

2022 Advancing Adams Comprehensive Plan

General Planning Project Merit Award

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Advancing Adams – the suite of Comprehensive, Transportation, and Parks, Open Space & Trails master plans that will guide growth and development in the Colorado county for the next 20 years – was ratified a year ago by the Adams County Board of Commissioners (BoCC). Advancing Adams also seeks to advance the health, safety, and welfare of the residents and property owners of Adams County.

Adams County is set to become the third most populous county in Colorado by 2040 – and because the economy has significantly shifted since 2012, housing affordability has moved to the forefront of this plan. Advancing Adams updates the county’s current land use plan and development policies while incorporating other planning efforts such as open space, greenways, affordable housing, and transit/transportation.

“With Advancing Adams, we can better integrate our future planning efforts and use infrastructure investments to connect and re-connect diverse communities across the county in historic ways,” said Director of Community & Economic Development Jenni Hall. “There is also an overarching theme of partnership with other organizations and local jurisdictions to leverage these investments wisely.”

The Advancing Adams plans identify areas for infill opportunities, including the development of parks, open space properties, and trails, in areas that will transition between industrial and residential land uses in the future and in areas where higher density residential uses will be supported.

The 20-Minute community model addressed in this plan also seeks to cluster services and residential and employment opportunities within a 20-minute walk, bike, or drive. 288 miles of bicycle lanes are planned to be invested in Adams County. Additionally, 6,500 acres of collective publicly accessible open spaces, parks, and greenways plan to be added to maintain current levels of provisions per person.

Adams County has the second highest growth rate in the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) region, making community amenities a primary focus of Advancing Adams. As of 2021, Adams County now owns and manages 2,166 acres of parks and open space, a 39% increase since 1998, and 40.75 miles of trails, a 60% increase since 1998.

Through a robust engagement process, Advancing Adams included an unprecedented level of community participation with thousands of completed surveys and responses. The process was also informed by many stakeholder meetings and focus groups, centered around a diverse 50-person community advisory committee. 85% of community survey respondents feel the loss of agricultural land is a significant issue and 93% believe housing affordability is a significant issue.

“Adams County is growing, and it’s growing fast,” said Hall. “It’s critical we have policies in place to make sure we are addressing and accommodating that growth responsibly. Advancing Adams embraces the

many different community efforts and visions that will help guide our growth and development over the next 20 years.”