

Community Health and Wellness

The City of Longmont is committed to enhancing the quality of life for those who live in, work in, or visit the community. Quality of life can be influenced by the health and well-being of the people in a community as well as the community as a whole. Health can be defined a number of ways. The World Health Organization defines health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”

Health, as currently contemplated by the Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan, focuses on healthy eating and active living. Healthy food generally refers to food such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy and lean protein. Active, healthy living and well-being can more easily be achieved in a community where people can incorporate physical activity into their daily routines, where recreational opportunities are available and easily and safely accessible to all, and where everyone has access to healthy food choices.

The Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan defines a long term vision for Longmont and identifies ways to realize this vision. There has recently been a collective desire to become a healthier Longmont. This has been the result of more awareness of individual health and its impact on one’s quality of life; it has also come about because of a collective awareness and strong partnerships focused on making Longmont the healthiest community in the healthiest state. Since 2007, the City has partnered with other community organizations to focus on improving community health outcomes through active living and healthy eating. As a result, a broad based coalition, known as LiveWell Longmont has developed. This coalition, comprised of community partners from many sectors and areas of the City, has developed to work toward creating environments where healthy lifestyle choices are available and convenient to all.

Adding a Community Health and Wellness chapter to the Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan further helps the community articulate the desire to be healthy and well. It is important to note that the goals contained in this chapter are intended to promote choice. They are not about mandating health; the City can help ensure people have access to healthy choices through the environments they live and work in, the way they get around and the access they have to healthy foods.

Health and wellness encompasses many things. This chapter does not attempt to cover all aspects of health, but rather focuses on a few strategic areas: active community environments and healthy eating. The choice to focus on these areas is deliberate. These focus areas align with the mission and goals of the City’s efforts in partnership with other organizations, like LiveWell Longmont. In addition, it makes sense to start with a few key elements of health and wellness and build on initial successes. These are also the areas where the City’s actions may have the biggest impact. Further, there are many other areas of the Plan that already support these concepts. For example the transportation chapter supports the concept of multi modal transportation, which reinforces the notion of choice for people in the way they travel. The Land Use and Urban Design chapter introduces the concept of neighborhood planning areas that are focused on mixed use areas with a variety transportation options. These are just a few of the many examples that are found throughout the Plan.

This chapter attempts to accomplish a number of things; these include:

- 1 • Creating a community vision for a healthy Longmont,
- 2 • Educating the community about community health and wellness in terms of the built
- 3 environment, transportation, and access to healthy foods,
- 4 • Improving the ability of people to integrate physical activity into daily routines,
- 5 • Providing transportation choices for all people, and
- 6 • Providing access to healthy foods.

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8 The chapter contains goals, policies, and strategies related to these ideas. Specifically, this chapter is
9 organized around five main goals relating to:

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- 11 1. Transform Longmont into a healthier community,
- 12 2. Integrating land use and transportation so that activity can be easily incorporated into
- 13 people's daily lives,
- 14 3. Providing a variety of transportation choices,
- 15 4. Promoting access to healthy food, and
- 16 5. Supporting the local food system.

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18 The common thread throughout the chapter is the idea of choice. The City wants to provide options
19 for those who want to make decisions to improve or maintain their health. As mentioned above, this
20 chapter of the Plan is focused on active community environments, which includes the built
21 environment and transportation, and healthy eating, which relates to the food system.

22 The Built Environment

23 The environments people live in can directly affect their health. It is important to plan for and develop
24 places where people have the choice to be active in their daily lives, if they so desire. Active
25 community environments (ACE) are places where the built environment and transportation systems
26 have been integrated in a way so that people of all ages and abilities can be physically active on a
27 routine, daily basis. They are more than recreation. ACE places are those where people can easily
28 walk, bike, or use transit to get to stores, schools, community centers, and jobs. A city designed
29 around neighborhoods that have mixed use activity centers are likely those where active community
30 environments are found.

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32
33 Neighborhood planning areas form the basis for planning in Longmont. These planning areas include
34 a mix of uses that serve residents and employees; most also include a park and school. There is an
35 opportunity to strengthen the environments within existing and planned neighborhood planning areas
36 so that physical activity can more easily be incorporated into one's daily life. The addition of this
37 community health chapter will start to accomplish this; in the future, it may also be desirable to modify
38 and strengthen existing goals, policies and strategies in other chapters to encourage these types of
39 opportunities.

40 Transportation

41 Multimodal transportation is about providing a choice for people on how they get around the City.
42 The safe, efficient and economical movement of people and goods continues to be an important goal
43 for Longmont. Livability and health are becoming increasingly important considerations when
44 evaluating transportation projects and policies. A transportation system that includes an extensive,
45 interconnected network of pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities in coordination with the existing
46 roadway system, allows people living, learning, playing, and working in Longmont to be more active
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1 in their day to day lives. As more people choose active transportation options, like transit, biking and
2 walking, additional health benefits, like improved air quality, can also be realized.

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4 While it is still important to plan for and accommodate personal vehicles, it is also critical to make
5 sure land use and transportation policies support options that make active transportation an
6 accessible option for all. The term *active transportation* is used throughout this chapter. This term
7 refers to transportation options that require human power, like bicycling and walking. Transit trips are
8 also included as an active transportation mode because these trips typically start and/or end with a
9 walk or bicycle trip averaging ¼ mile in length.

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11 Food Systems

12 It is important to consider both access and production when talking about food. Longmont has a rich
13 history of food production; agricultural industries arrived in the late 1870's. Food production and
14 agriculture, although more limited today, have remained a strong part of Longmont's identity. Access
15 to healthy foods, including fruits and vegetables, is a critical component contributing to the health of
16 the City's population.

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18 It is important to note that any discussion on food access and food production is really a discussion
19 about choice. Policies contained within this comprehensive plan are focused on ensuring that choices,
20 including healthy food options, are available to all who live in Longmont. They are not focused on
21 eliminating or restricting specific foods or food outlets. The strength of a community's food system can
22 directly affect the economic, environmental and social health of a community. A food system includes
23 everything involved in feeding a community: growing, harvesting, packaging, transporting, marketing,
24 selling, consuming and disposing of food. This encompassing definition illustrates how broad the food
25 system is and how much potential the food system has for helping strengthen a local economy, having
26 positive environmental benefits and improving the physical health of people who live in Longmont.

1 **Goal CH-1: Transform Longmont into a healthier community where increased physical activity and**
2 **improved nutrition are accessible choices for all.**

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4 **Policy CH-1.1:** Promote educational opportunities that illustrate how the built environment and the
5 local food system impacts health on an individual, community, and regional level.
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7 **Strategy CH-1.1 (a):** Develop a systemic approach to community health education, in
8 partnership with other community organizations.
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10 **Strategy CH-1.1 (b):** Evaluate City policies and regulations to incorporate health and
11 wellness issues on an on-going basis.
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13 **Strategy CH-1.1 (c):** Integrate community health priorities into the land use planning
14 and decision-making process.
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16 **Policy CH-1.2:** Develop regular channels of communication and collaboration between local health
17 officials, community-based organizations, like LiveWell Longmont, and planners.
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19 **Strategy CH-1.2 (a):** Research the feasibility of incorporating health evaluation tools,
20 such as but not limited to health impact assessments and walking or bicycling audits,
21 into the City's development review process.
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23 **Policy CH-1.3:** Develop indicators to measure levels of community health
24

25 **Strategy CH-1.3 (a):** Consider developing walkability and/or bikeability standards to
26 measure resident's access to daily retail needs, community services, recreational
27 facilities and transit connections.
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29 **Strategy CH-1.3 (b):** Assess walkability and bikeability of various areas of the City.
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31 **Strategy CH-1.3 (c):** Identify ways to measure access to recreational opportunities for
32 sensitive populations such as low-income families, the disabled and the elderly.
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34 **Strategy CH-1.3 (d):** Work with community organizations to measure access to healthy
35 foods.
36

37 **Policy CH-1.4:** Partner with local businesses to develop programs that provide incentives for
38 employees to lead healthier lives.
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40 **Strategy CH-1.4(a):** Demonstrate, by example, how an organization can incorporate
41 worksite wellness programs.
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43 **Strategy CH-1.4(b):** Provide healthy food options at City buildings and City sponsored
44 events.
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46 **Strategy CH-1.4(c):** Expand City-offered educational programs and activities that
47 focus on healthy eating and active living.

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2 **Strategy CH-1.4(d):** Provide information to employers and economic partners on the
3 benefits of active transportation and programs that support it (e.g. EcoPasses, bike
4 lockers, etc.)
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6 **Goal CH-2: Integrate physical activity into daily routines by promoting well-planned, compact land**
7 **use patterns and an interconnected transportation system.**

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9 **Policy CH-2.1:** Promote full service, livable, neighborhood planning areas that serve the daily needs
10 of people.
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12 **Strategy CH-2.1(a):** Establish baseline conditions and evaluate neighborhood
13 planning areas to assess services available to meet people’s daily needs.
14

15 **Policy CH-2.2:** Create connections to walking, bicycling and transit routes to increase opportunities
16 for physical activity in daily activities.
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18 **Strategy CH-2.2(a):** Enhance connectivity for each of the transportation modes
19 throughout the City.
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21 **Strategy CH-2.2(b):** Encourage development and redevelopment that supports transit,
22 bicycling and walking.
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24 **Policy CH-2.3:** Create convenient and safe opportunities for physical activity for all residents,
25 employees, and visitors.
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27 **Strategy CH-2.3(a):** Improve the pedestrian, bicycle and transit experience by
28 providing safe and comfortable streets, paths, sidewalks, recreation facilities and parks
29 through things such as increased access, wayfinding, lighting, and site amenities (e.g.,
30 shelters or benches, trash facilities etc.).
31

32 **Strategy CH-2.3(b):** Review and revise the Land Development Code to improve the
33 pedestrian, bicycle and transit experience.
34

35 **Strategy CH-2.3(c):** Eliminate barriers from the edges of development to other
36 neighborhoods and to core areas within the same neighborhood.
37

38 **Strategy CH-2.3(d):** Provide information and education to the development community
39 about the benefits of *Crime Prevention Through Environment Design* (CPTED).
40

41 **Policy CH-2.4:** Support the continued development of connected parks, trails, gathering spaces and
42 open spaces that promote physical activity in all neighborhoods for all users.
43

44 **Strategy CH-2.4(a):** Review and revise park standards to incorporate additional park
45 types for redevelopment areas.
46

1 **Strategy CH-2.4(b):** Evaluate access routes within neighborhood planning areas to
2 ensure safe access to parks from all areas in the neighborhood.

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4 **Strategy CH-2.4(c):** Incorporate universal design features that improve accessibility for
5 all users, including older adults, children and people with disabilities, such as, by not
6 limited to, hard surface paths, ramps, frequent benches, and lighting.

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8 **Strategy CH-2.4(d):** Maintain a desirable quantity, quality, and location of
9 neighborhood and community parks that are distributed throughout the community to
10 promote physical activity.

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12 **Policy CH-2.5:** Encourage walkability through well-planned, compact mixed use neighborhood
13 design.

14
15 **Strategy CH-2.5(a):** Support compact mixed-use development patterns for infill or
16 redevelopment opportunities to promote active transportation.

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18 **Strategy CH-2.5(b):** Identify opportunities to develop smaller more compact mixed-use
19 projects to provide opportunities for strategic density increases in areas appropriate for
20 revitalization.

21
22 **Strategy CH-2.5(c):** Evaluate the continued use of minimum parking requirements and
23 continue utilizing parking maximums in the Land Development Code.

24
25 **Policy CH-2.6:** Encourage land use patterns and connectivity that improve air quality and respiratory
26 health by reducing driving.

27
28 **Strategy CH-2.6(a):** Integrate pedestrian and bicycle routes into continuous networks
29 that connect high-intensity uses such as schools, neighborhood stores, parks,
30 community facilities, residential areas, and employment centers.

31
32 **Goal CH-3:** Continue to develop a balanced transportation system that provides for the needs of
33 all users, including drivers of motor vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders,
34 and people of all ages and abilities, including children, older adults, and people with
35 disabilities.

36
37 **Policy CH-3.1:** Use health evaluation tools to evaluate transportation plans and projects.

38
39 **Strategy CH-3.1 (a):** Develop health evaluation tools (e.g. health impact assessments)
40 to achieve an understanding of transportation-related needs and priorities for all
41 users.

42
43 **Strategy CH-3.1 (b):** Identify opportunities to incorporate health evaluation tools into
44 the planning and development review process.

45
46 **Policy CH-3.2:** Improve active transportation by connecting user destinations and minimizing barriers
47 for all modes of travel.

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2 **Strategy CH-3.2(a):** Continuously identify gaps or missing links in bicycle and
3 pedestrian networks and prioritize fixes through the *Capital Improvement Program* to
4 achieve better connectivity within and to all Longmont Planning Area neighborhoods.
5

6 **Strategy CH-3.2(b):** Identify inconvenient or unsafe routes and prioritize infrastructure
7 improvements through the *Capital Improvement Program*.
8

9 **Strategy CH-3.2(c):** Consider implementing Level of Service standards for all modes of
10 transportation, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit, along multi-modal
11 corridors.
12

13 **Strategy CH-3.2(d):** Prepare a transit master plan to better understand transit needs
14 and future priorities.
15

16 **Policy CH-3.3:** Review land use and transportation policies to ensure compatibility between
17 development projects and an active transportation network, so that the transportation
18 network is supported by adjacent land uses, and vice versa.
19

20 **Strategy CH-3.3(a):** Develop multi-modal corridors that enhance the pedestrian,
21 bicycle, and transit environment (e.g., appropriately sized travel lanes, bicycle lanes,
22 wide sidewalks, tree lawns, street furniture, lighting, pedestrian crossings, etc).
23

24 **Strategy CH-3.3(b):** Reintroduce or develop the street grid in infill and redevelopment
25 projects.
26

27 **Strategy CH-3.3(c):** Review and revise parking lot configuration requirements to
28 ensure safe, convenient passages into and through commercial areas and parking
29 lots.
30

31 **Strategy CH-3.3(d):** Provide ideas and information for incorporating Livable Streets,
32 which function as a part of the social fabric of the neighborhood and can promote
33 active living, in addition to accommodating motorized vehicles.
34

35 **Strategy CH-3.3(e):** Consider developing a Livable Streets pilot program taking into
36 consideration a broad range of elements contributing to the social function of streets
37 (e.g., parking, street furniture, curbs, signage, building elements and orientation, etc.).
38

39 **Policy CH-3.4:** Provide bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to ensure an active transportation system
40 that is safe and accessible for all users.
41

42 **Strategy CH-3.4(a):** Continuously evaluate and update bicycle and pedestrian plans to
43 strengthen the attractiveness of bicycling and walking as viable mode choices.
44

45 **Strategy CH-3.4(b):** Evaluate and update development regulations, as needed, to
46 ensure pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and amenities, including but not limited to

1 secure bicycle parking, ramps, sidewalks, and pedestrian-friendly lighting, are
2 provided.

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4 **Strategy CH-3.4(c):** Evaluate strategic locations for bicycle parking as a means of
5 encouraging active transportation.

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7 **Strategy CH-3.4(d):** Research the feasibility of implementing a bike share program.

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9 **Policy CH-3.5:** Work with partners to make active transportation the easy choice.

10
11 **Strategy CH-3.5(a):** Encourage the growth of the Safe Routes to Schools program to
12 increase opportunities for walking and biking to and from schools and to educate
13 school aged children about the benefits of active transportation.

14
15 **Strategy CH-3.5(b):** Coordinate with schools to improve transportation safety around
16 schools, and implement traffic calming in areas immediately around schools.

17
18 **Strategy CH-3.5(c):** Partner with agencies such as but not limited to the Regional
19 Transportation District (RTD) and Special Transit to improve the integration transit and
20 active transportation systems, especially for the “last mile” of a trip.

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22 **Strategy CH-3.5(d):** Partner with agencies such as but not limited to the Regional
23 Transportation District (RTD) and Special Transit to improve transit service in
24 underserved areas.

25
26 **Goal CH-4: Promote safe and convenient access to healthy food.**

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28 **Policy CH-4.1:** Promote increased consumption of healthy food.

29
30 **Strategy CH-4.1(a):** Partner with community organizations, like LiveWell Longmont
31 and county health departments, to increase awareness about the value of consuming
32 healthy food and to increase knowledge on growing and preparing healthy food.

33
34 **Strategy CH-4.1(b):** Partner with organizations to educate local restaurants on the
35 economic and health benefits of purchasing locally grown food.

36
37 **Strategy CH-4.1(c):** Work with LiveWell Longmont and other community partners to
38 develop and maintain a local, healthy food guide to highlight opportunities for
39 obtaining healthy food.

40
41 **Policy CH-4.2:** Support opportunities for people to have access to fresh, healthy food within their
42 neighborhoods.

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44 **Strategy CH-4.2(a):** Establish baseline conditions by collecting data regarding existing
45 food retail, including opportunities to purchase healthy food within neighborhood
46 planning areas.

1 **Strategy CH-4.2(b):** Identify neighborhoods that have limited opportunities to procure
2 healthy foods.

3
4 **Strategy CH-4.2(c):** Evaluate development regulations related to the siting of grocery
5 stores, greenhouses, farmers markets, gardens and other opportunities for
6 neighborhood access to healthy foods to determine if there are barriers and/or
7 diminished opportunities.

8
9 **Strategy CH-4.2(d):** Review and revise the Land Development Code to strengthen
10 support for community gardens, licensed farmers’ markets, and produce stands, so
11 these uses can operate by right in increased locations throughout the City.

12
13 **Strategy CH-4.2(e):** Create opportunities for people to access to healthy food within
14 their neighborhoods.

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16 **Policy CH-4.3:** Encourage grocery stores and convenience stores to sell healthy food in underserved
17 areas.

18
19 **Strategy CH-4.3(a):** Explore steps the City and our partners might take to encourage
20 food retailers to sell more healthy food.

21
22 **Strategy CH-4.3(b):** Inventory food retailers that provide healthy foods in all
23 neighborhoods and provide them information on underserved areas.

24
25 **Strategy CH-4.3(c):** Identify locations for new or expanded food retailers to sell healthy
26 food within underserved neighborhoods.

27
28 **Strategy CH-4.3(d):** Provide demographic information to businesses that provide
29 healthy food about the market potential in specific areas of the City.

30
31 **Policy CH-4.4:** Ensure that people can get to food retailers selling healthy food through a variety of
32 transit options (e.g., pedestrian, bicycle, and public transit).

33
34 **Strategy CH-4.4(a):** Work with transit agencies such as, but not limited to the Regional
35 Transportation District and Special Transit to ensure service from neighborhoods to
36 food retailers selling healthy food.

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38 **Strategy CH-4.4(b):** Identify ways mobile vending of fresh fruits and vegetables can be
39 accommodated within the City.

40
41 **Strategy CH-4.4(c):** Work with partners to explore a program that pairs volunteers with
42 people in need to take them grocery shopping so they can access healthy foods.

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44 **Goal CH-5: Work with community partners to support a sustainable food system.**

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46 **Policy CH-5.1:** Collaborate with the community to identify the appropriate role for the City to support
47 the local food system.

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Strategy CH-5.1 (a): Periodically assess the City’s role in supporting the local food system.

Policy CH-5.2: Coordinate land use planning efforts to ensure that land is allocated for various scales of food production (e.g. community gardens, greenhouses, and small farms.)

Strategy CH-5.2(a): Explore ways to integrate urban agriculture into the City.

Strategy CH-5.2(b): Review city programs and policies to promote use of land for various scales of food production.

Strategy CH-5.2(c): Explore additional ways to use City owned property for food production.

Strategy CH-5.2(d): Create an inventory of publicly owned parcels of land that could be utilized for community gardens, farmers’ markets, farm stands, and urban agriculture.

Strategy CH-5.2(e): Provide information to the development community about integrating food production into projects.

Strategy CH-5.2(f): Develop systemic approaches for soliciting and integrating food system related community concerns and priorities into the land use planning and decision-making process.

Policy CH-5.3: Work with community partners to link local food producers to local distributors and buyers.

Strategy CH-5.3(a): Assess/inventory local food processing, wholesaling, and distribution facilities.

Strategy CH-5.3(b): Identify ways the City can assist in connecting local agriculture to markets such as retailers, restaurants, schools, hospitals, and other institutions.

Policy CH-5.4: Develop economic opportunities in the local food system and encourage local agriculture.

Strategy CH-5.4(a): Consider economic development programs for local agriculture, such as tax incentives, grants, loans, public land access, and other credit and technical assistance for beginning farmers and on-farm infrastructure development.

Strategy CH-5.4(b): Consider economic development programs related to the community’s food system, such as community-supported agriculture programs, farmers’ markets, farm-to-institution programs, grocery stores, restaurants, etc.

1 **Policy CH-5.5:** Support farmers’ markets and mobile food vendors to increase access to healthy and
2 affordable food.

3
4 **Strategy CH-5.5(a):** Partner with the Longmont Farmers’ Market to evaluate the
5 feasibility of expanding services.

6
7 **Strategy CH-5.5(b):** Identify appropriate sites for farmers’ markets (e.g., municipal
8 parks, street closures), drop-off sites for community-supported agriculture “shares”
9 (direct marketing between farmers and consumers), and sites for mobile vending
10 stops.

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12 **Strategy CH-5.5(c):** Partner with organizations such as, but not limited to the
13 Longmont Farmers Market and LiveWell Longmont to provide information on where to
14 get healthy foods.

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16 **Policy CH-5.6:** Encourage gardening as a way to increase access to healthy food, as well as provide
17 opportunities for physical activity.

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19 **Strategy CH-5.6(a):** Support community gardens throughout the City.

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21 **Strategy CH-5.6(b):** Ensure development regulations allow the use of front and side
22 yards for growing fruits and/or vegetables.

23
24 **Strategy CH-5.6(c):** Work with partners to provide educational opportunities and
25 support for gardening.