should strive to be the “wildest urban center in Colorado”, in which ‘wild’ refers to ample access to nature

One of the Most Sustainable Cities in America

- Density in nodes near transit
- Lower density farther afield
- What does this mean? Everyone has a different idea (of sustainability)
- Financial sustainability
- Resource sustainability
- Long-term financial sustainability. Urban density supports economic resiliency
- The vision doesn’t address housing affordability or environmental health concerns (droughts, fragile water system).
- Sustainability and resiliency are essential to this plan update. Is “urbanism” sustainable?
- Need a balance of environment, economics, and equity
- Balance, balance, balance!
- Integration: Growth has a domino effect
- Water supply; wise use of limited resources

Diverse & Integrated Housing

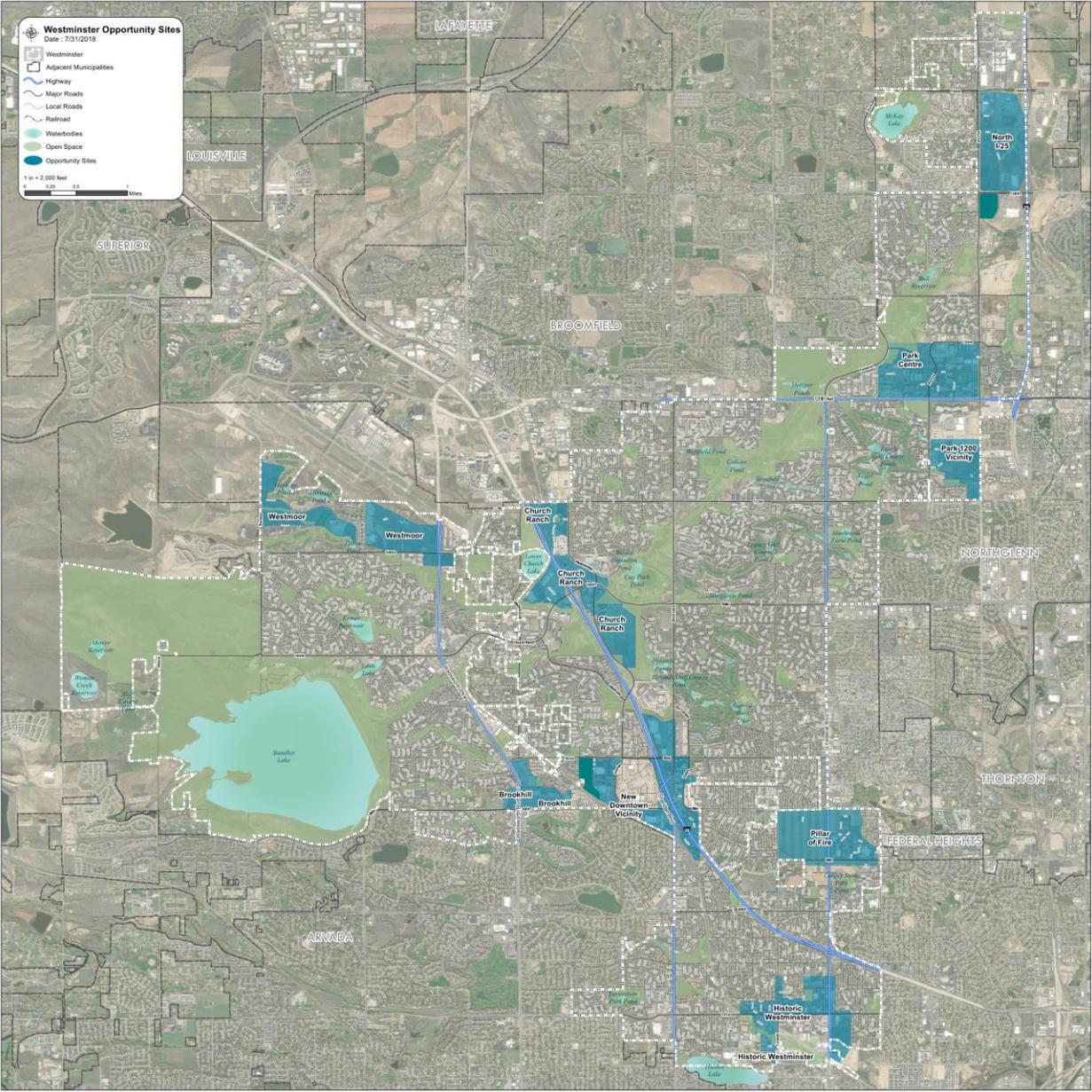
- Diverse housing should be affordable
- Flexibility with housing options; townhomes, condos, AirBnB
- Local jobs and employee housing
- Build out; When? How many people?
- Housing strategies; diversity
- Urban is the opposite of what people want

There were several comments on how the Vision was abstract or confusing. Additionally, several participants questioned the attainability of the Vision statement and inquired as to how success will be measured.

A second workshop series in 2018 was about visioning for the City as it relates to development of key areas with vacant land or anticipated redevelopment. Participants of this exercise were asked to identify “Opportunity Areas” and in addition, identify land uses appropriate to those areas, and then for that land use, what character makes sense. These locations as shown on the map below represent 3.93 square miles, which is just under 12% of the City’s overall land area.



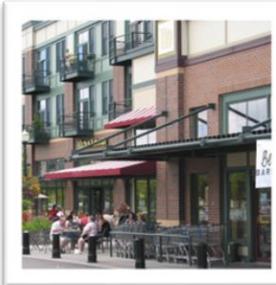
As a result of potential confusion between “Opportunity Areas” and the federally designated “Opportunity Zones” program, these locations were subsequently renamed to “Transition Areas.”



As shown on the map it is recognized that most of the City - approximately 90% of the City's land area - and in particular established residential areas and parks or open spaces, will not change significantly in the future. Participants were presented with a series of images of different land uses and building typologies to populate these Opportunity Areas. While each

individual area elicited different responses, some generalized preferences emerged through this exercise that are instructive to both the Comprehensive Plan and **Code Forward**.

Below is the specific imagery most selected by participants:



Housing above Retail



2-3 Story Townhome Apartments



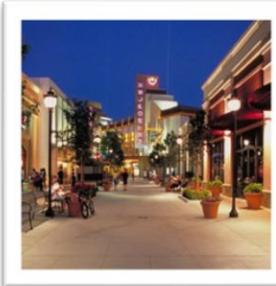
Lofts



3-4 Story Townhome Apartments



Main Street Retail/Commercial



Amenity and Entertainment



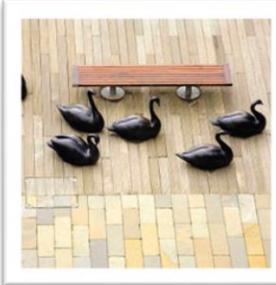
Outdoor Gathering/Eating Areas



Urban-Format Employment



Vertical Mixed Use



Integrated Public Art

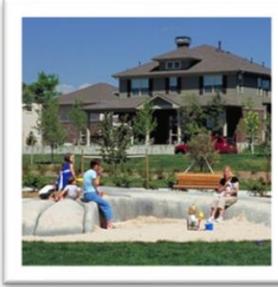


Plaza with Seating



Transit Stations

Below is the specific imagery least selected by participants:



Large-Lot, Single-Family



Big Box Development



Small-Scale Industrial Warehouse



Campus-Style Employment



Large-Scale Industrial Flex



Loft Industrial Flex

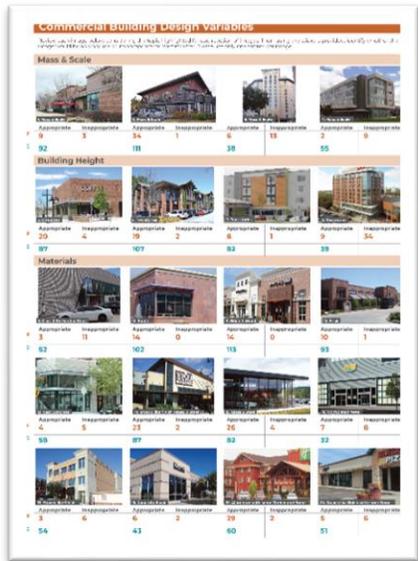


Solar Farm



Urban Agriculture

The majority of the City is expected to remain stable with only incremental development at scales generally compatible with surrounding development. Therefore the Opportunity Area exercise results are not meant to direct development patterns across the balance of the City



nor to increase densities in areas not previously designated as Focus Areas, but rather the purpose was to establish a vision for each area to inform both the Comprehensive Plan and standards for Code Forward. Development consisting of medium level intensities and active park and civic spaces were primarily selected as preferences for the Opportunity Areas while images provided in the survey of large lot single family, big box stores, campus-style employment and large-scale industrial were among the least popular selections for these identified locations.

A third exercise was a visual preference survey looking at specific design elements such as building mass and scale, materials, street frontages and landscaping that more directly informs Code Forward. Findings in some areas supported compact development forms provided that the appropriate design elements are provided relative to a mass and scale, materials, street frontages and landscape features. A Design Workshop was scheduled as part of this

activity but yielded minimal turnout therefore staff continued to identify larger community events to engage residents.



The online questionnaire associated with this activity was broadcast to participants at the Harvest Festival and Taste of Westminster in the fall of 2018. Westminster Forward cookies were also available at Taste of Westminster to try to raise awareness of this effort.



Internal City Staff discussions established some priorities for further development through this work including continued attention to financial sustainability with a cost-feasible plan, a goal of sustainability and resiliency with water and sewer as a subset of that and a goal to be “bold, innovative and different” that addresses changing demographics, regional

leadership in housing, multimodal connectivity, City identity, inclusivity, neighborhood pride and refinement of the development process.

STAFF PRIORITIZED KEY ISSUES

Ensure a cost-feasible plan.

Ensure water availability.

Address sewer capacity.

Be one of the most sustainable/ resilient cities.

**BE BOLD,
INNOVATIVE &
DIFFERENT.**

Address changing demographics (aging population, Millennials, Generation Z)

Be the regional model for affordable housing.

Ensure multimodal connectivity and safety.

Market the City's uniqueness in location and culture.

Address increasing diversity and ensure inclusivity.

Create neighborhood pride.

Refine the development review process.

2. Stakeholder Interviews

32 stakeholder interviews were conducted including the Mayor and City Council, residents, City staff from throughout the organization, property owners and representatives of community organizations. Consultant services were used for the interviews to allow for candid feedback and results have only been presented in aggregate form so as to allow interviewees comments to be grouped with discussion topics and not individualized. Separately 26 additional interviews were also held with community stakeholders for *Code Forward*.

The questions prompted interviewees to look 20 years into the future, but also solicited comments on current challenges and opportunities, identification of preferences relative to development patterns and design, business development, and suggestions on community input. Key takeaways from these interviews have been organized around the fifteen key issue areas to align with the staff-identified objectives:

Address Changing Demographics

- Consider the preferences and lifestyles of the future population of Westminster (i.e. Boomer and Millennial preferences and Generation Z emerging preferences)
- Ensure equal access to good schools
- Ensure a trained workforce and options for livability within the city (e.g. attainable housing)

Address Increasing Diversity and Ensure Inclusivity

- Improve accessibility through multimodal transportation
- Incorporate Westminster's diverse population into future plans
- Address housing diversity and affordability through ADUs
- Address mental health issues and provide access to opportunities to support citizens in need (e.g. coordinate with other regional entities to provide services; ensure transit service reaches these services; set aside land in key areas that don't currently provide services)

Ensure Resiliency

- Promote economic and environmental resiliency
- Identify options to adjust for declining sales tax revenue

Address Feasibility of Infrastructure and Service Costs

- Reduce (or recognize) financial impact of improvements on low-income residents
- Set expectations for level of services
- Improve the condition of our infrastructure

Address Sewer Capacity

- Address water and sewer service availability along with rates for usage

Ensure Water Availability

- Educate the public on the reasons behind water rate increases and the benefits of conservation
- Develop a realistic comprehensive plan that takes water limitations into account
- Address resource limitations and risks

Be a Regional Leader for Affordable Housing

- Encourage density where appropriate
- Investigate rent control for the Orchard

- Look into the development of a new urbanist community

Create Neighborhood Pride

- Create sub-neighborhoods
- Contemplate the annexation of enclaves
- Encourage diverse residential development
- Support homeowner associations
- Promote a variety of housing options
- Promote and strengthen aging neighborhoods; revitalize; and emphasize code enforcement in key areas; increase connectivity and wayfinding; improve amenities
- Through signage, wayfinding, and walkability visually attract people off arterials and into key areas

Ensure Multimodal Connectivity and Safety

- Improve pedestrian safety at crossings and on sidewalks; implement safe crossings at arterials (e.g. under/ overpasses)
- Identify trail connections north of 92nd
- Increase access to transit options
- Ensure first and last mile connections to transit
- Increase connectivity where possible, especially within redevelopment options, and to commercial centers adjacent to neighborhoods
- Enhance walkability and bikability without lessening traffic capacity

Create a Resilient Local Economy

- Determine the best use for the Orchard
- Consider adding an additional focus area south of 88th
- Develop special area plans for Harris Park, Orchard, and the TOD area
- Identify potential areas of change within the City
- Investigate the feasibility of tax increment finance districts
- Encourage greater use of flex office spaces
- Focus on redevelopment and development equally
- Improve the jobs/housing balance
- Evaluate the cost to the City of 5 units per acre density and lower
- Promote horizontal mixed-use developments
- Review subdivision standards
- Repurpose strip malls
- Ensure appropriate intensity transitions when infilling
- Ensure appropriate signage standards to assist in success of business

Refine the Development Process

- Create a consistent and predictable development process
- Consider alternatives to PUD
- Produce an actionable plan
- Ensure high quality of design

Be Bold, Innovative and Different

- The Comprehensive Plan should be reflective of the City's vision
- Develop an all-encompassing plan
- Educate and engage the community
- Focus on regional collaboration, especially in regard to transportation and key issues such as homelessness

- Truly enact an interdepartmental team to tackle city issues
- Identify benchmarks within the strategic action plan, along with responsibilities
- Initiate a feedback loop with the public to give a sense of transparency that the city has heard issues and comments; this is what has been done; this is what can't be done and why
- Ensure that the document reflects the residents' desires and needs
- Incorporate S-P-I-R-I-T (Service, Pride, Integrity, Responsibility, Innovation, Teamwork)
- Include goals and policies regarding enhanced communication with residents
- Integrate the plan digitally (i.e. within the City's website as an interactive document, and through a video executive summary that highlights the process, outreach, and key plan highlights)

Be One of the Most Sustainable Cities

- Promote sustainable practices within local government
- Become a leader in sustainability
- Incorporate sustainability into new developments
- Incentivize alternative energy sources
- Promote resource conservation
- Study property tax and special tax increases to improve financial sustainability
- Implement an economic and environmental sustainability program for businesses
- Create a City-run health and human services department
- Ensure clear and clean air (expand mobility options with bikes and transit)
- Research and test new, different materials to respond to climate change (e.g. new roadway materials to respond to increasing temperatures)
- Investigate shared city/ county services (i.e. can we afford to maintain all-inclusive city services?)
- Incorporate sustainability, but be mindful of unexpected results and costs

Expand Culture and the Arts

- Expand the local arts program and preserve the culture of the historic areas of Westminster, as well as the Latino and Hmong communities
- Promote the development of a performing arts complex
- Investigate tools such as public art dedication or fee-in lieu
- Create special districts in which murals and art are integrated with signage

Embrace the Outdoors

- Develop recreational opportunities (e.g. parks, recreation center, and library) north of 120th
- Consider property-tax rate increases that are commensurate with similar communities to mitigate lessening sales tax
- Look into developing a regional recreation program
- Prioritize the maintenance of existing land over purchase of new land

The input resulting from stakeholder input helped staff to further refine issues for additional community conversations and noteworthy suggestions to include in development of the Plan.

3. 2019 Outreach

Since project inception, 2019 was planned as the most significant phase of community engagement as it would be sequenced after other City 2018 engagement efforts on topics such as Water2025 and staff would be able to tap into the extensive calendar of community events to reach audiences who may not otherwise attend a City meeting. This also proved fortunate given the limitation on in-person engagement in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Building upon earlier input in 2018, the 2019 efforts provided additional opportunities for public engagement and a deeper dive into plan topic areas through *Westminster Forward* events, larger community events and targeted outreach. Staff sought to inform community members of the *Westminster Forward* planning projects and push participation of the online surveys. Translation services were offered at Latino Festival, the Hmong outreach, and the fall 2019 People, Places and Plans open houses. Online questionnaires were offered in both English and Spanish.

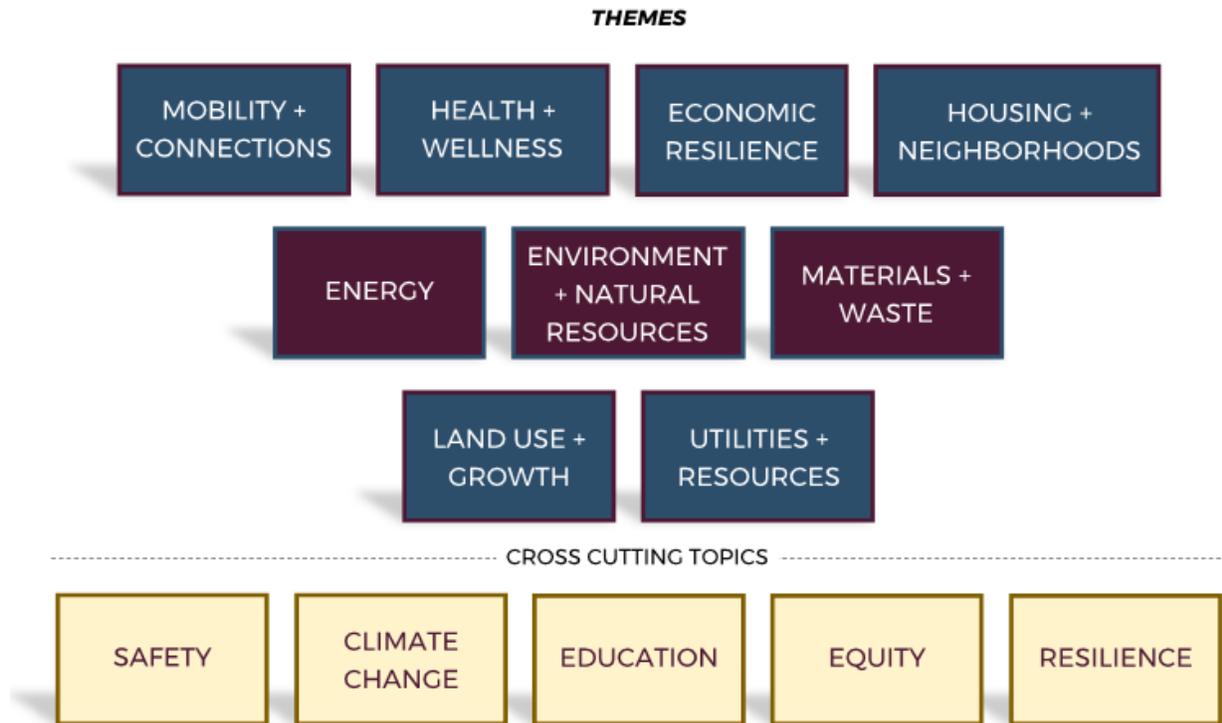
2019 Events

Date	Event	Location	Attendees/ Respondents
26 Feb	Homebuilders Association	HBA of Denver	12
7 Jun	Historic Westminster Summer Festival	Historic Westminster	600
14 Jun	Movies in the Park	Legacy Ridge	750
20 Jun	Latino Festival	Westminster Station	3,528, w/ 924 dot votes
Jun - Sep	Online Questionnaire #4	Online	358
17 Aug	Mayor's Youth Advisory Panel	Westview Rec. Center	21
23 Aug	Movies in the Park	City Park	1,000
14 Sep	Hmong Outreach	Westminster Garden	11
26 Sep, 16 Oct	People, Places, and Plans Events (2)	City Park Rec. Center, The MAC	75+
Oct - Nov	Online Questionnaire #5	Online	598
19 Oct	Harvest Festival	Downtown	34,000
23 Oct	City of Westminster Wellness Event	City Park Rec. Center	340
7 Nov	Taste of Westminster	Ice Center	500
6 & 13 Nov	Meeting in a Box (2 Meetings)	Resident Household	13
14 Jan (2020)	Homebuilders Association	HBA of Denver	14

Key Findings from 2019 Outreach

There were great community conversations at the events and meetings in 2019 with the opportunity provided to interface with over 40,000 residents and community stakeholders. The feedback received from the Westminster community provided important insight to perceptions of development, desired character, and Plan priorities.

The questionnaire results, written-in comments, and in person discussions will all be synthesized and insights translated into goals, policies, and strategy actions within Plan. Building on the outreach completed in 2018, general themes and plan priorities emerged. Below illustrates the overall topics covered in each plan, along with a handful of “crosscutting” themes that should be addressed in the *Westminster Forward* plans, including the Sustainability Plan and Comprehensive Plan.



In addition to these overall topics, priority opportunities were identified through early conversations with city staff and further vetted by the public through outreach activities. Based on this feedback, the following will also be integrated into the *Westminster Forward* plans:

- *Long-term water availability and sewer capacity constraints*
- *Sustainability and Resiliency*
- *Balanced land uses and development review process*
- *Multimodal connectivity and safety*
- *Distinct neighborhood pride*
- *Impacts of changing demographics*
- *Diversity and Inclusive Cultures*
- *Affordable housing*
- *City's uniqueness in location and culture*

With these priorities in mind, the community engagement activities started digging deeper into each issue through the 2019 outreach efforts. Key preferences and desires of the Westminster community are noted below:

- *Preference for mixed-use development patterns, but not everywhere.*
- *Diversity of housing types, but supported by nearby activities (i.e. restaurants, neighborhood-oriented retail) to form “neighborhood units” with a common theme.*

- Focus on walkability (smaller, neighborhood services closer to housing; shaded sidewalk; interconnected sidewalks system).
- Addressing the needs of changing demographics and being inclusive (i.e. housing for different types of households) .
- Incorporating parks as not just recreational areas, but also as social spaces; tied into “neighborhood units” and mixed-use areas of restaurants, small retail, and housing.
- Need to “infill” dying retail areas with new uses that can adapt to changing shopping preferences.
- Recognizing the need to be more sustainable and the need to plan for a finite water supply. This comes in the form of planning for infrastructure to match development needs and looking at water conservation.
- Mitigate commuter inflow/ outflow through addition of employment along with housing in strategic locations.

Summer Outreach and Questionnaire #4

The purpose of the summer outreach events was to inform community members of *Westminster Forward* and push participation of the concurrent online survey (Questionnaire #4).

Historic Westminster Summer Festival

City staff provided information on *Westminster Forward* plans, online activities and used this event announce upcoming additional outreach.

Movies in the Park

City staff provided a booth at two of the movie events. Overview materials were presented, a vote-by-dot exercise was provided and postcards distributed to movie attendees which directed them to the online *questionnaire* (see *online questionnaire results on page 5*). The display boards asked attendees do identify, by theme, one word that represents or describes the ideal future for the City. Common adjective responses were as follows:

Sustainable, safe, fun, friendly, active, family-friendly, beautiful, artsy, accessible, for all ages, convenient, efficient, affordable/attainable, connected, social, diverse, clean, effective, protected, modern

Additional notes on specific elements of the City important to maintain, enhance, and add: parks, open space, trails, bikes, playgrounds, local shops, train, solar, pool, technology,



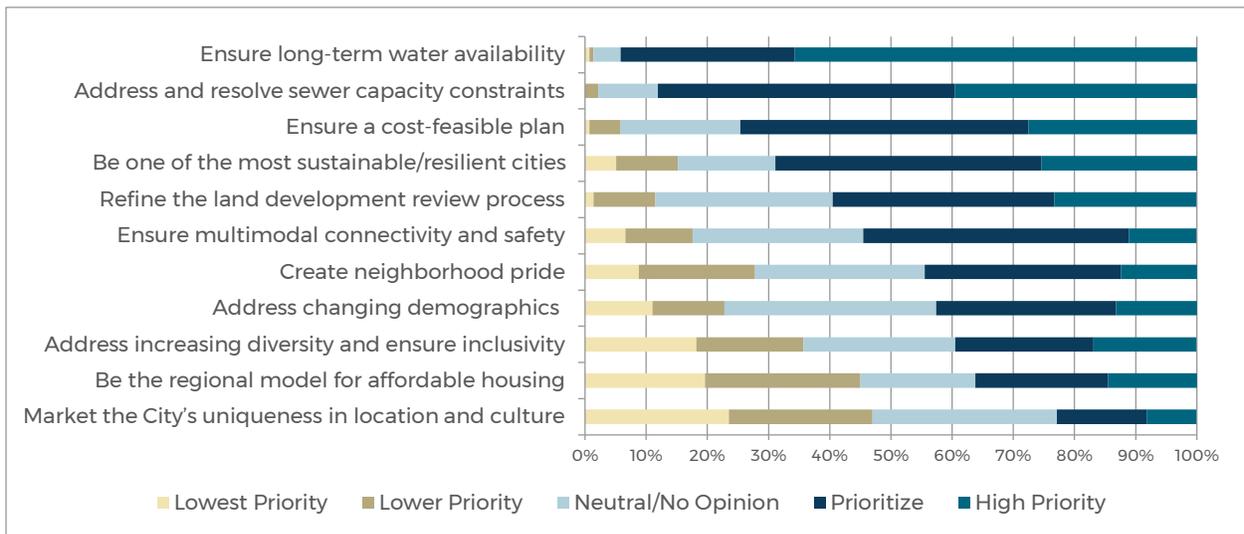
community activities, restaurants, dog parks, electric vehicle charging, and scooters.

Online Questionnaire #4

The most common themes of Online Questionnaire #4 centered on housing, open space, and sustainability practices. A total of 358 community members participated in this survey. The findings of this survey, described in the following pages, are combined with the results from our summer event participation, where applicable.

Which issues are the **MOST** important?

The following list of choices offered to respondents was originally created through early conversations with city staff on key issues and opportunities for the updated Comprehensive Plan.



Respondents noted infrastructure development, fiscal implications and sustainability and the top issues:

- 1) Ensure long-term water availability
- 2) Address and resolve sewer capacity constraints
- 3) Ensure a cost-feasible plan
- 4) Be one of the most sustainable/ resilient cities.

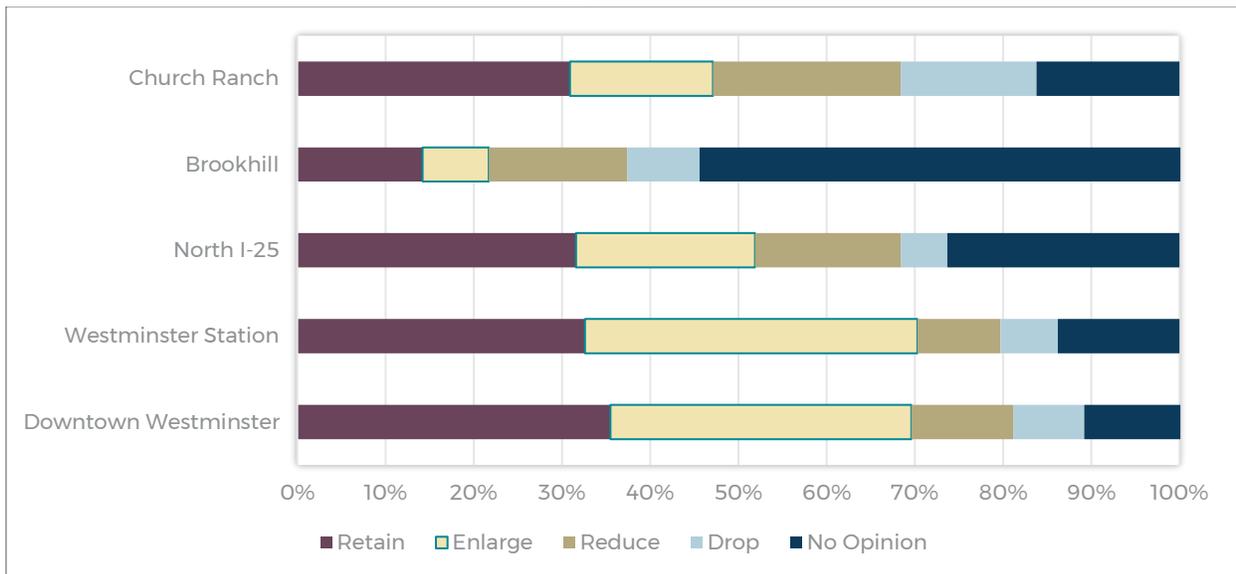
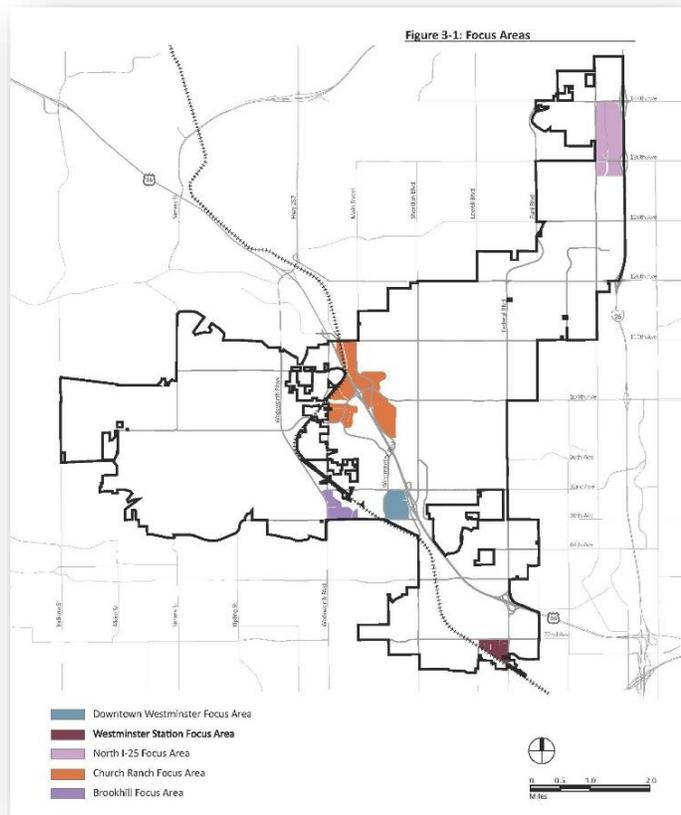
City uniqueness, and addressing diversity and inclusivity were noted as least important

These prioritized items have implications for all of the [Westminster Forward](#) plans but in particular the Sustainability Plan, Comprehensive Plan, and Water Supply Plan.

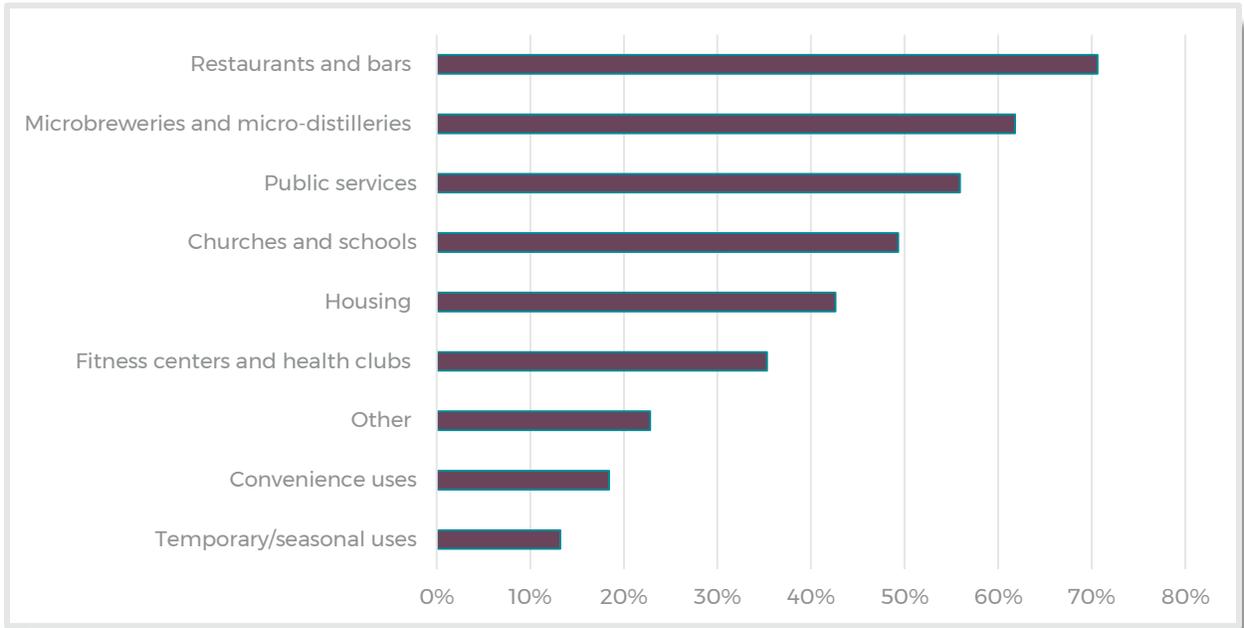
Are these the correct FOCUS AREAS?

The 2013 Comprehensive Plan identifies five “Focus Areas” where the greatest amount of growth and change over the next 20 years will occur. These areas consist of less than 4% of the City’s land area. The following map from the existing Comprehensive Plan shows the locations of Focus Areas.

Through the update of the Comprehensive Plan, there is an opportunity to reassess whether these are the right places to focus future growth. Based on these responses, some of these areas may need to be adjusted to reassess the overall area and impact of some of these Focus Areas. For example, the Westminster Station and Downtown Westminster Focus Areas may need to be enlarged into their surrounding areas, and Brookhill and Church Ranch possibly reduced in area.



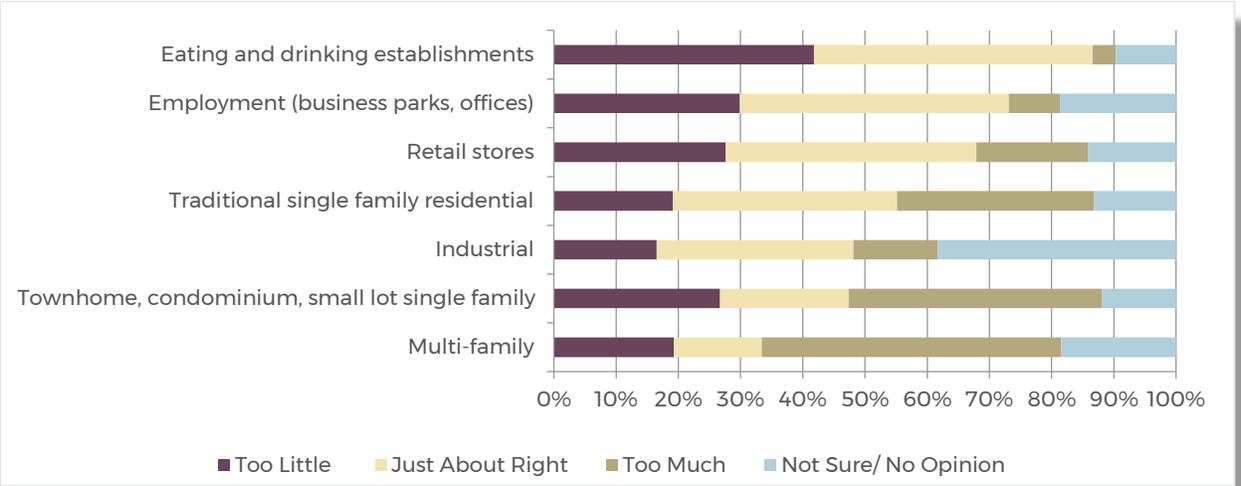
As Westminster's retail shopping centers lose tenants and their viability as retail providers, what **ALTERNATIVES** should be considered?



Established retail areas in 2019 were already exhibiting challenging conditions as many retail stores have reduced their footprints while 2020 saw an acceleration of this trend. This question intended to solicit ideas of new uses in their retail areas. Results for this question identified a preference (common throughout this outreach summary) for increased restaurants and drinking establishments, along with public services. There is little interest in accommodating additional temporary/ seasonal uses, or convenience uses (e.g. gas stations or drive-through uses). The written-in “Other” options included ideas like arts/cultural center, business incubators, civic or community space, and parks.

How do you feel about the rate of *GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT* in Westminster?

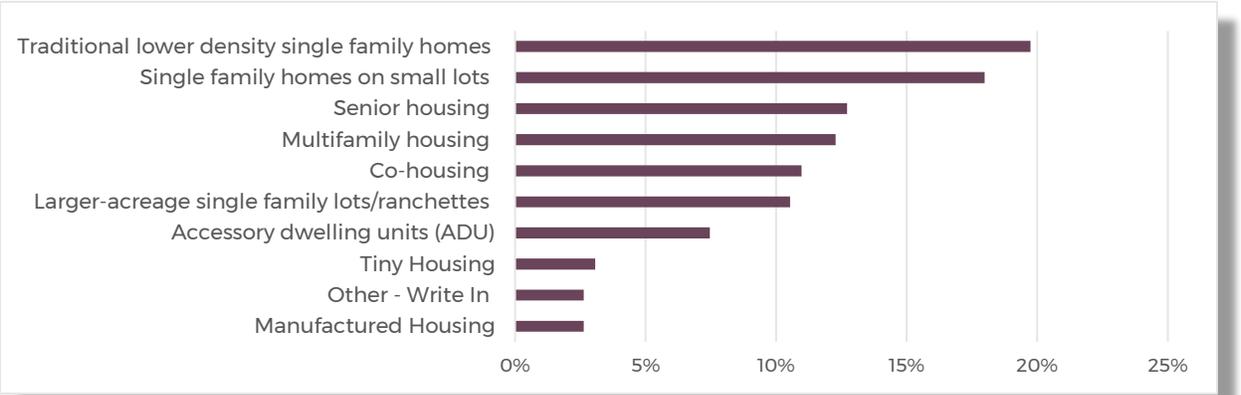
This question asked residents whether they believe the rate of growth and development in Westminster has been too little, just about right, or too much since 2010. A short description was provided for each of the land use categories to provide respondents context for their selection.



Again, as seen from these results, there is a preference for additional eating and drinking establishments, but concern over the amount of housing being developed, as there are high percentages of “too much” multi-family, townhome, condominium, small lot single family, and single-family residential. The high percentage of “Not Sure/No Opinion” on the allocation of Industrial land uses may be due to the fact that Westminster has little traditional industrial development and the land patterns do not lend themselves to heavy industrial uses.

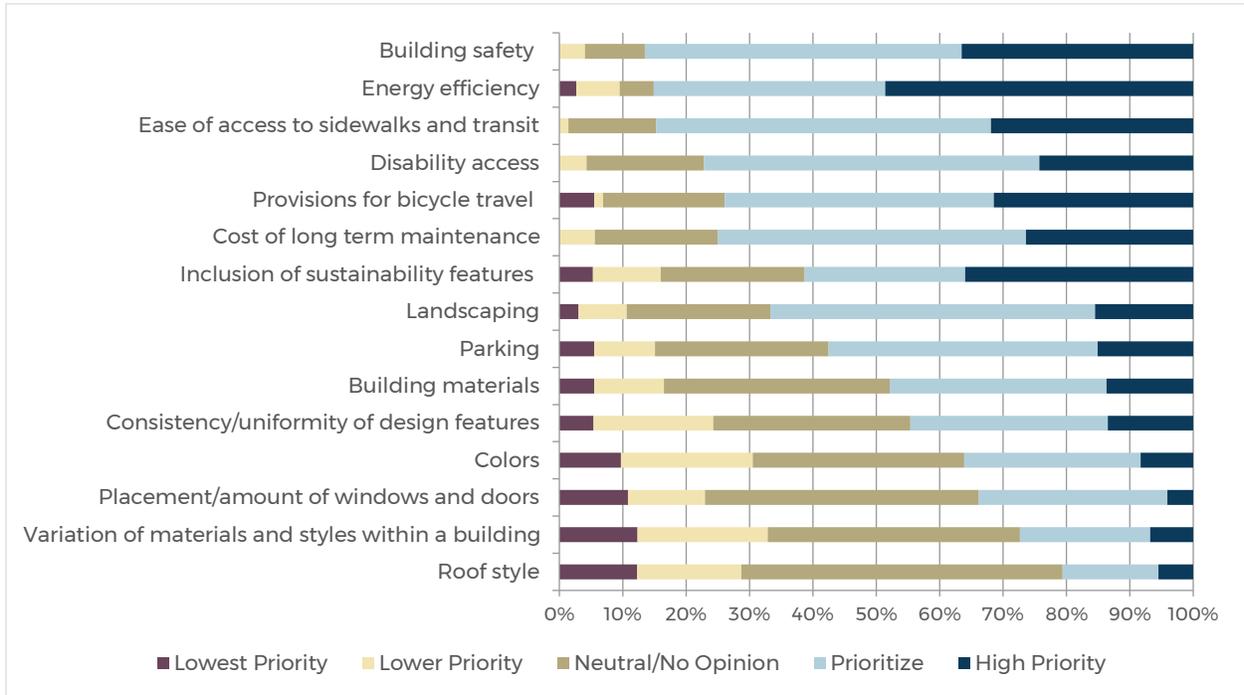
What type of *HOUSING* would best meet your future needs?

This question asked participants to consider their personal situation and what type of housing would best meet their future needs. Traditional single-family homes were the highest preference, however there was notable desires for smaller lot single family, senior housing and multi-family housing. This suggests that the City may want to maintain its primarily single-family residential development pattern but provide opportunities for the other highly desired housing types at key locations.



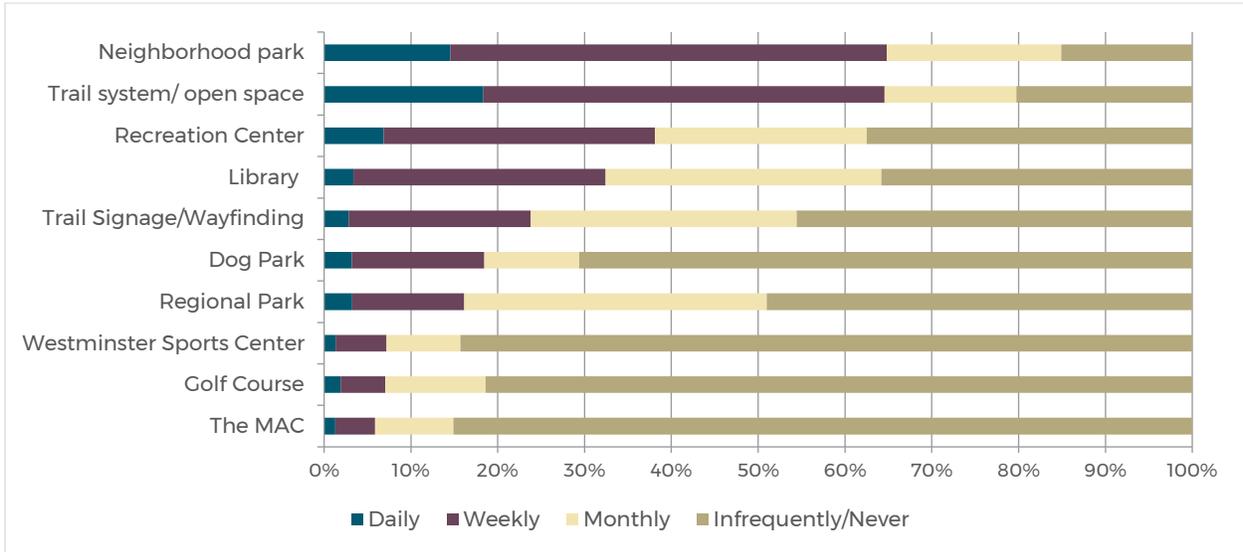
Which **DESIGN ELEMENTS** are the most important to you?

This question was meant to more directly inform **Code Forward** on design related preferences that often get discussed during Comprehensive Plan land use decisions. By analyzing results with the most “prioritize” and “high priority” selections, the following elements are ranked highest: 1) Building safety, 2) Energy efficiency, 3) Ease of access to sidewalks and transit 4) tie between cost of long-term maintenance, disability access, and provisions for bicycle travel. Interestingly within the responses, the least selected elements tend to be those that are typically included in design guidelines for new development, such as roof style, variation of materials and styles, colors, and placement of doors and windows.



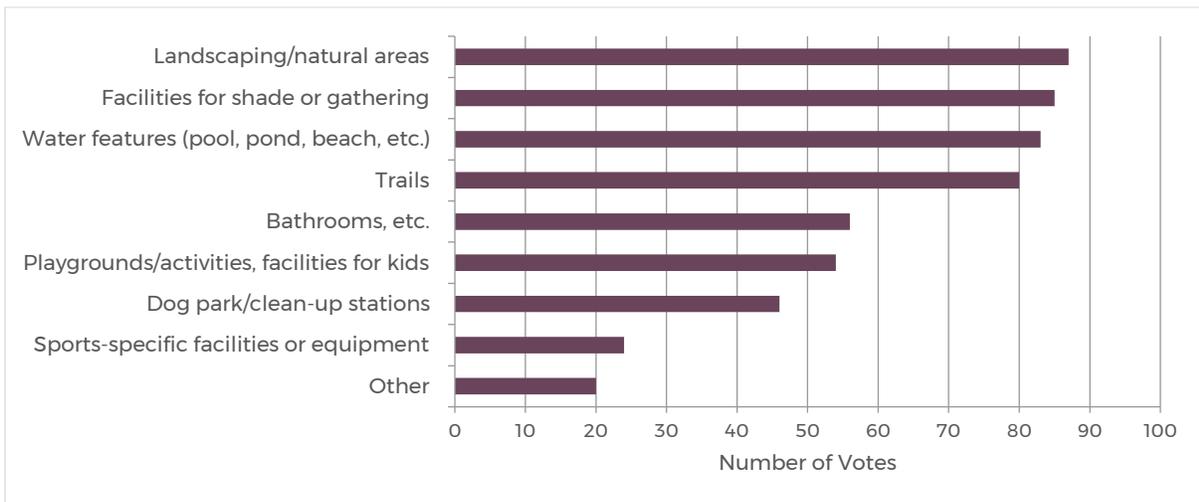
How Often Do You Use the Following FACILITIES?

Neighborhood parks and the open space and trails system appear to be the most utilized facilities, and the MAC and Sports Center seem to be least utilized facilities by survey respondents. One potential reason for this difference could be the high number and geographic spread of neighborhood parks, compared to the single centralized community and sports centers. This also suggests the development of future neighborhoods should continue to include neighborhood parks and trail systems as the dominant types of amenities.

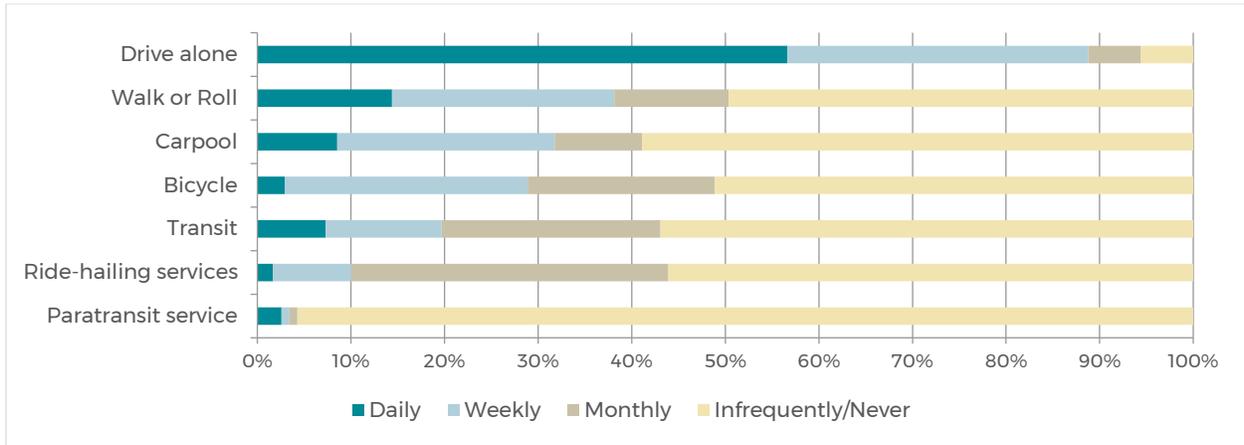


What AMENITY OR ACTIVITY is needed within the City?

The amenities that were ranked as having the highest need include landscaping/natural areas, facilities for shade or gathering, water features, and trails. Sports-specific facilities and dog parks were ranked as the City’s lowest amenity needs according to survey respondents. Many of the written-in “Other” options include improvements to Standley Lake, educational gardens/community gardens, and more open space.

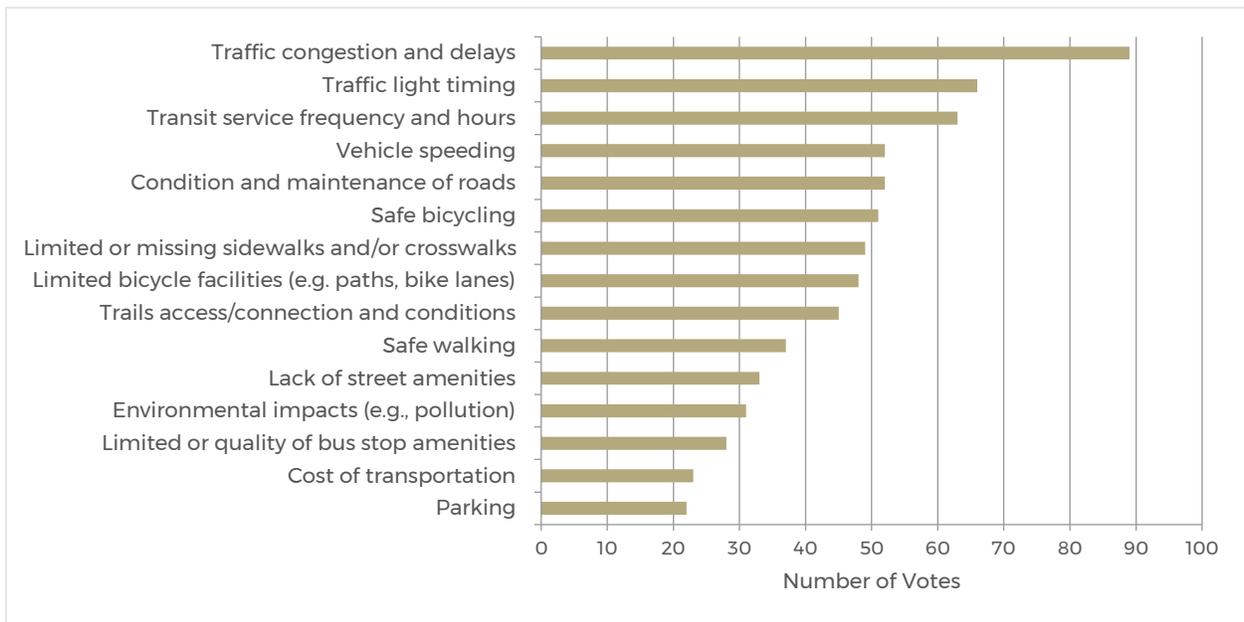


How often do you use these *TRANSPORTATION MODES* to get to/from work, school, errands, and social activities?



Driving alone was by far the most used daily transportation mode among survey and event respondents. Of the other choices, walk or roll, carpool, and bicycling were the most frequent choices.

What are the biggest *TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY* challenges?



Traffic congestion, delays and traffic light timing, and transit service frequency were ranked as the biggest transportation and mobility challenges among survey respondents. Respondents could choose up to four of the challenges and were asked to provide more detail about their mobility challenges. Many respondents indicated that the road congestion and traffic light timing is frustrating. Some said that they would like to bike or use transit more often, but gaps in trails and sidewalks or lack of safe crosswalks make it difficult to safely reach a destination

if not in a vehicle. Infrequent bus and commuter rail, coupled with inconvenient bus stop locations make transit an inconvenient choice for commuters.

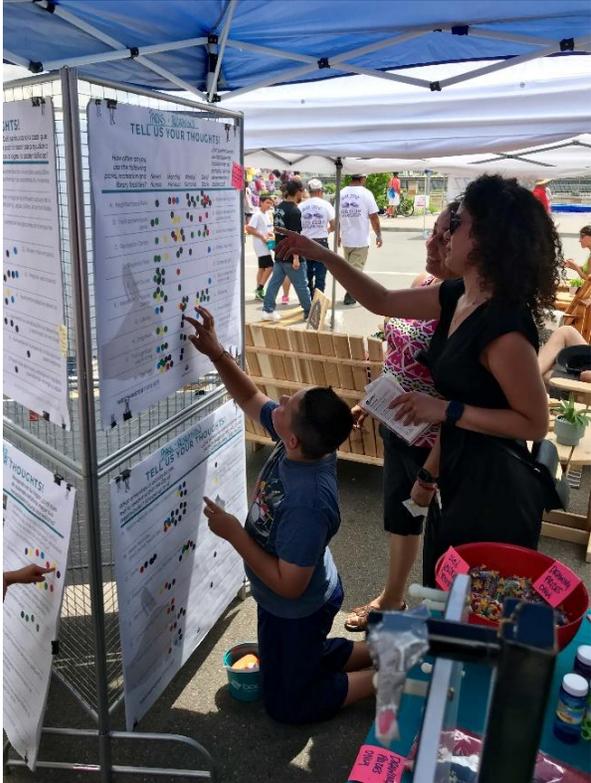
Targeted Outreach

The following two events – Latino Festival, and Hmong Outreach – included discussions with two specific communities. Read more about these events and the community input below.

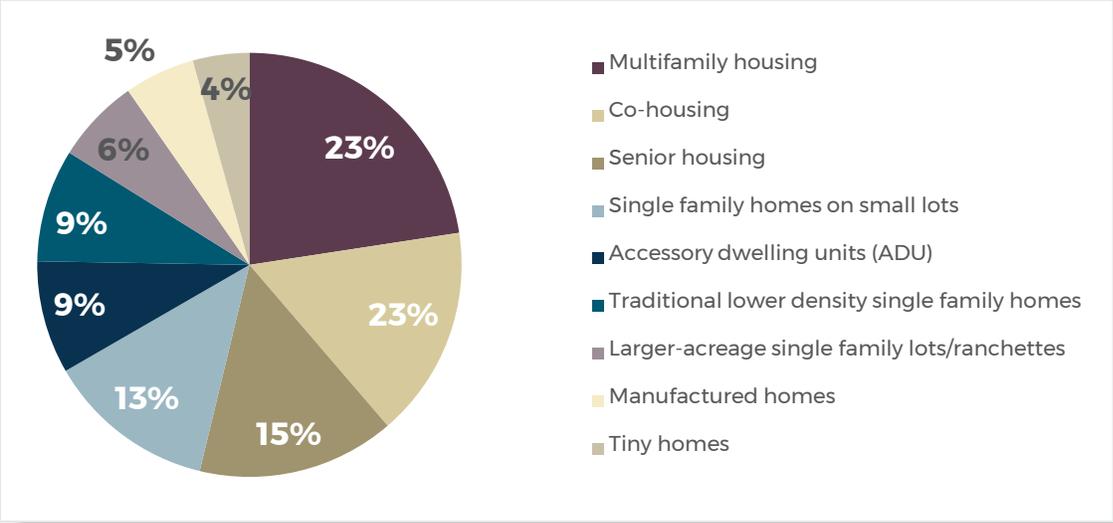
Latino Festival

The purpose of the Latino Festival was to inform community members of the **Westminster Forward** planning projects. Participants at the Latino Festival were asked questions about the needs of the City of Westminster and its residents, and the results of their efforts totaled 924 dots placed on the exercise boards.

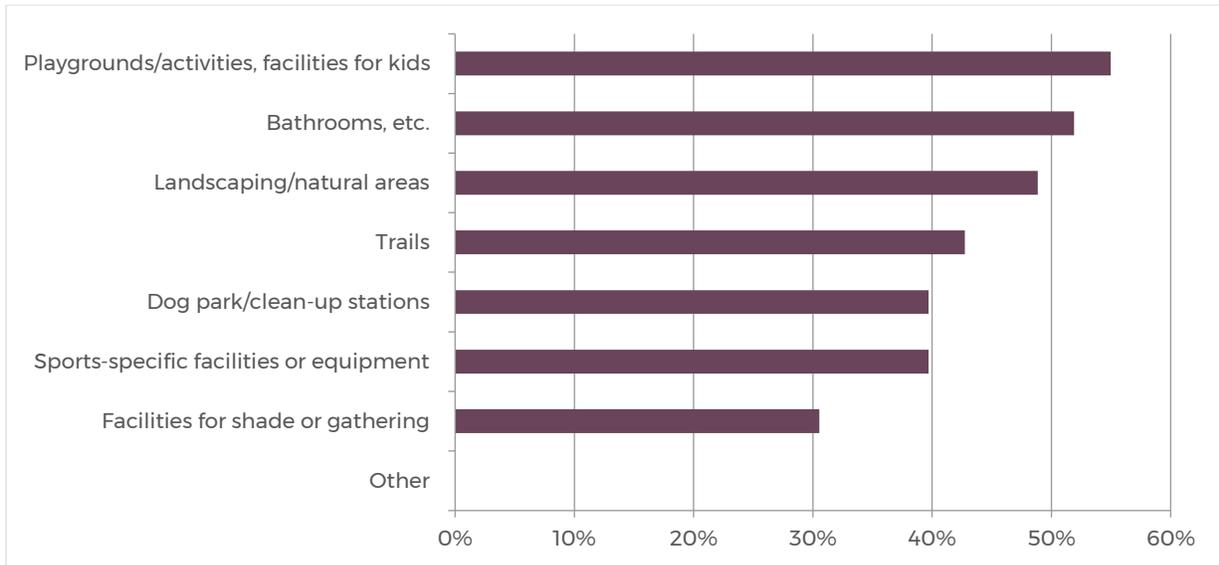
While exercise results generally echoed responses from other 2019 community engagement activities, the following two graphs summarize key results that differ from similar questions presented in other summer 2019 outreach—specifically the preferred housing types and park amenities desired. In regard to housing types, festival respondents focused more on multifamily housing and senior housing as compared to the community at large results described above. In regard to park amenities, festival responses focused on playgrounds and activities for children, while online responses saw higher percentages for trails, landscaping and natural areas.



Which type of HOUSING would best meet your immediate future needs?



What AMENITY OR ACTIVITY do you feel is needed within the City of Westminster?



Hmong Outreach

The purpose of this neighborhood meeting was to engage the Hmong community and identify issues and priorities. During the meeting, the participants were asked about how to improve the garden itself, housing availability, access to services and transportation. Below are the highlights from the conversation:

Improvements to the Garden: There were concerns about vandalism and safety and the need for better signage and fencing. Access to the road and parking lot improvements would be beneficial. Generally, the gardeners wanted confirmation that the garden would continue and could be expanded in the future.

Housing/Aging: Affordability is a big issue for this community, as many are retired and/or widowed. Many live in poverty and rely on what they can grow in the garden. Single-family housing is too expensive to sustain and there were concerns about isolation and loneliness when living alone. There was significant interest in affordable senior housing communities.

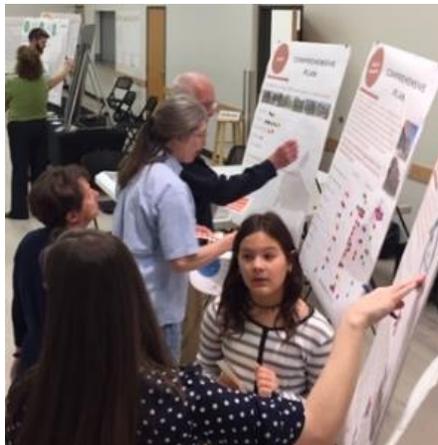
Transportation: Many older community members do not drive but are also uncomfortable or do not understand public transportation. There is a fear of getting lost and many rely on children and friends for rides. There was interest in an organized tour for bus and B-Line transit.

Access to Services: Few participants indicated that they use the MAC, which is only a few blocks away from the garden. They would be interested in a tour to understand what programs are available.

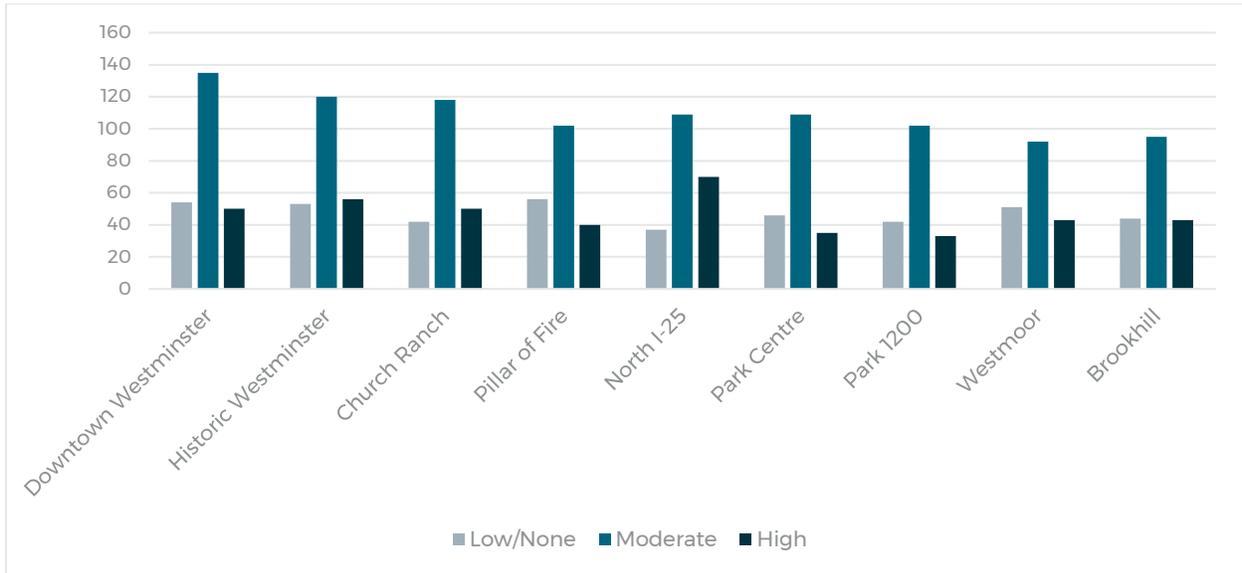


People, Places, and Plans Events and Questionnaire #5

Two large format open house events were held at different locations in Westminster to offer the public opportunities to learn about and participate in each of the six *Westminster Forward* planning efforts. At these drop-in events, participants were asked to share input to targeted questions by voting with dots. The event questions mirrors Questionnaire #5 online, available online from October through November 2019, garnered a total of 598 responses. The following tables summarize the results, both from the open houses and the online activities.

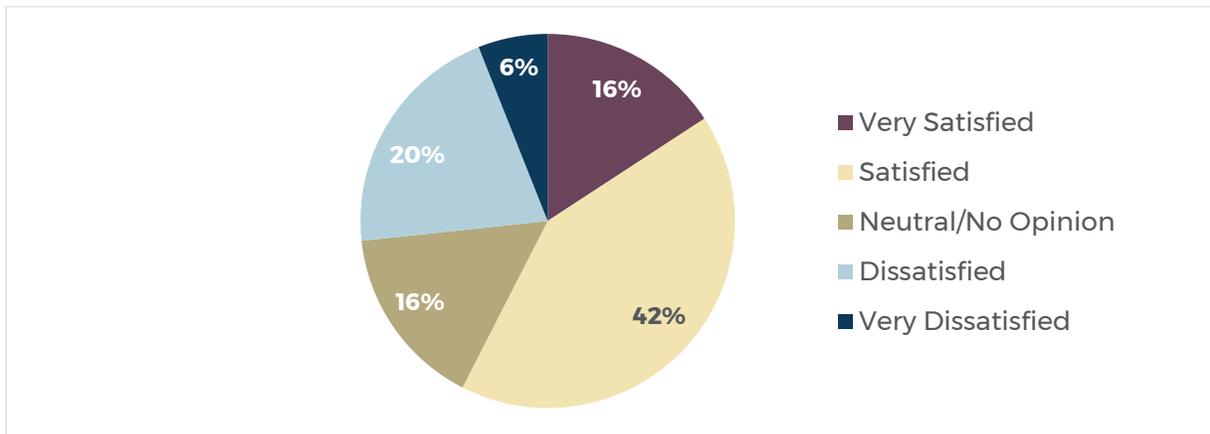


How much **RESIDENTIAL** is appropriate in the following areas, compared to commercial or employment uses?



Early in the planning process, and illustrated in the land use and visual preference results within 2018 Opportunity Area exercise, housing was identified as integral within the development/ redevelopment of: Downtown Westminster, Historic Westminster, and Pillar of Fire. The concept that is emerging is the formation of “Neighborhood Units” where residential development is correlated with commercial, employment and amenities. The results show that residents would generally like to see a housing component in each of these areas. However, housing was seen as a less important land use and one that should be limited within: Park Centre, Park 1200, and Westmoor which are generally more employment focused areas.

How satisfied are you with **HOUSING OPTIONS** in Westminster?

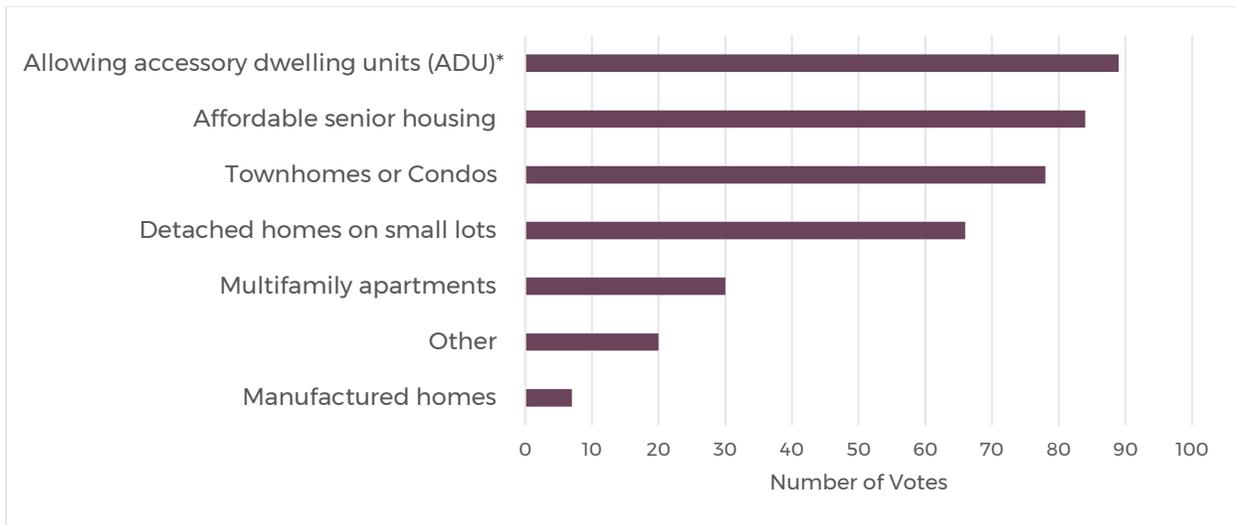


In earlier events and questionnaires, many respondents expressed concern over the high rate of housing development, but also expressed a desire to see a diversity of housing types. This and the following question asked respondents what types of housing would most provide for

their needs. Smaller format housing, including ADUs, affordable senior housing and townhomes or condos were the top three resulting choices (shown below).

Which of the following types of HOUSING would best meet your community's needs?

This question is similar to housing questions in the 2019 Summer Outreach and Questionnaire #4, however in this case participants were asked to think not just of their personal housing situation but of their perceptions for the housing needs of the greater community and therefore the results varied. Also, respondents could identify more than answer choice in this case. The previous question included traditional detached and smaller lot homes as multiple-choice answers—which were the highest selected answers, while this question focused more on multifamily housing and smaller unit types. In this case, the “Other” write-in comments included large lots and single-family neighborhoods, starter homes, and income-restricted housing.

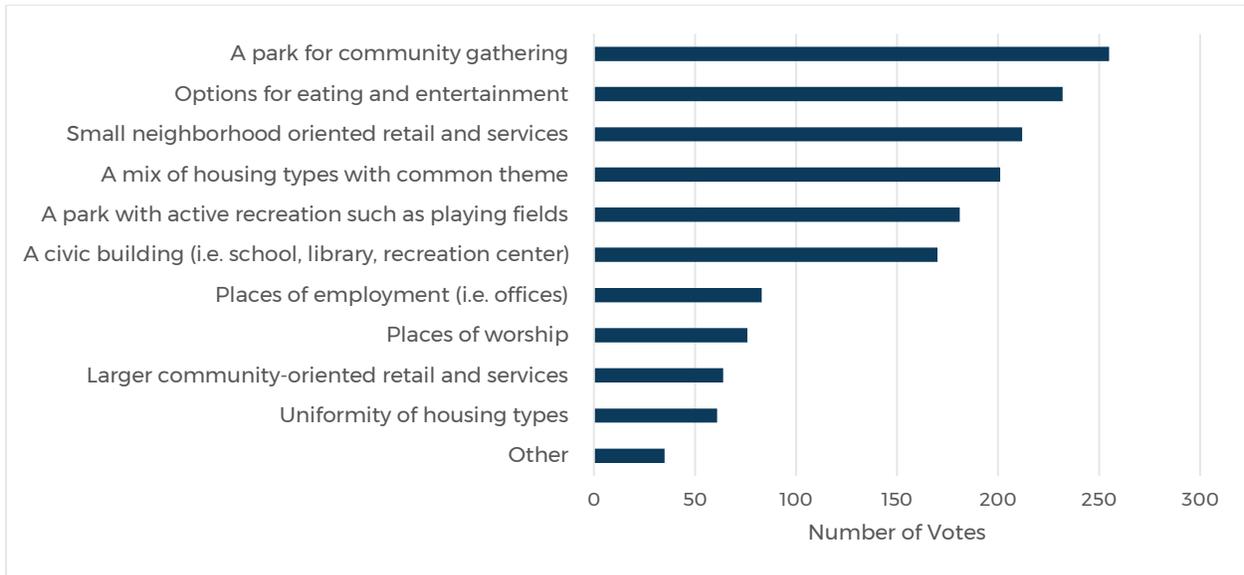


**ADUs are defined as added living quarters such as multi-generational “granny flats”, an in-home apartment, or tiny homes that are either attached to or detached from a house on the same lot.*

How could Westminster IMPROVE housing options?

Data was collected through open-ended questions for respondents. Generally, the responses indicated a desire for more one-level condos and transitional/senior housing options, overall more affordable options specifically for the “missing middle,” and a mix of downtown rentals with owner occupied housing.

Thinking about your household, the **IDEAL NEIGHBORHOOD** would include...

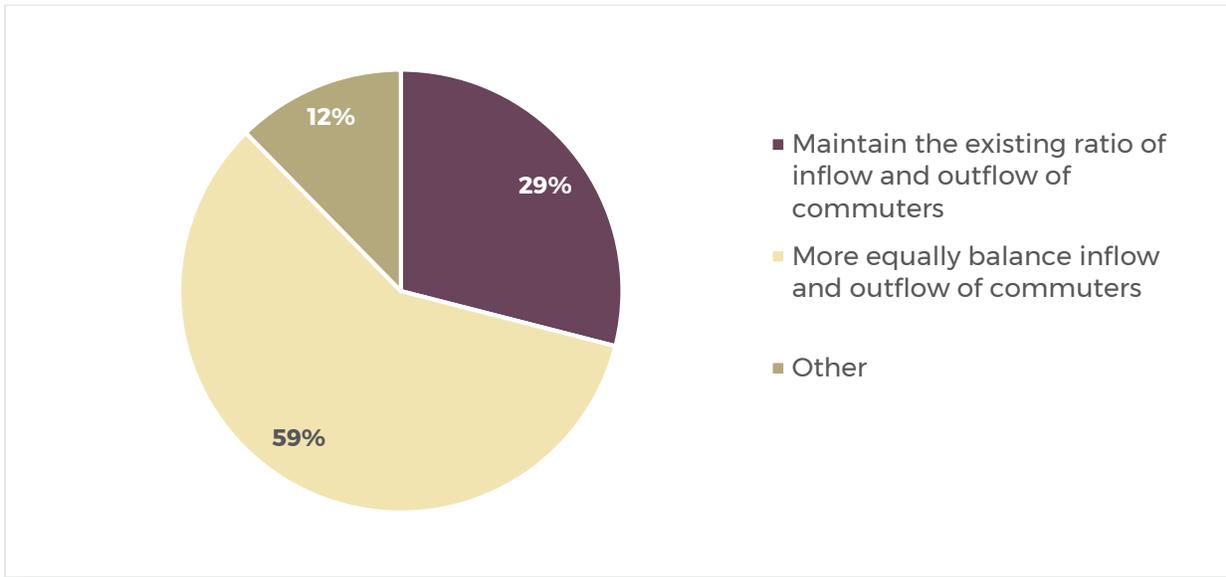


This input further informs the components of the Neighborhood Unit concept. Respondents could select multiple items in this question. Much like the results within Questionnaire #4, these results identify a preference for additional parks for community gathering, eating and drinking establishments, and small neighborhood-oriented retail and services. Interestingly, within the results, very few respondents selected uniformity of housing types. On the contrary, one of the highest response rates showed a preference for a mixture of housing types, along with parks for community gathering, and small, neighborhood-oriented retail and services. It may be worth noting that large community-oriented retail and services was not highly selected.

Data on Westminster commute patterns (37,699 commute in / 49,843 commute out daily) were shared with survey respondents to inform their answer to the following question:

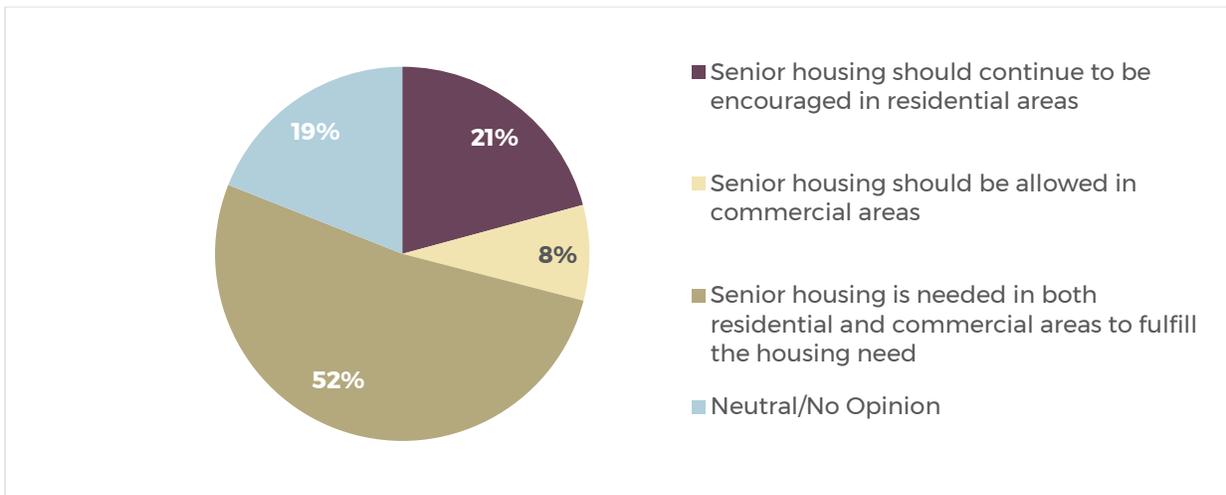


Should the Comprehensive Plan strive to:



Over half of respondents understand the need to more equally balance the inflow and outflow of commuters, echoing early responses to key issues to be more economically sustainable/resilient as well as ensure the efficiency of the transportation system. The “Other” written-in comments indicate that this is less of an economic development issue than a transportation issue or housing availability issue.

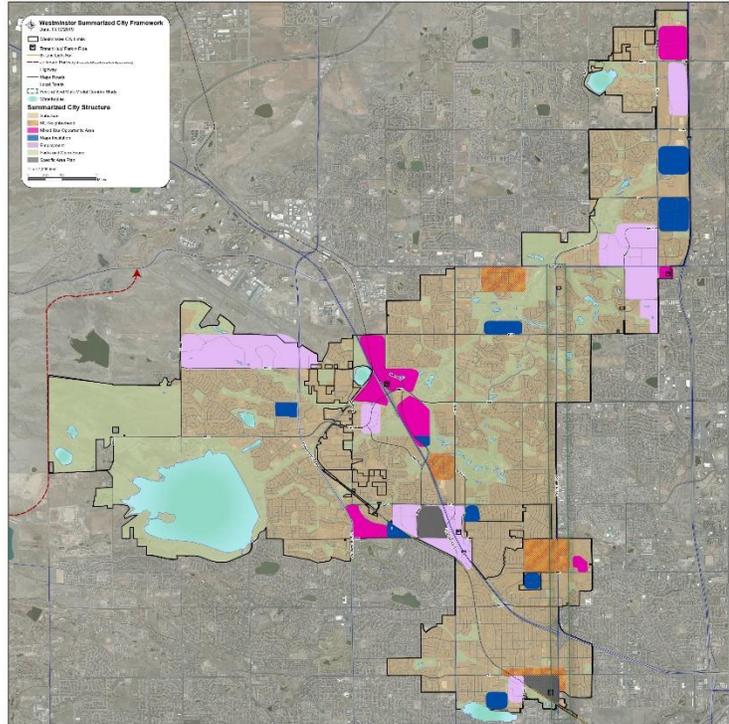
Recently the City has been approached to consider allowing various types of *SENIOR HOUSING* in commercial areas. Where should *SENIOR HOUSING* be allowed?



The existing Comprehensive Plan provides for senior housing in residential areas. Feedback from the community showed a need for more senior housing. As a result of this feedback, the City has been considering locations for senior housing relative to other land planning concepts in support of the “Neighborhood Unit.” When asked about locations for senior housing, generally half of respondents chose to allow senior housing in both residential and commercial

areas, emphasizing the need for mixed uses. This feedback could be related with previous questions posed relative to repurposing retail areas, in this case to explore the addition of senior housing into these commercial areas similar to what was done with Atria located on the vacant portion of the City Center retail center at Sheridan and 96th Avenue.

The People, Places and Plans Events also provided participants the opportunity to review a generalized map of the City's structure. This map identifies parks, open space and golf course areas; suburban areas; employment areas; major public facilities; and opportunities for mixed use development.



Additional 2019 Events

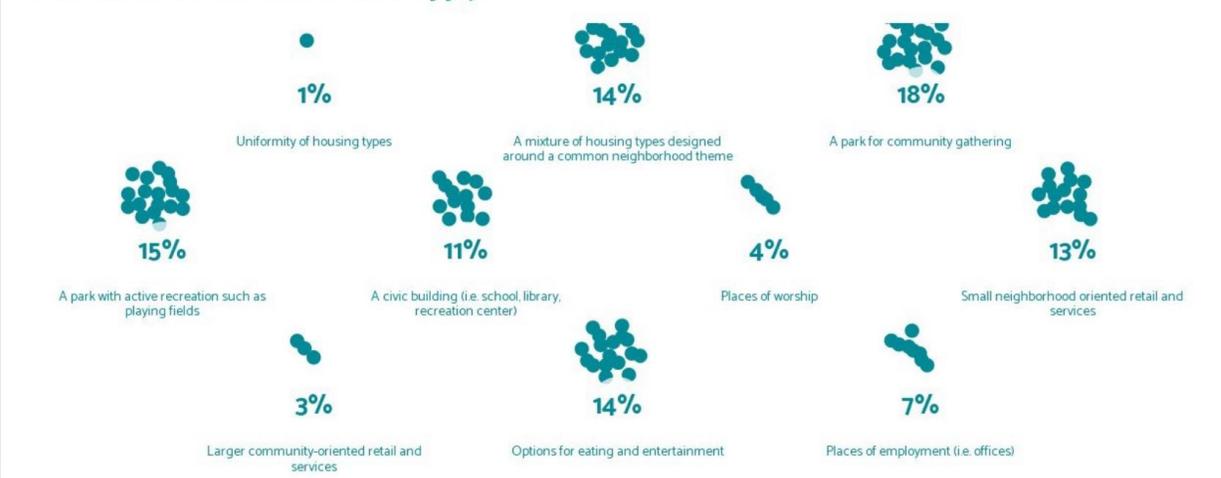
In order to continue to reach a cross section of the Westminster community, a presence was established at Harvest Festival, the City employees Wellness Fair and at the Taste of Westminster hosted by the Westminster Chamber of Commerce.

Harvest Festival

City staff occupied a large tent at the 2019 Harvest Festival to draw people to participate in online questionnaire #5. Those who chose to participate “on the spot” had their responses shown in real time on a monitor displayed at the booth.



Thinking about your household, the ideal neighborhood would include... (select all that apply)



City of Westminster Wellness Fair

This event was held for City of Westminister staff, to ensure awareness of *Westminster Forward* plans and provide input through online questionnaire #5.

Taste of Westminister

This Westminister Chamber of Commerce event included a station where City staff displayed exhibits for *Westminster Forward* and Downtown Westminister and provided another opportunity to connect with local businesses and stakeholders.



Meeting in a Box 2019

City staff designed a “meeting in the box” activity to provide an alternative to those unable to attend the public meetings and events and/or who were not able to participate online. The activity incorporated questions similar to those in online questionnaire #5 with a focus on questions related to land use, housing and employment. Two “kitchen table” style meetings were held by request from local residents.

Using the worksheets provided, feedback was given on several topics relevant to *Westminster Forward*. Ensuring water supply was the most important issue to attendees of both groups. Generally conversation topics focused on the need for status reports on water supply and sewer issues; a timeline on Downtown development and information on construction and parking; proposed development at 102nd and Sheridan; and a graphic for the development review process. Attendees also discussed the need for and interest in a greater diversity in housing types and pricing.

Homebuilders Association

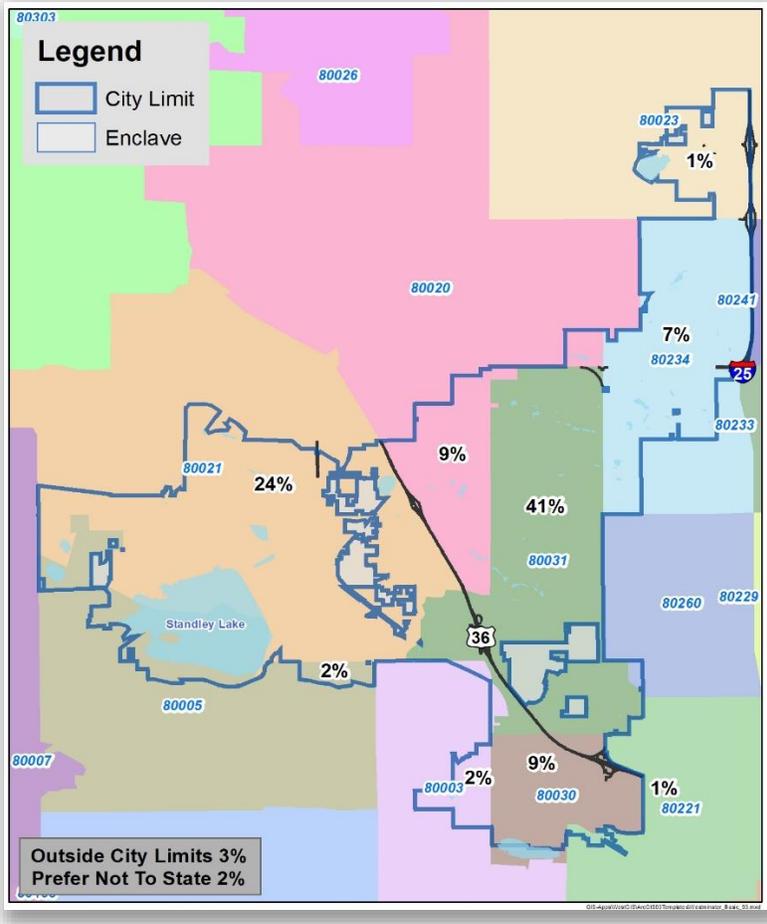
A second meeting with the Homebuilders Association as part of the 2019 outreach campaign however, this meeting occurred in January 2020 due to difficulty scheduling around the holidays. Key takeaways from earlier public engagement was shared as well as concepts for Code Forward.

Peer Review

A plan-making discussion was also held with planning staff from Adams County, Arvada, Jefferson County, Northglenn, Thornton as well as the planner for Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport. Representatives of Broomfield and Federal Heights were also invited but did not attend. Issues pertinent to the shared borders were addressed as well as best practices in community engagement.

Geographic Representation

To help City staff understand the reach of public participation online questionnaires #4 and 5 asked participants to identify the zip code of their residence or place of business. The map below indicates the level of overall participation by zip code.



4. 2020 Activities

With 2018 and 2019 community engagement in hand, staff development of the draft 2040 Comprehensive Plan document began with a series of “plan-writing” workshops in February 2020 attended by nine different city departments. This generally established the structure for the future Plan using the Guiding Principles resulting from community engagement and the *Westminster Forward* themes as organizing elements. Presentations were also done to the City’s Executive Leadership Team. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, staff work programs and priorities were adjusted to provide focus on urgent activities to support the City’s resiliency. A number of key City staff involved with the Plan effort were provided time to focus on immediate COVID-19 response efforts with work on the Plan resuming in late 2020.

Due to the onset of COVID-19 related restrictions on public gathering, closure of facilities and general concerns for public health, an additional “Meeting in a box” activity was created for small groups to host their own conversations about the Comprehensive Plan. The materials reviewed the Plan’s Guiding Principles of *Thriving Community, Healthy Places, Great Neighborhoods* and *Managed Growth* and asked participants to identify existing characteristics that support these guiding principles, how the Guiding Principles could be realized in the neighborhood of the respondent and impediments to attaining the Guiding Principles. New topics planned for introduction with the 2040 Comprehensive Plan were identified to gauge reaction by the respondents. These topics include food access, human services, strategies for declining retail, housing maintenance and neighborhood services and the needs of changing demographics.

In response to the questions regarding the Guiding Principles, the following written comments are noted:

- Continued support for City’s open space and trail programs
- Concern for the amount of multi-family development
- Concern for water availability
- The need for improved communication to residents and neighborhoods
- Importance of code enforcement to preserving existing neighborhoods and housing stock
- The need for assistance to forming neighborhood associations and HOAs
- Concern for build out and limited opportunities to annex more land, and what happens when there is no remaining land
- Revenue diversification
- Financial resiliency
- Concern for aging infrastructure
- Concern for competition with other cities

In response to the new Plan content identified, the following reactions are noted:

- Support for food access with suggestions for multi-family and residential back yard boxes and the need to establish food deliver programs for the senior population.
- The need to include regional players in human services programming, rather than a go-at-it-alone approach and notably with homeless and seniors the need to include counties, state government and faith-based organizations.
- A suggestion was made for the City to consider allowing dispensaries to mitigate the continued decline of brick and mortar retail.

- Support for increased neighborhood services including the need to assist in the formation of neighborhood associations, greater code enforcement and crime prevention.
- There were numerous comments on how to better support the growing senior population. Suggestions included the need to allow for patio home communities and affordable multifamily, the need to provide services to seniors in their homes, the need for law enforcement entities to be prepared to address senior issues, and the need to cooperate with County, nonprofits and other providers of senior services.

The future land use map is an area of concern in feedback from both residents and property owners and/or potential developers. Whenever possible Staff has explained that the land use map functions as a graphical representation of the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan on matters such as a housing, economic development, utilities and transportation and thus the importance of providing input on issues that the Plan is addressing through this update. Given that the vast majority fo the City's land area is expected to remain stable, only limited and strategic changes to the land use map are expected, further emphasizing the need for plan content on the sustainability and resiliency of existing neighborhoods.

Numerous comments both from City residents and non-residents submitted through Comprehensive Plan forums in 2020 were in the form of statements of opposition to pending development applications before the City for the proposed Uplands project and the proposal by Berkeley Homes adjacent to 102nd Avenue and Sheridan. These development applications are currently under review by City staff based on existing plans, codes and policies and will be heard by City Council in a future quasi-judicial public hearing. Staff has a responsibility to ensure comments on pending development applications are saved and compiled for the public record, therefore when comments are received that reference a particular development project by name they are reviewed and considered in the context of the forthcoming 2040 Comprehensive Plan and then such comments are routed to the City staff members responsible for these projects. As such these public comments will be included when these cases more forward to Planning Commission and City Council for consideration.

Several property owners of vacant land or buildings have been in contact with City staff regarding the status of their land as it pertains to the forthcoming 2040 Comprehensive Plan. Staff has communicated with these owners on the framework of the Plan, its relationship to other *Westminster Forward* plans and the need to ensure any potential land use maps are thoughtfully considered in the overall policy context of the Plan.

5. Planned 2021 outreach

With anticipated limits to in-person engagement due to COVID-19 expected to continue until summer 2021, the project team is preparing to engage with the community through innovative, digital tools and activities. The team is proposing to conduct community outreach in the Spring, with anticipated schedule revisions depending on the results of community engagement at the time.

A variety of communication resources will be utilized to disseminate announcements about the upcoming virtual community input opportunity. The project team will also have in-person activity materials on-hand in the event that social distancing rules are lifted. Based on the current proposed schedule and depending on the results of community engagement this spring, it is anticipated the completion of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan will be in summer 2021.