



Business Workshop Summary Thursday, October 20, 2016

The City of Fort Lupton hosted a business workshop on Thursday, October 20, 2016 as part of *Picture Fort Lupton*, the City's comprehensive planning process. This workshop provided an opportunity for members of the business community to offer their perspectives on issues and opportunities within Fort Lupton. The workshop started with a short presentation about *Picture Fort Lupton*, the purpose of a comprehensive plan and the importance of long-range planning. In addition, participants completed an exercise designed to gather their feedback regarding issues, concerns, opportunities, and strengths within the community. Input from this and other workshops will help to guide goals, recommendations, and policies which are included in the final plan.

Overall, business growth within Fort Lupton was a central issue raised by participants, with discussion focusing on the need for new businesses to support employment, provide greater retail options, and build a stronger economic base. Attendees discussed the need for greater branding of the community to build better recognition of the City on a regional level and help attract businesses, consumers, and employees to Fort Lupton. Other issues relating to image and identity were discussed, particularly the poor reputation of local schools. However, respondents remained positive about business overall, highlighting the existing business community as a key asset for Fort Lupton given its involvement and cooperation with the City. Many noted that Fort Lupton is a great place to own a business. Those in attendance also emphasized the importance of the Downtown and the need for a variety of improvements to revitalize the area. Participants identified Fort Lupton's small town charm, unique character, and Downtown as key assets which should be preserved. The following is a summary of all input collected from participants at the Business Workshop.

NOTE: The comments, observations, project, and actions cited in this summary are not to be interpreted as recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan and do not represent City policy.

Issues & Concerns

At the beginning of the workshop, participants were asked to identify their top issues and concerns for the City of Fort Lupton. After generating a cumulative list of issues, participants were asked to individually rank their top three issues identified by the group, be it their own or those raised by others. Below are the highest ranked issues as determined by those in attendance, as well as all other issues identified through the workshop, sorted by category.

Highest ranked issues:

1. Need for new business

2. Poor reputation of local school
3. Branding Fort Lupton for business
4. Lack of affordable housing
5. Character of Downtown
6. Commercial & industrial base
7. Relationship between traffic & pedestrians
8. Marketing outside & inside the community

Other Issues by Category

Economic Development

- Need for an educated workforce
- Need for new retail businesses
- Assistance for building owners with renting their spaces
- Low traffic – most people go east of Fort Lupton for their needs
- Need primary employment
- Lack of restaurant options
- No large retail store

Transportation

- Traffic – increased difficulty getting through and around town
- Traffic on Highway 52 & Denver Ave
- Communication of traffic throughout city
- Country Road 14 ½ needs to be improved
- Pedestrian friendly business access

Downtown

- Empty space and lack of activity in historic “downtown”
- Struggling downtown
- Parking issues in downtown
- Unattractive downtown area – not well kept
- Too many empty downtown buildings
- Lack of business on Denver Ave – no draw to “old Fort Lupton”

Other Issues

- Electrical costs too high
- Lack of media (i.e. radio/newspaper)
- Bedroom community – many commuting to work

Projects & Actions

In response to the list of issues, participants were asked to name specific project or actions that would provide solutions to those issues or improve the Fort Lupton community. Recommended projects and actions are categorized below.

Economic Development

- Develop a new retail site “strip” similar to Safeway shopping center
- Establish an industrial park with an inventory of buildings

- Collaborate with the URA, Development Corporation, and Chamber of Commerce to actively seek, attract, and close deals with new businesses
- Create places of business so that residents can complete errands within the community – Keep money in Fort Lupton.
- Provide a large tax credit for capital investment and job creation
- Recruit new business and offer incentives
- Assist in marketing the industrial park at the northern end of the community

Downtown

- Clean up areas that aren't cohesive to downtown, such as mobile home parks
- Redevelop downtown with a “Western” look
- Refurbish Denver Ave business fronts
- Completely revamp downtown, including Highway 52
- Restore old movie theater or repurpose the building in a way which contributes to Downtown.
- Update and renovate façades downtown

Transportation & Infrastructure

- Create a railroad free East to West route
- Build a bridge over railroad crossing on Highway 52
- Widen and improve the character of Highway 52 between Highway 85 and Denver Ave
- Redevelop traffic and pedestrian interactions

Image & Identity

- Improve perception and reputation of Fort Lupton
- Improve rooftops
- Make Fort Lupton a destination
- Clean up signage
- Place planter boxes and trees along main streets and within downtown
- Help the owners of rundown homes and businesses to make repairs

Government & Community Services

- Implement new Quest standards at all schools
- Work with schools to improve reputation
- Develop parks and open space
- Offer incentives to attract desired housing

Strengths & Assets

As the Comprehensive Plan moves forward, the key strengths and assets of the community should be regarded as areas to maintain and build upon. Participants identified the strengths and advantages that make Fort Lupton a great community, categorized below.

Image & Identity

- Small town community & culture
- Historic character of downtown

- Location and proximity to DIA, Boulder, Greeley, and Denver (25 miles or less) as a very central and easy location to get around (between I-25 & I-76)
- Affordability
- Low crime
- Gateway to the Rockies with rich history
- 50,100 customers in 15 min
- Amenities of City

Community

- Committed small core of concerned citizens
- Close-knit community
- Community involvement
- Diverse residents
- People & relationships
- Family – people stay here for generations

Economic Development

- Great collaboration between businesses & entities that are willing to pay
- Business' close relationship with community
- Diverse businesses (small & large)
- Commercial diversity – oil & gas, agriculture, commercial
- Reasonable wages and labor pool
- Stability – a lot of long standing businesses
- Pro-business-minded city government