

Appendix: Chapter 7—Built Environment

Introduction to the Planning Area

The Regional Context

The Town of Snowmass Village lies within Pitkin County, Colorado, approximately 200 miles west of Denver. It is accessed via State Highway 82, which runs south from Glenwood Springs through the Roaring Fork Valley, intersecting with the primary entry to Town, Brush Creek Road. When entering Snowmass Village through either the rural Lower Brush Creek or Owl Creek Valleys, one is greeted by a panoramic view of the valley, Mount Daly, Burnt Mountain, and Baldy Mountain. The Town of Snowmass Village, Pitkin County, and the White River National Forest own more than 49 percent of the public land in the Town's influence area.

The Planning Area

Per the Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.), the completion of a Comprehensive Plan is the Planning Commission's primary responsibility. Given that municipalities grow and the actions of adjacent governments may impact the operations of another government, Colorado law (CRS 31-12-105) enables municipalities to plan for expansion in the three-mile area surrounding the city limits.

The planning area for the Comprehensive Plan contains several political and topographic boundaries and encompasses approximately 23,000 acres. It is divided into four primary areas. These areas include:

1. The current Town boundaries
1. The Lower Brush Creek Valley Influence Area
2. The Owl Creek Valley Influence Area
3. The Divide Influence Area

Within the Town planning area there are seven special study Comprehensively Planned Areas (CPAs):

1. Faraway Ranch South CPA
2. Faraway Ranch North CPA
3. Faraway Ranch North CPA (including the Snowmass Center)
4. West Village—Mixed Use CPA
5. Base Village
6. Rodeo Grounds/Entryway
7. Multifamily-Residential CPA

The History of the Planning and Development of Snowmass Village

Historical Perspective

The Town of Snowmass Village's current planning policies and regulations were formed in the 1980s, and have continued to evolve over the last two decades. Since 1955, Snowmass Village's

zoning buildout has ranged from 4,350 to 20,000 dwelling units as planning policies evolved. The buildout varies from 8,145 units in the Janss Plan (1964) and then reduced to the number used for current multifamily and single-family buildout including Base Village.

Homesteads. By 1890, ranchers and homesteaders had settled the land that is now Snowmass Village, but it was mainly Aspen's ski resort success in the 1940s and 1950s that led people beyond the boundaries of Aspen and to the ranchlands of the Brush Creek Valley. In 1955, Pitkin County began planning for the Brush Creek Valley area and zoned the Snowmass Village area agricultural, forestry, and residential areas and established a minimum lot size of two acres.

Snowmass-at-Aspen. In 1958, the Hoaglund Ranch was purchased by the Janss Colorado Corporation. Janss continued to make land purchases and prepared a development plan for the area in 1964. The natural assets of Snowmass-at-Aspen would be developed into a profitable year-round resort, linked to the Aspen area lodging and amenities but including its own unique ski-in/ski-out residential opportunity. The **Janss Plan** integrated 8,145 dwelling units into several small, alpine pedestrian villages on the slopes of Burnt and Baldy Mountains. Building materials would come from the natural wood and stone available in the immediate area. Internal circulation would rely on pedestrian trails and an effective, accessible transit system. Less intensive residential use and recreational open space separated the planned villages. The Aspen Skiing Company would construct and operate the ski trails and lifts. The Janss Corporation would develop the residential, commercial, and other recreational facilities. The formation of the Snowmass-at-Aspen Ski Area attracted growth and investors to the area. The first lifts began operating up Fanny Hill and Sam's Knob on December 16, 1967.

The Aspen Area General Plan. Prepared and adopted by the Pitkin County Commissioners in 1966, the Plan included many of the same concepts that were in the Janss Plan. Snowmass-at-Aspen and Aspen were identified as areas for residential density, preserving other areas for agriculture and other rural uses.

County Influence: The Snowmass General Submittal of 1976. As Snowmass Village evolved, Pitkin County became concerned about the consequences of existing development proposals and zoning on the future density of the area. The Pitkin County Commissioners favored a less intense buildout, preserving open space and buffers around population centers. The Snowmass Corporation, now the major landholder, favored higher density pockets throughout the area. The Pitkin County Planning and Zoning Commission advised the Snowmass Corporation to consider the Janss Plan concept of clustering development in West Village, East Village, and Sinclair Mesa/Meadow Ranch areas. The West and East Villages would be oriented toward visitors and Sinclair/Meadow Ranch toward permanent residents. The Snowmass General Submission of 1976 was then produced.

The Town of Snowmass Village (TOSV). In 1977, Snowmass-at-Aspen officially incorporated as a Home Rule Town under Colorado law and became the Town of Snowmass Village. A citizen committee including representatives of the Aspen Skiing Company, the Snowmass Corporation, the Benedict Land and Cattle Company, and the new Snowmass Village Planning and Zoning Commission prepared the Town of Snowmass Village Master Plan, which was adopted in 1980. The plan was a policy framework guiding growth to make a "harmonious, well-integrated,

environmentally sound and fiscally balanced development" and envisioning Snowmass Village as both a world-class ski resort and a vibrant year-round community. The Master Plan addressed land use, transportation, employee housing, and community facilities and adopted the same densities designated in the Snowmass Corporation's **General Development Plan**. The West and East Villages remained as primary Town activity areas with 2,700 new residential units and commercial development. Those parcels not selected for development would be dedicated to the Town for open space or conservation.

TOSV Comprehensive Plan Updates

1983. The Town's Master Plan was revised in 1983 and emphasized the development process rather than a predetermined Master Plan to define the future of the Town.

1987. In 1987, a new land use plan was adopted. This plan included a very specific list of uses and reestablished underlying zoning regulations. A maximum number of units were allocated to specific parcels that had no prior development approvals. A maximum number of dwelling units were set and certain amounts of commercial development were allocated to specific locations. Forty acres were designated for public purposes and new policies were adopted to improve the Town's ability to regulate development. The guidelines remain the basis by which development is evaluated today.

1998. In the 1998 update of the Town of Snowmass Village Comprehensive Plan, the number of dwelling units envisioned for the area continued to be the established 2,700 slated in 1980. Major focus areas of this plan were transportation and developing a consensus on the vision for the community. The community involvement in the preparation of the 1998 was impressive; thus, community ownership of the document was achievable.

2008. The latest revision to this plan is the 2008 Town of Snowmass Village Comprehensive Plan. A combination of events early in the decade including the public's decreased desire to travel and downswings in the economy as a result of 9/11 led to development approvals for Base Village that some considered contrary to the Comprehensive Plan vision. In 2004 the community, through a referendum, upheld the approval of a Planned Unit Development for Base Village. Ordinances 21 and 23, Series of 2004, adopted on October 20, 2004, approved the Base Village and Fanny Hill Cabins PUDs involving 620 condominium units.

Upon full buildout (expected in 2011), the approved Base Village will become the core destination: a tourist-oriented mixed-use village node in the heart of Snowmass Village. Full buildout of the project is scheduled to include, over the course of five phases:

- 68,000 square feet of retail and restaurants including five restaurants and specific tenant and floor space
- A 26,000-square-foot child-care facility
- A conference center
- Various public amenities
- 620 luxury units including a 236-unit condominium hotel

Because the 1998 Plan was ten years old and there was some question about what the vision of Snowmass Village ought to be, an update to the Comprehensive Plan was commissioned.

And, because large segments of the community still supported the vision, goals, and policies of the 1998 Plan and community ownership of the document still existed, the update was to be a targeted effort. The intention of the 2008 targeted update was to:

- Refine and provide definition to the Town's vision
- Determine the Town's carrying capacity
- Complete the West Village and transit plaza plan as part of a comp plan update
- Provide clear guidelines for new development
- Provide an engaging and focused community process

Other Community Plans

Many other plans have contributed significantly to the development patterns established during the 1980s, 1990s, and new millennium.

Community Planning Process. In 1989, community members met in small committees to discuss transportation, employee housing, land use, open space, and the environment. The Town has implemented most of their recommendations.

"A Road, a Creek, and a Community in Maturation." The BTA Plan, developed in 1993, articulated "three basic and underlying values: stewardship of the environment, public support for a resort and hospitality-based economy, and a public expression of their pioneering spirit."

"Recommendations for Parking, Transit, and Traffic in Snowmass Village, Colorado: Final Report Prepared by the Transportation Committee." This planning effort laid the foundation for the 1993 Transportation Plan. A coordinated transportation and parking plan for the entire Town including regional connections was recommended. The Transportation Committee analyzed parking and traffic conditions and current and proposed Town buildout scenarios. The significant finding was that if skiers continued to drive in their private vehicles to the slopes, traffic and congestion would ultimately jeopardize the quality of life in Snowmass Village. This plan was the first to acknowledge community preference for rural-character roads and recommended improved turning movements as opposed to road widening.

Snowmass Village Community Partners Planning Process. Private and public sector members developed a Comprehensive Community Plan to address a physical improvement plan, a review of the Town's economy and government, and a financial analysis of future funding options.

Community Design Concept Plan. The Snowmass Village Community Partners Plan formed the Community Design Committee to evaluate input from citizens and from a variety of other sources to develop a vision for the future. The committee developed a very detailed recommendation for design and improvements throughout the community.

Mall Transit and Parking Plaza. In 1998, the Mall was the hub of the tourist commercial area in Town and provided a gateway to the ski lifts. The Mall Transit and Parking Plaza was a design plan that envisioned a smooth transit system that focused on pedestrian activities, ensured adequate parking, and incorporated alternative forms of transit such as people-movers and the more traditional bus system.

Brush Creek Corridor Transportation Study. The Town initiated this study in 2000 in order to better understand the interface between transit service to Snowmass Village and a regional transportation plan conducted in the Roaring Fork Valley that located a mass transit station at the intersection of Brush Creek Road and Highway 82. The carrying capacity of the road was evaluated and alternative transit options analyzed.

Snowmass Village Marketing Strategic Plan. This plan was developed in 2008 by the Marketing, Special Events, and Group Sales Board with the assistance of a consultant team. It provides extensive data analysis and recommends a number of broad strategies and policy directions for the mountain resort within Snowmass Village. Key elements of this plan have been incorporated into the 2008 Comprehensive Plan update.

Sustainable Market and Retail Study. A market analysis was completed in conjunction with both the 2008 Strategic Plan and the 2008 Comprehensive Plan update.

Accomplishments and Challenges

Since the 1998 Comprehensive Plan, the Town of Snowmass Village has made much progress and enacted several of that Plan's recommendations, including:

- The development of a Recreation Center and Town Hall facility
- Increased transit opportunities
- Expanded events and activities, especially in the summer months
- Restoration of several reaches of Brush Creek

At the same time, Snowmass Village continues to face a number of challenges:

1. Snowmass Village is approaching buildout; there are few areas left to develop.
 - A major expansion is under way at the Base Village. It promises to significantly increase the commercial and residential offerings of Snowmass Village. Because it is not completed, the full impact of the development has not been experienced yet. A number of the observations and conclusions of the Comprehensive Plan are based on projected impacts of this project.
 - Snowmass Mountain is managed by the Aspen Skiing Company. The mountain continues to provide the majority of Aspen Ski Company's intermediate skiing terrain. The mountain is authorized to accommodate over a million visitors per year. However, many of the Snowmass skiers do not patronize local businesses as they pass through the Village to return to Aspen or other destinations. The resulting potential sales capture is relatively low.

- Snowmass Village is relatively remote compared to many other Colorado mountain resorts, especially during the winter months, because of the weather. Most visitors come via air—through the airports at Aspen or Eagle or through DIA in Denver (a three-and-one-half-hour drive). This makes the resort vulnerable to disruptions in air service and increased airfares.
- Down-valley communities provide housing for our workers and even clients to the businesses in the Village. However, they also provide employment opportunities that compete with Snowmass Village businesses. This is compounded by growth in the energy industry in nearby counties. The cost and lack of affordable workforce housing in Snowmass Village makes it increasingly difficult for local businesses to compete for workers at all income ranges.
- Other competing resorts continue to upgrade and expand their offerings. On one hand this may be perceived to put the older establishments such as the West Village at a disadvantage. On the other hand, it is very possible that there is still a market within the skiing public for the lower-scale, laid back development that the West Village still offers.
- The community continues to deal with the need to balance the aspects of resort and community, transportation and housing, and creating a sense of place. The strengthening and completion of a vital and vibrant Town Core is still an issue for the community.

2. The Snowmass Village Comprehensive Plan is intended to guide us in addressing these issues as we plan and develop our community for the future. The objectives of the 2008 Comprehensive Plan Update include the need to:

- Acknowledge the changing economic and social conditions within the valley
- Integrate community expectations regarding government's role in land use and transportation issues
- Mitigate the impacts of expanded commercial areas on our existing retailers
- For the remaining areas subject to development, find an appropriate balance between the impact of growth and quality of life and community character; to protect the integrity and character of the community while accommodating some level of growth
- Establish land use guidelines to address the remaining undeveloped areas of Snowmass Village and define the community's expectations for development and redevelopment of the Town
- Retain a cohesive Town Core with a sense of place in Snowmass Village with seamless connections between commercial nodes
- Identify community thresholds and expectations for new development and redevelopment
- Maintain acceptable levels of service on our main roads and intersections
- Determine the appropriate relationship of the Mall and Base Village transit centers
- Understand the impacts of and mitigate the loss of quality short-term rental units in the Village
- Address employee issues, including the provision of affordable housing alternatives that meet the needs and preferences of the community

Synopsis of Public Input

The subject of the built environment was one of the most emphasized topics during the Plan update. The community expressed various views on how much growth is acceptable in the community and how much is too much. Some participants were amenable to some levels of growth ranging from developments much more massive than seen today to 10 percent of what is seen today; others were against any additional development. There was some level of comfort in maintaining the existing buildout guidelines in the 1998 Comprehensive Plan as an indicator of what should be “just enough.”

The unknown impact of the completed Base Village was a major concern. Although the impacts of Base Village were reviewed during the public hearing process for the development review, many community members felt that an acceptable level of future development could not be established until the impacts of the completed Base Village could be assessed.

General comments on the built environment, by topic, include:

Bulk and Mass

- Slightly larger (10 percent) than now; use existing buildout chart
- Compactness of town; limit sprawl and footprint
- Scenery not obstructed by big buildings
- Public gathering areas with sun
- Interconnected resort commercial nodes and community commercial node, pedestrian and multimodal
- Irregular heights and facades

Character (Small, Urban, Narrow Meandering Streets)

- Village feel
- Aesthetic and functional mountain architecture
- Quiet in residential areas, vibrancy in the core areas
- Preserve neighborhoods
- Sense of arrival at the entrance of Town (rodeo/parking/recreation/transportation) and at each resort commercial node (Base Village and existing mall)

Sustainability

- Become a leader in sustainability
- Green, sustainability, self-sufficiency, energy, environment
- Off the electric grid

Operations

- Separate pedestrian and delivery services

- Reduce bus-pedestrian conflicts

Background

Existing Land Use

The Planning Area consists of approximately 23,000 acres, including 16,000 acres within current Town boundaries and the remainder within the three-mile boundary, that are under Pitkin County jurisdiction but over which the Town of Snowmass Village may exert an influence.

Existing Zoning

Snowmass Village never applied traditional (Euclidean) zoning to the Town Core. General land use concepts were dictated by the initial development plan. The Town has, instead, placed broader, more general land use categories on the land and allowed the development review process as a Planned Unit Development to determine the specific land use classification and density. Four Pitkin County zone districts are applied within the Influence Areas.

Existing Ownership

The Town, Pitkin County, and the White River National Forest own and manage most of the public land within Snowmass Village and its Influence Areas. Approximately 6,660 acres of the National Forest account for nearly 40 percent of the land within the Town.

Land Use Categories

Land use classifications differ from zoning classifications in several aspects:

Land Use (Comprehensive Plan)	Zoning (Zoning map)
Does not convey vested rights	Conveys vested rights ¹
Does not necessarily apply to a whole property (e.g., may indicate different uses because of topography, flood plains, etc.)	Usually applies to a whole property
More than one zone may be consistent with the land use designation (e.g., the density range could be met by two or three residential zones.	.Generally, only a single zone is applied to a property.

A broad range of balanced land uses can provide community and resort opportunities that honor the community's vision, goals, and principles. Land Use Classifications from the previous Comprehensive Plan are continued. They include:

Estate Residential. Very low-density residential development. Estate residential lots are 100 or more acres per dwelling unit or an average of 100 or more acres per lot within a development.

¹ Right to develop in compliance with all conditions specified in the zone designated for a given property. The Planned Development Zone allows some flexibility but also requires legislative approval.

Estate residential development should be restricted to relatively small development envelopes in order to preserve large tracts of open space and sensitive lands.

Single-Family Residential. Single-dwelling units (one per building) used exclusively by one family and their guests. The single-family residential classification ranges from low density (10–99 acres/lot) to high density (less than 1 acre/lot). Single-family homes can range in size from 1,500 to 8,500 square feet and include free-market and price-restricted homes.

Multifamily Residential. Multifamily buildings contain two or more dwelling units and may share vertical and/or horizontal party walls. Each dwelling unit is designed for and used exclusively by one family and their guests. The multifamily housing classification includes both free-market and price-restricted duplexes, townhouses, apartments and condominium dwelling units. Fractional ownership units are included in the multifamily residential category; however, hotels or lodges are not included. Multifamily residential ranges from low density (less than 10 units per acre) to high density (50-plus units per acre). Multifamily residential can accommodate long and short-term visitors and part and full-time residents.

Lodge/Hotel. A building or a portion of a building containing rooms, areas, or separate spaces intended for temporary occupancy by guests typically by the day or week. Each lodge or hotel unit must contain sanitation facilities but no kitchen. Locked-off rooms, which contain sanitation facilities but no kitchen, are included as hotel rooms in this classification. Services that are accessory to lodging or tourist uses are allowed. Lodges may provide employee units on premises.

Mixed-Use. A mix of residential, retail, restaurant, office, public, cultural, and recreational uses serving residents and visitors. Live/work units are appropriate in this land use district. A diverse mix of uses is recommended in this area and is intended to create vibrancy and vitality.

Commercial. Commercial uses oriented to both community residents and visitors. This classification includes retail and restaurant uses.

Office. Office uses oriented to serve the resort and the community. This use is intended to house necessary services and administrative uses as well as to encourage the location of small businesses that will create jobs for local residents.

Public. Public, private nonprofit, communication, and technology uses: as examples, the Snowmass Chapel and Community Center, Snowmass-Wildcat Firehouse, Snowmass Water and Sanitation District, Anderson Ranch Arts Center, and some Municipal facilities.

Open Space/Conservation. Includes both public and private lands held for passive recreation, conservation, and preservation purposes.

Recreation. Public and private lands used for active and high-use recreation. Examples include Town-owned parks, the Snowmass Ski Area, and the golf course. Recreational support structures are allowed in this classification.

Future land use within the planning area is summarized in the tables below:

Table 7.1 Snowmass Village Future Land Use

Land Use Classification	Number of Acres	% of Total Acres
Estate Residential	6,278.4	37.1%
Single-Family Residential	932.5	5.5%
Multifamily Residential	225.4	1.3%
Lodging	4.9	0.0%
Mixed Use	91.4	0.5%
Commercial	5.7	0.0%
Public	161.1	1.0%
Open Space/Conservation	1,691.8	10.0%
Recreation	7,369.4	43.5%
Other*	161.3	1.0%
TOTAL	16,921.9	100.0%

Source: Snowmass Village Planning Department

Table 7.2 Influence Area, Future Land Use

<i>Lower Brush Creek Valley</i>		
Land Use Classification	Number of Acres	% of Total Acres
Estate Residential	599.6	28.7%
Single-Family Residential	945.6	45.2%
Multifamily Residential	0	0%
Lodging	0	0%
Mixed Use	0	0%
Commercial	0	0%
Public	0	0%
Open Space/Conservation	491.3	23.5%
Recreation	0	0%
Other*	53.6	2.6%
TOTAL	2,090.1	100.0%

<i>Owl Creek Valley</i>		
Land Use Classification	Number of Acres	% of Total Acres
Estate Residential	230.9	5.5%
Single-Family Residential	2,229.1	56.4%
Multifamily Residential	0	0%
Lodging	0	0%
Mixed Use	0	0%
Commercial	0	0%
Public	0	0%
Open Space/Conservation	363.5	9.2%
Recreation	1,104.0	27.9%
Other*	40.2	1.0%
TOTAL	3,967.2	100.0%

<i>Divide</i>		
Land Use Classification	Number of Acres	% of Total Acres
Estate Residential	734.1	100.0%
Single-Family Residential	0	0%
Multifamily Residential	0	0%

Lodging	0	0%
Mixed Use	0	0%
Commercial	0	0%
Public	0	0%
Open Space/Conservation	0	0%
Recreation	0	0%
Other*	0	0%
TOTAL	734.1	100.0%

* OTHER represents road, road right-of-way areas, and similar areas that do not have a designated land use.
Source: Snowmass Village Planning Department

The Future Land Use Map planning area boundaries encompass 16,921.9 acres (5 percent more acreage than the actual Town acreage), and include parts of the Divide and Lower Brush Creek Valley Influence Areas. The existing Snowmass Ski Area is classified as recreation, and no other development is shown within its boundaries. The community has placed a high priority on maintaining the integrity and vitality of the ski area. The preservation of the ski area for skiing is of primary importance to the future success of the resort and the community.

The Future Land Use Plan directly correlates existing land use and future land use patterns on a parcel-by-parcel basis. Development is discouraged in areas with sensitive environmental features depicted on the Environmental Sensitivity Map (see Chapter 6). Limited development is recommended on steep slopes, visually significant areas, important wildlife migration routes, and habitat and sensitive riparian areas. Specific development standards should be developed to address the following issues.

Buildout Projections

Residential growth projections used typical density and occupancy for land use designations. Population figures were derived by multiplying the number of residential dwelling units by average permanent and peak occupancies adjusted by unit type.

Table 7.3 Projection Assumptions

Unit Type and % Permanent	Permanent Occupancy	Peak Occupancy
Single Family (26.3%)	2.5 people/unit	4.5 people/unit
Multifamily (13%)	2.5 people/unit	3.5 people/unit
Lodge/Hotel (0%)	0.0 people/unit	1.9 people/unit
Employee (100%)	2.5 people/unit	2.7 people/unit

Source: Snowmass Village Planning Department

Land use and density were assigned within the planning area to determine the necessary community infrastructure and amenity requirements. This scenario represents maximum potential buildout and is not to be construed as permitted for development. Actual density and land use will be determined through the development review process, which insures that the policies of the plan are met. Future densities and land uses must complement Snowmass Village's vision for land use, infrastructure, environmental conservation, transportation, and other key components.

If the maximum potential buildout were permitted, residential dwelling units will increase by 19.6 percent over existing and approved units. Permanent population could increase 33.2 percent, and peak population could increase 20.0%. {Verify}

Table 7.4 Snowmass Village Buildout Chart {To be provided by Planning Department}

* E.H. stands for Employee Housing Unit
 Source: TOSV Planning Department, RRC Associates 2008 Housing Study

Table 7.5 Permanent and Peak Population Projections {Update per state demographer}

Year	Permanent	% change	Peak	% change
1980	984		5,904	
1987	1,360	38.0	8,160	38.2
1990	1,449	6.5	8,694	6.5
1995	1,588	9.6	9,528	9.6
*1998	1,875	18.1	11,072	15.6
**1998	2,081	11.0	12,115	9.4
2000	2,142	2.9	12,332	1.8
2005	2,302	7.5	12,885	4.5
2010	2,458	6.8	13,432	4.2
2015	2,615	6.4	13,981	4.1
2020	2,771	6.0	14,528	3.9

* "Existing" based on residential units built as of _____
 ** "Existing" based on residential units built in addition to proposed units approved as of _____
 Source: Snowmass Village Planning Department

The effect of increased growth in the Town and on the Snowmass Ski Area is a major concern. As an internal measure of the land use plan, the ski area "Skiers-At-One-Time" (SAOT) versus ski area acreage was determined.

Land use classifications are not a substitute for zoning, but serve as the guide for new land use and development regulations for the Town. By identifying desired land use patterns, defining urban boundaries, reviewing existing regulations, and preparing regulations and incentives, it will be possible to achieve the future land use vision for Snowmass Village.