

Land Use

4

Conditions

The City of Sandpoint's land use patterns are generally typical of a city its size and vintage. The City has a traditional downtown with multi-story buildings including retail, restaurants and civic/cultural amenities such as the Panida Theater. The downtown is also home to marinas (on Sand Creek and at City Beach), and a hospital. Currently, Downtown has very little housing when compared to historic conditions.

In South Sandpoint, an area generally lying south of U.S. Highway 2 and east of Olive Avenue, homes are older, are generally set on lots approximately 6,000 square feet in size, and feature large, mature trees. At the very southwestern tip of city limits, residential development is somewhat less homogenous, with low-rise condos along the waterfront and newer development inland typified by single-family dwellings on 10,000 square foot lots. Proceeding clock-wise from southwestern Sandpoint, newer single-family residences are prevalent along the Lincoln Street corridor to the intersection with Main Street, where the single-family pattern begins to include duplexes, multi-family apartments and town homes. This housing mix generally continues through the



Figure 4.1 - This early sketch highlights some of the key considerations for Sandpoint's plan, including primary circulation, proximity to walkable neighborhood centers, and ACI topographic constraints. (Image source: Studio Cascade, Inc.)

northwestern and northern portions of the city south of Baldy Mountain Road. The north and northeastern corners of the City generally feature low-intensity residential development.

Industrial development is mostly limited to the airport vicinity north of Walnut Street and west of Boyer. Some industrially designated lands beyond the airport are still actively used. Still other areas designated industrial are undeveloped. Some portions of the City's industrial lands have been classified as "brown fields" and require mitigation and/or cleanup work in order to resume productive use.

Open space preservation is a value held by the community. City Beach - the centerpiece of Sandpoint's parks system is an important part of the overall Sandpoint experience.

Existing parks and trails scattered throughout the city are also greatly appreciated, and facilitate active and passive recreation.

Area of City Impact (ACI)

Sandpoint's Area of City Impact (ACI) is unincorporated and adjacent land designated by the city and county as land that may someday be annexed into the City. As such, ACI lands are included in comprehensive planning to facilitate City goals and help coordinate development patterns between the City and the ACI. City boundaries include approximately 2,700 acres. Sandpoint's ACI is approximately 8,000 acres. A sizable portion of the ACI, however, is not suitable for urban-scale development due to steep slopes, ownership by the National Forest Service or wetlands/watershed issues.

Current development in the ACI is predominantly low-density and rural. Where developed, some lands are utilized for farming, most though are utilized for homes on characteristically large-sized rural lots. Residential development tapers away as the terrain gets steeper in the foothills that surround the city. Some isolated commercial uses exist in the ACI.

Plan Concept

During the planning process, participants repeatedly expressed the desire to develop (or redevelop) according to patterns established by the City's traditional neighborhoods. Led by this input, all elements of this plan focus on a conveniently accessed commercial and civic center; on the provision of modest-sized residential parcels near the civic center; support the inclusion of apartments above street-level retail, and emphasize an environment where people can enjoyably walk or cycle from one place to another.

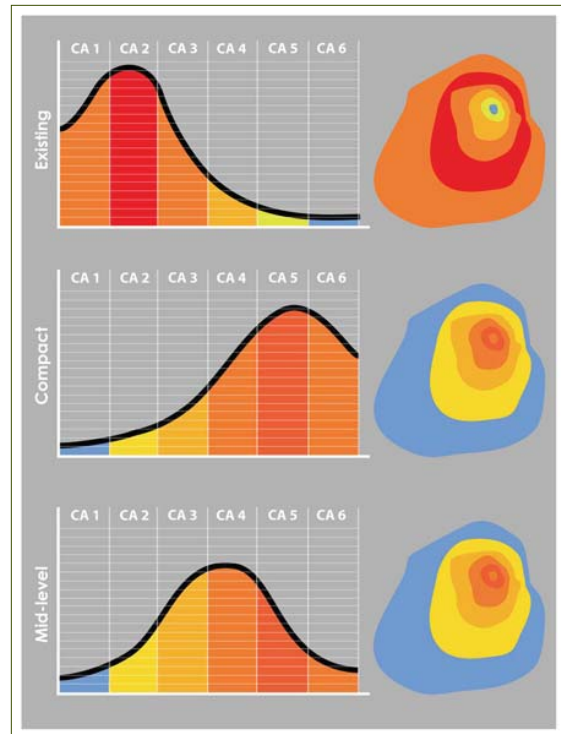


Figure 4.2 - Two presentations early in the process used histograms like these to illustrate various population density patterns, including the land-consumption implications of each. (Image source: Studio Cascade, Inc.)

This plan's planning concept seeks to emulate the traditional neighborhood development (TND) pattern established during the early 20th century, adapted to serve more contemporary needs. Sandpoint is a more widely dispersed town than it was 100 years ago, due primarily to development patterns occurring since the end of World War II. It is within this less-densely developed context that the TND-style patterns envisioned in this plan are set. By focusing commercial and civic centers along existing arterial corridors and by providing for increased residential density within and near those centers, this planning concept directs new development to take a shape that embraces those TND characteristics the community already enjoys and cherishes.

The plan establishes a more efficient land use pattern accomplishing many objectives,

including aiding the conservation of resources, ensuring the City's economic well being, supporting alternative transportation methods, improving affordability, and conserving nearby open space areas. These goals draw on an established vocabulary in Sandpoint, characterized as "Context Area" (CA) districts laid out in this plan's comprehensive plan map found in appendix C. Characteristics of each CA district are described below.

The community's objectives regarding the conservation of open space areas may also be served by the consideration of at least two alternatives that compensate owners of such lands: a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program, or a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program. These concepts influence the developed form by relieving development pressures in areas where open spaces are encouraged and increasing them where more intensity is desired.

Future Land Use

The idea of "Context Areas" was incorporated into Sandpoint's planning process to facilitate the development and evaluation of long-range, strategic growth patterns. Where prior plans had tended to focus on lot-by-lot land use, the concept of context areas helped articulate generalized patterns of urban form and density in addition to use. In this document, context areas are used to express generalized levels of density, form, and related infrastructure with uses intentionally expressed in broad-brush fashion. Detailed use considerations will be implemented as zoning. This approach tracks the overall plan, working to foster growth as a more traditional, harmonious progression between rural and urban. In order to implement this progression, separate, more specific form and use codes will be developed.

The context area concept provides the basis for the comprehensive plan map included in this chapter. Map designations were informed by current land use needs as well as long-range vision.

The map refers to context areas or "CA" areas from one (1) to five (5) (CA-1, CA-2, etc.), plus "very rural" and industrial lands. Character descriptions of each of these designations are:

CA-1

CA-1 is the lowest intensity development pattern in the Sandpoint plan, characterized as predominantly rural with some farms, a few residences and no service or commercial activity.

Because this rural pattern is inconsistent with the vision of a sustainable, compact city, the plan discourages CA-1 areas within city limits. CA-1 is indicated in areas adjacent to "very rural" areas in the ACI, and abutting industrial lands west of the Great Northern tracks near the airport.

CA-1.5

CA-1.5 is a low intensity development pattern occurring primarily in Sandpoint's ACI. This development pattern encourages preservation of wildlife habitat and open space through the utilization of cluster development that prefers congregation of dwelling units at slightly higher density in exchange for protection of larger areas of open space.

CA-2

CA-2 is the lowest density development pattern located in the City, characterized by Sandpoint's historic single-family neighborhoods set on a traditional street grid with small Accessory Dwelling Units, an urban forest, active alleys, on-street and alley parking,

walkable streets and a variety of housing types intermixed on the same street. Individual structures should respect the scale and character of the built environment with the bulk, mass and architecture of new structures being harmonious with existing residences in their vicinity.

Neighborhoods such as those comprising South Sandpoint or in the vicinity of Sixth Avenue for example already feature CA-2-style development and are identified as such on the comprehensive plan map. Similarly, areas to the north and east of the airport, given their existing form and distance from the City's center, are designated CA-2 in this comprehensive plan.

Beyond the City, much of the ACI immediately adjacent to CA-2 designations within city limits has been designated CA-2, to facilitate a more seamless transition should those areas be annexed in the future.

CA-3

CA-3 development patterns increase the density of housing through the use of smaller lot sizes, smaller setbacks, options for shared open space and the inclusion of attached and detached multi-family units. CA-3 supports the traditional street

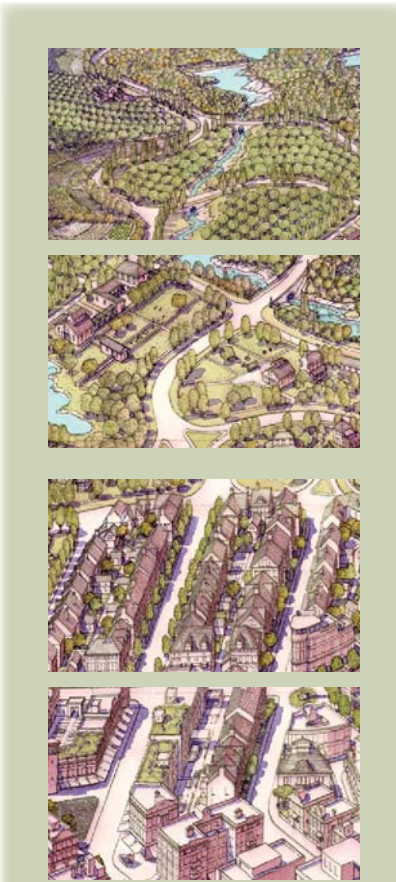


Figure 4.3 - Sandpoint's plan incorporates nine "Context Area" designations to facilitate the development and evaluation of strategic growth patterns. Instead of addressing long-range planning through lot-by-lot use determinations, the context area concept helps articulate overall patterns of urban form, density, character and types of use. From top to bottom, these sketches approximate envisioned characteristics of CA patterns. (Image source: Smart Code manual)

grid pattern, sidewalks and walkable proximity to services exemplified by many of Sandpoint's traditional neighborhoods. CA-3 is limited to residential uses only. The bulk, mass and architecture of multi-family and single family units should seamlessly integrate with one another, encouraging a balanced streetscape where no one structure or development dominates.

This pattern exists or is designated primarily in the area bounded by Boyer, Lincoln, Lake and Spruce Streets, and serves to buffer CA-2 neighborhoods and CA-4 centers. Within city limits, this designation reflects the on-the-ground densities and uses including collections of duplexes, and high density housing along Main and Division.

CA-3B (Business Overlay)

CA-3B (Business Overlay) development patterns are identical to CA-3 patterns, but envision mixed-use, neighborhood-compatible retail. These areas are typified by pedestrian-focused activities such as, salons, coffee shops, and residentially-scaled professional or institutional offices. All commercial structures should have

a residential component to prevent these areas from becoming vacant islands of inactivity after the close of business hours.

CA-3B designations are established on the comprehensive plan map where such patterns already exist, or may aid to buffer or provide continuity between future higher-intensity areas, such as along Division north and south of Highway 2.

CA-4

CA-4 pattern areas generally match those of CA-3B, but increase density by emphasizing two and three-story mixed-use and attached townhome-style residences. CA-4 areas are intended as vibrant secondary centers of commercial, office, and residential development, serving as neighborhood hubs for residents in neighboring CA-3 and CA-2 districts.

The comprehensive plan map establishes CA-4 districts along Highway 2, between downtown and the southwestern edge of the City, and along Baldy Mountain Road between Boyer and Division. In the ACI, no CA-4 areas are envisioned.

CA-5

CA-5 areas are envisioned as the primary commercial centers of the city, similar in urban pattern to CA-4 but with additional density in the form of scaled multi-story buildings housing shops and stores on the ground floor, offices on the second floor, and remaining floors dedicated to condos and apartments. CA-5 areas are envisioned as safe, pedestrian friendly and attractive places, drawing visitors and residents for community events, public art, shopping, dining and entertainment.

Today, Sandpoint's downtown comes closest to exemplifying the CA-5 pattern.



Figure 4.5 - Traditional neighborhoods, including some in Sandpoint today, feature small-scale, well-integrated uses like churches, professional offices and cafés. (Image source: camera exercise participant.)

CA-VR

Sandpoint's rural, non-developed areas are well defined by its existing land use arrangement. The majority of such lands are on the west and northwestern fringes of the ACI. On the comprehensive plan map, Very Rural designations have been applied to areas beyond CA-1 designations within the City's ACI. Very Rural areas are appropriate for designation as sending areas if a formal "TDR" program is implemented by the City. Very Rural lands represent an important component of the ACI. The rural character of these lands provides many benefits to residents including undeveloped viewsheds, opportunity for direct recreational access and a clear boundary, limiting development which contributes to our geographic authenticity and sense of place.

Industrial

Existing Industrial designations remain largely intact under this plan, representative of the important roll that manufacturing plays in the local economy. Some industrial area has been reduced on the comprehensive plan map, south of Baldy Road, to provide for future commercial development within walking distance to residences in the vicinity.

Parks & Open Space

Due to matters of scale, most park areas are either not included on the comprehensive plan map with the exception of City Beach Park.

This plan's Recreation Chapter includes a map of existing Sandpoint parks lands. Due to strong support for parks, open space areas and the protection of view corridors, the setting aside of open space areas are encouraged throughout the City in the form of future "pocket parks" and common areas within neighborhoods and developments.

☒ Goal LU-1: Efficient Land Use

Achieve an efficient use of land in and around Sandpoint, reducing pressure to expand into the Area of City Impact to accommodate population growth.

Policies

- A** Encourage increased density in CA-3 and CA-4 areas while requiring multi-family housing to respect neighborhood character.
- B** Encourage provision of housing above ground floor retail in CA-3B, CA-4 and CA-5 districts.
- C** Preserve open space in ACI by clustering development.
- D** Consider changes to building heights in CA-5 districts through “TDR’s” when accommodating multi-story residential development above ground-floor retail.
- E** Create or retain parks and open space areas to complement areas of increased development intensity.
- F** Support provision of structured parking in CA-5 districts and encourage in CA-4 districts as activities there intensify over time.
- G** Consider and possibly implement programs facilitating purchase or retention of existing open-space lands, such as Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) or Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) programs.
- H.** Encourage small, conforming, ADU’s throughout the City.

☒ Goal LU-2: Traditional Patterns

Emulate traditional neighborhood development in areas identified for more intensity; ensuring new population is housed close to services.

Policies

- A** Mix land uses in CA3-B, CA4 and CA-5 areas.
- B** Encourage development of attached housing types in and around Downtown.
- C** Encourage development of single-family housing on small, 5,000 to 7,000 square foot or less, parcels within CA-2 and CA-3 areas.

- D Provide an interconnected multimodal transportation network linking neighborhoods and providing convenient access to civic centers.

☒ Goal LU-3: Downtown Vitality

Have a prosperous and bustling Downtown.

Policies

- A Encourage provision of lodging and residential use in the downtown.
- B Retain and enhance civic, governmental, cultural, and entertainment uses in the downtown:
- C Amend development regulations to strongly encourage mixed use in the downtown.

