Comprehensive Plan 2035
Fowler, Colorado
Town of Fowler
Colorado

2035
Comprehensive Plan

Board of Trustees
Planning and Zoning Board

February 2009
Aknowledgements

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from the State and County governments

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Section 1:

Introduction

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Citizen’s Advisory Committee at work
1 Introduction

The citizens of the Town of Fowler share a common vision to become one of the most sustainable communities in Colorado. Our hope is to grow while balancing the central components of sustainability: economic, environmental and social-cultural. In Fowler, this means that as a community we must grow while maintaining social equity, preserving our cultural and historical heritage, increasing economic development and job opportunities, and providing a diverse housing mix for all levels of income within the community. Furthermore, the Town will work to balance the environmental heritage inherent within our community while further enhancing our ecological assets such as protecting the historical and environmental benefits of the irrigation ditches that serve the local farm land; practicing stewardship of the recreational and ecological benefits of the Arkansas River valley and realizing the inherent energy of the wind, sun and biomass. By utilizing natural capital and protecting ecological assets, the Town of Fowler will create a vibrant, sustainable rural economy.

It's not the plan that is important, it's the planning.

Graeme Edwards

1.1 What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A comprehensive plan is an official public document that envisions and recommends general ways in which the planning area of interest should evolve in the future. For the Town of Fowler, this comprehensive plan threads the reoccurring planning theme of sustainability throughout it to seek and ensure that the Town can continue to meet its current and ongoing environmental, social and economic needs without compromising the future needs for succeeding generations.

Finite resources, coupled with a significant desire to better support a diverse and sustainable community, require the Town of Fowler to make choices about how best to use its natural, social, economic, and human resources. Town residents and elected officials recognize that these choices are local decisions that will impact the natural environment, the community, and the Town's quality of life. The vision espoused in this plan is intended to guide Fowler's role locally, regionally, and globally. Moreover, the Town of Fowler 2035 Comprehensive Plan commits the Town to becoming a model community for sustainable policies and practices. It adopts a planning horizon which extends over 27 years, comprising three primary components: community overview, policy that guides future land use decisions, and maps.

In the community overview, the Plan describes general background information on history and culture; population and growth; community characteristics; economy; public health and natural conditions; existing land use and housing. Current conditions and trends are analyzed to provide a sufficient basis for goals, objectives and actions that will guide future land use, capital improvement, and economic development decisions.

The policy component of Fowler’s 2035 Comprehensive Plan is supported by goals, objectives and actions that were identified by the community through the planning process. Goals reflect the desires of residents and elected officials. Additionally, they set the stage for the development of a successful land use and community development decision-making process. Subsequently, objectives create the specific framework for addressing such goals. Finally, actions add a level of pragmatic planning and measurement of achievement through the description of specific activities to be accomplished within a specified time period. All policies were developed by the Town of Fowler residents and representatives.
The maps provided within this plan illustrate existing conditions while providing for location based direction on future sustainable land use, economic development, social and transportation decisions.

1.2 Why Plan?

Our Town has a committed vision for successful long term growth, economic viability and sustainability. As a rural community focused on farming and ranching, we plan to successfully build our future around renewable energy which will provide positive contributions to the future economic viability, environmental preservation and carbon footprint reduction for this community. In order to ensure that this vision is realized, with the help of consultants, we turned to the creation of a comprehensive plan through a community planning process.

This comprehensive planning document guides and assists us in addressing some of the primary reasons for this effort:

• **Putting Our Vision on Canvas**

  Communities, like organisms, are everchanging and responsive to the effects of their environments. As such, a comprehensive plan acts as a guide that allows all of a community’s parts to work together to align the priorities, programs, projects and government into a synergistic whole.

• **Local Decision Making**

  Comprehensive plans enable communities to coordinate their local decision making efforts by providing a document reflective of the vision and goals to which all policies and projects can be aligned.

• **Guides Landowners and Future Development**

  Effective planning provides expectations and builds confidence about existing and future land uses to landowners and developers. The comprehensive plan serves as the document through which such expectations and good planning are set.

• **Representation of Community Stakeholders**

  Through an engaged public planning process, the comprehensive plan represents a variety of voices and interests. This representation ensures that recommendations, opinions and suggestions are heard as well as included in the community’s vision and goals. With inclusion of these interests and voices, the plan builds a strong constituency for its ideas and recommendations. Furthermore, it guides future development decisions for the community such that they are based firmly on the goals of the plan and are supported by a significant representation of the community and its stakeholders.

1.3 Purpose of the Comprehensive Master Plan

The purpose of the Town of Fowler’s first officially adopted comprehensive plan is to guide community decision making toward accomplishing the vision and goals for a vibrant and sustainable community.

As Fowler has fewer than 2,000 residents and is located in Otero County, which is not subject to the requirements of C.R.S. 30-28-106 therefore the Town is not required by the State of Colorado statute to craft and adopt a comprehensive plan. However, going beyond minimum requirements, this plan has been developed in accordance with the State’s planning policy as defined in C.R.S. 31-23-206, Master Plan.
1.4 How to Use the Plan

The Town of Fowler Comprehensive Plan 2035 serves to implement the vision for future land use and development in the Town, as well as for future transportation needs, economic development, environmental stewardship, improvement programs, and community services. It should be used by the Town Administration when discussing projects with community groups and private developers. Additionally, the Plan shall be used by the Planning Commission and Town Trustees as a guide for refining the Town’s Municipal Code, ordinances and future capital improvements. All parties shall be familiar with the Plan, its goals, objectives and recommended actions in order to promote the long standing vision that is consistent with the purpose of this Plan.

The Plan is intended in its most important form as a plan of action for the next 27 years. However, there are several aspects that cut across that time frame:

• Sustainability is a concept for ensuring a high quality of life for future generations. Consequently, the Plan projects that these actions will provide benefit far into the future.

• Some actions are continuations of recent programs and require ongoing diligence to maintain. Consequently, some of these actions ‘flow through’ the Plan.

• The “timeframes” established as part of the actions is intended to be reviewed annually by the Town to inform them how well this plan is achieving its goals. Consequently, it is recommended that every five years the Town revisit the proposals in this plan and update them to ensure the plan maintains its course towards greater sustainability. The results of the annual review should be aligned with the operational and capital budget goals for the following fiscal year.

With long-term growth in mind, the 2035 Comprehensive Plan outlines the community’s goals for future growth and provides direction for elected and appointed officials as they make critical decisions for the Town of Fowler in the years to come. Specifically, the Comprehensive Plan gives Town officials clear guidance with respect to their decisions affecting growth, annexation, land use and development, parks and open space, wildlife, the preservation of Fowler’s agricultural, historic and natural resources, and the expansion of public facilities and services.

This Plan, intended to be general in nature, will provide a broad rational basis for regulatory implementation tools, land use decisions and capital improvements that shape the physical development of Fowler. As a guiding document, the Comprehensive Plan sets forth the vision and goals of the Town of Fowler that cannot be fully accomplished unless referred to when considering new projects, policies and programs for the Town. The ability of the Town and other involved parties in the creation of this plan (such as Otero County, Fowler School District, State and Federal government agencies) to accomplish this community vision is directly linked to the ultimate success of the Town of Fowler.
1.5 The Public Planning Process

It all began with a phone call from Wayne Snider, Town Administrator, to James van Hemert, Executive Director of the Rocky Mountain Land Use Institute. “Are you able to help us find a planner to work with us on a sustainable comprehensive plan?” Wayne asked. He explained the Town needed a comprehensive plan in order to develop a long range vision and action plan for community and economic development that included a strong renewable energy and sustainability component. After several months and conversations, everyone agreed that the best planner for the job would be RMLUI, a non-profit, non-partisan educational and research affiliate of the University of Denver with a mission to advance the cause of sustainable land use.

With matching grant funds from the State of Colorado’s Smart Growth Office of the Department of Local Affairs, the planning effort began with RMLUI taking the lead with support from Sedgwick Consulting Group (Planning), a student intern, Fehr and Peers (transportation) and Staller & Henry (Landscape Architects for GIS and mapping support).

All parties involved agreed that successful development of a Comprehensive Plan required a strong community engagement program with a Town appointed Citizen’s Advisory Committee at the center.

The public planning process was well integrated with the community. It involved the following community participant driven planning process steps:

- Ten interviews with specific community stakeholders, citizens and public officials to learn about key issues facing the Town;
- Thirteen Advisory Committee meetings, open to all interested publics; Nine of which were facilitated by consultants and resulted in a crafted vision statement, reviewed data gathered by consultants and community members and developed goals, objectives, action items and time frames for a comprehensive list of topics flowing from the vision;

Fowler Elementary School students present their vision for the future of Fowler
• A Town Hall meeting was held, following the 13 Advisory Committee meetings, to present the Citizen Advisory Committee’s findings, listen to feedback and questions from the broader community. Participation of elementary school students at the meeting occurred through skits, pictures and descriptions of their vision for the future of Fowler;

• A public review and comment period was held in January 2009 with draft copies of the Plan made available to all interested citizens for review along with notice published on the Town’s website, the Fowler Tribune and in draft plans provided in strategic locations throughout the community. Additional draft copies of the plan were also made available for review to interested government agencies and organizations; and

• Two public meetings to adopt the 2035 Comprehensive Plan were held; a hearing before the Planning & Zoning Commission on January 22, 2009 and a meeting to adopt a resolution before the Town Trustees on February 23, 2009.
Section 2:

Vision and Goals

COMMUNITY VISION ........................................ 2.1
COMMUNITY GOALS .......................................... 2.2
MEASUREMENT AND RESEARCH ......................... 2.3
Fowler Elementary School student artwork entitled “Our Vision of the Future of Fowler”
2 Vision and Goals

2.1 Community Vision

The following vision statement for the Town of Fowler was drafted by the Advisory Committee and citizens of the Town:

*A vibrant and progressive community that serves as a center for the farming and ranching economy. The gateway to southeastern Colorado's heritage that values its small town atmosphere and has a commitment to education. Aggressively pursuing growth, the community has many amenities and prides itself in maintaining its historic heart, main street, one that is walkable, and is a local and regional destination.*

2.2 Community Goals

The goals of this plan were developed during the Citizen Advisory committee meetings with community stakeholders. At each public meeting, those in attendance, worked to determine goals for each of the policy sections of the Comprehensive Plan. Through this effort a common vision was realized and a vision statement was born which is reflected above. The community goals set the foundation from which the Plan was developed providing guiding principles for the Town of Fowler and future development.

2.3 Measurement and Research

A comprehensive plan is a living document and meant to evolve to adequately adapt to changing conditions after time of plan adoption. Furthermore, maintaining a current plan that accurately reflects the Town’s vision is consistent with Fowler’s desire to grow as a sustainable community.

With this in mind, it is recommended that updates to the Plan should be carried out every five years to monitor the accuracy of growth forecasts and the effectiveness of plan implementation. Appropriate adjustments should be made at that time in consultation with the public. Interest has been expressed to form a committee, or continue the existing Citizen Advisory Committee, to provide ongoing review of achievements accomplished based on the goals, objectives and actions of the Plan during a quarterly review period.
Section 3:

Goals and Objectives

LAND USE ......................................................... 3.1
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SUSTAINABILITY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY ............. 3.3
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TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY ......................... 3.6
PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE ................... 3.7
3 Goals and Objectives

3.1 Land Use

Housing

Promoting housing affordability, diversity and quality to satisfy the needs of all household types and life cycle points is the current and future direction described by this section. Through policies and specific actions, we will work to enhance older neighborhoods by continually improving public facilities such as sidewalks and streets and by preserving trees. We will only approve infill development that respects the distinct neighborhood character in terms of density, scale, setbacks, uses and design.

Goal #1

Quality: Protect and enhance the character of existing neighborhoods

Objective 1.1

Rehabilitate existing housing stock in a manner that is compatible in terms of character, density, scale and design

Action

• Conduct or fund a housing study to develop an inventory of homes and assess their condition. Explore funding opportunities such as Community Development Block Grants and Main Street USA programs to assist with a study

• Maximize the search for funding and support efforts of Tri-County Housing for the rehabilitation of existing housing stock
**Objective 1.2**

Enhance and protect historical residential design through continuous improvement of public facilities such as sidewalks, streets and preservation of trees

**Action**

- Explore funding opportunities such as Community Development Block Grants and Main Street USA programs to assist with infrastructure and street improvements
- Create residential design standards that reflect the unique qualities in existing neighborhoods

**Timeframe**

Immediately via inclusion of illustrated guidelines within the plan

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**Goal #2**

**Affordability: Support affordable housing**

Promote the development of affordable housing while removing barriers and providing incentives

**Action**

- Locate affordable housing in proximity to employment, transportation, and services
• Support measures, such as deed restrictions and community land trusts, which maintain the affordability of affordable housing on a long-term basis
• Give projects that include affordable housing priority within the planning review process
• Revise the Municipal Code to ensure flexible standards that encourage affordable housing
• Revise the Municipal Code to allow for accessory dwelling units; mix of housing types for infill development, and multi-generational housing
• Seek funding from State, Federal and private funding sources for affordable housing while encouraging public and private land donations to reduce development costs for affordable housing

**Timeframe**

1 – 5 years

**Goal #3**

**Diversity: Maintain and encourage housing that meets the diverse needs of existing and future Town residents**

**Objective 3.1**

Promote flexible design standards that allow for accessory dwelling units, infill residential development and multi-generational housing

**Action**

• Revise the Municipal Code to ensure that adequate, safe and well-serviced housing for all age groups and special needs groups is available, including, but not limited to, “move up” markets, senior housing (independent and dependent) and housing for people with disabilities
• Encourage efficient infrastructure layouts and streamlined development review processes for such projects

**Timeframe**

Begin within one year

**Population Growth**

We desire to facilitate population growth at just below the state of Colorado’s average population growth rate of 1.2%. This rate of growth will ensure that the number of residents will increase at a rate sustainable for maintaining the quality of life that the current residents now enjoy without future burden on the community’s resources.

**Goal #4**

**Foster 1% Annual Population Growth**

**Objective 4.1**

Maintain strong leadership and community identity to attract growth

**Action**

• Maintain strong Mayor, Board of Trustees and Administration

**Timeframe**

Ongoing
Objective 4.2
Encourage young households and families to settle in Fowler

**Action**
- Allocate funds within the Town budget for advertising efforts that include information on natural areas, recreation, small town atmosphere, schools and affordable housing

**Timeframe**
1 – 5 years

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**Community Character**

We take pride in our community character which is reflective of traditional neighborhood development that new developments of today work so hard to achieve. Historically, this character was built from agricultural roots out of necessity to sustain a community that could be the recipient of the efforts born from its own labor. An integral part of this plan is to ensure that the community’s natural, historic and cultural heritage are preserved through physical design and future planning efforts. The Town will promote this character through new and existing developments to ensure that the same quality of life for the Town’s residents is maintained for now and future generations.

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Goal #5

**Maintain and enhance the Town’s distinctive community character within all planning areas (main street, neighborhood, state highway 50 corridor, rural and natural areas, cannery district)**

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Objective 5.1

Encourage infill and redevelopment that maintains the Town’s existing and historical character

**Action**
- Revise Municipal Code to include standards consistent with existing historic community character within all planning areas

**Timeframe**
Begin work within one year

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Objective 5.2

Preserve historic and cultural resources

**Action**
- Develop a preservation plan for critical acknowledged resources such as Windy Point, the golf course area and historic buildings
- Explore the State Historic Preservation Office as a resource and potential partner

**Timeframe**
1 – 5 years
Objective 5.3
Focus enhancements and improvements on high priority travel routes

**Action**
- Establish a “Gateway to Fowler” plan and program to concentrate community enhancements along the Town’s entryway off of the Highway 50 corridor that shall include but not be limited to, clear, attractive signage to announce the Town entry and other visual public amenities such as lighting

**Timeframe**
1 – 2 years

Objective 5.4
Maintain natural gateways and corridors through defined conservation efforts

**Action**
- Establish a plan that focuses on natural gateways and corridors for conservation and enhancement
- Seek and apply for additional sources of funding through the Colorado Department of Transportation to improve gateways and arterials

**Timeframe**
1 – 5 years

Objective 5.5
Encourage rehabilitation or redevelopment of deteriorating and abandoned building stock

**Action**
- Develop commercial design standards and guidelines which should also be applied to public buildings; revise Municipal Code accordingly

**Timeframe**
Immediately

Objective 5.6
Control the impact of light pollution in all new development projects

**Action**
- Create a “Dark Sky Ordinance”
- Collaborate with local electric utility on financial and design incentives and promotion of energy efficiency measures related to lighting

**Timeframe**
Immediately

Urban Influence Area and Annexation
The Town of Fowler seeks to balance the opportunities and challenges of future growth through sustainable land use policies, intergovernmental agreements (IGA’s) with neighboring jurisdictions, minimizing impacts through beneficial and meaningful annexations, and promoting a contiguous pattern of growth that is reflective of the Town’s vision and policies. With this direction, land must be preserved for either agriculture or urban density development, not low density living areas.

Within existing and new intergovernmental agreements (IGA’s), the Town shall review and comment on the location of future growth and development, the provision of public facilities and services, the conservation of natural resources, revenue sharing, and discourage sprawling rural residential development outside of defined growth areas.

Annexations may be pursued by the Town for purposes other than urban development, such as securing land use control over areas identified as open space by the Comprehensive Plan, or providing for future urbanization of an area. Further, the Town shall only support and allow development in areas where it can be adequately supported by critical public facilities and services such as water, wastewater, storm drainage, transportation, and fire and emergency services.

The Urban Influence Area in this Plan is defined by a three mile radius which encompasses an area wherein the Town wishes to influence land use decisions, requesting other jurisdictions to recognize Fowler’s right to do so. The map below illustrates the relationship between Fowler’s
incorporated boundary and its Urban Influence Area.

* See Map 4: Urban Influence Area Insert

Goal #6

Maximize orderly and efficient growth and development on a local and regional level

Objective 6.1

Foster regional coordination and cooperation between the Town and other municipalities, counties, and governmental agencies in the region

Action

- Maintain existing Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) and continue to pursue new IGAs with neighboring jurisdictions to address issues with respect to future urban growth and farmland preservation
- Amend the existing IGA with Otero County to include a requirement for Town review and approval of all land use decisions within the 3 mile influence area

Timeframe

Within one year

Objective 6.2

Preserve and protect agricultural land outside of the Town boundary not planned for urban development

Action

- Revise Municipal Code to protect and preserve these areas
- Enact Intergovernmental Agreements with Otero County and surrounding Counties to identify prime agricultural land for future preservation and protection
- Develop incentives and/or enroll in programs that ensure the profitability of farming and related business operations

Timeframe

Immediately

Objective 6.3

Pursue Annexations that are sustainable and maintain quality growth for the Town

Action

- Consider annexation of surrounding and adjacent developed properties where public services are feasible
- Prioritize the annexation of commercial properties
- Do not provide municipal services to development in unincorporated areas or assess necessary impact fees
- In accordance with Otero County preference, annex entire parcels and adjacent roads

Timeframe

Begin within one year

Objective 6.4

Attract and promote new neighborhoods that contain diversified housing options that meet the varying needs of its residents, including single family, multi-generational, attached homes and affordable housing options (Reference Population Growth Section)

Action

- Allocate funds within Town budget for advertising efforts

Timeframe

1 – 5 years

Objective 6.5

New neighborhoods will have access and direct linkage to the full range
Planning Areas

Goal #7

Establish Planning Areas

The historic development of Fowler has created distinctive areas with their own unique character and functions. Beginning with the mixed use pattern of Main Street, running perpendicular to the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway, the Town of Fowler grew and filled in its western railway Town grid in an area the Plan refers to as the “Neighborhood.” The old Diven Cannery building provides a focal point for a unique redevelopment opportunity for this now somewhat forlorn and forgotten area of Town north of the railway tracks now referred to as the “Cannery District.” The Arkansas River and Cottonwood Links Golf course comprise the “Natural and Recreation” area. Beyond the Town’s edges lies the “Farmland Preservation” area in recognition of Fowler’s agricultural heritage, identity and sustained economic growth.

Planning area policies reflect issues that emerged during the planning process, including the desire to encourage traditional neighborhood development, a diverse range of housing types and densities, redevelopment of historic and notable areas, parks, open space, farmland preservation and recreational opportunities. Implementing Plan objectives will require modification to the Town’s Municipal Code to ensure that existing and newly developed land use areas are consistent with this Plan.

* See Map 6: Planning Area Insert

Objective 7.1

Primary land uses should be single family with a small mix of duplex, multi-family housing and the occasional two homes on a lot

Action

• Develop residential design standards and update Municipal Code accordingly

Timeframe

1-5 years

Objective 7.2

Encourage multi-generational housing and location on a project specific basis

Action

• Develop a special review process for this type of housing

Timeframe

1-5 years

Objective 7.3

Commercial, office, retail and institutional uses complimentary to residential land uses should be considered through a special review process

Action

• Locate religious and institutional uses within walking distances from neighborhoods
Objective 7.4
Create and enhance network of connectivity via open space, trails, streets, sidewalks, bikeways

Action
- Establish safe routes for children to schools

Timeframe
1-5 years

Main Street Planning Area

This planning area forms the heart of the community. It begins at the Burlington Northern Santa Fe railway tracks where the street is characterized primarily by commercial businesses, several mixed use buildings (residential/office/commercial/institutional), becoming progressively more residential in character toward the southern end where the street meets City Park. Several of the Town's churches dominate the street. The two primary blocks, each on one side of State Highway 50, are dominated by one and two story buildings immediately adjacent to the wide sidewalks, forming a comfortable public “living room”.

Objective 7.5
Primary land uses should be commercial, retail, office, institutional

Action
- Develop a mixed use, urban design standard for this planning area and update Municipal Code accordingly

Timeframe
1-5 years

Objective 7.6
Allow for mixed use, traditional neighborhood residential development that encourages a diversity of housing types commensurate with the character of the area

Action
- Action by the Town will be taken upon proposal of developments

Timeframe
Ongoing

Objective 7.7
Enhance and maximize connectivity to Town Park

Action
- Improve Main Street by Park and School

Timeframe
1-5 years

Objective 7.8
Encourage energy efficiency and alternatives for development of this planning area

Action
- Install solar lighting
Objective 7.9
Maximize sustainable building materials for longevity and community quality

Action
• Encourage use of green building guidelines or use incentives for green buildings

Timeframe
6 months to a year

Objective 7.10
Rehabilitate and redevelop this planning area with particular focus on preservation of historical structures of value to the community while maintaining the unique character reflected in the industrial identity of this area

Action
• Develop design standards for this planning area and update municipal code accordingly
• Attraction of industrial, light industrial and mixed office-business-retail uses for future growth of this area

Timeframe
1-5 years

Cannery District Planning Area

This gritty area is characterized primarily by abandoned buildings and several ongoing concerns—feed mill, meat processing plant and offices in the former railway depot. Several of the abandoned buildings are historically significant structures with good architectural form and durable building material. The old cannery and feed mill in particular offer opportunity for restoration and redevelopment. Primary future land uses should be industrial, light industrial and mixed office-business-retail.

Highway 50 Corridor Planning Area
Characterized primarily by highway oriented uses such as gasoline stations, auto repair, motels and various eating establishments, the architectural quality of the Highway 50 Corridor planning area generally declines the closer to the present day buildings. This area serves as the primary entrance to the Town at the eastern and western incorporated boundaries. Future land uses should be reflective of “gateway” features and primarily be commercial or business uses.
Objective 7.11
Primary land uses should be commercial, service-oriented retail and business

Action
• Develop design standards for this planning area and update Municipal Code accordingly

Objective 7.12
Maximize partnership with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to ensure that transportation planning efforts for Highway 50 are well coordinated with the Town’s vision

Action
• Pursue and maintain ongoing communication with CDOT regarding the planning of Highway 50 through telephone conversations, correspondence and regular meetings at which CDOT will provide updates on their process

Timeframe
Immediately

Objective 7.13
Creation of gateways into the Town of Fowler from Highway 50 and other regional connections

Action
• Seek and maximize gateway funding by applying for additional resources such as federal grants from the “Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users” (SAFETEA-LU) Fund

Timeframe
2-5 years

Natural and Recreational Planning Areas
These planning areas are geographically delineated by the Arkansas River riparian area, floodplain, and neighboring wetlands. The Town’s golf course and adjacent trails further define this area. Preservation of the natural amenities provided by ecological assets should be a priority for this planning area along with community interconnectivity to open space and trails.

Objective 7.14
Conserve natural areas and resources that provide habitat, maintain environmental quality and enrich the lives of residents

Action
• Develop a plan and program to focus on the conservation and preservation of the Arkansas River riparian area and other critical areas such as the wetlands around the golf course and historical irrigation ditches

Objective 7.15
Balance recreation development and conservation of natural areas
**Objective 7.16**
Organize development to protect natural areas and enhance where necessary

**Action**
- Revise the Municipal Code to allow for rural cluster developments in an effort to provide for greater areas of conservation

**Timeframe**
1-5 years

**Objective 7.17**
Restrict development in the 100-year floodplain

**Action**
- Develop setback requirements for development along river and wetland areas
- Develop erosion control standards to protect natural areas from development impacts and revise Municipal Code accordingly

**Timeframe**
1-5 years

**Farmland Preservation Area**

Class 1 agricultural land defines the primary land use in this planning area. Priority should be applied to preservation of agricultural uses while permitting only very limited large lot residential development. Any residential development should be in the form of rural clusters in order to preserve open space and natural amenities while not overextending community services and resources.

**Objective 7.18**
Maintain productive agricultural activity

**Objective 7.19**
Allow for renewable energy uses

**Objective 7.20**
Development within this area should be limited to cluster residential development with review by the Town

**Action**
- Encourage an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with Otero County to ensure that the Town is provided the opportunity to review development proposals for this area and that proposed development within this area is limited cluster development

**Timeframe**
2-5 years
This Plan seeks to provide policies and actions which enable us to establish a range of programs and activities focused on business expansion and job creation in order to sustain current and future generations. The primary focus is on local-capacity building which is translated through encouraging the development of local entrepreneurial environments, such as the manufacturing of bio-diesel, “agri-tourism”, industry and university linkages, such as the Town’s strong relationship with Colorado State University- Pueblo campus, and regional industrial clusters, such as the proposed nuclear industrial campus. To ensure economic development is progressive, it is recommended through policy that as economic change occurs within the Town it be measured and held accountable for its successes and failures.

Objective 8.1
Enhance the value of agriculture production in the Town

Action
- Develop partnerships with CSA (Community Supported Agriculture), local farmer’s markets and other industry service providers to distribute agriculture regionally in the marketplace
- Partner with the Southeast Colorado Regional Heritage Taskforce (SECORHT)
- Monitor the trends of farmland utilization and production and be ready to act when there is the need for public policy support

Timeframe
1 – 5 years

Objective 8.2
Promote use of manure and other agriculture byproduct waste to produce renewable energy

Action
- Work with local farmers to create a manure selling program for anaerobic digestive plant that allows farmers to become stakeholders in the plant

Timeframe
Immediately

Objective 8.3
Create jobs through the use of technology alternatives for agriculture production

Action
- Partner with the University of New Mexico to develop a greenhouse program where agriculture specialists can grow crops year round

Timeframe
1 – 5 years
Goal #9

Foster economic prosperity for all community stakeholders

Objective 9.1
Create new jobs through existing industry and new industries such as renewable energy

Action
- Develop a program in partnership with the local Chamber of Commerce to market the Town's values and possible incentives to future employers the community would like to attract

Timeframe
- 1-5 years

Objective 9.2
Capitalize on market demand for renewable energy

Action
- Sell renewable energy excess back to local and regional utility providers and/or explore the opportunity for the Town to become a utility

Timeframe
- 1-2 years

Objective 9.3
Promote a “buy local” policy

Action
- Initiate a public campaign about the environmental and economic impacts of local vs. non-local purchases

Timeframe
- 1 – 5 years

Objective 9.4
Strengthen funding opportunities for new and existing businesses in the Town of Fowler

Action
- Work with the Chamber of Commerce to develop an “entrepreneur” building program and other economic development grants like Community Development Block Grants
- Partner with the Southeast Colorado Regional Heritage Taskforce (SECORHT)

Timeframe:
- 1 – 5 years

Objective 9.5
Attract and encourage development that respects the Town's existing history, neighborhood and culture

Action
- Seek commercial or retail services that will integrate into the community and complement local businesses
- Attract new development that will be “green” development with minimal impact on natural or energy resources while maximizing building orientation and landscaping to increase energy savings
Objective 9.6
Establish a Community Endowment Foundation

Action
• Create a non-profit Community Endowment Foundation that allows investments to stay within the community over the generations; encourage land donations through this effort

Timeframe
Begin within 1 year

Objective 9.7
Encourage and promote tourism (Reference Tourism policy section)

Action
• Develop a regional signage program for the Town along major routes into the area
• Explore and develop opportunities for Agri-tourism with local farmers and ranches
• Maintain a high level of involvement in SCORP
• Promote new development opportunities for hospitality services such as hotels, bed and breakfasts, local eateries, etc
• Partner with the Southeast Colorado Regional Heritage Taskforce (SECORHT)

Timeframe
Immediate and ongoing

Objective 9.8
Increase the availability of medical services

Action
• Partner with a hospital in the Pueblo area or surrounding region to establish an urgent care or other medical facility within the Town
• Explore opportunities to provide residents with immediate medical service needs such as a pharmacy

Timeframe
Immediately

Objective 9.9
Establish an economic evaluation system to measure indicators of economic success

Action
• Form an advocacy group for economic development within the Town that consists of community stakeholders, Town staff, and other representatives to implement and evaluate economic development initiatives included within this plan and the future

Timeframe
Begin within one year and ongoing

3.3 SUSTAINABILITY & RENEWABLE ENERGY
The built environment has a great impact on the natural environment that is often quantified long after the negative impacts appear. Looking forward, the policies for this section were authored to guide Fowler into the twenty-first century through the use of renewable energy to power and sustain community resources for future generations. Fowler’s 2035 Comprehensive Plan policies envision the prevention of such negative impacts through strong sustainability and renewable energy policies. Inherently, a sustainable community works to live in harmony with its natural environment, create a healthy economy and do so in a manner that supports and enriches all elements of society, with particular focus
on various populations and their needs. Further, sustainability can be seen as an urban quilt that weaves together the many elements of a community into a delicate balance, such as walkable streets, compact development, high-performance buildings and neighborhood scale infrastructure, while linking people to the natural environment through well-defined trail systems connected to preserved open space.

**Goal #10**

**Become a progressive and sustainable community through the use of renewable energy systems for both existing and future services to the Town**

**Objective 10.1**

Achieve renewable energy independence to reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and sustain a viable future

**Action**

- Form a New Energy Resources Commission to include Town staff, Board members, interested citizens and students. This Commission should have the ability to assist in implementing and keeping the focus on the energy goals of this plan through community outreach and education, collection of data, proactively examining renewable and sustainable energy options (i.e. solar power, vegetable oil and biodiesel options, methane digester power, wind turbine generation); the Commission should be coordinated with the Town Administrator and be responsible for organizing community education efforts

**Timeframe**

Immediately

**Objective 10.2**

Maximize renewable energy use and minimize consumption of nonrenewable resources through an energy conservation plan in an effort to decrease the Town’s dependency on local utilities

**Action**

- Partner with private entities to build an anaerobic digestive plant that powers utilities in the Town of Fowler
- Partner with private entities to locate and construct a wind energy farm on “Windy Point” in the Town of Fowler
- Investigate and partner with local and regional utility providers such as Aquila and Black Hills to form a renewable energy partnership or provide renewable energy credits produced within the Town back to the utility providers
- Implement a capital improvements program that works towards replacing old energy technologies with newer, cleaner, more efficient ones for the Town and its residents and business owners
- Promote the development of bio-diesel partner to provide alternative fuel to the residents and regional community
- Provide education to citizens on energy efficiency and how to use supporting new technologies

**Timeframe**

Immediately and ongoing over the next 5 years
Goal #11
Achieve and maintain a sustainable built environment

Objective 11.1
Maintain, improve, and develop traditional neighborhood development patterns set forth in smart growth codes.

Action
- Update Fowler’s Municipal Code accordingly so that all developments widely enhance social well-being while respecting and integrating with neighborhood culture and history
- Construct connecting sidewalks and roads to areas of future annexation such as developed areas along US Hwy. 50

Timeframe
Begin within one year

Objective 11.2
Exceed environmental regulations, such as LEED New Construction; LEED Neighborhood Development; Sustainable Sites Initiative and ASTM E1984-03 that minimize impacts on public and environmental health by requiring all developments to go above and beyond existing building standards

Action
- Emphasize restoration and preservation of existing housing and building stock to incorporate up-to-date energy standards
- Encourage green building techniques and operations by facilitating the development and construction of “green” [e.g. LEED™ certified] buildings with the goal that all new significant municipal buildings include these criteria – such as the Community Recreation Center
- Utilize grants and financial support of smart growth programs such as those offered through the Department of Local Affairs, State of Colorado and the Governor’s Energy Office (GOE) “New Energy Communities Initiative” or other similar programs

Timeframe
Begin within one year

Objective 11.3
New development shall be located such that all students can walk or bicycle to school (Reference policies in Public Health Section)

Action
- Coordinate with the Fowler School District on school-related land use decisions through a group effort with representatives from the Town staff, school and other interested citizens with particular focus on “Safe Routes to School” program initiatives and opportunities

Timeframe
Begin immediately

Goal #12
Create healthy working environments

Objective 12.1
Encourage responsible siting, design and façade improvements for new and current employment centers and retail outlets (Reference policies in Public Health Section)

Action
- Work in partnership with Town Staff, the Planning Commission and other interested representatives to prioritize rehabilitation efforts on existing businesses and looking towards design guidelines for new development

Timeframe
6 months to 1 year
Objective 12.2
Maintain and improve an integrated parks, open space and trails system near every neighborhood and employment center

Action
• Partner with Southeast Colorado Regional Heritage Taskforce (SECORHT) and give particular focus to the development of a trail system that connects regionally

Timeframe
Begin within one year

Goal #13
Provide transportation alternatives (reference policies in transportation and mobility section)

Objective 13.1
Develop a balanced transportation system that encourages transit, walking, and biking

Action
• Update Municipal Code to include such provisions
• Create a program that provides shuttles to services and employment centers on a local and regional basis (i.e. Pueblo)

Timeframe
Begin within one year

Objective 14.1
• Preserve and restore natural assets
• Create a program to protect and preserve irrigation canals
• Create a program to preserve natural wildlife corridors
• Create a program to preserve the area around the Arkansas River and floodplain
• Create a program to preserve prime agricultural land

Timeframe
1-5 years

Objective 14.2
Develop a comprehensive stormwater management program to protect water quality

Timeframe
1-5 years

Objective 14.3
Restrict damage prone development in hazardous or sensitive areas

Action
• Update Municipal Code to designate appropriate land uses for these areas

Timeframe
Begin within one year

Goal #14
Protect and respect the existing natural environment (reference policies in natural resource conservation section)

Goal #15
Maximize water efficiency and promote conservation (reference policies in natural resource conservation section)
Objective 15.1

Improve and augment the natural green infrastructure system

Action

- Convene a working group of Town Administration, and Planning Board, supported by a public works representative and task it with researching and determining improvements to infrastructure for environmental benefits and related public and private costs for construction, including permeable pavement where appropriate, rain water harvesting, natural area protection and other low impact infrastructure improvements

Timeframe

Begin within one year

Objective 15.2

Conserve water and reduce burden on stormwater system

Action

- Promote “Low Impact Development” (LID) process at the site level to replicate pre-existing hydrological conditions, thereby reducing negative environmental impacts

- Implement Municipal Code regulations that include measures for soil erosion and sediment control where possible, include ‘low impact’ and National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) drainage improvements concurrently with any pavement management program or project

Timeframe

Begin within one year

Objective 15.3

Require all new developments to follow water reduction and savings measures

Action

- Require Energy Star, Sustainable Communities Initiative or LEED New Construction Standards for water reduction

Timeframe

Begin within one year

3.4 PUBLIC HEALTH

The Town of Fowler’s existing development already demonstrates the principles of traditional neighborhood development - grid pattern, walkable streets, accessible services, safe sidewalks- which is the basic foundation for healthy, livable communities. Further, policies within this Plan recognize the strong link between public health and the built environment. Accordingly, objectives and action items support active living through a focus on transportation choices, diverse and compact development patterns, access to healthy food, ‘green’ buildings, parks, open space, recreation, and safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

Goal #16

Achieve optimal personal health and a clean and sustainable natural environment
Objective 16.1
Maintain, improve and develop the existing traditional neighborhood development patterns

Action
• Amend Municipal Code to require Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) standards where appropriate
• Encourage the creation and maintenance of community-scale gathering places such as the community recreation center, City Park, schools

Timeframe
Begin within one year

Objective 16.2
Improve access to health services

Action
• Provide more local health services for residents, especially the elderly, that lessen the need for travel to and from Pueblo and La Junta
• Plan and Develop a Community Recreation Center (Reference Recreation Section)

Timeframe
Begin within one year

Objective 16.3
Encourage green building techniques, such as LEED for New Construction, and operations that minimize impacts on public and environmental health

Action
• Amend the building code to require or provide incentives for the use of green building techniques such as density bonuses
• Assess and mitigate risk of lead and asbestos in existing structures
• Provide incentives for conversion to efficient operations and maintenance procedures for existing businesses and residents; for example, provide free Compact Fluorescent Light (CFLs) bulbs or low-VOC paint for residents and businesses

Timeframe
Begin within one year, ongoing

Objective 16.4
Coordinate with the School District on school-related land use decisions

Action
• Coordinate parks, schools and other Town services to maximize efficiency in facility use
• Locate schools within walking distance of student population
• Develop and improve safe routes to school to encourage walking and biking

Timeframe
Begin within one year, ongoing

Objective 16.5
Develop and expand access to fresh, local foods

Action
• In cooperation with Otero County, create a Food Policy Council to assess and make recommendations on issues of farmers’ markets, fresh foods in schools, and farmland preservation
• Provide advertising assistance to local food producers
• Coordinate with school administrators to procure locally-produced foods for school cafeterias; NOTE- Colorado law allows the procurement of in-state produce for schools even if it is more expensive than out-of-state bids - as long as the school district can afford to cover the difference

• Participate in local, regional and national farmland preservation programs that incorporate local foods and open space planning

**Timeframe**

Begin within one year, ongoing

### Objective 16.6

Encourage attractive pedestrian oriented places through responsible siting, design and façade improvement for new and current employment centers and retail outlets

**Action**

• Locate new employment centers and retail outlets within walking/biking distance from workforce and consumer populations

• Work with local organizations to assist in the improvement of existing facades of downtown storefronts; consider solicitation of pro-bono architectural services

• Consider design guidelines that mitigate the negative impacts of big box and large-format retail; update Municipal Code accordingly

### Objective 16.7

Maintain and improve an integrated parks, open space and trails system near every neighborhood & employment center (Reference Open Space and Recreation section)

### Objective 16.8

Develop a balanced transportation system that encourages transit, walking and biking (Reference relevant policies in Transportation and Mobility section)

### Objective 16.9

Prevent traffic and pedestrian injuries

**Action**

• Repair sidewalks and ensure the construction of safe new sidewalks and walking paths

• Provide and maintain clearly-marked crosswalks

• Install flashing pedestrian crossings where appropriate

**Timeframe**

Immediate and ongoing

### 3.5 Natural Resource Conservation & Mineral Extraction

The natural environment provides invaluable support services for human life and economic activity. Conservation of wildlife habitat and protection of species is a central conservation goal that is balanced with recreational opportunities and the protection of mineral extraction resources. Examples of species in the Fowler area are the bald eagle, great blue heron, leopard frog (all amphibians), horn lizards, wild turkeys, prairie dogs, burrowing owls, black-footed ferrets, and more. The Town recognizes the importance of protecting these species and prioritizes this protection through the guiding policies below. Additionally, the Plan reflects a strong stewardship ethic in the preservation of water supply and a low impact approach to stormwater management.
Natural Habitat And Wildlife Protection

Goal#17

Achieve Optimal Personal Health and a Clean and Sustainable Natural Environment

Objective 17.1

Integrate and balance tourism efforts with habitat protection

**Action**

- Amend Municipal Code to restrict habitat fragmentation

**Timeframe**

Begin within one year

**Action**

- Maximize birding trail opportunities through partnerships

**Timeframe**

1-5 years

Objective 17.2

Protect threatened species

**Action**

- Develop and implement a species protection plan in concert with the Colorado Department of Wildlife
- Consider wildlife festival to celebrate and promote wildlife protection
- Encourage maintenance and extension of contracts with the Federal Conservation Reserve Program to restore highly erodible croplands to native habitat

**Timeframe**

1 – 5 years

Source: SECORHT
Goal #18

Ensure a high degree of efficiency and environmental stewardship with respect to public, residential and commercial use and management of water

Objective 18.1
Conserve water to reduce burden on stormwater system

**Action**

- Review and amend municipal procedures and regulations to accomplish the following:
  - a) Examine building code for opportunities for water efficient features
  - b) Encourage permeable pavers and porous pavement systems
  - c) Prohibit direct connection of downspouts to stormwater sewer system
- Develop procedures to ensure highway contractors, builders and developers mitigate impacts using tools such as the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program
- Implement general water conservation measures where possible in Town buildings and services, i.e. parks, buildings, landscaping, plant native species at parks
- Conduct water audits for large industrial water users and recommend upgrades where appropriate

**Timeframe**

Begin within one year

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**Objective 18.2**

Improve and augment the natural green infrastructure system

**Action**

- Participate in regional efforts to control tamarisk along the Arkansas River
- Establish native landscaping requirements for new commercial, industrial and multi-family development
- Amend municipal code to allow green roofs and rain gardens (subject to applicable water law)
- Protect current open space as water collection/filtration feature
- Protect and rehabilitate wetlands within Urban Influence Area
- Work in partnership with Otero County and the State Engineer to address the agricultural water run-off issue
- Convene a working group of Town Administration, and Planning Board, supported by a public works representative and task it with researching and determining improvements to infrastructure for environmental benefits and related public and private costs for construction, including permeable pavement where appropriate, rain water harvesting, natural area protection and other low impact infrastructure improvements

**Timeframe**

1-5 Years

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**Objective 18.3**

Preserve and restore natural assets

**Action**

- Create a program to protect and preserve irrigation canals
- Create a program to preserve natural wildlife corridors
• Create a program to preserve the area around the Arkansas River and floodplain
• Create a program to preserve prime agricultural land

**Objective 18.4**
Integrate site planning, architecture, engineering and construction practices for new development

**Action**
• Amend Town development codes to accomplish the following:
  a) Minimize impervious surface area
  b) Provide incentives for owners who reduce amount of impervious surfaces and builders who implement Low Impact Development (LID) techniques
  c) Amend the development codes (Municipal and building) to require land development to mimic pre-development hydrology
  d) Set maximums for increase in velocity and loss of stormwater storage

**Timeframe**
Begin within one year

**Objective 18.6**
Provide outreach and mobilization for wise water use

**Action**
• Train Town staff and conduct community outreach on responsible water use and stormwater management
• Provide information to the public and publicize its availability
• Collaborate regionally with surrounding jurisdictions to address larger water issues
• Encourage drought-tolerant landscaping

**Timeframe**
1-5 years

**Objective 18.5**
Plan to maintain infrastructure

**Action**
• Maintain funding and make efforts to clean and upgrade sewer lines and related structures

**Timeframe**
Immediate and ongoing
Mineral Extraction
Goal #19

Protect deposits of significant value in accordance with Colorado statutes while ensuring protection of the natural environment and wildlife, minimizing impacts to existing and future land uses, addressing visual impacts, and mitigating off-site impacts such as noise, dust and traffic safety.

Action

- Amend Municipal Code to require a special use permit for mineral extraction within the Town boundaries as well as a joint review process with the County for lands within the 3 mile planning area.

Timeframe

Begin within one year.

3.6 Transportation and Mobility

Safety, public health, choice, and mobility for children and the elderly are the drivers for transportation and mobility policy within this Plan. Accordingly, there is a strong emphasis on enhanced sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, bicycle facilities, connectivity and mobility support services such as “call and ride.” US Hwy. 50 is an area of special consideration for pedestrian safety enhancements and an expressed preference for future re-alignment, if any, to the north of Town. Actions identify several funding sources to implement objectives and prioritize community needs.

Objective 20.1

Enhance pedestrian infrastructure that creates a safe environment for walking.

Action

- Secure a Safe Routes to School grant to ensure that Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Safe Routes to School (SRTS) sidewalks and crossings are available for all kids walking to and from school; this action will eventually evolve into the election of a coordinator to oversee these efforts.
- Reinstate and promote the sidewalk repair matching funds in the Town budget; use these funds to bring sidewalks into ADA and SRTS compliance.
- Work with Tri-County to obtain money for sidewalk improvement for owner occupied homes with 80% and below AMI.
- Pursue Transportation Enhancements money to build better pedestrian environments throughout Town.
- Construct sidewalks so that people can walk to the Post Office.
- Obtain a community development block grant.

Timeframe

Begin immediately.

Objective 20.2

Create safe crossing at areas with high pedestrian traffic.

Action

- Stripe and/or sign pedestrian crossing locations at critical locations such as the grocery store on Main Street, the public schools and the Town park.

Timeframe

Immediately and within the first year.
Objective 20.3
Ensure that crossing US50 is safe at all times of the year

Action
- Install “State Law Yield to Pedestrian” sign at US50 and Main Street
- Install temporary “State Law Yield to Pedestrian” sign at the pool crossing during the summer

Timeframe
- Within the first year

Objective 20.4
Enhance the bicycle infrastructure in Town

Action
- Install bike racks at key locations through Town such as the Town park and Main Street and other locations to be identified for future installment of bike racks
- Add bike lanes along roadways that have been designed and built for bicycle travel

Timeframe
- Immediately and completion within two years

Objective 20.5
Enhance access to recreational trails and improve trails to meet with existing and future planned State of Colorado designated trails

Action
- Formalize with signage the four mile loop that runs west along Grant Avenue to SH167 south to County Road KK east to 6th Street north to Grant Avenue
- Connect the golf course trail along the ditch and the Arkansas River
- Using money from the Southeast Colorado grant, connect Fowler to the Prairie Trails as well as the trail to Rocky Ford and the Comanche Grasslands
- Build an equestrian trail from Pueblo east along the Arkansas River. The Rocky Mountain Equestrian Club out of Colorado Springs will work with the Town and adopt the trail for maintenance
- Partner with the Colorado State Parks and the Southeast Colorado Regional Heritage Taskforce (SECORHT)

Timeframe
- Begin within the first year

Objective 20.6
Develop transportation services that meet the needs of the elderly

Action
- Create a call-and-ride service for access to regional services outside of Town such as medical, etc
- Work with organizations that have busses and involve students for community service hours
- Conduct a general survey of people going to Pueblo and La Junta
- Identify a parking area as a meeting area for citizens wanting to participate in program availability

Timeframe
- 1-2 years

Objective 20.7
Encourage carpooling for commutes outside of Fowler

Action
- Formalize and promote a carpool program that allows people with similar destinations to coordinate trips

Timeframe
- 1-2 years
Objective 20.8
Encourage the use of neighborhood electric vehicles (NEVs)

Action
• Create appropriate infrastructure to encourage the use of NEVs

Timeframe
1-5 years

Objective 20.9
Ensure that new roads encourage multimodal accessibility

Action
• Amend Municipal Code to ensure that new roadways are built to continue the grid pattern of the Town and increase connectivity
• Always construct new roads with sidewalks, and wherever possible add bicycle lanes

Timeframe
Begin within the first year and ongoing

Objective 20.10
Work with the Southeast Transportation Planning Region to secure transportation funding and ensure future transportation improvements coincide with the Town’s plans for growth and development

Action
• Work with Otero County to get a member on the Southeast Transportation Planning Region board as an informed representative of the Town and to help secure transportation funding for the County and Town

Timeframe
Immediately

Objective 20.11
Ensure that future redevelopment or realignment of US Hwy. 50 occur in a manner that supports Town objectives and that no realignment occur to the south of Town.

Action
• Work actively with CDOT in all planning and design processes relating to US Hwy. 50

3.7 Parks, Open Space and Recreation

While the recreation and open space section of this plan provides guiding policies, objectives and actions for future and existing recreational and open space amenities, the Town of Fowler should continue to build on the successes of its existing parks, recreation, and trails facilities through the development of a Parks, Recreation, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan. The guiding policies provided herein expand the types of facilities and services currently provided by the Town. A particular emphasis needs to be placed on providing a range of parks, recreation, and trail facilities that serve residents of all ages and abilities and that are
accessible from a variety of locations within the community. Specific focus, as identified by the Town of Fowler residents through this planning process, should be on biking and hiking trails; focus on the area around the Arkansas river corridor and golf course; directive towards a Legacy planning grant; and expansion of the trail system along the river to enhance view corridors and the natural amenities of that area.

Goal #21

**Enhance existing recreational areas and create new recreational opportunities**

**Objective 21.1**
Increase the quality and quantity of trails within Town of Fowler urban influence area

**Action**
- Study opportunities for trail development with partners such as Rocky Mtn. Equestrian Trails, GOCO, Pueblo Parks & Recreation,
- Review compatibility with the Statewide Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

**Timeframe**
1 – 5 years

**Objective 21.2**
Develop a Community Recreation Center

**Action**
- Study Town recreational needs and prepare a design implementation plan that is reflective of those needs for future construction

**Timeframe**
1 – 5 years

**Objective 21.3**
Hire a full-time staff person to manage recreational programs

**Action**
- Develop a job description; identify funding and a budget; solicit position; conduct interviews; make a selection

**Timeframe**
1-5 years

**Objective 21.4**
Establish a Recreation District

**Action**
- Explore setting up a recreation district and focus on financing alternatives for recreational improvements through the strategies of a district

**Timeframe**
1-5 years

**Objective 21.5**
Use an area south of Arkansas River and in the floodplain for sports fields and future complex

**Action**
- Town to study and annex land

**Timeframe**
1-5 years

**Objective 21.6**
Expand the existing golf course

**Action**
- Increase golf course from 9 holes to 18 holes and consider
residential development around it in areas outside the 100 year floodplain

**Timeframe**

1-5 years

**Goal #22**

Identify and preserve key areas of open space within Town boundaries and the 3-mile planning area defined by County IGA

**Objective 22.1**

Create a community separator buffer that consists of open space with particular focus on growth east and west of the Town; within 3-mile radius defined by County IGA

**Action**

- Identify areas and land owners and define what the buffer will look like on a map

**Timeframe**

6 mos – 3 years

**Action**

- Preserve and enhance Clark feedlot for open space, recreation and trails; if this property is currently not within the incorporated boundaries of the Town, it should be annexed by the Town as a “non-development annexation”

**Timeframe**

1 – 5 years

**Objective 22.2**

Protect and preserve land area around canals and irrigated farm land for open space

**Action**

- Explore community needs and wants for these areas, then define the best mechanism for protection and preservation such as easements or fee simple agreements

**Timeframe**

Ongoing

**Action**

- Renovate cabin adjacent to GOCO walking trail and coordinate with GOCO on these efforts

**Timeframe**

1-5 years

**Objective 22.3**

Require all new developments to have an open space and park requirement dedication

**Action**

- Need to define an implementation plan and update zoning code

**Timeframe**

Begin within one year

**Goal #23**

Establish and define an integrated park system throughout the Town

**Objective 23.1**

Enhance and expand Town's central park as an amenity and focus area

**Action**

- Continue planning, including for a possible skate park
Objective 23.2
Create a sustainable community park that is a central focus for the Town

Action
• Identify property location
• Define park amenities and prepare design plan
• Partner with local representatives and interest groups to include park amenities that will serve the community

Timeframe
1-5 years

Objective 23.3
Require all new developments to have an open space and park requirement dedication

Action
• Update Municipal Code as necessary to reflect development requirements

Timeframe
Ongoing

Action
• Create a Parks and Open Space plan with corresponding map for reference to the land use code and guide future developments

Timeframe
1-5 years
Fowler, Colorado
Map 6: Planning Areas
Section 4:

Community Overview

REGIONAL CONTEXT ........................................... 4.1
HISTORY AND CULTURE ....................................... 4.2
POPULATION GROWTH & CHARACTERISTICS ................. 4.3
ECONOMY ............................................................. 4.4
PUBLIC HEALTH AND NATURAL CONDITIONS ................. 4.5
EXISTING LAND USE ............................................. 4.6
HOUSING ............................................................ 4.7
COMMUNITY FACILITIES ......................................... 4.8
INFRASTRUCTURE .................................................. 4.9
TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY ............................ 4.10
Aerial View of the Town of Fowler with Town Boundaries
Community Overview

4.1 Regional Context

The Town of Fowler (Town) is a rural community of 1,138 people located in the Arkansas River Valley of southeastern Colorado, thirty-three miles east of Pueblo and 65 miles southeast of Colorado Springs. The Town’s political boundaries encompass approximately 313.6 acres or 0.5 square miles. Located along Colorado State Highway 50, at the northwest corner of Otero County, Fowler is uniquely positioned as a gateway into the southeast region of Colorado. Moreover, Fowler has two general aviation airports nearby in La Junta and Las Animas, and is within an hour drive of two commercial service airports in Pueblo and Lamar making it easily accessible on a regional basis.

4.2 History and Culture

Formed amidst a rich history of Native Americans, Spanish explorers and American settlers, the Town emerged as an idealist colony of farmers and homesteaders in the late 19th Century. The Town’s namesake – the noted professor and phrenologist O.S. Fowler – envisioned a community that sustained itself on the growth of its own food. These agricultural efforts bore organic fruit and vegetable growers and pure-fed livestock raisers, who nestled in the fertile Upper Arkansas River Valley. With the help of W.E. Alexander, President of the Fowler Town and Land Co., the Town, first named Fowler, then Alexander for 11 days, and back to Fowler, was platted in 1887 and people commenced to build homes and businesses. The railroad was the hub of the community with streets stretching mostly south from it to form the nucleus of the Town.

In 1888 work was begun on the Enterprise Ditch, later the Oxford Canal, from where it commenced on the south side of Arkansas River west of Nepesta to where it dumps into the Apishapa River east of Fowler. This provided water for the farms in this new community. In 1889 Bent County was divided and Otero County was born. One of the first plats announced that Fowler was the “Heart of the Fruit Belt of Otero County.” A large orchard was planted to the west and an egg farm and dairy were established.

The Town incorporated on October 3, 1900 with its then population of 150. In those early years, businesses, schools and churches flourished along Main Street. The first issue of the Fowler Tribune was published in 1897 by proprietor and Editor Mr. George P. Davenport, marking the first publication of its time for “this part of the [Arkansas River] valley.”

The original settlers were individuals and families that were moving west looking for new places to live and raise a family. Many of these people came from Missouri and Denmark. The Missourians started having community gatherings in the summer at the City Park (laid out in 1903) which in 1921 became the “Missouri Day” celebration. The Town continues to enjoy this celebration each summer in the month of July.

During the early years, a few Danish men visited Fowler, bought land, then went home to bring their wives and families, and before long their friends joined them too. Danish would have been the second language of the community had they not quickly learned English.

Until 1910, water had been available from a well at the corner of Main and Santa Fe Avenue for residents who did not have private wells. Springs providing drinking water were developed in the foothills across the river once pumps were introduced for use of subscribers as the local water proved to be quite hard, but suitable for yards and new indoor bathrooms. Rural delivery of
drinking water was delivered by tanks pulled by horses and later by trucks. Small ditches brought water for yards.

Fowler was the regional shopping center for the outlying farms and ranches. It was assumed that a family could make a living on 40 acres of farm ground which usually included a farmstead and was worked with a team of horses. National Alfalfa established an operation for grinding hay, employing many men, and a mountain of sugar beets awaited shipment to sugar factories by the tracks in fall.

Compared to now, the area was densely populated. Preceded by two smaller buildings, the first multistory school was built in 1905, and the first High School was built in 1918. The first library was started by membership fee in 1891. The Fowler Women's Club assumed responsibility for it in 1903 and it later came under the support of the Town.

Religion, education and sports have always taken a lead in the community. The first church built in the third block on Main Street, named the Community Church, later the Methodist Church. The Baptist, Christian, Lutheran, Church of Christ, Pitkin Avenue Baptist, Nazarene, Assembly of God, and Faith Baptist churches came later.

Civic clubs were numerous including a large Lions Club, Business and Professional Women's Club, General Federation of Women's Clubs: Fowler Women's club and Progress Club, 4-H club and Boy and Girl Scouts. The Fowler Boy Scout troop is given the credit of building the swimming pool in 1921 which is still being used in today. The American Legion was formed after WWI and the Veterans of Foreign Wars after WWII. Each of these organizations left their impact on life in Fowler.

In the days before movies and TV different groups put on plays and entertainments for the community. Golfers built a course with sand and oil “greens”.

Automobiles led to highways across America and Highway 50, “The Backbone of America” was developed through Town cutting a block south to run down Cranston Avenue which effect-
4.3 Population Growth and Characteristics

**Historic Growth**

The Town of Fowler’s population was first recorded by the U.S. Census in 1910, at which time 925 people resided within the community. Throughout the 20th century, the Town’s population fluctuated between 900 and 1300 residents and has hovered consistently close to 1,200 residents since 1950. One measure of growth for the Town has been the annual increase in student population at the local school district. Enrollment for the elementary school has increased from 209 students in 2005 to 232 students in 2008, approximately a 11% increase over a three year period. The district enrollment has increased as well from 375 students in 2005 to 408 students in 2008, approximately a 9% increase over the same three year period. This is expected to continue to grow for a number of years to come.

Between 2000 and 2006, however, the Town’s population steadily declined at a rate of -0.7% annually. According to the State Demography Office, all municipalities within Otero County experienced a similar drop. In the same interval, Colorado experienced a 2% statewide growth rate while neighboring Pueblo County grew by 1.4% and Crowley County by 6.1% in the same interval. Fowler’s 2006 population is estimated to be 1,138.

**Current Demographics**

Although widely distributed, the Town of Fowler’s population in 2000 demonstrates a strong presence of families with very young children, as well as a considerable proportion of frail elderly residents, especially women over 70. There are relatively few Fowler residents between the ages of 15 and 19 years old, as well between 25 and 29, indicating a possible out migration of young workers and college-aged students.

Town of Fowler household characteristics according to the 2000 Census:

- 28% of all households have individuals under age 18, lower than the national average of 36 percent.
- 35.9% of households have individuals 65 years old and above; however, the nationwide equivalent is far less at 23.4 percent
- 63.5% of total households are family households; 36.5% are non-family households. Nationwide, 68.1% of households are family households, and 31.9% are non-family households.

While a proportion of Fowler households roughly compares to the nationwide equivalent of those with a married couple as the head of household, fewer women in Fowler live alone either as singles or as single-parents. In fact, 7.7% of all Fowler’s households have a female householder with no husband present and 5% have a female householder, no husband present, and her own children less than 18 years old. Nationwide, however, 12.2% of all households have a female householder with no husband present and 8.3% have a female householder, no hus-
A noticeable percentage of householders live alone, however, and in 16.3% of all households, the householder lives alone and is 65 years old or older. Moreover, 19% of all households are made up of married couple families with their own children under 18 years old, while the nationwide equivalent is 24.3%.

Average household size in 2000 was 2.22, noticeably smaller than the national average of 2.59, the Colorado average of 2.53, and the Otero County average of 2.49. This statistic reflects a relatively high percentage of elderly living alone. It is challenging to project the direction of household size into the future. However, without significant numbers of new young families, household size may remain steady or decrease further as the population ages. If the Town's strategies to accommodate housing needs for new families succeed, average household size may increase and reflect statewide trends.

Of note, 12.4% of the population is Hispanic or Latino, lower than both Otero County at 37.6%, and 17.1% for Colorado (US Bureau of Census, 2000). Community leaders point out that virtually none of the current Hispanic population speaks Spanish, suggesting a fully assimilated ethnic group.

![Population Distribution - Fowler, Census 2000](image)

*Graph #2*
With respect to education, Fowler’s residents are fairly well-educated, with 85% holding a high school diploma (or equivalent) or higher and 14.4% holding a bachelor’s degree or higher. Those numbers compare to 75.7% of Otero County’s population holding a high school diploma (or equivalent) or higher, and 15.4% with a bachelor’s degree or higher. Educational levels are lower for the Hispanic or Latino population, as compared to the non-Hispanic or Latino white population.

**Anticipated growth projection**

According to the State Demography Office (SDO), Otero County is projected to grow from 20,251 in 2000 to 23,072 in 2035. Between 2010 and 2020, however, Otero County is expected to grow consistently by an average 0.9% each year, when by comparison, nearby Pueblo County is projected to grow by 1.4% each year from 2010 to 2015 and by 1.9% each year from 2015 until 2020.

If assumptions are made that Fowler grows at the same rate as Otero County, similar patterns will emerge. Based on this hypothesis, the following analysis attempts to forecast future changes in the ways the Town’s population may be distributed.
According to the State Demography Office, Otero County will subsequently lose a percentage of its 20-29 year olds from 2008 to 2020 – as compared to previous years. However, because the 2020 population pyramid shows the emergence of a noticeable bulge in the number of residents ages 35 to 39, it can be hypothesized that families with parents this age will move into the County during this time.

The graph shows that once they are relocated within the County it can be assumed those same families will likely stay. A similar proportion of those ages 50 to 54 appear in the 2035 population pyramid, compared to the number of those aged 35 to 39 fifteen years prior. However, given that the proportion of those ages 35 to 39 in 2035 is smaller than that in 2020, it can be assumed that fewer families will move into the County between 2020 and 2035 as did prior to 2020.

However, although statistical projections offer a certain amount of accuracy with respect to future growth, community leaders are also valuable resources in fully imagining growth patterns for the Town of Fowler. If the Town’s population growth were to follow the trends predicted for Otero County, the rate of growth anticipated by Town leadership still outpaces these statistical predictions. If the forecast is correct, Fowler could see as many as 1,519 residents in 2035, roughly 200 more residents than the State Demography Office predicts for Otero County.

**Methodology:** Town leadership is shaping policy goals and objectives around the desired potential for a steady 1% annual population growth. For comparison, those calculations have been carried out to examine potential implications of increased growth relative to growth projected by the State Demography Office.

Prepared by the Rocky Mountain Land Use Institute, 7/18/2008

### 4.4 Economy

**Employment**

According to the 2000 Census, the Town of Fowler’s median household income was $25,761, lower than that for Otero County in the same year at $29,738. However, data suggests that the Town has lower poverty rates than Otero County. While 11.3% of Fowler's families and 11.9% of its individual residents live in poverty, these statistics are lower than the national average and lower than Otero County, where 14.2% of families and 18.8% of individuals live in poverty. The percentage of all the nation's individuals in poverty combined is 12.4%.

With respect to race and ethnicity, 22.2% of the Hispanic or Latino
population is below the national poverty level, nearly double that percentage (10.3%) for the non-Hispanic or Latino white population. Moreover, median household income for households in Fowler with a Hispanic or Latino householder was $19,375, while those with a non-Hispanic or Latino White householder was $26,667.

According to the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, Otero County experienced a 6.1% unemployment rate in 2008, higher than the State of Colorado’s unemployment rate of 4.9%. This service does not provide unemployment data for municipalities.

According to the 2000 Census Labor statistics:

• 47.3% of the Town’s population between ages 16 and 64 were not considered part of the labor force, slightly higher than the equivalent for Otero County at 41.6%; statewide equivalent is only 29.9%

• Workforce statistics vary between men and women, with 66.4% of men 16 years and older participating in the labor force, and only 42% of women of the same age

• 56% of Fowler residents worked within Otero County in 1999; whereas 43% worked outside the County; Town leadership suggests that this trend has shifted in recent years where a significant percentage of residents work in Pueblo or Pueblo County

Despite Fowler’s strong agricultural roots, employment numbers reflect that very few of our residents are employed in farming occupations. Rather, Fowler’s occupational distribution reflects a nationwide trend towards higher numbers of sales, office and service jobs.

By industry, agriculture fares slightly better in the above data table. It measures at 2.3% of all jobs in Fowler regardless of occupational distinctions. Jobs within educational, health and social services still measure strong against all other industries, with retail trade and construction trailing farther behind.

Median earnings varied in Fowler between male and female full-time, year-round workers, at $25,536 and $20,750 respectively. This disparity is similar for Otero County, where 44.6% of employed females work in educational, health, and social services industries versus 13.4% of employed working-age men. Men are employed more broadly across industries.
Agriculture

Significant access to the surrounding agricultural land has remained in close proximity to residents of the community throughout Fowler's history. The Town's close proximity to Rocky Ford adds to the region's rich celebration of its agricultural roots as Rocky Ford proudly calls itself the “Sweet Melon Capital of the World,” and ships both cantaloupes and watermelons from its agricultural harvests nationwide seasonally.

Otero County has 87,691 total acres of cropland as of June 2008, according to USDA – Farm Service Agency. However, according to the USDA – National Agricultural Statistics Service (USDA – NASS), there are 95,429 acres of total cropland within the County locating the Town of Fowler in a richly diverse agricultural geographic area.

According to the USDA – National Agricultural Statistics Service (USDA – NASS):

- There a total of 488 farms within Otero County, nearly half of which are between 10 and 179 acres; 44% of all farms are 180 acres or bigger
- 37% of farms raise beef cows; Otero County farms also raise milk cows, hogs, pigs, sheep, lambs, and chickens
- Otero County raises wheat, corn (grain and silage), sorghum (grain and silage/green chop), dry edible beans, soybeans for beans, vegetables,
hay (alfalfa), and other hay types; Limited amounts of oats for grain and potatoes are also grown, with 12 acres of land in orchards.

- 1,977 acres of land in the County are harvested for vegetables to sell.
- Otero County does not currently grow sugar beets, sunflower seeds, barley, spring wheat or durum wheat; historically, there had been enough acreage devoted to sugar beets to support a processing plant located within Town.

Otero County has 2,559 active acres in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) as of June 2008, according to USDA – Farm Service Agency. Of these acres, the following amounts are set to expire in upcoming years:

- 158 acres in 2009
- 679.7 acres in 2010
- 1,196 acres in 2011
- 486.1 acres in 2012
- 39.6 acres in 2013

These numbers do not take into account contract re-enrollments and/or extension offers.

According to an interview with Richard Jensen a long-time local farmer and advocate for improving agricultural practices and productivity, local CRP acres have put native grasses back in place, restoring natural habitat for displaced bird and animal species while reducing soil erosion. Jensen worries that taking acres out of the CRP would be a mistake, since it would reverse the successes already made with respect to erosion, drainage and habitat restoration.

According to the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, farming, fishing and forestry occupations collectively accounted for only 0.15% of all occupations in the State in 2005.

According to the 2000 Census, 3.1% of all occupations in Otero County fall with farming, fishing and forestry occupations, whereas for the Town of Fowler, that number is only 0.4%.

With respect to the number of employees within each industry, the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment estimates that in 2006, 1.98% of all employees in Otero County and 0.53% of all employees statewide were employed in the agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting industries.

However, the 2000 Census estimated that 7.8% of all employed residents of Otero County worked in the agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting and mining industries. The difference could be accounted for in the exclusion of mining in the Department of Labor’s tabulations in this category and/or a change in the number employed in the respective industries between 2000 and 2006.

Town residents recently started a weekly farmers market, held on Saturdays along Highway 50. In its early stages, the market caters to local growers and residents who otherwise travel to nearby La Junta and Rocky Ford to buy and sell locally-grown produce and locally-made food products. Tremendous support exists amongst active residents to improve the availability of local foods and food products. Reasons for this effort expressed include the resulting reduction in fuel consumption, improved public health, better access to fresh foods for schoolchildren, and a sustainable economic development approach that champions local farmers and business owners.

**Renewable Energy**

“The most effective way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is energy efficiency”

— Kyoto Planet: Sustainable Enterprise Report

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*Source: NREL*
According to Colorado's Department of Energy, today, 98% of Colorado's energy is produced from fossil fuels—coal, oil, and natural gas. The Town of Fowler is located in close proximity to several fuel oil power plants in nearby Rocky Ford, La Junta and Las Animas, as well as a major coal-fired plant in Pueblo. Further, the Colorado Geological Survey notes that the Town is situated along a major rail distribution network of coal from Colorado and Wyoming as it travels within, through, and beyond Colorado on the Union Pacific and Burlington Northern Santa Fe rail lines. According to the 2000 Census, 93.2% of Fowler residents use utility-supplied gas heat; 5.3% use electric heat; 0.8% use wood as heating fuel, and 0.8% use other fuel. However, the Town's leadership has decided to take a different route to answering Fowler's energy needs by becoming one of the first communities in Colorado to operate most, if not all, of its utilities from several different types of renewable energy sources.

At the time of adoption of the Plan, the Town is planning for the construction of an anaerobic digestive plant, a wind farm, and solar power aggregation to use towards their renewable energy production. Furthermore, the Comprehensive Plan authors goals, objectives and actions to ensure that the Town maintains its future vision to become a sustainable, vibrant rural community.

Southeast of Fowler are several major wind farms – one in Lamar and two in Springfield, Colorado. The Town is currently exploring opportunities to locate a wind energy farm on “Windy Point” located within the Town's boundaries, just outside of the main geographic area of the Town. The National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) has designated the Town of Fowler and its surrounding geographical area as having a significant opportunity to harvest wind energy in the state of Colorado. Town administrators in Fowler are leaders in this regard and are in partnership with Colorado State University Pueblo, to test vertical axis wind turbines within the Town limits. Preliminary data is also being collected with the help of Colorado State University Pueblo, to assess average wind speeds atop Windy Point, which are currently estimated to be 14.6 miles per hour. Infrastructure exists to connect alternative power generation to the current grid through a substation and two transmission lines nearby this site. Additionally, an operable transmission line currently sits dormant just south of Town and holds a great deal of potential for Fowler as it looks toward additional power generation through renewable energy resources.

Eight miles outside of the Town, plans are underway for a 240-mega-watt solar facility on 21,000 acres, further underscoring the region’s capacity to develop renewable energy.

High priority plans are in place for the construction of a 4-megawatt anaerobic digestive plant within the Town’s planning area that will process livestock manure for electricity generation. Currently 2,400 tons of manure is produced daily providing significant potential to not only generate great amounts of energy, but also to provide economic stimuli to livestock farmers, as well. Moreover, it is estimated that as many as 45 jobs will result from the development of this anaerobic digestion plant.

Increasing synergy is also occurring with other renewable energy options. Town administrators are working with CSU-Pueblo and local businesses to collect cooking oil for the production of B100 fuel. This by-product from the production of biofuel can increase the efficiency of anaerobic digestion while contributing to the fuel efficiency of local automobiles and farming equipment.

The Town is looking towards a future of renewable energy as the leading denominator in sustaining economic vitality. Fowler believes that failing to reduce energy use and tolerating carbon emissions would compromise the quality of our community. Our approach is a high risk strategy but one that will have a high impact on the value of the quality of life in the community sustaining it for future generations to come.

Tourism

Fowler is part of a larger regional tourism endeavor, the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan for the state of Colorado. Colorado State Parks is currently updating the Colorado Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), a five-year planning document which each state must produce to remain eligible for Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) appropriations. The Town has received such grants and one of its residents currently serves on the Governor's Recreation and Tourism Board of the State of Colorado. Additionally, the Town is part of the Colorado Regional Heritage Taskforce, which is a larger tourism endeavor aimed at attracting local and national attention to this rural community. According to local experts, a heritage database of the region includes some of Fowler's
celebrated resources, including the Fowler Museum, Park School, Valley View Theater, and Missouri Days. Five selection criteria for the database will be matched to state heritage standards.

Grants have been awarded to the Southeast region by Preserve America, the State Department of Local Affairs, and the Anschutz Foundation. Otero County, in fact, has been designated a Preserve America County. The most recent Preserve America grant provides funds to develop an economic development strategy promoting regional cuisine and encouraging local restaurateurs to serve it.

The Town is also located within one of the largest and most significant birding areas in the nation. There are over 400 species of birds in this area alone. In partnership with the Colorado Division of Wildlife, the Colorado Birding Trail, according to its website, is “a major nature tourism initiative to promote non-consumptive outdoor recreation, conservation of resources by private landowners, and a diversified income for rural economies.” Fifty-one ranchers and farmers in the region provide access to their land as part of this effort, and way finding signage will be placed at the boundary of Otero County near the Town.

Within an hour drive of the Town, the Comanche National Grassland offers both Fowler residents and travelers unique nature tourism opportunities, including trails, picnic areas, historic areas, scenic overlooks, in addition to world-class birding opportunities. Passing through the grasslands is also the Santa Fe Trail Scenic Byway, maintained by the National Park Service (NPS). According to the NPS, “the Santa Fe National Historic Trail is one of 17 national historic trails in the National Trails System, which also contains national scenic and recreational trails.” The USDA Forest Service underscores the importance of this environment: “The stewardship of water, soil, and air resources is an important part of Comanche National Grasslands management.” In nearby Bent County, John Martin Reservoir State Park offers quite, serene access to wonderful conditions for a wide variety of wind water sports. Fishing from either boat or shore, visitors to the park can find walleye, saugeye, bass, pickerel, perch, and catfish. Bald Eagles roost at the reservoir in winter, and “threatened and endangered species like the Piping Plover and the Least Tern make the park their home for several months each year.”

Within one hour’s drive to the east, “Bent’s Old Fort National Historic Site features a re-constructed 1840’s adobe fur trading post on the mountain branch of the Santa Fe Trail where traders, trappers, travelers, and Plains Indian tribes came together in peaceful terms for trade. Today, living historians recreate the sights, sounds, and smells of the past with guided tours, demonstrations, and special events.”

New regional efforts to develop Agritourism are also being explored in and around Fowler. According to community leaders, changing market forces have shifted the desires of tourists towards wanting to vacation on working ranches. In coordination with birding and nature tourism, the facilities and parties needed to host these tourists would likely benefit from both tourism dollars, as well as temporary help on their farms and ranches.

Economic Development

According to the Governor’s Department of Energy Office (DOE), “Colorado has vaulted into sixth place nationally in wind capacity, trailing only Texas, California, Iowa, Washington and Minnesota. Colorado’s strong showing was made possible by the installation in 2007 of 775 MW of new wind capacity (400 MW at Peetz Table in Logan County, 300 MW at Cedar Creek in Weld County, and 75 MW at Twin Buttes in Bent County). Wind energy project construction employed over 600 people in Colorado in 2007. As the new Vestas wind blade manufacturing plant is completed in Windsor in early 2008, well over 700 people will be directly employed in Colorado by the wind industry alone.” Vestas has also recently announced the construction of a tower manufacturing plant in Pueblo, Colorado—less than 50 miles from the Town.

It is estimated that Fowler requires 4 megawatts of electricity per year to supply its residents and businesses. However, future power generation capacity from renewable energy sources will quickly exceed the Town’s energy needs. Community leaders are, therefore, exploring the possible designation of Fowler as a “utility” whereby the Town is able to sell excess renewable energy back to the regional utility provider. Residents would cease paying utility bills and would be issued dividends in proportion to the extra revenue generated. Community leaders see this arrangement as a way to provide innovative learning opportunities for school-age children and to keep younger generations living and working in the Town.

In addition, Town leadership expects that during the construction phase, wind turbines atop Windy Point will create 20 jobs per megawatt of
electricity generation. Once in operation, the turbines are expected to sustain two jobs for every megawatt of electricity produced. Moreover, the construction of a 4-megawatt anaerobic digestive plant will begin in the Spring of 2009 and will add a number of jobs to Fowler and its regional economy.

### 4.5 Public Health and Natural Conditions

#### Public Health

The health of the Town’s residents is of critical concern, given health statistics in Otero County from the Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment. Among the 10 leading causes of death for Otero County residents, the top three – heart disease, cancer and chronic lower respiratory diseases – show considerably higher age-adjusted rates of occurrence in Otero County than overall for Colorado. Diabetes in the County demonstrates more than twice the rate of occurrence. Chronic liver disease – number 7 for Otero County – is not even on Colorado’s “Top 10” list.

These health concerns are related to both environmental and behavioral causes. Because diabetes is strongly correlated with obesity, high rates of diabetes in Otero County suggest, generally speaking, that the County’s residents lead relatively sedentary lifestyles. These statistics, as well as those regarding liver disease, suggest a need for improvement in the diet and exercise patterns of Otero County residents.

The built environment, however, also has a significant impact on the health and well-being of those who occupy it. For example, while the high rates of lower respiratory diseases implicate lifestyle choices such as smoking, respiratory problems are also exacerbated by poor indoor air quality, for example by Radon, as well by fugitive dust particles emanating from the eight feedlots within Otero County. According to the Otero County Health Department, fugitive dust can travel as far as 1-2 miles and can impact the health of residents within that radius. Moreover, adequate open space for parks and recreation determines the ease with which residents can participate in vigorous exercise outdoors. It is critical; therefore, that Fowler considers the effects of the built environment on public health as we develop future land uses and grows to capacity.

#### Air and Water Quality

According to the nonprofit consumer organization Farm and Water Watch, Otero County is home to eight confined animal feeding operations for cattle. The Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment regulates the related pollutant discharges, both air and water releases under the Environmental Agriculture Program. Both air quality and water quality are of particular concern. Fugitive dust from these operations, for example, is a harmful irritant for residents already suffering from asthma.

#### Topography

The Town of Fowler is set amongst a rich riparian corridor, hidden canyons, and sweeping plains of shortgrass prairie that reach the horizon. Vast expanses of agricultural swathes lay flat along the gently undulating landscape, with distant views to the west of the Spanish Peaks of the Sangre de Cristo Range. Generally, the topography of the Town of Fowler does not present any significant challenges and is characteristic of the nation’s eastern plains.

#### Geology and Soils

The geology and soils within the Town’s incorporated boundary and influence area pose no hazards or limitations. According to the Colorado Geological Survey, the Town of Fowler has no active mines within its borders; however, sand and gravel pits proliferate along Highway 50 to its northeast and southwest.
According to the USDA Soil Conservation Service in collaboration with Colorado State University Experiment Station, the majority of farmland within the three-mile planning area is prime irrigated farmland of national importance. There are smaller portions considered irrigated farmland of statewide importance or prime farmland if irrigated.

**Hydrology**

The Arkansas River, Colorado’s largest river basin, drains over 24,904 square miles (Draft 2008 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)) and defines the northern edge of Otero County. Meandering to the southeast from Lake County towards the Kansas border, this river unfortunately suffers from an infestation of tamarisk, a non-native phreatophyte tree that in total drains the watershed of 76,600 acre-feet of water per year, above and beyond what native vegetation requires (Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District: Arkansas River Watershed Invasive Plant Project).

Anecdotal evidence suggests that field grading on surrounding agricultural land has increased the flow of water towards the Town, underscoring the imbalanced local hydrology. The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service quantifies agricultural run-off associated with this kind of altered hydrology. The Comprehensive Plan addresses this imbalance with guiding policies, objectives and actions, within the Natural Resource Conservation section.

**Vegetation**

According to the Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fowler is also located in close proximity to a Statewide Potential Conservation Area (PCA) with High Biodiversity Significance. This area is vulnerable 1) because it supports rare or uncommon species, 2) because the species are found only in a restricted range, even if they are abundant elsewhere, or 3) because other factors are contributing to its possible extirpation or extinction. The Colorado Division of Wildlife affirms that Fowler is in close proximity to key habitats supporting Shortgrass Prairie, Sagebrush and Playas – or shallow, seasonal wetlands. High priority habitats with private land focus areas are also to Fowler’s south, including Shortgrass Prairie, Playas and shrub-dominated wetlands. Of additional concern are threats made to native riparian species by the extensive infestation of non-native tamarisk throughout the Arkansas River Basin.

“PCAs do not necessarily preclude human activities, but their ability to function naturally may be greatly influenced by them. PCAs at all scales may require ecological management or restoration to maintain their functionality and long term persistence.”

As part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Farm Service Agency, the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) enrolls eligible farm owners in temporary contracts to retire agricultural production on highly erodible farmland. The resulting reduction in water runoff and sedimentation protects interconnected watersheds and restores native vegetative covers and wildlife populations to their proper place. Otero County has 2,559 active CRP acres as of June 2008. However, without taking into account contract re-enrollments and/or extension offers, nearly 80% of contracts for the County’s CRP acres are set to expire by 2011 (USDA Farm Service Agency - Monthly CRP Acreage Report by County).

**Wildlife**

Located along the Western Central Flyway – a frequent migration route for birds – Fowler provides access to a valuable share of the region’s estimated 475 different bird species. In addition, the Colorado Division of Wildlife has designated the Upper Arkansas River Basin as a high priority watershed for the State, as it is home to aquatic species such as chub, minnows, cutthroat trout, sucker, dace, and sucker. Mammals such as antelope, deer, fox, coyote and prairie dogs are also abundant.
Natural Hazards

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has identified the presence of a 100-year floodplain along the Arkansas River to the north of Town, roughly 700 feet from the center line of Colorado State Highway 50. The majority of the land within this flood-plain is in agricultural use.

Preliminary research indicates that the Town does not participate in the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) program. Otero County does participate in the FIRM and appears to have included lands within the incorporated boundaries of Fowler that lie north of the railway track.

Given the mixed results of the FIRM program and the risk of increased flooding due to climate change the Town should consider a No Adverse Impact (NAI) approach to flood-plain management. Such an approach will more effectively manage the sustainability of existing and future land uses in this area. NAI ensures that the action of a property owner – or any public or private entity – does not negatively affect the property and rights of others with respect to physical development and its effects downstream (In Protecting the Property Rights of All: No Adverse Impact Floodplain and Stormwater Management Edward A. Thomas, Esq. explains that “this principle makes a community look at what really needs to be done to prevent damage to people, property and the environment.” Thomas goes on to explain that NAI “is not anti-development, but rather . . . This safe foundation . . . should lead to the creation of a sustainable community [that is] decent, safe, sanitary and affordable.”) With this objective in mind, the Town should follow the principles of Low Impact Development (LID), which involves an NAI approach and describes the techniques that should be used on individual properties throughout the watershed to moderate excessive stormwater runoff and reduce the potential for future flooding, as well as sedimentation, erosion, channel modifications, land subsidence and other additional hazards.

Current Acreage

The Town of Fowler Boundary Area: 366.7 Acres
Fowler City Park: 3.2 Acres
Fowler City Pool: .6 Acres
Fowler School Campus: 21.5 Acres
Fowler Golf Course: 122.1 Acres

Urban Influence Area

Per an intergovernmental agreement between the Town of Fowler and Otero County, a three mile radius from the center of Town defines Fowler’s planning area. This circumference includes Otero County land subject to future annexation per future development needs in Fowler. Land within Crowley and Pueblo counties that falls inside the 3-mile radius is not included in the planning area. The total land area within this planning area is roughly 10,615 acres, of which only 367 acres are within the Town boundaries of Fowler.

4.6 Existing Land Use

General Land Use Characteristics

The Town’s development has remained compact throughout its hundred or more years of history. The Union Pacific Railroad and Burington Northern Santa Fe Railroad still traverse the Town and separate downtown from the Arkansas River to the north. However, as with many traditional railroad towns, Fowler’s street grid is well-integrated with the surrounding uses and does not resort to dead-end street design. Fowler’s wide, quiet streets and the moderate height of its homes and buildings create a sense of spaciousness for this small western town, preserving distant views of the surrounding farms and ranchlands. Moreover, civic buildings and facilities – such as the eleven churches that serve Fowler – provide visibly prominent focal points for the surrounding neighborhoods.

Typically, Fowler’s commercial development is one- or two-story Main Street construction, usually brick or stucco with large glass fronts. Roof lines are characteristically flat along the horizon, and colorful signs advertise the local shop owners’ wares. Overall, Fowler’s pattern of development has left room for dense and organic future growth within and around its historic downtown core.
The majority of land within the 3-mile buffer is prime agricultural farmland of national importance. All of it demonstrates high biodiversity significance, according to the Colorado Natural Heritage Program. Moreover, the northern edge of Otero County within the Urban Influence Area also lies within a 100-year floodplain along the Arkansas River.

Despite close proximity to the Arkansas River, according to Tri-County Housing, it is difficult for builders to get new water taps in the Tri-County area. However, some commercial development on the outskirts of Town has been able to tie into the Town's water, sewer and stormwater drainage lines. Some large-lot residential development has also occurred at the edge of Town and within the 3-mile radius planning area.

According to an interview with Tri-County Housing, many of these homes are being developed on the corner of agricultural fields. Frequently, these homes receive water supply from the Town even though they can be up to a mile away from the Town's incorporated boundaries. These obstacles and limitations will become more evident as Fowler plans for growth over the next few decades.

**Annexation**

The Town is beset by several issues that suggest the need for robust annexation and land use policies, in addition to the revision of its Municipal Code. Those problems include the economic drain imposed on Town services by both residential and commercial properties outside the incorporated Town boundaries. Dozens of houses adjacent or in close proximity to the Town boundaries enjoy the privileges provided by the Town – such as water, sewer, roads and police protection – despite the fact that their tax dollars support Otero County and not Fowler itself. Of note, a grouping of houses directly abuts the elementary, middle and high school properties and yet is technically outside Fowler’s jurisdiction. Moreover, according to the Chief of Police for Fowler, the Fowler police force often services properties beyond Town limits. In his opinion, it is far less efficient for the County Sheriff to respond, given that he is thirty minutes from Fowler; however, this arrangement results in Fowler providing unremitting services to County residents.

Commercial operations – such as the development east of Town where the post office was relocated, as well as restaurants to the West – also exacerbate this problem. Not only do they not contribute to Fowler’s sales tax base, they draw on the Town’s limited financial resources that provide municipal services. Additionally, a number of industrial, commercial and residential properties north of Highway 50 – some vacant, some in-use – fall within County jurisdiction and contribute to this persistent dilemma.

In order for Fowler to successfully pursue an economic development strategy for the three-mile planning area, this plan suggests active, direct long-range planning efforts at developing comprehensive annexation policies.

**4.7 Housing**

**Characteristics**

The community has acknowledged the need for a housing survey of Fowler’s existing resources and outstanding housing needs. However, some generalizations can be made on the nature of the existing housing stock.

According to the 2000 Census, 85% of Fowler’s housing units are single-family detached units. Only 9% of all housing units are multi-family attached. In Rocky Ford, by comparison, 78% of all units are single-family detached and 18% are multi-family attached. Fowler also has more mobile homes that Rocky Ford – 5% of Fowler’s total housing units versus 3% in Rocky Ford.

- According to the Colorado Department of Labor and Statistics, Otero County issued 22 building permits for all types of construction in 2004. 46,494 were issued statewide in the same year.
- According to Town records, Fowler has issued only 7 building permits to date in 2008 for all types of construction, compared to a total of 28 ten years ago in 1998. However, plans are underway for the construction of a pet shop within Fowler.
generally comparable to the statistics for Otero County and the State of Colorado as a whole.

**Vacancy**

According to the State of Colorado’s Demography office, Fowler has a higher residential vacancy rate (17.68%) than all other jurisdictions within Otero County. The vacancy rate for Rocky Ford, for example, is 16.18% and for Otero County as a whole is 15.73%. Moreover, the 2000 Census breaks these numbers down further to show that Fowler’s homeowner vacancy rate is 4.3% - higher than Otero County’s equivalent 3.1% and roughly three times the statewide equivalent. Fowler’s rental vacancy rate is also higher at 12.7% than Otero County at 8.9% and Colorado at 5.4%.

**Affordability: Tri-county Housing**

Tri-County Housing indicates that their three-county service area (Otero, Bent, and Crowley counties) encompasses 3,579 square miles in rural southeast Colorado and has a total population in the area is 31,827. Of that, Fowler itself is only 0.5 square miles with an estimated 2006 population of 1,138.

Home values are noticeably low for both Fowler and Otero County; in fact, no owner-occupied units in Fowler are appraised over $150,000. Median home value for owner-occupied units is $68,100 in Fowler, higher than Otero County’s equivalent by roughly $2,000. Median gross rent in Fowler is $390, also slightly more than the $372 median gross rent in Otero County (ibid).
According to Tri-County Housing, affordability is a critical issue. Seventy percent of families in their service area are eligible for financial housing assistance by their standards, which require that applicants earn 80% or less of the area median income. Moreover, homes over $100,000 are considered out-of-reach for the majority of Fowler’s population.

The 2000 Census, however, indicates that rental housing is slightly more affordable in Fowler than in Otero County. For roughly 40% of our residents – and 47% of Otero County residents – rent amounts to 30% or more of household income.

**Future Housing Needs**

There are several directions that Fowler’s growth could take. Assuming that the Town’s forecast of 1,519 residents by 2035 is accurate, changes in household size will also affect the need for housing. If the average household size were to stay at 2.22 between now and 2035, the projected housing need for Fowler would be 684 units by that same time. If, however, the Town successfully attracts new young families into Fowler and the average household size increases to 2.5, the number of required housing units drops to 608. The Plan identifies housing goals, objectives and actions to address the Town’s need for future residential development with specific focus on affordability, diversity and quality.
4.8 Community Facilities

Parks and Recreation

Colorado Preservation, Inc. has acknowledged the historic value of
the Fowler Bath-house, built by the Works Progress Administration
in 1940. The original pool has been replaced; however, the Town cel-
ebrates the access to the recreational opportunities it has fostered over
the years for its families, children and teens. Among these are City
Park, Cottonwood Links Golf Course, and the city pool.

According to leadership of the Fowler School District, recreational fa-
cilities are maintained by volunteers and are in need of improvement.
Neither the school fields nor City park, for example, are outfitted with
playground equipment. There is no operational theater or movie rental
outlet, nor is access to the Arkansas River adequately developed to en-
courage recreation along its banks.

Open Space

Passive and active open space is highly valued by the residents of the
Town. However, currently there is no formal master plan for the future
of parks and open space within the community. Much of the focus is
on preservation of the existing amenities such as City Park, irrigation
canals, and footpaths along the Arkansas River area close to the golf
course.

The Town sees future policies and objectives focused on the integration
of a community separation buffer, a developed integrated park system
throughout Town and park and open space requirements for all new
development.

4.9 Infrastructure

Roads and Sidewalks

The Town of Fowler transportation network is a well connected street
grid with small blocks, similar to a Traditional Neighborhood De-
velopment (TND) pattern, which makes it very easy to get around
Town. Two State Highways run through Fowler. US 50 runs east-west
through the north end of Town. State Highway 167 runs north-south
through the center of Town, and it is referred to as Main Street. State
Highway 167 turns west four blocks south of US 50 to follow Grant
Street outside of Town, where it then continues south. The intersection
of US50 and Main Street is the center of Town.

US 50 runs through Fowler with a travel lane in each direction and
a center turn lane. Several segments of US 50 in Town have paral-
lel parking on both sides of the street. US 50 is signed 35 miles per
hour through Town and has no signals or stop signs. Several years ago,
CDOT helped Fowler update their crossings on US 50 so that they
were compliant with the Americans with Disability Act (ADA). The
US 50 intersections now have ramps and striping. Most of the Town
and its businesses are located south of US 50.
In Fowler State Highway 167, known as Main Street, is comprised of one wide travel lane in each direction and angle parking on both sides of the street. The distance between curbs in 79 feet, which is very wide for a two lane street. The wide cross section of Main Street makes it difficult to cross for pedestrians.

During a meeting on September 25, 2008 to discuss transportation and mobility, community concern was specifically raised about crossing Main Street at the grocery store location. Young people who work at the grocery often help carry bags out for customers. This creates a lot of pedestrian traffic across Main Street at a location without crosswalks or other pedestrian amenities.
The sidewalk on Main Street is separated from the street by street lighting, planters, and trees. The buildings along Main Street come right up to the sidewalk’s edge and many have awnings, creating a consistent and comfortable environment.

Surrounding US 50 and Main Street, the local street network in Fowler is a well connected grid with very few dead ends and cul-de-sacs. The network is also contained, creating a rapid transition from the Town to more rural, agricultural land. The streets in the network are wide, with an average curb to curb distance of approximately 48 feet. Some local streets have sidewalks, some do not.

Sidewalks in Fowler are typically 3-4 feet wide and often in disrepair or not present along the street. They do not meet standard requirements laid out by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or the Safe Routes to School program. The Safe Routes to School program calls for minimum 5-6 foot wide sidewalks. The 2035 Comprehensive Plan identifies policies, objectives and actions for the construction of 8-10 foot wide sidewalks in areas with high pedestrian activity, such as schools.

The road adjacent to the front of the elementary and high schools does not currently have sidewalks on either side of the street. There is a well marked and signalized crossing between the high school and the elementary school. The town is in the process of securing a Safe Routes to School grant. The money from this grant will help to install and improve sidewalks in the community.
Additionally, where sidewalks meet streets a curb ramp should be in place, as suggested in this Plan. This makes crossing possible for people with disability as well as much more convenient for people walking with a stroller. Many of Fowler’s sidewalks do not currently have curb ramps at intersections.

Water: Potable and Non-Potable

According to local knowledge, Fowler has the water capacity to provide for double the current population of the Town. Present pumping capacity for potable water is 250 gallons per minute. Average daily water use within the community is 60 gallons per minute and the Town has the capacity to store 625,000 gallons of water.

Non-potable water is also used by the community. The park, cemetery and golf course all pump non-potable water for their grounds keeping.

Stormwater

According to local knowledge, the Town's storm sewers and drainage systems can sustain up to 1.5 inches of rain per hour. Anything above 2 inches of rain per hour would cause minor to major flooding in many of the Town's areas. Additionally, seepage west of Green Lane would require that future development use caisson foundations.

Sanitary Sewer

According to local knowledge, the capacity of Fowler's existing sanitary sewer system could provide for double the current population of the Town. Present sewer capacity for the community is at 125 gallons per minute, which exceeds the permit capacity of 76 gallons per minute. Average daily flows are noted at 49 gallons per minute, below capacity.
4.10 Transportation and Mobility

Highway 50 Expansion and Rerouting

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) are working to develop and analyze proposed improvements to US 50 between Pueblo and the Kansas State line. The current study builds on a 2003 CDOT corridor planning study that culminated in a community-developed vision for the corridor to be a safer roadway, on or near existing US 50 that maintains a reasonable traffic flow and speed for the movement of people and goods. The project team has been conducting the Tier 1 EIS, which evaluates alternative corridor locations for future improvements as well as the implications of keeping the current alignment with expansion. In Fowler, the current alignment alternative has already been discarded due to large impacts to the commercial land use currently on the corridor. The Tier 1 EIS is considering a northern realignment or southern realignment. A variety of meetings have been held to inform the community and illicit their input on the project. The Town of Fowler is more supportive of the northern alignment. The Tier 1 EIS should be completed in 2009 at which time the results will be distributed for a 45 day comment period. A Tier 2 EIS will not likely begin until funding is identified for the project.
Commuter Patterns
According to the 2000 Census, 56% of Fowler residents work within Otero County, 43% work outside the County. 15% of Fowler residents reported carpooling as their primary means of transportation to and from work. 14.2% of Otero County residents, and 12.2% of people carpool nationwide, carpool to and from work.

Modes of Transportation
Despite the limited sidewalk infrastructure, walking is a very popular mode of transportation in the Town. The 2000 census showed that 9.5% of people in Fowler walk as their main mode of transportation. This is significantly higher than the 3.1% of Coloradans who reported walking.

Biking is also a popular mode of transportation in Fowler. Adults and children like to use bicycles as their preferred mode of transportation. Wide roads in Town make biking comfortable. Currently, there is not any formal bicycle infrastructure. At the September 25, 2008 transportation and mobility meeting, the community expressed a desire for bike parking in several places around Town to encourage biking. Existing bike activity centers where bike racks would be appropriate are the park and Main Street as indicated in the Plan goals and objectives for transportation and mobility.
Fowler, Colorado
Map 2: Biodiversity

LEGEND
- Fowler Town Boundary
- County Boundary
- Railroad
- Highway
- Local Streets
- Arkansas River
- Streams
- Area of High Biodiversity

LAND USE
- Commercial Services
- Mixed Urban or Built-up Land
- Residential
- Transportation, Communications, and Utilities
- Herbaceous Rangeland
- Mixed Rangeland
- Shrub and Brush Rangeland
- Deciduous Forest Land
- Forested Wetland
- Cropland and Pasture
Historical Train Depot
Section 5:

The Way Forward
Citizens of Fowler at Public Planning Meeting
The Way Forward

“Planning is bringing the future into the present so that you can do something about it now.”

-Alan Lakein

The community of Fowler has a remarkable vision that is unprecedented in the State of Colorado. Our vision is linked to both the past and the future through the desire to become one of the most sustainable communities in the State through progressive, renewable energy initiatives.

Historically, built on a traditional, walkable neighborhood development pattern with a distinctive main street, the Town of Fowler began as a community that sustained itself on agriculture and ranching. During this time, Fowler could provide its own food and therefore its own economy through the production and sale of agricultural goods. Regionally, it was recognized as a community that had established a presence in southeastern Colorado and would succeed through centuries of change.

Today, our Town is using the past for inspiration to bridge the present into the future. We are working on the production of renewable energy to sustain our economy and our utilities, enhancing the traditional neighborhood patterns that are the envy of so many, and enhancing the amenities of our community. These elements will establish our Town as the gateway to southeastern Colorado.

The 2035 Comprehensive Plan serves as the guide into our future that is both visionary and practical on a daily basis. The plan should be a guide for decisions by the planning and zoning board, the utility board, Town trustees, and other Town appointed committees. The goals, objectives and actions identified in this plan will serve to achieve our vision by providing tools, measurement and verification of our progress. To be successful, the plan suggests substantial revisions to our current municipal code in order to be in alignment with the vision. Further, the plan is program-oriented and provides a foundation for capital improvements and budget priorities.

Major themes that arose through the comprehensive planning process were:

- Community powered, driven by renewable energy
- A vibrant and progressive community that serves as a center for the farming and ranching economy
- A gateway to southeastern Colorado’s heritage
- Valuing its small town atmosphere
- Commitment to education
- Aggressively pursuing growth
- Maintaining its historic heart
- Becoming a local and regional destination

Interest was also expressed through the planning process to maintain either the current Citizen Advisory Committee or elect another one that reviews, on a quarterly basis or other identified timeline, our community’s achievements and successes with the vision set forth in this plan. At a minimum, a five year review of this plan and our community’s actions should occur. This will enable us to maintain our vision and stay focused on the future of our community.

Together, we can sustain a community that is powered by its people. As the canvas for our vision, this Plan will provide guiding principles for our community that will lead us into a successful, sustainable future.
Water Tower, Town of Fowler
Section 6: Appendices

DESIGN GUIDELINES .......................................................... 6.1
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GLOSSARY OF TERMS ..................................................... 6.3
6 Appendixes

6.1 Design Guidelines

Mainstreet

- Two story buildings are preferred in order to maintain the comfortable sense of enclosure of the community “living room”
- Portrait style windows are preferred for the second story
- Use quality, durable materials such as brick and stone
- Construct buildings up to the front property line adjacent to the sidewalk

- Maintain generously wide sidewalks that allow people to walk abreast
- Use awnings for protection from the sun and rain
- Maintain generous amount of see through window area on main level
- Maintain direct front sidewalk entrances
- Build street furniture including benches and planters, flag poles
- Maintain street parking
• Signage must be directly affixed to buildings in an understated manner

• Use of historic patterns is encouraged such as the vertical sign, awning sign, or a sign painted directly on the front or side of buildings

• Free standing pole signs are prohibited
**Highway US 50**

- Consolidate free standing pole signs into directory signage
- Use quality building materials such as brick, stone, or finely machined metal and glass
- Building massing should represent distinct building functions and not be monolithic with long expanses of blank space
- Plant street trees
**Highway US 50**

- Use generous landscaping to soften the street edge, particularly for free standing buildings set back from the highway
- Construct minimum 5 foot wide sidewalks separated from the highway by a landscaping strip
**Cannery District**

- Use industrial building materials such as brick and corrugated metal
- Plant street trees
- Construct buildings to the front lot line adjacent to the sidewalk
- Signage should be limited to that painted on the buildings
**Neighborhood**

- Encourage porches
- Encourage picket fences
- Place homes as close as possible to the front lot line while preserving sufficient space for a small yard
- Encourage drought tolerant landscaping
- Encourage use of shingles and brick
- Encourage use of portrait style windows
- Planting and preservation of street trees
- Repair and construction of sidewalks with a minimum 5 foot width
**General guidelines for all development**

- Institutional buildings should be designed in a bold, distinctive style that speaks to their importance.
- Institutional buildings such as churches and government buildings are encouraged to have heights above 2 stories
- Institutional buildings should be constructed of quality durable materials such as brick or stone
- Provide nuisance screening for garbage dumpsters, utilities and other unsightly items
6.2 References

Bureau of the Census (U.S.), 1910-2000
www.census.gov

www.fema.gov

Federal Highway Administration (U.S.), 2008
www.fhwa.dot.gov

“Protecting the Property Rights of All: No Adverse Impact Floodplain and Stormwater Management”, Edward A. Thomas, Esq.

The Rocky Mountain Land Use Institute, Sustainable Community Development Code, January 2008

Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District: Arkansas River Watershed Invasive Plant Project
www.waterinfo.org/southeastern-colorado-water-conservancy-district

State of Colorado Demography Office, 2006

State of Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), 2008
www.dot.state.co.us

State of Colorado Revised Statutes: SECTION 5. 31-23-206, Master Plan

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)- Draft, 2008

Town of Fowler: Building records and raw data, 2008

United States Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency - Monthly CROP Acreage Report by County, 2008
www.fsa.usda.gov

Local Plans:

Sustainable Comprehensive Master Plan, City of Greensburg, Kansas 2008

Town of Erie, Colorado, 2005 Comprehensive Plan
6.3 Glossary of Terms

Accessory dwelling unit (ADU):
An accessory, subordinate living unit that may be contained within or attached to a single family detached dwelling, may be a separate accessory structure on the same lot or it may be contained within an accessory detached garage. It is a complete living facility with facilities for cooking, eating, sanitation and sleeping. Other common terms for an ADU are ‘Mother in Law’ apartment, granny flat and carriage house.

Activity center:
A concentrated area of development, often containing a mix of different land uses either within the same building or site, or within a localized area.

Adequate public facilities:
Those facilities such as roads, sewer systems, schools, water supply and distribution systems, and fire protection that meet adopted level of service standards.

Affordable Housing:
Housing that has a sale price or rental amount that is within the means of a household that may occupy middle-moderate, or low income housing. A commonly accepted guideline for housing affordability is a housing cost inclusive of mortgage payments, taxes, insurance and homeowner’s association fees that does not exceed 30% of a household’s gross income. Low income households are defined as those earning less than 80% of the median annual income, adjusted for household size, as determined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for a particular region.

ASTM E1984-03:
Standard guide for the process of sustainable brownfields redevelopment (www.astm.org).

Building form:
The alignment, relationship to street, visibility and accessibility of building entrances, defining physical elements, and the way buildings shape public spaces.

Building mass:
The three-dimensional bulk of a building measured by height, width, and depth.

Building scale:
The perceived relative height and bulk of a building relative to that of neighboring buildings, adjacent streets and pedestrians.

Buffer:
Open spaces, landscaped areas, fences, walls, berms, or any combination thereof, used to visually screen and provide a physical separation between adjacent structures or uses.

Character:
Those attributes, qualities, and features that make up and distinguish a particular place or development and give such place a sense of purpose, function, definition, and uniqueness.

Cluster Development:
The grouping of a particular development’s residential structures on a portion of the available land, reserving a significant amount of the site as protected open space. A common objective is to protect agricultural
Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA):
A contractual agreement between two or more governmental entities. The agreements define appropriate future urban areas and establish standards and procedures for development in these areas.

LEED:
Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design is the, Green Building Rating System developed by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), providing a suite of standards for environmentally sustainable construction.

Low Impact Development (LID):
Increasingly becoming subsumed under the broader category of “green infrastructure,” it is a comprehensive land planning and engineering design approach with a goal of maintaining and enhancing the pre-development hydrologic regime of urban and developing watersheds (www.lowimpactdevelopment.org).

Enterprise Green Communities:
The Enterprise Foundation’s Green Communities program provides grants, financing, tax-credit equity and technical assistance to developers for creating low-income housing according to specific “green” criteria (www.greencommunitiesonline.org).

Multigenerational housing:
Dwelling units that provide for three or more generations within the same household.

Green Infrastructure:
Strategically planned and managed networks of developed, natural lands, working landscapes and other open spaces that conserve ecosystem values and functions and provide associated benefits to human populations. Within the built environment the objective is to reduce runoff volume by infiltrating and absorbing small, frequent storms close to where runoff is generated, thereby mimicking predevelopment hydrology to meet water quality and channel protection goals using natural system functions of infiltration, absorption and evapo-transpiration. (For further information visit www.greeninfrastructure.net and http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/home.cfm?program_id=298).
Comprehensive Plan 2035
Town of Fowler, Colorado

Parks and Open Space:
For the purposes of this plan Parks generally are more active and accessible while open space is more passive and often designed to protect natural features.

Pedestrian connection:
A length of sidewalk, walkway, or trail that directly connects activities, buildings and properties in such a manner so as to avoid forcing pedestrians to walk across or around parking lots, roadways, driveways or around buildings in a circuitous manner.

Renewable Energy:
Energy generated from natural resources—such as sunlight, wind, rain, tides and geothermal heat—which are renewable (naturally replenished).

SAFETEA-LU:

Sustainability:
In a broad sense, it is the ability to maintain a certain process or state within ecological, financial and social limits. It is increasingly viewed as the equitable distribution of resources and opportunities without comprising the ability of future generations to thrive and succeed. The United Nation’s Brundtland Commission articulated the most widely accepted definition of sustainability: “…to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

Sustainable Sites Initiative:
An interdisciplinary effort by the American Society of Landscape Ar-
chitects, the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center and the United States Botanic Garden to create voluntary national guidelines and performance benchmarks for sustainable land design, construction and maintenance practices (www.sustainablesites.org).

**Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND):**

refers to the development of a complete neighborhood or town using traditional town planning principles. TND may occur in infill settings and involve adaptive reuse of existing buildings, but often involves all-new construction on previously undeveloped land. To qualify as a TND, a project should include a range of housing types, a network of well-connected streets and blocks, humane public spaces, and have amenities such as stores, schools, and places of worship within walking distance of residences. TND is limited to the scale of neighborhood or town, and should not be confused with New Urbanism, which encompasses all scales of planning and development, from building to region. TND projects incorporate many different architectural styles and are not exclusively traditional in aesthetic. An example of a TND known for modern style as opposed to neo-traditional style is Prospect New Town in Longmont, CO.