

WHAT TO EXPECT: PRELIMINARY PLANNING MEETING (PPM)

What is a Preliminary Planning Meeting (PPM)? Why is it important?

A Preliminary Planning Meeting (PPM) is the first step in the formal permit application process. This mandatory meeting applies to projects requiring a formal hearing or any project that staff determines needs adequate discussion time before determining next steps. These meetings provide an essential foundation before formal application submission, enabling project representatives (sponsors, agents, architects) to engage directly with planning staff to review proposals and discuss potential opportunities and challenges. This early collaboration helps ensure formal applications meet all requirements when submitted.

During this collaborative meeting, a planner will review your proposed project against county requirements and design criteria. The planner will suggest modifications to strengthen your proposal where needed, helping you identify the most viable options before proceeding with a formal application. In this meeting, a planner will guide you through the specific requirements and procedures. You'll receive detailed information about application materials, submittal requirements, project timelines, and associated fees. By engaging in this process early, you can ensure your project aligns with necessary requirements and avoid potential delays in development.

Preliminary Planning meetings that are submitted early in the project stage can help ensure that the project meets necessary requirements and avoids costly delays.

Additional Information

A. Purpose. The purpose of the PPM is to assist and provide applicants with a one-on-one consultation with a Planner to review your proposed project and direct you to the correct application process to obtain necessary zoning allowances for building permit approval. Please note that all PPM recommendations are advisory only and do not bind either the applicant or the County to any specific course of action.

Understanding that application timelines are paused whenever additional information is requested, we strongly encourage applicants to work closely with staff during the PPM to ensure comprehensive documentation is provided from the start. This collaborative approach helps streamline your path through the approval process, which involves various steps depending on the type of application and which hearing board reviews your case, including extensive staff technical review, Board of Adjustments & Appeals or Planning and Zoning Commission consideration, and final approval by the Board of Supervisors through public hearings.

B. Applicability. A Preliminary Planning Meeting (PPM) may be requested by any prospective applicant or their representative for any type of proposal.

A PPM is required for the following project types:

- Use Permits
- Zoning Map Changes
- Variances
- Planned Area Developments
- Comprehensive Plan Amendments
- Amendments or revisions to Subdivision Plats
- Any additional project type deemed necessary by Planning staff.

- C. Requirements.** You must complete all required fields in the request as well as all mandatory submittal items. For more details, refer to the “Submittal Requirements for PPM” document available on the [Planning Applications page](#).
- D. How to Submit.** See the How to Submit for a PPM on the [Planning Applications](#) page for step-by-step instructions on how to submit through our online OpenGov permit portal.
- E. Meeting.** Once you submit a complete PPM request through the online OpenGov permit portal, staff will arrange either an in-person or Teams meeting with you. Your application request will go into the order it was received. Given our current heavy caseload and ongoing hearings, early booking is strongly advised. You will receive email notification of your scheduled PPM date directly through the portal system. See the **Planning Applications Review Times** document on our [Planning Applications](#) page for more information on timeline estimates.
- F. Moving Forward After your PPM.** Following your PPM, you may choose to proceed by submitting a formal hearing application through the online OpenGov permit portal, which triggers the required administrative completeness review under A.R.S. 11-1605. During this review process, staff may contact you if additional information is needed for an accurate technical assessment. Your application cannot advance until all requested materials are submitted and thoroughly reviewed by staff.