

## **Compass Navigation Committee: Meeting #4**

*February 5, 2025*

*9:00am – 12:00pm (light breakfast from 8:30am – 9:00am)*

***Crested Butte Center for the Arts: King Community Room (3<sup>rd</sup> floor)***

*Zoom option is available for the public ([register at this link](#)).*

### **Meeting Purpose:**

- Refresh on core community values and the positive outcomes we seek
- Update on implementing Compass Navigation and interconnected success measures
- Discuss the draft Community Plan areas and recommendations

### **Meeting Agenda:**

***Optional: Networking Breakfast (8:30am – 9:00am)***

**(1) Welcome & Introductions (9:00am – 9:20am)**

**(2) Compass Navigation Actions (9:20am – 9:40am)**

(a) Interconnected Values, Goals and Success Measures

**(3) Breakout Groups: Draft Community Plan (9:40am – 11:00am)**

(a) Overview of Draft Executive Summary

(b) Define Key Plan Areas (Town-Wide, Areas of Stability and Areas of Change)

(c) Review and Discuss Draft Recommendations within the context of Success Measures

**(4) Roundtable Report Out: Key Community Plan Takeaways (11:00am – 11:35am)**

**(5) Next Steps: Where We Go From Here (11:35am – 11:45am)**

**(6) Public Comment (2 minutes per comment / adjourn at 12:00pm)**

**(7)**

***Optional: Compass Navigation Committee Lunch (12:00pm – 1:00pm)***

## **Meeting Materials: Packet Distributed on January 29, 2025**

<b>Attachment A: Compass Navigation Individual Plan Updates .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Compass Navigation Updates: Editorial Series .....	3
Transportation Mobility Plan: Implementation Update .....	3
Historic Preservation Plan: Adoption and Implementation Update .....	4
2030 Climate Action Plan: Adoption and Implementation Update .....	4
<b>Attachment B: Draft Community Plan and Navigation Committee Breakout Preparation.....</b>	<b>6</b>
What Have We Been Up To Since the Last Navigation Committee Meeting? .....	6
Introducing the Draft Community Plan.....	6
Navigation Committee Breakout Activity Introduction .....	7

### ***Supporting Documentation Links***

- [Crested Butte Community Compass](#) (Adopted November 2022)
- [Crested Butte Transportation Mobility Plan](#) (Adopted March 2024)
- [Crested Butte Historic Preservation Plan](#) (Adopted December 2024)
- [Crested Butte Climate Action Plan](#) (Anticipated Adoption February 3, 2025)
- [DRAFT Crested Butte Community Plan](#) (Shared for Navigation Committee Feedback on January 29, 2025)

# **Attachment A: Compass Navigation Individual Plan Updates**

## **Compass Navigation Updates: Editorial Series**

Following feedback from the Navigation Committee’s September meeting, the Town has partnered with Crested Butte News on a monthly editorial series about Compass Navigation. We hope you’ve had a chance to read it!

Below is the general schedule for the series, including links to available online editions (unfortunately, not all were published online).

### **Editorial Series Schedule:**

- November: Introduction to Compass Navigation
- [December: Historic Preservation Plan](#)
- January: Climate Action Plan
- February/March: Community Plan
- March/April: Transportation & Mobility Implementation Updates
- April/May: Anticipated Wrap-up

Each edition takes a deep dive into one of these plans, followed by "Voices of the Navigation Committee," where committee members share their insights on the process and priorities.

A big thank-you to Andris, Nicole, Molly, Andrew, and Gesa for participating so far! If you'd like to be featured in an upcoming edition, please reach out—we'd love to include your perspective.

## **Transportation Mobility Plan: Implementation Update**

The TMP sets a long-term roadmap to support the Community Compass goal to “de-emphasize cars and focus on walking, biking, rolling, and transit” through an approach of improving alternative mobility choices, managing parking resources, and integrating land use with transportation. [The final TMP document can be viewed here.](#)

**Red Lady Intersection:** The Town’s top transportation priority for 2025 is completing the CO-135 and Red Lady Avenue roundabout. The project is currently undergoing environmental review and the design process will kick off later this spring, which will include a community engagement process. This fully funded project is essential for the Crested Butte Community School (CBCS) to obtain its Certificate of Occupancy for its expansion.

**Corridor Plan:** Additionally in 2025, the Town will actively participate in Gunnison County’s CO-135 Integrated Land Use, Transportation, and Infrastructure Corridor Plan. This collaborative effort—led by Gunnison County with active collaboration with the Town of Crested Butte, Town of Mt. Crested Butte, CB South, the RTA, Mountain Express, and CDOT—aims to develop a long-term vision for CO-135, the Sixth Street Corridor in Crested Butte, and regional and local transit connections between Gunnison and Mt. Crested Butte.

**Parking & Traffic Calming:** No changes are planned for the Town’s parking and traffic calming programs in 2025. A review of last year’s implementation—including traffic calming measures and the winter skier parking permit program—will take place with the Town Council on March 3.

## Historic Preservation Plan: Adoption and Implementation Update

The [Historic Preservation Plan](#) (HPP) was officially adopted on December 16, 2024, setting the stage for implementation in 2025. The HPP aligns with the Compass goal to “retain the unique character and traditions of Crested Butte” by ensuring that the Town’s architectural identity reflects both its deep sense of community and its evolution over time. The plan continues to protect the national historic core, identifies and preserves the Town’s transition from a mining town to a ski and recreation destination, and allows for more design creativity outside historic districts—all while celebrating Crested Butte’s distinctive mass, scale, and form.

### Planned Implementation Items for 2025 include:

- Survey of buildings from the Early Recreation/Ski Period of Significance (POS) (Q2–Q4)
- Comprehensive updates to the zoning code, including: (Q3–Q4)
  - Establishing a second POS for the Early Recreation/Ski era
  - Refining demolition regulations for each period of significance
  - Adjusting the local historic district boundary to create a buffer around the National Historic District, while ensuring BOZAR review beyond this boundary
- Identification of incentive programs (Q3 – Q4)
- Design Standards and Guidelines Update (*Timing Currently Being Refined Q3/Q4 (2025) – Q1/2 (2026)*)

## 2030 Climate Action Plan: Adoption and Implementation Update

The [draft 2030 Climate Action Plan \(CAP\)](#) is anticipated to be adopted by Town Council on Monday, February 3, 2025.

The Town has influence on reducing community and Town greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by leveraging strategies in four major impact areas: building energy use, renewable energy supply, waste management and materials, and low-carbon transportation. With Brendle Group’s expertise and feedback from the CAPC, public, and Council, staff and Brendle refined a group of strategies and actions to address emissions for Crested Butte to 2030 and create an implementation timeline. As guided by Town Council, Brendle Group provided a cost-analysis and forecasted GHG emissions impact for each proposed climate action to inform which actions were the most cost-effective and should be highly prioritized by the Town. The results of this analysis are included in **figure 1**:

*Figure 1. Top 7 climate strategies identified in the 2030 CAP (Dollars spent/MTCO2e reduced). See 2030 CAP for all recommended strategies and actions.*

1	\$89 - \$101	Accelerate efficiency improvements and electrification in existing residential buildings
2	\$122 - \$134	Accelerate efficiency improvements and electrification in existing commercial buildings
3	\$222 - \$626	Maximize new local renewable energy generation
4	\$587 - \$878	Raise the bar on low emissions new construction
5	\$742 - \$953	Increase diversion from landfill and encourage sustainable consumption
6*	\$1,173 - \$1,521	Lead the way with efficiency improvements and electrification of Town buildings
7*	\$10,503 - \$12,837	Install renewable energy resources to serve Town facilities

*\*The cost effectiveness is lower than other strategies due to accounting for the full cost of implementation by the Town.*

[The 2022 Crested Butte GHG Emissions Inventory](#) identifies that 90% of Crested Butte’s community emissions are sourced from natural gas and electricity use; 51% of those energy emissions are attributed to energy use in existing residential buildings. Consequently, the analysis provided in **figure 1** finds that existing building energy use for both commercial and residential properties are the Town’s biggest opportunities to reduce GHG emissions to 2030 in a cost-effective manner. A proposed implementation timeline is included in the draft CAP that directs staff to prioritize existing building emissions and then look to address other sources of emissions within the Town. Figure 2 outlines the near-, mid-, and long-term climate action implementation strategies to 2030:

*Figure 2. 2030 Climate Action Plan Implementation Timeline*

Near-Term 2025 - 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Incorporate foundational and enabling strategies into all climate actions</li><li>• Require energy assessments for existing buildings and update zoning codes</li><li>• Expand building energy efficiency and electrification incentives</li><li>• Accelerate renewable energy coordination, education, and advocacy</li><li>• Develop incentives for waste reduction</li><li>• Implement Town facility energy monitoring and planning</li></ul>
Mid-Term 2027 - 2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop commercial building energy benchmarking requirements</li><li>• Track new construction building materials</li><li>• Implement Town facility efficiency, electrification, and renewable energy generation projects</li><li>• Support new local renewable energy generation</li></ul>
Long-Term 2029 - 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Close the gap on new construction electrification and efficiency</li><li>• Continue implementation of policy and incentive programs to reduce existing building emissions</li></ul>

# **Attachment B: Draft Community Plan and Navigation**

## **Committee Breakout Preparation**

### **What Have We Been Up to Since the Last Navigation Committee Meeting?**

The Community Plan is transitioning from its design phase to discussion phase. Since the Design Charrette and Navigation Committee meeting in September, the Community Plan Advisory Committee, as well as Town Council and BOZAR, worked through the charrette concepts and developed draft visions and recommended zoning change considerations for different areas of Town.

Together, these discussions led to the [first draft of the Community Plan document](#), which attached to this packet for the Navigation Committee’s review (and was previously shared with the advisory committee). Staff will use feedback from both committees to refine the draft throughout February before launching a community-wide feedback period in March. This engagement will include an open house, stakeholder meetings, and a feedback survey.

### **Introducing the Draft Community Plan**

The Community Plan defines a long-term vision for the town and will establish a regulatory framework to bring that vision to life—ensuring alignment with the community’s goals and values as outlined in the Community Compass.

The goal of the Community Plan is to improve the livability, functionality, and sense of community in Crested Butte by leveraging the Town’s development regulations to stimulate free market investment in community-serving housing, businesses, and non-profits.

*Key Chapters of the Draft Plan include:*

- **Introduction** – Provides context and an overview of the planning process
- **Crested Butte’s Context** – Examines current challenges and opportunities, and identifies measures of success to guide the plan.
- **Crested Butte’s Future** – Combines the seven strategic goals from the Community Compass with community input to shape the Community Plan vision statement—focusing on keeping Crested Butte, Crested Butte.
- **Unlocking Potential** – Introduces zoning concepts and the Community Plan toolbox, outlining strategies and zoning change considerations for areas of stability and change. *(This chapter will be the focus of the Navigation Committee meeting)*
- **Making It Happen** – Lays the foundation for implementing the plan, including setting the stage for the creation of a new five-year housing and resilient community plan.
- **Looking Ahead** – Positions the Community Plan as a stepping stone for the upcoming 2025 Gunnison County Corridor Plan.

## Navigation Committee Breakout Activity Introduction

The goal of the breakout discussion at the Navigation Committee meeting is to better understand how the draft Community Plan recommendations relate to the plan's interconnected success measures. Participants discuss as a team and additionally use a scorecard to help quantitatively evaluate each draft recommendation towards the positive community outcomes the plan is trying to achieve, as described in the following draft success measures:

- ✓ Ensure new regulations and incentives align with Town's physical character – preserving mass, scale, orientation, and the integrity of the historic district and historic resources.
- ✓ Increase full-time occupancy in the Town.
- ✓ Increase the quantity, variety, distribution, and opportunities for mobility of deed restricted housing units in the Town.
- ✓ Increase opportunities for the establishment and retention of community-serving businesses within the Town.
- ✓ Strengthen social connections by maintaining or enhancing community gathering spaces in the public realm.
- ✓ Maintain Crested Butte's rough edges and polish only when necessary.
- ✓ Support the Town's transportation mobility goals by increasing opportunities for people to live closer to where they work.
- ✓ Support the Town's climate action goals by increasing opportunities for development efficiencies.

Participants will split into four groups that will "speed date" among the four focus areas of the Community Plan.

1. Areas of Stability: Residential Neighborhoods
2. Area of Change: Bellevue Avenue
3. Area of Change: Sixth Street Corridor
4. Area of Change: Town-Wide applications (Parking Requirements) and Slate River Annexation

Representatives from Community Plan Advisory Committee, along with Town Staff, will be stationed at each area to guide the discussion and provide context and insight into the deliberations that produced the draft recommendations. Each group will take approximately 15 minutes in each area to review the draft vision statement and high-level toolbox recommendations on Land Use, Density, and Fit.

The breakout activity will include qualitative discussion of the relationship between draft plan recommendations and success measures with the following questions to guide our discussion:

- What resonates with the vision statement and why?
- What toolbox considerations connect or feel disconnected to our success measures?
- How do we balance tradeoffs and address tensions?
- What's missing or just doesn't make sense?

Ahead of the meeting, committee members are requested to review the first draft of the Community Plan, with a particularly focus on the **Crested Butte's Future** and **Unlocking Potential** chapters to prepare for the discussion. Beyond this meeting, committee members are welcome to share any additional plan feedback to Town Staff to help improve the draft prior to the March publication.



# TOWN OF CRESTED BUTTE COMMUNITY PLAN

PUBLISHED FOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE & NAVIGATION COMMITTEE  
REVIEW ON JANUARY 27, 2025



TORTI  
GALLAS +  
PARTNERS

January 2025

# Acknowledgements

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## Town Council

- Ian Billick, Mayor
- Mallika Magner, Mayor Pro Tem
- Anna Fenerty
- Beth Goldstone
- Kent Cowherd
- Gabi Prochaska
- John O’Neal
- Jason MacMillan, Former Town Council Member

## Board of Zoning and Architectural Review (BOZAR)

- Erik Nauman, Chair
- Donny Davol, Vice Chair
- Ed Schmidt
- Halley Anderson
- Josh Staab
- Luz Spann-LaBato
- Roxana Alvarez-Marti

## Community Plan Advisory Committee

- Kent Cowherd, Town Council Member
- John O’Neal, Town Council Member
- Roxana Alvarez-Marti, BOZAR Member
- Danica Ramgoolam
- Jessica Welborn
- Jim Starr

## Compass Navigation Committee

In addition to the Community Plan Advisory Committee, the Compass Navigation Committee is comprised of:

- Ian Billick, Mayor
- Anna Fenerty, Council Member, Transportation Mobility Plan Advisory Committee
- Ed Schmidt, BOZAR Member, Transportation Mobility Plan Advisory Committee
- Glo Cunningham, Transportation Mobility Plan Advisory Committee
- Cal Fenerty, Transportation Mobility Plan Advisory Committee
- Chris Hensley, Transportation Mobility Plan Advisory Committee
- Gabi Prochaska, Council Member, Historic Preservation Plan Advisory Committee
- Mallika Magner, Mayor Pro Tem, Historic Preservation Plan Advisory Committee
- Erik Nauman, BOZAR Chair, Historic Preservation Plan Advisory Committee
- Andrew Hadley, Historic Preservation Plan Advisory Committee
- Molly Minneman, Historic Preservation Plan Advisory Committee
- Andris Zobs, Historic Preservation Plan Advisory Committee
- Beth Goldstone, Council Member, Climate Action Plan Advisory Committee
- Donny Davol, BOZAR Vice Chair, Climate Action Plan Advisory Committee
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- Madison Manning, Former Planning Technician

## Consulting Support

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Thank you to everyone in the community who participated in this process whether through the surveys, public policy forum, open houses, design charrette, and more!

# Table of Contents

Executive Summary ..... 4

What’s Inside this Document

Introduction ..... 6

About this Plan & How it was Developed

Crested Butte’s Context ..... 14

From Challenges to Opportunities to Define Success

Crested Butte’s Future ..... 28

A Vision Rooted in Community Values

Unlocking Potential ..... 36

Enabling the Community Plan through Policy

Making it Happen ..... 60

Setting the Stage for Implementation

Looking Ahead ..... 64

Collaborating Beyond the Town’s Boundaries

Glossary ..... 66

Appendices (Links)

Policy Review Summary

Economic Market Study

Design Charrette Report



# Executive Summary

## What's Inside this Document

The Crested Butte Community Plan (CP) establishes a long-term physical vision for the Town of Crested Butte (Town) that aligns with the community's values and strategic goals. The CP outlines a plan to improve Crested Butte's livability, functionality, and sense of community by leveraging the Town's development regulations and community resources to stimulate free market investment in community-serving housing, businesses, and non-profits.

In this document, the reader will be guided through the essential elements of the Crested Butte Community Plan (CP):

### **Introduction**

#### ***About this Plan & How it was Developed***

This chapter introduces the Community Plan (CP), outlining its mission, relevance, and how it supports the Town's Community Compass and intersects with the Compass Navigation effort. It places the CP within the broader regional context and highlights how thoughtful data analysis, meaningful community engagement, and the foundation of the Compass, shaped the plan's creation.

### **Crested Butte's Context**

#### ***From Challenges to Opportunities to Define Success***

This chapter examines the challenges facing Crested Butte and how they can be transformed into opportunities. It identifies measures of success that ensure the CP reflects the Town's core values of authenticity, connection, accountability, and boldness, setting the stage for a shared vision of the future.

### **Crested Butte's Future**

#### ***A Vision Rooted in Community Values***

This chapter brings together the Town's seven strategic goals from the Community Compass with community input to craft a vision statement for the Town's future. The CP vision focuses on keeping Crested Butte, Crested Butte - retaining the special nature of what makes Crested Butte feel special and different, while embracing new opportunities to thrive into the future in a way that supports the Town's various goals, including Transportation Mobility, Historic Preservation, and Climate Action.

### **Unlocking Potential**

#### ***Enabling the Community Plan through Policy***

This chapter focuses on the strategies and tools needed to bring the CP vision to life. It examines how Town policies, particularly zoning, can be leveraged to unlock potential and drive progress. The chapter explores opportunities within areas of change, including Belleview Avenue, Sixth Street, and Slate River Annexation, and areas of stability of the Town's residential neighborhoods and historic core along Elk Avenue - ensuring a balanced and intentional approach.

### **Making it Happen**

#### ***Setting the Stage for Implementation***

This chapter charts the path to turning the vision into reality. It lays the foundation for the creation of a new five-year housing and resilient community plan and explores concepts for reimagining Town-owned properties to align with the Community Plan's goals.

### **Looking Ahead**

#### ***Collaborating Beyond Boundaries***

The plan concludes with a reflection on its role as a steppingstone toward the upcoming 2025 North Gunnison Valley CO-135 Corridor Plan, which will integrate land use, transportation, and infrastructure planning at a regional scale to achieve collective goals and foster long-term collaboration.



# Introduction

## About this Plan & How it was Developed

This chapter introduces the mission and goals of the Community Plan (CP), highlighting its urgency and importance. Building on the foundation of the Crested Butte Community Compass – a declaration of the Town of Crested Butte’s shared values and strategic objectives – the CP is positioned within the broader Compass Navigation framework. This framework represents a deliberate, integrated effort to align four coordinated initiatives with the Town’s seven strategic goals. Informed by comprehensive data analysis and enriched through meaningful community input, the CP embodies a collective vision rooted in the Community Compass and the voices of Crested Butte .

## About this Plan

### What is the Community Plan?

The Crested Butte Community Plan (CP) outlines a future vision for the Town of Crested Butte and establishes a regulatory framework to bring this vision to life, aligning with the community’s goals and values as defined in the Community Compass . It also sets the stage for creating a new five-year housing strategy and a resilient community plan, ensuring the community thrives while staying true to its values for years to come.



### WHAT IS A “THRIVING” COMMUNITY?

*A thriving community is a livable place, shaped by the people who call it home. It’s a place where people can live, work, and grow with stability and opportunity. It balances diverse needs, fosters belonging and connection, and uplifts its members through life’s ups and downs, allowing for a vibrant, inclusive, and enduring future.*



The Urgency Driving this Plan

Crested Butte is celebrated for its historic charm, colorful buildings, and stunning natural surroundings. But what truly sets it apart is its close-knit community, evident in neighborhood street gatherings, townie-takeovers, and quirky costume celebrations. However, in the 21st century, Crested Butte stands at a pivotal crossroads, facing a paradox of increasing economic investment and a worsening community affordability crisis.

As Crested Butte and the surrounding region grow, high land values and construction costs, combined with outdated development regulations, are skewing investments toward luxury uses and amenities, overshadowing and underproducing essential and affordable community needs.

This trend has led to a growing dependence on substantial and unsustainable public subsidies for community development. Despite significant public investment in affordable housing over the past several decades, the challenge remains, undermining Crested Butte’s livability, functionality, and tight-knit social fabric. The repercussions extend beyond housing affordability, creating transportation challenges and environmental pressures due to the rising cost of living and the displacement of the local workforce and essential goods and services down valley and out of Gunnison County. This is causing longer commutes and a slow erosion of Crested Butte’s authentic sense of community.

Addressing these challenges requires both a local and regional approach. It is crucial to find ways to facilitate more affordable housing and essential community-serving goods and services within the Town itself and throughout Gunnison County. Bringing more attainable housing closer to jobs and services and promoting community investments where infrastructure and amenities already exist are key pieces of the puzzle that align with several of the Town’s strategic goals. However, with limited resources, Crested Butte cannot sustainably continue to fully subsidize community needs while the free-market favors luxury amenities. A comprehensive update of the Town’s development regulations was needed through this plan to realign

market forces with the needs of a functional and livable community.

The CP evaluates and harnesses the Town’s development regulations to strike a better balance between the demands of a tourism and amenities-based economy and the needs of Crested Butte’s residents. This plan outlines a vision for the future of Crested Butte that reflects the community’s goals and values. Rather than waiting for change to happen, the CP builds on foundation of the Community Compass, the Town’s comprehensive plan, to take the reins. It charts a course for positive change that is authentic, connected, accountable, and bold – ensuring that Crested Butte’s strategic goals remain at the heart of this transformation.

The Community Plan Goal

The goal of this plan is to improve the livability, functionality, and sense of community in Crested Butte by leveraging the Town’s development regulations to stimulate free market investment in community-serving housing, businesses, and non-profits.

BREAKING DOWN THE GOAL

**DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS** The Town’s zoning code regulates and guides public and private investment, shaping the look, feel, and function of the community.

**FREE-MARKET INVESTMENT** This refers to development by private developers, not the public sector.

**COMMUNITY-SERVING HOUSING** Community-serving housing is affordable, accessible, encompasses a diverse range of housing types and programs designed to meet the evolving needs of the community. From seasonal employees to local professionals and service providers, to individuals, growing families, seniors, and households across varying income levels, the goal is to provide a variety of attainable housing options that support a wide spectrum of the community’s needs.

**COMMUNITY-SERVING BUSINESSES AND NON-PROFITS** This refers to the availability of suitable spaces within the Town for community-serving businesses and nonprofits to establish, operate, and thrive. These businesses and organizations play a vital role in meeting the everyday needs of Gunnison Valley residents, from essential services to local initiatives that support the community’s quality of life.

Following the Compass

In 2022, Crested Butte’s Community Compass was created as the town’s North Star, guiding the community through its most pressing challenges with a strategic and coordinated approach. The Compass established four community core values—authentic, connected, accountable, and bold—that formulated a 5-year strategic plan and underpin decision-making to navigate the Town’s many complex challenges.



Crested Butte’s economic challenges are not new but have been addressed incrementally over time without a comprehensive strategy. Since the adoption of its zoning code in 1961, the Town has made piecemeal amendments to address emerging issues, often leading to unintended consequences or inconsistencies. Together, the Community Compass, Community Plan, Transportation Mobility Plan, Historic Preservation Plan, and Climate Action Plan shift the Town towards taking a more proactive, strategic, and holistic approach.

The Community Plan, developed with extensive community input (detailed in the next section), seeks to enhance livability, functionality, and sense of community while aligning with the strategic goals from the Community Compass:

- 1. Approach community challenges through active collaboration and public engagement.
- 2. Accommodate growth in a way that maintains the Town's and Valley's rural feel.
- 3. Enable people who live and work here to thrive.
- 4. Retain the unique character and traditions of Crested Butte.
- 5. De-emphasize cars and focus on walking, biking, rolling, and transit.
- 6. Continue to passionately care for our natural surroundings and forever protect Red Lady.
- 7. Act on the urgency of climate change and prepare for the changes we expect from it.

The Community Plan seeks to balance the Town’s goals of “accommodate growth in a way that maintains Crested Butte’s rural feel” and “enable people who live and work here to thrive”. But in total, this plan touches all seven Compass goals, as they are interconnected and shape the Town’s future.




The CP is an opportunity to align the Town’s development regulations with the needs of Crested Butte’s spectrum of residents – youth, workforce, new and growing families, aging population and more – enabling them to thrive (Goal 3). This means enabling access to attainable housing, affordable essential goods and services, and a vibrant local economy that supports the community’s long-term vitality. A key strategy in this approach is concentrating future investment near existing infrastructure. This not only supports affordability but also protects the natural and agricultural landscapes that make Crested Butte unique (Goals 2 and 6). This further supports the Town’s mobility goals by reducing car dependency and advancing climate action by bringing housing closer to jobs and services (Goals 5 and 7). Above all, it’s crucial that any future vision maintains and builds on Crested Butte’s distinctive charm and character—the very essence that makes it the place we all love (Goal 4).



Navigating the future, together

The Community Plan not only touches all the Compass values and strategic goals, but it was critical to avoid planning in a silo. The Town took a comprehensive and integrated approach, called “Compass Navigation”, to four major planning processes of the Transportation Mobility Plan (TMP), Historic Preservation Plan (HPP), Climate Action Plan (CAP), and this Community Plan (CP) .

One of the only constants in life is change. Proactively managing change requires addressing the community’s conflicting priorities – such as affordable housing, climate action, historic preservation, and transportation – while balancing trade-offs. Compass Navigation goes beyond mapping an individual plan; it’s about taking a proactive approach to ensure the community’s goals and values guide the Town’s future development in a way that supports all its strategic goals. By connecting these efforts and incorporating community input, Crested Butte is charting a path forward that reflects its shared values and goals.

<b>TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY PLAN (TMP)</b> <i>Adopted March 4, 2024</i>	<b>HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN (HPP)</b> <i>Adopted November 18, 2024</i>	<b>CLIMATE ACTION PLAN (CAP)</b> <i>Adopted February 3, 2025</i>	<b>COMMUNITY PLAN (CP)</b> <i>This Document - In Progress</i>
			
<p><b>Creating a <u>connected</u> community.</b></p> <p>The TMP sets a long-term roadmap to support the Community Compass goal of “de-emphasizing cars and focusing on walking, biking, rolling, and transit” by improving mobility choices, managing parking resources, and integrating land use with transportation.</p>	<p><b>Preserving Crested Butte’s <u>authenticity</u> and character.</b></p> <p>The HPP aligns with the Compass goal to “retain the unique character and traditions of Crested Butte” by ensuring that the Town’s architectural identity reflects its deep sense of community and its evolution over time. The plan continues to protect the national historic core, identifies and preserves the Town’s transition from a mining town to a ski/recreation destination, and allows flexibility for more design creativity outside historic districts, while celebrating Crested Butte’s mass, scale, and form.</p>	<p><b>Taking <u>bold</u> and <u>accountable</u> action on climate.</b></p> <p>The CAP aligns with the goal to “act on the urgency of climate change and prepare for the changes we expect from it” by setting a roadmap to reduce Crested Butte’s emissions through 2030, focusing on building decarbonization, renewable energy, and waste management.</p>	<p><b>Living Crested Butte’s <u>core</u> community values.</b></p> <p>This CP is informed by the TMP, HPP, and CAP to strategically meet the Compass strategic goals by identifying a future vision that is aligned with and supports Crested Butte’s community values. The CP proposes a new regulatory framework and public investment strategy that enables Crested Butte to leverage its economic opportunities and address its affordability challenges.</p>

A Crested Butte Plan with an Important Regional Context

Crested Butte is a small town with a big community and its challenges are not isolated; they are part of a larger regional landscape that requires active coordination and collaboration. Addressing the complexities of housing, transportation, and community needs necessitates collaboration between the Town, County, neighboring municipalities, and other important regional partners. The Town plans to partner with Gunnison County, Town of Mt. Crested Butte, Crested Butte South POA, Mountain Express, RTA, and other regional stakeholders to develop a comprehensive CO 135 Corridor Plan for the Gunnison Valley. This plan will integrate land use and transportation, and guide infrastructure investment to better meet the needs of the entire region.

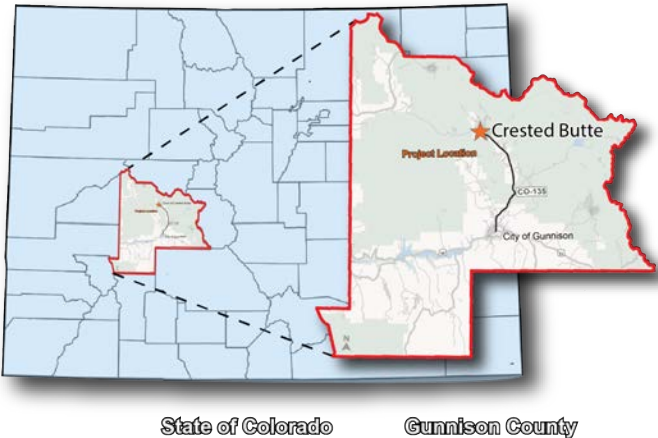
The CO 135 Corridor Plan builds on the goals outlined in the One Valley Resiliency Roadmap (OVR), which identifies three regional priorities to build and sustain community, create a more equitable and inclusive region, and advance climate action and environmental resiliency. A key focus of the OVR is aligning land use with transportation, and planning infrastructure investments across jurisdictions. The Corridor Plan’s intent is to set regional goals for these areas to support local governments and agencies in making decisions that benefit the entire valley, ensuring a more cohesive approach to future development.



**Regional Approach.** The Town of CB has control over its municipal boundary, but its important to leverage partnerships and collaborate to ensure a cohesive region.

This regional planning effort is essential, and Crested Butte is also looking inwards regarding public and private investment within the Town’s boundaries. The CP focuses on identifying opportunities near existing infrastructure and services, in alignment with both the Community Compass strategic goals and the CO135 corridor plan and OVR intentions. By doing so, the Town ensures that future development is aligned with both the Town’s strategic goals, as well as the larger regional vision.

Additionally, the CP is not solely concerned with housing and economic development. The ultimate goal is to enhance the overall livability, functionality, and sense of community within Crested Butte. Quality of life encompasses much more than just housing; it includes access to childcare, a strong local school, and ample opportunities for parks, recreation, and public open spaces. These elements are critical to ensuring a thriving community. To follow the CP, the Town will initiate a comprehensive update to the Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails (PROST) Master Plan in 2025. The PROST Plan will help plan for the evolving recreational needs of Crested Butte’s residents and visitors, ensuring the Town is well-equipped to support its growing community with regional collaboration and foresight.



# How this Plan was Developed

## Blending Community Wisdom with Technical Expertise

The CP was developed through a four-step process—discovery, desire, design, and discussion—that seamlessly combined data analysis with community feedback. A diverse advisory committee, including Town Council and BOZAR representatives as well as community members with expertise in architecture, land use law, mortgage lending, and small business ownership, ensured the plan aligned with the Community Compass Decision-Making Framework and integrated seamlessly with the Compass Navigation plans.

Supported by funding from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs' *Strong Communities* grant program, the Town engaged Torti Gallas + Partners and Hoffman Strategy Group to provide specialized expertise in community development, housing, and market analytics, resulting in a plan that reflects Crested Butte's values and advances its strategic goals.

### THE COMPASS DECISION- MAKING FRAMEWORK

- Step 1** Understand the challenge and define the goal.
- Step 2** Commit to a community engagement strategy.
- Step 3** Define success measures.
- Step 4** Create alternatives and filter them through the success measures.
- Step 5** Make decisions based on informed consent.

### Phase 1: Discovery

March - May 2024

The first phase concentrated on data collection and analysis. This included a [review of the Town's existing development regulations and policies](#), an [economic market study](#) to comprehend the region's current market conditions, and [review of an updated housing needs assessment](#) to understand the current needs of local residents. These efforts culminated in a thorough **understanding of the CP challenge and the definition of the goal**, marking the first step of the Compass Framework.

### Phase 2: Desire & Continued Discovery

June - August 2024

Phase two introduced **an extensive community outreach strategy** designed to engage a diverse audience. Throughout the summer, a [comprehensive bilingual survey](#), completed by 238 respondents, sought community input on the four Compass Navigation plans, including tools the community wanted to explore in the CP. In addition to the survey, various events provided opportunities to educate the community on the planning efforts and gather feedback on Crested Butte's challenges and opportunities. A collaborative event with the [Crested Butte Public Policy Forum](#) brought in experts on zoning and community affordability and attracted 250 attendees. Four [neighborhood block parties](#), engaging approximately 300 participants, facilitated discussions among neighbors, town staff, BOZAR members and council members.. Targeted stakeholder and focus group interviews with over 30 individuals offered diverse perspectives to inform the CP, including those from emergency services, public works, the design/build community, the school district, childcare providers, small business owners, and local non-profits. The feedback and insights from the community were synthesized with the discovery phase findings to **develop measures of success**, concluding this phase.

### Phase 3: Design

September 2024 - January 2025

The design phase built upon the success measures and concentrated on **creating alternatives** for community consideration. This phase featured a multi-day iterative [design charrette](#) facilitating the physical exploration of initial design alternatives for Crested Butte's future. Using hand sketches, digital renderings, and 3D models, several test concepts were crafted for different parcels in Crested Butte, examining different ways to meet the CP goals in alignment with the success measures. Approximately 200 people participated in a community meeting, design studio hours, or one-on-one meetings. Following the charrette, the CP advisory committee, BOZAR, and Town Council refined these concepts into alternatives for this draft plan.



**Community Engagement.** The community gathered in person for a Design Charrette (above) and Public Policy Forum (below).



### Phase 4: Discussion (CURRENT PHASE)

February - June 2025

In the final phase, ongoing community outreach will further refine the alternatives into the draft plan. Additional feedback will be gathered through a comment period and stakeholder presentations. The advisory committee will then integrate this feedback to refine the draft alternatives into a preferred vision and implementation plan. This plan will be considered for adoption using the **informed consent** decision-making model, first by BOZAR and then by the Crested Butte Town Council.

### YOUR VOICE MATTERS IF YOU...

- Attended the Public Policy Forum with Neal Payton, Justin Farrell, and Jason Blevins
- Took the Compass Navigation Survey
- Reviewed plan materials on the Compass Navigation or Community Plan website
- Read about the Compass or Community Plan in the Crested Butte News
- Sent an email to Town Council or had coffee with a Council member
- Chatted with Town Staff at a block party, outside the post office, or at Alpenglow
- Participated in the Design Charrette
- Participated in the Community Compass
- Participated in the Transportation Mobility Plan, Climate Action Plan, or Climate Action Plan
- Continue to share feedback with Town Staff and Town Council

**... THEN YOU DIRECTLY INFORMED THE CREATION OF THE COMMUNITY PLAN.**



# Crested Butte's Context

## From Challenges to Opportunities to Define Success

This chapter begins with a brief history and an overview of Crested Butte's unique context, setting the stage for a deeper understanding of the Town's current challenges. It examines the economic and social issues facing the community, reframing them as opportunities to inspire actionable solutions. Finally, it defines measures of success to ensure the Community Plan reflects and upholds Crested Butte's core values of authenticity, connection, accountability, and boldness.

## Crested Butte's Past & Evolution

### A Town Shaped by its History and Environment

Crested Butte rests on Núuagha-tuvu-pu (Ute) land, a region shaped by centuries of transformation. Originally home to the Ute people, the area's history was shaped by both natural forces and human activity and shifted dramatically when the Town was incorporated in 1880. The Town's early history was driven by the discovery of rich coal deposits, which sparked a mining boom that lasted through the late 19th century. With the arrival of the railroad in 1881, the region's rugged terrain became more accessible, transforming Crested Butte from a remote frontier settlement into a thriving coal town, home to over 1,000 residents by 1882.

The 20th century ushered in both progress and disruption. As automobiles and mail-order catalogs changed commerce and connectivity, the environmental landscape remained a constant force, with coal production advances helping the Town weather the Great Depression. World Wars I and II fueled coal demand, but by the early 1950s, the decline of coal mining and the closure of the Big Mine in 1952 marked a period of retreat. When the railroad was dismantled in 1955, the Town was left isolated, and its population dwindled to fewer than 300 people.

In the 1960s, Crested Butte began to evolve once again, but this time toward a new identity rooted in its natural beauty. The opening of paved mountain roads and the establishment of the Crested Butte Winter

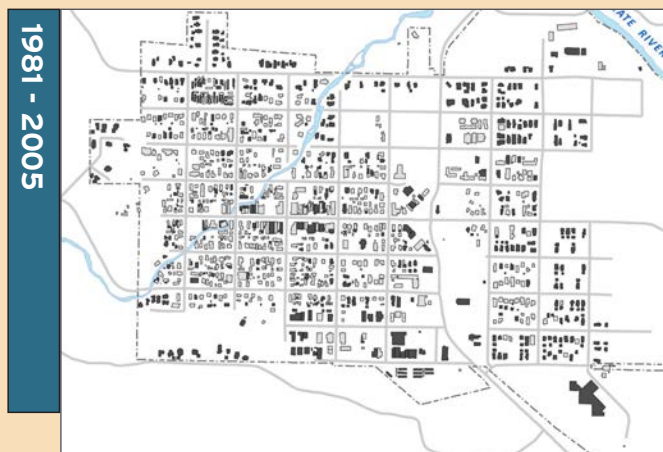
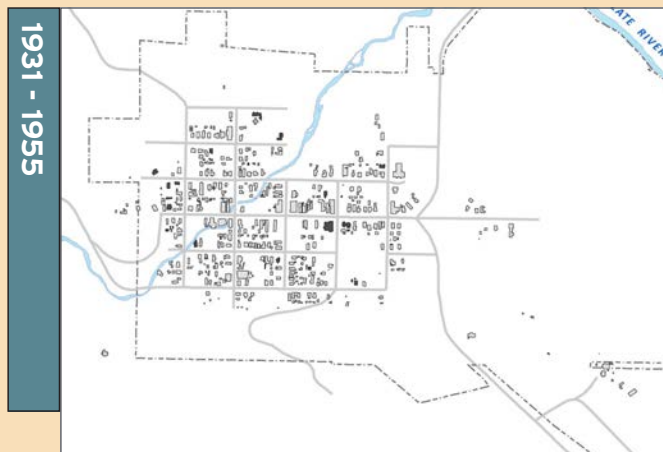
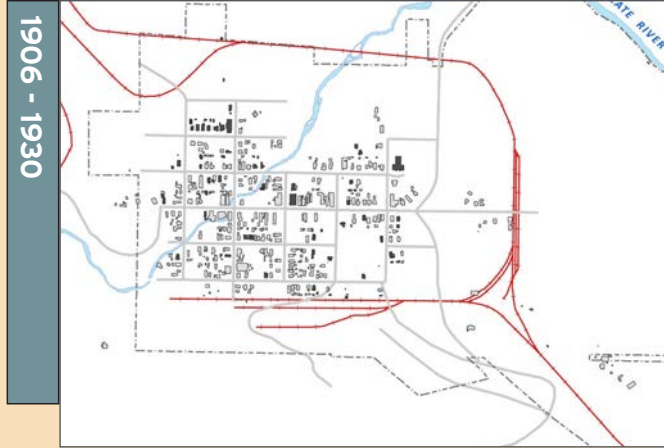
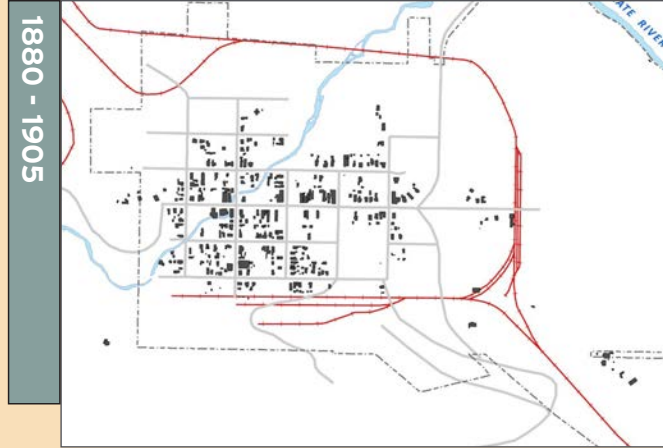
Sports Area in 1961 began a new chapter focused on recreation, as the area's mountainous terrain drew visitors seeking winter sports and outdoor adventures. Over time, the ski area grew into a renowned resort and Crested Butte also became a summer destination for its renowned mountain biking and hiking, and the Town's population rebounded, surpassing 1,500 by the turn of the century.

The Town's evolution has always been closely tied to its environment. Nestled at 8,885 feet in the Elk Range of the Colorado Rockies, Crested Butte is surrounded by natural beauty—snow-capped peaks, wildflower-filled meadows, and expansive forests. This natural beauty is not just a backdrop—it defines the Town's character while imposing clear limits on its physical expansion.

The Crested Butte community famously charted its own path by becoming the "Town that said 'Hell No!'" to a massive molybdenum mine on the cherished Red Lady (Mount Emmons), a 45-year battle that finally concluded in 2024. This decisive movement reflected a bold commitment to a future inspired by harmony with the land rather than a return to mining its riches.

Tucked at the end of the road, Crested Butte embraces a sense of isolation, especially during the winter months. Surrounded by a patchwork of privately conserved open space and public lands including three national wilderness areas, the Town faces unique constraints that demand intentional community planning. Balancing growth with a steadfast dedication to preserving the area's environmental integrity remains a defining challenge—and opportunity—for this resilient mountain community.





**Crested Butte.** The evolution of the Town has predominantly adhered to the historic boundaries of the 1880s settlement.



**Crested Butte.** As stunningly beautiful as it is to live surrounded and within these landscapes, everyday life can be challenged by the very of nature of this majestic place.



# Crested Butte Today

## Facing Complex Challenges that can be Seized as Opportunities

Crested Butte stands at a critical moment. With a population exceeding 1,600—the highest since its mining days—the Town is grappling with an economic paradox common to many amenities-rich communities throughout the world. Rising property values, driven by continued investment, are exacerbating housing affordability issues and pricing out full-time residents and the local workforce. While new luxury restaurants and a \$20 million art center signal economic growth, the real estate market’s median sales price of \$1.1 million and homes listed as high as \$5.5 million in 2023 highlight the widening gap between the increasing investment in the community and the financial pressures faced by its residents.

This paradox is no surprise. As this chapter will illustrate, the forces driving Crested Butte’s growth—escalating land values and rising construction costs, coupled with the Town’s outdated development regulations—are disproportionately favoring luxury developments and amenities as they have a higher return on investment and market audience through

tourists and vacation homeowners, rather than yielding land uses that provide community-based goods and services. As a result, critical community infrastructure—such as affordable housing, locally-owned business, and essential goods and services—continue to be undersupplied.

This shift has led to a growing dependence on public subsidies to meet development needs. Despite decades of investment in and construction of affordable housing by the Town, the gap persists, threatening Crested Butte’s character and eroding its sense of community. Beyond housing, these challenges have broader implications, spilling into transportation and environmental concerns, from increased sprawl outside of the town, commuting, and congestion. With rising costs and longer commutes, essential goods and services are being pushed down and out of the Gunnison Valley, further straining resources and reducing residents’ ability to thrive.

In this chapter, the economic paradox facing Crested Butte is explored in greater detail, highlighting the key challenges the Town and community is encountering. But with challenge, comes opportunity, and opportunities for the CP are identified to shape Crested Butte’s future, setting a course for a future where Crested Butte’s community can thrive.

## Crested Butte is facing...

### ...An economic paradox

The economic market study conducted for the CP revealed a striking “Economic Paradox” within Crested Butte. On the surface, the local economy appears robust, with net taxable sales growing at an impressive average annual rate of 6.7%.

This seemingly healthy economic growth, however, conceals a troubling decline in the purchasing power of community residents. The typical household in Crested Butte is burdened by significant expenses, allocating 40% of its income to housing, 18% to transportation, and 15% to food. These figures starkly contrast with the national standard, which considers a household “housing burdened” when over 30% of its income goes towards housing costs.

The high cost of living, coupled with limited affordable housing options, erodes residents’ ability to spend on other necessities, undermining the town’s economic resilience. As a result, many potential residents are forced to live farther from their workplaces, diminishing their quality of life and weakening community connections.

### With challenge comes opportunity

The CP must look beyond affordable housing alone, as housing is just one piece of the broader cost of living puzzle. By adopting a holistic approach, the CP seeks to address the interconnected challenge of providing a combination of community-serving housing, businesses, and non-profits, coupled with more affordable transportation options. By concentrating these elements closer together within Crested Butte—where existing infrastructure, robust transit, and a highly pedestrian-friendly environment already exist—the plan can help reduce transportation costs and lower overall household expenditures. This integrated strategy aims to alleviate multiple financial pressures on residents and shift the trajectory of the growing affordability crisis facing the community.



Development in Crested Butte is producing on luxury amenities, while the shortage of workforce housing continues to grow.



COMING SOON: Crested Butte Resident Spending vs National Average. 2023



Crested Butte is facing...

...A very concentrated economy

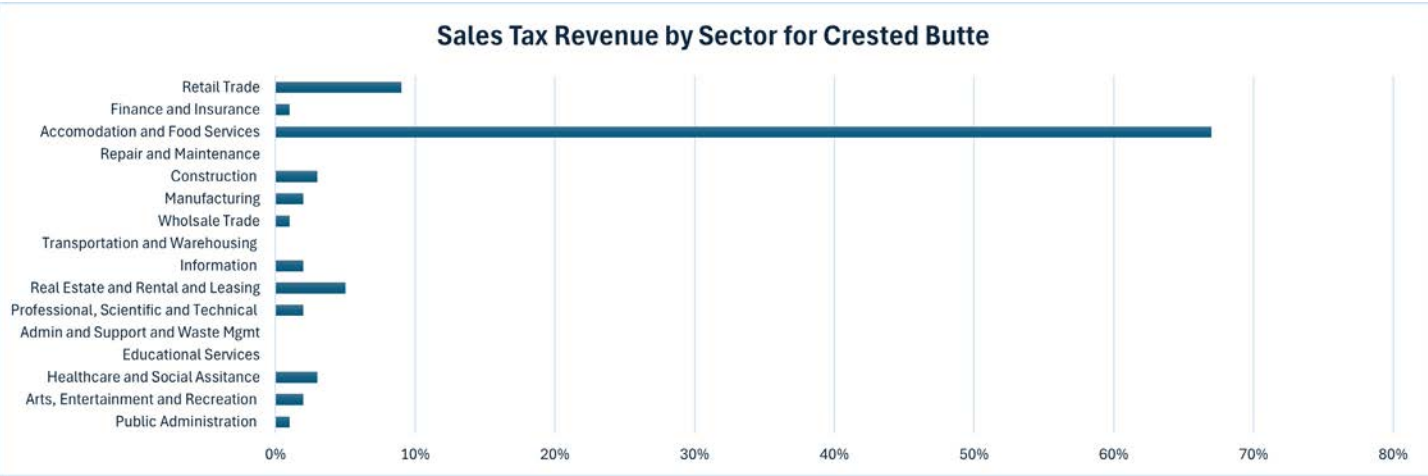
The market study additionally underscored the heavy reliance of Crested Butte's economy on tourism, revealing a concentration of economic activity in a few key sectors. A significant 67% of the Town's gross sales tax, and 50% of the North Gunnison Valley's revenue, comes from accommodation and food services that primarily cater to tourists. In contrast, essential goods and services such as trades, education, and childcare contribute minimally to the Town's gross sales, signaling a lack of local businesses that support everyday community needs. As land values and construction costs continue to rise, there is growing concern about the future of these essential goods and service businesses, many of which have owners that are likely to retire, sell, or close due to economic pressures. This over-reliance on tourism not only makes the local economy vulnerable to seasonal visitation fluctuations and external shocks but also threatens to push out the very businesses that serve the needs of the resident workforce. The absence of community-serving commercial trades emphasizes the urgent need for economic diversification to ensure a well-rounded and resilient economy that supports both the community and the workforce.

With challenge comes opportunity

The CP must be deliberate in establishing a new regulatory framework to guide future investment in Crested Butte. To safeguard the Town's long-term economic health, it is important to retain space for community-serving commercial and trades businesses within the Town, rather than push them out. The CP can create opportunities to support the affordability of commercial spaces, such as through minimum or maximum unit sizes, creating stronger regulatory incentives and disincentives, implementing deed restrictions, or developing Town-led programs with subsidized rents or incubator spaces. Additionally, the establishment of incubator spaces for emerging businesses can foster economic resilience while ensuring the continuation of essential services for residents.



Crested Butte's local economy is concreated in accomodation and food services.



Crested Butte Sales Tax Revenue by Sector. 2023

Crested Butte is facing...

...A decline of its full-time community

The U.S. Census reveals that 47% of Crested Butte's homes are occupied full-time. However, a more recent update of the Town's local census, which involved door-to-door surveys, shows a slightly higher full-time occupancy rate of 64%, down from 65% in 2021 and 80% in 2000. While this percentage still exceeds that of many other mountain towns, it reflects a worrying trend of decline. The situation is further compounded by the fact that many long-term residents, who purchased homes when prices were more affordable, are now nearing retirement. For many of these long-time residents, the rising economic pressure associated with Crested Butte's booming market is creating difficult choices. Home values have skyrocketed, yet many long-term residents find themselves unable to access the equity in their homes, facing a tough decision between rising property taxes and the option to sell and leave the community, as there aren't many available or affordable options to downsize. If these homes sell, they are likely to be purchased by wealthier individuals who may or may not choose to live in Crested Butte full-time, further driving up property values and reducing the availability of housing for the local workforce. This trend threatens to erode Crested Butte's full-time community, undermining its character and sense of belonging.

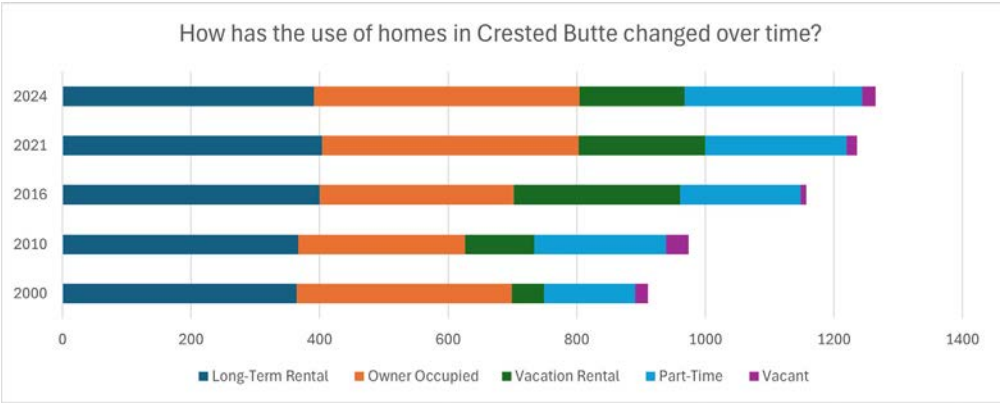
With challenge comes opportunity

The CP prioritizes strategies that not only retain but also grow Crested Butte's full-time

community. A larger, more stable full-time resident population and local workforce offers several key benefits: more neighbors to rely on, greater engagement in local governance through town boards and elections, a stronger volunteer base for community events and local organizations, and more. Residents who live closer to their places of work and community activities may be less likely to experience burnout from long commutes and a sense of being disconnected from the community.

To retain and grow its full-time community, the CP should focus on expanding the diversity of housing options available in the Town, ensuring that the full spectrum of community needs is met—from essential-service employees to seasonal workers, to long-time residents as well as new families, to empty-nesters, and more. Different neighborhoods within Crested Butte offer unique opportunities to provide a variety of housing types to meet the diverse needs of the community, from accessory dwelling units (ADUs), multi-family units, apartments within mixed-use buildings, and more, with a variety of bedroom counts.

Additionally, the CP should explore ways to support existing homeowners and ease the pressures they face. Encouraging and facilitating the development of affordable accessory dwelling units (ADUs), building opportunities to purchase deed restrictions on existing homes, or exploring potential to sell off micro-lots could provide homeowners with extra income or a viable option to downsize, helping retain their long-time community presence while alleviating some of the financial burdens associated with rising property values.



Crested Butte Census Comparison of Home Use. 2000 v 2024.



Crested Butte is facing...

...A hamster wheel of affordable housing development

Since the late 1980s, the Town has actively engaged in affordable housing development, starting with allowances and incentives for ADUs and progressing to development and construction of several housing projects. As a result, the Town has successfully ensured that 26% of its housing stock is deed-restricted, making it permanently affordable or reserved for the local workforce or as a long-term rental. Despite this progress, the demand for affordable housing continues to grow, and the Town faces the reality that it cannot simply build its way out of this crisis, nor can it afford to do so indefinitely.

A 2024 update to the Gunnison Valley Regional Housing Authority's Housing Needs Assessment highlights the scale of the housing challenge. The assessment projects significant housing needs for the entire Gunnison Valley, with 42% of these units required specifically in the North Gunnison Valley. The projected needs are as follows:

- 145 units to achieve a functional rental market (a 5% rental vacancy rate)
- 280 units to meet the demand for unfilled jobs
- 265-515 units to accommodate estimated job growth over the next five years
- 555 units to fill vacancies left by retiring workers in addition to new job creation
- **In total, the North Valley needs between 545 and 650 units by 2029 to meet these demands.**

While several promising projects are in progress, such as Mineral Point (34 units opening in 2025), the build-out of Paradise Park (14 units opening in 2025), and the upcoming Gunnison County Whetstone Project (255 units opening in 2026), the current approach of relying solely on public investment and subsidies is unsustainable. As the free-market continues to focus on luxury developments, the burden of affordable housing falls disproportionately on local governments, trapping the Town in a cycle that is increasingly difficult to break.

With challenge comes opportunity

While the Town will remain an active partner in community development, it must explore new strategies to better leverage its development regulations and encourage the private sector to play a more significant role in addressing the community's housing needs. By introducing performance-based requirements or bonuses in the Town's zoning code, Crested Butte can incentivize developers to include affordable housing and/or affordable commercial units as a component of new projects. For example, offering zoning bonuses like increased height or density opportunities in exchange for affordable housing units can help close the gap in supply, at little to no cost to the Town.

Additionally, tools like the Resident Occupied Affordable Housing (ROAH) policy, which requires housing mitigation based on jobs created from new development, can be further utilized and improved to require developers to either build affordable housing or contribute funds in lieu of providing housing, proportionate to their impacts. This ensures that as new developments create jobs, the corresponding housing demand is addressed.

Ultimately, the Town must shift its approach from being the primary community developer to fostering free-market investment in community-serving housing, businesses, and non-profits. **The goal of the CP is to harness development regulations to stimulate this investment without changing the character of the community.** The Town cannot bear the full burden of affordable housing development alone. By aligning the Town's regulatory framework and market forces with the community's needs, Crested Butte can change the paradigm and break out of the hamster wheel.



Crested Butte Affordable Housing. Deed-restricted ADUs, apartments and single family dwellings provide a variety of affordable housing typologies.



# Crested Butte is facing...

## ...A development code that isn't achieving what the community wants or needs

As previously discussed, the Town's current development regulations, in combination with escalating property values and rising construction costs, is skewing new development toward luxury amenities rather than addressing the community's essential needs. Developers are leveraging the existing code—which heavily favors single-family developments in 60% of the Town's parcels—to maximize return on investment. This results in developments that cater primarily to high-end markets, such as single-family homes that maximize the allowable size, luxury boutique hotels or other niche businesses, and upscale restaurants where a hamburger may cost more than \$25.

While Crested Butte may seem fully built out, the community will inevitably experience redevelopment of existing parcels and development changes over time. Under the current Zoning Code, up to 655 residential units and 366,503 square feet of additional commercial space could theoretically be developed. **This raises a critical question: What is the nature of this potential future development and does it align with the Crested Butte community's vision for the future?**

Today's regulatory framework, coupled with high land values and construction costs, favors development that caters to tourism and high-revenue amenities, rather than addressing long-term local needs. For instance, the R1 single-family zoning category occupies approximately 60% of the Town's developable land, permitting only single-family homes and ADUs, or duplexes by conditional use—a process that can be perceived as onerous. The result? Large, high-cost homes that dominate new development with a median sales price of \$1,000 per square foot. A typical 2,800-square-foot home (the average allowable maximum) costs \$2.8 million, and adding a 450-square-foot ADU pushes the total to \$3.5 million.

The emerging homogeneity of maximized, large homes are a departure from Crested Butte's historic housing stock, creating housing that is both unaffordable for the local community and incompatible with the Town's character. **The issue isn't merely the number of units but the type of housing the zoning allows.**

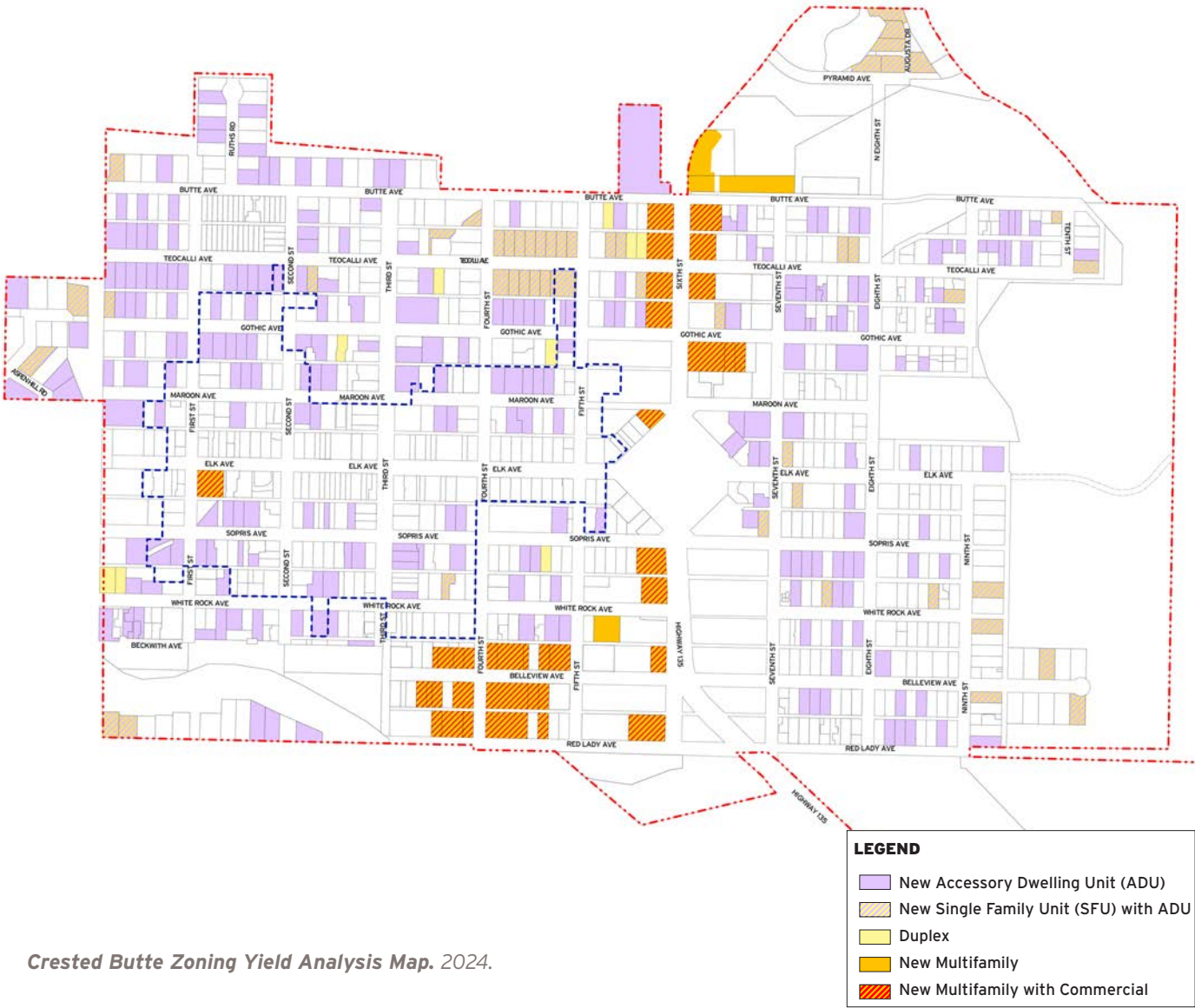
Without intervention, this trend will only escalate, driving Crested Butte toward a future increasingly at odds with its community's values and priorities.

### With challenge comes opportunity

The CP offers a powerful opportunity for Crested Butte to proactively shape its future and ensure that growth aligns with the community's values and strategic goals. By updating the Town's zoning code to reflect the vision established in the CP, this plan can steer development in a way that supports both economic vitality and livability, functionality, and sense of community. Without this update, the Town risks continuing its current path and the unintentional consequence of community erosion. The CP provides the vision to update the Town's outdated development regulations and enable development of spaces that meet community needs, creating a more balanced and livable future for Crested Butte's community to thrive.



Single-family homes that fully utilize their maximum allowable square footage have become the standard in many of Crested Butte's newer neighborhoods.



Crested Butte Zoning Yield Analysis Map. 2024.

Potential Build Out	Total	Land Use Totals
Single-Family Dwelling Unit or Duplex	75 units	606 Residential units
Accessory Dwelling Unit	308 units	
Multi-Family Dwelling Unit	223 units	
Net Commercial		258,213 sf

Crested Butte Zoning Yield Analysis Table. 2024.



Crested Butte is facing...

...Uncertainty of change

Navigating change in the 21st century is its own challenge, especially for a town like Crested Butte. This community has a rich history of preserving its character, holding fast to its beliefs, and proudly being the “Town that said ‘Hell No!’” to large-scale mining. However, change is already unfolding in Crested Butte and the surrounding region, often in ways that do not align with the community’s values and strategic goals. The Town’s and community’s tradition of holding boundaries and staying true to its values can serve as a powerful tool for proactively navigating the challenges ahead. While it may be tempting to wish for no more change, the reality is that change will continue, and if left unmanaged, it may not reflect the needs or desires of the community. It’s natural to fear change—it holds deep meaning for this Town and its community. The thought of adapting or changing perspectives can be intimidating, particularly when it feels like the future of something cherished is at stake.

With challenge comes opportunity

The Community Compass and the CP are not about imposing a top-down vision upon the community. These processes have been built from the ground up, shaped by the voices and input of the people that embrace the special nature of this place. Over 2,500 community members (including Town residents, as well as those from Mt. Crested Butte, Crested Butte South, and other areas of the Gunnison Valley, part-time residents, visitors, and more) contributed to the development of these plans, ensuring that they reflect the values and needs of Crested Butte’s community. Moving forward, the Town will continue to foster a transparent, inclusive planning process with an unwavering commitment to community engagement. By listening to the community, actively incorporating their feedback, and building trust through collaborative decision-making, Crested Butte can navigate its future in a way that aligns with its values. The opportunity lies in transforming the fear of change into a collective effort to shape a future that is both innovative and true to the community’s core identity.

Defining Success for the Future, on the Community’s Terms

Understanding Crested Butte’s most pressing challenges and opportunities is the first step in formulating a vision for the future through the CP. To shape that vision, it’s essential to define what success looks like, on the community’s terms. Establishing clear measures of success ensures that the plan reflects the values and aspirations of the people who call Crested Butte home. It builds trust and guides decision-making, creating a shared roadmap that aligns with the community’s priorities.

In line with the Community Compass decision-making framework, success measures were developed to set the stage for developing this plan in a way that is aligned with the community’s values. Success measures were developed by first identifying how the community’s values of authentic, connected, accountable, and bold intersect with the CP challenges and goal. These values were then filtered through the CP goal to establish meaningful criteria for success.

A successful Community Plan means that the CP and subsequent Zoning Code update will...

- ✓ Ensure that new regulations and incentives align with Crested Butte’s physical character, preserving the Town’s mass, scale, orientation, and the integrity of the historic district and historic resources.
- ✓ Increase full-time occupancy in the Town.
- ✓ Increase the quantity, variety, distribution, and opportunities for mobility of deed restricted housing units in the Town.
- ✓ Increase opportunities for the establishment and retention of community-serving businesses within the Town.
- ✓ Strengthen social connections by maintaining or enhancing community gathering spaces in the public realm.
- ✓ Maintain Crested Butte’s rough edges and polish only when necessary.
- ✓ Support the Town’s transportation mobility goals by increasing opportunities for people to live closer to where they work.
- ✓ Support the Town’s climate action goals by increasing opportunities for development efficiencies.



The Community Compass empowered the Crested Butte community to proactively shape its future, rather than simply reacting to change as it unfolds.

LIVING BY OUR VALUES

Some examples of how Crested Butte’s values relate to this plan (and pulled directly from the Compass) include:

- Being authentic means...
  - this Town has people living and working in it.
  - this Town’s vibe is diverse, modest, and quirky.
- Being connected means...
  - our neighborhoods have an enduring sense of community year-round, where we stop and chat with friends and acquaintances
  - we seek collaborative solutions that span jurisdictional boundaries.
- Being accountable means...
  - living in Crested Butte is accessible to those who work locally
  - our economy is resilient and fosters the ability for community members to grow and thrive, while accommodating those who want to visit.
- Being bold means...
  - we are willing to listen to different perspectives and new ideas.
  - our decisions prioritize community resiliency over short-term gains.



# Crested Butte's Future

## A Vision Rooted in Community Values

This chapter weaves together the Town's seven strategic goals and community insights to shape a compelling physical vision for Crested Butte's future. At its heart, the vision seeks to preserve the essence of what makes Crested Butte uniquely special, while embracing opportunities to strengthen its character and community for generations to come.

## Crafting a Vision

Building on Crested Butte's challenges, opportunities, and core values, this chapter focuses on creating a clear vision for the community and the Town's future. By blending the strategic goals from the Community Compass with insights from the community, this vision not only honors the spirit of Crested Butte but also embraces opportunities to enhance its character—both the physical look and feel of the Town, as well as the community which is comprised of diverse and unique individuals who call it home. This vision aims to foster a thriving community that stands the test of time, strengthening the distinctive qualities of Crested Butte for generations to come.



*The CP vision is centered on preserving the unique character and spirit that make Crested Butte, Crested Butte.*

## From Goals to Vision

The Community Compass outlines seven guiding strategic goals, but how can these abstract ideas be translated into a tangible vision? This plan takes the Compass a step further by crafting a vision for the Town to realize its goals:

1. **Approach community challenges through active collaboration and public engagement.**

Picture a town where the streets and public spaces foster regular gatherings and ongoing dialogue, ensuring that community engagement is at the heart of decision-making.

2. **Accommodate growth in a way that maintains the Town’s and Valley’s rural feel.**

Picture new development concentrated near existing infrastructure, transit, and services, preserving open spaces and agricultural lands as buffers to maintain the Valley’s town and country feel, rural character and strong connection to the landscape.

3. **Enable people who live and work here to thrive.**

Picture a Crested Butte where living here takes effort, but the rewards are real. With attainable housing options, accessible services, and a vibrant local business scene, residents can build a future and support the community that sustains them.

4. **Retain the unique character and traditions of Crested Butte.**

Picture a Town where life isn’t just about having a roof over your head and accessing the services you need, but it’s about living life in its distinctive, and quirky ways. It’s about skiing through the alleys and admiring the historic sheds, digging trails together, burning the grump, joining in the polka dance, slowing down for the cattle drive, and celebrating the things that remind us of why we fell in love with Crested Butte.

5. **De-emphasize cars and focus on walking, biking, rolling, and transit.**

Picture a town where neighbors casually chat while walking or biking to work, where townie takeovers are the norm, and public transit feels like a natural part of daily life, creating a more connected community that prioritizes people over cars.

6. **Continue to passionately care for our natural surroundings and forever protect Red Lady.**

Picture an area where protected natural areas, including Red Lady, are part of the town’s landscape, preserving Crested Butte’s natural beauty for future generations.

7. **Act on the urgency of climate change and prepare for the changes we expect from it.**

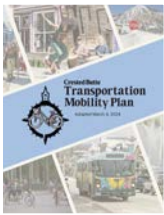
Picture a community that prioritizes energy efficiency, with buildings that are designed to minimize consumption and renewable energy sources power daily life.



## When goals seemingly conflict (or work together)

While the Community Compass goals often complement one another, there are moments where they may appear to conflict. For example, how can the Town preserve its historic character while increasing housing and commercial spaces, all while reducing greenhouse gas emissions? Through the Compass Navigation effort, these goals were carefully aligned to inform this Community Plan—ensuring that each value is reflected, without compromising the other critical needs of the community.

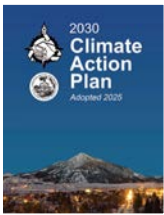
Picture a Crested Butte where transportation, preservation, and climate action seamlessly work together to create a thriving, interconnected community:



The **Transportation Mobility Plan** envisions a town where efficient transit systems connect the community and reduce reliance on cars. By repurposing underused parking spaces for public purposes, creating more affordable housing and allowing the workforce to live closer to employment centers, residents can enjoy easier commutes, giving choices to congestion and lowering carbon footprints. The town’s streets and corridors are prioritized as inviting spaces that connect residents to essential services, parks, and vibrant community hubs.



The **Historic Preservation Plan** envisions the town’s iconic character remaining intact. Its historic architecture, from mining-era buildings to those from the early recreation era, are preserved, maintaining Crested Butte’s charm and cultural identity. Meanwhile, outside the historic districts, more flexible design guidelines allow for modern growth that complement the town’s roots, allowing for new, more affordable, buildings to enhance the landscape rather than disrupt it.



The **Climate Action Plan** ties these strategies together by promoting sustainable building practices and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Housing near jobs and energy-efficient buildings reduce transportation-related emissions, while the overall design of the community helps minimize the impact of climate change. New construction uses flexible architectural styles and materials that support sustainability, contributing to Crested Butte’s long-term environmental goals and architectural diversity.



# The Community Plan Vision

## A THRIVING CRESTED BUTTE

In the future, Crested Butte will remain a place where the community thrives together, staying true to its roots while embracing thoughtful development. Its small-town charm will stay intact, and we'll build in, not out—keeping density where it makes sense in the commercial corridors, so we can continue to enjoy the open spaces and breathtaking views around us, find charm in our small-scale neighborhoods, all while being easily able to move around comfortably by boots, bikes, or bus.

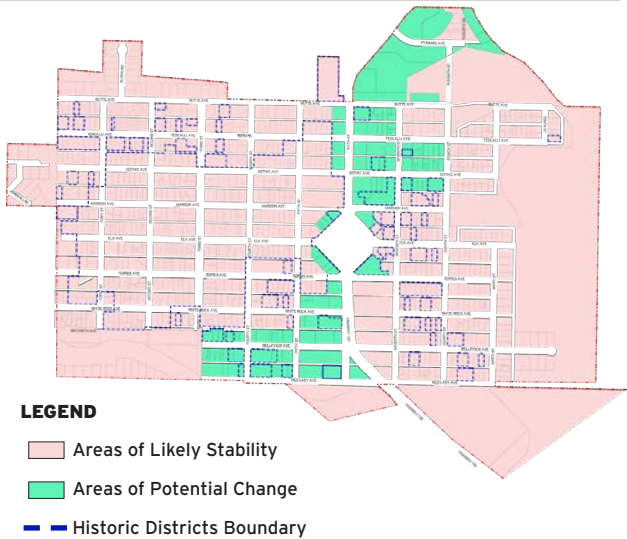
The heart of town will pulse with local businesses and homes above, creating vibrant corridors where starting a business or renting an apartment isn't a dream, but an attainable possibility. Residential neighborhoods will grow gradually while retaining their small-scale and historic charm, with a mix of homes and accessory dwellings to meet the diverse needs of the community—from seasonal or year-round workers, to growing or, down-sizing families, retirees, and all those who make up and embrace the community.

Crested Butte isn't just about living here; it's about connecting with your neighbors, whether in the street, at the post office, or during spontaneous gatherings. It's a place where relationships bloom and community is always at the forefront.

Living in Crested Butte isn't easy—it takes grit to embrace mountain life. But for those who are up for the challenge, this is a place to make a real home—where you don't need wealth to get started and where the community always has your back. Crested Butte is a place where people are valued over property, and community is prioritized above all.

COMING SOON

COMING SOON: Future Land Use Map



### COMING SOON: What does this vision look like?

In the final plan, a future land use map will turn the CP vision into a physical land use map to guide the Town's development regulations, to ensure the community grows in a way that meets its Town's vision. The vision and map frame Crested Butte's land uses within the context of **areas of change** (where change is likely to occur and where the community supports changing) and **areas of stability** (areas that are more stable and change is not desired).



# AREAS OF CHANGE

Areas of Change are those with potential for future development or redevelopment, offering opportunities to intentionally shape the community to match its vision. By making thoughtful adjustments in these areas, we can create spaces that align with our values, without compromising the unique character that makes Crested Butte so special.



## Bellevue Avenue

*A vibrant - yet edgy - mixed-use commercial core*

Bellevue Avenue will emerge as a vibrant, creative corridor that blends industrial charm with modern innovation. A mix of trade businesses, maker spaces, and community commercial services will ensure diversity in the Town's economy and provide easy access to necessary services. A growing residential presence in this corridor will help fill a niche in Crested Butte's housing needs and energize the area. Buildings will honor the town's character—maintaining its mass, scale, and form—while complementing the natural backdrop of Gibson's Ridge and enhancing the function of the businesses operating there. With a stronger focus on walkability and connections, including a future link between the school and Big Mine Park, Bellevue Avenue will become a dynamic hub where work and community life thrive together.



## Sixth Street Corridor

*A welcoming corridor of community connectivity*

Sixth Street will be a welcoming corridor that embodies the essence of 'welcome to Crested Butte,' blending lively community spaces, active restaurants, and everyday retail and services that bring locals and visitors together. The corridor will function as a seam connecting the two halves of the town, not as the divider of the community as it functions today. This dynamic corridor will feature a mix of eateries, lodging, and community hubs like the Center for the Arts, the library, a future transit hub, enhanced visitor services, and Crested Butte's iconic parks—all energized by increased residential presence. Buildings will showcase Crested Butte's unique character, with designs that complement the stunning views along the corridor. *On the corridor's edges, a mix of higher-density housing and lodging will place more residents and visitors near transit, services, and businesses, creating a vibrant and connected community.*



## Slate River Annexation

*A lively extension of Crested Butte's Sixth Street Corridor and Residential Neighborhoods*

The Slate River Annexation will be a residential extension of the Sixth Street Corridor, seamlessly blending with the Town's neighborhood character while fostering a strong sense of community. This higher-density residential area will be thoughtfully designed to complement the nearby fire station and Mineral Point apartment complex, creating a cohesive and connected neighborhood. It will offer a variety of recreational spaces—including sledding hill, a wetland walk, the Slate River boat launch, and the potential for more active park or recreation space – providing both residents and visitors with opportunities to enjoy the outdoors. Well-connected to the Town, the annexation will feature trails, sidewalks, and transit options that effortlessly connects the neighborhood to the rest of the Town.

# AREAS OF STABILITY

Areas of Stability are the Town's built-out neighborhoods with a distinct character that we cherish and want to preserve. In these areas, small tweaks can help achieve our vision, while keeping the essence of what makes these places feel like home intact.



## Residential Neighborhoods

*Retaining Crested Butte's neighborhood character (where the characters make the place)*

Crested Butte's residential neighborhoods will continue to reflect the Town's charm and authenticity, shaped by its people and history. These neighborhoods will retain their distinct mass, scale, and form, with architectural flexibility outside historic districts bringing fresh creativity that honors the Town's heritage. Small-scale accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and micro-lots will add more vitality, fostering a diverse mix of full-time residents from different backgrounds across different neighborhoods. The authenticity of lived-in spaces will be celebrated, with bikes, snowmobiles, tools, and toys a familiar sight in alleys and porches. Neighbors will exchange stories on slow-moving streets, preserving the relaxed, community-centered vibe that makes Crested Butte home.





# Unlocking Potential

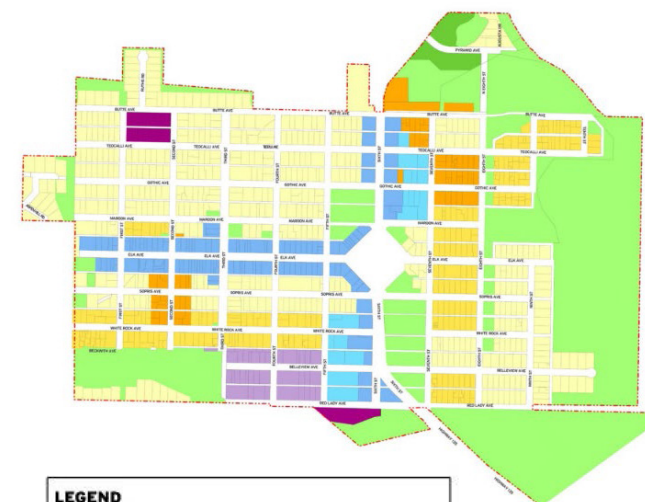
## Enabling the Community Plan through Policy

This chapter focuses on turning the CP's vision into reality. It begins by taking in-depth look at Crested Butte's zoning tools to ensure the Town development regulations can enable to vision to be achieved. By looking through two lenses of areas of change—Bellevue Avenue, the Sixth Street Corridor, and the Slate River Annexation—alongside areas of stability in the Town's residential neighborhoods and historic districts, this section outlines an approach to both enable and help achieve the CP vision through performance-based zoning.

## From Policy to Place

The Community Plan vision is deeply rooted in the values and strategic goals of the Community Compass, but having a vision is just the beginning. The next step is turning that vision into reality by unlocking the potential within the Town's policies to bring it to life.

This chapter explores how the Town's policy tools, including the zoning code, can be strategically leveraged to unlock opportunities and harness the free market to play a role in meeting Crested Butte's future vision.



LEGEND	
	Single Family Zones
	Low Residential Zones
	Moderate Residential Zones
	(C) Commercial
	(M) Mobile Home
	(T) Tourist
	Business Zones
	Public Zones

A consolidated map showcasing Crested Butte's current zone districts.

## About Zoning and its Influence

Zoning is the framework that towns and cities use to partition areas, or zones, into different land uses. The Town adopted its first zoning ordinance in 1961, which has incrementally evolved to what is used today in Chapter 16 of the Town's municipal code. The Town's zoning code has 23 total zone districts, with each having specific intent and elements that govern the look, feel, and function of each district they represent and how they come together to form the Town. While Town Council adopts the zoning code, the Town's Board of Zoning and Architectural Review (BOZAR) is the board that administers the Town's zoning code.

As outlined in the discussion of challenges and opportunities, the Town's current development code—coupled with soaring property values and rising construction costs—has shifted new development toward luxury amenities rather than meeting the community's core needs. **The question now is: How can the zoning code be transformed into a tool to guide the free market toward aligning with the community's vision—a vision of a place where the people of Crested Butte can truly thrive?**

Check out the [Policy Review Summary](#) at this link to learn more about Crested Butte's current zoning code.



*Zoning Can Make Things Really Hard...*

The Development is inevitable—entitlements are already in place through the Town’s current code, including the potential for 655 more residential units and 366,503 square feet of additional commercial space. It is likely that this full build out could develop very slowly over time, or it may never fully be reached. However, there isn’t an option to prevent this scenario unless the Town purchases certain properties. Zoning could be used to make development more difficult, through inconsistent rules, overlapping regulations, and excessive red tape. But as land prices increase, challenging regulations remove barriers to luxury development and add them to affordable development- everyone follows the same rules-but the projects with higher financing can afford to be more patient and absorb the delays convoluted zoning cause.

*Or It Can Be a Tool to Reflect A Community's Values...*

On the flip side, zoning also has tremendous potential to be a positive force. It can be leveraged to foster livable, thriving neighborhoods and commercial districts that align with the Crested Butte’s vision for the future. Thoughtful zoning can influence the very fabric of a community, shaping how spaces look, feel, and function. For instance, building orientation, size, and placement can define the character of a street, creating welcoming public spaces that highlight Crested Butte’s historic character or walkable corridors that encourage social connections and active lifestyles.

Zoning also plays a critical role in defining land uses, and when applied strategically, it can create vibrant, mixed-use areas where residents can live, work, and play within the same neighborhood. Encouraging a mix of housing, shops, restaurants, and small businesses supports local economies, reduces dependency on cars, and makes daily life more convenient and dynamic. By integrating diverse land uses, zoning can transform districts into hubs of activity, promoting livelihood and vibrancy that reflects the community’s values. When harnessed effectively, zoning becomes more than a set of rules—it becomes a framework for building a thriving, connected, and strong community.

*Don't let Perfection be the Enemy of Progress*

But, zoning is neither perfect nor a precise tool, and relying on incremental changes to address every new challenge can create more problems than solutions. Instead, a holistic approach is needed—one that evaluates the code intentionally to serve as a foundation for a future where development aligns with, rather than undermines, the values of the Crested Butte community.

While this effort won’t fulfill every specific community desire or anticipate every possible concern, it has the power to guide the market toward a more aligned path with the community’s vision. Perfection isn’t the goal; improvement is. By focusing on intentional, meaningful adjustments, the zoning code can catalyze a future that reflects the community’s vision while allowing for flexibility and adaptability over time.

**STRONG  
COMMUNITIES  
STRATEGIES**

*Crested Butte is not alone in its challenges, many towns and cities across the country are updating their zoning codes to encourage more affordable housing. The Town received a grant from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs' Strong Communities program to support this effort. As a condition of the grant, Crested Butte must evaluate and adopt at least one Strong Community strategy:*

- **Higher Density:** Identify areas for higher densities to promote affordable housing for the local workforce while maintaining the Town’s character.
- **Multi-family Housing:** Evaluate permitted and conditional uses for different multi-family housing types across different zones.
- **Inclusionary Zoning:** Evaluate density bonuses to incentivize workforce housing and deed-restricted commercial development.
- **Land Programs:** Identify Town-owned parcels or potential acquisitions for infill development of affordable housing and essential services.
- **Parking Standards:** Incorporate recommendations from the 2023 Transportation Mobility Plan to reduce parking requirements.
- **Alternative Building Options:** Evaluate barriers to alternative building methods that reduce construction costs, in line with historic preservation.



*Crested Butte's zoning shapes the look, feel, and function of the community.*



# The Community Plan Toolbox

## THE Y AXIS: LEVEL OF RESTRICTION

### The Top: Loosening Restrictions

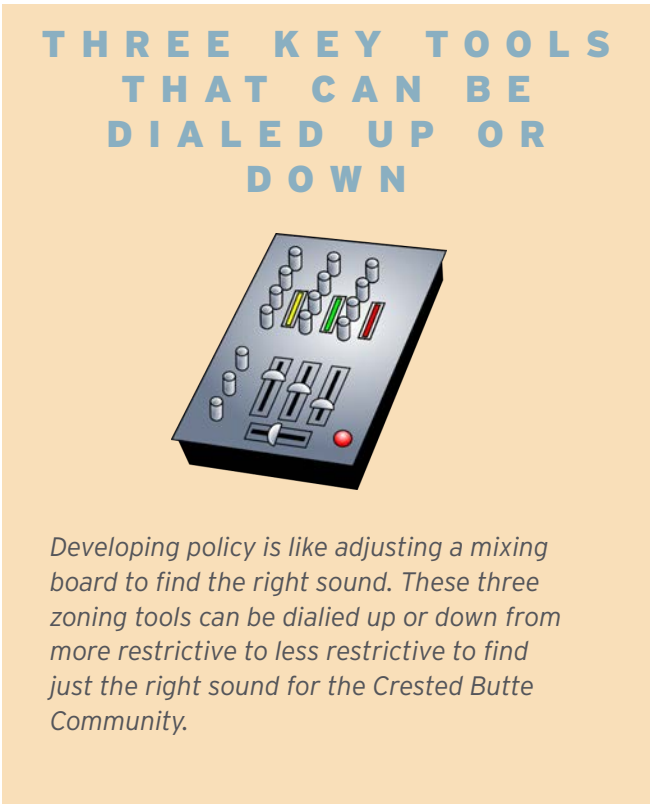
At the most flexible end of the spectrum, zoning entitlements allow developers to increase density, height, or reduce parking and setback requirements as a matter of right. While this approach offers simplicity and efficiency, in Crested Butte's market dynamics, granting more density doesn't automatically address affordability or community needs. Without strategic guardrails, additional supply often caters to luxury development, driven by high land values and demand for vacation homes.

### The Middle: Introducing Performance-Based Zoning

Sitting between restrictive and flexible approaches, performance-based zoning introduces bonuses or requirements tied to public benefits. This tool incentivizes developments to align with community priorities, such as providing deed-restricted housing or affordable commercial spaces in exchange for more flexibility. For example, developers might receive increased Floor Area Ratio (FAR), additional residential units, or flexibility on parking and setback requirements in exchange for delivering a percentage of deed restricted housing or commercial space. Projects that don't meet these criteria would proceed under the base zoning regulations, maintaining their more limited entitlements. Performance-based zoning offers a balance of flexibility and accountability, functioning similarly to Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) while keeping a clear focus on public benefit.

### The Bottom: Specific Requirements in the Town's Status Quo

At the restrictive end of the spectrum, Crested Butte's current zoning regulations are largely prescriptive and cautious. These regulations, illustrated in the Toolbox graphic (marked by an orange bar and red dots), represent the Town's aggregated policy today (an aggregation of all zone districts). While this approach provides structure and consistency, it also stifles creativity and responsiveness to changing community needs and burdens the Town to diversify the housing stock. Even within the current framework, updating the code to remove inconsistencies, streamline processes, and provide clearer guidance can improve its effectiveness and alignment with community goals.

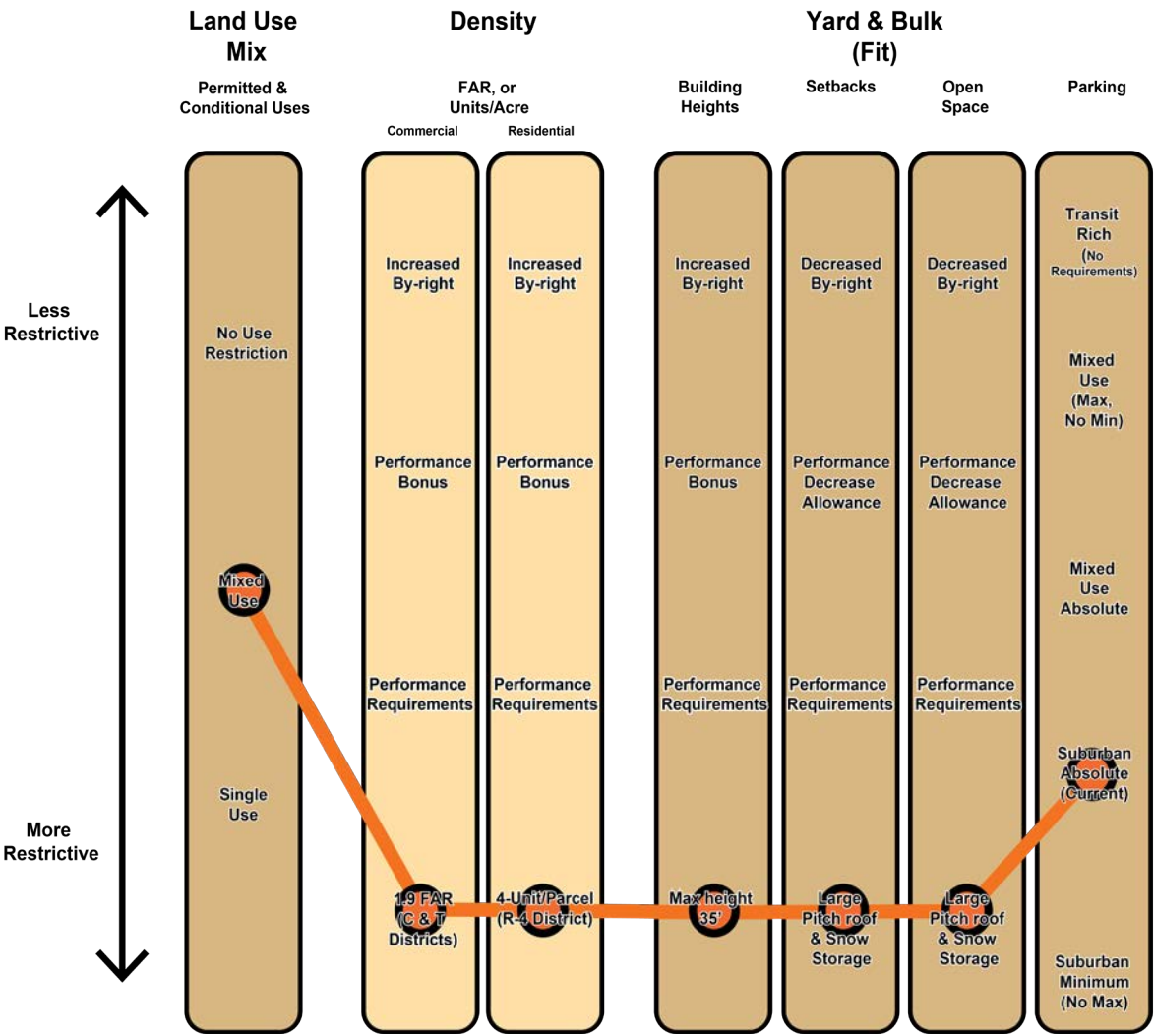


## THE X AXIS: ZONING TOOLS

### Land Use Mix: What Uses are Allowed?

Land use defines what types of uses—residential, commercial, retail, or a mix—are permitted in each zone. Crested Butte's zoning code currently allows both permitted and conditional uses within its districts. Permitted uses are granted as a matter of right, while conditional uses require a public hearing and approval by BOZAR based on compatibility criteria. If a use is not listed in the code, it is prohibited.

While the code permits a mix of uses in some areas, single-family housing dominates over 60% of the Town's developable land. This reliance on single-family zoning limits land use variety and fails to meet the needs of a diverse community, especially compared to other towns. Revisiting land use regulations could open opportunities for mixed-use developments that better reflect Crested Butte's socio-demographic diversity and vision.



### Density: How Much of the Land Use is Allowed?

Density determines how much of permitted land use is allowed in each area. In Crested Butte, commercial density is measured using FAR, while residential density is based on the number of units per parcel or acre. FAR measures the relationship between the total floor area of a building and the size of the parcel it occupies. Density should not be confused with fit, which includes factors like building height, setbacks, and parking requirements—elements that influence how a structure fits within its surroundings.

Crested Butte's low-density allowances, combined with high land and construction costs, contribute to the proliferation of expensive single-family homes, exacerbating affordability and decreasing full-time residency challenges. Adjusting density regulations offers one of the most powerful tools to address this crisis, as it can diversify housing opportunities. However, changes must be strategic, ensuring that any increase in density delivers public benefits, such as workforce housing, rather than solely market-rate development.

### Fit: How Does that Land Use Fit on a Site?

Fit refers to how buildings occupy a site and relate to their surroundings. This includes yard requirements (setbacks and open space), bulk (size and mass), building heights, and parking standards. In Crested Butte, fit regulations like setbacks and snow storage requirements reflect the practical needs of a high-altitude, snowy environment.

However, some requirements, such as parking minimums, are better suited for suburban, car-dependent areas and may limit development opportunities. The Town's Transportation Mobility Plan recommends leveraging walkability, transit access, and on-street parking to reduce parking requirements and free up space for more community-serving housing. Similarly, adjustments to height and roof type regulations in non-historic areas, as recommended by the Historic Preservation Plan, could encourage innovative and more affordable architectural designs and reduce snow storage requirements.



# A Deeper Dive on Parking

Parking is a crucial element of fit in zoning, influencing everything from the flow of traffic to the character of neighborhoods. While often viewed as a necessity, parking requirements can sometimes lead to inefficient land use and take up valuable space that could be better utilized for housing, recreation, or public services. In many cases, these requirements are overprescribed because they have been created with the assumption that everyone is the same when it comes to parking needs, which is not consistent with the reality that some households may need three-cars while others may require none. Fearing shortages, municipalities have tended to assume that they need to regulate this supply by creating conservative minimum requirements, without considering the impacts of these regulations on housing affordability and the environment. This frequently results in excessive parking capacity that is expensive to build and maintain and is typically underutilized.

## The Importance of Parking Requirements

Derived from national models, local parking requirements are often driven by a “one-size-fits-all” approach, meaning that every new development, whether it’s a residential unit, a commercial space, or a mixed-use building, is expected to accommodate a set number of parking spots based on its use. These requirements are intended to ensure that there is sufficient space for everyone who needs it, even at peak periods. But these guidelines used in towns and cities across the country typically don’t account for different neighborhoods and environments, from more car-centric suburban areas to more pedestrian and transit-oriented communities. In many cases, the parking spaces provided can be excessive for the actual demand, particularly in areas with good transit access, pedestrian amenities, and cycling infrastructure, like Crested Butte.

As a result, many developments end up with more parking than is truly needed. This excess space is not just an inefficient use of land but also raises the cost of development, which can drive up housing prices. By rethinking parking requirements, the Town can prioritize more valuable uses for land and allow the landowner or developer to choose less parking and create more vibrant, pedestrian-friendly spaces that reduce the need for excessive car storage if they and their lenders think that this decision is supported by the market. This point cannot be overemphasized, as some worry that by reducing required minimum parking, projects will only be parked to that minimum. However, experience with reduced minimum parking in both towns and cities is that developers attempt to create “Goldilocks” solutions; projects that have neither too little parking because that would hurt the marketability of their project nor too much because of available cost savings.



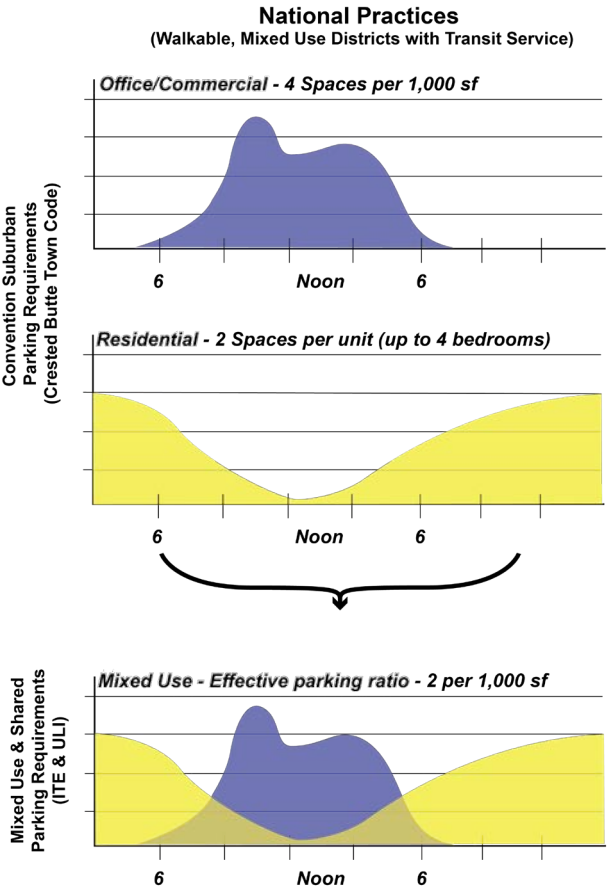
## Leveraging Mixed-Use: Efficiency and Flexibility

One of the most effective ways to optimize parking is through mixed-use development. These projects combine residential, commercial, and public uses in a single space, which allows for greater flexibility when it comes to parking. Since different types of uses have varying demands for parking at different times of the day, mixed-use developments can balance these needs by sharing parking spaces.

For example, residential areas may require parking primarily at night, while retail or office spaces require parking during business hours. By strategically designing these developments with shared parking, the overall parking footprint can be reduced without sacrificing convenience or accessibility. This strategy aligns with the Town’s transportation plan, which emphasizes park-and-ride facilities, on-street parking, and investment in transit systems. By encouraging alternatives to private car use, we can reduce the pressure on parking spaces and create a more sustainable, less car-dependent community.

## Learning from Successful Examples

Looking beyond Crested Butte, other towns and cities have grappled with similar parking challenges. [A notable example comes from Sandpoint, ID](#), where local leaders recognized that parking demand often varies based on market factors rather than rigid zoning codes. By eliminating minimum parking requirements in its downtown, and reducing off-street parking requirements in the rest of town, the resulting development’s parking supply better reflects the actual needs of the community. In this way, the town was able to reduce unnecessary parking while still maintaining accessibility.



National Practices Graphs.

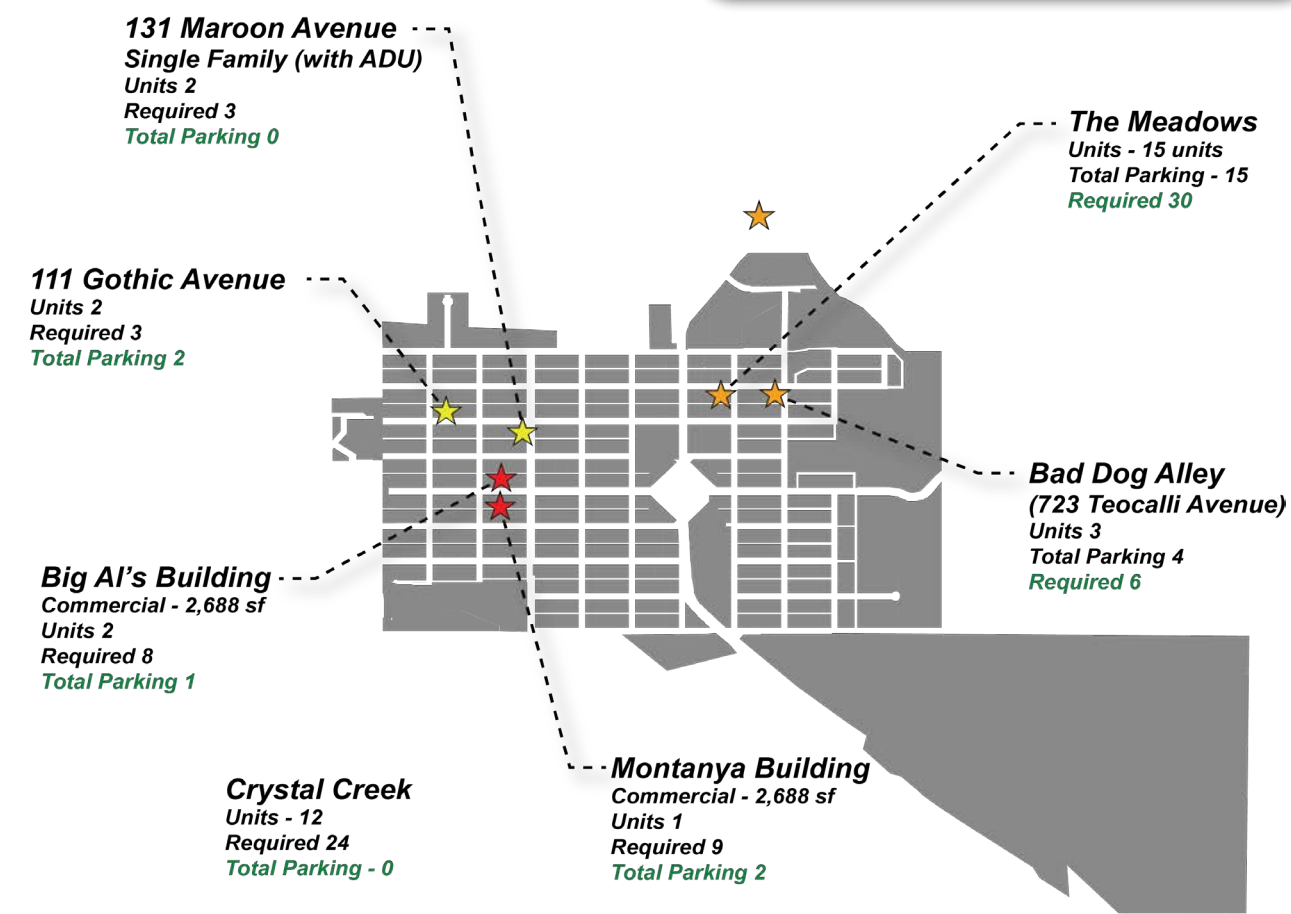
By providing the flexibility that comes from eliminating or reducing the minimum parking required, the Town allowed developers to build fewer parking spaces based on what they believed were the needs of their tenants, as well as the availability of other underutilized parking spaces. This approach demonstrated how the market—and not a blanket parking minimum—could dictate the true demand for parking, leading to more efficient use of land and better outcomes for residents and businesses alike.



It Already Works in Crested Butte

A great example of how reducing parking requirements can work comes from Crested Butte itself, where some existing homes successfully function without designated parking spaces. Property owners and tenants have found creative ways to manage parking needs, often relying on on-street parking, public transit, or simply walking or biking to their destinations. While there are occasional inconveniences—like moving a car every other night during the winter for snow plowing—many residents find that the trade-off is worth it, given the convenience of living in town and close to transit and services. These real-life examples provide valuable insights into how parking requirements can be rethought in more pedestrian-friendly, transit-oriented areas, creating a more flexible and efficient use of space.

Crested Butte has 2,616 on-street parking spaces, compared to 2,021 off-street private residential parking spaces.



Examples of existing homes in Crested Butte that have less than the required amount of parking.

Example Alternative Requirements

The Town's Transportation Mobility Plan (TMP) highlighted the opportunity to leverage Crested Butte's ample on-street parking capacity when reconsidering parking requirements. The TMP recommended reducing parking requirements in the Community Plan with the following considerations:

- Residential Developments:** Given the abundance of on-street parking spaces, it's recommended to allow reduced on-site parking for residential developments. This flexibility would allow the landowner to unlock the potential of their lot choosing to allow valuable land to be used for community housing instead of parking.
- Lodging and Industrial Commercial Uses:** Current parking requirements for lodging and industrial commercial uses should remain in place, as these land uses typically have higher parking demands. However, it's recommended to adjust the payment-in-lieu of parking fee to reflect current construction costs and provide incentives for deed-restricted commercial spaces. This program could also be linked to funding multi-modal transportation, transit, and parking management initiatives.
- Restaurant, Retail, Office, and Entertainment Commercial Uses:** For commercial spaces like restaurants, retail, offices, and entertainment venues, it is recommended to consider payment-in-lieu of parking in place of on-site parking requirements. This would create funding for transit and multi-modal transportation options, improving customer and employee access while reducing the need for on-site parking.
- Payment-in-Lieu Fee Update:** The current payment-in-lieu fee of \$13,000 per parking space does not accurately reflect the construction costs of building a parking space in today's real estate market. It is recommended to update this fee to better align with current market conditions.

Additional Considerations: Structured and Underground Parking

In addition to specifying the required number of parking spaces, development regulations also dictate the types of parking permitted, such as surface, structured, and underground parking. Currently, the Town Code provides a FAR bonus for developments incorporating underground parking. This incentive was introduced during the Sixth Street Station project review, where it was particularly practical due to the property's proximity to existing underground stormwater infrastructure. Notably, the Sixth Street corridor is the only commercial area equipped with the stormwater infrastructure needed to support the dewatering efforts often required for underground parking garages. Elsewhere in town, outside the Sixth Street corridor, dewatering and pumps may place an undue burden on the Town's limited stormwater systems.

Despite these considerations, the high costs of structured and underground parking significantly increase development expenses. These costs inevitably push projects toward high-end, luxury development to achieve a sufficient return on investment. Additionally, Crested Butte's high-water table presents further challenges, as underground parking may require extensive pumping of water and snowmelt, impacting both development and operating costs as well as the Town's wastewater and stormwater management systems.

While structured parking typically does not affect the wastewater system—since separation of wastewater and stormwater infrastructure is required—stormwater management remains a critical factor. Developers may connect to existing stormwater infrastructure if it is available nearby or they would be required to construct the necessary infrastructure to tie into the Town's system. Although developers bear the construction costs, the Town assumes ownership of public infrastructure and is responsible for its long-term maintenance and replacement. The Town may also require on-site passive treatment for discharges depending on anticipated water quality.

To promote affordability in future projects, the Town should reevaluate its approach to structured and underground parking. This includes reconsidering the current FAR bonus or potentially limiting such parking allowances. Instead, the Town could prioritize optimizing existing parking resources and capacity to support development in a more sustainable and equitable manner.

Did you know? A surface parking spot typically costs X a space, while a structured parking spot costs 2X per space, and an underground garage parking spot costs 4X per space.



Building Type	Required Parking Today	Example New Requirements
Single Family Dwelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2 spaces for 4 bedrooms or less</li><li>• 1 space for a fifth bedroom</li><li>• 1 space for every two bedrooms over 5</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minimum: 1</li><li>• Maximum: 2</li></ul>
Two Family Dwelling unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 4 spaces for 4 bedrooms or less</li><li>• 5 spaces or 5 bedrooms</li><li>• 1 space for every two bedrooms over 5</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minimum: 1 per dwelling unit</li><li>• Maximum: 2 per dwelling unit</li></ul>
Three family and multi-family dwelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1.5 spaces for each residential unit</li><li>• 1 additional space for every unit with more than 2 bedrooms</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minimum: 1 per dwelling unit</li><li>• Maximum: 1 per dwelling unit</li></ul>
Accessory Dwelling Units/ Employee dwellings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 space per 1 bed &amp; studio units</li><li>• 2 spaces for 2 &amp; 3 bedroom units</li><li>• 3 spaces for a 4 bedroom unit</li><li>• 1 space for every two bedrooms over 5</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minimum: 0</li><li>• Maximum: 1</li></ul>
Congregate Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 space per bedroom</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minimum: 0</li><li>• Maximum: 1 per bedroom</li></ul>
Bed & Breakfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 Space per rental bedroom</li><li>• 2 spaces for the owners quarters</li><li>• 1 additional space for every 2 beds in excess of two beds per room</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Same requirements</li></ul>
Hotel, lodge, motel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 Space per rental bedroom</li><li>• 2 spaces for the owners quarters</li><li>• 1 additional space for every 2 beds in excess of two beds per room</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Same requirements</li></ul>
Restaurant, club, bakery, distillery etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 space for every 500sf of usable space up to 1000sf</li><li>• 1 space for every 250sf of usable space from 1001sf to 2000sf</li><li>• 1 space for every 100sf of usable space over 2001sf</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 space for every 500 sf, only payment in lieu permitted</li></ul>
Retail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 space for every 500sf of usable space</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Same requirements, only payment in lieu permitted</li></ul>
Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 space for every 500sf of usable space</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Same requirements, only payment in lieu permitted</li></ul>
Auto-related service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 space for each 100sf of usable space</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Same requirements</li></ul>
Mobile Homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2 spaces per mobile home</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minimum: 1</li><li>• Maximum: 2</li></ul>
Theatre, auditorium, and other fixed seat establishments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 space for every 4 seats</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Same requirements, only payment in lieu permitted</li></ul>
Museum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 space for every 1000sf of usable space</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Same requirements, only payment in lieu permitted</li></ul>
Dry Storage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 for every 2000sf of storage building space</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Same requirements</li></ul>
Churches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 space for every 8 seats</li><li>• 1 space for every 500sf of usable space outside the sanctuary</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Same requirements, only payment in lieu permitted</li></ul>

## An Alternative Future...

### Breaking down the Toolbox for Areas of Change and Stability

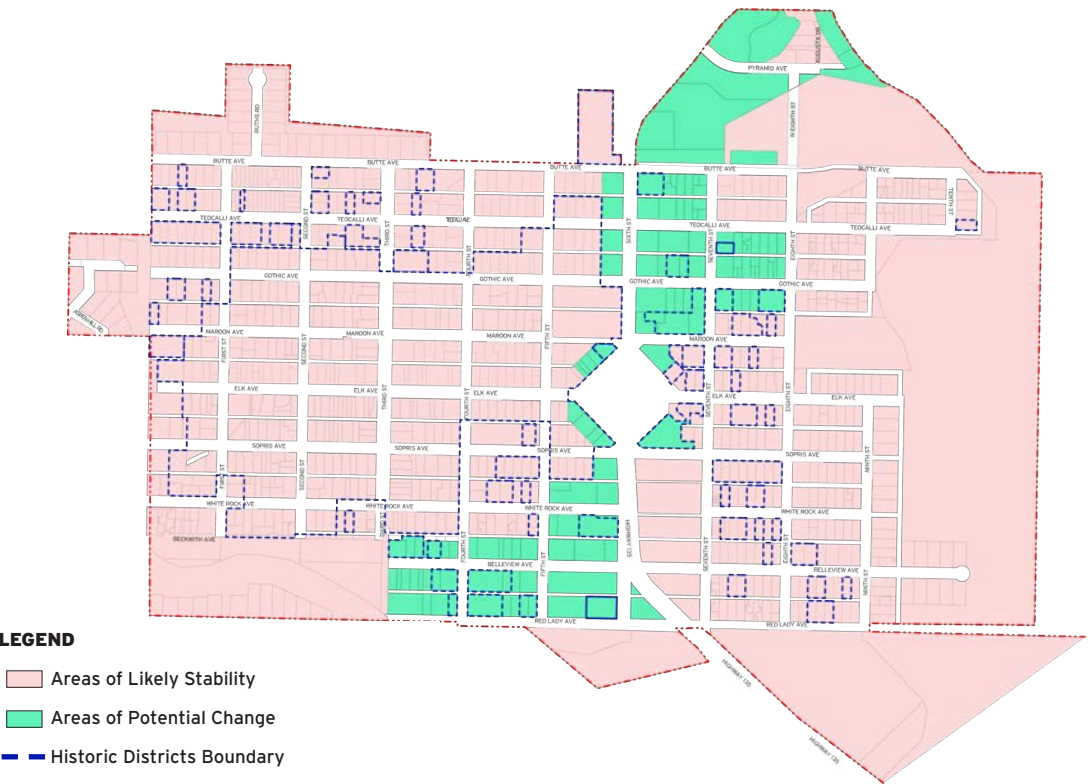
As we move forward, the next four pages will delve into how the Community Plan toolbox can be strategically adjusted and leveraged to align with Crested Butte’s vision for both areas of stability and areas of change. Residential neighborhoods, which are central to the Town’s character, will require thoughtful tweaks to preserve their unique qualities while bringing potential for more resident presence and diversity. Conversely, areas of change, such as Bellevue Avenue, the Sixth Street Corridor, and the Slate River Annexation, offer opportunities to explore performance-based zoning approaches that encourage more vibrant, mixed-use development, and ensure an exchange of public benefits. Through this targeted approach, this plan seeks to strike a balance between maintaining the Town’s charm and embracing the future in a way that the vision and evolving needs the Crested Butte community can be accommodated.

## PUTTING IT IN PERSPECTIVE... CHANGE OVER TIME

Change won’t happen overnight—it’s essential to keep things in perspective. The development timeline in Crested Butte is influenced by a range of market, cultural, and social factors. Change will occur incrementally, much like the Town’s evolution from its mining roots to its current recreational focus.

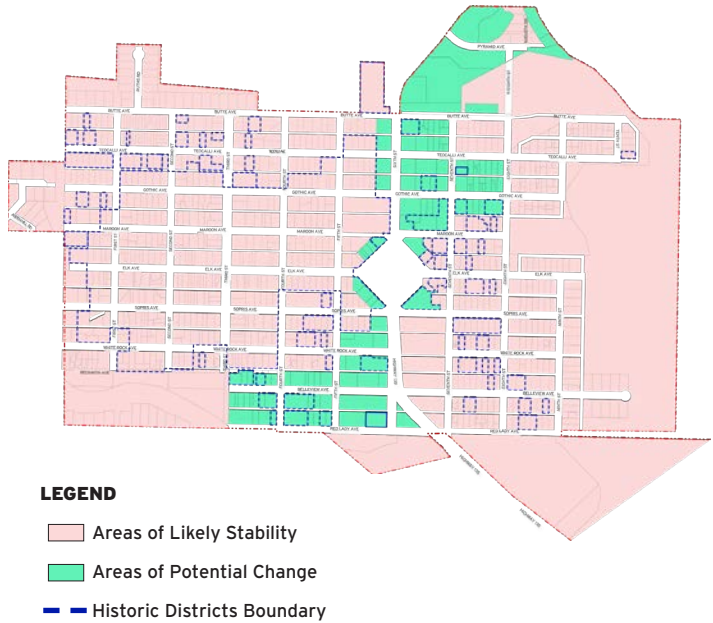
Revising the zoning code will not result in a sudden wall of tall buildings or a dramatic shift in parking patterns. Development happens gradually, parcel by parcel, driven by market conditions and the desires of individual landowners.

For example, under current development trends, the introduction of new zoning incentives could lead to the addition of 4-5 single-family homes and 2-3 accessory dwelling units (ADUs) annually, with 0-2 commercial developments every five years. While this plan explores potential build-out scenarios, these projections will unfold slowly and may never fully materialize, reflecting Crested Butte’s unique pace and character.



# Areas of Stability:

## Crested Butte's Neighborhoods



### A Vision for the Future

Crested Butte's residential neighborhoods will maintain their charm and authenticity, shaped by the people and history that define them. These areas will preserve their distinct mass, scale, and form, with architectural flexibility allowing for creativity that respects the Town's heritage. Small-scale accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and micro-lots will enhance vitality, fostering a diverse, full-time resident community. The authenticity of lived-in spaces will be celebrated, with bikes, snowmobiles, and tools common in alleys and porches. Neighbors will continue to connect on slow-moving streets and charming alleys, preserving the relaxed, community-centered vibe that makes Crested Butte home.

### A Strategy to Enable the Vision: Expanding Housing Options through ADUs and Micro-Lots

To help distribute a variety of housing units across Crested Butte's neighborhoods, the zoning code should focus on creating incentives to increase opportunities for building accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and subdividing micro-lots for individually owned ADUs. Since 1990, the Town has allowed ADUs as a conditional use in residential zones, permitting increased lot density in exchange for deed-restricting ADUs as long-term rentals for more than six months. Incentives have included subsidies for tap fees, which were increased to a full waiver in 2023. These efforts have resulted in 93 ADUs to date, but the pace of construction has slowed, and new strategies are needed to meet the community's housing needs.

### Balancing Market Realities with Community Needs

#### Market Opportunities & Constraints

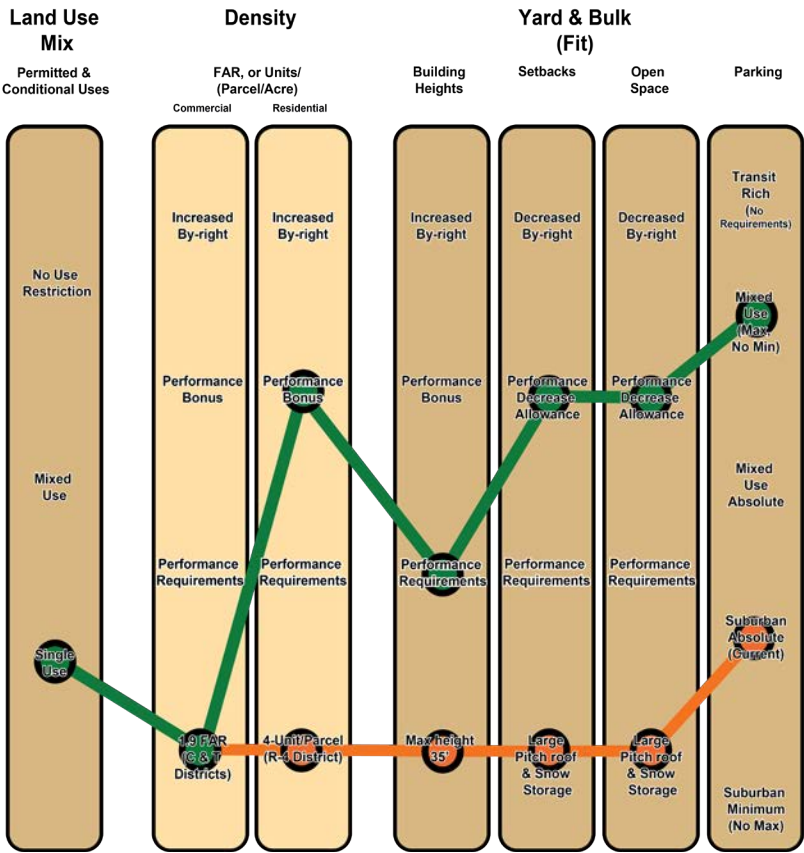
- **Vacant Lots:** Many property owners desire additional square footage beyond their current maximum allowances, but at higher price points, few are willing to deal with the responsibilities of being a landlord. There are 40 vacant lots in the Town's residential zones today.
- **Existing Lots:** Homeowners could reduce property tax burdens by generating rental income from an ADU or selling a micro-lot to a local buyer, but the cost of constructing an ADU remains a significant barrier. There are 308 lots in the Town's residential zones that could theoretically fit an ADU today.

#### Community Needs

The number of ADUs constructed annually has decreased and the necessary rents that will accommodate the local workforce no longer provide significant enough of an income to finance the cost of constructing an ADU. Through a combination of incentivizing double ADUs through bonus space, as well as considering future financial incentives and pre-approved building plans, the Town can leverage its development regulations and community resources to infill more of Crested Butte's residential neighborhoods with ADUs.

### Leveraging The Community Plan Toolbox

- **Land Use:** R1-3 Residential zones will remain primarily single-use, but the zoning code could streamline the development process by making the double ADU concept a permitted use rather than conditional. This change would still ensure that one ADU remains deed-restricted as a long-term rental.
- **Density:** Higher residential density could be offered as a performance bonus. For example, homeowners could be allowed two ADUs (instead of one, currently permitted conditionally) if one is deed-restricted as a long-term rental.
- **Fit:** Setbacks, open space, and parking requirements could be reduced for properties with two ADUs, leveraging on-street parking to free up space. Flexible design guidelines, such as permitting flat roofs, could address snow storage challenges while enabling smaller setbacks, fostering creative and efficient housing solutions.
- Additionally, incentives around what counts towards the home's maximum FAR could be implemented. For homes that include an ADU, certain spaces—such as accessory structures, garages, and basements—could be excluded from the FAR calculation, allowing increased usable space while maintaining the overall scale of the home. Conversely, homes without ADUs would not benefit from these exemptions; garage space would continue to count toward the maximum FAR, and basements could be prohibited, creating a balanced system of incentives and disincentives to promote ADU construction.



## Additional Considerations

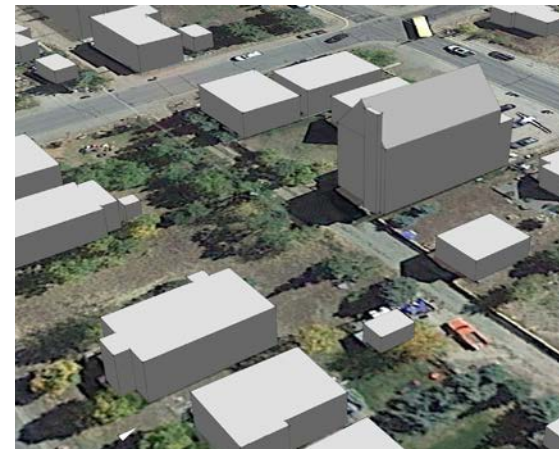
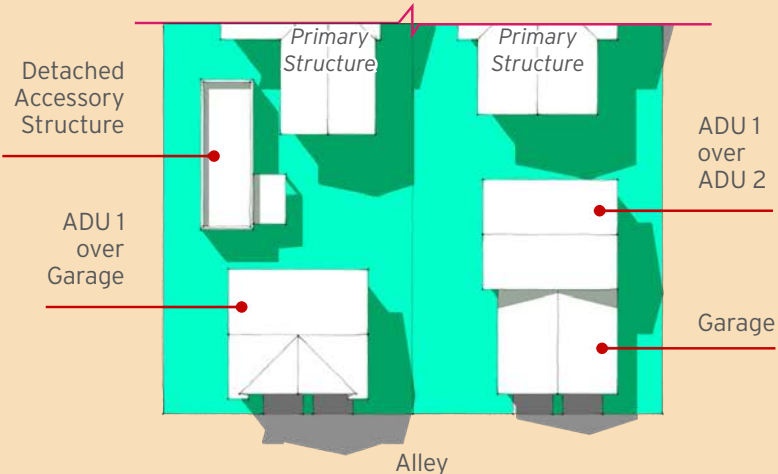
- **Subdividing Lots into Micro-Lots:** The Town's subdivision regulations could be updated to establish a process for creating micro-lots. This would enable homeowners with space for an ADU, but no desire to build one, to sell a portion of their lot to local residents who could construct smaller housing units. Existing ADUs could also be looked into to be subdivided as condominiums, creating more opportunities for local homeownership. While the subdivision code could outline this possibility, each lot would need case-by-case evaluation to address utilities, easements, access, and fire safety requirements.
- **Enhancing Mobile Home Zones:** The mobile home zone presents an opportunity to focus on retaining more naturally affordable housing. Currently, the zone prohibits permanent foundations. This requirement could be revisited to allow permanent foundations in exchange for a full-time residency deed restriction, ensuring that the mobile home zone continues to serve as a more naturally occurring affordable housing option in town.
- **Reevaluating the R3C Zone:** The R3C zone should be reassessed to better align with its intended purpose as a mixed-use transition area between commercial and residential uses. Its current classification as a higher-density residential zone under the "R3" designation may not accurately reflect its transitional mixed-use nature or goals.
- **Alley Maintenance and Access Policy:** Currently, the Town provides limited winter maintenance for alleys, with exceptions made for servicing affordable housing. If the Town seeks to further incentivize development along alleys through ADUs and micro-lots, it will need to establish clear policies regarding snow removal and access. Addressing these responsibilities will be essential to support increased use of alleys for housing while maintaining accessibility and safety during winter months.

## ADU Incentive Program

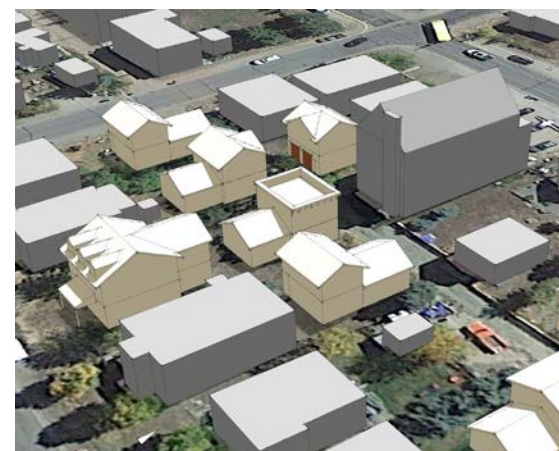
### Incentives for Providing Deed Restricted ADU

- Reduced 10' Front Setback
- 2nd ADU or Accessory Structure
- Garage Area excluded from Maximum Floor Area Calculation

### Sample Configurations

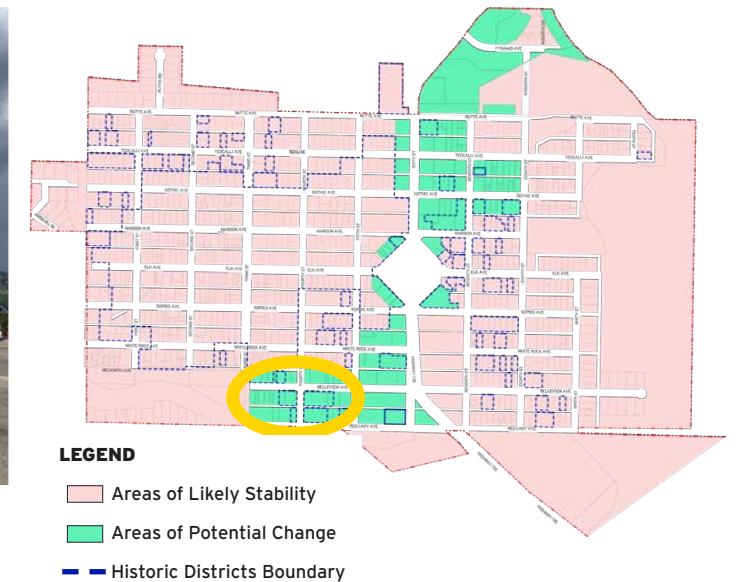


Digital Model of an Existing Alley.



Digital Model of an Alley with Potential ADUs.

## Areas of Change: Belleview Avenue



## A Vision for the Future

Belleview Avenue will evolve into a vibrant corridor blending light industrial charm with modern innovation. It will host trade businesses, maker spaces, and community commercial services, supporting the Town's economy while meeting housing needs through a growing residential presence. Buildings will maintain Crested Butte's character and scale, complementing the natural backdrop of Gibson's Ridge. Enhanced walkability and connections, like a future link between the school and Big Mine Park, will create a dynamic hub where work and community life come together.

### A Strategy to Enable the Vision: Increasing residential presence and retaining commercial uses

Belleview Avenue is the Town's commercial core, accommodating light industrial trades, services, and other uses less suited for pedestrian-oriented areas, such as restaurants. To bring vibrancy and address housing needs, Belleview Avenue's strategy focuses on increasing residential allowances while maintaining its mixed-use character. This area offers unique opportunities to diversify Crested Butte's affordable housing portfolio, as mixed-use buildings in commercial zones can fill a niche for residents seeking proximity to services and workspaces within the Town. The strategy proposes leveraging performance-based incentives, allowing increased building heights up to four stories (from a maximum of 35 feet to 46 feet), taking advantage of its backdrop against Gibson Ridge. In exchange for these changes, developers will be required to provide a percentage of affordable housing units and/or affordable commercial spaces, fostering a balance between economic vitality and community affordability. Additionally, zoning can be used to set the corridor up in the future to achieve an improved pedestrian experience, including providing space for a future sidewalk connection and on-street parallel parking.



Balancing Market Realities with Community Needs

Market Opportunities & Constraints

- Vacant Lots:** Bellevue Avenue currently has 40 vacant lots with limited mixed-use potential under current regulations. Each lot is restricted to a maximum of three deed-restricted housing units, occupying no more than 50% of the property. These limitations hinder development opportunities, as high land prices and construction costs reduce the likelihood of attracting investment. Developers are unlikely to pursue projects with constrained returns, leaving these lots underutilized. Expanding mixed-use allowances could enhance the market viability of these lots, encouraging investment in both commercial/trade businesses and diverse housing options. Introducing a balanced mix of market-rate and deed-restricted housing would provide an opportunity to leverage market dynamics while addressing community housing needs.
- Commercial Uses:** Bellevue Avenue faces challenges related to its lack of drive-by or walk-by traffic, which limits the success of restaurants or retail establishments. On the flip side, there could be potential for success of a restaurant in that corridor based on Crested Butte's small scale, but expanding these uses risks “gentrifying” the corridor and displacing commercial businesses. To retain Bellevue as the Town's commercial core, land use restrictions should prioritize commercial and light industrial uses. Housing-focused strategies in mixed-use developments could then drive investment and support the vibrancy of the district.
- Existing Lots:** Several existing lots on Bellevue Avenue are likely to face redevelopment pressure, business closures, or turnover as ownership transitions. While the Town cannot control when or why businesses may leave, proactive updates to development codes can prepare the corridor for these changes. Establishing clear standards for redevelopment can ensure that future uses align with the community's vision, preserving Bellevue's unique character while accommodating growth.

Community Needs

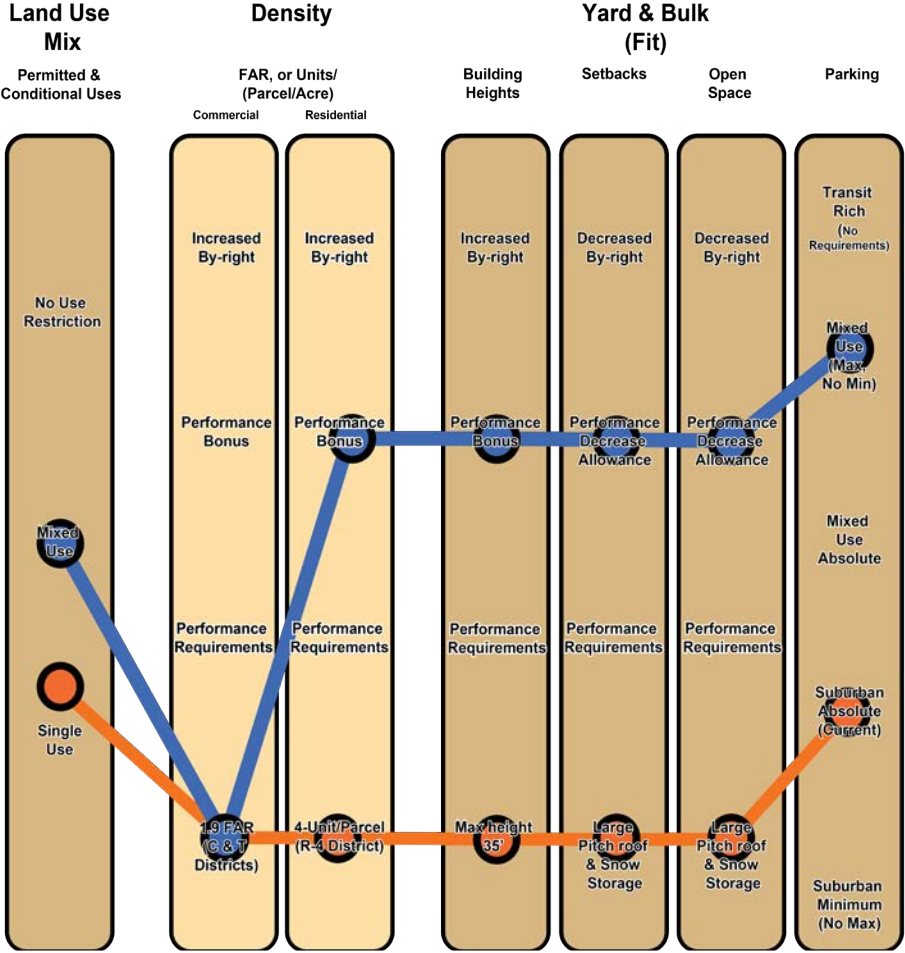
The community requires a diverse range of housing options distributed throughout the Town, incorporating various unit types and building styles. While living in a light-industrial area may not appeal to everyone, mixed-use apartments can serve as a vital component of Crested Butte's housing portfolio. These units are especially valuable for individuals seeking proximity to jobs, services, and the Town's amenities. By integrating more thoughtfully designed mixed-use spaces into Bellevue Avenue, the Town can address housing needs while maintaining the corridor's commercial and industrial focus.



**COMING SOON**  
Height comparison and context of a potential fourth story allowance in the Bellevue Corridor.



**View of Bellevue Avenue, Potential**  
A digital model view of what development may achieve without blocking views.

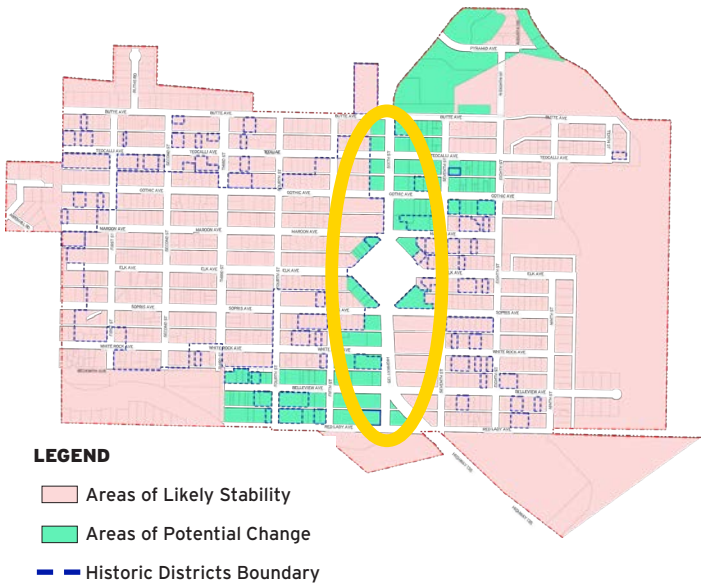


Leveraging The Community Plan Toolbox

- Land Use:** Bellevue Avenue's zoning could retain its emphasis on light industrial trades and service-oriented businesses while allowing increased residential allowances to foster more mixed-use developments. Such service-oriented uses could include a broad range of things, such as printing, furniture making or repair, or even caterers and bakers. Retail services could include paint supply or flooring as well as those that focus on local needs, and not tourism. This approach ensures the corridor remains the Town's commercial core while introducing flexibility for housing options, which is limited by the current zoning limit of a maximum of 3 residential units per parcel or 50% or less of the development.
- Density:** Performance-based incentives could allow increased residential density, making redevelopment more attractive. For example, developers could gain more residential units in addition to ground-floor commercial, in exchange for providing a percentage of those as affordable housing units or subsidized commercial spaces. These incentives would enable a balance of market-rate and deed-restricted units, supporting both housing and commercial goals.
- Fit:** Adjusting fit standards can ensure new developments align with Bellevue Avenue's character while addressing practical challenges. Allowing an additional story—up to four stories (49 feet) plus 3 extra feet of height on the ground floor from the current limit of three (35 feet)—leverages the Gibson Ridge backdrop, creates visual balance, and unlocks development potential. This additional height would be carefully considered only on the south side of Bellevue, or on the north side where building designs incorporate thoughtful step-downs in height toward the adjacent Whiterock residential neighborhood alley. These height adjustments can serve as performance bonuses, incentivizing developers in exchange for deed-restricted housing or affordable commercial space.
- Further adjustments, such as reducing setbacks and parking requirements, can optimize site use while ensuring adequate snow storage and practical parking solutions. Additionally, transitioning from head-in parking to on-street parking, paired with setting up space for future sidewalk connections, will improve loading/unloading logistics and lay the groundwork for parallel parking and a more pedestrian-friendly corridor.



# Areas of Change: Sixth Street Corridor



## A Vision for the Future

Sixth Street will be a vibrant gateway to Crested Butte, uniting locals and visitors in lively community spaces, eateries, lodging, and everyday retail. Anchored by hubs like the Center for the Arts, a potential future library, and a future transit hub, the corridor will feature buildings that blend Crested Butte’s unique character with designs that enhance its stunning views. Increased residential presence and pedestrian-friendly improvements will transform the corridor into a dynamic space that connects, rather than divides, the Town.

### A Strategy to Enable the Vision: Increasing residential presence and fostering more dynamic businesses and community spaces

To bring this vision to life, the strategy for Sixth Street emphasizes creating a vibrant, mixed-use corridor that balances residential, commercial, and community needs. Zoning should encourage ground-floor retail with two floors of housing above, leveraging an increase in building height from 35 to 38 feet as a performance-based bonus. In exchange, developers will provide deed-restricted housing and/or affordable commercial space, supporting community affordability and economic diversity.

The Town should also activate its assets in the corridor, such as the 4-Way Stop area, to develop subsidized mixed-use spaces that house a transit hub, potential improved library, and other community-oriented facilities. These spaces will foster connectivity, provide business incubation opportunities, and increase affordable commercial options, encouraging a broader diversity of businesses along Sixth Street.

Together, these strategies will transform the corridor into a vibrant and welcoming community hub, offering a mix of housing, services, and spaces that energize and connect Crested Butte.

## Balancing Market Realities with Community Needs

### Market Opportunities and Constraints

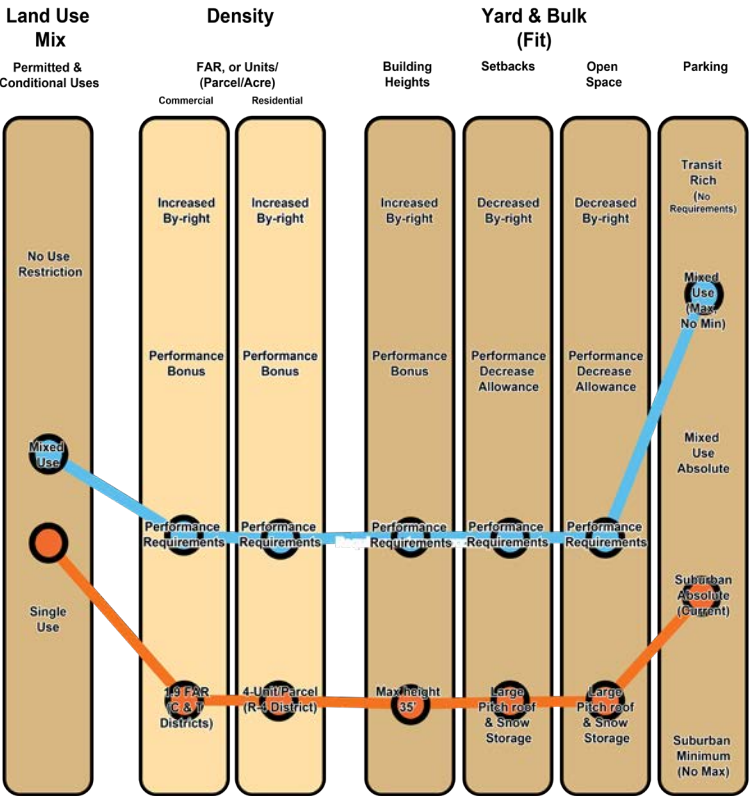
- Vacant Lots:** Sixth Street has 8 vacant parcels and others with less development than they are currently entitled resulting in significant potential for mixed-use development. However, current height and residential unit restrictions, along with rising land and construction costs, limit private investment, often skewing it toward luxury developments. Sixth Street could evolve into a vibrant extension of Elk Avenue, blending restaurants, retail, services, and community hubs. Minor zoning adjustments as performance bonuses—like a minor increase height and lower parking requirements in exchange for affordable housing—could unlock this potential while maintaining a balance between economic vitality, community affordability, and maintaining this corridor’s viewsheds that the community cherishes.
- Existing Lots:** While Sixth Street has a lot of vacant land potential, some existing lots may face redevelopment pressure as businesses evolve or relocate. Proactively updating zoning codes will ensure the corridor retains its character while accommodating growth. Clear standards will guide the integration of mixed-use spaces, balancing residential, commercial, and community needs.

### Community Needs

Sixth Street is an opportunity to provide diverse housing options while preserving spaces for small businesses and essential services. Mixed-use buildings with retail on the ground floor and housing above can offer affordable living close to work, transit, and amenities. Public investments, such as in the 4-Way Stop area, can activate community spaces and foster connectivity, supporting both housing and economic goals.

## Leveraging The Community Plan Toolbox

- Land Use:** The Sixth Street corridor should prioritize mixed-use zoning that accommodates a blend of retail, restaurants, and services, with residential units. Unlike Bellevue Avenue’s focus on commercial and light industrial uses, Sixth Street will emphasize ground-floor restaurant, retail, and services like medical with residential above, creating a more pedestrian-oriented environment. Civic hubs, such as a library, transit center, and visitor center, can be integrated into Town-owned parcels in the corridor, providing community-focused spaces that support the corridor’s vibrancy and serve the broader needs of Crested Butte.
- Density:** To encourage viable development and attract a mix of uses, residential density should be increased as a performance bonus, allowing more housing units beyond each parcel’s maximum of 50% of the development. Commercial space density will remain the same at its current FAR limits.
- Fit:** Fit standards for Sixth Street should ensure new developments align with the corridor’s character while supporting growth. Considering a modest 3-foot height increase (from 35 to 38 feet) will create space for ground-floor retail with two stories of viable housing above, preserving views and maintaining the corridor’s scale. Reductions in setbacks and parking requirements would optimize lot usage, balancing functionality with aesthetics. Additionally, mixed-use buildings should be designed to promote pedestrian access and integrate seamlessly with future civic hubs, fostering a vibrant, community-oriented atmosphere.



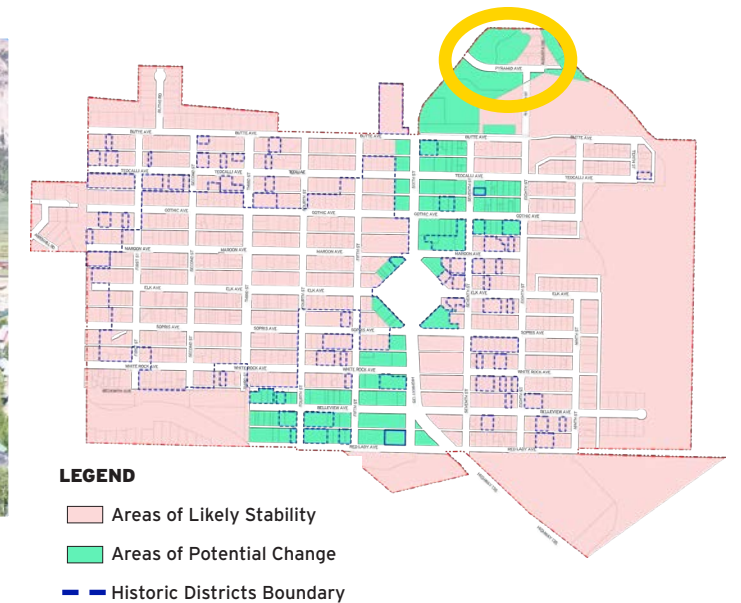
**Additional Considerations:**

- **Zoning the 4-Way:** The Town-owned 4-Way area offers significant potential for community-serving investments, including mixed-use live/work spaces to foster and incubate local businesses, an improved library (that is constrained in its current location), and an improved transit and visitor services hub. Currently unzoned, the Town should designate this former CDOT right-of-way as Public to facilitate its future reimagining and ensure these community-focused uses can be realized.
- **Evaluating the Tourist Zone:** The Tourist Zone, located along the northeast and southwest edges of the Sixth Street Corridor, provides space for visitor-related businesses and amenities, such as lodging and resorts. However, current housing requirements in the zone, which mandate 100% deed-restricted affordable housing or limit residential use to 50% of total development, hinder residential development.

The Town should reassess these restrictions to balance the need for visitor accommodations with opportunities for integrating affordable housing.

- **Evaluating the R4 Zone:** The R4 zone, the Town's highest residential density area, borders the T Zone at the northeast corner of the Sixth Street Corridor. While designed for higher-density residential uses, the zone still allows single-family homes by right, which market dynamics favor as the best and highest use. To preserve its intended higher-density character and support growth near transit and services, the Town should reevaluate this zoning allowance to ensure the zone remains suited for higher residential density.

## Areas of Change: Slate River Annexation



### A Vision for the Future

The Slate River Annexation will be a vibrant extension of the Sixth Street Corridor, designed to integrate with the Town's neighborhood character. This higher-density residential area will complement nearby amenities like the fire station and Mineral Point apartment complex, fostering a cohesive community. It will offer recreational spaces, including a sledding hill, Slate River boat launch, multi-use trails, potential additional active park space, and could accommodate a tennis court relocation. Well-connected by trails, sidewalks, and transit, the annexation will seamlessly link to the rest of the Town.

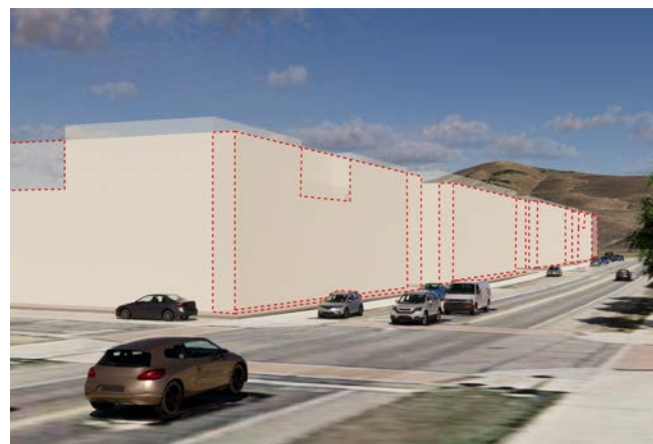
### A Strategy to Enable the Vision: Increasing residential density while including recreational amenities

The Slate River Annexation will introduce higher-density residential housing that fits seamlessly between the fire station and Mineral Point development. By reducing parking requirements and leveraging ample on-street parking availability, the development will complement the area's character while providing much-needed housing. It will also integrate recreational amenities and trail connections, enhancing access to the Town and recreation path. This thoughtful approach ensures a cohesive neighborhood and preserves potential for future community-serving uses, such as medical or assisted living services.

COMING SOON



COMING SOON



COMING SOON

Height comparison and context of a potential 3 ft additional height allowance in the Sixth Street Corridor.

UPDATE CAPTION

A rendering (top) and digital model view (bottom) of what development may achieve, compared to today's regulations.



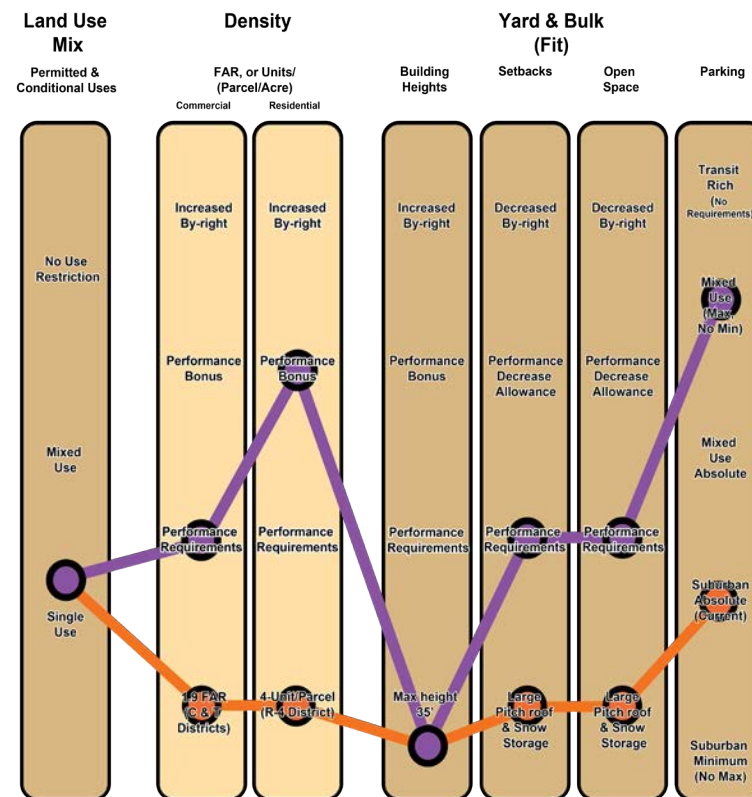
While Town Parcels 1 and 2 must remain in public ownership, limiting its ability to leverage market dynamics for housing, it should be designed to optimize construction efficiencies and reduce costs, such as through higher density buildings. Thoughtful allowances and design strategies should focus on meeting a range of community needs, making the site an attractive candidate for grant opportunities and future funding investment in affordable housing projects.

**Land Use:** This area will primarily focus on residential development, with the potential to incorporate recreational amenities and/or community-serving facilities such as medical or assisted living services. This approach ensures the area remains adaptable to community needs while enhancing its role as an integrated part of the broader neighborhood.

**Density:** With a target density of 29 units per acre, the development will explore a variety of building types to strike a balance between neighborhood livability/diversity with construction affordability. This density level strikes a balance between providing ample housing and maintaining the character of the surrounding area, especially given its location between established developments.

**Fit:** The 30-foot height limit will be maintained, ensuring that new buildings blend seamlessly with the surrounding neighborhood. This height restriction supports a human-scale environment while allowing for more compact, efficient housing solutions.

To accommodate the site's higher density, parking requirements will be reduced to 1 space per dwelling unit, and leverage the area's ample access to on-street parking on Pyramid Avenue, combined with its proximity to public transit.



## COMING SOON:

These recommendations will be refined based on public feedback and incorporated into a matrix of recommended zoning changes in this chapter in the final plan, which will serve as the foundation for updating the Town's zoning code in June 2025. The code update process will include targeted outreach and notifications to property owners to ensure a transparent and inclusive process.

Along with the zoning matrix, this section will also explore additional implementation tools, such as updating the Town's development impact fees in the Resident Occupied Affordable Housing Program (ROAH), streamlining the development review process, and considering other incentives like pre-approved building plans.

# Making it Happen

## Setting the Stage for Implementation

As the Town and community of Crested Butte continue to lead the way in shaping its future, it is vital to recognize the role it plays in setting an example for others. However, the Town is also limited by resources and funding, which means that while the vision is bold, achieving it will require strategic planning, partnerships, and innovative solutions that complement the Town's regulatory framework through its zoning code. As the community strives to meet its housing and economic goals, this chapter starts the conversation on how the Town can leverage its resources and identify ways to unlock potential, within a new 5-Year Housing and Resilient Economy Plan.

## A New Housing and Resilient Community Plan

To achieve the community's vision, a new housing and resilient community plan must be established—one that is rooted in clear objectives and practical pathways for implementation. This plan will not only guide the development of affordable housing but will also address the need for a resilient economy that can help incubate, foster, and sustain local, community-serving business and non-profits.

Creating the Community Plan vision in this plan is just the first step. To make it a reality, the Town will require innovative incentives and programs that encourage investment and action, from developers and local businesses to the broader community, which will be further identified, evaluated, and refined through two new 5-year plans, to be developed in 2026. These plans will help:

### 5-Year Housing Plan

- Evaluate and strategize the Town's current and future housing portfolio to ensure diverse housing types and housing programs/deed restrictions for a comprehensive portfolio that meets community needs.
- Leverage funding sources and prioritize new housing and mixed-use developments on Town-owned sites.
- Identify financial incentives to support the vision, such as loan programs or pre-approved building plans, that make it easier for developers to align with the Community Plan.
- Develop programmatic incentives to encourage the growth of accessory dwelling units (ADUs), such as landlord/renter matching programs to increase ADU availability.

### 5-Year Resilient Community Plan

- Evaluate and strategize how the Town can support local businesses and nonprofits to ensure a dynamic, sustainable economy.
- Leverage funding sources to prioritize new developments on Town-owned sites that build on the Town's Facilities Plan, such as the opportunities listed on the next page.
- Identify financial incentives, such as subsidized rental rates for new businesses or nonprofits in Town-owned facilities, to make these spaces more accessible and attractive.
- Develop programmatic incentives, such as business incubation and development programs, to support the growth of local businesses and foster long-term economic resilience.

Through these two plans, the Town will identify a strategic approach to housing and economic development that aligns with the Community Plan vision and helps realize and achieve it.



Re-envisioning the Town's Resources

The Community Plan process identified the vision and helped clarify how zoning is an opportunity for the Town to re-envision the use of its own resources. Town-owned properties and facilities represent untapped potential for realizing key community goals, including affordable housing, recreation, and services. Building on the Town's existing Facilities Plan and Transportation Mobility Plan, the following concepts and ideas were identified to further explore, vet, and design through the 5-Year Housing and Resilient Community Plans.

- Redeveloping the Marshals' Office/KBUT site to better meet community needs and foster a civic campus environment.
- Expanding and renovating Stepping Stones to enhance childcare functionality and capacity
- Developing affordable housing on TP 1, 2, and 3 in the Slate River Annexation to complete these neighborhoods.
- Collaborating with the Center for the Arts on Phase 2 renovations of the Old Center Building to better serve community non-profit and cultural needs.
- Completing the Elk Avenue and Third Street Streetscape Plan, as identified in the TMP, alongside re-envisioning Station One into a community hub with gathering spaces, co-working areas, business incubation space, and other community-focused amenities.
- Re-envisioning the 4-Way as a community hub, with potential live/work units, expanded library space, additional community areas, a transit hub with bike storage, an improved visitor center, and opportunities for affordable and/or senior housing.



The Town's existing facilities and parcels present an opportunity to be leveraged to better meet community needs.

Some Caveats to Envisioning Town-Led Possibilities

Focusing on Existing Town-Owned Parcels and Facilities

These concepts focus on the potential of existing Town-owned parcels and facilities. By leveraging the Town's existing assets, we can align new developments with the broader vision of a thriving, community-centered future. This strategy ensures that the Town maximizes the value of its current resources. Focusing on existing properties allows the Town to build on what is already in place, ensuring that new initiatives integrate seamlessly with the vision for a thriving community.

A Future Need for a Land Acquisition Strategy

In addition to utilizing Town-owned parcels, there may be a need in the future for a strategic land acquisition plan. As Crested Butte's needs evolve, acquiring land in key locations can support future housing, infrastructure, and community services beyond what the Town currently owns. To make this happen, a dedicated land acquisition strategy should be incorporated into the 5-Year Plans, ensuring that the Town can secure the land required to meet future demands. This effort will require thoughtful consideration and targeted funding resources to execute.

Addressing Snow Storage: Mapping and Needs Assessment

Crested Butte's distinctive climate necessitates careful planning when it comes to snow removal and storage. While the current concepts do not address the potential re-envisioning or redevelopment of parcels used for snow storage, it is important to recognize that these spaces play a vital role in the Town's operations. As the Town grows, a more detailed evaluation of snow storage needs will be crucial. This process will involve mapping current snow storage assets and assessing the capacity of these spaces to accommodate increased development, including the trade-offs involved in hauling snow outside of the Town limits. The snow needs to go somewhere.

Creating a Sustainable Funding Source

Realizing the Community Plan's vision—whether through new developments, financial incentives, or programmatic initiatives—requires a reliable and sustainable funding source. To complement existing resources like grants, bonds, taxes, and private-sector partnerships, the Town will need to identify a long-term financial strategy to support housing, infrastructure, and economic development goals. A dedicated funding stream will provide the stability needed to maintain progress, ensuring continued support for community-serving housing, businesses, and non-profits.





# Looking Ahead

## Collaborating Beyond Boundaries

As Crested Butte moves forward with this plan's vision, it is critical to remember that the success of these efforts extends far beyond the Town's borders. The future of Crested Butte and the Gunnison Valley is interwoven, and the challenges we face cannot be solved in isolation. Regional collaboration will be the key to addressing the shared issues of housing, transportation, infrastructure, to promote a thriving community.

This plan lays the groundwork for further regional collaboration, and starting in 2025, it will work closely with Gunnison County, the Town of Mt. Crested Butte, Crested Butte South POA, Mountain Express, RTA, and other regional stakeholders to develop a comprehensive CO-135 corridor plan and Three-Mile plan for the Gunnison Valley. This collaborative plan will integrate land use, transportation, and infrastructure goals across jurisdictions, ensuring that the region's growth and development are aligned with the needs of both Crested Butte and its surrounding communities.

The CO-135 Corridor and Three-Mile Plan will build on the One Valley Resiliency Roadmap (OVRP), a framework that identifies three critical regional priorities: sustaining community resilience, fostering equity and inclusion, and advancing climate action. These guiding principles will shape the region's approach to land use, infrastructure, and transportation planning, ensuring that the North Gunnison Valley grows in a way that benefits everyone. By aligning the CO-135 Corridor and Three-Mile Plan with these goals, we can create a more unified, interconnected region that is equipped to face the challenges of the future.

Though regional collaboration is essential, Crested Butte is first focusing on its own vision and future of development in this Community Plan. By identifying community-serving development opportunities near existing infrastructure and services, the Town is

positioning itself to be ready for the broader regional plan while ensuring that development aligns with local goals. This approach enables Crested Butte to set the stage for future collaboration, ensuring that community needs are addressed while contributing to the larger vision for the valley.

This plan's work does not solely focus on housing or economic vibrancy; it's about improving the overall livability and well-being of the community. The success of Crested Butte depends on creating a balanced, thriving environment that goes beyond simply providing housing. Access to quality childcare, educational opportunities, and recreational spaces are all integral to fostering a high quality of life. These elements will be further explored and expanded upon in the upcoming update to the Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails (PROST) Master Plan, which will begin in 2025.

The future of Crested Butte is one of interconnectedness and collaboration. By working closely with regional partners and aligning our strategies, we will not only achieve the Town's goals but also contribute to the broader vision for a more livable, functional, and thriving community. Together, we will continue to build a community that thrives together, not just within the Town's boundaries, but across the entire region.



# Glossary

## Breaking down common Community Development lingo and acronyms.

- **Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU):** A secondary, self-contained residential unit on a single-family lot, typically used for rental purposes, guest accommodations, or housing for family members. In Crested Butte, ADUs are currently restricted to be a long-term rental.
- **Administrative Review:** A process in which minor or routine development applications are reviewed and approved by administrative staff, rather than requiring review by BOZAR.
- **Affordable Housing:** Housing that is affordable to local residents and is intended for occupancy by those who live and work in the community, often subject to income restrictions and other criteria.
- **Board of Zoning and Architectural Review (BOZAR):** The Town's appointed board responsible for reviewing and approving development applications to ensure they comply with the Town's zoning code and design standards and guidelines.
- **Climate Action Plan (CAP):** The plan that defines the goals, strategies, and actions until 2030 for the Town to set the example of what is possible for mountain communities to take responsibility for our climate impacts and strategically drive down Crested Butte's GHG emissions.
- **Community Compass:** The Town of Crested Butte's comprehensive plan, which identifies the Crested Butte community's core values, 5-year strategic plan, and decision-making framework.
- **Community Plan (CP):** The plan that establishes a physical vision for the build-out of Crested Butte that aligns with the Crested Butte community's goals and values.
- **Compass Navigation:** The coordinated approach to implementing the goals and strategies outlined in the Community Compass, encompassing the Transportation Mobility Plan, Historic Preservation Plan, Climate Action Plan, and Community Plan.
- **Conditional Uses:** Activities that may be allowed with special approval, subject to specific conditions or review processes.
- **Deed Restriction:** A legal provision placed on a property that restricts its use or occupancy, often used to ensure affordability or compliance with certain zoning or preservation standards.
- **Density:** The measure of the number of housing units or buildings allowed per unit of land area, typically expressed as units per acre (residential) or floor area ratio (commercial).
- **Design Standards & Guidelines:** The Town's standards and guidelines that govern architectural design review for the different historic and non-historic districts in Crested Butte.

- **District Intent:** The primary purpose and goals of a specific zoning district, outlining the desired character, land uses, and development patterns for that area.
- **Figure Ground:** A diagrammatic representation of built structures and open spaces, used to analyze the spatial relationship between the physical built environment and vacant or open areas.
- **Fit:** How a building or development fits on the site, such as its height, setbacks to neighboring properties, snow storage, and parking.
- **Floor Area Ratio (FAR):** A ratio of the total floor area of a building to the area of the lot on which it is built, used to regulate the size/density of development.
- **Height:** The vertical measurement of a building from the ground level to the highest point of the roof or structure, as regulated by zoning standards.
- **Historic District:** An area designated for preservation due to its historical or cultural significance, where development and alteration are subject to stricter guidelines and review.
- **Historic Preservation Plan (HPP):** The plan that defines the goals, strategies, and actions to guide Crested Butte's historic preservation program and regulations, to ensure the Town's architectural identity reflects Crested Butte's deep sense of community and its evolution over time.
- **Land Use:** The designation or classification of property according to its intended use, such as residential, commercial, industrial, or recreational.
- **Lot Measurements:** The dimensions and size of a parcel of land, typically including length, width, and area, used to determine allowable land use and development.
- **Parking Requirements:** The minimum number of parking spaces required for a development to provide on site, based on factors such as building size, type of activity, and zoning.
- **Payment in Lieu of:** The allowance to provide a payment in lieu of a specific zoning requirement, such as paying in lieu of providing on-site parking.
- **Periods of Significance (POS):** Specific time frames or historical events that define the importance of a structure, district, or community, often used in the context of historic preservation to guide the assessment of historical integrity.
- **Permitted Uses:** Activities allowed by right in a specific zoning district.
- **Parks, Recreation, Open Space & Trails Master Plan (PROST Plan):** This Plan will study the existing conditions of PROST amenities and services, evaluate needs based upon projected growth in the community

as identified in current development proposals, identify values and develop policies to align with stated values, and collaboratively develop recommendations that align with current local, state, and regional planning efforts.

- **Resident Occupied Affordable Housing (ROAH):** A program created by the Town in 2012 that calculates the impact of new development in terms of new jobs created and requires a percentage of mitigation of the new jobs by providing affordable housing or payment in lieu of.
- **Restrictive Covenant:** A legal agreement that limits or dictates the use of land, typically designed to protect property values, maintain community standards, or ensure compatibility with surrounding uses.
- **Rights of Way (ROW):** The legal rights granted to use a specific portion of land for public or utility purposes, such as streets, sidewalks, and utilities.
- **Snow!** Refers to considerations regarding snow accumulation and removal within the town, including regulations for snow storage and management in development plans.
- **Snow Storage:** Designated areas where snow is stored after being cleared from a property to ensure public safety and maintain accessibility.
- **Transportation Mobility Plan (TMP):** The plan that defines the goals, strategies, and actions through 2040 for the Town to remain a pedestrian and townie-first community by de-emphasizing cars and focusing on walking, biking, rolling, and transit.
- **Variance:** An exception granted from zoning requirements or regulations, typically granted when strict enforcement would cause undue hardship due to the unique circumstances of the property.
- **Yard & Bulk:** Yard: The open space around a building, typically including front, side, and rear areas, required to be kept clear of structures. Bulk: The size, mass, and overall dimensions of a building or structure, often regulated by zoning codes.
- **Zoning Code:** A set of regulations governing land use and development within specific zones in the town, detailing allowed land uses, densities, and site requirements.
- **Zoning Map and Districts:** A visual tool that outlines the different zones or districts within the town, each with district having specific land use designations, development standards, and restrictions.



