

**CITY OF BOULDER**  
**PLANNING BOARD AGENDA ITEM**  
**MEETING DATE: April 2, 2015**

**AGENDA TITLE:** Concept Plan (case no. LUR2015-00006) for redevelopment of an approximately 58,272 sq. ft. (1.34-acre) site located at 2440 and 2490 Junction Pl. within Boulder Junction. Referred to as “The Commons,” the proposed commercial development would consist of two, 3-4 story, 55’ tall buildings totalling roughly 100,000 sq. ft. that would include professional office space, restaurant space and “flex” space intended as community gathering space. The proposal also includes 65 underground parking spaces, a proposed “mobility hub” that includes a car share program and B-Cycle Station, a central public plaza area and multiple multi-modal connections through the site.

Applicant: Bill Hollicky/ Coburn Architecture  
Property Owner: 2440 Junction Pl., LLC & 2490 Junction Pl., LLC

**REQUESTING DEPARTMENT:**

Community Planning & Sustainability  
David Driskell, Executive Director  
Susan Richstone, Deputy Director  
Charles Ferro, Land Use Review Manager  
Chandler Van Schaack, Planner I

**OBJECTIVE:**

1. Hear applicant and staff presentations
2. Hold public hearing
3. Planning Board discussion of Concept Plan. No action is required by Planning Board.

**SUMMARY:**

Proposal: The proposed commercial development would consist of two 3-4 story, 55’ tall buildings totalling roughly 100,000 sq. ft. that would include professional office space, restaurant space and “flex” space intended as community gathering space. The proposal also includes 65 underground parking spaces, a proposed “mobility hub” that includes a car share program and B-Cycle Station, a central public plaza area and multiple multi-modal connections through the site.

Project Name: The Commons  
Location: 2440 & 2490 Junction Pl.  
Size of Tract: 1.34 acres (58,272 sq. ft.)  
Zoning: Mixed Use – 4  
Comprehensive Plan: Mixed Use Business

Key Issues: Staff has identified the following key issue:

1. Are the preliminary plans consistent with the adopted Transit Village Area Plan (TVAP)?

## I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The project site consists of the two remaining vacant lots in the Steel Yards Subdivision, located on the east side of the Steel Yards development, abutting the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Rail Line just south of the intersection of Junction Pl. and Bluff St. The project site lies within Boulder Junction, and as such is overseen by the vision, goals and guidelines of the Transit Village Area Plan (TVAP).

## II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

The concept plan is for redevelopment of an approximately 58,272 sq. ft. (1.34-acre) site located at 2440 and 2490 Junction Pl. within Boulder Junction. Referred to as “The Commons,” the proposed commercial development would consist of two 4 story, 55’ tall buildings totalling roughly 100,000 sq. ft. that would include professional office space, restaurant space and “flex” space intended as community gathering space. The proposal also includes 65 underground parking spaces, a proposed “mobility hub” that includes a car share program and B-Cycle Station, a central public plaza area and multiple multi-modal connections through the site. **Figure 1** illustrates the proposed building footprints superimposed onto an aerial and **Figure 2** illustrates the Site Plan. Refer to **Attachment A** for project plans and the full applicant submittal. The applicant provided basic massing studies of the buildings as well as architectural renderings and a number of precedent images to help illustrate the anticipated architectural style and quality of materials.

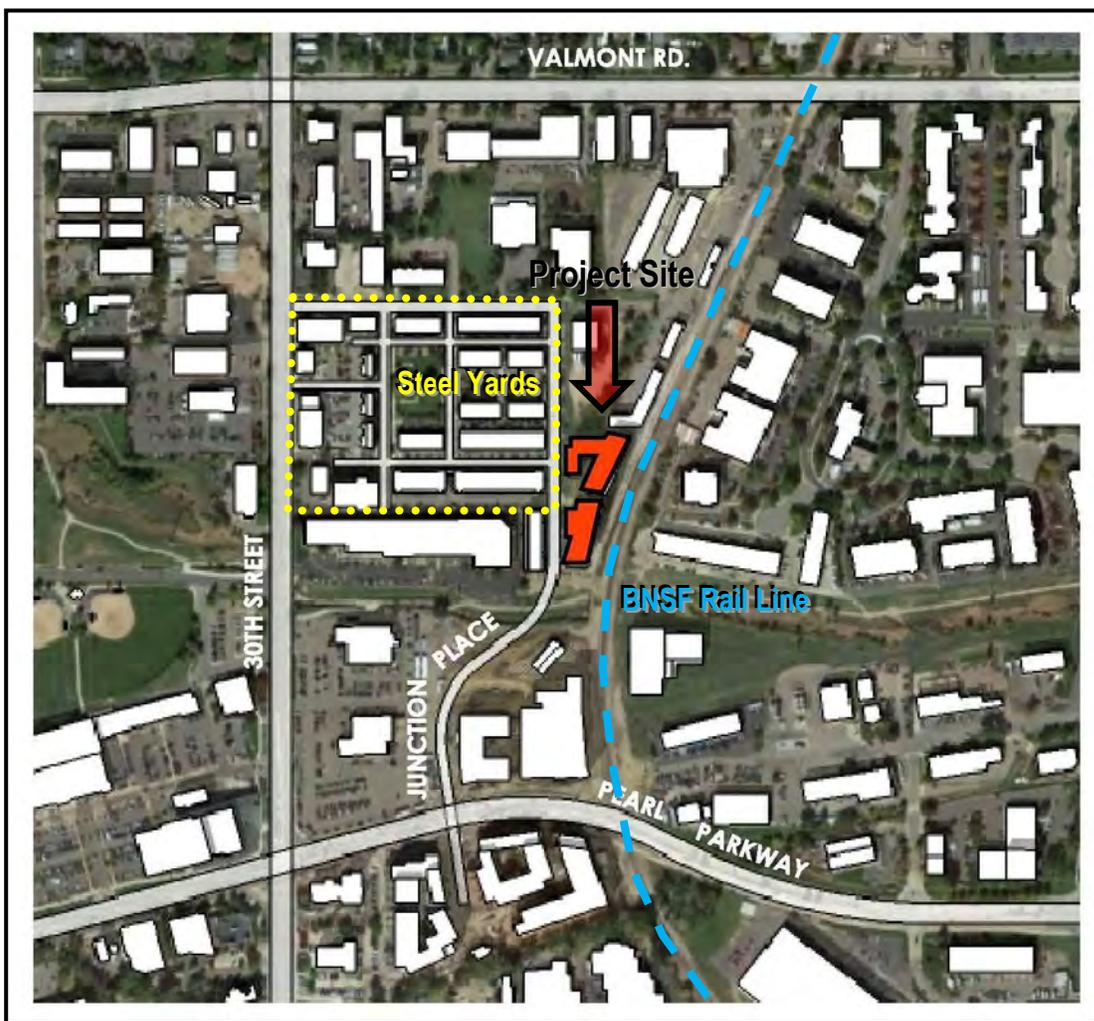


Figure 1: Vicinity Map



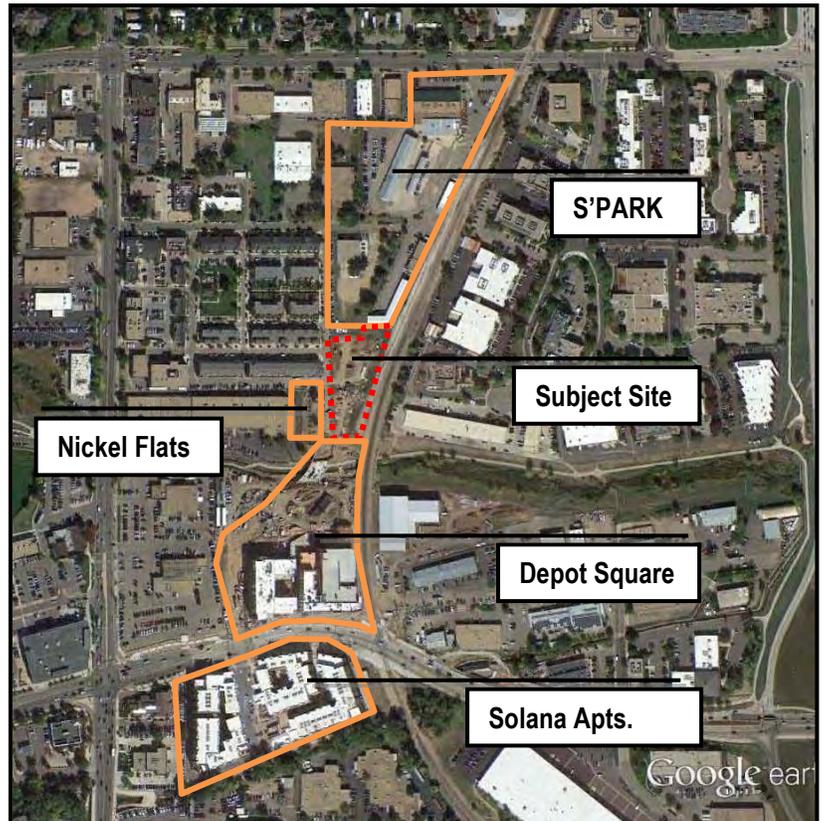
Figure 2: Proposed Site Plan and First Floor Plan

### III. Concept Plan Review Criteria for Planning Section 9-2-13(e), B.R.C. 1981

The following guidelines will be used to guide the planning board's discussion regarding the site. It is anticipated that issues other than those listed in this section will be identified as part of the concept plan review and comment process. The Planning Board may consider the following guidelines when providing comments on a concept plan:

- (1) **Characteristics of the site and surrounding areas, including, without limitation, its location, surrounding neighborhoods, development and architecture, any known natural features of the site including, without limitation, mature trees, watercourses, hills, depressions, steep slopes and prominent views to and from the site;**

As shown in **Figure 3**, the 1.33-acre project site is located on the east side of the Steel Yards development, abutting the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Rail Line just south of the intersection of Junction Pl. and Bluff St. The site is comprised of two parcels, both of which are currently undeveloped. Surrounding uses include the new Nickel Flats residential building immediately across Junction Pl. and the mixed residential and live-work Steelyards development further to the west; the former Sutherlands site (currently under review for the S'Park development) immediately to the north, and mixed office and light industrial uses to the east across the railroad tracks. The Goose Creek Greenway runs just south of the site, with the mixed use Depot Square development and residential Solana development abutting the west side of the railroad tracks further to the south. The Concept Plan packet provides site images on page 2, found in the following link [here](#), and **Figure 4** includes images of the site surroundings.



**Figure 3: Subject Property in relation to nearby projects under construction**

The site is located in the northern portion of Boulder Junction. The Boulder Junction area is guided by the [Transit Village Area Plan](#) and is anticipated to redevelop as several new urban, mixed-use, transit-oriented neighborhoods. Consistency of the project with TVAP is discussed in Key Issue #1 below. Redevelopment within Boulder Junction began in 2012 with the Solana Apartments, which include 319 units nearing completion. Currently under construction across Pearl Parkway from 3100 Pearl is Depot Square, a mixed use development that includes a below grade bus transit facility, a 150-room Hyatt Hotel, an above grade, wrapped parking structure and 71 permanently affordable, attached residential units. Also planned is the restoration of the historic depot building on the site that will include a public plaza space along with roadway improvements such as the construction of Junction Place, a new north-south roadway along with a new bridge over Goose Creek and implementation of a multi-way boulevard on Pearl Parkway.

Also recently approved within Boulder Junction is a 17-unit attached apartment building known as Nickel Flats, just north of Goose Creek on Junction Place. To the west of the site is the Steelyards, a mixed use development, with residential and live-work units along with retail and offices. Directly north of the project site is the former Sutherland

Lumber Supply Co. site, which includes large vacant warehouse buildings and a branch of Air Gas Co., a supplier of industrial, medical and specialty gas and accessories, safety products and welding supplies. Currently, the former Sutherland site is undergoing Site and Use Review for a mixed use development known as "S'PARK," which is proposed as a new mixed use commercial and mixed-income residential neighborhood comprised of six individual portions: Maarket: a 52,454 square foot, three story non-residential building with a brew pub; Ciclo: a four story office/retail building; Railyards: a 67,039 square foot, four story non-residential office and retail building with two restaurants; Timber: a 115,000 square, foot four-story apartment building with ground floor retail; Meredith House: a four story apartment building of 20,690 square feet; and S'PARK\_west: a three-story 97,000 square foot apartment and townhome building. **Figure 4** below illustrates the existing and proposed context surrounding the project site.

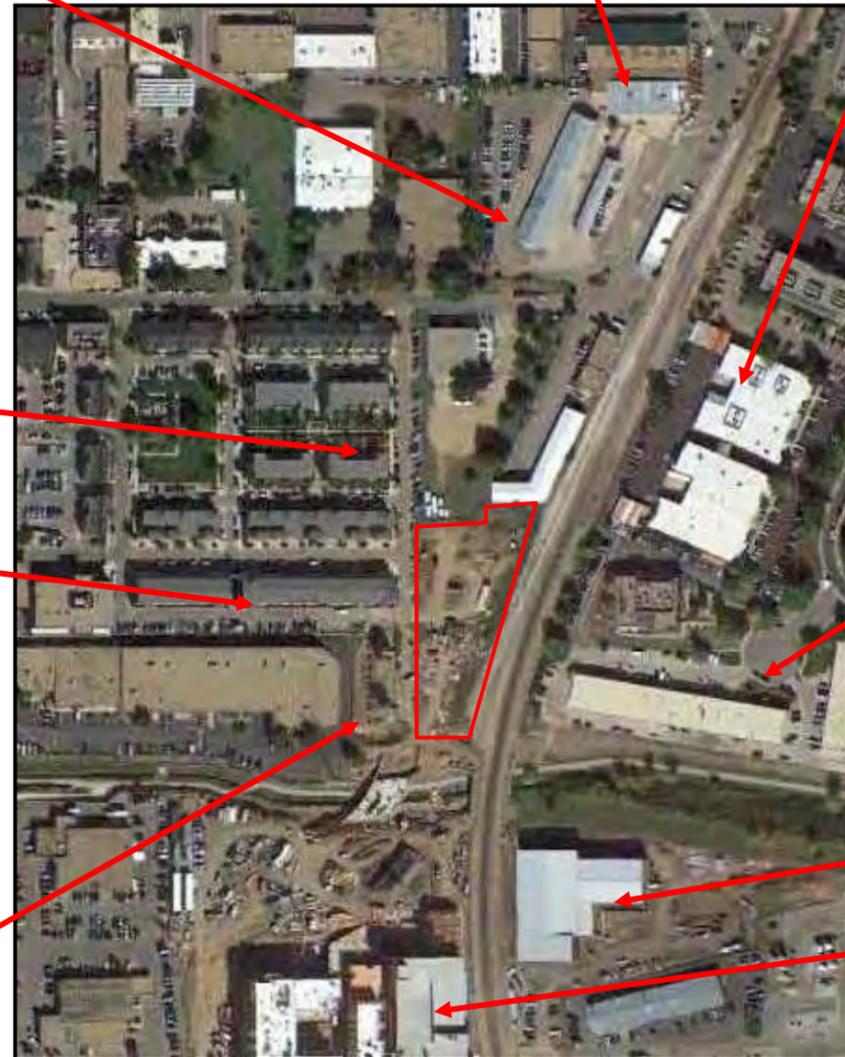


Figure 4:  
Photos of  
Surrounding Context

2) **Community policy considerations including, without limitation, the review process and likely conformity of the proposed development with the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan and other ordinances, goals, policies, and plans, including, without limitation, subcommunity and subarea plans;**

**Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) :** Pages 67 to 69 describes the purpose of Area Plans as a means to provide direction for specific geographic areas, and bridge the gap between the broad policies of the Comprehensive Plan and site specific project review. The Comprehensive Plan notes that issues that Area Plans address include appropriate character, scale and mix of uses and if regulatory changes are needed to ensure or encourage appropriate development. The Transit Village Area Plan (TVAP ) is one among four adopted area plans within the Comprehensive Plan with the stated purpose of the being:

*“To describe the city’s vision for the future of the 160-acre Transit Village area and guide the long term development of the area. The area is defined as within walking distance to the future FasTracks transit services – commuter rail, bus rapid transit, and regional bus services.”*

**Transit Village Area Plan (TVAP):** The area overseen by the TVAP was renamed Boulder Junction, in reference to the area from decades ago as the junction of two major rail lines. The overall TVAP land use Plan is presented on the following page as **Figure 5**. Within TVAP, the land use designation for the site is MU-2 or Mixed Use -2, which anticipates three- to four-story mixed use buildings at a FAR of 1.5 to 2.0. See **Figure 5** below for the TVAP Land Use Map, and **Figure 5a** for a description of the MU-2 Land Use designation with precedent development images.

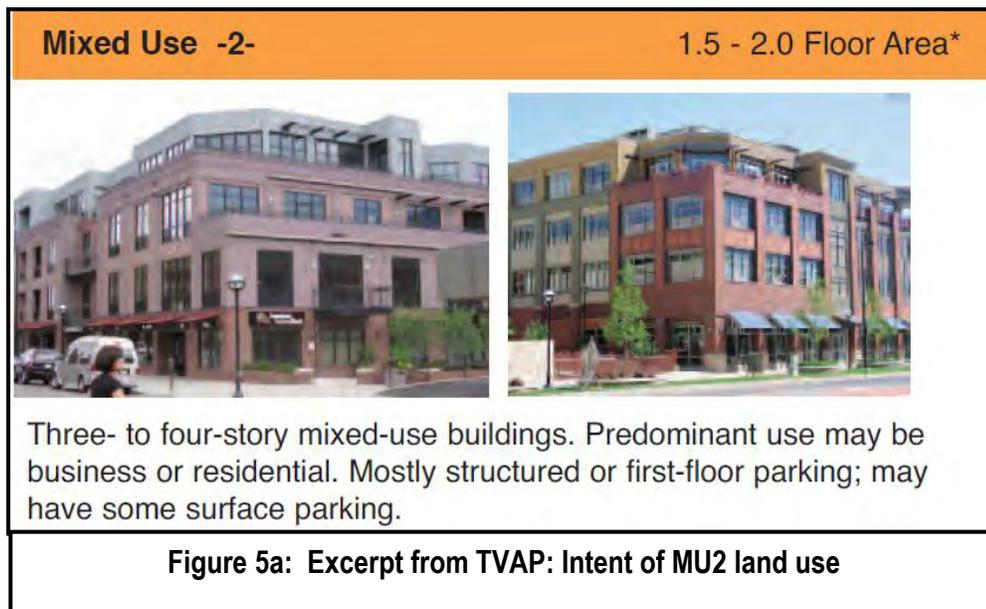
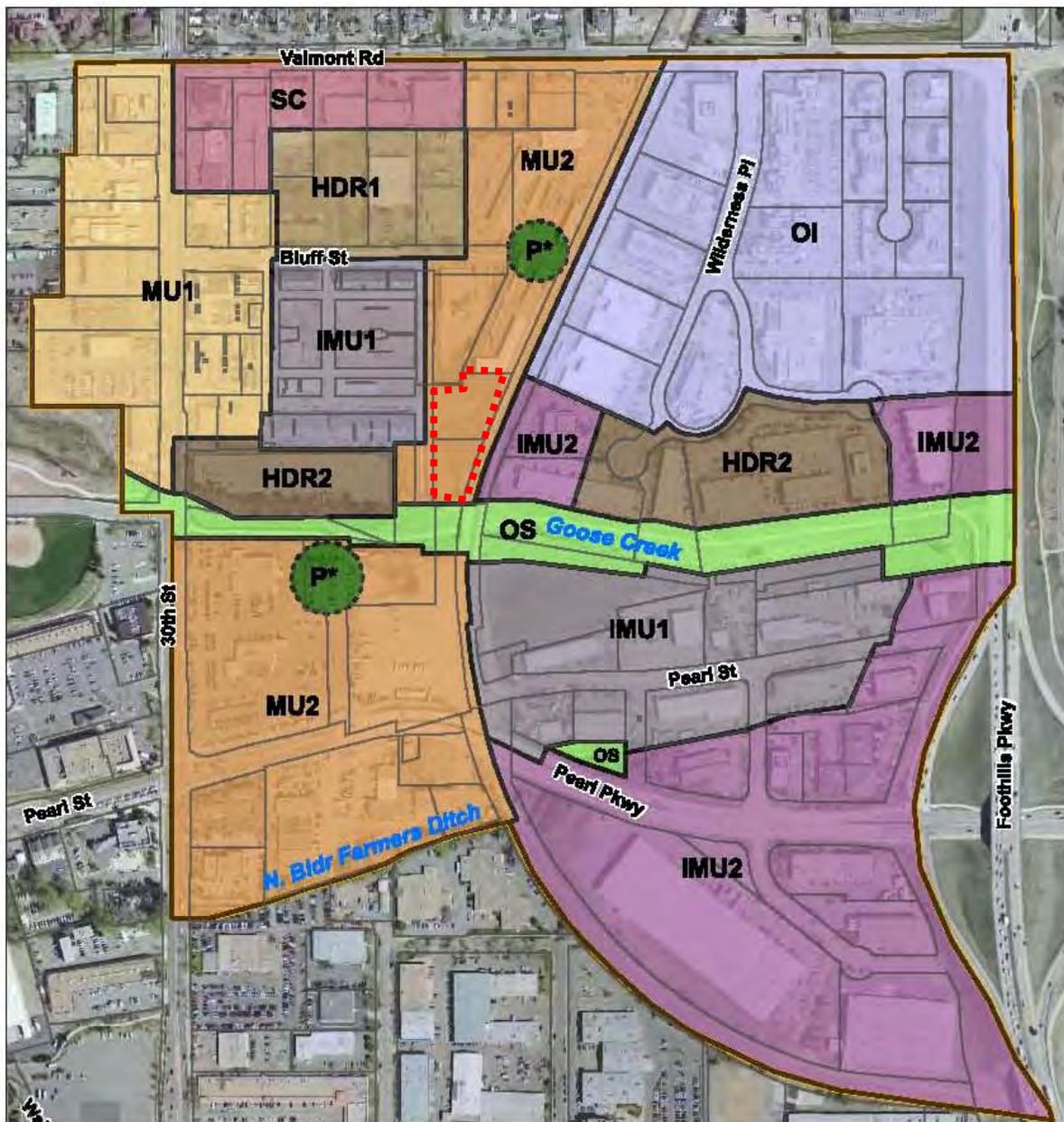


Figure 5: TVAP Land Use Map



**Legend**

<b>Plan Land Use</b>	Industrial Mixed Use 1	Service Commercial
High Density Residential 1	Industrial Mixed Use 2	Park / Public Plaza
High Density Residential 2	Mixed Use 1	Greenway / Open Space
Office Industrial	Mixed Use 2	



**Character Districts in TVAP.** Within TVAP, the Boulder Junction area was divided into eight character districts shown in **Figure 6**, primarily based on future land use and to promote a particular urban design character for each area. The area identified within the Concept Plan area is the “Rail Plaza District.” As noted

on page 23 of TVAP, this is the area that ultimately, “will host the Boulder stop on the new commuter rail service to Denver and Longmont.” The intent of the district is further defined, “The district will evolve into a high-density, commercial and residential mixed use area, with three- to five-story buildings.”

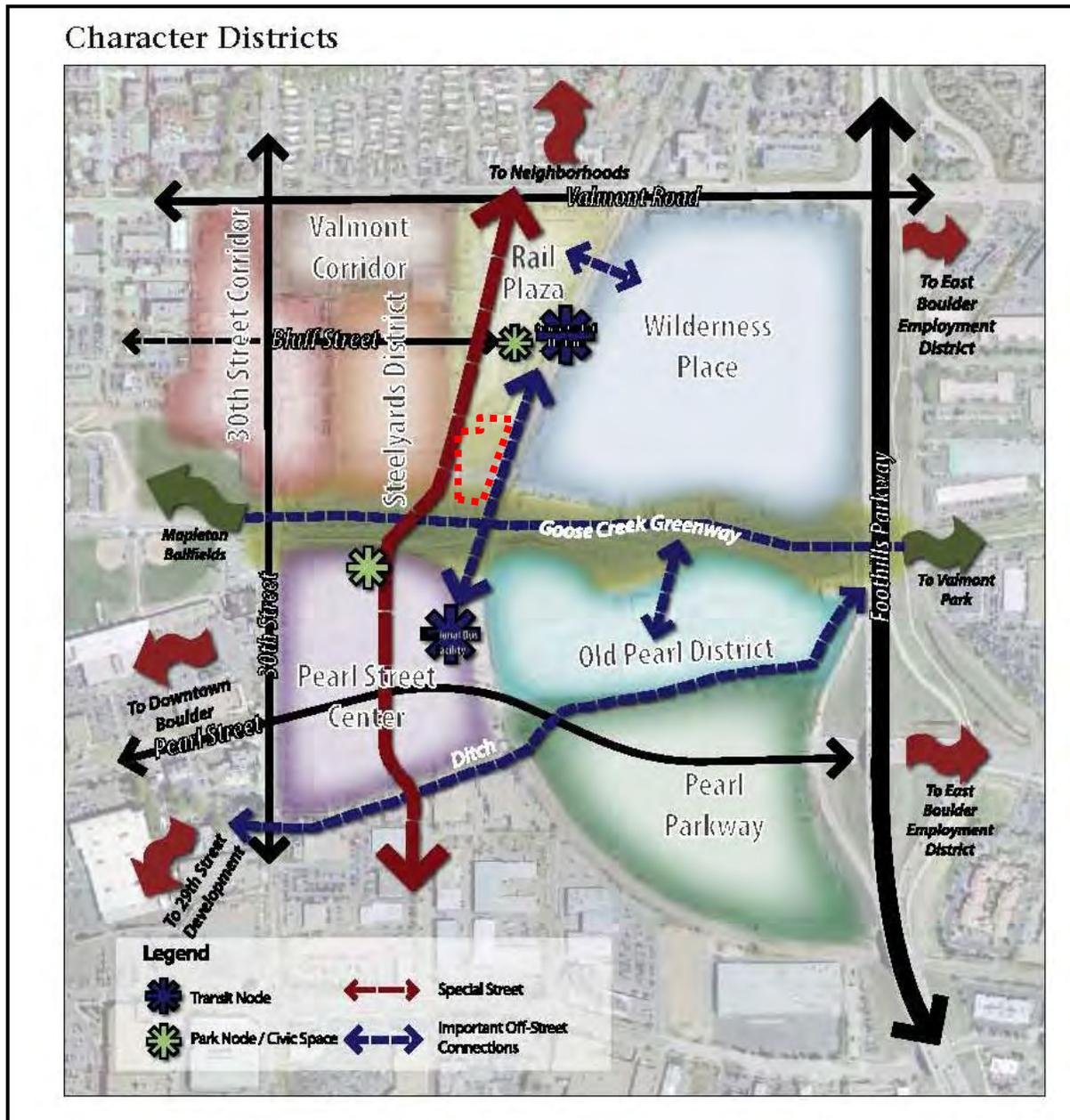


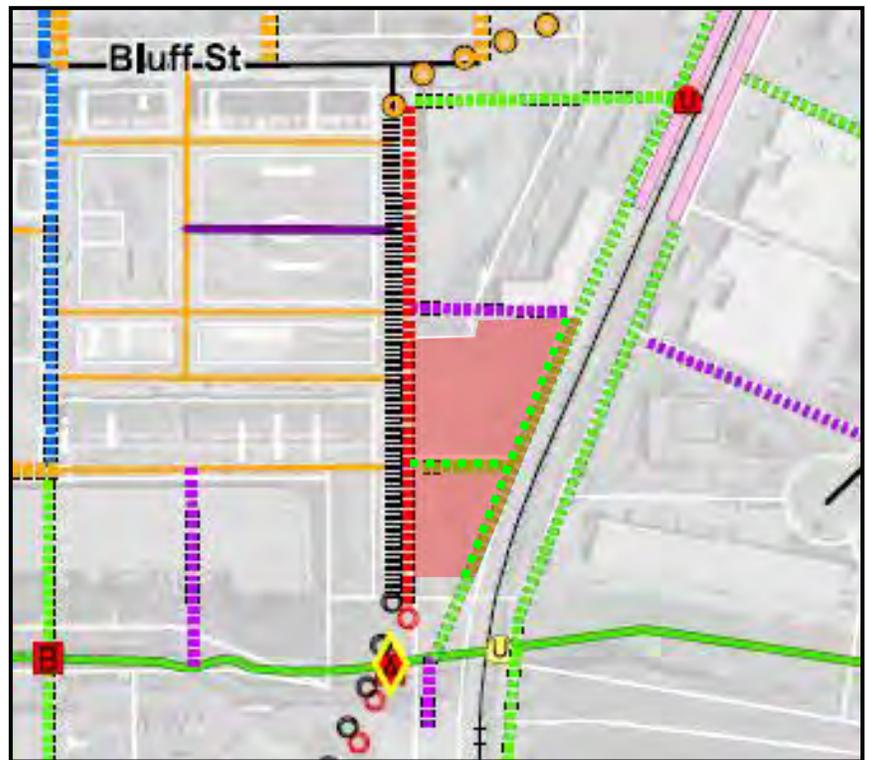
Figure 6: TVAP Character Districts Map

A connections plan was also adopted for TVAP that includes a number of connections through the site, as delineated in **Figure 7** (project site shown in red). Equally as important as Land Use, the connections plan is intended to:

*“Create walkable streets in a fine grain grid pattern, providing for walking, biking and possible car free zones. Provide multimodal connections within the area to adjacent neighborhoods and to key nearby destinations and activity areas.”*

The full text of the connections plan is found beginning on page 56 of TVAP, provided [here](#). As shown on the connections plan, Junction Place runs along the west side of the site and is anticipated to have on-street bike lanes (shown in red dashes). There are also multi-use path connections shown along the west side of the tracks to access the future rail plaza as well as running east-west through the center of the site to connect to Junction Place (shown in green dashes).

The current Concept Plan proposal is consistent with the TVAP Connections Plan, and includes a multi-use path along the west side of the railroad as well as a path running east-west across the center of the site connecting to Junction Place through the proposed central plaza area.

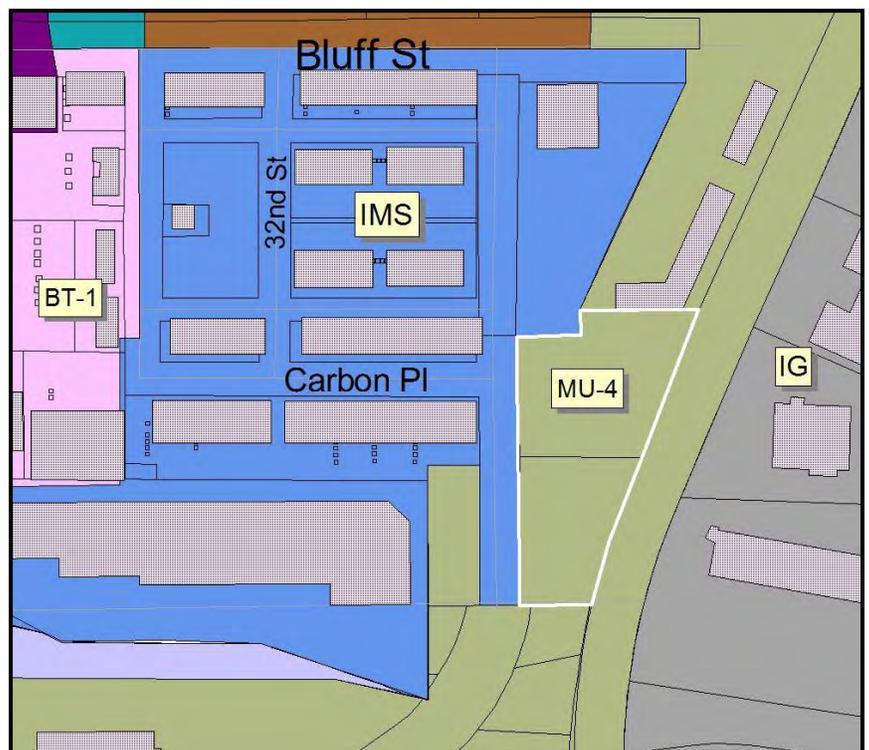


**Figure 7: Excerpt from TVAP Connections Plan showing connections through the site**

**Site Zoning.** The project site is zoned MU-4 (Mixed Use – 4) as shown in Figure 8. The following is an excerpt from the Land Use Code Section 9-5-2, B.R.C. 1981 for the zoning district definition:

**MU-4: Mixed use – 4**, residential areas generally intended for residential uses with neighborhood-serving retail and office uses; and where complementary uses may be allowed. It is anticipated that development will occur in a pedestrian-oriented pattern, with buildings built up to the street.

The MU-4 zone is a relatively new district established to help implement the vision of TVAP. The zoning district permits up to a 2.0 FAR by-right. Portions of the zoning district were amended in 2013 to allow additional uses to allow greater variety in the zoning district. Added were Commercial Kitchen and Catering; Small Manufacturing uses less than 15,000



**Figure 8: Zoning Map**

square feet; and Wholesale businesses. Also added were Live-Work units as an allowed use. Reference the staff memo from the second reading of the ordinance to amend the code [here](#). A zero lot line front yard setback is permitted by-right in MU-4 with a maximum by-right height of three stories or 38 feet, which can only be modified through Site Review.

It should also be noted that on January 20, 2015, City Council approved first reading of an ordinance that would limit to specific areas and situations the eligibility to have buildings that could exceed the by-right height limits through the existing Site Review process. That said, the pending ordinance includes an exemption provision for properties within Boulder Junction, so the subject property would still be able to request a height modification through the Site Review process. City Council will consider fourth and final reading on April 7, 2015.

The proposed project includes several modifications to the form and bulk standards for the MU-4 zone district. These modifications would be considered through the Site Review process, and are listed below:

- Minimum front yard setback from a street for 3rd story & above:

Request to allow for the a small portion of the third and fourth stories of the southern building to reach a setback of approximately 10 feet where 20 feet is the minimum required setback.

- Maximum number of stories:

Request to allow for buildings up to four stories in height where three stories is the maximum number of stories permitted. Site Review is required in MU-4 for projects over 3 stories in height. The project is designed to be 4 stories, below the 5-story intended maximum.

- Maximum principal building height:

Request to allow the two buildings to reach a height of 50 to 55 feet where 38 feet is the maximum permitted height. As mentioned above, the pending height ordinance includes an exemption provision for properties within Boulder Junction, so the subject property would still be able to request a height modification through the Site Review process.

- Maximum floor area of any principal building:

Request to allow for two buildings with a total combined floor area of approximately 100,000 square feet (The northern building would be approximately 60,000 square feet and the southern building would be approximately 40,000 square feet) where 15,000 square feet is the maximum floor area for a principal building.

### **3) Applicable criteria, review procedures, and submission requirements for a site review;**

Once the Planning Board has reviewed a Concept Plan application and provided comments at a public hearing as required by section 9-2-13(f), B.R.C. 1981, the city council may call up the application within 30 days of the board's review. Any application that it calls up, the city council will review at a public meeting within sixty days of the call-up vote or within such other time as the manager or council and the applicant mutually agree. Following the final review of the Concept Plan, the applicant will be required to submit for a

Site Review. Use Review may be required for certain uses as well, particularly restaurants with hours of operation that run past 11:00 p.m. In addition, as mentioned above, depending on the ultimate site configuration, a Lot Line Elimination may also be required following Site Review. Refer to Key Issue 1 for a preliminary consistency analysis under the applicable guidelines of TVAP.

**4) Permits that may need to be obtained and processes that may need to be completed prior to, concurrent with, or subsequent to site review approval;**

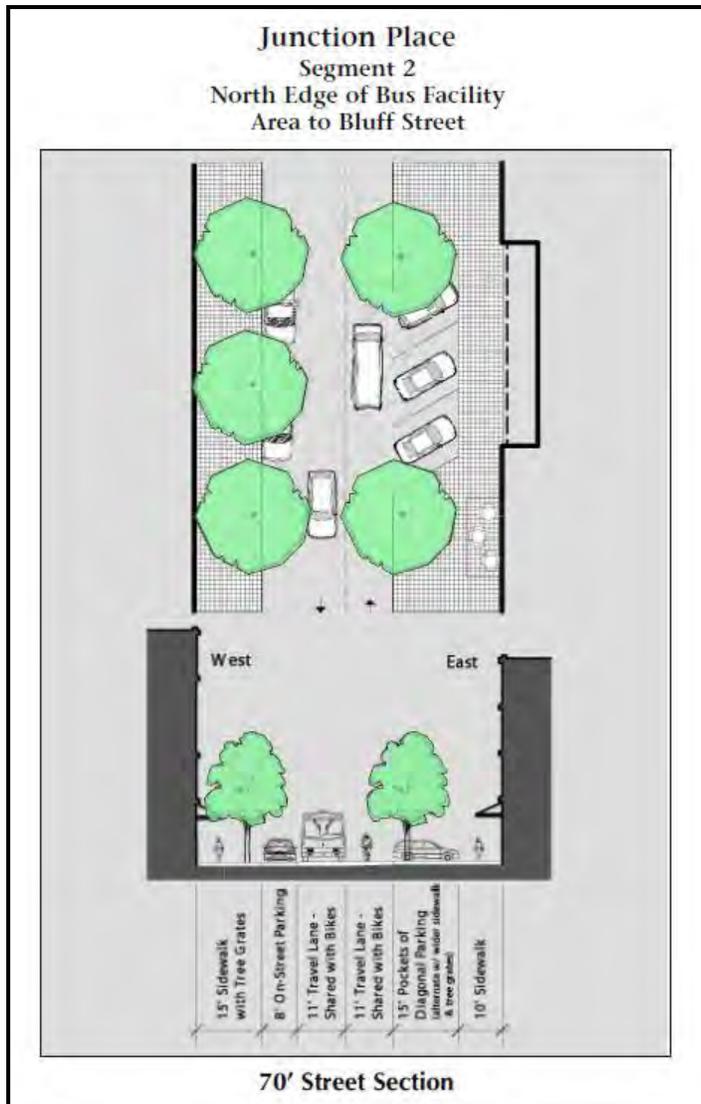
Following Concept Plan Review, the applicant will be required to submit a Site Review application. Following Site Review, the applicant is required to submit an application for Technical Document (TEC doc) Review prior to application for building permit. The intent in the TEC doc review is to ensure that technical details are resolved such as drainage and transportation issues that may require supplemental analyses. A TEC Doc review process will also be required for dedication of any necessary easements and right-of-way. As mentioned above, a Lot Line Elimination may also be required depending on the final site configuration.

**5) Opportunities and constraints in relation to the transportation system, including, without limitation, access, linkage, signalization, signage, and circulation, existing transportation system capacity problems serving the requirements of the transportation master plan, possible trail links, and the possible need for a traffic or transportation study;**

As mentioned above, the TVAP Connections Plan includes a number of connections through the site. Equally as important as Land Use, the connections plan is intended to *“create walkable streets in a fine grain grid pattern, providing for walking, biking and possible car free zones...(and to) Provide multimodal connections within the area to adjacent neighborhoods and to key nearby destinations and activity areas.”*

The full text of the connections plan is found beginning on page 56 of TVAP. As shown on the connections plan and in **Figure 7** above, a multi-use path is anticipated along the west side of the tracks to access the rail platform, as well as a connecting E-W multi-use path generally along the lot line between the two parcels. The applicant would be responsible for dedicating the right-of-way / easement and constructing the multi-use paths and pedestrian connection. The Streetscape Guidelines in TVAP illustrate what is anticipated for Junction Place from the Bus Facility in Depot Square to Bluff Street. This streetscape is described as “Segment 2” in the TVAP streetscape guidelines, and is shown below in **Figure 10**. As project plans progress, this configuration will be desired for Junction Place. The description of Segment 2 contained on pg. 37 of TVAP is as follows:

*Segment 2 is the middle section from the northern extent of the bus facility, near Goose Creek, to Bluff Street from the northern extent of the bus facility, near Goose Creek, to Bluff Street. A majority of this section follows the existing 33rd Street, which will be widened to accommodate a shared-space street (where vehicles and bikes share the roadway) and wide pedestrian areas. On-street parking will be parallel or in pockets of diagonal parking, alternating with wider sidewalk space for outdoor seating, larger planting areas, or other amenities.*



**Figure 10: Junction Place street section**

As discussed in the initial reviewer comments to the applicant (found in [Attachment C](#)), the applicant will be responsible for the dedication of right-of-way and constructing the following public improvements:

- ½ of the Junction Place (Segment 2) street cross-section
- The east – west multi-use path between lots 1 and 2
- The north – south multi-use path paralleling the BNSF railway right-of-way

As shown in **Figure 10**, the Junction Place street section must include the following cross-sectional design elements:

- 11' Travel Lane
- 15' combined on-street parking and landscape width
- 10' sidewalk
- 1' at the back of walk (where buildings are not constructed at the property/right-of-way line)

**6) Environmental opportunities and constraints including, without limitation, the identification of wetlands, important view corridors, floodplains and other natural hazards, wildlife corridors, endangered and protected species and habitats, the need for further biological inventories of the site and at what point in the process the information will be necessary;**

There are no known special status plant or animal species located on the site. The site has been vacant and is denuded of most vegetation except for weedy plant species. Given the broad expanse of vacant land, there is an existing view corridor to the Flatirons from the subject property.

**7) Appropriate ranges of land uses;**

Staff finds the proposal to redevelop the property as primarily office uses with the potential for retail or flex space along with a potential restaurant and coffee shop and to be generally consistent with the overall intent for TVAP to create an area that “will evolve into a lively, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented place where people

will live, work, shop and access regional transit,” as well as with the goal to provide “additional office uses in locations close to the future transit facilities and new residential areas.” As mentioned above, staff recommends that the applicant consider how the first floors of the buildings could be designed with adaptability in mind such that overtime they could be used as ground floor retail rather than office.

**8) The appropriateness of or necessity for housing.**

*Not applicable, as no housing is proposed.*

**Key Issue 1: Are the preliminary plans consistent with the Transit Village Area Plan (TVAP)?**

**Mass and Scale.** The Concept Plan illustrates two four story buildings that are stepped down to the west as shown in the massing model below in **Figure 12**, looking toward the southeast at the proposed project (the green cylinder represents the location of the proposed mobility hub and does not represent a physical building element). As noted, TVAP envisions higher intensity uses for the Rail Plaza District: *“The district will evolve into a high-density, commercial and residential mixed use area, with three- to five-story buildings.”* Because of the level of intensity anticipated to help support and enliven the rail plaza, overall the planned height and scale appears to be consistent with TVAP.



**Figure 11: Massing Model**

While the proposal for the buildings in excess of 38’ is generally consistent with the anticipated intensity of the Rail Plaza Character District as outlined in TVAP, as the project plans progress it will be important to consider how the project will meet the Site Review criteria found in section 9-2-14, B.R.C. 1981. As outlined in the application requirements for a Height Modification, the project will have to demonstrate how the building design accommodates pedestrians through such factors as the uses proposed for the ground level, the percentage of transparent material at the ground level, and signage and graphics. Particular attention should also be paid to how the useable open space will serve the public interest. In addition, the project will need to demonstrate compliance with the Site Review standards pertaining to *“Building Design, Livability and Relationship to the Existing or Proposed Surrounding Area,”* particularly those criteria related to compatibility with the existing and planned character of the area and the proportionality of the proposed building height to

the existing and planned building heights in the immediate area. In terms of the context surrounding the site, there is a notable difference between the approved and/or proposed developments to the north and south of the project site within the MU-4 zone and the existing and approved development to the west of the project site. The buildings to the west of the project site are generally between 2 and 3 stories, while the projects to the south (Depot Square, Solana Apartments) as well as the proposed development to the north (S'Park) all include buildings between four and five stories up to 55 feet in height. The current proposal includes a stepped building design in an attempt to address this contextual variation. As illustrated in **Figure 12** below, the proposed buildings would place the largest building massing (4 stories) along the railway, stepping the building down to 2 stories along Junction Pl. in an effort to frame the central plaza and transition to the smaller buildings to the west.



**Figure 12: Rendering of project looking northeast from Junction Pl.**

As the project progresses, the applicant should consider how the redevelopment of the former Sutherland's site to the north may affect the context surrounding the site, and how the project can achieve compatibility with the proposed S'Park development while preserving the feeling of transition to Junction Pl. and buildings to the west. It should also be noted that the City is in the early stages of developing a form-based code pilot program to be implemented within Boulder Junction. The applicant should continue to communicate with staff as the pilot program progresses

**TVAP Guidelines.** There are a number of guidelines within the Transit Village Area Plan that will be the basis of the evaluation of the proposed project, along with the Site Review criteria, as the project moves forward. The following is a preliminary consistency analysis of the proposed project with the relevant TVAP Urban Design Guidelines.

**General Urban Design Guidelines.**

- ***“Orient the main facade to the street and provide an entrance on the street side of the building.”***

Currently the proposed site plan appears to meet this guideline, with the majority of the main entrances to the building located along Junction Pl. or from within the proposed central plaza.

- ***“Design buildings with pedestrian-scale materials and architectural articulation, particularly on the first floor. Avoid large blank walls. Along streets and sidewalks provide pedestrian interest including transparent windows and well-defined building entrances.”***

While there is currently very little detail shown on the conceptual renderings to determine the project’s consistency with this guideline, staff finds that generally speaking, the first floor facades appear to be moving in the right direction, and that the expansive fenestration combined with architectural elements to frame the building entries as shown on Sheet CP-5 should continue to be refined as the project plans move forward. The applicant should draw the architectural vocabulary from surrounding existing and proposed development within the area. Staff notes that the Site Review criteria also require that *“Projects are designed to a human scale and promote a safe and vibrant pedestrian experience through the location of building frontages along public streets, plazas, sidewalks and paths, and through the use of building elements, design details and landscape materials that include, without limitation, the location of entrances and windows, and the creation of transparency and activity at the pedestrian level.”*

Regarding the upper floors of the proposed buildings, while again there has been very little detail provided, staff would also like to note that special consideration should be given in the Site Review submittal to ensure that the project meets the Site Review criterion requiring that *“exteriors of buildings present a sense of permanence through the use of authentic materials such as stone, brick, wood, metal or similar products and building material detailing.”* Generally, stucco should be used as an accent and staff recommends that special consideration be given to fenestration details in the formulation of the Site Review submittal.

- ***“Incorporate well-designed, functional open spaces with tree, quality landscaping and art, access to sunlight and places to sit comfortably. Where public parks or open spaces are not within close proximity, provide shared open spaces for a variety of activities. Where close to parks, open spaces provided by development may be smaller.”***

The current proposal includes a number of open space amenities, including the restaurant seating on the south end of the building, café seating at various points along Junction Pl., and the proposed courtyard/ “mobility hub” area between the two buildings. Additional details will be required at time of Site Review to determine how the proposed open spaces will function. In addition, staff notes that currently there is an abundance of hardscaped surfaces and a relative dearth of quality landscaping. As mentioned in the Pre-Application response for this project, the east side of Junction Pl. is currently anticipated to have parallel on-street parking with an 8 foot landscape strip and 8 foot sidewalk – the applicant should explore ways to seek more of a balance in the open space between *“sidewalk space for outdoor seating and larger planting areas”* as described in the Junction Place guidelines.

It is unclear from the current materials whether vehicular access is proposed to the mobility hub or whether it is intended to provide pedestrian access to the garage only; however, as mentioned above in the “access/ circulation” comments above, staff will not support more than one vehicular curb cut for the project and generally finds it inappropriate to allow vehicular access to usable open space areas. The applicant should also give special consideration to how open space areas will provide

*“significant amounts of plant material sized in excess of the landscaping requirements of sections 9-9-12, “Landscaping and Screening Standards,” and 9-9-13, “Streetscape Design Standards,” B.R.C. 1981” as required in the Site Review criteria. In addition, the proposed central plaza is somewhat awkward as currently shown. The applicant should explore ways of creating a more proportional and welcoming space that provides usable open space while contributing to the overall visual patterning of the building frontages as seen from Junction Pl. Please see analysis of “Rail Plaza District Guidelines” and “Landscaping” comments below for additional details.*

### **Junction Place Guidelines.**

- ***“In addition to the street trees, sidewalks and bike facilities specified by the Junction Place streetscape section, provide seating, planters, art, special pavement and lighting along Junction Place. (See the Implementation Plan for information on funding of the city share.)”***

See open space comments directly above. Additional considerations regarding the Junction Pl. streetscape will be made as the project plans move forward.

- ***“Where feasible, place active uses, such as retail or commercial services on the first floor of buildings along Junction Place.”***

As discussed in the Pre-Application meeting, the applicant will be required to demonstrate that the uses proposed for the first floors of the buildings will serve to activate the streetscape as indicated in the standard above. While the architectural design of the spaces will of course have a large impact on the uses’ success at creating a lively and active streetscape, the uses themselves will also play an important role. While the proposed “potential dining” area, “potential coffee shop” and “flex space” areas shown on the plans all show promise in terms of activating the streetscape, staff recommends that the applicant consider how the first floors of the buildings could be designed with adaptability in mind such that overtime they could be used as ground floor retail rather than office. Designing the first floors of the mixed use commercial buildings for inherent flexibility will help the project meet the intent of pedestrian-oriented place-making goals of TVAP, particularly those oriented to Junction Place. In addition, seating areas should be located adjacent to active uses so that they are well-utilized.

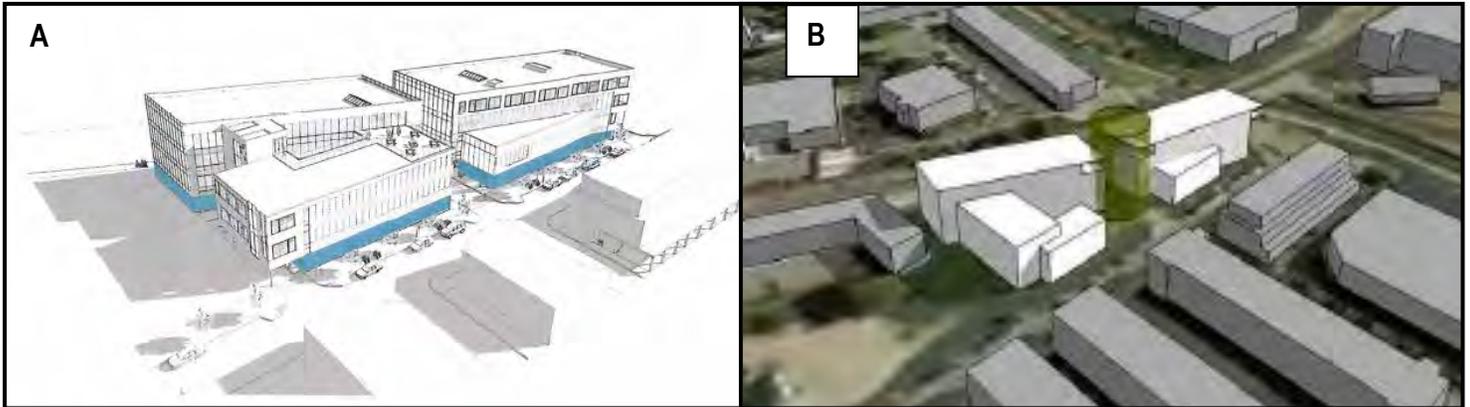
- ***“Provide way-finding features such as special pavements, signs, or art, to facilitate pedestrian movement between Junction Place, Rail Plaza, the rail platform and under/overpass, the bus station, Goose Creek Greenway, Pearl, Valmont, 30<sup>th</sup> Street and Wilderness Place. (See the Implementation Plan for funding information.)”***

The applicant has indicated special paving in the location of the central plaza/ mobility hub area. Greater detail needs to be provided as project plans progress to understand how this space will function and whether it is appropriate to treat it with special paving. Given the proposed alignment with the private drive across Junction Pl. to the west, treatment of the plaza entrance should be such that vehicular access is clearly prohibited. The way-finding features discussed above will also have to be considered as the project plans move forward.

### **1. Rail Plaza District Guidelines:**

- ***“Locate buildings along the street with parking behind.”***  
Staff notes that the proposed building designs shown in the Pre-Application (A) were more consistent

with this standard than the current submittal (B). Specifically, the Junction Place frontage of the northern building has been drawn back to the north, creating a break in the frontage that may create a somewhat awkward gap between frontages with several dead spaces and disparate sight lines (See **Figure C** for areas of concern shown in red). Staff recommends exploring ways of extending the Junction Place frontage of the northern building to the south in order to reduce the gap between the two building frontages and create more of a consistent visual pattern along Junction Place. This will also help to create a more consistent transition from the taller massing to the east to the Junction Place streetscape and smaller buildings across the street to the west. While staff is supportive of some kind of central plaza, it should be comprised of useable open spaces and amenities and should enhance rather than disrupt the visual patterning created by the two buildings.



- ***“Orient buildings to Junction Place (see Junction Place guidelines), as well as to the tracks. If feasible, place active uses on the first floor. Consider making the track-side frontage a car-free zone with pedestrian amenities.”***

The current proposal includes essentially no details on how the track-side frontages will be treated; however, as shown on the site plan the southern building would have three entrances along the tracks and the northern building would have none. While the proposed bike path is generally consistent with the adopted TVAP Connections Plan, additional details will be required regarding the treatment of the eastern frontages of the buildings as the project plans move forward to ensure that the above standard is met.

- ***“The district will evolve into a high-density, commercial and residential mixed-use area, with three- to five-story buildings.”***

While the Rail Plaza district anticipates high-intensity development and staff finds the proposed building height and massing to be generally consistent with this intent, the intent is also to provide variation in the range of building heights. Considering this, the applicant should explore ways of varying the building heights so that there is more variation between the two buildings in terms of massing along the railroad tracks, rather than a continuous 55' height as currently shown.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT AND PROCESS:**

Required public notice was given in the form of written notification mailed to all property owners within 600 feet of the subject site and a sign posted on the property for at least 10 days. All notice requirements of section 9-4-3, B.R.C. 1981 have been met. Staff has received comments from several neighbors in the Steel Yards development expressing concern over the proposed parking. Several neighbors have indicated that there is already an under-supply of parking in the area and that the proposal to provide 55 spaces for a 100,000 sq. ft. development will be insufficient and thereby exacerbate the existing parking problems. Staff recommends continuing to work closely with Parking Services staff to create a Transportation Demand Management Plan prior to Site Review submittal. Please refer to [Attachment B](#) for all correspondence received.

#### **STAFF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION:**

No action is required on behalf of the Planning Board. Public comment, staff, and Planning Board comments will be documented for the applicant's use. Concept Plan Review and comment is intended to give the applicant feedback on the proposed development plan and provide the applicant direction on submittal of the Site Review plans.

Approved By:



David Driskell, Executive Director  
Department of Community Planning and Sustainability

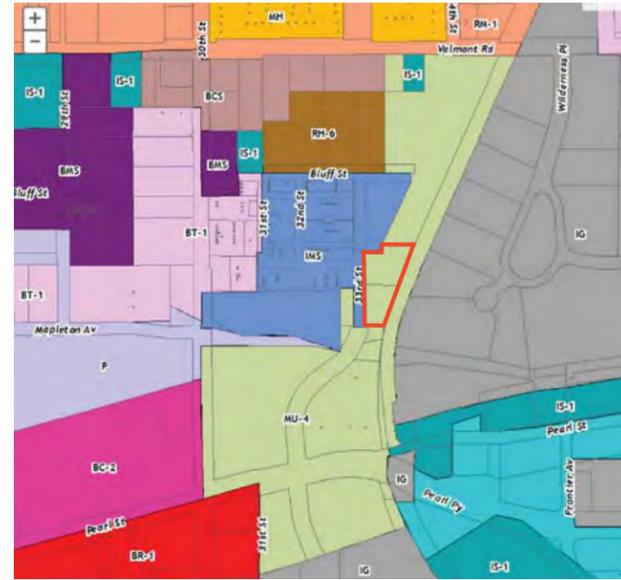
#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

- [A: Concept Plan Submittal](#)
- [B: Correspondence Received on Concept Plan](#)
- [C: Development Review Comments to Applicant](#)

# Boulder Commons: Concept Review & Comment



TVAP ZONING MAP  
SCALE: NTS



EXISTING ZONING MAP  
SCALE: NTS



VICINITY MAP  
SCALE: NTS



### Project Information

**Applicant:**  
 Coburn Development  
 3020 Carbon Place # 203  
 Boulder, Colorado  
 p: 303-442-3351  
 f: 303-447-3933

**Owner:**  
 Morgan Creek Ventures  
 3390 Valmont Road  
 Boulder, CO 80301  
 p: 303-442-9200

### Project Information:

Parcel Area:	Lot 1 (35,614 sf); Lot 2 (22,658 sf)
Current Zoning:	MU-4
Proposed Use:	Commercial
Proposed Area:	101,218 sf
Proposed FAR:	1.74

### Drawing Index

- CP-1 Project Information, Zoning & Vicinity Map
- CP-2 Context Diagram
- CP-3 Massing & Form
- CP-4 Sustainability
- CP-5 Active Public Spaces
- CP-6 Site and Floor Plans
- CP-7 Floor Plans

STEEL YARDS:  
Mixed Use Development



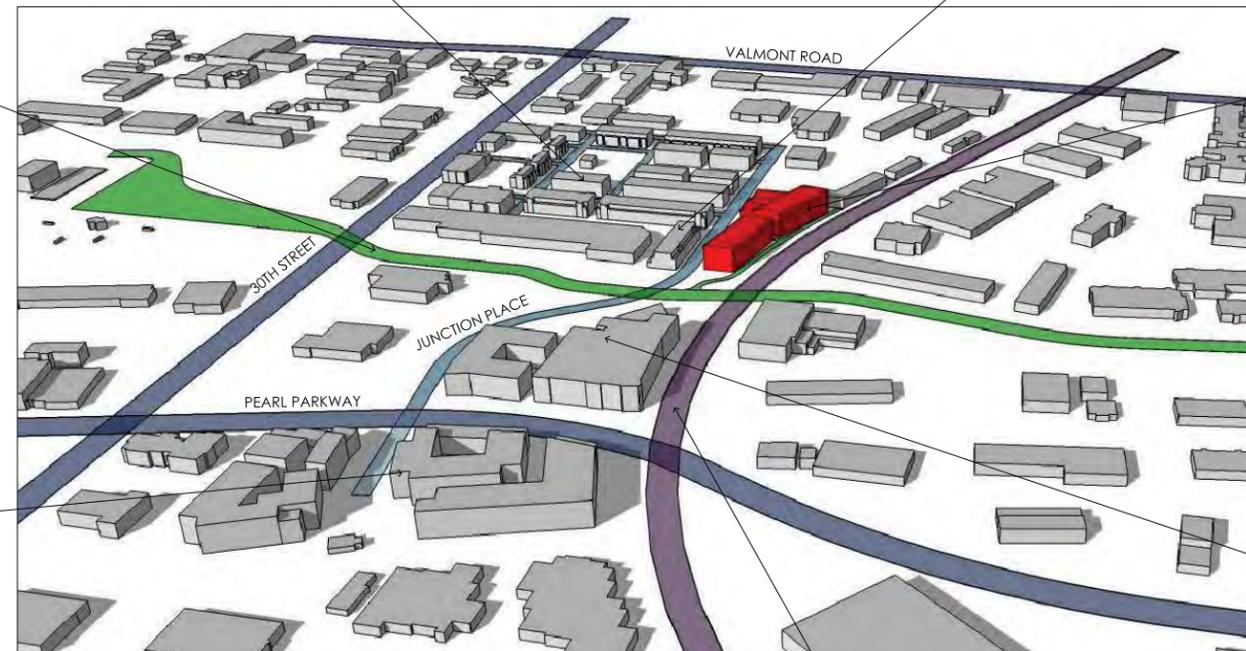
NICKEL FLATS:  
Residential



GOOSE CREEK TRAIL:



THE COMMONS:  
Commercial



CONTEXT MAP:

SOLANA:  
Residential

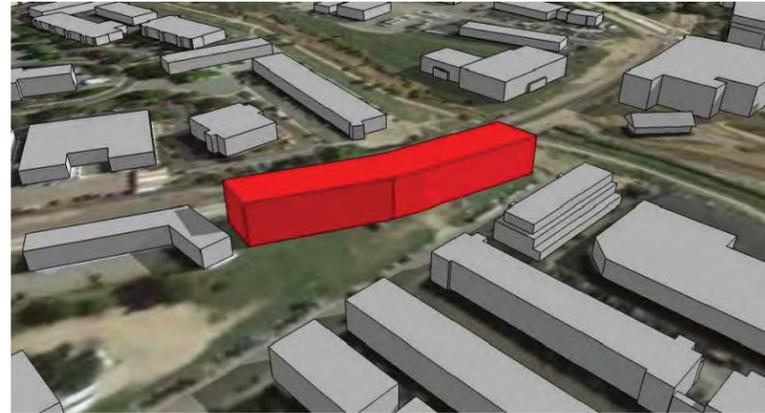


DEPOT SQAURE:  
Mixed Use Development



RAILWAY:

**MASSING AND FORM:**



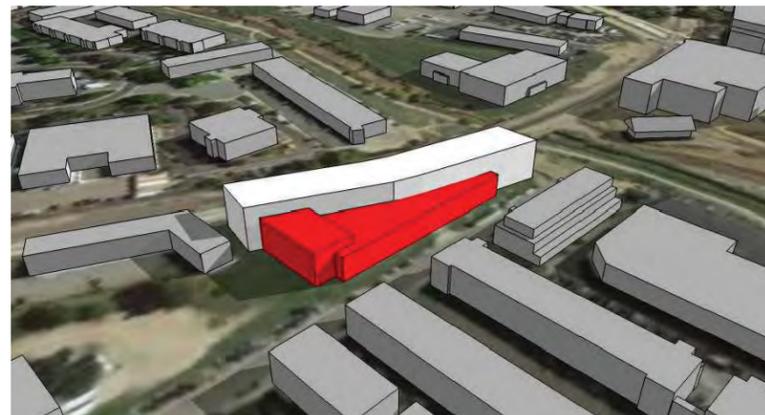
**1.) Back Bar:**  
 - Largest mass is sent against the railway to act as a buffer between tracks and Steel Yards residential  
 - Also protects Junction Place from train noise and activity



**4.) Daylighting:**  
 - The mass is further eroded to create optimal building depths for daylighting



Transportation 1: Multi-Use Path



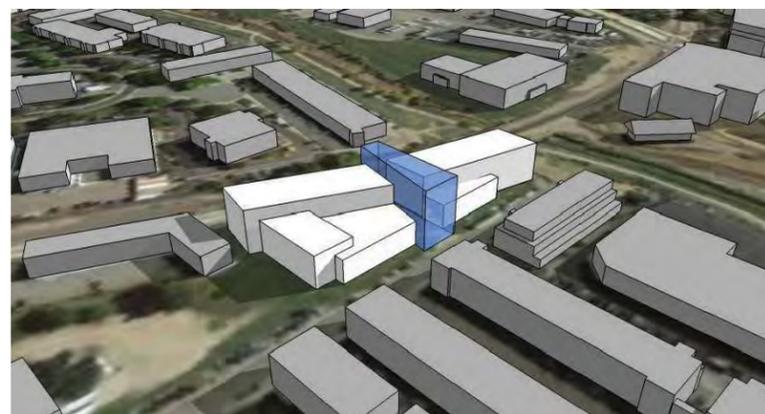
**2.) Front Bar:**  
 - Steps down to provide human scale along the street, and relate to Steel Yards



**5.) Mobility Hub:**  
 - Central point for access to B-Cycle Station, car share, future Goose Creek Trail connection, possible future light rail connection, along future bus route.



Transportation 2: Railway



**3.) Split:**  
 - Breaks mass for utility easements and pedestrian access through site to future Goose Creek Trail connection

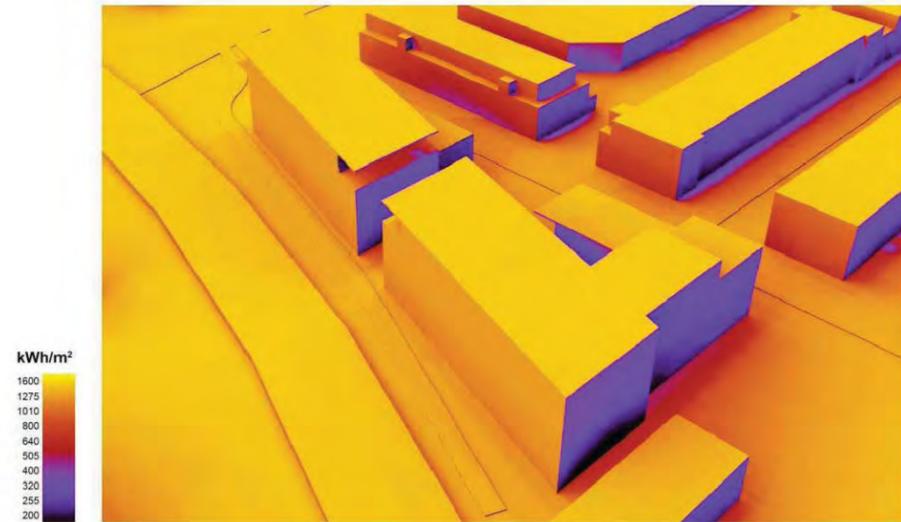


**6.) Solar:**  
 - The roofs and SE elevation of the building provide ample opportunities for pv panel location



Transportation 3: Roads (Junction Place)

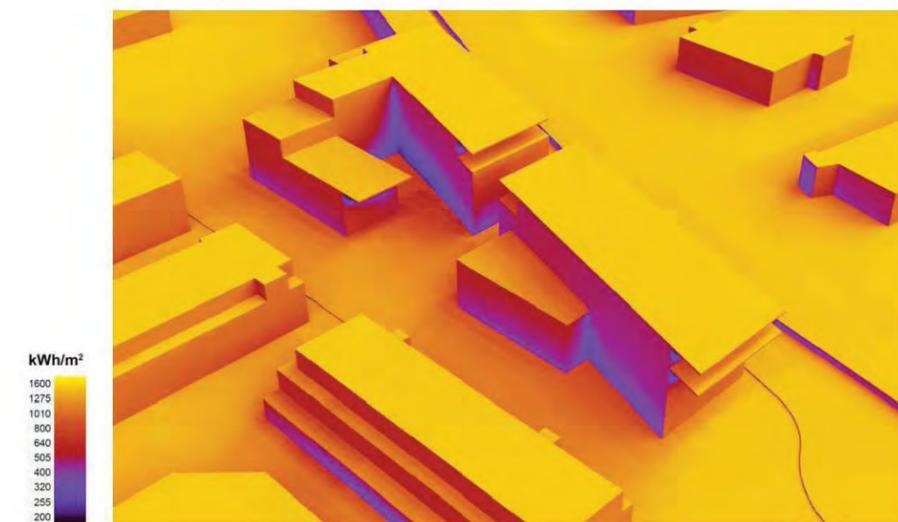
## Annual Insolation / Cumulative Radiation Falling on Surfaces



View from North East

INTEGRAL  
Revolutionary Engineering

## Annual Insolation / Cumulative Radiation Falling on Surfaces



View from South West

INTEGRAL  
Revolutionary Engineering

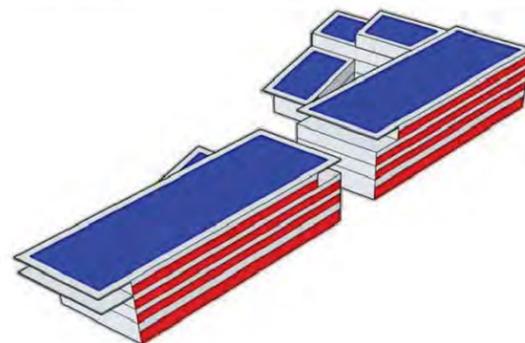
### SUSTAINABILITY:

- **Overview:** The Commons will be designed to LEED Platinum standards to create a Net Zero building.
- **Site & Building Location:** The Commons has been designed to decrease the footprint of the building and create several public plazas. This allows for the incorporation of ample open space, pervious areas, and landscaping to help decrease the heat island effect and decrease stormwater runoff. In addition, the building form and orientation were designed for daylighting and solar generation.
- **Proximity to Transit:** In addition to being connected to the future transit hub along Junction Place, The Commons development will encourage alternate modes of transportation by incorporating a B-Cycle station and car share program. The project is also located on future bus and rail lines as well as provides a connection to the multi-use path along Goose Creek.
- **Solar:** The building form lends itself to ample opportunities for solar to be provided along the roofs and southeast elevation. The location of the building against the railway ensures that solar access will always be available. The amount of solar that has potential to be generated can result in a Net Zero building.
- **Daylighting:** The building has been designed with optimum widths for daylighting and includes a light well on the northern building. Incorporating daylighting into the building will reduce the lighting load resulting in a decreased energy usage.
- **Cross Ventilation:** Incorporating cross ventilation through the building will help to decrease cooling loads.
- **Envelope & Mechanical Systems:** A tight, well insulated building envelope, coupled with an advanced, highly efficient HVAC system, will ensure the building can operate with a decreased energy load.
- **Efficient Lighting and Plumbing Fixtures:** Selecting energy efficient lighting fixtures coupled with occupancy sensors, and low flow plumbing fixtures, the building will be able to decrease its energy and water usage requirements.

### PV Results

Preliminary calculations indicate that covering 80% of the roof and 60% of the east facade with PV may support a building EUI (energy use intensity) of about 27.2 kBtu/sf-yr. These figures assume a high efficiency PV system with DC optimizer and an inverter efficiency of 96%.

Maximum PV Availability				
	% Coverage	Net PV Area (sf)	Annual Generation (Electricity, kWh)	Annual Generation (EUI, kBtu/sf-yr)
Roof	80%	21,000	579,773	20.1
Optional East Facade	60%	10,600	210,286	7.3
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>31,600</b>	<b>790,060</b>	<b>27.4</b>

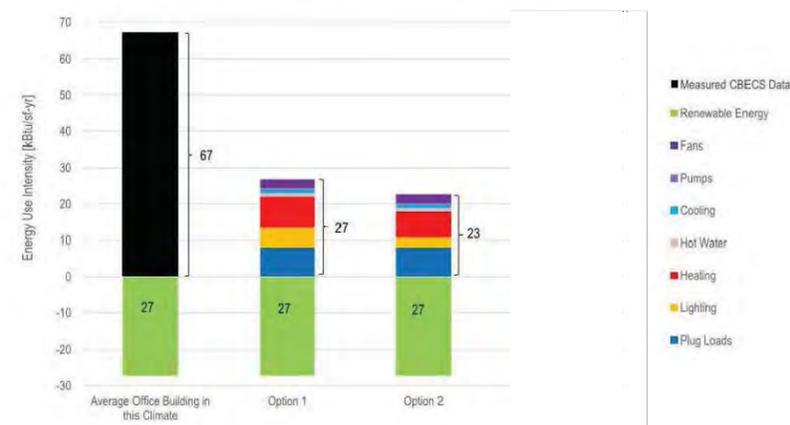


**Maximum Solar Array:**  
■ East Facade PV, 10,600 sf  
■ Rooftop PV, 21,000 sf

INTEGRAL  
Revolutionary Engineering

### Modeling Results

#### Energy Use versus PV Availability



INTEGRAL  
Revolutionary Engineering



Junction Place Looking Southwest: Nickel Flats

**ACTIVE PEDESTRIAN SPACES:**

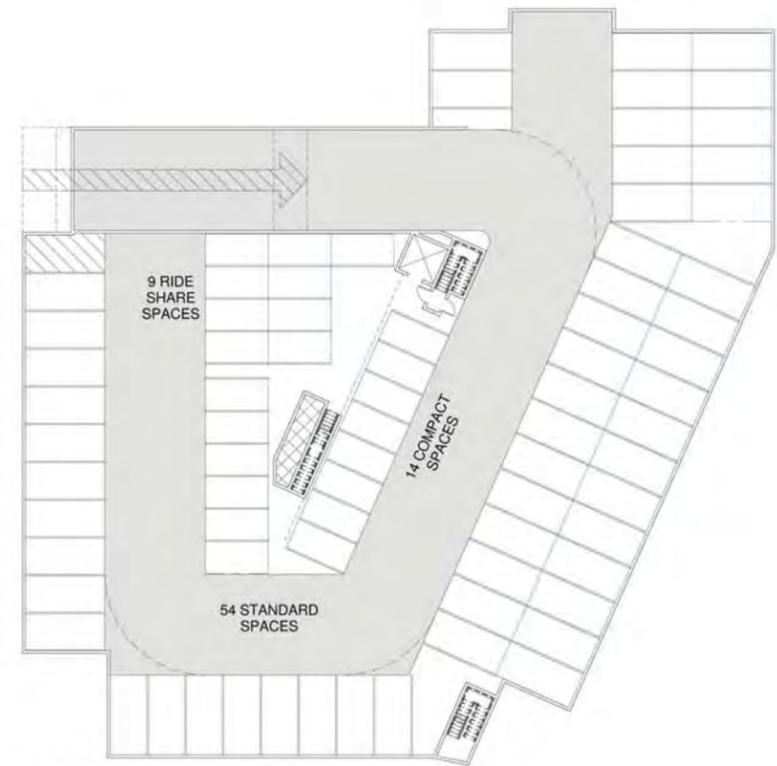
The Commons was designed around the public realm, from the ground up, with a focus on creating a complete street. The facade steps down toward the street to create an appropriate streetscape with human scale and interest. In doing this, not only does the building height relate to the three story residential building directly across the street, but is also helps to create a transition between the larger format projects to the south and the finer scale of the surrounding Steel Yards to the west and north. Pedestrian scale elements along the façade include awnings, signage, landscaping, and public plazas, that will create engaging spaces that can be enjoyed at any time of the day. In addition, several community based elements are being incorporated into the project that are accessible from the street, and will contribute to an increase in public activity along the street. These elements include a mobility hub with B-Cycle station and car share, a gallery/community gathering space, restaurant to the south, and several public plazas. The project is adjacent to several future transit connections and provides a direct connection to the multi-use path along Goose Creek, further increasing the amount of pedestrian activity along the street.



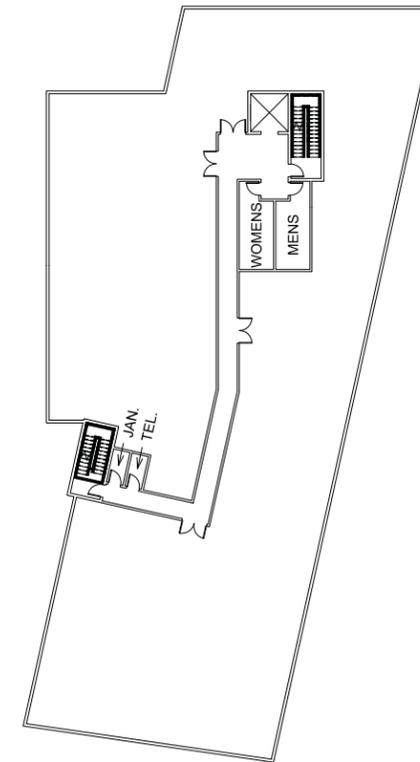
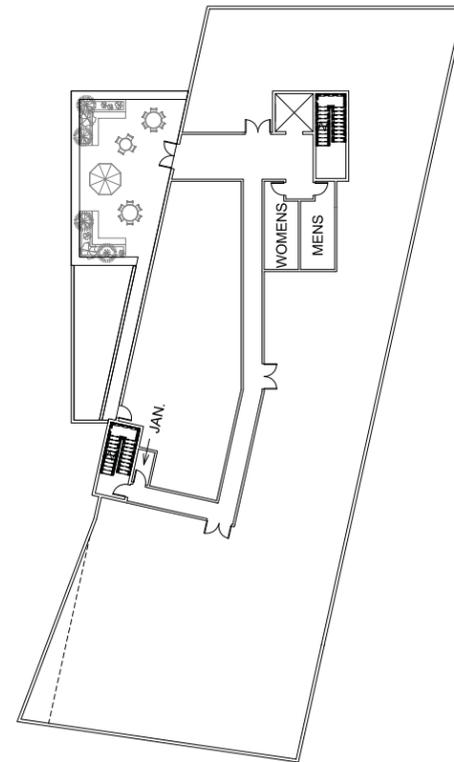
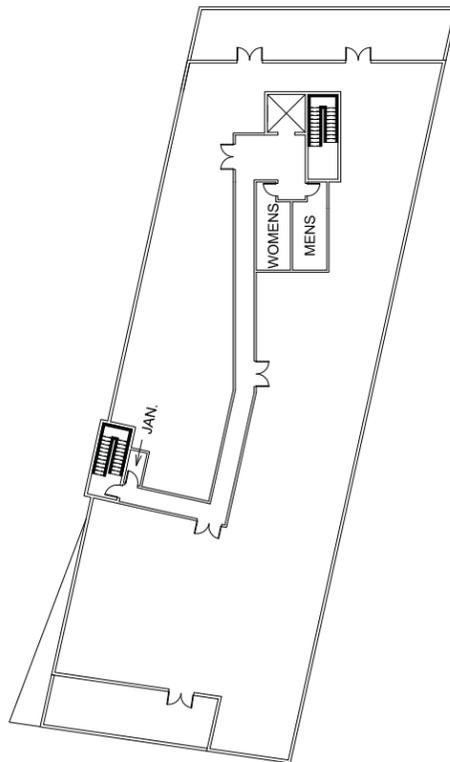
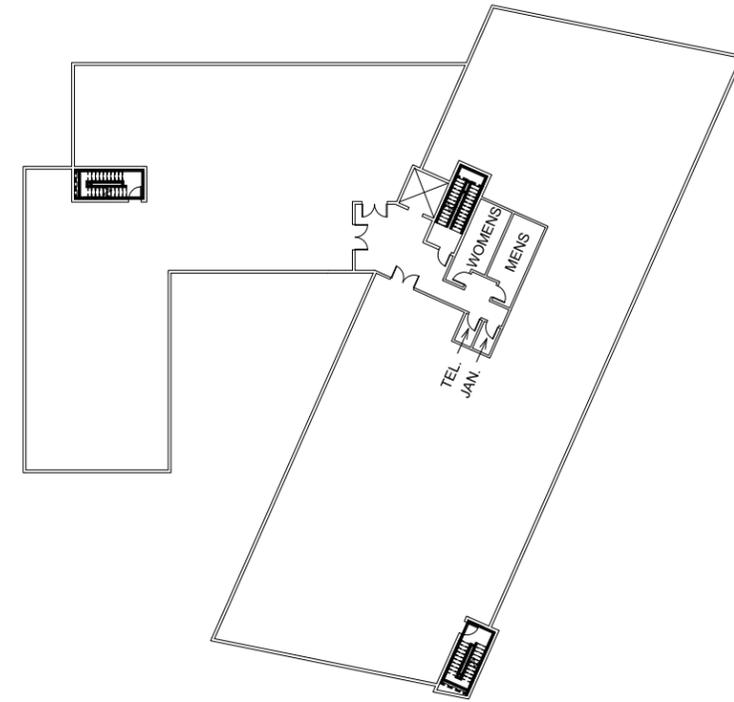
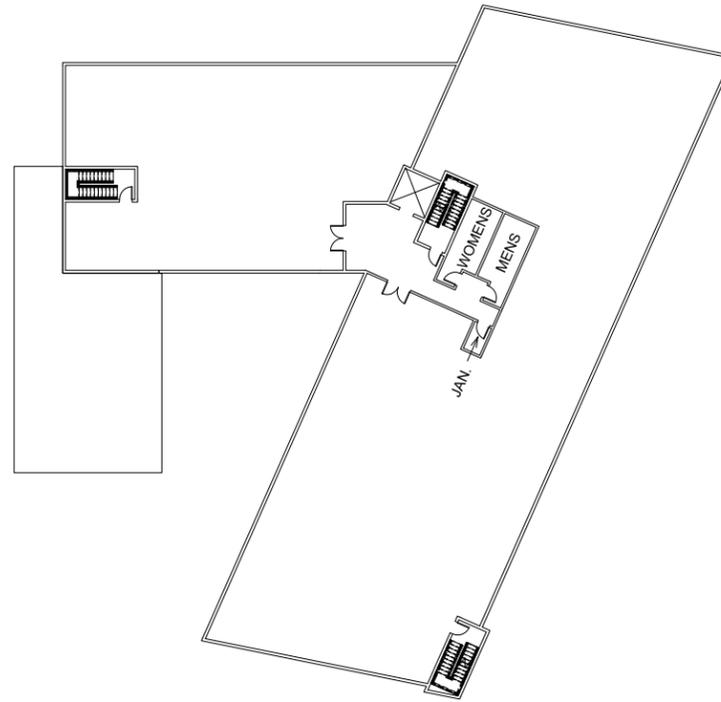
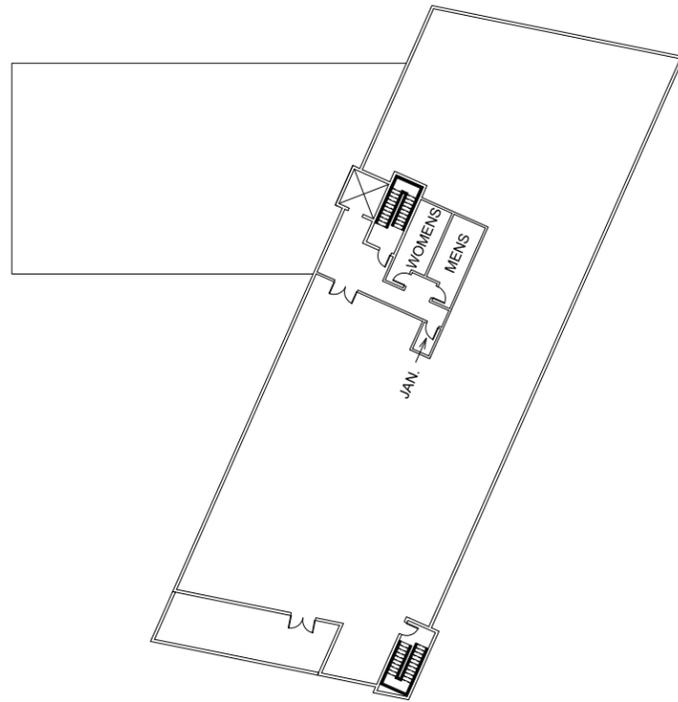
Junction Place Looking South: The Commons



Junction Place Looking North: The Commons



	NORTH	SOUTH
1ST FLR	14,861	10,938
2ND FLR	16,133	12,399
3RD FLR	14,161	12,188
4TH FLR	9,829	10,711
TOTALS PER BLDG	54,984	46,234
GRAND TOTAL	101,218	



② LEVEL 4 CONCEPTUAL FLOOR PLAN  
1" = 20'-0"



① LEVEL 3 CONCEPTUAL FLOOR PLAN  
1" = 20'-0"



③ LEVEL 2 CONCEPTUAL FLOOR PLAN  
1" = 20'-0"



THE COMMONS: CONCEPT PLAN REVIEW

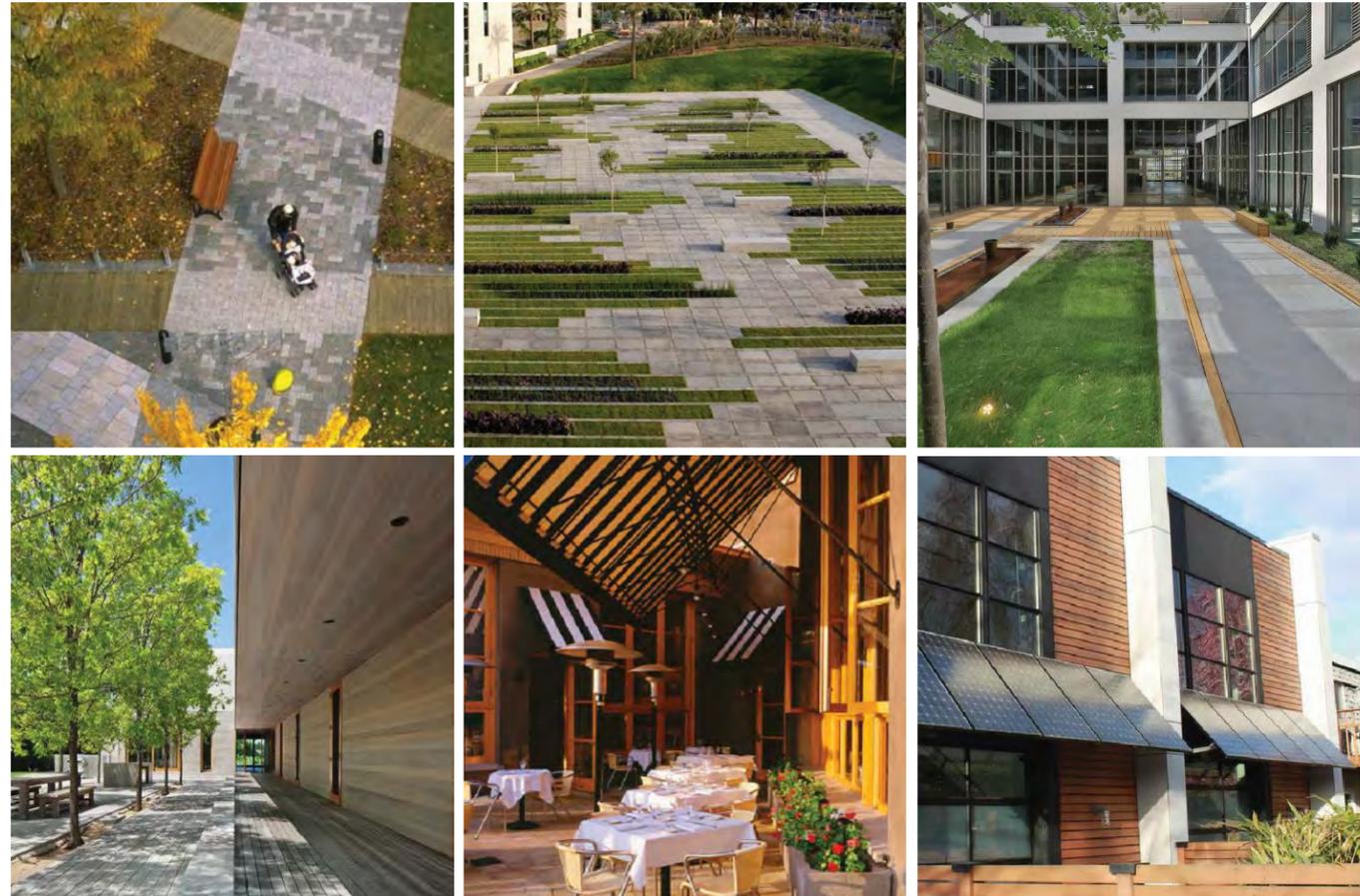
BOULDER, COLORADO

CP-7

01.20.15

Planners · Designers · Builders  
3020 Carbon Place # 203  
Boulder, CO 80301  
303-442-3351  
coburnpartners.com

LANDSCAPE/SITE AMENITIES:



BUILDING DESIGN + FORM:



THE COMMONS: CONCEPT PLAN REVIEW

BOULDER, COLORADO

CP-9

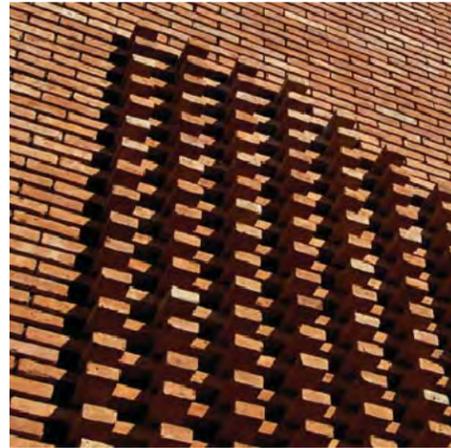
03.18.15

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3020 Carbon Place # 203  
Boulder, CO 80301  
303-442-3351  
coburnpartners.com

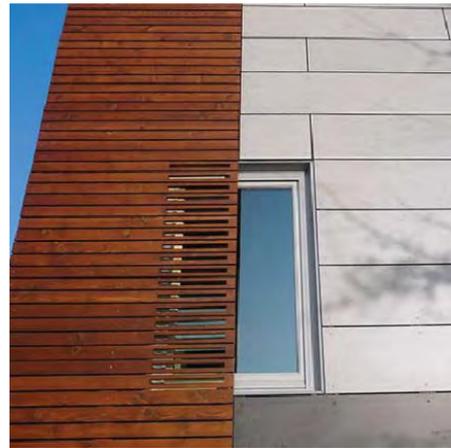
BUILDING DETAILS:



MASONRY DETAILS



WINDOW SCREENING



BUILDING DETAILS



**Van Schaack, Chandler**

---

**From:** jennifer.sorkin [jen.sorkin@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 04, 2015 3:04 PM  
**To:** Van Schaack, Chandler  
**Subject:** Steel Yards Common Project

Mr. VanSchaack,

My name is Jennifer Sorkin and I have been a homeowner and resident in the Steel Yards development since 2007. I recently received a letter in the mail about the new Commons Project located at 2440 & 2490 Junction Place. I would like to take this opportunity to communicate some concerns that I have about the proposed development. It appears that the applicant is proposing an approximately 101,000 sq. ft office/retail development with only 55 legal parking spaces. I am skeptical about how the current vacant site can support a 101,000 sq. ft. office building with as few as 55 parking spaces. Residents in the Steel Yards already have tremendous parking issues that are currently being addressed by our association. This new development can only lead to a much larger problem. The Commons Project doesn't provide enough parking to service the new buildings, which will inevitably result in new users parking in the surrounding areas (i.e., within the Steel Yards complex).

In addition, I have concerns about the traffic impact that this large of a development will have on the existing road (currently 33<sup>rd</sup> street) and other side streets within the Steel Yards. It would think that a 101,000 sq. ft. office building would require a much wider roadway to accommodate the traffic it will generate. 33<sup>rd</sup> Street is currently a very narrow road that experiences little to no traffic.

As a resident of the Steel Yards, I sincerely hope that the applicant can address both mine and my neighbors' concerns as well as those of the future users of the new site.

Thank you for your time,

Jennifer Sorkin

3200 Carbon Pl, #S-208

Boulder, CO 80301

## Van Schaack, Chandler

---

**From:** Del Kreiser [delkreiser@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 04, 2015 9:46 AM  
**To:** Van Schaack, Chandler  
**Subject:** re: The Commons Project - 2440/2490 Junction Place

Mr. Van Schaack,

My name is Del Kreiser and I am a 10+ year resident of the Steelyards neighborhood. I recently received a letter about The Commons project that will be located at 2400 and 2490 Junction Place. I am writing to you because I have concerns with the proposal that Coburn Development submitted.

- 1.) The combined square footage of the two buildings will be over 100,000sq. ft. and the plan only calls for 55 parking spaces. The lack of current parking in the Steelyards is a huge issue and this development will make it even harder for existing residents and future users to find parking.
- 2.) The proposed development will create more traffic on 33rd street and side streets within the plan. 33rd street isn't wide enough to accommodate the traffic that the new developments will generate. (When the S'park project is built in a few years, there will be even more traffic that 33rd street cannot handle.)
- 3.) I have concerns over the size of the proposed buildings too. A four story building will not fit into the aesthetics of our neighborhood. I understand that the plan will have the 4th story to be set back from the street, but I feel that the maximum height should be three stories.

My hope is that Coburn Development will incorporate minimum standards to have its project work for its future users of that site while maintaining the current lifestyle of the Steelyards.

Thank you,

Del Kreiser  
[delkreiser@gmail.com](mailto:delkreiser@gmail.com)  
720-256-7062

## Van Schaack, Chandler

---

**From:** Matthew [matthew@lg2llc.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 04, 2015 9:38 AM  
**To:** Van Schaack, Chandler  
**Subject:** RE: Commons Info

Hi Chandler –

Please do send me a copy of the initial review comments on the Concept Plan.

I'm interested to know if you are receiving comments from others that live and/or work in the Steel Yards – and what they are saying. Are you at liberty to say? Also, will the owner's association be able to send comments in after the February 6<sup>th</sup> comment period?

I'm trying to get an idea of how the city's parking district and PMAs work. I see that a parking district would be supported by an assessment and a PMA would be supported by fees in lieu of providing on-site parking. I think The Commons was considered to be a part of a parking district. Given this, they would not pay a fee for not providing on-site parking but be assessed differently. How would this lead to a relief in parking problems caused by such a large development? I think I'm missing some background ideas on how the overall system works because it's just not making sense to me. Is there someone that I can talk to that could explain this to me?

Will the April 2<sup>nd</sup> Planning Board hearing be based off of the plans identified in your letter? Or will the applicant have an opportunity to change those plans before the hearing?

Thank you.  
Matt.

MATTHEW LAWRENCE  
Manager

LG2 DEVELOPMENT LLC

3200 CARBON PLACE, SUITE S211  
BOULDER, COLORADO 80301  
**720.259.0068 [PHONE]**  
720.259.0071 [DIRECT]  
303.474.3905 [FAX]  
[MATTHEW@LG2LLC.COM](mailto:MATTHEW@LG2LLC.COM)

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**From:** Van Schaack, Chandler [mailto:VanSchaackC@bouldercolorado.gov]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 04, 2015 9:17 AM  
**To:** 'Matthew'  
**Subject:** RE: Commons Info

Thanks, Matt. I would say that even your “surface” comments are probably the most comprehensive and well-informed I have yet received, possibly ever! I encourage you to stay engaged as the process moves forward. Many of the issues you raise have also been identified by staff and will be discussed in further detail in the initial reviewer comments on the Concept Plan, which are due out this Friday. I will be happy to send you a copy. Also, note that a Planning Board hearing date has been scheduled for the Concept Plan – **April 2, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.** in City Council chambers. I encourage you to come and speak to the board directly if you have additional concerns you feel staff’s comments and memorandum do not adequately address. The memo will be posted online 2 weeks in advance of the hearing date. Thanks again for your comments and please do not hesitate to contact me with any further comments or questions.

Best,

== == == == == == == ==

**Chandler Van Schaack**

Planner I • City of Boulder

Community Planning & Sustainability

office: 303.441.3137 • fax: 303.441.3241

[vanschaackc@bouldercolorado.gov](mailto:vanschaackc@bouldercolorado.gov)

[www.bouldercolorado.gov](http://www.bouldercolorado.gov)

---

**From:** Matthew [<mailto:matthew@lg2llc.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, February 03, 2015 4:51 PM

**To:** Van Schaack, Chandler

**Subject:** RE: Commons Info

Thank you, Chandler – I appreciate you sending me the information in your email. Sorry about the delay in the response. It’s been a full few days.

As you know by our phone conversation, I have major concerns about the proposed development identified as “The Commons” at 33<sup>rd</sup> and Carbon Place, just across the street from my office. Staffs letter reinforces some of those concerns. My concerns are as follows:

- The 101,000 sq. ft. structure does not have a scaling or massing consistent with the existing Steel Yards development. As an example, according to the documents used to calculate Steel Yard Association Fees, the entire Steel Yards development consists of 93,294 sq. ft. of commercial space and 86,801 of residential space. The proposed 101,000 sq. ft. structure is larger than all of the commercial space available within the current surrounding area – all in 2 structure. The structure is also monolithic in scale – contrary to the Building Design, Livability and Relationship to the Existing or Proposed Surrounding Area standards that state:
  - Design buildings with pedestrian-scale materials and architectural articulation, particularly on the first floor. Avoid large blank walls. Along streets and sidewalks provide pedestrian interest, including transparent windows and well defined building entrances
  - Incorporate well-designed, functional open spaces with tree, quality landscaping and art, access to sunlight and places to sit comfortably. Where public parks or open space are not within close proximity, provide shared open spaces for a variety of activities.
- It does not feel that the open space provided meets the definition of usable open space found in the Boulder Revised Code or TVAP guidelines.
- The connection plan is intended to “create walkable streets in a fine grain grid pattern providing for walking, biking and possible car free zones... (and to) provide multimodal connections within the area to adjacent neighborhoods and to key nearby destination and activity areas”. The existing street structure does not do this and the proposed plans do not address the lack of such improvements.
- According to staff - the Transit Village Area Plan Transportation Demand Management program goal of 40% to 65% of work trips being made by alternate modes. If there are over 1300 work trips per workday, as illustrated from the traffic study provided by the applicant, and with a requirement of 405 parking spaces in a straight office zone per city standards, 55 legal parking spaces seems substantially lite.

- Cities such as Sacramento, that have incorporated alternative parking standards within their zoning ordinances, would require in access of 160 long term covered bike parking spaces in a project of this size to accommodate alternative modes of transportation in addition to a minimum number of parking spaces well above the numbers proposed by the applicant. If alternative modes of transportation are going to be uses then the proposed development needs to be require to provide the infrastructure to support such a concept.
- The current ROW is not build to the standards of the TVAP and the Applicant has not addressed that in the proposed plans.
- The existing curb cuts are not being considered in the proposed plans changing the way the surrounding area was initially planned.
- According to staff's comments, the City is in concept planning phase for street enhancements to Junction Place between Goose Creek and Bluff. It seems the design of the street enhancements that serve the surrounding area would govern the surrounding land use and building design. The proposed development needs to be designed in conformance with the design of the ROW which it is not.
- Per staff's comments - the proposed structure encroaches within the existing water quality pond drainage easements and following that up by stating that the applicant would need to revise water quality design for the Steel Yards development if this is to be done. Storm water quality is a major issue and should not be taken lightly.
- The proposed parking is a major problem. The traffic study provided by the applicant shows this especially with the Transit Village Area Plan Transportation Demand Management program's goal of 40% to 65% of work trips being made by alternate modes . The Steel Yards development already has parking problems both on weekend and during workdays. The proposed development would over double the amount of commercial real estate with the Steel Years while only providing 55 legal parking spaces (per the proposed plans) underground – even with known high contaminated water tables. This development has not adequately accounted for what a project of this scale requires as it relates to parking.

These are the surface concerns that I have on this project. Given the limited time to go through all of the issues that a project like this presents, I'm sure other issues can be found. I hope this provides enough information at this time.

Thanks, again.  
Matt.

MATTHEW LAWRENCE  
Manager

LG2 DEVELOPMENT LLC

3200 CARBON PLACE, SUITE S211  
BOULDER, COLORADO 80301  
**720.259.0068 [PHONE]**  
720.259.0071 [DIRECT]  
303.474.3905 [FAX]  
[MATTHEW@LG2LLC.COM](mailto:MATTHEW@LG2LLC.COM)

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**From:** Van Schaack, Chandler [<mailto:VanSchaackC@bouldercolorado.gov>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 29, 2015 4:23 PM

**To:** 'matthew@lg2llc.com'

**Subject:** Commons Info

Hi Matthew,

Thanks for speaking with me earlier. Attached is the Pre-Application response for the project site we spoke about. The Transit Village Area Plan can be found online here: <https://www-static.bouldercolorado.gov/docs/transit-village-area-plan-low-1-201305151134.pdf>. Information on Parking and Transportation Demand Management within TVAP can be found starting on pg. 47.

The Planning Board packets and audio from the S'Park and S'Park West Concept Plan hearings can be found here: <https://documents.bouldercolorado.gov/weblink8/Browse.aspx?startid=47549&row=1&dbid=0>

For S'Park, click on '2014,' then look in the folder for March 6  
For S'Park West, click on 2014, then look in the Sept. 4 folder

Thanks and please do not hesitate to contact me with any further comments or questions.

Best,

**Chandler Van Schaack**

Planner I • City of Boulder

Community Planning & Sustainability

office: 303.441.3137 • fax: 303.441.3241

[vanschaack@bouldercolorado.gov](mailto:vanschaack@bouldercolorado.gov)

[www.bouldercolorado.gov](http://www.bouldercolorado.gov)

## Van Schaack, Chandler

---

**From:** gl.dubois@ubs.com  
**Sent:** Monday, February 02, 2015 1:15 PM  
**To:** Van Schaack, Chandler  
**Subject:** Steel Yards Commons project!  
**Attachments:** Legal Disclaimer.txt

Mr. Van Schaack,

I'm a resident in the Steel Yard development that has received a letter about The Commons project located at 2440 & 2490 Junction Place. I would like to take this opportunity to voice some concerns that I have about the proposed development. It appears that the applicant is proposing an approximately 101,000 sq. ft office/retail development with only 55 legal parking spaces. I have concerns about how the current vacant site can support a 101,000 sq. ft. office building with as few as 55 parking spaces. Residents in the Steel Yards already have parking problems that are trying to be worked out by our association and this proposal can only lead to a much larger problem. This proposed development doesn't provide enough parking to service the future users leaving those users left to park in the current surrounding areas.

I also have concerns about the impact that this size of development will have on the existing road (currently 33<sup>rd</sup> street) and other side streets within the Steel Yards. It seems that a 101,000 sq. ft. office building would require much wider roadway to accommodate the traffic generated by such a development.

We all hope that the applicant can incorporate minimum standards to have its project work for its future users of that site while maintaining the current lifestyle that we enjoy at the Steel Yards.

Thank you,

Gail Dubois  
3200 Carbon Place Unit #207  
Boulder, CO 80301

## Van Schaack, Chandler

---

**From:** Steve Welsh [sfwelsh1@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 02, 2015 10:25 AM  
**To:** Van Schaack, Chandler  
**Subject:** 2440 & 2490 Junction Pl., The Commons

Chandler,

I've reviewed the proposed plan with the limited amount of information sent to me and writing to you to express my concerns about the negative impact this will have on our commercial property in Steelyards.

Primarily, I'm concerned about parking and use of the streets. This project has deviated from the allocated and suggested parking requirements, supposedly because of the offset with the future transit station. But I believe the City is being misled and allowing itself to be blinded by the problem that is currently in place. This project will make things even worse.

I'm really confused by what the City is thinking; allowing this large of a commercial project to get by with such limited requirements for their own parking. We are currently struggling with availability to park customers and employees vehicles, based on the existing requirements in place, yet the Commons has exceptions to allow a dramatic reduction of existing requirements and worse, the City will depend on the interior streets within the existing development, currently being used for parking.

Chandler, please don't let the City make another parking blunder. Note, I'm not against the development of new commercial and residential for our City, I have a problem with the Planning and Development Services Center being talked out of common sense thinking. You guys are trained and educated to design and approve projects that prevent problems from current and future development. We already have parking and traffic problems, please learn from what's in place and do something that prevents it from getting worse.

Thanks for your help and attention to this matter. Feel free to reach back to me with questions. FYI, I already left a voice message for you last week.

--

Steve Welsh  
303-931-5753

## Van Schaack, Chandler

---

**From:** Monika Chace [monikayip@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 27, 2015 7:34 AM  
**To:** Van Schaack, Chandler  
**Subject:** LUR2015-00006

Hello,

I'd like to continue to receive information about this concept plan.

I think that that area is already too dense with 3+ story buildings going up along Pearl. I object to the height modification, particularly as they are such large (60,000 and 40,000 square foot) buildings.

Hand Delivered  
1/30/15  
JL

RECEIVED

JAN 30 2015

January 30, 2015

City of Boulder  
Community Planning & Sustainability  
1739 Broadway  
Third Floor  
Boulder, Colorado 80306-0791

RE: CITIZEN COMMENT  
2440 & 2490 Junction Pl.  
The Commons

To Whom It May Concern:

Steel Yards Condominium Association is interested and concerned about the proposed Concept Plan for 'The Commons', located at 2440 & 2490 Junction Pl. (33rd St. and Carbon Pl.). Due to the extremely short turn-around time, the Steel Yards Board of Directors will be unable to actually meet and take formal action by the February 6, 2015 deadline for comment.

Steel Yards Board of Directors hereby requests a two week extension of the comment deadline to 5:00 pm on February 20, 2015.

Steel Yards Association can be contacted as follows.

Steel Yards Condominium Association

Registered Agent:

Hast & Company  
525 Canyon Boulevard  
Boulder, CO 80302  
-Phone: 303-444-7575  
-Email: [JLogan@Hast.com](mailto:JLogan@Hast.com)

Respectfully submitted,



John Logan, Property Manager

STEEL YARDS COMDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

February 18, 2015

City of Boulder  
Community Planning and Sustainability  
1739 Broadway, Third Floor  
Boulder, Colorado 80306-0791

# STEELYARDS

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RE: 2440 and 2490 Junction Place – “The Commons”

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Steel Yards Condominium Association, I am submitting these comments in response to the above referenced project. Because we cannot present a formal position of the Steel Yards Condominium Association without a vote of the property owners, this letter communicates the Board’s position. The applicant, Coburn Architects, appeared at our Board meeting on February 11, 2015 and made a useful and informative presentation. We also have had considerable contact with our members, several of whom approached the Board to express concern about this proposed project.

Our parking committee met on February 17 to discuss parking issues associated with the proposed Commons development. Members and area residents attended this meeting, at which a draft of this letter was discussed. Given the accelerated timeframe for the City’s review process, we have done all we can for now to consolidate and represent the neighborhood’s concerns. We would like to reserve the opportunity to comment further as the development review process moves along, but in general, we have no major issues with continued build-out of Steelyards or with the general design of the proposed office buildings.

However, we are greatly concerned about the amount of parking proposed by the developer. Interpretations of the site plan vary, but it appears the developer is proposing to build about 103,000 square feet of commercial space, most of which would be leased as office space, but is proposing to build only 75 parking spaces rather than the 300 to 400 in parking demand that would be generated by this development.

We were told by the developer at the February 11 Board meeting that City staff at the pre-application meeting took the position that there is too much parking shown in the plans and that perhaps there should be no new parking supplied with the project. While our members have been puzzled by this, we are familiar with the City’s plans for the Transit Village/Boulder Junction site and “transit village” area, and we understand the concept that parking demand might be reduced by the site’s proximity to the transit center.

However, it is unclear to us what transit services will be provided to Boulder Junction. As you know, transit service levels in the area today are quite low. The Bound service along 30<sup>th</sup> Street is frequent, but local. The 208 route comes within about 1,300 feet of the site along Valmont and the 206 passes through on Pearl. Both of these local routes offer half-hour service over a short service day. No regional routes currently serve either Steel Yards or Boulder Junction. Perhaps in the future some of the US 36 BRT buses would come to Boulder Junction, but the details of that or other future regional bus service levels and timing of new services are not available to us.

We understand the concept that if a high level of commuter and local transit service were directly available near the project site, the transit mode share could be high and parking demand thereby reduced, but we are unaware of any commitment from either the City or RTD that this will happen.

We also have been told that the Commons is now part of a general improvement district and would pay taxes in lieu of parking, similar to the way developers in downtown have no on-site parking requirements but must pay taxes to CAGID. The technical parking under-supply in the Commons application would be somewhere in the range of 225 to 325 spaces, depending on actual parking demand. We estimate each new structured parking space in our area costs at least \$25,000 to build, so the parking under-supply represents a cost savings/windfall of between \$5.6 million and \$8.1 million for the developer.

We assume there has been an accounting of the parking demand for the development site, the tax level that will be imposed, and the estimated amount of annual taxes the Commons owners would pay. Also, we assume there is a timeline showing how Boulder Junction parking demand will increase over time and when the new parking garages would come on line. If the new parking supply to be built by the Boulder Junction general improvement district lags the development of new buildings generating parking demand, Steelyards will bear the brunt of the parking overflow.

I believe you know that The Steelyards development is already significantly under-parked. Apparently, in project permitting years ago, the developer was allowed to take credit for new on-street supply, among other considerations. However, most of our streets are public, with the City responsible for management. We have been told the City is considering imposing paid parking on this on-street supply as a means of discouraging overflow of transit center parking into the neighborhood. While there may be an argument for doing that, this could further affect the viability of our neighborhood businesses, which have been struggling. And our members are questioning the equity of allowing Steelyards developers to under-supply parking and then responding to the parking shortage by imposing on-street paid parking on subsequent owners.

Finally, we were told on February 11 by the developer for the proposed S'PARK project, that they, too, would be relying on the Boulder Junction district parking supply. The S'PARK project appears to have been planned with proposed parking supply less than technical parking demand from land uses in the development. Our members are concerned about the City's intent for the district parking program. We understand the concepts of transit-oriented development, mode share and shared parking. But, concepts will not be enough to prevent significant financial and quality of life impacts to the property owners, residents and businesses in our neighborhood.

We have been meeting with staff of the Downtown & University Hill Management Division and Parking Services over the past year to explore potential for a Residential Parking Permit district, a Neighborhood EcoPass, and other actions to manage the problem. Our parking committee has been meeting regularly and we have spent Association money to retain a parking consultant (Walker) to help us address the issue.

We appreciate the support and assistance City staff has provided over the past year. However, it will be difficult to sell these programs to our members if there are active doubts about how well-planned the parking district is, what the timing of new parking supply will be, and what transit services will actually be provided, not to mention the equity issues, which probably have no answer.

We respectfully request answers to the following questions:

1. What tax rate will owners of the Commons pay to the Boulder Junction GID?
2. How much resulting tax revenue will that generate annually?
3. How much district parking supply will the City/district build for Boulder Junction and when will those projects be open for use?
4. Will the S'PARK development also be part of the Boulder Junction GID and will it, too, be allowed to undersupply parking as part of the City's district parking/transit concepts?
5. What mode share assumptions have been made to support the City's district parking strategy for Boulder Junction?
6. Has there been a study similar to the periodic analysis of parking demand, supply, and management prepared for CAGID and if so, could we have access to that data?
7. What regional and local transit routes will serve Boulder Junction, when will these services be implemented, and what service levels will result (frequency, hours of service, etc.)?
8. Will the US 36 BRT service reach Boulder Junction, and if so, what will the routing and service frequency be?

Thank you, in advance, for providing answers to these questions and for the opportunity to address our concerns with this proposed development.

Sincerely,



Catherine Hunziker,  
Steelyards HOA Board, President

## Van Schaack, Chandler

---

**From:** Catherine Hunziker [catherine@wishgardenherbs.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 09, 2015 7:24 PM  
**To:** Van Schaack, Chandler  
**Cc:** Catherine Hunziker; Jim Charlier; Lieb, David; Simpson, Jeremiah; Kara Csibrik; Todd Becker; Welsh, Michelle H; John Logan; Lewis Moses; Matthew Lawrence; Elijah Dudok; Michelle; Zach Lee; Gail Dubois; McLaughlin, Elaine; Bill Holicky  
**Subject:** Re: 2440 & 2490 Junction Pl. 'The Commons' - SY HOA Comments  
**Attachments:** pastedGraphic.tiff

Hello Chandler,

Thank you very much for taking the time to answer our questions. We are very appreciative!!

And thank you for the head's up about attending the public meetings and submitting our comments to RTD as well.

Best,  
Catherine

On Mar 4, 2015, at 3:30 PM, Van Schaack, Chandler <[VanSchaackC@bouldercolorado.gov](mailto:VanSchaackC@bouldercolorado.gov)> wrote:

Hi Catherine,

Please see the responses to your questions below, and do not hesitate to contact me with any additional questions or comments.

1. The tax rates for the two Boulder Junction Access Districts are as follows: Parking – 10 mils, and Travel Demand Management (TDM) – 5 mils. (Mill levy is a tax rate applied to assessed value. One mill is one dollar per \$1000 of assessed value.)
2. It is difficult to estimate the amount of taxes that the completed projects will generate since it is based on the property value of the completed project which is determined by the County Assessor; and residential properties are taxed differently than commercial properties.
3. The original projections for the parking supply provided by the district was: 100 spaces in the southern portion of the district and 100 spaces in the northern portion of the district. It was envisioned that the District would partner with other property owners and developers to provide the parking. To date, the District is a partner in the Depot Square project along with RTD, the Hyatt Hotel, the affordable housing project and the Depot which is resulting in 100 District spaces; the total garage is around 380 spaces. The District also has a parking management agreement with the other parties that they are able to have their spaces used by the district when they are not busy. For example, the hotel might not need all their spaces when their occupancy is lower or the residents of the housing might not own a car and contribute their space for general use. In the northern portion of the district, discussions are beginning with the developers of the S'Park project regarding the potential for partnerships with the district regarding parking. In the first phase, the S'Park project will designate a parcel in the southern portion of the site as a surface parking lot and we hope to reach agreement on District management of those spaces. We are also exploring the potential of the District partnering with the developer for parking in their Timber Loft project. Also, we are proposing the potential of residential parking management

possibly through a Neighborhood Parking Permit program. An unknown is the future of the city-owned, Pollard's site and how that will be developed and the potential for additional District parking on that site.

4. The S'Park development is a part of both of the Boulder Junction Access Districts. They are proposing to provide parking on-site meeting the zoning code requirements. It is important to understand that Boulder Junction was designed to be a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) with asset of the Bus Rapid Transit station as well as the amenities of bike and car share and the TDM district to provide Eco Passes and car and bike share memberships to its employees and residents.
5. The TVAP plan called for the goal of 55% to 70% of all trips, including work trips, to be made by alternative modes, and 40% to 65% of work trips made by alternative modes. This was based on creating a transit rich environment, parking management strategies, the mixed use make up of both residential and commercial uses, and the built-in TDM District programs. As the area is built out and occupied, the District will begin a program of tracking mode use. For comparison, downtown employees based on the 2014 survey, have an alternative mode share of 57% for work trips.
6. The District has commissioned several projections of development uses in order to project the types of uses that will be in Boulder Junction but has yet to have the information regarding mode use since there have yet to be completed projects. As the area is developed, built out and occupied, the District will be conducting a similar analysis to the ones prepared for downtown and hill to monitor and plan for future access demand.
7. As part of the US 36 BRT system (opening in January 2016), RTD proposes that the Boulder Junction to Civic Center (BJCC) express route will serve Boulder Junction from 4 – 9 a.m. and 3 – 6 p.m. at a 15 minute frequency. Additionally, Route 206, is proposed to be re-routed to terminate at Boulder Junction to allow riders to transfer from the BJCC Route onto the 206 to reach Flatiron Business Park. RTD is also proposing a one-seat ride from Boulder Junction to Denver International Airport, in the peak hours, at a 60 minute frequency.

In addition to the US 36 BRT services mentioned above, the current regional FLEX route from Fort Collins to Longmont will be extended to serve Boulder and will include a stop at Boulder Junction. The specific route alignment and trip times of the FLEX service to Boulder are still under development. Service is expected to begin by January 2016.

Local routes that will continue to serve the Boulder Junction area include the BOUND and HOP.

8. See above. More information on the US 36 BRT service plan can be found here <http://www.rtd-denver.com/servicechanges-us36.shtml>

Please note that RTD is in the process of revising their service plan for local/regional transit routes to serve Boulder Junction as part of the implementation of the US36 BRT service in Jan 2016. City staff is working with RTD and with the US36 corridor coalition of cities and elected officials to have improved service (local and regional) to Boulder Junction for opening day Jan 2016. There are public meetings coming up and RTD is taking public comments on their proposed service plan throughout March so it would be great if the Steelyards representatives can also make your desires know to RTD for the enhanced service and city staff will continue to do this as well.

Thanks,

=====  
**Chandler Van Schaack**

Planner I • City of Boulder

Community Planning & Sustainability

office: 303.441.3137 • fax: 303.441.3241

[vanschaack@bouldercolorado.gov](mailto:vanschaack@bouldercolorado.gov)

**From:** Catherine Hunziker [<mailto:catherine@wishgardenherbs.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 24, 2015 10:06 AM  
**To:** Van Schaack, Chandler  
**Cc:** Catherine Hunziker; Jim Charlier; Lieb, David; Simpson, Jeremiah; Kara Csibrik; Todd Becker; Welsh, Michelle H; John Logan; Lewis Moses; Matthew Lawrence; Elijah Dudok; Michelle; Zach Lee; Gail Dubois  
**Subject:** Re: 2440 & 2490 Junction Pl. 'The Commons' - SY HOA Comments

Hello Chandler,

Thank you for your note below with specifics about the process.

We have since reviewed the available materials, met with our parking committee and owners, and sought the advice of professional parking consultants. As a result I am submitting, on behalf of the Steelyards HOA Board and concerned resident owners, our formal comments regarding the proposed projects along 33rd street adjacent to Boulder Junction. This is specifically the 'Commons', as well as the S'PARK project. You will find them attached to this email.

I might also draw your attention to the questions we have, listed at the end of the comments. If you, or another professional in the department, would respond to them with more information it would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you very much for your consideration in advance.

Sincerely,  
Catherine Hunziker  
Steelyards HOA Board, pres.

On Feb 10, 2015, at 9:56 AM, Catherine Hunziker <[catherine@wishgardenherbs.com](mailto:catherine@wishgardenherbs.com)> wrote:

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Van Schaack, Chandler" <[VanSchaackC@bouldercolorado.gov](mailto:VanSchaackC@bouldercolorado.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: 2440 & 2490 Junction Pl. - 'The Commons'  
**Date:** February 5, 2015 at 7:59:13 AM MST  
**To:** 'John Logan' <[jlogan@hast.com](mailto:jlogan@hast.com)>  
**Cc:** "[catherine@wishgardenherbs.com](mailto:catherine@wishgardenherbs.com)" <[catherine@wishgardenherbs.com](mailto:catherine@wishgardenherbs.com)>, "[csibrik@hotmail.com](mailto:csibrik@hotmail.com)" <[csibrik@hotmail.com](mailto:csibrik@hotmail.com)>, Jim Charlier <[jfc@charlier.org](mailto:jfc@charlier.org)>, Todd Becker <[toddcbecker@mac.com](mailto:toddcbecker@mac.com)>, "Welsh, Michelle H" <[MWELSH@amfam.com](mailto:MWELSH@amfam.com)>

Hello John,

Thanks for following up and apologies for not replying to your inquiry sooner. The Feb. 6 deadline mentioned in the public notice is the deadline to submit comments to be included in the initial staff comments to the applicant. We cannot push this deadline back, as this date is determined by the three-week review schedule that the application review process and fee structure is based upon. However, as indicated on the public notice, staff welcomes inquiries and comments from the public throughout the review process. Any comments received after Feb. 6 will still be forwarded to the applicant as well as

the Planning Board. There will also be an opportunity to provide comments at the public hearing. Currently, the hearing has been scheduled for **April 2, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.** in the City Council chambers. Again, any comments received by this Friday will be included in the initial staff comments, and any comments received after Friday will be forwarded to the applicant independently and to the Planning Board prior to the public hearing. Email is preferred. Hopefully this alleviates some of your concerns but please do not hesitate to contact me with any additional questions or comments.

Respectfully,

=====  
=====

**Chandler Van Schaack**

*Planner I ? City of Boulder*

*Community Planning & Sustainability*

*office: 303.441.3137 ? fax: 303.441.3241*

[vanschaackc@bouldercolorado.gov](mailto:vanschaackc@bouldercolorado.gov)

[www.bouldercolorado.gov](http://www.bouldercolorado.gov)

---

**From:** John Logan [<mailto:jlogan@hast.com>]

**Sent:** Wednesday, February 04, 2015 6:29 PM

**To:** Van Schaack, Chandler

**Cc:** [catherine@wishgardenherbs.com](mailto:catherine@wishgardenherbs.com); [csibrik@hotmail.com](mailto:csibrik@hotmail.com); Jim Charlier; Todd Becker; Welsh, Michelle H

**Subject:** 2440 & 2490 Junction Pl. - 'The Commons'

Mr/s. Vanschaack,

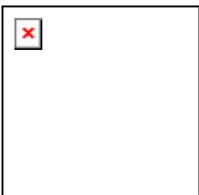
I understand you are the planner for the above reference project. Last week I delivered a letter to your office from Steel Yards Owners Association requesting an extension of the Citizen Comment Period. Attached is a copy of the letter.

We have not received a response to our letter. With the deadline approaching fast, I am reaching out for an update on the deadline extension request.

Thank you,

**John Logan, Property Manager**  
**Hast & Company**

525 Canyon Blvd.  
Boulder, CO 80302  
[jlogan@hast.com](mailto:jlogan@hast.com)



Catherine Hunziker, pres & sales  
WISHGARDEN HERBS, INC  
321 S. Taylor Ave #100  
Louisville, Co 80027  
720-629-3049 mobile  
[catherine@wishgardenherbs.com](mailto:catherine@wishgardenherbs.com)



**CITY OF BOULDER**  
**Community Planning & Sustainability**

1739 Broadway, Third Floor • P.O. Box 791, Boulder, CO 80306-0791  
 phone 303-441-1880 • fax 303-441-3241 • web www.bouldercolorado.gov

**CITY OF BOULDER**  
**LAND USE REVIEW RESULTS AND COMMENTS**

DATE OF COMMENTS: **February 6, 2015**  
 CASE MANAGER: **Chandler Van Schaack**  
 PROJECT NAME: **The Commons**  
 LOCATION: **2490 JUNCTION PL**  
 COORDINATES: **N04W03**  
 REVIEW TYPE: **Concept Plan Review & Comment**  
 REVIEW NUMBER: **LUR2015-00006**  
 APPLICANT: **MORGAN CREEK VENTURES**  
 DESCRIPTION: **Concept Plan Review: Develop Lots 1 & 2 of Block 9 in the Steel Yards Replat with two new four story commercial buildings. The northern building is approx. 55,000 sf and includes one level of underground parking. the southern building is approx. 46,000 sf.**

REQUESTED VARIATIONS FROM THE LAND USE REGULATIONS:

- ✓ Building Height (Section 9-7-5): Request to modify 38-foot permitted height to 55 feet
- ✓ Form/Bulk - Max. Size of Building (Section 9-7-1): Request to modify the maximum 15,000 square foot building size.
- ✓ Form/Bulk - Max. no. of stories (Section 9-7-1): Request to modify the maximum number of stories from 3 stories to 4 stories
- ✓ Form/Bulk – Min. Front Yard Setbacks (Section 9-7-1): Request to modify the front yard setback from 20 feet to 10 feet
- ✓ Form/Bulk – Min. Front Yard Setbacks for 3<sup>rd</sup> Stories and above (Section 9-7-1): Request to modify the 20 foot setback requirement for third stories and above

**I. REVIEW FINDINGS**

Staff acknowledges the applicant's vision for redevelopment of the property and notes it is consistent with the overall intent for TVAP to create an area that *"will evolve into a lively, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented place where people will live, work, shop and access regional transit,"* as well as with the goal to provide *"additional office uses in locations close to the future transit facilities and new residential areas."* The proposed urban configuration of buildings to street, the focus on connectivity, and the focus on sustainable building design would fulfill many of the goals and objectives of the TVAP. Staff notes that the proposed building heights and FAR are also generally consistent with the intent of the Rail Plaza character district to *"evolve into a high-density, commercial and residential mixed use area, with three- to five-story buildings"* as well as with the Mixed Use – 2 TVAP land use designation for the site which anticipates three- to four-story mixed use buildings at a FAR of 1.5 to 2.0.

While staff views the proposed concept as exciting and one that will, along with the proposed "S'Park" project to the north of the site, serve to complete a major segment of the first phase of the TVAP, there are several aspects of the current Concept Plan submittal that are inconsistent with some of the broader TVAP goals as well as some of the specific goals and objectives of the Rail Plaza District and Junction Place. These areas of concern are identified in the staff comments below.

While Concept Plan review does not require a response to these comments prior the Planning Board hearing, these comments should be considered, in combination with the discussion at Planning Board, to refine the project plans as the project moves into the Site Review phase. The Planning Board hearing is tentatively scheduled for **April 2, 2015**.

**II. CITY REQUIREMENTS**

**Access/Circulation,** David Thompson, 303-441-4417

1. In accordance with section 9-9-8 of the Boulder Revised Code, 1981 and the Transit Village Area Plan (TVAP), the Boulder Commons development project will be responsible for the dedication of right-of-way and constructing the following public improvements:

Address: 2490 JUNCTION PL

- ½ of the Junction Place (Segment 2) street cross-section
  - The east – west multi-use path between lots 1 and 2
  - The north – south multi-use path paralleling the BNSF railway right-of-way
2. Pursuant to section 9-9-8 of the Boulder Revised Code, 1981, TVAP and the City of Boulder Design and Construction Standards (DCS) the Junction Place street section must include the following cross-sectional design elements:
    - 11' Travel Lane
    - 15' combined on-street parking and landscape width
    - 10' sidewalk
    - 1' at the back of walk (where buildings are not constructed at the property/right-of-way line)
  3. Pursuant to section 2.08(D) and technical drawing 2.02.D of the DCS, the multi-use paths must be 12' wide within a 16' wide public access easement.
  4. In accordance with the DCS and at time of site plan submittal, please remove the scored (colored) concrete being shown for a section of the north-south multi-use path.
  5. The long-term and short-term off-street bicycle parking requirements must meet the minimum standards shown in Table 9-8 of the Boulder Revised Code and the applicant is encouraged to provide additional bicycle parking in support of the TVAP multi-modal goals. At time of site review, please ensure the bike parking is dispersed among the different land uses consistent with section 9-9-6(g)(3).
  6. Pursuant to the Site Access Control section of the Boulder Revised Code, staff will only support a single (shared) curb cut to serve the two lots. If the northern curb cut is identified to serve as access into the property then the curb cut will need to be shifted to the south in order to provide 20' between the diagonal parking stall and the curb cut. A traffic engineer will need to evaluate and demonstrate the proposed curb cut will not create vehicle conflicts with the left turning movements. If the southern curb cut is identified as access into the lots, staff should be consulted early to discuss design alternatives to ensure vehicles, bikes and pedestrians safely interact.
  7. Per Section 2.02(A) of the DCS, please have the traffic engineer contact staff to discuss revisions to the initial Traffic Assessment Letter in order to assess peak hour impacts at select intersections and projected daily traffic volumes on the TVAP roadway network.
  8. The Boulder Land Consultants Survey Control Diagram dated 6-30-11 for Boulder Junction must be used for the horizontal and vertical survey control and horizontal coordinate basis for the site, to allow integration with other area developments and public projects. Applicant can contact Alex May at (303) 579-9317 to obtain the data.
  9. The City is in the concept planning phase for streetscape enhancements along Junction Place between Goose Creek and Bluff which includes providing parallel parking along Junction Place. Please continue to coordinate with the City when planning the project's streetscape improvements along Junction Place.

**Building Design** Chandler Van Schaack, Case Manager

There are a number of guidelines within the Transit Village Area Plan that will be the basis of the evaluation of the proposed project, along with the Site Review criteria, as the project moves forward. The following is a cursory consistency analysis of the proposed project with the relevant TVAP Urban Design Guidelines.

**1. General Urban Design Guidelines:**

- ***“Orient the main facade to the street and provide an entrance on the street side of the building.”***

Currently the proposed site plan appears to meet this guideline, with the majority of the main entrances to the building located along Junction Pl. or from within the proposed central plaza.

- ***“Design buildings with pedestrian-scale materials and architectural articulation, particularly on the first floor. Avoid large blank walls. Along streets and sidewalks provide pedestrian interest including transparent windows and well-defined building entrances.”***

While there is currently very little detail shown on the conceptual renderings to determine the project's consistency with this guideline, staff finds that generally speaking the first floor facades appear to be moving in the right direction, and that the expansive fenestration combined with architectural elements to frame the building entries as shown on Sheet CP-5 should continue to be refined as the project plans move forward. The applicant should draw the architectural vocabulary from surrounding existing and proposed development within the area. Staff notes that the Site Review criteria also require that *"Projects are designed to a human scale and promote a safe and vibrant pedestrian experience through the location of building frontages along public streets, plazas, sidewalks and paths, and through the use of building elements, design details and landscape materials that include, without limitation, the location of entrances and windows, and the creation of transparency and activity at the pedestrian level."*

Regarding the upper floors of the proposed buildings, while again there has been very little detail provided, staff would also like to note that special consideration should be given in the Site Review submittal to ensure that the project meets the Site Review criterion requiring that *"exteriors of buildings present a sense of permanence through the use of authentic materials such as stone, brick, wood, metal or similar products and building material detailing."* Generally, stucco should be used as an accent and staff recommends that special consideration be given to fenestration details in the formulation of the Site Review submittal.

- ***"Incorporate well-designed, functional open spaces with tree, quality landscaping and art, access to sunlight and places to sit comfortably. Where public parks or open spaces are not within close proximity, provide shared open spaces for a variety of activities. Where close to parks, open spaces provided by development may be smaller."***

The current proposal includes a number of open space amenities, including the restaurant seating on the south end of the building, café seating at various points along Junction Pl., and the proposed courtyard/ "mobility hub" area between the two buildings. Additional details will be required at time of Site Review to determine how the proposed open spaces will function. In addition, staff notes that currently there is an abundance of hardscaped surfaces and a relative dearth of quality landscaping. As mentioned in the Pre-Application response for this project, the east side of Junction Pl. is currently anticipated to have parallel on-street parking with an 8 foot landscape strip and 8 foot sidewalk – the applicant should explore ways to seek more of a balance in the open space between *"sidewalk space for outdoor seating and larger planting areas"* as described in the Junction Place guidelines.

It is unclear from the current materials whether vehicular access is proposed to the mobility hub or whether it is intended to provide pedestrian access to the garage only; however, as mentioned above in the "access/ circulation" comments above, staff will not support more than one vehicular curb cut for the project and generally finds it inappropriate to allow vehicular access to usable open space areas. The applicant should also give special consideration to how open space areas will provide *"significant amounts of plant material sized in excess of the landscaping requirements of sections 9-9-12, "Landscaping and Screening Standards," and 9-9-13, "Streetscape Design Standards," B.R.C. 1981"* as required in the Site Review criteria. In addition, the proposed central plaza is somewhat awkward as currently shown. The applicant should explore ways of creating a more proportional and welcoming space that provides usable open space while contributing to the overall visual patterning of the building frontages as seen from Junction Pl. Please see analysis of "Rail Plaza District Guidelines" and "Landscaping" comments below for additional details.

## **2. Junction Place Guidelines**

- ***"In addition to the street trees, sidewalks and bike facilities specified by the Junction Place streetscape section, provide seating, planters, art, special pavement and lighting along Junction Place. (See the Implementation Plan for information on funding of the city share.)"***

See open space comments directly above. Additional considerations regarding the Junction Pl. streetscape will be made as the project plans move forward.

- ***"Where feasible, place active uses, such as retail or commercial services on the first floor of buildings along Junction Place."***

As discussed in the Pre-Application meeting, the applicant will be required to demonstrate that the uses proposed for the first floors of the buildings will serve to activate the streetscape as indicated in the standard above. While the architectural design of the spaces will of course have a large impact on the uses' success at creating a lively and active streetscape, the uses themselves will also play an important role. While the proposed "potential dining"

area, “potential coffee shop” and “flex space” areas shown on the plans all show promise in terms of activating the streetscape, staff recommends that the applicant consider how the first floors of the buildings could be designed with adaptability in mind such that overtime they could be used as ground floor retail rather than office. Designing the first floors of the mixed use commercial buildings for inherent flexibility will help the project meet the intent of pedestrian-oriented place-making goals of TVAP, particularly those oriented to Junction Place. In addition, seating areas should be located adjacent to active uses so that they are well-utilized.

- **“Provide way-finding features such as special pavements, signs, or art, to facilitate pedestrian movement between Junction Place, Rail Plaza, the rail platform and under/overpass, the bus station, Goose Creek Greenway, Pearl, Valmont, 30<sup>th</sup> Street and Wilderness Place. (See the Implementation Plan for funding information.)”**

The applicant has indicated special paving in the location of the central plaza/ mobility hub area. Greater detail needs to be provided as project plans progress to understand how this space will function and whether it is appropriate to treat it with special paving. Given the proposed alignment with the private drive across Junction Pl. to the west, treatment of the plaza entrance should be such that vehicular access is clearly prohibited. The way-finding features discussed above will also have to be considered as the project plans move forward.

### 3. Rail Plaza District Guidelines:

- **“Locate buildings along the street with parking behind.”**  
 Staff notes that the proposed building designs shown in the Pre-Application (A) were more consistent with this standard than the current submittal (B). Specifically, the Junction Place frontage of the northern building has been drawn back to the north, creating a break in the frontage that may create a somewhat awkward gap between frontages with several dead spaces and disparate sight lines (See **Figure C** for areas of concern shown in red). Staff recommends exploring ways of extending the Junction Place frontage of the northern building to the south in order to reduce the gap between the two building frontages and create more of a consistent visual pattern along Junction Place. This will also help to create a more consistent transition from the taller massing to the east to the Junction Place streetscape and smaller buildings across the street to the west. While staff is supportive of some kind of central plaza, it should be comprised of useable open spaces and amenities and should enhance rather than disrupt the visual patterning created by the two buildings.



- **“Orient buildings to Junction Place (see Junction Place guidelines), as well as to the tracks. If feasible, place active uses on the first floor. Consider making the track-side frontage a car-free zone with pedestrian amenities.”**

The current proposal includes essentially no details on how the track-side frontages will be treated; however, as shown on the site plan the southern building would have three entrances along the tracks and the northern building would have none. While the proposed bike path is generally consistent with the adopted TVAP Connections Plan, additional details will be required regarding the treatment of the eastern frontages of the buildings as the project plans move forward to ensure that the above standard is met.

- **“The district will evolve into a high-density, commercial and residential mixed-use area, with three- to five-story buildings.”**

While the Rail Plaza district anticipates high-intensity development and staff finds the proposed building height and massing to be generally consistent with this intent, the intent is also to provide variation in the range of building heights. Considering this, the applicant should explore ways of varying the building heights so that there is more variation between the two buildings in terms of massing along the railroad tracks, rather than a continuous 55' height as currently shown.

**Drainage**, Jessica Stevens, 303-441-3121

1. The proposed structures conflict within the existing water quality pond drainage easements along the eastern and southern property boundaries. The design cannot be approved in the current configuration. If the applicant wishes to consider a revised water quality design for the Steel Yards development a revised drainage report must be reviewed and approved in accordance with Section 7.13 of the *City of Boulder Design and Construction Standards (DCS)*.
2. The modified water quality design will be required to be approved and constructed prior to vacation of the existing easements. Building permits may not be issued until the easements have been vacated.
3. The project will be required to meet the detention and water quality requirements of Sections 7.12 and 7.13 of the *DCS*. The original drainage report for the Steel Yards development did not account for the southern portions of the site.

**Engineering**, Jessica Stevens, 303-441-3121

1. No portion of a structure, including footings and eaves may be located within an easement or the right-of-way. At the time of Site Review the applicant will be required to provide a Survey and a Site Plan including the location of all property lines and existing and proposed easements.
2. Based on the stair locations it appears that a portion of the parking garage may be located underneath the bicycle path. The bicycle path will be required to be located within a public access easement. No encroachments will be permitted within the easement.
3. The Level 1 Conceptual Floor Plan appears to show upper levels of the southern structure which extend over the sidewalk. The sidewalk will be required to be located within the right-of-way or an easement. Encroachments will not be permitted.
4. The applicant has proposed the building to be located within Public Service Company easements throughout the property. The easements were proposed to be vacated as a part of the utility relocation associated with the Nickel Flats project. Please provide City staff with recorded documents for the vacation of the previous easement and dedication of the new easements.
5. The applicant has proposed a below grade parking structure for the project. Recent developments within the immediate vicinity of the project have encountered shallow groundwater which contains contaminants in excess of allowable discharge limits. As a requirement of Site Review the applicant will be required to provide a geotechnical report indicating the depth of groundwater and a groundwater quality report. The applicant will be required to design an acceptable means of water treatment and discharge prior to Site Review approval.
6. The doors along the western side of the southern building appear to swing over the sidewalk. Doors will not be permitted to swing into the right-of-way or easements.

7. Per Section 8-5-13 of the *Boulder Revised Code, 1981 (BRC)*, no person shall excavate an area in the pavement of a public street for a period of 3 years from completion of resurfacing, except in compliance with said section. The applicant is advised that the Junction Place was reconstructed in 2014.

#### **Fees**

Because revisions or corrections are not required for this application, based on 2015 development review fees, hourly billing will not be applicable unless another application is required or the applicant revises the current proposal.

#### **Landscaping** Elizabeth Lokocz, 303-441-3138

The most important aspect of the proposed project's potential landscape is the streetscape and directly connected private open space. Please refer to the other reviewer comments, in particular Access for dimensional standards and Building Design for applicable guidelines. The rendered perspectives included in the submittal show a significant amount of landscaping in the right of way which is not illustrated on the site plan. Coordinate all images that will be transmitted to Planning Board to ensure accurate and constructive comments. The required eight foot planting strip shall have large maturing street trees unless a specific conflict is identified. Low water plant selections are preferable to the turf illustrated.

#### **Neighborhood Comments** Chandler Van Schaack, Case Manager

Staff has received comments from several neighbors in the Steel Yards development expressing concern over the proposed parking. Several neighbors have indicated that there is already an under-supply of parking in the area and that the proposal to provide 55 spaces for a 100,000 sq. ft. development will be insufficient and thereby exacerbate the existing parking problems. Staff recommends continuing to work closely with Parking Services staff to create a Transportation Demand Management Plan prior to Site Review submittal. The applicant may also wish to contact the Steel Yards Homeowner's Association in order to provide information on the proposed TDM strategies directly to the concerned parties. Several comments have also expressed concern over the proposed building height.

#### **Parking** David Thompson, Transportation

Parking Services is interested in discussing the feasibility of sharing the proposed garage. Please contact Kurt Matthews with Parking Services at [matthewsk@bouldercolorado.gov](mailto:matthewsk@bouldercolorado.gov) or 303-413-7320 to discuss options or to set up a meeting with staff.

#### **Plan Documents** Chandler Van Schaack, Case Manager

Staff finds that the current application provides little in the way of architectural intent. The applicant may wish to provide precedent images or additional character sketches prior to the Planning Board hearing if they wish to receive constructive feedback on the architecture of the project.

#### **Review Process** Chandler Van Schaack, Case Manager

Per section 9-2-14(b)(1), B.R.C. 1981, Concept Plan and Site Review are required for projects located in the MU-4 zone district that are over 3 acres in size or include over 50,000 square feet of floor area. Therefore, development of the 1.33-acre site with 100,000 sq. ft. of floor area requires both a Concept Plan and Site Review. Per section 9-2-13(b), B.R.C. 1981, an applicant for a development that exceeds the "Site Review Required" thresholds shall complete the concept review process prior to submitting an application for site review.

Once the Planning Board has reviewed a Concept Plan application and provided comments at a public hearing as required by section 9-2-13(f), B.R.C. 1981, the city council may call up the application within 30 days of the board's review. Any application that it calls up, the city council will review at a public meeting within sixty days of the call-up vote or within such other time as the manager or council and the applicant mutually agree. Following the final review of the Concept Plan, a Site Review will be required. The Site Review application form can be found online at: <http://www.bouldercolorado.gov/www/publications/forms/208.pdf>. Please note that a request for a Height Modification to allow for the proposed buildings to exceed the 35' height limitation will require Planning Board approval at a public hearing. Also note that on January 20, 2015, city council approved an ordinance that would limit heights in certain areas of the city; however, the Transit Village Subarea has been exempted from the proposed height limitations. Second reading of the ordinance is scheduled for February 26, 2015.

Applications for Site Review are submitted to the Planning and Development Services Center and are reviewed through the Land Use Review process. This review process takes approximately three to four months to complete. Site Review approvals are valid for three years, after which they expire if they have not been implemented. Staff notes that if either of the proposed buildings or the below-grade parking structure would cross the existing property line that a Lot Line Elimination would be required as a condition of Site Review approval.

#### **Utilities**, Jessica Stevens, 303-441-3121

Address: 2490 JUNCTION PL

Fire hydrants will be required to provide fire protection in accordance with the fire access requirements of Section 5.10 of the DCS.

### III. INFORMATIONAL COMMENTS

None at this time.

### IV. NEXT STEPS

A Planning Board hearing for this application has been scheduled for **April 2, 2015**.

### V. CITY CODE CRITERIA CHECKLIST

See attached checklist(s).

- 1. Characteristics of the site and surrounding areas, including, without limitation, its location, surrounding neighborhoods, development and architecture, any known natural features of the site including, without limitation, mature trees, watercourses, hills, depressions, steep slopes and prominent views to and from the site;**

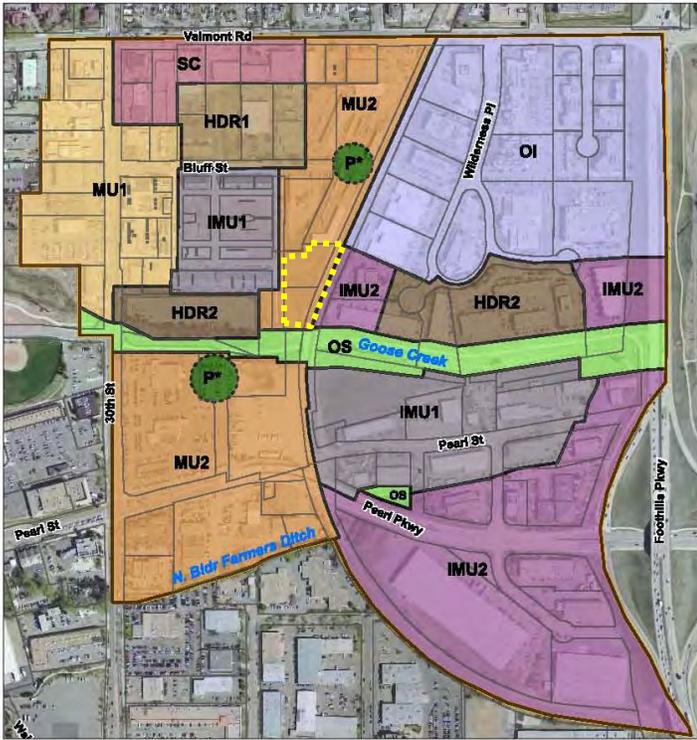
*The 1.33-acre project site is located on the east side of the Steel Yards development, abutting the railroad just south of the intersection of Junction Pl. and Bluff St. The site is comprised of two parcels, both of which are currently undeveloped. Surrounding uses include the new Nickel Flats residential building immediately across Junction Pl. and the mixed residential and live-work Steelyards development further to the west; the former Sutherlands site (currently under review for the S'Park development) immediately to the north, and mixed office and light industrial uses to the east across the railroad tracks. The Goose Creek Greenway runs just south of the site, with the mixed use Depot Square development and residential Solana development abutting the west side of the railroad tracks further to the south. The context map shown on the following page illustrates the surroundings.*

- 2. Community policy considerations including, without limitation, the review process and likely conformity of the proposed development with the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan and other ordinances, goals, policies, and plans, including, without limitation, subcommunity and subarea plans;**

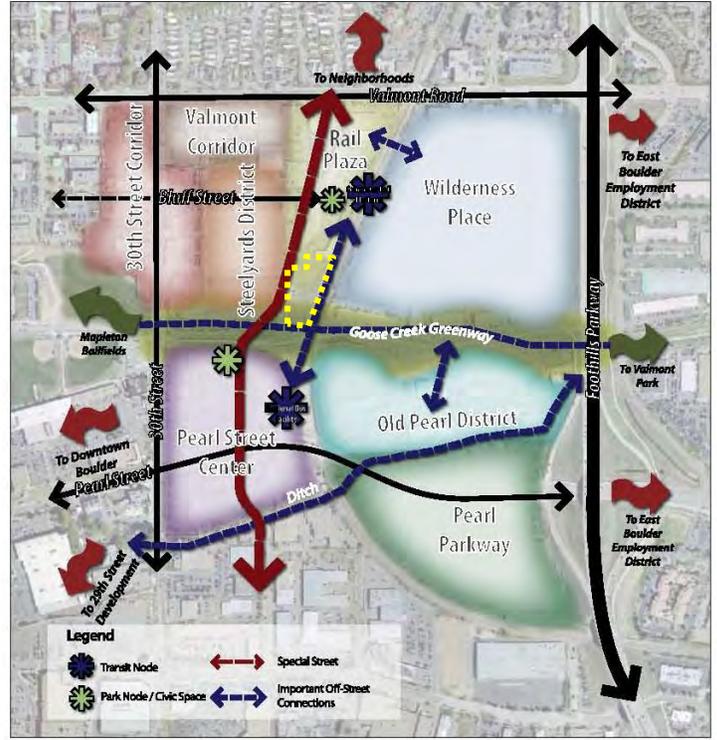
*The site is within the Transit Village Area Plan (TVAP), which is intended to be a more focused plan that provides guidance to implement the goals and policies within the BVCP. As such, consistency with the goals, objectives, and guidelines of TVAP is required with some opportunities for modifications delineated herein prior to application for Site Review.*

*The subject area is included in TVAP as part of the "Rail Plaza District." As noted on page 23 of TVAP, this is the area that ultimately, "will host the Boulder stop on the new commuter rail service to Denver and Longmont." The intent of the district is further defined, "The district will evolve into a high-density, commercial and residential mixed use area, with three- to five-story buildings." Within TVAP, the land use designation for the site is MU-2 or Mixed Use -2, which anticipates three- to four-story mixed use buildings at a FAR of 1.5 to 2.0. See **Figures 1 and 2** below for the TVSAP Land Use and Character Districts Maps, and **Figure 3** for a description of the MU-2 Land Use designation with precedent development images.*

**Land Use Plan**



**Character Districts**



**Mixed Use -2- 1.5 - 2.0 Floor Area\***

Three- to four-story mixed-use buildings. Predominant use may be business or residential. Mostly structured or first-floor parking; may have some surface parking.

**3. Applicable criteria, review procedures, and submission requirements for a site review;**

See individual comments above that cite specific applicable criteria under TVAP. Once the Planning Board has reviewed a Concept Plan application and provided comments at a public hearing as required by section 9-2-13(f), B.R.C. 1981, the city council may call up the application within 30 days of the board's review. Any application that it calls up, the city council will review at a public meeting within sixty days of the call-up vote or within such other time as the manager or council and the applicant mutually agree. Following the final review of the Concept Plan, the applicant will be required to submit for a Site Review. Use Review may be required for certain uses as well, particularly those that have outdoor seating for restaurants. In addition, as mentioned above, depending on the ultimate site configuration, a Lot Line Elimination may also be required following Site Review.

**4. Permits that may need to be obtained and processes that may need to be completed prior to, concurrent with, or subsequent to site review approval;**

Following Rezoning and Site Review approval, the applicant is required to submit an application for Technical Document (TEC doc) Review prior to application for building permit. The intent in the TEC doc review is to ensure that technical details are resolved such as drainage and transportation issues that may require supplemental analyses.

5. **Opportunities and constraints in relation to the transportation system, including, without limitation, access, linkage, signalization, signage, and circulation, existing transportation system capacity problems serving the requirements of the transportation master plan, possible trail links, and the possible need for a traffic or transportation study;**

*A connections plan was also adopted for TVAP that includes a number of connections through the site. Equally as important as Land Use, the connections plan is intended to “create walkable streets in a fine grain grid pattern, providing for walking, biking and possible car free zones...(and to) Provide multimodal connections within the area to adjacent neighborhoods and to key nearby destinations and activity areas.”*

*The full text of the connections plan is found beginning on page 56 of TVAP. As shown on the connections plan, a multi-use path is anticipated along the west side of the tracks to access the rail platform, as well as a connecting E-W multi-use path generally along the lot line between the two parcels. The applicant would be responsible for dedicating the right-of-way / easement and constructing the multi-use paths and pedestrian connection.*

6. **Environmental opportunities and constraints including, without limitation, the identification of wetlands, important view corridors, floodplains and other natural hazards, wildlife corridors, endangered and protected species and habitats, the need for further biological inventories of the site and at what point in the process the information will be necessary;**

*There are very few trees and no known special status plant or animal species located on the site. As project plans progress to Site Review, an existing tree inventory will need to be prepared by a certified arborist as part of the application materials.*

7. **Appropriate ranges of land uses;**

*Staff finds the proposal to redevelop the property as primarily office uses with the potential for retail or flex space along with a potential restaurant and coffee shop and to be generally consistent with the overall intent for TVAP to create an area that “will evolve into a lively, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented place where people will live, work, shop and access regional transit,” as well as with the goal to provide “additional office uses in locations close to the future transit facilities and new residential areas.” As mentioned above, staff recommends that the applicant consider how the first floors of the buildings could be designed with adaptability in mind such that overtime they could be used as ground floor retail rather than office.*

8. **The appropriateness of or necessity for housing.**

*Not applicable, as no housing is proposed.*