



2006 All-America City Award Application

Community Information

Community name and state:

City of Longmont, Colorado

Your community is applying as a:

Neighborhood Town 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: 1996, 1997

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

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

Contact Information

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

Name: Gordon Pedrow

Title: City Manager

Organization: City of Longmont

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List the 3 individuals who most actively participated in filling out this All-America City Award application (add additional lines if needed):

(Provide name and title; organization; phone; e-mail address)

Kris Rose, Resident and Consultant, (303) 651-7709, jkarose@comcast.net

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Carmen Ramirez, Community Relations Specialist, City of Longmont, 303-651-8444, carmen.ramirez@ci.longmont.co.us

The community applying will receive one complimentary membership (or a 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 Gordon Pedrow, City Manager
Address 350 Kimbark Street
City, State, Zip Code Longmont, CO 80501
Phone Number 303-651-8601 Fax 303-651-8590
Email gordon.pedrow@ci.longmont.co.us

If we are designated an All-America City, we agree to follow NCL's rules (available on the Web site) regarding use of the All-America City Award logo, a registered trademark of the National Civic League.

Signature: _____ Date: March 9, 2006

Name: Gordon Pedrow Title: City Manager

Community Statistics

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 2000 or most recent*): 82,798 (end of year 2005)

Source/Date: City of Longmont Planning/Development Services Division

POPULATION PERCENTAGE CHANGE 1990-2000 (indicate + or -): 37.9 %

Source/Date: Census (1990 population of 51,555 & 2000 population of 71,093)

RACIAL/ETHNIC POPULATION BREAKDOWN (*percentage*):

White alone	<u>84.8%</u>
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	<u>19.1%</u>
Black or African American alone	<u>0.5%</u>
Asian alone	<u>1.8%</u>
American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) alone	<u>1.0%</u>
Native Hawaiian and Other	

Pacific Islander (NHOP) alone	<u>0.1%</u>
Some other race alone	<u>9.7%</u>
Two or more races	<u>2.2%</u>

Source/Date: 2000 Census

MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME: \$82,000 (2005) For Boulder-Longmont MSA

Source/Date: U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development

PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES BELOW POVERTY LEVEL: 5.9 %

Source/Date: 2000 Census

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE: 4.1 % November 2005 preliminary Boulder-Longmont MSA

Source/Date: Colorado Dept. of Labor and Employment

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

19 years old and under	<u>30.4%</u>
20-24	<u>6.0%</u>
25-44	<u>33.1%</u>
45-64	<u>21.2%</u>
65 and over	<u>9.2%</u>

Source/Date: 2000 Census

PERCENTAGE OF HOME OWNERSHIP: 65.6 %

Source/Date: 2000 Census

WORKFORCE DISTRIBUTION -- Name the three largest employment sectors in your community and provide the percentage of total employed in each:

<u>Government</u>	<u>30.9</u> %
<u>Professional & Business</u>	<u>29.1</u> %
<u>Trade, Transportation</u>	<u>23.9</u> %

Source/Date: Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (11/05)

★★ Please attach a state map with your community clearly marked (attach as a separate sheet).

Part I

Civic Infrastructure

Describe your community. Using the four major sections of the National Civic League's *The Civic Index, Second Edition* (see www.ncl.org for more information), examine your community's civic infrastructure and civic capacity and describe how your community *lives* each of the answers to each of the following questions. Please include real examples of how your community has demonstrated its strengths and faced its challenges. The roman numerals correspond to parts of *The Civic Index, Second Edition*. Also see the application instructions for this section.

Add lines as needed for your responses

I. What is our community vision for its future? (300 word maximum)

The dynamic environment in which our community must thrive is experiencing great change. Economic globalization is reshaping the competitive arena in which communities exist. Jobs of all educational and skill levels are subject to relocation into any part of the world. Regionally, major transportation infrastructure improvements, population increases, intensified retail competition, and the arrival and departure of major employers will continue to significantly impact Longmont's quality of life and its ability to provide adequate public services.

In approximately 15 years, this city will reach the build-out of its planned residential area. As the community reaches build-out, the revenues associated with growth will decline. In order to preserve the amenities our City provides and continue to improve our quality of life, our community came together to develop strategic policy directions for our future. In 2005, 550 residents participated in a visioning process, "*Focus on Longmont*", that established the following goals:

- **Promote a Healthy Business Climate**
 - Create a continuum of job opportunities
 - Ensure that development and redevelopment aligns with Longmont's vision/values
 - Emphasize balance between local/non-local businesses
- **Support Education as a Community-Wide Value**
 - Promote activities supporting lifelong education including public/private partnerships, volunteerism and mentoring
- **Enhance the Natural Environment**
 - Improve City trail system
 - Promote multi-use open space
 - Encourage "green" building standards
 - Enhance public transportation opportunities
- **Focus on Downtown**
 - Promote the area as a destination and gathering place
 - Encourage mixed-use development
 - Foster economic development

- Improve accessibility and pedestrian orientation
 - **Promote a Sense of Community Identity and Cultural Inclusion**
 - Strengthen existing neighborhood groups, and encourage new groups in additional neighborhoods
 - Revitalize and renew youth programs
 - Continue to promote inclusive citizen involvement and cultural gatherings
-

II. How are we fulfilling the new roles for community governance?

II. (a). What is the extent and nature of community member participation in community improvement efforts? (300 word maximum)

Longmont has a long standing history of community involvement. The residents care about the city and have been actively involved in shaping its future for many years. Over 2,000 residents have participated in visioning processes in the last decade. *“Focus on Longmont”*, initiated in 2005, is a new city-wide planning project to develop community supported strategies that will move the city towards a sustainable future as it approaches build-out within its planning boundaries. Approximately 550 residents participated in this process through self-selection and random selection to ensure representation from people who don’t normally lend their voices to community planning processes. More than 145 organizations and community groups were represented.

The **Neighborhood Group Leaders Association** represents **53 neighborhoods** and meets monthly to keep abreast of city, community and school district issues. In 2001, a Neighborhood Revitalization Program began. 7,000 surveys in English and Spanish were distributed regarding neighborhood conditions. Five neighborhoods were selected to participate in the application process. Two neighborhoods have begun their revitalization efforts. The Kensington Neighborhood developed a plan in 2004 that focuses on parks, pride in residences, traffic, safety and lighting, investing almost **\$900,000** in the neighborhood. Residents of the Historic Eastside Neighborhood have developed a vision and a draft action plan.

The Multicultural Plan has brought together approximately 200 participants to develop an action plan that reaches out to all residents to create an inclusive, caring community. Additionally, the Longmont Housing Opportunities Team is working to meet the housing challenges the community faces.

Over 160 residents serve on 22 City boards, committees and commissions. There are more than 53 committees throughout the St. Vrain Valley School District with over 530 members. Additionally, more than 5,000 community members volunteer in the schools each year.

II. (b). What role does government play in community-wide decision-making and how do they contribute to improving the community? (300 word maximum)

City Council and staff recognize their roles in the community beyond municipal service provision. They are quick to recognize changes taking place in the social or economic structure of the community and they seek out opportunities to facilitate leadership. In 2002, the City initiated a formal **Community Involvement Plan** instructing departments to plan for appropriate community involvement in new projects, initiatives, policies or significant program changes. Whether a park is being planned or a water plant is being sited, the community is asked to participate in the process.

The City has taken lead roles in the **Multicultural Plan, “Focus on Longmont”** and the **Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan**, a community-wide process that helped guide development within Boulder County. Additionally, the City of Longmont provides support to the Neighborhood Group Leaders Association, providing staff and funding neighborhood improvement projects.

Longmont is an active partner in the **Boulder County Immigrant Integration Initiative** which is bringing together the immigrant and non-immigrant communities in meaningful dialogue to identify assumptions and fears, dispel myths, and generate proposals for increasing mutual understanding.

The City Council meets regularly with the St. Vrain Valley School District Board to coordinate efforts on community problem solving, development and facilities. They have partnered on ventures such as the **Gang Response and Intervention Project**. The City Council is committed to ensuring that children have a healthy start and are ready to learn when they begin school. As a result, an initiative is underway called **Bright EYES (Early Years Education Stewards)—A Longmont Community Early Care and Education Collaboration**. Representatives from the City, the School District and several service agencies convened to focus on ways the community can work to expand and improve early education opportunities. **Almost \$2 million dollars has been secured for Bright EYES.**

II. (c). What role does the non-profit sector play in community-wide decision-making and how do they contribute to improving the community? (300 word maximum)

The non-profit organizations in Longmont are a vital part of our community. They are willing partners in many community-wide efforts, including the **Longmont Housing Opportunities Team (LHOT), “Focus on Longmont”, GRIP** and the **Multicultural Plan**. They provide important services to the community, including:

Longmont’s **OUR Center** (Outreach United Resources), a unique community-based organization, unites churches (**45**), human service agencies (**40**), local governments (**2**), businesses (**100**) and volunteers (**600**) in providing emergency services. OUR Center’s “one stop” services provide food, shelter, clothing, counseling, job referrals and other life necessities. **In 2005, the OUR Center served over 6,000 individuals.** Additionally, **Salud Clinic provides quality, comprehensive primary health care services in Longmont and does not turn patients away based on finances, insurance coverage, or ability to pay.**

The **Longmont Housing Opportunities Team** began when those working on housing issues in the community, many non-profits, met to make sure they were not duplicating services. As a result of those early meetings, they are now proactively seeking solutions to homelessness in Longmont.

The **St. Vrain Community Council** is an organization consisting of **42 human service agencies** in the area. The Council coordinates the Holiday basket program to provide toys and food to families in need

around the holidays. It also monitors legislation and speaks out on issues that affect the populations served by the human service agencies.

Each year the City of Longmont provides **\$1 million in grants** to non-profit agencies that provide human services to Longmont residents. Applications are reviewed through a formal funding process coordinated by the **Longmont Housing and Human Services Advisory Board** which is a voluntary citizen advisory commission appointed by Longmont City Council.

II. (d). What role does business play in community-wide decision-making and how do they contribute to improving the community? (300 word maximum)

The **Longmont Downtown Development Authority** is enhancing and rehabilitating the downtown commercial core. More than **\$45 million in public and private funds have been invested in new and renovated buildings**. Redevelopment efforts have preserved historic buildings and “small town” appeal while endeavoring to fulfill the “*Focus on Longmont*” vision of a “destination” downtown with art galleries museums, theaters and music. Several parking lots have been landscaped in ongoing beautification efforts. The LDDA and the City of Longmont are examining the feasibility of a mixed use parking structure that would support area businesses.

The **Longmont Area Chamber of Commerce** holds Public Affairs Issue Forums for its members to learn more about leaders, issues and initiatives driving the local economy. Longmont’s highest profile topics are featured, including growth, transportation, school finance and affordable housing. This keeps business leaders informed and involved in the community. The Chamber’s support of the **Support Our Schools (SOS)** initiative helps ensure the continuance of quality public education.

The **Longmont Area Economic Council’s** purpose is to foster the creation and retention of primary jobs for Longmont citizens. The LAEC assists primary employers with issues related to keeping the business environment healthy by educating staff and elected officials, supporting primary employers, and acting as a spokesperson for employers on issues affecting them.

The **Longmont Area Visitors Association (LAVA)** was established in 2005 as a joint venture by the Longmont Area Chamber of Commerce and the City of Longmont. It has 32 members and was formed to market Longmont to potential visitors. The **Longmont Small Business Association** is a group of small business representatives whose goal is to strengthen small business in the community.

The **Latino Chamber of Boulder County** promotes opportunities for minority-owned businesses. It addresses the needs of the **rapidly growing Latino business sector**.

III. How do we work together as a community?

III. (a). How does our community recognize and celebrate its diversity? (300 word maximum)

Recognizing and celebrating diversity is a priority for Longmont. The **Multicultural Plan** is a large, community-wide effort to help Longmont become more caring and inclusive. While the task force members responsible for carrying out the Plan have many accomplishments, they have also organized several events to celebrate the diversity in the community. The Longmont Multicultural Plan Committee, the Longmont Museum and other community partners planned the **Dia de los Muertos** (Day of the Dead) event which was held at the Museum in 2005. Additionally, they made enhancements to the **Cinco de Mayo** celebration. They also planned a **Diez y seis de Septiembre** event held at the Longmont Youth Center and Centennial Park in 2005, as well as a **New Americans Series** from February – April 2005.

2005 was the first year the Office of Community and Neighborhood Resources offered Community Cultural Events Grants. The purpose of the grants is to support communities, groups and individuals in celebrating the diversity of cultures within Longmont. The City of Longmont provides **mini-grants of up to \$1,000 to support new events** or enhance projects which contribute to the diversity of community events. Two of the events supported with grants in 2005 were: **Celebrando Madres**, for Alternatives for Youth, an event to celebrate Hispanic Mothers and a **Mexican and Japanese Interactive Arts Booth** at Cinco de Mayo for the Longmont Sister Cities Association. Sister Cities created an opportunity to share Mexican and Japanese art projects at the Cinco de Mayo Festival. Approximately 200 children and adults made block prints and flowers.

Other efforts in the community to support diversity include the Longmont Sister Cities Association, which facilitates cultural exchanges between sister cities Ciudad Guzman, Mexico and Chino, Japan. Also, the newly formed Latino Chamber of Commerce supports minority-owned businesses.

III. (b). How does our community work with neighboring communities to address shared challenges? Is there a shared regional vision? (300 word maximum)

Longmont continues to be a leader in regional cooperation. The City of Longmont collaborates with cities, towns and special districts to provide fire, EMS, community planning and water services. Community leaders are active participants in many multi-city and county organizations in the greater metropolitan area, such as the **Denver Regional Council of Governments, MetroVision Regional Plan**, and the **Regional Transportation District**. **MetroVision** is this region's growth and development plan. Longmont has been an active participant in developing that vision.

Longmont also participated in the **Boulder County Civic Forum's** regional Affordable Housing Assessment, the **Boulder County Immigrant Integration Initiative**, and we are an active member of the **Boulder County Consortium of Cities**, a cooperative forum fostering cooperative action on programs regarding open space, trails, transportation, solid waste and more. The building of the St. Vrain Greenway was a tribute to successful planning and cooperation with Weld County, Boulder County and the Town of Lyons.

The City of Longmont recently began providing **water service to the Town of Lyons**, located just west of Longmont. Lyons was faced with building a new water treatment plant to meet Safe Drinking Water standards at a considerable cost to their 1600 residents. Longmont offered to provide water treatment services to Lyons for considerably less cost than the construction of a new treatment plant. The cities entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) in 2003. An additional IGA was signed in 2004 to convey property for a pump station and establish cost sharing for water lines that both entities are jointly

installing. Lyons began receiving water service from Longmont in January of 2006. This IGA represents the cooperative spirit between the two communities. This project **saved Lyons over \$5 million** and a 20 year IGA provides for the town to retain its water rights.

IV. How does our community strengthen its ability to solve problems? (300 word maximum)

A remarkable attribute of the Longmont community is its willingness to come together and tackle even controversial, potentially divisive issues, knowing the path will be complex and challenging, but realizing that doing nothing or taking the safe route is even more threatening to our community. The residents, organizations and businesses know that it takes the efforts of many to be successful.

Fully integrating our immigrant population is vital to the health of our civic infrastructure. **The Multicultural Plan and the Boulder County Immigrant Integration Initiative** are important to addressing some of the most pressing issues our community faces. Ensuring that all residents are provided the opportunity to actively participate in our community is a priority.

Support our Students (SOS) was formed by community members after the St. Vrain Valley School District encountered a large financial deficit in 2002. Community leaders have created an SOS program that will evaluate and meet the needs of the students of each school within the District to ensure that the student's academic progress is not affected and enhance education through business and community partnerships on an ongoing basis. SOS has donated \$170,000 to 39 schools.

"Focus on Longmont", a community-wide planning process, was undertaken to help the community deal with the problem of ensuring provision of vital services without growth revenue. Longmont expects to reach build-out in about ten years. It is through this proactive effort that the community hopes to prevent major economic challenges in the future.

SOMOS, Spanish for "We Are," was created to address any issues that develop between the Latino community and the Longmont Police. It is a process which allows Latino community members to bring issues they have with the police department to a confidential forum for mediation by one or more bilingual mediators.

Part II:
Community Background and Community Challenge Section

Add lines as needed for your responses

1 (A). Community Background: Set the background for your community. Tell its story. Summarize your community's history, successes and struggles. Describe how your community got to where it is today and your community's current state of affairs. (700 word maximum):

Longmont, the second largest city in Boulder County, has 25 square miles, over 300 days of sunshine, and a stunning view of the Rocky Mountains. In 1871, 400 pioneers established this community in the St. Vrain Valley as the Chicago-Colorado Colony. Their cooperation was so remarkable that in their first year, they built homes, stores, parks, irrigation canals, churches and Longmont's first library.

Agriculture played an important role in the development of Longmont. Agribusiness became successful in 1903 when area farmers secured the contract for The Great Western Sugar Factory and later built the Kuner-Empson Cannery. A large wave of immigration started in 1910, with Mexicans fleeing the Revolution. The sugar factory brought many of these immigrants to Longmont and they settled in East Longmont and the rural areas around the city.

Longmont transitioned from a small agricultural community in the late 1960's when high technology firms such as IBM and Storage Technology moved to the area, followed by Maxtor and Seagate. From 1990 to 2000, **the City's population grew by an extraordinary 38%** with the influx of industry. Today, Longmont sits at the heart of Colorado's "Technology Corridor." In 2001, the Boulder-Longmont high tech corridor was ranked number one in the country for high tech employment. Unfortunately, that same year, our community was hit hard by the national recession. The bottom dropped out of the high tech industry and by the end of 2002, the Longmont area had lost over **3,100** primary sector jobs. From 2000 to 2005, **foreclosures** in Boulder County increased by a staggering **271%**, the nation's 5th highest. During that same period, we also saw a dramatic **235% increase in the number of homeless** in our community. While there is an increasing economic divide among residents of our community, we are working to leave no one behind.

In the 1990s', Longmont's Latino population began to grow again and increased by nearly **8,000** people. **By the end of 2009, our Latino population could eclipse 24,000** (University of Colorado Geography). Nearly 40% of Longmont's Latinos were not born in the United States and thus faces language, cultural and educational barriers.

As our community has grown, we have also begun to face bigger city challenges such as an increase in gang activity and gang related crime. Fortunately, our community was able to respond quickly to stem that tide. The partnerships that have been developed through the School District, the City, members of the St. Vrain Valley Gang Task Force, and the Longmont Community Justice Partnership have provided unparalleled resources to protect and strengthen our kids.

Planning and collaboration have been a part of this community from its establishment. The Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan and various iterations of master plans have successfully guided various infrastructure improvements throughout recent years. Two versions of the Envision 2020 Community Strategic Plan were completed in the 1990's. All of these efforts have served the community well. Notable testaments to their success include 1500 acres of parks and open space and the St. Vrain Greenway trail system. Also, in recent years, our community successfully funded **a new recreation center and museum, a senior center expansion, a new water treatment plant, a wastewater treatment plant expansion and a major new boulevard**. Another success of long-term planning was our community's ability to respond to the worst drought in its history without significant impacts. Longmont is also starting to see job growth again. The number of jobs and those who are seeking them is starting to equalize once more.

Recognizing the accelerating pace of change, rapid globalization and dramatic increases in regional competition, representatives from businesses, neighborhoods, and non-profits came together in 2005 to develop a strategic plan aimed at ensuring a freestanding, sustainable Longmont after build-out. Our residents developed strategies to enable Longmont to continue to improve the quality of life as growth revenues decline. How will the community continue to improve education? How will we engage a more diverse community and make our diversity an asset? How can we encourage redevelopment? Our past growth was guided by careful planning and cooperation. Our future after build-out is being managed with the same care.

1 (B). Community Celebration: Why should your community be selected as an All-America City? Describe what makes your community a great place to live, work, and play. (300 word maximum)

Longmont enjoys the highest ratio of people living and working in the same city in Colorado. The diversity of housing available and housing programs allows many people to call Longmont home. However, it is the quality of life in the community that makes people want to live here.

Longmont has a wonderful feeling of community and has been described as a “**Giant Front Porch,**” a warm, inviting place to come together; to dream; and to plan our future. Residents have many opportunities to gather at events held by various organizations. Some of these include: **ArtWalk, Taste of Longmont, Cinco de Mayo, Rhythm on the River, Festival on Main, Oktoberfest, Pumpkin Pie Days, El Dia de Los Muertos Celebration, Veteran’s Day Parade, Hometown Holiday Parade and the nostalgic Pet and Doll Parade which will celebrate its 76th year in 2006.**

The neighborhoods that residents call home also contribute to that feeling of community. There are many neighborhood groups, allowing residents to get together socially and to address problems. The City supports neighborhoods and the Neighborhood Group Leaders Association by helping with block parties and providing grants for neighborhood improvements. The City Council sets aside \$50,000 annually for the projects initiated by the neighborhoods.

The City of Longmont’s **Quality of Life Benchmarks** ensure that the community will stay a great place to live, work and play. Almost every City department has benchmarks that anticipate the impacts of growth and development on the existing quality of life. When impacts are significant mitigation is required on new development or new development is denied. The **benchmarks monitor fire/EMS response time, traffic congestion, clean water/air, open space, affordable housing, parks and recreation, noise, sewer/water infrastructure, school capacity, traffic enforcement, sense of safety/disorder, agriculture preservation and rate of growth.**

1 (C). Community Challenges: Based upon your community’s current status, describe your community’s two most pressing challenges.

Challenge #1: (200 words maximum)

The number of homeless in Longmont is increasing at an alarming rate since 2000 (when Longmont first conducted its own homeless count) from 206 persons to **691** in 2005 – a **235% increase**. Our homeless are young (average age is 25.9 yrs) and half are homeless for the first time. Longmont’s homeless are less educated and over half of the current homeless are children.

Trends include:

- The total number of homeless has increased each year since 2000.
- The **length of time persons are homeless is increasing**. The percent of people homeless less than 30 days has decreased slightly since 2000 while the percent that are homeless for more than a month has increased from 81% to 85%.

- The **number of times** (incidents) that persons are homeless is also **increasing**. In 2000, 67% were homeless for the first time; in 2005 only 50% were homeless for the first time. For individuals homeless more than once, the percent increased from 33% in 2000 to 49% in 2005.

This community has the resources and will to eliminate the dismal symbol of social inequity that is homelessness.

Challenge #2: (200 words maximum)

We are tackling the challenge of fully integrating all residents into a **more ethnically diverse community**. In the 1990 Census, 11.1% of our population was Hispanic. In 2000, that number grew to **19.1%** and is projected to grow an **additional 5% by 2009 (BBC Research)**. **Approximately 40% are first generation, monolingual Spanish speakers**. Meeting the needs of a more diverse population is of great concern to our community. Critical questions must be addressed such as: How will our education system serve a more diverse population? How will diversity affect the economy and housing demands? How can we engage a diverse population and make diversity a community asset?

In recent years, the city, county, schools, non-profits and local police agencies heard the frustrations of the Latino community and resolved to improve services and expand opportunities for all residents. In 2001, the **Latino Task Force of Boulder County** commissioned a survey that identified critical needs and concerns of the Latino Community, such as housing, drop-out rates, and language barriers. This community is committed to **eliminating the barriers** that all minority populations face and modifying our systems and structures to actively include their voices in policy/decision making processes.

Part III: Community-Driven Projects

Add lines as needed for your responses

Part II requires descriptions of three collaborative community projects that have significantly affected the community.

The first two projects should be drawn directly from the two community challenges stated above.

The third project should be reflective of what your community is doing for children and youth.

PROJECT ONE (Challenge #1)

1. Project summary, name and give a brief description. (150 word maximum)

The **Longmont Housing Opportunities Team (LHOT)** is a collaborative, community-wide partnership working to end homelessness. Its mission is to eliminate homelessness in the Longmont area by eliminating the root causes of homelessness within 10 years.

This will be achieved by:

- 1) thoroughly understanding homeless issues and trends in Longmont,
- 2) designing and implementing appropriate programs that will best serve the homeless and work to help move them out of homelessness,

- 3) implementing a Housing First plan, which shall include provision of necessary supportive services,
 - 4) supporting other housing activities in the community to maximize the effectiveness of the current service agencies, and
 - 5) educating and mobilizing community residents to directly assist the homeless, as well as advocate for changes necessary to eliminate the causes of homelessness.
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2. Describe the relationship between this project and your first challenge, the project's history, and how it is being sustained? (300 word maximum)

Addressing our **large increase in homelessness is of critical concern to our community**. A group of community service providers started meeting in 2000 to ensure that services for the homeless were not being duplicated and to conduct an annual Point-In-Time Survey.

The community determined at a Retreat on the Homeless held in November 2003, that only by coming together could we affect a solution to this issue. As a result of the retreat, **LHOT's** mission and membership were expanded to reflect an acknowledgement that the issue of homelessness is a community-wide one impacting not only city government, but non-profit service providers as well as local businesses and the faith community. The **LHOT** group has been meeting at least monthly since 2003, has completed many projects and has obtained funding for ongoing services and projects.

The **Housing First Program** model is a reverse of the traditional human service model, which typically puts people into other programs before addressing their immediate housing need. This model meets people's more basic need for housing first, allowing follow-up programs to be more successful.

Not many communities the size of Longmont have begun addressing the issue of homelessness, however, **LHOT's** piloting of a Housing First Program has provided a resource for a neighboring community seeking to implement a similar program. In addition, the **LHOT model of community participation will be used as a best practice in the seven county Metro Denver Homeless Initiative**.

3. Describe the partnerships and collaborations involved in the creation, development, and implementation of this project. (300 word maximum)

The **Longmont Housing Opportunities Team (LHOT)** is a **collaborative partnership with over 50 members** representing government, social services, shelters, housing providers, domestic violence agencies, police, mental health, school district, banks, youth services, churches, senior services, health groups, businesses, recovery programs, and private individuals.

The larger **LHOT** group meets monthly and has formed several subcommittees and a Steering Committee to more effectively conduct the agreed upon annual work program (more details are in the next section). Of equal importance are the collaborative partnerships formed between **LHOT** members. For instance, a non-profit and a church jointly sponsored a workshop for the community on job opportunities for persons with disabilities, **"Out of the Shadows" Creating Employment Opportunities for People with Brain Disorders**. Additionally, the emergency services organization, OUR Center, formed a partnership with the local Workforce agency to provide **job search education and outreach** to the Day Shelter participants.

4. Describe the qualitative and quantitative outcomes of this project in the last 3 years and explain how this project has been a success. (300 word maximum)

The **LHOT** group has continued to grow and adapt since its inception. Attendance at monthly meetings remains constant and new agencies and individuals join often.

Housing First

LHOT designed a **Housing First Pilot Program** to house **10 families over the next 24 months**. All will receive support services 24/7. The families have been selected and 8 have chosen their housing.

Funding

LHOT has received over **\$316,000** to support the program, mental health and case management services. Longmont Housing Development Corporation and Longmont CDBG offices received funding on behalf of LHOT programs from the State Division of Housing with matching funds from the City of Longmont. In partnership with Boulder County Advocates for Transitional Housing, **LHOT** received funding for a joint Housing First Coordinator.

Day Shelter

A Day Shelter was opened in partnership with Longmont's OUR Center. Since opening on June 6, the Day Shelter has served **228** unduplicated Longmont clients totaling **1,375** visits for emergency food, showers, laundry, personal care items, clothing, prescriptions, glasses, tents, sleeping bags, backpacks, identification and birth certificates, mail and voice mail service. **49** obtained employment, **166** received medical screening, **61** are receiving benefits, **26** secured permanent housing.

The visibly homeless

LHOT convened a focus group on the "visibly homeless," leading to a partnership with Boulder County Cares program to provide **outreach to "street" homeless** during bad weather.

Community education/outreach

- Developed a resource pamphlet to assist the homeless in accessing services and to provide information to the community.
- Used the new 211 phone service to provide information on services.
- Sponsored a **Homeless Awareness Event** in 2005 which attracted over 400 persons. The author of "**Under the Overpass**" addressed the community. The event, held at a local church, was taped by the local public access channel which broadcasts the event.

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

Edwina Salazar Waldrip, Executive Director, OUR Center, 303 Atwood Street, Longmont, CO 80501
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PROJECT TWO (Challenge #2)

1. Project summary, name and give a brief description. *(150 word maximum)*

Longmont has developed a **strategic Multicultural Plan** designed to guide the community over a five year period (January 2003 to December 2007) in becoming a more multi-cultural, inclusive community. Community members formed a Steering Committee in 2002 and developed its vision: "**The people of Longmont working together to be a caring and inclusive community—proud to embrace, respect and celebrate each other.**" The Steering Committee organized its plan around category areas as follows: education; community involvement; health; housing; culture; and the economy.

One aspect of the plan, the **“Tamales and Talk” model was replicated by the Boulder County Immigrant Integration Initiative due to its effectiveness in creating deeper understanding and relationships among people with different perspectives.** One participant discussed her experience, **“Tamales & Talk** brings people together that would normally be scared to make the first move to get together.”

2. Describe the relationship between this project and your second challenge, the project’s history, and how it is being sustained? (300 word maximum)

The strategic planning process emerged from the findings of a community assessment of needs and assets among Boulder County Latino residents, which was published and released to the community in October 2001. This community was committed to addressing the needs identified in the assessment. In 2002, the Longmont City Council invited the entire Longmont community to come together to create a community-wide strategic multicultural plan to address the issues that were specific to Longmont.

During the initial phase, over **100 community members worked together to create a vision and a strategic plan** that will not only establish and sustain connections with the Latino community but will also serve as a catalyst to improve our ability to work together to become a more caring and inclusive community. These members represented **the non-profit organizations, community groups, interested community members, El Comité, St. Vrain Valley School District, business community, City of Longmont, Neighborhood Group Leaders Association, the Longmont Sister Cities Association and the Longmont United Hospital.**

A Steering Committee and task forces were formed around each of the identified areas. The Steering Committee includes 13 community leaders and 60 additional who people volunteered to help with the task forces. These task forces are responsible for developing and carrying out the action steps needed to address the issues.

The Steering Committee is planning a half-day retreat during the first quarter of 2006 to complete a major revision of its direction, goals and action steps, and to begin discussing the future and ways to ensure sustainability of the plan. **The strategic multicultural plan is only the beginning and will evolve over time**, as the community continues to work together to address the ever changing needs and interests of its residents.

3. Describe the partnerships and collaborations involved in the creation, development, and implementation of this project. (300 word maximum)

In 2001, a task force of Latino leaders throughout Boulder County released the results of its two-year assessment of the contributions and needs of the Boulder County Latino community. Through a series of community focus groups, surveys and interviews, the task force assessed quality of life issues in several areas.

The City Council invited the Latino Task Force to present the results of this assessment at the Council's 2002 retreat. Following this presentation, the City Council set as one of its work plan goals: *To create options to significantly enhance collaboration and interaction with the Latino community, and to make recommendations regarding issues related to the Latino community as outlined in the 2001 Latino assessment report.*

A committee comprised of City Council members, City staff and community leaders was created in 2002 to accomplish this work plan goal. They organized a community planning process involving residents and organizations including the City of Longmont, St. Vrain Valley School District, Longmont Daily Times-Call, Neighborhood Group Leaders Association, Longmont Sister Cities Association, El Comité (a Latino advocacy organization) and other non-profits and businesses.

Latino Task Force members believe that as a result of these efforts on the Multicultural Plan, Longmont has become a more inclusive community. Community members and government leaders actively seek input from the Latino community and have improved their awareness of their needs. The Multicultural Plan's success has prompted regional interest from the City and County of Boulder, the City of Lafayette and Latino leaders in Larimer and Weld Counties. Also, the plan sparked the City of Longmont to implement more elements of the **City Diversity Plan**. The City instituted a **bilingual pay** program in 2005, additionally compensating 57 employees fluent in Spanish and American Sign Language who assist in the delivery of services.

4. Describe the qualitative and quantitative outcomes of this project in the last 3 years and explain how this project has been a success. (300 word maximum)

Specific outcomes from the task force committees include:

Education

- Developed a Latino resource guide promoting English as a Second Language classes. As a result **Intercambio De Comunidades, an ESL provider** expanded to Longmont. **It has served 230 residents since 2004.**
- Developed a **mentoring program** at Skyline High School to ensure that students will be successful in their school and post-secondary education through mentoring, counseling and scholarships. 20 students and 19 mentors are currently in the program. Freshmen will be added each year.

Community Involvement

- Held 13 **“Tamales and Talk”** study circles in 2004 and 2005, a series of small group conversations designed to “grow involvement”. Nearly **150 participants** had the opportunity to build personal networks; talk about public issues; and learn how to participate in community decision-making.
- The City Leadership Team held additional circles to discuss government initiatives, reaching 50+ people.

Health

- Longmont United Hospital hosted a “**Cultural Appreciation Day**” to enhance employee skills in providing health care to Latinos.

Housing

- Completed a **Fair Housing Impediment study**; substandard housing education efforts; and predatory lending intervention efforts. As a result, the City took on fair housing discrimination complaints, began education/outreach and established a **Substandard Housing Program**.

Culture

- Coordinated “**Longmont Celebrates. . . Cinco de Mayo.**”
- Developed a “**New Americans**” **film/discussion series** and **Dia de los Muertos** event with the Longmont Museum
- Sponsored a forum with the transportation district to eliminate barriers to accessing public transportation.

Economy

- Presented a program with Workforce Boulder County and the Front Range Community College to the Longmont Chamber about the economic advantages of hiring bilingual workers.
- The plan served as a catalyst leading to the creation of the **Latino Chamber of Boulder County**, which already has **50 members**.

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

Marta Loachamin, Multi-Cultural Steering Committee Chairperson, First Horizon Mortgage, 275 Main Street, Ste. 200, Longmont, CO 80501 (303) 684-7636 mloachamin@firsthorizon.com

PROJECT THREE

As a commitment to America’s Promise, the National Civic League has issued the Youth Initiative Challenge. We ask that at least one project from each All-America City applicant document ways in which the lives of children and youth have been tangibly improved.

1. Project summary, name and give a brief description. (150 word maximum)

G.R.I.P., Gang Response and Intervention Program is a proactive program designed to provide **early education** for youth, parents and educators in the St. Vrain Valley; and **early intervention** and alternatives to gang membership. GRIP utilizes two intervention strategies, **a restorative justice process**, provided by the **Longmont Community Justice Partnership**, for gang members that have committed offenses; and a **9-week early intervention program** for non-offenders. **Peace Circles** for girls involved in gangs are also included in this approach.

GRIP’s strategic objectives:

- Educate children as young as elementary school to prevent gang membership
- Educate parents, teachers, counselors and administrators to improve gang awareness
- Provide counseling and support for families, redirection and alternatives for gang members
- Coordinate efforts of the different agencies to effectively work as one

- Utilize a restorative justice process for juvenile offenders and an early intervention program for non-offenders

2. Describe the relationship between this project and the challenge it is addressing, the project's history, and how it is being sustained? (300 word maximum)

In 2003, Longmont Children and Youth Resources and other agencies received data showing a significant increase in youth gang involvement. Boulder County's statistics showed that 62% of the county's youth incarcerations were from Longmont, and **eight out of nine Boulder County gang related incarcerations involved Longmont youth**. Also, Longmont Police were seeing an increase in gang related incidents as well as an **increase in serious incidences involving weapons**. There was also an increase in gang related graffiti or "tagging" in close proximity to parks and schools, even elementary schools. There are 13 gangs recruiting within Longmont with close to 400 members identified. Some of the gangs are home-grown and have become inter-generational (i.e. parents raising their children to be gang members), such as ESL, East Side Longmont. The community has witnessed clashes between Longmont's "Sureno" and "Nortenos" gangs. Our greatest fear was that our gang problems would escalate to levels that we are seeing in neighboring communities, one of which had 61 gang related shootings in the first 6 months of last year.

In 2004, a task force developed the **GRIP** concept into a program, based and funded in Children and Youth Resources, a City of Longmont division, and appointed a coordinator with a 25 year history of mentoring Longmont youth.

GRIP works through school resource officers and the school district to identify at risk or "wanna be" gang members, as well as actual gang members. If the student has been suspended or expelled, he/she works through the GRIP program to earn their way back down the district's "level" system.

3. Describe the partnerships and collaborations involved in the creation, development, and implementation of this project. (300 word maximum)

Over the past decade our community has reaped the benefits of numerous partnerships amongst police, non-profit agencies and service providers and private citizens. The community was able to build on this climate of cooperation and existing partnerships to form the **St. Vrain Valley Gang Task Force**. The Task Force developed **GRIP** to take a proactive approach to intervention and prevention at the earliest stages.

The partners of the Task Force include: Longmont Community Justice Partnership, Victim Offender Reconciliation Program, El Comité, Assets Initiative, Integrated Management Partnership for Adolescent Community Treatment, Alternatives for Youth, St. Vrain Valley School District (SVVSD), Boulder County Social Services, Boulder County 20th Judicial District, Longmont Police Gang Unit, Neighborhood and Community Resources (includes involvement of neighborhood group leaders), Longmont Children and Youth Resources, Boulder County Probation, the Department of Youth Corrections, and representatives from Twin Peaks Mall.

When the task force was formed, the partners determined that while many of these agencies were seeing a lot of the same kids, there lacked a comprehensive communication and referral structure to track kids across the agencies and coordinate their resources. **GRIP has provided just such a structure to pool every resource in the St. Vrain Valley and communicate more effectively with all of the parties involved** (families, courts, probation, case workers, and schools). The staff involved in these efforts has

identified and started relationships with each and every gang affiliated kid in this community, and we're building a giant safety net around them.

GRIP has recently incorporated a new approach into its intervention strategies. This will increase the number of referrals as it is a requirement of the 20th Judicial District. Summit County and the cities of Boulder and Brighton have contacted **GRIP** for assistance in replicating similar programs in their Colorado communities.

4. Describe the qualitative and quantitative outcomes of this project in the last 3 years and explain how this project has been a success. (300 word maximum)

GRIP is a proactive effort to pull existing gang members “away from the fold,” one kid at a time. A counselor at a local high school praised **GRIP**'s success. One of his students had been heavily involved in gangs, and caused problems at school. After completing the program, this young man is back in school, staying out of trouble, and out of his gang.

The community saw how effectively the task force responded when a violent clash occurred between gang members in the Bohn Farm neighborhood. The neighbors wanted to force the gang member's families to leave their neighborhood. **GRIP** responded to work with neighborhood leaders, community relations staff, and LPD to de-escalate a crisis situation. Team members held community meetings that provided resources to the neighborhood for addressing their problems long-term, and started intervention work with the teens involved and their families.

Other significant results include:

- **30** gang members have gone through the intervention program to learn resistance skills, peaceful conflict resolution, interpersonal/cultural competencies, character/life skills development. **20 have graduated; none have resumed their gang activity.** **18** more are currently enrolled, and **20** others will start this spring.
- **52** gang members referred to and **completed restorative justice conferences.** Approximately 73% had no further contact with police
- Parent support groups/workshops have educated approximately **65** parents on gang recognition
- Education programs established for youth in seven schools—to date, over **600 kids** have attended classes
- Classes provided to school counselors, teachers and administrators on developing strategies for a gang-free school
- SVVSD and Front Range Community College are helping students develop strategies for graduating and attending college.
- Students participate in music/art therapy, including “**Drum Warriors**”
- 15 Latino girls participated in **Peace Circles** at Heritage Middle School

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

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End of Application

See www.ncl.org/aac/ or the application instructions for detailed application instructions and sample applications from previous All-America City Winners.



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