DILLON RE-IMAGINED

SUMMER PLANNING STUDIO
COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING,
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO, DENVER

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This document summarizes the work produced within the summer graduate level course titled Planning Project Studio offered by the College of Architecture and Planning, University of Colorado Denver, in summer, 2018. The purpose of us developing the planning and design proposals included here has been education; best way to learn how to plan is to sit on the driver’s seat and start driving.

The class was a two-month long intensive summer studio. The class spent two weeks in Dillon. After writing some initial “first impressions” essays the class started to focus on background research about Dillon and Summit County: the recent planning efforts, demographics, land uses, and history. The identification of planning and design challenges defined the scope of the work. The class provided a preliminary (June 29) and a final presentation (July 13) to the city officials. This report incorporated the valuable input we have received by means of these presentations.

Mayor Carolyn Skowyra, Tom Acre, the Town Manager, Dan Burroughs, Town Engineer and Community Development Director, and Ned West, Town Planner and Engineering Inspector, met with the class during the informational welcome session and attended the presentations. They have provided their valuable input. We appreciate their guidance and sincerity. Thank you Carolyn, Tom, Dan, and Ned. Carri McDonnell, Finance Director, Jen Marchers, council member, Bonnie Moinet Dillon Economic Development Advisory Committee and Finance Director for the Town of Frisco, also joined our meetings and shared with us their views. We are thankful for their input. Last but not the least, Kerstin Anderson, Marketing and Events Director, Town of Dillon, was instrumental in inviting the class to work on this subject. She has been resourceful throughout the class. This work could not be produced without her commitment, help, and friendship. We sincerely appreciate her valuable views and enthusiasm. Thank you Kerstin.

Korkut Onaran, Ph.D.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**SECTIONS**

1 - Vision  
2 - Housing  
3 - Highway 6 & Dillon Ridge  
4 - Core Area  
5 - Dillon Marina
Section 1
Vision
INTRODUCTION

Dillon, Colorado is a hidden oasis in Summit County tucked away behind Highway 6 along the shores of Lake Dillon. This small town is heavily reliant on the tourism industry and lives by the whims of mother nature in the summer and the winter. In the summer, white boat sails dot the horizon across the lake and fluffy clouds float across the sky. In the winter, ice coats the water and skiers zip down bright white runs across the valley in Keystone. But if it was a particularly rainy summer or even more likely a summer filled with smoke and fire, those white sails and clouds would vanish. A dry summer would also leave those bright white runs bare and brown. If weather does not go Summit County’s way, activity and economic growth in Dillon will also wither.

CHALLENGES

As we conducted research and assessment of the town, we identified four challenges that are impacting the place making as well as the character and economy of Dillon. (1) Seasonality; (2) dormitory community, (3) the fact that Dillon is not a well-known destination and (4) there is not a strong public realm. Each of these issues affects the town in a unique way and this study explores and suggests projects that may help tackle those challenges.

Seasonality

Summit County is home to some of the most beautiful areas in Colorado. This draws visitors from all over the world to participate in the various outdoor recreation activities that are available. This provides a thriving tourism-based economy but the problem with tourism-based businesses have high seasons when business is good and low seasons when business is slow.
Dormitory Community
Due to the surrounding ski resorts, Dillon effectively becomes a suburb in the winter. In essence because there is not a specific draw to the town, it becomes a place people sleep while they participate in winter activities elsewhere in the county. As a result, there is little activity downtown during the winter and building community engagement through programming is even more difficult.

Not a well-known destination
Dillon is surrounded by well-known ski resorts that dominate the narrative for visitors to Summit county and tend to overshadow the town as a destination.

Not a strong public realm
The commercial district across Highway 6 is a strong area of economic activity, but downtown Dillon lacks a vibrant destination for visitors and residents to utilize. There is no sense of arrival and there are not enough third spaces like coffee shops or community hubs and almost no boutique retail that would appeal to tourists. There are also problems with walkability and lack of a pedestrian oriented environment. The amphitheater is an amazing public asset but can only be utilized at specific times and for organized events. The town lacks a space for organic community building.
1. Vision

Goals
When examining these identified challenges, a vision statement was prepared to encapsulate the potential we see for this community to strengthen. The goal of this study is to emphasize the Dillon economy as innovative, small and local.

Vision Statement
“The mountain lake context and wealth of recreational activities, an innovative small business community, and engaged population make Dillon a diverse, accessible, and vibrant year-round destination to work, live, and play within Summit County.”

To achieve this vision statement, four goals were identified to pursue:

Diversify local economy
To combat the challenge of Dillion’s ties to the tourist seasons, our vision is to explore opportunities to diversify Dillion’s economy by encouraging new business sectors to move to Dillon.

Create a more self-sufficient town
Dillon’s economy is beholden to the surrounding ski resorts and should some sort of disaster befall a surrounding community, Dillon could potentially be brought down as well. Diversifying economic activity will help protect the town against this possibility.

Equitable income distribution
There is a large socio-economic disparity in Dillon as well as in the larger Summit County area between residents who have large second homes and service workers who are struggling to live in an expensive economic landscape. Leveling the playing field will help attract workers, families and business owners to the town. Currently, because the cost of living is so high, few businesses feel confident enough to move or start in Dillon.

Increase workforce housing
Connected to equitable income distribution is the fact that there is very little affordable housing in Dillon and Summit County. As a result, it is difficult for business to attract workers and for the economy to expand past tourism.

Photo Credit: Summit Daily News
Target Areas

Four economic development target areas were identified that can assist the town of Dillon accomplish the established goals.

**Tech/Small Business**
- Start-up, Inclusive, Dynamic

**Arts/Culture/Music**
- Vibrant, Interactive, Funky, Outdoors

**Outdoor Industry**
- Rugged, Adventurous, Stewardship

**Culinary**
- Local, Fresh, Colorful, Grassroots

### Technology and Small Business

**Strategies:**
- Economic Development Corporation
- Business incentives
- Streamlined, transparent development process and review
- Partner with apprenticeship programs

**Programs:**
- Co-working space
- Makers space
- Business Incubator
- Events

### Arts, Culture, Music

**Strategies:**
- Creative RFP
- Partnerships with arts groups around the state
- Plan events

**Programs:**
- Pop-up art installations
- Artist in residence program
- Festivals and concerts

### Outdoor Industry

**Strategies:**
- Partner with outdoor companies and resorts
  - REI
  - Christy Sports
  - Vail/Keystone/Copper

**Programs:**
- Trade Show
- Seasonal Demos
- Races
- Product Testing
- Outdoor Education

### Culinary

**Strategies:**
- Partner with CMC’s Culinary Apprenticeship program
- Plan events

**Programs:**
- Festivals
- Pop-up spaces by marina
1. Vision

Case Studies

Baltimore Maryland, Light City Baltimore
Source: www.fafafamilyfun.com

Montreal Canada, Prismatica Installation
Source: www.contemporist.com

Montreal Canada, Electro-Snow Globes
Source: www.suzannelexler.com

London United Kingdom, “Spun”
Source: www.funheightblogspot.com

Lake Okoboji, Winter Games
Source: www.dglobe.com
Section 2

Housing

Dillon Reimagined
2. Housing

Introduction

In Dillon, there is an acute lack of planned affordable housing development despite huge demand. Based on the Summit County Needs Assessment, of the 593 rental units needed in Summit County, only 76 are planned, and of the 227 for sale units needed, none are planned. To better understand this discrepancy and the broader housing context in Dillon and Summit County, the housing analysis group utilized documents and data from the Summit Combined Housing Authority and the Town of Dillon.

...of the **593** rental units needed in Summit County, only **76** are planned...

In order to ultimately make policy and financial recommendations, the housing and policy group sought to understand the environment for housing holistically and understand the barriers and benefits of creating affordable housing in the town. Ultimately, we found that Dillon is a challenging setting for affordable housing for various reasons, which will be explored in this section and further described in the following Policy & Financial Solutions section.

Barriers

First, creating affordable housing in Dillon is challenging because Dillon is in many ways one single piece of the larger puzzle that is Summit County. Many of the financial funding mechanisms such as the 5A tax revenues and impact fee revenues are collected county wide, but distributed proportionally back to each town. Consequently, Dillon receives relatively small proportion of these revenues due to the slow pace of development and relative lack of retail and commercial activity. Those who work and live in Summit County can easily work in one town and live in another, so from a comprehensive county-wide standpoint, Dillon slips under the radar as a town that can use affordable housing in particular. For this same reason, Dillon can only be competitive for state funding like LIHTC because it is so small and CHFA likes to spread awards around the state. Additionally, there is no Section 8 voucher program.

- County-wide 5A tax revenues distributed proportionately
- SCHA does not control Section 8
- Lack of developable land with viable acreage
- Prohibitive zoning and community backlash
Next, according to the Summit Combined Housing Authority, a principle reason for lack of affordable and market rate housing development generally in Dillon is simply a lack of developable land. According to Jason Dietz, the executive director of the SCHA, parcels that are could be competitive for state or federal funding should be 4 acres or more. Dillon has very few parcels of this size available for development, meaning that most affordable housing development must be achieved through redevelopment opportunities of already-developed parcels around the town, or through annexations. Our recommendations primarily center on redevelopment opportunities and will be explored further on in this section and in the rest of the report. The issue of lack of developable land in Dillon is compounded by zoning laws that are prohibitive and community backlash, which are issues that will also be further explored in the following section.

Despite these challenges, Dillon has much to offer and is a desirable place to live. The town is motivated to draw developers in to increase the affordable housing stock, making Dillon attainable for more people to settle down. The following section outlines the policy and financial recommendations that the housing analysis group put together to help achieve Summit County’s affordable housing goals.

Real estate values and limited developable land mean that an affordable housing development can present significant opportunity costs to developers. Large, high-value homes and luxury condo developments attract both easier credit and higher margins. Viable affordable housing, therefore, requires density, cross-subsidization from commercial/market rate development, and cooperation from the relevant public bodies.

Image Credit: Summit County Real Estate
Policy and Financial Strategies

The housing analysis group has identified numerous high-level financial and policy-oriented solutions to the workforce housing crisis in Summit County in response to the existing barriers to equitable development as described previously. These strategies will all be applied to the distinct housing models further on in this chapter. In this section, each strategy will be described in detail so the town of Dillon can cultivate an in-depth understanding of what each strategy means and why it is important in the creation of a sustainable housing model in Summit County.

Affordable housing building blocks

- Construction debt
- Permanent debt
- LIHTC investments
- FHA financing
- Strategic partnerships

Affordable housing requires developers to draw from a diverse pool of credit sources. The risk and difficulty of this process means that a strong working relationship with a local municipality and housing authority is essential.

Image Credit: Mesa Realty Advisors
I. 5A TAX REVENUE REDISTRIBUTION
The 5A tax is a small sales tax enforced on all sales (except for grocery stores) that exists within Summit County. This tax has been a wildly successful program that generates over $9 million in revenue that is used exclusively for aiding affordable housing developments throughout the county. The issue with this source of financing is in the way it is distributed.

Currently, the revenue is gathered through SCHA and redistributed amongst the different municipalities by the percent each generated (i.e. if 50% of tax was generated from Breckenridge, then they would receive 50% of the funds for that year). However, this model is inconsistent with Summit County’s needs. The housing crisis in Summit County is on a county-wide basis. Affordable housing development in one jurisdiction alleviates the housing pressure in another because workers flow seamlessly throughout the county. The 5A tax should be awarded on a “readiness to proceed” manner, which means that the projects that are closest to closing would receive funding. This would incentivize development in all the jurisdictions in the county and allow for quicker development periods.

II. ELIMINATION OF IMPACT FEE DEFERAL
The impact fee is another great existing tool to incentivize development in Summit County. Currently, a $2/sf impact fee is assessed on all new construction projects in the county. The issue with this lies in a provision that allows the developer to record a restrictive covenant on the property which mandates that the fee to be paid during the next real estate transfer or sale. This allows developers to get out of paying the current fee, and kicks the workforce housing aid down the road to the next real estate buyer.

The county government (who administers the fee) should eliminate this provision because it has an extremely negative impact on the amount of capital the county can raise for workforce housing. In its place, the county may consider providing a provision that allows residential developers to create a certain amount of affordability in lieu of the payment.

III. SCHA AND SECTION 8 ASSISTANCE
Housing authorities across the country administer section 8 rental assistance in the form of housing vouchers (housing choice, or project based), and project based rental assistance (PBRA). These rental assistance programs will cover the difference between a low-income tenant’s rent (restricted typically at 30% of their income), and the market rate rent for the area, allowing developers the ability to leverage these rents to take on more permanent financing on a property. Unfortunately, SCHA lost the rights to administer section 8 programs to Grand County years ago. SCHA, under the new leadership of Dietz, should begin the process of reapplying for this right. It would allow the SCHA to become a key financial partner for any developer seeking to create affordable housing in the area.
I. DENSITY BONUSES
Dillon’s current zoning code does not allow for the heights that many developers require to make an affordable or workforce housing projects operate financially. For example, the core district only permits development up to fifty (50) feet, and Mixed-use is even more restricted at a thirty-five (35) foot cap.

Dillon could utilize a density bonus that states that maximum heights may be increased in exchange for a certain percent of new units being restricted for workforce or low-income households. This would allow developers to create greater financial returns while also providing affordable housing units which Dillon is in much need of.

II. ZONING FLEXIBILITY
Dillon’s current zoning code has many requirements which limits the amount of developable land on a parcel. For instance, the code currently requires xx/parking spots for every resident of a residential development, and twenty-five (25) foot setbacks for yards. These hinder a developer’s ability to create a feasible project, especially when considering the height restrictions. Dillon should consider waiving many of these requirements when a workforce or affordable housing project is proposed. An inflexible zoning environment will disincentivize development and lead to fewer housing developments for the town.

III. CULTIVATE PARTNERSHIPS AND RELATIONSHIPS
One of the biggest barriers to entry for a developer is the lack of comfort with a municipality or county. Dillon & SCHA should begin engaging with the private & non-profit affordable housing sector to cultivate relationships that could lead to development. The town could consider hosting meet & greets, informational meetings, happy hours, or attending housing functions across Colorado.
The three housing models prioritize a diversity of housing locations and types, financial feasibility, and near-term achievability. 
Source: Google Earth Pro Basemap
2. Housing

DILLON RIDGE MARKETPLACE

MULTI-USE, MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

The REI at Dillon Ridge Marketplace.
Image Credit: Summit County Tribune
Mixed-Use, Multi-Family Residential

Multi-family rental would be the optimal workforce/affordable housing type for the Dillon Ridge Marketplace. This housing type could provide 1, 2, and 3-bedroom units which would cater to working families that Dillon has expressed interested in attracting. They would be within walking distance of any commercial needs and be centrally located between other employment centers in Summit County. Additionally, retail options on the first floor of the development could provide more retail options for residents or be space for local entrepreneurs to rent.

A number of financing methods could be used to implement this project. We recommend utilizing a mixed-income approach to create a more feasible development. The project could restrict 40%, or more, of its units (for low-income tax credit purposes) to households making at or below 60% Area Median Income (AMI) and have the remainder be unrestricted to the market. This would create the much needed housing type of low-income rental units while also having the unrestricted market rents subsidize the restricted rents allowing the developer to borrow more debt. This approach maximizes feasibility but also caters to the workforce population. This is especially important when considering how expensive construction is in Summit County.

Why the Dillon Ridge Marketplace?

Connected
The Dillon Ridge Marketplace is centrally located to highway 6 and highway 70. These quick connections provide easy access for residents who live and work within Summit county. Additionally, the Summit Stage bus has multiple stops within walking distance of the market.

Active
The marketplace is home to the largest concentration of commercial and retail activity in the town. These uses include: grocery store, bank, coffee shops, affordable eateries, and a pharmacy. Placing affordable housing in this area would give residents the ability to walk for many of their commercial needs, which is important especially when considering that the lower-income residents may not own a mode of transportation.

Dense
One of the big motivations for putting affordable housing in the Dillon Ridge Marketplace is because of the lack of residential surrounding the area. Traditionally in Dillon, residential uses prevent high density because existing homeowners do not want their views obstructed.

Fortunately, there are few homes that would be blocked by vertical density in the Dillon Ridge Marketplace as the area is already higher elevation than the town center. This makes increasing height limits and density much easier and it would allow developers to create projects that are built to the density that allows the project to be feasible.
Case Study: Pinewood Village II

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I. TOWN INVOLVEMENT

The town of Dillon could participate in the development process in a number of ways:

- The local government could acquire land in, or near, the marketplace by utilizing local subsidies, and either sell the development rights or lease the land to a developer. By owning the land, the town of Dillon can assure that the project remains affordable in perpetuity and work with an experienced developer to develop, and manage the residential and commercial components of the project. The private developer would own the improvements (the building) but be restricted by affordable covenants placed on the land. The downside to this involvement is that purchasing the land would be costly for the town.

- The town could initially partner with a private developer. The private developer would work with the Dillon Ridge Marketplace landowner and purchase the land (or other form of ownership) independently of the city. In this method the city would provide available financing and be part of the project limited partnership. In turn for their financing, the private developer would set aside a certain amount of units for low-income residents. This involvement is less costly than Dillon purchasing the land and retaining ownership, but they lose total control over the project and the cost of the development would be higher, running the risk that it never gets completed.

III. TAX CREDIT APPLICATION

Whomever develops the project should consider utilizing low-income housing tax credits (LIHTCs). LIHTCs are the leading driver of affordable housing development in the country. There are two types, 4% and 9% that are available for financing. The 9% credit covers nearly 70% of construction costs, while the 4% covers 30%. For either program, the minimum affordable set aside for a project must be 20% of the units restricted to households making 50% AMI or lower, or 40% of units for households making 60% AMI or lower. Please refer to exhibit XX for a rough estimate of the financing ratios for both LIHTC models. The 9% is awarded annually based on a competitive process, which makes it much harder to obtain. The town of Dillon should familiarize themselves with these subsidies to better understand the type of documentation that will be needed so the process can proceed as fast as possible.

II. INCREASE DENSITY ALLOWANCE

The current zoning district for the Dillon Ridge Marketplace does not allow for buildings over thirty-five (35) feet. This density prevents a feasible project from being created. The city should consider permitting density bonuses or exceptions for affordable housing in the Dillon Ridge Marketplace that include tapping into the affordable housing funding.

IV. LOCAL AND FEDERAL SUBSIDIES

The town and development partner should work together to identify local and federal subsidies that can fill in any financing gap that arises due to the affordability of the project. Local subsidies that exist include 5A tax, impact fee, and any capital funds available from the city. Federally the project team could look at HUD rural grants, HOME/CDBG funding administered by the state, or towards a Federal Home Loan Bank.
DILLON TOWN CORE
CO-HOUSING MICRO-APARTMENTS

USPS, Lake Dillon Drive, Dillon CO.
Image Credit: City-Data
Co-Housing Micro-Apartments

Acknowledging the high costs of real estate, development, and comparative housing in Summit County, and the need for below 80% AMI units, shared amenity micro apartments have been identified as a clear strategy for maximizing Dillon’s limited and costly developable land.

While micro apartments have no strict definition, they are generally understood to afford less than 300 square feet per unit, sharing space-intensive amenities (such as kitchens, living areas, and sometimes bathrooms) between floors, or whole developments. This model reduces the overall rent of individual units, while providing competitive rent-per-square-foot returns to developers.

Among the other advantages of micro apartments in this location is the ability of more, smaller units to provide density (and, ergo, feasibility) to the development without requiring the kinds of height increases that a developer might otherwise seek in breach of surrounding viewsheds: as a micro apartment is typically half the size of a traditional studio, roughly twice the units can be provided on one floor.

Further, micro apartments speak to existing demand among Summit County’s young, lower-wage workforce. During the winter, many of these residents split condominiums between large groups to take advantage of the town’s residential down period; their transience ensured by the seasonality of the winter tourism sector and summer rent inflation. Providing a year-round alternative in the downtown with more formalized living conditions, and facilities catering to the needs of the population, the town can begin to make year-round affordable residence a viable option for this group. Further, the units would provide a resident workforce for any accompanying and future commercial development. As it stands, a deficit of secure housing for prospective employees is key in deterring commercial investment into Dillon’s core: businesses can move in, but they cannot attract a workforce without paying unsustainable wages.

As with all affordable housing developments, however, flexibility (of uses, incomes) is key to ensuring the financial viability of the project. While micro apartments allow for much-needed 80% and below AMI housing, a mixture of other, traditional workforce and market-rate units will be essential to ensuring return-on-investment for developers. Mixed-income residential also enables a higher standard of on-site public improvements and amenities (forcing developers to cater to the standards of the local market), and creates a more diverse client base for the on-site commercial development.
Case Study: Virginia Placer Boarding House

Telluride is a municipality struggling with many of the same problems as Dillon: the dominant ski industry requires thousands of workers in recreational and third-party industries; the real estate market is dominated by wealthy second-homeowners (land prices have risen 579% since 1990, while the average annual wage has risen by 120% in that period); and the remaining developable land in the town is both expensive, limited, and subject to local obstructionism.

With remaining town-owned land restricted to peripheral areas of the valley with difficult incline profiles, the need to maximize density and the number of affordable units per site was incredibly important.

Accordingly, Telluride and the San Miguel Housing Authority opted for a mixed-unit site: offering 18 traditional apartments and a 46 person occupancy boarding house with both single and double occupancy units.

Key to reducing the AMI offering of the boarding house (units cater to 40-50% AMI, offered to residents with a work-live deed restriction through lottery) was the sharing of facilities. There are two communal kitchens across three floors, and the exterior of the unit features storage lockers for ski gear, while bathrooms are shared and co-ed.

Virginia Placer unit plan: maximizing space with six units per floor and shared amenities. Image Credit: Charles Cunniffe Architects

The Virginia Placer development capitalized on density to make the most of a limited valley-side plot. Image Credit: Charles Cunniffe Architects
I. LAND ACQUISITION

The Town could achieve this through either direct purchase or exchange, offering USPS land in either the Dillon Ridge Marketplace (catering to wider USPS trends of downscaling and integration with retail), or one of the annexation parcels abutting Highway 6.

II. PARTNERSHIPS

Finding a mixed-use developer with experience applying for federal and state tax credits will be key to piecing together the necessary financing and development tools to ensure the project’s feasibility. Further, creating a working relationship between the developer, the town, and the Dillon Urban Renewal Authority will help to maximize use of the available financial and regulatory mechanisms (TIF, zoning variations, etc.).

Dillon’s Post Office generates traffic for the town through package collection serving the wider area, but commercial developers often seek an assured user base of nearby housing units.

The success of the market-rate Turntable Studios apartments in Denver (averaging 332 square feet) indicate the viability of micro units.

Image Credit: Summit County Daily

Image Credit: Turntable Studios
An example unit mock-up for the core micro-apartment units: in-room facilities (closet, limited kitchen...) are complemented by amenities shared across the development, including shared kitchens, lockers, and living spaces.

Image Credit: John Featherstone
ANNEXATION PARCEL
FOR-SALE MIXED INCOME
**Why the Annexation Site?**

The parcel owned by Denver Water is 54 acres, located on Highway 6 between Dillon Town Center and Summit Cove. The site has significant grade changes, which has advantages and disadvantages. The advantages are the opportunity for solar and the potential for vertical density without obstructing views. A disadvantage is the potentially high cost and long timeline of construction due to the necessary grading. Highway 6 offers easy connection to nearby jobs and amenities, and with a parcel so large, there are many options for development. The site can serve as an affordable home for those working in Keystone, at the fire department in Dillon, or at a nearby elementary school. This would come with pedestrian and bicycle connections to the site, ensuring its access to services and the rest of Dillon.

**For-Sale, Medium Density Homes**

In understanding that a diverse stock of housing is essential to serve the needs of Dillon and Summit County, and to address the lack of affordable homes for-sale, we recommend the construction of mixed-income, medium density for-sale units. Summit County residents are in need of the opportunity to own their first home, and to be financially comfortable - to provide these we recommend using a Transit Oriented Development model. With the inclusion of a Summit Stage bus stop, a pedestrian/bike bridge, and traffic calming measures on Highway 6, the site is well connected to nearby job opportunities and amenities. By following a TOD model, the financial burden of owning a car could be lessened if not eliminated.

The mix of housing could vary depending on developer resources and available funds. We recommend a mix of condos, townhomes, and duplexes. The condos could serve those between 60-80% AMI, the most affordable component of the development. The duplexes and townhomes could vary in size and price, reaching folks between 80-150% AMI. By including some market-rate condos and townhomes, the profit from these units would subsidize the cost of the affordable homes.
Community Solar
To take advantage of the slope and south-facing orientation of the site, we recommend including a community solar garden. To do this, when the town sells the parcel to the developer, the developer would subdivide the parcel leaving the Northeast (most sloped) portion undeveloped for solar panel installation. We recommend that the developer build the solar garden first, to begin making a profit on the land during the lengthy and expensive construction process. Once the homes are built, residents can buy into the community solar program to power their homes and to sell energy back to the grid. This will significantly reduce energy costs, as well as produce renewable and clean energy, contributing to the sustainability of the project.

Implementation Strategy
We recommend that the town purchase the lot and put out a competitive RFP for a mixed-income housing developer with experience competing for LIHTC funds. This way, the town ensures that the stock of affordable-for sale housing increases, while having a say in the nature of the development. The parcel would be offered at a discounted price with work-live deed restrictions, which will guarantee that the housing is available for Summit County residents while allowing for the appreciation of the value of their home. We recommend a PUD zoning to offer flexibility to work with a developer so that the project is profitable while achieving density.

Case Study: Peak One
The Peak One neighborhood in Frisco Colorado is a mixed-income, deed-restricted development that sold out before completion. The workforce housing consists of 69 units, a mix of two, three, and four-bedroom homes. The neighborhood is the product of a public-private partnership between the town, developer Brynn Grey Partners, and the Summit Combined Housing Authority. The deed restriction is simple and easily administered:
• Residents must work 30 hours per week in Summit County
• Homeowners must either be individuals, who work 30 hours a week in Summit County, or a local business; and appreciation will be limited to 3% per annum or the percentage increase in AMI, whichever is less.
The Peak One neighborhood can serve as a case study for Dillon in parcel annexation for affordable housing because:
• The town gave the land to the developer for free in exchange for affordability
• The existence of public-private partnership
• The workforce deed-restriction to ensure Summit County residents are the priority
• The ability for homeowners to appreciate value while ensuring long-term affordability

CONCLUSION
The recommendations and models for affordable housing that comprise this section are a jumping off point for Dillon look into to improve the environment for affordable housing and make Dillon an inclusive and attainable place for families to set roots. The following sections will touch on these models for affordable housing and expand on other opportunities to make Dillon a great place to live.
Section 3
Highway 6 & Dillon Ridge
The goal of this portion of the project is to transform Highway 6 and the Dillon Ridge Marketplace into connected and active places that are designed for people. Our proposed transformations include elements of complete, safer streets and pedestrian-oriented, walkable and bikeable developments in order to create healthy, lively places for the community and visitors to gather and interact with each other. The remainder of this section of the report will give more detail about the challenges, solutions, and implementation phases and strategies for Highway 6 and Dillon Ridge Marketplace. Our intention has been to incite new conversations around the ways Dillon can realize its full potential as a regional destination and local community.

Transforming the barrier created by the current design of Highway 6 into a healthy town street that accommodates pedestrian and business activity.

Source: Google Earth Pro Basemap, Summit County Open Data: Town Boundaries
3. A New Vision for Highway 6 & the Dillon Ridge Marketplace

Connecting Across Highway 6

Blue: Vehicular; Pink: Gondola System; Orange: Pedestrian Paths & Crossings; Purple: Tunnel Under Highway 6; Light Blue: Gravel Bike Path; White: New Rods; Grey: Roundabout
Source: Google Earth Pro Basemap

Highway 6 Challenges
Dillon has all the makings of a vibrant, connected town. However, Highway 6 bisects the town and fragments key assets and amenities in Dillon. Also, Highway 6 does not provide a sense of arrival and sense of place when entering the town.

Some specific challenges include the omission of a “grand entrance” that welcomes travellers as they arrive in Dillon. As visitors exit I-70 and turn onto Highway 6, there is an attractive welcoming Silverthorne sign. In contrast, the sign for Dillon is small and hard to see, and the branding is the Colorado Department of Transportation green road signs. Therefore, many drivers assume that Dillon is a subset of Silverthorne. Further, as people travel on the six-lane highway towards Dillon, it is not clear where Silverthorne ends and Dillon begins, as the current town boundaries are
not intuitive or apparent. It is easy for motorists enroute from I-70 to simply pass by the Dillon town center as they head to nearby destinations. Highway 6 is not designed to alert potential visitors that they are entering into a municipality.

Highway 6 is designed almost exclusively for cars, not people on foot or bike. It feels like a fast, auto-oriented highway, not a complete street designed for all modes of travel. The speed limit on Highway 6 is 40 mph, allowing cars to speed by Dillon. It has wide street crossings and a lack of pedestrian infrastructure that creates a sense of impermeability for pedestrians and bicyclists hoping to travel between the Dillon Ridge Marketplace and the town center.

Just a small reduction in speed limits can make a street dramatically safer for pedestrians and cyclists.


Figure 1. Vehicle Impact Speed and Pedestrian Injury Severity (from DETR)

The current design of Highway 6 and the Dillon Ridge Marketplace miss the important opportunity to announce the presence of the town and welcome visitors to the community.

Source: Google Earth - Street View Image

Despite quite a bit of pavement, there doesn’t look to be any good or safe space for people riding bikes.

Photo Credit: J. Slocombe
Given the intensity of the edge formed by Highway 6 the commute between Dillon’s two “zones” becomes a daunting task by foot or bike and most residents and tourists resort to hopping in their cars and driving the 0.6 miles to go grocery shopping. Further, there is no landscaping or welcoming features on Highway 6 that make it inviting, such as a median strip with landscaping, artwork, or Dillon-branded signage.

The Town of Dillon might consider a few key solutions to address the challenges of permeability, connectivity and sense of arrival mentioned above. We recognize that the road is vital to the regional transportation system, and so the changes we have proposed have been in keeping with practices already in place in other locations on Highway 6. The modifications we are proposing are integrated into a larger strategy of creating centralized parking that is served by a mix of mass transit options at a transit hub located in the Dillon Ridge Marketplace.

Solutions for Highway 6

The Town of Dillon might consider a few key solutions to address the challenges of permeability, connectivity and sense of arrival mentioned above. We recognize that the road is vital to the regional transportation system, and so the changes we have proposed have been in keeping with practices already in place in other locations on Highway 6. The modifications we are proposing are integrated into a larger strategy of creating centralized parking that is served by a mix of mass transit options at a transit hub located in the Dillon Ridge Marketplace.
Implementation of a few simple road diet solutions and complete streets concepts will transform Highway 6 from a highway into a healthy, safe, attractive Main Street-type street. First and foremost, installing (or enhancing, on the south side) a landscaped median along a portion of Highway 6 and reducing speeds by 10 mph would offer visual and sensory cues to motorists that they are entering into a municipality and not simply driving from point A to point B on an indistinct CDOT highway.

Road improvements should include a mix of the following complete street concepts: reducing the number of drive lanes from six to four (with a turn lane in the middle); installing buffered bike lanes on either side of the highway; and increasing the pedestrian infrastructure by installing sidewalks along all four sides of the intersection and providing pedestrian refuges. These measures would go a long way in transforming Highway 6 into a corridor that promotes bike and pedestrian mobility, as well as safety.

A landscaped median would provide a sense of arrival and indicate the presence of a municipality, and could be a host site for Town of Dillon-branded flags or artwork. Reducing speeds from 40 mph down to 30 mph also clues motorists in to the presence of "something..."
to see” and reduces the number of vehicle-pedestrian crash fatalities by 50% (U.S. DOT, 1999). We propose implementing all of these measures along Highway 6 from Dillon Ridge Road to a quarter mile beyond Lake Dillon Drive.

To really push the narrative around developing this stretch of Highway 6 as a viable city street, we believe that the city and CDOT should consider transforming the current intersection at Highway 6 and Lake Dillon Drive into a roundabout. This type of design has been implemented across Colorado in many similar situations as a way to maintain traffic flow while also managing high volume and high risk intersections. This change would not only facilitate the efficient movement of a high volume of traffic at a more reasonable speed, it would create a vital opportunity to create a sense of arrival at the entrance to the lakeside half of Dillon. This is a fantastic opportunity for the placement of a sculpture or “gateway” element.

In order to increase permeability and connections across Highway 6, we suggest an increased frequency of pedestrian crossings, an underground bike tunnel, a gondola, and the potential paving of the social trails near Skyline Drive. Installing two more pedestrian crosswalks with pedestrian refuges in the proposed median strip (which could be activated with a flashing beacon), could serve to “stitch” the two main sections of town together and increase permeability and cohesion among the town of Dillon as a whole. These increased crossings could also encourage alternative transportation, as they would allow directness and efficiency along the 0.6 mile commute between the town center and marketplace.

A roundabout at this critical intersection of Highway 6 and Lake Dillon Drive, will allow more traffic to flow through the site at much safer speeds. It is a great way to let drivers know that they need to slow down because they have arrived in a place.

Source: Google Earth Pro Basemap (left); Ontario Ministry of Transportation, http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/dandv/driver/handbook//section2.6.7.shtml (right)
Installing a bike tunnel passing underneath Highway 6 would allow cyclists and pedestrians alike to easily cross from one side of Highway 6 to another without disrupting the flow of traffic or incurring any safety risk. Tunnels passing underneath highways can span from low to high cost, but do take a minimum of a year to complete due to excavation and concrete structural implementations. Comparable examples to reference of these types of projects include both the bike tunnel at CSU in Fort Collins, which is a higher cost longer project, and the Arapahoe road underpass in Centennial which is lower in cost and time. We propose connecting this bike lane from the intersection of West La Bonte and Buffalo through an adjacent parcel of land and underground to the northeast corner of the Highway 6/Dillon Dam Rd intersection.

While the gondola is certainly the most radical suggestion, it is (by some measures) the fastest growing public transit option in the country and can cost 2-3 times less than installing a street car (Graber, 2013). Furthermore, it would increase public transit in a manner that affords unique views of the amphitheatre, marina and reservoir, and increase public transportation options, particularly for people with lower mobility than bicyclists and pedestrians.
Partnerships & Implementation

Highway 6 improvements will require collaboration with CDOT and there are a variety of organizations that offer resources, technical assistance, and funding for smaller communities to bring these ideas to fruition. The EPA’s Federal Resources for Sustainable Rural Communities publication “highlights federal resources rural communities can use to promote economic competitiveness, protect healthy environments, and enhance quality of life. It provides information on funding and technical assistance opportunities from the four agencies, as well as examples of how rural communities across the country have put these programs into action” (EPA 2012). Particularly relevant examples include BUILD Discretionary (formerly TIGER) Grants, the Highway Safety Improvement Program, the Surface Transportation Program (STP), and the FHWA State Division office.

### Challenges & Solutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHALLENGES</th>
<th>SOLUTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of presence / sense of arrival</td>
<td>Overhead Welcome Sign, Anchor corners at key intersections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Speeds, unsafe for peds and bikers</td>
<td>Reduce Speed to 30 mph, Median Strips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of connectivity/permeability</td>
<td>More frequent/improved pedestrian crossings, Bike tunnel under Highway 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pedestrian refuge (median strip)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Key Recommendations For Highway 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendations For Highway 6</th>
<th>Estimated Timeline</th>
<th>Potential Cost</th>
<th>Case Study Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Road Diet/Complete Streets</td>
<td>3-12 Months</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>See DOT FHWA Case Study [US DOT FHWA, 2016].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Install a landscaped median from Dillon Ridge Rd to ¾ mile beyond Lake Dillon Dr.</td>
<td>1 -2 Years</td>
<td>$2 Million</td>
<td>See 2005 Columbus Ohio Cost Estimates for Traffic Management Report [Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, 2015].</td>
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<tr>
<td>Install a roundabout at Lake Dillon Drive &amp; Hwy 6</td>
<td>1 Year</td>
<td>$500,000-$750,000</td>
<td>See Maryland Roundabout Case Study [US DOT FHWA, 2010].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian Refuges</td>
<td>6 Months</td>
<td>$55,000 Each: $100,000 - $200,000</td>
<td>See 2005 Columbus Ohio Cost Estimates for Traffic Management Report [Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, 2015].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike Tunnel</td>
<td>6 Months</td>
<td>$1.5 Million</td>
<td>See Arapahoe Road Bypass, Centennial CO.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gondola</td>
<td>2 Years</td>
<td>$100 Million+</td>
<td>See Vancouver’s Skytrain (costs could be borne regionally)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.9

**Dillon Ridge Marketplace**

Currently, the Dillon Ridge Marketplace is a space that is designed for automobiles, but it has the opportunity to be developed into an attractive, mixed use gathering and community place for people.

Dillon Ridge Marketplace is home to the busiest grocery store, City Market, in the county and is one of the best performing types of groceries in the state. That said, the current layout of the store, coupled with an abundance of surface parking, results in an unfriendly environment for pedestrians and encourages people to drive. This often results in conflict in the space between vehicles and shoppers, particularly at the entrance of the store. It also makes it difficult to walk from store to store, so it encourages people to drive around the marketplace. Further, the large amount of land dedicated to parking could be more efficiently utilized for mixed use development.

Dillon Ridge is zoned as a mixed use zone, but it does not live up to the potential of a truly mixed use area. Currently, there are only commercial uses. There is no housing in this area, and there are few new developments in close proximity. Although it is a widely used market area, it has the opportunity to attract more diverse uses.

A sea of parking and not much else at the core of the Dillon Ridge Marketplace.  
Photo Credit: S. Szrek
3.10

There are opportunities to increase the retail, restaurant, housing, and pedestrian amenities, as well as create more human-scale buildings. Additional uses will diversify the cash flow and create a more resilient and productive development for all parties invested in a positive outcome.

The Dillon Ridge Marketplace is disconnected from the rest of Dillon (by Highway 6). The pedestrian and bike access points to the development are intimidating, and can be tenuous. There are a number of opportunities to make it a more pedestrian-oriented and inviting place to walk and linger, and a place that people staying in Dillon can easily walk or ride their bike to for shopping, and then navigate from store to store without having to walk across a parking lot.

Dillon Ridge Marketplace serves a critical role in the community, but it is being steadily eclipsed by emerging developments in Silverthorne and Frisco that present similar shopping experiences with competing stores like Target and WalMart. To maintain the draw of the shopping center, redevelopment should be considered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHALLENGES</th>
<th>SOLUTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auto-oriented</td>
<td>Parking lot infill/decreased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto-oriented</td>
<td>Pedestrian scale amenities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of housing</td>
<td>Increase diversity of uses within shopping center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of mixed-uses</td>
<td>Increase development opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placelessness</td>
<td>Live/work/play spaces that can help strengthen community identity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Enhancing the Dillon Ridge Marketplace

Mixed use developments are popular all over the United States, and rural communities are no outlier to this trend. Convenience, economic diversification, decreased car usage and effective land use are among some of the benefits of moving from big box retail to mixed use developments. Many big box retail centers turned mix use developments are still under construction across the nation but worldwide this has been a trend that benefits many people both those that are visiting and those who live there. These solutions support a mixed use environment at Dillon Ridge Marketplace, which will provide many benefits for the community.

The redevelopment of the Dillon Ridge Marketplace site needs a strong, forward-thinking shared vision and strategy in order to make a compelling case for redevelopment. We recommend the town take a long-term approach to achieve a comprehensive, holistic vision to become the place that Dillon envisions in 10, 20, and 50 years. The Town of Dillon, owners in Dillon Ridge Marketplace, and the developers should strive to arrive at a common vision that makes use of all of the available resources. This site would be ideal for a new urbanist development, which means it would emphasize walkable, bikeable, lively, human-scale places.

This strategy and vision should also include a strong economic analysis to show to value of the proposed conversion of the site, which is essential for it to move forward. The analysis needs to show that the owners will have the potential to receive new revenue from the creation of mixed income housing, retail, and development. Using an adaptive development approach the long term masterplan can be built incrementally. In addition, this is an opportune project to offer Dillon’s portion of the affordable housing fund revenue to support the development of workforce housing units. Finally, Dillon is part of the greater Summit County region, and we recommend tapping into the surrounding resources and power of regional collaboration.

This is the chaos zone, where pedestrians and cars are constantly fighting to cross each others paths. Photo Credit: S. Szrek


3.12

**Highway 6 and Dillon Ridge Marketplace Development Ideas & Phases**

**Phase 1**

**Land Use Regulation**
- Subdivide parcels at Dillon Ridge Marketplace and update zoning for redevelopment according site development plan
- Create parcels to accommodate proposed infill
- Identify and certify needed changes to zoning restrictions on height, green space, parking, etc.

**Site Circulation**
- Convert parking lot access routes to streets or pedestrian access points
- Enhance pedestrian, bike and transit connections to and through the marketplace
- Add striping for all pedestrian crossings of Highway 6
- Commence process to get a tunnel built under Highway 6 and connect to bike route network on both sides of Hwy 6
- Create pedestrian crossing that connected to central pedestrian axis through site
- Add sidewalks along new streets
- Create transit center where buses, shuttles, and pedestrians can converge in a central location on the site

**Infrastructure**
- Upgrade site utilities for future diversity and density of uses (Sewer/Water/Power/Lighting/Stormwater/NaturalGas)

**Parking**
- Construct first parking garage and clad the faces facing the pedestrian ways with small/medium commercial uses on the first floor and residential units above. Consider using roof for solar, potentially use electricity to melt snow

**Infill**
- Using the excess parking offset by the new parking garage, develop infill structures in the BB&B/Theater lot area and/or one in one of the parking lots on the Northside of Highway 6 Strip
- Commence development of the parcel east of the Dillon Dam Road and north of Hwy 6 in a manner that will calm the intersection and contribute to redefining this particular stretch of Highway 6
- Find/create a location for the primary county Post Office in the Dillon Ridge Marketplace
Dillon Reimagined
Phase 2

Site Circulation

- Expand pedestrian only areas
- Create consolidated vehicular paths to parking structures to minimize potential conflicts with pedestrians and cyclists
- Commence development of Gondola to Dillon Core Area
- Develop trail in hillside ROW starting on north side of roundabout at Lake Dillon Drive and Highway 6, running along the hillside to join the marketplace

Infrastructure

- Implement sustainable infrastructure management practices

Parking

- Construct second parking garage and clad the faces facing the pedestrian ways with small/medium commercial uses on the first floor and residential units above. Consider using roof for solar or as housing community open space, potentially use electricity to melt snow

Infill

- Using the excess parking offset by the new parking garage, develop infill structures in the BB&B/Theater lot area and/or one in one of the parking lots on the Northside of Highway 6 Strip
- Continue development of the parcel east of the Dillon Dam Road and north of Highway 6 in a manner that will calm the intersection and contribute to redefining this particular stretch of Highway 6
- Also, focus on anchoring the corners of the intersection of Dillon Dam Road and Highway 6 with signage, sidewalks and additional 2-4 story mixed use developments
Phase 3

Site Circulation
Expand Gondola route to include stops at residential hubs along Highway 6 on the way to Keystone. Utilized as tourist attraction and parking/traffic solution for high volume during peak ski season
Continue to develop the transit hub concept and attempt to wrangle in a Bustang Stop with the new linkage to Keystone
Enhance and expand pedestrian zones, add courtyards/outdoor gathering areas with spectacular views

Infrastructure
Evaluate infrastructural systems for potential upgrades or improved management efficiencies

Parking
Conduct parking needs analysis based on new paradigm, determine if it makes sense to add garage in core area or potentially reduce lot coverage and increase developable density in core area

Redevelopment
Using the excess parking offset by the new parking garage, develop infill structures in the BB&B/Theater lot area and/or one in one of the parking lots on the Northside of Highway 6 Strip
Continue development of the parcel east of the Dillon Dam Road and north of Highway 6 with a focus on anchoring the corners of the intersection of Dillon Dam Road and Highway 6 with signage, sidewalks and additional 2-4 story mixed use developments
Restructure layout of grocery shopping in area, look into spreading grocery into three sections (produce/dairy/meat, dry/package goods, and Home/Pharmacy/Health) which will be complimented by Post Office/Shipping & Receiving facility co-located for convenience
Move one Starbucks from Dillon Ridge to Core Area (right now there are 2 in DRM)
Supportive Case studies

These case studies show examples of communities who have implemented a variety of the solutions and strategies that we have highlighted. Showcasing them gives more information about how to complete these projects, and offer potential partners to connect with to get more information.

**Edmonston, Maryland**, which has a small population and a limited municipal budget (similar to Dillon), completed a green streets project in 2010. The improvement project on Decatur Street, the town’s primary east-west corridor, stemmed from the costly experience of chronic flooding and aging infrastructure. Instead of repairing the ‘expired’ street in the conventional way, Edmonston’s political leadership and community members agreed to fix it with an approach that both reduced the amount of permeable surface and improved non-motorized accomodations on Decatur Street.

Rather than widening the street to make room for bicycle and pedestrian facilities, Edmonston narrowed the travel lanes. This is a suggestion for Dillon as well. In addition to adding on-street designated bike lanes, the project also included planting native trees, installing wind-powered lighting, rebuilding all sidewalks and crosswalks with permeable pavers, and adding corner bulbouts. The bulbouts and sidewalk buffers hold rain gardens/bio-retention planters to remove toxins and reduce the amount of runoff leaving the roadway. The bicycle and pedestrian features connect with the Anacostia Tributary Trail System, which links Edmonston with Cottage City to the south and Riverdale Park to the north.

The Town of Edmonston received project support from both local and regional partners, as well as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Maryland Department of the Environment, and the Low Impact Development Center. The project construction was funded by the EPA through a $1.1 million American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grant. This is a source Dillon could look into as well.

**Syracuse, New York** completed a “Connective Corridor” in 2015 that links downtown Syracuse and the Syracuse University campus with two miles of multimodal green streets, incorporating pedestrians, cyclists, transit, and automobiles. Prior to the completion of this project, the city’s two activity centers felt largely disconnected, severed by Interstate 81 and lacking pedestrian or bicycle amenities. This is similar to Dillon and Highway 6.

The project envisioned a vibrant network of streets that would bring life to downtown. The goals included improved connectivity and public spaces. The project included massive green improvements including rain gardens, sidewalk buffers, permeable pavers, and new native landscaping.

The project improved connectivity by adding
raised and separated two-way bike lanes, widened sidewalks, streetlights, sidewalk furniture, and wayfinding signage. The project also included many facade and lighting improvements to create a “corridor of light.” These changes marked a total overhaul for the area by encouraging pedestrian activity, and economic investment at the street level. Many of these elements would be beneficial in Dillon too.

Truckee, California created the Pioneer Trail Roundabout in 2010. Our report suggests a roundabout at Lake Dillon Drive and Highway 6 to capture the benefits that Truckee outlines here. Truckee constructed it to increase safety, aesthetics, and flexibility due to the seasonal nature of traffic in the area.

They added high-visibility crosswalks with pedestrian refuges to each leg of the four-way roundabout and off-road multi-use pathways to connect the roundabout and recreation facilities with a much larger network of area trails and bike lanes. This describes the environment in Dillon as well, which has a large network of trails. This helped increase accessibility between amenities and areas in Truckee. It also slowed traffic and enhanced pedestrian and bicycle safety, as well as serving as a stormwater retention area.

Russellville, Arkansas conducted a set of complete streets projects in 2014 for the North El Paso Corridor. The 3/4-mile roadway was identified in the 2011 Downtown Master Plan as a “key connection” for active transportation. This corridor was a former state highway. It is now an essential bike and pedestrian connection with pedestrian-scale street lights, buffered bike lanes, and new ADA-compliant sidewalks on both sides of the street. Highway 6 in Dillon could achieve this as well.

This case study argued that a more-inviting pedestrian environment can go a long way in reviving a downtown. They stated that since completion of these projects, new businesses have arrived both in downtown and along the El Paso Corridor. In addition, Arkansas Tech is now pursuing mixed-use housing along the El Paso Corridor, in part due to the influx of activity and extensive use by both pedestrians and cyclists. This supports the suggested solution to make Dillon Ridge Marketplace a truly mixed use area.

Ranson and Charles Town, West Virginia are examples of “a model of planning collaboration.” The two neighboring towns developed a “Two Cities, One Revitalization Plan” to transform their shared auto-centric arterial, Fairfax Boulevard, into a green street and renewed commerce corridor in 2017. They constructed the Green Corridor - a two-mile stretch of Fairfax Boulevard in Ranson and George Street in Charles Town. This is similar to the relationship between Dillon and
3. A New Vision for Highway 6 & the Dillon Ridge Marketplace

Silverthorne and shows the power of combining resources to realize regional goals.

Ranson (population 4,500) and Charles Town (population 5,300) were able to combine their financial and staff resources to imagine a regional-scale project. They were able to tap into Federal interest and financial support. Transportation is often a regional challenge, and the Green Corridor project presents a successful example of a community-driven, regional solution.


The Fairfax Boulevard is a critical local corridor, connecting residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, job centers, hospitals, and parks. They added bike lanes, widened sidewalks, streetlights, and bus shelters. The redesign now makes this thoroughfare both safe and inviting for all modes.

Buena Vista is a Colorado town that has implemented some of the proposed elements in this section and put them into play. Buena Vista is a popular retirement community, as is Dillon, and there is a need for developing it as a walkable, mixed use development to accommodate people of all ages and abilities.

In Buena Vista, they discovered the New Urbanism movement and quickly realized its architecture and design aspects would be efficient and effective at creating the walkable, pedestrian friendly community they envisioned. Tree-lined streets, mixed-use residences, green building and a conscientious land-use design were elements of New Urbanism that truly spoke to the planning team there. This new development, South Main, is extremely popular and shows that smaller, rural towns can create human-oriented destinations with character, charm, and uniqueness.

Rifle, Colorado and Bozeman, Montana are two other towns that are seeing changes in their urban environments and an increased desire for neighborhoods that are walkable and have amenities within walking distance.

“There is a desire for walkability, a desire for convenience—for the design of the place that makes it an intriguing place to walk.”

In this case study, a survey showed that “trying to entice big employers through old-school economic development tools such as tax incentives—what the report refers to as “elephant-hunting”—might be less effective than an approach based on creating communities that are desirable to live in.” They also found that the enduring stereotype of ideal Western living, in which single-family homes are widely dispersed across the panoramic landscape, is shifting (CityLab). This is important and relevant to Dillon because some of the traditional techniques for bringing in companies and creating economic development in the area may not be as effective as some of these new techniques of bringing in development by providing mixed use, walkable urban centers.

Conclusion

Dillon is a hidden gem with a strong foundation and many amenities, such as the marina, amphitheater, location, access to recreation, and scenery. These proposed interventions are aimed

at helping Dillon achieve a long-term vision to become a more vibrant and lively place to visit and live year-round.

**WORKS CITED**


Section 4
Core Area
CHAPTER 4 - INTRODUCTION

Context
Lake Dillon Drive, in its current form, is a deserted road most often cruised down at high speeds from Highway 6 to reach the marina. There is no sense of arrival, and the car-oriented atmosphere does not invite pedestrians to stroll the core’s streets. It is a space to pass through rather than a place to linger within, which is antithetical to its position as the core, the heart of Dillon.

Re-imaging Lake Dillon Drive as a Main Street involves a multitude of development, wayfinding and placemaking actions. Of focus to the Core team are:

1. Embodying the vision of creating a human scale environment
2. Introducing interventions both short and long term to realize this goal to revitalize main street

The Town of Dillon has defined a core area revitalization vision (Dillon Comp & Master Plans) to “create a vibrant, mixed-use destination that reflects our Mountain Lakestyle identity; is the preferred location for new and existing businesses, residents, and guests, and enhances the quality of life for all who venture here.”

Proposed definition of Dillon’s core area

Source: Google Earth Pro
The goals outlined to meet this vision involve:

1. Increasing density and foot traffic by providing a diverse mix of residential opportunities, businesses, event programming, and community amenities;
2. Improving the overall appearance of the core area and instilling a sense of pride in the Dillon community;
3. Diversifying and expanding Dillon’s tax base in order to reinvest in public amenities including parks, the amphitheater, Marina and community programs and events.

A related goal involved in fostering a main street atmosphere centers around developing a human-scale environment. Such a streetscape typically involves providing amenities tailored to pedestrians rather than simply vehicles. Additionally, a baseline lack in Dillon itself - job opportunities - would be well-tailored to set up shop, so to speak, in this soon-to-be-revitalized core area. In line with bringing more activity into downtown, introducing third places such as coffee shops, co-working spaces and additional breweries would provide day to night activity. A further opportunity tuned to a comprehensive look at Dillon’s core’s needs is to improve connections down Lake Dillon Drive and throughout the circulatory body of the downtown area. In this vein, looking to create a true sense of arrival to the core area is paramount, best fostered through a redesign and placement update of town signage along Highway 6. Within the town itself, improved wayfinding would allow visitors to more easily navigate the core and discover Dillon’s currently hidden gems. Providing a place for and sense of welcome to those traveling by all modes - vehicle, bus, bicycle, and on foot - is key to this goal.

Timeline
The team developed a group of interventions that aim to achieve the goals of fostering a main street atmosphere and improving connections within the core area. In line with the town goals, the core area interventions focus on increasing density and foot traffic, improving the appearance, and diversifying Dillon’s tax base. The team envisions a three step time-based phasing process for the core area interventions, as is outlined in the graphic below.

**Time-based phasing of core area interventions**

### Short Term 0-3 Years
- Install temporary parking pop-ups
- Revise sign code
- Create a gateway along Hwy 6

### Mid Term 3-5 Years
- Redesign right of way
- Reorient wayfinding and signage
- Construct central parking facility

### Long Term 5-10+ Years
- Redesign La Riva del Lago mall
- Redevelop post office
## Implementation matrix for core area interventions

Additionally, the team developed a matrix to outline the high-level considerations of each phase. The matrix identifies anticipated steps for implementation, beneficial partnerships, and general cost estimates. The matrix is not exhaustive and is intended to serve as a launching point for conversations surrounding the feasibility of each intervention.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvement</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
<th>Partnerships</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-3 YEARS</td>
<td><strong>Parking pop-ups</strong></td>
<td>Survey service gaps in core area; identify vendors; consider special tax or fee for vendors</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sign code revisions</strong></td>
<td>Host conversation with City staff and local businesses to identify advertising needs; modify code with additional flexibility to be responsive to these and short term promotional opportunities</td>
<td>City of Dillon, business owners, local event-hosting entities, Summit Stage staff (RE: bus stop ads)</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gateway along Hwy 6</strong></td>
<td>Engage local artists to re-design eye-catching, well-placed city promotion</td>
<td>CDOT, local creatives, City staff</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 YEARS</td>
<td><strong>Right of way</strong></td>
<td>Outline necessary space for improved ROW navigation; construct timeline for construction</td>
<td>$$$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wayfinding and signage</strong></td>
<td>Outline coordinated effort to construct effective wayfinding, utilizing consistent size/style design guidelines</td>
<td>Summit County, graphic specialists, business stakeholders</td>
<td>$$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10+ YEARS</td>
<td><strong>La Riva del Lago</strong></td>
<td>Work with Urban Renewal Authority; release RFP for redevelopment</td>
<td>$$$$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post Office</strong></td>
<td>Identify location in Dillon Ridge Marketplace; Acquire parcel for infill or new development</td>
<td>USPS, current business owners, future space occupants</td>
<td>$$$$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SHORT-TERM INTERVENTIONS

PARKING POP-UPS
A total redesign of the right of way (ROW) is a costly and lengthy process. In order to kick-start this process the Town of Dillon should find creative ways to promote safety and create a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere. We propose enhancements that would take advantage of the generous ROW along Lake Dillon Drive. In order to create an attractive pedestrian space, we propose slowing down vehicles in the core area and creating pop-up parks, retail spaces, and other creative uses of the parking spaces along Lake Dillon Drive. Utilizing inexpensive and multi-use structures to reclaim space for the public realm is a successful tactic utilized in many redeveloping areas.

The use of semi-permanent structures along Lake Dillon Drive will help to fill in the gaps between the street edge and building front. The large setbacks along Lake Dillon Drive have led to a diminished public realm and lacking pedestrian atmosphere. The use of adaptable structures

Target areas for street front activation along Lake Dillon Drive

Source: Google Earth Pro Basemap
would work to create an inviting space for all. As well as providing new visual cues to pedestrian activity, the temporary structures would be a great use of underutilized space to drive economic development.

By providing small businesses, restaurants, and community members a space to operate, Dillon can create an environment that promotes small business development. Shown below, temporary structures lining Lake Dillon Drive would create a festive and fun atmosphere in the town core. Allowing nearby businesses to “spill” out onto the streets, Lake Dillon Drive will provide a festive and attractive atmosphere to the visitors of Summit County.

Many cities around the world have implemented pop-up parks, playgrounds, and other temporary uses to transform underutilized spaces. One compelling example of the potential of a reclaimed public realm comes out of a program in Bogota, Colombia. The town worked with the Urban Land Institute to create a “Plazoleta” in an underutilized surface parking lot. As portrayed below, this space was transformed using relatively inexpensive interventions to create a fun and inviting atmosphere as well as providing local children space to play, safely protected from traffic.
A recent pop-up park in downtown Denver provides another example of how to successfully use a temporary use to activate an underutilized space. Located two blocks from the Coors Field, the “Square at 21st” utilized small wooden structures, Astroturf, café seating, and planters to create a pop-up park that attracted visitors from all over the metro-region.

**Year-Round Activities**
A fun and inventive use of such spaces involves the ability to get creative with these newly reclaimed areas. One example of a fun use in the winter would be the creation of a small snowboard or ski ramp. A small ramp or course created from piled-up snow would provide a small attraction in the core for residents and visitors to enjoy on a snowy day.

**Safety and Shared Streets benefits**
Many studies show the impacts on safety that reduced speed limits and shared streets have. Not only do the physical improvements increase safety, there is often an added bonus of private financing that follows. Infrastructure investments along Lake Dillon Drive would help to create a more marketable and viable space for businesses to thrive and signal a greater desire in the region for private investment.

Bell Street Park in Seattle is a fantastic example of what road diets can accomplish in an urban context. Using visual indicators and a road reconfiguration, Seattle was able to leverage millions of dollars of investment to spur economic growth in a once struggling neighborhood. The inclusion of public parks and reinforced safety barriers have created an inviting space in a once car-dominated area. The use of planters, signage, and highly visible pedestrian zones created an inviting and safe atmosphere for both pedestrians and motorists. These enhancements increased foot traffic in the area and increased the area’s vibrancy.

**SIGN-CODE REVISIONS**
The current wayfinding system present in Dillon’s town core is insufficient from a navigational perspective, often unreadable from a size and orientation perspective, and leaves much of the town’s gems unearthed to a tourist visiting for the first time. In taking a fresh look at the Sign Regulations governing Dillon’s business, amenity and event promotional landscape, there is much potential for the tourist tax contribution to grow substantially year-round. This influx of recognition about Dillon’s values and tourist draws will be further spurred on as additional businesses choose to plant themselves in an increasingly thriving town core.

The current sign regulations code, updated earlier this year, offers a multitude of regulations and specifications, yet little flexibility. It is well-acknowledged by town officials that a renewed vision for such regulations is necessary - particularly those governing the town’s core in relation to business and amenity promotion. With a wealth of local businesses hidden behind small, inconspicuous signage, it is in everyone’s best interest that local regulations uplift rather than detract from tourists uncovering these local gems.

Guiding principles from Dillon’s Municipal Code “ARTICLE XI - Sign Regulations:”
Guiding principles from Dillon’s Municipal Code

“ARTICLE XI - Sign Regulations:"

“Encourage the construction of commercial signs of natural materials which are aesthetically pleasing and are compatible with the cultural and natural surroundings and with the buildings to which they are affixed.”

“Protect, preserve and enhance the unique aesthetic character, beauty and charm of the Town, and thereby encourage the continued development of tourism within the Town.”

Consider visibility for all modes when choosing sign and letter size.

According to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices Design Guidelines from the Federal Highway Administration, a typical rule of thumb for local (non-interstate) sign legibility is to have 1 inch of letter height for every 40 feet of desired legibility (2003). Translating this to readability of wayfinding signs down Lake Dillon Drive and through Dillon’s core, 3-5 inches would be the ideal letter size to account for the 35 mph speed limit and 100 ft. ROW down this minor arterial. It is key in this consideration to adopt signage which is sized for, catered to and readable to all modes, including vehicles, buses, pedestrians and cyclists.

Wayfinding should be intuitive and helpfully repetitive.

Signage should intuitively highlight tourist hot spots, so visitors don’t feel compelled to pull out their phones to find the day’s destinations - taking them out of the scene. To be intuitive, wayfinding signs should predict key tourist destinations and points of note, such as parking, the marina, restaurants, breweries, coffee shops and activity destinations, orienting visitors effectively from whichever direction they enter town. Providing color cues can aid with this identification process (say, a red “P” for parking, green runner icon for recreation opportunities, blue wave icon for the Marina). This color and logo repetition technique should carry through to business signage too. According to the APA document, Content Sensitive Signage Design, it’s been shown that “A graphic on an advanced sign can help a driver better recognize sign content when that graphic is repeated on an on-premise sign” (2001).

Signage should be spatially aware, and consolidated when feasible.

Business, directory and general wayfinding signage orientation is another important factor in terms of readability. Since drivers, pedestrians and cyclists exploring Dillon may not necessarily enter the town core from Hwy 6 - say, coming down a side street into town, and after parking near their waterfront condo, walking up Lake
4. Core Area

Dillon Drive in search of a bite to eat or beverage - signage should be well noted both directions. General wayfinding should be easily readable both from the roadway and sidewalk. Business and directory signage, rather than being flush to the business facade itself (and therefore unreadable until one has entered the parking lot or parked alongside the establishment) should be sidewalk adjacent. Multi-business complexes, as are common in Dillon, provide an opportunity to consolidate signage streetside, magnifying the overall impact. An example of an effective directory sign from downtown Frisco and another mock-up for La Riva del Lago are included below.

Embrace creative signage design and placement. Most sign codes end up reading like rule books, with little imagery or examples provided of high quality, well received sign examples. Providing models and templates with particular note to the benefits of streetside sign placement and eye catching advertising approaches could help demystify the process for new businesses. Overall, inviting creativity into design could benefit all businesses in the downtown core, upping their revenues due to increased visibility.

Take for example the idea of an artist takeover, done effectively in Oakland, CA at local bus stops. Art is currently not regulated or prescribed by the Dillon sign code, but the potential to embrace Dillon’s artist values is offered with such an inclusion. In this vein, it is key to note that the sign code also currently prohibits bus/ bench shelter signs (or one would presume, any design elements outside the status quo). Likely this prohibition is intended to avoid the sort of unappealing, human size advertising glued to bus shelters that many have experienced riding the bus in urban areas. The reaction to this stereotypical advertising style, though well meaning, eliminates an excellent artistic advertising arena both for the town of Dillon to use and for greater Summit County placement to bring attention to Dillon’s amenities.

Examples of directories

Considering cross-county bus traffic includes both locals and visitors, allowing for thoughtfully crafted advertising at bus stops could be a boon to Dillon’s event promotion. To disallow the type
of stereotypical larger-than-life bulletins for cough syrup or law firms, the sign code could disallow single-entity advertisers and encourage event and multi-business advertising instead. This could be a great place to display the amphitheater lineup, promote a street festival or art show (like in the example from Antwerp below) or even publish a Summit County breweries map. Additionally, creative ads like the Wisconsin Tourism ad below could invite people to “picture themselves” in Dillon.

Allow flexibility in the sign code, particularly for special event signage permitting. Currently, the application process for temporary signs is laborious and requires a great deal of foresight to be successfully implemented. It may feel simply like too much work for a small business with a small staff to undergo. If the sign code were to instead allow bundling of temporary signage permit applications, this streamlining would be more friendly to the small business environment.

A great example of temporary signage could be to promote Small Business Saturday, which towns around the country are embracing to encourage shopping local. Certainly this motto holds true...
4. Core Area

For Dillon, with its downtown core comprised of many beloved spots like Pug Ryan’s Brewing and the Tiki Bar. Allowing for sandwich boards or sidewalk sale signs with merchandise outside businesses on this and other event days like farmers’ market Fridays, park(ing) days, street festival days and more would continue to bring vibrancy and tourist dollars to Lake Dillon Drive.

Of note from the sign code, this can easily be achieved while continuing to avoid a “tourist trap” atmosphere, as long as sign approval still undergoes a thorough but abbreviated review.

It is important to proceed with recognition that currently, businesses in downtown Dillon are inadequately showcased to vehicular traffic and even more so to foot traffic.

**Gateway along Highway 6**

The main entrance to Dillon’s core area is along Highway 6, which means that an appropriate gateway may attract visitors traveling by car to turn onto Lake Dillon Drive. A gateway is a physical landmark that indicates a change in environment from a major roadway to a lower traffic area of interest, such as a main street. A gateway serves not only to attract but also to welcome visitors by creating a sense of place (Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission).

The gateway that currently exists does not well-serve the core area. Along Highway 6, there are several small highway signs that direct visitors towards the . However, these signs are small and nondescript which means they are easy to miss. Additionally, there are two larger signs located at the junction of Highway 6 and Lake Dillon Drive. However, these signs are set back from the road and do not mention “town core” or “core area.” It would be easy to not see these signs or confuse them for signs designated for a subdivision. Finally, there are four wayfinding signs located at the crest of Lake Dillon Drive, but the size and placement of the signage is inefficient for directly visitors from Highway 6.
The team proposes re-purposing and relocating the signs located on Lake Dillon Drive as a means of creating a gateway for the core area. The first step in the process is to re-stylize the current signs to be more visually attractive and include the language “Town Center” or “Core Area”. This would also include increasing the font size so the wording is more visible at highway speeds. Once repurposed, these signs will be relocated in strategic locations along Highway 6 to better serve as wayfinding.
MID-TERM INTERVENTIONS

Right of Way
The team proposes redesigning the right of way (ROW) along Lake Dillon Drive as a means of both fostering a main street atmosphere and improving connections. The current ROW configuration encompasses 100’ of predominantly auto-centric space that includes wider than average drive lanes, underutilized center turn lanes, large diagonal parking spaces, and inconsistent pedestrian and cyclist amenities. The table below depicts the recommended improvements, which include reducing the number of travel lanes, reconfiguring parking, increasing landscaping, and enhancing pedestrian and cyclist oriented wayfinding amenities. Table 1 outlines the proposed ROW redesign specifications.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remove center turn lane</td>
<td>Use the additional space to expand the median. See “pedestrian median”.</td>
<td>• Low traffic on Lake Dillon Drive does not justify a center turn lane.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Removing the turn lane frees 14’ of ROW for other uses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create pedestrian median</td>
<td>Expand the median to 18’ to create a walkable, landscaped space.</td>
<td>• During warm months, the median can serve as additional seating and event space.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• In winter months, it can be used for snow storage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convert diagonal parking to parallel parking</td>
<td>Parallel parking along Lake Dillon Drive can be used for parking during peak season or pop-up uses.</td>
<td>• Landscaping can provide better absorption of runoff water (TJPD).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish a cohesive pedestrian network</td>
<td>Create a consistent sidewalk with 8’ of walking space and 8’ of usable space.</td>
<td>• Center refuge can simplify pedestrian decision-making when crossing the street (TJPD).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Allowing pop-up uses in parallel parking spaces provides a quick and affordable way to activate Lake Dillon Drive and fill in service gaps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Louisville, CO currently operates parking in a similar way along Main Street.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Expanding the walkable space to 8’ meets requirements of American Disabilities Act (ADA).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The additional 8’ allocates space for seating, wayfinding, sign posts, bike parking, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Consistent sidewalk provides a more enjoyable pedestrian experience.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 outlines the proposed ROW redesign specifications.
Wayfinding, Signage and Lighting

Lighting placement and illumination capacity are a huge comfort factor for pedestrians. In order to feel they’re welcome on the streetscape, those walking the sidewalks should feel safe and visible at all times of days and night. Loveland, Colorado’s Street Lighting manual requirements provide a good baseline measurement for Dillon (2007). Lake Dillon Drive is classified in Dillon’s Comprehensive Plan as a minor arterial street, which would fit into the “2 and 4-lane Arterial” category in the tables below. As an alternative, to create more of a neighborhood feel, a post height along the lines of the “Minor Collector” category at 15 feet could suit Lake Dillon Drive well too.

Not only do lamp posts adjacent to the sidewalk provide a more welcoming, well-lit experience for pedestrians, they also provide an excellent advertisement opportunity for the town of Dillon. Seasonally appropriate flags attached to the posts would inform pedestrians and cyclists of upcoming events, perhaps giving them good reason to return to Dillon another time. In addition, they could highlight particular grouped amenities such as attractions along the marina or the currently well tucked away Dillon Disc Golf Course.

| Table 15-2 |
| Loveland (City Limits Only) Street Light Requirements |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street Classification</th>
<th>Lighting System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6-lane Arterial</td>
<td>400-W cobra, semi-cutoff style, fiberglass pole, 38-foot mounting height</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 and 4-lane Arterial</td>
<td>250-W cobra, semi-cutoff style, fiberglass pole, 32-foot mounting height</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Collector</td>
<td>150-W cobra, semi-cutoff style, fiberglass pole, 27-foot mounting height</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor Collector</td>
<td>70-W acrylic acorn, fiberglass pole, 15-foot mounting height</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local/Lane</td>
<td>70-W acrylic acorn, fiberglass pole, 15-foot mounting height</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Street Light Requirements in Loveland, Colorado  
Source: Larimer County Urban Area Street Standards
Lamp posts with seasonal banners along Lake Dillon Drive
Source: Rendering created with Sketchup
Dillon’s core area is currently characterized by an abundance of parking spaces. Though there are certainly times when particular parking areas near the waterfront reach near capacity - say on farmers’ market days, during amphitheater concerts, or peak sailing season - the majority of spaces further up Lake Dillon Drive are available even during busy peak periods. With so many parking lots yawning open for much of the day and night, these concrete oases represent underutilized parcels which could reach a higher potential when converted to housing, office/co-working hubs or merchant space. This concept will be discussed in further detail in “Parking Pop-Ups.”

Additionally, it would be prudent for Dillon to consider consolidating small surface lots in the core area. There are several small surface lots throughout the core, and the parking regulations vary between them. For example, many surface lots only allow parking on specific days, which leaves empty, vacant space in the core throughout the week. Additionally, this system is challenging for town visitors to navigate, which may lead to cars cruising to find an available space. Similar cities and towns have remedied this predicament through the construction of a centralized parking structure, ideally one which is a fluid component of the streetscape as exemplified in the image below of 15th and Pearl Streets in downtown Boulder. Further study of parking conditions would need to be accomplished before proposing a particular number of spaces, but the town should certainly leave room to grow - expecting business and housing growth downtown and along the waterfront in the years to come.
4. Core Area

LONG-TERM INTERVENTIONS

After having undergone many years of stagnation, the Dillon Town Center is beginning to experience new development and renewed investment. As identified by the townspeople, several planning documents, and municipal authorities, the town center lacks the type of development necessary to create a successful and vibrant town core. As some parcels begin the process of redevelopment, it is important to continue to look for new opportunities and complementary projects that will contribute to the success and prosperity of the city. Our development recommendations are broken apart into long and short-term projects. The re-imagining and inclusion of pop-up interventions along Lake Dillon Drive, the redevelopment of the La Riva Del Lago Mall, and the redevelopment of the post office, will all work towards achieving the town’s vision for itself and the demand for a more vibrant and active town core.

Redesign of La Riva Del Lago Mall

La Riva Del Lago Mall is along Main Street in Dillon’s core area. The mall is the largest parcel in the core area at 2.35 acres (102,366 square feet). The mall includes private condos on the third floor, and five commercial uses on the first and second floor. The commercial uses are: Endurance Cycling Bike Shop, Frozen Yogurt Shop, Elevation Fitness.

The team evaluated the mall based on how it fits the main street atmosphere. The team concluded that the commercial use of the mall, and the circulation of the building itself, is unsuccessful in providing an inviting and impressionable atmosphere along Dillon’s Main Street. The mall has a relatively blank exterior with small...
windows, inward orientation, high retail vacancy, and no exterior signage or directory to invite pedestrians on Main Street to linger in the space, or investigate the mall. Additionally, the mall is surrounded by surface parking lots and a lack of building frontage on the opposing side of Main Street. The combination of blank exterior walls, surrounding land uses, and poor visibility into and around the mall create an unfriendly pedestrian environment. Based on the evaluation of the mall, the team began to re-imagine the mall, and its footprint on Main Street.

The proposed mall concept redesign presented by the team is not intended to be the exact architectural redesign of the current building. The concept presented here is intended to demonstrate the potential benefits gained by redesigning the mall to be more accessible and open. According to Alana Semuels of The Atlantic, in the 20th century retail was overbuilt, and now malls are being retrofitted into hospitals, apartments, schools, etc. (2015). In the case of La Riva Del Lago, the building currently serves as a residential use, and does have successful retail components. The need for the mall to be redesigned comes from the desire to stay relevant in the 21st century as the functions of retail changes and the culture of shopping and placemaking evolves.

The concept for La Riva Del Lago’s redesign comes from the popular “mall-as-main-street” movement, which incorporates outdoor seating and dining, pedestrian walkways, and residential uses (CityLab). In this case, the mall quite literally is the Main Street. Keeping with the “mall-as-main-street” concept, the proposed concept includes taking away the head-in parking spaces from of the Main Street entrance of the mall to expand the pedestrian environment. Taking away this parking could additionally accommodate more places to linger, patio seating, lawn chairs, trees and plants, an exterior mall directory, and outdoor programming elements such as cornhole, mini-golf, etc.

Increased patio seating and exterior programming could invite increased activity throughout the day, which could cause pedestrians to linger longer and engage with the retail space. Additionally, an exterior directory could inform passing pedestrians of retail space that would otherwise go unnoticed given the current inward orientation of the mall.

Additional opportunities for the mall to be permeable from the exterior could additionally activate the retail spaces more regularly. The addition of garage doors and larger windows would give the mall a more open and inviting facade. Increased permeability between the
interior and exterior of the mall, accompanied by increased outdoor programming gives the mall a more “main street” atmosphere in this setting.

**Policy Recommendations**

During the final presentation to the Town of Dillon, the team proposed using eminent domain to purchase the commercial portion of the mall. Once the town obtains possession of the building, the town may issue a request for proposal (RFP) to developers to redesign the exterior and interior commercial space. This recommendation was given based on two caveats. First, the Summit County Parcel Assessor data informed the team that the commercial space was co-owned by multiple owners. Secondly, the building, along with the core area, is considered blighted under the 2008 blight study commissioned by the Town of Dillon and conducted by Leland. Based on feedback received from the town staff that there is a single owner, the team no longer recommends eminent domain as a policy tool for achieving the redesign of the building.

Given the lack of new development, and the blighted core area, the team has updated the recommendations to include a few options:

1. The town could utilize a public-private partnership and solicit the private owner to assist in funding the redesign. In Washington D.C. the city has solicited public private partnerships and required private entities to fund portions of the redesign of school building infrastructure in exchange for the city providing “availability fees” - or regular payments on the grounds that the building is performing to required specifications and the city has ultimate say over the usage of the building (Kriston Capps, CityLab 2018).

2. Utilize the town and county Urban Renewal Authorities to create revitalization funds through Tax Increment Finance (TIF) or creating a ballot that would solicit an increase in sales tax to fund the revitalization project. The funds could then go toward paying for a development RFP to redesign the exterior and interior commercial space. The benefit of utilizing TIF in this particular context is that TIF is not a new tax; it is an incremental tax that would generate capital by dedicating growth in municipal tax, whereas issuing a raise in existing sales tax, or creating a new tax, would involve going to the ballot and has the potential of either getting voted down, or causing backlash in the community.

3. The town could allow for the creation of a business improvement district (BID) within the main street boundaries with La Riva Del Lago mall being the main entity involved in the BID. The BID could issue a property tax that the main street businesses pay into in order to generate capital to invest in the redesign of the commercial space. This could be beneficial, as the businesses could be positively affected by the increased foot traffic caused by the change to a more “main street” atmosphere. The BID could use the capital gained from the BID tax as a long term investment in their future stability by funding the improvement project.

**Redesign of the United States Postal Service Office**

Built in the early nineties, the Post Office takes up 2.2 acres of some of the most valuable real estate in the core area. An analysis of property and land values of the adjacent parcels indicate that the land may be valued at upwards of $720,000 per acre. The redevelopment of this parcel would likely provide a higher and better use of this land than its current use. Beyond the ability to increase the tax base, the redevelopment of this parcel also provides an opportunity to significantly alter the feel of Lake Dillon Drive.

Consolidation efforts by the Postal Service have identified parcels like the Dillon Post Office as ripe properties for redevelopment. Utilizing smaller retail spaces in centralized locations, the
services provided by the post office are able to be replaced with little impact on people’s daily lives. According to a survey conducted by the USPS, nearly 80% of postal customers surveyed agreed that moving a post office would be a minor inconvenience they would be able to overcome.

Oftentimes a post office is seen as a space that promotes civic engagement and small-town pride. Many smaller communities lack the development necessary to attract a diversified business community and must rely on services like the post office to fill the gaps in community gathering places. In Dillon, unlike many other small towns with centralized cores, there is a small but diverse array of businesses, but few that offer a “third-place” atmosphere. Many of the existing businesses are either oriented away from the street or set so far back from the road that many people have trouble finding these places. Part of this issue stems from the lack of viable retail space and a stable year-round population. Understanding these issues, our team analyzed many of the properties in the Dillon Town Center to identify opportunities for a catalytic development.

Transitioning from Post Office to Housing

In Dillon, much like with other small towns, the Post Office is thought of as a generator of foot traffic for the nearby businesses in the downtown core. However, because the lack of available attractions and “third places”, postal customers have few choices and options for lingering. The Town of Dillon should consider purchasing the property from USPS and working with local developers to fill the gap in the town’s housing stock. Dillon has already made clear its desires to diversify its housing stock. This project has the potential to introduce a mix of housing units into the downtown core while improving the core’s retail atmosphere. USPS has been active in the consolidation of their services and offloading their properties for a bargain rate. Acquiring the land at a good price allows the city to use tax increment financing to help capture the revenues generated by this development and incentivize a high-quality development at rates suitable for affordable housing.

The town of Crested Butte has recently undergone the process of consolidating postal operations. Met with initial backlash and criticism, the town was able to address resident concerns and still provide a similar level of service. Much of the postal operations in Dillon concern access to P.O. boxes. To overcome this issue Crested Butte used temporary uses and spaces to provide room for P.O. boxes in other parts of the city. The town installed temporary P.O. boxes at its community theatre and nearby retail center. Dillon has a promising opportunity to use small retail spaces and town-owned land to provide access to P.O. boxes in the town core. Redevelopment of the post office offers the opportunity to address the housing needs of Dillon and the depressed pedestrian realm in the town core.

In order to reach a desirable density in the town center we are recommending a parking exemption be extended to parcels near transit stops. We also suggest that developments that qualify as low-income developments should be extended parking exemptions up to 20%. These exemptions would allow a higher density than what is currently allowed in the core area. The renderings on the following page show that utilizing a dormitory style housing development and taking advantage of a 40 percent parking reduction would allow for a development capable of providing 78 units of low-income housing to local and regional workers. Flexible leases and affordable units would provide a much-needed housing type and a sizable year-round population.
New Post Office Redevelopment

Source: Rendering created in Sketchup
Many other similar workforce housing models have already been successfully demonstrated in surrounding communities. Vail and Breckenridge both provide dormitory style housing for their workforce population. The low vacancy rates signal that this type of housing is needed and that workforce housing developments are successful in their mission.

Another consideration for the potential uses of the new retail space created by the redevelopment of the Post Office is that local P.O. boxes will still be able use some of this space. The foot traffic generated by this new space will have the much-needed surrounding land uses that would promote economic development desperately needed by the city.

Dillon Ridge Marketplace

After consultation with other groups and an analysis of available parcels in the city, we recommend that the Post Office and its services be relocated to the new retail spaces in the Dillon Ridge Marketplace. This new space would be in a more central location with a higher and more compelling mix of uses to promote foot traffic. Another strong case for the use of the Dillon Ridge Marketplace is that the city has identified the marketplace as a site at which to create a regional transit hub. As a regional entity, the new marketplace and accompanying transit hub would better serve the interests and needs of postal customers.
References


4. Core Area
Section 5

Dillon Marina
fostered a symbiotic relationship with the Dillon Marina. As a primary attraction of the Town, the Dillon Marina currently offers boating services and educational opportunities as well as local waterside dining. The redevelopment of the Dillon Marina will enhance the cultural and recreational activities currently offered while also catalyzing development and diversifying the economy of the Town of Dillon.

THE PLANNING CONTEXT

The Marina and waterfront area plays an important role in providing recreational, artistic, and cultural activities for the town. Amenities such as the newly redeveloped Amphitheater, Marina Park, and Farmers Market provide spaces to gather and linger. The Marina is currently operating at a profit and provides the following uses and revenue drivers: multi-lane launch ramp, boat lift cranes, service, slip leasing, fuel, sanitary pump out services, storage, rental facilities, marina store, sailing school, yacht club membership, and a Tiki bar.

Key Issues and Goals
When visualizing the redevelopment of the Marina, it is important to understand the surrounding area and the existing urban fabric. By recognizing community constraints, we better understand how to cooperatively achieve
community goals. Three of the biggest constraints for the Dillon Marina are land availability, viewshed preservation, and communal resistance to change. To achieve the goals identified by the town of Dillon, it is vital that both residents and stakeholders are thoroughly invested in the planning process. Our recommendations address the following Town of Dillon goals:

- Strengthening diversity, collaboration, and sustainability
- Strengthening summer and winter season activities
- Incentivizing a mix of age groups
- Creating more permanent housing options
- Designing and implementing better signage and wayfinding

Guiding Plans
Marina Master Plan (2008)
Our recommendations complement the Dillon Marina Master Plan by supporting the development of underutilized spaces and further separating land uses along the Marina. Multiple elements from the 2008 Marina Master Plan are included in our concept plan. As shown in Figures x and x (on the following page), elements from the 2008 Marina Master Plan incorporated in our proposal include:

- Expanding the Tiki bar
- Relocating the Yacht Club
- Constructing a wharf to support existing Marina services
- Providing additional restroom facilities
- Moving Marina docks to deep water and connecting these docks to the shore via the wharf structure
- Constructing a welcome center that includes an observation tower, a large indoor multi-use space, and pop-up shops or market spaces
- Building a multi-level structured parking
- Moving and expanding the Marina maintenance building

Title: Service Uses Concept Map (top); Public Uses Concept Map (bottom)
Source: Google Earth Prop Basemap
The proposed solutions illustrate how the waterfront can be further developed. Implementing a mixed-use development and constructing a boardwalk at the Marina will create a more walkable, year-round destination for Dillon. Spaces for restaurants, entertainment, and boutiques will diversify uses and users along the marina. The goal is to clearly define separation of uses and create a pedestrian friendly environment that drives economic activity.

**Other Applicable Plans**
Other plans that support our vision include the Dillon Comprehensive Plan, Summit County’s Comprehensive Plan, and the OED Adaptive Reuse Initiative. The Dillon Comprehensive Plan states the Marina is a focal point for the entire community of Dillon and calls for the expansion and improvement of Marina facilities. Summit County’s vision for land use emphasizes the importance of appropriately located growth to ensure a rural mountain character is maintained. Finally, the OED Adaptive Reuse Initiative states that jobs follow people and people are drawn to quality communities and great places. People want to live and work in places that are walkable and have a strong sense of placemaking. Additionally, trends in economic activity suggest a general downsizing in store size nationwide, a rise in remote workers and entrepreneurs, and the need for incubator spaces. By adhering to the principles of these plans, the redevelopment of the Marina will create a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented boardwalk with diverse commercial opportunities for the Town of Dillon.

**CASE STUDIES**

**Brighton Marina**
A known success story from Brighton, United Kingdom acts as our case study in the design and feasibility of the Dillon Marina expansion. Built in 1979, the artificial marina boardwalk features a working harbor, residential housing...
and commercial activities. The marina facilities mimic those at the Dillon Marina, including a boatyard, equipment shops, and fueling facilities. Mixed-used development including first floor commercial space and second floor apartments, are located along the boardwalk. Commercial spaces include chic fashion shops, boutiques, galleries, craft shops and eateries. Brighton Marina is also under similar site constraints in terms of its width of 60 feet.

Sandpoint’s Boardwalk & Moorage Redevelopment Project:

The City of Sandpoint created a new doorway to the downtown core area that is only accessed by water. This project began in the early 2000s with the Moorage construction near the Old Power House, an effort which opened up more areas of Sandpoint’s lakefront property to public use during this first phase of redevelopment. Seasonal Moorage Services is offered from May to October and include: overnight moorage, covered or open slips, 24-hr fuel, security gates, pump-out station, restrooms and showers, dockside power & water, convenience store, marine supplies, public boardwalk.

**OUR PROPOSAL**

**Short Term Recommendations**

**Programming and Phasing**

The implementation of our recommendations will be incremental, so it is important to identify various measures to bring all components of the Marina development to fruition. In terms of commercial development along the proposed boardwalk, we recommend implementing temporary pop-ups as a way to gauge which kinds of businesses will thrive and complement the existing nearby businesses and services. Taking advantage of the highly trafficked Dillon Reservoir Loop and enhancing wayfinding to the Marina will also be useful in attracting new businesses and visitors to the Marina.

**Partnerships**

Forming partnerships with local business entities will provide Dillon with a competitive advantage and an opportunity to access a wide range of resources and expertise. In terms of

Sandpoint Marina, Idaho
http://www.idahorealestatelistings.com/North-Idaho-Photo-Tour-Sandpoint-Area.asp
redevelopment along the lakefront, our team has identified some key entities that would bring value to the Marina, many of which are already existing businesses along the Marina. The following potential partnerships we identified are as follows:

- Dillon Urban Renewal
- Colorado Stand Up Paddleboard
- Pug Ryans Tiki Bar
- Dillon Yacht Club
- Marina Rental/Retail Store
- Service Building, fueling, sanitation service

Creating partnerships is crucial in the beginning stages of development along the Marina, but they will also serve an essential long-term role as a way for the Town of Dillon to maintain strong relationships with the businesses and keep them thriving along the lakefront.

**Trails and Wayfinding**

Programming health and wellness into the Marina is a unique way to promote both the existing trails surrounding the lakefront and encourage healthy lifestyles. To achieve this, we are proposing the creation of an application (app) that allows people to run “Flat 14ers” (See Figure x). This concept was first adopted by Douglas County and is a great way to encourage people to “hike,” even when they are unable to make it to the mountains. The app would allow the user to choose which 14er they want to hike and count their steps while they are walking the Dillon Reservoir Loop. Along the Loop, there could be signs with bar codes that will correspond with whichever peak the user selected. Once the user scans their code and presumably “hikes” their 14er, they can then be rewarded with some sort of coupon to a local Dillon business.

This program also provides opportunities to partner with both local and large-scale businesses. For example, Dillon could partner with Fitbit in the development of the app to count the user’s steps, or partner with Pug Ryan’s to hand out coupons to the Tiki Bar upon completion of a flat 14er to draw people to the Marina. These sort of partnerships will not only assist in the successful development of the app, but also help spread awareness about the program, and ultimately the Town of Dillon.

Dillon should also leverage its relationship with other businesses in Summit County by providing places along the Dillon Reservoir Loop for advertisements, especially those that might draw people to Dillon’s core or the Marina. Providing advertisements for businesses in the surrounding towns will also strengthen the relationship between Dillon and its surrounding communities. In addition to advertising a variety of businesses along the loop, it would be beneficial to implement better wayfinding to direct users to other recreational opportunities around Dillon. This will get users off the Loop, where they would then be directed to the Marina or the Town Center.
LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

Marina Development
The Town of Dillon’s lakefront is one of Summit County’s greatest assets. With beautiful views of Lake Dillon and the surrounding mountains, the Dillon Marina is currently an attractive destination. It provides the community with boating services, recreational activities, and educational experiences as well as a place to spend a relaxing afternoon by the water enjoying some casual local dining. Although Dillon’s waterfront is currently a successful location, it is generally underutilized and has significant potential to become a more vibrant destination. This can be achieved through the implementation of the following recommended development.

Development Attributes
Northeast of the Marina Retail/Rental Store and Service Building, between the waterfront and the hillside, there is approximately 35,000 square feet of space. However, less than 6,000 square feet of this space is currently developed. This leaves nearly 29,000 square feet of underutilized space along the water. Additionally, adjacent to this space on the northern edge, there is approximately 55,000 square feet of developable space on the previously mentioned hillside. To make better use of this area, a proposed mixed-use development is recommended to act as an economic driver for the Dillon Marina and the Town as a whole.

This mixed-use development would consist of three key elements; a new boardwalk fronting the Dillon Marina, a single story of commercial use space along the boardwalk, and two stories of multi-family residential space designed in a terraced fashion up the hillside to preserve the viewshed of existing residential uses located above.

The distance between the hillside and the waterfront is approximately 100 feet. For this recommendation, 40 feet has been allocated to commercial building space, 15 feet for commercial patio space, 17 feet to dedicated boardwalk space, and 3 feet for amenity space to be used for objects such as planters, street lights, and benches. This leaves about 25 feet of space left to be used as necessary. Assuming developable space of 40 feet (distance between

LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS
Marina Development Cross-section

the hillside and commercial storefront) by 400 feet (distance along the marina), approximately 16,000 square feet of commercial use space could be accommodated in this area; over two and a half times the current developed space.

The adjacent hillside has a slope of approximately 15.6 degrees, or about 28 percent, which is relatively steep, but not infeasible for construction. Two stories of multi-family residential space could be developed in this area: each floor being approximately 50 feet by 400 feet, which would add 40,000 square feet to the Town’s existing housing stock if fully built out. As previously mentioned, these residential use spaces would be constructed in a terraced fashion retain the viewsheds of existing viewsheds. An additional measure that should be considered to minimize the impact of the development both environmentally and socially is to integrate a green roof on the upper level of the development.

The proposed mixed-use development not only has a direct opportunity to spur economic activity along the waterfront, but can also strengthen the Town’s overall vibrancy if the proper connections are made. The only means of direct access to the Dillon Marina from the bike path is the staircase on the Southwest side of the proposed development. If you are on the northeast side of the Dillon Marina, there is no means of accessing the bike path, which means that you need to walk over 500 feet along the waterfront before being able to access the nearest staircase leading toward the Town Center. To incentivize walkability between the Town Center and the Dillon Marina, the proposed development should include at least one staircase running directly through it. An additional staircase on the northeast side of the proposed development should be constructed.
to create another link from the bike path to the Marina. The implementation of these staircases will reduce the distance currently required to walk along the waterfront in order to reach the core area. Lastly, the proposed relocation of the boating service facilities at the northeast section of the Marina near Gold Run Circle will yield a significant increase in pedestrian traffic. Therefore, a pedestrian walkway should be constructed to link the bike path and the new Marina service area. Figure X illustrates both the existing connections and the proposed connections to the Marina.

Regulations
One of the most critical implementation steps Dillon can take to bring our recommendations to fruition is to rezone the Marina. The Marina is currently zoned Parks and Open Space, which allows recreational uses and accessory buildings that aid the Marina in carrying out day to day business. Discussions with city staff revealed that rezonings, especially those that involve Parks and Open space, can be extremely controversial. The rezoning process includes public hearings at both the Planning and Zoning Commission and at Town Council, which may bring further scrutiny from the public.

After a careful review of all existing zoning designations in the Town of Dillon, we have
5. Dillon Marina Redevelopment

determined that the existing districts would not allow for the development we have proposed at the Dillon Marina. This has led us to propose a new zoning district, Lakefront Mixed-Use. The new zoning designation would require:

- Green and Native Roofs
- Tiered Buildings
- Enhanced Design Standards
- Reduced Setbacks
- Mixed-Use Development
- Reduced Parking Ratios

Each requirement listed above would contribute to the natural transition we strive to achieve between the Town Center to the lakefront. Green roofs and tiered buildings will preserve the viewshed of existing residential uses; enhanced design standards and mixed-use development will ensure an active commercial corridor; and reduced setbacks and updated parking ratios will strengthen the pedestrian experience.

Development at the marina is a contentious issue, yet we believe these enhanced zoning standards will allow residents to become more comfortable with future redevelopment. As this zone becomes more heavily used, the Town of Dillon will have a more active and vibrant lakefront, catalyzing diversification of businesses and redevelopment.
Figure xx: Marina Development Zoning Components Illustrated
Source: Google Earth Pro Basemap