

WATER 2025

OUR WATER FUTURE STARTS NOW

Frequently Asked Questions To-Date (5/2/2019)

1. How were each of the sites scored?

- Over the past year, the city has conducted a comprehensive data-driven evaluation to identify two potential locations for Westminster's new drinking water facility. As part of the ongoing process, over 50 sites were methodically eliminated based on increasingly stringent technical criteria and community input.
- Based on this evaluation, the two remaining sites under consideration are the best suited for critical infrastructure that is needed to ensure high quality drinking water for our community now and in the future. The detailed evaluation and scoring for all reviewed sites can be found at: www.cityofwestminster.us/Water2025

2. Has Westminster ever converted Open Space to another use, and what is the process to convert deed restricted open space to another use?

- Open Space serves many functions in our community and it is common for our open spaces to also include infrastructure for public utilities, such as pipes, ditches, power lines, etc. Westminster has always allowed municipal uses in all land use categories; however, the city has not previously converted a large parcel of Open Space to another use.
- In order to convert deed restricted open space to another use, the city has contacted Jefferson County to identify that a path forward is available through an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA). Detailed specifics have not yet been worked out because a site has not yet been selected at this stage of the process.
- Open Space was one of many criteria used in the comprehensive Water 2025 site evaluation process. Each site received an individual score based on the General Management Classifications of Open Space outlined in [Westminster's 2014 Open Space Stewardship Plan](#).
- The current Open Space site under consideration is classified as a "Functional Landscape Management Area." This classification includes "sites that serve a specific functional purpose, such as a dam, and are not associated with natural diversity, high value landscape or public access."

3. Is the site on Westminster Blvd and 98th Avenue also zoned as open space?

- The city's Comprehensive Plan identifies the majority of the site on 98th Avenue as "Mixed Use Center," which is the highest and most dense category that allows a wide range of commercial and residential uses. There are no height or density restrictions for development that occurs on this site.
- There is also a small parcel of Open Space on the 98th Avenue site that is surrounded by developable land and roadway. Projects like Water 2025 present an opportunity to convert these types of small "orphan" Open Space to another use and add an equal amount of Open Space to an area where it can provide greater benefit to Westminster's overall Open Space network.

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- 4. How much total land is needed for all future development of the new drinking water facility, and why would a smaller site be chosen if a larger site is available?**
 - The minimum required site size for all planned phases of the city's new drinking water facility is 24 acres. Additional land provides more flexibility in treatment facility design, construction, buffer and amenity space. Both potential sites under consideration are adequate for the immediate and planned future needs of the new drinking water facility.

- 5. Is it safe to locate both the city's drinking water facilities in close proximity to the airport and/or each other and what are the emergency management protocols?**
 - The safety and security of our drinking water facilities is always the top priority. An analysis of both potential sites under consideration has shown there are no overriding operational or security risks associated with proximity to the city's existing Northwest Drinking Water Treatment Facility or the airport. Regardless of what site is chosen, the new facility will be included in the city's comprehensive emergency management plans.

- 6. What is the total project cost and what are the cost/benefit tradeoffs for each site? Have the previous city projects come in over or under budget?**
 - The total estimated cost for the project is approximately \$181 million through the first phase. The goal of the first phase is to have the drinking water treatment facility online by 2025, treating 30 million gallons of water a day (MGD). This will ensure high-quality drinking water now and in the future. While the acquisition costs for each site will vary, both provide suitable drinking water facility locations within the projected budget range that includes land, design, construction and pipeline connections.
 - The Utility's water and sewer projects completed between 2001 and 2018 have come in at or below budget

- 7. What kind of traffic and other activities occur at a drinking water facility? How will construction, traffic and other impacts be managed?**
 - Roads/Traffic: Drinking water facilities typically have less traffic than similar light industrial/business areas. Regardless of what site is chosen, as part of the design and permitting process, a traffic study will be required by the city to identify potential roadway improvements.
 - Noise: Most treatment operations occur inside, limiting noise impacts to neighbors. Most facilities have backup power in the form of a generator. Historically, Westminster has installed generators that have significant noise insulation, limiting impacts.
 - Odor: Drinking water facilities rarely, if ever, have odors. The water coming into the plant is raw water from a canal or lake and the water coming out is treated for drinking.
 - Environmental: Once a site is selected, the city will be performing all of the testing that is associated with a project like this. This will include comprehensive soil testing and environmental studies.
 - Construction: Regardless of site, a detailed construction management plan will be developed in advance to minimize traffic, dust, noise and other impacts.

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8. What's the timeline for construction for phase one and two?

- Our goal is to have phase one of the new drinking water treatment facility up and running by 2025 with design and construction from approximately 2020 to 2025. Once a site is selected a detailed design and construction schedule will be developed. Additional construction in phases will be phased as the existing Semper Water Treatment Facility is prepared for retirement in 2040.

9. What will the new drinking water facility look like, how will light pollution and facility aesthetics be addressed?

- Drinking water facilities have a great deal of flexibility in what they look like. Regardless of what site is chosen, local residents and business owners will have the opportunity to participate in a Design Workgroup to help shape the architecture, landscaping and amenities preferred by the local community.

10. What will happen to the Semper Water Treatment Facility land after it's retired?

- The Semper Water Treatment Facility is planned to operate until at least 2040. As of right now, there are no specific development plans for the city-owned land on which it's located.

11. Will you need to condemn homes or property (including 108th right-of-way)?

- The minimum required size for the planned drinking water facility is 24 acres for all currently planned treatment capacity for immediate and future needs. Both sites under consideration meet this minimum size requirement and provide adequate access from existing street right-of-way.

12. What are the environmental review processes and what if contamination is found?

- Once a site is selected, the city will perform all of the testing that is required by state and federal agencies for drinking water facilities, which includes soil and groundwater testing. If any kind of environmental contamination is identified, the city will follow all legal and regulatory protocols and best practices to ensure public safety and health.

13. Would the city consider re-opening the site evaluation process for additional review and consideration?

- Over the past year, Westminster, in collaboration with technical partners, has conducted a comprehensive data-driven evaluation to identify two potential locations for our new drinking water facility.
- As part of the ongoing process, over 50 sites have been methodically eliminated based on increasingly stringent technical criteria and community input.
- The two remaining sites under consideration are well suited for the critical infrastructure that is needed to ensure high quality drinking water for our community now and in the future.
- There are no plans to review previously eliminated sites at this time. Following tonight's meeting, further research may be needed before the Steering Committee makes a selection and proceeds to City Council for authorization to negotiate land acquisition.