



Statement of the Issues

The former 2000 Wheat Ridge Comprehensive Plan was adopted in January 2000. Since the previous Comprehensive Plan was adopted, some major projects and events have taken place in the City including approval of the proposed Cabela's development, the proposed Gold Line commuter rail station at Ward Rd., the initiation of subarea plans, and the creation of the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy (NRS). Preparation of the NRS involved extensive research and outreach which resulted in a bold and aggressive document outlining guiding principles for the revitalization of the City. One of the key recommendations of the NRS was the need for the Comprehensive Plan to be updated. The previous Plan did not set out a proactive vision for the City that it needs to achieve a strong and sustainable economy and appropriate mix of land uses.

A comprehensive community outreach effort was developed to initiate the update to the Plan. A 21 member Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) was appointed by the Mayor to provide more detailed feedback and input on the plan. Planning Commissioners Brinkman and Reinhart were on the CAC. Six CAC meetings were held throughout the planning process. In addition, five community meetings were held where the public was invited to attend to provide their ideas. Articles appeared in every edition of the Connections for the last year and information on meetings was announced on Channel 8. There was also a dedicated website with surveys, meeting materials and comment opportunities. In addition, staff attended business and community meetings and had a booth at the Carnation Festival where people could obtain information and provide feedback. Hundreds of community members have provided input on the Plan through the numerous events and activities.

The Technical Advisory Group met several times through the course of the planning process to be certain the goals, policies and action steps being developed were in line with department goals and priorities and with outside agency missions. Wheat Ridge 2020 was a member of the TAG and has been very involved in the development of the Plan. Their Board voted on September 22nd in support of adoption of the Plan.

Four joint study sessions were held with City Council and Planning Commission. At the July 20 study session, City Council unanimously passed a consensus motion to endorse the concepts and objectives of the Envision Wheat Ridge Plan. The last joint study session was held on September 21st where the consultants gave an overview of the planning process and discussed the Implementation Chapter of the Plan. While there were a few comments on the Plan, it was well received by both the City Council and Planning Commission members present.

As outlined in the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy (NRS), the City has not kept pace with its surrounding communities in retaining and attracting new businesses. As a result, the City's fiscal situation has deteriorated. Updating the comprehensive

plan was a critical piece for the City in addressing the need to revitalize the community to be a place where businesses want to locate and new households want to live. Therefore, a key focus of the Comprehensive Plan update has been on the economic and fiscal challenges facing the City and the best way to achieve a balanced mix of land uses. The intent of the Plan and its Structure Plan Map is to be strategic and not to provide a parcel by parcel guide for land use.

The Plan includes a very proactive implementation chapter that spells out the specific actions the City needs to take to implement the goals and policies of the Plan. The types of actions that need to be taken include zoning code amendments, new programs, partnerships and funding strategies. There is also a Priority Action table which lays out a list of actions for completion within the next five years.

A critical aspect of the planning process has been the review of existing documents including the 2000 Comprehensive Plan, the NRS, and the Northwest, Fruitdale and Wadsworth Subarea Plans. In addition, the City's urban renewal plans and current City code and regulations were also considered. As outlined in the Plan itself, many aspects of these previous planning efforts have been incorporated into the Envision Wheat Ridge Plan. With this more comprehensive look at the community, some conflicts do occur with the adopted subarea plans. These will be amended accordingly.

The Envision Wheat Ridge Comprehensive Plan supercedes the 2000 Comprehensive Plan and incorporates the previously adopted subarea plans and the NRS by reference except where there may currently be conflict, the Envision Wheat Ridge Plan will take precedence. A high priority for implementation will be revision of the subarea plans to be consistent with the Envision Wheat Ridge Plan.