

Councilors look ahead during retreat

Loveland's nine city councilors recently spent a full day-and-a-half informally looking toward the city's future during their annual retreat. Also participating in the retreat, held in the police building meeting room, were the City's executive staff and department heads.

About two dozen specific issues were discussed, many focusing on Loveland's future—from citywide wireless Internet service to library, museum and recreation center expansion.

All the issues discussed were related to city council's ongoing goals; economic development, transportation, open and accessible government, and effective and efficient government.



Further discussion at public study sessions is planned for some items, while others were assigned to City staff for further development.

Turn the page for city council retreat summary

Get your feet wet with xeriscaping

Have you wanted to try xeriscaping but don't have the time, money or creative aptitude you think is needed to get started? What if someone chose and organized the plants for you, put together a small plot design and sold the whole plan to you at a wholesale price? Loveland residents will have the chance to get in on just such an opportunity this spring.

Working with the Center for Resource Conservation, Loveland Water and Power is introducing the Garden-in-a-Box program. A Garden-in-a-Box is a professionally designed, preplanned xeriscape garden available at wholesale prices. There will be three designs to choose from. Each garden includes a planting plan, 30 or more plants and will

be available for pickup on a date to be determined in May.

Please look for more information in next month's City Update and on the Water and Power web page at www.cityofloveland.org on how to order your Garden-in-a-Box.

For more information, call 962-3566.



Yard work's a breeze with yard debris curbside collection

Curbside collection of yard debris begins Monday, April 2. Residents subscribing

to this service receive a special cart for grass clippings, leaves, garden trimmings and small branches to be collected weekly through the end of November. The cost is \$6 per month—much less costly than a trash cart of the same size. For residents who have a lot of yard waste throughout the growing season, a yard debris cart is ideal.

To order a cart call City Utility Billing, 962-2111. Loveland residents with a current site permit received annually by mail can also take their yard waste to the City's recycling center, 400 N. Wilson Avenue, free of charge.



INSIDE

Councilors discuss a variety of issues at annual retreat

Page 2-3

Project priorities set

Page 3

Annual Family and Youth Summit

Page 2

Annual waterway cleanup

Page 2

Feeling taxed?

Page 2

It was a blue Christmas here

Page 3

Innovation awards for Public Works

Page 4

Designing with power

Page 4

If we can't find you - we can't help you

Page 4

Pancake breakfast and plant sale April 21

What better way to ring in the spring than with a pancake breakfast and plant sale. Tickets can be purchased at the Chilson Senior Center in advance: \$4, adult; \$2.50, child or at the door \$5, adult; \$3, child. For more information call 962-2423.

Larimer County Older Adult Job Fair April 18

The Larimer County Workforce Center will be hosting a job fair for older adults – age 50+ – who are looking for seasonal, part-time or full-time employment. This is an opportunity for job seekers to meet directly with employers and learn about current job openings. The fair will be at the Chilson Senior Center 1:30 - 4:30 p.m., April 18. For more information call 667-4261, ext. 234.

Councilors discuss a variety of issues at annual retreat

The annual Loveland City Council retreat held Jan. 26-27 afforded the councilors an opportunity for informal discussion about many City issues. Items discussed grouped in conjunction with city council's primary goals are summarized below.

Economic development

Wireless access

The pros and cons of a citywide wireless Internet system will be a study session topic. Would ownership be public or private enterprise? Would it be fast and easy to update? Could the City recoup costs? Are there legal issues? These and other questions will be addressed.

In-fill redevelopment

Redevelopment within existing City areas such as downtown or elsewhere presents different challenges than new developments in open, "greenfield" locations. City staff will present an assessment of these challenges and possible solutions at a future study session.

Building materials tax

Currently, use tax on building materials—similar to the sales tax you pay at local stores—is paid in advance, when a building permit is issued. The accuracy and procedural requirements of this use tax will undergo future examinations. City council seeks to assure the process is fair and not unduly complicated for the builders.

Lodging tax

Yes, a possible tax on hotel and motel stays is being considered again. Loveland is one of the few cities that doesn't add tax on hotel guests' bills. A study session to discuss a tax along with possible exemptions is likely.

Retail sustainability

Loveland's tax base depends upon successful retail enterprise. Council plans further discussion on retail's continued success in Loveland, for both large and small stores.

Downtown

Council discussed downtown redevelopment, economic stability and beautification. A working group of several councilors, staff members and the public will be created to consider downtown's issues.

Airport

As the name implies, the Fort Collins/Loveland Municipal Airport is owned by both cities. A business plan for the airport's operations and capital improvements will be established.

CEFs

Capital Expansion Fees are paid by developers to offset the financial impact



of their new projects to City services. Council wishes to re-examine the procedures and methodologies associated with imposing and collecting CEFs.

Affordable housing

In 2006, the Affordable Housing Commission presented city council with affordable housing policies to consider. Council will await prioritization of these recommendations.

Annual Family and Youth Summit March 31

The 2nd annual Family and Youth Summit will be held Saturday, March 31 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the First National Bank Exhibition Hall at The Ranch and will offer something for every member of the family.

The Family and Youth Summit, sponsored by the Healthier Communities Coalition of Larimer County (HCC), in partnership with five local radio stations (107.9 The Bear, MY 97.9, 96.1 Kiss FM, 600 KCOL, and KIIIX AM 1410), with additional funding from the City of Loveland, provides a family a day of fun and learning about the community we live in, said Kim Sharpe, HCC coordinator.

"The goal is to give families a fun day together while learning about all the rich

resources in our community. They can take away new knowledge about healthy lifestyle choices," said Sharpe.



Deborah Campbell, library youth services supervisor, is also excited about this event. "Teens and 'Tweens' are often an

underserved and under-supported population in most communities. The Family Youth Summit is an excellent opportunity to help give these kids direction towards healthy outlets and let them know they're valued in our community," said Campbell.

A workshop list and pre-registration form are available at www.healthylarimer.org. Workshop space is limited. A cash concession area will be open. Admission is \$10. 495-7503.

Feeling taxed?

The basics of income tax planning



Are you taking advantage of all the tax benefits Uncle Sam has to offer? The goal of tax planning is to help you minimize your federal income tax as much as is allowable under current tax law. This free seminar will look at some basic income tax planning opportunities every taxpayer should know about.

Roger Bates, C.P.A./P.F.S., has a Master's of Taxation degree from the University of Denver and more than 20 years of experience as a C.P.A. with a specialty in income tax planning.

The seminar is April 10 from noon to 1:30 p.m. in the Gertrude B. Scott room at the Loveland Public Library and is part of the 2007 *Money Talks* series that meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. For more information call 962-2402.

Annual waterway cleanup April 21

In celebration of Earth Day, the City's Stormwater division is sponsoring the fifth annual Waterway Cleanup, 9 a.m., April 21 rain or shine. Citizens can actively participate in helping to improve our water quality, beautifying our natural areas and being good stewards to Mother Earth.

Last year, more than 60 volunteers spent the morning removing nearly five tons of debris from waterways within city limits. Even more trash removal from area waterways is likely this year. For information or to volunteer, call 962-2772.

Transportation

COLT bus system

Council is looking ahead at the City of Loveland Transit (COLT) system. Future growth, fare adjustments and federal funding is planned for discussion.

Open and accessible government

Library district creation

Creation of a library district, such as the newly approved district in Fort Collins, will be discussed further. Creation of a district would require approval by Loveland voters.

Web videos

Council discussed and declined a private firm's offer to provide brief videos showcasing Loveland on the City's web site in exchange for selling and placing advertising along with the videos.

Efficient and effective government

Employee retirement healthcare

The city will investigate the feasibility of allowing employees to participate in the City health care program between the time they retire and become eligible for Medicare at age 65.

ICMA update

Loveland has agreed to participate in the International City and County Managers Association of performance measurement comparison. Council was updated on

Capital project priorities set

City Council spent a substantial portion of their annual retreat prioritizing possible future capital projects. Capital projects are major "bricks and mortar" facilities such as buildings and equipment as opposed to services.

The City's current Ten-Year Plan includes 52 wide-ranging capital projects, all involving significant cost. All but 11 have future funding sources identified, continuing the City's "pay-as-you-go" approach to new facilities.

The top 14 projects were identified and re-grouped according to timeframe for further analysis as shown below. The City's Ten-Year Plan will be revised to reflect these priorities.

Five-year Priorities

- Chilson Rec. Center Expansion
- Community Building
- Downtown Parking
- Downtown Streetscape
- Library Expansion
- Mehaffey Park
- Service Center Expansion

Ten-year Priorities

- Kroh Park Phase 2
- Museum Expansion
- New East Fire Station
- New Recreation Center
- Police Shooting Range
- Wireless (Municipal)
- Youth Sports Park

Loveland's involvement in submitting data to the program.

Fire district

Loveland's fire chief reported that Loveland and neighboring cities had discussed the possibility of creating a single fire authority. The chief reported that current mutual aid agreements are working well and further discussions will continue.

Credit card use

Council members expressed interest in understanding the steps being taken to

ensure credit card use accountability under the City's new policy. A report will be prepared.

Other priority items

Meth efforts

Prevention and treatment of methamphetamine addiction was named as an area of concern by council for 2007.

Historic preservation

After the list is prioritized, city council will discuss properties being considered for historic preservation.

It was a blue Christmas here by Streets Manager Mick Mercer

It was a Christmastime we'll remember for years to come. The blizzard of snow created a blizzard of work, overtime, phone calls, expenses and more.

In the early hours of December 20th, it began to snow, and heavily – an inch per hour - and then a fierce wind kicked up. Twenty-four hours later - four days before Christmas – we had about 25 inches burying our city, with drifts up to 4-feet high.

Twelve hours after the snow stopped, the Streets Division had all Loveland's major streets opened up for travel. However, most Loveland residents were effectively trapped inside their residential neighborhoods, unable to drive just a block or two to the nearest plowed street. The real work was about to begin....

Plows got stuck

By early evening on December 21st, we attempted to plow at least one lane down every residential street so that residents could get out, but our heavy-duty City plow trucks often became stuck. We hired contractors with road graders, and they often became stuck trying to push so much snow. Unfortunately, when we were successful in plowing open a street, plowed snow blocked everyone's driveway.



Hauled Away

Wonder where those dump truck loads of snow went? Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of truckloads of snow were hauled to three dump zones like this one near the old fairgrounds site.

It quickly became apparent that it would be a very time-consuming and very expensive effort to open up all the residential streets, as well as the 20,000 driveways plowed shut by our equipment. Our office phones started ringing non-stop. We brought in extra staff to answer the calls. Residents wanted to know why it was taking us so long to plow open their residential streets. For the next several days, we fielded 400-500 phone calls per day!

We put out a plea to the local construction community. Any and all construction companies with road graders and front-end loaders were asked to assist us, and many answered the call. City

crews and several contract crews worked 24 hours a day for days on end to make at least one pass down every street, while also attempting to open the driveways. By Wednesday Dec. 27 – one week after the storm – nearly all residential streets were at least open and passable. But piles and piles of snow remained everywhere.

Another storm

And then we had to do it all over again, because a second storm hit on December 28th, dropping another 8-14 inches on the city. This time, our plow trucks were much more successful in pushing this smaller snowfall, but again, we unavoidably plowed shut the driveways that were

(continued on page 4)

Designing with power

Loveland's five field engineers are 'plugged in.' In their work designing and overseeing construction of power lines and electrical facilities, they interface with nearly every department in the city as well as a variety of organizations and entities outside city government from cable television providers to Larimer County.



The job is challenging, exciting and fun, said Kathleen Porter, field engineering supervisor. Prior to becoming supervisor eight years ago, Porter served as a field engineer for the City of Loveland for 20 years.

Field engineers work independently, setting their own schedules and seeing projects through from start to finish. "You take the projects and run," Porter explained. The engineering team's low turnover rate underscores the positive elements of the position.

Kent Aspinall has worked as a field engineer for eight years and in the power utility industry for 20 years. Like Aspinall, Bill Coufal has 20 years experience in the power utility industry—nine of those as a Loveland field engineer. Mark Miner has worked for the City as a field engineer for 14 years. He has 26 years experience in the power utility industry. Mark Warner, the newest member of the crew, has worked as a field engineer in Loveland for one year.

Because they oversee the design and construction of all electrical power lines, field engineers work with a wide variety of people including home owners,

construction engineers, farmers, engineering firms, developers, traffic planners and building contractors.

Any project that involves anything that is "new, upgraded, needing to be moved or changed or that's in the way" regarding the city's electrical power infrastructure crosses the desk of a field engineer. "That could include everything from a homeowner increasing their home's service to major technical and commercial projects such as a mall complex," said Porter.

Field service engineers typically have had college course work, computer-aided design training and have an electrical background. They need strong math skills, the ability to deal with tight deadlines, and, like most city employees, strong multi-tasking skills.

"Each one of my field engineers has 40 to 60 projects at any given time," Porter noted. "Normally the average is 15 to 20, but in the last five years new building construction and electrical upgrades have just been non-stop." Because of this, customers' projects get turned around in about six to eight weeks.

If we can't find you - we can't help you

In an emergency, being able to quickly locate a resident's home can sometimes mean the difference between life and death according to Scott Pringle, City of Loveland deputy fire marshal. Ensuring that emergency responders can efficiently reach people in need was the impetus behind the Reflective Address Sign Program.

Since 1999, Loveland Fire & Rescue has been urging residents to clearly mark their homes with these highly visible and reflective address numbers. "This is particularly important for rural residents," said Pringle.

"Often, homes in outlying areas will be a good distance from the road. If the address numbers are on the home and the home is 25 yards from the road, it's very difficult for us to readily identify those numbers—especially at night," Pringle said.



Reflective signs are available through the Fire Prevention Bureau at Loveland Fire & Rescue and come in two different designs; one for vertical mounting and one for a horizontal mount. Both are \$14 and come with an instruction sheet and mounting screws.

"This is one more ounce of prevention homeowners can take to really increase their level of safety, and proceeds from sign sales fund our public education programs," Pringle added. For more information or to purchase a sign, call 962-2614.

Innovation awards for Public Works

Loveland's Public Works Department was recently recognized by the Colorado Chapter of the American Public Works Association for outstanding work on two projects.

Big Thompson River Flood Insurance Re-Study

Gravel mining, road construction, bridge construction and bridge replacement have been implemented since the last study of the Big Thompson River floodplain in 1979. Working with FEMA, the City spearheaded a thorough evaluation of the nine miles of floodplain that wind through Loveland.

Data gathered will be used to assess flood risk and to administer floodplain management. The data will help ensure that structures built in the revitalized old fairgrounds site will be protected from flood flows.

Pay-As-You-Throw with Curbside Recycling

The City's Solid Waste Management Division was awarded for its solid waste collection and recycling services:

- Pay-as-You-Throw in which residents are charged based on volume of refuse
- Curbside collection of recyclable materials including yard waste
- The introduction of a drop-off center for recyclable and organic materials

Loveland has significantly reduced residential trash disposal while recycling and composting has increased significantly.

It was a blue Christmas here

(continued from page 3)

cleared after the first storm. And so the phones started ringing once again...

There has never been so much effort, equipment, energy and expense associated with snow removal in Loveland's history. With the constant sub-freezing temperatures of this December, the snow and ice bonded tightly to the pavement. Our snowplows simply chattered over the top, unable to penetrate and remove the icepack and deep ruts. Road graders and loaders worked, but they were slow, slow, slow.

By comparison, The 30-inch snowfall in March, 2003 was a breeze. Spring snowstorms are wet and sloppy but manageable, and they typically melt away in 3-4 days.

Perhaps skiers in Aspen and Vail enjoyed their white Christmas. In Loveland, this white Christmas had City workers singing the blues.