

Chapter One

Introduction

The first comprehensive plan for Wasatch County was completed in September 1973. The plan was prepared as a blueprint for the purpose of providing guidance to development or changes that would take place within the County during a twenty-year period. This plan served the needs of the County for that period; but for the eight years beyond the intended life of the plan. An acceleration in growth that has occurred both in the valley and mountain areas of the County that the plan does not adequately address and made the plan obsolete. Periodic updates to the General Plan have continually been made to react to these growth pressures that still occur today. This Wasatch County General Plan is intended to guide future development and growth according to the long-term goals and visions of Wasatch County. There has been tremendous growth in both the valley and mountain areas of the County. Some General Plan goals have been accomplished and therefore no longer need to be reflected in the plan. Growth, accomplishment of goals and changing values, among other things, will result in the need to periodically update the general plan to reflect the vision of the current County residents and act as a template of how the County develops during the coming years.

The elements to be considered in the preparation of a general plan are established by Utah State Law (Section 17-27-302 Utah Code Annotated). The general plan with its accompanying maps, plats, charts and descriptive materials outlines the recommendations for the development of the territory covered by the plan. This includes, among other things: 1) a land use element, 2) a transportation and circulation element, 3) a moderate income housing element, 4) an environmental element, 5) a public service and facilities element, 6) a rehabilitation, redevelopment and conservation element, 7) an economic element, 8) recommendations for implementation, and 9) any other elements that the County considers appropriate.

Purpose, Intent, and Use of the General Plan

The purpose, intent, and use of this general plan is to provide a comprehensive approach to the coordination of development, natural resources and open space in such a way as to provide a harmonious relationship that meets the needs of present and future residents and also promotes the health, safety and general welfare of the residents of the County. The general plan is not meant to be a static document and should be updated and amended as needed and used as a template against which planning decisions, changes to the land use and development code, and zoning are made.

Specifically, the purposes, intent and, uses of the general plan are:

1. To promote the most acceptable type of development within each planning area of the County.
2. To ensure the orderly growth of urbanizing areas and reduce the haphazard scattering of development that has occurred since the first plan became outdated.
3. To foster commercial and light industrial development, where appropriate, that will strengthen the economic base of the County.
4. To protect the natural and cultural resources of the County.
5. To ensure that geologic hazards, flood plains, wetlands, ridgelines, view sheds and other physical constraints are adequately considered in each planning area.
6. To promote the social and economic well-being of the people of the County.
7. To ensure that growth does not over tax the water resources and degrade the clean air of the County.
8. To be used as a guide to the Planning Commission and County legislative body as they review requests for the approval of development projects.
9. To be used as a framework which guides the establishment of policies regarding: zoning, the development code, and capital improvement programming.
10. To be used as a source of information with regards to public policies useful in making decisions concerning plans for future development.
11. To be used as a source of information with regards to public policies that may have any impact on a single parcel of property.

It is the intent of the County legislative body that the Wasatch County General Plan be adopted as “mandatory” requiring all land use proposals to adhere to the plan. Requests for changes in zoning or ordinances, not in accordance with this general plan, will require a change to the plan, thereby giving the elected and appointed officials and the public additional review and input into any changes made and to ensure that established public policies in the plan are followed or appropriately changed. Applications to amend the plan shall be heard by the legislative body once yearly during the month of November. This will ensure that the accumulative impacts of requested amendments are considered together.

Scope of Work

The area covered by this general plan includes all planning areas within Wasatch County except the Jordanelle and North Village Planning Areas which are addressed in greater detail through other efforts. Within Wasatch County there are approximately 772,835 acres of which about 70 percent are public lands administered by the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, State Division of Lands, State Division of Parks and Recreation and right-of-ways administered by the Utah State Department of Transportation. It is not the purpose of this General Plan to interfere with the purpose or administration of these public lands but to coordinate their land management plans with the land use plans of the County.

Within the County are the nine municipalities of Heber City, Midway, Charleston, Daniel, Hideout, Independence, Interlaken, Wallsburg and part of Park City. Efforts have been made to make the County general plan compatible with adjoining areas in each municipality as necessary.

There are also eleven districts within Wasatch County which provide various types of services which can have a profound impact on the general plan. If these districts were to ignore the general plan by extending their services into areas not designated by the plan, they could create haphazard and scattered developments and increase pressure for changes to the plan. For these reasons it is important that the County legislative body, who have ultimate control over zoning in the County, also govern these districts so that a consistent policy with regards to land use is maintained.

These districts include three county wide districts: the Wasatch County Fire/EMS Protection Special Service District, the Wasatch County Solid Waste Special Service District and the Parks and Recreation Special Service District. There are eight districts that provide either or both water and sewer services. Heber Valley Special Service District provides waste water treatment services to the following districts that currently provide only collection services to the unincorporated areas in the Midway Sanitation District, Twin Creeks Special Service District, Jordanelle Special Service District and the North Village Special Service District. Collection and treatment of waste water are also provided by the Strawberry Special Service District. Three of the above districts, Twin Creeks, Jordanelle and North Village, also

provide culinary water service along with the Timber Lakes Culinary Water Special Service District and the Charleston Water Conservancy District. At the present time the Wasatch County legislative body is the controlling Board for all of these districts except for the Midway Sanitation District, Charleston Water Conservancy District, North Village Special Service District and the Heber Valley Special Service District. In this general plan efforts have been made to ensure that the services provided and the areas serviced by these Districts are compatible with the general plan.

The Planning Process

The planning process used in the preparation of the general plan is divided into four parts:

1. **Background.** The background material is an inventory of existing land uses, infrastructure, physical constraints and population distribution that have an influence on how development will occur in the County during the next 15 years. The background section contains maps, plats, charts and descriptive materials which characterizes the existing conditions in the County.
2. **Public Input.** Citizens of Wasatch County were provided an opportunity to assist the Planning Commission in identifying issues of public concern through three public scoping meetings and a telephone public opinion survey. The defined issues were then reviewed by a committee of 100 citizens which were divided into four subcommittees. Each subcommittee was assigned one of the following elements of the general plan: land use, economic development, transportation, and public facilities, to review the public issues associated with that element. The subcommittees then recommended public policies to the Planning Commission regarding the identified issues. These public policies provided guidance to the development of the general plan.
3. **The Plan.** The plan was then developed based on a combination of background information with regards to existing land uses, infrastructure, physical constraints and public policies established by the committee of 100 citizens and recommended to and accepted by the Planning Commission for land use, economic development, transportation and circulation, public facilities, rehabilitations, redevelopment and conservation, and implementation.
4. **Implementation.** Implementation consists of regulations, programs and policies which should be employed to carry out the intent of the plan. The regulations are in the form of the Wasatch County Development Code which covers zoning and development procedures. Programs include the preparation of capital improvement lists which identify projects, their costs, and when

they are anticipated to be constructed in order to meet the needs of the public. Policies include such things as when water and sewer facilities should be extended into new areas and the administration and enforcement of zoning and development regulations.