

How Zoning Differs From Platting

The Planning and Zoning Division processes a variety of Land Use Applications. The most common applications pertain to Zoning and Platting. This Guide provides a brief overview of the differences between Zoning and Platting.

Zoning refers to the uses allowed on a piece of property. Basic uses allowed by zoning include agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial, or a mix of those uses.

In addition to designating land use, zoning also designates standards for permitted uses. Standards may include dimensions for the size of the property, size of a structure, distance a structure must be from a property line and maximum height of the structure. Standards may also include requirements for architectural treatments, lighting, and even the size and number of parking spaces and signs.

The Jefferson County Zoning Resolution regulates a property's zoning. The Zoning Resolution outlines uses and standards for a variety of typical uses, such as commercial, industrial, mixed use, residential and agricultural uses. (All standard zone districts are listed on page 4). To allow more flexibility for a property owner, the Zoning Resolution also provides a zone district called Planned Development. The Planned Development district allows a property owner to create their own set of regulations that may allow uses and standards not provided for or inadequately addressed by the 44 standard zone districts.

The Zoning Resolution also contains overlay zone districts which are supplementary to the underlying zone district regulations. Overlay zone districts act as an additional level of protection. They provide standards for areas where floodplains, geologic hazards, or wildfire occur, or where ground water is the source of drinking water. These additional standards are designed to reduce adverse impacts to the uses that are permitted by the underlying zone district.

With so much variety in zoning throughout Jefferson County, individuals should contact the Planning and Zoning Division to find out more about permitted uses and standards for a specific property.

Platting involves dividing a piece of property to create a building site. It is synonymous with the term "subdivision." In 1972, State Statute made it illegal to transfer land that contains less than 35 acres from one party to another without going through a local jurisdiction's subdivision process. In the subdivision process, the local jurisdiction reviews the request to ensure that both the portion of the property to be sold and the remaining portion of the property comply with the applicable Zone District regulations and all other applicable regulations.

The Jefferson County Land Development Regulation regulates the platting, or subdivision, of a piece of property. The Land Development Regulation contains engineering specifications related to grading, drainage, street construction, and other regulations related to water, wildlife, wildfire, sensory impacts, and lot layout. These regulations must be met for the building site to be created.

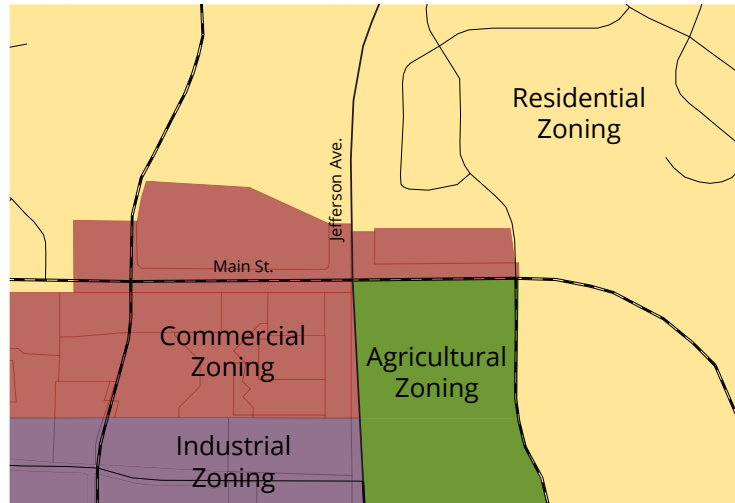
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Zoning Map

This map is a simplified zoning map. It shows the four most common types of zoning in Jefferson County. For example, if a property is within the residential zone, the yellow area, only residential uses are allowed. A gas station or an office building are not allowed in a residential zone.



How to Change Zoning: The Rezoning Process

- Property must be rezoned to allow for a different use, or to change a standard.
- Process starts with an application to the Planning and Zoning Division. Planner evaluates request and considers feedback from other applicable County/State agencies and the community.
- Request is presented to both the Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners at a public hearing.
- Approval is discretionary. Decisions may be based on the Board of County Commissioner's opinion of the appropriate use for that property.

Vacant Land

All vacant land in Jefferson County is zoned; the property has been given a specific set of uses and standards to which it can be developed.

Zoning remains with the land, no matter how many times the piece of property has been sold and no matter how long it takes the property owner to develop it. To develop vacant land in compliance with the existing zoning, the property owner may need to go through a subdivision or Site Development Plan process prior to being able to apply for a building permit.

Zoning

Explanation: Zoning is the designation of a use(s), that can occur on property.

Regulation: The designation of standards for the permitted use. Standards may include: dimensions for the size of the property, size of a structure, distance a structure must be from the property line, maximum height of the structure, architectural treatments, lighting, and size and number of parking spaces and signs.

The Zoning Resolution is the tool used by Jefferson County to regulate a property's zoning.

Terminology: Zoned, Rezoning, Zone District, Standard Zone District, Planned Development, Overlay Zone District.

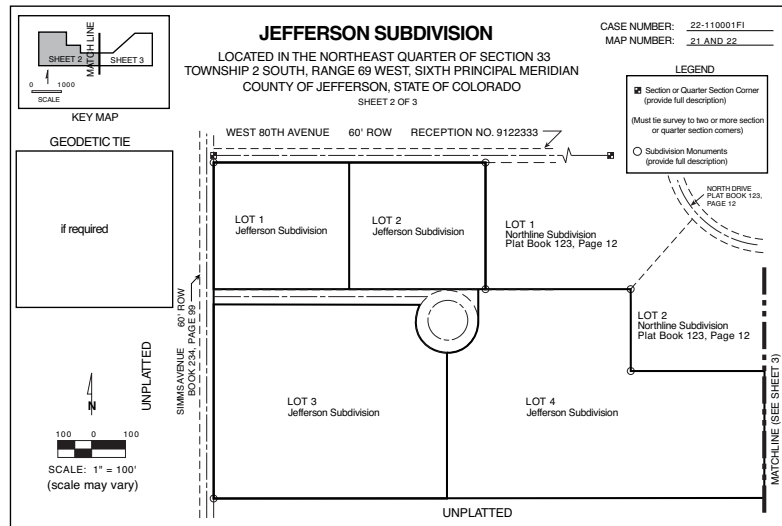
Applicability: Every piece of land in Jefferson County is zoned to allow one or more of these basic uses: agricultural, residential, commercial, and industrial. Uses on that property must be allowed by its zoning.

How Zoning Differs From Platting

Plat Map

This map is a simplified platting map. It shows how the property has been divided into multiple pieces of property.

The Jefferson Subdivision is an example of a plat. This is what is prepared, approved and recorded in order to subdivide a piece of property.



How to Plat: The Platting Process

- Property must be platted to create a new lot(s) or to change the existing property lines.
- Process starts with an application to the Planning and Zoning Division. Engineer evaluates request for compliance with the Land Development Regulation, and other applicable county and state regulations and technical criteria.
- Request is presented to the Planning Commission and/or Board of County Commissioners for final approval.
- Approval is not discretionary. Decisions must be based on whether or not the application complies with all technical regulations and criteria.

Vacant Land

If vacant land has been platted, the plat remains with the land, no matter how many times the piece of property has been sold and no matter how long it takes the property owner to develop it. To develop vacant land in compliance with the existing plat, the property owner must obtain a building permit for single family residential uses, or apply for a Site Development Plan for multifamily, commercial, industrial or institutional uses.

Platting

Explanation: Platting is the process of dividing property to create a building site.

Regulation: The approval that the new and/or modified piece of property complies with the applicable zoning regulations and all other applicable regulations.

The Land Development Regulation is the tool used by Jefferson County to regulate the platting of a piece of property.

Terminology: Subdivision, Plat, Platted, Division of Land, Land Split, Exemption from Platting, Minor Adjustment.

Applicability: Every piece of property that is created or modified must be platted. The only exceptions are pieces of property larger than 35 acres or properties created because of a transportation project.

How Zoning Differs From Platting

The Zoning Resolution has regulations for:

- Processes, such as building permits, rezonings, and site development plans
- Zone Districts:
 - Agricultural
 - Commercial
 - Conservation
 - Corridor
 - Industrial
 - Mineral Conservation
 - Mixed Use
 - Mobile Home
 - Mountain Residential
 - Overlay
 - Planned Development
 - Residential
 - Suburban Residential
- Accessory Uses
- Alternate Energy Resources
- Architecture
- Gravel Mining
- Home Occupations
- Landscaping
- Land Disturbance
- Lighting
- Nonconforming Buildings Structures and Uses
- Off-Street Parking and Loading
- Oil and Gas
- Signs and Outdoor Advertising Devices
- Special Events
- Stormwater Quality Structures
- Telecommunication Uses

The Land Development Regulation has regulations for:

- Processes, such as preliminary and final plats, rural clusters, minor adjustments and vacations of right-of-way
- Circulation
- Drainage
- Fire Protection
- Floodplain
- Geologic and Geotechnical
- Grading, Erosion and Sediment Control
- Historical, Archaeological, Paleontological
- Radiation
- School and Park Requirements
- Sensory Impact
- Stormwater Quality Structures
- Subsurface Groundwater Collection Systems
- Telecommunication Uses
- Trails
- Utilities
- Wastewater
- Water Supply
- Wildlife, Vegetation and Landscaping

The Planning and Zoning Division's staff is available to answer questions about zoning and/or platting. There are three ways to reach them: **1)** send an email to pzweb@jeffco.us, **2)** call 303-271-8700 to leave a message for the appropriate staff member, or **3)** make an appointment to talk with a staff member. An interactive map showing zoning may also be found at <https://gis.jeffco.us/>. Office hours are Monday through Thursday, 8:00 am - 5:30 pm.

Associated Zoning Processes

There are two different kinds of Zoning: Standard Zone District and Planned Development.

Standard Zone District: A Standard Zone District refers to one of the 44 Zone Districts in the Zoning Resolution. Specific uses and standards are provided for each standard zone district.

Planned Development: To allow more flexibility, the Zoning Resolution provides for a zone district called Planned Development. The Planned Development district allows for the property owner to create their own set of regulations that may allow uses and standards not provided for or inadequately addressed by the standard zone districts.

Associated Platting Processes

There are various ways to “plat” a property. Depending on the existing situation and the requested end result, the property may be eligible for a Minor Adjustment, Exemption from Platting, Combination Plat, or Preliminary Plat and Final Plat.

Minor Adjustments: This is a simplified platting process that allows modifications to property lines.

Exemptions from Platting: This is a modified platting process that allows discretion by the Board of County Commissioners for certain divisions of land.

Preliminary and Final Plat: This process was created to offer an expedited review of subdivision applications. It combines the separate Preliminary Plat and Final plat processes into a single process.

Preliminary Plat and Final Plat: This is a two-step platting process.