

# Commercial zone allocation in the canton of Basel-Country



**The revision of the Swiss Spatial Planning Act obligates the various Swiss cantons to introduce a commercial zone allocation register. Working on behalf of the canton of Basel-Country, EBP developed a guideline for demarcating such commercial zones.**

The new Swiss Spatial Planning Act, which came into effect on May 1, 2014, compels the canton of Basel-Country to introduce a commercial zone allocation register to enable the transparent tracking of new commercial zones. The register is to provide a rationale for all rezoning plans and to ensure a cost-effective approach to commercial zone development.

## Flexible zoning

The canton of Basel-Country's cantonal development plan makes provision for project-specific zoning to accommodate the spatial needs of new commercial enterprises and existing enterprises interested in expanding their operations. The plan also enables the exchange of municipal and cross-municipal commercial zones on an area-to-area basis. This facilitates the area-neutral concentration of fragmented, peripheral properties at suitable locations.

## Zoning guideline

However, given that the cantonal development plan does not specify how the project-related zoning plans and area exchanges are supposed to be executed, the canton took the step of commissioning the drafting of a related guideline. The general purpose of the guideline is to facilitate the work of

## Client

Basel-Country Spatial Planning and  
Economic Development Agency

## Facts

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private enterprises, municipalities, regional bodies and cantonal agencies. In particular, the guideline is to clarify all obligations and compliance issues, describe the relevant procedures for project-related rezoning and area exchanges and specify all responsible individuals and agencies.

### **Procedural matters**

EBP provided substantive and procedural support to the canton when it came to drafting the two procedures. This work included the systematic compilation and explanation of the legal issues and the specification of the relevant requirements and obligations to provide verification of compliance. We also continued our work with the client and a support team to handle all emerging tasks.