

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Planning is an activity that we engage in every day. We plan our day at work, our day at home, or, during vacations, we may even plan not to plan at all. Each of us also plan for the future by setting goals for next month, next year, and beyond. Our goals may appear to be simple, but the events that must take place in order to attain them may be complex.

Planning for a City is not unlike our individual planning process, but instead of planning for individuals or families we must plan for all citizens of the City, both present and future. The number of individuals, the area of jurisdiction, and the multiplicity of concerns further complicates the process. This planning process can achieve some semblance of order and stabilization in the community as the majority work toward common goals. These goals, often difficult to define, are expressed in the City's General Plan.

The General Plan is an official written statement which describes overall goals and policies for the desirable future physical development of the City. T. J. Kent, one of the fathers of City planning theory, described the purpose of the general plan as follows:

1. **To improve the physical environment of the community as a setting for human activities.** A community's Plan should have the primary goal of making the City more functional, beautiful, decent, healthful, interesting, and efficient. This purpose is in accord with the broad objective of local government to promote the health, safety, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare of the community. The intent is to enhance what already exists in the City.
2. **To promote the public interest, the interest of the community at large, rather than the interests of individuals or special interest groups within the community.** The comprehensive nature of the Plan contributes to this purpose by evaluating the relationships between the many elements which affect the physical development of the entire community. The Plan is based on information that attempts to be thorough and impartial. It helps to prevent arbitrary, capricious, and biased actions. The contributions of the Plan to democratic, responsible government help to safeguard the public interest.
3. **To facilitate the democratic determination and implementation of community policies on physical development.** The Plan is primarily a policy instrument. The Plan constitutes a declaration of long range goals and provides policies and recommendations to serve as a basis for accomplishing these goals. By providing an opportunity for citizen participation and then placing the responsibility for determining policies on elected officials, the Plan facilitates the democratic process.
4. **To effect political and technical coordination in community development.** Political coordination signifies that a majority within the community is working toward the same ends. Technical coordination is achieved by establishing a logical relationship between the physical elements

dealt with in the Plan and the most efficient planning and scheduling of actual improvements so as to avoid conflict, duplication, and waste.

5. **To inject long range considerations into the determination of short range actions.** This purpose is intended to achieve coordination through time; to attempt to make sure that today's decisions will lead toward tomorrow's goals. The establishment of long range goals is perhaps the most significant feature of the General Plan.
6. **To bring professional and technical knowledge to bear on the making of political decisions concerning the physical development of the community.** This purpose is intended to promote wiser decision making, to achieve informed, constructive government. Through the General Plan, the special knowledge of the professional planner is brought into play in the democratic political process.

The importance of the General plan as a policy document to guide future development in the City should be emphasized. The Plan sets the direction which the City should take but should be flexible enough to adapt to changing conditions. It should be understood that, once adopted, the Plan is not static but should evolve as the community evolves. The economy, new administrations, and unforeseen events may affect the Plan. For this reason it should be reevaluated from time to time to insure its relevancy.

Another emphasis of the General Plan is on implementation. Much of what is discussed in the Plan should result in a specific action or series of actions. The Plan contains many policy statements and recommendations for these actions. All of these policies and recommendations should eventually find a means of being implemented. The recommendations of the Plan are generally implemented through specific programs, the Zoning Ordinance, the Subdivision Ordinance, and/or the Capital Improvements Plan.

The General Plan's format includes both a policy approach to planning as well as a mapping approach. The goals and policies are presented in Chapter 4 of this document and are supported in succeeding chapters by information that pertains to specific elements of the Plan. Each element contains more specific recommendations intended to serve as the basis for initiating a plan of action to achieve the established goals. The map titled *Future Land Use Plan* graphically displays the recommendations of the Plan which should be considered in making land use decisions. This map, and others which are prepared to illustrate recommendations of the General Plan, are generally the most often used portions of the Plan but it should be remembered that the future land use recommendations are only the end result of a lengthy decision making process. Any inconsistencies that may exist between the text and maps should be resolved in favor of the text. The goals, policies, and recommendations tie the Plan together and the map helps to display their findings.

The General Plan should be used as a framework for land use decisions, as the primary reference in developing amendments to the City Code, and should be put to everyday use by the administrative and political bodies within Farmington City.