

Section 2: Draft Community Sustainability Plan

Introduction

In 2008, the City of Loveland began a staff-initiated effort to define and establish sustainability efforts for the City. The City of Loveland Draft Community Sustainability Plan (August 2012) reflects the work of that effort and identifies what steps the City has already taken to guide and improve sustainability in the Loveland community. The focus of the Draft Community Sustainability Plan is about defining smart business initiatives and community policies targeting the continued preservation, enhancement, and economic development of Loveland. Its objectives are to facilitate decision-making to support good return on investment, community engagement, and attracting jobs to the region.

The Draft Community Sustainability Plan seeks to provide a high-level document to clarify the city's position and role in the goals of creating a sustainable community. The Draft Plan is a first step in beginning the community discussion necessary to identify, clarify, and provide definition to the goals and action plans for the community and City government. Once adopted, these goals will inform all Citywide planning efforts, including the Transportation Plan.

This section provides an overview of the Draft Community Sustainability Plan prepared by the City of Loveland. As described above, the Draft Plan identifies Guiding Principles for improving sustainability in the community and establishes goals and sub-goals for seven key goal areas, including Transportation.

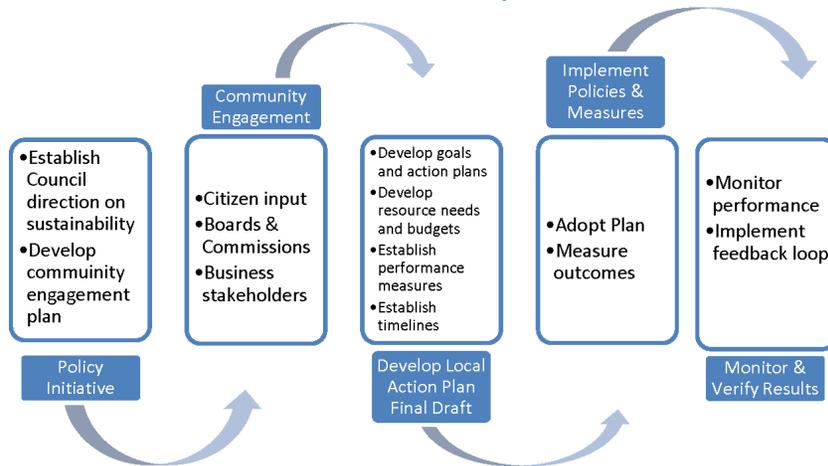
Process

To assist the City of Loveland and community leaders in working to support and drive a sustainable Loveland, eight Guiding Principles have been developed. These guiding principles have been further enunciated into seven specific goal areas, with parallels to the Comprehensive Plan. These seven goal areas are: 1) Resource Conservation; 2) Transportation; 3) Environmental, Open Space, and Community Health; 4) Economic Development; 5) Land Use and the Built Environment; 6) Buildings and Energy; and 7) Community Education and Civic Participation. The City of Loveland will establish performance measures, both quantitative and qualitative, assessing the impacts of the Community Sustainability Plan. The performance measures will be centered on the seven goal areas described above.

The City will undertake a three-step approach to addressing sustainability. The first priority will be taking business steps to move the City organization to more sustainable practices. Priority 2 will be a larger community discussion on sustainability and how it relates to governmental policy, community action, and funding. Following the community discussion, the third priority will be to integrate the community goals on sustainability into the existing City of Loveland Plan structure, interweaving the consideration of sustainability into key community planning documents, including the Loveland Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Plan, Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Open Space Plan, Title 18, Water Master Plan, Power Master Plan, and other key community planning documents.

The City of Loveland has not officially adopted a sustainability policy or set of goals. In order to more fully develop a Community Sustainability Plan, and the ensuing action plans and policies associated with the adopted plan, the City will seek community input into the Draft Community Sustainability Plan.

Process Map



Defining Sustainability

The City of Loveland has defined Sustainability as “Efforts at reducing the impact community and business operations have on the environment, this includes life-cycle planning, preservation and resource conservation efforts, and policies that support a long term vision for the community and citizens.”

Guiding Principals

1. The concept of sustainability is interwoven into City policy; programs and projects will consider sustainability in addition to other project factors.
2. Balancing the needs of economic vitality, environmental health, and the community fabric is essential to long term community sustainability. Community resiliency for emergency management is an essential component of sustainability.
3. Public participation and community awareness are essential to building a sustainable city.
4. Sustainability priorities will be developed through a process of community input, led by City Council, with an emphasis on economically viable programs and policies.
5. Partnerships among government, business, non-profits, and the community-at-large are essential to achievement of community goals.
6. The City of Loveland government organization, in our business operations, will strive to lead by example in sustainable business practices.
7. Protecting, preserving, and restoring the community and regions natural environment is a priority for the City of Loveland.
8. The City of Loveland recognizes its role as a community, regional, and national partner in making sustainable decisions.

Five Milestones for Sustainability

1. **Set Sustainability Goals** – The sustainability goals define the overarching objectives and scope of the sustainability plan. The type and number of goals can vary by jurisdiction, but likely will include an emissions reduction target along with other goals addressing issues such as workforce housing, natural resources conservation, and/or public transportation.
2. **Develop a Sustainability Plan** - The local government develops a sustainability plan, ideally with robust public input from stakeholders. The plan details the policies and measures that the local government will take to improve local sustainability and achieve the goals defined in the community and region. Most plans include a timeline, a description of financing mechanisms, and an assignment of responsibility to departments, the community, and stakeholders. This step should involve a public participation component to solicit ideas from the public and to receive feedback on measures being considered for inclusion in the plan.
3. **Conduct a Sustainability Assessment** - To begin the assessment process, a local government needs to first research and assess environmental, economic, and social equity challenges within the jurisdiction, and the programs in place to address these issues. The sustainability assessment typically includes a greenhouse gas emissions inventory and forecast for local government operations and the community as a whole and takes into account other key sustainability indicators.
4. **Implement the Sustainability Plan** - The local government implements the policies and measures in the sustainability plan.
5. **Monitor and Evaluate Progress** - Monitoring and verifying implementation progress is an ongoing process. Achieving this step involves annually reporting on implementation progress and monitoring the overall sustainability of the jurisdiction using the sustainability indicators identified.

Current Efforts

In 2008 and 2009, City staff began the task of developing an inventory of all activities, policies, and processes that support moving to a more sustainable business operation. This task compiled a significant snapshot of the city’s current efforts based on the seven goal areas described above. The list represents Loveland’s sustainability success as of 2010. Current sustainability efforts related to transportation include:

- **Catch the Bus:** 2009 saw the expansion of local bus service in the downtown corridor, seeing ridership jump from zero to 19 passengers an hour. The city also received \$776,000 in ARRA Federal Stimulus funds to purchase buses to support expansion of the regional FLEX bus route in June 2010. This first north-south regional route provides riders a connection from RTD in Longmont, through Berthoud, Loveland, and ending in Fort Collins. The new regional route is a partnership among seven regional governments. The buses on this route operate as alternative fuel, hybrid vehicles. Total ridership is averaging over 17 riders per hour and carrying over 154,100 passengers in the first 12 months.
- **Pedestrian Friendly:** Through the work of City Council, city staff, and the Loveland Downtown Team, a downtown Strategic Master Plan for both business and streetscaping was completed. The new plan identifies a framework to reignite historic downtown Loveland and lay a foundation for Living Streets that enhance and support pedestrian, bicycle, and alternative travel.
- **Roll with It:** Bike to work day was the biggest in years and laid the foundation for the 2010 and 2011 development of a new community-wide Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. In 2010, the city was named “Honorable Mention” as a bike friendly community.
- **T-n-T:** The City collaborated with Thompson R-2J School District to rollout an improved and growing Safe Routes to Schools program. The goals included upgraded pedestrian and bike friendly improvements around schools, and programs to encourage walking and biking for students. The hallmark of the program T-n-T Tuesdays (Tennies and Tires) was able to document a 70 percent increase in biking and walking to school and over 12,700 reduced vehicle trips at several elementary schools in the District.

- **Turn off the Engine:** In 2010, City of Loveland began a fleet-wide anti-idling education program in partnership with Fort Collins, Larimer County, and Poudre Schools. The goal is to improve both winter and summer air quality and improve fleet gas mileage.
- **Reduce the Footprint:** Between 2000 and 2010, the City of Loveland fleet has reduced greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) by an average of 10.52% per vehicle.

Sustainability Goals

In an effort to enhance discussion and provide a platform for community policies and plans around sustainability efforts, the City of Loveland has developed a series of potential goals in each of the key goal areas. The draft goals were developed based on past community planning efforts, such as the Comprehensive Master Plan and a review of sustainability plans from like-sized communities in the United States. These goals are a starting point to develop broad overarching goals that will then be used to create specific action plans, schedules, and funding and resources plans.

Transportation Goals

The goal and sub-goals for Transportation, as outlined in the Draft Community Sustainability Plan, are as follows:

Transportation Goal - While transportation is essential to the economic vitality of both the community and individuals, impacts created by transportation are far reaching and contribute significantly to sustainability. The City's transportation planning must embrace multi-modal solutions, regional mobility, and efforts to reduce vehicle miles traveled.

Transportation Sub-Goal 1 - Establish parameters for "Living Street" in the City's Transportation Plan.

Transportation Sub-Goal 2 - Grow transit opportunities both locally and regionally.

Lifelong Communities

Clearly the City's Sustainability Plan and its goals are intertwined with the 2035 Transportation Plan. From a transportation perspective, the current national guiding concepts of *Sustainability, Livability, Smart Growth, Complete Streets, Transit-Oriented Development, Safe Routes to School, and Context Sensitive Solutions and Design* are all important considerations and are reflected in the multi-modal components of this Plan. An additional guiding concept of *Lifelong Communities* is important as the City's population ages and the transportation system will be called upon to provide more mobility choices for residents. With that in mind, this Transportation Plan has increased the focus on pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and special transit systems for the future to provide improved community connectivity.

The transportation planning process has also been closely coordinated with the City's land use planning process where neighborhood services and housing type choices have also been important considerations that affect senior citizens. In concert, the City's Sustainability Plan, the Land Use Plan, and the Transportation Plan will work together to provide effective *Lifelong Communities* in Loveland for its aging population.