

Sanpete County Planning Commission Work Meeting

June 10, 2026 5:30 P.M.

Sanpete County Courthouse, 160 North Main, Room 302, Manti, Utah

Attendees: Planning Commission Chair Cody Harmer, Board Members: Claudia Jarrett, Gene Jacobson, Justin Atkinson, Jo-Anne Riley and Rick Allred. Also in attendance is Sanpete County Deputy Clerk Heather Pyper and Sanpete County Zoning Administrator Heidi Sorensen. Dallin Carter has been excused

Planning Commission Chair Cody Harmer calls meeting to order.

Discussion of updates to Land Use Matrix and Definitions.

Ms. Jarrett noted that a draft from County Commissioner Mike Bennett had been reviewed the previous week alongside an AI-generated draft from the original meeting. Because the Commission needed to add a significant amount of material to the solar farm draft, and given the desire to process the building code and business licensing frameworks, the Commission agreed to reorder the agenda to address business licensing definitions first and defer the solar farm discussion until afterward. Mr. Harmer acknowledged the extensive work Mr. Jacobson put into compiling the licensing documents, including a supplementary document outlining how to handle unlisted or mismatched uses where no existing zoning category applies. Mr. Jacobson addressed the Commission to explain his methodology, noting his primary concern was reconciling physical space regulations in land use with the commercial activity regulated by business permits. His research into Utah county practices confirmed that while local governments frequently synchronize zoning with permitted business types, a disconnect often occurs because land use ordinances and business licenses are legally distinct. Under Utah State law, when an application proposes an unlisted use, the Zoning Administrator has the legal authority to review the classification list, find the closest matching subcategory, and process it through administrative review under Zoning Administrator's office, eliminating the need to reinvent ordinances for every unique request. Mr. Jacobson clarified that he utilized both Gemini and Perplexity AI to structure these land use definitions and business license categories into a consistent, enforceable format featuring primary and subclass definitions in neutral language. The AI tools structured the categories based on principal use, accessory functions, intensity, and administrative clarity, organizing the sections into core definitions, included uses, conditional use notes, and overlay districts. Mr. Jacobson highlighted that the AI could further generate use-

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specific performance standards covering noise, hours, setbacks, and screening, while cross-referencing which zones are best suited for particular businesses. He cautioned against making definitions too tight, as overly restrictive language limits the administrative flexibility of the Zoning Administrator. Reviewing specific draft classifications, Mr. Jacobson examined an integration for microbreweries and distilleries that incorporated use-specific standards, district allowances, and table formatting. The draft detailed standard noise controls, requiring production equipment and loading operations to comply with county noise ordinances and requiring conditional use permits for amplified outdoor music or entertainment in tasting areas, which must cease by specified hours. Mr. Jacobson expressed support for attaching these types of descriptions, covering screening, buffering, fencing, and operational hours, to categories requiring clear parameters. Mr. Jacobson also discussed legal terminology variations, agreeing that utilizing the phrase "examples of this use include" instead of "this use includes" prevents the county from legally precluding unlisted operations, offering better long-term protection under state law. Similarly, the definition for small warehouse or cold storage facilities noted that the use "may include" indoor storage or refrigeration, with Mr. Jacobson pointing out that the legal connotation of "may" grants necessary administrative latitude. The conversation turned to the classification numbering system and potential constraints on future county expansion.

Alternatives were weighed, including shifting to entirely new numerical blocks or utilizing decimal sub-sections to match past office practices. Ms. Pyper clarified that the numbering system is not utilized for land use matrix functions, but is strictly an internal tracking mechanism for the County Clerk's office receipting program to help staff categorize applications efficiently. Ms. Sorensen added that when an application is received, her office cross-references parcel numbers and zones to verify permitted activity and assigns a corresponding business license category so both offices remain aligned. Concerns were raised regarding whether highly specific subcategories would overcomplicate the county fee schedule, particularly for businesses operating out of an office that also maintain a warehouse. Ms. Pyper noted that the minimum standard business license fee is \$100, with certain temporary or smaller ones set at \$75 or \$40. Ms. Pyper noted that while they can provide input, the final authority over the fee schedule rests entirely with the County Commissioners, and the consensus was to avoid overcomplicating the fee matrix while maintaining structural definitions. The Commission then conducted a

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continuous review of various business sections, beginning with home-based businesses. The text noted that conditional use reviews may be triggered by higher traffic, frequent deliveries, or prominent signage, with overlay options applied in residential transition areas to provide guidance if neighborhood complaints arise. For auto sales dealerships, the language specified that the category does not include full-scale repair or salvage operations, which are handled separately within the county framework. Regarding farmer's markets and flea markets, Mr. Harmer recalled past compliance conflicts with the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) south of Mount Pleasant, agreeing that language acknowledging required UDOT approvals or accommodated off-road parking should be factored into the text. Ms. Jarrett then discussed how food trucks and mobile vendors operating at special events are licensed. Ms. Pyper explained, if a mobile vendor holds a valid brick-and-mortar business license within a county municipality like Ephraim, it functions as an extension of their primary business, meaning they are generally not required to obtain a separate county license for single events, though certain independent municipalities do charge temporary fees. The Commission agreed to simplify this section by consolidating the subcategories into a broader definition utilizing "examples may include" to encompass mobile food services, temporary merchandise, and special event vendors, maintaining administrative flexibility for the clerk and zoning offices. The conditional use references for tobacco and vape retailers near schools or sensitive areas were evaluated next. Ms. Jarrett expressed that conditional uses for these types of businesses should not be implied as appropriate near schools, noting that future charter schools or municipal boundary overlaps must be protected. Ms. Jarrett directed that the conditional use section be removed from the vape definition entirely to avoid any implication of suitability, leaving the restriction to be strictly dictated by the zoning matrix. Adult entertainment was also discussed, with staff noting it is currently codified within the Industrial Zone to restrict proximity to schools and churches. Mr. Harmer agreed to add "adult use" to the Recreational and Lifestyle section and paste the existing protective land use definition directly into the business license document. For general contractors and specialty trades, the headings listed licensed builders, electricians, plumbers, and roofers in parentheses. Ms. Pyper verified these were intended purely as introductory examples, and the Commission agreed to insert the phrase "could include" or "may include" within the parentheses across all applicable headers in the classification block to prevent the categories from appearing

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closed. The sections regarding treatment centers, massage therapy, and child care were reviewed next, and it was noted that certain existing residential facilities operating between Fountain Green and Moroni require formal state licensing. The Commission directed that a blanket statement be integrated into the general definitions explicitly requiring compliance with the applicable standards of the State Department of Human Services and formal state licensing where mandatory. When reviewing short-term rentals, the Commission corrected text that originally referenced limited short-term rental zones, noting that Sanpete County does not feature a dedicated short-term rental zone. Instead, short-term rentals are managed via conditional use permits within a floating overlay district, and the Commission amended the text to state that a short-term rental use shall be allowed only in designated overlay zones with a conditional use permit, determining that the general residential short-term rental subcategory was sufficient to cover local lodging impacts. For aviation services, the Commission verified that the county's recently established private landing strip ordinance is strictly designated for personal, non-commercial use, meaning private strips do not generate commercial revenue and do not require a business license. To prevent confusion, the Commission added the phrase "not to include private landing strips for personal use" into the primary aviation heading. The mining definition was reviewed next, which covers excavation, drilling, blasting, stockpiling, hauling, and reclamation activities. It was noted that deep mining operations trigger federal MSHA oversight once specific depth thresholds are met, and the Commission amended the definition to include both decommissioning and reclamation alongside existing state-level regulations. Conversely, the Commission debated adding decommissioning language directly into the renewable energy definition for solar and wind farms. The consensus was that decommissioning, bonding, and development agreements represent distinct contractual frameworks handled during the conditional use permit phase, so the renewable energy definition was left clean to avoid duplication of the upcoming solar ordinance. The Commission then reviewed major telecom infrastructure, cell towers, and technology services. Historical precedent showed that major tower placements, such as cell towers near the landfill or on local hills, involve long-term franchise or pioneering agreements executed directly through the County Commissioners rather than standard administrative channels. The Commission amended the major infrastructure definitions to include verbiage stating all long-term agreements are subject to County

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Commission approval. This ensures that while small-cell 5G attachments on existing power poles can move through standard easements, major infrastructural lease agreements are directed to the final legislative authority. Concluding the review of definitions, the Commission discussed home occupation impacts and annual renewals, distinguishing between low, moderate, and high-impact operations. Ms. Riley noted that low-impact businesses, such as home-based artists or authors who ship items without generating foot traffic, are well-covered. Ms. Pyper verified that all county business licenses face an annual renewal process every November, during which businesses must disclose scale modifications, such as adding storage units or commercial vehicles, allowing the county to assess potential impact fees or require classification updates.