
Executive Summary

The Salt Lake County Commission adopted a general plan for the Mill Creek Community in 1988. This plan was the result of community input and contemporary planning practice. The plan won an Award of Merit for Plan Development from the Utah Chapter of the American Planning Association, and has served as the formal guide for development and land-use policy implementation for the area since that time. The purpose of the 1999 Mill Creek General Plan Update is to reevaluate the 1988 Mill Creek General Plan in light of changes and trends the community has seen since its adoption, over ten years ago. It is intended to build upon the 1988 Plan instead of replacing it out rightly.

The 1999 Mill Creek General Plan Update was compiled from a number of valuable sources. The most fundamental were the 1988 Mill Creek General Plan and West Mill Creek Neighborhood Revitalization Strategies produced by Wikstrom Consultants in 1995. (Since the completion of the Wikstrom study, the city of South Salt Lake annexed a substantial area (2.5 square miles) in the west portion of the Mill Creek Community).

The primary concern of Mill Creek residents is the decline of residential neighborhoods in the area. Neighborhoods age, and as they do they can either deteriorate, or mature to become warm, attractive 'places'. Deterioration comes from neglect, and neglect primarily comes only when there is first a dominating intrusion. These intrusions can be physical (such as congestion and noise from heavy traffic) or psychological (such as the nearby presence of a significantly larger structure).

There are neighborhoods in Mill Creek that provide clear examples of both deterioration and maturation. A common element found in deteriorated neighborhoods is a lack of adherence to basic planning principles. They are places that have developed in a haphazard fashion over long periods of time. Deteriorated residential areas are those exhibiting a lack of simple maintenance to clumsy home additions, direct exposure and impacts from heavy traffic, or objectionable commercial developments. Deteriorated commercial areas are those that display substandard or inconvenient access and parking, poorly maintained landscaping, and excessive signage. Deteriorated industrial areas have failed to provide sufficient facilities and infrastructure. All have a common lack of adherence to basic planning principles.

Conversely, it is evident that neighborhoods that have remained stable and continue to be desirable places to live. Good subdivision design and a high level of maintenance by the individual property owners are the key factors that help to foster the stability and appeal of neighborhoods.

The 1999 Update's recommendations are intended to present the tools for managing change and providing land use protection for stable well kept residential neighborhoods in the area, and to help this community move into the future and become even more functional and attractive. The

primary intent is to create a ‘sense of place’ in Mill Creek and restore it as one of Salt Lake County’s premier neighborhood locations.

The Plan cannot dictate final authority on every land use question. It is a policy or advisory guide for future development. However, it represents a comprehensive study and should be used to guide decisions. Flexibility in the Plan can accommodate the changing trends within the community. The General Plan contains policies and a land use plan map which illustrates a desired physical arrangement of uses, deemed appropriate at a certain point in time, but cannot provide for all future changes and demands. For this reason, each development proposal must be critically reviewed and promote the desired goals and high standards for development in the Mill Creek Community.

Vision of the Community

Visioning is simply a process by which a community envisions the future it wants, and plans how to achieve it. It brings people together to develop a shared image of what they want their community to become. Once a community has envisioned where it wants to go, it can begin to consciously work toward that goal.

Salt Lake County's impressive growth is producing large housing subdivisions, big retail centers and plenty of parking lots, but it's starting to become clear that large lawns and bargain shopping centers carry an indirect price. People are feeling the side effects of development: traffic congestion strained sewer systems, water pollution and crowded classrooms. Some are starting to ask if there's a better way. A review of the growth and changes that have occurred in the Mill Creek Community since 1988 Master Plan was completed, as well as how these changes occurred, provided the information to help answer the question of "where are we now?" In addition an analysis of the information collected regarding Mill Creek Community growth and development indicated current growth trends, which also helped answer "where are we going?" Perhaps the more formidable question of all those needing to be answered deals with "where do we want to be?" The answer to this question requires a considerable thought. Mill Creek will continue to change as people move to or from the community.

The policies outlined in the 1999 Mill Creek Community General Plan Update are designed to help the Mill Creek Community realize its potential as one of Utah's outstanding communities. Its vibrant, diverse mixed-use neighborhoods provide a wide variety of activities and opportunities in the heart of the Salt Lake Valley. Mill Creek is an area where goods and services are conveniently provided. Opportunities for economic, recreational, social and cultural assets are close at hand.

Through public involvement efforts, beginning with public meeting with the Community Council and Planning Commission, these and other issues were identified to form a consensual idea as to what the Community should become in the future. The formal expression of this idea is known as the **vision**.

The future of Mill Creek community will be:

- A community with a strong tax base
- A community where residents are able to enjoy tree-lined sidewalks and lighted streets.
- A place where residential neighborhoods and commercial developments foster an enduring character.
- A place where manmade and natural features are built in harmony.
- A place where open space preservation is a high priority.
- A place where quality housing to a wide range income levels and where children have good schools and many safe and attractive places to play.

Once established, this vision statement represents the beginning, not the end, of the process of directing the future towards achieving the vision described above. The final question of “How do we get there?” begins with the communication of this vision to residents, property owners, policy and decision makers, and any and all interested people. Once this vision is known and communicated to all, collective efforts can be geared towards making the desired outcome a reality. By knowing the vision statement and constantly bearing it in mind, ideas, decisions, and developments will cater to the common goal and vision.

See Land Use Plan Map

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