

SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

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ABOUT SMITHFIELD CITY

Smithfield City is located in the Cache Valley, seven miles north of Logan, Utah. Historically, the area depended predominantly on the agricultural industries of farming and ranching. Cache Valley was originally settled by trappers during the early 1800s, attracted by its rich supply of wildlife and wild game. In 1859, the first settlers moved north of the Logan settlement to focus on agricultural prospects. The area was surveyed, and the resulting settlement was named Summit. In 1860, the town was renamed Smithfield City in honor of the first Mormon Bishop, John G. Smith.

Today, Smithfield City is the second largest community in Cache Valley and has grown to a population of nearly 8,273 (January 2004). The population continues to grow because of the excellent quality of life Smithfield City offers. Business centers include the Thiokol Corporation, Morton International, and Nucore Steel. ICON, a manufacturer of athletic fitness equipment and the largest local employer, make up another center.

Growth has many Smithfield City residents concerned about the quality of life they currently enjoy. In addressing this concern, Smithfield City has prepared this General Plan to develop goals, meet future infrastructure needs, and capture a vision of the city. By applying growth management strategies, the residents of Smithfield City can continue to enjoy their existing way of life while increasing the city's prosperity and future stability.



WHAT IS A GENERAL PLAN?

A General Plan (sometimes referred to as a “master plan”) guides a community in making land-use decisions. Smithfield City’s rich agricultural heritage, coupled with the need to accommodate new industries and population growth, requires the establishment of this type of framework to effectively organize land uses. The General Plan is a tool to help guide zoning, budgeting, and capital improvement decisions and public policy-making. By implementing this General Plan, Smithfield City can create and sustain a stable and prosperous growth pattern. The General Plan contains a land-use map that depicts land uses. The General Plan and the land-use map work together in creating a focused direction for developing the community.

The General Plan is a reflection of the community’s vision for the future. It describes the location of desired land uses, and represents how the community wants to look. It is a dynamic document that changes through time. The changes are necessary to accommodate the changes within the city itself. Thus, this General Plan is really a continuation of the original plan drawn up in 1860. The revised General Plan will serve to encourage community development and growth that is functional and efficient, as well as prosperous and visually aesthetic.

The purpose of the General Plan is to require that all public buildings, streets, parks, subdivisions, and utilities (private and public) meet specified guidelines. The General Plan covers the area within the city limits, as well as the land within proposed annexation boundaries. Although the General Plan is not regulatory in nature, all construction within the community should conform to it.

It is important to understand that the General Plan, including the accompanying land-use map, is not the same as the Zoning Ordinance and the zoning map. The General Plan is more general in nature, while the Zoning Ordinance defines land uses in more specific terms. Specific changes may be made to the Zoning Ordinance as long as they comply with the general guidelines of the General Plan. If changes in the Zoning Ordinance occur beyond the guidelines, the General Plan should be amended in order to make the two consistent.

A three-level process governs the regulation of land use within communities that have adopted a compliance policy for a General Plan.

- **Level 1—General Plan**

A General Plan guides the zoning ordinances. It is typically general in nature, allowing the Zoning Ordinance to define the land uses in more detail.

- **Level 2—Zoning Ordinance**

Zoning ordinances become the regulatory method for enforcing the guidelines set in the General Plan. They are implemented through the building permit process.

- **Level 3—Building Permits**

Building permits are granted when a project conforms to the zoning designation for the building site. For example, a commercial building permit may not be issued for an area zoned as residential. The zoning designation is generally based on the land use specified for the site within the General Plan. For example, an area that is zoned “Low Density Residential Preservation” cannot contain apartment buildings, but might allow agricultural uses with single-family units that are associated with that density.

DEVELOPING THE GENERAL PLAN

The purpose of the General Plan is to provide a comprehensive guide for the physical development of the city. It will be used as a guide for zoning, capital improvement, policy, and budget decisions.

The Smithfield City General Plan was reconfigured through input received from community meetings, questionnaires, review by Smithfield City departments, and consultation with nearby city and government agencies in Cache County. This information was then used to update the General Plan that was completed in 1997.

The Smithfield City General Plan will be reviewed by Smithfield City Council members, Planning & Zoning Commissioners, city staff, developers, and residents concerned about the future of the community. This will serve to refine the General Plan to ensure that the goals of the city are met. After this review, it will be approved by the Smithfield City Council, the Smithfield City Manager, and the Smithfield Planning & Zoning Commission. Public hearings will then be held, after which the Smithfield City Council will then formally adopt the General Plan.

After this document is adopted by the Smithfield City Council, it is important that amendments be made to bring the Zoning Ordinance and the General Plan into accordance with each other. The future land use map (Figure 5-1) depicts desired future land use categories and their location. The areas shown on the land use map are conceptual; therefore, will require further analysis prior to any actual zoning map amendments.

Amendments to either of these documents must conform to the city's required procedures, including notification of public and mandatory community hearings. When rezoning property, the city must compensate all affected landowners whenever this deprives them of all uses of their land (per U.S. Supreme Court rulings).

UPDATING THE GENERAL PLAN

The process by which the General Plan may be amended is found in the Utah Code and the Smithfield City Code, which may be obtained from the city. Because the purpose of the General Plan is to guide the physical development of the city according to its needs and goals, the General Plan should change as the needs of the community change. It is important for the General Plan to remain current if it is to remain effective in guiding community development decisions.

To ensure its effectiveness, the Planning & Zoning Commission and Smithfield City Council should periodically review, update, and refine the General Plan.