



# Engaging Community:

Community Involvement Manual

## Community Involvement Philosophy

The [City of Longmont](#) works hard to provide excellent services to our community. Since 1996, when the City initiated its customer satisfaction survey process, between 76% - 78% of Longmont residents have reported overall high satisfaction with City services. The City of Longmont has long understood that effective citizen involvement



is essential to good government, and that elected officials, staff and residents all play important roles in governing. Meaningful cooperation between City government and residents results in the best possible policy decisions. In 2001, a staff committee, with community and [City Council](#) input, created a community involvement approach for the City of Longmont. This approach formalized the process for how the City determines what types of community involvement will be most effective and how to achieve involvement that is meaningful and productive for our entire community. A plan was developed to recognize and build upon the community involvement efforts that staff was already using, while creating new opportunities and approaches based on the work of the [International Association of Public Participation \(IAP2\)](#).

**Philosophy** The City of Longmont's [community involvement](#) process invites residents, elected officials, and individuals from public agencies, [private enterprise](#), nonprofit organizations and voluntary associations to come together to think collectively and act cooperatively to identify issues and to find solutions to them. The City believes that building relationships between City officials and community members is an important part of community involvement so that all partners share responsibility for sustaining solutions that are developed and implemented. The City of Longmont's community involvement process is not a canned program that the City has simply adopted and implemented. The best community involvement strategy fits an issue and the people concerned about that issue. Therefore, the City has developed a framework for helping City officials and community members determine which issues are appropriate for some level of community involvement and also identify different types of techniques that can be effective in drawing out meaningful public participation on issues.

**Guidelines** The framework consists of the following four principles, which have been adapted from the [IAP2](#) model, to help guide City officials and community members in determining which issues are appropriate for some level of community involvement. Each principle represents an increased level of community involvement. This manual is designed to explain the philosophy of Community Involvement as well as give a treasure box of tools and techniques that can be used.

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## Implementation Guidelines

The following section outlines a method for determining the appropriate level of community involvement as well as techniques and strategies that can be used for each level.

It is important to note that when implementing any of these community involvement strategies, we need to make sure we are reaching out and/or bringing everyone to the table. To make sure we're including a wide variety of community interests, we can use the "shoe test" - we should be able to look under the table and see lots of different types and sizes of shoes.

Always be mindful of cultural differences, and that you make provisions for specific resource needs of individuals and groups to help ensure their comfort with and full participation in the process (e.g. providing childcare, providing translation services, structuring the meeting in non-traditional ways, etc.).

Another key factor in successful community involvement is to consistently be reaching out to groups, places and/or resources to which residents already have a connection (e.g. faith-based organizations, neighborhood schools, etc.). If we tap into existing places where people already connected with each other and the issues, people are more likely to engage in a broader community involvement process.

1. Define the problem
2. Define stakeholders
3. Determine level of involvement and what you will do with input
4. Determine who the decision-makers are
5. Plan for engagement
6. Engage!

## How to Determine the Level of Community Interest

Some projects may be of great interest and/or importance to the community at large. This may include residents, employees, the business community, nonprofits, schools, etc. Some projects maybe more controversial or have interest beyond just Longmont (e.g. regional or state interest). Think about the type of comments and input you expect to get from various stakeholders. Specific questions to think about include:

- What decision is being made? Has a decision already been made?
- Who is the decision maker?
- What input or type of input would be most meaningful?
- What are the biggest issues expected to come up?

### *What helps you determine the appropriate level of involvement?*

You must consider the process and have an understanding of the interests and values of the community. The community does not want, or need, to be consulted for everything so it is important to use their energy, time, and focus on those interests and values. It is also helpful to use the [Community Involvement Planning Sheet](#) to guide your participant groups understanding of the scope of the project and the expected outcomes.

**-Erin Fosdick, Principal Planner**

## How to Determine the Most Appropriate Level of Community Involvement

This resource document contains a matrix which is intended to help you determine what level of involvement may be most appropriate for your project. The levels of involvement are listed across the top and the variables are listed down the left side. The variables have not been weighted. However, if you feel, for example, that sharing information is the most important factor of your project, that may outweigh the fact that the project is not temporary and you can use inform as your level of involvement.

### Questions to consider when determining the level of involvement

- What are the project's major issues?
- Who are the stakeholders and what is their level of interest?
- Does the project have alternatives to choose from?
- Do you have some ideas on how to communicate with the community?
- Who is the decision maker for the project? (i.e. staff, council, residents)

The answers to these questions may help you determine what levels of involvement to consider. The matrix can then be supplemental information to assist in your final determination.

Another thing to consider is that different phases of projects can call for different types of involvement. When you initiate a project, you may choose to *inform* the people to be affected that the project is beginning. Then in the next stage, you may need input from the stakeholders or you may want feedback from them. This could involve *consulting* or *involvement* depending on what you are looking for. In this way, your project may use different levels of involvement at different stages.

## Who Might Be Your Stakeholders?

When designing a community involvement process, it's important to make sure that you include your "stakeholders", i.e. people who will be affected by any plans or decisions that are made.

The following are some examples of stakeholders:

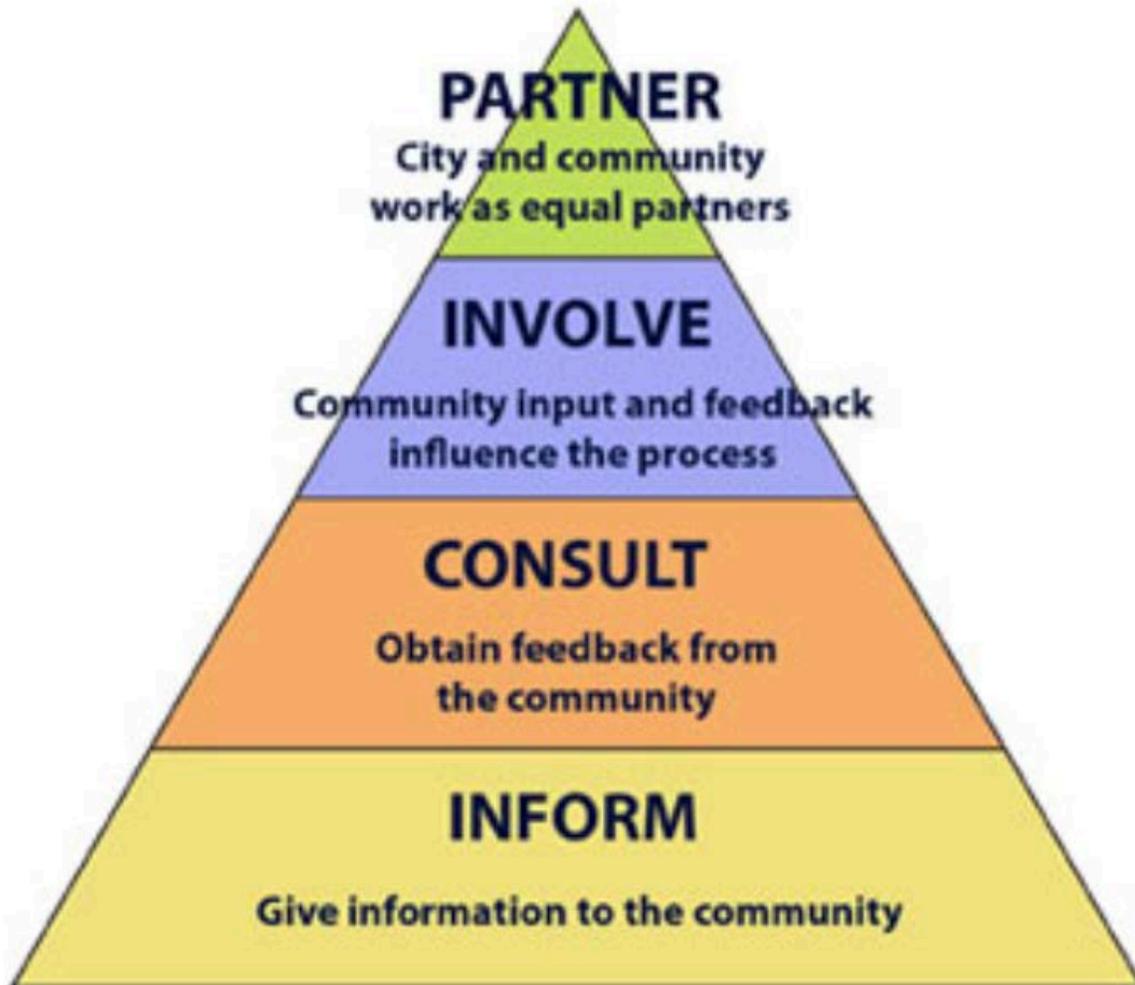
- Individual neighbors/residents
- Citizen interest groups
- Ethnic and racial community groups
- Political leaders
- Neighborhood group leaders
- Individual businesses and associations
- Community groups
- Religious groups and associations
- Other impacted government or social services agencies
- Owners of a particular type of business
- Users of a particular service
- Nearby schools
- Public and non-profit interest groups
- Possible opposition groups

*How do you know the right stake holders are at the table?*

"Make sure a diverse audience is reached and that the demographics of the city at large is appropriately represented in focus groups. Make sure that something like [Chips and Buckets](#) can be done in places where you can reach different types of people to collect a generally demographically representative amount of information. Use cultural brokers, where appropriate, to work with identified populations. Consult the Community Involvement team if there are ever any questions!"

**-Sandi Seader, Assistant City Manager**

## Community Involvement Pyramid



## Choosing a Community Involvement Strategy

	<b>Inform</b>	<b>Consult</b>	<b>Involve</b>	<b>Partner</b>
<b>Promise at this level</b>	We will provide you with accurate, balanced, objective information.	We will consider your comments in the decision-making process.	We will work to see that your issues and concerns are consistently understood and community input is reflected in the decision-making process.	We will work with you as equal partners.
<b>How many people are impacted?</b>	Varies	Varies	A significant number	A significant number
<b>How long is the impact?</b>	Temporary	Daily/Minimal	Lasting	Lasting
<b>Level of impact?</b>	Minimal	Minimal to Low	Moderate	Moderate to High
<b>Direction of information flow?</b>	From City to community members	Information is gathered from community members	Information is exchanged between community members and City	Information is exchanged between community members and City
<b>Length of project?</b>	Short	Short to Moderate	Moderate	Moderate to Long
<b>Level of interest?</b>	Low to Moderate	Moderate	Moderate to High	Moderate to High
<b>Objective?</b>	Share information	Gather information	Share and gather information	Work together
<b>Decision-making</b>	Staff	Staff/Council with community input	Staff/Council with residents' direction	Everyone

## Inform

This level of involvement is designed to provide balanced and objective information to assist in understanding the problem, alternatives, and/or solutions. This level of involvement is appropriate to use when:

- The issue will affect community members, but the impact will likely be temporary and/or minimal.
- There is great interest in knowing what city services/programs/facilities are available to the public. The community wants to know what is available to them and how to take advantage of it.
- Information will promote knowledge and understanding of community needs or activities (events, neighborhood utility work, classes, facility hours and services, notices of upcoming public action).
- Encouraging community understanding of rules, laws and/or ordinances that are in place to reflect, sustain, and support community standards.
- Accurate information about a situation is needed to promote understanding or address misperceptions.

## Advertisement

Designing an advertisement can be a good way to provide important information to a large number of people. You may choose to advertise a number of different things including your agency, a department, a project, a program, a decision-making process, or a specific meeting, but remember to be forthcoming in your ad. Unlike a commercial advertisement, a public sector agency cannot use an advertisement simply to "sell" an idea. Rather, an advertisement should be used to provide accurate information in an easy to understand format.

Advertisements can be placed in a wide range of places including social media, newspapers, local magazines, local radio stations, regional radio stations, or television. Be sure to present clear, accurate information. Sometimes legal ads are required for those projects which require a public hearing.

The [Daily Times-Call](#) has an ad representative assigned to the City. This person can help you design your ad and coordinate publication. Advertisements can be bought for publication in the paper itself or in the format of a newspaper insert. The City of Longmont buys an ad in the Daily



Times-Call each Monday called “City Talk.” A staff member from the City Manager’s Office coordinates this weekly ad. You may also place a text message on Channel 16 or Channel 3. There is no cost for this service.

The [Longmont Channel](#) can also help you produce a television commercial for a fee.

The [Public Information Team](#) can help get your message out, once you know what you are interested in advertising.

### **Background Study**

A background study is used to understand the characteristics of the Longmont community. By understanding the concerns, goals, and values of community members affected by a potential plan/program/policy, you can better relate any proposal to them. In addition, you will be better able to anticipate objections and concerns that might arise and be prepared to answer those concerns in a manner that will increase the chances of creating a successful plan or policy.

Factoring in the social and cultural aspects of a proposal is just as important to its success as are the technical components. Failure to do so can inevitably lead to overall failure and non-acceptance. The Background Study can take several different forms, ranging from an in-depth study including surveys, research, and interviews, to solely having informal conversations with several community members. The more contentious the issue is, and the more important public acceptance is, the more in-depth the background study should be.

### **Blog**

A blog (originally short for weblog) is a collection of short articles and photos (called posts) on a related topic. A blog can be used to group content that readers may want to refer to again during your project ([Building a Resilient St. Vrain blog](#)), to collect articles and information on a particular topic ([Senior Services blog](#)), or to offer a group of helpful tips ([Composting, Recycling & Waste Services Tips & Tricks](#)). Once you’ve created a post, it becomes a resource that can be shared via social media, e-newsletter links, or via your project webpage. The web content management system offers the capacity for creating blogs. The website coordinator can help you start and maintain a blog.

### **E-mail**

Technology makes it possible and legitimate to use e-mail as a way of not only communicating with community members but also to gather potentially important input. When using e-mail, keep several things in mind.

1. Make sure that you use email selectively. It’s best to allow community members to sign up to receive messages rather than placing them on a list without their consent. Also, make sure that you let them know how they can request being removed from your distribution list.
2. Make sure that the information contained in the communication is useful and pertains to their concerns and needs. Do not use this as an opportunity for “promotion.”
3. Be receptive and ready to receive significant input in response.

- When sending email to a large group, make sure that individual email addresses won't be visible to the entire group. Remember, not everyone has email so never use email as your only tool for reaching the community.

### Open House

Holding a one-day "open house" can be an effective way to generate interest and present information about your department or project to the public. An Open House is typically held in a central, public location and is highly promoted. Holding an Open House is a way to generate input from people who might not typically become engaged. Whether held at a community level or a city/state level, an Open House is an opportunity to attract a wide variety of participants, present information to them, generate input from them, and engage with them one-on-one. Be sure to provide opportunities for residents to sign up for further involvement opportunities and/or to be placed on a mailing list for future information.



#### *In Action!*

I hosted an information table for the Resilient St. Vrain project, [Open House](#) style, and that one-on-one setting was really helpful in having conversations with people. My intent for being there was to give residents information on the project, not to solicit input. Regardless of my intent, though, residents approached my table and used it as a space to share their flood stories with me, and it was my job in that moment to listen to them in a meaningful way. Being a good communicator is being a good listener and everyone walks away with a greater understanding.

**-Jennifer Loper, Public Information Specialist, Resilient St. Vrain**

### Fliers, Brochures, and Door Hangers

Fliers, brochures, and door hangers are tools for communicating information about your department or project. Fliers can be posted or distributed, and brochures can be mailed and/or placed in appropriate locations for interested individuals to pick up. Door hangers can be placed on residences or businesses. As with all public information materials, you must be sure to design them carefully and use language that is appropriate for the target audience. Avoid using jargon or technical terms. Always include contact information (telephone, web address) for people who may have questions or want to get more involved and remember that taxpayers are paying for these, so use good design and keep costs reasonable. Staff is highly encouraged to translate any materials into Spanish. If it's decided that translating documents into Spanish is not needed, it is recommended that this short statement be added to a prominent location on the document. The idea of the one liner was meant to be added to publication to help people know that the materials can be translated in Spanish or you can ask for someone to interpret the content. Here are the two options:

1. Si necesita esta información en Español por favor llame (phone number) para solicitar asistencia.

English: If you need this information in Spanish please call (phone number) to request assistance

2. Para una copia de esta publicación en Español llame al (phone number)

English: For a copy of this publication in Spanish please call (phone number)

### Forum

A forum is a venue for public discussion about issues of public importance. Forums are generally significant events that require organization and planning. A forum can be a one-time event (like candidates' forum involving people running for city council), or it can be a regular event (like a once-a-month breakfast a chamber of commerce hosts for civic and political leaders). A forum provides an opportunity for invited speakers to make speeches and answer questions.

### Mapping Information

Often, there are multiple factors and layers that contribute to the complexity of a community issue as well as to the public's understanding of an issue or project. It may be useful to [map](#) the available and relevant data as a graphical illustration. Types of data that may be relevant (and available in a format that makes mapping possible) include demographic, census, environmental, geographic, utilities, service statistics, project master plans and comprehensive plans.



Other options: map survey results, if your data fall along geographic lines, or use a large-scale map with overlaying transparencies to outline and illustrate the factors relevant to your project. This may help you and your staff to understand the complex variables that might affect your project, as well as the public to understand this (and your resulting actions/ decisions).

Parks development services, as well as many other City departments, use mapping to illustrate conceptual plans through final master plans. It has been an essential method used to obtain public buy-in.

City of Longmont departments work in collaboration with the City's GIS Analyst to utilize a [Geographical Information System](#) for the organization. This GIS links relevant City databases into one system, which can be easily accessed throughout the entire organization.

### Newsletter

A newsletter is a way to keep the public informed about a project or plan, communicate important information and notices, and provide an avenue for response and input. Newsletters can be developed for a department as a whole, a division, or for one specific project. It isn't

necessary that you use a high cost graphic designer, although they will definitely help you design a more effective layout.

In order to be most effective, your newsletter should contain several articles of varying lengths, as well as photos and graphics. In addition, make sure that at least one of your articles discusses some of the concerns and challenges of the project. This is a great opportunity to be open and honest, not simply try to sell your idea. This article will help to assure the public that you are aware of some of their concerns and have considered a range of solutions. Make sure that you include a way for the reader to contact you about additional concerns and ideas they may have.

Visit the [Communications Toolbox](#) on Inside Longmont to look at [50 Ways to Deliver Your Message](#). Another example comes from Resilient St. Vrain, where they use newsletter to keep meeting participants informed as work progressed. [Click here to see their newsletter!](#)

### **Podcasts/RSS Feeds**

A podcast is essentially a series of digital audio programs which are distributed via the internet. A podcast can usually be played back on a variety of electronic devices (smart phones, tablets, laptops, desktop computers, etc.) Programming can include public meeting broadcasts, informational programs, and occasional live events.

RSS Feed is a format for sending news out through a process called syndication, which is similar to that method currently provided on many news-type sites. It's not just for news, because any type of information can be provided in this manner, since it helps the visitor to keep up to date with information on a particular page of a web site. It's designed to share headlines or other web content. The City of Longmont uses RSS Feeds to keep residents informed of news and important updates (through Longmont e-Alert). Contact the City's Web Coordinator for details.

### **Participation Style Radio Show**

A participation style radio show allows you an opportunity to both provide information and receive input. In addition, you are allowed to respond to questions by people who, in most cases, have been screened to ensure that their question and/or comment is relevant to the issue at hand. It is a way to reach a large audience (depending on the station and timeslot) while still maintaining control of the information that is released. This method is especially effective for communicating with the Spanish speaking population. La Ley Radio 1170 AM is the local radio station that is broadcast in Spanish and a great resource for this strategy to inform.

Since a participation style radio is typically broadcast live, it's essential that you be well prepared and informed on the issue and all related issues. If you don't know an answer, do not just make one up because this will do more harm than good for you in the long run. If there is a "host" of the show who is not from your organization, do your best to brief them on the issue so that they are prepared to interact well with you and ask you relevant questions. Radio stations may contact you about your department, division or a program you are working on. Please make the Public Information Officer aware of the request by contacting the [City Manager's Office](#).



### Poster Campaign

A poster campaign is truly a "public information" technique. Fliers or posters explain your project and illustrate the points you need to make. You should also address some of the concerns that you feel (or know) that the public has regarding your project or issue to let them know that you are aware of their concerns. This technique communicates information to people who may not regularly attend the traditional methods of public participation. The posters should be well designed and include contact information (telephone number, website, hotline) for people who may have questions.

It is important to consider the community in which the posters will be displayed and make them appropriate (including language and design) for diverse groups of community members and should be placed where your target audience will see them (businesses, grocery stores, the library, etc.).

### Public Meeting

A public meeting is more than an open meeting. It is an official meeting to which residents are invited to attend, but the term implies opportunities for them to be actively involved in its proceedings. Public meetings should be organized and always managed according to a written [agenda](#) (either distributed or posted).

Be aware of the audience that you want to reach. Should notices be sent out in a language other than English? Should childcare be provided for the meeting? Are translators or signers needed? Design your meetings to be convenient to the community (time/location). It's also important to be sure to follow up on any commitments you make at public meetings. Public meetings include City Council, board meeting and project meetings.

### Public Service Announcements

Public Service Announcements (PSAs) can present important information to a large number of individuals. PSAs can be broadcast over television (local network or cable), radio, or print media. PSAs are generally short informative announcements that convey a specific message.

They can increase people's awareness of your agency and its mission. Local cable providers, local networks, radio, or print outlets may be willing to donate airtime or space in their publication for your announcement. Consider placing announcements in other languages or closed caption. If you want to reach the Latino community; consider a PSA spot available on Spanish TV or radio stations and print media.

Ask your [Public Information Team member](#) for assistance in developing effective PSA's!

### **Seminar/Workshop**

A seminar is an opportunity to provide in-depth information to the public and generate (potentially) well thought out discussion and ideas. A seminar or workshop can range in length from a couple of hours to a full day and should include presentations from you about your project or issue and group discussions pertaining to your project or issue. Depending on the issue stage, a seminar can be used to develop alternatives, evaluate options, prioritize criteria, further discussion, and educate the public. Typically, each seminar session consists of fewer than 25-30 individuals.

A seminar often involves staff and experts but can be planned and organized to recruit citizen participants as well. Send individual invitations with an RSVP date and follow-up via a fax and/or a phone call reminder. A breakfast/lunch format for daytime meetings can accommodate attendees and increase attendance.

### **Social Media**

People today are more digitally connected via phones and tablets, and social media has become an expected way for government to communicate with residents. The City of Longmont maintains an active presence on [social media platforms](#) including Facebook and Twitter and has accounts with other social media outlets as well. Additionally, some departments host department-specific accounts. Effective social media messages can promote an upcoming event, direct readers to a survey or webpage, or raise general awareness of your program. Your department's public information staff or the [City Public Information Office](#) can help you design and publish a social media campaign.

### **Study Circles**

A Study Circle consists of informal, face-to-face, sustained small-group discussion sessions about social and political issues. Study Circles have 5-20 participants and meet for 3 or more sessions. Leaders and participants do not attempt to "convert" each other; rather the focus is on learning and discussion of different perspectives. [Everyday Democracy](#) provides information about the process and materials for certain study circle topics, although materials can also be developed by the sponsoring organization.

### Traveling Displays and Programs

Taking your message directly to the residents via a traveling display or program can be effective in getting your information out. Display boards, posters, and other informational brochures can help educate your target audience. Traveling displays or programs are well received by schools and other civic organizations. One example is the [BookCycle](#), which brings books to the community on the back of a specially made bicycle!



### Telephone/Live Stream Town Hall

A telephone town hall or live streaming a town hall meeting provides an opportunity to both provide information as well as to respond to questions and ideas. There are several different ways to design a telephone/live stream town hall. Overall, it allows you to create a "virtual town hall", which allows for an exchange of ideas and information without actually convening together, where people are able to vote via their telephones. This technique is especially helpful for getting large numbers of people to give feedback on a specified set of questions (multiple choice).

#### *In Action!*

I really like Telephone Town Hall. We used this during the Envision Longmont process when we realized we were not reaching people who were not online or involved in community groups. It's a way to use technology, but not in a way that's intimidating to people. You can reach a lot of people in a short amount of time. Even if they aren't asking questions when they're dialed in, they're participating and aware of the project.

**-Erin Fosdick, Principal Planner**

### Town Meeting

This term has come to mean two things: a general meeting sponsored by an elected official or a regular, chartered meeting held by the City of Longmont. Each is an open, public meeting in every sense. It is managed according to a published agenda and is usually begun with a presentation made by public officials. Public reaction to the presentation is invited and encouraged. Agendas for town meetings should also include specific time for residents who attend to raise issues important to them, too.

### Video Information

Using the local access cable television station, Channel 3, is a way to reach a large number of people and provide a significant amount of information. Producing a high-quality video can range in cost, but it does not usually cost anything to have it aired repeatedly on Channel 3. A related technique is a "participation style TV show." Another way to use local cable television is to air broadcasts (either live or taped) of public meetings that you hold. This allows people who may not be able to attend the meeting to find out what happened.

Contact the [The Longmont Channel](#) if you want to produce and air a television show on Channel 8. You can also obtain Channel 8's assistance to produce a video that you can take to speaking events, open houses, public meetings, informational booths, etc. The Longmont Channel broadcasts City Council meetings, Planning and Zoning meetings, and produces a variety of videos for the City Manager's Office.

### **Website**

Designing a webpage for your department and/or for a specific project can provide a significant amount of information to the public. Make sure that it is well designed and easy to navigate. Also, be aware that not everyone has access to computers, knowledge of computers, or is comfortable navigating the Internet. Think about your target audience and decide if a website is an effective tool to reach them. A good website will feature well-organized information, "frequently asked questions", and contact information (e-mail, telephone). Be sure to publicize the web address well. Include the web and information that address on every piece of literature you distribute. In addition, make sure that you maintain your website and keep it updated.

If you are interested in putting information on the City's website, contact your [web committee team member](#).

## Consult

This level of involvement is designed to obtain feedback from the community on analysis, alternatives and/ or decisions. This level of involvement is appropriate to use when:

- Your department is considering changes in existing services or use of amenities that could impact community access. The impact of an issue will have an effect on a person's day to day life or the quality of lives in the neighborhood and there are options to be considered.
- There is a need to determine what the community wants or needs when developing new services, programs, policy and/or facilities. It is important to know which way the community is leaning or what it is thinking about an issue.
- It's important to determine the scope of an issue and which community partners may have an interest or expertise in dealing with that issue. This will assist in exploring/understanding the alternatives.

### Advisory Boards/Commissions

The Longmont City Council has established over 20 voluntary boards and commissions to review, discuss and make recommendations to City Council on a variety of important community issues. City Council appoints residents to serve on these citizen-based boards/commissions through a semi-annual application process. Each member serves a specific term, as determined by ordinance. Specific information about each committee and advisory board or commission can be found on the [City's website](#).



### Blue Ribbon Panel

The defining characteristic of this type of group is the members themselves. The members of a blue ribbon panel are well-known experts in the issue area or prominent individuals whose recommendations tend to carry a lot of weight and respect within the community. In a blue ribbon panel, the members tend to examine a rather specific issue and develop broad recommendations with little or no interference from the sponsoring organization. In addition, a blue ribbon panel may be assembled to evaluate a specific plan/policy direction and deliver a "verdict" stating whether they, in their expert or prominent opinion, support the plan/policy.

### Brainstorming Session

A brainstorming session is an opportunity to generate ideas. To be effective, brainstorming sessions should be relatively small, or be a larger group that breaks into small groups for the actual brainstorming process. A key to brainstorming is that any and every idea gets recorded, even if it is only a partially formed idea. A basic rule of brainstorming is that everyone agrees not to criticize or critique any of the ideas. Individuals are encouraged to expand and modify other's ideas, but these get recorded as separate ideas. It is useful to appoint one person as a recorder

(the recorder may choose to contribute ideas as well), to record each idea accurately. It is helpful to do the recording in a format that allows all participants to see the entire list of ideas (e.g. on flip chart paper, whiteboards or sticky wall). Interested individuals, experts, stakeholders, and/or residents are all appropriate brainstorming participants.

### **Briefings with Key Individuals**

Briefings are a way to keep key individuals or groups informed about the process and progress of your project or program development, as well as a way to gather their comments and input. Briefings can be designed to be very formal or informal. It may be helpful to schedule a series of regular briefings with key individuals or groups, or hold just one or two prior to major decision points. Periodic briefings also allow you to gather input from individuals or groups before you head too far in a specific direction.

### **Coffee Klatch**

A coffee klatch is a small "coffee meeting", typically held at someone's home or at a coffee shop. Often someone in the neighborhood of the project or issue will volunteer to host the coffee klatch.

These meetings are generally informal and tend to be held in the evenings. This type of gathering allows you to convey a significant amount of information to the small group gathered and respond to everyone's concerns and questions in a thorough manner. The setting of the coffee klatch is often more comfortable for people than many other traditional forums. Be sure to follow-up with the attendees of the klatches so that they know how their input was incorporated into processes and plans.

### **Conference Retreat**

A conference or a retreat is a way to provide in-depth education and create opportunities for dialogue about a specific issue or set of issues. A retreat can be thought of as an extended workshop or seminar where interested individuals, stakeholders, experts, elected officials, and agency staff can assemble together to learn about the issues relating to your project, plan, or agency as a whole and dialogue, brainstorm, discuss, and deliberate about ideas, alternatives, priorities, and solutions. In planning a retreat, you must make sure that all the appropriate interests are invited and involved. You must also make sure that, if there are presentations scheduled, a wide range of perspectives and ideas are presented. In addition, you should provide professional facilitators to guide the discussions and deliberation sessions and to help give direction to the conference.

### **Cultural Brokers**

This technique requires identification of key individuals who can offer helpful advice and information with respect to specific culture/language. This is a very informal technique, and must be done in the very earliest stages of a project, but can nonetheless yield helpful outcomes. When employing this strategy, identify several key individuals who represent

differing perspectives. These may be community leaders, interested group leaders, experts, or residents with whom you have worked previously. Talk with them to help you identify issues and concerns that may relate to your project, as well as to get their advice about ideas and strategies for proceeding.

Identifying cultural brokers should never be your sole community involvement technique, but rather can serve as a starting point for ideas. In fact, cultural brokers can be utilized not only for your project planning, but also for your community involvement planning.



### *In Action!*

During the flood of 2013, many of the residents of Royal Mobile Home Park essentially lost their homes to the disaster and were unconnected. Many did not speak English, or spoke limited English and were not sure what to do next. The City made a conscious effort to move from information to engagement. We held meetings there and connected residents to resources, working alongside them to navigate systems that would help them with recovery and to access resources. At that point our engagement was at a deeper level and we became their cultural broker, helping them fill out paperwork, serving as interpreters and helping look at options or resources based on the needs they identified, never forgetting that the primary decision maker was the resident. They were the ones that made decision to apply for resources or to identify what paths of recovery they wanted to take – we were just here to help them work through the process.

**-Carmen Ramirez, Community and Neighborhood Resources Coordinator**

### **Critics Committee**

The members of this type of committee should be made up of your project's fiercest critics and/or your biggest opponents. We recommend involving these individuals as early as possible. By involving them throughout the project, and honestly listening to and considering their concerns, there is a greater likelihood that they will support the final outcome. When using a critics committee, it may be necessary to move rather slowly to prevent the committee members from feeling "steam-rolled." Using a critics committee can take a lot of patience, but can be a very effective involvement strategy.

### **Feedback Panel**

A feedback panel brings together a group of people to examine and discuss an organization, a policy, a program, a plan, or a problem and provide feedback to the appropriate people. Designed to be flexible, a feedback panel can be one or two days long, and can gather residents, stakeholders, "customers" of your organization, or others. Participants can provide initial feedback and advice based on their own experiences or can be asked to think about and respond to specific information and requests. A feedback panel allows you to gather information about specific ways to modify a service, improve performance, or deal with a

challenging problem. A feedback panel is more in-depth and informed than a focus group, but not as much as a Residents Jury and is designed to allow you to hear from a small group of relevant participants.

### Focus Group

A focus group is an opportunity to bring together a group of people to get their input, ideas, and reactions. A typical focus group is 8 to 12 people, brought together for 1.5 – 2 hours. The group can be selected in a variety of ways, though is typically randomly selected (among your target audience if possible). In addition to gaining ideas and input, a focus group can also be used for "message testing" to help you learn about how best to communicate an idea or proposal to the public. You can utilize a skilled moderator to ensure that your focus group is productive and useful. Focus groups can be relatively expensive to conduct if using a professional focus group facility. Focus groups are useful to help predict public reaction as well as to gather input from a small group of people, but it is often difficult to "bring the message" from a focus group to the larger public.

### Games & Contests

Games and contests are special ways to attract attention and engage people who may not otherwise pay attention to your agency or project. Games can help people think about different alternatives and options. Games can be designed to help people think through trade-offs and priorities, in a different and inviting manner. Games can range from very "low tech" such as card games or board games, to specially designed "high tech" computer simulations. Contests, on the other hand, can generate publicity and interest, as well as generating ideas and input. Examples of contests include essay contests, poster contests, raffles, etc.

Chips and Buckets was used during the budget prioritization process at the City of Longmont. Chips and Buckets involved standing outside of community centers (such as grocery stores, the library, civic center, etc.) and giving residents poker chips that represented \$100. The residents were asked to place their chips into buckets that represented each of the budget priorities that were determined previously. Turns out, kids love doing this! It was a great way to engage families.



Not only did the city use the Chips and Buckets method, but they also surveyed residents online and in demographically appropriate focus groups. After collecting citizen input, city staff found that the priorities that residents identified was consistent across all methods of data collection.

Another example comes from Fort Collins, CO, where city planners had [residents use Legos](#) to inform their city planning.

***In Action!***

“Budget prioritization isn’t always the most exciting thing to get people to participate in, but figuring out priorities the residents have is important. The average citizen does not think about being super involved in the budgeting process, so we tried to make participating meaningful for residents. Before involving residents, however, we asked city staff to identify outcomes that they wanted from prioritizing the budget. Once those were identified, those suggestions were taken to the boards and members of commissions in the city so they could also provide their input on what city staff had identified. Through this process, the city staff were able to break their priorities into five different categories. These are the five categories they brought to the residents, and the intent was to get the opinion from the community on how those five things ranked in importance to them.

In order to get community feedback, city staff implemented “[Chips and Buckets](#)”. Chips and Buckets involved standing outside of community centers (such as grocery stores, the library, civic center, etc.) and gave residents poker chips that represented \$100. The residents were asked to place their chips into buckets that represented each of the budget priorities that were determined previously. Turns out, kids love doing this! It was a great way to engage families.

Not only did the city use the [Chips and Buckets](#) method, but we also surveyed residents online and in demographically appropriate [focus groups](#). After collecting citizen input, city staff found that the priorities that residents identified was consistent across all methods of data collection.”

-**Sandi Seader, Assistant City Manager**

**Interactive Displays and Kiosks**

Interactive displays and kiosks can be set up to provide information in response to frequently asked questions. Generally consisting of a video or computer screen, associated software, and a computer, interactive displays are usually housed in a unit that vaguely resembles an automated teller machine.

Information is provided through presentations, and users are invited to direct the flow of information through the use of a touch-screen, keys, or mouse. Interactive displays can offer a variety of issues to explore, elicit specific responses (acting as a survey tool), and/or enable the user to enter a specific request or join a mailing list. Displays should be located in a public location or be mobile units as well. Interactive displays can reach people who generally do not participate in other forms of involvement. Interactive displays can be designed to be multi-lingual, and provide print-outs of requested information, if applicable.

**Polling**

OptionPower is a tool that allows for real time polling from an audience that you are speaking to. This tool consists of a computer program to run the polling and individual remotes for participants in the audience to respond to poll questions. It is an instant way for everyone to be heard. If you are interested in learning more about how this tool works, contact the [Community and Neighborhood Resources](#) department.

## Public Hearing

Many government activities require that public hearings be held at various stages in the decision making or policymaking process. Public hearings must be announced well before the event. They're usually organized around a specific topic or issue and should be held at a time and place convenient to the public. They sometimes begin with a staff presentation, followed by an opportunity for the public in attendance to ask questions and make comments about the issue and what was presented.

Public hearings are used extensively throughout our organization. Many are required by the city code and have specific timeframes and procedures to follow. All information presented in public hearings should be conveyed in both English and Spanish. The public hearing environment should be made comfortable to residents—by having speakers sit at a table instead of standing at the podium, provide a mechanism for more immediate response, provide timely follow-up, etc.



## Responsive Publication/Comment Cards

A Responsive Publication is a technique that provides an opportunity to both inform the public and gather reactions and input. The publication usually has two main parts: information about the project or issue and a response form to be filled out. The information section of the publication should be written clearly and concisely, in language appropriate to the target audience. A simple graph, chart or picture can be used to illustrate information, in addition to written commentary. Include contact information for people who may want additional information. The response section should give the respondent space to answer a couple of questions and provide written comments. Ideally, the response section is a tear-off postcard with postage included. Another option is to create a response section that requires respondents to find an envelope and stamp, but this will reduce your response rate.

Questions included in a Responsive Publication should be very brief and few in number. There can be a space for the respondent to include name and address, but that should be marked "optional". Also, it's important to provide a space for respondents to mark if they are interested in receiving additional information or being invited to future meetings.

Be careful about drawing conclusions from the responses. Keep in mind that only those who choose to respond will be included in the responses (not a random sampling). This is by no means a technique to develop an exhaustive list of ideas or concerns, but it can help you gather some important information.

## Site Visit

A site visit provides an opportunity for individuals to visit a project site (or proposed site) to ask questions, gather information, and provide input. Depending on the nature of the project, a site visit can be used to view a proposed site to evaluate it or can be used to monitor

progress of a project at an already determined site. During a site visit, a brief tour or presentation can be given, followed by questions, concerns, and input from the visitors. You may choose to set up some type of informal brainstorming, public meetings, or workshop to assist in the evaluation of the site, if appropriate.

### **Survey/Questionnaire**

A survey is a useful tool for gathering information about the public's attitudes and perceptions toward a specific issue or project. Surveys must be carefully designed, administered, and analyzed in order to produce accurate results, and [information on creating a survey](#) can be found on the intranet. A survey can be administered via telephone to randomly selected telephone numbers, or online via social media, email, etc. A survey may also be administered on a door-to-door basis or through the mail. A related tool is a questionnaire. The main difference between a survey and a questionnaire is that a survey is designed to be statistically significant and administered to a randomly selected population. However, both tools can provide information that should be used very carefully when drawing conclusions from the information gathered. A survey should be designed and administered by experienced professionals.

Every other year the City does a Citizen Satisfaction Survey. If you are interested in asking a question on the survey, please contact the Public Information Officer.

An online survey is usually used to gather information from the public in a format that can be easily converted into usable data. For example, the City of Longmont has used Survey Monkey, an online survey tool that allows data to be exported to Excel, Powerpoint or PDF formats. Using an online survey can be helpful when:

- there are several policy choices that the decision makers want public input on,
- formal legislation trust requires a public hearing,
- there are questions of schedule, timing, etc. for a project, or
- controversial issues arise where the decision maker wants to hear various arguments from the public.

If you'd like to create a survey using Survey Monkey, use HelpSTAR to submit your request.

A questionnaire is a way to gather information in a relatively straightforward way. They can be distributed in the mail, at information points, at public meetings, at your offices, and so on. Make sure to include instructions about what to do with a completed questionnaire (drop box, address, fax number, etc.).

If you determine that you need to have a statistically significant result, your questionnaire must be written, administered, quantified, and analyzed by professionals. Questionnaire can also be used more informally to gather general information. This type of "less rigorous" questionnaire should include sections for respondents to write their answers as well as any comments they might want to add. The results of this type of questionnaire are simply gathered and tabulated, but not quantified or analyzed. A questionnaire like this can give you good ideas and input, as well as provide a general picture of feelings, perceptions, and values.

## Involve

This level of involvement is used when collaborating directly with the community to ensure that issues and concerns are consistently understood and considered. This level of involvement is appropriate to use when:

- The issue affects or has the potential to affect a significant number of residents; affects residents in more than one aspect/area (beyond geography); and/or has a lasting impact on people's property.
- Community ownership in the solution is helpful or needed.
- Longer-term strategic issues are being considered such as outreach efforts, goal setting, strategic plans, or new facilities.
- Involving the community may broaden the range of ideas, resources, and solutions that were not originally considered.

### Design Charette

A [Design Charette](#) is typically the first of a series of meetings where idea generation (charette ideas) are condensed into several concept plans and then refined into final designs – all with public review and input. This tool is most useful when the project involves design of new facilities, redesign of existing facilities or where brainstorming for physical project improvements are needed. A Charette can resolve confrontational attitudes that may arise during the process, as well as giving residents who participate



an opportunity to give early input into the planning process. The same "rules" that apply to a brainstorming session apply to a charette. The main rule is that the criticizing and critiquing of ideas is not allowed, but building and expanding on ideas is allowed and encouraged. The environment and setting for a charette are important to encourage creativity over an extended period of time (this can mean food and beverages readily available and supplying areas where participants can rest for a bit if needed). Participants can move in and out and between groups as the charette progresses to encourage "cross-pollination" of ideas, perspectives, expertise, and energy.

[Click here](#) for a video describing what design charrettes are and how they are done.

### Civic Education/Leadership Academies

A Civic Education Academy or Leadership Academy can be developed to help people to learn more about local government processes and how people can have a positive impact on issues important to their quality of life. Civic Education can include training in public speaking, group dynamics, local government process, elections, public policy development, etc. Communities have developed these academies to address specific needs/interests and reflect different levels

of community involvement including citizen's police academies, neighborhood leadership colleges, citizen planning colleges and citizen universities.

The City of Longmont Police Department sponsors citizen and student police academies. Longmont Public Safety offers an annual Police, Fire, and OEM Residents Academy which features different public safety staff members presenting information about their work and how the community can assist in making Longmont safer and get how to get engaged. Longmont Neighborhood Resources also sponsors a neighborhood leadership institute.

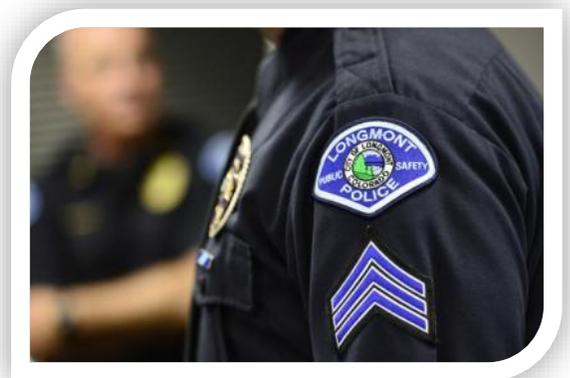
Residents of Longmont also have access to [People Engaged in Raising Leaders \(PERL\)](#), which is a training program designed to increase involvement among people of color on boards and commissions across Boulder County. Through this program, people of color are prepared to take on positions of leadership on boards and commissions, participate in their community civically, and gain the skills and tools necessary to better understand the process, structure, and make-up of boards and commissions.

### Commissions

A [commission](#) is similar to blue ribbon panel, task force, and working group and is usually made up of experts or prominent individuals who agree to study a specific issue for an extended period of time. The commission can develop either broad or specific recommendations, but they tend to come to their conclusions after significant study and deliberation. Whereas a blue ribbon panel may only convene a handful of times, a commission meets over a longer time period. A commission is useful for understanding highly complex and nuanced issues. A commission may also be convened to look at the entire agency/organization rather than just one specific policy/issue area.

### Public Safety in Partnership with the Community

Engagement with community members in a way that they know their voice counts, their thinking matters and their humanness is valued is the foundational principle of public safety in partnership with the community. It involves a relationship-based approach for keeping people connected to the Public Safety Department, the Public Safety Department connected to the community, and the community connected to each other. Public safety improves overall when people have these relationships and have healthy two-way communication with those charged with protecting the public and with each other. The Longmont Department of Public Safety embodies this approach and fosters such relationships through a variety of strategies including purposeful outreach conducted by Police Officers, Fire Crews, and Professional Staff with a focus on building expertise, resources and capacity within neighborhoods and across the community.



### **Depolarizing Committee**

This type of advisory committee is used when interests are so polarized and opposed to each other that it may be impossible for them to objectively assess a plan or issue on its merits. When an issue has become very adversarial, it's helpful to get the opposing and polarized parties together at the same table as members of the same committee.

The ground-rules and process of this type of committee meetings are of utmost importance so that individuals with opposing perspectives can begin to empathize and understand each other. It is important that the committee focuses on areas of agreement and is able to discuss areas of disagreement in a respectful manner. There are risks in using this type of committee. However, if it is successful, there is potential for improving the entire decision-making environment as well as raising the level of communication and respect amongst all parties involved. The relationships that are built through this type of committee can have a long lasting, positive impact on the community.

### **Leaderless Collaboration**

This is a process where the development of a vision among group members becomes the driving force for the continuation of project goals. There is no "appointed" leader of the group. This process is based on the principle that the development of community and trust among members can begin with a simple ritual of sharing a meal and/or sharing of stories/time, and then the group begins to work as a community united in a goal(s).

Creating and sustaining an atmosphere of common focus, like backgrounds, and "leveling of egos" (or addressing whatever keeps group members distanced from one another and unable to focus or complete tasks) is critical to the success of this strategy.

### **Mediation**

Mediation is an informal voluntary process for parties who have a conflict that they have been unable to resolve. Trained mediators meet with the parties to discuss their concern and the cause of the dispute. They assist the parties in reaching a solution that will work for them and end the dispute. The mediator(s) write down the specifics of the agreement. This agreement is binding and enforceable by those who sign it unless otherwise stated in the agreement.

### **Negotiation**

Negotiation is a process to resolve conflict and disputes between parties unable to reach agreement. Essentially, negotiation is "bargaining" between two or more interests. The interested parties meet together to resolve a dispute, sometimes with a facilitator, sometimes without.

Negotiation tends to be less formal than mediation. Negotiations can be designed in several different ways including one in-depth meeting, or a series of meetings over time. Your agency may, at times, be a third party to the negotiations.

Negotiation can help you decide what policy/project your agency should pursue. However, there may be occasions when your agency is one of the interests directly involved, which then

requires that you involve a neutral third-party to help facilitate the negotiations, to ensure legitimacy to the process. Negotiation is most effective if it occurs prior to polarization.

### Task Force

A task force is a committee assigned a specific task to accomplish. The members of a task force can be experts, well-respected individuals, members of interest groups, and/or residents. A task force is a relatively generically defined tool. Blue Ribbon Panels, Commissions, and Working Groups are all more specifically defined tools related to a task force.

### Volunteerism

Volunteers can assist your organization in many ways. In addition to providing assistance in delivering services or implementing a plan, volunteers can also be mobilized to help you develop your plans. If you have a good volunteer program already established, these volunteers can be tapped to help you make decisions. Volunteers tend to be rather civic minded and active people, and their contributions can be not only useful, they can also help to build support and confidence in your organization and plans. In addition, volunteers often have a close intimate knowledge of a current program and/or of the people that might be affected by your plans.

Consulting with volunteers can provide a perspective that might otherwise go unrecognized. Volunteers can also act as a liaison between your organization and the community. Find ways to gather input from the volunteers in a manner that does not significantly add to the time and energy they are already contributing.

An example of this technique is the City's [Clean Up, Green Up](#) program. This approach has been used for several years by the Parks and Open Space staff and begins with a meeting with the Longmont Times-Call newspaper staff to organize publicity and posters for to be distributed throughout the community. Members of city advisory boards, neighborhood groups, youth groups, scouts and representatives from the St. Vrain Valley School District all participate in the cleanup process.



## Partner

This level of involvement is designed to partnering with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution. All participants input is equally valued. This level of involvement is appropriate to use when:

- The City has a role to play as a community member - other people/groups have different parts of the solution and city/community partnerships are needed to define, design, implement, and/or sustain initiatives.
- A project requires follow through and resources from other people and groups.
- A decision will potentially affect everyone in the community and will have long range impact.
- Dealing with complex issues where many different groups need to be at the table.
- Issues that arise in the community where there is a more appropriate leader than the City (ex: Education).

### Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry, as described by the [Rocky Mountain Corporation for Positive Change](#), is a philosophy and a methodology for positive change. It is founded on the simple assumption that human systems – teams, organizations and people – move in the direction of what they study, what they focus upon and what they talk about with regularity.

The essence of Appreciative Inquiry is then the study of what “gives life,” energy and vitality to organizations, teams and people when they are at their best. Appreciative Inquiry does not assume that any person or organization is always at its best. It is based on the idea, and both research and experience show, that people learn, and organizations change most readily when they focus on, study, and engage in dialogue about strengths, patterns of success and who they are at their best.

For this reason, the Appreciative Inquiry process engages large numbers of people in dialogue and deliberations about their individual and collective strengths, their hopes and dreams for the future, as well as opportunities and plans for collaborative action. AI can be particularly powerful with vulnerable community members, as it focuses on building on their strengths, or what is working, rather than focusing on deficit.

Longmont has been featured in the book *The Power of Appreciative Inquiry: A Practical Guide to Positive Change* for the appreciative inquiry process that was used to create the [Focus on Longmont](#) strategic plan.

#### *In Action!*

[Appreciative inquiry](#) is something that can be influential and integrated into how we do business. It’s a great skill to have for those that can help us overcome language barriers and access vulnerable populations – starting with our strengths as a community.

**-Carmen Ramirez, Community and Neighborhood Resources Manager**

## Deliberative Dialogue

Deliberative dialogue, as described by [Scott London](#), is a form of discussion aimed at finding the best course of action. Deliberative questions take the form "What should we do?" The purpose is not so much to solve a problem or resolve an issue as to explore the most promising avenues for action. Deliberative dialogue differs from other forms of public discourse — such as debate, negotiation, brainstorming, consensus-building — because the objective is not so much to talk together as to think together, not so much to reach a conclusion as to discover where a conclusion might lie. Thinking together involves listening deeply to other points of view, exploring new ideas and perspectives, searching for points of agreement, and bringing unexamined assumptions into the open. The process usually revolves around a pressing question that needs to be addressed, rather than a problem that can be efficiently solved. A problem needs to be solved; a question cannot be solved, but it can be experienced, and out of that experience a common understanding can emerge that opens an acceptable path to action. In this spirit, deliberative dialogue among a group of people is aimed at establishing a framework for mutual understanding and a common purpose that transcends mere ideas and opinions. While it may not produce consensus, it can produce collective insight and judgment reflecting the thinking of the group as a whole — personal disagreements notwithstanding. It is commonly assumed that the only alternatives to consensus are compromise and dissent. But deliberative dialogue offers another possibility by assuming that individuals' views may be to some degree amorphous and indeterminate until they have been, as Madison put it, "refined and enlarged" through the process of reasoning with others.

Longmont partners with [Colorado State University's Center for Public Deliberation](#).

### *In Action!*

Deliberative dialogue was really useful when we had conversations in the community around marijuana. We had an expert or advocate for three different angles of the marijuana argument: Don't Allow It, Allow it, Regulate It. People were grouped up and each group had a medical marijuana patient, a person who's opposed to marijuana, a physician, a parent, a resident to discuss. It enables people to be educated and see other people's points of view. We weren't asking for anyone to vote, but asking different people to look at merits and drawbacks from varying viewpoints. While these are awesome discussions and great for contentious situations, they are time and resource intensive.

**-Erin Fosdick, Principal Planner**

## Eager Beaver

The members of this type of committee are "eager beavers" - individuals who are so motivated that they are willing to not only come up with ideas and recommendations, but also take responsibility for the implementation and follow-through on their recommendations. Essentially, these are community-members who have been identified as willing to "take the ball and run with it". This type of committee is useful when "volunteer power" is essential to achieve the goals of the program. Forming a non-profit, 501 c (3) organization may be helpful for longer

term or ongoing efforts. "Eager beaver" individuals or teams can also be helpful in securing additional funding for special programs.

The City's Adopt-a-Park Program is an example which has been used for many years as a way to allow residents to assist in maintaining public parks of particular interest to them.

### **Community Partnering**

The participants/organizations in this type of strategy partner with City programs or Divisions such as the Museum to collaboratively develop and present programs, exhibits or services. This collaborative strategy may involve applying for grants and securing other sources of additional funding for programs.

### **Whole Scale**

Whole-Scale sessions allow a "critical mass of the organization (or a sub-system) within the organization to define the criteria for the new culture while experiencing it directly." The approach consists of several different processes including those that clarify current reality, shape a vision for the organization, develop action plans to move forward, or address information, process, structure and relationship issues vital to the change process. The Whole-Scale approach can be used for different purposes, at different levels, and at different stages in the change process. In addition, the approach works in a wide variety of industries, government agencies, and non-profit organizations, across cultures. The core values underlying the Whole-Scale approach include creating:

- empowerment and participation,
- community,
- a shared preferred future,
- change in real time, as well as
- using reality as a key driver,
- building and maintaining a common database
- practicing action research
- transferring learning

### **Working Group**

A working group is a committee that works together to develop a specific plan or recommendation. Their work is usually relatively focused and can be very detailed, as opposed to broad ranging recommendations. Often, a working group is composed of interested residents and stakeholders, but can include experts or prominent individuals as well. A working group gets down to the "nitty-gritty" of an issue/proposal/ program and develops very detailed and specific plans and recommendations, which are generally followed by the sponsoring agency/ organization. Their recommendations are more than just "advice" and "food-for thought." The recommendations of the working group are action plans that are typically implemented without significant deviation.

## Other Resources

American Planning Association—Advancing the Art and Science of Planning

<http://www.planning.org/>

America Speaks—Engaging Residents in Governance

<http://www.americaspeaks.org/>

Dialogue by Design—Handbook

[http://designer.dialoguebydesign.net/docs/Dialogue\\_by\\_Design\\_Handbook.pdf](http://designer.dialoguebydesign.net/docs/Dialogue_by_Design_Handbook.pdf)

Everyday Democracy—Ideas and Tools for Community Participation

<http://www.everyday-democracy.org/>

International Association for Public Participation

<http://www.iap2.org/>

Jefferson Center—Originator of the Citizen’s Jury Process

<http://www.jefferson-center.org/>

Municipal Research and Services Center

<http://www.mrsc.org/>

National Charrette Institute

<http://www.charretteinstitute.org/>

## Community Involvement Project Summary Sheet

This summary sheet is intended to help you outline and frame your approach to community/ organizational involvement in a project. Complete as much of the following information as you can. Be sure to check out community involvement resources on line: <https://www.longmontcolorado.gov/community/community-involvement>.

You are also encouraged to contact the Community Involvement Steering Committee with questions or for additional assistance. A current directory of members is available on the intranet:

<http://insidelongmont.longmontcolorado.gov/our-organization/committees/community-involvement-steering-team/community-involvement-members>

**Project Name:**

**Project Begin Date:**

**Expected End Date:**

**Project Summary:**

**Staff Lead:**

**Lead Department:**

- City Manager's Office
- Community Services
- Longmont Power & Communications
- Planning & Development Services
- Public Safety
- Public Works & Natural Resources
- Shared Services
- City Attorney's Office
- Other Divisions

**Other Involved Departments:**

- City Manager's Office
- Community Services
- Longmont Power & Communications
- Planning & Development Services
- Public Safety
- Public Works & Natural Resources
- Shared Services
- City Attorney's Office
- Other Divisions

**Level of Community Interest**

*Some projects may be of great interest and/or importance to the community at large. This may include residents, employees, the business community, nonprofits, schools, etc. Some project maybe more controversial or have interest beyond just Longmont (e.g. regional or state interest). Think about the type of comments and input you expect to get from various stakeholders. Specific questions to think about include:*

*What decision is being made? Has a decision already been made?*

*Who is the decision maker?*

*What input or type of input would be most meaningful?*

*What are the biggest issues expected to come up?*

*Other notes:*

### **Expected methods of involvement**

*There are numerous ways to get community participation in a project. The City's community involvement resource manual, *Engaging Residents*, provides a lot more detail about methods and levels of involvement. Start thinking what level is right for your project. Record notes and ideas for the various levels here:*

<b>Type/Level of Involvement</b>	<b>Example Strategies</b>
Inform (provide information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information in City publications</li> <li>• Create flyers or bill inserts</li> <li>• Give updates on-line &amp; on social media</li> <li>• Have an informational meeting</li> </ul>
<b>Notes on informing strategies</b>	
Consult (gather feedback)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct stakeholder interviews</li> <li>• Host a focus group</li> <li>• Administer a survey</li> </ul>
<b>Notes on consulting strategies</b>	
Involve (seek continued input and feedback/ information exchange)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host a design charrette</li> <li>• Set up a project committee or task force</li> </ul>

**Notes on involving strategies**

Partner (work as equal partners, share in decision making)

- This level of involvement is relatively rare and the city would not necessarily lead this effort

**Advisory Boards to be Notified and/or consulted** *(check all that apply)*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Airport Advisory Board</u>                    | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Longmont Housing Authority</u>          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Board of Environmental Affairs</u>            | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Museum Advisory Board</u>               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Downtown Development Authority</u>            | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Parks and Recreation Advisory Board</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Golf Course Advisory Board</u>                | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Planning and Zoning Commission</u>      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Historic Preservation Commission</u>          | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Senior Residents Advisory Board</u>     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Housing and Human Services Advisory Board</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Transportation Advisory Board</u>       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Library Board</u>                             | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Water Board</u>                         |

**Outside Organizations & Groups in the Process/Project Stakeholders**

*There are numerous organizations in Longmont that work with the community in a variety of ways. Are you planning to involve any of these groups? If so, what will their role be? Record notes here:*

*Here is a sample list of organizations that may be interested in being involved in your project depending on the topic.*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Longmont Economic Development Partnership</li> <li>• Downtown Development Authority (DDA)</li> <li>• Visit Longmont</li> <li>• OUR Center</li> <li>• Multicultural Action Committee</li> <li>• Sustainable Resilient Longmont</li> <li>• LiveWell Longmont</li> <li>• Youth Council</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St Vrain Valley School District/School groups/organizations</li> <li>• Sports leagues and recreation programs</li> <li>• Seniors</li> <li>• Arts Longmont</li> <li>• Center for People with Disabilities</li> <li>• Bicycle Longmont</li> <li>• HOPE (Homeless Outreach Providing Encouragement)</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

**Other related plans**

*The City (and our partners) have engaged the community in a variety of planning processes and projects in the past. There may be current, relevant data and input that can be used for your project. Determine if your project is related to any existing City plans or projects and consult that project manager (or department) to see about getting access to information that was gathered as part of that outreach effort. Here are some current plans and reports that had a community outreach component and may have additional data that could be useful for your project. Contact the relevant department, which is noted below, for additional information.*

- Envision Longmont (PDS)
- Sustainability Plan (PWNR)
- Recreation Master Plan (CS)
- Parks, Recreation, Trails Master Plan (PWNR)
- Roadway Master Plan (PWNR)
- 1<sup>st</sup> & Main Transit Revitalization Plan (PDS)
- Wildlife Management Plan (PWNR)
- Open Space Master Plan (PWNR)
- Human Services Needs Assessment (CS)
- Homeless Service Assessment (CS)
- Parks, Open Space, and Trail Master Plans (for specific areas) (PWNR)
- Advance Longmont ED Strategy (LEDP)
- Downtown Master Plan (LDDA)

