

La Plata County District Plan Update
District Plan Structure
July 16, 2018

The Planning Commission has embarked on a collaborative effort to update plans for all 12 La Plata County planning districts on a rolling schedule (<https://goo.gl/HpCwGJ>) anticipated to conclude in 2019. Broad citizen involvement is a cornerstone in updating these plans. The Planning Commission will formally adopt the updated district plans which serve as guides in evaluating land-use proposals.

This document describes a common structure for La Plata County District Planning Committees to use for providing input for district plan updates in a standardized and consistent format so that the Planning Commission (PC) and staff can review and incorporate input into an updated district plan. The issues, content and responses within each district are unique, but the format and structure of each district plan will be consistent throughout the 12 planning districts in La Plata County (<https://goo.gl/liQFtg>). The Planning Commission will not be updating the district land use maps, until all the districts narrative language has been updated.

District Plan Definition

La Plata County's 12 planning districts highlight unique characteristics not necessarily found in other parts of the county (e.g., agriculture in some areas, and not others). The district plans establish goals, objectives and policies designed to help guide future growth within each district. These plans are advisory and help inform the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners in evaluating the intensity, density, type, location and compatibility of land uses in La Plata County.

Approach:

District Planning Committees and other groups are encouraged to start updating their plans based on input from attendees at their meeting(s). Committees are encouraged to consult the Planning Department regarding any element of this process. Once your committee has compiled proposed updates to your plan, please provide them to the Planning Commission via the Planning Department. The Planning Commission will consider those comments in conjunction with the public process and schedule the Planning Commission has established. In addition to any District Planning Committee input, the PC will also utilize the established process to broadly gather additional public input through public meetings, an online survey(s), and a district-specific matrix (based on current plan goals) to identify issues and guide input.

The following provides an outline for updating a district plan. Sections may be used or not, as applicable.

District Plan Template:

- I. Table of Contents
- II. Purpose of District Plan – as perceived and drafted by each District
 - a. Preamble
 - b. Authority – this is likely to be the same for all Districts
 - i. CRS Citations relevant to Authority including CRS 30-28-106 – Aside from the enabling statutes for the creation of a Comp plan/District Plan, all other CRS to be part of an appendix.
- III. Overall Guiding Principles
 - a. Vision Statement
 - b. Property Rights / Regulation – this is the place for each District to express their specific

common viewpoint about their own property rights, what is appropriate regulation (in general). This is intended to be guiding principles, similar to the Vision Statement, which are appropriate to that District.

- IV. Overview of District
 - a. Topography / Landscape / Critical Lands
 - b. Area Neighborhoods
 - c. History - Recognition of individual district geographical areas, customs and cultures(s)

- V. Background
 - a. Current, Past & Projected Demographics
 - b. Population Distribution – this should be prepared by County Staff from accurate and up-to-date county records, to which the public may have limited access.

- VI. Key Issues Relevant to District
 - a. Growth
 - b. Incorporated jurisdictions - Influence Area
 - c. Agriculture, Right to Farm
 - d. Tribal Lands
 - e. Public Lands
 - f. Oil, Gas & Mineral Extraction
 - g. Water Service, Water Rights
 - h. Access to Central Services
 - i. Highways, Transportation, Road Capacities
 - j. Power Supply & Transmission
 - k. Stewardship; balancing of human and natural environments; measuring economic, social, cultural and natural impacts, compatibility
 - l. Other

- VII. Land Use Classifications / Zoning
 - a. Distinction between Land Use Planning, Land Use Code and Zoning (clarification needed on this item)
 - b. Uses (intent is for districts to propose changes to the definitions / characteristics of these uses, and potential for these definitions to be consistent county wide)
 - i. Residential
 - ii. Vacant
 - iii. Agricultural
 - iv. Mixed Uses
 - v. Commercial
 - vi. Industrial
 - vii. Other

- VIII. Planning Process & Development Standards
 - a. Administration of Land Use Planning: District desires for how development standards will support the goals and objectives of that District, etc.

- IX. Goals, Objectives and Actions (use examples below)
 - a. Atmosphere / Characteristics
 - b. Property Rights / Regulations
 - c. Protecting and/or enhancing the tax base

- d. Economic stability and opportunity
- e. Targeting areas for future residential and commercial development
- f. Diverse land use options for Agricultural and Residential Lands
- g. Targeting areas for (defined) industrial uses
- h. Protection of Agricultural lands, additional county protection ordinances
- i. Highways, Transportation, Road Capacity
- j. Water
 - i. Domestic, wells
 - ii. Irrigation, ditches
 - iii. Interplay of State Law and County Code
- k. Sewer / Septic / Waste Water Treatment
- l. Access / Availability of Central Services
- m. Emergency Services
- n. Mineral Extraction
- o. Impact of tribal lands and public lands
- p. Wildlife
- q. Stewardship of Land
- r. Compatibility
- s. Preservation of Historical and Cultural Resources
- t. Property Owner Engagement / Participation, Public Information
- u. Other

X. Glossary of Terms, Definitions (with sources & references) and Appendices as needed

Drafting of Goals, Objectives, and Policies:

One of the main tasks of updating the district plans is to prepare a vision of the future for what type and where future growth in the district may be appropriate. Additionally the plan update should align the goal, objective, or policy of a district plan to a goal, objective or policy of the 2017 Comprehensive Plan for La Plata County.

Guidance on how to craft language:

- Frame a goal, objective, or policy in the positive. Identify what you do want, rather than what you do not want.
 - Good example: *Encourage subdivision to create lots of varying sizes to accommodate different needs/wants.*
 - Bad example: *Don't let subdivisions create lots of the same size so we can accommodate different needs/wants*
- Identify instances where the district plan goal, objective, and policy may not align with the 2017 Comprehensive Plan.

Examples:

- District Goals
 - Goal: broad direction
 - *E.g., Support efforts to develop affordable housing near identified employment and service areas*
 - Objective: an actionable item(s) related to the goal
 - *E.g., Encourage subdivision to create lots of varying sizes to accommodate different needs/wants*
 - Policy: direction to the PC, BOCC, staff to implement an objective and goal
 - *E.g., Explore potential incentives for developers who include affordable housing*

within their projects.

List of Resources:

- 2017 La Plata County Comprehensive Plan (<https://goo.gl/HKY9YM>)
- Current District plan (if one exists) (<https://goo.gl/g4YAUv>)
- Matrix of District Goals/Objectives/Policies **from current District Plan** (<https://goo.gl/g4YAUv>)
- Survey online – for respective district (<https://goo.gl/g4YAUv>)
- District Committees

District Plan Committees to include the following with their proposed update

- Communication efforts used by committees for outreach
- List of meetings held by committees
- List of attendees at meetings held by committees