



E4. Land Use Designation and Zoning Changes

The Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) Land Use Designation Map broadly indicates the type of land use appropriate for each parcel of land in the city and the range of development intensity that should be allowed by the parcel's zoning. Changes to the Land Use Map can be made through regular updates to the BVCP (next update in 2015). Land use and zoning changes can also be considered as part of an area planning process.

Key Issues:

- Changes to land use designation are usually made as part of regular updates to the BVCP, with the next update to occur in 2015.
- Zoning changes follow any land use designation changes. Zoning regulates on a more detailed level the specific types of uses and the intensity of development that is allowed in each zone. For example, zoning changes can be made to reduce minimum lot size or increase allowed building size.
- As part of every five-year BVCP Major Update, the city updates its projections of how many additional housing units and jobs can be added based on zoning. While there is little vacant land left to develop in the city, a lot of redevelopment could occur under current zoning. The BVCP 2015 Update will provide an up-to-date view of development/redevelopment potential prior to community discussions about whether land use designation changes should be considered.
- Two key ways to increase the amount of housing in the city would be to allow higher densities in residential areas and/or along transit corridors and/or allow more mixed use in commercial and industrial areas (see BVCP policies 2.16 and 7.10). These types of development would provide mostly attached units. However, without additional regulation, there's no guarantee that these would be small or affordable. For example, much of the mixed use that has been built downtown and elsewhere is relatively upscale. But regardless of price, mixed-use development can reduce residents' transportation expenses, if commercial and other services and/or jobs are within walking or biking distance.
- Another avenue for analyzing and considering land use changes is through an area planning process. The city can initiate an area planning process for a particular part of the city at any time. Zoning changes usually follow adoption of an area plan. Examples of area planning include the North Boulder Sub-community Plan, the Transit Village Area/Boulder Junction Plan, and Envision East Arapahoe project, currently underway.
- A "community benefit" requirement (value capture) could be added specifying that for any "upzoning" (giving a property more development potential), the developer must provide more affordable housing than normally required.

Background:

- Major updates to the BVCP occur every five years and include consideration of land use designation changes with community and property owner input. Changes within the city must be approved by both Planning Board and City Council. Changes within the Boulder Valley but not within the city (Areas II and III) must also be approved by the Boulder County Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners. Area plans are approved by Planning Board and City Council.
- The BVCP has policies supporting mixed use and higher densities in select areas ([e.g., Policy 2.16](#)). Over the past couple of decades, changes have been made through BVCP updates and area planning processes to allow more mixed use and higher densities in specific parts of the city, for example, downtown, North Boulder, and Transit Village/Boulder Junction.

Implementation Options:

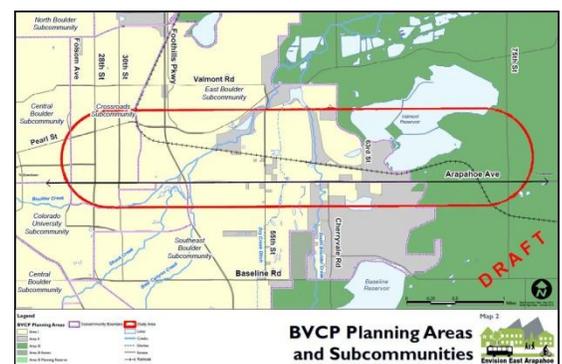
1. Consider land use changes in the BVCP 2015 Major Update to allow additional residential development in certain areas, potentially in exchange for an affordable housing "community benefit" requirement upon re-zoning (value capture).
2. Identify specific areas for an area planning process that would consider land use and zoning changes to allow more residential development, potentially in exchange for an affordable housing "community benefit" requirement upon re-zoning (value capture).

Goals Addressed Through this Tool:

- ✓ Strengthen Our Commitments
- ✓ Maintain the Middle
- ✓ Create Diverse Housing Choices in Every Neighborhood
- ✓ Create 15-Minute Neighborhoods

Strengthen Partnerships

Enable Aging in Place



project, accessed November 13, 2014