



## AMENDING THE LONGMONT AREA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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The *Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan* is a document that the City can amend to meet changing conditions. If the *Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan* is too rigid, the City may tend to make decisions that are inconsistent with it, and the *Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan* will lose its credibility. Therefore, the City provides processes for plan amendments. Amendments are one of the factors that contribute to the *Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan's* success in guiding the City's growth and development.

For specific requirements and review standards for amending the *Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan*, see the *Land Development Code*.

There are four types of amendments to the *Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan*: comprehensive plan amendments, land use amendments, Longmont Planning Area amendments, and Municipal Service Area amendments.

**Comprehensive Plan Amendments** are proposed changes to the text of the *Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan*. Both private parties and the City can initiate comprehensive plan amendments. Comprehensive plan amendments first may require a referral to City Council before the City begins to process the amendment. City Council will first consider whether or not it wants to devote Planning and Zoning Commission and staff resources to reviewing the comprehensive plan amendment.

**Land Use Amendments** are changes to the land use designations or the transportation system on the maps in the *Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan* (regardless of whether the area is in the Longmont Planning Area or the Municipal Service Area). Both private parties and the City can initiate land use amendments. Land use amendments do not require a referral to City Council before the City begins to process the amendment.

**Longmont Planning Area Amendments** add new neighborhood planning areas with land use designations to the Longmont Planning Area. Both private parties and the City can initiate Longmont Planning Area amendments. Longmont Planning Area amendments first require a referral to City Council before the City begins to process the amendment. City Council will first consider whether or not it wants to devote Planning and Zoning Commission and staff resources to reviewing the Longmont Planning Area amendment.

**Municipal Service Area Amendments** are amendments that transfer land from the Longmont Planning Area to the Municipal Service Area. Upon recording an annexation ordinance, the City automatically includes the annexed area within the Municipal Service Area. Only the City can amend the Municipal Service Area to include land that the City has not yet annexed. Municipal Service Area amendments to include land that the City has not yet annexed first may require a referral to City Council before the City begins to process the amendment. City Council will first consider whether or not it wants to devote Planning and Zoning Commission and staff resources to reviewing the Municipal Service Area amendment.



The **Concurrent Longmont Planning Area Amendment/Annexation Option** allows an applicant to process a Longmont Planning Area amendment and an annexation application at the same time. The City usually does not consider land for annexation unless it is within a neighborhood planning area within the Longmont Planning Area or the Municipal Service Area. However, in very limited situations where City Council determines it is in the best interests of the City, the City will process and consider applications concurrently for the annexation of land and a Longmont Planning Area amendment for only that land proposed for annexation.

The City will be quite selective in allowing applicants to use the concurrent Longmont Planning Area amendment/annexation option since it runs counter to the basic premise for neighborhood planning and evaluates parcels without the information one would have from a neighborhood plan.

Both private parties and the City can initiate concurrent applications for a Longmont Planning Area amendment and an annexation. These applications first require a referral to City Council before the City begins to process them. City Council will first consider whether or not it wants to devote Planning and Zoning Commission and staff resources on reviewing these applications concurrently. The fact that a neighborhood plan is not available to evaluate these proposals complicates the review of these applications.

The City wants to ensure that the Longmont Planning Area amendment, annexation, and resulting development will function as an integrated part of the community. Anticipating future public needs for these proposals is more difficult than when a parcel is part of a neighborhood plan. Identifying public facilities and amenities is a key aspect of the review of these concurrent applications.

As a result, the City may require the applicant to finance facilities and amenities, both on-site and off-site, that the *Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan* may not designate. Such facilities and amenities may not be a part of the *Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan* simply because the City has not previously completed any neighborhood plans for the area.

The *Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan* is a guide and not a regulation. There are many competing goals, policies, and strategies in the *Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan*. Some goals, policies, and strategies are more important than others depending on the circumstances associated with specific applications. The City will attach different weights to different criteria on a case-by-case basis. The City's decision on the amendment will reflect the different emphasis it places on different criteria.

People may believe that if they can point to a single goal, policy, or strategy that supports an amendment, the City should approve it. Others may believe that if an amendment does not meet a goal, policy, or strategy, the City should deny it. The City does not necessarily base its decision on an amendment on the number of goals, policies, or strategies met. An amendment may have a public benefit, and the City may approve it even if the amendment is contrary to some of the goals, policies, or strategies within the *Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan*. One particular aspect that may be faced during the amendment process is the issue of tradeoffs for controversial projects that provide benefits to the City as a whole yet may impact local neighborhoods or businesses.