



City Council Work Session Agenda

January 20, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Emily Francis, Mayor
Julie Pignataro, District 2, Mayor Pro Tem
Chris Conway, District 1
Josh Fudge, District 3
Melanie Potyondy, District 4
Amy Hoeven, District 5
Anne Nelsen, District 6

Council Information Center (CIC)
300 Laporte Avenue, Fort Collins

Cablecast on FCTV
Channel 14 on Connexion
Channel 14 and 881 on Comcast

Carrie Daggett
City Attorney

Kelly DiMartino
City Manager

Delynn Coldiron
City Clerk

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION 6:00 PM

This Agenda was amended on January 16, 2026 to update the presentation for Item #1.

A) CALL MEETING TO ORDER

B) ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Trends and Forces

The purpose of this item is to share context of the current state of trends with Council in advance of their Council retreat on January 24, 2026.

2. Finance and Budget Onboarding

The purpose of this item is to provide information about finance concepts and the City's budget. Information will be provided on the following topics:

- Core Municipal Finance Concepts
- Roles and Functions in Fiscal Stewardship
- Current Budget Revenue and Expenses
- Financial Outlook

C) ANNOUNCEMENTS

D) ADJOURNMENT

Upon request, the City of Fort Collins will provide language access services for individuals who have limited English proficiency, or auxiliary aids and services for individuals with disabilities, to access City services, programs and activities. Contact 970.221.6515 (V/TDD: Dial 711 for Relay Colorado) for assistance. Please provide advance notice. Requests for interpretation at a meeting should be made by noon the day before.

A solicitud, la Ciudad de Fort Collins proporcionará servicios de acceso a idiomas para personas que no dominan el idioma inglés, o ayudas y servicios auxiliares para personas con discapacidad, para que puedan acceder a los servicios, programas y actividades de la Ciudad. Para asistencia, llame al

970.221.6515 (V/TDD: Marque 711 para Relay Colorado). Por favor proporcione aviso previo. Las solicitudes de interpretación en una reunión deben realizarse antes del mediodía del día anterior.

File Attachments for Item:

1. Trends and Forces

The purpose of this item is to share context of the current state of trends with Council in advance of their Council retreat on January 24, 2026.

January 20, 2026

WORK SESSION AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

City Council



STAFF

Kelly DiMartino, City Manager

SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION

Trends and Forces

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this item is to share context of the current state of trends with Council in advance of their Council retreat on January 24, 2026.

GENERAL DIRECTION SOUGHT AND SPECIFIC QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

1. What questions and feedback does Council have regarding the information shared?
2. Are there topics Council wishes to explore further in future Work Sessions?

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

This item provides the City Council with a foundational briefing on the "Trends and Forces" that currently shape the municipal environment. This context is presented as "pre-retreat" material to support the Council's upcoming priority setting process. This information frames the external realities facing the community and the organization and could serve as the lens through which Council evaluates its two year priorities during the upcoming Council retreat on January 24 and 31st.

This item ties directly into the next item on Financial Services.

NEXT STEPS

This is an informational item.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Common Sense Institute Report: A Snapshot of Fort Collins' Demographic Future, November 2025
2. Labor Market Profile, September 2025
3. Presentation



NOVEMBER 2025

A SNAPSHOT OF FORT COLLINS' DEMOGRAPHIC FUTURE

AUTHORS: COLE ANDERSON, CAITLIN HEREFORD & JUDAH WEIR

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Cole Anderson

Cole Anderson is Common Sense Institute's Deputy Director of Policy & Research. Prior to CSI, he attended the University of Denver where he double majored in economics and public policy. His work at CSI has covered a variety of topics including crime, healthcare, foster care, and workforce issues.

Caitlin Hereford

Caitlin Hereford is a CSI KIPP Intern.

Judah Weir

Judah Weir is a CSI Daniels Scholar Junior Fellow and a junior studying biology at Colorado State University. He is currently a research intern for Common Sense Institute, working on child care and school safety.

ABOUT COMMON SENSE INSTITUTE

Common Sense Institute is a non-partisan research organization dedicated to the protection and promotion of our economy. As a leading voice for free enterprise, CSI's mission is to examine the fiscal impacts of policies and laws and educate voters on issues that impact their lives.

CSI's founders were a concerned group of business and community leaders who observed that divisive partisanship was overwhelming policy-making and believed that sound economic analysis could help people make fact-based and *common sense* decisions.

CSI employs rigorous research techniques and dynamic modeling to evaluate the potential impact of these measures on the Colorado economy and individual opportunity.

TEAMS & FELLOWS STATEMENT

CSI is committed to independent, in-depth research that examines the impacts of policies, initiatives, and proposed laws so that Coloradans are educated and informed on issues impacting their lives. CSI's commitment to institutional independence is rooted in the individual independence of our researchers, economists, and fellows. At the core of CSI's mission is a belief in the power of the free enterprise system. CSI's work explores ideas that protect and promote jobs and the economy, and the CSI team and fellows take part in this pursuit of academic freedom. The CSI team's work is informed by data-driven research and evidence.

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INTRODUCTION

Once a relatively quiet area of Northern Colorado with a population of 187,000 in 1990, the Fort Collins Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) has grown into the main hub of Northern Colorado, with over 375,000 residents today. The Fort Collins MSA's strong community, vibrant mix of restaurants and breweries, and proximity to the mountains have attracted thousands of new residents and businesses leading to tremendous growth. However, the Fort Collins MSA, which is equivalent to Larimer County, faces a growing economic challenge: net migration (i.e., in-migration subtracted by out-migration) in 2025 is **26%** lower than pre-2020 levels (2009-2019). Despite this trend persisting across much of Colorado, nearby Greeley has seen more net migration than the pre-2020 average, despite keeping pace with the Fort Collins MSA in the past.

As growth slows and projected net migration becomes lower in the future, the Fort Collins MSA could face long-term consequences for its economic competitiveness, labor force sustainability, school enrollment, and overall growth potential.

KEY FINDINGS

- Migration into the Fort Collins MSA was **26%** lower in 2025 when compared with pre-2020 levels.
- By **2026**, the Greeley MSA is projected to surpass the Fort Collins MSA in population; by **2050**, the gap could widen to **100,000 people**.
- In February 2025, the Fort Collins MSA's average rent hit **\$1,904**, surpassing the Denver MSA's average rent of **\$1,890** for the first time, highlighting the rising cost of living in Fort Collins.
- Net migration into the Fort Collins MSA is projected to peak at **6,301** in 2027, then fall **42%** to **3,659** by 2050, tracking Colorado's broader slowdown.

A COMPARATIVE LOOK AT MIGRATION TRENDS ACROSS COLORADO METRO AREAS

Fort Collins has followed the broader state trend of slower growth than prior to 2020. Figure 1 presents net migration figures for the Fort Collins MSA alongside several other Colorado MSAs. All areas covered by each MSA can be found in the appendix of this report.

The data compare net migration projections for 2025 to trends pre-2020. In 2025, Grand Junction and Greeley were the only MSAs in Colorado to experience a positive change in net migration, while the rest of the MSAs reported less migration than pre-2020. The Denver-Aurora-Lakewood MSA, Pueblo MSA, and the Fort Collins MSA observed similar negative net changes, and the Boulder MSA experienced the largest decrease in net migration at 99.5% compared to pre-2020. This indicates that the pace at which individuals are moving to Fort Collins and other popular Colorado areas has slowed. In contrast, the Greeley and Grand Junction MSAs have seen an inverse net migration trend between pre-2020 and 2025, with the pace of net migration increasing by 24% and 87% respectively. The Greeley and Grand Junction MSAs may have blunted certain economic or social factors that have caused net migration to decrease across Colorado.

FIGURE 1.

Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)	Average Net Migration 2009-2019	Net Migration: 2025	Percent Change in Net Migration: 2009-2019 Versus 2025
Fort Collins	4,537	3,938	-13.2%
Greeley	4,710	5,829	23.8%
Boulder	2,193	12	-99.5%
Colorado Springs	6,512	4,841	-25.7%
Denver-Aurora-Lakewood	24,344	13,776	-43.4%
Grand Junction	917	1,712	86.7%
Pueblo	3,359	666	-80.2%

Source: Colorado State Demography Office, 2025

Migration Slowdown for Fort Collins

Fort Collins' net migration continues to remain lower than pre-2020 levels. Net migration reached a low of 1,896 in 2024 and is expected to remain slightly below pre-2020 levels in the future, as shown in Figure 3. Net migration is projected to rise in the MSA in 2025 and continue through 2027, then slow thereafter.

Figure 3 presents a forward-looking projection of net migration for the Fort Collins MSA. Current forecasts for Fort Collins are notably optimistic in the near term, anticipating a 52.6% increase in net migration from 2024 through 2026. Net migration is expected to peak in 2027 at 6,301 individuals, followed by a sharp 26% decline by 2029. Beginning in 2029, Fort Collins' net migration is projected to enter a period of gradual decline, ultimately reaching 3,659 by 2050.ⁱ

As net migration and birth rates slow while deaths increase, the rate of population growth in the Fort Collins MSA is expected to decline (see Figure 4). Fort Collins could see slower K-12 enrollment growth, with related headwinds for funding, staffing, and facility use.

These projections carry important economic implications. A surge in net migration over the next several years could support short-term labor force growth, consumer demand, and housing market activity. However, the anticipated decline beginning in 2029 suggests that this boost may be temporary.

FIGURE 2.

Fort Collins MSA Net Migration: 2015-2025

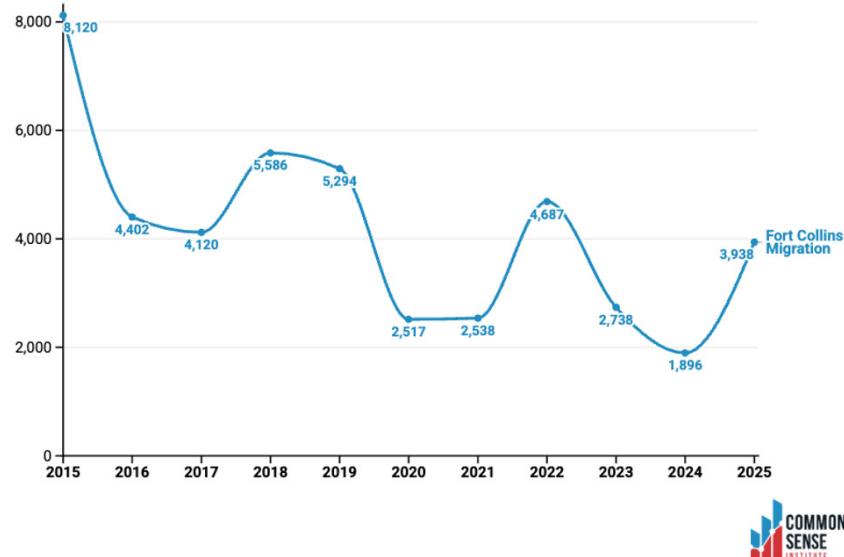
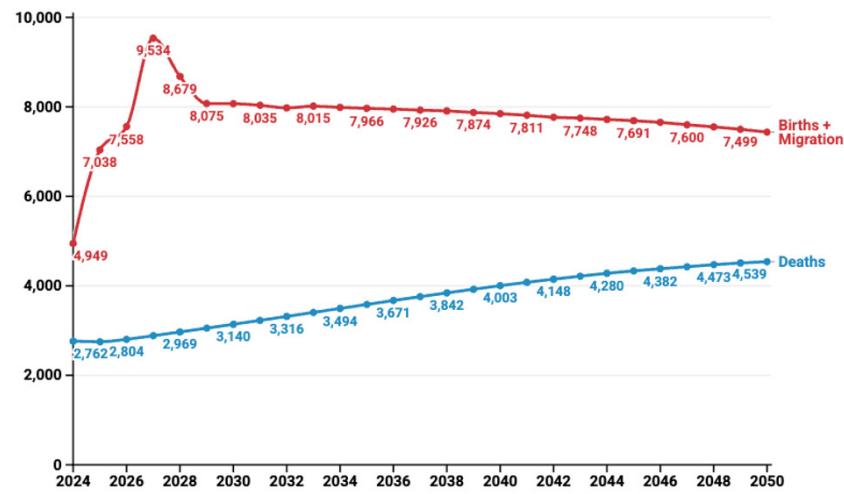
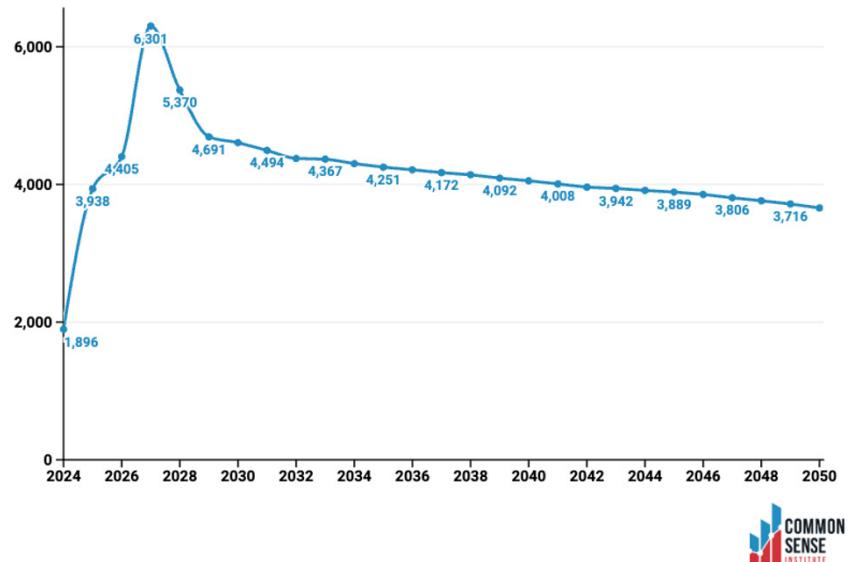


FIGURE 3.

Projected Growth: Fort Collins MSA 2024-2050



ration slows, Fort Collins may face tighter labor markets, reduced economic dynamism, and greater fiscal pressure on public services, particularly as the population ages. Slower population growth may also impact long-term planning for infrastructure, education, and housing supply. Lower net migration can be especially difficult for K-12 schools, as stagnation in enrollment can lead to closures. These issues emphasize the need for policies that retain and attract residents.

FIGURE 4.**Fort Collins MSA Projected Net Migration 2024-2050**

FORT COLLINS VS. ITS COLORADO COMPETITORS

The Fort Collins MSA is projected to be outpaced in population by the Greeley MSA. Population estimates show that in 2026, the Greeley MSA will overtake the Fort Collins MSA in population, 385,000 to 382,000 residents respectively. While Fort Collins remains an attractive place to live, its rising cost of living may be pushing prospective residents toward surrounding cities, most notably Greeley, which is forecast to see substantial growth between 2024 and 2050.

The Greeley MSA, Fort Collins MSA's main northern Colorado neighbor, is predicted to have 100,000 more people than Fort Collins by 2050. Boulder is expected to barely increase in population, with the gap between Boulder and Fort Collins growing from 46,000 in 2024 to 116,000 in 2050.

FIGURE 5.

Notable Colorado MSA Population 2024 & 2050

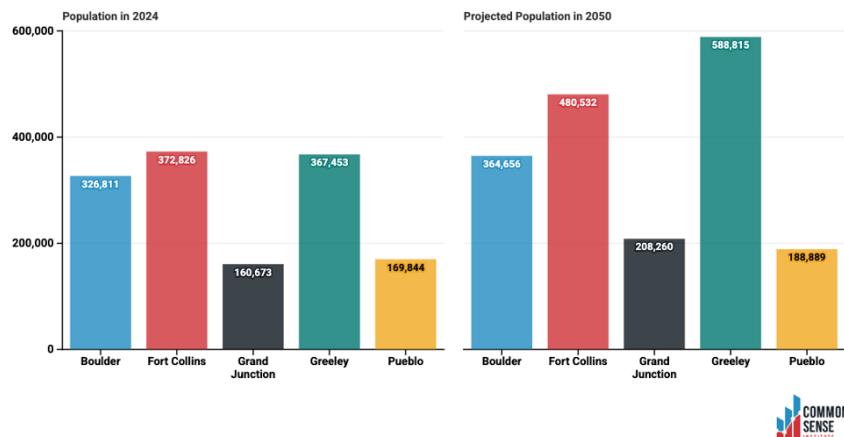
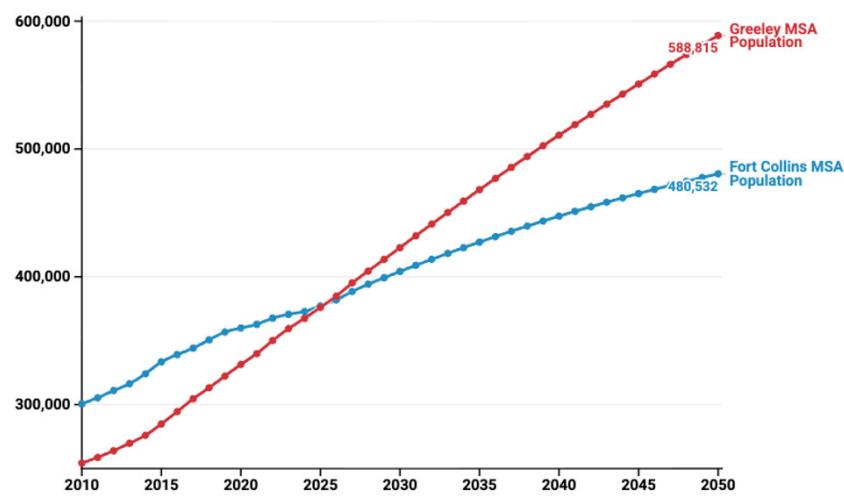


FIGURE 6.

Fort Collins MSA Versus Greeley MSA Population 2010-2025



Item 1.ollins' positive, albeit slowing, net migration indicates it is still a desirable place to live; however, the pace of growth highlights issues, including a high cost of living, that may have pushed potential residents to other places. The rise of remote work spurred by COVID-19 may have favored Fort Collins by increasing housing demand. This likely pushed housing prices up, which, in turn, may have priced out lower-income buyers and made the city less attractive to those, particularly younger Coloradans, looking to relocate.

The average home in the Fort Collins MSA costs \$549,000 as of September 2025, an increase of nearly \$180,000 since 2017, and is now nearly \$6,000 more expensive than the average Denver home price of \$543,000. The nearby Greeley MSA offers more affordable housing, with an average home price of \$498,000, nearly \$50,000

less than in Fort Collins. In September 2025, Greeley's average rent was \$1,798—about 7% cheaper than Fort Collins', which was \$1,935. Cheaper housing, along with access to many of the qualities that make the northern Front Range a desirable place to live, may be providing Greeley an advantage over Fort Collins in terms of growth.

Weld County, home to Greeley, is the only county in Colorado experiencing a rising birth rate, giving it stronger long-term growth prospects.ⁱⁱ Meanwhile, Fort Collins' birth rates have slowed, sitting at 8.3 births per 1,000 in 2025, down from 10.3 per 1,000 in 2015.

The most recent data reflect a slight cooling of rent prices in Fort Collins and Denver. However, Figure 7 shows that, in February 2025, rent prices in Fort Collins surpassed those in Denver for the first time. This fact could be driving potential residents to Greeley and other

FIGURE 7.

Average Monthly Rent Price since 2015

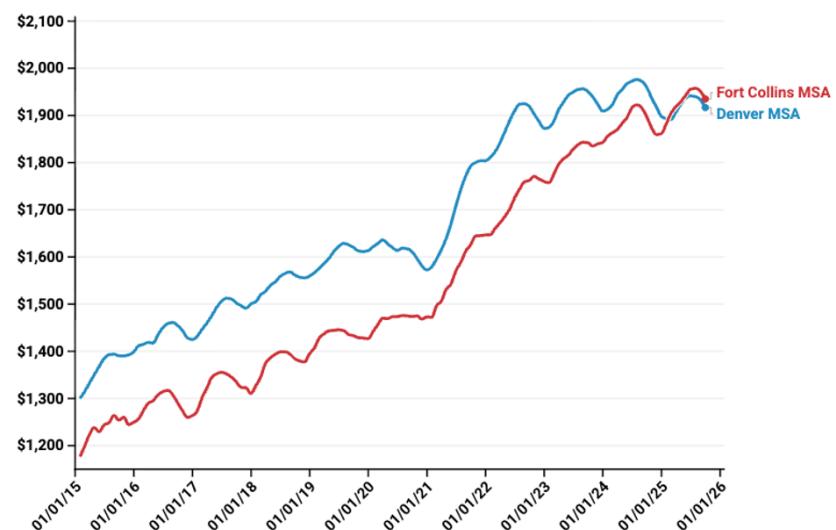
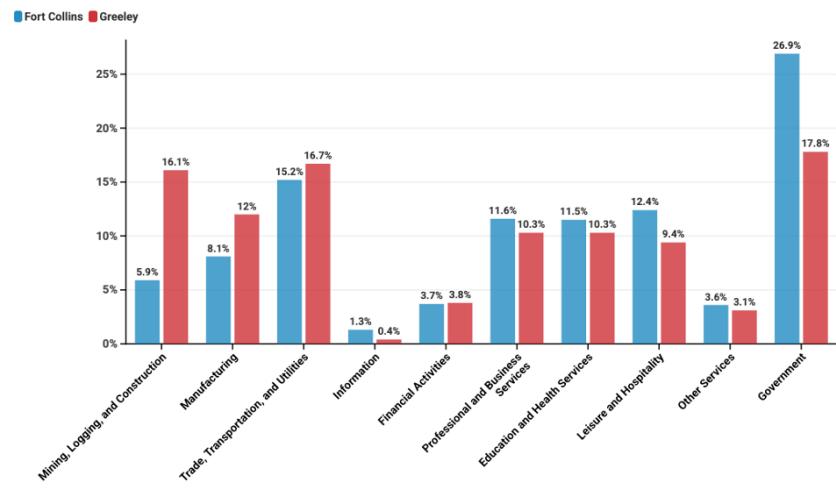


FIGURE 8.

Share of Workers in Nonfarm Job Categories



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics



Item 1. er areas, reflecting a scenario like the one in Denver, where rising housing costs have for years prompted residents and potential movers to choose more affordable locales. Since 2015, amid 39% inflation, rent prices have risen by 47% in the Denver MSA and 64% in the Fort Collins MSA.

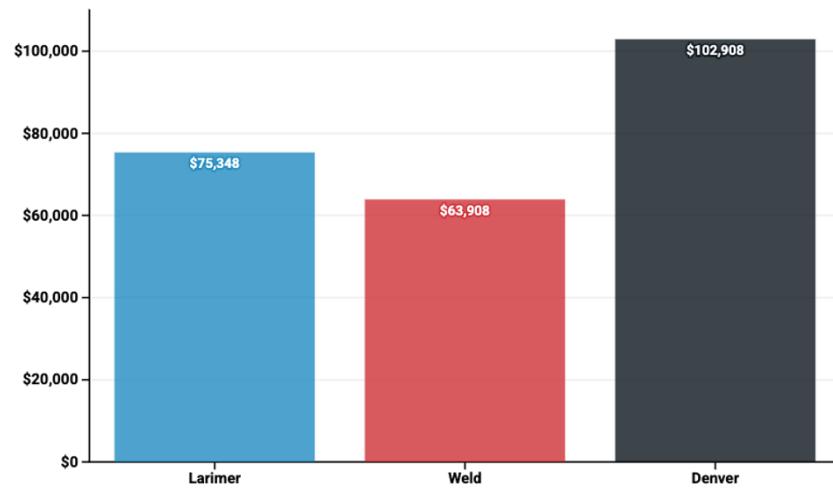
Figure 8 visualizes the job categories of people living in Fort Collins and Greeley. Fort Collins has more workers employed in traditionally white-collar categories, while Greeley has more workers in traditionally blue-collar industries. As of January 2025, the trade, transportation, and utilities industry was the highest-employing nonfarm category in Colorado.ⁱⁱⁱ When compared with Fort Collins, Greeley has 173% more jobs in mining, logging, and construction, and 48% more in manufacturing. However, it is important to note that a significant portion of these workers likely commute to places outside of their respective counties given the close proximity to the metro area.

The annual average wages for 2024 in Larimer and Weld counties are shown in Figure 9. Workers in Larimer County, where Fort Collins is, made an average of 16.4% more than those in Weld County, where Greeley is located. It's possible that blue-collar workers in Greeley may be choosing to live there rather than in Fort Collins because average wages are lower, and Fort Collins' cost of living is higher. If Fort Collins has a higher cost of living, then people in industries that pay less are going to choose to live in an area where there are more job opportunities and more affordable living.

FIGURE 9.

Average Wage by County 2024

Larimer, Weld, and Denver Counties



Source: County Employment and Wages in Colorado — Fourth Quarter 2024



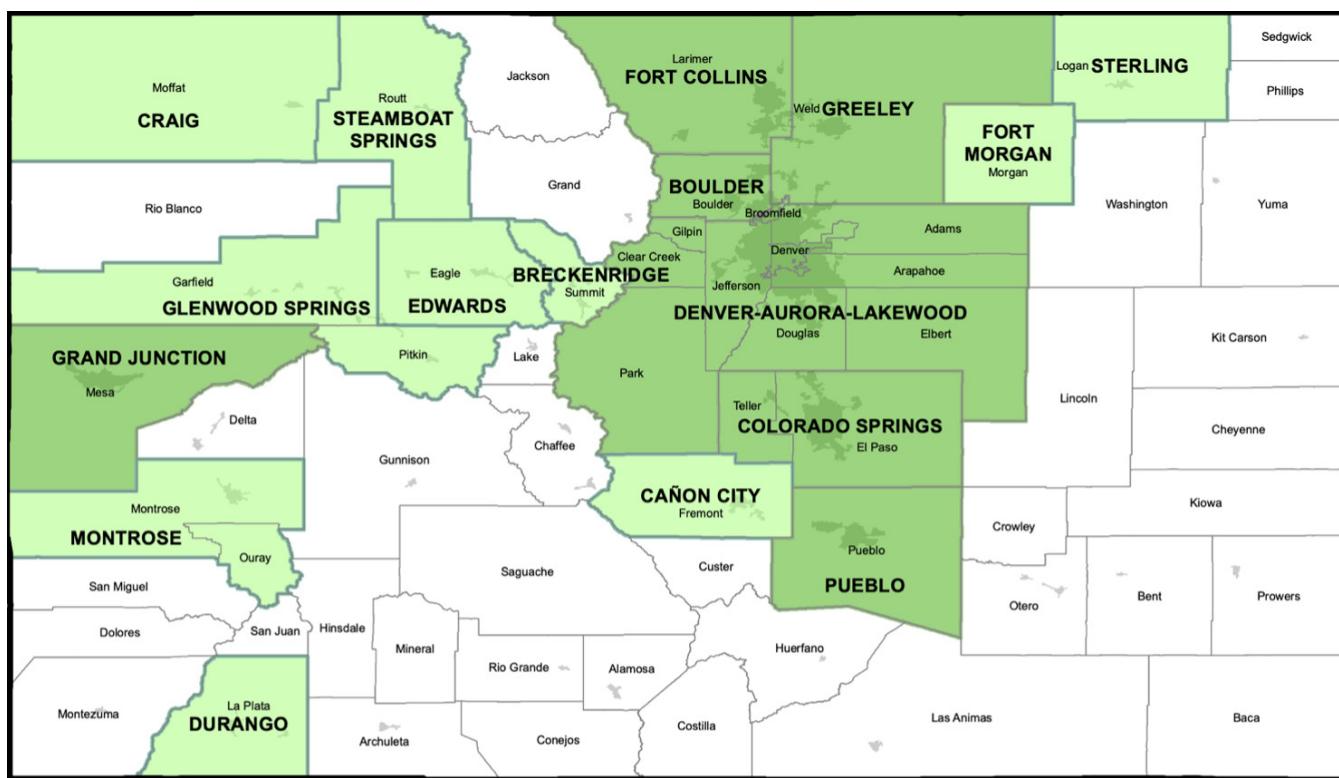
BOTTOM LINE

While the Fort Collins MSA is still continuing to grow, its slowed pace of net migration brings with it possible negative implications, including a reduction in labor force growth and a potential for slowing K-12 student enrollment. Fort Collins has typically been seen as a cheap alternative to Denver; now it's becoming more expensive and is experiencing the same decline in growth as much of Colorado. Meanwhile, its neighbor, Greeley, continues to grow at a high pace.

The slowing growth in Fort Collins suggests that, despite the potential to benefit from the shift away from urban centers, pressures such as housing affordability and perceptions of livability may be playing a greater role than in competing cities, mainly those in Greeley and Weld County. As migration continues to slow, it will be essential for local policymakers to keep a close eye on these patterns and address the root causes that are dissuading potential residents from moving to Fort Collins.

Approaching this dilemma with a targeted focus on workforce development, housing policy, and regional planning could yield effective results in improving growth numbers and supporting long-term economic resilience in Fort Collins.

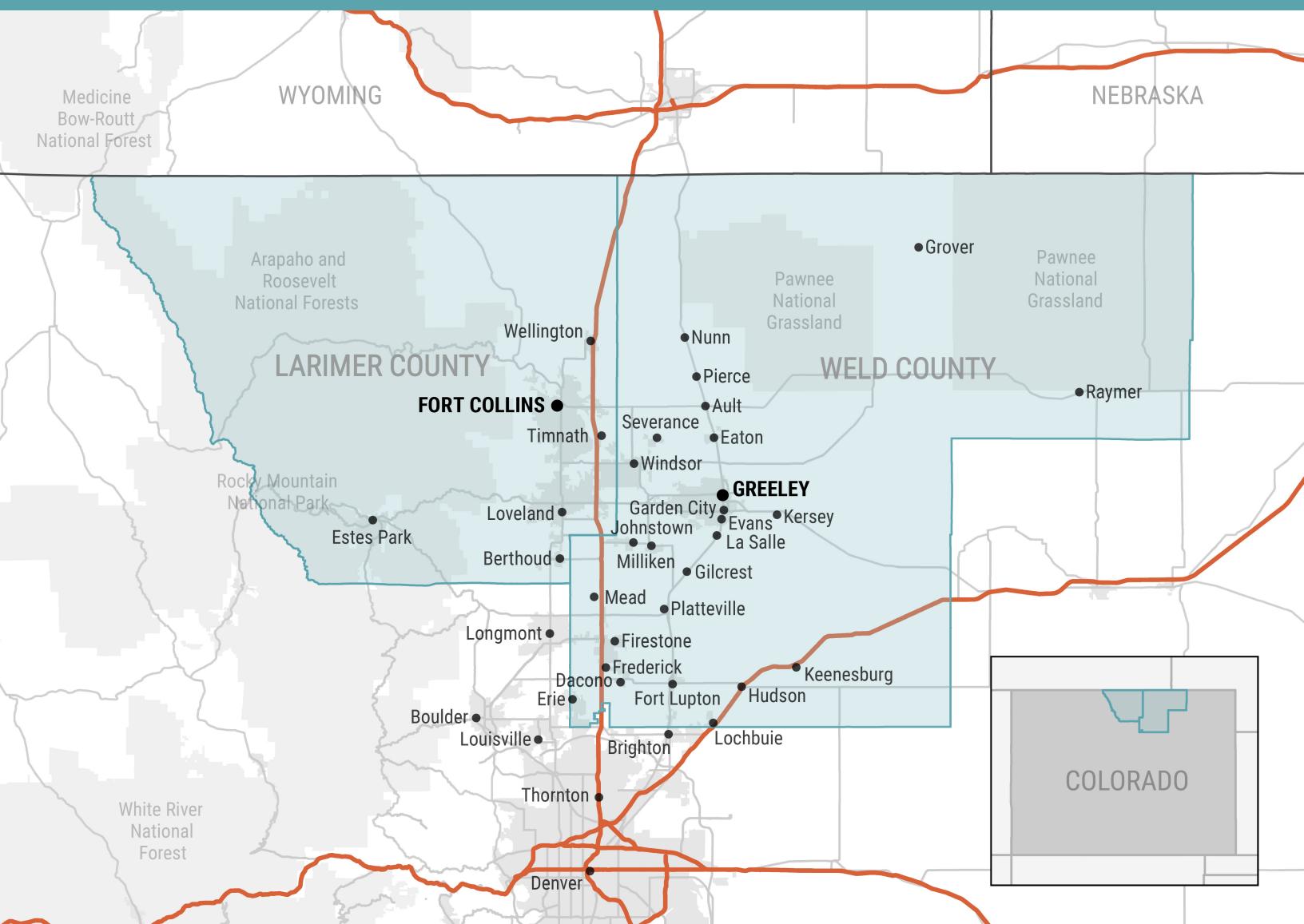
APPENDIX



- i. U.S. Census Bureau, Colorado State Demography Office, 2025.
- ii. <https://www.commonsenseinstituteus.org/colorado/research/housing-and-our-community/weld-county-in-context-an-outlier-within-colorado>
- iii. <https://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.co.htm>

LABOR MARKET PROFILE

Northern Colorado



PROJECT SPONSORS



300 E. Olive Street
Fort Collins, CO 80524
(970) 416-2164
<https://www.fcgov.com/>

Nestled at the base of the Rocky Mountains in Northern Colorado, the city of **Fort Collins** is known for its high quality of life, vibrant college-town atmosphere, and strong connection to nature and outdoor recreation. The city boasts a lively downtown with historic architecture, a thriving craft brewery scene, and a rich cultural landscape. Key industries include high tech, manufacturing, and emerging sectors like clean energy and biosciences, supported by major employers such as Colorado State University and various healthcare and tech companies.



225 South Meldrum
Fort Collins, CO 80521
(970) 482-3746
<https://fortcollinschamber.com/>

The **Fort Collins Area Chamber of Commerce** is the leading membership-based business organization in Northern Colorado. Rooted in ownership and leadership by its members, the Chamber is a dynamic and forward-focused organization. Its diverse membership includes businesses of all sizes and types, ranging from sole proprietors to large multinational corporations, from locally owned retailers to internationally renowned high-tech firms. Embracing both brand-new startups and longstanding companies, including some that have been operating since its founding in 1904, the Chamber values and supports businesses at every stage of their journey.



200 W. Oak Street
Fort Collins, CO 80521
(970) 498-6600
<https://www.larimer.gov/>

Located in north central Colorado, **Larimer County** is the state's sixth-largest county by population and a cornerstone of Northern Colorado's economic strength. Spanning 2,640 square miles from the fertile plains to the Continental Divide, the county encompasses vibrant urban centers, thriving mountain communities, and some of Colorado's most productive farmland. As both a gateway to the Rocky Mountains and a growing metropolitan corridor, Larimer County offers an attractive environment for business investment, talent development, and quality of life. The County's economic and workforce development ecosystem spanning training, skills development, and employer partnerships aims to ensure residents and businesses thrive in a competitive, rapidly changing economy.

Cover: Regional map created by TIP Strategies, patterned after the Northern Colorado Regional Economic Development Initiative [regional definition map](#).

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TIP Strategies, Inc., is a privately held Austin-based firm providing consulting and advisory services to public and private sector clients. Established in 1995, the firm's core competencies are strategic planning for economic development, talent strategies, organizational development, resiliency planning, and equity initiatives.

Contact

TIP Strategies
 13492 N Hwy 183, Suite 120-254, Austin, TX 78750
 PH: +1 512 3439113
www.tipstrategies.com

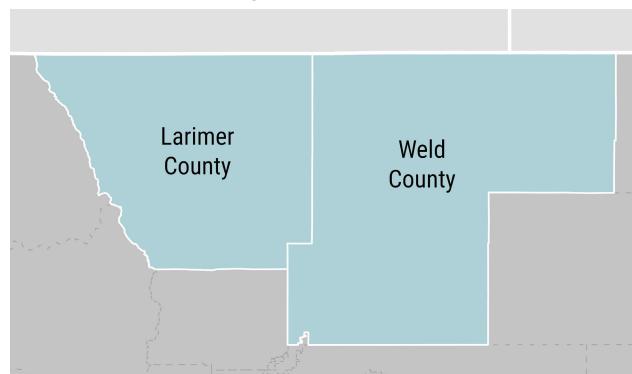
Project Contributors

Tom Stellman, CEO and Founder
 Erica Colston, Consultant
 Reece Neathery, Analyst

ABOUT THIS WORK

In preparation for a Northern Colorado talent strategy, local and regional partners commissioned TIP Strategies (TIP) to update a two-county workforce data analysis conducted as part of a strategy published in 2017. This *Labor Market Profile* synthesizes quantitative findings from an extensive analysis of workforce data for the Northern Colorado region that combines state and federal sources with job postings data, offering a real-time window into employer hiring needs. Insights from the data analysis will support the identification of workforce development priorities and provide context for potential next steps to be designed through a stakeholder-aligned, partnership-driven regional strategy.

Figure 1. Two-County Northern Colorado Region

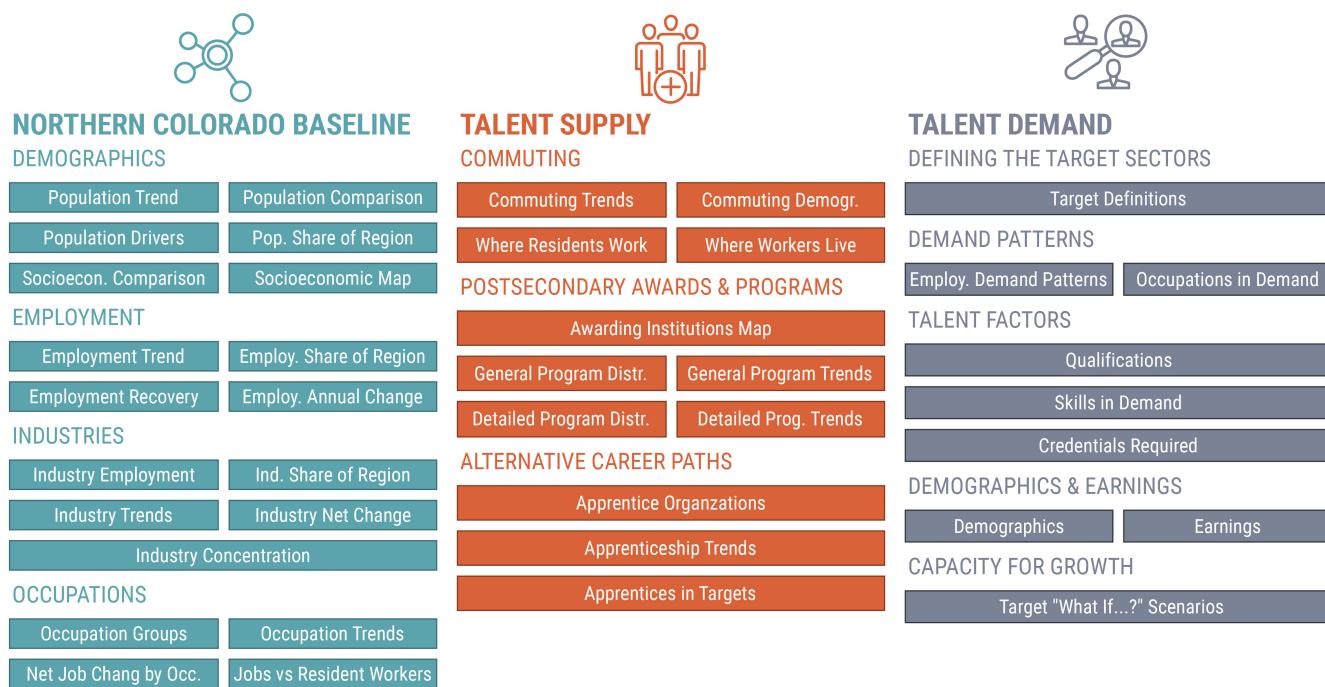


Source(s): TIP Strategies, Inc.

DATA DELIVERABLES

The primary deliverable of the engagement was the [Northern Colorado Workforce Analysis](#). Provided as an interactive data visualization, the menu of which is shown as Figure 2, this analysis offers a robust look at the baseline characteristics of the Northern Colorado labor market as well as factors influencing the supply and demand of talent across Larimer and Weld Counties. The baseline analysis provides traditional demographic, socioeconomic, and employment data. The supply analysis includes an examination of commuting patterns, postsecondary completions, and apprenticeship data. Finally, TIP's demand analysis relies on a query of a two-year trend in job postings data to measure occupational demand and skillsets in target sectors, identified by curated, representative lists of regional employers.

Figure 2. Northern Colorado Workforce Analysis Menu



The workforce data update was also informed by an additional, custom analytical tool, [Northern Colorado Job Quality and Access \(JQA\)](#), prepared by TIP. The JQA's focus on occupational data provides insights into the different factors affecting job quality (such as earnings, career opportunity, and job stability) and accessibility (as measured by barriers to entry and the demographic composition of the occupation) for more than 700 detailed occupations in the two-county region. This interactive analysis is designed to promote equitable growth and opportunity by helping stakeholders obtain a better understanding of job quality and accessibility. The interactive nature of the *Northern Colorado Workforce Analysis* and the JQA makes contextualized data available for better-informed decision making.

MOVING FORWARD

Building on the updated workforce data analysis commissioned by the project sponsors, the region's workforce development coalition, NoCo Works, is moving forward to develop a regional talent strategy. This *Labor Market Profile* describes the key findings, summarized in Figure 3, from TIP's quantitative analysis of Northern Colorado's labor market. As a core component of the workforce development strategic planning process, the quantitative data and insights will inform the design of strategic workforce development opportunities, helping communities develop talent, strengthen career pathways, and meet the workforce needs of industry. The remainder of this profile expands on these findings and discusses broad structural changes shaping labor markets around the country, including in Northern Colorado.

Figure 3. Labor Market Profile Key Findings

- 1** Weld County is becoming the driver of population growth in the Northern Colorado region.
- 2** Northern Colorado benefits from the complementary demographic strengths of its counties.
- 3** Northern Colorado's industries vary significantly by sector and location.
- 4** Fort Collins is a net importer of labor, including work-from-home, while Weld is an exporter.
- 5** Regional demand for labor varies across the six industry sectors of opportunity.
- 6** Workforce needs of employers in opportunity sectors skew toward higher education.
- 7** Twelve occupations cut across multiple opportunity sectors.
- 8** Regional postsecondary program completions generally align with opportunity sectors.

Source(s): TIP Strategies, Inc.

TIP's quantitative analysis is only one component of the first phase of the strategic planning process. Using its three-phase planning model—discovery, opportunity, and implementation—the firm will build on the data analysis through stakeholder engagement and best practice identification to develop the regional talent strategy. TIP's engagement with the community began at the Fort Collins Area Chamber of Commerce's Talent Summit in April 2025. As the process continues, targeted engagement with industry, education, workforce, and economic development partners will also influence the creation of a regional framework, designed to drive implementation of strategic workforce development opportunities across Northern Colorado.

FINDINGS

To provide context to the engagement's primary quantitative deliverables, TIP compiled high-level findings on regional and national trends that influence Northern Colorado's labor market.

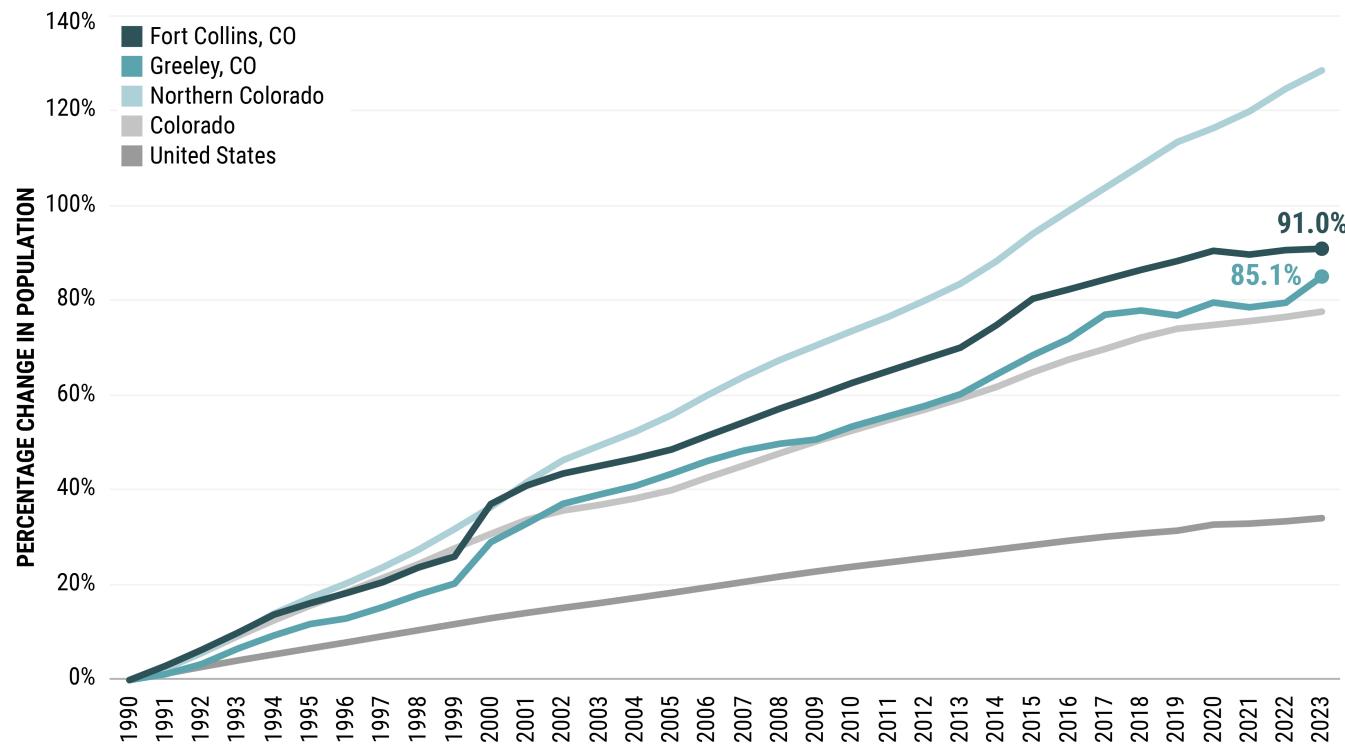
REGIONAL TRENDS

The interactive *Northern Colorado Workforce Analysis* provides a deep dive on characteristics of the regional labor market, including demographics, employment (by industry and occupational groups), commuting, postsecondary completions, and demand for talent. This section highlights factors that will shape the region's workforce development priorities and guide decision making about future investments.

Weld County is becoming the driver of population growth in the Northern Colorado region.

The population of Northern Colorado, consisting of Larimer and Weld Counties, has more than doubled since 1990 and increased by 30 percent since 2010 (Figure 4). The region's high quality of life, the enrollment growth at Colorado State University, and a wealth of economic opportunity afforded to residents have all yielded years of steady population increases. Though Fort Collins has long been a driver of the region's population increase, the city's growth has begun to show signs of struggle in the current decade. Over the same period, the broader Northern Colorado region has seen rapid and uninterrupted growth since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 4. Comparative Population Change

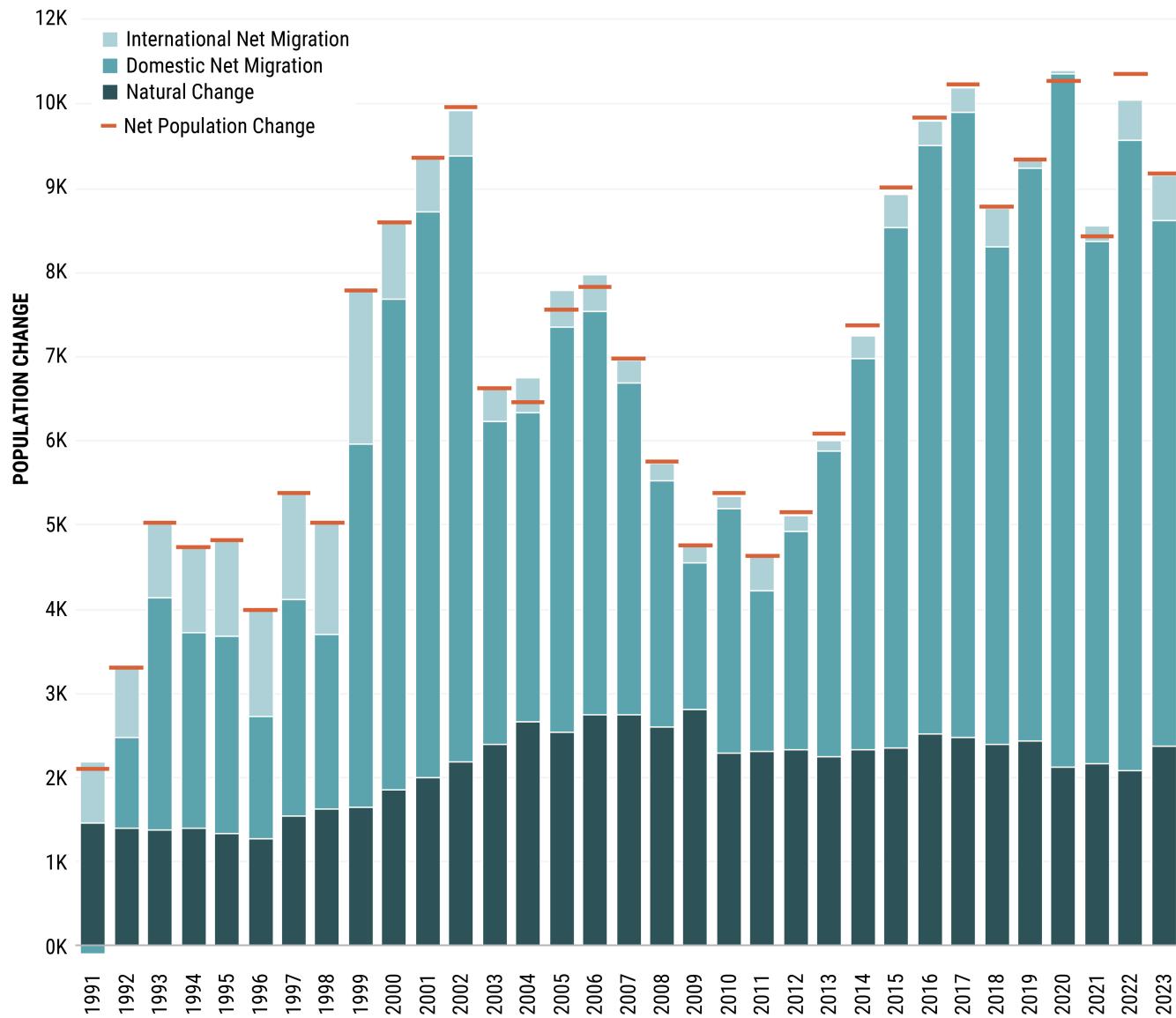


Source(s): US Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program; Moody's Analytics; TIP Strategies, Inc.

Note(s): Population estimates prior to 2010 are sourced from Moody's Analytics. Estimates from 2010 to 2023 are sourced from the Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program vintages 2020 and 2023. The Northern Colorado region consists of Larimer and Weld Counties.

In more recent years, Northern Colorado's population gains have been largely driven by ongoing growth in Weld County, though the population of Larimer County continues to climb. Larimer County itself has added more than 70,000 residents since 2010, driven in large part by the growth of its largest municipalities, Fort Collins and Loveland. However, the county has begun to see its growth rate diminish in recent years. At the same time, Weld County has seen continued growth as its positive natural change has remained stable, and its domestic net migration has remained high following a sharp increase in the early 2010s (Figure 5). Weld County has added over 100,000 residents since 2010 compared to Larimer's 70,000, with the two counties' growth rates diverging since 2020.

Figure 5. Weld County, Colorado, Drivers of Population Change



Source(s): US Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program; Moody's Analytics; TIP Strategies, Inc.

Note(s): Natural change is the difference between annual births and deaths. Total population change includes a residual (a change in population that cannot be attributed to any specific demographic component). Residual change is not shown in the chart but is included in the net population change shown by the red bars. 2010 and 2020 components are estimated based on a 12-month projection of the 2nd quarter (the period between the Census and the mid-year estimate) that is not seasonally adjusted.

Northern Colorado benefits from the complementary demographic strengths of its counties.

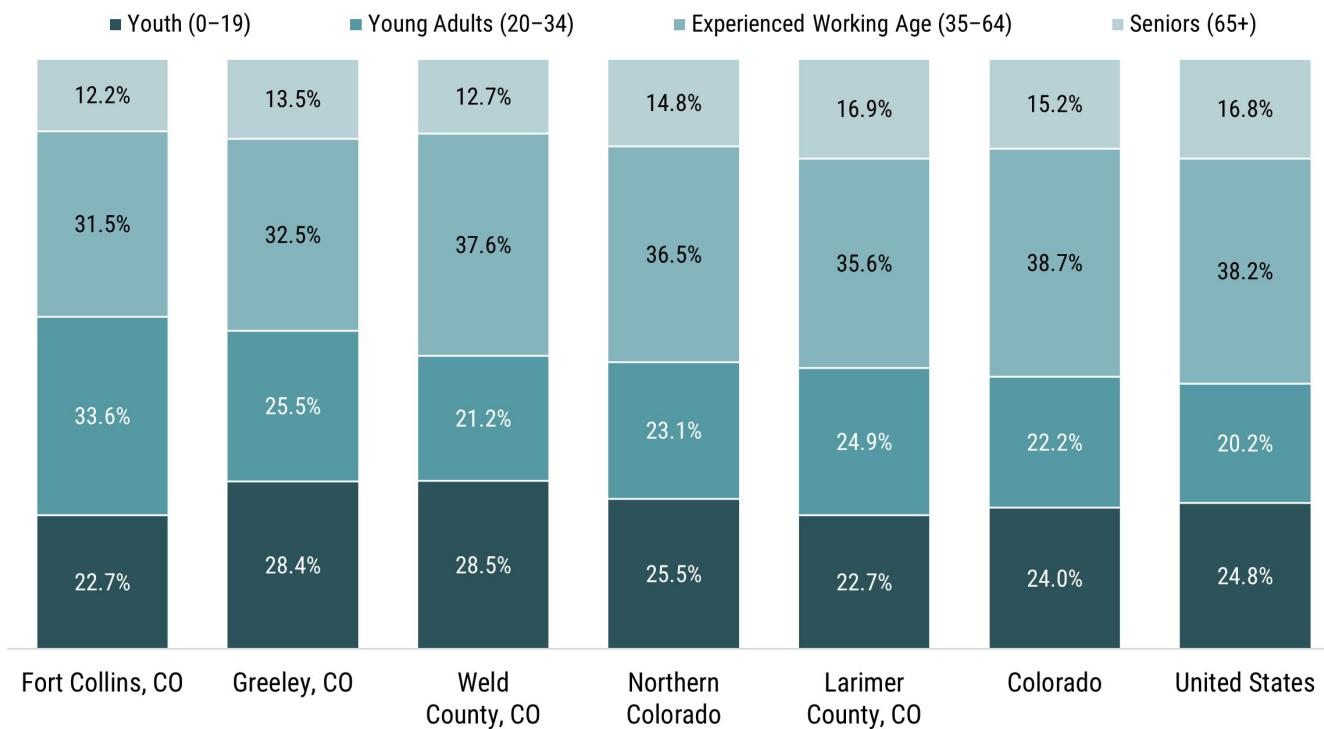
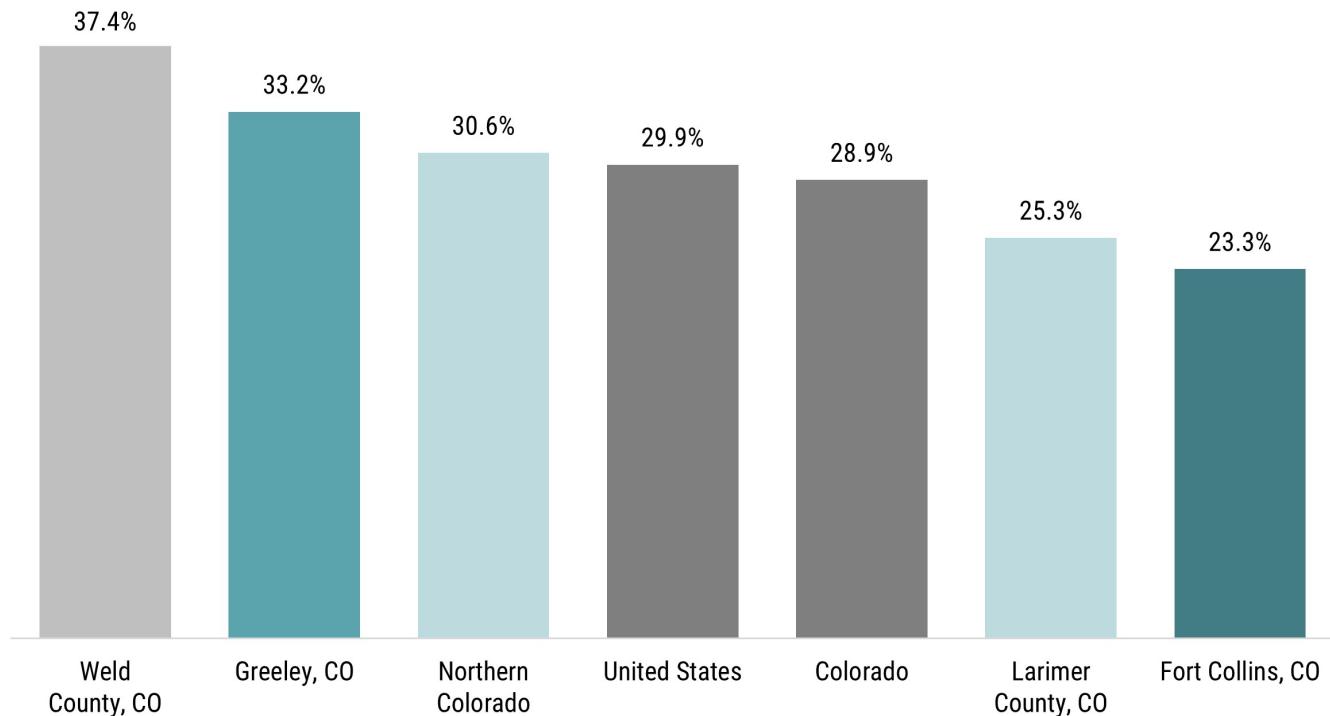
Fort Collins' status as a university town is underscored by its socioeconomic makeup. Within the region, the city is alone among its benchmark geographies in its large share of young adults—residents age 20 through 34 make up more than one third of the city's population (Figure 6, page 6). Among comparison geographies, the city has the smallest share of married households and is the only geography where less than a quarter of all households have children (Figure 7, page 6). The share of Fort Collins residents below the poverty line (16.0 percent) is higher than that of the Northern Colorado region (10.1 percent). However, the similarity in the share of SNAP-receiving households between the two geographies (7.2 percent citywide compared to 7.5 percent regionally) suggests a multitude of residents in Fort Collins who are not impoverished in the traditional sense, such as full-time students. In an era of workforce constraints, these demographics can be valuable for prospective employers. As explained on page 16, university towns like Fort Collins provide a source of much-needed skilled workers entering the labor market, thus affording regions like Northern Colorado a talent retention advantage over locations that lack similar institutional drivers.

In contrast to the city of Fort Collins, Weld County is home to more young families, and Greeley's status as a university town is less pronounced in the socioeconomic data. Among comparisons, the county has both the largest share of married households and households with children. Weld County has a large share of youth, with well over one quarter of the county's residents aged 19 or younger (Figure 6). Though Greeley, the seat of Weld County, is home to Northern Colorado University, its share of residents under the age of 25 that are enrolled in college or graduate school (25.2 percent) is less than one half that of Fort Collins (52.0 percent). Additionally, Greeley's comparatively high share of households with children (33.2 percent) and its corresponding shares of residents below the poverty line (14.7 percent) and households receiving SNAP (13.6 percent) suggest that the city is less demographically dominated by its university than Fort Collins.

Weld County's housing stock is relatively new; nearly a quarter of all housing units were built in 2010 or later. While the county's median household income (\$93,287) exceeds that of the Northern Colorado region (\$92,214), both its median value of owned homes (\$444,500) and median monthly rent (\$1,469) are lower than the respective regional values (\$489,939 and \$1,605), making it a comparatively affordable option for families who wish to live in Northern Colorado. Additionally, over 30 percent of Weld County residents are Hispanic, a significantly higher share than the county's comparison regions. Weld County also has a relatively high rate of foreign-born residents for the Northern Colorado region, at 9.1 percent.

Figure 6. Age Distribution, 2023

Sorted by the combined share of youth and young adults

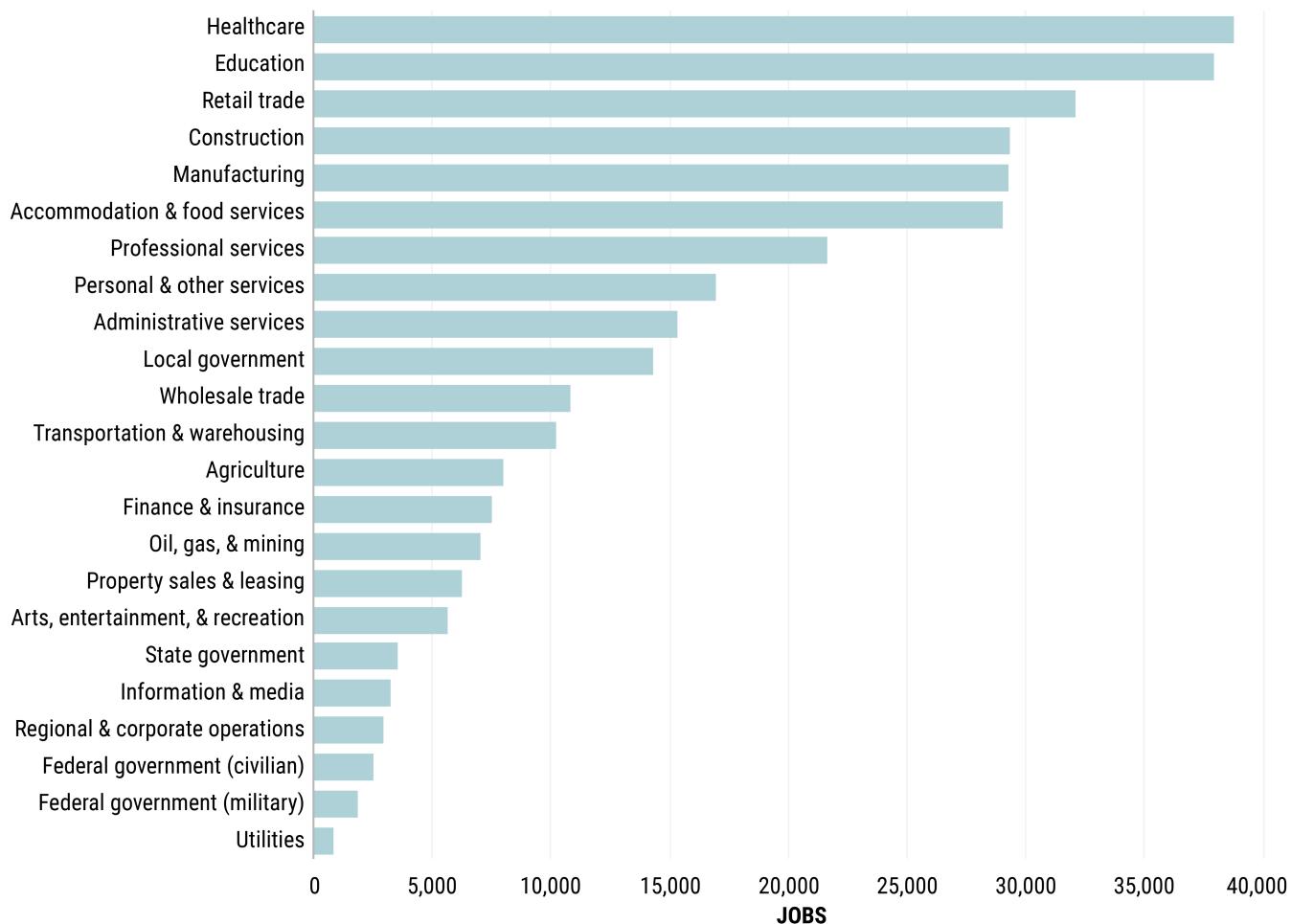
**Figure 7. Households with Children, 2023**

Source(s): Both figures—2023 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year sample; TIP Strategies, Inc.

Northern Colorado's industries vary significantly by sector and location.

The three largest industry sectors in Northern Colorado—Healthcare, Education, and Retail Trade—each employed upwards of 30,000 regional workers in 2024. These top performers were followed closely by three sectors that were approaching this 30,000-employee threshold: Construction, Manufacturing, and Accommodation & Food Services (Figure 8). While these top employment sectors may be close in size, they are distributed across the two-county region in a way that not only explains recent growth patterns but also suggests opportunities for future workforce development.

Figure 8. Industry Sector Employment in Northern Colorado, 2024



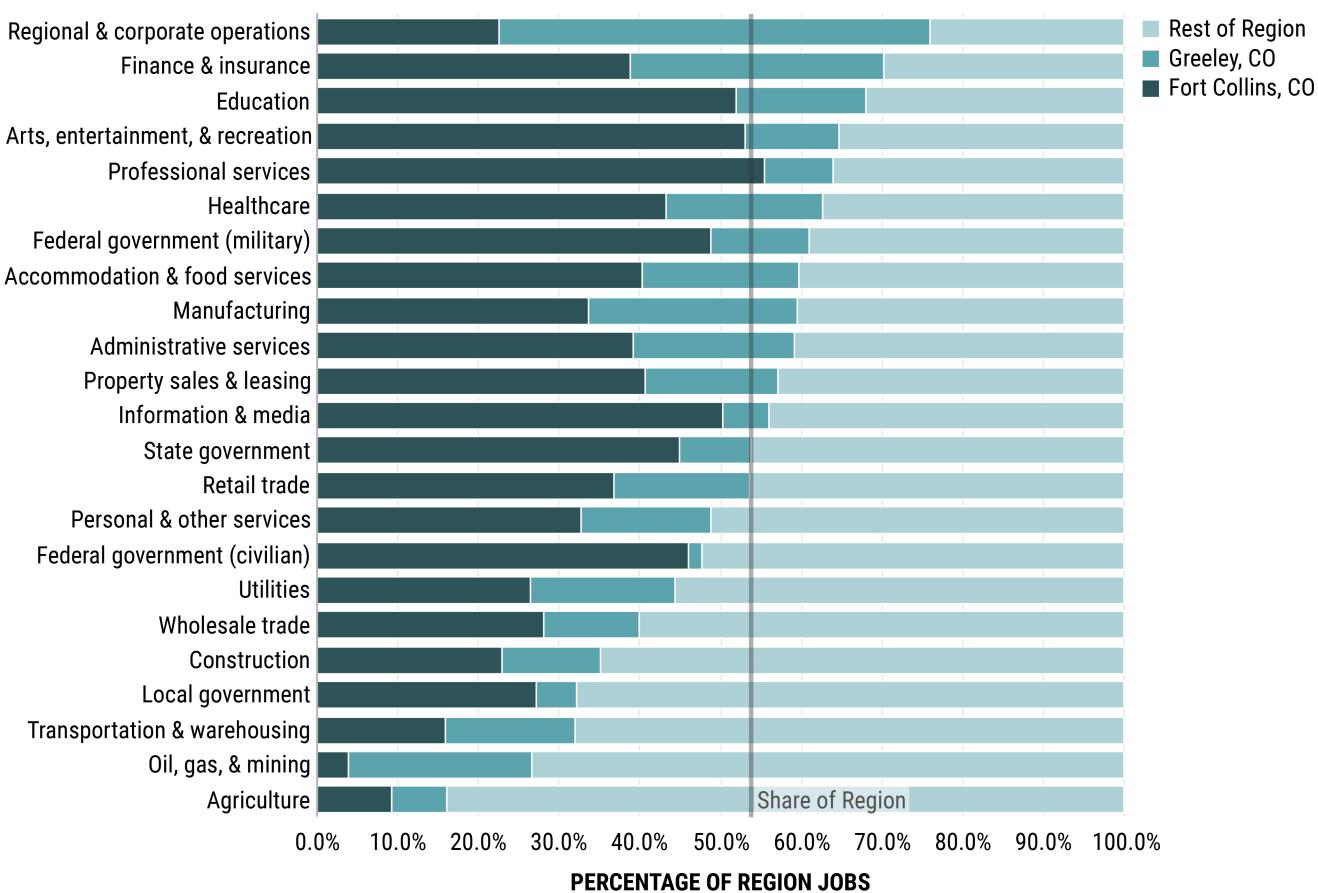
Source(s): US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS); Lightcast 2025.1—QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed; TIP Strategies, Inc.
 Note(s): The Northern Colorado region consists of Larimer and Weld Counties.

The county seats of Larimer and Weld Counties are notable drivers of demand for talent. At least one of every three jobs in the region can be traced to the city of Fort Collins. The concentration of regional employment in the city is particularly pronounced in a handful of sectors. In at least four sectors—Professional Services; Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation; Education; and Information & Media—Fort Collins is home to more than one half of the region's jobs (Figure 9, page 8). One in six regional jobs can be traced to the city of Greeley, which itself contains more than one half of Northern Colorado's Regional & Corporate Operations jobs. Additionally, Greeley's share of regional Oil, Gas, & Mining jobs is nearly six times that of Fort Collins.

Employment growth in Fort Collins echoes the trend exhibited by its population growth: a steady climb throughout the 2000s and 2010s has tempered through the early 2020s (Figure 4, page 3). Over the last 10 years (2015–2024), Northern Colorado's regional employment has increased by more than 16 percent, eclipsing the growth rate of Fort Collins, while employment in Greeley has grown by nearly 18 percent over the same period. Overall, the region has demonstrated an ability to recover, rebounding from the Great Recession more quickly than the state and nation, and exceeding its pre-COVID-19 pandemic job count by 2022.

Population trends have similarly shaped the balance and trajectory of employment in the two-county region outside of Fort Collins and Greeley, with population growth in both Larimer and Weld Counties exceeding that of their respective major cities. In Northern Colorado's sectors that depend most on land and natural resources (Agriculture and Oil, Gas, & Mining), most jobs are located outside of Fort Collins and Greeley. Transportation & Warehousing, a sector attracted to greenfield spaces with accessible infrastructure, employs just 16 percent of its Northern Colorado workforce in each of Fort Collins and Greeley, with the remainder of employment in outlying areas. In line with population growth trends, nearly two-thirds of construction employment lies outside of Fort Collins and Greeley.

Figure 9. Fort Collins and Greeley Share of Northern Colorado Employment by Industry Sector, 2024



Source(s): BLS; Lightcast 2025.1—QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed; TIP Strategies, Inc.

Note(s): Fort Collins, Colorado, is approximated by ZIP Codes 80521, 80522, 80523, 80524, 80525, 80526, 80527, 80528, and 80553. Greeley, Colorado, is approximated by ZIP Codes 80631, 80632, 80633, 80634, 80638, and 80639. The Northern Colorado region consists of Larimer and Weld Counties. Only includes sectors with at least 10 jobs in 2024.

Fort Collins is a net importer of labor, including work-from-home, while Weld is an exporter.

While continued employment growth has allowed the number of Northern Colorado residents who are employed in the region to climb significantly since 2010, the region is increasingly a net exporter of labor (Figure 10). This export of labor is driven by both workers in typically higher-earning, specialized sectors, like Professional Services and Healthcare, and customer-oriented sectors like Retail and Accommodation & Food Services. The most common destinations for these outward commuters include other major Front Range cities like Denver, Boulder, and Aurora.

Weld County is seeing an ongoing population increase as regional growth patterns shift outward (see discussion on page 3) and is similarly a net exporter of labor. More than two-thirds of its working residents commute outward to communities both within and outside of Northern Colorado, like Denver (9.6 percent of working residents), Fort Collins (6.6 percent) and Loveland (4.3 percent). The City of Greeley, a net importer of labor as recently as 2015, is also an exporter, with major destinations including Denver (7.3 percent) and Fort Collins (5.6 percent).

Unlike the region as a whole, Fort Collins is a net importer of labor. The almost 50,000 daily workers who commute in from nearby communities represent nearly 60 percent of all jobs within the city. In almost every year from 2010 to 2020, most of the city's working residents were employed in Fort Collins, though outward commuters have outnumbered these live-and-work commuters in each of the two most recent years of data.

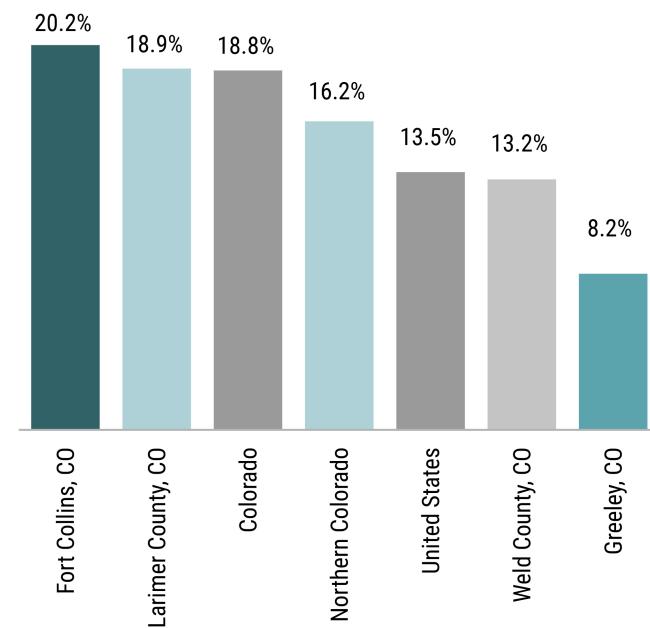
Figure 10. Commuting Patterns Through Northern Colorado, 2010–2022



Source(s): Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD), Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES); TIP Strategies, Inc.
Note(s): Only includes residents and workers in Colorado and Wyoming.

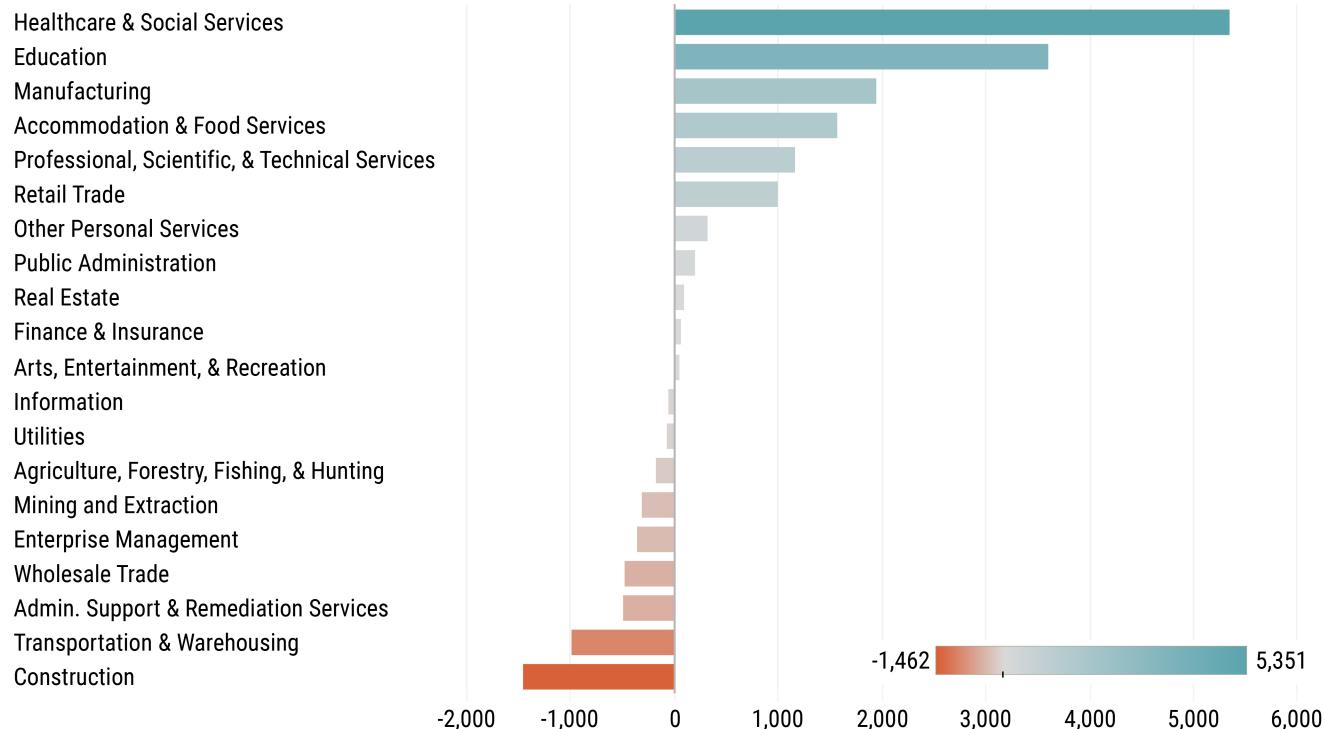
One in five Fort Collins residents work from home, the highest rate in the region (Figure 11). When compared to national remote work trends (Figure 20, page 18), the above-average rate in Fort Collins reflects the relatively high share of regional employment in industries that tend to work remotely, like Professional Services and Education (which includes employment at postsecondary institutions). Likewise, the low share of Greeley residents who work from home (8.2 percent) reflects that city's relative strength in Oil & Gas and Manufacturing—two sectors that have little opportunity for remote work. To further illustrate Fort Collins' status as a regional hub for service-related employment, Figure 12 shows the net flow of workers and residents through the city by industry sector. While this analysis provides an indication of which sectors draw labor into the city and which send resident workers to locations outside Fort Collins, it represents a straightforward comparison between place of employment and place of residence. It does not account for employees who work from home and who may not be physically commuting into the city limits on a regular basis.

Figure 11. Work-from-Home Workforce, 2023



Source(s): 2023 ACS 5-year sample; TIP Strategies, Inc. Workers ages 16 and older who worked from home. Includes remote employees and home-based businesses.

Figure 12. Net Flow of Workers Through Fort Collins, Colorado by Industry Sector, 2010–2022



Source(s): LEHD, LODES; TIP Strategies, Inc.

Note(s): All states are included in determining the net flow values in this chart. Net flow may appear slightly different from the values presented in the commuter trends chart.

Regional demand for labor varies across the six industry sectors of opportunity.

Employer needs determine the scope and scale of the demand for talent. TIP's analysis focused on six industry sectors that represent opportunities for Northern Colorado to leverage existing and emerging strengths for business attraction and expansion. Each of these target sectors is defined by a list of employers with a presence in the Northern Colorado region and is based on an analysis of two years of job postings from March 2023 through February 2025 (Figure 13). Naturally, sectors that corresponded with some of the region's larger industry clusters by employment had more regional job postings, including Information Technology (3,271 job postings), Food Processing & Manufacturing (3,079), and Business Services (2,107). Smaller, more specialized target industries included Aerospace (1,105), Bioscience & Medical Devices (1,038), and Fabrication & Production Technology Manufacturing (741).

Regional demand for workers in the opportunity sectors was not evenly distributed across the region, underscoring the nuances of regional strengths across the two counties. Fort Collins drove demand for the region's highest education-requiring and most STEM-heavy targets, including Aerospace (with more than 80 percent of the job postings for this target located in the city), Bioscience & Medical Devices (58 percent, followed by Windsor at 24 percent), Information Technology (60 percent, followed by Loveland at 18 percent) and Business Services (47 percent, followed by Loveland at 24 percent). Nearby Loveland exceeded Fort Collins' demand for jobs in the Fabrication & Production Technology Manufacturing industry (31 percent, followed by Fort Collins at 28 percent), while Greeley dominated the Food Processing & Manufacturing industry at 59 percent of demand (followed by Fort Collins at 13 percent).

Figure 13. Summary of Hiring Landscape for Opportunity Sectors in Northern Colorado

	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	FOOD PROCESSING & MFG.	BUSINESS SERVICES	AEROSPACE	BIOSCIENCE & MEDICAL DEVICES	FABRICATION & PRODUCTION TECH. MFG.
Summary of Job Postings, March 2023–February 2025						
Number of local and regional employers analyzed	52	54	44	55	53	57
Number of unique recent job postings identified in Northern Colorado	3,271	3,079	2,107	1,105	1,038	741
Share of regional job postings attributed to Fort Collins employers	60%	13%	47%	81%	58%	28%
Share of regional job postings attributed to Greeley employers	9%	59%	9%	2%	6%	6%
Share of job postings requiring a bachelor's degree or higher	73%	39%	67%	54%	51%	42%
Employment Growth, 2014–2024						
10-year growth rate for the most in-demand occupations in this target*	13%	15%	68%	17%	24%	13%

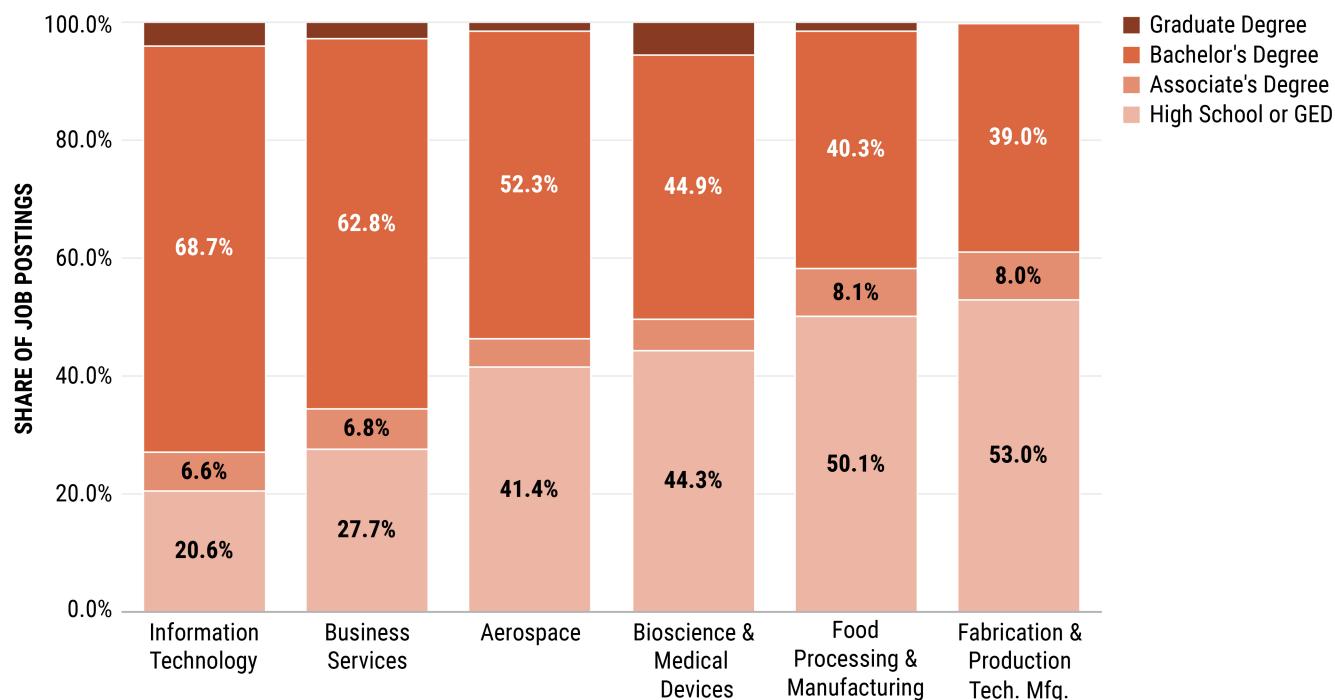
*For comparison, 10-year employment growth overall in Northern Colorado for 2014–2024 was 20 percent.
Source(s): BLS; Lightcast 2025.1–QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed; TIP Strategies, Inc.

Workforce needs of employers in opportunity sectors skew toward higher education.

Across the six opportunity sectors, education requirements of employers were relatively high. In four out of the six sectors, most job postings during the analysis period required at least a bachelor's degree (Figure 14). At the furthest extreme, more than 70 percent of all job postings in Information Technology included this requirement, with leading occupations like Software Developers, Industrial Engineers, and Data Scientists demanding a high level of formal education and training. Employers in two of the sectors—Food Processing & Manufacturing and Fabrication & Production Technology Manufacturing—sought to fill most of their open job postings with less than a bachelor's degree, though both sectors still contained a significant share of jobs with the higher requirements, at around 40 percent each.

Figure 14. Target Industries, Minimum Education Requested

Based on an analysis of two years of job postings, March 2023–February 2025

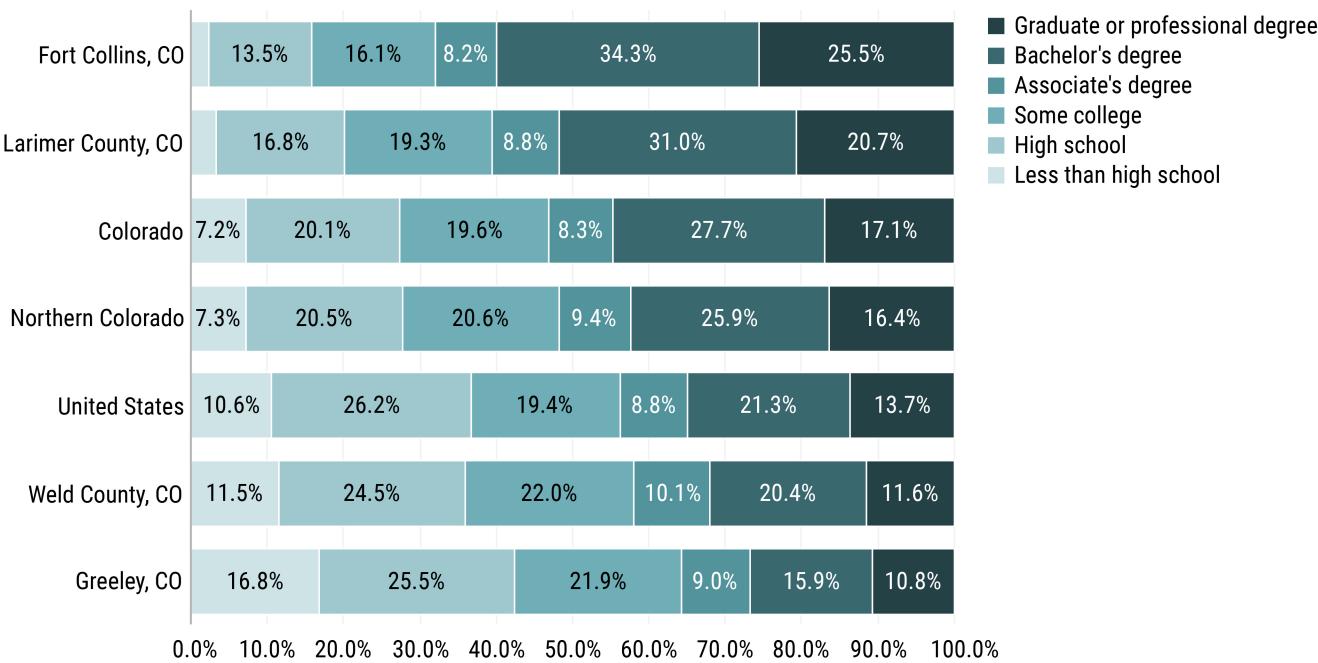


Source(s): BLS; Lightcast 2025.1—QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed; TIP Strategies, Inc.

Note(s): Job postings include non-staffing, unique, newly posted job postings for permanent full-time, part-time, and flexible positions, excluding internships, in Northern Colorado between March 2023–February 2025.

Although Northern Colorado residents are well suited to meet the diverse educational demands of target sector employers, regional partners should not be complacent about the demand for skilled talent below the bachelor's level. The region exceeds the national average in terms of educational attainment, with 4 in 10 of its residents over the age of 25 possessing a bachelor's degree or higher (Figure 15, page 13). This relative strength reflects both the presence of a major university in Colorado State, and the regional leadership in driving demand in target industries that typically require high levels of education. Additionally, target industry occupations with lower education requirements represent an opportunity for regional employers to provide quality local jobs for the large share of regional workers without a college degree, provided they have attained the right training and skillsets. To this point, regional apprenticeship programs have trended upward over the past decade. Among high-demand target industry occupations, the top program for apprentices residing in Northern Colorado is Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers (218 apprentices living in Northern Colorado between 2013 and 2024), while the top program for those training in the region is Industrial Engineering Technicians (52 training in the region over the same period).

Figure 15. Educational Attainment, 2023



Source(s): 2023 ACS 5-year sample; TIP Strategies, Inc.

Note(s): Education attainment only measured for population 25 and older. High school includes equivalency. Some college indicates no degree was received. Graduate degree includes professional degrees and doctoral programs.

Twelve occupations cut across multiple opportunity sectors.

When ranking occupations by the number of job postings in each opportunity sector, 12 occupations appear in the top 10 for two or more targets. Among these common in-demand occupations, shown in Figure 16 (page 14), the top two by job postings were Software Developers and Computer, All Other, representing more than 370 and 300 job postings over the study period, respectively. Both occupations are found in the top 10 most common occupations of three target sectors—Aerospace, Business Services, and Information Technology—and both typically require a bachelor's degree. An additional two of these twelve common occupations typically require a bachelor's degree—Industrial Engineers and Data Scientists—while two others require some level of formal education beyond high school, but below a four-year degree. This includes Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers, who are required to possess a commercial driver's license, and Industrial Engineering Technicians, who must typically have a relevant associate's degree. The remaining six occupations require no formal education beyond the high school level, or as is the case with Laborers & Material Movers, Hand, typically have no formal education requirement.

In lieu of stringent higher education requirements, several of these occupations require moderate-term on-the-job training, with hands-on experience being more valuable than formal education in certain labor-intensive jobs. Other occupations that require a specific qualification, like Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers, or those that require little in terms of front-end credentials, like Laborers & Material Movers, Hand, may require short-term on-the-job training.

Overall, the number of regional jobs in these 12 common occupations grew from more than 17,500 jobs to nearly 19,900 jobs from 2014 to 2024, an increase of more than 13 percent. Of the 12 occupations, 9 saw a positive change in number of jobs over this period, representing nearly 93 percent of jobs within the group in 2024.

However, access is not distributed evenly across target industry occupations. In three of the six target industries (Business Services, Information Technology, and Aerospace), a majority of top 10 in-demand occupations are classified as “less accessible,” with access measured as a set of factors related to education and experience requirements, workforce demographics, and the structure and flexibility of the job. Among the 12 common in-demand occupations, seven received lower access scores than they otherwise would because the share of workers that are male vastly exceeds the male share of Northern Colorado’s population (Software Developers; First-Line Supervisors—Production & Operations; Maintenance & Repair Workers, General; Industrial Engineering Technicians; Industrial Engineers; Laborers & Material Movers, Hand; and Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers).

For a single income, two adult household with two children, the living wage threshold (\$44.61 per hour) exceeds the average advertised wage for the top 10 occupations in every target industry except for one, Information Technology (\$44.78 per hour). Among the 12 occupations sought by employers in multiple target sectors, eight have a median hourly wage that falls below this living wage threshold. Notably, the four common occupations with a median hourly wage exceeding the living wage threshold all typically require a bachelor’s degree. Though each target industry offers occupations with high-end wages that exceed the living wage threshold, the most common occupation by job postings in every target industry except for Information Technology offers a median wage below the living wage threshold.

Figure 16. In-Demand Occupations Common to Two or More Target Industries
Based on an analysis of job postings, March 2023–February 2025

		TYPICAL EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	FOOD PROCESSING & MANUFACTURING	BUSINESS SERVICES	AEROSPACE	BIOSCIENCE & MEDICAL DEVICES	FABRICATION & PROD. TECH. MFG.
1	Software Developers	Bachelor’s degree	●	●	●			
2	Computer, All Other	Bachelor’s degree	●	●	●			
3	First-Line Supervisors—Production & Operations	High school/GED		●	●	●	●	●
4	Industrial Engineers	Bachelor’s degree	●		●	●	●	
5	Maintenance & Repair Workers, General	High school/GED		●	●	●	●	●
6	Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, & Weighers	High school/GED	●		●	●		
7	Production Workers, All Other	High school/GED	●					●
8	Laborers & Material Movers, Hand	No formal requirement		●				●
9	Sales Reps, Non-Technical & Scientific Products	High school/GED		●		●	●	
10	Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	Nondegree credential		●				●
11	Data Scientists	Bachelor’s degree	●		●			
12	Industrial Engineering Technicians	Associate’s degree				●	●	

Source(s): BLS; 2025.1—QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed; TIP Strategies, Inc.

Note(s): Job postings include non-staffing, unique, newly posted job postings for full-time, part-time, and flexible positions, excluding internships, in Northern Colorado between March 2023 and February 2025.

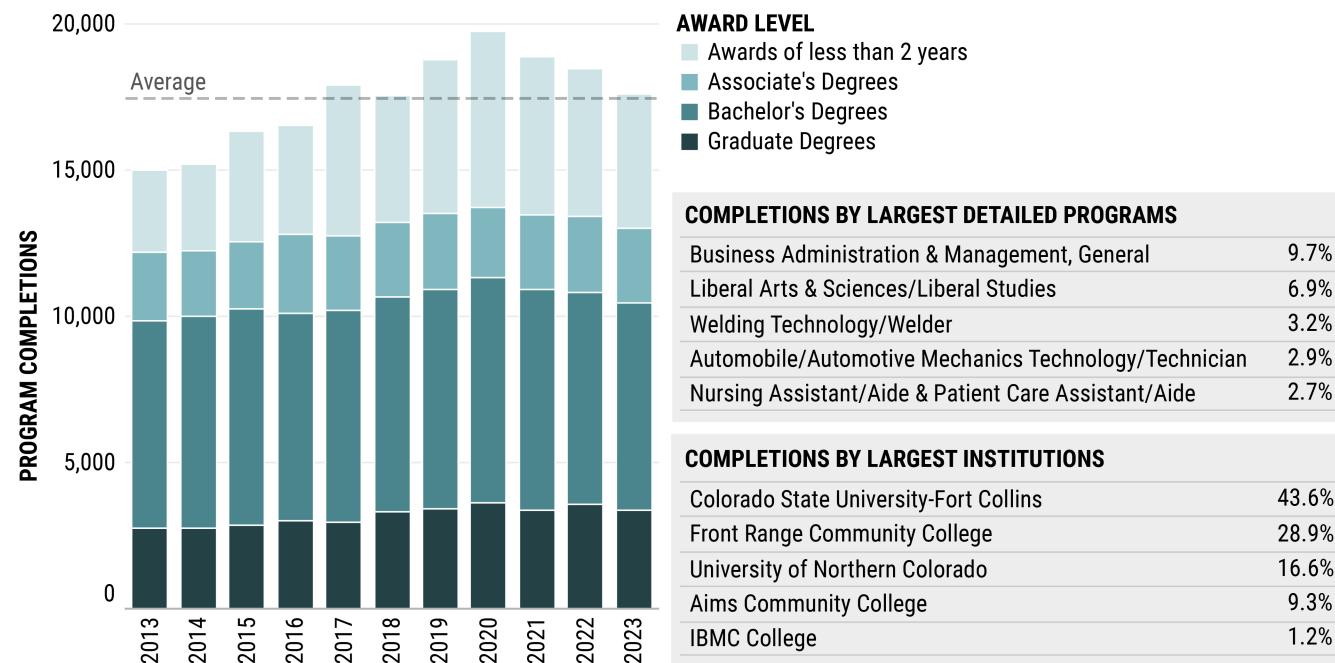
Regional postsecondary program completions generally align with opportunity sectors.

Higher learning institutions in the Northern Colorado region saw more than 17,500 program completions in 2023, representing a core workforce development strength of the region (Figure 17). The institution awarding the most completions over this period was Colorado State University (more than 44 percent of total completions), followed by Front Range Community College (more than 28 percent, though completions at Front Range Community College are combined across all campus locations). Other major institutions by share of regional completions include University of Northern Colorado (over 15 percent) and Aims Community College (nearly 11 percent).

Of these more than 17,500 completions, nearly 20 percent were graduate degrees, just over 40 percent were bachelor's degrees, almost 15 percent were associate's degrees, and the remaining 25 percent were awards of less than two years. Though the total number of regional program completions has trended upward since 2013, this number has declined year-over-year following a peak of more than 19,700 completions in 2020. This downward trend from 2020 to 2023 is reflected in the number of institution-level completions at Colorado State University, Front Range Community College, and University of Northern Colorado over this period.

Several top detailed programs represented completions related to high-demand occupations in the opportunity sectors. In 2023, the two largest detailed programs by completions were Business Administration & Management, General (1,544 completions) and Liberal Arts & Sciences/Liberal Studies (1,190 completions). Both programs related to top 10 occupations in all target industries except for Aerospace. The third largest detailed program was Welding Technology/Welder (719 completions), typically representing an award of less than two years, related to in-demand occupations in four of the six target sectors. Finally, Computer & Information Sciences, General, the sixth largest (447 completions), was related to in-demand occupations in three of the six target sectors.

Figure 17. Program Completions at Northern Colorado Institutions by Award Level, 2013–2023



Source(s): National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS); Lightcast 2025.1–QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed; US Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Student and Exchange Visitor Program; TIP Strategies, Inc.

Note(s): Includes only general programs with at least 25 average annual completions between 2013 and 2023. Associate's degrees include certificates earned in more than two years and less than four years. Graduate degrees include professional certificates, master's degrees, and doctoral degrees.

NATIONAL TRENDS

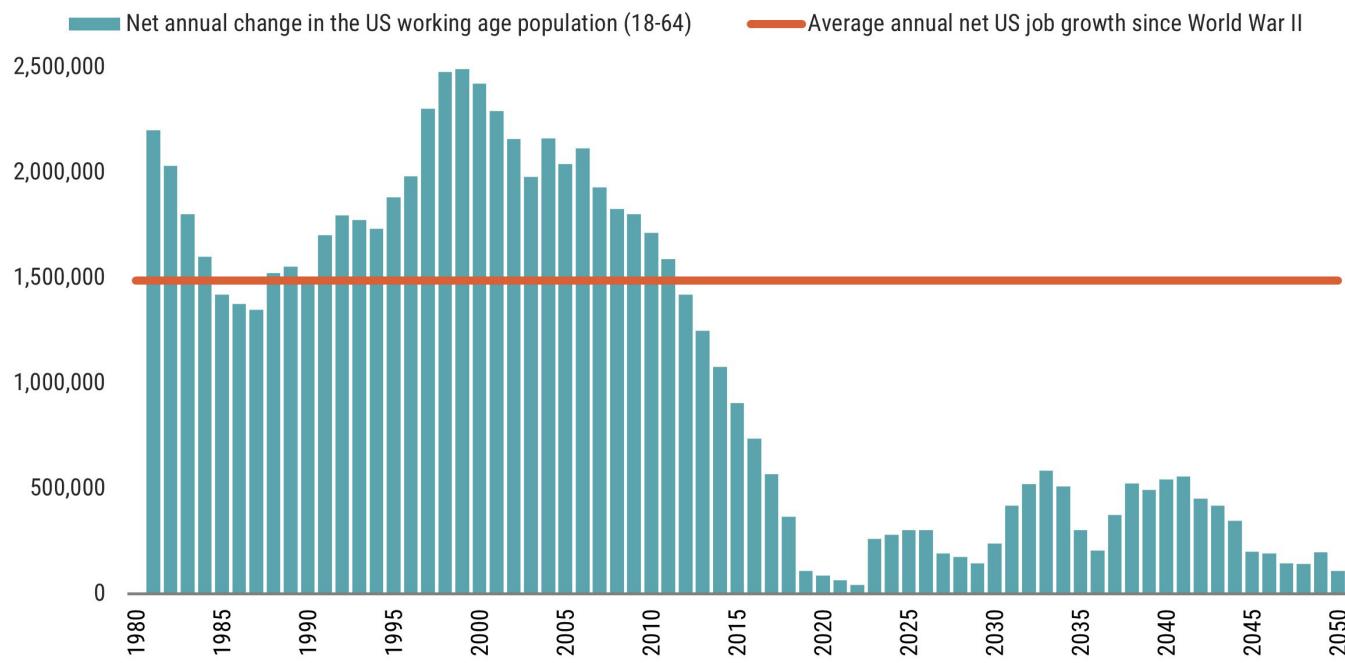
An examination of national trends points to broad structural changes shaping labor markets around the country, including in Northern Colorado. While these trends are outside the region's control, they merit consideration in local workforce development planning.

A misalignment of demographic forces creates workforce challenges.

Since World War II the US, on average, has reliably added nearly 1.5 million new jobs annually (Figure 18). Steady job creation coupled with a growing population, paints a largely positive picture of the national labor situation. Like everything else, demographics can be more complicated than appearances suggest. High birth rates in the first two decades following WWII ensured an ample supply of new entrants into the labor force well into the 1980s. And a loosening of immigration restrictions in the 1960s paved the way for new waves of workers in the late 20th century. These forces benefited US employers for decades, rewarding them with a seemingly endless labor supply to support a growing economy.

Figure 18. Supply and Demand of US Workers

The US labor supply faces long-term pressure



Source(s): US Census Bureau, International Database; US Bureau of Economic Analysis, Current Employment Statistics; TIP Strategies, Inc.

Note(s): Population estimates and projections are for the resident population. The US population components shown in the IDB may not match the official population components for the United States, in part, due to differences in how they are displayed (calendar year versus midyear-to-midyear estimates).

A number of factors have begun to change the picture in recent decades. A declining birthrate in the late 20th century has fallen even further in the 21st, turning a once-gushing fountain to a slowing trickle. The impact of this reversal has already started rippling through the workforce. At the other end of the demographic spectrum, the waves of babies born in the post-war boom are now entering retirement. Compounding these demographic shifts, the US has become increasingly less welcoming to immigrants since 9/11, so the backstop of imported labor to feed the workforce is no longer a certainty. As a result, the nation is confronted with a diverse array of long-term policy options across the political spectrum. These include, among other things, raising the retirement age, replacing

workers with automation, making immigration policies more welcoming, or implementing family-friendly policies in hopes of raising the birth rate. Regardless of the long-term policy choices, workforce development professionals are stuck in a near-term conundrum as net new job numbers in the US outpace the net supply of new workers.

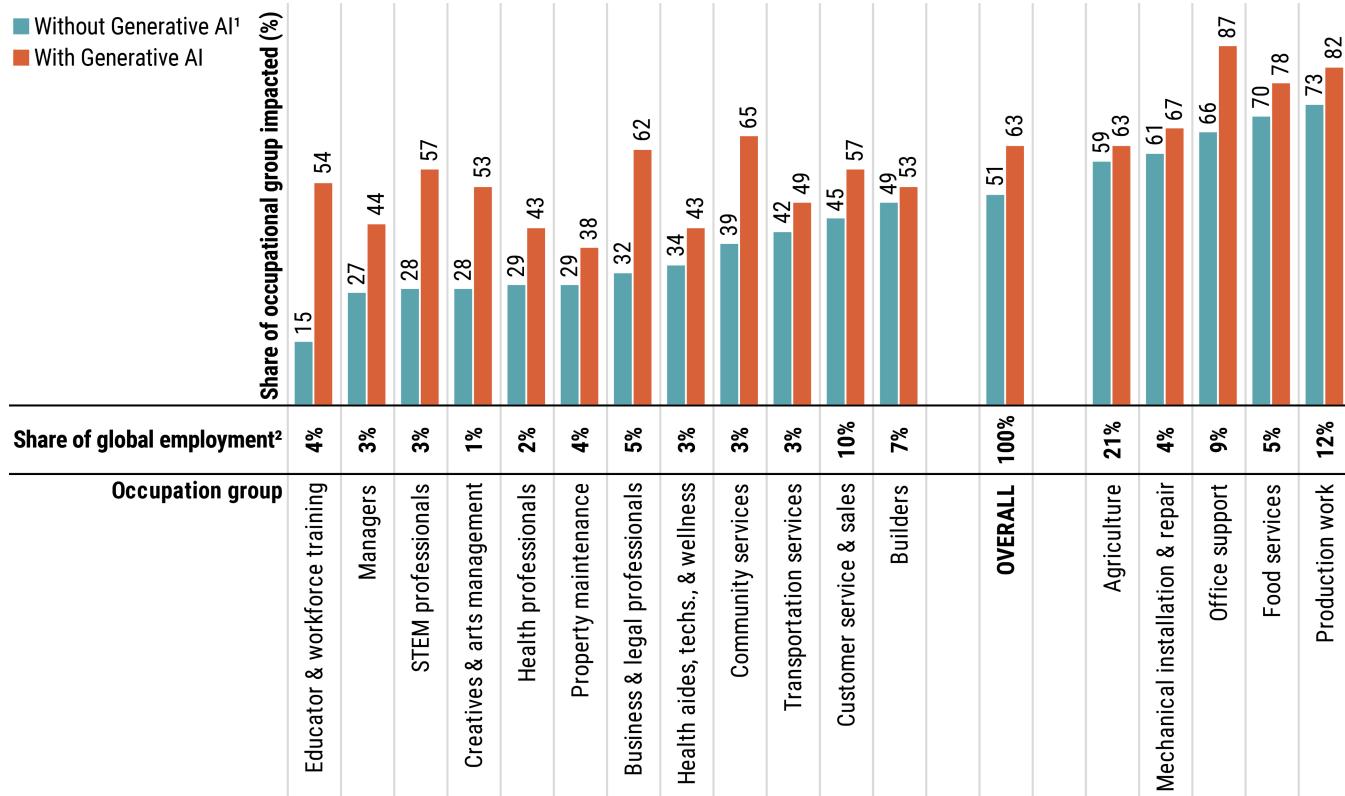
University towns like Fort Collins and Greeley hold one singular advantage. College towns are the tap providing much-needed skilled workers to the US economy. Locations like Northern Colorado are better positioned to retain talent than those lacking the same institutional advantages.

Rapid technological innovation: Threat or just-in-time solution?

The cycle of technological innovation eliminating jobs is not new, although the rapid deployment of artificial intelligence (AI) has heightened fears for many workers. News outlets, think tanks, and analysts routinely predict that many of today's jobs will go the way of horses, stenographers, and switchboard operators—all of which were once commonplace elements of the workforce until technology intervened. But it is worth remembering that the current hype surrounding AI happens with all new technologies. There is little doubt AI will displace some workers; the more relevant question is which ones are at risk. Whether it's AI or something else, technological change *always* chips away at rote functions and tasks. With AI, this chipping effect may be faster and more widely felt, but it will still be unevenly tilted toward occupations with more rote functions.

Given the tightness of the near-term workforce, the integration of AI into homes and workplaces could be well-timed. The challenge for workforce development professionals is how to adapt to this technological change in real time to ensure positive impacts.

Figure 19. Impact of Generative AI on the Automation of Occupational Groups



¹Previous assessment of work automation before the rise of generative AI.

²Includes data from 47 countries, representing about 80 percent of employment across the world.

Source(s): McKinsey & Company, *The economic potential of generative AI: The next productivity frontier*, June 2023, Exhibit 11, p. 41.

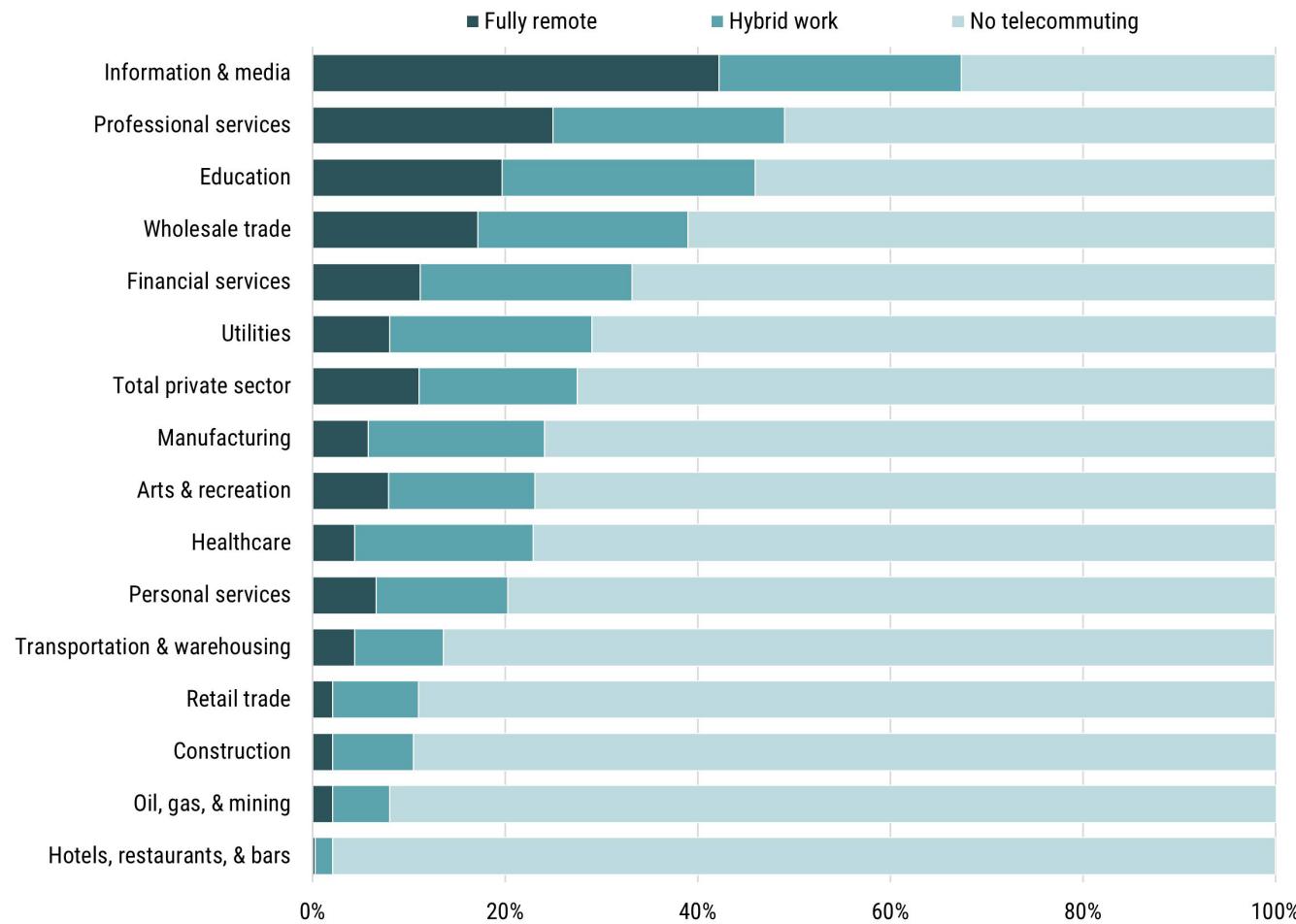
Note(s): Figures may not sum, because of rounding.

Remote work is not an option for most occupations and industries.

While there is a persistent media buzz about remote work, the data surrounding this phenomenon are often misinterpreted or misunderstood. To begin, it's best to consider the extent of remote work in the modern workforce. During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics implemented a temporary measure called a Business Response Survey to gauge the impact of a wide range of issues on employers. The results from August and September 2022, reported shortly before the rolling survey was discontinued, included work-from-home rates by industry sector (Figure 20). As would be expected, work-from-home rates for office-using workers, especially IT professionals, were quite high. Most of the remaining workers—e.g., waiters, maintenance workers, drivers, builders, postal employees—still had to be on the job, pandemic or not. The 2022 survey results may sound a bit dated at this point, but the unevenness of work-from-home potential is structural and thus unlikely to change much.

Figure 20. Share of Business Establishments with Telecommuting Options, US

Remote work varies dramatically by industry



Source(s): BLS, Business Response Survey 2022, Tables 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3.

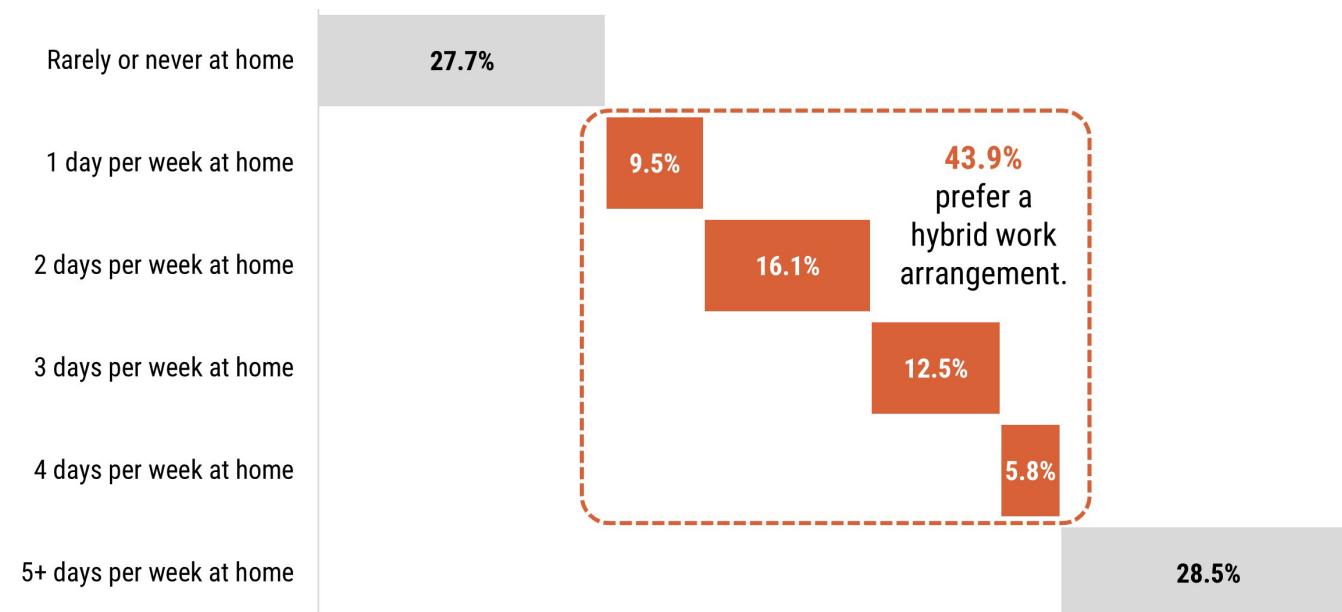
Note(s): The survey period covered August and September 2022.

For those eligible for remote work, hybrid options are preferred.

Work-from-home rates across the industry spectrum provide valuable context for interpreting data from other sources. For example, what work-from-home policies are preferred by workers who are theoretically able to do so? The *Survey of Working Arrangements and Attitudes* administered by a Stanford-led group of academic professionals on a rolling monthly basis assesses up to 10,000 workers in this eligibility category. The results are largely consistent from period to period (see Figure 21). There are those who want to be in the office every day and those who want to be home every day, but usually about one-half of all eligible workers are somewhere in the middle. They want a hybrid arrangement that mixes employer workplace with home office. This finding is likely to reflect the fact that most people lead busy lives that are complicated by the demands of children, aging parents, traveling spouses, and inflexible maintenance and delivery windows. It is no wonder that those workers who have the luxury to work from home do, in fact, desire a degree of flexibility in their schedules. Accommodating the needs of these workers is important. But it is equally important to bear in mind that they represent a small, albeit affluent, slice of the overall workforce.

Figure 21. Number of Work-From-Home Days Preferred by Eligible* Workers

Nearly one half of full-time salaried workers prefer a hybrid arrangement



*Eligible workers are those whose occupations are compatible with working from home.

Source(s): Survey of Working Arrangements and Attitudes (SWAA); Barrero, Jose Maria, Nicholas Bloom, and Steven J. Davis, 2021. "Why working from home will stick," National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper 28731.

Note(s): The Survey of Working Arrangements and Attitudes (SWAA) is a 12-month rolling monthly survey of US residents between the ages of 20 and 64 who earned \$10,000+ in the prior year. The sample includes full-time wage and salary employees who worked 5 or more days during the survey reference week. The sample is re-weighted to match Current Population Survey on age, sex, education, and earnings. The sample covers N=36,332 responses from the September 2024 to August 2025 monthly waves of the SWAA. The exact survey question is, "Looking one year ahead, how often would you like to have paid workdays at home?"

CONCLUSION

Northern Colorado stands at a pivotal moment where demographic shifts, industry diversity, and educational assets converge to shape its workforce future. Weld County's rapid population gains, Fort Collins' role as a labor importer and higher education hub, and Greeley's industrial strengths underscore the region's complementary assets. Together, these dynamics provide a strong foundation for addressing employer demand across key opportunity sectors—ranging from IT and aerospace to food processing and advanced manufacturing—while also ensuring pathways for both degree-holding professionals and skilled workers without four-year credentials.

Looking ahead, regional partners have an opportunity to align data-driven insights with collaborative action. By leveraging the strengths of higher education institutions, tailoring training to in-demand occupations, and addressing barriers to participation, Northern Colorado can facilitate access to employment across all sectors of its growing, diverse economy. Anchored by strong local leadership and guided by national workforce trends, the region is well positioned to develop a talent strategy that not only supports the current and future needs of employers but also strengthens long-term resilience and opportunity for all residents.



www.tipstrategies.com

+1 512 3439113

contact@tipstrategies.com

Trends and Forces

Kelly DiMartino

City Manager

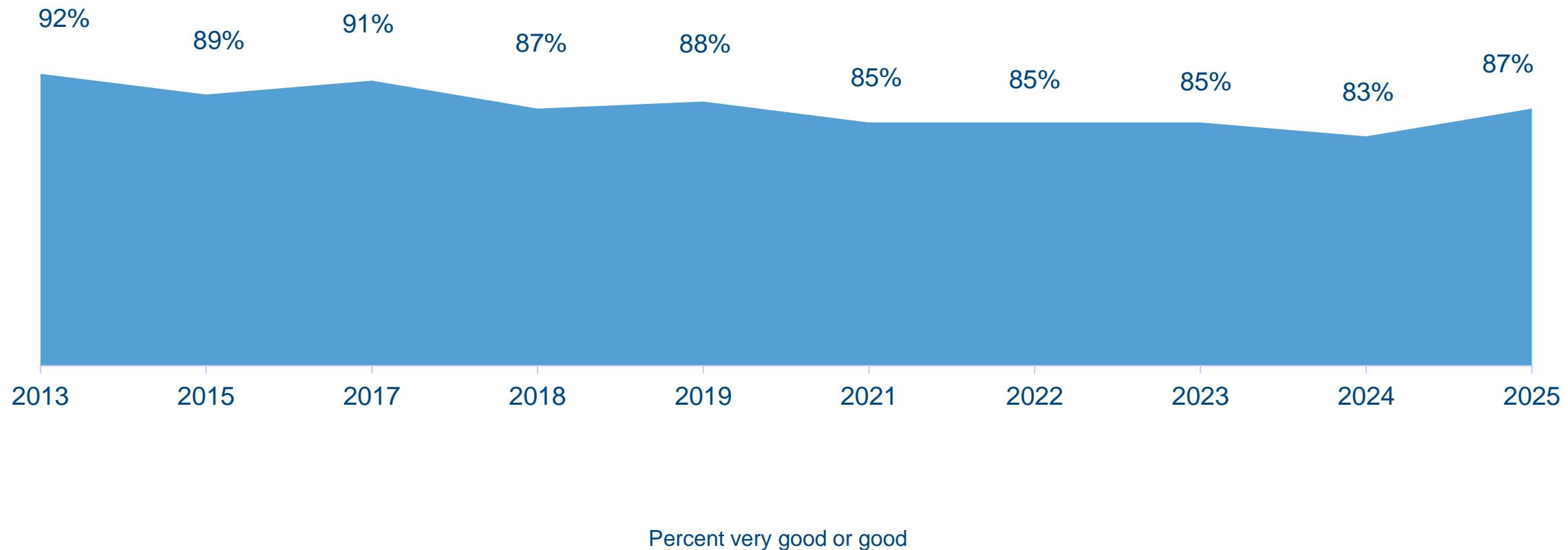


What questions and feedback does Council have regarding the information shared?

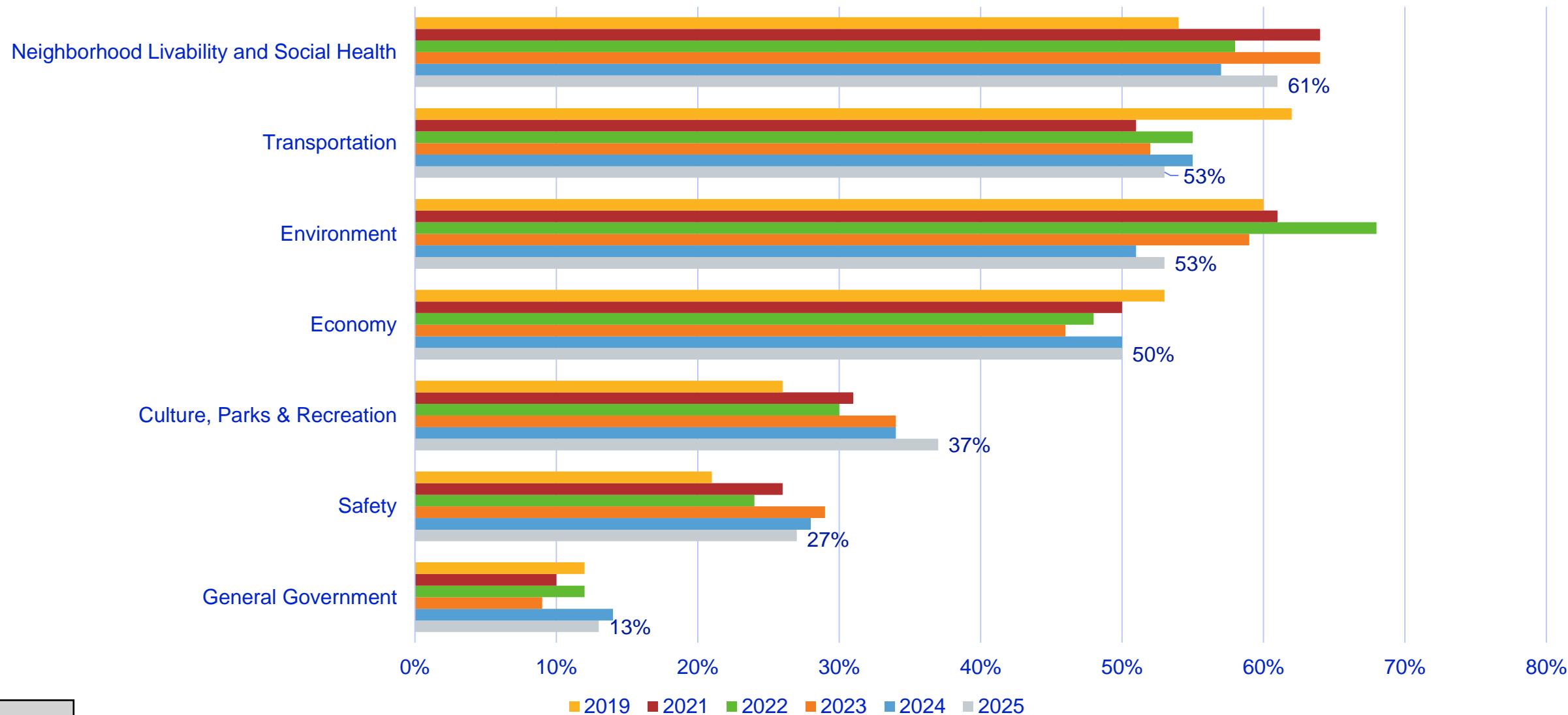
Are there topics Council wishes to explore further in future Work Sessions?



2025 Community Survey Results: Highlights



Top Three Budget Priorities by Year



Top Ranked





Growth and Development

- **Growth Rate:** Fort Collins is experiencing low population growth at **0.6%** (approximately 1000 people per year); by comparison, Loveland saw 6.2% growth from 2020 – 2024.
- **Aging Population:** The median age in Fort Collins is approximately **30.6**, which is younger than the Colorado average (37.9) due to the presence of Colorado State University. However, the 65+ age bracket is one of the fastest-growing segments in the City currently at **14.4%** .
- **Household Composition:** The average household size is **2.27** persons, reflecting a trend toward smaller families or single-occupant households.
- **Remote Work:** Approximately **21%** of the workforce continues to work from home, a trend that has remained stable post-pandemic and influenced local commuting patterns.

Topline: CSI's latest report examines how slowing migration is reshaping Fort Collins' economic outlook. As Colorado's growth slows, Fort Collins MSA faces unique headwinds that could have long-term consequences for its economic competitiveness, labor force sustainability, school enrollment, and overall growth potential.

Growth Slowdown

- Net migration into the Fort Collins metro area is down 26% from pre-pandemic levels.
- By 2026, Greeley is projected to surpass Fort Collins in population.
- Net migration is forecast to peak in 2027 and decline 42% by 2050.

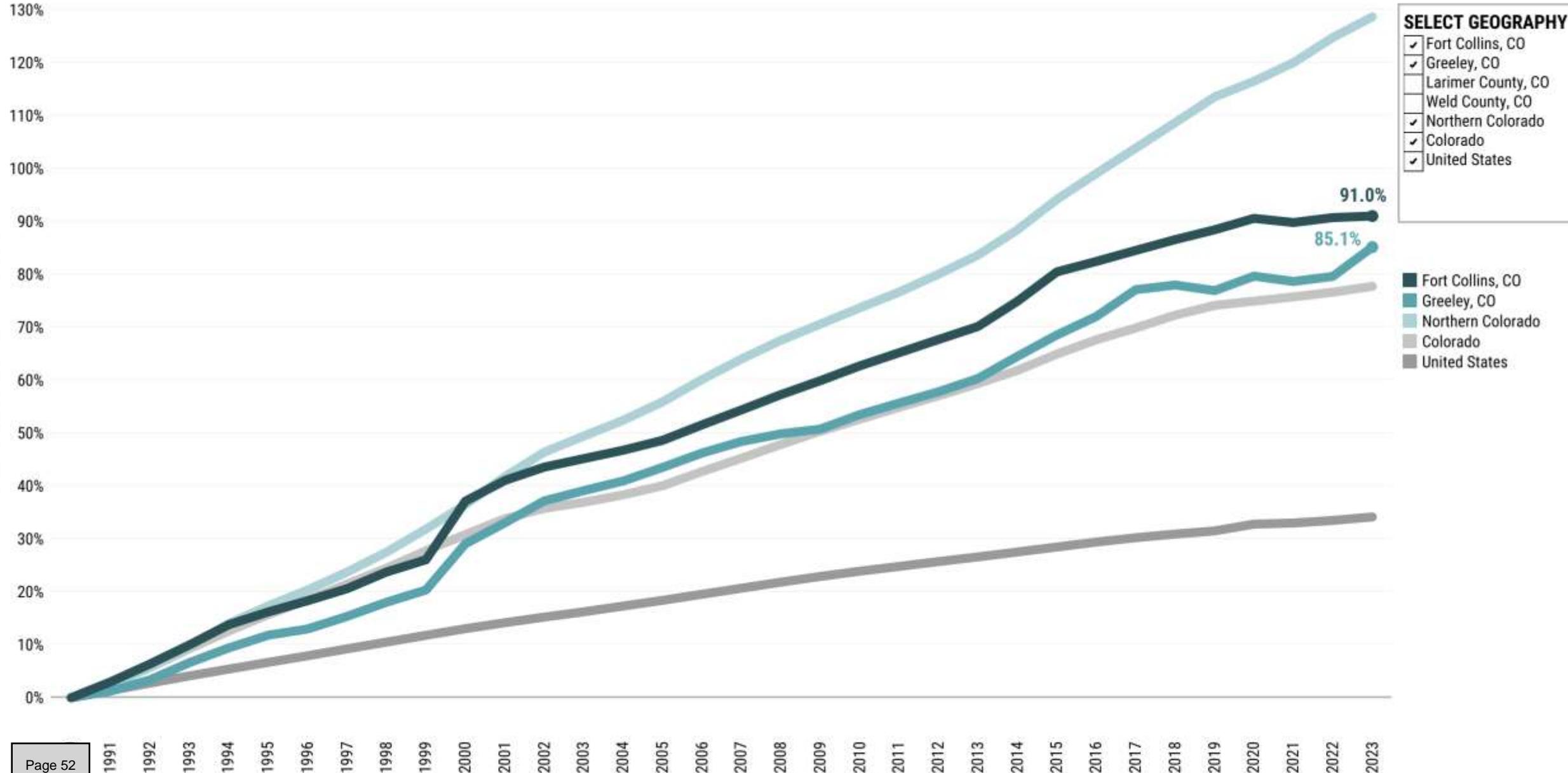
Housing Pressure

- Average rent in Fort Collins (\$1,904) is now higher than Denver's (\$1,890) for the first time.
- The average home price in Fort Collins is \$549,000, compared to \$543,000 in Denver and \$499,000 in Greeley.

Demographic Trends

- The local birth rate dropped from 10.3 per 1,000 residents in 2015 to 8.3 per 1,000 in 2025.
- Slowing population growth will have long-term impacts on labor force availability, school enrollment, and housing demand.

Item 1.



SOCIOECONOMIC COMPARISONS | Households with Children, 2023

MENU

Item 1.

37.4%



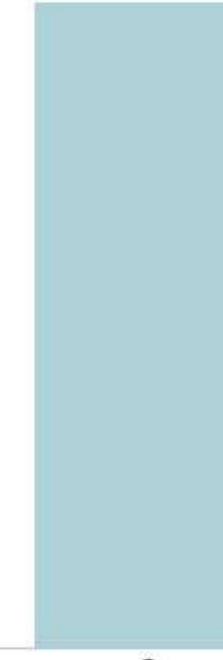
Weld County, CO

33.2%



Greeley, CO

30.6%



Northern Colorado

29.9%



United States

28.9%



Colorado

25.3%



Larimer County, CO

23.3%



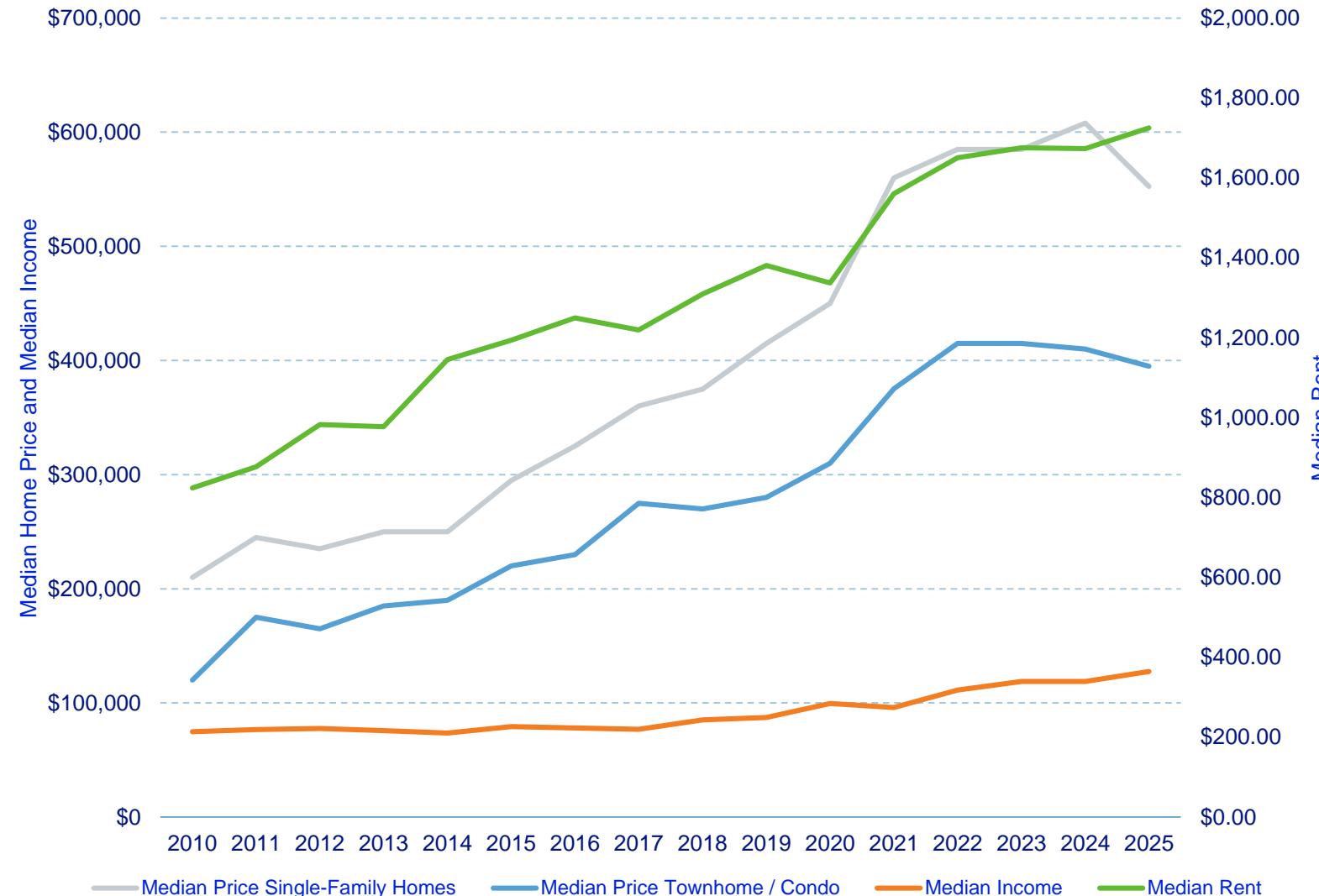
Fort Collins, CO

SELECT TOPIC

Households with Children

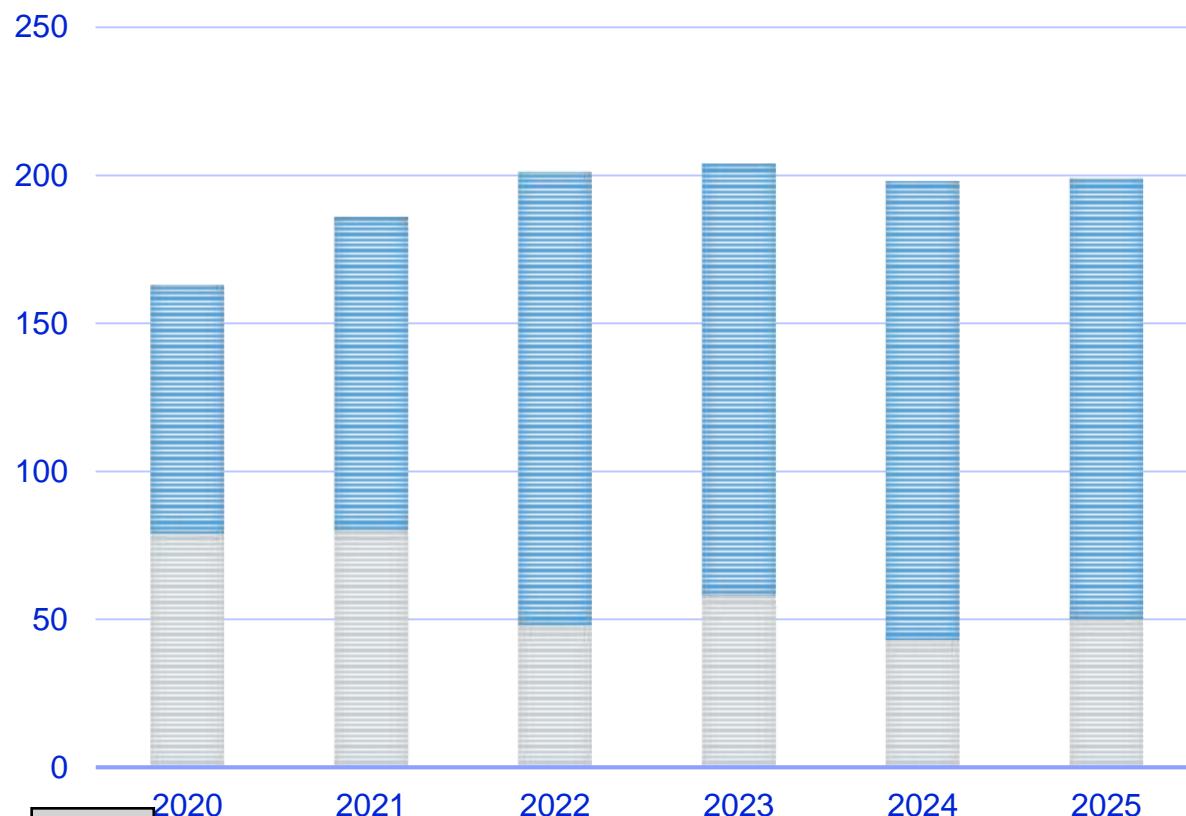
Trends in Home Prices, Rents, and Income

Median Home Price, Rent, and Income - 2010-2025



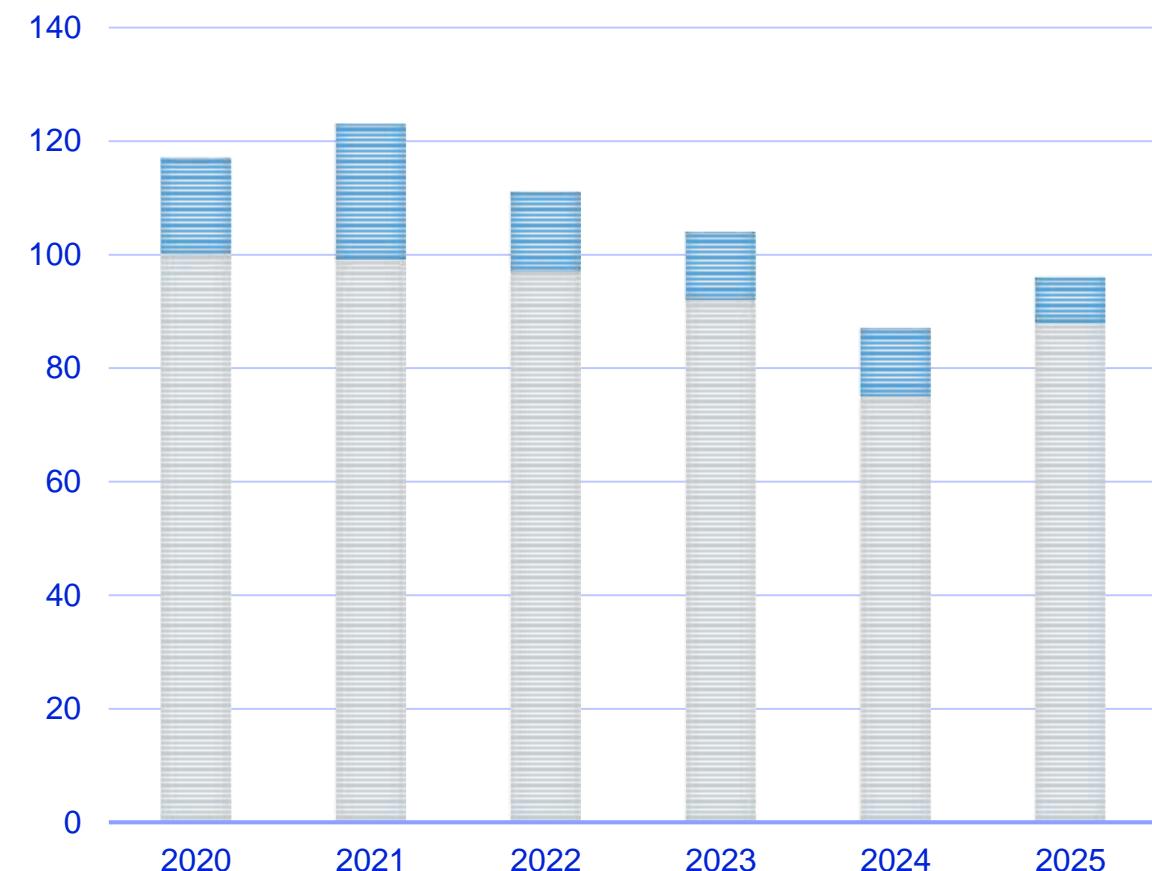
DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

■ Development Applications ■ Minor Amendments

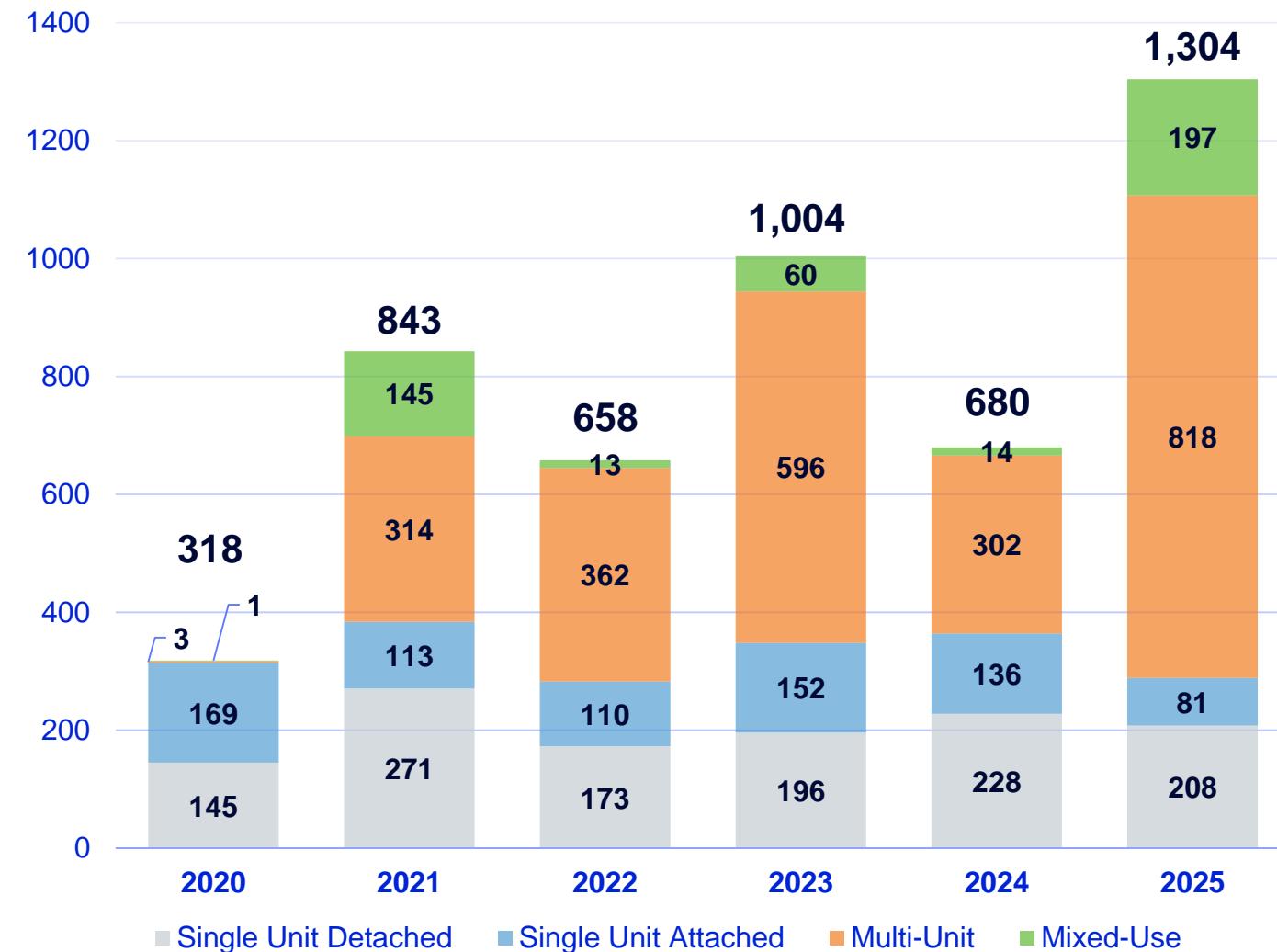


PRE-SUBMITTAL REVIEWS

■ Conceptual Reviews ■ Preliminary Design Reviews



BUILDING PERMITS FOR NEW HOUSING, 2020-2025





Labor Market and Workforce Trends



Weld County is becoming the driver of population growth in NoCo, becoming home to young families (and a large share of youth) due to affordability and easy access to I-25 or I-85.

The City of Fort Collins used to be the regional employment hub, and at least one of every three jobs in the NoCo region can be traced to Fort Collins. However, employment growth in the region is echoing the population growth.

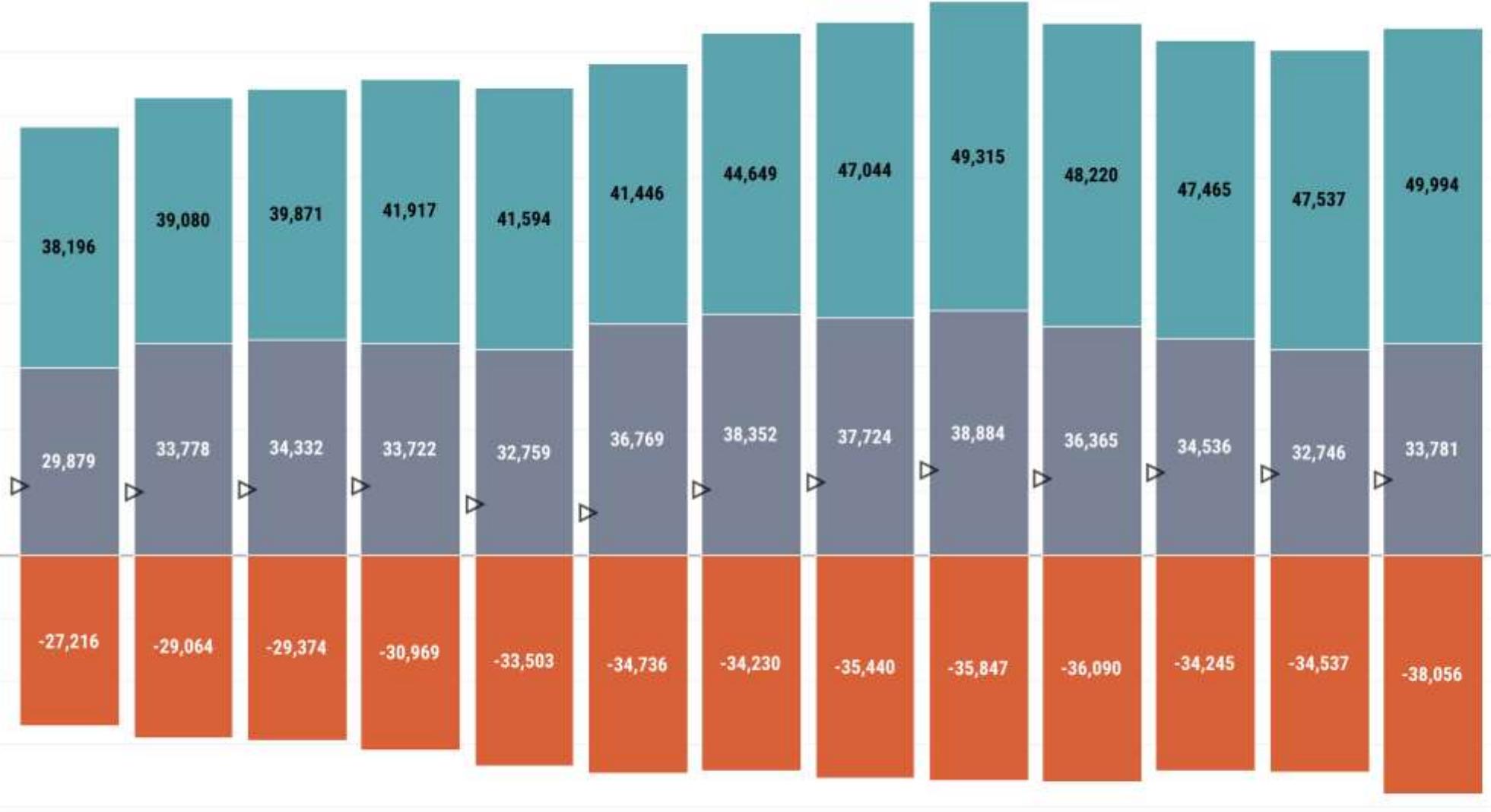
While northern Colorado, as a whole, is a net exporter of labor, Fort Collins is a net importer of labor with nearly 50,000 daily workers commuting in from nearby communities to work in Fort Collins.



MENU

COMMUTING PATTERNS | Trend

Flow of workers and residents through Fort Collins, CO, 2010-2022



SELECT GEOGRAPHY TYPE

- City
- County

SELECT CITY

- Fort Collins, CO
- Greeley, CO

SELECT COMMUTER CATEGORIES

- Commute In
- Live & Work
- Commute Out

SELECT BREAKDOWN TYPE

- Age Groups
- Broad Sector Groups
- Earnings Groups

SELECT GROUP

All

- Commute In
- Live & Work
- Commute Out

► Net Job Flow

COMMUTING PATTERNS | Industry Sectors



MENU

Flow of workers and residents through Fort Collins, CO, 2022

Industry Sector Groups

Healthcare & Social Services

Education

Manufacturing

Accommodation & Food Services

Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services

Retail Trade

Other Personal Services

Public Administration

Real Estate

Finance & Insurance

Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation

Information

Utilities

Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, & Hunting

Mining and Extraction

Enterprise Management

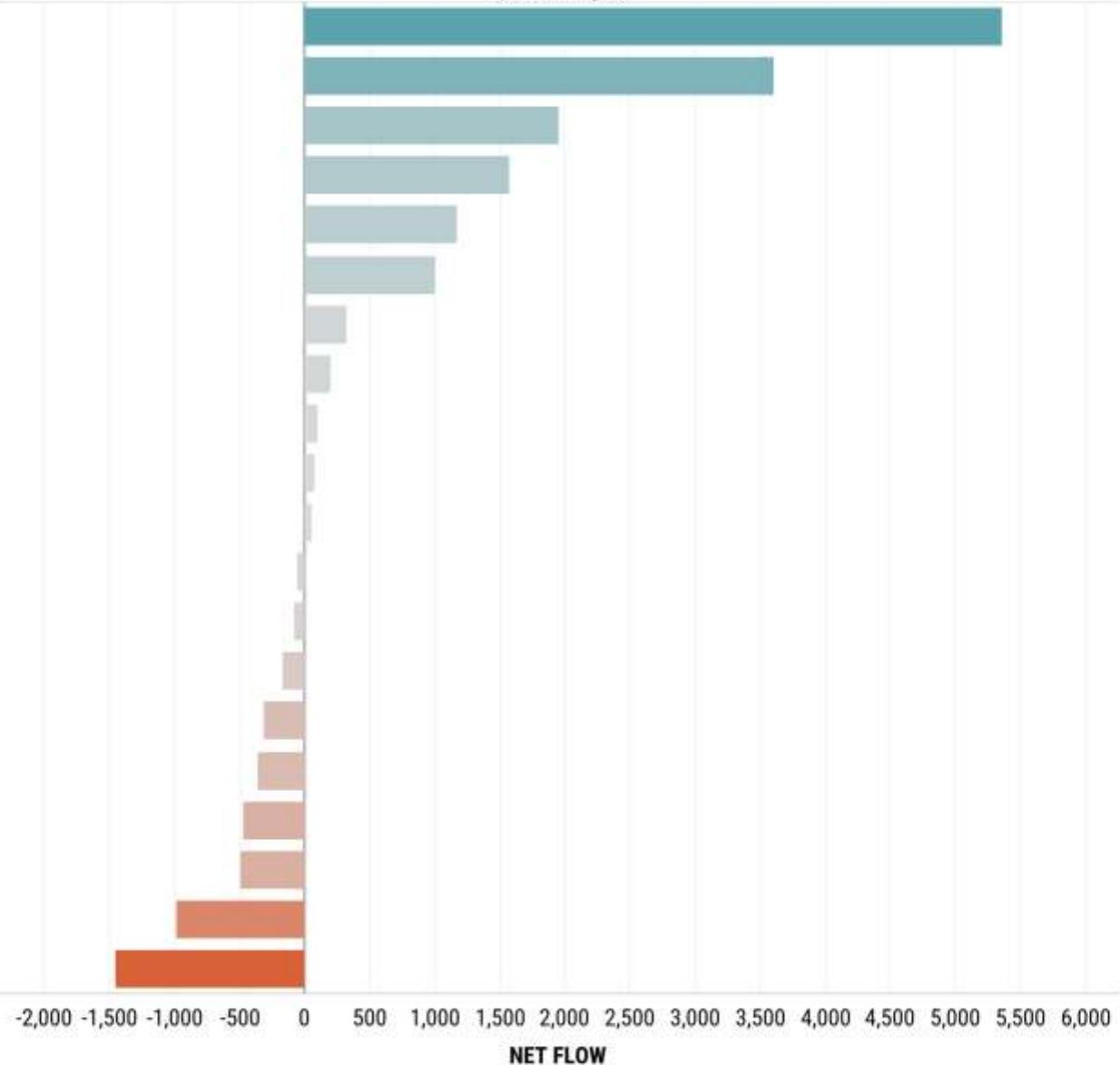
Wholesale Trade

Admin. Support & Remediation Services

Transportation & Warehousing

Construction

Fort Collins, CO



SELECT GEOGRAPHY TYPE

- City
- County

SELECT CITY

- Fort Collins, CO
- Greeley, CO

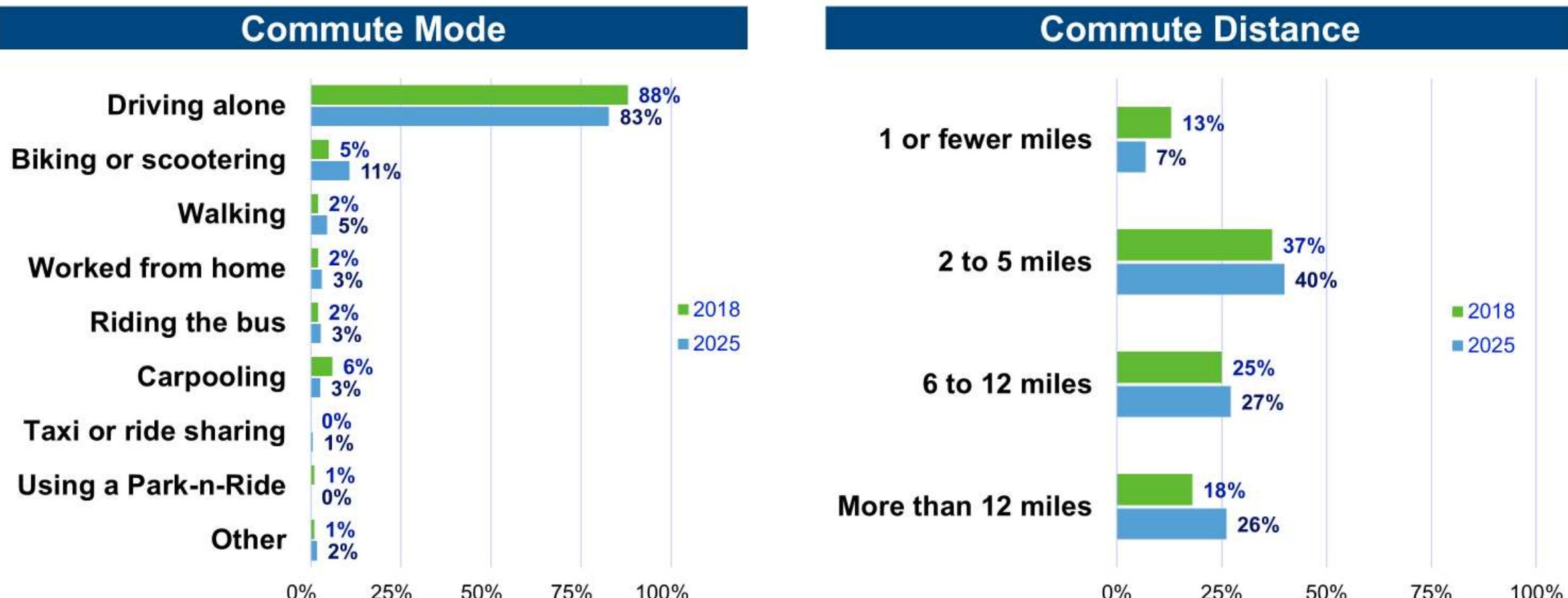
SELECT YEAR

2022

SELECT BREAKDOWN

- Industry Sectors
- Socioeconomic Factors

25 Employee Travel Survey – Key Findings



83% of employees drive alone

Half of employees commute **more than 5 miles**

Driving alone is more common among employees **outside Fort Collins**

What questions and feedback does Council have regarding the information shared?

Are there topics Council wishes to explore further in future Work Sessions?

File Attachments for Item:

2. Finance and Budget Onboarding

The purpose of this item is to provide information about finance concepts and the City's budget. Information will be provided on the following topics:

Core Municipal Finance Concepts

Roles and Functions in Fiscal Stewardship

Current Budget Revenue and Expenses

Financial Outlook

January 20, 2026

WORK SESSION AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

City Council



STAFF

Caleb Weitz, Chief Financial Officer
Bonnie Dennis, Deputy CFO/Controller
Jennifer Poznanovic, Revenue and Sales Tax Director
Victoria Shaw, Interim Finance Director, Special Projects

SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION

Finance and Budget Onboarding

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this item is to provide information about finance concepts and the City's budget. Information will be provided on the following topics:

- Core Municipal Finance Concepts
- Roles and Functions in Fiscal Stewardship
- Current Budget Revenue and Expenses
- Financial Outlook

GENERAL DIRECTION SOUGHT AND SPECIFIC QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

1. What additional information would enhance understanding of the fiduciary role of Council?
2. What feedback and additional consideration does Council have regarding the budgeting process?

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

This agenda item is intended to orient Council members to key elements of the City's financial framework. It provides an overview of core municipal finance concepts to support Council members with a shared understanding of how the City's financial resources are planned, managed, and overseen.

Core Municipal Finance Concepts

The Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) is the City's audited financial report, prepared by City staff and audited by the external audit firm Plante & Moran, PLLC, in accordance with General Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and standards issued by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). The annual audit includes federally required grant reporting and the completion of the Single Audit report related to federal expenditures.

The ACFR is completed annually after the fiscal year closes on December 31. The ACFR provides detailed budget-to-actual comparisons by fund and on a GAAP basis, supporting transparency and accountability in the City's financial reporting. In addition to the ACFR, the City publishes a Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR) which is a condensed, reader-friendly summary designed for a broader audience. These reports are filed and submitted to the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) in anticipation of receiving an award. The City has been awarded GFOA's national Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting award since 1986. This prestigious award recognizes conformance with the highest standards of state and local government financial reporting and reflects the City's commitment to full disclosure, accuracy and transparency.

Under GAAP, fund accounting is structured based on fund type and the requirements of the City's Charter. The City maintains approximately 40 funds, each of which is self-balancing, meaning each fund has its own balance sheet and statement of revenues, expenditures, and changes in fund balance. Funds are organized into two primary classifications, which are further subdivided into specific fund types: governmental and proprietary. Governmental funds include the General Fund, Special Revenue Funds, Debt Service Funds, and Capital Projects Funds, and are used to account for activities primarily supported by taxes and other restricted revenues. Proprietary funds are used to account for activities that operate in a business-like manner and are supported primarily through user fees and charges for services, such as water and power.

For budgetary purposes, each fund is independently appropriated and managed in accordance with the City Charter. The Charter requires that expenditures within a fund may not exceed available revenues and reserves and that City Council approval is required prior to expenditures occurring at the fund level. In addition, transfers between funds must be formally appropriated. Together, these requirements ensure fiscal discipline, legal compliance, and transparency in the City's budgeting and financial management practices.

Fund balance classifications describe how financial resources are constrained and available for use. There are five categories of fund balance as illustrated in the chart below and in conformance with GAAP and GASB.

Classification	Description
Non-Spendable	Permanent endowments or assets in a non-liquid form.
Restricted	Amounts constrained for a specific purpose by external parties, constitutional provision or enabling legislation.
Committed	Amounts constrained by a specific purpose set by City Council, which is the highest level of decision-making authority.
Assigned	Amounts intended for a specific purposes not already restricted or committed. These balances are established by the City Manager and CFO per a fund balance policy.
Unassigned	Spendable amount not included in any other classification.

Roles and Functions in Fiscal Stewardship

Financial stewardship is a shared responsibility among the City Council, City leadership, and the Finance Department, with each playing distinct and complementary roles. Effective financial stewardship depends on strong collaboration, clear roles, and open communication among all three groups.

The Finance Department serves as the technical and compliance authority for the city. They provide financial expertise, maintain accurate financial records, and ensure compliance with legal requirements. Finance staff oversees financial processes and systems, including internal control compliance and risk mitigation, recommend financial policies, and prepare forecasts and analytics to provide transparent, timely information to support informed decision-making.

City leadership, led by the City Manager, is responsible for translating Council's priorities and policy direction into operational and financial plans. Leaders within the city recommend balanced budgets and long-term strategies by integrating financial, operational, and strategic considerations while aligning service delivery with available resources. The City Manager oversees the execution of the adopted budget.

The City Council plays a central role in financial stewardship by setting the community's priorities and policy direction in addition to adopting the budget and financial policies. Council provides oversight to ensure public funds are used responsibly and in alignment with community values. Within the constraints of TABOR, Council decisions determine how limited resources are allocated to balance service levels with long-term financial sustainability.

To support additional collaboration between Council and staff, a subset of three Council members is appointed by the full council to form the Council Finance Committee. This committee meets monthly to provide focused review and early feedback on key financial topics. Additionally, this committee evaluates, interviews and selects the City's independent audit firm for recommendation to the City Council.

Snapshot of Current Budget

The City's annual budget of approximately \$900 million reflects a complex mix of funding sources, many of which are legally or traditionally restricted for specific purposes. While this structure ensures compliance and targets investments in directed areas, as designated by voters, it also limits flexibility in how resources can be allocated. Of the total budget, about \$150 million is from unrestricted sales taxes, which is directed towards a wide range of needs including critical services that do not have an alternative dedicated funding stream, such as public safety, transportation operations, and parks maintenance.

Revenues

The breakout of revenues originally projected in the 2025/2026 budget are shown in the following exhibit:

2025-2026 CITYWIDE REVENUES (ALL CITY FUNDS INCLUDING UTILITIES)

	2025	2026
Payments by Residents and Businesses for City Services	\$395.7M	\$418.4M
For example, utility payments for water and electricity, buying a day pass at Northside Aztlan or renting a picnic shelter at a local park.		
Sales Taxes	\$208.9M	\$191.9M
When we shop in Fort Collins, part of the taxes paid become revenue for the City. The tax rate can change when voters approve taxes, like for Natural Areas.		
Internal Payments Between City Departments	\$95.2M	\$70.5M
The Senior Center, for example, would need to pay the Streets Department to repave their parking lot.		
Payments by Other Governments for City Services	\$58.7M	\$47.8M
Nearby cities may pay for services from the City of Fort Collins, like bus services.		
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$49.1M	\$51.3M
Lots of little stuff that adds up just like change between the couch cushions.		
Property Taxes for City Operations and PFA	\$41.4M	\$42.1M
A portion of the taxes home owners pay for their house, and smaller than you might think, becomes revenue for the City (see next page).		
Proceeds of Issuing Debt	\$11.3M	\$12.4M
This is borrowed revenue that is required to be paid back with interest, based on the details of the loan agreements.		
Property Taxes for Downtown Development Authority (DDA)	\$10.3M	\$10.3M
This portion of the property tax is dedicated to the DDA.		
Licenses and Permits	\$3.7M	\$3.9M
These are things like the licenses required to run a business in Fort Collins and a building permit, required when getting a roof repaired from hail damage.		
Interest on Investments	\$16.9M	\$16.8M
The City keeps money in bank accounts where it can earn interest, just like with some checking accounts.		
Other Taxes	\$5.5M	\$5.6M
Examples include lodging tax paid when visitors come to Fort Collins and stay overnight in a hotel.		
Total	\$896.7M	\$871.0M

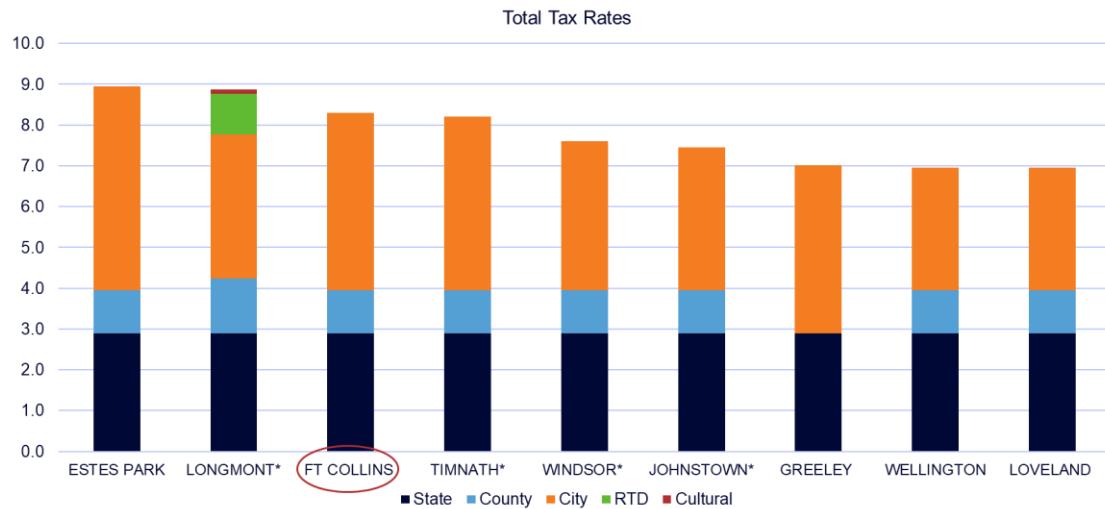
2025 2026

Payments for services represent the largest portion of forecasted revenues. The City's fee structure is established to offset the costs of providing the service, such as staff time, materials, capital replacement and many other factors.

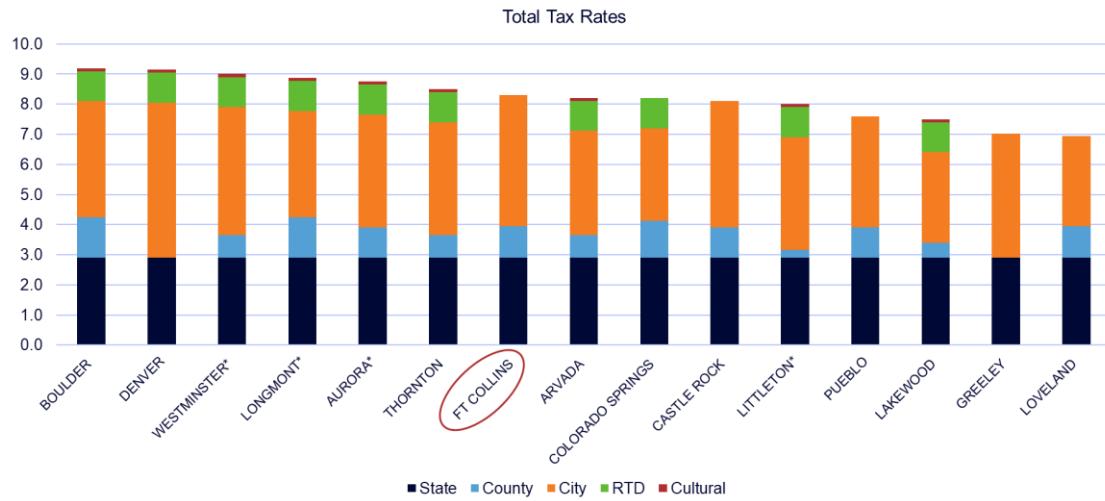
The second largest revenue stream for the City is sales and use tax. Sales and use tax is approximately 50% of the City's governmental revenue with \$200M per year. This revenue includes three dedicated $\frac{1}{4}$ cent taxes (Community Capital Improvement Plan (CCIP), Natural Areas, and Street Maintenance, and the $\frac{1}{2}$ cent 2050 tax for Parks and Recreation, Our Climate Future, and Transportation. These dedicated taxes are restricted by their associated ballot language requirements. Approximately \$150M per year would

be the general sales tax, which includes the dedicated $\frac{1}{4}$ cent Keep Fort Collins Great tax (KFCG), which are considered available or unrestricted for operating uses.

The effective sales tax rate, as of January 1, 2026, in Fort Collins is 8.30%. The City of Fort Collins share of that rate is 4.35% The chart below illustrates how this rate compares against other cities in Northern Colorado:

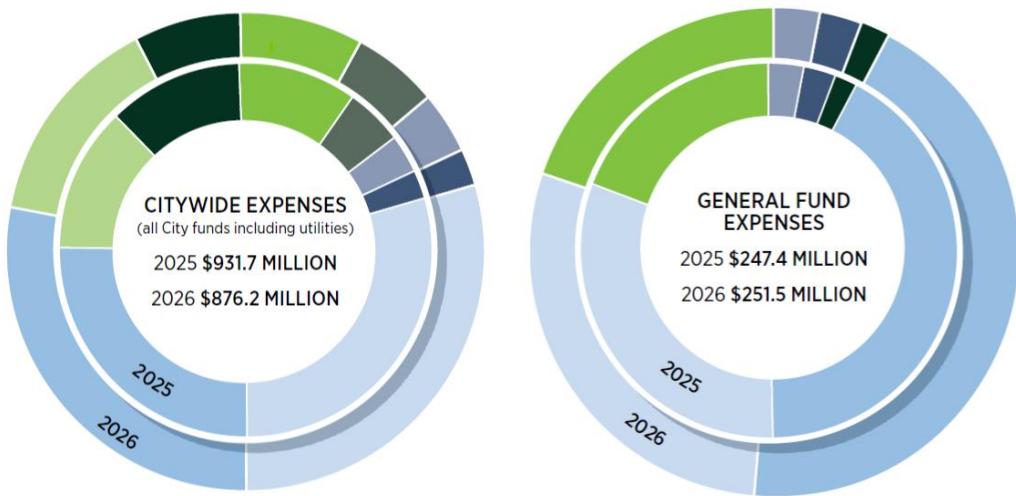


While the following chart displays how this rate compares with other large Colorado cities:



Expenses

Revenue is paired with prioritized funding requests through the budget process. In 2025/2026, the expenses were as follows:

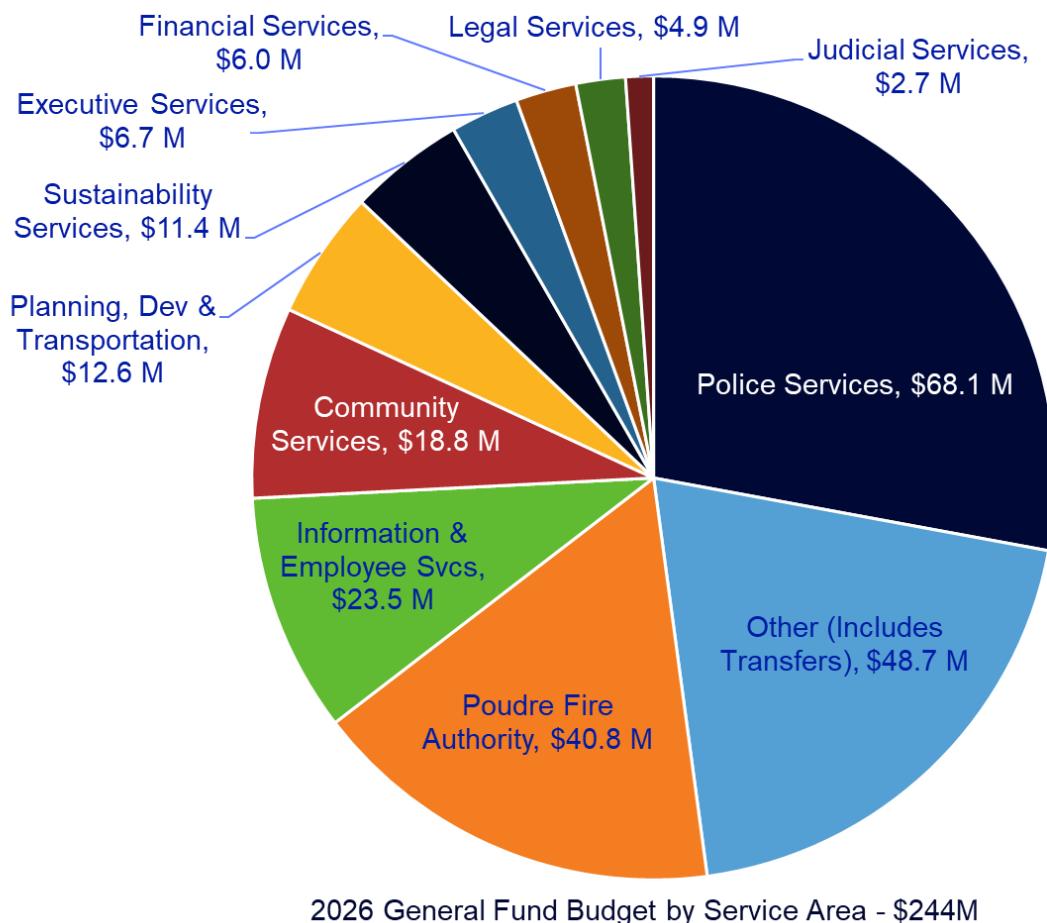


Citywide Expenses	2025	2026
Services Purchased from External Businesses, including Local	\$277.7M	\$262.5M
Employee Pay and Benefits	\$232.0M	\$243.2M
Energy Purchased from Platte River Power Authority	\$116.3M	\$123.7M
Capital, Including Land, Buildings, Vehicles, Large Machinery, etc.	\$108.2M	\$63.7M
Internal Payments Between City Departments*	\$96.7M	\$72.2M
Debt Service	\$47.0M	\$55.6M
Other Supplies	\$32.6M	\$34.3M
Other Expenses	\$21.1M	\$21.1M

General Fund Expenses	2025	2026
Employee Pay and Benefits	\$104.4M	\$109.2M
Services Purchased from External Businesses, including Local	\$74.3M	\$73.0M
Internal Payments Between City Departments*	\$47.5M	\$49.9M
Other Supplies	\$8.0M	\$8.2M
Other Expenses	\$6.7M	\$6.9M
Capital, Including Land, Buildings, Vehicles, Large Machinery, etc.	\$6.5M	\$4.4M

These expense categories represent the type of costs being budgeted, with the majority of Citywide costs going towards services purchased, while for General Fund costs, the majority of costs budgeted for are employee pay and benefits.

The General Fund appropriations for 2026 by Service Area are shown in the following chart:



The allocation of General Fund dollars generally follows three primary themes. First, many of these resources support departments that provide core governmental services that do not have other significant funding sources. Examples include Police Services and Parks Maintenance within Community Services. Second, funding is also directed to areas where General Fund support is used to leverage other revenue streams, such as grants or fee-based income. For example, Planning, Development and Transportation often combines City funding with federal, state, or local partner contributions to deliver infrastructure and mobility projects. Third, a portion of unrestricted funding supports internal City services, such as Information and Employee Services, which includes the Information Technology department, and Financial Services. These functions are essential to maintaining effective operations and enabling all departments to deliver services to the community.

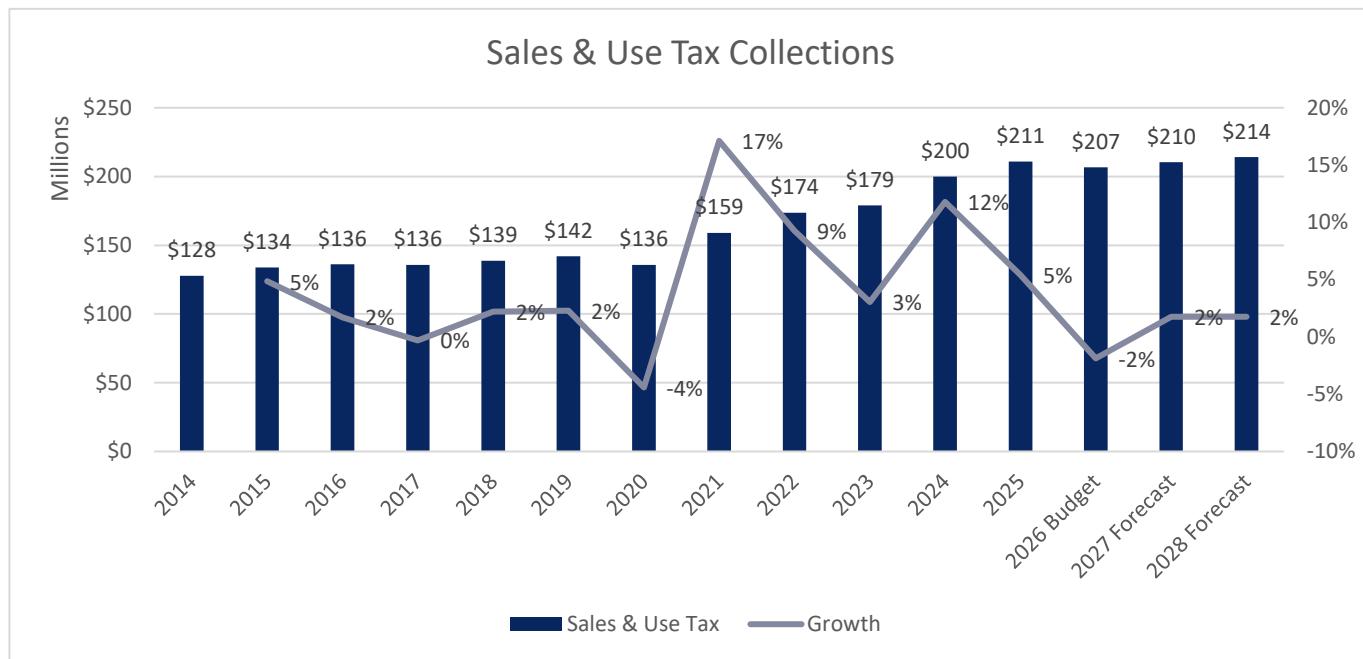
Financial Trends and Outlook

Based on trends in both revenue and expense pressures which emerged after the original adoption of the 2025/2026 budget, staff recommended reductions to maintain the health of the General Fund. The 2026 budget was revised to close an estimated potential shortfall of \$15.4M.

Throughout 2025, there was significant economic uncertainty, much of which continues today. At the national level, impacts from the tariffs have been hard to predict, while unemployment increased. Inflationary rate increases have slowed relative to recent years, but the increased costs experienced in many commodities over the past few years have not subsided.

At the state level, unemployment rose as the State faced at least a \$750M budget shortfall. Coloradoans also continue to hold some of the highest amounts of debt of any state in the nation. These economic conditions and uncertainty resulted in lower than forecasted growth in ongoing Sales Tax collections for

2025. For the 2027/2028 Budget, staff are currently forecasting 2% annual sales tax growth on 2026 sales tax collections. Historical sales tax information is shown in the chart below:



With expense pressures expected to continue into the 2027/2028 budget cycle, staff is required to have a forward-looking approach within the upcoming budget process. Current projections indicate a need for continued diligence matching appropriate service levels with financial capacity to ensure sustainable operations.

NEXT STEPS

Council onboarding and priority setting discussions will continue throughout the remainder of Q1 2026 with Leadership Planning Team and Council. Staff will incorporate Council members' feedback as they work on the 2027/2028 budgeting process.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Presentation



Jan 20, 2026

Finance and Budget Overview

Caleb Weitz, Chief Financial Officer





Core Municipal Finance Concepts



Roles and Functions in Fiscal Stewardship



Financial Snapshot



Look Ahead

1. What additional information would enhance understanding of the fiduciary role of Council?
2. What feedback and additional consideration does Council have regarding the budgeting process?

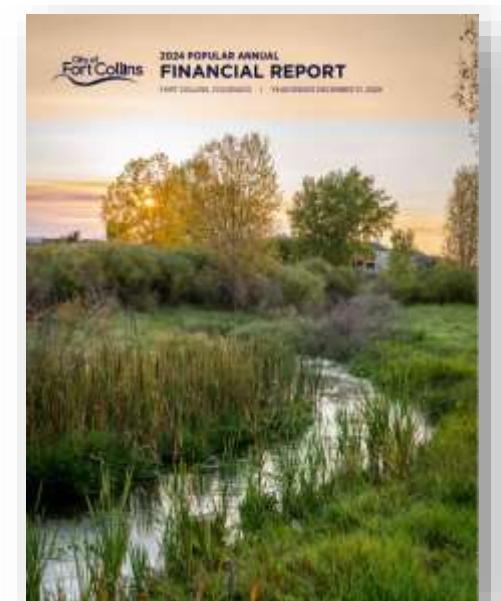
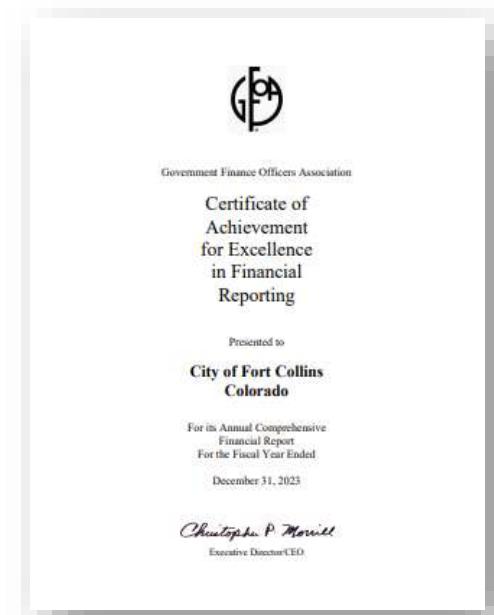


Core Municipal Finance Concepts



Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR)

- Audited Financial Report and Audited Federal Grant Reporting (Single Audit)
 - Plante & Moran, PLLC external audit firm
- Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB)
- Budget vs. actuals detailed by fund and by GAAP basis of accounting
- *Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting*
 - Awarded the by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA)
- Popular Annual Financial Report
 - Condensed and reader-friendly annual financial report
- AAA/AA+ Bond Rating



Governmental

Authority-approved spending

Enterprise

Fee-based, 100% cost-recovery operations

Self-Balancing Fund Types

- General (City Operations)
- Special Revenue
 - Transportation Services
 - 2050 Tax Parks Rec Transit Climate
 - Recreation
 - URA (Urban Renewal Authority)
 - GID (General Improvement District)
 - *Many more*
- Debt Service
- Capital Project

City Charter Requires:

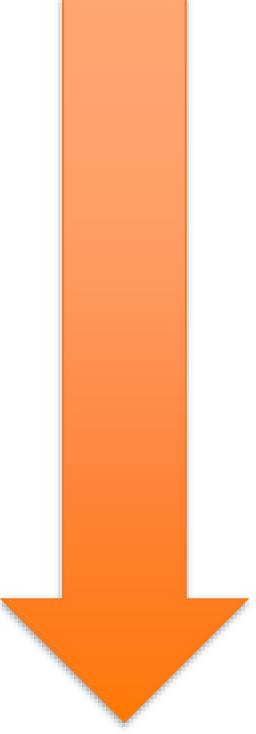
Spending cannot exceed revenues or reserves

AND

Council approval is required before expenditures occur at the fund level

AND

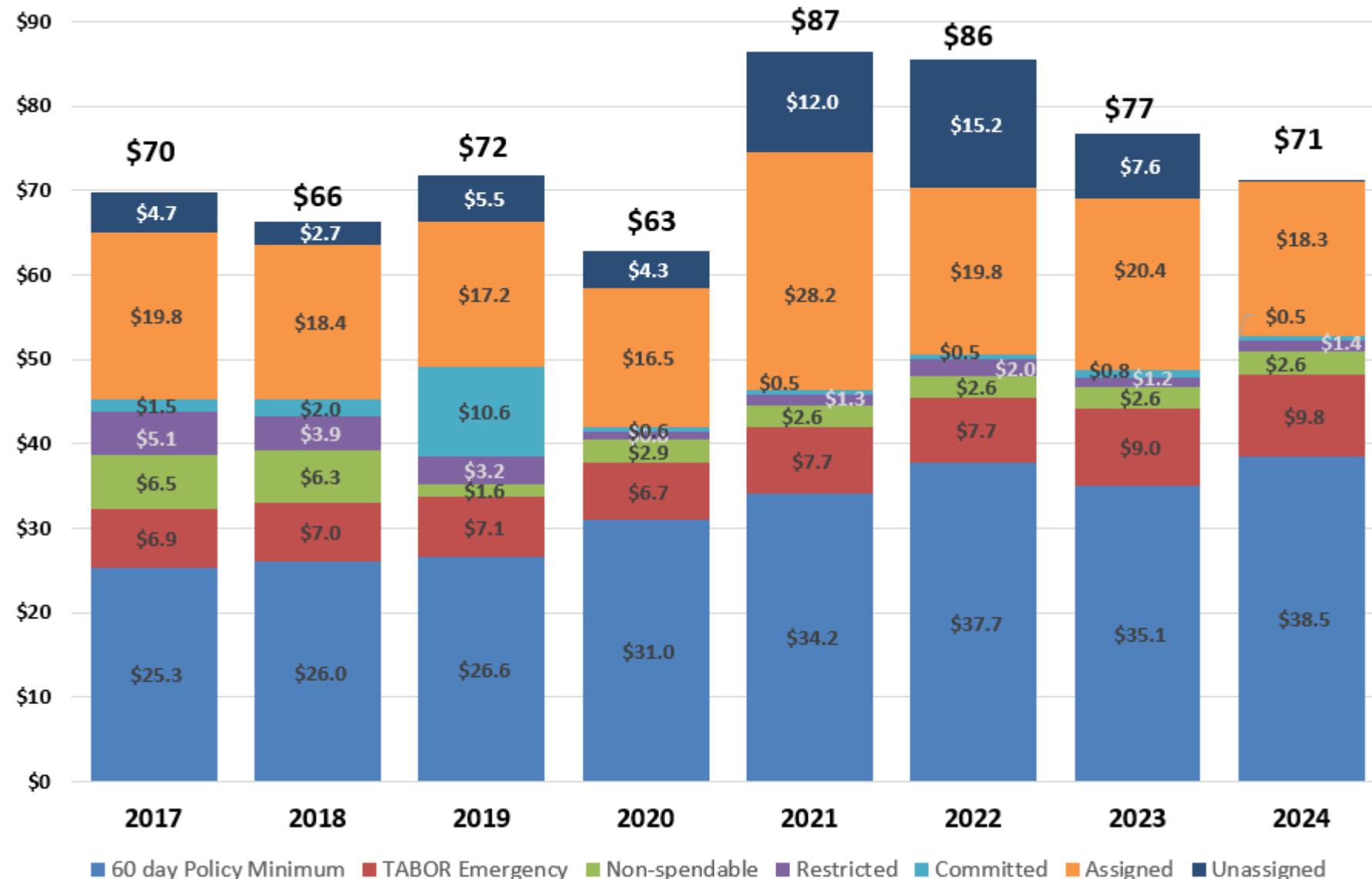
Council authorization of transfers between funds through appropriations



A large orange downward-pointing arrow is positioned on the left side of the table, indicating a progression from 'Most Constrained' at the top to 'Least Constrained' at the bottom.

Classification	Description
Non-Spendable	Permanent endowments or assets in a non-liquid form.
Restricted	Amounts constrained for a specific purpose by external parities, constitutional provision or enabling legislation.
Committed	Amounts constrained by a specific purpose set by City Council, which is the highest level of decision-making authority.
Assigned	Amounts intended for a specific purposes not already restricted or committed. These balances are established by the City Manager and CFO per a fund balance policy.
Unassigned	Spendable amount not included in any other classification.

General Fund Reserves by Year in \$M





Roles and Functions in Financial Stewardship



oles in Financial Stewardship



Finance Department

- Technical Expertise and Compliance
- Balance controls with customer service
- Prepare forecasts and reports
- Analyze fiscal impacts of policy proposals
- Administer processes and systems



City Leaders

- Recommend budgets aligned with priorities
- Balance service demands with constraints
- Integrate financial, operational, and strategic considerations
- Day-to-day operation and execution



Council

- Set Policy Direction and Priorities
- Provide Oversight
- Adopt the budget and major plans
- Approve rates, fees, and debt
- Refer ballot measures

Maintain transparency, integrity, and safeguard long-term fiscal health

Accounting

- External Reporting, General Ledger control, Treasury/Debt, Accounts Payable, Payroll, and Business Intelligence

Revenue

- Sales and use tax collections (lodging, FCTID, bag fee), tax audits, collections and enforcement of delinquent accounts, and various licensing programs

CityGive

- Cultivation, management and stewardship of philanthropic revenue to the City. Strategic relationship management.

Budget

- Biennial budgeting process, mid-year appropriations. Performance metrics systems and processes.

Purchasing

- Formal bids and requests for proposals (RFPs), annual contracts, and purchases above \$75K

Safety & Risk Management

- Health and safety programs, claims management, workers compensation & liability, insurance, commercial driver files

Finance Planning & Analysis

- Financial analysis, operations assessment, and decision support/coordination across the organization

Financial Snapshot: Sources and Uses



Budget Snapshot: Revenues

	2025	2026
Payments by Residents and Businesses for City Services	\$396.0M	\$418.5M

For example, utility payments for water and electricity, buying a day pass at Northside Aztlán or renting a picnic shelter at a local park.

Sales Taxes	\$208.9M	\$191.9M
--------------------	-----------------	-----------------

When we shop in Fort Collins, part of the taxes paid become revenue for the City. The tax rate can change when voters approve taxes, like for Natural Areas.

Internal Payments Between City Departments	\$96.7M	\$72.2M
---	----------------	----------------

The Senior Center, for example, would need to pay the Streets Department to repave their parking lot.

Payments by Other Governments for City Services	\$60.0M	\$47.8M
--	----------------	----------------

Nearby cities may pay for services from the City of Fort Collins, like bus services.

Miscellaneous Revenue	\$49.3M	\$51.6M
------------------------------	----------------	----------------

Lots of little stuff that adds up just like change between the couch cushions.

Property Taxes for City Operations and PFA	\$41.1M	\$42.1M
---	----------------	----------------

A portion of the taxes home owners pay for their house, and smaller than you might think, becomes revenue for the City.

	2025	2026
Proceeds of Issuing Debt	\$13.3M	\$14.4M

This is borrowed revenue that is required to be paid back with interest, based on the details of the loan agreements.

Property Taxes for Downtown Development Authority (DDA)	\$9.7M	\$9.7M
--	---------------	---------------

This portion of the property tax is dedicated to the DDA.

Licenses and Permits	\$3.4M	\$3.6M
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These are things like the licenses required to run a business in Fort Collins and a building permit, required when getting a roof repaired from hail damage.

Interest on Investments	\$16.6M	\$16.5M
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The City keeps money in bank accounts where it can earn interest, just like with some checking accounts.

Other Taxes	\$5.5M	\$5.6M
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Examples include lodging tax paid when visitors come to Fort Collins and stay overnight in a hotel.

Total	\$900.5M	\$873.9M
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2025
2026



Payment Revenues are associated with linked costs and have various restrictions around their use

Tax Rate effective January 1, 2026 to Current

State of Colorado	2.90%
Larimer County	1.05%
City of Fort Collins	4.35%
Total Sales Tax	8.30%
Fort Collins Lodging Tax (in addition to above)	3.00%
Total Accommodations Tax	11.30%
Fort Collins Tax on Food for Home Consumption	2.25%

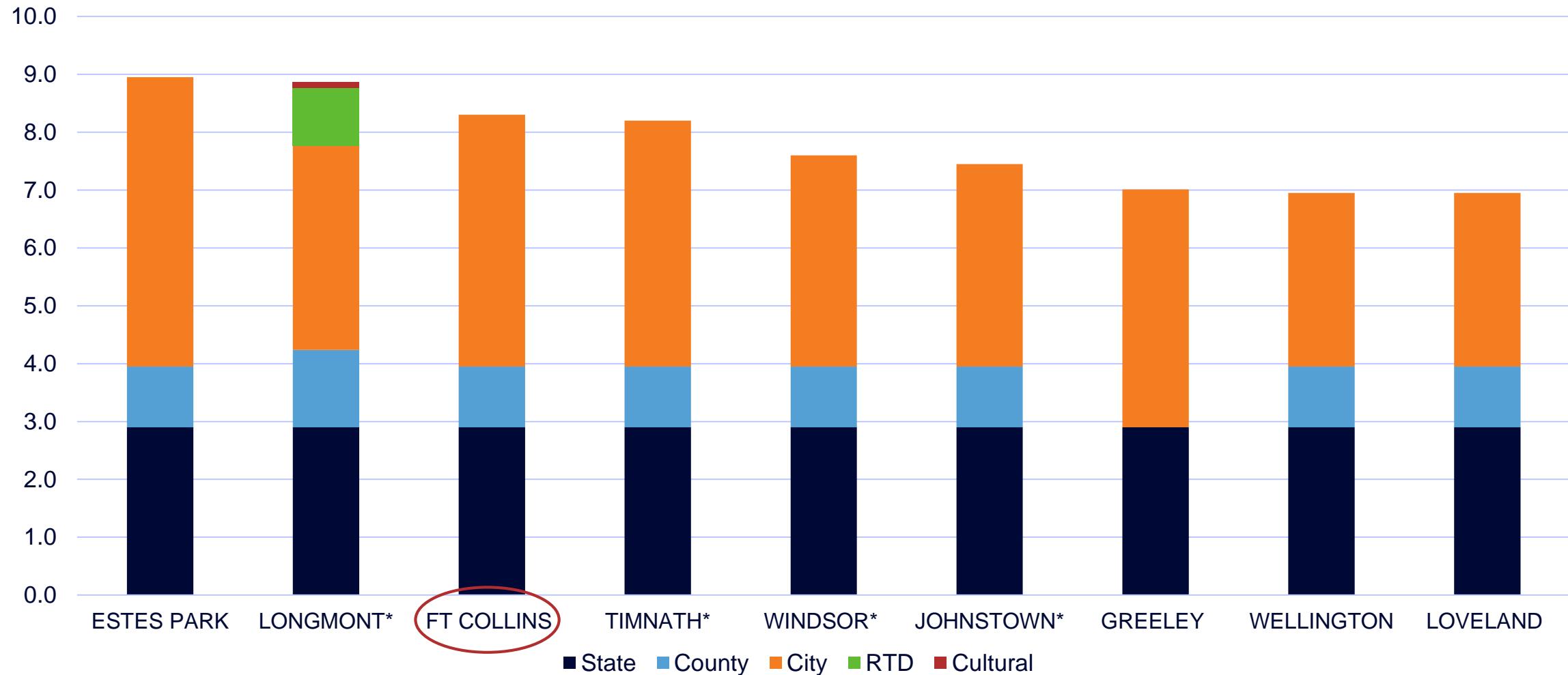
Northern Colorado City Full Stack Sales Tax Rates



Item 2.

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Total Tax Rates



*Jurisdictions located in more than one county; tax rate depends on county location

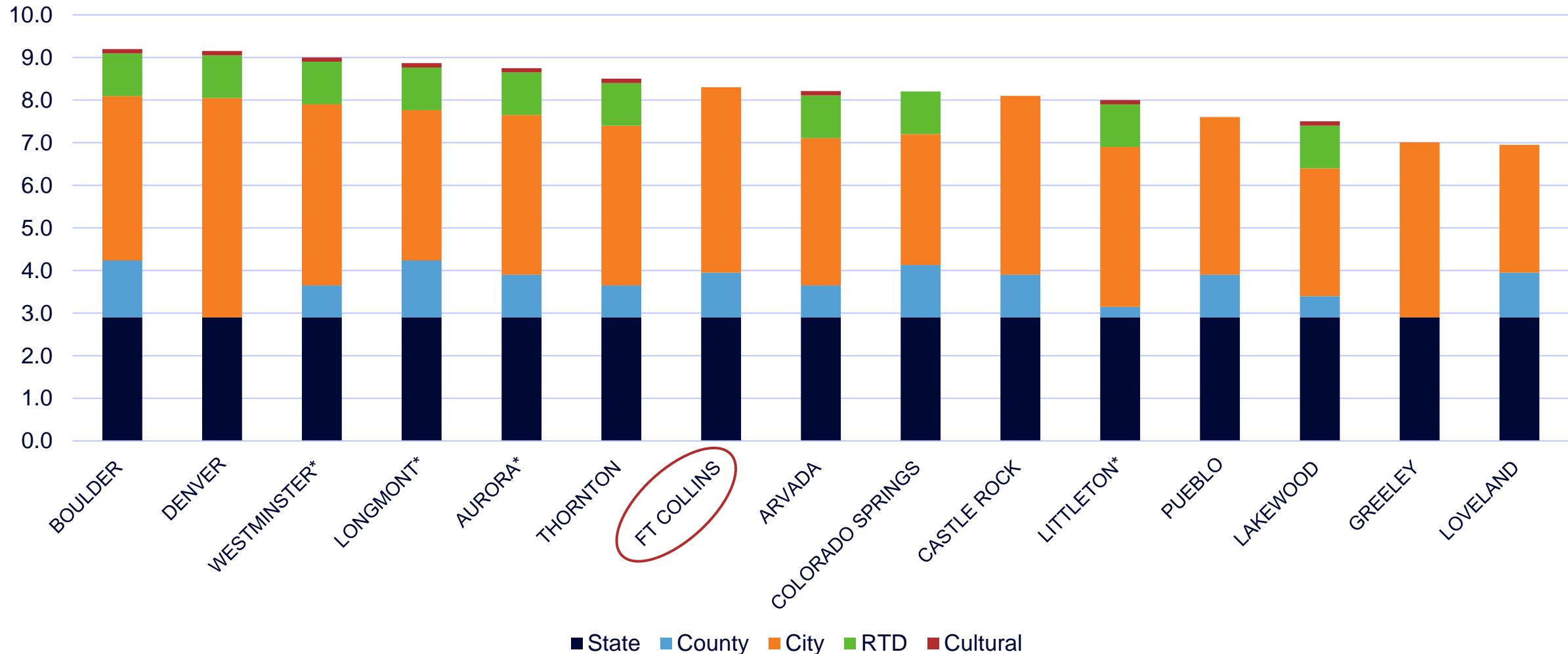
Colorado City Full Stack (15 largest cities by population)

Item 2.

Sales Tax Rates



Total Tax Rates



■ State ■ County ■ City ■ RTD ■ Cultural

PRIMARY FUNDING MECHANISM

- **Biennial Budget** – a Citywide budgeting process that identifies upcoming expenses and pairs them with the City funding sources for the upcoming two years.
 - It is a year-long process which runs in even years and concludes with the 1st and 2nd readings of the budget in November.
 - In the odd-year, there is a revision process ahead of 2nd year appropriations for requested changes.

SECONDARY FUNDING MECHANISMS

- **Supplemental appropriations** – unanticipated requirements may trigger a need for an out of cycle appropriation to be authorized by Council.
 - **Donations and Philanthropic Grants** – Charitable gifts from individual donors or foundations given with intent to impact a program, service, or facility. These funds pass through the City Give business unit and are transferred to departments for specific use following appropriation.
 - **Federal or State Grants** – grants are available for specific projects or programs. This funding will often come with specific restrictions and reporting requirements.
 - **Debt Issuance** – Proceeds from Certificates of Participation (COPs) financing are appropriated alongside the authorization to issue debt.
- **Annual Adjustment** – Consolidated recommendation for numerous, small dollar and non- controversial items, including unexpected revenues, late in the year to efficiently authorize spending.
- **Reappropriation** - reauthorize budget for specific initiatives that were not completed before the prior year's annual authorization lapsed.

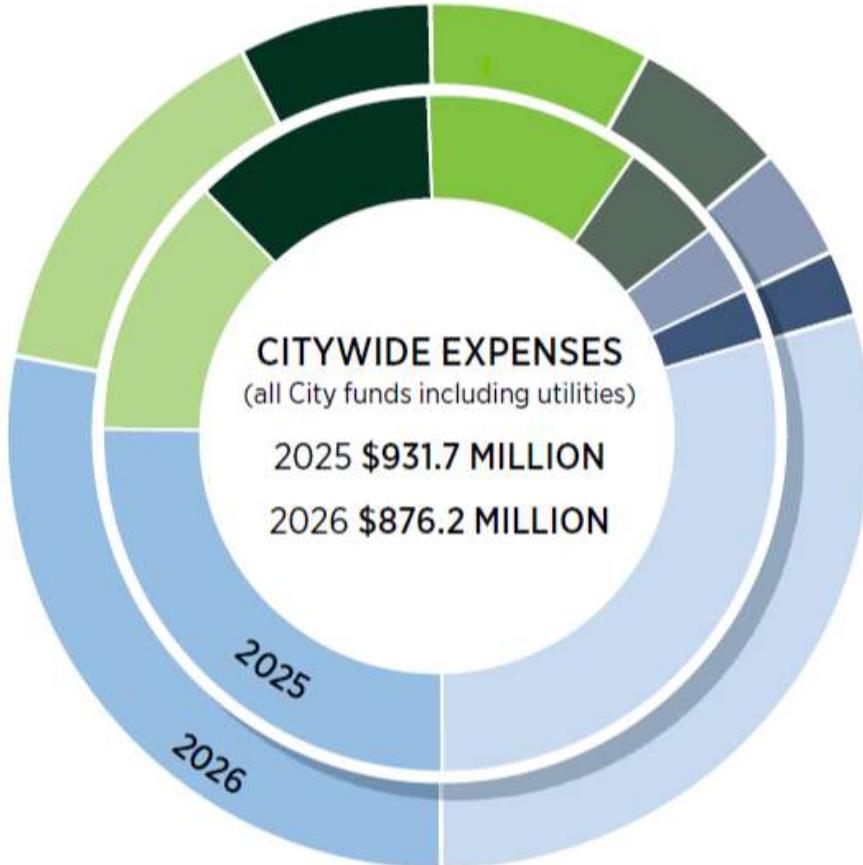
- Budgeting for Outcomes (BFO) – 20-year history
- 2027/2028 Transitional Budget based on feedback

Existing Process	Focus with Priority Based Budgeting
Focused on enhancements, Less scrutiny of base	Evaluate all programs, including base services, alongside new demands and Enhance understanding of service levels through program inventories & metrics
Dense and lengthy document	Streamlined format leveraging visuals to add context
Consolidated insights and trends available late in the process	Earlier grounding in budget trends and service area level overviews

Budget Calendar – Council Touchpoints

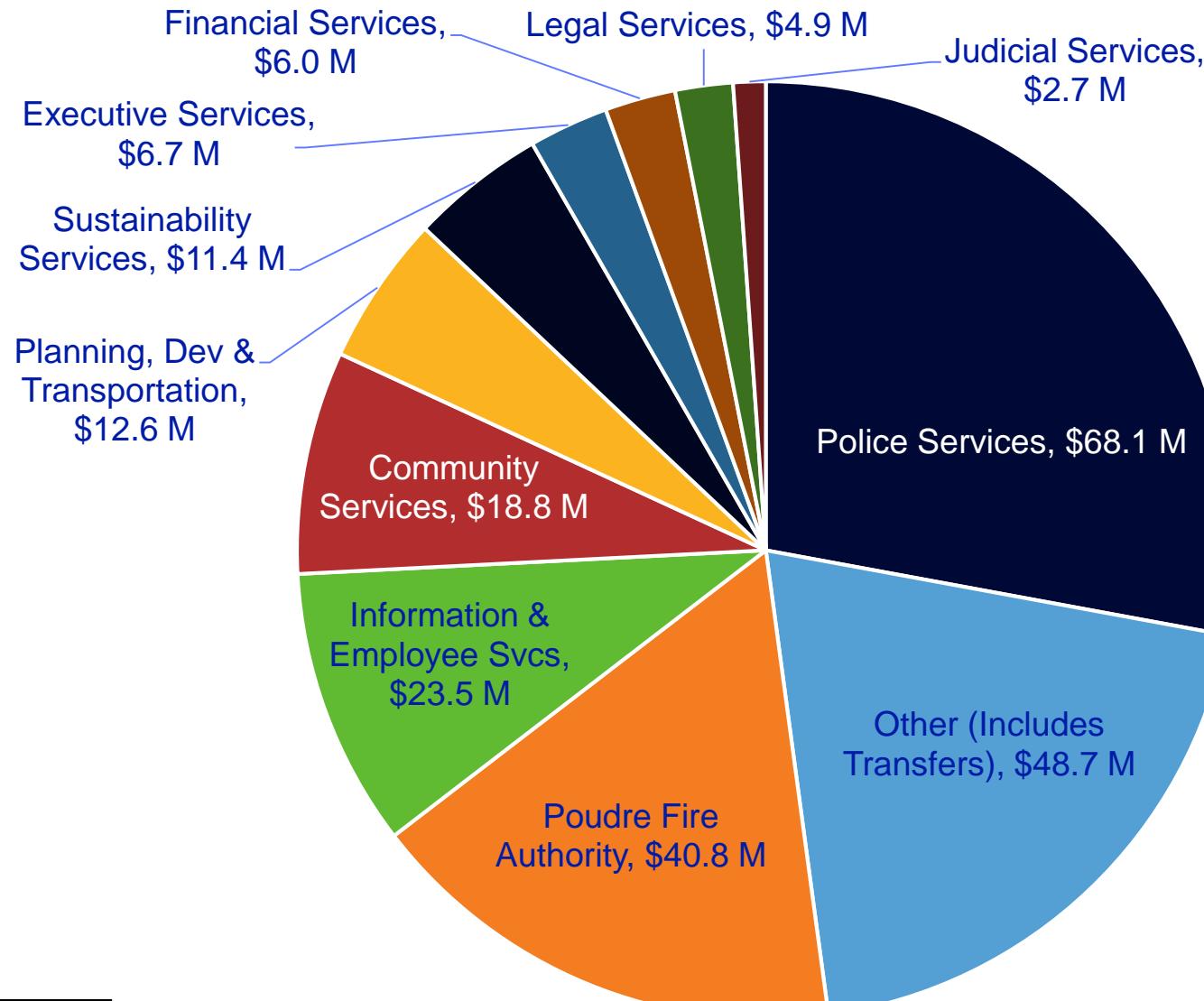
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Finance Committee	Service Area Financial Overviews							Budget Review		
Full Council					Work Session			Work Sessions and Public Hearings		Adoption of Budget

City Budget Snapshot: Expenses



Citywide Expenses	2025	2026
Services Purchased from External Businesses, including Local	\$277.7M	\$262.5M
Employee Pay and Benefits	\$232.0M	\$243.2M
Energy Purchased from Platte River Power Authority	\$116.3M	\$123.7M
Capital, Including Land, Buildings, Vehicles, Large Machinery, etc.	\$108.2M	\$63.7M
Internal Payments Between City Departments*	\$96.7M	\$72.2M
Debt Service	\$47.0M	\$55.6M
Other Supplies	\$32.6M	\$34.3M
Other Expenses	\$21.1M	\$21.1M

General Fund by Service Area



2026 General Fund Budget by Service Area - \$244M

Departments which are core government functions without other significant funding sources

- Police Services
- Parks Operations

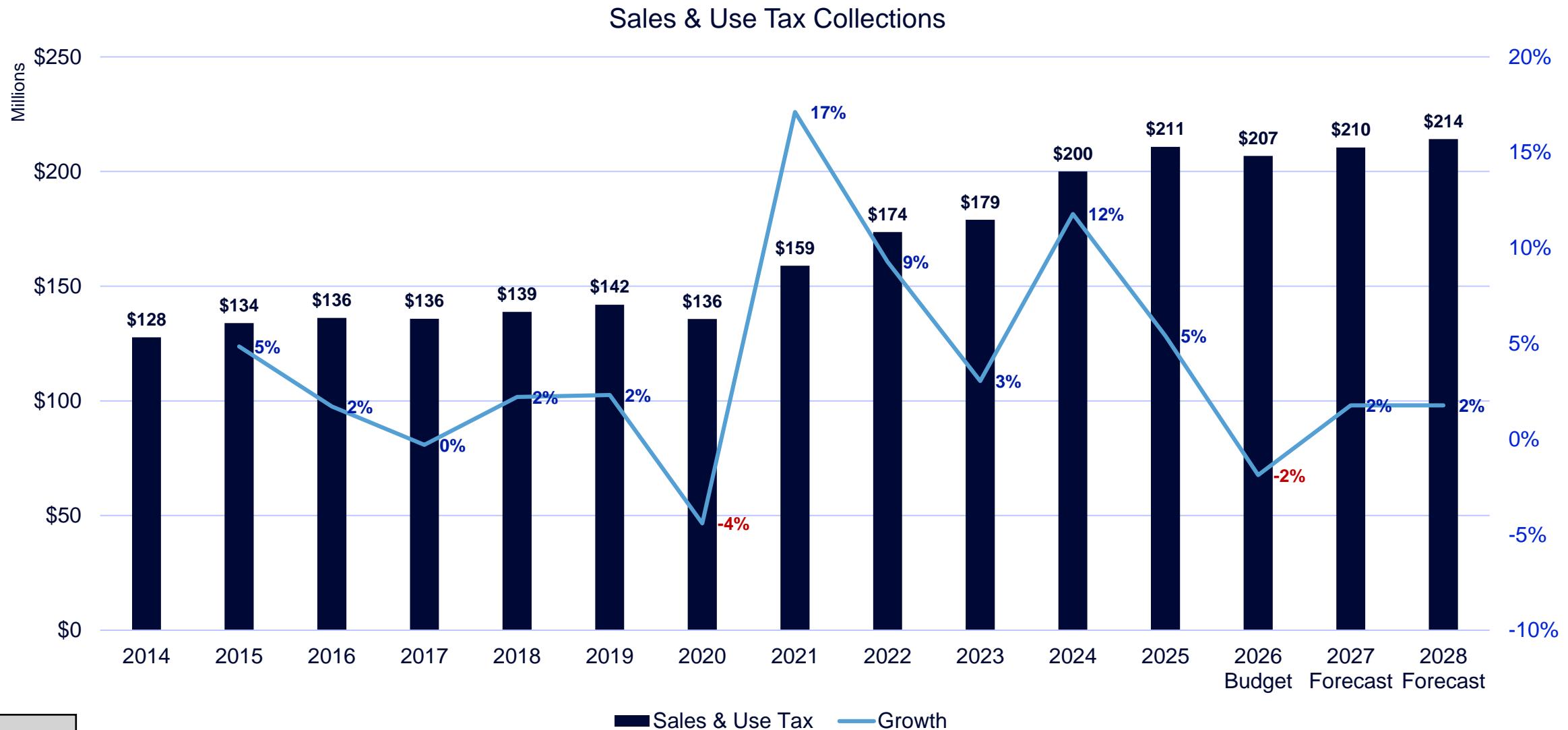
Areas with ability to leverage funding

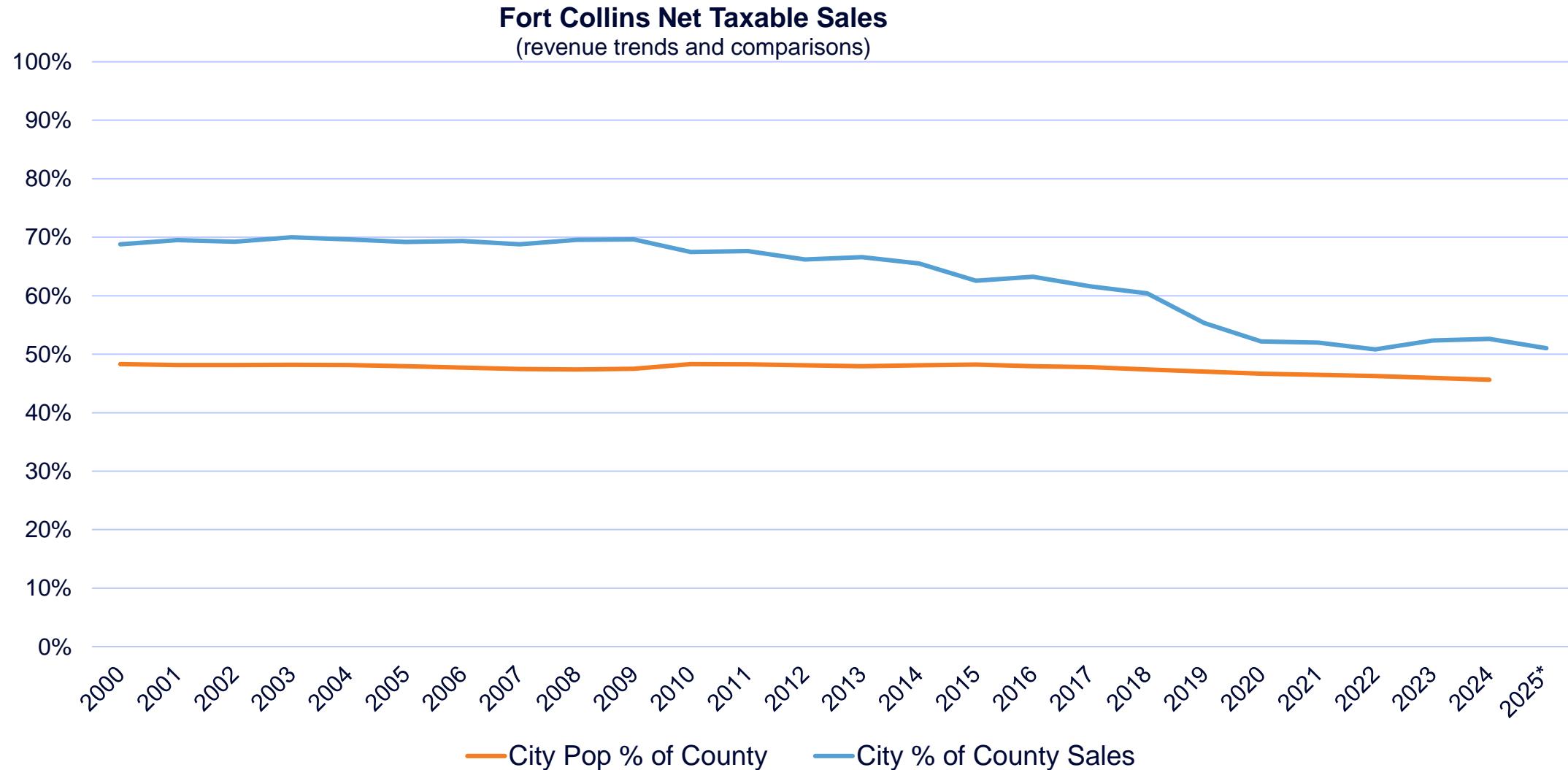
- Grants and Fees, like in PDT
- Revenue supported departments, like in Recreation

Internal support services

Looking Ahead







- Personnel costs – collective bargaining, compensation increases, increase in benefits costs
- Non-personnel
 - Commodity & Contractor costs
 - Deficit in grocery tax rebate program
 - Use of one-time funding for ongoing programs
- 2026 Budget was revised to close estimated \$15.4M General Fund shortfall
 - 30% of reductions were one-time opportunities
 - Reduced authorized FTE to eliminate 26 vacant positions
 - Reduced compensation increases to 2%
 - Hiring freeze (One-time reduction)
 - Adjusted service levels

- Economic uncertainty and limited revenue growth
- Continuing to experience the impact of recent inflation in cost pressures for ongoing services
- Keeping employee compensation competitive
- Addressing one-time funded programs
- Based on preliminary analysis, anticipating similar budget shortfall for 2027 as was experienced in 2026

High Priority Finance Projects

- Debt issuances
- 2027/2028 Budget
- Modernization of systems and processes



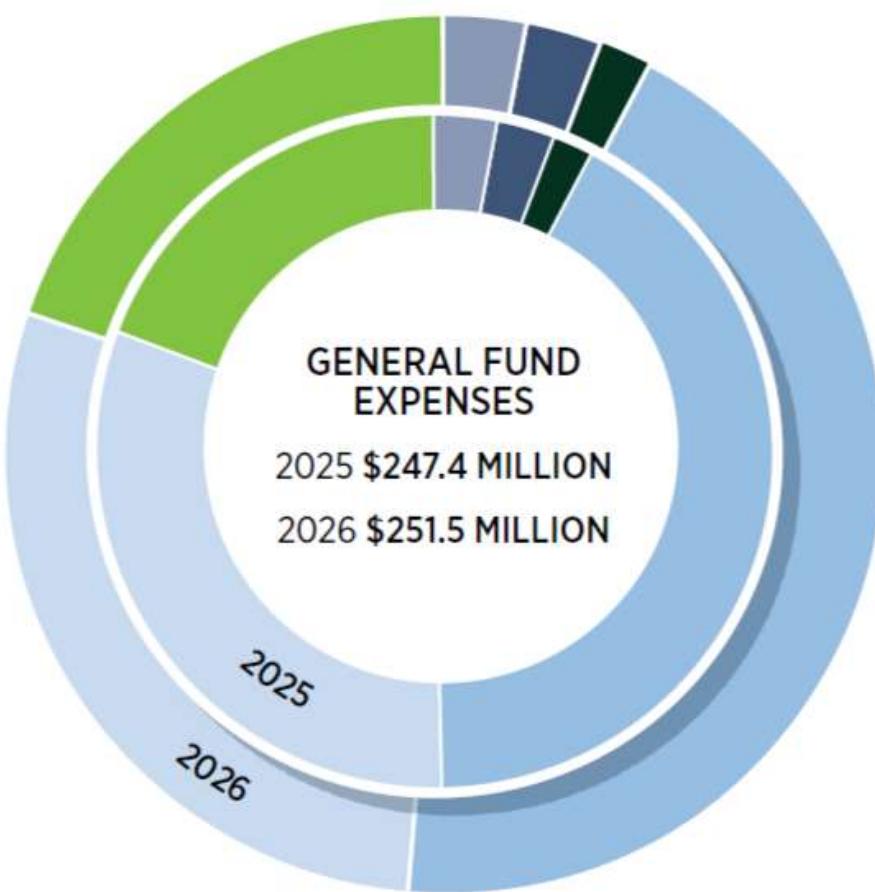
1. What additional information would enhance understanding of the fiduciary role of Council?
2. What feedback and additional consideration does Council have regarding the budgeting process?

Item 2.



Backup

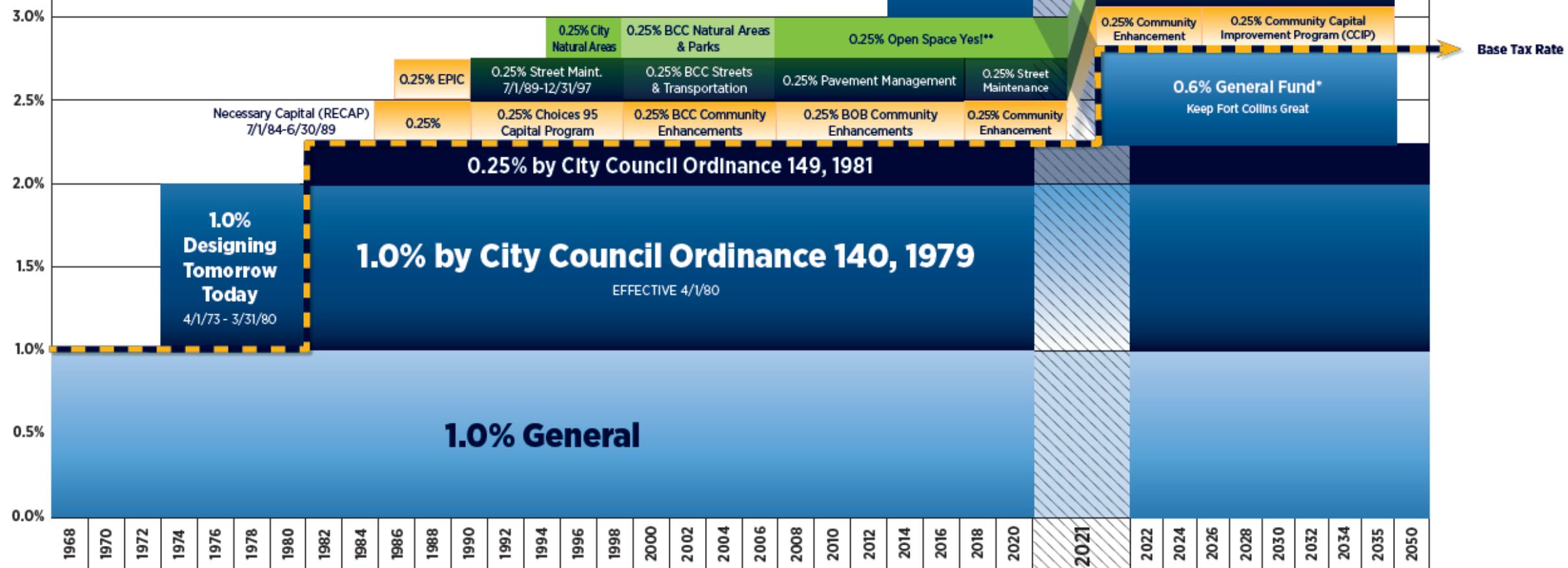
City Budget Snapshot: Expenses



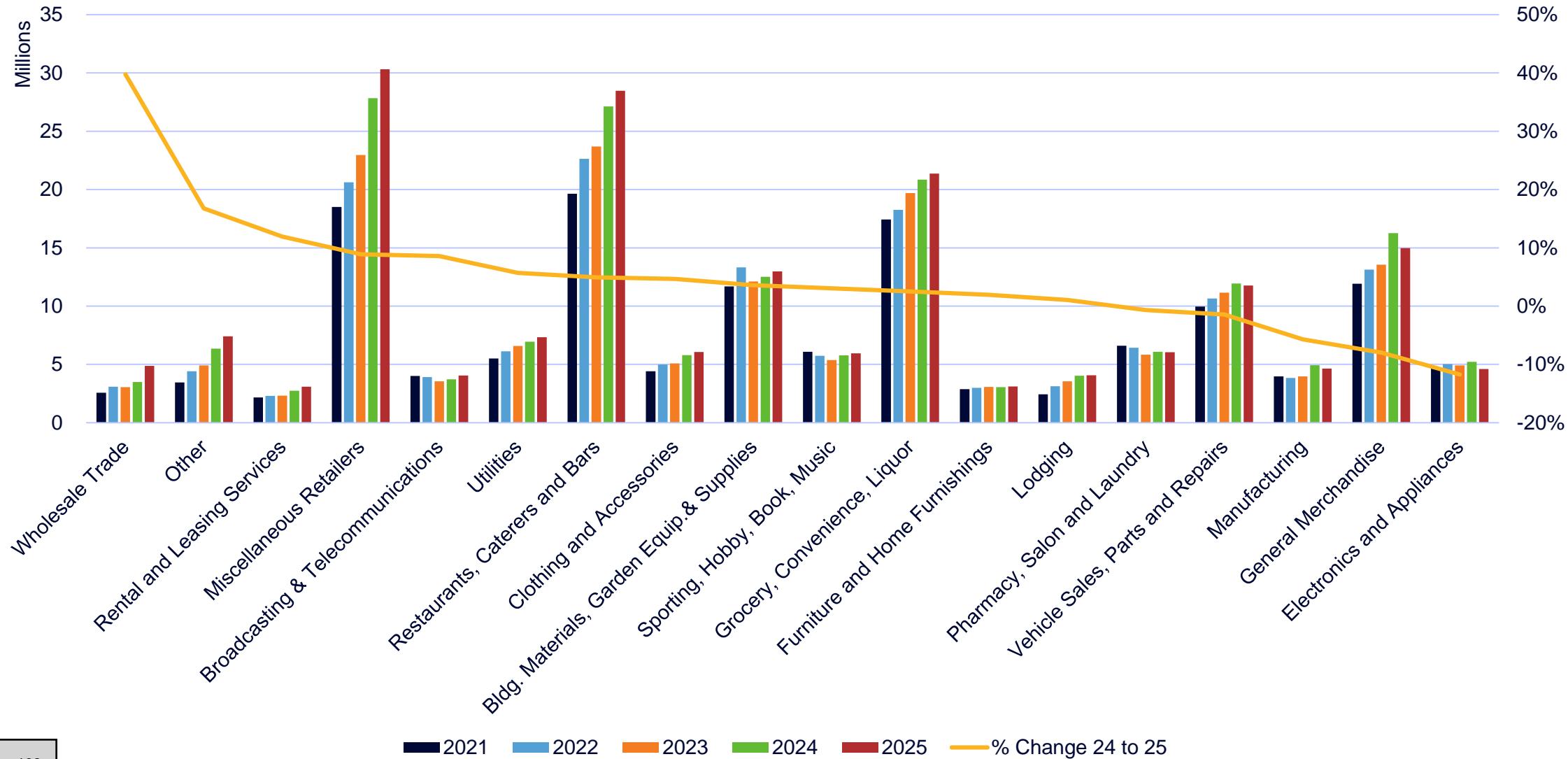
General Fund Expenses	2025	2026
Employee Pay and Benefits	\$104.4M	\$109.2M
Services Purchased from External Businesses, including Local	\$74.3M	\$73.0M
Internal Payments Between City Departments*	\$47.5M	\$49.9M
Other Supplies	\$8.0M	\$8.2M
Other Expenses	\$6.7M	\$6.9M
Capital, Including Land, Buildings, Vehicles, Large Machinery, etc.	\$6.5M	\$4.4M

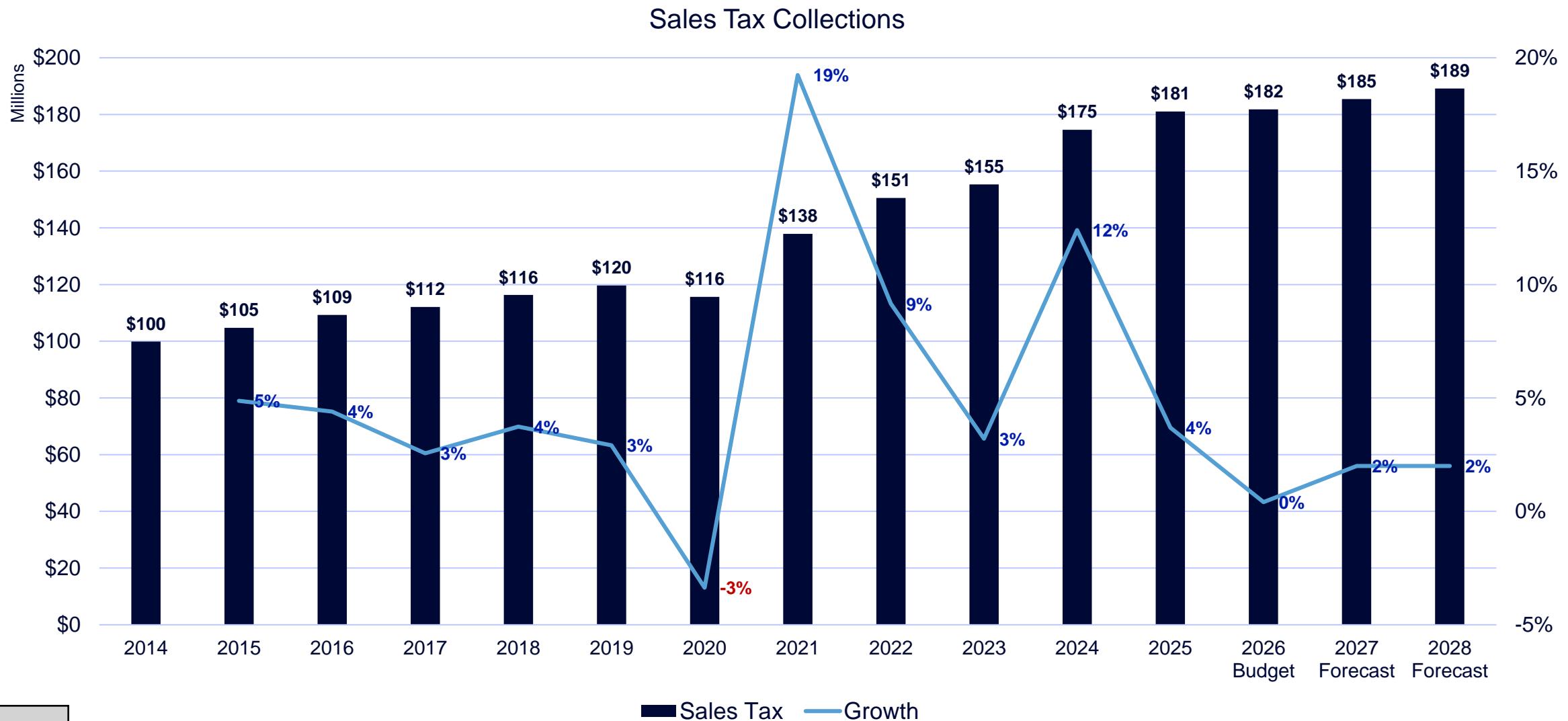
All taxes were **voter approved** unless otherwise stated.

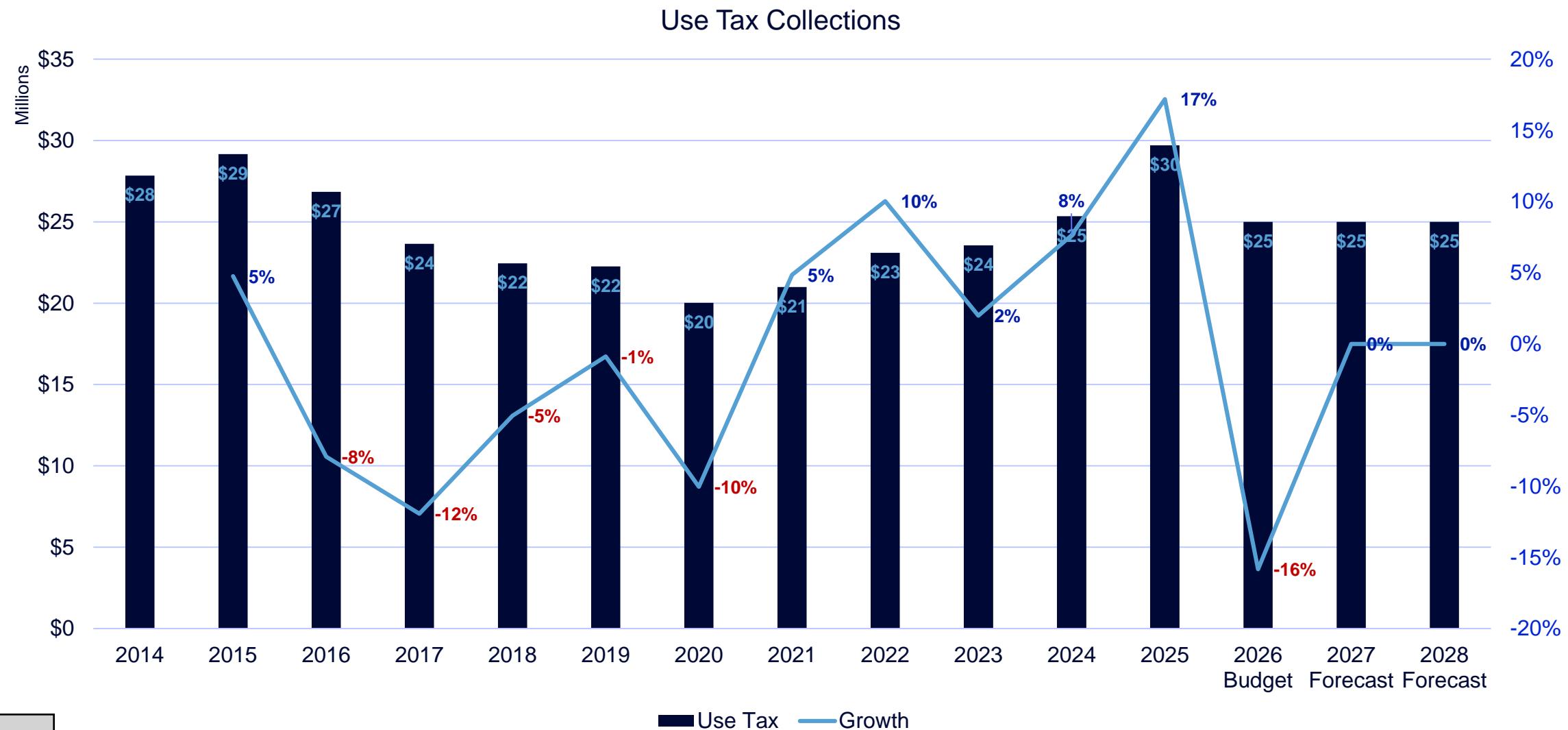
*KFCG revenue replacement will continue the 0.85% tax by increasing the on-going tax rate by 0.60% and adding a renewable 0.25% tax through 2030.



Taxes Tax Collections By Category







Item 2. Property Tax History

