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GP-25-003

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## Executive Summary

**Date:** January 12, 2026

**Applicant:** Millcreek

**Re:** Addition of a Water Preservation Element to the General Plan

**Prepared By:** Sean Murray

## REQUEST AND SYNOPSIS

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Staff presented a draft of the proposed Water Preservation Element to the City Council on December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025, for a first reading. The item was presented to and considered by the Millcreek Planning Commission on December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025. During this meeting, Planning Commissioners were presented with an updated draft which included better goals, suggestions from community councils, and changes suggested by the City Council.

Since the December 8<sup>th</sup> meeting, staff have included multiple changes to the Water Preservation Element largely found in the goals and strategies section of the plan. These changes come from comments staff heard in community council meetings, city council members, and from the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources. Organizing the goals into better categories and including more specific strategies will help with implementation of the plan and its contents.

New strategies and goals include consideration of water quality and contamination when discussing Millcreek's future water plans and aspirations. New strategies also include creating a better tree canopy program to help reduce heat island effects around the city and slow evaporation rates. Community council members mentioned the need for Millcreek to get a better understanding of the operations and processes with SLCDPU since they provide a majority of the water to residents. These changes, along with some grammatical and technical changes, can be found in the attached plan found at the end of this report.

A more in-depth staff report is attached to this memo.

## SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

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- Staff Report
- December 17<sup>th</sup> 2025, Planning Commission Draft Minutes
- Water Preservation Element plan



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GP-25-003

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## Staff Report

**Date:** January 12, 2026

**Applicant:** Millcreek

**Re:** Addition of a Water Preservation Element to the General Plan

**Prepared By:** Sean Murray

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**Scope of Decision:** **Discretionary.** This is a legislative matter, to be decided by the Millcreek City Council upon receiving a recommendation from the Community Council(s) and the Millcreek Planning Commission. Your recommendation can be broad in scope, but should consider prior adopted policies, especially the Millcreek General Plan.

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## REQUEST AND SYNOPSIS

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In 2022, the Utah legislature adopted [Senate Bill 110](#) which requires all municipalities and counties in Utah to update their general plans to include a Water Preservation Element that outlines water consumption and preservation. The goal of this bill is to gain a better understanding of how water is used within a municipality and what can be done to reduce consumption over the coming decades.

Millcreek partnered with Bowen Collins & Associates, a water focused civil engineering firm, to help gather data and draft elements of the plan. This partnership was essential in collecting data from the multiple water providers within Millcreek. Since Millcreek does not manage its own water utility, staff had to collect data from the numerous providers and extrapolate their data for the Millcreek service area. With this data, staff could estimate how much water is currently used within Millcreek and how much preservation of water usage will be necessary as our population grows. This data, as well as preservation benchmarks and strategies, are outlined in detail in the attached draft preservation element at the end of this memo.

## CURRENT WATER PROFILE

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Millcreek is served by five separate culinary water providers, none of which are managed by Millcreek. Due to this, gathering data on usage can be difficult when since there is no one source that can show data for the entire city. Instead, staff and the consultant met with the water providers and collect what data they could pull for their Millcreek service areas. A majority of the culinary water in Millcreek is provided by Salt Lake City Department of Public Utilities (SLCDPU) and Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District (JVWCD).

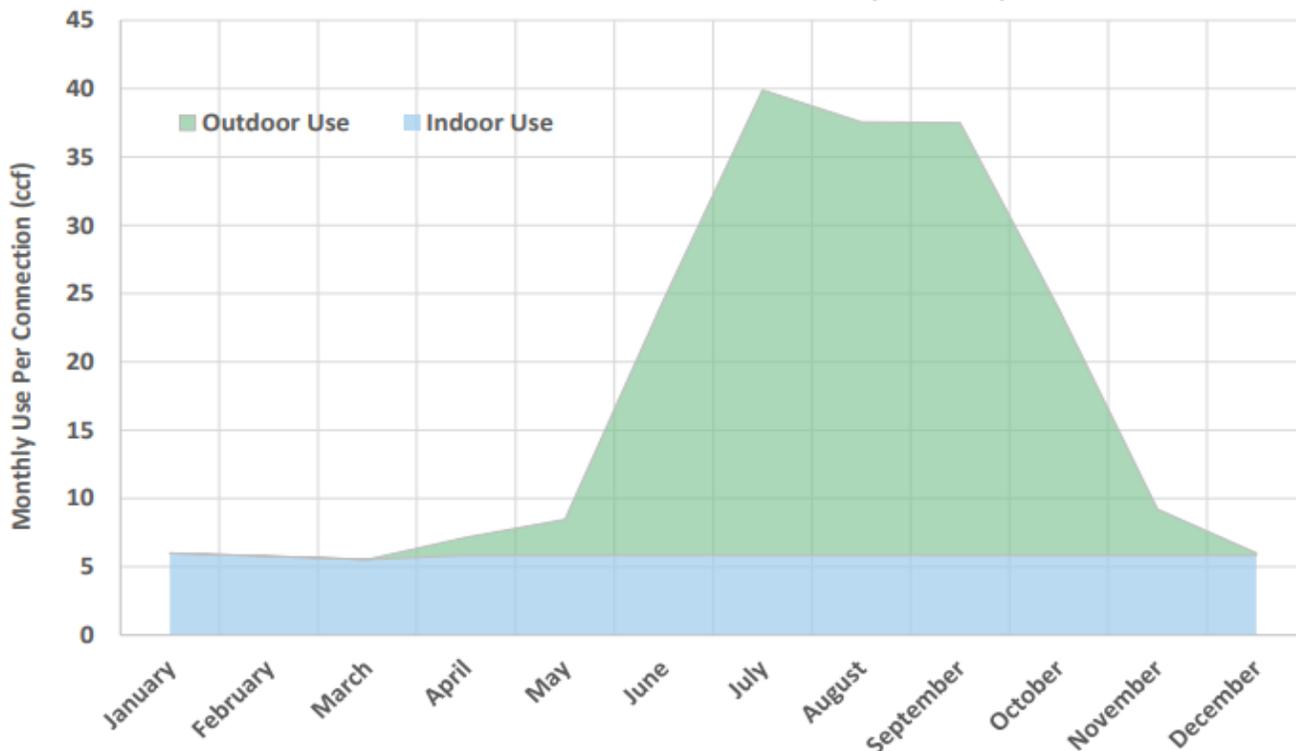
**USAGE**

Data was collected from SLCDPU, JWCD, and Holliday water. SLCDPU’s data was the most detailed and came with a 5-year history. JWCD only provided water usage numbers for their entire retail service area, not Millcreek specifically. Their retail service area spans a large swath of South Salt Lake City, parts of Murray, Millcreek west of 700 E, and a few disparate areas in southern Salt Lake County. Holliday water provided estimates of water use within the area they serve in Millcreek. Since all the data provided lacks standardized formatting and details, staff relied heavily on the SLCDPU data to generate a city-wide water consumption profile.

Based on data provided from SLCDPU, the average user in the Millcreek service area is 208 gallons per capita per day (gpcd). Multiplying this average by the current Millcreek population, 64,913, produces a daily average usage of 13,501,904 gallons per day. Taking this number and multiplying it by 365, we get an annual consumption of roughly 4,928,194,960 gallons per year. When discussing large amounts of water like this, the usual metric is acre feet per year (AF). An acre foot is the amount of water to cover one acre of land one foot deep which is about 325,851 gallons. In this case, 4,928,194,960 gallons per year, converts to roughly 15,100 AF per year.

Most of Millcreek’s water is consumed by residential customers. SLCDPU states that roughly 75 percent of the water provided to Millcreek is for residential uses. SLCDPU only serves part of Millcreek; however, many of the development patterns that exist in their service area are consistent within the service areas of other water providers. The water that is consumed by customers can be broken down into indoor and outdoor usage with indoor usage staying relatively consistent throughout the year and outdoor water spiking in the summer months of May through September. The highest user of outdoor water are single residence households. The graph below from the 2020 Salt Lake City Water Conservation Plan shows the split between indoor and outdoor water usage for an average single household residence throughout the year.

**FIGURE 2-6  
SEASONAL WATER USE, SINGLE RESIDENCE (2016-2018)**



(Ccf equals one hundred cubic feet or 748 gallons of water.)

## FUTURE WATER REQUIRMENTS

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The plan establishes consumption goals laid out every ten years with data points starting in 2024 and ending in 2060. Staff used current and projected population growth rates established in the 2024 Millcreek Housing Report to determine water consumption rates with and without conservation efforts.

Population growth rates were set at the following rates:

Year	Population	Projected Growth Rate
2024	64,913	6.7%
2030	69,093	6.4%
2040	73,480	6.4%
2050	77,169	5.0%
2060	81,028	5.0%

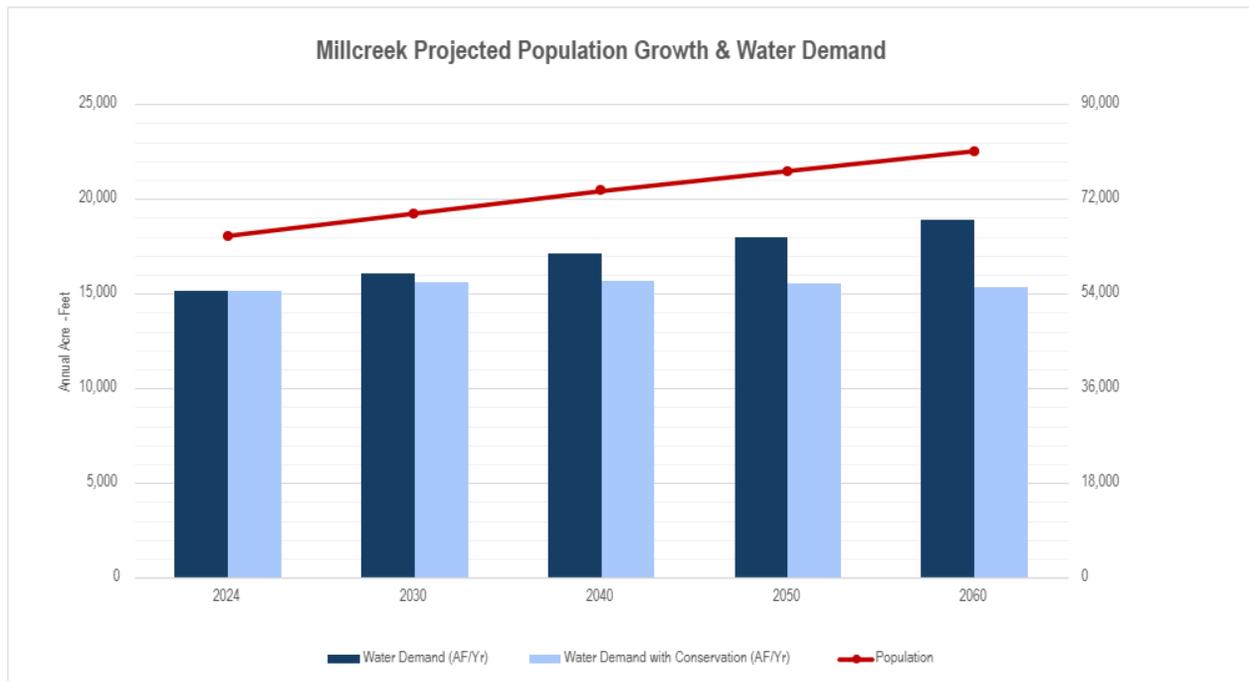
Based on these projected growth rates, water consumption, if maintained at the current rate, would be as follows:

- 16,097 AF/year in 2030,
- 17,119 AF/year in 2040,
- 17,979 AF/year in 2050, and
- 18,878 AF/year in 2060.

The water providers discussed with staff the need to be water conscious now to ensure ample water supplies in the future. Water providers, such as SLCDPU and JWCD, are required to adopt and follow water conservation plans that outline future water consumption and conservation efforts taken by the water providers. These conservation plans outline specific goals and benchmarks the providers plan to meet in order to continue to provide water service decades into the future. These plans help outline the need for preservation on the consumers end as well as the providers need for better conservation. Using the metrics found in these plans, staff and the consultant estimated the amount of water preservation needed to meet the water providers conservation goals outlined in their plan.

Estimating future population growth rates, consumption practices, and unforeseen events makes planning of water consumption 40 years into the future difficult due to all the variables present. Due to this, Millcreek will need to reassess population growth and water usage in coming years to ensure the estimates made in this plan hold up to changing realities on the ground. Updating Millcreek’s population data and water consumption data from water providers is imperative for this plan to be effective in years to come.

Below is a graph showing water consumption without conservation, with conservation, and estimated population growth.



To meet the goals outlined in these plans, per capita water usage needs to decrease on average from the current 208 gpcd to 169 gpcd by 2060. While this may seem like a difficult metric to meet, it's worth noting that per capita water usage has been trending downwards for a number of years already, largely thanks to existing conservation goals, emerging water saving technology, and a better public understanding of the importance of water conservation in an arid climate. In the *2020 Salt Lake City Water Conservation Plan*, water usage in the SLCDPU service area dropped from roughly 280 gpcd in 2000, to 240 gpcd in 2007, to 208 gpcd in 2018. These numbers are based on SLCDPU system wide usage, so they do not necessarily reflect the usage in the Millcreek service area.

**If conservation of water is done diligently and in line with the adopted conservation plans of our water providers, then Millcreek will have reliable water into the future.**

## CONSERVATION

To meet the goals outlined in the plan, conservation is paramount. Meeting these conservation goals is multi-pronged and must be done by multiple stakeholders, such as residents, governments, and businesses. Since Millcreek does not operate the water systems, only some efforts can be made by the city while others would have to be made by the providers themselves.

## EDUCATION

Education about the importance of water preservation and how to do it is imperative if the goals laid out in this plan are to be met. Millcreek has already been educating residents on water preservation and opportunities to save water. Printed and e-newsletters have outlined water saving strategies and rebate programs available to residents. Ongoing education programs through the newsletters are useful to keep residents up to date on the newest and best practices when it comes to water saving and conservation.

Seminars about water saving and waterwise plants can also be hosted at Millcreek City Hall in the coming years. The Jordan Valley Water Conservation Garden frequently puts on courses open to the public that discuss waterwise landscaping, rebate programs, and other water conservation methods.

### **LANDSCAPING**

One of the largest users of water is outdoor consumption for landscaping. This is especially pronounced in low density, single household neighborhoods, which constitutes the largest use of land acreage in Millcreek. Reducing outdoor water consumption is one of the best ways to reduce overall water consumption in the Millcreek service area.

Millcreek's new landscaping code already has provisions that limit the amount of turfgrass and water intensive plantings that can be allowed on a property. These rules affect new developments but are also applied when properties undergo major alterations. Allowances for turfgrass and other intensive plantings depend on the zoning of the property with manufacturing, commercial, and public properties largely prohibited from installing turfgrass unless under certain circumstances (parks, recreation areas, etc.). Single households are still allowed to install new turfgrass, however it must meet the LocalScapes provisions found in the landscaping code.

Water efficiency standards are also found in the code that outline the types of sprinklers that can be used and their flow rates. New developments must adhere to these standards while existing developments only need to come into compliance if there are major alterations to the property.

Low Impact Development (LID) is required for most new construction as well. LID consists of rain gardens, bioswales, and grassed swales to help reduce water waste and overload on the storm drain systems. LID improvements allow for water to permeate into the soil and back into the aquifer at a faster rate than traditional water runoff infrastructure.

### **LAND USE**

Land use plays a key role in water use and infrastructure improvements. **As residential density increases, water use tends to decrease per capita.** This is largely due to the decreased amount of landscaping that accompanies higher density developments. System loss from leaks and breaks also decrease with density as less infrastructure distance is needed to serve a higher population of residents.

Millcreek has two areas that accommodate high density housing, the Millcreek City Center and the Meadowbrook area on the west side. Additional moderate density housing is supported along certain corridors in Millcreek. These areas allow for higher density residential developments than other areas in the city and have rigorous landscaping standards that focus on water preservation. Each of these areas lie within separate water providers service areas. Each provider indicated to staff that they understood the increased density in these locations and what that would mean for system improvements such as upsizing water lines, new pressure demands on the systems, and the need for installation of new smart water meters.

### **ONGOING COMMUNICATION**

Constant and clear communication with water providers is key to ensuring that water demand and supply remain in balance. Since many of the assumptions and data points in this plan are subject to change over time, communicating those changes is important to ensure Millcreek and the providers are meeting their conservation goals. Currently, Millcreek and SLCDPU meet monthly to discuss new projects, system updates, and share data. Regular meetings like this should be done with all water providers to maintain relationships and up to date information.

## **COMMUNITY COUNCILS**

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Staff took this plan to the community councils during the week of December 5<sup>th</sup> to get comments and suggestions from the various community councils.

The Mount Olympus Community Council met on December 5<sup>th</sup> and discussed the plan with staff. The MOCC recommended that Millcreek staff work closer with Salt Lake City Department of Public Utilities to help influence policy related to water since so many residents rely on their service but have little to no say in policy. The council voted unanimously in favor of the proposed plan with the added goal of closer ties with SLC DPU.

The Millcreek Community Council had concerns about the data found in the plan, private property rights, and the State requiring Millcreek to adopt this preservation plan. Staff talked with members and answered what questions they could and explained why the state requires municipalities to adopt these plans. In the end, the council voted 6 in favor and 4 against adoption of the plan as proposed.

East Mill Creek Community Council voted unanimously in favor of the plan as proposed. Staff and council members discussed water issues in Millcreek and the region as a whole, as well as a few of the goals and strategies mentioned in the plan.

Canyon Rim Citizens Association does not meet in December but were sent the plan and staff memo. The chair of the association outlined some concerns in an email to staff. Concerns were that the plan lacked enough language surrounding tree canopy and how that can affect water use and general cooling. Mentioning in the plan how residents can currently work with the city to enforce bad water practices should be considered too (Report-a-concern). Lastly, concerns on how Millcreek would address getting to a lower water consumption goal were brought up, specifically how to track and ensure Millcreek is growing at the rate estimated in the plan and that water usage will be tracked diligently to ensure the plan is being met.

Comments and suggestions from these meetings are included in the proposed plan as much as possible.

## **CITY COUNCIL**

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The Millcreek City Council had a first reading on this item during their December 8<sup>th</sup> regular meeting. The reason for the item going to City Council before Planning Commission is due to the need to adopt this plan as early in 2026 as possible. Since there is no second City Council meeting in the month of December, staff decided to do a first reading now and then gather comments from the Planning Commission before going back to the City Council for a second reading in early January 2026.

The City Council received the memo sent to the community councils with an added executive summary discussing the adoption timeline and the initial comments from the community councils. The Council was presented the plan and asked questions of staff. One of the main recommendations was that the plan should discuss the importance of water quality when it comes to preservation. Keeping the water that flows into the Jordan River and the Great Salt Lake free of pollutants and detritus will help ensure fewer environmental problems down river.

Council members understood that this plan is a requirement of the state legislature and were happy to hear that the initial review by the Utah Department of Natural Resources stated that the proposed plan met the state's requirements.

## **PLANNING COMMISSION**

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At their regularly scheduled meeting on December 17th, the Millcreek Planning Commission was presented the Water Preservation Element plan and the data within it. Staff relayed comments made by community councils, City Council members, and Utah Division of Wildlife Resources.

Two commissioners had comments about the item, mainly surrounding enforceability of landscape plans and better data collection. Chair LaMar wanted to see if there was a better way of monitoring water usage at a site and ensure that future property owners adhere to a smart approach to water usage. Commissioner Soule wanted to see better cooperation with SLCDPU on infrastructure upgrades and projects due to the aging infrastructure and the overall effect that leaks may have on consumption. She also wanted to see better outreach for rebate programs and water conscious gardening.

The issue of ensuring that waterwise landscaping is upheld and done correctly is more of an issue to be tackled by code enforcement when issues arrive. Including standards for better landscape plan requirements, such as water budgeting, would be better fit in Millcreek's landscaping code so that all future applicants must adhere to those standards. Commissioner Soules' comments fit within the existing goals of better cooperation and communication with SLCDPU found in the plan. Commissioning a study with SLCDPU on water usage, infrastructure, and future plans, would be beneficial to Millcreek and SLCDPU. This is currently a stated goal in the plan and should be pursued when feasible.

The Planning Commission unanimously moved to recommend adoption of the Water Preservation Element to the Millcreek Together General Plan.

## **PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

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Planning staff recommend reviewing the attached Water Preservation Element and asking staff questions about the plan at the upcoming meeting. The plan includes changes requested by the community councils, City Council, and Utah Division of Wildlife Resources. Planning staff recommend adopting the Water Preservation Element to the Millcreek General Plan

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

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- **December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Planning Commission Draft Minutes**
- **Water Preservation Element plan**

approval, even if full fence replacement is not required, consistent with conditions originally imposed in 1995.

Commissioner Reid asked if the problem was the 55+ age not being enforced or that the code is wrong because 0.5 stalls per unit is not enough. Lilly noted this was a legislative approval, so if the commission felt that more parking was needed then they should make a finding as part of their recommendation to the city council. Commissioner Soule felt there was not enough information to make a recommendation. Commissioner Larsen recommended denial until the parking requirements are increased and there be a workable plan to meet those requirements. Chair LaMar would like to know the bedroom count of the facility. Commissioner Richardson said 80% AMI for senior housing was something the commission should care about.

John Brems said the Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination based upon age. There is an exemption for 55 and older communities that meet specific conditions. Those conditions are called the 80/20 Rule. At least 80% of the occupied units, not just those who signed the lease, are persons at least 55 years of age or older. The 80% requirement must be maintained. He noted this application to remove a zoning condition was legislative, so the commission could solve problems if there were any with the development.

**Commissioner Larsen moved to continue this application to a specified date, so that the parking requirements for 55 plus can be evaluated and increased, a plan can be implemented to meet those requirements and brought again before the Planning Commission, and to include more information on the units, as well as AMI and to provide documentation that 80% of the units are occupied by age 55 or older. Commissioner Reid seconded. Chair LaMar called for the vote. Commissioner Anderson voted yes, Chair LaMar voted yes, Commissioner Larsen voted yes, Commissioner Lofgren voted no, Commissioner Reid voted yes, Commissioner Richardson voted yes, Commissioner Soule voted no, and Commissioner Wright voted yes. The motion passed.** Commissioner Soule felt the application should be denied. Commissioner Lofgren felt new information would not change the parking issue. Lilly said the application would come back to the commission in January.

### **1.2 Consideration of GP-25-003, Request to Amend the Millcreek Together General Plan to Add a Water Preservation Element Planners: Sean Murray & Francis Lilly**

Sean Murray presented General Plan Amendment GP-25-003, which adds a required Water Preservation Element to the Millcreek General Plan in response to Utah Senate Bill 110 (2022). He explained that, unlike water conservation plans adopted by water providers, preservation plans guide municipal policies and land use strategies to reduce end-user water demand. Millcreek worked with Bowen Collins, state agencies, and regional water providers—primarily Salt Lake Public Utilities and Jordan Valley Water—to develop the plan using available consumption data, which indicates average use of approximately 208 gallons per capita per day and an annual total of roughly 15,100 acre-feet. Murray noted that most water use fluctuations are seasonal and driven largely by outdoor irrigation, particularly in lower-density single-family neighborhoods. Population growth projections were aligned with water provider conservation plans, showing that per-capita water use is already declining and is expected to continue decreasing with ongoing conservation practices. Since Millcreek does not operate its own water system, the plan focuses on policy tools already in use or proposed, including water-wise landscaping standards, rain barrel subsidies, public education, land use

planning that supports higher density in designated centers and corridors, and coordination with water providers. Murray reported that community councils generally supported the plan, with concerns centered on data precision, private property rights, and state mandates, and that City Council feedback emphasized water quality and downstream impacts. He concluded that the plan positions Millcreek to maintain reliable water supplies into the future, while acknowledging the need for periodic updates, improved data collection, continued coordination with water providers, and expanded public education efforts.

*Chair LaMar opened the public hearing.*

Michael Rush, Canyon Rim Citizens Association, expressed support for the inclusion of policies recognizing and promoting tree canopy preservation and expansion in the final plan, noting that tree canopies help reduce heat island effects, lower cooling demands, decrease evaporation, and ultimately reduce water usage. He emphasized the importance of protecting Millcreek's existing canopy while actively seeking opportunities to expand it in a thoughtful and sustainable manner. Rush also reflected on long-term water demand projections, particularly the estimated acre-foot usage by 2060, and encouraged ongoing consideration of how population growth and increased density may lead to future inflection points requiring difficult policy decisions. He urged city leaders to remain mindful of these long-term implications as they make planning and land use decisions, even within shorter elected terms.

*Chair LaMar closed the public hearing.*

Chair LaMar commended the broader goals of the plan related to protecting water resources and promoting regional cooperation, and suggested an additional refinement focused on quantifying water use in landscape planning. He recommended that landscape plans not only describe plantings and irrigation systems, but also clearly estimate expected water consumption so conservation goals can be measured and managed over time. Chair LaMar emphasized that these metrics should be practical and enforceable, proposing that developments of a given size target specific water-use thresholds, particularly during peak summer months. He further stressed the importance of ensuring that irrigation guidance is not merely documented in plan sets or digital files, but is translated into clear, durable, and accessible on-site instructions, such as posted schedules near irrigation control boxes, so that future maintenance personnel can easily follow appropriate watering practices and avoid over-irrigation.

Murray noted that Salt Lake Public Utilities has suggested potential strategies to improve water-use tracking and efficiency, particularly for larger developments. One option discussed was requiring separate water meters for indoor and outdoor use, which would allow more accurate monitoring of irrigation-related consumption and provide better data for future planning. He also highlighted existing code requirements for efficient irrigation systems, such as limits on drip emitter output, and pointed to emerging technologies like smart sensors that adjust watering based on soil moisture and weather conditions. Murray explained that many water conservation rebate programs already require pre- and post-installation inspections to ensure systems are installed and operated as designed. He concluded that, as technology continues to improve and costs decrease, the city could consider adding more specific requirements, especially for larger projects, to further enhance water efficiency and data collection.

Commissioner Soule raised concerns about improving water-use data collection by accounting for infrastructure losses, noting that aging pipes in parts of Millcreek contribute to water breaks and significant water loss before repairs are made. She suggested the city works more closely with Salt Lake Public Utilities to better understand how much overall water consumption is attributable to system leaks and whether more proactive pipe replacement could reduce these losses. Commissioner Soule also recommended expanding use of the Utah Water Conservation Program, particularly for larger developments, by requiring landscape plans to be reviewed through the program before installation to improve efficiency. Additionally, she emphasized the value of better public outreach and education about available rebates, suggesting that sharing real examples and financial benefits could encourage broader participation in water-wise landscaping programs.

Murray acknowledged that Salt Lake Public Utilities faces ongoing challenges related to aging infrastructure and water loss, noting that the utility is not a taxing entity and relies on Salt Lake City's budget, which complicates system-wide upgrades. He explained that utility reports submitted to the state indicate a significantly higher water loss rate compared to other systems, attributable to a combination of unavoidable system losses and frequent breaks associated with older infrastructure. While recognizing the scale and complexity of these challenges and the competing priorities the utility manages, Murray agreed that conducting a more focused study to better understand infrastructure-related water losses would be valuable and could provide useful data to inform future planning and coordination efforts.

**Commissioner Lofgren moved to recommend GP-25-003, the adoption of a Water Preservation Element to the Millcreek General Plan to the Millcreek City Council, as presented. Commissioner Richardson seconded. Chair LaMar called for the vote. Chair LaMar voted yes, Commissioner Larsen voted yes, Commissioner Lofgren voted yes, Commissioner Reid voted yes, Commissioner Richardson voted yes, Commissioner Soule voted yes, and Commissioner Wright was not present for the vote. The motion passed.**

## **2. New Item**

### **2.1 Consideration of CU-25-009, Request for a Condition Use Permit to Allow a Business Office an Outcall Service Location: 715 E 3900 S Applicant: Brandi Defa Planner: Zack Wendel**

Zack Wendel explained that the applicant is requesting a conditional use permit to operate a business office for an outcall service, within an existing office complex in the Residential Mixed (RM) zone. Under the Millcreek zoning ordinance, outcall service businesses are classified as sexually oriented businesses and may operate in the RM zone with a conditional use permit and business license, subject to legal standards informed by case law. The property is a nearly 1.5-acre office complex with approximately 25,000 square feet of space, though the proposed use would occupy only about 207 square feet for administrative purposes. The office would be staffed by one licensed employee per shift, serve no clients on site, conduct all bookings online or by phone, and display only minimal signage required for emergency identification. Surrounding uses include medical and commercial facilities, and the proposed office-only use is expected to mitigate typical impacts associated with sexually oriented businesses. Staff determined that the application meets all conditional use permit criteria except for one issue: the parking lot is not fully compliant with current off-street parking standards due to faded or missing striping. As a result, staff recommends approval of

## SUBCHAPTER 3.8: WATER USE & PRESERVATION ELEMENT

*Utah is home to the incredible Great Salt Lake as well as many freshwater lakes, rivers, and creeks, however, fast population growth and the arid Utah climate create a water scarcity issue that poses a serious threat to Utah's environment and economy. Preserving and protecting water helps ensure long-term sustainability, helps support local ecosystems, and secures reliable water for generations to come.*

### 3.8.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF WATER PRESERVATION IN MILLCREEK

In 2022, the Utah State Legislature adopted S.B. 110, which requires that all municipalities, including Millcreek, include a water preservation element in their general plan. This plan intends to formally integrate water use and preservation planning into Millcreek's long-term development and maintenance strategies. Millcreek and its residents have shown year after year they care about preserving water and treating it as a precious resource, and this plan aims to continue those efforts into the near future and beyond.

Required components of the plan include:

- Effect of permitted development on water demand and infrastructure
- Methods for reducing water demand and per capita consumption for future development
- Methods for reducing water demand and per capita consumption for existing development
- Opportunities to modify operations to eliminate or reduce conditions that waste water





### 3.8.2 TRENDS

#### Millcreek's Current Water Profile

*Where does Millcreek get its water?* Millcreek does not operate its own water system. Instead, multiple water providers and businesses work together to provide water to residents throughout the city. These water providers manage the infrastructure, deliver water, and charge residents. These providers have an essential role in setting long-term water conservation goals so that Millcreek will have reliable water for years to come. The water providers are shown in the map to the right and are listed below:

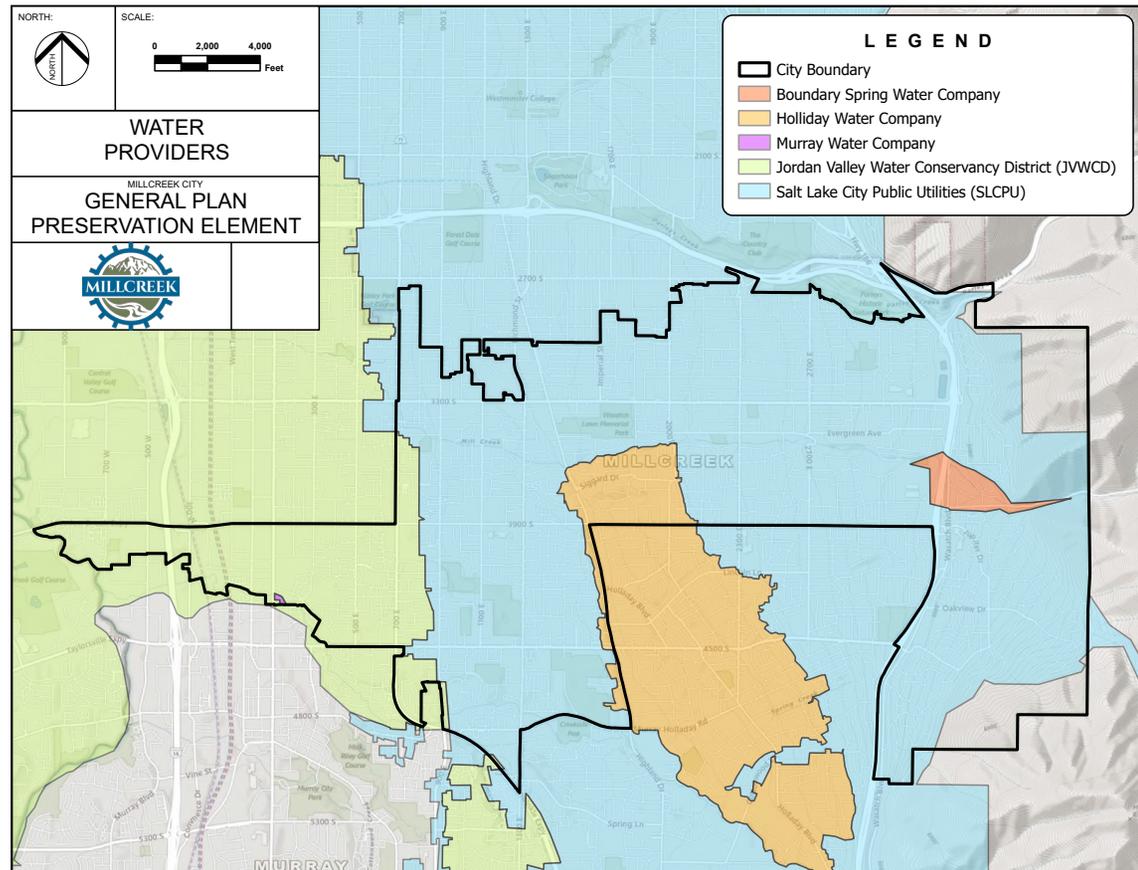
- **Salt Lake City Public Utilities (SLCDPU).** The largest portion of Millcreek residences and businesses receives their water from Salt Lake City Public Utilities. This water provider serves not only Millcreek but also serves Salt Lake City and other municipalities in the area. For more information on SLCDPU, see their conservation plan found on their website.
- **Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District (JVWCD).** The second largest portion of Millcreek residences and businesses receives their water from the Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District. This district serves both wholesale and retail water to a number of communities throughout the Salt Lake Valley. For more information on JVWCD, see their conservation plan found on their website.
- **Holliday Water Company.** A small, but not insignificant, portion of Millcreek is served by Holliday Water Company. This company

mainly serves Holladay City but serves some Millcreek residents as well. Holliday Water Company gets some of its water through SLCDPU, and some of its water from its own sources.

- **Boundary Spring Water Company.** As a small-scale water provider, Boundary Spring

Water Company serves about 150 homes in Millcreek.

- **Murray City Water.** Murray City primarily serves water to its own residents to the southwest of Millcreek. A handful of properties within Millcreek are also served by Murray City Water.



**How is water currently used in Millcreek?**

In 2024, the population in Millcreek was approximately 64,913. Within the SLCDPU service area, the residential population makes up over 75% of annual water use. Other areas in the city may see higher water use from industrial or commercial users, but overall, the majority of water use in Millcreek is from residential customers.

**How much water does Millcreek currently use?**

Residents in Millcreek use water at home, at work, and recreationally. Gallons per capita per day (GPCD) is the standard way to measure water use for an area based on population and is a common practice among water professionals. Current water demand trends from the SLCDPU conservation plan show that water sales in the Millcreek service area are approximately 208 GPCD. This means that in 2024, water sales within Millcreek were approximately 15,100 acre-feet.

Since water is supplied by multiple water service providers, data received about water usage within the Millcreek service area varied in accuracy and specificity. **Due to this, it is likely that the average consumption is lower than 208 GPCD.**

**Besides drinking it, how is water consumed?**

Water usage can be split into indoor and outdoor use. Indoor water consumption stays consistent throughout most of the year, while outdoor water usage increases dramatically in the summer months of May through September. Specific land uses such as residential, industrial, and commercial all have different consumption patterns when looking at indoor and outdoor usage.

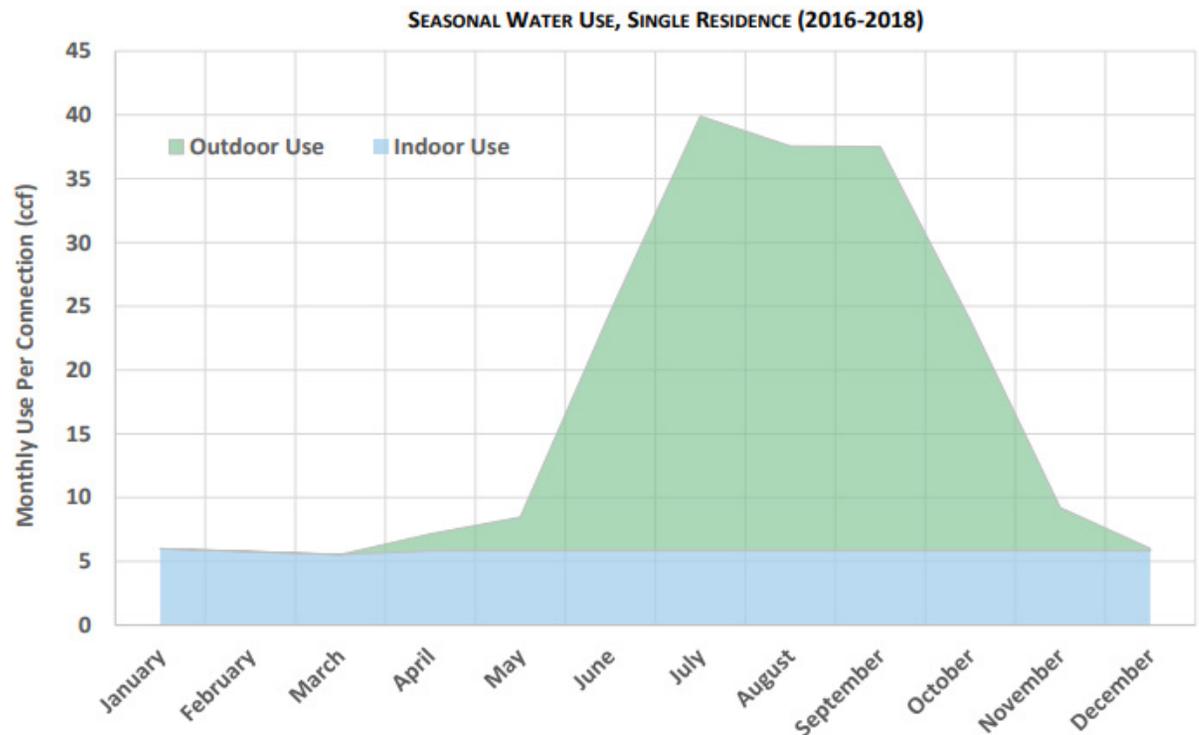
The figure below shows the use of water split between outdoor usage (green) and indoor usage (blue) for an average single family residence in the SLCDPU service area. This figure is taken from the 2020 Salt Lake City Water Conservation Plan.

Low density single household residences have the highest amount of outdoor water consumption of all land use types. The figure below shows the average household water usage for a single residence. This data is taken from the 2020 Salt Lake City Water Conservation Plan and gives a general idea of water consumption practices in

the SLCDPU service area.

Uses such as industrial and commercial frequently have higher indoor consumption and significantly lower outdoor consumption due to a frequent lack of significant outdoor landscaping associated with these uses.

Based on data provided by SLCDPU, water consumption within the Millcreek service area between 2020 and 2024 averaged around 78% residential use, 12% commercial use, and 10% industrial use.





**Where does Millcreek’s water come from?** As previously discussed, Millcreek relies on multiple water providers for its water. Our water comes from rivers, creeks, wells, and springs, all over the Salt Lake Valley. To find additional details on water sources and infrastructure that serve residents, the first step is to identify the correct water provider by looking at the “Water Providers” figure within this report or by visiting the State of Utah’s Department of Environmental Quality’s water system search website. After identifying the applicable water provider, the second step is to read the water provider’s “Water Conservation Plan” to get the desired details.

### Future Water Requirements in Millcreek

What does Millcreek’s future water use look like? Do we have enough water for our community?

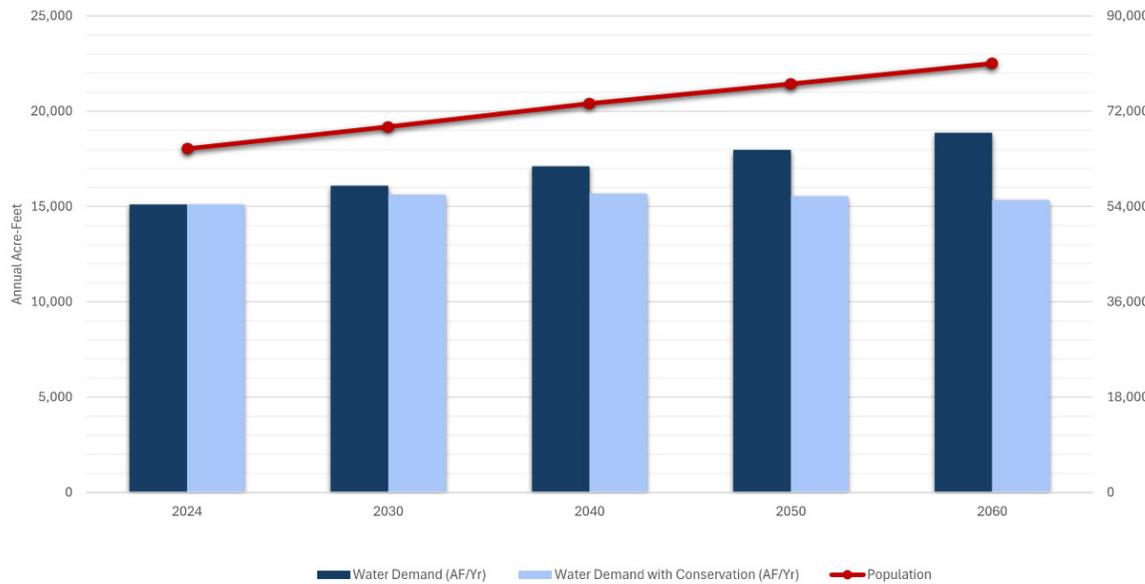
**What is Millcreek’s water demand without conservation?** The population of Millcreek is projected to increase relatively steadily, and will be about 77,200 people by 2050. Most of this growth is expected to occur through increasing residential density. Because Millcreek is essentially built out, our projected growth is significantly smaller than other communities in Utah. If water use patterns and per-capita water use remains the same as it is right now, the total annual water sales will increase to about 19,000 acre-feet by 2060.

**What is Millcreek’s projected water demand with conservation?** To meet the requirements of Millcreek’s water providers, conservation is required. To meet the goals within SLCDPU’s conservation plan, Millcreek needs to drop its usage by 2.9%, 8.4%, and 18.7% by 2030, 2040, and 2060 respectively. This equates to a reduction from 208 GPCD to 202 GPCD by 2030 and 169 GPCD by 2060 in order to meet the plan’s requirements for conservation. Based on these per-capita water use values, the total annual demand needs to be no more than 15,300 acre-feet by 2060. The figure to the left shows Millcreek’s projected population and water use.

**Do we have enough water for our future?** As discussed above, Millcreek does not manage its own water supply but rather supports its water suppliers in meeting their goals and requirements. Subsequently, it is not possible to define an exact supply for Millcreek as growth and conservation in other parts of the water suppliers’ service areas will affect overall water availability. To mitigate this uncertainty, Millcreek staff is in constant communication with the two major water suppliers – Salt Lake City Public Utilities and Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District. **Both SLCDPU and JWCD have stated that, as long as Millcreek meets the water conservation goals set and discussed within this planning document, and future growth does not exceed the projections contained here, there will be reliable water for Millcreek into the future.**

The figure illustrates, that while the population steadily increases over time, Millcreek’s total annual water use is projected to increase by only 200 acre-feet between 2024 and 2060 as a

Millcreek Projected Population Growth & Water Demand



SOURCE: BOWEN COLLINS & ASSOCIATES

result of conservation efforts. In order to meet the requirements of the water providers and secure water for the future, these conservation efforts must be successful in reducing water demands. As detailed below, Millcreek has already been making progress.

### 3.8.3 VISION & PRINCIPLES

Since incorporation, Millcreek has worked with residents and new developments to design water efficient landscaping and watering standards. Because Millcreek is not a water provider, it can be difficult to manage water usage. However, through incentives and landscape reviews, existing homeowners and new developments have been much more focused on landscaping and water practices that reduce overall consumption of water.

#### How is Millcreek Managing Outdoor Water Usage?

Outdoor water consumption is one of the drivers of demand in Millcreek. Reducing outdoor water usage through better landscape standards, smarter infrastructure, and more rigorous efficiency standards is a key way to reduce Millcreek’s overall water consumption now and into the future.

#### Waterwise landscaping for current and new development

In 2023, Millcreek updated its landscaping standards to align with modern waterwise standards set out by the Central Utah Water

Conservancy District. These standards apply for new development and allow existing developments to be altered in ways that maximize water preservation.

Since adopting these standards, Millcreek has seen businesses and private residences remove high water landscaping and replace it with waterwise plantings that mimic the natural environment in terms of water use, plant selection, and biodiversity. Prior to the ordinance’s adoption, Millcreek’s landscape standards did not permit modern waterwise standards, so residents could not participate in rebate programs for replacing their water intensive landscaping.

The updated standards follow the best practices to reduce water usage and waste while allowing homeowners and businesses to still have landscaping that fits their needs. All new development must meet these standards and redevelopment over certain sizes must also comply with these standards.

#### Hydrozones

Millcreek’s landscape standards also include planting standards for plants with similar water needs. This section is broken up into different “hydrozones” based on the frequency of watering. The hydrozone standard ensures that low water plants are used correctly and grouped to prevent over or under watering of plants on a site. As the needed frequency of watering increases, there is a limit outlined that no more than 10 percent of plant material may fall into the highest water use hydrozone.

#### Water Efficiency

Millcreek’s landscaping code requires water efficient irrigation systems for new landscape projects. These standards outline how and when to use drip emitters versus overhead sprinklers and operational procedures for each. There are also standards for automatic controllers, valves, pressure regulation, and use on slopes above 30 percent. New watering systems must achieve a minimum efficiency of 75 percent for fixed spray systems and 70 percent distribution efficiency for rotor systems.

#### Turfgrass

Turfgrass that is allowed to be installed has been significantly reduced for new developments within the city. Commercial, manufacturing, institutional, and public properties are prohibited from installing turfgrass. Mixed use and mixed household developments are prohibited from installing turfgrass for ornamental or aesthetic uses, but are allowed to install turfgrass for recreation facilities and sports fields. Single and two household homes are currently permitted to install turfgrass so long as it meets the LocalScape design standards found in the landscape standards.

HYDROZONE	IRRIGATION FREQUENCY	NOTES
Zone 0	Little or no water needed	Plant material in Zone 0 and 1 with water use requirement, as noted in the Millcreek Plant Species List, shall be used at the interface between urban areas and natural (non-irrigated) open space
Zone 1	Plants require supplemental irrigation once per month	
Zone 2	Plants require supplemental irrigation twice per month	No more than ten percent (10%) of plant material may fall under zone 3 and/or 4 watering frequency
Zone 3	Plants require supplemental irrigation once per week	
Zone 4	Most intensive water-use zone, plants require supplemental irrigation twice per week	



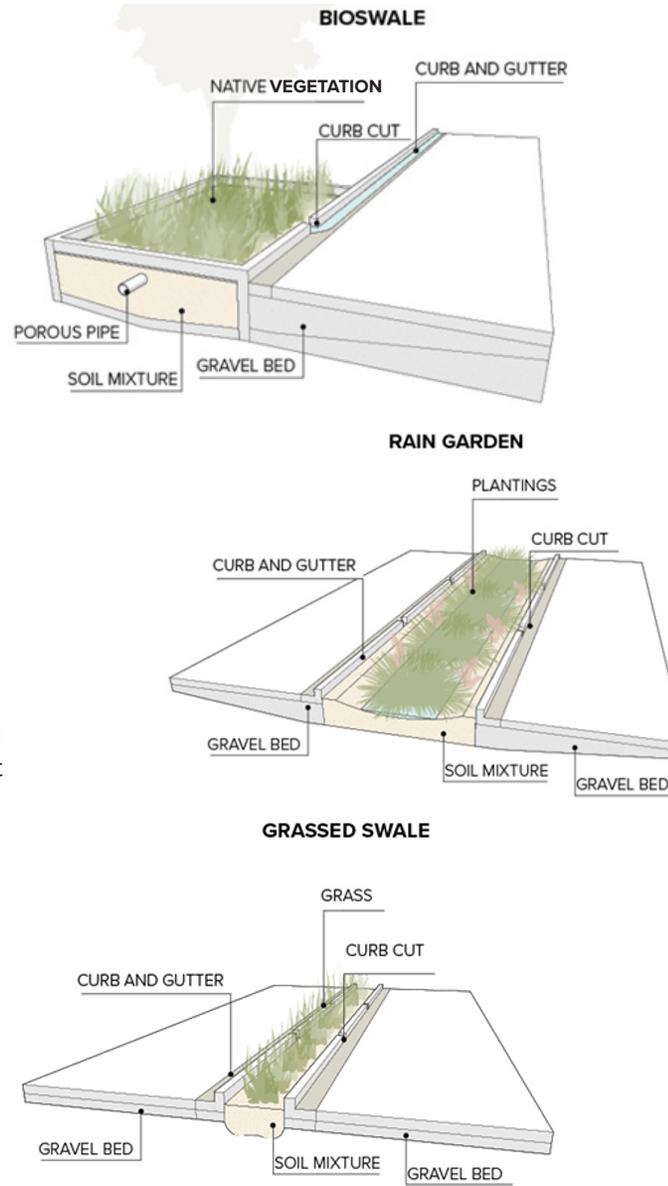
**Low Impact Development (LID):**

Low Impact Development is required for new developments in Millcreek, especially when bordering parking lots or areas with impervious surfaces. LID consists of incorporating rain gardens, swales, and bioswales to reduce water waste. These types of infrastructure allow for water to permeate the soil and return to the aquifer. Examples of these can be seen to the right.

**Bioswales.** Bioswales are vegetated swales planted with various plant species that can tolerate occasional water inundation and serve to transport, store, and allow water infiltration.

**Rain Gardens.** Rain gardens are small, shallow, depressions planted with a variety of native or ornamental plants that can treat small amounts of runoff to improve water quality.

**Grassed Swales.** Grassed swales are designed to convey water over the ground's surface to a point of disposal and serve to slow water flow, allowing some particulates to drop out before the water reaches the disposal point.



**How is Millcreek Currently Working to Preserve Water?**

Millcreek currently uses multiple strategies to ensure water is preserved for current and future generations. Landscaping standards, land use, and water savings programs are some of the ways Millcreek works to ensure water is used efficiently and that residents can use incentives to better preserve their own water.

**Land Use**

Land use is one of the biggest tools when it comes to preserving the future of water in Millcreek. According to the *Utah Growing Water Smart* guidebook, published by Western Resource Advocates, the density of development can play a large role in per capita water consumption. Higher density developments (3-8 units per acre) tend to use less water per capita due to less outdoor landscaping and less water leakage from water delivery systems.

There are two areas in Millcreek where a majority of new higher density development is slated, in the Millcreek City Center, and in the Meadowbrook area near 3900 S and Main Street.

The Millcreek City Center, located near the intersections of 1300 E and 3300 S, and Highland Drive and 3300 S, consists of a mix of higher density residential buildings, civic services, and commercial businesses. The Millcreek City Center Master Plan can be found on the Millcreek website.

The Meadowbrook area, which is located west of State Street, has seen significant new development in the last ten years. A majority of the new development has been high density residential. Newly adopted station area plans that cover this area call for increased density and new infrastructure to help spur more development in the area. The Meadowbrook area is described in more detail through out this document, specifically on page 52.

**Utah Water Savers**

Millcreek’s code allows for residents to participate in rebate programs laid out and operated by the Utah Water Savers program. Waterwise landscape standards and the inclusion of LocalScapes language in code allows for residents to alter their private property, residential or commercial, in line with the requirements outlined by the Utah Water Savers Program.

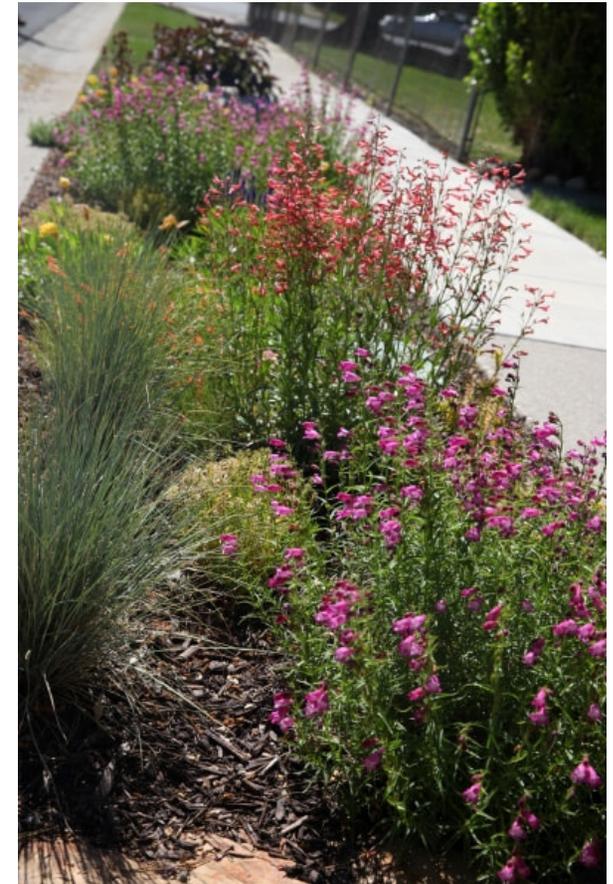
**Rain Barrel Sales**

Every year, Millcreek and surrounding communities have participated in Utah River Councils RainHarvest program that helps residents obtain rain barrels at reduced prices. Rain barrels are a great way for residents to practice water preservation on their own property without the need for costly property improvements. Rain harvesting was legalized in Utah in 2010 and residents are allowed to harvest 2,500 gallons of rain water per year. This program allows for residents to purchase rain barrels for \$85 instead of the market rate of \$155 per barrel.

**Current Landscaping & Water Use Ordinances**

Millcreek’s landscape standards were created with waterwise concepts included throughout. In 2023, Millcreek adopted new landscape standards in its zoning code that apply to new development and redevelopment within the city. This chapter of landscape standards was created with help from the Central Utah Water Conservancy District to ensure that the standards balance water savings and plant viability.

Rebates and programs that incentivize waterwise landscaping have helped residents and businesses switch to better landscapes that reduce outdoor water consumption. These rebates and programs help with costs associated with replacing landscaping and explain how and why these waterwise landscapes work. An example of a waterwise park strip can be seen to the right.

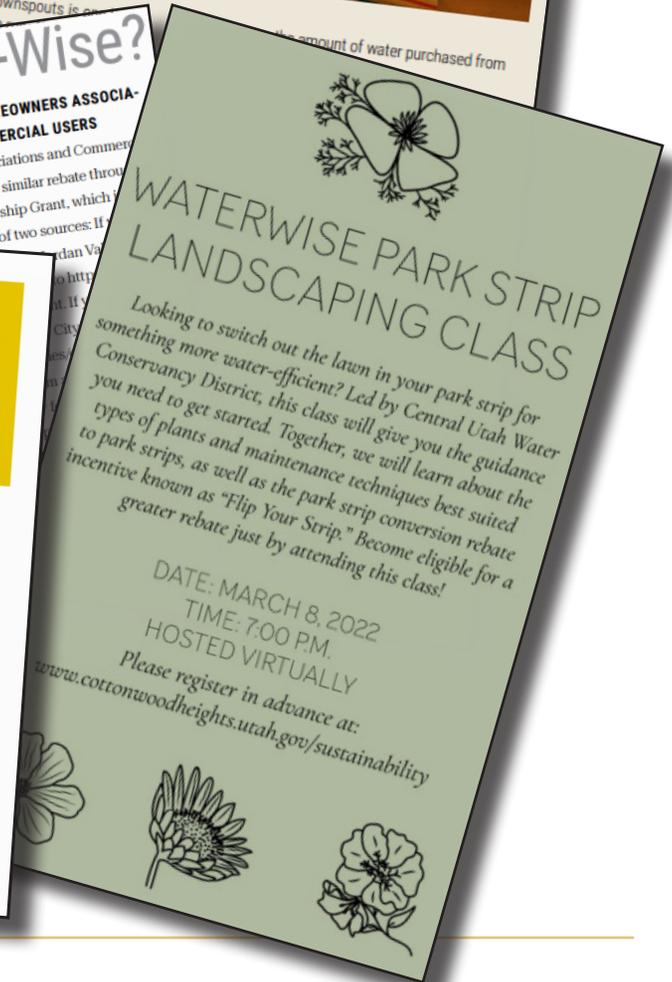


SOURCE: JORDAN VALLEY WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT



**Newsletters & Outreach:**

For years, Millcreek has been diligent in getting the word out about water preservation to residents in the city. Through social media, e-newsletters, and print newsletters, Millcreek has been regularly informing property owner and residents on how to reduce their water consumption. Articles discuss the rain barrel program discussed above, waterwise tips and ideas, and classes about reducing water waste in the park strip.



**Water Provider Outreach**

Since Millcreek has multiple water providers, coordination and cooperation with them is key to ensuring long term water availability for residents. A large majority of the culinary water in Millcreek is provided by SLCDPU, and JWCD. As part of the creation of this plan, Millcreek staff met with officials representing both providers and discussed future projects, current system demands, and their respective conservation plans.

Millcreek also sent out questionnaires to all culinary and secondary water providers asking what challenges they each face and what Millcreek can do to help their respective conservation goals. In total, Millcreek sent out 11 questionnaires to the culinary water providers and canal companies that serve Millcreek. Of these questionnaires, Millcreek staff only received four back, two from canal companies and two from culinary providers.

The canal companies that responded cited aging infrastructure and new development as their largest concerns going forward. Many of these canal companies have older infrastructure that can leak and create issues getting water to share holders. Upgrading this infrastructure to maintain water deliveries to their existing water share holders was the main goal stated by the two companies that responded.

Holliday Water and JWCD responded to the questionnaire as well. In JWCD's response, they outlined their contingency plans, efficiency standards, and their overall confidence that they will be able to continue to serve a growing population in the valley so long as efficiency standards are upheld. Currently, they serve

780,000 residents with the ability to add an additional 420,000 by 2065. Staff also met JWCD officials at City Hall to discuss further preservation measures that JWCD are pursuing and how they interface with Millcreek policies and ordinances.

Holliday Water is a much smaller water provider that does not have the same capacity and distribution network of utility providers such as JWCD and SLCDPU. The area they serve is largely built out and new development that takes place will be more dense than most of the existing development in the area. The increase in density will strain their existing infrastructure as it has been laid out and built for low density land use.

SLCDPU did not respond with a filled out questionnaire, but rather met with staff to discuss their system, issues Millcreek faces, and other considerations to take into account when planning for better water preservation. Ongoing meetings between SLCDPU and Millcreek Planning & Public Works Departments occur monthly. These meetings allow SLCDPU and Millcreek to discuss changes to infrastructure, system upgrades, and preservation measures.

**Creating a Water Education Program**

There are many ways for existing and future water users in Millcreek to save water. The *Utah Regional Municipal and Industrial Water Conservation Goals Report* recommends a variety of water conservation practices that both residents and city governments can use. Millcreek also has a water conservation guide accessible to the public on the website that provides direction on good water use practices.

Millcreek educates its residents on many of these practices already, however, there is still room for growth. Millcreek plans to formalize its education program by incorporating the following measures into the City's schedule:

- **Highlight Water Providers in City Newsletters.** Millcreek sends a printed monthly newsletter and a weekly e-newsletter to residents and subscribers. Articles that highlight water providers will be featured twice per year.
- **Hold an Annual Waterwise Seminar.** Millcreek has had immense success with attendance at Millcreek Common and City Hall, in part due to its engaged and active population. Millcreek has created a goal to schedule an annual waterwise seminar at the City Hall with open admission to all residents. Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District Conservation Garden would be an ideal fit to lead the seminar. This will allow residents to learn about the guiding principles discussed above and how they can implement waterwise practices within their communities and at their homes.
- **Have Continued Engagement at Community Events.** When practical, Millcreek staff will continue to set up educational booths at community events. Staff at the booths will be prepared with resources and information for residents that pass by. Staff can also use these booths to gather feedback from residents on how well water preservation is being handled at throughout the city.



### ***Participating in Regional Collaboration:***

Millcreek is already actively participating in regional collaboration with its water providers and canal companies. The landscape code is a major part of this collaboration. Millcreek intends to have its primary water providers, JWCD & SLCDPU, and the State's Division of Water Resources, review its code periodically and recommend changes as needed.

Another major part of regional collaboration is the endorsement of water rates. Water rates can play a key role in conservation. For example, a tiered water rate charges more per gallon of water the more water is used. This encourages lower water use per customer because the less water is used, the less expensive it is per gallon. Both of Millcreek's primary water providers, JWCD and SLCDPU, have recently implemented conservation minded rate structures. By endorsing these rates and educating its residents on the importance of conservation minded rates, Millcreek can help explain the need for increasing costs.

### ***Improving Government Facilities:***

As Millcreek grows, government facilities will need to be constructed, retrofitted, and upgraded to respond to the changing needs of residents and the changing environment. Government buildings and facilities need to be water efficient and employees need to understand the importance of water preservation now and into the future.

Currently, the parks in Millcreek are largely managed by Salt Lake County Parks and Recreation. This means that Millcreek does not always have the opportunity to make these changes, however, as new parks are created,

Millcreek can ensure they are built to waterwise standards. Although the County manages many of Millcreek's parks, water efficiency upgrades have already been done by the County on some parks within the county park system.

New city buildings will incorporate waterwise landscaping and use smart meters to help monitor water consumption. Having separate meters for indoor and outdoor consumption may help Millcreek track where and how water is being used for government facilities.

Best indoor water use practices should also be common place in government facilities. To achieve this, there will need to be regular training during city all staff meetings about water usage. The same all staff meetings can discuss waterwise practices for employees personal property as well.

## **How can Millcreek Residents Preserve Water?**

Water preservation takes many forms such as reducing overall water usage, changing habits, and planning smarter outdoor areas. While some actions will have more impact than others, all practices focused on water preservation help reduce demand on our water systems.

Reducing outdoor water consumption is the easiest way for Millcreek residents to reduce their water consumption footprint. Other strategies work as well, however, outdoor water consumption is by far the largest user of water that most residents can change.

## **Indoor & Outdoor Water Use Guidelines**

### ***Indoor water saving strategies:***

- Fix and stop leaks from pipes, sinks, and toilets.
- Only run full laundry loads.
- Only run the dishwasher when full.
- Reduce shower times.
- Turn off water connections when out of town and during winter.
- Do not let the water run when brushing teeth, cleaning dishes, or shaving.
- Install low water usage fixtures (toilets, sinks, appliances, etc.).

### ***Outdoor water saving strategies:***

- Remove high water consumption plants and plantings (grass, non-native species, etc.).
- Install drip emitters and low flow watering devices.
- Water outdoor plants at ideal times to reduce evaporation.
- Use mulch where possible to retain soil moisture.
- Install smart water meters.
- Install smart controllers for sprinklers.
- Cover pools and hot tubs to reduce evaporation.

### 3.8.4 GOALS & STRATEGIES

The Millcreek Together General Plan already outlines multiple goals that pertain to sustainability and preservation. These goals have helped shaped policy, code, and perspectives about water and land usage in Millcreek. Listed below are just a handful of the goals outlined in the existing plan that pertain to water usage and preservation:

- **SUSTAINABILITY. GOAL E-7:** Promote environmentally sustainable efforts and initiatives in the public and private sector.
- **ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY. GOAL HE-5:** Promote sustainable practices in the preservation, development, and maintenance of Millcreek’s natural and built environments.
- **AIR AND WATER. GOAL HE-6:** Implement standards, policies, and practices that encourage and support enhanced air and water quality.

These goals, along with others, have helped Millcreek make smart choices when it comes to water preservation before the state legislature required such measures. New goals are also needed to ensure Millcreek can meet its preservation goals outlined in this planning document.

**REFINE. GOAL W-1: *Continue to refine and enhance Millcreek’s vision for protecting water resources.***

- Strategy 1.1: Develop a portfolio of recommended waterwise standards for new and redevelopment based on State water use recommendations, Water Utility Conservation Plans, and City specific needs.
- Strategy 1.2: Establish a regular review of this plan to ensure Millcreek is meeting its goals and properly implementing the proposed measures. Update the plan in accordance with changes to water providers conservation plans and Millcreek’s population growth.
- Strategy 1.3: Improve water quality and reduce water contamination of storm water runoff. Work with the Public Works Department to ensure storm water runoff is free and clear of pollutant and detritus.

**COOPERATE. GOAL W-2: *Promote cooperative regional practices for water use and conservation.***

- Strategy 2.1: Endorse the concepts and ideas outlined in the water conservation plans of Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District and Salt Lake City Department of Public Utilities by using the data and goals to create outreach and educational material.
- Strategy 2.2: Engage in regular collaboration with water utilities and Utah DWR to ensure Millcreek is up to date on any water

preservation measures or updates to laws and policies.

- Strategy 2.3: Work closer with SLCDPU to gain better representation and data from Millcreek’s largest water provider.

**UPDATE. GOAL W-3: *Update and implement water conservation measures that address local needs and minimize unnecessary consumption of water resources.***

- Strategy 3.1: Identify what waterwise policies are working well and identify areas that could be improved by collaborating with various institutions in Millcreek, including applicable water providers, Salt Lake County Parks and Recreation, School Districts, Churches, Canal and Irrigation Companies, etc. Upgrade existing outdoor public water infrastructure to reduce waste and over consumption.
- Strategy 3.2: Gather feedback from Millcreek residents on their perspectives on water use in Millcreek and make changes and improvements to water policies as needed.
- Strategy 3.3: Work to create a tree planting program to help with cooling, evapotranspiration, and heat islands around Millcreek. Educate residents on how to effectively water trees to bolster Millcreek’s tree canopy.



**EDUCATE. GOAL W-4: Educate residents and officials on ways to reduce water consumption and increase water preservation awareness.**

- Strategy 4.1: Establish recurring water education programs that are open to the public to inform residents and officials on best practices for waterwise landscaping and maintenance.
- Strategy 4.2: Formalize a water education program in partnership with water providers and the Utah DWR
- Strategy 4.3: Continue to use the Millcreek printed and e-newsletter to pass on information about waterwise programs, rebates, and water preservation.
- Strategy 4.4: Promote the use of the Report-A-Concern feature on Millcreek's website to alert Millcreek to broken water infrastructure, over watering, and water waste.



SOURCE: SEVEN CANYONS TRUST