



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN



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Executive Summary



Executive Summary

Recognizing the importance of a stable revenue base, City Council directed in 2006 that a course of action be developed to address the issues and opportunities that impact Longmont's economic vitality. The process started with the creation of a task force made up of citizens and economic development officials charged with developing a strategic set of recommendations designed to be implemented through a comprehensive plan. The recommendations were refined by an advisory group that focused on the concepts that can be implemented in the near future. In all, the action items and strategic recommendations presented in the final report represent nearly two years worth of analysis and commitment on behalf of dedicated business and civic leaders.

Although many aspects of economic vitality are presented in the report, the consensus for moving forward focuses on improving our downtown as a pedestrian-friendly activity node, identifying and promoting a brand for the City that markets our strengths as a community, increasing the City's role in economic development by enhancing resources, and supporting the retail base of our economy through programs and processes that target its growth. It also is important to note that continuing efforts to create and retain primary jobs is essential to any plan for economic vitality.

The City's goal for economic health is simple: foster an environment in which businesses thrive and residents continue to enjoy an enviable quality of life. The foundation for achieving the goal has been laid by the diligent work of the task force and the advisory group. The next step is to develop a plan that incorporates policy, assigns responsibility, and clearly sets a path for success.

Doug Bene
Economic Development Manager
City of Longmont

Section 1

Economic Vitality Advisory Group (EVAG) Recommendations

August 2008



Group Members:

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Cotton Burden
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Background

At its 2008 retreat, City Council decided to reconvene the Economic Vitality Task Force (Task Force) to assist in the preparation of an economic development plan. The Task Force was reconstituted in May as the Economic Vitality Advisory Group (Advisory Group) with the specific charge of producing recommendations that may be included in the 2009 budgeting process. The Advisory Group consisted of a cross-section of the community and included four members of Council.

Because of the relatively short time frame for meeting (May-July), the Advisory Group decided to concentrate on four directions identified by the Task Force in 2007 as a way of laying a foundation for consideration in an overall plan for economic development.

The four directions are:

- 1. Develop a vision for downtown**
- 2. Branding**
- 3. Increase the role of the City in economic development**
- 4. Retail**

It should be noted that the strategies outlined by the Advisory Group are not intended to be comprehensive solutions, but rather build upon the areas deemed to have preference and the potential for significant impact should the strategies be implemented.

Process

The Advisory Group divided into four subcommittees of approximately six people each to work on the individual directions. Each committee was instructed to develop distinct strategies in support of the goals and objectives listed. The committees also listed time frames and responsibilities for completing the strategies. At the conclusion of the committee sessions, the Group reconvened and reviewed all the material through a series of committee presentations. Through this final group interaction, additional comments and suggestions were incorporated into the final report as warranted.

The collective work of the Advisory Group is presented in the following four directions:

Direction 1: Develop a Vision for Downtown

Committee Participants: Mary Murphy-Bessler, Gabe Santos, Abe Melendez, Alex Sammoury, Cotton Burden, and Baldy Ranson

Goal

Build upon the inherent qualities of downtown to include a prosperous commercial center with notable residential and entertainment developments.

Rationale

Having a historic downtown capable of providing significant residential, employment and entertainment choices is an important factor in the overall economic health of the City. A vibrant and active downtown capitalizes on the ideas of creating a sense of place and destination for residents and visitors alike.

Revitalizing downtown also represents an opportunity to practice smart growth strategies through strategic in-fill development that takes advantage of existing infrastructure and maximizes land use. The City also has implemented a Mixed-use Overlay District to allow flexibility in development standards, provisions for higher density residential development, and a wider range of commercial development.



Objective #1: Make downtown Longmont more accessible, livable and entertaining.

Downtown Longmont has traditionally served as a central gathering place for those seeking a more urban setting for residential and commercial interests. The historical characteristics of the downtown area differentiate the district as a unique setting with a true sense of place. Downtown can continue to be an attraction by planning for development that promotes a pedestrian friendly environment with improved infrastructure, additional housing and entertainment choices, and further developed employment centers.

Action Items:

1. Work with CDOT and City staff to study and possibly implement physical improvements throughout the Downtown District. This includes improvements to Main patterns, pedestrian connectivity opportunities with the proposed transit station area, and alleyway enhancements.
2. Work with CDOT to pursue angle parking on Main Street thereby increasing the number of parking spaces in front of businesses and making downtown more accessible.
3. Work with CDOT to establish acceptable alternative routes for 287 bypass traffic. Partner with Fast Tracks (RTD) to plan and develop multi-level parking at the TOD leaving more available land for residential and commercial development opportunities, and to provide adequate parking after hours for these uses, and provide easy access transportation to the downtown from 1st and 9th Avenues.
4. Pursue widening sidewalks along Main Street with improved landscaping to enhance pedestrian comfort and allow for more outside use by merchants.
5. Improve connectivity of existing parking and peripheral business to Main Street through alleyway improvements, including architectural lighting, new pavement, unified trash receptacle enclosures and placing of existing overhead power, telephone and cable underground.

Strategies:

For action items 1 through 5: Continue to move forward with Capital Improvement Program projects T-95, DR-8, and DR-23.

Project T-95: Analysis of U.S. Highway 287 through downtown Longmont

Project Description: This is a study to analyze the potential for creating new traffic capacity that would allow reduction of traffic on Main Street through the downtown area from four lanes to two lanes. This would require the creation of new roadway capacity such as a one-way pair using Main Street for northbound and Coffman Street for southbound in the downtown area. In addition, this analysis would review the options for on-street parking in the downtown area. This study would look at the potential options, the benefits, and the impacts of such as change on the community.

- Funding Status: 2009 CIP - \$75,000
- Project Cost: \$75,000 from the street fund

The consulting firm SEH is currently under contract with the City for traffic engineering and roadway design work and is working on traffic analysis for the Martin Street and Boston Avenue designs. SEH has provided a draft scope of services and cost estimate of \$40,000 to \$45,000 to provide the engineering services, including a traffic analysis of the one-way option and a preliminary cost estimate of such a project. In addition to this engineering work, a public process to determine community response to such a change would be a critical part of this effort.

Action Items, cont.

6. Partner with the Community for Cultural & Performing Arts (CCPA) and St. Vrain Valley School District (SVVSD) to create a performing and fine arts entertainment and instructional campus in downtown.

7. Promote downtown as the Arts and Entertainment District.

Strategies, cont.

- Timeline: 2009 - Preliminary engineering study and neighborhood coordination efforts.

Project DR-8: Downtown Alley Improvements

Project Description: Improve, upgrade and beautify alleys on the east side of Main Street from 4th to 6th and on the west side from 3rd to 6th, including placing utilities under ground. Improvements include replacement or repair of sewer lines and intakes, and alley resurfacing at appropriate drainage grades. The project also includes lighting improvements, landscaping and surface treatment. The first steps of this project will be to develop a master plan.

- Funding Status: 2009 CIP - \$75,000
- Project Cost: \$75,000 shared equally among LDDA, street fund, storm drainage, and electric. CDBG funds could be used for the actual infrastructure improvements (not for the study) if a blight study showed this to be a blighted influence.
- Timeline: 2009 - Preliminary engineering study and neighborhood coordination efforts.

Project DR-23: Downtown Parking Lot Improvements

Project Description: Improvements to parking lots in the downtown area, including (but not limited to) repaving, striping, and landscaping.

- Funding Status: 2009 CIP - \$20,000
- Project Cost: \$100,000 from LDDA parking
- Timeline: 2009-2013

LDDA should continue working with CCPA on a staged project that is currently focused on the Twin Peaks Academy located at the corner of [unclear] as one of several potential sites for cultural arts

- Funding Status: No funding required
- Cost: None
- Timeline: Ongoing effort

Develop a downtown summer concert series, in collaboration with the City of Longmont summer concert series, featuring national and regional artists to be administered through LDDA.

Action Items, cont.

Strategies, cont.

8. Place public art at the boundaries of downtown to serve as entranceways and to give the downtown more definition.

- Funding Status: 2009 budget
- Cost: The estimated cost is \$30,000
- Timeline: 2009

Support LDDA in developing a temporary public arts campaign to include the display of artistic banners throughout the downtown district. The banners would be designed by local artists with a different series for each season.

- Funding Status: 2009 LDDA Budget
- Cost: The cost of producing and displaying the banners is estimated at \$2,000 per season or \$8,000 per year. The source of funding would be the LDDA marketing fund provided through TIF revenue.
- Timeline: 2009

9. Partner with the Governors Energy Office (GEO), Department of Local Affairs (DOLA), and LPC to implement a conversion to light fixtures and strategies in downtown for events, displays, and pedestrian fixtures. This also includes free energy audits in all downtown buildings.

Support LDDA's efforts in working with the City's Art in Public Places program to include unique displays at either 9th or 10th Avenues, 1st Avenue, and at district boundaries located at Kimbark and Terry Streets.

- Funding Status: Unfunded
- Cost: Long-term strategy with no immediate funding required.
- Timeline: 2009 - 2014

Continue pursuing the \$2 million New Energy Communities grant through the Colorado Department of Local Affairs. The City, LPC, Platte River Power Authority, and the St. Vrain Valley School District have partnered in the application, which would provide funding for improving the "greening" of public facilities, downtown, and homes. In addition, the grant promotes energy efficiency and conservation, community livability, economic development in downtowns, and reducing carbon emissions.

- Funding Status: Grant awaiting approval
- Cost: The grant is matched with \$1.1 million of community partnership funds.
- Timeline: 2009

Objective #2: Develop a Master Plan of downtown that identifies opportunities for residential, multi-use, entertainment, transportation, and parking.

Action Item:

Develop a master plan of downtown Longmont to include:

- * Cultural Arts Center
- * Catalyst mixed-use project with parking
- * Transit-oriented development district
- * Extension of the LDDA boundaries
- * Design of architectural connections throughout the downtown

Strategy:

Encourage LDDA to contract with a professional consultant to partner on the plan's development.

- Funding Status: Unfunded
- Cost: The estimated cost of contracting with a consultant to develop a new downtown master plan is \$100,000. TIF funds may be used to pay for the plan and its implementation.
- Timeline: 2009

Objective #3: Develop and implement incentive programs to promote commercial and mixed-use development.

Action Items:

1. Restaurant Row Loan Program

Restaurant Row is a concept designed to attract a concentration of restaurants in a specified area of downtown (within LDDA boundaries, for example) in conjunction with area as an entertainment district. The micro loan program works as an incentive by making low-cost, private-public loans available to prospective restaurateurs.

Strategies:

Study the option of implementing the loan program within the next three years.

- Funding Status: Unfunded
- Cost: \$50,000- \$100,000 to seed the micro loan fund. CDBG funds could be used to support this project if low/ moderate income created and tracked.
- Timeline: 2009 -2011

2. TIF Facade Improvement Program

As a targeted incentive, a TIF Facade Improvement Program would allow LDDA to provide significant financial contributions to downtown development projects that meet : The design and project scope are evaluated by the county assessor to determine the incremental increase in property valuation that is then paid back into the TIF.

Encourage adoption of the TIF Facade Improvement Program.

- Funding Status: Awaiting Council approval
- Cost: All funds would come from the TIF and are determined by the total project costs.
- Timeline: 2008

Action Items, cont.

3. Development Fee Rebates

An ordinance amending the current development fee rebate program by extending the incentive to include commercial businesses located along Main Street is scheduled to come before Council in August. The amendment broadens the standards for application by including businesses that help reduce retail leakage as identified in the Retail Opportunities Study, or by including businesses that implement energy conservation goals as defined by the City or through LEED certification.

4. Sales and Use Tax rebate

Strategies, cont.

Encourage Council to pass the ordinance.

- Funding Status: No budget required
- Cost: The Development Fee Rebate provides up to a 30% reduction on certain building permit fees and the sales and use taxes associated with building permits. Businesses retain the ability to request waivers for up to 100% rebates on fees and taxes from Council.
- Timeline: 2008

Expand the current Sales and Use Tax rebate incentive program to include retail development within the LDDA boundaries. This incentive could provide a significant benefit in revitalizing buildings within the district. In addition, consider increasing the incentive if materials subject to sales & use tax are purchased locally.

- Funding Status: No budget required
- Cost: Rebate based on actual project costs and parameters
- Timeline: 2009

Direction 2: Branding

Committee Participants: Sarah Levison, Dan Ditslear, Frank Keating, Tom McCoy, Caryn Capriccioso

Goal

Develop a consistent and authentic marketing campaign that promotes Longmont as an ideal place for commerce and as a destination location.

Rationale

City branding is a comprehensive process incorporating every aspect of a city and its stakeholders, including residents, visitors, and the public and private sectors. A brand is not only a trust mark in the form of a logo or symbol, but is also reflective of perceptions that may represent heritage, history, architecture, traditions, and even the overall aesthetics of a place.



Objective: Establish a communitywide brand that can be implemented and shared among stakeholders and the public alike.

Branding Longmont's distinct characteristics can complement planning and development efforts by communicating the city's uniqueness and the values present in the competitive marketplace.

The development process typically takes 6 to 8 months with an expectation that implementation will be ongoing after this initial work is completed. At the end of this process the city is presented with the brand, as well as a 3- to 5-year plan for implementation and measurement.

The major stakeholders for a branding effort should include the City, LAEC, LDDA, the Chamber, and LAVA.

Action Item:

Contract with a professional consultant to produce a communitywide branding initiative that is comprehensive and consistent. The process of developing and implementing the brand should include the following elements:

- The final product should reflect the stakeholders' interests and operate under an umbrella-type arrangement in that all aspects of citywide identity fall under the review of the city.
- Any entity or group receiving funds from the city via contract or dues should demonstrate support for the established citywide brand as a requirement for funding.
- Assign staff to market and maintain the brand to ensure consistency among all stakeholders.

Strategy:

Contract for a professionally produced branding campaign.

- Funding Status: 2009 Budget
- Cost: \$70,000 - \$90,000 shared among the major stakeholders. The City's share of \$25,000 may come from the City's portion of the lodger's tax. The major stakeholders may share the total cost with LAVA contributing \$25,000 and LAEC, LDDA, and the Chamber contributing \$10,000 each.
- Timeline: 2008 – Identify additional stakeholders and draft the RFP.
2009 – Select consultant and develop plan.

Direction 3: Expand the City's Role in Economic Development Activities

Committee Participants: Tom Miller, Sharon King, Richard Juday, John Cody, Pam Gibson, Roger Lange

Goal

Establish programs and services through the City of Longmont that support business growth and productivity.

Rationale

The role of the Economic Development Manager is to coordinate economic development programs and assistance for local businesses. In order for the Economic

Development Manager to

be effective, the City needs a comprehensive set of resources, including cultural amenities and community services, such as good schools and recreational facilities, to help create a favorable business climate for sustained economic growth.



Objective #1: Create an Economic Development (ED) Department that unifies economic development efforts through collaboration among local agencies and within City government.

Action Items:

1. Include commercial redevelopment as a responsibility of the ED Department.
2. Lead staff person of the ED Department should be at the Director level and be the City's spokesperson on ED issues.
3. Staff the ED Department with appropriately skilled personnel.
4. Review incentive policy on an ongoing basis; propose changes and additions to Council that may assist in attracting and retaining primary employers.

Strategy:

Study the organizational structure of City government to measure the impact associated with properly aligning City resources to get desired results.

- Funding Status: 2009 Budget
- Cost: \$76,291 (economic development staff)
- Timeline: 2009

Action Items, cont.

5. Provide ED intelligence and industry forecasts to City Council as needed to guide policy decisions, such as incentives, land use, infrastructure.

6. Strengthen workforce development strategies to include an awareness of human capital assets available within the community.

7. Create a communication strategy to inform Longmont businesses and the public about the work and impact of the ED Department and citywide ED efforts.

Objective #2: Create a well-defined economic development policy that reflects a vision and path for achieving Longmont's fiscal stability.

Action Item:

Develop an Economic Development Strategic Plan with regular updates.

Strategy:

Contract for the development of a strategic plan.

- Funding Status: 2009 Budget
- Cost: approximately \$75,000
- Timeline: 2009

Objective #3: Establish an advisory committee for economic development activities.

Action Item:

Reinvigorate the Economic Alliance to act as an advisory group to the ED Department.

Strategy:

Establish the Alliance as an advisory committee for the ED Department.

- Funding Status: No funding required
- Cost: None
- Timeline: 2008

Objective #4: Support and expand business assistance programs.

Strategies:

Consider creating a start-up grant program (for example, \$2,000 each) for new businesses locating in specified commercial areas of the City (such as downtown or in economically challenged areas) that apply within the first year of operation. The business must be a community-serving retail or service business in a storefront that is accessible to the public. The business owner must complete an approved business development training program, and the business must be licensed in Longmont. The grant funds may reimburse only legitimate start-up costs associated with opening the business.

- Funding Status: 2009 Budget
- Cost: \$30,000
- Timeline: 2009

Consider developing a revolving loan fund to provide access to capital for new or expanding businesses. The program could be administered through third-party agencies or lending institutions specializing in microloans targeting small businesses. Several of these agencies have the ability to leverage the City's investment with other funding sources, such as SBA, creating a larger overall loan pool. This type of loan program can also be labeled as a City of Longmont incentive even though the City is not administering the loans.

- Funding Status: Unfunded
- Cost: \$100,000 to seed the program. CDBG funds could be used for this type of program if low/moderate income jobs are created or if regular jobs are offered to low/moderate income persons and this is tracked or reported.
- Timeline: 2009

Direction 4: Retail

Committee Participants: Karen Benker, Keith Kanemoto, Beverly Springer, Richard Hansen, Doug Bene

Goal

Establish Longmont as a retail hub that provides a variety of shopping venues and serves as a destination for attracting local and regional consumers.

Rationale

A diverse and comprehensive retail business sector provides choice and convenience for residents, reduces the flow of money outside the community, and creates a stable, growing tax base to support high quality community services and infrastructure improvements.

Competition for retail development along the Front Range is intense and can directly impact Longmont's position as a regional draw and the ability to secure revenue. Combined with the fact that sales tax revenue generated through retail commerce funds a significant number of services and programs offered by the City, a productive retail base is essential to maintain economic vitality and quality of life standards.



Objective: Develop policies and resources for retail as part of an overall strategic plan.

Action Items:

1. Promote a business-friendly development process through the one-stop-shop process that helps expedite permits and reduce potentially costly processing delays.
2. Develop and/or implement incentives for targeted retail development.

Strategies:

Create a data depository for prospective parties interested in retail development by providing accurate information on Longmont as a potential market.

Purchase the CoStar real estate database to monitor commercial real estate trends, including vacancy rates, available properties, and potential

Action Items, cont.

development sites.
Strategies, cont.

3. Ensure that retail is part of a business retention and expansion program.

- Funding Status: 2009 Budget
- Cost: The annual cost of the CoStar service is approximately \$4,500.
- Timeline: 2009

Purchase the eSynchronist surveying database that includes a retail element as a tool for measuring and monitoring the needs of our nonprimary employers.

- Funding Status: 2009 Budget
- Cost: The initial cost of eSynchronist is approximately \$6000
- Timeline: 2009

4. Support awareness campaigns that promote buy-local initiatives.

Consider sponsoring programs that promote shopping locally as way of preserving Longmont's uniqueness and reducing retail leakage.

- Funding Status: 2009 Budget
- Cost: \$2,500
- Timeline: 2009

5. Periodically update the Retail Opportunities Study.

Consider updating the 2006 Retail Opportunities Study.

- Funding Status: 2009 Budget
- Cost: \$20,000
- Timeline: 2009

6. Expand the Economic Alliance to include representatives from the retail and the real estate communities.

Include a local retailer and the Longmont Association of Realtors in the Economic Alliance.

- Funding Status: No funding required
- Cost: None
- Timeline: 2008

7. Support efforts to redevelop Twin Peaks Mall.

Partner with Planning, Finance, Administration, and other City departments on concepts and incentives that may be involved.

- Funding Status: No funding required
- Cost: None
- Timeline: 2008

Section II

Economic Vitality Task Force (EVTF) Recommendations

May 2007



Task Force Members:

Karen Benker	Richard Juday
Cotton Burden	Keith Kanemoto
Caryn Capriccioso	Roger Lange
David Chaknova	Sarah Levison
Ron Cheyney	Larry Longseth
John Cody	Tom McCoy
Barbara Douglass	Abe Melendez
Pam Gibson	Nelson Miner
Dan Grant	Mary Murphy-Bessler
Richard Hansen	Beverly Springer
Monty Jennings	

Background

Although the overall quality of life in Longmont is excellent, there are economic challenges that must be addressed for sustainability. Our high-tech industry is confronted with pressures from domestic and international competition, and our commercial base is threatened from the increasing amount of retail and office space being developed throughout the Front Range. In order to provide a diversity of employment opportunities and a sound fiscal structure for the operation of municipal government, we need all sectors of our business community to be as strong as possible. In progressively looking to maintain and strengthen our economic base, the Longmont City Council decided to move in a direction that would promote economic vitality. As a first step, Council created a task force to build upon the economic goals presented in *Focus on Longmont* by producing a set of recommended strategies that Council may implement or incorporate into an action plan.

The Economic Vitality Task Force (EVTF) was assembled in the spring of 2006 with members representing a cross section of the community providing a multitude of perspectives and critical thinking skills. Meeting bimonthly for nearly seven months, the group began the process by defining economic vitality as “the community’s ability to sustain a productive and dynamic business climate, fiscal strength and high quality of life.” Using this definition as a guide, the task force conducted a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis for a more in-depth look at the issues surrounding our economic vitality.

The results of the SWOT analysis (Appendix D) served as the basis for developing seven broad focus areas of study identified as Jobs, Revitalization/Redevelopment, Business Environment, Retail, Infrastructure, Education, and Land Use. Each area was examined in relationship to economic vitality and sustainability with strategies and actions items created for each category. The broad focus areas (Appendix A), including each strategy and action item, were then ranked by the task force in order of priority.

The broad focus areas represented the first draft of this report and were presented to City Council at its annual retreat in January 2007. The original findings included the broad focus areas and approximately 189 action items for Council’s consideration. While the broad focus areas are the essential to this report and should be included in any future action plan, City Council requested that the EVTF identify up to 10 recommendations that may be implemented within the short term. The result was four directions that propose strategies for building a vision for downtown, enhancing and promoting the city’s image, strengthening the city’s role in economic development, and marketing Longmont for increased retail activity.

The four directions are (1) strategies for building a vision for downtown, (2) enhancing and promoting the city’s image, (3) strengthening the City’s role in economic development, and (4) marketing Longmont for increased retail activity.

Direction 1: Develop a Vision for Downtown

This direction concentrates on the importance of creating a vibrant, active, and revitalized downtown Longmont capable of generating a regional customer base while maintaining the historic character of the area. Downtown is widely recognized in numerous city studies and surveys as a unique district rich in architecture and history but lacking in strength of commercial activity. The “Downtown” direction focuses on how we can build



upon the inherent qualities of downtown to include a prosperous commercial center anchored by equally strong residential and social qualities.

Action Items:

- 1. Develop the “big picture” for downtown and incentives to encourage property owners to move in the direction of the vision.**
 - A. Define downtown in relationship to the current LDDA boundaries and with the areas to the immediate north and south of Main Street.
 - B. Engage professional consultants to help drive the process and compare best practices and funding sources in other locations.
 - C. Consider tax/fee waivers or sales tax rebates for specified downtown commercial development.
 - D. Explore funding of the BID (Business Improvement District) and the use of other special districts as funding sources.
 - E. Include the FasTracks (TOD) location and possible development in the vision.

- 2. Encourage downtown residential development.**
 - A. Implement the proposed mixed-use overlay district.
 - B. Seek to leverage funding through the Longmont Housing Authority or CDBG for larger mixed-use developments that include an element of affordable housing.
 - C. Explore adaptive reuse possibilities for buildings.
 - D. Build a downtown identity.
 - E. Promote entertainment activities especially those after 5:00 in the evening.
 - F. Encourage new employers to locate downtown.
 - G. Pursue federal sources of funding earmarked for very low, low, and moderate income housing, and allocate CDBG funds for the rehabilitation of such housing.

3. Explore creating a more pedestrian-friendly atmosphere through transportation system improvements along Main Street.

- A. Consider reducing traffic on Main Street from four to two lanes.
- B. Widen sidewalks to encourage more business activity.
- C. Explore a change in parking from parallel to angled where appropriate.
- D. Study the use of roundabouts at key intersections.
- E. Implement free bus service to and from businesses in the downtown area.

4. Engage small business owners/tenants as meaningful partners in revitalization/redevelopment projects.

- A. Support the creation of a downtown merchant's association.
- B. Conduct joint meetings with business owners on major projects to actively seek their input.

5. Develop master covenants for downtown.

Preserve consistency in development design and appearance through sign codes, parking, tree, and landscaping requirements.

Direction 2: Focus on Longmont's Identity (Branding)

This direction focuses on developing an image for Longmont that reflects the city as an enticing place for business development and operation. Overcoming negative perceptions, regardless of their validity, can help improve the overall business climate. In much the same way a business markets itself, the city can embark on a communitywide effort to repackage the presentation of Longmont as a destination place.

Action Item:

Develop a formal branding effort that captures the character of the community and promotes those qualities through a coordinated marketing campaign.

1. Determine our vision of Longmont as a community, including the image we would like to portray.
2. Focus on an image for Longmont that reflects the nature of the business community and of those industries currently existing throughout the city.
3. Involve the Economic Alliance in the process.
4. Consider allowing the public to name the campaign through a contest.
5. Incorporate the views of futurists in the campaign.



Direction 3: Expand the City's Role in Economic Development Activities

This direction emphasizes allocating resources to establish and maintain a productive and effective climate for business growth. It also includes capitalizing on the variety of economic development engines operating in Longmont through cooperative sharing of best practices among organizations.

Action Items:

1. Support further development of the city's economic development department with the necessary resources to expand the programs and services offered.

- A. Develop an action plan.
- B. Expand the reach and resources of the department.
- C. Consolidate development incentives within the economic development department.
- D. Seek to expand capital assistance programs.
- E. Research best practices from other communities and adopt good ideas.

2. Strengthen collaboration among local business groups and economic development organizations.

- A. Support groups such as the Economic Alliance, a collection of 11 local economic development agencies, when working with the business community on development projects.
- B. Continue to leverage services through active partnerships with agencies such as the Small Business Development Center and Micro Business Development.

3. Proactively develop public-private partnerships for larger scale redevelopment projects.

Encourage cooperation on larger scale redevelopment projects such as the Twin Peaks Mall, downtown mixed-use developments, the flour mill, and the sugar factory. This type of partnership would involve sharing financial commitments and cultivating ideas that lead to redevelopment efforts otherwise too prohibitive for one party to accomplish.



4. Expand business assistance programs to include a one-stop-shop center for new or expanding businesses.

Create a city-based information center where a variety of general business support services can be obtained such as access to capital programs, site selection analysis, and workforce development assistance.

5. Prioritize redevelopment efforts and identify those that may serve as catalysts for the revitalization of entire districts.

The Council has initiated several redevelopment planning efforts, including the Flour Mill Redevelopment Plan in 2002, the Southeast Longmont Urban Renewal Plan in 2004, the Mid Town Redevelopment Plan in 2004, and the Downtown mixed-use parking facility, all illustrating the Council's commitment to actively encouraging the revitalization of our community as it exhausts its available "greenfield" development area. Each of these projects should be prioritized and have a cost associated with it so that the necessary financial resources can be secured ahead of time.

6. Identify future industry clusters and establish a strategy for attracting them to Longmont.

- A. Develop a recruitment strategy in connection with the economic development action plan.
- B. Partner with research experts to determine industry trends.
- C. Work closely with LAEC to encourage the relocation and development of industries that are new and growing in market concentration.

Direction 4: Market Longmont for Increased Retail Commerce

This direction looks at the importance of retail spending in Longmont and seeks to mitigate the effects of retail leakage through awareness building, destination shopping, and support of local entrepreneurs.



Action Items:

- 1. Market Longmont to increase our retail trade area and mitigate retail leakage.**
 - A. Support the creation of retail merchant's association.
 - B. Develop a retail awards program for shopping in Longmont.
 - C. Develop a niche market in Longmont, such as restaurants or the arts, that can be marketed as Longmont specialties.
 - D. Target businesses that address the retail leakage situation in Longmont and are able to draw customers from outside of the city.

- 2. Support a shop local (locally owned) marketing and educational campaign.**
 - A. Develop a shop local program to support small businesses through purchasing practices that elevate awareness of the benefits of keeping the dollars in Longmont.
 - B. Assist small businesses in capturing Internet sales by creating an Internet network that collectively promotes Longmont businesses as an electronic point-of-sale choice.
 - C. Seek to connect workforce development programs to retailers and continue to provide small businesses with educational resources for growing sectors.

Section III

Appendices



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Appendix A ECONOMIC VITALITY TASK FORCE BROAD FOCUS AREAS

This section consists of the seven focus areas, strategies and action items that were developed by the Economic Vitality Task Force. Items are listed in order of importance as ranked by the EVTF. The number to the left of each action item is the raw score resulting from the ranking. Higher numbers represent higher priority.

1. JOBS

Definition: A robust and prosperous local economy requires a diverse range of high quality job opportunities that enable citizens to live in and contribute to the community, which, in turn, provides revenue to support high quality public services. Communities that thrive in today’s global economy focus on job creation and retention and the infrastructure to support their business assets.

Strategy 1: Retain, support and nurture existing businesses (example: Business Retention and Expansion Institute)

<i>Raw Score</i>	<i>Action Items</i>
98	1. Maintain an active retention program for quality jobs.
88	2. Survey existing employers for needs, satisfaction, and climate of community.
56	3. Create a stronger business climate (Chamber of Commerce, Longmont Small Business Association, Hispanic Chamber, etc.).
46	4. Promote tourism and other businesses in city.

Strategy 2: Expand resources to support small businesses (<50 employees)

<i>Raw Score</i>	<i>Action Items</i>
125	1. Develop a one-stop small business program.
102	2. Develop a “buy locally owned” program.
73	3. Continue the Longmont Economic Gardening Initiative (LEGI).
66	4. Provide targeted, performance-based incentives for small businesses.
59	5. Have the City and school district make purchasing commitments to local small businesses.
46	6. Develop a catalyst program or provide catalyst money to ensure that large developments include space for small businesses.

Strategy 3: Maintain focus on primary jobs

Raw Score	Action Items
103	1. Continue and expand inducement strategies for primary employers.
96	2. Attract a diversity of primary employers. Diversify employment base from data storage.
95	3. Go out and get them!
91	4. For large business development, review current practices and determine what can or needs to be changed.
51	5. Adopt private enterprise strategies for productivity and monetary rewards for producing (i.e., give economic development staff bonuses or incentives when they are successful in attracting higher paying, primary job providers like Xilinx and others, and give them the tools they need to do this work).
35	6. Develop a program to attract corporate headquarters.

Strategy 4: Proactively seek out cutting edge business opportunities

Raw Score	Action Items
98	1. Develop and mine tech transfer opportunities through universities.
90	2. Be proactive in bringing in new jobs.
87	3. Develop systems that support business creation/development.
83	4. Work on developing relationships with universities for spin-off companies.
69	5. Expand awareness of incubator industry (LEN, CAPT, etc.).
40	6. Identify, coordinate, and support private equity resources.
14	7. Support state legislation for tech transfer.

Strategy 5: Expand/support workforce development

Raw Score	Action Items
95	1. Work more closely with Workforce Boulder County (i.e., City’s economic development staff should be on board; job fairs).
92	2. Develop connections among businesses, workforce, and trainees.
81	3. Create and project a “world class” community culture that supports continuous learning.
78	4. Build stronger linkages between primary employers and local schools.
50	5. Create a “home” for regional workforce training center.
41	6. Explore raising the minimum wage in Longmont or establishing the City’s living wage concept communitywide.
38	7. Develop a formal intern program.

Strategy 6: Target and study future opportunities

Raw Score	Action Items
139	1. Identify future industry clusters and create a favorable climate for attracting them.
106	2. Ensure adequate infrastructure is available to support “jobs of the future.”
92	3. Develop systems that support emerging “creative jobs.”
69	4. Develop a City policy to attract renewable energy businesses.
51	5. Coordinate the development and maintenance of an informational database on jobs and make it easily accessible to all.
43	6. Consider St. Vrain Greenway as a high tech corridor.
36	7. Fill vacant office space.
34	8. Coordinate the creation and/or enhancement of an information depository.
33	9. Continue to monitor jobs/housing ratio which measures the health of the business community.

2. REVITALIZATION/REDEVELOPMENT

Definition: Revitalization and redevelopment of mature areas of the community is a critical factor in ensuring the economic health and vitality of a community. Recycling valuable property through creative and adaptive reuse of structures and land that uses existing infrastructure can increase land values, improve a community’s image, stabilize decaying neighborhoods, and strengthen the local economy. Carefully targeted public investments can help jump-start urban revitalization and encourage private investment and partnerships that can be rewarding from both a financial and a social sense.

Strategy 1: Identify destination uses and/or catalyst projects for aging districts

<i>Raw Score</i>	<i>Action Items</i>
123	1. Identify and prioritize geographic areas/districts for revitalization or redevelopment.
90	2. Coordinate existing and future plans and planning efforts.
76	3. Select one or two keystone locations (projects) and develop incentives and assistance programs to jump start them.
55	4. Focus on a specialty city identity (brand).
51	5. Explore historic districts as an economic development opportunity.
43	6. Link primary retail areas in some way (map, transportation, etc.).
34	7. Coordinate “look” of visible items such as lamp posts, signage, streetscapes, etc.

1A: Revitalize downtown while maintaining historic character

<i>Raw Score</i>	<i>Action Items</i>
93	1. Develop “Big Picture” for downtown and incentives to encourage property owners to move in the direction of the vision for downtown.
79	2. Encourage residential development downtown.
77	3. Create more cohesive downtown district.
69	4. Create an architectural theme for areas of downtown (i.e., historic area, modern area).
65	5. Explore alternative transportation patterns for Main Street (Hwy. 287).
63	6. Engage small business owners as meaningful partners in redevelopment/revitalization projects.
39	7. Allow downtown development to go up.

1B: Redevelop Twin Peaks Mall as a modern retail district

<i>Raw Score</i>	<i>Action Items</i>
34	1. Take comprehensive look at southwest area—fairground, Twin Peaks Mall, Clover Basin.
16	2. Facilitate large-scale land accumulation for purposes of redevelopment opportunity.

1C: Redevelop sugar mill and flour mill as a complement to FasTracks

Raw Score	Action Item
	Address environmental issues.

Strategy 2: Explore/consider financing options for redevelopment/revitalization

Raw Score	Action Items
108	1. Develop private/public venture for large scale redevelopment efforts.
97	2. Establish a proactive policy promoting local businesses.
57	3. Expand use of Metro Districts.
45	4. Explore rationale for tax increment financing (TIF).
43	5. Explore a scale for TIF contributions to give back to the City's general fund.

Strategy 3: Examine the relationship between greenfield development and redevelopment

Raw Score	Action Items
116	1. Plan on a larger scale so developers and users can see "The Vision."
111	2. Adopt appropriate overlay districts to facilitate redevelopment.
94	3. Focus public investments in high-priority redevelopment areas.
90	4. Focus on infrastructure in aging areas.
72	5. Portion of redevelopment projects be neighborhood-serving businesses (smaller scale, locally owned).
60	6. Have new development (non-primary employers) help redevelopment in some way (affordable housing policy as an example, percent of development is set aside, cash in lieu, impact fee, etc.).
59	7. Development with public attraction.
46	8. Assist small retail; limit big box retail growth.
37	9. Establish market-based ceiling on private returns that use public money.

3. BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Definition: A healthy business environment is conducive to the retention and expansion of existing businesses, promotes the creation and relocation of new business, and stimulates a diversity of businesses and employment. A healthy business environment supports a “business friendly” reputation which creates a competitive advantage and climate attractive to private investment.

Strategy 1: Diversify economic base

<i>Raw Score</i>	<i>Action Items</i>
40	1. Inventory existing portfolio.
14	2. Encourage LAEC to promote or seek out companies that are not high tech to provide balance to the City’s job portfolio.

Strategy 2: Maintain/align balanced community philosophy

<i>Raw Score</i>	<i>Action Items</i>
72	1. Actively seek feedback and listen to input from Longmont stakeholders about what they want and need. Nonprofits are businesses—keep them involved in the Economic Vitality processes.
62	2. Develop process for policy makers to align City regulations with community economic vitality values.
46	3. Maintain balanced community philosophy about growth and development to avoid transmitting negative messages to the business community.
36	4. Engage small businesses when choosing downtown actions.

Strategy 3: Develop/enhance/promote reputation as a city that welcomes new businesses and promotes existing businesses

<i>Raw Score</i>	<i>Action Items</i>
78	1. Develop ways to welcome new businesses to Longmont (especially small businesses).
46	2. Determine perceptions regarding Longmont’s business friendliness (i.e., survey businesses or entities both inside and outside the city).
28	3. Improve support for the businesses (seek input from businesses regarding their needs).
25	4. Jump-start a community development corporation to help small terprises.
14	5. Find ways to make “business friendly” Longmont even friendlier.

Strategy 4: Develop timely, predictable development process

Raw Score	Action Items
54	1. Coordinate one-stop-shop development process with economic development concerns.
30	2. Make review process easy to understand.
28	3. City should consider creating a qualifying service providers list (i.e., planners, architects, etc.).

Strategy 5: Strengthen collaboration among business support groups

Raw Score	Action Items
72	1. Support further development of the City’s Economic Vitality office (i.e., what does ED Manager need to support his work?).
50	2. Develop new collaborative partnerships and improve communication.
36	3. Continue to support/strengthen the Economic Alliance and move to include missing entities such as the Magellan Center.
32	4. Improve support for small businesses through the City and the Chamber of Commerce (incentives, etc.).
29	5. Use City staff to moderate turf battles.

Strategy 6: Develop/consolidate research and development information

Raw Score	Action Items
43	1. Develop realistic forecasts for existing industry.
43	2. Use “competitive intelligence” as a strategy to identify direction.
31	3. Develop a consolidated City-based information center.
	4. Involve futurists in determining a productive “branding” direction.

Strategy 7: Target incentives for desired outcomes

Raw Score	Action Items
27	1. Develop incentives (but don’t give away the farm) for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Attracting small businesses to downtown b. Redevelopment c. Relocation d. Quality Jobsj
22	2. Show incentive specifics on City’s balance sheet (don’t ignore the “but for” part of the equation).

4. RETAIL

Definition: A diverse and comprehensive retail business sector provides choice and convenience for residents, reduces the flow of money outside the community, and creates a stable, growing tax base to support quality community services and infrastructure improvements. A vibrant retail sector enhances the community’s image as a regional destination attracting out-of-area consumers and tourists.

Strategy 1: Create a vibrant retail sector that enhances the community’s image as a regional destination.

Raw Score	Action Items
124	1. Create destination shopping areas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Downtown <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Restaurant District ii. Walking mall b. Twin Peaks district c. Upscale shopping area
88	2. Market Longmont to bring in customers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop retail rewards program for spending money in Longmont (i.e., sales tax goes back in your pocket, pool rewards to get a project accomplished). b. Develop “buy locally owned” marketing or public education campaign. c. Develop Longmont’s own retail Internet network to help small local businesses compete.
82	3. Encourage private/public ventures to provide new and unusual shopping experiences that generate high customer volumes combined with multiple uses.
66	4. Develop a “brand” for Longmont based on a concentration of business activity already here.
64	5. Pursue targeted retail businesses that would create a regional draw through their unique product (specialized furniture stores not typically found on furniture row—Ikea; antique stores; Trader Joes).
61	6. Encourage and facilitate transit-oriented demand (TOD) development appropriate for Longmont.

Strategy 2: Foster a diverse and comprehensive retail business sector to provide choice and convenience for residents.

Raw Score	Action Items
113	1. Identify retail needs/wants for Longmont; develop detailed inventory of existing retail.
105	2. Develop plan to encourage growth of local retail start-ups. Encourage environment for locally owned businesses. Support local nonprofits to develop social enterprise opportunities.
97	3. Develop incentives to create/attract new stores. a. Examples include fee waivers, tax breaks, tax models related to service businesses versus retail businesses. b. Incentives specific to downtown to entice what we want. c. Explore private/public ventures.
90	4. Incorporate competitive intelligence strategies and techniques to ensure that Longmont is forward thinking and able to capitalize on marketplace trends.
70	5. Pursue targeted retail businesses that cater to specific existing markets (e.g., supply store for woodworkers).
58	6. Create a small business incubator geared toward retail and service businesses.
43	7. Market Longmont to retail companies.
35	8. Focus on new image for retail. a. Outside big box. b. Move in a different retail direction than southwest Weld.

5. INFRASTRUCTURE

Definition: Reliable, accessible, and affordable infrastructure systems are a necessary ingredient for quality growth in a community and a cornerstone of economic vitality. Transportation, water, sewer, public buildings, parks, drainage, and power and communication systems create opportunities and provide a competitive advantage for existing businesses as well as act as incentives for attracting new firms to the community. Investment in sound infrastructure systems provides value for the taxpayer’s dollar and allows the government to provide services necessary to maintain and support the community’s public health, welfare, and quality of life.

Strategy 1: Plan, construct, maintain, and maximize existing and future utility infrastructure

<i>Raw Score</i>	<i>Action Items</i>
116	1. Maximize public benefit from city-owned infrastructure (water, power, public spaces, etc.)
113	2. Maintain existing infrastructure at workable level
80	3. Design or redesign infrastructure that complements or enhances revitalization efforts
66	4. Prioritize infrastructure projects in the Capital Improvements Program to reflect economic priorities of the community
65	5. Make sure sinking fund is adequate for infrastructure replacement and upgrades
65	6. Prioritize and upgrade older infrastructure systems
64	7. Build infrastructure for infill and redevelopment
40	8. Bury power lines on public and private areas

Strategy 2: Construct and maintain appropriate transportation system

<i>Raw Score</i>	<i>Action Items</i>
115	1. Examine Highway 287 through downtown. Engage small business owners (i.e., task force) to develop and discuss options.
100	2. Identify traffic patterns that improve vitality.
79	3. Ensure adequate bike and pedestrian connections to retail areas and transportation connection points.
79	4. Prioritize infrastructure projects in the Capital Improvements Program to reflect economic priorities of the community.
68	5. Design or redesign infrastructure that complements or enhances revitalization efforts.
44	6. Build infrastructure for infill and redevelopment.

Strategy 3: Continue focus on conservation

<i>Raw Score</i>	<i>Action Items</i>
79	1. Consider expanding City recycling efforts to commercial users.
70	2. Develop/enhance electric/water conservation programs.
46	3. Move toward focus on zero waste from retail through residential users.
39	4. Develop education programs geared toward specific use types.

6. EDUCATION

Definition: Quality educational opportunities are a component of an economically vital community and essential to an attractive business environment. In today's global information-based economy, knowledge is recognized as a key factor in achieving a competitive advantage and attracting employers that provide quality jobs. Educational systems that meet the workforce needs of businesses and the personal needs of employees and their families can be critical determinants of job and income growth within a community. The availability of quality education is a key element that relates to the success of a community in attracting economic development opportunities.

Strategy 1: Develop a compelling community education ethic that promotes lifelong learning

<i>Raw Score</i>	<i>Action Items</i>
181	1. Raise awareness of the <u>value</u> of a good education (i.e., well Educated = better job = higher quality of life).
116	2. Advocate community support for action items coming out of the Education Task Force's work.
90	3. Develop an "Education City" campaign similar to the "Tree City" Campaign.
89	4. Develop a comprehensive plan to work with drop-outs and those at-risk of dropping out. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Program(s) for reaching kids involved in gangs. b. Outreach to the kids on their own turf/territory.
72	5. Create a parent mentoring program (i.e., for single parents, parents of at-risk kids, etc.).
68	6. Develop public support for appropriate institutions, organizations, and entities that will provide education to all who need it.
65	7. Partner with local newspaper to raise awareness.
60	8. Raise the community's awareness of international markets and the global arena <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee on foreign relations
52	9. Continue to support multicultural transition from education to workforce.
51	10. Have every child ready for preschool/learning by age four.
45	11. Create marketing promotion to demonstrate the quality of education in Longmont (e.g., Dr. Zila—Superintendent of the Year).
23	12. Use public institutions as educational tools (Museum, Library, etc.).

1A: Grades K-12

Raw Score	Action Items
99	1. Make it a goal of public education that every child completes high school prepared for the workforce or for lifelong learning
68	2. Work with school district to invest resources <u>within</u> City of Longmont.
66	3. Encourage schools to teach economics and business education in K-12.
51	4. Enforce school capacity benchmark.

1B: Identify and prepare for educational needs of emerging jobs/industries and education

Raw Score	Action Items
103	1. Lobby state legislature for needed changes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Support of community colleges b. Re-establishing school impact fees
94	2. Assess and identify the skill set and/or technical needs of area employers and identify educational gaps.
91	3. Develop a system for the City of Longmont to sponsor facilities for community colleges or identified educational programs/needs.
87	4. Strengthen education at all levels through <u>adequate state funding</u> .
65	5. Encourage expansion of Career Development Center.
58	6. Develop a tracking program to monitor students after high school.
57	7. Develop school-to-work programs with Work Force Center.
51	8. Promote local public assistance (e.g., mill levy) to support community college.

1C: Higher education

Raw Score	Action Items
70	1. Improve and work with Front Range Community College.
52	2. Work more closely with public and private universities.
40	3. Bring graduate business education to Longmont.

1D: Technical/specialty schools

Raw Score	Action Items
66	1. Promote schools/education to fill employer needs and skill set requirements.
50	2. Promote Longmont as ideal place to locate technical/specialty educational institutions.
45	3. Support institutions that promote adult learning (Free University, Magellan Center).

Strategy 2: Designate and develop continuous learning campus(es)

Raw Score	Action Items
104	1. Assist Front Range Community College in locating a permanent campus.
95	2. City, and/or other entities, set aside and develop land for a multipurpose educational campus(es).
76	3. Leverage and build on existing campus investments.
73	4. Promote/market education campus to all continuous learning institutions.
60	5. Bring graduate business education to Longmont.
51	6. Develop grant program for innovative ideas in education programs.
23	7. Create education zones along St. Vrain River corridor.

Strategy 3: Strengthen partnerships between local employers and education systems at all levels (K-12, technical/trade, higher education, etc.)

Raw Score	Action Items
124	1. Develop primary employer and small business mentorship program in schools.
87	2. Develop an incentive program for businesses for: a. Co-op programs b. Internships c. Teaching release programs d. Volunteer mentor programs
79	3. Encourage direct relationships/partnerships with trade/technical schools and the school system.
52	4. Promote “Junior Achievement” program to City-sponsored level.
36	5. Promote Governor’s Summer Work Program, which provides work experience for students.

7. LAND USE

Definition: Land use regulations, when applied in a timely, judicious fashion, are an important factor in shaping a community’s economic success by enhancing the community’s competitiveness. Sound land use decisions ensure fiscal accountability and efficient use of the community’s resources, encourage private investment in the community, and embrace conservation and protection of the natural environment. Proper coordination of land use helps provide balance for the community and influences the community’s quality of life and competitiveness in the global market by facilitating access to services, workers, and customers.

Strategy 1: Target desired and new business types for specific geographic areas

<i>Raw Score</i>	<i>Action Items</i>
64	1. Examine the need for designating land for future business opportunities.
62	2. Seek unique development such as outdoor recreation opportunities.
27	3. Create formula business ordinance.

Strategy 2: Leverage City-owned land for economic development (private/public partnership and investment)

<i>Raw Score</i>	<i>Action Items</i>
60	1. Purchase (City) brownfields downtown and uptown to control the focus and use of the areas.
57	2. Create urban tech village on City property in Urban Renewal Authority.
41	3. Build a kinetic commerce village (mixed use residential/commercial with residential access from alleys with street frontage reserved for commercial and businesses with pedestrian traffic only).

Strategy 3: Create a business-friendly development process

<i>Raw Score</i>	<i>Action Items</i>
30	1. Develop an economic group/position that concentrates on bring in retail development to the City and assisting developments through the City process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Fast track targeted retail developments. b. Provide incentives for planners to complete reviews faster and/or build accountability into the review process.
12	2. Create Enterprise Zones that give economic incentives for development.

Strategy 4: Create a specific zoning/development code for downtown

<i>Raw Score</i>	<i>Action Items</i>
26	1. Create an overlay area in the downtown that allows high-density residential around central downtown.
23	2. Develop master covenants for downtown. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Currently, too many signage restrictions and restrictions regarding what business owners are allowed to do with their store fronts creating a “sameness” in downtown. b. Slow traffic as it goes through downtown.

Strategy 5: Evaluate how local codes (LACP and development code) impact economic vitality

Raw Score	Action Items
108	1. Develop a timely and efficient process for land use decisions.
103	2. Encourage an environment for locally owned businesses.
73	3. Ensure regulations are fair, efficiently implemented, and flexible to take into account the special needs of developments using older buildings; create separate but equal building code for older properties.
71	4. Guide land use within resource limitations, evaluating water resources, power supply, and traffic room.
60	5. Develop methods for the Planning Department to work with the community to gauge impacts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Require a cost/benefit analysis for major developments as part of the planning process b. Require additional public notification in newspapers, to HOAs, and other civic organizations.
58	6. Review LACP frequently to ensure adequate land uses for emerging, job-creating businesses.
57	7. Review influence of parking on land use and vice versa. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Encourage shared parking for uses that have parking needs at different times. b. Evaluate parking requirements, looking into additional review for land use requirements for parking (too much).
46	8. Complete LACP update in Weld County to clarify land uses.
21	9. Require big box stores to provide space to boutique activity characteristic of a local company or industry, e.g., put a McGuckin’s corner in a Lowe’s or Home Depot; hot dog vendor at Home Depot.

Appendix B

ECONOMIC VITALITY ADVISORY GROUP COMMITTEE REPORTS

Following are the original reports from which EVAG recommendations were derived.

Goal 1: Develop a Vision for Downtown

Destination Downtown — Longmont’s Arts and Entertainment District

Committee Participants:

Mary Murphy-Bessler, Gabe Santos, Abe Melendez, Alex Sammoury, Cotton Burden, Baldy Ranson

Goal: Build upon the inherent qualities of downtown to include a prosperous commercial center with notable residential and entertainment development.

Objective #1: Make downtown Longmont more accessible, livable and entertaining.

Rationale: At times in its history Longmont’s downtown has been the community’s central gathering place, at least in large part as a result of its accessibility to outlying neighborhoods, urban residence options, and entertainment venues. The excitement of the central community gathering place can be resurrected through a well-planned, pedestrian-friendly environment defined as the areas of the streets, sidewalks, alleyways, plazas and crosswalks where people walk, shop, sit, play, or interact outside of moving vehicles.

Implementation Strategies:

1. Work with CDOT to allow for immediate angled parking on Main Street thereby increasing the number of parking spaces in front of businesses and making downtown more accessible.
2. Work with CDOT to establish acceptable alternative routes for 287 bypass traffic.
3. Partner with Fast Tracks (RTD) to plan and develop multi-level parking at the TOD leaving more available land for residential and commercial development opportunities, and provide easy access transportation to the downtown from 1st to 9th Avenues.
4. Partner with the CCPA and SVVSD to create a performing and fine arts entertainment and instructional campus in downtown.
5. Promote downtown as the Arts and Entertainment District.
6. Place public art at the boundaries of downtown to serve as gateways and to give the downtown a “sense of place.”
7. Widen sidewalks along Main Street with improved landscaping to enhance pedestrian comfort and allow for more outside restaurant seating.
8. Improve connectivity of existing parking and peripheral businesses to Main Street through alleyway improvements, including architectural lighting, new pavement, unified trash receptacle enclosures, and undergrounding of existing overhead power, telephone and cable lines.

9. Create a functional, aesthetic, walkway connection between the TOD and downtown, paying special attention to minimizing the grade change perception.
10. Partner with the Governors Energy Office (GEO), Department of Local Affairs (DOLA), and LPC to implement a conversion to LED light fixtures and strategies in downtown for event lighting, holiday displays and pedestrian fixtures.

Timeline:

- Strategies 1, 2, 3 and 4 require immediate attention and action and minimal resources beyond City staff time.
- Strategy 5 should be the joint responsibility of the LDDA and the City and should commence with the hiring of a PR firm in 2008. (This may be a use for lodging tax revenue.)
- Strategies 6, 7 and 8 are public improvement projects, the planning of which should commence in 2008 and the construction of which should commence in 2009/2010.
- Strategy 9 should commence in 2008 through the City's participation in the Fast Tracks TOD planning, but construction would not commence until Fast Tracks station construction begins.

Responsibilities:

- City Council
- City staff
- LDDA
- CDOT
- LAVA and the Chamber of Commerce may also be involved in the downtown promotion strategies.

Objective #2: Develop a master plan of downtown that will identify potential development locations for residential, multi-use, entertainment and parking.

Rationale: The downtown currently struggles to attract new businesses and entertainment options because of its lack of resident and visitor density. Identifying appropriate locations for these identified uses will aid the City in attracting and incentivizing catalyst development designed to increase such density, and will aid developers in choosing the most promising locations for their developments.

Implementation Strategy: Hire a consultant to work with the City and the LDDA on a development master plan of downtown Longmont. The plan should include:

- Cultural arts center
- Catalyst mixed-use project with parking
- Transit-oriented development district
- Extension of the LDDA boundaries
- The design of architectural connections throughout the downtown, tying catalyst projects together into a cohesive and identifiable downtown (e.g., tying TOD to cultural arts center)

Timeline:

- Hire consultants to begin work in master plan and transportation opportunities - estimated completion in 2008/2009.
- Cultural arts center –2012
- Mixed-use project – 2010
- Transit-oriented development district – 2014

Responsibilities:

- For policy decisions: City Council
- Master plan: LDDA/City staff (transportation)
- Extension of boundaries: LDDA/City staff and Council
- Cultural arts facility: CCPA
- Catalyst mixed-use project: LDDA/City staff and Council
- Transit-oriented development district: City staff and City Council

Objective #3: Develop and implement incentive programs

Rationale: Stimulate investment in downtown through development incentives and public/private partnership opportunities.

Implementation Strategies:

- Restaurant incentive program (e.g., LDDA or City financial assistance in installing kitchen ventilation systems in older properties)
- TIF façade program
- Sales tax abatement program
- Establish artist cooperative; subsidize art studios to expand the art community
- Establish a partnership with LPC, GEO and DOLA, to pursue grant funding through the Governors New Energy Communitiess (NEC) program to conduct free energy efficiency audits. The recommendations of the audits would be eligible for funding through the existing LPC incentive/rebate programs for business and property owners.

Timeline:

- Restaurant incentive program: 2009
- TIF façade program: 2008
- Sales tax abatement program: 2009
- Artist cooperative: TBD – to be in place when cultural arts center is operational
- Initiate NEC Fall 2008 - 2009

Responsibilities:

- Restaurant incentive program: LDDA/ Economic Development Manager
- TIF façade program: LDDA/City Council
- Sales tax abatement program: City staff and Council
- Artist cooperative: LDDA/Longmont Arts Council/City staff
- NEC: LDDA, LPC, City of Longmont

Goal 2: Focus on Longmont's Identity (Branding)

General focus should be to create and nurture a positive identity for various areas of the community. This group envisions the brand as an umbrella where the sections of fabric between the ribs could each be representative of aspects of the community.

In our discussions, we considered five questions:

1. Process

Conduct focus groups to gain information from the communities to establish how we view ourselves. Examples would be groups from the business, city staff, residents, employers, tourist and visitors.

Recommendations and Resources: Use LAVA established tax funds. Hire a staff member to help market and maintain brand. Require that groups funded by the city demonstrate that they will actively support the brand in their work.

2. Resources available

- A. For tourist and visitor portion: LAVA
- B. Business identity: Business groups such as LAEC, industry groups, LSBA, private interests. As stated above, require groups granted funds from the City of Longmont for contract services to devote some work under the contract to fund and support the brand.
- C. Should also consider using a portion of business permit fees to help fund promoting and maintaining the brand.
- D. City staff member to help coordinate branding effort to ensure that the brand is being communicated consistently by various groups. Staff member would help review contracts to ensure that brand is being supported.

3. Groups or agency responsible for implementation and maintenance of brand

- A. City of Longmont to hire a staff member to oversee funding and function as an overseer of the brand.
- B. Paid consultant or outside agency where necessary will assist with survey work, focus groups, organize and assemble data, and make recommendations to create the brand.
- C. Form a group of stakeholders from the groups that relate back to brand that would meet quarterly to assess state-of-the-branding effort. Major potential stakeholders could include LAEC, the Chamber, LSBA, Latino Chamber Community Services staff member, Economic Development Department staff, and arts community, along with other stakeholders as they are identified.
- D. Minor stakeholders would represent their interests by working with major stakeholders to bring their views to the table.

4. How can tourism and educational branding efforts be included in a comprehensive approach to citywide branding?

- A. City takes the lead in all branding efforts. A comprehensive, consistent, single-entity coordinated approach is recommended. The umbrella approach (namely that all aspects of citywide identity fall under the umbrella) acknowledges many groups/entities have a part in forming and maintaining the brand. The brand has many aspects, like the sections of an umbrella, which can't function unless the sections are individually articulated.
- B. As stated previously, any entity or group receiving funds from the city via contract, grant funding, staff-supported resources, or facilities resources should demonstrate support for the established citywide brand as a requirement for funding.
- C. It is assumed that since the establishment of the lodger's tax was to form a marketing plan and establish some infrastructure and/or activities for tourists and visitors to persuade them to come and stay in the city, some of the lodger's tax money should be spent to establish the brand of the city. This marketing should not be directed solely for the recreational visitor but for business visitors as well.

5. How does the city accomplish and maintain its brand?

- A. Establish a timeline to complete initial citywide branding. Suggest beginning ASAP.
- B. Recommend to begin to fund branding efforts in the 2009 budget.
- C. Recommend that a local consultant be brought in to assist with organizing branding effort. Also recommend that staff position be established to supervise and coordinate the process. Envision a type of individual with skills and background in PR and/or marketing.
- D. Recommend that guidelines be required and written into the next cycle of contracts, grant applications and other city supported funding mechanisms to see how current vision is articulated. Develop criteria that ensure that groups receiving City support relate to the brand.
- E. Recommend that work begins immediately on the development of measurement tools to gauge how the brand is being supported and communicated.

Goal 3: Expand the City's Role in Economic Development Activities

Committee Participants: Tom Miller, Sharon King, Richard Juday, John Cody, Pam Gibson, Roger Lange

OBJECTIVE #1: Raise the status of economic development within City government

Rationale:

- Communicate to all city departments and the public that economic development (ED) is highly valued.
- Demonstrate a unified effort toward economic vitality in Longmont.
- Show industry prospects that Longmont government is serious about ED.

Implementation Strategies:

- Elevate ED manager's position to department director to ensure that ED is at the table for all City discussions.
- Integrate ED Department into all City policy initiatives.
- Get input from ED Department (along with all other departments) to complete the information loop.
- Provide ED training to all City departments so staff understands the value and effectiveness of ED and knows their impact on the City's ED efforts.
- Implement ED policy at the Council level.
- Articulate Council's ED policies to demonstrate Council's support for ED.

Timeline:

Immediate

Responsibility:

City Council

Resources:

All those currently available to and within the City

Measurements:

- Council's approval of ED manager's position change
- ED Department created as independent city department (not under another department)
- ED Department included at the table
- Written and disseminated Council ED policy
- Reference and adherence to that policy
- Certification by each department that ED training was completed

OBJECTIVE #2: Create an Economic Development Department to unify ED efforts and fill gaps within the city

Rationale:

There was unanimous agreement that there should be an Economic Development (ED) Department to:

- Provide strong, healthy, consistent and sustainable ED direction.
- Interact with all relevant City departments.
- Oversee and coordinate *all* ED functions, including functions performed by contracted organizations, volunteer individuals and committees.
- Establish a development coordination function to marshal development applications through the regulatory approval process.

Implementation Strategies:

- Assign coordination of redevelopment and development to the ED Department and the ED Director.
- Make the ED Director the City's spokesperson on ED issues.
- Develop a 2009-10 ED strategic plan for Longmont and a work plan for the ED Department.
- Update ED strategic plan every five years= or more often as needed.
- Review incentive policy on an ongoing basis; propose changes and additions to Council that may assist in attracting and retaining primary employers.
- Present an annual "State of the Economy" report.
- Provide ED intelligence and industry forecasts to City Council as needed to guide policy decisions, such as incentives, land use, and infrastructure.
- Encourage industry leaders in Longmont to promote the community within their industries and larger markets; encourage them to become part of the ED process.
- Establish an advisory committee for ED Department to promote early identification of technology with commercial applications.

Timeline:

- Within six months (by 2008 year end)
- Strategic Plan – 2009

Responsibilities:

- For policy decisions – Council
- For strategic planning and actual implementation – ED director, ED Department

Resources:

- Allocate adequate staff to meet implementation strategies.
- Consider moving functions – and staff – that already exist elsewhere into ED Department.
- This might not change overall funding from the City (positions may shift laterally).
- Strategic plan – Economic Alliance, City departments, Council, industry leaders; consider outside resources and professionals.

Measurements:

- Complete implementations
- Meet timelines

OBJECTIVE #3: Reinvigorate Economic Alliance Committee to act as an advisory group to ED Department

Committee voted unanimously that Economic Alliance should not be an oversight body.

Timeline:

Immediate

Responsibility:

ED Director

Resources:

ED Department

Measurement:

Meeting calendar dates set for balance of 2008, beginning in or before August

OBJECTIVE #4: Make sure there is an awareness of human capital assets available within the community for further economic development

Rationale:

The ED Department should advocate improving Longmont's competitiveness through

- The quality of workforce within the region
- Education and training centers

Implementation Strategy:

ED Department should be integrated into workforce and education initiatives to promote talent development for future workforce needs.

Timeline:

2009

Responsibility:

ED Department

Resources:

- Workforce Boulder County
- SBDC
- Regis University
- Front Range Community College
- St. Vrain Valley School District

Measurements:

Perform a periodic assessment of workforce quality by tapping industry experts and business owners.

OBJECTIVE #5: Communicate ED benefits to business and citizenry on an ongoing basis

Rationale:

- The community should know about ED policies, programs, benefits, and positive impact on the city.
- As the business community and general public learn about ED Department accomplishments, they will better understand ED's value.
- Broad participation in a well-planned and articulated ED effort will have momentum and produce tangible results.

Implementation Strategy:

- Create a communication strategy to inform Longmont businesses and the public about the work and impact of the ED Department and citywide ED efforts.
- Match department action plan and resources to enable a consistent effort.
- Conduct SBIR seminars to explain how to succeed in the SBIR world.
- Provide information about traditional and special finance opportunities, such as procurement, microloans, NIST, NREL and others.

Timeline:

Once department is established and actionable

Responsibilities:

- ED Department
- City Public Information Officer

Resources:

- City Public Information Officer
- City utility bill newsletter (City Line)
- Website
- Economic Alliance
- LENS
- Business support organizations
- Citizens who have expertise in special funding opportunities

Measurements:

Hearing ED "buzz" in the community in 2009.

OBJECTIVE #6: Support and expand business assistance to increase effectiveness of programs

Rationale:

Adequate support for business assistance will increase effectiveness and allow targeted outreach to small- and mid-sized businesses that produce economic impact – jobs, sales tax, capital investment – in Longmont

Implementation Strategy:

Continue to reevaluate and restructure delivery of the LEGI program using strategic partners (SBDC, market research partners, etc.) and staff members within the newly created ED Department.

Timeline:

2009

Responsibility:

ED Department and strategic partners

Resources:

Business assistance programs and other business assistant partners

Measurements:

Documented small- and mid-size business successes/improvements

Goal 4: Retail Direction

A diverse and comprehensive retail business sector provides choice and convenience for residents, reduces the flow of money outside the community, and creates a stable, growing tax base to support high quality community services and infrastructure improvements.

Goal:

Establish Longmont as a retail center that provides a variety of shopping venues and serves as a destination for attracting local and regional consumers.

Rationale:

TBD

Objective #1: Develop and implement a retail policy plan

Action Items:

1. Promote a business-friendly development process that may include a one-stop-shop for retailers that focuses on expediting permits and reducing unnecessary red tape.
2. Develop targeted incentives for retail development based on business type, location, and the overall scale of the project. Use this tool to help create retail niches and emphasize the uniqueness of Longmont.
3. Create a data depository for prospective parties interested in retail development by providing accurate information on Longmont as a potential market.
4. Encourage retail as part of mixed-use development or redevelopment projects.
5. Include retail as an element in a community wide branding campaign.
6. Ensure that retail is included in a business retention and expansion program.
7. Develop a program that assists entrepreneurs in creating retail businesses that promote sales tax revenue and job creation.
8. Include retail questions in the annual City of Longmont citizen's survey.
9. Support local awareness campaigns that promote shopping locally and with independently owned businesses. This includes the Think Local First and Longmont Shop Local programs.
10. Coordinate retail development requirements with planned infrastructure improvements.
11. Develop a marketing campaign that that incorporates ideas such as Internet network of local businesses, retail rewards program, and community events supporting retail activity.

Timeline:

Complete policy plan by end of 2009.

Responsibility:

City of Longmont

Objective #2: Expand resources and keep current on retail industry to meet retail policies as identified

Action Items:

1. Employ individuals with retail development and marketing skills or expertise.
2. Attend retail conferences such as ICSC and programs through IEDC for current industry trends.
3. Periodically update the Retail Opportunities Study.

Timeline:

Ongoing

Responsibility:

City of Longmont and local partners (LAVA, COC, DDA, LSBA, BCLCC)

Objective #3: Establish and maintain effective partnerships between the City and retail sector

Action Items:

1. Support the creation of a Retail Merchants Association.
2. Expand the Economic Alliance to include representatives from the retail and the real estate communities.
3. Implement strategies to link tourism (City's role) with retail commerce.

Timeline:

Immediate and ongoing

Responsibility:

City of Longmont, Economic Alliance, LAR, and local partners

Appendix C

Letter from Richard Juday, Tom McCoy, Richard Hansen and Sarah Levison

VITALITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

In preparing recommendations to Council regarding economic vitality for Longmont, the task force shows a mixture of micro-vision and large-scale perspective. This note presents a philosophical contemplation toward a large-scale overarching structure. Our thesis is: *Sustainability is an integral part of economic vitality.* To verbalize that as a plan for Council’s action, we say that the City must live within its means, now and in planning for the future. That sounds almost too simplistic and obvious. We describe some practical applications of the principle for City management. As a descriptive and quantitative tool we use Margin, the difference between present consumption and ultimate capacity, in several parameters related to sustainability.

We refer to some of the limitations of the conventional resources, capacities, and attractive features of Longmont such as follow in the Table. (The list is unavoidably incomplete and the taxonomy is not definitive.)

Some Elements of Margins

Character of Resource	Exemplar
Renewing, but finite in any year	Water
Constructible	Housing Power supply Streets
Consumed when used or converted	Open space and parks Energy sources Historic buildings
Valuable, potentially ephemeral, and needing conservation	Cultural organizations Classroom capacity
Headroom for population change	Difference between present and what can be accommodated

These resource elements are not infinite, they are not static, they are somewhat overlapping, and they trade off against each other in complex ways. For instance, open space trades with total house count with acres being the medium of exchange; power supply trades with streets with bucks in the City budget being the medium of exchange; etc. The examples are not quite exact, as acreage is not so fungible as dollars.

Two points are central to our thesis.

- The overall vitality of the community depends on our being within livable and comfortable boundaries on resources.
- We must not regard the Margin's "headroom" between present position and ultimate resources as a product to be mined as quickly as possible.

We propose that the Margin be managed and conserved in an explicit manner. Rather than ruminate "OK, we've been growing at only 2% per year, and that's not bad!" planners should instead take the perspective that "Uh-oh, at present growth rates we'll have to quit watering lawns in only a dozen years!" There is a great difference, for example, between "Growth at 2% per year" and "Growing into Margin by 2% per year." The former is not a sustainable management method; the latter is quite workable.

This brings us to the process of City planning, and we recommend some changes to the City's planning process:

1. Describe the Margin in our multi-parameter environment as a generalization of the table given above.
2. Quantify our present posture.
3. Chart the expected history of the Margin's parameters. (To take water as an example, will our water supply diminish with anticipated global warming? If we do all the development anticipated or allowed in the Comprehensive Plan, would that take us past our resource limitations?)
4. For any major planned City action, analyze the action to quantify its impact on the Margin, both immediately and in the predictable future.
5. Make decisions so as to manage the Margin.

And strongly related to the above:

6. Continually discern between *growth* and *vitality*; they are not synonymous.
7. Exercise related fiscal constraint; separate the operational funds from the capital improvement ones related to Margin. (Again, the water example: Tap fees could be accounted for in the same column with construction of water treatment facilities, but should not be applied to day-to-day operational expenses.)

A worthy corollary and Margin management tool is:

8. Establish and observe benchmarks.

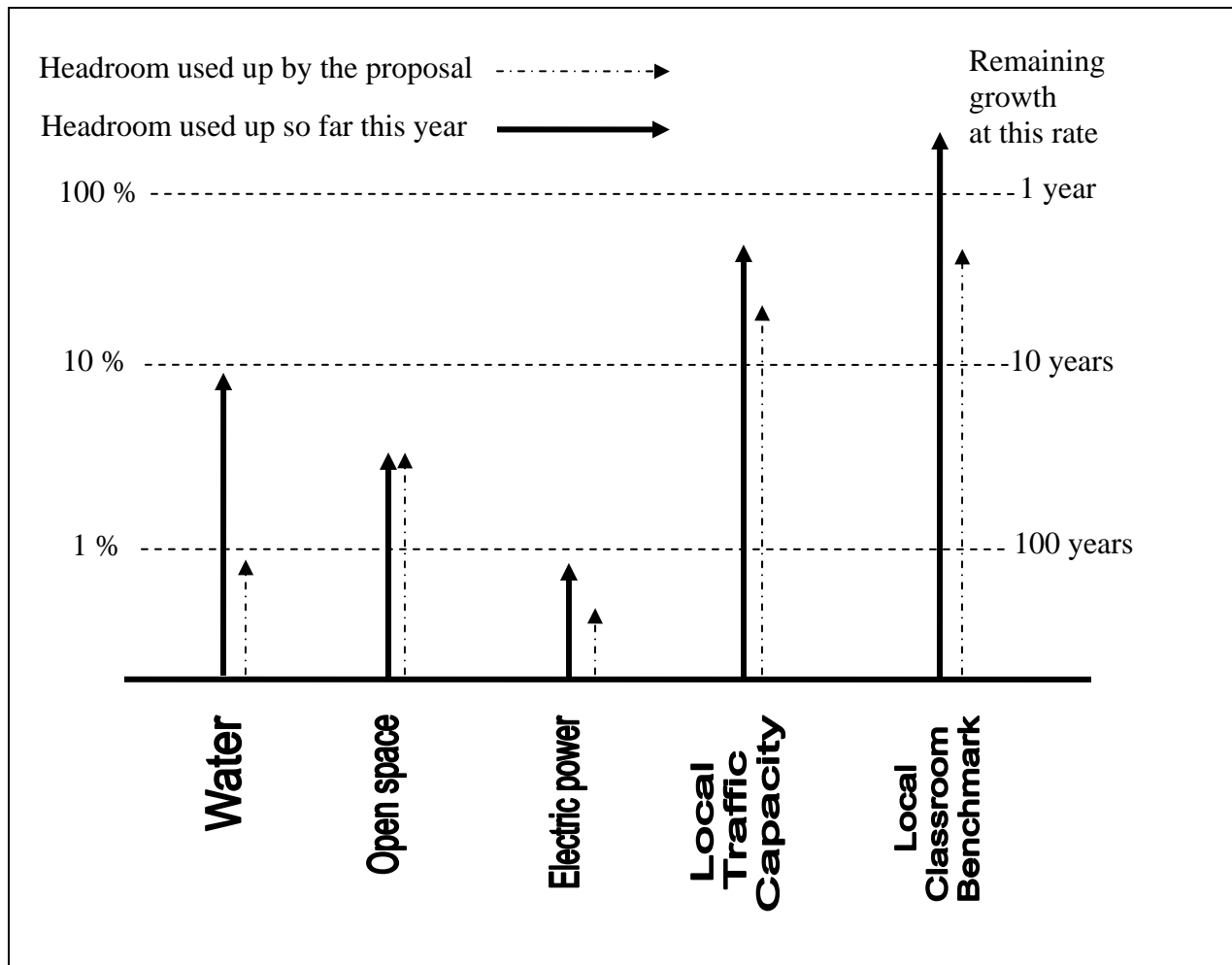
To state things thus is to put into words a planning process that we think has probably lain somewhere north of subliminal but south of explicit and quantitative.

That's the Big Picture/Executive Summary. We now elaborate.

PLANNING WITHIN MARGIN

Every proposed plan should be quantified for its erosion into sustainability headroom. A capital-M "Margin" refers to the multi-parameter border between what we are using now and what we have currently available. We recommend that every City planning action *explicitly take into account* the anticipated long-term *incursion into margins*. For example, the few examples of margin to be found in the Comprehensive Plan (land area, notably) should be extended to include the operative and infrastructure elements. An example of the use of Margin

would be in the presentation of a new housing development. The impact should expressly show the amount of overhead remaining in the various aspects of the Margin, before and after the proposed change occurs. See the Chart for an example. A proposed development uses up 1% of the reserve capacity of the City’s water supply, compared with 10% we have already allocated this year; consumes 5% of the City’s available open space, and none else has been consumed this year; hardly touches the electrical generating capacity; soaks up 20% of the remaining ability of nearby roads to handle traffic, which have had half their remaining capacity accounted for this year; and by itself uses half the headroom in classroom benchmarks, but in combination with other activity this year carries the local schools to 20% over their benchmarks.



Simplistically, the concept of Margin is related to Benchmarks. We have two comments on the lip service Council presently pays to Benchmarks in this context. First, so far as we can see, a planning action is currently considered only as to whether it causes the City to exceed some stated threshold. We think that the City should instead ask of each planning action *what portion of existing headroom* (Margin) the action uses up. That is just simple budgeting. Second, even the in-place Benchmarks are ignored or finessed. If a benchmark or Margin is to serve its

purpose, Council must have the resolve to honor it. In a prominent example of some currency, school overcrowding is highly visible evidence of poor planning, ignoring benchmarks, and a consequently stressed school system. Yet a widely acknowledged element of economic vitality – a high quality school system for the families of a courted business – is adversely impacted.

INFRASTRUCTURE

A visibly solid infrastructure is necessary for long-term sustainability and economic vitality. A business being courted for relocation to Longmont will want to be sure it can operate for decades. Maintenance, remediation, or replacement of infrastructure must be part of the long-term budgeting. When budgets become tight, we think that the City should maintain a publicly visible list – a kind of “wish list” – of infrastructure elements that have been dropped off of the maintenance list, given in priority order for reinstatement. If the City must go to the citizenry and ask for a tax increase, this list takes on an obvious significance.

CONFUSION BETWEEN GROWTH AND VITALITY

Growth and economic vitality are *not synonymous* for the City, regardless of what advantages growth might appear to have for the City in the short term (tap fees, building permit fees) or for special interests (construction and real estate development). Counter examples:

- Replacing an outmoded or failed business – or indeed, one that has done so well it moves away, an all too common experience in Colorado – with another need not incur growth. This is vitality without growth.
- Residential areas do not “pay their way” in that the cost to service them (roads, sewer, water, electricity, police, fire) exceeds housing tax revenues. Residential growth comes at an actual expense and can be deleterious to vitality. We are seeing the results of “allowing the market to adjust itself” with record foreclosures in residential housing. This is growth without vitality.

MANAGING GROWTH INTO MARGIN

An honest growth plan must acknowledge that there is a limit to growth. Even a supposedly modest “2% per year” statement on growth implies, in the mathematical sense, an exponential growth, which is distinctly not limited. A truly stated limitation on growth might take the form that in any year, no more than a certain percentage of any existing Margin parameter will be consumed. (Margin can, of course, be adjusted for good reason from time to time – a favored example is adding land area by brownfield reclamation.)

An important consideration for Council is the time scale for which it plans. If the time horizon is pushed a few more decades out, exponential growth is even direr. We have been blessed with our choice of agricultural community forefathers, who assured a water supply for many decades. Council would do our offspring well to keep a decades-long perspective also. We are ultimately to be limited by one resource or another; the only question is how hard our planning will crash us into our boundaries.

TAX INCREMENT FINANCING

Public incentives should be considered carefully. A full and complete and long-term cost-benefit analysis is necessary. Right now there is little or no full public oversight of the cost-benefit tradeoffs, for either residential or retail development. The computations and projections

should include taxes and the load placed on infrastructure (including health care, education, livable wage, impact on mil levies, and the impact to existing local businesses).

REDEVELOPMENT VS. GREEN-FIELD DEVELOPMENT

As we approach build-out, all change comes by redevelopment. The short-term benefit of cheaper greenfield development comes at the price of unrestrained long-term cost. Before we go down the path to rampant greenfield development we should address the redevelopment of existing areas. We need to take a definitive position on long-standing problem areas like downtown redevelopment, the flour mill, the sugar mill and the outdated Horizon Mall. We should not look at only greenfield development with its short-term and easy – but ultimately costly to Margin – solutions that have illusory faux profitability.

LIMITING THE SIZE OF THE CITY

There is an optimal size for Longmont, and the build-out plan recognizes that fact. “Size” means more than the area included within the City limits; it also includes population count, City budget, governmental staffing, and other elements. This fact deserves more attention and space than it is allotted here and should be given its own white paper.

Respectfully submitted:

Richard Juday

Tom McCoy

Rich Hansen

Sarah Levison

Appendix D

SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

EDUCATION

- Educated population
- Educated work force
- Higher education opportunities (CU, CSU, DU, UNC, FRCC)
- Educational access
- High quality K-12 education system

INFRASTRUCTURE SYSTEMS

- Independent power utility
- Water
- Strong public services and amenities
- Affordable utilities
- Good basic infrastructure (water, sewer services; police, fire, etc.)
- Transportation infrastructure
- Commuter rail stop coming soon (flour mill?, sugar mill?)
- Transportation infrastructure
- Airport
- Existing highway systems
- FasTracks—planning
- Regional hub for St. Vrain region

QUALITY PLANNING

- Boulder County location – IGA
- DRCOG agreement – Vision 2020
- LACP that reflects the community’s values
- Our comprehensive plan amended with care
- Significant land areas for new development

QUALITY OF LIFE

- Cultural/arts programs are plentiful (Vance Brand Auditorium, Museum, small orgs.)
- Environment – off the corridor; mountain access; mountain vistas; open space
- Recreational opportunities
- Health care
- Medical access
- Affordable housing
- Housing diversity

COMMUNITY

- Standalone community – open space
- History as independent City of Longmont
- Location
- Strong neighborhoods
- Strong sense of community
- Family community – parades
- Small town atmosphere – know your neighbor
- Active citizenry
- “Focus on Longmont”
- Quality of local government
- Willingness to include citizens in growth decisions
- Collaborative policy process
- Public/private partnerships (LAEC, CTEK)
- Citizens who participate
- People willing to volunteer their time
- Active nonprofit sector
- Community celebrates and encourages diversity
- Diversity of employers
- Diverse population

BUSINESS CLIMATE

- Business-friendly environment
- Quality primary employers (good corp. citizens)
- Job/employment center of St. Vrain region
- Primary high paying jobs
- Redevelopment opportunities for downtown, sugar/flour mills, and Twin Peaks Mall area
- Strong local business community
- Community responsive to industry needs
- High-tech entrepreneurial opportunities
- Low cost of doing business
- Attractive growth environment; scenery; infrastructure (services, housing, office/manufacturing space)

DOWNTOWN

- Attractive downtown historic Main Street
- Historic downtown
- Having a downtown

WEAKNESSES

CHALLENGES OF RETAIL

- Gaps in retail
- Lack of dynamic anchor on Main Street
- Lack of updated cinemaplex
- Retail—aging mall, downtown not reaching potential, gaps/lack of variety
- Outdated mall
- Highway through downtown historic area
- Too much traffic in downtown
- Outlook about downtown use
- Ease of parking/getting around downtown
- Retail opportunities in downtown

PLANNING/DEVELOPMENT/POLICY ISSUES

- Development process time frames not defined
- Growth
- Community vision for Weld County adjacent areas to existing city limits
- Chaotic development in Weld County (lack of Weld County planning)
- Unclear LACP boundary (east)
- Lack of mixed-use development
- City development process
- Inadequate staff for development pressures
- Lack of architectural review
- Growth too fast
- Conservative attitude toward growth
- Divisive discussions around growth vs. no-growth instead of quality growth
- City makes decisions without adequate input from those most affected (e.g., downtown garage)
- Need cost/benefit analysis of new development
- Not enough focus on investment vs. cost
- Lack of incentives for redevelopment
- Not annexed out to I-25
- Gang policing
- Balkanization of economic development activities (e.g., turf battles, tensions, funding spread thin)

COMMUNITY IMAGE

- Diversity and culture
- Culinary culture does not support diversity of dining. Not an eating destination.
- Lack of cultural opportunities (performance center)s
- Need to promote our heritage, history, and architecture
- Public safety – gangs
- Geographic location
- Visual of city – sugar mill and South Main
- Perceptions of image – gangs, agricultural
- Ugly fences on main thoroughfares
- Not capitalizing on our view of mountains
- View of big box backs
- No identifiable core to send people to
- Establishment resistant to new groups and ideas (no longer a small pond)

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Need another north/south major arterial
- Rail disruptions to traffic along Ken Pratt Blvd.
- Bike paths/pedestrian connections to retail/commercial

EMPLOYMENT

- More primary jobs
- High tech employment concentration
- Job wages too low
- In-home businesses not integrated

EDUCATION

- Front Range Community College in rented space
- School district perception
- Struggling school district (rural-urban, funding)

REAL ESTATE MARKET

- Vacant office space
- Over supply of housing/commercial/industrial space
- Homes for sale
- Banking loans effect on resale houses

OPPORTUNITIES

REDEVELOPMENT/LAND USE

- Sugar mill and flour mill land
- Build new or remodel fairgrounds
- Upscale shopping needs
- Private/public partnerships for development (parking garage)
- Redevelopment of existing buildings
- Redirect traffic from downtown
- Continue downtown revitalization
- Fill commercial vacancies with desirable businesses
- Renew Main Street from 1st to 17th Avenues
- Revitalize Twin Peaks Mall
- Redevelopment opportunities/urban renewal
- Downtown parking garage
- Realign Highway 287 off of Main Street
- Historical core area – downtown
- Capitalize on managed Highway 287 downtown traffic
- Work with Weld County (southwest)
- Improve time frames of planning process
- Land supply – vacant and new development
- Land use reform
- More mixed-use neighborhoods
- East Longmont development
- Protect our eastern gateway
- Available commercial space for potential users
- Creating TOD zoning district
- Build better retail centers (life style vs. strip mall)
- Union Reservoir

QUALITY OF LIFE

- Hispanic cultural opportunity
- Entertainment, arts, theater
- Build performing arts center
- Build ethnic relationships
- Downtown events
- Regional art community
- Art in Public Places, cultural art shows
- Live stage venue (Union Colony)
- St. Vrain Greenway – river/natural amenities
- Bike paths along St. Vrain
- River walk along St. Vrain
- St. Vrain River for restaurants, shops, walkways
- Recreation – hockey
- Senior opportunities
- Health/medical opportunities

EDUCATION

- Bring executive education to Longmont
- Higher education expansion
- Reform school system
- Make St. Vrain School District stronger
- Involve Front Range Community College into Longmont

IDENTITY

- Boulder County mystique
- Tourism (conference center, I-25, RMNP, gateway)
- Promotional materials/branding
- “All America City” marketing (capitalize on designation)

TRANSPORTATION

- Move railroad tracks to Weld County
- Expand airport
- Regional transportation hub
- Evolving transportation system (FasTracks, Highway 287, Highway 119, I-25, E470)
- Railroad/underground subway
- Improve traffic flows

CAPITALIZE ON SHIFTING AND MORPHING BUSINESS TRENDS

- Growth of business
- Supporting incubator businesses
- Start-up businesses
- Large businesses
- Technology, cluster, niche, innovation identity
- New organizations (CDC, mixed-use housing/commercial)

ENVIRONMENT

- Build new homes with green materials
- Recycling and renewable products
- Zero wastes
- Resource conservation
- Elimination – pollution

THREATS

SUSTAINABILITY

- Environment (green building, wildlife)
- Transportation system
- Natural resources (water, power, infrastructure)
- Aging of primary job opportunities

DYNAMICS OF IDENTITY

- Not working on creating a unique community
- Old and new have not come together
- Community complacency (local schools, outlook, community college)
- Issues dividing the community

EXTERNAL INFLUENCES

- National and world economies
- Competition for funding and jobs
- Business headquarters located outside the community
- Illegal immigration
- Limitations on revenues (city base)
- Mandated expenditures (city base)
- Lack of physical participation in I-25 boom
- Only small area is left for development
- Weld County sprawl – growth
- Other small towns growing into us
- Competition from dynamic Boulder and Loveland

EDUCATION

- Quality of education
- Floating school benchmark
- Decline of school systems
- Higher education opportunities
- Public perception/education around statistical research and decision making

LACK OF RETAIL DIVERSITY

- Retail leakage
- Retail uniformity – same stores, same design
- Retail sales controlled by few
- Big box overkill
- Small business failures

REAL ESTATE

- Excessive Main Street vacancies
- Overstock of commercial real estate
- Declining home ownership/foreclosure rates
- Overstock of residential real estate