

*City of Longmont
Community & Neighborhood Resources
Midtown Revitalization*



Neighborhood Action Planning Workbook



A Workbook for Midtown
Neighborhoods to Organize and
Plan for a Great Tomorrow

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Introduction to the Action Planning Process

Neighborhood Revitalization

Neighborhood revitalization is a comprehensive approach to improving neighborhoods. In a revitalization effort, neighborhoods identify their community, social, physical and economic needs and work in partnership with the City and others to obtain resources that can address these needs and further improve the quality of life for their residents. Neighborhood revitalization could include, but is not limited to, the following elements.

Community revitalization involves building relationships and developing leadership within the neighborhood. Residents take greater responsibility for defining, initiating and achieving projects that are important to their neighborhoods and the larger community. Developing and promoting neighborhood identity is also part of community revitalization.

Economic revitalization has to do with the local economy, job availability, quality of available jobs, transportation, educational opportunities, job skills training, and other aspects that contribute to the economic health of the community.

Social revitalization addresses the connections between people in a community—between friends, families, neighborhoods, social groups, schools, businesses, and faith organizations. Relationships within the community greatly influence cooperation; provide support and positive, meaningful interaction; and are important to successful revitalization efforts. Social revitalization also involves strengthening the skills, abilities, capacities and opportunities of all people who live in the community.

Physical revitalization includes improving such things as neighborhood streets and sidewalks, lighting, recreation space, quality of the housing stock, and landscaping.

Why Revitalize?

You shouldn't have to move to live in a better neighborhood. Community led programs that develop partnerships, build leadership skills and make the neighborhood more livable are long lasting, create safer environments, increase property values and increase the overall quality of life in the neighborhood.

Effective neighborhood revitalization efforts make sure that everyone has a chance to be involved. It is important to hear all ideas, address multiple issues, and build everyone's capacity to implement and sustain solutions.

I ntroduction to the Action Planning Process

Different Sizes and Types of Projects

At its best, the Action Planning Process has many facets and is a combination of activities rather than one large scale activity.

It includes **short term projects** that bring neighbors together and are a way to learn more about each other as well as identify neighborhood characteristics. These short term projects can include:

- Block parties
- Neighborhood Clean-ups
- Tree Planting
- Municipal Code Compliance Sweeps

The Action Planning Process includes consolidating **long term projects** that have a timeline of one to several years in length into the neighborhood plan. These projects are the result of a careful and complete analysis of the neighborhoods strengths and needs, as well as a great deal of input from as many neighbors as possible. Some examples of long term projects that neighborhoods have conducted are:

- Housing Rehabilitation
- Community Gardens
- Renovating Vacant Lots or Abandoned Buildings
- Small Business Loan Programs
- Playgrounds
- Neighborhood Watch
- Property Maintenance
- Food Share
- Job/Tool Bank
- Neighborhood Identity
- Adopt-a-Park/Street
- Art in Public Spaces

Goals for neighborhoods are not only about brick and mortar activities, but are also about building skills among the neighbors. Some goals that may not be readily visible, but are significant for the long term health of neighborhoods are:

- Increase leadership skills
- Increase sense of community
- Increase community capacity (to identify and resolve issues on their own)

Why Smaller Projects?

A balance of short term projects and long term projects help keep people engaged and motivated, and allow for some visible improvements as planning and work are still being done. Building capacity in neighborhoods can be as or more long lasting as any brick and mortar project.

Introduction to the Action Planning Process

Components of a Successful Neighborhood Action Plan

The Neighborhood Action Plan begins and ends with community involvement. It is flexible because it has to meet the needs of different neighborhoods, but it does have some standard components that should be included. You or your neighborhood may have already undertaken some of these things, or perhaps you will need to work on them.

Come Together and Agree to Plan – The City of Longmont will help you with this. We can help organize clean-ups, block parties and neighborhood meetings. Find out who the core group of neighbors is and who will make a commitment to work on the planning process. Provide all sorts of opportunities for neighborhood input.

Create a Neighborhood Profile – Truly getting to know your neighborhood and compiling a list of its assets. This includes discussions, surveys, polling, or research. Who are you as a neighborhood? What are your strengths? This workbook will walk you through the Neighborhood Profile step by step. You will have the opportunity to be increasingly specific with names, types of skills and/or names of the small enterprises, etc.

Determine Your Readiness as a Neighborhood – Use the checklist, and go back to it often, to make sure you are on track with leadership, neighborhood involvement, etc.

Create a Vision Statement – The workbook has different ways to create this vision and examples of vision statements. Dream big! What do you want your community to look like?

Create an Action Plan that get you from where you are today to closer to your vision of the community. This includes community involvement, brainstorming ideas, and deciding on realistic projects that have buy-in from the community.

- Start with identifying the issues you want to address and forming these into **objectives**.
- Using the objectives, you create **action steps**, which need to be prioritized.
- The **timeline** needs to be realistic and achievable.
- **Participants** are named and have expressed their commitment.
- Ways to **measure** the success of the project(s) are identified.

Why All These Steps?

Taking time to create a strong and thorough Plan makes all the difference in how an outcome stands the test of time.

Communicate with the City of Longmont – Create a way to get input on the plan, identify the roles and responsibilities of the City and the Neighborhood, and seek approval of the final plan. These Action Plans are a partnership with the City, but begin and end with the ideas and effort of you and your neighbors.

Implement Your Action Plan– Work as a team and involve all the parties responsible.

Introduction to the Action Planning Process

Roles & Responsibilities of Participants

It is important that the roles and responsibilities of each participant in the Neighborhood Action Planning Process be clearly defined. The roles can be those of the Neighborhood Action Planning Committee, the committee’s chair, the city liaison, and the chair of the neighborhood group, the City’s Neighborhood Resource Specialist, and the residents of the neighborhood. The specific participants that will be necessary will be determined in cooperation with the City of Longmont as the Action Planning process goes forth. Some roles and responsibilities are as follows:

1. Committee Members
 - Contribute information and value contribution of others
 - Allow all participants to speak, avoid interruptions
 - Come to X number or X percentage of meetings
 - Come prepared with your ideas, research or documents
 - Be the catalyst for change
2. Committee Chair
 - Make sure each participant has a chance to contribute, don’t let any one person dominate a discussion
 - Model and encourage direct communication, handle conflict openly with clear information, take breaks if things get too heated
 - Be prepared to agree to disagree, make it okay to have different opinions
3. City Liaison
 - Give advice and make recommendations on the neighborhood’s needs
 - Understand and communicate the City’s resources and information
 - Serve on the City Team
4. Neighborhood Resource Specialist
 - Help facilitate neighborhood meetings, provide opportunities for leadership and input to members of the community
 - Interpret the City’s role and guidelines for Neighborhood Planning
5. Neighborhood Revitalization City Team
 - Oversee the Midtown Revitalization Program

Who Does What?

Each neighborhood group will look different, but having clear “job descriptions” for each and every one who will play a part is important. In this way, we cover all the bases, AND we aren’t redundant. This helps all of us feel important and secure.

Your neighborhood group will identify the participants as you proceed through the planning process. It is important, from the beginning, to be clear about what is expected from each person.

Learning about Our Neighborhoods

Neighborhood Characteristics

One of the *first steps* in creating a better neighborhood is to clearly identify the various characteristics of that neighborhood as it is today. These characteristics are facts, lists and basic information.

- History of the neighborhood
- People living and working there
- Businesses in and around the neighborhood
- Geography
- Special features that make the neighborhood unique
- Community associations
- Appearance
- Traffic and safety
- Public facilities
- Schools
- Faith Communities
- Community programs and projects
- Housing and land use
- Parks and recreation

As we discover and list these characteristics, we understand the *assets** and *needs*** of a community. A variety of resources can be used to list all of these characteristics, such as city maps, stories told by long time residents, information gathered at neighborhood get-togethers, print resources and the internet. This is just a listing – no emotion, no values.

After listing the characteristics, the *second step* is to divide the list into **SWOT** – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. This is the time to add a value or a feeling to each item on your list.

A realistic action plan reflects the reality of a neighborhood, including its values and priorities. As we plan, we create partnerships with each other and with organizations and the local government.

After this information is gathered and recorded, it will be used to create the *third step*, the Neighborhood Profile. This is a summary of the neighborhood characteristics, and is an important aspect of the eventual Neighborhood Action Planning process.

Your final Neighborhood Profile will go into the **NAP Document Worksheet**.

Three Easy Pieces

1. Just the facts, ma'am! Who, what, where, when.

2. Now add a value to these facts – is it a strength or a weakness? Can this pose an opportunity for us, or is it threatening?

3. **This** is our neighborhood, a realistic look at us today.

**Assets* are those people, things, places and skills that are in a community that are positive and contribute to the neighborhood. An asset might be the electrician next door, or the school two blocks away, or that home based business you and your friend run.

***A need* is an area that could use something positive! This may be that there is no park within walking distance, or that the neighborhood park is full of garbage, graffiti and gang members. These needs will show up as you move to the second step, the SWOT analysis.

Learning about Our Neighborhoods

L *Neighborhood Readiness*

Before ever creating a Neighborhood Action Plan, a neighborhood must first have some level of organization, a planning committee, an agreement to work as a group in the planning process, and have opportunities for neighborhood participation.

Read through the following checklist, which can tell you how ready you and your neighborhood are for the planning process. This is a list you will come back to again and again as you proceed with the Neighborhood Action Plan.

- Who is our core group in our neighborhood?
- Have we tried to include the ideas and opinions of everyone in our neighborhood?
- How much commitment do we have from the core group in our neighborhood?
- Is our community profile complete, clear and to the point?
- What is the level of organization we need in our neighborhood to begin planning?
- Have we arrived at that pre-determined level of organization?
- Who will be on our Action Planning Committee?
- Who is that Committee's chair?
- Who will act as the liaison to the City?
- Have we come up with projects that have right-sized action steps?
- Have we created a realistic timeline?
- Do we have a way to have input from the City of Longmont?

Making a List, Checking it Twice

Come back to this list on a regular basis. "Readiness" means you have covered the bases, SO FAR, and you have participation and commitment from the people in the neighborhood. In this way, the plan will represent the entire neighborhood's needs. Work with the Neighborhood Resource Specialist to make sure this checklist is an important part of your process.

Identifying Resources in Our Neighborhoods

Leaders

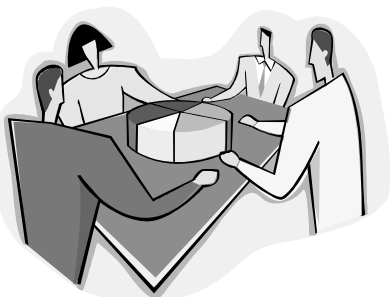
Leadership is essential to the Planning Process, but it doesn't need to be exhausting or lonely. This process is designed to identify a core group of persons in the neighborhood who have a leadership role, who have leadership skills, or who can and will provide some leadership to the Action Planning Process.

Identifying associations in your neighborhood is another great way to find natural leaders. Often, these people have volunteered their time and talents and built up their leadership skills over time.

The following points are important to consider when identifying leaders, whether that be yourself or your neighbor.

- Is this person fair? Is this person respected?
- Is this person comfortable with conflict or conflicting views?
- What is special that this person brings to the group?
 - accounting or other skill
 - construction or other trade
 - special connections, management experience
 - languages
 - long-time resident
- What is this person's availability for meetings?
- Are personal motives or hidden agendas discussed and resolved?
- Can two or more people work together in a leadership team?
- What specific skills or point of view do we still need, and can we find a person to fit that?

One group of people to remember to tap into is "labeled" people. Those are your neighbors that systems have labeled as "mentally ill, disabled, elderly, etc." Rather than being considered a burden to the community, how can these neighbors be as asset and provide leadership?



I dentifying Resources in Our Neighborhoods

Skills

As neighborhoods are filled with people, they are necessarily filled with a variety of skills. As you listed the characteristics of your neighborhood, you identified different skills represented. This is the chance to be specific. *Who* has *what* skill and they live *where*? The following skills list is just the beginning. Ask questions of your neighbors, get to know them, and add to the list!

- Carpentry
- Construction
- Gardening
- Agriculture
- Working with trees (arborist)
- Sewing
- Painting
- Graphic arts
- Cooking
- Baking
- Writing
- Grant writing
- Financial management skills



I dentifying Resources in Our Neighborhoods

Enterprises

Small enterprises and home-based businesses are often hidden from view when looking at neighborhoods. However, they can be gold mines of ingenuity, leadership, resources, community building, and fun activities. Who owns or participates in what type of small enterprise or home-based business in your neighborhood? Be specific, ask for commitments, and get to know the depth and range of what each enterprise or business does.

Supporting neighborhood businesses builds and sustains strong neighborhoods.

Some types of home based businesses to look for are:

- Daycares, licensed or unlicensed
- Tax Services, accountants
- Attorneys
- Therapists, massage therapists, other practitioners
- Repair shops – shoes, cars, computers
- Tailors or seamstresses
- Direct or indirect sales (or home-to-home sales), such as Amway, Silpada, Avon
- Dog walkers
- Carpentry, handyman, landscaping
- Baking, catering or personal chef



I dentifying Resources in Our Neighborhoods

Financial Resources

Although a great deal of the money for the Neighborhood Action Planning process will come through the city, there does exist a pool of financial resources in every community. Think about the following sources when determining who or what might contribute financially to the short-term and long-term projects you will want to do.

Some of these sources might provide in-kind donations, which can relieve the budget in significant ways. A restaurant or grocery store may provide food for an event, or a local business may supply skilled labor for a project.

Make your own list for your neighborhood, and don't be afraid to ask for contributions. This may be a wonderful way for these businesses or people to get the word out that they are interested in the neighborhood and want to work closely with their neighbors.

- Businesses
- Grocery Stores
- Small enterprises
- Home based businesses
- Private citizens
- Neighborhood associations or neighborhood groups
- Home Owners Associations
- Banks
- Credit Unions
- Savings and Loan
- Restaurants
- Non-profits



I dentifying Resources in Our Neighborhoods

Natural Resources

Each and every neighborhood has some natural resources to tap into. Look around your neighborhood, check different maps, and make a list of the existing natural resources that are in or feed into your neighborhood.

Is there a place for change or addition to the natural resources?

Here are some assets to begin considering:

- Water – lakes, streams, irrigation ditches, precipitation
- Land – hills, valleys, ditches, wetlands, meadows
- Trees – count the trees and plot them on a map, are any dead?
- Vegetation – bushes, hedges, flowers, landscaping, grasses
- Paths – bike paths, foot paths, paved, unpaved, how do they connect?
- Gardens – community gardens, neighborhood gardens, personal gardens, flowers, vegetables, xeriscaping
- Animals – pets, wild animals
- Parks – playgrounds, city parks, school playgrounds
- Greenways
- Open spaces



Creating an Action Plan

Vision Statement

You have created your Neighborhood Profile. You have been specific about Who, What and Where. You have created your planning committee. Now is the opportunity to create a vision for your neighborhood, providing a framework and a picture of what you want your neighborhood to look like.

This is an activity that is done inclusively, incorporates many ideas, and about dreaming for your neighborhood. The appendix includes three sample visioning exercises and a sample vision statement. Write out your final vision statement on the **NAP Document Worksheet**.

There are five guiding principles of visioning:

1. **A vision should be inclusive.** This vision includes as many members of the community as possible, even those who are usually on the margins and left out. When you include everyone, then everyone can OWN the vision, which leads to support, contribution and longevity.
2. **A vision should have central theme or idea.** The central theme or idea brings all the important issues of your neighborhood together. A statement that is succinct will point your neighborhood in one direction and be a focus for the neighbors' cooperation and participation.
3. **A vision should be comprehensive.** The vision needs to address all the areas of concern of the neighbors. It may cover such wide ranging topics as housing rehabilitation, small business development and improving the parks and schools. The vision needs to be a broad umbrella, to provide the whole picture of the dreams of the neighborhood.
4. **A vision needs to be community driven.** You and your neighbors will be implementing and managing this vision. You are the people who make up the social and economic fabric of your neighborhood. Leadership is provided by you – in partnership with local businesses and organizations, City staff, and local professionals.
5. **A vision should address implementation.** This vision should flow directly into the action phase of the planning process. With the dream in one hand, and the leadership of the neighborhood in the other, you move forward to implementing a very concrete strategy.



Creating an Action Plan

Objectives

Now is the time to work with the City's Neighborhood Resource staff to turn the issues into positive objectives. The City of Longmont is committed to partnering with you and your neighbors in working on each step of the Neighborhood Action Plan. The appendix includes a list of sample objectives.

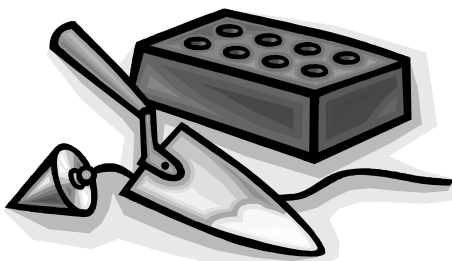
Each objective will be consistent with the reality of the neighborhood and the vision that has been created, and will be:

- Measurable
- Result-oriented
- Realistic

Each objective will have a description explaining WHY it has been chosen and is important. This is important because it provides the background for future neighborhood leaders, City staff, boards & commissions, City Council members, and the rest of the neighborhood. You will list your final objectives in the NAP Document Worksheet.

The steps you can take to create objectives are:

1. Using the Neighborhood Profile and the Vision Statement, identify the issues that have risen to the top.
2. As a group have each person take an issue and work through the following questions:
 - What is this issue? *Example: School Attendance*
 - Frame it as a question. *How can we work on improving school attendance?*
 - What are the consequences of NOT addressing this issue? *More and more kids not attending school, and not graduating.*
 - Brainstorm possible solutions or answers to the question. *Work with the schools, provide incentives for school attendance, etc.*
3. After all the issues are processed, present the results to the planning committee and have a discussion.
4. Talk about the balance of dealing with the issue against the consequences of not addressing it.
5. Do not limit yourselves to one or two objectives as solutions to the issues. Create several objectives to explore the many types of solutions.



Creating an Action Plan

Action Steps

Action steps are the HOW in the working through the Action Planning Process. Action steps are specific, measurable, and realistic. They are results-oriented and can be placed on a specific time line. Examples are in the Appendices. You will list the Action Steps and Timelines on the **NAP Document Worksheet**.

- Be creative when you are creating your Action Steps.
- Make sure you link the Action Steps directly back to the objectives and to your neighborhood.
- See if you can review other Action Plans for ideas, but do not limit yourselves to those types of Action Steps. You know your neighborhood best, and you know the capacity of your neighborhood for carrying out these steps.
- Discuss the logistics – the nuts and bolts – of each action step. Is it relevant to the issue? Is it realistic? Can it be done in a reasonable amount of time?
- Think partnerships and combining resources when creating Action Steps. Are there opportunities to create solutions with groups or organizations such as your local school by combining efforts?
- Research programs and initiatives currently available to your neighborhood on all levels, and tap into them.
- Some objectives will have several Action Steps, whereas some will have only one or two.
- Assign a timeline to each Action Step, or arrange the various Action Steps along one timeline.



Creating an Action Plan

Prioritizing the Action Steps

A priority should be assigned to each Action Step. This is related to the relative *importance* of the Action Step. It is without regard to the length or size of the program or the ease in finding funding for it. Some short-term, relatively easy programs may have a “Low” priority rating, whereas a long-term, complicated, expensive Action Step may have a “High” rating.

Some suggestions:

- Not all Action Steps can be rated as “High” priority. Be realistic! You will need to take into consideration your neighborhood and the City’s ability to commit to each effort and the workload involved.
- Safety related items should receive higher priority.
- Action Steps that receive a “Medium” or “Low” priority may be worked on sooner if funding or the opportunity opens up.
- Action Steps that are identified as “High” priority will be considered as *short-range and the most important - and may be easier to implement*.
- Action Steps that are identified as “Medium” priority are *mid-range and somewhat less important*.
- Action Steps that are considered “Low” priority are the *least important and will be long-range*.



Creating an Action Plan

Participants

With each specific Action Step, you now will identify the appropriate person or group to be responsible for working on it. Be specific! The list includes, but is not limited to:

- **Neighborhood group**

Your neighborhood group, or a subset of the group

- **Specific person within the neighborhood**

Making sure you have that person's commitment to work on the task, be specific with a name and contact information

- **Community organization**

Who is the contact person at the organization or agency who will do a specific task?

- **City staff**

Instead of just "the City", identify the department and contact person within that department who has the power to work and is charged with a certain task.

- **School or other local entity**

School, business, local enterprise, restaurant

Example:

The **Action Step** is to develop an incentive program with a local business for school attendance.

The **Participants** would be the contact person at the business and a person or a group of people from the neighborhood – and perhaps a contact at the school.

The Neighborhood Action Planning Committee can make many of the decisions as to who is responsible for each Action Step. This task can also be done in partnership with the City of Longmont Neighborhood Resources staff. The information about the Participants will be listed on the NAP Document Worksheet.



Creating an Action Plan

Measuring Success

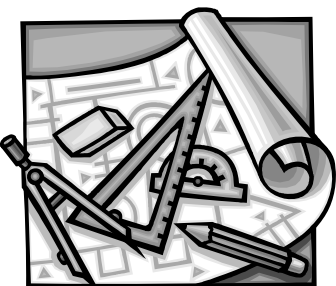
A large part of any Action Plan is knowing if you have been successful. In setting up Objectives and Action Steps, you should always be thinking about ways to measure success. The Neighborhood Resource Specialist can help you identify ways to measure your programs.

Some measurements will be very concrete and easy to quantify. Some will be more intangible. Be sure to use both! Some ideas are:

- Number of people involved
- Number of people served
- Square footage of land, concrete, sidewalk, gardens, etc.
- Numbers and kinds of trees, plants, bushes, etc.
- Number of items donated
- Change in revenue
- Change in customer volume
- Change in graffiti markings, specific crimes, etc.
- Change in school attendance
- Change in number of people walking or biking to work

And the more intangible, but important, things to measure:

- Level of organization for the neighborhood
- Level of feeling safe in the neighborhood
- Change in overall appearance of neighborhood
- Increase in leadership skills
- Increase in any type of skill
- Change in relationship with the City of Longmont
- Change in relationships with neighbors

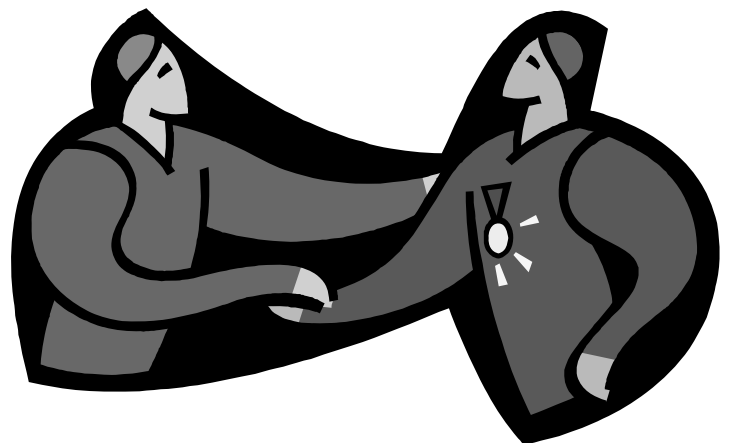


Partnering with the City of Longmont

The City's Roles & Responsibilities

The City of Longmont is taking an active and participatory role in the entire Neighborhood Action Planning process. Here are their major responsibilities and commitments to the Midtown neighborhoods.

- Partnering with and guiding neighborhoods in the Action Planning process
- Using designated Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) money towards this process
- Creating and supporting the City Team, which will integrate City resources and expertise into the process. The City Team is composed of key City staff and neighborhood representatives
- Providing assistance in developing leadership skills and meeting ideas for neighborhoods
- Helping with making sure projects and prioritizing these projects is realistic
- Creating partnerships and connections within neighborhoods and the community as a whole

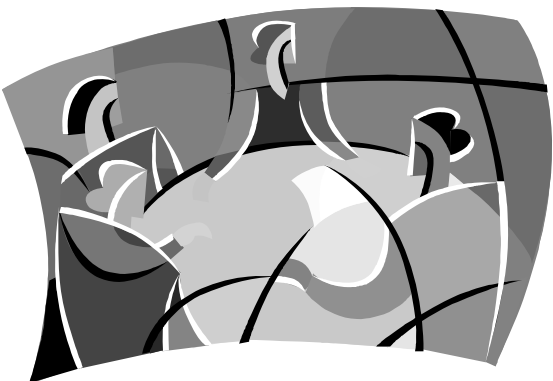


Partnering with the City of Longmont

The Council Manager Form of Government

The City of Longmont functions under the Council-Manager form of government. Understanding how this works and how each of the three parts of this form work together can help you collaborate better with the City of Longmont as a whole.

- **The Council-Manager** form is the system of local government that combines the strong political leadership of elected officials in the form of a council or other governing body, with the strong managerial experience of an appointed local government manager. The form establishes a representative system where all power is concentrated in the elected council and where the council hires a professionally trained manager to oversee the delivery of public services.
- **The Mayor and City Council** listen to and represent the residents of the City of Longmont. They make suggestions, set policy, provide the leadership, and initiate programs that reflect the needs and desires of their constituents. City Council meetings are open to the public, and the public is invited to be heard at each meeting. The Mayor and City Council members also hold gatherings each month at coffee shops to listen to the concerns and suggestions from members of the community.
- **The City Manager** is the professionally trained manager responsible for both advising the Mayor and City Council on key issues as well as making sure their direction is implemented. The City Manager is hired by the City Council and is a paid employee with a background in Public Administration and City Management. Our City Manager is Gordon Pedrow.
- **The Staff of the City of Longmont** are paid employees who implement the policies and programs for the City of Longmont as directed by the City Manager. Each staff member has a distinct area of expertise and works within the various divisions and departments to provide services to the community.



Appendix A: Neighborhood Characteristics

Just the facts. Characteristics are basic information, lists, names, dates and places. No emotion, no values added.

History of the neighborhood. *How old is your neighborhood? Why or how was it founded? Has this identity changed over time?*

People living and working in the neighborhood. *What type of people live in this neighborhood? How would you describe them by types of work, average income, cultural and linguistic background or length of residence in the neighborhood?*

Businesses in and around the neighborhood. *List the business that are located within the neighborhood. Are there any businesses nearby that are significant to this neighborhood? Are there any major employers nearby?*

Geography. *This requires a map of your neighborhood, identifying major landmarks, such as bridges, streets, or geographic features.*

Special features that make the neighborhood unique. *What are unique characteristics or landmarks within your neighborhood? These can include, but are not limited to, historical events, interesting parks, neighborhood activities, famous people, or significant businesses.*

Community associations. *These are groupings of individuals that may not have a specific address or leader, but are important to the fabric of the neighborhood. Examples are mothers groups, business associations, senior groups, etc.*

Appearance. *How would your neighborhood look to an outsider? Does it have a great deal of variety, or is it uniform in appearance?*

Traffic and safety. *What are the traffic patterns in your neighborhood? Does it vary by time of year or time of day? Describe the relative safety of the neighborhood, detailing the positives and negatives.*

Public facilities. *What are the public facilities in the neighborhood.*

Schools. *Are there schools of any level in the neighborhood, or nearby that serve this area? List them.*

Faith Communities. *What are the various faith communities in and around this neighborhood? Who are the designated contacts or the leaders of these faith communities?*

Community programs and projects. *What sort of programs or projects have occurred in this neighborhood, or are going on now? Is there anything planned for this area in the near future?*

Housing and land use. *What type of housing is in this neighborhood? How is the land used? Are there any vacant areas, and how is it used?*

Parks and recreation. *What and where are the parks and major sources of recreation for this neighborhood?*

Other. *Are there any other defining characteristics of your neighborhood that you haven't listed above?*

Appendix B: SWOT

With the list of characteristics in hand, now is the time to add a VALUE to them. Place the information pertaining to your neighborhood in the appropriate box.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Opportunities

Threats

Appendix C: Vision Statement

As adapted from the Vancouver, WA, Neighborhood Action Planning Kit

Sample Vision Statement Exercises

Sample 1

“Imagine Your Neighborhood”

Purpose: To identify issues or opportunities in your neighborhood

Materials: Large Pieces of Paper, Colored Markers

Participants: Sitting at tables, recalling images they have of their neighborhoods

Time: 20 minutes for drawing, 20 minutes for posting drawings on wall and sharing
(or rather, have drawing be “homework” and spend 20 minutes sharing)

1. Invite the participants to imagine that they are taking a walk through the area as it now exists. What is it about the neighborhood that they notice? What do they find important? Is the image positive here, less so in another place?
2. Tell them to **sketch the image or images** on the large sheets of paper, telling a story with pictures and symbols, keeping words to a minimum. Their paper can look like a storyboard or comic book with a series of pictures showing different snapshots of various places. Or it could be a single image like a bird’s eye view of plan view, showing the whole neighborhood or just a portion.

The point of this exercise is to have input from individual committee members and to share that image with the people with whom they will be working intensely on the Neighborhood Action Planning Process.

Sample 2

“Brainstorming”

Purpose: To identify issues, opportunities and core values to the neighborhood.

Materials: Small slips of paper, Large Pieces of Paper, Colored Markers

Participants: Sitting in groups of 4-6

Time: 20 minutes for group discussion, 10-20 minutes for sharing

1. Create slips of paper with the potential priority areas in the neighborhood plan, such as:
 - Traffic issues
 - Public Facilities
 - Land Use/Zoning
 - Housing
 - Community Appearance
 - Public Safety
 - Open Space and Recreation
 - Economic Development
 - Noise/Nuisances
 - Other Issues or Opportunities
2. Divide larger group into small groups of 4-6 people.

Appendix D: Sample Vision Statement

The Bagley Downs Neighborhood Association envisions a bustling, innovative community, which is vital and well blended. We embrace and nurture the diversity of our multi-cultural residents. The community-generated murals and artwork enrich and enliven our neighborhood.

Through good communication, cooperation and participation, we will create a neighborhood that is safe, friendly and clean. Our parks and community centers are respected, appreciated and well employed: fulfilling the activity, recreation and education needs of all peoples. Our protected green spaces provide natural beauty, recreation and relaxation. Sensitive wild areas cultivate rich habitats for native plant and animal species.

All traffic (automobile, pedestrian, bicycle and buses) moves smoothly and safely throughout our neighborhood. In the spirit of a thriving community, we join other neighborhood associations to make Vancouver, USA a first class city.

Appendix E: Sample Objectives

Schools:

- Increase number of neighborhood children walking or riding bikes to school
- Maintain school grounds and playground for use of the neighborhood
- Increase fresh vegetables for the school lunches

Open Spaces and Recreation:

- Clean up and maintain community park in our neighborhood
- Create commuter paths along greenway in our neighborhood
- Decrease crime and gang activity in community park

Housing:

- Preserve and enhance neighborhood appearance
- Reduce code violations in our neighborhood
- Increase opportunities for homeowners to conduct repairs on their homes

Appendix F: Sample Action Steps and Timelines

Action Step: Work with a local business to create an incentive program for elementary school children to attend school.

Timeline: To be created in July and August, prior to the beginning of school. To be implemented during the school months.

Action Step: Develop a pool of regular volunteers to staff a homework help center after school at a neighborhood church.

Timeline: We will create this after the first set of parent teacher conferences in the fall, and will have it in place by December 1.

Action Step: Work with neighborhood church to create a community garden at local school.

Timeline: Planning to be done by August; prepare soil, put in fence and gather volunteers by October; start planting by May.

Appendix G: Sample Action Plan

Objective # 1 :

Partner with neighborhood elementary school to increase health and well-being of school children in our area.

<i><u>Action Steps</u></i>	<i><u>Timeline</u></i>	<i><u>Priority</u></i>	<i><u>Participants</u></i>
<i>A.</i> Create community garden and supply school with fresh vegetables for lunches.	Create garden and fence by Oct., plant by next May.	Medium	School, local church, neighborhood leaders
<i>B.</i> Develop incentive program for school attendance by neighborhood children.	July	High	School, churches, teachers, businesses
<i>C.</i> Write grant for bike path funds	June	High	Neighborhood leaders, City resource specialist
<i>D.</i> Install bike lanes on safe routes to local elementary school.	August	Medium	City, biking org.

Comments on timeline, participants or resources:

The neighborhood church has been planning to fund a garden and would now like to partner with the school. The City is partnering with local biking organization to assess walk-ability and bike-ability of local neighborhoods, and we'd like to apply for funds to subsidize the creation of bike paths. The grant is due by June 15th.