

City of Centennial: Citywide Rezoning Public Outreach Process



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Merit Award: Project with a Small Budget

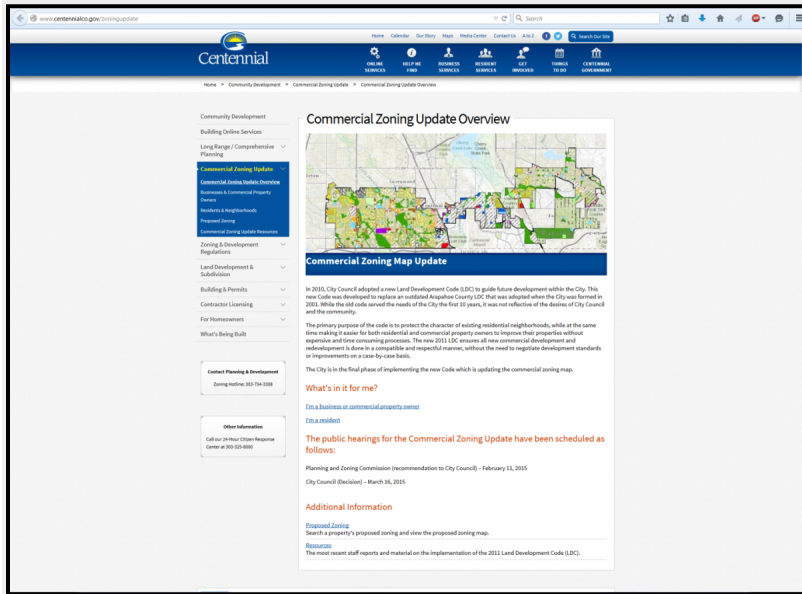
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In 2010, the City of Centennial adopted a new Land Development Code (LDC) containing streamlined approval processes and a set of high-quality, predictable development regulations. Although adopted in 2010, the new LDC was not yet effective because all properties were still governed by zoning in the 2001 code, known as the Legacy LDC. To implement the new LDC the City had to rezone properties from the Legacy LDC to a comparable zone district in the new code. Per direction from the City Council, the new LDC was implemented in three phases through a series of citywide rezoning efforts: Phase 1 – Residential properties; Phase 2- Special district and government properties; and Phase 3- Commercial properties.

While the process to legislatively rezone a city is not a new concept, Centennial's approach was different in that it involved so much community outreach and transparency. A common criticism of government and regulation-making is that it is done behind closed doors, without meaningful public comment or consideration. The exact opposite was said for Centennial's legislative rezoning; there were more than 60 public meetings and nearly 40,000 pieces of individualized notice (letters/postcards), not including recurring newsletter and newspaper publications. Staff prepared detailed reports to the advisory groups and public bodies, but also provided colorful, easy to understand posters and handouts to the general public. Further, all information made available at public meetings and open houses was also placed on a project webpage on the City's website. In addition, the City used its Geographic Information Systems (GIS) capabilities to create an interactive draft zoning map for public consumption during the outreach process, allowing for real-time comments (from the public) and edits by Staff. A running edit tracker was kept to allow public and elected officials to see what changes were made to the map during the public outreach process. The total project cost was approximately \$16,000.00 and consisted of printing and

mailing costs over a five year period.



As other cities and counties begin to update their own zoning codes, comprehensive plans, etc. there is a great lesson to be learned in Centennial's success: there is no such thing as too much public information! The outreach methods and tools used by Centennial Staff can serve as an example to other jurisdictions in the establishment of their own processes and procedures. Above all, try to provide as much information as possible, in as many forms as possible, so that all stakeholders can contribute and have ownership over the final product.