

NEW HARMONY VALLEY GENERAL PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The General Plan for the New Harmony Valley is a part of the General Plan of Washington County. Planning in Washington County began about 1970 and has continued since that time. The most recent update of the plan was in November of 1995. However, the plan for the New Harmony Valley at that time was very minimal, indicating that there would probably be a transition from agricultural uses to residential uses over a period of years.

BASIS FOR PLANNING

The authority for a General Plan comes from enabling legislation passed by the State of Utah and found in the Utah Code, Article 17, which outlines the methods to be followed and charges the County Planning Commission with the development of a General Plan.

Many other public agencies also are involved in planning for the areas that they are responsible for, such as the Bureau of Land Management, The National Forest and the National Park. All of these agencies are also involved with land in the New Harmony Valley area of Washington County.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The purpose of the plan is to serve as a guide for orderly development. It sets the pattern for growth and change. It expresses the goals as to what the area should look like in the future, and the policies or guidelines for achieving the goals.

THE GENERAL PLAN AND ACTION

Effectuating the Plan is the responsibility of public and private groups. The Plan alone does not cause things to happen, nor does it give precise recommendations for the development of various projects. The Plan provides the road map to follow. Vehicles of implementation such as the Zoning Ordinance, and the Subdivision Ordinance are needed to carry out the provisions of the General Plan.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

Located in the north central part of Washington County, the New Harmony Valley is considerably different than the lower parts of the County. This area of the County has four distinct seasons each year, has cold and sometimes stormy winters, combined with mild, cool summer seasons.

The settlement of Washington County began in the New Harmony Valley at Harmony Fort, just off the present I-15 freeway at the New Harmony interchange. The earliest settlers arrived in 1852, left for a year, and returned in 1854. Crops were raised in 1854 and the following winter was spent there.

The fort was begun in 1854, and Brigham Young arrived and helped dig some of the dirt for the foundation. Washington County was created in March, 1852, with New Harmony being named as the County seat. The fort, 300' X 300' in size housed most of the people of Harmony. It had only one defect. It was made from adobe brick and the rain and wind dissolved the earthen walls during a severe storm in 1862. The severity of this storm and the subsequent loss of their homes, caused the people to move to higher ground to the west where the Town of New Harmony is now located.

The Town has remained in the new location since the 1862 storm and has grown only minimally. In 1865 there were twenty-five families and 225 people in New Harmony. In recent years, development has taken place in many parts of the Valley. Subdivisions are now located in the vicinity of the old fort, to the south along Kanarra Creek and Ash Creek, and to the south of New Harmony Town. It is now expected that this growth and development will continue into the future. Because of the expected continued growth, there is a need for an updated General Plan for the Valley.

UNDERSTANDING THE PLAN

The General Plan identifies various land use categories and considers the use of each of these classifications. Many of these types of land use are considered in terms of the Goals and Policies that are adopted as a part of the Plan. Goals and policies are described as follows:

A **GOAL** represents an objective relative to some aspect of development that the County has determined to achieve.

A **POLICY** is an action that will allow, or help the County to achieve the desired goal.

ELEMENTS OF THE PLAN

The New Harmony Bench is a beautiful area with many unique characteristics. There are many qualities about the area that set it apart from other areas of the County. Therefore, as the area continues to grow and develop, it is necessary that the things that make the New Harmony Bench what is, are preserved. There is a limited amount of water in the valley and this will determine the extent to which development will take place. Historically, where water is, agriculture can flourish, or homes can be built. Where water does not exist, livestock grazing takes place. The key to the success in the Plan for the New Harmony valley is to establish goals and policies that will allow development to take place, using the water that is available, but to guide the development into a pattern that will maintain and protect most of the values that have caused people to come to this area. The Goals and Policies of the County to accomplish this purpose are identified in the following sections of the Plan:

Open Space Areas

Open space areas of the valley may include such things as Public Land, drainage channels and washes, unstable soils, reservoirs, livestock grazing lands, steep slopes, a lack of irrigation water, or a lack of culinary water. Land classified in open space should remain in this classification until any of the above conditions have been altered. At that time, the most appropriate land classification should be determined. Following are goal and policies relative to the open space classification and use of land in the New Harmony Valley:

GOAL: Identify open space areas within the valley and provide protection from development in the areas identified. Areas that may be hazardous in nature and are of an open space character should be maintained as open space in order to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the present and future residents of the valley.

POLICIES:

- Maintain an open space designation along all of the major washes and streams running through the valley.
- Identify the 100 year flood plain along these streams and washes. In order to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the residents. Do not issue building permits, or approve subdivisions in these areas.
- Encourage the public agencies to maintain their lands in an open space category. Do not exchange public lands in this valley for private lands elsewhere in the County.
- Allow the public lands to provide a buffer zone between the private land in the valley and other private lands outside of the valley area.
- Establish zoning classifications that will preserve the public lands and the other types of land uses identified herein as open space areas.
- Continue to encourage uses in open space areas that will encourage their remaining open. This might include livestock grazing, recreation uses, water courses, reservoirs, and other similar uses.
- A more detailed study could be conducted to identify possible recreation opportunities that might be developed along the major streams in the valley such as Ash Creek, and Kanarra Creek.
- Such a study might include consideration for the development of parks, riding trails, hiking and walking trails, etc.

- The parcel of BLM land near the Town of New Harmony should be acquired by the Town to maintain future open space and recreation use of that property.
- Setbacks greater than the normal requirements of the Zoning Ordinance should be established near major washes, streams, and drainage channels. These areas should not be a part of subdivided lots for building purposes.

Agricultural Land

Considerable agricultural land has historically existed in the New Harmony Valley both in Washington and in Iron counties. Most of this land has been "dry" land because of a lack of water for irrigated crop production. The continued expansion of agricultural land in the area is not expected. In fact, given the natural course of events, agricultural land will continue to decrease and disappear. The county has identified its position relative to agricultural land with the following Goals and Policies.

GOAL: To maintain the quality of life that is realized from having agricultural land around the valley. Promote the continued operation of agricultural land in the area.

POLICIES:

- Follow policies identified in the section dealing with residential development. Many of these policies relate to the maintenance of agricultural areas.
- Deed to the County, home owners associations, or land trusts, the agricultural land after one of the residential policies has been used to guarantee continued agricultural use. Groups then owning land could contract with those interested in farming the land to continue agricultural operations.
- Maintain a low overall density in agricultural areas, except as provided for in density transfer and clustering provisions.
- Encourage green belt classification of agricultural land.
- Encourage the establishment of agricultural protection areas according to State and County ordinance.
- Encourage installation of pressurized irrigation systems that would make more efficient use of available water.
- Educate new residents as to the agricultural character of the valley and solicit their support for agricultural use of land to avoid citizen complaint against agricultural operations.

Residential Development

Residential development has taken place at various locations in the New Harmony Valley. The town of New Harmony is located near the westerly edge of the valley. Other developments have taken place near the interstate freeway and south and east of New Harmony Town. In order to give direction to residential development in the valley, the plan suggests a goal to be achieved and policies to help achieve the goal.

GOAL: To provide for residential housing in attractive, functional neighborhoods to meet the needs of potential residents.

POLICIES:

- Maintain strict standards concerning the size of homes, and encourage the landscaping of yard areas around homes. Use natural landscaping where practical.
- Continue to use the same standards for modular or manufactured homes as for other types of residential construction.
- The Zoning Ordinance should be used to determine housing densities in different areas.
- Care must be given in residential areas to follow the transportation plan of the valley to make sure that vehicular traffic can circulate easily throughout the valley.
- Within the densities established by the Zoning Ordinance, encourage the transfer of density to clusters of smaller parcels within the overall density requirement, thus providing large portions of the land to remain in agriculture or open space.
- Allow the transfer of clustered development from one density classification to another in order to create even larger areas of open space, unencumbered by residential development.
- Establish minimum lot sizes for cluster housing, or for transferred densities, that will protect the health, safety, and welfare of residents from sanitation problems, but which will maximize the amount of open space and agricultural land preserved.

Commercial Development

Commercial development in the New Harmony valley should be kept to the minimum needed to serve the convenience needs of the residents and to provide for the needs of the traveling public on the Interstate Freeway.

GOAL: Allow sufficient commercial development to provide for the convenience commercial needs of valley residents, and to serve the traveling public.

POLICIES:

- Limit highway commercial development to convenient locations adjacent to the freeway interchanges.
- Limit convenience commercial development to the freeway interchanges, and to the incorporated community area.
- Do not allow strip commercial development along the major collector system of roadways.
- Consider other convenience commercial uses only as an integrated part of the overall development plan for large-scale residential developments.

Transportation and Circulation

It is important to provide for convenient movement of traffic in and through the New Harmony valley. The various developments need to be linked together to provide for a harmonious development of the area. Residents should not find it necessary to use the freeway to get from one residential neighborhood to another.

GOAL: Provide a circulation system that will move people and goods safely through the valley with access from one residential area to another residential area and to the Interstate Freeway.

POLICIES:

- Adopt a circulation system of streets as a part of this planning study.
- Require segments of roadways to be constructed as development takes place in any given area.
- Work with owners of open space, or agricultural land, to provide necessary major or

collector roads to be constructed through these areas to connect residential areas while maintaining a minimum of impact on the adjoining land.

- Identify, as part of the circulation system, a secondary access to the freeway from the area in and around New Harmony.
- Require all new development to provide paved roadways as a part of the initial development of the subdivided property.
- Encourage the County to provide regular roadway maintenance of existing County roadways, and to provide regular snow removal from these roads during the winter storm season.

Recreation

There are many areas of potential recreation development in the New Harmony valley. The Plan should encourage the development of desirable recreation facilities throughout the valley.

GOAL: Provide for the planning and development of appropriate recreational facilities for the residents of the New Harmony valley.

POLICIES:

- A plan should be prepared identifying desirable recreation activities enjoyed or desired by residents of the area.
- A recreation plan may include parks, riding trails, walking or hiking trails, and other types of recreation activities.
- Encourage the public land managers to continue a multiple use approach to the management of BLM and National Forest lands which will allow for hiking, hunting, etc., on the public lands.
- Encourage the Town of New Harmony to prepare a plan for the development of the isolated parcel of BLM land near the Town and to make application to the BLM to acquire this property under a recreation and public purpose lease.
- Encourage the Ash Creek Water Users Association to line the Ash Creek Reservoir to provide for maintenance of water in the reservoir and the creation of recreational and/or fishing activities at the reservoir.

Public Services

As the area continues to grow and develop, the need for public services continues to increase. A determination should be made as to how best to provide the services that are needed by residents.

GOAL: Create a mechanism for identifying and providing public service needs of the residents.

POLICIES:

- Establish a committee of residents of the various parts of the valley to identify those services that would be most desirable for residents to enjoy.
- Prepare detailed plans, where necessary, for accomplishing the elements of the needs study recommended above.
- Consider the creation of a Community Council to represent the residents of the unincorporated area of the valley, and coordinate the efforts of this council with that of the Town of New Harmony.
- Consider the creation of a Special Service District to serve all of the residents of the valley, including those in New Harmony Town, in order to provide the means of accomplishing some of the needs identified by the residents. A Special Service District with locally elected leaders, could provide a large measure of self-determination to residents of the area.
- Determine the services that might be provided through a Special Service District, even though some services might not be needed at the present time. These services could be added at a later time without amending the District.
- Consider a unification of the various water systems in the valley into one water district with professional management and operation.
- Consider the creation of Special Improvement Districts to provide for the paving of roads in subdivision that are not presently paved, but which property owners would like to see paved.
- Insure that services provided to the unincorporated areas of the County do not result in double taxation upon the residents living in incorporated Cities and Towns.
- In the event that development densities endanger ground water supplies, be prepared to initiate plans for construction of waste treatment facilities in the valley. This could become part of a special service district if it should become necessary.

Annexation and Incorporation

As the valley continues to grow and development, as the numbers of residents continues to increase, the time may come that it would be in the interest of residents to consider creating one governmental entity whether it came about through annexation, or incorporation of the presently unincorporated areas.

GOAL: Provide unification of the valley through either annexation into New Harmony Town, or through the creation of a Town by another name to provide for the needs of the residents.

POLICIES:

- Work with New Harmony relative to the expansion of the Town to include the various developments that take place in the valley.
- Establish guidelines for annexation of unincorporated land into the Town that may be followed by land owners desiring to become a part of New Harmony.
- Monitor the growth and development of the valley to determine at some point whether or not annexation of the entire valley, or the creation of a new town by another name would be of advantage to the residents in being better able to respond to their needs and desires.
- Recognize that the purpose of a Town or City is to provide for the urbanized needs of an area that cannot conveniently be provided by individual property owners. Also recognize that Washington County is not an urban service County and that urban services may better be provided through Town or City government.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The New Harmony valley is an area of Washington County that enjoys distinct differences from all other parts of the County. It is surrounded mostly by public lands, including the Kolob Canyons area of Zion National Park. Development has begun to take place in the valley and this trend is expected to continue. There is a limited amount of water in the valley to sustain growth and development, but direction needs to be given to the development that does take place to make certain that it does not destroy the open space, agricultural character of the valley that causes it to be attractive to the residents living there. There is room in the valley for continued growth, for open space, for agriculture, for recreation, and commercial development. Efforts need to be made to provide for the infrastructure that will be necessary to serve the residents of the area. An adequate circulation system is one of the most important needs. Through proper planning and adherence to the plan, the New Harmony valley should be able to sustain the growth that will take place, and at the same time maintain a quality of

life that may be hard to duplicate in any other area.

APPENDIX

NEW HARMONY VALLEY LAND USE ANALYSIS

Land Designation	Acreage	Percentage
Private Land	14,840	100.0%
New Harmony Town	280	1.8%
L.D.S. Church	4,480	30.1%
Harmony Heights Subdivisions	200	1.3%
Thorley Subdivision	240	1.6%
Harmony Views Subdivisions	300	2.0%
Blackridge Ranch Subdivisions	760	5.1%
Roadways (existing & proposed)	350	2.3%
Drainage channels & Washes	620	4.2%
Ash Creek Reservoir	320	2.1%
Total of above categories: (less Private & L.D.S. land)	3,070	20.6%
Balance of developable land:	11,770	79.3%

PRESENT DEVELOPMENT:	NUMBER OF LOTS	NUMBER OF HOMES
Blackridge Ranches	391	58
New Harmony Farms	131	24
Thorley Subdivision	10	9

Harmony Heights	77	5
Existing Totals:	609	96

Existing Water: 2,419.08 ac. ft. underground 1,446.77 ac. ft. surface

School Age Children: Elementary - 38

Secondary - 50

Total: 88

NEW HARMONY VALLEY PUBLIC MEETING

The Planning Commission held a meeting with the citizens of the New Harmony valley to receive input for updating of the General Plan of that area of the County. The majority of the comments dealt with the following concerns:

- Maintain a low density pattern of development. Lots should be in the 2 -1/2 to 5 acre range.
- Provide protection for agricultural areas.
- Maintain open space and rural atmosphere in the area.
- Limit commercial development to the freeway interchanges and the Town of New Harmony.

Following the public meeting, the County Planning Consultant has held meetings with small work groups and large property owners throughout the valley to further discuss concerns and to develop goals and policies for consideration as a part of the County General Plan.

Public meetings have also been held at which time all residents and property owners where encouraged to attend to review the General Plan proposals prior to holding public hearings before the Planning Commission and County Commission.

