

# PLACETYPES

**YOUR EL PASO**  
MASTER PLAN



El Paso County  
COLORADO

JANUARY 6, 2020

WORKING DRAFT  
FOR STAFF REVIEW



# PLACETYPES

## Place-based Master Plan

The Master Plan defines future land use and development using a place-based approach that defines 11 “placetypes.” The placetypes characterize specific areas based on defining character, scale, form and function. The place-based approach is not focused with the use of a specific parcel, but rather it is concerned with the collective mix of uses that establish a place within the El Paso County community. Together, the placetypes provide a land use and development palette that defines all areas of the County.

By thinking of El Paso County as a collection of unique places, the Master Plan promotes development of places at a neighborhood or district scale, creating a great deal of flexibility and potential for innovation. The place-based approach promotes the full potential of vacant and undeveloped properties by allowing them to draw on different types of land uses. The creation of places not only depends on the land uses but also on their specific design, functionality, and access to infrastructure.

Creating these placetypes will require maintaining and improving upon existing places and developing new places over time. The placetypes will be created and strengthened through community involvement, neighborhood planning, land use regulation, public investment, private investment, and public-private partnerships. A significant portion of investment will come from property owners, investors, and businesses working to stimulate real estate market forces.

## Your El Paso County's Placetypes

From Black Forest to Wigwam to Rush, El Paso County is a community of unique areas joined to create one distinct County. As is true with many large counties, El Paso has places with different histories and character, separated by significant distances. Expected growth in population, employment, and development creates a challenge in maintaining all of the County's one-of-a-kind places. The intent of the Your El Paso Master Plan is to preserve existing, differing character areas while accommodating new development, and joining them together to create a connected and cohesive growth strategy for the future.

The place-based approach will allow the County and its partners to effectively plan and manage existing unique areas and define desired growth and development across the County. El Paso County's 11 placetypes are described in the following pages. Each placetype includes a descriptions of the overall character of a placetype, including typical land use mix, key urban design features, mobility considerations, and other physical and functional elements that define each type of neighborhood or district.

## Land Use

The 11 placetypes consist of several typical land uses arranged in different patterns to provide for a range of development intensity. Primary land uses are those that are most prominent and play a pivotal role in characterizing the placetype. Supporting land uses are less prevalent and serve an ancillary function that complements the primary land use. For example, a Suburban Residential area primarily consists of a mix of residential housing types, like single-family homes; however, the neighborhood can also contain supporting uses such as multi-family residential, neighborhood-serving commercial areas, and parks. The adjacent matrix identifies how each land use fits into each placetype as a primary or supporting use.

Zoning is a regulatory tool used to implement the vision described by the placetypes. The list of primary and supporting land uses enables placetypes to be related to established zoning districts. The placetypes should serve as an essential tool in identifying needed updates to the County's regulations and development standards.

PLACETYPES	Single-Family Detached Residential	Single-Family Attached Residential	Multifamily Residential	Restaurant	Commercial Retail	Commercial Service	Ent. and Arts District	Office	Light Industrial / Business Parks	Heavy Industrial	Military Base	Parks and Open Space	Institutional (educational, religious, cultural)	Agriculture/Farm Homestead	
Rural (Ag./Ranch/Homestead)	○											●		●	
Large-Lot Residential	●											○			
Suburban Residential	●	●	○		○	○						○			
Urban Residential	●	●	●	○	○	○		○				○	○		
Rural Center	●	○	○	●	●	●							●		
Regional Center		○	●	●	●	●	●	○					○		
Employment Center				○	○	○		●	●	●					
Regional Open Space												●			
Front Range	○											●			
Military	○	○	●		○	○		●	●		●				
Incorporated Area															
	●	<b>Primary Land Use:</b> More prominent and play a pivotal role in characterizing that placetype.													
	○	<b>Supporting Land Use:</b> Less prevalent and serve to support the primary land use.													

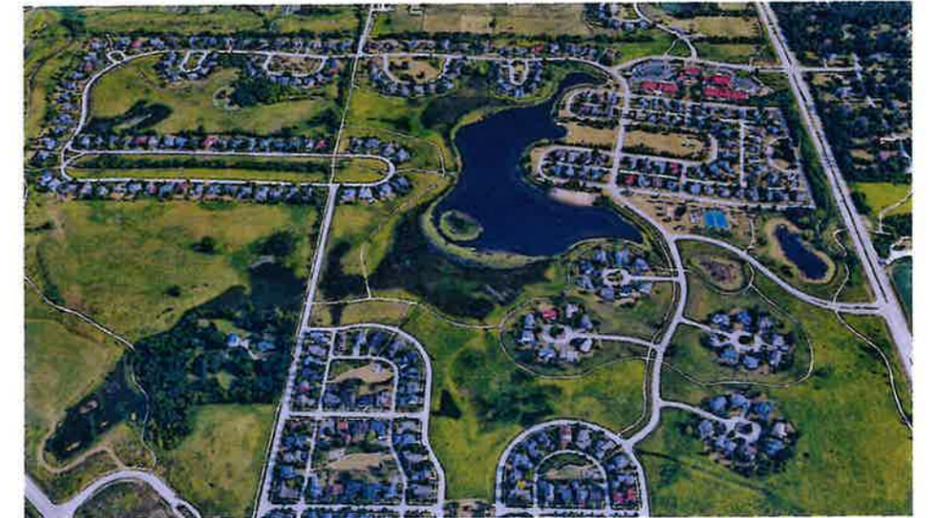
## Conservation Design

Regardless of the placetype within which future development is proposed, new development within El Paso County should be designed to incorporate a conservation design approach where appropriate.

Conservation design, also referred to as clustered development, promotes the use of an environmentally sensitive development pattern that aims to preserve contiguous areas of open space and protect environmental features and areas by grouping development together. This approach to development creates the potential for the use of naturalized stormwater management techniques to minimize or eliminate stormwater runoff. It also maintains areas of shared open space that can be preserved as natural areas or used as neighborhood or community parkland. The conservation design approach also minimizes the amount of roadway and utility infrastructure needed to serve a given development.

Conservation design is a density neutral approach wherein a clustered subdivision achieves the same number of homes per acre as a conventional subdivision. As such, the County can encourage open space preservation, while facilitating development that approaches the overall density desired. Conservation development techniques will allow new development to minimize the impact on quality natural areas, preserving them for public enjoyment while maintaining the rural character of the County.

Conservation design can be used to carry forward the quality of life that has come to be expected by El Paso County residents. Active outdoor recreation and trails, preservation of the natural environment and open space, and access to dependable services and infrastructure must be safeguarded and extended to new areas in the County. Saving room for open space areas, parks, and trails can enable the beauty of El Paso County to minimize potential negative impacts of future growth.





# RURAL (AGRICULTURE/RANCH/HOMESTEAD)

*Rural areas are a defining characteristic of El Paso County and their preservation is a key to ensuring the integrity of the water supply and sustainable growth.*

The Rural placetype comprises ranchland, farms, farm homesteads, and limited estate residential (minimum 5-acre lots). The Rural placetype covers most of the eastern half of the County. Rural areas typically rely on well and septic and parcels for residential development tend to be substantial in size. Rural areas are remotely located and distant from high activity areas or dense suburban or urban places, making access to regional transportation routes, such as Highway 24, vital to the quality of life for rural community residents.

Rural areas are often located adjacent to forested federal land or state-owned parks and preserves. The agricultural lands that Rural areas contain represent a valuable economic resource and unique lifestyle that should be preserved. As growth occurs, some Rural areas may develop and transition to another placetype, however leapfrog development should be prohibited in order to prevent the premature development of Rural lands and preserve contiguity of the Rural placetype.

## Land Uses

### Primary Land Uses

- Agriculture
- Open Space
- Farm Homestead Residential

### Supporting Land Uses

- Estate Residential (minimum 5-acres lots)





# LARGE-LOT RESIDENTIAL

*The Large-Lot Residential placetype supports the rural character of the County while providing for unique and desirable neighborhoods.*

The Large-Lot Residential placetype consists almost entirely of residential development and acts as the transition between Rural and Suburban Residential areas. Development in this placetype, typically consists of single-family homes occupying lots of five acres or more, are generally large and dispersed throughout the area so as to preserve a rural aesthetic. Even with the physical separation of homes, this placetype still fosters a sense of community and is more connected and less remote than Rural areas. Large-Lot Residential neighborhoods typically rely on well and septic, but some developments may be served by utilities.

Conservation design (or clustered development) should routinely be considered for new development within the Large-Lot Residential placetype to provide for a similar level of development density as existing large-lot areas while maximizing the preservation of contiguous areas of open space and the protection of environmental features.

While the Large-Lot Residential placetype is defined by a clear set of characteristics, the different large-lot areas that exist throughout the County can exhibit their own unique characters based on geography and landscape.

Some of the distinct places in El Paso County that include the Large-Lot Residential placetype are:

- **The Tri-Lakes** area, which is near Monument and Palmer Lake, and along the County's northern border;
- **The Black Forest** area, which consists of a unique terrain of hills, pine forest, and creek beds;
- **The Eastern Plains** areas, which are near Highway 94, Falcon, Peyton, and Ellicott; and
- **The Mountain Corridor** areas, which are in the south and west parts of the County, with existing development along the Front Range or within mountain passes.

## Land Uses

### Primary Land Uses

- Single-family Detached Residential (typically 5-acre lots or larger)

### Supporting Land Uses

- Open Space
- Commercial Retail
- Commercial Service





# SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL

*The Suburban Residential placetype comprises the County's traditional residential neighborhoods with supporting commercial uses at key intersections.*

Suburban Residential is characterized by predominantly residential areas with mostly single-family detached housing. This placetype can also include limited single-family attached and multifamily housing, provided such development is not the dominant development type and is supportive of the overall single-family character of the area. This placetype often deviates from the traditional grid pattern of streets and contains a more curvilinear pattern.

Although primarily a residential area, this placetype includes limited retail and service uses, typically located at intersections or along perimeter streets. Utilities, such as water and wastewater services are shared, dependent on the subdivision or place. Some County suburban areas may be difficult to distinguish from suburban development within city limits.

## Land Uses

### Primary Land Uses

- Single-family Detached Residential

### Supporting Land Uses

- Single-family Attached
- Multifamily Residential
- Open Space
- Commercial Retail
- Commercial Service





# URBAN RESIDENTIAL

*Urban Residential neighborhoods offer an opportunity for El Paso County to redefine its growth areas through highly desirable, connected, and complete neighborhoods with a mix of housing products and density.*

An Urban Residential placetype consists of established neighborhoods immediately adjacent to denser urban neighborhoods in incorporated areas, as well as new, largely residential neighborhoods in previously undeveloped areas. The Urban Residential placetype provides for a mix of development densities and housing types within a complete neighborhood unit. The dense urban development and high intensity of existing Urban Residential areas make it difficult to distinguish them from adjacent incorporated portions of Colorado Springs.

An interconnected network of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure make Urban Residential neighborhoods walkable internally and well-connected to adjacent placetypes. Highly accessible parks and open space are integrated throughout the neighborhood. Neighborhood-serving retail areas in this placetype should be conveniently connected and accessible to residents of the neighborhood. Commercial uses should be located along main or perimeter streets rather than within primarily residential areas.

## Land Uses

### Primary Land Uses

- Single-family Detached Residential
- Single-family Attached Residential
- Multifamily Residential

### Supporting Land Uses

- Restaurant
- Commercial Retail
- Commercial Service
- Institutional
- Parks
- Office





# RURAL CENTER

*Rural Centers provide rural residents vital access to goods, services, and public facilities and serve as the cultural anchor for the community.*

Rural Centers often act as the heart of rural areas, providing a mix of uses to support rural residents (including those living in surrounding Rural and Large-Lot Residential placetypes) such as grocery and convenience stores, restaurants, commercial services, schools, and post offices. Rural Centers are organized in compact blocks with a mix of residential and nonresidential development that form a recognizable district or destination within the large rural expanses of eastern El Paso County.

As a gathering place and town center for rural areas, development within the Rural Center placetype should be located along a community's main street or near the intersection of an area's most-frequented roadways. The Rural Center placetype is primarily auto-oriented, but includes pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to provide for a walkable environment. Examples of existing Rural Centers include Peyton, Calhan, and Ellicott.

## Land Uses

### Primary Land Uses

- Single-family Detached Residential
- Restaurant
- Commercial Retail
- Commercial Service
- Institutional

### Supporting Land Uses

- Single-family Attached Residential
- Multifamily Residential





# REGIONAL CENTER

*The Regional Center placetype is a commercial destination for County residents to purchase goods, procure services, and enjoy a variety of entertainment options.*

The fundamental purpose of a Regional Center is to provide access to necessary and desired commercial goods and services in El Paso County through a unique mix of uses. This placetype differs from Rural Centers by providing a level of goods and services that attracts people from across the County, and depending on location, from adjacent counties.

This placetype includes large scale shopping centers that include a variety of commercial businesses and support a high activity of users on a regular basis such as grocery stores, pharmacies, clothing stores, automotive centers, restaurants, entertainment opportunities, home improvement stores, and other major retailers. Regional Centers are major commercial destinations for residents and are easily accessible from major transportation routes throughout the County. Regional Centers in El Paso County are surrounded by residential development or incorporated areas.

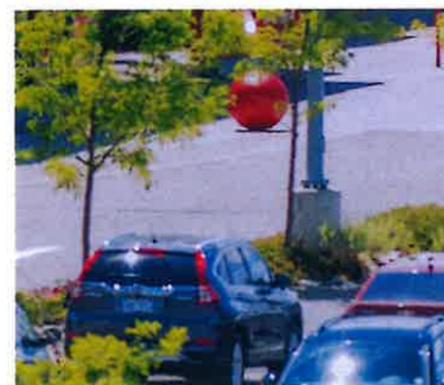
## Land Uses

### Primary Land Uses

- Restaurant
- Commercial Retail
- Commercial Service
- Entertainment
- Office
- Multifamily Residential

### Supporting Land Uses

- Office
- Institutional
- Single-family Attached Residential





# EMPLOYMENT CENTER

*Employment Centers are the County's primary location for large-scale, nonretail businesses that provide strong employment and economic development opportunities.*

Employment Centers comprise land for industrial, office, business park, manufacturing, distribution, warehousing, and other business uses. The priority function of this placetype is to provide space for large-scale employers to establish and expand in El Paso County. They are located on or directly adjacent to Interstate 25 and/or other regional corridors to ensure business and employee access.

To help grow the County's economy the uses in this placetype often require large swaths of land. Transitional uses, buffering, and screening should be used to mitigate any potential negative impacts in nearby residential and rural areas.

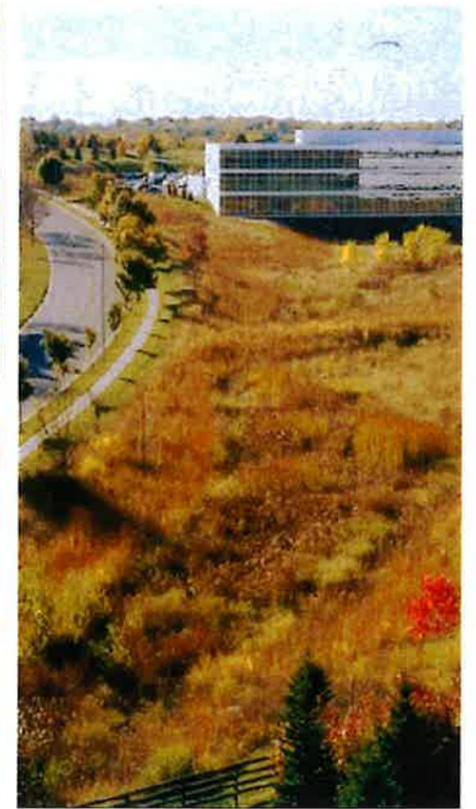
## Land Uses

### Primary Land Uses

- Light Industrial
- Heavy Industrial
- Office/Business Park

### Supporting Land Uses

- Commercial Retail
- Commercial Service
- Restaurant





# REGIONAL OPEN SPACE

*The Regional Open Space placetype encapsulates the abundant natural and open space areas in the County for preservation and protection.*

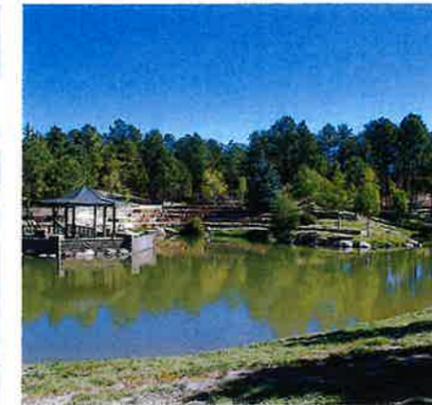
Regional Open Space encompasses large areas of both natural environment and developed parks of varying size and function. Representing more than just County parks, areas designated as Regional Open Space are often significant in size and are key drivers of development within adjacent areas. Natural open space in the County includes large areas of land managed by the State of Colorado and the federal Bureau of Land Management as well as specific County-owned sites.

This placetype includes undeveloped areas with significant ecological value as well as programmed parks accommodating passive and active recreation, both of which may function as stormwater-management facilities.

## Land Uses

### Primary Land Uses

- Parks
- Open Space
- Natural Areas





# EASTERN SLOPE

*The Eastern Slope placetype preserves the integrity of the mountainous/eastern foothills areas of the Front Range while addressing the needs of existing residents in the area.*

The Regional Open Space placetype incorporates all natural-land, open-space, and environmental-feature areas in the County except one: the Eastern Slope. The Eastern Slope placetype includes all areas in the County on or directly adjacent to the Eastern Slope area of the Front Range. As the largest and most-visited natural feature in El Paso County, the Eastern Slope presents a unique set of challenges to address in implementing the Master Plan. The Eastern Slope placetype recognizes the importance the Front Range plays in the County from both an ecologic and economic perspective.

Due to its unique nature and overall importance, the Eastern Slope areas must be appropriately preserved to help maintain the natural beauty of the County and protect the habitats of its abundant and diverse wildlife. There are several residential developments within the Eastern Slope placetype, particularly within the Ute Pass and Highway 115 corridors. The desire for additional residential development in the Eastern Slope must be well managed against the necessity of preservation and protection of this unique environmental area of the County.

## Land Uses

### Primary Land Uses

- Open Space
- Natural Areas

### Supporting Land Uses

- Single-family Detached Residential





# MILITARY

*Supporting the growth and advancement the County's military installations is critical to its own success.*

Land use and development near and immediately adjacent to existing military installations require additional consideration with regard to the suitability of development and the potential for impacts or interference with military lands and potential future military base expansions. This was identified in the JLUS which the County participated in with the PPACG. The five military installations in the County: Cheyenne Mountain Airforce Base, Fort Carson, Peterson Air Force Base, Schriever Air Force, and the U.S. Air Force Academy (USAFA) each function of their own accord.

They have a mix of residential and commercial uses in addition to their core military functions. In total they serve over 151,000 active-duty, National Guard, Reserve, retired military personnel, contractors, and other related tenants throughout Colorado's Front Range. The County continues to partner with all of the installations to maintain a compatible use buffer adjacent to each installation through open space protection and development restrictions. The Military placetype consists of the military installations in El Paso County and the supporting land uses and development that surround the installations areas.

## Land Uses

### Primary Land Uses

- Military Installation
- Office
- Light Industrial
- Multifamily Residential

### Supporting Land Uses

- Single-family Detached Residential
- Single-family Attached Residential
- Commercial Retail
- Commercial Service





# INCORPORATED AREAS

Incorporated Areas are the lands within the boundaries of the eight incorporated cities and towns in El Paso County, the largest of which is the City of Colorado Springs, and the smallest of which is the Town of Ramah in the northeast corner of the County. While the Master Plan will not address new land use and development in these incorporated municipalities, coordination among them will be critical to establishing the placetypes in the unincorporated areas of El Paso County.

