

CITY OF BOULDER MEMORANDUM

TO: Design Advisory Board (DAB)

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DATE: December 14, 2016

SUBJECT: **Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan 2015 Update – Future Regional Center, Neighborhood Centers and Industrial Areas**

PURPOSE

This is an informational memo provided to elicit feedback from the board regarding design concepts associated with the major Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) update. This packet includes information about future centers and industrial areas. Staff is seeking feedback to refine the design concepts that may help inform Built Environment chapter of the plan.

BOARD ROLE IN THE BVCP

The BVCP is jointly adopted by the City of Boulder (“city”) (Planning Board and City Council) and Boulder County (“county”) (County Commissioners and Planning Commission). While this board is not responsible for approving the plan, staff will be seeking feedback and ideas from the DAB about design issues. Following this discussion, the planning team will summarize the board’s feedback to the Planning Board on Dec. 15.

BACKGROUND

The [BVCP](#) is the community’s plan for the future. The core components of the plan include policies and maps. The policies are intended to guide decisions about growth, development, preservation, environmental protection, economic development, affordable housing, culture and the arts, urban design, neighborhood character and transportation for the next 15 years. Two maps, namely the Land Use and Area I, II, III Maps, define the desired land-use pattern and location, type, and intensity of development.

Despite its 15-year horizon, the BVCP is updated every five years to respond to changed circumstances or evolving community needs and priorities. Since the 1970s, the city and county have adopted the plan jointly. The ongoing collaboration to address issues of shared concern is relatively unique among communities.

The plan is the overarching policy guide for the community. As such, its policies tend to be less detailed than those that are found in the city’s 20+ master plans. The BVCP’s land use map sets parameters around future growth and guides development standards and zoning, and regulations in the Boulder Land Use Code are largely instrumental in guiding development to

achieve plan goals consistent with the land use map. The city and county closely adhere to the BVCP as guided by an intergovernmental agreement.

Plan Process and Schedule

The current phase of the plan has focused on preparing alternative scenarios, analysis and updating policies, including multiple community engagement activities as noted below and a second survey. The next major milestone is a joint study session of Planning Board (PB) and City Council (CC) on Jan. 24, 2017, at which time the two bodies will begin to discuss recommendations for key policy choices and initial proposals for changes to address the focus areas of the plan, such as housing. Recommendations and feedback from this DAB meeting will be shared with PB and CC. After the study session staff will begin preparing a draft plan in March.

The webpage has been revamped and contains up-to-date information about the project schedule and materials: www.bouldervalleycompplan.net.

BOARD INPUT

A major component of the 2015 BVCP update examines the capacity and appropriateness of increasing housing in neighborhood, regional and industrial centers. The attached handouts on this topic are being used in public forums as a visual aid for elements of ideal places – the mix, design, form and function. Each handout focuses on a specific type of center, maps showing the location of each center, and what could happen under current policies and alternative scenarios. The board may be most interested in the concepts or design, function, land uses and housing. The content and urban concepts found in these handouts will be refined by public input and board feedback for inclusion in the final plan. The Built Environment chapter of the BVCP is attached for reference ([Attachment A](#)).

Activity Centers and Industrial/Innovation Areas – Mix of Uses and Character

The packets describing the Boulder Valley Regional Center (BVRC), Neighborhood Centers, and the Light Industrial/Innovation Areas ([Attachment B](#)) depict existing conditions and policies for each type of place, draft principles for place making, and visualizations for transforming the mix of land uses and other urban design and character issues. Included in this memo is a summary and location map of the possible centers and areas for reference ([Attachment C](#)). The attachments have been used at the community forums to aid in discussion about vision and policies and to pose questions about issues, such as intensity and building height.

Staff seeks feedback from the board about the concepts presented for regional, neighborhood and industrial centers which could refine the concepts and design policies ultimately added to the Built Environment section of the plan that provides guidance on how these places should evolve. Specifically, staff requests feedback on the following:

- What refinements would the board recommend to the principles and the land use mix, character and design for: (a) the BVRC, (b) neighborhood centers, and the (c) light industrial/innovation areas?
- Are there specific suggestions regarding the relationship of these centers to each other and any important character differences between the centers that need to be emphasized?
- Does the overall mix of land uses and housing seem appropriate? Is additional housing more suitable in one area over another?
- What are the most important things to consider when drafting the Built Environment chapter, e.g. mass, scale, density, height, public realm, street character, open space relationships, use mix, connections, etc.?

UPCOMING CITY MEETINGS

- Dec. 15** **Planning Board**
Continued discussion of policy chapters, land use and other key policies
- Jan. 10** **City Council/Planning Board Joint Study Session**
Discussion of Housing Topics
- Jan. 19** **Planning Board**
Discussion of CU South land use change and preparation for joint Study Session.
- Jan. 24** **City Council/Planning Board Joint Study Session**
Review scenarios, analysis, community engagement results and CU South

ATTACHMENTS

- A. 2010 BVCP Built Environment Chapter
- B. Neighborhood, Regional and Industrial Centers Handout DRAFT
- C. Possible Location for Future Jobs and Housing DRAFT

2. Built Environment

Boulder's compact, interconnected urban form helps ensure the community's environmental health, social equity and economic vitality. It also supports cost-effective infrastructure and facility investments, a high level of multimodal mobility, and easy access to employment, recreation, shopping and other amenities, as well as a strong image of Boulder as a distinct community.

Background

Elements That Define Boulder's City Structure

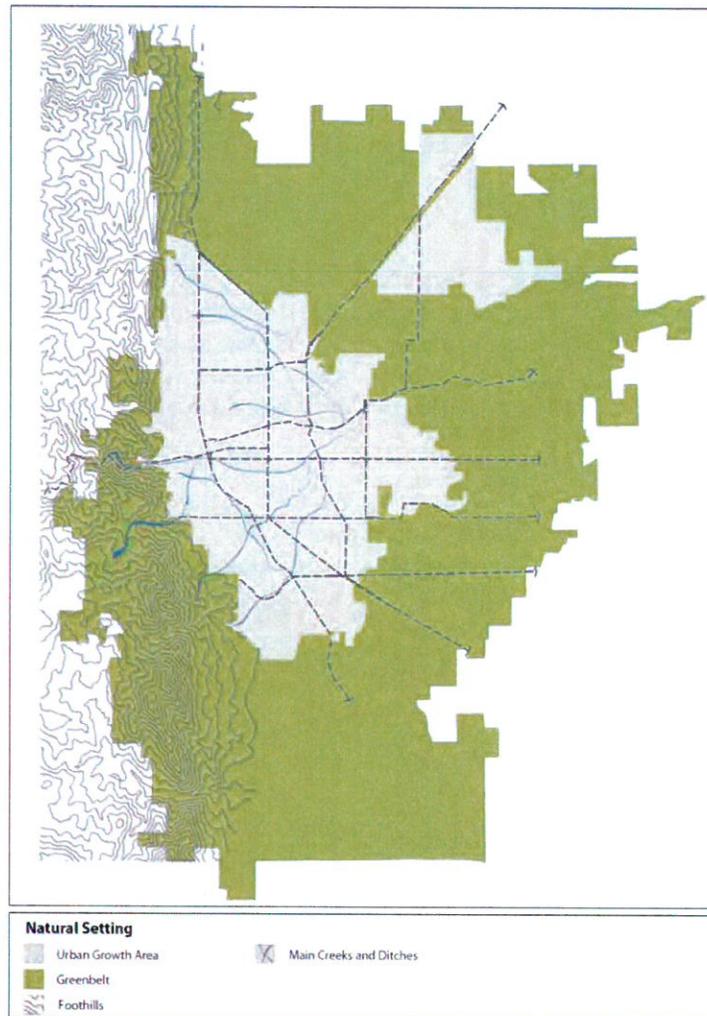
Boulder's distinctive 'sense of place' and compact size did not happen by accident. It has taken creative public policies and pragmatic planning decisions over many years to produce and preserve Boulder's unique character and physical beauty. Elements that define Boulder's city structure and support its continuing evolution to a more sustainable urban form are described below.

1. Natural Setting

Boulder's natural setting defines its size and shape.

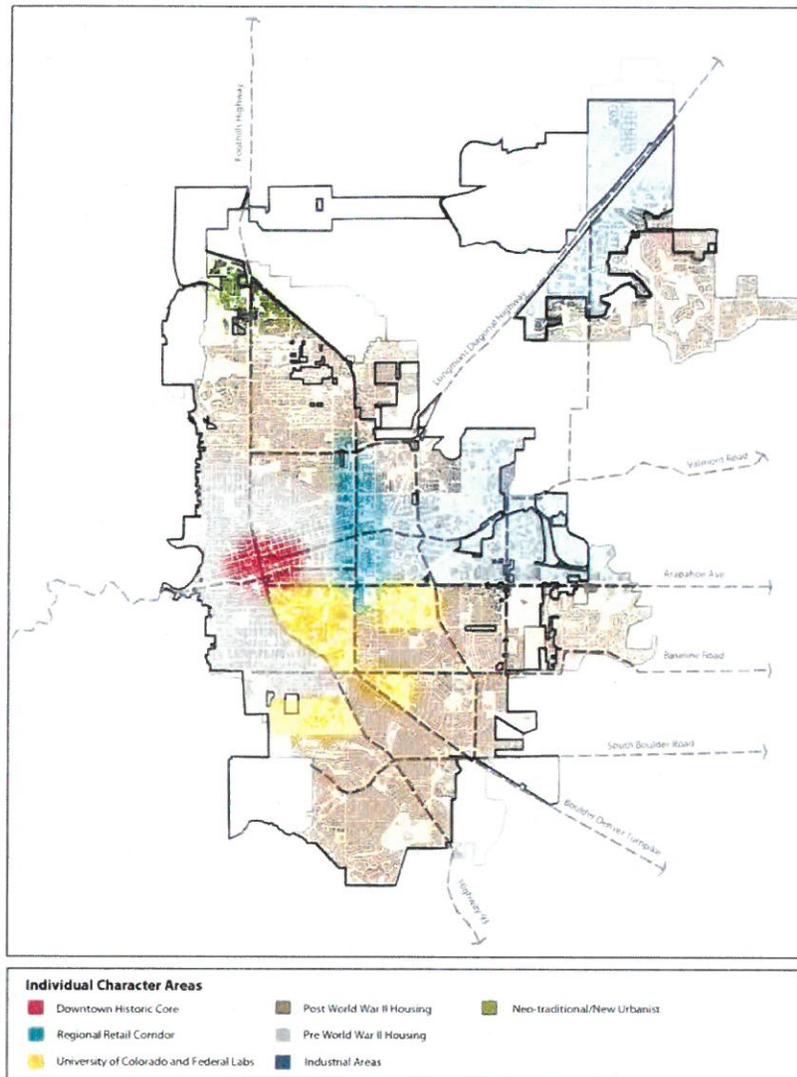
The two most important factors that shape the City of Boulder are its mountain backdrop and surrounding greenbelt. These natural features form a clearly-defined edge that separates the urban

area from the open countryside. Creeks and ditches have also shaped the layout of the city.



2. Individual Character Areas

Different parts of Boulder are distinguished by their individual character. Boulder's city structure is also defined by the individual character and distinctive qualities of its different areas, drawing on each area's unique history, development pattern, land uses, amenities and other factors. Some of the more distinctive character areas within the city are: the downtown historic core and surrounding pre-World War II residential neighborhoods, the 28th/30th Street regional retail corridor, the University and federal lab campuses, the industrial areas in East Boulder and Gunbarrel, the post-World War II residential neighborhoods and the North Boulder neo-traditional/New-Urbanist neighborhoods.



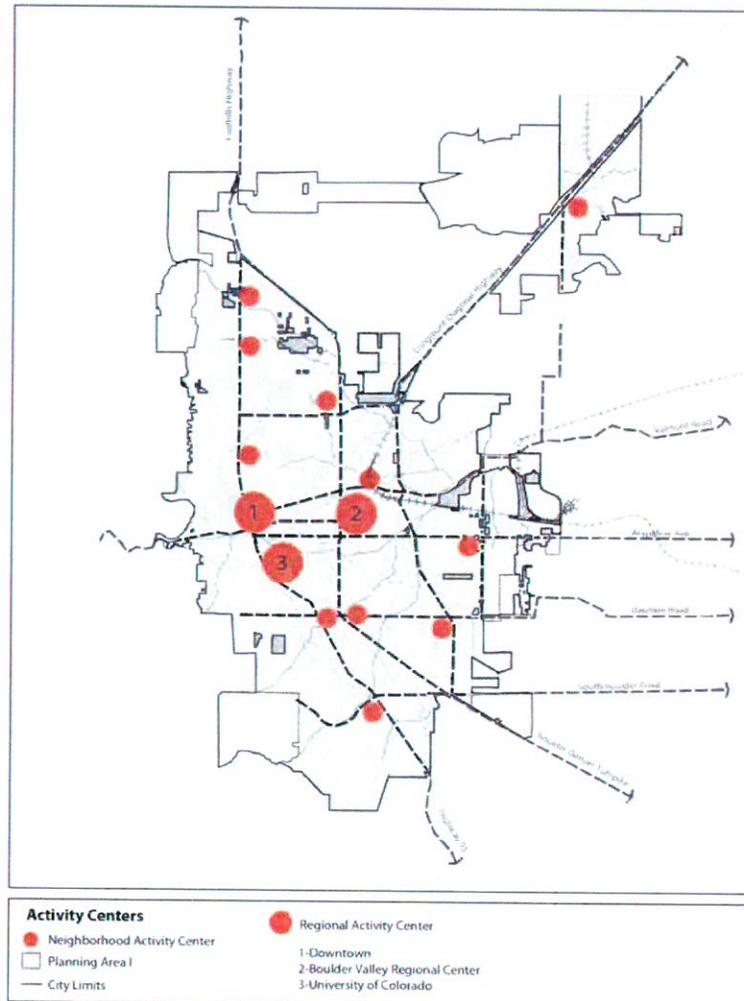
3. Activity Centers

Activity centers concentrate activities into nodes at a variety of scales.

Boulder's commercial, entertainment, educational and civic centers are focused in concentrated nodes of activities at a variety of scales distributed throughout the community.

At the highest level of intensity are the city's three regional centers. They form a triangle at Boulder's geographic center: the Historic Downtown, the Boulder Valley Regional Center (BVRC), and the University of Colorado (CU) with the University Hill business district, which also serves as a neighborhood center for the surrounding area. Each regional center has a distinct function and character, provides a wide range of activities and draws from the entire city as well as the region.

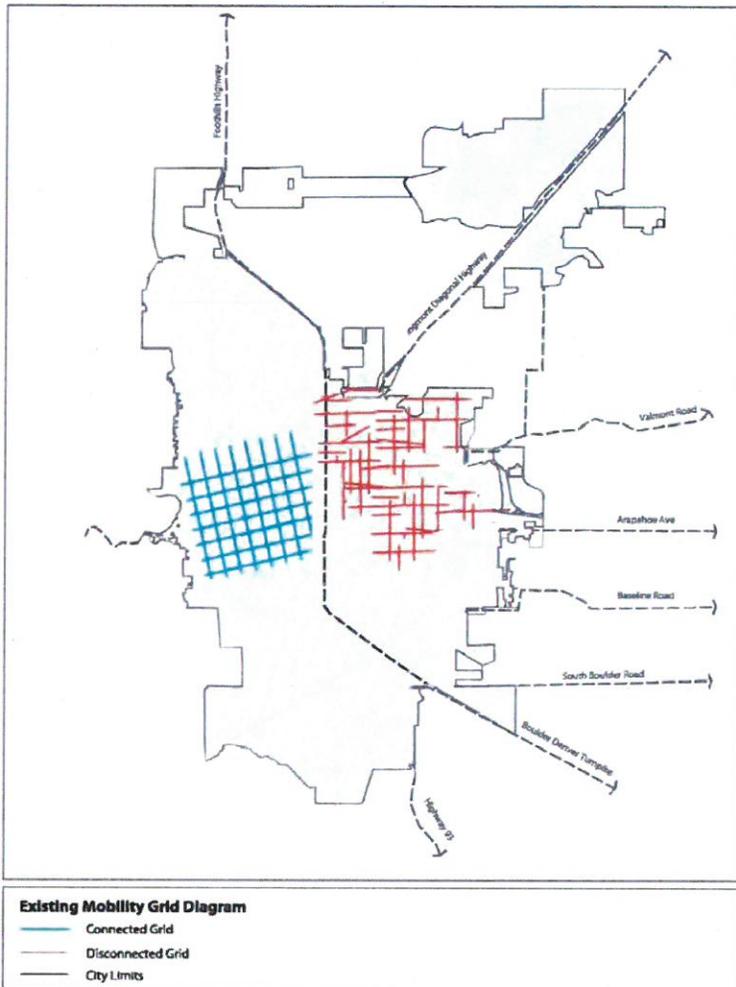
The next tier of intensity is neighborhood activity centers. In addition to serving as neighborhood gathering places, these centers also provide goods and services for the day-to-day needs of nearby residents, workers and students, and are easily accessible from surrounding areas by foot, bike and transit.

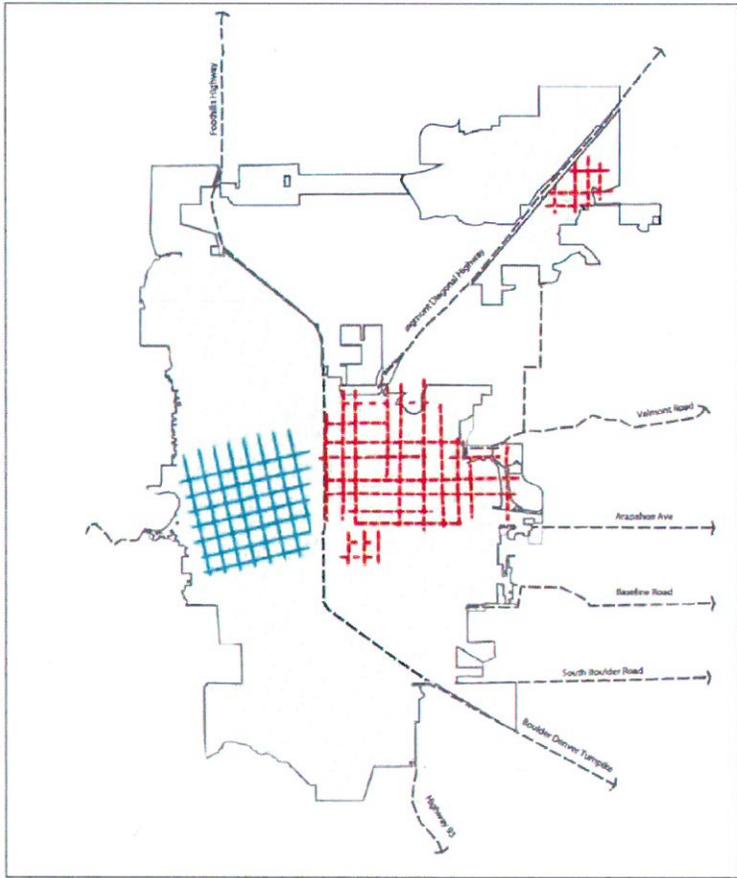


4. Mobility Grid

Boulder’s ‘mobility grid’ interconnects the city.

Boulder’s ‘mobility grid’—the system of streets, alleys, transit corridors, multi-use and greenway paths—interconnects the city and both serves and reflects the city’s land use pattern. Networks for vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians and transit—sometimes shared, sometimes separate—overlay the city and create a lacework of movement between and within regional centers, neighborhood centers, and residential and employment areas. In general, the western historic neighborhoods of the city have a fine-grained, walkable and bikeable street grid, whereas other parts of the city, for example, East Boulder, have larger, more car-oriented super-blocks. Over time, the city seeks to extend a more pedestrian and bike-friendly mobility grid to all parts of the community.





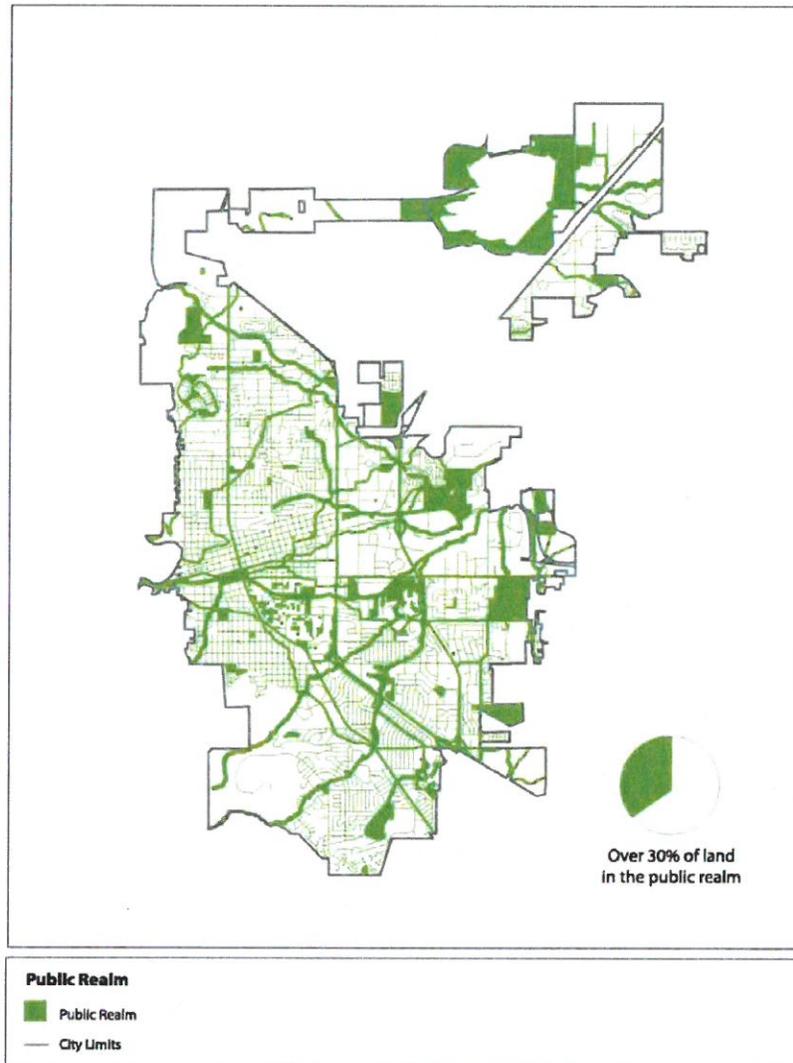
Future Mobility Grid Diagram

- Existing Connected Grid
- Future Connections
- City Limits

5. The Public Realm

The public realm provides key functions and strongly influences character and aesthetics.

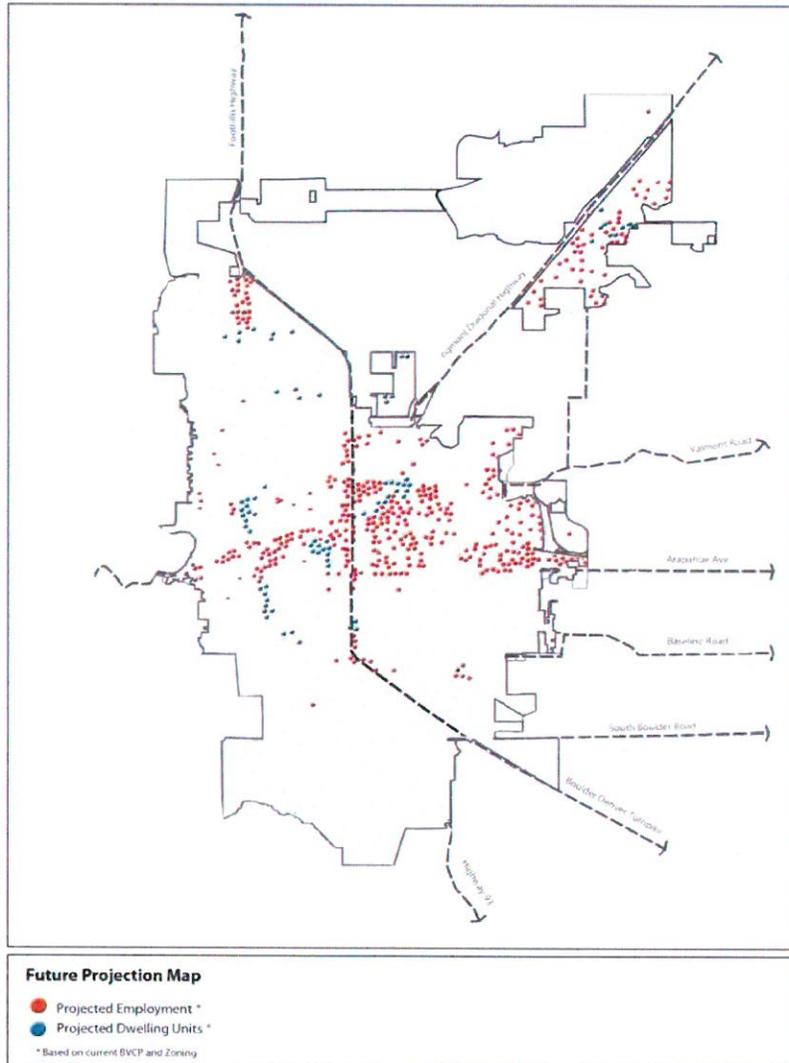
The public realm includes the city's streets, sidewalks and paths, ditches, parks, plazas and other urban outdoor spaces. It comprises a large portion of Boulder's land and represents a substantial public investment. The design of the public realm plays a major role in defining the character, identity and aesthetic quality of the city overall and individual neighborhoods. It also serves a variety of important functions: transportation, passive and active recreation, gathering places, opportunities to connect to nature, enhancement of air and water quality, and mitigation of urban heat island effects.



Projected Growth

This diagram illustrates where housing and jobs could be added within the city Service Area through development of vacant parcels and redevelopment of properties under current plans and regulations. The Built Environment policies help shape the form and quality of future growth, in

addition to protecting historic and environmental resources and preserving established neighborhood character.



Sustainable Urban Form Definition

The city's urban form is shaped by the location and design of streets, paths and open spaces; the mix of uses and activities that are allowed in each area of the city; and the design and intensity of development and public improvements. The city's goal is to evolve toward an urban form that supports sustainability. This "sustainable urban form" is defined by the following components:
Compact:

- A compact development pattern with density in appropriate locations to create and support viable, long term commercial opportunities and high frequency public transit.

Connected:

- An integrated multimodal system with abundant, convenient and pleasant ways to get around on foot, by bike, and by local and regional transit service.
- Opportunities for people to connect to nature and natural systems.

Complete:

- Daily needs within easy access from home, work or school without driving a car.
- A quality of life that attracts, sustains and retains diverse businesses, creative entrepreneurs and investment in the local economy.

Green, Attractive and Distinct:

- Comfortable, safe, and attractive places to live, work, learn and recreate that have a distinct, memorable character and high-quality design and that promote healthy, active living.
- A public realm that is beautiful, well-used and enriched with art, trees and landscaping.
- Buildings, streets, utilities and other infrastructure that protect natural systems, minimize energy use, urban heat island effects and air and water pollution, and support clean energy generation.
- Preservation of agriculturally significant lands, environmentally sensitive areas and historic resources.

Inclusive:

- A diversity of employment, housing types, sizes and prices, and other uses to meet the needs of a diverse community.
- Welcoming, accessible public gathering spaces for interaction among people of all ages, walks of life and levels of ability.

Community Identity/Land Use Pattern

2.01 Unique Community Identity

The unique community identity and sense of place that is enjoyed by residents of the Boulder Valley and characterized by the community's setting and history will be respected by policy decision makers.

2.02 Physical Separation of Communities

The city and county will strive to maintain and enhance an open land buffer that separates development in the Boulder Valley from surrounding communities and contributes to distinct community identities.

2.03 Compact Development Pattern

The city and county will, by implementing the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan, ensure that development will take place in an orderly fashion, take advantage of existing urban services, and avoid, insofar as possible, patterns of leapfrog, noncontiguous, scattered development within the Boulder Valley. The city prefers redevelopment and infill as compared to development in an expanded Service Area in order to prevent urban sprawl and create a compact community.

2.04 Open Space Preservation

The city and county will permanently preserve lands with open space values by purchasing or accepting donations of fee simple interests, conservation easements or development rights and other measures as appropriate and financially feasible. Open space values include use of land for urban shaping and preservation of natural areas, environmental and cultural resources, critical ecosystems, water resources, agricultural land, scenic vistas and land for passive recreational use.

2.05 Design of Community Edges and Entryways

Well-defined edges and entryways for the city are important because they support an understanding and appreciation of the city's image, emphasize and preserve its natural setting, and create a clear sense of arrival and departure. Natural features are most effective as edges, but public open land, major roadways or heavy tree planting can also function as community edges. As new areas are developed, the definition of a community edge will be a design priority. Major entryways into the Boulder Valley will be identified, protected and enhanced.

Rural Lands Preservation

2.06 Preservation of Rural Areas and Amenities

The city and county will attempt to preserve existing rural land use and character in and adjacent to the Boulder Valley where environmentally sensitive areas, hazard areas, agriculturally significant lands, vistas, significant historic resources, and established rural residential areas exist. A clear boundary between urban and rural areas at the periphery of the city will be maintained, where possible. Existing tools and programs for rural preservation will be strengthened and new tools and programs will be put in place.

2.07 Delineation of Rural Lands

Area III consists of the rural lands in the Boulder Valley, outside the Boulder Service Area. The Boulder Service Area includes urban lands in the city and lands planned for future annexation and urban service provision. Within Area III, land is placed within one of two classifications: the Area III-Rural Preservation Area or the Area III-Planning Reserve Area. The boundaries of these two areas are shown on the Area III-Rural Preservation Area and Area I, II, III Map. The more specific Area III land use designations on the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan map indicate the type of non-urban land use that is desired as well as recognize those county developments that have or can still develop at other than rural densities and uses. The Area III-Rural Preservation Area is intended to show the desired long-term rural land use; the Area III-Planning Reserve Area is an interim classification until it is decided whether or not this land should be placed in the Area III-Rural Preservation Area or in the Service Area.

a) Area III-Rural Preservation Area

The Area III-Rural Preservation Area is that portion of Area III where rural land uses and character will be preserved through existing and new rural land use preservation techniques and no new urban development will be allowed during the planning period. Rural land uses to be preserved to the greatest possible extent include: rural town sites (Eldorado Springs, Marshall and Valmont); existing county rural residential subdivisions (primarily along Eldorado Springs Drive, on Davidson Mesa west of Louisville, adjacent to Gunbarrel, and in proximity to Boulder Reservoir); city and county acquired open space and parkland; sensitive environmental areas and hazard areas that are unsuitable for urban development; significant agricultural lands; and lands that are unsuitable for urban development because of a high cost of extending urban services or scattered locations, which are not conducive to maintaining a compact community.

b) Area III-Planning Reserve Area

The Area III-Planning Reserve Area (PRA) is that portion of Area III with rural land uses where the city intends to maintain the option of limited Service Area expansion. The location and characteristics of this land make it potentially suitable for new urban development, based on the apparent lack of sensitive environmental areas, hazard areas, and significant agricultural lands, the feasibility of efficient urban service extension, and contiguity to the existing Service Area, which maintains a compact community.

2.08 Rural Density Transfer

The city and county will jointly determine criteria and areas for transfer of development rights (TDRs) within or in proximity to the Boulder Valley, in order to secure conservation easements on valuable rural lands from which density may be transferred and shift those rural residential densities to appropriate urban settings where the negative impacts of growth can be better mitigated or avoided.

Neighborhoods

2.09 Neighborhoods as Building Blocks

The city and county will foster the role of neighborhoods to establish community character, provide services needed on a day-to-day basis, foster community interaction, and plan for urban design and amenities. All neighborhoods, whether residential areas, business districts, or mixed land use areas, should offer unique physical elements of neighborhood character and identity, such as distinctive development patterns or architecture; historic or cultural resources; amenities such as views, open space, creeks, irrigation ditches, and varied topography; and distinctive community facilities and business areas.

2.10 Preservation and Support for Residential Neighborhoods

The city will work with neighborhoods to protect and enhance neighborhood character and livability and preserve the relative affordability of existing housing stock. The city will seek appropriate building scale and compatible character in new development or redevelopment, appropriately sized and sensitively designed streets and desired public facilities and mixed commercial uses. The city will also encourage neighborhood schools and safe routes to school.

2.11 Accessory Units

Consistent with existing neighborhood character, accessory units will be encouraged in order to increase rental housing options in single family residential neighborhoods. Regulations developed to implement this policy will address potential cumulative negative impacts on the neighborhood. Accessory units will be reviewed based on the characteristics of the lot, including size, configuration, parking availability, privacy and alley access.

2.12 Preservation of Existing Residential Uses

The city will encourage the preservation or replacement in-kind of existing, legally established residential uses in non-residential zones. Non-residential conversions in residential zoning districts will be discouraged, except where there is a clear benefit or service to the neighborhood.

2.13 Protection of Residential Neighborhoods Adjacent to Non-residential Zones

The city and county will take appropriate actions to ensure that the character and livability of established residential neighborhoods will not be undermined by spill-over impacts from adjacent regional or community business zones or by incremental expansion of business activities into residential areas. The city and county will protect residential neighborhoods from intrusion of non-residential uses by protecting edges and regulating the impacts of these uses on neighborhoods.

2.14 Mix of Complementary Land Uses

The city and county will strongly encourage, consistent with other land use policies, a variety of land uses in new developments. In existing neighborhoods, a mix of land use types, housing sizes and lot sizes may be possible if properly mitigated and respectful of neighborhood character. Wherever land uses are mixed, careful design will be required to ensure compatibility, accessibility and appropriate transitions between land uses that vary in intensity and scale.

2.15 Compatibility of Adjacent Land Uses

To avoid or minimize noise and visual conflicts between adjacent land uses that vary widely in use, intensity or other characteristics, the city will use tools such as interface zones, transitional areas, site and building design and cascading gradients of density in the design of subareas and zoning districts. With redevelopment, the transitional area should be within the zone of more intense use.

Mixed Use and Higher Density Development

2.16 Mixed Use and Higher Density Development

The city will encourage well-designed mixed use and higher density development that incorporates a substantial amount of affordable housing in appropriate locations, including in some commercial centers and industrial areas and in proximity to multimodal corridors and transit centers. The city will provide incentives and remove regulatory barriers to encourage mixed use development where and when appropriate. This could include public-private partnerships for planning, design or development; new zoning districts; and the review and revision of floor area ratio, open space and parking requirements.

Activity Centers

2.17 Variety of Activity Centers

The city and county support a variety of regional, subcommunity and neighborhood activity centers where people congregate for a variety of activities such as working, shopping, going to school or day care, accessing human services and recreating. Activity centers should be located within walking distance of neighborhoods and business areas and designed to be compatible with surrounding land uses and intensity and the context and character of neighborhoods and business areas. Good multimodal connections to and from activity centers and accessibility for people of all ages and abilities will be encouraged.

2.18 Role of the Central Area

The central area will continue as the regional service center of the Boulder Valley for office, retail, financial, governmental, medical, cultural and university activities. As such, it will remain the primary activity center and focal point of the Boulder Valley. The central area includes distinct, interrelated activity centers such as the Downtown Business District, University of Colorado, Canyon Boulevard Cultural Corridor, and Boulder Valley Regional Center. A variety of land uses surrounds these activity centers, and transportation alternatives provide direct connections between them.

Urban Design Linkages

2.19 Urban Open Lands

Open lands within the fabric of the city constitute Boulder's public realm and provide recreational opportunities, transportation linkages, gathering places and density relief from the confines of the city, as well as protection of the environmental quality of the urban environment. The city will promote and maintain an urban open lands system to serve the following functions: active and passive recreation, environmental protection, flood management, multimodal transportation, enhancement of community character and aesthetics.

2.20 Boulder Creek, Tributaries and Ditches as Important Urban Design Features

Boulder Creek, its tributaries and irrigation ditches will serve as unifying urban design features for the community. The city and county will support the preservation or reclamation of the creek corridors for natural ecosystems, wildlife habitat and cultural resources; for recreation and bicycle and pedestrian transportation; to provide flood management; to improve air and water quality;

and to provide a contrast to urban development. Path development will be sensitive to the ecology, terrain and privacy of adjacent residents and surroundings.

2.21 Commitment to a Walkable and Accessible City

The city and county will promote the development of a walkable and accessible city by designing neighborhoods and business areas to provide easy and safe access by foot to places such as neighborhood centers, community facilities, transit stops or centers, and shared public spaces and amenities. The city will consider additional neighborhood-serving commercial areas where appropriate and supported by the neighbors they would serve.

2.22 Improve Mobility Grid

The walkability, bikeability and transit access should be improved in parts of the city that need better connectivity and mobility, for example, in East Boulder. This should be achieved by coordinating and integrating land use and transportation planning and will occur through both public investment and private development.

2.23 Trail Corridors/Linkages

In the process of considering development proposals, the city and county will encourage the development of paths and trails where appropriate for recreation and transportation, such as walking, hiking, bicycling or horseback riding.. Implementation will be achieved through the coordinated efforts of the private and public sectors.

Community Conservation

2.24 Preservation of Historic and Cultural Resources

The city and county will identify, evaluate and protect buildings, structures, objects, districts, sites and natural features of historic, architectural, archaeological, or cultural significance with input from the community. The city and county will seek protection of significant resources through local designation when a proposal by the private sector is subject to discretionary development review.

2.25 Leadership in Preservation: City- and County-Owned Resources

The city and county will evaluate their publicly owned properties to determine their historical, architectural, archaeological or cultural significance. Eligible resources will be protected through local designation. Secondary structures that are part of and convey the cultural significance of a site, such as a farm complex and alley structure, should be retained and preserved as well.

2.26 Historic and Cultural Preservation Plan

The city and county will develop a Boulder Valley-wide preservation plan in order to: integrate historic preservation issues into the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan; ensure coordination between preservation goals and zoning, land use, growth management, transportation and housing goals; and ensure consistency among governmental policies that affect the community's historic, archeological and cultural resources. Preservation plans will be developed with public and landowner participation.

2.27 Eligible Historic Districts and Landmarks

The city has identified areas that may have the potential to be designated as historic districts. The Designated and Eligible Historic Districts map shows areas with designation potential, as well as areas that are already designated as historic districts. There are also many individual buildings of landmark quality both within and outside of these eligible areas. Additional historic district and landmark designation will be encouraged.

2.28 Historic Preservation/Conservation Tools

The city will develop a variety of tools that address preservation and conservation objectives within the community. Specific tools that address historic preservation and conservation objectives will be matched to the unique needs of specific areas. Preservation tools may include incentives programs, designation of landmark buildings and districts, design review, and public improvements. Conservation districts, easements and other tools may be applied in areas that do not qualify as local historic districts but contain features that contribute to the quality of the neighborhood or community. These could include historic resources that have lost integrity, neighborhoods with significant character but that are not historically significant, and scattered sites that share a common historic or architectural theme.

2.29 Preservation of Archaeological Sites and Cultural Landscapes

The city will develop a plan and processes for identification, designation and protection of archaeological and cultural landscape resources, such as open ditches, street and alleyscapes, railroad rights-of-way, and designed landscapes.

Design Quality

2.30 Sensitive Infill and Redevelopment

With little vacant land remaining in the city, most new development will occur through redevelopment. The city will gear subcommunity and area planning and other efforts toward defining the acceptable amount of infill and redevelopment and standards and performance measures for design quality to avoid or adequately mitigate negative impacts and enhance the benefits of infill and redevelopment to the community and individual neighborhoods. The city will also develop tools, such as neighborhood design guidelines, to promote sensitive infill and redevelopment.

2.31 Design of Newly-Developing Areas

The city will encourage a neighborhood concept for new development that includes a variety of residential densities, housing types, sizes and prices, opportunities for shopping, nearby support services and conveniently sited public facilities, including roads and pedestrian connections, parks, libraries and schools.

2.32 Physical Design for People

The city and county will take all reasonable steps to ensure that public and private development and redevelopment be designed in a manner that is sensitive to social, health and psychological needs. Broadly defined, this will include factors such as accessibility to those with limited mobility; provision of coordinated facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists and bus-riders; provision of functional landscaping and open space; and the appropriate scale and massing of buildings related to neighborhood context.

2.33 Environmentally Sensitive Urban Design

For capital improvements and private development, the city and county will strive to ensure that buildings, streets, utilities and other infrastructure are located and designed to protect natural systems, minimize energy use, urban heat island effects and air and water pollution, and support clean energy generation.

2.34 Importance of Street Trees and Streetscapes

The city and county will develop regulations and programs to encourage the planting and maintenance of attractive, healthy street trees and streetscapes, which act as the primary

connection between the private and public realm and provide aesthetics, comfort and environmental benefits for the public realm.

2.35 Outdoor Lighting/Light Pollution

The city and county will encourage the efficient use of outdoor lighting to reduce light pollution and conserves energy while providing for public safety. The city will seek to provide a nighttime environment that includes the ability to view the stars against a dark sky so that people can see the Milky Way Galaxy from residential and other appropriate viewing areas. Measures such as using more energy-efficient lights, ensuring that the level of outdoor lighting is appropriate to the application, minimizing glare, and using shielding techniques to direct light downward will be required.

2.36 Design Excellence for Public Projects

Public projects bear a special responsibility to exhibit design excellence. The city and county will work to ensure that new capital projects and transportation facilities are visually attractive and contribute positively to the desired community character.

2.37 Enhanced Design for Private Sector Projects

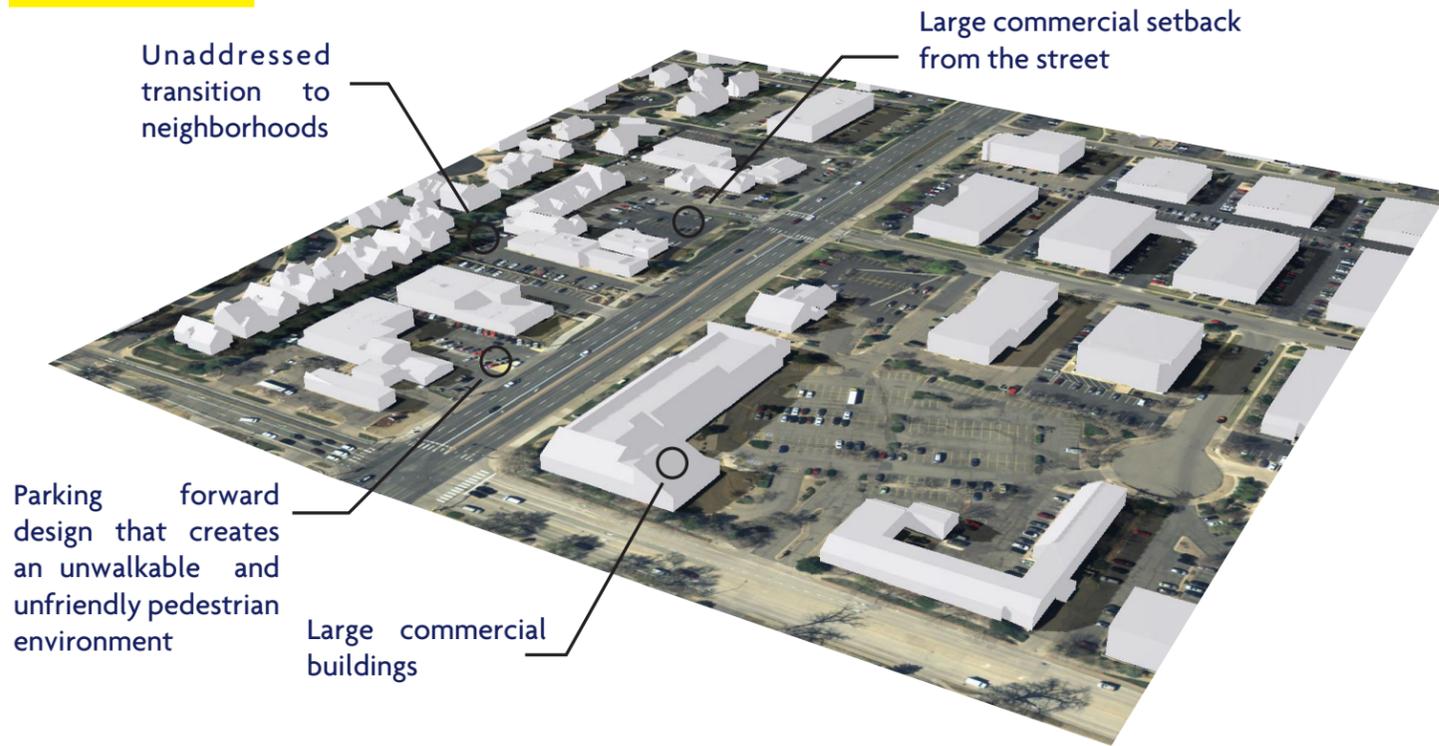
Through its policies and programs, the city will encourage or require quality architecture and urban design in private sector development that encourages alternative modes of transportation, provides a livable environment and addresses the elements listed below.

- a) The context. Projects should become a coherent part of the neighborhood in which they are placed. They should be preserved and enhanced where the surroundings have a distinctive character. Where there is a desire to improve the character of the surroundings, a new character and positive identity as established through area planning or a community involvement process should be created for the area. Special attention will be given to protecting and enhancing the quality of established residential areas that are adjacent to business areas.
- b) Relationship to the public realm. Projects should relate positively to public streets, plazas, sidewalks, paths, ditches and natural features. Buildings and landscaped areas—not parking lots—should present a well-designed face to the public realm, should not block access to sunlight, and should be sensitive to important public view corridors. Future strip commercial development will be discouraged.
- c) Transportation connections. Projects should provide a complete network of vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian connections both internal to the project and connecting to adjacent properties, streets and paths, including dedication of public rights-of-way and easements where required.
- d) Human scale. Projects should provide pedestrian interest along streets, paths and public spaces.
- e) Permeability. Projects should provide multiple opportunities to walk from the street into projects, thus presenting a street face that is permeable. Where appropriate, they should provide opportunities for visual permeability into a site to create pedestrian interest.
- f) On-site open spaces. Projects should incorporate well-designed functional open spaces with quality landscaping, access to sunlight and places to sit comfortably. Where public parks or open spaces are not within close proximity, shared open spaces for a variety of activities should also be provided within developments.

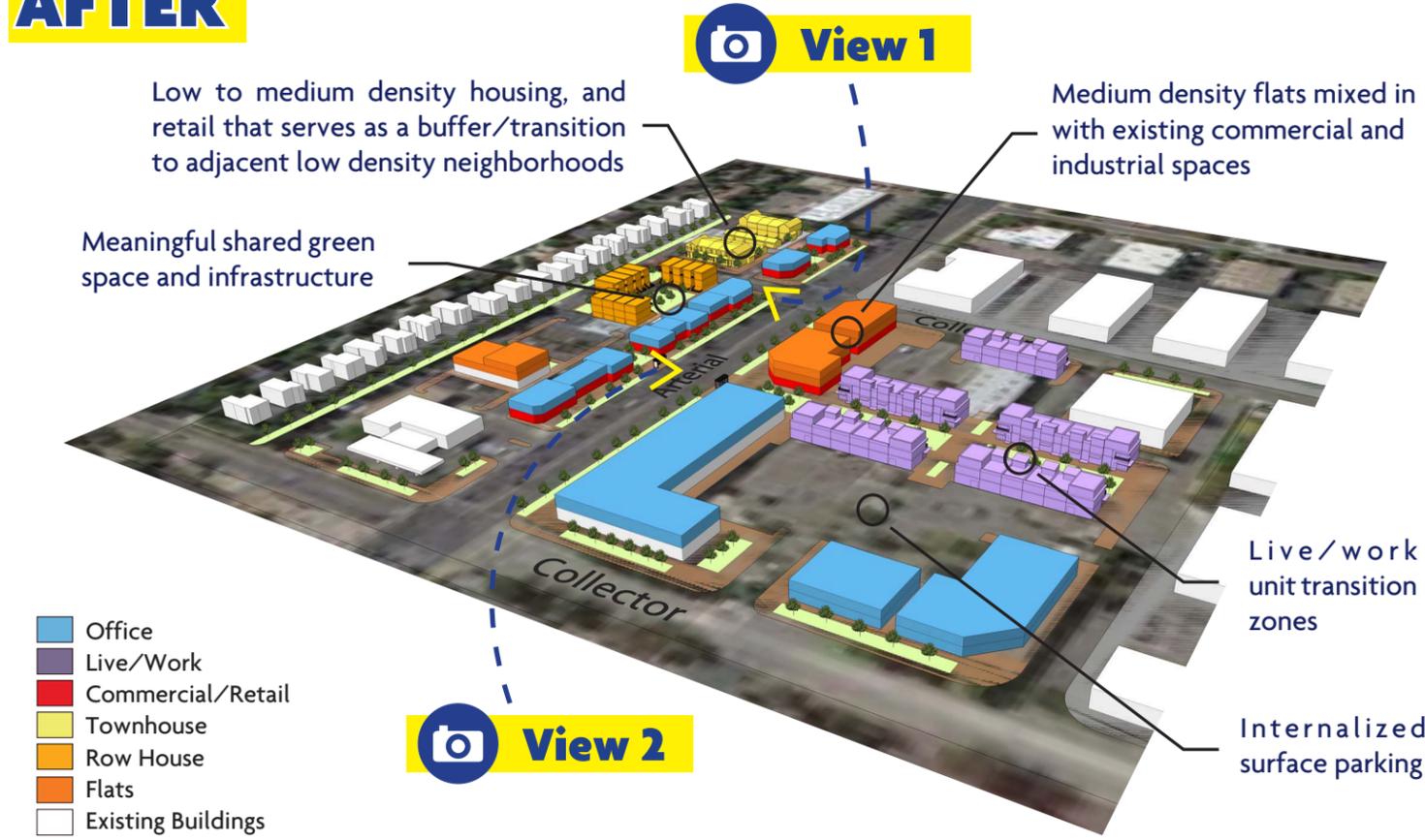
g) Buildings. Buildings should be designed with a cohesive design that is comfortable to the pedestrian, with inviting entries that are visible from public rights of way. Design innovation and the use of high quality building materials are encouraged.

The visuals presented below are to aid in community dialogue. They will be updated through early next year to reflect community input and other feedback received from City Council, Planning Board, and boards and commissions.

Before



AFTER



Neighborhood Activity Centers

DRAFT

What can we expect from current policy?

Uses

Most neighborhood centers have a land use designation of Community Business (CB), which the plan describes as a “focal point for commercial activity serving a subcommunity or a collection of neighborhoods.” Residential uses such as single-family and multi-family housing, duplexes and townhouses are allowed in these centers but are not commonly developed.

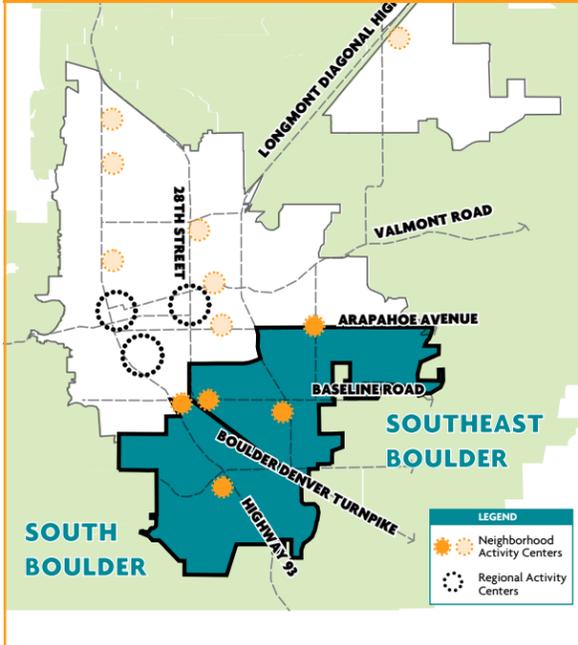
Form/Height

BC-1 and BC-2 zone districts, which are most common in these centers, encourage more suburban types of development, e.g. large setbacks and buildings that front parking. This largely reflects the characteristics of the older shopping centers that were developed in the early 60s and 70s. Development is restricted to three stories, and a building height of 35’, except where height modifications are permitted (generally areas with adopted area plans). While most centers are designated as Community Business (CB), new and emerging neighborhood centers in North Boulder and Boulder Junction are zoned as mixed-use (MU) and Business – Main Street (BMS), which both encourage a more walkable, pedestrian-friendly and mixed-use environment.

Draft Principles ——— Tells us what you think! ———

- 1. Mix of activities and vibrancy.** Include a mix of locally-serving retail (e.g. retail anchors such as grocery stores and personal services such as hair salons) and other activities (e.g. smaller-scale office uses) to meet day-to-day needs and sustain both daytime and evening activity.
- 2. Mobility hubs.** Include a richness of transportation amenities and conveniences such as sheltered seating, shared bicycles, bike cages and repair stations, among others.
- 3. Meaningful public realm.** Create permeability in centers with a mix of semi-public and public spaces that are connected visually and easy to navigate. Include civic and cultural uses as well as outdoor seating, shade trees and green spaces in the public spaces to create a unique identity and sense of place.
- 4. Architectural appeal.** Foster approachability and appeal of buildings through multiple entrances, four-sided design and attractive, well-designed architecture made of quality, long-lasting materials.
- 5. Comfort and safety.** Include human-scaled lighting, furnishings, signs and way-finding that feel welcoming, safe and comfortable for users of all ages and abilities. Provide unimpeded connections within the centers between parking, transit, retail and residential uses.
- 6. Parking not dominant.** Place parking behind and to the sides of buildings or in structures rather than in large street-facing lots. Encourage parking management strategies, such as shared parking, and versatile parking structures that are designed with the flexibility to allow for different uses in the future.
- 7. Low-impact design.** Contribute toward sustainability goals with low-impact site design that incorporates green infrastructure (e.g. permeable materials and bioswales).
- 8. Transitions to neighborhoods.** Ensure compatibility of buildings with adjacent residential uses and decrease intensity of activity around edges near neighborhoods. Encourage a diversity of residential uses such as attached single family housing, rowhomes and a variety of flats within these areas of transition.

South and Southeast Boulder Neighborhood Activity Centers



EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS

- Serve as a focal point for neighborhoods. They provide goods and services to meet the day-to-day needs of nearby residents, workers, and students
- Located throughout Boulder, generally along major corridors
- Accessible from surrounding areas by vehicle, walking, bike, and transit
- Generally classified as Community Business on the Land Use Designation Map and have Business Commercial (BC-1 and BC-2) Zoning
- Have distinct identities and are important to the nearby neighborhoods
- Sometimes contain community services and functions such as libraries, or public spaces
- Generally, do not include housing; and
- Range in size from small locally serving businesses to larger grocery stores or anchor stores. Total area ranges from 4-acres (Willows Shopping Center) to 30+ acres (Meadows)

What is your vision for neighborhood activity centers?

The visuals presented below are to aid in community dialogue. They will be updated through early next year to reflect community input and other feedback received from City Council, Planning Board, and boards and commissions.



Transition Areas Buffering Existing Low Density Neighborhoods

View 1 (see aerial diagram on the back for orientation)

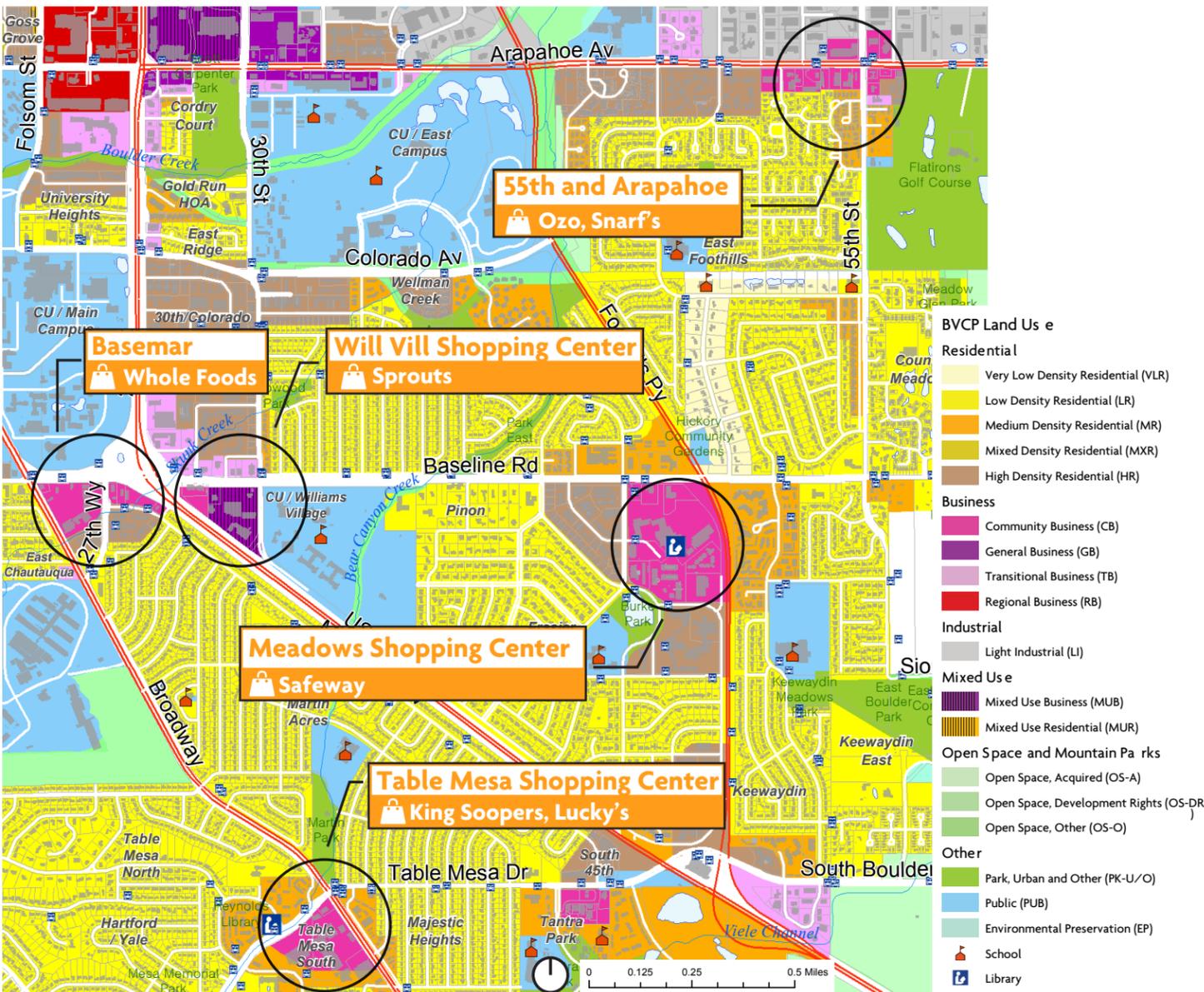
Pedestrian walkway and shared greenspace for residents, employees, and commercial visitors.

Mobility hub supported by concentration of mixed-use development and live/work units



Mix of Commercial w/residential (live/work, flats)

View 2 (see aerial diagram on the back for orientation)

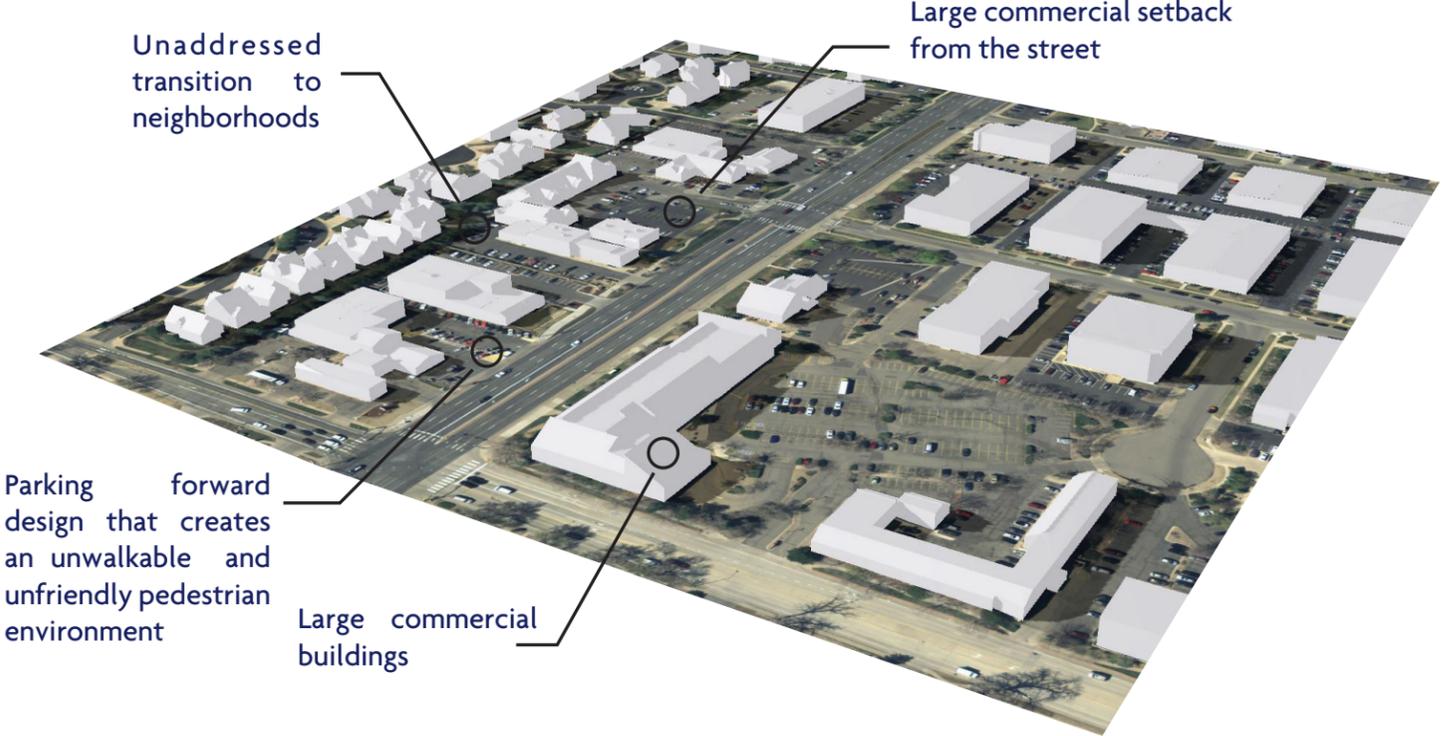


Neighborhood Activity Centers

DRAFT

The visuals presented below are to aid in community dialogue. They will be updated through early next year to reflect community input and other feedback received from City Council, Planning Board, and boards and commissions.

Before



What can we expect from current policy?

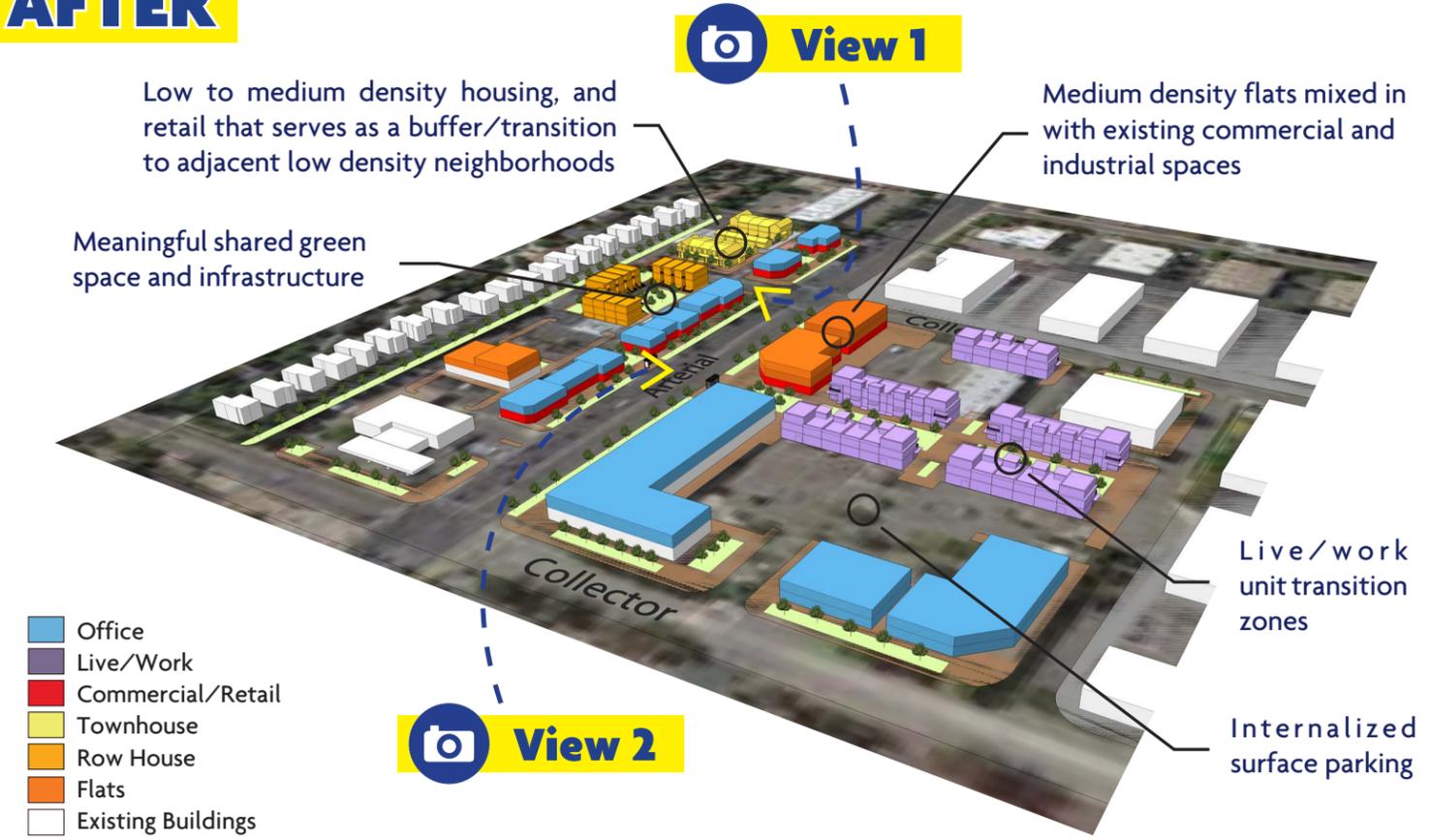
Uses

Most neighborhood centers have a land use designation of Community Business (CB), which the plan describes as a “focal point for commercial activity serving a subcommunity or a collection of neighborhoods.” Residential uses such as single-family and multi-family housing, duplexes and townhouses are allowed in these centers but are not commonly developed.

Form/Height

BC-1 and BC-2 zone districts, which are most common in these centers, encourage more suburban types of development, e.g. large setbacks and buildings that front parking. This largely reflects the characteristics of the older shopping centers that were developed in the early 60s and 70s. Development is restricted to three stories, and a building height of 35’, except where height modifications are permitted (generally areas with adopted area plans). While most centers are designated as Community Business (CB), new and emerging neighborhood centers in North Boulder and Boulder Junction are zoned as mixed-use (MU) and Business – Main Street (BMS), which both encourage a more walkable, pedestrian-friendly and mixed-use environment.

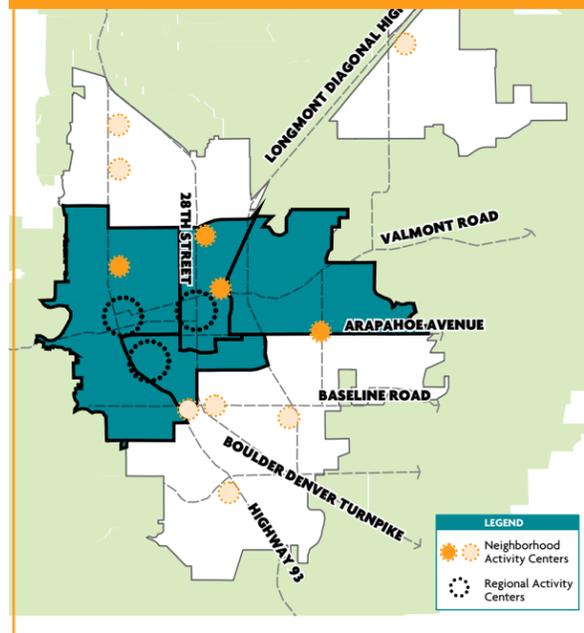
AFTER



Draft Principles ——— Tells us what you think! ———

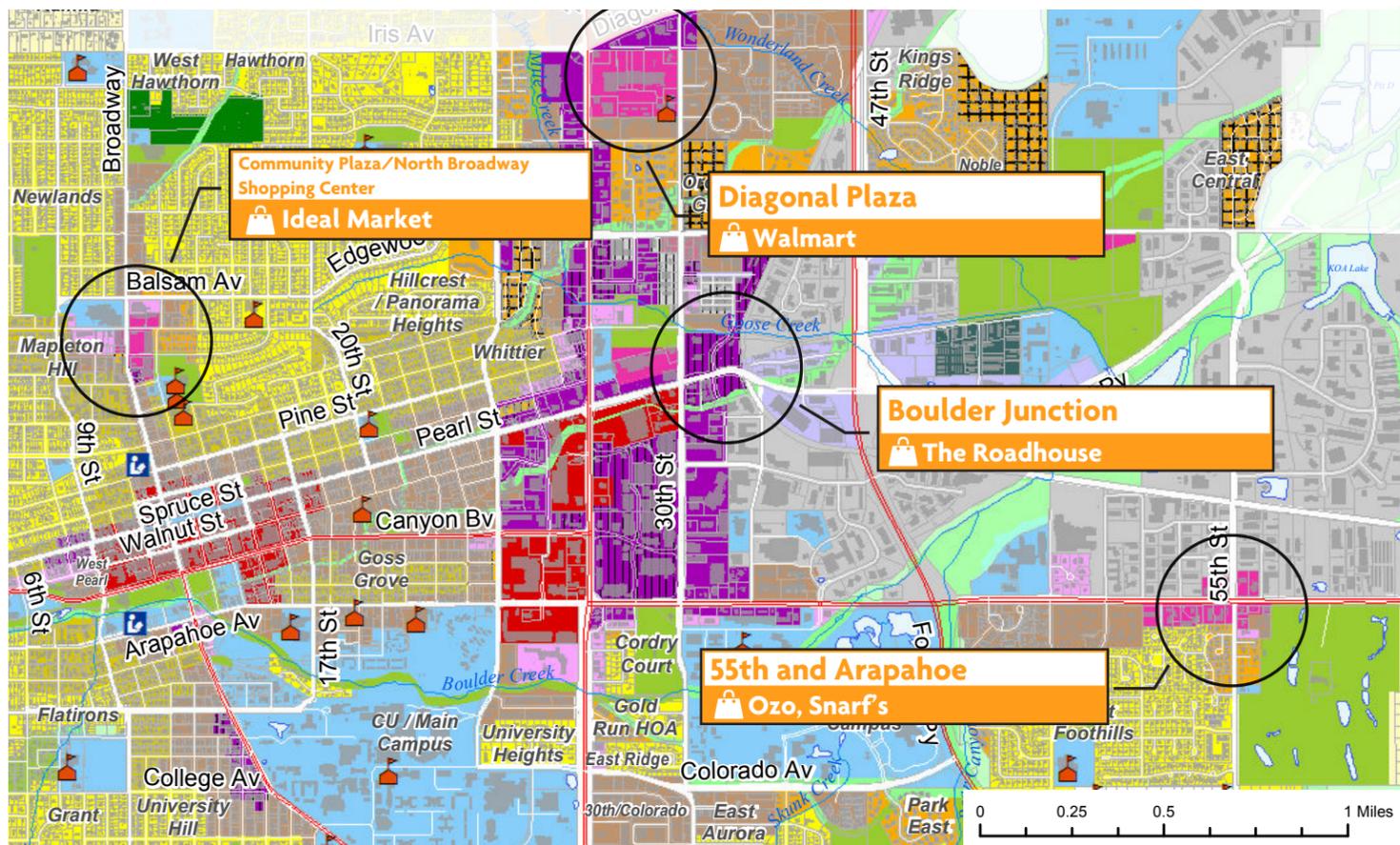
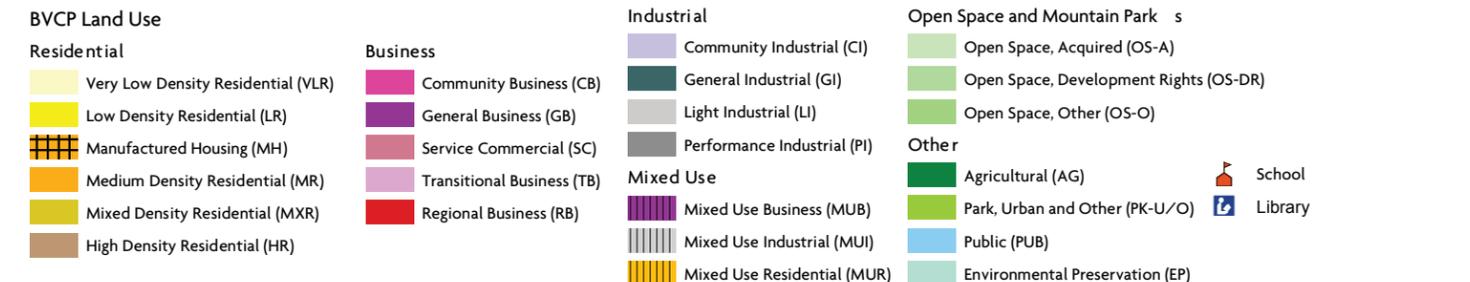
- 1. Mix of activities and vibrancy.** Include a mix of locally-serving retail (e.g. retail anchors such as grocery stores and personal services such as hair salons) and other activities (e.g. smaller-scale office uses) to meet day-to-day needs and sustain both daytime and evening activity.
- 2. Mobility hubs.** Include a richness of transportation amenities and conveniences such as sheltered seating, shared bicycles, bike cages and repair stations, among others.
- 3. Meaningful public realm.** Create permeability in centers with a mix of semi-public and public spaces that are connected visually and easy to navigate. Include civic and cultural uses as well as outdoor seating, shade trees and green spaces in the public spaces to create a unique identity and sense of place.
- 4. Architectural appeal.** Foster approachability and appeal of buildings through multiple entrances, four-sided design and attractive, well-designed architecture made of quality, long-lasting materials.
- 5. Comfort and safety.** Include human-scaled lighting, furnishings, signs and way-finding that feel welcoming, safe and comfortable for users of all ages and abilities. Provide unimpeded connections within the centers between parking, transit, retail and residential uses.
- 6. Parking not dominant.** Place parking behind and to the sides of buildings or in structures rather than in large street-facing lots. Encourage parking management strategies, such as shared parking, and versatile parking structures that are designed with the flexibility to allow for different uses in the future.
- 7. Low-impact design.** Contribute toward sustainability goals with low-impact site design that incorporates green infrastructure (e.g. permeable materials and bioswales).
- 8. Transitions to neighborhoods.** Ensure compatibility of buildings with adjacent residential uses and decrease intensity of activity around edges near neighborhoods. Encourage a diversity of residential uses such as attached single family housing, rowhomes and a variety of flats within these areas of transition.

Central and East Boulder, Crossroads, & University Neighborhood Activity Centers



EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS

- Serve as a focal point for neighborhoods. They provide goods and services to meet the day-to-day needs of nearby residents, workers, and students
- Located throughout Boulder, generally along major corridors
- Accessible from surrounding areas by vehicle, walking, bike, and transit
- Generally classified as Community Business on the Land Use Designation Map and have Business Commercial (BC-1 and BC-2) Zoning
- Have distinct identities and are important to the nearby neighborhoods
- Sometimes contain community services and functions such as libraries, or public spaces
- Generally, do not include housing; and
- Range in size from small locally serving businesses to larger grocery stores or anchor stores. Total area ranges from 4-acres (Willows Shopping Center) to 30+ acres (Meadows)



What is your vision for neighborhood activity centers?

The visuals presented below are to aid in community dialogue. They will be updated through early next year to reflect community input and other feedback received from City Council, Planning Board, and boards and commissions.



Transition Areas Buffering Existing Low Density Neighborhoods

View 1 (see aerial diagram on the back for orientation)

Pedestrian walkway and shared greenspace for residents, employees, and commercial visitors. Mobility hub supported by concentration of mixed-use development and live/work units



Mix of Commercial w/residential (live/work, flats)

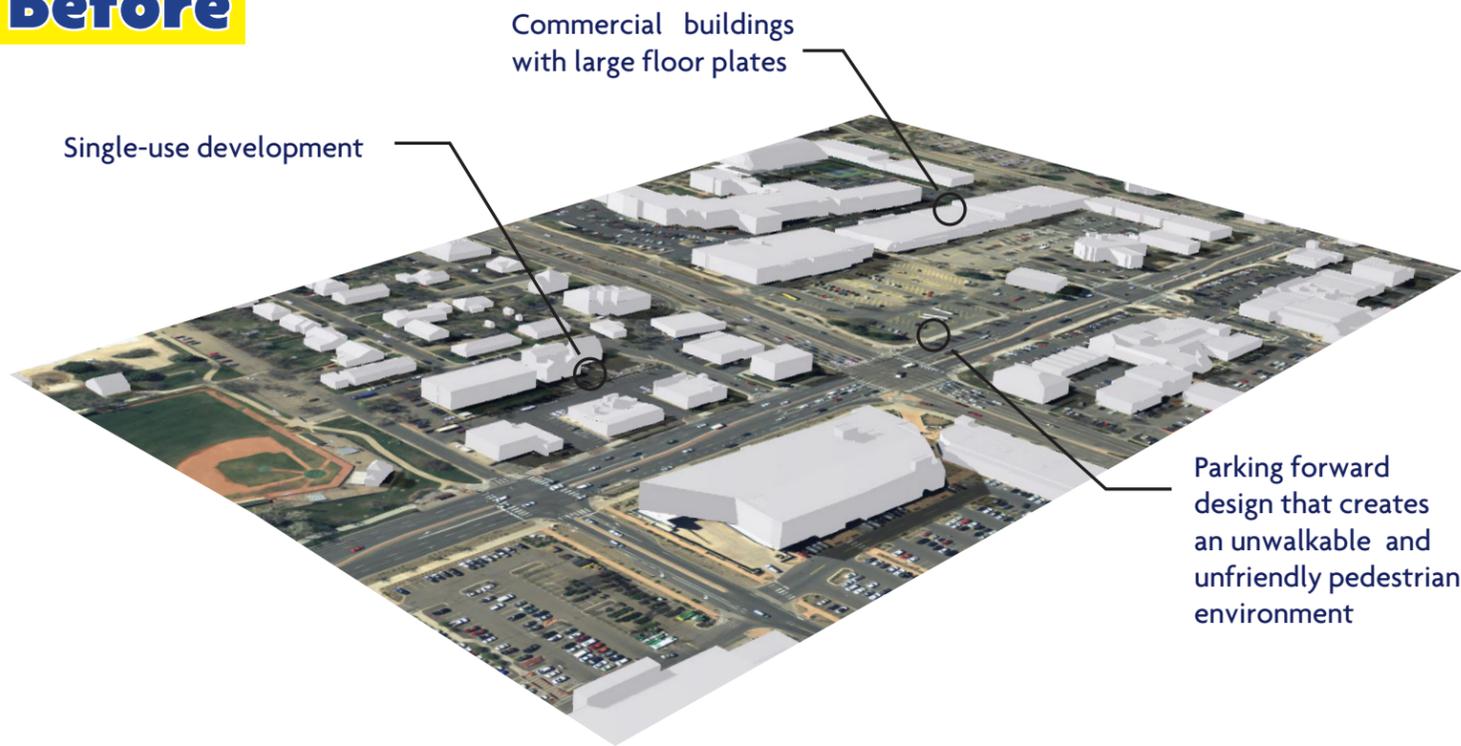
View 2 (see aerial diagram on the back for orientation)

Boulder Valley Regional Center

DRAFT

The visuals presented below are to aid in community dialogue. They will be updated through early next year to reflect community input and other feedback received from City Council, Planning Board, and boards and commissions.

Before



What can we expect from current policy?

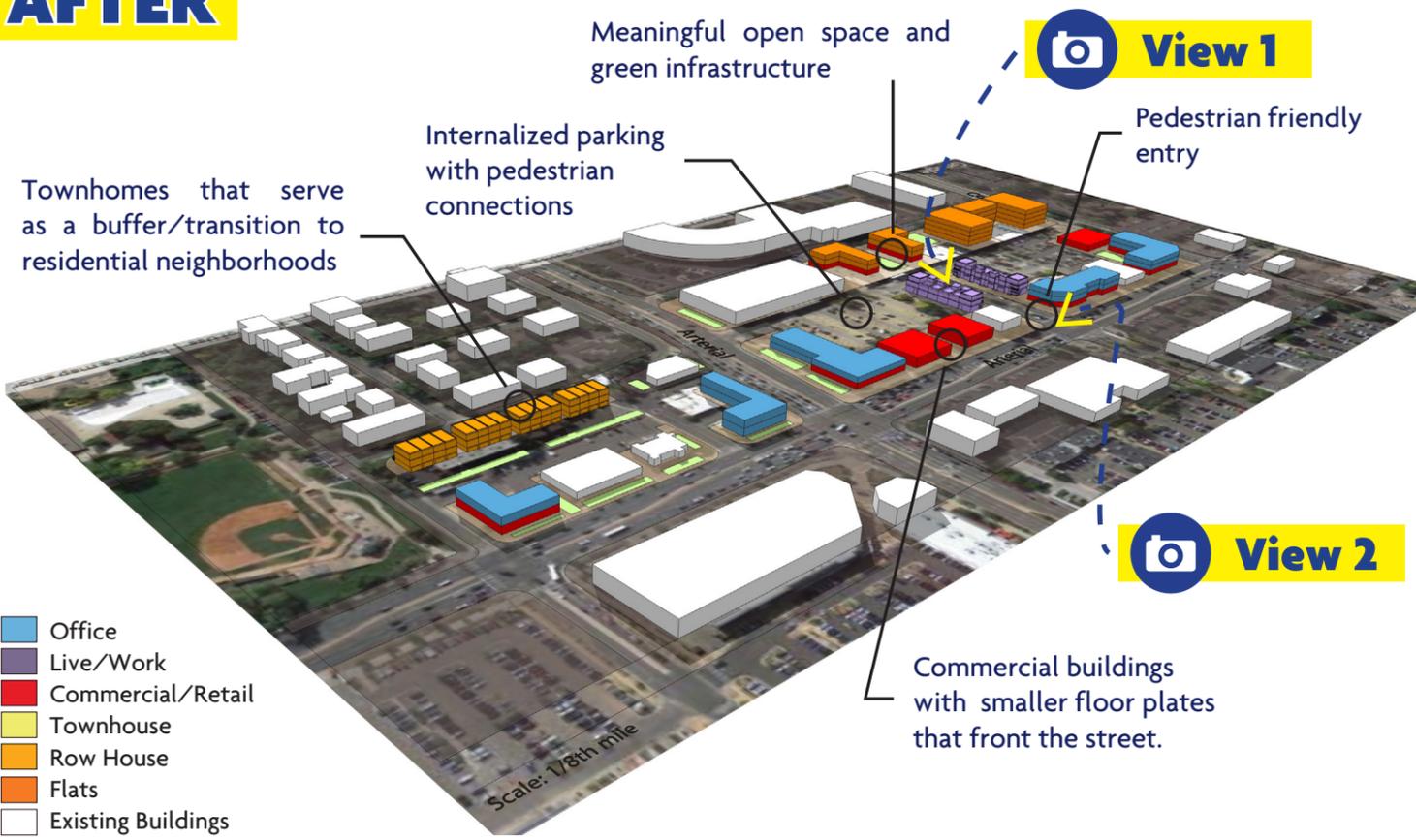
Uses

Most of the Boulder Valley Regional Center (BVRC) has a land use designation of Regional Business (RB), which the plan describes as places with “major shopping facilities, offices, financial institutions.” Although residential uses such as single-family and multi-family housing, duplexes and townhouses are allowed in this center, commercial development is more prevalent. Some housing exists along 30th, 26th, and Folsom Street and there is potential for more housing.

Form/Height

Some zoning districts (Business – Regional 1) within the BVRC reflect a more suburban development standard, e.g. large setbacks and buildings that front parking. Development is restricted to three stories and a building height of 35’, except where height modifications are permitted (generally areas with adopted area plans). Design guidelines have been adopted for the BVRC which is primarily used in the site review process and minor modifications to a previously approved development. The threshold for a site review process in a Business – Regional 1 zone district (BR-1) is three acres, or 50,000 square feet of floor area. The aim of the BVRC Design Guidelines is to create a “high-quality center” by establishing design goals related to the following components of development: site layout, circulation, parking, useable open space, landscaping, streetscape, building design and signage.

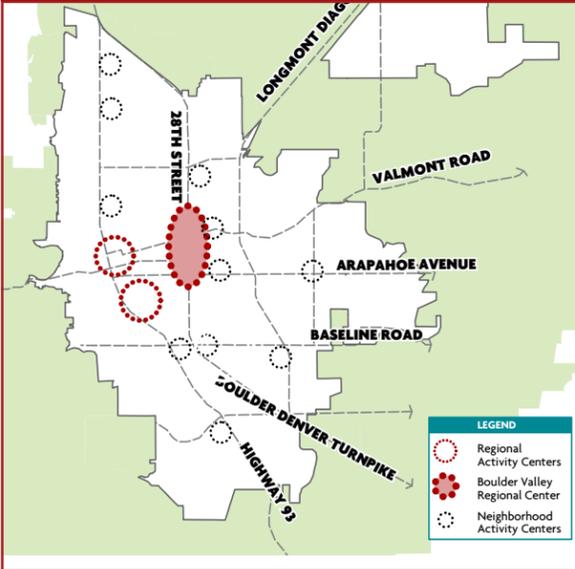
AFTER



Draft Principles ——— Tells us what you think! ———

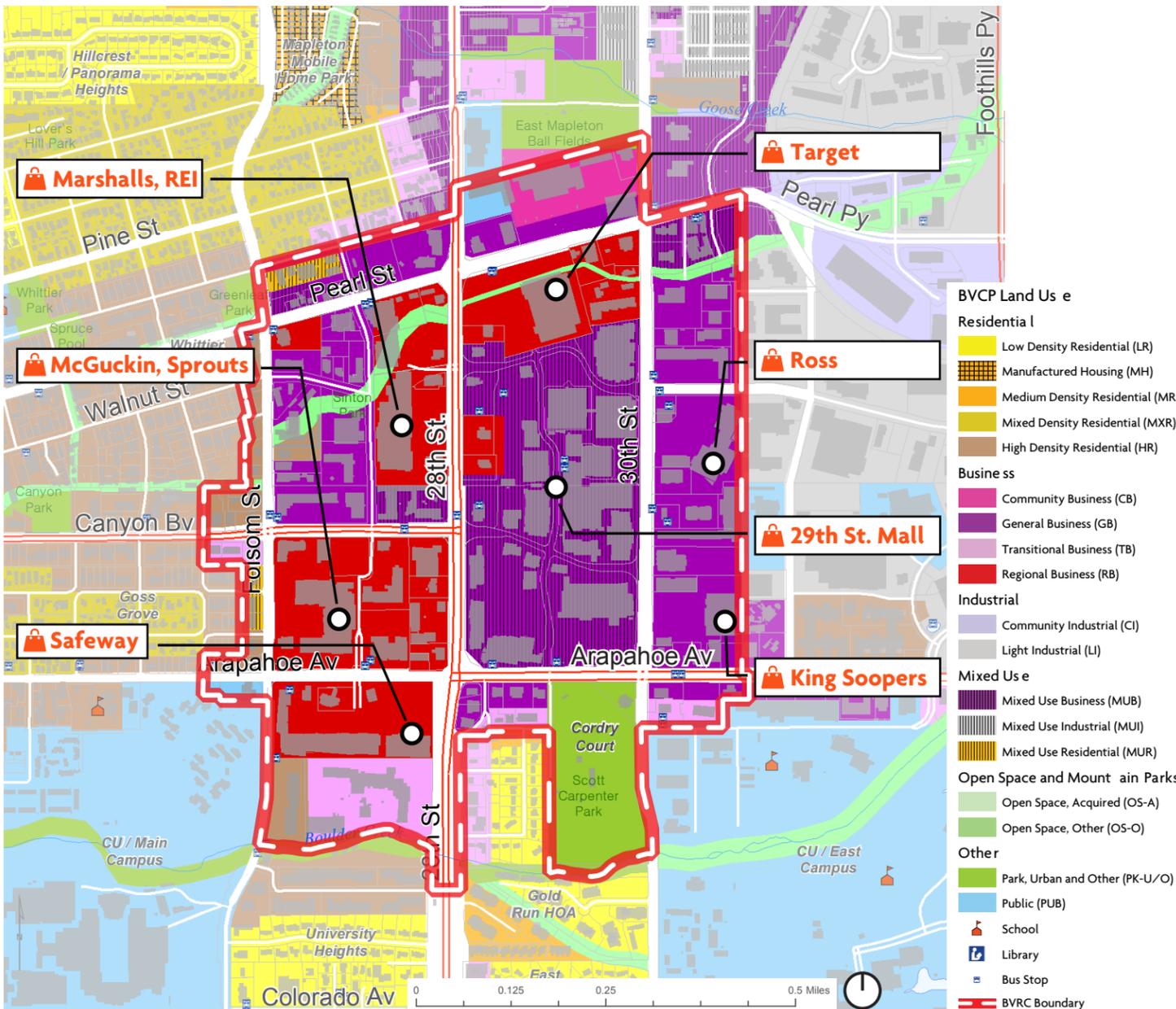
- Mix uses to support local and regional needs.** Encourage a mix of uses and activities that serve a primarily commercial function (e.g. large format retail and shopping, restaurants, offices, hotels) to meet the retail needs of the community and Boulder Valley and sustain daytime and evening activity. Include cultural and recreational amenities.
- Regional mobility hub.** Function as a regional multimodal hub by addressing ways to get around on foot, by bike, and by local transit service and offering amenities for users of all transportation modes by including sheltered seating, shared bicycles, bike cages and repair stations, among others. Improve access and connections to and from the regional mobility hub.
- Meaningful public realm.** Create permeability in centers with a mix of semi-public and public spaces that are connected visually for intuitive navigation. Include civic and cultural uses as well as outdoor seating, shade trees and green spaces in the public spaces to create a unique identity and sense of place.
- Architectural appeal.** Foster approachability and appeal of buildings through multiple entrances, four-sided design and attractive, well-designed architecture made of quality, long-lasting materials.
- Comfort and safety.** Include human-scaled lighting, furnishings, signs and way-finding that feel welcoming, safe and comfortable for users of all ages and abilities. Provide unimpeded connections within the centers between parking, transit, retail and residential uses.
- Parking not dominant.** Place parking behind and to the sides of buildings, in structures, or underground rather than in large street-facing lots. Encourage versatile parking structures that are designed with the flexibility to allow for different uses in the future.
- Low-impact design.** Contribute toward sustainability goals with low-impact site design that incorporates green infrastructure (e.g. permeable materials and bioswales).

Boulder Valley Regional Center



EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS

- Serves as a regional commercial destination with goods and services to meet the needs of the community
- Located in Boulder's Crossroads area along the highways and arterials and is accessible by vehicle, transit, and for pedestrians and bicycles locally and regionally
- Classified as General, Regional, and Mixed Use Business on the Land Use Designation Map and generally has Business Regional (BR-1) Zoning with the highest level of commercial
- Contains the regional mall, some larger big box commercial uses, a multitude of other restaurants and retail, offices, and some residential and is over 200 acres in size



- BVCP Land Use**
- Residential I**
 - Low Density Residential (LR)
 - Manufactured Housing (MH)
 - Medium Density Residential (MR)
 - Mixed Density Residential (MXR)
 - High Density Residential (HR)
 - Business**
 - Community Business (CB)
 - General Business (GB)
 - Transitional Business (TB)
 - Regional Business (RB)
 - Industrial**
 - Community Industrial (CI)
 - Light Industrial (LI)
 - Mixed Use**
 - Mixed Use Business (MUB)
 - Mixed Use Industrial (MUI)
 - Mixed Use Residential (MUR)
 - Open Space and Mountain Parks**
 - Open Space, Acquired (OS-A)
 - Open Space, Other (OS-O)
 - Other**
 - Park, Urban and Other (PK-U/O)
 - Public (PUB)
 - School
 - Library
 - Bus Stop
 - BVRC Boundary

What is your vision for the BVRC?

The visuals presented below are to aid in community dialogue. They will be updated through early next year to reflect community input and other feedback received from City Council, Planning Board, and boards and commissions.

Ground-floor retail	Meaningful shared green space	Family flats (2-3 bedrooms)	Neighborhood amenities
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Medium Density Mixed-use Neighborhood

View 1 (see aerial diagram on the back for orientation)

Mobility hub supported by a concentration of mixed-use development	Multi-use path	Refurbished commercial building	Live/work
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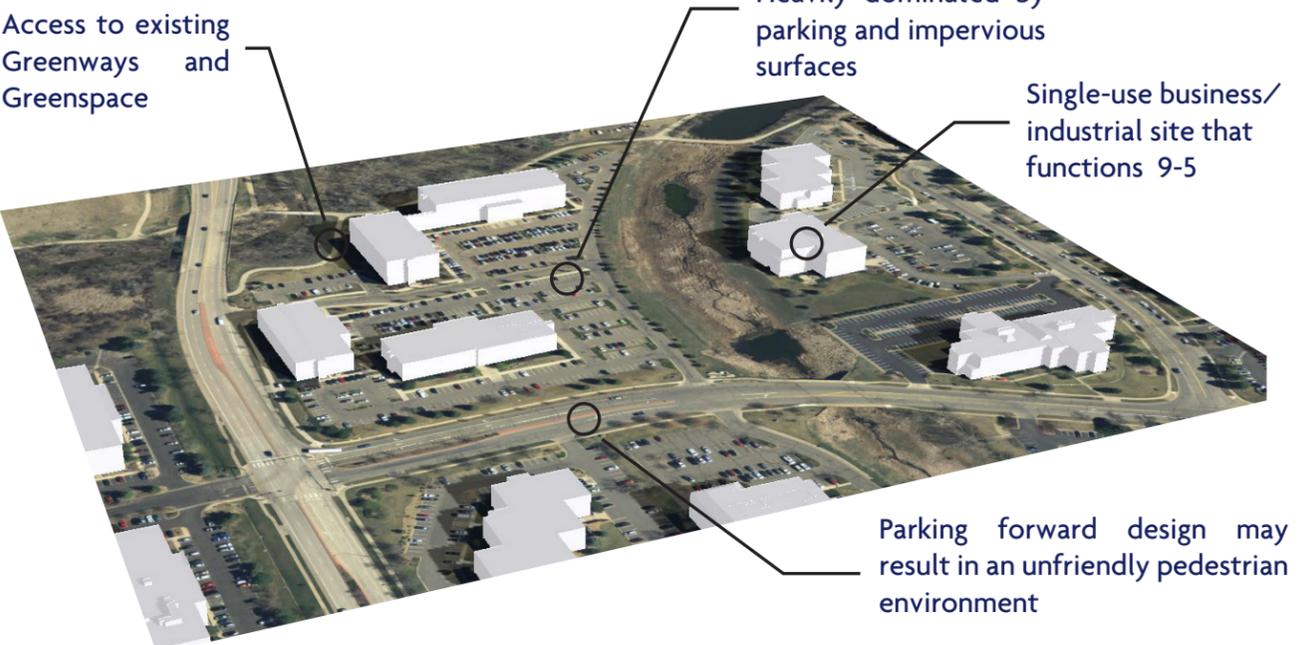


Mixed-use Walkable Street

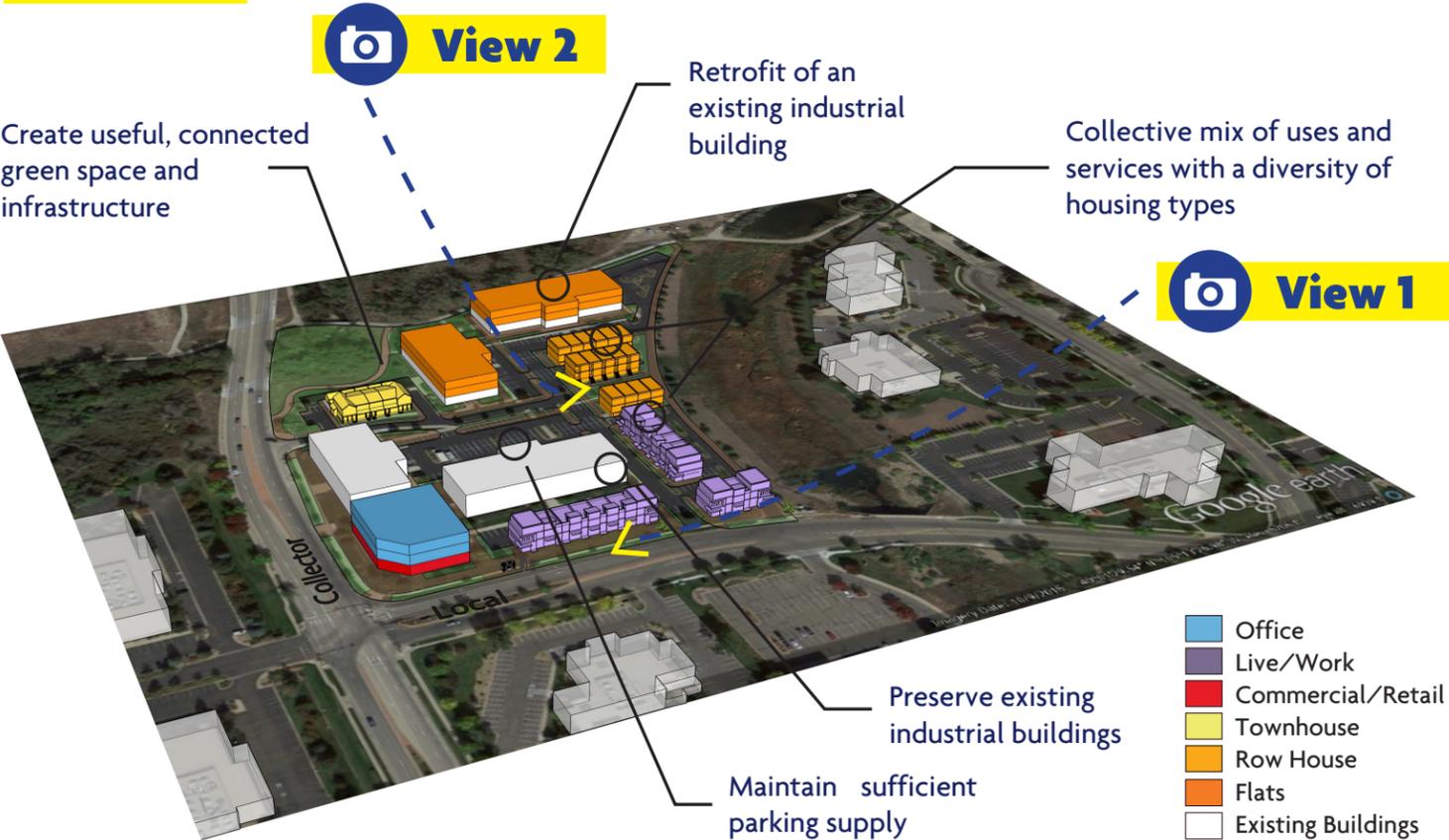
View 2 (see aerial diagram on the back for orientation)

The visuals presented below are to aid in community dialogue. They will be updated through early next year to reflect community input and other feedback received from City Council, Planning Board, and boards and commissions.

Before



AFTER



Industrial/Innovation Areas

What can we expect from current policy?

Uses

The identified industrial areas have a land use designation of Light Industrial (LI), which the plan describes as “primarily research and development, light manufacturing, large-scale printing and publishing, electronics, or other intensive employment uses.” Residential uses are allowed under a use review and if at least 1/6 of the existing parcel is contiguous with residential zoning or development or city- or county-owned park or open space. Housing is uncommon in these districts. Retail services and restaurants, among other non-residential uses are conditionally-allowed with certain restrictions so that it serves the surrounding neighborhood without undermining the industrial uses in these areas.

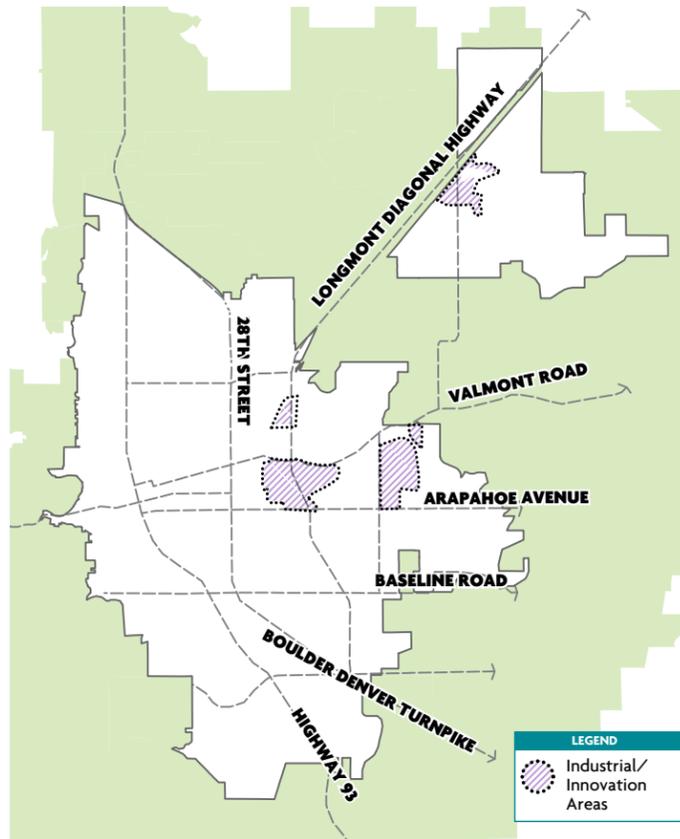
Form/Height

New development in these areas is primarily composed of light manufacturing and business parks and contains a high amount of parking relative to the new developments that are more centrally-located within the city. Development is restricted to three stories and a building height of 40’ and potentially 45’ if conditionally-permitted.

Draft Principles ——— Tells us what you think! ———

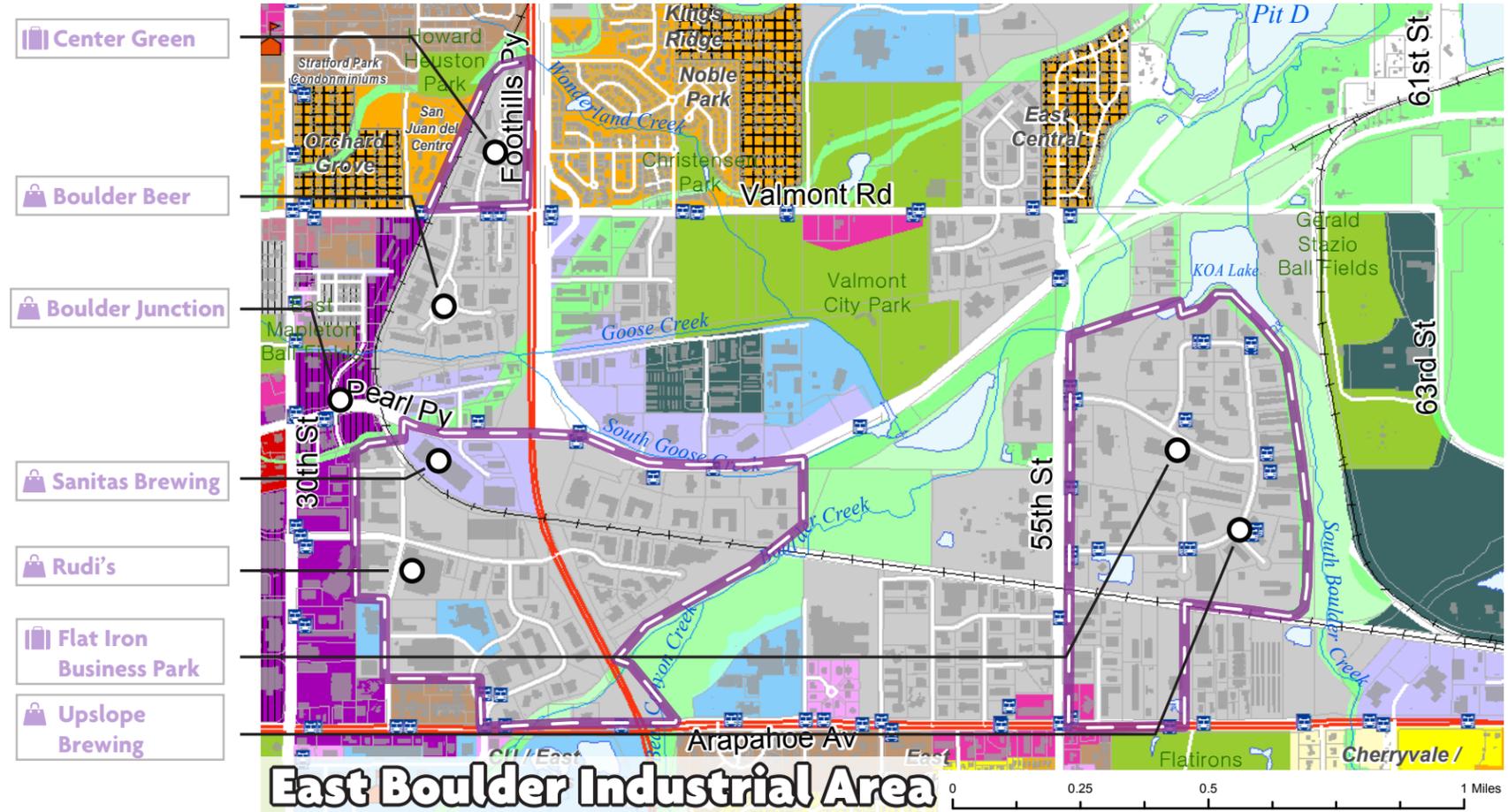
- 1. Amenities and mix of uses.** Co-locate locally-serving retail (e.g. retail anchors such as grocery stores and personal services such as hair salons) and possibly housing with large employers in these employment-rich centers.
- 2. Preservation and reuse.** Encourage retention and renovation of existing buildings and infill on parking lots.
- 3. Transportation connections.** Improve the multimodal system with convenient and pleasant ways to get around on foot, by bike and with local connections to regional transit.
- 4. Meaningful public realm.** Create permeability in centers with a mix of semi-public and public spaces that are connected visually for intuitive navigation. Include civic and cultural uses as well as outdoor seating, shade trees and green spaces in the public spaces to create a unique identity and sense of place.
- 5. Parking not dominant.** Keep parking behind and to the sides of buildings or in structures rather than in large street-facing lots. Encourage parking management strategies, such as shared parking, and versatile parking structures that are designed with the flexibility to allow for different uses in the future.
- 6. Low-impact design.** Contribute toward sustainability goals with low-impact site design that incorporates green infrastructure (e.g. permeable materials and bioswales).

Industrial/Innovation Areas



EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS

- Located in East Boulder, along Arapahoe between 33rd and South Boulder Creek, and in Gunbarrel along the Diagonal
- Classified as Light Industrial on the Land Use Designation Map and has Industrial General (IG) Zoning designed for “research and development, light manufacturing, larger scale printing and publishing, electronics, or other intensive employment uses” and “industrial parks” according to the 2010 plan
- Accessible by vehicles but are not particularly accessible by transit
- Strong regional connection to the city’s greenway system, particularly in East Boulder, making the area accessible for bicycles and pedestrians
- More auto-centric and less walkable/ bikeable within these areas due to the disconnected street grid



What is your vision for industrial/innovation areas?



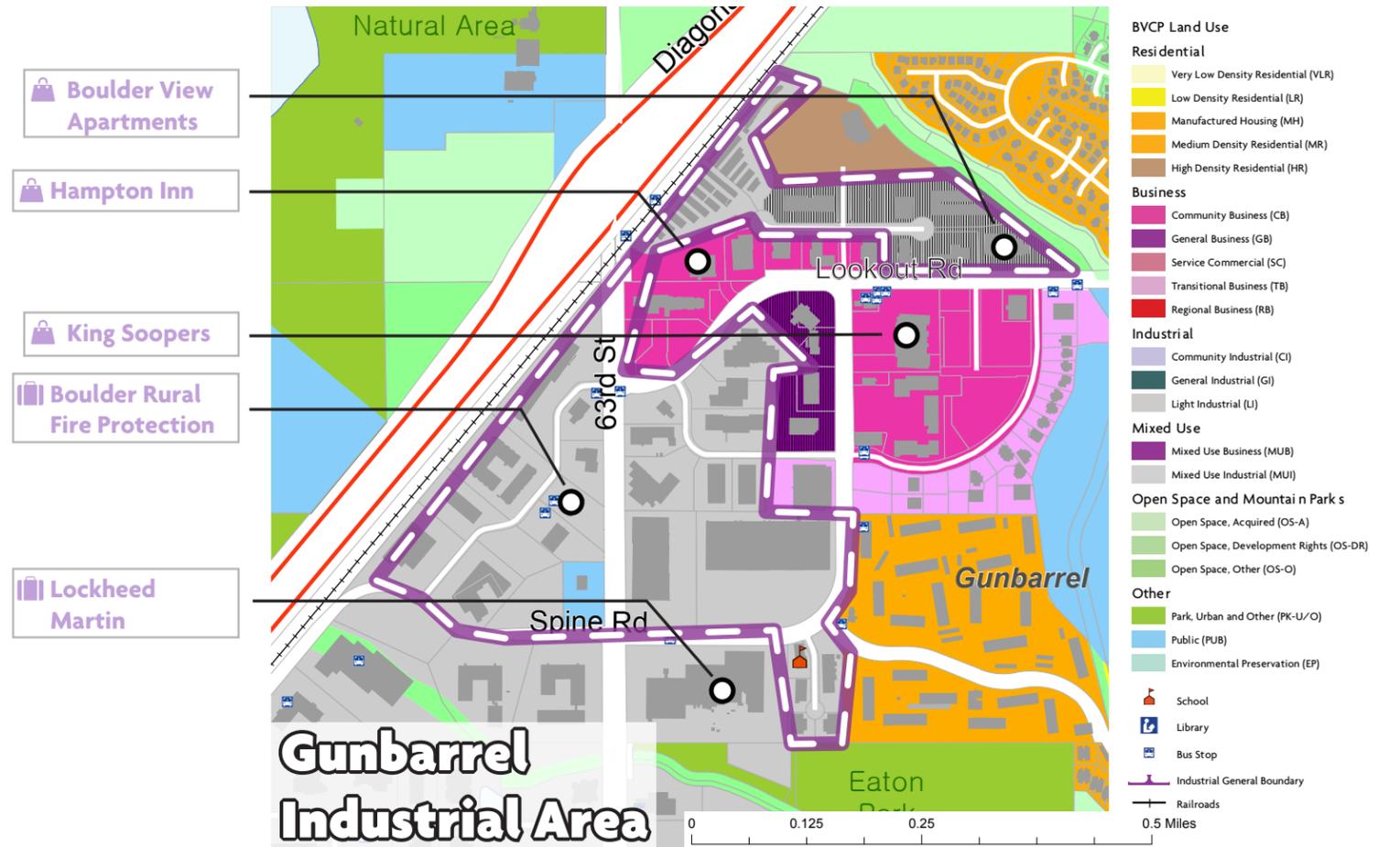
Live/work “15-minute” Neighborhood

View 1
(see aerial diagram on the back for orientation)



Friendly Walkable Neighborhood composed of Medium Density Residential

View 2
(see aerial diagram on the back for orientation)



POSSIBLE LOCATIONS FOR FUTURE JOBS AND HOUSING

Most future jobs and housing may occur in four types of places:

- Major Corridors
- Regional Activity Centers
- Neighborhood Activity Centers
- Industrial/Innovation Areas

The generalized location and distinct characteristics of each of these types of places are defined below.

INDUSTRIAL/INNOVATION AREAS

- Located in East Boulder, along Arapahoe between 33rd and South Boulder Creek, and in Gunbarrel along the Diagonal
- Classified as Light Industrial on the Land Use Designation Map and has Industrial General (IG) Zoning designed for “research and development, light manufacturing, larger scale printing and publishing, electronics, or other intensive employment uses” and “industrial parks” according to the 2010 plan
- Accessible by vehicles but are not particularly accessible by transit
- Strong regional connection to the city’s greenway system, particularly in East Boulder, making the area accessible for bicycles and pedestrians
- More auto-centric and less walkable/bikeable within these areas due to the disconnected street grid



BOULDER VALLEY REGIONAL CENTER

- Serves as a regional commercial destination with goods and services to meet the needs of the community
- Located in Boulder’s Crossroads area along the highways and arterials and is accessible by vehicle, transit, and for pedestrians and bicycles locally and regionally
- Classified as General, Regional, and Mixed Use Business on the Land Use Designation Map and generally has Business Regional (BR-1) Zoning with the highest level of commercial
- Contains the regional mall, some larger big box commercial uses, a multitude of other restaurants and retail, offices, and some residential and is over 200 acres in size



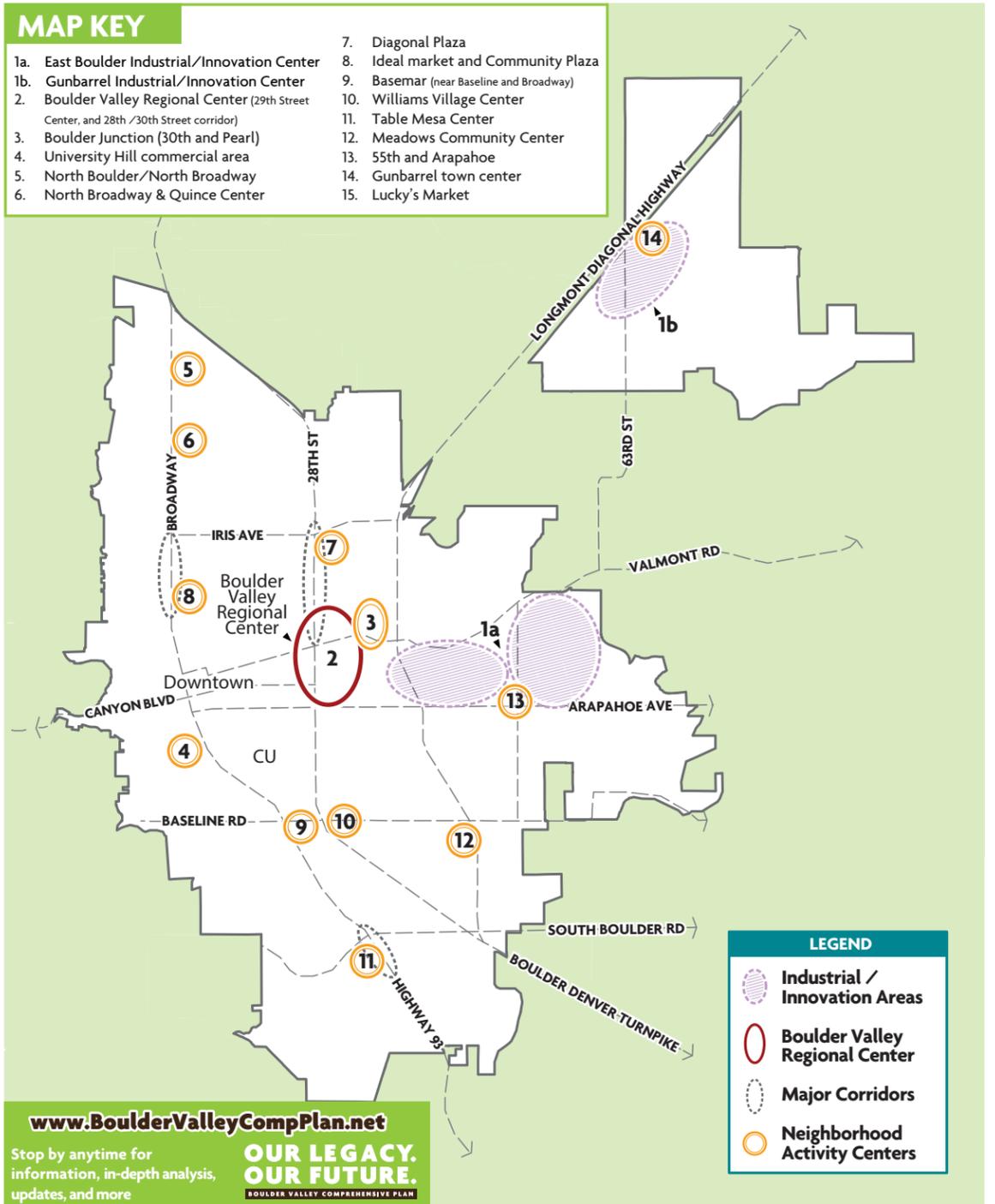
MAJOR CORRIDORS

- Varied in use. May be commercial transitioning to mixed-use or medium density housing
- Served by high frequency transit connecting the centers
- Fairly walkable/bikeable in most locations
- Abutting established neighborhoods
- Examples: 28th Street, Broadway



MAP KEY

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1a. East Boulder Industrial/Innovation Center | 7. Diagonal Plaza |
| 1b. Gunbarrel Industrial/Innovation Center | 8. Ideal market and Community Plaza |
| 2. Boulder Valley Regional Center (29th Street Center, and 28th /30th Street corridor) | 9. Basemar (near Baseline and Broadway) |
| 3. Boulder Junction (30th and Pearl) | 10. Williams Village Center |
| 4. University Hill commercial area | 11. Table Mesa Center |
| 5. North Boulder/North Broadway | 12. Meadows Community Center |
| 6. North Broadway & Quince Center | 13. 55th and Arapahoe |
| | 14. Gunbarrel town center |
| | 15. Lucky’s Market |



NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIVITY CENTERS

- Serve as a focal point for neighborhoods. They provide goods and services to meet the day-to-day needs of nearby residents, workers, and students
- Located throughout Boulder, generally along major corridors
- Accessible from surrounding areas by vehicle, walking, bike, and transit
- Generally classified as Community Business on the Land Use Designation Map and have Business Commercial (BC-1 and BC-2) Zoning
- Have distinct identities and are important to the nearby neighborhoods
- Sometimes contain community services and functions such as libraries, or public spaces
- Generally, do not include housing; and
- Range in size from small locally serving commercial to larger grocery stores or anchor stores. Total area ranges from 4-acres (Willows Shopping Center) to 30+ acres (Meadows)



About Established Neighborhoods

- Places where people live and with most of the community’s housing
- May contain some services, public spaces, parks, other community facilities
- Heart of the community- varied and distinctive, includes:
 - Historic and pre-World War II housing organized around a street grid pattern in and near downtown
 - Post World War II neighborhoods with a curvilinear street and cul de sac pattern, and
 - Neo-traditional, New Urbanist neighborhoods that contain a mix of housing types and more compact street design

Most changes will occur outside of established neighborhoods. However, some limited housing will continue to occur in neighborhoods as retrofits or built on individual lots.

