

# COUNTY OF ELBERT

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## Community & Development Services

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## **Oil and/or Gas Operations – Special Use Permit & Memorandum of Understanding**

Community and Development Services is proposing an amendment to the Elbert County Zoning Regulations to facilitate the development of oil and gas resources within the unincorporated area of Elbert County while also mitigating potential conflicts between existing, as well as planned, land uses. This Section, if approved, will be added as Part II, Section 26, of the Elbert County Zoning Regulations and will replace or supersede any reference to oil and gas drilling operations referenced therein. An “Oil & Gas Development Permit” will be required for any Oil & Gas Facility.

An “Oil and/or Gas Development Permit” may be obtained following one of two Special Permit Review Processes:

- Major facilities will follow the standard Special Use Review process as provided for in these regulations. (Approximately 5-6 month process)
- or
- Minor facilities may choose to apply as a standard Special Use Review process *or* may choose to follow an administrative process, provided a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Elbert County is approved in conjunction. (Approximately 30-45 days)

It shall be Elbert County’s policy to encourage the use of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with individual oil and gas production companies that are active within the County and are proposing a Minor Oil and/or Gas Facility. The BOCC will approve all proposed MOUs in a public hearing forum. The MOU will incorporate Best Management Practices (BMPs). For those production companies that enter into an MOU, the permitting process will be administrative and will not require the public hearing process. With the exception of the public hearing process, all other regulation within this section shall apply to administrative applications. This shortened process will serve as incentive for production companies to enter into an MOU and therefore agree to more stringent BMPs than those currently imposed by the state.

The public hearing for the Planning Commission is scheduled for January 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM, in the Exhibit Hall at the fairgrounds complex. The Board of County Commissioner public hearing is set for January 23<sup>rd</sup> at 9:00 AM, also in the Exhibit Hall.