



## CREDITS

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- Northern Colorado Business Report
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- LSA Associates
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**C L A R I O N**



**L S A**

# EMBRACE NORTHERN COLORADO

## DISCOVERING OUR VOICE SUMMARY REPORT

February 2011

*Note: The word cloud on the cover page includes all of the words mentioned by individuals in their contributions to the event's dream wall, with words that appeared more frequently set with the larger font size. Together, this image captures our shared vocabulary for talking about our collective vision for Northern Colorado in 40 years.*

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## BACKGROUND

### WHAT IS EMBRACE NORTHERN COLORADO?

Have you ever stopped to think what the quality of life will be for the next generation of people who will call Northern Colorado their home?

Population growth is inevitable when you live in such an attractive region like Northern Colorado. The Colorado State Demographer reports that 1.2 to 1.4 million people are projected to call Northern Colorado home by 2050. Growth should not come with the high price of losing our values and the benefits of what makes the region a wonderful place to live, work, play and call home.

#### *SO WHAT CAN BE DONE TO ADEQUATELY PLAN FOR THIS POPULATION GROWTH?*

Northern Colorado comprises more than 15 communities—each with its own unique character and amenities. They share common assets but unfortunately, significant regional dialogue, collaboration, and planning are not occurring. The government for every town, city and county within the region is responsible for planning their respective jurisdictions. Transportation, utility districts, and businesses compete for limited resources, with outcomes that do not always consider or contribute to the broader picture.

Given the projected population growth, the extreme pressure it will bring on resources and amenities, and the lack of collaborative regional planning, is Northern Colorado prepared today to make some tough decisions and handle this future demand so it can all continue to maintain—and improve—the already high standard of living?

#### *WE DIDN'T THINK SO, SO WE DECIDED TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!*

Embrace Northern Colorado was incorporated as a nonprofit in 2008. Its overall purpose is to facilitate a continuing conversation about the future of the Northern Colorado region and help the region forge an alliance and vision that addresses such critical issues as transportation, natural resources (water, people, minerals, critical lands, wildlife), utilities and energy, land use, housing, agriculture, arts and entertainment, business, education, ethnic diversity, health and healthcare.

Embrace Northern Colorado is guided by a 15-member Board of Directors that has a balanced membership with representatives from throughout the region. The effort is nonpartisan and the organization sees itself as neutral conveners. Thanks to a grant from the State of Colorado, and other local major donors, Embrace Northern Colorado became fully operational in May of 2010.

Now that Embrace Northern Colorado is operational, the organization is focused on accomplishing three goals:

1. Identifying a common framework, or vision, for the future of the Northern Colorado region.
2. Assisting Northern Colorado's citizens and leaders in creating a collaborative environment where people with diverse views can work together on important issues.
3. Finding innovative solutions to address the many challenges facing Northern Colorado and taking the necessary actions to implement those solutions consistent with an agreed upon vision for the future.

Efforts like this are not new. For example, in Utah, Envision Utah has successfully defined a vision for the future and is implementing major transportation, housing, economic and other improvements to position the greater Salt Lake City area to compete globally. In Louisiana, citizens, governments and businesses are working together to implement coordinated responses to three natural disasters. In northwest Michigan the region is working to preserve and enhance their quality of life, maintain their agricultural heritage and economic base while they experience rapid population growth.

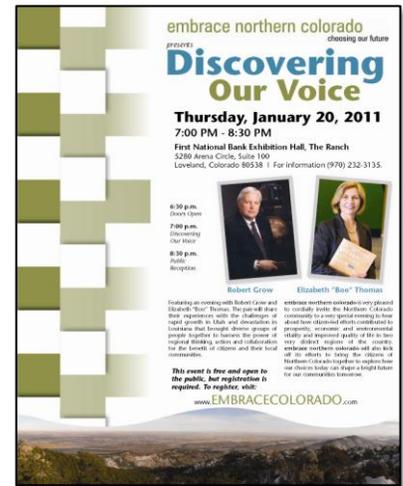
There are numerous examples of regions acting to secure their futures in a changing world. Embrace Northern Colorado believes the Northern Colorado region is positioned to be one of the very best places in America, but hard work and collaboration will be essential to realizing the area's potential

## WHAT WAS THE DISCOVERING OUR VOICE EVENT?

On January 20, 2011 Embrace Northern Colorado conducted its first major workshop and community forum on this topic and it was seen by many as a successful launch of our activities. These kickoff activities are commonly referred to as the “Discovering Our Voice” event. The event, held at The Ranch Events Complex and First National Bank Exhibit Hall, featured three main activities:

- Leadership Workshop (3 to 5 pm)
- Leadership Dinner (5 to 7 pm)
- Community Gathering and Reception (7 to 8:30 pm)

An overview of each activity, including its purpose, components, and attendees is provided in the sections below. Summaries of activity outcomes and full results are provided in the following chapters.



## LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP

The purpose of the Discovering Our Voice Leadership Workshop was to convene a group of regional leaders to start thinking and begin a dialogue about the long-term future of Northern Colorado, including aspirations, challenges, and opportunities. After an introductory welcome and presentation, the format of the workshop revolved around facilitated small-group discussions. Note-takers captured the key points of each group conversation, and the groups also reported out their ideas to the larger group. Speakers Mr. Robert Grow and Ms. Elizabeth “Boo” Thomas concluded the workshop with their observations of and reactions to the small-group discussions. (See additional information about the speakers’ backgrounds in the community gathering section below).

The workshop was an invitation-only activity for Northern Colorado leaders. Attendees included designated representatives from various Northern Colorado communities, Embrace Northern Colorado Board members, and other regional leaders identified through a survey conducted by researchers at the University of Northern Colorado and Colorado State University. The purpose of the leadership survey was to identify a core group of candidates in Northern Colorado who have a reputation for possessing key leadership skills and are positioned to facilitate the flow of ideas and information to the people of Northern Colorado.



*The Leadership Workshop focused on starting a dialogue about the future of Northern Colorado among a wide variety of regional leaders.*

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### LEADERSHIP DINNER

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Embrace Northern Colorado hosted the Discovering Our Voice Leadership Dinner for participants of the Leadership Workshop, Embrace Northern Colorado board members, and event sponsors and volunteers. The dinner provided opportunities for the workshop participants to continue their conversations about their aspirations for the future of Northern Colorado, and also to network and converse with other regional leaders and event sponsors. During the dinner, Mr. Robert Grow spoke about his experiences establishing Envision Utah, and offered reflections and thoughts to inspire the Northern Colorado region.



*The Leadership Dinner provided an informal opportunity for workshop participants and event sponsors to network and continue discussions about their ideas and vision for the future of Northern Colorado.*

### COMMUNITY GATHERING AND RECEPTION

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The Discovering Our Voice Community Gathering was an open and free public event intended to energize members of the Northern Colorado community with stories about how other regions have successfully embarked upon and embraced regional collaborative efforts. Following introductory remarks by Embrace Northern Colorado Board Chairs Mike Geile and Angela Milewski, Executive Director John Daggett presented an overview of the trends that are likely to shape and influence the future of Northern Colorado, such as population growth forecasts. Next, two keynote speakers were introduced: Mr. Robert Grow and Ms. Elizabeth “Boo” Thomas (speaker biographies are provided on pages 15 and 16). The pair shared their experiences with the challenges of rapid growth in Utah and devastation in Louisiana that brought diverse groups of people together to harness the power of regional thinking, action, and collaboration.

After a moderated question and answer session with the speakers, participants were encouraged to attend the community reception to mingle and interact with other members of the regional community, and to share their thoughts and aspirations for the future on the “dream wall.”



*More than 300 people attended the community event to hear Grow and Thomas discuss their experiences with regional collaboration.*

### NEXT STEPS

Embrace Northern Colorado is now in the process of forming a regional Leadership Task Force to represent the many voices and interests of Northern Colorado. Embrace Northern Colorado is also in the process of starting to share its story with major organizations and businesses in Northern Colorado that may share this vision of forging an alliance in our region to address the critical issues that will face us by 2050.

### HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

Embrace Northern Colorado is always looking for feedback and support from individuals and organizations. Visit <http://www.embracecolorado.com/about.asp> to learn more about Embrace Northern Colorado, including notification of future events and opportunities to participate, to join the Embrace Northern Colorado mailing list, or to make a tax-deductible contribution to support the organization.

## DISCOVERING OUR VOICE: AFTERNOON WORKSHOP

### OVERVIEW

Approximately 85 regional stakeholders and leaders participated in the Discovering Our Voice Leadership Workshop. Participation was invitation-only and included representatives from an array of Northern Colorado communities, Embrace Northern Colorado Board members, and regional leaders as identified through the leadership survey.

The workshop began with a brief presentation about Embrace Northern Colorado and a quick summary of how the world and region are changing. View the slides from the presentation .at <http://www.embracecolorado.com/discover.asp>.

Participants were divided into ten small groups for the workshop exercises. Each group included approximately eight participants plus one group facilitator and one note-taker. Participants were assigned tables so that each table would include a diverse mix of viewpoints and perspectives from various communities in the Northern Colorado region. Trained and experienced students representing Colorado State University's Center for Public Deliberation facilitated the group discussions. Volunteer note takers captured the main themes of the small group discussions on large flip-charts. Over the course of about 90 minutes, the small groups worked their way through and discussed four main questions:

1. What one thing is particularly valuable to you about living in Northern Colorado? (*Note: this was an icebreaker question; detailed notes were not taken.*)
2. What are you most concerned about losing in Northern Colorado's future (either for you, your children, or your children's children)?
3. If in 40 years, we can confidently say that our region has responded extremely well to these opportunities and challenges, what would life be like in Northern Colorado?
4. What barriers to realizing this vision are most important for us to consider along the way?

After the second question (what are you most concerned about losing), each small group was asked to identify one key item from their discussion and report it out to the rest of the room. These ideas were summarized on a composite list, and as the groups reported their ideas, they were asked to add new ideas, not repeat items on the composite list. This report-out process provided the opportunity for each small group to hear the ideas from other group discussions and see some of the common themes emerge.

Due to time constraints this report-out process was not repeated for the remaining questions. However, throughout the workshop speakers Mr. Grow and Ms. Thomas sat in on various small group discussions and helped identify common themes and key ideas between groups. Then, at the conclusion of the workshop, Mr. Grow and Ms. Thomas shared their informal observations and reactions to the group discussions.

To wrap-up the workshop participants were asked to identify their individual "dream" for Northern Colorado's future. The responses to this question were posted on the "Dream Wall" displayed at the community event, and were intended to spur the community participants to write their own ideas on the wall later in the evening. Common themes from the "Dream Wall" question are identified in the Community Event section of this report, and complete notes are provided in Appendix B.



*Workshop participants discussed their ideas within small groups and then reported out their top ideas to the larger audience.*

### SUMMARY OF KEY THEMES

The following sections highlight many of the shared ideas and key themes from the Leadership Workshop's small group discussions. They are organized by question, and reflect ideas that were shared by several groups, as detailed in the table notes. Please note that the order of the key themes listed does not indicate any sort of prioritization.

Question 2 was the only question for which each small group was asked to "report out" their top priorities to the full group, and the key themes reflected in that section match the list generated during the full group exercise, and also include additional themes identified from detailed review of the table notes.

In addition to the many common themes, many groups offered unique ideas and suggestions. Appendix A provides detailed notes from each group.

### QUESTION 1

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Going around the table, introduce yourself, mark on the map where you live with the green dot, and where you work with the blue dot, and briefly explain one thing that is particularly valuable to you about living in Northern Colorado?"

Question 1 was an "ice breaker" question intended to provide an opportunity for each participant to introduce him/herself to the small group and informally begin a dialogue about Northern Colorado. Notes were not taken on question 1; however a composite map was prepared based on all of the locations marked by the participants (See the following page for the composite map.)

### QUESTION 2

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We just heard about what makes Northern Colorado such a wonderful place to live. Considering the demographic trends, what are you most concerned about losing in Northern Colorado's future (either for you, your children, or your children's children)?

#### Key Themes from Group Reporting

The following is the list generated by the workshop participants as each small group reported out a key theme from their discussion.

- Conscious and changing use of water, recognition of importance of agriculture in Colorado's economy
- Effects of transportation and ability to move people, goods and services
- Air quality
- "Losing northern Colorado and gaining LA"
- Education (Higher education, sustainability of education)
- Preservation of the health of Northern CO and why many of us came to the region
- Safety as population growth occurs
- Effective infrastructure (water, sewer, electric, communications, etc.)
- Leadership, ability to create wealth
- Sense of community/sense of place
- Education
- Open space
- Socioeconomic diversity due to increased cost of living
- Sense of optimism
- Culture
- Recreation
- Balance between work and life/family



### Key Themes from Group Notes

The following themes were identified from detailed review of the group notes, and build on the key themes identified in the group-reporting process.

#### *Sense of Community and Engagement*

- Desire to retain the region's high quality of life, including sense of optimism, pride, and neighborly feeling.
- Concern about losing agricultural/rural roots and cultural heritage.
- Fear of increasing crime and loss of perception of safety.
- Concern about waning interest in community involvement (apathy), and lack of leadership and problem solving.

#### *Natural Environment and Resources*

- Concern about the long-term availability, supply, usage, storage, and quality of water.
- Afraid of air pollution and decreasing air quality (and related impacts such as health, visibility, etc.).
- Desire to retain the accessibility and views of the mountains and outdoors, including recreation and other opportunities to experience nature.

#### *Built Environment and Land Use*

- Concern about losing agricultural land to development.
- Desire for separation between communities (open space, agriculture, or lower-intensity land uses, etc.).
- Afraid of losing unique community identities and core downtown areas.

#### *Economy*

- Fear of losing economic base and stability (associated with diverse and quality industries).
- Concern about future cost escalation (including energy prices, infrastructure costs, funding for services, etc.) and decreasing affordability in region.

#### *Mobility/Transportation*

- Desire to retain the current ease of regional mobility, including short travel times to reach destinations.
- Concern about future traffic congestion and associated impacts including air pollution, safety, and the ability to move goods/people.

#### *Health and Education*

- Concern about not developing or retaining an educated workforce.
- Desire to retain quality medical services and concern about future health care availability.

### QUESTION 3

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If in 40 years, we can confidently say that our region has responded extremely well to these opportunities and challenges, what would life be like in Northern Colorado?

#### Key Themes from Notes:

The following themes were identified from detailed review of the group notes.

#### *Sense of Community, Leadership and Engagement*

- The area's high quality of life would be maintained, and the region would boast diverse, safe, healthy, and family-oriented communities.
- Culture, heritage, and diversity would be embraced.
- Leadership would be visionary and effective.
- Open dialogue would be welcome and expected, with widespread cooperation and effective communication throughout the region.
- There would be a sense of community, reciprocity, and shared responsibility across the region.

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### Natural Environment and Resources

- There would be coordination and collaboration on addressing water resources (e.g., supply, storage, conservation, quality, agricultural needs, etc.).
- The region would practice futuristic environmentalism (i.e., balance and integration of technology).

### Built Environment and Land Use

- Agriculture would be preserved and valued for various reasons (e.g., jobs, food, aesthetic, etc.).
- Communities would have distinct identities within the region.
- There would be balance between urban and rural areas, with thriving community core areas.

### Economy

- Various economic opportunities would exist for a diverse workforce
- Northern Colorado would be a leading area in entrepreneurialism and new technologies including energy, medical, transportation, water, etc.

### Mobility/Transportation

- There would be ease of transportation, including mode options, short trip times, accessibility, and high-quality infrastructure.

### Education

- There would be quality, affordable, education for all, including alternative opportunities, coordination between educational providers, and focus on preparing students for the workforce.

## QUESTION 4

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What barriers to realizing this vision are most important for us to consider along the way?

### Key Themes from Notes:

The following themes were identified from detailed review of the group notes.

#### Communication and Collaboration

- There is currently lack of regular or effective regional communication and lack of regional leadership.
- It will be challenging to find a common vision among very diverse values.
- There are a large number of “players” in the region, and it is challenging to work across community and political boundaries.
- There is a perception that many of the communities/leaders are self-interested, and it will be challenging to define what is equitable or beneficial for each community.
- The region is growing more diverse and it is critical to involve those groups that are growing and will comprise a significant portion of the population in the future (e.g., youth, Hispanic community, etc.).

#### Individual Interests and Expectations

- There is strong desire to maintain personal property rights and community autonomy, which will need to be balanced with a regional vision.
- There are some strong emotions and memories about past attempts at regional collaboration, and a sense that some may be unwilling to embrace change or cooperate.

#### Resource Availability

- The availability of water will be a key factor in shaping the future.
- There are many complex issues related to funding and economic resources, such as competition for sales tax, and a diminishing tax base to support infrastructure investments.

### SPEAKER REMARKS AND OBSERVATIONS AT CONCLUSION OF WORKSHOP

This section summarizes the key observations and remarks about the small group dialogues from Mr. Grow and Ms. Thomas. It is not intended to be a verbatim transcript, but rather a high-level summary of key their points and experiences that translate to Northern Colorado.

#### MR. GROW

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##### Sustainability

Traditionally, sustainability is seen as a stool with 3 legs: economic, environment, and equity. Each of these “legs” is represented, although each place struggles with how to balance them appropriately. The State of Hawaii has added a fourth “leg” to its definition of sustainability – preserving the uniqueness of the state. This theme and embracing what is unique applies to Northern Colorado. Unique features of the region include agricultural heritage, small-town feel, natural beauty, and various other attributes that drew many residents here in the first place.

##### Growth

Because the region is so desirable, it will continue to grow. Everyone is responsible for this problem, including those who have children, and those who want their children to stay in the region when they grow up. **The only way to really slow down growth is to make this a lousy place.** The alternative is accepting that growth will occur if the region is desirable, and planning can help ensure a positive future.

##### Process

The first step in regional collaboration involves listening and identifying issues and opportunities (the purpose of the Leadership Workshop). The next step entails scenarios or packages of choices. You can even create virtual worlds that help inform those choices.

An early part of the scenarios process involves identifying the key variables to test or change. Based on the small group discussions it seems like some of the key variables to test out might include water resources, transportation, health care, development patterns/density, energy resources, education, governance, etc. These are all problems that should be addressed at the appropriate scale (regional rather than local).

#### MS. THOMAS

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##### Community Building

There is currently a sense of growing isolation in our communities (i.e., children not playing together, adults not working together). It is important to think about how we can build a sense of community and bring people together. In Louisiana it was interesting how engaged the residents became in the scenarios process, and how exploration of alternatives really changed how they thought about the future.

## DISCOVERING OUR VOICE: COMMUNITY EVENT

### OVERVIEW

More than 300 people attended the Discovering Our Voice Community Event. Participants included many of the regional leaders and stakeholders who attended the Leadership Workshop and Dinner, as well as interested members of the public from various Northern Colorado communities.

Marketing and advertising about the event consisted of various press releases, email notification, and the Embrace Northern Colorado website: [www.embracecolorado.com](http://www.embracecolorado.com). Media coverage and press releases can be found on the Embrace Northern Colorado's website under the "media" tab.

The agenda for the Community Event included the following activities:

- Introductory remarks and speaker introduction
- Keynote speaker Robert Grow
- Keynote speaker Boo Thomas
- Moderated questions and answer session with the speakers and the Embrace Northern Colorado Board Chairs
- Community reception and "Dream Wall" activity

The entire evening's presentations, including introductory remarks, keynote speakers, and question and answer session can be viewed online at: <http://www.fcgov.com/youtube/#video-div-wrapper>. The following sections highlight some key ideas and themes from each presentation, in addition to a summary of answers to audience questions. Additional audience questions and follow-up answers from the speakers are available on the Embrace Northern Colorado website.



*Members of the audience represented a diverse interests and a wide variety of communities from throughout Northern Colorado.*

## PRESENTATION HIGHLIGHTS

The sections below summarize the key messages and ideas from the evening's presentations. PowerPoint slides and video recording of the presentations can be found online at [www.embracecolorado.com](http://www.embracecolorado.com).

## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

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### About Embrace Northern Colorado

- Embrace Northern Colorado's mission is to listen to lots of voices and serve as a neutral party that helps bring together the Northern Colorado region and start a dialogue about the future (i.e., the next 40 years to 2050 and beyond).

### Our World is Changing

- Major trends that are expected to shape the region include:
  - **Population growth:** Northern Colorado is projected to grow to approximately 1.4 million people by 2050 (180,000 people in 1970; 566,000 people in 2010)..
  - **Aging population:** An increasing number of people age 65 and older (9% of population in 1970 vs. 17% of population in 2050).
  - **Household composition:** Household size is decreasing; there is an increasing amount of households without children and single-person households.
- All of these changes will have impacts. Examples include increased demand on roadways (i.e., traffic) and water consumption.
- What does 40 years mean? Looking back at the past 40 years it is amazing to see the transformations that have occurred, such as computers, automobiles, electronics, and medical technology.
- Looking to the future, it is projected that more than 50% of the population growth and 66% of economic growth in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will occur in mega-regions. Colorado Springs to Greeley/Fort Collins is identified as one of those mega-regions.
- Historic and projected land use patterns demonstrate this shift to a mega-region, as rural/agriculture land converts to exurban and urban development up, down, and near the Interstate 25 and Highway 34 corridors.
- Embrace Northern Colorado will help us find a path forward so that we can organize and work together as a region to meet the challenges and grasp the opportunities that lie ahead.



*A lot has changed in our world over the past 40 years. What will Northern Colorado be like in 2050?*

### KEYNOTE SPEAKER: ROBERT GROW

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#### Biography



Robert Grow is founding chair emeritus of Envision Utah, a private/public quality growth partnership founded in 1997. Envision Utah is widely recognized as one of the country's most successful public involvement efforts for the development of a broad-based, long-term growth strategy for a major metropolitan area, having received the Urban Land Institute's Award for Excellence, the Alliance for Regional Stewardship's Gold Recognition Award, and the American Planning Association's Daniel Burnham Award. For his role in helping shape the strategy for the Salt Lake region's future transportation system, Grow received the American Public Transportation Association's (APTA) Distinguished Service Award in October 2003.

Grow has been invited to present the Envision Utah approach in more than 75 regions in the last seven years. He was involved in creating the visioning process for Southern Louisiana following the Hurricane Katrina disaster. He is also the lead consultant in the ongoing visioning process to create a sustainable city of one million residents on Superstition Vistas, the 275-square mile "crown jewel" of the Arizona State Trust Lands.

Grow holds degrees in engineering and law and has had a diverse career, including practicing law, leading and supporting regional visioning processes, being president of a large manufacturing company, and chairing a national trade association. He has been recognized as Utah's entrepreneur of the year.

Presently, Robert Grow practices law in Salt Lake City, specializing in land use planning and zoning, real estate development, regional visioning and growth planning, and environmental law.

#### Presentation Highlights

##### *Growth and Sustainability*

- Growth is coming to Northern Colorado because it is a great place to live. You can stop long term growth only if you make this an undesirable place to live for everyone (including ourselves).
- The process of regional planning can help address these challenges and create sustainable communities.
- The goal is sustainability...but what is it? In Hawaii the definition of sustainability includes balance among economic, social, community, and environmental priorities, but it also includes respect for the culture, character, beauty and history of the state's island community, and meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs

##### *Regional Visioning*

- Solving problems at the right scale is key (i.e., "scale appropriate" problem solving). Examples of regional, not municipal-level issues include air quality, water, and traffic.
- Strategic visioning involves the analysis of alternative scenarios to make wise decisions. A vision is not a forecast but a strategy to preserve best options or the best likely outcomes for the future
- Regional visioning helps the public and decision makers understand the long-term consequences of the choices they make now (informed decision making).

##### *Envision Utah: An Example of Success*

- Envision Utah serves as an example of regional visioning; it is a model for a regional visioning process that Northern Colorado might relate to.
- In 1997 Utah faced serious challenges including population growth, air quality, land urbanization, water supply, congestion, rising costs, and increasing infrastructure needs.
- Envision Utah was formed in 1997 by the Coalition for Utah's Future to evaluate and address growth.
- It includes hundreds of stakeholders and many different counties, cities, towns, and service districts. A key part of the coalition is its promise not to infringe on local planning issues (i.e. Envision Utah has no governmental authority).
- The premise of Envision Utah is that the public has the right to choose its future and public officials should serve that vision. The public will make good choices if presented with real options.

- The visioning process begins with defining the region's values.
- Regional visioning uses scenarios to ask important questions and help the public understand tradeoffs in decision-making. Significant public involvement in the scenarios process is key.
- The results of the scenarios process lead to the selection of an option that was based on a complete mobility system (integrated road and transit). This led to very strong support for a proposition aimed at expanding public transportation systems.

### Final Thoughts

- The Northern Colorado region has a very entrepreneurial, optimistic, can-do spirit. The residents of Northern Colorado can make it better!

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER: ELIZABETH "BOO" THOMAS

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### Biography



### *President and CEO – Center for Planning Excellence*

Well versed in local community planning activities, Thomas has led neighborhood redevelopment efforts in Baton Rouge since obtaining her Master's degree in Landscape Architecture from Louisiana State University. As the former head of Plan Baton Rouge and the Mid-City Redevelopment Alliance, Thomas has been an advocate for smart growth in Louisiana throughout her career.

While Thomas' work at Plan Baton Rouge focused in the revitalization of the downtown area, in the aftermath of hurricanes Katrina and Rita, she led the Center for Planning Excellence (CPEX) in facilitating the Louisiana Speaks recovery process: the largest regional planning effort ever undertaken in the Louisiana. Louisiana Speaks resulted in the Louisiana Speaks Regional Plan, a comprehensive plan created through the participation of over 27,000 South Louisiana residents. Thomas has continued to build on that plan, overseeing CPEX's planning efforts in parishes across the state.

In recognition of her outstanding contributions to Louisiana, Thomas has been honored by the Baton Rouge Chamber of Commerce, the YMCA, the Baton Rouge Business Report, LSU and the Louisiana Architecture Foundation. In September 2009, Thomas and CPEX were awarded the Olmsted Medal by the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) for "incredible leadership and set the standard for bringing community members and leaders together to work toward a shared vision for future growth and development." One year later, Thomas became the second woman in Louisiana named to the ASLA National Council of Fellows, one of the highest honors the organization can bestow on an individual.

### Presentation Highlights

#### About Louisiana Speaks

- The Center for Planning Excellence (CPEX) aims to make every community in Louisiana extraordinary through planning excellence (building on the unique potential of each community).
- CPEX focuses on outreach/ education and planning/implementation. Leadership development and community-driven processes are key.
- Hurricane Katrina was the worst hurricane to hit the US, and a month later Rita, the 3<sup>rd</sup> worst hurricane hit the area. The Louisiana Speaks Regional Plan effort emerged from devastation of Katrina and Rita, and recognition from the Governor that the area needed to start thinking about the long-term future. The motto was "build it back better."
- The Louisiana Speaks plan was entirely privately funded: \$2 million for the plan; \$5 million for public outreach.
- Early in the process they understood the need to identify trusted community leaders. A values survey of 2500 people asked people "who do you trust the most/least?" This helped identify local champions who became the citizen leaders and statesmen.

- The process also facilitated widespread cooperation and coordination between communities, organizations, and governmental agencies.

### Plan Details

- The Plan included a multi-faceted approach that addressed various levels including parish planning, community planning, building, and regional planning.
- The vision for the plan addressed costal restoration, storm protection, community growth, and infrastructure investment. Northern Colorado faces its own quality of life issues that must be addressed on a regional scale.

### Public Engagement

- The public engagement process was one of the largest in the Country's history, and was occurring even while residents were still displaced from the storms. Engagement techniques were widespread (even other states) and included newsletters, emails, online media, paid advertisements, polling stations, citizen-to-citizen conversations, and public meetings.
- The campaign resulted in 23,260 surveys taken; this matched almost exactly the demographics of southern Louisiana (a major feat given the dispersed nature of people and traditionally under-represented groups).
- Through polling, people were provided the opportunity to make choices based on an understanding of tradeoffs and consequences. Results showed that people were very supportive of coastal protection and restoration efforts, reducing community risk, and changing development patterns.

### Implementation and Results

- Implementation tools are widespread, and include a pattern book, Land Use Toolkit developed by the Office of Economic Development, a Costal Toolkit (underway). Implementation challenges include lack of an Office of State Planning (part of the reason why CPEX has been so strong).
- Since the creation of the plan, response to other disasters has improved and they have been far less devastating.

### Final Remarks

- Without a vision people will perish.

## AUDIENCE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Following the keynote speaker presentations, audience members had the opportunity to submit written questions to be answered by the speakers. Moderators from KUNC Community Radio for Northern Colorado and the Northern Colorado Business Report selected questions for the speakers to answer. Additional questions (not selected by the moderators) and answers (provided by the speakers after the event) are available at [www.embracecolorado.com](http://www.embracecolorado.com).



*Following the presentation audience members could submit written questions to be answered by the keynote speakers.*

### *Where did the money come from for the first few years?*

- Board Co-Chair Mike Geile: For Embrace Northern Colorado the North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) committed to contributing \$200,000 if an additional \$70,000 was raised from other supporters (including hospitals, REA, and many other partners).
- Mr Grow: Envision Utah was funded by 1/3 business, 1/3 foundations, 1/3 local government (\$1.5 million for a 3 year operating time line). The organization collected almost that much over the first 3 years, as people started to trust the process the money followed.

### *Why should we accept population growth as our destiny? Can't we choose to grow or not?*

- Mr Grow: People will follow jobs – if you produce jobs the area will grow.

### *Given how important widespread public participation is, how did you sustain it over the process?*

- Ms. Thomas: Champions were charged with bringing people to the table, although participation does fade as you are more successful.
- Mr Grow: Garnered media attention by focusing on interesting stories.

### *Have the people of Louisiana voted to pay for any of the projects identified in the plan?*

- Ms. Thomas: Not yet; the plan is a high level vision, but local communities are beginning to follow their plans, and we're starting to see them funding specific projects.

### *Are there any additional scenario studies you would like to do if funding were available?*

- Mr Grow: Health care, education (both spatial and non-spatial issues). An Envision Utah update is currently underway to check back in and address new issues.
- Ms. Thomas: Health care, education (Louisiana is one of poorest states), and forecasting other transportation modes to keep up with federal stimulus funding.

### *What mistakes were made?*

- Mr Grow: We accidentally left some people out (e.g., not involving the arts community in transportation); we learned as we went.

### *Is Utah selling their services to Northern Colorado?*

- Mr Grow: Envision Utah's mandate is to help Utah first; it is not in the business of serving other communities but can offer lessons learned and serve as a model for others.
- Ms. Thomas: Robert believed in Envision Utah so strongly he went to LA on his own dime 5 + times.

### *How did Louisiana Speaks address diversity and economic/socioeconomic differences?*

- Ms. Thomas: A plan with the usual suspects would not represent the community so we identified different community leaders (e.g., African-American, Vietnamese, Latino); and went to them (at churches and other familiar gathering places) instead of making them come to planning meetings.
- Mr Grow: Envision Utah hired a multi-lingual communications director who was a leader in the Spanish-speaking community.

### *Our communities hold joint meetings already...why do we need more meetings?*

- Board Co-Chair Mike Geile: We've talked to elected officials and regional collaboration isn't already occurring on a broad scale. There probably will be more meetings and individuals who come together will provide leadership.
- Board Co-Chair Angie Milewski: The idea is to add tools to leaders' toolkits so that they can see how their decisions impact the region.

### *Many people believe Embrace Northern Colorado is intended to fuel population growth. Is this true?*

- Board Co-Chair Angie Milewski: Embrace Northern Colorado is not a growth engine group, but is reacting to statistics and projections. Slowing growth would have to occur at and come from a regional scale.
- Mr Grow: If the growth comes, we'll be ready; generally nobody regrets coming together.

### *What can we do to keep our conversation about growth forward focused?*

- Mr Grow: It is important not to get stuck on the problems of today, but rather to focus on the long-term vision (i.e., look at the next 25 years and stay out of the short-term battles). It is critical to keep talking to each other because it takes a community/large network of people to move forward.

### *What happened to rail freight? How has congestion been alleviated? How did you address the issue of growth following transit?*

- Mr Grow: Envision Utah and the transportation outcomes have had little impact on rail freight. On a 4 lane highway, approximately 1 lane has been alleviated by transit service. The transit service it is most effective during rush hour, and it seemed to slow or eradicate the "drive until you qualify" effect.

COMMUNITY RECEPTION “DREAM WALL” EXERCISE

What would you like life to look like in 40 years in Northern Colorado? What would your dream be?

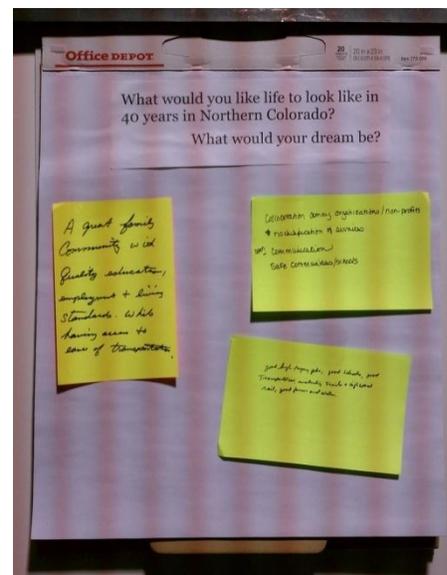
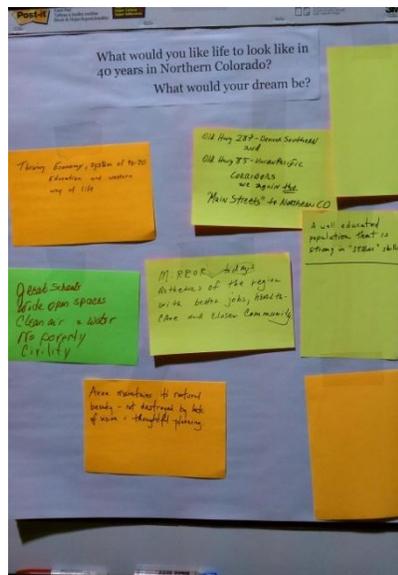
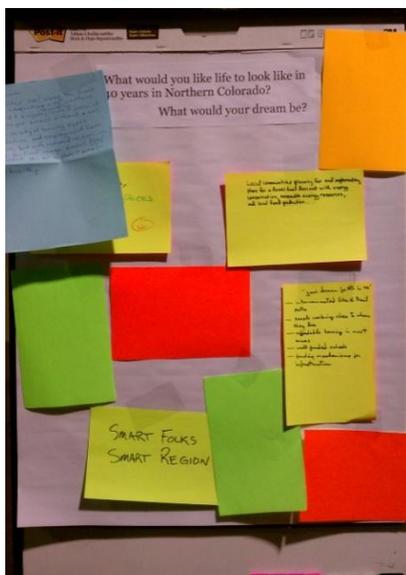
Key Themes

During the community reception, participants were asked to record their dreams for the future of Northern Colorado on the “dream wall” (a bank of large display boards). The following key themes were identified from the review of the dreams and aspirations captured on the dream wall. These themes start to comprise a regional “vision” that describes the improvements and protections that participants hope to see for the region’s natural environment, institutions and infrastructure, and community capacity.

- **Physical Environments:** Participants want to see open spaces, clean water, blue skies, and ecological diversity, which calls for conservation and sustainable practices. Recreational opportunities are found in the mountains and cities. Cities and farms are connected to the natural environment.
- **Institutions and infrastructure:** Participants want strong institutions—education, health care, business. Vibrant local economies mean job opportunities and affordable housing. Transportation infrastructure should be expanded and multimodal, from public transit between cities to bicycle and pedestrian paths within them.
- **Community Capacity:** Communities will work together, listen, and communicate. Diversity in multiple forms and the uniqueness of individual cities and towns should be celebrated and promoted. Communities should be safe. Leaders should guide; citizens should share responsibility.

Despite these common themes, there were some important tensions between different dreams for Northern Colorado that we will need to work through as a community. For each of these tensions, some people favored one side of the tension while others expressed that Northern Colorado should seek to balance these potentially competing values.

- Regional cooperation yet maintain local control.
- Vibrant agricultural and urban communities.
- Planning for growth yet challenging the presumption that growth is inevitable.



Participants were asked to record their dreams for the future of Northern Colorado on the “dream wall” for others to see.

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## APPENDIX A: WORKSHOP TABLE NOTES

The notes below reflect the small-group discussions from the Leadership Workshop. Notes captured the general highlights and key themes of the conversations, and are not verbatim minutes. They are organized by question and table, and are not reflective of any sort of prioritization or hierarchy.

Question 2: We just heard about what makes Northern Colorado such a wonderful place to live. Considering the demographic trends, what are you most concerned about losing in Northern Colorado's future (either for you, your children, or your children's children)?

### Table 2

- Differences in Greeley: dramatic and loss of communication between "world" a concern; missing conversation with other groups in Greeley
- Loss of mobility within region
- Loss of sense of identity between towns
- Loss of space between towns and homes
- Openness (mental health implications)
- Freedom of space to play
- Sense of play
- Others cannot deal with open lands (visitors)
- Water for all that growth
- That kind of growth will diminish ability of individuals to make a difference
- Communities lose individuality
- Loss of opportunity to own a business, home, control your destiny
- Water = demise of farming
- Farmland and open space
- Loss of "wild west" and adventure
- Freedom (e.g., mobility, space)
- Different values at different times of life

### Table 3

- Concerned about water use
- Concerned about underlying support from government
- Creation of wealth (for funding services, etc.)
- Growth going the wrong way
- Leadership (in general)
- Cost of energy
- Open space, agriculture, farm land

### Table 4

- Ease of transportation
- Lose agriculture for water supply due to population growth
- Agriculture as open space
- Agriculture as a job source
- Loss of sense of optimism and pride in community
- Loss of safety (crime)
- Loss of community-based problem solving (apathy)

### Table 5

- Traffic and congestion
- How can we grow (economic health, environmental)
- Environment/natural resources
- Social dimensions/equality
- Aging demographics
- Agricultural production
- Water sustainability (agricultural, municipal, natural resources, etc.)
- Effective infrastructure
- Healthy environment, natural resources
- Sustainable agriculture
- Cultural heritage
- Water balance (agriculture, people, natural)
- Social dimensions – equality in access

### Table 6

- Congested highways (Northern Colorado in general)
- Experience of nature
- Water sources and natural resources
- Safety/population
- Entrepreneurial spirit
- Economic base/stability, loss of economic diversity

### Table 7

- Access to mountains/outdoors

- Small town feel
- Agriculture/open space
- Community innovation and connection
- Support
- Safety/knowing neighbors
- Respect for agriculture
- Comfortable with who you are
- Education
- Transportation
- Water
- Agriculture
- Recreation and amenities
- Culture

Table 8

- Air quality (pollution)
- Water quality and quantity
- Transportation (congestion)
- Time – ability to reach destinations
- Infrastructure (e.g., water, transportation)
- Transportation (infrastructure, smog/pollution, time/congestion)
- Cost-escalation (infill)
- Open space and views
- Losing ability to grow
- Loss of unique characteristics
- Maintain rural/agricultural roots
- Ease of mobility (public transportation)
- Downtown/urban growth

Table 9

- Small Town
- Agricultural lands
- Make sure growth is orderly and provides opportunities for next generations
- Losing easy mobility and traveling in region as we age; loss of connection to family and friends
- Sustainable economy
- Agriculture that is dependent on water
- Educated workforce

- Congestion and mobility making the area less of a desirable place to live
- Losing Northern Colorado and gaining Los Angeles
- Quality jobs and industries
- Schools and education
- Starts with disposable income
- Quality of life to manage growth
- Crime rates
- Still have opportunity to be stewards as well as education, job growth, and infrastructure
- Needs to be sustainable
- Balance all factors in growth
- Smart standpoint in growing water storage – multi-purpose, multi-beneficial projects

Table 10

- Agriculture heritage and open space
- Uncongested transportation
- Quality education
- Quality environment
- Unique identities of communities
- Cooperation opportunities among communities
- Sustainability while growing
- Water supply for region/conservation
- Bike and other transportation infrastructure
- Water for agriculture
- Get real about built environment (landscaping/use of water)

Table 11

- Quality of live
- Level of education
- Strategic natural viewsheds
- Health (community, individual, environmental)
- People staying for the reasons they came to Northern Colorado (education, employment)
- Outdoor recreation opportunities
- Quality medical services
- Responsible development

Question 3: If in 40 years, we can confidently say that our region has responded extremely well to these opportunities and challenges, what would life be like in Northern Colorado?

Table 2

- Try to allow people to succeed (opportunity to succeed)
- Lifetime success platform
- Economic opportunity (diverse workforce)
- Folks across area concerned about all the area (responsibility across the area)
- What happens in “A” matters to “A” and to “B”
- Economic cooperation part of the success
- Huge difference between home and work (transportation)
- Is system “self-correcting” due to costs/limitations/etc.
- Economic resource issues
- Infrastructure does not support intra-regional model
- Transportation driven by land use (higher density coming)
- Balance of people and resources
- Will look different (e.g., lawns, multi-family)
- Still can make a difference as an individual

Table 3

- Energy technology (cost, efficiency)
- Leading in new technologies (medical, etc.)
- Wealth benefit
- Water utilization (efficient agriculture/water use)
- Effective communication
- University and businesses
- Willingness to communication
- Effective regional government
- Civility
- Environment for dialogue

Table 4

- Planned vision for infrastructure
- Ease of transportation
- Industry separate from residential
- Access to aesthetic mountains and spaces
- Economic opportunities to continue to live here
- Still safe environment for children
- Environment of collaboration
- Welcoming to diversity
- Improved funding for education
- Job diversification/quality across demographics
- Quality of employers
- The “golden triangle”
- Gross domestic happiness

Table 5

- Maintaining community (Interrelated nature, separate from technology-wise use)
- Maintained working landscapes (e.g., healthy local food, open spaces)
- Diverse healthy human communities, longevity for families
- Futuristic environmentalism (transportation, glass roads, local renewable “sun roofs”)
- Economic vitality, access universities
- Inventive solutions to current problems

Table 6

- Shared industrial epicenter (Fort Collins, Greeley, Loveland)
- People on public transportation
- Regional backing of issues
- Toward dense population areas to preserve natural resources
- Transportation to get to areas
- Preservation of natural resources
- Education system
- Sense of community
- Regional sense of community (business versus personal) How do we gain it?
- Quality of life, small town/city feel
- Water
- Zero carbon emissions
- Compensation for those who maintain open space

Table 7

- Balance of urban and rural
- Going up and not out
- Leaving natural areas
- Choice of lifestyle
- Economic development
- Balance of opportunity
- Help middle class
- Range of diversity
- Quality of education
- Bringing education together
- More involvement with education
- Not leaving students out of education
- Developing more skilled education
- Providing alternative educational opportunities
- Fresh/small produce farms
- Ways to reuse waters

Table 8

- Downtown vital core areas (economic vitality)
- Preserve unique characteristics of each community
- Good accessibility
- Resolved growth/no growth (good planning)
- Reduction of duplication of efforts
- Adequate water (regional plan for water)
- Invest in issues (e.g., education, water, infrastructure)
- Cooperative effort maintained, collaboration, advisory board
- Leadership from others
- “NOCO” Brand (not “NOCO”)

Table 9

- Infill development rather than sprawl
- Cost of infrastructure will change land use patterns
- Living density promotes communal transportation
- Technology will encourage sprawl
- Quality of life remains (e.g., open space, recreational opportunities)
- Live, work, and play in the same area and still large lot agriculture
- Intelligent infrastructure

- Interstate 25 would also include a train and local feeder system
- Personal mobility
- Less water in urban landscape
- Cityscape that builds ambiance
- Technology advance in water control
- Multi-pronged solutions to maximize water

Table 10

- Regional vision that's more than just that of biggest communities
- “Outside the box” vision for 40+ years
- Families and social capital
- Opportunities for young adult children for employment
- Building educational capital in our kids
- Cultural and heritage (e.g., Greeley Phil. and rodeo)
- Maintain cultural amenities (e.g., art/sculpture in Loveland)
- Painter – culinary arts, western heritage
- Employment for new generations
- Seniors are “exploited” for their vast talents
- Safe, multiple options for transportation (environmentally sensitive)
- Affordable education for all
- All levels “STEM” qualified students (science, technology, energy, math)
- Thriving region, innovative growth, job creators want to be in the region
- Agriculture/urban partnerships (preserve farm production)
- Pleasant, intelligently planned growth preserving beauty/attractiveness

Table 11

- Similar to how Northern Colorado is today (preservation of quality of life and great things about region)
- More diversity/integration of different groups into communities, outreach
- Planning infrastructure to regulate density
- Building up, not out
- Redevelopment of urban areas
- Preservation of culture and integration of minority groups

Question 4: What barriers to realizing this vision are most important for us to consider along the way?

Table 2

- State government (must address fiscal policy, education, etc.)
- State must “get real” on what it costs to maintain
- Water
- Will become unaffordable to live in Colorado
- Underserved – not a part of discussion
- Funding into education
- Metro area comes north to “drive to qualify” – need jobs north of Denver
- Affordable education
- Tendency toward provincialism
- Fortitude to keep working on these issues (stay with it, groom leaders)
- Where is the “tipping point” (where is “worse”/“better”)
- Default of not planning will not work
- Weld too large/too many other issues to be big part of solution (jurisdictions)
- Individual basis folks can be/are regional
- Multiple/overlapping jurisdictions
- Outdated county boundaries

Table 3

- Who will pay for what
- What is equal for each community
- Regional collaborative wealth
- Defining common interests in all of Northern Colorado (including southern)
- Respecting community identities
- Competition (us and them)
- Community barriers
- Community transportation issues
- Too diverse of opinions
- Define common interest/issues
- Why are we doing this exercise?

Table 4

- Diminishing tax base for municipal infrastructure
- Individual property rights vs. regional planning
- Harmonious immigration

Table 5

- Self-interested leadership
- Short-sighted planning
- Lack of inclusive vision
- Effective use of funding
- Lack of communication and cooperation
- Fear-based perception, non-willingness to listen and work with other values and find compromise
- Finding common ground
- Lack of action
- Lack of common sense

Table 6

- Retail sales tax competition
- Land wars/inability to work as a region
- Property rights
- Protecting values of farmlands – proper compensation and respect (difficult to make a living farming)
- Individual non-cooperative personalities
- Loss of food growth
- Inability to communicate across the region
- Lack of farmer involvement
- Lack of identification within Northern Colorado
- Lack of authority

Table 7

- County line
- Diversity (embrace it)
- Farms moving towards technology
- Education, school districts
- Segregation between school districts
- Funding transportation
- Citizen participation
- Different cultural norms
- Involvement
- Time
- Age
- Generational
- Independency/community
- Technology/communication
- Transportation
- Lack of water
- Technology and agriculture
- Energy and renewables

Table 8

- Lack of vision
- Political boundaries
- We don't embrace change
- Not in my back yard (NIMBY)
- Lack of common language
- Fear of losing power/control
- Different view points on taxation
- Diverse values
- Redrawing districts to better reflect needs (lots of "districts" today)

Table 9

- Break down silos, parochialism
- Work together in respect
- Establish common vision across communities
- Communication, not overbearing or controlling
- Move the discussion into action
- Identify and work on common issues and build trust
- Can we agree on common issues?

Table 10

- Money/resources (human, financial)
- Low in-state graduation rate
- "Silo" based thinking (need for collective, coordinated regional vision)
- No council of government
- Emotions tied to attention to Metro Denver
- Political boundaries do not match economic ones (NCEDC and Upstate Colorado Metro Mayors' Caucus)
- Less experience than Metro Denver in collective regional collaboration
- Recall proposed regional transportation authority: revenue sharing was a difficult issue
- Look at the way taxes are collected, shared, and not shared
- We're on the same ship
- Mistakes will prompt collaboration
- State law needs to change: tax restrictions on collaboration

Table 11

- Intergovernmental cooperation (barrier or opportunity)
- Education: access, valuation (preventing school disengagement)
- Need for growth of job market
- Focus on clean energy (without degradation of environment)

## APPENDIX B: DREAM WALL FEEDBACK

This appendix lists all of the ideas provided on the “dream wall.” Additionally, the cover of this report features a “word cloud” image that graphically represents many of the key words and ideas generated from this list of future dreams.

What would you like life to look like in 40 years in Northern Colorado? What would your dream be?

1. Area maintains its natural beauty, not destroyed by lack of vision; more thoughtful planning.
2. Great schools, wide open spaces, clean air and water, no poverty, and civility.
3. Thriving economy, system of Pk-20 Education and Western way of life.
4. Mirror today's aesthetics of the region with better jobs, health care and closer community.
5. Old Hwy 287-Denver Southern and Old Hwy 85-Union Pacific corridors are again THE “Main Streets” to Northern Colorado.
6. A well educated population that is strong in “STEM” skills.
7. No. Colorado would have a regional shared vision and a spirit of independence while maintaining and expanding a sense of community.
8. A lot like it does now. Un-crowded, open space, and outdoor recreation.
9. Vibrant Ag/Urban area that works cooperatively.
10. Smart Folks. Smart Region.
11. Blue skies, green open spaces, and happy people.
12. Local communities planning for and implementing plans for a fossil fuel descent with energy conservation, renewable energy resources, and local food production.
13. Walk to goods and services. Take public transportation to DIA and Denver. Access to the mountains for hiking, fishing, camping, and skiing.
14. Where people work and play together with a sense of responsibility to each other and for the quality of their lives and their environments.
15. Educated workforce enjoying sustainable lifestyle that includes a high quality of life, culture, and connection with one another as a community.
16. Open spaces where our children and grandchildren can still experience the beauty of natural Colorado.
17. Make a modern logistical corridor (RR, warehousing, and manufacturing) parallel to I-25. Then develop the UP and BNSF corridors for passenger rail serving core urban areas.
18. Jobs, recreation, open space, and mountains.
19. A beautiful, intelligently planned environment that provides cultural, educational, economic, recreational, and healthy opportunities for its residents.
20. A sustainable economy with at least our current level of lifestyle. That provides opportunity for all.
21. Cities grow up, not out. Open space remains, lots of transit choices.
22. Good high paying jobs, good schools, good transportation including trails and high speed rail. Good farms and water.
23. Collaboration among organizations/non-profits. Open communication safe communities and schools.
24. Regional Transit.

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25. Economic opportunity.
26. Vibrant cultural centers and maintain the natural resources and recreation we enjoy today.
27. Great education that leads to great jobs that fund great municipal services and community amenities. This economic well being allows people to embrace diversity rather than fear it.
28. Interconnected bike and trail paths, people working close to where they live, affordable housing in most areas, well funded schools, and funding mechanisms for infrastructure.
29. A great family community with equality, education, employment and living standards while having access to ease of transportation.
30. Individual communities would preserve their cultures and geographically they would still be separated by continuous open lands. Transportation alternatives between communities within communities and to outside destinations would be with zero emission systems. Northern Colorado would be the international center of clean and renewable energy research and development.
31. Commuter rail around the Front Range and commuting city centers. Transit and bicycle walking routes make it easy to get around without a car. Wide variety of housing types. Population and employment have grown but with reduced reliance on cars. The Front Range also can't feel crowded. The air is cleaner and people are healthy.
32. Balanced rural/metropolitan growth that preserves the basic values and DNA of the region and provides the necessary services and equality of life.
33. With the addition of adequate employment and services, when 1 million more people move to this region it will continue to look physically similar to the way it looks today. The region will address challenges to every member of the community.
34. A region that values healthy citizens over wealthy citizens. Appreciation for a simple life.
35. A place where there is a healthy and well planned, educated, human community connected to a sustainable and local food/agricultural community and connected to rich, natural, and well managed open spaces.
36. Region which communicates, works together, and maximizes resources for the general good, understands its identity, and recognizes and respects each other's opportunities.
37. 40 years from now people will reflect on the foresight of our regional planning: shared infrastructure, shared resources, vibrant core downtowns reflective of each community's unique character.
38. The world community to encompass the areas being talked about today.
39. One large community organized together.
40. Get rid of Tabor.
41. Community(ies) that benefited because of leadership/investment by the community(ies) of 2011.
42. Growth not doubled, open space and ag preserved, soil restored, water conserved, alternative energy, alternative transport modes, all homes and commercial bldg. LEED certified.
43. My Dream, 40 Years: Jobs, quality of life (high), abundance of quality water, high quality medical system, integration of Hispanics, maintain and improve our educational system (greater emphasis on community colleges), and safe place to live and work.
44. Lovely and peaceful open spaces (especially high vantage points) from which to take in beautiful mountain vistas. (Wish I could have seen it 100 years ago!)
45. I'd like to see adequate jobs, quality education, and lots of recreational opportunities.
46. Identified, dense cities that are easily accessed through multi-modes (incl. rail) that have preserved the environmental health, created enhanced community health and wealth, and generated cultural diversity, excellent education and a wide spread focus on individual neighborhood health.

47. Overall: Award winning collaboration region, celebrating diversity of individuals and cultures and nature. Health: 1. High Value, continuously improving health care. 2. Continuity of care across the medical, dental, and mental health spectrum. 3. Patient owns own record. 4. Healthier engaged population (in wellness). Environment: 1. Wildlife corridors, community support and use of conservation to protect our beautiful natural environment and resources. 2. Low emission public and private transit throughout. 3. High density of populations with agriculture and open spaces between. Education: 1. Full community support of primary, secondary, and higher education as an investment in our future. 2. Innovative use of resources (human and fiscal) and education approaches in order to help every student achieve his/her goals and potential. 3. Invest in leadership. Collaboration: many sectors for profit and non-profit sectors as in Forces for Good book. (Thanks for asking! Thanks for doing this)
48. In forty years, I'd like to see: all the amenities that I have today, better job opportunities, and certainty that these things will continue.
49. An area that provides open space enough to breathe good education for all and a diverse culture.
50. Mountains can still be seen, compact development, lots of transportation choices, focus on wellness vs. disease, and thoughtful civic minded non-egocentric leaders.
51. A major center for local food, agricultural heritage, green jobs, sustainable energy, healthy urban and rural environments, walk able communities, active citizenry, rapid transit= A resilient human and natural community.
52. A clean, attractive environment where opportunities for work and pay can flourish and families can stay intact.
53. Safe, profitable, and fun to live in.
54. Riding public transportation everywhere-esp. when commuting between Fort Collins and Greeley. "Absolutely!"
55. A region that's people recognize and appreciate the value of the community and our responsibility to leave the place we call home a better place than we found it. Thriving economies, well-stewarded natural resources, sound transportation modalities, healthy communities, and respectful of diversity of cultural resources.
56. Better educated workforce.
57. Courageous leaders that put in place long term plans for water (storage) and transportation (set aside alignments for rail and BRT now).
58. Ongoing strong commitment to educating all children and commitment to life long learning.
59. Well educated, balance of Ag. and primary jobs. Low/no poverty, and increase recreational opportunities.
60. Effective leadership and communication. Cooperation.
61. A region that works together under one brand name where each community remained unique, but worked together with all of the other communities to provide proper transportation modes, affordable housing, low crime, excellent health care and education, plenty of water for all, and air pollution under control.
62. End of sprawl mentality.
63. Equality, community, health, and education.
64. A family and community oriented environment that is safe and clean. The outdoor beauty we have today would still exist. Universal access to education and a bright future.
65. A community that realizes all of the important items to be sustainable and the ability to communicate between communities to achieve this.
66. N.I.S.P
67. A place of housing, transportation, health care, and entertainment choice. A place of identity with a strong and competitive economy.

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68. 40 years from now: Safe and healthy region with easy access for all citizens to jobs, housing, health care, education, and a variety of amenities.
69. Northern Colorado has set aside fears of working together; listened and heard each other; looked at all the scenarios and are moving in a direction to create a region that has protected its quality of life-environment, people, and agriculture.
70. In forty years, we have a regional brand known not only in Colorado but around the world and where cooperation among municipalities is at the highest level possible.
71. In 40 years (and before) there should be commuter rail to Denver and high speed rail from Cheyenne to El Paso through the cities. Most freight should use a direct rail line out on the plains.
72. Crime Free! No division of class. 99% healthy population.
73. Shared economic centers among cities and counties.
74. Homegrown educated talent-not just imported-and a region that celebrated diverse cultures. Latino and Somali...
75. We attracted a talented workforce that maintained economic viability of Northern Colorado. We solved transportation issues and we protected property rights. Sustained ag. heritage.
76. An attractive, well maintained infrastructure that supports a healthy lifestyle, smart growth, and economic vitality. UNC and CSU as economic contributors to a well educated workforce.
77. Educate our workforce rather than importing it.
78. Safe, sustainable, prosperous environment.
79. I'd like to see: Elbow room, clean and friendly, freedom of choice, de emphasis on growth, de emphasis on money, clean flowing rivers, wonderful schools, and low crime.
80. Plenty of water but strong sense of preservation.
81. 40 Years: There will be much less "parochialism" between towns (communities) and cultures in general. Younger citizens will merge together more readily. However, there will be strong cultural enclaves where outsiders are not welcome. These enclaves will co-exist by law.
82. Quality high tech jobs, energy jobs.
83. 40 Years: Laws city, state, and Fed will be more prohibitive of individual rights and pro-communal to the collective. Younger generations will acquiesce to the social-communal political environment. Individual rights will capitulate.