

**DOUGLAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
WORK SESSION
Monday, March 17, 2025 – 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
(In Office)**

A G E N D A

- 2:00 p.m. Agritourism Use Opportunities in Douglas County**
- Process and Regulatory Streamlining**
- Safran Defense & Space, Inc. Road Name Change Process**
- Parking Ordinance Follow Up**

Agenda Item

Date: March 17, 2025

To: Douglas County Board of County Commissioners

Through: Douglas J. DeBord, County Manager

From: Terence T. Quinn, AICP, Director of Community Development *TQ*

CC: Jeanette Bare, AICP, Planning Manager
Kati Carter, AICP, Assistant Director of Planning Resources
Steven E. Koster, AICP, Assistant Director of Planning Services

Subject: **Agritourism Use Opportunities in Douglas County**

SUMMARY

Douglas County is home to a wide range of agricultural, agricultural recreation, and related uses. Agricultural activities historically focused on cattle ranching, farming, and equestrian-related uses as reflected in the Douglas County Zoning Resolution (DCZR). In recent years, the Board of County Commissioners (Board) has approved regulations to allow for entertainment events, seasonal uses, event centers, and expanded levels of agricultural production and product sales. A summary of existing agricultural and agritourism-related uses is attached.

While the DCZR does not include “agritourism” as a specific use category, many activities associated with the term are, in fact, allowed. For a rural property owner attempting to decipher the regulations applicable to a broader category of possible uses and activities, however, it can be difficult to discern what is allowed and by which process. To address these concerns and make the code more user-friendly, the Board could consider updating the DCZR to consolidate or rename agricultural and other rural use categories. It may also be possible to define thresholds of use which would allow progressively greater intensity of activities in conjunction with progressively more intensive requirements and regulatory processes.

DISCUSSION

Opportunities for amendments to the DCZR to better address agritourism uses include the following:

- **Expand existing definition of Agricultural Recreational Activities** to codify an administrative interpretation by the Director that has allowed many activities associated with farming and horticulture to also be considered Agricultural Recreation. Agricultural Recreational Activities are allowed by right in the A-1 and LRR zone districts.
- **Create a definition for Agritourism.** Create a use definition consistent with the statutory definition of Agritourism as defined in §13-21-121(2)(b), C.R.S. as “*An activity related to the normal course of agriculture, as defined in section 35-1-102 (1), C.R.S.,*

which activity is engaged in by participants for entertainment, pleasure, or other recreational purposes, or for educational purposes, regardless of whether a fee is charged to the participants.”

Currently, entertainment-related activities and events, open to the general public, are subject to the County’s entertainment event permit process set forth in Section 22B of the DCZR. The Board may wish to eliminate the permit requirement for additional types of agriculturally-based entertainment events. Rodeos, horse shows, and similar livestock events are already exempt from entertainment event permitting. Corn mazes, pumpkin patches, farm to table dinners, lavender craft classes, tours, lectures, and the like could similarly be exempted.

- **Scale-able Agritourism Processes.** For agritourism activities that occur throughout the year; have large, regular public attendance; and/or include outdoor amplified music (concert-like elements) a scale-able approach to regulation might be appropriate. The operators of Lone Creek Farms and Zumas Rescue Ranch submit permit applications for multiple entertainment events each year. For operators starting off in the agritourism business, by-right uses or those with minimal permitting could be the first phase of use. If an operator’s initial efforts are successful, progressively more complex approval processes and improvements could be required to mitigate impacts of growing attendance, expanding entertainment or sales, or additions of permanent buildings (for public assembly). Enhanced permitting, SIPs, or USR processes would be triggered as intensity of use increased.
- **Lodging in Combination with Agritourism.** County staff is occasionally approached with requests for overnight lodging facilities. “Bed and Breakfast” and “Dude Ranch” uses are allowed through the USR process but have rarely been requested or approved. Bed and Breakfast establishments are limited to a maximum of 5 guest rooms with a manager living on the premises. With the recent allowance of short-term rentals, a limited amount of lodging may now be added to an agritourism business if desired. The Bed and Breakfast and Dude Ranch use categories could be updated to tie more directly to agritourism businesses with requirements and processes based on intensity and parcel size.
- **Agritourism Opportunity Guide.** A written guide or web page could be developed to consolidate information on agritourism opportunities and requirements within the County.

ATTACHMENT

Summary of Existing Agricultural and Agritourism Uses in the DCZR

Summary of Existing Agricultural and Agritourism Uses in the DCZR

Agriculture and Agricultural Recreation

Agriculture is a use by right on all properties that are nine acres or more in size in the Agricultural One (“A-1”) and Large Rural Residential (“LRR”) zone districts. Agriculture is defined as: “Land uses related to grazing or raising livestock or land uses which produce products that originate from the land’s productivity, such as farming, ranching, forestry, tree farming, animal husbandry, and horticulture.” Opportunities for limited horse boarding or training horses and riders are also available on these properties. No additional zoning approvals are required for these uses.

Agricultural Recreational Activities are also allowed by right on those same properties. These activities include such things as horse shows, gymkhanas, training clinics, team ropings, rodeos, polo matches, endurance rides, hunts, or other activities involving livestock; as well as educational, instructional, or recreational activities related to agricultural activities such as farming, forestry, and horticulture. An administrative interpretation by the Director has brought educational, instructional, or recreational activities related to Agriculture under the Agricultural Recreational Activities umbrella, as well. No additional zoning approvals are required for these uses, either.

- Agriculture.
- Agricultural Recreational Activities.
- Animals.
- Boarding up to 12 horses A-1, or 2 horses in LRR.
- No limit on boarded horses in A-1 on parcels of 160 acres or more when certain development standards are met.
- Training of non-owned horses, or riders not related to the landowner or lessee: up to 14 lessons per week.
- Sale of agricultural and value-added agricultural products raised and produced on site.
- Value-added agricultural processing within a maximum of 1,500 square feet.

Uses and activities requiring minimal approvals

Many other uses and activities on properties that are nine acres or more in size in the A-1 and LRR zone districts are allowed with minimal – usually administrative – approvals. Entertainment events like pumpkin patches and corn mazes can be conducted after approval of a permit by either the Planning Director or the Board, depending on their duration or anticipated attendance. Farmers Markets that bring together multiple agricultural producers to sell their products from one location can be held with staff-approved seasonal use permits. In the A-1 zone district, event centers, equine and livestock veterinary clinics, and hay sales are allowed with the approval of a site plan by Planning and Engineering.

- Boarding up to 18 horses in A-1 or 8 horses in LRR
- Entertainment Events (pumpkin patches, mazes, “fall festivals,” farm-to-table” dinners etc.)
- Event Center on parcels 80-acres or more in size (A-1 zone district only)

- Event Center that is accessory to agriculture on parcels 160 acres or more with administrative certification (A-1 zone district only)
- Equine and Livestock Veterinary Clinic or Hospital
- Farmers Markets (with a seasonal use permit)
- Hay sales (A-1 zone district only)

Uses and activities requiring USR approval from the Board

Uses that require hearings before the Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners.

- Bed and Breakfast
- Boarding more than 18 horses in A-1; or more than 8 horses in LRR
- Campground (A-1 zone district only)
- Dude Ranch (A-1 zone district only)
- Event Center on parcels that are at least 35 acres in size but less than 80 acres
- Horse rental stable
- Kennel
- Large Greenhouse (over one acre enclosed)
- Religious Retreat (A-1 zone district only)
- Training of non-owned horses, or of riders not related to the landowner or lessee: more than 14 lessons per week
- Veterinary Clinic or Hospital (typically smaller animals)

Agenda Item

Date: March 17, 2025

To: Douglas County Board of County Commissioners

Through: Douglas J. DeBord, County Manager

From: Terence T. Quinn, AICP, Director of Community Development ^{TQ}
Janet Herman, P.E., Director of Public Works

CC: Jeanette Bare, AICP, Planning Manager
Kati Carter, AICP, Assistant Director of Planning Resources
Steven E. Koster, AICP, Assistant Director of Planning Services

Subject: **Process and Regulatory Streamlining**

SUMMARY

This memo discusses both ongoing process and regulatory streamlining efforts as well as opportunities for additional streamlining. Some involve changes to processes which do not require regulatory amendments, but which can reduce process steps and requirements for the County's developers and builders. Other changes require amendments to either the Douglas County Zoning or Subdivision Resolution. The purpose of each identified opportunity is to eliminate or consolidate process steps to reduce costs and shorten timeframes for land use approvals.

DISCUSSION

Streamlining opportunities include the following. Based on discussions with the Board, other options may also be identified:

- 1) Article 10, Park Land Dedication Requirements (Subdivision Resolution). A separate agenda item memo has been submitted which discusses potential changes to these regulations in greater detail. From a streamlining perspective, the suggested changes could greatly improve the process of determining land values for cash-in-lieu fees, reducing both time and uncertainty for applicants. Changes to bring the County's land dedication standards in line with state statute and neighboring jurisdictions are also proposed for the Board's consideration.
- 2) Land Use Process Staff Guidance. Staff has been directed to reduce its guidance and recommendations to applicants which are beyond the regulatory-defined process. This approach is intended to encourage applicants to define their requests, public outreach processes, and response to public and referral comments as they determine appropriate and timely for their particular projects and circumstances. This streamlining approach does not require regulatory reforms.

- 3) Final plats and SIA-IGAs. The Board may wish to change its subdivision process to allow for administrative approvals of final plats and SIA-IGAs as recently enabled by State statute. This would eliminate Board land use meetings on a process that is focused on technical engineering plans, reports, and studies, thereby reducing the time required for approvals. Regulatory change to Article 5 of the Subdivision Resolution would be required.
- 4) Process overlaps. An opportunity exists to allow applicants to further overlap rezoning, plat, and SIP applications and processing steps (including referral review and hearings). Applicants would be required to provide hold harmless letters to cover the risk for submitting final engineering plans in advance of other necessary land use approvals. Final approvals would still need to occur in the correct order. Planning, Engineering, and Building staff also provide applicants with the ability to reduce time frames by allowing for such steps as early grading permits, early building plan reviews, and foundation-only permits. No regulatory changes required to allow these types of concurrent reviews.
- 5) Site Improvement Plan Requirements. Many submittal requirements for new and revised Site Improvement Plans can be waived by the Planning or Public Works Directors. Planners and Engineers routinely assist applicants in streamlining their application timeframes and costs by identifying submittals or steps that are not necessary for their particular proposals. In many cases, minor changes can be documented without the need for a formal application. Streamlining is an ongoing focus for development review staff at all levels.
- 6) PD Amendments. Increase types and thresholds of proposed PD changes that can be approved administratively, rather than requiring PC and Board hearings. Generally, eligible administrative amendments are limited to dimensional standards such as setbacks or lot sizes, text clarifications, and shifts to planning area boundaries. Other changes could include minor adjustments to commitments and uses. Regulatory changes to the Zoning Resolution would be required.
- 7) Online Permits and AI Tools. The Building Division is working on the POSSE PLS pilot, which is the first step in upgrading our current POSSE software and is planned to be implemented in 2025. The new software will introduce an online portal for permit submittals, along with the Archistar AI-based eCheck toolset, enhancing efficiency. This update will streamline permitting, plan review, and inspection workflows, aligning our processes with neighboring jurisdictions and improving customer communication.
- 8) Paperless Permitting. Building is working to make the mechanical, roofing and some electric permits completely paperless in the first quarter of 2025, allowing for a more streamlined process.
- 9) Pilot Project for Early Release of Model Home Building Permits. In 2022 Engineering, Building, and the County Attorney worked with several developers and builders to develop a Pilot Project to allow early release of model home building permits prior to initial acceptance of certain subdivision improvements. The developer and builder agree to adhere to certain requirements in order to receive the early release. The Pilot was especially helpful for the developers and builders if they ran up against cold weather delays. The Pilot has been successful therefore starting in 2025, staff recommends dropping the “pilot” and opening it up for regular use.

10) Multi-lot DESC Permitting. In 2021 Engineering implemented a pilot project with Sterling Ranch and the Solstice developments to process a “multi-lot” DESC plan and permit vs. individual DESC plans and permits as required by our Grading, Erosion and Sediment Control (GESC) Manual. This streamlined the plan review and permitting process and should result in significant time and cost savings for the single-family production-lot developers/builders. Engineering proposes to charge one standard permit fee for Multi-lot Permits instead of a fee on a per lot basis. This streamlined process is proposed to be formally incorporated into the GESC Manual for everyone to use.

NEXT STEPS

Staff is prepared to discuss these and other streamlining opportunities with the Board.

Agenda Item

Date: March 17, 2025

To: Douglas County Board of County Commissioners

Through: Douglas J. DeBord, County Manager

From: Terence T. Quinn, AICP, Director of Community Development *TQ*

CC: Caitlin Zeiler, Planning and Addressing Specialist
Lauren Pulver, Planning Supervisor
Kati Carter, AICP, Assistant Director of Planning Resources

Subject: **Safran Defense & Space, Inc. Road Name Change Process**

SUMMARY

County staff is working with Safran Defense & Space, Inc. (Safran) on a road name change request to change Compark Blvd to New Vernon Blvd. Staff has identified that the quickest process for this request is a determination by the Board of County Commissioners (Board) at a Public Hearing on April 8.

Once Safran submits an application with a narrative describing the request and a letter of authorization from the property owner authorizing Safran, as a lessee, to make the request on their behalf, staff will send the project on referral for 21 days and send courtesy notices to all 39 properties abutting Compark Blvd. Safran will be required to post notice on the property and publish notice by March 25, two weeks prior to Board hearing.

Agenda Item

Date: March 17, 2025
To: Douglas County Board of County Commissioners
Through: Douglas J. DeBord, County Manager
From: Kelly Dunnaway, Deputy County Attorney
CC: Lt. Adam Stanton, Douglas County Sheriff's Office
Subject: **Traffic and Parking Ordinance**

Staff is presenting two proposed amendments to the County Traffic and Parking Ordinance. While both proposals pertain to the same ordinance, they will be presented as: (1) proposed amendment prohibiting the parking of Commercial Vehicles on public streets in certain highly urbanized areas designated on a new Exhibit C; and (2) proposed amendment restricting parking of RVs on public streets in certain highly urbanized areas designated in a new Exhibit D.