



City of Lone Tree Planning Commission Agenda Tuesday, July 22, 2014

Meeting Location:
Meeting Procedure:

City Council Meeting Room, Lone Tree Civic Center, 8527 Lone Tree Parkway

The Lone Tree Planning Commission and staff will meet in a public Study Session at 6:00 p.m. in the lower level of the Civic Center. The Regular Meeting will be convened at 6:30 p.m. in the City Council meeting room. Contact Kelly First, Kelly.first@cityoflonetree.com if special arrangements are needed to attend (at least 24 hours in advance). Comments from the public are welcome during the Public Comment portion of the meeting (brief comments on items not appearing on the regular meeting agenda). Those persons requesting to comment on an agenda item will be called upon by the Chair. If you have any questions please contact Kelly First, Community Development Director, at Kelly.first@cityoflonetree.com, or 303-708-1818.

6:00 p.m. Study Session Agenda

1. Administrative Matters
-

6:30 p.m. Regular Meeting Agenda

1. Opening of Meeting / Roll Call
2. Conflict of Interest Inquiry
3. Public Comment
4. Minutes of the July 14, 2014 Planning Commission meeting
5. Comprehensive Plan Review, Project #MI14-07
6. Adjournment

MINUTES OF THE
Lone Tree Planning Commission Meeting
July 14, 2014

Lone Tree Civic Center

1. Attendance

In attendance were:

Martha Sippel, Chair
Dave Kirchner, Vice-Chair
Rhonda Carlson, Planning Commissioner
Roy Kline, Planning Commissioner
Stephen Mikolajczak, Planning Commissioner
Herb Steele, Planning Commissioner

Gary Godden was absent

Also in attendance from City staff were:
Kelly First, Community Development Director
Jennifer Drybread, Senior Planner

Also in attendance were members of the consulting team for the Community Sign Plan project:
Elena Scott and Katrina Kowalski, Norris Design
John Ward and Chuck Desmoinaux, 505 Design

2. Regular Meeting Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm with a quorum.

3. Conflict of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest stated.

4. Minutes of the June 24, 2014 Planning Commission Meeting

Commissioner Carlson moved, and Commissioner Steele seconded, to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Community Sign Plan Presentation

Ms. Kelly First provided an introduction to the project and discussed the various sign-related issues over the years that precipitated the City's decision to undertake this plan to look comprehensively at signage City-wide. The project consulting team was introduced and they provided an overview of the project goals, work had that been done to date, and process. They presented preliminary concept sketches and invited Planning Commission comment.

Commissioner Kline asked if they had inventoried the existing signs and compared them to determine what is preferred and what is not. Chuck Desmoinaux indicated that they had inventoried all signs. He said they particularly they liked the water fountain feature at Lone Tree Parkway and Yosemite Street and the use of sandstone. John Ward commented that the existing wayfinding signs were not serving the City well and did not represent the voice of the City.

Commissioner Steele commented that this is really a branding effort and that he preferred the concept designs that were at the beginning of the presentation to the ones that followed. He likes the use of rock in that it represents stability and timelessness. He views metal as somewhat trendy.

Commissioner Kirchner said he does not like "modern" design because it does not last. He said the sign at Timberline Road, as one enters the City from Highlands Ranch, stands the test of time because it is simple, understated and brick. That sign is also compatible with the fountain sign.

Commissioner Kline noted that halo lighting can have the effect of creating dark surroundings and that they may need to consider more lighting than the lantern shown in some concepts.

Chair Sippel said she prefers "Lone Tree" to be oriented horizontally, as opposed to stacked, as the "O" in "Lone" tends to look too large when stacked above the "Tree". She likes the look of the "City of" letters positioned on the top edge of a sign wall.

Commissioner Kline commented that the City's medians and brick walls are representative of Colorado. Commissioner Steele added that they are a defining characteristic of Lone Tree and also represent stability. While not a sign, they implicitly let people know they are in Lone Tree. He said that wayfinding signs should help brand the City and there should be consistency between RidgeGate and the rest of the City. Mr. Desmoinaux commented that RidgeGate is within Lone Tree and part of it. He said RidgeGate was amenable to that idea He also noted that Park Meadows uses stone of a similar color and style as Lone Tree.

John Ward, 505 Design said he agreed with all the comments and feels that the signage should be “fresh and optimistic”. He said that, while natural landscapes and traditional neighborhoods are important, the urban qualities of the City present and future, should also be considered in a sign program.

Commissioner Kirchner used the word, “clean” to describe his preference, citing the retaining walls in front of Cabela’s and the fountain. He felt that the look should carry over to the east side of I-25.

Commissioner Kline said he likes natural, Colorado rock. Chair Sippel agreed and pointed out the use of natural stone at the RidgeGate Parkway underpass at I-25. Mr. Ward said the use of stone in that way was very nice.

Commissioner Steele commented that the alternative word to “contemporary” is “natural”. He said he had heard about the idea of an iconic pedestrian bridge over Lincoln Avenue, and feels that it should be “natural”, with consistent branding.

Commissioner Carlson said she likes the back lit lighting of letters and the example of the logo engraved in stone. She pointed out that the City’s tree logo is a natural element.

Mr. Ward invited comment about the use of the City’s logo on private business signage, such as at gas stations. There was discussion that the use of the logo should be more discerning because the City is to a point in its history where it is not necessary to try and include the logo everywhere; it should be focused at gateways and wayfinding signs.

Commissioner Mikolajczak said one of the things he likes most about the City are its medians. He said his viewpoints have changed since he first became a Planning Commissioner and his tastes are not as conservative as they once were. He doesn’t understand the idea of “urban in a prairie” and sees the future of Lone Tree as very dense and urban. He commented that the Schwab buildings are not as distinctive as he thought they would be, although he likes the retail building. He said to take cues from the Kaiser signage, which he likes. Commissioner Mikolajczak said he likes the lighted lantern design feature on the proposed sign concepts. He said he likes the design of the Millennial Bridge in Denver.

Mr. Ward invited comments about the words used to describe Lone Tree, “stylish, tasteful, and sophisticated”. Commissioner Steele commented that they all generally mean the same thing. He offered the term, “comfortable sophistication”. Chair Sippel felt the City should be differentiated.

Mr. Ward commented that the biggest issue he sees is Lone Tree’s position in the larger Denver Metro area, and knowing that you have arrived in Lone Tree.

Commissioner Kline commented that once you are in Lone Tree , it is a higher quality place that has high expectations. For example, the water feature, which is also a sign, is unexpected. He referred to Lone Tree “premiums” and how the City can reinforce that message by spending money on quality signs.

Chair Sippel commented on the concept of villages within Lone Tree and signage of various HOA’s. She said if we are going to do more water features to make sure they work. She said there have been problems with the water features at Centennial Ridge and Heritage Estates and they are often not turned on as a result. She said that signs need to be legible at night, and that durable, lasting materials should be used to stand up to impacts from landscaping and snow plowing. She said she liked the contrasting green color of the low growing grasses at the base of a few of the proposed sign concepts.

Commissioner Steele commented landscaping should be low growing to not block the sign. Commissioner Kirchner commented that many of the HOA signs are marble set into brick and are very tasteful. Chair Sippel agreed but stated that her neighborhood’s signage is hard to see at night and the lettering is too low so both flowers and plants obscure the words. She said that landscaping should enhance any sign and be well below the lettering so as not to block it.

Ms. Drybread invited comment about the tag line “Surpass Expectations”. The Commissioners felt that if you really are living up to that statement you shouldn’t have to display it on a sign. They felt it was not a particularly welcoming statement.

Chair Sippel commented that there does not seem to be consistent branding throughout the City and that establishing a consistent brand is critical.

Commissioner Steele pointed out that Lone Tree is fragmented by virtue of C-470 and I-25 and that branding should try and transcend those unnatural boundaries. He said the medians have a calming effect. He hoped someday there could be medians on Lincoln east of Yosemite Street and beyond as they differentiate the City from other places.

Commissioner Steele said he has heard from others who think the Lone Tree Arts Center should have a marquis sign to more effectively communicate the changing events. He has also heard from people who feel there are too many signs at Charles Schwab.

Ms. Scott summarized the next steps, which are to present to the City Council and get a comfort level to begin developing numbers for next year’s budget. They will be working to refine a proposed brand, or voice, for Lone Tree with a proposed plan later this fall. They will also be looking at a regulatory framework to address the commercial signs and corridors, although that will probably stretch

beyond the fall time frame. They will work with staff to schedule a time to come back to the PC in the coming weeks.

6. Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Sippel adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

These minutes have been reviewed and confirmed by

_____ (name), on _____ (date)



CITY OF LONE TREE
STAFF REPORT

Date: July 15, 2014

TO: Lone Tree Planning Commission

FROM: Kelly, First, Community Development Director
Jennifer Drybread, Senior Planner

FOR: July 22, 2014 Planning Commission Meeting

SUBJECT: Comprehensive Plan Review, MI14-07

Summary

Enclosed is a staff report discussing possible elements that could be included in an update to the Lone Tree Comprehensive Plan, should the Planning Commission and Council deem an update necessary. The final report and recommendations will be presented to City Council for their meeting on August 5th.

Suggested Motion or Recommended Action

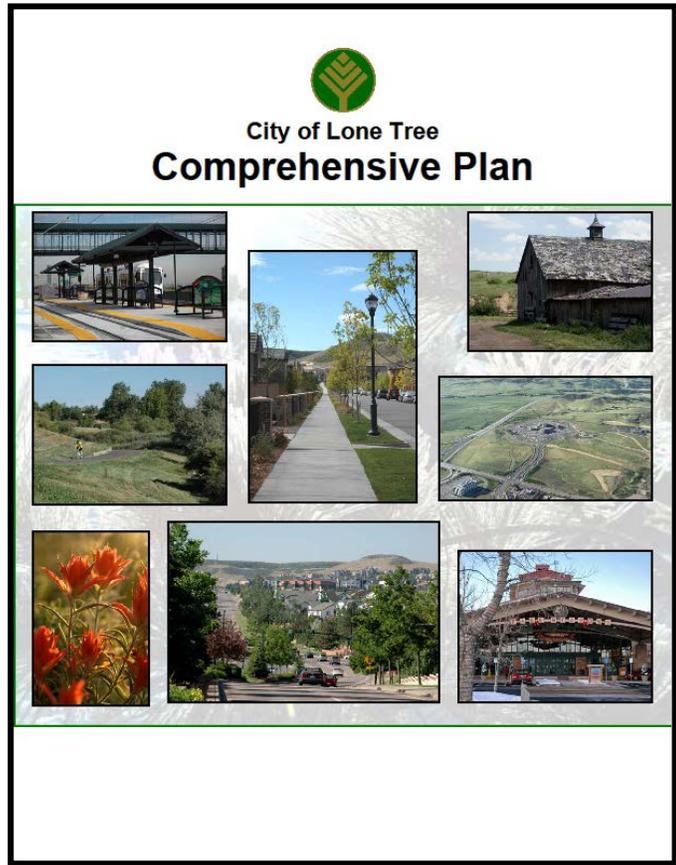
Staff is requesting Planning Commission deliberate on the recommendations addressed in the report and/or other possible changes to the Plan, and make a recommendation to City Council.

Background

The City Charter requires the Comprehensive Plan to be reviewed by the City Council at least once every three years. The last major update to the Plan was approved by the Planning Commission and City Council in 2007. Since then there have been reviews every three years. In 2013, Council directed staff to work with the Planning Commission and come back to Council with a recommendation on whether the existing Plan needs updating.

Should Council deem an update warranted, Staff would work with the Planning Commission and would solicit comments from residents to bring suggested changes to the Plan in the late 2014 or early 2015.

Comprehensive Plan Three-Year Review and Report to the Planning Commission



July 2014

Community Development Department

Overview

Purpose of the Plan

The Lone Tree Comprehensive Plan represents the City's desired vision to the year 2030 and beyond. It provides general direction for guiding growth and development, and is used as the foundation for the City's zoning, subdivision and other regulatory documents. The Plan serves as the basis for land use and annexation decisions. It is a tool used by the City when making decisions about capital projects and it also provides a framework for discussion with neighboring jurisdictions. Although broad and long range by nature, the Plan does need to be re-visited periodically to ensure it is reflective of the changing physical, social and economic conditions of the City. The City Charter requires the Plan to be reviewed by the City Council at least once every three years.

Background

The original Comprehensive Plan was developed shortly after incorporation and was updated in 2000. The current Plan is the result of a complete review and update in 2006-2007. Following its adoption there have been two minor amendments to the General Land Use Map in 2008 to reflect rezonings. A three-year review was conducted by Planning staff in 2010 and presented to the City Council (no amendments to the plan were deemed warranted at that time). Discussion with the City Council on the Plan in 2013 resulted in Council directing staff to undertake a more thorough review of the Comprehensive Plan with the Planning Commission in 2014.

General Recommendations

Overall, staff finds that the Comprehensive Plan continues to provide the appropriate framework for the future growth and development of the City and that a major overhaul of the document is not warranted at this time. However, there are several important issues that were raised as part of the review and discussion with the Planning Commission. Staff recommends that these issues be conveyed to the City Council for further consideration and possible integration into the Plan. Additionally, various minor revisions should be made to the Plan to ensure it is up to date. Based on review of the Plan in the context of current and anticipated conditions, as well as feedback from the Planning Commission, staff recommends:

- Minor revisions to the Vision Statement based on Planning Commission input (see page 14).
- Possible additions to the Plan related to bicycle lanes and pedestrian connections; redevelopment of commercial areas; expanded policies regarding the aging population; and, the issue of land use as it relates to a diverse tax base and revenue stream for the City. These items are further described in the summary beginning on Page 4.
- Possible new policies on a range of topics including land use, transportation, environment, and economic development (underlined in the Planning Commission minutes, beginning on page 12).

- Updates throughout the document, where appropriate, to reflect current conditions. For example, correcting references to *future* facilities that have since been built. These are summarized on page 15, under “Minor Recommended Updates and Corrections”.

Review Process

Information on a variety of topics was presented to the Planning Commission in the first six months of 2014 to apprise them of possible issues that might rise to the level of a Comprehensive Plan update. A summary of these presentations and information is found beginning on page 4. Staff also undertook a facilitated discussion with the Planning Commission on June 24th to gain their input on the vision, goals and objectives, and the City’s urban growth boundaries as identified on the General Land Use Plan map. The focus of the discussion evolved around, “Are we on the right track? What needs to be changed? What’s missing?” Excerpts from the minutes of that meeting are incorporated into this report beginning on page 12.

Report Framework

This report is organized to provide an overview of:

- The information presented to the Planning Commission in 2014 on a variety of topics related to future development in the City, with staff comments and recommendations.
- Excerpts from the minutes of the facilitated “visioning” discussion held with the Planning Commission on June 24, 2014, with possible recommended policy concepts not addressed in the current Plan.
- Minor recommended updates and corrections to the Plan.

Next Steps

A report of Planning Commission and staff recommendations is scheduled to be presented to the City Council on August 5, 2014. With Council’s support, it is recommended that Plan revisions be drafted in the fall of 2014, with a public outreach process and public hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council in late 2014 or early 2015.

PLANNING COMMISSION INFORMATIONAL SESSIONS

Information on a variety of topics was presented to the Planning Commission in the first six months of 2014 to apprise them of development trends and possible future issues to be aware of related to a Comprehensive Plan update. In total, six meetings and one tour were held, with 11 topics covered. The following is a synopsis of those presentations, along with staff comments and recommendations.

Comprehensive Plan Update Overview

Planning Staff provided an overview to the Planning Commission including the statutory authority to draft a Plan; the purpose of the Plan; why it is important to periodically review the Plan; the Plan structure, the current Vision and Plan principles, and a potential update process.

Planning for Future Development

RidgeGate is where the vast majority of the City's future growth will occur, with more than 2,000 acres of land available for development, including Lone Tree's future City Center. An update on current development and future planning in RidgeGate was made by Keith Simon and Darryl Jones of Coventry Development Corporation. They discussed development activity in RidgeGate west of I-25 (the West Village) and estimated it could build out in five to seven years. They noted they strive to have a balance of housing and jobs, and that has been facilitated by a mix of residential products coupled with major employment centers at Sky Ridge Medical Center and the Charles Schwab corporate campus. Mr. Simon noted that there are currently 1,350 residential units in RidgeGate, which should grow to a projected 2,000 units by the end of 2015. He also indicated there are now 3,000 people employed within RidgeGate, which should grow to a projected 7,000 by the end of 2015. They discussed work underway to facilitate the extension of light rail through RidgeGate, and the possibility of developing east of I-25 when an incubator project is found, such as a new corporate user or campus that could help raise the assessed valuation to pay for initial infrastructure.

Staff Comment: RidgeGate is developing according to Plan (both the City's Comprehensive Plan and the RidgeGate PDD plan) as a compact, mixed-use community, with public amenities such as parks, trails and open space, recreation and the Lone Tree Arts Center. It is designed to accommodate public schools and other public facilities and services. RidgeGate is intended to accommodate the automobile as well as the pedestrian, and supports multi-modal transit. As the RidgeGate annexation and development Plan were completed in conjunction with an update to the Comprehensive Plan in 2000, the two plans are closely aligned in terms of vision and future growth.

That said, the development of the West Village has provided an opportunity to evaluate “lessons learned” and improve certain aspects of the community as it continues to build out. One such element is the lack of on-street bicycle lanes in RidgeGate. Originally, the concept was that bikes would “share the road” and use the trail system, which provides several below-grade crossings for safety. However, the trails generally follow the drainages, which run in a north-south direction, limiting their functionality for those who want to bike safely to work, light rail and to other destinations throughout the City.

Another element of RidgeGate is the intent that it is pedestrian friendly. While it has a strong system of sidewalks and trails, there have been complaints by some local residents regarding the difficulty in crossing RidgeGate Parkway, particularly at the round-a-bouts. These issues are currently being explored by RidgeGate and by the City as part of the Walk and Wheel Grant awarded to the City this year, sponsored by Kaiser Permanente. Through that grant, the City is conducting a Complete Streets Study that will include the evaluation of certain corridors in the City, including in RidgeGate.

Staff Recommendation:

- Add language in the Plan, where appropriate, to support and guide efforts to promote a safe, walkable and bike-friendly community.
- Participate in the Complete Streets study, expected to be completed by the end of 2014. It is possible that the recommendations from that study could then be integrated into more specific strategies and policies directives that could be incorporated into the Plan, or evolve as a stand-alone Plan.

Infill Development

While not specifically discussed in the Comprehensive Plan meetings, it should be noted that there are nine areas in the City outside RidgeGate that are zoned for future development (see the infill map in the appendix). With the exception of the approximately 25-acre Furniture Row property located north of Park Meadows Drive and west of Yosemite Street, these properties are relatively small.

Staff Comment: The Comprehensive Plan supports the development of these properties. The principles, goals, objectives and policies of the Plan will guide development decisions for these areas. An existing Comprehensive Plan policy is intended to ensure compatibility with existing development: “Ensure infill development is harmonious with existing neighborhood characteristics in terms of quality and architectural character.”

Staff Recommendation:

- No amendments to the Plan related to infill development are necessary.

Redevelopment

Through their review of land use projects and participation in the Entertainment District Revisioning process, the Planning Commission is uniquely aware of the issues surrounding redevelopment of properties in the City. Although Lone Tree is a relatively young City, there are several commercial developments built prior to the City's incorporation in 1995 that are beginning to age and experience vacancies or have re-use potential. Even some newer properties built after incorporation, like the Treo building, have had a relatively short life span and are in need of redevelopment. Residential redevelopment is less of an issue, as housing throughout Lone Tree is relatively new and in good condition. The oldest housing stock in the City, The Charter, is only 32-years old (developed under Douglas County's jurisdiction prior to incorporation).

Staff Comment: The Comprehensive Plan does not address redevelopment opportunities in the City, yet the principles, goals, objectives and policies would serve as the basis for any redevelopment activity. Planning staff has seen an increase in remodels, re-use and redevelopment in the City in the last few years. This is an issue that will only continue as the City's commercial and residential areas age, and if the City annexes other existing development areas. Establishing goals and policies regarding redevelopment is recommended to address the issue more specifically and proactively.

Staff Recommendation:

- Seek policy direction from the Council regarding redevelopment issues, including conversion of commercially-zoned areas to residential; trends in zoning and land use that may impact rezoning decisions; incentives to foster redevelopment, etc.
- Add language in the Plan, where appropriate, to form the basis for decisions regarding redevelopment including goals, policies, and strategies.
- Work closely with the City's Economic Development Director to ensure that the Comprehensive Plan is aligned with other plans and initiatives, and that the Plan lends support to those efforts.

Transportation Infrastructure

Public Works Director, John Cotten, gave a presentation on various transportation improvement projects in the City, including the 1-25 Lane Balancing Project, C-470 widening, southeast light rail extension, the pedestrian bridge over Lincoln Avenue, the circulator shuttle program, County Line Road interchange improvements, and the widening of RidgeGate Parkway east of I-25.

Senior Planner, Jennifer Drybread, gave a presentation on Complete Streets, a relatively new term that calls for multi-modal infrastructure to accommodate users of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets was not an established concept when the City incorporated. Most communities outside RidgeGate were designed with sidewalks and wide streets to accommodate the automobile.

As previously described in the section about RidgeGate, a Complete Streets study is currently underway and is expected to be completed by the end of this year. It is possible that the results of this study, called the “Citywide Complete Streets Plan” will provide specific recommendations and proposed standards for accommodating bicycle and pedestrians in a safer and more comprehensive manner.

Staff Comment:

The Comprehensive Plan advocates an efficient, safe and pleasing multi-modal transportation network in partnership with other communities, while minimizing environmental and community impacts. While there is a Transportation Section within the Plan, it is not intended as a Transportation Plan.

It is possible that the outcome of the Citywide Complete Streets Plan mentioned above may provide the foundation for new Comprehensive Plan objectives and policies that could be applied in RidgeGate and elsewhere in the City.

Staff Recommendation:

- Consult with the Public Works Director and Council to determine if a City-wide Transportation Study is desired, or, if more specific or amended goals and policies in the Comprehensive Plan are advised to address the future transportation priorities and major projects in the City.
- Add language in the Plan, where appropriate, to support and guide efforts to promote a safe, walkable and bike-friendly community.
- Participate in the Complete Streets study, expected to be completed by the end of 2014. It is possible that the recommendations from that study could then be integrated into more specific strategies and policies directives that could be incorporated into the Plan, or evolve as a stand-alone Plan.

Demographic Trends

Planning for an Aging Population. A presentation was made by DRCOG staff Jayla Sanchez-Warren and Brad Calvert regarding the necessity to plan for an aging population, particularly given Lone Tree’s 333% growth rate in the 65+ age group between 2000 and 2010. While the senior population in Lone Tree only accounts for 8% of the total population, this cohort will continue to increase as the Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964) age in the coming decades. Mr. Calvert explained that the City could consider completing the “Boomer Bond Assessment Tool”, developed by DRCOG in cooperation with local governments and other entities, to assess how to plan for this growing population.

Staff Comment: While the City’s Comprehensive Plan anticipates the need for “senior-friendly housing” in Lone Tree, it does not address mobility and access for seniors; design features for gathering spaces, community spaces and facilities; or support services. The Boomer Bond Assessment Tool looks at these issues as well and is designed to be conducted by representatives from various local government departments and entities, the results of which could point to policies and implementation strategies that could be included in the City’s Comprehensive Plan. While this may be a worthwhile exercise, it should be noted that this 52-page

assessment would require an estimated two-month commitment by the entities involved to complete the assessment. .

Staff Recommendation:

- Seek direction from the City Council as to whether they would like staff to pursue completion of the Boomer Bond Assessment Tool. If so, complete the tool and report back to Council with recommendations for language in the Comprehensive Plan to address the desired outcomes.
- If the Assessment Tool is not used, seek input and direction from other sources to develop language in the Plan to address the aging issues currently not covered in the Plan. This effort could engage the Living and Aging Well group in Lone Tree, as well as the Douglas County Senior Initiatives Survey results.

Planning for the Generation Y (Gen Y) Population. A presentation was made by Lone Tree Senior Planner, Jennifer Drybread, regarding this demographic (born approximately between 1978 and 1995) and accounting for one-quarter of the nation's population (now a larger cohort nationally than the Baby Boomers). Research shows that Gen-Yers are also looking for small, affordable single-family detached housing (just like Baby Boomers looking to down size). They also have a stronger interest in multi-family housing than do other population groups. Like Baby Boomers, surveys also indicate that Gen-Yers are looking for walkable communities. Additionally, Gen-Yers are interested in diverse neighborhoods with diversity in households (singles, couples, and families), different housing types and styles, and a diversity of ethnic races and backgrounds. Research indicates that some Gen-Yers prefer to rent than own certain goods and have a high propensity to shop on line for some products. Such spending practices by Gen Y and other cohorts have already had an effect with in-store book sales and electronics. This growing age cohort will drive demand for housing, entertainment, employment and retail for years to come.

Staff Comment: While the City has a mix of housing types (single-family detached, townhome, condo, apartment), affordable, single-family detached housing does not exist in Lone Tree at present. Apartment rental rates are also high in the City, ranging from \$910-\$2,460 per month. The Comprehensive Plan has policies that support a "variety of housing types and affordability ranges". Also, the RidgeGate PDD requires a Primary Housing Study to be conducted within 18 months of the first residential development east of I-25 to begin to address the need for workers making between \$10 and \$20 per hour (as such wages may have existed in the year 2000 and as may be adjusted for inflation).

Regarding the preference for walkable communities by Gen-Yers, the "Citywide Complete Streets Plan" due out the end of this year will have recommendations for enhancing pedestrian movement Citywide by year's end that could raise to policy or implementation strategies in a Comprehensive Plan update.

Staff Recommendation:

- No Plan changes are necessary to address this demographic group as existing policies are in place and a housing and walkability studies are underway or will be in the future.

Regional Planning Efforts

A presentation was made by Deputy City Manager, Steve Hebert, about the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) Metro Vision and the Mile High Compact. Metro Vision directs but does not mandate growth and development decisions. It works across jurisdictional boundaries to "... integrate regional growth and development, transportation and environmental management into one comprehensive planning framework." The City of Lone Tree is a signatory to the Mile High Compact, as are 46 other communities in the Metro Area. Being a member of the Mile High Compact is a statement that signatories affirm their commitment to the ideals of Metro Vision.

Staff Comment: The City's Comprehensive Plan recognizes and supports regional planning efforts, including DRCOG's Metro Vision and the Mile High Compact. However, the City's Comprehensive Plan refers to the 2030 Metro Vision Plan. This information is dated as DRCOG has updated the Plan to a 2035 Metro Vision Plan and is working on a 2040 Metro Vision Plan.

Staff Recommendation:

- Update the Plan to recognize the 2035 Metro Vision Plan.
- Address "urban corridors" in the Plan, and Lone Tree's part in that designation.

Land Use - Retail, Office, Medical and Housing

Retail. Pamela Kelly, Senior General Manager for Park Meadows Mall, gave a presentation to the Planning Commission, emphasizing the mall's good location and demographics, timeless architecture, and other factors leading to its success. She defined what she believes to be a healthy community: comprehensive housing for retail workers; economic development; and, planning and building (with a development process that is quick, clear, efficient and cost effective). She noted that even with on-line shopping increasing, there will always be an interest for shoppers having that "experiential opportunity" that on-line retailers cannot offer. Ms. Kelly feels that good access in and out of the mall is paramount, and it is good to adapt the mall physically when necessary, citing the development of The Vistas.

Office/Economic Development. Mike Fitzgerald, President and CEO of Denver South Economic Development Partnership (DSEDP), provided an overview on DSEDP. He said they work on transportation improvements and economic development, focusing their attention on business retention and listening to the needs of businesses. They coordinate closely with area governments and private entities. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that the region has a high-quality workforce. Their surveys of the work force age 25-45 found that workers are highly educated; like to live in areas where they can walk to light

rail; like multifamily development; want to live in mixed-use communities; and may not own a car. He added that Lone Tree is at the epicenter of development in this region.

Medical. Two articles from *UrbanLand*, an on-line magazine of the Urban Land Institute were distributed to the Planning Commission on the future of medical relative to land use. The articles include interviews with key leaders in the healthcare and real estate industry. They assert that with a combination of the Affordable Care Act bringing more people into the health care system, combined with the aging Baby Boomers, and interest by major financial investment groups to invest in health care, that medical will continue to expand in the future. Mergers and acquisitions will continue by medical providers to help offset rising costs and risk. They report that health care systems are looking for "...affluent demographics, locations with high foot traffic, and prominent sites that help a system establish a strong brand."

Staff Comments: Planning Commissioner Herb Steele has referred to retail, financial and medical as the "three legs of the stool" when it comes to burgeoning nonresidential development in Lone Tree. The Comprehensive Plan currently states that the City should, "...avoid imbalances in the economic base to the point where any one economic sector dominates, because if that sector were to falter, it may severely impact the local economy." At present the City has a relatively diverse economy, though it is heavily reliant on retail sales for revenue (as the City does not have a property tax). That reliance on retail may create problems in the future if the growing trend of on-line shopping continues and local taxes are not collected. Other demographic trends may also negatively impact traditional retail sales and local tax revenue. The Comprehensive Plan could provide the Council with an opportunity to analyze this issue in broad, long-range terms and serve as the foundation for additional studies, initiatives, etc.

Staff Recommendation:

- Convey the Planning Commission's discussion above regarding land use issues and fiscal considerations to the City Council for further consideration to determine whether they would like to pursue as part of a Comprehensive Plan discussion.

Housing

Affordable Housing. Diane Leavesley, Executive Director for the Douglas County Housing Partnership spoke on the need for affordable housing in Lone Tree. She spoke about the programs that the Partnership have established including debt and loan counseling, affordable housing projects, and down payment assistance. Ms. Leavesley described the benefits of affordable housing including job creation (during construction); reduced likelihood of foreclosure due to appropriate loans and budgeting; attraction and retention of employees; reduced traffic congestion and attraction of business who say the ability of their work force to live nearby is an important factor in their site selection. She added that affordable housing reduces traffic congestion and air pollution (as people can live in proximity to their work).

Staff Comments: The existing Comprehensive Plan advocates integrating affordable housing in Lone Tree. The Plan notes that such development is important from an economic development perspective, as “employers often consider the availability of the work force when choosing to locate in a region.” Also, there is a commitment to develop a plan for “primary” housing in RidgeGate east of I-25 within 18 months of the first residential plat in that area. Primary housing is defined in the RidgeGate PDD as applying to those workers making between \$10 and \$20 per hour or annual salaries of \$21,000-\$41,000, as such wages existed in the year 2000 and as may be adjusted for inflation.

Staff Recommendation:

- There are no recommended changes to the Comprehensive Plan with regard to affordable housing as it is currently addressed and a plan will be prepared for RidgeGate.
- Staff recommends that the City consult the existing Comprehensive Plan policies in the review of development proposals to ensure that there is a balance achieved between the costs for high end design and materials and the effect on housing prices.

Community Services – Water and Waste Water

The Planning Commission was given a presentation and a tour on June 10th by Ron Redd, District Manager of the Parker Water and Sanitation District. Mr. Redd talked about the District’s capacity to provide water and wastewater treatment to land east of I-25 in RidgeGate, and also to that area on top of the bluffs west of I-25 in RidgeGate. (The RidgeGate West Village, excluding the bluffs) is provided water and wastewater treatment through Southgate Water and Sanitation District, through their contract with Denver Water.)

The Parker Water and Sanitation District will rely on a variety of water resources to provide service in Lone Tree in these areas, including groundwater, alluvial waters on Cherry Creek, and through future contracts with other providers. There is more than adequate capacity in the District’s new Reueter-Hess reservoir and a new water treatment plant is under construction near the reservoir.

Staff Comments: The current Comprehensive Plan requires that development in Lone Tree must be served by central water and sewer services. It supports efforts to ensure a “permanent, renewable, and reliable potable water supply and adequate sanitation system”, and supports measures to assure there is adequate capacity to meet the City’s growth projections. The Plan also supports measures to conserve water.

Staff Recommendation:

- Staff believes these existing policies serve the City well, and recommends no change to this section of the Plan.

LARGELY EXERPTED FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION DISCUSSION HELD ON THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ON JUNE 24, 2014

Ms. Jennifer Drybread led the Planning Commission in a discussion of the City's vision, goals and objectives as stated in the existing Comprehensive Plan, and reviewed the Urban Growth Area map.

VISIONING OUTCOME

Ms. Drybread began by focusing the Planning Commission's attention on what they perceived to be their ideal vision for the City. The following is a summary of that feedback, grouped by subject (note: underlined provisions are *not* currently addressed in the existing Plan under goals, objectives and policies, and could be considered in a Plan update):

Land Use:

- Provide for balanced growth (residential, commercial, recreation, etc.), to provide residents a live/work/play environment (not a bedroom community).
- Provide for variety in Lone Tree through housing choices, a range of services, activities, architecture, employment, etc.
- Foster "villages" within the City, each with its unique identity, but interwoven within the larger City.
- Encourage a broad range of housing, including affordable housing, particularly for first-time buyers, seniors and work-force housing.
- Develop as a complete, multi-faceted City, where the City has all the things you want for multiple generations, such as recreation, commercial, housing.
- Support measures for residents to age in place (allow people to live out their days in Lone Tree) through needed services, facilities, housing, etc.
- Foster Lone Tree as a special place that feels different than other communities (branding is important and can be achieved through attractive medians, brick walls, signage, etc.). Community identity vs corporate identity.
- Give people places to walk to in a community, including gathering spaces and a variety of businesses including restaurants, shops, galleries, etc.
- Provide for amenities in gathering spaces, including benches, fountains, and public art with attention given to providing for year-round activities.
- Provide places to go after a show at the Arts Center (have some reason for people to stay).
- Provide places with a vibrant street scene, with such activities as festivals and other events. (There was some discussion that the City has no downtown atmosphere, such as Louisville, Denver, Golden, Parker - no main street as a place to gather for special events/festivals.)

- Include objectives and policies on redevelopment in Lone Tree, including the Entertainment District.

Environment:

- Encourage a canopy of green in the City, including roof top gardens.
- Provide tree-lined sidewalks to give people an attractive place to walk year round.
- Provide for “connection” in the community with sidewalks and trails.
- Encourage connection in the communities east and west of I-25.
- Support and encourage sustainable practices, including solar.
- Encourage quality, iconic architecture in the City (conformity breeds mediocrity).
- Encourage measures which provide a sense of security to our residents (police, lighting, nighttime activities, etc.)
- Outlaw the use of drones in the natural environment (concern for wildlife, and also how it may impact your experience on the trails).
- The images only depict the “natural” vs the “built” aspect in this Chapter.

Economic Development:

- Be business-friendly.
- Encourage high-tech, state of the art development (progressive thinking). Examples of this include fiber optic communications in RidgeGate and the electronic signs in Lone Tree along Yosemite.
- Encourage a variety of unique stores in the City (not a community of franchises and chain stores).
- Foster home-grown businesses in the City through incentives.
- Support affordable retail.
- Encourage businesses to locate here that provide a broad-range of services to the City’s residents.
- Support home-grown businesses, including the City and economic development groups being an advisor to potential new local businesses.
- Support unique businesses.
- Support tourism.
- Support businesses that foster night-life in the City.
- Support small business parks that provide services, such as along Park Meadows Drive, e.g., home services, etc.
- Study why people come here for vacation and to stay (dining/retail).

Transportation

- Support the use of roundabouts for reducing congestion and for safety. Branding and vegetation are also important in roundabouts.
- Support on-street bike lanes (once considered unsafe, now new measures help address that).

VISION STATEMENT

There was some discussion about amending the Vision statement to add the concept of a “balanced” community and as a place to “live, work and play”. Some feel the current statement ignores commercial. There was also some discussion, but no consensus about moving the word “safety” in the statement.

GENERAL LAND USE PLAN MAP

Ms. Drybread presented the City’s General Land Use Map, showing the boundaries of the City’s Urban Growth Area. She commented that the Urban Growth Area extends beyond the City’s incorporated boundaries, and includes areas that the City might consider as possible for annexation in the future. Ms. Drybread elaborated that the City has a compact boundary, which makes it more conducive to providing services, and for emergency response times. The question was asked why Acres Green was not included in the City. Ms. First explained that Acres Green was not within the Park Meadows Metro District boundary, which coincided with the original incorporated City boundary. No changes to the boundary were suggested by the Planning Commission.

Minor Recommended Updates and Corrections:

A number of minor changes are recommended to update the narrative, or make corrections where warranted, including:

- Updating the reference to the City's "10-year anniversary" in the Introduction.
- Adding references to the new Lone Tree Arts Center in key places in the document (the current Plan refers to supporting *plans* for a new arts center).
- Updating information on Schweiger Ranch (the current Plan supports efforts to renovate the Ranch, a process that is nearing completion)
- Updating references to Metro Vision 2030 (Metro Vision 2035 plan is currently in place and will be updated to the Metro Vision 2040 plan in the near future).
- Revising a policy which encourages local businesses to use the City logo (it has become City practice to only use the City's logo for governmental purposes).
- Revising the policy for replacing dead trees with "a new planting of similar size and species" (it is no longer standard practice to replace large caliper trees with similar sized trees, as larger trees struggle to survive and often grow slower once established than smaller caliper trees. The current requirement is to replace the tree to the "minimum plant size for initial planting").
- Deleting the reference in the Environmental section to encouraging construction using the Built Green standards, as the program no longer exists.
- Updating the Fire Protection narrative, as there is only one Fire Protection District serving Lone Tree now, not two. South Metro Fire District and Parker Fire Protection District merged into South Metro Fire Rescue Authority.
- Updating the Library section narrative as there are no longer plans for a "joint-use" facility (by the time the Plan is updated there may be more fixed plans on a new library.
- Updating the reference to the Southeast Business Partnership (now called Denver South Economic Development Partnership).
- Updating the healthcare section to mention Kaiser, a major healthcare facility now in Lone Tree (at present the Plan only mentions the Sky Ridge Medical Center).
- Updating reference to the "future" RidgeGate interchange, as this has been constructed.
- Focusing on the extension of the Light Rail to the end-of-the-line station (not T-REX)
- Replacing the population forecasts in the Appendix with a population snapshot that can be updated each year.
- Updating photographs where warranted (e.g. the photo showing land "available for development" in RidgeGate by Sky Ridge Medical Center has much more development on it than when the photograph was taken).
- Deleting references to the "Public Landscape Design and Maintenance Guidelines" as these guidelines are no longer used by Public Works.
- Deleting the narrative on the City's Improvement Grant Program (no longer exists).
- Investigate whether policing by bicycle is still practiced.