



2018 All-America City Award Application

Spotlight: Promoting Equity through Inclusive Civic Engagement

Deadlines and Submission Instructions

February 2017 - February 2018: All-America City Promising Practices Series

Join National Civic League for this series of monthly webinars. Learn about innovative programs and approaches to promoting equity from All-America City (AAC) winning communities and other experts throughout the country. This series will also provide a chance for communities to talk with AAC winning communities about the benefits of AAC and tips for applying. See here for a [schedule of webinars](#).

October 18, 2017: Submit Letter of Intent to Apply

(Letter of Intent is not required, however, save \$100 on your application fee when you submit a Letter of Intent.)
[LOI Template](#)

February 28, 2018: Submit Application

- 1) by email to aac@ncl.org by Wednesday, February 28, 2018, 11:59 p.m. PST as a Word Document without pictures and file name with STATE, CITY 2018 AAC App and,
- 2) mail one hard copy with \$250 (*You only pay \$150 application fee if you submit a Letter of Intent to Apply by October 18, 2017) application fee to: National Civic League, 190 East 9th Ave., Suite 200, Denver, CO 80203

April 2018: Finalists Announced

Finalists will be announced in early April 2018. Community delegations will be invited to Denver to present.

April - June 2018: Competition Preparation

Finalist communities assemble a cross-sector community delegation to present the story of the community and its work at the June 2018 awards event and peer-learning conference. Raise the funds to send your delegation to the June event in Denver. Finalist community delegations present their story to a national jury of civic, local government, business, philanthropy, and community experts. All applicant communities are invited to participate in the June workshops and networking opportunities. See Resource page below for link to past AAC presentations.

June 22-24, 2018: All-America City Awards Competition and Event in Denver, Colorado.

Application Guidelines

The National Civic League invites you to apply for the All-America City Award (AAC) – the nation’s most prestigious community award, now in its 69th year. The AAC Award offers the opportunity for both recognition and reflection. Applications require communities to come together to assess their strengths and challenges. The process of applying for the award provides an opportunity to mobilize local groups to work together and display on a national stage the people and projects that make your community a great place to live, work and play.

NCL recognizes that no perfect communities exist. The All-America City Award does not honor perfection. It does honor the progress and innovation demonstrated through the cross-sector partnerships in the three project examples. It recognizes a community’s courage to recognize its challenges along with commitment to face those challenges with the same spirit exhibited in the highlighted projects. It is about moving forward and getting the hard work done collaboratively, innovatively, inclusively, and with maximum civic engagement.

In 2018, the All-America City Award will recognize ten communities for their inclusive engagement processes, projects and community vision. The essence of the application is a description of three community projects with a clear community-wide commitment to inclusiveness, equity, impact, innovation, civic engagement and cross-sector collaboration. Applications are encouraged to include at least one project focused on the 2018 highlighted topic - inclusive engagement practices that promote equity.

The 2018 spotlight for the Award are efforts focused on inclusive engagement practices that promote equity and bring all voices to the table to help solve our country’s most pressing and complex issues. **With this spotlight NCL hopes to learn more about the inclusive decision-making processes that communities use to solve complex problems and move toward more equitable communities.**

2018 is the 50th anniversary of the Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (more commonly known as the Kerner Commission). The report, published in 1968, concluded with words that fit easily within our own times, “it is time to make good the promises of American democracy to all citizens – urban and rural, white, black, Spanish surname, American Indians, and every minority group.”

With this framing in mind, NCL is particularly interested in learning about your projects that:

- promote positive community-police relations,
- promote racial healing and dialogues on race,
- expand government and institutional representation and access,
- further educational equity in the community,
- create affordable and safe housing,
- reduce poverty,
- increase job readiness and employment,
- focus on restorative justice,
- seek equitable transportation access,
- promote or ensure access to healthy food and/or to safe and healthy natural environments.

We do not require the application to address any of the above issues specifically. However, applicants are strongly encouraged to share efforts that fit with the 2018 theme of inclusive engagement practices that promote equity. We know that local communities face a wide array of challenges and that demonstrating a commitment to inclusion and engagement will look different in different places. We look forward to hearing about the engagement processes your community uses to address complex issues and make your community a great place to live, work and play for all.

All-America City Awards Criteria

All-America City applications – and the three submitted projects – are considered using five main criteria:

1. **Civic Engagement:** comprehensive citizen/resident engagement in decision-making and action planning.
2. **Inclusiveness and Equity:** intentional involvement of diverse segments and perspectives (ethnic, racial, socio-economic, age, sexual orientation, gender expression, people with disabilities, national origin, and others) in community decision-making.
3. **Collaboration:** cross-sector collaboration (business, local government, nonprofits, military, etc.) and regional collaboration.
4. **Innovation:** creative use and leveraging of community resources.
5. **Impact and Future Planning and Visioning:** demonstrable, significant and measureable achievements from the past 5 years (for example: increase in number and diversity of residents involved in engagement processes, reduced poverty rates, increased access to school health services, increased number of affordable housing units). Especially for communities who have recently begun this work, we also encourage a description of a community-wide vision or long-term plan to address local challenges.

Resources Available to You

As you fill out this application, it may be helpful to consult the following material:

All-America City Award Related:

1. [The All-America City Experience](#): Brief informational video on the award program
2. [Previous All-America City presentations](#)
3. [Previous All-America City Award Event Program](#)
4. Previous Applications:
 - a. [2014 Winner Chelsea, Massachusetts](#)
 - b. [2015 Winner Tallahassee, Florida](#)
 - c. [2016 Winner Hayward, California](#)

Engagement Resources:

1. NCL's *Civic Index* to help evaluate your civic infrastructure
 - a. [Civic Index, Third Edition](#)
 - b. [Civic Index Quick Quiz](#)
2. [NCL's All-America Conversations Toolkit](#)
3. Asset-based framework--[Discovering Community Power: A Guide to Mobilizing Local Assets and Your Organization's Capacity](#). (Provided by permission of co-author John McKnight)

National Civic Review Articles on Civic Engagement:

4. [What Makes an All-America City?](#)
5. [Hampton, Virginia: Civic Engagement as a Management Strategy](#)
6. [Dubuque: Creating a Culture of Engagement](#)
7. [Decatur, Georgia: Diversity, Gentrification, and the Art of Community Conversation](#)

Equity Resources:

1. [Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative](#)
2. W. K. Kellogg Foundation's [Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation Initiative](#) (NCL is a proud partner of the TRHT Initiative)
3. [Building Welcoming Communities Campaign](#)
Community Policing
 - a. [The President's Taskforce on 21st Century Policing](#)
 - b. [The President's Taskforce on 21st Century Policing: One Year Progress Report](#)
 - c. [The President's Taskforce on 21st Century Policing: Implementation Guide](#)
4. Kerner Commission Report
 - a. [Kerner Commission Report Summary](#)
 - b. [Full Report for purchase](#)

Community Information

Community name and state: Longmont, Colorado

Your community is applying as a:

Neighborhood Village Town Tribe City County Region

If applying as a region, name participating communities: _____

If applying as a neighborhood, name city: _____

Has your community applied before? Yes No If Yes, which years: 1997 and 2006

Has your community been a Finalist before? Yes No If Yes, which years: 1997 and 2006

Has your community been an All-America City before? Yes No If Yes, which years: 2006

Contact Information

All-America City Award contact (primary contact person available throughout competition & follow-up):

Name: Sandra Seader

Title (if any): Assistant City Manager

Organization/Government/Other: City of Longmont, Colorado

Address: 350 Kimbark Street

City, State, Zip: Longmont, Colorado, 80501

Phone (business/day): 303-651-8634 Mobile Phone: 720-352-8873

E-mail Address(es): Sandra.Seader@LongmontColorado.gov

The applying community will receive a complimentary membership (or membership renewal if an AAC application was submitted last year) to the National Civic League for one year. To whom should this membership be directed?

Name Harold Dominguez, City Manager

Address 350 Kimbark Street

City, State & Zip Code Longmont, Colorado 80501

Phone Number 303-651-8601 Fax N/A

Email Harold.Dominguez@LongmontColorado.gov

We agree to follow NCL's rules regarding use of the All-America City Award logo, a registered trademark of the National Civic League. We allow NCL and the All-America City Award to share this application and the information enclosed in it with the NCL and AAC networks to promote the work of our community. If we are named an All-America City, we agree to conduct a post-AAC conference call or regional forum for the AAC network that features our projects. In a pay-it-forward spirit, if named a finalist or All-America City, we agree to consider supporting AAC through an NCL membership for a minimum of the next three years.

Signature: Sandra Seader Date: 2/28/29

Name: Sandra Seader

Title: Assistant City Manager

Community Statistics and Map

Note: Use the most up-to-date statistics possible for your neighborhood, town, city, county, or region (source suggestions: U.S. Census Bureau, State Department of Economic Security, State Department of Finance, Department of Public Health, and local school statistics).

POPULATION (in year 2010 or most recent):

Source/Date: City of Longmont estimate: 94,777 (12/31/2017)

POPULATION PERCENTAGE CHANGE 2000-2010 (indicate + or -): +16%

Source/Date: Census/City of Longmont

RACIAL/ETHNIC POPULATION BREAKDOWN:

White	85.6%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)*	26.0%
Black or African American	1.3%
Asian	2.8%
American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN)	1.3%
Mixed Race	3.0%
Other	5.9%

Source/Date: American Community Survey Demographic and Housing Estimates, 2011 – 2015 ACS 5-year estimates. *Hispanic or Latino is considered ethnicity.

MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME: \$62,208

Source/Date: American Community Survey Selected Economic Characteristics, 2011 – 2015 ACS 5-year estimates

PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES BELOW POVERTY LEVEL: 10.5%

Source/Date: American Community Survey Selected Economic Characteristics, 2011 – 2015 ACS 5-year estimates

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE: 2.7%

Source/Date: Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Statistics for the Boulder, CO MSA (2017)

POPULATION BREAKDOWN BY AGE GROUP (percentages, if available):

19 years old and under	28.3%
20-24	6.3%
25-44	26.9%
45-64	26.1%
65 and over	12.2%

Source/Date: American Community Survey Age and Sex, 2011 – 2015 ACS 5-year estimates

PERCENTAGE OF HOME OWNERSHIP: 61.6%

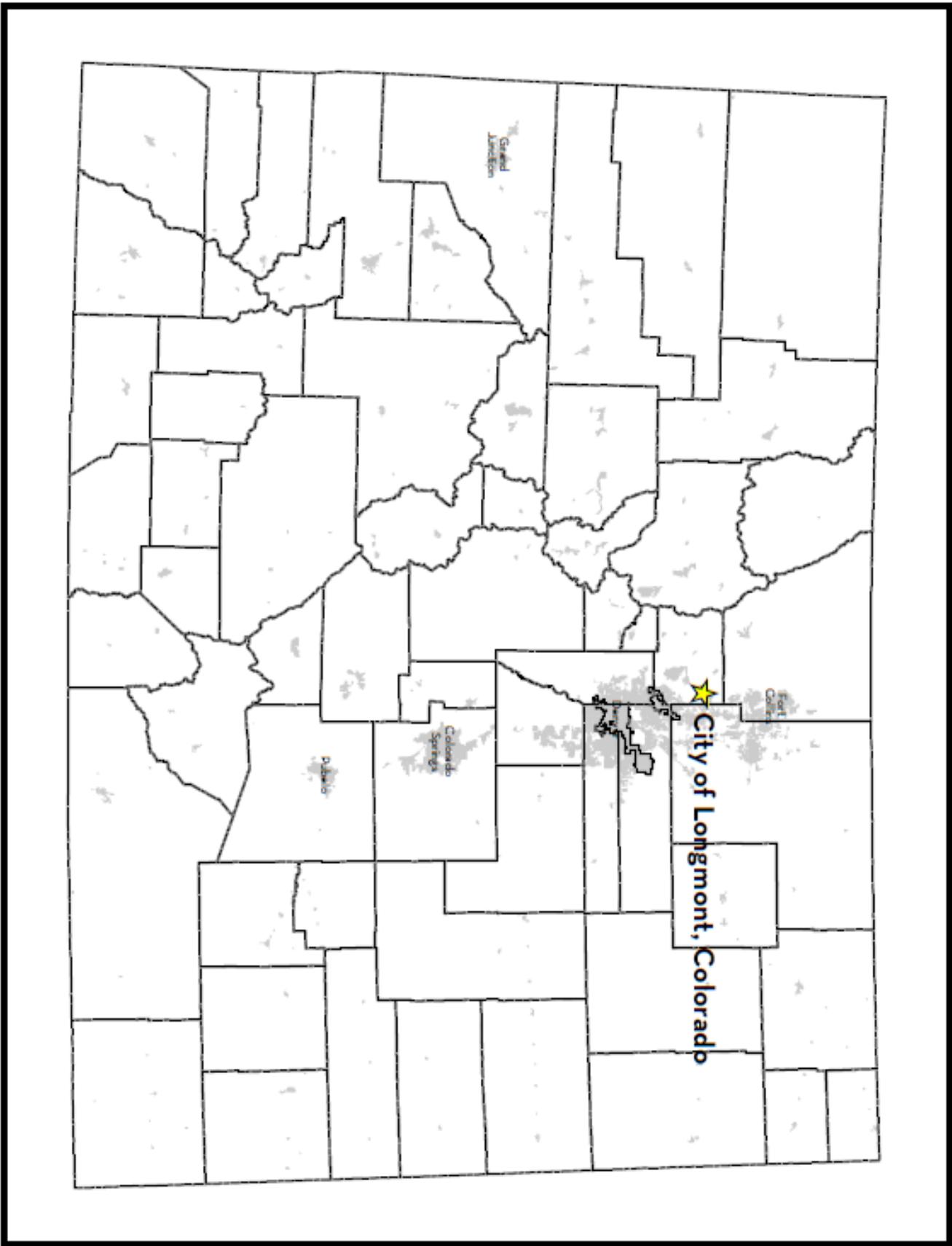
Source/Date: American Community Survey Selected Housing Characteristics, 2011 – 2015 ACS 5-year estimates

WORKFORCE DISTRIBUTION -- Name the three largest employment sectors (include military services and/or installations, if any) in your community and provide the percentage of total employed in each:

Health Care & Social Assistance	15%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	14%
Retail Trade	13%

Source/Date: JobsEQ, Data (Q3 2017)

MAP -- Please attach a state map (8.5" x 11") with your community clearly marked



PART I: How equitable are opportunities in your community?

In alignment with our inclusiveness and equity criteria, we ask applicant communities to share the processes they use to help ensure local government (or other application lead) reflects the full diversity of the community. NCL believes a community is stronger and more sustainable when the leadership and decision makers reflect all perspectives in a community. To help move toward a more equitable community, local institutions need to first look at their own operations, policies and practices that could cause barriers to opportunities. By taking an inventory of the demographics, different identities and perspectives in your community and comparing them to leadership positions and economic opportunities, major gaps may be revealed.

We know this is not yet a common practice in local institutions. Do not be discouraged if you cannot provide data on the pieces below. It is our hope that by highlighting this approach in the application we can encourage institutions to consider it going forward, to help highlight gaps and barriers to equitable opportunities. If you do not have any practices, policies or data that assess equity in leadership and economic opportunities, please provide a brief narrative on how you see this being incorporated in future actions.

Based on the demographics you reported above how does the local government or other community institution assess the level of institutional equity in the following areas:

*Please also share any perspectives you are tracking in addition to those listed in the community statistics section to help ensure equity. You may [use and edit the attached template](#) to help report any equity data you are tracking. (1,000-word maximum)

- Contracting and Vendors
- City Staff and City Leadership
- Elected Officials
- Resident Boards and Commissions
- Leadership Academies
- Scheduled updates to infrastructure and city services (i.e. parks and recreation areas, road maintenance, public works investments, etc)

Longmont Community Profile

	Race: American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN)	Race: Asian	Race: Black or African American	Race: Hispanic or Latino (of any race)*	Race: Mixed Race	Race: Other	Race: White	Gender: Female	Gender: Male	Gender: Other (trans-gender, non-binary, etc.)
Overall Community Demographic	1.3%	2.8%	1.3%	26%	3%	5.9%	85.6%	50.7%	49.3%	N/A
Elected Officials	0%	0%	0%	17%	0%	0%	83%	67%	33%	N/A
City Staff Department Heads	0%	8%	0%	15%	0%	0%	77%	38%	62%	N/A

City Staff	0.5%	1.5%	1%	12%	3%	N/A	82%	47%	53%	N/A
Resident Boards and Commissions	0%	3.3%	2.17%	5.43%	0%	1%	88.0%	55%	45%	N/A

*Hispanic or Latino is considered ethnicity

Aside from the quantifiable demographics that show the race and gender of the various community and government institutions, Longmont strives to create a culture of equity by promoting and implementing the following initiatives that work towards that goal:

Contracting and Vendors

Although statistics are not tracked, the City of Longmont has updated its code regarding outreach in order to contract with small and minority firms, women’s business enterprises, and Labor Surplus Area firms, especially when federal grants are involved.

City Staff and City Leadership

Longmont serves a multilingual community, and providing great customer service to the large part of our community that speaks Spanish is of significant importance. Bilingual employees are recognized with additional compensation for their fluency in the Spanish language (and in sign language) and willingness to use that fluency to assist customers. This bilingual compensation plan, which Longmont implemented in 2003, is used as a model for other communities wishing to increase access and inclusivity.

Boards and Commissions

There are 22 citizen-based boards, committees, and commissions on which approximately 160 residents serve. Citizen participation helps ensure that our local government is truly addressing the needs of the Longmont community through the services, planning and decision-making provided by each board.

Leadership Academies

People Engaged in Raising Leaders (PERL), is a training program to increase involvement among people of color on boards and commissions across Boulder County. Participants prepare to take on positions of leadership on boards and commissions, participate civically in their community, and gain the skills and tools necessary to better understand the processes, structure, and make-up of boards and commissions.

The Longmont Chamber of Commerce organizes the Leadership Longmont program. This program immerses potential community leaders in issues that are inherent in the public arena at varying levels: city government, education, transportation, arts, culture, and more.

The Community Foundation of Boulder County offers residents of Longmont the opportunity to become a Leadership Fellow. This program trains individuals to take on leadership positions in their community (e.g. join a nonprofit or government board or commission, work on a candidate or initiative campaign, lead a neighborhood or school association, or run for office). Monthly curriculum topics include inclusive leadership, planning and development, critical human needs, health, education, and arts and culture.

In partnership with the City of Longmont, the Boulder County Latino Chamber of Commerce provides \$10,000 in scholarship funding to minority residents of Longmont to attend the leadership training courses noted above or other leadership training programs of their choice. These funds have been expended through the Latino Chamber for the last three years with over 50 Longmont residents taking advantage of the scholarships.

Police and Citizen Groups

While demographic information is not collected for Longmont's Public Safety volunteer program, there are 139 volunteers, who help further the City's Community Policing programs through Safety and Justice general help, Explorers (middle school/high school), Citizen Volunteer Patrol, Victim Advocates, fire volunteers, and LEVI volunteers, and as student interns (college).

Infrastructure Updates

Longmont takes a proactive approach to building, updating and maintaining parks, roads and public works projects by using a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to create a long-term view of infrastructure needs that have a minimum life expectancy of 5 years and a minimum cost of \$10,000. The CIP allows for better input from and coordination with partner agencies and neighborhood groups.

Projects such as neighborhood park renewal in low- to moderate-income census tract areas, bridge replacements, street rehabilitation projects, and the City's flood mitigation project (Resilient St. Vrain) are among those budgeted for in the CIP. All of these projects affect diverse portions of our population, but some do so more directly than others. The Resilient St. Vrain Project, for example, will remove lower-income housing from the 100-year floodplain.

Longmont Multicultural Action Committee

The Multicultural Action Committee (LMAC) is a city council-initiated effort that inspires the Longmont community to take individual and collective action to promote cultural understanding, inclusion, and involvement and to create a community where everyone belongs. This work is led by 25 community members representing Longmont's Latino, Asian, African American, Middle Eastern and Anglo cultures, with City staff support. Since 2003, LMAC has accomplished its overarching goal by:

- Developing the capacity of government and community organizations to provide culturally competent services and programs
- Cultivating stronger connections and relationships among people from different cultures
- Promoting civic engagement within neighborhoods, schools and local government
- Creating opportunities for all residents to actively participate in the Longmont community and to learn about and celebrate all the different cultures that are part of our community.

Resiliency for All/Resiliencia para Todos

In 2016, Longmont received a grant from the Colorado Division of Local Affairs to create a bridge between a vulnerable sector of our Latino population, community resources and local governments in Longmont and Boulder County. The Resiliency for All/Resiliencia para Todos (RFA/RPT) project brought the community together to identify barriers, develop recommendations that would be more inclusive of this segment of the community, and create space for representation from this underserved portion of the community.

Conclusion

The concepts of inclusion and outreach are included in the strategies of multiple community plans, and yet based on this community assessment, we still have much work to do. The City continues to diligently assure that diversity and inclusion are integral to the discussion and remains committed to representing and serving our community fully.

PART II: Tell Your Community's Story

Tell us your community's story. Focus on the last ten years of your community's progress and development and describe how that progress has benefited your residents. Utilizing the awards criteria (above), describe how your community addresses its pressing challenges and plans for its future. Provide necessary history and background on your community to set the stage for the rest of the application. (500-word maximum)

You Belong in Longmont

Longmont is a diverse, multicultural and welcoming city, one in which we actively identify and work to remove access barriers and strive to provide multiple ways for people to make connections and to thrive as part of the community. Longmont is home to many customs and cultures: residents and visitors can follow multiple paths to find fellowship with others of similar backgrounds and to explore and join in traditions that are new or foreign to them. The many nonprofit, civic and cultural organizations of Longmont welcome new people to become involved, and there is opportunity to find others with whom to share almost any interest. Not only do "you belong in Longmont" if you're seeking a welcoming hometown or business location, but "when you're in Longmont, you belong."

All cities have a variety of people living next to each other. It takes effort to create a true community. Through neighborhood groups, community relations programs, thoughtful planning, and other initiatives, Longmont is committed to building a real community, not just a collection of streets and buildings. But how is that accomplished? In Longmont, all things feed back to our shared community vision, and comprehensive planning has been a part of the City from its establishment as the Chicago-Colorado Colony in 1871.

Envision Longmont, the City's current comprehensive plan, was approved by the city council in June 2016, but staff and council members gathered input from the community to develop the plan over the course of 14 months. Consistent with our community involvement values, we solicited the dreams and aspirations of our community from thousands of residents, business owners, students, employees, and our partners in the nonprofit community. Thousands of people of every age, ethnicity and socioeconomic status participated and provided their insights and ideas on how to create a sustainable community. This community involvement effort launched into a new level of inclusive participation, using new technologies in addition to tried-and-true methods. The plan will serve as a policy guide for the City over the next 10 to 20 years.

The Envision plan followed a long-standing tradition of community planning that has yielded great successes. In 1990, a visioning process led to bringing a community college to Longmont, establishment of a community theater, a more visually appealing downtown, and an educational center for teens performing poorly in the traditional school setting. In 2005, the "Focus on Longmont" visioning process led to tremendous improvements in inclusion and support for minority populations and youth.

Our residents create our plans, and our plans become our future. We cultivate a community culture that has the courage to have challenging conversations, and this culture has led us on a path of creating conscious action to address challenging issues. Our community has been through tragedy and triumph, from acts of violence perpetrated by people who needed our help, to becoming Colorado's first "gigabit city," to recovery from a devastating flood. We are not perfect, but together we work through.

PART III: Describe Civic Engagement in your Community

Authentic civic engagement builds a reciprocal relationship between local institutions and residents to identify and solve problems together. In a civically robust community, both local government officials and citizens initiate projects that meet the needs of residents.

For this section describe how your community engages residents to help make decisions and create a stronger place for all people. Some factors to consider when describing your community's approach to community engagement include:

Community Vision and Pride

- 1) Does your community have a shared vision and strong sense about what people want moving forward? If so, what was the process to select your community vision?

Public Participation

- 2) What formal and informal avenues and opportunities do residents from all segments of the community have to help prioritize issues and shape the community moving forward? (This could include city boards, commissions, among many other examples.)

Inclusiveness

- 3) How have groups (or the city) effectively engaged residents beyond “the usual suspects” and included those rare voices in decision-making? What effective strategies have you found for engaging hard to reach groups? How does the community ensure that those most impacted by a given issue are meaningfully and actively engaged in identifying solutions?

Decision Making and Consensus-Building

- 4) How does your community come to consensus on contentious issues to move forward with practical compromises and solutions?

Collaboration

- 5) How do organizations and institutions in the community bring people together across dividing lines to engage with one another on key issues? Have you held All-America Conversations or something similar?

Please use examples to illustrate the answers to these questions and be sure to mention the specific tools and processes you use to engage residents. *Note: If your community has conducted an All-America Conversation please include it here.* Please refer to the Civic Index materials in the resource section for assistance in filling out this section. (1,000-word maximum)

Community Involvement – Longmont Style

It Started with an RV

Longmont took steps toward developing a culture of community involvement in 1990 with the first communitywide visioning process. While that process was successful, we still had a lot to learn, and community involvement in Longmont was fundamentally transformed the same way it happens in most organizations: something didn't go right and people pulled together to change it. In our story, the city council was considering a change to where recreational vehicles (RVs) could park. City staff wrote a new ordinance, held a public meeting at the Civic Center, and took the ordinance to council. The process was a disaster! The public expressed anger and confusion over not being really included. The city council decided that year, 2001, to set a goal “to develop and implement a comprehensive

approach for involving the community in City service delivery and problem-solving efforts.” This began the design of Longmont’s community involvement program. City leaders wanted involvement to be inclusive, meaningful and productive and to build capacity in the community, and they expected City staff to engage residents as partners, on top of the visioning work that had already become part of the culture.

A team of staff from each department came together to create a framework, adapted from the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2). This helped staff look at issues and opportunities then determine the “level” of involvement that would be productive and meaningful. It was essential that people who participated made a real impact on decision-making.

Facilitation training was designed, and employees were trained in how to bring out the best in group decision-making and consultation using the model of:

- Inform: “We will provide accurate, balanced and objective information.”
- Consult: “We will consider your comments in the decision-making process.”
- Involve: “We will work to see that issues are understood and community input is reflected in the decision-making process.”
- Partner: “We will work with you as equal partners, with equal decision-making and accountability.”

A steering team was formed to ensure that the culture of involvement remained strong. The City used this framework in the 2005 “Focus on Longmont” strategic planning process, which received the IAP2’s Core Values Project of the Year Award in 2006. The 2016 Envision Longmont strategic planning process also was developed with broad community involvement.

Lessons Learned About Inclusion

One of the first things taught is to identify the stakeholders. Often, when we called a meeting or went out into the community, we got our “regulars,” but when we surveyed their demographic information, we realized that there were huge gaps. Longmont’s population is 26 percent Latino, but this was not reflected in our outreach. We started hosting demographically appropriate focus groups; if there were 30 people in a room, they reflected the demographics of Longmont in age, gender, income, race and education level. We started to go where people were – to grocery stores and local festivals – to get input from those who would never attend a public hearing. We engaged online, through social media, and in telephone town halls.

Council asked us to find out what our community’s promise is to others, our brand. City staff conducted hundreds of interviews. We knew we weren’t reaching everyone and started to rely on other City staff who were trusted in their own diverse cultures to introduce us and act as “cultural brokers.” We helped bag food for needy families at El Comité, a grassroots organization dedicated to providing advocacy and social services for Latinos. After giving out the food, we asked politely for interviews. We conducted interviews at the local Peruvian festival, at a teen mom support group, and at various Chamber of Commerce events. We wanted to make sure that we really met with our community – face to face. What we heard over and over is that regardless of whether someone was born in Longmont or had recently moved here, they had found a place where they belonged.

Building Capacity

As people became more involved with their government, the City's role began to change into one of facilitative leadership – gathering the community to make decisions and take care of each other. The City's Community and Neighborhood Resources Division helps nurture this growth by building neighborhood capacity. They register neighborhood groups, facilitate a Neighborhood Group Leaders Association, and provide grants to participants to help fund improvements and events that explore the benefits of knowing your neighbors, leading to safer, healthier neighborhoods. These neighbors are now carrying forward the torch of community involvement.

The facilitation and involvement training that was developed for City staff was expanded to all of Longmont's boards and commissions, the school district, neighborhood group leaders, the Longmont Multicultural Action Committee, Boulder County, and the cities of Boulder and Fort Collins.

The St. Vrain School District also has set up a leadership and participation training program. The first group of parents that participated in the district's program went on to form an organization of parents called "Grassroots St. Vrain" that has more than 2,000 participants. The program has been a model for other school districts and won an award from IAP2 in 2014.

The Longmont Multicultural Action Committee, a community-based initiative, has sponsored inclusive community gatherings, cultural events, leadership training, and community conversations to expand diverse participation.

Today

In Longmont, we found the courage to engage as a community. Hundreds answered the call to tackle our mental health crisis. It was private citizens and business leaders who led the drive to improve our community's access to technology. And in 2013, when a devastating flood literally divided our city in half, creating instant homelessness for many of our lowest-income residents, this community came together like never before. We gained a new perspective on what it means to be resilient, and populations that we had formerly viewed as "vulnerable" began to be seen as an asset yet unrealized. This is our journey today – building capacity, sustainability, relationships and trust while we tackle the tough problems...together.

PART IV: Describe Three Community-Driven Projects

Describe your three best projects that have a compelling community-wide vision and have resulted in significant local impact and action planning within the past five years. Past All-America City Award applicants have highlighted projects focused on: building community-police relations, creating affordable housing, ensuring third grade reading success for at-risk children, providing health care for underserved populations, creating new businesses or revitalized downtowns, promoting sustainability. Simply put, projects can focus on the full array of challenges facing communities.

While not required, NCL strongly encourages communities to identify at least one project that highlights local efforts around engaging residents to build equity. For each of the three projects, be sure to tell us how each of these projects promote civic engagement, collaboration, inclusiveness, innovation and impact.

PROJECT ONE

Provide the project name and describe the challenge being addressed, actions taken and how it innovatively leverages civic engagement, collaboration and inclusiveness to create an equitable impact for your community's residents. Be sure to share the description of its vision and outcomes achieved through this project to date. (2,000-word maximum)

Provide name of the primary contact for the project. Name & title, organization, address, telephone, and e-mail address. (This person may be contacted to verify information.)

Supporting Action for Mental Health

Primary Contact:

Karen Roney, Director of Community Services

City of Longmont

350 Kimbark Street

Longmont, CO 80501

303-651-8633

Karen.Roney@LongmontColorado.gov

In March 2015, the Longmont community experienced two significant tragic events: a murder-suicide involving a father and his son, and a fetal abduction where a woman used the sale of baby clothing on Craigslist to lure a pregnant woman to her home, attacked her, and cut the fetus from her womb. These senseless and nationally televised tragedies were a wake-up call for this community to come together and better support people struggling with mental health issues so that we can prevent such tragedies in the future. A group of 50 community members formed a collaboration known as Supporting Action for Mental Health (SAM), which is a movement of local community groups, organizations, faith communities, residents, and local government working together to explore how we all can raise awareness of and take action to address mental health needs in Longmont.

One year later, the group organized *A Day for Grace*. Over 500 community members attended this event, which featured a resource fair and presentation of an off-Broadway play regarding mental illness, followed by an expert panel of local and national leaders discussing issues surrounding mental health. Following the event, the collaboration planned and facilitated a series of community conversations on mental health to get people engaged and involved in solutions to support those in our community who are struggling with mental health issues. SAM customized a national community conversation model and trained over 50 volunteers to facilitate the conversations. Collaboration members also organized, marketed to and recruited conversation participants. In total, 10 Community Conversations on Mental Health were facilitated over a 10-week period involving nearly 250 people. Three of these conversations were conducted with monolingual Spanish speakers and one with youth. During these conversations, participants identified mental health issues and needs in our community and suggested ideas on which the community could take action to address them. In early May 2016, 85 of the conversation participants reconvened and, using Option Power technology, prioritized the top two community actions SAM should begin work on: 1) offering community education, such as Mental Health First Aid, and considering some type of local anti-stigma campaign, and 2) increasing the availability of local mental health crisis services. We repeatedly heard from participants that they were inspired and came away with a renewed sense of hope that collective action could and would be taken as a result of these conversations.

In October 2016, the City of Longmont received a \$200,000 grant from the Colorado Health Foundation to enable SAM to address the mental health education priorities identified during the community conversations

and hire a project coordinator to provide support for the collaboration. After receiving the grant, Supporting Action for Mental Health created a more formal structure for the collaboration. A steering committee was established and began meeting monthly in November 2016. The steering committee provides a high-level review of the work, addresses barriers, seeks additional opportunities for collaboration, and provides direction for the project coordinator. A formal charter agreement that lays out expectations for the steering committee is signed by all committee members. The City of Longmont, Mental Health Partners and Longmont United Hospital lead the collaborative. Steering committee members are staff from the City of Longmont, Longmont United Hospital, Mental Health Partners, the SAM Education Team, the SAM Crisis Action Team, Boulder County Public Health, and Latino/Hispanic cultural brokers from various organizations. Participants in the community conversations volunteered to create teams to move the two priority actions forward (community education and crisis services), and community volunteers signed up to lead each team. Over the past several months we have created an Anti-Stigma Committee, a Conversations on Mental Health Committee, and a Latino Outreach Team. These teams and committees include various members of the collaboration from different sectors of the community, 45 people in total.

Over the past year, SAM has accomplished the following:

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA):

- Trained and certified 14 new MHFA instructors from our community, including four who are bilingual/bicultural
- Developed connections with groups across Longmont, including the school district, local community college, faith communities, local hospitals, public safety, county government, numerous City departments, and nonprofit organizations
- Worked closely with Boulder County Public Health and the county's mental health center to coordinate teaching MHFA across the county
- Organized 36 MHFA trainings and trained close to 800 people. Eighty-eight percent of participants completed an evaluation at the end of their training. Of those respondents:
 - 98 percent agreed or strongly agreed that as a result of the training they are more confident that they can recognize the signs that someone may be dealing with a mental health problem or crisis
 - 96 percent agreed or strongly agreed that as a result of the training they feel more confident that they can reach out to someone who may be dealing with a mental health problem or crisis
 - 98 percent agreed or strongly agreed that as a result of the training they feel more confident that they can be aware of their own views and feelings about mental health problems and disorders

Conversations on Mental Health:

- Engaged nearly 200 people in conversations on mental health
- Created Mental Health Conversation Guides on a variety of mental health topics including depression, bipolar disorder, coping with loss, and caring for our mental health
- Encouraged community members to be conveners of conversations in their workplaces, faith communities, social groups and neighborhoods
- Created a series of guides in Spanish, and developed Mental Health Conversation Bags for the library that include books and films on mental health topics with a discussion guide
- Explored creative ways to engage people in conversations. Examples include Text Talk Act, a program that texts a series of mental health conversation questions to a group for discussion, and developing coffee sleeves and coasters with mental health conversation questions to be distributed at local coffee shops, restaurants and breweries

Anti-Stigma Campaign:

- Participated in a seven-county bilingual mental health awareness/anti-stigma campaign called Let's Talk. The campaign centered around three primary areas: what to say when someone is struggling with mental health issues, what a mental illness is, and how stigma around mental health challenges can lead people to feel ashamed and avoid seeking help
- Partnered with Boulder County Public Health to streamline production and delivery of materials. Distributed approximately 800 posters in English and Spanish and approximately 1,700 postcards in English and Spanish throughout Longmont
- Received 18,000 English views and 4,300 Spanish views of paid Facebook ads; English YouTube: high view rate of 23 percent, 40,283 impressions, 9,442 views; and Spanish YouTube: high view rate of 26 percent, 27,151 impressions, 7,197 views

Educational Resources:

- Created an educational resource on the various levels of crisis services and interventions in Longmont, available in both English and Spanish
- Developed a class (using the previously mentioned resource) to further educate the public on crisis resources and how to access them in our community
- Created a website with information on Mental Health First Aid, Conversations on Mental Health, the Let's Talk campaign, local mental health resources, and other community education and support
- Created a monthly email communication to share information and opportunities for further education and engagement
- Partnered with Boulder County Public Health to establish an online platform for mental health resources and community engagement

We have taken intentional actions to ensure that the work we are doing is inclusive particularly for the monolingual Spanish-speaking/Latino community and for the LGBTQ community. We are working with 10 Latino/Hispanic cultural brokers who are actively involved in City programs and nonprofits in the community. Three Latino/Hispanic cultural brokers serve on the steering committee, two serve on the Crisis Action Team, and one serves on the Education Team. There also are seven Latino/Hispanic cultural brokers who make up our Latino Outreach Team. These individuals represent a variety of organizations in the community including the youth center, senior center, family resource center, victim advocates, the school district, and an organization serving individuals with disabilities. This team is exploring how we can ensure that the work we are doing through SAM is bilingual and culturally sensitive. They are helping us identify the best way to talk about mental health and mental health education in the Latino community.

This team is creating content for the Spanish Mental Health Conversation Guides and serving as conversation facilitators. They also are developing educational offerings in Spanish in response to the needs voiced at the conversations. This team has created a list of mental health resources that are bilingual or available to undocumented individuals in our community. The Latino/Hispanic cultural brokers bring a deep passion and commitment to this work that is allowing us to make exciting strides in reaching the Latino community.

While Mental Health First Aid is a very valuable, evidence-based training, the curriculum fails to address the needs of the LGBTQ community. We have partnered with Boulder County Public Health to ensure that our MHFA instructors have the training and resources necessary to direct people to mental health resources for the LGBTQ community and to ensure that they are using gender-inclusive language and gender-inclusive scenarios in their

classes. We know from the local Boulder County Trends Report 2015 that mental health challenges are of particular concern in LGBTQ youth. These young people reported higher percentages of bullying, self-harm, suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts. In the coming year we intend to train community members as Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) instructors and to work with OUT Boulder (our community's organization that provides LGBTQ education, services and advocacy) to identify individuals who could become instructors and help train others in the community in YMHFA.

In 2018, the broad coalition that makes up the Supporting Action for Mental Health team intends to provide Mental Health First Aid training to an additional 1,400 people, engage another 1,200 people in community conversations about mental health, and focus attention on expanding crisis response services in Longmont.

PROJECT TWO

Provide the project name and describe the challenge being addressed, actions taken and how it innovatively leverages civic engagement, collaboration and inclusiveness to create an equitable impact for your community's residents. Be sure to share the description of its vision and outcomes achieved through this project to date. (2,000-word maximum)

Provide name of the primary contact for the project. Name & title, organization, address, telephone, and e-mail address. (This person may be contacted to verify information.)

Connecting a Community

Primary Contact:

Scott Rochat, PR and Marketing Specialist

Longmont Power & Communications

1100 S. Sherman Street

Longmont, CO 80501

303-651-8793

Scott.Rochat@LongmontColorado.gov

Today's All-America City must be a connected community. Homes, schools and businesses must have the tools they need to build a prosperous and desirable city, a goal that depends especially on fast, affordable and reliable internet connections that are available throughout the community regardless of socioeconomic status. It's fair to say that the internet is now as vital a community utility as water or electricity – and in Longmont, Colorado, that utility, the fiber-optic broadband network known as NextLight™, has become the envy of the nation.

NextLight is a community-owned broadband service from Longmont Power & Communications (Longmont's municipal electric utility, also known as LPC) that makes symmetrical gigabit internet service available to homes and businesses citywide, with no contracts or data caps, at prices that are among the best in the United States. In particular, nearly all home users have "gotten their gig" for \$49.95 per month, a Charter Member Rate that is believed to be the best price for an unbundled, no-contract gig connection in the country. That readily available high-speed connection provides a powerful learning tool for Longmont's students and it's one they don't have to leave behind when they head to school for the day. The rollout of the NextLight network fit perfectly into the timing of the local St. Vrain Valley School District's technology plan, allowing the City and the schools to enhance an already well-established partnership.

Turning on the NextLight

Longmont has a long history of providing its own core services. In 1912, the City began to operate its own electric utility, establishing a long history of dependability and affordability. In 2017, LPC's residential electric rates were the second lowest in Colorado out of 58 utilities; its average customer could go two and a half years without seeing a power outage, and many customers have never experienced one. The City had even secured its wholesale energy generation resources as one of four cities (with Loveland, Estes Park, and Fort Collins) that founded and co-own Platte River Power Authority (PRPA).

In the 1990s, PRPA and its member cities decided to upgrade their electric substations for fiber-optic communications. In Longmont, this led to an interesting proposal. LPC informed the Longmont City Council in 1996 that by placing additional strands in the soon-to-be 18-mile fiber loop, it could serve as the backbone for a citywide internet service. Such a network would not only provide fast and reliable service to Longmont's

residents, it would make Longmont a cutting-edge competitor on a global scale, able to attract and retain strong businesses that would further enhance the community's opportunities.

The council agreed and the loop was completed in 1997, but a search for a private partner to build out the network proved unsuccessful. Before things could go farther, the Colorado Legislature in 2005 barred local governments from providing advanced telecommunications services, either alone or with a partner.

The new law contained one caveat – the restrictions could be set aside by a vote of the community. A private group of residents and businesses formed, noting unmet needs and urging the formation of a City telecom utility. In 2011, the community involvement and support swelled, and Longmont voters passed the ballot issue that gave the City back the right to provide telecommunication services. LPC unveiled its business plan in 2013, garnering further public support for a \$45.3 million bond issue to build and operate a fiber-optic network throughout the city limits. Construction began in August 2014 and by October, the name of the new service had been announced – NextLight. This is a reference to how Longmont had provided the “first light” of electricity to itself 100 years ago and was now again putting light into glass for the community's benefit, this time through fiber optics rather than incandescent bulbs.

The first NextLight customers began to subscribe in November 2014 and became the leading edge of a flood of enthusiasm. LPC's business plan had estimated that NextLight would need a “take rate” of at least 37 percent by its fifth year to be financially viable and pay back its bond. From an early stage, the network routinely had take rates of over 50 percent, prompting other providers in town to improve their own service offerings. After the fast start, LPC general manager Tom Roiniotis noted that “I had two nightmares about this. One was that nobody would want NextLight. The other was that everyone would want it right away. Of the two, I'm glad we have the second.”

NextLight also quickly fulfilled its promise of making the city attractive to business, with its high-capacity uploads and downloads proving desirable for graphic design, medical imaging, and even simply working from home. The tech company Wiland, which offered to relocate to Longmont in 2015 with 143 jobs, said that “We want to ensure fiber connectivity exists when we open our doors in our new facility.” A 2016 arrival, Sticker Giant, was even more direct in its reasons for coming, with founder John Fisher saying, “It's closer to where my employees live, we needed the space, and I wanted that fiber.”

NextLight has since become a model for making community broadband work. Cities across the country have asked Longmont for advice as they explore their own options. In 2017, PC Magazine ranked Longmont as having the fastest internet speeds in the U.S., with NextLight as a principal reason; the same year saw NextLight named the Community Broadband Project of the Year by the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA). With the completion of the network, Longmont became the first “Gig City” in Colorado.

The long-held dream had become a reality at blinding speed. And as it did, Longmont's schools had a front-row seat.

High-tech Teaching

The St. Vrain Valley School District is nationally recognized for excellence in technology, innovation, student engagement, and digital integration. Over the past decade, St. Vrain has developed a portfolio of high-quality instructional focus programs that combine technology, design thinking, and rigorous academics to best prepare students for their future and give them a strong competitive advantage in the globalized 21st-century economy. The district is the seventh largest in Colorado and home to a community of 32,000 students across 55 schools over 411 square miles. Approximately 36 percent of the student population are minorities, 31 percent qualify for free or reduced lunch, and 20 percent are English language learners. In recent years, this diverse community has seen the highest SAT scores, graduation rates, school accreditation ratings, and student engagement levels in

the district's history. Robust co-curricular options and strong college and postsecondary preparatory programs, in partnership with high-quality teaching and rigorous academics, have all contributed to these large gains in student achievement.

An additional program driving St. Vrain's ongoing success is the level of technology integration across the district. Through strong community support and the passage of a mill levy override in 2012, St. Vrain created its award-winning Learning Technology Plan to ensure that *all* students could leverage the power of technology to enhance learning and gain essential 21st-century skills. The plan included giving every middle-school and high-school student their own iPad mini for school use, iPads for all elementary classrooms, robust professional development and integration support for educators, and refreshing teacher devices and classroom technology more frequently. The St. Vrain Valley School District drastically eliminated the digital divide by providing every child access to the technology needed today.

To ensure success for this initiative, St. Vrain planned for large bandwidth needs and solid and sustainable network and support infrastructure – by 2017, the district had 45,000 tablets and computers in use! As a result, St. Vrain became one of the earliest beneficiaries of LPC's fiber network. Even before the NextLight name had been announced, LPC provided two 10-gigabit fiber-optic wide-area networks (WANs) to Longmont schools in 2014, a main network and a backup. This gave St. Vrain 10 times the bandwidth its prior carrier had provided and also came with a 38 percent cost savings, equivalent to over \$100,000 a year. St. Vrain later adopted NextLight as an ISP, receiving a 2-gigabit connection that was expandable to 5 gigs.

This was hardly the first or the last time the City and the schools would work together on technology, though the combination of NextLight and the Learning Technology Plan has served as the foundation for increasingly ambitious efforts. Some of the other partnerships have included:

- A City-supported St. Vrain "hackathon" in 2013 – a year prior to NextLight – at which approximately 60 students spent an entire weekend working on an app challenge for the City. The result was an app that would sync event calendars from several organizations across Longmont to create a universal event calendar system. The City then paid students to develop it.
- In 2015, when the City of Longmont switched to iPhones for City communications, six Apple-certified students from the district's Innovation Center hosted training and support sessions during the deployment.
- The Longmont Museum supported robotic education in the St. Vrain schools, including hosting an annual robotics tournament with about 30 teams participating. During the museum's 2015 Robot Rising exhibition, students created displays and hosted a related TEDx event highlighting robotics, technology, and innovation in the schools and the community.
- A senior design team of students from Skyline High School and Erie High School has been working with the City of Longmont and the Boulder County Sheriff's Department to design a better bomb-defusing robot arm.
- Two prototypes by a student underwater robotics team from the Innovation Center were a sonar boat to map lake bottoms and "Poseidon," an underwater robotic vehicle that can take photos and video. The team has been working with the City – including using Clover Basin Reservoir for testing – with the aim of creating a more streamlined and cost-effective way of inspecting dams and other critical infrastructure.
- A design thinking challenge was held with students at Indian Peaks Elementary School to reimagine their neighborhood park. Planners from the City of Longmont's Natural Resources Division met with students and incorporated their design into the final planning for the park.

- Staff from the Children, Youth and Families Division offer a Digital Divide program to low-income households with school-age children. The program pays for internet services and hardware for these families.

Between NextLight's fiber-optic infrastructure and the devices and technology that rely on it, every student in Longmont public schools has the opportunity to not just be part of a connected community but also to contribute to it. As they learn, they strengthen not only themselves but also their entire community. NextLight's price per megabit is by far the lowest in Longmont (and among the lowest in the nation), and as the rising tide floats all boats, competitors have improved their own prices and speeds in response.

Going Forward

Six years ago, Longmont's citywide fiber-optic network was still a dream. Six years ago, St. Vrain Valley Schools' technology plan was awaiting voter approval. Today, the two have helped forge a community that we are proud of, not just for providing for the needs and prosperity of Longmont today, but to "future-proof" it and provide a technological equity for the next generation.

"Give us the tools and we will finish the job," Winston Churchill once proclaimed in the midst of World War II. Today, from its efforts and partnerships, Longmont has available a rich set of tools, equal to any job ahead. The story of Longmont's connected community is far from over, and the next chapters may be the most exciting of all.

PROJECT THREE

Provide the project name and describe the challenge being addressed, actions taken and how it innovatively leverages civic engagement, collaboration and inclusiveness to create an equitable impact for your community's residents. Be sure to share the description of its vision and outcomes achieved through this project to date. (2,000-word maximum)

Provide name of the primary contact for the project. Name & title, organization, address, telephone, and e-mail address. (This person may be contacted to verify information.)

An Engaged Community Deals with Disaster

Primary Contact:

Jennifer Loper, Public Information Specialist
Department of Public Works & Natural Resources
1100 S. Sherman Street
Longmont, CO 80501
303-774-3560
Jennifer.Loper@LongmontColorado.gov

In September 2013, Longmont made national news when, according to the National Weather Service, “flooding of Biblical proportions” destroyed homes, devastated businesses and divided the city in two as bridges crossing St. Vrain Creek were destroyed by floodwaters. In a four-day period, the watershed of St. Vrain Creek received over 17 inches of rain, which is comparable to Boulder County's average annual rainfall. Longmont is among the ever-growing list of cities shattered by severe weather events that have destroyed infrastructure and displaced residents and businesses. What makes Longmont stand out among these affected cities is our level of preparation and response, both before and since the 2013 flood, combined with innovative strategies for incorporating resilience at all levels of community response.

A few years before the massive flooding that would bring Longmont to the national spotlight, City engineers learned of updates to the floodplain maps for St. Vrain Creek maintained by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Based on the new information, officials determined that if a flood occurred, the city would have approximately 90 minutes before floodwaters inundated the community. At the time, Longmont was in a drought situation, and the idea of the tiny St. Vrain Creek flooding seemed unlikely.

City of Longmont officials, however, viewed this possibility of severe flooding as a public safety issue and began strategizing how to inform, engage and prepare the community. Special efforts were taken to reach vulnerable populations living in mobile home parks located very near the creek, who might not have been reached through more traditional communication methods such as local newspapers, emails or websites. Through a series of neighborhood meetings and door-to-door visits conducted in both English and Spanish, every resident in those lower-income areas was contacted and encouraged to create an action plan and to sign up for the reverse 911 emergency notification system.

The flooding that ultimately occurred in 2013 proved to be both a test and an opportunity. In Longmont, more than 6 inches of unceasing rain in one week – combined with 17 inches of rain upstream – crashed down the mountains, breaching creek channels, flooding hundreds of homes (including many outside the designated floodplain), and damaging much of Longmont's infrastructure.

But Longmont passed the test. The City's emergency planning efforts paid off, and the Emergency Operations Center functioned smoothly as a central hub to distribute information to residents and the media via websites,

social media updates, and reverse 911 notifications. Staff responded to phone calls from residents 24/7 and provided real-time updates on evacuation areas and shelter locations. Emergency personnel worked around the clock to ensure that vulnerable populations were safely evacuated from flooded areas, and neighbors from diverse cultural and socioeconomic populations united to help shelter and feed the displaced and clean up massive damage in neighborhoods throughout the city.

Assistant City Manager Sandra Seader credited the fact that the city experienced no loss of life during the flood to city government's dedication to transparency and innovative community engagement methods. Fortunately, no one died because of the flooding, but large portions of our population found themselves displaced from homes, workplaces, and schools. Members of our most vulnerable populations found themselves suddenly homeless.

As the cleanup was underway, Longmont seized the opportunity to create a more sustainable community. A desire to maintain and expand upon the community unity displayed during the flood evolved into an increased City focus on ensuring that all in our community are able to become resilient. This focus on social equity and creating resiliency for all became a three-pronged effort: 1) Develop a more economically diverse housing stock so that people have a place to relocate during a disaster as well as help in weathering another economic downturn; 2) Increase social capital and the ability for vulnerable populations to become resilient; and 3) Modify infrastructure to reduce the size of the floodplain in our community, thereby removing lower-income residents, families and businesses from the massive economic losses that are proving difficult to recover from. These concepts also were incorporated into Envision Longmont, the City's multimodal and comprehensive plan that provides strategic direction for the next 10 to 20 years, as well as into the City's Sustainability Plan, ensuring that resiliency and social equity will remain ongoing components of City planning and activities.

Assessing and Addressing Housing Needs

With the support of Boulder County, Longmont took the lead in forming a recovery effort and collaborative partnership of impacted communities throughout the county to determine housing and infrastructure needs, seek and distribute funding, implement projects, and document compliance with funding requirements. As other communities in northern Colorado lined up to compete with one another for scarce state and federal disaster recovery dollars, Longmont formed a coalition with neighboring communities, both large and small, to ensure that the communities and populations most affected received the funding they desperately needed to rebuild. Faced with housing needs in every community – more than 11,800 homes suffered damage, including about 1,000 homes in Longmont – the City of Longmont set out to prioritize needs for the entire county, recognizing that other communities had needs greater than our own. For example, the Town of Lyons lost about 90 units (10 percent of its housing stock) with 43 units lost in a single mobile home park. In unincorporated Boulder County more than 3,500 homes were damaged.

The result of this effort was the formation of the Boulder County Collaborative (BCC), which assessed new housing unit needs and jointly allocated more than \$25 million in new housing construction funding. This work resulted in the construction of almost 1,000 affordable rental and homeownership housing units in 14 different developments, including four new Habitat for Humanity builds. From this housing collaboration, the Boulder County Regional Housing Partnership was formed and is proposing the creation of a countywide Housing Trust Fund to allow for the development of 12,000 affordable homes over the next 15 years, with the goal to have 12 percent of the county's total housing stock be deed-restricted affordable by 2035.

Royal Mobile Home Park, which housed about 50 families along St. Vrain Creek, was substantially damaged by the 2013 flood. Many of its residents were low-income, elderly and Latino families with monolingual Spanish speakers or those with limited English ability. During the first week after the flooding, National Guard units secured the area and residents were unable to enter the park. Ensuring that residents knew what was

happening was essential. Longmont involved internal cultural brokers who spoke Spanish and culturally understood the needs of the families to interact with residents and set up informational meetings coordinated in both English and Spanish. These cultural brokers were essential to helping families as they went from the shocking impact of the flood to identifying a relocation plan and navigating the government systems that would provide much-needed assistance.

Because of the location of this property and long-term plans to make floodplain improvements to the St. Vrain (see the Resilient St. Vrain project described below), the city council voted to use City funds to acquire the mobile home park, dispose of the damaged mobile homes, and relocate the residents into safe housing, ensuring that these community members would not be saddled with additional debt as they were recovering from this crisis. The City also replaced over 35 mobile homes in a nearby mobile home park, elevating them to at least 2 feet above the base flood elevation. While this park is currently still in the floodplain, the work the City has funded and planned along St. Vrain Creek will eventually remove these homes from the floodplain.

Building a Culture of Resilience

A group of local government, community and nonprofit representatives began meeting after the flood to document lessons learned throughout Boulder County. Recognizing how crucial their relationships and shared knowledge were to helping flood-affected populations recover, group members decided that continuing and strengthening these relationships would be valuable, and BoCo Strong was born. Its goal was to build, share and cooperate around a culture of resilience throughout Boulder County, including Longmont.

The main focus after a disaster typically is on restoring physical infrastructure and making it more resilient, while social infrastructure frequently is ignored or forgotten. The BoCo Strong collaboration focused on increasing the social capital of existing social networks through outreach efforts that let each community know what others are already doing in the areas of the community, economy, health, housing, infrastructure, and the natural environment. In this way, efforts can be coordinated for maximum effectiveness.

One group identified as being underrepresented in existing efforts was the Latino community. Approximately 26 percent of Longmont's population identifies as Latino. After reviewing community assessments and holding community conversations, gaps in active outreach and inclusion of monolingual Spanish-speaking community members became apparent. The Longmont-led effort Resiliency for All/Resiliencia para Todos (RFA/RPT) identified these barriers and developed recommendations to help create a bridge between a vulnerable sector of our Latino population (monolingual Spanish speakers), community resources, and local governments in the City of Longmont and throughout Boulder County. The study met with focus groups and captured personal stories from bilingual youth, cultural brokers and community members.

The resulting report and multilingual video is being used as a tool to raise awareness of how Longmont and other communities can better address the needs of this population. Boulder County Emergency Management translated its Emergency Preparedness Guide into Spanish and developed a bilingual (English and Spanish) door hanger to use during future emergency situations to notify residents to evacuate. These two items were a direct result of barrier identification in the RFA/RPT project.

Updating Infrastructure to Reduce Risk

As floodwaters receded and cleanup began, Longmont residents voiced their desire that the community be more prepared for future flooding and other disasters. In 2014, voters overwhelmingly approved the issuance of \$20.5 million in storm drainage bonds to fund improvements to St. Vrain Creek and City infrastructure.

City engineering staff began exploring ways to redesign the area surrounding St. Vrain Creek to protect people and property from the risk of future flooding. The result was *Resilient St. Vrain*, an extensive, multiyear project to reduce the size of the 100-year floodplain through Longmont, which began construction in late 2016. The

Resilient St. Vrain project ultimately will remove more than 800 acres from the existing floodplain. This shrinking of the floodplain will also reduce the risk of flooding for more than 500 structures, including mobile homes, senior housing, and many small businesses. The threat of damage from smaller, more likely flooding also will be reduced. (Longmont regularly experiences heavy runoff from mountain snowmelt in the spring, which can cause localized flooding.)

Additionally, Resilient St. Vrain will restore a well-traveled greenway trail that was heavily damaged by the 2013 flood. The St. Vrain Greenway provides an east-west transportation route along the creek corridor for residents relying on bicycle or pedestrian transportation.

Throughout work on Resilient St. Vrain, keeping the community informed has been a key goal. Project communications have been designed with Longmont's diverse populations in mind and have included resources in both English and Spanish, on the City website, and through social media and local news media. Regular open houses and community meetings provide residents a chance to speak directly with project engineers for answers to their questions and concerns.

Looking Ahead

Longmont's focus on creating and increasing resiliency for all facets of its population has already begun paying off in the short-term, but the hope is that its effects will ultimately be long lasting and comprehensive. Although there is no way to predict when another economic downturn will happen or what the next disaster might be, Longmont is taking steps now to help ensure that all of our community, regardless of their socioeconomic status or culture, is prepared and able to bounce back.

End of Application. Thank you for submitting your All-America City Award Application!

Need additional guidance? Email aac@ncl.org or go to www.nationalcivicleague.org for announcements of upcoming conference calls for prospective applicants and AAC resources or call NCL at 303-571-4343.