

9.0 Plan Compliance



This chapter provides an overview of plan compliance and implementation. Specific topics include consistency with development regulations and guidelines, growth management and planning for future focus areas. Additionally, city planning efforts that will continue to influence the implementation and future updates to the Comprehensive Plan are summarized.

9.1 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPLIANCE

Mandatory Compliance Ordinance

The primary intent of the Plan is to provide information, guidance and direction for future development. Accordingly, the city enacted Ordinance No. 2475 in 1997 to effectively implement the Comprehensive Plan. This Ordinance requires all future land uses to be in compliance with the Plan with regard to use, density, development standards and other criteria set forth in the Plan. This includes compliance with the Land Use Diagram, the land use plan descriptions and land use categories contained in Chapter 2 of this Plan. The ordinance is intended to ensure that the key goals of the Plan with regard to land uses, density, housing mix, and other aspects of physical planning will be accomplished as development occurs. The goals and policies throughout this Plan will be considered for all new development.

The ordinance requires that prior to any rezoning of land or approval of any development application for a parcel of land within the city, a determination must be made that the proposed use of a parcel is in compliance with the Plan. Additionally, any property owner who wishes to change the established use of any parcel of land must comply with the Plan at the time such use is changed or the property is substantially redeveloped.

Development Regulations

In addition to the plan compliance requirements described above, the development of property within the city shall continue to be subject to all other procedures and regulations established for development pursuant to the Westminster Municipal Code. This shall include such considerations as site planning, architecture, parking, landscaping and other design criteria. Preliminary and official development plans pursuant to the Westminster Municipal Code shall continue to be required. In addition, special uses such as schools, churches, group homes and other designated special uses shall be processed pursuant to the city's procedures.



Design and Development Guidelines

The city conducts design review for new projects with design guidelines that correspond to residential and commercial land use categories. These design guidelines regulate site and building design elements for Retail Commercial, Single Family Detached, Single Family Attached, Multi Family, Senior Housing and Traditional Mixed Use Neighborhood Development. The guidelines are perceived as minimum design criteria, from which new development should be based and generally exceed. Additional guidelines may be developed for employment uses, mixed-use development and higher density residential development.

Vested Rights / Development Agreements

Land use designations shown in the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Diagram may be affected by pre-existing vested rights or contractual development commitments. The applicability and scope of such vested rights or contractual development commitments, if any, will be reviewed and determined at the time of development plan approval.

9.2 GROWTH MANAGEMENT

The city's Growth Management Program was established in 1978 to aid the city in balancing growth with the ability to provide and expand services including water, water treatment, sewer, police, fire, and parks and recreation. The Growth Management Program establishes an annual allocation of "service commitments" that are adopted by resolution by City Council. Service commitments, each the equivalent of one single family residential water tap, are allocated based on the following factors:

- The amount of raw water that can realistically be acquired and be treated;
- The amount of existing raw water supply presently available from all sources which can safely be used for new growth without imperiling the city's ability to serve water to the existing Westminster water system consumers;
- The ability of the city to continue to balance between growth rate and consumer demands through orderly and cost effective expansion of utility systems;
- The ability of the city to continue the balance between growth rate and the expansion of transportation systems, fire protection services, police services, park and recreation services and other related city services; and
- The demand of a given proposed land use on the city's utility system compared to other land uses.

Award of service commitments to a residential project represents an agreement by the city to provide municipal services (e.g. water and sanitary sewer) to a project. The award is granted for a finite period of time, which is determined at the time of service commitment award. Service Commitment awards do not guarantee approval of a project. Nonresidential uses are also allocated service commitments on an annual basis. Service commitments that are allocated but are not awarded to new development during the year are returned to the water supply figures for use in future years. If projects apply for more service commitments than are allotted, City Council may award additional commitments on a periodic basis.



Residential Development Competition

Service commitment competitions are held to manage the number of new residential projects proceeding through the city's development review process. Each year, a competition is held for awarding all five service commitment categories for residential development (Single-Family Detached, Single-Family Attached, Multi-Family, Senior Housing and Traditional Mixed Use Neighborhood Developments). Award of allocated service commitments for all categories except Traditional Mixed Use Neighborhood Developments is based on points received by providing "incentive" design items listed and detailed in the residential design guidelines for that category. Traditional Mixed Use Neighborhood Development proposals are reviewed by a design jury that makes recommendations to city staff, who in turn make recommendations to the City Council regarding awards.

9.3 FOCUS AREA SPECIFIC PLANS

Specific plans for focus areas identified in this Comprehensive Plan will be completed to provide more detailed direction for future development. The purpose of these plans is to ensure that development is planned and designed cohesively with a synergistic mix of uses; connected, multimodal circulation system; access to transit and public amenities; and adequate provision of public utilities and services. The location and boundaries of each focus area are identified in Figure 3-1. These areas include downtown Westminster, Westminster Station, North I-25, Church Ranch and Brookhill.

Implementation

The City of Westminster will coordinate planning efforts for each focus area and determine the appropriate time for plan preparation. A work program will be prepared to complete the plan, including a schedule for preparation and a program for public outreach. The plans at a minimum will include a cohesive vision for land use, urban design, multimodal circulation, public amenities and adequate utilities and services. Upon completion, each specific plan with associated rezoning or updates to the Comprehensive Plan, if applicable, will be adopted by City Council and incorporated by reference into the Comprehensive Plan. Adopted specific plans include the Westminster Downtown Specific Plan, adopted in 2014.



9.4 OTHER RELATED PLANS

This section provides an overview of the various planning efforts conducted by the city. Regional and neighboring jurisdiction planning efforts are also summarized.

City of Westminster Planning Efforts

Planning for all community amenities, infrastructure and services will continue to be conducted on a more detailed level by individual city departments. The plans referenced in each appropriate section of the Comprehensive Plan are incorporated by reference. Ongoing planning efforts throughout the city are described below.

Community Enhancement Planning

The city adopted its first Community Enhancement Master Plan in 1992, which was last updated in 2006. The plan focuses on enhancements to the city's physical fabric to serve Westminster's citizens, provide a strong foundation for existing development and to attract future development and employers to the city. Key elements that the plan focuses on include roadways (streetscapes), districts and landmarks, and view corridors. The Community Enhancement Master Plan provides additional detail, direction and design guidelines beyond the Comprehensive Plan and should be referenced as new projects are proposed.

Neighborhood and Area Planning

In 2001, City Council adopted the South Westminster Strategic Revitalization Plan, which is intended to provide guidance in developing programs and funding projects within the South Westminster area. The plan was last updated in October 2011, and includes strategies in four general areas: housing, economic development, community image and character, and public facilities and services.

Additional planning for areas in the city will be completed as specific or area plans, such as those underway for the downtown Westminster and Westminster Station focus areas. The city will also continue to participate in inter-jurisdictional planning with neighboring cities and counties. Unless otherwise stated, the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan shall take precedence over specific and area plans, if a discrepancy should occur.

Transportation and Circulation Planning

The city maintains a Comprehensive Roadway Plan that evaluates levels of service and roadway capacity for vehicle travel, recommends improvements and identifies priorities for the Capital Improvement Plan. Additional planning for circulation in the city includes the Bicycle Master Plan, completed in 2010, and various streetscape plans and improvements.

Parks and Open Space Planning

The Parks, Recreation and Libraries Plan provides guidance for improvements to existing city facilities and identifies potential new facilities and programs to serve the needs of the community. Park and facility types are described as well as performance measures. The city's Parks, Recreation and Libraries planning also includes periodic needs assessments and performance evaluations to best plan for future need. The city's Trails Master Plan serves as a guide for where improvements and new connections should be made within the overall trail network. Open space planning will be refined by completion of an Open Space Master Plan in 2014. This plan will focus on improvements, maintenance and operation of the city's extensive open space network.

Public Works Planning

The Utilities Planning and Engineering Division of the city uses several master plans for long term planning of the city's water and wastewater infrastructure. These plans are written and periodically updated to be consistent with land use and development direction established by the Comprehensive Plan. These plans include the Comprehensive Water Supply Plan, Water Conservation Plan, Reclaimed Water Master Plan and Wastewater Master Plan. Additional master plans for infrastructure systems are also maintained.