



## Chapter 1: Vision, Goals and Objectives

### A Neighborhood and a Destination

The Transit Village area will evolve into a lively, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented place where people will live, work, shop and access regional transit. It will become a new neighborhood as well as an attractive destination for the larger city, with regional transit and public spaces that will benefit the entire Boulder community.

The new bus and rail services will take Boulder residents to the Denver metro area for jobs and entertainment and to the airport, and likewise will bring people from the metro area to Boulder. New housing in the Transit Village area will provide the opportunity for people to live close to jobs, services, entertainment, transit, bikeways, a new park and a civic plaza. The area may become a desirable place to live for people employed in Boulder, people seeking affordable housing, seniors, and anyone who wants to reduce or eliminate automobile use.

### Urban Character

The area's present low-density, automobile-oriented environment will gradually transform into a higher-density, more urban environment. Most new buildings will range in height from two to four stories, and many will have a mixture of different uses. Variety in building styles and sizes is preferred and will most likely occur if properties are developed individually, rather than assembled. Much of the new parking will be in structures, underground or tucked under the first floor of buildings. This will create a more attractive streetscape and pleasant pedestrian environment. A fine-grained transportation network, including new streets, alleys and paths, will be built as redevelopment occurs.

### Alternative Transportation

To reduce the traffic impacts of higher-density development and capitalize on the new transit services, the city will work with property owners and businesses to institute a comprehensive Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program for the area. Similar to the Downtown and the University of Colorado campus today, program incentives and managed, paid parking will encourage area residents, employees and shoppers to choose transit, walking, bicycling, ride-sharing and telecommuting over driving. The TDM program, combined with improved transit services, better pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and a more pedestrian-oriented environment, will make it easy and inviting to get to and around the area without a car. This will enable residents and workers to reduce their household transportation costs.

### Diverse Housing

New development in the area is expected to be predominately residential, both as stand-alone residential development and as mixed-use development. New housing will provide an opportunity for workers who currently commute into Boulder to live in Boulder. Approximately 1,400 to 2,400 new residential units will be built, adding 2,800 to 5,000 residents

### Vision

At the outset of the Transit Village area planning process, the City Council and Planning Board adopted the following vision to provide direction for the development of the plan.

The Transit Village area will be:

- A lively and engaging place with a diversity of uses, including employment, retail, arts and entertainment, with housing that serves a diversity of ages, incomes, and ethnicities.
- A place that is not overly planned, with a "charming chaos" that exhibits a variety of building sizes, styles, and densities where not everything looks the same.
- A place with both city-wide and neighborhood-scale public spaces.
- A place that attracts and engages a broad spectrum of the community, not just people who live and work here or come to access the transit in the area.
- A place that emphasizes and provides for alternative energy, sustainability, walking, biking and possible car-free areas, e.g. "eco-village."



The vision for the area is a lively, pedestrian-oriented place.



*“Growing overall demand for transit-oriented development is a reflection of converging demographic trends, as well as changing housing preferences. The types of households that tend to seek out transit-oriented development -- singles, couples without children, the elderly and low-income minority households -- also are the types of households that are projected to grow the most in the Denver region over the next 25 years. Consumers are choosing smaller, more compact housing in neighborhoods where shops and services are within walking distance and where high-quality transit service is a viable alternative to driving.”*

*- Dena Belzer, President of Strategic Economics*



Neighborhood retail with cafe seating creates a rich streetscape.



A mixed-use development in Seattle takes advantage of an adjacent creek path.

and creating a new neighborhood. (Prior to the area plan, an additional 300 housing units and 600 new residents were projected. See Appendix 5 for more information.) Homes will be offered in a range of sizes and prices to appeal to a range of lifestyles, ages, ethnicities and abilities. In order to promote a diverse Transit Village area population and help achieve the city’s overall housing goals, the city will offer an incentive for developers in select zones to provide more permanently affordable housing than required. Land that the city owns in the southwest corner of the area will be developed with a higher percentage of affordable housing. All housing will be within walking or biking distance of the regional bus or commuter rail service. The combination of affordable housing and lower-cost transportation options may create a more economically diverse population in the area. It also may support a more diverse employment base for the city, as more Boulder service workers may be able to reside in the Transit Village area.

### **New Retail and Jobs**

Area retail will serve both community-wide and neighborhood needs. The most likely location for larger stores and retailers is along 30th Street and near the 30th and Pearl streets intersection. They would complement the stores located at Twenty Ninth Street. Neighborhood-serving retailers will tend to be in more interior, but also highly visible locations, and will be interwoven with new housing and offices.

New office and industrial space will be developed throughout the area, creating approximately 2,900 to 4,300 new jobs, depending on the density and type of space actually built in the mixed-use zones. (Prior to the area plan, 2,900 additional jobs were projected.) Workers will be well-positioned to access these jobs using the new regional transit services, bike facilities and local buses that will circulate frequently through the area.

The existing Service Commercial and Service Industrial uses (for example, automobile repair and services, personal services and small-scale manufacturing) currently distinguish this part of the city and serve essential, everyday needs of residents and businesses throughout the city. Since these uses will likely be displaced in much of the area as higher density redevelopment elevates land prices and lease rates, the plan identifies some areas where zoning would seek to preserve these uses.

### **Inviting Public Spaces**

The city will strive to design public spaces to appeal to a broad spectrum of the population. A new civic plaza will be located near the rail stop at the end of Bluff Street, and it will be visited and enjoyed by the entire Boulder community. A new pocket park south of Goose Creek on the west side of the railroad tracks will primarily serve residents and employees in this area. The historic Union Pacific/ Boulder Jaycees train depot will be relocated from Crossroad Commons to the Transit Village area and become a unique community attraction.

A new north-south street will connect the bus facility with the rail platform and plaza and serve as a spine for the area. Junction Place will be designed primarily for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users, and have a special, amenity-rich character. Both the Goose Creek Greenway and a new multi-use path along North Boulder Farmer’s Ditch will provide key, off-street, grade-separated pedestrian/ bicycle access to and through the area.



## **Plan Goals & Objectives**

At the outset of the Transit Village area planning process, the City Council and Planning Board adopted the following goals and objectives to provide direction for the development of the plan.

**1. Create a well-used and well-loved, pedestrian-oriented place** of enduring value that serves all of Boulder, by including:

- a. Places with special character that signal that you are in Boulder and not just “Anywhere, USA” and that are exciting enough to draw people from the larger area—not just the people who will be here to use transit.
- b. A mixture of uses, including housing, to enliven the area.
- c. Sufficient amount of housing to create neighborhoods
- d. Engaging, convenient and safe pedestrian and bike connections within the area, to surrounding neighborhoods, and to key nearby destinations such as downtown, Twenty Ninth Street, the university, Valmont Park and other employment centers.
- e. Active, walkable streets in a fine-grain grid pattern in the hub area, major multimodal connections within the larger boundary area, and connections from the larger area to adjacent areas and key activity centers.
- f. A variety of community gathering spaces at different scales—from a central focus or “heart” that’s for the community as a whole and connects to the transit functions—to civic spaces that are designed and scaled for neighborhoods within the area.

**2. Support diversity** through land use and travel options that expand opportunities for employees and residents of differing incomes, ethnicities, ages and abilities by including:

- a. A variety of housing types at a range of prices from market rate to affordable (including housing for very low, low, moderate and middle income households) to meet diverse needs (workforce housing, senior housing, family housing, housing for special populations such as those with disabilities).
- b. Services that support residents, adjacent neighbors and businesses.
- c. Support for the locally owned and minority owned businesses in the area.
- d. Public spaces to celebrate diverse ethnicity.
- e. Space for nonprofit organizations.
- f. Affordable spaces for retail, office and service industrial uses.

**3. Enhance economic vitality:** Increase economic activity for businesses, increase revenues for the city of Boulder, reduce transportation costs and expand travel options for residents and employees, including:

- a. Neighborhood-serving retail uses, and regional retail uses that complement the large investment of the Twenty Ninth Street project.
- b. Convenient and safe connections to downtown and to Twenty Ninth Street.
- c. Additional office uses in locations close to the future transit facilities and new residential areas.
- d. The development of a realistic plan including implementation techniques for public/ private partnerships.

**4. Connect to the natural and built environment:**

Create a place that reflects Boulder’s commitment to environmental sustainability and “green” development is integrated with the natural features in the area and connects to the larger city fabric, including:

- a. Innovative “green” energy efficient site planning, architecture and urban design.
- b. An overall stormwater management plan for the area in lieu of property by property stormwater detention.
- c. Connections to existing natural amenities such as the Goose Creek greenway, the Boulder Slough (ditch) and Boulder Creek.
- d. Taking advantage of views and view sheds from key locations.

**5. Maximize the community benefit of the transit investment:**

Locate homes and employment to maximize access to local and regional bus service, future commuter rail and bus rapid transit, and to allow for a pedestrian-oriented lifestyle, including:

- a. Improving the balance of jobs and housing in the community through new mixed-use neighborhoods in areas close to multiple transit facilities.
- b. Managed parking strategies; reduced parking requirements in the hub; transportation demand management strategies.
- c. Multimodal access and mobility within the area and to the rest of Boulder.
- d. Lively and engaging commuter rail and regional bus locations.

**6. Create a plan that will adapt to and be resilient for Boulder’s long-term future,** including:

- a. Building in flexibility and allowing for serendipity and changes in use over time.
- b. Providing for increased density in targeted locations.