



GROWTH OF THE CITY

The City has benefited from growth, but there have been some costs and impacts to the City as well. The goal of the City is to continue to accommodate that growth which enhances the quality of the environment for existing and future residents. Growth should be a positive addition to the City, improve the quality of life for Longmont's residents, and pay its fair share of infrastructure and service-delivery costs.

The City will continue to use the "three-tier" planning process to guide its growth and development. The first tier is the Municipal Service Area. The second tier is outside of the first tier in the area known as the Longmont Planning Area. The third tier is the St. Vrain Valley Planning Area. This three-tier system is a tool for managing the expansion of the City outside the Municipal Service Area. The system is process-oriented and sensitive to market forces. The three-tier system more clearly shows the City's level of commitment to providing the public infrastructure for growth and development.

Within Weld County, the City has a supplement to the three-tier planning system. It is known as the Coordinated Planning Area. This Coordinated Planning Area (also known as Longmont's urban growth area in Weld County) is the area that is subject to the City's Coordinated Planning Agreement with Weld County. Similar to the three-tier system, it also shows the City's level of commitment to providing the public infrastructure for growth and development.

The Longmont Planning Area and the Coordinated Planning Area comprise the City's urban growth area in terms of the Denver Regional Council of Governments' Metro Vision 2035 Plan. The Municipal Service Area, the Longmont Planning Area, and the Coordinated Planning Area comprise the City's "three-mile area or plan" in terms of the Colorado Revised Statutes §31.12.105.e.

The three-tier planning system, which uses the neighborhood planning area concept as a basic service area unit, has been combined with methodology that identifies locations in the Longmont Planning Area where extending infrastructure is most cost-effective. This process has created an environment that potentially allows growth to occur in any neighborhood planning area (subject to the City's consent) and allows investment in infrastructure from the public sector to be directed more cost-effectively. The City has adopted several components of a growth management system, such as the City's benchmarking system, which can limit the timing of development in a particular neighborhood planning area or on a particular property. The net result has created an atmosphere that provides some management from the public sector while allowing the private sector to propose growth in other neighborhood planning areas in the Longmont Planning Area provided the private sector carries all development costs, and the proposed development is consistent with the City's growth management objectives. Inadequate facilities currently exist for urban development in some of these areas. There are plans to install some infrastructure for development.

The City supports the notion of becoming a sustainable community over the long-term—a community that balances economic, environmental, and community concerns as growth occurs. The City intends to explore expanding the quality of life benchmarks program to become a sustainable community indicators program that will assess trends toward economic, environment, and community goals in an integrated way, and to help guide decisions about growth and development.



Growth of the City Goals, Policies, and Strategies

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| GOAL G-1: | Plan, guide, and accommodate growth that promotes the most efficient use of scarce resources, and maintains and enhances the quality of life for present and future residents of Longmont. |
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POLICY G-1.1: New development should provide a positive contribution to Longmont and enhance the overall quality of life for new and existing residents.

Strategy G-1.1(a): Periodically review, and modify as appropriate, equitable methods of financing capital improvements where existing and new development pay their appropriate share of the costs.

Strategy G-1.1(b): Promote a land use balance which generates sufficient revenues from new development to pay for the costs of public services needed as a result of the development.

Strategy G-1.1(c): Identify and develop techniques that the City can use to anticipate, monitor, and respond to the cumulative effects of the fiscal impacts of new development as developments actually build out.

Strategy G-1.1(d): Coordinate with other service providers during the development review process so that necessary services not provided by the City are available for new development.

Strategy G-1.1(e): Continue to work with the St. Vrain Valley School District to coordinate procedures for school site dedications or cash-in-lieu of school site dedications.

POLICY G-1.2: Strive for balanced growth where a variety of land uses will provide a high quality of life for the residents of Longmont, including the public facilities necessary to serve diversity of housing and commercial, industrial, educational, and recreational activities.

Strategy G-1.2(a): Prioritize, through the *Capital Improvement Program*, the City's expenditures into those areas where the City's residents receive the greatest benefits.

Strategy G-1.2(b): Periodically review and revise, as appropriate, all development fees to make them serve as incentives to achieve balanced growth without compromising the City's ability to raise revenues to pay for required capital improvements and services.

Strategy G-1.2(c): Plan areas in advance of development so that the City can identify the levels of services that both the City and other entities need to provide to accommodate the development.



Strategy G-1.2(d): Maintain a relative and appropriate balance of residential to industrial and commercial land use in the Longmont Planning Area and monitor land use balance in other communities to assure that the land use balance in the Longmont Planning Area is appropriate.

POLICY G-1.3: Continue planning for the growth of Longmont in a manner that clearly establishes the mutual expectations between the City and landowner/developer and that encourages private investment that furthers the City's goals.

Strategy G-1.3(a): Continue to use the three-tier planning process which is composed of the following:

Tier One – The Municipal Service Area is that area within which the City is providing, or intends to annex and provide, urban services over time. The City will consider applications for annexation from property owners in this area in accordance with applicable state and local laws and regulations. The Municipal Service Area represents the greatest level of public investment for installation and/or maintenance of capital improvements. The City considers this area appropriate for urban development. Development in this area would be able to use, for the most part, existing or programmed capital improvements. Therefore, the developer's responsibility for the financing and installation of public improvements is less than in the Longmont Planning Area.

The City normally expands the Municipal Service Area at the time of annexation. However, the City maintains the option of including other unincorporated areas in the Municipal Service Area based on the determination that it can and should extend public services into those areas. Expansion is solely at the City's discretion. In addition, property does not necessarily have to be within the Municipal Service Area to be eligible for annexation.

Tier Two – The Longmont Planning Area is the next tier, outside the Municipal Service Area, that the City plans in advance of development using the neighborhood planning area concept. Land within the Longmont Planning Area is eligible for annexation if:

- A. Funding for capital improvements necessary to serve the area either will comply with the City's timetable for such expenditures or will be the responsibility of the persons requesting annexation as contained in a negotiated annexation agreement.
- B. Revenues generated by the proposed use, once added to the overall revenues of the City, will aid in providing the required levels of services.



- C. The City has planned the area in advance of development for land use and transportation, and the proposed use is in accordance with that neighborhood planning area. In limited situations when City Council finds that the annexation is in the best interests of the City, land use planning can occur concurrently with the annexation.
- D. The City Council has conducted a referral review and concluded that the proposed annexation provides exceptional benefits to the City over and above meeting City requirements.
- E. The goals, policies, and strategies of the Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan are met.

Tier Three – The St. Vrain Valley Planning Area is the next tier, outside the Longmont Planning Area, within which land use, transportation, and water rights changes may have a direct or indirect effect on the City. The City monitors change in this area so as the City grows it can realistically understand all opportunities and constraints.

Strategy G-1.3(b): Continue to use the Coordinated Planning Agreement with Weld County and the Coordinated Planning Area to plan for Longmont’s growth in Weld County.

POLICY G-1.4: Ensure that urban-level development within the St. Vrain Valley Planning Area is directed toward the City of Longmont in accordance with the goals and policies of the *Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan* or with adopted intergovernmental agreements.

Strategy G-1.4(a): Formalize cooperation with other jurisdictions (including Weld County and Boulder County) by executing and updating intergovernmental agreements that recognize the comprehensive plans of applicable jurisdiction.

Strategy G-1.4(b): Develop and maintain with Weld County a joint land use plan for the Union Reservoir area.

Strategy G-1.4(c): Consider the Coordinated Planning Area as the City’s urban growth area in Weld County.

POLICY G-1.5: Annex and grow in a manner consistent with goals, policies, and strategies of the *Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan* and with adopted intergovernmental agreements.

Strategy G-1.5(a): Consider annexation of land contiguous to the City limits in accordance with the *Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan* and applicable state and local law when residents and property owners express interest in annexing to Longmont, and strongly discourage flagpole annexations.



Strategy G-1.5(b): Encourage annexation of enclaves consistent with all applicable policies and regulations.

Strategy G-1.5(c): Consider annexation petitions for land only within the Municipal Service Area and Longmont Planning Area or in the limited situations where land in the Coordinated Planning Area or the St. Vrain Valley Planning Area is eligible for the concurrent processing of a Longmont Planning Area amendment and an annexation petition.

Strategy G-1.5(d): Consider annexation petitions only when the City reserves the right to enact growth management systems which could limit the extension of urban services and/or the timing of development on the property.

Strategy G-1.5(e): Consider annexation petitions when the proposal offers exceptional benefits to the City that are over and above meeting minimum requirements.

Strategy G-1.5(f): Consider annexations of land that will help the City manage its boundaries and open space buffers, remain a stand alone or free-standing community, and maintain its separate identity.

Strategy G-1.5(g): Consider the Municipal Service Area, the Longmont Planning Area, and the Coordinated Planning Area as the components of the City's "three-mile area or plan" for purposes of annexation.

Strategy G-1.5(h): Refer annexation petitions to City Council for a determination about whether or not the annexation shall be reviewed substantively through the City's development review process.

GOAL G-2: Support growth and development that allows Longmont to become a sustainable community over the long-term—one that balances economic, environmental, and community needs.

POLICY G-2.1: Explore the concept of sustainability and what it means for the City of Longmont with respect to balancing economic, environmental, and community needs.

Strategy G-2.1(a): Consider expanding the adopted quality of life benchmarks and indicators to become a sustainable community indicators program that consider interdependent trends rather than isolated strengths and weaknesses. Such a program should help the City make decisions about growth and development that will help the community achieve its vision of sustainability.

Strategy G-2.1(b): Use the indicators program as an on-going monitoring tool to understand progress toward or away from established benchmarks, and progress toward achieving plan goals.



Growth of the City Indicators

Policy Rationale: The on-going dialogue about the appropriate growth rate for the City will be clarified with information on the community's quality of life. Tracking the growth rate is critical for the City to understand relationships between growth and each of the indicators identified in the *Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan*.

Benchmark Standard: None at this time

Indicators:

- A. Number of building permits issued annually
- B. Housing starts and growth rate

Methods, Sources:

- A. City of Longmont Building Inspection Division
- B. City of Longmont Planning Division