

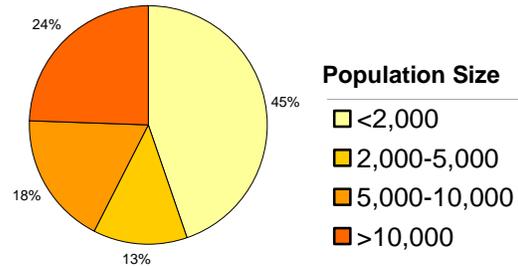
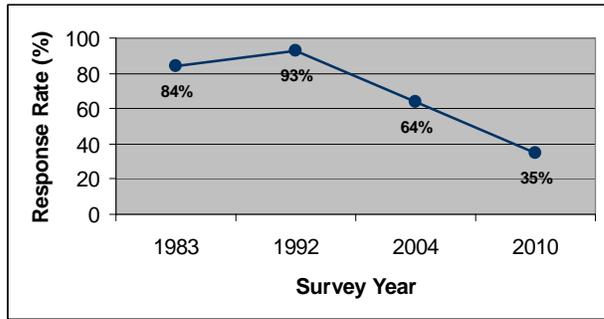


2010 Colorado Municipal Land Use Survey Results

Overview

The Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) conducted the 2010 municipal land use survey in partnership with Colorado Municipal League (CML), the Colorado Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA Co), and the Colorado State University Extension Office. The purpose of this survey is to maintain an understanding of municipal land use planning throughout Colorado, recognize trends compared to previous survey years, and to provide communities with an inventory of Colorado land use planning efforts. Similar surveys were conducted in 1983, 1992, and 2004. Although many questions in the 2010 survey were not included in previous survey years, there were several consistent questions that allow for tracking trends over time. The survey was distributed electronically to municipal planning directors and results were collected from 94 municipalities in 40 counties.

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Compared to previous years, the response rate was considerably lower in 2010 (35%). This could be attributed to the electronic administration of the survey. In previous years, hard copy surveys were mailed to each municipality. Forty-five percent of the responding municipalities have a population fewer than 2,000. Twenty-four percent of responding municipalities have a population greater than 10,000.

Responses and Response Rates by Municipal Population Size¹, 2010

Population Categories	Number of Municipalities	Number Reporting 2010	Number Reporting 2004	Response rate 2010	Response rate 2004
Fewer than 2,000	162	42	90	26%	56%
2,000 – 4,999	43	12	26	28%	61%
5,000 – 9,999	27	17	22	63%	82%
Greater than 10,000	38	23	34	61%	90%
Total	270	94	172	35%	64%

¹ Population categories are based on 2009 population estimates prepared by the State Demography Office.

Comprehensive or Master Plans

Of the 94 municipalities that responded to the survey, 85 (or 90%) indicated they have an adopted comprehensive or master plan. The only municipalities that indicated that they did not have an adopted master or comprehensive plan have populations fewer than 2,000 – whom are not required by statute C.R.S. §31-23-206(4) to adopt comprehensive plans. Two of the municipalities without an adopted comprehensive or master plan are currently underway developing those plans.

Adopted Comprehensive or Master Plans by Population, 2010

Population Categories	Have adopted a comprehensive or master plan (number of municipalities) 2010	Percent by population range 2010	Percent by population range 2004
Fewer than 2,000	35 ²	83%	60%
2,000-4,999	12	100%	96%
5,000-9,999	17	100%	95%
Greater than 10,000	23	100%	100%
Total:	87	93%	80%

Summary of Municipalities with an Adopted Comprehensive Plan

Survey Year	Percent of Responding Municipalities
1983	54%
1992	56%
2004	74%
2010	90%

90% of responding municipalities indicated they have adopted a comprehensive plan

Administrative and Technical Resources

Respondents were asked about their existing administrative and technical planning resources – *Do they have a planning commission? Do they have planning staff? Who do they rely on for technical assistance? Do they use Geographical Information Systems (GIS) for support?*

Planning Infrastructure among Responding Municipalities, 2010

Type	Number of Responding Municipalities	Percent of Responding Municipalities
Have a planning commission	85	90%
Have a planning department	62	66%
Have a separate board of adjustment	54	57%
Have all three	42	45%

Ninety percent of responding communities indicated that they have a planning commission. All of the responding communities without a planning commission have a population fewer than 2,000.

Two thirds of responding communities indicated they have a planning department

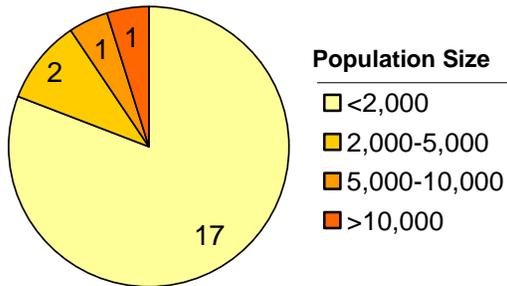
² Two of these municipalities are currently underway developing their comprehensive plans.

Most of the responding communities with a population greater than 10,000 have a planning commission, a planning department (with at least one staff), and a separate board of adjustment. Conversely, only 17% of responding communities with a population of fewer than 2,000 have all three resources. Slightly more than half of the responding municipalities (52%) with populations between 2,000 and 10,000 reported having all three planning resources.

Use of GIS Services among Responding Municipalities

Type of GIS Service Used	Percentage of Responding Municipalities
County GIS	55%
Planning department's own GIS capability	50%
Private consultant	15%
Other (please specify) ³	14%
Council of Governments (COG) or Regional Planning/Economic Development Organization	13%
State agency	9%
Federal agency	9%
Nonprofit organization	4%
We do not currently use GIS support	22%

Fifty-five percent of the responding municipalities are using county GIS services. This implies that Colorado communities are using resources efficiently. Half of the responding communities have internal GIS capabilities within their own planning department. Conversely, there were twenty-one communities (22%) that indicated they are not currently using GIS support.



Most of the communities that are not currently using GIS have a population fewer than 2,000

The results clearly indicate that the majority of the responding municipalities not currently using GIS have a population fewer than 2,000. The municipalities with populations over 10,000 mostly indicated that they are using GIS within their internal planning department followed by county GIS services.

The use of GIS has increased significantly among municipalities compared to previous survey years. This is likely the result of the increasing progression and ease of use

³ Other responses included: a separate municipal GIS, city surveyor, or GIS capability located with the Information Services, Public Works, Utilities, or Engineering Departments. One municipality listed a land use coordinator as the GIS provider.

among GIS software and systems that was considerably less prevalent in previous survey years.

Using GIS, by Survey Year

Survey Year	Percent of Responding Municipalities Using GIS
1983	--
1992	5%
2004	38%
2010	78%

The responding municipalities indicated that they rely on multiple planning resources for planning-related assistance. There is a clear trend that the larger municipalities are utilizing a diverse portfolio of resources while many of the smaller communities rely only on one or two different resources.

Percentage of Responding Municipalities using Planning Resources by Pop., 2010

Planning Resource	<2,000	2,000-4,999	5,000-9,999	10,000-49,999	>= 50,000
Colo. Dept. Local Affairs (DOLA)	45%	75%	59%	65%	33%
Colorado Municipal League (CML)	38%	50%	53%	76%	83%
American Planning Association (APA)	14%	42%	47%	71%	100%
Planning consultant	40%	50%	41%	71%	67%
Informal planner network	14%	33%	35%	71%	83%
PC Journal/Planners Web	10%	25%	29%	53%	33%
Rocky Mountain Land Use Institute	10%	33%	29%	71%	50%
COG or regional planning/economic development organization	7%	17%	24%	59%	50%
Other ⁴	7%	8%	0%	0%	17%

The table indicates that the smaller and medium-sized communities rely heavily on DOLA, while the medium to largest communities are relying more heavily on CML, APA, and planning consultants. One possible explanation for this could be that DOLA typically provides assistance on fundamental planning issues, whereas CML often supplies information and assistance on hot topics and progressive planning in Colorado.

Planning Policy Guidance and Regulations

Municipalities were asked to indicate whether or not they had implemented policies or regulations on specific planning issues within general categories including planning and growth management; agriculture and food systems; business and economic development; environment; hazards, health, and safety; housing; and infrastructure. Within these categories, responding municipalities were asked to select specific policies and regulations currently in place.

⁴ Respondents who marked ‘other’ indicated they relied on other municipalities, the Urban Land Institute (ULI), the town engineer, and the International City County Management Association (ICMA).

Policy was defined as *explicit guidance regarding a particular topical area that may be contained in a comprehensive plan, resolution, or elsewhere.*

Regulation was defined as *specific codified regulatory guidance (ordinance, resolution) that is usually contained within a land use code, zoning resolution, etc.*

The following table summarizes the specific issues most frequently guided by policy among responding municipalities.

Issues Most Frequently Guided by Policy, 2010

Specific Planning Issue	Percentage of Responding Municipalities using Policy Guidance
Capital improvements	59%
Parks and recreation	54%
Economic development/downtown revitalization	51%
Annexation (plan, policies)	50%
Three mile plan	49%
Urban growth boundaries or urban service areas	47%
Growth management	45%
Cultural/historic preservation	44%
Open space protection	44%
Mixed-use development	43%

These policies are aligned closely with the results from the previous survey year 2004. The data show that the larger communities were more concerned with mixed-use development and growth boundaries than the smaller communities. Parks and recreation policy was higher on the list for the smaller communities than the larger cities and towns. Generally speaking, the more a municipality grows, the more they rely on more sophisticated planning tools to guide them in the right direction.

The planning issues most frequently addressed by responding municipalities in plan elements or policy in 2010 were capital improvements, parks and recreation, and economic development/downtown revitalization



Photographs courtesy of the Department of Local Affairs

Issues Most Frequently Addressed by Regulation, 2010

Specific Planning Issue	Percentage of Responding Municipalities using Regulation
Nuisance (junk, weeds)	81%
Signs (size, placement, permanence)	80%
Subdivision regulations	78%
Home occupations	76%
Planned unit developments	73%
Floodplain	70%
Adult-oriented business	64%
Stormwater runoff/drainage	62%
Annexation	61%
Design standards	59%
Mobile home parks	57%
Extension of water/sewer lines	55%
Manufactured housing	53%
Wastewater management	48%
Parks and recreation	47%
Mixed-use development	47%
Water supply	46%
Medical marijuana dispensaries, growing	46%
Water quality	44%

Compared with the results from the previous survey year 2004, the top planning issues are aligned. Adult-oriented business increased from 46% of responding municipalities in 2004 to nearly 65% in 2010. Medical marijuana regulations were non-existent in previous survey years, and 46% of responding municipalities have adopted regulations as of 2010. It is interesting to examine the regulation data against specific population categories:

Most Prevalent Issues Addressed by Regulation by Population, 2010

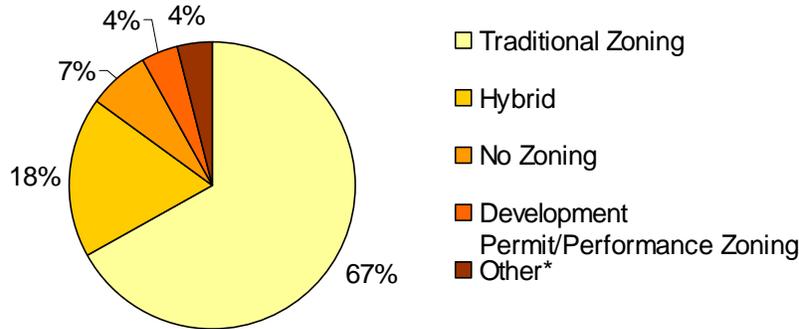
Population Category	Most Prevalent Planning Issues Addressed by Regulation
<2,000	Nuisance, subdivision regulations, signs
2,000 – 4,999	Nuisance, design standards, signs, home occupations
5,000 – 9,999	Floodplain, subdivision regulations, signs, home occupations
10,000 – 49,000	Floodplain, planned unit developments, nuisance, home occupations
>50,000	Nuisance, signs, annexation, mixed-use development, extension of water/sewer lines, public facilities, parks and recreation, floodplain, home occupations, subdivision regulations.

Floodplain regulations were more prevalent in medium-sized to large cities than Colorado’s smaller responding communities.

The planning issues most frequently addressed by responding municipalities through regulations in 2010 are nuisance, signs, subdivision regulations, and home occupations

Zoning

Zoning helps municipalities regulate growth and development, and control impacts from certain types of development on adjacent uses. Of the responding communities, 67% use a traditional (or Euclidean) zoning system. Nearly 18% use a hybrid system – a mix of traditional and either form-based or performance zoning system.



* Other responses included land use code, mandatory PUD, traditional/form based/design controls, and code that follows statutory requirements

Zoning used by Responding Municipalities by Population, 2010⁵

Type of Zoning	<2,000	2,000-4,999	5,000-9,999	10,000-49,999	>= 50,000
Traditional Zoning	78%	67%	71%	56%	17%
Hybrid	3%	25%	29%	25%	50%
Development Permit/Performance Zoning	0%	8%	0%	13%	17%
Other*	5%	0%	0%	6%	17%
No Zoning	15%	0%	0%	0%	0%

* Other responses included land use code, mandatory PUD, traditional/form based/design controls, and code that follows statutory requirements

All responding municipalities without zoning in 2010 have a population fewer than 2,000

Impact Fees and Land Dedications

Many Colorado communities offset the costs of public improvements and infrastructure required to serve new development by placing the burden onto the development through the approval process using impact fees, land dedications, or fees-in-lieu. Communities use these tools to help offset portions of the costs of systems such as water, sewer, parks and recreation, transportation, and others. The following table summarizes the types of impact fees and dedications used by the responding communities.

⁵ Totals for each population category may not equate to one hundred percent due to rounding.

Types of Development Charges Adopted by Responding Municipalities, 2010

Type of Charge	Percentage of Respondents with Adopted Impact Fee	Percentage of Respondents with Adopted Dedication or Fee in Lieu
Water	46%	25%
Sewer	37%	21%
Parks and recreation	30%	57%
Transportation	26%	18%
Storm drainage	20%	16%
Public safety	10%	4%
Affordable housing	7%	15%
Other	7% ⁶	3% ⁷

These results are relatively aligned with results from the previous survey year 2004 in that water, sewer, and parks and recreation were the most commonly utilized impact fees. It is interesting to look at the impact fee data against population categories.

Impact Fees Imposed by Responding Municipalities by Population, 2010

Type of Impact Fee	<2,000	2,000-4,999	5,000-9,999	10,000-49,999	>= 50,000
Water	43%	67%	47%	41%	33%
Sewer	36%	42%	35%	41%	33%
Parks and recreation	21%	58%	35%	24%	33%
Transportation	10%	58%	41%	24%	33%
Storm drainage	7%	42%	12%	41%	33%
Public safety	12%	8%	12%	0%	17%
Affordable housing	7%	25%	6%	0%	0%
Other ⁵	7%	17%	6%	18%	0%

There is a higher percentage of responding municipalities with populations between 2,000 and 4,999 imposing impact fees for water, sewer, parks and recreations, transportation, and storm drainage than the other municipal population categories. This could be due in part to the fact that only twelve of the ninety-four responding municipalities have populations between 2,000 and 4,999 and most of them are imposing impact fees in those categories.

Nearly one-half of the responding municipalities indicated that they impose a development impact fee for water

⁶ Other impact fee responses included building impact fee, roads, downtown redevelopment, fire, fire protection and snow removal, public art fee and service expansion, school, and water and tap fees.

⁷ Other land dedication or fees in lieu included air quality and solid fuel burning, parking, and schools.

Intergovernmental Agreements for Planning and Land Use

An intergovernmental agreement (IGA) is any agreement that involves or is made between two or more governments to cooperate in some specific way. Intergovernmental agreements can be made between or among a broad range of governmental or quasi-governmental entities, such as two or more counties, two or more municipalities, a municipality and a special district, and so forth. The use of intergovernmental agreements related to planning and land use has consistently increased over time since the first survey year in 1983.

Use of IGAs 1983-2010

Survey Year	Percentage of Municipalities Using IGAs
1983	19%
1992	25%
2004	57%
2010	77%

77% of the responding municipalities indicated they currently utilize some type of planning or land use IGA

Types of IGAs used by Responding Municipalities, 2010

Type of IGA	Percentage of Municipalities Using IGAs
Cooperative planning (e.g. urban growth boundaries, urban service areas, or joint planning review)	40%
Resource sharing (e.g. parks, fields)	33%
Transportation planning	23%
Agreement with the county for building inspection	19%
Joint planning commission	5%
Joint planning department	2%
None at this time	23%
Other ⁸	13%

Conclusions

Although the response rate for 2010 was relatively low compared to previous survey years, the land use survey results tell the general story of land use planning in Colorado's municipalities. Over time, an increasing number of municipalities have adopted comprehensive or master plans. The results of this survey show that 90% of the responding municipalities indicated they have an adopted comprehensive or master plan (up from 74% in 2004).

As expected, the survey results confirm that the smaller communities have fewer technical and administrative resources such as planning commissions, boards of adjustment, planning staff, and use of GIS systems. In fact, 81% of the communities not currently using GIS have a population fewer than 2,000. The overall use of GIS in

⁸ Other responses included application review and comment; county sewer inspection, law enforcement, animal control; growth management with county; building inspection with Town of Telluride; IGA re land use; joint land use master plan; law enforcement; library district, recreation district, BLM, county sheriff; sales tax sharing; transportation planning with county; and IGAs with Boulder County, Erie, Louisville & Broomfield regarding annexations and other various planning issues.

Colorado more than doubled since the previous survey year from just 38% in 2004 to 78% in 2010. The use of GIS in planning related activities is now widely accepted as the norm for mapping and spatial analysis. The survey results also show that municipalities are increasingly relying on more outside resources for planning activities. The data generally indicates that the smaller and medium-sized municipalities are relying more on DOLA, and the larger municipalities more so on CML, APA, and consultants.

As with the previous survey year, guiding policies are used most frequently for capital improvements, parks and recreation, and economic development/downtown revitalization. Issues addressed most frequently by regulations are nuisance, signs, and subdivision regulations. Colorado's larger municipalities are more frequently addressing floodplain regulations and are concerned more with mixed-use development and annexation – likely a result of increasing growth pressures.

Only seven percent of the responding municipalities indicated that they do not currently have zoning in place. All of those municipalities have a population fewer than 2,000. Nearly 70% of the responding communities are using traditional zoning practices, followed by 18% using a hybrid system (mix of traditional and form-based or other type).

Intergovernmental agreements are becoming ever more popular. In 1983 when the land use survey was first administered, only 19% of responding municipalities were using IGAs. In 2010 that number jumped to 77% of responding municipalities. Sharing resources will continue to become progressively utilized especially during difficult economic times.

The 2010 Land Use Survey clearly illustrates the various methods and tools that Colorado municipalities are using to implement their planning activities. Guiding and regulating land use and development in Colorado is not a one-size-fits-all process. As our population continues to increase, a wider range of progressive planning tools are being used by Colorado communities. Municipalities are using discretion to determine the most effective and appropriate tools depending on population size, growth pressures, and ability to cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions. The increase in the overall level of planning expertise and regional collaboration in Colorado is evident from the results of this survey.

For questions regarding this survey, or to obtain tabular results, please contact:

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<http://dola.colorado.gov/dlg/osg/surveyresults.htm>

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