



## THE PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

(P&Z) is a 10-member volunteer citizen's board in Coconino County responsible for reviewing applications for Conditional Use Permits, Subdivisions, Zone Changes, and other development proposals.

## WHAT ARE THE PRIMARY FUNCTIONS OF THE P&Z COMMISSION?

The planning function involves the review and approval of the County Comprehensive Plan, local Area Plans, and related land development codes and ordinances. This role is advisory to the Board of Supervisors with the Planning Commission forwarding a recommendation to the Board for final action.

The development review function involves monthly public hearings on Conditional Use Permits, Zone Changes, Subdivisions, and other development proposals.

As defined in Arizona Revised Statutes, the core goal of the Planning & Zoning Commission is protection of public health, safety, and general welfare of County residents.

## COMMONLY USED TERMS

**Area Plan:** An official amendment to the County Comprehensive Plan that reflects the local residents' vision of the future, contains goals and policies for development, and provides guidance for decision makers. An Area Plan may serve a community, specific neighborhoods, or rural areas.

**Comprehensive Plan:** A statement of the County's desired future, intended to serve as the primary decision-making guide for future growth and development.

**Conditions of Approval:** Specific requirements attached to approval of a development proposal that an applicant must complete during development of the project. Conditions may include items such as related permits, site improvements, parking, landscaping, and others.

**Development Project:** A project that requires approval by the Planning & Zoning Commission and/or Board of Supervisors, such as Conditional Use Permits, Zone Changes, and Subdivisions.

**Findings of Fact:** The specific criteria used by the Planning & Zoning Commission to determine approval, denial, or modification of a development proposal.

**Zoning Ordinance:** A set of legally binding provisions adopted by the Board of Supervisors to regulate land development. Along with the Subdivision Ordinance, the Zoning Ordinance is used to implement the goals, objectives, and policies of the County Comprehensive Plan.

## COCONINO COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

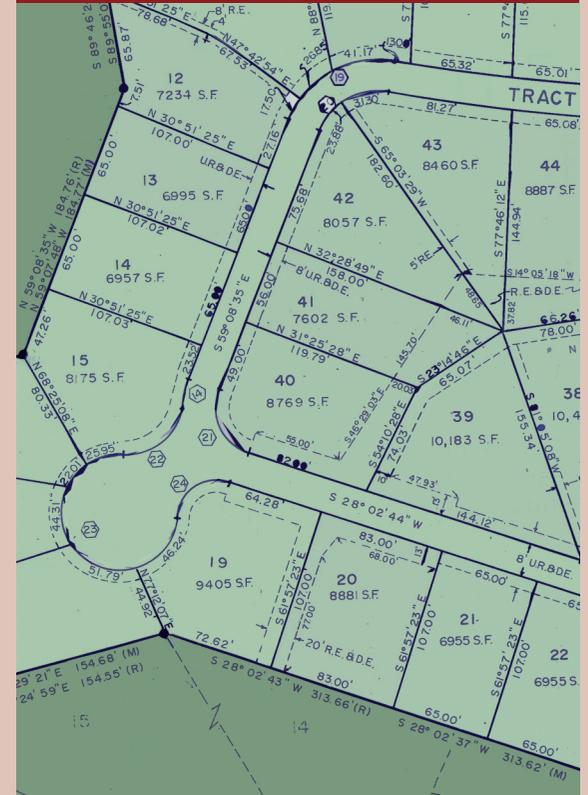
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Photos by John Aber

# WHAT IS THE PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION?



COCONINO COUNTY  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
DEPARTMENT



# Planning & Zoning Commission

The list of common questions and typical responsibilities as outlined in this brochure have been adapted from information provided by the Arizona Department of Commerce/Community Planning Program.

## WHAT ARE THE COMMISSION'S TYPICAL DUTIES?

To fulfill its primary functions, the Planning & Zoning Commission has a number of specific responsibilities, including the following:

- Develop and apply the policies of the County Comprehensive Plan and related land development codes and ordinances.
- Hold public hearings and provide a public forum for decision-making on future growth and development.
- Determine project compatibility according to staff report, site visit, and any applicable Area Plans.

## WHAT MIGHT THE COMMISSION ASK WHEN REVIEWING A DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL?

In reviewing a development project, the Commission will evaluate the proposal based on specific planning criteria—generally referred to as the “findings.” While these findings of fact are somewhat unique for each type of development project, some of the general questions that the Planning & Zoning Commission might ask include:

1. Is the request in accordance with the adopted county comprehensive plan and any applicable area plan?
2. If the request is not in accordance with the comprehensive plan, does it promote the goals and objectives of the plan?
3. Is the request an allowable use in the designated zoning category?
4. What are the existing site conditions? Are there any environmental considerations that need to be addressed, preserved, or mitigated?
6. Does the applicant provide a clear site plan of the proposed development or change?
7. Does the site or master plan address density, landscaping, setbacks, signage, right-of-ways, open space and parks dedication, drainage, parking, utilities and services, circulation, ingress, and egress?

8. Are there any traffic impacts? If so, does the applicant attempt to mitigate them in some way?
9. Does the proposal and/or staff report identify the potential impacts to the community and the associated costs and benefits of these? Are the negative impacts mitigated?
10. Is there neighborhood or public opposition to the proposal? What are the specific reasons or facts given for opposition?
11. Is the proposed architecture and design in accordance with the overall community character?
12. If the proposal is adjacent to a dissimilar use, what types of buffering are provided by the applicant?



## HOW DO I GET INVOLVED?

If you'd like to sit in on a public hearing, contact the Community Development Department to confirm Commission meeting dates and request agendas. If you are interested in filling a community leadership role, call your County Supervisor.

## WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OTHER PLAYERS IN THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

The Planning & Zoning Commission is not the only player in the county's development review process. The applicant, County planners, and the general public also play important roles. General responsibilities include:

### The Applicant

- Discuss an idea with county planning staff (prior to formal submission) to determine applicability of proposal and potential areas of concern.

- Per the County's citizen participation requirements, inform neighbors and any potentially-affected parties about plans.
- Ensure a complete application with the specified application fee and supporting documents.

### County Planners

- Review potential projects and guide applicants regarding county expectations for project information, graphics, and analysis.
- Evaluate consistency and compatibility with adopted plans and ordinances.
- Develop a staff report for the Planning & Zoning Commission evaluating the project and providing staff recommendations for Commission decision-making.

### Citizens and the General Public

- Ensure development proposals meet the guidelines and intent of community plans.
- Ask questions and evaluate the long-term impacts of a development project.
- Encourage collaboration by actively contributing to the decision-making process.

## WHO SERVES ON THE P&Z COMMISSION?

The Commission is a volunteer citizen's board appointed by the Board of Supervisors. There are two members appointed from each Supervisor's district, for a total of ten Commissioners. Terms are four years, and members may be reappointed for subsequent terms.

## WHEN DOES THE COMMISSION MEET?

Regular meetings of the Planning & Zoning Commission are typically held the last Wednesday of each month. Staff review meetings begin at 3pm; P&Z study sessions at 4pm; and public hearings begin at 5:30pm. All meetings are held at the Coconino County Administration Building, 219 E. Cherry, Flagstaff.