

# 2015-2040 PROJECTIONS

UPDATED – 08/28/15

**OUR LEGACY.  
OUR FUTURE.**

**BOULDER VALLEY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

## Introduction and Background

The Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) contains a Land Use Plan that guides the future type, location, and intensity of growth and development. The plan largely reflects what is already built, but also aims to implement the community’s vision for future development. As part of each BVCP update process, new 25-year projections are completed to inform discussions about future growth and potential changes to the Land Use Plan. For the 2015 update, the projections are calculated to 2040.

### How are Projections Used?

- Projections give a broad sense of what type, location, and pace of housing and jobs might occur communitywide *based on current adopted policies* (e.g., current zoning).
- They help inform conversations about the kind of future Boulder wants, and potential changes to current policies. In the past, the city has changed land uses from commercial and industrial to mixed use and residential based on projections data and community-defined priorities.
- City departments like transportation, parks and utilities use the projections to plan for system needs in long range master plans.

### How are Projections Not Used?

- Projections do not address quality or character of development or social issues (e.g., diversity, cost of housing, types of future jobs and incomes, etc.).
- They are not useful at the site-specific level because the methods of calculation are based on broad assumptions for large areas; accuracy is lower for individual parcels.
- They do not represent a “given.” They reflect what could happen under current policies and zoning, and reasonable assumptions regarding demographics and economic growth.

### How are the Growth Projections Calculated?

The BVCP projections use a capacity-based methodology with the following (generalized) steps:

- 1) Estimate current dwelling units, population, and employment
- 2) Estimate total development capacity using what is allowed by-right by existing zoning
- 3) Subtract existing development from total capacity to determine the capacity for additional growth
- 4) Fill this remaining capacity using historic growth rates and other assumptions (see the “What Assumptions Applied?” section of this report for more information).

Note: this is not the complete methodology. For additional details please see page 6 and refer to the *2015-2040 BVCP Projections Methodology* on [www.BoulderValleyCompPlan.net](http://www.BoulderValleyCompPlan.net).

# Summary of Results

Table 1 below summarizes the results of the 2040 projections. Table 2 provides additional detail by subcommunity on zoning capacity. The maps on pages 3 and 4 accompany Table 2 and show areas where there is capacity for future residential (Figure 1) and employment growth (Figure 2), based on the capacity analysis that is at the core of the model.

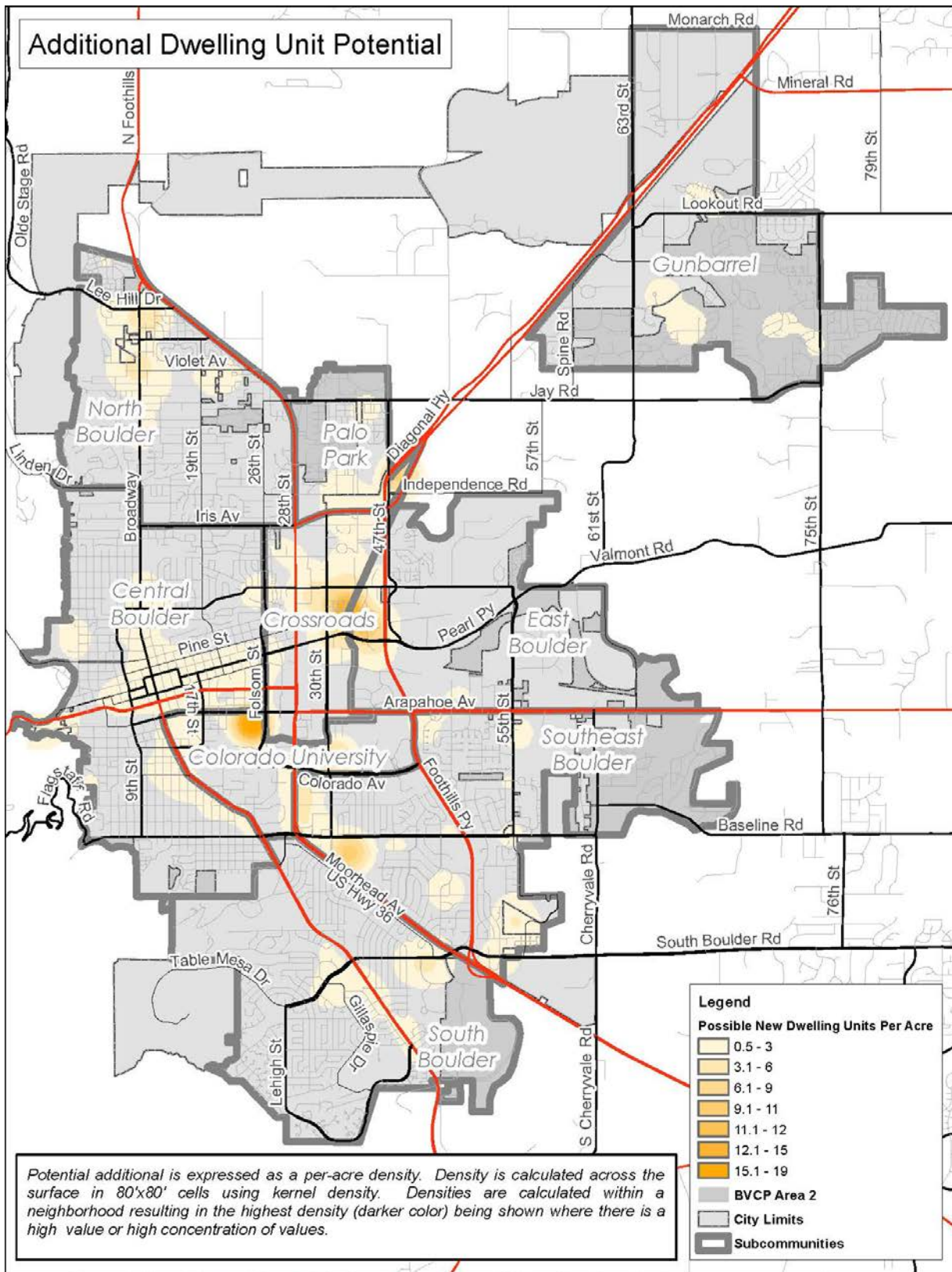
**Table 1: Boulder Growth Projections**

	Existing	Additional to 2040	2040 Total	Additional to Zoning Capacity	Zoning Capacity Total
<b>Dwelling Units</b>					
City Limits (Area I and III Annexed)	45,740	6,260	52,000	-	52,000
Area II	5,710	490	6,200	-	6,200
<b>Total Service Area</b>	<b>51,450</b>	<b>6,750</b>	<b>58,200</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>58,200</b>
<b>Population (including group quarters)</b>					
City Limits (Area I and III Annexed)	104,810	18,190	123,000	-	123,000
Area II	12,030	1,070	13,100	-	13,100
<b>Total Service Area</b>	<b>116,840</b>	<b>19,260</b>	<b>136,100</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>136,100</b>
<b>Employment</b>					
City Limits (Area I and III Annexed)	98,510	18,490	117,000	34,200	151,200
Area II	2,920	580	3,500	1,800	5,300
<b>Total Service Area</b>	<b>101,430</b>	<b>19,070</b>	<b>120,500</b>	<b>36,000</b>	<b>156,500</b>

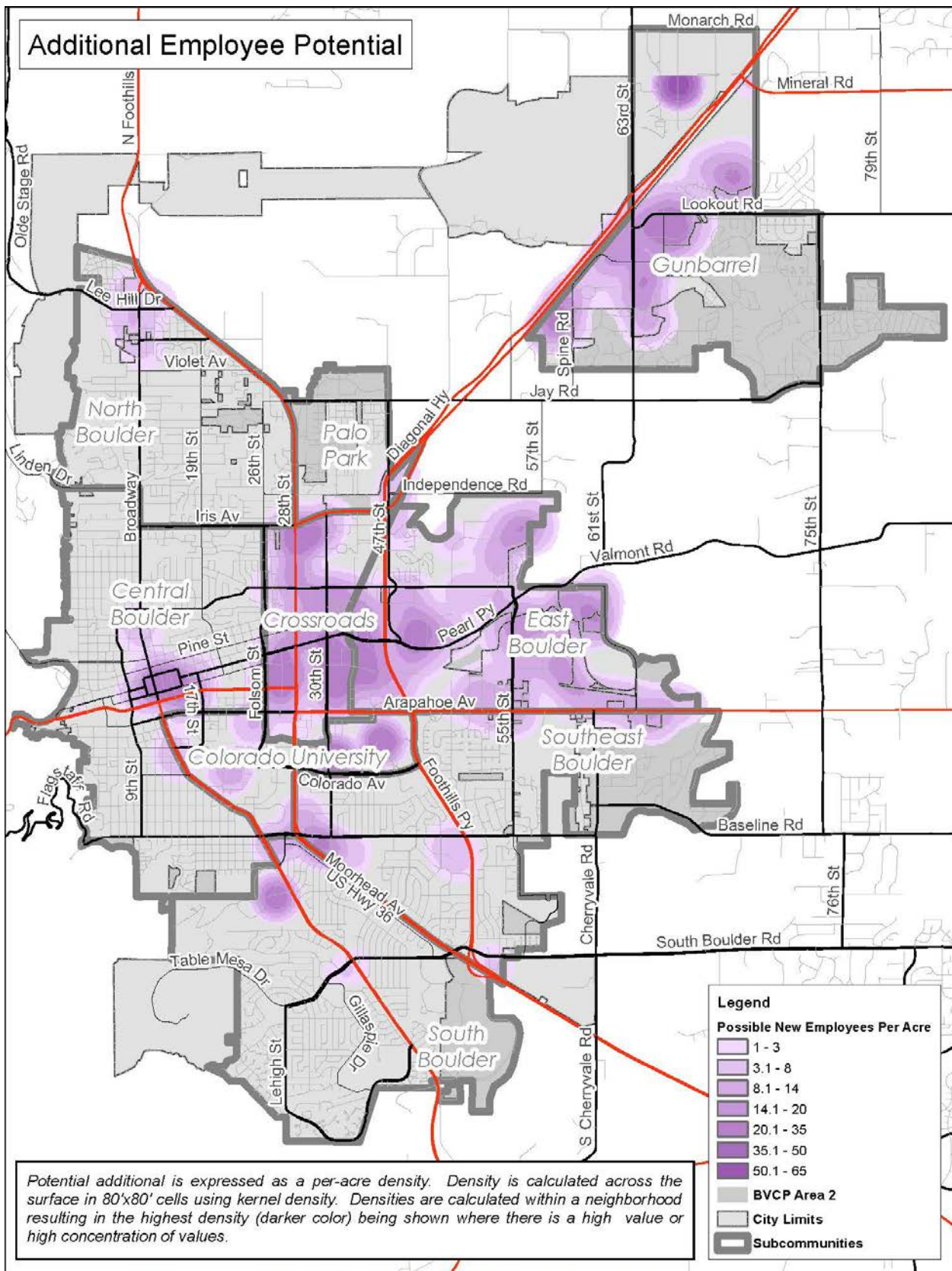
**Table 2: Zoning Capacity by Subcommunity**

Subcommunity*	2015 Dwelling Units	Additional Dwelling Units to Zoning Capacity	Total Dwelling Units at Zoning Capacity	2015 Population	Additional Population to Zoning Capacity	Total Population at Zoning Capacity	2015 Employees	Additional Employees to Zoning Capacity	Total Employees at Zoning Capacity
Central Boulder	13,370	730	14,100	29,520	1,580	31,100	23,580	3,820	27,400
Colorado University	2,020	1,080	3,100	9,320	4,280	13,600	11,990	3,510	15,500
Crossroads	4,250	1,250	5,500	8,790	2,810	11,600	13,850	10,950	24,800
East Boulder	1,400	800	2,200	3,450	1,750	5,200	17,940	17,260	35,200
Gunbarrel	5,600	200	5,800	10,800	1,500	12,300	12,750	12,850	25,600
North Boulder	6,080	620	6,700	12,670	1,430	14,100	4,380	1,120	5,500
Palo Park	1,720	480	2,200	3,650	1,050	4,700	790	310	1,100
South Boulder	7,320	480	7,800	15,450	1,050	16,500	4,070	1,730	5,800
Southeast Boulder	9,680	1,120	10,800	23,180	3,820	27,000	10,690	3,210	13,900
<b>Total</b>	<b>51,440</b>	<b>6,760</b>	<b>58,200</b>	<b>116,830</b>	<b>19,270</b>	<b>136,100</b>	<b>100,040</b>	<b>54,760</b>	<b>154,800</b>

\*Subcommunities encompass Area I and Area II



**Figure 1: Additional Dwelling Unit Potential at Zoning Capacity**



**Figure 2: Additional Employee Potential at Zoning Capacity**

## What Do The Results Mean?

- Based on current policies, the community is relatively built out and will not change much in the future except through redevelopment in select locations, mostly along major corridors or in mixed use areas where the plan's current policies have directed more intensity.
- Boulder has more potential for non-residential development (jobs) than for housing. Based on current zoning, Boulder reaches its capacity for additional housing before 2040, but has continued capacity for additional jobs beyond 2040.

### Residential

- In 2015, City of Boulder (Area I) has 45,740 housing units and 104,810 people. The remainder of the Service Area (Area II) has 5,710 housing units and 12,030 people.
- By 2040, the city has potential for 6,260 new housing units and 18,190 additional people. Area II has potential for 490 new units and 1,070 additional people.
- CU is projecting additional growth by 2040 in the form of new group quarters (dormitory) populations as well as residential units (apartments). They are projecting approximately 720 units and 2,070 people on the main campus, 250 units and 2,025 people in the East Campus, and 855 people near Williams Village (in the Southeast Subcommunity). These additional units and group quarters populations are accounted for by the model as part of the overall dwelling unit and population increases.
- Beyond 2040 there is no additional capacity for housing units and people, as the model indicates that Boulder will reach its residential development capacity a few years prior to 2040.
- Most of the potential for residential units is located in either Mixed Use or Residential Medium/High districts in Crossroads, Boulder Junction, and along major corridors such as 28<sup>th</sup> St. or Broadway or near Downtown.
- Most single family neighborhoods in Boulder will not see any change based on zoning potential, apart from some larger parcels that are scattered throughout neighborhoods that could accommodate another unit. The ability for these larger parcels to add a residential unit would depend on many factors such as slopes, access, and the location of the existing home and structures.

### Non Residential

- In 2015, City of Boulder (Area I) has 98,510 jobs. The remainder of the Service Area (Area II) has 2,920 jobs.
- By 2040, the city has potential for 18,490 new jobs and Area II has potential for 580 new jobs.
- Beyond 2040, there is zoning capacity for 34,200 additional jobs in the city and 1,800 jobs in Area II.
- Most of the job growth potential is in Crossroads, East Boulder (including Boulder Junction), and Gunbarrel.
- There is little-to-no potential for non-residential growth within single family neighborhoods.

## Housing and Jobs Mix and Balance

- The current housing and jobs mix is 45,740 housing units to 98,510 jobs (1:2.2). Boulder is an employment center, as called for in the 2010 BVCP. Based on current zoning with no changes, the 2040 mix of housing and jobs will be 52,000 housing units to 117,000 jobs (1:2.3). Because the projections model predicts that residential capacity will be reached prior to 2040, the number of housing units stays the same beyond 2040 while jobs continue to grow until zoning capacity is reached. At capacity, the model shows that the mix will be 52,000 housing units and 151,200 jobs (1:2.9).

## What Assumptions Applied?

A number of assumptions are factored into the projections model. A summary of key assumptions is provided below. Additional detail can be found in the full projections methodology posted on [www.BoulderValleyCompPlan.net](http://www.BoulderValleyCompPlan.net).

### What Residential Assumptions Went into the Model?

- The model is based on zoning capacity and parcels with redevelopment potential. A number of parcels were screened out entirely (condos, single family homes), and the model applies different redevelopment assumptions to residentially-zoned parcels with private schools and places of worship.
- In assessing redevelopment potential, the model factors in environmental constraints such as floodplains and wetlands.
- Some large single family parcels have potential for lot splits but not all were counted toward the total if other factors indicated that they are fairly unlikely to redevelop.
- It assumes a 0.6% annual residential growth rate, a
- 97.6% occupancy of residential units based on State Demographer's office estimate, and
- 2.16 people per dwelling unit based on 2010 U.S. Census.
- Group quarters populations are included within the population numbers, but can be pulled out as a separate line item.

### What Non Residential Employment Assumptions Went into the Model?

- The current employment estimate was created by accounting for the total number of wage and salary jobs occurring geographically inside the city limits and Area II, plus an estimate of self employed jobs based on a percentage of the employed labor force.
- In 2015, as a result of the city's effort to refine estimates, the existing employment estimate is lower than the previous methodology would have reported. It was determined that some jobs with "Boulder" addresses are actually outside of the city limits. The city coordinated with the University of Colorado's Leeds School of Business in its efforts to refine the estimation methodology.
- Source for employment data: Bureau of Labor Statistics from DOLA.
- Self employment is estimated using the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) methodology applied to city numbers.
- As with residential, the employment projections are based on zoning capacity and parcels with redevelopment potential.
- It assumes a 0.7% growth rate.