



LAND USE CODE AND HOUSING POLICY UPDATE

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Agenda and Meeting Material

25 April 2023

Project Overview

The City of Cortez is excited to announce the kick-off of the Cortez Land Use Code (LUC) and Housing Policy Update. The current LUC was adopted in 1996 and has been amended numerous times over the years. Since the initial adoption, almost 30 years ago, the City has grown, and our needs have changed. The current LUC needs an update specifically for ease of administration and simplification of review processes, as well as inclusion ensuring standards that support the city's housing needs. For context, the Land Use Code is comprised of zone district regulations, use regulations, subdivision standards, site development standards, administration and application procedures.

Objectives of Meeting

The objective of phase one of this project is to assess the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities of the existing development review processes, existing standards, and housing policies. The consultant team will be conducting community listening sessions throughout the week of April 24 in -person, with virtual opportunities for the two-three weeks following. Integrating the policy direction and feedback from City Council will be integral to the success of this project. As representatives of the community, we would like to hear your thoughts on the following questions:

1. Is the LUC easy to use? What revisions could make it more user-friendly?
2. What works well with the current LUC?
3. What does not work well with the current LUC?
4. Following are some possible topics to consider when discussing these questions:
 - a. Land use impacts (e.g., noise, light, traffic)
 - b. Use standards (housing types, definitions and standards of specific allowed uses)
 - c. Zoning and dimensional standards (density, lot size, height, setbacks)
 - d. Application procedures and process
 - e. Review criteria
 - f. Additional standards that are missing from the current LUC

Proposed Schedule





LAND USE CODE AND HOUSING POLICY UPDATE

Guiding Principles

As part of the foundation of this project, the following core principles have been developed by to guide the process and ensure the final product meets the overarching goals of the City of Cortez.

Ensure the LUC is User-Friendly. The LUC should be easy for the public, applicants, and administrators to understand and use. Information should be logically arranged, easy to find, and include language and graphics that are attractive and clear.

Make the Right Things Easy. The LUC should result in a clear and concise approval process that encourages the type of development described by the City's established vision, goals and policies with a clear and concise approval process for.

Balance Flexibility and Predictability. The updated LUC should balance the benefits of clear, objective standards with common sense flexibility to best meet the needs of the Cortez community. The update process should increase transparency in the application and approval process to provide landowners, applicants, and the public with predictability.

Engage the Public. A code is not just a document—it is a process. To ensure long-term success, the LUC should reflect the input of a broad range of community members. The update process should utilize multiple avenues and platforms to engage the public and allow them to participate in shaping the future of Cortez in a meaningful way.

Right-Size the Standards and Procedures. The LUC should not over- or under-deliver. The zoning and subdivision standards should ensure that development reflects the expected level of design as well as the unique needs and market conditions in Cortez.

Preserve and Enhance Local Character. The LUC should support the landscapes and heritage that make Cortez unique. The Code should protect and enhance local cultural, environmental, and historic resources that contribute to the community's shared connection to place.

Respond to Housing Needs. The LUC and Housing Policy Update should address current constraints and opportunities for affordable housing and lay a foundation for inclusive housing development practices.