



Land Use Planning: Framing the Vision



What is land use planning?

Land use planning is the process of thinking about how we'd like our built (and un-built) environment to look in the future. Built on a visioning process, it frames the discussion for the steps the City needs to take to make that vision a reality. As a municipal government, the City helps facilitate this community-wide visioning process through updates to the comprehensive plan and through smaller area planning efforts.

As part of the broader comprehensive plan, the land use element helps provide guidance on where and how growth should occur within the existing context of the City's built environment. The planning process helps to identify the context, character, and quality of the City's built environment, and makes recommendations for improvements from reinvestment and invigoration to preservation and protection.

Did you know?

The City's Boards & Commissions frequently look to the recommendations of the land use element, as well as recommendations made in adopted neighborhood, area, and corridor plans, when making decisions about applications for rezoning and development. While these recommendations are non-binding, they help provide context by informing decision-makers of the community's vision and guiding principles.

Please Join Us!

We're hosting our second round of open houses - have you put one of them on your calendar yet? Please be sure to come and let us know if the recommendations we've developed reflect your long term vision for Columbia. We're hosting two identical, drop-in open houses:

Tuesday, February 12, 2019,
5:30-8:30pm,
Woodland Park, Gym

Wednesday, February 13, 2019,
5:00-8:00pm,
Richland Library Main, Auditorium

Neighborhood, Area, & Corridor Planning

In planning for a smaller geographic area, residents, business owners, and others come together to define a vision for the feel and the look of that area. They spend time thinking not only about what they'd like their area to look like, but what steps need to be taken to make their shared vision a reality.

If you've taken part in a visioning process for your community, it's likely you've joined in this type of planning effort. These plans are smaller to medium in scale and in more recent years, the City has adopted neighborhood, area, and corridor plans as addenda to the comprehensive plan, and therefore as city policy. More recent planning efforts can be found [on the City's website](#).

Part of the Plan Columbia planning process was also developing a strategy about how best to move forward with area plans throughout the City. Recognizing that many

neighborhoods cross jurisdictional boundaries, and that the successes and struggles of a single neighborhood are tied to adjacent neighborhoods and business districts, the plan divided the City into [23 recommended planning areas](#).

Land Use Planning vs. Zoning

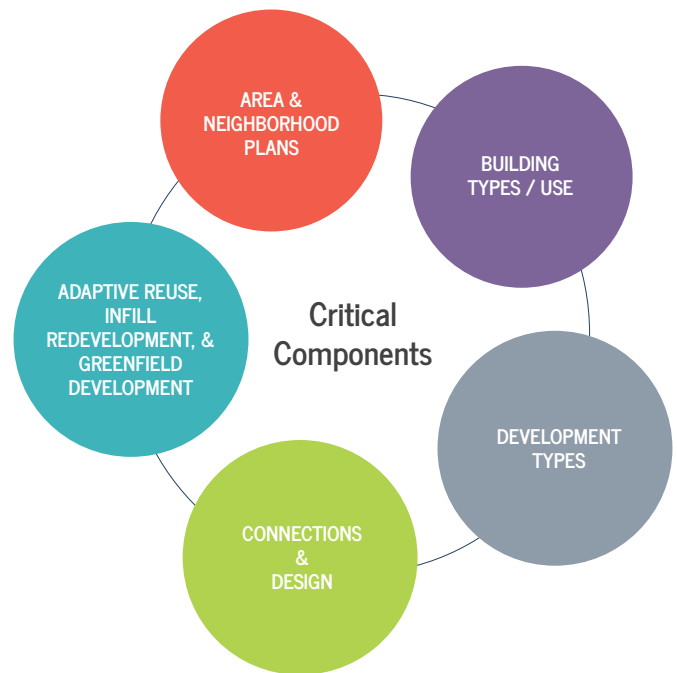
Where land use planning takes a longer-term and broader view, zoning is the regulatory tool that helps provide citizens with predictable standards and expectations. Zoning districts are more specific than future land use classifications, and they carry regulatory weight. Zoning districts set forth very specific regulations for use types and how structures should relate to each other, property lines, streets, and other physical features. One of the reasons - but not the only reason - that the City updated the land use element in 2014 was to better inform the code-rewrite process, which is currently underway. The land use planning process also helped us identify future

Plan Columbia: Land Use Plan

The planning process for [Plan Columbia](#) began in 2013. Citizens were engaged throughout the process through public meetings and stakeholder focus groups, and Council adopted this update to the land use element of the comprehensive plan in 2014. While the Columbia Compass planning process will result in some updates to the Plan Columbia document and maps, we anticipate that the guiding principles and five critical components will remain the same.

Plan Columbia: Critical Components

The land use element is broken into five critical components, which help identify how the vision and guiding principles should be implemented in the short and long term.



These components helped:

- Identify future planning areas for additional study and visioning to address the market, infrastructure, and other needs which are not specifically land-use related.
- Develop a glossary of building and land use types to be incorporated into development types as appropriate primary, secondary, and tertiary uses.
- Establish development types (also referred to as future land use classifications) that share similar characteristics of function, form, and land use. After careful review of context and the community’s visions for these areas, these development types were used to create a future land use map of the City.
- Prioritize connections and design in gateways, corridors, and greenways - enhancing the public realm.
- Establish context and recommend guidelines for adaptive reuse, infill, and redevelopment.

We want to hear from you!

Our second survey is up, and this one asks you to help us set priorities and make difficult choices about how we make your vision a reality in the next 10 years. In our first survey, we had 1,197 responses, and we are so grateful for your thoughtful comments. Please help us out by taking our second survey and asking your friends, family, and colleagues to do the same!