DRCOG
Planning Commissioners Workshop
Best Practices for Local Comprehensive Plans

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Principal, Clarion Associates
Topics

- Master Plans “101”
  - What Should Colorado Plans Include?
  - How Can You Use a Plan?
- What if Your Community Needs to Update Your Plan?
- What Makes an Effective/Innovative Plan?
Introduction - Clarion

- Comprehensive Planning
- Public Process and Facilitation
- Implementation
- Expertise in:
  - Land Use Analysis/Planning
  - Zoning and Ordinances
  - Community Design/Aesthetics
  - Historic Preservation
  - Parks and Open Space
  - Resource Protection, incl. rural areas
  - Housing
  - GIS
Comprehensive Plans

Clarion has had over 12 master plans adopted unanimously in the past 5 years, including:

- Arapahoe County, CO
- Longmont, CO
- Manhattan/Riley County, KS
- Boulder City, NV
- Steamboat Springs/Routt County, CO
- Arvada, CO
- Westminster, CO
- Norman, OK
- Henderson, NV
- Pagosa Springs, CO
- Northwest Subarea Plan, CO
What is a Master (Comprehensive) Plan?

- It guides where and how the community will grow in the next 20 years.
- It establishes how to allocate resources and prioritize programs.
- It is a policy document, and as such is advisory, **not** regulatory.
Counties and cities have authority to create and adopt master (comprehensive) plans for the physical development of the community.

- County – CRS 30-28-106
- Municipal – CRS 31-23-206
- Intergovernmental Cooperation 29-20-105

Planning Commission “makes and adopts” the master plan.
It Can address...

- C.R.S. allow a wide range of issues, such as:
  - Growth and land use
  - Community design and character
  - Transportation
  - Cultural and historical preservation
  - Economic vitality
  - Environment and resources
  - Parks, recreation, and trails
  - Fiscal responsibilities
Why Are Master Plans Helpful?

- A variety of reasons:
  - Great communities don’t just happen!
  - Balance fiscal costs and services and the revenues to provide them
  - Provide for orderly growth and development
  - Provide a sound policy basis for regulations and capital project decisions
What Role Does a Plan Serve?

- The Master Plan sets the foundation for all land use decisions, from broad policy to detailed site design and development.
- Coordinates other plans.
What Should it Contain?

- Land Use Maps
- Goals, Objectives and/or Policies, and Actions.
  - Goal: Our Community will Support Pedestrian Improvements to the Local Transportation System
    - Policy: New development shall include an interconnected pedestrian and bicycle system.
    - Action: Develop standards for sidewalks and bike lanes in new development.
Vertically Integrated Policies...

- Big ideas should tie from top to bottom
- “Follow the thin blue line”
  - Builds a solid policy foundation for topics that will require regulations or program changes
  - Makes it clear – provides justification for elected officials to do something difficult politically
Giving Your Plan Life...

Taking to Next Level

- Build your Plan’s objectives into community “systems” to keep objectives front and center:
  - Workbook / checklist for development review
  - Plan Monitoring
Single-Family Low Development Checklist

Development review checklist for:

- developments designated as Single-Family Low in the Land Use Plan applying to exceed the “by right” density of 4.5 du/ac.

Development Name: ________________________________

Reviewed by: _________________________ Date of Review: _________________________

Base Density: _________________________ Requested Density: _________________________

BUILDING AND SITE DESIGN FEATURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achieved?</th>
<th>Development Review Question</th>
<th>Comments/ Suggested Changes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does the development use quality building materials?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Do the proposed housing models successfully achieve architectural variety as defined in Chapter 5?</td>
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<td>Does the development contain a variety of housing models as defined in Chapter 5?</td>
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<td>Does the development transition to adjacent development through appropriate building design and massing?</td>
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## Plan Monitoring

### Annual Plan Review Questions

#### Land Use

- Has the city created, adopted and adhered to a set of design criteria for new Master Planned Communities in the negotiation and approval of MPC development proposals in the BLM release area?
- Has the city created, adopted, and begun to implement the Downtown Master Plan?
- Has the city implemented the North Fifth Transit Supportive Concept Plan through street improvements and land use and development decisions within the designated corridor and station areas that are in keeping with the principles of transit-oriented development?
- Are approved projects deviating from the Plan, and if so, why?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Base Level (Year)</th>
<th>2025 Target Level*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jobs/Housing Balance</td>
<td>0.64 (2002)</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parkland Acres/1,000 People</td>
<td>2.51 acres/1,000 residents (2004)</td>
<td>7.50 acres/1000 residents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sq.ft. Rentable Retail Space per Capita</td>
<td>10.82 (2005)</td>
<td>19.25</td>
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When to Update Your Plan
Plans can be Ineffective if they are:

Past their shelf life.

“Measured by the pound,” without clear direction.
Helpful Plan

- Deals with up-to-date issues in community
- Provides clear policy direction relating to development and investments
- Prioritizes strategies to get it done!
Updating your Plan: What it Takes

Planning Process (12-18 months):

1. Start-up / Public Participation Strategy
2. Fact Finding / Information
3. Visioning and Land Use Scenarios
4. Implementation Strategies (Ordinance Recommendations)
Elements of Successful Participation

1. Open, transparent process
2. Informative
3. Align expectations
4. Engaging and innovative
5. Focus on outcome
Open and Transparent Public Process

ShapeCheyenne addresses the policy choices, including neighborhoods, parks and open space, economic development, transportation, and more. This component of the plan will contain the goals, policies, and physical plan directions to guide decisions in the future. The scenarios help the community work toward a preferred land-use plan map that will guide the location of development in our community. Please join the process and let us know which direction is right for our community.
Engaging & Innovative

- Make it interactive
  - Fitting the phase and meaningful
- Involve all levels of public, including elected officials
- Recruit stakeholders
- Make it fun - food helps!
- Mix up the tools

- Photo “vision” exercises
- Surveys
- Land Use Planning “Sim” Community
- “Red light/Green light” questions or dot exercises
- Electronic keypad polling
- High Tech? Computer scenarios (e.g., 3D or VIZ)
Best Practices:
Innovative Plans
Ideas for Leading-Edge Plans

1. Community-Based
2. Focused on Needs with Effective Implementation
3. Simple Concepts / Use of Technology
4. Integrating Plans
5. Addressing Contemporary Themes
6. Using “Big Ideas” vs. Plan Elements
Community-based

- Involve:
  - Staff
  - Planning Commission and Elected Officials
  - Stakeholders
  - Others…

- Each Step:
  - Fact finding
  - Visioning and Scenarios (choices and implications)
  - Implementation (what is public willing to do?)

Norman, OK Advisory Committee

This!

Not This!

“Today’s topic is ‘public awareness.’”
Plan Implementation

- Shouldn’t Say it Unless You Mean It
  - Clear (no “puffy clouds”)
  - Have the support of elected and appointed officials
- Vertically Integrated Policies – “Follow the Thin Blue Line”
- Taking your Plan to the Next Level
Effective Implementation

- What is public willing to do?
  - Realistic strategies
  - Public has “weighed in” on acceptable actions
Using Technology for User-Friendly

- Improves how we plan!
- Sharing information and communicating
- Analyzing choices and implications
- Presenting complex technical ideas or concepts.

FACTS AT A GLANCE

Carson City has recently initiated an open space program to preserve corridors, hillsides, protective natural areas, and provide passive recreation opportunities.

Open Space Acquisition
Some of the major areas that Carson City is working to preserve include:
- Carson River corridor
- Scenic vistas and visible hillsides
- Working agricultural areas in or near the City
- Linkages for trails, trail heads, and connection of open space parcels

Opportunities
- With a unique and expansive open space system, Carson City has the potential to attract additional out-of-town visitors
- Open Space corridors can be used to connect trails and parks

Means of Acquiring Open Space
Carson City can acquire additional open space through a variety of measures including:
- Conservation easements
- Cluster development
- Estate planning
- Land preservation development
- Deed restrictions/overcovenants
- Reserved life estate
- Cash purchase
- Donation or gift
- Land exchange
- Purchase of development rights, transferable development rights
- Intergovernmental agreements

OPEN SPACE

TRENDS AND KEY ISSUES

PLANNING FOR FUTURE OPEN SPACE PURCHASES
- The City should purchase lands only when necessary, in other words, when land is under threat of being developed
- With limited funding to purchase open space, the City must prioritize its acquisitions
- Carson City should work with partners to leverage additional resources for acquiring open space

CHALLENGES
- As Carson City grows, land will be needed for housing, employment, parks, and other public uses, leaving less land available for open space.
- Working with landowners to create an integrated system of open space may prove to be a difficult process
- Management of open space since it is acquired will require funding from the City
Websites a fundamental tool

Welcome to PlanCheyenne.com

PlanCheyenne: ADOPTED!

PlanCheyenne was adopted by the County on November 7th and by the City Council on November 13th. The plan will undergo an editing process to include all items adopted by the elected officials, including elements resulting from the public comment. The website will gradually change into a searchable, electronic version of PlanCheyenne, with an eye toward being user-friendly. In the meantime, you can access the draft plan in the following ways:

1. **Click and download the files below.** (Note that many files are very large and have been broken down into smaller pieces for slower internet connections. Several files are offered in full chapters for high speed connections.)

   Downloadable Plan Files

2. **Order an electronic version of PlanCheyenne on CD.** (Please contact the MPO at 637.6281 for more information.)

3. **View a paper copy from the MPO or at area libraries.**
Simplifying Concepts

Not this!

This!

Figure 10: 2030 Congestion with the 2030 Roadway Vision Plan

Legend
Level of Congestion
- Uncongested (A - C)
- Congestion (D)
- Congested (E - F)

Traffic Volume

This map shows areas that will be congested in 2030 if Cheyenne grows at 2% per year and the Roadway Vision Plan is built.
Land Use/Growth Analysis

Indicators

- **Development Footprint Indicator:** A greater development footprint indicates less efficient use of land and more dispersed development on larger lots.
- **Housing Mix Ratio:** A higher ratio number indicates a higher proportion of multi-family housing as a part of total mix.
- **Distance to Services Ratio:** A lower distance indicates less travel time, less costs in transportation system, and greater convenience for residents.
- **Irrigated Agriculture Land Impacted Indicator:** A lower number of acres impacted indicates greater agricultural land conservation.
- **Habitat Land Impacted Indicator:** A lower number of acres impacted indicates greater wildlife and conservation.
- **Quality of Life Indicators:**
  - **Key to Ratings:**
    - High Rating
    - Medium Rating
    - Low Rating
  - **Overall Comparison:**
    - Development Footprint (safer)
    - Housing Mix (more diverse)
    - Distance to Services (shorter)
    - Irrigated Agriculture Land Impacted (less)
    - Wildlife Land Impacted (less)
    - Recreation Access (closer)

Scenarios Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Development Footprint</th>
<th>Housing Mix</th>
<th>Distance to Services</th>
<th>Irrigated Agriculture Land Impacted</th>
<th>Wildlife Land Impacted</th>
<th>Recreation Access</th>
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<td>A</td>
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<td>B</td>
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<td>D</td>
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Legend:
- Present Trend
- Present Trend Conservation Hybrid
- Town Focused Development
- Mixed Towns & New Town(s) Focus

- Leads to the greatest amount of dispersed development. Preferred scenario for people who like to drive.
- Easier to achieve than B or D but would not protect wildlife, agriculture, or dense areas as effectively. Blend allows some large sites to continue.
- Most protect wildlife, agriculture, and remote areas but more complex to implement. Usually must add incentives.
- Could protect wildlife, agriculture, and remote areas but can be complex to implement. Requires trading new towns for other non-conventional areas.
GIS Maps (Can be Conceptual)

PAGOSA SPRINGS ♦ Comprehensive Plan

Future Land Use Scenarios

**Scenario 1**

Conventional Development

*Scenario Description*
This scenario projects current development patterns into the future, providing a view of what Pagosa Springs may look like when fully developed.

*Key Characteristics:*
- Commercial development continues to focus on and expand along the Highway 160 corridor and begins to expand southward along Highway 84.
- The majority of new residential development occurs in new large single-family lot county developments and low-density subdivisions.
- Does not emphasize the conservation of open space or natural features.
- Transportation remains predominantly auto-dependent and focuses along Highway 160 as the main roadway into which most other streets feed.

**Scenario 2**

Balanced Centers

*Scenario Description*
Under this scenario, new development and commercial activity are focused in two “activity centers”, with open space keeping other areas along the highway more open.

*Key Characteristics:*
- Commercial development occurs in focused centers in the Downtown and Pagosa Lakes area.
- More development occurs in and directly around the town rather than surrounding rural areas.
- Open space corridors are conserved along Putt Hill and Highway 160 as well as portions of major rivers, with development set back from these features.
- Transportation remains predominantly auto-dependent but additional trails in the greenway connect east and west. “Centers” are designed to be pedestrian-friendly.

**Scenario 3**

Multiple Activity Centers

*Scenario Description*
Under this scenario, development focuses in a number of localized activity centers. Development is more clustered to conserve open space and natural areas.

*Key Characteristics:*
- Commercial development occurs in multiple focused centers.
- Clustered development in rural areas conserves significant portions of land as open space while still allowing the same number of units as allowed by zoning.
- Open space is preserved along riparian corridors, highways, and in areas of steep slopes.
- Transportation system places a stronger emphasis on local street network connectivity. Trails along open space corridors connect neighborhoods with activity centers. “Centers” are designed to be pedestrian-friendly.

www.townofpagosasprings.com
Building Type: A
SINGLE UNIT/RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER

Characteristics

BUILDING MASSING/FORM
Scale and massing of individual buildings is consistent with the residential character of the surrounding neighborhood context.

STREETSCAPE CHARACTER
- Homes separated through use of a side setback.
- Building entrances oriented to the primary street frontage.

REAR YARD W/ALLEY ACCESS
Parking accommodated in enclosed garages, on-street, and/or in surface lots behind structures.

relationship to the street
- Broad front yard setback.
- Sidewalk separated from street by planting area and regularly spaced street trees.

Building Type: C
MULTI-UNIT/URBAN RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER

Characteristics

BUILDING MASSING/FORM
Buildings are typically more blocky and urban in form than those in the Neighborhood Transition Character Area.

STREETSCAPE CHARACTER
- Front facade is built to the back of streetscape edge, except where outdoor gathering spaces/community amenities are provided.
- Buildings are built to side lot lines in most cases, although setbacks may be appropriate when providing transitions to a surrounding neighborhood or to an existing historic structure.
- Building entrances oriented to the primary street frontage or a central courtyard.

REAR YARD W/ALLEY ACCESS
Parking accommodated in enclosed garages, on-street, and/or in surface lots behind structures.

relationship to the street
- Entrances are typically raised above the sidewalk level.
- Sidewalk is wide to accommodate pedestrian traffic and street furniture.
- Street trees placed in grates or surrounded by planting areas.
Graphics/photos help explain concepts

- Kit of land uses
- Scaled to map
- Density comparisons
- Goal = Comprehension
  - Density
  - Land Use Relationships
  - Perspectives
Graphics/photos improve plans

FACTS AT A GLANCE

The Cheyenne Area population has continued to grow at a relatively stable rate over the past decades. In 2000, the Cheyenne Area accounted for 90% of the total population in Laramie County, so trends in Laramie County reflect those in the Cheyenne Area. The following statistics and data are relevant to the Cheyenne Area (planning area being considered for PlanCheyenne).

2000 U.S. Census Population and Households Profile

- Population: In 2000, the Cheyenne Area had a population of 74,160 people in 27,780 households. (U.S Census – 2000, Census Blocks).
- Growth: On a yearly basis from 1990 to 2000, the population of Laramie County (and thus the Cheyenne Area) grew at an annual rate of 1.1%.
- Future Growth: Most planning entities in the Cheyenne area project that growth will continue to be at a rate close to 1% annually. However, if the Cheyenne area were to grow as fast as 2 percent annually for 25 years, the population could grow by 56,000 new people.
- Household Size: The average household size is 2.36 people.
- 1960 to 2000 Growth: Laramie County had 60,100 residents in 1960 and in 2000 had over 82,000 residents.

2003 Cheyenne Area Population and Households (Estimated)

- From 2000 to 2003, 1,351 new building permits were issued in the Cheyenne Area. In addition, 760 new address points were recorded in the County between 2000-2003 (when county building permits were not included with City Engineering data).
- Therefore, by the end of 2003, the Cheyenne Area had 29,896 households (28,401 occupied) and a population of 79,141 (MPO).

Age

- The median age of residents in Laramie County is rising—from 31.9 in 1990 to 35.3 in 2000.

Race and Ethnicity

- Cheyenne residents are a mix of ethnicities, including White (85%), Hispanic (11%), Black (3%); Native American (2%); and Asian (1%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Median Age</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>60,149</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>56,362</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>68,649</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>73,142</td>
<td>31.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>81,607</td>
<td>35.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


TRENDS AND KEY ISSUES

- The population for the Cheyenne Area could grow as fast as 2% per year from 2003. This means that by 2030, the Cheyenne Area could have 56,000 new residents, and a total population of 135,000 people. Most projections show the area growing at a rate closer to 1% annually.
- Future Cheyenne Area residents will need a diverse range of housing and jobs.
- The population is growing older. PlanCheyenne should consider needs of a growing senior population, including housing (see Snapshot Cheyenne Area Housing report).

Sources:
- U.S. Census 2000 - Census Block data for the 2,622 blocks that correlate with the MPO planning area. Center for Economic and Business Data, Economic Indicators, Annual Trends, 2004
When our neighborhoods and places are well-connected, this encourages social interaction and cultural events, allows outdoor experiences to be more spontaneous and accessible, decreases pollution by encouraging alternative transportation modes, and allows for healthier lifestyles by allowing walking and bicycling.

Theme 5: Arts and Culture

Henderson will build community through Arts and Culture.

Henderson's arts and culture are important aspects of the quality of life in the community. Serving as a basic part of educational and recreational offerings, arts and culture has the ability to strengthen neighborhoods and community involvement. Community art and culture also helps to foster new perspectives and appreciation while making the city a more attractive and appealing environment. For example, this can be as simple as an artistic sign or fence post, a statue, or a public art expression built into the everyday surroundings of the city. Community art and culture should be accessible to the public and have aesthetic, educational, or community-enriching qualities.

Artistic enrichment and cultural opportunity are vital to our community values, quality of life, and economic and social well-being and makes our community a unique and attractive place to live and for visitors to recreate. To build a stronger community, all citizens should have new opportunities for creative involvement, play, and cultural exchange.
Graphics in Plans...
Plan Integration

- Use your Comprehensive Plan as the integrating element for other plans
  - Transportation
  - Parks and open space
  - Subarea plans

Early Transportation Modeling showed that the area around 1-25 south of the city and would be badly congested in the future (future roads with Level of Service “F” indicated by the red lines).
Do them together, if you can!

*PlanCheyenne*: land use, transportation, parks, open space

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Early Transportation Modeling showed that the area around 1-25 south of the city and would be badly congested in the future (future roads with Level of Service “F” indicated by the red lines).

**Future Neighborhood and Community Parks**

**Trails** (Source: Cheyenne Parks and Recreation Master Plan, EDAW).
Working in Contemporary Themes

- Change from decade to decade
- Different in every community
- Watch for buzz words
- Be aware and be well versed
Contemporary Ideas

- Context of High Growth
- New Urbanism
  - form-based plans and codes
  - Transit-oriented development
  - Activity Centers
- Sustainability
- Quality/Design
- Property rights / rural development /
- Cost of services
Theme-Based Plans

- Traditional Plan structure:
  - Vision
  - Goals & Policies
  - Elements
    - Land use
    - Transportation
    - Open Space
    - Etc.
Theme-Based Structure

- Build Plan around big, compelling, ideas, and integrate them!

1. A Balanced Land Use Pattern
2. Equitable Distribution of Recreational Opportunities
3. Economic Vitality
4. Livable Neighborhoods & Activity Centers
5. A Connected City
Good Idea or Problematic?

**Pros:**
- Powerful vision
- Resonates well with officials and citizens
- Strongly integrates all elements

**Cons:**
- Hard to do!
- Traditionalists are skeptical
- State statute requirements
Effective tools for growth and investment direction.

Planning Commission make and adopt.

You should continue to use once adopted:

- Plan as the first step (for implementation)
- Integrate its vision throughout your planning systems (development review, monitoring)
- Update from time to time
Your Thoughts and Questions?