

The Town of Empire, Colorado, Three-Mile Plan

Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to serve as the official Three-Mile annexation plan for the Town of Empire. This plan is designed to encourage sound planning practice, to serve the needs of applicants seeking annexation to the Town, and to facilitate communication between local, county and federal government entities.

By publishing this plan, it is hoped that developers and owners of land will know, before they purchase or design developments, what the policies are for the Three-Mile area. When combined with the Master Plan, the Three-Mile Plan will provide a tool that all local government, state and federal agencies can employ in making decisions regarding proposals within the Three-Mile area.

This plan is not regulatory or binding such as an ordinance. The Three-Mile Plan is an official document that reflects the growth and annexation policies of the Town of Empire in implementing the statutory planning requirements of Senate Bill 45.

Annexation Strategies

1. To maintain and enhance the small, rural, mountain town character of the Town of Empire.

- Encourage the preservation of existing businesses and promote new businesses in accordance with zoning laws and regulations.
- Concentrate development in and around the Town of Empire, making infill sites a priority.
- Encourage business and commercial developments that are appropriate to this area and support and complement the historic character of the Town of Empire and the surrounding amenities of the region.
- Rely on existing zoning, subdivision and other applicable ordinances to help maintain the existing character of the Town of Empire and Empire Valley.
- Support pedestrian and bicycle travel throughout the area.

2. To promote development in an orderly manner according to the Town of Empire's ability to provide services.

- Encourage development to utilize existing structure of the Town of Empire.
- Support development only where appropriate and when adequate public facilities are available.
- Annex areas that would be logical extensions of the Town of Empire boundaries, facilities and services.
- Develop a road and street plan which will serve as an organizational framework for future growth and development.

3. To ensure that annexations are not economic burdens on the city.

- Development should be discouraged from locating in those areas with serious servicing issues.
- Request the full cost of extension of water and other utility services to be paid by the developer, or land owner, requesting annexation.

- Investigate the formation of a Special Districts prior to requesting annexation to the Town of Empire.
- All annexation requests and new development shall be considered in light of its compliance with the Town of Empire and Clear Creek County Master Plans, adopted policies and subdivision and zoning regulations.
- The perspective developer should explore techniques that would offset any financial impact new developments might have on the Town of Empire and its services.
- The perspective developer should prepare a list of benefits and liabilities to the Town of Empire for the proposed annexation.

4. To protect and enhance the views, visual character and the quality of life of the Town of Empire and Empire Valley.

- Protect the openness of Empire Valley, by preserving open space using a variety of techniques.
- Work with the County, State and Federal agencies to provide appropriate access to public lands.
- Encourage uninterrupted view corridors to important local physical features.
- Encourage retaining open space parcels surrounding the Town of Empire.
- Use pre-annexation agreements as a means to obtain open space.
- Maintain the Town of Empire's existing height restriction of 32 feet.
- Encourage development that does not create excessive light and or noise pollution.

5. To protect and enhance the natural character and setting of the area. This includes area wildlife, wildlife habitats, migration corridors, riparian areas and water and air quality.

- Discourage development that will adversely impact wildlife, wildlife habitat, migration corridors or riparian areas.
- Have new development mitigate any negative impact to wildlife or habitat.
- Explore a variety of tools that will preserve and improve critical wildlife and habitat.

- Encourage use of conservation easements.
- Promote education, interpretive uses and other passive uses of open space.

6. To maintain sufficient water supply and protected water facilities of the Town of Empire and wastewater facilities of special districts to serve all present and future uses.

- Maintain a high level of water quality and supply through watershed protection and management.
- Ensure that proposed development does not adversely impact water quality or potential water resources.
- Review existing individual systems, especially those found in areas mentioned, to ensure that standards are being met.

7. To ensure that development recognizes the limitations that the natural environment places on human activities.

- Soil studies shall accompany any development proposal within areas of unstable slope. The study should also review soils in terms of run off and drainage.
- Any development occurring on heavily vegetated hillsides shall incorporate erosion control features and re-vegetation plans, as well as wildfire mitigation measures.

8. To develop clear communication and encourage cooperation with other jurisdictions to promote a regional approach to land use decision making.

- Continue open dialogue with all Local, State and Federal agencies regarding proposals and land use in the area.
- Develop clear communications with the County so that the Town of Empire is notified of any impending development in this area.
- Areas that overlap with other municipalities should be recognized with a letter of consideration from the Town of Empire.
- Develop inter-governmental agreements as necessary.