

DENVER PLANNING BOARD – Frequently Asked Questions

Who?

Who is the Denver Planning Board?

The Denver Planning Board is an 11-member volunteer board comprised of Denver residents that advises the mayor and City Council on land use matters. The mayor appoints board members to serve three-year terms.

The Board is established through the Denver Revised Municipal Code and follows the rules from the ordinance, as well as its own bylaws. Learn more at denvergov.org/planningboard.

What?

What is the Role of the Denver Planning Board?

The Board reviews neighborhood and citywide plans, rezoning requests, text amendments to the Denver Zoning Code, certain district design standards and guidelines, comprehensive sign plans and general development plans. For most matters, the Planning

Board has an advisory role and makes recommendations to City Council or the city's zoning administrator. The most common land use actions that come to the board are plans, rezoning and design review.

How?

Plans

Plans set the vision for a neighborhood or area and provide policy guidance for regulations such as zoning. Planning Board reviews a variety of plans including comprehensive, neighborhood, small area, and corridor plans. The Planning

Board holds a public hearing to take testimony on proposed plans and plan amendments, and votes whether or not to approve a proposed plan. The plan then goes to City Council for a second public hearing before final adoption.

Rezoning

Rezoning changes the rules for land use and types of buildings permitted on a given property by changing its zone district. Because this public process amends the city's official zoning map, a rezoning is also referred to as a "map

amendment." Rezoning applications request a "new" zone district and its associated regulations, not approval of a specific development or building type, as one zone district can accommodate a variety of development scenarios.

The Planning Board evaluates rezoning requests against the following criteria (per Section 12.4 of the Denver Zoning Code):

- Is the rezoning consistent with completed plans?
- Would the rezoning result in consistent regulations for each property with the same zoning designation citywide?
- Does the rezoning further public health, safety, and welfare?
- Are there circumstances that justify the rezoning?
- Is the rezoning consistent with the neighborhood context and the zone district's purpose and intent?

After evaluating a rezoning request against the above criteria, the Planning Board makes a recommendation to City Council. City Council holds a second public hearing

and makes a final decision on the request. For more, visit denvergov.org/rezoning.

continued

Design Review

The Planning Board reviews urban design for new development only in these neighborhoods: Denver Union Station, Arapahoe Square, the Commons and Highland Gardens Village. For proposed development

in these locations, the Planning Board reviews the proposal for compliance with the relevant design standards and guidelines and makes a recommendation for final action to the city's zoning administrator.

How Does the Planning Board Consider Transportation?

Transportation considerations are important in many of the land use matters that come to the Planning Board for review. The purview over

transportation considerations varies depending on the type of land use action. See below for more:

Area Plan

Describes the **VISION** for an area, neighborhood, or corridor

Transportation Considerations

Ensure area plan is consistent with citywide plans including the Comprehensive Plan and Blueprint Denver, the citywide land use and transportation plan. Analyze existing transportation network and utilize community input to identify and prioritize mobility goals.

Roles

City staff: drafts • **Planning Board:** reviews and approves • **City Council:** adopts

Rezoning

Sets the **REGULATIONS** for private property

Transportation Considerations

Ensure proposed zone district is consistent with adopted plans, including street classifications from Blueprint Denver. Review does not address the potential traffic effects of a specific development since a range of future development scenarios are possible.

Roles

City staff: reviews • **Planning Board:** reviews and make recommendations • **City Council:** final decision

Permit

Development proposal for a **SPECIFIC PROJECT**

Transportation Considerations

Assess potential traffic impacts associated with proposed development. Determine if traffic study is needed. Identify and require mitigation as needed to optimize traffic flow before permits are issued.

Roles

City staff: reviews and makes final determination • **Planning Board:** none • **City Council:** none