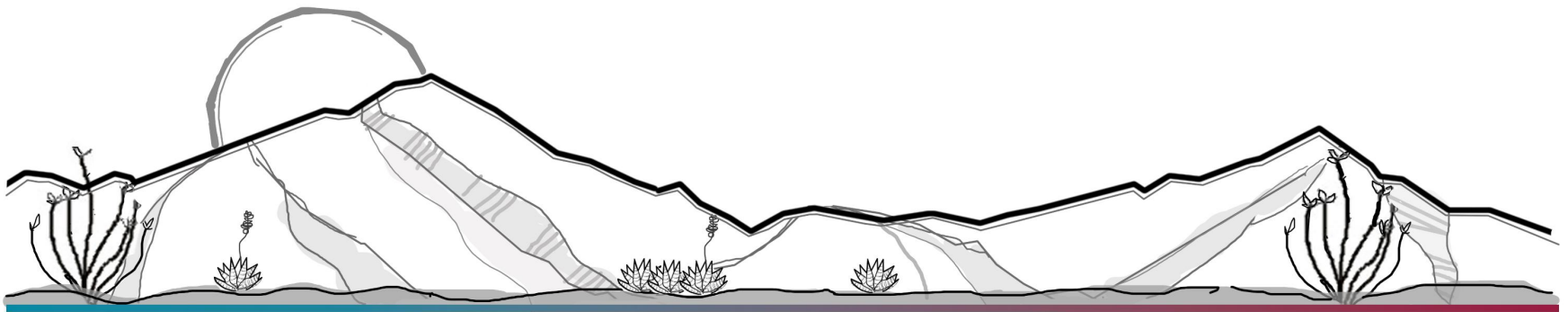


# Work Session: Introduction to the Cochise County Planning and Zoning Commission

April 9, 2025  
Planning & Zoning Commission



## Agenda

- 1: Purpose & Authority
- 2: Commission Composition
- 3: Core Responsibilities
- 4: Staff's Role
- 5: Special Use Process
- 6: Rezoning Process
- 7: Appeals
- 8: Meetings & Findings of Fact


## Purpose & Authority

Purpose: Guide land use development within Cochise County

Authority: [Arizona Revised Statutes §11-802](#) Requires every county have a planning and zoning commission

Structure, responsibility, and procedural rules can be found in the [Planning & Zoning Commission Rules & By-Laws](#) (first adopted 1969)

## Purpose & Authority

**COCHISE COUNTY**  
Arizona

[Cochise County Website](#) | [Books](#) | [Feedback](#) | [Manage](#)  
**Cochise County**  
1415 Melody Lane Bldg. F, Bisbee, AZ 85603 / 520-432-9300

**Development Services**

0 results

- 2 ZONING REGULATIONS
- 4 SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS
- 6 BUILDING SAFETY REGULATIONS
- 8 FLOODPLAIN REGULATIONS
- 10 BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT BY-LAWS AND RULES
- 12 PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION BY-LAW:**
- 14 DEVELOPMENT SERVICES FEE SCHEDULE
  - ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH FEES

**[12 PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION BY-LAWS AND RULES OF PROCEDURE](#)**  
[12.01 PREAMBLE](#)  
[12.03 OFFICERS](#)  
[12.06 MEETINGS](#)  
[12.09 ORDER OF BUSINESS](#)  
[12.12 PRESENTATION OF MATTERS BEFORE THE COMMISSION](#)  
[12.15 AMENDMENTS OF BY-LAWS AND RULES OF PROCEDURE](#)  
[12.18 RECORDATION OF RULES AND AMENDMENTS](#)

**12.01 PREAMBLE**  
The County Planning and Zoning Commission ("Commission") was created by the Board of Supervisors of Cochise County, Arizona by authority of "County Planning Commission Ordinance," first passed and adopted November 20, 1969, to direct the growth and physical development of the County of Cochise and environs in sound and orderly fashion for the prosperity, health, safety, convenience, and general welfare of the citizens of Cochise County.

The purpose of these Rules of Procedure shall be to implement this Ordinance, and its subsequent changes and revisions, and shall at all times be interpreted as carrying out the directives set forth in said Ordinance.

The functions, duties and responsibilities of the Commission are defined in the Commission Ordinance. In order that the functions, duties, responsibilities of the Commission may be carried out in an orderly and consistent fashion with full public knowledge of the procedures involved, the following by-laws and rules of procedures are adopted.

**12.03 OFFICERS**

1. The officers of the County Planning and Zoning Commission shall be:
  - a. **Chair.** The Chair shall preside at all meetings and public hearings of the Commission, adopt all committees, have general supervision of the conduct of the affairs of the Commission, and perform such other duties as are usually exercised by the Chair of a Commission.
  - b. **Vice-Chair.** The Vice-Chair shall perform the duties of the Chair in the Chair's absence. In the event that both the Chair and Vice-Chair shall be absent, then the members present shall choose one from among their number to be Chair pro-tem for that meeting.
  - c. **Secretary.** The Secretary who shall be the secretary to the Planning Director, or a county employee designated by the Board of Supervisors, shall keep a written record of all business transacted by the Commission, notify members of all meetings, keep on file all official records of the Commission and be responsible for serving legal notice of all public hearings. This person shall be responsible to the Planning and Zoning Commission when appointed. Any compensation for extra hours, if any, shall be fixed by the Board of Supervisors.
2. **Officers.** The officers of the County Planning and Zoning Commission shall be elected each year from among the members of the Commission for a one-year term at the Annual Meeting, with the exception of the Secretary who shall be appointed.
3. **Legal Counsel.** The Office of the County Attorney shall render all legal counsel and shall defend the Commission and the Board in all legal actions, unless the Board of Supervisors shall deem it wise to retain other or additional legal counsel. Advice of legal counsel shall be received and entered in the minutes before disposition of any question of law, or matter requiring legal interpretation or advice unless the Commission has obtained the advice of legal counsel in Executive Session pursuant to Section 12.06(4), of these by-laws.
4. **Number of Commissioners.** The Commission shall be composed of nine (9) members. The members shall be qualified electors, residents and real property owners appointed by the Board. Three members shall be appointed from each supervisorial district, not more than one of these three shall be a resident of an incorporated municipality. Any member may be removed by the Board for neglect of duty, inefficiency, or misconduct in office, after ten days written notice and hearing thereon. A written statement of the reasons for removal shall be filed with the clerk of the Board the Commission Chairman shall notify the Board whenever any member is absent from three consecutive regular meetings; this notification will include a listing of any mitigating circumstances and recommended action. When a

All content maintained by Cochise County - <https://cochisecounty.municipalcodeonline.com> Municode Codification

## Commission Composition

Each elected County Supervisor appoints three Commissioners to staggered four-year terms

Up to three Commissioners are from cities, at least six Commissioners are from unincorporated areas

A Commissioner's service is *pro bono*

A quorum is five Commissioners

## Core Responsibilities

**Public Hearings:** Conducts hearings for proposed zoning changes, land use applications, and special use requests.

**Advisory Role:** Provides recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on land use map amendments and rezonings.

**Quasi-Judicial Role:** Special use requests are reviewed and approved by the commission. A majority vote passes a motion. A tie vote triggers a re-hearing at the next meeting. Appeals of special use decisions are heard by the Board of Supervisors.

**Comprehensive Plan:** The commission is responsible for formulating a comprehensive plan ([ARS 11-804](#)). The plan must be adopted or re-adopted every 10 years.

## Staff Role

The planning division of Development Services supports the Commission by providing technical expertise and administrative assistance.

**Staff Reports:** A case planner prepares detailed analyses of zoning and land use applications, including recommendations.

**Meeting Facilitation:** Planning staff organizes public hearings, provides legal notices, and ensures compliance with state and county regulations.

## Request Evaluation: Special Uses

### SPECIAL USE PROCESS

- [Request a Pre-Application Meeting](#) with planning staff. Planning staff will provide address labels and a sample letter for you to personalize following the pre-application meeting.
- Send out [notifications by mail](#). Letters should be sent out approximately two weeks prior to a special use application submittal.
- Complete a [Special Use Authorization Application \(PDF\)](#).
- Apply online through our permitting portal under "[Apply for a P&Z project](#)." [Deadlines for Planning and Zoning Commission Meetings \(PDF\)](#) are the last Friday of every month.
- Once the application is accepted, planning staff will contact you. If the application is complete, it will be placed under review, and you will be able to submit the [processing fee](#).
- A case planner will prepare a staff memo and presentation and fulfill all remaining citizen review and public notification requirements.
- The [Planning and Zoning Commission](#) will consider the request. The decision of the commission is final unless it is successfully appealed.
- A non-residential permit application must be applied for within 12 months and granted within 18 months of the Special Use Authorization or within the time frame otherwise specified by the Planning Commission. The County may revoke the Special Use approval if any condition of the Special Use Authorization approval is not met within these time limits and/or unless a request for a time extension through the Special Use modification process is granted.

## Request Evaluation: Rezoning

### Process

- [Request a Pre-Application Meeting](#) with planning staff. Planning staff will provide address labels and a sample letter for you to personalize following the pre-application meeting (for requests to a more intense classification).
- Send out [notifications by mail](#) if you are requesting a rezoning to a more intense classification. This is not required for downzonings. Letters should be sent out approximately two weeks prior to a rezoning application submittal.
- Complete a [Rezoning Application](#).
- Submit your application online through our permitting portal, under "[Apply for a P&Z project](#)." [Deadlines for Planning and Zoning Commission Meetings](#) (PDF) are the last Friday of every month.
- Once the application is accepted you will be contacted by planning staff. If the application is complete, it will be placed under review, and you will be able to submit the [processing fee](#).
- A case planner will prepare a staff memo, presentation, and fulfill all remaining citizen review and public notification requirements.
- The [Planning and Zoning Commission](#) will consider the request during a public hearing and offer a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.
- The Board of Supervisors will consider the request during a second public hearing. The decision of the Board is final. If approved, the new zoning classification will be effective 30-days following the Board of Supervisors hearing.

## Appeals

Who can appeal: Applicants or affected property owners who disagree with the Commission's recommendation.

Time Limits: Must be filed within 15 calendar days of the hearing, must be reviewed by the Board within 60 calendar days.

Board Considerations:

- The commission's recommendations and findings.

- Staff report

- Public input and any **new** evidence presented.

Board Options:

- Affirm (uphold commission recommendations)

- Affirm but modify (Adjust the conditions or terms of the approval)

- Overturn (Rejects the commission recommendation and issue a different ruling)

## Meetings & Findings of Fact

Meetings: Held monthly on the second Wednesday of the month at 4 PM in the Board Room, and virtually via Teams. The Commission elects a chairperson and vice-chair annually.

The commission must document its reasoning when approving, denying, or conditioning requests. All decisions must be supported by substantial evidence (findings of fact).

# Work Session: Introduction to the Cochise County Planning and Zoning Commission

April 9, 2025  
Planning & Zoning Commission

