

Comprehensive Plan Basics

What is a comprehensive plan?

A comprehensive plan is a guiding policy document that reflects a community's future vision. The comprehensive planning process allows a community to understand existing conditions, self-evaluate needs and issues, and prioritize a clear roadmap for accomplishing shared goals. The comprehensive plan is an essential step in a continuous process that is designed to be flexible and adaptable. In this way, a comprehensive plan provides guidance for citizens and decision-makers on how a community should change over time.

How is a comprehensive plan organized?

State law requires all comprehensive plans contain at least nine chapters, or elements:

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| • Population | • Cultural Resources | • Land Use |
| • Economic Development | • Community Facilities | • Transportation |
| • Natural Resources | • Housing | • Priority Investment |

Each element must contain an inventory of existing conditions, a statement of needs and goals, and implementation strategies with time frames. All planning elements detailed in a comprehensive plan represent the Planning Commission's official recommendations to County Council regarding wise and efficient use of public funds, future growth, development, redevelopment, and the fiscal impact of the planning elements on property owners.

How often does the County complete a comprehensive plan?

State law allows a jurisdiction to review the comprehensive plan or any of the nine elements as often as necessary; however, the jurisdiction must review the plan at least every five years and update the plan at least every ten years. Major changes within a jurisdiction can also dictate if or when a review is necessary.

Project Schedule

