



# ADAMS COUNTY, COLORADO

## Development Standards Overhaul (DSO) Module 2 Overview

Brian Mabry, AICP, Vice President

Marya Morris, FAICP, Principal Planner

June 10-12, 2025

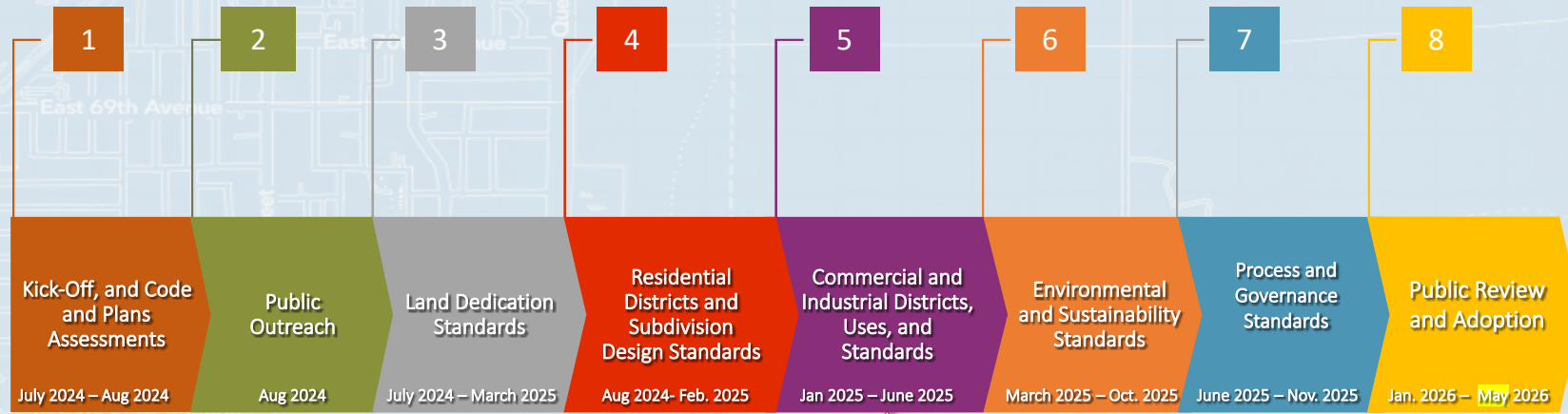


# Agenda

- Module 2 Contents & Key Changes
- BoCC Feedback / Direction Requested
- Next Steps



## Phase 2 Tasks and Timeline





## Module 2 – Agriculture, Commercial and Industrial Districts, Uses, and Standards

## Guiding Framework for Module 2

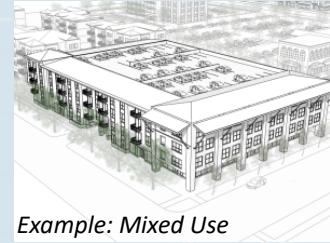
- Review purpose and standards in each existing agricultural, commercial, and industrial zone district relative to Comprehensive Plan goals, best practices, functionality
- Merge redundant commercial zones to reduce administrative burden, make more user friendly, and add some permitted uses to support livability and flexibility
- Continuation of overlay districts (Flammable Gas, Airport Noise, Airport Height, etc.)
- Consolidate and update permitted uses for ease of implementation, flexibility, and relevance
- Combine certain land use permissions
- Improve livability, reduce emissions from transportation, and encourage alternative forms of transportation, and improve a sense of community and place in the County
- Conserve open space in Agricultural zone districts



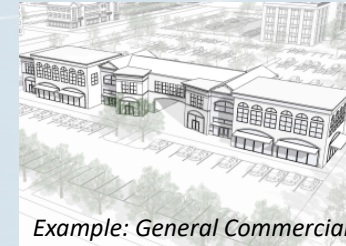
## Chapter 2, Zone Districts and Land Uses

### Key Changes from Existing DSR

- Recommended to combine:
  - C-0 and C-1 into Neighborhood Commercial (~90 properties)
  - C-2 and C-3 into General Commercial (~84 properties)
  - C-4 and C-5 into Heavy Commercial (~480 Properties)
- Industrial districts will not change
- Similar dimensional standards and uses are cues to merge districts



Example: Mixed Use



Example: General Commercial



Example: Light Industrial



Example: Small Commercial

Nonresidential Building Type Illustrations

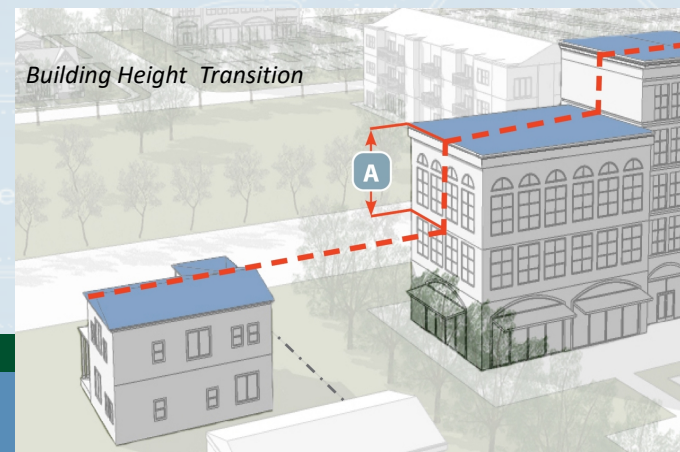
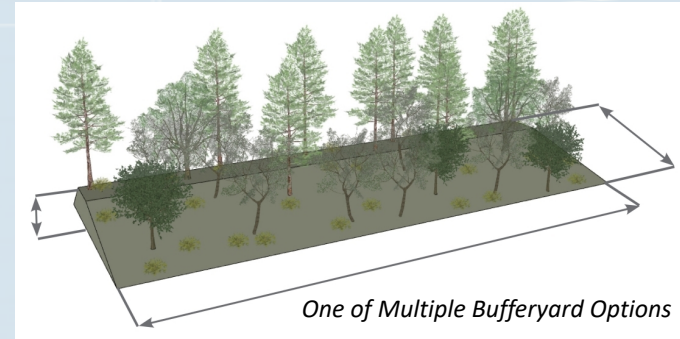
**Strategy BEC 1.2.03:** Encourage a diverse and compatible mix of land uses that support the housing, commercial, and industrial needs of the county.

## Chapter 2, Zone Districts and Land Uses

### Key Changes from Existing DSR

- Benefits of merging districts
  - User-friendly for applicants
  - Easier administration for staff
  - Fewer zones can result in less rezoning requests to streamline process
  - Transitions such as buffering and building design mitigate “friction” between differing districts

**Strategy BEC 1.1.07:** Explore planning and potential modifications to development standards to promote compatible transitions of land uses.



# Neighborhood Commercial - New Zone District Proposed

- Zone for small scale commercial uses that compliment residential uses
  - Previously C-0, C-1.
- Encourages “20 minute community” adopted by Comprehensive Plan
  - Typical uses include: convenience store, coffee shop, bakery, office
- *Maximum* lot area or floor area can control scale
- Maximum height will be similar to residential
- Compatible standards with residential uses
  - E.g. parking located in the rear, monument signs only, sloped roofs

**Strategy BEC 1.2.03:** The commercial land use category is intended for a broad range of commercial areas including smaller scale and neighborhood commercial that could include corner stores and/or small commercial strips.



*Neighborhood Commercial Examples*



# Summary of Key Zone District Changes

## Neighborhood Commercial

Future Land Use Category	Proposed Zone District	Current Zone District	Proposed Changes	Rationales and Benefits
Commercial	Neighborhood Commercial (NC)	C-0 and C-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 10%-20% amenity space requirement</li><li>• Retention of C-0 and C-1 setbacks</li></ul>	<b>Strategy BEC 1.1.07:</b> Explore planning and potential modifications to development standards to promote compatible transitions of land uses.

# Summary of Key Zone District Changes

## General Commercial

Future Land Use Category	Proposed Zone District	Current Zone District	Proposed Changes	Rationales and Benefits
Commercial	General Commercial (GC)	C-2 and C-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 20% amenity space requirement</li><li>• Retention of C-2 and C-3 setbacks</li></ul>	<b>Strategy BEC 1.1.07:</b> Explore planning and potential modifications to development standards to promote compatible transitions of land uses.

# Summary of Key Zone District Changes Heavy Commercial

Future Land Use Category	Proposed Zone District	Current Zone District	Proposed Changes	Rationales and Benefits
Commercial	Heavy Commercial (HC)	C-4 and C-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 5% or 20% amenity space requirement depending on industrial or other permitted use</li><li>• Retention of C-4 and C-5 setbacks</li></ul>	<b>Strategy BEC 1.1.07:</b> Explore planning and potential modifications to development standards to promote compatible transitions of land uses.

# Summary of Key Zone District Changes Mixed Use

Future Land Use Category	Proposed Zone District	Current Zone District	Proposed Changes	Rationales and Benefits
Mixed Use	Mixed Use (MU)	MU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modest increase in Minimum and Maximum Density from 10 DU/acre and 35 DU/acre to 12 DU/acre and 40 DU/acre, respectively</li> <li>• 10% to 15% amenity space, depending if nonresidential or residential</li> <li>• 80% maximum lot coverage introduced</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategy BEC 2.2.05: Promote mixed use, multi-modal, pedestrian-oriented development patterns.</li> <li>• Make consistent with other zones that have a lot coverage standard</li> <li>• Transit Oriented Communities Legislation HB24-1313</li> </ul>

# Amenity Types – Agricultural Zones

## Similar approach to Module 1:

- Apply Amenity Types and a points system applicable to new development
  - Only applies in Agricultural zones to Open Space Neighborhoods
  - Amenity types Agricultural zones include Natural Areas, Greenways, Small-Scale Agriculture
  - In Nonresidential and Mixed Use, types include Plazas, and Squares

**Strategy COH 1.1.05:** Preserve existing productive agricultural lands, open space, designated view corridors, wildlife habitat, and sensitive environmental areas.

**Strategy CH 1.2.03:** Work to preserve existing agricultural land, farms, and facilities that grow food for the local community.

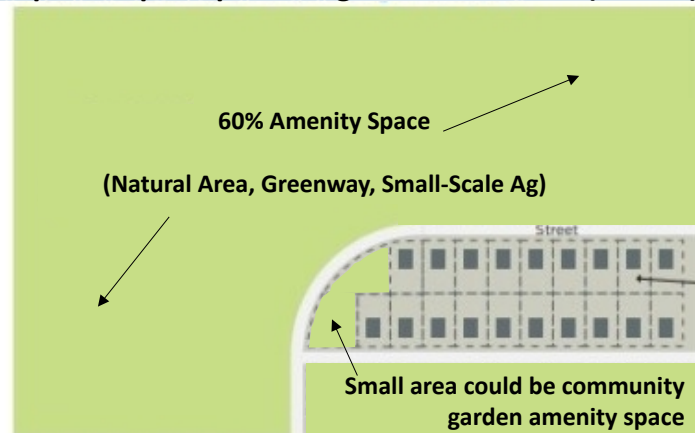


*Plaza, Small-Scale Ag, Natural Area, amenity types*



# Example of Amenity Points in Agricultural Districts

**Example 1: Open Space Neighborhood in A-1 (19 lots)**



**Key Characteristics:**

- Smaller lots; intensity focused on a portion of the site
- Required amenity space on 60%, 75%, or 85% of site depending on Agricultural-1, Agricultural-2, or Agricultural-3 zones

**Vs.**

**Example 2: Conventional Neighborhood (19 lots)**



**Key Characteristics:**

- Very large lots and low intensity
- No amenity space requirement

# Summary of Key Zone District Changes

## Agriculture - 1

Future Land Use Category	Current Zone District	Proposed Changes	Rationales and Benefits
Agriculture Small-Scale	Agriculture -1 (A-1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of Open Space Neighborhood Option</li> <li>• 1 unit per 2.5 acres for Open Space or Conventional</li> <li>• 60% open space as part of development for Open Space Option</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COH 1.1.05: Preserve ...open space, designated view corridors, wildlife habitat, and sensitive environmental areas.</li> <li>• NRE 1.1.02: Encourage new development in a manner compatible with the preservation of open space...such as clustering, that mitigate impacts to important natural areas.</li> <li>• Permanently set aside open space.</li> <li>• Flexibility for constrained sites.</li> </ul>

# Summary of Key Zone District Changes

## Agriculture - 2

Future Land Use Category	Current Zone District	Proposed Changes	Rationales and Benefits
Agriculture Small-Scale	Agriculture -2 (A-2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjustment of purpose statement to include low density residential</li> <li>• Introduction of Open Space Neighborhood Option</li> <li>• 1 unit per 10 acres for Open Space or Conventional</li> <li>• 75% open space as part of development for Open Space Option</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COH 1.1.05: Preserve existing productive agricultural lands.</li> <li>• ED 3.1.04: Discourage new development on agricultural lands that are productive or in cultivation.</li> <li>• CH 1.1.03: Work to preserve existing agricultural land, farms, and facilities.</li> <li>• Permanently set aside open space or agricultural area.</li> </ul>

# Summary of Key Zone District Changes

## Agriculture - 3

Future Land Use Category	Current Zone District	Proposed Changes	Rationales and Benefits
Agriculture Large-Scale	Agriculture -3 (A-3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjustment of purpose statement to include extremely low density residential</li> <li>• Introduction of Open Space Neighborhood Option</li> <li>• 1 unit per 35 acres for Open Space or Conventional</li> <li>• 85% open space as part of development for Open Space Option</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COH 1.1.05: Preserve existing productive agricultural lands.</li> <li>• ED 3.1.04: Discourage new development on agricultural lands that are productive or in cultivation.</li> <li>• CH 1.1.03: Work to preserve existing agricultural land, farms, and facilities.</li> <li>• Permanently set aside open space or agricultural area.</li> </ul>

## Industrial Districts Approach

- Minimal changes to permitted or conditional uses
- Consolidating use table into groups of industries with similar attributes and external impacts (e.g., food manufacturing)
- Outdoor storage: New clearer standards for screening. No reduction in outdoor storage proposed.
- Moderate adjustments will be made to dimensional standards so that outdoor storage is located behind building



ADAMS COUNTY  
COLORADO



KENDIG KEAST  
COLLABORATIVE



# Summary of Key Zone District Changes

## Industrial - 1

Future Land Use Category	Current Zone District	Proposed Changes	Rationales and Benefits
Industrial Low	Industrial -1 (I-1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a maximum front setback of 25 ft. and 35 ft.</li> <li>Increase permitted building height from 60 to 75 feet</li> <li>New 90% lot coverage limit</li> <li>New standards for screening outdoor storage</li> <li>Waive the amenity space req. for industrial uses</li> <li>Caretaker's quarters allowed now in I-1. CUP or Admin Review TBD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New maximum front setback means outdoor storage goes to sides and rear</li> <li>Amenity space not as needed for industrial uses with little public traffic</li> <li>Current regulations do not have maximum lot coverage</li> <li>Allowance for night security on-sight</li> </ul>

## Summary of Key Zone District Changes Industrial - 2

Future Land Use Category	Current Zone District	Proposed Changes	Rationales and Benefits
Industrial Medium	Industrial – 2 (I-2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establish a maximum front setback of 25 ft. and 35 ft.</li><li>• New standards for screening outdoor storage</li><li>• Waive amenity space req. for industrial uses</li><li>• Considering new 90% lot coverage limit</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New maximum front setback means outdoor storage goes to sides and rear</li><li>• Amenity space not as needed for industrial uses with little public traffic</li><li>• Lot coverage limit accommodates buffers &amp; landscaping</li></ul>

## Summary of Key Zone District Changes Industrial - 3

Future Land Use Category	Current Zone District	Proposed Changes	Rationales and Benefits
Industrial High	Industrial – 3 (I-3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establish a maximum front setback of 25 ft. and 35 ft.</li><li>• New outdoor storage standards, including for uncovered materials</li><li>• Waive amenity space req. for industrial uses (new 10% required for nonindustrial uses in I-3)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New maximum front setback means outdoor storage goes to sides and rear</li><li>• Lot coverage limit accommodates buffers &amp; landscaping</li></ul>

# Chapter 3, Land Uses

## Key Changes from Existing DSR (cont.)

- Reworking of Use Table
  - Permitted Uses
  - Conditional Uses
  - Prohibited Uses
  - Specific Use Standards
- Work-in-progress as we go through Modules 1 and 2

Table 2-05-02.B-2, Nonresidential and Mixed Use District Use Table

USE CATEGORIES	MH	MU	NC	GC	HC	I1	I2	I3	CO	P-L	NP	RP	NA	Specific Use Standards
<b>COMMERCIAL USES</b>														
<b>Office Use Category</b>														
<u>Banking and Financial Services</u>	-	-	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	-	-	-	-	
Business Services	-	-	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	-	-	-	-	
Business Park Uses	-	-	C	C	P		P	P	-	-	-	-	-	
Commodity Brokers and Services	-	-	C	C	P	P	P	P	-	-	-	-	-	
Engineering and Management Services	-	P	P	P	P		P	P	-	-	-	-	-	
Holdings and Other Investments	-	-	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	-	-	-	-	
Insurance Carriers	-	-	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	-	-	-	-	
Legal Services	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	-	-	-	-	
Membership Organization	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	-	-	-	-	
Real Estate Brokerage	-	-	P	P	P	P	P	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Security Establishment	-	-	P	P	P	P	P	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Social Services (except Care Facilities)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	-	-	-	-	

## Chapter 3, Land Uses - Sample of Combining Use Permissions

- Generally, err on the side of allowing a use if use permissions differ between combined districts

Land Use (Typical Example)	Discrepancy in Permissions in C-0 and C-1	Proposed Permission Status in New Neighborhood Commercial (NC) Zone
Kennel, Commercial	Prohibited in C-0; CUP in C-1	CUP
Parking Lot, Commercial	Prohibited in C-0; CUP in C-1	CUP
Land Use (Typical Example)	Discrepancy in Permissions in C-4 and C-5	Proposed Permission Status in New Heavy Commercial (HC) Zone
Light Manufacturing or Processing	CUP in C-4; Permitted in C-5	Permitted
Mini-Storage	Prohibited in C-4; CUP in C-5	CUP



# BoCC Feedback/Direction Requested

1. Proceed with consolidation of the following commercial zones?
  - C-0 / C1 → Neighborhood Commercial (NC) (~90 properties)
  - C-2 / C-3 → General Commercial (GC) (~84 properties)
  - C4 / C5 → Heavy Commercial (HC) (~480 properties)
2. Proceed with approach to consolidate uses as shown in previous slides?
3. Move forward with Open Space Neighborhood type option in the Agricultural zones? If so, incentivize their use by allowing *slightly* more density compared to conventional, large-lot development in the Agricultural zones? Or leave as “density-neutral”?

# BoCC Feedback/Direction Requested Continued

## 4. Outdoor Storage Discussion Points

- Enhanced screening
- Locate behind structure(s)
- Prohibition: Highways and/or Corridors

## 5. Allow additional home on A-3 lot over 40 acres?

- Prior to 2002, two homes were permitted when lot was over 40 acres



ADAMS COUNTY  
COLORADO



KENDIG KEAST  
COLLABORATIVE

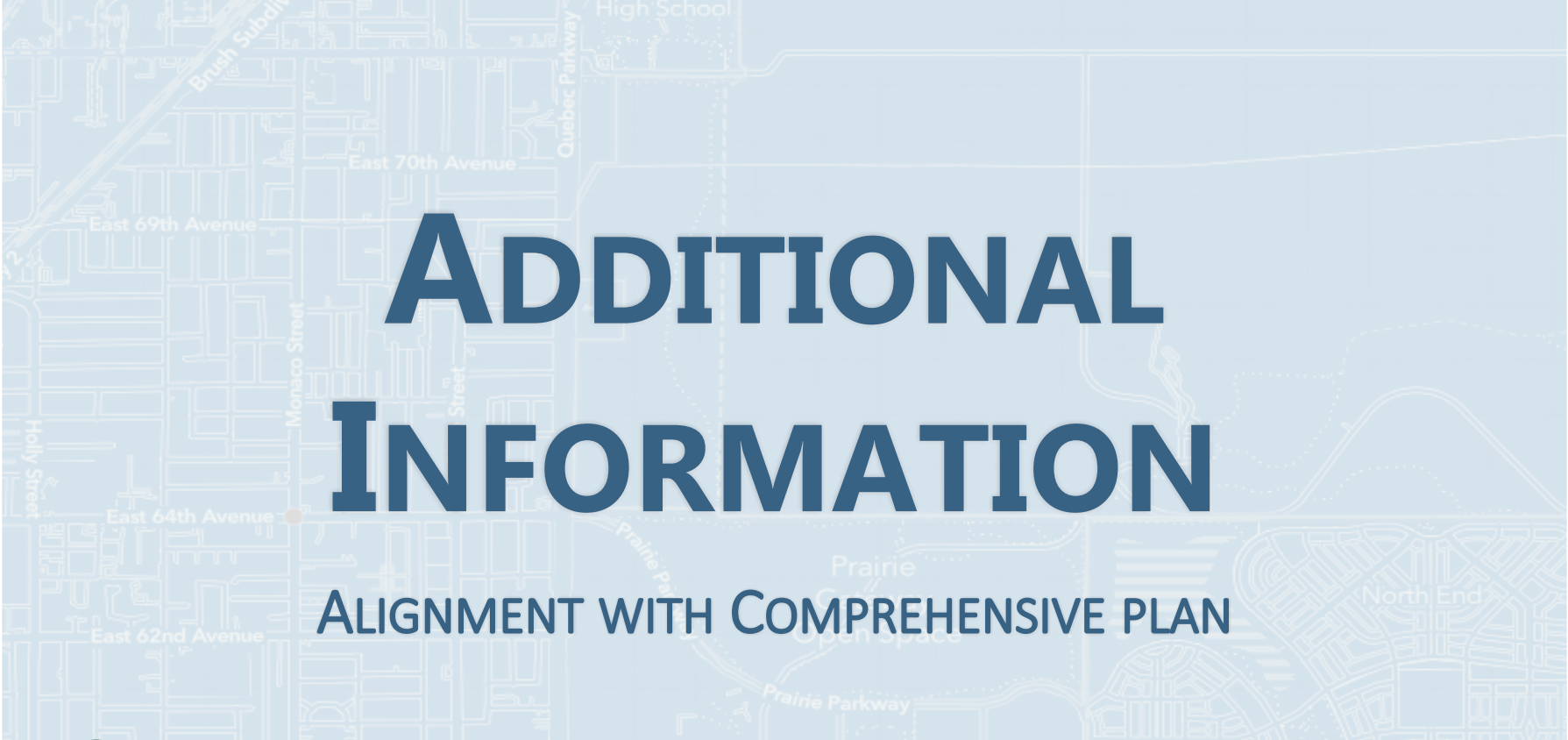
# Next Steps

## **June 10-12, 2025 – Site Visit #4**

- Board of County Commissioners Study Session
- County Project Team
- DSR Technical Advisory Committee
- Community Open House (June 11, Apple C&D, Human Services Center, 5-7 pm)
- Planning Commission Update
- Community Advisory Committee

## **June 2025 – March 2026**

- Continued County staff review and feedback on Modules 1&2
- Drafting Module 3
  - Chapter 4, General Development Standards; Chapter 6, Special Service Districts; Chapter 7, Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resource Protection Standards; Chapter 8, Stormwater Management; Chapter 9, Access Management and Traffic Requirements; Chapter 10, Areas and Activities of State Interest
- Module 3 Site Visit (September 22-25 2025)
- Module 4 Kickoff ( Late Fall/Winter 2025)
- Public hearings and adoption - Spring 2026



# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ALIGNMENT WITH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## Alignment with Advancing Adams Comprehensive Plan

Plan Strategies	Related Changes in Module 2
COH 1.1.05: Preserve existing productive agricultural lands, open space, designated view corridors, wildlife habitat, and sensitive environmental areas.	<p>Achieved through new Open Space Neighborhood option in A-1, A-2, and A-3 which requires appropriate amenity space types (natural area, small-scale agriculture, etc).</p> <p>By-right clustering of residential lots is a more effective tool for preserving open space and agricultural lands than larger lot development because there is no guarantee that the large lots will not be rezoned and subdivided in the future.</p>
NRE 1.1.02: Encourage new development in a manner compatible with the preservation of open space. Promote development strategies, such as clustering, that mitigate impacts to important natural areas including wildlife and riparian habitat.	
BEC 3.1.01: Growth should be focused in a way that minimizes adverse impacts on the natural environment.	
ED 3.1.04: Discourage new development on agricultural lands that are productive or in cultivation.	
CH 1.1.03: Work to preserve existing agricultural land, farms, and facilities.	



## Alignment with Advancing Adams Comprehensive Plan

Plan Strategies	Related Changes in Module 2
COH 1.1.06: Avoid new residential development in areas impacted by airport-related development or within aviation easements.	Preservation of 3 existing Airport related overlay districts: Airport Height, Airport Influence, and Airport Noise Overlays
COH 2.1.02: Encourage a variety of housing types in locations proximate to job centers and transit access.	Addition of residential uses in nonresidential districts to allow denser residential where facilities already exist and public objections may be less likely.
NRE 1.1.04: Expand Natural Resource Conservation Overlay (NRCO) to encompass additional areas that provide habitat corridor connections and open space and strengthen protections for habitat.	Change to Zoning Map (later in project). Expand the boundaries of the NRCO.
NRE 1.1.07: Encourage conservation easements on private land to encourage the preservation of open space, water, and wildlife habitat.	In Open Space Neighborhoods in residential and agricultural zones, one option for ensuring amenity space is permanent is for the space to be under a conservation easement (Module 1).

## Alignment with Advancing Adams Comprehensive Plan

Plan Strategies	Related Changes in Module 2
BEC 1.2.03: Encourage a diverse and compatible mix of land uses that support the housing, commercial, and industrial needs...that promotes a...more livable community.	<p>Allow residential uses in nonresidential zones where better infrastructure may already exist and less public opposition may occur.</p> <p>Continuation of Mixed Use zone.</p> <p>State-initiated Transit-Oriented Communities zone district initiative required by HB24-1313.</p>
BEC 2.2.04: Emphasize the 20-minute community in established neighborhoods and identified town and urban centers by encouraging service and commercial supportive densities and development patterns.	
BEC 2.2.05: Promote mixed use, multi-modal, pedestrian-oriented development patterns in urban centers, town centers, around transit hubs, and in mixed-use zones.	
BEC 3.1.02: Discourage new developments located within the FEMA flood plain. Continue participation in the National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System and maintain...applicable community certifications or designations.	Continuation of Flood Control Overlay.

## Alignment with Advancing Adams Comprehensive Plan

### Plan Strategies

BEC 3.1.11: Plan for a climate that is hotter, more prone to drought, and produces more extreme weather events. Support community amenities that consider refuge from heat events, such as cooling stations, water pads, and shade.

### Related Changes in Module 2

Amenity space types preserve existing green natural spaces and provide for shaded areas. Splash pads / water pads added as an amenity type for suburban and urbanized areas.