



Planning for Water: Implementing the Colorado Water Plan

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APA Colorado

- 1,500 members Statewide
- The mission of APA CO is *“Making Great Communities Happen”*
- Primary tools are education and advocacy
- Members are diverse in expertise and focus
- Have a common goal to provide vision and leadership for the future development of Colorado communities



Planning for Water in the West

- **Planners work with communities** to:
 - Create short term and long term land use plans
 - Address critical issues like transportation, housing, parks and open space, water and more
- **Good planning is holistic** and inclusive of all factors, all potential impacts (positive and negative), all stakeholders, and their interaction
- **Water is a critical issue** for the future of our communities and our State
- **Land Use and Water planning have historically been conducted in silos** (does not constitute holistic planning)
- **Result is unplanned consequences**; failure to achieve desired result



Planning for Water in the West

- **The Planner's Tool Box**
 - **Comprehensive Master Plans** – Represent community vision
 - **Zoning Ordinance or Resolution** – Regulatory document (consistent with Comprehensive Master Plan)
 - **Subdivision** – Requirements for dividing property prior to sale (must be consistent with zoning)
 - **Site Plans** – Most specific plan; presents required details for development (consistent with Comp Plan, Zoning, and any subdivision requirements)



Planning for Water in Colorado

- **CWP Goals and Objectives**

- Supply-Demand Gap
- Conservation
- ***Land Use***
 - ***CWP Objective: By 2025, 75 percent of Coloradans will live in communities that have incorporated water-saving actions into land-use planning.***
- Agriculture
- Storage
- Watershed Health, Environment, and Recreation
- Funding
- Education, Outreach, and Innovation



About Western Resource Advocates (WRA)

- Non-profit organization in 7 Western States: water, energy and land
- Urban water management has been a focus for well over a decade
- We have been leading and collaborating on the water-land use planning topic for 6 years



Implementing Integrated Water & Land Use Planning in Colorado

Direct assistance available to communities:

- [Growing Water Smart Workshop](#) by Sonoran Institute. On going. Up to 10 communities per year.
- Incorporating Water Saving Actions into Land Use Workshop ([Colorado Municipal League](#) and Western Resource Advocates). 1 day in 2018, 17 communities.
- Individual community assistance provided by Western Resources Advocates and WaterNow Alliance in partnership with Babbitt Center for Land and Water Policy. On going. Up to 10 communities per year
- Department of Local Affairs provides matching funding for comprehensive plans, with an aim to help better integrate water elements. On going. Up to 6 communities per year.



Implementing Integrated Water & Land Use Planning in Colorado

Free educational resources for communities:

- [Integrating Water Efficiency Into Land Use Planning in the Interior West: A Guidebook for Local Planners](#) (by Land Use Law Center at Pace Law School, and Western Resource Advocates)
- [Best Practices for Implementing Water Conservation and Demand Management Through Land Use Planning Efforts Addendum to 2012 Guidance Document](#) (by Getches-Wilkinson Center and Babbitt Center for Land and Water Policy, prepared for Colorado Water Conservation Board.
- [Webinar Training Modules](#) (by Land Use Law Center for Colorado Water Conservation Board)



Implementing Integrated Water & Land Use Planning in Colorado

And yet more is needed to achieve the Water Plan land use goal.

- Robust incorporation of water planning into land use planning is not the norm.
- Preliminary findings from a Babbitt Center study showed 40% (85 out of 213) of comprehensive plans had some degree of a water element included, even if very basic.
- Significant resources have been dedicated to guidance and assistance, but change is slow.



Implementing Integrated Water & Land Use Planning in Colorado

While land use decisions are local, the State can play a supportive role.

- The State should continue to play a supportive role in advancing integrated land use and water planning, and consider additional steps to achieve water plan goal.
- [WRA's State Policy & Program Database](#): features Land Use & Water programs and policies from across the nation, such as:
 - Required coordination among land use and water authorities
 - Agency review to ensure cohesion among plans for land use, watersheds and water management
 - Required water elements in comprehensive plans
 - Assured water supply requirements
 - New construction standards



Implementing Integrated Water & Land Use Planning in Colorado

Concluding Thoughts

- Whereas historically water and land use planning activities have been siloed, today there is broad recognition of the importance of integrated planning.
- Community by community changes are beginning to happen, but we have much farther to go to do it robustly and to meet the Water Plan goal.
- Efforts will be needed at the local, county, and state levels to support this work.



Thank you!

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