



MULTIMODAL & COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Adopted June 28, 2016

Acknowledgements

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Brian Bagley
Polly Christensen
Dennis Coombs, Mayor
Bonnie Finely
Jeff Moore
Joan Peck
Gabe Santos
Sarah Levison (former Council member)

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

David Andrews, Alternate
Charles Brunot
Janell Flaig
Joshua Goldberg
Judson Hite
Selina Koler, Alternate
Michael Polan
Michael Shernick
Chris Teta
Scott Dunn (former Commissioner)
Erin Hutchinson (former Commissioner)

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Buzz Feldman
Gary Graca
Jeff Isleman
Mike Jarvis
Robert Lee
Michelle Wade-Mabie

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John Caldwell, Water Board
Mayor Dennis Coombs, City Council
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Janell Flaig, Planning and Zoning Commission
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Jeff Ilseman, Transportation Advisory Board
Anne Kear, Longmont Housing Authority
Gay Kuhlmann, Housing and Human Services Advisory Board
Bob Lee, Transportation Advisory Board
Charles Russel Lyman (Russ), Historic Preservation Commission
Sean O'Halloran, Senior Citizens Advisory Board
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Thaxter Williams, Downtown Development Authority
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Sarah Levison, City Council (former Council member)

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Bob Ball, Public Works and Natural Resources
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Erin Fosdick, Planning and Development Services
Jeff Friesner, Community Services
Phil Greenwald, Planning and Development Services
Lisa Knoblauch, Public Works and Natural Resources
Kathy Kron, Public Works and Natural Resources
Joni Marsh, Planning and Development Services
Peter Perez, Public Safety
David Starnes, Redevelopment Services
Michele Waite, Community Services
Dan Wolford, Public Works and Natural Resources
Cal Youngberg, Public Works and Natural Resources

CONSULTANT TEAM

Clarion Associates
Felsburg, Holt, & Ullevig
Economic and Planning Systems, Inc.
Urban Interactive Studio

PHOTO CREDIT

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PLAN FRAMEWORK



PLAN FRAMEWORK

ABOUT ENVISION LONGMONT

In early 2015, the City of Longmont initiated an exciting, community wide planning effort to update and integrate the Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan (LACP) and the Longmont Multimodal Transportation Plan (MMTP). Branded as “Envision Longmont,” the process was designed to engage a diverse cross-section of the community in a discussion about the City’s future—providing an opportunity for the community to reflect on Longmont’s strengths and assets, and to explore future possibilities.

As the City’s Comprehensive Plan, Envision Longmont plays a critical role in weaving together previous planning efforts and addresses emerging trends to shape a positive future for the community. Envision Longmont was informed by numerous plans, studies, and initiatives developed by the City and its many local and regional partners in recent years. Related plans and studies that played a particularly significant role in the process include: Advance Longmont; the Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan; the Open Space and Trails Master Plan and Wildlife Management Plan; Resilient St. Vrain (underway); Blueprint St. Vrain (underway); the Sustainability Plan (underway); the Boulder County Hazard Mitigation Plan; and the Age Well Boulder County Strategic Plan. A complete list of related plans and studies is referenced in the Envision Longmont Community Profile report.

A TRADITION OF CITY PLANNING

Longmont has a tradition of city planning that dates back to the establishment of the Chicago Colorado Colony in 1871. With the adoption of the St. Vrain Valley Plan in 1974, the City solidified this tradition in response to a period of rapid growth and change. The City revised the St. Vrain Valley Plan in 1982. In 1986, the City of Longmont again revised the St. Vrain Valley Plan, in response to conditions affecting the City at that time, and renamed it the Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan (LACP). The City updated the Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan in 1995 and again in 2003. The Multimodal Transportation Plan (MMTP) was adopted by the City of Longmont in 2005 to address bicycle, pedestrian, public transit and automobile modes of transportation in greater detail than the Transportation chapter of the Longmont Areas Comprehensive Plan, but drew heavily from the future land use vision set forth in the LACP.



Photo: Longmont Museum

Legislative Authority

The Comprehensive Plan is a public document and official statement of land use policy approved by the Planning & Zoning Commission and adopted by the City Council. State law authorizes the City to adopt a comprehensive or master plan pursuant to Section 31-23-206 of the Colorado Revised Statutes as amended. Although the Planning & Zoning Commission is the agency expressly authorized by state law to prepare and adopt the final Comprehensive Plan, the City Council also possesses the legislative power to establish land use planning policies for the City. State law recognizes the legislative authority of the municipality's governing body by expressly requiring that the Planning & Zoning Commission's adopted comprehensive plan be subject to approval of the City Council. In effect, the Comprehensive Plan is not fully effective until the City Council approves the plan.

How to Use the Plan

Envision Longmont is an advisory document that outlines Longmont's aspirations for the future. As such, it plays several important roles: 1) The Plan provides policy guidance for elected and appointed officials in making choices regarding the long-range needs of the community; 2) It helps inform residents, property and business owners, developers, and others invested in or considering investing in Longmont's plans for the future and its general priorities for implementation; and 3) It promotes continued coordination and collaboration with neighboring jurisdictions and the many public, private, and nonprofit agencies that play a significant role in the City's future and the quality of life of its residents.

The Plan consists of both written policy recommendations and maps, which should be used together when making decisions. The Plan is also supported by numerous functional plans prepared and periodically updated by the City that should be referenced for additional detail regarding capital needs and project planning. These plans include, but are not limited to the Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan; the Open Space and Trails Master Plan; Wildlife Management Plan; the Water Supply and Drought Management Plan; Water Conservation Master Plan; Raw Water Master Plan Update.

The long-range planning horizon of this Plan requires that it be flexible and adapt to changing conditions. This document should be reviewed and revised as needed to reflect the availability of new implementation tools, changes in state and federal law, changes in funding sources, the results of monitoring the effectiveness of existing policies and the impacts of past decisions, as well as to reflect changes in the community's vision for the future.

Plan Amendments

The Comprehensive Plan is a document that the City can amend to meet changing conditions. If the Plan is too rigid, the City may make decisions that are inconsistent with changing community goals, policies, and strategies. Therefore, the City provides processes for plan amendments. Amendments are one of the factors that contribute to the Plan's success in guiding the City's growth and development and helping shape a positive future for Longmont.

Since the Comprehensive Plan is a guide and not a regulation, there may be competing goals, policies, and strategies in the Plan. At any given time, some goals, policies, and strategies are more important than others, depending on the circumstances associated with specific applications. The City will attach different weights to different criteria on a case-by-case basis. The City's decision on an amendment will reflect the different emphasis it places on different criteria.

The City does not necessarily base its decision on an amendment on the specific number of goals or policies met. An amendment may have a public benefit, and the City may approve it even if the amendment is contrary to some of the goals, policies, or strategies within the Plan. Tradeoffs may be faced during the process for controversial projects that provide benefits to the City as a whole yet may impact local neighborhoods or businesses.

There are three types of amendments to the Plan: text amendments, land use amendments, and Longmont Planning Area amendments. Both private parties and the City can initiate amendments to the Plan. Some amendments require a referral to City Council before the City begins to process the amendment. This allows City Council to consider whether or not it wants to devote Planning and Zoning Commission and staff resources to reviewing the amendment.

Staff will bring proposed amendments to the City Council for its review semiannually. Amendment applications received by the City will be evaluated and presented to Council in April and October of each calendar year. For specific requirements and review standards for amending the Plan, see the Land Development Code.

AMENDMENTS THAT REQUIRE A REFERRAL TO CITY COUNCIL

Text Amendments

Text Amendments are proposed changes to the text of Envision Longmont.

Longmont Planning Area Amendments

Longmont Planning Area Amendments add new properties, with land use designations, to the Longmont Planning Area.

AMENDMENTS THAT DO NOT REQUIRE A REFERRAL TO CITY COUNCIL

Land Use Amendments

Land Use Amendments are changes to the land use designations or the multimodal transportation system on the maps in the Plan (regardless of whether the area is in the Longmont Planning Area or the Municipal Service Area).

Factors Influencing the Plan

Envision Longmont was influenced by a number of factors which helped to shape discussions with the community and the recommendations contained in this Plan. Each of these factors is discussed briefly below:

WHERE AND HOW SHOULD WE GROW?

Longmont is expected to add approximately 24,165 new residents by 2035. Balancing future growth with the need to protect the distinct character and quality of life of the community will require careful consideration about where and how future growth occurs. While some previously undeveloped land remains within the planning area, a growing proportion of future growth will need to occur in the form of infill and redevelopment in established areas of Longmont. This “inward” focus will allow for the efficient expansion of local and regional transportation options—transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian systems—which will be essential as the City grows.

HOW CAN WE PROACTIVELY ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF OUR CHANGING POPULATION?

Although it is comprised primarily of families today, Longmont’s population is becoming increasingly diverse in terms of its age, income levels, and ethnicity. As a result, a greater variety of housing types and living situations is needed. As children grow up and leave parents with “empty nests” some will desire to downsize to smaller homes. Likewise, as residents age, their needs will change. Millennials (ages 20 to 34 years) are declining as a percentage of the population and may find it harder to live and work in Longmont with an entry level job, or find employment, housing, and multimodal options

that suit their lifestyle. Older adults, which are set to become the largest segment of the population over the next 20-30 years, will require housing and services that meets their unique needs, especially when they are no longer able to live independently.

HOW CAN WE PROMOTE CONTINUED GROWTH AND DIVERSIFICATION OF OUR ECONOMY?

Longmont is well positioned for continued economic growth in terms of both its current employment base and its geographic location. At the same time, the percentage of residents living and working in Longmont has decreased significantly and the City lacks modern employment workspaces that meet the needs of today's businesses. While previous employers favored large industrial flex space, current trends, especially in industries targeted by the City, point to a growing demand for smaller spaces. Likewise, the availability of housing and transportation options will influence the ability of the City to retain existing businesses as they grow and attract new businesses and workers over time.

HOW CAN WE BECOME MORE RESILIENT AS A COMMUNITY?

The floods in 2013 damaged many of Longmont's parks, trails, roads and bridges; portions of the City's water supply system; and many homes and businesses. Recovery work is well underway; however, the City's infrastructure system has not been fully restored to pre-flood conditions. A key focus of the Envision Longmont process was to explore ways to address the broader issue of resilience—which seeks to manage disruptive forms of change, such as disasters, climate change, and economic downturns through mitigation and actions that anticipate and contain disruptive impacts.

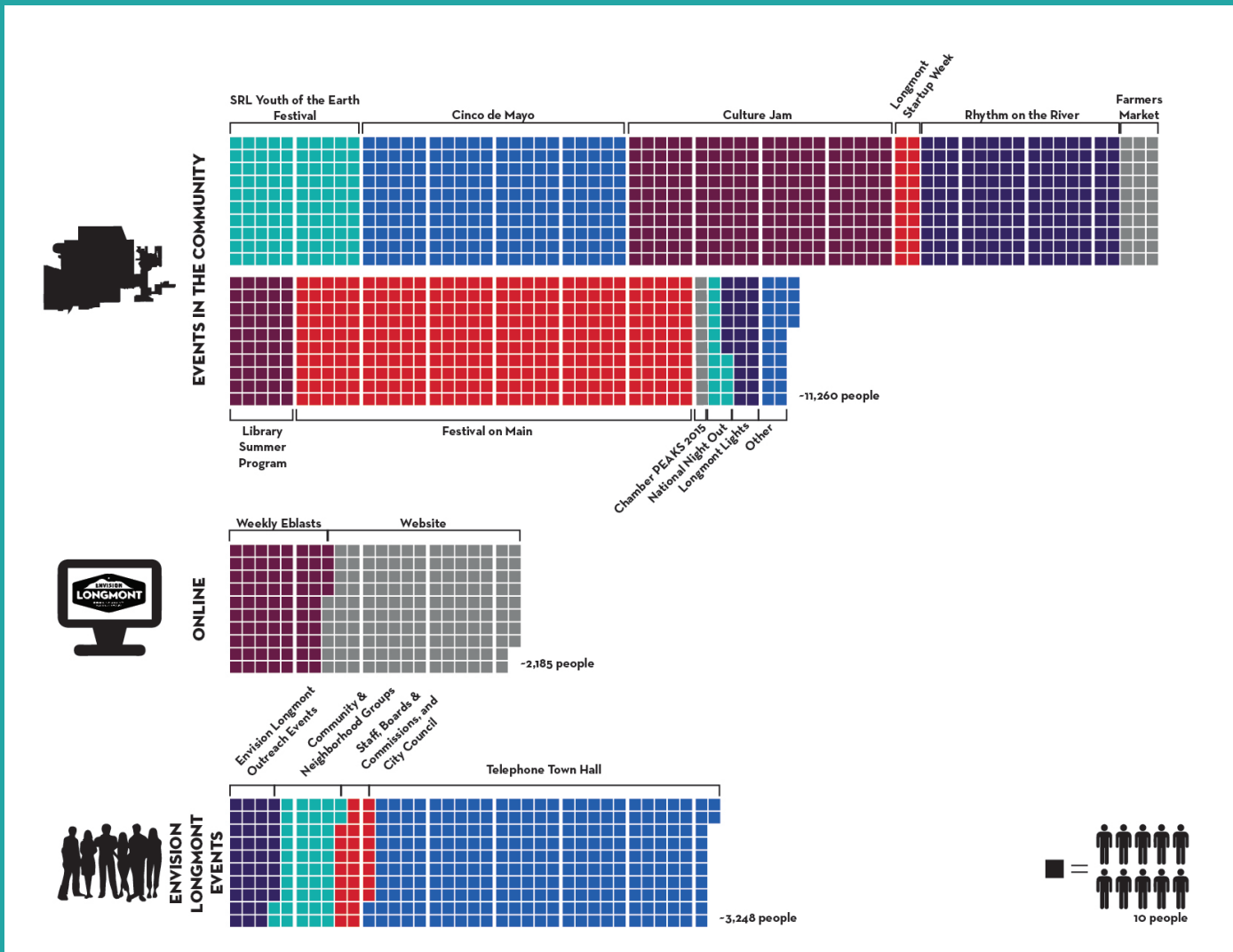


HOW CAN WE PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF EXISTING AND FUTURE RESIDENTS?

As Longmont continues to grow, it will be important to ensure that future residents have access to the same types of quality of life amenities that today's residents value and enjoy, or an even better range of amenities! Continued investment in the City's parks, recreation, greenway and trails system, as well as our waterways and wildlife habitat, ensures all residents will have access to recreation and the opportunity to live active, healthy lifestyles and have access to the natural environment. Continued investment in the multimodal transportation system will ensure residents of all ages, abilities, and income levels have affordable transportation options to reasonably access employment, health care, services, and other daily needs.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

One of the primary objectives of the Envision Longmont process was to engage a diverse cross-section of the community in a discussion about the City’s future. This was accomplished by involving residents, youth, underrepresented groups, businesses, elected and appointed officials, partner organizations and agencies, and numerous other stakeholders throughout every stage of the planning process. Over the course of a year, more than 5,000 people were directly engaged in the process—formally participating in online or in person events and activities. More than 11,000 additional people were exposed to the process and participated informally—speaking with City staff, City Council members, and other project representatives about their vision for the future of Longmont as part of other events in the community.



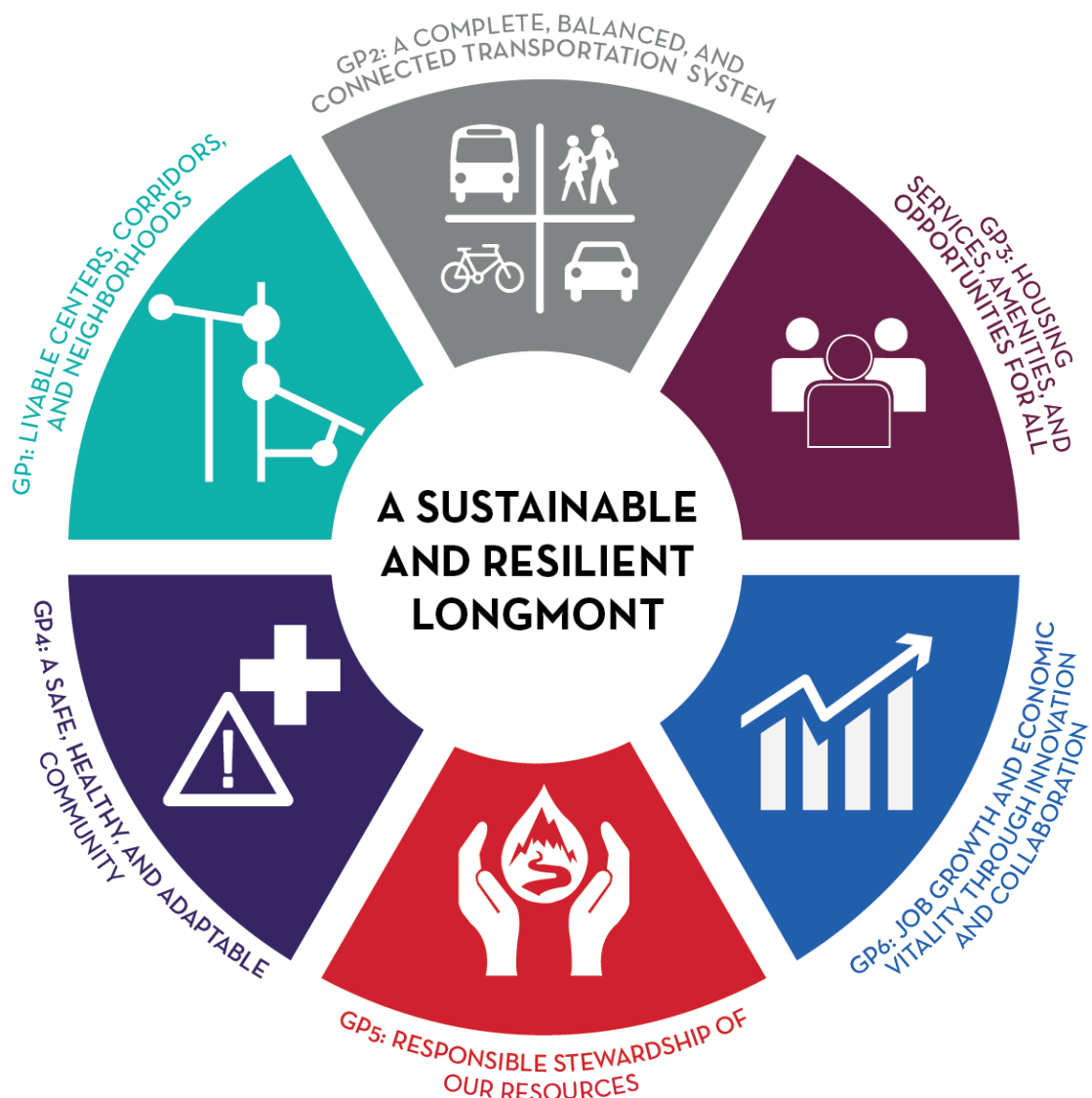
Project team members worked closely with a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), comprised of staff from multiple City departments, and a Coordinating Committee, comprised of representatives from the City’s many boards, committees, and commissions on the development of interim work products, coordination with other City initiatives, and overall project strategy. Periodic study sessions were also held with the City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, and Transportation Advisory Board to ensure these bodies were informed about the process and had an opportunity to weigh-in on the key choices being presented to the community.

Vision and Guiding Principles

Longmont’s vision for the future is embodied in the six guiding principles below. These guiding principles reflect key elements of the community’s desired future. They also provide focus in terms of where efforts and resources should be focused over the next ten to twenty years to ensure Longmont remains a livable, prosperous, and attractive community.

Fundamentally, these guiding principles and their supporting goals are intended to promote a more:

- **SUSTAINABLE** Longmont, by taking care of the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability to meet the needs of future generations; and
- **RESILIENT** Longmont, by increasing the capability of the City and its partners to anticipate risk, limit impact and bounce forward rapidly by adapting and learning in the face of disruptive shocks and stresses.



Because the guiding principles are closely interrelated, they are intended to be viewed as being equal in weight and are not listed in any particular order of importance. This foundation encourages systems thinking to recognize and emphasize the interrelationships among all aspects of the community’s vision. A systems thinking perspective recognizes the interdependent economic, social, and environmental implications of policies, decisions, and outcomes, and recognizes the benefits and tradeoffs across these topic areas. In this Plan, application of a systems thinking perspective also reinforces the understanding that sustainability and resiliency are interrelated concepts.

Parts of the Plan

Envision Longmont contains three sections, in addition to this introductory chapter, and a series of technical appendices. The contents and purpose of each are described below.

II. POLICY FRAMEWORK

Section II establishes the policy foundation for Envision Longmont. It is organized around the six guiding principles and defines specific goals and policies to help the community achieve its desired future. The table below illustrates where individual plan elements or topic areas are addressed in relationship to the guiding principles. A number of the topic areas are “cross-cutting” in nature—meaning that they relate—either directly or indirectly—to more than one of the Plan’s six guiding principles. Cross-cutting topic areas are not necessarily of greater importance or considered a higher priority than any of the individual topics listed. Rather, they highlight opportunities to leverage available resources and staffing, and to reinforce the need for ongoing collaboration and coordination among City departments and with other local and regional partners on the implementation of *Envision Longmont*.

Parts of the Plan

Envision Longmont contains a hierarchy of information—linking broad concepts to specific recommendations. Together, these components provide a framework for day-to-day decision-making.



	GUIDING PRINCIPLE	TOPICS ADDRESSED
GP1	Livable centers, corridors, and neighborhoods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth management • Land use • Community character and design • Housing and neighborhoods • Downtown/CBD • Infrastructure and public improvements • Parks, greenways and open space
GP2	A complete, balanced and connected transportation system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roadways • Infrastructure and public improvements • Public transportation • Bicycle and pedestrian facilities • Airport
GP3	Housing, services, amenities, and opportunities for all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable housing • Community services • Diversity and cultural inclusivity • Parks, greenways, and open space • Arts and culture • Volunteer involvement • Recreation and leisure pursuits • Education
GP4	A safe, healthy, and adaptable community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public safety • Emergency services • Healthy and active lifestyles • Food access • Recreation services • Community health and wellness • Resilience and hazard mitigation
GP5	Responsible stewardship of our resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental quality • Sustainability • Governance/role of government • Historic preservation • Cultural resources • Agricultural resources • Parks, greenways, and open space • Water • Budgeting/delivery of services
GP6	Job growth and economic vitality through innovation and collaboration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic development • Jobs and employment • Education and workforce development • Infrastructure and public improvements • Airport

TRACKING OUR PROGRESS

Each of the six guiding principles is accompanied by a set of indicators that will be used to help track the City's progress in achieving the goals set forth by Envision Longmont over time. Changes in the indicators will be measured, recorded, or tracked, and shared with the community on a regular basis, through a report prepared by City staff and an online dashboard. While it is intended that indicator reporting would occur annually, data for indicators that are tracked by service providers or outside agencies is less predictable and will be reported as new information becomes available.

The indicator tables include a column for:

- **Indicator:** the topic or area the indicator will measure.
- **Geography:** the geographic area that will be used to measure the indicator.
- **Method:** how the indicators will be measured.
- **Baseline:** Baseline data (when available) for the most recent year data is available.
- **Target:** Describes the general trend or direction that should be seen each year in order to achieve the vision and goals set forth in Envision Longmont. Along with these directional targets, more specific targets have been set for certain indicators where possible or desirable to help the City gauge and evaluate progress.
- **Source:** Lists sources that will be drawn upon to measure the indicator. While many are derived from existing sources, not all of the indicators have readily available sources of data (marked with an *), and will need to be measured by the City of Longmont.
- **Relevant goal:** Refers to the specific goal(s) in which the indicator is meant to measure progress. Some indicators address multiple goals, as well as goals that come from multiple Guiding Principles.

A list of supporting data accompanies the indicator tables for each guiding principle. Supporting data do not have specific goals or targets, but will still be tracked and reported by the City of Longmont to help to tell a more complete story about how the community is changing over time.

III. GROWTH FRAMEWORK

Section III addresses the physical aspects of the community's vision as it pertains to future growth. It is a tool for City staff, elected and appointed officials, and the community-at-large to use in anticipating, evaluating and making decisions regarding the location, intensity, and design of future development and the timing of infrastructure improvements in Longmont over the next ten to 20 years. Key elements of Longmont's growth framework include:

- **Future Land Use Plan.** The Future Land Use Plan is comprised of the Future Land Use and Transportation System Map and accompanying land use category descriptions. The map defines where and how Longmont will grow over the next ten to twenty years and is accompanied by a discussion of the specific land use categories that are associated with different locations or types of places within the City. The Future Land Use Plan builds upon community preferences expressed as part of the Envision Longmont process as to different types and intensities of development, other City plans and policies, and underlying zoning, where applicable.
- **Multimodal Transportation Plan.** The Multimodal Transportation Plan is comprised of recommendations for the roadway, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian systems, which function together as the City's multimodal system. The Multimodal Transportation Implementation Plan in Appendix A contains the technical analysis and more

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detailed background information that underpins the Multimodal Transportation Plan.

- **Focus Areas.** Four Focus Areas were identified as part of the Envision Longmont process as areas offering the greatest opportunity to accommodate future development: 1) Hover Street Corridor; 2) St. Vrain Creek Corridor 3) Midtown/North Main; and 4) Sugar Mill/Highway 119 Gateway. Goals and policies in this section reflect a preliminary direction for each area that sets the stage for more detailed planning efforts in the future.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Section IV outlines a series of strategies that will support the implementation of Envision Longmont. It contains a detailed Action Plan, organized by guiding principle. For each strategy, the Action Plan identifies the anticipated timing of the action, related goals, types of strategies, and general funding requirements to help identify current and future budget needs. The Action Plan is intended to be reviewed and updated on an annual basis, or as needed, to ensure it remains current and reflects the City's progress over time.

APPENDIX A: MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Multimodal Transportation Implementation Plan contains the technical analysis and more detailed background information that underpins the multimodal transportation components of Envision Longmont. It includes traffic forecasting information as well as phased improvement plans for roadways and the transit and bicycle system.



APPENDIX B: COMMUNITY PROFILE

The Community Profile report identifies major trends and key issues affecting the City of Longmont. Specifically, this report provides an overview of demographic, socioeconomic, economic, and other trends and highlights key issues, opportunities, and constraints that helped inform the Envision Longmont process.

APPENDIX C: MAP ATLAS

Appendix C contains a set of ready to print 11x17 maps as found throughout the Plan.

