

Ft. Collins, CO

Division 4.4 Low Density Mixed-Use Neighborhood District (L-M-N)

(A) Purpose. The Low Density Mixed-Use Neighborhood District is intended to be a setting for a predominance of low density housing combined with complementary and supporting land uses that serve a neighborhood and are developed and operated in harmony with the residential characteristics of a neighborhood. The main purpose of the District is to meet a wide range of needs of everyday living in neighborhoods that include a variety of housing choices, that invite walking to gathering places, services and conveniences, and that are fully integrated into the larger community by the pattern of streets, blocks, and other linkages. A neighborhood center provides a focal point, and attractive walking and biking paths invite residents to enjoy the center as well as the small neighborhood parks. Any new development in this District shall be arranged to form part of an individual neighborhood.

Typically, Low Density Neighborhoods will be clustered around and integral with a Medium Density Mixed-Use Neighborhood with a Neighborhood Commercial Center at its core. For the purposes of this Division, a neighborhood shall be considered to consist of approximately eighty (80) to one hundred sixty (160) acres, with its edges typically consisting of major streets, drainageways, irrigation ditches, railroad tracks and other major physical features.

(B) Permitted Uses.

(1) The following uses are permitted in the L-M-N District, subject to basic development review, provided that such uses are located on lots that are part of an approved site specific development plan:

(a) Accessory/Miscellaneous Uses:

1. Accessory buildings.
2. Accessory uses.

(b) Any use authorized pursuant to a site specific development plan that was processed and approved either in compliance with the Zoning Code in effect on March 27, 1997, or in compliance with this Land Use Code (other than a final subdivision plat, or minor subdivision plat, approved pursuant to Section 29-643 or 29-644 of prior law, for any nonresidential development or any multi-family dwelling containing more than four [4] dwelling units), provided that such use shall be subject to all of the use and density requirements and conditions of said site specific development plan.

(c) Any use which is not hereafter listed as a permitted use in this zone district but which was permitted for a specific parcel of property pursuant to the zone district regulations in effect for such parcel on March 27, 1997; and which physically existed upon such parcel on March 27, 1997; provided, however, that such existing use shall constitute a permitted use only on such parcel of property.

(d) Institutional/Civic/Public Uses:

1. Neighborhood parks as defined by the Parks and Recreation Policy Plan.

(2) The following uses are permitted in the L-M-N District, subject to administrative review:

(a) Residential Uses:

1. Single-family detached dwellings.

2. Two-family dwellings.
3. Single-family attached dwellings.
4. Multi-family dwellings (limited to eight [8] or less units per building).
5. Group homes for up to eight (8) developmentally disabled or elderly persons.
6. Mixed-use dwelling units.

(b) Institutional/Civic/Public Uses:

1. Places of worship or assembly with a building footprint which does not exceed a total of twenty-five thousand (25,000) square feet.
2. Public and private schools for college, university, vocational and technical education, provided they are located within five hundred (500) feet of East Vine Drive or railroad property adjacent and parallel to East Vine Drive.
3. Public facilities.
4. Parks, recreation and other open lands, except neighborhood parks as defined by the Parks and Recreation Policy Plan.
5. Cemeteries.
6. Community facilities.
7. Neighborhood support/recreational facilities.

(c) Commercial/Retail Uses:

1. Bed and breakfast establishments with six (6) or fewer beds.
2. Child care centers.
3. Neighborhood centers consisting of at least two (2) of the following uses: mixed-use dwelling units; retail stores with less than five thousand (5,000) square feet of building footprint area; convenience retail stores; personal and business service shops; small animal veterinary facilities; offices, financial services and clinics containing less than five thousand (5,000) square feet of building footprint area; community facilities; neighborhood support/recreation facilities; schools; child care centers; and places of worship or assembly.
4. Elderly day care centers.

(3) The following uses are permitted in the L-M-N District, subject to Planning and Zoning Board review:

(a) Residential Uses:

1. Mobile home parks.
2. Group homes, other than allowed in subparagraph (2)(a)5 above.
3. Boarding and rooming houses.

(b) Institutional/Civic/Public Uses:

1. Public and private schools for elementary, intermediate and high school education, and for vocational and technical training.
2. Golf courses.
3. Long-term care facilities.
4. Places of worship or assembly with a building footprint which exceeds a total of twenty-five thousand (25,000) square feet.

(c) Commercial/Retail Uses:

1. Neighborhood centers consisting of one (1) or more of the following uses: standard and fast food restaurants (without drive-in or drive-through facilities); artisan and photography studios and galleries; or convenience retail stores with fuel sales that are at least three-quarters (¾) mile from any other such use and from any gasoline station; provided that such use or uses are combined with at least one (1) other use listed in Section 4.4(B)(2)(c)3 above.
2. Enclosed mini-storage facilities, provided they are located on property adjoining the railroad property adjacent and parallel to East Vine Drive, and are located within five hundred (500) feet of such railroad property.
3. Limited indoor recreation establishments, provided they are located within five hundred (500) feet of East Vine Drive or of the railroad property adjacent and parallel to East Vine Drive.
4. Offices, financial services and clinics which are not part of a neighborhood center.

(d) Industrial Uses (provided they are located within five hundred [500] feet of East Vine Drive):

1. Workshops and custom small industry.
2. Light industrial (production, assembly, packaging).

(e) Accessory/Miscellaneous Uses:

1. Wireless telecommunication equipment.

(C) Prohibited Uses. All uses that are not (1) expressly allowed as permitted uses in this Section or (2) determined to be permitted by the Director pursuant to Section 1.3.4 of this Land Use Code shall be prohibited.

(D) Land Use Standards.

(1) Density.

(a) Residential developments in the Low Density Mixed-Use Neighborhood District shall have an overall minimum average density of five (5) dwelling units per net acre of residential land, except that residential developments (whether overall development plans or project development plans) containing twenty (20) acres or less and located in the area defined as "infill area" need not comply with the requirement of this subparagraph (a).

(b) The maximum density of any development plan taken as a whole shall be eight (8) dwelling units per gross acre of residential land, except that affordable housing projects (whether approved pursuant to overall development plans or project development plans) containing ten (10) acres or less may attain a maximum density, taken as a whole, of twelve (12) dwellings units per gross acre of residential land.

(c) The maximum density of any phase in a multiple-phase development plan shall be twelve (12) dwelling units per gross acre of residential land, and the maximum density of any portion of a phase containing a grouping of two (2) or more multi-family structures shall be twelve (12) dwelling units per gross acre of residential land.

(2) Mix of Housing. A mix of permitted housing types shall be included in any individual development plan, to the extent reasonably feasible, depending on the size of the parcel. In order to promote such variety, the following minimum standards shall be met:

(a) A minimum of two (2) housing types shall be required on any project development plan containing thirty (30) acres or more, including such plans that are part of a phased overall development; and a minimum of three (3) housing types shall be required on any such project development plan containing forty-five (45) acres or more.

(b) Lot sizes and dimensions shall be varied for different housing types to avoid monotonous streetscapes. For example, larger housing types on larger lots are encouraged on corners. Smaller lots are encouraged adjacent to common open spaces.

(c) The following list of housing types shall be used to satisfy this requirement:

1. Standard lot single-family detached dwellings (lots containing six thousand [6,000] square feet or more).
2. Small lot single-family detached dwellings (lots containing less than six thousand [6,000] square feet).
3. Two-family dwellings.
4. Single-family attached dwellings.
5. Mixed-use dwelling units.
6. Multi-family dwellings (limited to eight [8] dwelling units per building);
7. Mobile home parks.

(d) A single housing type shall not constitute more than ninety (90) percent of the total number of dwelling units. If single-family detached dwellings are the only housing types included in the mix, then the difference between the average lot size for each type of single-family detached dwelling shall be at least two thousand (2,000) square feet.

(3) Neighborhood Centers.

(a) Access to Neighborhood Center. At least ninety (90) percent of the dwellings in all development projects greater than forty (40) acres shall be located within three thousand nine hundred sixty (3,960) feet (three-quarter [] mile) of either a neighborhood center contained within the project, or an existing neighborhood center located in an adjacent development, or an existing or planned Neighborhood Commercial District commercial project, which distance shall be measured along street frontage, and without crossing an arterial street. Neighborhood centers shall meet the requirements contained in subparagraphs (b) through (e) below.

(b) Location. A neighborhood center shall be planned as an integral part of surrounding residential development and located where the network of local streets provides direct access to the center.

Neighborhood centers that are located on arterial streets and that include retail uses or restaurants shall be spaced at least three thousand nine hundred sixty (3,960) feet (three-quarters [] mile) apart.

(c) Land Use Requirements. A neighborhood center shall include two (2) or more of the following uses: mixed-use dwelling units; community facilities; neighborhood support/recreation facilities; schools; child care centers; places of worship or assembly; convenience retail stores; offices, financial services and clinics; personal or business service shops; standard or fast food restaurants (without drive-in or drive-through facilities); small animal veterinary clinics; and artisan or photography studios or galleries. No drive-in facilities shall be permitted. A neighborhood center shall be a maximum of five (5) acres in size, excluding such portion of the neighborhood center which is composed of a school, park, place of worship and assembly and/or outdoor space as defined in subparagraph (e) of this Section.

(d) Design and Access. The design of neighborhood centers shall be integrated with surrounding residential areas by matching the scale of nearby residential buildings; providing direct access from surrounding residential areas; creating usable outdoor spaces; orienting building entrances to connecting walkways; and, to the extent reasonably feasible, maintaining/continuing the architectural themes or character of nearby neighborhoods.

(e) Outdoor Spaces. A publicly accessible outdoor space such as a park, plaza, pavilion or courtyard shall be included within or adjacent to every neighborhood center to provide a focal point for such activities as outdoor gatherings, neighborhood events, picnicking, sitting and passive and active recreation.

(4) Other Nonresidential Development. Permitted nonresidential uses that are not part of a neighborhood center shall not be approved in any development project until the requirements for a neighborhood center in subsection (3) above have been met. This limitation shall not apply to uses permitted along East Vine Drive under subsection (5) below.

(5) Blocks of Nonresidential Uses Along East Vine Drive. In order to establish a buffer and transition from rail switching and industrial uses to the south, certain uses are permitted along East Vine Drive, subject to the criteria below. Any development project that proposes uses which are only permitted in the Zone District along East Vine Drive shall comply with the following criteria:

(a) Any such development shall consist of multiple buildings cohesively planned and designed.

(b) Any such development project must occupy at least one (1) entire block face, with East Vine Drive forming one (1) side of the development project.

(c) A single tier of buildings facing only one (1) side of an internal street shall be permitted to a maximum depth of three hundred (300) feet.

(d) A double tier(s) of buildings facing both sides of an internal street, with the land use boundary change occurring along a mid-block line, shall be permitted to a depth of five hundred (500) feet.

(e) To the extent reasonably feasible, loading docks, service bays and garage doors shall not face East Vine Drive. The intent is for such facilities to face side yards or other internal site areas and not public streets. If it is not reasonably feasible to accommodate the function of the intended use without such facilities facing East Vine Drive, then such facilities shall be completely incorporated into the architectural design of the building according to the provisions of this Land Use Code.

(f) Any enclosed mini-storage facility shall include a caretaker's dwelling facing a local or collector street, and any storage unit building frontage along the street shall consist only of rear walls of storage unit buildings and landscaping. Fencing along streets shall be wrought iron, or its visual equivalent, and any fencing along streets that exceeds four (4) feet in height shall be placed in segments between buildings, and not as a continuous perimeter fence.

(6) Facing Uses. To the extent reasonably feasible, land use boundaries in neighborhoods shall occur at mid-block locations rather than at streets, so that similar buildings face each other.

(7) Small Neighborhood Parks. Either a neighborhood park or a privately owned park, that is at least one (1) acre in size, shall be located within a maximum of one-third (1/3) mile of at least ninety (90) percent of the dwellings in any development project of ten (10) acres or larger as measured along street frontage. Such parks shall meet the following criteria:

(a) Location. Such parks shall be highly visible, secure settings formed by the street layout and pattern of lots and easily observed from streets. Rear facades and rear yards of dwellings shall not abut more than two (2) sides or more than fifty (50) percent of the perimeter frontage of the park.

(b) Accessibility. All parts of such parks shall be safely and easily accessible by pedestrians and open to the public.

(c) Facilities. Such parks shall consist of multiple-use turf areas, walking paths, plazas, pavilions, picnic tables, benches or other features for various age groups to enjoy.

(d) Ownership and Maintenance. Such parks may, in the discretion of the city, be acquired by the city (through dedication or purchase), or be privately owned and maintained by the developer or property owners association.

(e) Storm Drainage. When integrating storm drainage and detention functions to satisfy this requirement, the design of such facilities shall not result in slopes or gradients that conflict with other recreational and civic purposes of the park.

(E) Development Standards.

(1) Streets and Blocks.

(a) Street System Block Size. The local street system provided by the development shall provide an interconnected network of streets in a manner that results in blocks of developed land bounded by connecting streets no greater than twelve (12) acres in size.

(b) Mid-Block Pedestrian Connections. If any block face is over seven hundred (700) feet long, then walkways connecting to other streets shall be provided at approximately mid-block or at intervals of at least every six hundred fifty (650) feet, whichever is less.

(2) Nonresidential and Mixed-Use Buildings.

(a) All nonresidential buildings permitted under this Section, including industrial buildings, shall meet the standards for Mixed-Use and Commercial Buildings in Section 3.5.3.

(b) Maximum Size. No building footprint shall exceed a total of twenty thousand (20,000) square feet, with the exception of schools and places of worship and assembly.

(c) Height. In order to encourage roof forms, dormers, windows, balconies and similar features associated with occupied space, to the extent reasonably feasible, buildings or parts of buildings shall be at least one and one-half (1.5) stories in height (with functional and occupied space under the roof). The maximum height shall be two and one-half (2.5) stories.

(d) Roof Form. Buildings shall have either: 1) sloped roofs; 2) combined flat and sloped roofs, provided that the sloped portion(s) forms a substantial part of the building and is related to the integral structure, entries and activity areas; or 3) flat roofs with building massing stepped or terraced back to form usable roof terrace area(s). The minimum pitch of any sloped roof shall be 6:12. Buildings containing more than four thousand (4,000) square feet of gross floor area shall have at least three (3) roof planes that are directly related to building facade articulations.

(e) Building Massing. No building permitted by this Section shall have a single undifferentiated mass with a footprint over ten thousand (10,000) square feet. No building footprint shall exceed a total of twenty thousand (20,000) square feet.

1. For any building with a footprint in excess of ten thousand (10,000) square feet, walls that are greater than seventy-five (75) feet in length shall incorporate recesses or projections created by wall plane returns of at least thirty (30) feet; any such building shall be differentiated into multiple sections of mass in order to achieve proportions that are compatible in scale with adjacent residential neighborhoods.

2. Minimum front yard setback of all buildings shall be fifteen (15) feet in order to provide a landscaped front yard consistent with the residential character of the L-M-N zone district.

(f) Orientation. Building entrances shall face and open directly onto the adjoining local street with parking and any service functions located in side or rear yards and incorporated into the development according to the provisions of this Land Use Code.

(g) Outdoor Storage. Outdoor storage shall be prohibited.

(h) Hours of Operation. The decision maker may limit hours of operation, hours when trucking and deliveries may occur, and other characteristics of the nonresidential uses in order to enhance the compatibility with residential uses.

(i) Drive-in Uses. Drive-in uses shall be prohibited.

(3) Maximum Residential Building Height. The maximum height of residential buildings shall be two and one-half (2.5) stories.

(4) Design Standards for Multi-Family Dwellings Containing More Than Six (6) Dwelling Units. Each multi-family dwelling containing more than six (6) dwelling units shall feature a variety of massing proportions, wall plane proportions, roof proportions and other characteristics similar in scale to those of single-family detached dwelling units, so that such larger buildings can be aesthetically integrated into the low density neighborhood. The following specific standards shall also apply to such multi-family dwellings:

(a) Roofs. Each multi-family building shall feature a combination of primary and secondary roofs. Primary roofs shall be articulated by at least one (1) of the following elements:

1. changes in plane and elevation.

2. dormers, gables or clerestories.

3. transitions to secondary roofs over entrances, garages, porches, bay windows.

(b) Facades and Walls. Each multi-family dwelling shall be articulated with projections, recesses, covered doorways, balconies, covered box or bay windows and/or other similar features, dividing large facades and walls into human-scaled proportions similar to the adjacent single-family dwellings, and shall not have repetitive, monotonous, undifferentiated wall planes.

Each multi-family building shall feature walls that are articulated by at least two (2) of any of the following elements within every thirty-six-foot length of the facade:

1. Recesses, projections or significant offsets in the wall plane.
2. Distinct individualized entrances with functional porches or patios.
3. Chimneys made of masonry, or other contrasting material that projects from the wall plan.
4. Balconies.
5. Covered bay or box windows.

(c) Variation Among Repeated Buildings. For any development containing at least forty (40) and not more than fifty-six (56) dwelling units, there shall be at least two (2) distinctly different building designs. For any such development containing more than fifty-six (56) dwelling units, there shall be at least three (3) distinctly different building designs. For all developments, there shall be no more than two (2) similar buildings placed next to each other along a street or major walkway spine.

Distinctly different building designs shall provide significant variation in footprint size and shape, architectural elevations and entrance features, within a coordinated overall theme of roof forms, massing proportions and other characteristics. To meet this standard such variation shall not consist solely of different combinations of the same building features.

(d) Color. Each multi-family building shall feature a palette of muted colors, earth tone colors, natural colors found in surrounding landscape or colors consistent with the adjacent neighborhood. For a multiple structure development containing at least forty (40) and not more than fifty-six (56) dwelling units, there shall be at least two (2) distinct color schemes used on structures throughout the development. For any such development containing more than fifty-six (56) dwelling units, there shall be at least three (3) distinct color schemes used on structures throughout the development. For all developments, there shall be no more than two (2) similarly colored structures placed next to each other along a street or major walkway spine.

(e) Garages. No street-facing facade shall contain more than three (3) garage bays.

(Ord. No. 90, 1998, 5/19/98; Ord. No. 228, 1998 §37, 12/15/98; Ord. No. 41, 1999 §§5, 6, 3/16/99; Ord. No. 99, 1999 §18, 6/15/99; Ord. No. 165, 1999 §§33--35, 11/16/99; Ord. No. 59, 2000 §§28--31, 6/6/00; Ord. No. 183, 2000 §§19--27, 12/19/00; Ord. No. 107, 2001 §§35--40, 6/19/01; Ord. No. 204, 2001 §§1, 26, 12/18/01; Ord. No. 087, 2002 §§24--27, 6/4/02; Ord. No. 177, 2002 §19, 12/17/02; Ord. No. 090, 2003 §11, 6/17/03)