PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES

Goal: “We will prioritize the provision of high quality municipal services, maintain appropriate service levels, and fund necessary capital improvements and their maintenance to serve the needs of current and future residents and visitors.”

The quality of life of a community depends, in part, on the quality of the public services that are provided to citizens. They represent the public’s investment in the design, development and delivery of services and programs to the community. They are also an investment in our future ability to serve our growing population.

CITY SERVICES

The City of Idaho Springs is responsible for the following services:

- Government administration
- Public Works
- Water and Waste Water Operations
- Police Protection
- Municipal Court
- Building inspections
- Planning and Community Development

PUBLIC WORKS

The City of Idaho Springs’ Public Works Department is located on Colorado Blvd, at the extreme west of the City, just before the westbound entrance to I-70. The Public Works Department provides snow removal, street sweeping, street repair, landscape maintenance, parks maintenance, and maintenance of utilities. The City presently owns 3 snowplows, 2 loaders, a street sweeper and other various equipment.

The City is presently assessing potential locations for a new facility. Desired criteria include larger bays for vehicle repair, more office space, and additional outdoor storage for sand and snow removal materials.

POLICE SERVICES

The Idaho Springs Police Department employs approximately 10 people, including sworn and support personnel. The existing facility is located in a former Colorado State Patrol Building located at the extreme eastern end of the City. The Police Department is assessing locations for a larger facility, desiring additional storage, locker rooms, better communications infrastructure, and more sheltered parking.

The existing 1,000 square foot building is presently inadequate for the needs of the 10 person department including sworn and support personnel department. The existing building lacks such facilities as adequate storage, locker rooms, employee and public restrooms, interview rooms, suitable communications infrastructure, and a dedicated public entrance with waiting area. The preferred arrangement would be a building of at least 2,000 square feet, parking for at least 10 cars, with indoor or minimally sheltered parking and located as near the center of town as possible.
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CITY / COUNTY COORDINATION

The City and the Clear Creek Metropolitan Recreation District share responsibilities for various park and community recreation services. Emergency medical services and fire protection are provided by countywide service districts or authorities.

Clear Creek County Social Services has an office in Idaho Springs. There are plans to bring a health clinic back to Clear Creek County, and this clinic is anticipated to be within Idaho Springs.

Clear Creek County operates a transfer station on Soda Creek Road approximately 1.5 mile south of I-70. Services provided include trash drop off and recycling, including electronics recycling. Xcel energy provides electric and gas service to the City of Idaho Springs. Solid waste collection is performed by private contractors or by individual homeowners.

Non-profit organizations, such as the Idaho Springs Garden Club and Scraps to Soil, provide volunteer community services such as gardening and plant upkeep within the City of Idaho Springs in selected locations.

WATER SYSTEM

The City obtains raw water from Chicago Creek, a tributary of Clear Creek, with additional water rights in Soda Creek. The water treatment plant is located about 3 ½ miles upstream on Chicago Creek with the water storage tank located west of Pine Slope Road at approximately 7,770 feet in elevation.

Plant capacities and capabilities have been upgraded and are adequate to address current needs, with normal operational and maintenance issues to be expected. A membrane/micro-filtration treatment plant was put on-line in April of 2002 and an upgrade to low-pressure membrane replacements was completed in December, 2007. Future plans include installation of additional filtration skids, replacement of raw water pumps, and carbon filter engineering. The capacity of the water treatment plant is 1.3 million gallons per day, with an annual average consumption of approximately 375,000 gallons per day. As of 2017, the City estimated 1,009 service connections remaining. Water supply will not be a constraint to development for the foreseeable future.

Water rights owned by the City include both direct and storage rights, to meet any reasonable growth forecasts. The City has sufficient rights to allow it to consider sales to extraterritorial users either from direct sales to users, wholesale to other providers, or through augmentation agreements.
Water System Challenges

Water System Issues

Some water lines in Idaho Springs are more than 75 years old. The City will continue to require replacement of aging water mains and service lines, as well as examination and inventory of line capacities and conditions to assure adequate flow for water delivery, both for consumption and fire flow needs.

Water lines are being replaced with the Colorado Blvd reconstruction project and are planned for replacement during Miner Street and Soda Creek Road reconstruction. Any new development at the Twin Tunnels, Hidden Valley and Pine Slope will mandate the design and expansion of distribution lines.

Development in areas above the elevation of the water storage tank (approximately 7,770 feet) may also require the construction of additional pump stations and water storage facilities.

WASTEWATER SYSTEM

The Wastewater Treatment Plant near the Twin Tunnels has seen improved operations in recent years and a program has been created to address ongoing maintenance needs.

Wastewater System Issues

The facility is operating very near capacity, with one of the primary reasons being groundwater infiltration into the sewer system due to the age of sewer lines, especially during spring and summer when the water table rises. The current capacity of the system is 600,000 gallons per day, whereas it presently operates at as high as 80% of capacity (480,000 gallons per day). Per the State of Colorado, design for additional capacity is required for water treatment plants operating at more than 80% capacity, and this design is occurring. Cost for wastewater sewer improvements is presently generated to the Enterprise Fund through sewer taps, although pre-treatment for larger developments may be required if developments are constructed before the wastewater facility enhancements are completed.

STORMWATER & DRAINAGE

Drainage Issues

Due to its topography, the City is affected by significant drainage basins. Within the limited landmass of the city, homes, businesses and streets are often affected by storm drainage problems. A number of projects have been undertaken and more are being planned to address drainage issues across the community. One of these projects will involve reconstruction of Soda Creek Road and remediation of significant drainage issues. To help determine future public improvements as well as direct development to appropriate areas, the City should consider a comprehensive drainage study.

SCHOOLS

The City’s residents are served by a public elementary school located in Idaho Springs and by a combined middle and high school located on Floyd Hill. These schools have substantial capacity to serve increased enrollment. The City supports the District effort’s to maintain and improve programs at the three schools serving city residents. Substantial population growth and enrollment increases can occur without creating
large capital investment needs. More importantly, population and enrollment increases are essential to maintaining the long-term viability of the school district.

**BROADBAND TECHNOLOGY**

**Broadband Opportunities**

Idaho Springs is mostly served with high speed broadband via a network of fiber and coax. In order to remain competitive and embrace emerging new technologies, the City should encourage upgrading broadband infrastructure whenever possible. When trenching and road improvements occur, fiber and/or conduit should be installed to prepare for future technologies or colocation of telecommunications carriers. Policies that encourage placement of conduit or fiber optic cable when a trench is open eliminate much of the capital costs for network deployment as well as minimize community disruption and infrastructure damage.

**OBJECTIVE:** Provide an effective and balanced system of community facilities, services and utilities to meet the current and future needs of the community and all of its citizens.

- **Strategies**
  
  **Policies**
  
  - Ensure existing services have the capacity for future development, and continue to upgrade public infrastructure systems as needed.
  - Provide and pay for those facilities and service which benefit the general community, but not those which benefit specific developments.
  - Promote high-speed telecommunications connectivity throughout the City. Encourage installation of conduit and/or fiber cable when applicable trenching occurs, including during construction of new developments.
  - **Consider regulations that encourage renewal energy such as solar and wind power.**

- **Programs**
  
  - Analyze utility line service extensions in terms of long-term costs including maintenance and operations.
  - Identify and continue to resolve wastewater collection line infiltration problems.
  - Monitor water and wastewater enterprise funds to ensure adequate revenues are generated to address debt service, operational and maintenance expenses.

- **Projects**
  
  - Develop a specific plan for capitalizing upon the city’s water assets.

**OBJECTIVE:** Locate and design new public facilities and utilities to decrease cost, increase efficiency and reduce impacts on the surrounding community.

- **Strategies**
  
  **Policies**
  
  - Direct future development to areas best served by existing infrastructure.
• Construct utilities and communication equipment to minimize visual obtrusiveness by utilizing stealth technology, coloring equipment, locating away from residential areas, and/or screening to blend with the surroundings.
• Require electric power distribution systems, telephone and cable television lines to be located underground in all future developments.

Programs

• Coordinate with the County, Special Districts and other quasi-governmental agencies in relocation, siting and possible co-location of public facilities such as the County bus maintenance facility, the police department and public works buildings.

OBJECTIVE: - Utilize all available resources and technology to enhance services.

❖ Strategies

Policies:

• Continue to use the capital improvement program to target priorities for upgrading the City’s public facilities and improvements. Develop, update and implement capital improvement plans for city utilities.

Projects:

• Construct a database of existing and proposed infrastructure through the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS).
• Consider development of a comprehensive drainage study.

Maps: Idaho Springs - Public Water and Infrastructure