

CENTER PLANNING COMMISSION MATERIALS
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INVITATION TO SERVE ON CENTER'S PLANNING COMMISSION

When openings are available, the Town of Center invites citizens residing in the Town of Center to submit a letter of interest to serve on the Town of Center Planning Commission. Interested parties should review the Town of Center Planning Commission Priorities, Qualifications, Skills, Application Review Process, and Code of Conduct before applying. Those seeking to apply should include relevant information to demonstrate their qualifications and skills in a one page letter delivered to the Town of Center. Eligible candidates will be interviewed and selected by the Town Board of Trustees.

The Town of Center Planning Commission ordinance, established in 2011, affords residents the opportunity to actively participate in the planning of the Town and its welfare; to learn all facets of the regulations governing such functions; interact with a wide variety of citizens participating in the shaping of Center's future; and assume an active role in any regulation changes involving zoning and subdivision activity.

The Center Planning Commission is a 5-member, volunteer board composed of Center residents who advise the mayor and Town Trustees on land use matters. The Commission is comprised of five voting members, and two alternates. Chairperson and Vice Chairperson are selected from within the Commission by its members. The Trustees appoints commission members to serve three or six year terms.

The Town of Center has established a seat on the Planning Commission Board for a Youth Planning Board (YPB) to engage young people from the Town of Center in the land use planning process. The Youth Planning Board may be comprised of up to five (5) people who are under the age of 19, however as a collective, the Youth Planning Board has one (1) single vote on the Town of Center Planning Commission. Youth interested in serving should

complete the Planning Commission application process and will be reviewed in accordance with the application review process. Terms for youth members may be flexible with one year commitments.

The Commission will review neighborhood and town wide plans that may include rezoning requests, amendments to Zoning Code, certain design standards and guidelines, signage plans, and zoning of the North 90. On most matters, the Planning Commission has an advisory role, meaning it makes a recommendation to the Town Trustees and the Town's Administrator.

Once selected, the Planning Commission will meet monthly in a public hearing unless otherwise noted. The time, day of month, and location of meetings will be posted publicly and in collaboration with Commission members. Study sessions may recur every four months as needed.

The board will meet regularly on the third Monday of each month at 5:30 p.m. Commission members are expected to come prepared, having reviewed staff reports, public comments, and other supplemental materials ahead of time. From time to time, board members may also be asked to attend special sessions for training or to take a deep dive on a specific issue.

PLANNING COMMISSION PRIORITIES

In 2022, the Town of Center Trustees established an ordinance to create a Planning Commission to review and prepare recommendations to help shape the Town priorities for the Trustees focus for consideration and action in the coming years.

PLANNING COMMISSION GOALS

- Considering Plan + Code Updates. Recommend and adopt code changes or programs related to affordable housing, including appropriate zoning and regulations for attainable and workforce housing needs. If the Town determines the need for a new comprehensive plan, the Planning Commission will participate in the process.
- Consideration of Accessibility. The Planning Commission will review the plans for expansion of transit, trails, Americans with Disability (ADA) improvements, and pedestrian infrastructure and resources in the region to ensure the Town of Center is proactively planning for access in the community.
- Review Capital Improvements. Receive training from Town staff on the Town capital improvement process (CIP) budget process as it relates to the financing of planning projects. Work with the Town Public Works to review and create suggestions around the necessary capital improvements needed for current and future planning.
- Enhance Community Engagement. Review and discuss current community engagement processes and any recommendations for improvements related to this topic.
- Review and Discuss the North 90. A priority of the Town Board of Trustees, the planning commission will work with the Town Board and Center Urban Renewal Authority to establish recommendations for a phased build out of the 87 acre Consul Property.

- Consider Historic Preservation. Discuss recommendations related to strengthening historic preservation in the community and recommendations related to the role of the recording and sharing history of the built environment.
- Review and Monitor Rental Licensing. Investigate and understand the current market for short and long term rental, use of accessory dwelling units, and impacts on attainable and workforce housing options in the Town.

PLANNING COMMISSION RESPONSIBILITIES

- Reviewing and making recommendations on land use policies, zoning ordinances, and comprehensive plans.
- Evaluating development or building proposals, including variances and special review uses, for compliance with zoning regulations and long-term community goals. The Planning Commission will provide written recommendations to the town board of trustees but shall have no authority itself to approve or deny proposals.
- Providing guidance and advice to elected officials or governing bodies on matters related to land use, development, and urban design.
- Promoting public awareness and engagement in the planning process through outreach activities, workshops, and educational programs.
- Staying informed about emerging trends, best practices, and legal requirements in urban planning and land use regulation.
- Balancing the needs and interests of diverse stakeholders while prioritizing the long-term welfare and vitality of the community.

PLANNING COMMISSIONER QUALIFICATIONS

The Town seeks commissioners who may have some or all of the following qualifications:

- Community member who is well connected to Center residents and can bring a non-professional community-based perspective to the board. The Town will look to achieve a balance that reflects the Town of Center demographics.
- Community Building and Design Professional (General Planner, Landscape Architect, Land Use Attorney, etc) with professional planning or public policy experience. Backgrounds in municipal planning, urban and outdoor design, policy development and similar will be considered.
- Construction or Real Estate Professional who has experience navigating variances, development projects, building permits, working within the boundaries of zoning codes and other experiences related to the built-environment.
- Local Commercial Property or Business Owner who works within the Town of Center. Ideally, someone with experience in commercial real-estate, redeveloping a property, operating a business, or similar.
- Student or Youth Leader who is interested in studying and shaping the Town of Center to consider livability and opportunity for the next generation.
- All candidates should have reviewed background material and be willing to receive education on the San Luis Valley and Town of Center Housing Study, the Town of Center Demographer's Profile, other background reports, and have a strong commitment to advancing equitable outcomes.
- All candidates must comply with the Town of Center Code of Conduct.

PLANNING COMMISSIONER SKILLS

The town is seeking applicants who have the following skills:

- Listening. The skill of listening to what others have to say. All commissioners should be respectful and capable of hearing the ideas and opinions of others.
- Knowledge. Understanding of Community Issues. Commissioners should plan to be involved in community conversations and be prepared to read and prepare questions based on materials provided to them.
- Being Fair & Open-Minded. Commissioners will build on previous experiences while honestly considering new ideas.
- Ability to Communicate. Commissioners should be able to share ideas and have open discussions with others.
- Community and Relevant Experience. Commissioners should engage with community members, support organizations, and build awareness of initiatives that impact the town.

TOWN OF CENTER CODE OF CONDUCT

A code of conduct is a defined set of rules, principles, values, expectations, behaviors, and relationships that the Town considers important and believes necessary for its success. The Town of Center Code of Conduct includes principles and ideals that distinguish our community by placing priority on the inclusive and transparent culture to create a message that all citizens can rely upon.

PRIVACY, SECURITY, AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

The Town of Center recognizes that those who serve as staff, elected officials, or appointed board or commission members trust us with their personal information and data. Our security protocol places strict restrictions on who has access to and uses user information.

HEALTH, SAFETY, AND SECURITY

All partners must observe all safety rules and practices, cooperate with officials enforcing these rules and procedures, and take all required precautions to safeguard themselves and others.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

All partners must use caution and never drink in a way that affects performance, causes improper behavior, endangers the safety of others, or breaks the law. Using illegal substances is strictly forbidden. If there is reason to believe the usage of drugs or alcohol is affecting performance of duties, the Town may require an alcohol or drug test.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

We must avoid all potential conflicts of interest. When a personal interest of activity interferes with or appears to interfere with performance of duties, there is a conflict of interest. Potential conflicts of interest must be brought to the attention of the Town leadership. Disclosure can be made directly to the Town Clerk.

No two Planning Commissioners may serve the Commission simultaneously with significant others, spouses, or those they cohabitate with one another while serving on the Commission. Similarly, any serving Commissioner must recuse themselves from voting on a project or discussion submitted by a significant other, spouse, cohabitant or family member.

COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND REGULATIONS

We are committed to abiding by all applicable laws, rules, and regulations in the Town of Center, Saguache and Rio Grande Counties. If you believe there is a discrepancy, or if you have a question about the legality of a staff member, elected official, or an appointed member of a board or commission, all citizens can consult a Trustee or the Town Manager. If applying to a Board of Commission, any and all previous discrepancies should be clearly stated with an explanation of why the infraction does not impact the ethical discharge of the relevant duties.

INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

The Town of Center is committed to open and inclusive policies and practices. The Town Board and Commissions will consider a balance of experienced citizens with cultivating new leaders from the community through board and commission roles.

PLANNING COMMISSIONER APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

The Town of Center is focused on transparent, inclusive, and equitable access to leadership roles for all citizens. As the Town expands the work of community building through commissions, boards, and collaborations, the Town will utilize clearly identified criteria to analyze the potential commission and board members along geographic, demographic, skills, and interest areas to ensure diversity in representatives.

The review will not be mandatory or used as a requirement, but will be used to consider balanced representation in leadership positions to further diversity and inclusion in the Town’s leadership opportunities and an open door policy to allow future generations to fill roles, serve on committees, and learn the processes to lead the Town. When receiving applications to serve on Town of Center commissions and boards, the Town will use the following criteria to analyze applicants and consider equitable and inclusive representation in town leadership.

Criteria	Geographic	Employers	Organization	Demographic	Current Commitments
Definition	Represents property ownership or employment in different regions of the community.	Represents the most prevalent types of employment and skills in the community or desired by the community.	Represents topics of community benefit that provide support for health and healing as a response to community needs.	Representing the qualities (such as age, sex, and income) of a specific group of people.	Balancing leadership pathways for new and experienced people to be involved.
Examples	(Downtown, 112, Migrant Housing, bordering N. 90, Central, East Side)	(Restaurants, Service, Retail, Ranching, Supplies, Schools)	(School, Health, Ranchers, Housing, Ag Coalition, food, sanitation)	(Youth, Latino, Senior, Differently Abled)	Some members with other positions and some without

PLANNING COMMISSION RULES OF PROCEDURE

These procedures are intended to supplement the general parliamentary procedure recommended in Planning Commission's by-laws with more specific guidance to the Commission for the most effective meeting procedures.

Chairpersons Privileges and Duties

1. The Chair shall, at the designated date and time, call the Commission to order and upon ascertainment of a quorum proceeds with business.
2. The Chair acts to conduct the meeting in an orderly and democratic fashion. The Chair seeks to clarify the actions pending before the Commission to focus discussion and to assure full discussion and deliberation before a vote.
3. The Chair acts as parliamentarian with the assistance of staff and legal counsel, if present, unless the Commission designates another member to act in that capacity.
4. In the role of achieving the most effective meeting, the chair generally encourages and enlists other members to propose or second motions and lead initial debate. Nevertheless, the chair is entitled to the same rights as other members regarding the presentation of motions, seconding motions, and debate as deemed appropriate by the chair.
5. The chair may declare a temporary recess without motion or consent of the Commission, however, no recess shall be declared which would interrupt a member who has properly secured the floor to speak.
6. In the event any person(s) interrupts the business of Commission or causes a disorder, the chair may require such person to cease such behavior and/or leave council chambers or the meeting room. Should such a person fail to comply, the chair may request a police officer be summoned and have such person removed.

Youth Planning Board Seat

The Town of Center has established a seat on the Planning Commission Board for a Youth Planning Board (YPB) to engage young people from the Town of Center in the land use planning process. While serving on the board, youth members strengthen their skills in leadership, collaborative decision-making, communication, problem-solving, and advocacy.

Youth Board members develop and practice these skills by convening as a group and participating in the comprehensive planning process for the Town of Center. The Youth Planning Board will convene and follow the same rules and procedures as the Planning Commission, but the quorum for a vote is one (1) vote. The Youth Planning Board as a collective, has one vote on the Town of Center Planning Commission.

General Rules for Effective Meetings

1. Except when raising a Point of Order or Point of Information (see parliamentary rules), a commissioner must be recognized by the chair and given the floor in order to address the commission.
2. In order to maintain a clear recorded meeting record, only one person shall speak at a time. Interrupting a person who has the floor or engaging in side conversations while another person has the floor is out of order.
3. The Chair may direct that discussion be limited to one topic or issue at a time in order to most effectively consider all relevant issues. To that end, each commissioner will speak to the issue or aspect of the subject land use case directly and concisely, reserving other comments until such issue or opportunity is raised by the chair.
4. A commissioner should only speak once to any motion or specific topic raised by the chair until such time as others seeking the floor have been provided an opportunity to speak.

5. The Chair will endeavor to cover all relevant issues or questions pertaining to an agenda item but will afford each commission member the opportunity to suggest relevant topics or issues.
6. In the course of deliberations commissioners will attempt to clearly articulate their perspective on evidence and testimony provided, however, deliberations are not a forum for back and forth debate of differing perspectives.
7. A voice vote shall be allowed at the discretion of the chair, however, roll call vote should be utilized in the event that a close vote is anticipated. In case of a tie vote on any motion, the motion shall be considered defeated.

Public Hearing Procedures on Land Use Matters

Typically, when considering a land use application, the Commission will hold a public hearing on the application. It is important that all comments, from the public, staff and the applicant, be taken during the public hearing, after it has been opened by the Chair. The public hearing should generally be as follows:

1. Open public hearing
2. Presentation by staff of background material on the case as well as a clearly articulated list of decision criteria and staff's understanding of the relevant policy issues or determinations the Commission will need to make.
3. Questions from Commission to staff
4. Presentation by applicant. Except in rare circumstances, the Applicant should be prepared to limit their verbal presentation to no more than 20 minutes. The Commission will have read previously submitted materials.
5. Questions from Commission to applicant.
6. Comments from the public, including clarifying questions of the public by the Commission.
7. Questions from Commission to staff to clarify comments by applicant or public, if necessary.
8. Rebuttal from applicant, if applicant desires.
9. Review by the Chair and commission of the list of evidentiary, policy or criteria items to be first considered in the upcoming deliberations.

10. Deliberation among Commission members, presided over by the Chair.
11. Final review by Commission to confirm that there are no further questions or clarifications requested by individual commissioners before the close of the public hearing.
12. Close public hearing
13. Motion/Second*
14. Discussion
15. Vote
16. As needed, the commission will follow up on the topic or deliberation if further action is determined to be required by the Public Hearing process.

* If the Motion/Second is to table or continue the case to a date certain in order to receive additional or clarifying information, the Chair, with assistance from staff and or legal counsel, will assure that the purpose of the continuance is clear, and which elements of the public hearing are to be re-opened at the subsequent date, including whether comment from the applicant or public on the requested information will be accepted.

Anti-Violence and Harassment Policies

The Center Planning Commission is committed to a civil and respectful relationship with each other, town staff and the community. To that end, the Commission will comply with the harassment and anti-violence policies adopted by the Town for town employees, as it may be amended from time to time. Concerns regarding such provisions shall be reported to the Mayor and Town Administrator.

PLANNING COMMISSION BY-LAWS

The Town of Center Planning Commission shall be composed of five (5) regular members and two alternate members who reside within the Town of Center. All members shall be appointed by the Mayor of the Town and confirmed by a majority of the Trustees.

1. Planning Commission terms shall be for a period of three and six years, until their successor takes the position. Should a Planning Commission position be vacated before the term is completed, the newly appointed successor shall serve out the unexpired term of the vacated position.

2. The number of meetings per month and a schedule of meeting dates shall be established, and may be altered or changed, at any regularly scheduled meeting. One regular meeting date is scheduled for the third Monday of each month at 5:30 P.M. in Trustees Chambers. Additional meetings may be held at any time upon the call of the Chairperson or by a majority of the voting members of the Commission or upon request of the Town Trustees, following at least a twenty-four hour notice to each member of the Commission, and 24 hours' notice is provided on the Planning Commission website in advance indicating topic, location, and planned attendees. These meetings shall be considered study sessions, and not quasi-judicial in nature, unless specifically designated for a public hearing that meets all applicable public notice requirements.
3. The Commission shall elect a new Chairperson and Vice Chairperson every twelve (12) months. The Town Clerk or designated shall be the Recording Secretary.
4. The duties and powers of the officers of the Planning Commission shall be as follows:
 - a) Chairperson
 - Preside at all meetings of the Commission;
 - Call special meetings of the Commission in accordance with the Bylaws;
 - Sign documents of the Commission;
 - See that all actions of the Commission are properly taken.
 - b) Vice Chairperson
 - During absence, disability, or disqualification of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall exercise or perform all of the duties and be subject to all of the responsibilities of the Chairperson.
 - c) Recording Secretary
 - Keep the minutes of all meetings of the Commission in an appropriate minute book;

- Give or serve all notices required by law or by the By-laws;
- Prepare the agenda for all meetings of the Commission;
- Be custodian of Commission records;
- Inform the Commission of correspondence relating to business of the Commission and attend to such correspondence;
- Sign official documents of the Commission;
- See that all documents are properly recorded.

d) Youth Planning Board Seat

- The Town of Center has established a seat on the Planning Commission Board for a Youth Planning Board (YPB) to engage young people from the Town of Center in the land use planning process. The Youth Planning Board may be comprised of up to five (5) people who are under the age of 19, however as a collective, the Youth Planning Board has one (1) single vote on the Town of Center Planning Commission.

6. Matters referred to the Commission by Town Trustees shall be placed on the calendar for consideration and action at the first regular meeting of the Commission after such reference, provided that an appropriate amount of time is allowed for public notice if required by law.
7. A majority of Commission members entitled to vote shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.
8. Reconsideration of any decision of the Commission may be had when any Commission member or interested party for such consideration makes a showing, satisfactory to a majority of the Commission, that without fault on the part of such party, essential facts were not brought to the attention of the Commission. New evidence should be presented within thirty (30) days at a scheduled regular meeting.
9. Robert's Rules of Order shall guide the Commission in all cases not otherwise provided for in these rules. All final determination of procedure shall be the responsibility of the Chairperson.

10. DEADLINE FOR THE AGENDA. Deadline for filing for placement on the agenda for applications for any actions requiring Planning Commission review shall be due by six (6) pm on the Wednesday prior to the Monday meeting of the Planning Commission. All documents shall be sent to the Commission members by six (6) pm of the Thursday prior to the Monday public meeting.
11. ORDER OF CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ITEMS. The "Town of Center Planning Commission Public Meeting Form and Procedure" will normally be observed; however, it may be arranged by the Chairperson for individual times if necessary for the expeditious conduct of business.
12. DEADLINE FOR CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ITEMS. All new agenda items shall be filed with the Planning and Development Department secretary by six (6) pm on the Wednesday prior to the meeting.
13. DESIGNATION OF VOTING ORDER. Voting for individual cases in regular meetings shall be by verbal vote and the order of voting to be rotated each vote; the alternate member shall vote in the absence of a regular member. The presiding officer (Chair, Vice Chair, or other member) shall be last in voting order. Voting for agenda and organizational issues in regular meetings shall be by voice vote as a group, signified by Aye or Nay by each member.
14. Any member of the Planning Commission who has a conflict of interest or the potential of a conflict of interest shall comply with the legal disclosure requirements as listed below. Prior to meeting these disclosure requirements, Commission members may consult with the Town Attorney to determine the appropriate procedure.
 - a) In the case of a conflict of interest, or potential conflict of interest where the Commissioner chooses not to participate, the Commission member should disclose the real (or potential) conflict of interest to the Town Clerk and the Secretary of State at least 72 hours prior to the public hearing, in a manner suggested by the Town attorney.

- b) In the case of a potential (but not actual) conflict of interest where the Commission member wishes to participate, the Commission member should follow the disclosure procedures above, then state the disclosure at the public hearing and indicate that there is no actual conflict.
15. Each member of the Planning Commission who has knowledge of the fact that he will not be able to attend a scheduled meeting of the Planning Commission, shall notify the secretary of the Commission at the earliest possible opportunity and in any event, prior to 3:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting.
 16. Three consecutive unexcused absences may result in removal from the Planning Commission. Removal will be subject to a formal vote by the remaining members. Vacancies created by removal will be filled by drawing names of alternates. The term for the replacement will be either three or six years, depending on the remaining duration of the original term. A new alternate will be selected by the Town of Center Trustees through the process outlined on Pg. 2 "INVITATION TO SERVE ON CENTER'S PLANNING COMMISSION."
 17. The alternate member shall have a voice in all actions, but shall have no vote unless a regular member of the Commission is absent or is not participating due to a conflict of interest; in such case the alternate shall be called upon for a vote.
 18. The Chairperson shall be an ex officio member of all committees with voice but no vote.
 19. A member may serve no more than 24 months as Chairperson of any consecutive forty-eight (48) months.
 20. The Vice Chairperson shall succeed the Chairperson if he or she vacates the office before the term is completed. A new Vice Chairperson shall be elected as soon as possible at a regularly scheduled meeting.
 21. The By-laws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Planning Commission by a majority of the Commission, provided that notice of

said proposed amendment is given to each member in writing by six (6) pm of the Thursday prior to said meeting.

22. The Commission shall annually provide input to the Town manager on the Capital Improvement Program, and include at that time any proposed operating budget funding requests for studies to be completed in the next calendar year(s) or other projects related to the Commission's duties.