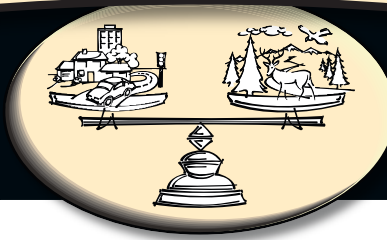


# CITIZEN'S GUIDE

Jefferson County  
Planning & Zoning

*"Dedicated to outstanding customer service."*



100 Jefferson County Parkway, Suite 3550  
Golden, Colorado 80419-3550  
Phone (303) 271-8700 • Fax (303) 271-8744  
<http://planning.jeffco.us>

## How Does Zoning Differ 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 designation of a use(s), that can occur on a piece of property. Four basic types of zoning exist in Jefferson County: agricultural, residential, commercial, and industrial. Every piece of land in Jefferson County has zoning that allows one or more of these basic 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 helps regulate a property's zoning. The Zoning Resolution has a set of regulations for three agricultural zone districts, 15 residential zone districts, four commercial zone districts, four industrial zone districts, and one mixed use zone district. Also, to allow more flexibility for a property owner, the Zoning Resolution provides a zone district called Planned Development. The Planned Development district allows a property owner to create his/her own set of regulations that may allow uses and standards not provided for or inadequately addressed by the 27 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 from natural hazards, such as floods, wildfire,

and dipping bedrock and other geologic hazards. These overlay regulations prescribe additional provisions 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 your property or other property.

## ZONING VS PLATTING

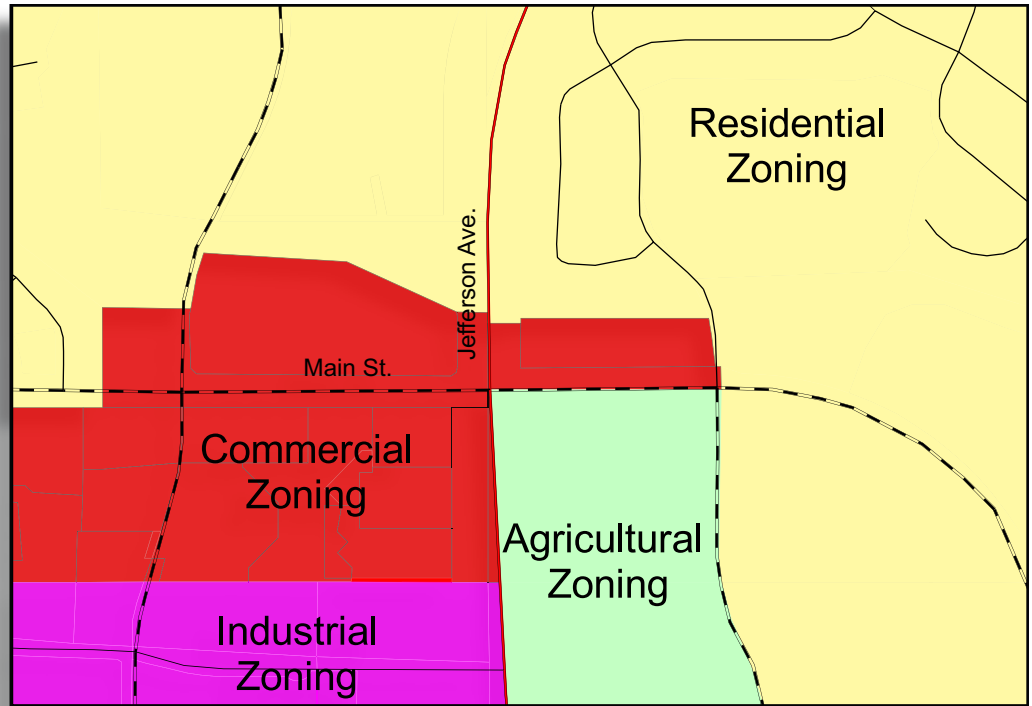
**Platting** involves dividing a piece of property to create a building site. It is synonymous with the term "subdivision." In 1972, State Statute made it illegal to transfer land that contains less than 35 acres from one party to another without going through a local jurisdiction's subdivision process. 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 helps regulate the platting, or subdivision, of a piece of property. The Land Development Regulation contains "engineering" specifications that pertain to grading, drainage, street construction, and so forth. The Land Development Regulation can be seen as the set of regulations that a property owner must comply with so that a piece of property can be built upon.

# 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 another 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 may be discretionary- decisions may be based on the Board of County Commissioner’s opinion of the appropriate use for that property.

### Vacant Land

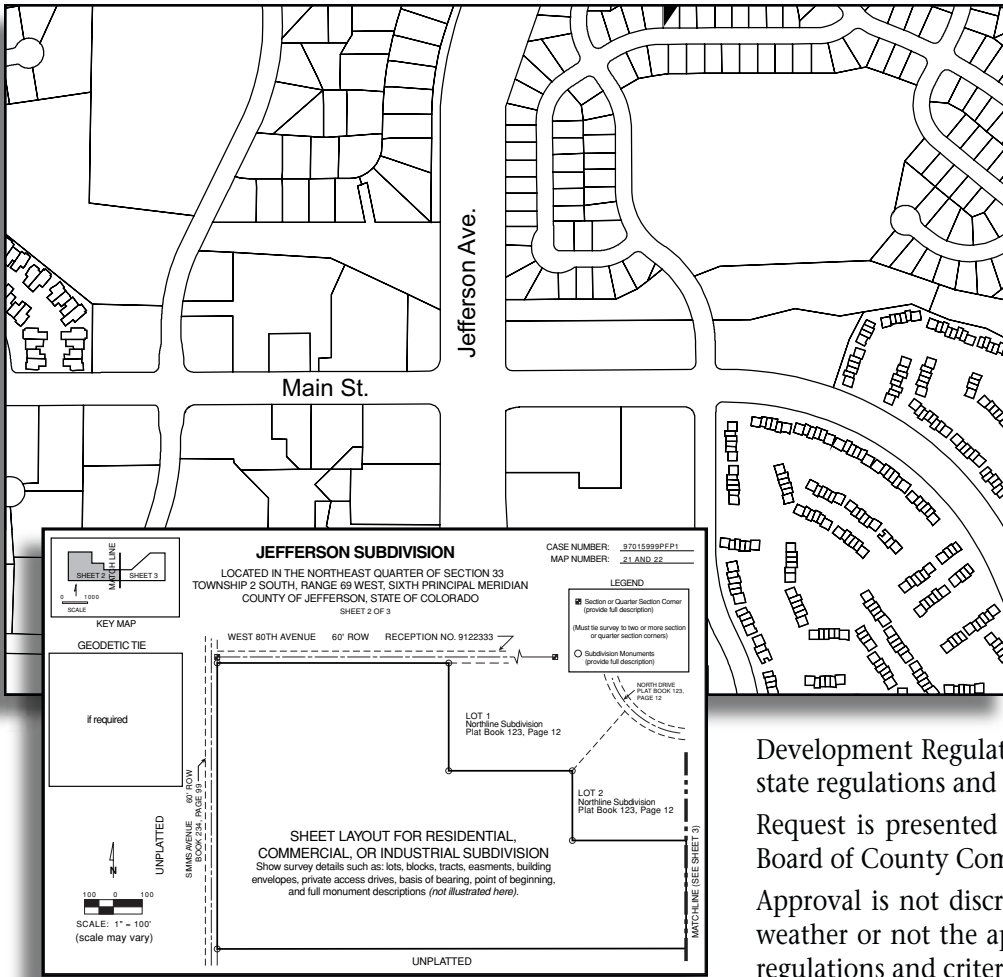
All vacant land in Jefferson County is zoned- the property has been given a specific set of uses and standards to which it can be developed.

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 must only obtain the appropriate approvals and building permits from the County. These are administrative processes, where the community would not be informed.

### ZONING

<b>Explanation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The designation of a use(s), that can occur on property.</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>
<b>Regulation</b>	The Zoning Resolution is the tool used by Jefferson County to regulate a property’s zoning.
<b>Terminology</b>	Zoned, Rezoning, Zone District, Standard Zone District, Planned Development, Overlay Zone District
<b>Applicability</b>	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 conform to its zoning.

The Planning and Zoning Division is available Monday through Friday from 7:30 am to 5:30 am at 303-271-8700 to answer any questions about zoning and/or platting. Staff can provide you with general information about any of the County’s zoning and platting regulations or with specific information about a specific property. You may also view the Planning and Zoning Division’s Interactive database at <http://www.co.jefferson.co.us/nonresinv/> to learn more about a specific property.



## Platting 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 change the existing property lines, or create a new lot(s).

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 weather or not the application complies with all technical regulations and criteria.

## PLATTING

- The process of dividing property to create a building site.
- The approval that the new and/or modified piece of property comply 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.

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

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.

### Explanation

### Regulation

### Terminology

### Applicability

## Vacant Land

All vacant land in Jefferson County is platted- the property can be built upon.

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 only obtain the appropriate approvals and building permits from the County. These are administrative processes, where the community would not be informed.

## About the Zoning Resolution

### The Zoning Resolution has regulations for:

- 3 agricultural zone districts
- 15 residential zone districts
- 4 commercial zone districts
- 4 industrial zone districts
- 1 mixed use zone district
- 1 planned development zone district
- 6 overlay zone districts
- Accessory Uses
- Nonconforming Buildings Structures and Uses
- Telecommunication Uses
- Home Occupations
- Special Events
- Signs and Outdoor Advertising Devices
- Lighting
- Architecture
- Off-Street Parking and Loading
- Landscaping

## About the Land Development Regulation

### The Land Development Regulation has regulations for:

- Circulation
- Trails
- Grading, Erosion and Sediment Control
- Drainage
- Subsurface Groundwater Collection Systems
- Floodplain
- Water Supply
- Wastewater
- Utilities
- Fire Protection
- Geologic and Geotechnical
- Sensory Impact
- Radiation
- Wildlife, Vegetation and Landscaping
- Historical, Archaeological, Paleontological
- School and Park Requirements



## 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 27 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 27 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.

**Combination Plats:** This is a modified platting process for the subdivision of 9 single family detached lots or 12 single family attached lots.

**Preliminary Plat and Final Plat:** This is a two-step platting process for all property not eligible for the other processes in the County.