

Carbondale Comprehensive Plan Update

Draft White Paper for Review

Table of Contents

- 1.0 Executive Summary**
 - 1.1 Town of Carbondale Vision
 - 1.2 Plan Elements
 - 1.3 Implementation Strategy
 - 1.4 Relevance to Other Plans + Studies

- 2.0 Introduction**
 - 2.1 Purpose
 - 2.2 Background
 - 2.3 Engagement Process
 - 2.4 Focus Areas
 - 2.5 Definitions

- 3.0 Vision + Goals**
 - 3.1 Vision
 - 3.2 Community Framework Plan
 - 3.3 Goals

- 4.0 Plan Update Elements**
 - 4.1 Overview
 - 4.2 Town-wide Policies
 - 4.2.1 Future Land Use Map
 - 4.2.2 Housing + Jobs
 - 4.2.3 Multi-modal Access + Circulation
 - 4.2.4 Climate Action Plan
 - 4.2.5 Aging in Community
 - 4.2.6 Historic Preservation
 - 4.3 Downtown
 - 4.4 Downtown North
 - 4.5 High Density Residential Areas

- 5.0 Implementation Strategies**
 - 5.1 Implementation Matrix
 - 5.2 Plan Monitoring

- 6.0 Appendix**

1.0 Executive Summary

TO BE DEVELOPED

2.0 Introduction

2.1 Purpose

DISCLAIMER: The following information represents a revised Draft 'WHITE PAPER' and addresses revised content for draft Goal Topics + Guiding Principles and revised draft recommendations by Plan Element and key topics.

This information is intended for review and discussion purposes only with the Project Steering Committee (PSC). This document is not the Draft Comp Plan Update Supplement deliverable. The Draft Plan Update Supplement will be provided to the Town staff and PSC in December 2021 and will include revised draft text, map and graphic content.

The purpose of the Town of Carbondale Comprehensive Plan Update is to provide an opportunity for the community to re-assess the current 2013 Comprehensive Plan and to update it as needed in key areas identified by the Town of Carbondale. At the center of this Update is the opportunity for community members to re-evaluate the overall long-term community vision and policy direction for managing the built and natural environment in Carbondale.

The Comprehensive Plan Update (Update) addresses community needs and values, changing conditions, and priorities in the community. The Plan elements include land use, mobility, economic development, housing, environment, natural resources, recreation, and infrastructure capacity and services. This Update serves as a 'Supplement' to the 2013 Carbondale Comprehensive Plan. The Update is not intended as a wholesale re-write of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan, but rather focuses on an analysis of key Plan Elements as defined by the Town of Carbondale. In addition, the Update includes a range of broader town-wide topics that were identified as a part of the community engagement process.

The Update is organized in two Parts; Part 1; Town-wide planning needs and recommendations, and Part 2; Key Focus Areas identified by Town staff. The Key Focus Areas were defined by the Town of Carbondale as high priority areas for the Comprehensive Plan Update process. As the community outreach process continued to advance, several other topics have been identified by community members.

Part 1 and 2 include the following Plan Elements:

PART 1

- Vision + Goals
- Community Framework
- Future Land Use Map (FLUM)

- Climate Action Plan
- Multi-Modal Access + Circulation
- Aging in the Community
- Historic Preservation

PART 2

- Downtown
- Downtown North
- High Density Residential Areas

The Plan Update includes three main sections: Vision + Goals, Plan Elements, and Implementation Strategies. The Vision + Goals section highlights a revised community Vision Statement and a series of Goal Topics and Guiding Principles. The Plan Elements section describes each of the Plan Elements noted above along with Recommendations. The last section includes the Plan Implementation Strategies.

The Recommendations and Implementation Strategies (refer to Section 5.0 Implementation Strategies) were developed based on input received from the community, subject matter experts, community workshops, focus group discussions, and town staff. The Comprehensive Plan Update is the product of an open, inclusive, and transparent plan process and has been led by the Town of Carbondale Planning and Zoning Commission Project Steering Committee.

2.2 Background

In 2020, the Town of Carbondale Board of Trustees and Planning + Zoning Commission determined that, due to changes in key areas, an update to the 2013 Comprehensive Plan was warranted. Key focus areas were identified by the Board and Commission as areas that require specific attention as part of the current Comp Plan Update. The focus areas include:

- Review and update of communitywide Vision + Goals
- Revisions to the Future Land Use Map (FLUM)
- Assessment and updates to the Climate Action Plan
- Considerations for Multi-Modal Access + Circulation and Aging in the Community
- Review of Downtown zoning districts, Downtown North and select High Density Residential Areas

KEY PROCESS DELIVERABLES

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN (CEP)

The Community Engagement Plan (CEP) was developed in collaboration with Town staff and the Project Steering Committee. The purpose of the CEP is to thoughtfully plan key touchpoints with the community

to ensure broad community support for the ultimate adoption of the Comprehensive Plan Update. The CEP evolved over time as meetings were added and new outreach strategies were tested to respond to Carbondale's unique community needs and direction given by the Steering Committee.

Date(s)	Event/Task	Purpose	Target Audience(s)	Outreach Strategies
Jul 2 - Aug 6	Online + paper survey	Ask general questions about public concerns, recent successes and vision for the future	General public	Press release, social media posts, email blasts, postcards with QR codes
Jul-Aug	Stakeholder focus group interviews	Group interviews with representatives from stakeholder organizations to understand opportunities/constraints in topic areas	N/A	N/A
Jul 2	First Fridays Kick-off event	Kick off the Comp Plan Update - generate awareness for the effort and promote the online survey	General public	Social media event + direct advertisements, email blasts
Aug 16	Spanish-speaking Community Meeting	Hold a community meeting in Spanish to hear from the Latino community	Latino community	Personal engagement - Latino community leaders went to predominantly Spanish-speaking neighborhoods to personally invite community members
Aug 17	Community Meeting (in English)	Present initial analyses on growth, housing, mobility and have small-group conversations to gather input on Comp Plan focus areas	General public	Press release, social media posts, newspaper ads, email blasts, flyers
Aug 17	Downtown/North Downtown Design Charrettes (2)	Get key stakeholders together to discuss potential future uses and design of infill development Downtown and North Downtown	General public, Downtown/North Downtown stakeholders	Personal emails, website

Oct 27	Spanish-speaking Virtual Open House	Present draft plan items for public comment, get input on prioritization of projects/policy	Latino community	Press release, email blasts, newspaper ads, radio ads, flyers around town
Nov 3 - Nov 21	Draft Recommendations Poll	Get feedback on the Draft Recommendations presented at Virtual Public Meetings	General public	Press release, email blasts, social media posts
Dec 6 - Jan 3	Draft Plan Survey	Get feedback on the Draft Future Land Use Map, Implementation Plan and revised Recommendations	General public	Press release, email blasts, social media posts
	Adoption Hearings			

EXISTING CONDITIONS SUMMARY

The Comprehensive Plan Update process included data collection and assessment and a Existing Conditions Summary Memorandum. The Existing Conditions Summary was provided to the Town on September 3, 2021 and provides an overview of existing conditions, current plans and programs and policies that may inform how the Town makes decisions with respect to the build and non-built environment in the Town. The Existing Conditions Memorandum will be available on the project website: <https://carbondalekaleidoscope.org/chart-carbondale>

2.3 Community Engagement Process

A robust public engagement effort guided the 7-month planning process, intended to solicit input on community values and aspirations. The consultant team engaged in a series of community events, focus group interviews, surveys and design charrettes with stakeholders, volunteer boards and commissions and the Project Steering Committee (Planning and Zoning Commission) to gain a shared understanding of existing conditions, market realities, opportunities, and challenges. This outreach informed the vision for the Comprehensive Plan Update, consisting of a community framework, goals, guiding principles and implementation strategies. The vision and guiding principles are the shared values around which concepts were developed for the Comprehensive Plan Update.

PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE (PSC)

The Town of Carbondale Planning and Zoning Commission acted as a Project Steering Committee (PSC) to offer guidance throughout the Comprehensive Plan Update process. Six PSC meetings were held throughout the planning process at which the project team presented findings on the following topics:

- 2013 Comp Plan Vision + Goals, Community Engagement Plan
- Economics, demographics, population projections, Downtown and North Downtown

- Aging in Place, Climate Action Plan, Multi-modal Mobility
- Draft Vision + Goals
- Draft Recommendations
- Draft Implementation Plan

Meetings were held virtually, and the public was invited and encouraged to participate in the discussion.

WEB PAGE

The Town contracted PR Studio to enhance overall communications between the Town and community members, and they worked with staff to create an engagement website for all Town communications called Carbondale Kaleidoscope (<https://carbondalekaleidoscope.org/>). The Comprehensive Plan Update (called Chart Carbondale) was used as a kick-off project for the larger engagement site, which launched on July 2nd, 2021 (<https://carbondalekaleidoscope.org/chart-carbondale>). The web page hosted information about the project and offered several ways to engage including map pinning, an ideas forum, and multiple surveys. The page could be translated into Spanish so that Spanish-speaking community members could participate online.

STAKEHOLDER FOCUS GROUP SESSIONS

Six stakeholder focus group sessions were held to do a deep dive on topics that were identified as important to focus on in the Comp Plan update. The list of participants for the focus groups was developed by Town staff in collaboration with Valley Settlement, Carbondale Arts, Carbondale Chamber, Wilderness Workshop and Manus. The list included representatives from the following entities:

- RFTA
- CAFCI
- Senior Matters
- RE-1 School District
- Valley Settlement
- La Clinica del Pueblo
- Carbondale Arts
- KDNK
- Clay Center
- Stepping Stones
- Family Resource Center
- Andy Zanca Youth Empowerment Program
- Youth Entity
- Voices
- Artists
- CLEER
- AVLT
- Roaring Fork Soccer Club
- Wilderness Workshop
- Downtown Property and Business Owners
- Downtown North Property and Business Owners

The topics of the sessions included:

1. Affordable housing,
2. Local businesses and economy,
3. Mobility and aging in community,
4. Sustainability, agriculture and recreation,
5. Arts, culture and community services
6. Development, infrastructure, Downtown and North Downtown

Summaries of the meetings can be found in the Existing Conditions Memo in the Appendix.

INITIAL ONLINE + PRINTED SURVEY

The initial survey was available online and at Town Hall on paper from July 2nd to August 6th, 2021. The purpose of this survey was to ask general questions about public concerns, recent successes and the community's vision for the future of Carbondale. It received 483 responses online and 41 paper surveys, totaling 524 responses. Below are some highlights from the survey and the full survey results can be found in the Existing Conditions Memo in the Appendix.

Demographics

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- Survey responders generally reflected Carbondale's aging population, with 33% over the age of 65, 20% between 55 and 64, 17% between 45 and 54, and 17% between 35 and 44.
- When asked what their relationship to Carbondale is, 36% of survey responders live there full-time, 23% shop/eat/drink there, 22% recreate in the area, and 10% work full-time in Carbondale.

Community/character

- When asked how they would describe the identity of Carbondale, responders had diverse answers (see Figure X word cloud). Words and phrases like "small town", "communal", "friendly", "mountain", "funky" were common.
- Survey responders were most concerned about how rapid growth/development (19%), housing affordability (15%), population growth (9%), gentrification (8%), high cost of living (8%) and too much traffic (7%) are threatening their quality of life.

Land Use, Growth + Housing

- The majority (54%) of survey responders felt that there has been too much residential growth in Carbondale, while 37% felt that residential growth has been adequate. When asked about commercial growth, the majority (54%) of responders felt that it had been adequate, while 31% believed there has been too much commercial growth, and 16% said there hadn't been enough.
- When asked what future uses they would like to see in North Downtown (see Figure 4), neighborhood park (23%), mixed-use opportunities for housing and retail/commercial (20%) and civic uses (20%) were most popular.

Mobility

- When asked what their most important goal for Carbondale's transportation system is, 28% said an equitable transportation system (for people of all ages, abilities, ethnicities and income levels), 27% said a system that minimizes environmental impacts, 18% said a safe transportation system.
- Survey responders identified the lack of sidewalks (22%) and lack of overall connectivity (21%) as the biggest challenges associated with walking in Carbondale. Common "other" answers accounting for 18% of responses included no challenge/fine as-is, speeding/careless drivers and crossing Highway 133.

Economics

- When asked how they felt about the economic health of Carbondale, the majority (57%) said good, 21% said fair, 11% said excellent and only 2% said poor.

Community Priorities

- The final survey question which aimed at determining community priorities asked, "if you could make one recommendation regarding the future of Carbondale, what would it be?" When amalgamated, the most mentioned themes are shown in Figure X.

AUGUST COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Spanish-Speaking Community Meeting

As part of the Comprehensive Plan Update, the project team held the Town's first ever community meeting in Spanish to engage members of the Latino community that have traditionally been difficult to reach due to several barriers including language and the lack of historical communication between the Town and Latino community. Representatives from Valley Settlement did personal outreach to invite community members to participate by door-knocking, going to parks and doing outreach in restaurants. An estimated 30 participants attended the meeting.

The meeting's format included a brief presentation about what the Comprehensive Plan is and why it's important that people get involved, and then attendees visited several stations with information on growth and housing, mobility, and Downtown/Downtown North. Participants then broke up into small groups where trained Spanish-speaking facilitators led discussions on key issues faced by the Latino community. At the end, the facilitators presented top themes to the larger group.

Community Meeting in English

The meeting in English was conducted in the same format as the Spanish meeting with an estimated 68 participants.

Discussion highlights from both meetings can be found in the Existing Conditions Memo in the Appendix.

DOWNTOWN/DOWNTOWN NORTH DESIGN CHARRETTES

Two design charrettes were held to explore opportunities and challenges with infill development Downtown and the future of Downtown North. Both sessions were well-attended with about 20 people each (broken up into two tables of ten). Stakeholders including landowners, developers, architects, planners, elected/appointed officials, and Town staff were invited to participate, as well as members of the general public.

Discussion highlights from both charrettes can be found in the Existing Conditions Memo in the Appendix.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS ENGAGED

Additional meetings were held with advisory boards, committees, and other interest groups to include their vision and goals into the Comp Plan Update process including:

- Environmental Board (E-Board)
- Clean Energy Economy for the Region (CLEER)
- Carbondale Age Friendly Community Initiative (CAFCI)
- Board of Trustees
- Bike + Pedestrian Commission
- Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)

DRAFT PLAN VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETINGS

When Draft Plan Recommendations were ready for public review, two Virtual Public Meetings were held to get needed input.

Virtual Public Meeting in Spanish

Despite the employment of various outreach strategies, the Spanish meeting was not attended by any Spanish-speaking members of the general public. Outreach strategies included: advertisements on La Nueva Mix, advertisements in the Spanish Sopris Sun, flyers posted around town, emails to contact lists of Spanish-speaking community members, and press releases in the paper. The main difference between the in-person Spanish-speaking Community Meeting in August (which had better attendance) and the Virtual Public Meeting in Spanish was the availability of members of the Spanish-speaking community to personally invite folks to show up. The community leaders we employed to do outreach for the meeting in August were unavailable to help get the word out for the virtual meeting, and other community organizations that focus on Spanish outreach are extremely busy and could not take on the task.

Virtual Public Meeting in English

The virtual meeting in English was held the following night and included the same content as the presentation and discussion from the meeting in Spanish. The meeting's format included a brief presentation on the draft recommendations for the three geographic focus areas (Downtown, Downtown North and Residential Focus Areas) followed by a poll and open discussion. The purpose of the poll was to gauge community support for the draft recommendations. Generally, meeting participants supported the draft recommendations for Downtown, North Downtown, Residential Focus Areas, Aging in Community, Climate Action Plan, Multi-modal Mobility, Housing + Jobs and Social Equity.

Discussion highlights from the Virtual Public Meeting can be found in the Existing Conditions Memo in the Appendix.

DRAFT PLAN SURVEYS

Two additional surveys were conducted to get additional public input on draft plan items.

Draft Recommendations Poll

The same poll that was conducted at the Virtual Public Meetings was made available online for those who could not attend the meeting.

Draft Plan Poll

A final poll on the Draft Future Land Use Map, Draft Implementation Strategy and revised Recommendations was available in December of 2021.

Relevance to Other Plans + Studies

This 2021 Comprehensive Plan Update serves as supplement to the 2013 Comprehensive Plan. The 2013 Comprehensive plan is still a relevant and valid document that will be used for guidance by the community. The Update will be used for further guidance based on the specific focus areas identified by the Board of Trustees and Planning and Zoning Commission. Strategies from the 2013 Comprehensive Plan were evaluated for 2021 relevance and incorporated into an updated Implementation Matrix. The 2013 Two-Mile Planning and Town Peripheral Future Land Use Plan maps are recognized as still valid with the one addition of the annexation of Red Hill as a significant protected parcel and designated as Recreation/Open Space on the Future Land Use Map.

Other plans and studies informed the goals and strategies found in the Update. Notably much work has been completed in planning for climate action and resiliency through the Vulnerability, Consequences, and Adaptation Planning Scenarios (VCAPS) Report from 2019, the Climate and Energy Action Plan of 2017, and through independent efforts and events from the Town's Environmental Board (E-Board) and Clean Energy Economy for the Region (CLEER) among other organizations. Strategies have been directly incorporated based on evaluation of these studies and engagement with their authors.

The Unified Development Code (UDC) was evaluated, and areas of recommended changes are referenced as strategies based on public and stakeholder input. An update to the UDC is an implementation strategy for achieving this plan's goals.

3.0 Vision + Goals

3.1 Vision

The Comprehensive Plan Update (Update) process evaluated the 2013 Comprehensive Plan Vision and Goals. Working in conjunction with community members and the Planning & Zoning Commission, the previous Vision Statement - "*Vision for a Sustainable Future*" was recognized as an important overarching theme that should be retained as a part of the Plan Update Supplement.

In addition, the following Vision Statement was further expressed and is derived from Comprehensive Plan Update process and represents a collective long-term vision for the Town of Carbondale.

VISION

"The Town of Carbondale is a creative and connected community that actively celebrates its small-town character, diversity, and shared identity. The people of Carbondale reflect the values of the past with an eye toward welcoming future generations in an inclusive, respectful and equitable manner."

3.2 Community Framework Plan

Community Framework

The Vision Statement is further expressed through the Comprehensive Plan Update **Community Framework** that emphasizes **COMMUNITY CHARACTER, RESILIENCY, and INCLUSIVITY and EQUITY**. This organizing structure serves as an essential framework in support of the Town of Carbondale's long-term Vision for a Sustainable Future. The Vision for a Sustainable Future* ensures that future generations will be able to enjoy the same quality of life and benefits that the current community enjoys today.

**Source: Vision for a Sustainable Future: refer to the 2013 Town of Carbondale Comprehensive Plan.*

Definitions

Community Character may be described as having a distinctive trait, quality or attribute that is inclusive of natural, visual, and cultural characteristics, as we as, the people, institutions, and their interrelationships.

Resilience is defined as the capacity to adapt to changing conditions and to maintain or regain functionality and vitality in the face of stress or disturbance. It is the capacity to bounce back after a disturbance or interruption. Resilient design is the intentional design of buildings, landscapes, communities, and regions in response to vulnerabilities.

Inclusivity / Equity describes a state that is achieved when all people have full and equal access to opportunities that enable them to attain their full potential. The determinants of Inclusivity and Equity include the social, economic, cultural, geographic, political, and built environment conditions in which people live and work that lead to the creation of a fair and just society.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

INTENT: The residents of Carbondale define the character of this unique place. The built environment is viewed and understood at multiple scales and includes neighborhoods, community, region, and global perspectives.

RESILIENCY

INTENT: Community resiliency includes social, environmental, and economic sustainability and the health and well-being of all community members.

INCLUSIVITY / EQUITY

INTENT: The community values, aspirations, lifestyles, preferences, and social/civic capacity shall be representative of ALL residents and shall serve as a guiding principle.

3.3 Goals + Guiding Principles

GOAL TOPICS

The following **GOAL TOPICS** have been refined based on the 2013 Comprehensive Plan and input received from the community and the Project Steering Committee. The **GOAL TOPICS** are further informed by the Town of Carbondale Vision and Community Framework.

Each **GOAL TOPIC** is followed by an **INTENT** statement and a series of **GUIDING PRINCIPLES** to further articulate the purpose and meaning of the GOAL TOPIC.

#1 COMMUNITY CHARACTER

INTENT: Actively preserve and protect Carbondale’s small-town character

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Protect the physical and natural environment
- Support the existence of an ethnically and culturally diverse community
- Preserve and enhance access to the local decision-making process

#2 ECONOMIC GROWTH

INTENT: Embrace economic diversification and self-sufficiency

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Promote a balanced economic growth strategy for the community
- Support locally owned businesses in the community

#3 HOUSING

INTENT: Solve the housing affordability challenge in Carbondale

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Prioritize housing affordability and housing diversity

#4 SUSTAINABILITY

INTENT: Meet or exceed community long-term, sustainability measures and objectives

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Promote Carbondale and a leader in sustainable development
- Plan for highly effective sustainable infrastructure systems to meet current and future community needs

#5 UNIVERSAL ACCESS

INTENT: Deliver universal access and multi-modal improvements throughout the community

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Promote universal access, active mobility, and multi-modal options in the community
- Provide for safe and enjoyable access for people of all ages

#6 MOTHER EARTH

INTENT: Celebrate the natural resources and ecological values of the region

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Protect the region's natural resources, rivers, and open spaces
- Promote an ethic that encourages a balance between community growth and protection of natural resources

#7 INCLUSIVITY / EQUITY

INTENT: Prioritize social equity, health, and well-being

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Inclusivity and equity are core values that influence all decisions for the Town of Carbondale
- Leave no person behind

#8 FINANCIAL SOLVENCY

INTENT: Ensure the long-term fiscal health of the community

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Growth should not burden the community's capacity to provide infrastructure, health, or other public services
- Town investments should advance impactful projects that implement housing, climate and mobility and other strategies

#9 GOOD GOVERNANCE

INTENT: Guarantee high quality and responsive governance

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Allocation of any Town resources is rooted in transparency and research

Each of the **GOAL TOPICS** are further addressed in **Section 5.0 Implementation Strategies**.

4.0 Plan Update Elements

4.1 Overview

PURPOSE

The following Plan Elements are organized around the Town of Carbondale Comprehensive Plan Update key focus areas. The focus areas were defined by the Town of Carbondale as high priority areas for the Comprehensive Plan Update process. In addition, as the Comprehensive Plan Update progressed, the community identified several additional topics that have been include in this Plan Elements section.

The Plan Elements below have been collectively developed based on input received from the community, community-based subject matter experts, through a series of plan focus group discussions, and direction provided by town staff and the Project Steering Committee.

As the community outreach process continued to evolve, several other topics were identified by community members. These items are addressed in the Community Engagement and Recommendations section in this Update.

Additional text will explain how 'recommendations' are defined and then converted to Implementation Strategies (next Section of the Plan Update)

EXISTING CONDITIONS SUMMARY MEMORANDUM

The Project Team provided an Existing Conditions Summary Memorandum on September 3, 2021. The Existing Conditions Memorandum is available on the project website: <https://carbondaekaleidoscope.org/chart-carbondale>

PLAN UPDATE OBSERVATIONS

The following high-level observations were identified throughout the Plan Update process. This list is not exhaustive of all topics discussed, but it is representative of important themes and patterns brought up frequently in the community engagement process.

1. Carbondale's desirability has attracted a many new residents and, as a result, a significant uptick in development activity has occurred. This recent in-migration is due in part to changing working and living patterns and the ability for location-neutral workers to live in more remote areas than previously.
2. Even with increased demand, recently completed, proposed, or entitled housing development projects have, or will meet the projected 10-year housing demand and growth projection estimates in Carbondale.
3. Housing diversity and affordability is desired, and efforts must be made to supply housing units for young families, low and "missing middle" income earners, single working individuals and seniors.
4. Downtown has not seen the type of redevelopment that was anticipated in the 2013 Comprehensive Plan due to several reasons including: market conditions, financing, zoning, and development regulations.
5. Vacant parcels in core areas (Downtown, Downtown North and Residential Focus Areas) have not seen desired development.

6. If Downtown North redevelops into different uses, the community may be at risk of losing jobs in the critical light industrial/commercial employment sector.
7. In some areas of Town, the current land use framework may unintentionally promote areas of potential incompatibility, particularly in areas where residential use 'transitions' to non-residential use or where two unlike land use types and densities may abut.
8. The 2013 Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map (FLUM) classifies land uses into neighborhood typologies rather than conventional land uses as would normally be provided in a Future Land Use Map. The proposed FLUM attempts to correct this detail while also providing clearer land use designations and a strategy for areas of stability and areas that may change based projected development patterns.
9. The Town of Carbondale Climate Energy Action Plan presents a forward-thinking approach to address climate issues in the community. The Plan may benefit by establishing interim targets to demonstrate how the Town may work toward achieving 2030 goals of a 50% reduction in CO2 emissions. The Plan may also consider establishing clear direction to define methods for accountability by various parties as part of the Plan implementation.
10. A comprehensive town-wide Transportation Master Plan is needed to fully understand and identify mobility network challenges and opportunities on a community and regional scale.
11. Efforts to create a multi-modal 8th Street corridor created momentum to establish a needed multi-modal connection through the community. However, some community members felt the design process did not adequately address priorities intended to balance elements like multi-modal access and on-street parking. The community may learn from this experience and apply a broader view on how future corridor projects are developed as needed.
12. Due to physical barriers like Highway 133, areas of town are not fully connected with safe, accessible facilities designed to accommodate all ages and abilities.
13. Discussions surrounding the Aging in the Community topic identified the need to reposition the conversation of 'aging' to not only address seniors but accommodate all age groups.
14. The 2013 Comprehensive Plan Implementation Strategies and associated measures should be holistic to address a wide range of community topics and needs.

4.2 Town-wide Policies

4.2.1 Future Land Use Map (FLUM)

FLUM text and exhibits were sent in previous packet materials

4.2.2 Housing + Jobs

OVERVIEW

Maintaining an identity as a vibrant visitor destination and preserving homes and workplaces is paramount to Carbondale's economic health and social sustainability. A safe and efficient mobility network must also connect homes and workplaces. The need for a diverse housing supply and workforce/ jobs balance is at the core of this mix. In 2021, many ask: "Is growth applying undue pressure to Carbondale's markets and affecting accessibility to both housing and jobs?" The answer is likely yes for the lower- and middle-income employee or the young family aiming to enjoy Carbondale's quality of life. Despite an active residential development market, homes for those struggling to live in town are not being built.

With sales tax being the fiscal lifeblood for Carbondale, the health of local retail, recreation, and dining establishments erodes as housing affordability makes retaining service employees challenging. Shortfalls in the affordable housing market stress the transportation system as workers commute from further away in search of reasonable rents and mortgages.

Diversifying the housing supply toolkit is necessary as the predominant method for supplying affordable units currently is inclusionary zoning to deed-restrict units. One strategic approach to expand affordable housing options and diversify the toolkit are Community Land Trusts (CLTs). CLTs differ from ordinary deed restriction programs in that a Trust acquires land and develops housing units that are sold to qualifying households (income limits and residency requirements are up to the CLT organization). These households take ownership of the building only - not the land (like in a condominium transaction). Like ordinary deed-restrictions, CLT unit owners are limited in the amount of annual appreciation they can capture in resale, and future purchasers must also be income-qualifying. The long-term retention of the underlying land can be appealing to philanthropic participants, and the CLT structure helps coordinate property acquisitions and marketing.

GROWTH

The uptick in residential development post-recession occurred in Carbondale but this is several years in the making. There are currently 199 units under development, plus the recently completed Sopris Lodge with 78 senior assisted living units and an additional 105 units proposed but not built for a total of 382 units. This trend is unlikely to continue at this pace. Based on projection estimates, Carbondale could add about 1,200 people or 450 housing units over the next ten years. This means current development activity alone will accommodate about 75% of the 10-year housing demand.

Land capacity analyses estimate that available vacant or underutilized land and increased density in areas of Downtown and Downtown North can accommodate the residual demand without growing outward or annexing outlying areas.

COMMUNITY INPUT

During the Plan Update process, the following questions were posed:

1. What innovative or new ideas can we bring in to solve the housing affordability challenge?
2. Where are current land use, zoning and housing policies not serving the intended purpose?
3. Are the areas designated for high density housing the right areas and are there any design guidance improvements needed to ensure character compatibility?
4. Does the community grasp the trade-off of replacing job-generating land uses with housing?

Recommendations

Generally, Town housing policies help in small ways to increase supply of needed unit types and costs. But to help Carbondale further supply housing, more must be done to boost housing policy flexibility (e.g., land use standard relaxations for affordable projects).

- Explore programs and policy tools to prevent displacement (e.g., rent stabilization, commercial linkage fees, impact fees, or rent review boards) for all susceptible communities.
- Ensure that land use regulations governing Planned Unit Development (PUDs) and subdivision covenants facilitate and remove barriers to construction of more affordable housing.
- Allow Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) for single-family residential zones, to add housing capacity and increase financial flexibility for owners. Consider adding an educational component to inform homeowners with guidance on ADU construction/conversion. Research best practices from peer communities for enforcement and monitoring.
- Refine and evolve inclusionary zoning regulations to ensure they do not discourage mixed-use developments that would otherwise include needed housing. Explore programs allowing limited sale/transfer of unit requirements in such cases.
- Partner with Garfield County to leverage County efforts to encourage production of affordable housing, including participation in State (CHFA) and federal (HUD/HOME, USDA) programs including Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) subsidies.
- Convene a town-wide and/or regional task force to develop a comprehensive policy to address multi-generational housing, displacement, and social equity issues and considerations including topics of small-businesses retention, housing affordability, and anti-displacement policies in the community.
- Assist in the formation of non-English-speaking business groups or commerce associations.
- Consider adoption of recent Garfield County modifications to the County's Land Use & Development and Building Codes to allow for "Tiny Homes."
- Support and expand the Carbondale Affordable Creative Space effort to promote and fund arts-oriented space.

- Expand deed-restricted housing through Community Land Trusts (CLTs) either by partnering with an existing CLT (e.g., Elevation CLT, primarily active in the Front Range today) or by helping to organize a similar partnership in the Roaring Fork Valley.
- Evaluate strategies to actively engage with regional housing providers to address affordable housing opportunities.
- Continue to engage with affordable housing providers and agencies to develop actionable strategies and programs to deliver affordable housing in Carbondale
- Re-assess affordable housing needs, land development opportunities, funding, partnerships, site selection criteria, and design guidelines for possible affordable housing initiatives for the Town of Carbondale.
- Explore creating a facade improvement program and funding source to support local businesses and jobs.

4.2.3 Multi-Modal Access + Circulation

OVERVIEW

Access within and to/from Carbondale is a key element of creating a community that is vibrant, safe, and attracts a diverse set of residents and visitors. An effective mobility network includes transportation programs, services, and infrastructure for people walking, biking, taking transit, and driving. The current transportation network in Carbondale has several great assets including RFTA's Highway 82 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) that provides efficient regional transit; the Rio Grande Trail which provides a direct connection to communities in the Valley for people walking and biking; and a dense downtown street grid that promotes walkability.

Another existing asset in Carbondale is the previous work that has been done by the Town to identify priority Multi-Modal Corridors in the 2019 High Priority Bicycle and Pedestrians Corridors Map. Multi-Modal Corridors (MMCs) are a connected system of streets, pathways, and sidewalks on which the needs of all users (regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation) are of equal importance and all users have the same rights to safe and comfortable use.

Throughout the community engagement process, and through an assessment of existing conditions, the community identified key challenges for people traveling in Carbondale, including lack of connectivity, high vehicle speeds making walking and biking uncomfortable, missing, or deficient sidewalks, barriers to crossing Highway 133, poor coverage of the RFTA Carbondale Circulator, gaps in the low-stress bicycle network, and insufficient parking supply. Poor connectivity comes in the form of a street network that is curvilinear, presents gaps in the bicycle and pedestrian network, and barriers to direct access due to physical impediments as rivers, railroads, and major arterial streets. The community helped to identify key connection points in Town that require further analysis, particularly for those areas along Highway 133 where connections to and from neighborhoods and schools, between the east and west sides of Carbondale, and connections to the Circulator are most difficult. Participants also noted missing

connections on the west side of Town due to the nature of the street network and layout in certain areas.

In response to these challenges, it is recommended that the Town invest in the expansion of the bicycle and pedestrian networks, further evaluate parking utilization, and consider enhancements to the local transit and paratransit services. These recommendations should build off the work and community input from the 8th Street Multi-modal Corridor, the 2019 High Priority Bicycle and Pedestrian Corridors Map, the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and the current regional bike share and first and last mile study. Additional study should be performed to further refine the recommendations in this section.

Recommendations

- Develop a town-wide Transportation Master Plan (TMP) that develops a long-term vision for multi-modal transportation based on comprehensive community outreach, forecasting of future growth, and a comprehensive analysis. The TMP will help inform the Town's Capital Improvements Program (CIP) for short and near-term project identification and potential funding opportunities.
- Implement sidewalks and upgrade deficient sidewalks. Through outreach and inputs (such as access to key destinations, crash history, and vehicle volumes and speed), identify high priority sections of roadway where sidewalks should be completed or upgraded. Consideration should be made for certain sections of roadway where sidewalks may not be constructed, due to trade-offs such as parking loss or community character.
- Prioritize completing and upgrading bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure on corridors identified in the 2019 High Priority Bicycle and Pedestrian Corridors Map. Understand that the 2019 High Priority Bicycle and Pedestrian Corridors Map will continue to evolve based on changes to land use, key destinations, or desired circulation for people biking. Identify the appropriate facility type and prioritization for each corridor based on the unique context of each corridor (i.e. right of way, adjacent land uses, crash history, vehicle speed and volumes, and community input.) Build off the toolbox developed in the 8th Street Corridor project as a foundation for future active transportation enhancements.
- Identify locations for bicycle/pedestrian cut throughs where roadways do not provide connectivity. Consider changes to development code to require bicycle/pedestrian cut throughs. Pursue properties or easements to provide pedestrian and bicycle connections between existing neighborhoods.
- Additional local transit service within Carbondale is desired and demanded. Conduct a study to determine the best model for providing this service. The study should include an assessment of transit models in other communities in the valley, potential funding models, provider models, service area, and other operational characteristics.
- Work alongside CDOT to plan and design enhanced bicycle/pedestrian crossings of Highway 133. Consider access to key destinations, high demand locations, proximity to nearby crossings, and continuity of priority bicycle/pedestrian routes.

- Invest in programs that enhance transportation including Transportation Demand Management strategies that promote non-single occupancy vehicle modes of travel, wayfinding, bicycle parking, lighting, maintenance of transportation facilities, and Safe Routes to School programs.
- Implement high-quality, low-stress, and interconnected bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure when areas develop or redevelop, and more substantial right of way can be allocated for active modes of transportation.
- Conduct a parking study that assesses parking utilization at different times of day, days of the week, and parts of Carbondale including the downtown and higher density residential neighborhoods of Carbondale. Based on parking utilization, determine changes to parking requirements/code or the need for an additional public parking structure.
- Maintain land uses, streetscapes, and the scale of east Main Street as a neighborhood gateway to Downtown.
- Highlight the future intersection and roundabout at Highway 133 and Lewies Ln/Weant Blvd as the southern entry into the town core by emphasizing the Historical Society park and by framing entryway focal points, landscaping, and open space with new development.

4.2.4 Climate Action Plan

Overview

The Town of Carbondale has a strong foundation of environmental commitments supported by plans and policies to achieve their vision of a sustainable future. Since the publication of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan, there have been several notable accomplishments and developments which provide a strong foundation for current Plan Update. For this Update, a primary focus has been to evaluate the current policies and programs in the *2017 Climate and Energy Action Plan (CAP)* and the *2018 Final Workshop Report for Vulnerability Consequences and Adaptation Planning Scenarios (VCAPS)*, and provide recommendations to these three questions:

- Are the goal topics outlined in the 2013 Comprehensive Plan still relevant?
- Are we missing any new topics or goal statements?
- Are there any updated sustainability goals which should be established in the Comprehensive Plan?

Following an analysis of the CAP and VCAPS Plans, the plan process included discussions with the Town of Carbondale E-Board, members of Clean Energy Economy for the Region (CLEER), and other community stakeholders to gain insight and feedback about environmental priorities, needs, opportunities, and challenges. As a result of this analysis and community engagement, a key recommendation established three pillars of Climate Protection, Resiliency, and Equity as an important foundation for sustainability measures in the community.

Climate Protection describes actions to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions and reduce global warming.

Targeted strategies identified in the 2017 Climate and Energy Action Plan include:

- Increasing Building Efficiency
- Decarbonizing Transportation
- Renewable Energy and Storage
- Reducing and Recycling Waste
- Local and Sustainable Food
- Water Conservation & Reuse

Resilience is defined as the capacity to adapt to changing conditions and to maintain or regain functionality and vitality in the face of stress or disturbance. It is the capacity to bounce back after a disturbance or interruption. Resilient design is the intentional design of buildings, landscapes, communities, and regions in response to vulnerabilities.

Equity describes a state that is achieved when all people have full and equal access to opportunities that enable them to attain their full potential. The determinants of Equity include the social, economic, geographic, political, and built environment conditions in which people live and work that lead to the creation of a fair and just society.

On September 23, 2021, CLEER, E-Board, and community experts hosted a community workshop focusing on climate protection and action. The workshop focused on the review the current information and the accomplishments of the Town to seek a pathway forward for achieving a carbon neutral community by 2050. At this event CLEER gathered additional community input to inform the Comprehensive Plan Update. This session was resulted in 182 comments from roundtables focused on Buildings, Energy, Transportation, Waste, Water, Food/Agriculture and Trees/Vegetation. Results from the workshop have been incorporated into the Implementation Matrix.

Recommendations

Climate Protection

To support Carbondale’s 2017 Climate and Energy Action Plan commitment to become a net zero community by 2050:

- Establish incremental steps and a methodology for tracking and reporting progress towards carbon neutral goals.
- Every 3-5 years review existing plans and strategies to evaluate implementation methods, emerging technologies, opportunities, and issues facing the community. As needed to advance carbon reductions, update plans and strategies to include new or modified priorities. Updates should include actionable items, timelines, measurable benchmarks, and enforcement mechanisms.
- Build capacity to enforce Codes, Plans, and strategies related to climate protection, resilience, equity.
- Focus on emission reduction targets and decarbonization strategies for existing buildings.

- Develop and implement programs and policies to respond to findings and action items recommended in updated versions of the CAP plan.
- Engage in regional collaboration with surrounding communities to advocate for policies to expand renewable energy resources at the regional and State level.
- Develop and implement programs that respond to the findings of the Three County Solar and Storage, Regional Energy Inventory study conducted by CLEER.
- Pursue a Zero Energy District.
- Develop and implement programs and policies to expand public and private infrastructure for zero emission vehicles.
- Leverage Holy Cross and Xcel service territory for maximizing on-site electric and renewable infrastructure.
- Consider adopting Low Impact Development (LID) strategies intended to address environmental impacts associated with on-site stormwater management and water quality strategies. LID strategies may include bio-retention, impervious surface materials and use of drought tolerant plant materials.
- Establish project performance strategies to define interim sustainable development targets and measures (i.e., energy consumption and carbon reduction, water, construction waste recycling, trip reduction, equity, etc.).
- Define specific measurable targets to account for incremental efforts to achieve overall Co2 emission reduction targets - i.e., the Town's long-range goal is 50% reduction in CO2 emission by 2030. This measure is intended to establish how the Town will monitor and be accountable for, how the community will work toward this target. There is no quantitative means to do so now.

Resilience

- Develop outreach, education, and communication to support concepts and strategies that advance Resilience.
- Develop and implement programs and policies to respond to the findings of the 2018 Vulnerability Consequences and Adaptation Planning Scenarios (VCAPS) Report.
- Resilience programs and policies adopted by the Town should include defined goals, performance targets, measurable benchmarks, timelines, and transparent reporting and enforcement mechanisms.
- Develop specific resilience strategies at the following scales: Building, Community, and Regional and Ecosystem scales.

- Engage in regional collaboration with surrounding communities to advance interconnectedness and shared systems (environmental, economic, workforce, supply chain, and utility structures, etc.).

Equity

- Develop outreach, education, and communication to support concepts and strategies needed to advance social equity through a discourse that reflects a range of values and social identities.
- Establish and implement structures for inclusion that engage stakeholders and allow for community engagement and input.
- Align affordable housing developments with sustainable building practices and maintenance programs. Focus financial resources and support programs that promote an energy transition around lower to moderate income (LMI) households.
- Focus financial resources and support programs that promote an energy transition around lower to moderate income (LMI) households.

Climate Action Comprehensive Plan Event Strategies - September 23, 2021

- See Implementation Matrix for specific strategies.

4.2.5 Aging in Community

OVERVIEW

The population of those aged 60 and older is projected to double in Carbondale in 10 years, while children aged 10 to 19 years is likely to decline. People aged 30 to 34, typical ages of younger families, are projected to increase. Housing types for senior adults generally trend toward downsized units with a variety of support services including assisted living or active senior living complexes. The market has supplied such units in recent years; however, the demand will continue to grow with demographic changes.

Age Friendly, livable communities include essential features that allow residents of all ages, ability levels, incomes, races, and ethnicities to thrive. People of all ages benefit from the adoption of policies and programs that make neighborhoods walkable, feature transportation options, enable access to services, provide opportunities to participate in community activities, and support housing that's affordable and adaptable. Well-designed, age-friendly communities foster economic growth and make for happier, healthier residents of all ages.

In addition, the ability and desire to own and operate a private automobile will vary across one's lifetime. As residents' age, they may rely more heavily on a mobility device such as a wheelchair or walker. Sidewalks, curb ramps, and crosswalks that are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provide a reliable and more comfortable option for those traveling with mobility devices. Frequent and comprehensive transit and paratransit service provide a reliable and convenient alternative to driving for those with limited mobility or for longer travel distances. As the community

demographics continue to shift toward an older population, the Town of Carbondale will need to enhance transportation options to facilitate travel for all populations without reliance solely on the automobile to access places locally and regionally.

COMMUNITY INPUT

During the Plan Update process, the following questions were posed;

1. Where are the gaps, physical or otherwise, in delivering age-friendly initiatives?
2. Is Carbondale doing its part in accommodating, with housing, networks or services, those with mobility or accessibility challenges?

Recommendations

Transportation

- Develop a sidewalk maintenance program that addresses regular snow and debris removal as well as upgrading deficient sidewalks to allow for comfortable and accessible travel for all ages and abilities.
- Research peer community programs and education for property owners on their responsibilities. A well-maintained network of sidewalks and curb ramps allows for more reliable travel by wheelchair, walker, or stroller.
- Work with RFTA to determine opportunities to enhance the current paratransit program to allow for more reliable and convenient access to trips.
- Integrate electric bikes into the transportation system by educating users, implementing parking for e-bikes, and considering e-bikes in the design of bike facilities (e.g., width of bike facilities).

Housing and Services

- Incorporate opportunities and services for older adults in all aspects of zoning and economic, land-use, and transportation planning, e.g., leverage older adults' skills, connections, time, and willingness to stay active.
- Consider creating an advisory committee to implement Carbondale Age-Friendly Community Initiative projects and efforts.
- Establish programs to include childcare/daycare or other youth facilities/programming into new development projects.
- Ensure the Town continues to meet demand for housing that supports the growing demographic shift toward an increase in younger families and older adults.
- Install tools such as form-based codes should help create a built environment that intentionally provides opportunities for older people to easily participate in community life, avoiding aging in isolated enclaves.

- Implement universal design elements into the UDC to increase accessibility and visibility by wheelchairs or other mobility devices.
- Establish a percentage of overall project housing unit target in the UDC for units with universal design features.
- Encourage age-friendly concepts to be elevated as a part of the design and development of capital improvement projects.
- Recognize caregivers, particularly home care workers, in planning, land-use, and economic policy development.

4.2.6 Historic Preservation

OVERVIEW

The Plan Update process included opportunities to engage the Carbondale Historic Preservation Commission (CHPC) to discuss their specific vision and priorities, preservation strategies, and ideas for the Downtown, historic commercial core, Downtown North other areas of historic and cultural resources in the community.

COMMUNITY INPUT

During the Plan Update process, the questions were asked:

1. Balance between historic scale and new development is necessary for the Historic Commercial Core's and the community's success, but are the current framework preventing economic development?
2. How can we implement or extend the historic design guidelines to residential neighborhoods? Does this go beyond Old Town future land use designations?

Recommendations

1. Develop a dedicated funding source such as a revolving loan program to fund preservation efforts and building/interior improvements
2. Update the Downtown historic design guidelines and expand for residential uses, particularly into the Old Town neighborhood.
3. Work with property owners to ensure historic area boundaries are accurate and clear.
4. Create a consideration review for the CHPC for projects within designated historic neighborhoods.

5. Consider form-based residential infill development standards to ensure new development, building additions and new elements like ADUs are compatible with adjacent contributing historic resources and neighborhood context.
6. Consider ways to direct future development toward key areas of vacant or underutilized parcels Downtown.
7. Consider language that promotes pedestrian connectivity between HCC and Downtown North, which has possible but uncertain future development potential.
8. Consider ways to promote the HCC zone as a mixed-use hub of activity with small, local, and essential businesses, food and beverage establishments, entertainment destinations and a diverse mix of housing.
9. Consider adopting language that provides a credit for on-street parking to support retail and residential uses, as well as community events.
10. Consider ways to adopt form-based code language that places larger emphasis on character, massing, and scale, building articulation and adjacencies rather than enforcing building use as the basis of requirement.

4.3 Downtown

OVERVIEW

Downtown Carbondale was the focus of several meetings and workshops with community members, property owners and stakeholders who have an interest in the Downtown. In addition, two charrettes were held to discuss the current state of development and regulations in the Historic Commercial Core (HCC) zone to understand what factors may be contributing to inhibiting project development and redevelopment.

Downtown Carbondale includes the core historic area along Main Street and several commercial or mixed-use blocks on either side which are zoned as the Historic Commercial Core (HCC). The 2013 Comprehensive Plan and the 2016 Unified Development Code envision the HCC zone as a mixed-use hub of activity with small local businesses, food and beverage establishments, entertainment destinations and a diverse mix of housing.

The 2013 Comprehensive Plan notes that redevelopment in the Downtown should balance the protection of Carbondale's small-town character and preservation of historic resources with new development that offers variety in human-scale architectural design. Creating Main Street mixed-use buildings that can add to diverse housing types is another land use goal.

There are currently an estimated 200 housing units in the HCC zone district. About four acres HCC-zoned lands are vacant or undeveloped. Economic and mapping analyses found these parcels could accommodate an estimated 17% of the total 10-year projected housing growth (not including projects currently in the pipeline). Despite several proposals in recent years, Downtown has not seen significant development as anticipated. Reasons noted include ownership decisions, market/financing viability,

physical property constraints and positioning (parcel size and development standards/requirements). Several redevelopment projects are in various planning and design stages.

COMMUNITY INPUT

During the Plan Update process, the questions were asked:

1. Is the Downtown's vibrancy threatened by commercial/mixed use development elsewhere and if so should changes be made to redirect energy back toward Downtown?
2. Why hasn't Downtown seen recent development and what could be done to ensure if/when development occurs it accomplishes goals of maintaining character/scale and adding vitality?
3. Are historic preservation mechanisms effective and adequate?

Results of community input relative to Downtown embodied at least two distinct themes:

- development should be promoted and enabled through flexible standards to further Downtown's vibrancy and sense of place while keeping the existing scale and character and;
- developing vacant land Downtown should not just be done for the sake of it and should consider public gathering spaces or additional parks or green spaces.

Community responses ultimately reflected an understanding that redevelopment will eventually occur and moving forward, modifications to the HCC zone may be worth exploring in subsequent UDC updates to ensure projects further community goals.

Community sentiment also suggests that Downtown vitality may be affected if additional, competing retail and commercial uses are developed in peripheral areas beyond the downtown.

Other key issues identified as part of the Plan Update process included building height regulations, ground floor activation and parking standards for residential and lodging uses in the HCC zone.

Recommendations

- Direct redevelopment to Downtown if it promotes a diverse mix of development typologies including commercial, residential multi-family, market rate and affordable housing.
- Promote residential uses Downtown including rental and ownership units, ground-level and upper-level units intended to support increase density and a variety of multi-generational populations and needs, such as those who are experiencing disabilities and aging in community.
- Create opportunities for public gathering spaces or green spaces through in the Downtown. Include in updates to Parks and Recreation Master Plans.

Unified Development Code Recommendations

- Provide more flexibility with certain development standards -- notably parking requirements and ground floor activation standards.
- Look at creative ways to incentivize development, e.g., provide a parking reduction credit for projects located adjacent to public transit service.

- Provide credit for on-street parking to support project related ground floor retail uses and event parking requirements. On-street parking must be located adjacent to the project site.
- Amend the ground floor commercial use standards to acknowledge more flexible design solutions intended to address ground level activation in certain areas in the HCC zone.
- Consider adjusting the total maximum building height requirement through a cost/benefit and development impact study in the Downtown with the intent to allow flexibility for ground level design outcomes.
- Consider a centralized shared parking approach to create efficiency between day-use retail and employment uses and night-time residential uses. This concept will require multiple project partners and landowners to work together to create a shared-parking investment opportunity in the Downtown.
- Establish a flexible standard for ground floor activation in the Downtown that takes into consideration Main Street and secondary street frontages in the HCC zone and corresponding design requirements for both street and frontage typologies. The flexible design standards would include variations for certain ground floor conditions based on primary (Main Street and intersection corners) and secondary street frontage conditions. Ground floor variations may consider active retail, commercial office, live/work and other acceptable ground floor uses and forms – to help make adjustment where the HCC zone transitions to non-HCC residential areas.
- Seek travel demand strategies to reduce parking demands to compliment the Downtown mixed-use commercial and neighborhood urban form, including enforcement of timed parking, parking maximums, permit programs, or unbundling (requiring the separate pricing of residential parking from the rent or sale price of a home or building).

4.4 Downtown North

OVERVIEW

The Downtown North property has been the subject of several discussions over the years and as part of community outreach throughout the Comp Plan Update process. The Plan Update process prompted an open discussion about this important area in the Town of Carbondale. In addition, focus group meetings and workshops were held with various community experts such as architects, developers (not associated with the property), property owners in and around the Downtown to discuss the future of the Downtown North area.

Much of the Downtown North area is currently held in ownership by one property owner as two legally separated parcels. The estimated 12-acre site is primarily occupied by several light industrial-commercial oriented businesses. Over the years, several different concept site plans have been developed for this area. However, to date, no formal plan submittal has been provided to the Town for review.

As Carbondale evolves, the Downtown North area will become an increasingly important property. Due in part to its location adjacent to the Downtown HCC zone, and the size and scale of the development footprint, the Downtown North could feasibly help address several communitywide goals and objectives,

such as promoting a mix of uses near the downtown, housing supply, housing diversification and affordability, sustainable development strategies, walkable small-town character, and redevelopment that is complementary to the Downtown urban form.

On the other hand, the current light industrial and commercial uses in Downtown North provide upwards of 100-125 jobs now, and locations for light industrial uses throughout the Town are limited. The current uses and related jobs are difficult to transfer to other areas of Town. As a result, the community will be faced with debating the merits and trade-offs of two very different ideas of what Downtown North may be in the future.

Discussions as a part of the Plan Update process for the Downtown North area focused heavily on what the future redevelopment of this property may be. Should the area be thought of as an extension of the traditional downtown form, scale, and mixture of uses? This suggestion would add to and support the elements of the downtown and include restaurants, retail, offices, arts, non-profits, conference center/hotel, and a broad mix of residential unit types and workplace facilities. If Downtown North redevelops based on this model, all or portions of the light industrial uses would need to transition elsewhere in the community and land area intend to accommodate this type of use is clearly in short supply in the community.

COMMUNITY INPUT

During the Plan Update process, the questions were asked:

1. What do you envision the future of Downtown North to be?
2. What types of uses represent the highest and best use scenario?
3. What type of urban form and amenities do you think are appropriate for this site?

Based on this inquiry, the input received included a blend of both concepts: consider a mix of residential and small-scale neighborhood commercial uses to help retain the existing commercial and industrial activities and the on-site jobs that currently exist.

Some people felt that the current uses (and jobs, and particularly the diversity in creative-oriented jobs) are important to the Carbondale economy and spirit. Others felt that the area could transition to help address other Town priorities such as housing supply, affordability, and diversity. Comments were made that – if the current uses and jobs were to go away – where in Town could this type of use go?

Anecdotal comments stated that the Town's creative maker's industry housed in these places that naturally emerged is beginning to decline due to a lack of affordable housing and artists/makers being priced out of workshop space.

Considering the input, and the overall community priorities of housing diversity, climate, resiliency, and small-town character in Carbondale, the current recommendation is that the future Downtown North site should strive to create a balance of housing diversity and job creation as part of a new mixed use redevelopment. The site should support flexible building typologies designed to accommodate small-scale neighborhood uses supportive of retail, creative maker space or incubator live-work spaces, small-scale commercial and low impact commercial uses. The overall character is that of a gritty, light industrial, mix of uses that complements the small-scale nature of Carbondale and the walkability and architectural form of the Town's Main Street with a traditional street grid. Specific uses such as hospitality should be further evaluated to determine market demand and whether this site is the best opportunity for hospitality compared to other locations such as Downtown.

Other Observations

- Redevelopment of Downtown North may displace light industrial or creative industry jobs desired by some in the community.
- Added rooftops, activity and traffic to the area may impact the mobility network for both pedestrians and vehicles if not properly planned for.
- Land uses in new non-residential development in Downtown North and nearby neighborhoods should be carefully reviewed to ensure a smooth transition and compatibility between adjacent uses.

Recommendations

- Consider flexible uses and building forms and typologies as represented along 4th Street in the area toward Rio Grande Trail.
- Pursue opportunities to add to the community's gathering and green spaces with a central square or open area.
- Urban design should consider circulation to allow vehicles to access the rear of buildings and pedestrians are prioritized in the frontages.
- Promote a diverse mix of lot and housing types that includes multi-family attached row houses and townhomes, duplex and 4- to 6-unit corner lots and possible 2nd and 3rd floor flats. Housing units would include a mix of market rate rental and ownership units and affordable housing units.
- Acknowledge adjacent land uses while locating uses and massing on-site with less density on the north and more density on the south and east portions of the property.
- Neighborhood-scale retail commercial uses should be concentrated near the 4th Street and Rio Grande Trail intersection.
- Integrate light industrial/commercial and creative makers space units that include increased floor to ceiling area, flexible floor area and access doorways / roll-up doors.
- Allow non-residential uses to evolve based on new realities of retail and work from home.
- Optimize density to prevent need for annexations and to populate downtown core to the benefit of downtown businesses and pedestrian and transit access.
- Consider allowing the property owners the ability to subdivide for permanent financing mechanics and varying lot sizes and uses.
- Consider redevelopment near the Rio Grande Trail corridor in a way that may accommodate future light rail or other transit facilities.

Future Land Use Recommendations

- Define the Downtown North area as the Neighborhood Light Industrial/Mixed Use area that provides the framework for a Neighborhood Light Industrial/Mixed Use Zone with a vision for a medium-scale, light manufacturing, or creative space district.
- Consider an increase in density if a proposed design supports the intent of the new neighborhood.
- Create urban design standards to define street and blocks, alleys, parcels and building footprints, building typologies, massing, and scale, building articulation, and fenestration concepts.
- Provide a central gathering space that includes shade trees, benches, and other amenities.

4.5 High Density Residential Areas

OVERVIEW

The High Density Residential Focus Areas regard designated land use areas within the Town that are zoned as a Residential/High Density (R/HD) classification per the UDC. These areas are occupied by a variety of housing types that include multi-family apartments on smaller lots and attached or detached single-family dwellings. Located just outside the Town HCC, these uses exhibit a range of housing unit types from many eras, not all of which are built to the allowable density.

A considerable amount of long-term rental housing stock exists in these areas and is at risk of redevelopment, potentially displacing low- to moderate-income families.

COMMUNITY INPUT

During the Plan Update process, the key questions asked was;

1. How does what's on the ground in Residential Focus Areas compare to what's possible to build?
2. If these areas develop to allowable standards will the results be acceptable, including potential displacement of at-risk communities?
3. What mechanisms can be used to ensure compatibility between areas of different adjacent residential character?

Several R/HD zone districts are located adjacent to low-density single family zone districts. Community input expressed concern that if properties in R/HD zones are assembled and redeveloped, the result might include incompatible housing types or scales of buildings in these areas. The concerns raised indicated that:

- Assembly of parcels in R/HD zones may create incompatible urban form and scale between 35' tall structures and low-density residential.
- Redevelopment of R/HD parcels may lead to a loss of an older, diverse housing stock that in some cases provides affordable units in comparison to elsewhere in town.

Recommendations:

- Consider revisions to the “Transitions between unlike land uses” (UDC 3.7.5) in the Town’s Unified Development Code that strengthen design compatibility in areas where R/HD zones abut or are across the street from R/LD zones.
 - Consider residential infill design standards / guidelines to address design compatibility, form, scale, and character. The development standards should specifically address adjacencies, roof line forms, solar access, entry and window alignments, setbacks, upper level step-backs, and privacy and other mass and scale standards to ensure compatibility of structures between low and high-density uses and protection of neighborhood character as changes may occur over time.
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5.0 Implementation Strategies

5.1 Implementation Matrix

Implementation Matrix was sent in previous packet materials.
