

Chapter 5: City of Fort Collins

US287 through Fort Collins is known as College Avenue, runs for approximately 9.25 miles, and bisects the City north to south. Within the City, US287 is a principal arterial. Within the City’s mile-by-mile grid, College Avenue is the divider between east and west Fort Collins.

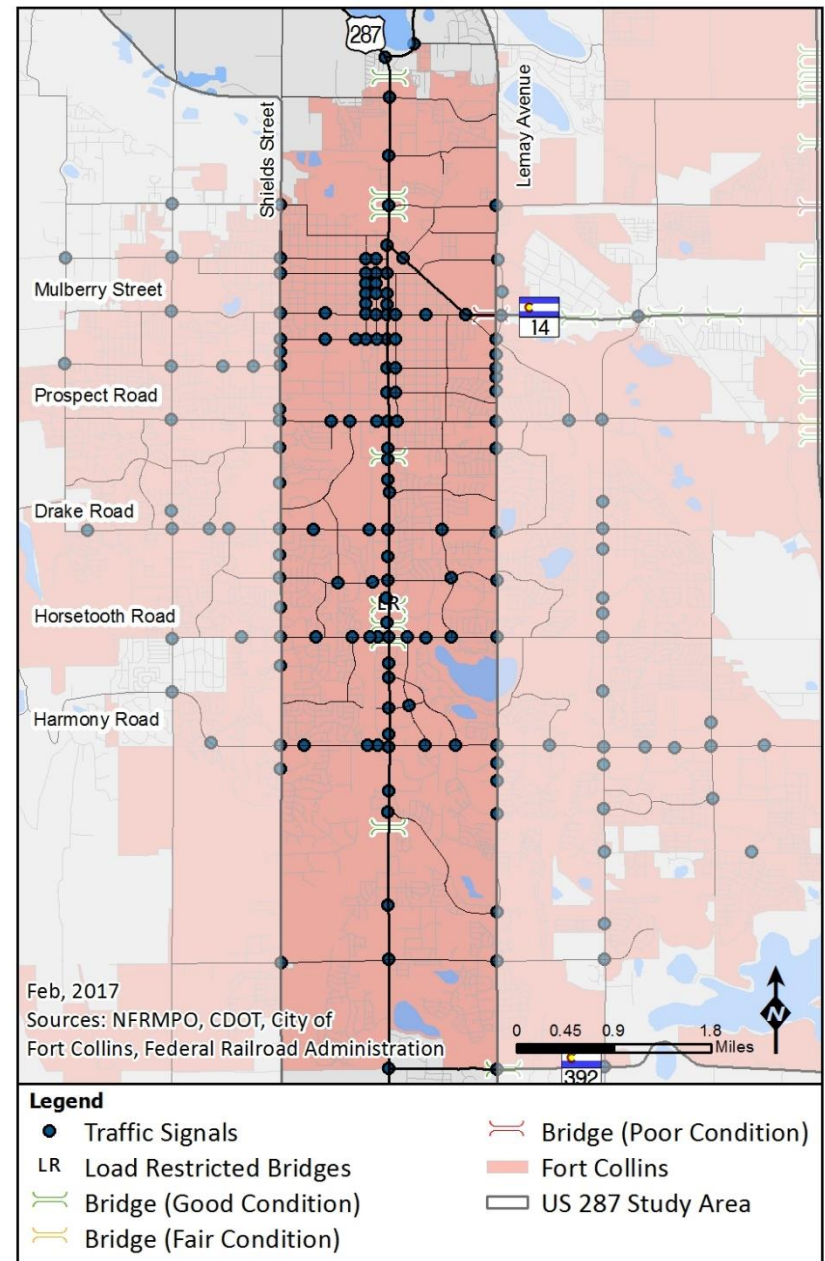
Road Network

Figure 5-1 shows infrastructure related to the corridor, including bridges on state and US highways, and traffic signals. Fort Collins maintains and operates traffic signals within the City including those owned by CDOT. Bridge maintenance along US287 is performed by CDOT.

Bridges carry US287 at eight points throughout the City and are all rated in good condition. There is one load restricted bridge at the Larimer County No. 2 Canal, with the load restriction category yellow. The maximum allowable permit weight depends on the number of axle groups and distance between axle groups, and is identified in **Appendix A: Bridge Load Restrictions**.

Intersections with traffic signals were mapped using the FCMaps tool and are up-to-date as of January 2017. As of that date, 33 intersections with traffic signals exist on US287 between Willox Lane and SH392/Carpenter Road. There are approximately 177 traffic signals within City limits, meaning nearly one in five traffic signals are on US287.⁶ Shields Street and Lemay Avenue, parallel arterials to College Avenue, have similar numbers of traffic signals to College Avenue. Fort Collins has removed some traffic signals as part of its investment in the Low-Stress Bicycle Network. This is discussed more thoroughly in the **Bicycle and Pedestrian Section**.

Figure 5-1 Fort Collins Bridges and Traffic Signals



⁶ Fort Collins, Fort Collins 2009 Traffic Signal Timing Program Final Report, 2010. <http://bit.ly/2k1CsNF>

Figure 5-2 shows Fort Collins is bisected by two major railroad corridors owned and operated by Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) and BNSF Railway. The BNSF Railway corridor runs parallel west of College Avenue, and provides the right-of-way used for transit and trails on the Mason Corridor. The UPRR Line parallels Timberline Road and Riverside Avenue to a switching yard north of Old Town. The Great Western Railway (GWR) also has track rights in the City.

Figure 5-3 shows the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) along state highways in Fort Collins. The highest traffic on US287 is located south of Prospect Road to approximately Boardwalk Drive. This portion of US287 has over 40,000 vehicles per day. Other areas with significant traffic include the section between Mulberry Street and Prospect Road - roughly parallel to the Colorado State University (CSU) campus - and south of Boardwalk Drive to the City of Fort Collins boundary.

Truck traffic is similar in distribution to AADT as shown on **Figure 5-4**. The highest truck traffic is located between Prospect Road and Boardwalk Drive, and between Old Town Fort Collins and SH1.

Figure 5-5 shows the number of travel lanes along US287. The highest number of lanes is between Laurel Street and Harmony Road with six lanes bordering CSU, Foothills Mall, and other major destinations in the City. Through Old Town Fort Collins and south of Harmony Road, the road is four lanes wide.

Figure 5-6 shows speed limits for US287. Speeds may differ in the northbound and southbound directions. As a result, northbound and southbound speeds are shown separately on the map. Speed limits are highest south of Harmony Road at 55 MPH and decrease the closer the corridor gets to Old Town Fort Collins. Speeds increase again on the north side of Old Town.

Figure 5-2 Fort Collins Active Railroads and At-Grade Crossings

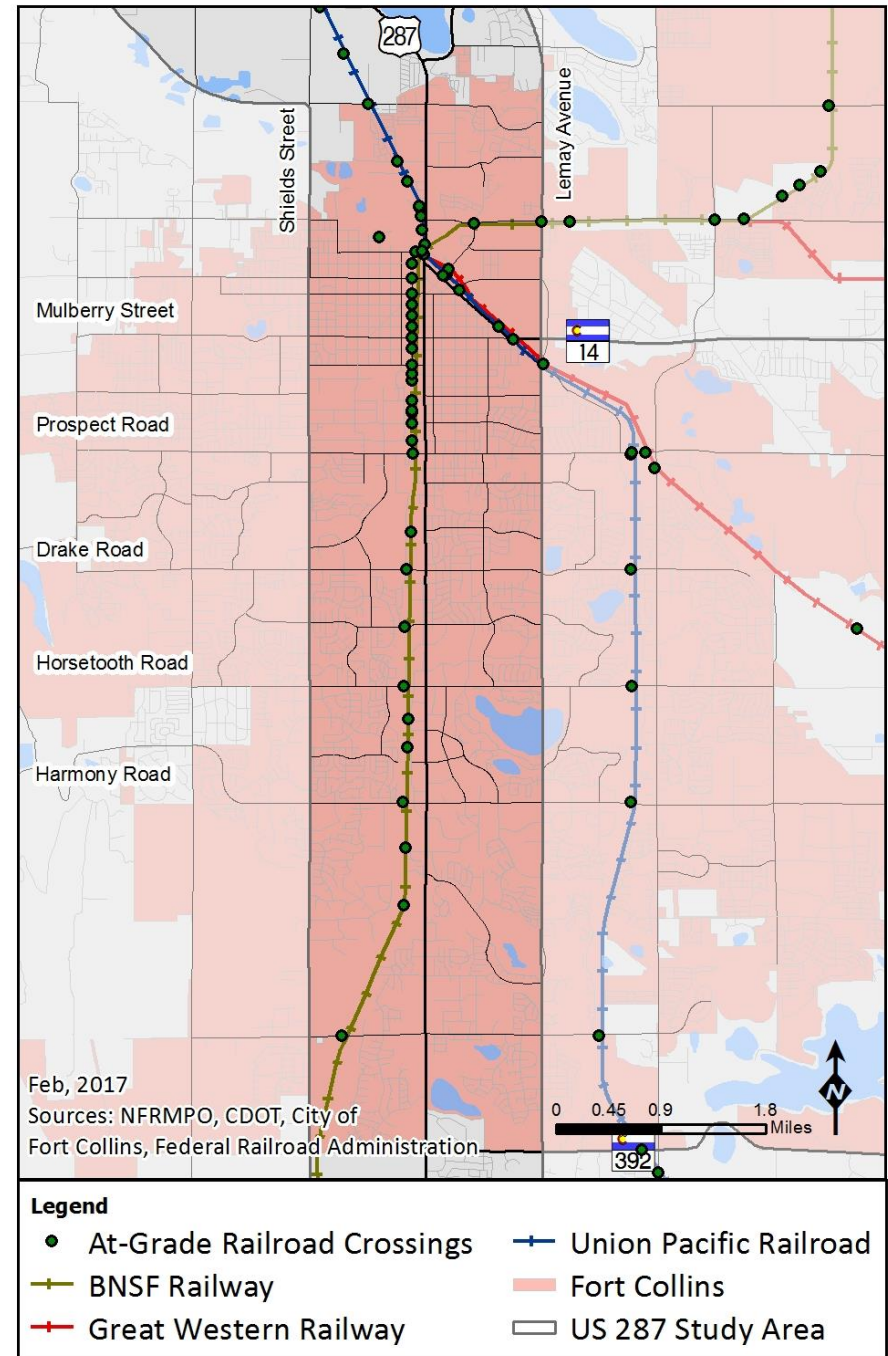


Figure 5-3 Fort Collins Annual Average Daily Traffic

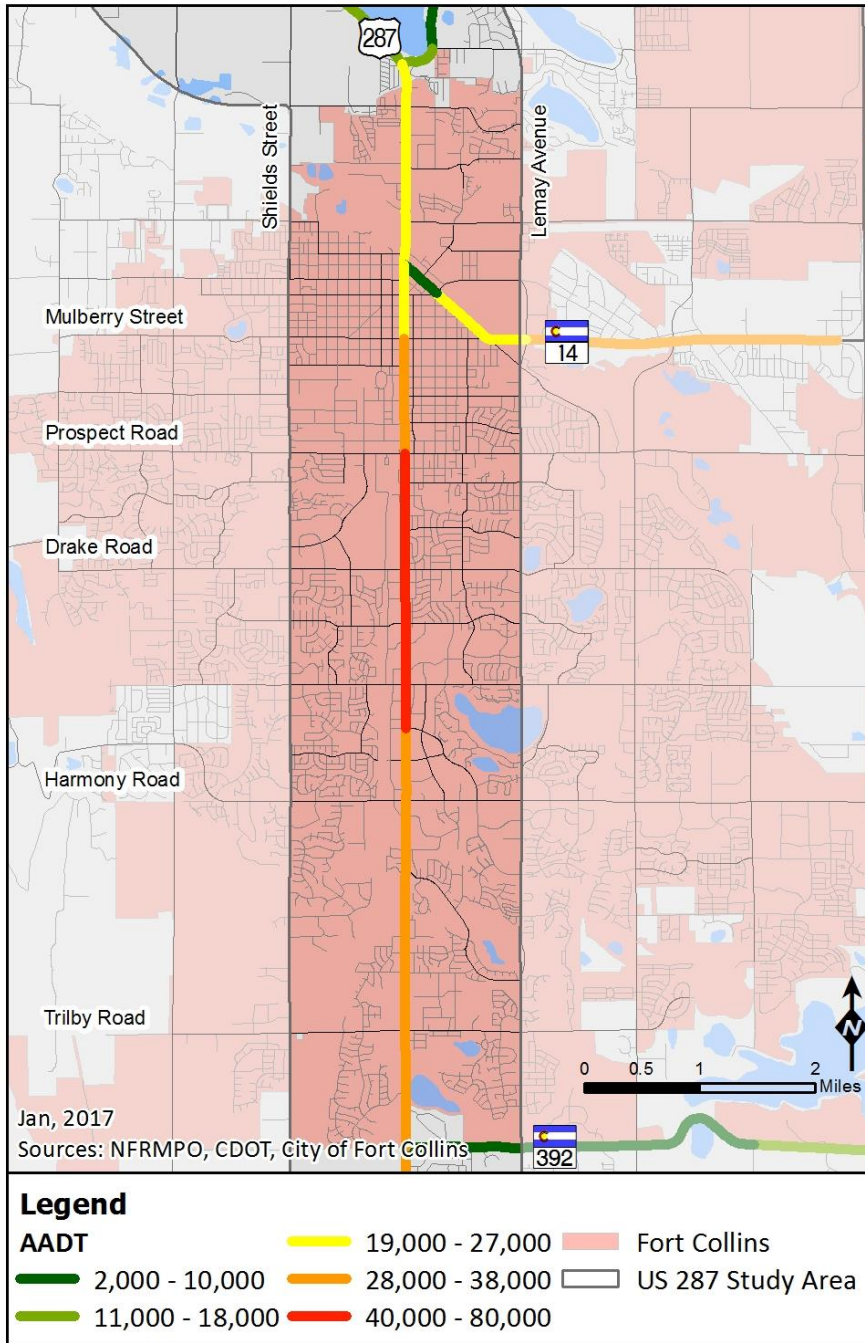


Figure 5-4 Fort Collins Annual Average Daily Truck Traffic

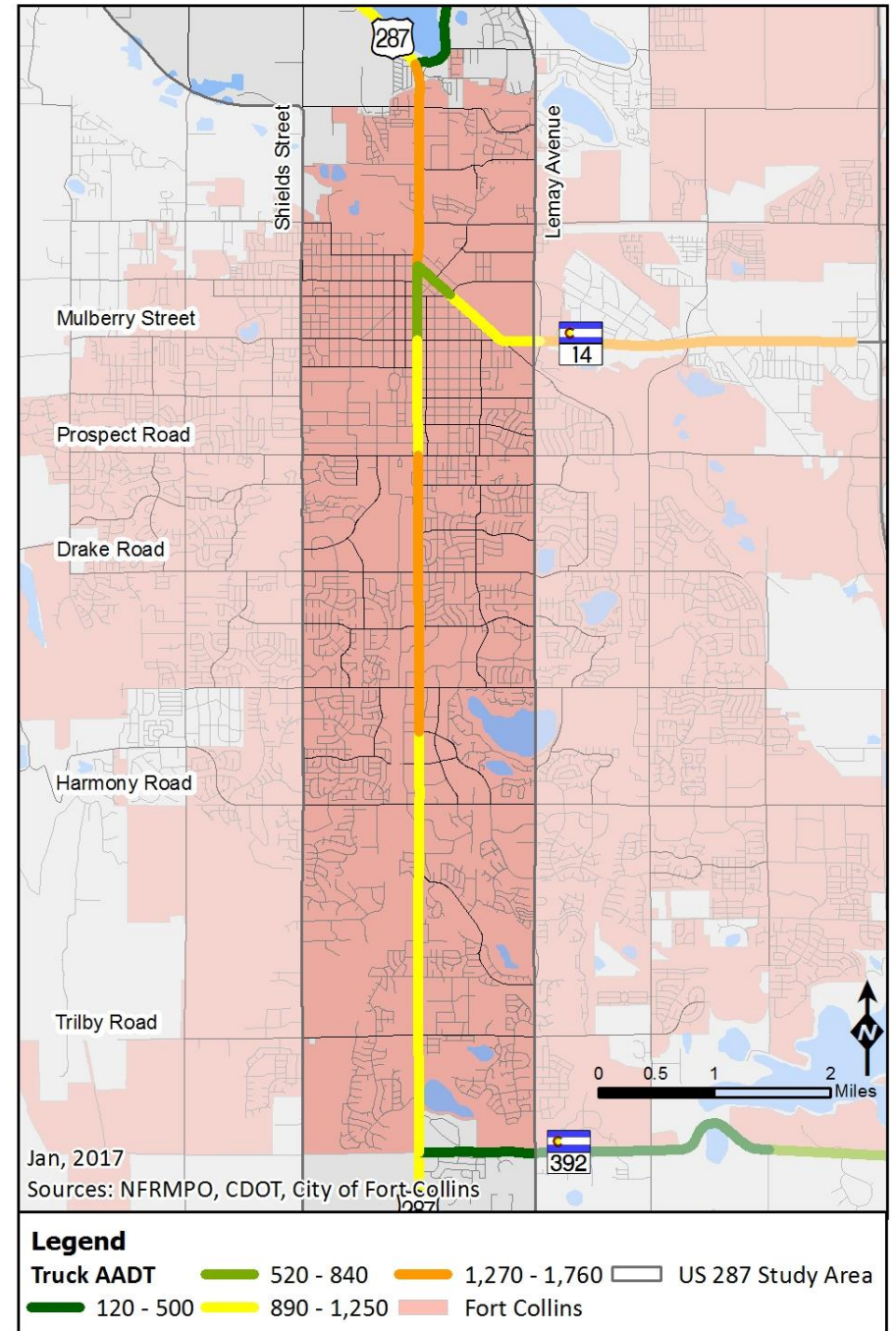


Figure 5-5 Fort Collins Number of Through Lanes

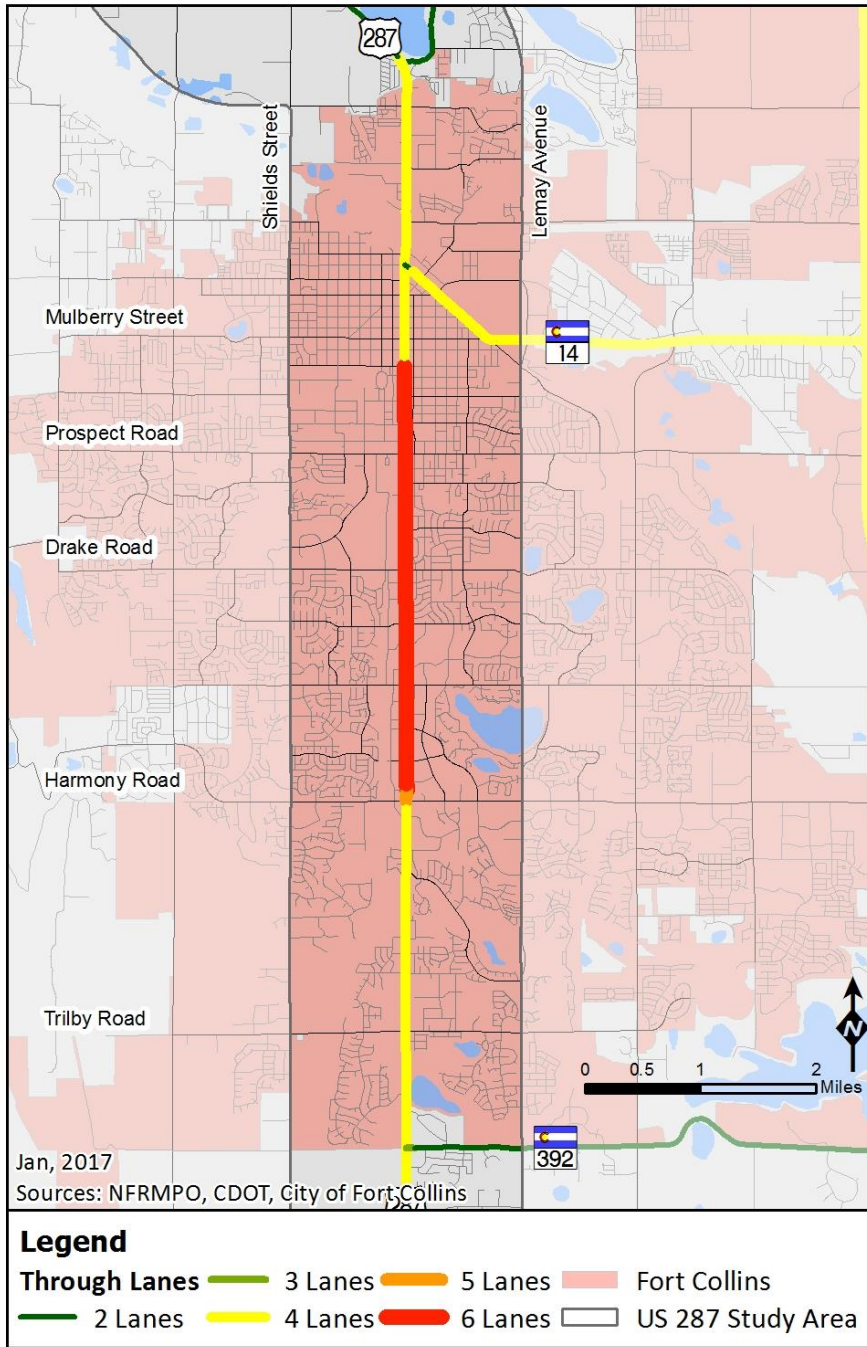
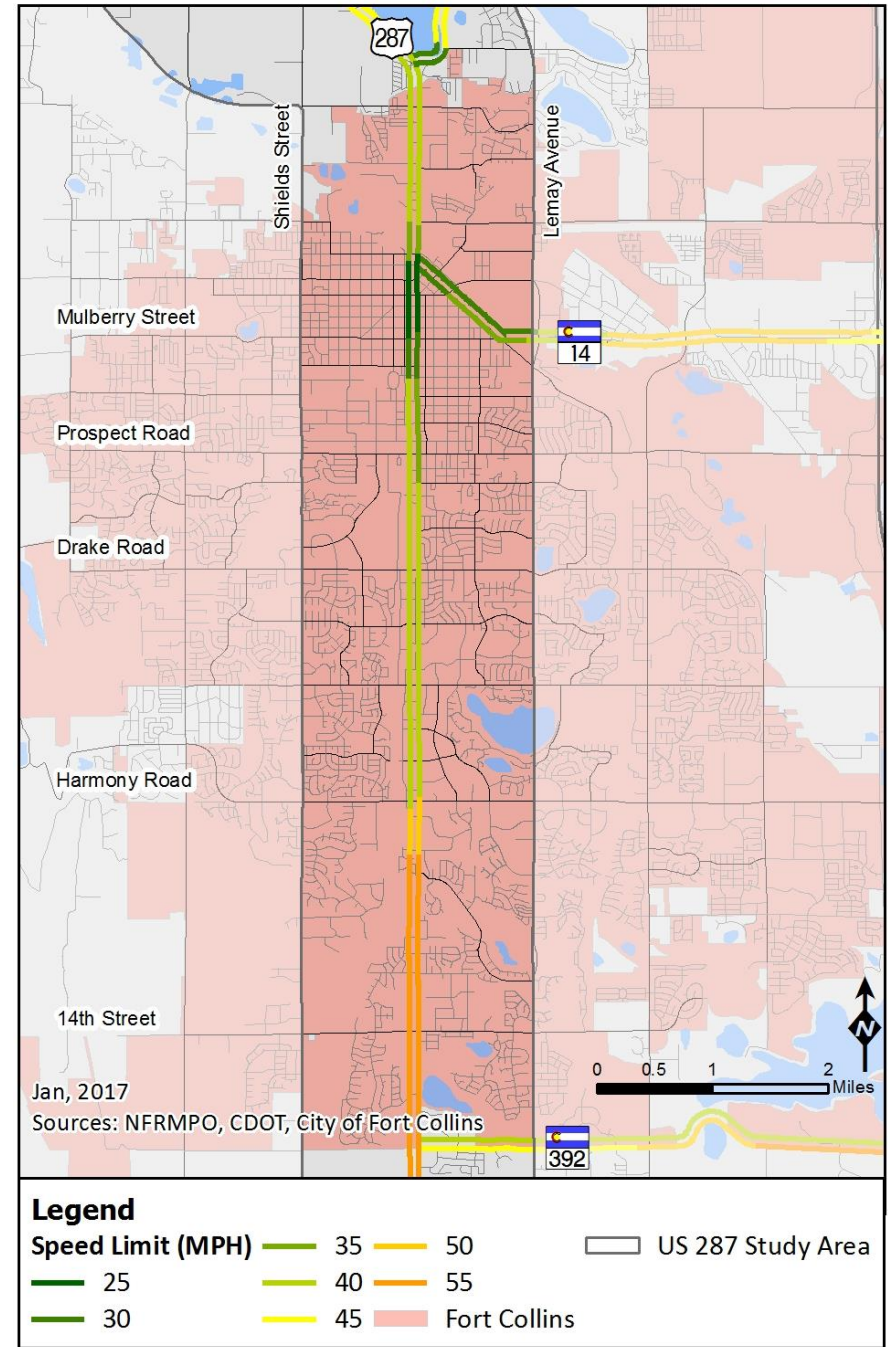
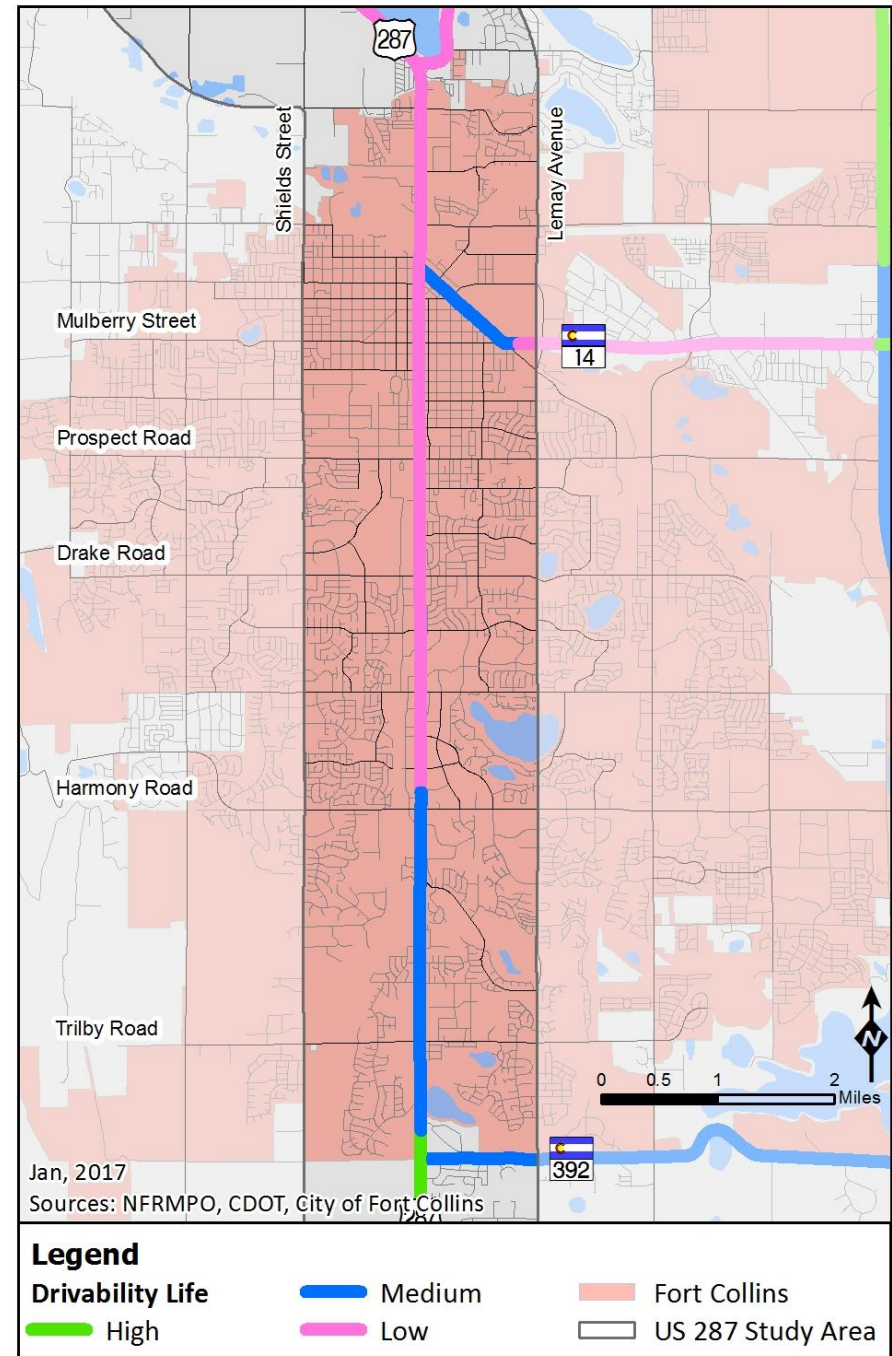


Figure 5-6 Fort Collins Speed Limits



Drivability Life is the rating system used by CDOT to grade pavement condition, which is shown on **Figure 5-7**. The latest data available represents year-end 2015. At that time, the section north of Harmony Road to SH1 had a low Drivability Life, while the section south of Harmony Road and north of SH392/Carpenter Road had a medium Drivability Life. CDOT initiated a repaving project along US287 through Fort Collins in 2016, which is expected to be completed in 2017.

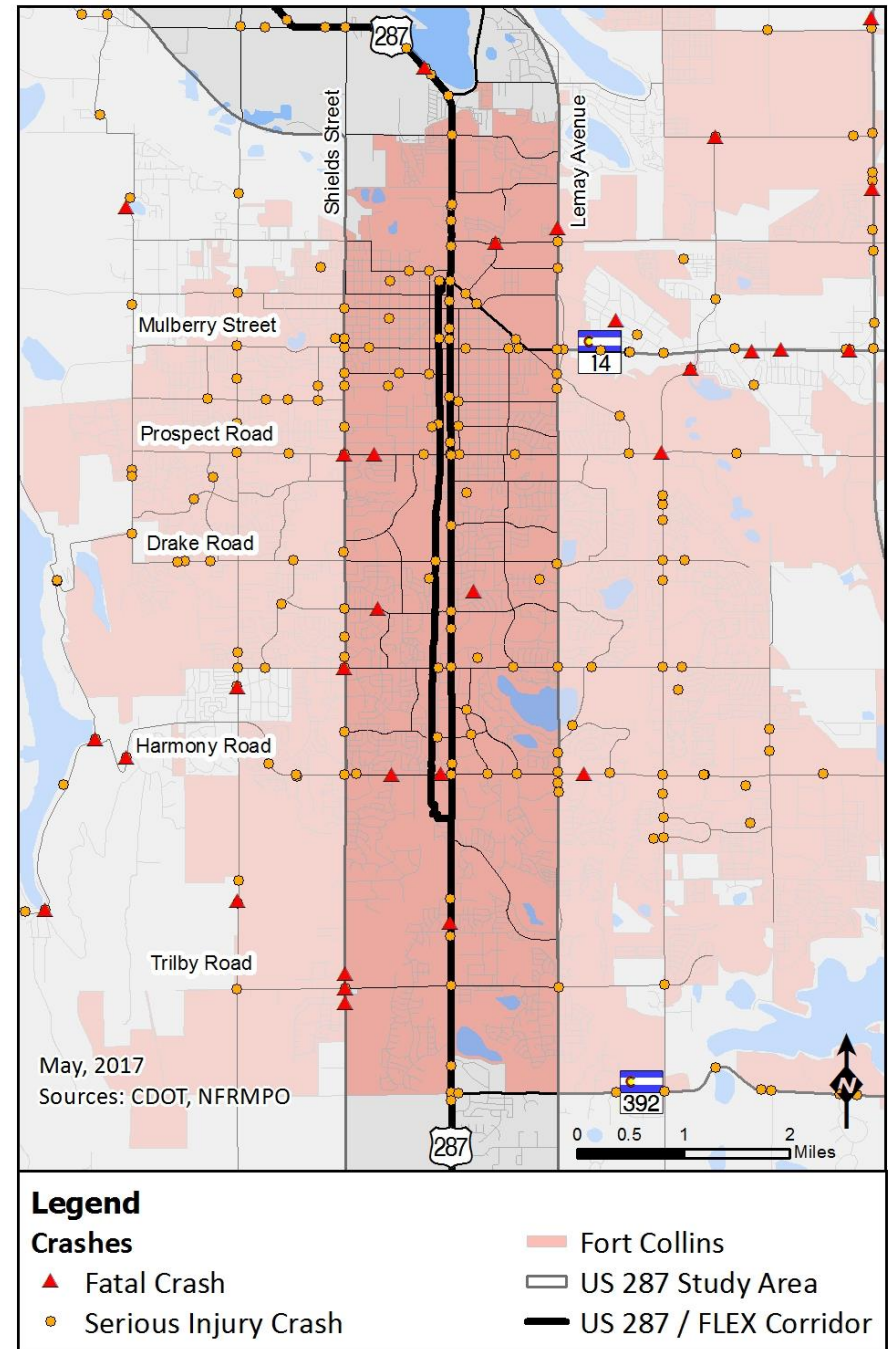
Figure 5-7 Fort Collins Drivability Life



Crash Data

Figure 5-8 shows serious injury and fatal crashes from 2011 to 2015 in Fort Collins. There were 13 fatal crashes and 104 serious injury crashes in the Fort Collins Study Area during the five year time period.

Figure 5-8 Fort Collins Serious Injury and Fatal Crashes (2011-2015)

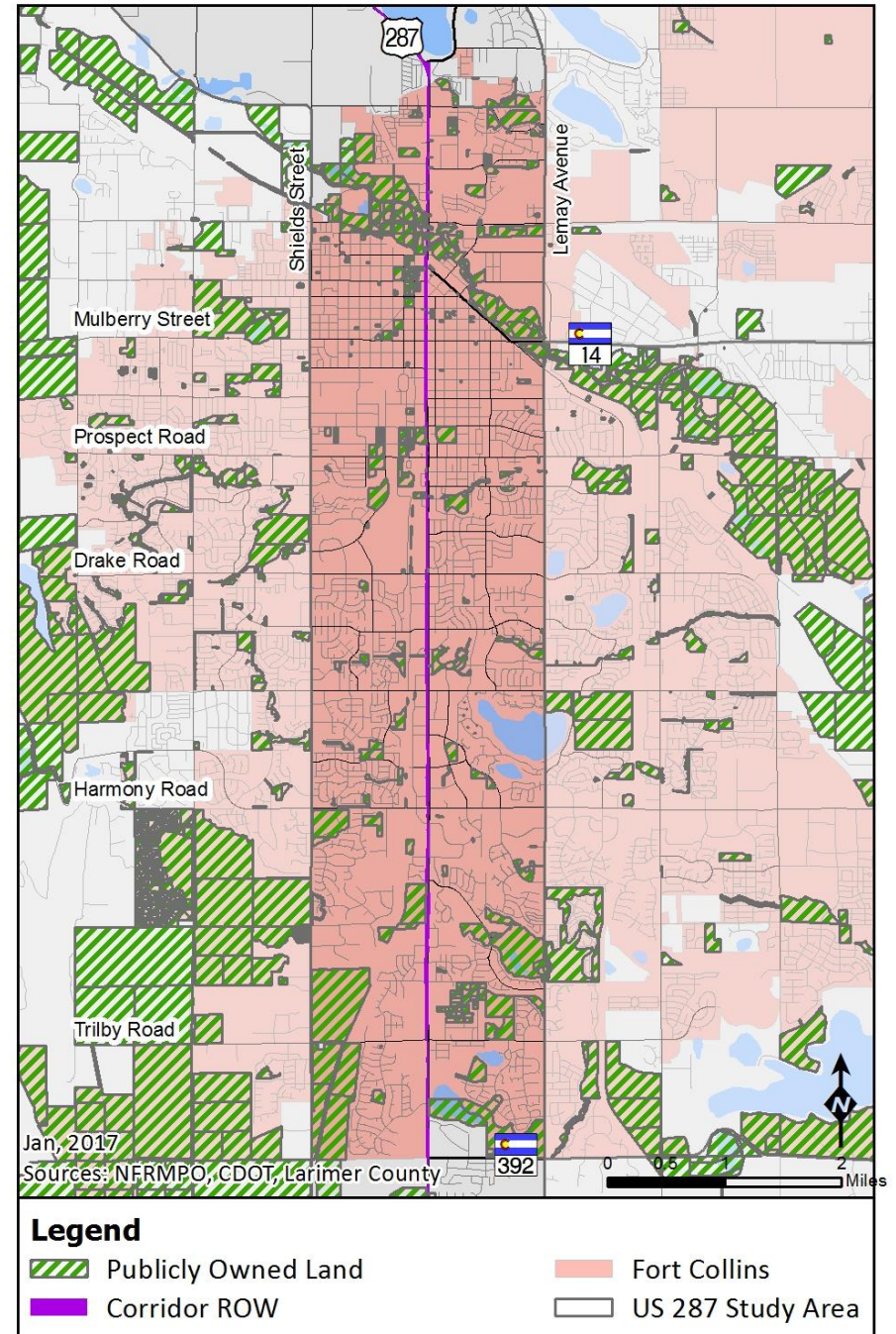


Right-of-Way

An estimate of US287 right-of-way is shown on **Figure 5-9**. Based on Larimer County parcel data, the right-of-way is colored where there is no existing property owner. The width of the right-of-way estimate along US287 ranges from 80-224 feet in Fort Collins. Due to the irregular borders of the right-of-way, a general map is presented in the figure. In-depth maps are available upon request.

Also shown is the land owned by the City of Fort Collins, Larimer County, the State of Colorado, or the US. CDOT is in the process of creating a right-of-way database, which will be available in the future. The expected timeline is three to five years.

Figure 5-9 Fort Collins US287 Right-of-Way and Publicly Owned Land



Bicycle and Pedestrian

Fort Collins has a well-developed bicycle and pedestrian network. As a result, the League of American Bicyclists has named the City a Platinum Bicycle Friendly City. **Figure 5-10** shows the City’s bicycle lanes, bicycle routes, recreational trails, and sidewalks. It is important to note cyclists are not permitted on College Avenue between Laurel Street and Harmony Road. Due to the density of the network, **Figures 4-10 through 4-12** show separate sections of Fort Collins in greater detail.

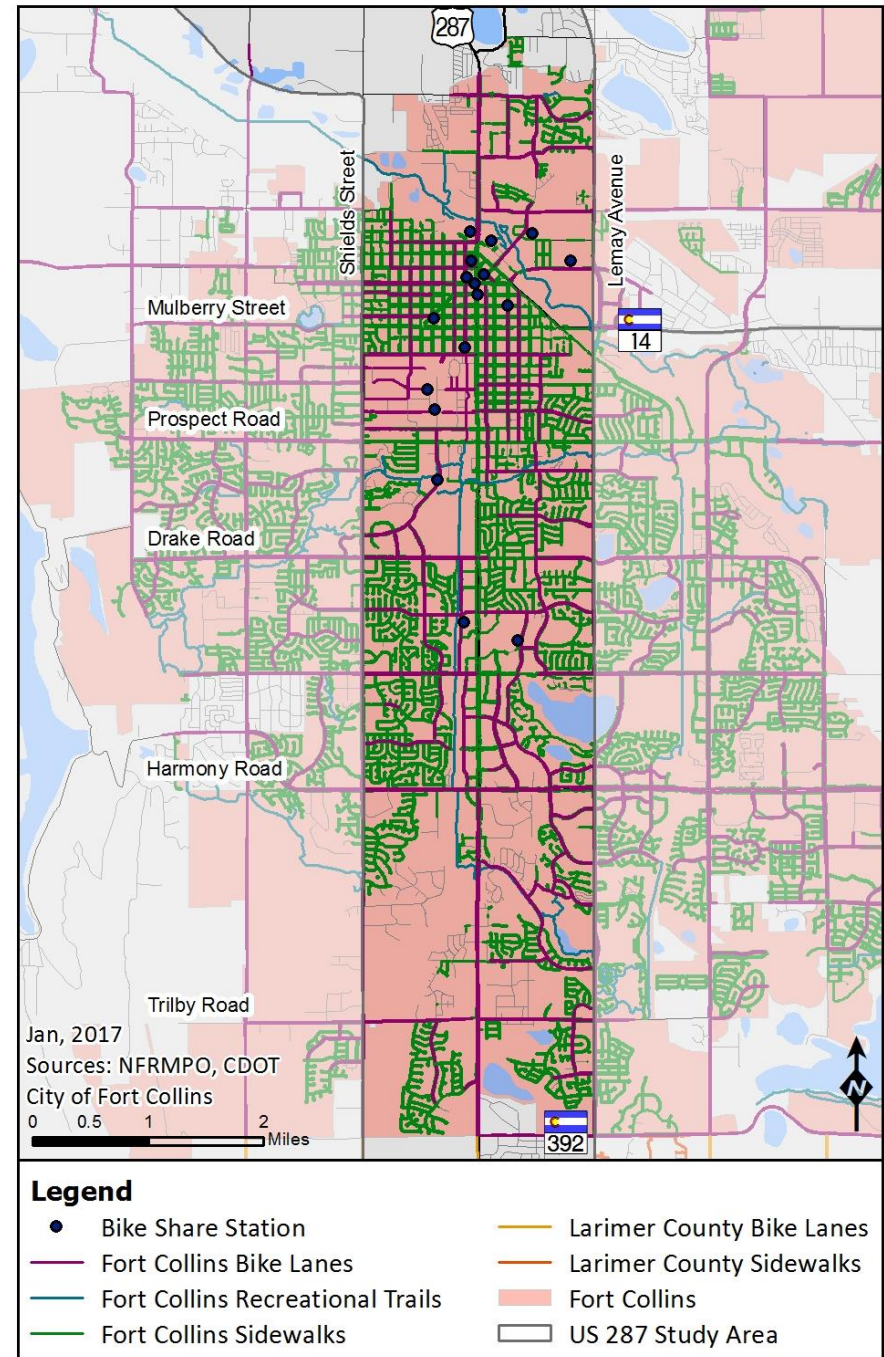
Fort Collins has a bicycle sharing system called Zagster, which operates along the US287 corridor. The service allows anyone to sign up for a day, month, or annual pass to sign out a bicycle at any Zagster station. If the bicycle is returned within 30 minutes, the user is not charged outside of the original pass. Stations are located in Old Town, on CSU’s campus, and near the Foothills Mall. CSU is working on funding an expansion of the City/Zagster system on campus and the CSU area. Station locations are still under consideration.

Figure 5-10 focuses on Old Town Fort Collins and the CSU campus. Roads typically have sidewalks on each side. CSU has invested heavily in bicycle infrastructure on campus, which ties directly into the City’s network. A pedestrian underpass connects CSU’s Annual Flower Trial garden and the new parking garage north of Lake Street.

Figure 5-12 features Midtown Fort Collins, from Prospect Road to north of Harmony Road. A new pedestrian underpass is under construction at College Avenue between Monroe Drive and Foothills Parkway; this new pedestrian underpass will connect Foothills Mall to the Mason Trail and MAX corridor.

Figure 5-13 shows the portion of Fort Collins south of Harmony Road. Development is not as dense as in the North and Midtown portions of Fort Collins, but sidewalks and trails connect the existing development to US287 or other neighborhood streets.

Figure 5-10 Fort Collins Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure



US287 is paralleled by two major non-motorized corridors: the Remington Greenway and the Mason Corridor. The Remington Greenway provides cyclists with buffered bicycle lanes from Mountain Avenue to south of Stuart Street. Some intersections were converted from four-way stops to two-way stops, and others had traffic signals replaced with either a four-way stop or a mini-roundabout. The infrastructure investments contribute to Fort Collins’ Low Stress Bicycle Network. On the west side of College Avenue, the Mason Corridor provides buffered bicycle lanes and an off-road trail shared with the MAX high-capacity transit route. The MAX route is discussed more thoroughly in the **Transit** section. The Mason Corridor connects the Downtown Transit Center to the South Transit Center, providing access to CSU, Spring Creek Trail, and Foothills Mall.

Figure 5-11 North Fort Collins Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure

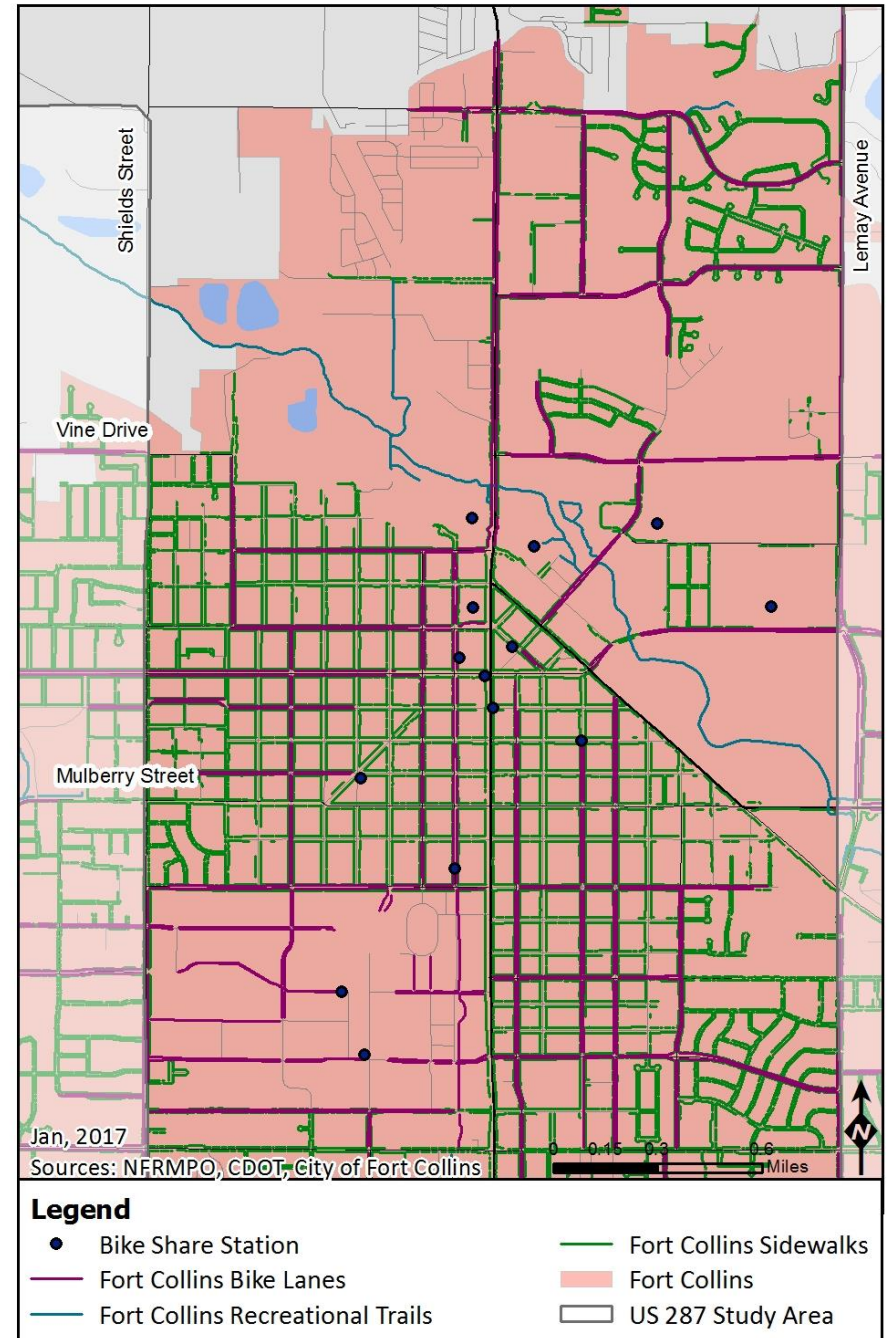


Figure 5-12 Midtown Fort Collins Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure

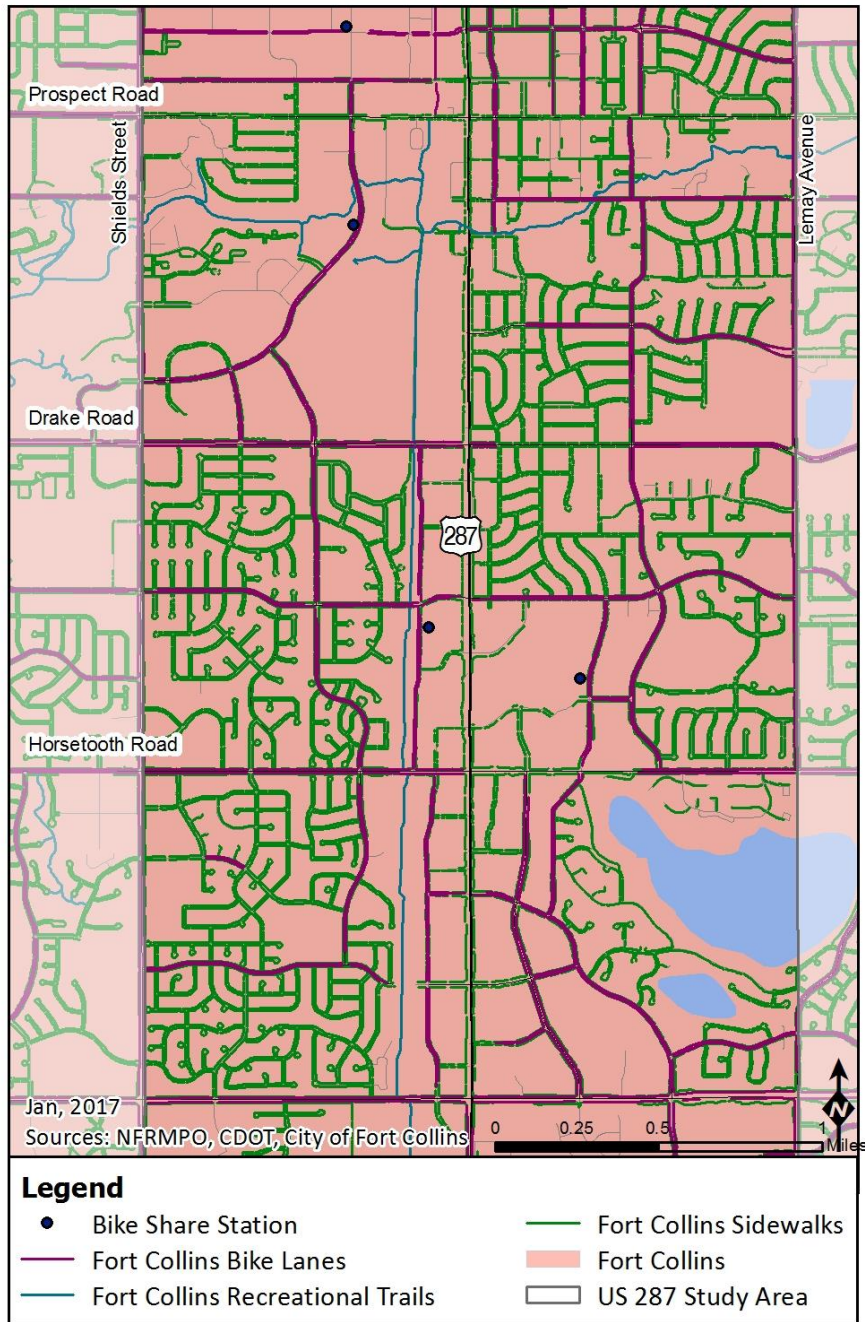
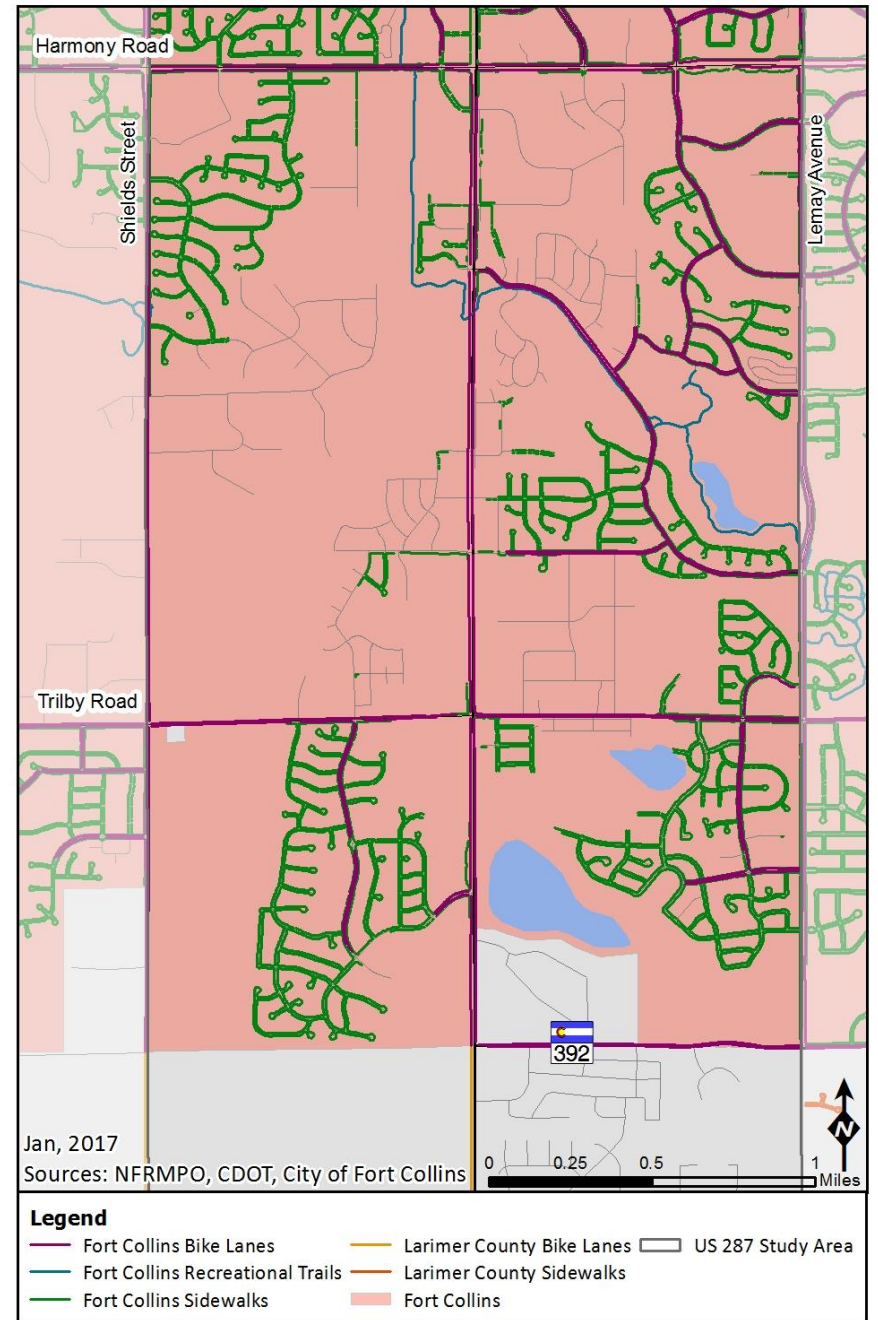


Figure 5-13 South Fort Collins Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure



Transit

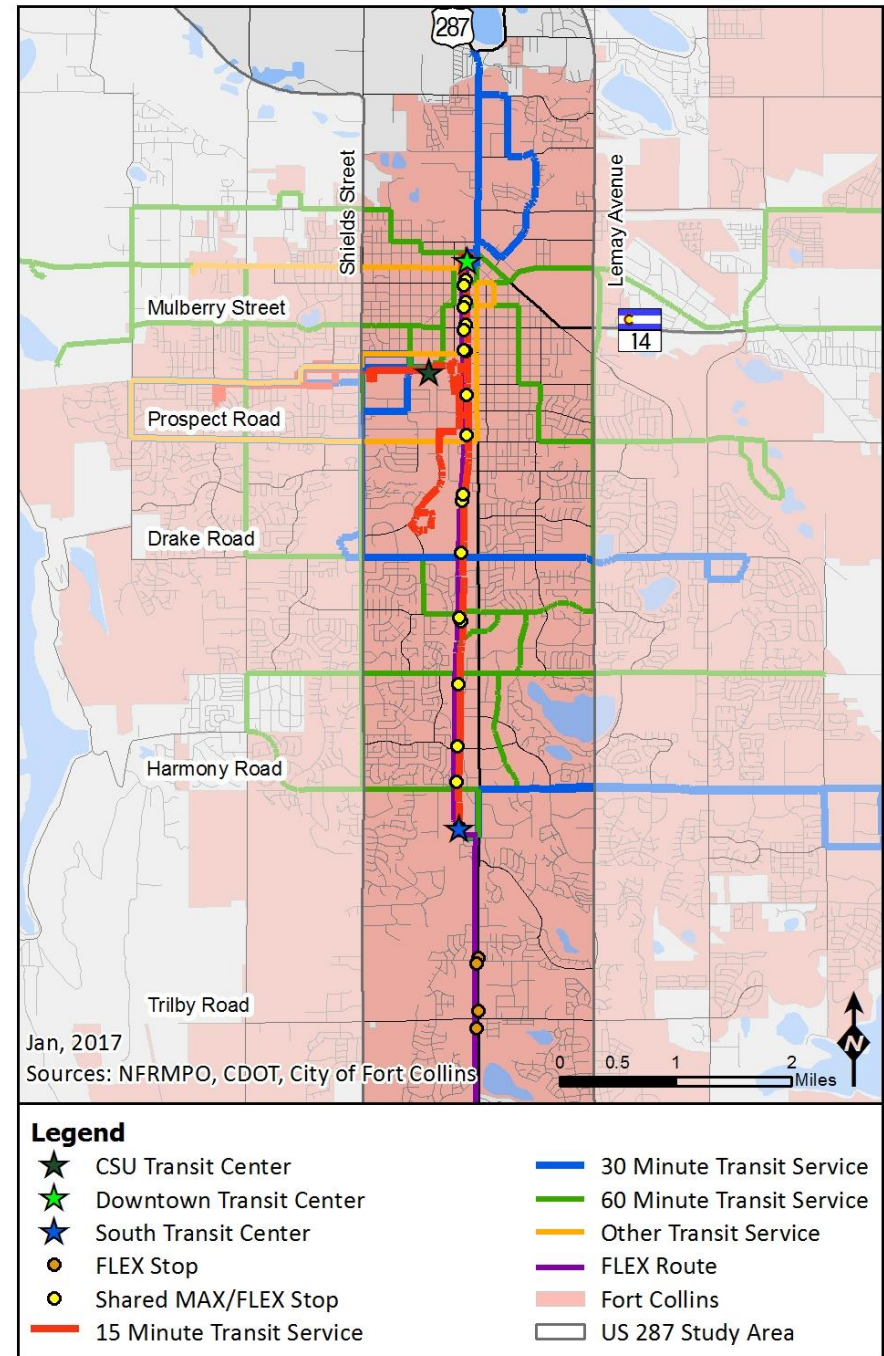
Transfort, a department of the City of Fort Collins’s Planning, Development, and Transportation Service Area, operates transit in Fort Collins. MAX Bus Rapid Transit service provides 10-minute service approximately 0.10 to 0.20 miles west of US287. Some bus routes use US287 through Old Town to connect to the Downtown Transit Center. Similarly, some bus routes use a short segment of US287 south of Harmony Road to connect to the South Transit Center.

Figure 5-14 shows the routes operated by Transfort, identified by frequency of service during peak periods. Service operating more than every fifteen minutes is displayed in red, and includes the MAX corridor and three routes partially subsidized by CSU. MAX operates every ten minutes from approximately 6:30AM to 7:00PM. Routes displayed in blue provide service at half-hour intervals, and connect major arterials including North College Avenue, Drake Road, and Harmony Road. Green routes provide service hourly, and connect less dense neighborhoods. Orange services include a school route subsidized by Poudre School District, operating once per day, and a late-night route, which operates on 15-minute headways on Friday and Saturday late nights (Gold Line).

Transfort buses serve three transit centers: Downtown Transit Center; CSU Transit Center; and the South Transit Center. The Downtown Transit Center is located in Old Town, and provides access to nine routes. Connections to Bustang are available at the Downtown Transit Center. Additionally, FLEX to Boulder departs from the Downtown Transit Center. The South Transit Center connects five routes, in addition to both FLEX patterns. The CSU Transit Center is located at the Lory Student Center, connecting students and staff to 10 separate routes. Connection to the RamsRide, a Bustang route connecting CSU Transit Center to Denver Union Station on weekends, is available as well. CSU provides funding for multiple routes on corridors with high student populations, including Around the Horn. The HORN is a campus circulator operating 10 minute service when CSU is in session.

Information about Transfort routes is available at www.ridetansfort.com.

Figure 5-14 Transfort Routes



Environmental Features

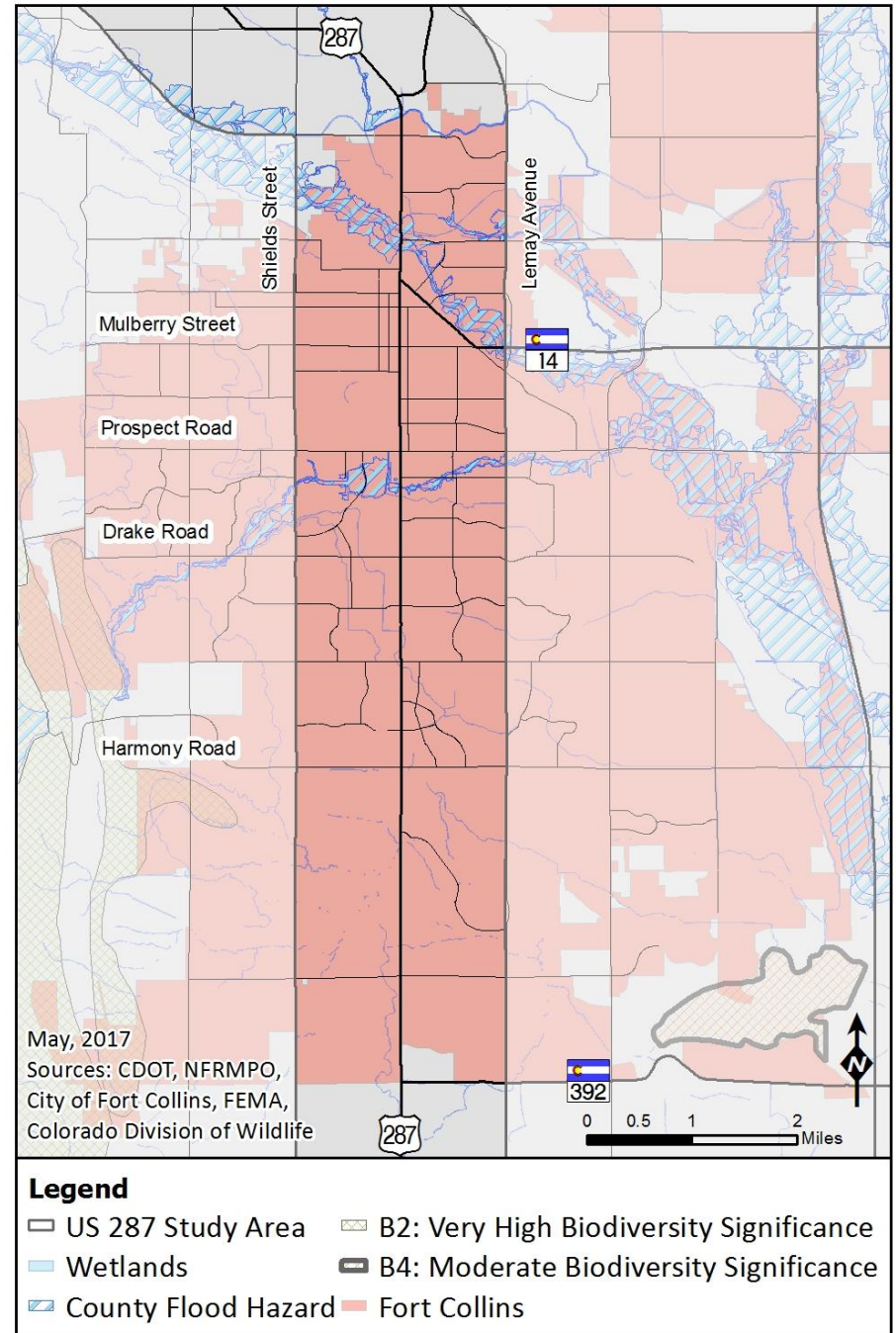
US287 through Fort Collins is located along the Rocky Mountain foothills. **Figure 5-15** shows wetlands, flood hazards, and conservation areas. The Colorado Division of Wildlife has studied various habitats throughout the State and considers the habitats denoted in the map as Potential Conservation Areas. The rating scale of B1: Outstanding Biodiversity Significance to B5: General Biodiversity Significance is a reflection of the ecological sensitivity of the area.

The Cache la Poudre River is a major river that runs through Fort Collins, running generally southwest across the City. Spring Creek, a major recreational corridor, bisects US287 between Prospect Road and Drake Road. FEMA has identified these corridors as potential flood hazards.

Wetlands are located throughout the City due to the ditches dating back to the area's rural beginnings.

Additionally, being located close to the Rocky Mountains ensures a diverse range of biodiversity. According to the Colorado Division of Wildlife, there are two conservation areas in Fort Collins: a Very High Biodiversity Significant area located close to Horsetooth Reservoir and a Moderate Biodiversity Significant area located near Fossil Creek Reservoir. Neither of these areas is located in the US287 Study Area.

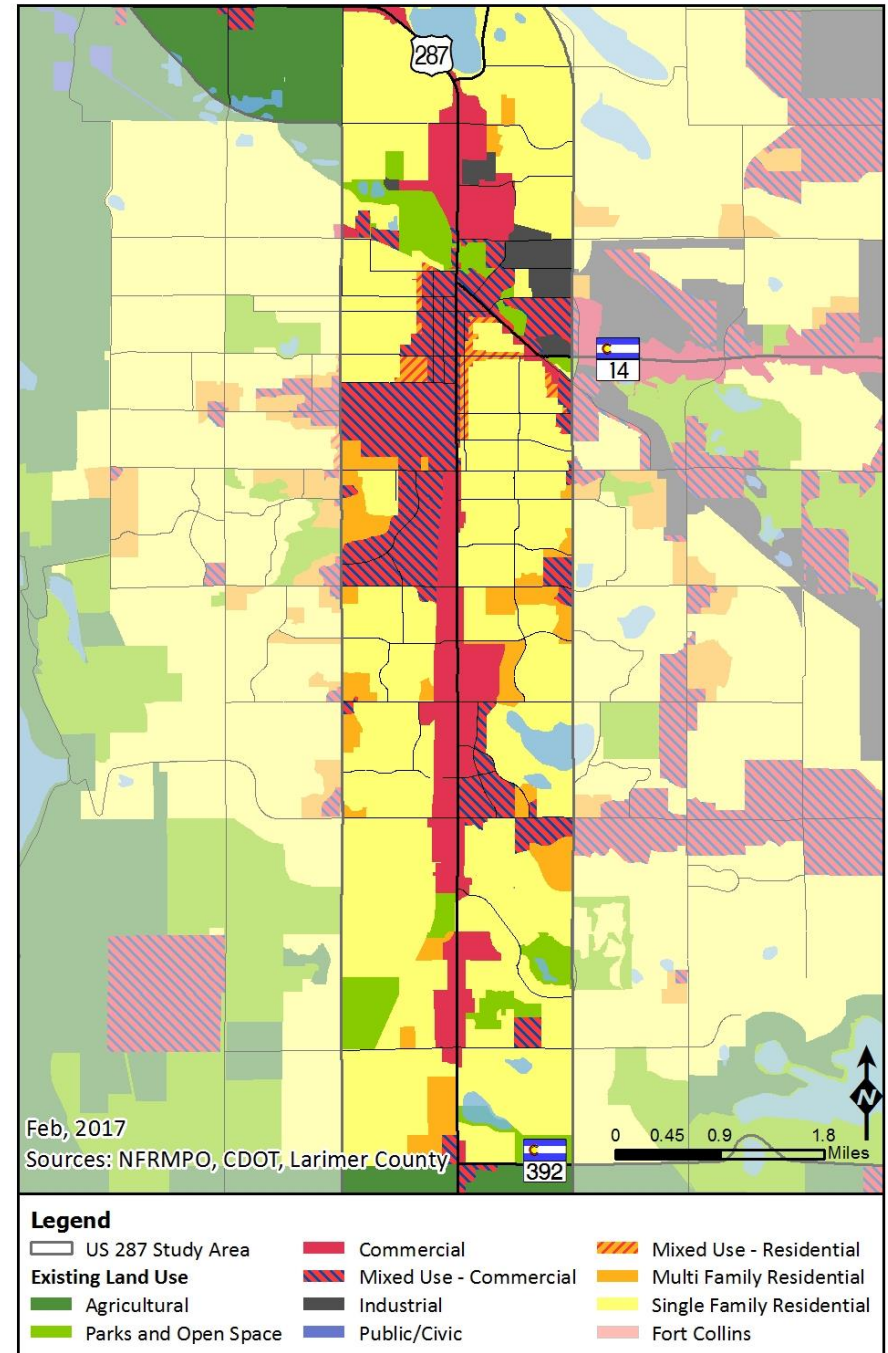
Figure 5-15 Fort Collins Environmental Features



Existing Land Use

The land uses displayed on **Figure 5-16** represent 2012 land uses as of 2012, as compiled for the NFRMPO 2040 Land Use Allocation Model. Land uses vary along the corridor, and primarily include Mixed Use - Commercial, Commercial, Parks and Open Spaces, and Residential land uses.

Figure 5-16 Fort Collins Existing Land Use



Future Land Use

The land uses displayed on **Figure 5-17** represent future land uses as compiled for the NFRMPO 2040 Land Use Allocation Model. Data were provided by Larimer County zoning (2013) and the 2011 City of Fort Collins Comprehensive Plan. The future land uses represent built out conditions identified by local communities, and does not adhere to a specific forecast year. Within the Study Area in Fort Collins, future land uses primarily include Mixed Use - Residential, Commercial, Mixed Use - Commercial, Single Family Residential, Parks and Open Spaces, and Industrial land uses.

The City of Fort Collins is undertaking an update to its Comprehensive Plan, which may result in changes to the future land use. The update is expected to be completed in 2018.

Figure 5-17 Fort Collins Future Land Use

