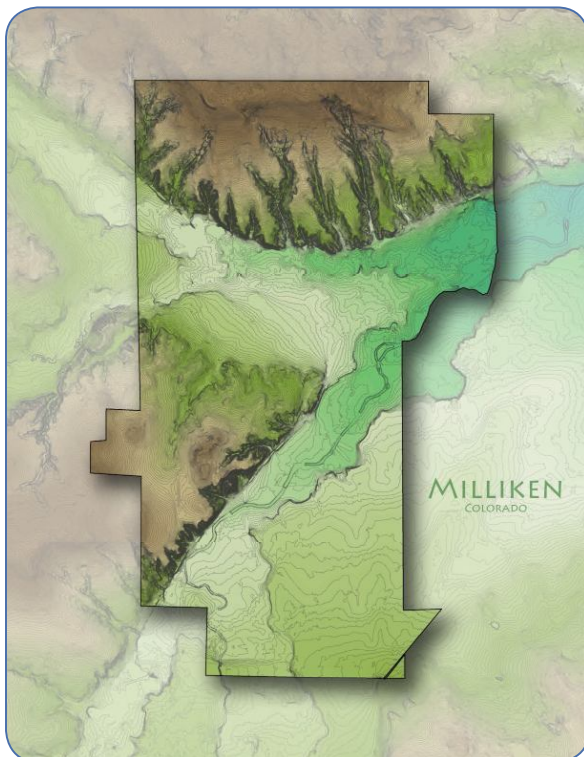


5.0 Purpose and Plan Formation

5.1 PURPOSE OF THE ENVISION MILLIKEN PLAN

The Envision Milliken Plan (the Plan) establishes an urban development strategy and policies to guide the future growth and development of the community over the next two decades. The Plan assesses existing conditions and trends, and provides recommendations for the use and development of land, the extension and improvement of services and infrastructure, the development of community facilities, the provision of housing, the expansion of the Town's economic base, the provision of recreation and tourism opportunities, and the protection of natural resources.

The Plan has a long-range perspective and, as such, is one of the primary tools used by Planning Commission, the Board of Trustees and Town Staff in making decisions that affect the future of the community.



5.2 WHY DOES THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN NEED TO BE UPDATED?

The Town's original Comprehensive Plan was developed in 1998 by Design Workshop when the Town had fewer than 1,800 residents. The Plan was subsequently updated in 2002 by Tetra Tech RMC in response to a significant influx of new residents, most who reside south and east of the downtown within the 2,500 acre Centennial Master Plan area.

While the past comprehensive plan efforts yielded important conclusions about the community's desire to retain its "small town character", it did not complete the picture by addressing fiscal impacts to future growth. These important relationships between revenue, expenditure, and land use have been evaluated as a major component of the latest Plan, ensuring that future growth can be sustained.

Milliken is no longer a community insulated from its neighbors and the Colorado Front Range. As other communities in Weld and Larimer County have grown rapidly, Milliken has become part of a much larger region. Many of the issues are the same - where to grow and how much, attainable housing options, transportation for workers and residents, how to enhance and maintain the Town's character - but the environment in which the Town functions today is considerably more complex, and the number and scale of the entities that affect the future of the Town more numerous.

Major shifts in national and regional policy also call us to re-examine the Plan. A new dialogue has begun about "sustainability", i.e.-how impacts of our current resource use does not negatively affect the resource needs of future generations. In response, the Plan adds a focus on local food production, energy conservation, "green building" practices, re-use and resource preservation.

Lastly, the Plan has measured the fiscal impacts to future growth under three possible growth scenarios;

Agrarian, Small Town (limited growth) and Employment Based on these conclusions, come up with the most balanced land use pattern relative to Town revenues and expenditures. This new fiscal model will be applied to future proposed development so that the Town makes responsible fiscal decisions as the area grows over time.

5.3 WHAT KIND OF INFORMATION IS FOUND IN A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

The focus of the Envision Milliken Plan is to establish principles and policies that will provide the framework for ongoing community planning activities, and for the wide array of other adopted Town planning documents whose detailed recommendations and regulations will expand upon and supplement the more general recommendations in the Plan. These policies direct future decisions towards the implementation of the vision statement and the preservation of vital community attributes and service levels. The following Plan Elements are consistent with the provisions of the State of Colorado Statutes (Title 31, Article 23) relating to “Comprehensive” or “Master” plans.

The Plan focuses on eleven primary Elements:

1. Land Use
2. Agricultural Land Preservation
3. Downtown
4. Housing
5. Parks, Recreation, Trails and Open Space
6. Economic Development
7. Tourism
8. Environmental Sustainability and Resources
9. Transportation
10. Cultural Resources and Landmarks
11. Community Services and Utilities

LAND USE

The land use element sets the stage by guiding the use, location, intensity, scale and “look” of future development before and during development proposals review. Land use composition is vital in achieving the greater vision of the Town while providing the opportunity for existing and future residents to live, work and recreate. This mosaic of land uses should provide a greater range of housing opportunities, support future multi-modal transportation opportunities, ensure vibrant commercial and employment environments and maintain or enhance level of service standards to the residents of Milliken.



AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION

Milliken’s small town character and sense of place is largely due to the area’s rich agricultural heritage, lands and operations. Through the agricultural land preservation element, the Town continues to support agricultural operations and associated industry through its economic policies and regulatory framework.

DOWNTOWN

Downtown Milliken is a special asset to the community. As such, it should be preserved, protected and enhanced to take advantage of the cherished qualities of small agricultural towns in our region. The Downtown truly has the potential to give Milliken a competitive economic advantage to retaining and attracting businesses and a talented workforce.

HOUSING

The single-family detached housing unit constitutes a large percentage of the existing housing stock in Milliken. While there were potential concerns expressed during the Comprehensive Plan workshops about all types of growth in the community and associated impacts on current residents, several common issues and themes emerged regarding housing. There is a public awareness that demographics in Milliken are changing, yet the types of housing choices that are available in the community are not responding to this change. This is particularly true for empty nesters and families without children. These groups are typically looking for smaller and lower-maintenance homes – few products of this type are available in the community. The Town has the opportunity to integrate housing products of different types and densities, as well as ensure that new neighborhoods retain the qualities that citizens think are most important.



Trail connectivity

PARKS, RECREATION, TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE
Beyond the agricultural operations that help to define Milliken’s character are hillsides, drainageways and riparian areas with great aesthetic and ecological value. These open space areas are undoubtedly a key ingredient in Milliken’s identity. The urban shaping, accomplished through open space and the high level of connectivity established by the Town’s master planned parks and trails system, provides unique assets to residents of the Town. Opportunities to expand these amenities as well as buffering from and connectivity with adjoining jurisdictions through intergovernmental cooperation are encouraged in the Plan.

Particular policies address the need to provide formalized activities for families and area youth, including a community recreation center and enhanced skateboard park.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

One of the most important roles government has in economic development is ensuring that there is an adequate supply of development-ready land (land that is appropriately zoned and with existing utilities and services) and buildings to accommodate the needs of business and industry.

The Town must ensure that that the physical infrastructure of the community, including telecommunications facilities, the transportation network, sewers, and water mains, supports the economic development goals of the community. The Town has a role either as a direct provider of the infrastructure or as regulator and user of services.

TOURISM

The Tourism element attempts to capitalize on three growing trends in the national tourism economy: agritourism, cultural heritage tourism, and outdoor recreation.

Agritourism is the practice of attracting visitors and travelers to agricultural areas, generally for educational and recreational purposes. This rise in agritourism is, in part, due to support from the farm and ranch community as well as the public. Due to economic hardships and changes in the farming and livestock industries, many farmers – especially those with small, family-owned farms – are seeking ways to supplement their agricultural income. Likewise, as the distance between the production and consumption of agricultural products grows, interest has increased in how crops and livestock are raised. People want to reconnect with the agricultural practices of the past.

Milliken also has the opportunity to capitalize on society’s desire to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. The Town can capitalize on those irreplaceable historic and cultural resources, including historical sites, ancient burial grounds and architecturally significant buildings as another economic generator.

Many great recreation activities associated with outdoor, natural or semi-natural settings can be found in Milliken, particularly bicycling, fishing, hiking, and horseback riding.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND RESOURCES

This Plan element recognizes the finite nature of many of earth’s resources. It introduces the concept of sustainability defined as the management of our environment so that current resource use does not negatively affect the resource needs of future generations. The policies focus on energy conservation, “green building” practices, re-use and preservation.

TRANSPORTATION

Preservation of community character and identity often turns into a discussion of traffic impacts. The Town of Milliken is fortunate to be located in proximity to a full hierarchy of roadway systems and relatively good access to major roadways leading to Denver and other major Front Range cities. A full range of transportation policies addresses multi-modal opportunities and design elements of major arterial roadways. The policies are intended to enhance those found in the adopted Milliken Transportation Master Plan.

CULTURAL RESOURCES AND LANDMARKS

The Cultural Resources and Landmarks element attempts to address the richness in the Commu-



nity's cultural resources. The preservation of cultural, historic, and archaeological resources is one of many factors that can have a positive impact on a community's quality of life, visual appeal, tourism potential, downtown and neighborhood revitalization and future economic development opportunities. The preservation and protection of historic buildings, districts, sites and landscapes play an important part in maintaining and developing an appealing sense of place and promoting the community's pride in its heritage.

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND UTILITIES

This element addresses a wide range of governmental services, such as maintaining the high standards of public safety and crime prevention in the Town. Service capacities of Town utilities are evaluated in this element, as well as being an important component to the land use element. Water reuse projects, acquisition of water rights and recognition of master water and wastewater plans are discussed as well.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

The Town of Milliken has used a fiscal analysis to evaluate land use decisions as part of this plan. The fiscal analysis model assigns a cost index to each land use providing a measure to evaluate the impact of various land uses on each department or service provider. The fiscal analysis provides a reference point in understanding the current expenditures by each service to support the current level of service provided to current residents of the Town and estimate the additional increment of cost associated with future growth. Fiscal analysis is one important tool in understanding how future land uses, location and timing of development can impact service levels to current and future resi-

dents and business owners within the Town.

5.4 RELEVANT PLANS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

While the Envision Milliken Plan covers a broad range of topics, it does not provide the specific level of detail for all topics, issues, or geographic areas within Milliken. The Plan is therefore intended to be used in conjunction with several other concurrent plans and studies, both regulatory and functional as outlined below, and incorporates by reference all other Town master plans and studies.

It is intended that the Plan and each of these concurrent plans and studies work in a cohesive and supportive fashion. It is the goal of the Town to resolve conflicts between its regulatory documents, such as the Subdivision and Land Use ordinances set forth in the Milliken Municipal Code and the Envision Milliken Plan. As conflicts are identified they will be resolved in a reasonably timely fashion by amendment of either the regulatory documents or the Plan. Relevant plans and studies incorporated by reference are summarized below. All existing plans are available through the Community Development Department.

MILLIKEN TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN (2008)

This plan identifies projected transportation needs and improvements over the next 20 years. The Plan specifically identifies roadway improvements, roundabouts/traffic signals, and alternate mode (transit, bicycle and pedestrian) improvements.

MILLIKEN/JOHNSTOWN PARKS, TRAILS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN (2003)

This plan was intended to guide the planning, acquisition, development and administration of parks and recreational services as well as establish goals, policies, strategies and standards for parks, trails and open space. The Master Plan identifies general locations of future and existing parks, trails, and open space in order to help the community plan for staffing, acquisition, construction, and maintenance and avoid duplicating facilities.