

Planning Department

Collection Summary

Title: Planning Department

Collection Group: City Departments

Dates: 1946 – 1986

Location: *Archives B, Shelf BA4*

Quantity: 3 boxes

Abstract: The city planning department is responsible for both short term and long term land use planning. Like many other cities, Aurora became interested in redevelopment as a strategy in the 1960's. The department focused on cleaning up the visual environment by developing sign codes and producing plans for integrated park systems as well as collaborating with HUD to secure funds to rehabilitate run-down residences. With a rapidly growing population, the decline of several military bases, and the professionalization of the planning field throughout the 1970's, the department (and contractors) produced many specialized reports that capture industrial potential, housing needs, changing patterns of land use, and projected demographics. As Aurora's population grew throughout the 1980's, the department saw greater focus on highway expansion and possible limits on growth including the blue line policy, which restricts growth based on water distribution.

Arrangement: This collection has been compiled from several different sources without accession records. Original order has been lost. Contents are organized into two series based on type of record (documents versus bound reports) and within that by topic and chronology. Oversize reports in box 2 are included in the box but are not grouped with their subseries. Many of the documents were collected during Jim Raughton's career with the department and emphasize projects he was specifically involved in.

Contents

Series and Subseries

Box 1 of 3

Series 1: Documents

Subseries A: Operations

Folder 1: Dates 1946-1988. This folder holds formal zoning documents, land classification manuals, zoning map reviews, and design guidelines that assist planners in making day-to-day decisions about permits and acceptable use.

Folder 2: Dates 1946-1961. Bound resolution from the city council forming the first planning commission in 1946. Recommendations for improved basic planning, municipal zoning ordinance, and ordinance changes from 1959-1961.

Folder 3: Dates 1965 – 1967. Zoning map reviews with feedback.

Folder 4: Dates 1969. This folder contains official public documents from the city council, the planning commission, and the planning department which show the planning decisions. These records are scattered, but mostly consist of numbered ordinances that make changes to the zoning code, memos and minutes from planning commission meetings, open letters from community members to the planning commission, re-zoning applications with associated directions and fees, and ordinances. Of interest is a bound resolution from the city council forming the first planning commission in 1946.

Subseries B: Comprehensive Planning and Master Plans

Folder 5: Dates 1966-1985. Contains initial documents outlining the goals of comprehensive planning in the city, the first general plan studies by Gruen & Associates, staff feedback, and subsequent amendments from the late 1970's. Also contains the land use plan from 1973 which complements the Master Plan, bound and newsprint copies of the 1984 comprehensive plan, and the 1991 Open Space Master Plan.

Sub-subseries B1: Annexation

Folder 6: Dates 1969-1973. City annexation procedures, comparison of utility costs in the area, a joint statement from Denver and Aurora representatives with recommended annexations, a history of annexations by planning direction Jim Raughton and an analysis of Municipal Annexation Act of 1965, memos and impact statements regarding the Witco and Sky Ranch annexations.

Sub-subseries B2: Sign code

Folder 7: Dates 1968-1971. The campaign to develop a comprehensive city sign plan started in summer 1968, spearheaded by Jim Raughton and lasted into early 1971. Lakewood and Denver adopted similar codes around the same time. This folder contains memos from Raughton to the planning commission and city council, news clippings, planning commission notes, an educational packet on the concept and legal basis for such a code, several examples of how the code was interpreted through letters between the City Attorney and area businesses, and the 4th draft of the proposed code.

Sub-subseries B3: Planned Unit Development (PUD)

Folder 8: Dates 1968- 1986. News clipping from "Rocky Mountain News" outlining the PUD plan and how it can be used for more creative development than a strict parcel-by-parcel zoning approach. An overview and recommendations to the PUD situation in the 1980's, along with a complete listing of commercial site plans from 1986.

Sub-subseries B4: Recreation and Green Space

Folder 9: Dates 1966-1969. Focuses mainly on the "Pathways to the Future Plan," which involved a system of mini- and strip-parks for public use as well as drainage facilities to work with the existing flood plain. Contains a report written by Director of Planning Richard Veazey on the existing flood plain regulation in the city. There are several drafts of the proposal as the budget and contribution responsibilities shift throughout the planning process, including descriptions and drawing plans specific to the

floodway park concept.

Sub-subseries B5: Residential/Vacancy policies

Folder 10: Dates 1950- 1978. Dwelling unit counts and structure condition surveys including surveys for US postal workers; a 1971 "Housing Review" which outlines the current allocation of residential units and neighborhoods, foreseen growth, and recommended residency policies; a Workable program (1972) with the Department of Housing and Urban Development; a 1978 HUD application to fund the Community Development program, aimed at rehabilitating older neighborhood structures and improving communication between neighborhood groups in old Aurora.

Sub-subseries B6: Commercial and Industrial policies

Folder 11: Dates 1962-1963. This group mostly relates to a city grant for community renewal grants from the Housing and Home Finance Agency. Contains application information, city resolutions, official statements by Director William Slayton of the Urban Renewal Administration within the HHFA on rehabilitation and different commercial strategies for urban renewal. Also contains a 1960 memorandum on a possible HHFA loan for a proposed Metropolitan Sanitation District.

Folder 12: Dates 1969 – 1971. Report by Raughton on the industrial potential of Aurora based on natural and man-made resources, a report on square footage of commercial structures available for use, and a report on proposed industrial development based on the current zoning map and available land use.

Sub-subseries B7: News Articles

Folder 13: Dates 1970. News clippings from *The Denver Post*, *The Aurora Star*, and *The Aurora Advocate*. Topics covered include annexation, height restrictions, a proposed public service company (electric), downtown revival, and a city parking and setback code.

Subseries C: Personnel

Folder 14: Dates 1968-1972. Resumes, payroll information, personal thank you notes, and cover letters by Jim Raughton, who served several position within the department.

Folder 15: Dates 1968-1972. Contact information for the Planning Commission members, the Citizens Advisory Committee on Planning, appointments to other boards and commissions. Also, community contacts for builders, contractors, and civilian planning services. Bound 1972 roster of the American Institute of Planners, Colorado chapter.

Box 2 of 3

Series 2: Reports

Subseries A: Economics and Development Studies

Folder 16: Dates 1959- 1982. Mostly economic base studies and market analyses of the whole city and the downtown area, but also includes some industrial land surveys and an combined demographic/economic profile of the city. Earlier reports are produced by outside sources, including Gruen & Associates, Trafton bean & Associates, and Development Research

Associates. Oversize reports also in box 2: "Opportunities for Planned Growth" and associated summary report (1970-1971) and a community renewal program report (1972).

Subseries B: Land Use Reports

Folder 17: Dates 1975-1986. Main foci are vacancy, developed and raw industrial land, commercial land use, and annexations in the mid 1980's. An oversize map index for Adams County 1969) is also in box 2.

Subseries C: Environmental and Transportation Studies and Reports

Folder 18: Dates 1969 – 1985. Reports and environmental impact studies. Main foci are storm drainage, bike paths, noise pollution, the blue line policy guiding development around existing water sheds and sources, and the E-470 alignment project.

Subseries D: General and Legal reports and manuals

Folder 19: Dates 1954- 1968. Introductory guide for planning commissioners published by the Public Service Administration, guide to federal and state planning and land use law published by the Colorado AIP, a general social and economic history of the city.

Box 3 of 3

Subseries E: Demographic and Residential Studies

Folder 20: Dates 1960 – 1983. Contains official department reports on population growth, population and demographic profiles of the city and neighborhoods, estimates on future housing needs, residential vacancy studies, and mobile home owner studies.

Additional Planning Department items in other collections:

Archives B:

Inter-Regional Planning Commission/DRCOG collection, Archives B, BB6

Collections:

Annexation agreements, Ephemera File, Drawer 1

Aurora Growth/Development, Ephemera File, Drawer 2

City of Aurora – Housing Code, 1965, Ephemera File, Drawer 5

City of Aurora – Planning/Community Development Department, Ephemera File, Drawer 5

Books in Aurora History Museum Library:

Books in Aurora Public Library:

Aurora City Center: A marketability transportation, and urban design study (1979) PLA 351.12 Aur