



Date: Thursday, October 16, 2025
Time: 3:30 PM
Location: Hybrid - In-Person: Estes Valley Community Center Classroom, 660 Community Dr, Estes Park, CO 80517 or Virtual, Zoom.

ESTES VALLEY PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

The Larimer County Estes Valley Planning Advisory Committee met at the Estes Valley Community Center and virtually via Zoom video at 3:30 p.m. on Thursday, October 16, 2025, at which time the following business was transacted.

Committee members present in-person: Drew Webb and Scott Stewart. Committee members present virtually: David Converse and Nataly Handlos.

Staff present in-person: Matt Lafferty, Michael Whitley, and Ryane Oswandel (Community Development Planning Division) Staff present virtually: Rebecca Everette (Community Development Director)

Board of County Commissioners present: None. Commissioner Shadduck-McNally was not able to attend.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Member Webb moved, and Member Stewart seconded the motion to adopt the October 16, 2025, agenda of the Larimer County Estes Valley Planning Advisory Committee, as presented. Members Webb, Stewart, Handlos, and Converse voted in favor. The motion carried (4-0).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Member Webb moved, and Member Stewart seconded the motion to approve the July 17, 2025, minutes of the Larimer County Estes Valley Planning Advisory Committee, as presented. Members Webb, Stewart, Handlos, and Converse voted in favor. The motion carried (4-0).

COMMUNICATION ITEMS

COMMISSIONER UPDATES

Rebecca Everette provided updates on behalf of Commissioner Shadduck-McNally.

- 2026 County Budget: The County Manager's Proposed Budget for 2026 is finished and available online at larimer.gov. Key dates provided include:
 - Work session (televised): Wednesday, October 22nd at 2:30 p.m.
 - Public hearing (in-person and on Zoom): Monday, November 10th at 6 p.m.
 - Adoption of the budget: Thursday, December 11th. The commissioners are seeking input regarding proposed funding and reductions intended to match anticipated 2026 revenues.

- EVPAC Vacancies: Doyle Baker resigned from the committee. The commissioners have decided not to advertise to fill the vacant positions at this time. The standard time frame for EVPAC appointments is in the spring. Commissioner Shadduck-McNally wishes to spend time discussing and refining the role, purpose, and scope of EVPAC before recruitment for vacant positions begins. The committee confirmed that three members constitute a quorum.
- Ballot Initiatives: Drew Webb asked how upcoming tax initiatives affect the budget. Rebecca Everett responded:
 - Transportation Sales Tax: If this tax passes, funding would directly affect the county budget, allocated towards transportation/road and bridge departments. The county has not budgeted assuming this initiative will pass, so the budget would need to be revised to include new revenue and expenses if approved.
 - Child Care Tax: This is not a county-initiated tax, and the county would not be the recipient of the funds; they would be managed by the Early Childhood Council of Larimer County (a separate nonprofit).

STAFF UPDATES

- Special Events Land Use Code (LUC) Changes: Staff is currently conducting outreach and a public survey regarding the land use code section for special events, which is several years old. The current code uses a "one size fits all approach" to regulate events ranging from private weddings to large music festivals and road events, which has presented challenges. Staff is seeking to differentiate regulations based on event types and their actual impacts, while balancing recreation/tourism promotion with community impacts.
- Crossroads Ministry Event Denial: Drew Webb inquired about the Crossroads Ministry event at the YMCA of the Rockies being canceled after invitations were sent out. Rebecca Everett clarified that the issue stems from the YMCA continuously amending its master plan and expanding facilities without required county approvals. It was communicated to the YMCA that they were limited to three special events annually until they amended their plans. The Crossroads event was denied as the fourth application, exceeding this limit. Staff confirmed the YMCA chose not to appeal the decision. Staff emphasized the county's priority of consistency and fair application of regulations to all properties. Michael Whitley noted that the YMCA is currently working on modifying their special review approvals to enable them to host regular events within approved parameters without needing to go through the special event process each time. Drew Webb suggested that location (property size, distance to neighbors, and pre-existing use, such as the Stanley Hotel) should be considered in the code update. Staff encouraged this specific feedback via the survey.
- New Community Engagement Portal: Ryane Oswandel introduced the Larimer County Engage portal, a new mechanism for collecting public input on various projects, specifically development cases headed for hearing. The portal improves accessibility compared to traditional email input. The site is accessible from larimer.gov, via signs, and postcards using a QR code. Comments submitted (supporting or opposing a case) become part of the public record. Users must provide their name and email address for legal requirements, but do not necessarily need to create a full account. The portal uses transcription software for voicemails left via the provided phone number.
- Town of Estes Park Project Updates:
 - Land Development Code Update: Town staff completed initial outreach; consultants will outline potential changes over the next few months. The County plans to monitor the Town's progress and then evaluate what changes should be made to the County code for alignment, rather than updating simultaneously.

- Annexation Policy: The Town Board of Trustees is evaluating criteria for annexation, with a follow-up study session scheduled for October 28th. The County is acting as a resource (sharing intergovernmental agreement examples) but is not actively collaborating on the policy, respecting the Town's sole authority over annexation.
- Town Ballot Propositions: Staff does not anticipate a direct impact on county regulations, but there could be secondary effects, such as denied town developments moving to the county.
- Case Updates: Regular project case updates (following EVPAC recommendations) will now be provided via email by Christina, rather than being discussed during the meeting. This change was requested by County Commissioners to avoid prolonged discussion of decisions that have already been made. The committee agreed this was a more efficient process.

COMMITTEE MEMBER UPDATES

None.

PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION ITEMS

ITEM NO. 1 – ESTES FORWARD PLAN - IMPLEMENTATION STATUS UPDATE

PRESENTATION

Matt Lafferty provided an overview of the implementation status of the Estes Forward Plan, reviewing strategic elements based on their timing (short-term: 1–2 years; mid-term: up to 5–6 years; long-term, and ongoing). Many items are ongoing functions of the development review process. Areas highlighted for future EVPAC input included exploring Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) and strengthening regulations for wildlife movement regarding legacy fencing removal.

ESTES VALLEY PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND STAFF DISCUSSION

- Viewsheds/Grading Standards (NED1D): The short-term action to strengthen grading standards has not been started. Staff intend to wait and see how the Town of Estes Park amends its regulations before proceeding.
- Wildlife Assessment (NE3.C): David Converse asked about the lack of a formal habitat assessment map for development reviews. Matt Lafferty noted the Town is looking at wildlife assessment as part of their code amendments, and the County relies on agencies like Colorado Parks and Wildlife for guidance in development review.
- Land Use Review Procedures (BE3J): Discussion was held regarding reviewing the land uses and administrative special review processes that were adopted when the Estes Valley IGA dissolved. Michael Whitley explained this review is necessary because uses were quickly converted into the County's administrative special review process without full re-evaluation. Committee members agreed that reviewing these tables of uses and procedures would be a worthwhile activity for the committee. Rebecca Everette suggested this task would be valuable to undertake following the completion of the Town's code update.
- Next Steps: The committee agreed to continue conversation about the implementation status sheet at the next meeting (January) with specific comments and questions, to allow time to further review the information.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Joan Hooper (Watershed Coalition Board)

Testimony

- The Board recently achieved positive movement with the town regarding a wildlife assessment reference document, which is a high priority and likely to be finished within the year. This document could provide a beneficial tool for planning valley wide.

ITEM NO. 2 – TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS - PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

PRESENTATION

Rebecca Everette introduced the TDR project, funded by the Strong Communities Grant Program from the State of Colorado. TDR is a market-based incentive program allowing density transfer from sensitive areas ("sending areas") to appropriate growth locations ("receiving areas"). The project is a direct implementation of Action Item NE 2.F in the Estes Forward Plan. The one-year project schedule ends in September 2026. A consulting team including Logan Simpson, ECONorthwest and Skip Swenson (economics/TDR expertise) has been hired. Staff involved include Rebecca Everette, Danielle Reimanis, Matt Lafferty, and Scott Benton. TDR has a history of success in the 1998 Fossil Creek TDU program, which protected over 500 acres at no financial cost to the county/city. The project will involve identifying sending/receiving areas (Phase 2) and designing the program (Phase 3), including evaluating TDR bank feasibility and administration options.

ESTES VALLEY PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND STAFF DISCUSSION

- Scope and Location: The TDR program could potentially operate throughout Larimer County and could include partnerships with municipalities. Committee members noted that the Estes Valley could potentially function solely as a sending area for density credits, with receiving areas located elsewhere in Larimer County, and noted that there could be challenges with increasing density in areas of the Valley.
- Maps: Staff confirmed that maps prioritizing sending and receiving areas will be produced in Phase 2.
- Developer Incentive: Nataly Handlos questioned the developer incentive. Drew Webb suggested the incentive is financial, as higher density reduces expensive infrastructure costs (electrical, sewer, road).
- Stakeholder Engagement: Staff will form two stakeholder groups (a Working Group and a Municipal Advisory Group) and offer one-on-one interviews and site visits. Staff asked for input on stakeholders to include in the project. Committee members requested that staff send the committee the current list of identified stakeholders before the members submit additional suggestions to avoid duplication.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

None.

ACTION ITEMS

ITEM NO. 1 - ELECTION OF CHAIR, VICE CHAIR, AND SECRETARY

Commissioner Converse was elected as the Estes Valley Planning Advisory Committee Chair.

Commissioner Webb was elected as the Estes Valley Planning Advisory Committee Vice Chair.

Commissioner Stewart was elected as the Estes Valley Planning Advisory Committee Secretary.

OTHER BUSINESS

David Converse asked members to send any ideas for the next meeting (scheduled for January) directly to Rebecca Everette. Scott Stewart offered to volunteer for one of the TDR working groups.

ADJOURN

With there being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm.