



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING SERVICES

1555 N. 17th Ave

Greeley, CO 80631

Website: www.weldgov.com

Email: jflesher@weldgov.com

Phone: (970) 400-3552

Fax: (970) 304-6498

2020 Weld County Comprehensive Plan Update

The Weld County Comprehensive Plan is intended to guide land use decisions in the unincorporated area of the County. It was originally created in 1973 and has since been updated in 1987, 1995, 2002, and 2008. The latest update is a much shorter document than in previous years, being only eight pages long. One way it was shortened was by eliminating the Strategies that were listed in the previous version. The Planning Department will maintain a list of actions in a Strategic Plan, which can be updated annually and need not be adopted into County Code.

Article I of the Comprehensive Plan is similar to the previous version but one change was to move the Guiding Principles to Article II to be closer to the Goals of the Plan. Also, Section 22-1-140, Planning Process, will only pertain to the process for the 2020 update of the Comprehensive Plan. Previously, this section started off describing the update process but ended with five planning principles. Another change to Article I is that the amendment procedure in Section 22-1-150 has been updated to reflect the fact that amending the Comprehensive Plan is a legislative action of the Board of County Commissioners and the Regional Urban Areas have not been incorporated in Chapter 22 for many years.

Article II is much shorter than the previous version and contains four Guiding Principles, plus Goals and Objectives, rather than having descriptions of each topic followed by Goals, Policies, and Strategies. The previous Comprehensive Plan included categories of Agriculture, Urban Development, Unincorporated Communities and Historic Townsites, Industrial Development, Commercial Development, Residential Development, and Regional Urban Areas (RUAs) in Article II. The draft Comprehensive Plan includes four Goals regarding Agriculture, Development, and Transportation. Also included in the updated Article II are Goals and Objectives on Economic Development, Environment, and Natural Resources.

The old Article III was titled "Land Use Amenities" and included Public Facilities, Fire Protection, Law Enforcement, and Transportation. (The Weld County Transportation Plan was adopted as a separate document in 2010 and is also being updated.) Articles IV and V covered Environmental and Natural Resources, respectively. Finally, Article V contained Goals, Policies, and Strategies regarding Economic Development.

The new Article III addresses the requirement in state statute for a Recreation and Tourism Element and the Comprehensive Plan ends with Article IV, which describes a map to be used to guide rezonings and subdivisions with concentric rings around municipalities and areas that are preferred locations for potential rezonings to commercial and industrial zones. The map offers a visual representation of policies and regulations encouraging zone changes and subdivisions within one-quarter mile of municipalities to annex, and shows additional buffers of one and three miles around municipalities, as well as areas within water districts. Urban-scale development would only be permitted within three miles of a municipality. Nonurban-scale development would be allowed beyond one mile of a municipality as long as it had public water. Rural-scale PUDs would be only allowed beyond three miles from a municipality.

The areas considered better suited for potential commercial and industrial zones (and commercial and industrial Planned Unit Developments) are based on proximity to railroads, highways, and higher classified intersections. As stated in Section 22-4-10, this designation on the map "does not guarantee a zone change application will be approved. All applicable criteria in Chapters 23 or 27 of the Weld County Code must be satisfied in order for the Board of County Commissioners to approve a zone change application, including location-specific attributes such as surrounding land uses, topography, and availability of utilities."