



MEMORANDUM

P.O. Box 4100 ♦ FRISCO, COLORADO 80443

TO: MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL
FROM: NANCY KERRY, TOWN MANAGER
RE: WORK SESSION DISCUSSION: ENVISIONING FUTURE SCENARIOS
DATE: MARCH 9, 2021

Summary and Background:

In the summer of 2020, the Frisco Town Council held a two-day work session in the gazebo of the Historic Park. During the work session, Town Councilmembers developed priorities for the coming year in addition to continuing to manage the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Town Councilmembers reflected on how the Town has changed over the years and yet maintains a wonderful sense of community and a strong connection to the community.

Frisco's Main Street is the 'hub' of Summit County, the access point between ski resorts, limitless recreational activities, highway 9 and the interstate, inevitably resulted in Frisco's tourism-based economy. Over the years, Frisco developed four main economic centers of the Town (Main Street, Highway 9 Commercial Center, the Frisco Bay Marina, and Frisco Adventure Park), resulting in diverse year-round revenue opportunities.

Where the Town was 150 years and where it is today, is likely the result of a mixture of many things, including community needs, economic demands and the reaction thereto, private property ownership and their economic incentives, good governance, visioning, planning, happenstance and change in time.

Today, the local business community has come to rely upon tourism, including the secondary impacts of tourism (professional/community services), along with the financial support from 3,000 Frisco residents and collectively the 31,000 countywide residents who may frequent Frisco's stores and services. The Town's businesses generate approximately \$250M in annual retail/commercial sales, which does not include professional services, real estate sales, banking, and community services. As evidenced by the impacts brought on by the pandemic, there are few businesses in Town, if any, that could survive on a customer base the size of the community (approximately 3,000 full-time residents). Local businesses, and the overall economic activity in Town, is wholly dependent upon a vibrant tourist-based economy.

The pandemic brought a new type of tourist to Town: the remote worker. While it is unknown as to exactly how many workers relocated to their own second home or rented STRs, anecdotally, news reports and secondary data sources (real estate) revealed the phenomenon, going so far as to label it the "new zoom economy" ('zoom' referring to Zoom meetings).

Work Session Purpose:

Where the Town is today, and where the Town Council would like it to be five years from now, will, in part, be the result of decisions made by this Town Council. Even though we are still in the midst of the pandemic, taking time to pause and reflect upon the Council's vision and goals for the future will position the Town to come through the pandemic best prepared to meet the changing expectations of tourists and community members.

The purpose of this work session is to do exactly that: To consider and evaluate where the Town is today: (a) what are the current and new realities experts are seeing for destinations such as the Town of Frisco, (b) how do those align with the Council's priorities, and then, (c) which among a series of scenarios, would the Council like to steer the Town toward over the next few years.

During this first of two work sessions, the Town Council will hear from the Insights Collective team. The Insights Collective is a group of experts with an array of tenured experience in the destination, tourism, mountain-town community fields. They have met with the Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, and Communications Director several times in preparation for this work session with the Town Council.

At this first work session, the Insights Collective Team will lay a foundation for a shared understanding of current realities; they will seek a conversational discussion with Council around topics to develop that shared understanding. Topics will include economic drivers for Frisco and their importance or value for the Town, and realities the Town should consider including community changes, retail/restaurants and the changes in customer expectations, special events and impact on community culture, municipal funding models (are we managing tourist-based budgeting or reacting to it?), will there be a lasting impact of the pandemic on the mindset, and so on. They will also share their knowledge, both the successful and not so successful strategies, which municipalities have deployed to support the harmony between resident quality of life and visitor experience, and they will discuss how these strategies align with the Town's Strategic Plan and Community Plan priorities.

Insights Collective team will introduce these topics with a robust presentation and then engage the Town Council in a discussion. It is hoped the conversation between the Collective and the Council will ignite the thinking for the second work session where the discussion will turn to: what does the Council envision for the next few years and what potential scenarios for a path forward would the Council like to pursue?

Communities that spend time reflecting on their vision for the future are far more likely to achieve their desired outcomes. As a result of the pandemic, the world has shifted. The past nine months have been spent managing the crisis and leading the community through it. While we do not yet know what shifts are temporary or permanent, the Town will be poised to leverage opportunities having given thoughtful consideration to paths forward and pursue those that are in alignment with the Council's vision.

This staff report is provided as background for a participatory conversation with the Insights Collective.