



# Land Use Plan Amendment Report

## Case #LUP25-0002

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### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

*City Council Date: December 15, 2025*

<b>PROJECT NAME</b>	Villages at Buffalo Run East Townhomes
<b>LOCATION</b>	Southeast corner of East 120 <sup>th</sup> Avenue and Chambers Road
<b>SITE SIZE</b>	13.8 Acres
<b>CURRENT ZONING</b>	PUD (Villages at Buffalo Run East Planned Unit Development)
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Lokal Homes
<b>OWNER</b>	Buffalo Run Commercial Investors LLC
<b>CASE PLANNER</b>	Nic Berry

### **REQUEST**

This Land Use Plan Amendment, if approved, would change the comprehensive plan designation of the subject property from Northern Range Commercial to Mixed Commercial. This change is being requested to support a future PUD Zone Document Amendment.

### **LAND USE PLAN AMENDMENT**

The 2045 Comprehensive Plan has several key maps which help to guide development within Commerce City. While these maps are not regulatory or parcel specific, they are used as a reference in making zone change decisions. This Land Use Plan Amendment is a request to make a change to the Economic Development and Residential Area Framework maps within the Commerce City 2045 Comprehensive Plan. The Economic Development Framework Map indicates areas throughout the City where commercial uses could be located. For the subject property, the Economic Development Framework map calls for Northern Range Commercial. Northern Range Commercial is characterized as a commercial center which contains retail and entertainment. The applicant is proposing a change from this designation to Mixed Commercial. Mixed Commercial is characterized as a mix of community commercial, office, and high density residential.

In addition to the changes to the Economic Development Framework map, the applicant is also proposing a change to the Residential Area Framework Map. As adopted, the subject property has no designation on the Residential Area Framework Map. This indicates no designation and therefore is not called to be developed for residential uses. Additionally, anywhere Mixed Commercial is indicated on the Economic Development Framework Map the Residential

Framework map reflects that possibility of residential development. As a result of the change to the Economic Development Framework Map, the applicant is proposing to add the designation of Greenfield Development for the subject property. Greenfield development is characterized as new residential development in the Northern Range.

## **BACKGROUND AND CASE HISTORY**

There are four related applications currently being reviewed for this site:

- LUP25-0002- This Land Use Plan Amendment
- PUDA24-0002- PUD Zone Document Amendment
- SKP24-0003- Sketch Plat
- DS24-0002- Design Standards
- Future applications will include a Final Plat and Development Plan

The subject property is located within the Villages at Buffalo Run East PUD. The original PUD was adopted in 2001. Since that time, the nearly 358-acre PUD has been developed except for the commercial corners at the southeast corner of East 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Chambers and at the southwest corner of East 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Buckley Road. In 2016, the City approved an amendment to the PUD to decrease the acreage designated for commercial at East 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Buckley Road. There has been no change to the PUD for the subject property since 2001.

The landowner has been working with the City for this subject site since 2020. Attracting commercial users has been difficult due to the limited visibility and access from Interstate-76, development of the commercial center at East 104<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Chamber Road, and the development of the Prairie Center in Brighton. In addition to these logistical challenges to commercial development, COVID-19 has changed how commercial developers view land acquisition. To date, the subject property has only been able to attract a car wash.

The applicant is proposing to convert this commercial center into a horizontal mixed-use project to help attract commercial users. The Land Use Plan Amendment to change from Northern Range Commercial to Mixed Commercial will support this vision for the property. This application will be followed by a PUD Zone Document Amendment to introduce uses (townhomes) to the property. The applicant is proposing to limit the residential development to approximately 7 of the 13.8-acre site.

## **PROJECT ANALYSIS**

### **Site Overview**

The requested Land Use Plan Amendment is for approximately 13.8 acres, located at the southeast corner of East 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Chambers Road.

This site is bordered by the existing residential to the south and east and limited commercial development to the north and west. The subject property is bounded by existing public roadways East 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the north, Jasper Street to the east, East 119<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the south, and Chamber Road to the west.

## **Overall Analysis**

The proposed Land Use Plan Amendment has been reviewed by the Development Review Team (DRT) including Planning, Public Works, Engineering, Economic Development, Environmental, South Adams County Fire District, and South Adams County Water and Sanitation District. The DRT has reviewed the proposal against the Comprehensive Plan, Economic Development Strategic Plan, Land Development Code (LDC) requirements and other applicable plans.

## **Traffic Study**

A Traffic Study was requested by City staff to review in conjunction with the sketch plat and future final plat. The improvements the City will require with a development agreement are yet to be determined. However, the applicant's proposal of switching from a commercial center to a mixed-use project is expected to decrease the potential future traffic by approximately 3,780 trips per day.

## **Neighborhood Input**

On October 9, 2025, a neighborhood meeting was held at Buffalo Run Clubhouse. There were 28 people in attendance. Those in attendance asked about future plans for East 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue, the traffic impacts on Jasper Street, and public parking on East 119<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Those in attendance were specifically concerned about the left turns trying to leave the community (see Traffic Study Analysis).

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (CP) CONSISTENCY**

### **Character Areas:**

The subject property is located within the Northern Neighborhoods character area in which Multifamily Residential is listed as a secondary land use (near collectors and arterials), meaning they are less prevalent and serve to support the primary land use. The proposed Mixed Commercial designation allows for multifamily residential in conjunction with commercial development. Chambers Road and East 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue are considered arterial roadways. Therefore, locating townhomes in this area fits the character area. This proposal is also compliant with the Character Area. (Land Use) goals and objectives.

- Goal 1: Strive for a balanced mix of land uses across the City as represented in the Character Areas Plan and map.
- Goal 1.1: Provide neighborhood-level services within residential areas, as appropriate.
- Goal 1.2: Provide opportunities at key nodes and intersections with land for business, retail, and industrial needs.

### **Housing and Neighborhoods:**

The proposed Land Use Plan Amendment would allow the property to develop as townhomes. If approved the subject property would be classified as Greenfield Development within the [Residential Areas Framework map](#). Greenfield Development calls for high quality buildings and

site design standards, as well as future connections to existing neighborhoods. The accompanying Design Standards application will ensure that this development is of high quality.

Additionally, the Housing and Neighborhoods chapter calls for higher density near commercial corridors and nodes to promote a more desirable transition. The proposed Land Use Plan Amendment would provide a transitional use between the commercial area and the residents to the south and east.

The Housing and Neighborhoods Chapter also references the 2018 Housing Needs Assessment, which states that 76% of Commerce City's homes are single-family detached (86% in the Northern range). There is a need for more varied housing options for individuals and families that meet their budget, space, tenure, location, and lifestyle needs. Lastly, the Mix of Housing section within the Housing and Neighborhoods Chapter also recommends supporting higher density housing development along underperforming commercial corridors to help activate said areas. This proposal is also compliant with the following Housing and Neighborhoods goals and objectives.

- Goal 1: Promote a full range of housing options for residents of all ages, incomes, physical abilities, and lifestyles.
- Goal 1.1: Support greater housing choices and neighborhood amenities for all city residents.
- Goal 1.2: Promote a variety of housing types to increase affordable housing options.
- Goal 1.7: Increase the range of "missing middle" housing.
- Goal 3: Support existing neighborhoods with appropriate maintenance and infrastructure improvements.
- Goal 4: Build new neighborhoods with diverse housing, strong design, and ample open space and amenities that are welcoming to all.
- Goal 4.5: Continue to advance high-quality design.
- Goal 6: Create a sense of community in all of Commerce City's neighborhoods.
- Goal 7: Ensure that all City residents have the opportunity to obtain safe, healthy, and affordable housing.

#### **Commerce and Employment:**

The Land Use Plan Amendment is proposed to allow a horizontal mixed-use project. The vision for this development is that there is a symbiotic relationship between the higher density residential and commercial development. The density of people attracts and supports commercial development, and the nearby commercial development makes it an exciting place to live. Because of this relationship it can be found that this proposal is meeting the following Commerce and Employment Goals and Objectives:

- Goal 2: Promote a healthy, progressive, and competitive local economy.
- Goal 3.1: Promote site design, programs and development that add to the overall quality of life for Commerce City residents and businesses.

- Goal 5.5: Explore opportunities for pedestrian-orientated development commercial center with a mix of uses.
- Goal 6: Attract and support quality retailers to become a more balanced City.

### **Art, Culture and Tourism:**

The Community Character map located in the Art, Culture and Tourism chapter of the Comprehensive Plan designates East 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue as a Primary Key Corridor, which is a highly trafficked roadway which should be enhanced and well maintained. Additionally, the same map notes East 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Interstate-76 as a Key Gateway Area. This proposal will bring high-quality development to the area and enhance these major locations and roadways within the City.

## **LAND USE PLAN AMENDMENT APPROVAL CRITERIA**

A decision for this case must be based on the following criteria from Sec. 21-2110(3) of the Land Development Code. An application may be approved when the proposed amendment:

### **Criteria (a): Is consistent with the overall intent of the comprehensive plan;**

The proposed Land Use Plan Amendment will allow for development of townhomes which will provide a better transition from the single-unit homes to the commercial development, will support the commercial development at the corner, and provides for a greater mix of housing types. All of which are major goals of the Comprehensive Plan. Therefore, it can be found that **Criteria (a)** is met.

### **Criteria (b): Is consistent with the purposes set forth in Section 21-2100;**

This proposed Land Use Plan Amendment will promote the development of higher density residential. This housing type is generally more attainable and is thereby promoting greater economic welfare for Commerce City citizens. This Land Use Plan Amendment also creates a positive pattern of development which others can follow as an example. Therefore, it can be found that **Criteria (b)** is met.

### **Criteria (c): Is necessary or desirable because of changing social values, new planning concepts, or other social or economic conditions;**

The City's Economic Development division has reviewed the current Economic Development Framework Map and has determined that the map is overly optimistic in the areas designated for commercial development. To avoid vacant, under-utilized land the Economic Development Framework map needs to be amended. Additionally, after COVID-19 commercial developers are buying less land while other major retailers are closing locations around the Denver metro-area. Additionally, the Denver area is experiencing a housing shortage. This is inflating housing costs and making owning a home out of reach for many Commerce City residents. Therefore, it can be found that **Criteria (c)** is met.

**Criteria (d): Will not have a negative effect on the immediate area;**

The type of development proposed is expected to have minimal impacts to the immediate area. This would include a lowered impact on the transportation network compared to what is currently allowed. Additionally, impacts fees will be applied to this development to help offset the impacts to services and facilities. Therefore, it can be found that **Criteria (d)** is met.

**Criteria (e): Will not have a negative effect on the future development of the area; and**

All services that future development at this location would use, have been built out and are ready for connections. As such, the proposed amendment will have no effect on the future development. Additionally, as a quasi in-fill development project, City services like Police and Public Works already extend well beyond the boundary of this amendment. For other services the subject property is already included in the service districts for South Adams County Fire Protection District and South Adams County Water and Sanitation District. Limiting any negative impacts on future development. Therefore, it can be found that **Criteria (e)** is met.

**Criteria (f): Will promote the public health, safety, and general welfare of the people of the city.**

The proposed Land Use Plan amendment will help promote new development in the City. All new developments must conform with City codes and standards like the Land Development Code, Building Code, Engineering Standards and Specifications, and other requirements. Adherence to these standards will create a development which is safe and meets all health standards. Additionally, the development of a different housing types than what it predominately available will allow for more choices and different price ranges. This flexibility will help to promote the general welfare of Commerce City residents. Therefore, it can be found that **Criteria (f)** is met.

**CONSIDERATIONS FOR REQUESTED LAND USE PLAN AMENDMENT**

1. Economic Development supports the changes proposed to the Economic Development Framework Map.
2. Allowing residential uses to be a development option, could decrease daily trips to the subject property

**PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION**

A public hearing was held on November 18, 2025 in front of the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission voted 4-0 to recommend approval of this Land Use Plan Amendment.

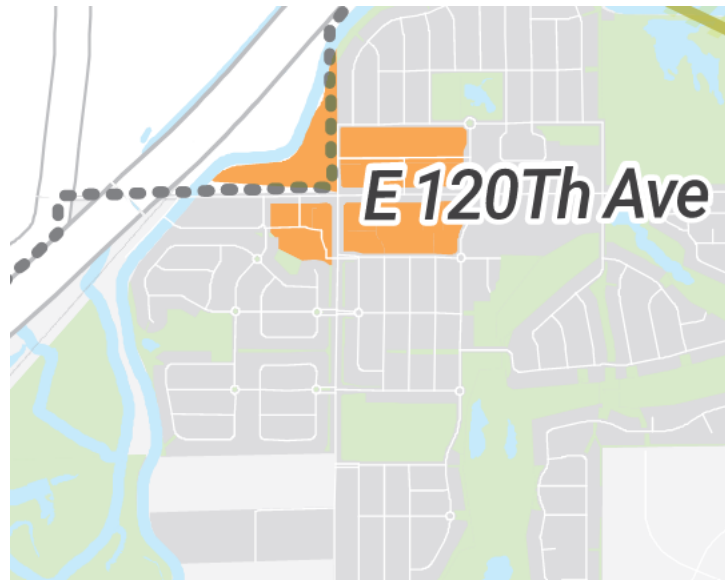
**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

The proposed Land Use Plan Amendment is supported by the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. Further, the inclusion of residential will aid in attracting commercial users to this area and could lower the traffic burden on failing intersections. As such, staff is recommending approval of this Land Use Plan Amendment.

### **AVAILABLE ACTIONS**

- Available Action #1: Approve Ordinance LUP25-0002, to find that the requested Land Use Plan Amendment meets the criteria of the Land Development Code found in Section 21-2110 (3).
- Available Action #2: Deny Ordinance LUP25-0002, to find that the requested Land Use Plan Amendment fails to meet the criteria of the Land Development Code found in Section 21-2110 (3).
- Available Action #3: Approve with conditions Ordinance LUP25-0002, to find that the requested Land Use Plan Amendment meets the criteria of the Land Development Code found in Section 21-2110 (3) with added conditions.

## Economic Development Framework Map (existing)



## Residential Framework Map (existing)







## Economic Development Framework Map (proposed)



## Residential Framework Map (proposed)



## Aerial Map

