

City's comprehensive plan an award winner

By Rosalie Everson
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The map of Fort Lupton's future, the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, garnered a 2008 award for the efforts of its creators to include everyone who will be affected by growth in and around Fort Lupton in its creation.

The plan was recognized by the Colorado Chapter of the American Planning Association at a recent conference. Tom Parko, the city planner who spearheaded the movement to address future growth in an orderly fashion, said an exhaustive effort was made to include everybody in the area.

"Our efforts to get out and involve the Latino community and use translators were recognized, as was the fact we worked with seniors, with students, with the chamber of commerce."

As the plan was being formulated, small meetings with community leaders took place, followed by larger public gatherings where everyone who would be affected by the growth could come, look at different scenarios and voice their opinions on different options.

One of the main points was growing from the core of the city out, Parko said.

"We try to focus on infill and then grow out. We want to discourage development outside an area we have defined as our urban growth boundary. The new trend in growth is, 'Let's get them in closer to where they work, getting them in closer to the urban area.'

But because current unincorporated land would be included in the comp plan, those residents were also invited to participate, because, Parko said, "They are impacted as well." The APA found that impressive, Parko said, "Because most communities don't reach out to outlying areas."

"We wanted the citizens to do a lot of the planning," Parko said. "So when we meet with developers there is support behind it knowing that this is the vision of the community. The real value is to tell developers "This is our future, this is our growth plan. "The city adopted it by ordinance and that gives it more impact, so when a developer comes in and doesn't want to conform, they have to go through a public hearing. Our plan does have teeth. It won't sit on a shelf," he said.