



Blueprint: **Silverthorne**

2022 Comprehensive Plan Update



SILVERTHORNE
COLORADO

Introductory Remarks

2022 Update

The 2022 Comprehensive Plan Update reflects both growth since the last update in 2014, as well as the unusual circumstances that the Covid-19 pandemic brought on in the last two years. There have been significant achievements – the establishment of the Performing Arts Center and Downtown Core – and reaffirmation of values that community members hold true. This update seeks to continue much of the momentum that the 2014 Update set in motion, solidified through a unified vision of local identity, connections to the outdoors, and commitment to a thriving future.

While the COVID-19 pandemic caused many challenges, in Silverthorne, those often held opportunities. Locals and visitors alike favored walkable, outdoor spaces and community-based programs. Silverthorne’s tremendous work to create a new downtown, promote the arts, and continue to invest in parks and open space, recreation and local businesses made it an attractive destination for new residents and visitors. The 2022 Silverthorne Comprehensive Plan Update embodies the spirit of the community with bold ideas for growth and reinvestment in infrastructure, parks and recreation, housing, and mixed-use development. These goals, objectives, and actions will ensure that a strategic momentum for economic vibrancy will endure for the next 8 years.

While the community agrees that the Town is on the right track, there is interest in ensuring that Silverthorne stays focused on “locals first.” Balancing the needs of the local community and visitors is expressed in new Community Element and Housing goals that describe these values in policy form. The Town’s unwavering commitment to connecting community members is evident in events, programs, and projects, such as First Fridays and the creation of the Smith Ranch Neighborhood. This Update elaborates on the importance of the Blue River and civic spaces in future redevelopment scenarios. The Pavilion, Recreation Center, Town Hall and Library, existing businesses, and the Blue River Trail are all tried-and-true community assets that will continue to provide the framework for establishing that vision.

The 2022 Comprehensive Plan Update is one of the many tools that the Town now has in place to encourage investment in the community’s future and make strides towards Town Core and Gateway District redevelopment. It will work in concert with the Town Code and development regulations to ensure that future projects uphold the principles of urban design in mountain communities. Tools such as the Urban Renewal Authority will bolster this plan by facilitating funding strategies to get projects built. Illustrative graphics, detailed maps, and clear and concise goals and policies further articulate the Town’s vision to inspire future investments from both the public and private sectors and will ensure that this plan is actionable.

This Update would not have been possible without the strong community participation that occurred at every event forum. Thank you to our community members, Town Council, and Planning Commission for their dedication to this effort.

Sincerely,

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The Silverthorne Comprehensive Plan is a guidebook for the future. This community has evolved continuously over the last century and a half – from prospective placer mine, to workers’ camp, to commercial center and year-round community for permanent residents and second homeowners alike. Silverthorne’s development pattern reflects this evolution and today, the Town is positioned to continue imagining how the built environment can enhance quality of life, celebrate natural resources, connect us to our community, and support economic sustainability. This 2022 Comprehensive Plan Update is the blueprint to achieving those goals through the next course of evolution in Silverthorne.

Purpose of a Comprehensive Plan

The essential idea behind planning is that people living in a community can guide decision-making relative to growth and development. These ideas often take the form of a comprehensive plan where the community, through its local government, makes an effort to:

- Protect the health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens in the community;
- Improve the physical, social, and economic environment of the community; and
- Understand and make decisions on proposed short-term, individual actions that are informed by their expected long-range impacts.

A comprehensive plan acts as a community’s guiding framework, and many tools are used to inform decision making. The comprehensive plan does not contain codes or ordinances. Instead, it organizes the goals and policies expressed by the entire community. These ideas in-turn inform public projects, programs, budget decisions, and updates to codes and standards. In addition to guiding land use decisions, a comprehensive plan serves as a guide for ongoing and future public investment. Through land use planning, a town can judiciously use its fiscal resources to provide the efficient and affordable services that businesses and residents need. A comprehensive plan also helps focus a town’s resources on specific strategies to achieve community goals. More specifically, the 2022 Silverthorne Comprehensive Plan Update:

- Provides a framework that supports informed and consistent decision-making by Town elected officials, appointed officials, and staff;
- Outlines a series of long-range goals and policies concerning land use, community design, transportation, and annexation of lands within three miles of the Town limits;

- Guides public investment and the provision of services;
- Establishes policies to balance the rights of the individual with the interests of the community at large; and
- Provides direction for land-use regulations, namely the Development Code and Design District Standards.

Community Need for the Update

With the guidance of the 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update, Silverthorne has seen significant achievements with a new Performing Arts Center, new downtown mixed-use development, new parks, trails and open spaces, and new neighborhoods providing opportunities for a diverse group of owners to call Silverthorne home.

There has long been a desire to create a vibrant downtown area to complement Silverthorne’s regional commercial businesses and elevate the experience for locals and visitors. Through the vision, policies, and goals established in the 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update and other important tools, such as the Urban Renewal Plan, the Town made significant strides and positioned itself to capitalize on opportunities. The cohesive vision that the community set out to achieve is on the right track following a vision and specific set of goals and policies, despite challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 2022 Update will ensure the community’s quality of life is sustained as the Town continues to evolve. It will be used to protect the qualities the community loves most about Silverthorne while creating opportunities to enhance the rest.

The iterative nature of this Update creates an opportunity to look more deeply at areas of Town that received less attention in the previous Update. Following the 2014 Update’s success in the Town Core District, this Update will focus on the Gateway District, housing, and community while still creating a framework that allows adjustments to all Town growth patterns. What occurs in our Town matters; it is essential that new commercial development is well-defined by place, purpose, and mountain community character.

Planning Process

The 2022 Update began with community engagement, including an online Town survey, provided in both English and Spanish, attendance at two outdoor summer community events, one at Rainbow Park and one at the Performing Arts Center, and one open house held at the Silverthorne Pavilion. The process also included input from Town leadership and decision-makers.

Themes Heard From the Community

Throughout the planning process, there were certain themes that emerged that reflect today's community vision.



A complete summary of public outreach can be found in Appendix B.

How to Use This Document

This Plan is first and foremost a tool for decision-makers and property owners to use in informing choices about public investment and land development in the future. Various graphics are meant to inspire, and Goals and Policies specifically articulate how to achieve the Community Vision. This Plan is an advisory policy document, and it will guide subsequent revisions to Town Codes, budgets, and standards.

Each chapter serves a specific purpose. Chapter 2 provides a more in-depth glimpse of what has brought Silverthorne to this point in time, especially related to the topics of Land Use, Transportation, Community Design, Growth, and Economic Development. Chapter 3 reaffirms the Community Vision. Chapter 4 presents the Goals and Policies, including the Community Blueprint, the Future Land Use Map, and the Town Core and Gateway Blueprints. Chapter 5 is focused on Implementation, presenting actions and priorities for the years ahead.

