

2021 TOWN OF BENNETT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



INTRODUCTION

The Town of Bennett, Colorado is a rapidly evolving community on the high plains of Eastern Adams and Arapahoe Counties. Bennett residents enjoy the pleasures of small-town living, clean air, room to breathe and welcoming neighbors. While the Town's incorporated area is currently 5.9 square miles, Bennett is the shopping and service hub for over twenty thousand residents along the eastern Interstate 70 (I-70) corridor. Our residents have a unique mixture of rural and urban highlights, surrounded by ranchland and farmland; but only 25 miles from Denver and the alpine recreation of the Rocky Mountains only an hour's drive away. The major transportation network creates a transportation nexus ideal for influential development and economic vitality.

Bennett's community leaders are visionary and willing to take bold steps to secure the Town's future. As the Town continues to attract significant land development interest, it recognizes the guiding principles for public and private land development need to be updated to reflect our community's vision and regional planning interests. In the 2015 Comprehensive Plan, the Town identified a 91.4 square mile "**Area of Planning Interest**." While this planning area continues to influence what happens in Bennett, this 2021 update redefines the surrounding planning areas. The amended "**Area of Planning Influence**" is defined as an area that influences the Town's ability to provide services and grow; but, it does not align with annexation interests. More specifically, the Area of Planning Interest includes unincorporated infill properties within Bennett, contiguous properties and properties within a logical service area, ideal for future annexation for the Town. The Area of Planning Interest is further categorized into three focus areas for potential annexation. The areas are number based on the continuity for infrastructure, resources and services for the community. Each area describes the Town's primary vision for key expansion and includes specific goals and policies that will guide future planning and development in these areas. The Area of Planning Interest reflects a 30.2 square mile area for likely near-term development.

Bennett's plans for growth are matched by its objective to effectively master plan infrastructure and introduce a portfolio of water resources, including renewable and reuse water supplies. The prospect for expansion associated with the Town's recently adopted Capital Asset Inventory Master Plan is a fundamental tenet of this comprehensive plan.

Bennett is committed to responsible planned development; economic vitality; high-quality public services, resilient infrastructure, programs and policies; and the continued expansion of a healthy community. The 2021 Town of Bennett Comprehensive Plan is a focused update of the Town's 2012 and 2015 Comprehensive Plans. The updated 2021 Comprehensive Plan process involved master planning and public engagement efforts, including:

- The recently modernized Town of Bennett website, providing a page dedicated to master planning and guiding documents for public transparency.
- An update to the Town's social media and public information approach to provide details on upcoming meetings, meeting summaries, draft documents, and public comment forums.
- Adoption of the Capital Asset Inventory Master Plan (CAIMP), which lays the groundwork for the supporting infrastructure and resiliency of our community.
- In-person Engage.Shape.Build public forums with one-on-one conversations, educational presentations and community input boards.
- Adams County, Arapahoe County and Colorado Air and Space Port master planning efforts.
- Work sessions with the Adams County and Arapahoe County planning staff, the Bennett Planning Commission and Town Board.
- Public hearings before the Bennett Planning Commission and Town Board.

STRUCTURE AND USE OF THE PLAN

The 2021 Town of Bennett Comprehensive Plan Update is structured around nine planning themes - Neighborhoods, Economic Opportunity, Open Lands, Transportation, Services and Infrastructure, Community Health, Annexation, Community Partnerships and Resiliency. In addition, there is defined Area of Planning Influence and a focus on our Area of Planning Interest.

Each planning theme contains an achievable goal, key strategy, catalyst action, and one or more policy directives:

- An **achievable goal** is a statement of an ideal condition that can be accomplished. An achievable goal is supported by one or more key strategies, catalyst actions, and/or policy directives;
- A **key strategy** is a statement of a specific approach directed toward the achievement of a goal;
- A **catalyst action** is a statement of an initiative that will enhance the success of reaching an achievable goal. The Plan Monitoring section (page 20) identifies the short-term, mid-term, and long-term time frames established for the implementation of catalyst actions; and
- A **policy directive** is a statement consistent with a strategy to prescribe, restrict or otherwise guide or direct action.

This plan is intended to provide elected and appointed officials, residents, business owners, landowners, project applicants, community partners and other stakeholders a broad policy tool for guiding decisions concerning growth and future land uses. As the Area of Planning Influence is regional in scale, plan implementation will require intergovernmental coordination and an additional level of public policy guidance and in-depth study. The focus areas, achievable goals, key strategies, catalyst actions and policy directives detailed within this document serve as the first generation of what is anticipated to be an ongoing, dynamic planning process. To further support the nine planning themes, the Board adopted a vision statement (Figure 1) and twelve guiding principles, as shown on page 3 (Figure 2), to establish our core values or standards to guide decision-making now and into the future.

Overall, this plan has been created to give successive public bodies a common framework for addressing land-use issues and set forth policies that foster a distinctive sense of place unique to Bennett. The plan is concluded by a summarized culmination and desired outcome accountability and tracking system within the plan monitoring section of this document.

Figure 1: Vision Statement

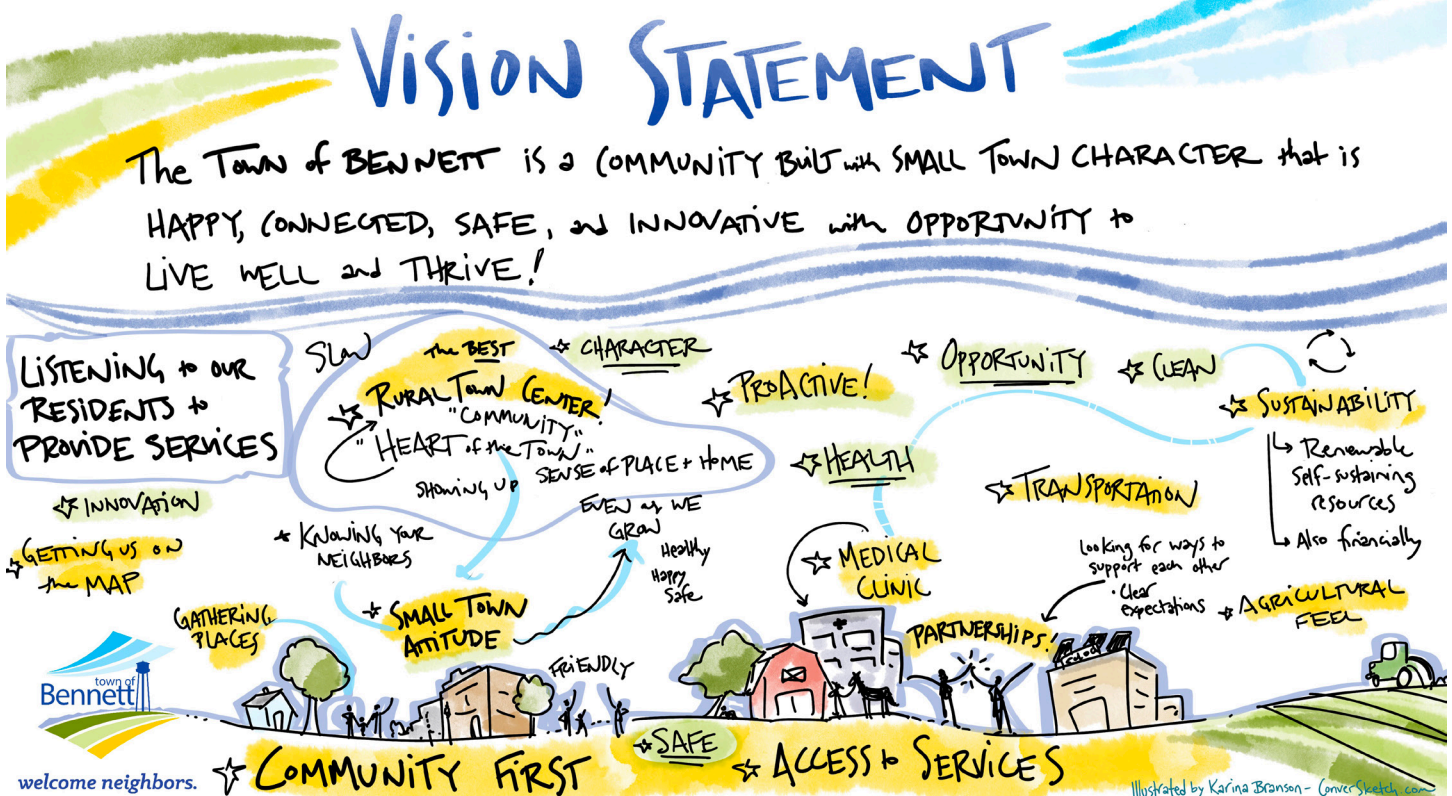
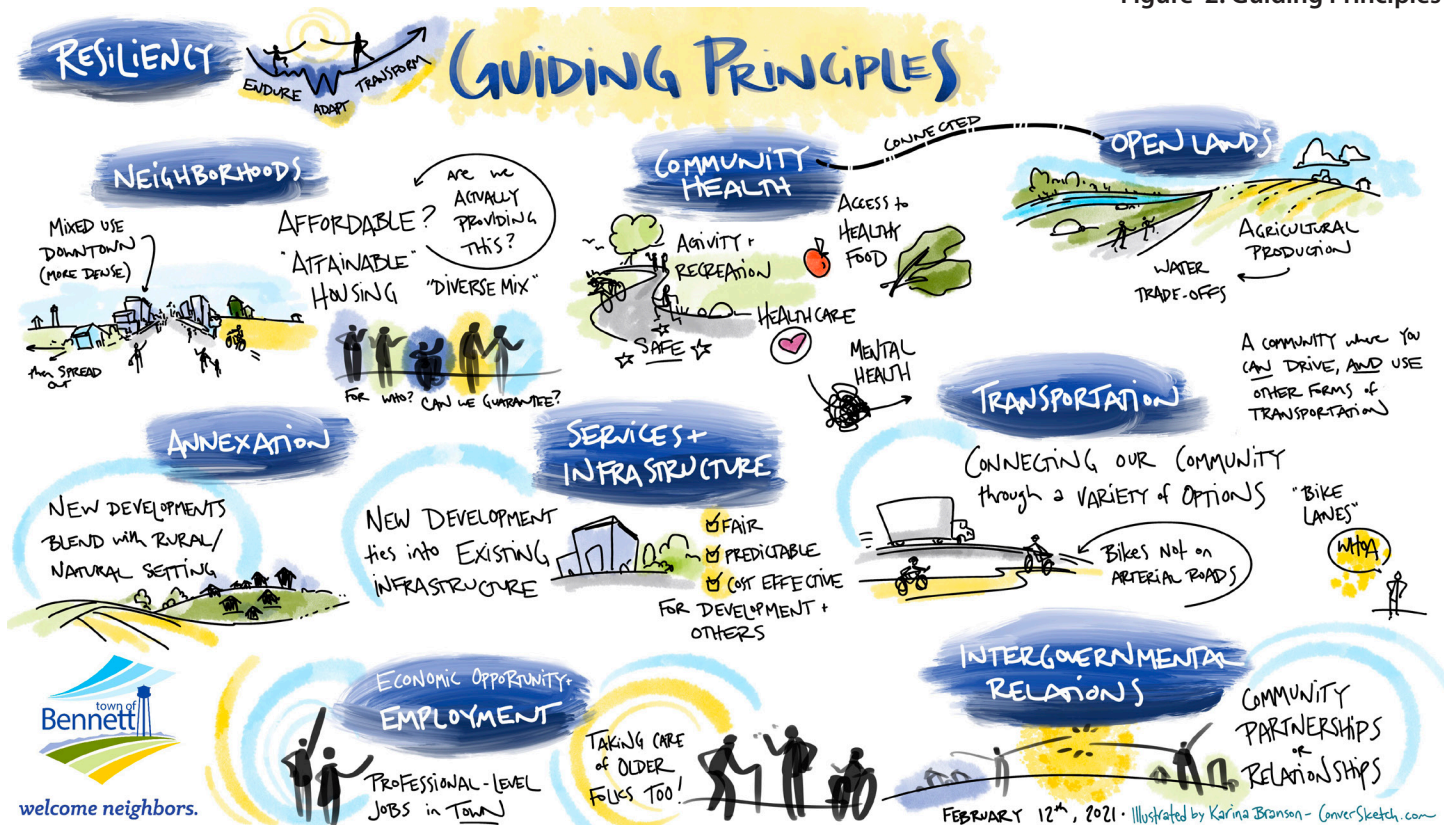


Figure 2: Guiding Principles



1. A comprehensive, safe and efficient transportation system that provides for all forms of travel, including vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian and public transit.
2. Develop neighborhoods that have a mix of land uses and densities with easy access to parks and open space, schools, cultural facilities, places of worship, shopping and employment.
3. Development of a Town Center in the heart of Bennett that will serve as our "downtown" offering easy access to shopping, dining, entertainment and employment.
4. Encourage a high-quality and diverse mix of housing, available to people of different backgrounds, income, age, abilities and all phases of life.
5. Commit to being good partners with other community agencies and organizations through; collaboration, leveraging funding, needs planning for future growth. Emphasize local relationships with the School, Library, Recreation, and Fire Districts.
6. Foster an attractive community that retains residents in all stages of life through attainable housing, continuing education and a robust job market.
7. Preserve and protect natural open space and other areas that have environmental significance, with an emphasis on flood hazard; water value; natural mineral wealth; or are prime open space locations.
8. Value the development of a healthy community with access to healthy foods, physical activity, recreation, healthcare and safe neighborhoods.
9. The Town strives to be resilient by providing a framework to understand and measure its capacity to endure, adapt and transform through economic, social, and physical stresses.
10. Design new developments in a manner to blend with the rural setting and preserve natural features and areas designated for agricultural production.
11. Contiguous land development pattern that promotes connected infrastructure and services in line with the capital asset inventory master planning documents.
12. Both land and infrastructure development decisions will be predictable and provide equitable cost-sharing in line with the Town's master plans.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

The Town of Bennett incorporated in 1930 and has steadily grown into a thriving and self-sustaining community with an excellent public school system and a growing hub for goods and services along the eastern I-70 corridor. The Town boasts over twelve miles of walking and biking trails, numerous parks, a community center, a recreation center and over 200 acres of protected open spaces. Currently, there are over 1,200 acres of land approved for development within the Town boundaries. Over half of that land being located within an Enterprise and Foreign Trade Zone, making Bennett a rising community with many attractive attributes for land developers and growing businesses.

Like many communities in rural Colorado, Bennett has an agricultural history and culture and has remained relatively small. However, since 2015, it is estimated the population has grown 33%, from 2,587 to approximately 3,200 persons by 2021 (Based on Water Account Data). The primary contributor to this increased population was the approval of new residential developments and a high demand for quality housing. In addition, two major annexations were approved during that period. Developing the Capital Asset Inventory Master Plan was a major policy change resulting in the expansion of the portfolio of water resources and identification of major infrastructure needs, providing the Town with the

capacity to accomodate development and responsibly absorb the impacts of growth. The below demographic information chart was provided by The Retail Coach, an economic development consulting firm.

While the incorporated 5.89 square miles of the Town is relatively small, Bennett is the service hub for the surrounding rural region. The total population of the trade area is currently over 20,000 and still growing. This population supports some of the nation's largest retail chains in Bennett, including King Soopers, Tractor Supply and Love's. Over 112 local business owners have called Bennett home for multiple generations. Bennett continues to cultivate a business-friendly community through our code and development processes. A stress-free commute also provides a significant labor shed of over 1.7 million workers within a 50-mile (approximately one-hour) radius, Figure 3. This, along with various workforce training and education programs, underline the Town's strong workforce pipeline available for economic vitality and expansion.

Visionary leaders in Bennett understand the importance of balancing "green spaces," unpopulated areas that help humans connect to their environment, with a built community that plays into its residents' overall happiness and mental well-being. Overall, the Town is committed to a community built with small-town character that is happy, connected, safe and innovative with the opportunity to live well and thrive.

Table 1: Community Demographic Profile

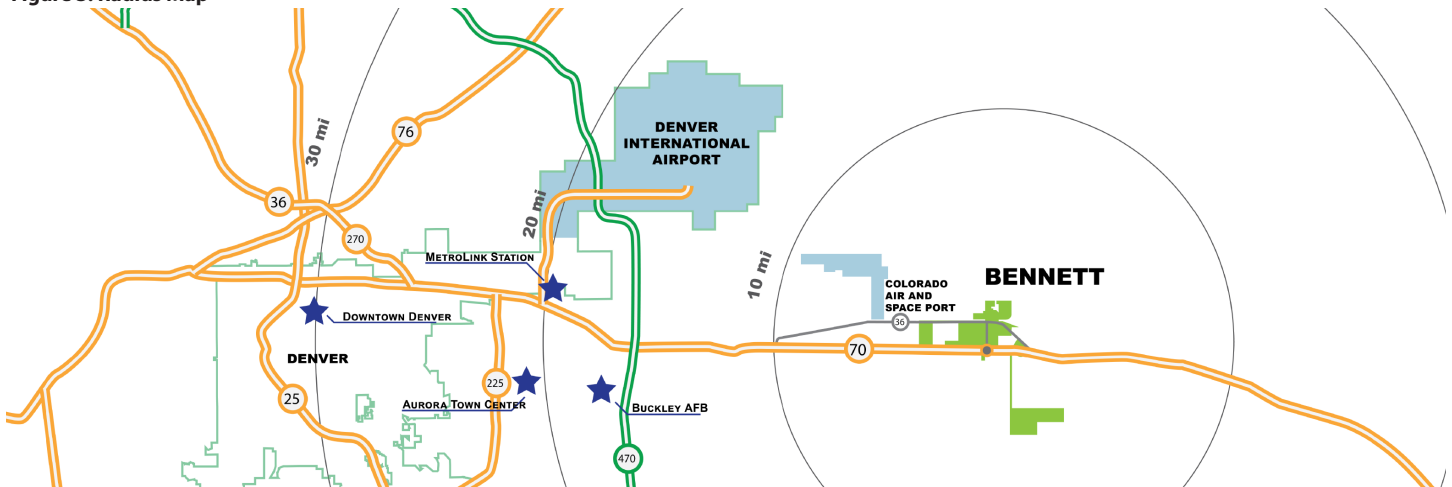
Population (2020 Census)	3,017
Population (2026 Estimate*)	6,694
Population (2010 Census)	2,308
Population Growth 2010-2020	24%
Trade Population (Service Hub Area*)	20,644
Median Age*	36.12
Median Household Income*	\$80,093
Households*	951

Table 2: Commute Times

Colorado Air and Space Port	10 Minutes
Denver International Airport	20 Minutes
Downtown Denver	25 Minutes
Denver Tech Center	35 Minutes
Rocky Mountains	50 Minutes
Hospital	20 Minutes

*Data Provided by The RetailCoach, August 2021.

Figure 3: Radius Map



SUMMARY OF PROJECTED GROWTH

The purpose of this section is to support the Town's projected growth by providing population and land use density projections over a long-term period as a basis for community resilience, economic indicators, mixed housing products and preservation of open lands. The research has been multi-faceted, first compiling and analyzing zoning data to project land uses and densities within the Town boundaries, assembling current population data unique Bennett to establish a population growth rate, and absorption assumptions to project up to date timelines.

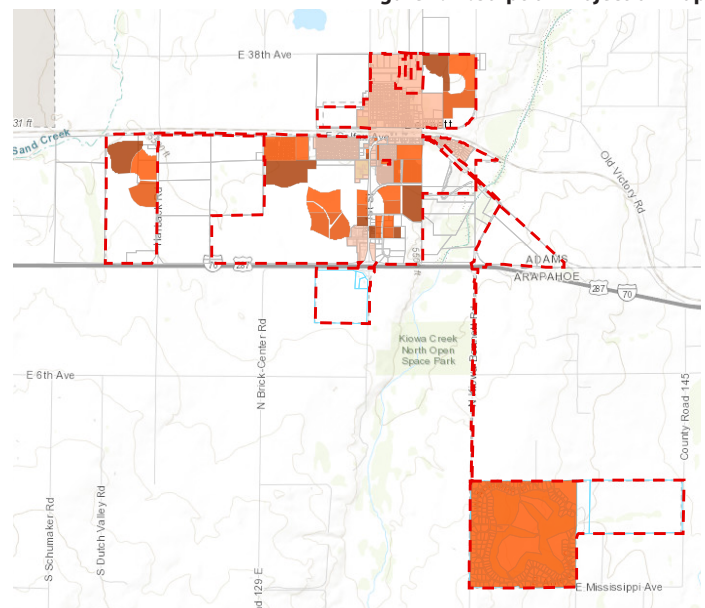
It is estimated that the Town currently has 1,200 acres of undeveloped land potential. These properties were identified through planning records, current zoning maps, landowner discussions, active applications and embedded in the Capital Improvements Planning and Development Project Status modules hosted in ArcGIS Online and updated on a case-by-case basis. The data was separated into residential versus non-residential development. In order to make comparable estimates for various development types, the projections are now assessed through the Single-Family Equivalent (S.F.E.) method, which considers the size of the property and the number of bedrooms in residential properties and restrooms in commercial properties to determine the estimated equivalence of impact of that proposed development. At the time of the CAIMP development, one S.F.E. was equivalent to 2.71 persons per household. Therefore, developments with more than one S.F.E. are allotted proportionally more impact in each tier. This methodology provides the framework for estimated equivalency in mixed-use products and growth projections, all of which is critical to future water planning for the Town's renewable water project.

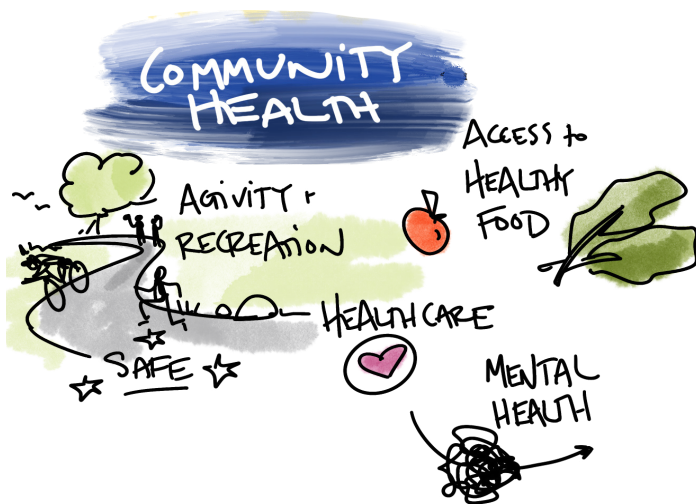
Next, the unique Bennett population summary was analyzed using data from the State Demography Office, input from the State Demographer's staff, the relevant Census data, and various discussions with the CAIMP team. Through this process, the potential for residential and commercial growth is significant in the Town based upon the property owner and developer interviews regarding the current market interests. The anticipation for growth is a result of three major contributing factors seen across the State. The first factor is the current and increasing population growth in the State, the second is the expansion and population increase in Metro Denver, and last the increase in housing prices that pushes buyers into surrounding areas such as Bennett. Bennett's residential market has been proven by prominent home builders with steady housing absorption rates over the last three years.

Finally, the absorption data was compiled through the developer interviews to determine and verify the information compiled in Geographical Information System (G.I.S). All absorption projections are based upon the developer's best estimate of how the market will respond. In the past ten years, all of Bennett's residential home market has been small infill until 2017 when LGI began to construct new homes and platted 250 new home sites. At the end of 2020, approximately 80% of these homes had certificates of occupancy. In 2021 the Town has five residential developments in various stages of construction with 948 platted lots and issued 129 certificates of occupancy. The 2021 absorption rate equates to approximately 14 SFE's per month.

The growth rates proposed were reviewed and vetted by the technical team and the Town leadership to determine Bennett's appropriate projected growth rate. Updating the growth projection models annually will be essential to the community's asset management and planning needs. The creation of CAIMP, the new G.I.S. framework, gives staff and consultants the ability to map land planning within an infrastructure model providing streamlined results for development and population projections. At the time of CAIMP, the Town's population is expected to reach 12,581 persons by the year 2029, which equates to approximately 4,358 S.F.E.'s (residential, industrial and commercial). The desired employment opportunities aligned job and housing expansion to reflect balanced growth in Bennett's future, reinforce one of the core concepts of the plan, which calls for neighborhood and employment centers with ample opportunities to live, work, and play locally.

Figure 4: Absorption Projection Map





Bennett is committed to providing a healthy, happy and safe lifestyle for all. Our capacity to plan and guide development through recreational activity, access to healthy food and healthcare initiatives reflect this commitment. On August 13, 2019, the Town adopted a robust Parks, Trails and Open Space Master Plan. This plan established a vision for the Town over the next ten years, giving the tool necessary to manage and enhance existing parks and plan for future parks, open spaces and trail connections throughout the community. This visioning process was an opportunity to update existing Town plans, including the previous 2009 Parks, Trails and Open Space Master Plan. Bennett has developed a multi-use trail that extends from the residential core of the community to the local shopping center, enabling safer pedestrian and bicycle grocery trips as well as improved

railroad crossings through the main HWY 79 and 36 intersection. Additionally, the primary grocer located within the incorporated Town, coupled with the relative population of Bennett, makes its progress in providing accessible healthy food options impressive.

An overarching objective for Bennett's community health is to increase residents' opportunities to make healthy food, mental health awareness and physical activity choices by implementing sustainable policies and practices for the built environment. As such, there is a strong emphasis on community health as an underlying principle to the Town of Bennett Comprehensive Plan. In particular, the Board has identified the desire to enhance community health by promoting healthcare recruitment strategies and incentives, as guided by the economic development assistance policy. Healthcare is highly recognized as a critical quality of life factor impacting the retention and attraction of Bennett residents and the workforce. Furthermore, healthcare is more important than just the services they provide. Access to high-quality, affordable health care institutions affects the workforce and community resiliency. Healthy, longer-living workers are more productive and happier. The more productive and happier your workforce is, the more they are likely to stay and invest in their community.

Achievable Goal: To promote healthy eating and active living.

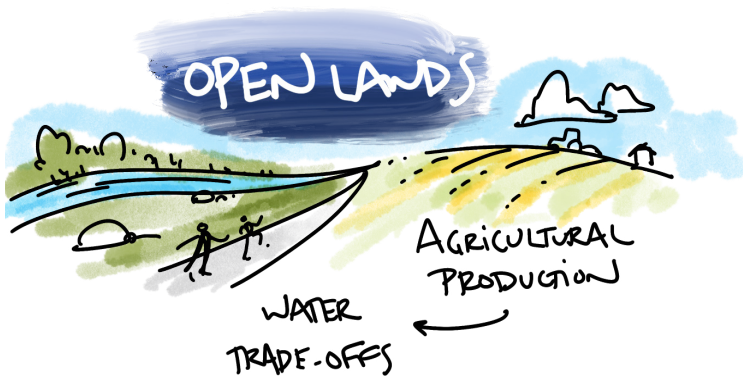
Key Strategy: Increase public health resources through partnerships with organizations such as: Tri-County Health Department, LiveWell Colorado, the Colorado Health Foundation and others as a model healthy community initiative.

Catalyst Action: Conduct an assessment of local and regional plans adopted by the Town, Adams and Arapahoe County and other regional governing bodies to link trail systems and open space.

Policy Directive: The Town shall ensure the creation of a built environment that supports healthy options for physical activity and good nutrition as foundations for sustainable health.

Policy Directive: The Town shall implement recommendations from the 2019 Parks and Open Space Master Plan to provide for the recreational and tourism needs of residents and visitors to encourage other sports or other recreational activities along with the commercial facilities supporting such uses.





The bulk of the Planning Area of Interest consists of open lands, characterized by sizeable agricultural landholdings with pockets of very low density, large lot residential areas. The area also includes four major (one hundred year event) floodplains that serve as natural drainage and riparian corridors. During the May 2021 Engage.Shape.Build public input meeting, it was evident that our residents place a high value on their environment and strongly desire the preservation of a rural lifestyle.

Unique among other communities in Colorado, Bennett's availability of open land creates a promising impact for development along with the preservation of the natural environment that will later define the physical character and image of the rural community. The extensive network of trails, open space corridors and conservation areas weaves through the fabric of each development application, connecting with parks, neighborhoods, schools, community facilities, employment centers and activity districts. Identifying rural preservation areas within new developments helps the Town assure residents access to a range of recreation opportunities and benefit from the protection of sensitive environmental habitats, water bodies and view corridors. Additionally, it is duly noted that preservation of open space provides a water trade-off, as these land areas will drastically reduce the overall water impact. Overall, this open lands effort connects residents to regional trails, neighboring jurisdiction open space and water sustainability for planned density developments. Since 2015, the Board of Trustees has taken several steps that aid in preserving open space. First, by the Code

adoption of land dedication requirements. Dedication requirements at the time of subdivision allow for the dedication of vacant land for the purposes of public parks, trails, open space, public facilities or recreational purposes. Next, by taking ownership over Bennett Regional Park and Open Space containing 193 acres. The property was previously a privately owned 18-hole golf course named "Antelope Hills" and now supports Recreation, Relatively Natural Habitat and Open Space conservation values. In particular, the property provides public access to open space and for outdoor recreation and trail connections from the Antelope Hills Community to the Kiowa Creek North Open Space and surrounding rural areas for the use and enjoyment of the general public. In addition, since taking ownership of the property in April 2013, all of the concrete trail systems from the golf course have been removed, and replantation of early-seral plants and weeds mitigation to restore historical conditions of a healthy short-grass prairie system have been completed. As a result, this well-established conservation easement now protects all 193 acres of Bennett Regional Park and Open Space. Finally, the Town recently entered into an option to purchase agreement to preserve approximately 156 acres of native creek habitat within the floodplain, serving as a natural drainage and riparian corridor within the Northern Kiowa Creek Preserve.

In summary, while the Town has made significant strides in the preservation of open space, it is recognized that in order to maintain the rural character of the area, subdivided lots created should be screened, clustered or distributed in such a manner as to minimize visual and environmental impacts and maximize the use of existing roads and utilities, and that continued efforts for public acquisition of open space property should be prioritized whenever possible.

Achievable Goal: To protect and preserve the rural nature of open lands.

Key Strategy: Identify parcels with the Focus Areas for potential open space acquisition.

Catalyst Action: Work with Arapahoe County's Open Space Master Planning efforts to redefine their North Open Space parcel and identify the trail linkage program for connectivity with the Town's trail system.

Policy Directive: The Town shall encourage future open space acquisitions and identify preservation efforts, as a way to protect their natural values.





The Summary of Projected Growth (page 5) notes demand in the next ten years for 4,358 additional S.F.E.'s within the Area of Planning Interest. Providing a balanced mix of housing opportunities in the Town will continue to be a focus of planning efforts in each development. Ensuring that a wide range of incomes, age groups and lifestyle choices are accommodated, will reinforce the Town's desire to be a place in which to live and work, inclusive of all.

A guiding principle of this plan is to develop neighborhood centers that allow for a mix of land uses with increases in densities, which is a departure from the historical growth pattern in the corridor. Benefits of concentrated mixed-use development include an efficient land use pattern that increases transportation choices, reduces energy consumption, promotes water conservation and offers more opportunities for social interaction. In addition, the Town will pursue a variety of strategies to maintain the affordable housing stock that currently exists comparable to the Denver Metro area.

Neighborhood centers are characterized by a core of civic, educational, entertainment, office and retail uses that support surrounding residential uses of varying types and densities. Each center's development will vary in density and intensity from large master-planned neighborhoods on the within the Area of Planning Interest to smaller in-fill projects within the Town's core.

In 2021, the Town commenced draft updates to its Chapter 16 Land Use Code, inclusive of zoning regulations and the adoption of interactive Zoning and Development maps. To foster new and in-fill development, the interactive maps and revamped applicants guides now provide real-time information to developers and are intended to offer transparent and streamlined development process.

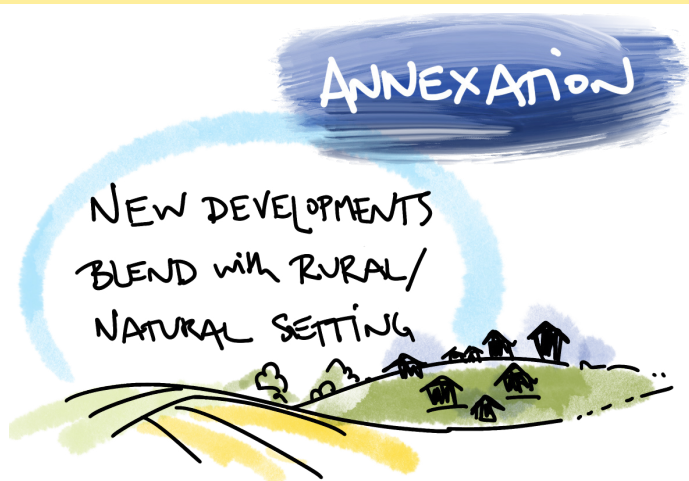


Achievable Goal: To provide diverse housing types at various densities and a mix of appropriate land uses.

Key Strategy: Foster innovative infrastructure practices, site planning, and mixed-use development patterns.

Catalyst Action: Prepare design guidelines and transition the Town's existing PD's and outdated zoning districts into one of the new zoning districts.

Policy Directive: The Town shall encourage master-planned, mixed-use development in concentrated centers.



Annexation Focus Areas 1, 2, and 3 correspond to the three-mile annexation boundaries;

- The timing of annexation in each Focus Area will be dependent on the ability to provide infrastructure and services to the property. Conversely, resources underlying lands rich in water supply, open space and/or other Town desired resources, may provide an opportunity for prioritization of annexation; and
- Through various planning efforts, the Town will seek to strike a balance among the many competing demands on land by creating development patterns that are orderly and rational, provide the greatest benefits for individuals and the community as a whole and avoid nuisance conflicts between land uses.

A fundamental principle forming the basis for the Town's annexation policy is that annexation is an agreement between a willing landowner and a willing local government. Therefore, the Town and property owner should enter into a pre-annexation agreement as a precursor to any annexation. Pre-annexation agreements establish the conditions of annexation and provide the Town and property owner with a set of negotiated obligations upon annexation.

Three annexation growth areas are outlined in Figure 5 below, and referenced herein as Focus Areas, all within the Planning Area of Interest. These growth areas are intended to provide guidance, not an obligation, or priority for future annexation by the Town or landowners. In general, these are areas that may be candidates for annexation. Additional considerations include:

- With minor exceptions, Colorado annexation statutes limit the extension of a municipal boundary to no more than three miles within any one year. In general,

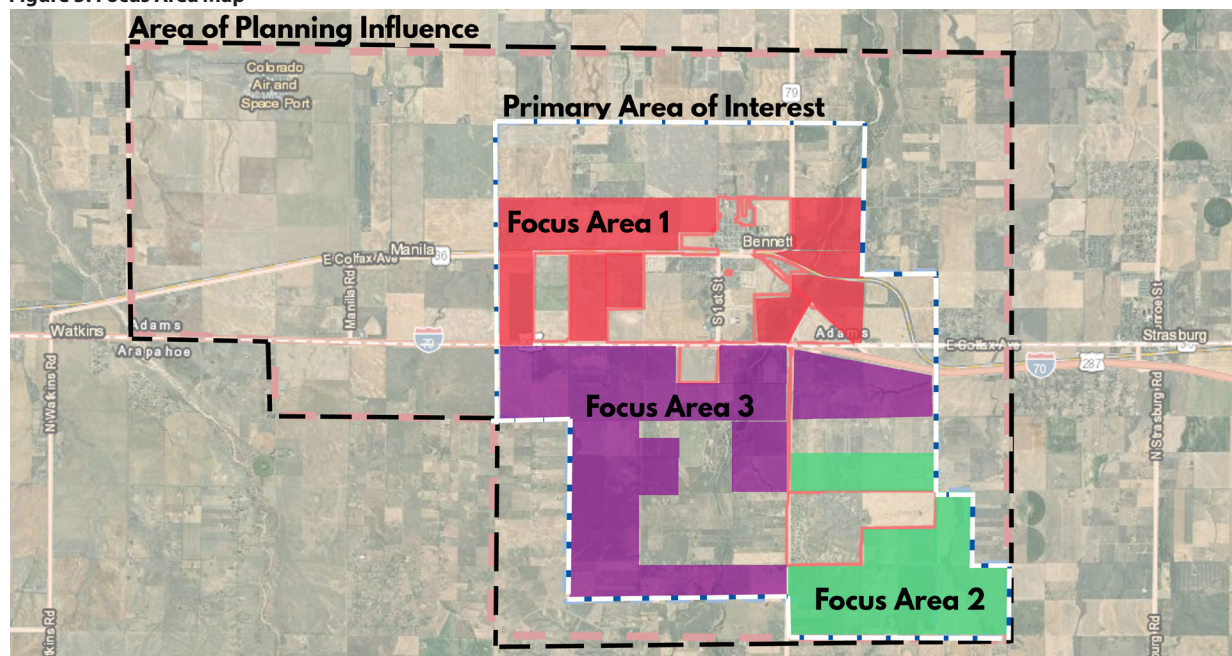
Achievable Goal: To support the development of Bennett as a healthy community with interconnected employment and neighborhood centers.

Key Strategy: Utilize incorporated lands and public rights-of-way to establish continuity for future annexation of land on a prioritized basis.

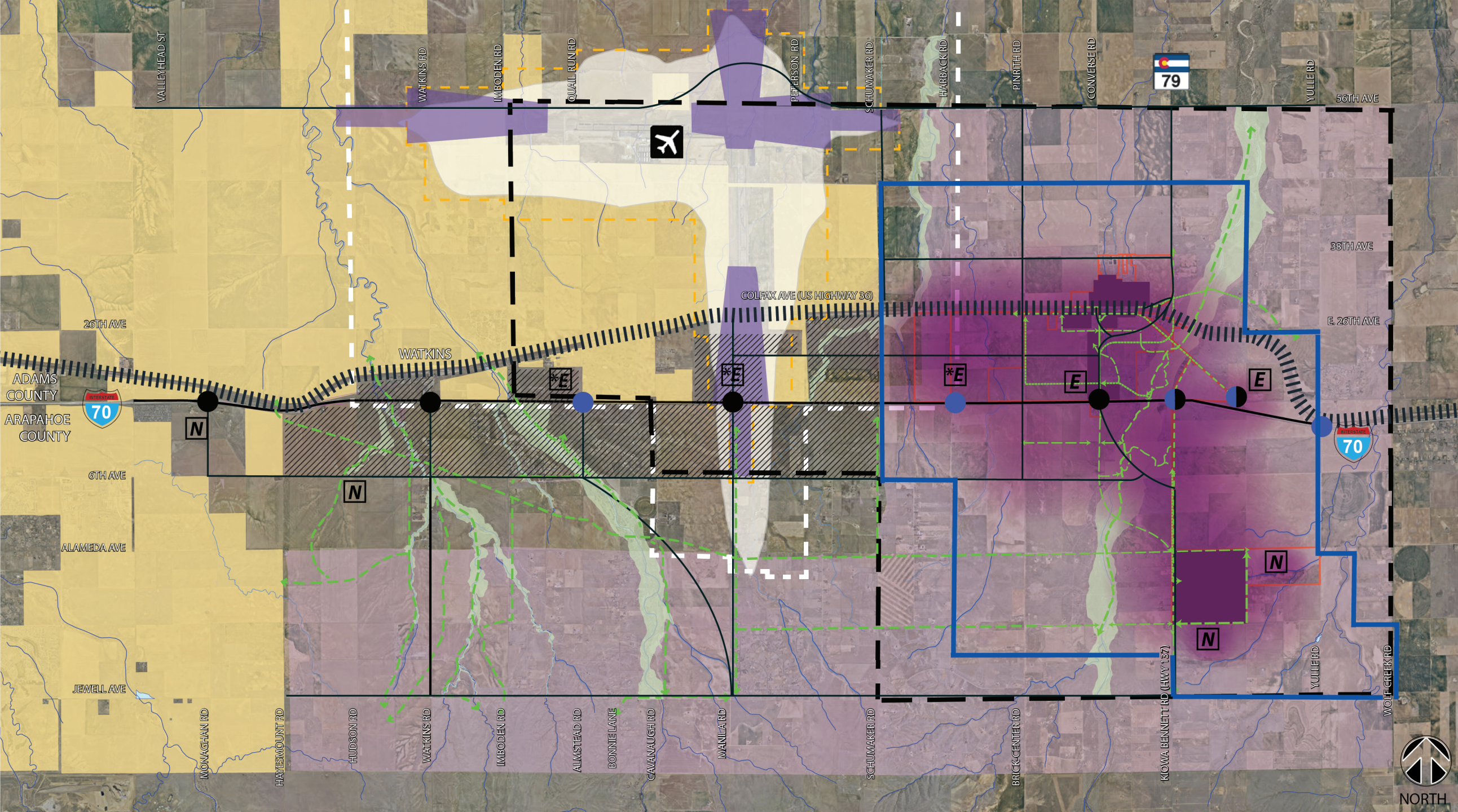
Catalyst Action: Update on an annual basis the Town's Three Mile Area Plan that serves to support Colorado statutory provision C.R.S. § 31-12-105, which requires that a municipality have a plan in place prior to the annexation of any land.

Policy Directive: Existing rural residential subdivisions in all annexation priority areas shall not be considered for annexation, unless critically in need of sewer and/or water service due to environmental concerns, failing septic systems, or poor water quality or quantity.

Figure 5: Focus Area Map

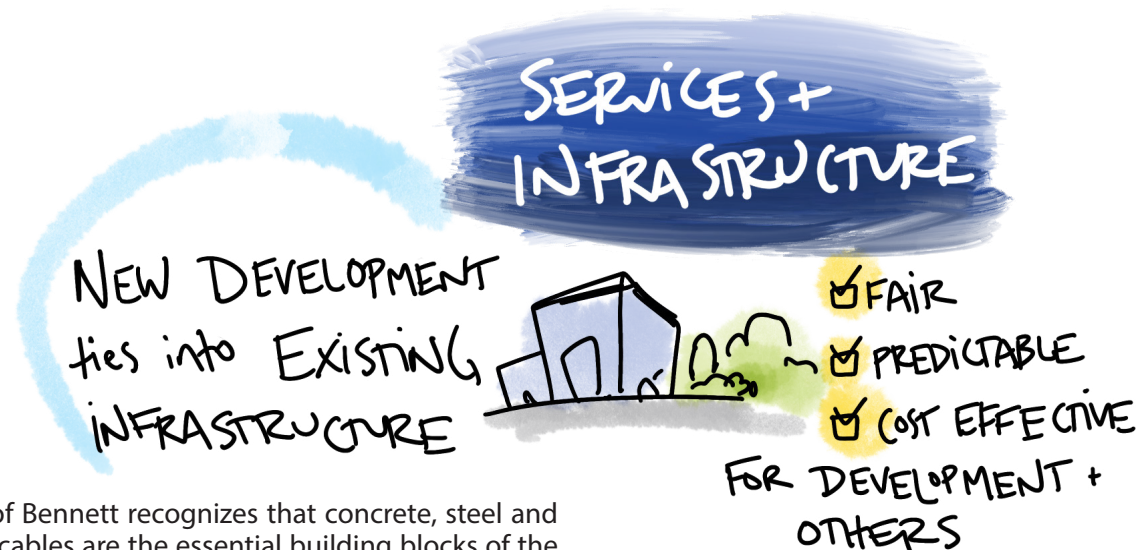


PREFERRED PLANNING PRINCIPLES MAP



Legend

	Area of Planning Interest		Colorado Air and Space Port		Freeway		Established Municipal Area		Employment Center * Subject to Airport Influence Zone restrictions
	Area of Planning Influence		Airport Influence Zone		State Highway		Developing Municipal Area		Neighborhood Center
	Town of Bennett		Airport Restriction Area #1		Union Pacific Railroad		Rural/ Rural Preservation		Proposed Arterial
	City of Aurora		Airport Restriction Area #2		Existing Interchange		Natural Resource Area		Proposed Regional Trail
	Aurora Strategic Area		55 DNL Noise Contour		Proposed Interchange				



The Town of Bennett recognizes that concrete, steel and fiber-optic cables are the essential building blocks of the economy. Infrastructure enables trade, powers businesses, connects workers to their jobs, creates opportunities for communities and sustains us from an unpredictable economy. From private investment in telecommunication systems, broadband networks, freight railroads, energy projects, and pipelines to the Town's responsibility of transportation, water, buildings, facilities, and parks, infrastructure is the backbone of a viable community and a healthy economy.

A primary focus of Bennett infrastructure is to plan, protect and construct sustainable and resilient infrastructure for current and future residents of Bennett. A thorough assessment of current assets and prospects for growth associated with a renewable water supply is a fundamental tenet of the 2019 Capital Asset Inventory Master Plan, otherwise referred to as CAIMP. In December 2019, the Town of Bennett Board of Trustees adopted a resolution approving the CAIMP as guiding principles for which infrastructure will be assessed, planned, designed, and constructed. CAIMP affirms Bennett's commitment to responsible planned development, resiliency, economic vitality and a program for public improvements to protect quality of life for its residents. CAIMP provides appointed and elected officials, landowners, project applicants, and other stakeholders with a broad policy tool for guiding decisions concerning capital infrastructure for current and future Town assets.

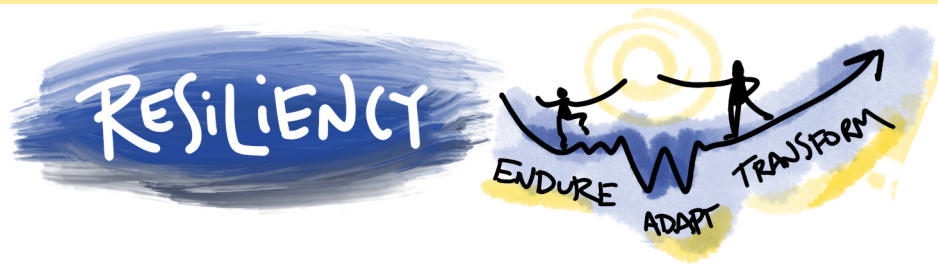
CAIMP was a targeted update of the Town's 2003 B.B.C. Research & Consulting Impact Fee Study, 2008 R.T.W. Water-Wastewater Master Plan and Rate Study, and the 2014 Impact Fee Update. The Town's senior staff, Terramax, Inc., Aqua Engineering, Jehn Water Consultants, Inc., Northline G.I.S., PureCycle, Kendrick Consulting, Inc., Norris Design, and SM Rocha, LLC. made up the consulting team responsible for the development of this robust master plan. Additionally, public forums were hosted to provide residential input and historical data.

Through previous assignments and communications with Bennett's stakeholders, this planning approach recognizes the Town's burgeoning Geographic Information System (GIS) vision and commitment. This new ESRI GIS program provides an avenue for more dynamic, flexible and useful living documents for master planning and capital improvements. While many master plans and capital improvement programs are destined to become obsolete quickly, GIS holds the potential to work directly against this factor, by remaining in regular and active use, reviewed and updated by Town staff and Town policy directives.



CAIMP underscored the need to "quantify the reasonable impacts of the proposed development." As Bennett considers new initiatives to complement the need for a diverse mix of land uses and services, the Town recognizes the desire from developers to diversify housing products and development phasing. Bennett took steps to assess impacts based on development types equivalent to a typical single-family resident living in Bennett. Impacts are now assessed through the Single-Family Equivalent (S.F.E.) method, which is proportionate to the size of the property, bedrooms of residential or restrooms of commercial to determine the estimated equivalence of impact of that proposed development.

Finally, to be successful, capital improvement planning must be an ongoing activity. The progress matrix within CAIMP provides an essential plan monitoring tool specific to services and infrastructure, that identifies timeframes for the accomplishment of catalyst actions in congruence with the Comprehensive Plan.



Natural, technological and human-caused hazards take a high toll on communities, but better managing disaster risks can reduce the costs of lives, livelihoods and quality of life. The Town recognizes that planning and implementing prioritized measures can strengthen resiliency, improve a community's ability to continue or restore vital services in a more timely way and build back better after damaging events. One of the primary objectives of this Plan update is to prepare the Town for future events, minimize risk and assure recovery if disasters occur.

The plan provides a practical and flexible approach to help Bennett improve resilience by setting priorities and allocating resources to manage risks for prevailing hazards. Early identification of the planning process, which includes working examples, will help to illustrate the elements of resiliency. Furthermore, the Town will gather resources to characterize the social and economic dimensions of the community, dependencies and cascading consequences, and building and infrastructure performance. Finally, the implementation of resiliency guides can assist integration of consistent resiliency goals into economic development, zoning, mitigation and planning activities that impact buildings, utilities and other infrastructure system needs.

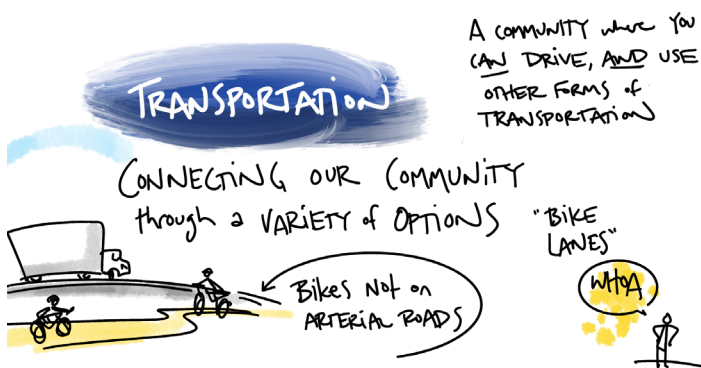
Achievable Goal: Create the next-step process to help the Town think through and plan for its social and economic needs, their particular hazard risks and recovery of the built environment.

Key Strategy: Setting performance goals for vital social functions—healthcare, education and public safety—and supporting buildings and infrastructure systems - transportation, energy, communications, and water and wastewater.

Catalyst Action: Create the action-oriented resiliency companion report to help the Town follow a guided and researched process, including providing a series of customizable templates and additional resources if a hazard occurs.

Policy Directive: The community's social and economic needs and functions should drive goal-setting for how the built environment performs and providing a comprehensive method to align community priorities and resources with resilience goals.





Bennett is one of the most accessible communities in the Denver area. The transportation network includes Interstate 70 (I-70), US Highway 36 (US 36), State Highway 79 (SH 79), as well as the Union Pacific Railroad. In addition, Bennett's proximity to Denver International Airport (DIA), the Colorado Air and Space Port, and E-470 Public Highway Authority creates transportation connections ideal for responsible development and economic vitality. Furthermore, the extensive network of trails weaving through our parks, neighborhoods, schools, community facilities, employment centers and activity districts provide the framework for a safe multi-modal transportation network.

The regional highway system's condition and functionality significantly impact the Town's existing and future roadway systems. The two primary access points off I-70 (I-70/Kiowa-Bennett Road and I-70/SH 79) currently provide convenient access to the community. The Town recognizes that as the community grows these main entry points will require significant improvements.

In 2015, the Town of Bennett passed a successful sales tax and bond measure for an additional 1% sales tax and completely reconstructed most of the streets in Bennett and made crucial repairs to the existing concrete streets. This sales tax does not sunset but will continue to be a primary funding source to make future improvements and repairs to our system.

Several studies addressing transportation needs inform this comprehensive plan, including the SH 79 PEL Study, the Access Control Plan, the Downtown Bennett Planning Study, the Grade Separation Preliminary Feasibility Study, the Adams County Transportation Plan and the Arapahoe County Transportation Plan.

Key recommendations reflected include:

- The realignment of SH 79 east of Bennett, which begins south of 38th Avenue and ends just north of I-70.
- Constructing new interchanges on I-70 at Quail Run Road, Harback Road and Yulle Road and improving the existing SH79 and Kiowa-Bennett Road interchanges.

A key next step is creating a Master Transportation Plan (MTP). The MTP will guide the Town's policy development, and the delivery of services, prioritize transportation projects, outline opportunities and generate a strategic action plan for the next ten years. In addition, the MTP will review and outline expansion opportunities for roadway, transit and other cutting-edge transportation opportunities, including a multi-modal transportation network of bike lanes and trails, and future public transit elements:

- Express bus service to the Denver metro area, as the majority of the Area of Planning Interest is currently located outside the existing Denver Regional Transportation District (RTD) boundary; and
- The initiation of a local bus circulator or trolley service that will give residents the ability to travel between neighborhood and employment centers.
- Potential transit improvements that extend beyond the 2040 planning horizon could include:
- Commuter rail service to RTD's planned East Corridor commuter rail line using either the existing Union Pacific rail line or new rail installed in the I-70 median; and
- A high speed rail station located at an I-70 interchange in the Area of Planning Influence, with service from Denver.

Achievable Goal: To provide a safe, efficient, and connected multi-modal transportation network.

Key Strategy: Improve vehicular access, traffic circulation and public safety at interstate highway interchanges accessing Bennett.

Catalyst Action: Completion of a master transportation plan for the Town of Bennett and incorporating the plan into the Town's GIS systems.

Policy Directive: The Town shall work with DRCOG, CDOT, RTD and other regional transportation entities to coordinate development of a multi-modal transportation system.





The Town's economic development strategy intends to strengthen and grow the Town's employment base, support existing and new retail business and foster redevelopment of our Downtown. The Comprehensive Plan supports a full range of business growth opportunities within the Town from inception to expansion to provide a healthy environment for business development. There is a unique opportunity with the amount of land available to both nurture existing businesses and accommodate new businesses. Identifying land uses and development that will complement the Town's rich service base is a key focus as the Town grows and attracts new businesses.

The Area of Planning Influence is part of the Colorado Air and Space Port industrial space submarket, which is projected to capture 77.6 percent of the new growth in industrial space and ultimately represent 32 percent of the total industrial space in the Denver metropolitan area. In addition, there are over 2,400 acres of open land available for development within the Area of Planning Interest. Thus, available land is one of Bennett's most significant assets for recruiting business and employment opportunities.

The Town commits to targeting new opportunities and expansion of existing businesses that diversify our economic base and continue to strengthen the fiscal health of our community while respecting our natural resources and our unique small-town feel. The Town of Bennett Economic Development Assistance (EDA) policy is intended to customize economic development assistance based upon the need of the project and meet long-term community goals by creating a vibrant, economically healthy community.

The concentration for development into employment centers is a key component of the recruitment strategy for the Town. These employment centers are proposed along the I-70 Corridor at major interchanges, parallel to the Union Pacific Railroad; and near E-470, SH 79 and 56th Avenue with excellent access to DIA and Colorado Air and Space Port. The employment centers are intended to accommodate commercial and industrial land uses, including large-scale warehousing, manufacturing, outdoor storage, distribution and trans-loading facilities. Other supporting uses could include hotels, restaurants, child care centers and small-scale retail.

As growth continues into the eastern I-70 Corridor region, Bennett finds ways to balance economic development with the community's desire to maintain its rural and agricultural character. Since 2013, the "Bennett Community Market" has been an agricultural attraction along the I-70 Corridor and partner of recent agritourism initiatives. The Bennett retail community has grown from one primary grocer to a diverse economic service base for the Eastern Corridor. The retail development efforts reflect Bennett's ongoing commitment to maintain its agricultural heritage, stimulate economic development and foster healthy lifestyle choices.

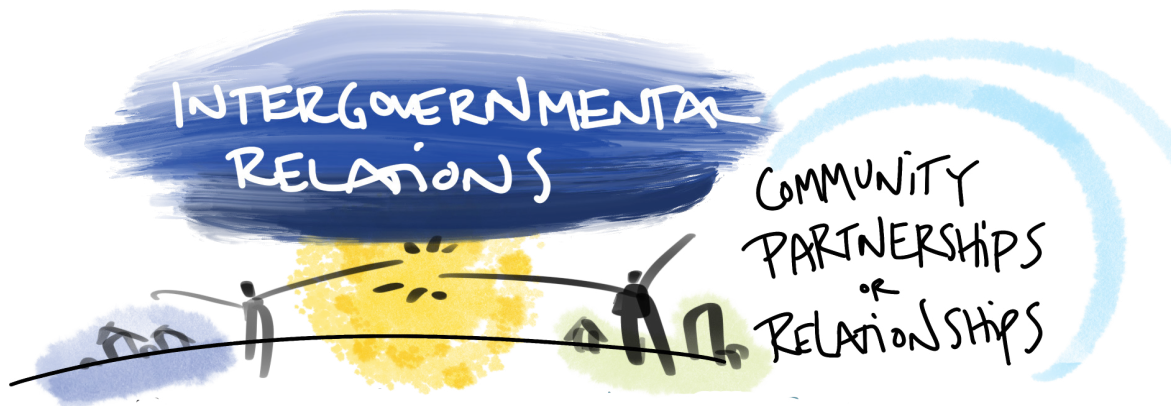
Achievable Goal: To enhance the sales tax and employment base of the Town by attracting and retaining commercial and industrial development.

Key Strategy: Identify and preserve land for Town Centre Concept and parallel Mainstreet.

Catalyst Action: Finalize and implement the next steps in the Strategic Economic Development Plan to determine advantages and priorities for attracting a variety of new commercial and industrial development into identified employment center locations that will meet the daily needs of area workers.

Policy Directive: The Town shall proactively annex and zone land for employment centers.





Both the Planning Influence Area and Area of Planning Interest for the 2021 Comprehensive Plan include areas of unincorporated Arapahoe and Adams Counties and the City of Aurora. These three jurisdictions, along with the Town of Bennett, the Bennett School Districts, the Bennett Fire Protection District, Anythink Library District, and the Bennett Recreation District, are major stakeholders in ensuring coordinated regional planning. The Town renewed local focus in this 2021 update, working to ensure all local special districts were included in the planning process as well as updating Intergovernmental Agreements with these entities to identify future expectations for growth and partnership.

Both Adams County and Arapahoe County updated long-range planning documents relative to the Bennett area including the Colorado Air and Space Port Subarea Plan and the Watkins-Bennett Area Vision Study. In addition, the City of Aurora completed a comprehensive plan update in 2009. While Bennett's influence planning area excludes the City of Aurora, there is a minimal direct impact on the desired annexation of these parcels. The overarching goal is to develop partnerships that encourage new growth into all adjacent areas that contemplate reduced impacts to the Town, County's and City and maximize access to services and existing infrastructure for residents and businesses. The Town is also interested in pursuing joint planning for the Colorado Air and Space Port in combination with the County's Subarea Plan.



During the development of the 2019 Capital Asset Inventory Master Plan, the Town initiated a process to coordinate its planning principles with major stakeholders. As a result, several important issues have been identified that could ultimately form the basis for one or more intergovernmental agreements, including:

- A governance structure for regional infrastructure improvements that include water, wastewater, transportation and open lands preservation;
- Revenue sharing from future commercial and industrial development;
- Joint development standards in anticipation of future annexation;
- Regulatory changes to the Space Port influence zone framework; and
- Common interest in urban growth area in Bennett.

Achievable Goal: To create a cooperative framework for regional land use planning in the eastern I-70 corridor.

Key Strategy: Promote the coordination of local and regional plans through active participation and leadership in the Colorado Air and Space Port and the updates to the Adams County and Arapahoe County comprehensive plans.

Catalyst Action: Renew or Create Intergovernmental Agreements (IGA's) as needed between/among local partners such as the Bennett/Watkins Fire Protection District, Bennett 27J School District, Bennett Parks and Recreation District, and the Anythink Library District.

Catalyst Action: Integrate additional county offices into Town facilities to foster the efficient provision of coordinated local government services for area residents.

Policy Directive: The Town shall work with DRCOG, the City of Aurora, Adams County and Arapahoe County on matters of inter-jurisdictional concern.

PREFERRED PLANNING PRINCIPLES

During the initial major revision to the Comprehensive Plan in 2011, the Town laid out a conceptual planning framework that is consistent with the Town's vision and guiding principles.

This 2021 update redefined the planning areas, shown in Figure 5 on page 9, and are as defined below:

1. The Area of Planning Interest, which includes the Town of Bennett and an unincorporated planning area within Adams and Arapahoe counties; and
2. The Area of Planning Influence, a potential growth area within the I-70 Corridor that may impact the Area of Planning Interest that includes the community of Watkins, Colorado Air and Space Port, and an undeveloped portion of northeast Aurora.

The Town's Planning Principles are categorized into four planning definitions:

Established Municipal Area

That portion of the existing incorporated Town of Bennett, which for the most part is a well developed and mature built environment with adequate services and infrastructure capability. This area also includes the Main Street- Downtown and Old Town areas proposed for redevelopment in the Town Centre Land Use Concept, as shown on page 19.

Developing Municipal Area

Areas where development is either contiguous to Established Municipal areas or where a stand-alone neighborhood or employment centers are contemplated. Developing Municipal areas are characterized by direct access to I-70 and proposed arterial roadways and transit, and the potential for targeted delivery of infrastructure and urban services.

Rural/ Rural Preservation

For the Area of Planning Interest, this area includes existing rural residential neighborhoods, large lot development, very low density cluster development and large agricultural land holdings that desire to remain rural or rural in character. The Open Lands element calls for a number of mechanisms to protect and/or preserve these areas.

Natural Resource Area

Areas that are the within designated one-hundred year flood plains. Natural Resource areas represent significant value to current and future residents in terms of open space, trail systems, passive recreation, flood control, water quality and water supply.

The assumptions derived from the 1999 comprehensive plan that shaped the preparation of the 2012 comprehensive plan and each subsequent plan update that remain relevant today are:

- Residential and commercial development is inevitable and will continue due to regional growth pressures, proximity to transportation infrastructure and availability of services;
- Adams County, Arapahoe County and the City of Aurora recognize Bennett's interest in development issues; and
- Distinction can be made between varying levels of development within Bennett's geographic area of interest.

The Town envisions a healthy, sustainable community where residents can live, work and play locally, setting Bennett and its proximity to the I-70 corridor apart from a conventional development pattern and being unique for the needs of current and future residents. Key elements of the Plan include:

- Future land development is concentrated in mixed use, master-planned neighborhood and employment centers wrapped with agricultural lands and very low density rural development;
- The open land between neighborhood and employment centers becomes a valuable community asset, with a regional trail system along riparian corridors providing important recreational and environmental linkages;
- Access, mobility and circulation are improved as development occurs, with future transit providing service between neighborhood and employment centers while additional options are explored;
- An efficient service and infrastructure delivery system limits capital and operating costs, easing the fiscal burden of existing and future residents;
- Intergovernmental Agreements (IGA's) between/ among Arapahoe County, Adams County, Aurora, to address coordination of land use issues, public financing districts, joint development standards, capital investment policies, and potential for revenue sharing; and
- Intergovernmental Agreements (IGA's) as needed between/among local partners such as the Bennett/ Watkins Fire Protection District, Bennett 27J School District, Bennett Parks and Recreation District, and the Anythink Library District.

The 2021 update will continue to reference guiding principles outlined in the 2010 Downtown Planning Study. This study is still a viable opportunity for the Town to analyze and explore future possibilities for infill development and redevelopment of Bennett north of I-70. The Town Centre Land Use Concept Plan (Figure 7) calls for increased residential density near the historic center of the Town, allowing for diverse housing opportunities that will appeal to both young adults and the increasing retirement age population. Lower density residential opportunities are reserved for the outlying edges of the Town Centre. Employment center, light industrial and commercial uses are focused along the SH 79 and SH 36 highway corridors. The Town Centre land use categories are defined as:

Main Street – Downtown

The Main Street - Downtown focuses attention on a pedestrian-oriented environment where accessibility and visibility are key. Retail is anticipated on a smaller scale with the buildings on the street creating energy and vitality through art, food, music, and entertainment. Residential uses may include single family attached and small multi-family, live/work units, and vertical mixed use with ground floor retail. See the Downtown Conceptual Plan in Figure 6, below.

Old Town

Old Town is the historic commercial center of Bennett. This area is bisected by the railway line where transportation continues to allow easy access to farming goods and services. This historic core continues to be a vital area for affordable and accessible commercial properties. Expanding upon the Main Street - Downtown theme, street improvements are envisioned where sidewalks, street trees, lighting, and parking all create an urban spine that revitalizes this important commercial center.

Commercial Mixed Use Corridor

These areas are adjacent to the realignment of SH 79 and SH 36 (E. Colfax Avenue) serving a high volume of vehicular traffic on a regional route including semi-tractor trailers. Residential is secondary and needs to be compatible with the commercial uses along this corridor.

Mixed Residential

Mixed Residential neighborhoods will contain a variety of housing types and densities, combined with non-residential secondary land uses that are complementary and supportive. These areas should meet a wide variety of every-day living needs, encourage walking to gathering places and services, and integrate into the larger community. Other supporting land uses, such as parks and recreation areas, religious institutions, and schools may be included in Mixed Residential areas.

Low Residential

Low density residential uses are typically less than 5 dwelling units per acre and comprised of single-family detached housing. Low Residential areas are intended to provide housing to accommodate a wide range of price ranges, from affordable single-family starter homes to custom home neighborhoods managed by homeowner associations.

Freeway Commercial

Freeway commercial land uses accommodate larger scale retail uses and cater to a regional population traveling along the I-70 and SH 79 corridors. As the principal gateway to Bennett, this area needs to provide continuity between the larger scale regional development and the smaller scale commercial and residential areas of Bennett progressing from I-70 along SH79 into Main Street.

Light Industrial

The Light Industrial area on the northern edge of the town core allows of a wide variety of industrial land uses that contribute to the employment base. The light industrial centers should integrate buildings, outdoor spaces, and transportation facilities, with minimal levels of dust, fumes, odors, refuse, smoke, vapor, noise, lights, and vibrations.

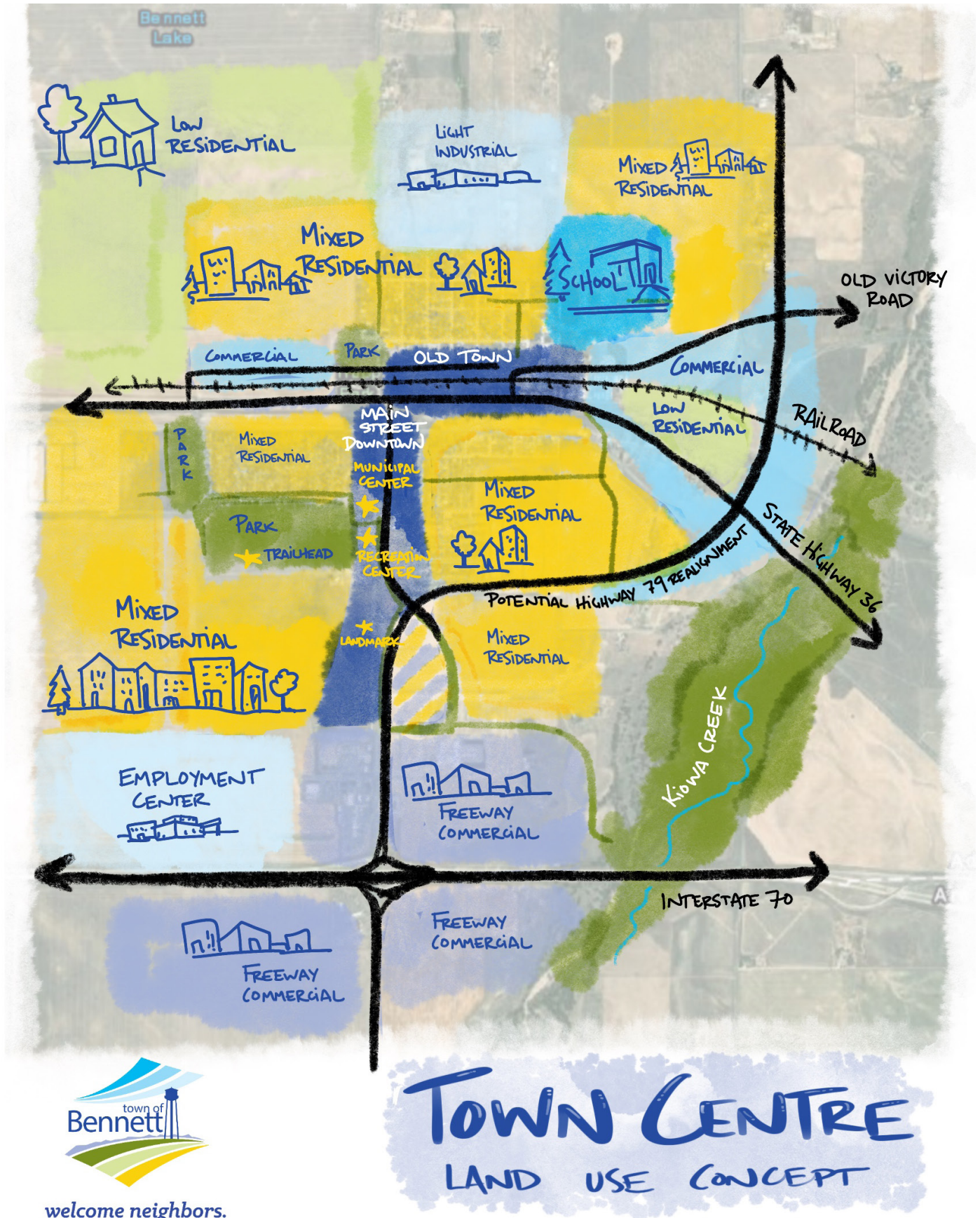
Employment Center

The Employment Center proposed near the I-70/SH79 interchange is intended to serve as a location for non-residential commercial and industrial uses in a campus-style, business park configuration. See page 15 for additional details on employment centers.

Figure 6: Downtown Conceptual Plan



Figure 7: Town Centre Land Use Concept Plan



PLAN MONITORING

To be successful, planning must be an ongoing activity. Plan monitoring involves establishing accountability tools for tracking progress over time. The progress matrix (below) is a basic plan monitoring tool that identifies timeframes for the accomplishment of catalyst actions: short-term (annual to three years), midterm (three to five years), and long-term (five years and beyond).

Plan monitoring is a dynamic process. Key strategies, catalyst actions, and policy directives should be reviewed on an annual basis and refined with changing circumstances. As data become available, indicators or other specific measures that monitor the accomplishment of achievable goals should be established for each plan theme. Finally, the entire plan document should be considered for public review and updated five years from its adoption.

Progress Matrix

Catalyst Action	Completion Timeframe	% Complete
Update on an annual basis the Town's Three Mile Area Plan that serves to support Colorado statutory provision C.R.S. § 31-12-105, which requires that a municipality have a plan in place prior to the annexation of any land.	Short-term	___%
Completion of a master transportation plan for the Town of Bennett and incorporating the plan into the Town's GIS systems.	Short-term	___%
Renew or Create Intergovernmental Agreements (IGA's) as needed between/among local partners such as the Bennett/Watkins Fire Protection District, Bennett 27J School District, Bennett Parks and Recreation District, and the Anythink Library District.	Short-term	___%
Integrate additional county offices into Town facilities to foster the efficient provision of coordinated local government services for area residents.	Mid-term	___%
Update design guidelines and transition the Town's existing PD's and outdated zoning districts into one of the new zoning districts.	Mid-term	___%
Finalize and implement the next steps in the Strategic Economic Development Plan to determine advantages and priorities for attracting a variety of new commercial and industrial development into identified employment center locations.	Mid-term	___%
Conduct an assessment of local and regional plans adopted by the Town, Adams and Arapahoe County and other regional governing bodies to link trail systems and open space.	Long-term	___%
Create the action-oriented resiliency companion report to help the Town follow a guided and researched process, including providing a series of customizable templates and additional resources if a hazard occurs.	Long-term	___%
Work with Arapahoe County's Open Space Master Planning efforts to redefine their North Open Space parcel and identify the trail linkage program for connectivity with the Town's trail system.	Long-term	___%

Acknowledgements

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