



Vision and Goals Outline

DRAFT – 3/17/09

VISION

Wheat Ridge will be a prominent and sustainable city, with a bright future built upon the foundation of the community's major assets (one-of-a-kind neighborhoods, unique culture and history, abundant open space, terrific views, and proximity to Clear Creek). The community will balance its broad, resilient local economy that provides family wage jobs and thriving business districts with its friendly and comfortable neighborhoods, convenient transportation options, valuable services, and a high quality of life for all residents.

KEY VALUES

The following "key values" help to organize the draft goals for the plan:

1. Promote a Resilient Economy with Balanced Land Uses
2. Preserve and Reinvest in Neighborhoods and Housing
3. Enhance Community Character and Design
4. Increase Transportation Connections and Options
5. Provide Quality Community Amenities, Services, and Resources
6. Focus on Sustainable Community Growth

Promote a Resilient Economy with Balanced Land Uses

Wheat Ridge will promote, strengthen, and support a vibrant and diverse business community to build an enduring and resilient local economy.

1. MARKET WHEAT RIDGE AS A “COMMUNITY OF CHOICE” TO LIVE, WORK, SHOP, AND RECREATE.

Aggressively promote the city’s assets, including its abundance of open space along Clear Creek, its proximity to Denver and the mountains, its parks and recreation opportunities, its distinctive neighborhoods, and tremendous tree canopy to attract residents, employers, and visitors.

2. PROVIDE A SUSTAINABLE BALANCE OF LAND USES AS THE COMMUNITY GROWS AND REDEVELOPS.

Define a sustainable mix of land uses and guide future development and redevelopment to achieve the sustainable mix.

3. ATTRACT QUALITY RETAIL DEVELOPMENT IN APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS AND ACTIVELY RETAIN EXISTING RETAILERS.

Identify areas for potential retail centers and explore opportunities for niche and specialty businesses, such as a “gardening district” as identified in the Fruitdale Subarea Plan. Encourage new businesses that provide healthy and high quality products and goods, and link new development to community assets like Clear Creek. Proactively work with existing retailers to remain in Wheat Ridge.

4. IDENTIFY AND PROMOTE OPPORTUNITIES TO RETAIN AND DIVERSIFY LOCAL EMPLOYMENT.

Expand or create new employment opportunities or centers, such as “green” industry jobs and medical-related facilities to complement the Exempla Lutheran hospital. Retain industrially zoned lands and promote and foster quality small businesses.

5. COMMIT TO QUALITY DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT IN DEFINED REVITALIZATION AREAS.

Identify locations with immediate and future development potential, and establish tools to promote investment and quality development of land. (Note: some potential locations include: the Wadsworth Corridor, along West 44th Avenue, 38th and Kipling, and the Northwest Subarea.)

6. TARGET OPPORTUNITY AREAS FOR FUTURE ACTIVITY CENTERS (INCLUDING A TOWN CENTER) AND COMMUNITY GATHERING SPACES.

Identify priority areas for mixed-use activity centers. (Note: possible locations for a “town center” include: 44th and Wadsworth and along 38th Avenue .)

Preserve and Reinvest in Neighborhoods and Housing

Wheat Ridge will embrace its unique neighborhoods, and promote reinvestment to provide housing options for longtime and new residents.

1. PRESERVE AND ENHANCE WHEAT RIDGE'S LOWER DENSITY NEIGHBORHOODS.

Identify neighborhoods that are strong and enhance their positive attributes. (Note: Some strong neighborhoods identified to date include the neighborhoods south of Clear Creek between Youngfield and the hospital; between 32nd and 38th Avenues; and northeast of Wadsworth and 44th Avenue.)

2. REVITALIZE AND PROMOTE REINVESTMENT AND HOMEOWNERSHIP.

Identify neighborhoods with needs for code enforcement and issues related to property maintenance, and explore opportunities to promote homeownership and reinvestment in these areas. Make infill compatible.

Enhance Community Character and Design

Wheat Ridge will promote its assets, such as Clear Creek, friendly neighborhoods, and mountain views, and will work to continually improve its community image and the design of its gateways and corridors.

1. CREATE RECOGNIZABLE GATEWAYS AND CORRIDORS.

Identify the community's entrances ("gateways") and primary corridors through the city, and emphasize, enhance, and promote a positive community image in these areas.

2. ENSURE QUALITY DESIGN FOR DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT.

Use the Architectural Site Design Manual and develop other design guidelines for infill and redevelopment projects to promote quality design and project compatibility.

Increase Transportation Connections and Options

Wheat Ridge will improve mobility and accessibility for all modes of transportation.

1. PROVIDE AN INTEGRATED TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM TO ADDRESS ALL MODES OF TRAVEL AND FUTURE FUNDING PRIORITIES.

Accommodate all modes of travel including motorists, pedestrians, bicycles, and transit riders. Identify priority corridors and funding mechanisms for future infrastructure improvements.

2. CONTINUE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION ON REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ISSUES.

Emphasize the interconnectedness of regional transportation systems and promote cooperation and continued coordination with providers including the Regional Transportation District (bus and future light rail), Colorado Department of Transportation (highways), railroads, Jefferson County, Denver Regional Council of Governments, and adjacent communities (Arvada, Lakewood, Denver, etc.).

3. ENHANCE MOBILITY THROUGH INCREASED TRANSPORTATION CHOICES.

Expand and enhance existing transportation and mobility options, including bus transit, bicycling, and walking. Plan to accommodate and connect future light rail within the transportation framework.

4. PROMOTE “COMPLETE STREETS” TO IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE SAFETY, COMFORT, AND CONNECTIVITY.

Identify locations to improve pedestrian connectivity and safety, and provide recommendations for future improvements. (Note: some locations include along 32nd Avenue, a north/south route on or parallel to Wadsworth Boulevard, and pedestrian crossings at major intersections along Wadsworth Boulevard.)

5. DEFINE ROLE OF ARTERIALS AND RELATIONSHIP TO LAND USES.

Synchronize the desired image and function of arterial street corridors, such as Wadsworth Boulevard and Kipling Avenue, with future land uses. Clearly communicate the vision for arterial corridors with regional transportation agencies such as Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT).

Provide Quality Community Amenities, Services, and Resources

Wheat Ridge will be committed to providing and investing in community amenities, services and resources that sustain and enhance the quality of life for all residents.

1. CONTINUE TO PROVIDE QUALITY CORE COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES.

Ensure that core city services and facilities can be maintained at satisfactory levels in the future.

2. PROMOTE DIVERSE ARTS, CULTURAL, AND RECREATIONAL AMENITIES.

Encourage community amenities, such as art in public places, preservation of historic resources, and recreational opportunities that improve the quality of life for residents and also attract visitors.

3. CONTINUE INVESTMENT IN PARKS.

Maintain quality parks that are accessible to all neighborhoods and residents.

4. PROVIDE STEWARDSHIP OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES AND OPEN SPACE.

Provide stewardship for the community’s natural and environmental resources and open space include Clear Creek, Lena Gulch, the greenbelt, and the prominent urban tree canopy. Manage these resources for present and future generations. Increase access to the greenbelt and maintain connections to Crown Hill Regional Open Space.

5. COORDINATE WITH FIRE DISTRICTS AND UTILITY PROVIDERS TO MAINTAIN QUALITY SERVICE.

Encourage continued coordination among service providers to provide and maintain quality levels of service to customers.

6. EMPHASIZE COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CODE ENFORCEMENT.

Proactively ensure the safety and welfare of residents by providing high levels of police and emergency response services and promote community involvement in crime prevention and code enforcement programs.

7. MAINTAIN STRONG RELATIONSHIPS WITH SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION PROVIDERS.

Recognize the need for quality schools and the role they play in attracting and retaining families and employers. Work with the school district and other partners to improve or maintain school performance, and increase opportunities for lifelong learning.

8. ENGAGE RESIDENTS AND PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEANING PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT.

Encourage community involvement in issues that affect the quality of life in the city and provide ample opportunities for discussion to build a greater sense of community.

9. PROMOTE INVESTMENT IN TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE.

Recognize the demand for modern technology and promote investment in community-wide broadband and/or wireless technology infrastructure to enhance educational and employment opportunities.

Focus on Sustainable Community Growth

Wheat Ridge will focus on balancing local economic conditions, neighborhood and transportation desires, and community assets and services, to address current needs and to achieve a sustainable bright future.

1. THE CITY WILL HAVE A RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE TAX BASE.

Focus on achieving a resilient tax base to fund community core services, by balancing future economic development strategies and land use decisions with current community service expectations and fiscal realities. Keep industrial areas intact.

2. PROVIDE ENVIRONMENTAL EQUITY FOR ALL RESIDENTS.

The plan should support activities and growth patterns that preserve or promote a balance of environmental considerations that benefit all residents.

3. WHEAT RIDGE WILL SUPPORT ENERGY AND RESOURCE CONSERVATION.

Explore opportunities to increase conservation of energy and resources in city programs and with private development.

4. WHEAT RIDGE WILL BE AN ACTIVE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY.

Identify barriers for active lifestyles (i.e., pedestrian connectivity) and focus on promoting a healthy lifestyle for residents, including programs and activities such as Safe Routes to School, farmer’s market, community gardens, and Walk and Watch.