

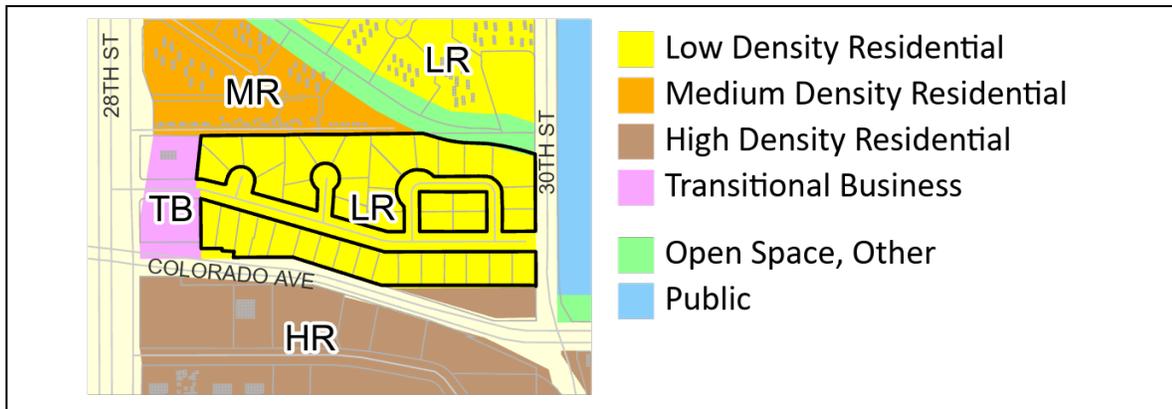
Request #1

East Ridge Neighborhood

Initiated by resident / property owner in the area

Request:

Change land use from Low Density Residential (LR) to Medium Density Residential (MR)



Staff Recommendation: No

Staff recommends that this request not be considered further as part of the 2020 BVCP Mid-Term Update for the following reasons:

1. It has not been the city's practice to allow changes to BVCP land use to increase density in single-family neighborhoods without an adopted area plan, subcommunity plan or other over-arching planning process. No area-specific planning process has evaluated and recommended changes for this area.
2. Such a process is beyond the scope of the stream-lined mid-term update and would require significant staff resources.

ANALYSIS:

1. Consistent with the purposes of the mid-term update?

No. While this is a land use designation change request, which is allowed in the mid-term update, new policy direction is not within the scope of a mid-term update. It has not been the city's practice to support changes to BVCP Land Use to increase density in single-family neighborhoods without an adopted area plan, subcommunity plan or other over-arching planning process.

2. Consistent with the current policies in the BVCP or relevant subcommunity or area plans?

BVCP Policy 2.10 Preservation & Support for Residential Neighborhoods includes policy direction that "the city will work with neighborhoods to protect and enhance neighborhood character and livability."

While the policy also includes direction that “the city will also work with neighborhoods to identify areas for additional housing... that could be integrated into and supportive of neighborhoods,” this is typically done in a comprehensive planning process to fully understand the range of impacts and benefits. Studies to determine how the area would appropriately evolve to allow for more density and determine appropriate zoning would need to be done in conjunction with or subsequent to a land use designation change.

3. Compatible with adjacent land uses and neighborhood context?

This request is for the existing East Ridge neighborhood, which is an established neighborhood with Low Density Residential (LR) land use and low density residential (RL-1) zoning. While the wider area has experienced significant redevelopment to add high density housing, this area has an established single-family context. The surrounding neighborhoods are a mixture of condominium and apartment complexes ranging in density from low density residential to high density residential.

4. Was the proposed change requested or considered as part of a recent update to the Comprehensive Plan or other planning process?

No. This request was submitted in several previous BVCP update processes. In each, staff did not recommend pursuing the proposal further. A change to the land use designation to increase density in an established single-family residential area is unprecedented in recent comprehensive plan history. Adding dwelling units to an area not originally designed to accommodate them calls for careful planning and consideration as increasing density in established single family areas without attention to mitigating negative impacts (i.e. parking and over-occupancy) can result in degradation of the neighborhood character.

Recent changes in the regulations for accessory dwelling units (ADUs) may offer options for owner-occupied units to add an ADU, potentially increasing affordability for owners and creating new affordable units.

5. Is there any change in circumstances, community needs or new information that would warrant the proposal be considered as part of this update?

Not at this time. Should the Planning Board and/or City Council express interest in exploring ways to allow this single family neighborhood to transition to medium density, this could be an area that could meet the criteria to be studied in the context of a Neighborhood Pilot Program as outlined in the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan. A first step would be to gauge interest among neighborhood residents. If sufficient interest is expressed, and the other criteria could be met, the pilot project could be further explored as the planning work plan allows in coming years.

6. Are there enough available resources to evaluate the proposed change (city and county staffing and budget priorities)?

No. This request would require a moderate to significant amount of time to involve neighborhood residents and property owners throughout the neighborhood, determine the range of options, and assess potential implications, benefits, and impacts.



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BOULDER VALLEY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



BOULDER VALLEY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2020 MIDTERM UPDATE: REQUEST FOR REVISION

1) Type of Amendment (check all that apply):

Land Use Map Amendment

Planning Areas Map Amendment

Service Area contractions or Minor Changes to the Service Area Boundary

Other Map Amendment

2) Please provide the following information

a. Brief description of the proposed amendment:

b. Brief reason or justification for the proposed amendment:

a. Brief description of location of proposed amendment (including address or approximate coordinates):

b. Size of parcel: _____



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BOULDER VALLEY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



3) Applicant:

Name: _____

Address:

Phone: _____

4) Owner:

Name: _____

Address:

Phone: _____

5) Representative/Contact:

Name: _____

Address:

Phone: _____

6) Does the applicant have a development application or some interest in a property that in any manner would be affected by this amendment proposal? (If yes, please explain):

East Ridge Land Use Change Narrative

Boulder East Ridge, excluding multi-story office and residential buildings, is a small neighborhood of 40 detached houses between 28th and 30th, north of Colorado Ave. and south of Gold Run condominiums. It is the only neighborhood currently low density that is virtually adjacent to both main and east University of Colorado campuses and is essentially the “land bridge” between them.

When this neighborhood was built circa 1955-1958 it stood alone. Since then CU has grown around it and it has also become essentially surrounded by higher density residential housing. It is already designated as part of the Colorado University sub-community in the Comp Plan. Since our previous land use change applications in the 2000's, several CU academic departments have moved to east campus. Due to its close proximity to both main and east CU campuses, the natural use of these properties is for student and staff housing. The land use designation should reflect the changes in the surroundings to help meet the demand for student housing.

In our 2010 application hearing, City Council specifically stated we could apply for a land use change during a Mid-Term Update, even though staff thought our application should only be considered during a Major Update, when it would get lost among Planning Reserve and major annexation controversies e.g. Hogan Pancost. City Council Resolution 922 Part 3B states "Consider the potential for higher housing densities on parcels adjoining the University of Colorado." We are now virtually adjacent to both CU Boulder academic campuses.

Upon rezoning from low to medium density, I anticipate many duplex conversions, subject to off-street parking requirements. We are already a Neighborhood Parking Permit program neighborhood given our proximity to main campus. There will also probably be a few additional structures built and possibly a few pop-tops depending on lot size. This would help meet student housing demand in close proximity to academic campuses. This is largely sustainable use of existing structures to adjust to changes in surroundings.

A land use change for our neighborhood would meet many criteria in the Comp Plan. BVCP Ch. 3 Policies Section 7 Housing goals to Support Community Housing Needs, Preserve & Enhance Housing Choices, Integrate Growth & Community Housing Goals are all clearly met if students are considered, who are essentially ignored in the BVCP. All 6 amendment criteria a-f p.166 are met as part of the “Colorado University” sub-community. We are adjacent to 28th, 30th, and Colorado transportation corridors. We are within walking distance of 29th St., Basemar, The Village, and 30th/Baseline retail areas.

Staff has previously been opposed to this land use change because of glaring omissions in the Comp Plan, that use of existing structures can and will change without change in the basic structures themselves due to changes in surroundings, and that student housing is essentially not addressed in the Comp Plan, a significant proportion of our population and the “elephant in the room.” If our application is again rejected despite the noted changes in our surroundings and the use of existing structures, these policy omissions will need to be addressed in the next Major Update.

There is already precedent for up-zoning large areas, especially along the west side of 30th between Colorado and Baseline, that are adjacent to and largely surrounded by higher density. However, increasing the housing density of East Ridge will not set a precedent for increasing the density of other neighborhoods since no other low density neighborhoods have our particular location virtually adjacent to not just one but two CU academic campuses.

When I moved into East Ridge 40 years ago, most houses were owner occupied. Now, with the changes in surroundings including the growth of CU, most houses are student rentals. Nearly all of us property owners would like to be able to better utilize our properties to help meet the demand for student housing in close proximity to both campuses, otherwise students will live elsewhere in the city. Changing the land use designation for East Ridge will be an appropriate step in adjusting to the changes in CU and the surrounding neighborhoods.