

Long Range Planning Policies

Changes are tracked in red.

Environmental Stewardship

Water

Proper planning and maintaining of water quality and quantity is essential. An adequate and safe supply of water protects the health of the community's residents and the environment. Land development affects both the quality and the quantity of Ground Water and surface water. Because of this direct link, the adverse impacts of existing and future development on this necessary resource should be studied and mitigated.

Goals

- Promote a sustainable, adequate, reliable, and safe water supply.
- Protect the quality and quantity of surface and Ground Water resources.
- Protect water resources through stormwater management.
- Promote water conservation practices.
- Increase water reuse to better optimize available water supplies.

Policies

General

1. Endorse efforts to better define and protect Ground Water Recharge areas.
2. Limit the spread of vector- and water-borne diseases through ~~Encourage~~ Best Management Practices ~~to limit the spread of vector- and water-borne diseases.~~
3. ~~Encourage~~ Promote connections to Centralized Water and Sewer Systems, when economically feasible, or necessary to protect human health or the environment.
4. If drainage modifications are necessary, they should be natural in appearance.
5. Create a list of water providers by Area Plan.

Ground Water

1. When an area has been identified by the County or Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment as having a Ground Water quality problem, proper Mitigation of the problem should be implemented before zoning, health variances or changes are approved that would aggravate the problem.

2. Encourage continued collection and analysis of data to evaluate the extent, availability, trends, and quality of Ground Water resources and forecast future extent and availability considering climate change effects and potential drought conditions- in the Mountain Ground Water Overlay District.

Water Quality

1. Identify existing water contamination sources and mitigate or eliminate them.
2. Identify appropriate measures to protect water resources from effects of point and non-point sources of stormwater pollution.
3. Stormwater from New Developments should not discharge into a drinking water supply reservoir unless it can be demonstrated that water quality will not be impaired.
4. Runoff from fertilized landscaped areas and impervious surfaces, including pavement, hard-packed corrals, etc., should be filtered through vegetated buffers and grass swales or other Infiltration structures to reduce pollutants before the runoff leaves the property. (See Appendix C I. d.)
5. Development and other land use activities should avoid water quality impacts from erosion and sedimentation.
6. Utilize Low Impact Development (LID) as a stormwater management approach and set of practices that can be used to reduce runoff and pollutant loadings by managing the runoff as close to its source(s) as possible.
7. Existing development should be encouraged to implement stormwater quality Best Management Practices. (See Appendix C I. a.)

On-Site Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS)

1. Protect the quality of surface and Ground Water from pollution caused by OWTS.
2. Encourage-Promote advanced treatment system OWTSs when replacing OWTSs.
3. Encourage the State to evaluate separation requirements between wells and leach fields.

Conservation

1. Encourage-Assist in the development and implementation of water conservation plans and programs.
2. Promote water conservation techniques which provide large water use reductions and have relatively low cost. (See Appendix C I. e.)
3. Encourage site designs that make efficient use of water.
4. ~~Design landscaping to conserve water.~~

4. Review the County's existing Landscaping regulations for changes that would improve water conservation. Revisions should assess:

- a) Creation of differing standards for Mountain and Plains;
- b) Inclusion of and emphasis on native species in landscaping options;
- c) Protection of native vegetation, not just existing trees; and
- d) Limitations on turf areas.

5. Create an approved plant list that supplements the landscape regulation and evaluates landscape options based on:

- a) Soil types
- b) Water sources (wells vs. public water)
- c) Water requirements
- d) Climate zones
- e) Wildfire hazard

6. Landscaping regulation updates should be complemented by an education program for residents, developers and builders to maximize the potential of water-conserving landscape design.

7. Promote efficient irrigation systems that eliminate run-off from landscaped areas, use water efficient fixtures (such as rain sensors, master valves, and flow sensors), and incorporate non-potable water.

8. Streetscapes should utilize xeric plants over traditional turfgrass.

Reuse

1. Support ~~gray~~non-potable- water reuse for New Development, when not in conflict with local, state and district rules.

2. Support efforts by water providers to effectively and environmentally implement potable and non-potable water reuse, including augmentation.

3. Promote reuse of treated wastewater for irrigation and other acceptable uses, when feasible.

4. Consider opportunities to demonstrate the benefits of using non-potable sources of water and to dispel negative connotations.

Coordination

1. ~~The County should protect the region's water resources, in part by s~~Supporting the Denver Regional Council of Government's Plans to protect the region's water resources.

2. Coordinate surface water planning on a Watershed level.

3. Coordinate with neighboring communities and with regional planning forums to develop and implement effective Watershed management strategies.
4. The County should work with appropriate parties to develop new, innovative standards for stormwater management.
5. The County should engage with water providers to share issues of mutual concern on a periodic basis and work collaboratively to address long-term water supply concerns.
6. Encourage special districts to include water conservation measures in their utility master plans.
7. Support implementation of water provider conservation projects.
8. Support appropriate efforts by water providers to incorporate drought conditions in their supply and demand forecasts in providing future and existing water supplies.
9. Work with water providers and the Division of Water Resources to review and revise, as appropriate, the standards of the various zoning districts to ensure they are consistent with promoting water efficient development.
10. Partner with Public Health and community groups that want to monitor wells for water quality and/or quantity to establish consistent methodology.

Outreach

Water

The quality and quantity of water is a very important issue in Jefferson County, especially in the Mountain Areas where a large number of properties, both Commercial and residential, are served by Ground Water. Education about water issues should include issues related to wells, On-Site Wastewater Treatment Systems and water conservation.

Goal

- Promote the education of residents, businesses, and appropriate agencies about water issues affecting the County.
- Reduce end user water consumption in the County.

Policies

General

1. Develop and maintain partnerships and joint outreach programs with water providers, Jefferson county municipalities, and other entities with water/hydrologic expertise and common water education goals.
2. Work with the CSU Cooperative extension to create a Xeriscape program to educate residents about the benefits and proper maintenance of low water use landscapes.

3. Collaborate with partners on water conservation education about ways residents and businesses can conserve water in their homes and businesses.

14. Work with community groups and citizens to distribute information, such as the Water Smarts brochure, to inform residents about water quantity, quality and sanitation issues.

25. Inform developers and residents about stormwater Best Management Practices.

36. Educate the citizenry on the importance of maintaining On-Site Wastewater Treatment Systems.

47. Support educational programs that teach ways to reduce overall water use without adversely affecting quality of life.

8. Coordinate with public educators to add water education to curriculum or assemblies.

59. Encourage homeowners to regularly test their well water for Potability.

610. Encourage well owners to regularly measure the static water level in their well to establish a baseline level.

11. Promote rainwater capture as allowed by law.