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Purpose of the Master Plan

MASTER PLAN PURPOSE

The Master Plan is a policy framework for decisions that affect the physical, social and economic environment of the Town. The ‘Parker 2035: Master Plan’ represents goals and strategies to guide the Town over the next 20 years. The Plan provides vision, direction and a defined achievable future for the Town by establishing specific goals and strategies for land use; community appearance and design; housing and neighborhoods; jobs and economic vitality; transportation; public services and facilities; natural resource protection; open space and recreation; history, arts and culture; and regional coordination.

THE MASTER PLAN

What it is:

- A statement of Town policy
- A guide to decision making
- A framework for more specific planning
- A tool for education and communication
- A way to provide a long range perspective
- A way to improve our quality of life

What it isn't:

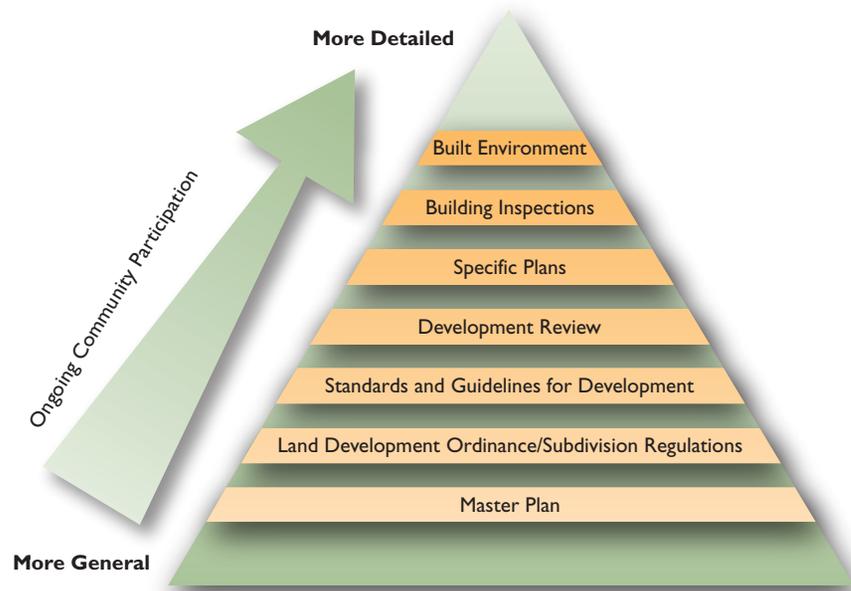
- A Zoning Ordinance
- A Land Development Code
- A rigid or static document
- A Capital Improvements Plan or Town budget
- A specific development plan for a project

This Plan is to be used by Town staff to evaluate and make recommendations to Planning Commission and Town Council on regulatory and policy changes, proposed annexations, zonings and budgeting. The Planning Commission and Town Council use the Master Plan to make decisions regarding proposals that are presented before them. This Plan is used by citizens and neighborhood groups to understand the Town’s long range plans and proposals for different geographical areas in Town and to encourage plan implementation. The Plan provides a basis for the Town’s development regulations and the foundation for its capital improvements program.

WHY DOES PARKER HAVE A MASTER PLAN?

The Colorado Revised Statutes give the authority and responsibility to municipalities to ‘make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the municipality’ (C.R.S. 31-23-206). The statute further states ‘The plan shall be made with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the municipality and its environs which will, in accordance with present and future needs, best promote health, safety, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare’ (C.R.S. 31-23-207). The Town’s Home Rule Charter also establishes this responsibility.





Building a Community

RELATIONSHIP OF THE PLAN TO OTHER PLANNING DOCUMENTS

The Master Plan is used in conjunction with several other planning documents, both regulatory and advisory, as discussed below.

Land Development Ordinance

While the Master Plan provides a framework for decisions, the Land Development Ordinance is used to realize these goals and strategies. The Land Development Ordinance contains the zoning and subdivision regulations and the site plan review process. These three aspects of the Land Development Ordinance were developed and are used to enact and forward the goals and strategies set forth in the Master Plan.

Standards and Guidelines for Development

Adopted as part of the Land Development Ordinance are documents that set forth architectural and site design standards unique to specific locations in Town or specific types of development. These documents are also established to help enact the goals and strategies of the Master Plan and to be used as tools in assuring that the physical appearance of the built environment provides the guidance necessary to ensure the highest possible standards of design.

Capital Improvements Plan

The Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) is designed in 5-year intervals and functions as an implementation link between the Master Plan and the Town budget. The CIP is a schedule of major public capital improvements and as such, may include such things as: major roads; bridges; large park projects; and government buildings and facilities. The capital improvements identified in the CIP reflect the needs of our community while balancing fiscal constraints.

Open Space, Trails and Greenway Master Plan

Updated in 2010, the ‘Open Space, Trails and Greenways Master Plan’ is an element of the Master Plan. The purpose of this plan is to:

Guide the assessment, conservation and management of open space as well as the assessment, linking and management of the trail system;

Preserve open space and trail corridors for future generations;

Enhance the linkages between open space, trails and the built environment; and

Ensure that open space and trail linkages are appropriate, seamless and safe.

The ‘Open Space, Trails and Greenways Master Plan’ reflects the community vision that open space, trails and greenways are an integral part of the Town, the natural environment and the built environment and are to be coordinated with each other and developed cohesively.

Bike Lane Plan

Adopted in July 2005, the Bike Lane Plan is an addendum to the Open Space, Trails and Greenways Master Plan. The purpose of this Plan is to identify opportunities for bike lane development in the Town.

Parks and Recreation Master Plan

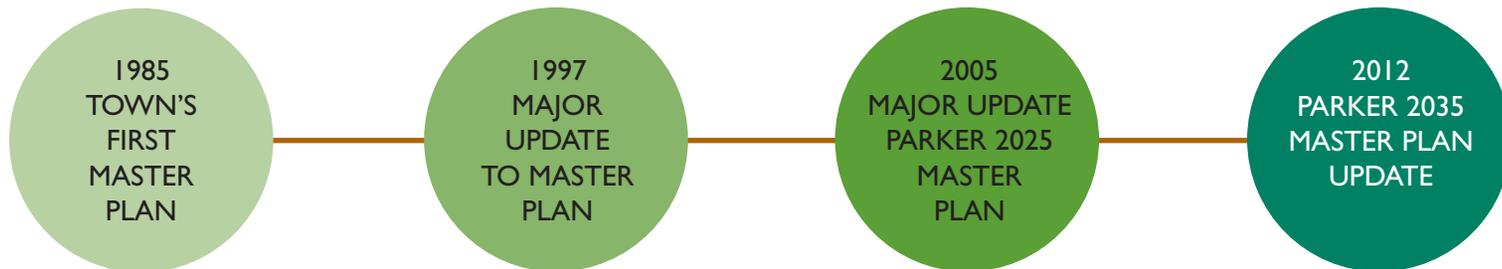
‘From Values to Vision: A Strategic Action Plan for Parker’s Parks and Recreation is a vision document for parks and recreation in the Town. The Plan, completed in 2006, identifies specific action items, the timeframe for completion and who is responsible for completing the projects.



HISTORY OF MASTER PLANS IN PARKER

Preparation of the Town's first master plan in 1985 closely followed incorporation. After a decade of significant growth, the Town revisited the Master Plan for a major update in 1997. The Town completed another major update in 2005 after eight more years of continued growth.

Significant changes have occurred since the last major update seven years ago, the Town's growth rate has significantly slowed. This slowing of both commercial and residential growth reflects national and statewide trends. These local implications of the economic changes precipitated the discussion and ultimate undertaking of this update to the Town's master plan.





HOW TO READ THIS MASTER PLAN

This Master Plan contains a series of fifteen chapters organized in a manner that can be divided into four groupings – The Community; The Plan; The Big Picture; and Key Components to our Community.

For each of the primary chapters (Chapters 6 – 15) a topic-specific vision, goals and strategies were developed. For the purposes of this Plan, these elements are defined as follows:

Vision

Visions identify desired states for the future regarding land use and related issues. They provide the aspiration for the future of our community and give us guidance in our decision making processes.

Goal

Goals are statements of intent used to guide public and private decision making and provide a general direction for our more refined strategies.

Strategy

Strategies describe the actions that the Town and its partners can take to accomplish its overall vision. Each strategy is linked to a specific goal and sets forth actions that should be taken to implement the goal.

Visions identify desired states for the future regarding land use and related issues.



The Community (Chapter 1)

Chapter 1: Community Profile

The Plan begins with our community profile establishing where we came from, who we are as a community and who we expect to be in the future, including a demographic analysis of our community today and future forecasts.



The Plan (Chapters 2-4)

Chapter 2: Understanding the Context of our Future Decisions

Chapter 2 discusses the context of our decisions. This chapter is intended to set forth the boundaries of our decision making process for this Master Plan and why they were established.

Chapter 3: Community Involvement

This document is a plan for our community and by our community. It was of the utmost importance to the Town to assure that the community was not only allowed to participate, but strongly encouraged to participate. Chapter 3 discusses the extensive public participation process that was undertaken for this Master Plan effort in 2005 and this update in 2012.

Chapter 4: Purpose of the Master Plan

Chapter 4 sets forth the basic framework of the Master Plan. It reviews the purpose of this Master Plan, the history of Master Plans in Parker, the organization of this Plan and the administration of it.

The Big Picture (Chapters 5-7)

Chapter 5: Master Plan Vision and Guiding Principles

Chapter 5 sets forth the overall vision and guiding principles for this planning effort. Derived from community input and good planning policy, the vision and guiding principles are the cornerstones for our decision making process and provide Plan direction.

Chapter 6: Land Use

Chapter 6 sets forth the framework for what the urban fabric of our Town will look like and how our different land uses will interact.

Chapter 7: Community Appearance and Design

Community appearance and design were primary concerns of our citizens. This chapter provides direction regarding the appearance and design for all types of development and preservation that will occur in the Town.

Key Components to Our Community (Chapters 8-15)

The remaining chapters, as outlined below, address specific key components that make up our community.

Chapter 8: Housing and Neighborhoods

Chapter 9: Jobs and Economic Vitality

Chapter 10: Transportation

Chapter 11: Public Services and Facilities

Chapter 12: Natural Resource Protection

Chapter 13: Open Space and Recreation

Chapter 14: History, Arts and Culture

Chapter 15: Regional Coordination



ADOPTION OF THE PLAN

To be adopted, the Plan must go through a formal public hearing process. As required under the Town's Home Rule Charter, the Plan is reviewed and recommended by the Planning Commission and submitted to the Town Council for adoption. Both actions take place in a public forum where citizens are encouraged to attend and be heard.



ADMINISTRATION OF THE PLAN

There is a natural tendency to presume that a master plan as adopted will be applied in its entirety with minimal changes over the specified timeframe; however, such a rigid application would not be responsive to the natural changes and unforeseen opportunities that arise in a community as dynamic as Parker. Making long range decisions means that issues need to be periodically readdressed to reflect new or emerging circumstances. Each succeeding Town Council also has the discretion to reconsider previous long range policy decisions and may choose to modify the Plan. The Master Plan is a key instrument to reflect changing perspectives and attitudes.

The Master Plan is designed to be a broad and flexible document that changes to meet the community's needs, conditions and direction of change. It can be amended and updated through Town-initiated amendments or through citizen/landowner initiated amendments. If an amendment is related to a land use application, the amendment may be processed with the applicable application process.

It is recognized that a proposed change of land use within any given portion of the Town may have a substantial impact on the overall balance of land uses within the Town and the character of the area in which it is located. The General Land Use Plan in this document was formulated and adopted with full consideration of the character of the Town and the balance of land uses. An amendment of any aspect of the General Land Use Plan should strive to maintain this balance or should demonstrate that market changes or other outside influences have occurred that warrant this change.

All amendments to this Master Plan shall demonstrate that the proposed amendment fits within the visions and guiding principles of this Plan, as set forth in Chapter 5.



AMENDMENTS TO THE PLAN

The Planning Commission shall conduct a public hearing to consider any amendment to the Master Plan. The Planning Commission shall then submit its recommendation regarding the proposed amendment to the Town Council. Town Council may adopt the Master Plan amendment as presented or may adopt parts of the proposed amendment through a Resolution.

All public hearings shall be held subsequent to proper notice as set forth in the 'Town of Parker Municipal Code'.