



## Focus Group Summary

**Focus Group Description:** Three Focus Group meetings were conducted August 28<sup>th</sup> to inform the initial stages of understanding current conditions and to identify issues for the Frisco Community Plan. Approximately 60 subject matter experts and community members representing a variety of perspectives were invited to attend and provide their insight.

Discussion sessions were organized around the following topics:

1. Frisco's Economics: Now and the Future
2. Community Design, Character and Land Use
3. Housing Diversity and Livability

**Discussion Summary:** Each topical focus group was provided a list of potential discussion items used to help direct conversation. The following summary combines the main discussion points of these three groups and captures the primary themes they expressed.

### 1. Frisco's Economics: Now and the Future

Frisco's economy has experienced sustained growth over the past 10 years.

- TOF has experienced record growth in sales tax revenue and more stability for the past 10 years. Government revenue growth shows the strength of the local economy.
- Sales tax trends reveal:
  - Businesses along Summit Blvd. are the greatest contributors (groceries).
  - Vacation rentals are growing while lodging is decreasing in revenue share.
  - Frisco has more variety in local businesses as compared to previous years.

Visitors are attracted to the feel of this community

- Frisco's identity as "low key", "real town" and "friendly" keeps visitors coming back.
- Retaining locals is key to continuing to provide services to visitors and maintaining Frisco's identity as a "real town". Projects like Peak One have contributed to retaining locals and keeping a strong sense of community.
- Visitor data and trends are difficult to track, but this data would be helpful to decision-making.

Frisco is the center of a larger community

- Frisco has a shared economy with other communities in Summit County. Frisco benefits as other communities prosper. Amenities and services of Frisco are centrally located and accessed by the region.
- Differences in opinion exist between how Frisco invests in its own economy versus surrounding communities in terms of housing, tourism and community services.

Many factors will influence Frisco's economic future:

- Cost of housing in Frisco and other communities.
- Infrastructure capacity and reaching build-out potential with no place to expand.
- Low wages that haven't risen with the rate of housing prices.
- Transportation and the I-70 corridor.
- Need to consider how we provide commercial space



A diverse economy is a sustainable economy.

- Frisco should plan to grow slow, balancing population growth and retaining character.
- Other industries or opportunities to diversify include; IT campus, health services, recreation technology, education campus and arts and culture.
- Frisco doesn't have to indulge in huge, bold experiments, rather keep doing whatever is needed to preserve the character of the Town.

**2. Community Design, Character and Land Use**

Frisco's character is defined by the people of Frisco's past and present community.

- Character isn't defined by buildings alone; people and social engagements bring character. Frisco's community creates a different identity from other mountain towns.
- Frisco's character is defined by diversity in ages, income levels and backgrounds. Many generations have left their finger prints on what Frisco is today. This diversity is important to maintain in the future as future individuals will shape the future character.

Frisco's history defines today's community design including:

- Preservation of the historic grid.
- Old cottages and residential character of the central core.
- History as a regional transit hub (still a regional transit hub).
- Views from Downtown. Views from peninsula look back at town.
- Few historic buildings remain that require action for preservation.

Frisco's community design is shaped by the surrounding natural environment.

- The surrounding ridgelines, water courses and bodies and natural ecosystems set natural limits on the town's development pattern.
- As growth continues, Frisco should plan for alternative modes of transportation to decrease the small land area's reliance on vehicles.
- More pathways to the natural environment are needed to incorporate this value

Character of the Main Street central core is an element to preserve.

- Character of the central core is described as "small town."
- Under today's development code, the central core could redevelop at higher density and building heights. This would be a significant character change.
- Maybe a thought that greater regulation, design review and height limits are along Main Street to imbue desired character, but with greater height directed to the side streets and areas adjacent to Main Street.
- The smaller scaled projects desired typically are a result of singular property ownership. More consolidated property ownership is the trend but may not be desirable.
- Ground floor uses which encourage pedestrian vitality are not being required in the central core, decreasing the opportunities for community interaction. More land use opportunities which allow for "neighbors to run into each other" should be encouraged.
- Street trees contribute to a smaller-scale streetscape and friendlier pedestrian environment on the ground level.
- Small spaces for public gathering should be encouraged.
- New development tends to maximize development code allowances rather than be focused on good design.

Character of Summit Boulevard is an opportunity for change.



- Gateways are important introductions to the community
- Summit Blvd is the appropriate place for density in town. (Housing, mixed-uses, etc.)
- The roadway does not feel pedestrian friendly. Any opportunity to improve appeal for pedestrians would strengthen character.
- Views to parking fronting the roadway should not define the corridor in the future.

### 3. Housing Diversity and Livability

#### Housing diversity and services which support locals maintain a sense of community inclusivity.

- To be an inclusive community we must embrace the local workforce, families, and people of different ethnicities/cultures
- Vacancy of second homes detract from the feel of the community.
- Increasing housing options for locals working in Frisco is a must.
- Livability (and employee retention) is improved with increased options in daycare.
- Other elements to support livability include urgent care, access to affordable food, walkability, senior living and housing for emergency service workforce.

#### Trends affecting housing diversity in Frisco:

- Rise of free market housing prices.
- Population growth in Frisco, the surrounding region and Front Range.
- Increasing cost of construction.
- Today's calculations for AMI doesn't reflect all of Frisco's housing needs.
- The next market cycle will correct pricing inflation to some degree, however, pricing will likely continue to rise.
- Market rental rates are not matching costs to construct new units.
- Frisco is land locked with fewer opportunities to develop housing.
- There is a need for more housing in all categories.

#### Increasing housing diversity will only be achieved through multiple strategies.

- Incentives to convert short-term rentals to long-term rentals. (FIRC's property manager program is one example).
- Allowing for more ADU's.
- Zoning is a great tool to increase density in some areas to encourage housing.
- AMI formulas should be evaluated.
- Buy-down programs.
- Incentives to include units with redevelopments.
- Regional approach to housing solutions, while acknowledging people living and working in the same place builds community.
- Homes built to last and with energy efficiency

### Elements of the Community Plan

Participants from all Focus Group Meetings indicated the following possible elements of the Community Plan require the most emphasis:

- Mobility and Transportation
- Recreation and Tourism
- Land Use and Density
- Affordable Housing
- Economic Diversity/Sustainability
- Environment and Sustainability (Snow, Water and Climate Change)
- Parks, Trails and Open Space
- Community Design and Character



The following elements received less support as areas for emphasis in the Community Plan:

- Natural and Cultural Resources
- Historic Preservation
- Strategic Growth
- Hazard Mitigation
- Capital Improvements
- Water Supply and Conservation
- Government Efficiency/Transparency
- Energy

**Next Steps:** The key themes and ideas that emerged in the Focus Group meetings provide valuable insight for themes which will be tested in the upcoming community open house.