



Niwot Local Improvement District Advisory Committee
STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2021

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Adopted December 2016 by the
Niwot Local Improvement District Advisory Committee
(Originally adopted December 2011; revised December 2016)

www.niwot.com/LID/

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Niwot, Colorado, has a population of more than 4,000 people in semi-rural, unincorporated Boulder County. In 1992, the Old Town Niwot Local Improvement District (LID, or District) was established, levying a 0.5% sales tax within LID boundaries for streets, curbing, sidewalks, and lighting. In 2007, voters approved an additional 0.5% sales tax for all original LID functions and for production and distribution of informational products and materials for the District. Since Niwot is not an incorporated town or municipality, the LID sales tax revenue is the only direct tax funding that Niwot receives. The Boulder County Board of County Commissioners sits as the Board of Directors (the Board) for the LID, and the Niwot LID Advisory Committee makes funding recommendations to the Board.

Need for a strategic planning process in 2011 emerged with availability of substantial additional revenue due to full repayment of long-term debt on a sizeable bond, as well as a transportation studies that resulted in recommendations to address issues such as parking and connectivity. Strategic decisions and recommendations to the Board are necessary, both to implement priority transportation recommendations and to continue funding important ongoing priorities, such as promotion and other support of public events in Niwot.

The Strategic Plan for 2017-2021, is a minor revision of the five-year plan for 2012-2016 and was adopted in late 2016. The Plan defines a mission, vision, and values, as well as activities, objectives, and goals for the three funding categories.

- **Mission Statement:** *The Niwot Local Improvement District promotes economic vitality to serve, facilitate, and sustain a robust business base in Niwot's commercial district, through prioritized investment of sales tax revenues.*
- **Vision Statement:** *The Niwot Local Improvement District Advisory Committee is a catalyst for a thriving business district that sustains the unique, authentic culture of Niwot.*

Defined and prioritized funding criteria for Infrastructure, Marketing and Promotions, and Economic Development will support strategic outcomes to be achieved by the LID, and priorities identified by Advisory Committee members will help drive economic prosperity in Niwot's business community.

The Strategic Plan will be the foundation for funding decisions and will drive longer-term strategies for the LID over the next five years, and concomitant goals and objectives will be reflected in the annual budget.

BACKGROUND

Niwot, Colorado, is located in unincorporated Boulder County, nine miles from Boulder and seven miles from Longmont. With a population of more than 4,000 people in approximately four square miles, Niwot is a semi-rural and historically quaint community that maintains connection to its Native American, agricultural and railroad heritage.

In 1992, the Old Town Niwot Local Improvement District (LID, or District) was established



Old Town Niwot

by a vote of Niwot district residents and property owners, levying a 0.5% sales tax within the Niwot LID boundaries beginning in 1993 for the purposes of construction and maintenance of streets, curbing, sidewalks, and lighting. In 2007, the LID returned to the voters to request an additional 0.5% sales tax to be available for all original LID functions, as well as for

the production and distribution of

informational products and materials for the District. LID authority and funding categories are defined in Colorado statute, C.R.S. 30-20-603.

Because Niwot is not an incorporated town or municipality, the LID sales tax revenue is the only direct tax funding that Niwot receives to provide for infrastructure expenses and to support economic viability and vitality in the District. For emergency services, social and human services, and other such services, Niwot is served by Boulder County government. The Boulder County Board of County Commissioners sits as the Board of Directors (the Board) for the LID, and the Niwot LID Advisory Committee makes recommendations to the Board regarding how sales tax revenues should be spent.

After the LID was formed in 1992, Boulder County issued a bond to fund substantial infrastructure improvements. At that time, all LID funds resulting from the original 0.5% sales tax were directed to repayment of that bond. The bond was fully repaid at the end of 2010. The LID collected more than \$100,000 in sales tax revenue in 2010, but prior to bond repayment approximately half of the tax collection was dedicated to service of that debt. Beginning in 2011, all sales tax revenue, which should total more than \$100,000, is available for expenditures other than the original street, curb, drainage, and lighting improvements.

Need for a strategic planning process emerged with the availability of additional revenue that no longer must be used for bond repayment, as well as a transportation study conducted in the fall of 2011 that resulted in recommendations for addressing issues such as parking and

connectivity that will necessitate considerable financial expenditures. LID Advisory Committee members and the Board of County Commissioners wanted to ensure strategic allocation of the larger available revenues, according to defined, objective criteria and with the intent of achieving



LID Advisory Committee members during the first session of Strategic Planning meetings

long-term vision and goals for the District.

In addition to greater revenue available to the LID, in the fall of 2011, a consulting firm contracted by the Boulder County Transportation Department and the LID conducted a transportation study in the District. While the study focused on a number of transportation issues, particular analysis was directed to parking – which is particularly inadequate and problematic during large community events in the District and inadequate according to current land use regulations – and connectivity between Old Town Niwot and Cottonwood Square, which both are located in the LID but are separated by a busy street with no natural flow between the commercial areas.

Increased revenues will allow the LID to make strategic funding decisions and recommendations to the Board, both to implement priority transportation recommendations and to continue funding important ongoing priorities, such as marketing, promotions and other support of public events in Niwot.

Every year, the Niwot Business Association, Niwot Community Association, Niwot Cultural Arts Association, Ni-wot Prairie Productions, Niwot Historical Society, and other groups hold numerous community events. These events draw substantial visitors to the District, and the additional “feet on the street,” as LID co-chair Carrie Wise terms it, result in a marked increase in customers for Niwot’s shops, restaurants and other businesses, and provide significant direct and indirect economic benefits to the merchants within the District. Events include the popular and award-winning Summer Concert Series, the Farmers’ Market, Jazz on 2nd Avenue, a Lobster Bash with Live Music, a 4th of July Celebration and Parade, Nostalgia Day and Parade, Enchanted Evening and Tree Lighting, First Friday Art Walks, a Holiday Parade, and more

Niwot LID Advisory Committee members participated in the strategic planning process from August to November 2011 and a subsequent process to update the strategic plan for 2017-2021,

which was adopted by the LID Advisory Committee in late 2016. The Plan defines a mission, vision and values for the LID, as well as objectives and goals for the funding categories of Infrastructure, Marketing and Promotions, and Economic Development. This work and the concomitant written plan inform funding decisions and longer-term strategies and goals over the five years of the plan, with annual budgets reflecting those strategies.



Facilitator Leslie Irwin checks in with LID Advisory Committee members Carrie Wise and Biff Warren.

THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The strategic planning process aimed to develop and build consensus around a mission, vision and values for the LID; to identify short-, mid- and long-term objectives that should be accomplished with LID funding; and to clarify priorities and criteria for decision-making processes.

MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES STATEMENTS

LID Advisory Committee members also for the first time developed mission, vision and values statements for the LID. The mission statement defines why the LID exists and its basic and overall purpose. The mission communicates what needs are intended to be met and with what resources, in a realistic, clear and concise way.



Carrie Wise and Bruce "Biff" Warren discuss the LID's strengths and weaknesses.

The vision statement answers the following questions: In five years, what do Advisory Committee members want the LID to look like? What will the community look like if you do your job well? What are the indicators of good outcomes of your work? What is our ideal or preferred future? The vision statement should be a compelling description of the state and function of the organization once it has implemented the strategic plan.



LID member Laura Skaggs and co-chair Lane Landrith work together to craft a vision statement.

Values statements serve as guiding principles for LID members, defining their moral or operational values. Value statements express how the LID does business, how it gets things done, and its role in the community.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Niwot Local Improvement District promotes economic vitality to serve, facilitate, and sustain a robust business base in Niwot's commercial district, through prioritized investment of sales tax revenues.

VISION STATEMENT

The Niwot Local Improvement District Advisory Committee is a catalyst for a thriving business district that sustains the unique, authentic culture of Niwot.

VALUES STATEMENTS

We advocate for an ever-improving and sustainable business environment in Niwot's commercial district.

We are committed to attracting outside visitors and new businesses to Niwot and to creating awareness of Niwot's unique, authentic character and semi-rural quality and artistic expressiveness of the community.

We address our responsibilities and make funding decisions in a responsive, consistent and transparent manner.

We value and provide opportunities for community members and organizations to actively participate in funding requests that utilize Local Improvement District sales tax revenues to accomplish the LID vision and objectives.

We operate with passion, integrity and a spirit of community.

We strive for data-driven, informed funding decisions that will help the LID achieve our vision and bring a return on investment to the community.



Advisory Committee members Harris Faberman, Jim Eastman, Euvaldo Valdez, and Carrie Wise.

DEFINING THE PURPOSE AND FUNDING CATEGORIES OF THE LID

During the 2011 planning process, there was much discussion regarding whether the LID should function as a “doer” or solely as a funder. In reality, the LID serves as both. By mandate, the LID collects sales tax revenue, which it then spends on infrastructure in the LID and promotion and marketing of the LID, particularly through public events. However, the LID also serves as a doer, by striving to achieve long-term economic priorities for the District through the definition of objectives, goals, criteria, and measurable outcomes to be achieved through the funding allocation.

Through the strategic planning process, LID Advisory Committee members agreed by consensus on the primary funding categories – Infrastructure, Marketing and Promotions, and Economic Development – as well as activities funded within each category, the objectives and goals for funding in those categories, and measurable outcomes that define how success will be measured.

To clarify, objectives are the long-term desired outcomes and the end result to achieve, and goals are the near- and mid-term steps that will help accomplish the objectives.



Advisory Committee members work through definitions and details in their funding categories.



Biff Warren and Howard Treppeda draft a vision statement.

These are detailed in the following pages.

FUNDING CATEGORY: INFRASTRUCTURE

The following projects and activities will be considered for funding through the Niwot Local Improvement District, within the “Infrastructure” category.

Maintenance and improvements, including but not limited to street, curbing, lighting

Objective: To keep streets safe, clean and attractive – or improve those qualities

Goals:

- Maintain budget reserve that will adequately fund the timely maintenance and repair of the street amenities
- Partner with Boulder County for funding of maintenance and improvement
- Ensure that complaints and reports are responded to promptly

How success will be measured:

- Receiving of positive reports on conditions of streets, lighting, curbing

Parking

Objective: To provide sufficient and convenient parking to accommodate customers, visitors and employees

Goals:

- Advocate for acquisition and location of permanent parking
- Establish revised parking requirements
- Support adequate permanent parking to meet future needs, in particular for employee parking off 2nd Avenue, merchants, and customers
- Encourage and support event sponsors in identifying temporary parking spaces, in particular for special events, guests and vendors
- Understand parking needs of each merchant
- Encourage appropriate bicycle parking
- Encourage valet bike parking at community events
- Utilize right-of-way parking, minimizing negative impacts

How success will be measured:

- Additional permanent parking constructed when a revised appropriate trigger identified in Parking Study is met
- Additional, adequate temporary parking (overflow lots) identified and utilized
- Visitors to Niwot have adequate parking in the commercial area, including during special events
- Bicycle parking is utilized

Access to Niwot, transportation, and connectivity between Old Town and Cottonwood Square

Objective: To provide convenient and accessible flow into the District and to induce customers to visit adjacent commercial area

Goals:

- Partner with Boulder County to review and revise the Transportation Study's prioritized recommendations
- Clarify responsibilities of Boulder County and LID
- Allocate funding for directional or way-finding signage that communicates connection inside Niwot, particularly between Old Town and Cottonwood Square
- Fund a "walking map" of the amenities located with the LID. Make a template that is easily modified and updated. Each business in the LID area and points of interest should be identified.

How success will be measured:

- Increase in sales revenue
- Increase in customers accessing both commercial districts, as shown by spot survey by merchants
- Transportation plan is revised to reflect the needs and will of the community

Community gathering infrastructure

Objective: To provide community gathering places to encourage residents and consumers to spend time in the district, and to bring the local community from their homes to retail establishments in the district

Goals:

- Support the construction of gathering places for all ages of persons, such as benches, alcoves and play structures for sitting in commercial district
- Identify additional needs for gathering or meeting places (NBA)
- Encourage community bench program (NBA)
- Work with Cottonwood Park West HOA on improvement of the southwest corner of 79th Street and Niwot Road, at the Sculpture Park

How success will be measured:

- Gathering places are constructed and utilized by community

Beautification, including but not limited to flower pots, landscaping, public art, and banners

Objective: To ensure that streets and walkways within the district are appealing to visitors and customers

Goals:

- NBA delivers annual budget request accounting for seasonal needs
- Allocate adequate budget for beautification
- Investigate installation of supporting posts to hang banner
- Beautify the electric boxes ("shock boxes") located within Niwot.

How success will be measured:

- Number of participating merchants
- Seasonal color apparent year-round

FUNDING CATEGORY: MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS

The following projects and activities will be considered for funding through the Niwot Local Improvement District, within the “Marketing and Promotions” category.

Special events

Objective: To support essential expenses and promotions for community events in Niwot, which draw substantial visitors to the District and provide significant direct and indirect economic benefits to District merchants by informing visitors of the goods and services provided by Niwot merchants, resulting in contemporaneous and future sales

Goals:

- Plan budget according to annual calendar of events so that needs are anticipated at the beginning of the year
- Fund special events – and related expenses that are essential to the success of the event in drawing visitors to the District – will be considered according to the following criteria:
 - Events must be community events that are open to the public, held in or in close proximity to the District, and usually sponsored by a non-profit organization.
 - Reasonable expenses will be considered for funding.
- Require Event Sponsors applying for funding to address the guidelines, as specified in the document *Niwot Local Improvement District Funding Application Guidelines for Applicants*.

How success will be measured:

- Sales revenue increase for merchants on dates of events, tracked through sales tax revenues
- Number of website visits or hits on Niwot.com (NBA reports to LID)
- Number of RSVPs or hits on social media events pages
- Feedback from merchants completed after events regarding business activity
- Estimated head count at events, completed by promoter or volunteer
- Regular updates to LID from NBA marketing

Signage for Niwot

Objective: To brand, identify and announce Niwot, and to entice visitors to town

Goals:

- Clarify number and locations of signs to be constructed
- Allocate funding for gateway signs and banners
- Allocate funding for signage on bikeways and trails and in commercial districts
- Allocate funding for way-finding signs in the District

How success will be measured:

- Signage installed on bikeways
- Budget and plan for future signs are developed

Advertising and print media for the business district

Objective: To advertise the business District in order to increase brand recognition and awareness of and attraction to businesses in the Local Improvement District

Goals:

- NBA develops detailed media plan, advertising schedule and advertising budget, to submit to LID
- Require that “Niwot: Vintage Colorado” logo must be included in all advertising
- Encourage use of a trackable marketing device such as website click-through data, when possible

How success will be measured:

- Sales revenue increase for merchants, as measured through sales tax revenues
- Number of website visits or hits on Niwot.com (NBA reports to LID)
- Marketing device is utilized and tracked

Electronic media

***Objective:* To advertise the business District in order to increase brand recognition and awareness of and attraction to businesses in the Local Improvement District**

Goals:

- NBA develops budget and submits funding request for electronic media
- Support maintenance and improvement of Niwot.com, including non-NBA businesses within the LID
- Support creation of Facebook event or other social media promotion, in particular for each special event
- Support production of weekly electronic newsletter

How success will be measured:

- Number of website visits or hits on Niwot.com (NBA reports to LID)
- Number of RSVPs or hits on social media events pages

FUNDING CATEGORY: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The following projects and activities will be considered for funding through the Niwot Local Improvement District, within the “Economic Development” category.

Business development

Objective: To support existing businesses’ ability to remain in business in the District, and to support businesses interested in locating to Niwot’s business district, in order to ensure economic vitality, viability, and a balanced commercial mix

Goals:

- Continue funding an Economic Development Director for Niwot
- Create response materials and information for businesses interested in locating to Niwot, to be hosted on website
- Collect and analyze data on commercial vacancies in the LID
- Collect information on needs and barriers of targeted existing businesses, and develop budget to meet those needs
- Identify and recruit targeted types of businesses to gain balanced commercial mix
- Help fill vacant space
- Economic Development Director should serve as a liaison between Boulder County staff and citizens/business owners who are seeking to invest in improved or new businesses and amenities within the LID area
- Support the 10-year Niwot Vision/Sustainability Plan
- Encourage local organizations to attract and recruit the next generation of leadership in the community and encourage participation on boards and at the county level
- Develop a process to improve communication with county staff

How success will be measured:

- Commercial occupancy rate is maintained at 90-95%
- 90% of businesses remain in business for at least one year
- Existing businesses experience revenue growth
- A long-term vision for the commercial district is developed