• My name is Sarah Cawrse, and I am the project manager for the Advancing Equity in Rezoning project.
• This is the presentation for the first Community Meeting.
So, what will we cover today? There will be three main components of this presentation:
1. There will be an overview of the project.
2. Then we will review the draft issues to address and draft goals to achieve so far with opportunity for questions and discussion after each.
The city is **EVOLVING**

- Why are we, the city, doing this project to update the rezoning process?
- First, we recognize that the city is evolving.
- Development and change has been happening.
- And we have heard from community members like yourself that some improvements can be made, especially to the rezoning process.
• Second, citywide goals need to be implemented.
• In 2019 we adopted new citywide plans that set the vision, priorities, and goals for Denver.
• These plans also provide guidance for land use and future development.
• As we consider how the city is evolving, we look to our plans to see what projects should be prioritized to achieve our citywide goals, especially the goal of creating a city that is equitable, affordable, and inclusive.
Third, the rezoning process is outdated. The citywide plans I just mentioned identified this project as a priority, because the rezoning process is outdated and can be improved. There are more rezonings getting denied because of conflicts of outdated review criteria. There are more applicants having a difficult time navigating the process. And more people are showing up, wanting to be a part of the process, but are not feeling heard.
• So, there are two plans I want to discuss.
• The first plan is the Comprehensive Plan, which is a 20-year vision for Denver.
• It has six vision elements, and the first vision element is the goal for Denver to be equitable, affordable and inclusive.
• The second plan is Blueprint Denver, which guides future land use and transportation.
• This project, as well as all city projects, look to these citywide plans and aim to achieve their goals.
Blueprint Denver defines equity as when everyone, regardless of who they are or where they come from, has the opportunity to thrive.

This plan also identifies specific goals related to equity, including the three equity concepts that should be integrated into projects.

They are improving access to opportunity, reducing vulnerability to displacement, and expanding housing and jobs diversity.
There are recommendations from this plan that led to the project we are here to discuss today.
• This project is not a visionary planning project.
• Instead, this project is a regulatory project intended to help implement goals already identified in our plans.
• The outcome will be an update, also known as text amendment, to the Denver Zoning code.
The main question this project will answer is: How should the rezoning process change?

We want you to contribute to this project, to provide your expertise, experience, or perspective to help solve this question with us.
To understand the rezoning process, we must understand the role of zoning and the difference between the two.

- One thing that we will iterate is that this project is about the rezoning process.
- However, to understand the rezoning process, we must understand the role of zoning and the difference between the two.
• Zoning controls what you can or cannot do with your property, or zone lot.
• It controls how tall buildings can be.
• Their general location, and other things such as parking.
• It controls amount of transparency or windows, entrances and other design standards.
• And it also controls uses within the building or on the site.
A rezoning is the process of changing the zone district of a property.

- So, if that was zoning, then this is rezoning.
- A rezoning is the process of changing the zone district of a property.
• For example, this property that’s zoned to allow a residential duplex could rezone to....
• Allow a three-story building with retail on the first floor and office on the upper floors.
• Again, a rezoning is to go through the process of changing zone districts for a property.
A few examples of rezoning requests:

- Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)
- Change in height
- Change in use (e.g., residential to mixed use)
- Reduction in lot size

• A rezoning may occur for a variety of reasons.
• Applicants may request to rezone their property into a zone district that allows an Accessory Dwelling Unit, or a change in building height, or a change in uses allowed such as going from a zone district that only allows residential to one that allows a mixture of uses, or a reduction in the minimum lot size.
• Denver has different zone districts across the entire city.
• If you would like to look up a zone district for a property, the city’s website has an interactive map of the zoning in the city.
• Since we don’t have enough time today to cover all the details about what zoning is or thoroughly talk through the rezoning process, we highly recommend that you visit the city’s website, as well as the project’s webpage, to learn more about zoning and the rezoning process.
• Overall, the purpose of this project is to evaluate the existing rezoning process and criteria to understand how they may be modernized and better advance Blueprint Denver’s equity concepts.
The project will focus on:

- Updating the rezoning process so that it is transparent, equitable, and accessible for all.
- Identifying rezoning review criteria that inform better decisions and achieve citywide goals, including goals related to equity.
- Creating requirements that respond to the varied equity impacts of rezonings.

- More specifically, this project will focus on updating the rezoning process so that it is transparent, equitable, and accessible for all.
- Identifying rezoning review criteria that inform better decisions and achieve citywide goals, including goals related to equity.
- And creating requirements that respond to the varied equity impacts of rezonings.
• There are three main areas that our project can have an impact.
• Our project can provide updates to the rezoning process requirements and materials.
• This may include updates to application requirements, how and when community engagement should occur, or updates to notification requirements to make community members aware of current rezonings.
This project can evaluate and update the review criteria.
The Review Criteria are a very important piece to the rezoning process.
They are defined in the Denver Zoning Code and the Review Criteria are what City staff, Planning Board, and City Council use to evaluate a rezoning request.
This evaluation includes determining whether the rezoning request meets all five of the Review Criteria.
Again, this project could update the review criteria.
Lastly, this project can address concerns regarding equitable outcomes.
• This project will be about a year-long project
• And will involve several phases.
• The project kicked-off this winter and we are currently in the second phase analyzing and identifying the problem.
• There is a Task Force with about 25 members, and the Task Force is anticipated to meet monthly throughout the first six phases of the project.
• You can observe those meetings if you like, and all the meeting materials are posted to the project’s webpage.
We plan to have a variety of opportunities for engagement during phases two through six. There have already been a few Task Force meetings and focus group meetings to get the conversation started on analyzing and identifying the problem. That’s also what we will discuss in this presentation.
Here are a few ways you can stay engaged throughout the project.

- We plan to have at least three community meetings.
- The one that occurred on April 5th, with other ones that may occur this summer and fall.
- There will be focus groups, with a few coming up this month.
- Office hours will be scheduled, which will be designated times for anyone to come and have a conversation with city staff about the project.
- There are several different ways for you to submit feedback to the project team through the project’s webpage.
- And there will be other opportunities for submitting feedback, such as surveys.

Check the project webpage for updates, announcements, and ways to submit feedback: [www.denvergov.org/equityinrezoning](http://www.denvergov.org/equityinrezoning)
• Let’s discuss the draft issue identification.
• What I’ll present is only a draft of issues that have been raised in feedback so far, and they will be updated to incorporate additional feedback that we hear from you tonight, as well as surveys, and focus groups.
I’ll be going through the main themes of feedback we have heard so far, and the more specific issues associated with those themes.

After I go over these, we would love to hear your feedback on the issues that have been identified and what we may be missing.

The first theme is public awareness.

Some of the issues that have been identified include:

- Noticing requirements do not seem to be equitably accessible and they use technical language.
- The review criteria and process are difficult to understand.
- There is inadequate language access, including translation and interpretation of materials.
- And notifications to Registered Neighborhood Organizations do not necessarily reach a diverse range of people and there may be a lack of representation from the community.
• The second theme is consideration of public input.
• It’s perceived there are insufficient requirements for public engagement.
• There may be varying public input, including input that differs from guidance in adopted plans.
• Public hearings are not the best format and there is a lack of understanding of how input is used.
• The third theme is the process for applicants.
• It’s not ideal that the process is the same for everyone, or all types of applicants and rezonings.
• The application and process can be unclear to people who are inexperienced with rezonings, creating a potential barrier.
• The process itself can be difficult with unpredictable outcomes.
The fourth theme is the review criteria. The review criteria don’t identify how public input should be used. They do not clearly consider equity impacts. And some of the criteria are unclear or vague.
The fifth theme is equitable outcomes.
Tools to evaluate equity are not used on all rezonings.
Development proposals are not part of the rezoning process, which can contribute to unclear impacts.
Some agreements are associated with rezonings, but many are done privately and may not include an equity lens.
There is a lack of commitments from applicants.
And, the rezoning fees are not equitable.
• Let’s discuss the draft goals.
• Our team went through the feedback related to issues and concerns that we have heard so far and developed some initial goals and objectives that the project should achieve.
As I mentioned earlier, the project will focus on three initial goals that set the framework for the project.

- The original goals will be listed at the top of the slide. Beneath it, we developed what we are calling objectives for that goal.
- Objectives should achieve specific outcomes of the goals.
- We will go over the draft goals and objectives that have been identified based on feedback we have received so far.
• The first goal is to have a rezoning process that is transparent, equitable, and accessible for all.
• And the first objective to achieve that goal is to customize rezoning materials and notifications, especially to address the language needs of the community and adapt to the scale and impact of the rezoning.
• The second objective is to improve public awareness and input opportunities.
1. A rezoning process that is transparent, equitable, and accessible for all

**OBJECTIVES**

- Customize rezoning materials and notifications
- Improve public awareness and input opportunities
- Tailor community engagement depending on type & size of rezoning

*DRAFT – Will be updated to incorporate additional feedback*

- The third objective is to tailor community engagement depending on the type & size of rezoning.
GOAL

1. A rezoning process that is transparent, equitable, and accessible for all

OBJECTIVES

- Customize rezoning materials and notifications
- Improve public awareness and input opportunities
- Tailor community engagement depending on type & size of rezoning
- Identify how community feedback is used

• The fourth objective is to identify how community feedback is used throughout the decision-making process.
Advancing Equity in Rezoning

Community Meeting #1

GOAL

1. A rezoning process that is transparent, equitable, and accessible for all

OBJECTIVES

• Customize rezoning materials and notifications
• Improve public awareness and input opportunities
• Tailor community engagement depending on type & size of rezoning
• Identify how community feedback is used
• Reduce barriers for rezonings that are small in scale

DRAFT – Will be updated to incorporate additional feedback

• And the fifth objective is to reduce barriers for rezonings that are small in scale.
• The second goal is to have rezoning review criteria that inform better decisions and achieve citywide goals, including goals related to equity.
• The first objective to achieve that goal is to update the review criteria so that they are clear and understandable.
2. Rezoning review criteria that inform better decisions and achieve citywide goals, including goals related to equity

**GOAL**

- Update the review criteria so that they are clear and understandable
- Ensure the review criteria contribute to achieving the city’s goals

**OBJECTIVES**

- And the second objective is to ensure the review criteria contribute to achieving the city’s goals.
• The third goal is to have rezoning requirements that respond to the varied equity impacts of rezonings.
• The first objective to achieve that goal is to create a process for evaluating equity impacts of rezonings.
3. Rezoning requirements that respond to the varied equity impacts of rezonings

OBJECTIVES

• Create a process for evaluating equity impacts of rezonings
• Incorporate tools, such as an equity analysis, in the rezoning process

• The second objective is to incorporate tools, such as an equity analysis, into the rezoning process.
3. Rezoning requirements that respond to the varied equity impacts of rezonings

**OBJECTIVES**

- Create a process for evaluating equity impacts of rezonings
- Incorporate tools, such as an equity analysis, in the rezoning process
- Create consistent and predictable ways for applicants to commit to certain outcomes

*And the third objective is to create consistent and predictable ways for applicants to commit to certain outcomes.*

*That was a summary of the draft goals and objectives.*
**NEXT STEPS:**

- Please take the Community Survey
  - Link located on the project’s webpage
  - English & Spanish versions available

Please visit the project webpage for updates and other opportunities for engagement:

[www.denvergov.org/equityinrezoning](http://www.denvergov.org/equityinrezoning)