

Public Involvement Plan

Updated: September 2024

1. INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Following adoption of the Your El Paso Master Plan in May 2021, El Paso County is conducting a major update of the County's Land Development Code (LDC). Although the LDC is regularly updated, El Paso County last adopted comprehensive changes to the LDC in 2007. Therefore, this presents the first major update to the regulations that guide development and growth in the County in almost 20 years. Key objectives for the process are to:

- Implement the Your El Paso Master Plan
- Modernize the LDC using a community-based process
- Create clear, predictable, and effective standards that are easy to understand
- Fill regulatory gaps
- Simplify and streamline review processes
- Tailor the LDC to work across rural, suburban, and urban settings
- Focus regulations on what matters to El Paso County (don't overregulate)
- Simplify and focus on user friendliness

El Paso County covers a vast land area and is home to a diverse set of communities and environments, each with a unique set of challenges and opportunities. El Paso County, which includes the unincorporated communities of Black Forest, Cimarron Hills, Falcon, Gleneagle, Peyton, Security-Widefield, Stratmoor, and Woodmoor is home to over 200,000 residents (about 28% of all residents in the county), which would be subject to the changes proposed in the LDC. Ensuring a successful project outcome includes collecting countywide input about the project and providing educational opportunities about the role of the LDC.

ROLE OF THE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

Stakeholder and community input is critical to the success of the LDC process. This Public Involvement Plan (PIP) outlines a detailed strategy to:

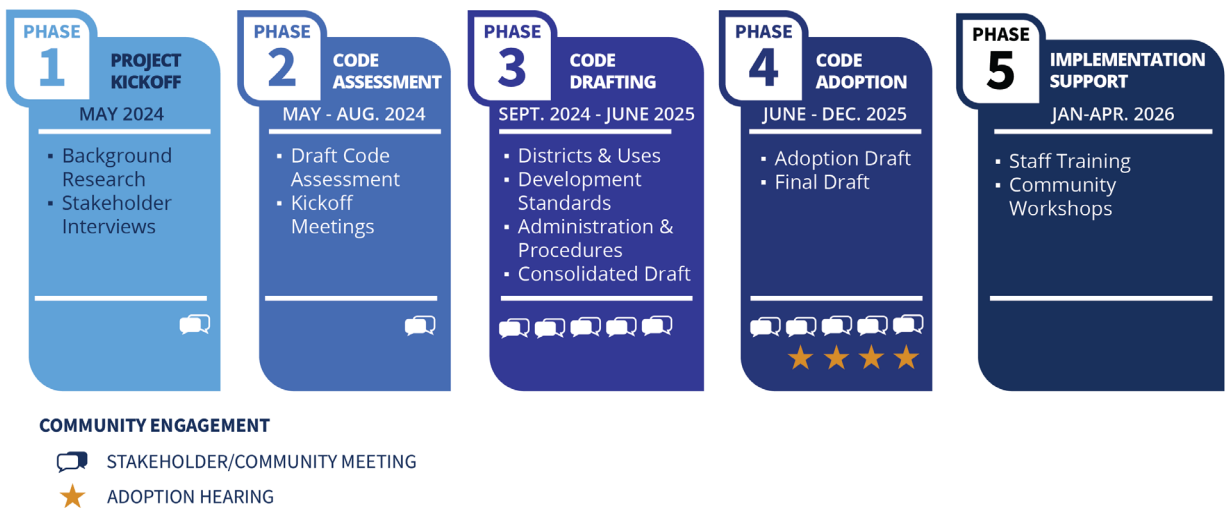
- Solicit input from those who regularly use the LDC regarding the strengths and weaknesses of its structure, format, and organization and how it might be improved.

- Ensure the public is kept informed, understands the purpose and scope of the LDC update, their role in the decision-making process and how their input influences the LDC project.
- Listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations expressed by participants and collaborate with the community on ways to address them.
- Solicit input from those who may be affected by potential modernization and streamlining of the LDC, including those who may be less familiar with how zoning works.
- Inform and educate stakeholders about emerging practices in zoning regulations and procedures that may improve the County’s ability to advance community priorities.
- Make LDC concepts accessible to all.
- Provide a variety of ways for the community to provide input.

Information contained in this PIP will be used as a reference during the course of the process and will evolve. Meeting dates and times will be finalized at least one month in advance of each round of community and stakeholder engagement.

PROCESS OVERVIEW

An overview of the LDC process and the expected timelines for each project phase are provided below. Community engagement strategies will be tailored to fit these objectives and will therefore vary by project phase. Additional detail is provided in the sections that follow.



2. GROUPS IN THE PROCESS

The entire community will be invited to participate in the LDC update at key points during the process, as outlined in Section 4. This section outlines the groups that will be tasked with providing more day-to-day guidance for the LDC update. Representation in these groups includes individuals that are familiar with and use the County’s development regulations regularly and those that may be less familiar, but may have an interest in in the implementation of *Your El Paso Master Plan* and

growth and development issues generally. An overview of each group's composition and role in the LDC process is provided below.

STAKEHOLDERS

In addition to the community-at-large, the LDC process relies on the input and feedback of a diverse array of stakeholders and community groups, especially those who use the County's development regulations regularly. Engagement will occur both formally and informally, as outlined in this PIP.

- Developers, builders, planners, surveyors, engineers, and architects
- El Paso County Department of Public Works
- El Paso County Department of Parks and Community Services
- El Paso County Department of Emergency Management
- El Paso County Department of Public Health
- Pikes Peak Regional Building Department (PPRBD)
- Cheyenne Mountain Space Force Station, Fort Carson, Peterson Space Force Base, Schriever Space Force Base, and the U.S. Air Force Academy
- Unincorporated communities: Black Forest, Cascade-Chipeta Park, Cimarron Hills, Crystola, Eastonville, Ellicott, Falcon, Gleneagle, La Foret, Peyton, Rock Creek Park, Rush, Security-Widefield, Stratmoor, Truckton, Woodmoor, and Yoder.
- Special districts
- Others as identified through the LDC process

Additionally, community groups involved in planning and development efforts may be engaged during the process, potentially including:

- Neighborhood organizations
- Agriculture and ranching community
- Business owners and employers
- Environmental and conservation organizations
- Housing organizations and advocates
- Infrastructure and service providers

CORE TEAM

The project management team will work closely with a core team of planning staff from El Paso County to assist with overall project coordination and scheduling, review and input on interim drafts, and identification of issues and solutions raised throughout the process. The core project management team will meet bi-weekly, or as needed, throughout the process. Once drafting of the LDC gets underway, the project team will meet with the full Planning and Community Development Department team as needed to seek input on interim drafts and the LDC process.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS

The project team will provide regular updates to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) and El Paso County Planning Commission (PC) to keep elected and appointed officials informed about overall progress on the LDC, share input received, and seek direction on potential directions for the LDC as it takes shape. Updates are anticipated to occur quarterly but could be more frequent when needed. Work sessions with the PC may be scheduled at key points in the process to allow time for more in-depth discussion and input on individual modules of the LDC.

LDC ADVISORY COMMITTEE (LDCAC)

The LDC Advisory Committee (LDCAC) will be assembled to provide input and guidance to the project team, PC, and BOCC throughout the process. The LDCAC will seek representation from a cross-section of the community, but especially those with a passion and/or working knowledge of zoning and the development process (e.g., developers, private land use consultants, neighborhood organization representatives, business owners). LDCAC meetings will generally correlate to the review of interim drafts and major project milestones (e.g., the code assessment and each LDC module draft) to ensure that updates to the LDC will work in practice. The LDCAC may need to meet up to ten times over the course of the project. Throughout the project, the LDCAC role will be advisory in nature and the committee will not have veto power over proposed LDC revisions.

3. COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

OBJECTIVES

Establishing and maintaining open lines of communication about the LDC drafting process is a central component of this PIP. Generally, the primary communication channels will be used each time a major deliverable is made available for public review, and/or approximately two weeks in advance of public meetings, events, or input opportunities. Where possible, communications will rely on established connections to various social media networks, newsletters/blogs, local news outlets, and distribution lists that El Paso County has access to. Tapping into these established networks is one of the most efficient and effective ways to get the word out about the LDC process. Information will also be shared with metropolitan districts. Primary methods of communicating with the public about LDC update are anticipated to include, but not be limited to:

PRIMARY COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Tool	Objectives	Responsibility	Timing
Web/Video			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated project website County website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide general project information Advertise upcoming meetings and events Provide access to surveys and online input opportunities Provide access to work products and other project-related materials Post learning sessions and informational videos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarion will be responsible for managing materials and information posted to the project website Staff will be responsible for providing a link/feature County website that directs people to the project website: https://www.elpasocountyldc.com/ Video messages may be periodically developed in collaboration with the core team and PIO to help get the word out about the process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch project website in May-June 2024 and update as needed throughout the process Major updates will generally coincide with the completion of a project phase or publication of a major deliverable (e.g., each interim draft)
Social Media			
Venues typically used by the County, including:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand awareness of public meetings and events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarion will prepare a series of suggested posts for distribution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post periodically throughout the process

Tool	Objectives	Responsibility	Timing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facebook X Instagram LinkedIn NextDoor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct community to online engagement activities Highlight participation in community events and activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PIO for County will incorporate as part of scheduled posts on respective sites, as applicable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin advertising for community meetings and events two weeks in advance Periodic updates to announce and drive participation to online input opportunities
E-mail Blasts			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple listservs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide brief updates on the project Advertise upcoming meetings and engagement activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarion will draft content for staff and PIO to review and approve PIO will send email blast from existing email listservs (Clarion to provide email addresses collected through website) as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately two weeks prior to each community meeting, or to announce the release of interim drafts for review
Print/Online Media			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The Colorado Springs Business Journal</i> <i>Hispania News</i> <i>The Courier</i> <i>The Gazette</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build awareness of LDC process Expand reach of advertising for community meetings and online input opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarion will prepare draft press releases for review and distribution PIO for County will distribute to news outlets as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Press releases will be issued at least one week prior to a community meetings and public adoption hearings

Tool	Objectives	Responsibility	Timing
Radio			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KVOR (740 AM) • KRDO (1240 AM) • KZNT (1460 AM) • KXRE (1490 AM) • KFCS (1580 AM) • KEPC (89.7 FM) • KRCC (91.5 FM) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand reach of advertising for community meetings and online input opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIO for County will distribute press releases to radio outlets as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press releases will be issued at least two weeks prior to a community meetings and public adoption hearings
Television			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • El Paso County Channel 1 • KOAA (NBC) • KTSC (PBS) • KKTU (CBS) • KRDO-TV (ABC) • KZRM-TV (FOX) • K17OE-D (PBS) • KJCS-LD (EWTN) • KVSU-DT (Univision) • KWHS-LD (CTN) • KXTU-LD (CW) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand reach of advertising for community meetings and online input opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIO for County will distribute press releases to television outlets as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press releases will be issued at least two weeks prior to a community meetings and public adoption hearings
Flyers			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community message boards • County buildings, as well as 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build awareness of LDC process, community meetings, and online input opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarion will develop flyers in English and Spanish upon request • County staff will print and distribute flyers as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately two weeks prior to community meetings and public adoption hearings

Tool	Objectives	Responsibility	Timing
schools, libraries, community centers, and other buildings with message boards			

4. OPPORTUNITIES FOR INPUT

OVERVIEW

Zoning is not usually a topic most residents get excited about—unless it impacts them directly. Helping the community understand how topics they care about—housing affordability, protecting agricultural lands, review of 1041 projects, improving resilience to natural hazards like flooding and wildfires, and others—will be addressed as part of the LDC process (and why their input matters) will be essential. Each round of public engagement will be tailored to fit the types of input needed at each stage in the process and will include a variety of opportunities for input. Regardless of whether meetings are conducted virtually or in-person, information presented at the meetings will be made available on the project website.

This section outlines specific opportunities for community and stakeholder input as part of the LDC process. An initial list of opportunities for input are listed below by phase. Details for each event will be refined based on discussions with staff, elected and appointed officials, and other stakeholders as the process moves forward. This is a multi-year effort, so some dates in the following table will be updated and published in a new version of this document when they become clearer.

Date	Opportunities for Input	Engagement Objectives
1. Project Kickoff (May – Jun. 2024)		
May – Jun. 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder interviews Initial survey (online) PC and BOCC kickoff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop awareness in the community about the LDC update process Identify strengths and weaknesses of the format, structure, and organization of the current codes, as well as issues related to the implementation of the <i>Your El Paso Master Plan</i>
2. Code Assessment (May – Aug. 2024)		
Jul. – Sep. 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PC and BOCC quarterly update LDCAC meeting (every other month) Community and stakeholder meetings 	Present and confirm key themes that will be used to inform next steps in the LDC process
Sept. 2024	Code Assessment online survey	
3. Draft LDC (Sep. 2024 – Sep. 2025)		
Module 1: Zone Districts & Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PC and BOCC quarterly updates LDCAC meeting (every other month) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the public on project status, opportunities to participate, information on

Date	Opportunities for Input	Engagement Objectives
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community outreach on key topics (Jan. 2025) 	<p>notable changes from the current regulations</p>
Module 2: Development Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PC and BOCC quarterly update LDCAC meeting (every other month) Community outreach on key topics (Apr. 2025) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage the community on a targeted set of issues/questions to help inform the drafting of each module of the LDC, potentially including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing affordability Development quality Parking, landscaping, lighting, stormwater mgmt., etc. Development review process
Module 3: Administration & Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PC and BOCC quarterly update LDCAC meeting (every other month) Community outreach on key topics (Jul. 2025) 	
Consolidated Draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PC and BOCC quarterly update LDCAC meeting (every other month) Community and stakeholder meetings (Apr. – Jun. 2025) Konveio online document review (Sep. 2025) 	<p>Seek input on the consolidated draft LDC (highlighting notable changes based on public input received) before the draft is finalized for consideration by the PC and BOCC</p>
4. LDC Adoption (Nov. 2025 – Feb. 2026)		
Nov. 2025 – Jan. 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PC and BOCC update(s) and workshops LDCAC meeting Konveio online document review and/or online survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show changes incorporated to the draft LDC as a result of community feedback on consolidated draft Provide an opportunity for public comment on the adoption draft of the LDC
Jan. – Mar. 2026	Public hearings	
5. Implementation Support (Jan. – Apr. 2026)		
Jan. – Apr. 2026	As determined with PCD Staff	<p>Support staff with implementation of the new LDC with training, development of support materials, and hosting workshops for development professionals and the general public</p>