



WESTMINSTER

# SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

MAY 2021

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### **Welcome to the City of Westminster's first Sustainability Plan!**

This is an exciting time for Westminster. We face many challenges including aging infrastructure and poor air quality in the metro area. The cost of living continues to rise and the demand for city services only gets larger. We also face an unprecedented public health emergency with the COVID-19 virus that has demonstrated the need for a stronger community resiliency response by the city and its partners.

On the other hand, we have creative and thoughtful people in our community who care about the city, the best public servants I've had the honor to work with, and committed community leaders who have set a vision for the city to be a sustainable and inclusive community.

The city has a long history of innovation related to sustainability, even when that term wasn't part of our common vocabulary.

For example, we installed solar panels on city buildings, created a nationally recognized park and stormwater feature near the city's first commuter rail station, introduced the first electric vehicle into the city's fleet, expanded affordable housing options, and provided financial support to help businesses keep their doors open during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our city is creating economic opportunity, enhancing community resiliency and protecting the environment. We are energized by innovative ideas and a passion to create an even better city for people to live, work, play and visit. We are also creating a city that can respond to and rebound from economic, public health and natural threats facing the entire community.

We have already made great progress, but the Sustainability Plan will help us make even more. This Plan sets a practical agenda for the next five to 10 years. It is a financially sustainable approach that will be implemented with our partners including school districts, the business community, public health agencies, energy utilities and nonprofit organizations. However, the city can't do this alone. Our partners will be critical in collectively achieving this vision.

This Plan is the first step in a long journey. Part of that journey includes tracking our progress. We will periodically report on that progress to describe success stories and highlight where we can do better.

Satya Nadella, the head of Microsoft said, "What people have to own is an innovation agenda, and everything is shared in terms of the implementation." If we want the city to remain a leader, it will take all of us thinking about an innovative future and working individually and collectively to create the best place possible for current and future residents. We want everyone to be proud of their city and help make it even better!

Donald M. Tripp  
City Manager

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2018, the City of Westminster began a two-year planning process to develop its first Sustainability Plan as a guiding framework that the city staff and community partners will use to move the city towards its vision of becoming a sustainable and inclusive community. The Sustainability Plan focuses on actions that can be implemented within the next 5-10 years as part of the city's Strategic Plan vision.

The Sustainability Plan was developed as part of Westminster Forward, a coordinated community engagement process created to support six concurrent city planning efforts. This robust process encouraged collaboration across departments and engaged a wide, diverse number of community members through stakeholder meetings, working groups, online surveys, meetings and community events.

## WESTMINSTER'S SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK

### Sustainability Statement

The Sustainability Statement serves as the overarching guide for the Sustainability Plan. In alignment with the City of Westminster vision, the Sustainability Statement represents the desired future of the community. Westminster's Sustainability Statement is as follows.

**WESTMINSTER STRIVES TO BE A SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE CITY**, with an economically strong, socially vibrant and environmentally healthy community for current and future generations. A sustainable community is a desirable place to live, work, visit and play and is characterized by:

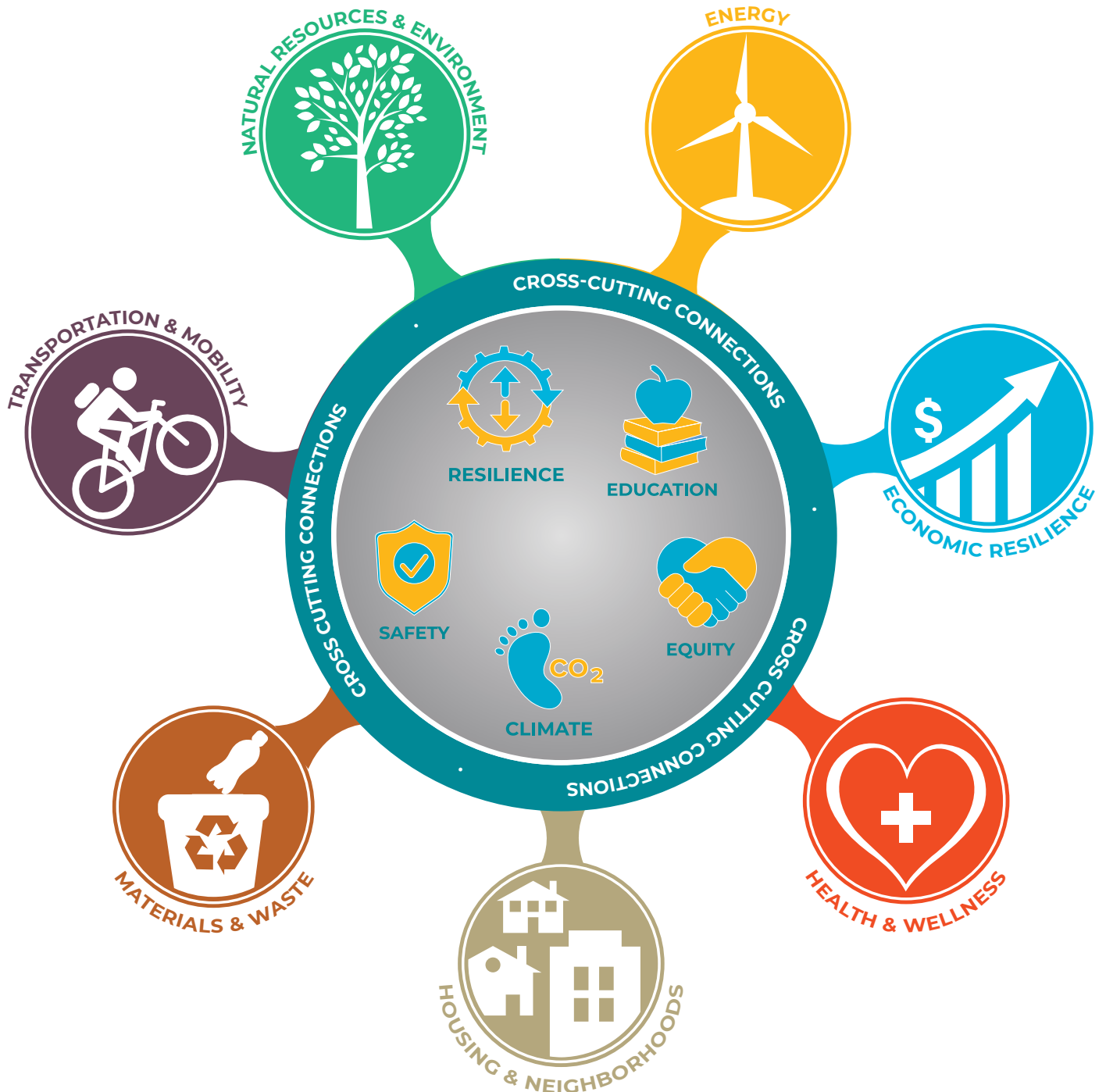
- » Prosperous neighborhoods
- » Connections and accessibility
- » Thriving businesses
- » Clean air, land and water
- » Core services that meet diverse citizen needs
- » Resilient physical, social and economic infrastructure
- » Safe, healthy, informed residents

### WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS VISION BY:


- » Creating a clear direction for city and community action
- » Working collaboratively with residents, businesses and community partners
- » Utilizing best practices in city operations and focusing on continuous improvement
- » Exceeding all required standards and regulations
- » Being proactive to prevent problems before they occur
- » Continually identifying new opportunities for innovation and action


# Sustainability Plan Themes

The Sustainability Plan is organized around seven sustainability themes and five cross-cutting concepts that, together, reflect the Sustainability Statement. Each of the themes include objectives, targets and strategies that can be applied by staff to guide annual work plans, by elected officials to prioritize policy action and by community partners to identify opportunities to collaborate and contribute.



# Sustainability Plan Targets

	<p><b>Objective:</b> Establish a resilient, equitable and reliable energy future powered by low-carbon and renewable energy.</p>
<p><b>Energy</b></p>	<p><b>Targets:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Achieve 25% electricity savings and 15% natural gas savings community-wide by 2030 compared to the city’s 2014 baseline.</li> <li>❑ Pursue opportunities to decrease energy utility costs for low-income households.</li> <li>❑ Strive for 80% renewable electricity for primary municipal facilities and operations by 2030.</li> <li>❑ Align with the Governor Administration’s Roadmap to pursue 100% renewable electricity community-wide by 2040.</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Objective:</b> Foster a dynamic and diverse economy that cultivates and strengthens a wide array of economic opportunities.</p>
<p><b>Economic Resilience</b></p>	<p><b>Targets:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Maintain a diverse primary industries base.</li> <li>❑ Expand opportunities for small businesses and entrepreneurs within the community.</li> <li>❑ Grow opportunities for local workforce to match business needs.</li> <li>❑ Improve social responsibility and sustainable business practices in the community.</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Objective:</b> Increase awareness of and access to healthy lifestyle options, including recreation opportunities, healthy foods and wellness services for all.</p>
<p><b>Health &amp; Wellness</b></p>	<p><b>Targets:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Achieve the parks, open space and trail targets established in the Parks, Recreation &amp; Libraries Plan.</li> <li>❑ Reduce food swamps and lessen the effects of food deserts on local populations.</li> <li>❑ Increase education about and access to local and healthy foods, mobility options for active lifestyles and other healthy living opportunities.</li> <li>❑ Increase community resilience and neighborhood connections for improved health and wellness outcomes.</li> <li>❑ Collaborate to improve regional air quality.</li> </ul>



### Housing & Neighborhoods

**Objective:** Support a vibrant, connected and sustainable mix of diverse and adaptable neighborhoods that facilitate a sense of community.

**Targets:**

- ❑ Maintain or increase the percentage of residents who somewhat or strongly agree that the city can be described as safe and secure.
- ❑ Increase both the diversity of housing types and affordable options available in the city.
- ❑ Maintain or increase the percentage of residents who rate the overall quality of their neighborhood as very good or good.
- ❑ Achieve 90% or greater voluntary compliance with nuisance code violations issued by the city.
- ❑ Increase opportunities for creating community and neighborhood engagement.



### Materials & Waste

**Objective:** Cultivate improved waste and materials management that supports source reduction, sustainable diversion and regulatory compliance through accessible services and programs for all sectors.

**Targets:**

- ❑ Increase waste diversion rate to 35% by 2030 for all city operations and facilities.
- ❑ Increase the community-wide waste diversion rate.
- ❑ Enhance city environmental management systems and practices.



### Transportation & Mobility

**Objective:** Innovate to provide a safe, connected, accessible and inclusive multimodal transportation network.

**Targets:**

- ❑ Achieve the mode share targets for carpool, transit, bicycling and walking established in the Transportation & Mobility Plan (TMP).
- ❑ Improve and invest in transportation infrastructure to enhance and complete connections to local and regional activity centers (such as shopping, jobs and recreation).
- ❑ Reduce and strive to eliminate traffic fatalities and injuries in the transportation system.
- ❑ Increase the number of light duty and medium duty electric vehicles in the city fleet.
- ❑ Increase the number of electric vehicle charging stations on and off city property.





**Natural  
Resources &  
Environment**

**Objective:** Perpetuate the legacy of Westminster’s natural resources by conserving and maintaining thriving natural systems and enhancing city infrastructure.

**Targets:**

- Maintain and protect biodiversity and native species throughout the city.
- Expand the urban tree canopy coverage.
- Improve the health of the community’s waterways and water bodies.
- Reduce system-wide water use to 110 gallons per capita per day (gpcd) or lower by 2030.
- Halt the decline in the Utility Condition Index (UCI) for the city water and wastewater infrastructure systems.

The Plan contains strategies, specific actions and metrics to track progress. For each strategy, key roles are identified along with a projected timeline and resource needs.

**For more information** on the Draft Plan and to provide comments, please visit the city’s website at [www.cityofwestminster.us/Residents/CityServices/Sustainability/SustainabilityPlan](http://www.cityofwestminster.us/Residents/CityServices/Sustainability/SustainabilityPlan).

If you have questions about the draft Plan, please email [sustainability@cityofwestminster.us](mailto:sustainability@cityofwestminster.us).



# INTRODUCTION



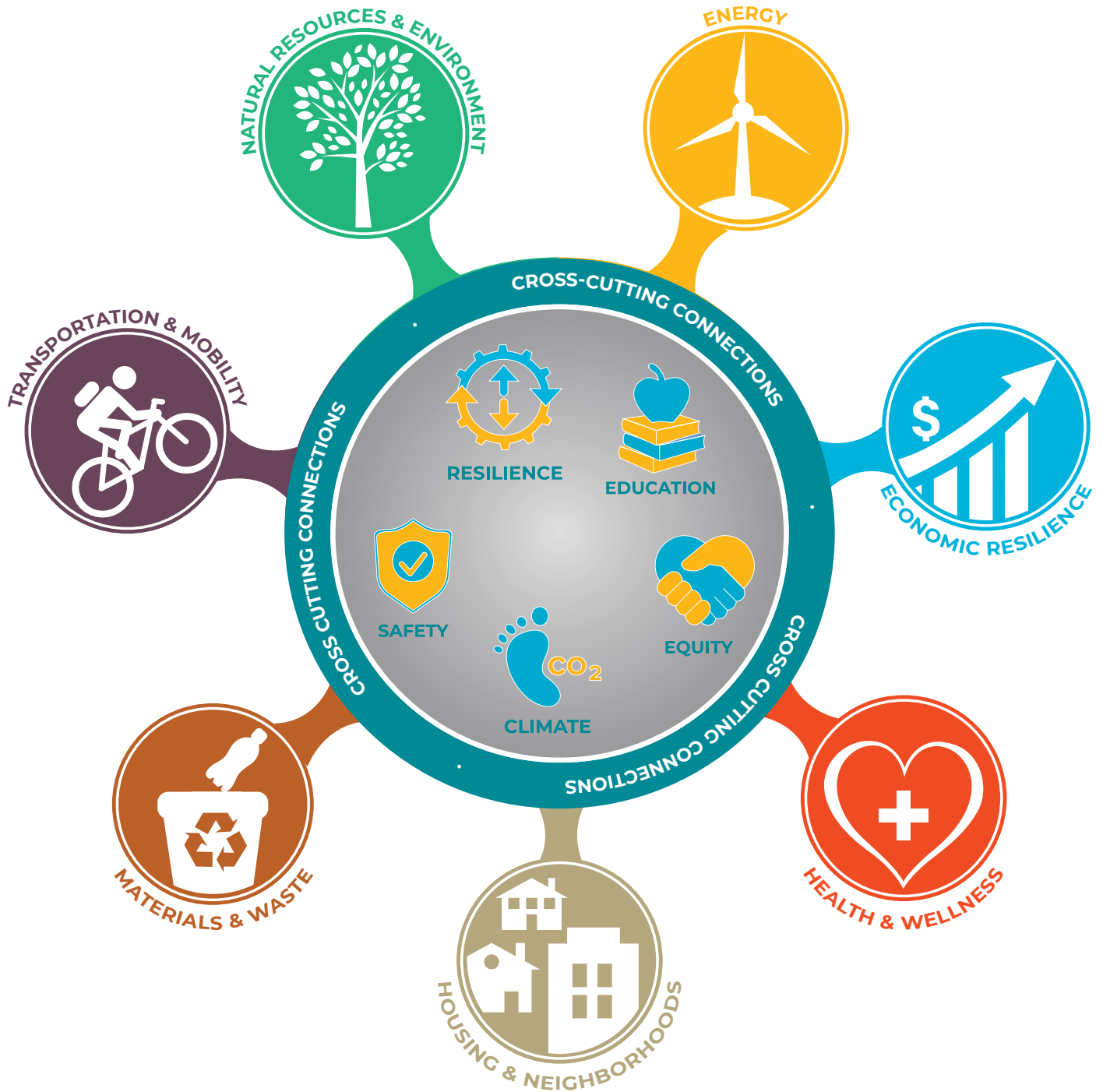
# INTRODUCTION

In 2018, the City of Westminster began the development of its first Sustainability Plan to provide a guiding framework for city staff, residents, businesses and other community partners. The Westminster Sustainability Plan focuses on actions that can be implemented within the next 5-10 years to move the city towards its vision of becoming one of the most sustainable cities in America. This plan identifies key city departments and staff to lead most actions included in this plan. Where appropriate, community partners, such as city advisory boards and school district representatives, are identified to provide additional support and expand the reach of this plan into other aspects of the community.

This Sustainability Plan is an essential component of the city's Strategic Plan vision and seeks to provide a platform to align, coordinate and unify sustainability efforts across city departments and the community. The plan will address the community's desire for an economically strong, socially vibrant and environmentally healthy Westminster.



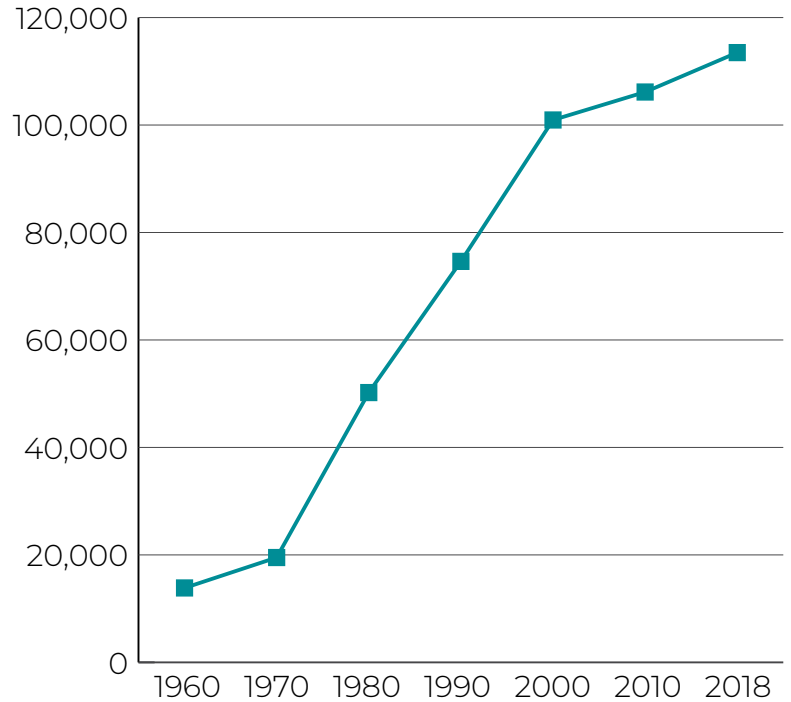
The Westminster Sustainability Plan encompasses seven sustainability themes, supported by five cross-cutting concepts. Each theme is supported by an objective, measurable targets and an array of strategies to support the theme objectives and targets. The actions identified in this document can serve as a preliminary workplan for city staff to guide immediate, near-term, long-term and ongoing activities. In coordination with other city plans and programs, the Sustainability Plan will enable Westminster to achieve its goals and move the city toward a more sustainable future.



## WESTMINSTER OVERVIEW

The City of Westminster is located 12 miles northwest of Downtown Denver and 13 miles southeast of Boulder. Over the past several decades, Westminster has continued to grow as a part of the Denver metropolitan area. Westminster's population grew by 51% between 1990 and 2018, from 74,000 residents to 113,000 residents, but has slowed in recent years (DOLA, County and Municipal Population Time Series, 2018). Like many communities along the Front Range, Westminster is expected to see continued growth over the next 20 years. Older adults are expected to comprise an increasingly larger portion of the population, which will be more racially and ethnically diverse as well (DOLA, Population: Data and Lookups, 2018).

City of Westminster Population: 1960 - 2018



Approximately 65.5% of the city's housing is owner-occupied and 60% of Westminster's housing stock is single-family detached (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). City-wide, home values have increased by 38% between 2005 and 2016; and while median household income has also increased, it has not kept up with the rising cost of housing. Between 2011 and 2015, purchasing power was lost by homeowners and renters alike. In line with regional and national trends, housing unaffordability is having a disproportionate impact on lower-income residents (BBC Research and Consulting, 2017).

Prior to the COVID-19 public health crisis, which resulted in economic challenges, Westminster had experienced an uptick in economic growth over the past two decades. The community's strongest growth has been in the aerospace, business support services, financial services, health and lifesciences, hospitality and entertainment and technology and Information industries, creating nearly 8,000 total new jobs between 2011 and 2016. These six industry clusters employ more than 34,110 employees in almost 4,440 companies, representing 67.7% of all employment and 67.5% of all businesses in the City of Westminster (Development Research Partners, 2017). Nearly 9 out of 10 jobs in Westminster are held by non-residents and only about 12% of employed residents hold jobs within the city (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). On a typical work day, approximately 79% of Westminster residents who work drive alone to their employment; another 9% carpool and 4% take transit. Approximately 1% walk, 1% bike and another 6% work from home (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). The graphic on the following page illustrates the flow of traffic throughout the day for daily commuters.

# Commuter Inflow, Outflow

- Overall daily population in Westminster is reduced as more residents commute to work outside the city than employees who commute into Westminster
- In addition to the inflow and outflow of Westminster residents and employees, there are also many commuters who travel through Westminster everyday

**TRANSPORTATION  
& MOBILITY PLAN**



*Population based the 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*

Growth and land use patterns have been influenced by the natural features of the Front Range landscape, constrained by abutting jurisdictional boundaries and organized by major transportation infrastructure, such as I-25, US 36 and transit service including the Regional Transportation District (RTD) B-Line. Factors such as the network of parks and open spaces and the availability of water and sewer also play important roles in the location and amount of new development.

The Parks, Recreation and Libraries Department's mission focuses on nature, wellness and literacy. The city currently maintains and operates 55 neighborhood, community and city-wide parks, ranging in size from 0.7 to 200 acres and comprising 2,910 acres in total. The city also manages two public golf courses totaling 644 acres. Additionally, the city manages over 150 miles of trails and 3,100 acres of open space, including the 2,321-acres Standley Lake Regional Park and Wildlife Refuge (City of Westminster, 2019). Westminster owns 60 acres of unimproved parkland.

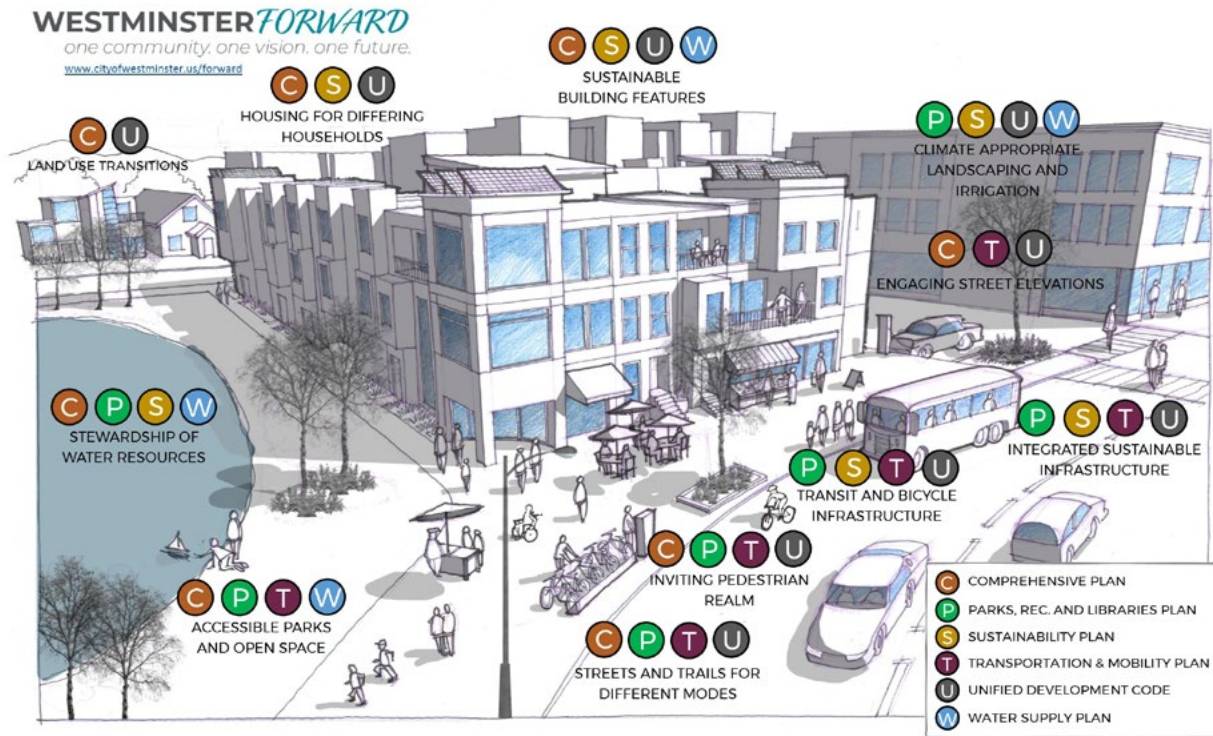
Recreation, arts and culture programs are important services for maintaining quality of life within the city. Westminster provides programming for individuals of all ages, abilities and interests at seven recreation facilities and two libraries – these facilities and programs are often the major ways that residents connect with and interact with the City of Westminster organization.

Other important natural features include the water systems that support the community. The city is located within the South Platte River Basin and the majority of Westminster's potable water supply comes from the Clear Creek watershed. Standley Lake is the water storage reservoir used for the city, as well as for Northglenn, Thornton and Farmers Reservoir and Irrigation Company (FRICO). Since Westminster's water supply is limited, remaining opportunities to increase water supply yield of the system is primarily centered on increasing operational efficiency and expanding reservoir storage.

# PLANNING PROCESS

## Westminster Forward

Westminster Forward is a coordinated community engagement process created to support six concurrent city planning efforts. Westminster Forward plans include: Comprehensive Land Use Plan; Unified Development Code; Sustainability Plan; Parks, Recreation & Libraries Plan; Transportation & Mobility Plan; and Water Supply Plan.



Westminster Forward is not one final plan or product. Each individual plan will provide specific guidance for policy and programming and will be reliant upon vision alignment, projected resource availability and budget. The goal of Westminster Forward is to integrate efforts across disciplines to the extent possible to ensure themes, policies, projects and actions are coordinated.

Westminster Forward's key objective is to seek and maximize community and stakeholder engagement and to prevent community outreach fatigue by providing coordinated opportunities for public input. Under a single umbrella, Westminster Forward can facilitate combined outreach efforts for the plans. Westminster Forward will strive for an interactive feedback process that is dynamic as the plans progress.

The project teams are regularly coordinating to ensure the plans are working together to address the city's Vision, Strategic Plan and other city-wide goals. Because each plan is in a different development phase, a number of the plans will be updated to reflect details that are developed in the plans that come later in the Westminster Forward timeline. For example, the Sustainability Plan will be completed prior to the Transportation & Mobility Plan. When the subsequent plans are completed, any relevant strategies and actions will be used to update information in the Sustainability Plan. This is especially true with the Comprehensive Plan because land use decisions need to be closely



aligned with Sustainability Plan strategies to ensure the creation of a livable community. All of the Westminster Forward Plans must reflect and support one another since they describe a common future for Westminster.

The Sustainability Plan also briefly covers some issues that are addressed in more detail by the other plans. For example, the issue of expanding and connecting the city's trail network is addressed in a general statement within this Plan, but the detail of how and where that will be accomplished will be addressed in the Parks, Recreation & Libraries Plan and Transportation & Mobility Plan. As comments and questions have arisen during public outreach and engagement, city staff have identified the most appropriate plan to address each comment.

## Sustainability Plan Development Process

Development of the Sustainability Plan included the following four major phases.

**Project Kickoff:** To kick-off the project, preliminary meetings with city staff helped to outline goals and expectations of the plan development process, in coordination with the other Westminster Forward planning efforts. During this phase, city staff identified potential topics to cover in the plan and recommended that the Sustainability Plan topics should align with and complement the elements of the Comprehensive Plan. City staff and community representatives were identified and invited to form a Sustainability Working Group. Community representatives were identified based on suggestions from City Council, Executive Leadership and Staff. The Working Group was comprised of 16 community members and 14 staff, which resulted in a variety of perspectives critical to the development of the Plan.

**Baseline Snapshot:** Development of the State of Sustainability, focused on identifying current initiatives, establishing baseline conditions and identifying new opportunities to advance sustainability in Westminster. Engagement efforts included a survey of city staff members; interviews with city leaders and city staff; and review of relevant plans, documents and Westminster Forward survey results. The report identifies current and potential sustainability commitments and activities, existing metrics and cross-cutting considerations, such as equity and education. A summary of the State of Sustainability is provided in Appendix A.

**Vision Framework:** This phase of the planning process was oriented toward developing the "framework," or hierarchy of information, for the Sustainability Plan. The first work session with the Sustainability Working Group focused on developing preliminary objectives for the Plan's seven themes. The objectives serve as the backbone of the plan, with all other components orienting toward these objectives. At the first work session, the Sustainability Working Group also brainstormed potential measurable targets to evaluate progress toward the draft objectives.

**Strategies and Action Planning:** At the second work session, the Sustainability Working Group brainstormed potential strategies to support the draft objectives. Strategies were analyzed using a triple bottom line evaluation tool that helped explore the environmental, economic and social benefits of each strategy, as well as linkages, cross-cutting themes, political/budget feasibility and

staff capacity to support implementation. At two public open houses, community members reviewed and weighed-in on the draft strategy ideas through dot voting activities. A summary of the outcomes from these public open houses is provided in Appendix B.

Strategy evaluation results and public support information were used to inform strategy refinement during a third and final Sustainability Working Group work session. Working Group members focused on clarifying and improving strategies, reducing redundant strategies and identifying potential priorities. Finally, work sessions with city staff helped explore and create action plans for priority strategies. Action plans identify timelines, parties responsible and implementable steps to help the city and community partners achieve the priority strategies in this Plan.

## City and Community Engagement

City staff and community members were engaged early and often to help develop a plan responsive to the needs and desires of Westminster. Engagement activities included:

- Westminster Forward community engagement: ideas and concepts for the Sustainability Plan were initially identified through extensive Westminster Forward community engagement efforts and events. Feedback was gathered through online surveys and community events including Harvest Fest, Movies in the Park and Latino Fest.
- Two public open house events: During both Westminster Forward Open House events, city staff and the consulting team attended to garner feedback from community members regarding the preliminary sustainability strategies. Community members voted on their favorite strategies and suggested new ones not previously considered.
- Three work sessions with Sustainability Working Group: city staff and community representatives recommended and provided feedback on draft plan products, including theme objectives, targets and strategies.
- Seven city staff focus groups: city staff members identified as potential strategy leaders helped to further refine objectives,

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### SUSTAINABILITY WORKING GROUP

Key city staff and community partners were identified and invited to participate in three work sessions to provide input and feedback throughout the development of the Sustainability Plan. Working Group members helped provide technical expertise and connected plan concepts with other Westminster Forward Activities. Working Group members also provided preliminary insight into city capacity during strategy prioritization. Working Group members were also engaged through a series of surveys between work sessions and were tasked with reviewing the full draft plan prior to release for public comment.



targets and strategies. Importantly, these focus groups helped to develop action plans for priority strategies, clarifying city roles, timelines and individual action steps.

- Additional public engagement will be conducted during the Plan adoption process.

## A LIVING PLAN

The Westminster Sustainability Plan is intended to be a living document that city staff, elected officials and community partners use to drive the city towards its vision of becoming one of the most sustainable cities in America. The Plan can be applied by staff to guide annual work plans, by elected officials to prioritize policy action and by community partners to identify opportunities to collaborate and contribute. Living documents can shift and change with the priorities of an evolving community.

Moving forward, city staff, leaders and community members can evaluate the progress and success of prior efforts, while reevaluating the importance of efforts identified for future implementation. As priorities of the community change, efforts identified for future implementation may be dropped, delayed or expedited, and new priority efforts may be added. This is especially true given the COVID-19 public health crisis and the resulting economic challenges.

## IMPORTANT SUSTAINABILITY INFLUENCES

### Growth Management

The Denver metropolitan area population is forecasted to grow by more than 380,000 between 2020 and 2030, with Adams County and Jefferson County together experiencing nearly 150,000 of that growth (Colorado Department of Local Affairs, 2020). Westminster's rate of growth is anticipated to be lower than the metro region as a whole, but will still increase. Accommodating this increase in a sustainable manner requires strategic planning at regional and local levels that balances rising demands for natural resources, transportation capacity, affordable housing and public services like libraries, schools and utilities.



This Plan addresses this challenge through strategies that enable Westminster to create a vibrant economy, while maintaining a high quality of life for its residents. Strategies related to energy and water conservation help protect finite natural resources, while strategies like tree-planting, growing local food and increasing access to recreation promote a healthy, thriving community. Redevelopment of some areas of the city will ensure efficient land use, while also allowing for new investment. Quality of life will also be supported through strategies that promote vibrant, diverse neighborhoods with access to services, transportation and housing opportunities.

## Aging Infrastructure

Maintaining the city's existing infrastructure, including over 1,000 miles of underground water, sewer and stormwater pipes and over 1,100 miles of roads, is one of the city's most important responsibilities. A large portion of Westminster's infrastructure was built in the late 1970s and early '80s during a period of growth in the city. This infrastructure is now close to 50 years old and needs to be repaired, replaced or upgraded presenting a major challenge for the city in the coming years. Recently, the city has enhanced its data-based long-term planning process to work toward stopping the decline of its infrastructure and maintaining the levels of service its community depends on by systematically identifying the right projects at the right time.



In order to finance costly infrastructure improvements, the city continues to evaluate alternative funding sources, closely monitors the affordability of the rates it charges for service and offers a number of assistance programs to help residents manage their utility bill.

This Plan addresses this challenge through strategies that evaluate the financial implications of the city's infrastructure needs and that encourage creative solutions, such as low impact development stormwater features. As the city continues to face challenging infrastructure investment decisions, tools like Envision may provide a useful framework for assessing the sustainability and resilience of crucial, lasting investments.

## Financial Sustainability

One of the city's strategic goals includes being a financially sustainable government providing excellence in city services. This involves clearly understanding how best to fund the work described in this Sustainability Plan and other city plans currently under development or recently developed. These plans have been developed with an eye towards implementation and success and are therefore, practical with respect to what is realistically achievable for the city. Aspirational plans can excite the community, but if they are impractical to implement, then no one benefits. As Walter Isaacson said in his book on Leonardo Da Vinci: "Vision without execution is hallucination."

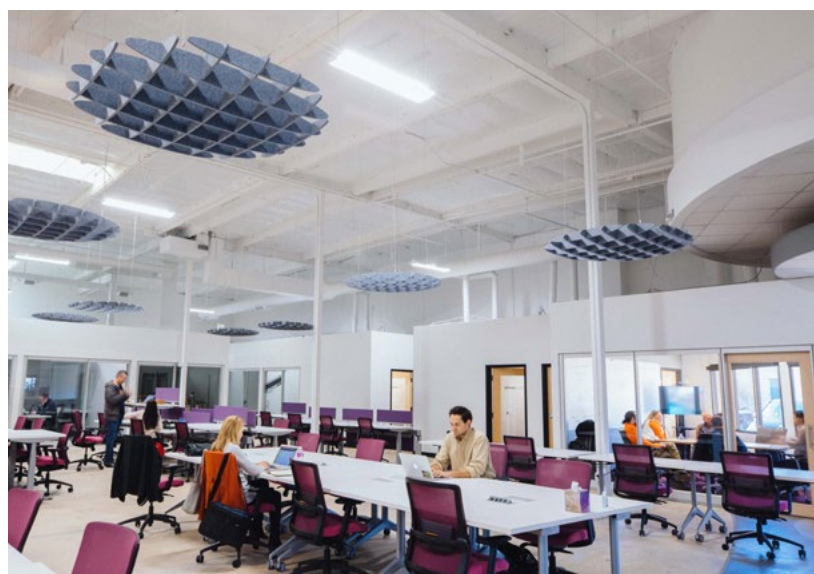
Financial sustainability is essential for the City of Westminster, because the city's General Fund is primarily dependent upon a single revenue source: sales and use taxes. National and local economic growth go through cycles that impacts tax collections at a local level and Westminster needs to be prepared to both weather economic challenges and take advantage of economic upturns. In anticipation of future economic changes, the city has been proactive over the past few years of revenue growth and has increased its cash reserves. Even amidst the revenue growth and careful planning, tremendous financial demands exist to address aging infrastructure through repair and replacement projects and demand for city services continues to grow. These trends illustrate the need for careful planning and innovative funding approaches to sustain the city's fiscal position in the future in order to continue meeting these community expectations and remain a municipal leader.

In 2018, the city conducted a financial sustainability study that identified a potential structural imbalance where expenses were projected to eventually outpace revenues, assuming no changes in current city operations or revenue structure. Key recommendations resulting from the 2018 study include:

- Pursue revenue-generating options in order to ensure funding sufficiency to properly maintain critical infrastructure and to maintain service delivery levels;
- Explore revenue-generating options for purposes of diversifying the city's revenue structure and reduce the reliance on sales and use taxes, a variable revenue source that is susceptible to business cycles;
- Evaluate services provided by the city, including an analysis of core services compared to additional services; and
- Develop and periodically update a resilient, long-range financial projection as part of its standard business practices.

Meeting these recommendations is certainly achievable, but will take intentional and determined effort.

As part of long-range financial planning efforts, ongoing communication is necessary in order to maintain a long-range perspective and to clearly understand how actions today may affect the city years into the future. Further, integral to long-range financial planning efforts includes a focus on financial policy development, including policies that inform proper reserve levels.



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## INNOVATIONS INITIATIVE

A new Innovations Initiative was launched in 2019. This program will evaluate and transform internal business practices that enhance efficiencies and effectiveness and will perform activities using a longer-term planning horizon (e.g., 5, 10, 30 years) about how the city might need to do its work differently to meet future needs. A key question is “How can the city provide more value for its stakeholders or find more stakeholders to pay for service?”

The Innovations Initiative work is intended to:

- Improve service delivery through improved business processes and innovation, resulting in long-term savings that will likely exceed the initial investment in requested resources.
- Allow more strategic and coordinated capital planning that focus on financing tomorrow’s needs.
- Develop a strategy to generate and diversify revenues, relying less on taxes with more entrepreneurial thinking.
- Adopt an integrated sustainability approach that considers economic, environmental and social aspects that prioritizes core services.
- Better position the city financially for the long-term.

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## Regional Environmental Issues

As part of a metropolitan area, Westminster faces several regional environmental issues caused by past and present human activity. Some require regular monitoring and remediation, such as contamination from Rocky Flats, a former nuclear weapons-related facility and potential zebra and quagga mussel infestation from activities at Standley Lake. Other issues require ongoing diligence, such as protecting water and soil quality from oil and gas operations and improving air quality by reducing vehicle emissions. This Plan recognizes the importance of regional collaboration to address issues like these and includes regional strategies in each theme area.





Westminster



# WESTMINSTER'S SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK



# WESTMINSTER'S SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK

## SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT

The Sustainability Statement serves as the overarching guide for the Sustainability Plan. In alignment with the City of Westminster vision, the Sustainability Statement represents the desired future of the community. Westminster's Sustainability Statement is as follows.

**WESTMINSTER STRIVES TO BE A SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE CITY**, with an economically strong, socially vibrant and environmentally healthy community for current and future generations. A sustainable community is a desirable place to live, work, visit and play and is characterized by:

- » Prosperous neighborhoods
- » Connections and accessibility
- » Thriving businesses
- » Clean air, land and water
- » Core services that meet diverse citizen needs
- » Resilient physical, social and economic infrastructure
- » Safe, healthy, informed residents

**WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS VISION BY:**

- » Creating a clear direction for city and community action
- » Working collaboratively with residents, businesses and community partners
- » Utilizing best practices in city operations and focusing on continuous improvement
- » Exceeding all required standards and regulations
- » Being proactive to prevent problems before they occur
- » Continually identifying new opportunities for innovation and action

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***ONLY THROUGH OUR COLLECTIVE ACTIONS CAN WE ACHIEVE OUR SUSTAINABILITY VISION.***

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# LONG-TERM ASPIRATIONAL CITY GOALS

The following goals are future-focused aspirations for the entire city. The city government influences, but does not completely control the achievement of these aspirational goals. Achieving the goals will require commitment and assistance from the city's partners and the entire community.

## 100% renewable electricity

*Provides air quality improvements, utility bill savings and climate benefits*

## 100% electric vehicles

*Provides air quality improvements, costs savings and climate benefits*

## 100% of residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park

*Provides for healthy living and access to nature*

## 100% energy efficient, healthy buildings

*Provides utility bill savings, indoor air quality improvements, thermal comfort improvements, and climate benefits*

## 25% of Westminster businesses are assisted by SAGE Sustainable Business Program activities

*Provides economic resilience, energy, waste, mobility, and climate benefits*

## 100% of Westminster residents have a safe, stable and affordable place to live

*Provides neighborhood, economic, and health and wellness benefits*

## SUSTAINABILITY THEMES AND OBJECTIVES

Responsive to this vision, this Plan is organized around seven sustainability themes, which serve as the main “chapters” of this document. The themes listed below were selected to generally align with Westminster Forward plan elements. The themes are listed in alphabetical order and the order of presentation does not denote any level of priority or importance.

An objective, or aspirational statement, was developed for each theme. Objectives show desired progress/future direction and seek to answer the question, “what is the city/community hoping to accomplish with respect to sustainability for each topic?” Objectives were developed to align with language found in other Westminster plans.



### Energy

Establish a resilient, equitable and reliable energy future powered by low-carbon and renewable energy.



### Economic Resilience

Foster a dynamic and diverse economy that cultivates and strengthens a wide array of economic opportunities.



### Health & Wellness

Increase awareness of and access to healthy lifestyle options, including recreation opportunities, healthy foods and wellness services for all.



### Housing & Neighborhoods

Support a vibrant, connected and sustainable mix of diverse and adaptable neighborhoods that facilitate a sense of community.



### Materials & Waste

Cultivate improved waste and materials management that supports source reduction, sustainable diversion and regulatory compliance through accessible services and programs for all sectors.



### Transportation & Mobility

Innovate to provide a safe, connected, accessible and inclusive multimodal transportation network.



### Natural Resources & Environment

Perpetuate the legacy of Westminster’s natural resources by conserving and maintaining thriving natural systems and enhancing city infrastructure.

## Targets

Targets establish the desired future conditions for the seven sustainability themes and objectives. Where appropriate, targets are expressed as numerical, or quantitative metrics. Where identifying a numerical target was impractical, targets were expressed as directional intent (i.e., increase/maintain/decrease). Targets are established specifically to facilitate the evaluation of progress and outcomes toward objectives. As such, targets identified were associated with specific metrics that can be monitored over time. Metrics are numerical values that can be tracked and monitored to demonstrate implementation progress of strategies and actions and overall impact on achieving the target.



## Strategies

Strategies are major initiatives that the city and community can pursue in support of sustainability objectives and targets, including programs, projects, partnerships and studies. During the development of this Plan, many strategies were identified, evaluated and prioritized. High-priority strategies were further refined to include specific actions, the detailed steps required to implement each strategy. Additionally, leadership roles, timelines and resource needs were identified to serve as a high-level roadmap for implementing identified actions. Some strategy details will be determined by other Westminster programs, plans and projects. Below outlines the organization of information for each strategy..

## Actions

A list of detailed steps for making progress on the strategies.

### Roles

The departments and/or organizations responsible for leading or supporting strategy implementation.

- Lead: city department or other community partner responsible for project coordination and leading implementation
- Support: city department or other community partner responsible for supporting implementation

## Timing

The anticipated timeline for implementation to begin (pending budget approval and resource availability).

- Ongoing (already underway and expected to continue)
- Immediate (within the 2019/2020 Budget)
- Near-Term (2021/2022 Budget)
- Mid-Term (2023/2024 Budget or 2025/2026 Budget)
- Long-Term (2027/2028 Budget or beyond)

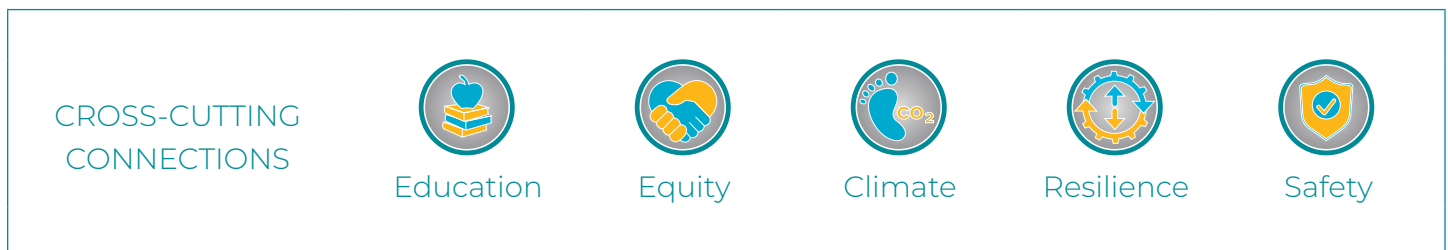
## Resource Needs

The new or additional resources that may be necessary to successfully implement a strategy (in addition to existing City of Westminster resources). **Note that resources need to be already committed in the existing budget or requested through future biennial budgeting processes.**

- Staffing: Additional staff required to implement one or more actions
- Outside Services: Contracted services (i.e., consulting) or partnerships required to meet needs beyond current staff capacity without hiring additional staff
- Funding: Financial resources needed to complete one or more actions
- Other: Additional resources required to complete one or more actions

## CROSS-CUTTING CONNECTIONS

In reaching across all seven themes, the cross-cutting connections listed below were identified as areas of emphasis for strategy development and prioritization. Icons throughout this plan illustrate the cross-cutting connections with each of the sustainability strategies.



## Education

A key component of implementing the strategies will be community education through communication and engagement. The ability of the city to meet its sustainability goals depends heavily on actions taken by residents and businesses, whether it be transportation choices, housing decisions, or other lifestyle selections. Therefore, the city and partners need to provide information to help individuals make informed choices on topics such as recycling, multimodal transportation options and water and energy conservation. This can be done using existing city communications tools, such as the City Edition, the city web site and social media channels.

An education campaign will not be successful unless two-way communication occurs on issues and topics of interest. The city and partners must be responsive to community feedback and adjust communications accordingly. In particular, stronger efforts must be made to engage members of

the community who may be underrepresented in community conversations, including residents of different income, racial, gender and age groups and those experiencing disabilities. Another key component of this work is the need to ensure that consistent information on key topics is provided across the organization and with key partners. Inconsistent information on topics (e.g., recycling options) will only serve to confuse people.

Achieving the Plan’s vision and objectives will be dependent on partnerships with other key groups essential to each strategy. These partners could include schools, community colleges, neighborhood groups, home owners associations, business groups and other community organizations. Many times these groups have access to communication avenues that the city does not have.



## Equity – Diversity and Inclusion

One of the city’s Strategic Planning goals is a “Vibrant, Inclusive and Engaged Community.” It is expressed as follows: “Westminster provides options for an inclusive, demographically diverse citizenry in unique settings with community identity, ownership and sense of place, with easy access to amenities, shopping, employment and diverse integrated housing options. Members of the community are empowered to address community needs and important community issues through active involvement with city cultural, business and nonprofit groups.” One of the objectives under this goal is to “develop programs and strategies that build a unique sense of community in Westminster.”



One of the primary ways the city celebrates cultural diversity is through special events. Westminster has produced an annual Latino Festival for many years, and once COVID restrictions are eased, plans are being made to expand this event into a celebration of world culture. In 2019, the city partnered with local artists to deliver Babe Walls—a mural arts festival in Historic Westminster celebrating women and non-binary artists. The city has also routinely offered dual-language films in its popular Movies-in-the Park series. Working closely with Westminster’s Inclusivity Board, the city’s Office of Cultural Affairs works continuously to inject cultural diversity into its programming (e.g., live performances, art exhibitions, etc.). Additionally, a number of staff teams and the city’s Inclusivity Board are working on expanding programs such as the Language Access Plan to include intercultural relationship building and expanded community engagement. The city strives to be a more welcoming and equitable place to live and be.

Creating an inclusive community is a growing component of municipal sustainability work. Inclusion is achieved by taking an equitable approach, ensuring that diverse groups and communities within the community have similar rights, opportunities and access to all forms of community capital programs and services, as well as engagement opportunities. Westminster views equity in a broad context that covers a variety of demographic issues, including race, age, gender, sexual orientation, income, ability/disability, nationality, faith, and culture. As an example, the Recreation Division provides scholarships for

those who have financial need in order to ensure everyone in our community has access to swim lessons, art classes, childcare and more. The Plan recognizes that many groups do not have equitable access to some of the programs and services described in this document. Therefore, as the Plan strategies are implemented, consideration must be given to providing more opportunities for residents who may not have equitable access to city offerings or who have needs that may not be met by existing city policies, programs and services. The city's Language Access Plan efforts and recent ADA audit are underway and helping to inform next steps for the organization to be more accessible to all community members. Additionally, a community advisory work group will be making recommendations to staff leadership in the upcoming weeks, which include recommendations to be more equitable in the community and be better at equitably providing resources to community members.



## Climate

In 2019, Westminster conducted its first-ever greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory. The inventory accounts for all GHG emissions resulting from activities within the city's geographic boundary. Key findings from the inventory show that emissions from on-road transportation (emissions from gasoline and diesel vehicles), building electricity (burning fossil fuels to produce electricity) and natural gas consumption are the three largest sources of emissions. Together these sources comprise 86% of total emissions. Most of the remaining emission sources are from aviation (estimated air travel for Westminster residents from Denver International Airport).

The city also conducted a 2017 GHG inventory for municipal operations, showing a total emission value of 30,978 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (mtCO<sub>2</sub>e). The largest share of emissions was from facilities, which comprised 36% of the city's overall emissions. Emissions from water transport and wastewater treatment energy-use make up the second and third largest portions at 18% and 16% of the total, respectively. Emissions from powering streetlights, traffic signals and park lighting make up the fourth largest portion at 13% of the total.





The contribution to community GHG emissions from city operations is very small, but the city will demonstrate leadership by working to reduce its share of the total amount of emissions.

Because GHG emissions are not limited by community boundaries, the City of Westminster has set its GHG emissions reduction target using the State's GHG emissions reduction goals (see sidebar). The city's GHG contribution represents about 1% of the total emissions generated in the state, so to be effective and efficient, the city must partner with state and regional entities to achieve the state-level goals. The city also must view the issue in light of community interests and needs, which means emphasizing the economic and community benefits of taking action, such as saving residents money, improving air quality and providing services that make Westminster a desirable place to live, work, visit and play.

A robust GHG reduction approach needs a clear understanding of who can lead on different GHG reduction actions, including utilities, businesses, state government, federal government, and universities. Cities can play a role in adopting development and energy codes, improving municipal operations (e.g., fleet), managing elements of a multimodal transportation network (e.g., streets, trails, sidewalks), prescribing appropriate land uses, leading community education and outreach, installing publicly accessible electric vehicle charging stations and other similar actions.

In support of this work, the city engages in regional partnership with a variety of organizations. The city is an active member of Colorado Communities for Climate Action (CC4CA), an advocacy group for climate strategies at the state legislature and state agencies. CC4CA is comprised of numerous municipalities and allows Westminster to expand its reach and impact through the collective action of many partners. Westminster also has a strong

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## WESTMINSTER'S GREENHOUSE GAS INVENTORY

The Westminster GHG inventory (based on 2017 data) shows a total emission value of 1,371,220 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent (mtCO<sub>2</sub>e), which is similar to most communities in the Front Range.

Further comparison shows that the city's GHG emissions roughly represent 1% of the State's total emissions (125,529,000 mtCO<sub>2</sub>e per 2020 estimates).



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## COLORADO'S GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSION GOALS

In 2019, the Governor's Administration established a roadmap for the State of Colorado to achieve the following energy and climate goals:

- 90% reduction in GHG emissions by 2050 (from 2005 levels)
- 100% renewable energy by 2040

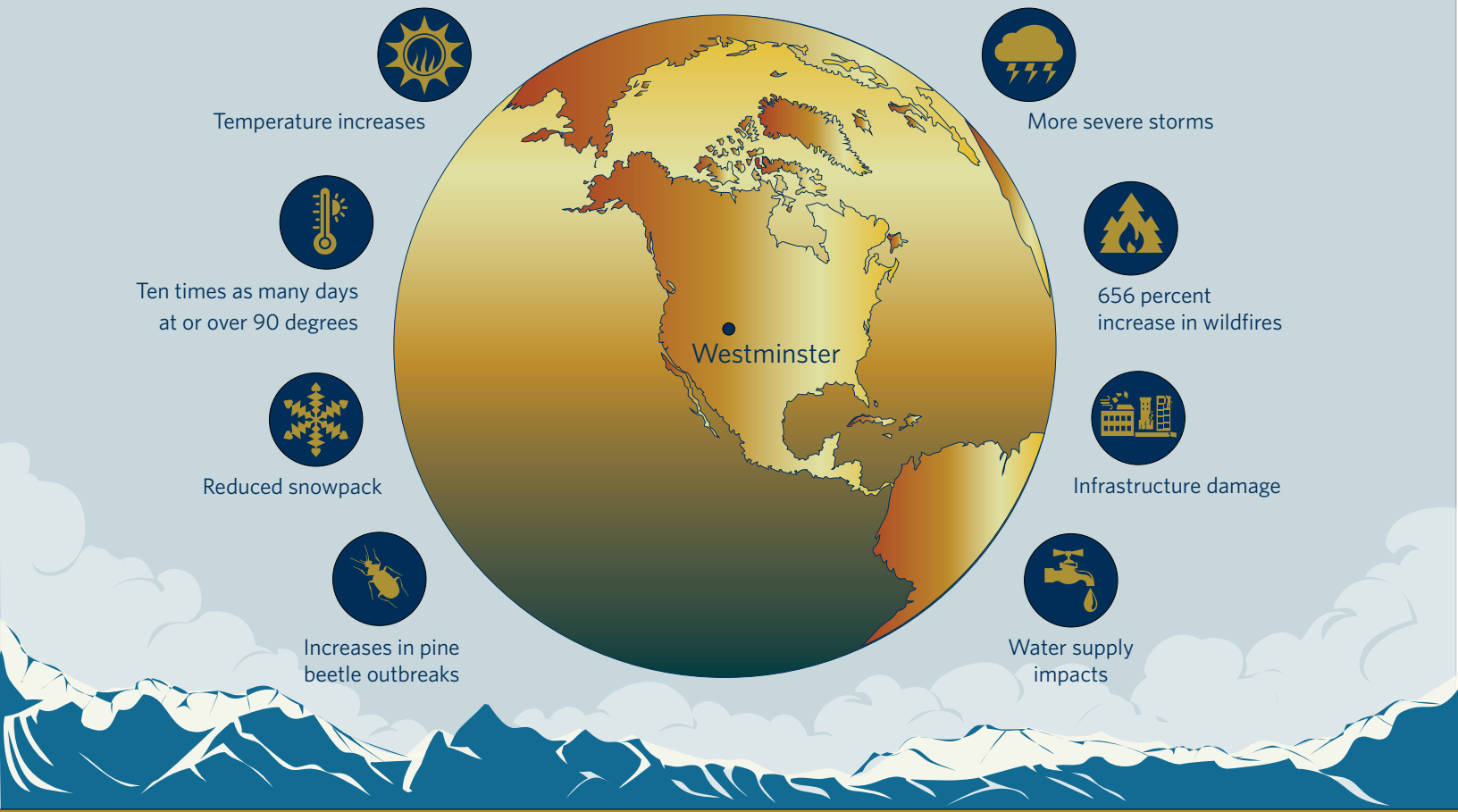
In addition, Xcel Energy established goals of 80% reduction in GHG emissions by 2030 and carbon-free electricity by 2050. Their interim goal is to achieve 55% renewable electricity by 2026.

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# 2017 COMMUNITY GREENHOUSE GAS INVENTORY



## REGIONAL IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE



## How Westminster is leading the community



The City of Westminster is committed to creating a sustainable community to enhance quality of life and community resilience, generate economic growth, and create equitable access to services for the entire community. Westminster is focusing on reducing energy and transportation costs for the community, improving air quality and providing critical services that meet resident's needs. A key part of that work is understanding key sustainability issues facing the city and developing strategies to address those issues, one of which is the community's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. **This summary represents the results of Westminster's first-ever communitywide GHG emissions inventory and will serve as a baseline of emissions moving forward.**

The city's participation in regional and national climate initiatives (i.e., Climate Mayors and Colorado Communities for Climate Action) illustrate a commitment to participate in efforts to understand the city's role in issues that extend beyond its boundaries. This initial emissions inventory sets the stage for Westminster to understand, identify and implement strategies for reducing community emissions. Westminster is positioned to continue to be one of the most sustainable cities in America, and the city's commitment to understanding and reducing GHG emissions will result in a healthier and more resilient future.

## A Summary of the Most Meaningful Findings

### KEY FINDINGS

Westminster's 2017 inventory was conducted in accordance with the Global Protocol for Community-Scale Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventories (GPC). The GPC is a global standard that provides a transparent GHG accounting methodology for reporting community GHG emissions. The 2017 inventory captures all emissions occurring within the city's geographic boundary. The 2017 Westminster GHG inventory shows a total emission value of 1,371,220 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent (mtCO<sub>2</sub>e), which is similar to most communities in the Front Range.

### Emissions by Source

Key findings from the inventory show that emissions from on-road transportation (emissions from gasoline and diesel vehicles), building electricity (burning fossil fuels to produce electricity) and natural gas consumption are the three largest sources of emissions. Together these sources comprise 86 percent of total emissions. Most of the remaining emissions sources are from aviation (estimated air travel for Westminster residents from Denver International Airport).

### Emissions by Sector

The largest share of emissions was from transportation, which comprised 48 percent of the community's overall emissions. The residential and commercial/industrial sectors followed, generating 25 percent and 24 percent of overall emissions, respectively. Emissions from the decomposition of solid waste were the fourth largest category, comprising 3 percent of total emissions.



### WHAT THE COMMUNITY CAN DO Implement Climate Change Mitigation Strategies

We can reduce emissions by reducing energy consumption for buildings and transportation, and waste generation. Westminster can lead this charge by developing, facilitating, and implementing GHG reduction strategies for the entire community. This GHG inventory is the first step of that process. By identifying a baseline of GHG emissions, Westminster can effectively target the best places to reduce GHG emissions.

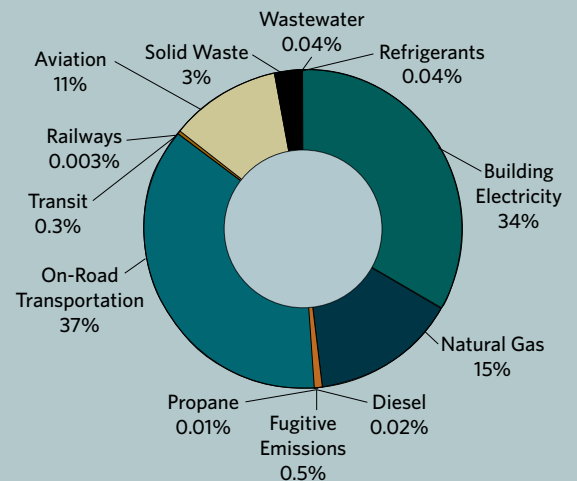
The community could focus on making homes and businesses more energy efficient, reducing water use (note: water use is a big energy user), using less gas by combining trips and taking transit, and even buying an electric vehicle. Many options also exist for owning or leasing solar energy. In addition, reducing waste generation and increasing recycling are also important. For more information on what the community can do, check out the city's Sustainability page at [www.cityofwestminster.us/sustainability](http://www.cityofwestminster.us/sustainability).

### COMMUNITY INVENTORY

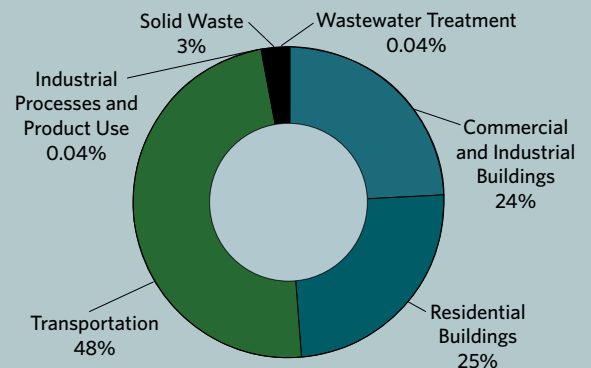


1,371,220 mtCO<sub>2</sub>e Total Emissions

### EMISSIONS BY SOURCE



### EMISSIONS BY SECTOR

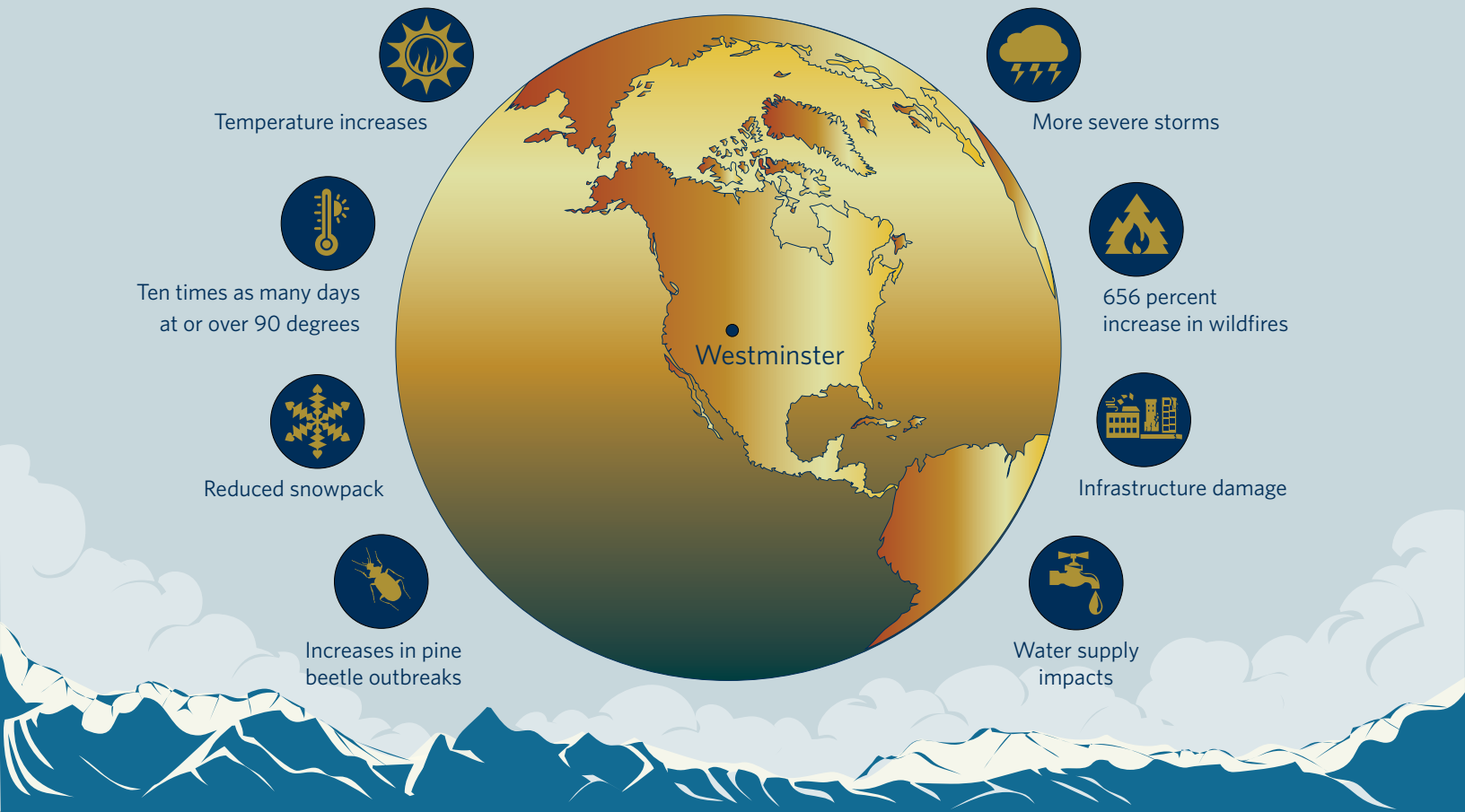


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# 2017 MUNICIPAL GREENHOUSE GAS INVENTORY

## REGIONAL IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE



## How Westminster is leading the community



The City of Westminster is committed to creating a sustainable community to enhance quality of life and community resilience, generate economic growth and create equitable access to services for the entire community. As part of this effort, the city is committed to walking the talk by reducing its own greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from municipal operations, mainly from transportation and buildings. This summary showcases the results of Westminster’s 2017 municipal operations GHG emissions inventory, a critical step in assessing the city’s operational carbon footprint.

The city’s participation in regional and national climate initiatives (i.e., Climate Mayors and Colorado Communities for Climate Action) illustrate a commitment to participate in efforts to understand the city’s role in issues that extend beyond its boundaries. This emissions inventory sets the stage for the city to understand, identify and implement strategies for reducing municipal operations emissions.

# WESTMINSTER 2017 MUNICIPAL GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

## A Summary of the Most Meaningful Findings

### KEY FINDINGS

Westminster's 2017 municipal inventory was conducted using guidance from ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability's (ICLEI) Local Government Operations Protocol (LGOP). The 2017 inventory captures all emissions occurring within the city's operational boundary, showing a total emission value of 30,978 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent (mtCO<sub>2</sub>e). Subsequent GHG emission inventories may provide new emission data that can be compared against 2017 totals, which will provide information on annual trends and changes to annual totals.

### Emissions by Source

Key findings from Westminster's 2017 GHG municipal inventory show that **emissions from building electricity (burning fossil fuels produces electricity), vehicle fleet and natural gas consumption** are the three largest sources of emissions. Together these sources comprise **96 percent of total emissions**.

### Emissions by Sector

The largest share of emissions was from **facilities**, which comprised 36 percent of the municipality's overall emissions. Emissions from **water transport** and **wastewater treatment energy**-use make up the second and third largest portions at 18 percent and 16 percent of the total, respectively. Emissions from **streetlighting, traffic signals and parks lighting** make up the fourth largest portion at 13 percent of the total.



### WHAT CITY STAFF CAN DO

Inspire the community to reduce its carbon footprint

Considering the scope of a city's influence and its contribution to GHG emissions, Westminster has a clear role in leading the community. Cities can motivate, inspire and guide significant reductions in a community's carbon footprint. The most significant contributor to GHG emissions is the **burning of fossil fuels for buildings and transportation**. Therefore, the most significant actions that can be taken are to **make buildings more energy efficient, use renewable energy where feasible and use fuel efficient vehicles**.

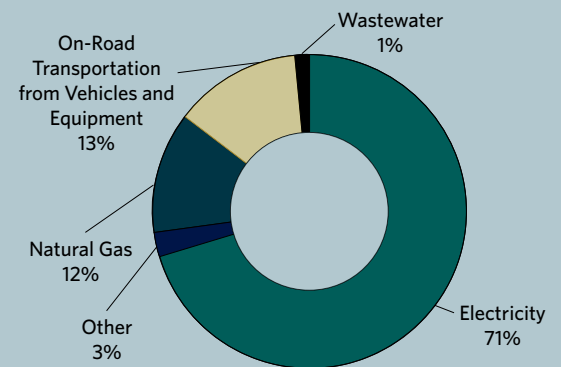
Westminster can lead this charge by **developing, facilitating and implementing GHG reduction strategies for its operations**. This GHG inventory is the first step of that process: by identifying a baseline of GHG emissions, Westminster can effectively target the best places to reduce GHG emissions.

### MUNICIPAL INVENTORY

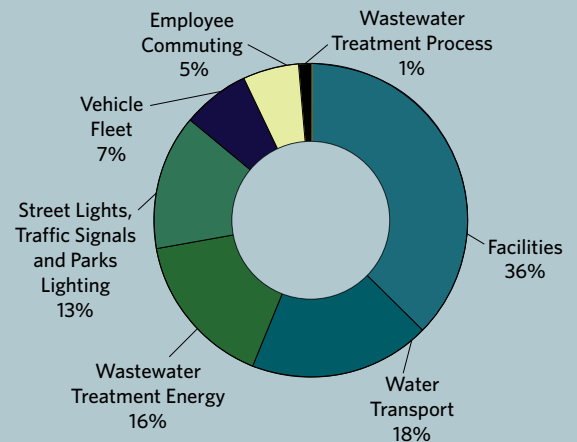


30,978 mtCO<sub>2</sub>e Total Emissions

### EMISSIONS BY SOURCE



### EMISSIONS BY SECTOR



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Memorandum of Understanding with Xcel Energy, called the Energy Futures Collaboration (EFC). The EFC describes mutual strategies that help the city and Xcel Energy meet their respective energy efficiency, renewable energy, Smart City and economic development goals.

The strategies and actions identified in many of the Plan chapters contribute to a reduction in GHG emissions. In particular, the Energy, Housing and Neighborhoods and Transportation and Mobility sections identify work on the part of the city and its partners (see Appendix C). Taken collectively, these strategies and actions will contribute to the larger Colorado effort to meet aggressive state-wide GHG goals. Both the community and municipal inventory summary documents are provided on the following pages.



## Resilience

Community resilience is typically defined as the ability to anticipate, accommodate and positively adapt to natural and man-made hazards, disruptions and cycles (e.g., economic). A primary method that municipalities use to address these issues is to develop a Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP), which identifies the range of hazards and prioritizes strategies to mitigate those risks. Hazards can include catastrophic storms, train derailments, electric grid failure, pandemics and other acute problems. Longer-term problems are also identified including the impacts from climate change, such as drought, aridification and extreme weather events. Westminster updated its HMP in 2018 and continues to update the document as needed. In 2020, the city will develop specific appendices to the document that consider the risks and impacts to the city, residents and businesses from COVID-19, flooding and high-heat events, so that community members can take steps to adapt and thrive amidst these changing climate conditions.

The city's infrastructure (e.g., bridges, roads, buildings, water systems, etc.) is also at risk from both short- and long-term hazards and disruptions. The city actively works to maintain the resilience of those systems to ensure that they are available when and where the community needs them. Examples of city actions include leading-edge water supply planning, assessment and enhancement of the stormwater system and increasing the energy efficiency of buildings. Maintaining critical city infrastructure is essential to creating a sustainable city. In addition to increasing its own resilience, the city can partner with regional groups to broaden its impact and help create a more resilient Colorado, similar to the regional and state benefits experienced through economic development and public health efforts. These experiences underlie the need for broader engagement on regional resilience issues that not only include governments, but also businesses, non-profits, universities, research organizations and the public.



Every chapter of this Plan includes actions that enhance the resilience of city operations, residents' lives and businesses' ability to operate successfully. For example, the Economic Resilience chapter contains a strategy to launch a business sustainability program that will help Westminster businesses reduce their energy, water and waste costs while increasing their recognition in the community. The concept of resilience can serve as a framework to identify strategies that help the city maintain its strong position, while continuing to protect its residents. For example, as energy costs rise, how can energy efficiency and renewable energy strategies help residents adapt to those changes? As high-heat events become more common, how can the city help populations without air conditioning and residents who may be more impacted by heat than others (e.g., older adults)? As our water supply becomes more endangered by drought, wildfires and invasive species, how can buildings and landscapes be designed to consume less water? The city's challenge is to search for ways to help people adapt to large-scale changes, whether they are short- or long-term.



A sustainable city is a safe city. Westminster is working to improve safety in the city for all residents and businesses. While the 2018 Resident Survey Report of Results regularly shows that they feel safe in the city, more can clearly be done (National Research Center, 2018). The Sustainability Plan and other Westminster Forward plans touch on this issue in a number of ways. Providing a safe multimodal transportation system is of particular concern. The city's plans focus on limiting conflicts between cars and bikes and pedestrians throughout the city through multiple strategies (e.g., implementing bike lanes), thus creating a safer and more comfortable space for pedestrians and cyclists.

Maintaining safe neighborhoods is clearly a role for municipal police and fire departments. Safe neighborhoods can also be created through connections among neighbors who watch out for each other. Creating social capital (i.e., connections among neighbors) has been shown to reduce crime rates and to maintain support networks during difficult times, including local and regional disasters. For example, during the catastrophic Chicago heat wave of the 1990s, neighborhoods that had stronger social connections had far fewer people die from heat than neighborhoods that did not have robust social capital. Social connections, some of which may be enhanced by city programs and initiatives, are essential to a safe community.

Another safety issue that occasionally occurs in the city is abandoned hazardous waste. Some individuals do not properly dispose of waste material (e.g., used motor oil) thus creating a safety issue. Ensuring that abandoned waste is reported and correctly managed is a role for the city to keep residents safe and the environment clean.

Finally, a safe community provides a sense of security for residents related to preparing for, responding to and recovering from human-made and natural hazards. As mentioned in the previous section, keeping people and property safe in the event of natural and man-made incidents is a key role for a city, especially the emergency management function.







# ENERGY

Establish a resilient, equitable and reliable energy future powered by low-carbon and renewable energy.





## ENERGY

Westminster's population growth brings an increasing demand in energy to power more than 45,000 housing units (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017) and 4,000 businesses (Development Research Partners, 2017). By carefully planning new development, engaging existing property owners and working with energy utility providers (Xcel Energy and United Power), Westminster can leverage this growth in order to transition to a clean energy future that protects the health of its residents, realizes the benefits of a clean energy economy and contributes toward state-wide greenhouse gas emission reduction goals.

As Westminster's main energy service provider, Xcel Energy's goal to reduce its electricity carbon emissions by 80% by 2030 will help drive progress; however, there is still work to be done in order for Westminster to build a resilient, equitable and reliable energy future. The City of Westminster is a current participant in Xcel Energy's Partners in Energy offering, which leverages existing utility programs to improve municipal, residential and commercial energy efficiency. Additional opportunities to reduce energy use are predominately found by improving efficiency in existing buildings through retro-commissioning, equipment upgrades and other improvements. New construction can also be built more efficiently, reducing energy impacts and integrating renewable energy systems into the design and construction. As Westminster explores new technologies and strategies for increasing renewable energy, considerations will need to be made to ensure energy affordability and equitable access to programs for all.

### Targets

- Achieve 25% electricity savings and 15% natural gas savings community-wide by 2030 compared to the city's 2014 baseline.
- Pursue opportunities to decrease energy utility costs for low-income households.
- Strive for 80% renewable electricity for primary municipal facilities and operations by 2030.
- Align with the Governor Administration's Roadmap to pursue 100% renewable electricity community-wide by 2040.

### SOLAR POWER

From investing in community solar gardens to supporting solar installations on homes, Westminster continues to invest in Colorado's tremendous solar resource. The city has subscribed to 4.2 megawatts of community garden solar energy, enough to power City Hall, the Public Safety Center and City Park Recreation and Fitness Centers. This example is matched by Westminster residents with more than 2,215 solar installations, representing 7.4% of Westminster homes.

Leading by example, the City of Westminster has completed several energy efficiency and renewable energy initiatives and continues to explore clean energy options for city facilities. Examples of past efforts include energy performance contracting to capture energy savings, a subscription to 4.2 megawatts of community garden solar energy to power city facilities and the installation of more efficient heating and cooling systems in buildings.



Recent technology advances such as battery storage and distributed energy systems offer opportunities to protect hospitals, emergency shelters and other critical community assets from grid disruptions and enhance Westminster's overall resilience.

## STRATEGIES

### EN1. Support a Clean Energy Agenda for the State of Colorado

The State of Colorado has set state-wide goals and priorities to transition to renewable energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This strategy focuses on how Westminster can support clean energy efforts at the state level.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

#### Actions

- Track and support State of Colorado energy-related legislation and rulemaking.
- Support a clean energy agenda for the State of Colorado, including policies and programs related, but not limited to renewable energy, electric vehicles, energy affordability and workforce development.
- Continue to work with Colorado Communities for Climate Action (CC4CA) and other regional and state groups to strengthen state climate policy.

#### Roles

Lead: City Manager's Office

**Timing:** Ongoing

#### Resource Needs

- Maintain staffing for ongoing program administration.
- Funding to invest in new technologies and systems (to be requested through biennial budgeting process).

## EN2. Explore Opportunities for Resilient Energy Systems

Increasing resilience in energy systems can help protect critical assets, improve reliability and reduce dependence on non-renewable resources. This strategy explores opportunities to develop resilient energy systems for both the public and private sectors.



### Actions

- Explore opportunities to develop resilient energy systems in city facilities and through private development using new technologies, including district energy.
- Explore opportunities to reduce code and utility barriers to battery storage systems.
- Pursue opportunities to integrate new energy technologies to maintain or improve continuity of operations for critical facilities and infrastructure, such as emergency services, shelters and schools.
- Continue the transition of city streetlights to LEDs.

### Roles

Lead: General Services; Community Development; Fire

**Timing:** Ongoing

### Resource Needs

- Maintain staffing for ongoing program administration.
- Funding to invest in new technologies and systems

## EN3. Build Regional Renewable Energy Partnerships

Many communities and agencies across the Front Range have shared energy goals and face similar energy challenges and opportunities as Westminster. This strategy focuses on building partnerships with neighboring communities and utility providers to increase access to renewable energy programs.



### Actions

- Seek regional partnership opportunities to implement renewable energy projects and programs, such as collaborating with Broomfield, Northglenn and other neighboring communities to launch a North Metro Solar United Neighborhoods program.
- Explore potential sites for community solar gardens in coordination with solar garden providers and other partners.
- Continue partnering with Xcel Energy on the Energy Futures Collaborative workplan to expand renewable energy and energy efficiency opportunities

## Roles

Lead: City Manager's Office; General Services

Support: Xcel Energy; United Power

**Timing:** Immediate and Ongoing

## Resource Needs

- Maintain staffing for ongoing program administration.
- Funding for renewable energy projects, programs and/or incentives.

## EN4. Provide Residential Energy Education and Engagement

The City of Westminster and its utility providers offer many energy efficiency and renewable energy programs. This strategy focuses on providing energy education to residents and exploring ways to better engage underserved and low-income populations.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

## Actions

- Bolster residential energy education by leveraging existing energy efficiency and renewable energy programs, partnering with schools and providing information via City of Westminster communications channels.
- Explore ways to reach under-served populations and low-income populations with opportunities to save energy and money.
- Educate residents on opportunities to shift to renewable energy, switch from natural gas to electricity and incorporate new and emerging technologies, such as electric vehicles, heat pumps, and programmable thermostats.
- Partner with Xcel Energy and others to offer free Home Energy Squad® visits, and other options, to middle and lower income homeowners and renters

## Roles

Lead: City Manager's Office; Community Development

Support: School districts; Energy Resource Center; Xcel Energy; United Power; Energy Outreach Colorado

**Timing:** Immediate and Ongoing

## Resource Needs

- Continued support from Partners in Energy.
- Funding to develop and distribute educational materials.

## EN5. Increase Renewable Electricity for Municipal Facilities and Operations

The City of Westminster is actively pursuing opportunities to increase renewable electricity procurement for municipal facilities and operations. Currently, 21% of city facilities' electricity comes from community solar gardens. This strategy focuses on continuing this effort through on-site solar installations, renewable energy subscription programs and other renewable energy opportunities.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

### Actions

- Work with Sun Share, Xcel Energy and other renewable energy providers to increase cost-effective renewable energy for municipal facilities and operations through community solar gardens, Renewable\*Connect® and similar programs.
- Explore opportunities to connect streetlights on city property with renewable energy subscriptions or programs.

### Roles

Lead: General Services

**Timing:** Immediate and Ongoing

### Resource Needs

- Maintain staffing for ongoing program administration.
- Funding for new on-site renewable energy projects.

## EN6. Conduct Energy Performance Contracting in Municipal Facilities

The City of Westminster has completed several rounds of energy performance contracting to capture energy savings from equipment and operations within city facilities. This strategy promotes continued city participation and leadership in municipal energy management through energy performance contracting.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

### Actions

- Explore additional energy performance contracts for energy efficiency and renewable energy for city facilities and operations.
- Execute energy performance contracts for city facilities where practical and cost effective.

## Roles

Lead: General Services

Support: Energy Performance Contract providers

**Timing:** Immediate and Ongoing

## Resource Needs

- Maintain staffing for ongoing program administration.

## EN7. Update Building and Development Codes

The City of Westminster regularly updates its building and development codes to reflect best practices, including energy efficiency updates. This strategy focuses on ways to improve energy efficiency and renewable energy practices in new development.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

## Actions

- Regularly adopt updated International Building and Energy Conservation Codes to establish minimum energy efficiency requirements. The city has adopted the 2015 suite of codes from the International Code Council (ICC). The ICC released updated 2021 codes in 2020.
- Provide training opportunities to the community when new codes are adopted.
- Create programs, incentives and local code amendments to encourage above-code energy efficiency and renewable energy practices, including but not limited to net zero energy construction and cool roof installation.

## Roles

Lead: Community Development

Support: Fire, Home Builders Association; building industry

**Timing:** Near-Term and Ongoing

## Resource Needs

- Funding for consulting services for local code amendments and training.







# Economic Resilience

Foster a dynamic and diverse economy that cultivates and strengthens a wide array of economic opportunities.





# ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

Colorado's economy, along with the nation's, entered into a recession in February 2020, after one of the longest growth markets in US history and as a direct result of the COVID-19 global pandemic. Westminster is in the same economic situation that has resulted in business closings, increased unemployment, and decreased revenues. While much is still unknown, the economic impacts present significant challenges to the Westminster community. At the same time, there is an opportunity to rethink the approach to sustainability and development. During the period of immediate response to the pandemic and the impacts it created to the local economy, the city provided financial assistance to support small businesses and the local workforce. Long-term economic recovery plans and efforts are in progress and will continue through the immediate future

The Front Range has been, and continues to be, a place that attracts a talented workforce and is viewed as positive place to do business. Over the past decade, land and housing prices have been on the rise in Westminster and the Denver metropolitan area, creating challenges to maintaining the needed levels of affordability for the community. To address the challenges associated with high housing prices, Westminster developed the Affordable and Workforce Housing Strategic Plan (Westminster Department of Economic Development, 2017). Other challenges associated with growth are being addressed through a collection of plans known as Westminster Forward, which includes a Transportation and Mobility Plan.

The Westminster business community, as part of the larger regional economy, is central to creating and maintaining resiliency in the local economy. In addition to providing job opportunities and an array of goods and services to the community, businesses can adopt sustainability practices that improve their bottom line, reduce their environmental impacts, and create social benefits. A few notable tools and trends to support these efforts include developing local sustainable business programs that connect businesses with information and resources, linking recognition or incentives to sustainability progress without jeopardizing the city's competitive position, and encouraging corporate social responsibility initiatives. The latter is an emerging business practice that focuses on pursuing benefits for both the business as well as for society.

## TARGETS

- Maintain a diverse primary industries base.
- Expand opportunities for small businesses and entrepreneurs within the community.
- Grow opportunities for local workforce to match business needs.
- Improve social responsibility and sustainable business practices in the community.

# STRATEGIES

## ER1. Foster Small and Local Business Development

The City of Westminster already has a robust economic development strategy that offers an assortment of programs, services and resources for small and local businesses. This strategy focuses on leveraging and increasing awareness of existing resources and tools, strengthening collaborations with other organizations and aligning offerings with sustainability best practices and information in order to expand small business growth and opportunities.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

### Actions

- Continue to implement the city's economic development strategy that focuses on strengthening and growing the employment base, supporting retail business and fostering redevelopment.
- Strategically support and partner with other agencies: the North Metro Denver Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Front Range Community College (FRCC) and the Westminster and Metro North Chambers of Commerce to extend services and opportunities to local businesses.
- Continue to make grants and financial assistance available to businesses, including but not limited to the Small Business Scholarship Grant and Small Business Capital Project Grant programs, the Facelift Program and Economic Development Agreements. As applicable, review and update eligibility and participation requirements to align with sustainability best practices (e.g., incorporate xeriscaping principles for landscaping improvements completed as part of the facelift program).
- Continue to market and connect businesses with state and federal tax credit and financing programs and opportunities, including but not limited to Enterprise Zones and Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) financing.

### Roles

Lead: Economic Development

Support: City Manager's Office; Community Development; SBDC; Westminster and North Metro Chambers of Commerce

**Timing:** Ongoing

### Resource Needs

- Maintain staffing for ongoing program administration
- Funding for small business grants and scholarships

## ER2. Enhance Workforce Development for Under-represented Populations

Those who lack adequate education, language skills, or training can struggle to find work even with positive employment trends. This strategy focuses on investing in Westminster’s under-represented workforce populations in order to improve household stability and create a more resilient local economy.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

### Actions

- Partner with the Adams County Workforce and Business Center, vocational programs and other workforce development organizations to identify programs and opportunities best suited for Westminster’s under-represented populations.
- Ensure wrap-around services and support are built into workforce development programs, including interview and resume skills, assistance overcoming transportation barriers and developing financial literacy.
- Partner with Adams 12 Five Star Schools, Westminster Public Schools, Jeffco Public Schools, Front Range Community College and other educational institutions to promote experience, apprenticeships, jobs and workforce development opportunities to under-represented populations.
- Explore opportunities for under-represented populations to enter the clean energy economy and other careers that contribute to Westminster’s sustainability goals.

### Roles

Lead: Parks, Recreation and Libraries, Human Resources, Adams County Workforce Center; Adams 12 Five Star Schools; Westminster Public Schools; Jeffco Public Schools; Front Range Community College

Support: Economic Development

**Timing:** Ongoing

### Resource Needs

- Maintain staffing for ongoing program coordination
- Funding to support partnerships and program expansion

### ER3. Align Workforce Development to Business Needs

A resilient local economy requires a trained and available workforce to support local business. Aligning workforce development initiatives with local business needs, not only benefits local businesses, but also provides more opportunities for Westminster residents.



Education



Equity



Climates



Resilience



Safety

#### Actions

- Engage the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Westminster and Metro North Chambers of Commerce and local businesses to identify workforce gaps.
- Partner with the Adams County Workforce and Business Center, vocational programs and other workforce development organizations to explore opportunities to address local workforce gaps.

#### Roles

Lead: Economic Development

Support: SBDC; Westminster and Metro North Chambers of Commerce; Adams County Workforce Center; local businesses; school districts; Front Range Community College

**Timing:** Ongoing

#### Resource Needs

- Maintain staffing for ongoing program coordination
- Dedicated part-time staffing or funding for consulting services for workforce gap analysis

### ER4. Strengthen Core Economic Development Functions of Business Attraction, Retention and Expansion

Supporting and growing a diverse mix of businesses is critical in ensuring long-term financial and economic resilience. This strategy emphasizes the need to maintain the core functions of the Economic Development Department, while continuing to identify opportunities to improve service and adapt to the changing needs of the business community.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

## Actions

- Continue identifying creative new ways for the city to support economic development through the city's Innovations Initiative.
- Leverage growth opportunities in the sustainability business sector, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and clean technologies, through incentives or other programs in order to attract new types of employment.
- Help existing businesses develop continuity plans for climate change impacts, such as utility costs, water availability and extreme weather events (e.g., hail, flood, heat wave).
- Provide recognition for businesses that demonstrate commitment to the Westminster community, such as number of years serving Westminster or number of jobs provided.

## Roles

Lead: Economic Development

Support: City Manager's Office; Community Development; Emergency Management

**Timing:** Ongoing

## Resource Needs

- Maintain staffing for ongoing program administration

## ER5. Create a Sustainable Business Support and Recognition Program

Sustainability is rapidly becoming a common business strategy. By creating a sustainable business support and recognition program, Westminster can acknowledge existing business leadership in sustainability and encourage additional businesses to adopt sustainable practices.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

## Actions

- Develop a sustainable business program, including recognition opportunities, that leverages local, state and utility tools and programs related to energy and water conservation, waste reduction and transportation options.
- Coordinate and align business support and education activities with partners, including the city's Public Works Department Water Resources and Quality Division.
- Include corporate social responsibility (CSR) as an element of the program.
- Incorporate a business energy assistance program in coordination with Xcel Energy and United Power to promote measures such as retro-commissioning, equipment upgrades, benchmarking and renewable energy procurement.
- Provide support and education to businesses related to resilience, including climate risks, continuity planning and resource management.
- Seek funding for business incentives to help offset the costs of implementing sustainability practices (e.g., energy efficiency projects).

## Roles

Lead: City Manager's Office; Economic Development

Support: Community Development; Emergency Management; SBDC; Westminster Chamber of Commerce; Xcel Energy; United Power

**Timing:** Immediate and Ongoing

## Resource Needs

- Maintain staffing for ongoing program administration
- Funding to develop and distribute educational materials

## ER6. Explore the Integration of Sustainability Practices into Economic Development Incentives

The City of Westminster's existing economic development incentive programs encourage businesses to make decisions and investments that are good for Westminster. This strategy focuses on exploring the incorporation of sustainability into incentive packages.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

## Actions

- Engage with the development and business community to explore opportunities for sustainability best practices to be incorporated into economic development programs.
- Develop additional economic sustainability criteria and metrics for appropriate incentives.

## Roles

Lead: Economic Development; City Manager's Office

Support: Community Development

**Timing:** Mid-Term

## Resource Needs

- Maintain staffing to research opportunities for economic sustainability







# Health & Wellness

Increase awareness of and access to healthy lifestyle options, including recreation opportunities, healthy foods and wellness services for all.





## HEALTH & WELLNESS

The recent COVID-19 global pandemic has directly affected the health and well-being of Westminster residents and has highlighted shortfalls in the public health system. Recovery from this public health crisis will involve city, regional and state government, non-profit and private sector players and could create the opportunity for more innovative approaches to helping residents cope with current and future situations as they arise.

Many factors play into the health and wellness of a community's residents, including equitable access to healthy food; health care and mental health services; a connected network to access parks, open space, trails and other recreation opportunities; and social service programs and systems. While the county jurisdictions, rather than the City of Westminster, provide health and human services beyond parks, recreation centers, libraries and trails, there are abundant opportunities to partner with county and other local organizations to elevate access to health and wellness options and to play a leadership role in influencing the food landscape and overall health of city residents.

Current key city program offerings include wellness, outdoor, educational enrichment, swimming and sports activities. Aside from the Standley Lake Regional Park, located at the western edge of the city, most park space in the city is classified as neighborhood and community parks. These parks are an integral part of the quality of life in Westminster and are used by approximately 75% of Westminster residents daily (City of Westminster, 2013).

While there is a variety of health and wellness infrastructure in Westminster, 73% of Westminster's residents have limited access to healthy food (NYU Langone Health, 2015) and 24% of Westminster's adults report being obese (NYU Langone Health, 2016). In 20 years, Westminster's population will be older and more diverse with the fastest growing age segment ranging from 55 to 64 years of age. This significant increase in older residents aging in place will create challenges and market demands for the built environment as well as influence allocation of municipal and other services, such as

<sup>1</sup>Food swamps are areas that are oversaturated with or have a high density of establishments selling unhealthy food options relative to healthier food options.

### TARGETS

- Achieve the parks, open space and trail targets established in the Parks, Recreation & Libraries Plan.
- Reduce food swamps<sup>1</sup> and lessen the effects of food deserts on local populations.
- Increase education about and access to local and healthy foods, mobility options for active lifestyles and other healthy living opportunities.
- Increase community resilience and neighborhood connections for improved health and wellness outcomes.
- Collaborate to improve regional air quality.

grocery stores. With grocery delivery services growing increasingly common, to a certain extent, grocery store locations can matter less over time as food distribution systems evolve. However, the city will need to monitor this to ensure programs and policies are in place and working effectively for low-income community members to access these delivery programs. Technological and financial barriers may exist for them and members of the rest of the community.

While the city does not determine which food retailers choose to operate in its boundaries, it can encourage a more complete food ecosystem that includes opportunities to grow, sell, process, distribute, consume and compost food. This may include expanding the city's community garden program, which currently supports four gardens with a waiting list for plots. Other opportunities may include individual gardens, urban agriculture, restaurants, grocery stores, convenience stores and neighborhood events.

Being a Front Range community, Westminster regularly experiences the effects of poor air quality that result from collective emissions and particulate matter in the Denver metropolitan area. While this is a regional challenge, there are opportunities to reduce local contributions to poor air quality by opting for alternative modes of transportation and by collaborating on regional initiatives with broad impacts.

Ultimately, healthy and connected neighborhoods are the framework for local sustainability. Safe neighborhoods where needs are met through access to healthy food, mental health services, wellness/recreation options and opportunities to connect with each can foster greater community resilience throughout the city.

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## WESTMINSTER FORWARD LINKAGES

The Parks, Recreation & Libraries Plan will address important facets of community health and wellness, including but not limited to park and open space access, trail development, recreation and library facility upgrades, arts and culture and historic preservation. The plan will emphasize nature, literacy, wellness and sustainability.

The Transportation & Mobility Plan will include goals, policies and actions related to healthy lifestyles and active modes of transportation, such as walking and bicycling.

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# STRATEGIES

## HW1. Improve Trail Connectivity

The City of Westminster's Parks, Recreation & Libraries Plan will include open space, trail and park development and will be coordinated with the Transportation & Mobility Plan. These plans will outline an assortment of infrastructure improvements, programs, services and resources for recreation and connectivity throughout the community. This strategy emphasizes identifying missing pedestrian and bicycle trail links and recommendations for continuing to improve trail connectivity in the face of growth and land use changes over time.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

### Actions

- Complete the development of the Parks, Recreation and Library Plan and the Transportation & Mobility Plan.
- Develop an inventory of missing trail connections throughout the city.
- Determine and apply criteria to prioritize missing connections.
- Develop and maintain an up-to-date trail development map illustrating required connectivity and high priority missing connections.
- Identify trail connections that will be constructed as part of development or will be funded through cash-in-lieu payments.
- Identify funding needs and resources for improvements and establish timelines for completing all connections.
- Develop wayfinding for existing trails and incorporate wayfinding into all new trail development.

### Roles

Lead: Parks, Recreation and Libraries

Support: Public Works and Utilities; Community Development

**Timing:** Immediate and Ongoing

### Resource Needs

- Funding for trail construction, wayfinding and associated multimodal transportation infrastructure connections (as identified in the Capital Improvements Plan)
- Dedicated staffing and resources for project management and maintenance of increased trail connections and associated multimodal transportation infrastructure

## HW2. Partner to Expand Health, Nutrition and Wellness Education and Offerings

Leading by example and partnering with local organizations to encourage health and wellness is a natural extension of city activities. This strategy involves partnering with and supporting school districts, county health departments, food banks and businesses to promote existing health, nutrition, active transportation and wellness offerings. It also includes identifying and offering additional community-based services and programming beyond free meeting spaces, which are currently available through the city, to increase health and wellness literacy for community residents. This strategic approach should begin with high need populations, such as those without access to a vehicle, necessitating healthy food options in walkable distances or viable alternatives.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

### Actions

- Coordinate with Jefferson County Health Department, Tri-County Health Department (community health assessment and public health improvement plans as backdrop), food banks, Adams 12 Five Star Schools, Westminster Public Schools, Jeffco Public Schools and Front Range Community College (FRCC) to identify existing collaborations and contacts.
- Determine best ways to leverage partnerships by identifying successful channels and programs for outreach, targeting gaps in current services and using existing service mechanisms to share additional information about health and wellness.
- Develop a communications plan that includes appropriate messaging and materials to inform community members about existing programs and community services, includes public and seasonal events as opportunities to share information and takes advantage of partner networks and channels to raise awareness about opportunities and resources.
- Publicly recognize successful points of connection.

### Roles

Lead: Parks, Recreation and Libraries

Support: City Manager's Office; county health departments; food banks, Adams 12 Five Star Schools; Westminster Public Schools; Jeffco Public Schools; FRCC

**Timing:** Immediate and Ongoing

### Resource Needs

- Maintain or increase staffing for enhanced coordination and program support

### HW3. Achieve HEAL Cities Designation

The HEAL Cities and Towns Campaign (Healthy Eating and Active Living) is a process offered through LiveWell Colorado, which partners with the Colorado Municipal League and Kaiser Permanente. HEAL is designed to help municipalities remove barriers to healthy foods and active living, especially for low-income populations, through no- and low-cost policy changes. HEAL also helps to incorporate healthy living considerations into other city decision-making. This strategy involves the City of Westminster achieving the HEAL Cities designation by taking advantage of the free training and technical assistance offered by LiveWell Colorado and using this information to inform policy-making to build an active community with access to healthy food and healthy workplaces.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

#### Actions

- Submit a resolution outlining Westminster's selected policy areas of interest per HEAL requirements and become a member of HEAL.
- Take advantage of the free resources of HEAL to develop city policy, communicate with the broader community about the effort, identify and apply for grant funding to implement the policy and gain recognition.
- Develop an implementation work plan and take action, including working with local partners and service providers.
- Incorporate the social determinants of health into a future city discussion framework.

#### Roles

Lead: Parks, Recreation and Libraries

Support: City Manager's Office, LiveWell Colorado

**Timing:** Immediate

#### Resource Needs

- Maintain staffing to support designation process

## HW4. Reduce Local Contributions to Regional Air Pollution

Given the nature of air quality challenges in a metropolitan area, this strategy acknowledges the importance of collaboration to find regional solutions for poor air quality. Partnering with neighboring jurisdictions and the Regional Air Quality Council (RAQC) will ensure coordinated efforts to improve regional air quality that could include incentives for reducing local contributions through specific and recognizable activities. This strategy also involves leveraging existing resources to educate and inform the local community about air quality concerns (e.g., ozone alert days) and ways to help.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

### Actions

- Establish and maintain periodic coordination meetings with RAQC and adjacent jurisdictions.
- Promote the voluntary Simple Steps, Better Air voluntary ozone outreach, awareness and Behavior Change program through RAQC.
- Explore partnerships with the RAQC and local employers to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips to help reduce air pollution.
- Consider applying for additional Charge Ahead Colorado funding to diversify transportation fuel types and promote electrical vehicles and supply equipment.
- Determine available regional resources for education and outreach, including Adams County Extension.
- Identify short- and long-term activities that can be accomplished locally but will have regional impacts in coordination with the city's impending Transportation & Mobility Plan.
- Pursue/collaborate on and support policy initiatives at the State level that could impact regional air quality.
- Use city communication channels to announce air quality alert days and discourage driving, vehicle-fueling and lawn-mowing on such days.

### Roles

Lead: City Manager's Office

Support: Community Development, RAQC

**Timing:** Immediate and Ongoing

### Resource Needs

- Maintain staffing for enhanced coordination and program support
- Funding for outreach

## HW5. Encourage Home Gardens and Local Food Production

In conjunction with the updated Comprehensive Plan and Development Code update underway, there is an opportunity to reduce restrictions on urban agriculture to promote more opportunity for locally produced food. In addition, the city can explore and encourage organized Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) operations that connect community residents to locally produced food and encourage gathering and connections within the community. At the individual level, raising awareness about and promoting home gardens through education and events has the potential to increase local food production and health through gardening activities. Community gardens will also be included in the Parks, Recreation and Library Plan.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

### Actions

- Align with Comprehensive Plan and Development Code updates to streamline processes and promote opportunities for year-round urban agriculture, such as greenhouses, hoop houses and residential food sales.
- Identify existing urban agriculture organizations, farmer's markets and vendors that accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Double Up Food Bucks as partners.
- Potentially partner with the Adam's County Extension Office to leverage existing curriculum, messaging, materials and Master Gardener program to promote home gardening.
- Identify local CSA operations through Local Harvest or other organizations and partner to promote education and availability throughout the city.
- Publicly recognize local food producers and home gardeners.
- Pilot a partnership with Growing Home who will provide volunteers at a community garden at Irving Street to provide their food pantry with fresh produce.

### Roles

Lead: Parks, Recreation and Libraries; Public Works and Utilities

Support: Community Development; City Manager's Office; Adams County Extension Office; Colorado State University Extension Office in Jefferson County; local markets and CSA providers

**Timing:** Near-Term and Ongoing

### Resource Needs

- Maintain or increase staffing for enhanced coordination and program support
- Funding for outreach materials and events



## HW6. Identify Needs and Gaps Related to Community Health and Resilience

Building a coordinated approach to community health and resilience first requires an understanding of the related needs and potential or experienced barriers to broader and sustained wellness in the community. This strategy encompasses a quantitative and qualitative assessment of service, opportunity and infrastructure gaps in the community related to health and wellness, especially as they affect underserved populations in Westminster. The assessment should identify trends as well as an inventory of programs and initiatives offered by the city and other local and regional organizations working to improve health and wellness. Based on the outcomes of the assessment, the city can work with other community organizations to address the gaps, such as mental health and substance abuse service availability, safe multimodal transportation infrastructure, or public education about ozone alerts, high-heat days, deep freezes, or other triggers for emergency services.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

### Actions

- Collect data on existing health and wellness services in Westminster (e.g., county health departments, schools).
- Conduct interviews with providers of related supportive services in Westminster, Adams County and Jefferson County to understand trends, wait lists, missing services and future plans.
- Compare existing resources and capacity levels with identified needs.
- Consider hosting public meetings to gather broader input on needs and existing services.
- Prepare a report with implementation recommendations and priorities that match resources and identify potential funding opportunities that extend beyond current resources.
- Support mental health service providers, advocating for resources to support and help bridge service gaps within our community.
- Raise awareness in the community about the availability of mental health services and encourage the community to take advantage of the services.

### Roles

Lead: New Task Force (with staff from City Manager's Office; Parks, Recreation and Libraries; Emergency Management)

Support: Local service providers, Bloomberg Philanthropies Training

**Timing:** Near-Term and Ongoing

### Resource Needs

- Dedicated staffing or funding for consulting services to lead Task Force and gap analysis
- Additional resources may be necessary to support implementation recommendations

## HW7. Encourage and Recruit Healthy Food Options

To address the challenges associated with food deserts and swamps and their impacts on vulnerable populations in the community, the city must understand where food deserts and swamps exist and why and then offer support to retailers, markets, food banks and farmers markets to increase healthy food availability in these areas. At the same time, the city can provide free meeting rooms to organizations like the health departments to provide free educational opportunities to community members about diet, nutrition as well as how to prepare and grow fresh food.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

### Actions

- Conduct an inventory of food retailers, markets and food banks to determine food desert and swamp areas in Westminster through a city-wide mapping analysis of walksheds and other barriers to access.
- Review development codes in areas that meet the criteria of food deserts and/or swamps to reduce barriers and increase opportunities for healthy food sales and distribution.
- Develop an incentive structure to encourage food retailers to support designated areas.
- Coordinate with and consider incentivizing community supported agriculture (CSA), farmers markets and food banks to expand service to designated areas.
- Develop policies and incentives to support Double Up Food Bucks Colorado to ensure better access to healthy foods at food retailers, markets and CSAs.

### Roles

Lead: Parks, Recreation and Libraries; Economic Development

Support: City Manager's Office; Community Development

**Timing:** Near-Term and Ongoing

### Resource Needs

- Increase staffing for enhanced coordination and program support
- Funding for grants or other incentives

## HW8. Develop Community Partnerships for Resilience

To address the increasing risks associated with climate change and extreme weather events, Westminster will develop flooding, drought, winter storms and heat appendices to the Hazard Mitigation Plan that identify and describe actions to reduce the impacts to residents and businesses from weather or other catastrophic events. This strategy also includes defining and implementing targeted actions to improve community resilience, such as identifying a reliable network of resources available and raising awareness about how to use them in an emergency, ensuring back-up power at key facilities and cooling centers for people without a functional cooling system, publicizing these key facilities' locations and establishing clear and redundant lines of communication that are recognizable to community members so they can respond accordingly. Finally, the city will consider employing safe development practices, such as locating or relocating structures outside of floodplains, preserving natural land as buffers and protecting existing development from extreme weather.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

### Actions

- Coordinate on the Hazard Mitigation Plan development to include flooding and heat events as new appendices or chapters.
- Identify local, county and state resources that can be tapped in times of crisis or extreme weather conditions as safe spaces.
- Explore and pursue opportunities with the Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) to conduct neighborhood resilience trainings.
- Coordinate with organizations that manage these resources related to best and highest uses, when and how to mobilize or make resources accessible and process alignment.
- Evaluate and prioritize the need for emergency back-up power at key city facilities
- Develop a clear communications plan with appropriate messaging and channels so that residents, including even hard-to-reach populations are informed about emergency resources.
- Educate businesses and neighborhoods on resilience planning and practices (e.g. contingency planning, disaster preparation).

### Roles

Lead: Fire, City Manager's Office, General Services

Support: Parks, Recreation and Libraries; Public Works and Utilities

**Timing:** Near-Term and Ongoing

### Resource Needs

- Maintain or increase staffing for enhanced coordination and program support
- Potential funding for consulting services for Hazard Mitigation Plan updates
- Potential capital improvement resources for facility enhancements





# Housing & Neighborhoods

Support a vibrant, connected and sustainable mix of diverse and adaptable neighborhoods that facilitate a sense of community.





## HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS

Westminster is a primarily residential community within the context of the larger Denver metropolitan area. Nationally, housing costs continue to outstrip increases in household income, making housing affordability a top priority for all communities in the entire Denver metropolitan area. Plus, Westminster has an opportunity to emerge as a leader in providing diverse housing options and neighborhood programming.

In 2018, 69% of residents reported that Westminster’s “openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds” was good or very good. Additionally, 59% of the community agreed that “Westminster is a good place to retire” (National Research Center, 2018). However, 37% of residents identified homelessness as a moderate or major problem within Westminster (National Research Center, 2018). As the population along the Front Range ages and becomes more racially and ethnically diverse, there is significant opportunity for Westminster to support housing and neighborhood policies that foster a more inclusive and multi-generational residential community.

Options that allow families to age in place or that accommodate multi-generational households may become increasingly popular. And while housing affordability can impact the entire community, lower- and middle-income residents often experience greater impacts. Developing policies and strategies to increase diversity in housing price points and options are also important considerations as Westminster plans for its housing future. The City of Westminster Affordable and Workforce Housing Strategic Plan sets forth detailed actions to foster more balanced and inclusive housing. This strategic plan was developed following the 2016 Housing Needs Assessment and 2017 Affordable Housing Task Force. It provides a series of policies and prioritized actions to address existing and future housing needs (City of Westminster, 2017). An updated Housing Needs Assessment is underway in 2020.

### TARGETS

- Maintain or increase the percentage of residents who somewhat or strongly agree that the city can be described as safe and secure.
- Increase both the diversity of housing types and affordable options available in the city.
- Maintain or increase the percentage of residents who rate the overall quality of their neighborhood as very good or good.
- Achieve 90% or greater voluntary compliance with nuisance code violations issued by the city.
- Increase opportunities for creating community and neighborhood engagement.

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## WESTMINSTER FORWARD LINKAGES

Though the Sustainability Plan can play a role in guiding more environmentally, economically and socially viable development, it is the primary responsibility of the Comprehensive Plan to establish a consistent framework for land development and redevelopment. The updated Comprehensive Plan will serve to align land uses with economic vitality, community health, community resilience, energy/climate, water resources, transportation, services and other issues.

While the Comprehensive Plan provides a general policy framework, the Sustainability Plan details specific programmatic actions and identifies resource needs, city department leads and partnerships required to implement these actions. Thus, both documents must work in tandem to guide a sustainable future for Westminster's housing and neighborhoods.

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In addition to affordability, neighborhood safety and vibrancy play an important role in resident perception of quality of life. Though 80% of Westminster residents feel safe from violent crimes, only about 63% of residents feel safe from property crimes (National Research Center, 2018). Traffic safety was another major concern for residents and 83% of residents identified walkability and bikeability improvements as very important. Though access to walkability and bikeability are related to overall neighborhood quality, these transportation improvements are addressed in the Transportation and Mobility chapter.

The city plays an important role in facilitating community cohesion and fostering a high quality of life. Encouraging face-to-face interaction both amongst neighbors and city staff may lead to an enhanced sense of safety and belonging. Other key tools and trends to encourage high quality, livable neighborhoods include adopting green building standards to support sustainable construction and education partnerships to support residents in maintaining safe, healthy homes.



## STRATEGIES

### HN1. Preserve and Cultivate Affordable and Workforce Housing

Ensuring housing options for residents can reduce the burden of their combined housing and travel costs. The city's Affordable and Workforce Housing Strategic Plan outlines specific actions to help preserve and cultivate a more diverse housing stock. This strategy builds on the actions identified in the Strategic Plan.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

#### Actions

- Update the Affordable and Workforce Housing Strategic Plan.
- Continue to monitor the progress of actions outlined in the Strategic Plan.
- Continue to monitor the success of housing incentives and refresh and expand incentive offerings based on lessons learned.
- Explore policies to improve multimodal transportation connectivity to reduce travel costs.
- Explore other financial tools and strategies to increase affordable housing development.
- Consider providing model plans for accessory dwelling units (ADUs) that allow expedited permitting when used.

#### Roles

Lead: Economic Development

Support: Community Development

**Timing:** Ongoing

#### Resource Needs

- Maintain staffing for ongoing plan implementation

### HN2. Protect and Preserve Existing Housing Stock

Preserving and enhancing existing homes is one of the most efficient uses of resources for cultivating a sustainable housing stock. Rental inspection programs, disseminating educational materials about home safety and directing residents to home repair resources are all ways the city can help enhance and maintain its existing housing stock.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety



## Actions

- Provide education and connect residents with resources to ensure that residents have healthy and safe environments in which to live (e.g., radon information, building and fire codes, nuisance codes).
- Maintain and enhance enforcement tools aimed at incentivizing compliance while managing city staffing resources in a sustainable manner. These tools include administrative citations, public nuisance abatements (civil) and summary abatements.
- Continue to implement Rental Inspections Program for units 6 years and older.
- Continue to develop and share information about resources like Emergency and Essential Home Repair Program to support residents seeking upgrades.

## Roles

Lead: Community Development

Support: City Manager's Office; Public Works and Utilities; Fire; Economic Development

**Timing:** Immediate and Ongoing

## Resource Needs

- Increase staffing for increasing volume of rental inspections and code compliance activities

## HN3. Promote Sustainable Practices and Product Diversity in Construction

Maintaining and enhancing the high quality of Westminster's neighborhoods will require a multi-pronged approach to sustainable development. Promoting sustainable construction practices and building materials can lead to more environmentally, socially and economically-friendly housing stock to serve generations of Westminster residents. However, sustainable development isn't constrained to new homes nor the retrofitting of old homes. Westminster can support economically sustainable housing practices by promoting a diversity of housing product for construction. Offering a range of housing types and price points will help ensure all of Westminster's residents have a place to live and age.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

## Actions

- Support the incorporation of sustainable building materials and construction practices in the construction of all housing through updates to the Development Code.
- Educate residents and developers on the long-term savings for short-term investments in sustainable building materials.
- Incorporate Universal Design standards into the Development Code.<sup>2</sup>
- Incorporate sustainability practices into the Development Code for new construction, including electric vehicle-ready and solar-ready building requirements.

<sup>2</sup>The United States Access Board defines Universal Design as "the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design." (United States Access Board, 1995)

## Roles

Lead: Community Development

Support: City Manager's Office; Economic Development; Home Builders Association; building industry

**Timing:** Immediate and Ongoing

## Resource Needs

- Maintain staffing for development review and economic development agreements
- Increase staffing for educational campaigns

## HN4.Focus on City Neighborhoods

Activating neighborhoods can take many forms, including gatherings, neighborhood clean-ups, adopt-a-street programs, or landscaping programs. Improving neighborhoods through grass-roots programming, supported by city staff, will require close partnerships between the city and its neighborhoods. Identifying city staff and neighborhood liaisons, both for communities with and without homeowner associations (HOAs) will be key to the success of this strategy.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

## Actions

- Provide coordinated outreach and education about sustainability opportunities to Westminster's HOA and non-HOA neighborhoods.
- Refine and expand the neighborhood landscape program to promote and encourage neighborhood-based sustainability and resilience initiatives.
- Consider establishment of a neighborhood services initiative to unify service delivery through the city organization.
- Explore additional volunteer opportunities for residents to engage in neighborhood and open space clean-ups and other activities to improve the city.
- Consider adopting the Lakewood Sustainable Neighborhoods network program.

## Roles

Lead: City Manager's Office; Parks, Recreation and Libraries

Support: Community Development; Economic Development; Public Works and Utilities; Inclusivity Board; HOAs

**Timing:** Near-Term and Ongoing

## Resource Needs

- Dedicated staffing to lead and coordinate efforts
- Funding for micro-grants

## HN5. Facilitate Discussions focused on Neighborhood Inclusivity and Resilience

Inclusion, partnerships and social cohesion are key components of resilient neighborhoods. Resilient neighborhoods are self-sufficient and possess the capacity to organize and address neighborhood issues. While electronic neighborhood platforms have increased the speed with which Westminster residents can share information, these platforms tend not to build true relationships with neighbors. Facilitated discussions seek to better define Westminster's neighborhood needs, including workforce housing and other housing types, to build greater cohesion and greater social capital.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

### Actions

- Facilitate inclusive community discussions on affordable, workforce housing, permanent supportive housing and housing diversity.
- Support neighborhood gatherings that enhance social cohesion, neighborhood capacity and self-sufficiency to organize and address neighborhood issues.

### Roles

Lead: City Manager's Office; Parks, Recreation and Libraries

Support: Economic Development; Inclusivity Board; Fire

**Timing:** Near-Term

### Resource Needs

- Dedicated staffing to lead and coordinate efforts



REC



## Materials & Waste

Cultivate improved waste and materials management that supports source reduction, sustainable diversion and regulatory compliance through accessible services and programs for all sectors.





# MATERIALS & WASTE

More than 95% of Colorado’s waste could be diverted from landfills and converted into new products or stronger soils, yet the state of Colorado remains one of the most wasteful in the country, recycling or composting only 17% of municipal solid waste compared to a 35% national average (Bailey, Setzke, & Katz, 2019). Recent Westminster data reveals an estimated diversion rate of 11%, which is below the 18% regional diversion rate (Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, 2018). The regional rate includes Denver, Golden, Boulder and other communities with universal recycling services and compost programs. In Westminster, 10 private waste collectors provide waste hauling services.

In Front Range communities like Westminster, reducing waste at the source and increasing diversion efforts have the potential to produce substantial environmental and economic benefits. By recycling and composting, communities can reduce greenhouse gas emissions and energy associated with the extraction and production of new materials and the decomposition of organic waste in landfills. Material reuse and waste diversion also have the potential to boost Westminster’s economic resilience by creating new jobs.

### TARGETS

- Increase waste diversion rate to 35% by 2030 for all city operations and facilities.
- Increase the community-wide waste diversion rate.
- Enhance city environmental management systems and practices.



Jobs created by landfills and incinerators



Jobs created by composting



Jobs created by recycling



Jobs created by reuse

Compared to landfills and incinerators, composting creates at least twice as many jobs, recycling creates an average of 10 times more jobs, and reuse creates as many as 30 times more jobs (Eco-Cycle Solutions, 2019).

Despite these benefits, Westminster faces significant challenges to waste diversion due to global and local factors and personal preferences. China's recent ban on U.S. recycled paper and plastic resulted in a global market upheaval, leaving recyclers with an oversupply of materials. Recent news stories and the wide variety of materials and packaging in the marketplace often create confusion around what can be recycled. In addition, limited markets for end products and lack of composting services create challenges to increase waste diversion.

In order to overcome these challenges and meet community goals, Westminster can build upon current material management efforts, including residential yard waste collection services, city-run recycling drop-off centers and household hazardous waste programs. By enhancing and expanding recycling and composting programs and employee education, the city can increase its own waste diversion, including a 13% diversion rate at City Hall (Alpine Waste and Recycling, 2019).

The operation of city services and facilities is subject to a wide variety of environmental regulations. The city generates a variety of waste materials that must be properly disposed, including used motor oil, lightbulbs and cleaning chemicals. Over the last few years, the city has expanded its work in this area to stay in compliance with all regulations and to prevent problems before they happen. The city will constantly search for state-of-the-art practices to achieve best-in-class status in the way that it operates its facilities and conducts its work.



# STRATEGIES

## MW1. Reduce Waste and Increase Diversion in City Facilities

By expanding waste diversion efforts at city facilities, the City of Westminster can demonstrate leadership and share lessons learned with the broader community. This strategy focuses on assessing the city operations to identify opportunities to increase waste diversion through infrastructure, programs and policies.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

### Actions

- Review and assess existing waste infrastructure and increase education, information and signage about proper disposal in city facilities.
- Investigate the expansion of the composting education and collection infrastructure in city facilities.
- Explore opportunities to achieve a zero-waste approach for city rental facilities, city employee events, city-sponsored community events and city purchasing policies.

### Roles

Lead: General Services; Parks, Recreation and Libraries, Finance

Support: City Manager's Office

**Timing:** Near-Term and Ongoing

### Resource Needs

- Funding for expanding compost collection services in city facilities

## MW2. Require Enhanced Waste Infrastructure in New Developments

Most existing development is designed to only accommodate trash collection. This strategy focuses on creating space for recycling and composting infrastructure in new developments in order to enable tenants to implement waste diversion programs.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety



## Actions

- Require new development to provide sufficient and accessible indoor and outdoor waste collection areas at the time of ODP (site plan) to accommodate trash, recycling and composting receptacles and other waste infrastructure.
- Review and align development codes and review procedures to integrate new site plan requirements for waste infrastructure.

## Roles

Lead: Community Development

Support: City Manager's Office; waste haulers; building industry

**Timing:** Near-Term and Ongoing

## Resource Needs

- Maintain staffing for development review activities

## MW3. Explore Options for Increasing Commercial Waste Diversion

Office buildings, schools, stores, hotels, restaurants and other commercial and institutional buildings generate significant amounts of materials and waste. This strategy explores options for increasing waste diversion in the commercial sector through education, collaboration and recognition.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

## Actions

- Work with businesses and private waste collectors to increase recycling rates.
- Engage businesses and schools in efforts to adopt sustainable purchasing policies and replace single-use items with durable materials.
- Develop and distribute information about waste reduction, common recycling errors and myths, composting at home, hard-to-recycle items and access to disposal facilities.
- Include waste diversion activities and resources in the sustainable business program.
- Educate businesses (and consumers) to reduce the purchase and use of toxic and hazardous products.
- Encourage diversion and reuse of building construction and demolition materials.

## Roles

Lead: City Manager's Office

Support: Community Development; Economic Development

**Timing:** Near-Term and Ongoing

## Resource Needs

- Maintain staffing for sustainable business program

## MW4. Explore Options for Increasing Residential Waste Diversion

The city offers several programs to help residents dispose of their waste responsibly and safely. This strategy builds on these programs and explores new ways to increase residential waste diversion by increasing education, supporting neighbor-led efforts and building partnerships with homeowner association (HOAs), multi-family properties and other residential groups.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

### Actions

- Identify opportunities to increase diversion of waste collected through the large item cleanup program, recycling drop-off locations and other city services.
- Work with HOAs and private waste collectors to increase residential diversion rates.
- Develop and distribute information about waste reduction, common recycling errors and myths, composting at home, hard-to-recycle items and access to disposal facilities.
- Support neighborhood-led swap and cleanup efforts.
- Continue the household hazardous waste collection program and explore options to expand to multi-family properties.

### Roles

Lead: General Services

Support: City Manager's Office; Park, Recreation and Libraries; Public Works and Utilities, waste haulers

**Timing:** Near-Term and Ongoing

### Resource Needs

- Dedicated staffing and resources for ongoing program administration and outreach.

## MW5. Enhance Environmental Management and Compliance

The city offers several programs to ensure the safe and responsible disposal of materials. This strategy focuses on exploring options to enhance the city's current level of service and launching a coordinated environmental management system<sup>3</sup> to help prioritize the most important facilities, standardize procedures, clarify roles and responsibilities and provide a method for determining best return on investment for decision-making.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

### Actions

- Increase education about the city's Stormwater Hotline and other options for voluntary reporting of illegal dumping.
- Explore options to expand the types of materials accepted at city recycling drop-off locations and through the household hazardous waste program.
- Pilot and expand an environmental management system (e.g., ISO 14001) to provide more comprehensive management and documentation of the city's environmental and safety programs.

### Roles

Lead: General Services; City Manager's Office

Support: Fleet

**Timing:** Near-Term and Ongoing

### Resource Needs

- Maintain staffing for stormwater education
- Maintain or increase funding for contractor and operating fees associated with drop-off centers and household hazardous waste program
- Dedicated staffing or funding for contracted services to implement an environmental management system

<sup>3</sup>An environmental management system is a set of processes for training of personnel, monitoring, summarizing and reporting that enable an organization to reduce its environmental impacts and increase its operating efficiency.





# Transportation & Mobility

Innovate to provide a safe, connected, accessible and inclusive multimodal transportation network.





# TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

Heavy reliance on private automobiles has a profound impact on the health, safety and viability of a community. A sustainable city provides multiple transportation choices for residents and businesses. Approximately 79% of Westminster residents drive to work alone (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). When automobiles are the primary travel mode choice in a suburban community, lower income residents without the resources to own a personal vehicle or those who cannot drive are put at a disadvantage, making traveling to work or school, going to the doctor, or buying groceries difficult. Providing education and improving multimodal transportation infrastructure can help people shift their transportation choices to walking, biking, carpooling and riding transit. Reducing air emissions by choosing shared or active transportation options, as well as using alternative fuel vehicles are important components in becoming a more sustainable and resilient community.

The availability and accessibility of multimodal transportation infrastructure, services and programs greatly contribute to the outcomes of community health, safety and livability across the city and region. Active transportation accounts for modes of transportation such as walking, biking and riding transit. Investments in the B-Line, Westminster Station and the US 36 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system provide high-quality transportation choices that increase access to services and employment opportunities. In addition to supporting greater access to employment, these infrastructure improvement projects also support economic development. By creating a safe, inclusive and

## TARGETS

- Achieve the mode share targets for carpool, transit, bicycling and walking established in the Transportation & Mobility Plan (TMP).
- Improve and invest in transportation infrastructure to enhance and complete connections to local and regional activity centers (such as shopping, jobs and recreation).
- Reduce and strive to eliminate traffic fatalities and injuries in the transportation system.
- Increase the number of light duty and medium duty electric vehicles in the city fleet.
- Increase the number of electric vehicle charging stations on and off city property.



connected transportation system, individuals can more easily and safely get around Westminster without having to rely solely on private automobiles.

With most of the transportation modes being powered by fossil fuels, the overall health of the community is intimately linked to the movement of people and goods throughout the network. According to the 2017 Greenhouse Gas inventory, the transportation system currently contributes 48% of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the City of Westminster (Lotus, 2017). Because passenger cars are one of the greatest contributors to air pollution and GHG emissions, the city and its partners will need to identify sustainable funding to maintain and operate the multimodal transportation network.<sup>4</sup> The city can also reduce transportation emissions by supporting the State's transition to make Colorado a "zero-emission vehicle" state, helping to meet state-wide air quality standards and climate goals over the next decade.

When transportation and land use decisions are coordinated, communities are connected and accessible. Compact and mixed land use patterns can reduce the dependency on automobiles, which ultimately lead to fewer miles traveled and a higher use of active transportation such as transit, walking and biking. By giving equal weight to the safety and comfort of pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users and automobiles, the city supports the needs of all modes, ages and abilities when planning new streets or retrofitting existing ones, a strategy to help reduce traffic fatalities and injuries.

<sup>4</sup>The city's multimodal network includes the RTD transit system, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, access to regional and international airports, an expansive local and regional trail system, local and arterial roadways and major highways.

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## **WESTMINSTER FORWARD LINKAGES**

The city's first TMP, currently under development, will address near- and long-term multimodal transportation and mobility needs of Westminster residents, commuters and visitors. The plan will include goals, objectives and recommendations for strategic actions and investments to provide safer and more efficient, connected and accessible transportation options for all demographic sectors of the community including the needs of our youth, aging, disabled and work force populations. The plan will also identify corridors for transit, bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

Reference to the TMP is cited throughout this chapter for further information.

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## **THE FIRST AND FINAL MILE**

Travel to and from a transit stops or stations is just as important as the transit trip. If transit riders are unable to access a stop or station due to poor infrastructure quality or missing connections, transit becomes ineffective. More communities, including Westminster, are focusing on ways to improve the first and final mile transportation options for transit users to ensure they can easily access stops and stations. RTD, in coordination with agencies and jurisdictions, including Westminster, developed a First and Last Mile Strategic Plan. Wagon Road Park-n-Ride, located in Westminster, was on the areas that was evaluated and identified for improvements in this plan.

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## STRATEGIES

### TM1. Identify, Complete, Operate and Maintain a Multimodal Transportation Network

As Westminster's population increases and growth continues, a connected multimodal network is needed to help improve access throughout the local, regional and state-wide transportation system. Currently, the city is focused on improving and expanding the multimodal transportation network that is designed for the safe connection between all modes of transportation including sidewalks, bike lanes, trails, transit and roadways. The completion of missing links and improved connections will create a safer and more walkable and bikeable environment that provides more transportation options for residents, commuters and visitors to travel without the use of a private vehicle. The projects identified in the Transportation & Mobility Plan will provide mobility benefits throughout the city. Implementation of this strategy will require coordination and partnerships to identify priority transportation network improvements.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

#### Actions

- Develop a list of projects for the transportation network and prioritize projects that provide critical connections to destinations according to the criteria identified in the TMP.
- Identify corridors for improved and new multimodal transportation connections.
- Evaluate corridors to identify transit service and infrastructure improvements.
- Continue to implement and support transportation improvement projects and programs to strengthen and shape the city's multimodal transportation network.
- Ensure new development provides and/or improves adjacent infrastructure for fiber conduit, sidewalks, bike lanes, trails, transit and roadway improvements to meet multimodal goals.
- Ensure delineated pedestrian routes are provided between public building entrances to adjacent public streets in a direct, logical path to promote walking and access to transit.
- Ensure provision of supporting bicycle infrastructure with new development to include safe, secure bicycle parking; changing rooms/showers; and vehicle parking reductions where bicycle facilities are provided.
- Establish a maximum parking requirement as a companion to the minimum parking requirement. Consider abolishing minimum parking requirements in high-density transit accessible locations.

#### Roles

Lead: Community Development; Public Works and Utilities; Parks, Recreation and Libraries

Support: City Manager's Office, RTD, CDOT



**Timing:** Ongoing

**Resource Needs**

- Specific details identified in TMP

## TM2. Identify Sustainable Funding for a Multimodal Transportation Network

One or more dedicated funding sources for a multimodal transportation network will allow for more transportation infrastructure, programmatic and service improvements, maintenance and operations. Currently the city has a limited funding source for transportation improvements, which means that funding must be requested from Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG), the State and other funding resources. The uncertainty of funding commitments from year-to-year limits meaningful long-term planning for new and expanded services. Frequency, reliability and coverage of transit service impacted by funding and resources are often cited as a barrier to increased transit use. The regional Flatiron Flyer BRT service and the B-Line has provided increased transit service between Westminster and other communities throughout the region. However, local transit service is limited and unreliable in areas of the city. RTD's limited resources to maintain and expand the transit system will require municipalities to evaluate their community transit needs and identify resources to maintain and expand transit service. Implementing this strategy will require coordination between the city, RTD and other funding partners. This strategy will also require community outreach and support from the business community, major activity centers and educational facilities.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

**Actions**

- Plan and budget for planning, design, construction, operations and maintenance funding for non-motorized infrastructure.
- Seek funding for priority projects that provide critical connections to destinations and underserved communities (See TMP).
- Identify transportation improvement funding sources and partnerships at the federal, state, regional and local level.

**Roles**

Lead: Community Development; City Manager's Office; Public Works and Utilities

Support: Parks, Recreation and Libraries, RTD, CDOT

**Timing:** Ongoing

**Resource Needs**

- Specific details identified in TMP

## TM3. Adopt a City-wide Complete Streets Policy

The overall goal of Complete Streets is to provide safe, comfortable and convenient access to destinations for all modes of transportation. While the city has already made progress in implementing Complete Streets principles, a city-wide Complete Streets policy would expand this effort by supporting the needs of all users when planning new streets or retrofitting existing ones. The policy would also give equal weight to all users when planning, designing and funding transportation improvements. Sole reliance on private automobiles negatively impacts air quality, public health and pedestrian safety. Complete Streets elements would provide facility enhancements for people walking, biking and using transit.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

### Actions

- Develop and implement a city-wide Complete Streets Policy (see TMP).
- Identify and rank TMP projects for Complete Streets elements, including Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility.
- Work with the private development community to assure support and implementation of new policy and associated design and construction requirements.

### Roles

Lead: Community Development

Support: City Manager's Office; Public Works and Utilities; Parks, Recreation and Libraries

**Timing:** Near-Term

### Resource Needs

- Specific details identified in TMP

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## COMPLETE STREETS

Complete Streets are streets designed and operated to enable safe use and support mobility for all users. Those include people of all ages and abilities, regardless of whether they are travelling as drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, or public transportation riders. The concept of Complete Streets encompasses many approaches to planning, designing and operating roadways and rights of way with all users in mind to make the transportation network safer and more efficient.

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## TM4. Utilize Best Practices to Achieve Transportation Industry Standards and Recognition Programs

The city continues to pursue walking, biking, transit, driving and carpooling options that support active living for people of all ages and abilities. These efforts lend themselves to federal and state-wide programs, standards and recognition. The city should capitalize on their efforts and accomplishments by applying for recognition and industry programs. For example, since the city is already striving to reduce/eliminate traffic fatalities and injuries, the city should create a Vision Zero Plan as a guiding framework to achieve this goal. Vision Zero is a multinational transportation safety campaign to increase traffic safety and mobility for all roadway users by eliminating fatalities and serious injuries. Other designations include exploring Bike- and Walk-Friendly Recognition Programs. This marketing strategy will recognize and reward projects that meet best practices and garner support for city-wide initiatives.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

### Actions

- Create a city-wide Vision Zero plan and associated policies (see TMP).
- Explore recognition from the League of American Bicyclists Bicycle Friendly Community.
- Explore Walk-Friendly community designation.

### Roles

Lead: Community Development

Support: City Manager's Office; Public Works and Utilities; Parks, Recreation and Libraries

**Timing:** Ongoing

### Resource Needs

- Specific details identified in TMP

## TM5. Expand Outreach and Education to Facilitate Active Transportation Options

Each of these transportation strategies requires continued outreach and education to residents, commuters, visitors, developers, consultants, elected boards and city staff. Many of these strategies require increased awareness of existing and planned programs, for example, existing transit services, carpooling opportunities and trail facilities. To achieve the city's vision, all transportation system users must be aware of the transportation options available.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

## Actions

- Inventory existing education materials and identify new and updated material needs (See TMP).
- Coordinate with partners for consistent messaging, resource sharing and additional information, such as RTD, Transportation Management Associations, adjacent counties, Colorado Department of Transportation and the Denver Regional Council of Governments.
- Develop and maintain educational and marketing content for community outreach including web site content, maps, signage, social media updates and newsletters for visitors, residents and employees to understand the full range of transportation options available.

## Roles

Lead: Community Development; Parks, Recreation and Libraries

Support: City Manager's Office; RTD; DRCOG

**Timing:** Ongoing

## Resource Needs

- Specific details identified in TMP and Parks, Recreation & Libraries Plan

## TM6. Encourage Private Electric Vehicle Adoption and Infrastructure Development

The city and its partners will work to help establish the State of Colorado as a leader in the adoption of electric vehicles (EV). This approach will include providing information on resources and tools for investments in residential and commercial areas. The city will leverage partnerships for the deployment of zero-emission vehicles (ZEV) and EV charging infrastructure in order to increase ease of use and accelerate public and private investment in alternative fuel vehicles. This strategy also emphasizes continuing to work with partners, such as the Regional Air Quality Council and Xcel Energy, to increase the number of ZEVs and EV infrastructure in Westminster.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

## Actions

- Update city Development Codes to require new single-family buildings to be pre-wired to support EV charging infrastructure.
- Update Development Codes to require pre-wiring and/or a minimum number of EV charging stations for large multi-family and commercial properties, including charging infrastructure for e-bikes and scooters.
- Support private EV infrastructure development and build-out of publicly accessible charging stations, including DC-fast charging, at major community destinations. Assist in applying for EV charging infrastructure grants from organizations like the RAQC.
- Encourage education and programs that promote EV charging to increase the adoption of EVs.

## Roles

Lead: Community Development; City Manager's Office

Support: General Services; Public Works and Utilities; Xcel Energy; Colorado Energy Office; Home Builders Association, building industry

**Timing:** Immediate and Ongoing

## Resource Needs

- Dedicated staffing for development review activities
- Additional resources may be needed to implement EV charging strategies

## TM7. Advance City Fleet Vehicle Electrification and Infrastructure Development on City Property

The city maintains about 600 fleet vehicles and equipment to deliver city services, such as park maintenance, snow removal and code enforcement. Since 2008, the city has worked to increase the percentage of fleet vehicles with some form of alternative fuel, including hybrid and plug-in hybrid vehicles (nearly 40) and electric motorcycles. This strategy focuses on Westminster's continued investment in vehicle electrification for the city fleet to advance sustainability goals and save money, starting with light-duty vehicles and eventually shifting to other vehicles and equipment, as they become available.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

## Actions

- Develop and implement a multi-year fleet transition plan to accelerate adoption of low and zero-emission city fleet vehicles, including required charging infrastructure needs.
- Identify high demand locations on city property to install EV Charging Stations.
- Pursue partnerships and grant funding to install EV charging stations at city facilities and city Transit Oriented Development sites.

## Roles

Lead: General Services; City Manager's Office

Support: Public Works and Utilities; Community Development; Economic Development; Xcel Energy; Regional Air Quality Council, Colorado Energy Office

**Timing:** Near-Term and Ongoing

## Resource Needs

- Funding for new vehicles and charging infrastructure (as part of existing fleet management strategy)





# Natural Resources & Environment

Perpetuate the legacy of Westminster's natural resources by conserving and maintaining thriving natural systems and enhancing city infrastructure.





# NATURAL RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT

Stunning views of the Rocky Mountains serve as a constant reminder of the importance of preserving and protecting the natural environment that surround and pervade Westminster. Creek corridors and water bodies throughout the city include Little Dry Creek, Walnut Creek and Big Dry Creek and their tributaries; as well as Standley Lake, McKay Lake, Lower Church Ranch, Ketner Lake and Hidden Lake.

In addition to the natural function of these features, the city relies on its waterbodies and creek corridors for drainage and in some cases water supply. Floodplains and wetland areas provide important wildlife habitat, but also constrain locations for new development. The majority of this sensitive habitat area is part of the city's open space network, which comprises 3,100 acres of land within the city. Additional sensitive habitat area is located within the city's 2,910 acres of park land and 644 acres of public golf courses.

## TARGETS

- Maintain and protect biodiversity and native species throughout the city.
- Expand the urban tree canopy coverage.
- Improve the health of the community's waterways and water bodies.
- Reduce system-wide water use to 110 gallons per capita per day (gpcd) or lower by 2030.
- Halt the decline in the Utility Condition Index (UCI) for the city water and wastewater infrastructure systems.

## WESTMINSTER FORWARD LINKAGES

Additional water supplies for Westminster to purchase are extremely rare and expensive. Thus, the city must decide how it will grow within the limitations of its existing water supply or face significant capital investments to secure additional water. The city's Water Supply Plan and the Comprehensive Plan work closely together to balance Westminster's growth needs against the finite availability of water in the region. In addition to population growth and variations in land use, Westminster's Water Supply Plan must also consider the region's changing climate. Climate models predict higher temperatures and potentially more extreme and frequent drought periods. Thus, to plan for a resilient and sustainable water system, the Water Supply Plan will be developed within the context of both regional growth patterns and anticipated climate change.



In addition to these intricate natural systems, the city also maintains developed infrastructure systems to support the community. Water, stormwater and wastewater utilities provide potable water to residents and businesses, while treating and returning non-potable water to nearby waterbodies. The city has an established policy to ensure new development does not result in water demand that exceeds the city's existing water supply.

Protecting the natural environment and providing high quality utility services are both important components of maintaining a sustainable community. Therefore, the city must take a more holistic approach to managing all of its assets. For instance, though it is important to manage and remove stormwater and wastewater, how these resources are returned to the environment can have significant impact on ecosystem health. Similarly, while landscaping can play an important role in the use and character of development, it can also add value to the natural environment.

There are many opportunities for the city to balance both the provision of high-quality utilities with the protection of the natural environment. For example, city codes help to dictate the extent to which landscapes use water, provide shade and provide habitat for native species. The city is currently in the process of updating many of their landscaping standards, presenting an opportunity to incorporate sustainable criteria for new development and redevelopment. The city's 2020 Water Efficiency Plan outlines ways in which the city and residents can help lower the demand for water and develop a more resilient system. The city can also promote the installation of green stormwater infrastructure along waterways to help protect waterbodies while allowing the return of water to the system.

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## LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT/ GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Low impact development (LID), also commonly referred to as “green stormwater infrastructure” is an approach to surface water runoff management that protects, restores, or mimics the natural water cycle. The City of Westminster is working toward incorporating more of these approaches in the development and capital planning phase in an effort to be more sustainable, economical and enhance overall community safety and quality of life for our residents. Projects are already being considered and implemented along Little Dry Creek and Big Dry Creek.



# STRATEGIES

## NRI. Enhance Biodiversity

Biodiversity is a primary metric for the health and resilience of an ecosystem. Programs like Bird City USA and Bee City USA provide guidance for how communities can support vibrant pollinator populations, a cornerstone of high-functioning ecosystems. Updates to the city Development Code, in concert with education and incentive programs, will help maintain and protect the city's biodiversity. This strategy is focused on protecting and providing habitats to promote a rich biodiversity, especially to support the community's vital pollinator species.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

### Actions

- Encourage conversion of hardscapes to low-water landscapes, low-impact development (LID) stormwater features, or wildflower gardens.
- Promote best practices in the community related to public green-space improvements and enhancements.
- Partner with organizations (e.g., Resource Central, Butterfly Pavilion, Denver Botanic Gardens) to incentivize the adoption of native landscapes and pollinator gardens.
- Map and protect environmentally abundant and sensitive areas and establish a long-term strategy to connect and enhance biodiversity. Achieve and maintain Bird City USA and Bee City USA status.
- Update landscaping standards to identify minimum requirements for native species and tree species.
- Educate residents and businesses regarding the importance of city code requirements related to native species and biodiversity.
- Provide plant lists, seed lists and other recommendations, resources and requirements for new development and plantings to incorporate greater diversity and use more native plants that support pollinator species.
- Invest in restoration of marginal, degraded habitat (e.g., Big Dry Creek).

### Roles

Lead: Parks, Recreation and Libraries; Community Development

Support: Public Works and Utilities; City Manager's Office, Butterfly Pavillion; Audubon of the Rockies; Colorado Native Plant Society; Xerces Society; Front Range Wild Ones

**Timing:** Ongoing

### Resource Needs

- Dedicated staffing for supporting implementation and enforcement
- Funding for improvement projects

## NR2. Increase Westminster's Tree Canopy Coverage

Urban tree canopies help cool the urban environment while providing an important habitat for a wide range of species. Trees also help to purify air and water systems and absorb carbon dioxide. This strategy focuses on maintaining Westminster's Tree City USA status by identifying and mitigating threats to Westminster's urban tree canopy and promoting tree sales and plantings through education and incentives.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

### Actions

- Maintain Tree City USA status.
- Use remote sensing to conduct a tree canopy study for the city and establish a quantitative baseline for ensuring sufficient tree canopy to meet air quality, urban heat island and stormwater management goals.
- Identify and inventory threats to the urban tree canopy (e.g., climate change, pests).
- Develop a plan to mitigate potential threats, (e.g., canopy diversification, removal of infected or infested species, Integrated Pest Management).
- Continue utilizing tree canopy funds to invest in the urban forest, especially along pedestrian corridors, waterways and trails.
- Promote the ReLeaf Westy Tree sale and rebate program to increase the number of trees planted on private property.
- Increase education for property owners about proper tree care techniques.
- Enhance tree canopy goals through new development, including preservation of existing trees and vegetation, installation of new trees, including measures to promote tree health and mitigation for removed trees.

### Roles

Lead: Parks, Recreation and Libraries

Support: Public Works and Utilities; City Manager's Office; Community Development, private development community

**Timing:** Ongoing

### Resource Needs

- Increased staffing for ongoing planning and management
- Funding for consulting services for tree canopy study

## NR3. Expand Stormwater Low Impact Development

Stormwater low impact development (LID) mimics natural processes to help alleviate the adverse effects of traditional stormwater management. Traditional stormwater infrastructure collects runoff and releases it at a few discrete points into local waterways, which can overwhelm natural systems with damaging flows and pollutants. Stormwater LID slows the flow of collected water, allowing some of the water to infiltrate naturally into the ground. The remaining water can be released more slowly into waterways to avoid damaging flows. Stormwater LID can also help to remove pollutants from stormwater, through natural or man-made filtration and through plant uptake. Westminster is currently developing a stormwater LID Master Plan, which will serve as a guide to educate residents and identify potential stormwater LID throughout the city.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

### Action

- Develop a stormwater LID master plan (including types of stormwater treatment facilities recommended in Westminster and where they could be utilized and identify potential locations for regional stormwater facilities).
- Educate residents and businesses about stormwater LID options for private property (e.g., rain barrels, rain gardens, disconnected downspouts).
- Invest in vegetative buffers, natural areas and other LID, especially along waterways and along trails.
- Pilot and incorporate more stormwater LID strategies into city capital improvement planning and projects.
- Require that vegetative stormwater treatment facilities are planted with low-water plant mixes that support biodiversity.
- Certify lead city maintenance staff through the National Green Infrastructure Certification Program.

### Roles

Lead: Community Development

Support: Public Works and Utilities; Parks, Recreation and Libraries

**Timing:** Ongoing

### Resource Needs

- Potential funding for consulting services for Master Plan development
- Funding for improvement projects identified in Master Plan

## NR4. Improve and Maintain City Stormwater Program

The City of Westminster seeks to provide stormwater management services to protect the health and well-being of its residents and businesses. As highlighted earlier, traditional stormwater management approaches can degrade the natural environment and resources. Closely monitoring the health of waterways will allow for better understanding of impacts and minimizing environmental harm. This strategy also promotes education and outreach as a tool to empower residents to do their part in protecting the environment.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

### Actions

- Collect data and monitor stream and water body health for key water quality indicators such as Dissolved Oxygen, water temperature, pH, E.coli and nutrients (LCRA, 2019).
- Develop and disseminate education and outreach materials regarding the causes and impacts of stormwater pollution.
- Host city-sponsored events highlighting the importance of and community role in protecting stormwater quality.
- Bolster inspection program for construction sites to ensure proper stormwater management during construction activities.
- Inspect and maintain existing stormwater infrastructure and operation to ensure proper function, including facilities under municipal control.
- Conduct a stormwater infrastructure conditions assessment to inform the financial sustainability of existing infrastructure and to plan for future needs.
- Explore partnerships with local schools and to develop a Citizen Scientist program.

### Roles

Lead: Community Development

Support: Public Works and Utilities; City Manager's Office; Parks, Recreation and Libraries

**Timing:** Ongoing

### Resource Needs

- Dedicated staffing for program administration

## NR5. Replace Aging City Utility Infrastructure

Primary responsibilities of the city are to provide safe, clean and reliable drinking water and to remove and treat wastewater in an environmentally responsible manner. A critical function of the city's Public Works and Utilities Department is to plan, prioritize and implement capital improvement projects to sustain the quality services that support public health and safety, as well as the city's Strategic Plan Goals of Financially Sustainable Government Providing Excellence in city Services.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

### Actions

- Incorporate best practices and principles from Envision to establish and pilot sustainability guidelines for the design, construction, operation and maintenance of city infrastructure projects.
- Develop a Stormwater Utility Condition Index and identify Index targets.
- Use the Utilities Condition Index targets (water and sewer) to measure the impact on Level of Service and describe the consequences of less funding on Levels of Service.
- Develop a long-term plan for infrastructure replacement and upgrades based on known aging issues and predictive maintenance considerations.
- Develop a robust education campaign to increase visibility of utilities, recognize their importance to quality of life and improve understanding of the value of their services.
- Evaluate adding code requirements that identify the degree to which a developer is responsible to identify and pay for growth-driven offsite improvements to utilities.

### Roles

Lead: Public Works and Utilities; Community Development

Support: Parks, Recreation and Libraries; CDOT; neighboring jurisdictions, private development community

**Timing:** Ongoing

### Resource Needs

- Alternative revenue streams to fund utility capital improvement projects such as development fees and the State Revolving Fund.

## NR6. Prepare and Adopt Water Efficiency Plan

The City of Westminster's Public Works and Utilities is nearing the completion of a 2020 Water Efficiency Plan. This plan will serve as the guiding document to help residents, businesses and the city become more water efficient over the next five to seven years. The plan will primarily focus on targeted technical assistance and education. Developing and implementing the plan will help the city continue to reduce per person water demand.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

### Actions

- Finalize and adopt 2020 Water Efficiency Plan.
- Provide education and outreach for residents, businesses and visitors regarding water systems, water quality and water conservation strategies.
- Expand water efficiency incentive programs for residents and businesses.
- Encourage conversion of high-water use landscapes, namely Kentucky bluegrass lawns, to low water use landscape.
- Once smart water metering is installed, enable data access to customers through an online portal.
- Support and adopt local ordinances that address water adequacy, water-wise landscaping and efficient irrigation practices.
- Update the city's Reclaimed Water Master Plan and identify implementation options.

### Roles

Lead: Public Works and Utilities

Support: Community Development; City Manager's Office; Parks, Recreation and Libraries; Adams 12 Five Star Schools; Westminster Public Schools, Jeffco Public Schools

**Timing:** Immediate

### Resource Needs

- Specific details to be identified in the Water Efficiency Plan

## NR7. Adopt Water Efficient Landscape Standards

The city is currently updating landscape standards to bolster requirements regarding native, pollinator supportive and water-wise vegetation. In addition to providing plant lists, which highlight plants that are low-water using, the new standards formalize hydrozone<sup>5</sup> requirements for efficient irrigation. Though the Development Codes are an important tool to require water efficient landscapes in new development and some redevelopment, ongoing compliance and maintenance with approved plans can be challenging.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

### Actions

- Adopt new landscape standards through the Development Code that require, rather than encourage, water-wise and native plants, as well as pollinator-supportive species.
- Educate residents and businesses regarding the importance of following and using the landscape standards.
- Identify and request additional resources necessary to enforce new standards.

### Roles

Lead: Community Development

Support: Public Works and Utilities; City Manager's Office; Parks, Recreation and Libraries

**Timing:** Immediate and Ongoing

### Resource Needs

- Dedicated staffing for education and supporting implementation and enforcement

<sup>5</sup>According to the Westminster Landscaping Regulations, a Hydrozone “refers to areas within the landscape area defined by similar water needs to sustain healthy plants” (City of Westminster, 2004.).



## NR8. Reduce Outdoor Water Use at City Properties and Facilities

Outdoor water demands over 50% of the city's water supply. Water is required to maintain parks and other landscaped areas associated with city facilities. This strategy addresses several ways the city can reduce its outdoor water use. In addition to reducing the city's water use, many of the actions included in this strategy may serve as an example to Westminster residents and businesses, inspiring others to reduce their outdoor water use as well.



Education



Equity



Climate



Resilience



Safety

### Actions

- Continue to replace existing turf with water-wise landscaping at city properties and facilities.
- Use water-wise principles on city properties.
- Strategically evaluate turf areas based on a scale of high-use/highly visible city property (e.g., soccer fields) to little/no active use potential (e.g., greenbelts).
- Apply deficit watering practices to those evaluated areas based on evapotranspiration rates.
- Upgrade the city's master irrigation control system.
- Replace irrigation water meters at city properties.

### Roles

Lead: Parks, Recreation and Libraries

Support: Public Works and Utilities; General Services

**Timing:** Immediate and Ongoing

### Resource Needs

- Funding for facility improvements.

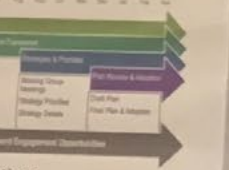
ATION

### SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

The Sustainability Plan organizes all of the sustainability objectives, targets, and goals into a unified document. We want you to play a key role in making a sustainable community.

#### Timeline

Work has been hard at work discussing sustainability for the community to consider. The draft will be ready in January 2020 for community review.



#### Objectives

Objectives are an objective that provides an overall direction for progress and future conditions.

#### Strategies

Strategies are programs, projects, partnerships, and other actions that address sustainability objectives.

These are preliminary concepts generated by the community. They do not represent City policies for adoption and consideration.

Help inform which strategies are included in the Sustainability Plan. Community members may address some of these strategies if they lack support or feasibility.

#### FORWARD

## ENVIRONMENTAL & NATURAL RESOURCES

**OBJECTIVE:** Perpetuate the legacy of Westminster's natural resources by conserving and maintaining thriving ecosystems and enhancing city infrastructure.

- E-1 Support a Clean Energy Agenda for the State of Colorado
- E-2 Promote Switching from Natural Gas Appliances to Electric
- E-3 Build Regional Renewable Energy Partnerships
- E-4 Increase Energy Efficiency of Commercial and Multi-Family Properties
- E-5 Stay up to Date with International Building and Energy Code
- E-6 Conduct Energy Efficiency Outreach Programs
- E-7 Promote Gas Appliance Installations
- E-8 Develop Efficiency Education
- E-9 Engage School Districts in Energy Efficiency Programs
- E-10 Promote Exposed Concrete and Masonry Surfaces
- E-11 Encourage Deep Energy Retrofits
- E-12 Explore Adoption of a Green Building Code
- E-13 Develop a History Energy Large Commercial and Industrial Program
- E-14 Increase Renewable Energy for Public Buildings
- E-15 Conduct Energy Performance Audits

### STRATEGIES: What's your priority?

These draft strategies are preliminary ideas. Put a dot under the strategy that you'd like to see as a priority in the Sustainability Plan.

If you have an idea not listed to the right, write it on a sticky note and stack it below.

- E-1 Support a Clean Energy Agenda for the State of Colorado
- E-2 Promote Switching from Natural Gas Appliances to Electric
- E-3 Build Regional Renewable Energy Partnerships
- E-4 Increase Energy Efficiency of Commercial and Multi-Family Properties
- E-5 Stay up to Date with International Building and Energy Code
- E-6 Conduct Energy Efficiency Outreach Programs
- E-7 Promote Gas Appliance Installations
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- E-13 Develop a History Energy Large Commercial and Industrial Program
- E-14 Increase Renewable Energy for Public Buildings
- E-15 Conduct Energy Performance Audits



## MAT

**OBJECTIVE:** management reduction accessible

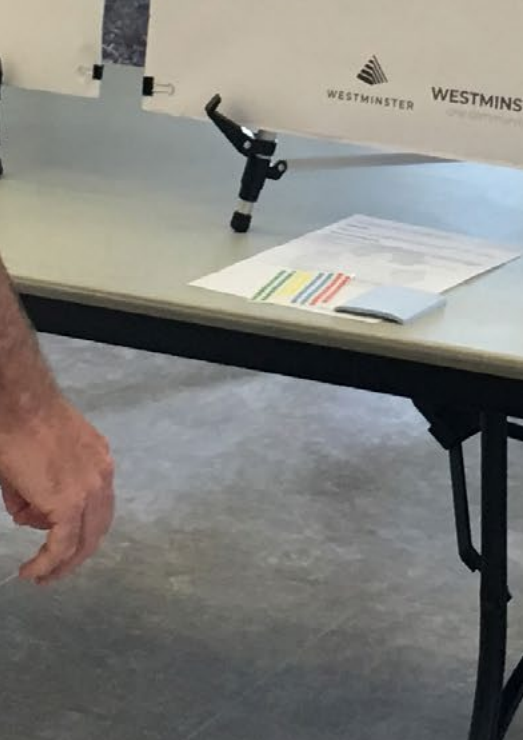
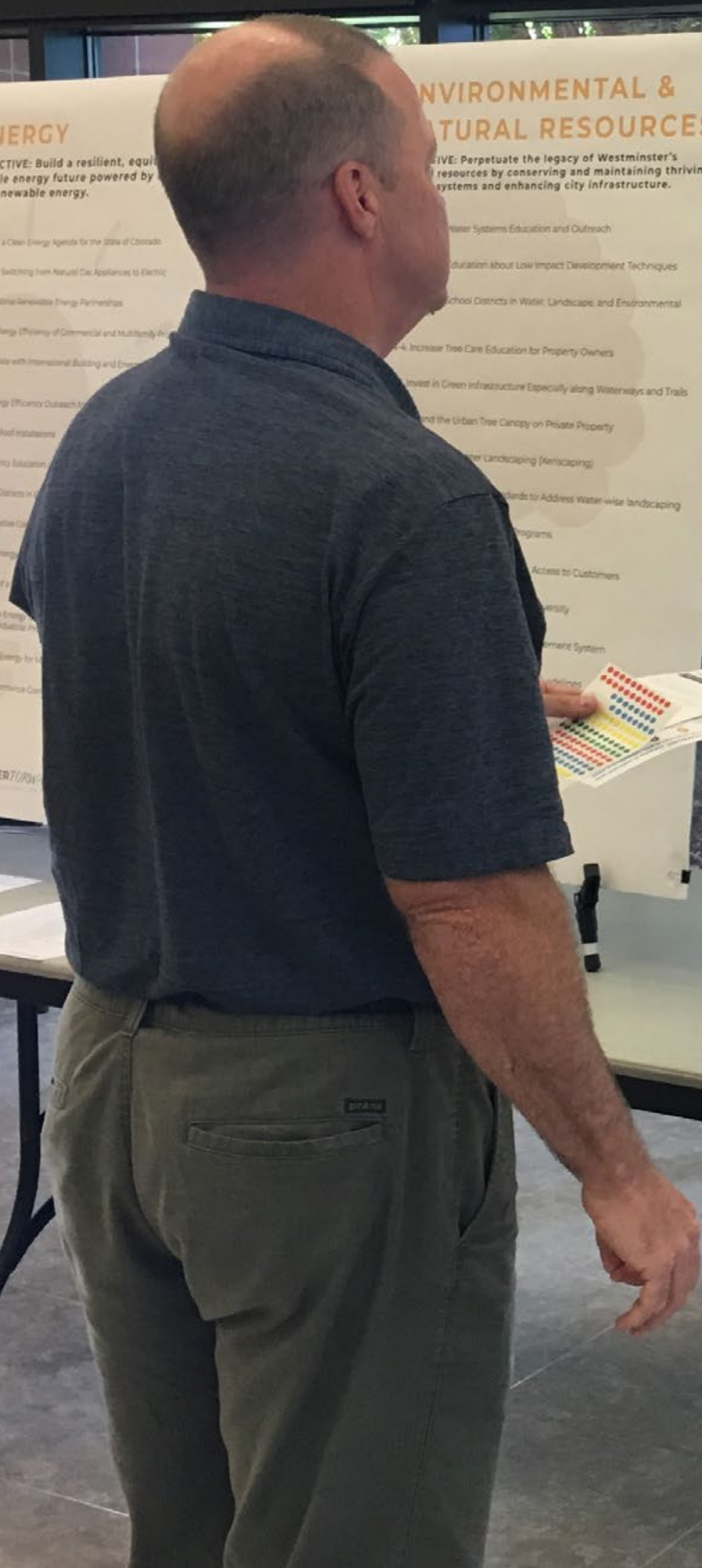
- W-1 Explore Con...
- W-2 Require Cur...
- W-3 Encourage S...
- W-4 Encourage Se...
- W-5 Provide Waste...
- W-6 Enhance Enfor...
- W-7 Require Waste...
- W-8 Establish a Com...
- W-9 Improve Compos...
- W-10 Promote Zero W...

### STRATEGIES: What's your priority?

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- W-1 Explore Con...
- W-2 Require Cur...
- W-3 Encourage S...
- W-4 Encourage Se...
- W-5 Provide Waste...
- W-6 Enhance Enfor...
- W-7 Require Waste...
- W-8 Establish a Com...
- W-9 Improve Compos...
- W-10 Promote Zero W...



# IMPLEMENTATION

## MATERIALS & WASTE

**OBJECTIVE:** Cultivate a circular waste economy that supports source reduction and sustainable diversion through services and programs for all sectors.

- Consolidated Private Waste Services by Location or Sector
- On-site Compost Pickup Services from Waste Haulers
- Single Use Plastic Reduction
- School Waste Diversion
- Reduction and Proper Disposal Education and Outreach
- Enforcement Efforts for Illegal Dumping
- Waste Diversion Facilities for New Developments
- Community-wide Clean-up and Swap Day
- Recycling in City Facilities
- Waste for City Operations (90% Diversion)

**WATER FORWARD**  
Only water one future

## MOBILITY & CONNECTIONS

**OBJECTIVE:** Innovate to provide an accessible, safe, and inclusive multi-modal transportation network.

**STRATEGIES:**  
What's your priority?

*These draft strategies are preliminary ideas.*

*Put a dot under the strategy that you'd like to see as a priority in the Sustainability Plan.*

*If you have an idea not listed to the right, write it on a sticky note and stack it below.*

- M-1. Adopt a Citywide...
- M-2. Fund the Complete Streets Sidewalks
- M-3. Achieve Bicycle...
- M-4. Achieve Walk F...
- M-5. Increase Multi...
- M-6. Study and Remo...
- M-7. Increase Enforcem...
- M-8. Implement Bike and/or...
- M-9. Develop a Policy for Share...
- M-10. Study Commuter Rail Op...
- M-11. Increase Wayfindi...
- M-12. Re...

## STRATEGIES

**OBJECTIVE:** Innovate to provide an accessible, safe, and inclusive multi-modal transportation network.

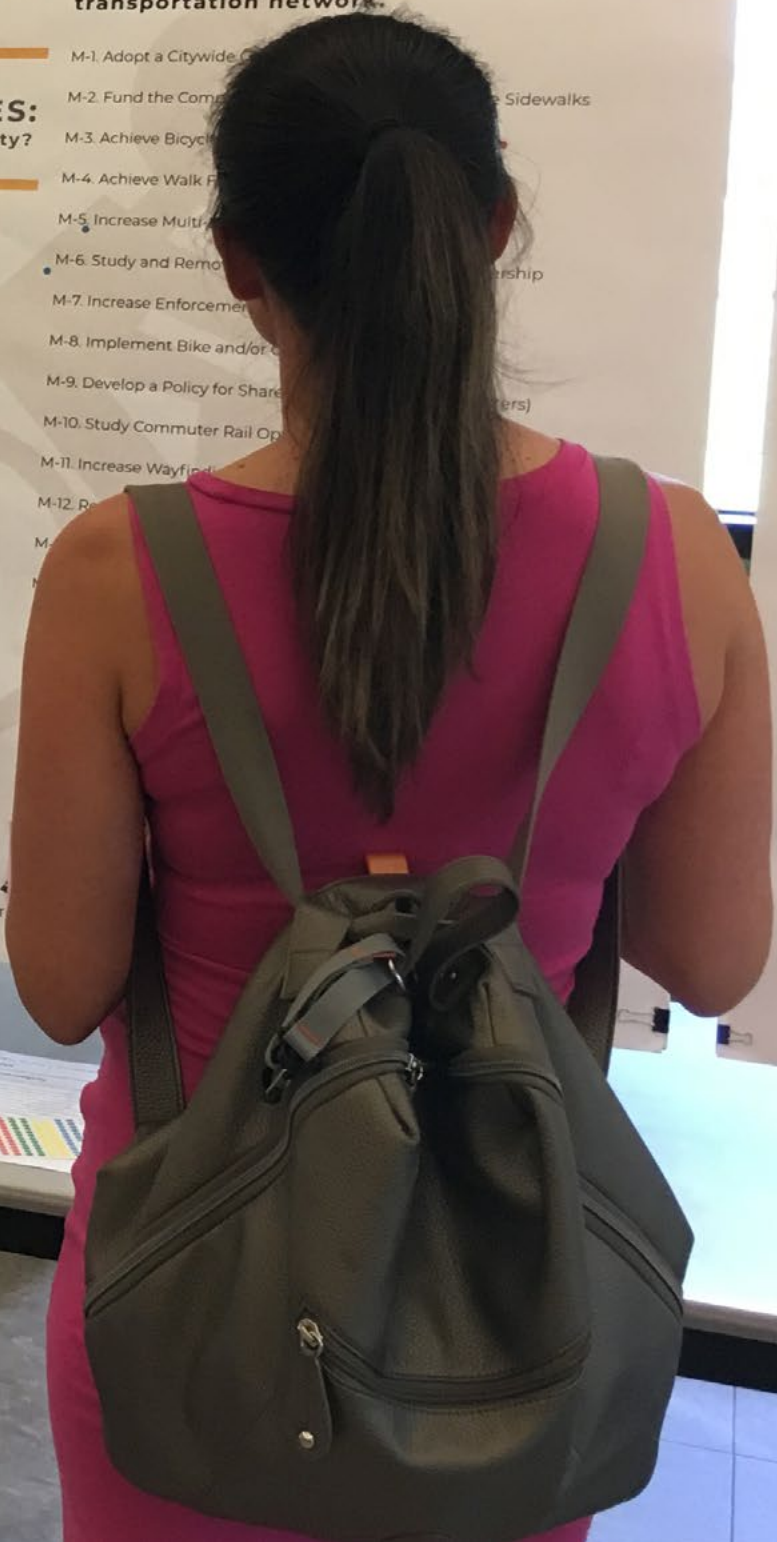
**STRATEGIES:**  
What's your priority?

*These draft strategies are preliminary ideas.*

*Put a dot under the strategy that you'd like to see as a priority in the Sustainability Plan.*

*If you have an idea not listed to the right, write it on a sticky note and stack it below.*

**YOUR IDEA**



# IMPLEMENTATION

## A LIVING PLAN

The Westminster Sustainability Plan is intended to be a living document that city staff, elected officials and community partners use to drive the city towards its vision of becoming one of the most sustainable cities in America. This Sustainability Plan can be applied by staff to guide annual work plans, by elected officials to prioritize policy action and by community partners to identify opportunities to collaborate and contribute.

This plan identifies a broad range of strategies, some with specific actions that can be taken immediately and others that contain broader ideas requiring further exploration. Some strategies can be implemented by staff or elected officials alone and some require partnerships across local, regional and state government or between the public and private sector. These strategies are scheduled to be implemented over the next five to ten years. However, as a living plan, strategies should be revisited regularly to address new information, technologies and resource development.

In order to track implementation progress and adapt to changing community needs, the city’s Chief Sustainability Officer will lead an annual strategy review in coordination with city staff and community partners, noting the implementation status of each strategy as complete, in progress, upcoming, on hold, or removed.

The following tables summarize plan strategies and organizes them by anticipated completion timeline. These are preliminary timelines and implementation success will be dependent on having adequate staffing and resources in place to lead and support these efforts.



### Energy

Strategy	Timeline
EN1. Support a Clean Energy Agenda for the State of Colorado	Ongoing
EN2. Explore Opportunities for Resilient Energy Systems	Ongoing
EN3. Build Regional Renewable Energy Partnerships	Immediate and Ongoing
EN4. Provide Residential Energy Education and Engagement	Immediate and Ongoing
EN5. Increase Renewable Electricity for Municipal Facilities and Operations	Immediate and Ongoing
EN6. Conduct Energy Performance Contracting in Municipal Facilities	Immediate and Ongoing
EN7. Update Building and Development Codes	Near-Term and Ongoing



## Economic Resilience

Strategy	Timeline
ER1. Foster Small and Local Business Development	Ongoing
ER2. Enhance Workforce Development for Under-represented Populations	Ongoing
ER3. Align Workforce Development to Business Needs	Ongoing
ER4. Strengthen Core Economic Development Functions of Business Attraction, Retention and Expansion	Ongoing
ER5. Create a Sustainable Business Support and Recognition Program	Immediate and Ongoing
ER6. Explore the Integration of Sustainability Practices into Economic Development Incentives	Mid-Term



## Health & Wellness

Strategy	Timeline
HW1. Improve Trail Connectivity	Immediate and Ongoing
HW2. Partner to Expand Health, Nutrition and Wellness Education and Offerings	Immediate and Ongoing
HW3. Achieve HEAL Cities Designation	Immediate
HW4. Reduce Local Contributions to Regional Air Pollution	Immediate and Ongoing
HW5. Encourage Home Gardens and Local Food Production	Near-Term and ongoing
HW6. Identify Needs and Gaps Related to Community Health and Resilience	Near-Term and Ongoing
HW7. Encourage and Recruit Healthy Food Options	Near-Term and Ongoing
HW8. Develop Community Partnerships for Resilience	Near-Term and Ongoing



## Housing & Neighborhoods

Strategy	Timeline
HN1. Preserve and Cultivate Affordable and Workforce Housing	Ongoing
HN2. Protect and Preserve Existing Housing Stock	Immediate and Ongoing
HN3. Promote Sustainable Practices and Product Diversity in Construction	Immediate and Ongoing
HN4. Focus on ity Neighborhoods	Near-Term and Ongoing
HN5. Facilitate Discussions focused on Neighborhood Inclusivity and Resilience	Near-Term



## Materials & Waste

Strategy	Timeline
MW1. Reduce Waste and Increase Diversion in City Facilities	Near-Term and Ongoing
MW2. Require Enhanced Waste Infrastructure in New Developments	Near-Term and Ongoing
MW3. Explore Options for Increasing Commercial Waste Diversion	Near-Term and Ongoing
MW4. Explore Options for Increasing Residential Waste Diversion	Near-Term and Ongoing
MW5. Enhance Environmental Management and Compliance	Near-Term and Ongoing



## Transportation & Mobility

Strategy	Timeline
TM1. Identify, Complete, Operate and Maintain a Multimodal Transportation Network	Ongoing
TM2. Identify Sustainable Funding for a Multimodal Transportation Network	Ongoing
TM3. Adopt a City-wide Complete Streets Policy	Immediate
TM4. Utilize Best Practices to Achieve Transportation Industry Standards and Recognition Programs	Ongoing
TM5. Expand Outreach and Education to Facilitate Active Transportation Options	Ongoing
TM6. Encourage Private Electric Vehicle Adoption and Infrastructure Development	Near-Term and Ongoing
TM7. Advance City Fleet Vehicle Electrification and Infrastructure Development on City Property	Near-Term and Ongoing



## Natural Resources & Environment

Strategy	Timeline
NR1. Enhance Biodiversity	Ongoing
NR2. Increase Westminster's Tree Canopy Coverage	Ongoing
NR3. Expand Stormwater Low Impact Development	Ongoing
NR4. Improve and Maintain City Stormwater Program	Ongoing
NR5. Replace Aging City Utility Infrastructure	Ongoing
NR6. Prepare and Adopt Water Efficiency Plan	Immediate
NR7. Adopt Water Efficient Landscape Standards	Immediate and Ongoing
NR8. Reduce Outdoor Water Use at City Properties and Facilities	Immediate and Ongoing

Because the Sustainability Plan is the first in the suite of Westminster Forward plan updates, an update to the Sustainability Plan is recommended, following completion of the other Westminster Forward plans, as well as other plans that drive city-wide policy implementation. This update may include items such as minor updates to objectives, targets and strategy details to ensure alignment and consistency with the other plans. A public engagement process to support the first update will not likely be necessary (since the other plans will be developed through coordinated engagement processes), unless new strategy ideas emerge that need to be reviewed and vetted with the broader Westminster community.

Looking to the future, major updates to the Sustainability Plan are recommended every four or five years, or as identified strategies are completed and new strategy ideas emerge. Activities to be included in major Sustainability Plan updates include documenting the status of existing targets and strategies (see “Performance Management” below), revisions to existing targets and strategies and incorporating new targets and strategies.

## **RESOURCING IMPLEMENTATION**

The city’s budget reflects careful preparation according to City Council goals, the long-term strategic plan and city-wide objectives. The two-year budget process emphasizes long-range planning, budgeting for results, effective program management and fiscal responsibility. It is the city’s policy to ensure that adequate resources are allocated to preserve existing assets and programs before targeting resources toward additional assets and programs, especially those that have ongoing maintenance obligations.

In order to support the budgeting process and effectively respond to a slowing economy, aging infrastructure and evolving technologies, the city will be creating a long-term Financial Plan to identify challenges, develop solutions and increase overall city resilience. The Financial Plan will:

- Identify existing and upcoming financial challenges including the cost to update utility infrastructure and maintain and replace city facilities.
- Work across city departments to develop solutions that leverage public-private partnership and other synergies.
- Create long-term forecasts and projections that are regularly updated.

The city’s asset management and technology system tools also play an important role in supporting implementation of the Sustainability Plan. New technology provides opportunities for efficiency gains, improved data-sharing and collaboration and increased accountability. The city will continue to pursue partnerships and investments in new technologies and information systems in order to better track and manage city assets, including fleet vehicles, transportation infrastructure and parks, recreation and library facilities. This includes continuing to explore Smart City trends, partnerships and opportunities through the Smart Cities and Future Technologies iTeam and identifying ways to link efforts with asset management tools and approaches.

Successful implementation of the Sustainability Plan will require making some incremental shifts with the existing city staffing and current resource commitments, exploring new revenue streams and funding mechanisms, pursuing outside resources like grants and community partnerships and allocating future staffing and resources to support strategy implementation. These shifts and adjustments must happen within the larger context of the city's overall two-year budget process. Some preliminary ideas about resource opportunities and needs for each of these categories are summarized below.

### **Examples of Incremental Shifts with Existing Staff and Resources**

- Update city educational materials and programming to reflect Sustainability Plan priorities
- Integrate sustainability considerations into Development Code updates
- Incorporate tracking and monitoring activities into existing roles
- Adopt and implement new city asset management tools

### **Examples of New Revenue Streams and Funding Mechanisms**

- Pursue revenue generation through performance-based Infrastructure projects

### **Examples of Outside Resources**

- Grants from Regional Air Quality Council
- National Foundations, including Bloomberg Philanthropies

## **Performance Management**

For Westminster to determine success in achieving its vision, targets are established for each plan objective. Some targets are expressed as numeric, or quantitative metrics, while others are expressed as directional intent (i.e., increase/maintain/decrease). Progress towards targets can be achieved by implementing the Sustainability Plan strategies, along with other city plans, programs and projects that contribute toward sustainability. When added together, these targets can be used to answer the question, "How are we performing?" and provide an opportunity to highlight achievements and identify areas for improvement.

Targets will be monitored and reported annually to ensure transparency and accountability. This process will be coordinated by the Chief Sustainability Officer and the results shared with the community to invite feedback and participation in upcoming sustainability efforts. See Appendix C for a summary of sustainability targets, baseline values and performance monitoring details. Several of the targets may also be included in a future performance management dashboard, to provide even greater access and accountability.



## Sustainability Plan Targets



### Energy

- ❑ Achieve 25% electricity savings and 15% natural gas savings community-wide by 2030 compared to the city's 2014 baseline.
- ❑ Pursue opportunities to decrease energy utility costs for low-income households.
- ❑ Strive for 80% renewable electricity for primary municipal facilities and operations by 2030.
- ❑ Align with the Governor Administration's Roadmap to pursue 100% renewable electricity community-wide by 2040.



### Economic Resilience

- ❑ Maintain a diverse primary industries base.
- ❑ Expand opportunities for small businesses and entrepreneurs within the community.
- ❑ Grow opportunities for local workforce to match business needs.
- ❑ Improve social responsibility and sustainable business practices in the community.



### Health & Wellness

- ❑ Achieve the parks, open space and trail targets established in the Parks, Recreation & Libraries Plan.
- ❑ Reduce food swamps and lessen the effects of food deserts on local populations.
- ❑ Increase education about and access to local and healthy foods, mobility options for active lifestyles and other healthy living opportunities.
- ❑ Increase community resilience and neighborhood connections for improved health and wellness outcomes.
- ❑ Collaborate to improve regional air quality.



### **Housing & Neighborhoods**

- ❑ Maintain or increase the percentage of residents who somewhat or strongly agree that the city can be described as safe and secure.
- ❑ Increase both the diversity of housing types and affordable options available in the city.
- ❑ Maintain or increase the percentage of residents who rate the overall quality of their neighborhood as very good or good.
- ❑ Achieve 90% or greater voluntary compliance with nuisance code violations issued by the city.
- ❑ Increase opportunities for creating community and neighborhood engagement.



### **Materials & Waste**

- ❑ Increase waste diversion rate to 35% by 2030 for all city operations and facilities.
- ❑ Increase the community-wide waste diversion rate.
- ❑ Enhance city environmental management systems and practices.



### **Transportation & Mobility**

- ❑ Achieve the mode share targets for carpool, transit, bicycling and walking established in the Transportation & Mobility Plan (TMP).
- ❑ Improve and invest in transportation infrastructure to enhance and complete connections to local and regional activity centers (such as shopping, jobs and recreation).
- ❑ Reduce and strive to eliminate traffic fatalities and injuries in the transportation system.
- ❑ Increase the number of light duty and medium duty electric vehicles in the city fleet.
- ❑ Increase the number of electric vehicle charging stations on and off city property.



### **Natural Resources & Environment**

- ❑ Maintain and protect biodiversity and native species throughout the city.
- ❑ Expand the urban tree canopy coverage.
- ❑ Improve the health of the community's waterways and water bodies.
- ❑ Reduce system-wide water use to 110 gallons per capita per day (gpcd) or lower by 2030.
- ❑ Halt the decline in the Utility Condition Index (UCI) for the city water and wastewater infrastructure systems.

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# APPENDIX A: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY



### SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

**OBJECTIVE:** Build a resilient, equitable, and reliable energy future powered by low-carbon and renewable energy.

**STRATEGIES:**

- 1-1 Support Clean Energy Grants to the Board of Councils
- 1-2 Provide Funding for Local Gas Appliance to Districts
- 1-3 Subsidize Renewable Energy Technology
- 1-4 Review Energy Policies of Contractors and Multiple Priorities
- 1-5 Use an Incentive/Rebate/Utility and Energy Conservation Loan
- 1-6 Conduct Energy Efficiency Outreach for Uninsured Residents
- 1-7 Increase Green Building
- 1-8 Develop Energy Education and Engineering
- 1-9 Increase Energy Efficiency Training of Staff and Education
- 1-10 Increase Energy Efficiency for City Buildings
- 1-11 Increase Energy Efficiency for City Buildings

### ENERGY

**OBJECTIVE:** Build a resilient, equitable, and reliable energy future powered by low-carbon and renewable energy.

**STRATEGIES:**

- 1-1 Support Clean Energy Grants to the Board of Councils
- 1-2 Provide Funding for Local Gas Appliance to Districts
- 1-3 Subsidize Renewable Energy Technology
- 1-4 Review Energy Policies of Contractors and Multiple Priorities
- 1-5 Use an Incentive/Rebate/Utility and Energy Conservation Loan
- 1-6 Conduct Energy Efficiency Outreach for Uninsured Residents
- 1-7 Increase Green Building
- 1-8 Develop Energy Education and Engineering
- 1-9 Increase Energy Efficiency Training of Staff and Education
- 1-10 Increase Energy Efficiency for City Buildings
- 1-11 Increase Energy Efficiency for City Buildings

### ENVIRONMENTAL & NATURAL RESOURCE

**OBJECTIVE:** Perpetuate the legacy of Westminster's natural resources by conserving and maintaining thriving natural systems and enhancing city infrastructure.

**EN-1:** Provide Water Systems Education and Outreach

**EN-2:** Provide Education about Low Impact Development Techniques

**EN-3:** Engage School Districts in Water, Landscape, and Environmental Education

**EN-4:** Increase Tree Care Education for Property Owners

**EN-5:** Invest in Green Infrastructure Especially along Waterways and Trails

**EN-6:** Expand the Urban Tree Canopy on Private Property

**EN-7:** Promote Low Water Landscaping (Xeriscaping)

**EN-8:** Update Landscaping Standards to Address Water-wise landscaping

**EN-9:** Expand Water Conservation Programs

**EN-10:** Provide Smart Water Meter Data Access to Customers

**EN-11:** Establish a Program to Monitor Biodiversity

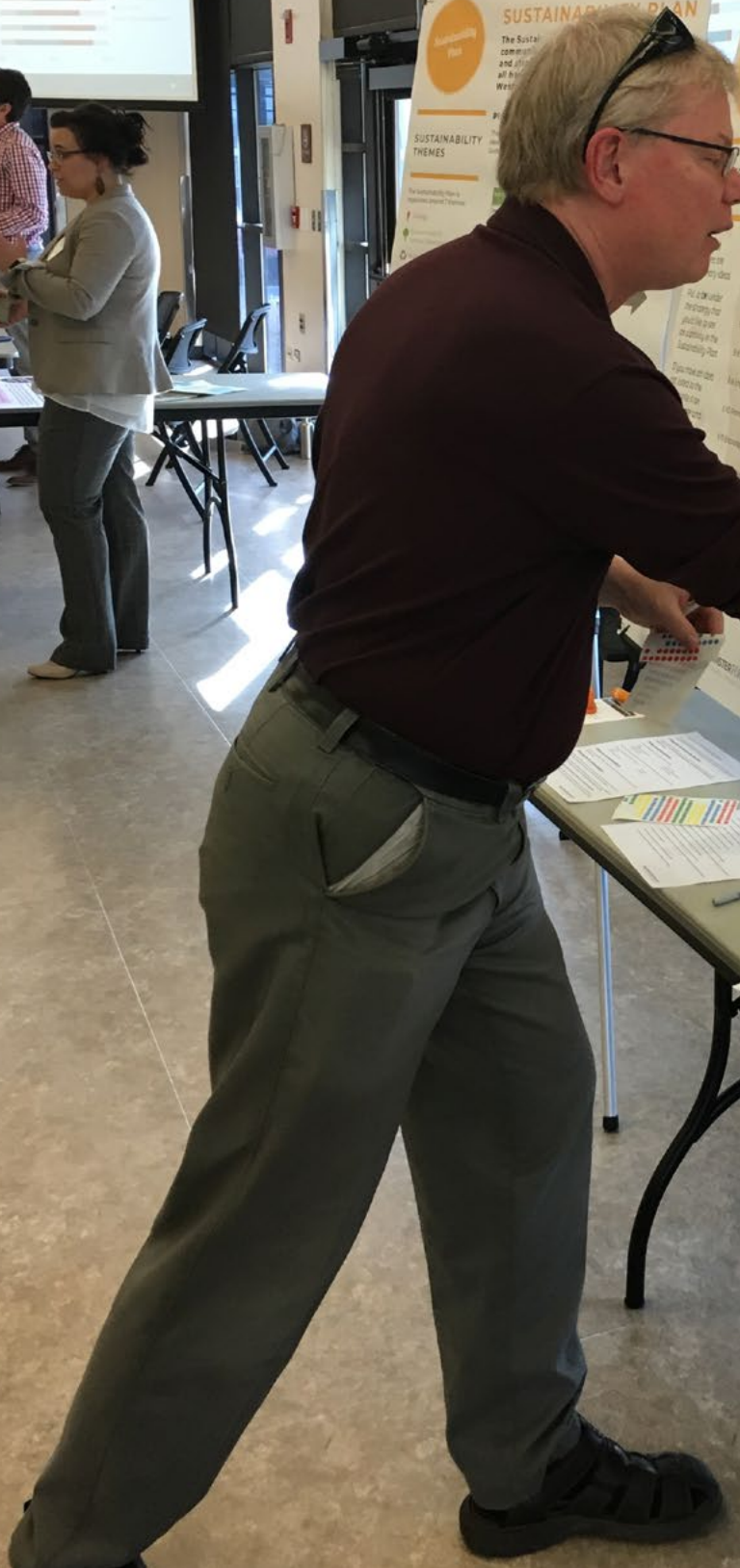
**EN-12:** Develop a City Environmental Management System

**EN-13:** Establish Sustainable Infrastructure Guidelines

**EN-14:** Pilot Low Impact Development Guidelines

**EN-15:** Increase Turf Reduction at City Facilities

**WESTMINSTER FORWARD**



# APPENDIX A: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

The Sustainability Plan was developed as part of Westminster Forward, a coordinated community engagement process created to support six concurrent city planning efforts. This approach is intended to maximize community engagement, prevent public fatigue by providing coordinated opportunities for input and ensure that all plans work together to address the city's Vision, Strategic Plan and other city-wide goals.

The Westminster Forward process began in the summer of 2018 with a series of stakeholder interviews and continued into 2019 and 2020 through online surveys, meetings and community events.

This public engagement summary appendix:

- Describes the **Sustainability Working Group**, an engagement process for Sustainability Plan-specific stakeholders.
- Lists the Westminster Forward public **outreach activities** and the resulting **participation** of each activity.

## Sustainability Working Group

A working group of 29 key city staff, residents and technical experts were identified and invited to participate in three work sessions to guide the development of the Sustainability Plan and ensure plan concepts connected with other Westminster Forward outcomes. Working Group members also provided preliminary insight into city capacity during strategy prioritization. In addition to the three work sessions, members were engaged through a series of surveys between work sessions and were tasked with reviewing the full draft plan prior to release for public comment.

## Outreach Activities and Participation

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Attendees/ Respondents</b>
Ongoing	Stakeholder Interviews	City Hall	40+
May 31, 2018	City Staff Meeting #1	City Hall	31
Jun 3, 2018	Imagine Westminster	Corner of 73rd /Lowell Blvd	150
Jun 12, 2018	Planning Commission	City Hall	18
Jun 28, 2018	City Staff Meeting #2	City Hall	23
Jun 28, 2018	Online Survey #1	Online	149
Jul 24, 2018	Planning Commission	City Hall	21
Jul 26, 2018	City Staff Meeting #3	City Hall	17
Aug 14, 2018	Visioning Workshop	City Hall	52
Aug 14, 2018	Online Survey #2	Online	170
Aug 18, 2018	Youth Advisory Panel	City Hall	21
Aug 20, 2018	City Council	City Hall	15
Sept 18, 2018	Design Workshop	City Park Recreation Center	9
Sept 18, 2018	Online Survey #3	Online	200
Oct 11, 2018	City Staff Meeting #4	City Hall	22
Oct 20, 2018	Harvest Festival	Downtown Westminster	2,081 “votes”; 34,000+ overall attendance
Nov 8, 2018	Taste of Westminster	Ice Center on the Promenade	400
Nov 28, 2018	City Staff Meeting #5	City Hall	10
Dec 11, 2018	Planning Commission	City Hall	10
Dec 11, 2018	City Staff Meeting	City Hall	10
Feb 2, 2019; May 20 & 21, 2019	Code Forward Task Force	City Hall	40+
30 May 30, 2019; Aug 8, 2019; Oct 3 2019	Sustainability Plan Working Group	City Hall	40+
Jun 7, 2019	Historic Westminster Summer Festival	Historic Westminster	600
Jun 14, 2019	Movies in the Park	Legacy Ridge Golf Course	750
Jun 20, 2019	Latino Festival	Westminster Station	3,528
Aug 17, 2019	Mayor’s Youth Advisory Panel	West View Recreation Center	21
Aug 23, 2019	Movies in the Park	City Park	1,000
Sep 14, 2019	Hmong Outreach	Westminster Garden	11

Jun 13 – Oct 1, 2019	Online Questionnaire #4	Online	358
Sep 26, 2019; Oct 16, 2019	People, Places and Plans Events	City Park Recreation Center, The MAC	75+
Oct 19, 2019	Harvest Festival	Downtown	34,000
Oct 23, 2019	City of Westminster Wellness Event	City Park Recreation Center	340
Nov 7, 2019	Taste of Westminster	Ice Center	500
Nov 6 & 13, 2019	Meeting in a Box (2 Meetings)	Resident Household	13
Sep 26 – Nov 18, 2019	Online Questionnaire #5	Online	598
2019	Project Web site	www.cityofwestminster.us/ forward	16,000+ hits
2019	Informational Displays	College Hill & Irving Street Libraries; City Park and West View Recreation Centers; the MAC	2,400/day
2019	City Edition – 8 bi-monthly editions from August 2018 to January 2020	Every residence & business within the City	56,750+
2019	The Weekly – 19 editions from July 2018 to November 2019	Email newsletter	3,200+
2019	Westminster Forward Newsletter – 6 bimonthly editions in 2019	Email newsletter	500+
2019	Social Media	Facebook, Next Door	5,600+



## Westminster Forward Public Open Houses

At two open houses, participants were asked to place dots next to the sustainability strategies that they supported most for each Sustainability Plan theme. The following table summarizes the results from the open house dot voting.

Note: based on the open house voting results, other public input and staff analysis, some of the strategies on the lists below were not included in the final Plan.

<b>Energy Strategies</b>	<b>Dot Total</b>
Promote Cool Roof Installations	11
Support a Clean Energy Agenda for the State of Colorado	10
Build Regional Renewable Energy Partnerships	9
Increase Energy Efficiency of Commercial and Multi-family Properties	9
Increase Renewable Energy for Municipal Facilities	7
Conduct Efficiency Outreach for Underserved Populations	6
Engage School Districts in Energy Efficiency Education	6
Promote Evaporative Cooling as an Air Conditioning Alternative	5
Encourage Zero Energy Ready Homes	5
Develop a Voluntary Energy Benchmarking and Reporting Program for Large Commercial and Industrial Properties	5
Explore Adoption of a Net Zero Energy Building Code	4
Stay Up-To-Date with International Building and Energy Conservation Code	3
Promote Switching from Natural Gas Appliances to Electric	1
Develop Efficiency Education and Programming	1
Conduct Energy Performance Contracting in Municipal Facilities	1
<b>Economic Resilience Strategies</b>	<b>Dot Total</b>
Foster Small and Local Business Development	22
Explore Integration of Sustainability Practices into Economic Development and Incentive Programs	14
Explore Options to Increase City Revenue Stability	7
Enhance Workforce Development for Under-Resourced Populations	6
Prioritize and Deliver Core City Services Sustainably	6
Recognize Sustainable Businesses	4
Encourage Revenue Generating Land Uses	3
Invest in Updated City Asset Management Tools	0

<b>Health &amp; Wellness Strategies</b>	<b>Dot Total</b>
Connect Gaps in Recreation Trails	22
Expand Community Garden Program	9
Reduce Restrictions on Urban Agriculture	8
Improve Access to Parks and Recreation Facilities in Underserved Areas	7
Encourage Home Gardens	6
Partner with Health and Wellness Businesses to Offer Community-Based Programming	5
Collaborate with School Districts to Include Healthy and Local Food in Student Meals	5
Encourage and Recruit Healthy Food Retailers in Underserved Areas	4
Promote City-Sponsored Health, Wellness, Library and Recreation Programs	4
Collaborate with Neighboring Communities for Regional Air Quality	3
Enhance Park Play Features	3
Expand the Strong, Prosperous and Resilient Communities Challenge Effort with Partners	2
Enhance Health and Wellness Collaboration with County Health Departments	1
Create Community Partnerships for Resilience	0
<b>Housing &amp; Neighborhoods Strategies</b>	<b>Dot Total</b>
Facilitate Community Affordable Housing Discussions to Explore Solutions	11
Expand Neighborhood Landscape Program to Address Sustainability and Resiliency	11
Establish a Land Bank Program for Affordable Housing Development	10
Support Neighborhood Block Parties and Gatherings	10
Coordinate with Homeowner Associations on Sustainability Education	7
Promote Sustainable Materials in New Housing Construction.	7
Review and Refresh Affordable and Workforce Housing Incentives	4
Conduct a Mobile Home Community Inventory	3
Identify Neighborhood Liaisons	2
Create a Yard-of-the-Month Recognition Program	2
Expand the Emergency and Essential Home Repair Program	2
Provide Education and Enforcement to Ensure Healthy Homes	0
Explore a Municipal Employee Housing Incentive or Assistance Program	0

<b>Materials &amp; Waste Strategies</b>	<b>Dot Total</b>
Encourage Single Use Plastic Reduction	22
Establish a Community-wide Clean-up and Swap Day	10
Promote Zero Waste for City Operations (90% Diversion)	9
Explore Consolidated Private Waste Services by Location or Sector	7
Require Curbside Compost Pickup Services from Waste Haulers	7
Enhance Enforcement Efforts for Illegal Dumping	6
Improve Composting in City Facilities	6
Provide Waste Reduction and Proper Disposal Education and Outreach	4
Require Waste Diversion Facilities for New Developments	3
Encourage School Waste Diversion	1
<b>Transportation &amp; Mobility Strategies</b>	<b>Dot Total</b>
Achieve Walk Friendly Community Designation	11
Increase Multimodal Outreach and Education	10
Study Commuter Rail Options	10
Achieve Bicycle Friendly Community Silver Status	9
Fund the Completion of Missing and Inaccessible Sidewalks	8
Study and Remove Barriers to Increase B Line Ridership	7
Explore Public-Private Partnerships for EV Charging Infrastructure Development	4
Adopt a City-wide Complete Streets Policy	3
Develop a Policy for Shared Vehicles	3
Increase Enforcement of Traffic Violations	2
Increase Wayfinding Signage	2
Require EV Readiness with New Construction	2
Support Buildout of a Fast Electric Vehicle Charging Station Network	2
Study Options to Reduce Urban Freight Emissions	2
Implement Bike and/or Car Share Programs	1
Adopt the CO Electric Vehicle Wired Workplace Program	1
Develop Neighborhood Electric Vehicle Connections	1
Explore Options for City Fleet Motor Pool Consolidation	0
Develop a City Fleet Transition Plan	0

<b>Environment &amp; Natural Resources Strategies</b>	<b>Dot Total</b>
Promote Low Water Landscaping (Xeriscaping)	12
Establish Sustainable Infrastructure Guidelines	8
Engage School Districts in Water, Landscape and Environmental Education	7
Increase Tree Care Education for Property Owners	7
Invest in Green Infrastructure Especially along Waterways and Trails	7
Expand the Urban Tree Canopy on Private Property	6
Update Landscaping Standards to Address Water-wise Landscaping	6
Expand Water Conservation Programs	5
Develop a City Environmental Management System	5
Provide Smart Water Meter Data Access to Customers	4
Provide Water Systems Education and Outreach	3
Provide Education about Low Impact Development Techniques	3
Increase Turf Reduction at City Facilities	3
Establish a Program to Monitor Biodiversity	2
Pilot Low Impact Development Projects	2
Limit High-Water Users	0
Limit Impervious Surfaces	0
Prioritize Environmentally Sensitive Development	0

# APPENDIX B: PERFORMANCE MONITORING



# APPENDIX B: PERFORMANCE MONITORING

This appendix provides details about monitoring the Sustainability Plan targets, including baseline values (if available), data sources (if established), preliminary tracking roles/responsibilities. As part of the living plan process, many of these targets will likely be further established and defined as data sources are confirmed or new monitoring approaches are developed.



## Energy

Target	Baseline Value	Data Source	Tracking Responsibility
Achieve 25% electricity savings and 15% natural gas savings community-wide by 2030 compared to the city's 2014 baseline	770 million kWh 41.9 million therms	Xcel Energy Partners in Energy Data Summary	Paul Schmiechen and Tom Ochtera
Pursue opportunities to decrease energy utility costs for low-income households.	Approved applications for Colorado Low-Income Energy Assistance Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6,072 in Adams County (2019)</li> <li>• 3,801 for Jefferson County (2019)</li> </ul> 100 residences participating in Xcel Energy's low-income weatherization program. 223 residents participating in the Low-income Energy Assistance Program.	Low-Income Energy Assistance Program Data (Colorado Department of Human Services)  Xcel Energy Partners in Energy Data Summary	Paul Schmiechen
Strive for 80% renewable electricity for primary municipal facilities and operations by 2030.	4.2 MW purchased from Solar Gardens (2019)  28% of Xcel Energy Supply from RE (2018)	<a href="#">City of Westminster Web site</a> - RE purchases and offsets  <a href="#">Xcel Energy</a>	Tom Ochtera

Align with the Governor Administration's Roadmap to pursue 100% renewable electricity community-wide by 2040.	28% of Xcel Energy supply from renewable electricity (2018)  2,215 single family residence parcels with solar permits (2020)	<a href="#">Xcel Energy</a> – utility owned energy generation  Community Development	Paul Schmiechen
Reduce state-wide GHG emissions by 90% by 2050	125,000,000	CDPHE	Paul Schmiechen



### Economic Resilience

Target	Baseline Value	Data Source	Tracking Responsibility
Maintain a diverse primary industries base.	TBD	TBD	Stephanie Troller
Expand opportunities for small businesses and entrepreneurs within the community.	TBD	TBD	Stephanie Troller
Grow opportunities for local workforce to match business needs.	TBD	TBD	Stephanie Troller
Number of businesses participating in the sustainable business program. Number of businesses taking a sustainability action.	TBD	TBD	Paul Schmiechen
Improve social responsibility and sustainable business practices in the community.	2 businesses in Environmental Leadership Program 2 businesses registered in the Best for Colorado program	<a href="#">Environmental Leadership Program</a>  B Lab Best for Colorado	Paul Schmiechen



## Health & Wellness

Target	Baseline Value	Data Source	Tracking Responsibility
Achieve the parks, open space and trail targets established in the Parks, Recreation & Libraries Plan.	TBD	Parks and Recreation Department	Nicole Ankeney
Reduce food swamps and lessen the effects of food deserts on local populations.	TBD	<a href="https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/">https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/</a>	Nicole Ankeney and Kate Starbeck
Increase education about and access to local and healthy foods and living opportunities.	TBD Participants in the City's Rx for Health Program TBD Participants in the City's Diabetes Prevention Program and Journey to Wellness	Parks and Recreation Department – Healthy Living Program	Barbara Giedraitis, Acting Recreation Services Manager  YMCA Diabetes Prevention Program  Tri-County Health Department
Increase community resilience and neighborhood connections for improved health and wellness outcomes.	TBD	TBD	TBD
Collaborate to improve regional air quality.	TBD	<a href="#">CDPHE Air Quality Index Reports</a>	TBD





## Housing & Neighborhoods

Target	Baseline Value	Data Source	Tracking Responsibility
Maintain or increase the percentage of residents who somewhat or strongly agree that the city can be described as safe and secure.	22% strongly agree; 61% somewhat agree in 2018	Westminster Community Survey	Policy and Budget Department
Increase both the diversity of housing types and affordable options available in the city.	19.5% of households with a mortgage; 40.0% of rental households (2013-2017 5-year estimates)  Annual housing certificates of occupancy by unit type TBD	U.S. Census Bureau Monthly owner/renter costs that exceed 35% of household income  Building permit data	Community Development
Maintain or increase the percentage of residents who rate the overall quality of their neighborhood as very good or good.	81% in 2018	Westminster Community Survey	Policy and Budget Department
Achieve 90% or greater voluntary compliance with nuisance code violations issued by the city.	91% in 2018	Code Enforcement Activity Report	Aric Otzelberger
Increase opportunities for creating community and neighborhood engagement.	TBD	TBD	TBD



## Materials & Waste

Target	Baseline Value	Data Source	Tracking Responsibility
Increase waste diversion rate to 35% by 2030 for all city operations and facilities.	13% in 2018	Alpine Waste and Recycling Sustainability Report	Anjelica McMahon
Increase the community-wide waste diversion rate.	11%, 2017	City waste hauler reports	City Clerk
Enhance city environmental management systems and practices	TBD	TBD	Anjelica McMahon



## Transportation and Mobility

Target	Baseline Value	Data Source	Tracking Responsibility
Achieve the mode share targets for carpool, transit, bicycling and walking established in the Transportation & Mobility Plan (TMP).	2017 Community to Work Mode Share <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carpool – 8.9%</li> <li>• Transit – 4.3%</li> <li>• Walked – 1.2%</li> <li>• Bike/other – 1%</li> <li>• Work at Home – 5.5%</li> </ul>	<a href="#">U.S. Census Bureau</a> Means of Transportation to Work	Kristina Evanoff
Improve and invest in transportation infrastructure to enhance and complete connections to local and regional activity centers (such as shopping, jobs and recreation).	See TMP	Community Development Department – Transportation Engineering	Kristina Evanoff
Reduce and strive to eliminate traffic fatalities and injuries in the transportation system.	See TMP	Community Development Department – Transportation Engineering	Kristina Evanoff

Increase the number of light duty and medium duty electric vehicles in the city fleet.	TBD	TBD	Joe Murzynsky
Increase the number of electric vehicle charging stations on and off city property	TBD	TBD	Paul Schmiechen



### Natural Resources and Environment

Target	Baseline Value	Data Source	Tracking Responsibility
Reduce system-wide water use to 110 gallons per capita per day (gpcd) or lower by 2030.	2014-2018 5-year average = 127 gpcd	Public Works and Utilities Annual Metered Demand	Drew Beckwith
Increase biodiversity and native species throughout the city.	TBD	TBD	TBD
Maintain the urban tree canopy coverage	TBD	TBD	Nicole Ankeney
Improve the health of the community's waterways and water bodies.	TBD	TBD	Jake Moyer
Halt the decline in the Utility Condition Index (UCI) for the city water and wastewater infrastructure systems.	Declining	Public Works and Utilities Utility Condition Index	Julie Koehler





# APPENDIX C: CLIMATE CHANGE

# APPENDIX C: CLIMATE CHANGE

This appendix includes a summary of the various Sustainability Plan goals, targets, and actions that connect to reducing contributions to and adapting to climate change.

## Climate Goals

The following goals help the City of Westminster chart a course toward reducing total GHG emissions, as especially those from energy and transportation, the largest sources of the community's emissions.

### 2019 State of Colorado Goals

- 90% reduction in GHG emissions by 2050 (from 2005 levels)
- 100% renewable energy by 2040

### Xcel Energy Goals

- 55% renewable electricity by 2026
- 80% reduction in GHG emissions by 2030
- Carbon-free electricity by 2050

### Long-Term Aspirational City Goals

- 100% renewable electricity
- 100% residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park
- 100% electric vehicles
- 100% energy efficient, healthy homes





## Westminster Climate-Related Targets & Strategies

The following sections detail which Sustainability Plan targets and strategies contribute to emissions reductions.











### Buildings

Residential and commercial/industrial buildings generate 49% of community emissions. Sustainability Plan targets and strategies that enable or support emissions reductions in the building sector include:

#### Targets

- Achieve 25% electricity savings and 15% natural gas savings community-wide by 2030 compared to the city's 2014 baseline. 
- Pursue opportunities to decrease energy utility costs for low-income households. 
- Strive for 80% renewable electricity for primary municipal facilities and operations by 2030. 
- Align with the Governor Administration's Roadmap to pursue 100% renewable electricity community-wide by 2040. 







## Strategies

- EN1. Support a Clean Energy Agenda for the State of Colorado 
- EN2. Explore Opportunities for Resilient Energy Systems 
- EN3. Build Regional Renewable Energy Partnerships 
- EN4. Provide Residential Energy Education and Engagement 
- EN5. Increase Renewable Electricity for Municipal Facilities and Operations 
- EN6. Conduct Energy Performance Contracting in Municipal Facilities 
- EN7. Update Building and Development Codes 
- ER5. Create a Sustainable Business Support and Recognition Program 
- ER6. Explore the Integration of Sustainability Practices into Economic Development Incentives 
- HN1. Preserve and Cultivate Affordable and Workforce Housing 
- HN2. Protect and Preserve Existing Housing Stock 
- HN3. Promote Sustainable Practices and Product Diversity in Construction 







## Transportation

The transportation sector is responsible for 48% of Westminster's emissions. Sustainability Plan targets and strategies that enable or support emissions reductions in the transportation sector include:

### Targets

- Achieve the parks, open space and trail targets established in the Parks, Recreation & Libraries Plan. 
- Increase education about and access to local and healthy foods, mobility options for active lifestyles and other healthy living opportunities. 
- Achieve the mode share targets for carpool, transit, bicycling and walking established in the Transportation & Mobility Plan (TMP). 
- Improve and invest in transportation infrastructure to enhance and complete connections to local and regional activity centers (such as shopping, jobs and recreation). 
- Increase the number of light duty and medium duty electric vehicles in the city fleet. 
- Increase the number of electric vehicle charging station on and off city property. 



## Strategies

- HW1. Improve Trail Connectivity 
- TM1. Identify, Complete, Operate and Maintain a Multimodal Transportation Network 
- TM2. Identify Sustainable Funding for a Multimodal Transportation Network 
- TM3. Adopt a City-wide Complete Streets Policy 
- TM6. Encourage Private Electric Vehicle Adoption and Infrastructure Development 
- TM7. Advance City Fleet Vehicle Electrification and Infrastructure Development on City Property 






## Solid Waste

Emissions from the composition of solid waste account for 3% of community emissions. Sustainability Plan targets and strategies that enable or support emissions reductions in the solid waste sector include:

### Targets

- Increase waste diversion rate to 35% by 2030 for all city operations and facilities. 
- Increase the community-wide waste diversion rate. 

### Strategies





- MW1. Reduce Waste and Increase Diversion in City Facilities 
- MW2. Require Enhanced Waste Infrastructure in New Developments 
- MW3. Explore Options for Increasing Commercial Waste Diversion 
- MW4. Explore Options for Increasing Residential Waste Diversion 
- MW5. Enhance Environmental Management and Compliance 



## Other

Other sectors that contribute to community emissions include wastewater treatment (0.04%) and industrial processes and product use (0.04%). Beyond mitigation, carbon capture, sequestration, and climate adaptation also help address community climate impacts. The following Sustainability Plan targets and strategies support emissions reduction in other sectors beyond buildings, transportation, and waste, or provide additional climate adaptation benefits.

### Targets

- Maintain and protect biodiversity and native species throughout the city. 
- Expand the urban tree canopy coverage. 
- Improve the health of the community's waterways and water bodies. 
- Reduce system-wide water use to 110 gallons per capita per day (gpcd) or lower by 2030. 

### Strategies

- HW2. Partner to Expand Health, Nutrition and Wellness Education and Offerings 
- HW4. Reduce Local Contributions to Regional Air Pollution 
- HW8. Develop Community Partnerships for Resilience 
- HN4. Focus on City Neighborhoods 
- NR2. Increase Westminster's Tree Canopy Coverage 
- NR3. Expand Stormwater Low Impact Development 
- NR4. Improve and Maintain City Stormwater Program 
- NR6. Prepare and Adopt Water Efficiency Plan 
- NR7. Adopt Water Efficient Landscape Standards 
- NR8. Reduce Outdoor Water Use at City Properties 

