

Columbus Citywide Planning Policies

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is Columbus Citywide Planning Policies?

The Columbus Citywide Planning Policies (C2P2) is a new approach to land use planning in Columbus. It is designed to provide communities throughout Columbus with access to up-to-date land use policies. C2P2 includes four elements: Guiding Principles, Design Guidelines, Land Use Policies, and Land Use Plans for individual areas.

2. What does “C2P2” stand for?

C2P2 is an acronym based on the first letter of each work in Columbus Citywide Planning Policies, which has two words that begin with C and two words that begin with P.

3. How is C2P2 used by the city and the community?

C2P2 does not propose new development, but instead it is used to help guide development proposals initiated by property owners. If a property owner submits a zoning or variance request, city staff and the community will review C2P2 to determine if the request is consistent the recommendations within the document. C2P2 becomes city policy after it is adopted by City Council for a specific area. C2P2 is not code, and it does not change existing zoning regulations.

4. What are Guiding Principles?

Guiding Principles are “big picture” ideas that express how the city should develop and serve as the foundation for the Land Use Policies and Design Guidelines.

5. What are Design Guidelines?

Design guidelines address the visual component of development. The guidelines provide recommendations for the size, placement, height and design of residential and commercial development. Connectivity, open space and natural features are also addressed by the guidelines.

6. What are Land Use Policies?

Land Use Policies are detailed policies (text) designed to be used with the Recommended Land Use Map in an area’s Land Use Plan. These policies provide flexible guidance on key land use issues and scenarios.

7. What is a Land Use Plan?

Land Use Plans are developed for each area individually. It includes a Recommended Land Use Map and Area Specific Policies, and provides recommendations to address special circumstances in each area.

Columbus Citywide Planning Policies

8. Does C2P2 apply citywide?

The goal of C2P2 is to provide consistent, predictable, up-to-date policies for land use planning in all areas of the city, but it will not be applied to the entire city at one time. C2P2 is optional and city staff will work with area commissions and major civic associations individually to discuss C2P2 for their respective areas.

9. Where will C2P2 apply?

Columbus Citywide Planning Policies (C2P2) is available to all areas of the city of Columbus, except portions of the city that fall within historic districts or design review areas. These areas already have adopted design guidelines and related development review processes.

10. Will C2P2 apply to historic commissions and design review boards?

Not at this time. Portions of the city that fall within historic districts or design review areas will not be covered by C2P2 as these areas already have adopted design guidelines and related development review processes.

11. When will it apply to my area of the city?

Area commissions and major civic associations may vote to support C2P2. If a community supports C2P2, City Council may consider adoption of C2P2 for the respective area. Staff will begin working with communities to develop Land Use Plans in 2020. Prior to this (2018/2019), areas may request adoption of the C2P2 Design Guidelines to be used with existing adopted plans – this is called “early adoption” as it provides a portion of C2P2 to an area earlier than the plan update. To see a list of areas that have supported C2P2, visit www.columbus.gov/planning/C2P2

12. Why do we need C2P2?

The City’s past area plan process made it a challenge to provide updated plans to communities in a timely manner due to the number of existing plans (over 40) and the amount of time to update a plan (18 months). Areas covered by older plans, and areas without a plan, do not have the benefit of current land use policies and design guidelines. As the region is expected to grow by up to 1 million people by 2050, C2P2 is designed to guide and focus that growth to benefit our city.

13. How does C2P2 benefit my community?

C2P2 provides the ability for communities to easily access up-to-date policies for land use and design. This is accomplished through a shorter land use plan update process (allowing land use plans to be updated more frequently) and through regular updates to the core elements (guiding principles, design guidelines, and land use policies) using a citywide engagement process.

Columbus Citywide Planning Policies

14. How is C2P2 similar to area or neighborhood plans?

C2P2 is very similar to existing adopted area and neighborhood plans. It includes the same elements as existing area plans (guiding principles, design guidelines, land use policies and land use plans), and it is used by the community in the same way – to review rezoning and variance applications. It is also similar in that staff works with each community to develop their own plan, called a Land Use Plan, which includes a map with recommendations and policies specific to the community.

15. How is C2P2 different from area or neighborhood plans?

Existing area plans remain static for 10 – 20 years before receiving updates. C2P2 allows for regular updates to land use policies and design guidelines through engagement with stakeholders across the city (including your community). In addition to engaging with communities one at a time, staff will also engage with all communities to provide updates to the three core elements: Guiding Principles, Design Guidelines & Land Use Policies. The three core elements are used with an area’s Land Use Plan.

16. How long will it take until my area’s plan is updated?

Part of C2P2 is updating each area’s Land Use Plan (previously called area or neighborhood plans). In 2018 & 2019, staff will be focused on putting the overall framework in place for C2P2. This stage will include establishing a process to update the policies and guidelines as needed. Land Use Plan updates are projected to begin in early 2020 and it will take approximately five years to complete a Land Use Plan for each area of the city.

17. Can we benefit from C2P2 policies before our Land Use Plan is updated?

Yes. Community groups can choose to adopt the C2P2 Design Guidelines early. Upon approval by City Council, these guidelines can be used in conjunction with existing area plans to review development proposals. Early adoption of C2P2 Design Guidelines will not replace existing plan recommendations, but will be used with existing adopted plans to review development proposals. If there is a conflict between an existing plan recommendation and C2P2 Design Guidelines, the more current policies will be used. An opportunity for “early adoption” is being presented the summer of 2018, and this option will be available again in the fall.

18. How do I participate in the process?

City staff will work with each community to develop an area specific Land Use Plan (similar to an area or neighborhood plan). The Land Use Plan will include a map with land use recommendations and policies specific to the community. If supported by the community, the plan will be used with the C2P2 Design Guidelines and Land Use Policies to review development proposals. Additionally, city staff will work with a variety of stakeholders throughout the city to update the core elements of C2P2. These updates will apply to communities that have adopted C2P2 in the past, and the updated elements will be used with the area specific Land Use Plan.

Columbus Citywide Planning Policies

19. How is a new Land Use Plan developed for our area?

City staff will work with community stakeholders to develop a parcel-specific Land Use Plan. The plan will be informed by community priorities, existing conditions, and C2P2 policies. Developed for each area individually, Land Use Plans include a map with land use recommendations and policies specific to the community.

20. What is the timeline for Land Use Plans?

Staff will be developing a timeline for Land Use Plans over the next year. The timeline is tentatively scheduled to begin in early 2020, with a goal of working with multiple communities each year to develop a plan.

21. Can our community choose to adopt portions of C2P2, but not all of it?

At this time, communities have the opportunity to adopt the Design Guidelines element of C2P2 separately from the other elements – this is called early adoption as it provides a portion of C2P2 to an area earlier than the plan update. The Design Guidelines will be used with existing adopted plans to review development proposals for areas with early adoption. In the future, communities have the option to support complete adoption of C2P2, including an area specific Land Use Plan. These are the two options for adoption.

22. What if our community doesn't support C2P2?

Similar to the past area plan process, communities are given the option to support proposed land use planning for their respective areas. C2P2, including the Land Use Plans, are optional and not required for any community. C2P2 is a beneficial tool for communities to use during the development review process, and therefore, staff will work with communities to build consensus for the proposed recommendations and policies. Many priorities and concerns of each community (related to land use) are able to be addressed through area specific policies in the Land Use Plan.

23. If C2P2 is adopted for our community, what happens if our community doesn't support future updates?

The update process for the core elements of C2P2 (Guiding Principles, Design Guidelines, and Land Use Policies) will include a variety of stakeholders throughout the city, including community members from each area. Staff will work to build consensus for the proposed changes in order to gain overall support of the proposed changes. In the event a community does not support proposed updates, staff will work with the area commission or major civic association address the issue.

Columbus Citywide Planning Policies

24. How is C2P2 kept up-to-date?

There will be ongoing updates to C2P2 Guiding Principles, Design Guidelines, and Land Use Policies. These updates will include community engagement at a citywide level with stakeholders representing residents, property owners, business owners, developers, etc. Updates to C2P2 will be adopted by City Council and apply to areas where C2P2 was previously adopted. Land Use Plans are updated approximately every 10 years, but are designed to be used with the three core elements that are updated regularly.

25. Will I have the opportunity to review updated guidelines and policies?

Yes. The current set of policies and guidelines reflect best practices and experience of staff and the community over the past 20 years. As potential updates are developed, community members and other stakeholders will have the opportunity to review and comment. Updates will also require consideration by the Development Commission and approval by City Council.

26. What impact will C2P2 have on new development?

In areas where C2P2 is in place, design guidelines and land use policies will be used to review development proposals that require a rezoning or variance.

27. Does C2P2 impact zoning?

C2P2 is city policy and not code. Adoption of C2P2 does not change existing zoning. The policies and design guidelines will be used to review development proposals that require a rezoning or variance application. The C2P2 process has the potential to inform potential changes to zoning code over time, which would involve a separate community engagement process.

28. Does C2P2 address infrastructure and community facilities?

Not directly. The City plans for and manages infrastructure and facilities, such as streets, parks and waterlines, in a number of ways. These include citywide planning and analysis, such as the Recreation and Parks Master Plan. Multiple City departments review zoning and variance proposals and subsequent development plans for consistency with each departments' plans or standards. These efforts are supplemented by city code provisions and regulations.

29. How can I learn more about C2P2?

Additional information is available at the project webpage: www.columbus.gov/planning/C2P2 or by contacting staff at C2P2@columbus.gov or 614-645-8834