

Agenda Item 1.4.4

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS BRIEFING PAPER

Topic: Water Supply Planning

**Presented by: Abel Montoya, Development & Transportation Director,
Christopher B. O’Keefe, Planning & Zoning Director, Heather Gutherless,
Long Range Planning Supervisor**

Date: 5/20/2025

☐ For Information

☒ For Discussion/Board Direction

☐ Consent to
Place on Business/
Hearing Agenda

Issue: Two 2024 State bills, SB24-174 and HB24-1313, were signed into law last year and discuss water supply. Complying with both will necessitate collaboration with the County’s 50+ water providers. This paper will outline the requirements and how the County is planning to meet those requirements.

Background:

SB24-174 (Housing Needs Planning):

SB24-174 primarily focuses on supporting affordable housing, developing housing needs assessments and evaluating displacement risk. However, this act also mandates a Water Supply element in municipal, county and regional comprehensive plans. When developing a Water Supply element, C.R.S. § 30-28-106(3)(a.5)(II) requires a community to:

- Consult and coordinate with local water provider(s),
- Include water conservation policies, and
- Estimate a range of water supplies and facilities needed to support the potential public and private development described in the comprehensive plan.

The Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) has created a dedicated website to [Water and Land Use Integration for Local Governments](#). This website contains a page specifically for Comprehensive Plan Elements including a guidebook for local planners. The County’s adopted Master Plan must include a Water Supply Element no later than December 31, 2026, and that element must be updated no less frequently than every 5 years.

HB24-1313 (State Land Use Criteria for Strategic Growth Act):

HB24-1313 (C.R.S. § 29-35-201, *et seq.*) focused on increasing housing densities near specific transit facilities, including high-frequency transit lines and transit stations. This legislation recognized that water providers must be involved in the conversations about supplying water to any locally designated transit centers zoned to allow a higher density of dwelling units for compliance with the act. The first step to meet this legislation is to determine the County's Housing Opportunity Goal (HOG). The HOG is the total number of units that zoning must allow within the legislatively identified Transit Areas (the "Zoning Capacity"). A preliminary report with this information is due to the State on June 30, 2025. A final report identifying the final HOG calculation, a map identifying any County designated Transit Centers and evidence that the County's Zoning Capacity meets the HOG, affordability and displacement strategies identified and a plan to implement, and a description of community engagement is due December 31, 2026. Finally, December 31, 2027, is the HOG compliance deadline at which time each subject jurisdiction must designate Transit Centers and ensure Zoning Capacity meets the HOG and have submitted a Final HOG Report and received approval from DOLA.

More detailed information about Transit Areas and the County's HOG will be presented at a briefing in the near future.

Discussion: The County has been working toward addressing these new statutes. One proactive water provider has reached out to the County to begin discussions on this topic.

SB24-174:

In 2020, the County updated the Comprehensive Master Plan with a focus on water. With this update 15 Water Conservation policies were added. These policies will fulfill the requirement that water conservation policies be included in the Master Plan.

Through the Together Jeffco Process, a specific Water Supply goal and policies have been added to the draft Comprehensive Plan. While this will not fully meet the legislation, it creates a framework for where the information about water supply and facilities will reside in the County's Comprehensive Plan.

County staff will need to convene all water providers to discuss this legislation's requirements, how to obtain the required information, and what

needs or concerns surround this process. With the timing of the remaining Together Jeffco process, staff would anticipate starting conversations via email with water providers when the full draft of the Comprehensive Plan is sent out for review with meetings starting in the fall. Throughout 2026, there will be regular check-ins and deadlines for necessary documentation.

Inclusion of a water supply element and strategic growth element increases prioritization of applications for grants administered by the State.

Staff is evaluating the DOLA guidance and reviewing other jurisdictions' recent water supply plans to determine if this is something that staff has the expertise to complete or if we will need support from an outside consultant.

HB24-1313:

There are several Transit Areas in the unincorporated portions of the County. The largest and most contiguous is along the South Golden Road Corridors. In order to address the County's HOG, staff has been using the DOLA guidance provided to determine the number of housing units allowed under the County's zoning regulations. Once this number is determined, staff will need to contact the water suppliers in the Transit Areas to determine whether there is adequate water to supply the increased allowable density. If water supply is not available in one of the areas, then the first option is to determine if increased density could be provided in the boundaries of a different water provider that does have capacity. If water supply is not available, then an "Insufficient Water Supplies Report" will need to be submitted on or before December 31, 2026, and every three years thereafter. Compliance with this law and reporting will enable the County to apply for funds from the Transit-Oriented Communities Infrastructure Grant Program.

Additional information on the preliminary HOG report is scheduled to be presented to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) on June 10, 2025.

Fiscal Impact: ☐ yes ☒ no

SPA Review: SPA supports with no concerns, Zoe Jenkins, 5/7/25

County Attorney Review: Comments addressed/No concerns, Kristin Cisowski, 5/13/25

Facilities Review: No concern, Mark Danner, 5/6/25

BIT Review: No impact, Andy Corbett, 5/6/25

Fleet Review: No fiscal impact, Janice Mayer, 5/6/25

County Human Resources Review (new FTE only): N/A - No new FTE requested.

Recommendations: The BCC provide guidance that staff may not have considered regarding ensuring adequate water supply for the County and in Transit Areas.

Originator: Heather Gutherless, X8716

Contacts for Additional Information: Chris O'Keefe, X8713; Abel Montoya, X8578; Tugce Ucar Maurer X8735