

BOARD OF TRUSTEES INFORMATION

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT



Meeting Date:	January 13, 2026
Agenda Title/Subject:	Information regarding building heights in the Downtown Center character district and along Mountain Avenue
Type of Item:	Regular Item
Purpose:	Discussion regarding building heights in the Downtown Center character district and along Mountain Avenue
Presented by:	Anne Johnson, Community Development Director

ATTACHMENTS:

- Power point presentation with BHA visual simulation
- Link to Google Earth virtual field trip: <https://arcg.is/1q1WjT2>

BACKGROUND

The Land Use Code is a reflection of the vision established in the 2021 Comprehensive Plan update as well as a set of regulations to be met for all future development in the Town. The Town updated its Land Use Code, the Mountain Avenue Overlay Guidelines, and the Character District Guide and Design Guidelines (Architecture and Design Guidelines) in late 2025 based in large part from input received during the Comprehensive Plan update process, requirements of State Statute and recent legislation, and input received from the Planning Commission and Town Trustees over the past two years regarding the quality of development expected in the Town of Berthoud.

Citizens approached the Town Trustees in the second half of 2025 expressing their desire to limit future development along the Mountain Avenue Corridor to 2-stories in height.

As the latest round of Land Use Code amendments have come to a close, staff was able to collaborate on the production of a visual study of multi-story structures in downtowns with historic structures. Seeing building mass and scale in other communities is important to conceptualize how these structures may feel in Berthoud. A Google Earth virtual field trip link was provided with this packet and the intent is to review the downtowns selected to elicit input from the Trustees regarding multi-story structures.

In addition, BHA Design Incorporated were involved in the development of the Mountain Avenue Overlay District and developed a visual scenario of a multi-story building at the southeast corner of 5th Street and Mountain Avenue. The visual scenario includes simulations of looking at the new structure from different vantage points. This scenario is attached as a power point presentation. Not only are the Trustees able to conceptualize the building mass and scale of structures in context

in Berthoud by visualizing the structure on a particular block, BHA also simulated the block from different vantage points. The context of height should be evaluated from different distances.

The Land Use Code and the Mountain Avenue Overlay District currently limit building heights by Zone and Character District. Refer to the table on the next page.

Building Height Allowance			
Zone District and Mountain Avenue Overlay Character District			
30'	35'	40'	50'
Urban Commercial with only Commercial	Residential R-1	Agricultural	Residential R-4
Suburban Residential	Residential R-2	Residential R-3	Commercial C-1
Urban Residential	Suburban Residential - Clustered	Residential R-5	Commercial C-3
	Urban Residential - Clustered	Industrial M-1	Industrial M-2
		Urban Commercial	
		Suburban Commercial	
		Urban Residential - Apartments	
		Mountain Avenue Overlay (In Ag, refer to underlying Zoning)	

UPDATE/NEXT STEPS:

Should the Town Trustees want to limit the height of structures in the Mountain Avenue Overlay Character District, the next steps would include Staff drafting Code language to reduce allowable heights in targeted zone or character districts. Existing structures exceeding the desired height would need to be established as legal non-conforming structures with the Town's legal counsel should this redevelopment ability be removed.

FISCAL IMPACT AND FUND SOURCE:

There is no negative fiscal impact to the Town in amending the land use code to limit building height other than redirecting staff's time from one project to another. If requested, staff could request a fiscal impact analysis to determine the return on investment for two vs. three story construction however, assumptions can be made regarding the return on investment by limiting the redevelopment opportunity of a structure by limiting height.

COMMUNITY TOUCHSTONES:

Consideration of limiting the building height in the Mountain Avenue Overlay District should reflect upon the touchstones of community identity, sustainability and resilience. The Trustees will want to consider the following:

- Is Berthoud's identity linked to two-story structures along Mountain Avenue?
- Is it sustainable to limit redevelopment of structures to two-stories in the Mountain Avenue Overlay District?
- Does limiting redevelopment of property/structures in the Mountain Avenue Overlay District to two-stories reflect resilient land development practice?