

# Chapter One

## Introduction

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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, there has been an acceleration in growth that has occurred both in the valley and mountain areas of the County that the plan does not adequately address. This growth has resulted in the need to update the County's general plan to reflect the vision of the current County residents as to where, to the timing, and to what extent growth should be allowed to take place during the next 15 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 Planning Commission's recommendations for the development of the territory covered by the plan and includes among other things: 1) a land use element, 2) a transportation and circulation element, 3) an environmental element, 4) a public service and facilities element, 5) a rehabilitation, redevelopment and conservation element, 6) an economic element, 7) recommendations for implementing, and 8) any other elements that the County considers appropriate.

## Purpose

The purpose for the preparation 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.

Specifically, the purposes for planning within Wasatch County are:

1. To promote the most acceptable type of development within each planning area of the County.
2. To insure 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of urbanizing areas and reduce the haphazard scattering of development that has occurred since the first plan became outdated.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 that will strengthen the economic base of the County.
4. To protect the natural and cultural resources of the County.
5. To insure that geologic hazards, flood plains, wetlands, ridgelines, view sheds and other physical constraints are adequately considered in each planning area.
6. To insure that local units of government can obtain the highest return per dollar spent in maintaining water and sewer facilities, storm drainage facilities, streets, parks and other types of public facilities.
7. To ensure that public safety personnel and facilities are within a reasonable distance in areas of concentrated development within the County.
8. To promote the social and economic well-being of the people of the County.
9. To insure that growth does not over tax the water resources and degrade the clean air of the County.

## 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 being planned in greater detail than this effort. 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 five municipalities of Heber City, Midway, Charleston, Wallsburg and part of Park City. In this general plan, efforts have been made to make the County general plan compatible with adjoining areas in each municipality.

There are also ten 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 Commission, who have ultimate control over zoning in the County, also control these districts so that a consistent policy with regards to land use is maintained.

These districts include two county wide districts: the Wasatch County Fire Protection Special Service District and the Wasatch County Solid Waste 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 Board of Commissioners is the controlling Board for all of these districts except for the Midway Sanitation District, Charleston Water Conservancy District and the Heber Valley Special Service District. In this general plan efforts have been made to insure that the services provided and the areas serviced by these Districts are compatible with the general plan.

## Use of the General Plan

The five basic uses for the general plan may be categorized as follows:

1. A guide to the Planning Commission and County Commission as they evaluate proposals for improvements to or changes in the County's infrastructure.
2. A guide to the Planning Commission and County Commission as they review requests for the approval of development projects.
3. It is the framework which guides the establishment of policies regarding: zoning, the development code, and capital improvement programming.
4. It is the source of information with regards to public policies useful in making decisions concerning plans for future development.
5. It also is 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 Board of County Commissioners that the Wasatch County General Plan be adopted as Mandatory requiring all developments to adhere to the plan. Future requests for changes in zoning, not in accordance with this general plan, will require a change to the plan, there by giving the public additional input into any changes made and insure that established public policies in the plan are followed or appropriately changed. Applications to amend this plan shall only be accepted once yearly during the month of November. This will insure that the accumulative impacts of requested amendments are considered together.

## The Planning Process

The planning process used in the preparation of this general plan was 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.

