

## Arvada City Council Meeting Workshop, April 25, 2016

Notes taken by Susan Shirley

Attending this workshop were Mayor Marc Williams, Mayor Pro Tem Bob Fifer, and Councilmembers Don Allard, Nancy Ford, Dave Jones, John Marriott, and Mark McGoff.

Topics are: Intergovernmental agreement with Westminster, Updates on Arvada's Water Supplies, and Parking in Olde Town.

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**Intergovernmental agreement with Westminster:** Standley Lake holds much of Westminster's water supply, and that city is very concerned about keeping development in the area from polluting or otherwise affecting Standley Lake. Up to now, the solution has focused on having stormwater drainage from west Arvada go into the Church Ditch, which routes it away from Standley Lake. The only flaw so far has been the fact that any development east of the Church Ditch can't drain into it, nor be routed away from it, but instead would inevitably drain into Standley Lake, exactly what needs to be avoided. Westminster's proposal, which is compatible with Arvada's Comprehensive Plan, is to have the Church Ditch be the boundary for future annexation, between Arvada and Westminster, so that any development affecting Standley Lake would be under Westminster's control. There are some existing properties which would form minor exceptions to that boundary, with the boundary lines conforming to the property lines of those properties.

There was brief discussion as to what would happen if a property owner was unable to obtain services from Westminster. City Attorney Chris Daly said a court would have the final decision, if it came to that.

City Manager Mark Deven said staff supports this IGA, and will bring it to a future business meeting for approval.

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### **Water!**

According to the packet of information posted at Arvada.org, there are currently enough water supplies to support about 136,000 people. Planning is needed now because of a projected population, in fifty years, of about 156,000, as well as anticipated problems with climate change. In the background of any planning is always the certainty of severe droughts on a recurring basis, which makes it necessary to avoid running low on water in the years immediately prior to those droughts.

Arvada gets about three-fourths of its water from Denver Water, through an agreement which took effect in 1960. That water comes in as "raw" water, which is stored in Ralston Reservoir and treated at the Ralston treatment plant. Arvada has a very good contract which requires Denver Water to put Arvada's needs high on the priority list. The rest of our water comes from Clear Creek. While that used to be used mainly for irrigation, over the years it has developed into an important source of municipal water.

To add more water will be complicated. There is little groundwater of good quality remaining in the aquifer, so that would be used only in the event not enough water was available from other sources. Increasing Denver's water supply is right now thought to be dependent on the expansion of Gross Reservoir, which would in turn increase Arvada's water supply by 3,000 acre feet. However, there are a number of hurdles between now and the possibility of any expansion of the Gross Reservoir, and the City estimates completion no sooner than 2025. Also, the City's contract for that water is separate and somewhat less favorable than the terms of the main Denver Water contract.

To increase supply from Clear Creek would require favorable rulings from Colorado's water court, which is never a sure thing. Also, there is only a limited amount of water to be had from Clear Creek and about all the water rights Arvada can buy from that source, it already has.

One way water is currently provided for new development is that the property owners, who own the water rights for their own land, sign over those rights to the City, in exchange for being connected to City water and sewer services. This makes it possible for the City to acquire a sufficient water supply, up to a point.

Climate change will cause less snowfall and longer growing seasons in the mountains. These changes are expected to result in about a 13 percent reduction in Arvada's available water from Clear Creek, which equals about a 3 percent decrease in the total water supply to Arvada. But higher temperatures here also mean more water lost to evaporation, so that landscape irrigation needs would increase by 17 percent if the same plants continue to be grown. That works out to an increase in total water requirement of about 8 percent. Naturally, there will be greater and greater focus on conservation as water supplies become more scarce. A little over half of water usage is currently indoors, with the remainder being used on landscaping. The City estimates that conservation could reduce demand by about 5 percent. So, to review, 3 percent plus 8 percent equals an 11 percent decrease in available water, but with conservation measures that could be mitigated to about a 6 percent shortfall.

Using all those figures, the City currently estimates that it will need about 3,300 additional acre-feet of water and about another 2,000 acre-feet of storage to meet future demand at build-out. Plans for water are always made as far ahead as possible because it takes so long to develop sources. Utilities Director Jim Sullivan said that we don't have enough water, even in an average, non-drought year, for 156,000 people.

Sullivan said that between 1992 and 2000, the water demand kept pace with growth, but that in the years since 2000, conservation has taken hold enough that demand has leveled off even while growth has increased. He added, later, that the drought in 2002 "was a wake-up call," which resulted in drastically lowered demand by Arvada's parks. There is not only less turf, there is also a computerized irrigation system which can even be shut off from one location if, for example, it's raining. These improvements have dropped water consumption by the parks by 30 percent since 2002.

Councilmember John Marriott asked about opportunities for Arvada to increase its water storage capability. Sullivan said you have to match long term supply and demand, then store water for drought periods--but one problem with water storage is evaporation--"you can't store enough to keep it full." The Highway 93 lakes are looked at as storage for thirty or forty years down the road. Another possible place for water storage are the coal mines under Leyden, which no longer have natural gas storage. There are many problems involved in that use, says Sullivan, including difficulty getting water back out, plus the need to maintain and replace expensive pumping equipment which will rust quickly in that environment.

Councilmember Don Allard said, "We should drastically revise our land use plan to curtail irrigation in Arvada, the sooner the better. I see no reason at all why we shouldn't regulate the amount of grasses and plants we allow" that need irrigation.

Mayor Marc Williams observed that "tomorrow's technology solves a lot of future issues," but that "we have to stay on top of this."

Councilmember Nancy Ford said, "We have to be careful we don't get into a California type situation." She recommends encouraging xeriscaping before there's a huge crunch wherein a drought makes water so expensive that people simply quit watering their lawns and then we have ugly brown lawns everywhere.

Councilmembers Allard and McGoff said the historical information in the packet was well-written. City Manager Deven said he is looking for Council support of a review of conservation programs, and that Arvada needs to pay attention to lessons learned in other parts of the country, particularly California. Williams responded, "Clearly, at some point, you can't issue new building permits."

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### **Parking in Olde Town**

The City has contracted with Walker Parking Consultants to develop recommendations for the future of Olde Town parking. Currently, Olde Town has 284 on-street parking spaces and 70 spaces in the Webster parking lot. All spaces are currently free but with time limitations during peak hours. The parking garage is expected to open in October, providing 400 spaces for RTD riders, and 200 for the use of everyone else. The garage spaces would be time-limited to perhaps four hours, or by permit. Once the parking garage opens, some of the unlimited-time on-street parking could be converted to two-hour parking. These areas include Upham between Ralston and Grandview, the north side of Grant west of Upham, Yukon between Ralston and 57th, and Olde Wadsworth south of Grandview. Unlimited parking would be available at the former Griff's, the West lot, Vance Lot, and 55th and Olde Wadsworth. Residential permit zones might be expanded by ordinance.

At the moment there is no plan to charge for parking. However, the consultants recommend looking at that under certain conditions, for example, if the on-street parking is regularly more than 85 percent full despite increased enforcement of time limits, or if neighboring Gold Line Stations all charge for parking, then Arvada would need to follow suit to avoid being a magnet for people who seek the free parking.

Enforcement is not currently done 7 days a week, and is currently done using borrowed personnel from the police department. Even so, over 800 citations were issued in 2015. The consultants recommend retaining a third party to enforce parking. This is generally done by means of a license-plate-reading camera mounted on the enforcement vehicle. Permits can be programmed in so that they don't register as being parked illegally overtime.

Councilmember John Marriott asked some questions about third party enforcement: he wondered if they would be paid a flat rate, or as a percentage of tickets written; if the tickets would still go through Arvada's court system, and what happens to the scans of license plates once they're taken--could the enforcement company, for example, sell or otherwise use that data for other purposes.

The third party company would most likely be paid a flat rate, which would be based on exactly what duties they would be called on to perform and which would be close to what enforcement is currently costing the city. The tickets would be civil rather than criminal and therefore would be handled outside the court system except in cases of appeal, which up to now have been very rare. The contract could be written in such a way that the records could only be retained until the case was completed.

Councilmember Marriott wondered about the wisdom of disallowing overnight parking for the 200 public spaces in the parking garage. The plan is to have no cars except those with residential permits (about 20 households in Olde Town would qualify for those) in the spaces between 3 and 5 a.m. But Marriott gave the example of a person who came to Olde Town to the bars, decided he'd had too much to drink to be safe driving, and called Uber for a ride home. That person would receive a ticket--that time. The next time, the person might choose to drive anyway, to avoid the ticket, or go drinking elsewhere than Olde Town. Either outcome would of course be an unintended consequence. Marriott also advised caution in deciding whether or not to go forward with third party enforcement.

Councilmember Ford expressed concern about Park Place Olde Town not having enough parking spots because the assumption was made that its residents would largely commute by train, yet that seems not to be playing out in reality. The paltry 1.4 spots assigned per unit could mean overflow into the on-street parking in the area. She wondered if there will be an impact, then, on spaces for people who want to shop in Olde Town. Mayor Williams suggested having a talk with Mark Goldberg, PPOT's developer, to see what percent of units are now full and how many vehicles are owned by the current residents. Ford also asked how many Olde Town employees there are, who need to park in Olde Town, and was told the number is around 1,200. That would include people who work at night or on weekends, not all daytime employees.

Councilmember Dave Jones asked about the Elks Lodge parking, whether that will be monitored by parking enforcement. Deputy City Manager Bill Ray said that, at the moment, the Elks prefer to do their own monitoring. Jones asked about the possibility of other parking being available anywhere such as St. Anne's lot. Unfortunately, no stone has been left unturned by the City in efforts to locate additional resources, and there simply are not unused spaces anywhere in the Olde Town area.

The parking situation will be re-assessed in about January, after the parking garage has been in operation for several months. The Olde Town Business Improvement District has commissioned their own parking study, and the results of that will be made available soon.

The workshop concluded at 8:25.