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## INTRODUCTION

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Integrating water resource protections into land use planning is a multi-interagency initiative. The workgroup that has developed this guidance was diverse in member composition and the general purpose of this document is to provide guidance to educate planners and elected officials on some potential voluntary methods or strategies to integrate water resource protection and land use planning.

The intention of this document is to provide guidance for communities and local elected officials to integrate water resources protection into their planning process as they deem appropriate. Through the collaborative workgroup (see Collaborative Partners and Contacts Section) we identified elements (Guidance Section) for local governments to consider.

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## PURPOSE

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Many communities throughout Colorado are taking a pro-active approach to protect water resources that commonly includes their drinking water supply. Water resources protection implemented on the local level including municipal, public water system, and county planning efforts is the most effective resource protection effort that can provide guidance on important decisions for protecting the community's water resources.

Locally driven source water protection plans are one tool that may be utilized in resource protection planning efforts. Other effective tools are Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) between counties/municipalities and public water systems and incorporation of water resources protection language into comprehensive or master planning documents. In order to achieve water resource protection, economic vitality, and community sustainability, comprehensive planning best practices are encouraged.

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## GUIDANCE

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The following are elements to consider when integrating water resource protection into your local comprehensive (comp) and master planning efforts.

- Identify essential stakeholders and community members that should be involved in this process.
- Promote education of the watershed health connection to land and water resources protection to your planners/elected officials. Specifically express why it's important, the purpose, and why elected officials should coordinate with their planners and planning departments.
- Explain the role of comprehensive/master plans (ex: municipal, county) and connection to water resources and source water protection to your elected officials.
- Planners/staff discuss with municipal/county officials the intent of comp/master planning language.
- Review and highlight important/common aspects of any source water protection/water conservation strategies/plans that the community and public water providers deem important.
- Determine whether a broad based or specific goal oriented strategy is best for implementation. Based on your strategy define specific objectives, goals, and measures you wish to accomplish (if applicable).
- Determine specific actions to achieve your goals, objectives, and measures (if applicable). Identify effective management plans, land use code revisions, and strategic implementation that supports your goals.
- Determine a plan to raise awareness of the importance and significance of these comp/master planning elements to the developers, community, staff and planners, and elected officials (council members, commissioners and

special district board members)/stakeholders. Also, assess the political will of the community and draft the proper language to include in your comp/master planning documents.

- Share information regarding the planning efforts and geographical information systems (GIS). GIS information for drinking water supplies are available to governmental entities from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Please contact the source water program ([cdphe.wqswap@state.co.us](mailto:cdphe.wqswap@state.co.us)) to obtain the data.
- Provide education, outreach, and training opportunities for developers, community, planners, elected officials (council members, commissioners, and special district board members), and stakeholders.
- Share your planning effort and experiences with other communities.

## EXAMPLE COMPREHENSIVE AND MASTER PLANNING LANGUAGE

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There are many areas in a comp/master planning document that the language below may be incorporated. Water resources protection should be mentioned in the executive summary and specific language outlined in a section named Watershed Health, Water Resource Protection, or Water Resource Strategy.

### 1. General Broad Based Language.

The “City or County” recognizes the importance and criticality of water resources and water quality protection in relationship to community and public health, economic development, and sustainable resource management. The “City or County” acknowledges that water resource protection and management is a collaborative community and inter-agency responsibility involving federal and state water quality regulations, state water quantity regulations, local land use planning, and locally developed source water protection planning strategies involving public water systems.

The “City or County” will continually seek to protect, maintain, and improve the quality of surface and subsurface drinking water sources and work with other water and land use interests as needed to assure the integrity, sustainability, and quality of its drinking water supplies. Implementation of the necessary strategies to perform this function may be guided by local source water protection plans that are developed in conjunction with diverse stakeholder interests and public water providers. The “City or County” is dedicated to understanding the watershed, source water protection areas, and ecosystem health components that may influence water resources and water quality protection.

## RESOURCES (other comp/master plan examples and information)

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- More resources can be researched at <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/dola/comprehensive-plans> and <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cowaterplan/integrating-land-use-planning>

## COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS AND CONTACTS

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