

# City Planning & Growth in Colorado Springs

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# Planning 101



## Topics of Discussion:

- History of Planning and Basic Planning Principles
- What is a Comprehensive Plan?
- PlanCOS
- What is Zoning?
- General Colorado Springs Planning Processes
- How to get involved!

# Planning 101



## History of Urban Planning:

Protection of the public health, safety, and welfare

- Industrial Revolution
- Modern concerns, ie – sanitation, natural light, over-crowding

## Zoning

- 1904 – Los Angeles land-use restrictions
- 1916 – New York City adopted city-wide regulations
- 1926 – Village of Euclid, Ohio vs Ambler Realty Co. Supreme Court Case & Euclidean (exclusionary) zoning

Theories – City Beautiful, Monumental Design, Garden City, Garden Suburb, New Urbanism

- City Beautiful – order, balance, tree-lined boulevards
- Monumental Design – axis, buildings organized around a public square
- Garden City – high density around a greenbelt or open space
- Garden Suburb – curving streets, well-landscaped greenspace
- New Urbanism – walkable, compact, sustainable, “eyes on the street”, no sprawl

## Housing

- US Housing Acts – 1949 (Urban Renewal), 1954 (Comp Planning Grants), 1966 (Model Cities), 1974 (CDBG), 1977 (UDAG)
- 1965 – HUD Created

## Comprehensive Planning

- 1928 – Standard City Planning Enabling Act



# Planning 101



## What is Zoning?

Establishes permitted uses on a property

- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Parks

Regulates dimensional and development standards

- Building setbacks
- Parking
- Landscape requirements

If a use is permitted, cannot be denied\*

- Must comply with all other codified standards, but in general, if a zoning allows for an ice cream shop, the ice cream shop application cannot be denied

Colorado Springs Code of Ordinances – Chapter 7



Single-Family Residential



Multi-Family Residential



Commercial



Civic



Industrial



Agriculture/Park/Open Space

# Planning 101



# POP QUIZ!

What year did Colorado Springs adopt our first Zoning Code?

- A. 1914
- B. 1972
- C. 1926
- D. 2001

## Planning 101



# POP QUIZ!

**What color is assigned to single-family residential zone districts?**

- A. Yellow
- B. Red
- C. Green
- D. Black

# Planning 101



# POP QUIZ!

**What type of document would house a city's vision?**

- A. Zoning Code
- B. Comprehensive Plan
- C. Infrastructure Manual
- D. City Song

# Planning 101



## Colorado Springs Planning Processes: Planning Staff does not have control over what applications are submitted!

### Annexations

### Rezoning

- 'Hard zoning' – established zone districts
- PUD – "create your own zoning district"

### Development Plan

- Building orientation, footprint
- Setbacks
- Parking
- Landscaping

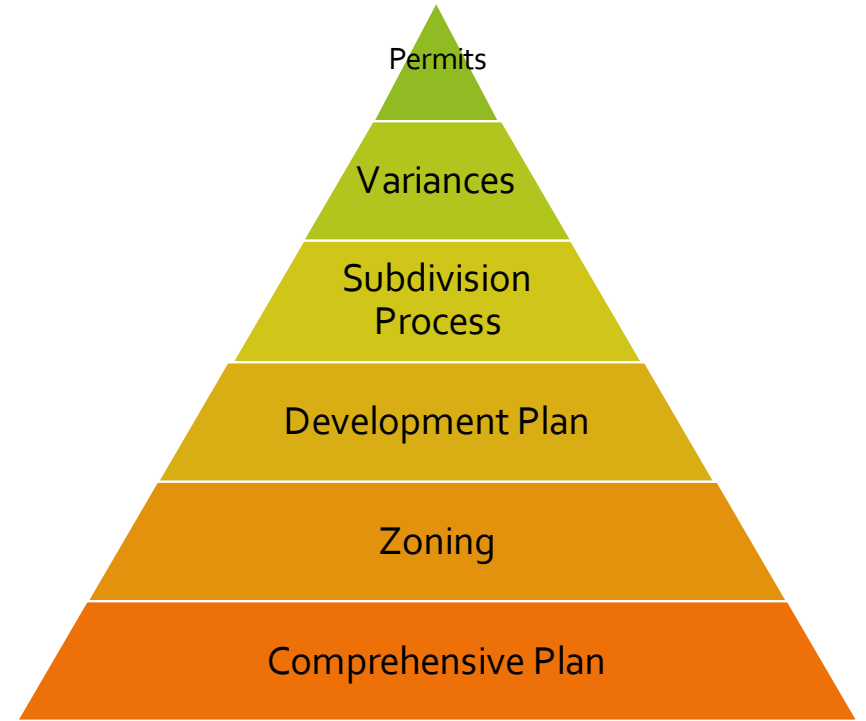
### Subdivision Process

- Platting – Final Plat/Replat
- If meets Code requirements, cannot be denied\*
- **Recorded with El Paso County Clerk**
- Must be recorded before pulling Building Permits with Pikes Peak Regional Building Department

### Variations

### Permits

- Ranges from a Home Occupation to a Temporary Use Permit





# Planning 101



## Further Reading:

[The Death and Life of Great American Cities](#) by Jane Jacobs

[The Image of the City](#) by Kevin Lynch

[The City in History](#) by Lewis Mumford

[Civilizing American Cities: Writings on City Landscapes](#) by Frederick Law Olmsted

[Silent Spring](#) by Rachel Carson

[The Next American Metropolis: Ecology, Community, and the American Dream](#) by Peter Calthorpe

[Planning in the USA: Policies, Issues, and Processes](#) by Barry Cullingworth

[The Edge City](#) by Joel Garreau

[Design with Nature](#) by Ian McHarg

[New Localism: How Cities Can Thrive in the Age of Populism](#) by Bruce Katz and Jeremy Nowak

# Land Use Review Neighborhood Liaison



## How to get involved!

- Green Postcards – what are they?
- Public Hearings
- Ask me questions! –  
[Morgan.Hester@coloradosprings.gov](mailto:Morgan.Hester@coloradosprings.gov).

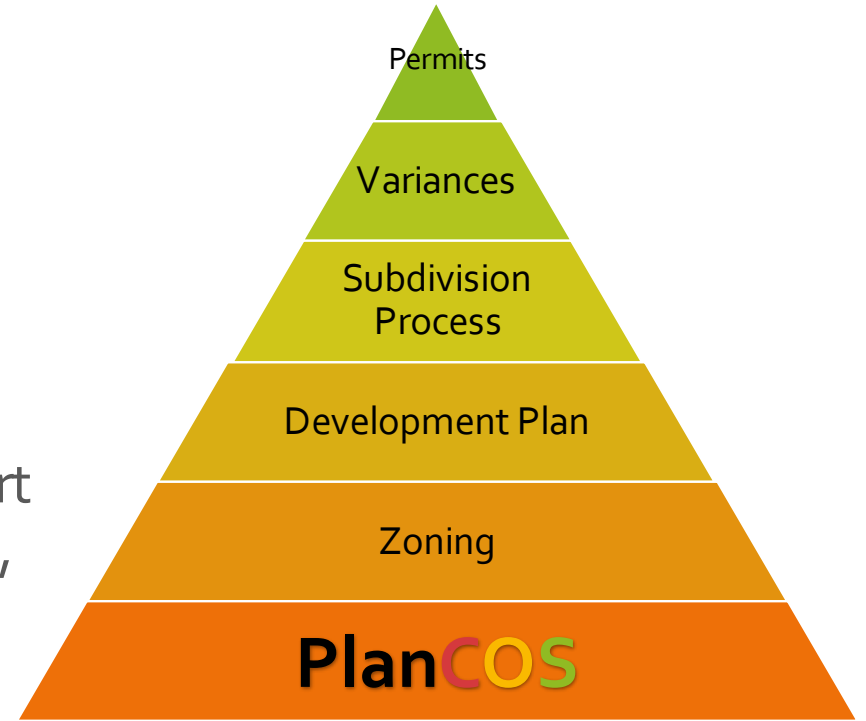
## Things to remember –

- All emails are part of the public record and will be included in agenda packets for public hearings.
- Excitement and support for projects is encouraged and welcomed!

# PlanCOS



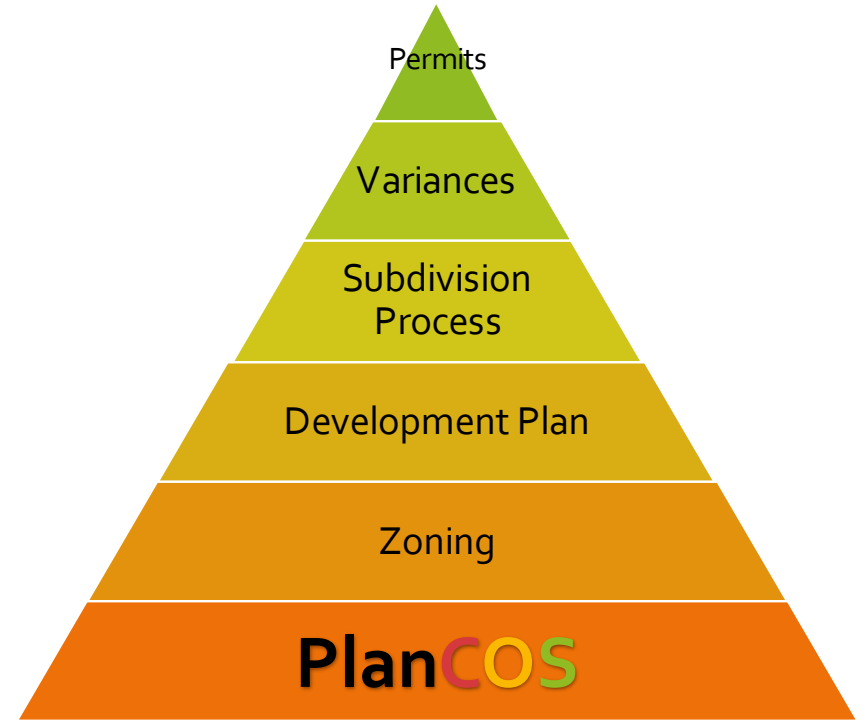
- PlanCOS is our community's plan for the physical development of Colorado Springs
- PlanCOS is intended to support and not to restrain the market, private initiative, strategic public investment, and innovation.



# PlanCOS



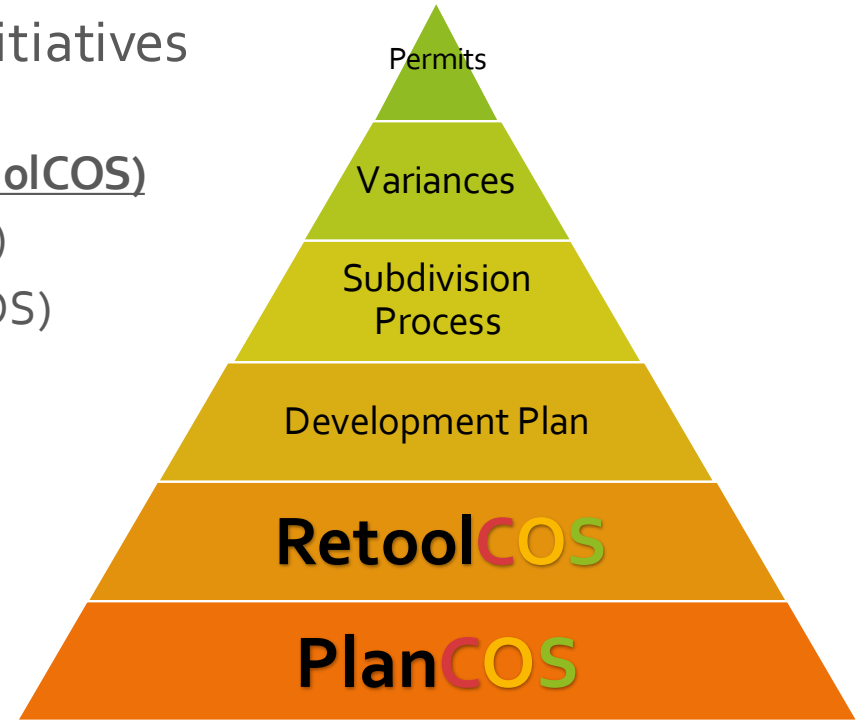
- OUR VISION:  
“We will build a great city that matches our scenery.”
- Policies, goals, and strategies are centered on six themes:
  - Vibrant Neighborhoods
  - Unique Places
  - Thriving Economy
  - Strong Connections
  - Renowned Culture
  - Majestic Landscapes



# PlanCOS



- PlanCOS recommended 6 key initiatives for implementation:
  - Zoning & Subdivision Code (RetoolCOS)
  - Transportation Plan (ConnectCOS)
  - Attainable Housing Plan (HomeCOS)
  - Smart Cities Initiative (SmartCOS)
  - Annexation Plan (AnnexCOS)
  - Neighborhood Planning Program



Want to stay up to date on RetoolCOS?  
[Coloradosprings.gov/retoolcos](https://coloradosprings.gov/retoolcos)

# RetoolCOS



- 3 Modules + Consolidated Draft + Final Draft



- Projected adoption of UDC in 2022
  - Public process through Planning Commission and City Council

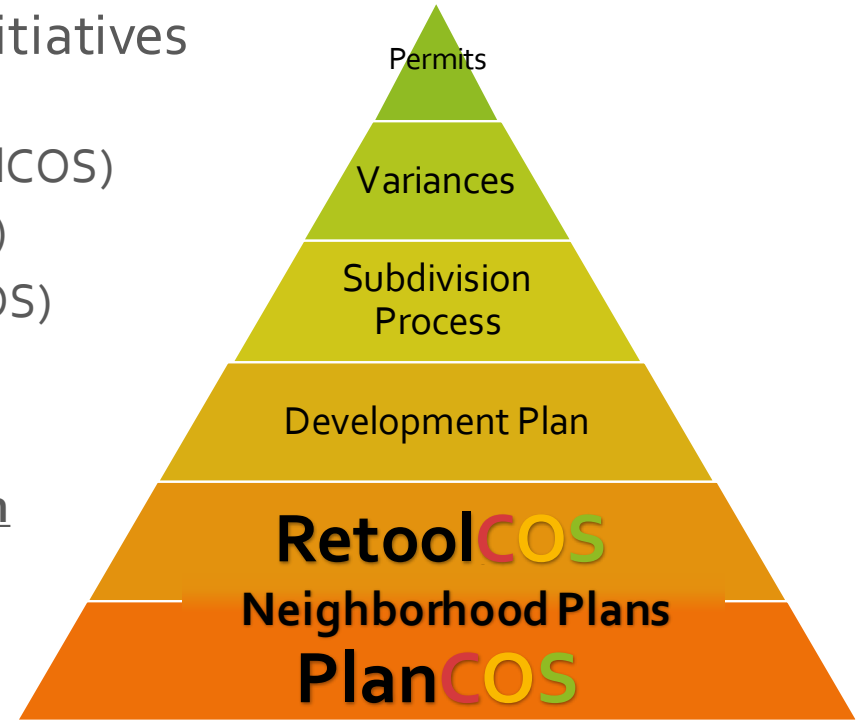
Want to stay up to date on RetoolCOS?

**Coloradosprings.gov/retoolcos** or email  
**[RetoolCOS@coloradosprings.gov](mailto:RetoolCOS@coloradosprings.gov)**

# PlanCOS



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# Neighborhood Planning Program

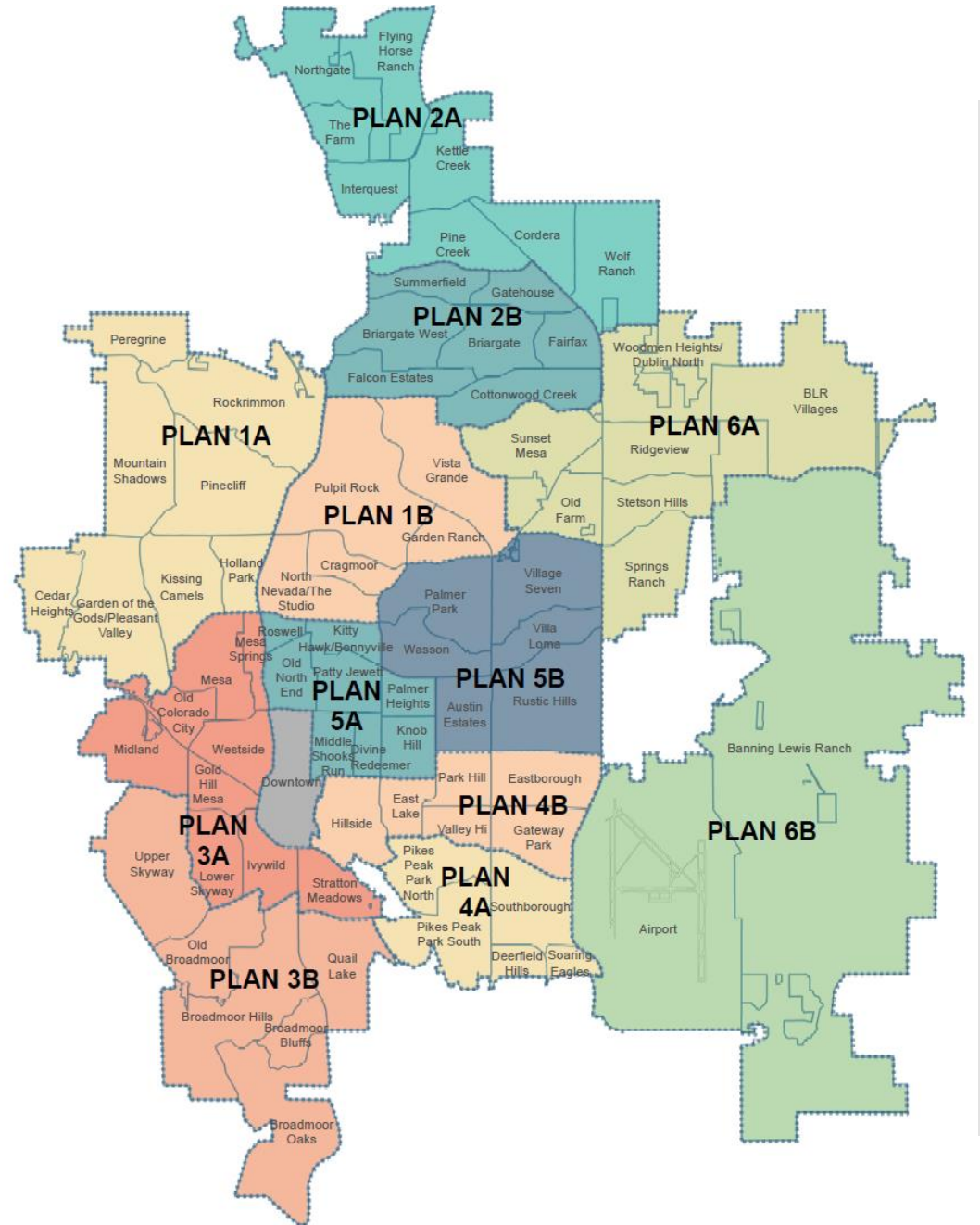


Apply larger visions in PlanCOS in a practical, neighborhood-level manner which addresses the unique characteristics and needs of different areas within the Plan's boundary.

12 total plans

Priority based on need

Each constructed using PlanCOS's Vision Themes





# Neighborhood Plan Priority



Timing and order of neighborhood plans will be based on need using criteria:

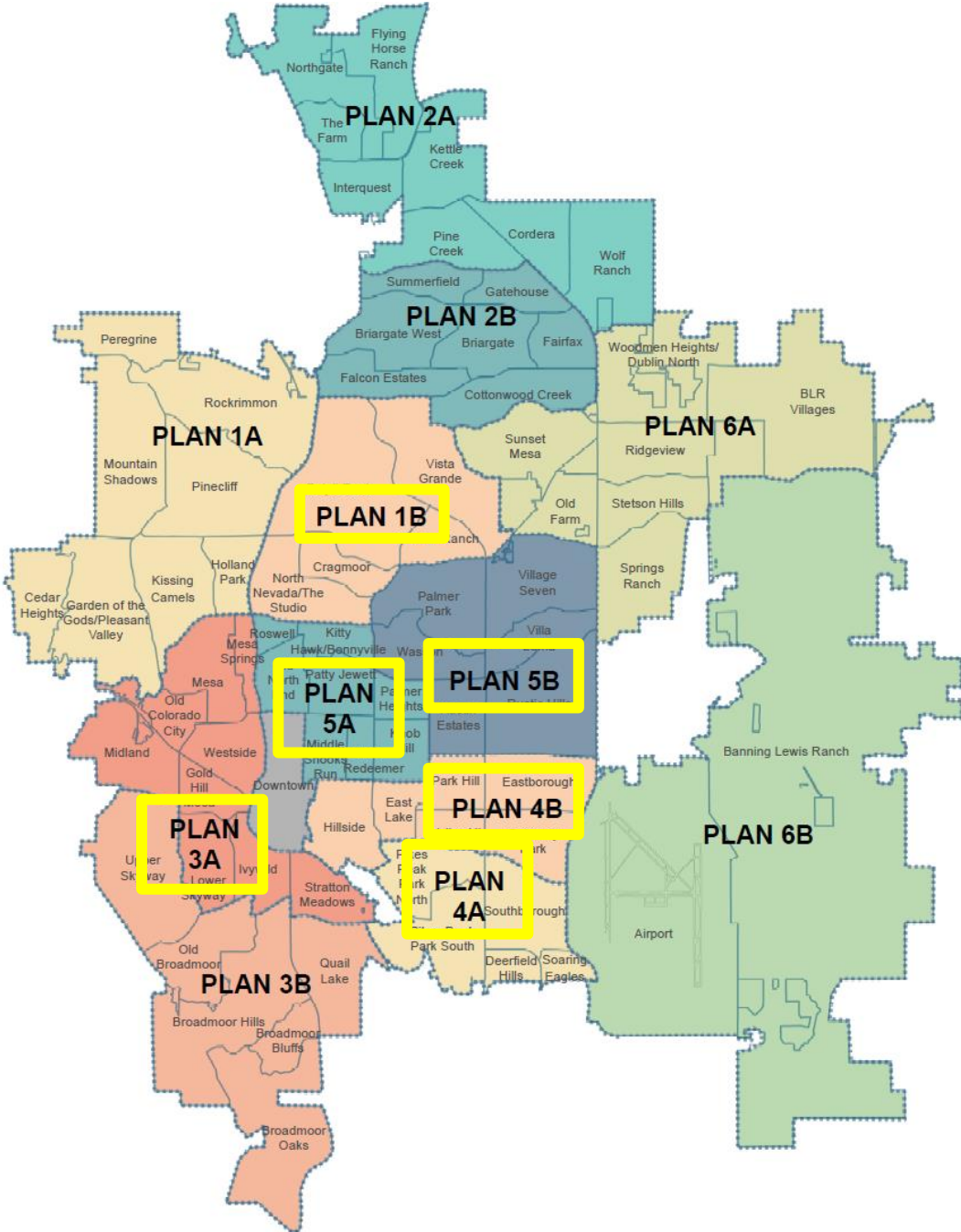
- Presence of operative master plans and the age of those plans
- Vacant land not regulated by an operative master plan
- The rate of infill development
- Age of average development
- Number of controversial projects in an area
- General community interest and engagement
- LMI Census areas
- Recent and ongoing plans, studies, and assessments

# Priority Matrix



Plan Area by Need	Recent/ongoing plans and studies (5 years)	LMI Census areas	Presence of "Changing" and "Traditional" neighborhoods	Community interest	Controversial projects (3 years)	Age of average development	Infill development (3 years)	Vacant land without an active master plan	Age of any public master plans	Presence of operative master plans	Plan Name & Location
1A	Light Red	Light Orange	Light Orange	Yellow	Light Green	Light Green	Teal	Teal	Light Grey	Dark Blue	PLAN 1A Northwest
1B	Light Red	Orange	Light Orange	Yellow	Light Green	Light Green	Teal	Dark Teal	Light Grey	Dark Blue	PLAN 1B North-central
2A	Light Red	Light Orange	Light Orange	Yellow	Light Green	Light Green	Light Grey	Teal	Light Grey	Medium Blue	PLAN 2A Far Northeast
2B	Light Red	Light Orange	Light Orange	Yellow	Light Green	Light Green	Teal	Dark Teal	Light Grey	Dark Blue	PLAN 2B North
3A	Dark Red	Orange	Light Orange	Yellow	Light Green	Light Green	Teal	Light Teal	Dark Blue	Medium Blue	PLAN 3A West, South-central
3B	Light Red	Light Orange	Light Orange	Yellow	Light Green	Light Green	Light Teal	Teal	Light Grey	Dark Blue	PLAN 3B Far southwest
4A	Dark Red	Orange	Light Orange	Yellow	Light Green	Light Green	Teal	Dark Teal	Medium Blue	Dark Blue	PLAN 4A South-central
4B	Light Red	Orange	Light Orange	Yellow	Light Green	Light Green	Teal	Dark Teal	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	PLAN 4B Southeast
5A	Dark Red	Orange	Light Orange	Yellow	Light Green	Light Green	Light Teal	Dark Teal	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	PLAN 5A Old town
5B	Light Red	Orange	Light Orange	Yellow	Light Green	Light Green	Teal	Dark Teal	Medium Blue	Dark Blue	PLAN 5B Central
6A	Light Red	Light Orange	Light Orange	Yellow	Light Green	Light Green	Light Teal	Light Teal	Light Grey	Medium Blue	PLAN 6A Northeast
6B	Light Red	Light Orange	Light Orange	Yellow	Light Green	Light Green	Light Teal	Light Teal	Medium Blue	Light Blue	PLAN 6B Airport/BLR

# Priority Areas According to Criteria

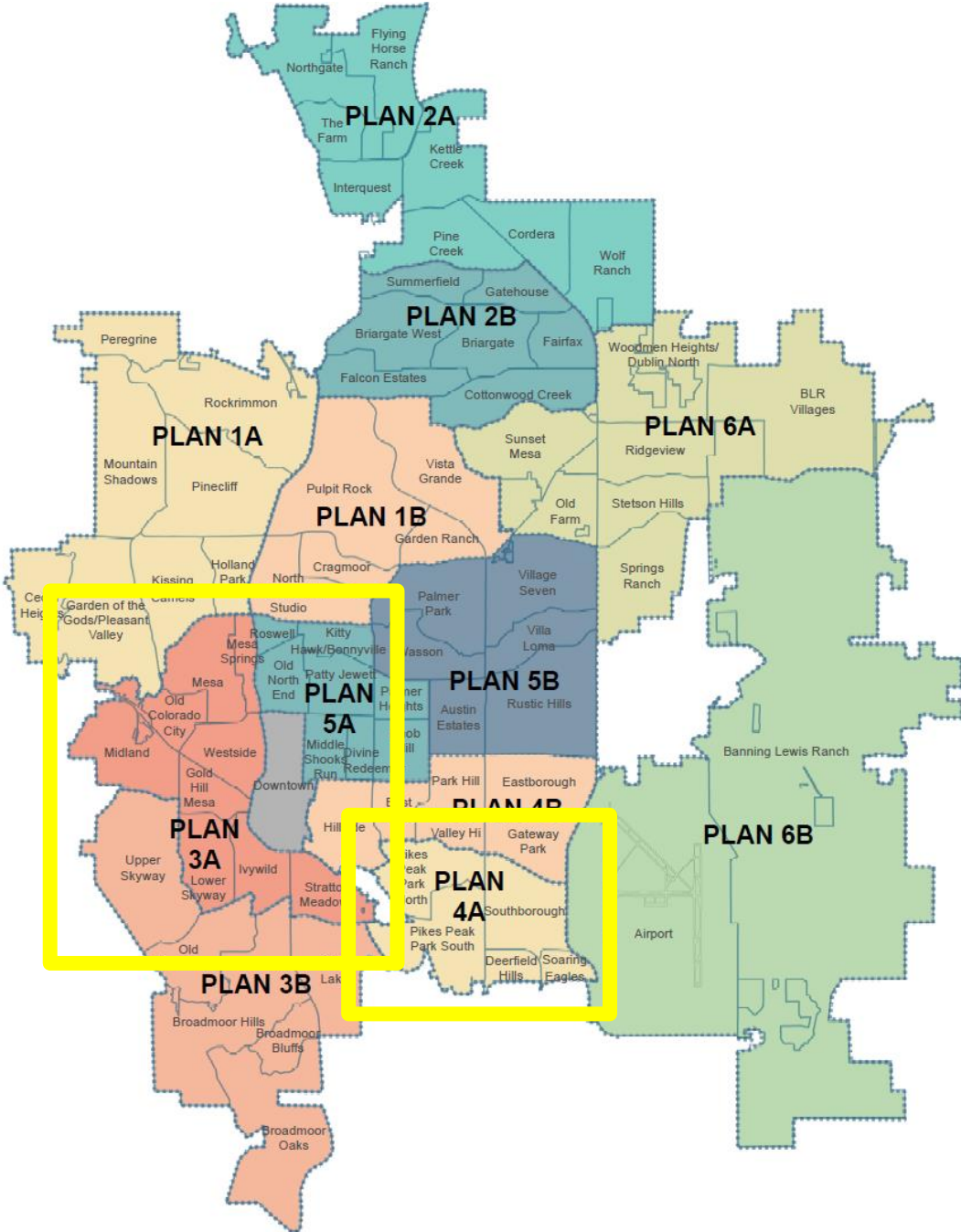


# Community Plans



- Land use-focused plans that also consider:
  - Transportation, housing, economic development, public safety, etc.
- Healthy Community Planning:
  - Working to establish a set of healthy community indicators which will focus on resident health, food access, and climate resiliency
  - A health assessment of the plan area will be conducted if area is failing in any particular indicator

# Southeast Colorado Springs



So....



What does all this mean for



# Growth for COS



- **PlanCOS** addresses new development, redevelopment, and neighborhood change with high-level goals and approaches
- **RetoolCOS** hones in PlanCOS by addressing the shape, format, and uses within new development, redevelopment, and neighborhoods
- **Neighborhood Planning Program** hones in PlanCOS according to a geographic area with a focus on areas prime for redevelopment and change in order to influence trajectory and allocate resources

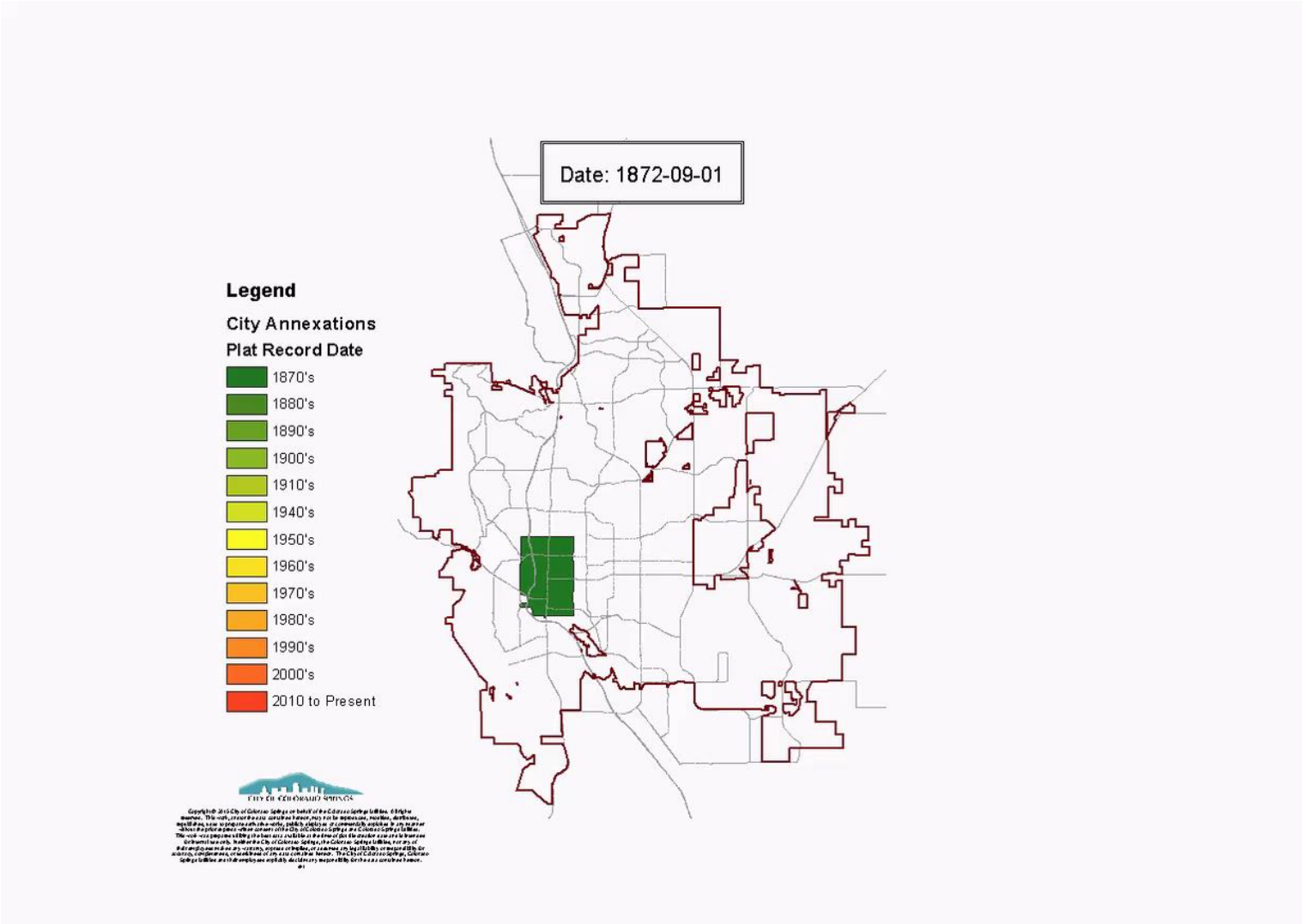
# Growth for COS



- **AnnexCOS** is an upcoming plan that will address property annexation into the City's jurisdiction
  - The State of Colorado requires jurisdictions to have some form of annexation plan
  - The 1980's were the heyday for annexation in the region
- Most annexations are occurring to the north and east, however, county islands are slowly being annexed
- Annexation should not be confused with development
  - Whether development occurs is **NOT** dependent on annexation
  - It is the City's desire to annex properties that will develop so those properties pay their fair share in taxes
    - Development in the County may house residents that will likely drive on roads and use parks maintained by the City



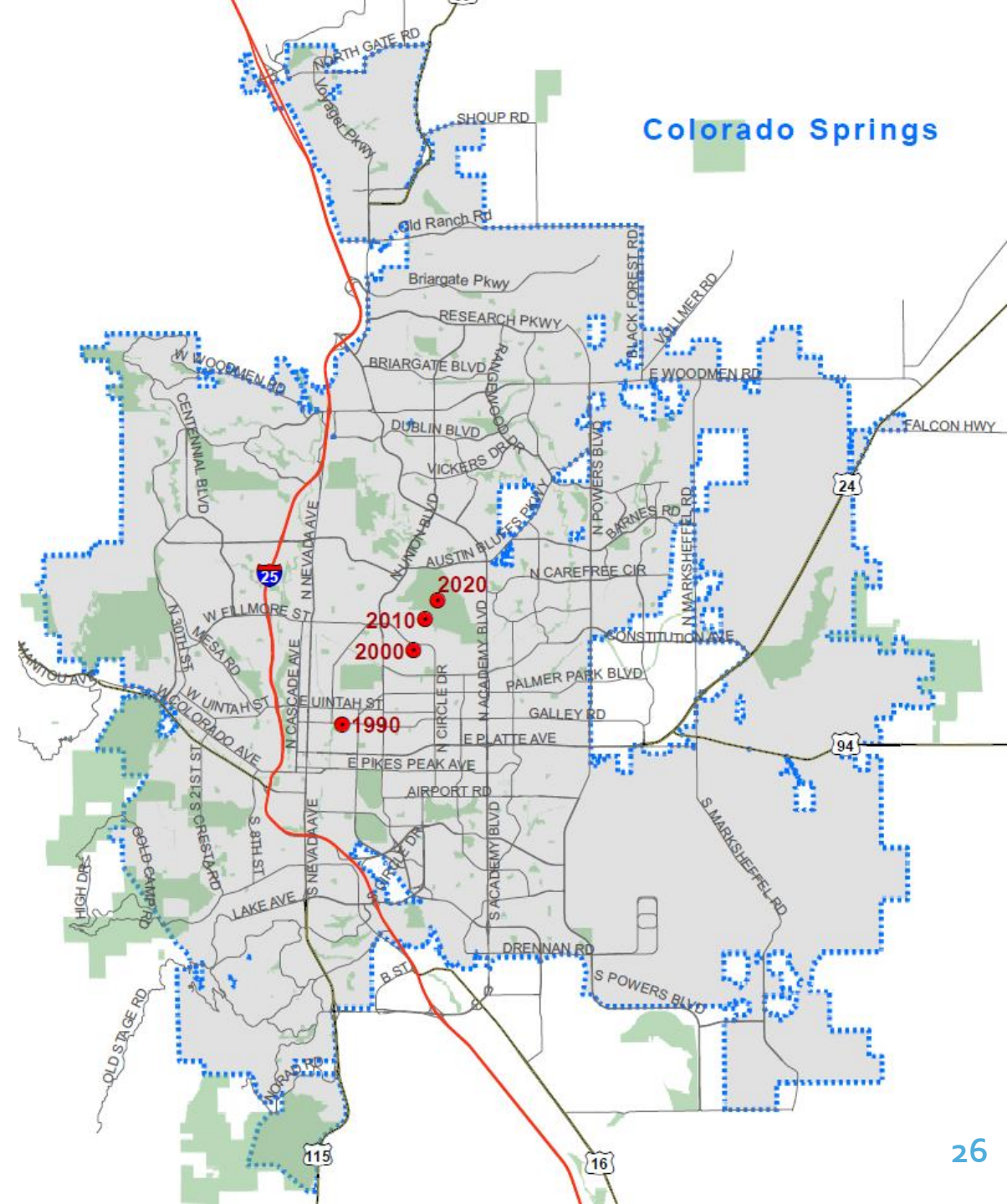
# Growth for COS



# Growth for COS



According to the 2020 Census, the City's mean population center shifted 2,300 feet northeast in the last 10 years



# Growth for COS



# POP QUIZ!

**Who decides on policies related to growth and annexation?**

- A. City Planners
- B. County Commissioners
- C. City Council
- D. Mayor



# POP QUIZ!

Who decides on policies related to growth and annexation?

- ~~A. City Planners~~
- B. County Commissioners**
- C. City Council**
- D. Mayor**



# Growth for COS



- Regarding high-level approaches to growth...

**We cannot emphasize the role of local politics enough**

- The role of municipal city planners is to provide the best information available and insights possible
- Local decision makers (City Council, Mayor, County Commissioners) decide how things proceed

Questions,  
comments,  
thoughts,  
appreciations,  
concerns?



- Morgan Hester, Planning Supervisor
  - Project Manager for RetoolCOS
  - Development Review Liaison
- Hannah Van Nimwegen-McGuire, Senior Planner
  - Project Manager for the Neighborhood Planning Program

