

III.Land Use Map Descriptions

The Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map provides a sketch plan of the desired land use pattern in the Boulder Valley. Land use categories include residential, business, industrial, public/semi-public, open space, and park use. The map also shows the location and functional classification of roads. The following descriptions are meant to be used in interpreting the map.

Land Use

Residential Land Use and Densities

Residential land use areas on the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan, for the most part, reflect the existing land use pattern or current zoning for an area. The highest density areas are generally located close to the University of Colorado or in areas planned for transit oriented redevelopment. Medium density areas are generally situated near community shopping areas or along some of the major arterials of the city. Mixed density areas surround the downtown and are located in some areas planned for new development. Lower density areas in the older section of the city consist predominantly of single-family detached structures. Many of the areas developed in the city and the county over the last 30 years are characterized by a mixture of housing types ranging from single-family detached to cluster and patio homes, townhouses and apartments. A variety of housing types will continue to be encouraged in developing areas during the planning period of the Comprehensive Plan.

Residential densities under the Comprehensive Plan range from very low density (two units or less per acre); low density (two to six units per acre); medium density (six to 14 units per acre); to high density (more than 14 units per acre). It is assumed that variations of the densities on a small area basis may occur within any particular classification, but an average density will be maintained for that classification.

Additionally, in older downtown neighborhoods that were developed with single family homes but for a time were zoned for higher densities, a variety of housing types and densities are found within a single block. The city's goal is to preserve current neighborhood character and mix of housing types, and not exacerbate traffic and parking problems. Some new housing units may be added. The average density in the downtown neighborhoods designated mixed density is in the medium density range (six to 14 units per acre). The mixed density designation is also applied in some areas planned for new development where the goal is to provide a substantial amount of affordable housing in mixed density neighborhoods that have a variety of housing types and densities. The density in the mixed density designation in newly developing areas is from six to 18 units per acre.

The manufactured housing designation is applied to existing mobile home parks. The intent of the designation is to preserve the affordable housing provided by the existing mobile home parks.

Within certain residential areas, there is also the potential for limited small neighborhood shopping facilities, offices or services through special review.

Mixed Use-Residential development may be deemed appropriate and will be encouraged in some residential areas. These areas may be designated Mixed Use-Residential. In these areas, residential character will predominate, although neighborhood scale retail and personal service

uses will be allowed. Specific zoning and other regulations will be adopted which define the desired intensity, mix, location and design characteristics of these uses.

Business Land Use and Intensity

Within the Boulder Valley there are five categories of business land use, based on the intensity of development and the particular needs of the residents living in each subcommunity. The five categories are: Regional, Community, General, Transitional and Mixed Use-Business.

The two major Regional Business areas of the Boulder Valley are the Downtown and the Crossroads Area. Within these areas are located the major shopping facilities, offices, financial institutions, and government and cultural facilities serving the entire Boulder Valley and neighboring communities. These areas will continue to be refurbished and upgraded and will remain the dominant focus for major business activities in the region.

A Community Business area is the focal point for commercial activity serving a subcommunity or a collection of neighborhoods. These are designated to serve the daily convenience shopping and service needs of the local populations and are generally less than 150,000 to 200,000 square feet in area. Offices within the Community Business areas should be offices designated specifically for residents of the subcommunity. Where feasible, multiple uses will be encouraged within these centers.

The General Business areas are located, for the most part, at junctions of major arterials of the city where intensive commercial uses exist. The plan proposes that these areas continue to be used without expanding the strip character already established.

The Transitional Business designation is shown along certain major streets. These are areas usually zoned for less intensive business uses than in the General Business areas, and they often provide a transition to residential areas.

Mixed Use-Business development may be deemed appropriate and will be encouraged in some business areas. These areas may be designated Mixed Use-Business where business or residential character will predominate. Housing and public uses supporting housing will be encouraged and may be required. Specific zoning and other regulations will be adopted which define the desired intensity, mix, location and design characteristics of these uses.

Service Commercial areas provide a wide range of community and regional retail and service uses generally not accommodated in core commercial areas and which generally require automotive access for customer convenience and the servicing of vehicles.

Industrial Land Use and Intensity

The Comprehensive Plan projects four classifications of industrial use within the Boulder Valley: General, Community, Light, and Mixed Use-Industrial.

The General Industrial classification is shown where the more intensive and heavy industries are located or planned.

The Community Industrial classification is shown for those areas where the predominant uses provide a direct service to the planning area. These uses often have ancillary commercial activity and are essential to the life of the Boulder community. These uses include smaller scale auto-

related uses, small printing operations, building contractors, building supply warehouses, small manufacturing operations and similar uses.

The industrial uses considered as ‘Light’ on the Comprehensive Plan are primarily research and development, light manufacturing, large scale printing and publishing, electronics, or other intensive employment uses. These uses are concentrated primarily in ‘industrial parks’ located within the Gunbarrel area along the Longmont Diagonal, and along Arapahoe Avenue between 33rd and 55th streets.

Mixed Use-Industrial development may be deemed appropriate and will be encouraged in some industrial areas where industrial character will predominate. Housing compatible with and appropriate to the industrial character will be encouraged and may be required. Neighborhood retail and service uses may be allowed. Specific zoning and other regulations will be adopted which define the desired intensity, mix, location and design characteristics of these uses.

Public/Semi-Public Land Use Designations

Public/Semi-Public land use designations encompass a wide range of public and private non-profit uses that provide a community service. This category includes municipal and public utility services such as the municipal airport, water reservoirs, and water and wastewater treatment plants. Public/Semi-Public also includes: educational facilities, including public and private schools and the university; government offices such as city and county buildings, libraries, and the jail; government laboratories; and nonprofit facilities such as cemeteries, churches, hospitals, retirement complexes and may include other uses as allowed by zoning.

Agriculture Land Use Designation

An Agriculture land use designation identifies land in the Service Area that is planned to remain in agricultural use. Uses that are auxiliary to agriculture, such as a home, a barn and outbuildings and the incidental sales of farm or horticultural products are expected on land with this designation. Given the urban nature of Boulder, the designation will be used rarely.

Environmental Preservation

The Environmental Preservation designation includes private lands in Areas I and II with environmental values that the city and county would like to preserve through a variety of preservation methods including but not limited to intergovernmental agreements, dedications, development restrictions, rezonings, acquisitions, and density transfers.

Natural Ecosystem Overlay

In order to encourage environmental preservation, a Natural Ecosystem overlay is applied over Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designations throughout the Boulder Valley Planning Area. Natural ecosystems are defined as areas that support native plants and animals or possess important ecological, biological or geological values that represent the rich natural history of the Boulder Valley. The Natural Ecosystems overlay also identifies connections and buffers that are important for sustaining biological diversity and viable habitats for native species, for protecting the ecological health of certain natural systems, and to buffer potential impacts from adjacent land uses.

A Natural Ecosystems overlay will not necessarily preclude development or human use of a particular area or supersede any other land use designation but will serve to identify certain

environmental issues in the area. The overlay will serve to guide the city and the county in decisions about public acquisition, purchase of development rights or conservation easements, promotion of private land conservation practices, density transfers, rezonings, development review, annexations and initial zonings, rezonings, service area boundary changes, and subcommunity and departmental master planning.

A description of the criteria used to identify lands suitable for a Natural Ecosystems designation can be found in the environmental resources element of the plan on the web at: www.bouldervalleycompplan.net.

Open Space and Parks

Open Space

Open Space designations on the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Map include the following three categories of land:

Open Space - Acquired: Land already acquired by the city or Boulder County for open space purposes;

Open Space - Development Restrictions: Privately owned land with conservation easements or other development restrictions; and

Open Space - Other: Other public and private land designated prior to 1981 that the city and county would like to preserve through various preservation methods including but not limited to intergovernmental agreements, dedications or acquisitions.

Open Space designations are not intended to limit acquisition, but to be indicative of the broad goals of the program. Other property that meets Open Space purposes and functions should be considered and may be acquired. Open Space designations indicate that the long-term use of the land is planned to serve one or more open space functions. However, Open Space designations may not reflect the current use of the land while in private ownership.

Urban and Other Parks

Urban and Other Parks includes public lands used for a variety of active and passive recreational purposes. Urban parks provided by the city include pocket parks, neighborhood parks, community parks and city parks as defined in the *Parks and Recreation Master Plan*. The specific characteristics of each park depend on the type of park, size, topography and neighborhood preferences. Neighborhood parks typically provide a children's playground, picnic facilities, benches, walkways, landscaped areas and multi-use open grass areas. Other park uses may include recreational facilities such as basketball or tennis courts, community gardens and natural areas. There are three community park sites (Harlow Platts, East Boulder and Foothills) that are fully or partially developed. Large multi-use city parks are planned for two locations: 1) the Valmont Park site and 2) the Area III - Planning Reserve site, which will be held to meet future recreational needs. The Boulder Reservoir is a regional park that provides opportunities for fishing, swimming, boating, picnicking, etc. Other public recreational facilities, including city recreation centers, a golf course, swimming pools, ballfields, and the Eldorado Canyon State Park are also included in this category.