

Budget Comment Form

Results Overview



Date: 7/2/2008 7:55 AM PST

Responses: Completes

Filter: No filter applied

#	Response
4. Please list significant benefits that any of these General Fund services provide to the Longmont community.(Services as listed above in question 3)	
1	Public Safety is still the most important function. We confirmed that with the establishment of the separate Publed Safety Tax.
2	As the economy is getting tighter, people are going to use the items in 'their own backyard' more such as parks, library etc.
3	I love the trail system. I only wish they were more interconnected. Our home was robbed a couple of years agoand I have nothing but, praise for the police department. The library and museum are great. I did not use the ice rink,but felt it was money well spent.The trash and recycling service is great.
4	Economic health and a safe community must take priority , since these are primary considerations for businesses and future residents deciding to come to Longmont.
5	I think Longmont always has to prioritize the people who live and work here. That is why my top choices reflect keeping people safe, supporting services to diverse populations in the community, and helping our neighborhoods remain strong and become more united. These all seem to be critical, especially in light of hard times.
6	test
7	Government should take the lead on encouraging economic development and environmental vitality -- Lead by Example!
8	We need to keep Longmont a desirable place to be. We need to improve our existing assets instead of expanding new development further out. Redevelopment, community involvement and safety
9	All of these services are vital to the health of our city, and they all interact to keep the city healthy. Often times people feel that the cultural, educational and recreational services are not vital, but they are mistaken. The heart and soul of a city is measured partly by the those services, which take care of people's physical, mental and emotional health.
10	Safety is a must for any community. Economic health is necessary to keep funding any of the secondary priorities.
11	Neighborhood quality: important because a great area to live in is important to those working and building the community. If the city is allowed to deteriorate it will cause talented people to want to live, work and play elsewhere. This is regarding code enforcement and safety especially.
12	Neighborhood quality is high Cultural events provide a significant benefit Recreational facilities are very good Educational information is very useful
13	The summer concerts and affordable recreation services.
14	Human service opportunities help people when they are struggling, either for financial or cultural reasons. This then helps keep kids out of trouble and helps prevent their resorting to crime.
15	Safe Community speaks for itself where would we be without them. The Senior Services has a vast array of areas to help seniors.
16	safety and Cultural services.
17	All of the areas mention have instrinsic value for the community as a whole...loss or decrease in any area is a detriment. Streamlining and efficiency must come more into focus if budgets decrease so that the level of quality and activity can remain at least on the level it is now. Consider looking at private and federal grant programs to fund activities and programs not covered under the budget--ask for community volunteers to write for the grants if City staff is too low to do so.
18	Economic health is the cornerstone to all of the other benefits. A community with high paying jobs will result in the residents and corporations driving progress in all other areas.
19	No Comment
20	They are all critical priorities for a thriving community and provide beneficial services.
21	I think neighborhood quality is key to keeping Longmont a liveable and desirable community. With strong communities, there is less of a need for police support. A strong community supports existing businesses to promote economic health. At strong community will volunteer to contribute to environmental health and cultural/educational efforts in a town.
22	Safety first of all, and all of the normal minimal services that a city should provided. The exception to this would be the few new services which have been created recently in the past 10 years when there was a construction boom. I am most concerned about how our roads, facilities and parks appear. This is a first impression to the residents as well as any visitor and if it continues to

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Responses: Completes

Filter: No filter applied

#	Response
	5. If less emphasis were placed on any of these service areas, what would be the effect on our community or you personally?
1	There will be some loss of quality, but I see it as temporary while the revenue stream sorts itself out. This seems to be the time to re-think our prime revenue sources and emphasise those that are more stable like property tax, food sales tax, utility franchise tax and a city vehicle registration tax.
2	Believe if any of these services were cut, especially the safety ... then this would be an undesirable place to live and I would consider moving out of town sooner, rather than later. Cutbacks in areas like the parks / library / senior services is unimaginable... we pay tax for these things -- where is the money going? And no.... increased taxes is not the answer.... work smarter --- the citizens can't afford more!
3	A loss of sense of community. Also a high level of pride that I live in Longmont.
4	Lack of development and safety enforcement would increase my taxes and decrease my desire to continue to live in Longmont
5	If less emphasis is placed on human services, in particular, I think many local agencies will suffer. They will be unable to provide crucial services to at-risk and in-need sectors of the community, and these populations' needs are likely to increase rather than decrease in the future, especially if there is a recession. I also think the City is able to provide needed low-cost activities and services that people otherwise are unable to access, especially when finances are limited -- these include services for youth, seniors, low-income, etc. I think that without provision of services to these populations, they could become even more at risk and isolated, which in no way benefits the community at large.
6	test
7	I would seek out those services at my church, my professional organization, or wherever. I would also volunteer my support to those endeavors with which I resonate.
8	Longmont would just be a place to live, not a place that would have its own attractiveness. It would end up like some of the towns east of I25 that are simply cheaper housing developments.
9	What a dilemma, we need ALL of them. I love living in Longmont partly because of the people/neighborhood support and services.
10	If economic health of Longmont deteriorates the city will become an unaffordable place to live and more and more of the economic base will leave.
11	Either I would have to pay more in taxes or pay more 'at the door' for services.
12	If these items were reduced I would need to find some other way to get them
13	I see very little benefit for business economic stimulis. Businesses will come here not matter what.
14	My neighbors and friends work in these areas and if funding for their jobs were no longer available and they lost their jobs, that would have a profound effect on my day-to-day activities, my child care network and my patient base, as a health care provider.
15	It would a shame to see our City be less than it is now. The City has been going forward for so many years I would hate to see it start going backwards.
16	Higher crime
17	Less emphasis on any program will hurt the City--already almost every area could use a little improvement.
18	N/A
19	Rather than ranking these service areas, integral to the strategic plan. I would prefer to look within each one to seek efficiencies, consolodations, duplications etc. to validate each and maximize impact and cost benefits.
20	Read my answer above - people/businesses will move away and crime will go up. There is already an increase in crime. I see more graffiti and the crime maps indicate a rise in number of violent and destructive crimes.

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Responses: Completes

Filter: No filter applied

6. What are your ideas for reducing and/or eliminating any of these General Fund service areas?	
#	Response
1	There are a few services that can be deferred until the revenue problem is resolved. For example, the frequency of street sweeping can be reduced or the storm water fund can contribute to this program's cost. Measure effectiveness by tons of debris removed rather than miles swept. Second, reduce the duplication of court services that the state provides and the City duplicates. Unless the court produces revenue in excess of its cost, it simply duplicates the state funded County Court. For the short term, if the neighborhood grants are General Fund, defer them for a while.
2	Do not cut the senior services or safety. as the baby boomers get older, these services need to INCREASE not decrease.
3	Less money spent on consultants and travel.
4	Increased fees for those who use and desire services that affect a minority of the population.
5	While I don't think Economic Health is an area to eliminate, I would consider how best to approach this work during this current time of economic hardship. It makes me think of the saying, "throwing good money after bad." A builder might be unwise to build in a housing slump, so how do we encourage economic development and not put our residents at further risk of bankruptcy and other financial straits? I don't think, for example, we should do things to encourage new, small business to open (without supporting them in an excellent long-term sustainability plan) when a great number of businesses are struggling or even closing their doors, particularly in downtown. (At times, downtown seems like a revolving door of businesses there.) What is the best way to help businesses sustain themselves? How can we "weather the storm" together as a community, without more layoffs or businesses failing? What businesses can we support and attract without putting our hard-working community members at greater risk of business failure, loss of savings, lay-offs, etc?
6	test
7	Why does Longmont need a SWAT team and a bomb squad. Aren't these available in the area?
8	Government should provide a framework that allows the private citizen to do the "heavy lifting." Government should play a roll in oversight and corruption control, but should not have direct responsibility.
9	I think we have enough open space. This might be one area to save on. However, I think all of these areas are important.
10	I suggest a massive campaign to "Buy Longmont." There are so many great stores here, and I think the public needs to be educated about the importance of keeping our tax money here. For example, when I'm in Boulder or Lafayette and need to buy groceries, I will wait till I'm back in Longmont to shop, because I know how important that tax money is. I'm not sure if you have made that appeal yet, as I've only lived here for 8 months.
11	The city needs to focus on economic health and safety. Beautification, social services, env. health should take a backseat. Beautification projects should be made to be selfsustaining whenever possible, ie, don't plant annuals, think perennials.
12	Increase fines for code violations. Utilize wherever possible high school and college interns and volunteers as much as possible, as well as any other individuals who need to collect volunteer hours, to do jobs they can do and free up city employees for more important work. Cut back work week hours for those employees who want to do so. They would have to find a way to be more productive, this may be able to be accomplished by having the interns/volunteers. If the city can cut back 5% on payroll it may amount to a significant savings.
13	Service clubs and faith based groups in the past provided many of these services. I believe the city should ask these groups to become more involved in providing these services.
14	The chamber of commerce or LSBA can take this role.
15	Eliminating some of the recreational activities and areas seems a good area to postpone spending, at least until the tax base is spending money again.
16	Maybe a small cut back on all areas if it has to be done. Not the Police or Fire Departments.
17	don't reduce them just be more effective.
18	I don't think they should be reduced--I think focus should be on streamlining and improving efficiency so the money goes further and there is less waste.
19	Make ecational activities pay their own way.
20	Reduce services for free. Add even a nominal fee to services to ensure that residents actually want those services. Re-balance based on usage and focus on those areas, eliminate services not used frequently. (Disc golf, cricket, etc.)

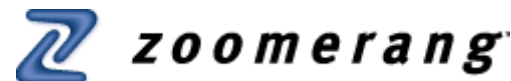
21	No More Special Events I.E. Parade's, Etc BAN ALL FIREWORKS,GARAGE SALES ,ETC
22	I think it's a mistake to frame the conversation this way and risk eliminating or reducing any area. Perhaps individual programs within each area, or applications or administrative burdens could be adjusted. Each area is critical and inherent in a whole, vibrant, safe community. Cuts should be felt be all and efficiencies should be sought everywhere. It's time to get creative and re-frame the dialogue, not simply make a prioritized list and eliminate the unfortunate one that comes in last.
23	I understand our problem with graffiti and gangs. Of course, I think promoting community can help address that problem. My only complaint regarding our boosted police presence is that I feel like I'm living in a police state at times. I see officers driving around neighborhoods regularly, and I strongly feel watched. Maybe this is the point, but I miss the interaction. I think it was 2 weeks ago that I saw at least 8 patrol cars in one weekend driving around the downtown area (from Fri to Sunday). You can't please all the people all the time, right? Is there a way around this that will help save money too? I think so, but unfortunately, I'm already up against your deadline for comments. . .
24	I would reduce the 'fluff' - the services that we provide after the main services a city should be providing. I do not see the necessity of having a new sub-division sign or having the city pay for neighborhood improvements for anyone who applies. If a neighborhood is in disrepair - it should step in and just do the repairs needed to keep the neighborhood functional and safe. Some of the additional extra-curricular programs that various divisions are 'creating' should be re-considered. Get back to the basics of government and let non-profits help when they can. Also - supporting all of the non-profits should be kept to a minimum. Their desires for asking for more money out of the city is an unending road to us not having enough money for our basic needs.

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7. How might any of these services be delivered or funded differently?	
#	Response
1	Since the maintenance of the storm water system depends on the amount of debris that falls into the system from the streets, use this fund to pay for some of the street sweeping budget.
2	Probably could charge a small fee (\$1-3) for the museum. Have special events at places like the museum that you could charge for such as a black tie dinner one night and charge \$25 a night and have the symphony play. Increase it and split the proceeds with a charity... like the Zoo or something. You could have movie night at the library and charge for popcorn / beverages. What about the big bus that will go to neighborhoods to check out books .. you could charge a small fee per book for that service? Or locate it at the grocery stores.. in the parking lot? Have smaller events at the parks (not rhythm on the river size) charge for beverages etc. Sporting events -- pay to participate ... like \$5. Classes about the wildlife in Longmont. Walking clubs. Dances at the parks for kids... pay \$5-10 for the music / softdrinks -- even can go into the evening. UTILIZE the things we have better. Some of these amounts see low but something is better than nothing. Utilize the longmont radio / advertising... Get some locale corps to sponsor like Seagate.
3	No ideas
4	Stop trying to be Boulder North and find a way to delay open space, using those funds to make up the difference. Don't just say "we can't use those funds" Find a way.
5	I am slightly unclear about "Environmental Health," so I will write about that category here. Is Forestry not related to Parks? (IF not, then maybe they should collaborate or be combined in some way). Energy conservation should be an ongoing thing occurring in an imbedded way throughout the City and not costing much. If it is costing a lot, I think effort should be made to reduce that cost, as conservation should be a cost saver and not a burden. Finally, right-of-way likely means roads, and this is the one subcategory in Environmental Health that seems to represent a necessary and continuous expense. We do need safe roads and adequate routes.
6	test
7	Partner with, assist, and utilize resources in the private sector (faith-based, community-based, etc.) to provide social and community services.
8	We could charge for the use of some facilities (increase fees for recreation, charge for annual library usage & museum)& consider special taxing districts for redevelopment. We need to cut back on new housing expansion & offering any more tax breaks without community participation.
9	Increase overdue fines at the library; Increase fees at the rec center, but not a lot. Charge a fee at the museum, but have one or two free days a month; those are some of my ideas.
10	Social services should be left to private sector, library should charge a yearly usage fee (like fishing license) that can be waived for low incomers/srs.
11	Get more departments fully online. I tried to get information from the city regarding licensed contractors and had to go thru a cumbersome process to get the info.
12	Skip the Mill Levy to give the Adminstators at SVVSD raises and instead put the mill levy toward city improvements
13	provide a presence in other parts of the community, such as on weekends in local grocery and hardware stores, etc.
14	CORPORATE SPONSORSHIPS ON A TEMPORARY BASIS
15	Look at grant programs to increase funding. Mall area redevelopment and marketing will increase tax dollars--we are losing lots of \$\$ due to having no anchor stores...there is no "draw" to the shopping areas. People from Longmont drive to Loveland, Boulder, and Flatirons to shop/eat/go to movies.
16	Do not cater to special interest groups. Do not try to be the "Everything to everybody". Provide good solid services at a fair price.
17	N/A
18	I'd be curious to see how departments might partner to share resources or collaborate on process. Partnering with the private sector could create possibilities. Changes should be thought of critically- if the economic health is improved, more revenue is created. If cultural, rec, educational, human services are cut there would be added burden on the law enforcement community safety, etc.

19	I know it is difficult to recruit volunteers, but perhaps the community can pull together during this time. Many of us really love Longmont and think it is one of the best places to live along hte front range. Perhaps if the results of the budget decision process were publicly released with rationale for cuts and proposed pulling together, people would be willing to give some time. Can we use more volunteers at the parks, library, museum? If so, let residents know. Create a position to organize volunteers that can help reduce some of the need for temporary part-time workers?
20	Put more money into offering services over the web. Your site could be providing many more interactive ways for the public to get their business done via the web and it's not. The cost of doing business via the web is much less than in person.

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Responses: Completes

Filter: No filter applied

#	Response
	8. What advice would you give to the city about reducing services to meet budget projections?
1	Defer capital spending. While the CIP fund may be able to build a building, it takes General Fund \$\$\$ to staff it and pay the utilities.
2	DON'T Increase taxes -- if the city government can't survive the 'slow down' with the tax money that we already pay then how do you expect to maintain a healthy economic city. People are strapped as it is.
3	This is difficult
4	Make the hard decisions on personnel reduction in areas of the city employment. Businesses have to do it and so should the city government
5	It is tempting to cut human services, because many think this a "soft" area of government. However, I urge the City to continue support of human services agencies to the extent possible. There are many, many unintended consequences that can emerge if human services are cut: increase of violence, physical abuse, and substance abuse; increased isolation and animosity in the community; higher risk of health problems in the community; etc.
6	As our projected revenues decline, concentrate on making government smaller. When an decision requires that government either expand or contract, tend towards the latter and look for other, non-governmental alternatives to fill any gaps.
7	Priorities always have to be set for funds, especially in slower economic times, but we should not sacrifice safety & the health of our community.
8	If you decide to cut services, that will not only diminish the richness of our community, but will add people (staff) to the list of unemployed, which will ultimately bring in less \$\$ in taxes because those former employees will possibly have to relocate for work, or won't have as much money to spend here.
9	Eliminate skating rink (unless selfsustaining). Stay out of the "green" mandate business, leave to free market. More speeding enforcement on Hover, etc.(should pay for itself) redlight cameras? Eliminate staff where possible and replace with better websites, self-service (such as code violation reporting).
10	Look for every way possible to reduce energy consumption. Perhaps a mandate for every building city-operated to turn off 25% of their ceiling lights. Bicycle patrol for the policemen. Reduce the fancy stuff you use for your 'presentations'.
11	Reduce the services which directly serve the fewest number of people or which serve mostly the non-children non-aged.
12	Only in areas where it would do the least harm
13	be more effient in delivering them and let volenteers do more.
14	REVIEW ITEM BY ITEM VS ACROSS THE BOARD CUTS
15	Focus less on reduction in services and more on having the right personnel in place to get the job done--there's a lot of apathy in staff, and with more trained and positive people in place more can get done with less people.
16	Do street sweeping only where it is needed. The sweeper comes by our home and only raises dust.
17	Reduce services for free. Add even a nominal fee to services to ensure that residents actually want those services. Re-balance based on usage and focus on those areas, eliminate services not used frequently. (Disc golf, cricket, etc.)
18	Ask THE VOTERS FOR PERMISSION!!!
19	Fee for service is reasonable on some amnetities, but not public services. And there should always be accessibility (sliding scale or scholarships) for low-income residents.
20	I'm not trying to be cheeky, but good luck! No one wants to have their services cut. I recommend being as open about the process as possible. Lay out the costs for the programs, the rationale to decisions, and the cost savings associated with each decision.
21	Keep cutting extraneous 'fluff' like the ice rink and additional community type services that the customers could be paying for through additional fees at the door instead of footing the bill.

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Responses: Completes

Filter: No filter applied

9. Other comments	
#	Response
1	In future, do not use Building Permit revenue for the operating budget. It is too volatile. Use contract building inspectors during boom periods, but cut back to minimum staff during down times.
2	<p>Senior services: instead of uneconomical buses, why not hybrid busses or more small cars like prius's. My mom is 86 and hates the public transportation for seniors... the schedule is awful. She would prob pay \$5 per roundtrip if it was a more 1:1 or 1:3 service.</p> <p>How can you cut 911???? seriously ...</p> <p>Tornado warning system... my mom never can hear it and if she does / can't understand the speaker. How about reverse 911 for that?</p> <p>What is the human service grants? What do we benefit from this?</p> <p>How about electronic billing for city services? NO Paperwork.</p> <p>I would support the growth of the business & homes that already exist. Do not see much reason to bring in more homes that will remain empty -- same with business. it's depressing.</p> <p>Don't make Longmont a trashy place to live please. I would be highly dissapointed.</p>
3	I would like to have a list of ideas to sort through since my contributions in this area are nonexistent.
4	The city council and the planning department should stop blocking every legitimate attempt at development , and instead become business friendly before there is no more business in Longmont
5	We have to encourage our citizens to take responsibility for what is important to them. Government can help, certainly, but we should all be willing to work for what we want!
6	I don't think the city should expend funds for Mall re-development. While I agree it needs help, perhaps it would just be best to level it & let the developer open it to "big box" stores.
7	I hope and pray for an economic turn-around in Longmont and in our nation. I love this city and am saddened at the thought of cutting any branch off the tree of life here. I truly believe that if people are informed about the importance of "Buying Longmont", there could be some more money in the coffers.
8	Overall, the city does a good job. Trash management is firstrate, as is utilities. Please don't turn the city into a Boulder clone.
9	Increase the fee for a business license to a reasonable amount. For a concrete contractor it's \$15, forever. It should be \$75 a year. Nobody is going to 'run away' from Longmont for paying a reasonable amount that shows perhaps the business is serious. AND they should be required to show PROOF of their sales and use tax receipt to advertise in the newspaper. More on this if you care to ask me!
10	I believe there is nothing wrong with getting people to think of the 'big picture' of all aspects of the City's budget - but I have one question. Whatever happened to line item vetoes in the city's budget process? Instead of people anguishing over Neighborhood quality and Economic health - why can't the city simply review the Capital Improvement Program list of proposed or funded projects and find a few that can be put off for another year. I would expect that very quickly the City can find enough funding for individually approved projects that can safely be delayed for another year or two.
11	We might put some pressure on the Government to do something about Illegals in CO and our City. This would take a lot of stain off of some of the budgets
12	Our friends in Wahington, DC have really put us in a bad way, lets hope for a major change, it will spread to all of us in due time, but things will not get better over night . It took 8 yrs for this to happen.
13	RAISE FEES FOR PERMITS, ETC
14	Please consider less focus on elimination, and consider more focus on morale boosting, internal training, and efficiency. Consider asking the community to help write for available dollars--there's money out there for schools, transportation-related activities such as bike trails, and more. Citizen task forces can help, marketing can help (such as informational emails and flyers in strategic locales, etc.).
15	Not a very good survey in my estimation.
16	ELIMINATE ANY NONESUTUAL PROGRAMS, SERVICES TO SAVE THE CITY MONEY