

# LIVERMORE COMMUNITY CONVERSATION



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Location:	Livermore Community Hall, 2044 W County Rd 74e
Date:	February 29, 2024
Time:	5:30 – 7:00 PM
Host:	Commissioner John Kefalas
Presenters:	Rebecca Everette, Matt Lafferty, Lesli Ellis (Larimer County Staff)
Attendees:	Approximately 200 people signed in, with an estimated total attendance of 250 people.

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## Meeting Overview

- Welcome and opening remarks by Commissioner John Kefalas
- Purpose of the meeting and ground rules (Rebecca Everette, Community Development Director)
- Overview – how did we get here? (Rebecca Everette)
- Presentation – what is a character area plan? (Matt Lafferty, Principal Planner)
- History and context for long-range planning in rural areas (Kathay Rennels, former County Commissioner)
- Group discussion and Q&A
  - Individuals were called on to ask questions or share comments
  - Attendees were encouraged to write additional questions and comments on index cards. That input is included in the summary below
- Specific questions that were posed to the audience:
  - What brought you here tonight?
  - What questions do you have about character area plans?
  - Do you see value in preparing a plan for the Livermore area?
    - If so, how would you want to be informed and involved in a community planning process?
    - If so, what kind of issues or opportunities do you think a plan should address?
- Next steps
  - County staff explained that a summary of all comments would be prepared and shared with everyone who provided an email address.
  - Based on the feedback, the Board of County Commissioners will determine whether a character area plan is appropriate for the Livermore area at this time.

# Summary of Feedback

In addition to comments shared verbally at the Community Conversation, County staff received 27 comment cards at the meeting and several follow-up emails from members of the Livermore community. Below is a list of all of the comments received, organized by question.

## What brought you here tonight?

- Showed up because heard there would be a mall development and is against that.
- Looking for info about development, zoning, taxation changes, property value changes.
- What is being done about short-term rentals in glacier meadows? It is going to ruin our community. What is being done to lower our property taxes?
- Please be more transparent about a few people making plans. I feel that plans have been and are being made in secret. I want protection from unwanted development. Couldn't a mill levy help fund the water issues for the school and fire dept?
- I want to protect the peace of Livermore.
- Shopping mall, car wash, liquor store, hotel, auto mechanic, housing development → all these are the 30 miles from Livermore. We don't need them here!
- Please leave Livermore alone, thank you. No development plan.
- We do NOT want public restrooms or the county land shop donated.
- I grew up on Horsetooth Reservoir where my family homesteaded outside Stout, CO in the 1880's. When my grandpa, John Soderberg relinquished power of attorney, the county got the last portion of the Soderberg Ranch and made a lot of promises and once they got the land they broke them all and let 150 years of infrastructure and history fall apart. How are we/I supposed to trust your intentions now? You want more taxes, we get less services. The county ruined the water here in the 70's and you're asking us to fix it.
- Livermore Road and Bridge newly constructed building does not reflect the fabric, the character of the rural Livermore community.
- Proactive planning on what we have vs where we going – do not want change.
- We would like to see Livermore stay the same.
- I moved to the Glacier View area to escape city life. Please, I do not want it to find me. Please let us alone!
- I'm pleased this is happening. I have lived in Livermore for 90 years + my family has been here for 150 years. This is a good first step - so us locals may have a voice in what happens here.
- This is a home and a life for people – the animals and trees and views need a voice.
- A community member expressed concern that 10-12 people prepared a plan while others were left out of the loop. That's why people are upset. The concern is also that the plan is about getting water and therefore having the development to pay for it. Don't want to see the area develop.
- Concern about recently finding out about a few people developing a plan – just a few voices. How do we bring other voices together? Can that be walked back? There's a sense of mistrust and people not feeling heard.

## What questions do you have about character area plans?

- What services are legally required if developed (law enforcement, physical structures, water subscriptions, sewer, right-of-way, road paving, etc.)?
- What would planning process look like?
  - Suggested committees? Names of committees?
- What land is zoned for commercial, how much control do we as a community to control who builds what in that area?
- Within the fire threat how can we increase our water supply?
- Why did a group of residents try to spur the plan?
- What is the Livermore community geographic area – does it relate to the fire protection district or school boundary?
- Who is the “we” in the planning committee?
  - County staff explained that a plan could have different forms of engagement with or without committees, and if there is a committee it could represent different perspectives.

## Do you see value in preparing a plan for the Livermore area?

- Hard No.
- Character plan is needed
- A member of the Red Feather Lakes PAC spoke about how that community developed that plan and encouraged active conversation. She mentioned interest in health care resources.
- If the community wants a plan, everyone should have a voice.
- Without water, there’s no reason to have a character plan.
- I totally support being pro-active on land use planning for the future and the needs of our community. It is much better to "Plan" than to "Re-Act". Colorado's growth has doubled in the last decades to an estimated 5.8 million people and there is no end in sight, with more folks wanting to move to our beautiful state.
- Please find the resources and make the time to commission a study to plan for the necessary services for our special Livermore community. With Ft. Collins 20 miles away and Larimer 30+ miles to the north, Livermore will obviously remain an important mid-point for services for local residents and travelers. Mankind will never be able to control the weather and we must all recognize that we need to minimize our trips for services and save the planet for future generations.

## If so, how would you want to be informed and involved in a community planning process?

- Please do more to inform regarding future meetings (email, flyers).
- Hold more community conversations in Livermore.
- Would like to be involved in future discussions on character plan.
- Our community needs a forum for our voices to be heard.

- Get the Sheriff there to talk about traffic safety issues.
- Better, widespread notification for events – use social media, Next Door etc.
- Can the County expand its review notification radius for development applications?

## If so, what kind of issues or opportunities are you concerned about?

- I don't want to see development to pay for water issues that only a few people are concerned about.
- No development! I like Livermore just the way it is. I'm happy to drive to Ft. Collins for services. My idea of a character plan is with no growth, no development. No subdividing less than 35 acres.
- 287 improvements worst road and needs enforcement.
  - An attendee mentioned that there were service proposals for law enforcement that were not accepted in the County's 2024 budget.
- What is County doing to rectify water issue @ Livermore due to contamination of well.
- Transportation issues.
- Extremely concerned about road safety and volume of traffic. It appears that access to 287 from is becoming dangerous.
- Livermore value for a character plan: respect history, support agriculture – ranching, continue conservation efforts – healthy land & water for people and wildlife, plan for droughts and climate uncertainty, dark night skies, connected, large private parcels, well stewarded public lands, locally owned & operated small businesses.
- Issues – water at USHWY 287 & 74E Juncture, traffic volume & dangerous drivers/safety, rerouting US HWY 287 & Glade Reservoir, increasing recreation use – on public roads & public land, continued subdivision into small parcels, water quality & quantity in streams.
- Preserve our small town fill and keep out trash business and other businesses that do not support local people.
- The county planning dept recognizes that properties in the Livermore area are different than properties in the Poudre Canyon or Bellvue or Berthoud. Can we get the assessor's office to recognize this and not lump our properties with foothills properties all the way South to Berthoud?
- People in Livermore moved there to get away from urban areas. Leave it alone. Don't mess with it. Don't want condos and development.
- Does the fixed spill area need to be addressed through a plan? The Diesel spill at 287 and 74E? The water quality is terrible.
- Focus on maintaining what's in Livermore already (e.g., water, roads) rather than build new.
- Bicycles are inundating the area.
- US 287 safety issues are a concern along with traffic control on the road. Bringing more traffic will make it worse.
  - Commissioner Kefalas mentioned the CDOT study and some funds allocated to fix parts of the road and offered to have County Engineering meet and discuss.
- Concerned about growth without much say and concern about more traffic. They might need to work as a community to figure out what is needed.

- If the community develops a plan that says “no development,” how enforceable is that?
  - County staff explained that the plan could be a precursor to zoning changes, and zoning could reflect proposals in the plan, while there needs to be a balance with property rights.
- Need enforcement of laws.
- One participant mentioned dislike of statements about “equity and race” in the Fort Collins Housing Plan and did not want the Livermore community to follow that approach.
- Lyons is an example of a lot of development coming into a small community – don’t want to mimic that approach.
- Sense of community in Livermore is important.
- This area is a “gem”. Protect it and don’t let it go the way of the areas to the south with development.
- There is a concern that water = development.
- Didn’t move to Livermore to see it develop.
- Don’t be like Jackson Hole.
- A newer member of the community expressed not wanting Livermore to become like the place she came from.
- There are important issues regarding law enforcement, EMS, schools, roads. Address proper places for growth. Concerns about human trafficking on a location near a state highway and a school. Have a discussion about risks.
- Don’t let it be like Yampa Valley. Livermore has a precious heritage. Cattle not bikes. Should be able to say who else is using the roads.
- Agricultural heritage is important. Need ranch infrastructure. Is there funding?
- Community safety is important.
- Livermore shop – there was limited community input on that – how does the community keep randomness from happening around there? It’s a difficult balance with private property rights.
- How can the community fix a water problem? Identify an area where water can be developed.
- Don’t want change.
- Robert’s Ranch – conservation easement on 17,000 acres was done to help with conservation in the area.
- Concerns about Livermore being about to be enveloped by Denver. It may be time to talk before it comes this way.

## Next Steps

The Board of County Commissioners will discuss feedback from the Community Conversation and determine whether a character area plan for Livermore is appropriate and a high priority at this time. Information from the meeting, including the agenda, handouts, and meeting summary are available at: <https://www.larimer.gov/planning/livermore>