# CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO  
**MIXED-USE ZONING & STREET STANDARDS**

**DIAGNOSIS OF EXISTING CODES & POLICIES**

December 2001

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MIXED-USE ZONING & STREET STANDARDS
DIAGNOSIS OF EXISTING CODES & POLICIES
December 2001

I. INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

In August 2001, Colorado Springs retained Clarion Associates, teamed with Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, LSA Associates, and ThermoRetec, to help the city implement the Comprehensive Plan’s vision of mixed-use activity centers that are compatible, convenient, and attractive. The team is specifically charged with identifying and making changes to the city’s zoning and subdivision codes, as well as to the city’s street standards, to encourage and promote the development of mixed-uses as the new, preferred pattern of development.

This Diagnosis document is a written analysis of the city’s land development codes and land development policy documents and manuals. It identifies: (1) strengths and weaknesses in those documents in light of achieving the Comprehensive Plan’s mixed use goals; (2) preliminary recommendations for changes that the city might consider; and (3) areas where future study and analysis may be needed.

This Diagnosis is based on the Clarion team’s review of pertinent documents including the Comprehensive Plan, zoning and subdivision codes, and subdivision policy manuals; on extensive interviews with 44 different stakeholders identified by city staff; and on the consultant team’s national experience and research on this issue, including field work studying good and bad examples of mixed-use development. In addition, this Diagnosis builds on the consultants’ recently completed Character Analysis of twelve centers in Colorado Springs, which resulted in a derivation of 19 general principles to guide the design and form of future mixed-use development in the city.¹

This Diagnosis is an important first step to frame threshold issues and establish the city’s preferred direction relating to code and policy changes. The Clarion team will present this Diagnosis, together with the precedent Character Analysis document, for discussion of key issues with the City Council, Planning Commission, and project Task Force, at a joint work session on December 10, 2001. The next steps after the Diagnosis will be to draft a

¹ This Character Analysis was an important exercise for the consultants to understand typical commercial center development patterns in Colorado Springs, as compared to the Comprehensive Plan’s vision of integrated mixed uses. The analysis involved a critical look at land uses, intensity of development, site layout and building design, context and transitions, and transportation/circulation for twelve different centers located throughout the city. From this analysis, the Clarion team derived 19 guiding principles that serve to focus the discussion of potential regulatory changes to enable more mixed-use development in the city. The Character Analysis document has been delivered to the city as a separate document from this Diagnosis, but they should be read together as complementary and supporting pieces of the analysis and diagnosis stage of this project.
detailed, annotated outline of proposed zoning, subdivision, and street standards changes, after which the consultant team will draft new and revised standards and guidelines consistent with the city’s final directions.

In Section II that follows, the planning and policy basis for this project is described briefly to put this Diagnosis document in context. In Section III, regulatory and policy barriers to mixed-use development are identified and discussed, and preliminary ideas for revised zone districts, development and transportation standards, and design guidelines are suggested for the city's consideration. In Section IV, the Diagnosis presents a variety of zoning mechanisms that the city will need to consider in order to apply the mixed-use regulations suggested in Section III, and Section V follows with a description of the city planning staff’s recommended implementation approach. Finally, Section VI concludes with a brief discussion of the next steps to follow and identifies subject areas beyond the scope of this project that the city may consider for further study and action.
II. **Planning and Policy Basis for This Project**

A. **The 2001 Comprehensive Plan: A New Prototype for Land Development**

In March 2001, Colorado Springs adopted a new Comprehensive Plan ("Plan") to guide future land development in the city for the next 20 years. A hallmark of the new Plan is its emphasis on a new development prototype for growth in the city. The Plan’s Objective LU 3 sums up this new prototype: “Develop a mix of interdependent, compatible, and mutually supportive land uses.” More specifically, this new prototype is characterized by strong residential neighborhoods that are integrated and connected to a variety of different-scaled activity centers servicing the city’s commercial and employment demands. The Plan specifically recommends the development of five different types of activity center, as follows:

1. **Neighborhood Centers**, which provide shopping and service amenities to an immediately adjacent residential neighborhood.
2. **Community Activity Centers**, which provide shopping and services to multiple, adjacent residential neighborhoods.
3. **Commercial Centers**, which provide shopping and services to multiple residential areas and which also serve some community-wide commercial needs.
4. **Employment Centers**, which provide employment opportunities to the larger community, as well as supporting shopping and services.
5. **Regional Activity Centers**, which provide a combination of employment and commercial services to the entire city and the greater metro area.

A mixture of land uses, rather than segregation of uses, characterize the five different activity centers described in the Plan. Residential uses are intended to be an important part of that mix in order to provide a greater choice of housing types in the city. The intent of focusing much of the city’s forecast commercial and employment growth into activity centers is to encourage more efficient consumption of land, strengthen the quality of development’s visual character and appearance, and create opportunities for travel modes that reduce dependence on the automobile. This last point is also an important policy shift for Colorado Springs: The Plan places strong emphasis on recognizing the interrelationship between land use and transportation decisions, and seeks to better coordinate the two fronts to enable a future land use pattern that provides city residents with a full range of transportation choices—walking, biking, transit, as well as the automobile.

A summary of the 2001 Plan’s key land use objectives, policies, and strategies related to fostering mixed-use development as a new, preferred development pattern in Colorado Springs, is set forth in Appendix A to this document.

B. **Implementing the Plan’s Vision and Goals**

As noted in the Comprehensive Plan’s final chapter, “[I]n order for the Comprehensive Plan to be a useful and relevant document, it must be implemented.” In terms of implementing Plan Objective LU 3, “Develop a mix of interdependent, compatible, and
mutually supportive land uses,” the key challenge for the city is how to move from current patterns of development to the preferred Plan prototype of mixed-use and multi-modal activity centers.²

In the city’s newer and developing areas, contemporary patterns of land use are dominated by single-use developments that are not well connected, internally or externally, to other complementary uses. These parts of the city contain many examples of missed opportunities to integrate and better mix complementary land uses. The MCI campus, for example, is a vibrant employment center located among some of the city’s newest neighborhoods, but employees living as close as across the street would find it a challenge to walk to MCI’s front door because of the lack of public sidewalks, safe arterial street crossings, and on-site pedestrian ways. Another example is the Cheyenne Mountain Center, where “Tinseltown” is located. This commercial center contains a healthy mix of commercial, service, and entertainment uses, and which residents state offers convenient “one-stop” shopping. However, “one-stop” is actually several stops—and all taken in an automobile—in order to access the multiple uses that are separated by large expanses of parking lots, with barely a pedestrian way in sight.

In the city’s older and established neighborhoods, land use patterns were largely etched in pre-zoning times, when a grid street pattern created walkable blocks, and incremental, small-scale development slowly filled these areas with a mix of housing types and densities, and commercial service areas. The city’s downtown also contains a vibrant mix of office, retail, and civic/institutional uses. All the interviewees we talked to pointed to these areas as their favorite areas, or models, that new development should study and duplicate, wherever possible. But new, infill development in these older and established areas is not without problems

² It is important to understand that the code changes discussed in this Diagnosis are not intended to totally preclude future development of single-purpose land uses. As the Comprehensive Plan explains in Policy LU 801, there will always be a need and demand for such uses, including large, single employer campuses, or uses with environmental, industrial, or operational constraints that limit their ability to locate within a mixed-use center. However, even with these single-use developments, the Plan aims to encourage their location in close proximity to a complementary mix of uses in activity centers.
either, even when adding to the mix of existing uses. Awkward building and use transitions between new and existing development is one problem we observed; accommodating enough parking on smaller parcels to comply with current-day requirements is another.

Why are the development patterns we described above so prevalent? While there are several reasons, an important one is that they are the models or prototypes that the city has codified in its minimum zoning and subdivision standards. Developers are very familiar with these models and have created systems that churn them out fairly predictably. Thus, developing to this model is the path of least resistance for an individual developer. A developer seeking to do a mixed-use or other innovative development under the current land development rules, as evidenced by the few mixed-use projects in the city, must apply for multiple variances, modifications, and waivers of existing standards. This effort means more time in the development review process and considerably more money and resources spent before even a single spade of dirt is turned. In the end, the result is apparent from much of the city’s built landscape: individual development decisions that make good business sense given the city’s current regulatory requirements, and which—bottom line—tend to succeed in the marketplace. But, at a community and city scale, the cumulative result is a development pattern that wanders far from the Comprehensive Plan’s vision of more mixed and integrated land uses and neighborhoods, less traffic congestion, and a more walkable and connected city.

One way to address the above challenge is to revise the city’s land development codes, and develop new standards, guidelines, and incentives that enable mixed-use development as a viable option to conventional development patterns. The Comprehensive Plan specifically recommends targeted changes to the city’s zoning and subdivision regulations that may include any of the following:

- New and revised zone districts (e.g., new mixed-use zones).
- New and revised types of uses (e.g., new “center” uses).
- New and revised development standards (e.g., parking, setbacks, density and intensity of development).
- Revised transportation standards (e.g., vehicle circulation and access, pedestrian/bike circulation and access, public street and streetscape design, accommodation of public transit).
- Process streamlining, where possible, for mixed-use development.
- Revisions to building and other safety codes (e.g., remove unintended barriers to mixing residential and commercial uses in a single building).
- Regulatory incentives for mixed-use development (e.g., modification of parking requirements, density bonus, or procedural streamlining).
III. REGULATORY & POLICY BARRIERS TO MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT

A. Mixed Use Guiding Principles

From our Character Analysis of existing and potential center development in Colorado Springs, and based on the stakeholder interviews and our collective national experiences, the consultants have derived a set of 19 principles to guide the future development and design of mixed-use centers in the city. These principles are, for the most part, common sense and intuitive. Most will ring familiar to residents who list the Downtown, Old Colorado City, and other mature, established areas within the city as their favorite places to visit, shop, and walk. These principles attempt to capture the underpinning elements of what makes these favorite places work so well, and recast them as realistic objectives to apply to new development.

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<tr>
<th>General Subject Area</th>
<th>Guiding Principles</th>
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<td>Land Uses &amp; Zoning Districts</td>
<td>1. Provide a range of commercial and residential uses in mixed-use activity centers that are suited to the needs of the surrounding neighborhoods and potential users.</td>
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<td>2. Include a variety of housing choices within activity centers, and in surrounding neighborhoods. Infill and redevelopment with a mix of commercial and residential uses may be possible in some existing centers.</td>
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<td>3. Mix retail, restaurants, personal service, offices and housing in activity centers within walking distance of one-another.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intensity of Development</td>
<td>4. Integrate various land uses in close horizontal or vertical proximity to achieve higher intensities of use and vitality.</td>
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<td>5. Share parking and service functions wherever possible. Compact, mixed land uses, coupled with a safe and amenable pedestrian environment will support increased use of alternate modes – transit, bicycles and walking.</td>
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<td>Building &amp; Development</td>
<td>6. Strive for an urban character in activity centers, with buildings directly facing streets, active and inviting ground floor uses, other uses above, parking at the rear or side of buildings, blocks of development divided by frequent local streets.</td>
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<td>7. Where possible, mix uses horizontally and vertically, e.g. housing over retail, office over retail, housing over parking, housing and institutional uses across a local street, etc.</td>
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### Table 1: Mixed Use Activity Centers—Guiding Principles

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<th>General Subject Area</th>
<th>Guiding Principles</th>
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<td>8. Use building massing, height and architecture to create emphasis and enclosure at heart of the activity center, to achieve comfortable definition of local streets, appropriate transitions from most dense to least dense development and a scale that is inviting to pedestrians.</td>
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<td>9. Design activity center buildings to accommodate the pedestrians at street level, with continuous and generous walkways, inviting storefronts, attractive landscape and furnishings, safe lighting levels, rain and sun protection.</td>
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<td>10. Include public open space as a focal point for mixed uses where various shoppers, workers, visitors and residents can co-mingle. This could take the form of a square, courtyard or garden. This open space is intended to be actively used and centrally located; a function that cannot be fulfilled by peripheral, landscape buffer areas.</td>
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<td>11. Mixed uses that are pedestrian-oriented require that parking be subordinate to buildings, streets and open space. Parking should be easy to find and convenient, yet inconspicuous. Parking should be integral with site development, but should not compromise the quality of the pedestrian environment.</td>
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<th>Context &amp; Transitions</th>
<th>Guiding Principles</th>
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<td>12. Adjust the mix and intensity of activity centers to achieve complementary adjacencies and transitions between different uses (e.g.: between retail and housing, retail and office, higher density and lower density, etc.).</td>
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<td>13. Protect existing, sensitive uses from new, mixed uses that create noise, traffic congestion, interference with views, or other nuisances. Configure activity center development to minimize such impacts through building massing and orientation, setbacks, buffers, screening, and traffic calming.</td>
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<td>14. As activity centers are created or expanded, incorporate existing viable businesses.</td>
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<td>15. Protect valued views and natural environments in new and expanded activity center site designs.</td>
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Figure 4—Mixed-use infill with an urban character, Boulder, Colorado.

Figure 5—Complementary transition between uses, Boulder, Colorado.
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<th>General Subject Area</th>
<th>Guiding Principles</th>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation &amp; Circulation</td>
<td>16. Coordinate public transportation plans and improvements with Comprehensive Plan-designated activity centers to ensure that infrastructure supports and does not hinder mixed use activity center development.</td>
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<td>17. Provide a hierarchy of streets in a logical, interconnected system from arterials, to collectors, to local streets, lanes, access-ways and alleys.</td>
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<td>18. Design the street system at activity centers to accommodate access by all modes. This means:</td>
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<td>• Arterials and collectors that have through-connectivity, simple and frequent intersections, and pedestrian features;</td>
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<td>• Local streets that connect to each other at a frequent interval to help distribute rather than concentrate local traffic;</td>
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<td>• Minimal interruptions to the continuity of the pedestrian system by providing safe crossings at arterials and collectors, by extending pathways where streets do not connect, and by restricting the frequency and size of driveways.</td>
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<td>19. Design streets with an urban character that anticipates abutting development with active frontages. Include landscape, furnishings, lighting and generous sidewalk space for a variety of activities such as eating, standing, talking, sitting, waiting, as well as walking.</td>
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When these 19 principles for mixed-use centers are held up aside the city’s current zoning and subdivision codes and policies, the gaps in those existing standards are apparent and underscore why mixed-use development is difficult to do under those rules. The Comprehensive Plan (Chapter 8, pp. 138-142) provides a good starting point at identifying some of the gaps in the city’s current set of zoning and subdivision development standards. This Diagnosis builds on and refines the Plan’s suggestions in the following subsections, which are organized by the same five subject areas shown in Table 1 above (with the addition of a sixth area focused on land development review procedures). In each of these subsections, we identify barriers, or describe the shortcomings of current standards, and make some preliminary recommendations for additions or revisions that implement the Plan’s mixed-use goals and the guiding principles shown in Table 1.
B. Land Uses & Zoning Districts

As discussed above, the Comprehensive Plan states a clear preference for new mixed-use development and activity centers as the preferred development pattern in Colorado Springs to complement the city’s residential neighborhoods. However, under current land development rules, the prevalent development form has been a pattern of isolated, disconnected, single-purpose land uses. Thus, fundamental changes are required in the city’s Zoning Code to enable the integration of mixed uses in both older, established parts of the city, as well as in newer and developing parts.

1. Analysis of Uses Permitted in the Existing Base Zone Districts.

The first major area of focus is the city’s zone district and specific use regulations, contained in Article 3, “Land Use Zoning Districts,” of the Zoning Code. During the Clarion team’s interviews with key stakeholders, interviewees consistently identified the single-use nature of existing zone districts as a major barrier to doing mixed-use development in the city. Interviewees consistently lamented that in most existing base zone districts, the Zoning Code does not (easily) allow a mix of different use types.

From our analysis of the Colorado Springs’ base residential, commercial, and industrial zone districts, key points are summarized below. A more detailed description of the primary components of each of the districts may be found in Appendix B to this Diagnosis document.

- Principal land uses are allowed either as “permitted” uses or as a “conditional” uses:
  - Permitted uses are typically considered “by-right” uses; that is, establishment of a permitted use is not subject to public review in a quasi-judicial hearing before either the Planning Commission or City Council. However, except for single-family, duplex, and limited expansions of existing uses, most development of permitted uses is subject to administrative (staff) review of a development plan prior to building permit issuance. (§7.5.502.) Total time for processing an administrative development plan application is a minimum of about 10 weeks.
  - Establishment of a conditional use is subject to the discretionary review and approval of the Planning Commission, and requires a public hearing. An application for conditional use must include a development plan for the use. Total time for processing a conditional use development plan application is a minimum of 12 weeks. Appeals of the Planning Commission’s decision on a conditional use application may be taken to the City Council. (§7.5.701 et seq.).

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3 Development plans are detailed site plans, which show proposed buildings, on-site vehicle and pedestrian circulation, off-street parking areas, open areas, drainage facilities, and landscaping. Development plans are intended to allow city review of a use’s specific impacts on adjacent properties and existing and planned public services and infrastructure. An approved development plan will expire four years after its approval if the applicant has not pulled a building permit within that time frame. (§7.5.504.C.)
Although the stated intent of each base zone district is to encourage the development of a predominant type of land use, the zoning actually allows a surprising variety of principal uses in the city’s SU, PUD, and base commercial zone districts. For example, a type of mixed-use center called a “commercial center” is a principal permitted use in the PBC, C-5, and C-6 districts. This type of center contains a mix of commercial and office uses, but does not contain residential uses. However, although the plain meaning of the zoning text may allow a variety of principal uses in a zone district, there is a critical missing piece that, for all practical purposes, makes mixing different principal uses (especially residential with nonresidential uses) very difficult. The missing piece is the complete absence of tailored standards in the Zoning Code to guide development of an integrated mix of uses on a single property or in a single building, and to address the potential impacts of mixed-use development.

- Under current zoning regulations, a developer of a mixed-use project must often juggle a double set of development standards, one for commercial uses and a different set for residential uses. In practice, these different standards can contradict each other and contradict the intent of mixing uses in close proximity to each other. For example, a developer in the C-5 zone district, which is the only commercial zone district that allows “mixed commercial-residential” uses as a permitted use, would likely need a variance from the zoning requirement for a 15-foot landscaped buffer between adjacent commercial and residential uses.

- In the SU District, general office and medical/dental clinic uses, as well as a unique variety of educational, civic, and public assembly uses are allowed as permitted principal uses. General commercial retail or services are not allowed in the zone. Residents and citizen activists from the SU District neighborhoods stated that the growing number of conversions of residential buildings to office use is the top land use issue in the SU District. Concerns about this trend included operations, lighting, and signage incompatible with near-by residential uses, and new or renovated building design that turns its back to the existing residential context (e.g., in terms of building orientation, materials, as well as architectural style). It was pointed out that if what has been occurring in the

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4 The majority of the residential base zone districts (the A and R districts) are clearly single-purpose zones, with only limited supporting civic, public, or institutional uses expressly allowed (e.g., schools and churches). Only the SU and PUD zones, categorized as residential zone districts in the Zoning Code, allow commercial uses as principal uses. None of the city’s commercial and industrial base zone districts include intent statements that say mixing and integrating uses is a zoning goal. However, most of the commercial zone districts actually allow a variety of principal residential uses, as well as civic and institutional uses.

5 A “commercial center” is defined in the Zoning Code as: “A retail center that usually has an anchor of at least 1 major food store, department store, or other similar tenant accompanied by a variety of general retail uses, restaurants, indoor entertainment, and offices. The center is developed and maintained under unified control. A majority of the business establishments share common walls, front on one side or both sides of an open or closed pedestrian path, and share common parking areas. 3 types: Community commercial; neighborhood commercial; and regional commercial.”
SU District with recent office conversions is what the city means by introducing “mixed use,” there will be considerable resident outcry in protest.

- A related issue is that without specific mixed-use development standards to guide its review, the city’s treatment of development plans for even by-right mixed-use projects runs the risk of being very subjective or, at worst, arbitrary.

- Another impediment to mixing uses under the current zoning rules is that, where allowed, mixing commercial retail or office uses with residential uses usually requires conditional use review.

- In the OR zone, mixing more than one office and one residential dwelling unit together on the same property requires conditional use review. Mixed commercial-residential uses are allowed only as conditional uses in the C-6, PBC, and M-1 zone districts. As noted above, conditional use review is a discretionary and public process, which can take more time to win approval than a by-right permitted use subject only to administrative review.

- The PUD zone district is intended to be predominantly residential in character, but its intent statement does allow for “appropriate mixed use development,” without any further description or direction. But even in this more flexible PUD zone, while “cultural, recreational, and commercial uses” are allowed as principal permitted uses, they are hamstrung by the additional requirement that they be “designed to serve the residents of a specific project.” Staff reports that this limitation on commercial uses in a PUD has made it impossible to integrate viable commercial uses in such developments without a use variance. Evidencing this is the Lowell Center PUD, where the applicant’s proposal to mix in office and retail uses with the primarily residential PUD development required a discretionary use variance (according to §7.5.803 of the Zoning Code).

The bottom line is that, despite allowing a variety of principal uses in several of the base zones, the Zoning Code’s current zone district and use standards make building mixed-use projects under these provisions an impossible task without multiple variances and modifications. Several developer interviewees and city staff confirmed this conclusion. Thus, if developers are going to have to negotiate anyway and spend the additional time and resources in a lengthy public review process, those interested in doing mixed-use developments have turned to the flexibility offered by the PUD or PBC-Planned Business Center zone districts, often accompanied by numerous conditions of record or use variances to achieve a mix of desired uses.
2. **Recommended Permitted Uses for Mixed Use Centers.**

Given the above-described disconnect between the mix of uses that the current zoning actually permits, and the overwhelming single-purpose development that usually results, one way to encourage mixed-use centers in Colorado Springs is to tailor the existing zone districts, or create new zone districts, to more directly allow and guide mixing different principal land uses vertically or horizontally on the same parcel, on the same development site, or in the same building. (The choice among alternative zoning approaches to applying new mixed-use standards is discussed in more detail in subsection IV, "Applying the New Mixed Use Standards & Guidelines," below.)

The following Tables 2 and 3 summarize the new Comprehensive Plan’s general recommendations regarding the range of uses that should be allowed in each of the five types of mixed-use activity centers. In addition, where available, the tables also include Plan recommendations for some of the relevant zoning standards that should apply in each of the centers, such as recommended locations and limits on total center size.

As used in the tables below, the term “primary uses” means those uses that the Plan states should dominate the mix of uses in the center, while “secondary” uses are those that should play a more minor role and complement or support the primary use(s). In some instances, the Plan also recommends specific types of “transition” uses, which are uses that are typically sited at the outer edges of a center in order to assure fewer adverse impacts on adjacent, lower-intensity uses. As this project progresses into the outline and drafting stages, the Clarion team will flesh out the general use recommendations in the following tables with more specific use categories and types. For example, in Table 2 below, “neighborhood-serving uses,” which are listed as the primary use allowed in Neighborhood Activity Centers, might be interpreted during the drafting stage to include small-scale general retail stores and office space, personal service shops or instruction, and sit-down restaurants or cafes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Neighborhood &amp; Community Activity Centers</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summary of Possible Zoning Standards</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Uses Permitted</th>
<th>Neighborhood Activity Center</th>
<th>Community Activity Center</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Neighborhood-serving&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Neighborhood-serving&quot; uses.</td>
<td>Primary or typical &quot;anchor&quot; use = grocery store</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Secondary and Complementary Uses Permitted</strong></td>
<td>Limited range of convenience goods/services.</td>
<td>Retail, office, service, civic, and attached residential. Examples cited in Plan include variety, drug, hardware stores; personal services; medical offices; restaurants/eating &amp; drinking establishments. Also, neighborhood-supporting uses such as schools, employment, day care, parks, civic uses, plus residential uses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transition Uses Recommended</strong></td>
<td>Not applicable.</td>
<td>Higher density housing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2: Neighborhood & Community Activity Centers
Summary of Possible Zoning Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Prohibited Uses</th>
<th>Neighborhood Activity Center</th>
<th>Community Activity Center</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gas stations or other auto services, auto-related or oriented uses; on-site dry cleaning; uses that produce noxious fumes, or excessive light/noise.</td>
<td>Most drive-in and drive-through uses.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Range of Center Size</th>
<th>Neighborhood Activity Center</th>
<th>Community Activity Center</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plans states these are “small” and “low impact” centers: &gt; Max size = 5 acres &gt; Consider limit on size of individual commercial uses.</td>
<td>Range of size: Minimum 10 acres, maximum 40 acres.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mixing of Uses Allowed in Same Building?</th>
<th>Neighborhood Activity Center</th>
<th>Community Activity Center</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location Requirements</th>
<th>Neighborhood Activity Center</th>
<th>Community Activity Center</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Must be reasonably accessible to residents the center is intended to serve, such as at: Intersection of collector street; Entrance to neighborhood; Shared location with school, park, civic, or other public use.</td>
<td>&gt; Recommend access from at least 1 arterial street; and &gt; Minimum one-mile spacing between community activity centers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Comprehensive Plan (2001) and City Planning Staff.

Table 3: Commercial, Employment, & Regional Activity Centers
Summary of Possible Zoning Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Uses Permitted</th>
<th>Commercial Center</th>
<th>Employment Center</th>
<th>Regional Activity Center</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Large-scale” retail uses that provide durable goods, restaurants, and services to multiple neighborhoods; Other “integrated” uses = retail, office, R&amp;D, institutional, entertainment, civic.</td>
<td>Large employment generators, including R&amp;D, major service and office centers/campuses, warehousing and industrial uses, and major educational facilities.</td>
<td>Primary Uses = Combination of Commercial Center and Employment Center primary uses in single, integrated center. Uses must be mutually supportive. Includes regional malls and corporate headquarters.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Secondary and Complementary Uses Permitted</th>
<th>Commercial Center</th>
<th>Employment Center</th>
<th>Regional Activity Center</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Supporting” uses = residential, service, office, entertainment, eating/drinking establishments, medical uses.</td>
<td>“Supporting” uses = Complement the employment center, including restaurants, hotels, day care, convenience shopping, and residential uses (if part of an overall planned development); Other “complementary” uses = business services, lodging for business travelers, convenience retail, childcare, restaurants, MF housing, entertainment.</td>
<td>“Supporting” Uses = Anything that is needed to achieve “integrated mixed use”, including high-density residential.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 3:
**Commercial, Employment, & Regional Activity Centers**
**Summary of Possible Zoning Standards**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transition Uses or Standards Recommended</th>
<th>Commercial Center</th>
<th>Employment Center</th>
<th>Regional Activity Center</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transition uses should be stepped down in density and scale.</td>
<td>None specified in Plan.</td>
<td>None specified in Plan.</td>
<td>None specified in Plan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prohibited Uses</th>
<th>Commercial Center</th>
<th>Employment Center</th>
<th>Regional Activity Center</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Limit on Size of Center</th>
<th>Commercial Center</th>
<th>Employment Center</th>
<th>Regional Activity Center</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum size = 20 acres.</td>
<td>Minimum size: varies greatly—Staff to devise parameters from existing and planned employment centers.</td>
<td>Minimum size: 50 acres.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mixing of Uses Allowed in Same Building?</th>
<th>Commercial Center</th>
<th>Employment Center</th>
<th>Regional Activity Center</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes. Core uses should be commercial – allow multiple-story buildings with mix of uses: 1st floor = retail or service; 2nd floor = residential or office.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>Yes, however, in a Regional Activity Center, uses are more likely to be mixed horizontally versus vertically.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location Requirements</th>
<th>Commercial Center</th>
<th>Employment Center</th>
<th>Regional Activity Center</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At least 1 access from arterial street; Must be directly accessible from surrounding residential areas.</td>
<td>Along an arterial, preferably with close access to limited access freeways and I-25; Access to regular and frequent transit services.</td>
<td>Intersection of major roadways; Direct access to major arterial street; Ability to serve entire city and, possibly, region.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Comprehensive Plan (2001) and City Planning Staff.

### 3. Land Use & Zoning Districts in Downtown Colorado Springs.

Downtown Colorado Springs is a regional activity center, consistent with that term as defined in the Comprehensive Plan. The current zoning of Downtown is an amalgam of several different commercial and residential base zone districts. The core commercial and civic areas of Downtown are zoned C-6, which allows residential uses only as a conditional use. Moreover, zoning regulations governing residential uses in the Downtown are geared toward a more suburban model, where new residential development is typically contained in free-standing, single-purpose structures, and scaled according to surrounding low-density residential neighborhoods. This model does not always fit well in the urban framework of Downtown. For example, a maximum building height of 45 feet allows a 4-story apartment building, which is arguably low for a downtown urban core. In order to go higher, an applicant would have to apply for a rezoning to the High-Rise (HR) Overlay, another discretionary review process. In comparison, Denver allows residential development in the Golden Triangle—a mixed-use neighborhood adjacent to the downtown central business district—to be, by right, as tall as 175 feet.

In virtually every large city in which we work, downtown employment hubs with rich historical architecture and context like Colorado Springs’ are typically subject to one specially tailored “downtown” or “CBD” zone district. These downtown zones are fine-tuned to addresses these special places’ unique contextual elements, desired urban versus
suburban scale, and mix of uses. Colorado Springs does not enjoy this type of downtown zoning. As a result, under its current zoning, it is difficult to replicate the downtown’s mix of uses, the streets, and the scale that were already much in place pre-zoning. Moreover, some of the city’s generally applicable development standards, such as landscaping buffer requirements and public parks/open space, are not well-suited to accommodate urban-scale development in the Downtown.

Thus, although many of this Diagnosis’s recommendations can be applied to the Downtown to expressly allow a greater variety of uses, including high-density residential uses, it is our opinion that such measures are more appropriate as interim, stop-gap responses to Downtown’s unique zoning needs. In the long term, tailoring a separate, new zone district for the Downtown, including incorporation of the current set of Downtown design guidelines, may be in the city’s best future interest.

4. How Can Zoning Assure a Mix of Uses Actually Occurs?

One of the challenges of enabling mixed-use developments through zoning regulations is the risk that an actual mix and balance of principal uses will never occur, or occur only haphazardly. Even if, as we recommend, a wide variety of principal uses are allowed by new mixed-use zoning, there is no guarantee that a developer, operating under his or her own unique set of business and market motivations, will actually mix two or more of those uses together on a single site or in the same building. The market tends to dictate building one use at a time, and the concern is that the first wave of development will gobble up the best sites in a planned mixed-use center location.

There are a number of zoning mechanisms to deal with this problem of balancing uses though mixed-use zoning. For example, in a mixed-use zone that is intended to be predominantly residential, or which must be integrated with an existing residential neighborhood, commercial development may be unlimited once a threshold density of housing has been achieved. At the same time, there may be a limit of a maximum 5,000 or 10,000 square foot retail footprint. In predominantly commercial mixed-use zones, which most of the Comprehensive Plan’s centers are, housing can be “free”—i.e., not count toward maximum intensity limits, and governed by different height and bulk limits. The city of Gresham, Oregon (a suburb of Portland and located on the area’s light-rail line), adopted these approaches in its mixed-use zoning regulations.

Another approach may be to require that within a mixed-use zone district, an overall target balance between housing, retail, and other commercial development must be maintained within stipulated aggregate ranges. The City of West Sacramento, California, took this approach in its recently drafted mixed-use zoning regulations. If there is a boom in housing, only so much housing could be developed until the other uses begin to catch up. This approach gives an advantage of market choice to the first developers to invest in an area—a strategy intended to encourage early commitment.
The city’s draft Traditional Neighborhood Development (“TND”) ordinance\(^6\) takes an approach similar to West Sacramento’s. TND developments are classified according to size: Small (less than 20 acres), Mid-size (20-40 acres), and Large (greater than 40 acres). In each size TND, the ordinance states a minimum mix of uses, by percentage. For example, in a mid-size TND, a minimum 40% of the development must be devoted to single-family housing, and a minimum 5% must be devoted to commercial retail, office, or industrial uses. The remaining area must be developed for a mix of open space and multi-family housing, with civic uses optional.

Yet another option may be to require the development of an appropriately scaled activity center as part of any new development proposals that meet a defined threshold. For example, any proposal for residential development that contains more than a specified number of units may be required to develop, or at least reserve land for, a neighborhood activity center. Clarion Associates used this approach in residential design standards it drafted for the City of Brighton, Colorado, which were adopted in May 2000.

One of the land use principles from Table 1, above, that should guide future development of mixed-use centers is the provision of a variety of housing choices, both within a center and as complementary to existing housing choice in surrounding neighborhoods. To do this, the city should permit a wide variety of residential uses (e.g., attached, multi-family, accessory units) by-right in all centers to ensure flexibility to respond to market demand. The city may wish to take this a step forward, as it is doing in the draft TND ordinance, and consider requiring an actual mix of different types of housing in some of the larger-scale activity centers.

Finally, a related and important challenge will be achieving a mix of complementary uses within a center that fulfills the Comprehensive Plan’s intent to create active “24/7” centers, where residents, visitors, employees, and other users will continuously interact and cross paths during the day and into the night. For example, a community activity center project might satisfy a new mixed-use zoning standard that requires it to contain at least 50% commercial uses, 5% public or civic uses, and 5% residential uses, but still not

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\(^6\) With the approval of the Lowell Center development in 1999, the city recognized the need for revisions to the existing Zoning Code to allow and encourage additional traditional neighborhood development (“TND”). Accordingly, the planning staff initiated a process to draft an amendment to the Zoning Code to create a new zone classification that specifically permits TND projects, with specific standards and guidelines. In 2001, the Comprehensive Plan included numerous goals that could be met by facilitating TND, and an implementation strategy was included to create a TND zoning classification. Developing the new TND zone district is an ongoing project that has involved the public and numerous affected city departments. A draft of a new zoning classification is expected to go to the City Planning Commission and Council in early 2002.
succeed in creating a lively and active place. If that community activity center is dominated by commercial office uses that run on a 9-to-5 schedule (e.g., travel or insurance agency offices), residents will return home from work to a shuttered-up place with little opportunity to mingle or cross paths with anyone. Similarly, daytime user activity will suffer in a center dominated by office uses, with few retail shopping or eating places in the mix. Consequently, new mixed-use zoning standards will need to address not only the quantity of different types of uses making up the mix, but also the quality and potential of specific uses to mix together to make an active place with staying power.

5. Diagnosis of Miscellaneous Use Regulations.

The majority of the remaining specific use regulations in Article 3 of the Zoning Code would be as applicable to the uses when a part of a mixed-use center as when developed as stand-alone uses. Generally, none of these use regulations create barriers to mixed-use development, with some very limited exceptions, as follows:

- Accessory dwelling units (sometimes referred to as “granny flats” or “mother-in-law apartments”) can help build density, provide variety in housing types and lifestyle choice for city residents, and provide relatively affordable housing. Accessory dwelling units may be appropriate in a mixed-use center where single-family residential uses are allowed. Accessory dwelling units are not, however, allowed in any of the existing residential base zone districts. In the draft TND ordinance, accessory dwelling units are allowed, subject to specific standards governing maximum size, location on a lot, height, ownership, and parking. The city may want to consider allowing this type of alternative housing choice as part of planned activity center uses or zones wherever single-family residential uses are allowed.

- The accessory structure standards require a minimum 10-foot rear yard setback for detached residential garages that are accessed from an alley (§7.3.105.A.2). Ten feet may be excessive, particularly in a more urban-scaled mixed-use activity center, where residential uses are likely to be developed at higher densities. The city may want to consider reducing this setback by 50% or more, when applied to residential uses in a mixed-use center, assuming utility easement requirements can be met.

- The allowance for limited retail/service uses accessory to a principal medical or dental office use (§7.3.105.A.8) should be extended to similar office/clinic uses permitted in any new mixed-use center uses or zone districts created for this project.
• Home occupations are allowed as an accessory use to a principal dwelling use, provided the home occupation complies with the permit requirements and criteria in §7.5.1501 of the Zoning Code. In a mixed-use center that contains residential uses, home occupations should be permitted accessory uses. The criteria in §7.5.1501 should apply to home occupations in mixed-use centers, except that the city may want to consider eliminating the total prohibition on outside employees and the limits on the number of customers served by a home beauty salon/barber shop, given the more intense and mixed-use character of an activity center.

C. Intensity of Development

Article 3, “Land Use Zoning Districts,” of the Zoning Code establishes lot dimension and basic development standards for all zone districts, including minimum lot area, minimum lot width, minimum setbacks, maximum lot coverage, and maximum building height. In addition, Article 4, “Site Development Standards,” contains off-street parking and landscaping/buffer standards. All these standards affect the potential intensity of development.

The goals of the Comprehensive Plan, our Character Analysis of existing commercial centers, and our combined experiences with mixed-use zoning and development, all strongly suggest that the intensity of development in new, mixed-use centers will need to be higher than what Colorado Springs is building today. More intense development in mixed-use centers is intended to ensure maximum efficiencies in land consumption, foster significant user and resident activity to support the mix of uses, and support alternative transportation modes such as public transit.

1. Commercial Intensity of Development

Commercial intensity of development is measured, typically, using floor area ratio ("FAR"), which is the ratio of total commercial floor area to total lot or site (land) area. A commercial building containing 43,560 square feet of total floor space (on one or more floors) on a one-acre lot would result in a FAR of 1.0. In our study of existing centers, the highest FARs were 0.32 at The Bon Shopping Center (a community center) and 0.35 at the Citadel Mall/Citadel Crossing Shopping Center (a regional activity center). The lowest FARs were registered at the Spring Canyon (MCI) employment center (0.15), the East Fillmore strip commercial center (0.23), and the Chapel Hills regional mall (0.24). In comparison, the city main administration building located at 30 South Nevada Avenue has a FAR of approximately 3.4.

One explanation of the difference in the intensities of development in the examples cited above is the amount of land area devoted to on-site (off-street) parking. At the city’s
downtown administration building, there is no parking on-site, which allowed more intense build-out of usable office floor area. At the Spring Canyon (MCI) employment center, the buildings total nearly 500,000 square feet on a 77.5 acre site, but there are 3,671 off-street parking spaces accommodated in on-site parking areas. The ratio of parking spaces to building floor area at Spring Canyon is 7.3 spaces per 1,000 square feet. It is interesting to note that the Zoning Code required only a minimum of 4.83 spaces per 1,000 for this mix of uses—or a total of 2,409 spaces (1,262 spaces less than what was provided).

In a western city like Colorado Springs, where access to much of the city’s commercial services is dependent on the private automobile, increasing commercial intensity while still reasonably accommodating the automobile will be challenging. There are, however, several methods that cities like Colorado Springs are experimenting with to increase commercial intensity. Some communities across the nation that have adopted mixed-use zoning, or very closely related mixed-use provisions for transit-oriented development, use minimum intensity standards as a basic underpinning of their regulatory approach. For example, San Diego, California, Portland and Beaverton, Oregon, Washington County, Oregon, Renton, Washington, and Sacramento County, California, have all adopted minimum FAR standards to support mixed-use development. Several of these standards are summarized in Table 4 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction &amp; Type of Zone</th>
<th>Minimum FAR Requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>San Diego, California (Transit Oriented Development Zone)</td>
<td>0.35 without structured parking; 0.5 with structured parking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland, Oregon (Light Rail Transit Station Zone)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaverton, Oregon (Station Community-Mixed Use Zone)</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington County, Oregon (Transit Oriented Zones—Commercial and Employment)</td>
<td>.25, .35, or .50 — minimum FAR increases as proximity to transit station increases</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, minimum commercial FARs can be difficult to achieve in places where land values are not high enough to justify the significant costs of building structured parking (versus surface parking lots). In addition, minimum FARs can meet with strong resistance from the development community. Therefore, alternative approaches should be considered, including:

- Preserving the potential for future intensification of large activity center parcels, by requiring more internal streets, and thereby creating more developable blocks of land. While many of the blocks created can, in the short term, be used for surface parking, over the long-term, as land values rose, the intention would be to incrementally remove those surface lots and replace them with buildings and structured parking. Critical to the success of such an approach would be strictly enforced limits on requests to vacate those internal streets.
• Using building height and placement to create intensity at key locations within a center, especially along street frontages. For example, Fort Collins deliberately chose not to implement minimum FARs for individual building projects in its new mixed-use zoning districts. Instead, the city requires each mixed-use district to consist of a minimum number and type of “blocks”, such as a mixed-use block, an office block, a residential block, and a civic block. For each such block, the city sets minimum development standards including a maximum block size and minimum FAR for the entire block. For example, in its Community Commercial Mixed-Use District, at least 25% of the district must be comprised of mixed-use blocks (primary use is commercial/retail). Each mixed-use block may be no larger than 7 acres and total development on such block must achieve a minimum FAR of .35. In addition, buildings on a mixed-use block must contain a minimum of two-stories, and must be sited to occupy at least 50% of each block side/frontage.

• Reduce the amount of land area devoted to surface parking areas. As discussed in more detail in section III.D below, options may include (1) a cap on the maximum amount of parking spaces provided; (2) requirements or incentives for shared or joint parking; (3) FAR bonuses for structured parking; (4) reductions in the minimum amount of parking required for certain mixes of uses (e.g., residential and grocery store uses) or close proximity to transit.

2. **Residential Intensity of Development**

Residential intensity of development is typically discussed in terms of “density”, and measured in terms of the number of dwelling units per acre of land area. Residential density may be measured as “gross” density or “net” density. Gross density means the density is computed based on the total land area, including public rights-of-way. Net density means density is computed based on the total land area excluding all public rights-of-way.

Colorado Springs’ base residential zone districts establish minimum lot areas, but no explicit maximum density standards. Some of the highest residential densities are permitted in the R-5 and SU zone districts. In the R-5 zone district, the minimum lot area for single-family detached development is 4,000 square feet, which translates roughly to a maximum gross density of about 10 dwelling units per acre. According to staff, the maximum achievable (net) density for multi-family residential development in both the R-5 and SU districts is, to date, about 44 units per acre, based on minimum lot area per multi-family unit requirements of 800 and 600 square feet per unit, respectively.

The staff’s proposed draft of a new TND zone district does recommend (as guidelines) minimum residential densities for large-scale TND developments (more than 40 acres). The TND zone district is intended to allow an option for residential development that incorporates a mix of housing types integrated with open space, civic, and commercial uses. A minimum 10 dwellings per net acre is recommended in the “village center” core area of large TNDs, while a minimum of 6 dwellings per net acre is recommended in the development area adjacent to the village center core area. Fort Collins takes a similar approach but through mandatory standards, requiring minimum net densities of between
8 and 12 dwelling units per acre in its mixed-use neighborhood (residential) districts to increase the potential for transit services and to reduce traffic congestion.

3. **Recommended Changes**

As described in this subsection and the remainder of this Diagnosis document, new lot area, FAR, density, lot coverage, lot dimensions, building envelope, parking, landscaping, and building design standards will likely be drafted that either allow or require appropriate densities and building coverage to encourage more efficient land use consumption and pedestrian-friendly mixed-use centers. In most cases, as already discussed, this will mean proposed FARs, residential densities, and lot coverage standards for uses within the mixed-use centers that are greater than what is currently allowed in the city’s base zones. The proposed TND zone district is a good precedent for the concept of minimum residential density standards or guidelines, but the 10- and 6-dwelling unit per net acre guidelines proposed for a TND development are probably too low to implement the Plan objectives for most of the mixed-use centers (except, perhaps the neighborhood activity center).

D. **Building & Development**

The guiding principles for building and development summarized in Table 1 above (referred to as “building form” principles in the Character Analysis document) are intended to result in mixed-use centers that:

- Consume land efficiently and in a fiscally responsible manner (i.e., more compact versus sprawl patterns of land consumption).
- Are well organized in terms of siting complementary uses near each other with convenient access to parking.
- Provide a safe, attractive, and efficient environment for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit, as well as the automobile.
- Address building compatibility and transitions issues at edges shared with less intensive uses, especially single-family residential uses.
- Improve the visual character and appearance of the city.

1. **Analysis of Existing Building & Development Standards**

The current zoning and subdivision regulations cover some of the above ground, including regulations governing off-street parking (§7.4.201), landscaping (§7.4.301, plus the accompanying Landscape Policy Manual), and lighting (§7.4.102.D). Some of these existing regulations should remain applicable to new “center” uses or to development in new mixed-use zone districts, including much of the off-street parking and landscaping standards. However, there will need to be revisions to some of these standards to encourage mixed-use development and to address the unique configuration of mixed-use centers, including:

(A) **Provisions for Shared Parking**. The current off-street parking standards do not allow shared parking for a mixture of principal uses on the same property or part of the same overall development plan. Instead, current regulations require the developer to supply the cumulative total of the
minimum parking requirements for each separate use. (§7.4.203.A-C.) In order to use land more efficiently, and to achieve the levels of intensity and density that can support mixed-use centers, parcel area devoted to parking (especially surface parking) must be reduced. Shared parking provisions allow uses with different peak parking demand times to overlap their required parking space requirements, thereby reducing the total otherwise required if they were developed as separate projects. For example, adjacent office and cinema uses have day/night demands that are complementary; therefore, less parking is typically necessary.

The draft TND zone district, for example, allows a reduction up to 25% of the Zoning Code's off-street parking requirements for shared parking. In both Longmont and Arvada, Colorado, the cities may reduce the amount of off-street parking required for approved shared parking plans.

(B) Revisions to the Amount of Parking Provided. Conventional commercial retail and office developments often provide parking in an amount geared to the few days of a year when customer demand is greatest—e.g., the winter holiday shopping season at shopping centers. The Character Analysis of existing neighborhood, community, and employment centers in the city revealed that the amount of parking can exceed the minimum amount required by the Zoning Code by at least 12% (at the First & Main commercial center) and as much as 50% or more (at the Spring Canyon/MCI employment center and Shoppes at Mountain Shadows community activity center). A central tenet of mixed-use centers is that the automobile, while conveniently accommodated, must not overwhelm the pedestrian experience. Vast expanses of surface parking lots challenge the ability to make a center pedestrian-friendly. In addition, the mixed-use nature of a center, together with its design to accommodate other travel modes, should reduce the demand for on-site parking.

As a result, many communities implementing mixed-use zoning across the country typically make some adjustment to the amount of parking required in a mixed-use center. Some lower the minimum amount required. Some give “credit” reductions in the amount otherwise required for a specific center’s mix of uses, for close-by on-street parking, and for proximity to public transit. For example, Denver will approve up to a maximum 25%
reduction in the number of parking spaces for developments in its mixed-use zone district that are sited within ¼ mile of a light-rail line, or within ½ mile of the Downtown or LODO districts.

In addition, there is a growing trend to set caps on the amount of parking that may be provided in a mixed-use center, often by setting a maximum amount. Fort Collins sets a maximum limit of 4 spaces per 1,000 square feet for commercial retail and 3.5 spaces per 1,000 square feet of office development in its mixed-use Community Commercial Zone. The city’s draft TND ordinance includes a ceiling on the amount of parking that a non-residential use may provide in a TND development: The amount cannot exceed 1.0 times the minimum required number of spaces as stated in the Zoning Code.

(C) Provisions for the Location of Parking Areas or Structures. The Zoning Code currently does not address the location of off-street parking areas. The proposed new TND zone district restricts the location of parking areas to the rear or side of the principal building (excluding single-family and two-family dwellings). Many communities, including Fort Collins, Arvada, and Longmont in Colorado, have adopted standards for large “big-box” retail establishments or commercial retail centers that limit the amount of parking in front of buildings to 50% of the total or less. The Comprehensive Plan (Chapter 8, p. 141) and the guiding principles for mixed-use centers in Table 1 both recommend that parking areas be subordinate to other uses and activities on a development site, and that they do not interrupt the rhythm of a block face at too frequent intervals. Accordingly, provisions that either require or encourage parking to be located to the rear or side of principal buildings, or otherwise located internal to a group of buildings, should be considered.

(D) Provisions for the Design of Parking Areas or Structures. The off-street parking standards do not discuss how internal vehicle and pedestrian circulation will be facilitated in large parking lots that will be necessary to serve employment, commercial, or regional activity centers. Such standards could describe pedestrian corridors, crosswalks, transit access to the interior of the site, parking lot aesthetic treatments, and similar measures.

During the interviews for this Diagnosis, most staff and developers had few complaints about the current Zoning Code’s parking lot landscaping standards (§7.4.205.G). However, in the more “urban” forms of the recommended commercial and employment centers, it may be appropriate to loosen the current requirements for parking lot screening, and allow—without need for administrative relief—use of structures such as low walls and ornamental fencing for screening purposes (§7.4.205.G.2). In addition, in order to provide a more pedestrian-friendly environment, the city may want to increase the current requirement for 1 tree per 15 parking spaces, or consider more specific standards (versus guidelines) that require
clustering or that specify the specific location and placement of landscaped islands and peninsulas.

The current Zoning Code does not contain standards to guide the design of parking structures, which because of their massive size, can have profound effects on the street-level atmosphere for pedestrians. More and more communities, including Denver, now require in their mixed-use districts, that the ground-floor level of parking structures be designed to accommodate commercial or other non-parking uses that can provide more pedestrian-friendly activity at street level. The proposed TND zone district ordinance similarly requires the first floor frontage of parking structures to be dedicated to commercial uses.

(E) Provisions for Bicycle Parking and Facilities. The current off-street parking standards do not contain any provisions for bicycle parking or facilities. The Comprehensive Plan strongly emphasizes that all new mixed-use centers must be accessible to all transportation modes, including bicycles. Many cities along the Front Range, including Denver, Fort Collins, Longmont, and Arvada, require a certain number of bicycle parking spaces in all new non-residential and multi-family developments. The number may be based on a percentage of the number of off-street vehicle parking spaces required, or may be based on the type and floor area of the proposed land use. For example, in the draft TND ordinance, one bicycle parking space must be provided for each 20 vehicle parking spaces. In addition, bicycle parking standards usually also require features and amenities such as bike lockers or racks near building entrances to promote bicycle use.

(F) Revisions to the Landscaping Standards & Policies. There were few complaints heard from interviewees about the city’s current landscaping standards (§7.4.301) or Landscaping Policy Manual, which all agree is very thorough and contains many modern “best” practices and alternatives. However, several developer interviewees pointed to the emphasis placed by these current regulations on the use of landscaping as a buffer and screening tool. In mixed-use centers, where the idea is to integrate uses and create synergy by their close proximity, the city’s requirements for 15-foot wide landscaped buffers between residential and non-residential uses (§7.4.323.C) may hinder this important goal. Accordingly, the city should consider alternative “transition” tools (such as architectural transitions) between different land use types or intensities, which are discussed in more detail in subsection E, “Transitions & Context,” below.

In addition, the current street tree planting policies were the subject of some concern by city staff. Street trees are an important element of walkable, pedestrian-friendly streets, and will be included as part of any new or revised cross-sections for streets in a mixed-use center. Current policies recommend street trees planted no closer than five feet to the curb of arterial streets, and centered in a minimum four-foot wide tree lawn.
along non-arterial streets. The appropriate context for tree lawns is residential or commercial areas where there are relatively lower volumes of foot traffic. The advantages of using tree lawns for street tree planting include greater root zone space for trees, more pervious surface area to diminish storm runoff volumes, less urban heat island effect, and a "greener" looking street.

In a mixed-use activity center that contains a significant mix of residential uses or low-foot-traffic generating employment uses, the city’s current standards for parkways and street trees are sufficient, although a 4-foot width is probably the minimum viable tree lawn. A 4-foot width would just barely accommodate a 4-inch caliper tree root ball. In our experience, where practical, a minimum 6-foot wide tree lawn is recommended.

However, in the commercial portions of a mixed-use center (especially retail areas), where stores may directly abut the sidewalk and foot traffic volumes are expected to be higher, high-quality hardscape such as structural soils, structural tree vaults, and enlarged tree grates, are recommended rather than continuous tree lawns. One hybrid alternative to consider is elongated tree wells, 4 feet x 16 feet, with hardscape between. This achieves some of the advantages of the parkway, but has more walkable surface. In parts of Chicago, such elongated tree wells are set back from the face of the curb approximately two feet, so people could open a car door and step out onto paving. The tree wells have an 18-inch high decorative iron railing around it, planted with flowers and ground covers around the tree. With any of these options, new standards will need to address required maintenance and the responsibility for such.

Revisions to Exterior Lighting Standards. The current exterior lighting standards, found in §7.4.102.D and §7.4.205.G (for parking lots), are relatively simple and require that exterior lighting be “directed away” from adjacent properties and rights-of-way so that “direct rays” are confined on site. Given the mix of uses contained on a single parcel in a mixed-use center development, it may be advisable to supplement these existing standards to address the potential for light glare and trespass between different uses located on the same property. The draft TND ordinance, for example, takes existing standards a few steps forward by requiring "full
cut-off fixtures” on all non-residential lighting. In addition, the draft TND ordinance requires lighting to be of a uniform design and to be pedestrian-friendly, and requires a development-wide lighting plan for the city’s review at the time a final development plan is submitted. These types of lighting requirements should similarly apply to mixed-use centers in the city.

(H) Provisions for Master Signage Plans. Because the uses and buildings in a mixed-use center are planned as an integrated group, even if eventually developed by different builders, cities typically desire a unified design theme for the center, including signage. The city’s sign code, §7.4.401 et seq., does not contain any provisions that would allow the city to review and approve a “master plan” for shared and individual user signage in a proposed mixed-use center. Many western communities routinely require such plans for PUDs and mixed-use developments. New provisions for such a master signage plan should incorporate any applicable requirements in the existing provisions for “shared signage” in a multi-tenant building, and sign allocation for multi-story buildings, set forth in §§7.4.405.N-O. In addition, the draft TND ordinance contains a master signage plan requirement that could be duplicated to be applicable to a mixed-use center.

2. **Recommended New Building & Development Standards for Mixed-Use Developments**

Because of their unique character and pedestrian orientation, mixed-use center development raises the need for standards that are not often found in a conventional zoning or subdivision code. In Colorado Springs, to implement the Comprehensive Plan and the guiding principles derived from the Character Analysis (Table 1), the most essential of these additional types of development standards include the following:

(A) **Provisions for Public Gathering Places in a Center.** To support and encourage the pedestrian-friendly nature of intended mixed-use centers, many communities require or encourage a developer to provide public gathering places within a center. These gathering places or amenities might include a public plaza or small green space, a playground, a natural area, or a performance area.

(B) **Provisions for Build-to Lines & Limits on Setbacks.** To enhance the walking experience in a mixed-use center, mixed-use zoning standards often require at least some of the buildings in a new mixed-use center to be built...
right up to the sidewalk (that is, no front yard setback). This is the pattern
in such walkable parts of the Colorado Springs area as the downtown,
Manitou Springs, and Old Colorado City.

(C) **Provisions to Guide Building Locations in a Center.** Many communities
seeking to encourage well-designed mixed-use centers adopt design
standards or guidelines that address how to site buildings within a center to
create walkable, pedestrian-scale places that people will want to visit
repeatedly. On this point, the Comprehensive Plan speaks strongly against
“strip” commercial development patterns. Guiding principles 6, 7, and 8 in
Table 1 above also address this subject.

For example, one important issue that mixed-use activity center site design
should address is the scale of “blocks” or building sites within the center.
This is especially important in the design of larger-scale community and
regional activity centers, which will likely contain many individual buildings
located both within and along the perimeter of the site. The blocks or sites
on which individual buildings are sited must be both “human scaled” and
well-connected so that pedestrians will not only feel invited to walk from
use to use, but will feel comfortable doing so.

(D) **Provisions for Individual Building Design.** Regulating architectural building
design is foreign territory for many of the jurisdictions we work in.
However, even in the most hesitant of communities, certain elements of
individual building design are so important to creating pedestrian-friendly
places that they are typically addressed in mixed-used zoning regulations.
(Alternately, they are strongly encouraged through design guidelines.)

Probably the most common element of building design addressed is the
design and scale of the first floor of individual buildings. (See guiding
principles 6, 8, and 9 in Table 1 above.) The first 20-30 vertical feet of a
building are the most important portion from the pedestrian’s perspective,
since that is the portion in full view from the sidewalk. Thus, design
standards often address what occurs at the ground floor, such as the
 provision of pedestrian amenities like canopies, emphasized customer
entrances, building orientation to the street or sidewalk, first-floor
transparency (windows vs. solid wall) requirements, and architectural
articulation of long walls (to avoid long expanses of “blank” walls).

Whenever building design is addressed, each community must weigh the
respective merits of employing prescriptive standards or flexible guidelines,
and strike a balance that is appropriate to the local setting. In Colorado
Springs, the consultants heard from city staff that more specific, often
quantitative standards make reviewing development proposals easier. City
staff and neighborhood representatives also spoke strongly about the need
to regulate at least some elements of individual building design, to ensure
good quality, to make new commercial buildings more appealing at street
level, and—especially in many infill and redevelopment areas—to ensure
respect for the existing built context. On the other hand, many private sector developers and real estate consultants (but not all) feel strongly that there is no place for an “architectural police” force in Colorado Springs, and that while there are examples of poor building design in the city, flexibility and personal choice in individual building design should be paramount.

The Clarion team has been directly involved in many approaches to this issue of regulating individual building design. In some communities, voluntary guidelines that seek to encourage appropriately pedestrian-scaled buildings are the preferred approach. Colorado Springs has taken this approach with its Downtown Design Guidelines. In other communities, the design areas that a city believes are too important become the subject of detailed standards, while other areas are addressed through voluntary guidelines. Denver, for example, in its design standards and guidelines for the Golden Triangle zone district, chose to require compliance with a limited number of specific standards aimed at ensuring “human scale” building design at the ground floor. For example, the first 80 feet of building must be built to the edge of the sidewalk and contain a minimum amount of windows. Other areas, such as architectural style, become the subject of more flexible guidelines.

One hybrid approach that Clarion has used with success is a “menu approach,” wherein a city requires an applicant to comply with a specific design standard, and then states a menu of options the applicant can choose from to comply with the standard. For example, the standard might state: “All mixed-use centers shall incorporate community amenities to serve as public gathering places.” Then, following the standard might be a list of 6-7 specific types of amenities (e.g., a water feature, plazas, park, clock tower, etc.) that, if chosen, would satisfy the standard. The cities of Aurora, Colorado, and Overland Park, Kansas, have incorporated this menu approach into new and proposed commercial design standards and guidelines.

(E) Provisions to Address Potential Conflicts in Vertical Mixed-Use Developments. Vertically mixing residential and commercial uses in the same building raises a distinct set of issues that may be appropriate for a zoning code to address, in order to ensure compatibility in use and operations. (More basic public health and safety concerns should be addressed through revisions in the city’s building and fire codes, discussed in section D.3 below.) Accordingly, Zoning Code provisions might include:

- Mitigation of the commercial use’s potential adverse operational impacts on residents in the same building. Possible impacts to address, and potential mitigation options, might include: Noise (e.g., soundproofing between commercial and residential components); smoke and odors/fumes (e.g., proper design of ventilation system required); and limitations on potential nuisance uses (e.g., no nightclubs or live music venues; limits on hours of operation).
• Placement and allocation of shared parking spaces and access. Also, the potential for parking trespass should be addressed—i.e., retail customers using resident parking spaces. One solution might be separate and designated parking areas and entrances.

• Access to each component. In some cases, separate access and entries may be appropriate.

• Parking security (e.g., lighting, patrol).

• The placement of commercial loading and other service areas (e.g., trash collection) needs to maximize commercial convenience and minimize impacts on residents.

• Placement and screening of utility meters. Mixed-use buildings require more meters because residential and commercial uses are assessed at different rates. Their location must be convenient and safe for CSU access, but should be discrete enough to avoid adverse aesthetic impacts.

One zoning approach to address the vertical mixed-use issues listed above may be to adopt performance standards that set the goal of mitigating these impacts, but that allow a builder flexibility to address them through a variety of acceptable techniques.

3. Analysis of Potential Barriers to Mixed-Uses in City’s Building & Safety Codes and Utility Policies

Finally, an important set of regulations and policies that directly affect both built form and mixture of land uses is the city’s adopted building and fire codes, and Colorado Springs Utilities (“CSU”) policies regarding utility placement, access, and maintenance. Our stakeholder interviews with developers and with city staff from the transportation planning and traffic department, from public works, and from CSU, revealed some potential barriers to constructing mixed-use projects in the city.


As culled from the consultants’ interviews of city staff, the following building and fire code issues were raised as those that might challenge development of vertical mixed-use buildings. These issues need to be examined and resolved if the city—through zoning revisions—places new emphasis on mixing residential uses with commercial uses in the same building:
• Adequate fire separation between commercial and residential uses.
• Building height threshold for sprinkler system requirement.
• Length of the process for reviewing and approving requests for building code variances or modifications.
• Inflexible nature of the current codes’ prescriptive standards, versus a more flexible, performance-based code approach to compliance.
• Enhancing the fire resistance of interior building materials.
• Minimum standards for elevators when used by both commercial and residential occupants.
• Minimum number of standpipes required.
• Roadway widths in terms of accommodating fire safety equipment and vehicles.
• Need for pre-application meetings between applicant and building/fire departments.

The issue of addressing and removing potential barriers to mixed-use in the administration of the city’s adopted building and fire codes is an important one that requires much more detailed and specialized study than is within the scope of this project. The list above is an initial attempt at identifying some of the more obvious potential problem areas, and does not include other problem areas that may be latent in the building codes, and which usually take specialized expertise to recognize and address. For a more detailed and in depth review, the city may wish to retain private consultants who specialize in building code analysis and retrofit. There are also out-of-state models to consider, including but not limited to Seattle’s recent building code amendments to accommodate mixed commercial-residential uses, and the State of New Jersey’s new Rehab Code that addresses the unique building challenges associated with retrofitting older, existing buildings for new uses.

b. Other Potential Barriers to Mixed-Use Development.

A related and potentially significant barrier to future mixed-use development is the consultant team’s sense of some institutional resistance to changes in public works policies and standards, particularly as concern streets and utilities. This resistance could make it difficult to site and construct a mix of uses in close proximity to each other in a planned, mixed use center that is friendly to all modes of transportation. While we understand that city and CSU staff were very supportive of the concept for mixed-use development approved at the Lowell Center, some of the most difficult issues between the developer and the city centered not on use and land development standards, but on street widths, traffic mitigation, placement of and access to utilities in public streets, and ongoing maintenance of utilities and public rights-of-way and spaces.

There is a growing track record of success from around Colorado and the country that supports, in the appropriate planning contexts, more narrow streets and alleys and residential and commercial uses developed in very close proximity on the same parcel. To the extent possible, this mixed-use project will build on the street cross-section design and related standards that city staff and CSU continue to develop in the draft TND ordinance. However, in some cases, this Diagnosis document recommends changes in standards that are inconsistent with current public works/utilities standards and have few precedents in the city. For example, this Diagnosis suggests that in the context of designing streets for
mixed-use activity centers, current city policies may raise issues related to arterial street intersections by often requiring the addition of right turn lanes, acceleration lanes, deceleration lanes, wide left-turn lane refuges, large corner radii, and minimal sidewalk width. Another example is current policies about utility placement and spacing in public rights-of-ways, which tend to encourage wide, lateral spacing between different utility lines, as opposed to (for example) placing multiple lines in a single vault. Strictly applied, the current utility spacing and placement policies can be inconsistent with recommendations for narrower streets and alleys in some mixed-use activity centers. Given that these policies are driven by operational and safety considerations, the city and CSU will need to closely examine possible alternatives and variations for application in a mixed-use development environment.

While some of these policies, such as placement and access to utilities and right-of-way maintenance responsibilities, are beyond the scope of this zoning and subdivision code revision effort, other issues such as street design, vehicle access, and related transportation standards will be addressed. These recommendations are based on the consultant team’s national experience in regulating, designing, and building these transportation improvements, and on our research, observation, planning, and design of mixed-use developments. At this point in the project, it is important to have the endorsement and direction of the City Council on the investment of effort and resources in researching and drafting new mixed-use street and transportation standards.

E. Transitions & Context

Zoning standards that require or encourage mixed-use development typically allow relatively high development densities and intensities, which may—if built to the maximum allowed—be substantially greater than the development densities and intensities in surrounding areas. Thus, one of the most important considerations to address is compatibility of new, mixed-use development with its neighboring land uses. This issue will obviously play out when applied to redeveloping or infill sites in established neighborhoods, but is also a concern in newer, more suburban parts of a city experiencing rapid growth and development. Indeed, the most common concern about mixed-use development expressed by the neighborhood representatives we interviewed was “compatibility.”

Compatibility issues and concerns range from the prospect for cut-through vehicular traffic in the neighborhoods, to the proposed scale and design of buildings that will abut residential homes, to hours of operation, noise, illumination of uses, and location of loading and service areas. Our Character Analysis of existing centers reveals a mixed bag...
of efforts to address transitions between the uses in the center and surrounding uses. For example, at the Cheyenne Mountain Center (where Tinseltown is located), we observed significant differences in building scale between the commercial uses in the center and surrounding residential neighborhoods. Compatibility issues are addressed by distancing the center’s commercial buildings from neighboring buildings and by using large streets or topography as separators. Buildings in the center are oriented to their parking lots, and most turn their backs (and loading areas) to adjacent properties.

The Character Analysis’ guiding principles regarding context and transitions point out the importance of acknowledging the existing built and natural environments and of more thoughtful treatment of a mixed-use development’s edges. One approach that the Clarion team has often taken to address these legitimate concerns is through specific “transition” standards and guidelines. The liberal use of graphics and creative visual presentations can also help to allay community concerns by illustrating a wide variety of permitted building scales and designs that can be, quite often, very attractive and compatible with adjacent, lower-density residential uses.

A related, but different compatibility issue than the one discussed above is the compatibility of different land uses within the mixed-use district or development. It is very important to relate different land uses within a mixed-use district or development to each other in a way that avoids, to the extent possible, potential conflicts between the different user groups. Thus, standards and guidelines must address the different parking, access, and other “operating” demands posed by a potentially diverse mix of land uses in close proximity to each other, especially when the mix includes residential uses in close proximity to commercial uses. (See also sections III.D.2. and D.3 above regarding issues related to mixing residential with commercial uses in the same building.)

Colorado Springs’ Zoning Code contains review criteria for concept and development plans, and for PUD developments, that require projects to be “compatible,” but it does not include generally applicable development standards that specify how or to what extent proposed development must be compatible with its surroundings. The one exception is the Code’s requirement for landscaped buffers between residential and non-residential uses, but as discussed above, this tool is often wielded like a sledgehammer when a chisel may be the more appropriate choice.

Accordingly, we recommend the addition of the following types of transition and compatibility standards that should be applicable to new mixed-use development in the city:

(A) Give the developer a choice among various tools to ensure smooth transitions between different types or intensities of uses. These tools should be applicable to different uses within a center, and to the edges of the center adjacent to residential neighborhoods. These transition tools might include:
- Siting of similar or complementary uses near each other (e.g., residential uses within a commercial activity center development sited along edges shared with an existing residential neighborhood).
• Use of a rear alley between rear commercial parking areas and adjacent residential lots.
• Use of compatible architectural/building design, such as stepping down in building height, use of similar building materials, colors, and roof treatments, similar orientation to the street, and similar proportions in building mass and outdoor space.
• Open space/green belts as dividers.
• Traffic calming techniques.
• Use of landscaped buffers, fences, and walls.

(B) Limits on certain uses near residential uses, such as bars, restaurants with late operating hours, and similar establishments.

(C) Residential protection standards that allow the city to place conditions on development approval that mitigate potential impacts, including the ability to address, among other things, hours of operation; lighting; additional landscaping beyond the minimums required; height restrictions; and siting of potentially noxious services such as parking, loading, trash collection, and outdoor vending machines.

(D) For new mixed-use infill development or redevelopment in older and established neighborhoods, require contextual building design and siting requirements. These might include guidelines or standards addressing contextual setbacks, building materials, building height, building scale, or roof pitch.
• For example, front building setbacks are typically a critical component of an existing built context in older neighborhoods. Thus, maximum front building setbacks may be appropriate in such cases. Alternately, “contextual” front setback standards could be used, which allows some flexibility by permitting buildings to be setback anywhere between 0 feet and the average front setback of existing buildings located on the same block.

(E) **Provisions for Screening Commercial Service Areas.** Section 7.4.323 of the Zoning Code, and related policies, require screening around any refuse collection area, loading or utility service area, vehicle repair bay, or vehicle fueling area that is visible to the public. Screening must be at least six feet tall, and may be an opaque fence or wall, including chain link fences with slats, or may be vegetation.

This approach to screening commercial service area may be supplemented in the new mixed-use zoning by requirements to integrate service areas into the architecture of the primary building, to the extent possible, and to require the same quality of materials for a screening wall or fence as used on the primary building. These suggestions may help hide these service areas, and reduce their visual and other nuisance impacts on adjoining uses and properties, in a more subtle fashion than simply erecting a chain link fence around a service area sited on the perimeter of the parcel.
F. Transportation & Circulation

1. Overview

The Character Analysis of existing centers revealed an overwhelming bias in the majority of the centers to accommodate first and foremost persons traveling by automobile, with relatively little thought given to accommodation of alternative modes, particularly walking. The Chapel Hills Mall regional activity center is probably the extreme example of automobile-oriented development; one Task Force member related how scary it was to travel on foot between two bookstores located within easy walking distance of each other, but separated by parking lots with no pedestrian ways and by driveways with no incorporated pedestrian crossings. On the other end of the spectrum, some of the smaller centers located in older, established neighborhoods, such as the Templeton Gap center and the Bon center, have retained relatively stronger pedestrian connections to surrounding residential neighborhoods (there is even a well-used pedestrian/bike trail located directly behind the Bon center). These smaller centers have the advantage, also, of locations on older streets that offer attractive pedestrian amenities such as street trees, landscaped medians, crosswalks at intersections, and detached sidewalks.

The Character Analysis’ guiding principles addressing transportation and circulation are intended to break down the old prototype and bias toward automobile-oriented developments, and provide greater opportunities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users. These principles are echoed in Colorado Springs’ Comprehensive Plan, Long Range Public Transportation Plan (2001 draft), and its Intermodal Transportation Plan (2001), in which the city commits itself to increase the ease of, and broaden the options for, alternatives to the automobile. The objective is to create an environment that will encourage and allow people, including the young and elderly, to move comfortably around all parts of the city by whatever means they desire. Many people will walk if there is a direct, continuous, safe, pleasant, and secure pedestrian route for doing so. People will ride bicycles if they can do so safely. People will use public transit if it is convenient and pleasant and there are pedestrian connections between the transit stop and destination. People will use modes of transportation besides the automobile if the other modes provide reasonable alternatives.

Achieving the Comprehensive Plan’s goal of encouraging future development in concentrated mixed-use “activity centers,” will be dependent on integration of multi-modal transportation opportunities. While the five different Plan-defined centers vary in purpose, size, and character, all must be connected appropriately with surrounding land.
uses if they are to endure, and visitors must be able to move about on the sites if such centers are to thrive. The transportation infrastructure and intermodal needs vary between center types. On the one extreme, neighborhood activity centers are small-scale, pedestrian-oriented centers that serve local residents. Easy access to neighborhood centers—for pedestrians, bicyclists, and, to a lesser degree, automobiles—will be critical to the center’s vitality. Transit access is less important than other modes because of the neighborhood centers’ localized market, although access to transit is still desirable. Neighborhood centers must be pedestrian oriented, and typically are no more than a few acres in size, making internal circulation relatively unimportant.

Regional activity centers, at the other extreme, are large (50 acres or more) and serve a regional market with significant commercial and employment activity. Regional centers typically are located at the intersections of major roadways to facilitate regional access, and neighborhood access is relatively less important. Given their regional draw, transit service is important and transit stops should be an integral part of regional activity center designs. As the center grows in size, internal vehicle and pedestrian access becomes more important, enabling visitor transactions among the mixed uses present at the site. These aspects make street hierarchy, parking standards, and pedestrian paths important elements at the larger-scale mixed-use centers, like the community, commercial, and regional activity centers.

Table 5 below captures an important distinction among mixed-use centers in their relationships to the different modes of transportation and related infrastructure needs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Activity Center</th>
<th>Pedestrian/Bicycle</th>
<th>Public Transit</th>
<th>Automobile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Activity Center</td>
<td>****</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Center</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Center</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Center</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>****</td>
<td>*****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Activity Center</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>****</td>
<td>****</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key:
- * Necessary, But Not As Important
- ** Important
- *** Very Important
- **** Absolutely Necessary

Because the mixed-use center concept has been introduced so recently in the city, there are some transportation standards that can support the mixed-use goals that have not been integrated into the city’s governing transportation rules and policies. However, the city also has several standards and requirements in place already that are amenable to activity centers, and those can be modified readily to address them. Both categories are discussed in the following subsections.
2. **Existing Policy Framework for Accommodating Intermodal Transportation**

The city adopted its Intermodal Transportation Plan (“ITP”) in April 2001. The ITP contains the planning and policy basis for requiring multi-modal options in future mixed-use developments. ITP recommendations include implementing “methods by which we can improve pedestrian mobility within neighborhoods, improve mobility within commercial centers, and ways to improve access between the two” and “design policies for pedestrian circulation and access in developing areas of the city.” However, there are gaps in the ITP that should be addressed to facilitate multi-modal implementation in mixed-use centers:

- The Transit Element (Section 7) should identify links between transit services and activity centers, especially the more concentrated employment centers and regional activity centers, which will be destinations for transit users and desirable locations for transit stops. This is implied in Objective A-1.5, (Section 3, p.30), but could be clarified.

- The Bicycle Element (Section 8, Table 21) cites AASHTO requirements for bicycle facilities—Bicycle Route: 14-foot outside travel lane; Bicycle Lane: 5-foot minimum from curb face and 3-foot minimum from pavement edge.
  - These bicycle facility standards should be included in new transportation and street standards for mixed-use developments, and ultimately should be incorporated into the Public Works Design Manual to ensure that new roadways accommodate these requirements. Bike facilities in activity centers should connect to adjacent city and regional bike trails and facilities.

- The Pedestrian Element (Section 9) of the ITP identifies as a “Needs” deficiencies in the current system with respect to sidewalk width and gaps in the system. The ITP calls for a study of sidewalk gaps, but also should recommend steps to address known deficiencies in sidewalk widths and address other pertinent pedestrian elements such as directness, street crossings, visual interest and amenities, and security. The Pedestrian Element also should describe a system to prioritize sidewalk improvements and identify potential funding sources. This will be important to the infill and redevelopment of mixed-use centers in older, established neighborhoods.

Figure 14—Clear, direct internal pedestrian connections, Harmony and College Center, Fort Collins, Colorado.
New transportation standards for mixed-use development should address all these pedestrian elements, including clear standards that identify the conditions for when sidewalks must be attached or detached to the adjacent roadway. Generally, because of their emphasis on pedestrian accessibility, most centers should contain sidewalks and pedestrian ways that are relatively wide (e.g., 5 feet wide) and detached from the curb wherever practicable.

### 3. Diagnosis of the Draft TND Ordinance’s Transportation Standards (Including Street Cross-Sections)

The draft TND ordinance represents the city’s first formalized attempt to codify transportation and circulation standards that more fully accommodate multiple modes of transportation. It also incorporates some significant alternatives to the city’s street designs that have been on the books for decades. As such, the consultant team views the draft TND ordinance as a natural launching pad for any new or revised transportation standards to encourage and facilitate mixed-use development in the city consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

While the draft TND ordinance does not refer specifically to mixed-use centers, the street cross sections clearly reflect mixed uses, and the overall TND concept is compatible with both neighborhood and community activity centers that might be located in a traditional residential neighborhood. For example, the TND Main Street cross section provides wider sidewalks, but restricts off-street parking. This is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan goals for neighborhood and community activity centers that seek to balance pedestrians and bicycles with automobiles.

The Character Analysis’ guiding principles encourage the city to focus more resources on assuring all public streets live up to their antecedents in Colorado Springs’ older neighborhoods and include the types of amenities that help make those older streets so walkable, including street trees, tree lawns, detached and roomy sidewalks, frequent crossings at marked or signaled intersections, and infrequent curb cuts. The standards for several TND street types improve upon the existing Public Works standards in providing for pedestrians and bicyclists. For example, TND “Parkway” streets include 6-foot sidewalks and 12-foot bicycle trails. In contrast, existing standards for Major Arterials include 4-foot sidewalks and recommend, “bicycle travel should not be encouraged unless no alternative routes are available.”

The Character Analysis’ guiding principles also seek to improve vehicle access to and circulation within a center by distributing traffic flow along a more diverse and hierarchical internal street system, instead of concentrating local traffic at a few major intersections. The TND concepts for street hierarchy can also be applied to site planning for the larger commercial, employment, and regional activity centers. For example, elements of the recommended street network for traditional neighborhood development diagramed on page 26 of the draft TND ordinance (dated 8/21/01) could provide a framework for an internal circulation plan, with only slight revisions to effectively circulate traffic throughout the larger activity centers (e.g., eliminate alleys, modify block sizes as needed). The draft
TND ordinance also emphasizes a clear hierarchy of streets, shared parking opportunities, importance of pedestrians, and balance between internal circulation and external access. A hierarchical street system prevents transitioning from larger, faster roadways directly to smaller, slower neighborhood streets—a design flaw which could preclude efficient vehicle access and adversely affect pedestrian activity. Shared parking more efficiently employs space dedicated for that purpose by reducing redundant facilities. (See more discussion of parking recommendations in Section III.D.1, above.)

Connectivity is another element addressed in the draft TND ordinance that is a critical component of mixed-use centers. The various TND street cross section criteria (p.22-25) specify acceptable connections between street types; for example, a “TND Street” may connect to any other street except a Parkway (p.23). These connectivity standards enhance traffic flow entering and exiting TND neighborhoods, thereby clarifying driver expectancy and improving pedestrian circulation while eliminating bottlenecks. Similar connection guidelines are not provided in existing subdivision or Public Works standards.

The draft TND ordinance also identifies the need for central transit stops, identifies bicycle facilities in diagrams (p.24-25), and recognizes the importance of streetscape aesthetics and other amenities in the neighborhood. All these features are important to encourage alternate modes of travel. The draft TND ordinance does not, however, adequately address interaction between pedestrians and automobiles at street intersections and mid-block crossings. In new mixed-use developments, we would recommend consideration of the following features to encourage alternate modes of travel to and within activity centers:

- Bulb-outs, median refuge islands, or similar treatments to facilitate pedestrian crossing at intersections;
- Mid-block crossing locations, guidelines, and standards;
- Highlighting crosswalks by using raised crosswalk surfaces or alternative paving materials, and other crosswalk treatments, including refuge islands in Avenues and Parkways; and
- Crosswalk signal alternatives to the button-activated crosswalk signals, such as lead pedestrian walk phase, countdown times, and audible walk indicators compliant with the federal American with Disabilities Act.

Future mixed-use street design guidelines should also improve on the TND street guidelines by clarifying the street types where bicycle facilities are allowed (e.g., Main Street and smaller) versus where they are required (e.g., Avenue and Parkway), and the widths of on- and off-street bicycle facilities. Operation details, such as designing how a right turn lane crosses a bike lane, also should be identified.
The good news is that each of the TND street cross sections identified in the draft TND ordinance will probably be applicable to one or more of the proposed mixed-use activity centers, whether as perimeter or internal roadway types. In the next phase of this project, the consultants will recommend a specific street hierarchy and a set of cross sections for the five types of mixed-use centers. Recognizing and building upon the amount of staff input and effort already invested into the draft TND ordinance, those recommendations will focus primarily on better integration of alternative mode design requirements and improved intersection treatments.

4. Diagnosis of Transportation & Circulation Standards in the City’s Zoning & Subdivision Codes

As relates to mixed-use development, the two most critical shortcomings in the city’s relevant zoning and subdivision transportation standards are: (1) Inadequate facilities and standards to safely accommodate pedestrians in the transportation mix, and (2) insufficient facilities to accommodate non-automobile travelers to and within mixed-use center sites. Without appropriate intermodal facilities, the integration of multiple uses around and within activity centers may be frustrated.

There is a stated bias in the city’s large street standards (Types I, II, and III Major Arterials) toward the relatively unimpeded flow of high-speed vehicle travel. Subdivision Code, §7.7.702. This may not necessarily be a hindrance to good, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented activity centers, because even the largest regional activity centers will be built at the edge of major arterials, and not with these streets running through their middle. However, the city’s limits on the frequency of signalized intersections at major arterials could adversely affect access to activity centers by forcing all traffic to a few points, which in turn could make intermediate roads leading into and through the activity center subject to excessive design standards. Here the benefits of a clear hierarchy or grid of streets, which can allow traffic dispersal, come into play with the major arterials. Revisions to city policy on signal progression and intersection spacing will also play a major role in assuring safe pedestrian access to the larger centers.

The current transportation standards do not specify connectivity guidelines for which types of streets are allowed to intersect. The category of street where this may be particularly critical is the intermediate streets (i.e., Minor Arterial—Types I and II, and "Avenue" and "Parkway" in the draft TND ordinance). These streets may lead from the large activity centers into surrounding residential neighborhoods, but they should not adversely affect the flow of alternate mode trips to and from the center. Along some edges of the activity center, there need to be pedestrian, bicycle, and transit friendly...
streets connecting the center with its context, to prevent the center from becoming an isolated, vehicle-dependent island.

5. Diagnosis of Transportation & Circulation Standards in the Subdivision Policy/Public Works Manual

Part 7 of the city’s Subdivision Code contains regulations for the provision and design of public streets. However, most of the specific street design requirements and construction criteria are found in the Subdivision Policy/Public Works Design Manual ("Manual"), which the city adopted in 1991. Because the Manual predates the mixed-use activity center concept by more than a decade, its standards do not clearly accommodate this newest development concept. However, similar land uses that were in existence when the Manual was written (e.g., neighborhoods, industrial/commercial areas, etc.) can be updated with current terminology to reflect new mixed-use center concepts.


The following summarizes general problem areas identified in the Manual, as well as recommended revisions to the Manual, to facilitate mixed-use development:

- The standards do not recognize activity centers, nor suggest which roadway types are appropriate in different sizes of centers.

- Standards should be clear that when streets or intersections are widened, improvements must include considerations for pedestrian and bicycle mobility as well as the automobile.

- Essentially no discussion of intersections treatments to encourage pedestrian activities (the sections on crosswalks and crossing signals identify responsibility only). Intersections on the perimeter of, and internal to, activity centers will determine accessibility by all alternative mode users.

- Bicycle lanes are mentioned, though always secondary to automobile traffic. For example, on Major Arterials, “on-street bicycle travel should not be encouraged unless no alternative routes are available.” No specific design standards for bicycle lanes are provided. To facilitate bicycle travel, the standards should provide more balance in planning and more specificity in design.

- Minimal recognition is made of pedestrians or other users. For example, the “sight distance requirements” do not recognize the need to see pedestrians or bicyclists at an intersection. A minor revision in this document can reinforce the importance of alternate mode users.

- The description of “medians” does not include mid-block islands or mention pedestrian users. Lines of sight standards should apply here as well, for the safety of pedestrians in the medians.

- The diagrams (pp.8-13) do not include sidewalks or crosswalks.
b. Mitigation of Traffic Impacts in Mixed Use Activity Centers.

Under current Manual policies and requirements, applicants must submit a traffic impact study for all proposed nonresidential developments generating more than 100 peak hour vehicle trips, and for large multi-family (more than 150 units) development proposals in the city. The study is based on assumptions about the future number of vehicle trips generated by the proposed land uses, and applicants must mitigate any projected adverse impacts on the surrounding, existing or planned transportation system that may result from those increased vehicle trips. Traffic impact mitigation in Colorado Springs, as it is in many other cities, is based not on actual traffic outcomes, but on projections of future traffic patterns, trips, and impacts.

However, as applied to mixed-use development, prevailing practices governing traffic impact mitigation may fall short. That is because in combination, the right mix of uses in an activity center has the potential over time to result in fewer vehicle trips than the amount generated by those uses taken separately. For example, siting residential uses in close proximity to shopping uses such as a grocery store, or in close proximity to employment uses, has the potential to reduce the number of vehicle trips generated by both the residential uses and the commercial uses, because walking, biking, and transit become more viable travel options. In the prevailing prospective approach to traffic impact mitigation, these potential trip reductions may not be fully recognized, or assumptions about such reductions may be too conservative compared to actual results.

In addition, selling mixed-use development to the general citizenry usually means pledging vigilance in addressing potential adverse traffic impacts on surrounding neighborhoods. However, analysis of traffic impacts from new mixed-use developments is still a fledging field, making projections of future impacts difficult. If a city is too vigilant in addressing predictions of possible adverse impacts, it may inhibit future mixed-use development. On the other hand, resident support is critical, so a city that only gets the usual “one bite at the apple” to address possible traffic impacts is under pressure to take a conservative, better-safe-than-sorry approach.

New traffic planning techniques are being finessed to address these issues and the unique qualities of mixed-use centers. One option that city transportation staff has expressed interest in, and which the consultant team will explore further in the next stages of this project, is the concept of a “trip generation budget” for mixed-use development projects. Generally, under such a system, a mixed-use development would work with the city to calculate the maximum number of vehicle trips the project could generate. The developer receives credit for evidencing a mix of land uses that would reduce the overall number of vehicle trips through the substitution of alternative modes such as walking or transit. In an important distinction from some current practice, the total trip generation budget would be allocated to each phase of the proposed development, with developer commitments that each phase would not generate more than the agreed-upon amount of vehicle trips. An allocation between phases is important, so that the last persons building in the project are not stuck paying for a disproportionate amount of traffic improvements resulting from prior phases’ impacts. In another important distinction from current practice, developer commitments to the total trip generation budget and allocations are
binding, and the city has not only the opportunity to check actual outcomes as the mixed-use center is built and operating, but also recourse to the original developer(s) for additional improvements/mitigation if the preliminary traffic impact projections fall short.

Thus, in exchange for the flexibility offered mixed-use developers to go outside the standard impact analysis box and account for potential trip reductions, the city—and a mixed-use center’s neighbors—get real assurances that actual traffic outcomes will match the developer’s up-front projections. It should be noted that while the trip budget option is attractive because of the flexibility it offers mixed-use developers, there may be significant burdens associated with tracking and administering such a system over time. Moreover, such an option would have to be considered carefully for its potential to dissuade infill and redevelopment, where existing transportation facilities may be closer to city-defined capacity than more suburban, greenfield locations.

c. Transitions To Activity Centers.

One of the key transportation concepts underlying the Comprehensive Plan’s mixed-use centers is a shift in balance from vehicle predominance to greater integration of alternate modes of travel. Existing Public Works standards are geared toward efficient movement of vehicles, reflecting primary objectives at the time the standards were written, as well as development preferences for auto-oriented uses. Design elements, signage, and monumentation should inform people when they enter mixed-use centers. Vehicle drivers should be able to recognize the increased presence of pedestrians and bicyclists, who in turn perceive the improved accommodation of alternate-mode travel and increased personal safety. The general concepts listed below could be steps to achieve these objectives; these conceptual measures will be reviewed and refined during subsequent stages of this project:

- Street widths become narrower and travel speeds are reduced;
- Curb returns are smaller, but perhaps reinforced (to prevent damage from delivery trucks jumping the curb when turning);
- Medians and islands are more common for pedestrian refuge;
- On-street parking is diagonal rather than parallel;
- Mid-block and intersection crosswalks are enhanced with respect to paving treatments, signal activation, curb cuts, and similar elements;
- Sidewalk system is integrated more thoroughly into the activity center movement patterns; and
- Entryway landscaping and signage indicates the boundary of an activity center.

d. Specific Street Cross-Section Issues.

(1) Freeways and Expressways.

The largest roadway types are vital connectors, primarily for vehicles and transit, to larger activity centers with regional markets. While designing freeways and expressways is likely to be within State purview, City standards should be developed to contribute to planning for activity centers.
• No standards for HOV/bus lanes

(2) **Major Arterials.**

These roadways may form the perimeter of larger Activity Centers, and provide vital connections for automobiles and transit to these sites. Major arterials should be designed to prevent becoming barriers to pedestrians and bicyclists entering large Activity Centers from surrounding areas.

• No standards for pedestrian access, crosswalks at intersections or mid-block crossings
• Planning Characteristics (#C) do not specify sidewalk width or setback distance
• Design Characteristics not provided for intersection treatments
• Design Characteristics not provided for bicycle lanes
• Design Characteristics not provided for bus pull outs
• Traffic Characteristics (#D) do not specify median widths

(3) **Minor Arterials.**

These roadways may be the primary interior thoroughfares at larger activity centers, and may provide primary access to smaller mixed-use areas. As such, minor arterials provide important connections for all modes of travel to activity centers, and should be designed to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists entering activity centers from surrounding areas.

• No standards for pedestrian access, crosswalks at intersections or mid-blocks
• Traffic Characteristics (#C) do not specify sidewalk width or setback distance
• Traffic Characteristics (#D) do not specify median widths, nor require raised medians which should be raised for pedestrian refuge islands
• Design Characteristics not provided for bicycle lanes
• Design Characteristics not provided for bus pull outs
• Cross Sections (p.31) sidewalks in 140’ ROW are not set back, as required
• The City should evaluate the low priority placed on bicycle facilities in Planning Characteristics (#C)

(4) **Collector Streets.**

Collector Streets may be an important intermediate roadway type at large activity centers and may provide primary access to smaller mixed-use areas. As such, collector streets provide important connections for all modes of travel to activity centers, and should integrate alternate modes of travel.

• No standards for pedestrian access, crosswalks at intersections
• Planning Characteristics (#C) do not specify sidewalk width or setback distance
• Planning Characteristics (#D) intent unclear with respect to bike lanes
• Design Characteristics not provided for bicycle lanes
(5) **Residential Streets and Minor Residential Streets.**

Residential Streets may provide secondary access inside larger activity centers, and may provide primary access to smaller mixed-use areas. As such, residential streets provide important connections for all modes of travel to activity centers, and should integrate alternate modes of travel.

- No standards for pedestrian access, crosswalks at intersections
- Planning Characteristics do not specify sidewalk width or setback distance

(6) **Hillside Residential Streets.**

These streets may be incorporated to address specific topographic requirements at some activity centers.

- No standards for pedestrian access, crosswalks at intersections
- Planning Characteristics do not describe sidewalk criteria

(7) **Industrial/Commercial Streets.**

These streets may be incorporated to address specific land uses at some activity centers.

- No standards for pedestrian access, crosswalks at intersections
- Planning Characteristics do not describe sidewalk criteria
- Planning/Design Characteristics not provided for bicycle lanes
- Cross Section (p.44) does not reflect sidewalks

(8) **Frontage Roads.**

Frontage Roads may form a secondary (“back door”) perimeter to activity centers, and should be designed to avoid becoming a barrier to alternative travel modes.

- No standards for pedestrian access, crosswalks at intersections
- Planning Characteristics do not describe sidewalk criteria
- Planning/Design Characteristics are not provided for bicycle lanes
- Cross Section (p.44) does not reflect sidewalks

Finally, the matrix of “Facility Types x Features” does not mention bicycle lanes, crosswalks or signal timing for pedestrians, HOV/bus lanes on freeways or expressways, and does not reflect activity centers.

**G. Procedures For The Review Of Mixed-Use Development**

To encourage mixed-use development, it is imperative that developing mixed-use be at least as easy as doing a more conventional, single-purpose development. This is true not only concerning mixed-use development standards, but also the development review process for new mixed-use development.
The new, mixed-use zoning standards and guidelines must attract appropriate new investment in the city. Today, if a developer in Colorado Springs wants to build a mixed-use development like Lowell Center or Spring Creek, his only procedural recourse is a very long, negotiated, and public rezoning process. For most investors, the time taken to gain necessary approvals is critically important, and a cumbersome review process that threatens delay is a good reason to look elsewhere. Accordingly, we believe it is imperative that the review procedures work to make mixed-use development as much of a “by-right” development option, as possible. This means the process to approve new mixed-use developments should be as streamlined as possible, or at least no more lengthy or involved as the process for conventional, single-purpose developments.

The developer and private sector interviewees stated their firm belief that review of new mixed-use development in Colorado Springs must be by-right and administrative, rather than discretionary, whenever possible. If a discretionary, rezoning process is the only way to get mixed-use development approved in the city, these interviewees predicted little change in future development patterns from today’s single-purpose, single-use pattern.

Accordingly, we recommend the following methods to streamline review of applications for mixed-use development, and make review of mixed-uses on par with review of single-use development:

• Strongly consider alternatives to voluntary rezoning as the only vehicle for mixed-use development. See the detailed discussion of alternative implementation approaches in Section IV of this Diagnosis, below.

• To the maximum extent possible, allow mixed-use development as permitted uses, rather than as conditional uses, with quality standards to ensure compatibility.

• Because of the significant new standards and guidelines anticipated in this Diagnosis, it is important to have some city review of proposed mixed-use development to ensure compliance prior to construction. Since conventional commercial development is subject only to administrative development plan review in most cases, mixed-use development should similarly be subject only to administrative review of a development plan prior to building permit issuance. In addition, since staff may refer a conventional development plan to the Planning Commission for consideration at a public hearing (§7.5.503.A), this same referral option should apply to applications for a mixed-use development plan.

It is important to stress that a streamlined review process does not mean sacrificing quality design and controls on new mixed-use development. It does mean that whatever development and design standards are adopted should be clear and concise to lend as much certainty to the process as possible and to protect existing residential neighborhoods. (See discussion of building and development standards in section III.D. above.) It may also mean the thoughtful use of incentives such as density bonuses to make mixed-use a more appealing option. (See discussion of regulatory incentives in section III.C.6 below.)
Finally, when a city is considering implementation of detailed, new design standards, a procedural issue often arises whether to employ a specialized design board or commission to review subject applications. Such design review boards are often comprised of architects, urban designers, and other professionals with expertise in real estate, site planning, building design, or architecture. The alternative approach is to have the city’s professional planning and building staff review applications for compliance with all applicable standards, including design standards. Clarion’s experience with this issue is that in most every circumstance, professional planners of the caliber employed by Colorado Springs are very capable of successfully and fairly applying detailed design standards of the type described in this Diagnosis.
IV. APPLYING NEW MIXED-USE STANDARDS & GUIDELINES

As this Diagnosis shows, there is very little in the current zoning and subdivision codes to address mixed-use development, and some existing regulations may actually hamstring and discourage mixed-use. Ultimately, a new set of zoning development and design standards and guidelines will be needed to guide and manage future mixed-use development in Colorado Springs. Therefore, it is imperative that the city decides how and in what way these new standards and guidelines will be applied. In this section, we raise the threshold issue whether or to what extent these standards should be prescriptive, and present several alternative approaches to applying new mixed-use standards and guidelines.

A. Threshold Issue: Choices Along The Prescriptive/Enabling Continuum

The Comprehensive Plan states a clear preference for new mixed-use centers versus single-use developments in the future. As shown in this Diagnosis, under current land development rules, the city is not getting mixed use as the prevalent development form. Thus, an important threshold issue is whether the new rules for mixed-use development should be prescriptive, or enabling, or some combination in between. It may be helpful to think of this as choosing a point along a continuum, with a purely prescriptive system—in which the mixed-use standards are mandatory—on one end, and a purely enabling system—where mixed use is just an option—on the other end. Colorado Springs will need to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of the various choices, and pinpoint the balance that reflects its own unique frame of reference.

1. Prescriptive Systems—Advantages & Disadvantages

In a prescriptive system, developers must comply with applicable mixed-use zone district regulations or specific development standards that might require, for example, a mixing of uses, better pedestrian connections within a center and to surrounding uses, incorporation of new types of streets, or specific approaches to ground-floor building design.

The advantages of a prescriptive approach to implementing new mixed-use regulations include the following:

- A prescriptive system will more likely result in mixed-use centers as the prevalent form of new development in the city.
- A prescriptive approach implements the intent of the Comprehensive Plan, with resulting benefits that include reduced vehicle trips and traffic congestion; improved pedestrian, bike, and transit travel choices for residents; and alternative housing choices.
- A prescriptive approach builds certainty into the Zoning Code, especially if implemented through a streamlined review process. Developers know ahead of time that mixed-use development will be required in the specified circumstances and that approvals will likely take a fairly predictable amount of time, and can therefore undertake their business planning accordingly.
The disadvantages of a prescriptive approach to implementing new mixed-use regulations include the following:

- A prescriptive approach will likely arouse more opposition from the real estate development community, although well-tailored incentives may help take the sting out of such an approach.

- A prescriptive approach may push some development into unincorporated El Paso County.

- A prescriptive approach may be less flexible in terms of responding to immediate market demand at an individual site.

2. **Enabling Systems—Advantages & Disadvantages.**

In an enabling system, the choice to rezone or to develop mixed uses is left to the developer, and is not forced under any zoning prescription. However, typically even in an enabling scenario, once the choice is made, the developer must still comply with any development and design standards applicable to mixed-use development.

The advantages of an enabling approach to implementing new mixed-use regulations include the following:

- An enabling approach is familiar, and will likely have more support from the real estate development community.

- While probably not as effective in implementing the Comprehensive Plan and promoting a new pattern of development as a prescriptive approach, an enabling approach may still be more effective than the current “laissez-faire” approach. An enabling approach’s effectiveness may be increased if incentives are layered on to encourage mixed use, and the playing field that now favors single-use developments is leveled even more. For example, the city could level the playing field by making conventional development subject to minimum standards in the areas of pedestrian/bike connections, provision of community amenities, and better transitions to adjoining uses. (See also the more detailed discussion of regulatory incentives in subsection IV.C.6 below.)

The disadvantages of an enabling approach to implementing new mixed-use regulations include the following:

- An enabling approach is less likely to make mixed-use development the prevalent form of future development in the city.

- If the playing field is not leveled (see above), conventional development will remain the easier and more popular choice.
• Our collective experiences across the country shows that a more enabling approach generally is less successful in achieving mixed-use planning goals than a prescriptive approach.

3. **A Related Issue: Guidelines Versus Standards**

Finally, under either a prescriptive or enabling system, a related issue is the desired balance between development and design guidelines (things one “should” do), versus standards (things one “shall” do), that will apply to mixed-use development. Compared to standards, guidelines leave it fairly wide open for a developer to site, design, and develop a mixed-use center as he sees fit, subject only to the direction offered in the guidelines. For example, a guideline may suggest a minimum density for the residential component of a mixed-use development, but the developer may always choose to build to a lower density than the minimum.

**B. General Recommended Framework for Application of New Mixed-Use Zoning**

Based on our national experience, our tours of the city, the detailed Character Analysis of existing centers, and the need to keep things as simple to administer as possible, the consultants recommend the following basic framework for organizing and applying new standards/guidelines for mixed use development in the city.

The Plan details five different types of mixed-use centers in which most future commercial and employment development demand should be accommodated:

(A) Neighborhood Activity Center,
(B) Community Activity Center,
(C) Commercial Center,
(D) Employment Center, and
(E) Regional Activity Center.

The city can be broken down, geographically, into two general categories:

(A) Older and established locations/areas (developed before 1985); and
(B) Newer and developing locations/areas (developed since 1985, plus true “greenfield” sites).

Combining the five different types of centers from the Plan, with the two different types of geographic location, results in a maximum 10 different variations of center/location combinations that should be addressed in the new mixed-use zone districts, standards, and guidelines. We strongly recommend that the number of new zone districts, or other variations of centers/location combinations addressed, be kept to a minimum to reduce the burden on developers and staff alike. In the following sections, we recommend several different zoning approaches for regulating mixed-use development in all its possible center type/location combinations described above.
C. Alternative Zoning Approaches to Applying New Mixed-Use Standards & Guidelines

As discussed in this Diagnosis, one obvious way to encourage or enable mixed use centers in Colorado Springs is to chip away at the single-purpose zone districts by allowing (or requiring), where appropriate, a mix of different principal land uses vertically or horizontally on the same parcel or site, or in the same building. The city can choose from several possible zoning approaches to achieve this mixed-use goal, namely:

(A) Create 5 New Zone Districts for Each Type of Mixed Use Center.
(B) Create 10 New Zone Districts for Each Variation of Center/Location Combinations.
(C) Add New Uses in Existing Zone Districts to Encourage Mixed-Use Development.
(D) Create New “Activity Center” Use and Development Standards.
(E) Create New Development Standards for All New Non-Residential Development.
(F) Create Regulatory Incentives for Mixed Use.

It is important to note that these approaches are not mutually exclusive; combinations of several may ultimately prove to be the preferred approach. Indeed, the staff's recommended approach, described in section IV.D below, is a combination of new zone districts, new development standards and guidelines, and regulatory incentives. Each of the above six approaches is described more fully below.

1. Create Five New Zone Districts for Each of the Centers

The Comprehensive Plan details five different types of mixed-use centers in which most future commercial and employment demand in the city should be accommodated:

(A) Neighborhood Activity Center,
(B) Community Activity Center,
(C) Commercial Center,
(D) Employment Center, and
(E) Regional Activity Center.

One zoning approach would be to create five new zone districts that align with each type of mixed-use center listed above. Zone districts in Colorado Springs are either (1) base districts, (2) special purpose districts, or (3) overlay districts. A base district is a delineated area in the City within which all land uses and structures are governed by a specific group of use standards set forth in the Zoning Code. An overlay zone district prescribes special use and/or development regulations that are applied only in combination with a base zone district. Typically, the more specific overlay zone regulations will trump any conflicting regulations in the base zone district. The city’s current hillside and historic preservation zone districts are overlay zone districts. Special purpose zone districts are base zone districts intended to accommodate unique public or quasi-public uses, such as parks, police stations, or utility production facilities, or provide areas for unique combinations of recreational and cultural facilities to promote tourism in
the city. The city’s current public facilities (PF) and planned cultural resort (PCR) districts are special purpose zone districts.

In this approach to enabling mixed-use development in the city, five new base zones or five new overlay zone districts could be created. The overlay zone approach would layer targeted use restrictions, and development standards and guidelines for mixed-use development on top of the applicable base zone requirements, which would remain in place except to the extent they conflict with the overlay zone requirements. Alternately, five new base zone districts could be created that are specially designed to allow mixed-use developments.

In either the overlay or base zone approach, the new district would likely contain regulations generally applicable to the type of center enabled, such as permitted uses, and two sets of regulations applicable depending whether the center is sited in an older, established part of the city or in a newer, developing part of the city.

New zone districts are either mapped upon adoption, or “float” until anchored to a specific property through an application for rezoning. This raises an important issue. It is our understanding that the city will not take the initiative to map newly created base zone districts and rezone property on its own. It is less clear whether the city would consider mapping an overlay mixed-use zone upon adoption; there is precedence in past city actions when it mapped the hillside overlay and historic preservation overlay zone districts upon adoption.

As with any alternative, there are both advantages and disadvantages of choosing to create new zone districts to implement mixed-use planning goals in Colorado Springs.

The advantages of this approach include:

• Creating and mapping new zone districts to facilitate a new kind of land use development pattern is a straightforward and easy-to-understand approach.

• Each new zone district, whether an overlay or a base zone, can be tailored to the specific type of center listed in the Comprehensive Plan. However, there is less potential for conflict over applicable regulations when a base zone district approach is used, versus a base + overlay zone district approach.
  o Zone district requirements could cover a variety of subject areas, including but not limited to permitted uses, parking, and required pedestrian connections.
  o Zone district requirements would likely be varied for application in an older/established area versus newer/developing area of the city.

• Mapped overlay zone districts may be a more palatable approach to adding new mixed-use development requirements without necessarily “taking away” the underlying zoning, particularly with regard to permitted uses. In addition, mapped overlay zones could avoid the problem of creating wholesale non-conforming uses that might arise with mapping new base zones.
On the other hand, a powerful incentive can be achieved if the overlay zone says certain key uses otherwise permitted in the base zone district can only be done in a mixed-use development.

- If new zone districts are floating rather than mapped, regulatory incentives may be needed to encourage petitions to rezone to the new zones.

The disadvantages of this approach include:

- If the city does not map new base or overlay zone districts, few petitions to rezone may occur, frustrating Plan implementation. This is what happened in Montgomery County, Maryland, which enacted a “floating” transit-oriented mixed-use zone district, but no one ever used it because it was too restrictive. Even if regulatory incentives are used, they need to be “enough” to encourage persons to undertake the highly discretionary and public process of rezoning.

- These disadvantages might be reduced if floating zones and incentives are combined with other regulatory approaches to “level the playing field” with conventional development according to existing zoning.
  
  - For example, the city could level the playing field by “upping” the standards for conventional developments in accord with the Comprehensive Plan, such as new standards for pedestrian/bike connections, provision of community amenities, and better transitions to adjoining uses.

2. **Create 10 New Zone Districts for Each of the Different Center/Location Variations**

   This approach is very similar to the 5-zone-district option described in subsection C.1. above, and shares the same advantages and disadvantages, with one exception. With this approach, 10 discrete new zone districts are created to accommodate the maximum number of variations in center and location combinations described in the basic framework (subsection B. above). This difference results in one additional disadvantage: Adding 10 new zone districts to the city’s current list of 28 zone districts is likely to be too unwieldy and cumbersome to administer.

3. **Add New Uses to Existing Zone Districts to Encourage Mixed-Use Development**

   In this approach, we would add new types of uses that would allow a wider mix of uses in the current “single-use” zone districts. This could be achieved, for example, by adding limited-scale, neighborhood-serving commercial uses to the list of permitted uses in the R-1 zones. Alternately, different types/scales of “activity centers” could be defined as separate and distinct principal uses. Such uses would be permitted by-right in existing zone districts, or be subject to conditional use review. For example, the city might allow a new “neighborhood activity center” use in all residential zone districts, or a new “commercial center” in all commercial zone districts. All new uses would be carefully defined to align with the Comprehensive Plan’s definitions and recommended mix of uses, market, and overall scale and size.
The new mixed uses would be subject to specific zoning standards that would, at a minimum, address mix of uses, density/intensity of development, and location. The Comprehensive Plan provides a good starting point for these criteria. This is the approach Clarion employed in the City of Aurora’s new E-470 Corridor Mixed-Use Zoning Districts, which the city adopted in December 1999.

An alternate approach might be to require the development of an appropriately scaled activity center use as part of any new development proposals that meet a defined threshold. For example, any proposal for residential development that contains more than a specified number of units may be required to develop, or at least reserve land for, a neighborhood activity center. Clarion used this approach in residential design standards it drafted for the City of Brighton, Colorado, which were adopted in May 2000.

The advantages of this approach include:

- This approach would not add new zone districts to a list that is already 28 long.

- In existing zone districts that do not currently allow them, developing a mix of uses could become “by-right”; that is, not subject to a discretionary and public rezoning process.

- This approach does not create non-conforming uses, as mapping new base zone districts might.

The disadvantages of this approach include:

- This approach is not artfully tailored to guarantee the specific types of synergistic, mixed-use centers the Plan envisions. Without anything more (like development standards), this approach may result in a mix of uses that do not necessarily complement each other (e.g., in terms of compatibility, pedestrian orientation, or potential for shared parking).

- The Zoning Code currently allows a wide variety of residential uses in the commercial zones (OR, OC, PBC, C-5, and C-6), and allows residential uses on the same property or lot as a commercial use, but “mixed use” development is not happening under these zones.

  - The few true mixed-use developments in the City (e.g., Lowell and Spring Creek) are being done according to tailored PUD zoning.

- Thus, by itself, this approach may not be successful in implementing the Comprehensive Plan’s mixed-use goals. At a minimum, this approach would probably need to be combined with specific development and design regulations aimed at these new “center” uses, and with development standards applicable to conventional development that help level the playing field.
4. **Adopt New Development Standards That Apply Generally to All New “Activity Center” Developments**

In this approach, a new set of standards would address and require, among other things, better pedestrian/vehicle connections, better circulation systems, better transitions between different land uses, and provision of community amenities. These new standards would apply to all “activity centers.” “Activity Centers” would be defined very broadly to include all the types of centers described in the Comprehensive Plan, from neighborhood to regional activity centers. However, the definition of “activity center” would not be limited to mixed-use developments that include both residential and commercial uses. In fact, the definition would be very similar to the current Zoning Code’s definition and use of the term “commercial center” (§7.2.302.C.9), but expanded to include centers that mix residential uses with commercial retail and office uses. Clarion used this approach in the City of Arvada’s revised zoning ordinance, which was adopted in 2000.

The advantages of this approach include the following:

- Without rezoning or changing the permitted uses in an existing zone district, standards could begin to shape and manage future development of commercial centers across several important substantive areas, such as connections and other pedestrian-friendly elements.

- This approach will increase the quality of many otherwise conventional developments that would have to comply with these generally applicable standards.

The disadvantages of this approach include the following:

- Implementing development standards, without anything more, will not necessarily encourage mixing of uses beyond what is typically found in a conventional commercial shopping center. For example, it would not necessarily encourage a blending of different commercial office and retail uses in a center, which can be mutually supportive, stretch user activity into more hours of the day, and lend itself more readily to land-conserving options like shared parking.

- A developer would still need to request a rezoning to a tailored-PUD or PBC zone district to build an activity center that mixed residential uses with commercial use, although if that happens, these standards could still apply. The mixture of residential with other uses in an activity center is a priority Comprehensive Plan goal, which can help activate centers more hours of the day and provide valuable support for commercial uses on a site.

5. **Adopt New Development Standards That Apply Generally to All New Non-Residential Development**

Like option C.4 above, this approach would create a new set of standards that address and require, among other things, better pedestrian/vehicle connections, better circulation systems, better transitions between different land uses, and provision of community amenities. The difference is that these standards would be generally applicable to all...
new, nonresidential and mixed-use development, not just development that qualified as an “activity center.” That is, these standards would be applicable to a conventional, single-use office building, as well as a mixed, retail-office-residential project.

The advantages of this approach include the following:

- Same as option C.4 above, but these standards would apply to a broader range of new developments in the city.

- Since conventional development would have to satisfy new standards, this approach may encourage developers to choose to do mixed-use centers, especially if incentives are tied to the mixed-use choice.

The disadvantages of this approach include the following:

- Same as option C.4 above.

6. Create Regulatory Incentives to Encourage Development of Mixed-Use Centers.

In this approach, regulatory incentives would be drafted to encourage development of mixed-use centers consistent with Comprehensive Plan’s vision. Regulatory incentives can be layered on top of either a prescriptive or enabling system of mixed-use zoning and development standards. Incentives, or “extras” such as increased density or a wider range of permitted uses, can help take the sting out of a prescriptive system. Alternately, in a purely enabling system, incentives can help encourage mixed-use development by providing “extras” that make it an attractive alternative to conventional single-use development.

Incentives may also be used to address how multiple parcel ownership affects the implementation of mixed-use planning goals. The larger-scaled employment and regional activity centers designated on the Comprehensive Plan’s 2020 Land Use Map encompass land area owned by more than one person. Traditionally, however, development occurs one parcel at a time, with each owner bringing his own parcel to the city for review—such that the land is ultimately developed piece by piece, with little opportunity to require or even address how one parcel’s development fits into the city’s vision of a larger mixed-use “center.” Thus, it is important to create mechanisms that encourage different landowners to create well-designed activity centers that will, as a complete whole, actually create the synergy and energy that the city desires. For example, the City of Cary, North Carolina, has adopted an “incentives approach,” whereby in areas designated as activity centers in the Comprehensive Plan, landowners are allowed a relatively greater range of permitted uses and greater development densities/intensities if some minimum percentage of the owners get together and agree upon a master plan for the center, which becomes the basis and application for subsequent rezoning or development requests.
Other regulatory incentives could include any of the following:

- Broader staff authority to grant administrative (staff-approved) relief from development standards. The current “Administrative Relief” provisions in §7.5.1101 et seq. allow the Planning Manager to grant a 5% reduction in lot area, setbacks, and lot width; and a 5% increase in lot coverage and building height. For mixed-use developments, the range of permitted relief might be increased to 10% or even greater.

- Residential floor area in a mixed-use project might be excluded from maximum FAR or lot coverage requirements.

- Reductions in certain standards that reflect less demand in mixed-use projects, such as off-street parking and public parks/open space. For example, reduced parking requirements may be based on some form of a transit accessibility index in transit areas, which reflect decreased auto use. In Louisville, Kentucky, which is also trying to encourage mixed-use development in its established and developing neighborhoods, the city may waive up to 25% of the required off-street parking for such developments.

- Allow mixed-use developments the ability to “opt-out” of otherwise generally applicable development or design standards by providing alternative compliance that achieves the same goals. For example, in Fort Collins’ land development code, the city allows alternative compliance with landscaping, environmental protection, and other development standards if an applicant can demonstrate that its alternative plan accomplishes the purposes of the standard equally well or better than a plan that complies with the standard.

- Reductions in zoning and subdivision application processing fees for mixed-use projects.

- Public contribution to required street or streetscape improvements.

- Streamlining or expedition of approval procedures, where possible given existing staffing resources.

- Earlier or longer vesting of property rights connected with an approved plat or plan for a mixed-use development.

- A greater number and variety of uses allowed in a mixed-use overlay zone versus in a base zone district.

- Bonus density or floor area for the provision of amenities that provide a public benefit and implement the Comprehensive Plan, such as bonuses for:
  - Including residential uses in a MU development.
  - Improvements to the streetscape or rights-of-way in older, established areas (e.g., add and/or widen sidewalks, landscaping, traffic calming, etc).
- Provision of pedestrian-friendly amenities at street level, such as awnings, outdoor seating areas, public open spaces/plazas.

- Reduction in off-site transportation improvements, based on the fewer vehicle trips generated by a MU development.
  - Alternately, a pay-as-you-go approach to improvements versus payment due all up-front.

The advantages of this approach include the following:
- Regulatory incentives can help take the sting out of prescriptive standards for mixing uses.
- This approach can help encourage mixed-use development under an enabling zoning system.

The disadvantages of this approach include the following:
- Historically, there has been mixed success with use of zoning incentives, especially bonus density/floor area incentives, in larger cities across the nation. The reasons for the mixed success include the following:
  - Often times, bonus density/FAR is never used because the base zoning density/FAR maximum is high enough, or higher than necessary, to meet market demands. Some cities like Seattle and San Francisco purposely lowered maximum base densities/FARs in order to encourage use of the incentives (and to get the public amenities they sought).
  - San Francisco ultimately jettisoned its downtown incentive programs (for improvements to pedestrian movement, open areas, and access to transit) and instead adopted prescriptive design standards. The city explained that it did this because it learned from its experiment with incentives that any amenities worth encouraging with bonuses should be seen as essential to downtown development, and thus, should simply be required.
  - Many times, incentives are “under-priced.” That is, a city gives away too much and bonuses are granted that far exceed the public benefit of the amenity provided, or the amenities are not designed very well to serve their intention. That was New York City’s and Chicago’s experience with their zoning density bonus programs, which sought public plaza amenities in return for bonus floor area in commercial projects. As a result, it is strongly recommended that there be some minimum development and design standards for amenities sought in return for bonus density.

- To ensure a match between the value of the amenity and the public benefit from the bonus, most cities employing density/FAR bonuses employ one of a variety of calibrating methodologies. These can be complex to administer and often require that the applicant submit to a discretionary, negotiated process—which means, typically, more time, expense, and uncertainty for the developer.
• If incentives are the only “carrot” used to entice mixed-use development, the public objective may not be met if the economy softens and development activity slows.

• Overall, we believe that incentives are probably an important part of the mix, but probably cannot do the job alone.

D. Staff/Consultant Recommendation: A Blend of Approaches

The alternative zoning approaches to implementing mixed-use regulations described in this section of the Diagnosis are not mutually exclusive. In fact, as already noted, overall success in achieving mixed-use planning goals typically depends on a mix of several of these approaches. City planning staff and the Clarion consulting team, having deliberated the advantages and disadvantages of a prescriptive versus enabling system, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of the various zoning approaches discussed above, recommend to the City Council the following blend of approaches:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 6: STAFF/CONSULTANT RECOMMENDATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Five New Zone Districts.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Create no more than 5 new base zone districts aligning with the different types of activity centers described in the Comprehensive Plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ In most circumstances, for all new rezoning requests to create commercial or employment development, the city’s recommendation will be one of these new zone districts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Districts will include development and design standards tailored to the type and scale of the activity center, and address mix of uses allowed, intensity of development, building and development, transportation and circulation, and context and transitions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Districts will include a subset of specially tailored standards applicable to infill and redevelopment in the older, established parts of the city.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **New Development Standards & Guidelines for All New Non-Residential Development.** |
| ➢ New standards would be applicable to new mixed-use zone districts and to new non-residential development in the city’s existing non-residential base zone districts, including the PBC zone district. |
| ➢ Standards and guidelines would address, among other things, pedestrian/vehicle connections, internal (on-site) circulation systems, transitions and compatibility between adjacent uses, and provision of community amenities. |
| ➢ New standards would be applicable to new mixed-use zone districts and to Standards would specifically enable and facilitate mixed-use development, including residential and commercial mixed-use projects where current zoning now allows it either as a permitted or conditional use. |
The staff’s and consultants’ recommendation, which falls close to the middle of the “prescriptive/enabling continuum” discussed above, strikes a balance that should ease the way for mixed-use development to occur in Colorado Springs on a more even basis with conventional single-purpose development. We believe that this recommended approach adequately fills the gaps in the city’s zoning and subdivision codes and will create significant opportunities for fulfillment of the Comprehensive Plan’s mixed-use goals and policies.

V. NEXT STEPS

At the December 10th work session, the consultant team will take the city’s direction received, and thereafter draft a detailed, annotated outline of proposed zoning, subdivision, and street standards changes. After presentation and discussion of the annotated outline, the consultant team will draft new and revised standards and guidelines consistent with the city’s final directions. The consultant team and staff will test the draft standards and guidelines prior to public review of the documents. Delivery of final adoption drafts is targeted for the end of 2002.

It is important to note that this Diagnosis document makes several recommendations for change that are beyond the agreed-upon scope of this project, and are offered with the intent to alert the city of areas where future study and analysis may be needed. These areas include the following:

- The creation of a tailored “downtown” zoning district and related design and development standards above and beyond the mixed-use standards and guidelines recommended in this document.

- Detailed sign code review and revisions beyond the recommendation in this Diagnosis for master signage plan requirements.

- Identification of specific changes needed to the city’s adopted building and fire code standards, and utility policies, to facilitate mixed-use development, including vertical mixes of residential and commercial uses.

- Non-regulatory incentives, such as reductions or waivers of fees; tax waivers or deferment; up-front public infrastructure investments in areas targeted for activity centers (e.g., streets and streetscape improvements); write down of residential land costs; public assistance to small retailers and businesses in redeveloping areas (e.g., building improvements, rent subsidies or restructuring, relocation assistance).
VI. APPENDIX A: SUMMARY OF MIXED-USE POLICIES AND STRATEGIES FROM THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

CHAPTER I: LAND USE

Land Use Pattern
- Policy LU 201: Promote a Focused, Consolidated Land Use Pattern
- Policy LU 203: Develop a Land Use Pattern that is Mutually Supportive with the Intermodal Transportation System
  - Strategy LU203a: Locate the Places that people use for their Daily Needs and Activities Close to Each Other.
  - Strategy LU 203b: Concentrate and Mix Uses
  - Strategy LU 203c: Define the functional Relationships between the Elements of the Land Use Pattern and the Elements of the Intermodal Transportation System.

Land Use Mix
- Policy LU 3: Develop a Mix of Interdependent, Compatible, and Mutually Supportive Land Uses
- Policy LU 301: Promote and Mixed Land Use Pattern.
- Policy LU 302: Encourage Development of Mixed-use Activity Centers.
  - Strategy LU 302b: Promote a Pedestrian Orientation of New Activity Center to the Public Right-of-Way and public Spaces.
  - Strategy LU 302c: promote compatibility between Land Uses of different Intensities.
- Policy LU 303: Promote a Pedestrian-oriented and Transit-oriented Development Pattern.
  - Strategy LU 303a: Design Pedestrian Friendly Environments.
  - Strategy LU 303c: Integrate Transit Stops into the Design of Activity Centers.

Infill and Redevelopment
- Objective LU 4: Encourage Infill and Redevelopment.
  - Policy LU 401: Encourage Appropriate Uses and Designs for Redevelopment and Infill Projects
    - Strategy LU 401a: identify Infill and Redevelopment Opportunities and Target Public Investments.

Residential Development
- Objective LU 5: Develop Cohesive Residential Area.
  - Policy LU 501: Plan Residential Areas to Integrate Neighborhoods into the Wider Subarea and Citywide Pattern.
    - Strategy LU 501c: Plan community Activity Centers to Serve Residential Areas.
    - Strategy LU 502e: Locate higher Density Housing as a Transition and Buffer to Residential Areas.

Housing
- Objective LU 6: Meet the Housing Needs of All Segments of the Community.
  - Policy LU 601: Assure provision of Housing Choices.
    - Strategy LU 601b: Support a Mixture of Housing Densities.
  - Policy LU 602: Integrate Housing with Other supportive Land Uses...employment, education, health, recreation, shopping...

Commercial Development
- Objective LU 7: Develop Shopping and Service Areas to be Convenient to Use and compatible with their Surroundings.
  - Policy LU 701: Plan and Develop new Commercial Areas as Activity Centers.
    - Strategy LU 701a: Locate New Commercial Uses in Activity Centers.
    - Strategy LU 701b: Locate and Design Neighborhood Centers to be Local Pedestrian-oriented Amenities.
Strategy LU 701c: Locate and Design Community Activity Centers to Serve Multiple Neighborhoods.
Strategy LU 701d: Locate and Design Commercial Centers to Serve Multiple residential Areas in the wider Community.
Strategy LU 701e: Combine Commercial and Employment Uses in regional Centers Designed to Serve Residents throughout the City and Region.
Strategy LU 701f: Encourage new Commercial Development in New and Developing Corridors to Form Activity Centers.

Policy LU 702: Design Commercial Redevelopment and Infill Projects as Activity Centers.
Strategy LU 702a: Redevelop Obsolete Commercial Areas as Activity Centers.
Strategy LU 702b: Redevelop and Infill Commercial Uses in Mature/Development Corridors to Form Activity Centers.
Strategy LU 702c: Support and Encourage evolution of Existing Commercial Areas into Activity Centers.

Policy LU 703: Develop Standards and Guidelines for Commercial Development in Activity Centers.
Strategy LU 703a: Establish criteria for Combining Commercial Uses with Other Uses in Activity Centers.
Strategy LU 703b: Revise Regulations to allow Mixed-use Development in Commercial Areas.
Strategy LU 703c: Develop criteria and Standards and guidelines for parking to Serve Commercial Uses I Activity Centers.
Strategy LU 703e: Encourage the Redevelopment of Obsolete Community Activity Centers and redevelopment Corridors and Mixed-use Activity Centers.

Policy LU 801: Locate New Employment Activities within Mixed-use Centers.
Strategy LU 801a: Develop Criteria for Mixed-use Employment Centers.
Strategy LU 801b: Amend regulations to Allow Mixed Uses in Employment Centers
Strategy LU 801e: Plan and locate Complimentary Mixed Uses to Serve Large, Single-Employer Campuses
Strategy LU 801f: Plan and Locate Mixed Uses to Serve Industrial Areas.
Strategy LU 801g: support and Encourage the Redevelopment of Obsolete Industrial Areas as Activity Centers.

CHAPTER II: Neighborhoods

Enhancement
Objective N 2: Enhance Neighborhoods
Strategy N 201a: Preserve and Enhance the Physical Elements that Define a neighborhood’s Character.

Policy N 202a: Prepare Neighborhood Plans to Coordinate Redevelopment.

Policy N 203: Partner with the Development Industry to Create Functional and Attractive New and Developing Neighborhoods.
Strategy N 203d: Support a Mix of Housing types and Densities.
Strategy N 203e: Enhance Neighborhood Connectivity Standards.
Mixed Use
✓ Objective N 3: Vary Neighborhood Patterns.
  ❑ Policy N 301: Identify and Develop Mutually Supportive Mixed Uses.
    o Strategy N 301a: Identify Non-Residential Land Uses that Support Neighborhoods.
    o Strategy N 302b: Support a Mix of Housing Types and Densities in Neighborhoods.

Transportation
✓ Objective N 4: Mitigate Transportation Impacts
  ❑ Policy N 401: reduce Traffic-related Impacts on Existing Neighborhoods.
    o Strategy N 401b: Mitigate Traffic Impacts.
  ❑ Policy N 4-2: Plan for Transportation Improvements to Enhance New Neighborhoods.
    o Strategy N 402a: Connect Street System Components.
    o Strategy N 402b: Construct Arterials Adjacent to Neighborhoods (instead of through them).
    o Strategy N 402c: Support Multi-modal Transportation Options.

CHAPTER III: TRANSPORTATION

Planning and Mobility
✓ Objective T 1: Transportation Planning and Mobility
  ❑ Policy T 101: Transportation System Planning
  ❑ Policy T 102: Transportation System Goals.
    o Strategy T 102a: Create a Balanced System.
    o Strategy T 102g: Street Design Criteria.
  ❑ Policy N 102: Transportation System and Land Use Pattern.
    o Strategy N 103a: Integrate Mixed Land Use.
    o Strategy T 103b: Link Neighborhoods with Citywide Transportation System.
    o Strategy T 103c: Improve Pedestrian and Transit Opportunities.

Livable Communities
✓ Objective T 2: Maintain Livability
  ❑ Policy T 201: System Improvements will be Compatible with Other Uses.
    o Strategy T 201a: Ensure Transportation System Compatibility with Adjacent Uses.
    o Strategy T 201b: Develop an Environmentally Compatible Transportation System.
    o Strategy T 201e: Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety.
    o Strategy T 201g: Recognize Neighborhood Character.
    o Strategy T 201h: Streetscape and Neighborhood Creation and Preservation.
  ❑ Policy T 202: Improve Mobility with Multi-Modal System
    o Strategy T 202a: Improve Mobility Options.
    o Strategy T 202b: Transportation and Land Use.
    o Strategy T 202e: Provide Safe and Convenient Connections between Modes.

CHAPTER IV: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Open Space
✓ Objective NE 1: Balanced Open Lands System.
  ❑ Policy NE 101: Implement the City’s Open Space Plan.
  ❑ Policy NE 102: Preserve Open space Areas That Provide Multiple Benefits.
CHAPTER V: COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE

Built Environment and Natural Setting

Objective CCA 1: Maintain a Positive Relationship between the Built Environment and the Natural Setting.
  - Policy CCA 101: Preserve the Character of the Community's Natural Setting.
  - Policy CCA 102: Use the natural Environment to Shape the City's Form.

Streets

Objective CCA 2: Quality Designed Streets.
  - Policy CCA 201: Develop a Streetscape Design Plan.
  - Policy CCA 202: Improve Major Transportation Corridors.

Unique Areas

Objective CCA 3: improve the Character of Individual Areas and Elements of the City.
  - Policy CCA 301: Foster the Character of Individual Areas and Elements within the Community.

Public Places

Objective CCA 5: Design of Public Spaces.
  - Policy CCA 501: Support Enhance Civic Design.

Compatibility

Objective CCA 6: Fit New Development into the Character of the Surrounding Area.
  - Policy CCA 601: New Development Will Be Compatible with the Surrounding Area.
### VII. Appendix B: Summary Table of Colorado Springs Base Zoning Districts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone District</th>
<th>Stated Intent as to Predominant Uses</th>
<th>Principal Uses Allowed</th>
<th>More than 1 Principal Use Allowed per Lot?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Residential Zone Districts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Agricultural</td>
<td>Large lot residential + agricultural purposes</td>
<td>Single-family dwelling (&quot;SFD&quot;) and Agricultural uses; Recreational facilities, commercial stables, cemetery, schools, religious orgs, CMRS, Day care home</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R (Estate)</td>
<td>Low density SF use</td>
<td>SFD; Recreational facilities, cultural facilities, schools, religious orgs, CMRS, Day care home</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-1 6000</td>
<td>Mod density SF use</td>
<td>SFD; CMRS, schools, religious orgs, Day care home</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-1 9000</td>
<td>Mod-High density SF use</td>
<td>SFD; CMRS, schools, religious orgs, Day care home</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-2</td>
<td>SF and Duplex Use</td>
<td>SFD and Duplex; CMRS, schools, religious orgs, Day care home</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-4</td>
<td>Moderate density MF use</td>
<td>SF, Duplex, Multi-Family (&quot;MF&quot;); Fraternity, retirement home, library, CMRS, schools, religious orgs, Day care home</td>
<td>Yes, except only 1 SFD use per lot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-5</td>
<td>Medium to High MF use, plus SF and Duplex Use</td>
<td>SF, Duplex, MF; Rooming house, golf course, funeral parlor, hospital, hotel, mini-warehouse, fraternity, retirement home, library, CMRS, schools, religious orgs, Day care home</td>
<td>Yes, except only 1 SFD use per lot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUD</td>
<td>Residential development and “appropriate” mixed use development</td>
<td>SF, Duplex, MF; Day care home, religious orgs, and “cultural, recreational, commercial uses” designed to serve residents of the PUD</td>
<td>Explicitly allows “multiple” SF or duplex dwelling on one lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SU</td>
<td>Colleges, universities, and commonly associated uses in close proximity</td>
<td>SF, Duplex, MF, Fraternity, College and educational institutions, General Offices, Medical/Dental Clinics, “Off-campus administrative offices,” planetariums and theaters; Retirement home, golf course, art gallery, mining operations, museum, religious orgs, schools</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zone District</td>
<td>Stated Intent as to Predominant Uses</td>
<td>Principal Uses Allowed</td>
<td>More than 1 Principal Use Allowed per Lot?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Commercial Zone Districts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR Office Residential</td>
<td>Transitional zone allowing variety of small office uses and R uses</td>
<td>Duplex, MF, SFD, general office, med clinic, B&amp;B, personal services; Funeral home, mini-warehouse, civic uses, religious orgs</td>
<td>1 office and 1 d.u. are allowed in the same structure as a permitted use; more than 1 office or 1 d.u. in the same structure is a conditional use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OC Office Complex</td>
<td>Professional office uses—less intense and intended for non-major arterials.</td>
<td>Duplex, MF, SFD, office uses/clinics, B&amp;B, business services, personal services, pharmacy, restaurants, civic uses including hospitals; Dormitories, funeral home, mini-warehouse, civic uses, religious orgs</td>
<td>Any office-residential mixed use is a principal permitted use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBC Planned Business Center</td>
<td>Commercial retail and service uses that serve adjoining neighborhood(s). Not for strip centers.</td>
<td>Duplex, MF, SFD, office/clinics, limited automotive services, bar, B&amp;B, business services, “commercial center [3],” food sales, hotel/motel, “mixed commercial-residential (C) [4],” personal services, comml recreation/entertainment, restaurants, adult businesses, mini-warehouse, parking lots/structures Civic uses, religious orgs, CMRS</td>
<td>Yes for the “mixed commercial-residential use”—a conditional use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-5 Intermediate Business</td>
<td>Moderate intensity general commercial uses typically on individual sites; may be appropriate adjacent to residential.</td>
<td>Duplex, MF, SFD, office/clinics, limited automotive services, B &amp; B, business services, bars &amp; restaurants, “commercial center,” food sales, hotel/motel, “mixed commercial-residential,” personal services, indoor commercial recreation/entertainment, restaurants, adult businesses, mini-warehouse, parking lots/structures, construction yards, custom manufacturing; Civic uses, religious orgs, CMRS</td>
<td>Yes for the “mixed commercial-residential use”—a permitted use.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Summary of Colorado Springs Base Zoning Districts [1]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone District</th>
<th>Stated Intent as to Predominant Uses</th>
<th>Principal Uses Allowed</th>
<th>More than 1 Principal Use Allowed per Lot? [2]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C-6 General Business</td>
<td>General commercial uses that are typically high-volume traffic generators and dependent on more than immediate neighborhood for market</td>
<td>Same as C-5, plus some heavier commercial/repair uses, laundry services, outdoor uses, transportation terminal Civic uses, religious orgs, CMRS</td>
<td>Yes for the “mixed commercial-residential use”—a conditional use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Zone Districts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PIP-1</td>
<td>Planned industrial park for quiet and clean professional, admin, research, manufacturing, and industrial uses. May be adjacent to R areas.</td>
<td>Human service facilities, office/clinic uses, storage yards, “business park”, mini-warehouses, commercial recreation, restaurants, day care, membership clubs, educational institutions, religious institutions, contractor yards, general light industry, manufacturing, R&amp;D, warehousing/distribution, CMRS</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PIP-2</td>
<td>Same as PIP-1</td>
<td>Same as PIP-1, plus food sales, custom manufacturing, heavy industry, truck terminal, surface/structure parking, CMRS</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-1</td>
<td>Light industrial uses and commercial uses that are complementary and compatible to the industrial uses.</td>
<td>Contractor yards, custom manufacturing, light industry, junk yard, manufacturing, R&amp;D, scrap metal processing yard, truck terminal, warehousing/distribution; Residential uses (duplexes + MF), human service establishments, office uses, all commercial uses listed in use table, clubs, crematory, day care, hospital, public assembly, educational institutions, religious orgs., parking uses, CMRS</td>
<td>Yes, explicitly allows “mixed commercial-residential” use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-2</td>
<td>Heavy industrial uses that are likely to have extensive impact on surrounding areas. Should be separated from R districts.</td>
<td>All heavy and light industrial uses (including batch plants, meat packing, stockyards); Office uses, all commercial uses (except food sales and mixed C/R use), adult businesses, crematory, day care, hospital, parking uses, CMRS</td>
<td>Yes, except “mixed commercial-residential use” not an allowed use</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Notes to Table:

[1] This table does not include the following special purpose base zone districts: PF (Public Facilities); PK (Public Park); APD (Airport Planned Development); and PCR (Planned Cultural Resort).

[2] According to the city’s planning staff, there is no explicit standard in the zoning code that prohibits more than 1 principal use per lot, except in the R-4 and R-5 zones, where only 1 SFD is allowed per lot. Staff noted that the only limit is meeting the various standards required of the different uses on the same lot (such as different setbacks for SF and MF uses). Thus, in practical if not technical terms, mixing more than 1 principal use on a single lot in most zones is very difficult if not impossible (without multiple variances). The only exceptions are the explicit provisions that allow “mixed residential-commercial uses” in the PBC, C-5, and C-6 zones, and the allowance for residential-office mixed use in the OC zone.

[3] “Commercial Center” is defined in the Zoning Code as: “A retail center that usually has an anchor of at least 1 major food store, department store, or other similar tenant accompanied by a variety of general retail uses, restaurants, indoor entertainment, and offices. The center is developed and maintained under unified control. A majority of the business establishments share common walls, front on one side or both sides of an open or closed pedestrian path, and share common parking areas. 3 types: Community commercial; neighborhood commercial; and regional commercial.”

VIII. APPENDIX C: SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

On October 11 and 12, 2001, members of the consulting team from Clarion, LSA Associates, and ZGF interviewed a total of 44 persons. (A list of interviewees is included at the end of this Appendix C.) The interviewees included city staff from development review, traffic/transportation, fire, and economic development; Regional Building and Utilities staff, as well as representatives from the organization of neighborhoods and other community/neighborhood activists; and private-sector architects, planners, developers, and major property owners. The Mixed Use Task Force members that were interviewed are included in the above categories. A list of the interviewees is attached.

The following summarizes key points and observations made by various interviewees about how mixed use in the City of Colorado Springs now works (or doesn't work), what the regulatory and other barriers to mixed use development are, and what mixed use should look like and function in the future. This summary is intended for use as a valuable input to the diagnosis process.

STREET DESIGN

Street/Alley Width

Staff

- Residential alley width is a concern, developers support a narrower width than envisioned in Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) Ordinance.
- Alley width must accommodate service vehicles such as garbage trucks.
- Staff finds positive and negative aspects to narrowing street widths:
  - There are positive aesthetics to wide streets.
  - Utility access must be accommodated without interference with traffic flows.
  - Decrease in vehicle speeds may inhibit mobility and efficient traffic flow.
  - Narrow streets in high-density areas make it difficult to access drainage and utility facilities.

Private Sector

- Where both alleys and streets provided, should allow narrower alleys and streets.
- Consider Old Colorado City – many anomalies work well enough.
- Street standards – need smaller streets, slower speeds on streets - look at the old streets like Tejon as models to develop a different street standard that is more pedestrian in nature. Currently not legal to create a Tejon St.
- Arterials still necessary in some cases - use boulevard model for high volumes.
- Curb radii: need to think about signage, streetlights, hydrants, electrical.

Streetscape

Staff

- Tree lawns (strip between curb and sidewalk) at 3-4 feet wide are too narrow for easy tree maintenance by city.
- Hard surfacing tree lawns as some residents have done, is not beneficial to community.
- Requiring wider tree lawns and sidewalks will create more difficulties for developers of small-lot subdivisions as often found in mixed-use developments.
- Street trees are currently planted through the City’s street tree program, where new homeowners may buy a discounted tree for tree lawns areas.
- The City street tree program may need some revision in order to assure the planting of trees in tree lawns – currently it’s an optional program for property owners.
- City Forester recommends 6-8 foot tree lawns – wider than currently required.
- Downtown streetscaping is good and should be a model for new development in city.
Private Sector
- The street should contribute to the enjoyable experience of walking, which raises costs to developer.

Neighborhood
- Six-foot high, opaque front yard fences shouldn't be allowed.

Hierarchy/Connectivity/Land Use

Staff
- City departments are receptive to revised street standards contained in the draft Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) ordinance.
- Transportation/traffic staff: there should be different expectations for each roadway class depending on the adjacent land uses.
  - There is confusion over the “residential” classification
  - Land Uses should be considered in developing standards, including access, parking and bicycle/pedestrian treatment
  - Important to think through the transition to standard streets
- Traffic staff support grid pattern for the connectivity; alleys are especially key to this pattern.
- Infill development creates intersection concerns regarding remaining capacity and costs compared to suburban development:
- Some support city funding for public alley improvements considering extensive use by businesses, especially in the downtown.
- Could consider impact fees for alley improvements
- To allow reduced street widths, must have true mixed use and pedestrian incentives.
- Should consider long term uses in developing street standards
- The concept of “Trip Budgeting” should be considered to identify a peak hour trip limit. This makes developers accountable and gives certainty to the neighborhood. Especially important considering difficulty of estimating traffic generation for mixed use.

Private Sector
- Should include the positive elements of both types of street systems: The interconnected aspect of older street systems, and the hierarchical street pattern in the newer areas.
- Very important to consider street design integrally with land uses.

Neighborhood
- Many malls would be more efficient with a grid street system.

Safety and Maintenance

Staff
- Access to utilities for maintenance and repairs is important, including ground surface treatments. Must think creatively considering tight quarters and narrower access areas.
- In current processing of mixed-use proposals, dealing with fire safety, traffic and utilities criteria and standards considering narrower right of way widths has been difficult.
- Concern that city street maintenance and fire protection equipment is designed for wider streets – moving to narrower streets will require different methods and equipment. Larger equipment is more efficient (snowplows and street sweepers).
- Traffic calming techniques can be acceptable in the right places.
- Visibility at corners is important for vehicular and pedestrian safety.
- Streets should be public; private streets create problems with ongoing maintenance.
- As part of the planning for the Woodmen & Powers regional commercial center, City Planning required pedestrian connections. These types of connections should be required, even though the distances to connecting uses are lengthy.
- Grid streets and connectivity helps with all utilities (CSU).
Private Sector

- In the hillside areas, a 24’ street is adequate. However, the argument is made for wider streets, based on the possibility of a sewer maintenance truck blocking a fire truck. This unlikely scenario does not seem to warrant an entire system of wider streets.

Neighborhood

- It can be difficult, in new northern neighborhoods (near Garden of the Gods), to get from one place to another, due to circuitous streets and lack of pedestrian and transit opportunities.
- The situation would be improved if there were more minor street connections with arterials.
- Connectivity is difficult when retail/commercial uses turn their backs to adjacent properties.

TRANSIT

Staff

- There is a need for shared parking;
- Density is key;
- Hub and spoke design appropriate for the city’s service;
- Park and Ride lot locations are identified in the Draft Transit Plan;
- Plan is moving toward Bus Rapid Transit between key locations.

UTILITIES

City Utilities Staff General Comments.

- Turning radii in streets and alleys must accommodate service trucks.
- Installation, maintenance and safety are principal concerns – tighter layouts required for narrower streets are a concern. Issues such as access for quick repairs (especially electrical), separation of different main lines, location criteria for gas safety vents, are some of the issues that should be addressed.
- Suburban subdivisions with larger lots allow more room for future expansions of homes subsequent to initial development. If porches or homes are expanded, they must be designed to avoid adversely affecting utility lines.
- Meter locations must meet utility standards - they are difficult to locate properly on mixed uses and high density uses.
- There are standard separation requirements for maintenance and safe operations that must be adhered to, regardless of the small size of lots or streets.
- 24-hour access to utilities and manholes is imperative.
- Transformer locations often conflict with many elements along narrower streets, creating location difficulties for utilities.
- Design and equipment is more expensive for higher density and mixed-use situations. The competitive nature of electrical service requires a cost effective approach.
- Different soil types require different installation standards. Developers must understand that in some cases maximum separations must be adhered to.
- Routing of utility pipes will require flexibility and may require some changes to current standards. Such elements as spacing between manholes, line gradients and more street frontages will have an affect on utility plans and may present challenges. Maintenance is the biggest issue.
- If special paving or curbs have to be removed for access, then complexity and expense increase.
- Electrical transformer locations are important, and have numerous location criteria that must be met. Transformer, cable T.V. and irrigation controls in landscape strips may raise objections by developers due to appearance.
- Besides the four main utilities, cable and telecom must be provided. Joint trenching is possible in some cases.
- CSU utilities easements are exclusive use – so no other services are allowed, making CSU responsible for all services within the easement.
- There may be conflicting goals between desired Traditional Neighborhood Design and providing safe service and affordable utility rates.
- There are hillside standards that are very different from flat lands, so want to use standards with discrimination.
- Service lines: homeowner takes responsibility from stop-box to house.
LAND USE, ZONING, AND REGULATORY ISSUES

Zoning

Staff
- Threshold issue: should MU be prescriptive or simply enabled?
- Doubts whether by simply enabling MU, it would ever happen at the scale desired by the Comprehensive Plan. Especially in the older, established areas.
- Given the history of zoning in the city, proactively rezoning areas to mixed-use zone districts will not happen.
- Should revised code set mandatory thresholds for when the mixing uses will be required?
- Another option may be to adopt new development standards regarding connections, street systems, compatibility, etc., that would apply equally to conventional as well as to mixed-use development proposals, but that would be relatively difficult for the former to comply with without moving toward a more mixed-use pattern of development. Then, adding incentives for mixing uses that make it more attractive.
- In requiring that there be an adequate mix of uses, need to quantify ratios that work in requirements.
- Would like to see mixed use allowed in straight zones—as straightforward and simple as possible.
- Maybe the new code would be something between TND and what we have now—a parallel code but as a middle ground.
- Even traditional neighborhood design often doesn’t include mixed use. There need to be destinations in TND projects to really accomplish the TND purpose.

Neighborhood
- Some history in city of approving conditional and special uses with multiple exemptions/exceptions, especially parking and landscaping. Prevalent in the SU and other older neighborhoods near Colorado College.
- Many of the businesses moving in to the SU zone are seen as threatening to the residential neighborhood; goal is to better control the trend so businesses can be better neighbors.

Private Sector
- Must permit greater mix of uses in city’s zone districts:
- Single-use zoning is the problem. People will not choose to live in commercial zones. Need to reintroduce the patterns that existed prior to zoning, allowing more to happen and less single use.
- It might be appropriate to enable mixed uses along major transportation corridors such as Colorado Avenue.
- The easiest approach to mixed use is to allow granny flats. These could be used as a home office too. Need to be able to separate office from home—home occupation regulation as written now doesn’t work for everyone. The home-occupation idea needs to ratchet up another level.
- Difficulty doing mixed office and residential project in a converted Victorian house in the C-5 zone—need to revise permitted uses.
- Code is very heavily residential-oriented—there is very little in the code to cover non-residential development.
- Proposed mixed-uses are trying to work within confines of the PBC zone, but no residential uses are allowed. So negotiate residential as conditional use.
- Developers agree that probably some specificity is needed in regulating key elements of a MU development, but are also looking/hoping for flexibility within a defined boundary.
- Overlay zoning might work, but attention needs to be paid to the transitions.
- Shouldn’t reinvent the wheel. Find codes that work, demonstrate their utility to neighborhoods, and imitate them.
- What about industrial uses in the city—city needs these uses, too. Focus on future nonresidential development seems to be on mixed-use. Can industrial be part of the use mix? If not, better be careful to answer question about what uses are not part of “mixed use.” [And better make sure they’re accommodated somewhere else in the city.]
Staff and Private Sector
- Downtown needs residential uses by-right (not as conditional use) to allow loft conversions and other projects.
- At Lowell Center, went with PUD zoning, but even that didn’t clearly allow commercial as part of a predominantly residential project—so, negotiated limited commercial uses as a conditional use.
- The C-5 zone allows a mix of uses, but wasn’t really intended for a mixed-use development like envisioned in Plan.
  o C-5 allows residential with commercial uses, but concern remains that the right to a commercial use threatens neighbors.
  o C-5 zoning also doesn’t address any design elements—not really flexible for site planning and site design to fit mixed uses in a coherent whole.
  o C-5 also allows vertical mix of different uses, but there’s no guidance re. how to do a good vertical mix—what should/shouldn’t go on ground floor, how to address multiple entrances, etc.
- Multiple variances to zoning and building codes needed now to do urban-style mixed-use.
- Currently, the city doesn’t allow something like the Lowell development. Poet Lofts in the Lowell Center needed multiple variances, including a height variance; variances from some fire code standards (e.g., allowed to use sprinklers to protect exposed steel joists that supported interior mezzanines versus treating the steel with special paint or other fire proofing); variance to allow different type of elevator than otherwise allowed in a commercial building; variance/exception to permit smaller number of standpipes.

Incentives

Staff
- In inner city sites, what would induce a developer to undertake the risk of seeking a rezone, rather than doing something simple, tried and tested?
- Doubts raised whether processing/density incentives by themselves will get mixed use to happen.
- Reduction in demands for off-site improvements, especially for redevelopment. Or, perhaps, a more flexible “pay as you go” approach versus all up front. Should be able to justify fewer/less off-site transportation improvements if project is truly mixed use or transit-supportive—some reduction of vehicle trips probable.
- Waivers or reductions in administrative/processing fees may be good incentive, especially since city is considering raising those fees substantially.

Private Sector
- Will be hard to make MU attractive to developers, too much risk, unless there are some key changes—provide allowance for mixing uses in zones and a process that’s not too subjective.
- Waivers of some development standards, such as city’s landscaping code, which tends to favor buffers and setbacks as transition tools, which is not always what you want when you’re really mixing uses.
- Grant vesting earlier and/or for a longer period of time to MU concept/rezoning plans or development/site plans.
- There is a lot of unsatisfied retail demand in Colorado Springs, but it follows rooftops. Needs City help to get it started. Can use TIF only if an urban renewal area declared. Can waive taxes, or half sales tax to pay for development, as in other Colorado cities as inducements to create residential-retail developments.
- There is nothing left to give away as an incentive.

Compatibility

All Groups
- Right now, there are no clear and objective review criteria for evaluating a mixed-use proposal. Especially important will be criteria to assure design/siting compatibility in older/established neighborhoods.

Private Sector
- C-6 next to R-1 6000 is not a good idea for compatibility. Need a gradation to allow for a transition from higher impact to lower.
Neighborhood
- Need to do a better job of screening and siting HVAC equipment, especially on rooftops, as well as ground-mounted. Ways to require junction boxes to be at grade or below?
- Don't allow chain-link fences in/adjacent to residential areas.
- Concern about lack of specific neighborhood plans that could guide new development at this scale. Zoning changes should be consistent with such plans.
- According to CONO, neighbors fear little control over what uses go in a neighborhood—why this MU project scares them somewhat. Key will be good transitions between potentially conflicting uses. Biggest complaint/concern is lack of sensitivity in mixing uses.
- Neighborhoods fear infill into existing neighborhoods, and zoning may reduce control over what happens.
- Zoning often allows intensive and incompatible uses next to residential, without any requirement to consider impacts and require adequate mitigation.
- Neighborhoods want historic fabric respected by new development (where applicable).
- There are strong public concerns over compatibility such as lighting, traffic, and signage.
- Need to find areas of mixed uses (in the older areas) that work, and analyze why they work.

Traffic and Parking

All Groups
- To many residents who don't live near it, Downtown shopping is “not convenient” because can't get a parking spot right in front of desired destination.

Staff
- At Lowell and new co-housing project, city agreed to variances from the minimum amount of parking required. Reductions of about 10-15% were granted at Lowell, and even more at co-housing.
- Downtown is exempt from off-street parking requirements, but some in city are rethinking the exemption. Instead, perhaps applicants pay an “in-lieu” parking fee.
- Reception to shared/joint parking: Some concern expressed about “sale-ability” of residential space if no guaranteed spaces for residents.
- Staff would like specifics in code to require usable/leasable space on the ground floor of major parking structures.
- Renovation and reuse of existing non-residential buildings. Parking an issue in attracting new tenants.

Neighborhood
- People converting homes to offices have been obliged to pave over yards to provide minimum required on-site parking.
- Cut-through traffic and over-flow street parking from more intense adjacent uses is a concern.
- Neighborhood activists state they fight MU today because have no faith in the City to address traffic impacts other than making streets and intersections wider and less pedestrian friendly.

Private Sector
- City access requirements tend to focus traffic on certain intersections that conflict with pedestrian circulation.
- Neighborhoods often fight connections to adjacent uses because of traffic concerns.

Process

Staff
- Staff would like to see more specific standards in place for MU so wouldn't need to spend time/resources reinventing the wheel and negotiating everything each time a proposal walks in door. Would also save on applicant's need to apply for multiple variances (use, parking, and otherwise).
- Staff notes that in Code now are some very wide-open, goal-oriented review criteria, and they finding them very difficult to apply and use in many cases. Would like to move to more specificity, but still allow some flexibility in development approaches.
- Concept plans currently required for rezonings are fairly detailed documents that would probably work if MU is processed as a rezoning; once approved, concept plans are good for 4 years.
Staff wants some kind of site plan/development plan review even for "by-right" MU proposals, with ability to refer such apps to the Planning Commission for action.

Should have LDTC review of concept plan for new MU developments, even if administrative process.

Neighbors

- Need to allow for a public process. People have a harder time getting involved in administrative reviews.

Private Sector

- Where possible with new MU zoning, allow approvals to be administrative to speed things up.
- Rooftops generally precede introduction of supporting commercial and other non-residential uses, but once residents in, they don’t want any other type of use near them.
- Need certainty in the process of allowing MU—too much discretion, especially in how the neighborhoods influence the process, will doom it.
- Public reviews instead of administrative hearings add months and much cost to projects that are entirely in conformance with the zoning code. Vesting occurs with development plan, so some issues may not be in place at hearing stage. Current process encourages dissent. e.g. elderly housing next to single-family housing – denied because established residents resisted change.
- Too much opposition to more integrated mixed uses. Neighborhood opposition --- based on general fear that these new uses might degrade property values-- A few neighborhood representatives who are adamantly opposed can carry the day.

Design Standards and Guidelines

(Regarding more prescriptive vs. more performance/goal approaches to new MU regulations)

Staff

- PUD approach is very performance-based, but city is not seeing much creative design resulting. At same time, staff and applicants spend a lot of time battling over application of some very subjective criteria in PUD ordinance.
- In some cases, staff thinks standards (vs. guidelines) will be appropriate; e.g., build-to lines/setbacks, avoiding long blank walls, parking lot standards.
- Staff hesitant to see very prescriptive controls on the permitted scale and size of commercial uses permitted in neighborhoods (e.g., uses no larger than 10,000 square feet), because may become too inflexible to respond to market; however, open to the idea that controlling block size as one means to get at scale issue.
- Regarding balancing flexibility and certainty—approach may depend on where the MU standards are being applied: may want more certainty/specificity for infill/redevelopment versus green field/developing areas.
- Model suggested for MU approach by staff: Use the way the city’s landscaping standards and landscaping policy manual work together. The policy manual gives lots of examples and guidance to complement the actual standards. Policy manual has been successful in getting good results. Integrated approach of standards/policy + guidelines.
- Staff doubts that city has resources/staffing to process mixed-use centers as “rapid response” items.
- Staff thinks the landscape code is, overall, very good and working well. Parking lot landscaping standard of 1 tree per 15 spaces is good, but may need to be more specific about clustering the required trees in landscaped islands/medians versus scattering single trees about.
- Need to be sensitive about landscaping over drainage utilities—beware of deep-rooting trees; perhaps encourage parking over such facilities.
- Neighbors appear to fear “bait and switch” in permitting mixed uses—i.e., city approves a new commercial use in a residential neighborhood that everybody signs on to, but what happens when the next user down the road is something obnoxious?
- Be careful of creating isolated islands; for example, be sure to link new redevelopment in the Urban Renewal area to the Downtown.
- City’s own public buildings are among the worst design offenders – blank walls etc. No role model there.

Neighborhood

- Regarding control of specific approaches to design: there was much general resistance toward the possibility of an “architectural police force” during the Comp Plan process.
Need to have two story buildings with residential on top.
City’s lack of control over site and building design as basis for much concern about neighborhood compatibility. Need to respect the context, especially in older neighborhoods. Look at the Higginbotham building on Cascade as a good example.
In SU District, little fixes could go a long way to address compatibility of office conversions—such as controls on lighting and signage. Signs now can be lit 24 hours/day and nothing to stop spillover light/glare.
Architectural compatibility also stated as neighborhood/resident desire. Even look at building materials in specific (older) neighborhoods where there is a given context. Like center in Rockrimmon where brick was predominant material and new development matched.
Developers expect a fight on anything with high density, especially if building height is above average.
So far as infill goes, need to give strong consideration to surrounding areas, and having compatibility with these areas. Infill requires attention to individual design to fit.

Private Sector
Developers think a blending of such approaches is best—don’t want to leave too much room for interpretation in how a goal is reached, will bog down the process. More specificity will help with giving certainty to both developers and neighborhoods—but, caveat is not to require things that market will not support.
City review is a dispassionate tally of standards. Quality is not a criterion. Lack of design guidelines. Design must excel if mixed use is to succeed.
Can’t separate site design from architecture. Need to get a gradient of density from core to less dense. Pay attention to architectural scale and increase density toward the center. Don’t be random.
Architecture is integral with making good streets. A sea of parking doesn’t work. Can’t incorporate mixed use without it being pedestrian friendly. People need to be able to walk.
Design review is necessary with mixed use. In other places design has been mandated. Developers can’t lead the way. The city needs to take a leadership role to get this accomplished in a way that provides well-designed commercial areas with mixed uses.
Co-housing project proposed, and accepted until a commercial component was included. Despite longstanding commercial use on that site, residents reacted negatively at the words ‘commercial uses’. Neighbors need the security of knowing what is going to be next to them.
Integration versus buffering of dissimilar uses – City landscape code promotes this, making horizontally mixed uses impossible.
Some developer/planners noted that design standards would help in getting new infill and redevelopment to better respect context, especially sensitive sting of buildings’ orientation to street. But wondered out loud whether City Council would go for it and many other developers have resisted.

BUILDING AND SAFETY

Staff
Regional building department staff stated mixing uses, even residential and commercial, in the same building is allowed by building codes, as long as it maintain separations—and that’s not difficult to achieve. If have to add sprinkler system, that can be costly.
Mixing uses can be difficult under prescriptive code standards; city’s fire staff is open to approaching such projects from a more performance standard/review approach to safety. Fire staff just wants to ensure they’re involved in any revisions right up front.
Fire separation needs to be built in if mixing different uses in same building.
Retrofit existing commercial buildings for residential uses—difficult to meet codes or at least very expensive.
Staff and Private Sector
- Multiple variances to zoning and building codes needed now to do urban-style mixed-use and/or high-density residential.
- Poet Lofts in the Lowell Center needed multiple variances, including a height variance; variances from some fire code standards.

Neighborhood
- Concern of neighborhoods about “contributory neglect” of historic and older properties—i.e., owners who simply do not maintain their structures and then when time is finally ripe, ask city for variances and other exceptions because they need help to get property saleable.

PERCEIVED BARRIERS TO DOING MIXED-USE IN CITY

Private Sector
- In general, mixed use as infill is difficult to do for various reasons. Often it is harder and takes longer to make it through the process due to existing conditions and problems, considering the relative small size of an infill project. The trend is toward larger volume developers and larger projects. Another issue is neighborhood opposition to change and disruptions during construction. So long as “greenfield” development is possible on the fringe, there are no strong reasons to confront the obstacles to infill.
- Regarding residents’ attitudes and hostility: need to educate the community in order to have people understand infill concepts and provide support.
- Current consumer preferences seem to be homes with 3-4 car garages, something that infill projects don’t usually allow the space to provide. Bucking consumer preferences? Most-wanted feature/option in new residential developments in eastern Colorado Springs: 3-car garage, with good response shown to 4-car garage with additional living space above 4th garage (but no kitchen facilities allowed by zoning in such above-garage space).
- Market forces play a large part in what is proposed and mixed-use is considered risky. Concern that government mandates may be counter to the economics that support certain types of development.
- There is a compelling need for suburban development to have segregated commercial uses, e.g. Briargate. Mixed use isn’t appropriate in all cases.

Staff
- What about timing of City maintenance and impacts (especially noise) on residents? Can’t do street work at night without offending residents; during day, bothers merchants/businesses.
- The TND ordinance must be coordinated with the mixed-use project.

All Groups
- Need to communicate effectively what “mixed use” is, and deal with potential resistance due to misunderstanding. Images work better than words, especially with neighbors.
- In defining mixed use, it seems to be the concept of parking the car and walking to achieve multiple goals, such as errands, work, and lunch. Mixed use should include residential, not just commercial. It should not be simply changes of use or conversions from residential to office, as is happening in the SU zone.
MOST FAVORITE AND LEAST FAVORITE PLACES IN COLORADO SPRINGS

Note: This question was intended to elicit images/examples of key design/development elements that could be incorporated in a new mixed-use development prototype in Colorado Springs.

All Groups
- No good development models on east side of city for mixed use—too segregated and the building sizes too large.
- Downtown topped list of favorite places:
  - Tejon/Bijou streets—shopping, variety of uses, good “feel,” pedestrian friendly, places to sit/see people, safe, classy; walkable.
  - 2 new bars in Downtown, have raised issues of pedestrian safety as reported property and person crimes have increased. There are no downtown “beat” cops (i.e., out of patrol cars) in Colorado Springs.
  - Integration of parks with the downtown uses—like the Fine Arts Center.
  - Mix of uses including things like the YMCA.
  - Downtown could use more convenience uses for the employees there, such as drug store or small food store.
- Pioneer Museum.
- Manitou Springs.
- The Broadmoor—use of the natural landscape.
- City’s natural environment and parks: foothills and the mountains behind; parks, open space, trails in city.
- Some noted difference between older areas with open, inviting feeling and newer trails that are walled in by adjacent fences.
- Bon Center and ice cream stand behind.
- Near North and Patty Jewett and Middle Shooks Run neighborhoods—older homes; variety of residential styles/architecture; street trees/street landscaping; walking distance to Downtown/shopping; public transit is easily accessed/used; Willamette intersection with easy parking and access to mom and pop shops; traffic is not a hassle.
- Old Colorado City
- Families with children like Tinseltown—can do movies, eat, services like dry cleaning, and shopping at Target in 1 trip (more or less).
- Conveniences shopping on Academy Boulevard.
- Core neighborhoods built prior to 1940 seem better designed and originally included markets. There is tension between these residential uses and institutional uses such as Colorado College and Penrose Hospital.
- Chapel Hills Mall is very user-unfriendly. It’s very hard to get around. However, malls are safe for families to let kids wander a bit. Need safety, convenience and fun.
- Park Meadows can be confusing, but it does contain surprises and is a new experience.

INFORMATION/FEEDBACK ABOUT CURRENT MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN CITY

Staff and Private Sector
- “Gold Hill Mesa” Site at Highway 24 and 21st Street—Classic Homes and NES as consultants. Proposal for an urban village with MU area (200 acres). This is a brownfield site. Village portion is 1500 dwelling units on 90 acres. Walking connections and some live/work units.
- Proposal for Blake Ranch—1600 acres annexation proposal by Classic Homes, including 200-400 unit TND village.
- The First and Main Center (Powers and S. Carefree) - there is a lost opportunity in not providing a mix with residential.
- Lowell Center (Nevada and Fountain) is primarily residential with limited neighborhood-serving retail.
- Spring Creek is a proposed mixed-use infill project, located next to a failed retail center. No ordinance in place for mixed use, so finding it difficult to meet setback and street section standards. City Traffic wants wide streets with medians – which do not serve pedestrians and other street uses.
- Urban Renewal Area (SW of Downtown near Confluence Park): city is requiring mixed use as minimum parameter for Request for Proposals.
- In Briargate Area, La Plata Investments, developer of Briargate, is planning “Briargate Crossing.” Intended to more of an “urban development pattern” according to developer. Using the PBC as stopgap zoning, filling in the gaps with new provisions to enable a mix of uses.
New zoning will be PBC with "conditions of record" (mandatory standards) addressing setbacks, building heights, mass, parking location, landscaping, building orientation for office, retail, and MF uses.

- There will also be CCRs/Design Guidelines for building design.

Westside infill projects have been restricted to commercial zones along Colorado Avenue, and have been fairly uncontroversial. Near Old Colorado City, have taken unremarkable buildings away to create new sites, or remodeled. multifamily building with two stories did raise objection.

**INTERVIEW LIST – MIXED USE ZONING AND STREET STANDARDS PROJECT**

**Task Force Membership**

- Benson, David  Benson Enterprises, Inc.
- Blanchard, Steve  Planning Commission Liaison
- Braden, Ralph  Nor’Wood Development Group
- Brown, Tom  Thomas Brown & Associates
- Campbell, Charles  Charles Campbell, Architect -SICK
- Cunningham, Mark  West One Group
- Doran, Jan  CONO Representative
- Galletta, Lou  Architect
- Hutchison, Sharon  CONO Neighborhood Representative
- John Maynard  Nes, Inc. (Developer)
- Kuhns, Ron  CONO Neighborhood Representative
- Lawson, Walter  CONO Neighborhood Representative
- Loeb, Mark  LaPlata Investments LLC
- Nelson, J Mark  J Mark Nelson Architects
- Snider, Val  Planning Commission Liaison
- Spokas, Beth  Downtown Partnership
- Stimple, Doug  Classic Homes
- Tremmel Mark  Colorado Architecture Partners

**Technical Advisory Committee**

- Bevans, Ron  Development Review, Landscape Architect
- Blewitt, Craig  City Public Works/Transportation
- Fleschow, Michael  Transit System
- Horhbacher, Dave  Colorado Springs Utilities
- Lethbridge, Dave  City Engineering
- London, Dave  Regional Building Department
- Marrino, Angela  Fire Prevention
- Mayerl, James  Development Review,
- Roberts, Tim  City Traffic Engineering
- Veltman, Brett  Development Review Enterprise, Unit Manager

**Other Consultants/Developers**

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- Seibert, Tim  Nes, Inc.
- Weipking, Jack  HBA & TND Committee
**CS Utilities**

- Cerda, Mark  Utilities
- Gross, Brad  Utilities
- Pounds, Loren  Utilities
- Valle, Jerry  Utilities

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- Tim Burke  Public Communications
- Alece Otero  Development Review

**Others**

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- Rice-Jones, Judith  Citizen