



TOWN OF CRESTED BUTTE COMMUNITY PLAN

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TORTI
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Executive Summary

The Crested Butte Community Plan (CP) identifies a long-term vision to improve Crested Butte’s livability, functionality, and sense of community by aligning the Town of Crested Butte’s (Town’s) development regulations with the community’s values and strategic goals.

The CP seeks to encourage and stimulate private-sector investment in community-serving housing, businesses, and non-profits to address Crested Butte’s pressing local challenges –an escalating affordability crisis, a vulnerable and concentrated economy, a decline in full-time residency, and zoning regulations that fail to produce the housing and infrastructure the community needs.

While the Town has incrementally advanced affordable housing and business support over several decades, it cannot sustainably solve these challenges alone. Without action, Crested Butte risks becoming less like the place people cherish—less affordable, less livable, and less connected. Addressing these challenges requires a proactive and strategic approach that shapes the future rather than allowing incremental change to reshape the town.

The CP lays out a bold yet thoughtful strategy to preserve the unique character and spirit that define Crested Butte while guiding development in alignment with the Town’s core values: authenticity, connection, accountability, and boldness.

To achieve this, the plan proposes implementing performance-based zoning, which introduces new development incentives that align with Crested Butte’s character in exchange for key community benefits of deed-restricted housing and spaces for local-serving businesses and non-profits. By leveraging these incentives, the CP ensures that new development actively contributes to the community’s long-term needs while providing clarity and feasibility for responsible development.

However, performance-based zoning is not a one-size-fits-all solution. Crested Butte’s neighborhoods each possess a unique character and charm that must be preserved to maintain the town’s authentic feel. The CP prioritizes protecting the distinct identity of residential areas while promoting thoughtful, incremental infill outside the National Historic District. Strategies such as incentivizing accessory dwelling units and allowing micro-lots aim to introduce more diverse, community-serving housing options without compromising the integrity of each neighborhood.

In key areas identified for potential change—such as Belleview Avenue and Sixth Street—the plan considers modest increases in building height and density, along with reduced parking and setback requirements, in exchange for additional community-serving housing and commercial spaces. These adjustments seek to enhance community vibrancy and connectivity by fostering more mixed-use development tailored to local needs. Additionally, the Slate River Annexation is envisioned as a natural extension of the Sixth Street corridor, supporting higher-density development complemented by recreational amenities and other community-focused uses. This approach aligns with surrounding land uses while creating more opportunities for residents to live in Town, closer to where they work.

Beyond zoning changes—which will be further refined and implemented immediately following CP adoption—the plan lays the foundation for a new five-year Housing and Resilient Community Plan. This initiative will focus on Town-owned development opportunities, property-owner incentives, and supportive programs to collaboratively implement the community’s vision. Additionally, the CP highlights the importance of

regional collaboration, setting the stage for the 2025 Gunnison County Corridor Plan. This regional initiative will integrate land use, transportation, and infrastructure planning along the CO-135 corridor, ensuring a well-connected future for the Gunnison Valley.

With this forward-thinking approach, the CP ensures that Crested Butte remains Crested Butte—a spirited and thriving community for generations to come.

WHAT’S INSIDE THIS DOCUMENT

In this document, the reader will be guided through the essential elements of the CP:

INTRODUCTION: About this Plan & How it Was Developed

This section introduces the CP, outlining its mission, relevance, and integration with the Town’s Compass Navigation effort. It also highlights the data-driven development process and community engagement that shaped the plan.

CRESTED BUTTE’S CONTEXT: How Challenges & Opportunities Define Success

This chapter identifies Crested Butte’s challenges and explores opportunities for the CP, with success measures rooted in the community’s values of authenticity, connection, accountability, and boldness.

CRESTED BUTTE’S FUTURE: A Vision Rooted in Community Values

This section explains how the vision for Crested Butte’s future reflects the community’s seven strategic goals and emphasizes preserving what makes Crested Butte, Crested Butte.

UNLOCKING POTENTIAL: Enabling the Community Plan through Policy

This chapter explores strategies to bring the CP vision to life, including leveraging zoning policies to create vibrant areas of change while preserving the stability of existing residential neighborhoods and the historic core.

MAKING IT HAPPEN: Setting the Stage for Implementation

This implementation chapter outlines the steps to realize the CP’s vision, focusing on creating a five-year housing and resilient community plan and reimagining the use of Town-owned properties to align with community goals.

LOOKING AHEAD: Collaborating Beyond Boundaries

The CP concludes with a commitment for regional collaboration through the upcoming 2025 Gunnison County Corridor Plan, which will integrate land use, transportation, and infrastructure planning to achieve collective, long-term goals.



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. The CP builds on the foundation of the Crested Butte Community Compass – a declaration of the Crested Butte’s shared values and 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 CP outlines a future vision for the Town of Crested Butte (Town) and establishes a regulatory framework to bring this vision to life. 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, play, 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 community future.



The Urgency of 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 and caring community, evident in neighborhood street gatherings, townie-takeovers, and quirky costume celebrations.

However, Crested Butte stands at a pivotal crossroads, facing the contradiction 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 and growth toward luxury uses and amenities, overshadowing and underproducing essential and affordable community needs.

This trend has led to a growing dependence on unsustainable public subsidies for community development. Despite decades of significant public investment in affordable housing, the challenge to retain Crested Butte's full-time resident community persists, threatening the community's livability, functionality, and close-knit social fabric. The impacts extend beyond housing. The increasing costs of building homes and living is displacing the local workforce and essential services to areas farther down the valley and even out of Gunnison County. As a result, longer commutes, time away from families, and less time spent in Crested Butte are gradually chipping away at Crested Butte's authentic sense of community.

Addressing these challenges requires a regional approach to expanding affordable housing and essential services within Crested Butte and Gunnison County. Bringing housing closer to jobs and aligning development with existing infrastructure are key solutions. However, the Town cannot continue to fully subsidize community needs while the free market prioritizes luxury housing and amenities. A comprehensive update of development regulations is necessary to realign market forces with the needs of a functional, affordable, and livable community.

The CP evaluates and proposes how to harness the Town's development regulations to strike a better balance between the demands of a tourism and amenities-based economy with the needs of Crested Butte's residents. Rather than waiting for economic challenges to escalate, this plan takes the reins of change, outlining a future vision that aligns with the community's goals and values.

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

Strengthening our sense of community and protecting what makes Crested Butte the place we all love.

DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS are embedded within the Town's zoning code and should be a direct reflection of Crested Butte's values. The code regulates and guides public and private investment, shaping the look, feel, and function of the community.

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

COMMUNITY-SERVING HOUSING is affordable, accessible, and encompasses a diverse range of housing types and programs designed to meet the evolving needs of the community. From seasonal employees, to year-round 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 & NON-PROFITS refers to the availability of suitable spaces within the Town for local 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—and articulated a 5-year strategic plan and decision-making framework to navigate the Town's many complex challenges.

Crested Butte's economic challenges are not new, but the Town has addressed them 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 CP, Community Plan, Transportation Mobility Plan, Historic Preservation Plan, and Climate Action Plan shift the Town towards taking a more proactive, strategic, and holistic approach to addressing these economic challenges.

The CP, developed with extensive community input, aims 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 CP seeks to facilitate and balance the Town's goals of "accommodate growth in a way that maintains Crested Butte's rural feel", "enable people who live and work here to thrive", and "retain the unique character and traditions of Crested Butte". In total, this plan touches all seven Compass goals, as they are interconnected and will shape the Town's future.

FROM POLICY TO PLACE

The CP builds on the community values, strategic goals, and decision-making framework of the Community Compass to shape a clear vision and strategy for Crested Butte's future development.

It confronts uncertain change and an uncertain future and charts a path forward on the community's terms, outlining necessary updates to the Town's Subdivision Code, Zoning Code, and Design Standards & Guidelines to align with this vision.

The CP also lays the foundation for a new five-year Housing & Resilient Community Plan, ensuring the vision is actively implemented and brought to life.



Navigating the Future, Comprehensively

The Town took a comprehensive and integrated approach to crafting the CP through an effort called “Compass Navigation”, which included four major planning processes.

One of the only constants in life is change, and change is happening to Crested Butte and the Gunnison Valley. Proactively managing change here in Crested Butte requires addressing the community’s conflicting

priorities – such as affordable housing, climate action, historic preservation, and transportation – while balancing trade-offs to minimize unintended consequences. 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.

<p>TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY PLAN (TMP)</p> <p><i>Adopted March 4, 2024</i></p> 	<p>HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN (HPP)</p> <p><i>Adopted November 18, 2024</i></p> 	<p>CLIMATE ACTION PLAN (CAP)</p> <p><i>Anticipated Adoption March 2025</i></p> 	<p>COMMUNITY PLAN (CP)</p> <p><i>This Document - In Progress</i></p> 
<p><i>Creating a <u>connected community</u>.</i></p> <p>The TMP establishes a long-term roadmap to support the Community Compass goal to “de-emphasize cars and focus on walking, biking, rolling, and transit” by improving mobility choices, managing parking resources, and integrating land use with transportation.</p>	<p><i>Preserving Crested Butte’s <u>authenticity and character</u>.</i></p> <p>The HPP aligns with the Compass goal to “retain the unique character and traditions of Crested Butte” by ensuring 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><i>Taking <u>bold and accountable action on climate change</u>.</i></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><i>Living Crested Butte’s <u>core community values</u>.</i></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 aligns 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 within 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 housing, transportation, and community needs involves working closely with regional partners including Gunnison County, Mt. Crested Butte, Crested Butte South POA, Mountain Express, RTA, and other key stakeholders. The Town plans to collaborate on the upcoming 2025 Gunnison County Corridor Plan, which will integrate land use, transportation, and infrastructure planning along the CO-135 Corridor. This plan will integrate land use and transportation, and guide infrastructure investment to better meet the needs of the entire region.

The Gunnison County Corridor Plan will build upon the priorities outlined in the One Valley Resiliency Roadmap (OVRR), which identifies three regional priorities to build and sustain community, create a more equitable and inclusive region, and advance climate action and environmental resiliency. By aligning land use with transportation and infrastructure investments across jurisdictions, the

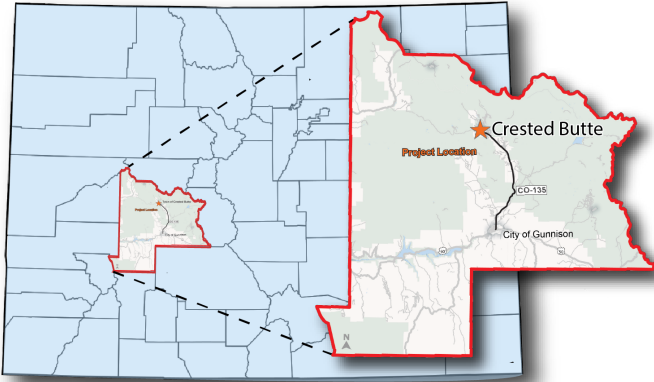
Corridor Plan will guide decision-making to benefit the entire valley. The goal is to create a more cohesive approach to regional development, ensuring that both local governments and agencies are working toward shared objectives.

While regional collaboration is crucial, Crested Butte is also focusing inward on local investment and development. This CP identifies opportunities within the Town that align with existing infrastructure and services, ensuring that future development supports both the Town’s strategic goals and the broader regional vision. This approach positions Crested Butte to integrate seamlessly into regional plans while addressing local needs.

In addition to housing and commercial development, the CP is centered on improving the overall quality of life in Crested Butte. This includes access to childcare, a strong local school, and ample parks, recreation, and open space. These elements are essential for creating a thriving, livable, and vibrant community. In 2025, the Town will update its Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails (PROST) Plan as well as develop a new 5-Year Housing and Resilient Community Plan. These plans will address the growing needs of residents and visitors, ensuring the Town is well-prepared to support its expanding community, in collaboration with regional partners.



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



State of Colorado Gunnison County



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 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 the community’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 provided 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**.

Phase 3: Design

September 2024 - January 2025

The design phase built upon the developed 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 this final phase, ongoing community outreach will further refine the alternatives into the 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.

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 or other communication 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

How Challenges & Opportunities 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 CP reflects and upholds Crested Butte's core values of authenticity, connection, accountability, and boldness.

Crested Butte's Past & Evolution

A Town Shaped by its Environment and History

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

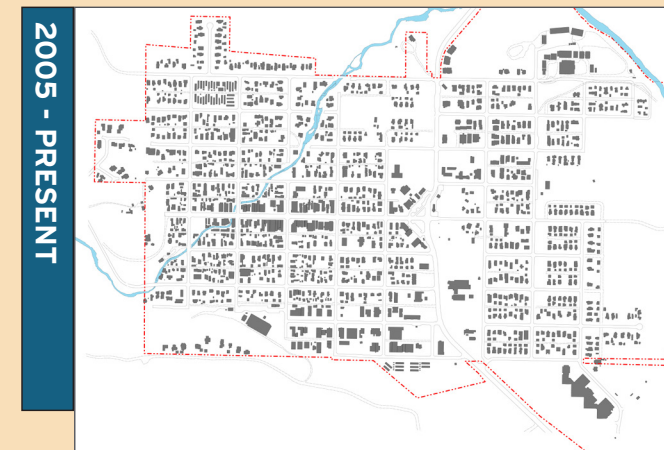
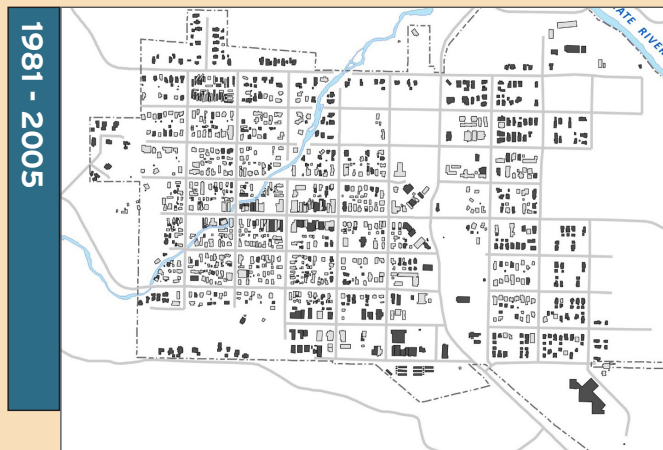
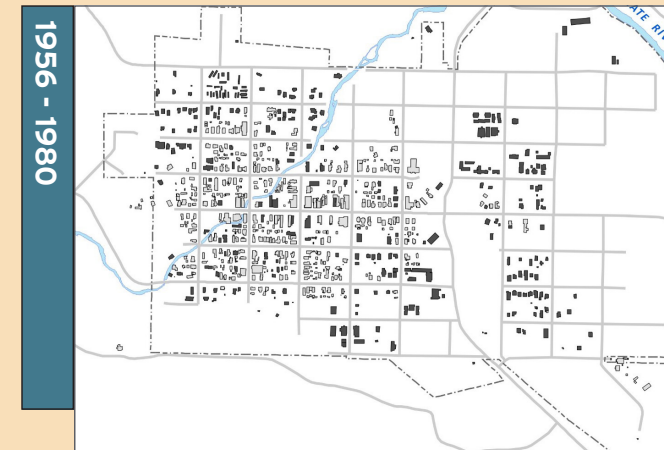
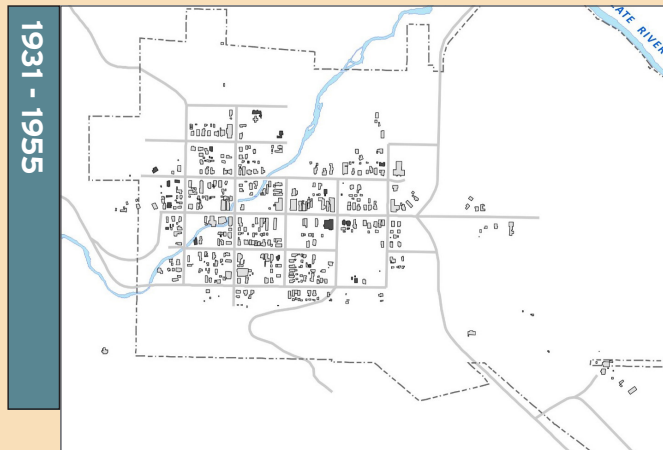
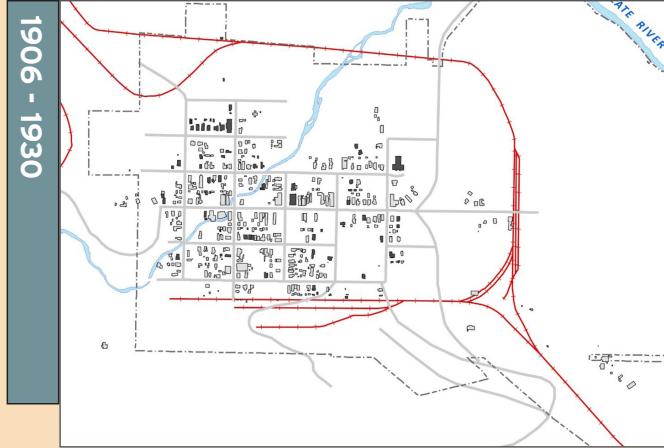
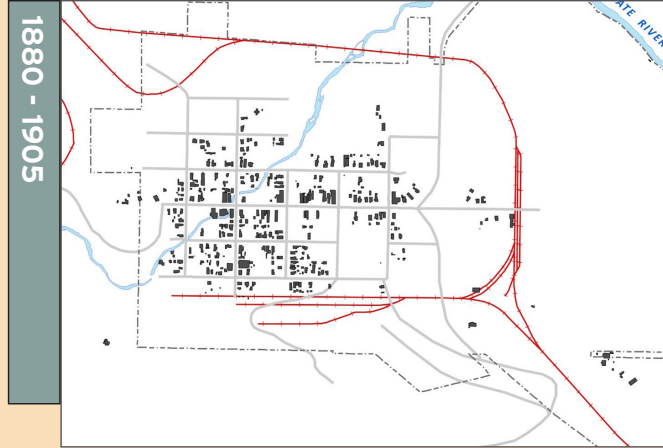
recreation, as the area's mountainous terrain drew visitors seeking winter sports and outdoor adventures. Over time, the ski area grew into a renowned resort and Crested Butte also became a summer destination for its acclaimed mountain biking and hiking, and the Town's population rebounded, surpassing 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, mountain streams, 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 48-year battle that finally successfully concluded in 2024. This decisive movement reflected a bold commitment to protecting the essence of the community and 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 conserved private 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, while preparing for resiliency in the face of a changing climate, remains a defining challenge—and opportunity—for this mountain community.





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

Crested Butte Today Facing Complex Challenges that should be leveraged 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 and pricing out full-time residents and the local workforce. While new high-end 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 challenge created by this snowballing 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 current growth—escalating land values and rising construction costs, coupled with the Town's outdated development regulations—are disproportionately favoring construction of luxury developments and amenities, over providing locally affordable housing and community-based goods and services. As a result, critically needed community infrastructure—such as affordable housing, locally-owned businesses, and essential goods and services—continue to be undersupplied and are slowly eroding out of the economy.

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 continue to thrive.



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



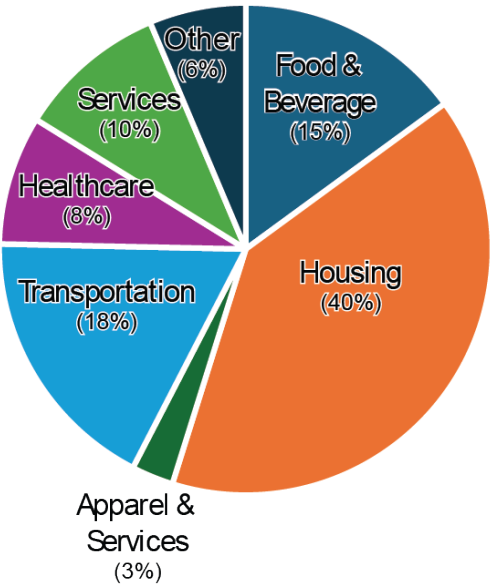
Crested Butte is facing...

...An economic paradox

The economic market study conducted for the CP revealed a striking “economic paradox”—while the local economy appears strong, with taxable sales growing at 6.7% annually, residents’ purchasing power is shrinking. The typical household spends 18% of income on transportation, 15% on food, and 40% on housing, far exceeding the national housing burden threshold of 30%. The rising cost of living and lack of affordable housing weaken economic resilience, forcing many to live farther from work, reducing quality of life and community cohesion.

With challenge comes opportunity

Addressing affordability requires more than just addressing housing. The CP takes a holistic approach, integrating community-serving housing, businesses, and nonprofits with affordable transportation options. By concentrating these elements within Crested Butte—where transit, infrastructure, and walkability already exist—the plan aims to lower household costs, reduce transportation burdens, and ease financial pressures, shifting the trajectory of the affordability crisis.



Crested Butte's Typical Household Expenditures. 2024.

...A very concentrated economy

Crested Butte’s economy is heavily reliant on tourism and serving part-time residents. 67% of total economic activity in the Town and 50% of the North Gunnison Valley is estimated to be from accommodation and food services, which primarily cater to tourists and part-time residents.

Meanwhile, essential goods and services—such as trades, education, and childcare—contribute minimally, highlighting a shortage of businesses that support daily community needs. Rising land values and construction costs threaten these businesses further, as many owners face retirement or closure due to economic pressures. This dependence on tourism and serving part-time residents not only makes the economy vulnerable to seasonal fluctuations but also risks displacing the very businesses that sustain the local workforce.

With challenge comes opportunity

The CP proposes a regulatory framework that preserves space for community-serving businesses and ensures economic resilience. Strategies include regulating commercial unit sizes, introducing incentives and deed restrictions, and exploring Town-led programs such as subsidized rents or incubator spaces for emerging community-serving businesses. By fostering economic diversification, the CP can help sustain essential services and strengthen Crested Butte’s long-term economic stability.



Crested Butte's economy is heavily reliant on tourism, particularly accomodation and food services.

...A decline of full-time community

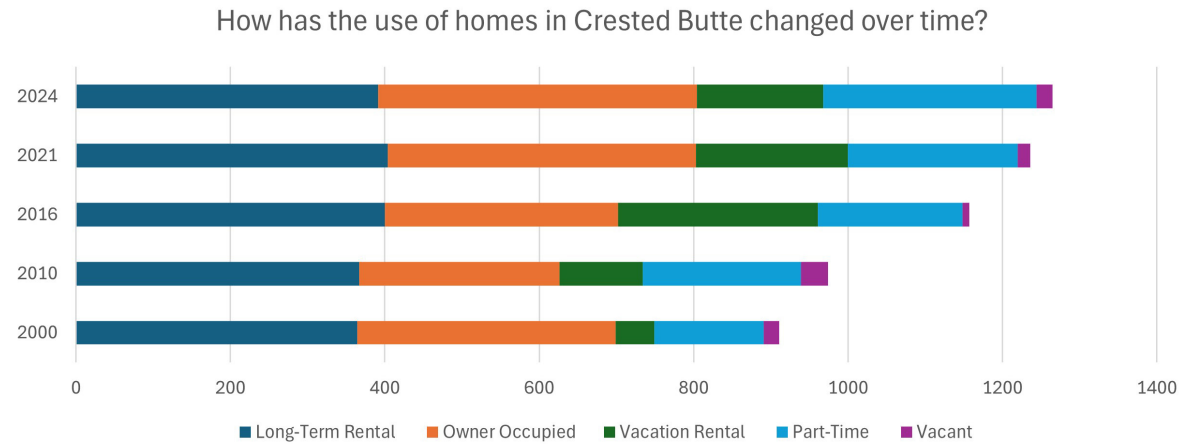
Crested Butte’s full-time occupancy rate has dropped from 80% in 2000 to 64% today, according to a local census—down from 65% in 2021. While higher than many mountain towns, this decline is concerning.

Many long-time residents who bought homes when prices were lower now face rising essential commodity prices and property taxes on fixed incomes with limited downsizing options. If they sell, homes are often purchased by wealthier buyers who may not live or work full-time in Crested Butte, further driving up property values and reducing housing availability 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 retaining and growing the full-time community, recognizing the benefits of a stable workforce, engaged local citizenry, and stronger volunteer networks. Expanding diverse affordable housing options is key—addressing the needs of essential workers, seasonal employees, new families, and retirees. Different areas present opportunities for ADUs, multi-family units, and mixed-use apartments with varied bedroom counts.

To ease pressures on existing homeowners, the CP also explores strategies like incentivizing affordable ADUs and creating micro-lots through subdivision on parcels that can accomodate them to generate income or provide downsizing options. These initiatives could help longtime residents stay in Crested Butte while maintaining affordability and community stability.



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



Crested Butte's neighborhoods are becoming increasingly bifurcated, with deed-restricted areas maintaining full-time residency, while some free-market neighborhoods are witnessing a decline in year-round residents.



Crested Butte is facing...
...A hamster wheel of affordable housing development

Since the late 1980s, Crested Butte has proactively developed affordable housing, from deed restricted ADU incentives to large-scale projects, ensuring 26% of its housing stock is deed-restricted for local workers and long-term rentals (soon to be 29% with current projects under construction). Yet, demand continues to outpace supply, and the Town cannot build its way out of this crisis.

A 2024 Housing Needs Assessment underscores the challenge, projecting that the North Gunnison Valley needs 545-650 units by 2029 to address rental shortages, unfilled jobs, workforce turnover, and job growth. While projects like Mineral Point (34 units, 2025), Paradise Park (14 units, 2025), and Whetstone (255 units, 2026) will help, the current reliance on public funding is unsustainable. As the free market

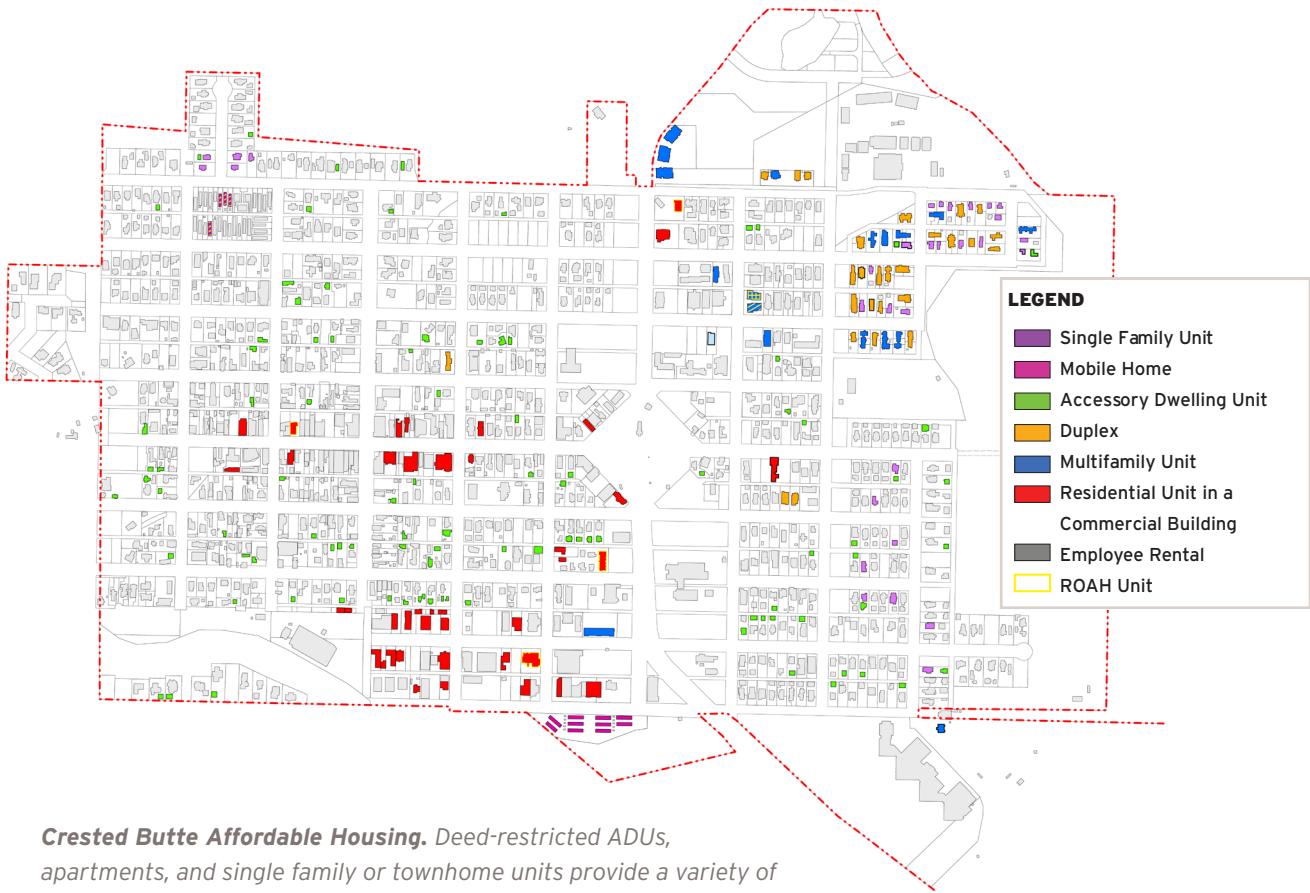
prioritizes luxury development, local governments bear the burden, creating a cycle that is increasingly difficult to break.

With challenge comes opportunity

While the Town will remain a key player in community development, it must leverage its regulations to encourage private-sector participation. Performance-based zoning incentives—such as increased height or density in exchange for affordable housing—can help expand supply at little to no cost to the Town.

Additionally, strengthening tools like the Resident Occupied Affordable Housing (ROAH) policy can require developers to mitigate housing impacts by building units or contributing funds based on the jobs created by the development.

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 or townhome units provide a variety of affordable housing typologies.

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

Crested Butte's current development code, coupled with rising property values and construction costs, is driving development toward luxury amenities instead of addressing the Town's essential needs. The zoning code, which heavily favors single-family homes, has resulted in high-cost developments catering primarily to high-income buyers rather than the long-term local community.

For example, the R1 single-family zoning covers 60% of the Town's developable land, permitting only single-family homes and ADUs or duplexes through a conditional use process. This has led to the construction of large, expensive homes—often priced at over \$1,000 per sq ft—with typical homes like a 2,800-sq ft house costing around \$2.8 million, and a 450-sq ft ADU making the total \$3.5 million.

The emerging homogeneity of maximized, large homes are a departure from Crested Butte's historic housing stock, creating housing that is

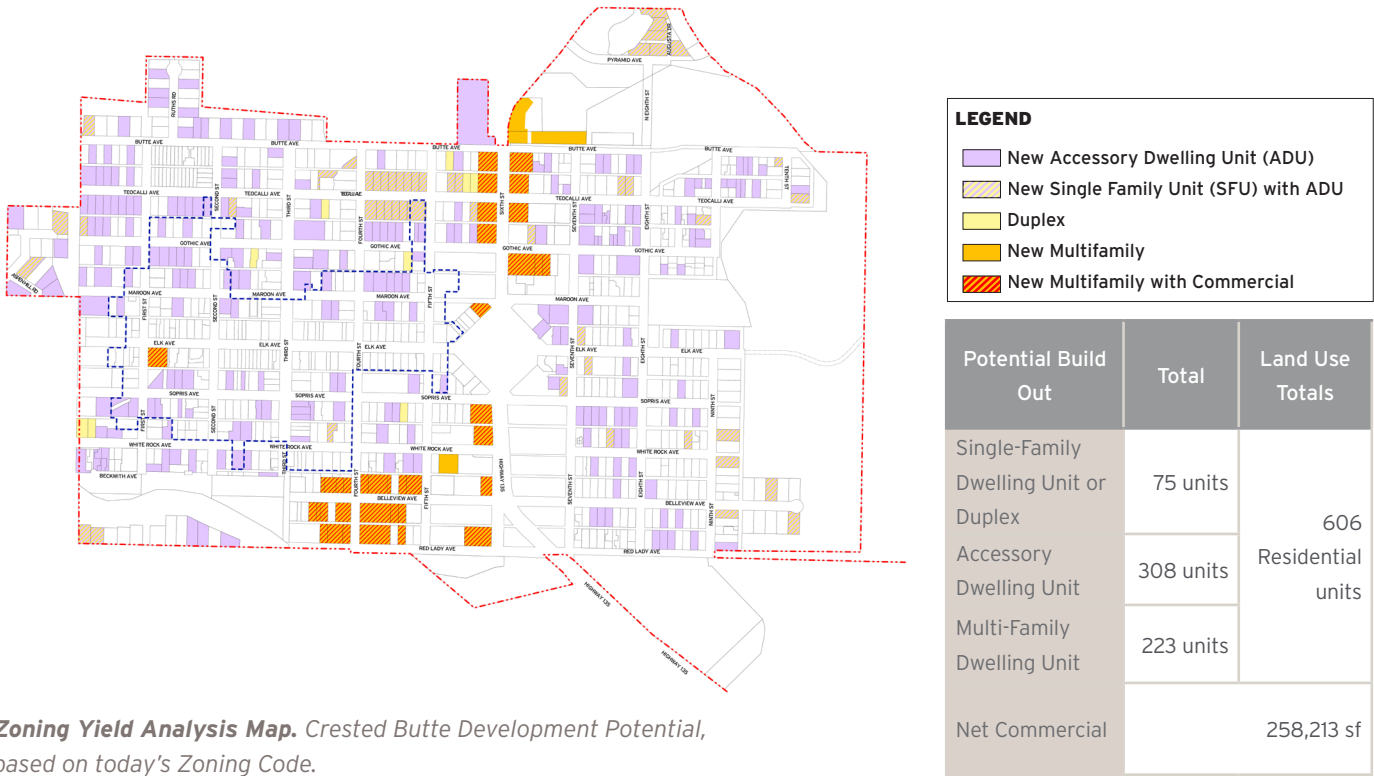
both unaffordable for the local community and incompatible with the Town's character. **The issue isn't merely the number of units but the type of housing the zoning allows.**

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

Though Crested Butte may seem fully built out, the zoning code still allows for up to 655 more residential units and 366,503 sq. ft. of commercial space. **This raises a critical question: Can this potential development align with the community's vision?**

With challenge comes opportunity

The CP provides a powerful opportunity to update the zoning code to align with the Town's vision, ensuring that future development meets community needs and supports both economic vitality and livability. By reshaping the regulatory framework, Crested Butte can ensure a more balanced and livable future for the community to thrive.



Zoning Yield Analysis Map. Crested Butte Development Potential, based on today's Zoning Code.



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. The 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.



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

With challenge comes opportunity

The Community Compass and CP aren’t about imposing a top-down vision; they’ve been shaped from the ground up, based on input from over 2,500 community members—including full-time residents, part-timers, visitors, and people from throughout the Gunnison Valley. Moving forward, the Town will continue to prioritize transparent, inclusive planning, listening closely to community feedback. This collaborative approach allows Crested Butte to navigate future changes in a way that aligns with its values, turning the fear of change into an opportunity to shape an innovative yet authentic future.

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

Understanding Crested Butte’s challenges and opportunities is the first step in creating a future vision through the CP. To guide this vision, it’s crucial to define what success looks like on the community’s terms. Clear success measures ensure the plan reflects local values and aspirations, building trust and aligning decisions with community priorities.

In line with the Community Compass framework, success measures were developed by identifying how the community’s values—**authentic, connected, accountable, and bold**—align with the CP’s goals and challenges, establishing meaningful criteria for success.

Success Measures

- ✓ 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.

LIVING BY OUR VALUES

Some examples of how Crested Butte’s values relate to this plan (and taken 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 CP vision is centered on preserving the unique character and spirit that make Crested Butte, Crested Butte.**

Crafting a Vision

Building on Crested Butte's challenges, opportunities, and core values, this chapter focuses on creating a clear vision for the community'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 promote ongoing dialogue between full-time residents, part-time residents, and visitors, helping to ensure 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 on Belleview or Sixth Street and not in the rural corridor. This new development is near existing infrastructure, transit, and services, preserving open spaces and agricultural lands as buffers to maintain the Valley’s town and country feel 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 at any stage of life have the opportunity 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 a polka dance, slowing down for the cattle drive, and celebrating the things that remind us 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.**

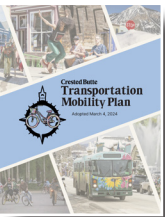
Picture a community that builds on its legacy of environmental stewardship to become a leader in climate action, proactively preparing for the changes ahead. It prioritizes energy efficiency, with buildings designed to minimize consumption, while renewable energy sources power everyday life.



When goals seemingly conflict, but work together

While the Community Compass goals often complement one another, there are instances where they 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 conflicts were taken into account to minimize the degree of conflict while addressing all the critical needs of the community, including those identified in this CP.

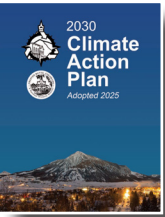
Picture a Crested Butte where this CP, the TMP, HPP, and CAP proactively work together to create a thriving, interconnected community:



The **Transportation Mobility Plan** envisions a town where efficient transit systems connect the community and reduce reliance on cars. By reimagining parking, creating more affordable housing, and allowing the workforce to live closer to their jobs, 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 of mining-era buildings and the early recreation era are preserved, maintaining Crested Butte’s charm and cultural identity. Meanwhile, outside these historic districts, more flexible design guidelines allow for modern design that complements the Town’s roots, allowing for new, more affordable, buildings to enhance Crested Butte’s architectural vernacular rather than disrupt it.



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



The Community Plan Vision

A THRIVING CRESTED BUTTE

Preserving the unique character and spirit that makes Crested Butte, 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 mixed-use corridors, so we can continue to enjoy the open spaces and breathtaking views around us, and find charm in our small-scale neighborhoods, all while being able to easily move around comfortably by boots, bikes, or bus.

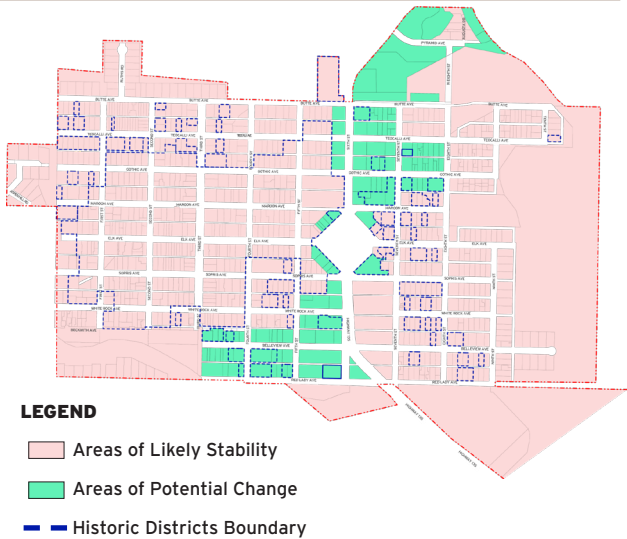
The heart of town will pulse with local businesses and homes above, creating vibrant corridors where starting a business or renting an apartment isn't a dream, but an attainable possibility. Residential neighborhoods will grow gradually while retaining their small-scale and historic charm, with a mix 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 other public venues, 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 can continue to be a place to make a real home—where you don't need wealth to get started, where the community always has your back, 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 the Town's vision. The vision and map will frame Crested Butte's land uses within the context of **Areas of Change** and **Areas of Stability**, which are further explored in the next chapter.

- **Areas of Stability** are the Town's built-out neighborhoods and historic districts with distinct character that the community cherishes and wants to preserve. In these areas, small tweaks to the zoning code can help achieve the CP vision, while keeping the essence of what makes these places feel like home intact.
- **Areas of Change** are those with potential for significant future development or redevelopment, offering opportunities to intentionally shape the community to match its vision. By making thoughtful adjustments in these areas, spaces can be created that align with the community's core values, without compromising the unique character that makes Crested Butte so special.



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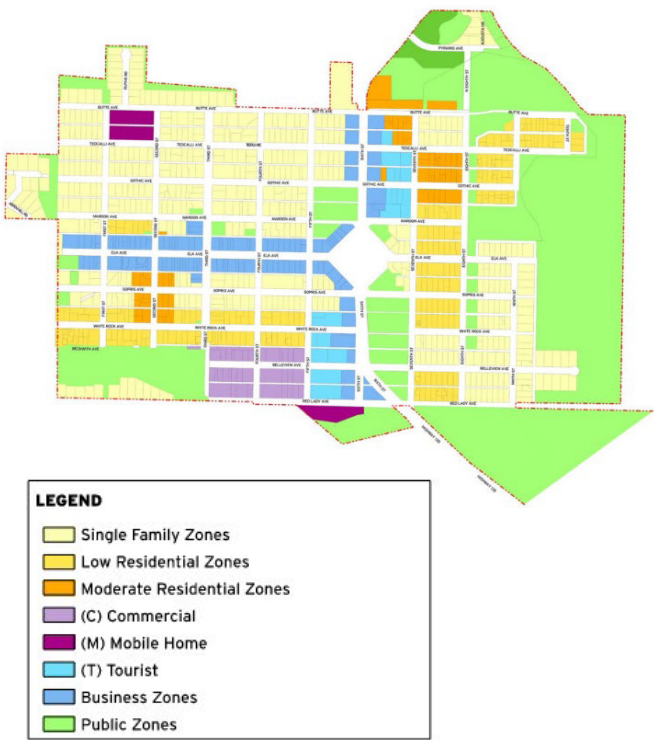


Unlocking Potential

Enabling the Community Plan through Policy

The CP vision is firmly rooted in the values and strategic goals of the Community Compass—but a vision alone isn't enough. The real challenge lies in transforming that vision into reality by leveraging the Town's policies and regulations to shape the future of Crested Butte.

This chapter examines how policy tools—particularly the zoning code—can be used strategically to unlock opportunities and guide the free market in a way that aligns with the community's aspirations.



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

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

About Zoning and its Influence

Zoning is the framework that towns and cities use to partition areas, or zones, into different land uses. It is a direct reflection of a community's values and one of the most powerful tools to strengthen what makes Crested Butte, Crested Butte.

The Town's first zoning ordinance was adopted in 1961 and has since evolved into the comprehensive zoning code found in Chapter 16 of the municipal code. Today, Crested Butte has 23 distinct zoning districts, each designed with specific goals to influence the look, feel, and function of that district. While Town Council is responsible for adopting zoning regulations, BOZAR (the Board of Zoning and Architectural Review) administers the code, ensuring that development aligns with the Town's standards.

Yet, as outlined in earlier discussions on challenges and opportunities, the current development code—combined with skyrocketing property values and rising construction costs—has pushed new development toward higher-end amenities rather than addressing the community's essential needs.

Now, the key question is: How can the zoning code be reimagined as a tool to guide development in a way that supports the community's vision?



Zoning Can Make Things Really Hard...

Development is inevitable—under the Town’s current zoning code, entitlements are already in place for up to 655 additional residential units and 366,503 square feet of new commercial space. While full buildout may happen gradually—or not at all—the potential exists.

Zoning has the power to shape this growth, but it can also make development unnecessarily difficult. Inconsistent rules, overlapping regulations, and excessive red tape can slow projects down, creating barriers to progress. However, as land prices rise, these regulatory challenges are less apt to stop luxury development—they stop the types of development the community needs most.

Everyone must follow the same rules, but projects with greater financial resources can afford to navigate delays, absorb higher costs, and wait out the system. Meanwhile, affordable and community-oriented projects struggle the most, making it harder to achieve a balanced and sustainable future for Crested Butte.

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

Zoning doesn’t have to be a regulatory hurdle—it has the potential to be a powerful force for good. When thoughtfully applied, it can shape livable, thriving neighborhoods and commercial districts that align with Crested Butte’s vision for the future.

Zoning influences the very fabric of a community, guiding how spaces look, feel, and function. Elements like building orientation, size, and placement define the character of a street, shaping inviting public spaces that honor Crested Butte’s historic charm or creating walkable corridors that foster social connections and active lifestyles.

Beyond aesthetics, zoning plays a crucial role in land use planning. When applied strategically, it can encourage vibrant, mixed-use areas where people can live, work, and play within the same neighborhood. By allowing a diverse mix of housing, shops, restaurants, and small businesses, zoning supports the local economy, reduces reliance on cars, and enhances the convenience and dynamism of daily life.

When harnessed effectively, zoning is more than a set of rules—it’s a framework for building a strong, connected, and thriving community that truly reflects Crested Butte’s values.

Don’t let Perfection be the Enemy of Progress

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

This effort won’t resolve every community concern nor predict every future challenge, but it can guide the market in a direction that better reflects Crested Butte’s vision. Perfection isn’t the goal—progress is. By focusing on intentional, meaningful adjustments, the zoning code can become a catalyst for a future that stays true to Crested Butte’s identity while remaining flexible and adaptable 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 TMP 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—and in turn- the strength of the community.



The Community Plan Toolbox

THE Y AXIS: LEVEL OF RESTRICTION

The Top: Loosening Restrictions

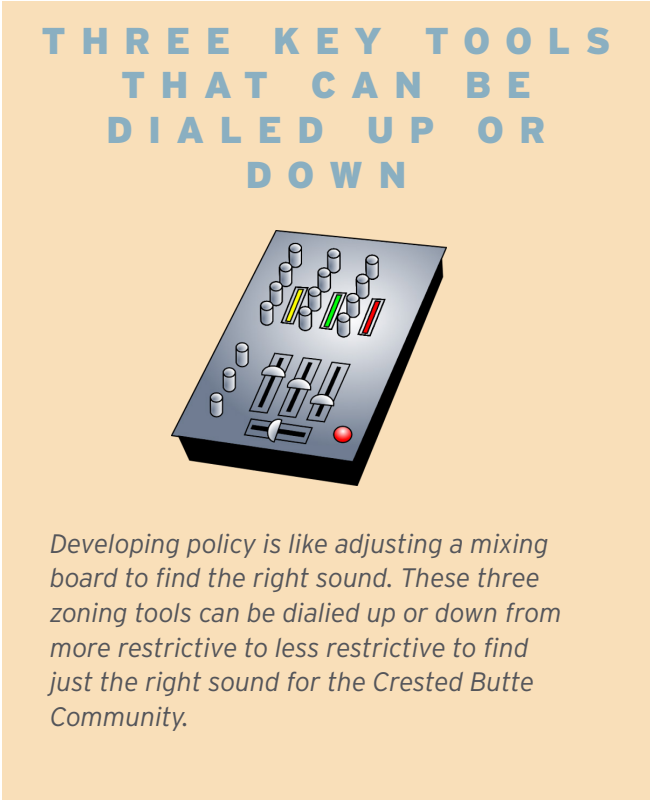
At the most flexible top end, zoning entitlements allow, by right, more uses, increased density, height, or reduced parking and setback requirements. While efficient, in Crested Butte's market, simply adding density doesn't guarantee affordability. Without strategic safeguards, new supply often leans toward luxury development, driven by high land values and vacation home demand.

The Middle: Introducing Performance-Based Zoning

Performance-based zoning ties incentives to public benefits by creating a balance between flexibility and restrictions. Developers can receive bonuses like more Floor Area Ratio (FAR), additional units, or relaxed parking and setback rules in exchange for contributions like deed-restricted housing and/or commercial spaces. Projects that don't provide these contributions follow the base zoning rules. Performance-based zoning offers a balance of flexibility and accountability, functioning similarly to negotiated Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) that emphasize public benefits.

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

At the most restrictive bottom end of the mixing board, Crested Butte's current zoning is largely prescriptive and cautious (illustrated in the Toolbox graphic with an orange bar and circles). While this approach ensures consistency, it can limit creativity, slow responses to changing needs, and make it harder to diversify housing options. Even within this framework, streamlining regulations, reducing inconsistencies, and clarifying processes can improve zoning's effectiveness and improve approval processes.

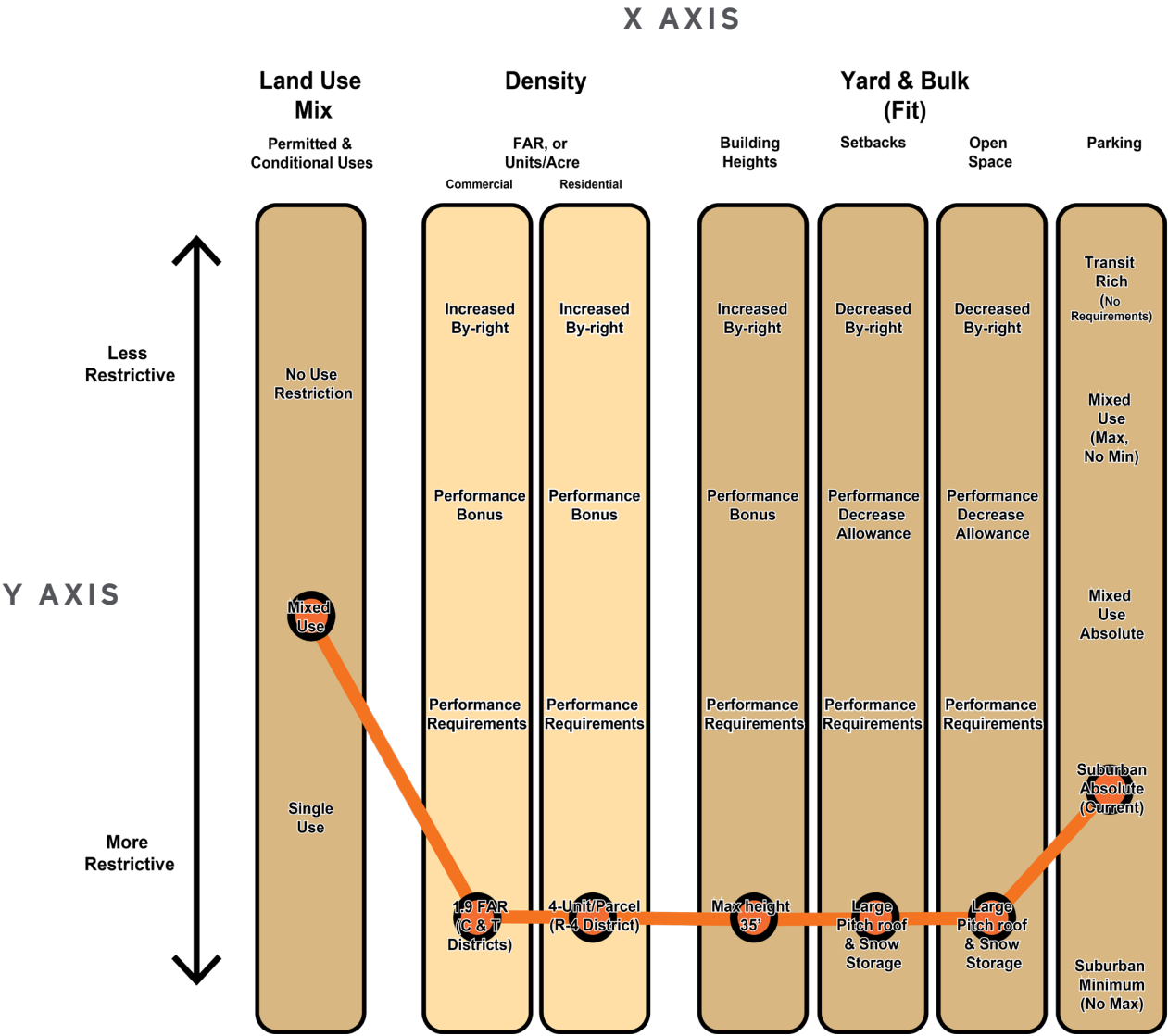


THE X AXIS: ZONING TOOLS

Land Use Mix: What Uses are Allowed?

Land use regulations determine whether residential, commercial, or mixed-use development is permitted in each zone. Crested Butte's zoning code allows permitted and conditional uses—permitted uses are approved by right, while conditional uses require a public hearing and BOZAR approval based on neighborhood compatibility. If a use isn't listed, it's not allowed.

While some areas allow mixed uses, over 60% of the Town's developable land is zoned for single-family housing. This limits diversity in land use and doesn't fully meet the needs of a dynamic community. Revisiting these regulations could create opportunities for a more diverse building stock that better aligns with Crested Butte's vision.



Density: How Much of the Land Use is Allowed?

Density determines how much of the allowed use is permitted in an area. In Crested Butte, commercial density is measured by Floor Area Ratio (FAR), while residential density is based on units per parcel. FAR reflects the relationship between a building's total floor area and the parcel size.

Crested Butte's current low-density allowances, paired with high land and construction costs, have fueled the rise of expensive single-family homes, worsening affordability, and reducing full-time residency. Strategic density adjustments could increase and diversify housing options, but any density increases should be tied to public benefits, like workforce housing, or it will simply fuel more market-rate luxury development.

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

Fit determines how buildings interact with their surroundings, including yard (setbacks and open space), bulk (height and mass), and parking requirements. In Crested Butte, regulations like setbacks and snow storage requirements reflect the Town's snowy climate and should be retained.

However, some current standards—like parking minimums—are more suited to suburban, car-dependent areas and may limit desired development potential. The TMP suggests leveraging walkability, transit access, and on-street parking to reduce minimum parking requirements and free up land for community-serving housing. Similarly, adjustments to height and roof type regulations in non-historic areas, as recommended in the HPP, could encourage more affordable, innovative housing.



A Deeper Dive on Parking

Most parking regulations are based on national models rather than local conditions, requiring new developments—whether residential, commercial, or mixed-use—to meet rigid minimums. While intended to ensure availability, these guidelines don’t always reflect actual demand or need, especially in walkable, transit-friendly areas like Crested Butte. Excess parking takes up valuable land that could be used for housing, recreation, snow storage, or public spaces.

By reassessing current requirements, the Town can allow developers to determine the right balance—ensuring enough parking for their market needs without unnecessary mandates. Experience shows that when given flexibility, developers aim for a “Goldilocks” solution—not too much parking, which increases costs, and not too little, which could hurt marketability.

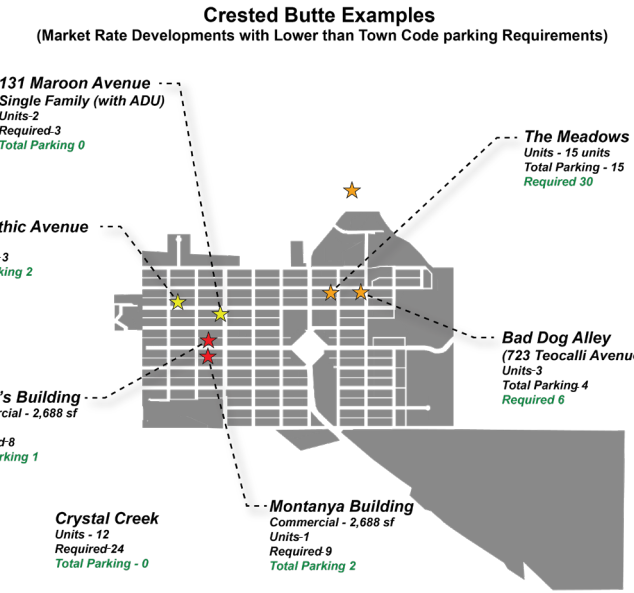
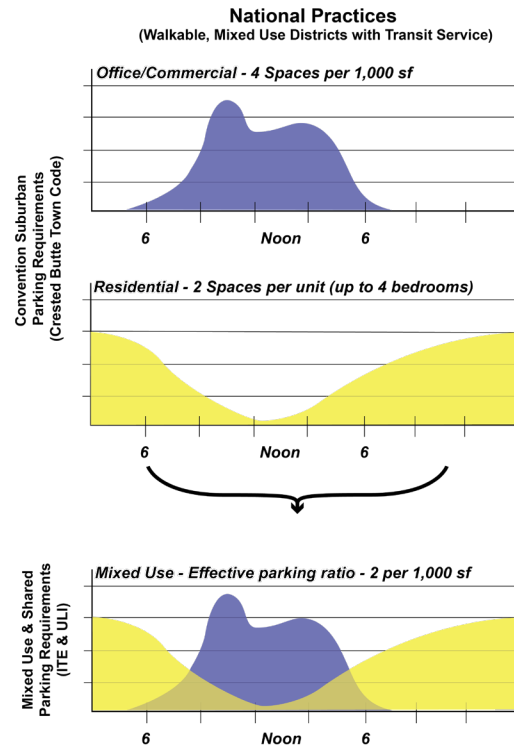
Leveraging Mixed-Use: Efficiency and Flexibility

One of the most effective ways to optimize parking is through mixed-use development. Mixed-use developments naturally balance parking demand, with residential spaces needing parking at night and commercial uses requiring it during the day. Shared

parking strategies reduce overall space needs without sacrificing convenience. Aligning with Crested Butte’s TMP, investing in park-and-ride facilities, on-street parking, and transit options can further ease parking pressures while fostering a more connected and less car-dependent community.

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 services. These real-life examples provide valuable insights into how parking requirements can be rethought in more pedestrian-friendly, transit-oriented areas, creating 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.

Example Alternative Requirements

The Town’s TMP identifies opportunities to optimize parking requirements, making better use of the town’s existing on-street parking capacity. The TMP recommends reducing parking requirements in this CP with the following considerations (see the next page for a specific table):

- Residential Developments:** Given an abundance of on-street parking in most areas of town, reducing on-site parking requirements for new residential developments is recommended. This would allow property owners to repurpose valuable land as a development bonus for community housing (for example, ADUs) instead of parking.
- Lodging and Light Industrial Uses:** Parking requirements for lodging and industrial uses should remain unchanged due to their higher demand. However, it’s suggested that the payment-in-lieu of parking fee be increased to reflect current construction costs and to incentivize deed-restricted commercial spaces. This could also fund multi-modal transportation and parking management initiatives.
- Restaurant, Retail, Office, and Entertainment Uses:** For commercial spaces like restaurants, retail, and offices, a payment-in-lieu of parking option is recommended (with exemptions for deed-restricted spaces), replacing the need for on-site parking. This would create funding for public transit and other transportation options, improving access for both customers and employees.
- Payment-in-Lieu Fee Update:** The current \$13,000 payment-in-lieu fee for each required parking space does not align with today’s parking construction costs. It’s recommended to adjust this fee accordingly and consider exemptions for deed-restricted commercial spaces.

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.

Additional Considerations: Structured and Underground Parking

Development regulations specify the types of parking allowed, including surface, structured, and underground parking. The Town offers a FAR bonus for underground parking in the Sixth Street corridor, where existing stormwater infrastructure supports the dewatering needed for underground garages. Outside this area, dewatering would place undue strain on the Town’s limited stormwater systems.

The high cost of structured and underground parking drives projects toward luxury development to recoup expenses. Additionally, Crested Butte’s high water table makes underground parking challenging, as extensive pumping of water and snowmelt adds both development and operating costs, impacting wastewater and stormwater systems.

While structured parking doesn’t affect the wastewater system, the stormwater management they require is crucial and expensive. Developers must connect to existing infrastructure if nearby or build new connections, and the Town would need to handle the long-term maintenance of this infrastructure.

To promote affordable development, the Town should consider eliminating the FAR bonus for underground parking and consider prohibiting underground and structured parking. Instead, the focus could be to optimize existing parking resources for more sustainable and equitable development.



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

An Alternative Future...
Adjusting the Toolbox

The following pages will explore how the CP toolbox can be strategically adapted to align with Crested Butte’s vision for both the areas of stability and change.

The Town’s core district and residential neighborhoods (areas of stability), integral to Crested Butte’s character, will require thoughtful adjustments to preserve their charm while fostering greater resident presence and diversity.

In contrast, areas of change like Belleview Avenue, the Sixth Street Corridor, and the Slate River Annexation present opportunities for performance-based zoning that can incentivize vibrant, mixed-use development and ensure identified public benefits.

This approach aims to balance preserving Crested Butte’s unique character while accommodating its evolving needs and vision for the future.

Crested Butte today.



Crested Butte with the CP’s considerations.



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

Change in Crested Butte will be gradual—it’s important to keep that in mind. The development timeline is shaped by various economic, cultural, and social factors. Just as the Town evolved from its mining roots to a recreational hub, future change will occur incrementally.

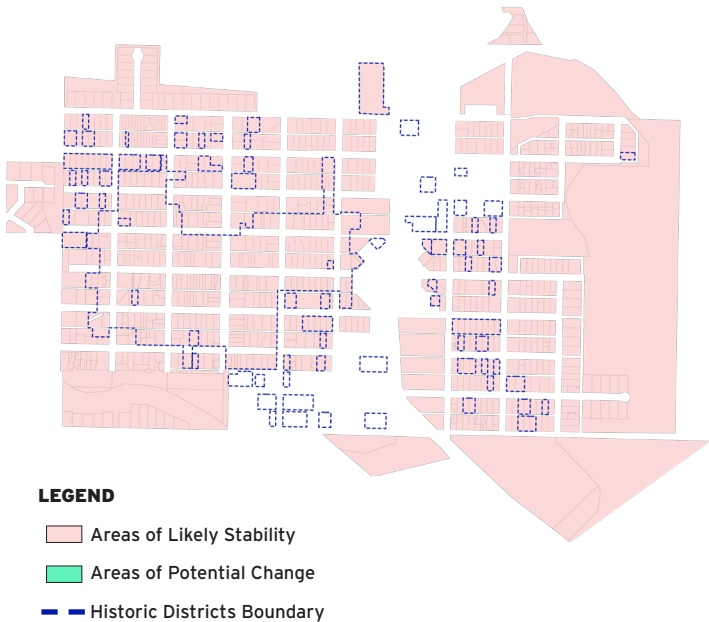
Revising the zoning code won’t result in an overnight transformation. Development happens gradually, driven by market trends and the goals of individual landowners. For instance, these factors and new zoning incentives might lead to 4-5 single-family homes and 2-3 accessory dwelling units (ADUs) annually, with 0-2 commercial developments every five years.

The models below illustrate how these changes might eventually take shape. While the plan envisions potential growth, these projections will evolve at Crested Butte’s own unique pace, staying true to the community’s character.



Areas of Stability:

Crested Butte's Core & Neighborhoods



A Vision for the Future

Crested Butte’s historic core and 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 would 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 on 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 existing lots into individually owned micro-units. 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 increasing full-time housing needs.

Balancing Market Realities with Community Needs

Market Opportunities & Constraints

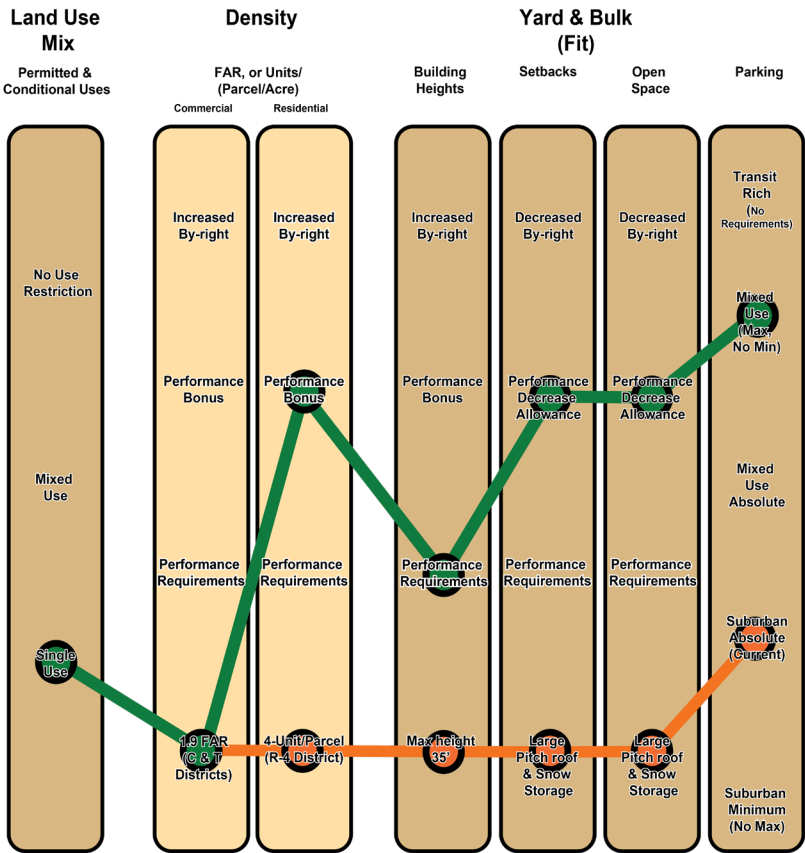
- **Vacant Lots:** There are 40 vacant lots in the Town’s residential zones today. Many property owners desire additional square footage beyond their current maximum allowances, but at higher price points, few are willing to deal with the responsibilities of being a landlord.
- **Existing Lots:** There are 308 lots in the Town’s residential zones that could theoretically fit an ADU today. Homeowners could realize income 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.

Community Needs

The number of ADUs constructed annually has decreased and the necessary rents that the local workforce can afford no longer provide significant enough of an income to finance the cost of constructing an ADU. Through a combination of zoning incentivizes which both create space and allow more development entitlements, 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 these needed ADUs.

Leveraging The CP Toolbox

- **Land Use:** R1-3 Residential zones will mostly stay single-use, but the zoning rules could be adjusted to make it easier to build two ADUs instead of one. One of these ADUs would still need to be deed restricted as a long-term rental.
- **Density:** To encourage higher residential density outside the historic core, homeowners could be allowed to build two ADUs (instead of just one, as allowed now) if one of them is rented out long-term.
- **Fit:** Setbacks (how far a building is from property lines), open space, and parking requirements could be relaxed for properties with two ADUs, using on-street parking and flat roofs outside of the historic core to save space.
- Also, for homes with an ADU, certain areas like accessory buildings, garages, and basements would not count against the home’s maximum allowable size (FAR). This would give more usable space while keeping the house’s scale in check. Homes without ADUs wouldn’t get these benefits, and garages would still count toward the maximum size limit and basements could be prohibited, helping encourage ADU construction.

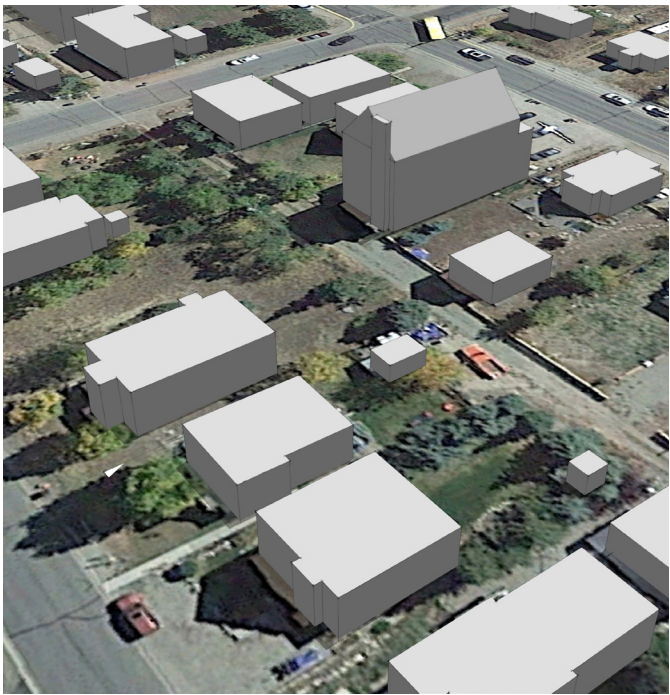


Neighborhood Toolbox. The Green line demonstrates the changes under consideration.

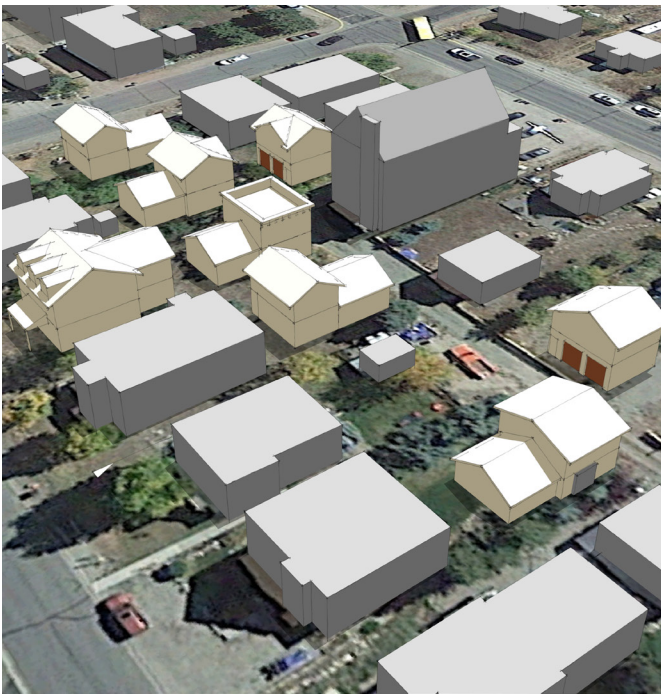


Additional Considerations

- **Evaluate Subdivision of 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 interest in building one to sell part of their lot to others who can build smaller housing units. Additionally, existing ADUs could be subdivided into condominiums for more local homeownership opportunities. Each lot would require case-by-case evaluation for utilities, easements, access, and safety.
- **Evaluate Minimum Unit Size:** Assess the feasibility of allowing residential units smaller than 400 sq ft where appropriate, to expand housing options while maintaining livability and neighborhood compatibility.
- **Evaluate Home Occupation:** Reevaluate the definition of home occupation to allow more affordable local businesses to operate from homes, without negatively impacting the neighborhood.
- **Evaluate Mobile Home Zones:** Allow permanent foundations and/or stick built structures in the mobile home zone, with requirements to meet the scale and form of the existing neighborhood, in exchange for deed restrictions, ensuring that this area continues to provide affordable housing ownership options.
- **Reevaluate the R3C Zone:** Reassess the R3C zone to better reflect its role as a mixed-use transition area between residential and commercial uses, rather than a higher-density residential zone.
- **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 alley access and snow removal. Addressing these responsibilities will be essential to support increased use of alleys for housing while maintaining charm, accessibility, and safety during winter months.



Digital Model of an Existing Alley.



Digital Model of an Alley with Potential ADUs.

ADU Incentive Program

Incentives for Providing Deed Restricted ADU

- Reduced 10’ Front Setback
- 2nd ADU or Accessory Structure (with at least one required to be long-term rental)
- Garage Area excluded from Maximum FAR Calculation
- Basements could be allowed and excluded from Maximum FAR Calculation (and prohibited or counted if an ADU is not built)

Sample Configurations

A diagram showing two sample configurations for ADU placement. The left configuration shows a 'Detached Accessory Structure' and 'ADU 1 over Garage' next to a 'Primary Structure'. The right configuration shows 'ADU 1 over ADU 2' and a 'Garage' next to a 'Primary Structure'. Both configurations are situated along an 'Alley'. Red lines connect the labels to the corresponding structures in the diagram.

Detached Accessory Structure

ADU 1 over Garage

Primary Structure

ADU 1 over ADU 2

Garage

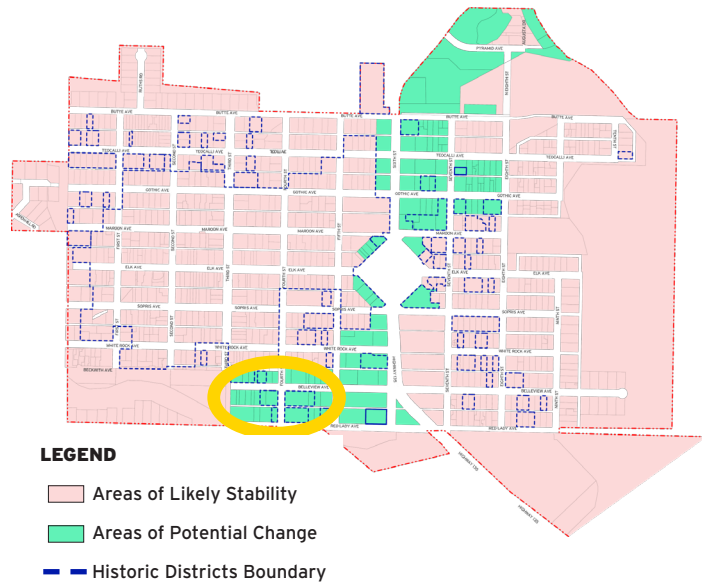
Alley



A conceptual rendering of the Alley above.



Areas of Change: Belleview Avenue



A Vision for the Future

Belleview Avenue will evolve into a vibrant corridor blending light industrial grit 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 mixed-use 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, like 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 49 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 needs. Additionally, zoning can be used to enable this corridor to become an improved pedestrian experience, including providing space for a future sidewalk connection and on-street parallel parking.



Digital model view of Belleview today.



Digital model view of Belleview with potential zoning changes.

Balancing Market Realities with Community Needs

Market Opportunities & Constraints

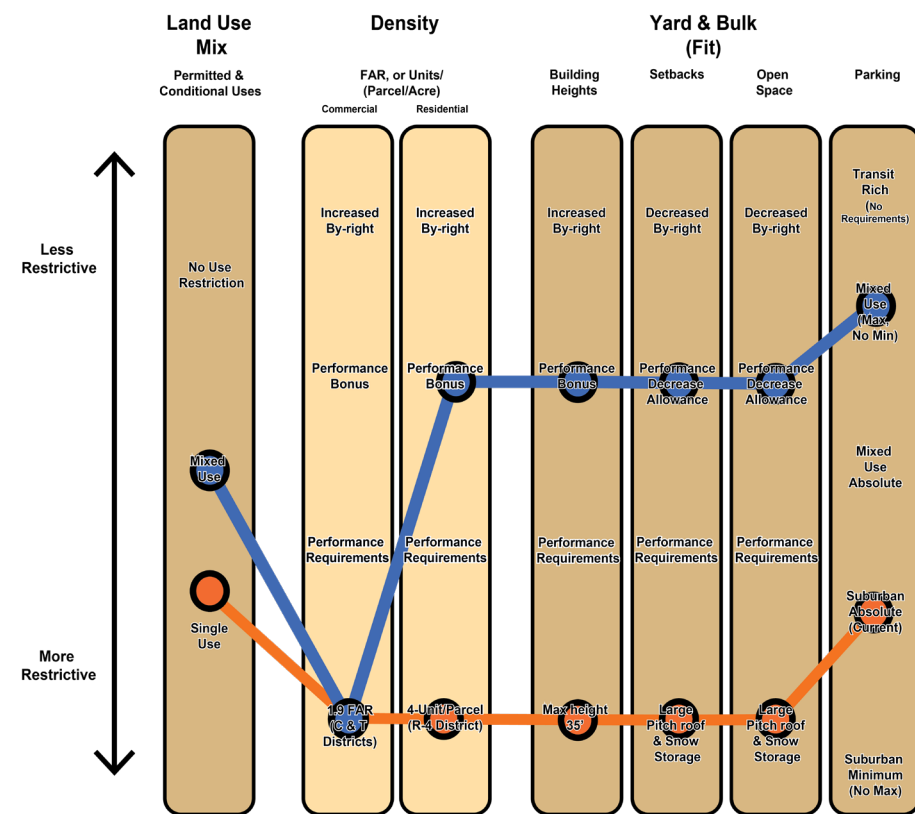
- **Vacant Lots:** Belleview Avenue currently has 40 vacant lots, each limiting residential use to three deed-restricted housing units, occupying no more than 50% of the property. These restrictions limit mixed-use potential and hinder investment due to high land prices and construction costs. Expanding mixed-use allowances could make these lots more marketable, encouraging investment in both commercial and residential projects. A balance of market-rate and deed-restricted housing could leverage market forces while addressing local housing needs.
- **Existing Lots:** Many lots on Belleview Avenue may soon face redevelopment pressures or business turnover. While the Town cannot control when or why businesses leave, updating development codes in advance can help shape future projects in line with the community’s vision. Clear standards for redevelopment will help maintain the character of the corridor.
- **Commercial Uses:** The lack of drive-by or walk-by traffic on Belleview Avenue presents challenges for restaurants and retail businesses. While a small-scale restaurant could work, expanding similar commercial uses could lead to gentrification and displacement. To preserve the area as the Town’s commercial core, zoning is encouraged to prioritize light industrial and service businesses, and mixed-use housing, which can drive investment and vibrancy.

Community Needs

The community requires a variety of housing options, from apartments to single-family homes, distributed throughout Crested Butte. While living in a light-industrial area may not appeal to all, mixed-use apartments can provide a critical part of the housing portfolio for those seeking proximity to jobs, services, and amenities. By adding thoughtfully designed mixed-use residential spaces on Belleview Avenue, the Town can meet housing needs without sacrificing the corridor’s commercial and light-industrial identity.



Leveraging The CP Toolbox



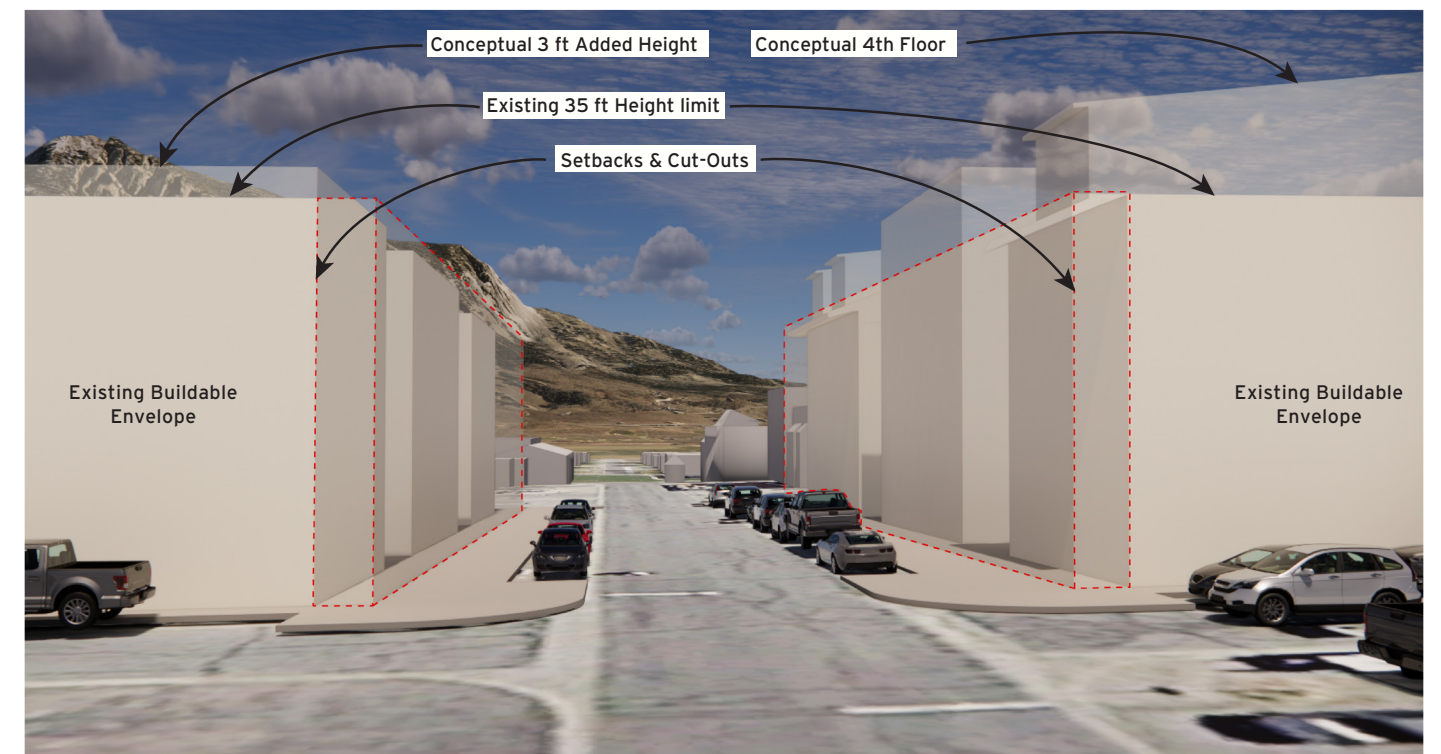
Bellevue Toolbox. The Purple line demonstrates the changes under consideration.

- **Land Use:** Bellevue Avenue's zoning should keep its focus on light industrial and service businesses while also allowing more residential development for mixed-use projects. Service businesses could include things like auto repair, sheet metal fabrication, printing, furniture making, or catering. Retail services could focus on local needs, like paint supplies and flooring, rather than tourism. This change would maintain the area as the Town's commercial hub while offering more housing options.
- **Density:** Performance-based incentives could enable and encourage developers to add more market-rate residential units in exchange for providing deed restricted housing or commercial spaces. These incentives would help balance market-rate and deed-restricted housing, supporting both housing and local commercial goals.
- **Fit:** Adjusting the fit standards could help new developments match the character of Bellevue Avenue while solving practical challenges and community needs. For example, buildings up to four stories (49 feet), which would include an additional 3 feet on the ground floor for commercial space, could be allowed on the south side, compared to the current 35 ft height limit. This would be possible because of the higher natural landscape of Gibson's ridge on the southside of Bellevue. On the north side, buildings could step down in height toward the Whiterock residential neighborhood. These height increases would be offered as performance bonuses for providing deed restricted housing or commercial spaces.
- 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.



A conceptual rendering of Bellevue, demonstrating the proposed performance-based height allowance.

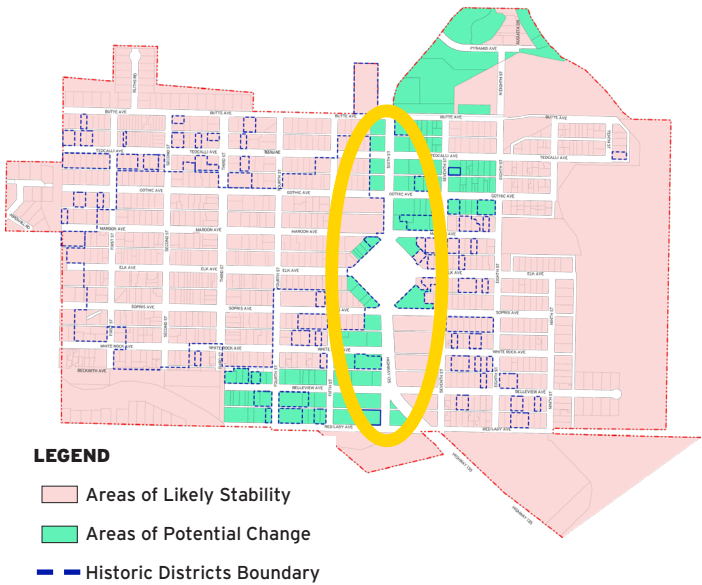
LEGEND	
—	Existing 35 ft height limit
- - -	Conceptual 38 ft height limit
- - -	Conceptual 49 ft height limit



A model view of Bellevue, demonstrating the proposed performance-based zoning change considerations.



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 or services 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

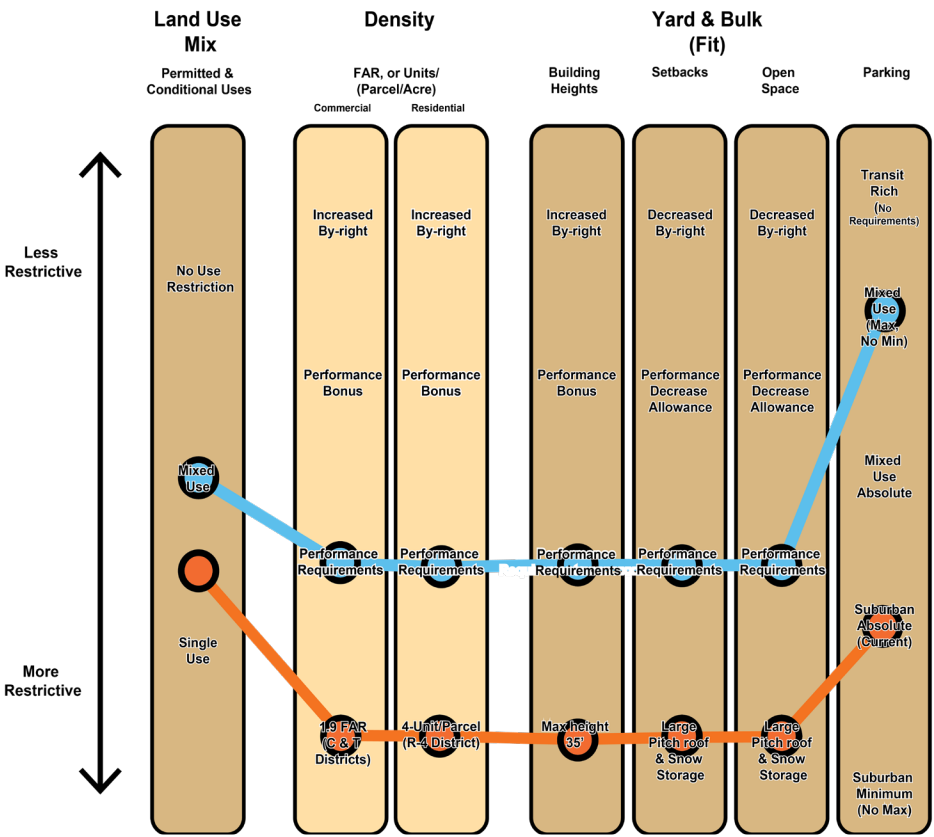
Market Opportunities and Constraints

- **Vacant Lots:** Sixth Street has 8 vacant parcels with significant potential for mixed-use development. 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 significant 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 desired character while accommodating growth. Clear standards will guide the integration of mixed-use spaces, balancing residential, commercial, and community needs.

Community Needs

Sixth Street presents an opportunity to provide diverse housing options while preserving spaces for small businesses and essential services. Mixed-use buildings with retail or services 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 CP Toolbox



Sixth Street Toolbox. The Blue line demonstrates the changes under consideration.



Leveraging The CP Toolbox (cont.)

- **Land Use:** The Sixth Street corridor should prioritize mixed-use zoning that blends retail, restaurants, and services with residential units. Unlike Bellevue Avenue’s focus on commercial and light industrial uses, Sixth Street should emphasize ground-floor businesses like restaurants, retail, and medical services, with residential units above, fostering a more pedestrian-friendly environment. Civic spaces such as a library, transit center, and visitor center could be integrated on Town-owned parcels along the corridor, enhancing the area’s vibrancy and serving the broader needs of the community.
- **Density:** To encourage development and attract diverse uses, residential density should be allowed as a performance bonus, permitting additional housing units beyond the current 50% maximum. Commercial space density should remain the same under existing FAR limits.
- **Fit:** New developments on Sixth Street should align with the corridor’s character while accommodating growth. A modest 3-foot height increase (from 35 to 38 feet) would allow for ground-floor retail with two stories of housing above, maintaining the corridor’s currently allowed scale and preserving views. Adjusting setbacks and parking requirements would maximize lot usage, balancing functionality with aesthetics. Mixed-use buildings should also be designed to prioritize pedestrian access and integrate seamlessly with future civic hubs, creating a more community-focused atmosphere.

Additional Considerations:

- **Zoning the 4-Way:** The Town-owned 4-Way area has great potential for community-serving uses (as regional park-and-rides are developed in the corridor), including mixed-use live/work spaces for local businesses, an expanded library, and a revamped transit and visitor services hub. Currently not zoned, the Town should designate this area as Public to enable a possible future transformation.
- **Evaluating the Tourist Zone:** The Tourist Zone, located along the northeast and southwest edges of the Sixth Street Corridor, currently provides space for visitor-related businesses like lodging and resorts. However, the current housing requirements—such as the mandate for 100% deed-restricted affordable housing or the 50% cap on residential use—limit residential development. The Town should reconsider these restrictions to balance the need for visitor accommodations with enhanced opportunities for affordable housing integration.
- **Evaluating the R4 Zone:** The R4 zone, which is the Town’s highest-density residential area, borders the Tourist Zone at the northeast corner of the Sixth Street Corridor. Although intended for higher-density residential use, the zone still allows single-family homes by right, which market trends often favor as the highest-use option. To ensure the R4 zone fulfills its intended purpose to provide a location for higher-density residential growth near transit and services, the Town should consider whether to continue allow single-family homes by right.

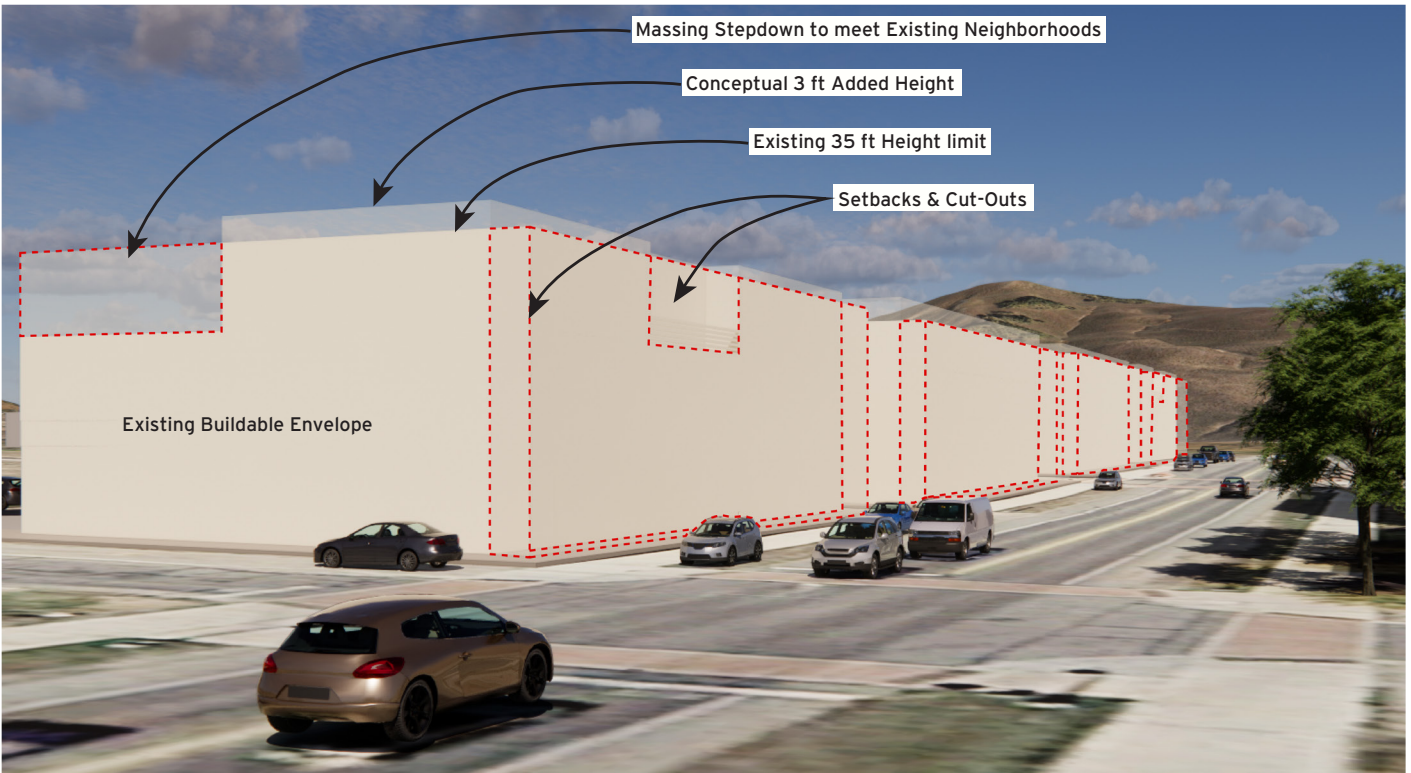


A conceptual rendering of Sixth Street, demonstrating the proposed performance-based height allowance.

LEGEND

Existing 35 ft height limit

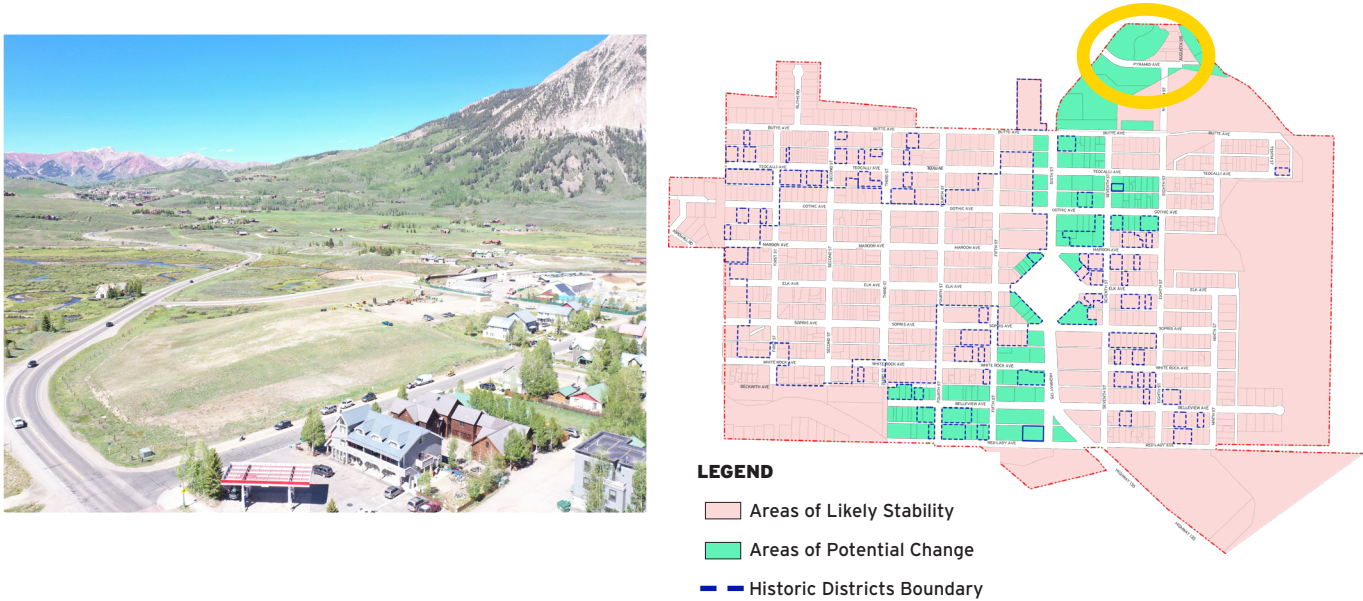
Conceptual 38 ft height limit



A model view of Sixth Street, demonstrating the proposed performance-based zoning change considerations.



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 community-serving amenities

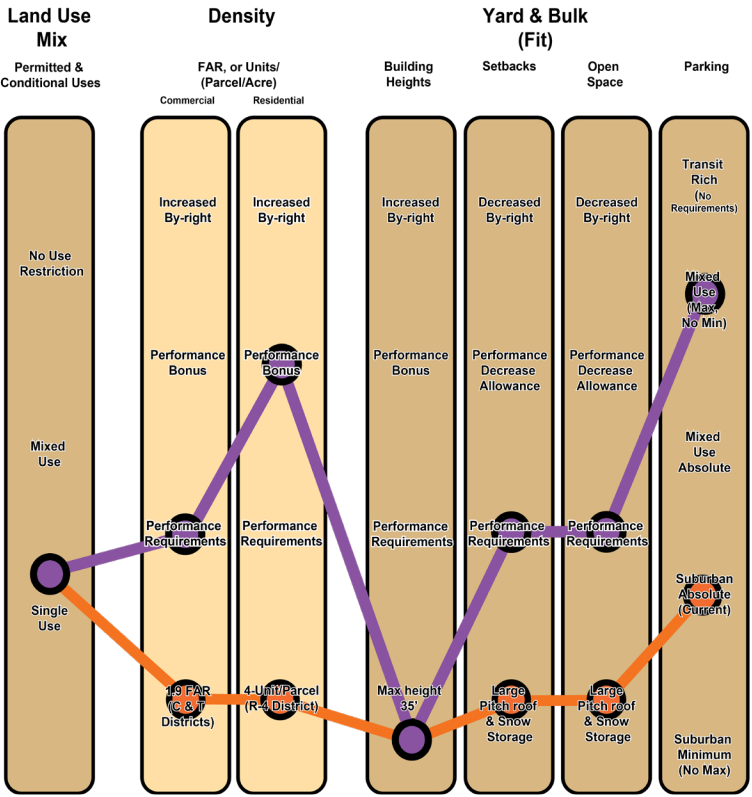
The Slate River Annexation can introduce higher-density residential housing that fits seamlessly between the fire station and the Mineral Point development. By reducing parking requirements and leveraging ample on-street parking availability, the development can complement the area's character while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

Balancing Market Realities with Community Needs

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 larger floor plate buildings rather than smaller more expensive per sq ft buildings. Thoughtful design strategies and allowances 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.

Leveraging The CP Toolbox

- 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 ensures flexibility for evolving community needs while enabling it to integrate with the broader neighborhood.
- Density:** With a suggested target of 29 units per acre, the development will explore a mix of building types that balance livability, diversity, and affordability, fitting well within the context of the surrounding established areas.
- Fit:** The 30-foot height limit will preserve the neighborhood's scale while allowing for efficient, compact housing. Parking requirements are needed to be reduced to 1 space per unit to achieve efficient use of space. Additional parking could utilize the on-street parking on Pyramid Avenue.



Slate River Toolbox. The Purple line demonstrates the changes under consideration.



Different affordable housing, recreation, and community needs configurations explored at the Design Charrette.



COMING SOON:

Matrix of Recommended Zoning Changes

This **DRAFT** CP presents and suggests proposed zoning changes, offering alternative approaches to altering the status quo in order to unlock the full potential of the Town and help achieve the CP vision.

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 beginning in the summer of 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 also recognize our community's limitations. The Town is 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. 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 Five-Year Housing and Resilient Community Plan.

A New Housing and Resilient Community Plan

To achieve the CP'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 businesses and non-profits.

Creating the CP vision and recommended zoning changes is just the first step and necessary to establish the regulatory framework and permissions. To make it a reality, the Town will need to provide innovative incentives and programs that encourage investment and action, from developers and local businesses to the broader community. These will be further identified, evaluated, and refined through a new Housing and Resilient Community Plan, to be developed starting in the summer of 2025. These plans will help:

5-Year Housing Plan

- Evaluate the Town's current and future housing portfolio and create a housing strategy to ensure diverse housing types and programs that serve the spectrum of the community's needs.
- Prioritize new housing and mixed-use developments on Town-owned sites and leverage funding sources.
- 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 CP.
- Develop programmatic incentives to encourage construction of more ADUs, such as pre-approved building plans and/or landlord/renter matching and management programs.

5-Year Resilient Community Plan

- Evaluate and strategize how the Town can support local businesses and nonprofits to ensure a dynamic, resilient 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 this plan, the Town will identify a strategic approach to housing and business/non-profit support that aligns with this CP's vision and helps achieve it.



Re-envisioning the Town's Resources

The CP 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. Building on the Town's existing Facilities Plan and TMP, the following concepts and ideas were identified to further explore, vet, and design through the 5-Year Housing and Resilient Community Plan.

- A: Completing the Elk Avenue and Third Street Streetscape Plan, as identified in the TMP.
- B: Re-envisioning Station One (the former fire station) into a community hub with gathering spaces, co-working areas, business incubation space, and other community-focused amenities.
- C: Redeveloping the Marshals' Office/KBUT site to better meet community needs and foster a civic campus environment.
- D: Re-envisioning the 4-Way and/or tennis courts 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.
- E: 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.
- F: Expanding and renovating Stepping Stones to enhance childcare functionality and capacity
- G: Developing affordable housing on TP 1, 2, and 3 in the Slate River Annexation to complete these neighborhoods.



Some Considerations for Envisioning Town-Led Possibilities

Focusing on Existing Town-Owned Parcels and Facilities

These concepts focus on utilizing existing Town-owned parcels and facilities, aligning new developments with the vision for a community-centered future. This strategy maximizes the value of current resources and ensures seamless integration with the broader goals.

A Future Need for a Land Acquisition Strategy

As Crested Butte's needs evolve, a land acquisition plan may be needed to support housing, infrastructure, and community needs. This strategy should be included in the 5-Year Plan, with targeted funding to secure land for future needs.

Addressing Snow Storage: Mapping and Needs Assessment

Crested Butte's 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 and solutions will be crucial. This process will involve mapping current snow storage areas 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 CP's vision—whether through new developments, financial incentives, or programmatic initiatives—will require 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 would provide the stability needed to maintain progress, ensuring continued financial support for community-serving housing, businesses, and non-profits.



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



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.





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March 2025