

# Guide to Preliminary Plans

## INTRODUCTION

The Douglas County Department of Community Development is committed to providing open, transparent application processes to the public. This Guide is provided to assist anyone interested in the procedures and expectations involved in the preliminary plan process. The preliminary plan is the second step of the subdivision process. The information in this packet is a summary of Article 4 of the Douglas County Subdivision Resolution (DCSR).

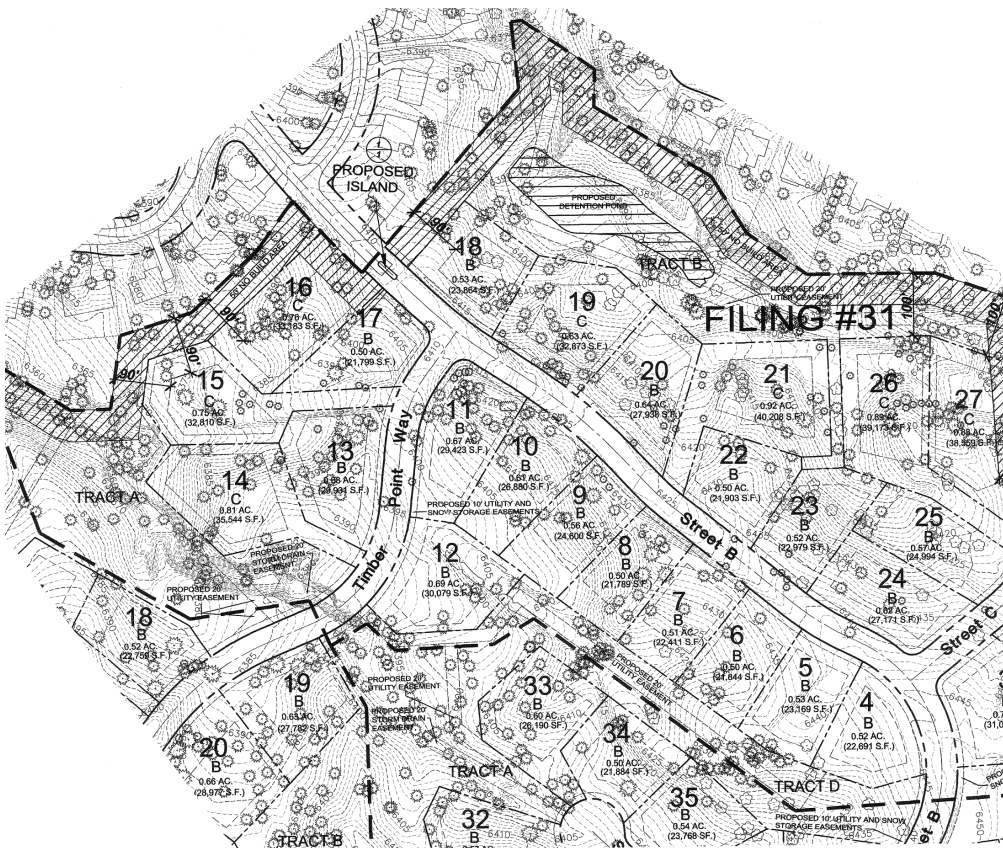
## WHAT IS A PRELIMINARY PLAN?

The preliminary plan process is intended to examine the feasibility of a subdivision through the review of a schematic design. It involves the initial evaluation of the proposed subdivision including the lot layout; circulation and road system; location of community facilities and amenities such as parks, schools and trails; and the provision of all services including water and sanitary service. Emphasis at this step is on the overall design of the subdivision and compatibility with the natural features of the land and surrounding environment. This process includes public hearings before the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners. Preliminary plans are valid for three years, although this timeframe can be extended by the Director of Community Development or Board of County Commissioners.

The next step in the subdivision review process is a final plat, which is intended for final review of engineering and platting details, and settlement of any land dedication requirements.

## WHEN IS A PRELIMINARY PLAN NECESSARY?

The preliminary plan process is required for anyone proposing to subdivide land into 10 or more lots. New subdivisions for fewer lots may be eligible for the minor development platting process.



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# Steps 1-3 of the Preliminary Plan Process

## Presubmittal Review

### STEP 1

#### COUNTY STAFF'S GOAL FOR COMPLETION: 7-10 DAYS

The presubmittal review is the initial review of a proposal to identify potentially significant issues and submittal requirements. While Planning Services staff strives to identify critical issues at presubmittal, additional issues may be identified during the formal application review and referral process.

Presubmittal reviews are held weekly and proposals are evaluated by Planning Services, Public Works Engineering and Building staff. The applicant may schedule a meeting to request a presubmittal review by calling 303-660-7460.

Written comments from the presubmittal review team are typically provided to the applicant within a few days of the presubmittal meeting. Presubmittal comments are valid for one year from the date of the presubmittal meeting.

## Submittal

### STEP 2

#### COUNTY STAFF'S GOAL FOR COMPLETION: 2 DAYS

Following the presubmittal review, the applicant may submit a formal application to Planning Services. A planning technician reviews the application submittal to ensure that all required items have been included. Once all materials are provided, a planner is assigned to the project.

#### Submittal Checklist (summarized from Section 405 and 407 of the DCSR)

- Presubmittal review
- Completed Land Use Application form
- Project narrative
  - Total land area, number of lots, overall density, total open space, phasing, any changes from the approved sketch plan
- Application fee
- Copy of a title policy or commitment
- Notarized letter from the landowner authorizing a representative to process the application, if applicable
- Stamped envelopes addressed to abutting landowners for courtesy notices
- Water supply summary sheet
- Copy of approved sketch plan
- Preliminary plan exhibit (see examples on pages 6 and 7)
- Development Reports, as required
  - Phase II Drainage Report
  - Preliminary Geotechnical or Geologic Report
  - Traffic study
  - Evidence of sanitation service
  - Evidence of adequate water supply in accordance with Section 18A of the Douglas County Zoning Resolution (DCZR)
  - Discussion of cultural, archaeological, and historical resources
  - Discussion of site features
  - Discussion of infrastructure and other services
  - Evaluation of potential radiation hazard
  - Sound study for proposed residential lots abutting a state, federal, or major arterial roadway

## Pre-Referral Review

### STEP 3

#### COUNTY STAFF'S GOAL FOR COMPLETION: 15 DAYS

Planning Services and Public Works Engineering staff perform a completeness review to identify any additional exhibits/reports that may be required and comments on any obvious conflicts with Douglas County's Roadway Design & Construction Standards Manual, Storm Drainage Design & Technical Criteria Manual, and Grading Erosion & Sediment Control Manual.

When reviewing the preliminary plan in accordance with the DCSR requirements, planning staff utilize the following criteria:

#### Preliminary Plan Exhibit (summarized from Section 406 of the DCSR)

- Sheet size of 24" x 36" with a 1" minimum margin on all sides for each sheet
- Drafted plat at a scale that best conveys the subdivision (1"=50', 1"=100', or 1"=200')
- Title at the top of the sheet must include:
  - Name of the proposed subdivision or planned development
  - A general legal description with section, township, range, 6th Prime Meridian, and Douglas County, CO
  - Total acreage, number of lots and tracts
  - Planning Services file number

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# Step 3-4 of the Preliminary Plan Process

## Pre-Referral Review *continued*

- Include the following in a block in the lower right-hand corner:
  - Preparation date and date of revisions, if applicable
  - North arrow
  - Written and graphic scale
  - Names and addresses of the applicant, developer, engineer or surveyor
  - Sheet number and total number of sheets
- Identify subdivision boundary with a heavy solid line and label areas that are "not included in this plat"
- Vicinity map of the area to be subdivided and surrounding area within a 1-mile radius
- Identify the locations of all abutting subdivided parcels, unplatted parcels and public lands as well as the zoning and ownership of abutting parcels
- Identify and label all lots, tracts and appropriate building envelopes, if requested by staff, with the appropriate dimensions including the acreage within each lot to the nearest 0.01 of an acre
- Describe the purpose, widths and locations of all easements and abutting easements
- Accurately locate 100-year floodplain and other water or drainageways
- Identify all lands to be dedicated for public use or reserved for landowners
- Identify all potential hazard areas, including geologic hazards and expansive soils
- Display topography at 10' intervals, and differentiate between areas having a slope of 15-25% and those having a slope greater than 25%
- Note any existing structures on site and whether they will remain
- Identify any historical or archaeological sites
- Note any significant, natural or man-made features on or adjacent to the site
- Note short- and long-range views onto and from the site
- Identify any significant existing vegetation by type
- Identify wildlife habitat areas
- Depict legal and physical access to the site, and label and dimension all rights-of-way

### Design Elements to be addressed (summarized from Section 404 of the DCSR)

- Lots are of an appropriate size and configuration for the site and can meet zone district standards
- Geologic hazards of other hazardous conditions are mitigated or avoided
- Conflicts between proposed and surrounding uses are minimized through lot and tract layout, setbacks, landscaping, or other buffering techniques
- Streets and stormwater facilities are laid out and designed to meet County Engineering standards
- Elements of the site's natural terrain, drainageways, riparian areas, and vegetation are preserved or integrated into the subdivision design
- Archeological and historical resources of special significance are protected
- Opportunities for safe and convenient vehicular, pedestrian, and other connections within the subdivision and to adjacent areas are provided
- Specific recommendations of other required development reports or technical studies are implemented into the subdivision design

## Applicant Revision

### APPLICANT'S AVERAGE: 4 DAYS

The applicant reviews the pre-referral letter provided by staff and updates the preliminary plan exhibit and additional materials, as necessary. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide any additional exhibits, plans, studies or fees necessary requested by staff in order to proceed with the referral. The applicant prepares referral packets in accordance with staff's written instructions. A prompt resubmittal addressing all staff comments will help achieve a speedy process.

## Referral Period and Courtesy Notification

### REGULATORY REFERRAL PERIOD: 21 DAYS

The planner verifies the contents of the applicant's referral packets, inserts a Referral Response Request form to solicit comments, and distributes the packets to necessary referral agencies. The referral period provides an opportunity for various agencies and stakeholders to comment on the application. Referral agencies have 21 days to comment unless the applicant grants, in writing, an extension of up to 30 days. The applicant must pay any referral agency fees, if charged.

Through the referral process, Parks, Trails, and Building Grounds, and the School District will identify any land dedication requirements as stated in Article 10 of the DCSR. Dedication of land, or payment of cash-in-lieu of land dedication takes place through the final plat process.

*(continued on the next page)*

STEP  
**3**  
continued

STEP  
**4**

STEP  
**5**

# Steps 5-8 of the Preliminary Plan Process

## Referral Period and Courtesy Notification *continued*

### STEP 5

The planner forwards referral comments to the applicant as they are received so the applicant can immediately begin addressing comments directly with the referral agencies. The planner can assist in facilitating meetings and discussions between the applicant and referral agencies, if necessary. Additional referral periods may be required depending on the extent of design changes resulting from comments produced through the initial referral period.

Concurrent with the distribution of referral packets, the planner prepares and mails courtesy notices to abutting landowner(s) that state the application is in process.

If the applicant has not previously notified any mineral rights holders of the proposed development, it should be done at this time. The applicant prepares a Certificate of Compliance acknowledging that notification has occurred. This Certificate must be received before the Planning Commission meeting or hearing.

## Post Referral Review

### STEP 6

#### COUNTY STAFF'S GOAL FOR COMPLETION: 7 DAYS

The planner ensures all referral responses have been forwarded to the applicant. Following the referral period, the planner provides a post-referral letter to the applicant summarizing any outstanding comments from Planning Services staff and referral agencies that the applicant must address. The applicant is encouraged to meet with the planner and referral agencies to discuss any comments or questions.

## Applicant Revision

### STEP 7

#### APPLICANT'S AVERAGE: 19 DAYS

The applicant reviews the post-referral letter provided by staff and revises all necessary exhibits, plans, and studies accordingly. The applicant addresses the comments of all regulatory referral agencies by identifying, in writing, the extent to which the project has been revised in response to the comments. The applicant is strongly encouraged to provide a written response to comments from all advisory referral agencies. It may be necessary for the applicant to meet with the planner and referral agencies in order to address all comments. A prompt resubmittal addressing all comments may reduce the process by several weeks.

## Staff Review

#### COUNTY STAFF'S GOAL FOR COMPLETION: 10 DAYS

The planner ensures all outstanding comments have been adequately addressed in the applicant's resubmittal. If any comments have not been addressed, the planner provides the applicant with a letter stating the deficiencies. It may be necessary for the applicant to resubmit in order to satisfactorily address the review comments. If necessary, the planner will facilitate a meeting between the applicant and referral agencies to resolve outstanding comments.

Once the application is finalized, the planner schedules the project for Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners' meeting or hearing. The applicant must meet all public notice requirements listed in Section 408 of the DCSR. At each meeting or hearing, the following approval standards are used to evaluate the project:

#### Approval Standards (summarized from Section 403 of the DCSR)

- Conforms with the goals, objectives, and policies of the Douglas County Comprehensive Master Plan
- Conforms with the design elements established in Section 304 of the DCSR
- Demonstrate a sufficient water supply in terms of quantity, quality and dependability as determined in accordance with the standards in the Water Supply - Overlay District section of the DCZR (Section 18A)
- Provisions have been made for a public sewage disposal system
- Demonstrate services to meet the needs of the proposed subdivision including: streets, police and fire protection, schools, recreation facilities, and utility service facilities
- Soil is suitable for the proposed subdivision
- Subdivision design protects cultural, archaeological, natural resources, and unique landforms
- Adequate drainage improvements have been provided
- Adequate transportation improvements have been provided

### STEP 8

# Steps 8-9 of the Preliminary Plan Process

## Public Hearings

### APPLICANT'S AVERAGE: 28-40 DAYS (DEPENDS ON HEARING SCHEDULE)

Planning Commission hearings are generally held the second and fourth Monday of every month at 7 p.m. in the Commissioners' Hearing Room. The Board of County Commissioners generally hears land use proposals bi-weekly on Tuesdays at 2:30 p.m. Staff will identify upcoming hearing dates and relay them to the applicant. The planner creates a staff report in preparation for the meeting or hearing, a copy of which is mailed to the applicant.

In preparation for the meeting or hearing, the applicant must provide proper public notice, published and posted, of the item in accordance with Section 409 of the DCSR 14 days prior to the hearing date.

At the hearing, the planner will present general project information. The applicant should be prepared to present pertinent information and address questions about the proposal. Common question topics include layout, water supply, referral agency comments, traffic, and how the application meets the approval standards.

# STEP 9

## PRELIMINARY PLAN FEES

1-10 lots	\$750
11-50 lots	\$70 per lot
51-500 lots	\$3,500 + \$15 per lot
501+ lots	\$11,000 + \$3 per lot
Time Extension	\$150

*Make checks payable to Douglas County  
Depending on the project, additional fees may apply*

**Douglas County Government**  
**Department of Community Development**  
Planning Services  
100 Third Street, 2nd Floor  
Castle Rock, CO 80104  
Ph: 303-660-7460  
Email: [planning@douglas.co.us](mailto:planning@douglas.co.us)  
Web: [www.douglas.co.us](http://www.douglas.co.us); search for Planning Services



# Sample Preliminary Plan Exhibit

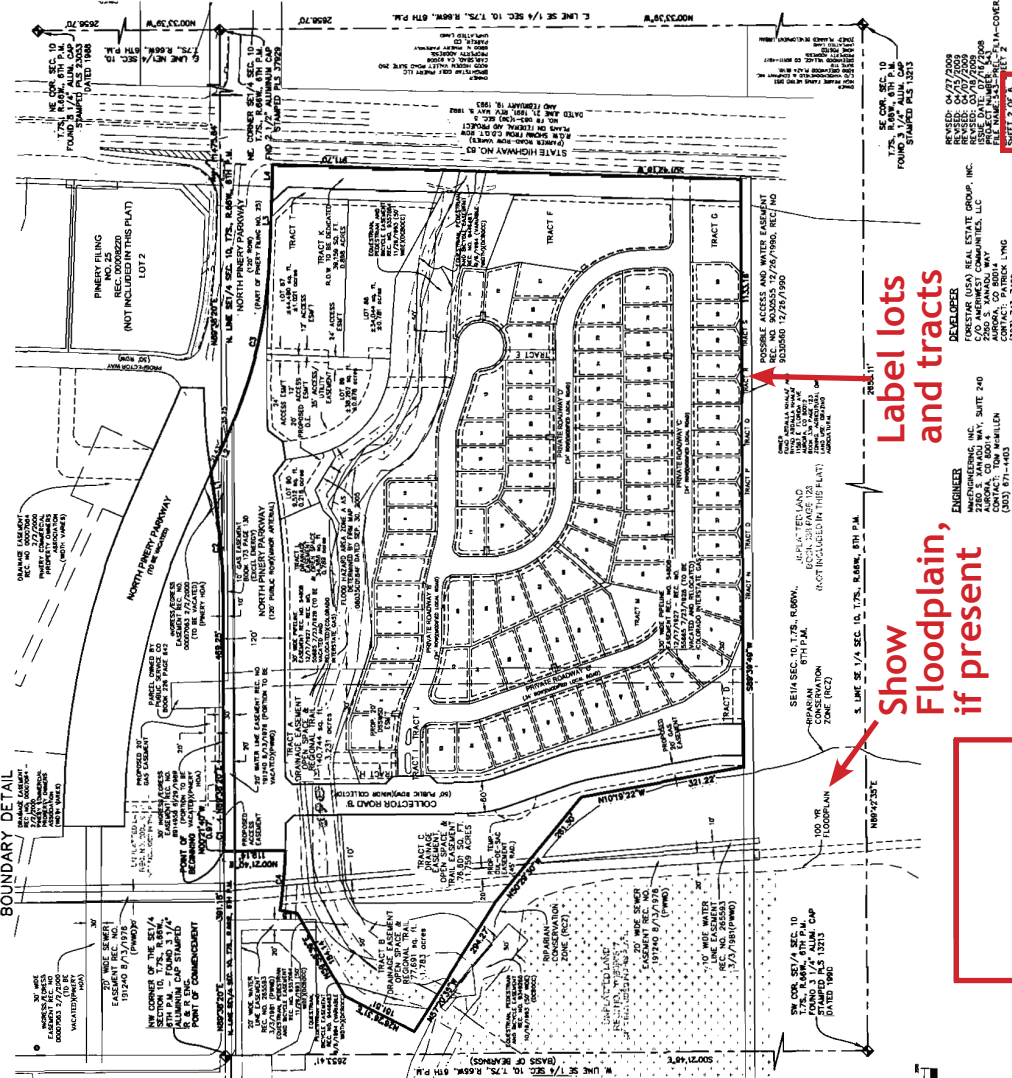
Title Block

**PINERY WEST PRELIMINARY PLAN #2**  
 PLANNING AREAS H, 39, AND 40B, PINERY PD 20TH AMENDMENT  
 TOWNSHIP 7 SOUTH, RANGE 66 WEST OF THE 6TH P.M.,  
 COUNTY OF DOUGLAS, STATE OF COLORADO  
 SUBDIVISION OF 30.8594 ACRES, 86 RESIDENTIAL LOTS, 4 COMMERCIAL LOTS, 20 TRACTS  
 ALTERNATIVE RESIDENTIAL STANDARDS PER PINERY PD 20TH AMENDMENT  
 SB 09-002

LAND-USE TABLE	LAND-USE TABLE
GROSS AREA	30.859 AC
NET AREA (EXC. NON-PUBLIC & PRIVATE)	24.824 AC
TOTAL NUMBER OF RESIDENTIAL LOTS	86
TOTAL NUMBER OF COMMERCIAL LOTS	4
AREA OF RESIDENTIAL LOTS	10.889 AC
AREA OF COMMERCIAL LOTS	2.000 AC
TOTAL NUMBER OF TRACTS	20
AREA OF TRACTS	10.829 AC
AREA OF PRIVATE STREET DEDICATION	3.689 AC
PUBLIC LAND DEDICATION (TRACTS A, B, K, L)	2.276 AC
PARK, LANDSCAPE AREA	6.156 AC
REGIONAL TRAIL, ORNAMENT, HIGHWAY R.O.W.	18.958
AND OPEN SPACE	
FRONT/DRIVEWAY/LANDSCAPE AREAS/TRACTS	4.671 AC
C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, R, S, U)	10.827 AC
TOTAL AREA OF PARKS/LANDSCAPE AREA/	35.028
DRIVEWAYS/REGIONAL TRAIL	
SMALLEST RESIDENTIAL LOT - TRADITIONAL SFD	4,759 SF/0.109 AC
LARGEST RESIDENTIAL LOT - TRADITIONAL SFD	7,789 SF/0.179 AC
AVERAGE RESIDENTIAL LOT - TRADITIONAL SFD	5,504 SF/0.126 AC
JOINTLY (NET) CROSS-SECTION	51,315.00/AC
ZONING (RESIDENTIAL P.A. 30)	PD
ALTERNATE RESIDENTIAL STANDARDS PER PINERY PD 20TH AMENDMENT	
MIN. BLDG. SET BACK (FRONT/REAR)	14.5' (FRONT) LAND (GARAGES)
	14.5' (SIDE) LAND (GARAGES)
	24.5'
	8' ADJ. TO OPEN SPACE OR LANDSCAPE ELM/T
	REAR(YEES)
	35 FEET
MAXIMUM RESIDENTIAL HEIGHT	
ZONING-COMMERCIAL	PD
MIN. BLDG. SET BACK(PUBLIC STREET/COMM.)	20 FEET
MIN. BLDG. SET BACK(OTHER/COMM.)	40 FEET
MIN. BLDG. SET BACK(OTHER/COMM.)	20 FEET
MIN. BLDG. SET BACK TO LOT LINES OTHER THAN STREET ROW (COMM.)	EXCEPT PAD SITES
MIN. BLDG. SET BACK TO LOT LINES OTHER THAN STREET ROW (COMM.)	5 FEET
MIN. BLDG. SET BACK TO LOT LINES OTHER THAN STREET ROW (COMM.)	ON PAD SITES
MIN. BLDG. HEIGHT (COMM.)	45 FEET
BUILDING SEPARATION (COMM.)	50 FEET

TRACT/AREA	TO WHOM TITLE IS HELD (S/C)	OWNERSHIP/MAINTENANCE	USE
A	45,744/3,331	PINERY COMMERCIAL METRO DIST. 182	DRIVEWAY/OPEN SPACE/REGIONAL TRAIL
B	76,007/7,759	PINERY COMMERCIAL METRO DIST. 182	DRIVEWAY/OPEN SPACE/REGIONAL TRAIL
C	24,276/2,257	H.O.A.	OPEN SPACE
D	40,502/3,930	H.O.A.	OPEN SPACE
E	11,784/1,070	H.O.A.	OPEN SPACE
F	5,337/510	H.O.A.	OPEN SPACE
G	213/20	H.O.A.	OPEN SPACE
H	213/20	H.O.A.	OPEN SPACE
I	10,545/1,042	H.O.A.	RIGHT OF WAY TO BE DEDICATED
J	20,159/1,988	DOUGLAS COUNTY	PARKS/OPEN SPACE
K	10,545/1,042	H.O.A.	PARKS/OPEN SPACE
L	20,159/1,988	H.O.A.	PARKS/OPEN SPACE
M	20,159/1,988	H.O.A.	PARKS/OPEN SPACE
N	20,159/1,988	H.O.A.	PARKS/OPEN SPACE
O	20,159/1,988	H.O.A.	PARKS/OPEN SPACE
P	20,159/1,988	H.O.A.	PARKS/OPEN SPACE
Q	20,159/1,988	H.O.A.	PARKS/OPEN SPACE
R	20,159/1,988	H.O.A.	PARKS/OPEN SPACE
S	20,159/1,988	H.O.A.	PARKS/OPEN SPACE
T	6,831/637	PINERY COMMERCIAL METRO DIST. 182	LANDSCAPE AREA
TOTAL	471,989/40,894		

CURVE TABLE		CURVE TABLE	
LINE	LENGTH	CHORD BEARING	CH. LENGTH
1	89.307	S 83.030° E	92.207
2	102.000	S 83.030° E	105.000
3	120.000	S 83.030° E	123.000
4	140.000	S 83.030° E	143.000
5	160.000	S 83.030° E	163.000



Scale & North Arrow

State Purpose of Tracts

Information Block

Show Floodplain, if present

Label lots and tracts

Sheet Number