

Memorandum

Date: October 1, 2025

To: Douglas County Planning Commission

From: Scott Weeks, Senior Planner
Matt Jakubowski, AICP, Chief Planner
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Steven E. Koster, AICP, Assistant Director Planning Services

Subject: **2040 Comprehensive Master Plan Amendment – Section 8, Environmental Quality and Section 10, Amendments & Updates**

SUMMARY

Staff initiated amendments to Section 8: Environmental Quality, specifically Section 8.4: Air Quality and Section 10: Amendments & Updates of the 2040 Douglas County Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP). A request to amend the CMP is subject to the process outlined in CMP Section 10.

The requested amendment will be sent out on a 35-day referral period. Following the 35-day referral period, staff will review comments and prepare a staff report for the proposed CMP amendment. At a noticed public hearing, the Planning Commission will evaluate the proposed amendment, referral comments, the staff report, and public testimony and make a decision. A summary of the proposed amendments is below and a redline of Sections 8 and 10 are attached.

BACKGROUND

Section 8.4: Air Quality

staff has researched potential CMP policy changes specific to air quality. The topic of air quality is currently addressed in CMP Goal 8-4, Improve Air Quality. The CMP amendment proposes to replace an existing policy (Policy 8-4A.3) and include new objectives and policies that advance the County's commitment to air quality. Revisions to this section generally include the addition of objectives and policies related to renewable energy, air quality awareness on a community level, reduction of carbon emissions and particulate matter, energy efficiency, and reduction of vehicle emissions.

Section 10: Amendments & Updates

Proposed revisions to Section 10 generally include text cleanup; clarification of the role of the CMP map and CMP goals, objectives, and policies in review of development applications; clarification of the CMP amendment approval criteria, particularly related to special districts; revision to language regarding distribution of referrals; revision of the

length of the referral period to align with other County processes; and clarification of submittal requirements to assist applicants in the preparation of submittals.

NEXT STEPS

After discussion with the Planning Commission, staff will process the proposed amendment per the current requirements of CMP Section 10-4.

ATTACHMENTS

CMP Section 8.4: Air Quality redlines

CMP Section 10: Amendments & Updates redlines

CMP Section 8: Environmental Quality

Goal 8-4: Improve Air Quality.

Douglas County is actively searching for ways to reduce air pollution and improve air quality. Having good air quality is essential for a healthy lifestyle and environment. Transportation, residential, and industrial emissions play a significant role in the deterioration of air quality. Strategies of encouraging the use of renewable energy sources can help mitigate these impacts and reduce carbon emissions. Community awareness and engagement in air quality monitoring can help empower individuals to act in their communities to reduce air pollution.

The County is part of the Environmental Protection Agency Air Quality Region 8 and participates in the Regional Air Quality Council (RAQC), a regional intergovernmental group committed to maintaining and improving the metro area's air quality through implementing federal and state air quality regulations.

The Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) performs air quality analyses for the region's transportation plans and is the regional mechanism for implementing air quality standards through development of the federally mandated State Implementation Plan. This plan reduces air pollution by regulating emissions of carbon monoxide, ozone, and total suspended particulates (very fine dust).

Douglas County works with the RAQC and DRCOG to address regional air quality issues and sets forth, in the policies below, a framework to implement regional goals.

Objective 8-4A

Cooperate with governments and businesses to improve air quality.

POLICY 8-4A.1

Use, at a minimum, standards established by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and the Environmental Protection Agency to improve air quality.

POLICY 8-4A.2

Encourage clean, non-polluting industries to locate in Douglas County.

POLICY 8-4A.3

Encourage development patterns that reduce dependence on the automobile for work, shopping, and other trips, and provide for alternative modes of transportation.

POLICY 8-4A.4

~~Require businesses and developers to control dust and other pollutants resulting from mining, travel on unpaved roads, and similar activities.~~ Support transitioning to renewable energy options.

Objective 8-4B

Implement renewable energy sources and reduce particulate matter emissions with different measures throughout project development and construction.

Policy 8-4B.1

Incorporate air quality awareness by providing access to information for the community to gain knowledge and provisions of opportunities to reduce emissions with communication and engagement.

Policy 8-4B.2

Require policies within developments for proper disposal of waste such as solid waste, recycling, and rural land management techniques to support the reduction of carbon emissions.

Policy 8-4B.3

Support street sweeping programs to reduce the amount of particulate matter produced by but not limited to; dust, debris, and pollutants that are typically found on roadways from tire debris, oils, and heavy metals.

Policy 8-4B.4

Support current construction technologies that reduce carbon emissions. Increase the overall energy efficiency for all development construction types.

Policy 8-4B.5

Encourage a conversion from natural gas to electricity to promote renewable energy systems.

Policy 8-4B.6

Support materials and practices that convert carbon including but not limited to; trees, shrubs, mulch, and native plants that require little to no maintenance.

Policy 8-4B.7

Require land grading techniques, dust mitigation and suppression practices during construction to reduce soil erosion that contributes to dust pollution.

Policy 8-4B.8

Encourage the development of on-site for renewable energy systems.

Policy 8-4B.9

Support rebate and incentive programs for the installation of renewable energy in existing buildings to help offset upfront costs.

Objective 8-4C

Promote communities that provide pedestrian oriented travel and public transit options that

are both user friendly and functional. Create opportunities to reduce vehicle emissions by lessening driving time within built environments.

Policy 8-4C.1

Incorporate bike lanes, sidewalks, and crosswalks into development to reduce vehicle emissions.

Policy 8-4C.2

Provide access to bus stops, light rail stations and ride-sharing services within mixed-use communities to maximize opportunities to utilize public transit.

Policy 8-4C.3

Provide dedicated parking areas for non-vehicular transportation options to reduce travel mode conflict and encourage their use.

Policy 8-4C.4

Support incentives to promote alternative transportation services for employees.

Policy 8-4C.5

Incorporate walkable neighborhood designs in developments.

CMP Section 10: Amendments and Updates

~~Consistency with the Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP) is considered a fundamental criterion for a positive recommendation for land use applications. Any rezoning proposal inconsistent with the CMP Land Use Map should amend the CMP prior. This section contains the standards and procedures for updating the CMP.~~

10-1 Types of Amendments

Generally, two types of amendments may be made to the Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP).

10-1A Amendments Initiated by The Public

The public may initiate amendments only to the CMP Land Use Map. Such amendments shall be considered Major Amendments.

10-1B Amendments Initiated by The Planning Commission or County Staff

~~Major or administrative amendments which affect either the Land Use Map or goals, objectives, and policies of the CMP may be initiated by~~ The Douglas County Planning Commission, ~~either on its own or at the request of the public,~~ or Planning Services, ~~may initiate either major or administrative amendments which affect either the Land Use Map or goals, objectives, and policies of the CMP.~~ Members of the public may make a request to the Planning Commission to initiate a major amendment to amend goals, objectives, and policies, in accordance with the procedures outlined in Section 10.3.

1. Major amendments have a significant effect on the intent of the goals, objectives, policies, and maps of the CMP. Examples of these are as follows:
 - A comprehensive update of the CMP conducted ~~approximately every five~~ years periodically.
 - The revision of elements or portions thereof (including maps) as new information becomes available.
 - The preparation of additional or more specific elements of the CMP or subarea plans.
2. Administrative amendments include changes that do not affect the goals, objectives, policies, or maps in any substantive way. Examples of these are as follows:
 - Updating the Land Use Map to show areas designated as preserved or conserved natural resources.
 - Updating the Land Use Map to show annexed or incorporated municipalities.
 - Updating population and employment forecasts.
 - Formatting changes.

10-2 Amendments Initiated by The Public

10-2A Approval Criteria

~~All of the following criteria shall be considered by the~~ The Planning Commission will consider the diversity of community values, applicable laws and regulations, private property rights, and unique characteristics of each application when approving or disapproving CMP amendment requests. All applications must demonstrate:

1. Consistency with the ~~spirit~~, intent, goals, objectives, and policies of the CMP.
2. Compatibility with surrounding land uses and zoning.
3. Compatibility with existing, natural, and environmental conditions of the site-area and preservation of important natural features and scenic viewsheds, riparian corridors, wildlife habitat and movement corridors, and historic resources.
4. How existing and planned capabilities of the affected special districts can adequately handle the service demand at the time of development, including Adequate water-supply~~water supply~~, water and sewer treatment facilities, transportation networks, access, fire protection, school facilities, and parks and trails for the development.
- ~~5. How existing and planned capabilities of the affected special districts can adequately handle the service demand.~~
- ~~6.5.~~ How ~~-social, economic, or land use-~~ conditions of the County have changed or are in the process of changing in such a manner to support the proposed amendment to the CMP.
- ~~7.6.~~ How land proposed for urban development is a logical expansion of ~~the Primary Urban Area (PUA), Separated Urban Area (SUA), or Chatfield Urban Area~~ Urban Areas, as applicable.
- ~~8.7.~~ How the expansion of ~~the an PUA, SUA, or Chatfield~~ Urban Area results in a compelling public benefit, as applicable.

10-2B Procedure for Amendments Initiated by The Public

10-2B.1 Presubmittal Meeting

Prior to submittal of a CMP amendment application, the applicant shall meet with staff to review the proposal and discuss the procedures and submittal requirements. The applicant shall contact Planning Services and schedule a presubmittal meeting which may include other referral agencies, as deemed necessary. The applicant shall provide the following:

1. Project Narrative (per Section 10-2B.2b(4), herein).
2. CMP Amendment Map (per Section 10-2B.2b(5), herein).

Staff shall comment on the proposed amendment; its consistency with the intent of the amendment provisions; and explain the amendment process; ~~and identify any additional submittal requirements.~~ A staff comment summary shall be provided to the applicant.

10-2B.2 Amendment Application

The CMP amendment application shall be submitted only after the presubmittal meeting has been completed and a copy of the comment summary has been provided to the applicant. CMP amendments shall then be processed as follows:

10-2B.2a Submittal Process

1. The applicant shall submit the required information to the Planning Division. The submittal shall be reviewed for completeness within ~~15- 7~~ working-calendar days. The applicant shall be notified of any inadequacies. An incomplete submittal shall not be processed until the deficiencies in the submittal have been remedied.
2. ~~For complete applications, Once the submittal is determined complete, staff will notify the applicant of the submittal information required for distribution to referral agencies. Staff will identify in the written notice which referral agencies are a regulatory referral agency and which referral agencies are an advisory referral agency. staff shall notify the applicant of the referral agencies to receive referral packets. Referral packets shall be in unsealed envelopes large and durable enough to accommodate referral materials, addressed to the appropriate referral agency, with all information identified in 10-2B.2b (1), (4), and (5), properly folded and compiled. Referral packets response requests shall also be provided to homeowner associations within two miles of the amendment and any other homeowner associations two miles of the amendment and any other homeowner associations potentially affected by the development amendment.~~
3. ~~Staff shall mail the referral packets to the referral agencies. Staff shall mail notification letters to abutting landowners.~~ The applicant shall submit any revised plans or documents for distribution to the referral agencies, as required by staff. Staff will send referral response requests to referral agencies.
- 3.4. ~~Staff shall send a courtesy notice of an application in process and applicable contact information to all abutting landowners and owners of land separated by 300 feet or less from the property by a platted tract. The applicant shall reimburse the County for the cost of materials. Errors in the courtesy notice shall not negatively impact the determination of public notice compliance set forth herein.~~
- 4.5. The referral agencies shall comment within ~~35~~ 21-calendar days of receiving a complete submittal unless the applicant grants an extension of no more than 7 ~~15~~ calendar days. ~~The applicant is encouraged to meet with the referral agencies, staff, and community groups to address any concerns prior to the end of the referral period.~~ The amendment shall be referred to the Division of Planning of the Department of Local Affairs in conformance with C.R.S. §30-28-122. ~~The staff planner will review the referral comments, discuss the concerns with the applicant, schedule a public hearing before the Planning Commission, notify the applicant of the hearing date and time, and prepare a staff report.~~
- 5.6. ~~Staff shall provide a copy of the proposed plan to all adjoining counties, municipalities completely or partially located within the boundaries of the county or within three miles of the county, and any special district that supplies water to the area covered in the plan.~~

~~6.7.~~ Staff shall schedule a public hearing before the Planning Commission and notify the applicant of the hearing date and time.

~~7.8.~~ The applicant shall be responsible for public notification in accordance with Section 10-2C, herein.

~~8.9.~~ Staff shall prepare a staff report for the Planning Commission. All oral and written public comments will be accepted by staff and provided to the Planning Commission for its consideration.

~~9.10.~~ The Planning Commission shall evaluate the application, referral comments, staff report, and public testimony during consideration of adopting an amendment. and take one of the following actions:

- Approve the request.
- Approve the request with conditions.
- ~~Table for further study.~~
- Continue the request to a time and date certain in order to obtain more information and to take additional public testimony.
- Deny the request.

~~10.11.~~ The Planning Commission's decision shall be based on the evidence presented and compliance with the standards for approval, as listed in Section 10-2A, ~~and The decision~~ shall be in the form of a resolution.

~~11.12.~~ The Planning Commission resolution shall identify the approved amendment map and be signed by the Planning Commission Chair and Secretary.

~~12.13.~~ If the amendment request is ~~approved~~ adopted, all post-approval requirements shall be completed, as identified in Section ~~10-4~~ 10-5, herein.

10-2B.2b Submittal Requirements

Application forms, maps and additional resources can be found at (insert CMP webpage link).

1. Completed Land Use Application Form ~~(copy available from the Planning Office).~~
2. Application Fee ~~(fee schedule available from the Planning Office).~~
3. Proof of Ownership, for parcel-specific requests, in the form of an updated or current title insurance policy or title commitment no more than 30 days old from the date of application.
4. Project Narrative (8-1/2 x 11-inch document) supplemented with appropriate maps that describes the following:
 - a) Intent of amendment.
 - b) Consistency Alignment with the goals, objectives, policies, and intent of the CMP.
 - c) Consistency with maps contained in the CMP.
 - d) ~~Compatibility~~ Demonstrate compatibility with surrounding land uses and zoning.
 - e) Environmental conditions and hazards existing on the site.
 - f) Identify i important natural features, scenic viewsheds, riparian corridors, and wildlife habitat movement corridors as defined in Appendix A.
 - g) Identify h historic resources.

- h) Impacts on the existing road network.
 - i) Capabilities of, and impacts on, existing or planned special districts affected by the amendment.
 - j) Water supply and provision of water and sanitary sewage treatment.
 - k) Availability of public facilities such as schools, parks and trails, libraries, fire stations, etc.
 - l) Conditions that have changed in the county to warrant the amendment.
 - m) If applicable, evidence to support approval criteria 10-2A (7) and (8), herein.
5. CMP Amendment Map (24 x 36 inches) illustrating or containing the following:
- a) Vicinity map at a scale ~~of 1 inch = 2,000 feet~~ that clearly showing the location of the amendment in relation to major roads, section lines, existing subdivisions, and other pertinent features.
 - b) Legal description and acreage of the property under consideration.
 - c) Drawing of the proposed amended area, at an appropriate scale determined by staff, that includes the following:
 - Topography in the area at 10-foot contour intervals.
 - Major roads on, or adjacent to, the site and their functional classifications according to the Douglas County Transportation Plan.
 - ~~Existing and proposed CMP Land Use Map land use designations.~~
 - CMP Land Use Map designation of adjacent areas.
 - Any significant natural features or environmental conditions on or adjacent to the site.
- ~~6. The applicant shall also provide stamped letter-sized envelopes addressed to all abutting landowners, and other landowners as requested by staff. Staff shall mail a courtesy notice of an application in process and applicable contact information to the landowners, along with a copy to the applicant.~~
- ~~7. A copy of the staff comments from the presubmittal meeting and any additional information as requested by staff. A written response to all questions and comments raised through the presubmittal process is recommended.~~
- ~~8. Evidence of ability to develop a sufficient water supply in accordance with the Water Supply Overlay District, Section 18 A of the Douglas County Zoning Resolution, as amended.~~

10-2C Public Notice Requirements for Amendments Initiated by The Public

The applicant shall be responsible for public notification. In calculating the time period for public notification, the day of publishing, posting, or mailing shall be counted toward the total number of days required. The day of the hearing shall not be counted toward this total.

The degree of accuracy required for the information contained in these public notices shall be that of substantial compliance with the provisions of this section.

10-2C.1 Written Notice

At least 14 calendar days prior to the Planning Commission hearing, the applicant shall mail a written notice of the hearing by first-class mail to the address of each abutting landowner at such address shown in the records of the Douglas County Assessor's Office. The notice shall read substantially the same as the published notice also required by this section.

At least 7 calendar days prior to the public hearing, the applicant shall submit the following to the Planning Services Office:

1. An alphabetical list of the abutting landowners.
2. A map showing the site and the location of the abutting landowners.
3. A copy of the notice sent to the landowners.
4. The certificate of mailing.

The person completing the mailing of the written notice shall execute a certificate of mailing. Such certificate shall read as shown in Figure 10.1.

In the event the applicant fails to mail a notice to an abutting landowner or otherwise fails to comply with the written notice required in this section, the landowner who did not receive such complying notice may waive such notice by submitting a written waiver to Planning Services prior to the hearing.

10-2C.2 Published Notices

At least 14 calendar days prior to the Planning Commission hearing the applicant shall:

1. Publish a notice in at least one publication of a daily or weekly newspaper of general circulation in the County in a manner sufficient to notify the public of the time, place and nature of the public hearing. ~~printed or published in whole, or part, in Douglas County.~~
2. Provide a publisher's affidavit of said published notice to Planning Services at least seven calendar days prior to the public hearing. ~~The Planning Commission may direct that the notice be published in one or more additional newspapers of general circulation in Douglas County.~~ The notice shall read as shown in Figure 10.2.

10-2C.3 Posted Notice

At least 14 calendar days prior to the Planning Commission hearing, the applicant shall post a notice on the land under consideration. The notice shall consist of at least one sign facing each abutting public or private street open for travel, within 10 feet of the property line abutting such street, placed at posts at least four feet above ground level. In the event the staff planner determines a sign cannot be placed abutting such street and visible from such street or that there is no abutting public or private street open for travel, the staff planner may require ~~d~~ an alternate location for a sign. ~~Additional signs may be required by the staff planner.~~ Each sign shall measure not less than 3 x 4 feet. Letter size shall be a minimum of three inches high and a minimum of six inches high for the sentence that reads, "For more

information call Douglas County Planning at 303-660-7460.” The notice shall read as shown in Figure 10.3.

Figure 10.1

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING
I hereby certify that a true and correct copy of the attached written notice was placed in the U.S. mail, first-class, postage prepaid this ____ day of _____, 20____, and addressed as follows: <i>(list of addresses)</i>
_____ (signature of person completing the mailing)

Figure 10.2

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE PLANNING COMMISSION
A public hearing will be held on <u>(date)</u> , at <u>(time)</u> , in the Commissioners’ Hearing Room, 100 Third St., Castle Rock, Colorado, for an amendment to the Douglas County 2030-2040 Comprehensive Master Plan. The subject property is located approximately <u>(distance and direction from nearest major intersection)</u> . For more information, call Douglas County Planning at 303-660-7460.
File Name and Number: _____

Figure 10.3

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE PLANNING COMMISSION
This land shall be considered for amendment to the Douglas County 2040 Comprehensive Master Plan. The public hearing is (date), at (time), in the Commissioners’ Hearing Room, 100 Third St., Castle Rock, Colorado. For more information call Douglas County Planning at (303) 660-7460.
File Name and Number: _____

10-2C.4 Affidavit of Sign Posting

An affidavit of sign posting and newspaper publishing shall be submitted for the file in Planning Services at least ~~seven-7~~ calendar days prior to the hearing. The sign(s) shall be photographed by the applicant and attached to the affidavit as shown in Figure 10.4.

The applicant shall remove the sign within ~~two-weeks~~ 14 calendar days following the final decision by the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission submits a certified copy of the amended CMP to the Board of County Commissioners and the planning commission of all municipalities within the county.

Figure 10.4

(sign lettering must be legible in photo)

I, (print name of applicant/representative/person posting sign), attest that the above sign was posted on (date), abutting (name of street).

File Name and Number: _____

(signature)
STATE OF COLORADO)
) ss.
COUNTY OF _____

Acknowledged before me this _____ day of _____, 20____, by _____ as _____.

My commission expires: _____

Witness my hand and official seal

Notary Public

If the request from the public is to be initiated, the proposed amendment shall be processed in accordance with Section 10-2.

10-4 Amendments initiated by the Planning Commission or County staff

10-4A Submittal Requirements

Information submitted to the Planning Commission should be of sufficient detail to clearly explain the proposed amendment. A narrative describing reasons for the proposed amendment and maps or data supporting the amendment shall be included.

10-4B Major Amendment Procedure

10-4B.1 REFERRALS

All major amendments shall be sent out to appropriate referral agencies for comment. The referral agencies shall comment within ~~35~~ 21 calendar days of receiving a complete submittal unless the applicant grants an extension of no more than 7 ~~15~~ calendar days. The amendment shall be referred to the Division of Planning of the Colorado Department of Local Affairs in conformance with C.R.S. §30-28-122.

10-4B.2 PUBLIC HEARING

Planning Services shall schedule a public hearing before the Planning Commission and prepare a staff report. Public notice shall be in accordance with Section 10-2C, herein.

10-4B.3 PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

The Planning Commission shall evaluate the proposed amendment, referral comments, staff report, and public testimony, and take one of the following actions:

- Approve the request.
- Approve the request with conditions.
- ~~Table the request for further study.~~
- Continue the request to a date and time certain in order to obtain more information and to take additional public testimony.
- Deny the request.

10-4B.4 PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION

The Planning Commission's decision shall be in the form of a resolution. The Planning Commission resolution shall identify the proposed amendment map or narrative specifically and be signed by the Planning Commission Chair and Secretary.

10-4B.5 POST-APPROVAL

All post-approval requirements shall be completed as identified in Section 10.5.

10-4C Administrative Amendment Procedure

10-4C.1 PLAN REVISIONS

Staff shall revise the CMP to reflect all mapping and narrative amendments. All amendments approved shall be included in the next publication of the CMP.

10-4C.2 APPROVAL OF PLAN REVISIONS

The Community Development Director shall approve all administrative amendments and notify the Planning Commission. No public notice shall be required.

10-4D Public Notice – Planning Commission or County Staff Initiated Amendments

At least 14 days prior to the Planning Commission hearing, staff shall publish a notice in at least one publication of the daily, or at minimum, a weekly newspaper of general circulation in the County in a manner sufficient to notify the public of the time, place and nature of the public hearing. ~~printed or published in whole, or part, in Douglas County.~~

10-5 Post-Approval Requirements

10-5A Document Revision

The staff planner shall revise the CMP to reflect all mapping and narrative amendments. All amendments approved shall be included in the next publication of the CMP.

10-5B Plan Certification

The Planning Commission shall certify a copy of the amended CMP to the Board of County Commissioners, as well as the planning commissions of all municipalities in the county. The Planning Commission shall submit the master plan or amended master plan to the division of local government in the department of local affairs pursuant to Section 30-28-106(8).

~~10-5C Regional Plan Amendment~~

~~After the Douglas County CMP is amended, all regional plans shall be amended, as necessary. For amendments initiated by the public, applicants shall be responsible for preparing regional plan amendment submittals for the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG). All such amendments shall be submitted to the Douglas County Department of Community Development for review and approval prior to submission to DRCOG.~~