



## **CIVIC Conversations To-Go**

Earlier this year, your Fort Collins Area Chamber of Commerce launched a monthly engagement series known as CIVIC Conversations.

CIVIC Conversations is best described as an opportunity for individuals to share perspective and learn from others. Importantly, the conversation takes place in a comfortable atmosphere where participants introduce themselves to other community members with whom they might not otherwise interact.

Prior to each conversation, registered participants are introduced to the topic of discussion along with objective source material that may spark further investigation and thought on the issue. Subject matter expertise and preparation are not required.

At the event, participants self-select a table at which to sit, introduce themselves to each other, and review the rules of engagement: Everyone gets the opportunity to speak; there are no “right” or “wrong” statements; all participants are worthy of respect; and, enjoy the experience!

Just before the conversations get started, Chamber staff once again reviews the topic and offers a few “starter questions” to get the ball rolling. From there, each table dives right into the topic.

At the end of the allotted time, tables are asked to briefly summarize perspectives and share any key ideas or information that might benefit the full assembly.

CIVIC Conversation To Go is designed to support your own conversation among friends, neighbors, and colleagues utilizing all the same background and resource information made available for scheduled events.

We invite you to organize your own CIVIC Conversation utilizing this material. Share it with those you have invited and encourage all to bring their own perspective to the dialogue.

After your event, please let us know how it went, what worked well, what didn't, and how we might expand this initiative.

**Fort Collins Area Chamber CIVIC  
Conversation**  
Monday, May 22, 2023



**Water Pipelines**

Residents and businesses within the city limits of Fort Collins may be served by one of five domestic water providers: City of Fort Collins Water Utility, Fort Collins-Loveland Water District, East Larimer County Water District, West Fort Collins Water District, and Sunset Water District. While the City Utility holds sufficient water rights to serve customers within its boundaries, each of the districts require new water users to acquire the necessary water rights before service can be provided.

Most often, water rights for both potable and non-potable use are transferred from agricultural use. Both the transfer of water use and the pipelines necessary to direct that water into the domestic system can be highly controversial. Beginning in the 1980s, the City of Thornton began acquiring water rights from farmers for the eventual transfer of that water to the Denver metro area. Lesser known is that other metro communities, including the City of Aurora, are actively pursuing a similar strategy within Northern Colorado.

Though many voices have raised alarm at this practice, it does present a conundrum as much of the water we consume along the Front Range has been diverted from other river basins. Notably, the Colorado River. In fact, approximately 80% of the water delivered by the City of Fort Collins Water Utility has been diverted from the Colorado and Laramie Rivers.

**Resources:**

<https://coloradosun.com/2022/12/04/thornton-water-rights-pipeline-larimer-county/>

<https://www.northernwater.org/what-we-do/deliver-water/canals-pipelines-and-outlets>

- **Questions to start the conversations:**
  - What is the primary use of water in your home or business?
  - Do you support transferring water from one region to another, and why?
  - Should local government have the right to deny access to water rights by others, and why?
  - Should domestic use of water take priority over agricultural uses, and why?

***We ask that you come to this event with thoughtful intention. We want you stretch your conversation muscles while being open to hearing other thoughts and opinions. You don't have to agree, but we hope you can learn from other perspectives.***

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