

Mixed Use and Non-Residential Uses

The amount and location of retail stores, office buildings, restaurants, commercial services, and light industrial operations help determine the character of the community.

While these land uses may be needed as the community grows, proper planning is necessary to maintain the balance of these uses with residential development and maintain the mountain rural community and its natural setting. The absence of public water and sewer districts could constrict the type and amount of retail, office and light industrial development in the North Mountains. Access to goods and services in Golden, Boulder and Arvada reduces the demand for extensive commercial and light industrial activity in the area.

General Policies

1. Accommodate retail, office and light industrial land uses which are compatible with the character of the rural mountain community and are of a scale which supports residential development in the area.
2. Provide commercial and light industrial activities that are needed for the convenience of local residents and provide limited employment opportunities.
3. Ensure that commercial and light industrial activities are compatible with surrounding land uses in terms of visual appearance, traffic generation, water and sewer requirements, noise and air quality impacts.
4. Locate retail, office and compatible light industrial land use in mountain community centers to avoid strip development along roads, especially along Golden Gate Canyon and Coal Creek Canyon Roads.
5. Mountain light industrial development that is compatible with mountain community center land uses should be located inside mountain community centers to concentrate employment and traffic, provide convenience, and to avoid proliferation of light industrial development outside of designated mountain community centers.
6. Mountain community centers should be designed to serve the daily needs of residents and tourists.
7. Preservation of existing vegetation for screening and erosion control should be a priority in site plan development.
8. Landscaping should emphasize the use of vegetation which needs minimal water to live. Earth shaping in conjunction with the creative use of rock are alternative techniques which should be considered.
9. All new retail, office and light industrial development should comply with applicable criteria in the Mountain Site Design Criteria section.

Specific Land Use Recommendations

The mountain community centers proposed for the North Mountains area are intended to minimize the pressure for strip development along the roads by designating areas where commercial and light industrial development could occur. These centers would provide convenient access to goods and services needed by local residents and should be either convenience or neighborhood centers in size. They should be sited and designed to be compatible with the surrounding area.

Revegetation of disturbed land in mountain areas is difficult given the lack of irrigation water, the thin layer of top soil, and the short growing season; therefore, land disturbance should be minimized.

Benefits to residents would include fewer miles driven to purchase goods, get to work, and take children to athletic activities, music lessons, etc. This reduction in miles driven would contribute to better air quality in the mountains and the metropolitan region, and lower transportation costs.

The centers are not intended to provide the major employment opportunities nor to duplicate the diversity of goods and services found in the commercial and light industrial areas which exist in the metropolitan area.

Area 6: Coal Creek Canyon Center

1. This mountain community center should be a neighborhood commercial and mixed use center where the services and goods available are needed daily by residents within the community.
2. A minimum of 25% open space should be provided.
3. The County should create an implementation plan for this area and include all appropriate stakeholders. The purpose of this plan should be to draft a conceptual design for redevelopment of this center. The objectives for the plan should be to:
 - a. rehabilitate the stream corridor;
 - b. improve the quality and extent of services and physical appearance;
 - c. provide pedestrian access;
 - d. improve traffic access and parking capacity;
 - e. provide landscaping and visual impact mitigation;
 - f. create a stream-side park and other community facilities;
 - g. incorporate the existing commercial and light industrial center; and
 - h. increase the economic viability of the center.
4. The implementation plan should include the following:
 - a. Access and parking plan for the center, including the expansion parcels.
 - b. Landscape plan for the center which identifies the mitigation measures necessary to reclaim mountain scarring and unvegetated areas.
 - c. Design for a park and other public community facilities.
 - d. Designated location for ride sharing and RTD buses, if service is restored in the future.
 - e. The funding source(s) required to implement the Plan recommendations. Techniques which could be used include creation of special overlay zone or improvement districts, public/private joint ventures, grants, and awards.
 - f. An implementation schedule which establishes completion dates and assigns responsibilities for each action.

Use Area 7: Golden Gate Canyon Center

1. This mountain community center should be a convenience center with a minimum of 25% open space. The development should have the appearance of smaller stores and offices and avoid an unbroken expanse of walls.
2. If and when the County Shops are moved, this location should be considered for commercial or community land use.
3. The objectives for this center should be to provide for convenience shopping and enhance fire protection for area residents. The plan for this site should include:
 - a. access and parking plan which provides for shared parking;
 - b. criteria for structures which would blend with the existing terrain, i.e., the structures should avoid expanses of unbroken walls and should have an architectural finish compatible with the rural mountain setting;
 - c. established setbacks from the roads for structures;
 - d. techniques which make maximum use of the topography and existing vegetation to provide screening; and
 - e. a program which addresses cut and fill standards, scarring, erosion, and revegetation, to be implemented within the first year.
4. The Golden Gate Fire District should be consulted about locating a fire station at this site.

Outside Mountain Community Centers

Please note: Staff is considering adding these uses to the Comprehensive Master Plan so they are allowed in all mountain areas. If we do add them to the Comprehensive Master Plan, they will be removed from this section.

1. When industrial development is proposed which will serve the needs of residents but has visual, noise and other impacts which are not appropriate inside mountain community centers, it may be located outside mountain community centers when impacts associated with these uses can be mitigated. Examples of this type of development: heavy equipment, LP gas facilities.

This type of industrial development may be located outside of mountain community centers only when all of the following criteria are met:

- a. traffic will use collector roads with existing Golden Gate Canyon Road and Coal Creek Canyon Road access;
- b. a minimum of 80% of the site remains in natural open space;
- c. the height of any building does not exceed 35';
- d. the visual resource corridors, specifically the visual foreground, are preserved along roads, especially Golden Gate Canyon, Coal Creek Canyon and Clear Creek Canyon Roads;
- e. adverse impacts i.e., air, visual, noise and odor, can be mitigated;
- f. traffic will not go through residential communities;
- g. it complies with the recommendations in other sections of the Plan; and
- h. it complies with the Mountain Site Design Criteria section.

2. Cottage industry should be allowed when it meets the following criteria for cottage industry in rural areas:

- a. it is located on or near road junctions, unless the traffic volume is low or can be mitigated;
- b. it has the characteristics of art and craft work, technical and professional support services, and light assembly, repair and manufacture;
- c. it does not have more than 3 employees;
- d. it is a limited, low volume retail activity;
- e. the traffic impacts are similar to residential use;
- f. the architectural quality and size of buildings is equivalent to residential quality;
- g. outside storage is very limited and screened, with substantial setbacks from adjacent properties;
- h. the percent of site coverage does not exceed that of neighboring residential development;
- i. noise, smoke, glare, fumes, vibration, hazardous and other adverse environmental impacts do not exceed those associated with a residential use.

3. Home occupations under the current County Zoning Resolution are allowed for a limited range of businesses such as professional services, consulting, tutoring, craft work, small repair services, and art studios. While the County does not enforce covenants which may limit or prohibit home occupations, residents are advised to review applicable covenants prior to applying for home occupation status. This Plan endorses a continuation of the home occupation regulations, with amendments that will accomplish the following objectives.

- a. Allow an increase in the permitted number of employees from 1 to 2.
- b. Require that the residence to be used is the principal residence of the applicant, not a secondary one.
- c. Provide adequate off-street parking.
- d. Impose limitations on home occupations allowed on very small residential lots more strictly than on larger lots which can better absorb impacts.
- e. The use, storage, or production of any hazardous materials, substances, by-products, residue, or wastes should comply with all applicable local, state and federal regulations.
- f. Prohibit adverse effects from noise, odors, smoke, glare, or vibration beyond that associated with adjacent uses.

4. Churches, schools, bed and breakfasts and group homes should be allowed when:

- a. the architectural quality and size of the building(s), the percent of site coverage and traffic impacts are similar to those of surrounding land uses.
- b. off-road parking is provided and screened from adjacent properties.

If these land uses are not able to meet the foregoing criteria they should:

- 1) be located inside mountain community centers, or

2) meet the resort policies.

Conformance with the appropriate criteria in the Mountain Site Design Criteria section should be demonstrated.

5. Resort development: Gambling activity in adjacent Gilpin County could increase the potential for the development of destination resorts which provide recreational and leisure time activities. These land uses should be permitted when the following criteria are met.

- a. The development site is 35 acres or larger.
- b. A minimum of 80% of the site is retained in open space.
- c. The development is buffered and/or screened from the public access road.
- d. Private access is provided that meets the requirements of the Transportation and Public Facilities, Services & Utilities sections of this Plan.
- e. The development will have limited impact on the surrounding community.
- f. The scale of the development is compatible with a rural mountain environment.
- g. The requirements of County and State regulatory agencies for water and sewage disposal can be met.
- h. Traffic generated by the resort can be accommodated by the road system.
- i. Access to public open spaces can be maintained or improved.
- j. There is minimal external signage.
- k. The recommendations in other sections of this Plan and the Mountain Site Design Criteria can be met.
- l. This type of development does not become the predominant land use in the general area.
- m. The types of use which could be permitted include campsites, cabins, RV parking, lodges, hotels, apartments, condominiums, restaurants, or any combination thereof.
- n. Onsite commercial activity should be directly associated with the resort, ancillary to the development, of a scale compatible with the development and the rural mountain environment.