

ARAPAHOE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING
JUNE 16, 2026
6:30 P.M.

SUBJECT: CASE NO. LR25-002 – ARAPAHOE COUNTY 2018 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT TO ADOPT, BY REFERENCE, STRASBURG 2050: STRASBURG SUBAREA PLAN

GRETCHEN RICEHILL, PLANNER/PROJECT SPECIALIST, PUBLIC WORKS AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

PURPOSE AND REQUEST

Arapahoe County proposes to amend the 2018 Arapahoe County Comprehensive Plan to adopt, by reference, the updated Strasburg Subarea Plan.

The updated draft Strasburg 2050: Strasburg Subarea Plan (the Plan) will provide guidance to staff and County officials on a range of goals and policies over the next 25 years. It will serve as a framework for public and private investment within the Strasburg area. The Plan provides a list of implementation actions to accomplish the goals outlined in the Plan, intending to make this a “living” document that has practical, actionable steps.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

Strasburg is an unincorporated community of roughly 4,700 people that straddles both Adams and Arapahoe counties, with Colfax Avenue (Highway 36) being the common boundary. The current Strasburg Plan was adopted by Adams and Arapahoe County Planning Commissions in 2002 and incorporated by reference into each of the county’s comprehensive plans. The current Strasburg Plan contains seven vision statements and a series of goals and policies that were intended to guide growth and development decisions in the community for about 20 years.

In 2022 the Advancing Adams Comprehensive Plan prioritized the need to update the Strasburg Plan. In 2024 Adams County Community and Economic Development Department staff initiated and led the planning process with Arapahoe County staff providing support. Adams County staff formed a Steering Committee as well as a Technical Advisory Committee with representatives from the Strasburg School District, I-70 REAP, the Parks and Recreation District, Comanche Crossing Museum, Colorado Department of Transportation, Strasburg Fire, CORE Electric, as well as residents and business owners. The intent was to create a community-based vision for Strasburg for the next 25 years, with goals, policies, and actions that reflected the community’s desires and suggestions.

The planning process began with an inventory of existing conditions and community and business surveys. Results were presented at two open house events in November and December 2024. Survey responses, comments made during the open houses, as well as advice and recommendations from the Steering Committee formed the basis for the vision statement and seven guiding principles that are carried throughout the Plan. Those seven principles are:

- Enhance and maintain the charming small-town character and sense of place.
- Promote a friendly and safe sense of community.
- Steward development intentionally to ensure any growth enhances rather than diminishes existing amenities and services, while protecting our natural resources.
- Support and promote local businesses that reflect the community's values, providing residents with diverse shopping and service options within the community.
- Prioritize the maintenance and improvement of roads and develop safe mobility options to connect community members.
- Foster strong community ties through cherished spaces, events, and historical preservation, honoring our shared heritage and the stories that connect us.
- Actively involve residents in decision-making processes to ensure that all voices are heard.

These guiding principles influenced the goals, policies, and strategies in all the major topics areas in the Plan: Land Use and Housing, East Colfax Avenue Design, Transportation and Mobility, Economic Development, and Cultural and Historical Resources.

A new feature of the updated Plan is the Implementation Matrix which details how each of the strategies will be carried out over the next 25 years. The matrix identifies entities and partnerships responsible for strategy implementation; timing, expressed as short-term (0-5 years) or long-term (6+ years); and potential funding sources.

In late August 2025 a draft of the Plan was posted on the Adams County project webpage (with links from Arapahoe County's webpage) opening the official four week public comment period. Arapahoe County staff reviewed the draft plan with the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners during study sessions on December 2, 2025, and January 13, 2026, respectively. The adoption draft version of the Plan has incorporated relevant comments from the public review as well as from the Commission and Board study sessions. The Board of County Commissioners in particular requested revisions to the Implementation Matrix to include additional partnerships responsible for implementing certain elements of the Plan.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The Future Land Use Map is a fundamental element of the updated Strasburg Subarea Plan. It is the visual representation of the Plan's goals, policies, and strategies related to growth, land use, and desired development patterns. The Future Land Use Map provides the policy basis for rezoning and land use regulations and helps guide decisions for development proposals and new infrastructure investment.

To start, staff and the Steering Committee reviewed the 2002 Future Land Use Map and land use category definitions. Discussions focused on the community's needs and desires, assumptions regarding water availability, and prioritizing development in those areas already served by infrastructure. The result is an updated Future Land Use Map that concentrates the bulk of new residential growth in Adams County.

The Arapahoe County portion of the updated Map includes the nine land use categories from the original 2002 map, with updated definitions, and two new categories: "Railroad", to identify the rail corridor, and "Recreation Commercial" which is applied to the KOA park, the Comanche Crossing Museum, and a unique property along Highway 36 that features a model train track and

buildings. Some additional refinements in land use classification were made to a few properties, primarily to reflect existing land uses.

PUBLIC COMMENT & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The opportunity for public involvement in the development of the Strasburg Subarea Plan was extensive. A detailed report of the outreach efforts is detailed in Appendix A of the Plan and is summarized below.

Surveys:

Adams County staff began the plan development process by conducting two surveys in the fall and winter of 2024. The first was a general community-wide survey which was posted on the project website. Staff notified residents about the survey through social media, by postcard which was mailed to each home in the Strasburg 80136 zip code, and by flyers that were posted at area businesses. In all, 262 people responded to the survey.

The second survey targeted area business owners. Fourteen owners completed the survey which staff collected in-person.

Outreach Events:

Additional public input was obtained at outreach events during the annual Strasburg Hometown Days celebration in 2024 and 2025, and two open houses at TBK Bank on November 20 and December 2, 2024. An additional open house was held on August 19, 2025, with business and owners of properties along the Colfax Avenue corridor to discuss the Plan's recommendations for corridor design improvements. Roughly 80 people attended the two open houses at TBK Bank, and about 30 attended the Colfax Avenue open house. Input received from these outreach events and the two surveys formed the basis of the Plan's vision statement, and many of its goals and policies.

Project Website and Social Media:

Adams County staff created a website to provide information about the plan and the plan update process. Arapahoe County also developed a webpage which included links to the primary Adams County site. The Adams County website had 223 subscribers that received regular project updates and invitations to all the outreach events.

In addition to the website, Adams County Communications posted to Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to encourage participation in the Plan's development and to inform people about upcoming events.

Community Steering Committee

A project steering committee was formed in August 2024 with the purpose of providing direction and information throughout the plan development process. The committee, which met monthly, was made up of 12 people from the Strasburg community that represented diverse backgrounds and ages.

Draft Plan Outreach

The draft Plan was posted on the Adams County website for a public comment period from late August through September 29, 2025. Links to the website were included on Arapahoe County's

project webpage. During the formal public review period, Adams and Arapahoe County staff invited the public to share their comments or ask questions about the draft Plan during two in-person events at local coffee shops, called “Coffee with Planners”, on September 9 and 10, 2025. Individuals could also send their written comments directly to Adams County staff. Eight people attended the “Coffee with Planners” events and others provided comments via email. Some comments resulted in clarifying or verifying certain elements of the Plan, however no comment necessitated revision of any of its goals, policies or strategies.

REVIEWING AGENCY COMMENTS

Arapahoe County staff sent the draft Plan to 23 referral agencies and entities. Three agencies submitted comments, and one agency, the Arapahoe County Sheriff’s Department submitted a “no comment” response.

Arapahoe County Public Health (ACPH) commented about the projected increase in population over the life of the Plan (from 4,376 in 2020 to an estimated 6,889 by 2050). The agency recommended evaluating wastewater treatment system capacity and performance, and long-term water supply and potable water demand as part of implementing the Plan.

Staff Comment: As noted in ACPH’s comments, the Economic Development section of the Plan identifies infrastructure investment, including water system improvements, as a key strategic priority necessary to implement the Plan’s more specific goals, actions, and policy recommendations. This is a key strategy that will endure through the life of the Plan.

Further, as part of any development proposal, Arapahoe County evaluates the availability of water, and the adequacy and capacity of wastewater systems to support the development. As necessary, the Strasburg Water and Sanitation District is consulted and afforded the opportunity to comment on and add specific requirements to those proposed developments within its boundaries.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) submitted detailed comments regarding potential impacts to area wildlife from development activities. CPW expressed particular concern regarding the proposed development of trails along riparian corridors.

Page 6 of the Plan includes a proposed trail map. Prepared in 2014 as part of the Strasburg Parks and Recreation District’s Strategic Plan, this map generally depicts proposed trail routes, some of which parallel and cross the Wolf Creek and Comanche Creek drainages. In response to CPW’s concerns, staff from Adams and Arapahoe counties met with CPW representatives on May 19, 2026, and added language in the Plan regarding coordination with CPW and prioritization of wildlife habitat in the floodplains.

The other items of concern addressed in CPW’s written comments include limitations on construction, site lighting, fencing requirements, leash law enforcement, noise impacts, and weed mitigation. Because CPW is a referral agency for all development proposals within the county, many of these concerns can and should be addressed on a site-by-site, project-by-project basis as individual properties are proposed for development.

Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) commented that work in the CDOT right-of-way requires an access, utility, or special use permit. The State Highway Access Code dictates any improvements when an access is built, modified, or closed.

Staff Comment: Section 2 of the Plan includes a series of policies and strategies with a goal of improving the East Colfax corridor. Staff developed design ideas in consultation with CDOT representatives. It is understood that any specific design improvements will have to be reviewed and approved by CDOT.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICES

The Planning Commission public hearing was noticed in newspapers of general circulation within the County, including the I-70 Scout on May 27, 2026, the Littleton Independent, Englewood Herald, and Centennial Citizen on May 28, 2026, and the Eastern Colorado News on May 29, 2026. Staff referred the proposed amendment to the Colorado Department of Local Affairs as required by Colorado Revised Statutes on May 5, 2026.

STAFF FINDINGS

Staff finds that:

1. Strasburg 2050: Strasburg Subarea Plan is an update of the 2002 Strasburg Plan and reflects the aspirations of the community.
2. Strasburg 2050: Strasburg Subarea Plan was prepared with extensive involvement of residents, businesses, property owners, and stakeholders in the Strasburg planning area.
3. The Planning Commission reviewed the draft Strasburg 2050: Strasburg Subarea Plan at a study session on December 2, 2025.
4. Strasburg 2050: Strasburg Subarea Plan sets forth a vision, goals, policies, and strategies that closely align with those in the 2018 Comprehensive Plan and reflect the opinions and comments from the Strasburg community.
5. The Planning Commission has the authority to amend the Comprehensive Plan to adopt, by reference, Strasburg 2050: Strasburg Subarea Plan as an element of the Comprehensive Plan, following a public hearing.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of Case No. LR25-002, a Comprehensive Plan amendment to adopt, by reference, Strasburg 2050: Strasburg Subarea Plan as an element of the 2018 Comprehensive Plan based on the findings and analysis of this staff report.

PLANNING COMMISSION DRAFT MOTIONS

Motion for Approval:

In the case of LR25-002, Arapahoe County 2018 Comprehensive Plan Amendment to adopt, by reference, Strasburg 2050: Strasburg Subarea Plan, I have reviewed the staff report, including all exhibits and attachments and have listened to staff's presentation and any public comment as presented at the hearing and hereby move to adopt this Comprehensive Plan amendment based

on the findings in the staff report and submit the Strasburg Subarea Plan to the Arapahoe County Board of County Commissioners for approval.

Motion for Denial:

In the case of LR25-002, Arapahoe County 2018 Comprehensive Plan Amendment to adopt, by reference, Strasburg 2050: Strasburg Subarea Plan, I have reviewed the staff report, including all exhibits and attachments and have listened to staff's presentation and any public comment as presented at the hearing and hereby move to deny this Comprehensive Plan amendment based on the following findings:

1. *State new findings in support of denial as part of the motion.*

Continue to a Date Certain:

In the case of LR25-002, Arapahoe County 2018 Comprehensive Plan Amendment to adopt, by reference, Strasburg 2050: Strasburg Subarea Plan, I move to continue the hearing to *[date certain]*, 6:30 p.m., at this same location, to obtain additional information and to further consider the information presented.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Planning Commission Resolution – Amendment of the 2018 Arapahoe County Comprehensive Plan to Incorporate Strasburg 2050: Strasburg Subarea Plan.
2. Adoption Draft Strasburg 2050: Strasburg Subarea Plan.
3. Referral Comments.
4. Presentation.