



LONGMONT, CO OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN: OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

By John Rainey

Longmont, Colorado, is a thriving community of 93,000+ people located about 30 miles northeast of the Denver Metro Area. Historically, the city was a small, agricultural community, but over the past 40-50 years, the population more than tripled. Its economic engine has transitioned into a technology and manufacturing hub with easy access to Denver International Airport, two world-class state universities, and an educated, youthful, health-oriented population.

In November 2000, the citizens of Longmont voted for an Open Space tax to be used for acquisitions, improvements, and maintenance of Open Space properties, as well as trail development like St. Vrain Greenway and Lake Macintosh Trail. The following

year, the City hired GreenPlay, LLC, to create their first Open Space and Trails Master Plan.

The City's ordinance that created the Open Space Program was the guiding basis for the plan. The criteria spelled out in the ordinance identified suitable land for preserving as open space. Additional guidance came from extensive citizen input along with input from the City's Staff Advisory Committee, representing a variety of Departments, as well as representatives from other neighboring agencies and resource experts.

After input from all interested parties, a vision statement and resultant goals were developed.

VISION STATEMENT:

Connecting our people with our natural resources...

- ... Preserving our heritage
- ... Respecting our environment
- ... Defining our community
- ... Balancing our growth
- ... Treasuring our children's future
- ... Protecting what we value.

Be a part of Longmont's future, today.

GOALS:

- Preserve Natural and Cultural Resources
- Provide Connections
- Provide for Low-Impact Recreation Compatible with Resource Protection Goals
- Acknowledge Previous Planning Efforts
- Provide Urban Shaping Buffers and Buffer Zones



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Email: info@greenplayllc.com

The 2002 Plan resulted in a series of recommendations including use of a tiered approach for parcel acquisition, gaining support from neighboring counties and communities, management and organizational issues, and development of policies and regulations. The plan also set forth a series of strategies and tasks for implementation.

Program Review

In the fall of 2017, the City of Longmont hired GreenPlay again to review and update the 2002 plan. As part of that review, a status report was released to the public, represented by the graphic seen here.

Benefits of Master Planning

Since our inception in 1999, GreenPlay has done a wide variety of planning projects throughout the country — over 475 at this point. Our consultants have done master and strategic plans, comprehensive plans, cost recovery plans, and feasibility studies, to name a few. Over that time we have continually endeavored to bring innovative and fresh perspectives to communities based on our extensive experience and success.

Over the past 19 years, it has been the company's privilege to do repeated updates of previous plans. These updates help us learn how well the plans worked and help these communities

prepare for the future. The Longmont Open Space and Trails Master Plan is one of many examples of the benefits of Master Planning.

See our companion article on how Longmont's Open Space Helps Keep Residents Healthy



LONGMONT, CO OPEN SPACE & TRAILS

<p>November 2000: Citizens voted for a 2¢ tax (\$0.02 on every \$10 purchase)</p> 	<p>Revenue used for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisitions • Improvements • Maintenance • Trail Development <p>2007: Voters extend tax to 2034</p>	<p>Nearly 2,500 acres of Open Space protected and managed by the City of Longmont:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1953 acres purchased in fee • 532 acres of conservation easements <p>In addition, the City holds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 788 acres in Conservation Easements for Boulder County • Manages the 358 acres of Lake McIntosh
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The Open Space program has acquired:

- **722 acres** for the Union Reservoir Community Buffer (Hartman, Hernor, French, Sipe, Adrian Rider and Bogott)
- **Just over 1,000 acres** which are under **agricultural lease** growing a variety of crops and grazing animals (Sherwood, Hartman, French, Hernor, Adrian, Bogott, Golden Farms, Bragg-Spangler)

Trail Accomplishments

- **Acquired nearly 1,100 acres** St. Vrain Greenway development (Boulder Creek Estates, Sherwood, Peschel, Distel/ Camas, Golden Farms, and Dickens Farm Park) and has accomplished the following:
 - **Lake Macintosh Trail/Park** – 3.5 miles
 - **Jim Hamm Trail/Park**

- **Spring Gulch Trail** – 5 miles west of Union Reservoir from Ute Creek Golf Course to Sandstone Ranch following the Spring Gulch drainage
- **Expansion of Rogers Grove District Park**, through which the St. Vrain Greenway passes – **acquired the 54.87 acres** from Boulder County
- **Stakeholder for Colorado Front Range Trail** (Wyoming to New Mexico)
- **Stakeholder for St. Vrain Valley Trails and Open Lands Plan** (40 mile loop between Longmont, Firestone, Frederick and Erie)

Other Significant Accomplishments

- **Open Space and Trail Master Plan** – Adopted May 2002
- **Complete acquisition of the St. Vrain Corridor** from Weld County Road #1 to St. Vrain State Park

- **Acquisition of the Boulder Creek Estates** which contains the confluence of Boulder Creek and the St. Vrain Creek
- **“Chick Clark Youth Fishing Program”** at Izaak Walton Park – exclusive fishing opportunity for youth 15 and under, providing over 3,000 rods and reels to youth
- **Handicapped Fishing Pier** at Izaak Walton with matching funds from Colorado Parks and Wildlife
- **Wildlife Management Plan** – Adopted May 2006
- **\$2.2 million Grant** from Great Outdoors Colorado (Sherwood and Hayes Land acquisition)
- **Responsible for the land management and direction of all City's owned lands**
- **Management of the citywide Mosquito mitigation/education program** since 2003

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