

City Council Retreat Paper Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan Parking Lot Issues

Background

As a part of the recent targeted update to the Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan (LACP), several items were identified as “parking lot” items for further study after completion of the LACP update. The LACP update was approved by the City Council in August of 2003. In October the City Council reviewed the parking lot issues to confirm that the issues were properly framed as potential future work program items. In addition to the LACP parking lot issues, one other issue the City Council has been tracking as a potential 2004 work plan item is managing the ongoing rail regional initiatives to keep Longmont involved and up-to-date in various mass transit and commuter rail discussions going on regionally both north and south of Longmont. This work is already on-going and it is suggested that this item be combined with the multimodal transportation plan work item.

After the October meeting when the parking lot issues were reviewed by the City Council, staff has made minor adjustments to the project descriptions and estimates for resources to accomplish them. Hopefully this will aid the Council in prioritizing among both the numerous competing work plan prospects for 2004 and on-going Planning Division work items. The objective of the retreat discussion on these parking lot issues is to confirm that the parking lot tasks described are consistent with City Council’s previous comments and provide further clarification on these items if necessary. The parking lot matter involving the role of the Long Range Planning Commission merits a more specific content-oriented discussion at the retreat, to assist Council in deciding if the role of the Long Range Planning Commission should change. Consequently that parking lot item is somewhat more detailed than the other parking lot descriptions included in this retreat topic.

Summary of Parking Lot Issues

Mixed Use Commercial and Corridor/Gateway Planning

With the development potential along SH 66 and the recent opening of the SH 119 extension, this project is timely for 2004. Development applications are pending along both of these corridors. Managing appropriate public process, getting design consultants hired, and developing access and gateway standards make this a work plan item of significant proportion for 2004. City Council has set aside \$50,000 in the 2004 Operating Budget for consultants for this project. Because this item involves so many interested parties from the community, the Council may wish to consider involving a citizen steering committee or task force in this project. Such a task force could assemble a broad community involvement base by including representatives from groups such as property owners, design professionals, citizens, P/Z, and TAB.

Multimodal Transportation Plan

The Street Fund has \$100,000 available for this plan. If City Council includes this project in the 2004 Work Plan, an appropriation request subsequently would be brought to City Council to authorize its funding. Because of the level of interest in the community in multimodal transportation, this project has a longer work term and higher resource commitment associated with it to properly accommodate meaningful community involvement. RTD has indicated that an additional \$25,000 match from the City could allow them to include TOD (transit oriented design) to be included in the Longmont FasTrack feasibility study. It is suggested that this project incorporate the ongoing monitoring and planning associated with possible transit rail connections to Longmont through FasTracks or other initiatives. This project could utilize the general oversight of a task force comprised of Planning and Zoning Commission (P/Z) and Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) members and representatives from identified community groups.

Design Standards for Multimodal Transportation

After completion of the multimodal transportation plan, this revision to the City's design standards can be completed as a part of the annual update to the construction and design standards effort managed next year.

Role of the Long Range Planning Commission

The Long Range Planning Commission (LRPC) is a subset of commissioners on the P/Z. The duties and responsibilities of the LRPC are to make recommendations on long range planning issues to the P/Z. The nature of their role has been on the minds of P/Z for some time. The LRPC has met a few times late in 2003 to discuss their role and has suggested what it should be (see attached letter from LRPC dated September 24, 2003). Also attached is a memo from Councilman Brown on the subject. The LRPC has not been active as a separate body for many years. Instead they have worked and met in "study committees" with both the P/Z and City Council on important projects such as the last two updates to the LACP, Metro Vision 2020, and the update to the LDC. This combined study committee format has worked well on these projects. This particular parking lot issue is the only one for which a decision by City Council at the retreat would be helpful.

Main Street Redevelopment

This project would involve examining not only the downtown area, but areas up and down Main Street for redevelopment opportunities. In addition, techniques, programs and incentives would be examined which can assist redevelopment. This project includes a number of facets to complete. This includes the research necessary to identify the geographical areas in the City for potential redevelopment, assemble and analyze the various redevelopment tools (such as an urban renewal authority) the City could use, evaluate and consider appropriate design and development standards and conduct an appropriate citizen involvement process. Community involvement activities would focus on including groups such as property owners, business owners, the Longmont Downtown Development Authority (LDDA), registered neighborhood groups, and residents. Such community involvement will better inform and assist both the P/Z and City Council in their respective deliberations. Given the individual components of this project, and the time needed to prepare the research and manage a public involvement process, this would

be a major work item that should probably not be scheduled concurrently with one of the other major parking lot items, but scheduled according to priority.

Neighborhoods

Based on the previous Council discussion on this item and assuming staff has properly captured the Council's intent on this task, this project will incorporate some public involvement process including neighborhoods and homeowner's associations in the City. However, changes to recognize neighborhoods as social/geographical units and not "planned neighborhoods" can be managed on a "house-keeping" level and would not be a major project for 2004.

Neighborhood Parks

This item was identified early in the LACP update process as an item that needed further attention to assure that new residential development in the City was afforded good design and reasonable access to either internal open spaces or neighborhood parks. The City will evaluate the effectiveness of the recent amendments to the Land Development Code (LDC) which increased the required amounts of open space in low density residential subdivisions. Last October the discussion among City Council appeared to indicate that this project no longer was a high priority given recent City efforts that relate to this issue. Consequently, this project probably doesn't need to be considered for further study at this time.

Discussion Questions

1. What are the priorities for the parking lot issues that City Council wants to include in the 2004 Work Plan? Projects included would be addressed in the order of City Council's priorities as time allows given ongoing work items.
2. What does City Council want to do with the LRPC?