

TACTICAL MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT

Aligning Policy and Process with Longmont's Vision

DRAFT



ELEVATING BUSINESS. EMPOWERING COMMUNITY.

Prepared for



Prepared by



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INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

To assist in the implementation of the Longmont Economic Development Partnership (“LEDP”) *Advance Longmont 2.0 Strategic Plan* and Longmont Downtown Development Authority (“LDDA”) *Downtown Master Plan of Development*, LEDP and LDDA retained CIVISTRUCT Strategy + Development to undertake a Tactical Management Assessment to address the following objectives:

- Gain a greater understanding of why some proposed development projects in Longmont were abandoned over the last 2-3 years and quantify (to the greatest extent possible based on available information) the impacts of these abandoned projects to the Longmont community (e.g., housing units, square feet of space, jobs, investment amount, etc.).
- Undertake a comparative analysis of the entitlement process employed for a high-density residential project and a commercial project in Longmont compared to the process undertaken in other selected jurisdictions for similar projects within the past 2-3 years to identify similarities and differences in the entitlement process and what recommendations could be recommended for Longmont.
- Convene strategy sessions with representatives from the development, construction, and professional services industry to solicit feedback and input into Longmont’s entitlement process and what strategies and recommendations they may have to meet community and development goals and objectives and strengthen partnerships between the public and private sectors.

KEY TASKS¹

1. **Project Initiation / Kick Off:** Met with the LEDP and LDDA client team in a work session to review the scope of work and to identify specific conditions, identify comparable projects for entitlement analysis, development project updates and other issues impacting the Tactical Management Assessment.
2. **Inventory / Analysis of Abandoned Real Estate Projects:** Identified abandoned real estate development projects in Longmont within the past 2-3 years, and summarized why they were abandoned (e.g., market issues, financing, entitlement process, etc.). Quantified, to the greatest extent possible based on available information, the impacts of these projects not being developed in terms of number of housing units, square feet of space and investment amount not realized.
3. **Comparative Analysis of Project Entitlement Processes:** Evaluated 4 recently completed / under construction high density residential and commercial projects – two of these projects in Longmont and two in other municipalities – within the last 2-3 years to see what the similarities and differences exist between the land entitlement processes. Summarized key takeaways in the entitlement processes and identified strategies that could be employed to strengthen Longmont’s entitlement process.
4. **Developer & Builder Strategy Sessions:** Convened two (2) virtual strategy sessions – one with representatives from the development industry and the other with representatives from the construction and professional services industry – to solicit feedback and input into Longmont’s entitlement process and recommended tactical strategies to strengthen partnerships with the City, development community and economic development partners.
5. **Tactical Strategy Recommendations:** Based on the comparative analysis of entitlement processes, interviews with developers, property and business owners, consultants, and municipal staff, summarized key strengths and challenges of Longmont’s entitlement and development review process and identified potential tactical strategies to address some of these challenges and meet best practices in the industry.

¹ Please note that the tasks focus *primarily* on the Land Development Code / development review process vs. construction / building permit approval process.

ABANDONED REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS ASSESSMENT

Overview

Real estate development is a complex endeavor that takes fortitude, financing, and expertise in diverse disciplines and activities to successfully implement. Identifying sites, deciding on potential uses, determining project feasibility, seeking funding (debt and equity), designing the project, getting the project approved from the local municipality, and constructing the project for tenant or resident occupancy can take years.

There can be many reasons why a real estate development project is abandoned. Market issues could arise and change demand for certain types of uses, financing can be challenging to obtain if debt and equity requirements change and there isn't adequate project sponsorship, and the length of time and cost associated with obtaining project entitlements can make project viability difficult.

For example, the coronavirus pandemic and changes in consumer preferences has impacted the office and retail markets in significant ways with the long-term impacts of where and how people work and shop unknown. How many employees will go back to the office and how will this impact future demand for office space? How has on-line retail spending changed the demand for brick-and-mortar stores? There are many unknown answers to these questions at this point. This uncertainty and other risk factors is making developers take a hard look at the viability of such projects and whether they want to undertake the risk of building something that may not have strong demand in the long run (which can increase risk to the project and financial viability).

LEDP and the LDDA are interested in identifying real estate development projects that may have been abandoned in Longmont within the past 2-3 years, and importantly, why they were abandoned. Were these projects abandoned due market issues, lack of financial feasibility, entitlement challenges, or other issues?

Due to the challenges in identifying development projects that may have been abandoned in Longmont, this evaluation looks at development projects in Longmont since 2019 where the developer, property owner or professional services firms working on behalf of a developer of property and business owner ("applicant") submitted a pre-application development application to the City of Longmont Development Review team. A pre-application development meeting is required by the City of Longmont before applicants submit a full development application for a site plan, annexation, subdivision, or other development application.

For this analysis, evaluating the status of these pre-application request forms served as the best metric for identifying which projects are actively going through the City's development review process, are under construction, built, on hold or were *abandoned*.

Methodology

The following methodology was employed to identify real estate development projects that may have been abandoned in the City of Longmont from 2019 through July 2021.

- Reviewed all City development pre-applications submitted for 2019, 2020 and through July 2021. The City Planning and Development Services requires applicants interested in submitting a development application (e.g., annexation, comprehensive plan amendment, zoning map amendment, subdivisions, site plans) to complete a pre-application form prior to submission of a development application. There have been a total of 271 development pre-applications during this period, broken out by year below.

Year	Number of Development Pre-Applications Submitted to City
2019	130
2020	93
January - July 2021	48
TOTAL	271

- Compared development pre-applications during this period against the City of Longmont Active Developments Log (July 2021) to check status to see if the project is an active application, completed, or under construction. The Active Developments Log identifies projects currently under development review, under construction, approved and public hearing.
- Due to limitations in scope, did not evaluate projects where the applicant was seeking a temporary use permit, residential accessory dwelling unit, public improvement plan (PIP), change of use, vacation of right-of-way, vacation of easements, minor subdivision plat, etc. We focused our evaluation on pre-development applications where the applicant would be submitting a site plan application for a development project. In many instances applicants would be submitting site plan applications in conjunction with additional development applications such as minor or preliminary / final subdivision plat and public improvement plans required for approval of the development project.
- For projects not identified in the City's Active Developments Log as either under review, under construction, approved or public hearing, reached out via e-mail and telephone to applicants identified on the development pre-application to ascertain status of project. Scope was limited only to those pre-development applications for residential projects over 5 units and 2,000 square feet of commercial space (if identified). In many instances after several attempts to contact (both via phone and email) the applicant, we were unable to ascertain the status of the project due to applicant non-response.
- Reached out to developers, brokers, business and property owners, LEDP and LDDA staff, municipal staff, and other key stakeholders in the Longmont community to see if they had (or known of) any abandoned or withdrawn real estate development projects within the past 2-3 years in Longmont. The goal was to identify projects that may have been abandoned by the developer, but they did not submit a development pre-application to the city after completing their internal due diligence.
- Quantified (to the greatest extent possible based on available information) the impact of the abandoned projects in terms of the number of housing units not built, square feet of space not constructed and investment amount not realized.

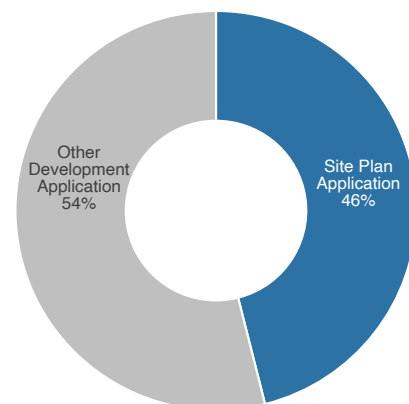
Overall Summary Observations

A total of 271 pre-application request forms were received by the City of Longmont from 2019 through July 2021. The pre-application meeting is where an applicant who is interested in submitting a development application (e.g., annexation, comprehensive plan amendment, zoning map amendment, subdivision plat, site plan) meets with City staff to review their request and receive comments from the City prior to the applicant submittal of a formal development application.

The following observations were made:

- 46% of pre-applications were for site plans (permitted use, conditional use, limited use, site plan amendment)
- Remaining 54% of pre-applications were for subdivision plans, temporary use permits, vacation of easements, vacation of right-of-way, annexation, public improvement plans (PIP), change of use, site plan waivers and other development applications. In some instances, the pre-applications included intent to submit multiple development applications at the same time (e.g., minor subdivision plat and site plan) which would be required for development approval.

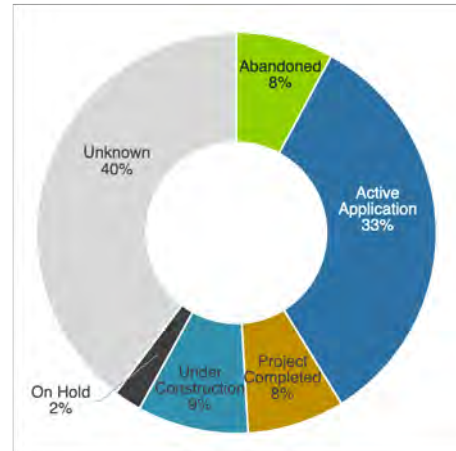
Pre-Application Request Form Type
(2019-July 2021)



Based on a review of these pre-applications, checking them against the City's Active Development Log, outreach to selected applicants which noted site plan applications, and discussions with developers, property and business owners and others, the following summarizes key observations:

- Approximately 50% of pre-applications were either currently in development review (33%), the project is currently under construction (9%), or the project was completed (8%)
- 40% of pre-applications have an unknown status. These projects were not identified in the Active Development Log as an active application, under construction or approved application. It is unknown why these applications did not move beyond the pre-development application stage or if they are currently on hold. For those applications with site plans, attempts were made to reach out to the applicant to find out the status of the project, but were unable to receive responses.
- **10% of pre-applications were identified as abandoned (8%) or the project is currently on hold (2%).**
- For those projects currently on hold, reasons identified by the applicants included: supply chain issues and drop in demand due to the coronavirus pandemic, working with multiple property owners until agreements can be reached, lack of equity funding to move projects forward, waiting for completion of Airport related development plan, and personal issues.

Status of Development Projects With Pre-Application Meetings (2019 – July 2021)



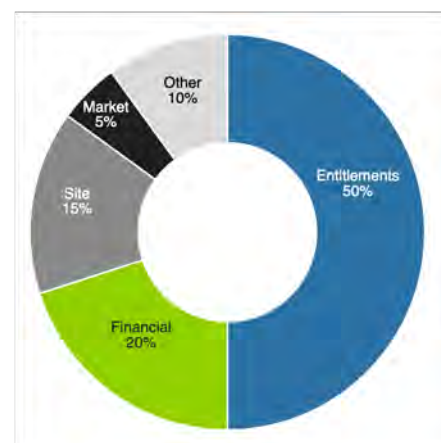
Abandoned Projects Assessment

Through this evaluation of pre-applications, as well as outreach to and interviews with developers, property and business owners, and City planning staff, a total of roughly 20 development projects were identified as abandoned or withdrawn from 2019 through July 2021. These abandoned projects represent 8% of the pre-applications submitted to the City of Longmont.

In terms of why the projects were abandoned or withdrawn, 50% of these projects could be attributed primarily to entitlement issues based on interviews with the applicant. Financial issues comprised 20% of the reasons why the projects were abandoned followed by site issues at 15% and market issues at 5%. Other issues, described in further detail below, comprised the remaining 10% of projects that were abandoned.

One of the key observations identified in discussions with development applicants, as well as, with property and business owners is that once a developer or property owner has acquired a site, they are *unlikely* to abandon a development project. During the development review process, if a project applicant

Primary Causes Reported for Project Abandonment



finds that a proposed site plan or concept is not going to be supported or approved, the applicant often will work to find an alternative plan that they think will have a greater chance of success in getting approved. This could involve several iterations of the site plan and proposed uses and can extend the entitlement process several years.

Entitlements

Entitlement issues were identified as one of the primary issues for projects being abandoned or withdrawn based on discussions with developers, property and business owners.

These entitlement related issues were wide ranging. For example, required on-site and off-site infrastructure and public improvement costs associated with a proposed industrial / flex project and annexation request made the projects financially infeasible. Other issues included the prolonged time frame as part of the municipal development review process, neighborhood opposition as part of the development review process, and riparian setback requirements which made a lot undevelopable. In another case, a change in the City's affordable housing income levels made a proposed affordable housing project not financially viable and created uncertainty resulting in the project's equity partner dropping out of the project.

Project Description	Primary Reason(s) for Abandonment
180,000 sq. ft. of flex/industrial space	City off-site requirements and developer costs to improve adjacent road to current roadway standards, re-alignment of nearby street and required additional landscaping requirements made project financially infeasible
7,000 sq. ft. convenience store	Developer requested variance on landscape regulation, but prolonged response by City on request to whether that would be supported or not; buyer did not have time to wait and moved on from the project
20,000 sq. ft commercial building	Presence of prairie dogs on site stretched City regulatory process out beyond a timeframe the business owner was willing to wait and moved on from the site
60-unit affordable housing	Change in affordable housing income levels for the affordable units by City made it financially unviable to pursue and created uncertainty in the project resulting in equity partner dropping out
Gas station	City denied a Comprehensive Plan Amendment referral to allow fueling stations
Annexation referral for 70 acres of land	Significant off-site infrastructure costs associated with drainage plan made the project financially unviable
Hotel	Riparian setback requirements made lot undevelopable because too small of a build-able footprint
Government recreation maintenance facility	Neighborhood opposition (impact on views)
6-story mixed use building with 32 dwelling units	Regulatory process and rising construction costs on nearby similar project completed (with limited profit) - declined to move forward on this site

Financial

For projects that were identified as abandoned due to financial issues, the primary reasons identified ranged from a property owner / developer who was unable to line up investors to fund the equity portion of an apartment project to a proposed purchaser of a site for a hotel-to-apartment conversion losing out on the price as part of a competitive bid process with the property owner / seller. One business that was looking to build a new manufacturing facility found another site with an existing building at a lower price point. In addition, one property owner who was trying to add an accessory dwelling unit to the property decided not to move forward after learning the high cost it would take to elevate the unit to comply with Federal FEMA regulations.

Project Description	Primary Reason(s) for Abandonment
17,000 sq. ft. manufacturing facility	Property owner / business found another site with existing building at a lower price point
Hotel to apartment conversion (210 residential units)	Developer (purchaser) lost out on price as part of a competitive bid process with the property owner
Accessory dwelling unit	Costs associated to comply with Federal FEMA regulations made the project financially unviable
17-unit apartment building	Property owner could not find investors to fund the equity for the project

Site

Site issues were also identified as reasons why some projects were abandoned. This included land that was not deep enough to accommodate the developer's proposed site plan for 20 single family residential lots and a site that was not large enough to achieve the developer's needed density to make the project financially viable.

Project Description	Primary Reason(s) for Abandonment
20 single family detached lots	Land not deep enough to be developed for developer's proposed site plan
100-unit apartment project	Site not big enough to get the density the buyer needed to make it financially viable; buyer could not meet seller's expectations
Subdivision of 1 acre lot into 4 residential lots	Needed utility connections from a lot to the south which could not be secured

Market

One of the noteworthy outcomes of discussions with developers and property owners that has been shared is the COVID pandemic appears to have less of an impact on projects viability, in particular, industrial and multi-family development. However, one exception has been the office market and uncertain future with how and where people will work that has given some developers pause in building new office space. One proposed downtown office project was identified as abandoned primarily due to the COVID pandemic and impact on the office leasing market as well as rising construction costs.

Project Description	Primary Reason(s) for Abandonment
30,000 sq. ft. Downtown office building	Primarily due to COVID pandemic and impact to office market (leasing) as well as rising construction costs

Other

Other reasons that were identified for project abandonment included a proposed annexation where the property owner decided to wait until they had specific plans and a user for the site before deciding to move forward with an annexation application. In addition, a climbing gym submitted an initial pre-development application for a site in Longmont but found another site in Longmont for the gym so withdrew the development application for the site.

Project Description	Primary Reason(s) for Abandonment
Annexation referral for 10 acres of land	Property owner decided to wait until they have specific plans and a user to move forward
15,000 sq. ft. indoor/outdoor climbing gym	Climbing gym moved to another location in Longmont so withdrew development application

Estimated Quantitative Impact

For projects that do not move forward, there is a quantitative impact in terms of commercial space not built, housing not constructed and an overall investment amount, in terms of land acquisition and construction costs, not realized.

Based on information provided by those developers and property owners who did not move forward with their projects, and, if that information was not available, applying standard industry assumptions for construction costs for commercial space and residential housing, the estimated quantitative impact of these abandoned projects is estimated at:

Estimated Quantitative Impact of Abandoned Projects Not Realized

Square Feet of Commercial Space	280,000 – 290,000
Residential Units ^{1/}	440 - 450
Investment Amount	\$80,000,000 - \$90,000,000
<small>1/ Includes proposed conversion of hotel to apartment project</small>	

Please note that this quantitative impact estimate does not include abandoned projects that were annexation requests and subdivision plats where proposed development programs were not identified.

Key Takeaways

The following summarizes key findings from the abandoned projects assessment:

- Based on outreach and interviews with developers and property owners, once a developer or property owner has acquired a site for development, they are generally *unlikely* to abandon development of the site as it can be very expensive to do so. The owner/developer has already incurred costs to acquire the land and “soft” costs associated with planning, design, and engineering for the site plan application. Unless the applicant has an option on the property with the property owner where they have the option to *not* close on the property if they don’t receive site plan approval (and most likely lose some of their earnest money deposit), the applicant often will work to find an alternative plan that they think will have a greater chance of success in getting approved. This could involve several iterations of the site plan and proposed uses and can extend the entitlement process several years.
- Approximately 8% of projects (20 proposed projects) that submitted pre-applications to the City of Longmont between 2019 and July 2021 were identified as abandoned.
- 50% of these abandoned projects were abandoned primarily to entitlement issues based on interviews with the applicants. Financial issues comprised 20% of the reasons why the projects were abandoned followed by site issues at 15% and market issues at 5%. Other issues comprised the remaining 10% of the reason why the projects were abandoned.
- Based on discussions with project applicants, the COVID pandemic appears to have played less of an impact on project abandonment. Only one identified project was abandoned primarily because of the pandemic, primarily due to the unknown impact the pandemic will have on the office leasing market, and to a certain extent, rising construction costs due to supply chain and other issues.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PROJECT ENTITLEMENT PROCESSES

Purpose

The purpose was to evaluate two (2) recently completed / under construction high density residential projects with structured parking – one in Longmont and the other in another municipality – and two (2) commercial projects – one in Longmont and the other in another municipality – that have been completed or are under construction within the last 2-3 years to see what the similarities and differences are between the land development entitlement and regulatory approval processes.

The objective was to summarize similarities and differences in the entitlement processes and provide key takeaways that could be proposed for Longmont's entitlement process to facilitate stronger partnerships between public and private sector parties.

Methodology

Based on discussions with LEDP and LDDA staff, outreach to developers and consultants, and availability of the developer and the municipality, the following projects were identified for the comparative analysis.

Multi-Family Residential

Location	Project Name	Description
Longmont	The Spoke on Coffman	74 units of for-rent affordable housing
Loveland	Patina Flats at the Foundry	155 units of for-rent housing

Commercial

Location	Project Name	Description
Longmont	1660 S. Fordham Industrial (Longmont Business Park)	97,500 sq. ft. of industrial / flex space
Louisville	1875 Taylor Avenue (Colorado Technology Center)	83,615 sq. ft. of industrial / flex space

Generally, the following criteria was employed to select the projects for this analysis:

Multi-Family	Commercial / Industrial
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Downtown location• For-rent product• Multi-story with structured parking• Availability of developer/architect and City staff to discuss project	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Industrial / flex space• Between 50,000 and 100,000 sq. ft.• Business Park setting• Availability of developer/architect and City staff to discuss project

Once the projects were identified, the following process was utilized to evaluate the development review process to gain a greater understanding of municipal regulatory processes that led to project approval, issues encountered, processes that worked well, and recommendations for improvement.

- Interviewed developers and consultants involved in the development application process of each identified project to provide their perspective on the development review process.
- Interviewed City Planning and Development Review staff (as available) involved in the development application process to provide local government perspective.
- Reviewed development application materials and (re)submittal materials, including but not limited to: site plan applications, development pre-application information, Planning and Zoning Commission / City Council staff reports, and other relevant documents as available.
- Reviewed key aspects of the applicable city's Land Development Code, development review processes, and municipal land development standards, including design standards and guidelines.

Multifamily Residential Project Entitlement Comparative Analysis

The Spoke on Coffman (Longmont)



Source: Boulder County Housing Authority, RNN Architects

Project Overview

Project Name	The Spoke on Coffman
Location	518 Coffman Street, Longmont CO 80501
Developer	Boulder County Housing Authority
Status	Under Construction
Development Program	73 units of affordable rental housing 10,000 sq. ft. ground floor commercial space 262 parking spaces in 3-story parking garage
Site Size	1.17 acres
Development Features	1- to 3-bedroom apartments affordable to households with income up to 60% AMI Commercial space with an enterprise café Office space for Boulder County services Bike and electric vehicle charging station Interior courtyard
Zoning	Mixed-Use Downtown (MU-D)

Project Description

The Spoke on Coffman is a 4-story, 73-unit affordable housing development currently under construction in Downtown Longmont that also includes a 3-story structured parking garage with 262 parking spaces with 10,000 square feet of commercial space on the ground floor. The developer of the project is the Boulder County Housing Authority.

The \$28.8 million project is a public-private partnership between Boulder County, the Boulder County Housing Authority (BCHA), Longmont General Improvement District (GID), Longmont Downtown Development Authority (LDDA), and RLET Properties LLC with regards to a shared parking garage developed adjacent to the affordable housing project. As part of this project the Longmont GID, Boulder County and RLET Properties LLC contributed land towards the garage to be used by the parties as follows: 39 assigned parking spaces for the affordable housing residents and guests; 125 spaces for use by Boulder County to serve the needs of

employees and visitors to the existing St. Vrain Community Hub and newly built 10,000 square feet of County office space; 70 spaces to be used by the LDDA and the GID to serve the needs of visitors to downtown Longmont; and 28 spaces to serve the needs of the adjacent office space owned by RLET Properties.

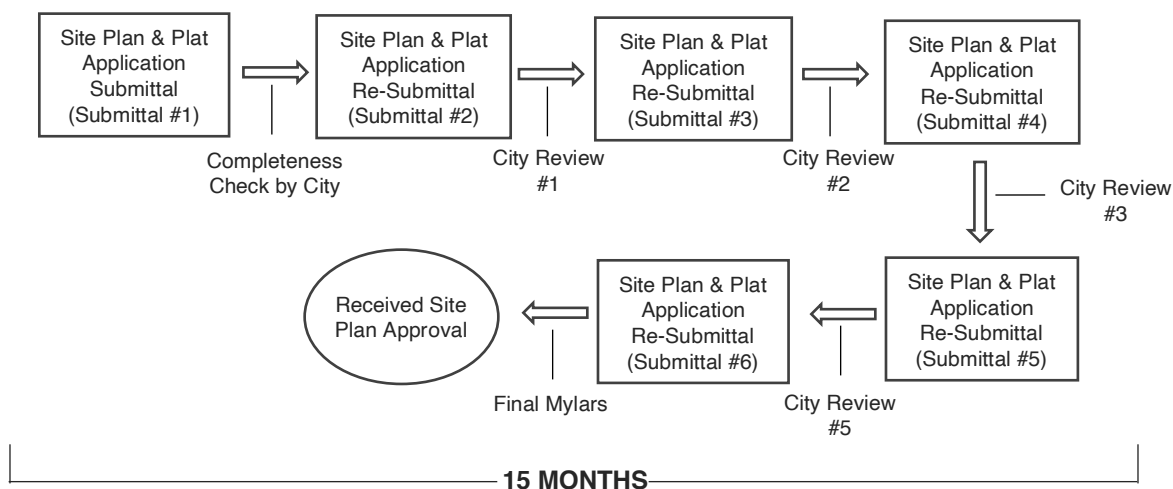
Project funding came from a wide variety of sources. Affordable housing financing for the project includes Colorado Housing and Finance Authority (CHFA) Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTCs). Financing sources include: \$15.3 million construction loan by Citi Community Capital, \$11.9 million in affordable housing tax credit equity from Enterprise Housing Credit Investments, \$1.6 million in Boulder County Worthy Cause funds, \$1.5 million from the Boulder Broomfield HOME Consortium, and \$3.7 million in State of Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) grant funds. In addition, the LDDA contributed \$2 million towards the cost of the parking garage. BCHA is also receiving up to \$300,000 from the LDDA's Downtown Incentive Program (DIP) that reimburses the County for certain development fees associated with the project.

Entitlement / Development Review Process

The development review process for the project (affordable housing and parking garage) was a site plan and minor subdivision plat application that was approved at the staff level. No City of Longmont Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council approval was required for the site plan and minor subdivision plat approval.

The total timeline from when Boulder County Housing Authority submitted the initial site plan and minor subdivision plat development application to when they received final official approval of these applications was approximately 15 months. There were a total of six (6) official submittals of the site plan development application by Boulder County and five (5) reviews by the City's Development Review Committee, including the initial site plan application submittal. According to the applicant, the COVID pandemic did impact the project timeline in terms of delay/resubmittals.

Spoke on Coffman – Development Review Process



The Spoke on Coffman project is an urban infill site redevelopment that includes the development of a 4-story multi-family residential project adjacent to a 3-story parking garage with ground floor commercial / office space. A key aspect of the development review process identified by the applicant was a dedicated staff planner who was the primary interface between the City and the BCHA development team throughout the process and was identified as key in shepherding the development application through the development review process and assisting to provide project approvals to meet key financing requirements by the applicant.

In addition, the LDDA was identified as a key partner in the project and a great advocate as the project will provide homes for people who will have easy access to all that Downtown Longmont has to offer and will also bring needed public parking into the downtown area for businesses and visitors.

The following were identified as some of the challenges as part of the entitlement process for the project:

- High number of site plan application (re)submittals (6) during the development review process prolonged the timeline for project approval (15 months).
- New permanent stormwater control requirements (e.g., treat 80% of water on site) and unclear direction on design of the system that would be acceptable added significant cost to the project and extended the approval process.
- Third party review of certain elements (e.g., landscaping, structural) of the site plan application during the development review process added time to the review process.
- Design challenges integrating the project into the Coffman Street BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) design, such as on-street parking, mid-block crossing, design of Coffman Street dedicated bike lane and other right-of-way improvements.
- Redundant and conflicting development review comments which resulted in a high number of comments that added to increased time and cost for applicant to respond.

One item to note is that prior to the City of Longmont adopting an inclusionary housing ordinance in 2018 which requires 12% of new residential development to be affordable to low- and moderate-income buyers, the city had an “expedited” development review process for affordable housing projects. However, it appears that this “expedited development review” incentive is no longer available for affordable housing after the inclusionary housing ordinance became effective since all residential projects would, in essence, be providing affordable housing by way of the inclusionary housing requirement of either providing the housing on site or through other methods (e.g., fee in lieu) acceptable to the city. It appears that the Spoke on Coffman affordable housing project did not go through an expedited review process.

The City of Longmont does provide other incentives for affordable housing projects, such as fee waivers, height/density bonuses, reduced development standards (e.g., setbacks, landscaping), and reduced parking requirements.

Patina Flats at the Foundry (Loveland)



Source: Apartmentfinder.com

Project Overview

Project Name	Patina Flats at the Foundry
Location	246 N Cleveland Avenue, Loveland CO 80537
Developer	Brinkman
Status	Completed (2018)
Development Program	155 units of market rate rental housing 15,206 sq. ft. ground floor commercial space
Site Size	4 acres (The Foundry)
Development Features (Apartments)	Outdoor fire pit Rooftop patio Fitness center Lounge areas
Zoning	Downtown

Project Description

Patina Flats is a mixed apartment and commercial project that is part of the larger Foundry development in downtown Loveland. The Foundry represents Loveland City Council's efforts to create a "downtown catalyst" project that will spur revitalization and renewed investment in the downtown. The Foundry is a public-private partnership between the City of Loveland and Brinkman whose goal is to revitalize Loveland's downtown corridor. The Foundry project encompasses roughly 4 acres in the downtown core of Loveland.

The Foundry consists of a wide mix of uses, including multi-family residential, structured parking, retail, entertainment, and outdoor public spaces. In addition to the Patina Flats apartment project, the Foundry includes a 102-room TownePlace Suites by Marriott hotel, seven-screen 625-seat Metropolitan Theater, 460-space parking garage, restaurants, and retail, all connected by a central plaza.

Patina Flats is a core component of the Foundry development. The two-building mixed use complex anchors the Foundry project providing 155 market rate multi-family units in a combination of studio, 1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom apartments along with 15,200 square feet of ground floor commercial/retail space. Resident amenities include a fitness center, rooftop patio, lounge area, outdoor fire pit and garage parking.

The City of Loveland issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a developer to redevelop the 4-acre downtown site, on what was then vacant land, as a catalyst project to bring to fruition a longstanding community vision for the area. Brinkman was selected as exclusive development partner to build the catalyst project. As part of this partnership, more than \$27 million in public investment was provided to bring this \$80 million Foundry project to fruition. As part of this partnership, the City spent \$7 million to acquire the property for the redevelopment, waived use taxes and development fees and invested \$17.6 million in public improvements, including the 460-space parking garage and central plaza improvements.

Entitlement / Development Review Process

The development review process for the project was a site plan development application that required Loveland Planning Commission approval. As outlined in the Loveland Municipal Code, the Loveland Planning Commission is the decision-making body for all site plans for projects over 25,000 square feet in downtown Loveland. The Patina Flats mixed use project, which totals more than 156,000 square feet in two buildings, along with the other project components, met that requirement for Planning Commission approval.

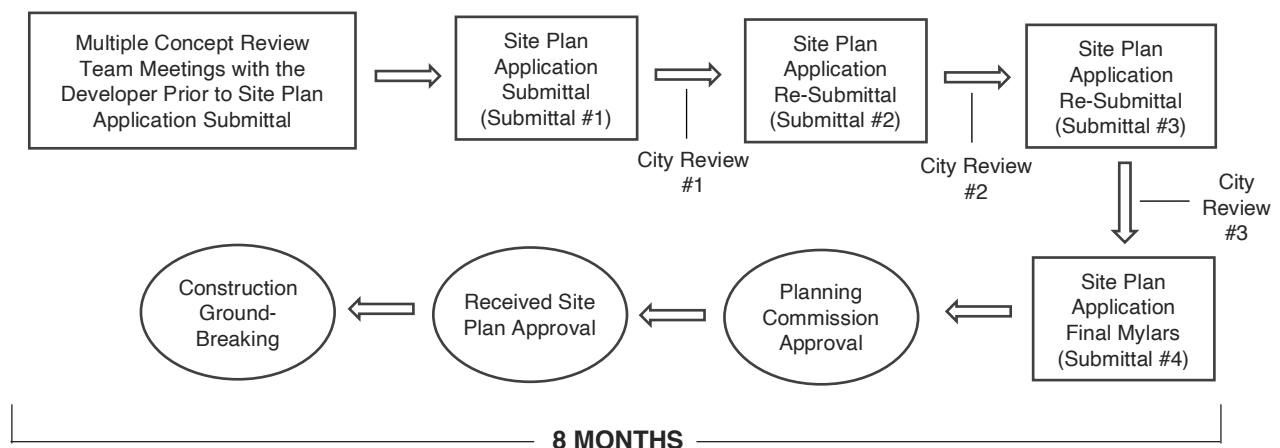
The site plan application for the Patina Flats project also included the site plan for the 460-space parking garage. Site plans for the other Foundry project components, including a movie theater and a hotel, were presented to the Planning Commission in a separate filing at a later date.

Prior to the site plan application, Loveland City Council approved a Redevelopment Agreement between the developer and the City of Loveland and Downtown Development Authority, which among other items, identified the timing on consideration of entitlements for the project. According to the City and the development team, the City Development Review Team (DRT) and Brinkman development team all worked with a high level of urgency to meet the agreed upon development parameters. Timely approval for the site plan was critical to keep the project progressing as delays could negatively impact the project and agreements.

The total timeline from when Brinkman was selected as the developer for the Foundry project to when they broke ground on construction was 8 months. This included multiple pre-submittal meetings between the City DRT and Brinkman development team, site plan application submittal / review process and approval by Loveland Planning Commission for the site plan application. Loveland City Council did also have to approve some easement vacations for the site, but this was not part of the site plan application.

There were a total of three (3) reviews of the site plan development application by the City's Development Review Team, including the initial site plan application submittal. The City DRT staff had two (2) weeks to turnaround review comments back to the developer for each submittal.

Patina Flats at the Foundry - Development Review Process



The City's expedited development review process was identified as an overall success for the project. There were minimal challenges identified by the applicant during this process as the City DRT and the Brinkman development team worked in a collaborative partnership to solve problems, find solutions, and move the development process in an expedited fashion to meet project timelines and objectives.

The following were identified by both the Brinkman development team and the municipal development review staff as keys to entitlement success that resulted in project approvals:

- **Standing Concept Review meetings between City Development Review Team and the Brinkman development team** held every 2 weeks prior to submittal of Site Plan application to discuss issues and find solutions
 - Meetings focused generally on specific topics of issue (e.g., stormwater, utilities, design)
 - Entire Municipal Development Review Committee (Planning, Public Works, Transportation, Fire, Building, Water/Wastewater, Power, Stormwater, Parks, Police, etc.) participated in the standing meetings so everyone could hear the same information
 - All City departments integrated into the Development Review Team process
 - Held 6 months of these meetings prior to developer submitting initial site plan application
 - Helped developer fine tune their submittal to minimize the number of City reviews and applicant resubmittals
- **City Development Review Team Master Coordinator / Single Point of Contact**
 - The City Development Review Team had a Lead Planner who was the master coordinator for the entire Foundry project (very important from the developer's perspective)
 - Lead Planner also involved in permitting and inspections which is atypical
 - Lead Planner handled any internal conflicts between departments on the site plan application and got them resolved before meeting with developer and/or submitting comments back to the applicant on the site plan application
 - Key to resolving conflicts among City departments was listening to all perspectives, hearing alternatives, presenting ideas and being open minded
 - Lead Planner read all staff comments to check for conflicting and repeated comments, and revised as necessary, before sending out to the applicant
 - Lead planner having a strong knowledge base of overall development objectives and vision for the Downtown area and relationships with different interests (DDA, etc.) to ensure vision is being implemented
- **Flexible and Responsive Development Review Process**
 - Project identified as a high priority for the city
 - More iterative process for development review
 - Have flexibility when applying and interpreting zoning standards
 - Collaborative process between City and Brinkman development team (multiple meetings to fine tune application and identify/resolve any issues that arise)
 - Provide clarity on staff comments by referencing sections of the Code if required by Code
 - Two (2) week turnaround time for City DRT to review site plan application and send comments back to the developer for each submittal
- **Significant Public Outreach and Community Engagement that resulted in strong community support**
 - 4 separate open houses held at the Loveland Downtown Development Authority
 - Information available during the Corn Roast Festival, Festival of Lights and Fire & Ice events
 - Eight Press Releases to local newspapers
 - Information on the City website and in the City Utility Billing Newsletter
 - City Facebook postings

Industrial / Flex Project Entitlement Comparative Analysis

1660 South Fordham Street at Longmont Business Center (Longmont)



Source: Macy Development Company, Michael Bloom Realty Company

Project Overview

Project Name	South Fordham Industrial at Longmont Business Center
Location	1660 S. Fordham Avenue, Longmont CO 80501
Developer	Macy Development Company
Status	Under Construction
Development Program	97,500 sq. ft. ground floor industrial / flex space 175 surface parking spaces (1.75 / 1,000 sq. ft.)
Site Size	6.99 acres
Development Features	24-foot clear height 16 dock high, 4 drive-in loading 175'-180' building depth 50' x 60' column spacing
Zoning	Non-Residential Primary Employment (N-PE)

Project Description

1660 South Fordham Street is a Class A, 97,500 square foot flex industrial building in southwest Longmont at the Longmont Business Center. The building is currently under construction and is expected to be ready for tenants by early 2022.

The project is a high-bay facility with 24-foot clear heights and will have 16 dock high loading areas and 4 drive-in doors. The project includes 175 surface parking spaces. The development offers front parking and rear loading, with 10 percent office planned built to suit depending on tenant needs.

According to the developer, this project addresses pent up demand for this type of industrial flex product primarily due to the impact of the COVID pandemic and the “last mile” delivery that has become more needed due to the increase in e-commerce.

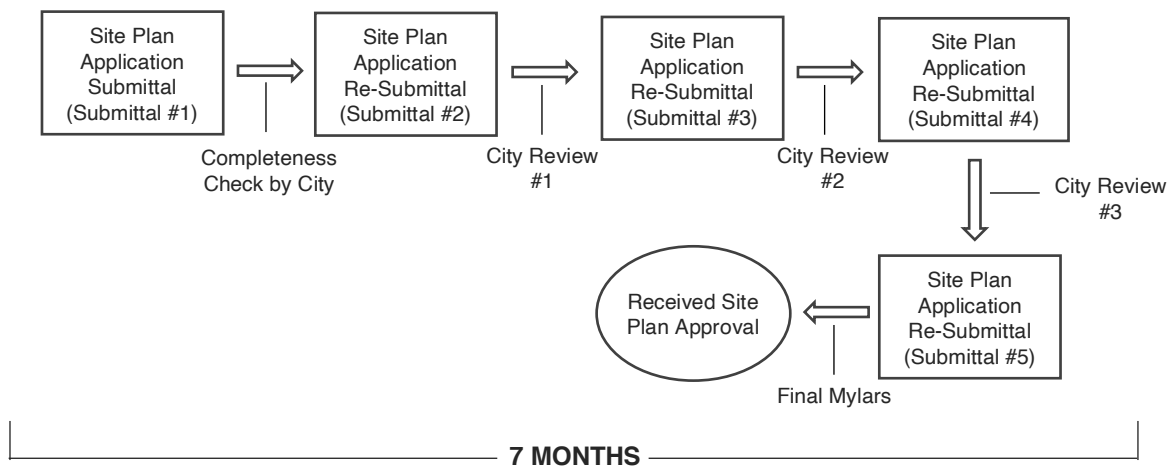
Entitlement / Development Review Process

The development review process for the project was an administrative (staff-level approval) process that included a site plan development application to allow construction of the industrial building and associated site improvements. The site plan application was a minor development application pursuant to the City Land Development Code which means only staff level approval is required. In addition, the applicant requested and was approved for three administrative modifications for landscaping, access, and exterior elevations. The minor development application did not require approval by Longmont Planning and Zoning Commission and Longmont City Council.

The site is located within the Longmont Business Park and is subject to Nonresidential Primary Employment (N-PE) zoning district and the mixed-use and nonresidential design standards of the Longmont Land Development Code.

The timeline from when the initial site plan application was first submitted to the City by the applicant to when the project received final site plan approval was approximately 7 months. The applicant went through four (4) rounds of development review, including initial application completeness check, by City development review staff. A total of 5 application (re)submittals were needed. This extended number of reviews prolonged the development review process. According to the applicant, the City development review process was fairly straightforward with no major issues. The applicant appreciated the City's electronic review process.

1660 S. Fordham Industrial - Development Review Process



While the development review process was fairly straightforward, one of the challenges identified by the applicant was that there were no *specific industrial design standards* that would apply for this industrial use.

The project was subject to Section 15.05-120 *mixed-use and nonresidential design standards* of the Longmont Land Development Code. These design standards apply to a wide range of commercial buildings, such as office, warehouse, flex, manufacturing, and other commercial uses, each which have different building articulation, uses, architectural design, and building materials that may be used. The mixed-use and nonresidential design standards can often involve a higher level of architecture and landscape design and other requirements that may be appropriate for an office building but can be cost prohibitive and may not be appropriate for an industrial building that may not need this higher level of design where lower industrial rents (when compared to office rents) may not justify that added cost and could impact project financial viability.

The applicant requested and received approval for minor modifications to the landscape code and building façade. For example, the nonresidential design standards stipulate that the primary building material for building façades can only be brick, natural stone, and stucco, which, as noted above, can be costly and not consistent with materials more commonly found in industrial-type buildings.

The applicant requested a modification to this standard to permit the use of a textured paint over concrete that closely matched the texture of stucco, steel canopies, aluminum storefront window framing, and insulated glazing. According to the applicant, this request utilizes many industry-standard design features for an office-warehouse industrial product of this type and scale to maximize structural and interior use efficiency while still putting forth an attractive exterior design. The modification request was approved by staff where they noted that the proposed request meets the review criteria in that this is an industrial building designed to be a “flex space.”

Other challenges and comments identified by the applicant include the following:

- Prolonged review period for each application (re)submittals (e.g., 7 weeks to get the first round of comments back, including 1 week for application completeness check). Ensuring adequate staff capacity in the development review process could shorten these review timelines.
- Having to prepare two separate infrastructure improvements construction plan sets – one for the site plan application and the other for the public improvement plans (PIPs). It was identified that it would be more efficient and cost effective to have one set of infrastructure improvement construction documents.
- Proposed off-site infrastructure and streetscape improvements and costs along South Fordham Street associated with enhanced multi-use corridor requirements. The applicant was able to work with the city to address these proposed improvements, but this added time and cost to the project.
- Permanent stormwater control and water quality system design requirements were unclear for the project which added additional development review time and increased design and construction costs for the final approved stormwater design. Having a clear standard of an approved design for permanent stormwater control could help reduce review timelines and provide a predictable process for the applicant to follow when designing for the permanent stormwater control and water quality system.
- Ensure that development review comments are consistent with the City’s design and development standards identified in the Land Development Code.

1875 Taylor Avenue at Colorado Technology Center (Louisville)



Source: Colliers International, Silverpoint Development

Project Overview

Project Name	1875 Taylor Avenue at Colorado Technology Center
Location	1875 Taylor Avenue, Louisville CO 80027
Developer	Silverpoint Development
Status	Under Construction
Development Program	83,615 sq. ft. ground floor industrial / flex space / R&D 267 parking spaces (3.2 spaces / 1,000 sq. ft.)
Site Size	6.81 acres
Development Features	24-foot clear height One (1) – 12'-14' drive in loading Twenty-two (22) – 9'x10' dock high loading 161' building depth
Zoning	Planned Community Industrial (P-I)

Project Description

1875 Taylor Avenue is a Class A, 83,615 square foot flex industrial / flex / R&D building located in the Colorado Technology Center (CTC) in Louisville, Colorado. CTC is Louisville's largest commercial and industrial park at over 400 acres that includes nearly 5 million square feet of space developed. 1875 Taylor Avenue is currently under construction and is expected to be ready for tenants in 2022.

Like 1660 S. Fordham, the project is a high-bay facility with 24-foot clear heights. The development will have 22 dock high loading areas and 1 drive-in loading. The project includes 267 surface parking spaces distributed on all sides of the building. The development offers front parking and rear loading.

The building construction for 1875 Taylor Avenue mainly consists of tilt up concrete panels. The building includes canopies, concrete screen walls, vertical panels, and two wood trellises to highlight building entries and create visual interest. Building materials and architectural treatments include the use of concrete form-liners, wood siding, architectural metal panels, and fiber cement board siding.

Entitlement / Development Review Process

The development review process for the project was a 2-step process – (1) rezoning of the property to permit industrial uses (General Development Plan Amendment), and (2) Final Planned Unit Development (PUD) and minor subdivision plat to allow construction of the industrial building and associated site improvements.

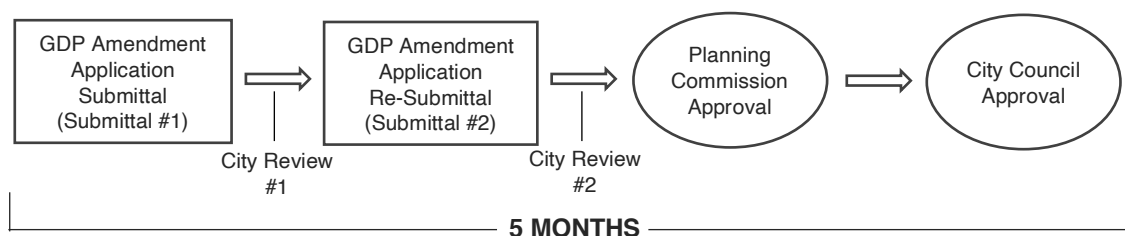
General Development Plan (GDP) Amendment Development Review Process

The first step was an amendment to the General Development Plan to rezone the property from Planned Community Zone-Commercial (PCZ-C) to Planning Community Zone-Industrial (PCZ-I). The primary purpose of this rezoning was to align the allowed uses proposed for the site (industrial, flex, R&D) with those allowed on the property surrounding the site and to be responsive to market demand for industrial development which was in high demand.

The initial development concept for the site was zoned to provide commercial / retail uses and previous applicants in the area demonstrated that the market for commercial / retail uses in the CTC is limited. The area had changed with new industrial development within CTC, and industrial uses on the subject property were deemed suitable and appropriate for this development. Staff supported the application to rezone the property, and it was approved by the Louisville Planning Commission and Louisville City Council. Per the City's development review process, rezoning applications require Louisville Planning Commission and Louisville City Council action for approval.

The GDP Amendment process entailed two (2) reviews by City staff. Louisville City staff found the application met the purpose and intent of the Planned Community Zone District of the Louisville Municipal Code and recommended approval of the GDP amendment for the site. The Planning Commission and City Council approved the development application to rezone the property to PCZ-I and permit industrial uses. The entire process for GDP amendment approval took approximately 5 months.

General Development Plan (GDP) Amendment - Development Review Process



Final Planned Unit Development (PUD) / Minor Subdivision Plat Development Review Process

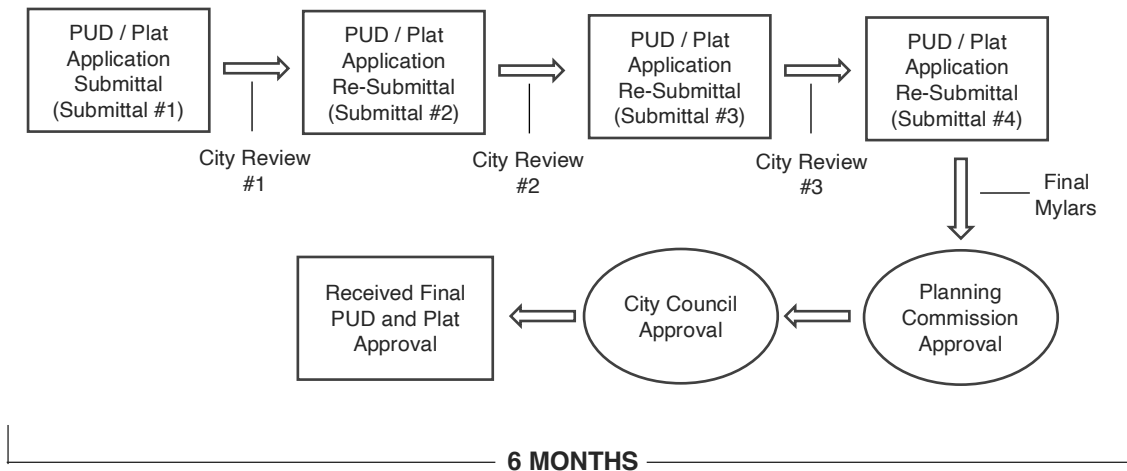
The second and final step in the process required a development application for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) and Minor Subdivision Plat to consolidate two lots into one lot to permit construction of the industrial flex building and associated site improvements.

The site was subject to the Commercial Development Design Standards and Guidelines (CDDSG) and Planned Community Zone-Industrial of the Louisville Municipal Code. The applicant went through three (3) rounds of review by City staff that resulted in minor changes to the initial PUD application and minor subdivision plat. After final staff review, the project was recommended for approval by staff as it met the PUD requirements in terms of site planning, vehicular circulation and parking, pedestrian and bicycle circulation, architectural design, landscape design, screen walls and fences, and exterior site lighting. The applicant requested and received approval for one waiver request to permit carport parking roughly 11 feet from the property line. The applicant

added additional landscaping and buffering through shrubs, as well as, a retaining wall to mitigate the impact of waiver the request. The Final PUD and minor subdivision plat were approved by the Louisville Planning Commission and the Louisville City Council.

The timeline from when the full set of PUD and minor subdivision plat documents were first submitted to the City by the applicant to when the project received final approval from the Louisville City Council was roughly 6 months.

Final Planned Unit Development (PUD) / Minor Subdivision Plat - Development Review Process



Overall, the applicant reported that there were no major issues in the development review process. According to the applicant, the following highlights key aspects of the development review and approval process for 1875 Taylor Avenue:

- City's development review process was straightforward, predictable, and clear.
- Staff was responsive to the applicant's comments and changes to the PUD and minor subdivision plat.
- Lead City staff planner was key to success for the project – provided clear direction and collated all comments from the various departments involved in the development review process which was important in terms of a coordinated response from the city.
- One issue that had to be resolved was related to the commercial design guidelines along the Highway 42 corridor. The applicant had to provide elevated architectural elements for the building along Highway 42 which added cost to the project.

Key Takeaways of the Comparative Entitlement / Development Review Process Assessment

Land entitlement, in general, is a legal process that involves gaining approval from the local government for a development plan or project. Local governments review proposed developments to ensure they meet community needs and design standards, including citizen safety and high-quality buildings and public infrastructure. The entitlement process can be a challenging process with risk for setbacks and even failure if the project is not approved. During this process, the developer needs to invest significant money before any revenue can potentially be gained once the project is completed and tenants or residents begin occupying the site.

While each municipality can have a different development review process, this comparative analysis of the entitlement process provides a snapshot of the similarities and differences in the development review process for a downtown multifamily project (Longmont and Loveland) and an industrial / flex project (Longmont and Louisville) with the objective of identifying potential tactical strategies that could be applied to Longmont's review process to strengthen partnerships between public and private sectors.

Key takeaways of the Longmont and Loveland downtown multifamily projects comparative analysis include:

- Both multifamily projects were public-private partnerships where the municipalities and other public partners contributed funds towards the project. In the case of the Patina Flats / Foundry project in Loveland, the City of Loveland purchased the land and contributed the land at no cost to the development team, waived certain taxes and fees for the development and paid for public improvements for the project, including a parking garage to serve the site. For the Spoke on Coffman project in Longmont, the project received land contributed by the GID, Boulder County and RLET Properties for the parking garage, LDDA funding toward a portion of the parking garage cost, and rebates/credits for certain development fees through the LDDA's Downtown Incentive Program.
- The Patina Flats project in Loveland had an "expedited development process" as it was identified as a high priority project for the city. The project took 8 months to receive development approval from when the development team was selected by the City to when the project broke ground after receiving City Council approval. By comparison, the Spoke on Coffman affordable housing project took 15 months to receive site plan approval. It doesn't appear that the Spoke on Coffman received expedited development review as that incentive was not available for affordable housing.
- The Patina Flats project in Loveland was required to receive City Council approval for its site plan development application because of the project size in a downtown location. The Spoke on Coffman site plan development application was an administrative process that needed only staff level approval. No City Council or Planning Commission approval was required for the Spoke on Coffman.
- Both the projects had dedicated lead planners from the municipal development review team who were identified by the applicant as key to shepherding the project through the development review process.
- A key to success for Patina Flats project in Loveland was the multiple standing Concept Review meetings between City Development Review Team and applicant development team prior to the full site plan application submittal. This collaborative partnership allowed the applicant to discuss issues and find solutions in partnership with the City review team. This helped the developer fine tune their site plan submittal to minimize the number of City reviews (3) of the site plan application.
- Another key point of success identified by the applicant and municipality for the Patina Flats project was the flexible and iterative development review process (applying and interpreting zoning and design standards) and quick response times required by the municipality (staff had a 2-week turnaround for each City review of (re)submittal to get comments back to the applicant).

- The Spoke on Coffman had challenges associated with unclear direction on stormwater water quality design standards which added time and cost to the project as the current 2007 adopted standards do not address water quality.

Key takeaways of the Longmont and Louisville industrial / flex projects comparative analysis include:

- The industrial / flex project at 1660 South Fordham in Longmont was an administrative staff-level only approval process for the site plan application. The industrial / flex project at 1875 Taylor in Louisville required Planning Commission and City Council approval to rezone the property prior to the staff-level site plan approval process.
- The 1875 Taylor project in Louisville was subject to specific design standards for the PUD / industrial zoning while the 1660 South Fordham project in Longmont was subject to the *mixed use and nonresidential design standards* that apply to all types of commercial uses (e.g., office, industrial, retail). Because of this singular nonresidential design standard, the Longmont project applicant requested a modification to the standards in terms of landscaping, access and building elevations to align with the industrial character of the site and building.
- The applicants in Longmont and Louisville identified that the development review processes for their projects were fairly predictable with no major issues identified. In Louisville the applicant had to add some elevated architectural elements to comply with the commercial design guidelines in the industrial area which added cost to the project. In Longmont, the applicant had to work through unclear directions on how to design the permanent stormwater control and water quality systems which added cost and time to the project.
- One of the key observations from interviews with the project applicants on the municipal development review process was the importance of being transparent, responsive, clear, straightforward on what the issues may be and finding solutions with the applicant and coordinating internal department comments so that there were not any conflicting comments in the application (re)submittals.
- In terms of the process, 1660 South Fordham in Longmont needed 5 application (re)submittals and 7 months for site plan approval compared to 4 application (re)submittals and 6 months total for site plan and minor subdivision plat approval for 1875 Taylor in Louisville. The Louisville project also required an additional 5 months to receive Planning Commission and City Council approval to rezone the property for industrial uses as part of a General Development Plan amendment.

ENTITLEMENT PROCESS KEY TAKEAWAYS AND TACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Development Strategy Sessions

In September 2021, two virtual development strategy sessions were held to convene representatives from the development, construction, and professional services industry to solicit feedback and input into Longmont's entitlement process and what recommendations they may have to improve the process to meet community and development goals and objectives and strengthen the partnership with the City of Longmont and economic development partners.²

The participants in these sessions included developers who have built commercial and residential projects in Longmont, general contractors, and professional services consultants, such as architects, designers, engineers, brokers, and entitlement consultants, who have worked on behalf of developers, businesses or property owners to process site plan development applications for projects in Longmont.

In addition to the discussions with participants from the two virtual development strategy sessions, additional insight into Longmont's entitlement and development review process was provided through interviews with development and municipal representatives as part of the comparative analysis of project entitlement processes, as well as, through the abandoned projects analysis. These interviewees also provided commentary on best practices in the entitlement and development review process in other communities in the region that could be applicable to Longmont.

Summary Observations

What's Working Well in Longmont

One of the key themes identified throughout this analysis and discussions with both development and municipal staff is the need for increased communication, collaboration, and cooperation between public and private sector parties. Land development is a complex process that involves strong partnerships between the public and private sectors to be successful. Continuing to build on a collaborative culture with the community and across municipal departments will strengthen this partnership.

In terms of what's working well in Longmont, key observations of the development review and entitlement process by study participants and interviewees include the following comments:

- Development review staff is helpful and has done a pretty good job overall in terms of communication and responsiveness.
- Great, friendly people working in the city.
- Pre-application meetings are a good thing to get all the city departments involved in the process to receive feedback on the proposed development concept.
- Electronic submittal process is a positive process that reduces hard copy submittals, but it is not particularly user-friendly and can be hard to navigate.
- Once the project is approved and under construction, the inspection process is pretty smooth.
- "We had an instance where a planning staff member came down to Denver to visit our project to get a better understanding of what we were proposing in Longmont. That was a very exceptional thing to do that we haven't seen too many times in other jurisdictions."
- Access and discussion with development review staff is good – it's the *process* that's challenging.

² Please note that the above tasks focus *primarily* on the Land Development Code / entitlement approval process vs. the actual construction / building permit approval process. Most cities, including Longmont, follow the International Building Code (IBC) process so there is not much variation between cities if they are using the same IBC year adopted (and very limited flexibility to build not to code).

What are some of the Entitlement Challenges and Potential Tactical Strategies to Address these Challenges and Meet Best Practices?

Overall, one of the key takeaways that emerged from the virtual development strategy sessions and interviews with development professionals is related to the entitlement *process itself* – the intensive development application submittal process, submittal requirements and overall length of time it takes for development projects to get approved to be developed for a certain use. There is significant risk involved if the property can't be developed for the applicant's intended use, or major redesign is needed to garner project approvals which can impact project costs and financial viability. This entitlement risk is not only an issue for Longmont but has been identified by many as a challenge in other Front Range communities and throughout the nation.

Having a predictable and transparent development review process ensures a smooth process that helps increase efficiency for both the private sector (development applicant) and municipality (review and decision-making body). This predictability and transparency reduce risk to the applicant and is vital to having a business-friendly development climate that makes it attractive for investment to occur in the community.

The following outlines challenges identified in the land entitlement process. These observed challenges are based on discussions with developers, property and business owners, builders, professional services consultants (e.g., architects, engineers, entitlement consultants), and municipal development staff involved in the development review process, key takeaways from the developer and construction and professional services strategy sessions, and best practices identified in other communities. Potential tactical strategies and recommendations for consideration to address these challenges are provided.

Observed Challenge	Potential Tactical Strategy
The lengthy entitlement process often requires financial flexibility and carries risk for the development applicant due to significant carrying costs for extended periods of time and potential for the project to not be approved, significantly redesigned, or abandoned.	Ensure adequate development review staffing capacity which can shorten development review timelines to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide timely and responsive development application responses within the review timelines as outlined in the Development Handbook.• Respond to increase in number of requested pre-application meetings.• Handle any high priority development review processes and minimize impact to other projects going through the development review process.• Meet with applicants more frequently to collaboratively problem solve and find solutions.• Incorporate ability in the development review process to communicate with applicants at an informal level to provide updates if something is missing or address small or isolated issues without having application needed to be rerouted through the formal process again.• Ensure applicant is responsive with addressing resubmittal comments in a timely manner.• Explore bringing in-house development review components, which may have been outsourced to third parties, such as a licensed landscape architect dedicated to development review and inspections. This could help save costs to the municipality.

The length of time it takes in the development review process for a project to receive approval has been identified as one of the key challenges in the entitlement process. This entitlement risk has been identified in many communities throughout Colorado and the nation.

Observed Challenge	Potential Tactical Strategy
<p>The desire to reduce the number of development application review cycles and application resubmittals. Many development applications have multiple resubmittals, including redesigns and need for variances, modifications, or exceptions, which can extend the process resulting in increased time and costs for both the applicant and the municipality (additional staff time to review).</p>	<p>Explore potential high-level Conceptual Review process. Prior to submitting a formal development application explore use of a high-level informal conceptual review process between the applicant and development review staff that could include the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant submits brief application to development review staff describing the proposed project and a drawing/sketch of the proposed development. • Development review staff review applicant's application and provide initial comments within two (2) weeks of application submittal. • Applicant and development review staff meet, as needed, to discuss any issues, identify solutions, and receive clarification. • If needed, the applicant submits revised plans for development review for a second time and goes through another high-level review. If the project looks good, a pre-application checklist is provided to the applicant so they may begin the formal development application process. <p>The goal of this high-level concept review process is for development review staff to provide big picture comments quickly to the applicant outside the formal development review process to address any issues that may make the project difficult to move forward or require variances, modifications, or exceptions. This process may save time (e.g., reduced number of formal application (re)submittals) and cost for both the applicant and development review staff.</p>
<p>The applicant's development applications not incorporating, or adequately addressing comments, made by municipal development review staff. This can lead to multiple application resubmittals by development applicants to address comments provided by municipal development review staff and extend the development review cycle process.</p>	<p>Ensure development applicants have quality control measures in place to check that responses prepared by their consultant team address staff development review comments prior to formal (re)submittals. This will help minimize the number of resubmittals which can reduce cost and save time.</p>
<p>Selected design and development standards within the Land Development Code not in alignment to support infill and redevelopment. As the Longmont community is nearing build out, the "inward" focus in the form of infill and redevelopment will continue to take a more prominent role in the land development process.</p>	<p>Continue to update and refine the Land Development Code to provide design and development standards supportive of infill and redevelopment to better align with the Envision Longmont comprehensive plan and other adopted plans.</p>

Observed Challenge	Potential Tactical Strategy
<p>Examples of potential updates to the Land Development Code to support more urban infill development include landscaping, drainage / water quality, setbacks, and sharing of utility easements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulate an internal development review process to capture lessons learned annually related to potential Land Development Code updates to reflect changing community needs and market opportunities. • Review and update as necessary land development code standards associated with landscaping, drainage/water quality, setbacks, utility easements, etc. to support a more urban form and design standards. • Have flexibility when applying zoning and development standards to ensure those regulations are well aligned with the end result and are forward thinking.
<p>Current adopted 2007 <i>Public Improvement Design Standards and Construction Specifications</i> do not address current best practices, incorporate new statutory requirements, or may not be sufficiently aligned with Envision Longmont. This can lead to unclear direction for how the development applicant can best comply with municipal requirements and best practices that are not in the current 2007 adopted standards (e.g., stormwater water quality) which can potentially add additional review times and costs to the project.</p>	<p>Seek adoption of updated 2021 <i>Public Improvement Design Standards and Construction Specifications</i> to bring the standards and specifications in line with current industry standards, federal and state regulations as well as comply with Envision Longmont Comprehensive Plan, City of Longmont Land Development Code, and City Sustainability Plan.</p> <p>This will provide clarity for staff comments and applicant responses to comply with adopted standards as part of the development application process.</p>
<p>Ensure that identified “high priority” projects that meet community and economic development objectives have a coordinated and prioritized development review process.</p> <p>These can include high priority projects such as affordable housing, economic development projects, public-private partnership projects, and redevelopment opportunity sites which may take precedence over other projects in the development review system upon evaluation of current project loads and schedules.</p>	<p>Explore formalization of a “priority review” process for identified high priority projects with Project Development Administrator / Ombudsman with decision-making authority to shepherd the development application through the development review process, resolve issues and find solutions is vital to meet project timelines and development and community objectives.</p> <p>The process could include the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide for pre-submittal "Concept Review" standing meetings between applicant and development review staff to fine tune the application to minimize comments once full development application is submitted • Limited number of development application reviews (3 reviews or less is ideal) • For each review, the municipality development review team has an accelerated turnaround time to send comments back to the applicant.

Observed Challenge	Potential Tactical Strategy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipality has a Project Administrator / Ombudsman who serves as the master coordinator / single point of contact for the applicant. • Project Administrator / Ombudsman handles any internal conflicts between Municipal departments on the development application to get them resolved before meeting with the developer <p>See Exhibit A for more details on this potential High Priority Review process.</p>
<p>Singular <i>mixed use and nonresidential design standards</i> is currently applied to a wide range of commercial buildings, such as office, retail, and industrial projects, each which have different building articulation, uses, architectural design, and building materials.</p> <p>This singular commercial standard results in potential requests for variances, modifications and exceptions to the standards which can increase cost and time for the development applicant. For example, applying office design standards to an industrial building can be cost prohibitive and may not be appropriate for an industrial building that may not need this higher level of design where lower industrial rents may not justify that added cost and could impact project financial viability.</p>	<p>Consider having separate mixed use and nonresidential design standards by product type. Different commercial product types, such as office, retail, flex, industrial, warehouse, etc., each can have different building articulation, uses, architectural design, and building materials.</p> <p>Creating separate design standards by commercial product type could simplify the development review process, reduce comments, and potentially limit the need for exceptions to standards, modifications, or variances depending on the application and what is proposed.</p>
<p>Request to submit to one set of public improvement plans as part of the development application. Often development applicants must submit separate public improvement plan (PIP) and site plan construction plan that often include the same designed infrastructure improvements related to water, wastewater, street, storm drainage, landscaping, irrigation, utilities, etc. Having to produce separate plans can add extra design and engineering costs and additional time to the project.</p>	<p>Consider combining required public improvement (PIP) and site plan construction sheets into one plan set which would help streamline the required application submittal plans resulting in cost and time savings.</p>
<p>Request for ability to submit <i>preliminary</i> plans and reports, such as drainage and stormwater plans, instead of <i>final</i> plans, with <u>first</u> application submittal and ability to defer other required plans to be submitted later in the review process as the site plan and building layout is finalized.</p> <p>The required application reports and plans to support the development application for the first submittal can be lengthy and may change as the site plan is finalized. For example, requiring the submittal of a</p>	<p>Explore potential to reduce number and level of detail of development plans and reports to be submitted with <u>first</u> development application submittal.</p> <p>For example, this could include submitting <i>preliminary</i> plans (e.g., drainage, stormwater control) with the initial submittal versus <i>final</i> plans as these plans may change as the site plan goes through the development review process and changes are made to the site plan and building layouts. Also consider</p>

Observed Challenge	Potential Tactical Strategy
<p><i>Final Drainage Report and Stormwater Pollution Control Construction Drawings</i> with the first submittal can add time and cost to the project as these plans may need to be revised as the application goes through the development review cycle and changes to the site plan and building layouts may require changes to these corresponding plans and reports as well.</p>	<p>permitting required landscape plans and photometric plans to be submitted <i>after</i> the first application submittal and not until the site plan and building layout have been determined after development review. This could help save time and costs.</p>
<p>Desire for tactical Development Review Teams with focused specializations to help streamline the process and save time and costs for both the applicant and municipality.</p>	<p>Explore potential for municipal Tactical Development Review teams that specialize in key priority areas of the community (e.g., downtown, redevelopment areas) and product types (e.g., industrial, multifamily) that could provide a strategic and responsive development review process.</p> <p>Having a focused development review process with staff with specialized expertise and knowledge could save time and cost for both the development applicant and the municipality.</p>
<p>Need/desire to better integrate LDDA and LEDP in the development review process for projects that address LEDP and LDDA goals and objectives.</p>	<p>Provide increased opportunities for LDDA and LEDP to be more integrated into the development review process for projects that advance the LEDP <i>Advance Longmont 2.0</i> and the LDDA <i>Downtown Master Plan of Development</i> goals and objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure designation of development review staff persons to serve as liaisons to LEDP and LDDA to keep them in the loop on submitted development applications that address LEDP and LDDA goals and objectives. • Maintain strong lines of communication between municipal development review and LEDP and LDDA, and regularly update organizations on status of applications and any issues that arise. • Include LEDP and LDDA as a referral agency for identified key downtown and economic development projects to provide opportunities to comment on development applications as needed to address issues and find solutions.
<p>Desire to learn from other communities and what's working well for them (and not working so well) in the development review process and seeing if some recommendations could be applied to the Longmont entitlement process.</p>	<p>Explore best practices associated with the development review processes from other communities to streamline the development review process and strengthen public and private collaboration. This could include providing ongoing training and professional development opportunities and mentorship to empower staff and implement creative problem-solving solutions to advance public and private sector goals and objectives.</p>

Observed Challenge	Potential Tactical Strategy
<p>Desire to strengthen coordination among department review comments in the development review process to reduce conflicting and repeated review comments. This can lead to confusion on how applicant should respond to the comments resulting in increased time and cost.</p> <p>Examples of comments identified by applicants that are sometimes conflicting include: not related to constructability, not a city design requirement or on current checklist, perceived reviewer preferences, not required per city standards, and new comments introduced that based on issues that were previously agreed upon and addressed with staff in previous submittals.</p>	<p>Explore use of quality control measures and ensure alignment across the various departments and referral agencies involved in the development review process.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for development review staff managers to coordinate internal staff comments, address any conflicting comments, and conduct final review of development application comments to check for conflicting and repeated comments before sending to applicant. Also reference section of the Land Development Code for comments required by code to provide clarity to the development applicant.</p> <p>This could reduce the number of applicant resubmittals and shorten development review timelines.</p>
<p>Need for clarity on exceptions to city standards, administrative modifications, and variances as part of the development application process on what constitutes a request for an exception to city standards (public improvement design standards and construction specifications), administrative modifications, or variances and if one is required and what would be acceptable can add uncertainty (increased risk), time and cost to a project.</p>	<p>Seek clarity on request for exception, administrative modification, or variance prior to formal application submittal <u>early in the process</u> to see if one may be required by addressing up front with the development review staff prior to formal development application submittal.</p>
<p>Development application submittal requirements can be very lengthy and overly burdensome for <u>smaller projects</u>, including some site plans, subdivision plats, administrative modifications, and temporary uses.</p>	<p>Explore setting up a separate development review process to streamline the process for smaller projects. Consider streamlining the process with designated development review staff for smaller projects that may not require the same application materials or similar review timelines as larger development applications. This could help reduce the number of development applications in review which can help free up staff capacity.</p>
<p>Municipal electronic submittal and plan review process for development applications can be a challenge for users in terms of ease of use and navigating the system (e.g., document submittal formats and review commenting process).</p> <p>The electronic document review process has improved efficiency and can be a time and cost saver (e.g., no need for multiple paper copy submittals) and allows staff to share and review electronic documents across departments. However, it has been commented that the electronic document</p>	<p>Continue to explore options to refine and update the electronic document submittal and plan review process to be more user friendly, intuitive, and streamlined for both the development applicant and municipal development review staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve visibility via City Development Process website on how users can access the on-line submittal process portal to create accounts, pay fees, submit development applications, and track application processing status.

Observed Challenge	Potential Tactical Strategy
<p>submittal process can be challenging in terms of ease of use, such as providing documents in required PDF formats, document commenting process, and potential for errors to be generated which can make the process challenging to navigate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update user guides that provide detailed instructions and tips for the on-line submittal process for site plans, plats, and other development applications (e.g., how to submit applications in appropriate Adobe PDF formats, how to comment within the PDF documents). • Explore engaging consulting services with specialized expertise in electronic document review platforms as needed to assist in providing user-friendly interfaces and technical assistance. • Highlight processing status of development applications with estimated completion dates, assigned development review staff, and open issues identified.

Exhibit A

Potential Development Review Process for High Priority Projects

Note: modeled in part based on the City of Loveland expedited development review process for high priority projects such as the Foundry project and development review best practices identified in other municipalities.

Key Components for Success

- Standing Concept Review meetings between Development Review Team and the development team held every 2 weeks to discuss issues and find solutions
 - Meetings focused generally on specific topics of issue (e.g., stormwater, utilities, design)
 - Entire Municipal Development Review Committee (Planning, Public Works, Transportation, Fire, Building, Water/Wastewater, Power, Stormwater, Parks, Police, etc.) participate in the standing meetings so everyone could hear the same information
- Municipality has adequate staffing capacity to handle expedited process and development review turnaround times and minimize impact to other projects going through the development review process
- All Municipal departments integrated into the Development Review process -- make known that this project is a high priority for the community
- Began holding these "Concept Review" standing meetings at least 6 months prior to developer submitting initial site plan application so developer can fine tune the application and minimize comments (and re-submittals) once full development application is submitted
- Limited number of development application reviews (3 reviews or less is ideal)
- For each review, the Municipality Development Review Team have a 2-week turnaround time each time to send comments back to the applicant
 - Provide clarity on staff comments by referencing section of the Code if required by Code
 - Have Lead Planner read all staff comments to check for conflicting and repeated comments, and revise as necessary, before sending out to the applicant
- Municipality has a Lead Planner/Ombudsman who serves as the Development Review Master Coordinator / Single Point of Contact for the high priority project (this is very important and was the key to success from the Municipality and developer perspective for the Loveland project)
 - Lead Planner involved in permitting and inspections (which is atypical) to make sure the process is running smoothly and help resolve any issues as they arise
 - Lead Planner handles any internal conflicts between Municipal departments on the development application to get them resolved before meeting with the developer
 - Key to resolving conflicts among Municipal departments was listening to all perspectives, hearing alternatives, presenting ideas and being open minded
 - Key was Lead Planner having strong knowledge base of overall development objectives (the ultimate vision for the area per Downtown Master Plan or other sub area plan) and relationships with different interests (Downtown Development Authority, Urban Renewal Authority, Economic Development group, etc.) to ensure vision is being implemented