

**TOWN OF LYONS
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
(TOLEDC)**

INTERIM REPORT TO BOARD OF TRUSTEES



“A clear and precise difference must be defined by the Board of Trustees as to what is considered ‘spending’ and what is considered ‘investing’. It will be a critical decision and the outcome will play a major role in whether or not the town takes steps in solving its economic issues.”

-EDC-

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I would like to thank the members of the Economic Development Council who spent many hours working together to help prepare this document. The hard work has resulted in an interim report that will assist the Board of Trustees in setting the economic direction for the Town of Lyons. I would like to give special thanks to Read Spear and John Burke for their support and outstanding contribution to this document.

Howard Armstrong
10/9/2008

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INTRODUCTION

Functioning as a group the 33 member Economic Development Council defined its vision, mission and objectives to closely reflect the current situation and needs of the community. In addition, the group felt it important to identify the global key issues affecting the Town of Lyons. The challenge for the subcommittees was then to develop individual plans that parallel and support the EDC vision and mission statements.

EDC Vision Statement

By the end of 2008, the Town of Lyons will have laid the foundation to become economically and environmentally sustainable through the approval of the steps proposed herein by the Board of Trustees and the implementation of those steps by year end 2010.

EDC Mission Statement

The Town of Lyons will become economically and environmentally sustainable by developing and implementing a business plan that was created by the EDC, adopted by the Town Board of Trustees, the PCDC and supported by the public at large. The Plan focuses on the assets and character of the town and is based upon sound, concise, realistic, time sensitive ideas, with creative and new marketing concepts.

EDC Objectives

1. All EDC ideas and business and marketing concepts will contribute directly or indirectly to the objective of increasing the town's current sales tax base which represents the revenue stream for the Town of Lyons.
2. Introduce marketing concepts and commercial and residential growth opportunities that balance the town's desire to achieve growth objectives while maintaining current quality of life issues that are highly desirable by town residents.
3. All EDC ideas and business and marketing concepts will address the town's desire to maintain and expand its responsibility to the environment and long term objective of becoming environmentally sustainable.
4. The EDC will achieve its revenue, economic, and environmental goals by conducting an open public process and soliciting public input and participation by a representative cross section of town and local residents.
5. The EDC will submit the final planning document to the Board of Trustees on or around 12/31/08.

Section I - PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the interim report is to bring the Board of Trustees up to date on the activities of the Economic Development Council. The report is presented in a business plan format (with informal comments and notes where appropriate). The plans developed to date are a “work in process” and changes in the plan will most likely occur as the planning process continues.

The EDC encourages the Board to review the report in detail, offer suggestions for improvement and provide guidance to the EDC on both the structure and content of the Plan. The EDC also request that the Board of Trustees to provide input on the details of the report and whether or not it meets objectives of the Board.

Please keep in mind the content of this report was generated by volunteers from the community at large and prepared at no cost to the town.

BACKGROUND

The Economic Development Council (EDC) was formally sanctioned by the Lyons Board of Trustees by Resolution on May 19, 2008. The EDC was formed with the objective to develop and implement an economic development business plan for the Town of Lyons. The Plan will focus on those objectives that will build the foundation on which the town can address critical economic issues and support the vision of the town becoming economically and environmentally sustainable.

The EDC was formed by public notice with the objective of attracting participation from a cross section of residents in the town and surrounding communities. The Council currently has 39 active members. The Council originally established eight (8) subcommittees but was later consolidated to six (6). The current subcommittees are:

- Marketing and Downtown Business Development
- Eastern Corridor/Annexation and IGA Review
- Historical/Arts/Parks & Open Space
- Information Technology
- Funding, Incentives and Grants
- Town Hall Project Review

The Council anticipates a continued consolidation of subcommittees as the planning process continues and as individual plans are consolidated into one plan. The EDC held its first group meeting on May 15, 2008. The subcommittee’s meet on an as needed basis and report to the general membership on a monthly basis.

The EDC has used a web based software application, the brand name of which is BaseCamp™, and which is colloquially referred to as TOLDEC (Town of Lyons Economic Development Council) as a means of communication.

The use of the ‘TOLDEC’ collaboration software has allowed the group to be very efficient and effective in sharing group and subcommittee scheduling, posting messages, setting milestones, uploading documents, and sharing of ideas in general. The communication channel provides the ability to communicate among subcommittee members alone or with the general membership. The TOLDEC process has served as a means of communication for subcommittees when onsite meetings could not be scheduled.

This report achieves a milestone in the planning process and the EDC membership is encouraged with the progress that has been made to date.

PLANNING PROCESS

The EDC agreed the most efficient approach to achieving its ultimate goal would be to have each subcommittee follow a specific planning template. The objective is to “roll up” each subcommittee’s individual plans into one consolidated EDC planning document.

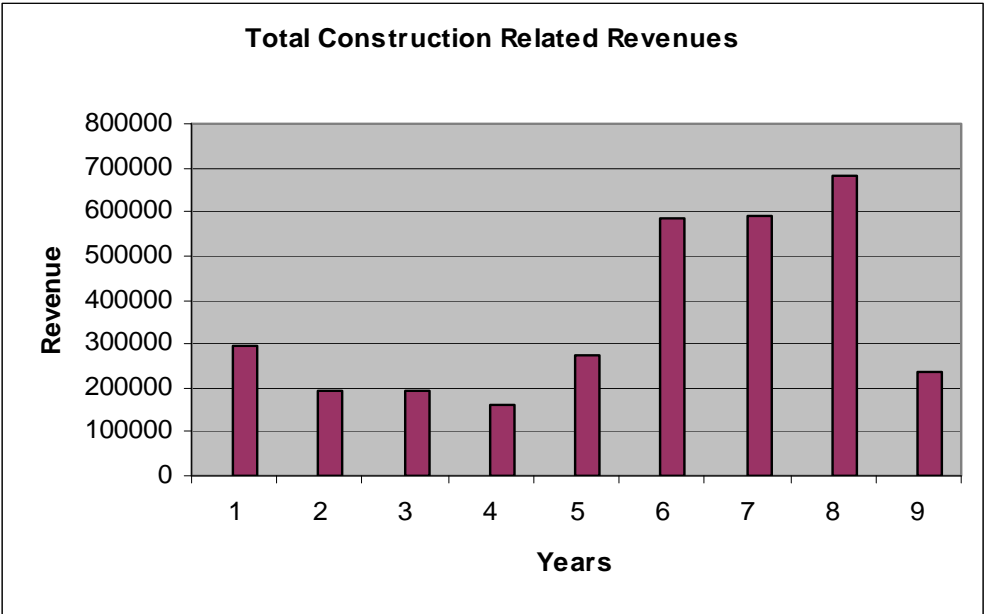
The EDC agreed on a vision and mission statement along with a set of objectives that will be used as the foundation to build the final planning document. Each subcommittee was given the direction to establish a mission statement and objectives that would parallel and support the EDC. The EDC agreed the primary goal would be to develop a final planning document that is based in reality with a focus on identifying objectives that can be realistically implemented in the short to medium term (1 to 5 years).

Public input has been limited to EDC members and the feedback they may have received from residents of the town and surrounding communities. The EDC has discussed various options to solicit public input and the public input component will play a key role in preparation of the final document.

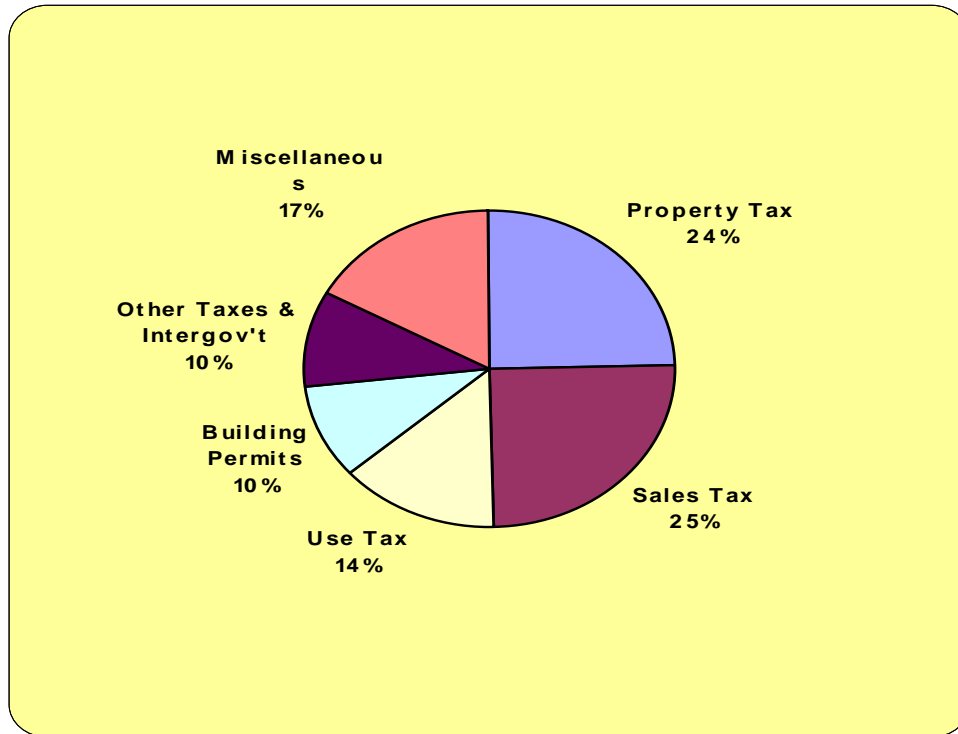
The EDC has targeted 12/31/08 as their project completion date. However, the EDC may require additional time to complete the final planning document due to a longer than expected summer hiatus by its members. The original targeted completion date was June 30, 2009. However, the completion date was changed to 12/31/08 so as not to conflict with the start of the Comprehensive Plan Update.

Section II - SUMMARY STATEMENT

For well over two decades, the Town of Lyons primary sources of revenues have been sales taxes, permits and fees directly related to residential housing construction and property taxes. The following two graphs represent the years 2000 – 2008.



The pie chart revenue numbers represent a five year town average.



As demonstrated in the graphs above, fees resulting from building permits, use taxes (tax on the purchase of construction materials), sales taxes, and property taxes generate the majority of revenue for both the General and Parks and Recreation Funds. Each of these taxes is directly or indirectly related to some form of home construction and resulting home values. In turn, the funds are used to provide basic services to the residents of Lyons.

As the town approaches and enters residential “build out”, revenues from new construction will represent a much smaller percentage of total town revenues. As a result, town leadership must look for other means and methods to generate revenues for town operations.

On July 28, 2006, the town brokered an agreement for Boulder County to purchase approximately 119 acres of property from Victor A. and Sharon Olson. As a result of this sale, the property is no longer part of the Lyons Planning Area as defined in the current IGA with Boulder County. The property has been designated as Parks and Open Space and will forever remain the same.

The town's Comprehensive Plan identified this land as an appropriate parcel for the development of mixed use projects. The 1998 Comprehensive Plan also supported a population base of approximately 2,700 residents.

This estimate was in large part based on the development of the Olson property. In fact, the town invested in infra structure at an estimated cost of \$11.3 million dollars to support the projected population growth.

In addition, the EDC has estimated that over \$15 million dollars in fees could have been realized from this development; revenues that could have stabilized and sustained the town's financial position for many years. This estimate does not include the revenues that would have been realized from resulting new property taxes, use taxes and sales taxes.

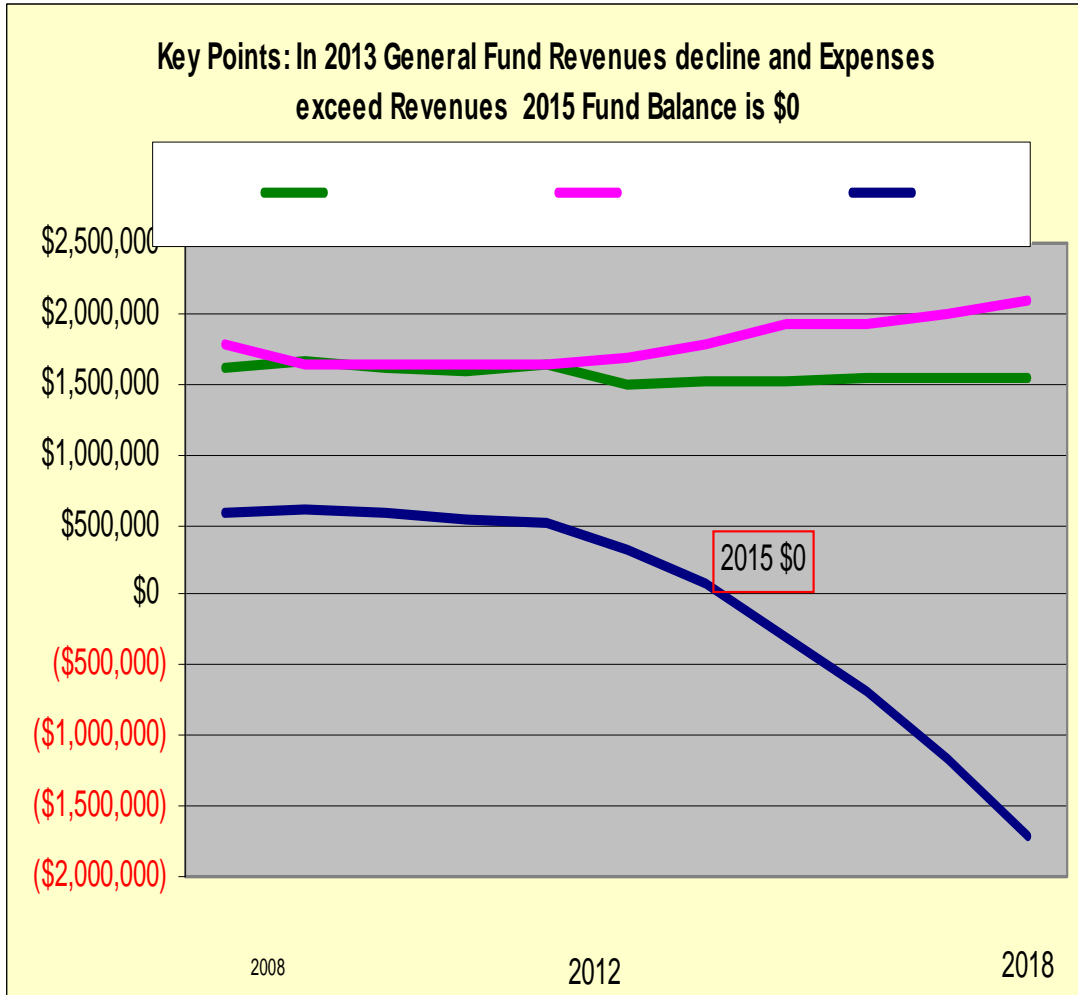
While the potential financial impact on the town was significant, the EDC realizes that many in the community (including the Board of Trustees at the time) supported the sale, and continues to feel protecting this land as Open Space far outweighs the loss in potential revenues to the town. There is no doubt the recently opened Picture Rock Trail is a beautiful recreation site and will be enjoyed by residents and visitors for many years to come.

However, since this property is no longer in the town's Planning Area, reality speaks to the need for the town's leaders to find alternate sources of revenue.

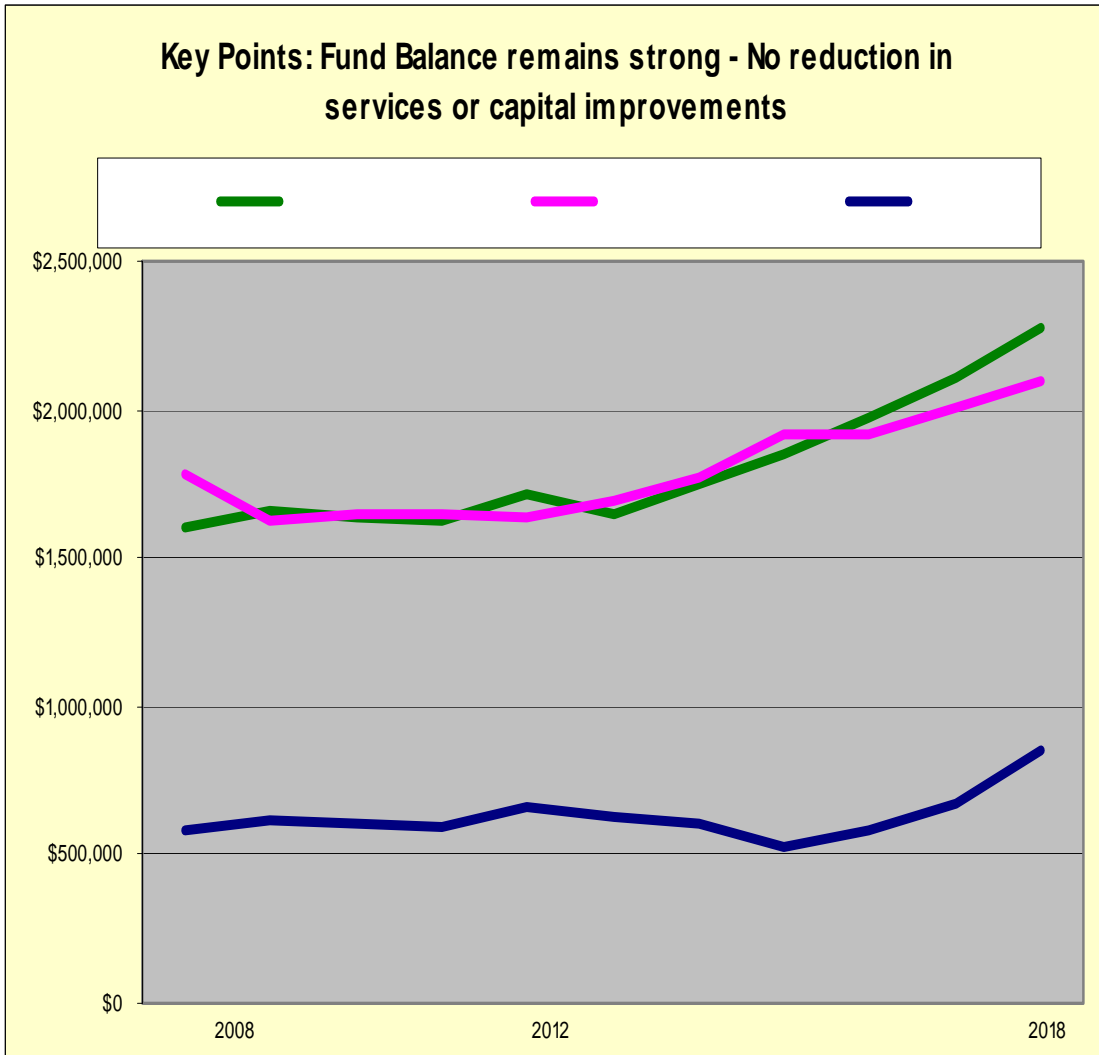
The town Administrator and Finance Director prepared a build out analysis that demonstrated under a best- case scenario build out will occur within five years. The analysis presented several scenarios on the impact build out would have on the General Fund and the Parks and Recreation Fund. The degree of impact will be determined by the level of commitment the Board makes to economic development. Current economic conditions and the difficulty in predicting when they may change, may compound the problem and the financial challenges.

The two line graphs are represented by revenues (green), expenses (red) and fund balance (blue).

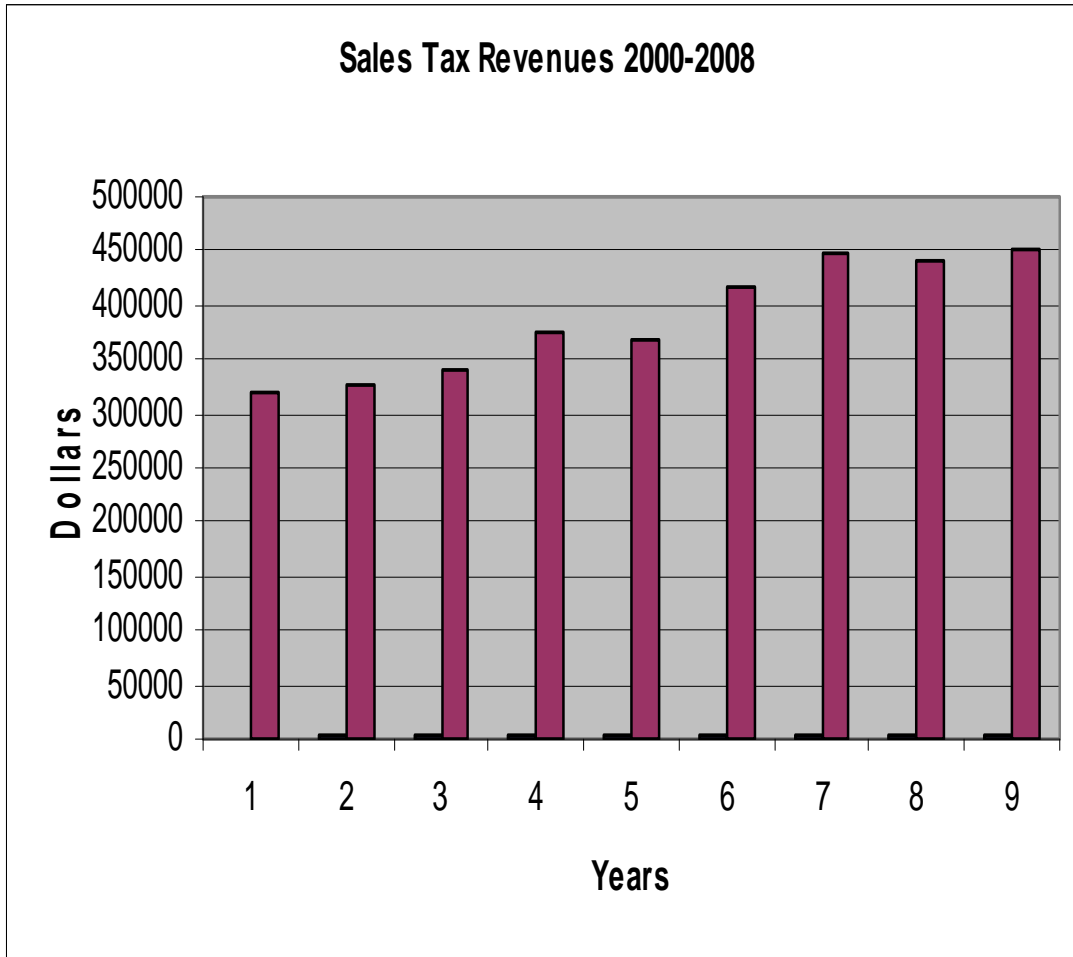
The following graph depicts the impact a “do nothing” strategy will have on the General Fund. By the year 2015 the fund will have a zero balance. It is estimated a similar impact on the Parks and Recreation Fund.



The graph below depicts the impact on the General Fund if an investment is made in economic development resulting in an increase of the sales tax base of 8% for the next five years. As you can see, the fund balance remains strong and no reductions in services or capital improvements will be required.



Compounding the residential build out problem is the relative flat growth in sales tax revenue over the past eight years.



The Town of Lyons consistently lags behind other towns its size in sales tax generation from local business operations. In large part, the problem can be traced to the fact that the town does not capture sales tax revenues from businesses providing basic services to its residents. The chart below supports the claim that Lyons is not capturing sales tax revenues from sources common to other towns of a comparable size. However, the EDC recognizes that conditions and circumstances vary among the communities listed below and each community has managed their economic development by different methods. However, it does indicate that Lyons has a “sales tax leakage” issue and this report attempts to address its cause and effect.

Town	2006 Population	Rank By Sales Tax Collected
Pagosa Springs	1696	\$ 2,925,611
Granby	1806	\$ 1,365,504
Idaho Springs	1831	\$ 1,092,799
Bayfield	1833	\$ 945,197
Nederland	1451	\$ 774,739
Hayden	1814	\$ 739,522
Kremmling	1596	\$ 568,194
Lyons	1747	\$ 518,734
Del Norte	1624	\$ 420,635
Olathe	1766	\$ 302,583

source: Colorado State Dept. Local Affairs

The town currently has multiple businesses for sale in both the downtown and eastern corridor business sectors. It has also been reported, most recently by the CCRA (Colorado Community Revitalization Association) group, that Lyons is not perceived as a business friendly town. The lack of sales tax growth in Lyons can be attributed to multiple factors including:

- lack of local resident support to the town's retail outlets,
- lack of businesses that provide basic services residents perceive as necessities (such as a grocery store),
- lack of consistent store business hours,
- lack of cooperation among existing business owners,
- and a perception that the town government does not support the efforts and needs of local businesses.

In summary, as the town approaches residential build out, and as revenues from sales tax revenues remain flat, the leaders of the town must step forward and demonstrate the political courage to make the difficult decisions that transcend local politics and consider adopting the recommendations defined in this document. The town must transition from a town dependent on construction related revenues to one that can achieve economic and financial sustainability through sound and well- thought- out economic development proposals.

Section III - SITUATION ANALYSIS

In order for the town to prepare for its future, it must understand its past. This situation analysis will take a brief look at the town's past, where it is today, and where it wants to go in the future. The situation analysis will be expanded upon as the planning process evolves into a final report.

THE TOWN'S HISTORY

Lyons Colorado, a community nestled at the base of the Rocky Mountains, boast a population of approximately 1875. Its surrounding communities add another 4000 residents to its market area. The Town was founded by Edward S. Lyon in 1880 when he purchased the Sawyer Farm. It wasn't long after Mr. Lyon settled into the area when he noticed the red sandstone in the nearby hills and started a stone quarry business. As his business grew families moved to the Town and surrounding areas. As more families located to the area, businesses that directly or indirectly supported the quarry industry flourished.

For many years, and to some extent today, families depend on the sandstone industry, and the quarries continue to fuel the local economy. A visitor needs only to walk the streets of downtown Lyons to see the influence "red stone" has had on the Town's culture, history and architecture. It can be fairly stated that this beautiful stone is engrained in the Town's soul and character.

The Town has reinvented itself over the years and its direct dependency on the stone quarries has diminished. The Town has managed to maintain and nurture its small town character and continues to build on a quality of life that is the envy of Boulder County.

The town is blessed to possess numerous natural assets, such as the St. Vrain River, acres of parks and open space, wildlife, trails, and easy access to numerous outdoor activities like hiking, biking, fishing, and kayaking. The town is also very fortunate to have a fine elementary, middle and senior high school with many dedicated teachers and administrators. These many assets are some of the reasons why young families have been attracted to the lifestyle in Lyons. While the town is a direct contrast to Boulder and Longmont, its residents depend on these two urban areas for their primary services including jobs, food, and other basic retail and personal services.

For many years, the town has proudly promoted itself as the Gateway to the Rockies with literally millions of visitors passing through Lyons each year on their way to Este Park and the Rocky Mountain National Park. For years the town has struggled to figure out how to capture a small percentage of this visitor/tourist market. The struggle continues today and takes on greater importance as the town transitions from its financial dependence on residential housing construction.

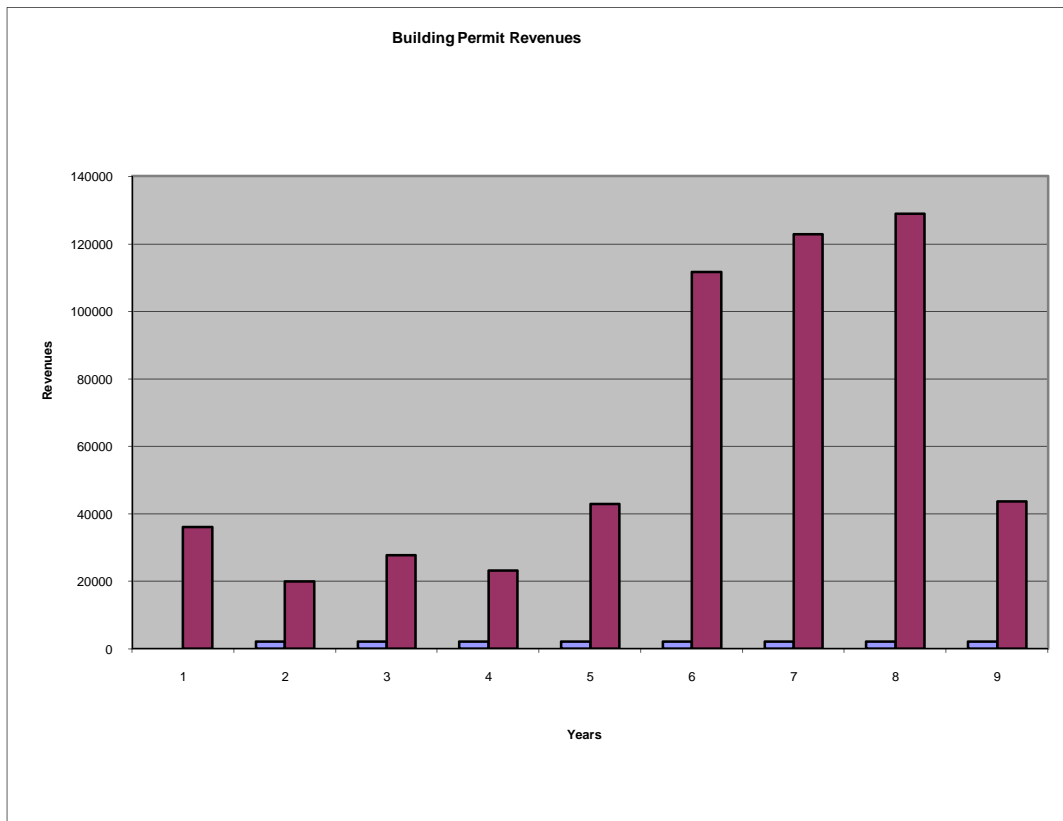
The town has evolved from one primarily dependent on the stone quarry industry whose workers and families relied on local businesses to provide basic services to a town that has a diverse demographic that no longer can depend on local business operators to provide those same services.

In the past, the town has demonstrated its ability to successfully adapt to changing economic times, and it is once again being challenged to adapt to an uncertain time where the local and national economy can best be described as unpredictable.

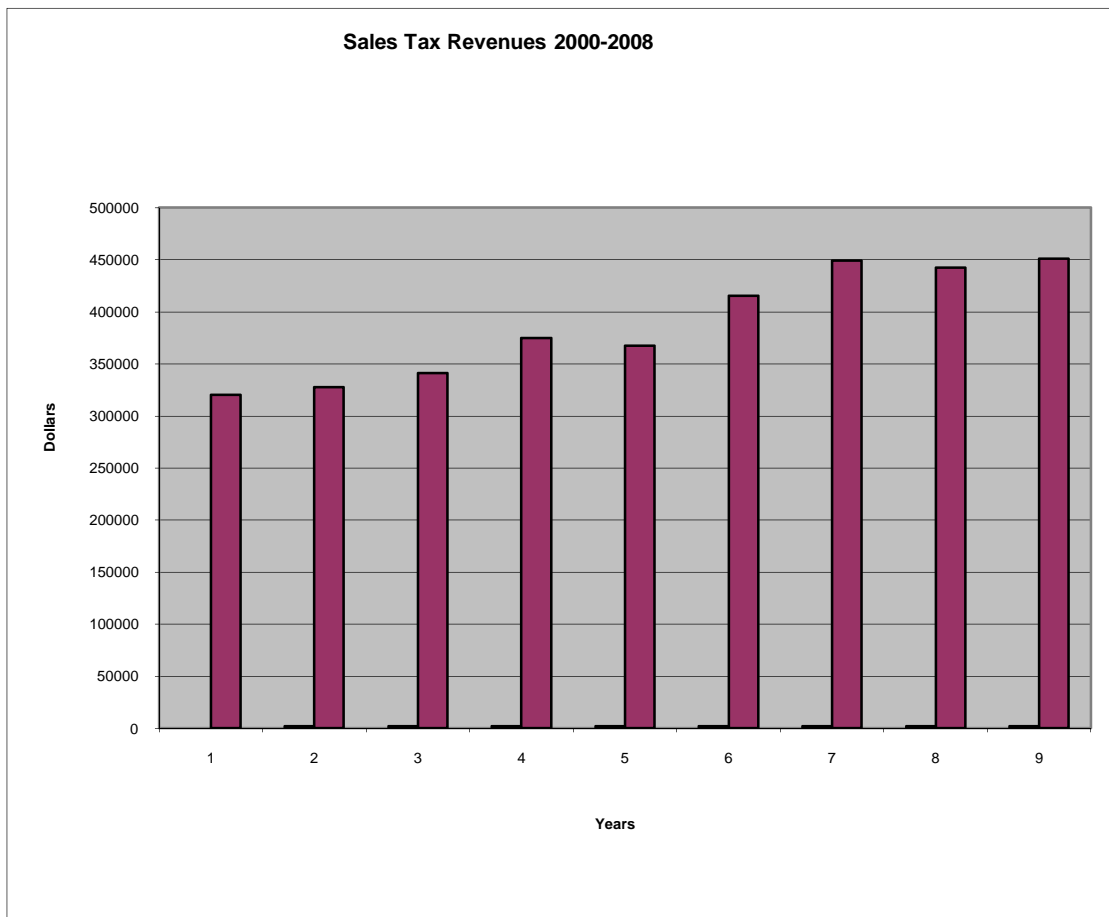
THE TOWN'S CURRENT CONDITION

The EDC subcommittees have identified key issues, obstacles and challenges the town will face in years to come. After a very thorough review of the issues, it is clear there is no “silver bullet” or quick and simple solutions. Building permits have all but disappeared, residential build out is looming and sales and property tax growth will be a serious challenge. As a result of these factors, there will be serious budget deficits and pressure to make cuts that could affect the quality of services the town provides.

As the graph indicates, as a result of changing economic conditions and construction being delayed in the final construction phase of Lyons Valley Park, building permit revenues have been dramatically affected in 2008.



The following graph indicates the relatively flat sales tax growth over the period 2000 to 2008.



The challenge will be for the Board of Trustees to find the balance between reducing non essential operating expenses and making investments in economic development programs necessary to lay the foundation for future growth; programs that will directly result in new and or expanded businesses and net new employment opportunities. A clear and precise difference must be defined by the Board as to what is considered “spending” and what is considered “investing”. It will be a critical decision and the outcome will play a major role in whether not the town takes steps in solving its economic issues.

A clear and precise difference must be defined by the Board as to what is considered “spending” and what is considered “investing”. It will be a critical decision and the outcome will play a major role in whether not the Town takes steps in solving its economic issues.

Many of the issues the EDC will put forth can and should be debated. However, they are the issues that must be addressed in order to build an economic foundation for the future of the town. The town has been on “auto pilot” with its addiction to residential construction fees and as a result has been lured into a false sense of financial security. As a result, a lack of focus has been placed on the town’s declining business climate making the challenge to refocus its priorities especially difficult.

Prior to addressing the many challenges the town will face, it is important to restate the often times less obvious – the substantial strengths and assets of the town.

- The Town of Lyons is blessed with great natural assets including beautiful mountains and mountain views, a wide variety of wildlife, great outdoor activities, clean rivers and air, close proximity to major shopping, and a climate that boast more sunny days per year than San Diego California.
- In addition, the town has passionate, intelligent residents that are involved in their community and active in supporting their favorite causes.
- The town has a current demographic ranging from those who have spent their entire life in Lyons witnessing both the good and bad, to those young families who have moved to Lyons to enjoy the natural beauty of the town and freedom from the hassles of living in larger cities.
- The town is fortunate to have a population of artist’ and musicians who enjoy an atmosphere of free expression, many members of the internet generation who many of which have built home- based businesses or work for major corporations, but enjoy the freedom of working from home.
- The town has a major advantage that most other small towns do not enjoy. Each year approximately 2.5 million cars, campers and motorcycles pass through the town on their way to popular vacation spots in the Rocky Mountain National Park and Estes Park. While some in the town may perceive this traffic as a nuisance, from an economic and commercial point of view, this traffic count/flow presents a natural business opportunity.

One of the many challenges the town will face is how it will capitalize economically on its many assets while maintaining the important and delicate balance of managing growth with environmental responsibility.

As stated above, there is no silver bullet to solve the financial issues confronting the town. However, as you will read in is document, there have been discussions with three developers who have shown interest in developing property in the eastern corridor. One is proposing the sale of land for residential development in north Stone Canyon, and two are considering commercial developments that would provide basic services to the community including a grocery store. The EDC thought it would be appropriate to present a pro forma analysis (See appendix H) for the Board to review.

The purpose of the analysis is to simply demonstrate the impact the combination of residential and commercial development could have on town finances and how such development could play a critical role in solving the long term financial challenge the town will face. If one combines this analysis with progress that could be made in the downtown business district with the implementation of the plans included in this document, you can easily see how on one hand the financial prognosis may look dim, but on the other very promising. The attached analysis in no way reflects any commitments on the part of any developer, but merely represents the some of the possibilities that have been discussed. We have chosen not to use specific names of developers or the type of retail projects they are considering for confidentiality reasons.

Section IV - EDC KEY ISSUES

In order to produce an economic development plan that is responsible to all demographics, and at the same time will achieve the town's financial goals, the town leaders must have a clear understanding of the issues, challenges, and obstacles before them. The issues the EDC has identified may not be comfortable to consider and will be difficult to solve. It is imperative that all stakeholders work to acknowledge them so the community can develop a plan that will transform the challenges and obstacles into opportunities.

Following are the Key Issues identified by the EDC. They are presented in two lists. The first summarizes each issue in thumbnail format. The second presentation restates and elaborates each issue with greater depth.

Thumbnail Summaries – EDC Key Issues

Market Stakeholder Perceptions

Many market stakeholders fully support economic reforms and development initiated by town leadership. But many influential property owners and business people have long held beliefs that “development” (whether physical or economic) is either not possible or not desirable. Much of this can be attributed to a lack of information about actual business metrics in the town, and/or other factually based and strategically important information sets.

History

The recent history of retail business on Main Street features a ten or more year pattern of business failure. Some of this can be attributed to a lack of understanding about the seasonal realities of doing business in Lyons, specific costs (such as expensive water) which are potentially significant, etc.

Market Niche

The town has no brand of its own - no generally accepted identity which communicates the extraordinary range of activity and opportunity available to visitors, investors and potential residents. The town furthermore has an historic “slogan” or “by-line” (Double Gateway to the Rockies) which in addition to being used by other communities in nearly identical form may be counter-productive to any branding effort.

Appearance

Many areas within our beautiful town are not consistently maintained by property owners, tenants and town government.

Rental Market

There has been a pattern of very low rental prices for commercial property. There is also little information about what the aggregate inventory of commercial space in the town looks like (how much space is available, occupancy rates, cost per square foot, etc.)

Population

The Town of Lyons does not supply a customer base large enough to sustain most local retailers.

Demographics

The town has changing demographics which is resulting in changing needs, desires, and political will.

Incentives

The town in the past has been reluctant (and suspicious) of providing financial incentives to attract developers, business owners, or private parties to invest in the town.

Retail Services

The town lacks basic and essential retail services that are both desired by the public so the public currently purchases from Longmont and Boulder.

Infrastructure

The town has spent millions of dollars investing in utility infrastructure to support a population of over 3,000 residents while currently serving 1875.

Planning Area

The town is restricted in its ability to expand residentially or commercially by its current IGA with Boulder County.

In-Depth Summaries – EDC Key Issues

STAKEHOLDER ATTITUDES

The attitude of some influential property owners, business people and informal town leaders presents a challenge to implementation of a successful plan.

There are many stakeholders who could assist in the development of a successful plan and could also benefit from implementation of that plan. But first they must have, or must be willing to respond to, a clear vision of what can be accomplished and how.

Unfortunately, many of these people seem to be indifferent to the need and to the opportunity for economic development. While those who are indifferent sit on the sidelines, a few of these people are downright hostile to the idea of economic development in any of its guises – and some have substantial influence within the community.

Without the full support of all stakeholders economic development faces a more difficult path. Thus, one marketing challenge is to recruit the support of these people – or at least preempt their opposition by engaging enthusiastic support from the wider community.

HISTORY

The recent history of retail business on Main Street features a ten- or- more year pattern of business failure. For example, over a fifteen year period, 47 businesses or individuals went out of business in just the 400 block of Main Street.

That pattern makes it difficult for aspiring entrepreneurs and developers to identify retail markets or commercial needs that can be addressed by new or upgraded companies. When measuring Lyons, a responsible investor or lending agent will regard the town's retail history as a warning flag.

Despite this challenge, many wise people consider sales tax generated by retail sales to be the primary route to economic health for the community.

It is easy to assert, as many do, that Lyons is ripe for business growth..... and that sales tax from retail business will rescue the town budget..... and furthermore that the town leadership can decide what configuration of business enterprises is ideal for Lyons and then install that configuration.

Those assertions are inaccurate. In fact, the reality is that business startups require the careful measure and acceptance of risk, and that is almost always done by an individual.

This is the line of inquiry that is followed by a person thinking of locating or enhancing a business enterprise in this community: “Is it reasonable and responsible for me to invest my personal money and energy - or my company’s resources or my bank’s loan fund - in this enterprise? How does the risk of financing this venture in Lyons stack up against the risk of locating (or investing) elsewhere?”

There are people in the Main Street business community who have discussed the impact of the pattern of business failure since the antique store concentration began to erode fifteen years ago. They find that within the Lyons business community, which extends well beyond the town’s political borders there are seldom easy and affirmative answers to the matter of risk assessment. Consequently, since the business community is made up of a couple hundred small individual entrepreneurs, few (if any) of whom are blessed by prosperity, it is difficult for many of them to visualize how the town can chart a course towards a robust local economy based on new business or enhancement of current business.

THAT is the challenge – today’s perception is rooted in years of failure and observation of the number of businesses and buildings for sale currently.

The relationship between history, perception and financial risk is a major impediment to the individual decisions that in the aggregate become economic development. Mindful of that we will assert that rising water lifts all boats – even those that are leaking and especially those that are about to be launched.

Incentives from town government, funding from government programs used elsewhere but long neglected by Lyons, implementation of a town marketing process and other expected results of the Economic Development Committee will help offset the impact of history, perception and risk on the individual risk assessment evaluation.

MARKET NICHE

The town has no brand - no generally-accepted identity which communicates the extraordinary range of activity and opportunity available to visitors, investors and potential residents.

Lyons ceased to be a self-contained economic unit more than a half century ago. Thereafter it has been reliant on the regional economy. But today, unlike more economically viable nearby communities, Lyons has no sustainable niche within the dynamics of that regional economy.

This was not always the case. There was a time when the town was known as the primary regional retail and wholesale source for carpet and textiles.

Its reputation attracted a day-trip clientele from northern Colorado, southern Wyoming and western Nebraska.

In a subsequent iteration, Lyons was known regionally for its 13 antique and collectible shops, a metal plating shop, an antique clock and cash register repair shop and several furniture restoration and refinishing experts. In combination those businesses made Lyons a regional day-trip destination for antique collectors and browsers.

The importance of an identity in the regional marketplace, and the need to protect a market niche, was not apparent in the era when town budgets were based on tap fees. Even though the town's commercial identity was distinct and competitive, sales tax was not an essential revenue stream to a government financed by residential growth. Little thought had to be applied to the local economy as long as the town kept growing.

Today the near-term economic forecast is more troubling. Unfortunately, as we face the growing need to nurture sales tax opportunities, the town has no brand which can define and reflect a sustainable market niche.

The town that was once an essential stop on the arduous trip into the mountains, the town that was once a trading center for area mining and agriculture interests, the town that was once the carpet/tile center of Northern Colorado and Southern Wyoming, the town that later became a day trip destination for Front Range antique collectors, that town today has no commercial identity. There is no word to fill in the blank that ends the essential market proposition below:

“Lyons is the community that _____.”

Lyons is the community that..... that what?” The absence of a brand – a sustainable market niche that attracts sales tax revenue – is a fundamental barrier to economic development.

APPEARANCE

Many areas within our beautiful town are not consistently maintained by property owners, tenants and town government.

The appearance of those areas makes it more difficult for the town to attract visitors, customers, investors and companies... and to attract notice from those who pass through on their way to Estes Park and Rocky Mountain National Forest.

A neat, orderly and attractive environment is absolutely critical to inducing the esteem of people encountering the town's environment.

Smooth sight lines such as level sidewalks, consistently colored streets (not potholed, patched and tarred), trees pruned properly at about 7 or 8 feet above grade, lack of litter, well-positioned public benches, etc. all work together to provide a calming effect that make people want to linger. By contrast, a hodgepodge of inconsistent or unmaintained elements, visual clutter, and short, jagged sight lines will make people less willing to take Lyons seriously.

The subcommittee has identified some “low hanging fruit” (See appendix A) the town should address in the short term that could have an immediate impact on the visual pollution of the town.

The subcommittee is happy to note that in response to private and town initiatives, a number of improvements have been made. Chief among these independent initiatives is near-completion of the High Street project, welcome renovation of the Lyons Shoppette, removal of a junked car *and* a junked refrigerator truck that sat behind the flower shop for three years, overdue attention to maintaining town planters and increasing weed control on public property.

RENTAL MARKET

There has been a pattern of very low rental price for commercial properties.

The practice of charging rents was a short-term benefit for small business owners who rented commercial space. That pattern also generated cumulative long-term consequences which now burden the local economy.

Renting commercial property at sub-market rates may seem like an act of generosity by landlords. But for the commercial property owner that practice restrains both the necessary cash-flow and the commitment to invest in property maintenance and upgrades. With capacity and inclination thus restricted there is noticeable erosion in the condition of commercial property, the value of commercial property and the property tax stream generated by that property.

There is a more subtle consequence which bears on the issues being addressed by the subcommittee. Rents pegged below normal market rates eliminate a traditional barrier to business entry.

When it is expensive to open a shop in a prime retail location aspiring business people are forced to take more seriously survival issues such as cash reserves, banking relationships, lines of credit, business plans and similar financial requirements for commercial success. The converse is also true: ease of entry is related to ease of failure. Thus, sub-market rental rates are a likely factor in the town’s history of business failure.

That history is important. The town reportedly has a reputation of being anti-business. That reputation, even if unjustified, is substantially based on the unmistakable pattern established by small business failures in Lyons. At the very least the history/reputation is a warning to investors and companies evaluating the prospects for success in Lyons. At worst it is an outright barrier.

We know the town's business climate reputation can be remedied by innovations such as an astute marketing program. This section of the Interim Report addresses a related issue: the natural reluctance to changing the rental rates for commercial space. Neither landlords nor tenants are likely to be enthusiastic about major adjustment. As a result, it is likely the town will continue to have prime commercial properties whose rental income carries mortgage, insurance, tax and operating costs. But that level of revenue does not provide funds for discretionary maintenance and building upgrades.

The appearance of commercial property appears to some to be a charming time-warp. To others it amounts to a capital deficit that must be addressed before the town's commercial enterprise can flourish. Realtors, appraisers, banks considering commercial real estate loans, visitors and consultants like the experts from the Community Revitalization Partnership routinely point out that Lyons commercial buildings are tattered around the edges.

The need for maintenance and upgrades in the eastern corridor and in the downtown commercial district is partially a reflection of rents being too low for too long. Addressing this challenge through rent adjustments will place a burden on the business community.

POPULATION AND MARKET SIZE

The Town of Lyons, as presently configured, does not supply a customer base large enough to sustain most local retailers. While 2006 census data places the population of Lyons at 1875, the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) estimates the population to be 1,915 as of July 1, 2008.

The local population is small. It also has a practice of making business and personal purchases at outlets in Longmont and Boulder. As a consequence of the size and the buying practice of its local market, Lyons' business owners cannot rely on Lyons residents to survive. Instead, survival also requires the trade of tourists and day-trip visitors, a market which is both seasonal and unreliable. This complicates development of effective business plans and practices.

However, the small local population is augmented by people who live beyond the town's boundaries but relatively close to its business district. In Apple Valley and on the hills outside of town and in the canyons and gulches between Lyons and Estes Park lives a substantial market of people who pass through Lyons in route to employment, shopping, services and entertainment. That migration, a daily round trip for many – perhaps most, can become a source of economic development for Lyons if the businesses and services available in town begin to better meet the needs of those nearby residents.

Observation also indicates that successful businesses in Lyons share certain traits. The subcommittee will attempt to identify characteristics of those businesses that have succeeded to provide an informal template for investors and developers thinking about locating business ventures in Lyons.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The demographics of the town have changed dramatically over the past two decades, resulting in changing needs, desires, and political will within the electorate.

According to ESRI Business Information Solutions, the population of Lyons is 1875 with a breakdown of 50.5% male and 49.5% female and an average household size of 2.32 people. Ninety one point eight percent (91.8%) of the population is white with an 8.6% Hispanic population.

According to ESRI, 23.5% of Lyons residents have a high school diploma and 37.2% of the population has a Bachelor's, a Master's, or Doctorate Degree a number which is higher than the State of Colorado average of 32.7%.

According to this same source, the estimated 2007 median household income for Lyons is \$65,656 which once again is higher than the Colorado average of \$60,976.

Growth has been one of the by-products of this change in demographics. Not all segments of the population are satisfied with this growth. At times the result has been political friction which creates a less than unified effort to deal with the challenges identified in this report.

Many of the younger, educated, professional families that have moved to Lyons did so to experience a lifestyle that is far removed from the challenges one faces in larger communities like Longmont and Boulder. A lifestyle that captures the many assets the town has to offer, a lifestyle that is often experienced in a "bedroom" community.

This demographic change in itself could present an obstacle to economic growth that is less apparent than the obvious obstacles addressed in this document. It could be assumed that a large percentage of the "newbie's" that make up this changing demographic could very well resist growth and economic development based on the fact that it contradicts their reason for moving to Lyons.

There may be many that are fine with working in Longmont and Boulder, purchasing their basic products and services there, and then returning to their community that provides them with the lifestyle they desire – the definition of a bedroom community.

INCENTIVES

In the past, the town has not been receptive to providing incentives to developers, business owners or private investors to either expand their current business operations or to attract new entrepreneurs to start new businesses. In fact, it could be fairly stated that some leaders in the past have not only been suspicious of developers, but have publicly discouraged any concessions or incentives that would have resulted in potential investments in the town.

As we face difficult economic times, it is the position of the EDC that the town leadership must seriously consider offering incentives, concessions and extending a hand to encourage public and private partnerships. The town can not and should not take on the role of developer, but must take the necessary steps to encourage private investment to "jump start" the economic development plan.

RETAIL SERVICES

It is stated throughout this document the town lacks basic retail services that its residents turn to other communities to procure – beginning with a grocery store that most residents in Lyons and surrounding communities will support. Whether the decision is made to move forward with aggressive economic growth plans or to be satisfied with minimal or no growth and turn to other means to meet the town’s revenue needs, it is agreed by all the town needs to focus on providing the support necessary to attract businesses that provide basic retail services to its residents.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The town has invested in its utility infrastructure to support a population of over 3,000 residents while currently serving 1,875. As a result individual residents pay more for their basic utilities than other communities of a comparable size. The residents are unable to take advantage of economies of scale that should be available with an electric sub-station, wastewater plant, and water service the size of which could service many more households.

The electric sub station that was installed within the past few years was designed to service a much larger population at a cost of millions of dollars. The Town made the decision to purchase its water from Longmont and discontinue treating its own water. In order to do so it required the building of a pump station at a cost of several millions of dollars. The decision was also made to build and expand a wastewater treatment facility that could service many more households at a significant cost to the community.

After investing millions of dollars utility infrastructure that could support a population of well over 3000 residents, the decision was also made to broker a land purchase for Boulder County that resulted in the elimination of over 100 acres of developable property.

As stated previously, the decision to do so can be easily defended with the resulting asset to the area. However, the reality still speaks to the need to examine how the current high cost (and rising) of utilities can be contained in the future.

PLANNING AREA

The town is restricted in its ability to expand the residential and commercial base by its current IGA with Boulder County. The current agreement with Boulder County will expire in 2012. Therefore, the town is faced with very few options to address its need to expand both commercial and residential developments. (See appendix B)

The options are; wait until the current agreement reaches its natural expiration date or prepare a reasonable request for the Boulder County Commissioners to amend or renew the agreement.

Section V - PRELIMINARY EDC RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are derived from the Interim Reports submitted by EDC subcommittees and reflect extensive research, analysis and discussion by the thirty-four committee members over a period of five months. It is felt that these best meet two criteria established by the EDC:

1) they would have the most direct impact on the financial objectives of the town, and

2) they can be implemented in a time frame of 1 to 3 years to meet the EDC objective of prompt response to the town's economic development challenges.

Consideration was also given to the degree of difficulty in implementation and the potential of funding.

Please note the following:

- each of the 14 recommendation is supported by one or more subcommittee reports contained in the section that follows (Section VI)
- those subcommittee reports makes many additional recommendations, some of which are not included here but have great merit
- there is substantial overlap and occasional but infrequent disagreement between the ways subcommittees chose to address various issues facing the town, yet there is near unanimity among the subcommittees in identifying the issues that do need to be addressed.

It is important to note that after the Board reviews the individual subcommittee plans defined in the following pages of this report, they may very decide that additional recommendations should be considered, and the recommendations submitted below by the EDC may not achieve the objectives of the Board and should be modified, eliminated or given a low priority.

<i>Recommendation</i>

The Board of Trustees will approve the creation of an Economic Development Fund by Resolution that is funded by:

- An annual contribution (transfer of funds) from the General Fund in the amount not to exceed \$50,000.
- Allocating 1-3% of the water and sewer utility fund balance on an annual basis.
- Allocating the proceeds of the sale of the old water treatment facility.
- Increasing the town sales tax to 3.75% with the 0.75% going directly to the development fund.

The Board of Trustees will have the absolute authority over the fund and will require an official request from the town Administrator to allocate dollars to a specific economic development project. The funds could also be used for matching grant purposes.

Recommendation

Adopt, support and fund the Marketing Plan as presented in this document.

The EDC unanimously agrees that any economic development plan will require a well thought out, professional marketing plan. The EDC has full confidence that the plan developed by the Marketing subcommittee meets these criteria. If adopted by the Board and funded in this budget cycle, the subcommittee will continue its work to refine the details and expand and modify where necessary. The committee will then prepare a final document for the Board's review in early 2009.

Recommendation

Vote on and approve a resolution to instruct the town Administrator to schedule a meeting with the Boulder County Commissioners for the purpose of giving a presentation on renewing the town's Inter Governmental Agreement (IGA) with the objective of expanding the town's Planning Area as defined in appendix C.

Recommendation

If the negotiations to renew the IGA are successful and the planning area is expanded as requested, then adopt the necessary incentives as defined in this document to attract potential developers of the eastern corridor. Also adopt recommended incentives for property owners to annex into the Town of Lyons.

Recommendation

Use the Town Hall property as incentive for economic development. Because of both its appraised value and its location, this property represents one of the few marketable assets that the town has which can be used as an incentive for appropriate redevelopment.

Its liquidity is compromised by current economic conditions and in fact by the buildings on the property themselves (the committee agrees the land is not currently being used at its highest and greatest value). By transforming the property into a financial opportunity/incentive, the two primary structures could be replaced and or dramatically enhanced.

There is also a legitimate argument that can be made that if the Town Hall and Library were relocated to a more economically visible and viable area of Town they could play a vital role in the overall economic development and survival of the Town.

Appendix D outlines a case for the strength of Libraries alone as an economic driver, as well as how funding for such a project can be secured. Any number of redevelopment scenarios is possible. The point is *the property itself* is perhaps the largest single financial incentive in the town's portfolio and should be viewed as a financial asset, not merely a piece of property.

The manner in which this asset it is implemented is beyond the scope of this document. But its value has been long overlooked, and recently defeated efforts aimed at use of this asset should not be viewed as reason to continue to let the asset value of the town's land wither on the vine.

The EDC recommends the Board to take the first step by reviewing Appendix D, and then establish a process (or the formation of a committee) to work with the EDC to determine the viability of pursuing both a new library and the development of the Town Hall property.

Recommendation

Create a Downtown Development Authority (DDA) to assist in the funding of economic development projects in the downtown business district. The tax increment financing would come from a property tax levy on any new incremental property taxes resulting from new development or a small increase in the local sales tax.

Within the DDA the EDC recommends establishing a business enterprise zone that will permit the sale of alcoholic beverages regardless of their distance from school property.

Recommendation

Adopt, fund and implement a Master Landscaping Plan that will address all areas of town and assist in developing the Town Brand as well as deal with the ongoing issue of sight pollution throughout town. The EDC recommends working with a local landscape architectural firm – Urban Oasis. The EDC feels a qualified local company like Urban Oasis can relate to the culture and needs of the community better than one who is not familiar with the community.

It will also be important to work with DIPCT to coordinate the implantation of the two plans to ensure there is not a duplication of efforts and cost.

Recommendation

Hire a director of event planning and communication that will have the responsibility to implement the many plans outlined in this document, write grants to assist in the funding of the programs defined, to review all current community events that require town support for effectiveness and revenue generation, and identify and implement new programs and events that will generate new sales tax revenues.

This individual could also assume the responsibility of managing the new web site and function as the communication officer for the town.

The EDC believes that with the preparation of an effective job description and implementing a careful hiring process, the individual hired could very well justify his/her salary.

Recommendation

Adopt, fund and implement the plan defined in this document for the Town of Lyons to become a totally wireless community. This recommendation if implemented properly can have a tremendous impact on not only local residents, but with tourist and visitors passing through town.

Recommendation

Provide the necessary funding to offset any proposed budget deficit necessary to implement the coordinated project between the town, CDOT and DIPICt. The project will repave Main Street from 3rd to 5th Avenues, replace sidewalks and curbs on the north side of Main Street from 3rd to 4th Avenue, widen the sidewalks on the south side of Main Street from 4th to 5th Avenue's, create diagonal parking on the south side of Main from 3rd to 5th Avenue and parallel parking on the north side of Main from 3rd to 5th Avenues.

This project will be funded primarily by CDOT, the town's escrow account with CDOT, and a TIP grant procured by DIPICt. As mentioned above, once final project cost are determined there may well be a need for the town to absorb the deficit that may result from guaranteed funding and required funding.

This project could have the greatest impact on the town of any other proposal presented in this document. It could dramatically change the economics of the town as well as creating an attractive and calming shopping environment for locals, tourist and visitors.

Recommendation

Support and fund the creation of public art and music council that will assume the responsibility of recommending policy on public art, and to work with the local art community to assist in the development of programs that will attract art and music enthusiast from throughout the region to Lyons. The Council will work with the subcommittee to determine the most effective method to re-establish the sculpture trail, completion of the clarifier project and the displaying of sculpture art throughout town.

Recommendation

Invest the necessary resources including, hiring consultants expert in the area of creating funding authorities to educate Staff and the Board of Trustees on the variety of funding options available to the town and which (if any) best fit the needs of the town.

In addition, the town should continue to invest in bringing organizations like the CCRA to town to confirm the EDC economic development plan or suggest alternative approaches.

Recommendation

Invest in a traffic flow and parking study that will take an in depth look at existing traffic flows, identify parking needs, make recommendations on how traffic flow could improve pedestrian safety and improve volume through the downtown business district, make recommendations on the town's parking requirements with specific recommendations with special attention given to how parking efficiencies will improve tourist retention and improve access to local businesses.

In appendix G the Board will find one parking recommendation put forth by the EDC for review and consideration for funding.

Recommendation

Support the creation of a committee comprised of members of the Board of Trustees, PCDC, EDC and general public that will assess the various incentive options the town can offer that will attract developers, investors and entrepreneurs to the Town of Lyons. Many of the options to be considered are defined in this report.

Section VI – SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Subcommittee: Marketing and Downtown Business Development

Mission Statement:

The subcommittee is taking an analytical and evidence-based approach to identifying characteristics of the Town of Lyons. Those characteristics will be used to brand the town appropriately. With that brand Lyons can be more successfully marketed to its three major target populations: residents, business people, and tourists.

The Subcommittee will formulate a comprehensive strategy to increase awareness and use of the town by those groups. It will provide recommendations to the Board of Trustees on the apparatus necessary to deploy the strategy in a manner that is consistent with the EDC's goal of economic growth and sustainability.

Key Issues

1. There are many different definitions in the community of what marketing is and what it does.
2. There is a fundamental lack of understanding as to the potential value of implementing a marketing plan.
3. Marketing is an intangible concept to most and therefore difficult to place a value on which will be necessary to justify funding.
4. Few people realize how marketing can assist all aspects of economic development and how without it projects are doomed to fail.
5. A marketing plan will be difficult to implement due to the relatively few resources the town has to rely on.
6. In order for the town's marketing plan to be successfully implemented their will be a strong reliance on volunteer's from within the community who have experience in developing and implementing marketing plans.

Objectives:

1. The town must establish a brand for itself. To be as effective as necessary, the brand must be defined by stakeholders, embraced by the community and understood by its three markets – residents, visitors and regional residents.
2. The town must establish a marketing plan that communicates with its three markets: residents, visitors and entrepreneurs.
3. The town must conduct a new survey to better measure opinion about essential issues among residents, visitors and the general Front Range public.
4. The town must provide professional support to essential town activity.
5. Make an effort to directly inform and recruit stakeholders to become partisans of the economic development process and of the various initiatives within it.
6. Create at least one economic development and property improvement district designed to qualify for alternative funding opportunities offered by federal, state and county governments and by some private foundations.

7. Use the economic development district(s) selected and implemented as suggested in the above Objective #6 to support the town and its commercial property owners.

Objective 1: Marketing and Downtown Business Development

The town must establish a brand for itself. To be as effective as necessary, the brand must be defined by stakeholders, embraced by the community and understood by its three markets – residents, visitors and entrepreneurs.

Action Plans:

1. In Lyons community there are a number of people with substantial professional experience in branding. Under the leadership of town government and with the support of other stakeholders, several of those people can be asked to offer their expertise at reduced cost in a collaborative effort to develop a new town brand, along with usage guidelines, as is done in any thoughtful branding campaign. :
2. The verbal branding summary of the town should emphasize those elements that make Lyons a day trip destination for Front Range residents, those elements that offer an attractive lifestyle to residents and those elements that provide opportunity and support to certain types of business.
3. The summary should be offered in variations that differ by size and by focus so the verbal branding summary always provides a useful tool for the various applications of local organizations, companies, town government and others who might want to market the town or want to associate their identity with that of the town.
4. A logo will be the non-verbal tool that brands the town with a consistent visual identity. It should be accompanied with a complete graphics standards policy that provides for consistent visual representation of that brand wherever it is used. The logo will be intellectual property that should be owned by the town but licensed without charge to local users, providing that they apply the logo in accordance with the town's graphics standards policy.

Objective 2: Marketing and Downtown Business Development

The town must establish a marketing plan that communicates with its three markets: residents, visitors and entrepreneurs.

Action Plans:

1. A plan that will provide specific uses of the defined town brand.
2. A plan that will incorporate the brand into a way- finding signage system that identifies key visitor/economic assets and attractions.
3. A plan that will identify markets and the media that service them.
4. A plan that will develop strategies for development and maintenance of an email list of media contacts.

5. A plan that will develop strategies for mounting integrated marketing campaigns for scheduled town activities (such as Good Old Days) including local signage, targeted distribution of press releases and standard media backgrounders, appropriate notification of local residents, affinity notification of special-interest groups, targeted advertising, use of the free tourist website and mailing list services offered by county and state organizations to encourage local traffic.
6. A plan that will implement a process for identifying media-worthy stories about Lyons people and occurrences and for emailing press releases and standard media backgrounders about them.
7. A plan that will develop award-recognition programs for local organizations, for-profit and non-profit, which demonstrate to the rest of the Lyons community especially effective marketing techniques developed to promote their own agendas.
8. A plan that will support the distribution of inexpensive branding items for children who accompany visiting adults.
9. A plan that will encourage town/Chamber collaboration for continuation and enhancement of the Community Calendar developed by the Chamber and presented on LyonsFirst.Com.
10. A plan that will recommend ethical but rigorous enforcement of town codes plus development of new codes (if needed) to eliminate the eyesores that had been acceptable when town was financially healthy and its residents had insufficient motivation for concern about the town's appearance or its market position.

NOTE: The Marketing plan need not be overly complicated or even very costly. It will consist of an ongoing series of targeted low-cost print advertisements, targeted email advertising, physical improvements to the town consistent with a brand theme and other standard methods deemed appropriate or necessary to address markets, opinions and opportunities identified by the public opinion survey mentioned in Objective #3. It can be assisted by experienced volunteers but must be centrally and professionally administered.

Objective 3: Marketing and Downtown Business Development

The town must conduct a new survey to better measure opinion about essential issues among residents, visitors and the general Front Range public.

Action Plan:

1. There a number of ways the opinions of these three markets (locals, visitors and business people) can be ascertained scientifically. These options will be identified in the subcommittee's final report.
2. The results of the survey to be suggested by this subcommittee will heavily influence development of a brand and branding strategy and development of a marketing plan, both mentioned above.

Objective 4: Marketing and Downtown Business Development

The town must provide professional support to essential town activity:

Action Plans:

1. The position will support the above three objectives (branding, marketing and measuring public opinion)
2. The position will support town-sponsored and volunteer-sponsored community events.
3. The position will support the process of evaluation, application and management of public and private grants that enable activities like the above. Encourage ongoing efforts to implement the downtown plan and other infrastructural efforts that are conducive to business.
4. The position will seek out and correct “Marketing Disconnects”. For example, the current AAA guides list just 3 things to do in Lyons, only one of which is actually IN Lyons!
5. The position will capitalize on “Easy” or “ready-made” existing attractions in ways that perhaps haven’t been (i.e. existing festivals, kayaking events, cycling events, etc...) Expand on these highly successful events and find ways to expose new audiences to these events.

Objective 5: Marketing and Downtown Business Development

Make an effort to directly inform and recruit stakeholders to become partisans of the economic development process and of the various initiatives within it.

Action Plans:

1. The subcommittee recommends the BOT and town Administration to recognize that it is unwise to attempt a long-term endeavor as complex and important as economic development without a concerted attempt to identify, inform and recruit a combination of stakeholders and people with substantial appropriate experience.
2. In Lyons there are business owners and commercial property owners whose future well-being is deeply vested in the results of this initiative. This report, as well as an array of economic information about the town should be distributed to these stakeholders in a presentation format. The information should be as comprehensive as possible, and should be arrayed in the report in an easily understandable manner. This report will ultimately be read by the stakeholders themselves, who while often versed in the language of business, may not speak “marketing”.
3. Reach out to the untapped talent pool of retired people and Lyons residents employed elsewhere whose competence may be superior to the competence of those of us who stepped up to the plate and responded to the call for participants in economic development.

4. Reach out to – business owners, commercial property owners, high-achieving people who work beyond the town, retired people with substantial expertise – who are sitting on the sidelines and if asked may bring their expertise to the table. We believe these stakeholders and experts should be systematically identified. An effort should be made to recruit the participation of a representative selection of this talent pool. In addition, a mechanism should be established to continually update stakeholders and uninformed people of appropriate competence on progress made by our economic development effort. This should be done with an eye to the next stage of economic development. The time will come when the group of self-selected citizens who responded to a request for help from town government will be replaced by people selected for their ability to apply specific skills to specific activities that had been earlier identified and initiated by our committee of more general composition.

Objective 6: Marketing and Downtown Business Development

Create at least one economic development and property improvement district designed to qualify for alternative funding opportunities offered by federal, state and county governments and by some private foundations.

Action Plan:

1. A committee of appropriate people, primarily commercial property owners, should be established to examine the revenue generating districts and tools that have long been in use by nearly every municipality in Colorado and can become the financing mechanism for town marketing and many other economic development initiatives. The committee can then suggest strategies that lead to the selection of one or more of these basic municipal financing tools and then assist the BOT and town Manager in the implementation of the ones they choose.
2. The Colorado Department of Local Affairs has prepared a primer on these funding mechanisms. It can be found at the following website. Note that for marketing purposes the most likely opportunities for Lyons are on pages 15 and 16 of this summary.
3. http://dola.colorado.gov/dlg/ta/special_districts/administration/docs/financing_mechanisms.pdf

Objective 7: Marketing and Downtown Business Development

Use the economic development district(s) selected and implemented as suggested in the above Objective #6 to support the town and its commercial property owners.

Action Plans:

1. Use the districts to identify and resolve infrastructure issues.
2. Use the districts to upgrade streetscape, traffic, parking and similar attributes of the commercial district.

3. Use the districts to assist building and business owners to improve the appearance and amenities of the areas for which they are individually responsible;
4. Use the districts to fund a comprehensive ongoing marketing plan for the town's businesses, organizations and events

Subcommittee: Downtown Development

Mission Statement

This subcommittee will review the recent history, current condition and likely trajectory of the downtown business core in the blocks from Second to Fifth Avenue on Main Street, the 400 block of High Street, and those businesses located west of the Black Bear Restaurant. The committee will then suggest a set of strategies for the economic development task force and ultimately for property and business owners to evaluate.

Key Issues

1. The downtown business district has been in general decline for several years resulting in no sales tax growth.
2. There are multiple businesses for sale in the downtown business district which creates a negative perception with potential investors or potential new businesses.
3. The downtown business district is not aesthetically pleasing.
4. There is a lack of designated parking for potential patrons of downtown businesses.
5. There is a lack of signage and "way finding" to direct tourist and visitors to town facilities, attractions and businesses.
6. There is a question as to whether or not the town's current mix of businesses is sufficient to attract day trippers and tourist.
7. There is a lack of businesses that serve the basic needs of town residents.
8. There is a lack of code enforcement that directly affects town aesthetics and creates visual pollution.
9. While very controversial, the 500 foot rule has prevented current businesses from expanding their operations and attracting new businesses.
10. The businesses located between the eastern corridor and downtown business district seem to be "stuck" between two identified business districts and get lost in discussions of business development.

Objectives

1. Create a Downtown Development Authority (DDA) to fund development for local tax dollars and to qualify for alternative funding opportunities offered by federal, state and county governments and private foundations.
2. Create a business enterprise zone within the DDA that will allow the sale and consumption of alcohol within an acceptable distance from the school.
3. Work with DIPICt and CDOT to implement the Main Street improvement project defined by town Administration, DIPICt and CDOT.

4. Implement a parking improvement plan and traffic flow recommendations that will address the needs of all stakeholders.
5. Identify the specific “visual pollution” issues that currently impact or discourage tourist/visitors to visit or day trip to Lyons and implement a plan to correct the issue.
6. Develop a Landscape Master Plan for the entire town and eliminate “piece meal” improvements.
7. Support the continued implementation of the High Street improvement plan.
8. Develop a data base of information that can serve as a tool to attract, promote, and secure potential new businesses.

Objective 1: Downtown Development

Create a Downtown Development Authority (DDA) to fund development for local tax dollars and to qualify for alternative funding opportunities offered by federal, state and county governments and private foundations.

Action Plan:

1. Work with the Funding and Incentive subcommittee to review the most common development authorities available and educate the Board of Trustees on the advantages and disadvantages of each.
2. Create an Authority Board to manage the overall operations of the authority selected.
3. Define and recommend the geographical boundaries of the proposed development authority.
4. Make specific recommendations as to the type and amount of taxes that should be used to fund the authority i.e. sales tax assessment or property tax levy.
5. Prepare a strategy to sell the benefits of the authority to those directly affected by the authority including how the funding will be used to improve the downtown business district and business and property owners.

Objective 2: Downtown Development

Create a business enterprise zone within the DDA that will allow the sale and consumption of alcohol within an acceptable distance from the school.

Action Plan:

1. The Board of Trustees will work with current business owners to define the boundaries of the enterprise zone and the make up of the taxing authority.
2. Public notice will be given to debate the issue of expanding the 500 foot rule and the need for a business enterprise zone.
3. A strategy will be developed to communicate to the public the need to implement a business enterprise zone.

4. Develop an application with a set of rules and standards that must be met and agreed to in order to qualify for selling alcohol in the business enterprise zone; the applications will be reviewed and approved either by the Board of Trustees or the DDA Board.

Objective 3: Downtown Development

Work with DIPICt and CDOT to implement the Main Street improvement project defined by town Administration, DIPICt and CDOT.

Action Plan:

1. Finalize design plans currently being prepared by Tim Kyer and Jim Blankenship (town Contract Engineer).
2. Conduct a public review process to finalize design plans and gain approval.
3. Work with Jim Blankenship to finalize cost estimates for both traditional paving and cement paving.
4. Work with DIPICt to coordinate the TIP grant project with the Main Street project to realize construction savings.
5. Submit plans with cost estimates to CDOT for review.
6. Work with CDOT to procure funding for the project over and above the town's escrow account.
7. Estimate the investment required (if any) by the town to complete the project.
8. Develop a construction plan for project completion prior to Memorial Day weekend 2009.

Objective 4: Downtown Development

Implement a parking improvement plan and traffic flow recommendations that will address the needs of all stakeholders and improve tourist and visitor experience.

Action Plan:

1. Conduct a complete review of town property to identify parking options from the eastern corridor to the downtown business district.
2. After completing the parking analysis make specific recommendations for improving parking capacity with a priority given to the primary business districts.
3. Analyze current traffic flow in key areas of the town and make recommendations that will not only improve flow but will also direct traffic to the business districts.
4. Where appropriate work with business owners who will directly benefit from improved parking to participate in funding new parking capacity.
5. Based upon the above analysis prepare an estimated budget necessary to implement the recommendations.

Objective 5: Downtown Development

Identify the specific “visual pollution” issues that currently impact or discourage tourist/visitors to visit or day trip to Lyons and implement a plan to correct the issue.

Action Plan:

1. Identify specific problem areas throughout town paying particular attention to the entering and exiting of town on Highway 66/36, Main Street and Broadway.
2. Work with the Public Works Department to address the “low hanging fruit” issues as identified in appendix A of this document.
3. Implement a plan that utilizes the resources of Public Works and Parks and Recreation to focus on those areas of town that are highly visible to tourist and visitors.
4. Work with CDOT to insist on better maintenance of roads/highways under their direct control.
5. Work with law enforcement (code enforcement) to develop a fair but aggressive plan to enforce relative sections of Title 4 of the town Code.
6. Identify volunteer organizations to work with the town to implement town pride programs.
7. Consider making the recommendation to purchase a street sweeper in order to keep all streets clean within the town.

Objective 6: Downtown Development

Develop a Landscape Master Plan for the entire town and eliminate “piece meal” improvements.

Action Plan:

1. Identify a landscape architectural firm (Urban Oasis) to work with the town to develop a master landscape plan for the entire town with a focus on those areas that are most visible to residents, tourist and visitors.
2. Form an advisory committee of residents and local business owners to provide advice to the firm selected.
3. Secure public and Board support and approval for the master plan through the public review process.
4. Prepare a preliminary budget for Board review and approval for the master plan.

Objective 7: Downtown Development

Support the continued implementation of the High Street improvement plan.

Action Plan:

1. Encourage the town to support DEPICT in implementing the ongoing improvement plan for High Street with both budget dollars and Public Works services.
2. Work with DEPICT to expand their plans to include historical lighting, and pedestrian benches along the north and south side of the street.
3. Work with the town and property owners, including the Oddfellows organization, to develop commercial, municipal, and mixed use development opportunities.

Objective 8: Downtown Development

Develop a data base of information that can serve as a tool to attract, promote, and secure potential new businesses.

Action Plan:

1. Create a database of all businesses in Lyons with contact information, business description, employee data etc.
2. Create an inventory log of available retail and office space with all relevant data, such as, location address, owner, square footage, rental rate, etc.
3. Work with the Chamber of Commerce to develop a strategy to promote the available space to the business community in the surrounding area.
4. Work with the town web site to promote available space and provide data base information to potential investors and entrepreneurs.

Subcommittee: Town Hall Land Project

Mission Statement

The Mission of the Town Hall Land Project Subcommittee is to explore the need for a new and or improved municipal facilities complex including Town Hall, Library, and the Sheriff Sub-Station; and to determine the best location for these facilities based on the assessment of the best and highest use of the land on which they currently occupy and the economic impact they may have on the town.

NOTE: The Town Hall Project subcommittee has determined that current economic conditions are not conducive to attracting developers, potential investors, or funding for a project of this scale and nature.

However, the committee does agree the land is not currently being used at its highest and greatest value. The committee also agrees that the two primary structures need to be replaced and or dramatically enhanced. There is also a strong sentiment that if the Town Hall and Library were relocated to a more economically visible and viable area of town they could play a vital role in the overall economic development and survival of the town.

The committee also believes it is prudent to perform “background” work to prepare for a turn in market conditions and have a plan in place that proposes options for development of the land. Those options should include a range from status quo, to a modification of the original proposal, to moving and replacing the existing structures to other more economically viable areas of town.

Key Issues

1. The current economic conditions are not conducive to attracting developers and funding for a project of this nature.
2. The town rejected a proposed development plan less than 1 year ago; which may indicate the timing of a new proposal may not be supported by the public at large.
3. The Public may not perceive the need to replace and or improve the current facilities.
4. There currently exists a real or perceived historical/cultural connection to the structures themselves.
5. There is uncertainty as to the actual value of the land.
6. There exist questions as to whether or not the adjacent property owner will realistically negotiate with any future developer on his key piece of the land in question; this piece may be vital in the overall development picture.
7. There has been a lack of cost benefit analysis prepared for public review.
8. There is a lack of understanding as to how the overall development (beyond new structures) would economically benefit the town.
9. There have been no or limited discussions on potential alternate uses for the land.
10. There has been no discussion on whether or not the individual components on the property could be moved to different locations that would provide greater economic opportunities and create increased land value for future development.
11. There is no clear understanding of alternative options for development (including the town being the General Contractor) and how and what funding options exist.
12. In an era when libraries are becoming media centers, the town Library may be inadequate to meet the needs of the various constituencies it serves today.

Objectives

1. The committee will review the first developer proposal and analyze the pros and cons of the proposal, and incorporate the results of the “post mortem” analysis to build upon any new proposal.

2. Prepare a development plan for review and consideration that would include moving the land's individual component parts to locations that would provide greater economic opportunities improve operational efficiencies and create greater land value for future development.
3. Conduct an in depth needs analysis of the existing structures; which will ultimately become part of an RFP.
4. Propose to the town Administrator and BOT to conduct an appraisal of the property with and without the adjacent property owner.
5. Identify potential developers and approach with specific incentives to develop based upon real land value and town needs.

Objective 1: Town Hall Land Project

The committee will review the first developer proposal and analyze the pros and cons of the proposal, and incorporate the results of the “post mortem” analysis to build upon any new proposal.

Action Plan:

1. Schedule a meeting with Pete Dordick and Dave Wickum and conduct an in depth review of the proposal that was presented, the method in which it was communicated, and gain opinion as to why it failed from the developer's point of view.
2. The committee will prepare a “post mortem” report based upon the results of the meeting and utilize the information for future (potential) proposals.
3. The committee will reach out to a cross section of residents to solicit their opinions as to why the proposal failed and incorporate the responses into the “post mortem” report.
4. A survey needs to be conducted (possibly on the new web site) to determine the communities opinions as to the need for new facilities.

Objective 2: Town Hall Land Project

Prepare a development plan for review and consideration that would include moving the land's individual component parts to locations that would provide greater economic opportunities improve operational efficiencies and create greater land value for future development.

Action Plan:

1. Contract with an appraiser to determine the value of the land with and without the existing structures and with and without the adjacent property owner.
2. Make an assessment of the economic impact the structures have at their current location versus the economic impact they may have at separate locations.

3. Develop a plan that would assess the economic impact on the town if a new Library were constructed in a more economically viable area of town i.e. High Street. (see appendix D)
4. Determine the cost and the work efficiencies associated with moving the Public Works department to the Wastewater facility.
5. Determine the cost associated with moving the skate board park to Bohn Park and incorporate into phase I of the POST plan update.
6. Identify options for relocating the RTD parking area.
7. Determine the cost associated with creating a new parking area once a replacement location is identified. (see appendix G)
8. Identify areas where the recycling containers could be relocated.
9. Prepare options and potential locations for relocating and building a new Town Hall e.g. High Street, Eastern Corridor
10. Identify and assess potential funding opportunities for each component part including pursuing public private partnerships, developers, creating a Library District, grants etc. (see appendix D)

Objective 3: Town Hall Land Project

Conduct an in depth needs analysis of the existing structures; which will ultimately become part of an RFP.

Action Plan:

1. Conduct an internal employee survey to identify personal and space requirement needs based upon experience working in the existing facilities.
2. Work with the Library director to solicit facility and personnel needs and specifications.
3. Work with the Library Board to determine the role a Library should play in the future of Lyons, specifications, and overall design.
4. Work with the town contract engineer to work on design, specification and cost issues and estimates.
5. Work with the Board of Trustees and current town Hall employee's to identify design needs, space requirements, future space needs for work place efficiencies.

Objective 4: Town Hall Land Project

Propose to the town Administrator and BOT to conduct an appraisal of the property with and without the adjacent property owner.

Action Plan:

1. Identify commercial brokers in the Lyons, Longmont and Boulder area that have experience in appraising municipal property.
2. Enter into an agreement with a commercial appraisal to conduct the appraisal with and without facilities and with and without the adjacent property owner.

3. Use the appraisal as a resource in developing a funding plan.
4. Use the appraisal as a resource to attract potential investors and developers.
5. Use the appraisal as a resource to build a potential public and private partnership for land development and facility relocation.
6. Use the land value to develop a strategy to educate the residents of Lyons on the financial issues related to the development of the property.

Objective 5: Town Hall Land Project

Identify potential developers and approach with specific incentives to develop based upon real land value and town needs.

Action Plan:

1. Identify local developers that have experience in large scale commercial developments of this nature.
2. Contact local and regional real estate agencies to assist in the identification of potential developers.
3. Work with the Colorado Municipal League to identify potential developers that have entered into private and public partnerships with communities in Colorado that are comparable to this project.
4. Work with DOLA to identify potential developers and funding sources that will enable discussions on private and public partnerships.
5. Prepare a plan that includes an incentive package to attract potential developers, private investors and encourages public and private partnerships.
6. Research other government agencies that have experience with development projects of this nature and have engaged in public and private partnerships.

Background work necessary to complete to prepare for a change in market conditions.

1. Allocating budget dollars to have the property appraised with and without the adjacent property and with and without the existing facilities.
2. Initiate a search to determine the history of the property including any environmental issues.
3. Determine and map the location of all existing utilities including the Lyons Ditch on the property.
4. Develop a better understanding as to the adjacent property owner's interest in the project and what financial issues would be involved with the property.
5. Determine if there are CDOT access issues with the property.
6. Determine what "footprint" the new facilities would occupy.
7. Determine how communications can be improved between town Administration and town residents to better educate residents on the pros and cons of the project

Subcommittee: Eastern Corridor/Annexation

The subcommittee has determined the area commonly referred to as the Eastern Corridor would provide the greatest opportunity for commercial growth. The eastern corridor has been defined as that area with businesses located east of the U Pump It service station to the east to the Longmont water treatment facility.

Mission Statement

The Eastern Corridor and Annexation Committee will assess the commercial and residential growth opportunities that exist in the area east of the U Pump It and traveling east on Highway 66 to the point where Highland Road intersects with Ute Highway. The committee will also make specific recommendations on areas throughout town that should be considered for annexation for both commercial and residential opportunities.

Key Issues

1. The town lacks incentives for property owners to consider annexation.
2. No database of business owners and property owners currently exists that can be used for analysis and planning purposes.
3. The town does not possess effective planning area maps to be used as a tool planning and decision making.
4. There exist an ingrained resistance to annex property by the public at large; especially as it relates to residential annexations over 5 acres in size.
5. There is a lack of agreement on what the public considers “desirable” commercial businesses.
6. There is a lack of knowledge of URA’s and other financing options that could be used for economic development funding.
7. There are serious “image” problems as one enters the Easter Corridor from the East.
8. Current property owners in the Eastern Corridor that have land for sale are asking unrealistic sales prices.
9. There are flood plain issues along the Eastern Corridor that may inhibit development.
10. There is uncertainty on how the town intends to use the railroad property and how it may be used as incentives for development or annexation.
11. There is a need for traffic flow and traffic count data to assist in attracting future business.
12. There is a lack of understanding of the needs of the neighborhoods in close proximity to future commercial development.
13. There is a lack of value incentives that would or will attract developers and investors.

Objectives

1. Identify specific areas that are most conducive for commercial development and existing property owners who own those properties and prepare a strategy to contact and to ascertain their desire to sell to a developer, private investor, or enter into a development partnership.
2. Develop and propose a series of effective incentives for the BOT to consider that will attract developers and investors to the Eastern Corridor.
3. Develop and propose a series of effective incentives for the BOT to consider that will provide motivation for individual property owners to annex into town.
4. Develop a specific annexation plan that includes both commercial and residential properties for the BOT to consider.
5. Develop a strategy to communicate to the public at large that outlines specific benefits resulting from annexations and commercial development in the eastern corridor.

Objective 1: Eastern Corridor/Annexation
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Identify specific areas that are most conducive to commercial development and existing property owners who own those properties and prepare a strategy to contact and to ascertain their desire to sell to a developer, private investor, or enter into a development partnership.

Action Plan:

1. Conduct an assessment of developable land in the eastern corridor and identify individual property owners. A key criterion to determining the properties suitability for development is its proximity to the flood way and flood plane.
2. Map the developable property with property owner designations.
3. Identify properties that are currently for sale and map along side potential developable properties.
4. Contact those property owners whose properties are not officially for sale to determine their appetite or interest in selling.
5. Map those properties currently for sale along side those properties that property owners have an interest in selling.
6. Work with individual property owners with the goal of creating development sectors in the eastern corridor.
7. Create a “development map” identifying specific development sectors for investor and developer use.

Objective 2: Eastern Corridor/Annexation

Develop and propose a series of effective incentives for the BOT to consider that will attract developers and investors to the Eastern Corridor.

Action Plan:

1. Identify potential investors and developers that may have an interest in eastern corridor development.
2. Survey those developers to determine what incentives would be required from the town to encourage development.
3. Based on survey results, prepare a list of incentives for Board consideration and approval.
4. Develop a plan with presentation to appeal to potential developers for eastern corridor development.

Objective 3: Eastern Corridor/Annexation

Develop and propose a series of effective incentives for the BOT to consider that will provide motivation for individual property owners to annex into town.

Action Plan:

1. Identify those properties in the eastern corridor that would provide economic benefit to the town if annexed.
2. Identify those properties that may benefit from town services if annexed.
3. Identify the property owners by name.
4. Quantify the cost (hard and soft) for a property owner to apply for annexation.
5. Develop a series of incentives that would provide the necessary justification for a property owner to annex into the town.
6. Develop a strategy including the incentive package to approach each property owner for annexation.
7. Identify what residential areas should be included in the annexation plan that could result in significant economic benefit to the town including Upper Stone Canyon and the Hawkins property.

Objective 4: Eastern Corridor/Annexation

Develop a specific annexation plan that includes both commercial and residential properties for the BOT to consider.

Action Plan:

1. Once properties and land are identified as described in objective 3, prepare a written plan with mapping to present to the Board based upon location priorities and net economic benefit to the town.

Objective 5: Eastern Corridor/Annexation

Develop a strategy to communicate to the public at large that outlines specific benefits resulting from annexations and commercial development in the eastern corridor.

Action Plan:

1. Prepare an objective analysis of the pros and cons of annexing the identified properties and expansion of the planning area.
2. Based upon the results of the research and plan development as described in previous objectives above, develop a communications and public relations strategy that would outline the benefits the community at large will realize from both annexations, expansion of the planning area and additional residential construction.
3. Define how the communication strategy will be disseminated to the public.
4. Utilize the new website for polling purposes as well as part of the communication strategy.

Subcommittee: IGA and Planning Area Review

Mission Statement

The mission of the Boulder County IGA Review Committee is to determine the potential benefits and disadvantages to the Town of Lyons of amending or renewing the town's current IGA with Boulder County; and making a recommendation to the BOT based on those findings.

Key Issues

1. Boulder County, in the past, has been reluctant to amend or renew IGA's within its Super IGA.
2. It is the perception by some that Boulder County uses IGA's not as a planning document, but as a document to restrict growth and preserve open space.
3. There is a restrictive criterion the town must agree to prior to any discussion or consideration to amend or renew the agreement.
4. It is doubtful the town can achieve its commercial and residential growth objectives within its current planning area
5. To what extent did the Olsen property purchase restrict the town's residential and commercial development opportunities and what financial impact did that decision have on the town.
6. If the town proceeds with negotiations to amend or renew its agreement, what should the new planning area boundaries be and what is the correct balance between commercial and residential planning areas.
7. The question needs to be answered as to whether or not the County can purchase land in a town's planning area designated for open space without replacing the acreage lost.

Objectives

1. Legal counsel will review the current IGA Agreement to determine areas where arguments or positions can be taken for re-negotiation to renew or amend the agreement and whether or not certain properties were inadvertently left out of the planning area.
2. Objectively analyze and review the impact(s) on the town if the IGA is renewed or amended and what are the impacts if it is not and is allowed to reach its natural expiration date.
3. Define a new planning area that will achieve the long term commercial and residential needs of the town which will ultimately result in the town becoming economically sustainable.
4. Prepare and make a recommendation to the BOT as to the pros and cons of re-negotiating the IGA and whether or not to proceed with a renewal or amendment strategy with the County.
5. Develop a specific strategy and presentation to approach the County on re-negotiating the IGA based on the BOT decision.

Objective 1: IGA and Planning Area Review

Legal counsel will review the current IGA Agreement to determine areas where arguments or positions can be taken for re-negotiation to renew or amend the agreement and whether or not certain properties were inadvertently left out of the planning area.

Action Plan:

1. Submit copy of the IGA (see appendix B) to Tim Cox for legal review. The review should focus on identifying areas of the agreement whereas the town can base sound renewal or amendment arguments.
2. Review of the document with a focus on the current planning area to determine what properties may have been inadvertently removed from the planning area and which have ultimately caused a hardship for the property owner and or town.

Objective 2: IGA and Planning Area Review

Objectively analyze and review the impact(s) on the town if the IGA is renewed or amended and what are the impacts are if it is not and is allowed to reach its natural expiration date.

Action Plan:

1. Ask and answer the fundamental question – why should the town want to renew or amend the IGA?
2. Formulate an objective list of advantages and disadvantages for renewing or amending the IGA versus letting it reach its natural expiration date.
3. Analyze the advantages and or disadvantages of a renewal versus an amendment.
4. Assess the leverage the town has currently versus when the agreement expires naturally and to what extent is that an advantage to the town.
5. Determine if the town could (in reality) opt not to renew the agreement and if so what would the impact(s) be from the County.
6. Determine what the economic advantages would be to the town to let the agreement expire naturally once the County impact(s) are assessed.

Objective 3: IGA and Planning Area Review

Define a proposed new planning area that will achieve the long term commercial and residential needs of the town which will ultimately result in the town becoming economically sustainable.

Action Plan:

1. Review the proposed new planning area definition as defined by the subcommittee. (see appendix C)
2. Work with the Board of Trustees to accept, change, or modify the suggested planning area.
3. Communicate with any affected property owners to get approval of new planning area.

Objective 4: IGA and Planning Area Review

Prepare and make a recommendation to the BOT as to the pros and cons of re-negotiating the IGA and whether or not to proceed with a renewal or amendment strategy with the County.

Action Plan:

1. After review of the pro and con analysis relating to whether or not to proceed with making a recommendation to amend or renew or whether to allow the agreement to expire naturally, prepare a formal recommendation for the Board of Trustees to review, approve or reject.

Objective 5: IGA and Planning Area Review

Develop a specific strategy and presentation to approach the County on re-negotiating the IGA based on the BOT decision.

Action Plan:

1. Secure decision from Board of Trustees as to how they wish to proceed with the negotiation.
2. With consultation from the Board develop a presentation strategy that is economically and financially driven to present to the County Commissioner's.
3. Schedule a presentation (request to be on agenda) to the BOC.
4. Develop an alternative strategy in the event the request is denied.

Subcommittee: Historical, Arts, Parks and Open Space

Mission Statement

To define and implement promotional campaigns and events that focus on the town's historical attractions, artist and musicians, and parks and open space that will have a positive impact on town sales tax revenues.

Key Issues

1. The town's artists have become disenfranchised; witness the resignation of the former Lyons Arts and Humanity Council, the art sculpture located at the eastern end of downtown was removed and not replaced, and the sculpture tour has not been recreated.
2. The town's museum attracts less than 1000 visitors per year.
3. The town's fine art stores have experienced a decline in business.
4. The clarifier project has stalled.
5. While our current town events are very successful, they seem to appeal only to local residents.

Objectives:

1. Implement programs that will emphasize our artist community and attract visitors and tourist that have interest in this area.
2. Make a long term commitment and investment in the town museum to become a multi purpose facility and High Street anchor that will attract both locals and tourist/visitors.
3. Work with local art stores to determine needs and desires of visitors/tourist who are interested in art products and services.
4. Work with town's Parks and Recreation department to analyze current events, determine how events may be expanded and improved upon, and how they may be marketed to expand their appeal beyond the local community.
5. Develop an overall trail plan for the Town of Lyons that will position the town as having one of the most extensive trail systems in the state of Colorado and will ultimately attract tourists and visitors from around the state.
6. Hire a Director of Event Planning and Communication to focus on the implementation and marketing of current events, identifying and planning new events and implementing a region wide communication plan.

Objective 1: Historical, Arts, Parks and Open Space

Implement programs that will emphasize/promote our artist community and attract visitors and tourist to the town.

Action Plan:

1. Reinstate the sculpture trail by incorporating a juried process.
2. Define the necessary steps and cost to reinstate and finish the clarifier project.
3. Work with local artist to implement an annual art festival on High Street.
4. Work with LAHC to identify needs of community and determine what will attract tourist/visitors to town.
5. Work with LAHC, Board of Trustees, and cross section of local artists to determine what sculptures could be displayed throughout town and the best locations for display to attract the highest volume of residents, tourists and visitor's.
6. Prepare an estimated budget for sculpture display.
7. Work with the marketing committee to design advertising campaign promoting the artist community and relevant businesses.

Objective 2: Historical, Arts, Parks and Open Space

Make a long term commitment and investment in the town museum to become a multi purpose facility and High Street anchor that will attract both locals and tourist/visitors.

1. Establish a committee that will redefine what the museum can and should be as a multi purpose facility that will serve a wide variety of audiences.

2. Prepare a preliminary facility design and function definition for Board and public review.
3. Prepare a pro forma analysis of projected event revenues, ongoing operating expenses and risk assessment to the town.
4. Conduct community survey through new website to determine level of community interest and their willingness to financially support the project.
5. Prepare construction cost estimates.
6. Work with the funding committee to explore the wide variety of potential funding options.
7. Implement a community funding drive to support the redesign efforts.
8. Gain commitment from Board of Trustees to fund the project through the budget process.

Objective 3: Historical, Arts, Parks and Open Space

Work with local art stores to determine needs and desires of visitors/tourist who are interested in art products and services.

Action Plan:

1. Review the results of the marketing survey to determine needs/wants of tourist and visitors as they relate to arts, crafts, history etc.
2. Prepare a summary of the report and share with local businesses to assist them in adjusting their inventory and products and services they offer that will attract more local's and tourist.
3. Work with marketing committee to develop an advertising message and campaign that will help in attracting new customers.

Objective 4: Historical, Arts, Parks and Open Space

Work with the town's Parks and Recreation department to analyze current events, determine how events may be expanded and improved upon, and how they may be marketed to expand their appeal beyond local community.

Action Plan:

1. Conduct an extensive review of each current event to determine the impact it has on the town (its History), the net cost to the town, amount of revenue it generates for the department, the estimated number of out of town visitor's it attracts, and the perception of the participants of the event.
2. Analyze the results of the review and determine make a recommendation as to which events should be expanded and which ones should be eliminated.
3. Based upon the analysis, develop a list of new events that should be considered for implementation and funding e.g. chain saw wood carving added to outdoor games, chalk walk on High Street, Marti Gras, expand fall festival to become Oktober Fest.

4. Consider merging certain events to make both events more profitable e.g. merging the Lyons Duck Race with the Lyons Outdoor Games.
5. Develop a plan and budget to expand on those events that have the appeal to markets outside the Town of Lyons.
6. Work with Parks and Recreation Department and Marketing Committee to develop a marketing plan, including budgets, to promote Lyons as the town to visit if you are looking for low-cost fun entertainment.
7. Continue to work with existing cultural events and volunteer sponsors to support the Parks and Recreation efforts.
8. Once title is received from LVP for pond areas implement a variety of fishing and water based activities for the children in town.
9. Work with marketing to ensure a new marquee announcing and promoting town activities is part of the overall plan.

Objective 5: Historical, Arts, Parks and Open Space

Develop an overall trail plan for the Town of Lyons that will position the town as having one of the most extensive trail systems in the state of Colorado that will ultimately attract tourists and visitors from around the state.

Action Plan:

1. List and map all trails (including social) in Lyons and the surrounding area.
2. Identify the gaps in the trail system.
3. Develop a plan to connect the “gaps” and use the plan to serve as the document to work with local, county and state agencies to support and fund the completion of the trail system.
4. Work with the marketing committee and parks and recreation department to develop a trail marketing plan to promote the town’s current trail system and future plans.

Objective 6: Historical, Arts, Parks and Open Space

Hire a Director of Event Planning and Communication to focus on the implementation and marketing of current events, identifying and planning new events and implementing a region wide communication plan.

Action Plan:

1. Prepare a job description that includes the above qualifications as well as grant writing capabilities.
2. Conduct a pro forma analysis to determine the net cost of the new hire based on estimates of new revenues he/she will bring to the town, grants that he/she can secure, capacity to make staff more efficient and focused on other activities that can generate revenue to the town and contribute to the overall economic development goals.

3. Prepare a budget for the position.
4. Advertise for the position with a priority given to potential local candidates.

Subcommittee: Information Technology

Mission Statement

Utilize Information Technology as the backbone infrastructure from which all local business and economic development concepts can springboard, and to provide local businesses an incentive to operate in town by providing the businesses and their customer's internet access.

Key Issues

1. There is an overall lack of technical knowledge as to how to implement technology community wide.
2. In the past, there has been a resistance to adopt certain high frequency technologies for fear of potential health issues.
3. It is difficult to conduct and quantify a cost benefit analysis on technology that is directed at attracting tourists, visitors, businesses and residents.
4. It is difficult to get business owners to cooperate and agree to ensure the overall success of any marketing campaign that may be implemented.
5. There will be a challenge to educate the public on the benefits of advancing this technology.
6. There may be some resistance to promoting "back office" type of businesses.

Objectives

1. Provide wireless high speed internet service that "blankets" the entire town for use by residents, businesses and visitors/tourist.
2. Encourage businesses and other members to actively participate in core Town of Lyons marketing campaigns.
3. Provide internet infrastructure that will attract "back office" businesses
4. Take the "pulse" of the community as to their interest in installing a cell phone tower for improved personal communications and business operations

Objective 1: Information Technology

Provide wireless high speed internet service that "blankets" the entire town for use by residents, businesses and visitors/tourist.

Action Plan:

1. Define and implement the appropriate infrastructure to support a town wide wireless capability.
2. Install wireless antennas in the quantity sufficient to blanket the town.

3. Research third-party wireless hardware manufacturers to analyze cost.
4. Place “free wireless internet access” signs throughout the town.
5. Define the system so that it will “hijack” all visitor’s browsers to force viewing of Town of Lyons updated web page showing ads of businesses, coupons, services etc.
6. Provide free or subsidized WiMax service to all chamber members and other business owners.
7. The core of the town would have to be live with internet access 24/7.

Objective 2: Information Technology

Encourage businesses and other members to actively participate in core Town of Lyons marketing campaigns.

Action Plan:

1. Work with the Chamber to provide details of advertising campaigns to promote free internet services to businesses and residents.
2. Work with Chamber to conduct a survey of members to determine level of interest for free internet access with requirement to view ads.
3. Members would be provided free internet access but would be required view ads, but could bypass ads for a service fee.
4. Work with Chamber to determine actual value of forcing visitors to town website with ads.
5. Clients who opt to participate in advertising would be required to keep site up to date on promotions/specials.

Objective 3: Information Technology

Provide internet infrastructure that will attract “back office” businesses.

NOTE: I would like to refer to a report that was prepared by John Burke some time ago that addressed this issue and the potential “back office” operations have in contributing to the overall economic growth of the town.

He noted that Main Street is the town’s prime business location, but that is not sufficient to make it a prime retail location. He stated that Lyons is a bedroom community situated adjacent to the retail and employment centers of Boulder and Longmont. Consequently, our local population tends not to buy locally. The Main Street traffic flow may be heavy, but it is also unfortunately destination –oriented. Retail stores having proven themselves to be an inadequate path to economic renaissance, so the town might be wise to enthusiastically embrace a mix of commercial enterprises in the 400 block of Main Street.

He gave an example of what would happen if another 10 companies (similar to his) located in town.

- At current rates they would generate approximately \$3,500,000 annually in payroll and benefits, primarily to locals.
- The companies would generate about 120 jobs. Many locals would shift from commuting to Boulder or Longmont or Denver to work minutes from home.
- Ten offices of similar size could fit into +/- 15,000 square feet on one level.
- From this modest change in the commercial economic vitality, commercial property taxes and locally available services would increase while coffee shops and restaurants would have their seasonality even out. With the additional people and activity downtown and solid retail stores would find Lyons more attractive.

Finally, he accurately pointed out that it is tough to argue that Lyons should encourage retail shops in a failed retail district without also considering the potential impact of software development companies and an insurance back office and a management consulting company and a few cyber-businesses can have in a revitalized downtown commercial district.

Action Plan:

1. Invest in the appropriate infrastructure that will support high speed internet access that is capable of supporting back office operations such as direct marketing companies, customer service companies, technical support companies etc.
2. Provide local businesses the incentive to operate in town utilizing dual fiber backbone technology.
3. Promote the town having high speed internet services that could support back office businesses.
4. Negotiate access to the fastest internet provider available (Quest)
5. Initiate discussions with Quest to tap into the dual fiber backbone that is rumored to pass through Lyons to Estes Park.

Objective 4: Information Technology

Take the “pulse” of the community as to their interest in installing a cell phone tower for improved personal communications and business operations.

Action Plan:

1. Hold a series of public hearings on the issue.
2. Conduct public survey on the new web site.
3. Insert the issue in the monthly newsletter.
4. Prepare a pros and cons position statement for the public to review via the above.
5. Work with the Chamber to conduct a survey of their members to determine their position on the issue.

6. Take a pro active look at potential tower sites that would have the least visual impact on the town.

Subcommittee: Funding, Incentives, Grants

The Funding, Incentives, and Grants Subcommittee of the greater Lyons Economic Development Council is a temporary and advisory committee committed to the establishment of an active and ongoing program of identifying and providing Funding, Incentives and Grants available to Town of Lyons residents, volunteer groups, associations, and local businesses. In addition, the subcommittee shall assist the larger Economic Development Council in the development of a comprehensive Economic Development Plan; to attract, sustain and promote new and existing services, amenities and public improvements to better serve town residents and businesses.

The Subcommittee shall help to identify appropriate private, local, county and state entities from which to secure financial assistance. The Committee agrees that the future viability and vitality of the town will be largely dependent upon the establishment of an active program of grant writing, business education and the further development of all available resources that the town has at its disposal to meet those ends. The F.I.G subcommittee shall report directly to the town Administrator and work at the pleasure of the Lyons Board of Trustees.

F.I.G shall assist the town in conducting forward-looking research, analysis, and for developing strategies on the fundamental economic issues facing the town. The long term objectives of the committee are: To better the quality of life and level of services available to all Lyons residents and user groups. To further develop the necessary economic infrastructure through public and private partnerships to attract and create public amenities, jobs and investment; and ultimately, to help the town develop solutions to achieve long-term growth, equity and economic sustainability.

The following interim report will illustrate the immediate challenges and short-term objectives of the town in achieving these long term goals. In addition, this report will elucidate the necessary action steps and summary recommendations of the subcommittee deemed necessary to implement a successful economic development plan and facilitate these long term goals.

Mission Statement

The Funding, Incentives and Grants Committee will actively work to identify various funding mechanisms required to successfully implement the various projects identified in the EDC Plan. They will actively work with appropriate private, local, county and state entities to secure financial assistance to the town. They will also be responsible for providing forward-looking research, fiscal analysis and strategies on the fundamental issues facing the town.

Key Issues

1. The town's current budget can not support the investment required to implement the EDC Plan.
2. Current and projected town revenues will not support the implementation of the EDC Plan on a large scale.
3. Based on the projected decline in revenues related to residential building permits, there will be pressure to reduce operating cost and not invest in economic development.
4. The town does not have a dedicated grant writer to focus on projects related specifically to economic development.
5. Until recently, there has been no plan that specifically defined the projects that needed to be funded that would have a direct economic impact on the town. Grant writing has been performed on an as needed (reactive) basis versus a plan driven proactive basis.
6. There has been no clear understanding of the financing tools that are available to the town.
7. There has been public resistance in the past to use revenue generating concepts such as URA's, TIF, DDA, BID etc.
8. The town has not seriously considered providing incentives to attract developers and or private investors to invest in the economy of the town.
9. The number of "for sale" signs and failed business ventures of recent years in the downtown core creates the negative perception of a downward business climate and a decaying downtown, thus inhibiting capital inflows and investment in times of need.
10. The current national economic climate and tight credit and commercial lending requirements will be the overarching challenge to any local economic development efforts, forcing many small communities to approach economic development in creative and unconventional manners.
11. Lyons has the lowest sales tax rate (3.00%) of all major cities/towns in Boulder County. Other cities/towns in the County range from 3.275% to 3.75%. For example, Nederland has a sales and use tax of 3.75%. Nederland's sales and use tax collections are 50% higher than Lyons but they have 20% fewer residents than Lyons.
12. Lyons has a serious sales tax leakage problem evidenced by the fact that most Lyons residents choose to make their retail purchases in the neighboring communities of Longmont (10 miles away) and/or Boulder (20 miles away).
13. Due to the geographical setting of the town and the fact that the town is surrounded by Boulder County Open Space, green belts, and buffer zones, the opportunities for growth and a growth-based local economy are severely limited.
14. There is no single funding mechanism that will meet all the economic or public improvement needs of the town. Most likely, a mix of funding mechanisms will be needed to promote the desired "self help" approach that the town needs.

Objectives

1. Reverse the negative perception that Main Street is in decline and create incentives for local business owners to improve the appearance of buildings visible from the public right-of-way. The main thrust of economic development and public improvements for the next 5 years should be the enhancement of Main Street as outlined in the scope of the Downtown Improvement Plan and evidenced in the Streetscape improvement Plan. The replacement of the water and sewer mains and the resurfacing of Main Street should be a priority and done in carefully planned phases with moderate investment to start.
2. To counter the overarching and ever tightening credit market, the Lyons business community must approach economic development and revitalization in creative and unconventional ways. The success of revitalization efforts will be pre-determined by increasing stakeholder involvement and volunteerism in the process.
3. In the absence of any significant anticipated sales tax growth in the near term, Lyons must increase the 3.0% sales tax rate that it currently enjoys to help stimulate real, long term growth in sales tax revenues.
4. The town should conduct a sales tax leakage study to determine the amount of retail dollars and foregone sales tax collections lost annually to our neighboring communities of Longmont and Boulder. Provided that the study quantifies the types and amounts of sales tax leakage, it would also serve to inform potential investors about potential business opportunities within the town.
5. Lyons' economic viability and future growth is severely hindered due to the natural constraints of geography and typography, and by virtue of our being surrounded by Boulder County Open Space. Therefore, we must secure some economic benefit from existing IGA's currently in place with Boulder County if we are to renew our participation in these IGA's when they expire. Past efforts to amend our planning boundary have been met with limited success and have yet to produce any real economic benefit to the town, except for the over abundance of beautiful open space around us. It is time to rebuild our relationship with Boulder County by constructively engaging them with an entirely new approach to Lyons' much needed economic development and future growth.
6. Since no single funding mechanism or district can be relied upon to meet all of the needs and costs of all the proposed town improvements; Additional outside consultants and/or a part time Economic Development Coordinator/Grant Writer will be needed to address financial issues and challenges as they emerge.
7. Identify specific incentives the town could offer to attract developers, business owners, and private investors to invest in specific sales tax and employment generating projects.

8. Identify the various development authorities and tax increment financing tools the town could implement to fund economic development.
9. Assist in the creation of the appropriate legal entity to receive and disburse private, local, county and state funds.
10. Work with the town's local banks to create a revolving-loan fund to assist businesses in securing small bank loans and grants.
11. Assist in creating a Community Economic Development and Grant Writing Advisory Board or any other appropriate development authority designed to outlive and perpetuate the objectives of the Economic Development Council.

Objective 1: Funding, Incentives, Grants
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Reverse the negative perception that Main Street is in decline and create incentives for local business owners to improve the appearance of buildings visible from the public right-of-way. The main thrust of economic development and public improvements for the next 5 years should be the enhancement of Main Street as outlined in the scope of the Downtown Improvement Plan and evidenced in the Streetscape Improvement Plan. The replacement of the water and sewer mains and the resurfacing of Main Street should be a priority and done in carefully planned phases with moderate investment to start.

Action Plan:

1. Have the town BOT, Staff and Finance Director determine project priorities and town budgetary capabilities in regards to the TIP 2007 2030 grant and the implementation of components of the Downtown Improvement Plan.
2. Get a written commitment from the Colorado Department of Transportation to obtain additional funds for the resurfacing of Main Street above the initial amount allotted to the town to cover the increased cost of materials, i.e. Asphalt.
3. Make sure that Lyons becomes a Certified Local Government.
4. Work with local businesses to educate them about new and existing state and federal programs to improve the condition and character of their properties. Encourage local businesses to participate in these programs which provide income tax credits for companies and businesses engaged in restoration and re-vitalization efforts.

For example, the Colorado Enterprise Zone Program and Colorado Main Street Program both provide for investment tax credits for the renovation of historic buildings and vacant land as well as a host of other eligible re-vitalization efforts. Additionally, state and federal investment tax credits are available for the renovation of historic properties land marked by a Certified Local Government.

Eligible commercial and income producing properties can qualify for up to 20% federal investment tax credit, and/or an additional 20% state investment tax credit on the total rehabilitation costs to their properties.

5. Create a local Enhanced Sales Tax Incentive program which provides for share-back of retail sales generated, to local retailers or developers, as re-imbusement for capital projects that meet the criteria of being “public or public related improvements”.

-Up to 100% of newly generated sales tax can be “shared-back” to offset the costs of improvements.

6. Create a local revolving loan fund administered by the town to provide small loans to businesses for façade improvements, interior renovations, and small business equipment purchases. The size of the loans should be very small, \$500-\$1,000.00 and should bear a very low interest rate. Eligibility and loan amounts should be based on need and past Re-payment performance.

Objective 2: Funding, Incentives, Grants
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To counter the overarching and ever- tightening credit market, the Lyons business community must approach economic development and re-vitalization in creative and unconventional ways. The success of re-vitalization efforts will be pre-determined by increasing stakeholder involvement and volunteerism in the process.

Action Plan:

1. Support a town resolution/ordinance for the creation of an informal and advisory Lyons Commercial Business Association as the necessary first step towards the eventual creation of a Statutory Downtown Business Authority or Downtown Development Authority.
2. Delay the creation of the DBA or DDA until the aforementioned Association enjoys enough popular support, institutional organization and chooses to muster a majority vote among themselves of qualified electors residing, owning or leasing property within the “central business district” to create the authority.
3. Engage and update the Association as to the timeline and implementation of all Downtown Improvement Plan projects and associated streetscape improvements so as to minimize negative or hostile reactions to town sponsored public improvements, and to garner support for related volunteer efforts.

Objective 3: Funding, Incentives, Grants

In the absence of any significant anticipated sales tax growth in the near term, Lyons must increase the 3.0% sales tax rate that it currently enjoys to help stimulate real, long term growth in sales tax revenues.

Action Plan:

- 1- Increase Lyons' sales tax to at least 3.75% in accordance with C.R.S. 29-2-112.
- 2- Dedicate the increased sales taxes to a town- administered Sales and Use Tax Capital Improvement Fund or Economic Development Fund..
- 3- Have Finance Director Saeger determine the amount of potential revenue bonds that could be issued based on the increase in the sales tax rate.
- 4- Issue revenue bonds for capital improvements and for operations and maintenance for downtown Improvements. The revenue bonds may be authorized and issued by ordinance or resolution of the BOT. (C.R.S 29-2-112).

Objective 4: Funding, Incentives, Grants

The town should conduct a sales tax leakage study to determine the amount of retail dollars and foregone sales tax collections lost annually to our neighboring communities of Longmont and Boulder. Provided that the study quantifies the types and amounts of sales tax leakage, it would also serve to inform potential investors about potential business opportunities within the town.

Action Plan:

1. Secure the limited engagement of the Colorado Community Revitalization Association (CCRA) as consultants.
- 2- Utilize the knowledge and expertise of the town's Planning and Community Development Commission in regards to the methodology and content of the Study.

Objective 5: Funding, Incentives, Grants

The town must secure some economic benefit from existing IGA's currently in place with Boulder County if we are to renew our participation in these IGA's when they expire. Past efforts to amend our planning boundary have been met with limited success and have yet to produce any real economic benefit to the town, except for the over abundance of beautiful open space around us.

It is time to rebuild our relationship with Boulder County by constructively engaging them with an entirely new approach to Lyons' much needed economic development and future growth. A new approach could prove to be mutually beneficial to both parties and be consistent with the spirit and intent of the original 2002 Intergovernmental Agreement and the 2003 Boulder County Countywide Coordinated Comprehensive Development Plan Intergovernmental Agreement.

Action Plan:

- 1- Engage Boulder County Commissioners in discussing the concept of sales tax revenue sharing with the city of Longmont under provisions of Section 5, Boulder County Countywide Coordinated Comprehensive Development Plan Intergovernmental Agreement dated October 16, 2003.
- 2- Many communities within the county already have similar agreements with each other, i.e. Thornton and Westminster and Louisville and Superior.
- 3- Begin discussions with Boulder County Commissioners after the sales tax leakage study is completed.

Objective 6: Funding, Incentives, Grants

Since no single funding mechanism or district can be relied upon to meet all of the needs and costs of all the proposed town improvements; Additional outside consultants and/or a part time Economic Development Coordinator/Grant Writer will be needed to address financial issues and challenges as they emerge. (See appendix F for alternate financing mechanisms)

Action Plan:

- 1- Engage the services of the Colorado Community Revitalization Association (CCRA) consultants after project priorities have been identified.

- 2- Hire the services of an Economic Development Coordinator/Grant writer on a part- time or as needed retainer basis.
1. Assist in creating a Community Economic Development and Grant Writing Advisory Board or any other appropriate development authority designed to outlive and perpetuate the objectives of the Economic Development Council.

Action Plans: Funding, Incentives, Grants (Objectives 7-11)

1. Recommend the BOT approve the establishment of a town Economic Development Fund that will initially be funded by the following. (dispersment of the funds would require BOT approval)
 - a. Contributions (transfer of funds) from the Water and Sewer Utility funds at a rate of 1-3% of the funds year end balance.
 - b. Contribution of \$50,000 from the General Fund
 - c. Proceeds resulting from the sale of the old water treatment facility
2. Recommend the BOT approve the following incentives for developers, new and or existing business owners, and private investors to invest in the town which investments will directly result in new incremental sales tax revenue or net new employment with a special emphasis on those businesses that will provide essential services.
 - a. Percentage sales tax exemptions for a designated period of time.
 - b. Discounted or free water, sewer and electric taps.
 - c. Discounted water, sewer and electric rates for a designated period of time.
 - d. When and if available, lease town owned property at discounted rates
 - e. Provide services to those property owners who agree to annex into town.
3. Establish a Downtown Development Authority (DDA) using tax increment financing via a sales tax or property tax assessment to fund public improvements within the DDA district.
4. Research other urban and or development authorities that could be established in other parts of town (i.e. eastern corridor) to raise funds for economic development projects.
5. Work with DOLA to find economic development granting sources.
6. Work with the town's local banks to establish an effective public awareness program to publicize the details relating to the Community Re-investment Program.
7. Work with the town's local banks to establish a mechanism to communicate and disseminate information to potential investors on the Small Business Association Loan programs.
8. Recommend the need to hire a part time grant writer and prepare an RFP to begin in January 09.
9. Develop a data base of funding sources, local business data, demographics, and other related data that will support the decision making process for those considering starting or expanding a business in the town.

In closing, the EDC would like to once again emphasize that this report is a work in progress and will be continually refined as the process moves forward and feedback is received from the Board of Trustees and the public at large.

The EDC recommends that after the review of this document by the Board of Trustees a Saturday workshop be scheduled for an open discussion of the many recommendations the EDC has made and how the document should proceed to a final plan. The EDC recommends the PCDC be involved in the workshop and it be open to the public.