

LARIMER COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN

AUGUST 30, 2004

Prepared by
The Employees of Larimer County

INTRODUCTION

THE LARIMER COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN IS A CATALYST FOR POSITIVE CHANGE, ENHANCED ORGANIZATIONAL AND PERSONAL POTENTIAL, AND THE REBUILDING OF TRUST.

The people of Larimer County Government have a shared vision upon which their individual roles and responsibilities are based. It involves a clear commitment to the citizens of Larimer County for whom they work. They also share a customer-driven mission. There is clear commitment to performance of their jobs to protect and enhance the services and directions that are in the best interests of all the citizens of Larimer County.

The *Larimer County Strategic Plan* is to be owned and used by all County employees and elected officials as a frame of reference for action. It provides the philosophical direction for policy and procedure decisions, budget, and individual division operating plans. It helps all members of the organization to address the difficult challenges the County faces on a daily basis and will face in the future.

Larimer County employees are members of a team that accepts its public stewardship responsibilities with a positive, open, and can-do attitude. The members of the Larimer County team know that sincerity, honesty, and respect serve as a strong foundation upon which effective partnerships are built at all levels inside and outside the organization. With an understanding of our common history, the major issues to be addressed, and a spirit of collaboration, our destiny is truly manageable.

HOW TO USE THIS STRATEGIC PLAN

This plan is to provide direction for the County's leadership role in our organization and community and as a guide for allocation of limited resources for service delivery. By planning for the future, Larimer County is better prepared to address problems and opportunities as they arise.

The Plan supports the organization by:

- Stimulating forward thinking and clarifying future direction.
- Building teamwork and expertise.
- Solving organizational issues
- Improving performance

**OUR
PLANNING
TEAM**

Elected Officials of Larimer County
Chief Deputies
Senior Management Team
Employees of Larimer County

**THE STAKE
HOLDERS**

Employees of Larimer County
Citizens of Larimer County

THE PROCESS

September 9, 2003 – Facilitated meeting with the Leadership Team that included Elected Officials, Chief Deputies, and Senior Management Team

- Provided overview of the last strategic plan
- Discussed and defined the current Slogan and Vision Statement
- Identified topics for strategic initiatives
- Wrote Provocative Propositions for each identified topic

November/December - Focus Groups - All county employees invited to attend a two hour focus group meeting.

Agenda for the meetings included:

- Overview and rationale of the process
- Overview of Appreciative Inquiry
- Questions for discussion in small groups
- Invitation to attend February Integration meeting

December/January - Data Collection

February 4, 2004 - Full day facilitated integration session with the Leadership Team as well as a representative group of county employees from throughout the organization.

March – April 2004 – Compile data and integrate into the provocative propositions.

April 15 and 16 2004 – Leadership Team Retreat

May 2004 – Implementation Team prepares critical issue identification, prioritization and action statements.

June 2004 - First draft of plan

VISION AND SLOGAN

Larimer County will add value to the lives of its citizens by:

- Building Partnerships
- Being Customer Driven
- Empowering People to Take Responsibility
- Being a Fulfilling and Enjoyable Place to Work .
- Being A Good Steward Of Public Resources

*LARIMER COUNTY - COMMITTED TO
EXCELLENCE*

MISSION STATEMENT

The people of Larimer County Government, consistent with our shared vision, are dedicated to delivering the services mandated by law and determined by the Elected Officials to be necessary to protect the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Larimer County. In doing so, we hold to the following principles:

- To work for the benefit of all the citizens of Larimer County and consistently take the customers' interest and their changing needs into consideration when making decisions;
- To hold the citizens' funds in trust, and seek to make the most efficient use of those dollars by employing them prudently, honestly, and without favor;
- To maintain and enhance our skills, knowledge and professionalism in order to serve the residents of Larimer County in a competent and effective manner;
- To respect and uphold the rights of all individuals, regardless of ethnicity, race, gender, political beliefs or socioeconomic status;
- To seek constant improvement in the provision of services through innovation, integrity and competence;
- To incorporate positive character values in our daily activities.

PROVOCATIVE PROPOSITIONS

Provocative Proposition 1 **“We have a vision; we plan”**

A powerful shared vision drives planning for the way we do business now and the future. This vision is highly responsive to community needs; springs from a process that includes citizens, employees and effected interests; anticipates the future; is flexible and adoptable; is inspired and difficult, but realistic and doable; and challenges employees to engage in creative problem solving and to excel.

Provocative Proposition 2 **“We customize our services”** **“We are customer centered; there is no wrong door”**

Larimer County programs, services, and service levels are responsive to and prioritized based on: community expectations and desires; legislative mandates; and the health, safety and welfare of the citizenry. The majority of Larimer County citizens acknowledge the value of services provided, and willingly funds them.

All Larimer County services are grounded in respect and concern for customers. Services are customer centered rather than program centered. By promoting employee excellence, Larimer County provides the best possible service delivery. Employees take responsibility to personally assist customers. Customers walk away feeling listened to understood and well assisted.

Provocative Proposition 3 **“We work well together”**

Cooperation, trust and teamwork are hallmarks of Larimer County government. The County is a holistic organization, ensuring efficient and effective delivery of services. Data and resources are shared while duplication of effort is eliminated.

Provocative Proposition 4 **“We value and invest in our employees”**

Larimer County, in its commitment to excellence, values its employees and their abilities and is committed to their safety, security and well being through effective staffing levels, job enrichment and competitive compensation, benefits and retirement programs. We maintain productive and satisfied employees that serve the community in an effective and efficient manner.

Provocative Proposition 5 **“We communicate”**

We have a culture that values communication and the importance of relationships. We take every opportunity to actively solicit and gather information from our staff and community. We effectively use all forms of communication to listen and respond through education and outreach. Communication is coordinated throughout the county to make information easy to find.

ACTION PLAN

Provocative Proposition 1

“We have a vision; we plan”

A powerful shared vision drives planning for the way we do business now and in the future. This vision is highly responsive to community needs; springs from a process that includes citizens, employees and effected interests; anticipates the future; is flexible and adaptable; is inspired and difficult, but realistic and doable; and challenges employees to engage in creative problem solving and to excel.

| Strategic Objectives | Specific Actions | Staff Lead | Time Line | Resources Needed |
|--|---|---|---|------------------|
| <p>To fully define and integrate the County Vision into all aspects of County services and programs.</p> | <p>Re: The County Vision Statement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add Stewardship to the County Vision Statement • Evaluate and prioritize programs and activities. • Hire and evaluate employees • Evaluate Service Proposals and budget decisions. | <p>County Manager</p> | <p>On-Going</p> | |
| <p>Incorporate futuring and long-range planning into county management processes.</p> | <p>Develop and utilize long range plans to guide organizational priorities.</p> <p>Identify funding sources to implement plans.</p> <p>Management processes (policies & procedures) will support long-term planning</p> <p>Plans to be developed, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications & Technology • Financing Operations & Infrastructure • Facilities • Services • Others | <p>County Manager with SMT & Chief Deputies</p> | <p>Service Plans: by 2006</p> <p>Operations and Facilities: by 2007</p> | |

Provocative Proposition 2

“We customize our services” and “We are customer centered; there is no wrong door”

Larimer County programs, services, and service levels are responsive to and prioritized based on: community expectations and desires; legislative mandates; and the health, safety and welfare of the citizenry. The majority of Larimer County citizens acknowledge the value of services provided, and willingly funds them.

All Larimer County services are grounded in respect and concern for customers. Services are customer centered rather than program centered. By promoting employee excellence, Larimer County provides the best possible service delivery. Employees take responsibility to personally assist customers. Customers walk away feeling listened to, understood and well assisted

| Strategic Objectives | Specific Actions | Staff Lead | Time Line | Resources Needed |
|--|--|---|------------------------------------|------------------|
| Make County Government decision making and provision of services open, visible, transparent and accountable. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Develop a visible open decision making process (which shows purpose and intended outcomes) for providing all services. 2) Enhance communications of County services and purpose for those services such as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Enhanced web sites b) School outreach c) Speakers Bureau d) Etc 3) Insure services delivered are reaching planned levels and objectives. | County Manager and Leadership Team Community Information Manager | Start: Immediately On-Going | |
| Countywide Customer Service System | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a CS System that would: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Set CS standards & expectations b. Reinforce proposition of customer service c. Reward & recognize CS excellence d. Provide appropriate training e. Incorporate a feedback loop to provide modifications and improvements | Human Resources Director / SMT | Dec 2005 | |
| Develop active feedback mechanisms to listen to the public's needs, concerns, questions, priorities. | | Community Information Manager | Dec 2005 | |

Provocative Proposition 3
“We work well together”

Cooperation, trust and teamwork are hallmarks of Larimer County government. The County is a holistic organization, ensuring efficient and effective delivery of services. Data and resources are shared while duplication of effort is eliminated.

| Strategic Objectives | Specific Actions | Staff Lead | Time Line | Resources Needed |
|--|---|------------------------------------|-----------|------------------|
| Develop integrated systems that focus on the customers needs. | Emphasize: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships (See Vision Statement) • Knowledge sharing • Resource sharing • Non-duplicative roles & functions (effective organizational structures) • Process to examine services for potential efficiencies. • Employee communication on behalf of customer | County Manager / Elected Officials | | |
| Develop a process for objective and reasonable resource allocation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an outcome based resource allocation • Everyone knows and participates using same rules • Everyone understands how decisions are made | Budget Manager | | |
| Breakdown walls between departments and offices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage cross functional activities • Create more opportunities and environment for employee interaction | County Manager | | |

Provocative Proposition 4

“We value and invest in our employees.”

Larimer County, in its commitment to excellence, values its employees and their abilities and is committed to their safety, security and well being through effective staffing levels, job enrichment and competitive compensation, benefits and retirement programs. We maintain productive and satisfied employees that serve the community in an effective and efficient manner.

| Strategic Objectives | Specific Actions | Lead Staff | Time Line | Resources Needed |
|---|--|-------------|-----------|------------------|
| Hire and retain highly qualified and productive employees. | Provide a competitive compensation and benefit program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reexamine competitive percentile in an open and informative process Evaluate current benefits plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Survey employees to see what is important to them ○ Tailored flexible benefits package – cafeteria style | HR Director | | |
| Provide a work environment that is enjoyable, challenging and fulfilling. | Survey employees to see what is important to them. Provide flexible staffing alternatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • such as, flex time, telecommute, part-time, sabbaticals • Offer job rotation at same salary level Recognition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly recognition within individual departments, agencies, offices focus on everyday employee just doing normal job not necessarily above and beyond • Highlight employees to community Provide resources/tools to efficiently complete job <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic review of tasks to eliminate redundancy, unnecessary paperwork | HR Director | | |
| We celebrate | Annual employee fests Picnics | | | |

| | | | | |
|------------------------|---|-------------|--|--|
| | <p>Interdepartmental interactions</p> <p>Create lounge/snack area in new buildings</p> <p>County event at Events Center</p> | | | |
| Investing in employees | <p>Maintain effective staffing levels (possibly move to "customize services" – balance between quality of service with resources available)</p> <p>Providing training – include training in budget</p> <p>Developing potential (coaching, advancement.etc)</p> <p>Career ladders and lateral movement</p> | HR Director | | |

Provocative Proposition 5
“We communicate”

We have a culture that values communication and the importance of relationships. We take every opportunity to actively solicit and gather information from our staff and community. We effectively use all forms of communication to listen and respond through education and outreach. Communication is coordinated throughout the county to make information easy to find.

| Strategic Objectives | Specific Actions | Lead Staff | Time Line | Resources Needed |
|---|--|---|-----------|------------------|
| <p>1. Optimize communication opportunities and methods to effectively reach intended audiences/customers.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a program aimed at promoting awareness of County Services so that employees are more informed ambassadors. • Develop a marketing plan and program aimed at promoting awareness about Larimer County government. | <p>Community Information Manager</p> | | |
| <p>2. Encourage a culture that values communication</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rewarding exemplary communication efforts • Using multiple communication channels is the norm • Balance communication without information overload • Develop a communication team • Create an internal ambassador program • Make better use of county network to disseminate timely information | <p>Community Information Manager / IT</p> | | |