

# Guide to Site Improvement Plans

## INTRODUCTION

The Douglas County Department of Community Development (DCD) 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 site improvement plan (SIP) process. The information in this packet is a summary of Section 27 of the Douglas County Zoning Resolution (DCZR).

## WHAT IS A SIP?

The SIP process includes review of on- and off-site infrastructure, access, and other elements to encourage compatibility and connection with the larger environment. The SIP process ensures life safety issues are resolved prior to development.

## WHEN IS A SIP NECESSARY?

A SIP is required for any use, or change in use, for any multi-family dwelling; mobile home park; business, commercial or industrial development; any use by special review; library; utility major facility; utility service facility; cell site; or for similar uses contained within a Planned Development (PD), including single-family attached dwellings.

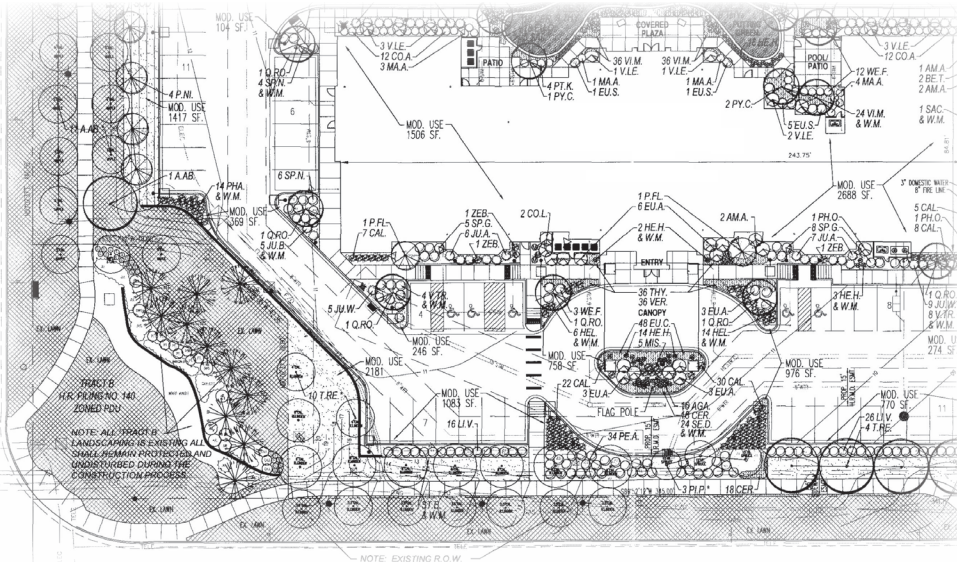
## DOES THE BUILDING PERMIT RELATE TO THE SIP?

Based on the scope and scale of the project, a building permit application may be submitted to the Building Division prior to approval of the SIP. Building permits cannot be issued until the SIP has been approved and financial security provided, if applicable. In addition, proof of adequate water and sanitation supply is required by the Building Division prior to issuance of a building permit. Telephone numbers and contacts for applicable water and sanitation districts, Tri-County Health Department and State Division of Water Resources are available through Planning Services.

If applicable, engineered site construction drawings must be approved by Public Works Engineering. Although separate from the SIP process, construction plans may run concurrent with the SIP. Approval of engineered site construction drawings by Public Works Engineering is required prior to issuance of a building permit. Please contact Public Works Engineering at 303-660-7490 for specific criteria regarding construction plans.

## DOES THE SIGN PERMIT RELATE TO THE SIP?

If signs are proposed, approval of a sign permit is required in addition to, and separate from, approval of the SIP. Signs are not approved through the SIP process; however, sign locations should be shown on the plan for reference. The applicant may request a sign permit from Planning Services. Reference Section 29 (Sign Standards) of the DCZR, and any applicable PD requirements, for additional information regarding signs.



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# Steps 1-3 of the Site Improvement 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 2705 of the DCZR)

- Completed SIP submittal checklist
- Completed Land Use Application form
- Copy of a title policy or commitment
- Notarized letter from the landowner authorizing a representative to process the application, if applicable
- Boundary survey of site (unplatted land)
- Planning Services and Public Works Engineering fees
- Courtesy notices
- Project narrative
- SIP plan set
- Engineering exhibits and reports (unless waived)
  - Engineered site construction drawings (2 copies)
  - Traffic study
  - Phase III Drainage Report and Plan
  - Grading Erosion and Sediment Control (GESC) Report and Plan
  - Utility drawing(s)
  - Off-site improvement plans, if applicable
  - Colors and materials sample sheet
- Detailed technical studies, if applicable

## 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 or 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.

The planner reviews the submittal to ensure compliance with Douglas County's Comprehensive Master Plan, Douglas County Subdivision Resolution (DCSR), and DCZR. If applicable, the planner reviews the plat, Planned Development (PD), and Board of County Commissioners' minutes specific to the plat to ensure that boundary information is current, and plat notes, approval conditions, and PD commitments are satisfactorily addressed.

The following is intended to assist the planner in determining whether the requirements of the SIP have been addressed. Compliance with the requirements of Section 27 of the DCZR will help to facilitate a timely plan review. When applicable, the plan sets (24" x 36") should include the following:

##### General Plan Requirements Checklist (summarized from Section 2706 of the DCZR; for sample exhibit see page 6)

- Legal description (address if not subdivided); planning area, if applicable; acreage or lease area; type of application; and project number
- Information block with date of preparation or revisions; north arrow; scale (including graphic scale bar); sheet title; business name; and preparer's name, address and phone number
- Composite plan, including a key sheet diagram, if applicable
- Sheet number and number of sheets, as well as sheet index
- Minimum .5" page margin
- Bearings, distances and curve data per the final plat or certified boundary survey

*(continued on the next page)*

# Step 3 (continued) of the Site Improvement Plan Process

## Pre-Referral Review *continued*

### General Plan Requirements Checklist *continued*

- Approval certificate (corporate or individual) on first sheet
- Approval certificate initial block on subsequent sheets
- Locate, provide dimensions, and indicate the use of all easements
- Identify and provide dimensions for all ISDS leach fields and indicate a replacement field location, if applicable
- Centennial Airport Review Area Note (and separate avigation easement), if applicable
- Delineate major drainageways and any 100-year floodplains on or adjacent to site
- Future phase note on all sheets, if applicable

### Site Plan Checklist (summarized from Section 2707 of the DCZR; for sample exhibit see page 7)

- Vicinity map of the project and surrounding areas
- Site data chart to detail the square footage of hardscape, landscape, and parking
- Label and provide dimensions for all existing and proposed structures, indicate any structures to be removed, and identify setback lines and building dimensions from lot lines
- Identify adjoining land uses and zoning
- Identify the location and provide dimensions of trash enclosures
- Provide dimensions for off-street parking and loading areas; identify number of parking spaces per parking aisle
- Provide dimensions and note material of streets, walks and trails, rights-of-way, curb cuts, and access points
- Locate and provide dimensions for all existing and proposed signs
- Identify all fire hydrants; note approximate distance and direction to nearest hydrant(s) if off-site

### Landscape Plan Checklist (summarized from Section 2708 of the DCZR)

- Ensure a minimum 15 percent of the gross site area is live plant material
- Provide a landscape buffer when adjacent to residential uses
- The scale and impact of the proposal may require additional landscaping
- Provide a landscape buffer between residential use and non-residential parking, parking adjacent to street, outdoor storage and adjacent use
- A maximum 1.5 percent of total site area may be high-water-use plants (except for parks and multi-family)
- Provide year-round screening through a combination of plants, berms or walls
- Ensure plants meet the minimum plant size
- Identify the source and type of irrigation
- Identify planted areas by name, size and quantity of material
- Ensure plant materials are drawn at  $\frac{3}{4}$  mature size
- Identify walkways, pedestrian areas and landscape elements
- Depict location of all pole-mounted, wall-mounted, and ground-mounted light fixtures
- Depict final grades as solid lines
- Label streets, rights-of-way and points of access
- Ensure adequate sight distance triangles are depicted
- Ground-mounted HVAC note
- Landscape legend: symbol, quantity, botanical and common name, size, if high-water-use
- Landscape maintenance statement
- Ensure parking lot islands are provided if more than 40 parking spaces are proposed
- Parking lot islands should be a minimum size of two parking spaces and include live plant material
- Parking lot islands may be grouped together to provide effective drainage, screening, etc.

### Grading and Drainage Plan Checklist (summarized from Section 2709 of the DCZR)

- Label proposed and existing buildings, structures, fences, walls, walks, trails, off-street parking and loading areas
- Retaining walls (in excess of 30") may require permanent barriers
- Development sites are required to balance earthwork quantities on site
- Show existing contour lines as dashed lines and proposed contour lines as solid lines
- Depict existing grades greater than a 4:1 slope
- Proposed grades shall not exceed a 3:1 slope
- Label the low and high points (elevation) of the site
- Identify the drainage flow direction with arrows
- Depict and label required drainage easements with detention, water quality facilities, and storm sewer infrastructure
- Label top and bottom of wall elevations at 20-foot intervals along retaining walls

(continued on the next page)

STEP  
**3**  
continued

# Steps 3-6 of the Site Improvement Plan Process

## Pre-Referral Review *continued*

### STEP 3

continued

#### Building Elevation Checklist (summarized from Section 2710 of the DCZR)

- Label and provide dimensions for all building features
- Label all building materials and finishes with manufacturer colors and numbers
- Identify the location of all wall-mounted light fixtures
- Depict the roof plane, behind the wall, as dashed lines
- Depict emergency generators, roof top mechanical equipment or HVAC and other ground-, wall-, and roof-mounted accessories as dashed lines, screened from view
- HVAC Remediation Note on all elevation sheets

#### Lighting Plan Checklist (summarized from Section 2711; also reference Section 30 - Lighting Standards)

- Luminaire schedule: quantity, type, mounting height, lumens, light loss factor, color and description
- Include copy of the manufacturer's catalog sheet, product number, and Illuminating Engineering Society of North America type description
- Lighting remediation note

## Applicant Revision

### STEP 4

#### APPLICANT'S AVERAGE: 31 DAYS

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

## Referral Period and Courtesy Notification

### STEP 5

#### 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 other 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 length of the referral period may be reduced upon concurrence by Public Works Engineering; however, it is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain comments within the reduced timeframe and pay any referral agency fees, if charged.

The planner forwards referral comments to the applicant as they are received so that the applicant can immediately begin addressing comments directly with the referral agencies. The planner assists in facilitating meetings or discussions between the applicant and referral agencies, as 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.

## Post Referral Review

### STEP 6

#### COUNTY STAFF'S GOAL FOR COMPLETION: 5 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 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.



# Steps 7-10 of the Site Improvement Plan Process

## Applicant Revision and Response

### APPLICANT'S AVERAGE: 37 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.

In an effort to keep the project moving, an applicant may request early review of construction drawings or early issuance of some permits by the Building Division. This request should come directly to Planning Services, and is only permitted upon concurrence by Department of Public Works Engineering.

The applicant submits executed originals of the Site Improvement Plan Improvements Agreement (SIPIA) to Public Works Engineering, if applicable, to secure the costs of improvements associated with the SIP. A prompt resubmittal addressing all comments may reduce the process by several weeks.

STEP  
7

## 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 requests a final SIP plan set for approval, and provides the applicant with either the Requirements for Release of Certificate of Occupancy form, or the Requirements for Release of Final Inspection form.

#### Approval Standards (summarized from Section 2703 of the DCZR)

- Consistent with the Douglas County Comprehensive Master Plan, DCSR, DCZR, PD (if applicable), Roadway Design & Construction Standards Manual, Storm Drainage Design & Technical Criteria Manual, and Grading, Erosion & Sediment Control Manual
- Submit proposed easements, if applicable, to Public Works Engineering for review
- SIPs, and any revisions or modifications, comply with this resolution
- Requirements for Release of Certificate of Occupancy or Requirements for Release of Final Inspections form, as applicable, is executed and submitted in the next step
- SIPIA, as applicable

STEP  
8

## Final Submittal

### APPLICANT'S AVERAGE: 17 DAYS

Once requested by the planner, the applicant should begin preparation of the final SIP plan set for approval. The final SIP plan set consists of one rolled plan set (24" x 36"), with original, notarized signatures. The applicant submits the completed SIP plan set, and an executed copy of either the Requirements for Release of Certificate of Occupancy form or the Requirements for Release of Final Inspection form, to Planning Services for approval. A prompt submittal of all necessary documents will expedite the successful completion of the SIP process.

STEP  
9

## Final Determination

### COUNTY STAFF'S GOAL FOR COMPLETION: 5 DAYS

The planner reviews the applicant's submittal to ensure all necessary documents have been submitted for approval. Once verified, the planner routes the SIP for approval by Planning Services and Public Works Engineering staff. The planner notifies the Building Division of SIP approval, and states that Planning Services does not object to permits being issued.

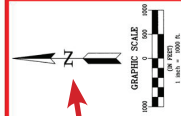
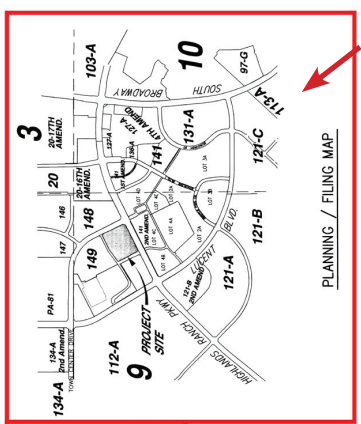
The planner provides the applicant with an electronic copy of the approved SIP. The planner sends a Notice of Action-Final Status form to all landowners who received a courtesy notice, notifying them that the SIP has been approved.

STEP  
10

# Sample SIP Exhibit - Cover Sheet

Legal Description

**HIGHLANDS RANCH, FILING 149, 2ND AMENDMENT, LOT 1C-2**  
 A PORTION OF THE NE 1/4 OF SECTION 9, TOWNSHIP 6 SOUTH, RANGE 68 WEST OF THE 6TH P.M.  
 PLANNING AREA 80 - 7.684 ACRES  
 SITE IMPROVEMENT PLAN - SP08-081



**APPROVAL CERTIFICATE**

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS: *[Signature]*

DATE: *[Date]*

APPROVED BY: *[Signature]*

DATE: *[Date]*

PROJECT: *[Project Name]*

PREPARED BY: *[Company Name]*

SCALE: *[Scale]*

SHEET: *[Sheet Number]*

Approval Certificate

Vicinity Map

Scale & North Arrow

**Site Data Chart**

DESCRIPTION	AREA (SQ. FT.)	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL SITE AREA
NET BUILDING AREA	14,300	0.37%
NET PARKING AREA	14,300	0.37%
NET DRIVEWAY AREA	14,300	0.37%
NET SIDEWALK AREA	14,300	0.37%
NET LANDSCAPE AREA	14,300	0.37%
NET UTILITY AREA	14,300	0.37%
NET TOTAL AREA	38,500	1.00%
NET REMAINING AREA	38,500	1.00%
NET AVAILABLE AREA	38,500	1.00%
NET TOTAL DEVELOPMENT AREA	38,500	1.00%

Sheet Index

Phase Note

Minimum .5" page margin

**Information Block**

DATE: JANUARY 29, 2009

SCALE: AS SHOWN

JOB NO. 498-003

SHEET 1 OF 10

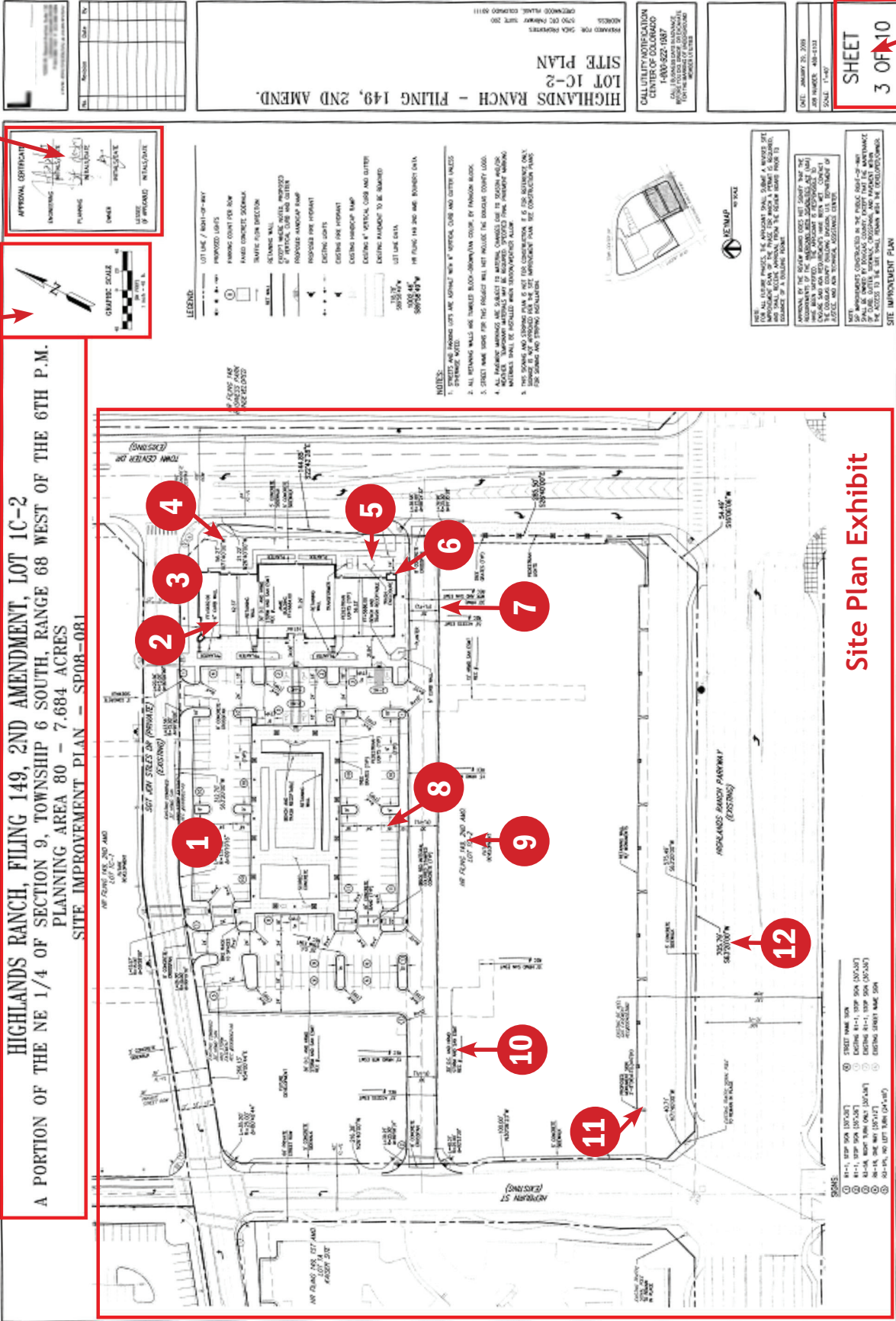
Sheet Number

# Sample SIP Exhibit - Site Plan

Legal Description

Scale & North Arrow

Approval Certificate Initial Block



Sheet Number 3 OF 10

- 11 - Locate monument signs
- 12 - Include bearings and distances

- 6 - Screen utility pads
- 7 - Provide dimensions for streets and walks
- 8 - Provide dimensions for off-street parking
- 9 - Identify adjacent land uses
- 10 - Identify easements

- 1 - Identify parking spaces per aisle
- 2 - Provide dimensions for structures
- 3 - Provide dimensions for setback
- 4 - Identify fire hydrants
- 5 - Provide dimensions for trash enclosures

# Additional Information and Fees

## CHANGES TO APPROVED SIP

Proposed changes to an approved SIP are processed as either a revision or a modification depending on the scale and impact of the project.

### Revision

A revision shall be for the purpose of additional review and referral based on the scale and impacts of the proposed changes. In general, a revision may impact grading, drainage, parking and access, building footprint, or landscaping. Impacts usually require the entire site be brought into compliance with the current zoning resolution.

A revision is subject to the full SIP process described herein; however, the referral period is shortened to 21 days.

#### Revision Checklist

- Completed Land Use Application form and application fee
- New SIP plan exhibit, as necessary
- Development reports and plans, if applicable
- Current title commitment or insurance policy
- Notarized letter from the landowner authorizing a representative to process the application, if applicable
- Written narrative of proposed changes
- Letter from HOA and Architectural Control Committee, if applicable

### Modification

A modification shall be for the purpose of minor changes to the approved SIP. In general, a modification does not increase the building footprint, impervious surface, or affect fire access.

A modification does not follow the SIP process described herein. A streamlined presubmittal and submittal process is available for a modification. Due to the limited impact of the modification, staff has seven days for internal review of the application and there is not a referral period. Upon completion of the staff review, staff notifies the applicant of approval, denial, or any required revisions to the exhibit.

#### Modification Checklist

- Completed Land Use Application form and review fee
- Redlined copy of approved SIP, and other exhibits as necessary, to depict proposed modification
- Letter from the landowner authorizing a representative to process the application, if applicable
- Written narrative of proposed changes
- Letter from HOA and Architectural Control Committee, if applicable

## SITE IMPROVEMENT PLAN FEES

Non-residential SIP	\$1,550
Residential SIP	\$1,550 plus \$75 per building
Major Revision	\$1,550
Minor Revision	\$225
Modification	\$225
Approval Extension	\$75

*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

Fax: 303-379-4198

Email: [planning@douglas.co.us](mailto:planning@douglas.co.us)

Web: [www.douglas.co.us](http://www.douglas.co.us); search for Planning Services