

# *Fremont County Master Plan*



2015 Update



## Acknowledgments

The 2015 Fremont County Master Plan has truly been a team effort by a large number of concerned citizens, elected officials, and dedicated county organizations. Each of the persons listed below has contributed thoughtful and substantive ideas and sweat equity to the quality of the plan that now guides the county's growth, development and preservation.

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# Chapter One

## Introduction

### What is in the Plan?

The 2015 Fremont County Master Plan is the official document for guiding both the public and private sector in land-use decisions for the County. It outlines the goals and objectives developed by Fremont County and addresses a planning period up to the year 2025. The Plan is general, comprehensive, and long-range in nature. It is *general* in that it outlines broad-based goals and objectives for growth in the County. It is *comprehensive* because it includes all areas and conditions in the County. And, it is *long-range* because it addresses current issues facing the County, and looks to future considerations and possibilities.

This Plan was reviewed through a “Chapter by Chapter” review process of the 2002 Plan, by the Planning Commission and Department of Planning and Zoning Staff. The Master Plan was amended to update demographics and reflect changes in land-use issues brought on by County growth and diversities in land use that have occurred since 2002. The Plan still is general, comprehensive and long-range in nature with updates that reflect the changes that have occurred in Fremont County since the previous document was adopted by the Planning Commission on January 2, 2002.



Bighorn Sheep in the Bighorn Sheep Canyon of the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area – Staff Photo

## Why Have a Plan?

Residents of Fremont County enjoy the rural, agricultural character the area offers. The spectacular scenery, the clean air, and the sense of community are important factors to residents. Locals also appreciate good schools for their children, economic opportunity, and secure employment. The residents of Fremont County understand that unregulated growth in the County, water limitations, increased traffic on roads, and other factors are affecting living conditions. Steps need to be taken now to ensure that the current desirable quality of life will continue into the future.



Rural living in northwestern Fremont County – Staff Photo

The County is committed to developing and maintaining a quality living environment and a sound economy for its citizens. The Fremont County Master Plan provides the framework and overall direction necessary to see that the objectives for future growth in the County are maintained and allowed to develop.

During the 2015 revision of the Plan, the Planning Commission decided that several important trends are contributing to the need for planning documents such as this Master Plan to provide a long-range outline for future land-use development of Fremont County. These trends, listed in no particular order, include:

- Tourism industry growth
- The continued success of the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area
- Emergence of the Arkansas River as a world-class fishery
- Continued growth in the County senior population
- County urbanization and increased urban activities
- Changes in municipal boundaries and growth area emphasis

- Stormwater drainage and flooding issues
- Continued rural development and the growing needs for rural services
- Wildland and urban interface fire concerns
- Continued paleontological discoveries
- Changes and growth in mineral extraction industries
- Protection of environmental, cultural, and historic amenities
- Transportation and aging infrastructure concerns

## The Planning Strategy

The following strategy was developed early in the planning process and is integral to the success of the Fremont County Master Plan:

### 1) *Understanding the current needs and desires of the citizens.*

In the initial phase of the planning process, the Fremont County Planning Commission undertook a thorough and detailed review of the previous Plan's goals, objectives, and implementation strategies during 2011-2013. This review highlighted the principal challenges which the Plan must address.

In order to fully understand the current needs and conditions for this Plan, it was necessary to examine a range of issues that impact the County. A review of existing literature, including the 1981, 1990, and 2002 Fremont County Master Plan documents, was included in the initial investigation. Information on demographic and economic trends, housing, and public sector finance first was compiled. Natural resource information, infrastructure, and roads were inventoried and summarized. Consideration was given to adjoining Counties, front-range Counties, Municipalities, and their respective long-range planning documents.

Extensive public involvement was an important element in the development of the 1990 Plan. Early planning direction came from a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). This committee represented a wide range of the interests and geographic areas within the County. A series of public workshops was held across the County to allow interested parties to express their thoughts regarding the Plan. Due to minimal population growth and economic change since the 2002 document, this review was conducted without an "advisory committee".

During the 2002 Update, a multi faceted public involvement process again was undertaken. First, a community leaders' survey was conducted across 454 community organizations and their leaders. Next, a series of three public input meetings was conducted in Cotopaxi, Penrose and Cañon City. Conversations were held through the meeting format with a diverse representation of citizens. Presentations were given concerning the Plan to service organizations, homeowners associations, and via a radio interview. Finally, public input hearings were held by both the County Planning Commission and the County Commissioners.

With this 2015 update, many Commission workshops have been held in its review, and an internet survey open to the entire citizenry was conducted. Radio interviews were held with Commission members and Staff to spark interest in the survey.

### 2) *Developing a Plan with goals, objectives, and strategies that are realistic and attainable.*

The goals, objectives, and strategies in the 1990 Plan were generated through a series of public workshops. They represented a realistic and current view of conditions, as well as the future

aspirations of the County at the time. In the 2002 update, the detailed revision to goals, objectives, and strategies completed by the Planning Commission reflects significant accomplishments in achieving consensus across the diverse interests of Commission members. Their initial assessments then were corroborated by the community leaders' survey data, and re-examined by participants in the public input meetings. The final form is the result of thorough efforts at achieving policy positions to best represent the interests of citizens of the County. This 2015 update reflects the Commission's review of the goals, objectives, strategies, and input gained from the internet survey and public comments. Many of these items were re-written to be more understandable and current; and some items were added to provide direction relative to newer County issues. Some items were deleted as they had become dated and no longer relevant.

***3) Creating a document that is responsive to the desires of the County while allowing for flexibility and for change over time.***

The Plan provides a framework for future growth in the County by including goals, objectives, and strategies that support conditions favorable to controlled growth and development. There is also the opportunity to amend the document as conditions change and as the County deems appropriate (see Chapter Six).

***4) Developing an easy-to-use document for County Staff, the Planning Commission, the County Commissioners, and the general public.***

It is very important that the information and direction given in the Plan is easily understood and utilized. To accomplish this, the Plan is organized into clearly separated goals, objectives, and strategies, all of which are numbered sequentially.

## The Plan's Relationship to Other Planning Documents

The 2015 Fremont County Master Plan is intended to be visionary rather than regulatory and give general policy guidance to the future development of the County. Zoning and Subdivision Regulations, on the other hand, are specific and deal with well-defined issues. For example, the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations identify specific uses allowed in each zone district, and specific design criteria which must be met to allow development to occur--including but not limited to street width requirements, lot sizes, and building setbacks.

The Zoning and Subdivision Regulations, which are contained in other documents (*The Fremont County Zoning Resolution and the Fremont County Subdivision Regulations*), are intended, in part, to attain the goals by implementing the objectives and strategies outlined in the Plan. Furthermore these regulations are intended to foster land-use compatibility between adjacent and neighborhood properties.

## How this Document is organized

Each chapter in this Plan addresses a different aspect of Fremont County planning concerns. The Plan is organized in a manner that will allow anyone interested in a specific issue to find the pertinent information without reviewing the entire document.

The basic organization of the document was not altered from the 1990 Plan, with the exception of a stormwater drainage section addition in 2002 to Chapter Four. In the 2015 review the Planning Commission has decided to add a Mining category to Chapter Four, due to the long history and interest of mining in the County. As necessary, each portion of the Plan was amended to reflect changes that have occurred in land-use issues for Fremont County during the ten years since the adoption of the two previous documents, and current and future land use issues as identified by the Planning Commission and Staff.

## Chapter One - Introduction

The first chapter outlines the planning process and introduces the concepts of Planning Districts and land-use guidelines, which are important elements of the Plan, and discusses the organization of the Plan.

## Chapter Two - Existing Conditions, Demographic and Economic Profile, and Future Trends

Chapter Two has been updated and outlines background data for the County, detailing such items as physical attributes, population trends, utility service capabilities including water and sewer, and other important information necessary in a Master Plan. The chapter also includes the demographic and economic profile of the County. This information builds a platform to allow users to understand the past development and growth patterns of the County, and to project future demand. The chapter serves as a reference for other chapters.

## Chapter Three - The Master Plan Internet Survey

This chapter provides statistical analyses and conclusions from the internet survey administered during summer 2012. The findings of the survey, along with public meetings held during spring 2015, form the primary public input to the 2015 Plan. Goals, objectives and strategies are guided by the Commission review, staff input, public meeting input and the results of the survey.

## Chapter Four - Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Strategies

Chapter Four outlines overall goals, objectives and strategies in thirteen categories that present a consideration of current conditions in the County, and the goals that County residents wish to pursue. Maintaining the natural beauty of the County is an overriding concern of the citizens, not only for their own enjoyment, but also for the importance of the regional scenery which is anticipated to be a major economic force in attracting and retaining tourism. The goals and objectives put forth by the citizens, which have been summarized in the third chapter, clearly address the necessity for controlled, quality growth in the County.

## Chapter Five - Planning Districts

Chapter Five addresses the general goals, objectives, and strategies for the seven distinct Planning Districts within the County. The Districts were developed during the late 1990s by identifying areas that encompass similar social, economic, and physical conditions. After the definition of the Districts and a series of citizen workshops, land-use strategies were developed to direct where and how specific types of development should occur within the different Districts. The strategies address the general implementation of goals and objectives formulated in Chapter Four. The Land Use Strategies help ensure that future land-use decisions in the County will guide development in a useful and productive direction. During the 2014 review the Commission examined municipal changes to designated growth boundaries, annexation actions, and area conditions. Based on these changes, the Commission decided to eliminate the Royal Gorge Impact District and to separate the Mountain District into a northern and a southern district, with minor boundary changes to other districts to better define similar areas.

## Chapter Six - Plan Implementation and Update

Chapter Six outlines the steps, sequence, and preferred process that should be followed in implementation of the Plan. The major implementation strategies of the 2002 Plan included Intergovernmental Agreements; Sub-Area Plans, a Visual Resource Management Program, a Parks, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan; the Fremont Heritage Conservation Fund; and a transfer of development rights program. Since the 2002 Plan the County has entered into planning-oriented agreements with the City of Cañon City; and the Commission encourages this type of cooperation between the County and all municipalities within its boundary, and neighboring Counties as may be appropriate. Economics and slowed growth since adoption of the 2002 Plan have not allowed the implementation for most of these items. During the 2015 Plan review, the Commission felt there was still validity in these items and has elected to leave them in the Plan to be available as land-use tools as the need may arise. Furthermore the Commission felt that there may be more importance in sub-area plans now, due to the diversity of specific area needs.

A review and update process is included because the Plan is a living document and evolves over time. For the document to continue to be useful, it is necessary for a process to be established that allows for simple, direct, and easy updating. This will keep the Plan viable, and allow it to continue as an important planning tool for the County. This document is intended to address the next ten years. Based on the 2015 review the Commission recommends that adjustments to the document occur if necessary to keep the document relevant due to land-use and technological changes. Further, the Commission recommends that an in-depth review be conducted as necessary due to influential land-use changes within the County.

The Plan provides a process for citizens to propose amendments.

### *Appendices*

The Plan has four appendices that provide supporting information for the Plan.

- **Appendix A** is the Transportation Plan that provides descriptions and lists of roadway designations.
- **Appendix B** contains maps that support information supplied or referenced in the Plan.
- **Appendix C** is a glossary of terms used in the Plan.
- **Appendix D** is a summary of the public meetings held in the Plan review process.

## Chapter Two

### Existing Conditions, Demographic Profile, and Future Trends

#### Geography

Fremont County is located in south-central Colorado, bordered by the Sangre de Cristo Mountains on the west and stretching to the semi-arid high plains on the east, with an elevation range of 5,000 to over 12,000 feet. The Arkansas River, the largest river on Colorado's eastern slope, bisects from west to east the County's approximately 1,500 square miles. The varied landform, vegetation, water features, and natural history present a range of development opportunities as well as constraints for growth in the County.

#### History

Between 1540 and 1848, what is now Fremont County was an area subject to various land disputes among Spain, France, Mexico, the Republic of Texas, and the United States. Trappers, traders, and mountain men came to stake their own claims in the Arkansas Valley in the early 1800s. Indeed, the County is named after Colonel John C. Fremont, known as "The Pathfinder". The Pikes Peak Gold Rush in 1859 brought more residents, resulting in the settlement of Cañon City, Florence, and the Hardscrabble area.

Early in 1860 the first mining claim for coal was filed for in Fremont County near what is now known as Coal Creek. Shortly after an "oil seep" was discovered, oil production began in Fremont County. Since these early finds, mining for iron, gypsum, marble, limestone, and granite also have taken place; and the current mining boom of aggregates has been thriving for several years.

In 1861, Fremont County became one of the original seventeen counties created by the Colorado Territorial Legislature, with Cañon City as the County seat. Throughout its history, the County has attracted growth with its mild climate, rich soils, available water supply, abundant mineral resources, and outstanding natural beauty.

#### Demographics

The County is divided into two general socio-geographic regions. The eastern, developed areas around Cañon City (*population 15,431*) comprise the first. The incorporated municipalities of Florence (*population 3,653*), Brookside (*219*), Williamsburg (*714*), Coal Creek (*303*), Rockvale (*426*) and unincorporated Penrose (*4,000*) make up the bulk of eastern Fremont County's population outside Cañon City. Secondly, the western, undeveloped mountain areas are the center of recreational activities for both residents and tourists. The majority of the county's 46,145 people reside in the eastern communities. The remainder are settled in a few unincorporated smaller towns in the Arkansas River Valley such as Texas Creek and Cotopaxi (*combined population approximately 2,258*), Coaldale (*population approximately 500*), Howard (*population approximately 1,100*), Swissvale (*population approximately 200*), and in scattered ranch or mountain subdivision home sites.

## Land Uses

Active land uses within the County include: mining and mineral processing, commercial trade, agriculture and cattle ranching, manufacturing, and recreation/tourism. Nearly half of the County is Federal or State public land, managed by the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, or the Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife. There are also numerous State Land Board tracts. These large areas of open land are the essential features of the recreational opportunities and scenic qualities that attract visitors to Fremont County.

In contrast, the current urban land-use patterns are haphazard, visually disruptive, and difficult to service. While generally limited to the eastern settlement areas described earlier, the characteristic sprawl of mixed development along the Arkansas Valley and scattered residential settlement farther west threaten to undermine the scenic, rural qualities of those mountain and plains areas that are necessary to attract quality growth.

## Roads

U.S. Highway 50 serves as the east-west transportation corridor for the County. Cañon City is located on U.S. Highway 50, at the mouth of the Royal Gorge Canyon. Eleven miles due east is Penrose, where U.S. Highway 50 and Colorado State Highway 115 intersect. Florence is eight miles southeast of Cañon City at the junction of Colorado State Highway 115 and Colorado State Highway 67.

Colorado State Highway 115 between Penrose and Colorado Springs (*approximately 30 minutes drive time from Penrose*) is the major north-south arterial. Other paved arterials include Colorado State Highway 9 to Hartsel, Colorado State Highway 69 to Westcliffe, and Colorado State Highway 67 to Wetmore. The remainder of the County is served by secondary paved (*in urban areas*), hard-surfaced (*chip and sealed*), gravel, or graded unpaved roads.

## Demographic Profile

This space is reserved for future information.

## Summary and Conclusions

Fremont County lies along the edge of the Front Range, within fifty miles of two Front Range cities, and at the gateway to the Royal Gorge and mountain region of the U.S. Highway 50 corridor. This unique and strategic location provides the County with a diversity of opportunities and people. The County has grown moderately in population over the past decade and is likely to continue this moderate growth trend. The population is older than the state average and graying, as is much of the Southern Colorado region. The population is also less educated, more Anglo in ethnicity, and poorer than the state average.

The long-standing commitment to the Corrections industry provides an entrenched source of vocational identity for the County, but not the only source. Fremont County's history is long and rich. Cañon City's downtown National Historic District exemplifies this history, as do many smaller communities in the County with histories dating back to the 1880s. Mountain men, mining, railroading, and recreation provide rich sources of heritage and identity for the County.

Fremont County's challenges in the future pertain largely to land- and water-use decisions, preservation of the natural and cultural heritage, infrastructure provision to growth in the

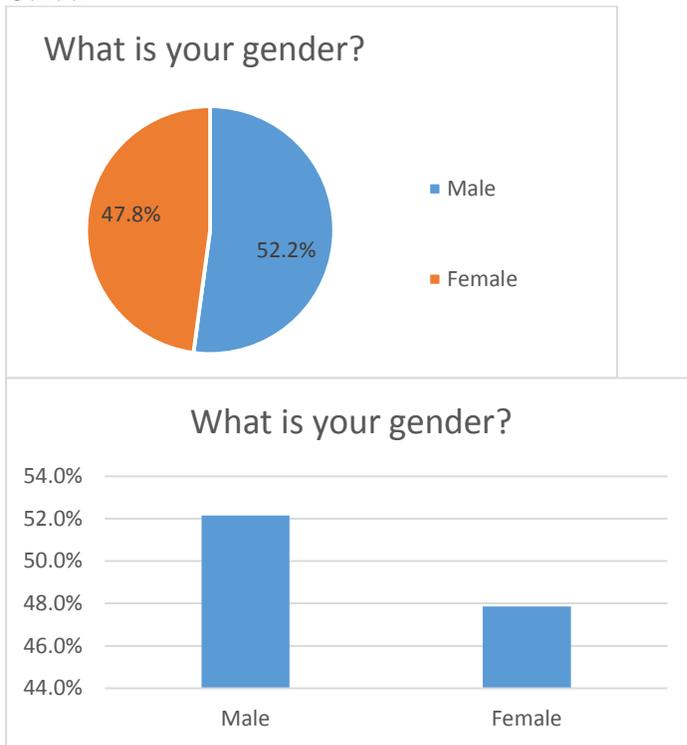
unincorporated areas, and economic diversification and stabilization. These challenges form the core issues addressed by the current Plan.

The statistical information in this portion of the Master Plan have been gathered from other sources and are considered to be a general planning tool solely, and should not be relied on as current information.

## Chapter Three – Master Plan Survey

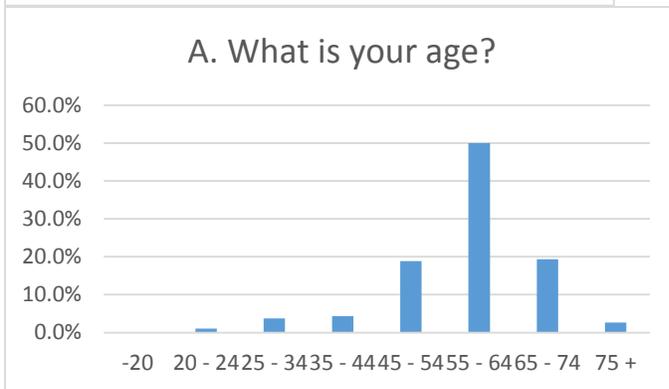
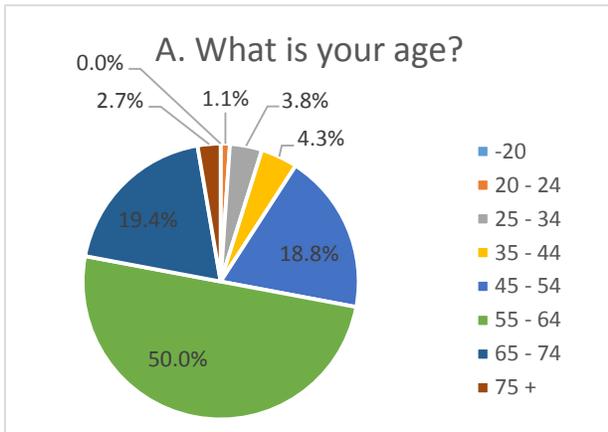
During its review of the of the 2002 Master Plan the Planning Commission decided to acquire initial public input to determine the Fremont County citizens' views on items that could be Master Plan-influenced. To do so they developed a survey that could be accessed on the internet. The survey was managed by a third party internet contractor. Paper copies of the survey were made available to citizens who wanted to participate but did not have internet access. There were 186 participants; and the following is a list of the survey questions with graphs to illustrate the results.

### Gender



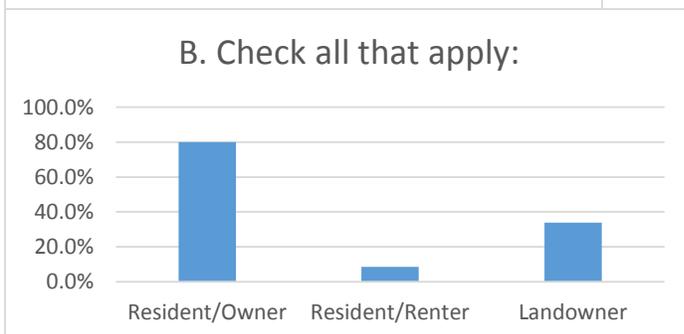
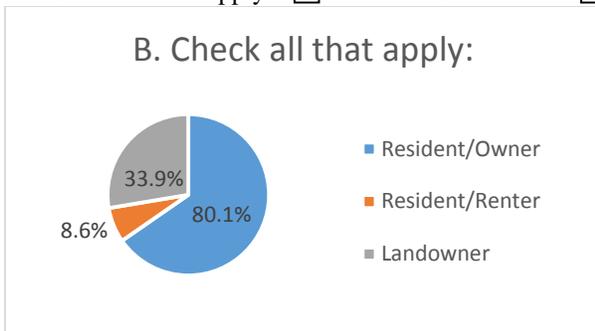
A. What is your age?

- Under 20  20 to 24  25 to 34  35 to 44  45 to 54  55 to 64  64 to 74  75 or over



B. Residential Status:

- Check all that apply:  Resident/Owner  Resident/Renter  Landowner



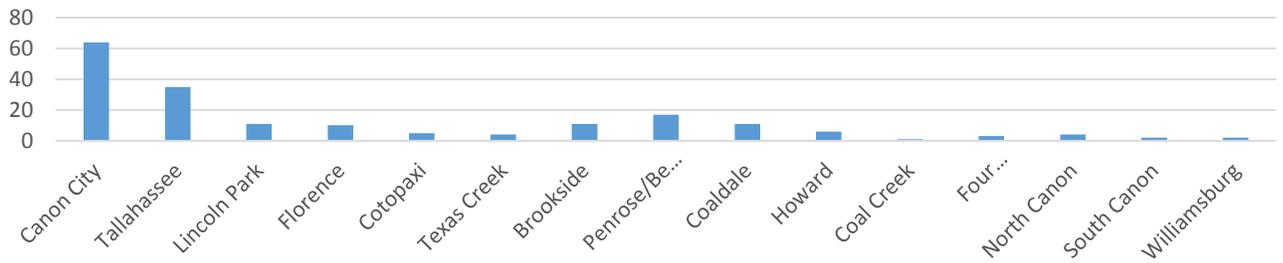
C. Where do I live?

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Cañon City (81212)        | 10. <input type="checkbox"/> Tallahassee (81212)         | 19. <input type="checkbox"/> Rockvale (81244)    |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Lincoln Park (81212)      | 11. <input type="checkbox"/> Florence (81226)            | 20. <input type="checkbox"/> Coal Creek (81221)  |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> North Cañon (81212)       | 12. <input type="checkbox"/> Rainbow Park (81226)        | 21. <input type="checkbox"/> Cotopaxi (81223)    |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Fourmile/E. Cañon (81212) | 13. <input type="checkbox"/> West Florence (81226)       | 22. <input type="checkbox"/> Texas Creek (81223) |
| 5. <input type="checkbox"/> South Cañon (81212)       | 14. <input type="checkbox"/> Brewster (81226)            | 23. <input type="checkbox"/> Deer Mtn (81223)    |
| 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Brookside (81212)         | 15. <input type="checkbox"/> Penrose/Beaver Park (81240) | 24. <input type="checkbox"/> Coaldale (81222)    |
| 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Oak Creek (81212)         | 16. <input type="checkbox"/> Beaver Creek (81240)        | 25. <input type="checkbox"/> Howard (81233)      |
| 8. <input type="checkbox"/> Garden Park (81212)       | 17. <input type="checkbox"/> Phantom Canyon (81240)      | 26. <input type="checkbox"/> W/Swissvale (81201) |
| 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Parkdale (81212)          | 18. <input type="checkbox"/> Williamsburg (81226)        | 27. <input type="checkbox"/> Hillside (81232)    |

C. I live in: (Please choose the one that most closely indicates where you live)

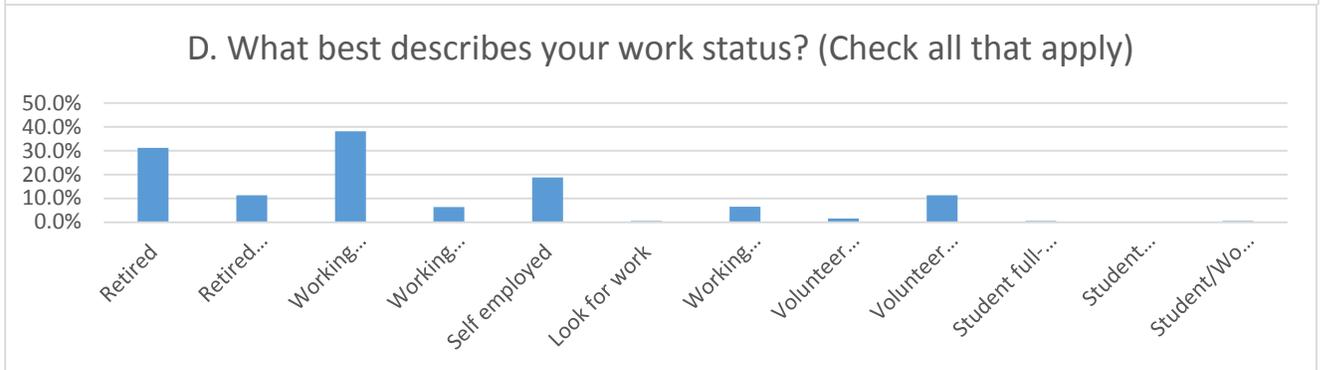
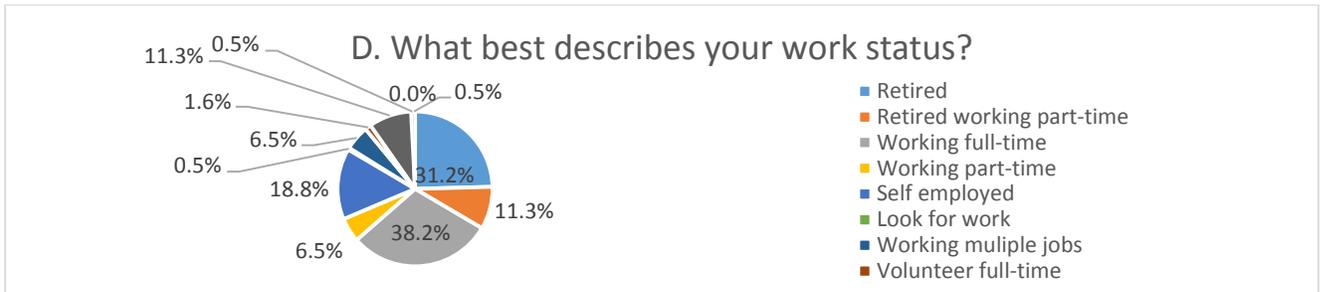


C. I live in: (Please choose the one that most closely indicates where you live)



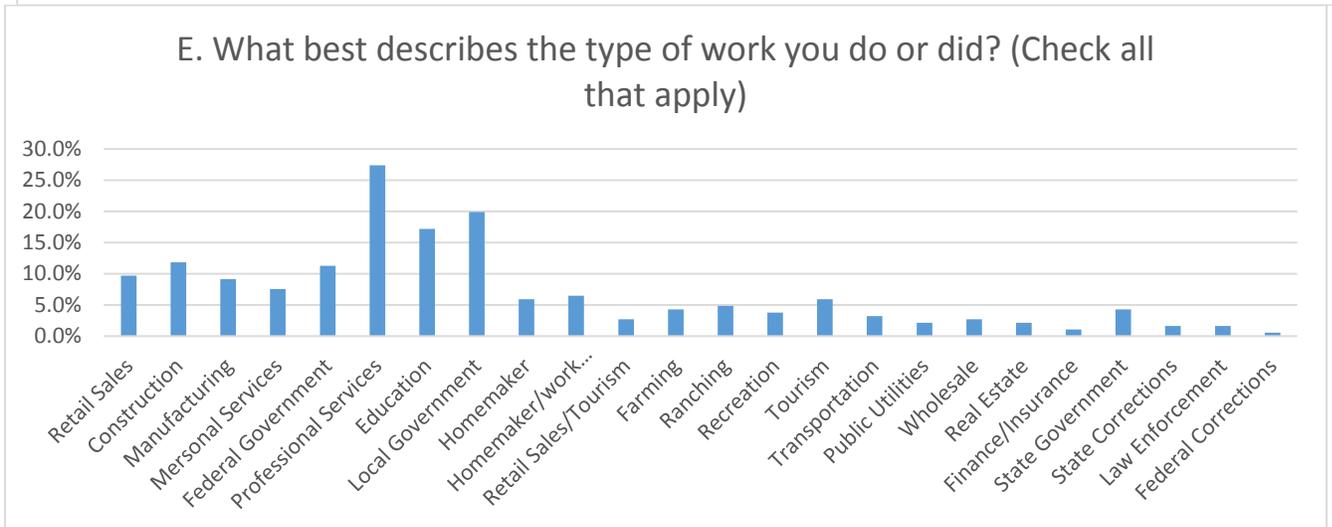
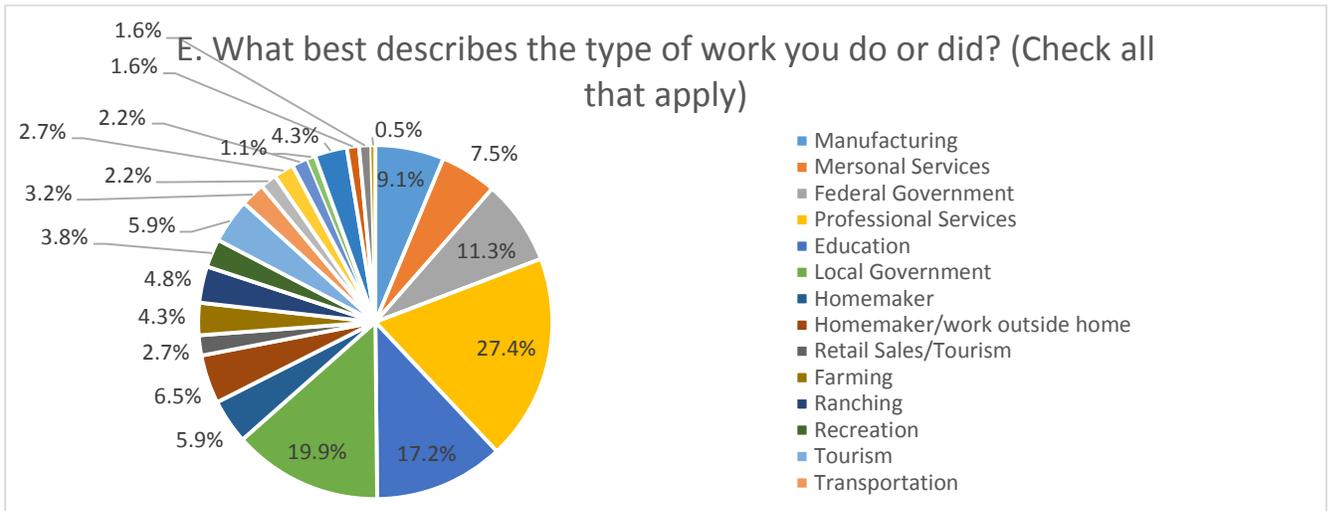
D. What best describes your work status? (Check all that apply)

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Working fulltime          | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Self-employed         | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Student/working      |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Working part time         | 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Working multiple jobs | 10. <input type="checkbox"/> Looking for work    |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Retired                   | 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Student full time     | 11. <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer part-time |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Retired working part time | 8. <input type="checkbox"/> Student part time     | 12. <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer fulltime  |



E. What best describes the type of work you do or did?

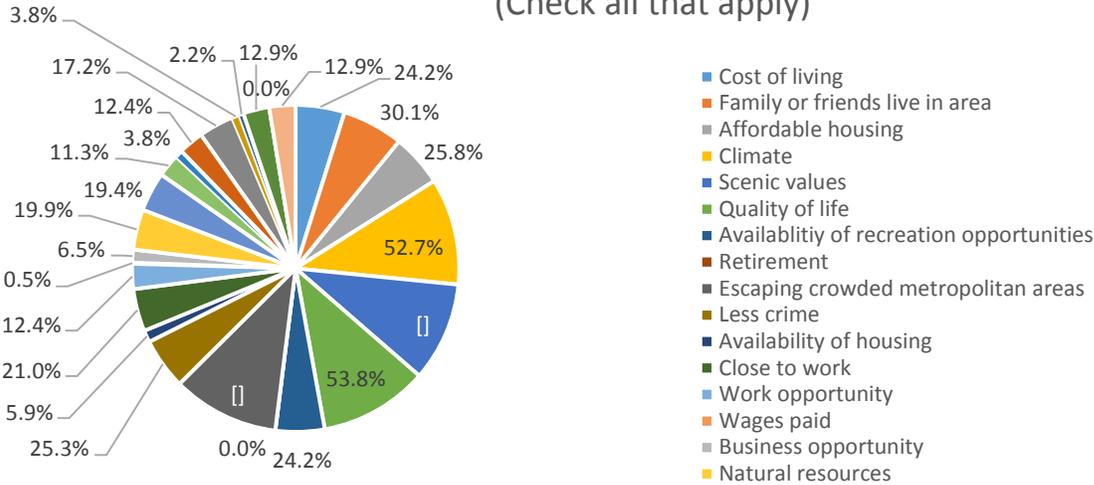
- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Retail sales          | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Construction            | 17. <input type="checkbox"/> Real estate         |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Retail sales/tourism  | 10. <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing          | 18. <input type="checkbox"/> Finance/insurance   |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Personal services     | 11. <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation         | 19. <input type="checkbox"/> Federal Government  |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Professional services | 12. <input type="checkbox"/> Public utilities       | 20. <input type="checkbox"/> State Government    |
| 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Farming               | 13. <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | 21. <input type="checkbox"/> Local Government    |
| 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Ranching              | 14. <input type="checkbox"/> Homemaker              | 22. <input type="checkbox"/> Federal Corrections |
| 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation            | 15. <input type="checkbox"/> Homemaker/work outside | 23. <input type="checkbox"/> State Corrections   |
| 8. <input type="checkbox"/> Tourism               | 16. <input type="checkbox"/> Wholesale              | 24. <input type="checkbox"/> Law Enforcement     |



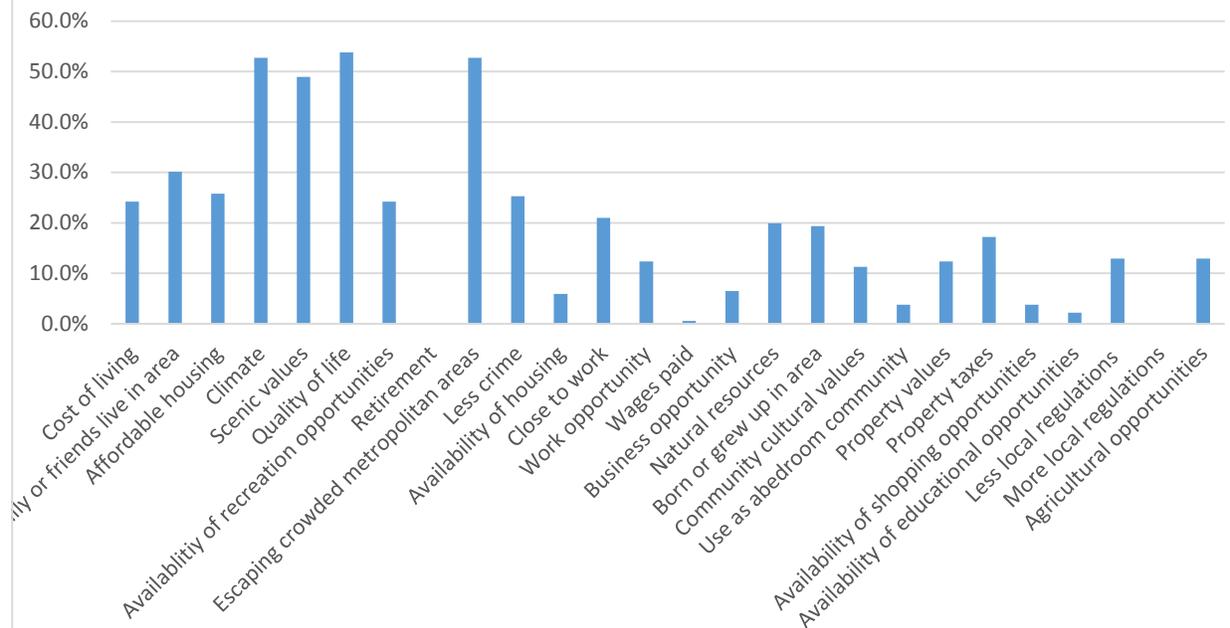
F. What factors influenced your decision to live in Fremont County? (Check all that apply)

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Cost of living           | 11. <input type="checkbox"/> Family or friends live in area            | 21. <input type="checkbox"/> More local regulations     |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Affordable housing       | 12. <input type="checkbox"/> Community cultural values                 | 22. <input type="checkbox"/> Less local regulations     |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Availability of housing  | 13. <input type="checkbox"/> Use as a bedroom community                | 23. <input type="checkbox"/> Climate                    |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Close to work            | 14. <input type="checkbox"/> Property taxes                            | 24. <input type="checkbox"/> Scenic values              |
| 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Work opportunity         | 15. <input type="checkbox"/> Property values                           | 25. <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of life            |
| 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Wages paid               | 16. <input type="checkbox"/> Availability of shopping opportunities    | 26. <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural opportunities |
| 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Business opportunity     | 17. <input type="checkbox"/> Availability of recreation opportunities  |   |
| 8. <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Resources        | 18. <input type="checkbox"/> Availability of educational opportunities |   |
| 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Retirement               | 19. <input type="checkbox"/> Escaping crowded metropolitan areas       |   |
| 10. <input type="checkbox"/> Born or grew up in area | 20. <input type="checkbox"/> Less crime                                |   |

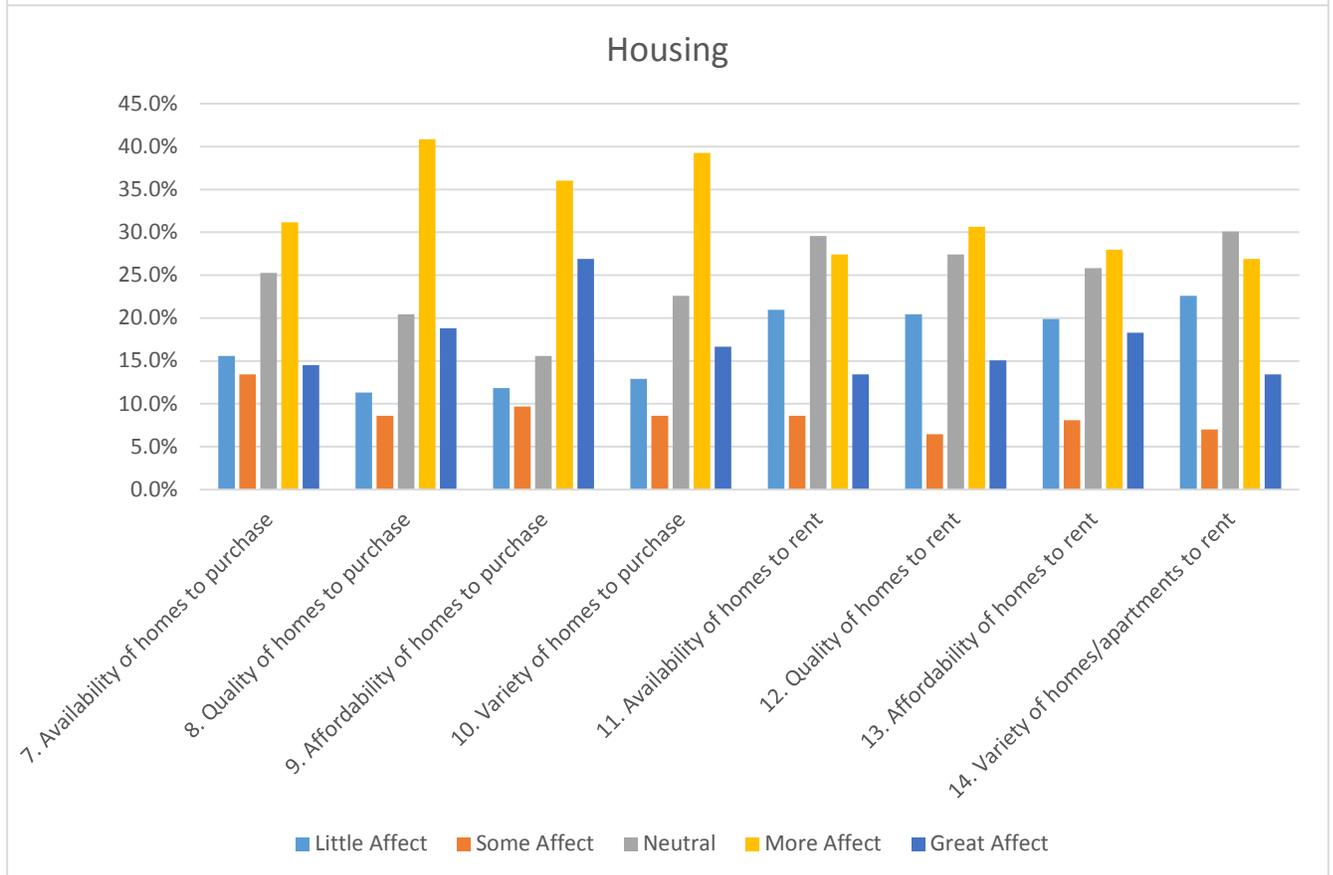
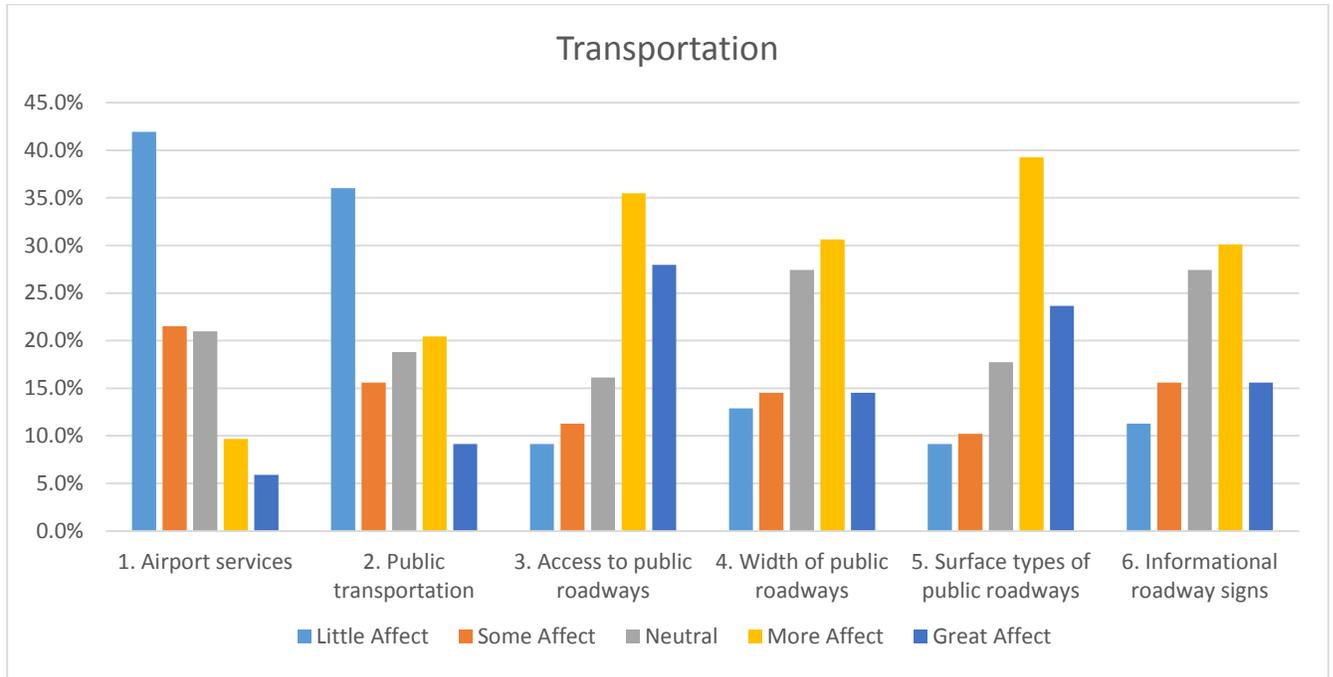
F. What factors influenced your decision to live in Fremont County? (Check all that apply)

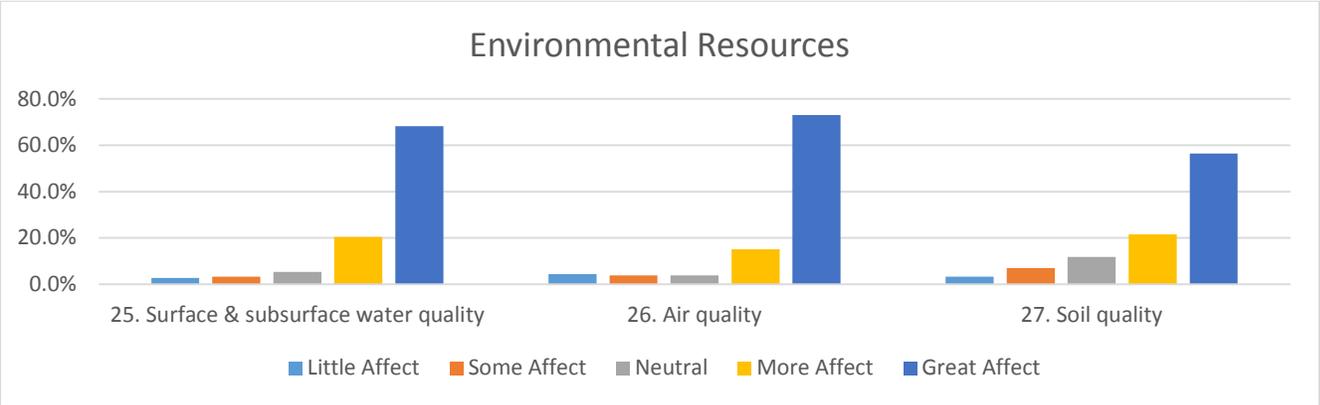
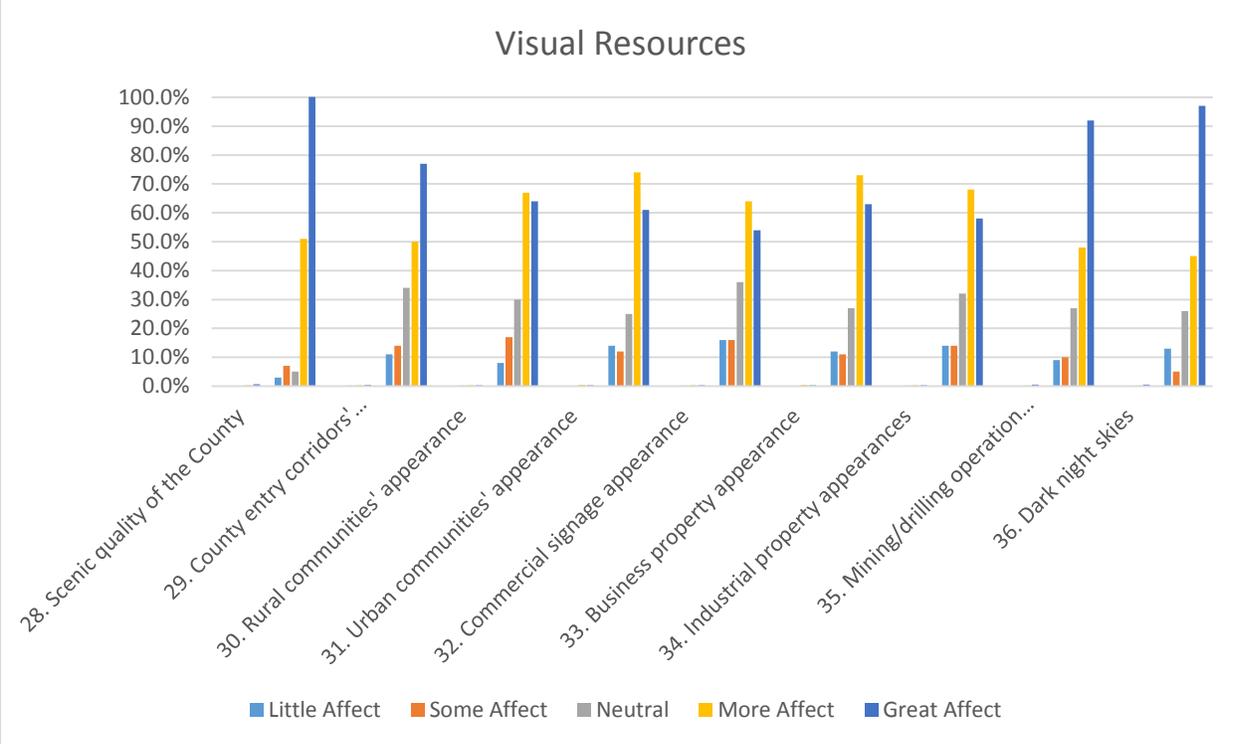
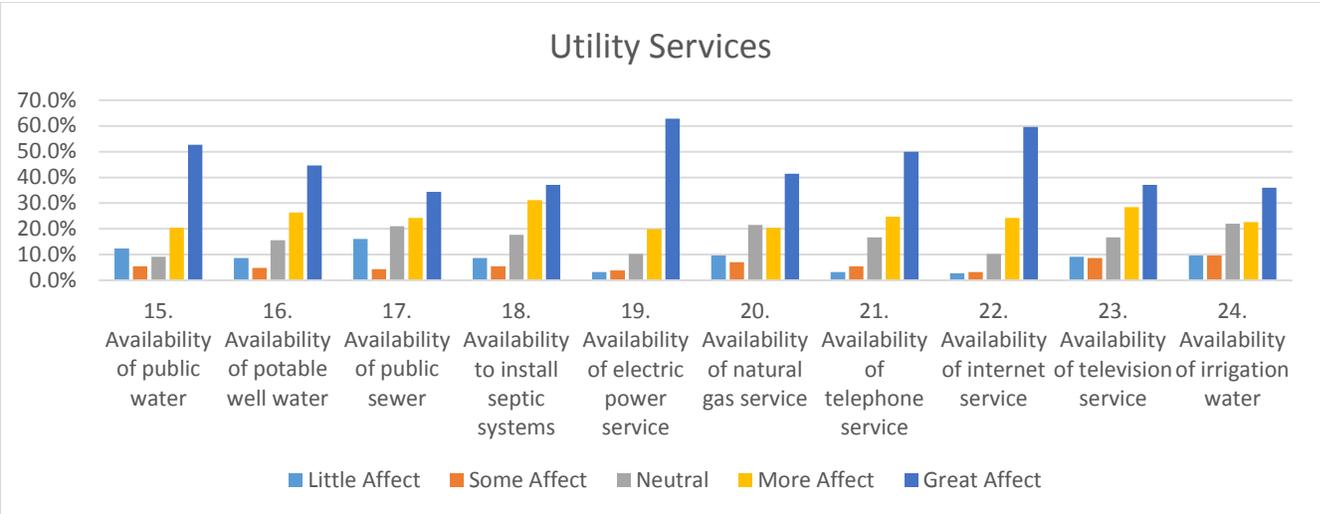


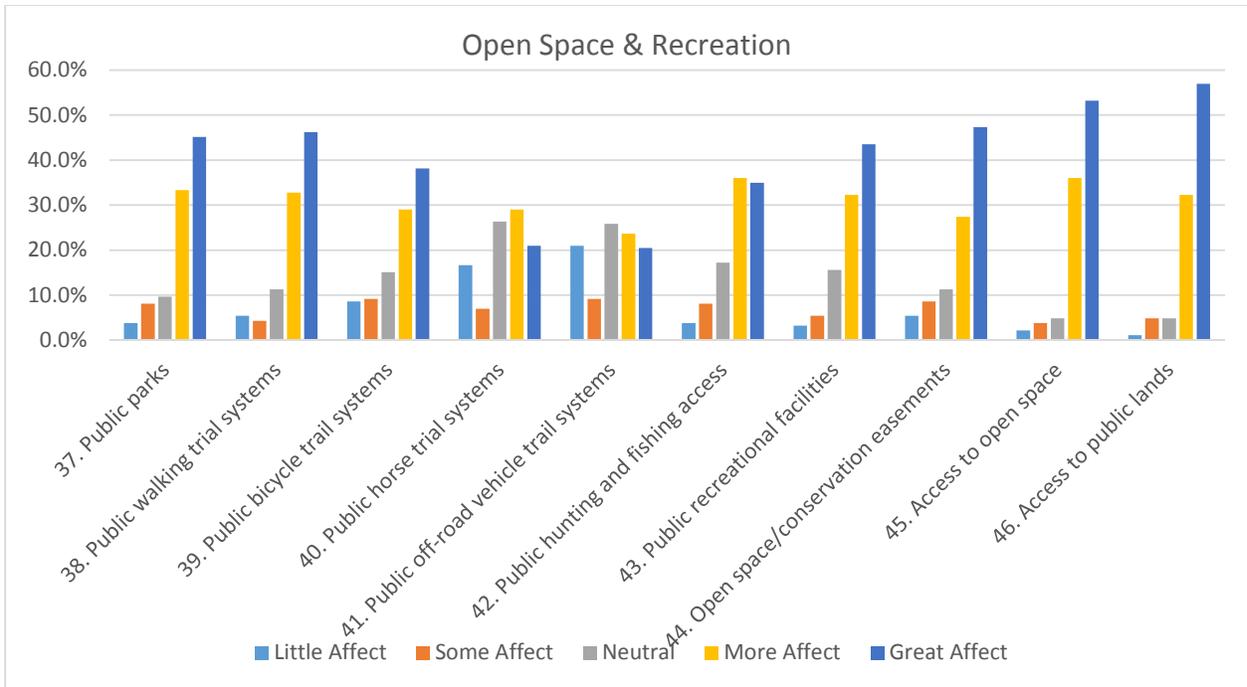
F. What factors influenced your decision to live in Fremont County? (Check all that apply)



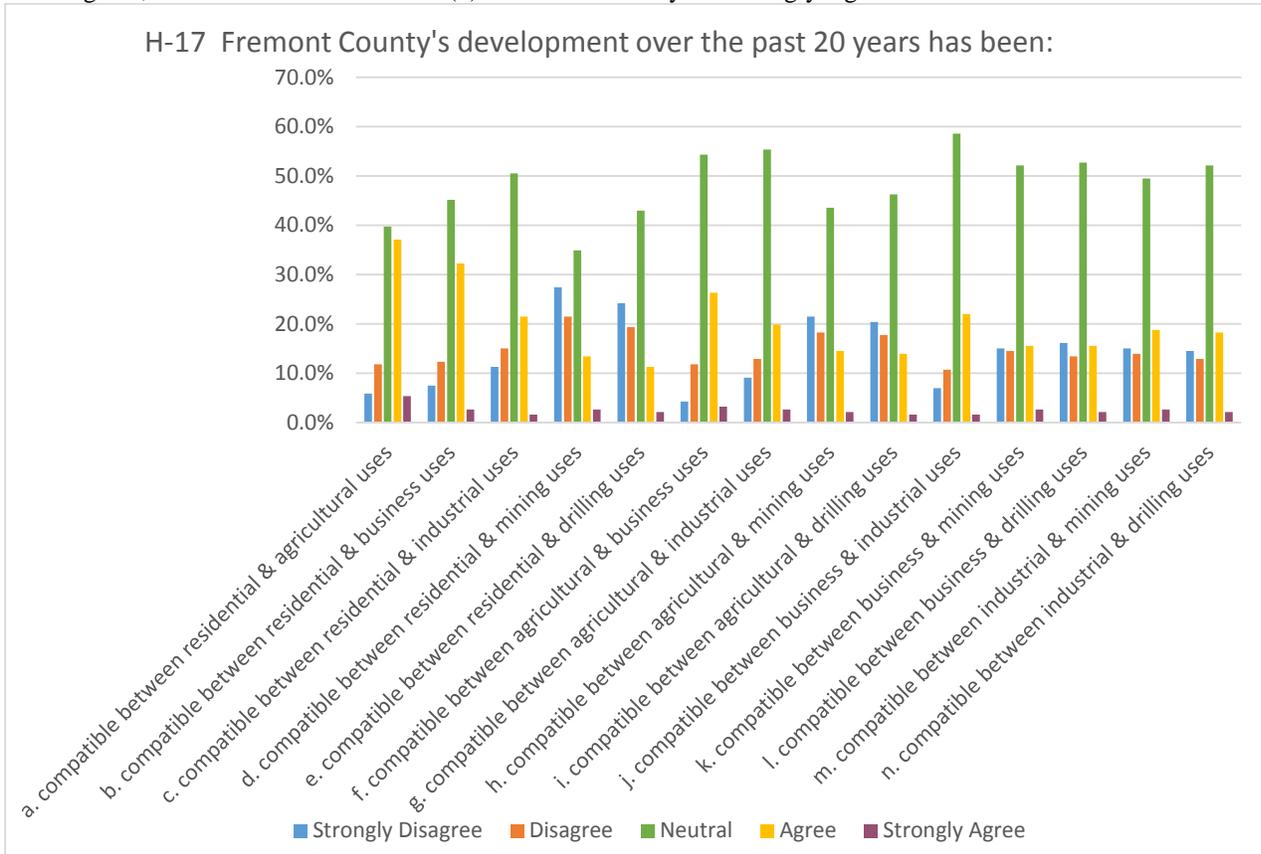
G. Please rate the following items as to how you see each affecting the present quality of life for the residents of Fremont County. A check in the one (1) column would mean that line item has 'Little Affect' on the quality of life and a check in the five (5) column would mean that line item would have a "Great Affect" on the quality of life (Check only one box for each item)



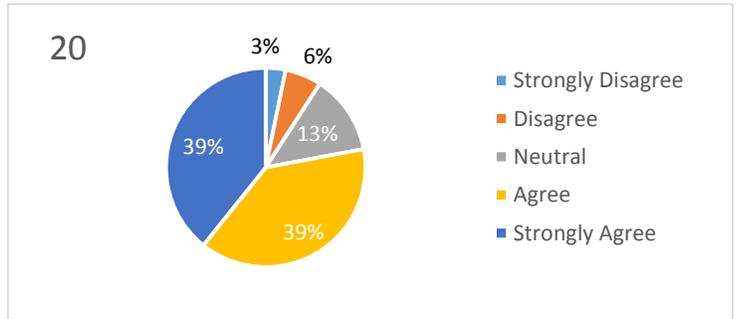




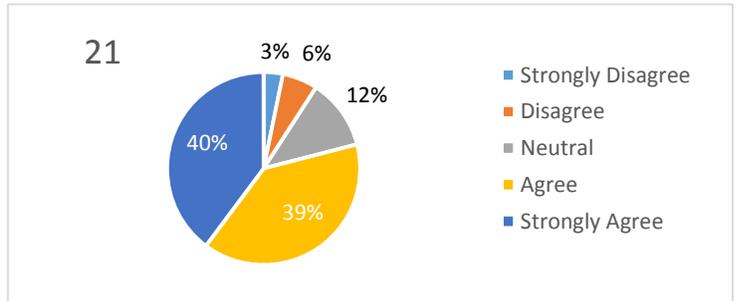
H. For each of the statements below, check the box indicating the degree to which you agree or disagree. A check in column one (1) would mean that you “Strongly Disagree” with the statement, a check in column two (2) would mean that you “Disagree” with the statement, a check in column three (3) would mean that you have a “Neutral” opinion (neither agree or disagree), a check in column four (4) would mean that you “Agree”, and a check in column five (5) would mean that you “Strongly Agree” with the statement.



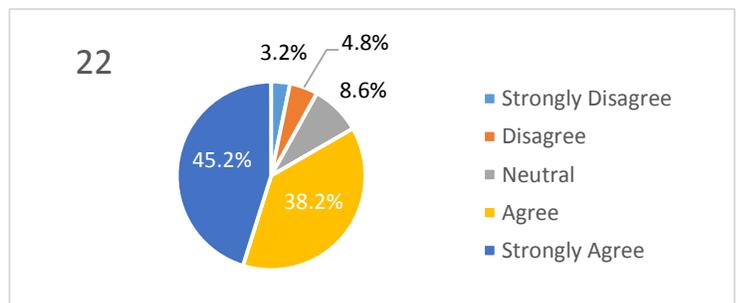
H-20 The cost of residential onsite development such as roads, water, sewer, stormwater management should be paid by the developer and not the County tax payers.



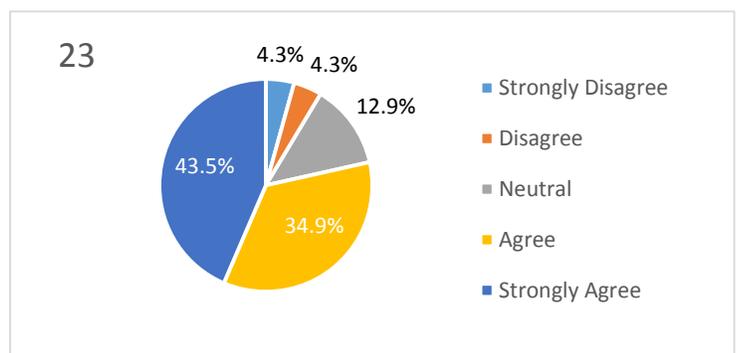
H-21 The cost of business onsite development such as roads, water, sewer, stormwater management should be paid by the developer and not the County tax payers.



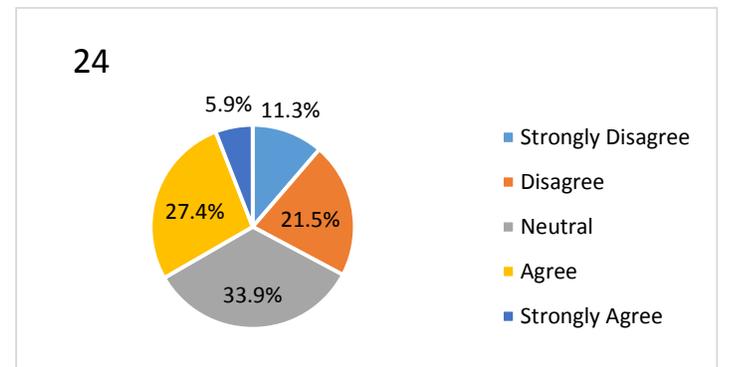
H-22 The cost of industrial onsite development such as roads, water, sewer, stormwater management should be paid by the developer and not the County tax payers.



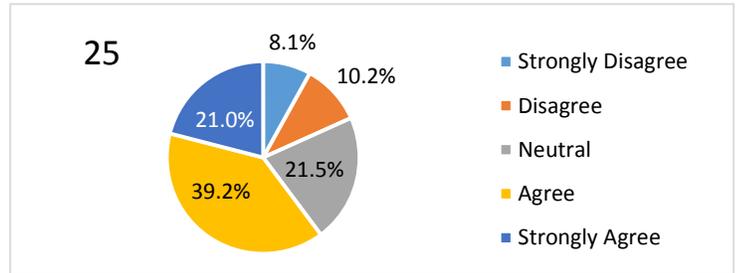
H-23 Commercial development should pay the cost of offsite neighborhood impact to water, sewer, stormwater and roads caused by the development and not County tax payers



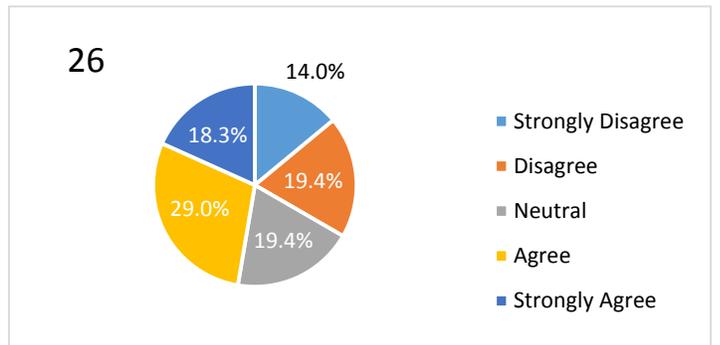
H-24 Multi-family housing is an important part of the County's housing options and more should be available in urban and rural areas of the County.



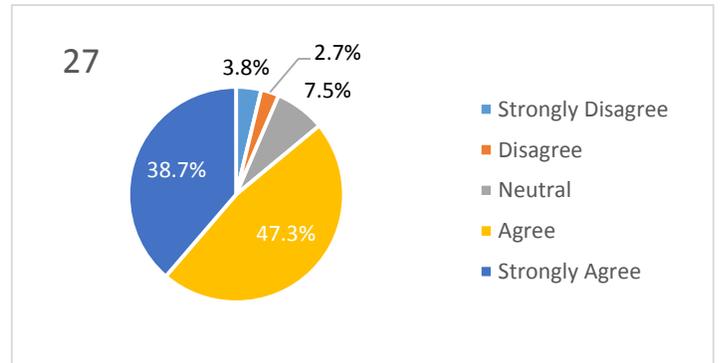
H-25 35 acre residential development is an appropriate development pattern for rural portions of the County.



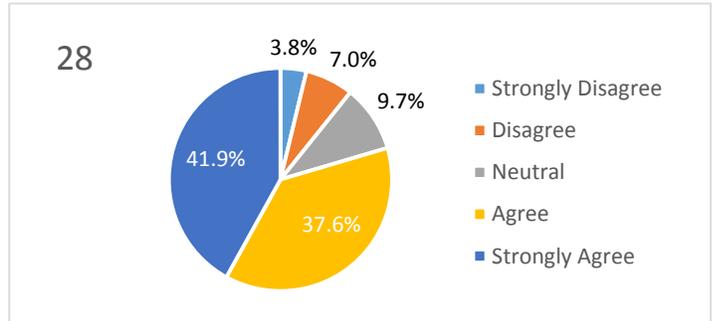
H-26 Further subdivision of 35 acre properties in the rural portions of the County would not be appropriate due to the burden such rural density would put on the County tax payers to provide essential services such as road maintenance, snow-plowing, etcetera.



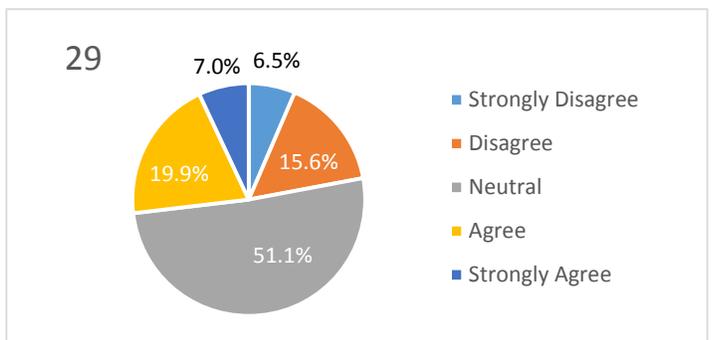
H-27 Property owners in the rural portions of the County should understand that items common to the urban areas such as public water, public sewer may not be at the same level or available to their areas.



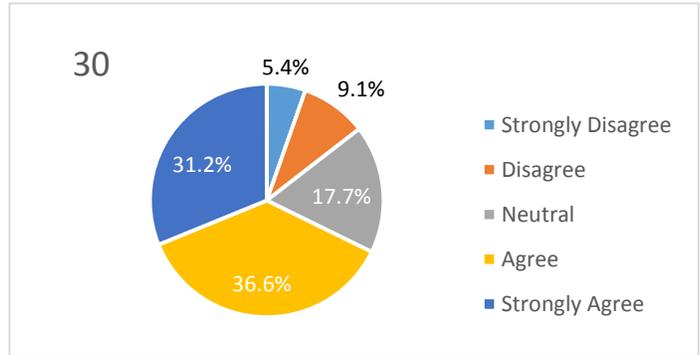
H-28 Flash flooding and stormwater management from the aspects of velocity, quantity and quality are real concerns in the urban and rural portions of the County and deserves consideration in every land use development including subdivision, business, industrial and ones that require issuance of permits.



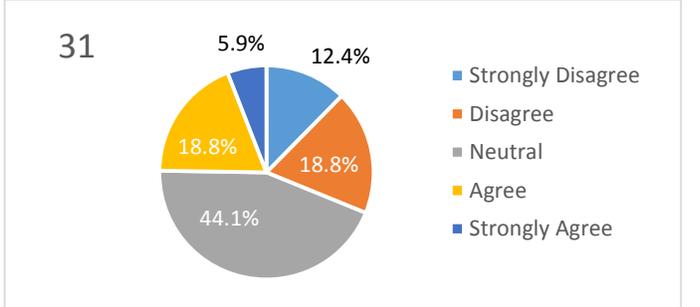
H-29 The current County regulations and policies adequately address flash flooding and stormwater management concerns in the urban and the rural portions of the County regarding land use development proposals.



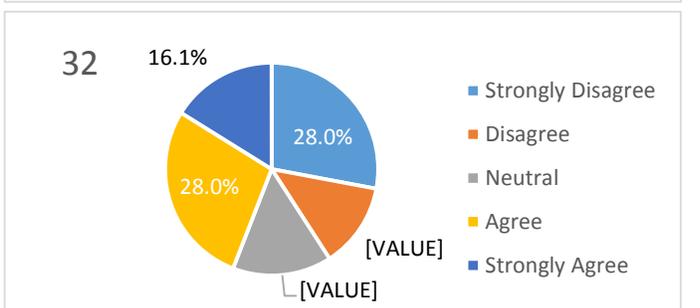
H-30 Traffic management is a real concern in the urban and the rural portions of the County and deserves consideration in every land use development proposal including subdivision, business, industrial and ones that require issuance of use permits.



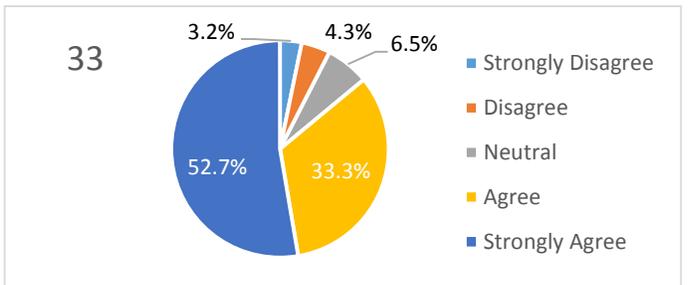
H-31 The current County regulations and policies adequately address traffic management concerns in the urban and the rural portions of the County regarding land use development proposals.



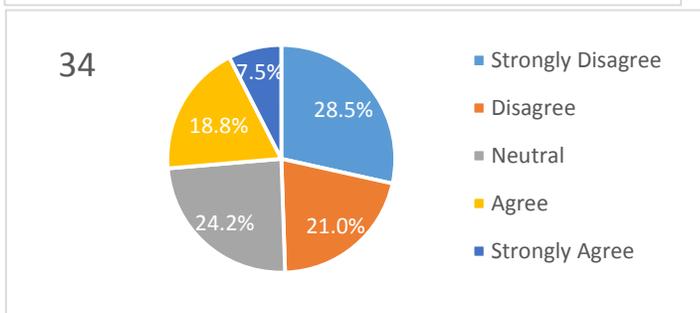
H-32 Mining and drilling operations have been a portion of the County's economy since its settlement and should remain a viable commercial operation in the County for the foreseeable future.



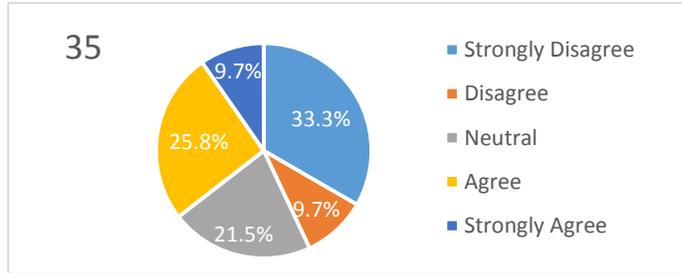
H-33 The impact of mining and drilling operations have a variety of effects on adjacent properties and neighborhoods these affects should be considered in review of use permit applications that would allow such uses.



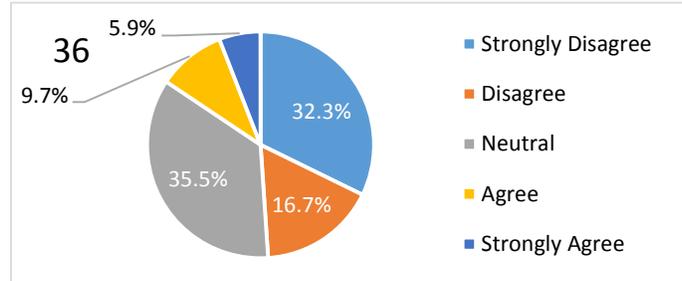
H-34 The impact of mining and drilling operations would have lesser impacts on adjacent properties and neighborhoods if the operation is required to have a short term life.



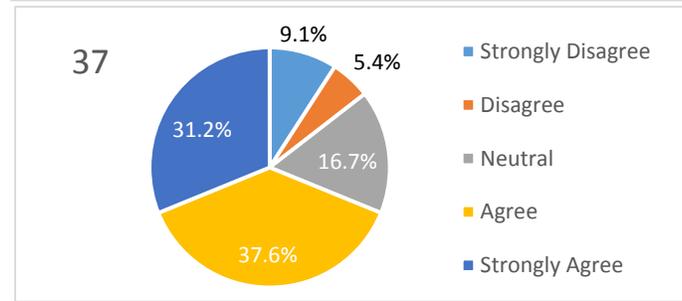
H-35 Due to the great expense of research, land and or mineral right acquisition, planning, permitting, the actual mining/drilling, transportation and reclamation of mining and drilling operation, long terms of operation are justifiable.



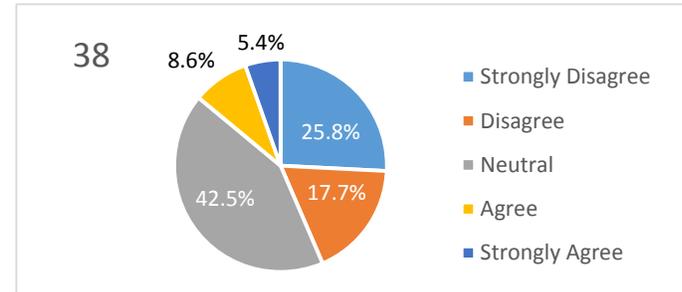
H-36 The current County regulations and policies adequately address the impacts of mining and drilling operations and the effects on adjacent properties, neighborhoods and all County residents and visitors.



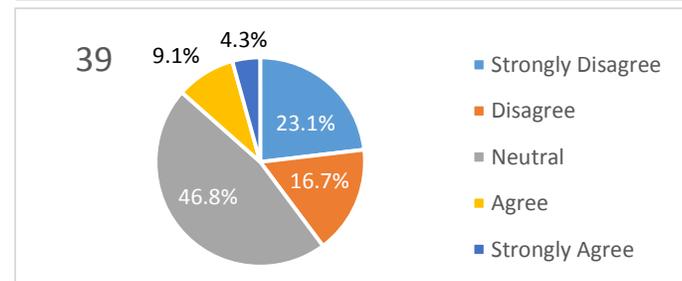
H-37 Fremont County has vast geological and mineral resources that warrant land use management measures.



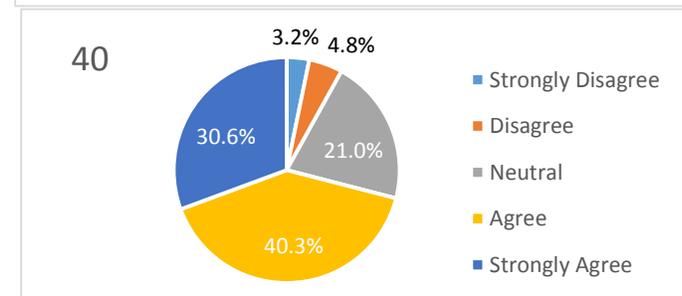
H-38 The current County regulations and policies adequately address the necessary land use management measures to protect the geological and mineral resources of the County.



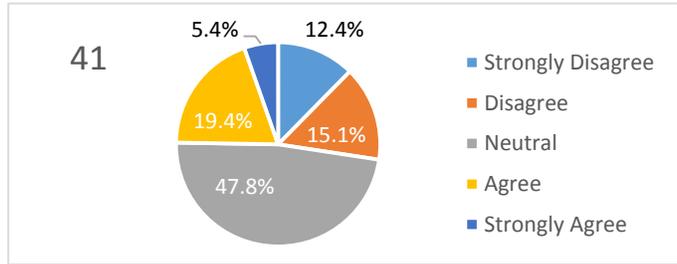
H-39 The current County regulations and policies adequately address the necessary land use management measures to allow development of the geological and mineral resources of the County.



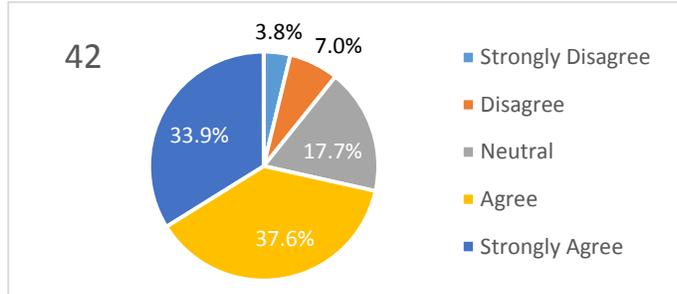
H-40 Fremont County has vast historical, archeological and paleontological resources that warrant land use management measures.



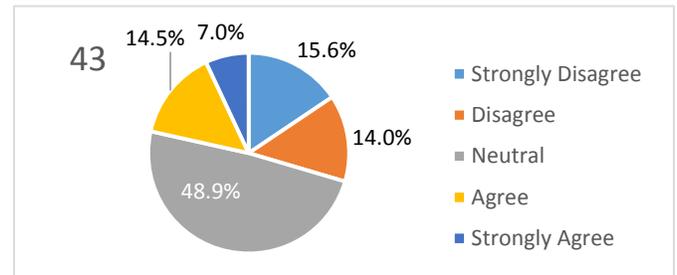
H-41 The current County regulations and policies adequately address the necessary land use management measures to protect the historical, archeological and paleontological resources of the County.



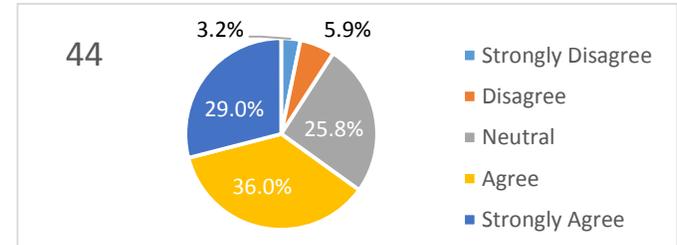
H-42 Fremont County has vast terrestrial and aquatic wildlife resource that warrant land use management measures.



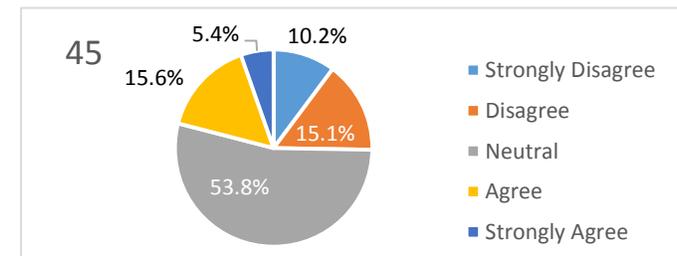
H-43 The current County regulations and policies adequately address the necessary land use management measures to protect the terrestrial and aquatic wildlife resources of the County.



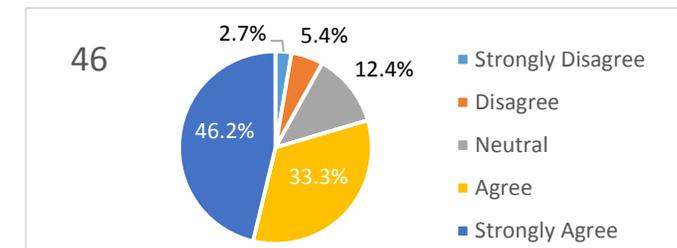
H-44 Fremont County has a very diverse plant community, some of which are unique to the County and warrant land use management measures to protect them.



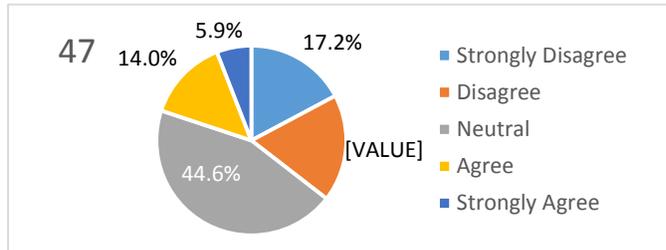
H-45 The current County regulations and policies adequately address the necessary land use management measures to protect the plant community unique to the County.



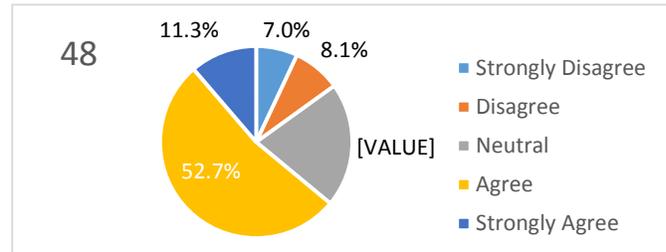
H-46 Fremont County has unique and beautiful scenic resources that warrant land use management measures.



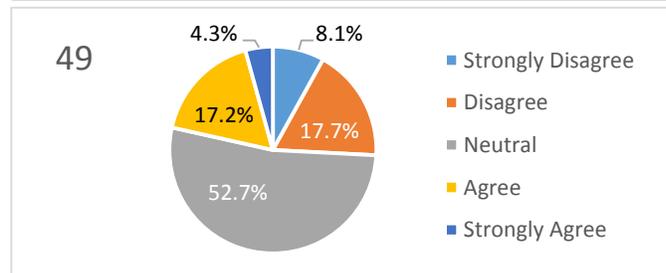
H-47 The current County regulations and policies adequately address the necessary land use management measures to protect the unique and beautiful scenic resources of the County.



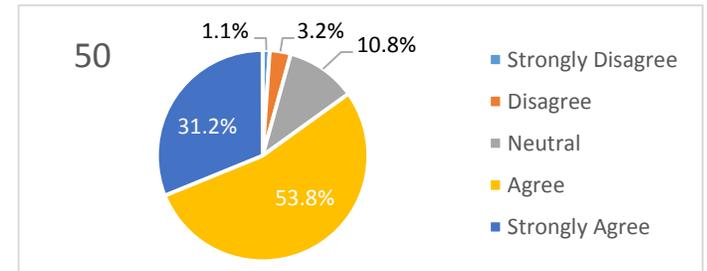
H-48 Commercial signs are necessary for location and advertising of business and industrial operations.



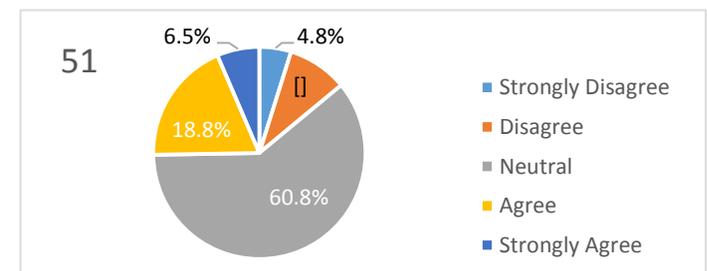
H-49 The current County regulations and policies adequately address the necessary land use management measures to lessen the visual impacts of commercial signage.



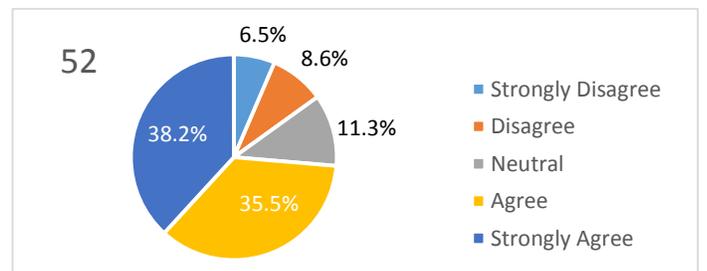
H-50 Telecommunication towers are necessary to stay in contact in today's fast pace American society.



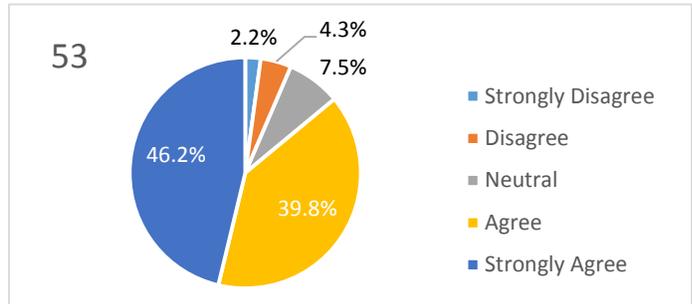
H-51 The current County regulations and policies adequately address the necessary land use management measures to lessen the visual impacts of commercial towers.



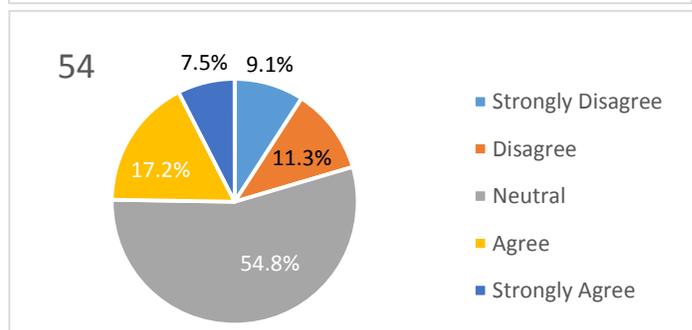
H-52 Abundant night lighting obscures view of the night skies and wastes energy, except in safety situations, therefore consideration of "dark night skies" in every land use proposal including subdivision, business, industrial and ones that require issuance of use permits are necessary.



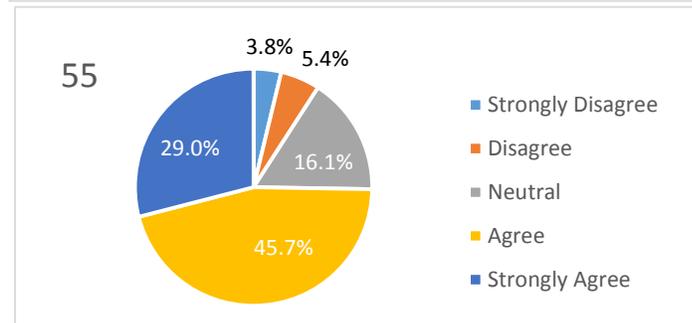
H-53 Fire protection is a real concern in the urban and the rural portions of the County and deserve consideration in every land use development proposal including subdivision, business, industrial and ones that require issuance of use permits.



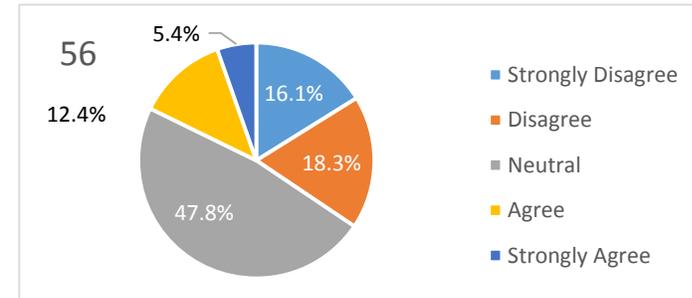
H-54 The current County regulations and policies adequately address fire protection concerns in the urban and the rural portions of the County regarding land use development proposals.



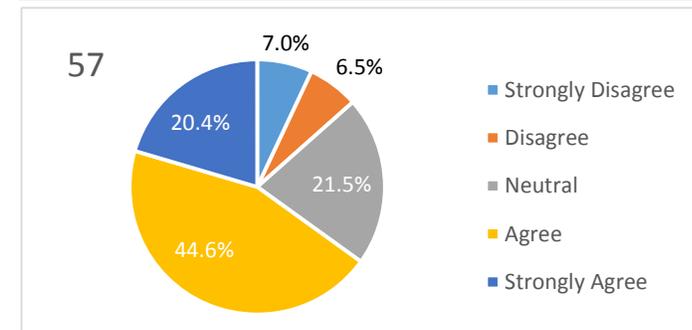
H-55 Economic development is essential to a stable economy and new development can be attributed to the developer be satisfied with the area “quality of life” for he and his employees along with the availability of resources, transportation of goods and consumers.



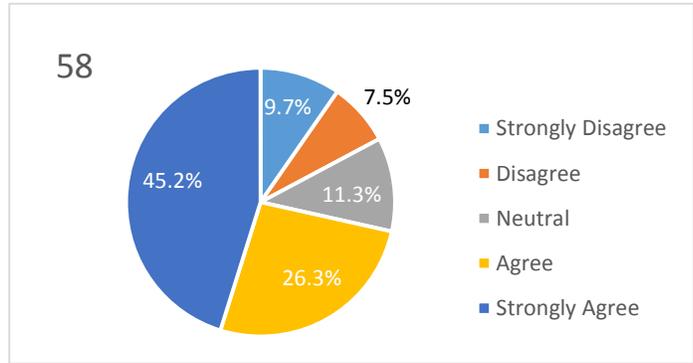
H-56 The current County regulations and policies adequately address the necessary land use management measures to provide a desirable “quality of life” for all County residents and encourage economic development.



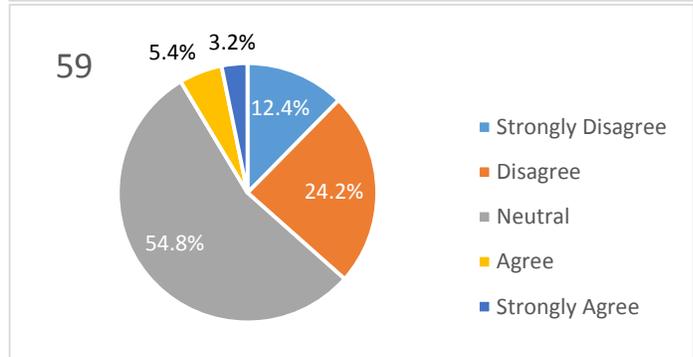
H-57 There are areas of the County that have population of significant size and unique community situations such as to warrant land use management measures specific for their areas (Penrose/Beaver Park, Cotopaxi, Coaldale, Howard and Deer Mountain).



H-58 Green energy resources (wind, solar and water generated energies) are viable renewable resources for America and should be utilized when cost effective in land use development proposals including subdivision, business, industrial and ones that require issuance of use permits.



H-59 The current County regulations and policies adequately address green energy both in development and the generation of green energy for public use.



# Chapter 4 - Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Strategies

## How this Chapter is Organized

This chapter is broken up into thirteen categories (A-M), covering the following areas:

- ➔ A. ---- Transportation
- ➔ B. ---- Urban and Rural Development
- ➔ C. ---- Economic Development
- ➔ D. ---- Agriculture
- ➔ E. ---- Mining
- ➔ F. ---- Water, Sewer, and Utility Services
- ➔ G. ---- Housing
- ➔ H. ---- Community Services and Facilities
- ➔ I. ---- Environmental and Cultural Resources
- ➔ J. ---- Visual Resources
- ➔ K. ---- Open Space and Recreation
- ➔ L. ---- Solid Waste
- ➔ M. ---- Stormwater Drainage

These categories are of concern County-wide and should be considered in all land-use applications where the category is germane.

Each category has a short narrative about the topic in relation to Fremont County, followed by Goals, Objectives, and Strategies pertaining to that category. There is only one primary goal per category; and there may be several objectives that by accomplishing would allow the goal to be reached, and strategies for achieving the objectives.

After the narrative for the category, the goal for that category is stated.

After the goal, the first objective will be stated. Following the objective will be one or more proposed strategies that should allow the objective to be accomplished. There could be several strategies offering more than one way to accomplish the objective; or more than one strategy might be necessary to meet the objective.

In most circumstances there would be several objectives in each category, each having a list of strategies. The same strategy may be appropriate to accomplish more than one objective. For simplicity the strategy will be listed under each objective.

In some categories there will be a listing of general strategies that could be used throughout the category to realize the goal and objectives of the category.

Each category of the chapter has been assigned an alpha designation. The objectives are given a numerical designation in addition to the alpha; and the strategies would have the alpha and numerical designation followed by a period and another numerical designation. As an example: C

would designate the third category; C1 would designate the third category, first objective; C1.1 would designate the third category, first objective, first strategy. General strategies are listed with the alpha designation for the category; the letters GS for general strategy followed by a numerical designation (CGS1 would designate the first general strategy for category C).

Thirteen major issue areas are defined in this chapter which are key to the future growth and development of Fremont County. These issues encompass a broad spectrum of topics that County Staff, Planning Commission, and County Commissioners must consider when making decisions related to current or long-range planning. The order of the topics does not reflect priorities in addressing the issues. All are important factors to be considered in the planning process. All of the issues identified are integral to desirable development of the County. A category of Mining was added with the 2015 review. The Planning Commission felt that mining is a land use that takes place throughout the County and should be addressed as a County-wide issue.

Within each major issue, status of the item in Fremont County is provided, general considerations are discussed, and an overall goal is identified. General objectives then provide a picture of how the County wishes to address the overall goal. These objectives apply on a County-wide basis, just as the issues address a County-wide concern. The objectives and their subsequent strategies are not listed as to priority or importance. It may not be necessary to meet every objective in order to realize the goal for the category, nor every strategy to meet the objective with every land-use application.

## Chapter 4, Category A

### A. Transportation

The movement of goods and people within an area has more influence upon the way an area will develop than probably any other factor. The transportation system not only influences the location and type of development, but also can have a major impact on the intensity of the use. Transportation has played a key role in the development of the region. Early railroads followed the Arkansas River, bringing goods and people to the region. The stage lines and railways took miners and supplies to the mining camps of Victor and Cripple Creek to the north. An efficient transportation system is necessary to allow easy access for tourists coming to the area as well as commuter and service traffic. The purpose of this section is to discuss the current transportation network, and to present clear direction on how future transportation issues should be considered so as to provide maximum advantages to the residents and visitors of Fremont County.

#### ***U.S. Highway 50:***

U.S. Highway 50 bisects Fremont County from east to west, a transcontinental highway that stretches just over 3,000 miles from Ocean City, Maryland to West Sacramento, California. Until replaced with other roadways in the early 1970s, U.S. 50 went on west to San Francisco and currently travels through twelve states (*Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, Utah, Nevada and California*) and the District of Columbia across the United States. U.S. 50 was a portion of the “original U.S. Highway system” created in 1926, was paved through Fremont County in 1938, and still serves as a major transportation corridor south of Interstates 70 and 80 and north of Interstates 40 and 64. U.S. Highway 50 serves as the major east-west connector, both in Fremont County and the region. U.S. Highway 50 runs from the Pueblo-Fremont County line west through the community of Penrose, City of Cañon City, and communities of Parkdale, Texas Creek, Cotopaxi, Coaldale, Howard, Swissvale and Wellsville-- mostly along the Arkansas River from Cañon City westerly to the Fremont-Chaffee County line.



U.S. Highway 50 from its south side looking westerly near Penrose.



U.S. Highway 50 looking westerly near the Fremont-Chaffee County line.

***Colorado State Highway 115:***

C.S. Highway 115 was established in the 1920s and was a connection from Colorado Springs and Interstate 25 south to U.S. Highway 50 near Penrose. Prior to 1950 C.S. Highway 115 was extended south to the City of Florence and then west through the Town of Brookside and the area known as Lincoln Park to a terminus intersection with U.S. Highway 50 in Cañon City. C.S. Highway 115 is the major delivery and commuter route between El Paso and Fremont Counties and between Cañon City and Florence.



C.S. Highway 115 looking southerly as it approaches Penrose.

### ***Colorado State Highway 67:***

C.S. Highway 67 was established in the 1920s and ran from the Fremont-Custer County line near Wetmore (*Custer County*) north through the City of Florence to Teller County. Now C.S. Highway 67 ends at its intersection with U.S. Highway 50 and becomes Fremont County Road 67 north from U.S. Highway 50 to the Fremont-Teller County line. The roadway from Florence to Teller County follows the former route of the Florence and Cripple Creek Railroad.

### ***Colorado State Highway 9:***

C.S. Highway 9 was extended southerly from Hartsel to U.S. Highway 50 near Parkdale in 1939. Paving wasn't completed until the early 1970s. It runs north from its intersection with U.S. Highway 50 to the Fremont-Park County line approximately 26 miles south of Hartsel (*Park County*). The road originally was developed to provide access to the area's high mountain park ranches and to the central mountain region of Colorado.

### ***Colorado State Highway 69:***

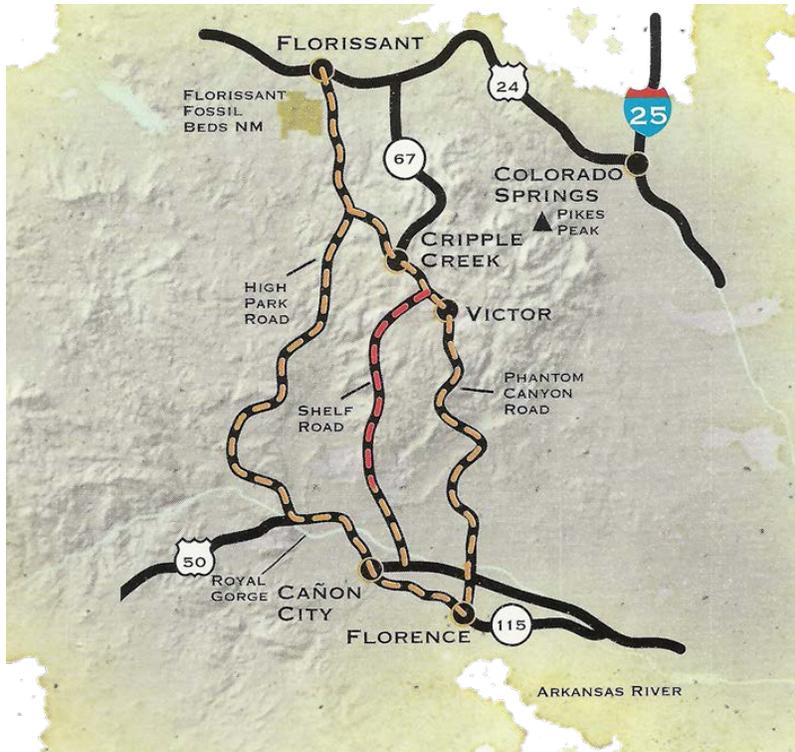
C.S. Highway 69 is an original 1920s state highway and runs south from its intersection with U.S. Highway 50 at the Texas Creek Junction, to the Fremont-Custer County line near the community of Hillside approximately 14 miles northwesterly from Westcliffe (*Custer County*). The road originally was developed to provide access to the "Wet Mountain Valley" and the southeastern Front Range of Colorado.

### ***Colorado State Highway 120:***

C.S. Highway 120 is an original 1920s state highway and went from Cañon City northeasterly, ending at C.S. Highway 115 north of Penrose. By 1950, U.S. Highway 50 was rerouted to bypass the City of Florence and C.S. Highway 120 was shifted to U.S. Highway 50's old alignment from its intersection with C.S. Highway 115 at the east end of the Rainbow Park Addition to the City of Florence (*not annexed into the City of Florence*) on the south side of the Arkansas River through the Town site of Portland then northeasterly to an intersection with U.S. Highway 50 in its current location. Then in the 1990s its alignment again was changed at its intersection with the Fremont County Road "R Street". R Street between C.S. Highway 120 and U.S. Highway 50 became C.S. Highway 120. C.S. Highway 120 contains a one-lane bridge of concrete construction over the Arkansas River that has been noted as historically significant by the Colorado Department of Transportation.

### ***The Gold Belt Tour--a Federally designated Backcountry Byway and Colorado Scenic and Historic Byway:***

The Phantom Canyon Road (*Fremont County Road #67 - mainly gravel*), a major portion of which was previously the Florence and Cripple Creek Railroad route, Shelf Road (*FCR #9 - mainly dirt*), was the first stage route linking the Cripple Creek & Victor Mining District to the Arkansas Valley. High Park Road (*FCR #11 - mainly bituminous paving*) developed mainly for access to the mountain park ranches of the area, and a portion of U.S. Highway 50 and Colorado State Highways 9, 67 and 115 are designated as the Gold Belt Tour Scenic Byway. The Gold Belt Tour is a Bureau of Land Management Backcountry Byway, and a Colorado Scenic and Historic Byway, highlighting the importance that the scenic qualities of the area and the transportation system both have on the economy--historically and currently--with state-licensed gaming allowed in Cripple Creek.



**The Gold Belt Tour**  
**A National Backcountry Byway and a Colorado Scenic and Historic Byway**



The High Park Road



The Shelf Road



The Phantom Canyon Road

***County Roads - Urban Areas:***

Fremont County experiences problems typical of a County undergoing urbanization in some areas, although slowed by a decade-long slump in the worldwide economy. The County road network was developed to serve rural areas and low-density developments. Areas near the incorporated limits of the cities and towns of Fremont County often develop at densities more common to municipal development. This causes more use of the existing roadways, requiring more maintenance, improvements for utilities, and in some circumstances requiring resurfacing. Urbanization has created high traffic demands on the rural road network close to the County's municipalities.

***New County Roads - Undeveloped Areas:***

The County’s ability to construct roads is limited by financial constraints. A majority of the County’s road budget, excluding salary and equipment costs, is used for maintenance and repair of existing roads. These maintenance costs relate directly to a relatively high number of road miles serving low-density, scattered developments. Because of this, commercial and residential developers should be prepared to address construction, funding, and maintenance of roadway improvements (*both on- and off-site*) needed to serve their developments. A constant opinion expressed by the citizenry is that new development should pay its own way and not add to the tax burden of the current residents.

***Municipal Transportation Plans:***

Under Colorado Revised Statutes, jurisdiction is given to municipalities to “control with reference to a major street plan and not otherwise...all land lying within three miles of the boundaries of the municipality...” The City of Cañon City has developed a “Three Mile Transportation” plan that was reviewed by the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners and accepted. Any proposed subdivision of land within the boundaries of this plan must have review of the proposal by the City of Cañon City. It is the responsibility of the municipality to initiate preparation of such transportation plans. Fremont County should be a willing participant in preparation of such plans if the City of Florence and the Towns of Williamsburg, Rockvale, Coal Creek, and Brookside become actively involved in working to develop “Three Mile Transportation” plans for their jurisdictions.

***Rural vs. Urban Roadway Design:***

Fremont County has both rural and urban areas within its jurisdiction. It is appropriate to differentiate between urban and rural roadways. Rural roadways generally serve the same purpose as their urban equivalents, but traffic volumes are much less due to lower residential development densities and less commercial development. County regulations that address street design standards should contain standards for both urban and rural roadways.

***Other Modes of Transportation:***

**Air Travel:** Fremont County has an airport, located southeasterly of the intersection of U.S. Highway 50 and C.S. Highway 67 east of Cañon City and north of Florence, at an elevation of approximately 5,400 feet. Currently the airport can accommodate most propeller aircraft and some small jet aircraft. The main runway is just over a mile long, 75 feet in width, with a 26,000-pound weight limit and asphalt surfacing. The facility sells aviation and jet fuel. The facility regularly is used in wildland firefighting operations. The Fremont County Airport has its own Master Plan, administered by the Airport Advisory Board, whose members are appointed by the Board of County Commissioners.



Small Jets



Prop Planes



Fire-Fighting Helicopter



Private Plane and Hangar

Commercial Air transportation services are available in Denver, Colorado Springs, and Pueblo, Colorado.

**Railroads:** Fremont County is bisected along the Arkansas River corridor by the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way. The history of the railroad through Fremont County is vast. A war was fought between competing companies for the right to pass through the Royal Gorge. Discovery of [silver](#) and [lead](#) near [Leadville](#) in 1877 prompted a race to build rail access to the area. The Royal Gorge was a bottleneck along the Arkansas River--too narrow for both the [Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway](#) and the [Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad](#) to pass through; and there was no other reasonable access to the South Park area. Both railroad crews thus took to fighting the "Royal Gorge Railroad War", two years of essentially low level [guerrilla warfare](#) between the two companies. [Federal](#) intervention prompted the so-called "Treaty of Boston" to end the fighting. The D&RGW completed its line and leased it for use by the Santa Fe. In the 1890s Royal Gorge was used as a passenger route for [transcontinental rail](#) travel. As many as four trains per day went through the Gorge; though in time the establishment of alternate routes through the mountains made the Royal Gorge fall from favor for transcontinental use, and passenger train service on the main line was discontinued in 1967. A sightseeing train now follows the route through the Gorge.



Currently the rails are in use from the eastern County line to the Parkdale area for operation of a scenic railway and transportation of gravel. West of Parkdale the rails are still in place but have been inactive for many years. There are several sporadically used railroad spurs in eastern portions of the County.

## Goal

*Create and maintain a safe, functional, aesthetically pleasing, low maintenance, cost effective, and environmentally sound County-wide transportation system.*

## Objectives

A1. Coordinate with the municipalities of the County to create and maintain a roadway system.

### ➔ Strategies

**A1.1** Work together with the City of Florence and the Towns of Williamsburg, Rockvale, Coal Creek, and Brookside, ultimately through Intergovernmental Agreements, to coordinate and adopt a transportation plan that identifies similar City and County right-of-way widths and street designations.

- A1.2** Continue to work with the City of Cañon City to coordinate City and County transportation systems in the areas around the corporate limits of Cañon City and within the City's designated growth area. Review agreements and plans periodically to ensure goal achievement.
  - A1.3** Request input from any municipality with a "Three Mile Transportation Plan" when applications for subdivision are within three miles of the municipality's corporate limits.
- A2.** Coordinate with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to create and maintain a roadway system.
  - A2.1** Encourage County participation in review of any CDOT scoping and planning processes that involve roadways in Fremont County.
  - A2.2** Request CDOT input on transportation issues when applications for development potentially impact CDOT roadways.
  - A2.3** Require CDOT access permits for developments that propose access from CDOT-maintained roadways.
- A3.** New road construction proposed by developers should become part of the County roadway system.
  - A3.1** Require that any road proposed to become a part of the County roadway system by an application for development be safe and meet or exceed the County minimum standards for right-of-way width; construction maximum slope grades; stormwater drainage flow and water quality; line of sight for hills, curves, intersections and/or driveway accesses; minimizing soil disturbance and cut and fill; and slope stabilization for the type of road proposed.
  - A3.2** Require that any proposed road or driveway be designed to provide a safe angle of intersection to the County Road.
  - A3.3** Design and construction of any proposed road should include consideration of the aesthetic quality of the area and minimization of such impacts.
  - A3.4** Design and construction of any proposed road should include consideration of social concerns, such as local access, commercial access, and access to public facilities.
  - A3.5** Develop a manual setting out roadway and driveway requirements. Revise as necessary to consider new technologies that would enhance safety, provide intersection control, address environmental concerns, protect aesthetic quality, consider maintenance issues, and reduce construction costs.

- A3.6** Recommend that professional level traffic studies be conducted for all proposed developments prior to application submittal.
  - A3.7** Consider the impacts to of the number and type of proposed intersections to the County transportation system.
  - A3.8** Develop a County wide transportation plan that classifies existing rights-of-way for future development based on projected use, and identifies unconstructed roadways needed for future development.
  - A3.9** Include development of walking and bicycling paths in the County wide transportation plan.
- A4.** When possible in the development review process, the County will try to acquire public access to adjacent public lands.
- A4.1** Encourage developers to provide access to public lands through right-of-way dedication or providing easements for public access when public lands are adjacent to development sites.
  - A4.2** Encourage developers to provide access through development sites for public lands to allow continued public access to public lands in light of potential future development.
  - A4.3** Request input from any entity with jurisdiction over the adjacent or nearby public lands.
- A5.** Maintain and enhance the vast scenic quality of the County landscapes, panoramas, and view sheds.
- A5.1** The designs and construction of any proposed road should consider impacts to County landscapes, panoramas, and view sheds.
  - A5.2** Designs and construction of any public road proposed by an application for development should provide pullouts for safe viewing.
  - A5.3** Seek input from the Bureau of Land Management, United States Forest Service, and Colorado State Parks and Wildlife regarding visual impacts.
  - A5.4** Seek input from the Colorado Department of Transportation, Colorado State Historical Society, and Bureau of Land Management when construction of any road proposed by an application for development may impact The Gold Belt Tour.
  - A5.5** Develop a procedure for evaluating scenic values and a process for mitigating potential impacts.

- A5.6** Develop a list of County roadways with a scenic value that should be minimally impacted.
- A6.** Careful consideration shall be given to any application for relocation or vacation of a County controlled public right-of-way.
  - A6.1** Request input from the FCDOT regarding the relocation or vacation.
  - A6.2** Request input from the CDOT regarding relocation or vacation of any County right-of-way that intersects a State roadway.
  - A6.3** Request input from the Fremont County Sheriff's Office regarding vacation of any County right-of-way that contains roadway improvements.
  - A6.4** Request input from the entity with jurisdiction over any public lands that might be impacted by the proposed relocation or vacation.
  - A6.5** Request input from the fire protection authority, when applications for relocation or vacation have the potential to impact emergency service in their jurisdiction.
  - A6.6** Consider the future impacts to the County transportation.
  - A6.7** Discourage the relocation or vacation of any County right-of-way that would eliminate public access to public land.
  - A6.8** Consider the effects, including safety, convenience, and expediency of the relocation or vacation when there is an alternative access to public land, either existing or proposed.

## B. Urban and Rural Development

### ***The Pattern of Growth:***

Urban development (*properties containing less than 4½ acres*) is occurring in several areas of the County, with the bulk of it in and around the Cities of Cañon City and Florence. Cañon City and Florence have seen the addition of public golf courses within their limits (*Fourmile Ranch and Sumo Golf Village respectively*) along with residential and commercial growth. Development of properties at urban levels and just surpassing urban levels is occurring in the Penrose/Beaver Park area.

Rural development (*properties containing 4½ acres or more*) is occurring throughout the County on larger tracts of land undergoing subdivision into 35-acre parcels and within subdivisions that were created several years ago. Development, reorganization and expansion of some independent emergency service entities, such as fire protection and emergency medical responders, have provided support to rural development.

Residential and commercial growth in Fremont County has slowed in the last ten years following the nationwide trend. This slowing has provided time to prepare for future growth; and in many respects the County is ready for uniform, steady growth to occur.

### ***Population Distribution:***

There are two distinct geographic regions within the County across which there is uneven population distribution.

The “Front Range” (*eastern one-third*) portion of the County is made up of gently sloping plains with mountains extending north and south along the easterly County border. Included in the Front Range region are the incorporated Cities of Cañon City and Florence, Towns of Williamsburg, Coal Creek, Rockvale and Brookside, and the unincorporated community of Penrose/Beaver Park. The Front Range area contains public water and sewer systems and is the location of the majority of the urban development within the County.

The “Mountain Region” (*western two-thirds*) of the County is characterized by rolling hills and mountains extending north, south, and west to the County border. Included in the Mountain Region are the unincorporated communities of Texas Creek, Cotopaxi, Coaldale, Howard, Swissvale, and Wellsville in the Arkansas River Valley (*Big Horn Sheep Canyon*), with Deer Mountain (*southerly*) and Tallahassee (*northerly*). The Mountain portion of the County consists of mountains and open park areas in the higher elevations. This area, with exception of the communities, is sparsely populated with growth occurring as the economy and development of area services allow.

### ***Density Characteristics:***

*"Urban development" is defined for the purposes of this Plan as both residential and commercial development with lot sizes of less than 4½ acres.*

Urban development encompasses the zone districts of Agricultural Estates; Agricultural Suburban; Low-, Medium-, and High-Density Residence; and Manufactured Home Park. Travel

Trailer Park and Campgrounds and all business and industrial zone districts may be either rural or urban in density (*lot size*), depending on the availability of city water and sewer service.

Urban development areas are generally located in the Arkansas River Valley surrounding Cañon City, Florence, and the Penrose/Beaver Park area. This is due primarily to the availability of public water and public sewer services in these areas. There are also smaller areas of development in unincorporated portions of the County that are developed at urban densities. Penrose/Beaver Park area, located northeast of Florence, has a public water system that provides service to a majority of the area and limited availability of public sewer in the area platted as the Town of Penrose (*unincorporated*) in 1928. Cotopaxi, Coaldale, and Howard were “homestead” communities in the Arkansas River Valley west of Cañon City. Each community has some lot sizes of less than 4½ acres, created prior to current development regulations, but do not presently have the availability of public water and sewer systems.

*"Rural development areas" are defined for the purpose of this Plan as residential and commercial lot sizes of 4½ acres or larger.*

There are rural areas of the County with some residential development that have some lot sizes less than 4½ acres that are mainly in the “pre-regulation or early regulation” mountain subdivisions such as Glen-Vista/Colorado Acres (*combined commonly known as the Deer Mountain Area*), Indian Springs, Spruce Basin, Fox Creek Canyon, Cottonwood River Ranch, and Big Horn Ranch. These areas were platted prior to the current development standards regarding water and sanitation in relation to lot size. Rural development is Countywide, however, through the development of numerous 35-acre minimum lot-size subdivisions. These, based on current regulations, are exempt from County review of platting. Many of these 35-acre subdivisions primarily were used for summer cabins and second homes when originally platted in the early- to mid-1970s. However, with the influx of growth to the County in the late 1970s and 1980s and the development of area services, many lots now contain full time residential units, some combined with smaller agricultural ventures.

## Goal

*Future urban development should eliminate haphazard sprawl, assure the provision of adequate urban services, and maximize return on funds invested in public facilities and services.*

*Future rural development of properties less than 35 acres should be located in or adjacent to the core areas of the communities of Swissvale, Wellsville, Howard, Coaldale, Cotopaxi, and Texas Creek in the western Arkansas River Corridor. Other rural development of properties less than 35 acres should occur in the areas of pre-regulation or early-regulation development, such as Deer Mountain, Big Horn Ranch, Cottonwood River Ranch and Beaver Park.*



## Objectives

### All Development

- B1.** All development should result in minimal impacts to the County, its current citizens and service providers regarding land use compatibility. Negative impacts should be mitigated. Preferred development controls public costs by minimizing road construction and maintenance, law enforcement expenditures, school district transportation costs, and environmental and visual resource disturbance.

#### ➔ Strategies

- B1.1** Encourage input from local public service providers regarding property development within or near their service areas.
- B1.2** All development should include fire plans to mitigate potential fire hazards that may be created.
- B1.3** All development should limit environmental and aesthetic impacts such as pollution, lighting, signage, glare, noise, and odors on neighborhoods.
- B1.4** Encourage development pre-application meetings with governmental entities, utility service providers, and public services providers to determine the development feasibility and ability to comply with requirements and regulations.

- B1.5** All development should mitigate any impacts to any plant and wildlife, and historical, archeological, or paleontological resources.
- B1.16** The County may, in the future, consider the implementation of a “Transfer of Development Rights” program that would protect larger acreage and open space properties from development while providing incentives to developers to locate urban-density developments in areas more appropriate for such development.



## Objectives

### *Urban Development (in addition to previous Objectives and Strategies at B1)*

- B2.** Urban-level densities in eastern Fremont County will be encouraged primarily in areas that reasonably can be serviced with existing public service facilities such as public water, public sewer, and public maintained roads. Accomplishment of this objective will help to minimize “leapfrog” development, minimize urban sprawl, minimize cost to the community for expansion of services such as public water and sewer, minimize road construction and road maintenance costs, and promote continuity in growth patterns.

### ➔ Strategies

- B2.1** Encourage urban-density developments in areas where the proposed development could be considered an “in-fill” development.
- B2.2** Encourage urban-density developments within established water and sewer districts.
- B2.3** Encourage annexation into water and sewer districts if development is not within established districts.

- B2.4** Encourage input from the Cities of Cañon City and Florence, and the Towns of Williamsburg, Coal Creek, Rockvale, and Brookside regarding property development adjacent to or within a reasonable distance from their corporate limits or within their established “Urban Growth Boundaries”.
- B2.5** Within the limits of existing County land use regulations, all new development inside designated municipal Urban Growth Boundaries should be compatible with the municipality's adopted Master Plan.
- B2.6** Encourage development and implementation of “Intergovernmental Agreements and/or Memorandums of Understanding” between the County and the Cities of Cañon City and Florence, and the Towns of Williamsburg, Coal Creek, Rockvale, and Brookside regarding review of development applications that could allow for items such as development review criteria, joint development reviews, appropriate circumstances for development property annexation, mutual notification of development, and development of “special” land use regulations applicable to definable areas within a designated Urban Growth Boundary.
- B2.7** The County should, when appropriate, encourage annexation to municipalities and should not create disincentives for annexation of land within designated Urban Growth Boundaries, either before or after development.



## Objectives

### *Rural Development (in addition to previous Objectives and Strategies at B1)*

- B3.** Rural-density development should impact the County and its citizens as minimally as possible and uphold the rural character of the neighborhood.

### ➔ Strategies

- B3.1** Rural-density development should minimize new road construction, or in appropriate circumstances, provide plans and agreements to insure private maintenance of proposed roads.

- B3.2** Rural-density development applicants should, as much as possible, design proposed roadways to minimize environmental impacts, including but not limited to wildlife, vegetation, view sheds, slope derogation, and stormwater drainage.
- B3.3** Rural-density development should design proposed roadways to minimize the creation of roadway hazards and should take into consideration items including but not limited to lines of sight, degree of curvature, slope grades, angle of intersection, surface type, surface widths, and seasonal weather conditions.
- B3.4** Rural-density development should be designed so that wells and septic systems easily can be placed onsite without potential to cross-contaminate or affect neighboring properties.
- B3.5** Rural-density development should include fire plans that consider the potential fire hazards of the proposed use, mitigation measures such as onsite water storage and/or fire suppressant materials, the fire hazards that may exist in the neighborhood, and provision for a “defensible area” to be maintained around proposed structures.
- B3.6** Rural-density development should blend with the rural feel of the neighborhood.
- B3.7** Zone change requests to increase density in rural areas are discouraged without evidence to indicate such a density increase would not have a negative County and local impacts. Further, such requests primarily should be in areas of previous community development such as Swissvale, Wellsville, Howard, Coaldale, Cotopaxi, and Texas Creek in the western Arkansas River Corridor. Requests also should be made in the areas of pre-regulation or early-regulation development, such as Deer Mountain, Big Horn Ranch, Cottonwood River Ranch, and Beaver Park near existing similar densities, or adjacent to incorporated municipalities with similar densities.
- B3.8** The County should consider “cluster developments” in rural areas, providing for “open space programs” or “conservation easements” on the majority of the property involved.

## Objectives

### *Commercial and Industrial Development (in addition to previous Objectives and Strategies)*

- B4.** Commercial and industrial development, at urban densities, should be encouraged only in areas with access to public water and sewer services and major transportation systems, and in locations that have a minimal impact on existing adjacent land uses.

## ➔ Strategies

- B4.1** Potential urban-density commercial and industrial development should be located in or near areas where similar land uses currently exist.

- B4.2** Urban-density commercial and industrial development should have minimal impacts on public water, sewer and transportation systems, or include plans that would alleviate or mitigate potential impacts to those systems.
- B4.3** Urban-density commercial and industrial development should include mitigation measures to limit neighborhood impacts such as pollution, lighting, signage, glare visual, noise and odors.
- B4.4** Urban-density commercial and industrial development should have fire plans to address potential fire hazards created by the development.
- B4.5** Urban-density commercial and industrial development should have plans to address stormwater drainage issues including quantity and quality concerns.
- B4.6** New urban-density commercial and industrial development in areas not serviced by public water and sewer may be considered in the existing commercial “hubs” of Texas Creek, Cotopaxi, Coaldale, and Howard, the central Deer Mountain Area and Penrose, or near incorporated municipalities where similar uses exist. Such development should serve area residents, provide an enhancement to tourism, or be located due to the presence of raw materials.
- B4.7** Commercial and industrial uses that have a definable “life of the use” should be allowed only through application for a “Use Permit” that would allow the use for a definable period of time. Extensions may be allowed if necessary, and if conditions in the permit could make the use compatible with existing and allowed uses in the existing zone district. Justification should be required for any extension of time.
- B4.8** Commercial and industrial uses that do not have a definable “life of the use” may be allowed in rural areas through a Use Permit with a condition allowing “life of the use” when zone change of the property is not appropriate, if conditions in the permit could make the use compatible with existing and allowed uses in the existing zone district. Such development should serve area residents, provide an enhancement to tourism, or be located due to the presence of raw materials.

## Chapter 4, Category C

### C. Economic Development

#### ***Economic Development:***

Fremont County is open to hearing all proposals that could widen or enhance the economic base of the area while protecting and improving the current and future residents' quality of life. The County's approach is to direct new urban level development that requires high-level services (*business, industrial, and residential*) to existing incorporated communities where services can be supplied in the most cost-efficient manner, and where new development easily can be integrated into the existing infrastructure. Rural level development requiring fewer services (*business, industrial, and residential*) would be directed to areas that have an established community base. The County understands that certain types of development must be near certain resources or attractions to be successful.

#### ***Quality of Life:***

The County also recognizes the importance of environmental factors, natural and cultural amenities, or "quality of life" issues that play a key role in the health of the economy and livelihood of residents. To have a strong economy, the natural and manmade amenities of the County must be maintained and enhanced. The County must take into consideration all impacts when evaluating any development proposal and the effects on current and future residents and on the natural and man-made amenities of the County.

## Goal

*Widen the existing economic base and broaden employment opportunities on a County-wide basis. The role of Fremont County government in economic development is to support and facilitate other public and private economic development efforts which are consistent with the economic development objectives for the County.*



Rafting and Eatery "8 Mile Hill" west of Cañon City - Staff Photo

## Objectives

**C1.** Encourage economic development activities that will provide sustainable employment opportunities in the County.

### ➔ Strategies

**C1.1** Support economic development that is consistent with the long-term goals of the County and its residents regarding quality of life.

**C1.2** Encourage cooperation with entities whose existence primarily is attributed to the promotion of economic development within Fremont County specifically and Colorado generally.

**C2.** Encourage existing businesses and industries to remain in the County.

**C2.1** Consider preferences to local business and industry that could supply goods or services to the County government.

**C2.2** Encourage local business and industry endeavors both locally and outside the County through support of entities and programs such as Fremont Economic Development Corporation, Colorado Enterprise Zone Project (*Upper Arkansas Enterprise Zone*), Small Business Development Center (*Pueblo Community College, Fremont Campus*), Chambers of Commerce and the like.

**C3.** Encourage existing agricultural activities to remain in the County.

**C3.1** Encourage “agricultural water” to remain with the property for which the water right was established.

**C3.2** Support the establishment of agricultural water rights.

**C3.3** Support the establishment of agricultural conservation trusts and/or easements.

**C3.4** Encourage the use of locally raised and grown agricultural products.

**C4.** Encourage sustainable growth in existing business and industrial parks to take advantage of existing infrastructure.

**C4.1** Encourage development to locate in existing business and industrial parks both within the incorporated municipalities and unincorporated areas of the County.

**C4.2** Encourage promotion of existing business and industrial parks through appropriate entities so as to attract new commercial ventures.

- C4.3** Consider providing development incentives for planned unit developments.
- C4.4** Encourage use of business plans for commercial development to assist in assessing the feasibility of the proposal.
- C5.** Encourage development of new business and industrial parks and the resulting shared infrastructure.
  - C5.1** Consider providing development incentives for planned unit developments.
  - C5.2** Consider entering into intergovernmental agreements with municipalities located within the County and/or adjacent counties that may enhance commercial development opportunities within the County.
  - C5.3** Consider allowing mixed-use developments through planned-unit development that may enhance commercial development opportunities within the County.
- C6.** Encourage developers to pay the cost for development including mitigation of neighborhood impacts.
  - C6.1** Consider imposing development fees based on the impact of new developments on existing services.
  - C6.2** Consider imposing improvement requirements to offset impact expenses
  - C6.3** Require development plan approval to determine the extent and cost of neighborhood impacts.
- C7.** Encourage the preservation and enhancement of the natural and scenic features of the County and the realization of their positive economic impacts to the County.
  - C7.1** Request input from government agencies and private organizations that specialize in preservation and enhancement of natural and scenic features with regard to impacts of proposed development.
  - C7.2** The County, when appropriate, will support initiatives sponsored by other government agencies or private organizations that specialize in preservation and enhancement of natural and scenic features.
- C8.** Encourage the preservation and enhancement and cultural amenities of the County and the realization of their positive economic impacts to the County.
  - C8.1** Request input from government agencies and private organizations that specialize in preservation and enhancement of cultural amenities with regard to impacts of proposed development.
  - C8.2** The County, when appropriate, will support initiatives sponsored by other government agencies or private organizations that specialize in preservation and enhancement of cultural amenities.

**C9.** Recognize the importance of tourism and recreation opportunities in the County and their positive economic impacts for the County.

**C9.1** Request input from government agencies and private organizations that specialize in preservation and enhancement of tourism and recreation opportunities with regard to potential impacts of proposed development.

**C9.2** Support initiatives sponsored by government agencies or private independent organizations that specialize in preservation and enhancement of tourism and recreation opportunities.

**C10.** Protect the clean environment, strive to keep pollution levels low throughout the County, and preserve the strong sense of community pride that contributes to a stable economy.

**C10.1** Request input from government agencies and private organizations that specialize in environmental pollution and enhancement of community pride with regard to potential impacts of proposed development.

**C10.2** Support initiatives sponsored by government agencies or private organizations that specialize in preservation of a clean environment and enhancement of community pride.

## Chapter 4, Category D

### D. Agriculture

Agriculture has long been associated with the cultural history and economic stability of the County.



Hay field and range land near Waugh Mountain in the Tallahassee area – Staff photo

#### ***Right to Farm and Ranch Policy:***

In 1998 the Fremont County Board of County Commissioners with the adoption of Resolution Number 40 established a “Right to Farm and Ranch Policy” for the County. The stated policy from the resolution is:

“That ranching, farming, and all manner of agricultural activities and operations within and throughout Fremont County are integral elements of and necessary for the continued vitality of the County’s history, economy, landscape, lifestyle, and culture. Given their importance to Fremont County and the State, agricultural lands and operations are worthy of recognition and protection.”

#### ***Development and Preservation:***

Agricultural lands are being converted to non-agricultural uses throughout the County. Agricultural land is a valuable, nonrenewable resource. Once the land is converted to a nonagricultural use, the resource itself does not typically return to an agricultural use. The key factor in maintaining an option for an agricultural use is retaining the water with the land resource. To maintain rural, agricultural productivity, agricultural water must remain with the land. Preserving the County’s agricultural lands for the continuation of agriculture is the primary intent of the following general goals and objectives. The Colorado Division of Water Resources (DWR), also known as the *Office of the State Engineer*, administers water rights, issues water

well permits, represents Colorado in interstate water compact proceedings, monitors streamflow and water use, approves construction and repair of dams and performs dam safety inspections, issues licenses for well drillers, and assures the safe and proper construction of water wells.



Rural living and hay fields in the community of Howard – Staff Photo

## Goal

*Encourage farm and rural ranch land to remain in active and productive agricultural use.*

## Objectives

D1. Encourage existing agricultural activities to remain in the County.

### ➔ Strategies

- D1.1** Encourage “agricultural water” to remain with the property for which the water right was established.
- D1.2** Support the preservation of agricultural water rights.
- D1.3** Support the establishment of municipal, urban, and commercial water rights from resources other than dissolution of agricultural water rights.
- D1.4** Support the establishment of agricultural conservation trusts.

- D1.5** Encourage the use of locally raised and grown agricultural products.
- D1.6** Require that establishment of necessary buffering between existing agricultural uses and non-agricultural adjacent development be at the expense of the developer.
- D1.7** Discourage “leapfrog” development around existing agricultural uses to prevent land use compatibility conflicts.
- D1.8** Establish several zone districts that allow a variety of agricultural uses based on land size and service availability.
- D1.9** Support the elimination of noxious weeds that have a detrimental effect on agriculture.

**D2.** Encourage the development of new agricultural endeavors in the County.

- D2.1** Encourage applications for planned unit developments that propose mixed uses in specific areas.
- D2.2** Support the establishment of agricultural water rights.
- D2.3** Support the establishment of conservation trusts and or easements.
- D2.4** Support new, innovative agricultural techniques that could provide opportunities for agricultural development.
- D2.5** Consider buffering between proposed agricultural uses and adjacent properties at the developer’s expense to ensure future compatibility between adjoining uses.
- D2.6** Establish several zone districts that allow a variety of agricultural uses based on land size and service availability.

**D3.** Discourage conversion of prime agricultural land to nonagricultural uses.

- D3.1** Consider development incentives to property owners to encourage the preservation of agricultural lands for agricultural uses.
- D3.2** Support the establishment of conservation trusts and or easements.
- D3.3** Consider planning strategies such as a “Transfer of Development Rights” policy and regulation that allows developers to purchase development rights from owners of agricultural properties, and use those rights in other areas more suited to development to assure that the agricultural property remains in agricultural production.

**D3.4** Encourage applications for planned unit developments that propose “cluster development”, allowing the grouping or clustering of residential or commercial development in relatively small areas while requiring the bulk of the surrounding property to remain in productive agricultural use.

**D3.5** Support a program that allows the County or a sponsored agency to obtain agricultural lands to insure that they remain in productive use for perpetuity.

**D4.** Promote and preserve an atmosphere congenial to the continued use of agricultural land for agriculture.

**D4.1** Promote respect of private property issues that are essential to agricultural use of land.

**D4.2** Promote land development that does not disrupt agricultural activities.

**D4.3** Promote land development that does not pollute the land, water, and air.

**D4.4** Promote land development that does not require public access through agricultural lands.

**D4.5** Apply the Fremont County “Right to Farm and Ranch Policy” to development proposals that include agricultural land or land adjacent to existing potential agricultural property.

**D4.6** Promote development that does not place undue financial burdens on agricultural land owners.

## Chapter 4, Category E

### E. Mining

Mining has long been associated with the cultural history and economic stability of the County. Mining in the early 1860s for coal, iron, gypsum, marble, and granite, along with precious metals, led to the organization of Cañon City's first government. Ownership of the subsurface material usually is established through Federal laws and can be severed from the surface land ownership. There are State and Federal agencies that have regulations for mining.

#### *Current mining trends:*

Open-pit sand and gravel mines are abundant in the County. Most of the material is used in out-of-the-County construction and/or decorative uses while still fulfilling local needs. There is an active marble quarry and several open-pit clay and gypsum mines. There are coal mines in the permitting process and reclamation stage; however none currently are in production. There are exploratory operations for gold and uranium currently underway in the County.

#### *Abandoned and pre-regulation mines:*

Many mine sites were pre-regulation and were not reclaimed. This has resulted in some scarring of the natural landscape and some hazardous locations. Abandoned mine shafts and adits are obviously hazardous due to the potential for collapse, but also could contain hazardous gases and contaminated waters. Abandoned surface mines could have unstable slopes, contaminated overburden and tailing piles, and contaminated water pools. The State through different agencies has been trying to address these issues by identifying the sites and developing mitigation strategies. **All abandoned mine sites should be avoided by the public.**

The common method of early underground coal mining was "room and pillar", where the coal veins were excavated in large areas (rooms) with spaced columns (pillars) to support the ceiling of the room. When the excavation of the room was complete the pillars containing coal would be removed allowing the ceiling of the room to collapse, which can result in voids and may create a surface problem called "mine subsidence". Mine subsidence can create "sink hole" occurrences on the surface when layers between the room ceiling and surface break down into the voids created. Subsidence may occur when the pillars are removed, many years later, or not at all. The State, through different agencies, has conducted mine subsidence mapping of old mine sites with the best information available to help surface property owners determine if there is a potential for subsidence.

Coal seam fires are a potential concern with any coal operation. This happens when an exposed surface or underground coal seam ignites and then smolders. Ignition can be caused by things such as lightning, wildland fires, human error, and spontaneous combustion due to changes in moisture content of the coal seam. These fires can smolder for years, decades, or more since fuel and oxygen are all that is needed to keep them going. They not only burn the coal, they can emit toxic fumes, start surface fires, and create surface subsidence; and are extremely difficult and expensive to extinguish. In New Castle, Colorado a seam fire started underground in 1899 and was blamed for starting the destructive "Coal Seam" surface fire between New Castle and Glenwood Springs in 2002.

### ***Mining necessity and benefit:***

There is an adage, “If it isn’t grown, it is mined”. The need for mined materials increases as the population rises. Mined materials are used in everything from road construction to electronics. The economic benefits usually are understated and affect not only the miners, but the transportation, mill, factory, retail workers, and area residents as well. Ingenuity in mine reclamation can benefit neighborhoods by providing wildlife habitat, recreation areas, construction sites, and agricultural lands.

## **Goal**

*Encourage responsible mining operations with the least impacts possible.*

## **Objectives**

**E1.** Ensure land-use compatibility between mining and other land uses.

### **➔ Strategies**

- E1.1** Consider mining plans and reclamation plans.
- E1.2** Encourage mining operations to be short-term.
- E1.3** Consider hours and days of operation for mines.
- E1.4** Consider method of product transportation, haul routes, haul times, hauling equipment, and number of haul trips.
- E1.5** Encourage mine reclamation plans to result in a benefit to County residents and landowners.
- E1.6** Encourage visual screening of mines and load out operations.
- E1.7** Encourage security measures during the life of the operation.
- E1.8** Discourage mining operations from creating pollution.
- E1.9** Consider downstream impacts when the site is located in a watershed.
- E1.10** Consider noise impacts.
- E1.11** Consider lighting impacts.
- E1.12** Discourage residential and commercial development in areas with valuable underlying mineral deposits.
- E1.13** Consider the mining technique and equipment proposed to be used.

**E1.14** Encourage low impact mining techniques.

**E1.15** Encourage that emergency plans are in place to address potential events.

**E1.16** Encourage noxious weed mitigation plans.

**E2.** Limit the long-term impacts of mining.

**E2.1** Discourage development in areas with a potential for mine subsidence.

**E2.2** Encourage mine subsidence mitigation.

**E2.3** Encourage mining techniques that would prevent mine subsidence.

**E2.4** Support programs that locate and provide mitigation for abandoned mine sites.

**E2.5** Support programs that locate and extinguish coal seam fires.

**E2.6** Consider distance buffering between mine sites and neighboring uses.

**E2.7** Encourage reclamation to commence as soon as feasible.

## Chapter 4, Category F

### F. Water, Sewer, and Utility Services

#### Current Services

**Water:**

Fremont County residents receive water from a variety of Cities, Towns, Water Districts and Associations. No major expansions of water providers or their service areas currently are proposed.



Water storage tanks west of Cañon City – Staff Photo

- The City of Cañon City has a water treatment, storage, and distribution system. It serves users within the city limits of the City of Cañon City and in much of the area within a two-mile radius of the City.
- The Orchard Park Water Association, located north of Cañon City, has a water distribution system but not a treatment facility. The Association purchases its treated water from the City of Cañon City.
- The Park Center Water District, located north of Cañon City, has a water treatment, storage and distribution system.
- The Town of Brookside, located southeast of Cañon City, has a water distribution system for its residents but no treatment facility. The town purchases its treated water from the City of Cañon City.

- The City of Florence has a water treatment, storage, and distribution system. It serves users within the city limits of the City of Florence and many of the unincorporated areas around the City, including the incorporated towns of Coal Creek, Rockvale, and Williamsburg.
- The East Florence Water association, located easterly of the City of Florence, has a water distribution system but no treatment facility. The association purchases its treated water from the City of Florence.
- The Penrose Water District has a water treatment, storage, and distribution system. It serves users in the unincorporated community of Beaver Park/Penrose.

***Sanitary Sewer:***

The Fremont Sanitation District provides sewer services to the Cities of Cañon City and Florence. It also provides sewer service to areas of urban development around the two cities. The District has a sewage treatment facility east of Florence and a collection system. No major expansions of the District or their service areas currently are proposed.

The Penrose Sanitation District provides sewer services to the easterly portion of the unincorporated platted Town of Penrose. The District has a sewage treatment lagoon and a collection system. The District service area is limited by the size of the lagoon and the elevation of the collection lines. No major expansions of the District or their service areas currently are proposed.

***Service Areas:***

There are areas in the urban, developed portions of the County near the Cities of Cañon City and Florence where the service areas for domestic water and sanitary sewer do not coincide. These areas often have public water available but rely on individual sewage disposal systems. While the Penrose Water District services the majority of the area platted as Beaver Park and the Town of Penrose, the Penrose Sanitation District has a very limited service area.

Other urban areas have topographical features or unreasonable distances to service lines that make connection to sanitary sewer systems impractical. The County requires a permit for placement of an individual sewage disposal system on any property within the County.

Most rural areas of the County rely on individual water wells and individual sewage disposal systems for sanitation needs. This affects development density since property sizes need to be larger to accommodate minimum-separation issues between wells and septic system to prevent cross-contamination.

There are some rural areas of the County where reliance on well water is inconsistent due to potability, mineral content, or production quantity. Property owners in these areas purchase treated water from a water provider, haul it to the site, and store it onsite in cisterns until used. This is considered as an unreliable water source.

***Irrigation Water:***

Irrigation water is available in many areas of the County through various ditch and irrigation companies. These companies commonly have distribution systems that consist of ditches and in some cases reservoirs. The availability of irrigation water for individual properties is based on each company's supply system, water rights, and the company's rules, regulations and by-laws.

***State Jurisdictions:***

The State of Colorado, Department of Natural Resources, Division of Water Resources, Office of the State Engineer issues all water well permits, and regulates ground and surface water usage in the state of Colorado including agricultural, commercial, and residential use.

The State of Colorado, Department of Public Health and Environment issues permits for and regulates individual sewage disposal systems that reach or exceed 2,000-gallons-per-day capacity based on formula for calculating system size.

***Electricity Service:***

Electrical service from a public utility is available to most of the County. Cost for line extension and topographical features can be limiting factors for development in rural areas.

***Gas Service:***

Natural gas service is available through a buried-line system in the urban developed portions of the County near and including the Cities of Cañon City and Florence, and the majority of the platted Beaver Park/Penrose area. The more rural areas of the County rely on onsite propane storage tanks, sized for individual property use requirements, with delivery to meet their needs for household and/or commercial gas.

***Telephone Service:***

Telephone service is available to most of the County via "land lines". Cost for line extension and topographical features can be limiting factors for development in rural areas. Cellular phone service areas are limited by topographical features and the number of transmission and reception towers.

***Television Service:***

There is limited "over the air", major network television reception in the urban areas and some rural areas of the County. Most of the urban areas of the County have access to cable television service. Satellite television reception is available in the vast majority of the County.

***Internet Service:***

Various levels of Internet service are available throughout most of the County via telephone lines, cable television lines or satellite service.

***Population Demand:***

Based on the expected growth rate in the urban areas, availability of all utility service, including public water and sewer, should be improved to accommodate the projected urban

population for the year 2025 and further into the future. Urban growth and the need for urban services can change drastically dependent on area conditions and circumstances.

## Goal

*Ensure that all development has access to adequate, dependable, cost effective water sources and sewage disposal for all proposed uses.*

*Ensure that water and sewage-disposal service for existing uses are not diminished by new development.*

*Ensure coordination between utility providers and developers so as to provide necessary services for development while limiting impacts to existing services for the neighborhood.*

## Objectives

F1. Guarantee that all development has adequate water for the proposed use.

### ➔ Strategies

**F1.1** Require evidence of proof of water for the proposed use prior to approval of the development request.

**F1.2** Require evidence of a water supply adequate for fire protection for the proposed use prior to approval of the development request.

F2. Guarantee that all development has an adequate method of sewage disposal for the proposed use.

**F2.1** Require evidence of adequate sewage disposal for the proposed use prior to approval of the development request.

F3. Encourage the use of existing infrastructure in urban developments.

**F3.1** Encourage development to locate in areas where water, sewer, and other utility services already exist.

**F3.2** Request input from utility service providers regarding the feasibility of providing service to the subject pending-development property.

**F3.3** Require utility plans, approved by service providers, to demonstrate how any proposed development could be served.

- F4.** Ensure that new development does not cause negative impacts to neighborhood utility services.
- F4.1** Encourage utility service providers to evaluate potential impacts to existing services and to provide suggestions to mitigate any negative impacts to users.
  - F4.2** Require development to bear costs of mitigation of impacts to existing utility services.
  - F4.3** Encourage establishment of improvement districts to upgrade neighborhood water and sewer services.
  - F4.4** Encourage utility providers to establish a rebate system to allow development to recoup expenses of line extension or facility improvement from future development.
- F5.** Support cost-effective upgrades and expansion of existing service infrastructure and facilities.
- F5.1** Encourage utility service providers to include the County and area landowners in their service planning efforts.
  - F5.2** Encourage utility service providers to provide input during neighborhood or County-wide planning efforts to evaluate impacts to services, and to provide suggestions that would allow for a coordinated effort to address any needs or impacts.

## Chapter 4, Category G

### G. Housing

#### ***Diversity and Affordability:***

Fremont County recognizes the need for quality, diversity, and affordability in housing; and has provided through building, subdivision, and zoning regulations, mechanisms for a wide variety of housing opportunities. Fremont County allows full time residential use in “single-family dwellings”, “two-family dwellings”, “multi-family dwellings”, “single-wide manufactured homes”, “manufactured homes”, “cabins” and “efficiency apartments” as defined in the Fremont County Zoning Resolution. These housing options are allowed in specific zone districts; and in some circumstances the type of dwelling allowed depends on the use. In some zone districts, watchman, custodian or owner residents may require a particular type of residence. For certain types of housing developments such as townhomes, condominiums, and those where lot sizes are proposed to be less than 35 acres, County regulations and State law may require platting through a formal County subdivision process.

With the adoption of Board of County Commissioners Resolutions Number 27, Series of 2004 on April 27, 2004, mobile homes--as defined by the Zoning Resolution (*living units assembled offsite prior to January 1, 1975...*)--were no longer allowed in Fremont County for any use in any zone district. All existing mobile homes legally placed prior to May 11, 2004 will be considered a nonconforming use and allowed to continue being used for residential purposes.

#### ***Property Sizes:***

Current County zoning regulations, dependent on the specific zone district, allow for the creation of residential property sizes as small as 8,500 square feet in areas where public water and sewer are available, and minimum sizes of 4½ acres in areas where public water and sewer are unavailable. Due to issues such as access, public water and sewer availability, emergency services, and law enforcement, the zoning regulations allow for residential densities (*property sizes*) ranging from 8,500-square-foot minimums to 35-acre minimums.

There are properties in the County, created prior to the adoption of the Fremont County Subdivision Regulations on June 1, 1972, that do not meet the standards stated above. Also there are properties that legally were created after that date in areas where the zone district development requirements have changed, the zone district has been changed, or that have been created by a court action, that do not meet current development requirement of the Zoning Resolution. In these circumstances the Zoning Resolution allows for development of “Nonconforming Lots of Record”, as long as the proposed use is allowed and setback and property coverage requirements of the current zone district can be met. If setback and property coverage requirements of the current district cannot be met then a variance is required for development to proceed.



Homes in the Hidden Valley area southeast of Coaldale – Staff Photo

### ***Second Homes:***

There continue to be a number of vacation or second homes located throughout the County, creating a situation where the homes are vacant much of the year. Stewardship of the land and improvements can become a concern with second home developments. However due to change of ownership, retirement, internet commerce, the expansion of utility services, and a vibrant economy throughout the 1990s, many second homes have become full-time residences.

## **Goal**

*Provide affordable, diverse, and quality housing alternatives to accommodate County residents. Housing should not be detrimental to public health, safety and it should preserve the scenic quality of the area.*

## **Objectives**

- G1.** Keep development costs as low as possible while maintaining the health, safety, and welfare of current and future County residents.

### **➔ Strategies**

- G1.1** Encourage “infill” development, especially in urban areas.
- G1.2** Encourage the utilization of existing utility and roadway infrastructure.

- G1.3** Provide alternative development options, such as “planned unit development” regulations in the Zoning Resolution that allow developers to negotiate development requirements appropriate for the proposed uses and property location.
  - G1.4** Cooperate with private and public entities that encourage and fund projects for low- and moderate-income housing opportunities.
  - G1.5** Adopt regulations for “manufactured home park” developments to address functionality of the development and compatibility with neighborhood uses.
  - G1.6** Consider adoption of “cluster development” and “transfer of development rights” regulations.
  - G1.7** Consider innovative construction styles and techniques such as tiny homes and barn conversions.
- G2.** Ensure that residential development in the County occurs in such a way to be long lasting, safe, and building a stable community tax base.
- G2.1** Continue to require issuance of building permits prior to onsite residential construction or manufactured home placement, and inspections of all phases of the construction.
  - G2.2** Encourage the use of quality building materials and nationwide accepted construction techniques for all construction.
  - G2.3** Encourage the use of fire resistive building materials in construction.
  - G2.4** Require building setbacks and building separation adequate to discourage spread of fire between structures and properties.
  - G2.5** Encourage “safe zones” or “defensible areas” around structures, especially in rural development, to help protect improvements during fire events.
  - G2.6** Encourage fire fuels reduction measures for rural development, such as tree and vegetation thinning, and trimming and removal of dead trees and vegetation.
  - G2.7** Review stormwater drainage for all development applications and require measures to mitigate potential flooding issues.
  - G2.8** Prohibit or mitigate development, through flood damage prevention regulations, in any Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA)-designated flood hazard area.

**G3.** Encourage residential uses to be developed compatibly with the neighborhood in which they are to be located.

**G3.1** Encourage multifamily housing developments to locate in urban areas of the County.

**G3.2** Require traffic studies for development.

**G3.3** Require drainage studies for development.

**G3.4** Review all proposed land uses in a development application to determine impacts on the existing neighborhood land uses and to mitigate perceived impacts.

**G3.5** Consider buffering--including separation distance, landscaping and improvement barriers--to lessen impacts between incompatible uses.

**G4.** Ensure that new development does not diminish the scenic quality of the neighborhood.

**G4.1** New residential development is to be compatible with the existing residential development pattern and with the aesthetic character of the surrounding landscape.

**G4.2** Encourage residential development not to obstruct natural landscape views.

**G4.3** Discourage unnecessary removal of native trees and vegetation on development sites, to control erosion and maintain the natural character of the area.

**G4.4** Discourage disruption of natural features (*bluffs, cliffs, waterways, bodies of water...*) contained on development property.

**G4.5** Discourage unnecessary disruption of wildlife habitat to maintain the natural character of the area and preserve habitat, particularly in rural residential development.

**G4.6** Consider the use of platted “building envelopes” or regulated “building siting criteria” to locate structures in a manner that creates minimal disruption of the scenic quality of the area, particularly in larger-acreage developments.

## Chapter 4, Category H

### H. Community Services and Facilities

The community services that County residents expect include road maintenance, schools, libraries, fire protection, emergency medical response, hospitals, park and recreation facilities, airport facilities, and law enforcement protection. This portion of the Plan addresses these community services and facilities. These services are not to be mistaken for utility services which are defined, for the purposes of this Plan (*please see category F of this section*), to include water and sewer services.

The quality of life of County residents can be defined in part by the quality of community services provided in the residents' neighborhoods. It is important that these services keep pace with the development of the area. No matter the rate of growth occurring in the County, maintenance of community services at a high standard should continue to be a high priority for the County's resource allocation framework.

There are many community service entities throughout Fremont County, some of which assess a mill levy, some rely on donations, and all may or may not charge for services.

Entities listed with this symbol ✧ are currently assessing a mill levy.

Entities listed with this symbol ✦ are currently not assessing a mill levy.

#### **Schools (*there are some private schools associated with religious institutions*):**

- Cañon City School District RE-1
- Florence School District RE-2 (*includes Penrose schools*)
- Cotopaxi School District RE-3
- Salida School District R-32J
- Fremont County Headstart
- Pueblo Community College

#### **Fire Protection:**

- Cañon City Fire Protection District
- Florence Fire Protection District (*includes Penrose sub-district*)
- Southwestern Highway 115 Fire Protection District
- Deer Mountain Fire Protection District
- Western Fremont Fire Protection District
- South Arkansas Fire Protection District
- Wet Mountain Fire Protection District
- Fremont County Sheriff's Office (*wildland fires not located within a fire district boundary*)
- Howard Volunteer Fire Department
- Oak Creek Grade Volunteer Fire Department
- Tallahassee Rural Fire Protection Agency
- Indian Springs Volunteer Fire Department
- Western Fremont Fire Protection District

**Emergency Medical Responders** (*some Fire Protection entities provide emergency medical response*):

- American Medical Response
- Arkansas Valley Ambulance Service
- Northwest Fremont County EMS
- Fremont County Search and Rescue
- Chaffee County EMS

**Hospitals:**

- Salida Hospital District
- West Custer County Hospital District
- St. Thomas More Hospital

**Water Conservation Districts:**

- Upper Arkansas Water Conservation District
- Southeast Colorado Water Conservation District

**Libraries:**

- Cañon City Library
- John C. Fremont Library District (*Florence Area*)
- Penrose Community Library District

**Recreation Districts:**

- Cañon City Area Recreation and Park District
- Penrose Park and Recreation District

**Conservation Districts (*soil*):**

- Fremont County Soil Conservation District

**Improvement Districts:**

- Four Mile Metro District 1, 2 and 3
- Four Mile Metro District 4
- Four Mile Ranch Overlap Parcel

**Other:**

- Fremont County 911 Authority
- Fremont County GIS Authority
- Fremont County Airport



There are six municipalities (*Cañon City, Florence, Williamsburg, Rockvale, Coal Creek, and Brookside*) and Fremont County that assess mill levies and use their general funds for community service items--such as law enforcement, road and bridge maintenance, and normal government functions--without individual assessments for such services (*there may or may not be charges for services*). There are several State and Federal agencies that provide services (*such as Colorado Department of Transportation, Colorado State Patrol, U.S. Forest Service, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Bureau of Land Management*) that are funded by budget allocations from their base government entity.

## Goal

*Ensure the maintenance of adequate and dependable levels of community services necessary to support all existing and future residents of the County.*

## Objectives

H1. Support upgrades and expansions of existing community service facilities.

### ➔ Strategies

**H1.1** Collaborate with community service agencies in seeking funding for equipment or improvement projects.

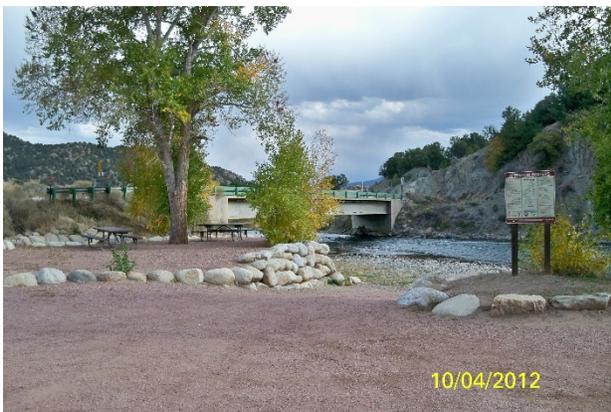
- H1.2** Promote adaptive reuse of existing buildings to minimize the amount of capital outlay for new service facility development.
  - H1.3** Provide “in-kind” assistance to community service agencies.
  - H1.4** Support the creation of local and public improvement tax districts.
  - H1.5** Initiate a developer impact-fee program designed to assist community service entities that are impacted by development that requires County approval.
  - H1.6** As a part of any proposal submitted for commercial, industrial, or residential development for which the County requests a fiscal impact analysis, require a substantive report that analyzes the fiscal impacts of development upon local community service entities, public agencies, and the County.
- H2.** Encourage beneficiaries of the service facilities to support necessary maintenance and upgrade of the facilities.
- H2.1** Request input from affected community service entities on pending development regarding potential impacts and mitigation of the impacts.
  - H2.2** Encourage new development to annex to existing community service districts or service areas.
  - H2.3** Encourage new development to locate within service distance of existing community service districts or service areas.
- H3.** Support initiation of new community service entities if existing service facilities are incapable of providing an adequate level of service.
- H3.1** Encourage property owners of new developments to form their own service districts when appropriate.
  - H3.2** Encourage formation and/or upgrades of new community service entities and facilities when new or advancements in technology present the need.

## Chapter 4, Category I

### I. Environmental and Cultural Resources

#### ***Topography and Natural Features:***

Fremont County has a wide range of environmental conditions, ranging from the semiarid prairie of the eastern plains at an elevation of 5,000 feet to alpine meadows and rugged mountain peaks at an elevation of over 12,200 feet in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains at the southwestern edge of the County. The Arkansas River bisects the County, flowing from west to east, creating a beautiful river canyon, known as the “Bighorn Sheep Canyon”. The Canyon is managed as a Colorado State Park, Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area, in a joint venture between Colorado Parks and Wildlife and the Bureau of Land Management. Rafting, fishing, and wildlife and scenery viewing are major activities. Just west of Cañon City the river has formed the Royal Gorge, a spectacular canyon spanned by the Royal Gorge Bridge--one of the world’s highest suspension bridges and a popular tourist stop. The Arkansas River has many tributary streams throughout the County that add to the scenic and recreational value of the County.



#### ***Unique Historic and Natural Resources:***

The County’s unique environmental resources include non-renewable natural landmarks and scenic areas; significant historic/archeological sites associated with Anglo exploration of the western United States and Native American ways of life; world renowned paleontological sites

with specimens on display at museums nationwide; and geologic areas so significant that the County is home to three university level geology field camps. These unique resources warrant protection. Some plant life in the County has been determined to be rare and limited to very specific habitats. Some of the wildlife in the County is very sensitive to habitat change. Wildlife and plant habitats associated with the different elevations and areas of the County also present conditions that deserve consideration for preservation.



***Mining Influence:***

Historically, mining has been an important element in Fremont County since its settlement. The City of Florence was a center for refining the gold and silver ores that were mined to the north, in Victor and Cripple Creek. Surface mining for limestone, clay, and gravel also occurs at various levels in the County. Underground and open-pit mining for coal has taken place in the County with more reserves still in place. Mining will continue to be an element of the land use pattern for the County; and the impacts of this use should be considered.

***Oil Influence:***

The “Florence Oil Field” is the oldest continuously producing oil field in the United States. Wells still produce revenue for the County, with exploration and production of oil and natural gas on an increase. Oil production will continue to be an element of the land-use pattern for the County; and the impacts of this use should be considered.

**Goal**

*Encourage a land-use pattern which considers the historical, cultural, ecological, and environmental sensitivity of the land and wildlife; does not overburden the capacity of the land; and promotes the health, safety, and welfare of all County residents.*

## Objectives

- I1. The County will review all proposed development in terms of potential environmental impacts on land, water, air, and wildlife, and place the burden of proof to mitigate any potential impacts with the developer.

### ➔ Strategies

- I1.1* Seek input on development applications from government agencies and independent entities that specialize in issues regarding land water, air, and wildlife resources.
- I1.2* Require submittal of reclamation plans for development with a determinable life that ensure the site will be restored to an equivalent or superior state to that before the development.
- I1.3* Encourage design of developments to have minimal impacts by minimizing grading slopes from their natural topography and negligible disturbance to site vegetation.
- I1.4* Encourage development by siting and design to avoid detrimental effects on drainage ways, waterway courses, streams, rivers, or bodies of water.
- I1.5* Consider effects of proposed development on the land and its subsurface waters.
- I1.6* Encourage development by siting and design to avoid impacts to prominent natural landmarks and natural physical features.
- I1.7* Emphasize protection of the Arkansas River corridor and the mitigation of impacts.
- I1.8* Encourage mitigation plans to address potential neighborhood impacts of the proposed development.
- I2. The County will review all proposed developments with regard to potential impacts to cultural and historic resources of the County.
- I2.1* Seek input on development applications from government agencies and independent entities that specialize in issues regarding cultural and historic resources.
- I2.2* Encourage development by location and design to avoid detrimental effects on cultural and historic resources.
- I2.3* Encourage mitigation plans to address potential neighborhood impacts of the proposed development.

- I2.4** Promote preservation of historical, paleontological, and archeologically significant sites identified by government agencies and other accredited historical entities.
- I3.** The County should promote the formation of an inventory of environmental, cultural, and historic resources of the County.

  - I3.1** Encourage partnerships with government agencies and private entities to assist in such inventories.
  - I3.2** Encourage the development and maintenance of a database and mapping system for the inventory.
  - I3.3** Develop referral procedures for existing inventories.
  - I3.4** Coordinate with appropriate agencies and organizations to identify sensitive ecological areas and preserve them in a natural state.
  - I3.5** Identify and preserve critical wildlife habitat in cooperation with appropriate agencies and organizations.

## General Strategies

- IGS1** Promote the use of special development techniques, such as Planned Unit Development, Transfer of Development Rights, and/or designated site specific building envelopes to minimize development impacts to unique environmental and cultural resources.
- IGS2** Coordinate public education efforts with public and private organizations to protect threatened plant and animal habitat, riparian corridors, and mountain and prairie ecosystems.
- IGS3** Consider creation of a capital fund program to assist in preservation of significant sites through development fees, impact fees, and special real estate assessments.

## Chapter 4, Category J

### J. Visual Resources

#### ***Value of Visual Resources:***

Preservation of the existing high quality visual resources of Fremont County is an important factor in the future of the County. In order to maintain the existing quality of life and to enhance the tourist - and recreation-based economy, the quality of the visual resources is important, ensuring that people continue to come and stay in the area and return to Fremont County. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in their 1995 Royal Gorge Resource Area Management Plan document--in particular the Special Resources Management Location Map--indicates that a large portion of the County, especially in key future recreation areas, is currently of high scenic quality.

#### ***The BLM Visual Resource Inventory***

The BLM's Visual Resource Inventory System takes into account three dimensions of scenic quality:

- Scenic Quality Evaluation (land form, vegetation, water, color, adjacent scenery, scarcity, and cultural modifications)
- Sensitivity Level Analysis (types and amounts of use, public interest, adjacent land uses, and special uses)
- Distance Zones (foreground, middle ground, background, and seldom-seen zone)



Based on field-checked inventories using the above evaluative criteria, the BLM has classified most lands in Fremont County into one of three Visual Resource Quality Zones.

The highest visual quality zone in the County is categorized as Class II. Visual Resource Class II Zones are managed on BLM lands for the following objective:

**Class II Zone Objective:** To retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be low. Management activities may be

seen, but should not attract the attention of the casual observer. Any changes must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

In Fremont County, these lands are designated throughout the Arkansas River Corridor from Royal Gorge west, including the northeast slopes of the Sangre de Cristo mountain range and along the Highway #9, High Park Road, Garden Park/Four Mile, Phantom Canyon, and Beaver Creek corridors. These are the lands evaluated by BLM to be most valuable as scenic resources.

The second Visual Resource Quality Zone in the County is the Class III zone, with the following BLM management objective:

**Class III Zone Objective:** To partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be moderate. Management activities may attract attention but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Changes should repeat the basic elements found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

Lands falling into the Class III zone are found in the remainder of the County's mountain regions, urban growth districts, and the Beaver Park/Penrose area.

The third zones found in the County, Class IV zones, are managed permitting major human modifications to the landscape and are found in Fremont County in the south central and southeast sections of the County.

The BLM Visual Resource Inventory system provides an empirically grounded, standardized classification system applied throughout BLM lands nationwide. This system provides Fremont County with one basis for determination of the scenic value of County landscapes. While the management guidelines developed by BLM *apply to BLM lands only*, they offer suggestions about the visual resource management objectives that might be established for County-level planning as well.

***Byways:***

The Gold Belt Tour is a designated "National Back Country Byway" and a "Colorado Scenic and Historic Byway" that includes roadways in two counties, Fremont and Teller. The Byway has three distinct sections in Fremont County that are connected by U.S. Highway 50, Colorado State Highways #9, #67 and #115. The sections are Fremont County Roads #67 (aka Phantom Canyon Road) to the east, #11 (aka High Park Road) to the west, and a combination of Field Avenue, Red Canyon Road, Garden Park Road, and Shelf Road in between the east and west sections. The Byway has not only very high scenic value but also historical significance.

***Scenic Roadways:***

Scenic views, especially along much traveled scenic roadways of Fremont County, are currently in need of protection. Roads which fall in BLM Visual Quality Class II zones and are recommended for inclusion in the Visual Resource Management Plan include the following:

- U. S. Highway 50, from Parkdale west to the County Line along the Arkansas River
- Colorado State Highway #69 from Texas Creek south to the County Line
- Tallahassee Road (#2)
- Hayden Creek Road (#6)
- Red Gulch Road (#12)
- Upper Beaver Creek Road (#132)
- Copper Gulch Road (#28, #27a and #30)
- Royal Gorge Road (#3A)
- Temple Canyon Road (#3) (*weather and vehicle considerations*)
- Deer Haven Road (#69) (*weather and vehicle considerations*)
- Fremont County Road #F24 (Red Canyon Park Road) (*weather and vehicle considerations*)
- Oak Creek Grade Road (#143 and #277)
- Colorado State Highway #115 (from the El Paso County line to the Florence City limits)



## Goal

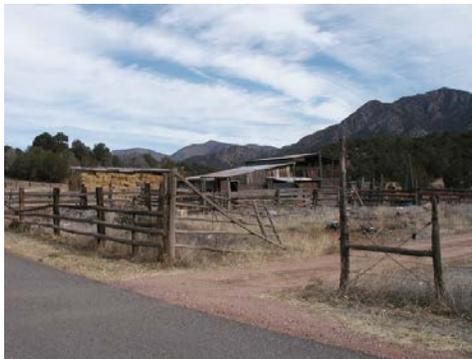
*Protect the unique scenic and rural quality of the County for current and future residents and visitors.*

## Objectives

**J1.** The County may consider adoption of a Visual Resource Management Program to protect the County’s highest quality and most threatened scenic resources over time.

### ➔ Strategies

- J1.1** Partner with government agencies and municipalities to conduct a current Visual Resource Inventory based on agreed-upon visual standards.
- J1.2** Partner with government agencies and municipalities to develop a Visual Resource Management Plan. The Plan might include adoption of Viewshed Protection Overlay Zones for specific areas of the County, with visual requirements for developments within the zones. These requirements would be specific to the defined area of each overlay zone.
- J1.3** Consider restrictions on architectural style, building materials, coloration, or reflectivity of surfaces in zone districts that allow commercial uses, and for developments that require a use permit to operate in Viewshed Protection Overlay Zones.
- J1.4** Consider building setback requirements, height restrictions, and the use of “building envelopes” as a means to protect skyline viewsheds in Viewshed Protection Overlay Zones.
- J1.5** Consider exemptions for properties in active agricultural production from regulations applicable in Viewshed Protection Overlay Zones.



- J1.6** Consider a set of voluntary architectural guidelines, along with incentives for implementation, for developers and property owners.

**J2.** Consider adoption of regulations that limit visual impacts.

- J2.1** Develop signage regulations to protect the scenic quality of the County.
- J2.2** Encourage buffering by separation distance, building envelopes, and/or screening when reviewing development applications which could have negative impacts to the scenic quality of the area.
- J2.3** Development standards for communication towers and other uses exceeding normal construction heights to minimize viewshed impacts.
- J2.4** Develop visual standards for zone districts that allow commercial development or require use permits to minimize viewshed impacts.

## Chapter 4, Category K

### K. Open Space and Recreation

#### ***Open Space:***

The large amount of publicly managed open land within the County is integral to maintaining the rural character of the County. Approximately half the County is in public ownership. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Forest Service manage a large portion of these open lands while the Colorado State Land Board manages a smaller portion. These lands are an important habitat for wildlife. They also are a source of pride and enjoyment for residents, as well as being an attraction for tourists, sportsmen, adventurers, and visitors to the area.

#### ***Recreational Opportunities:***

Fremont County has a myriad of recreational opportunities on public lands within its boundaries including hunting, fishing, wildlife and scenery viewing, hiking, bicycling, backpacking, camping, horseback riding, rock climbing, ATV riding, and rafting. Also there are many commercial outfitters that help provide a wide variety of recreational experiences in the County.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife, in conjunction with the BLM, manages the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area--a portion of which consists of the immediate Arkansas River corridor through the County. There are three State Wildlife Areas (SWA) in Fremont County: Beaver Creek SWA, Brush Hollow SWA, and Ogden-Treat SWA, which are managed by Colorado Parks and Wildlife. There are several parcels of State Trust Lands managed by Colorado Parks and Wildlife through lease agreements with the Colorado State Land Board in various locations within the County. The U.S. Forest Service manages the Sangre De Cristo Wilderness Area, which is located in the alpine areas in the southwest portion of the County lying within the San Isabel National Forest. Fragmented portions of the San Isabel National Forest are also located in the northwest and south-central parts of the County. The south-central portion contains Oak Creek Campground maintained by the U.S. Forest Service.



Float fishing the Arkansas River in western Fremont County.



Camping site at Oak Creek Campground in the San Isabel National Forest

The BLM in their 1995 Royal Gorge Resource Area Management Plan document--in particular the Special Resources Management Location Map--showed several areas as "Special Resources" in Fremont County. They are Arkansas Canyon Lands Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), Beaver Creek ACEC, Beaver Creek Wilderness Study Area (WSA), Garden Park ACEC, Grape Creek ACEC, Grape Creek WSA, McIntyre Hills WSA, and the Phantom Canyon ACEC.

The Central Colorado Wilderness Coalition, a private organization, has proposed that five wilderness areas be established in Fremont County. They are Badger Creek Wilderness (19,250 acres), Beaver Creek Wilderness (38,450 acres), Grape Creek Wilderness (43,371 acres), McIntyre Hills Wilderness (17,930 acres), and Table Mountain Wilderness (23,130 acres).

The Gold Belt Tour, which is designated as a National Backcountry Byway (*Federal Designation*) and a Colorado Historic and Scenic Byway (*State Designation*) consists of High Park Road, Shelf Road, Garden Park Road, and Phantom Canyon Road, providing a unique recreational opportunity. The tour passes through the Cities of Cañon City and Florence and the Town of Brookside in Fremont County, and Cities of Cripple Creek, Victor, and Florissant in Teller County.

The City of Cañon City maintains three large natural municipal parks in its vicinity. These include Royal Gorge Park, consisting of eight square miles west of the city and home to the Royal Gorge Bridge Amusement Area, a world renowned tourist attraction; Red Canyon Park, which consists of approximately one square mile north of the city and contains many red sandstone rock formations; and Temple Canyon Park, that is one square mile southwest of the city with historical sites, hiking, and fishing opportunities. The City of Florence maintains the Florence Mountain Park southwest of the city, containing approximately 240 acres; and the Florence River Park east of the city on the south side of the Arkansas River, containing approximately 25 acres.

There are two recreation special districts in Fremont County: the Cañon City Area Recreation and Park District, and the Penrose Park and Recreation District. The Cañon City district maintains approximately seven miles of trails along the Arkansas River, commonly known as the Arkansas River Walk, which begins in the County west of Cañon City, travels through the City and ends in the County east of the City. The River Walk has multiple-use trails, a ropes course, and provides fishing access to the river. The Cañon City District also maintains a portion of the approximately 160-acre Pathfinder Park, located south of the Arkansas River and north of Colorado State Highway 115 between Cañon City and Florence; and Rouse Park, which consists of fourteen acres located southeast of Cañon City. Both contain open space and recreational fields. The Penrose district maintains an eight-acre neighborhood park just to the north of the town area that contains recreational fields and open space.

The Holcim U.S. Corporation owns and maintains the Holcim Recreation Area. The Recreation Area contains 49 acres and is open to the public. The area is located south of the Arkansas River and north of Colorado State Highway 120 just west of Holcim's Portland Cement Plant.

There are several government-sponsored programs and/or independent organizations that have conservation easements in the County. These easements have varying themes, including for agricultural preservation, open space, wildlife habitat etcetera.

At least three nationally recognized bicycle and hiking tour routes pass through Fremont County: the American Discovery Trail's southern leg, the Trans-America Trail Bicycle Route, and the Western Express Bicycle Route. These routes are a conglomeration of Federal, State and local roads in combination with regional and local trails.

## Goal

*Ensure that adequate parks, recreational facilities, and open space are provided throughout the County for resident and visitor recreational opportunities, while maintaining the rural character of the County.*

## Objectives

**K1.** With the potential future of a recreation- and tourism-enhanced economy in the area, it is important that the County not only maintain the existing opportunities, but look to enhance and expand them as well.

### ➔ Strategies

**K1.1** Consider development of a "County-Wide" Open Space, Parks and Trails Plan in order to maintain, enhance and expand existing resources, while exploring opportunities for new resources.

**K1.2** Partner with government agencies, municipalities, and recreation districts that control lands that would preserve, enhance or expand these valuable resources.

**K1.3** Consider partnerships with private groups and organizations that have interests in lands that would preserve, enhance, or expand these valuable resources.

**K1.4** Develop better communication and coordination between the public and private sector authorities that control and manage the open spaces, historic sites, and recreational lands in the County.

**K1.5** Support more development of the Brush Hollow State Wildlife Area, particularly the reservoir, as a recreation area.

**K2.** The County should look to develop new open space, park, and trail resources.

**K2.1** Seek partnerships with government agencies, local municipalities, local recreation districts, and private groups and organizations to acquire lands that would preserve open space, historical places, and add to the growing trail systems in the County.

- K2.2** Encourage donation of lands or payment in lieu of land when considering development applications in the County to benefit open spaces, historic sites, and recreational uses.
- K2.3** Encourage preservation of lands through government agencies and/or private groups that promote conservation easements.
- K2.4** Require new roadway rights-of-way to include areas for walking trails and bicycle paths.
- K2.5** Consider designing floodplains and areas of geological hazard as open-space areas, wildlife habitat, and recreation areas; and protect lands and resources that are not conducive to development.
- K2.6** Encourage multiple-use trails along the Arkansas River and its tributaries.
- K2.7** Encourage obtaining public access to public lands.
- K2.8** Consider establishing a fund to maintain existing resources and acquire and develop resources.
- K2.9** Encourage development of new reservoirs to conserve water and provide new wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities.

**K3.** The County will encourage land-planning techniques that protect open spaces, historic sites, and recreational areas.

- K3.1** Encourage the use of planned unit development regulations and transferable development rights to preserve open spaces, historic sites, and recreational areas.
- K3.2** Encourage “in fill” development to preserve open spaces, historic sites, and recreational areas.
- K3.3** Discourage zone changes from large acreage minimum-parcel-zone districts to small acreage minimum-parcel-zone districts, except for “in fill” development or to meet a definable neighborhood need.
- K3.4** Discourage development applications without adequate impact mitigation plans, to mitigate negative impacts to wildlife habitats, historic sites, and recreational areas.
- K3.5** Encourage buffering by separation distance and/or screening for development to mitigate negative impacts to existing uses in the neighborhood.

- K3.6** Encourage the use of “building envelopes” for development in sensitive areas to mitigate impacts.
- K3.7** Encourage short terms for developments with a definable life to limit the duration of the development’s impacts.
- K3.8** Encourage development reclamation plans to create wildlife habitat and/or recreational areas as final uses.

## Chapter 4, Category L

### L. Solid Waste

#### ***Community and Environmental Impact:***

Solid waste disposal can be considered a part of the services provided in a community. Because of the special impacts this service may have on the community and the environment, and because of the past problems Fremont County has experienced with the disposal of solid waste, specific goals and objectives are needed to address these problems.

#### **Goal**

*The County will encourage the proper disposal and recycling of solid waste to limit impacts to the environment.*

*The County will make efforts to ensure that solid waste needs of the residents and commercial developments are met now and in the future.*

*The County will encourage the private sector to address the solid waste needs and recycling programs of the County.*

#### **Objectives**

- L1.** Ensure that solid waste disposal facilities are operated to meet the needs of the community and limit the environmental impacts during operation and after closure.

#### **➔ Strategies**

- L1.1** Require approval of a development application prior to the development of a final or interim solid waste disposal facility.
- L1.2** Require a final reclamation plan and encourage staged reclamation for all solid waste disposal facilities.
- L1.3** Discourage development of a solid waste disposal facility in sensitive areas, such as scenic vistas, flood plains, geologic hazard areas, historic sites, wildlife habitats, and recreational areas.
- L1.4** Require proof of compliance with all Federal, State and local regulations applicable to the development and operation of solid waste disposal facilities.
- L1.5** Encourage buffering by separation distance and/or screening for all solid waste disposal facilities.

**L1.6** Require periodic compliance reports to be provided by solid waste disposal facilities.

**L1.7** Discourage all solid waste disposal facilities from polluting.

**L1.8** Discourage illegal disposal of wastes in the County.

**L2.** Encourage recycling programs to reduce solid waste and preserve resources.

**L2.1** Encourage public education on the values, methods, and techniques for recycling, resource recovery, and waste reduction.

**L2.2** Consider partnering with government agencies, local municipalities, and the private sector to encourage recycling programs.

**L2.3** Encourage solid waste facilities to promote recycling programs.

**L3.** Limit the impacts of hazardous and special wastes.

**L3.1** Cooperate with State and Federal agencies and local municipalities to ensure that hazardous and special wastes generated within the County are properly recycled, neutralized, or disposed of at authorized facilities.

**L3.2** Require solid waste facility plans, sites, and operations to prevent air, water, and noise pollution, and have contingency plans to handle the impacts of hazardous and special wastes.

## Chapter 4, Category M

### M. Stormwater Drainage

#### ***Drainage Impact:***

Stormwater drainage is a concern to the residents of Fremont County due to volumes, velocity, and quality of the water generated during a storm. The major drainage basin of the Arkansas River and its tributaries, in combination with steep slopes and soil conditions, make for potentially severe flash flooding during storm events. Flooding can create serious destruction of man-made improvements, costing both property owners and taxpayers financial loss, disruption of commerce and services, and the potential for loss of human life. Alteration of natural wildlife habitat also can occur during flood events, potentially altering ecosystems, and causing loss of animal life. Non-point pollution of stormwater affects water quality in underground aquifers, water supply systems, and ecosystems--not only in Fremont County but also in downstream regions. The County has entered into an agreement with the City of Cañon City for the City to review applications for development in the City's Water Source Protection Area.



Badger Creek flood at the confluence with the Arkansas River 7/9/04 photos by Justin Foster.

### Goal

*Minimize damage caused by storm events.*

### Objectives

- M1.** Encourage the development of strategies that will reduce stormwater impacts to existing man-made improvements and amenities.

#### ➔ **Strategies**

- M1.1** Partner with Federal and State agencies, and local municipalities to provide stormwater mitigation alternatives in developed areas.
- M1.2** Consider stormwater drainage impacts, including water quality, when reviewing all applications for development; and require mitigation plans to address the impacts.

- M1.3** Consider the development of a county wide stormwater drainage program to provide guidance for new development and mitigation for existing development.
- M1.4** Consider drainage impact fees and improvement districts to address mitigation of neighborhood drainage issues.
- M1.5** Encourage maintenance and improvement of existing stormwater drainage facilities.
- M1.6** Consider incentive programs for existing developments to mitigate stormwater drainage issues.
- M1.7** Discourage development in areas that are susceptible to flooding.
- M1.8** Discourage individual onsite stormwater detention and encourage regional channelization and detention plans, in order to decrease the amount of land dedicated to detention, and to reduce maintenance issues of onsite detention facilities.
- M1.9** Encourage development of drainage facilities that preserve and positively impact culturally and historically significant areas.
- M1.10** Encourage existing agricultural operations to address stormwater drainage issues and neighborhood impacts, and to implement mitigation plans.

**M2.** Encourage new development to limit the impact of stormwater drainage.

- M2.1** Consider stormwater drainage impacts, including water quality, when reviewing all applications for development; and require drainage and mitigation plans to address the anticipated impacts.
- M2.2** Encourage addressing stormwater drainage impacts on a regional basis.
- M2.3** Encourage multiple uses of land that address the needs of a neighborhood, such as drainage facilities that also could be used as a recreational area.
- M2.3** Discourage development that proposes improvements in areas that are susceptible to flooding.
- M2.4** Encourage development of drainage facilities with positive impacts on wildlife habitats and natural areas.
- M2.5** Coordinate stormwater drainage plans with park and open space plans in the region, to ensure proper and regionally beneficial utilization of lands in potentially affected areas.

**M2.6** Enforce stormwater drainage regulations regarding volumes and quality associated with new residential, agricultural, and commercial development.

**M2.7** Assure that stormwater quality and drainage control are addressed in the Fremont County Flood Damage Prevention Resolution; Subdivision Regulations and Building Codes consistent with Colorado Revised Statutes; regulations of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment; and the Federal “Clean Water Act”.

**M3.** Encourage water source protection for domestic water systems.

**M3.1** Consider stormwater drainage impacts, including water quality, when reviewing all applications for development; and require drainage and mitigation plans to address the anticipated impacts.

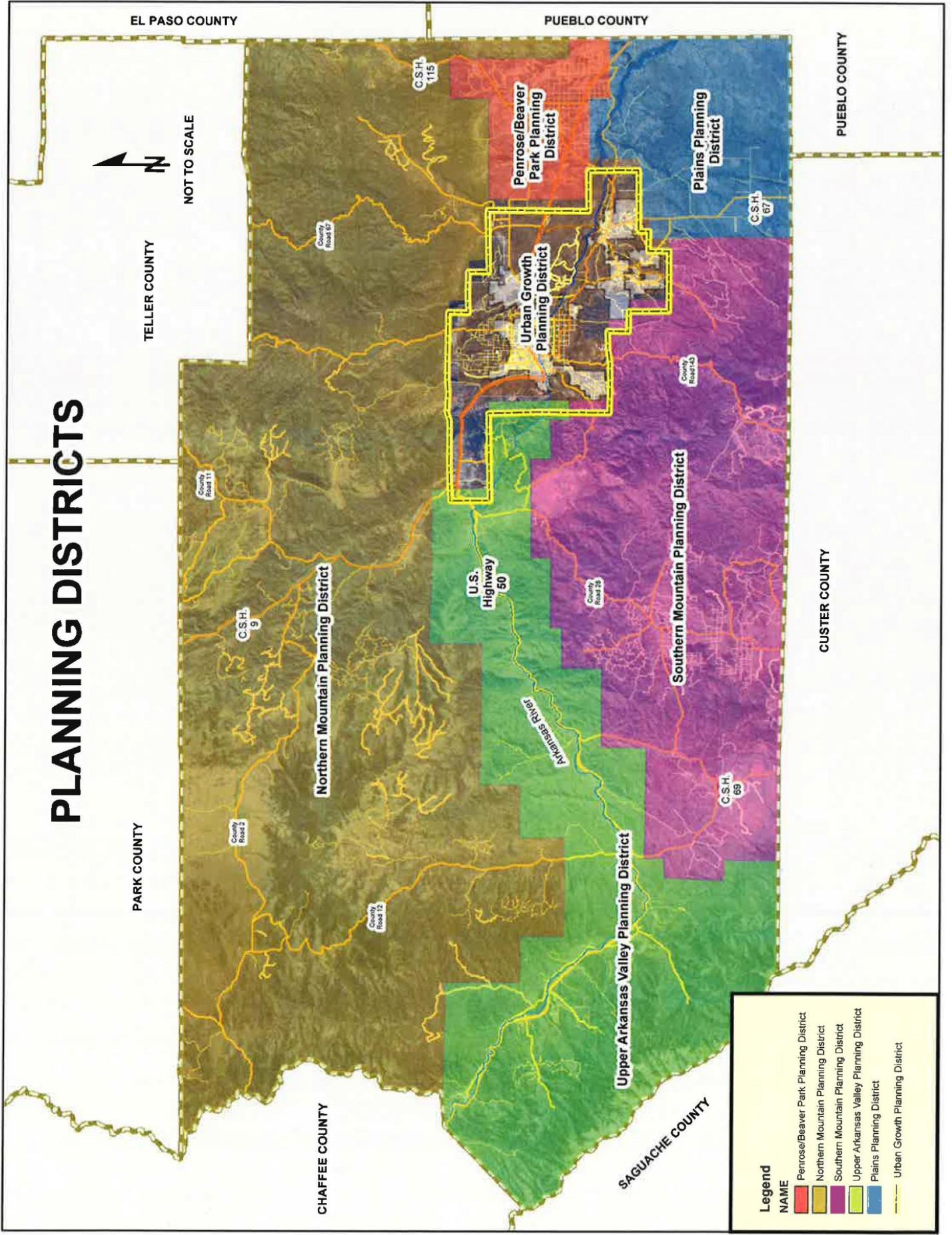
**M3.2** Encourage agreements with water suppliers to insure stormwater drainage review of developments within their water source areas.

**M3.3** Consider water source protection when development proposes to use individual sewage disposal systems.

**M3.4** Consider water source protection when large agricultural development is proposed.

**M3.5** Consider water source protection when commercial/industrial/mining development is proposed.

# PLANNING DISTRICTS



**Legend**

NAME	Color
Penrose/Beaver Park Planning District	Red
Northern Mountain Planning District	Brown
Southern Mountain Planning District	Purple
Upper Arkansas Valley Planning District	Green
Plains Planning District	Blue
Urban Growth Planning District	Yellow outline

## Chapter 5 - Planning Districts

### How this Chapter is Organized

This chapter is broken up into six Planning Districts or categories (A-F), titled as follows:

- ➔ A. District One ----- The Urban Growth District
- ➔ B. District Two ----- The Penrose/Beaver Park District
- ➔ C. District Three ----- The Northern Mountain District
- ➔ D. District Four ----- The Southern Mountain District
- ➔ E. District Five ----- The Upper Arkansas Valley District
- ➔ F. District Six----- The Plains District

These districts were formed based on neighborhood, land use, service availability, municipal boundaries, natural features, cultural characteristics, and geography.

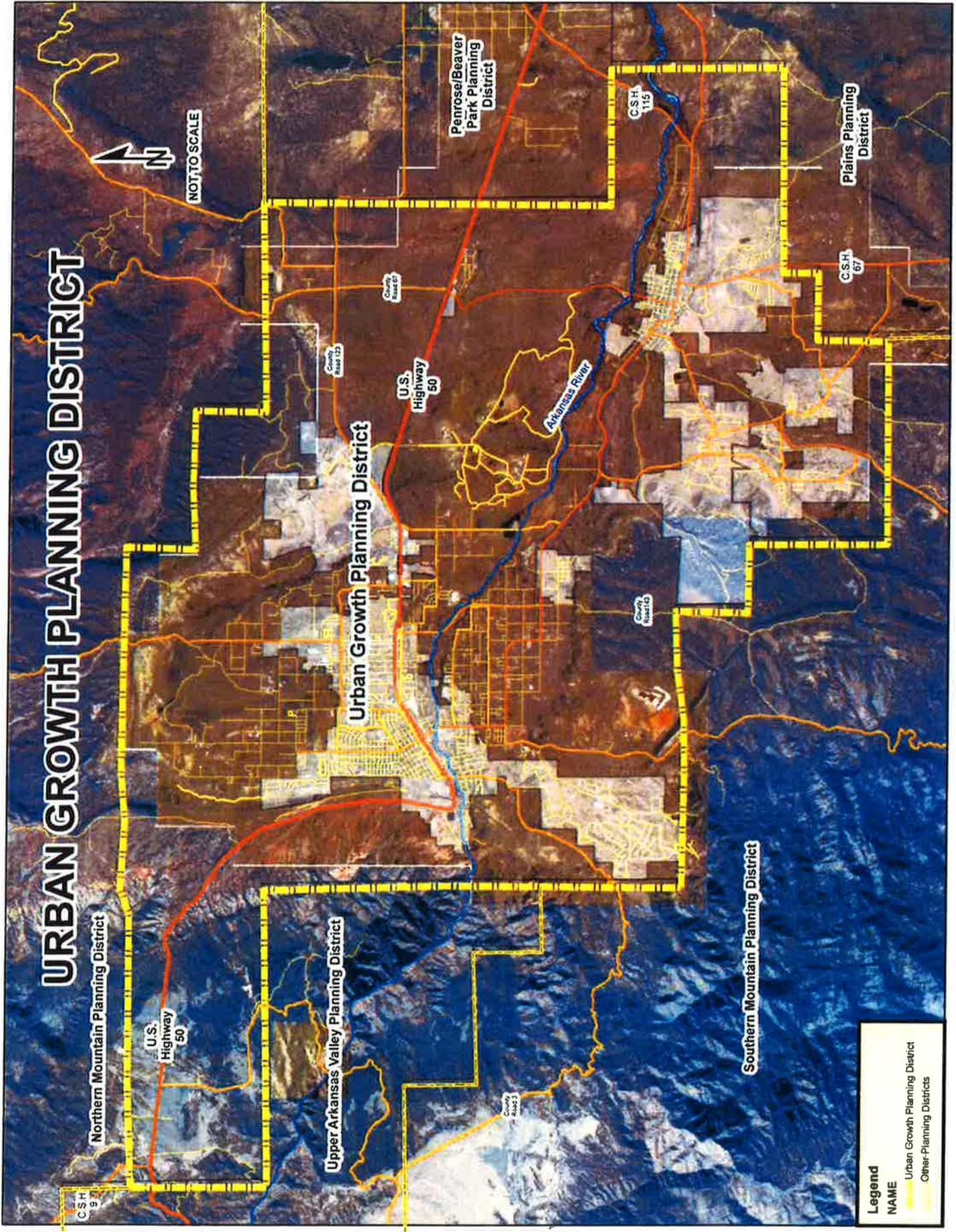
Each category has a short narrative about the district that includes a general description of the district, highlighting location in relation to the other districts, geography of the district, land uses contained in the district, and services available in the district. Following the narrative there will be a list of objectives for the district with strategies to achieve the objective, then a list of general strategies for the district. These objectives and strategies will provide guidelines for review of land use applications in the district and considerations for general planning tactics that could be used in the district.

Each category (district) of the chapter has been assigned an alpha designation; the objectives are given a numerical designation in addition to the alpha; and the strategies would have the alpha and numerical designation followed by a period and another numerical designation. As an example: C would designate the third category; C1 would designate the third category, first objective; C1.1 would designate the third category, first objective, first strategy. General strategies are listed with the alpha designation for the category; the letters GS for general strategy followed by a numerical designation (CGS1 would designate the first general strategy for category C).

These districts are not listed by priority or importance nor are the objective and strategies for each district.

For planning review purposes, if an individual property is located where it lies in more than one district, the district where the majority of the property is located will be used as the district for review. The exception would be when the lesser portion of the property is located in a highly sensitive area, and which only is addressed in the district where that portion of the property is located. Then the district containing the lesser portion would be used for planning reviews.

# URBAN GROWTH PLANNING DISTRICT



NOT TO SCALE

**Legend**

NAME	Color
Urban Growth Planning District	Yellow
Other Planning Districts	White

## Chapter 5, Category A

### A. District One: The Urban Growth District

#### Description

##### ***Location:***

The Urban Growth District includes the non-incorporated areas around the County's incorporated municipalities of Cañon City and Florence. The Urban Growth District has been enlarged from the previous Master Plan due to changes in the "Urban Growth Boundary" for Cañon City and Florence, as well as the need to address urban issues around some of the smaller towns that previously were not included in the District. Urban Growth Boundary is a land-use tool governed by Colorado law that allows designated areas to be influenced by the municipality that has designated the area. The changes in the Cañon City Urban Growth Boundary were significant to the west along the U.S. Highway 50 corridor and eliminated the need for the Royal Gorge Impact Planning District from the previous Master Plan document. The Florence Urban Growth Boundary has expanded north along the State Highway 67 corridor to and including its intersection with U.S. Highway 50 in the area of the Fremont County Airport.

##### ***Geography:***

The terrain around Cañon City forms a canyon or bowl within which the incorporated City lies. Topography in the area gently slopes toward the Arkansas River from the north and steeply slopes with plateaus from the south toward the River.

The area of the District surrounding Florence is characterized by relatively flat terrain that gently slopes toward the Arkansas River, with occasional rock outcroppings and buttes which punctuate the horizon.

The area of the District surrounding the Towns of Williamsburg, Coal Creek, Rockvale, and Brookside has a terrain that generally can be described as a gently sloping plateau from south to north with open views to the north and foothills to the south.

The Arkansas River and U.S. Highway 50 bisect a good portion of the District from west to east midway from north to south.

##### ***Land Use:***

The area of the District surrounding Cañon City generally can be described as residential areas with a rural atmosphere, established businesses mainly along the U.S. Highway 50 and State Highway 115 corridors that service residential neighborhoods, and agricultural land mixed with residential land uses. However, the existing scattered development and inconsistent land use creates a lack of continuity within the District in general. For the most part this situation is a result of pre-regulation development in the area. Land use regulations were first established in the County in 1968 and development has been more consistent since that time.

The area of the District surrounding the Florence area generally has land uses consisting of a few businesses along the State Highway 115 corridor and residential uses combined with hobby and production agricultural uses.

The area of the District surrounding the Towns of Williamsburg, Coal Creek, Rockvale, and Brookside is sparsely developed with primarily residential land uses together with hobby and production agricultural uses.

The District contains the Colorado Department of Corrections East Cañon Complex that consists of six State facilities with varying levels of security. (*Arrowhead Correctional Center, Centennial Correctional Facility, Colorado State Penitentiary, Fremont Correctional Facility, Four Mile Correctional Center, and Skyline Correctional Center [the Colorado Territorial Correctional Facility is located within the corporate limits of Cañon City]*).

The District contains open pit sand and gravel mines and clay mines. Historically open pit and underground coal mines have operated in the District, and a potential for continued operations still exists. A large portion of the “Florence Oil Fields” lies within the District which contains producing oil wells, some closed wells, and exploratory operations. There are two commercial production dairies within the District. Also in the District are the Fremont County Airport, and the Airport Industrial Park that contains a variety of light industrial uses.

The Arkansas River corridor through the District is a part of the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area. The River corridor provides recreational opportunities to residents and visitors alike such as fishing, boating, pleasure hiking, and wildlife viewing. The confluences of Four Mile Creek and Grape Creek with the Arkansas River are located within the District. There is one golf course in the District.

The two larger municipalities contain most of the retail and personal-service providers.

Considering the population of the incorporated municipalities and the urban areas of the County surrounding the municipalities, this District is home to the major populous of the County.

***Services:***

Water is available to most of the District through the two municipal water districts associated with Cañon City and Florence. These two municipal districts have contractual agreements to provide treated water to other municipalities. The Park Center Water District is a Title 32 Colorado Special District that stores, treats and distributes water in an area north of Cañon City. Areas in the Planning District that do not have water service from one of these providers use an onsite water well or cistern when appropriate. Water depth and quality can be of concern when relying on wells. The County has entered into an agreement with the City of Cañon City for the City to review development applications in the City’s Water Source Protection Area.

Sanitary sewer is available to most of the District through the Fremont Sanitation District. Areas where sewer service is not available rely on onsite individual sewage disposal systems to meet sanitation needs.

The District includes areas that can be served by public water and sewer but also areas that, at present, rely on onsite wells and individual sewage disposal systems or a combination of onsite and offsite services.

Fire protection for the District is provided by the Cañon City Area Fire Protection District and the Florence Fire Protection District, both of which are Title 32 Colorado Special Districts. Wildland fires on properties within the Planning District that are not covered by either of the two Fire Districts are the responsibility of the Fremont County Sheriff in accordance with Colorado law. Law enforcement in the unincorporated portions of the District is provided by the Fremont County Sheriff. Public roadway maintenance in the unincorporated portions of the District is performed by the Fremont County Department of Transportation. The Cañon City Area Metropolitan Recreation and Park District maintains the Arkansas River Walk that extends through the corporate limits of Cañon City and into the unincorporated area of Fremont County. In conjunction with Fremont County it also maintains Pathfinder Park, which is a large regional park between Cañon City and Florence. Both Cañon City and Florence have libraries that serve residents that live in the incorporated municipalities and those that live in the other urban areas of the District.

## Objectives

- A1. Encourage cooperation with all municipalities concerning land-use issues in the planning district.

### ➔ Strategies

- A1.1** Encourage input from the appropriate municipality(s) on development applications in the Urban Growth Boundary and/or when the development is proposed near the corporate limits.
- A1.2** Consider entering into “intergovernmental agreements” or “memorandums of understanding” with municipalities regarding land-use issues within their Urban Growth Boundary or within a definable distance from the corporate limits.
- A1.3** Consider adoption of land-use regulations to address specific issues related to the District.
- A1.4** Consider forming a planning committee for the District with representation from each municipality to provide recommendations on development applications.
- A1.5** Consider working with each municipality to create an annexation plan to help direct developers when planning projects are to be located near a municipality’s corporate limits.
- A1.6** Consider working with each municipality to create a transportation plan for the District to benefit all entities involved.

- A1.7** Encourage water source protection for domestic water systems within the District.
- A2.** Encourage preservation of limited highly productive agricultural lands in the District.

  - A2.1** Encourage the use of planning techniques such as planned unit development to preserve such lands.
  - A2.2** Consider creation of a Transfer of Development Rights program for the District where developers could purchase development rights from an agricultural land owner.
  - A2.3** Encourage cooperation and/or partnerships with landowners, governmental and private entities, with the goal of creating conservation easements or other methods to preserve agricultural lands.
  - A2.4** Encourage agricultural water to remain in agricultural use and development of new agricultural water rights.
  - A2.5** Encourage new developments to be compatible with existing agricultural uses.
  - A2.6** Discourage new development in fertile agricultural areas.
  - A2.7** Encourage noxious weed mitigation.
- A3.** Protect the integrity of existing infrastructure of the District and maximize benefits from expenditures for upgrades and improvements to infrastructure.

  - A3.1** Encourage infill development and discourage “leapfrog” development.
  - A3.2** Consider the creation of an infrastructure inventory to help developers locate projects in areas that would have the least burden on the existing infrastructure.
  - A3.3** Encourage input from utility providers when reviewing development applications.
  - A3.4** Consider requiring utility plans or similar documents approved by the utility providers for all development applications.
  - A3.5** Encourage pre-application meetings between developers and the Fremont Department of Transportation and/or Colorado Department of Transportation to determine project requirements for access to development sites.
  - A3.6** Consider requiring traffic studies to help determine access requirements and roadway use volumes generated by the proposed development.

- A3.7** Consider requiring plan and profiles including utility location for any development application that necessitates new road construction or existing roadway improvement.
- A3.8** Consider formation of a planning committee with representatives from utility providers, municipalities, and Departments of Transportation to provide input regarding development applications, and to hold pre-application meetings with applicants.
- A3.9** Consider requiring the developer to incur all costs associated with infrastructure improvements for the proposed development.
- A3.10** Encourage all utility providers to have a reimbursement program to help developers recoup expenditures for infrastructure installation and/or improvement.
- A3.11** Consider formation of local improvement districts to pay for new infrastructure or improvements to infrastructure that benefit the entire neighborhood.

**A4.** Encourage a variety of quality housing options to be developed in the District.

- A4.1** Encourage development on a variety of lot sizes.
- A4.2** Encourage developments on minimum lot sizes only where there is access to public water and public sewer services.
- A4.3** Encourage the use of planning techniques such as planned unit development to provide minimum use of land for developments.
- A4.4** Encourage all housing to be constructed to the standards of the Fremont County Building Code.
- A4.5** Encourage soil testing and engineered foundation designs for construction in the District.
- A4.6** Encourage a variety of housing types within the District, both inside and outside the municipal urban growth boundaries, including single family large lot, and single family small lot, multi-family housing, townhouse, condominium, and manufactured housing developments.
- A4.7** Densities may be increased relative to the surrounding density only if the change in the overall appearance and character does not negatively impact the surrounding area

- A4.8** Consider cooperation and/or partnerships with landowners, government, and private entities to provide housing opportunities that are essential to residents of the County.
- A5.** Concentrate commercial development in existing commercial use areas to save on infrastructure costs and gain the benefit of centrally located commercial uses.
- A5.1** Encourage the use of planning techniques such as planned unit development to provide multi-use commercial development.
- A5.2** Encourage multi-use commercial development to conserve land; ~~and~~ limit development maintenance of roadways, parking areas, and driveway accesses; and to reduce drainage impacts.
- A5.3** Encourage the use of planning procedures such as planned unit development to allow multi-use commercial in combination with multi-family residential developments.
- A5.4** Encourage infill development and discourage “leapfrog” development.
- A5.5** Discourage commercial development of properties along the highway corridors if the highway frontage is not essential to the success of the development.
- A5.6** Encourage small scale, multi-use commercial developments in residential areas when the main purpose of the development is to provide convenient service to area residents.
- A5.7** The architectural and landscaping design of the neighborhood commercial development should be compatible with surrounding residential uses.
- A5.8** New development should minimize the number of accesses onto adjacent streets. When conditions warrant, methods such as curb cuts shared with adjacent properties should be encouraged.
- A6.** Protect the Arkansas River corridor through the District--its water quality, wildlife habitat, recreational value, and visual resources.
- A6.1** Consider impacts to the river corridor when reviewing development applications.
- A6.2** Encourage input regarding water quality impacts from the appropriate State and Federal Agencies during review of proposed development applications.
- A6.3** Consider requiring stormwater drainage studies for all proposed development applications.

- A6.4** Encourage input from the appropriate State and Federal Agencies when considering impacts to wildlife habitat, recreational value, and visual resources in the river corridor.
- A6.5** Discourage any type of residential or commercial development to occur within the flood hazard areas of the river corridor.
- A6.6** Encourage further extensions of the “Arkansas River Walk” park through the corridor and multi-use trail development along its tributaries and drainages.
- A6.7** Any development adjacent to the Arkansas River should provide and dedicate trails, open space, and parks improvements.

**A7.** Ensure land-use compatibility between mining and other land uses.

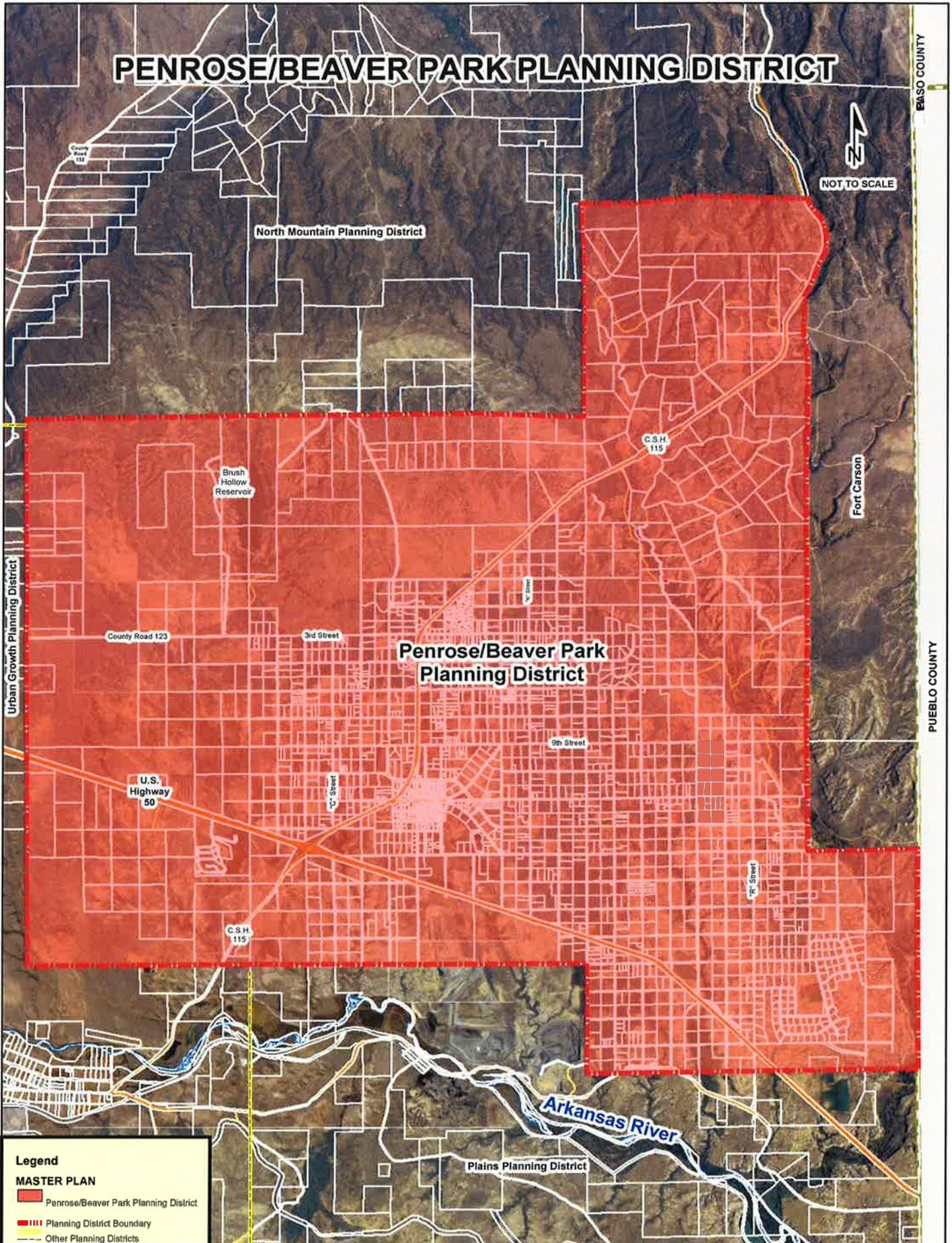
- A7.1** Consider mining plans and reclamation plans.
- A7.2** Encourage mining operations to be short-term.
- A7.3** Consider hours and days of operation for mines.
- A7.4** Consider method of product transportation, haul routes, haul times, hauling equipment, and number of haul trips.
- A7.5** Encourage mine reclamation plans to result in a benefit to County residents and landowners.
- A7.6** Encourage visual screening of mines and load out operations.
- A7.7** Encourage security measures during the life of the operation.
- A7.8** Discourage mining operations from creating pollution.
- A7.9** Consider downstream impacts when the site is located in a watershed.
- A7.10** Consider noise impacts.
- A7.11** Discourage development in areas with a potential for mine subsidence.
- A7.12** Encourage mine subsidence mitigation.
- A7.13** Encourage mining techniques that would prevent mine subsidence.
- A7.14** Encourage low impact mining techniques.
- A7.15** Encourage noxious weed mitigation plans.

## General Strategies

- AGS1** Be sensitive to visual impacts and consider requiring visual impact studies that include mitigation plans for all proposed development applications in the District.
- AGS2** Consider adoption of signage regulations to limit visual impacts to the District.
- AGS3** Encourage input from recreation districts and entities with similar interests when reviewing development applications.
- AGS4** Encourage cooperation and/or partnerships with landowners, government, and private entities with the goal of developing a District-wide open space and public multi-use trail system plan.
- AGS5** Consider requiring dedication of land or granting of easements that benefit the expansion of the public multi-use trail system when reviewing a development application.
- AGS6** When developments are proposed in the vicinity of the East Cañon Correctional Complex, request input from the Colorado Department of Corrections as to compatibility of the proposed use with the Complex, and mitigation strategies.
- AGS7** Consider collaboration with the Federal Bureau of Prisons to develop specific land-use strategies for developments proposed to occur in the vicinity of the Florence Federal Correctional Complex.
- AGS8** Consider collaboration with the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area administration to develop specific land-use strategies for developments proposed to occur in the vicinity of the Arkansas River corridor.
- AGS9** When development is proposed to locate in the vicinity of the Fremont County Airport, request input from the Fremont County Airport Advisory Board regarding compatibility of the proposed use with the airport, and mitigation.
- AGS10** Consider collaboration with local municipalities, State and Federal agencies to develop specific land-use strategies for developments proposed in the vicinity of the Fremont County Airport.
- AGS11** Consider requiring fire protection plans for all development applications.
- AGS12** Consider collaboration with local, State and Federal entities to prepare fire protection strategies and mitigation plans to limit the potential for urban/wildland interface fires.

- AGS13** Consider requiring traffic studies that address types of vehicles, potential roadway wear, number of trips per day, and times of heavy traffic generation, for all development applications.
- AGS14** Consider requiring stormwater drainage studies that address historic volumes, volumes after development, velocity, water quality, and mitigation plans for all development applications.
- AGS15** Consider requesting input from local, State, Federal agencies, and private entities regarding historical, natural, and/or cultural features on properties proposed for development in order to preserve significant features or to provide suitable mitigation techniques.
- AGS16** Consider collaboration with local, State, Federal agencies, and private entities to determine the location of significant historical, natural, and/or cultural features, and prepare a strategy for preservation of such features and suggestion for mitigation when appropriate.
- AGS17** Consider requesting input from local, State, Federal agencies, and private entities regarding critical wildlife habitat and sensitive ecological areas on properties proposed for development, to preserve significant features or to provide suitable mitigation techniques.
- AGS18** Consider collaboration with local, State, Federal agencies, and private entities to determine the location of critical wildlife habitat and sensitive ecological areas, and prepare a strategy for preservation of such features and mitigation when appropriate.
- AGS19** Consideration should be given to the rural character of the District; and proposed development should conform to the rural character as much as possible.
- AGS20** Consider requiring development plans to address all potential exterior issues such as access, visual impacts, drainage, and slopes, during property development.

# PENROSE/BEAVER PARK PLANNING DISTRICT



**Legend**

**MASTER PLAN**

- Penrose/Beaver Park Planning District
- Planning District Boundary
- Other Planning Districts

EADS COUNTY

PUEBLO COUNTY

## Chapter 5, Category B

### B. District Two: The Penrose/Beaver Park District

#### Description

##### ***Location:***

The Penrose/Beaver Park District is located in the eastern portion of Fremont County and is the eastern entryway to the County. The unincorporated community is bisected by U.S. Highway 50 from east to west and by Colorado State Highway 115 from north to south.

##### ***Geography:***

The Penrose/Beaver Park District primarily consists of approximately 69,000 acres platted in the early 1900s by the Beaver Land and Irrigation Company. The original average platted lot size was 9.25 acres. It was platted in an aliquot grid with fifty-foot-wide dedicated roadways around each forty acres (*four ten-acre lots minus the roadways = 9.25+/- acres per lot*). While many of the original lots still are intact, many have been subdivided; and the overall density of the area is approximately 4.5 acres per lot.

Included in this District is the platted Town of Penrose, located centrally on the Beaver Park Plats and platted at typical town-site densities for the era. The area generally is made up of relatively flat terrain, gently sloping to the south and east. This creates expansive views of the Wet Mountains to the south, together with views to the southwest toward Florence and west toward Cañon City with mountain silhouettes. Natural vegetation in the area is a mix of Piñon and Juniper trees and prairie grasslands. The Beaver Creek Valley crosses the northeastern portion of the District; and the Brush Hollow State Wildlife area is in the northwestern portion of the District. Much of the District surrounding the platted area consists of parcels that are 35 acres or more in size. An undeveloped portion of the Fort Carson Military Reservation is located northeasterly of the District and serves as a buffer area between the District and military training operations.

##### ***Land Use:***

The District primarily contains residential uses with hobby and production agricultural uses. The area is famous for its apple orchards and has seen a rise in cultivation of vineyards over the last decade. The Town of Penrose was intended to be the commercial hub of the rural residential and agricultural lots platted around it. The town area does function as the commercial hub of the community and contains the local public school. Business uses are scattered along the U.S. Highway 50 and State Highway 115 corridors. Also located within the District is a model rocket factory, a hot spring recreation area, and a large limestone-shale quarry that extends south of the District. The area serves as a bedroom community for many El Paso and Pueblo County commuters who enjoy living in the rural atmosphere of the area. The District has a potential for more development with further improvement of the residential water system and the successful advancement of a viable sewage management strategy.

### ***Services:***

Residential-use water is available from the Penrose Water District to most of the platted Penrose/Beaver Park area. Irrigation water for agricultural uses is available in most of the area from the Beaver Park Water Company. In areas of the District that are not served by these two entities, water is available through onsite water wells.

Sanitary sewer service currently is not available in the District except in the eastern portion of the town area which is within the Penrose Sanitation District. This sewage-treatment system is an open, aerated lagoon with limited capacity. The remainder of the District uses septic systems or other types of onsite sewage-disposal systems. Due to the fractured shale table throughout most of the platted portion of the District, septic systems are potential pollutants.

Fire protection for the District is provided by the Penrose Fire Department, which is part of the Florence Fire District. Law enforcement is provided by the Fremont County Sheriff. Public roadway maintenance is supplied by the Fremont County Department of Transportation for County Roads and by the Colorado Department of Transportation for State and Federal Highways. The Penrose Park and Recreation District maintains a public park near the platted town site; and the Penrose Community Library District provides service to area residents.

## **Objectives**

**B1.** Maintain the rural atmosphere of the District.

### **➔ Strategies**

- B1.1** For development with lot sizes less than 4.5 acres, encourage locating near and around the town site.
- B1.2** Encourage development of new agricultural ventures in the District.
- B1.3** Encourage commercial development to be centrally located rather than scattered throughout the District.
- B1.4** Encourage the use of planning techniques such as planned unit development to preserve agricultural lands and open spaces.
- B1.5** Discourage further subdivision of properties without access to a public water supply.
- B1.6** Consider adoption of signage regulations to limit visual impacts to the District.
- B1.7** Encourage cooperation and/or partnerships with landowners, government and private entities to create conservation easements or other means to preserve agricultural lands and open spaces.

- B1.8** Encourage agricultural water to remain in agricultural use and development of new agricultural water rights.
- B1.9** Require development plans for proposed commercial developments and encourage those plans to be compatible with the rural nature of the District.
- B1.10** Encourage use of the land in farming and orchard operations, to utilize the available irrigation rights.
- B1.11** Consider land-use compatibility issues when reviewing any application for development to plan for short - and long-term impacts of the proposed use on the neighborhood.

**B2.** Concentrate commercial development in areas that already have commercial uses established.

- B2.1** Encourage development of the platted Town of Penrose into a commercial hub for the District.
- B2.2** Discourage commercial development of properties that are not adjacent to existing commercial use properties.
- B2.3** Discourage commercial development of properties along the highway corridors when the highway frontage is not essential to the success of the development.
- B2.4** Encourage multi-use commercial development to conserve land, limit development and maintenance of roadways and parking areas, and reduce drainage impacts.
- B2.5** Encourage the use of planning techniques such as planned unit development to allow multi-use commercial development in combination with multi-family residential uses.
- B2.6** Consider implementing development design criteria and guidelines for highway commercial development.

**B3.** Develop a sewage-disposal strategy for the area.

- B3.1** Encourage all new development to have lot sizes large enough to address sewage-disposal needs without impacting the neighborhood or the environment.
- B3.2** Encourage cooperation and or partnerships with other government and/or private entities to study the area and develop a long-range strategy to address sewage disposal for the area.

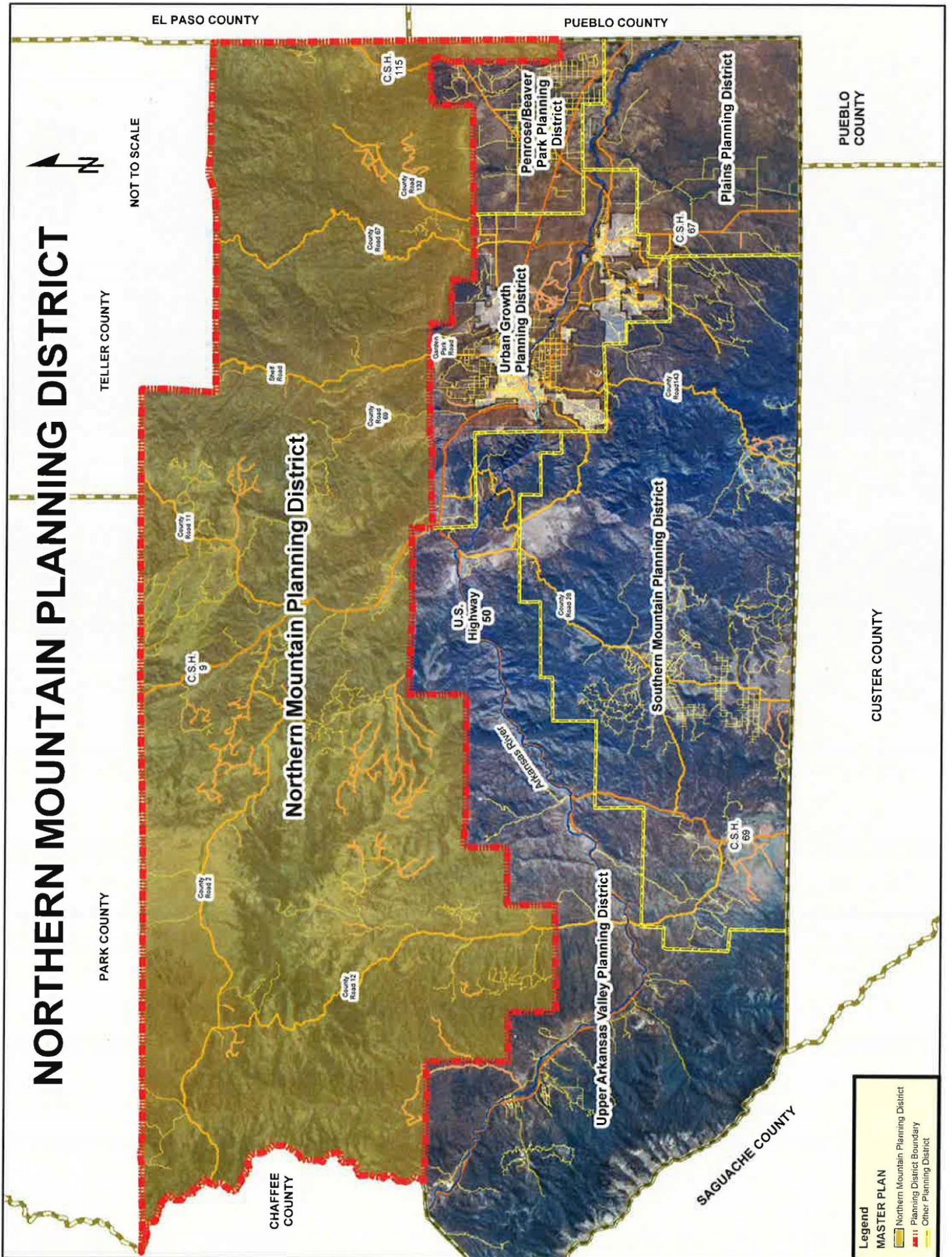
**B4.** Develop potential recreational resources of the Brush Hollow State Wildlife Area.

- B4.1** Encourage Colorado Parks and Wildlife to maintain the Brush Hollow Reservoir to provide the uses generally associated with a body of water of its size.
- B4.2** Encourage maintenance of the water levels of Brush Hollow Reservoir that are conducive to an aquatic wildlife habitat and recreation area.
- B4.3** Encourage cooperation and/or partnerships with other government and/or private entities to study the area and develop a long-range strategy to address maintenance and development of the area for the benefit of all users.
- B4.4** Consider potential impacts to the recreational resources of the Wildlife Area when reviewing development applications.

### General Strategies

- BGS1** Consider development of a “Sub-Area Plan” or designation of a special planning area for the District. The plan should consider beneficial land-use guidelines and regulations for the area.
- BGS2** Consider the use of special development techniques, such as Planned Unit Development, Transfer of Development Rights, and/or designated site specific building envelopes to minimize development impacts to environmental and cultural resources.
- BGS3** Encourage the continued growth of specialized service entities such as library and recreation districts, and development of new service entities for particular needs.
- BGS4** Consider the use of improvement districts to address localized needs in specific areas of the District, with input from area residents.

# NORTHERN MOUNTAIN PLANNING DISTRICT



**Legend**

**MASTER PLAN**

- Northern Mountain Planning District
- Planning District Boundary
- Other Planning District

## Chapter 5, Category C

### C. District Three: The Northern Mountain District

#### Description

##### ***Location:***

The Northern Mountain District is bound on the north, west and east by the County line. The District is bound on the south by the Upper Arkansas Valley District, the Urban Growth District and the Penrose/Beaver Park District. Colorado State Highway 9 runs north and south in the middle of the District and Colorado State Highway 115 runs north and south through the eastern portion of the District.

##### ***Geography:***

The Northern Mountain District contains a wide variety of landform vegetation, and other environmental conditions ranging from open mountain meadows to steep wooded mountainsides. The dominant trees are juniper and piñon with ponderosa pines on the slopes. The ground vegetation is similar to flora found in a semi-arid ecosystem. There are development constraints associated with this District including soil types, sufficient water volume in wells, steep slopes, and wildfire hazards. The Badger Creek, Tallahassee Creek, Four Mile Creek and Beaver Creek corridors traverse the District from north to south. This District contains approximately 750 square miles.

##### ***Land Use:***

The Northern Mountain District is a rural district. Approximately one-half of the land in the District is under the administration of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), United States Department of Defense (*Army - Fort Carson Military Base*) or the Colorado State Board of Land Commissioners (SLB), with about one-half of the District lands in private ownership. The BLM, USFS and SLB-controlled lands are multi-use lands, often leased for agricultural, forestry or mining operations. The private ownership in the District includes some working ranches, some hobby ranches, primary residential and/or second homes.

The District has a history involving mineral extraction as with much of the Rocky Mountain region. In most circumstances this has been exploration for minerals with little production. The eastern portion of the District has several open-pit clay, sand and gravel mining operations. There has been an interest in mining uranium deposits existing in the District over the years. There is physical evidence of pre-regulation uranium extraction and exploration. Currently there are active permits for uranium deposit exploration. Some of the District has had timber harvesting operations of varying sizes.

The primary non-agricultural land use will be residential. However, mineral resource areas throughout the State are a matter of State interest. The orderly development, exploration, and extraction of minerals is encouraged by the Colorado General Assembly; and such policy and laws related to mining are binding on counties. Consequently, development of natural resources

shall be the primary land use in those areas where such resources shall be found. Following reclamation of the lands, the affected land shall be put to other beneficial uses as provided herein. See Chapter 4, Category E.

There is minimal public road access throughout the District and many of the roadways and rights-of-way in the District have no public maintenance. Privately-owned properties within the District range in size from approximately two acres up to 35 acres and larger. There are some pre-regulation and some early regulation (1972+) subdivisions in the District. The “Arkansas, Spruce and Indian Mountain” areas of the District contain approximately 360 lots averaging five acres in size. The “Cottonwood River Ranch” area of the District contains approximately 200 platted lots averaging five acres in size.

Most other residential development occurs on properties of 35 acres and larger. The potential for development in the District far exceeds the ability to provide public services. Currently all areas of the District are sparsely developed. The number of 35-acre or larger privately owned properties in the District is not known, since these developments are not required to comply with the County subdivision process. Many of these developments are discovered when deeds are filed in the land records.

The District includes Red Canyon Park owned by the City of Cañon City near the Four Mile Creek corridor. The BLM’s Beaver Creek Wilderness Study Area and High Mesa Grassland Study Area are in the eastern portion of the District. The BLM manages these as wilderness areas until the U.S. Congress decides to include them in the Wilderness program or designate them for other uses. Also located in the District is the Colorado Parks and Wildlife’s (CP&W) Beaver Creek State Wildlife Area, along with adjoining State Trust Lands that are managed by CP&W through a lease agreement. The majority of the “Gold Belt Tour”, a National Backcountry Byway and Colorado Historic and Scenic Byway, is located in this District.

There are no commercial hubs in the District.

***Services:***

The District is served exclusively by onsite wells, cisterns and septic systems. Public access to electric power and telephone service is limited due to terrain and expense to extend service in the rural area. There is limited cell phone service in the District.

Fire protection along the Highway 115 corridor of the District is mainly provided by the Florence Fire Protection District. The “Tallahassee Area” has an independent volunteer group that provides limited fire protection. Law enforcement is provided by the Fremont County Sheriff. Road maintenance for State Highways 9 and 115 is provided by the Colorado Department of Transportation. County road maintenance is provided by the Fremont County Department of Transportation.

## Objectives

**C1.** Preserve the rural atmosphere of the District.

### ➔ Strategies

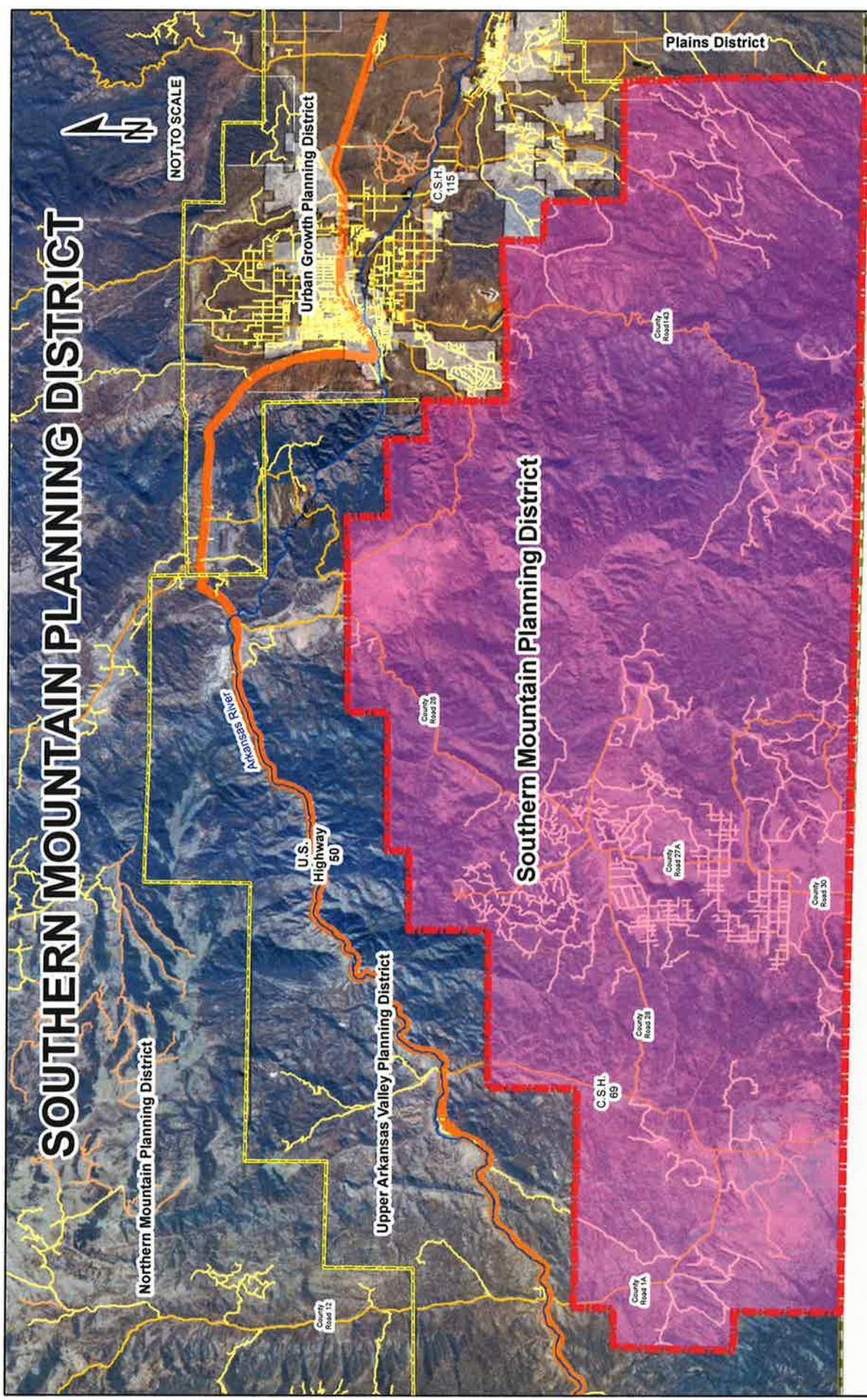
- C1.1** Encourage residential developments in the District to have a minimum lot size of 4½ acres.
- C1.2** Encourage the use of planning techniques such as building envelopes, building height restrictions, and setbacks to protect viewsheds.
- C1.3** Encourage all proposed developments to have a minimal visual impact on the surrounding landscape.
- C1.4** Encourage the use of planning techniques such as planned unit development to disturb the least amount of natural landscape as possible.
- C1.5** Discourage development from locating on excessive slopes and discourage large areas of side slope “cut and fill”.

## General Strategies

- CGS1** Consider requiring visual impact studies that include mitigation plans to accompany all proposed development applications.
- CGS2** Consider adoption of signage regulations to limit visual impacts.
- CGS3** Encourage development of guidelines for minimizing visual impact during and after mineral extraction and mining operations, beyond those established by current State and Federal regulations.
- CGS4** Consider requiring fire protection plans for all development.
- CGS5** Encourage collaboration with local, State, and Federal entities to develop fire protection strategies and mitigation plans to limit the potential for wildland interface fires.
- CGS6** Consider requiring traffic studies that address types of vehicles, potential roadway wear, amount of trips per day, and times of heavy traffic generation.
- CGS7** Encourage input from local, State, Federal agencies, and private entities regarding historical, natural and/or cultural features on properties proposed for development, in order to preserve significant features or to provide suitable mitigation techniques.

- CGS8** Encourage collaboration with local, State, Federal agencies, and private entities to determine location of significant historical, natural and/or cultural features, and prepare a strategy for preservation of such features and mitigation of impacts.
- CGS9** Encourage input from local, State, Federal agencies, and private entities regarding critical wildlife habitat and sensitive ecological areas on properties proposed for development, in order to preserve significant features or to provide suitable mitigation techniques.
- CGS10** Encourage collaboration with local, State, Federal agencies, and private entities to determine the location of critical wildlife habitat and sensitive ecological areas within the District, and prepare a strategy for preservation of such features and mitigation of impacts.
- CGS11** Encourage proposed development to conform to the rural character as much as possible.
- CGS12** Consider requiring development plans to address all potential exterior issues, such as access, visual impacts, drainage, and slopes.
- CGS13** Consider requiring stormwater drainage studies that address historic volumes, volumes after development, velocity, water quality, and mitigation plans for all development applications
- CGS14** Consider collaboration with the Colorado Department of Transportation to develop strategies for County Road and private property access onto Colorado State Highways 9 and 115.
- CGS15** Consider designation of special planning areas for the vicinity around the Beaver Creek and High Mesa Grassland study areas and the Gold Belt Tour region, to protect them from development impacts.
- CGS16** Encourage collaboration and/or partnerships to develop water rights in the District to serve current and proposed development and for fire protection.
- CGS17** Consider development of land-use regulations for mineral extraction to lessen impacts and increase compatibility between the mining and other land uses.
- CGS18** Consider designation of special planning areas for the region with the potential for uranium extraction, to lessen neighborhood impacts and increase land use compatibility.
- CGS19** Encourage collaboration with the United States Department of Defense to develop specific strategies for land-use issues in the vicinity of the Fort Carson Military Reservation.

# SOUTHERN MOUNTAIN PLANNING DISTRICT



CUSTER COUNTY

**Legend**  
**MASTER PLAN**

- Southern Mountain Planning District
- Planning District Boundary
- Other Planning Districts

## Chapter 5, Category D

### D. District Four: The Southern Mountain District

#### Description

##### ***Location:***

The Southern Mountain District is bound on the north and west by the Upper Arkansas Valley District and a portion of the Urban Growth District. The District is bound on the east by the Urban Growth District and the Plains District and on the south by the County line. Colorado State Highway 69 runs north and south through the western portion of the District.

##### ***Geography:***

The Southern Mountain District contains a wide variety of landform, vegetation, and other environmental conditions, ranging from open rolling meadows to steep wooded mountainsides. The dominant trees are juniper and piñon with ponderosa pines on the slopes. The ground vegetation is similar to flora found in a semi-arid ecosystem. There are development constraints associated with this District including soil types, ability to drill wells, adequate access for construction equipment, slopes, and wildfire hazards. The Grape Creek and Texas Creek corridors traverse the District from south to north. This District contains approximately 300 square miles.

##### ***Land Use:***

The Southern Mountain District is a rural district. Approximately one-half of the land in the District is under the administration of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the U. S. Forest Service (USFS) or the Colorado State Board of Land Commissioners (SLB) with about one-half of the District lands in private ownership. The federally and SLB-controlled lands are multi-use lands, often leased for agricultural, forestry or mining operations. The private ownership in the District includes some working ranches, some hobby ranches, primary residential and/or second homes.

The eastern portion of this District has a history involving mineral extraction. There have been several above- and below-ground coal mines. Currently there are no producing coal mines in the District. There are a few mines that are in the process of reclamation. Coal deposits remaining in the area may warrant a resurgence of mining in the future. This portion of the District includes the “Florence Oil Fields”, one of the oldest producing oil and gas areas in the United States. There are active wells, closed wells, and continuing exploration.

There is minimal public road access throughout the District; and many of the roadways and rights-of-way in the District have no public maintenance. Privately-owned properties within the District range in size from two acres up to 35 acres and larger. There are some pre-regulation and some early regulation subdivisions in the District. The “Copper Gulch” area of the District contains approximately 4,350 lots most of which are less than five acres in size (*approximately 3,000 are less than 2½ acres*). The “Oak Creek” area of the District contains approximately 225 platted lots averaging five acres in size. The potential for development in the District far exceeds the ability to provide public services. Currently all areas of the District are sparsely developed. Some of the housing stock is considered substandard due to the time of construction and lack of

stewardship. The quality of residential construction, after the County’s adoption of land use and building regulations, has improved. The number of 35-acre or larger privately owned properties in the District is not known, since these developments are not required to comply with the County subdivision process. Many of these developments are discovered when deeds are filed in the land records.

The District includes Temple Canyon Park owned by the City of Cañon City in the Grape Creek corridor, and the City of Florence’s Florence Mountain Park in the eastern portion of the District. The BLM’s McIntyre Hills Wilderness Study Area and Upper and Lower Grape Creek Wilderness Study Areas are in the District. The BLM manages these as wilderness areas until the U.S. Congress decides to include them in the Wilderness program or designate them for other uses. The USFS’s Oak Creek Campground is located in the eastern portion of the District.

The “Copper Gulch” portion of the District is often referred to as the “Deer Mountain Community”. There is a very limited commercial area near the center of the Community that serves as a hub for the rural area. The “Oak Creek” portion of the District has an extremely limited commercial area that serves as a hub for this portion of the District.

***Services:***

The District is served exclusively by onsite wells, cisterns, and septic systems. Public access to electric power and telephone service is limited due to terrain and expense to extend service in the rural area. There is limited cell phone service in the District.

Fire protection in the Deer Mountain Community is provided by the Deer Mountain Fire Protection District. The Oak Creek area has a small independent volunteer group that provides limited fire protection. Law enforcement is provided by the Fremont County Sheriff. Road maintenance for State Highway 69 is provided by the Colorado Department of Transportation. County road maintenance is provided by the Fremont County Department of Transportation.

## Objectives

**D1.** Preserve the rural atmosphere of the District.

### ➔ Strategies

- D1.1** Encourage residential developments in the District to have a minimum lot size of 4½ acres.
- D1.2** Encourage commercial developments in the District to locate in existing service “hubs”.
- D1.3** Encourage all proposed developments to have a minimal visual impact on the surrounding landscape.

**D1.4** Encourage the use of planning techniques such as planned unit development to disturb the least amount of natural landscape as possible.

**D1.5** Discourage development from locating on excessive slopes and discourage large areas of side slope “cut and fill”.

## General Strategies

**DGS1** Consider requiring visual impact studies that include mitigation plans to accompany all proposed development applications.

**DGS2** Consider adoption of signage regulations to limit visual impacts.

**DGS3** Encourage development of guidelines for minimizing visual impact during and after mineral extraction and mining operations, beyond those established by current State and Federal regulations.

**DGS4** Consider requiring fire protection plans for development.

**DGS5** Encourage collaboration with local, State and Federal entities to develop fire-protection strategies and mitigation plans to limit the potential for wildland interface fires.

**DGS6** Consider requiring traffic studies that address types of vehicles, potential roadway wear, number of trips per day, and times of heavy traffic generation.

**DGS7** Encourage input from local, State, Federal agencies, and private entities regarding historical, natural and/or cultural features on properties proposed for development, in order to preserve significant features or to provide suitable mitigation techniques.

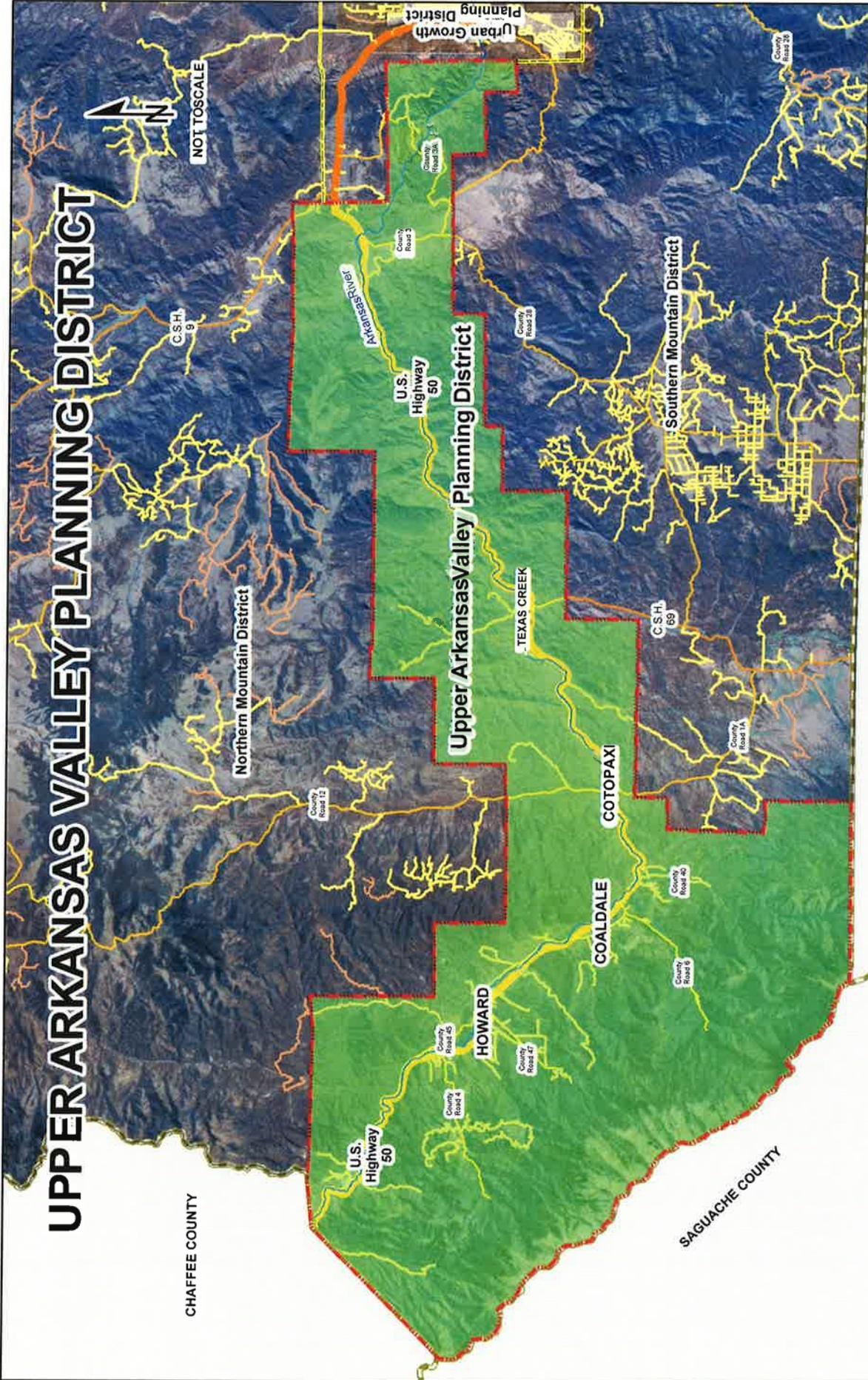
**DGS8** Encourage collaboration with local, State, Federal agencies, and private entities to determine location of significant historical, natural, and/or cultural features, and prepare a strategy for preservation of such features and mitigation of impacts.

**DGS9** Encourage input from local, State, Federal agencies, and private entities regarding critical wildlife habitat and sensitive ecological areas on properties proposed for development, in order to preserve significant features or to provide suitable mitigation techniques.

**DGS10** Encourage collaboration with local, State, Federal agencies, and private entities to determine the location of critical wildlife habitat and sensitive ecological areas within the District, and prepare a strategy for preservation of such features and mitigation of impacts.

- DGS11** Encourage proposed development to conform to the rural character as much as possible.
- DGS12** Consider requiring development plans to address all potential exterior issues, such as access, visual impacts, drainage, and slopes.
- DGS13** Consider requiring stormwater drainage studies that address historic volumes, volumes after development, velocity, and water quality; and require mitigation plans for all development applications
- DGS14** Consider collaboration with the Colorado Department of Transportation to develop strategies for County Road and private-property access onto Colorado State Highway 69.
- DGS15** Consider designation of special planning area for the area centering around the existing community development areas (*service hubs*) to protect the rural atmosphere of the District.
- DGS16** Encourage collaboration and or partnerships to develop water rights in the District to serve current and proposed development and for fire protection.
- DGS17** Consider development of land-use regulations for mineral extraction industry to lessen impacts and increase compatibility between mining and other land uses.

# UPPER ARKANSAS VALLEY PLANNING DISTRICT



CUSTER COUNTY

**Legend**  
**MASTER PLAN**  
 ■ Upper Arkansas Valley Planning District  
 --- Planning District Boundary  
 --- Other Planning Districts

## Chapter 5, Category E

### E. District Five: Upper Arkansas Valley District

#### Description

##### ***Location:***

The Upper Arkansas Valley District follows the Arkansas River corridor west from the Urban Growth District to the Fremont-Chaffee County line. The District is bordered on the north by the Northern Mountain District and on the south by the Southern Mountain District. The District expands to the south to the Fremont-Saguache and Custer County lines and includes the San Isabel National Forest lands--a part of which contains Fremont County's portion of the Sangre De Cristo Wilderness Area. This District includes the Royal Gorge, Parkdale, Texas Creek, Cotopaxi, Coaldale, Howard, Swissvale, and Wellsville.

##### ***Geography:***

In this District is the Royal Gorge (*also known as the Grand Canyon of the Arkansas*). It is approximately ten miles in length and has a depth of 1,250 feet in places with a width in some of the narrowest portions of just over fifty feet. U.S. Highway 50 crosses the Arkansas River from north to south at Parkdale, which is considered to be the western beginning of the Royal Gorge. With U.S. Highway 50 on its south and the right-of-way for the Union Pacific Railroad on its north the Arkansas River corridor travels west to the Fremont-Chaffee County Line. The river canyon is approximately forty miles in length between Parkdale and the western County line.



The River Canyon (*also known as the Bighorn Sheep Canyon*) has very rugged side slopes covered with rock outcroppings, scattered juniper trees, and cactus plants. In areas where the

canyon opens there are sensational views to the south and west of the Sangre De Cristo Mountain Range. The river ecosystem is home to a wide variety of flora, terrestrial, avian, and aquatic species.

The District contains the unincorporated communities of Parkdale, Texas Creek, Cotopaxi, Coaldale, Howard, Wellsville, and Swissvale that have small commercial centers that serve the neighborhood and highway travelers.



### ***Land Uses:***

Approximately two-thirds of the Upper Arkansas Valley District is under the management of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) or the Colorado State Board of Land Commissioners (SLB), with about one-third of the District lands in private ownership. The private ownership in the District includes a few working ranches, some residential properties with “hobby ranches”, second homes on 35-acre properties, and some minimum lot-size properties that contain primary residences. Many of the residents of the District commute outside the District to work and some work or telecommute from home.

The federally controlled lands are multi-use lands, often leased for agricultural, forestry or mining operations. The SLB lands may be leased for similar purposes. BLM lands along the Arkansas River are parts of the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area (AHRA), a Colorado State Park jointly managed by the BLM and the Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife primarily for river recreation opportunities. AHRA manages the recreational use of the Arkansas River throughout the entire County. The USFS’s Hayden Creek Campground is located in the southwestern portion of the District.

There are some mining operations in the District, most of which are not in the viewshed of the river or highway. There is an industrial area near the County line at the community of Wellsville. There are recreational and tourism-oriented businesses along with neighborhood service businesses in the corridor. The Royal Gorge Bridge and Park attraction is located near the east end of the District.

Currently, isolated parcels of commercial development are interspersed with rural residential properties throughout the River corridor from the east end of Coaldale to the west end of Swissvale.

The demand for additional recreation-oriented development along the corridor is impacting the area. A land-use plan for the corridor is needed to preserve the integrity of existing communities and maximize opportunities for businesses, while preserving the scenic resource upon which tourism businesses depend. The U.S. Highway 50-Arkansas River corridor is highly scenic; and precautions should be taken to maintain the scenic resource visible from the highway.

***Services:***

There are no public water and sewer services available in the District. Water needs are addressed by onsite water wells and cisterns. Sanitation needs are addressed with onsite individual sewage disposal systems. Water rights for a limited number of commercial well permits are sold by the Upper Arkansas Water Conservancy District for property owners inside the “Blue Line”, approximately one-quarter to one mile distance out from the river.

Fire protection in the District comes from the Western Fremont Fire Protection District, the Howard Volunteer Fire Department, and the Deer Mountain Fire Protection District. Law enforcement is provided by the Fremont County Sheriff. Road maintenance for U.S. Highway 50 and Colorado State Highways 9 and 69 is provided by the Colorado Department of Transportation. All County roadways are maintained by the Fremont County Department of Transportation.

## Objectives

- E1. Protect the Arkansas River corridor through the District--its water quality, wildlife habitat, recreational value, and visual resources.

### ➔ Strategies

- E1.1 Consider impacts to the river corridor when reviewing development applications.
- E1.2 Encourage input from the appropriate State and Federal Agencies when considering water-quality impacts to the river corridor from proposed development.
- E1.3 Consider requiring stormwater drainage studies for all proposed development.
- E1.4 Encourage input from the appropriate State and Federal Agencies when considering impacts from proposed development to wildlife habitat, recreational value, and visual resources in the river corridor.
- E1.5 Discourage residential or commercial development within the flood hazard areas of the river corridor.

- E1.6** Encourage dedication of land and easements for trails, open space, and parks from development adjacent to the Arkansas River.
  - E1.7** Encourage collaboration with the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area administration to develop specific land-use strategies for development.
  - E1.8** Consider adoption of site-specific design criteria for commercial or residential development within the viewshed.
  - E1.9** Consider adoption of signage regulations specific to the viewshed.
- E2.** Concentrate commercial development in areas with existing commercial uses established, to save on infrastructure costs and to gain the benefit of commercial uses being centrally located.
- E2.1** Encourage the use of planning techniques such as planned unit development to allow multi-use commercial development.
  - E2.2** Encourage multi-use commercial development to conserve land and to limit development and maintenance of roadways, parking areas, driveway accesses, and drainage impacts.
  - E2.3** Encourage the use of planning procedures such as planned unit development to allow multi-use commercial in combination with multi-family residential developments.
  - E2.4** Encourage infill development and discourage “leapfrog” development.
  - E2.5** Discourage commercial development of properties along the highway corridors when the highway frontage is not essential to the success of the development.
  - E5.6** Encourage small scale, multi-use commercial developments in residential areas when the main purpose of the development is to provide convenient service to area residents.
  - E2.7** Encourage architectural and landscaping design of neighborhood commercial development to be compatible with surrounding residential uses.
  - E2.8** Encourage minimization of the number of accesses onto adjacent streets, and sharing of access points.
  - E2.9** Encourage sharing of water and sanitation facilities among commercial developments.
- E.3** Work cooperatively with the City of Canon City for development along County Road 3A and along Highway 50 in the vicinity of the intersection of Highway 50 and County Road

3A to provide land uses, access, design, and signage that are consistent with the Cañon City Master Plan for the Royal Gorge Park and surrounding Royal Gorge area.

- E3.1** Develop and promote creative site-planning techniques, including flexibility in setbacks and land-use arrangements that preserve the natural environment along the edge of the road and key viewsheds, and place parking areas on the side or behind buildings to develop in a manner consistent with the Cañon City Royal Gorge Park Master Plan.
- E3.2** Strongly discourage commercial strip development along Highway 50 and County Road 3A to avoid continuous or intermittent linear development that is generally one activity deep.
- E3.3** Encourage shared access points for separate properties and discourage highly visible parking located between the road and buildings.
- E3.4** Discourage new billboards and provide development incentives or ameliorative zoning regulations to promote the elimination of existing billboards along Highway 50 and County Road 3A.

## General Strategies

- EGS1** Consider requiring visual impact studies that include mitigation plans to accompany all proposed development.
- EGS2** Consider adoption of signage regulations to limit visual impacts.
- EGS3** Consider developing guidelines for minimizing visual impact during and after mineral extraction and mining operations.
- EGS4** Consider requiring fire protection plans for new development.
- EGS5** Encourage collaboration with local, State and Federal entities to prepare fire protection strategies and mitigation plans to limit the potential for wildland interface fires.
- EGS6** Consider requiring traffic studies that address types of vehicles, potential roadway wear, number of trips per day, and times of heavy traffic generation.
- EGS7** Encourage input from local, State, Federal agencies, and private entities regarding historical, natural, and/or cultural features on properties proposed for development, in order to preserve significant features or to provide suitable mitigation techniques.

- EGS8** Encourage collaboration with local, State, Federal agencies, and private entities to determine location of significant historical, natural and/or cultural features, and prepare a strategy for preservation of such features and suggestion for mitigation.
- EGS9** Encourage input from local, State, Federal agencies, and private entities regarding critical wildlife habitat and sensitive ecological areas on properties proposed for development, in order to preserve significant features or to provide suitable mitigation techniques.
- EGS10** Consider collaboration with local, State, Federal agencies, and private entities to determine the location of critical wildlife habitat and sensitive ecological areas within the District, and prepare a strategy for preservation of such features and suggestion for mitigation when appropriate.
- EGS11** Encourage proposed development to conform to the rural character of the District.
- EGS12** Consider requiring development plans to address all potential exterior issues during property development.
- EGS13** Consider requiring stormwater drainage studies that address historic volumes, volumes after development, velocity, water quality, and mitigation plans.
- EGS14** Encourage collaboration with the Colorado Department of Transportation to develop specific strategies to address issues pertaining to County Road and individual property access on U.S. Highway 50.
- EGS15** Consider designation of special planning areas around the existing community development areas to protect the exceptional recreational and visual qualities and the rural atmosphere of the District.

# PLAINS PLANNING DISTRICTS

Northern Mountain Planning District

Penrose/Beaver Park Planning District

U.S. Highway 50

Urban Growth Planning District

C.S.H. 115

C.S.H. 120

County Road 112

Arkansas River

County Road 120

Plains Planning District

County Road 19

Handscrabble Creek

County Road 108

C.S.H. 87

County Road 22X

County Road 15

County Road 103

County Road 106

County Road 19

County Road 105



NOT TO SCALE

PUEBLO COUNTY

Southern Mountain Planning District

CUSTER COUNTY

PUEBLO COUNTY

**Legend**

**MASTER PLAN**

- Plains Planning District
- Planning District Boundary
- Other Planning Districts

## F. District Six: Plains District

### Description

#### ***Location:***

The Plains District is located in the southeast corner of Fremont County. The District is bound on the north by the Penrose/Beaver Park and Urban Growth Districts and on the west by the Urban Growth and Southern Mountain Districts. The Arkansas River travels through the northern portion of the District. U.S. Highway 50 crosses the northeast corner of the District, and State Highways 67, 115 and 120 cross the District in the west and northern portions of the District. State Highway 67 is the southeastern entryway to the County and U.S. Highway 50 is the northeastern entryway to the County.

#### ***Geography:***

The terrain is relatively flat, with gentle slopes from the foothills south and west toward the Arkansas River and from the north to the Arkansas River. In some areas, the river's movement over time has left buttes and small cliffs with a river ecosystem in the area immediate to the river corridor. In general the District, other than the river valley, would be considered a high plains desert ecosystem.

There is minimal woody vegetation, except for areas adjacent to the river. The existing vegetation is very scattered and low. Development is highly visible due to the lack of screening by terrain or vegetation. The Colorado Nature Conservancy has identified and mapped four rare and endemic plants that are established in the District. The low terrain and vegetation also allow for generally unobstructed views.



Arkansas Valley Evening Primrose  
Courtesy of Colorado Natural Heritage Program



Round-Leaf Four-O'clock  
Courtesy of Colorado Natural Heritage Program

### **Land Use:**

The District contains scattered rural residential uses with hobby and production agricultural uses. Southeast of the City of Florence, in the northwest portion of the District, the United States Department of Justice-Federal Bureau of Prisons manages the Florence Federal Correctional Complex, a three-plex prison facility with varying ranges of security. (*FCI Florence - a medium security Federal Correctional Institution; USP Florence High - a high security United States Penitentiary; USP Florence ADMAX - an administrative maximum United States Penitentiary with a minimum security satellite prison camp*). The District contains the Holcim U.S., Inc. Cement Plant in the north-central portion of the District along with Holcim's limestone-shale quarry and the Holcim Recreation Area. There are several open pit sand and gravel mining operations of varying size throughout the District. Some of the District is in the "Florence Oil Fields" which contain producing oil and gas wells and oil and gas exploration. The Arkansas River corridor is a portion of the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area.

### **Services:**

There are no public water or sanitary sewer services available in the District, with the exception of the Florence Federal Correctional Complex. Water is available only through onsite wells and cisterns. Sewage disposal is through onsite individual sewage disposal systems.

Fire protection for the District is provided by the Florence Fire District. Law enforcement is provided by the Fremont County Sheriff. Public road maintenance is supplied by the Fremont County Department of Transportation for county roads and by the Colorado Department of Transportation for State and Federal Highways.

## **Objectives**

- F1.** Protect the Arkansas River corridor, its water quality, wildlife habitat, recreational value, and visual resources.

### **➔ Strategies**

- F1.1** Consider impacts to the river corridor from proposed development.
- F1.2** Encourage input from the appropriate State and Federal Agencies when considering water quality impacts to the river corridor.
- F1.3** Consider requiring stormwater drainage studies for proposed development.
- F1.4** Encourage input from the appropriate State and Federal Agencies when considering impacts to wildlife habitat, recreational value, and visual resources in the river corridor.
- F1.5** Discourage any type of development to occur within the flood hazard areas of the river corridor.

**F2.** Maintain the rural character of the District.

- F2.1** Discourage strip commercial development along the existing highways in the District, because of visual impacts, dispersion of commercial uses, and lack of utilities.
- F2.2** Discourage development on small acreages.
- F2.3** Consider requiring site-development plans for any development.
- F2.4** Encourage the use of planning techniques such as planned unit development to preserve agricultural lands and open spaces.
- F2.5** Encourage development that is compatible with existing mineral extraction uses and that would be compatible with potential mineral extraction operations.

**General Strategies**

- FGS1** Consider requiring visual-impact studies that include mitigation plans for all proposed development.
- FGS2** Consider implementation of signage regulations to for the District to insure limited visual impacts.
- FGS3** Encourage input from appropriate government agencies and/or public entities to assess impacts to plant life by proposed developments, and require mitigation measures to limit impacts and support compatibility.



Arkansas River Feverfew –  
Courtesy of Colorado Natural Heritage Program

- FGS4** Encourage input from the Federal Bureau of Prisons regarding compatibility and mitigation measures for proposed development near the Complex.

- FGS5*** Encourage collaboration with the Federal Bureau of Prisons to develop specific land-use strategies in the vicinity of the Florence Federal Correctional Complex.
- FGS6*** Encourage collaboration with the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area administration to develop specific land-use strategies for proposed developments in the vicinity of the Arkansas River corridor.
- FGS7*** Consider requiring fire protection plans for development.
- FGS8*** Consider requiring traffic studies that address types of vehicles, number of trips per day, and times of heavy traffic generation.
- FGS9*** Consider developing guidelines for minimizing visual impact during and after mining operations.

## Chapter Six – Plan Implementation and Update

There are several activities referenced throughout the Plan that will be critical to implementing the concepts and directions embodied in the Plan. These include:

- Intergovernmental Agreements
- Sub-Area Plans
- The Visual Resource Management Program
- The Fremont Heritage Conservation Fund
- The Parks, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan
- The Transfer of Development Rights Program
- The Plan Amendment Process

This final chapter of the Plan elaborates each of these activities to help provide a road map toward implementation.

### Intergovernmental Agreements

A sub-area plan for the Penrose/Beaver Park District is recommended based on the information and guidelines provided in the Master Plan. The sub-area plan should weigh growth pressures at the projected rates of growth, water system expansion options and their potential finance schemes, impacts of septic system proliferation, and other local government needs in the District. Recommendations concerning organization of services should be provided by the plan.

As the 1996 Governor’s Smart Growth and Development panel suggested: “Population growth fuels conflicts over land use.” Throughout Colorado, counties and municipalities are experiencing direct impacts from growth and development in growing communities and their adjacent regions. Cooperative planning efforts, incorporating intergovernmental agreements (IGAs), can better accommodate population growth and its associated impacts. This can result in more efficient and desirable patterns of development.

A provision for intergovernmental cooperation was added to the Colorado Constitution in 1970 amendments (Colo. Const. Art. XIV Sec. 18). Colorado law expressly authorizes local governments to cooperate and contract with other governments involved in any function lawfully authorized to those bodies, including the joint exercise of the function (CRS 29-1-203). Also, local governments are encouraged to cooperate and contract with other units of government for the purpose of planning or regulating the development of land (CRS 29-20-105).

In Colorado, counties have very limited formal authority to influence municipal annexation decisions. Under Colorado’s annexation statute, a County’s sole method of challenging a municipal annexation is to file a motion for reconsideration within ten days of the annexation, then to seek limited judicial review within sixty days of the annexation. A County can raise technical objections, but any land already annexed remains connected during the challenge (CRS 31-12-116).

In order to reduce litigation and generate cooperative planning efforts, many local governments are successfully using IGAs to address existing or impending land use conflicts with neighboring jurisdictions. IGAs can result in binding and enforceable contracts or policy directives providing a basis for cooperation. Successful examples include cooperative planning and permitting procedures, joint master plans, and cooperatively managed transportation corridors. The Colorado Division of Local Government's *Best Practices in Intergovernmental Agreements* summarizes some of the successful efforts around the State.

There are many regulatory and administrative issues in which Fremont County and the various municipalities in the County currently need cooperation. A brief list includes the following:

- Establishment of new Growth Management Areas and administration of new and existing areas
- Development standards and review in unincorporated areas of influence from municipalities and special districts
- Cooperative Transfer of Development Rights Programs with options not only through a County sponsored program, but on an individual basis between cooperating land owners
- Establishment of annexation priority areas as determined through mutual agreement
- Joint transportation planning and conformity of road plans
- Exchange of GIS mapping data through the Fremont County GIS Authority
- Improvements to and maintenance of cooperatively managed public facilities
- Collection and management of user fees for cooperatively managed public facilities

The principal vehicle for implementation of cooperative agreements for these and similar issues may be the Intergovernmental Agreement. Many of the above cooperative planning issues are currently ready for an IGA between the County and the Municipalities within the County. The process for adoption of an IGA may follow certain recommended steps.

- After defining the problems, it will be important to determine the subject areas where the potential for mutual agreement exists.
- Seeking broad participation of all relevant elected officials will be critical for the ultimate success in adoption and enforcement of the IGA.
- A process for public participation needs to be conducted, including participation of the media. Lack of public support can erode the effectiveness of the IGA at the implementation stage.
- Preliminary consensus will be an important early step. This can serve as a building block for successive agreements.
- The IGA may incorporate an expiration or renewal date, to permit subsequent elected bodies opportunities for reconsideration.
- Implementation, fiscal obligations, administrative responsibilities, methods of review, evaluation, and update will need to be included.
- The master plans for the parties involved should provide the vision and policy guidelines for implementation.

The City of Cañon City and the County have in place IGAs related to planning. Those include, the Three Mile Transportation Plan, the Cañon City Urban Growth Boundary, The Cañon City Annexation Priority Areas, the Land Development Review Policy, and the Source Water

Protection Memorandum of Understanding. There is potential to enter into other agreements in the future.

The County should work with other municipalities within the County toward planning IGAs. The County may find that it would be appropriate to consider planning IGAs with adjoining Counties and/or Federal and State agencies.

## Sub-Area Plans

Goals for growth, growth management, and district development patterns should be generated through public input into the sub-area plans. These goals would guide the development of planning strategies for the districts.

### ***Royal Gorge Impact District:***

This district is in the general area of the intersection of U.S. Highway 50 and Fremont County Road 3A and includes the tourist influenced commercial area. The majority of this district, designated for a sub-area plan, has been included in the Cañon City Urban Growth Boundary. Any planning efforts in this area should be coordinated with the City and should include an IGA to govern the effort.

### ***Penrose/Beaver Park District:***

With 4-5,000 residents and many characteristics and problems of an incorporated town, the Penrose/Beaver Park District is rapidly facing a decision point concerning the direction in which the District will move during the next several decades. One possibility will be for the District to retain its current semi-rural character, limit its minimum lot size to 4.5 acres, and limit its growth to the capacity of its water system. In this scenario, public services including road maintenance and law enforcement would also retain their rural character. A public sewer system expansion probably would not be feasible, based on current densities in the area.

Another alternative is for the community to incorporate and encourage planned commercial development, expand the centralized sewage treatment system, and determine and provide its own municipal services. The District has been divided in its view of these options for some time, and a sub-area plan is recommended as a process for a deliberate determination of the community's preferred direction.

Initiation of a sewer district and consideration for incorporation should receive specific attention as potential goals. The sub-area plan should develop a strategy for guiding new commercial development into downtown Penrose, the State Highway 115 corridor, and the Highway 50 corridor, based on goals established during the planning process.

Recommendations for parks, open space, and trails development in the Penrose/Beaver Park District also should be developed as part of the sub-area plan, in collaboration with the Penrose Recreation District.

## Other Potential Sub-area Plans

### ***Arkansas River Corridor:***

With the success of the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area State Park and the potential for more commercial and residential development within the Arkansas River corridor, there could be a need for sub-area plans within the corridor. These needs could be addressed through development of a singular plan to address the river corridor as a whole, or through a combination of plans that would address the community needs on a more individual basis. Some concerns for the area include viewshed protection, access and intersection safety, mining, and the use of wells and septic systems on small lots. It is important to allow residential and commercial development in the river corridor while having the least amount of impact possible to the scenic beauty of the corridor and its avian, terrestrial, and aquatic wildlife.

- The community of Parkdale is developing with a mixture of seasonal commercial uses pertaining to adventure sports, open pit aggregate mining, and residential units on larger acreages.
- The community of Texas Creek is developing with a mixture of seasonal commercial uses primarily consisting of rafting, fishing, and all-terrain vehicle use.
- The community of Cotopaxi has an established commercial hub on the south side of U.S. Highway 50 at its intersection with Fremont County Road 1A. There are several neighborhood and highway-oriented businesses located there along with a medical clinic. On the north side of U.S. Highway 50, accessed from Fremont County Road 12, there are some residential uses on small lots, the U.S. Post Office, the local shops for the County and State Departments of Transportation, a fire station, and the area schools and associated uses. On the north side of U.S. Highway 50 and west of County Road 12 are some seasonal commercial uses.
- The community of Coaldale has an established highway oriented commercial area on the north side of U.S. Highway 50 at its intersection with Fremont County Road 6, including the U.S. Post Office. South of Highway 50 along Fremont County Roads 6, 40, and 45 are residential developments ranging in density from two to 35 acres and larger. At the intersection of County roads 6 and 45 is a community center that consists of a fire station and community meeting room. The United States Forest Service's Hayden Creek Campground is about five miles south of the community. There is a gypsum mine southwest of the community.
- The community of Howard has a variety of land uses, with the most prominent being residential on various property sizes. There are neighborhood and highway oriented commercial uses on the north and south sides of U.S. Highway 50 through the community. There is a U.S. Post Office and a community center in combination with a fire department. There are some open pit sand and gravel mines in the area.
- The community of Swissvale consists of predominately residential uses on small lots. There are a few neighborhood business uses in the area.
- The community of Wellsville has a few residential uses, some adventure-oriented businesses and an industrial packaging operation.

***Deer Mountain Community:***

This community is located in the general area of the intersection of Fremont County Roads 27 and 28 and consists of three pre-regulation subdivisions: Colorado Acres (*approximately 3,200 – 2+ acre lots*), Glen-Vista (*approximately 1,150 – 4+ acre lots*), Iron Mountain Wilderness (*approximately 150 – 5 to 20+ acre lots*) and some 35+ acre subdivisions. This community has a small commercial hub located approximately one mile south of the intersection of County Roads 27 and 28 that consists of neighborhood-oriented businesses. There is a fire department in the community. Concerns in this area include the lack of access to the area and individual property in emergency situations, small-lot well and septic use, rural fire protection, rural medical services, rural law enforcement, scenic views, and land value preservation.

***Big Horn Ranch Community:***

This community is located in the general area of the intersection of Fremont County Roads 143 and 277 and consists of one pre-regulation subdivision, Big Horn Ranch (*approximately 218 – 5+ acre lots*) and four 35+ acre subdivisions (*approximately 90 lots*). There is a commercial area near the intersection that currently contains a “country store” and a volunteer fire department. Concerns in this area include the lack of access to the area and individual property in emergency situations, small-lot well and septic use, rural fire protection, rural medical services, rural law enforcement, scenic views, and land value preservation.

***Tallahassee Community:***

This community is located along Fremont County Road 2 from its intersection with Colorado State Highway 9 west to the Fremont/Chaffee County borderline, approximately five miles either side of the roadway. Included in this area are two pre-regulation subdivisions: Cottonwood River Ranch (*approximately 200 – 1-to-5+ acre lots*), Rock Creek (*approximately 105 – 10+ acre lots*) and over twenty 35+ acre subdivisions (*approximately 600 lots*). The area has developed with year-round and seasonal residential uses and has a rural fire department. Concerns in the area are typical of large acreage rural residential development and are complicated with a potential for industrial scale mining and processing operations due to large deposits of uranium found in the area.

## Visual Resource Management Program

Due to monetary considerations, this program should be considered if a partnership can be formed with the BLM and/or U.S. Forest Service and/or State of Colorado to develop and institute the program.

Preservation of the existing high quality visual resources of Fremont County is an important factor in future development. In order to maintain the existing quality of life and to enhance the tourist- and recreation-based economy, a Visual Resource Management Program should be developed. The Program should be in areas of the county in BLM Visual Quality Class II zones, and should be based on future proposals for and adoption of Viewshed Protection Overlay Zones as County ordinances, for specific areas of the County. Early steps in the planning process should include the development of Candidate Protection Zones, along with a process for review and adoption.

The Program should require no restrictions on architectural style, building materials, coloration or reflectivity of surfaces.

Viewshed Protection Zones should, in most instances, be corridors along roadways and streams in the County. The BLM Visual Resource Inventory process distinguishes between foreground, middle ground, background, and seldom-seen zones in evaluation of sensitivity

In Viewshed Protection Zones, building should be prohibited in major skyline zones, to be defined as part of the Program based on guidelines from BLM and similar resources. Building heights in minor skyline zones would be defined as part of the Program. Building envelope descriptions for sensitive site design should be reviewed for building permits, including assessments of construction impacts to geology, soils, vegetation, and surrounding development.

Existing guidelines applicable to the zoning district under consideration should be reviewed for minimizing impacts of subdivision roads, communications towers, and mining.

As part of the Visual Resource Management Program, a set of voluntary architectural guidelines should be developed in conjunction with incentives for implementation, and made available to developers and property owners for voluntary implementation.

The County may develop a sign ordinance designed to protect the scenic quality of the County in coordination with the Visual Resource Management Program. A section of the sign ordinance could address billboard restrictions, which would require a timed elimination of existing off-premise advertising, and would provide standards for necessary outdoor advertising. The County should develop business, industrial, and mine site development standards and visual protection criteria to ensure that the scenic quality of the County is maintained. Criteria could include methods such as large setbacks, building heights, building envelopes, extensive buffering, screening, and other site mitigation measures to ensure that visual quality is maintained.

## Heritage Conservation Fund

This program has not been installed due to a lack of funding for the project. The project continues to have benefit and should be considered when funding is available to develop and administer the program.

The Heritage Conservation Fund is conceived as a restricted Capital Improvements Fund, funded primarily by dedication of a portion of County real estate taxes. The purpose of the Fund would be to permit preservation of the agricultural, historic, and scenic heritage of Fremont County into perpetuity. Funds would be used for purchase of conservation easements or fee-simple acquisition of:

- Key agricultural lands
- Parcels critical to viewshed protection or other open-space values
- Critical tracts of essential threatened wildlife or rare-plant habitat
- Historic properties

- Trail corridors
- Archeological treasures
- County parks

The fund would be managed by a voluntary policy Board appointed by the County Commissioners. Policy would parallel that of existing successful land trusts in the region. An emphasis would be placed on successfully leveraging outside partnership funds, donations, and other less-than-fee-simple mechanisms for protection of properties and natural resources in the County.

## Parks, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan

As has been noted throughout this Plan, Fremont County has a myriad of outdoor recreational opportunities within its boundaries, including hunting, fishing, backpacking, rock climbing, and rafting. Approximately half of the County is in public ownership. In the northeastern portion of the County lies the Beaver Creek Wilderness Study Area and the Beaver Creek State Wildlife Area. Portions of the San Isabel National Forest also lie within the County. The three U.S. Forest Service units in the County are: 1) south of Cañon City, 2) south of U.S. Highway 50 and west of Colorado State Highway 69, and 3) north of U.S. Highway 50 and west of Fremont County Road #12.

The Arkansas River bisects the County flowing from west to east; and the Bureau of Land Management and Colorado Parks and Wildlife have undertaken extensive improvements to more effectively manage river recreation throughout the corridor. The Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area State Park (AHRA) begins near Leadville and ends at the Pueblo Reservoir, and is recognized as one of the nation's most popular locations for fishing, wildlife viewing, and whitewater rafting and kayaking. The Arkansas River through the Recreation Area is one of the most commercially rafted rivers in the United States.

Several large, natural municipal parks are also important resources close to Cañon City's urban population. These include Royal Gorge Park (*8 square miles*), Red Canyon Park (*1 square mile*), and Temple Canyon Park (*1 square mile*). The Florence Mountain Park also is located in close proximity to the population base, as well as the Royal Gorge Bridge, the third largest tourist attraction in the state.

The designation of Phantom Canyon, Garden Park, and High Park Roads as the "Gold Belt Tour National Back Country Byway" by the BLM and as a "Colorado Scenic Byway" further enhances the developing tourist amenities of the area.

With the potential for an expanded future recreation- and tourism-based economy in the area, it is important that the County not only maintain the existing opportunities, but look to enhance and expand them as well. A need exists for a coordinated Parks, Open Space, and Trails Plan for the County as a whole. The emphasis of the Plan would be to integrate existing opportunities and identify gaps. While it may seem that the County has ample public land, there are clearly areas of the urban growth district, as well as the Penrose District, that remain in need of district and regional parks. Similarly, the river trail system has much opportunity for expansion

and connection to trail corridors in the Front Range portion of the County. Finally, protection of rare-plant habitat in the Plains District can best be accomplished through a coordinated effort at open-space planning.

Specific issues that should be addressed through this Master Plan include the following:

- The Open-Space Plan would consider reservation of sections of the Arkansas River Corridor from Cañon City east to the County line as an open-space/trail corridor.
- The Plan would involve State and other agencies in developing and coordinating a local and regional trail system that will include links to the trail along the Arkansas River. The first phase should link Cañon City with Florence. The focus for the trail system should be the Arkansas River corridor.
- The Cañon City Metropolitan Recreation and Park District Trails Master Plan could serve as baseline input to the County Plan in the urban growth area.
- The Plan would include site plans and linkages for the existing Airport War Memorial Park, The Acres of Ireland Park in Howard, and the I.O.O.F. Grand Encampment in the Deer Mountain Area. Fremont County--in partnership with the Cañon City Metropolitan Recreation and Park District and Colorado State University Extension Service--has developed Pathfinder Park, which provides access to the Arkansas River, numerous “play fields”, and an arena used primarily for “4-H” activities.
- In partnership with the Penrose Recreation District, the Plan should include a park sub-area plan for the Penrose/Beaver Park District, in order to provide a park system for the area and to include a trail link to the Arkansas River corridor.
- The Plan should include budgetary projections for land acquisition and development, to be funded through the County’s Heritage Conservation Fund or other appropriate means. This new capital development program, described above, is to be funded through a portion of County real estate taxes. The fund should provide critical local match funds for grant applications to Great Outdoors Colorado and other funding sources.

## Transfer of Development Rights Program

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) programs are an innovative way to guide new development towards certain areas and away from other areas through the use of market purchases and sales of development rights. Although the County would be required to enact regulations to help create the private market and to set limits on its operation, the government is acting primarily just as a facilitator rather than a regulator in encouraging changes in development patterns.

The County would define five steps in the TDR program:

1. “Sending areas”, or areas where the County would like to see less development than current zoning would allow. These may be prime agricultural areas, environmentally sensitive areas, or very scenic areas.
2. “Receiving areas”, or areas where the County would like to see more development than current zoning will allow. Generally, these will be infill parcels, perhaps inside the Urban Growth Boundaries of the municipalities that already are served with utilities and roads.

3. The County would then arrange a mechanism so that owners of land in sending areas can sell their rights to develop houses or commercial buildings to the owners of land in Receiving areas. Often, a development right is defined as the right to build a single-family house, and the mechanism for the transfer will be a paper certificate given by the seller to the buyer to evidence the sale of the right. A seller can sell all of the unused development rights associated with its land, or just some of them.
4. The County would then require that the seller record a deed restriction notifying the public that the seller's property has limited development rights, and restricting the owner or a future buyer from developing the portions of the land from which the rights were sold.
5. Finally, the County allows the owners of land in Receiving areas to use their purchased development rights to increase the amount of development that they can build on their land. Usually, TDR's allow the owner of land in the Receiving area to exceed the currently zoned density of the land without the need for a formal rezoning; and the County limits the amount by which the zoned density can be exceeded in order to protect neighbors from overly dense development.

Generally, the market sets the price at which development agreements are bought or sold. However, the County might choose to purchase development rights through funds from the Heritage Conservation Fund, for example, to "retire" the rights or resell them to private owners in Receiving areas to promote their own growth goals.

Statutory authority already exists for the establishment of the program, and TDR's may be treated as another form of development incentive offered by local government.

As an alternative to the program the County may allow a transfer of development rights on an individual basis. A potential developer could work out an agreement with a property owner that has zoning in place or a potential for rezoning to allow for the density of development desired. Then by either platting statements, deed restrictions, and/or contractual agreements, accomplish essentially the same thing as the TDR program; preserving large acreages in conservation easements and locating more dense development in more appropriate areas.

## The Plan Amendment Process

The Fremont County Master Plan is a policy document used to guide land use. It is not a local government regulation. The Plan is intended to be dynamic and flexible enough to respond to changes in economic forces, legislative requirements, and public attitudes. Therefore, an amendment procedure is necessary to keep the Plan up to date and relevant in light of changing conditions.

A cursory review of this Plan should be conducted every five years to determine the need for an update due to change in the County. A comprehensive review of this Plan should be conducted every ten years to determine the document's effectiveness considering the development trends and desires of the citizenry. An update is not required if change in the development of the County does not warrant an update. This update should be a thorough

analysis of the Plan in relation to land-use development. The procedure involved in the update should include an opportunity for the public to review and comment on any amendments being considered. The Fremont County Planning Commission carries out this update.

At other times, the County may consider amending the Plan for a specific policy, land use or map amendment. Amendments may be desired by the County or municipalities to accommodate a change in policy; or an individual may request them for a specific development proposal. The County may initiate the amendment process at any time.

Individuals wishing to seek an amendment to the Plan should first contact the County Planning Director to informally discuss their proposed request. If desired, they then may submit a request to amend the land-use plan, including the following items as part of the proposed amendment:

- A statement describing why the land-use plan is in need of revision
- A statement describing how the proposed amendment will be consistent with the goals, objectives, and strategies of the Plan
- A statement describing how the proposed amendment will not place a burden upon existing or planned service capabilities of the County
- Additional items, including impact studies, if determined by County staff to be required
- There will be a fee charged to cover review time and cost generated by the request. The fee will be determined by the Board of County Commissioners

The Master Plan amendment will come before the County Planning Commission for a public hearing. At the public hearing, the Planning Commission will recommend approval, approval with revisions, or denial of the amendment request. Final authority rests with the Planning Commission.

# Appendix A - Transportation Plan

## Transportation Category Criteria

### Urban Highway Systems

➤ **Urban Expressways/Freeways and Major Arterials**

The urban principal arterial system serves the major centers of activity of urbanized areas, and the highest traffic-volume corridors. It carries a high proportion of the total urban area travel even though it constitutes a relatively small percentage of the total roadway network. Because of the nature of the travel served by the principal arterial system, almost all fully and partially controlled access facilities are usually part of this functional class. Right-of-way width guidelines for Expressways/Freeways are 200-300 feet and Major Arterials 100 feet. For specific street design criteria please reference the Fremont County Subdivision Regulations.

➤ **Minor Arterials:**

Arterials are streets that carry relatively high speed, through traffic; accommodate traffic moving considerable distances within an area; and accommodate traffic moving into and out of an area. These types of streets are designed to move traffic rather than to accommodate specific land use. Right-of-way width guideline for Arterial streets is 70 feet. For specific street design criteria please reference the Fremont County Subdivision Regulations.

➤ **Collector:**

The Collector street system provides both land-access service and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods and commercial and industrial areas. It differs from the Arterial system in that facilities on the Collector system may penetrate residential neighborhoods, distributing trips from the Arterials through the area to their ultimate destinations. The Collector street also collects traffic from local streets in residential neighborhoods and channels it into the Arterial system. Adequate space for two lanes of moving traffic should be available at all times. Right-of-way width guideline for Collector streets is 60 feet. For specific street design criteria please reference the Fremont County Subdivision Regulations.

➤ **Local Streets:**

Local or residential streets are those streets with the primary function of providing access to abutting properties. Through traffic movements usually are discouraged on Local streets. Right-of-way width guideline for Local streets is 50-60 feet. For specific street design criteria please reference the Fremont County Subdivision Regulations.

➤ **City of Cañon City Three Mile Transportation Plan:**

The City of Cañon City and Fremont County have an intergovernmental agreement to review together all proposed road improvements within the City near the city limit line that will connect to the County road system and all proposed road improvements in the County that are within three miles of the city limit line. The City's Three Mile Plan guidelines for right-

of-way widths are 250 feet for Expressways/Freeways, 100 feet for Major Arterials, 80 feet for Arterials, 70 feet for Collectors and 60 feet for Local streets. For specific street design criteria please reference the Fremont County Subdivision Regulations.

## Rural Highway Systems

### ➤ **Rural Arterials:**

The Rural Arterial system consists of a network of routes with the following service characteristics: **a)** Corridor movement with trip length and density suitable for substantial statewide or interstate travel; **b)** Movements between all, or virtually all, urban areas; **c)** Integrated movement without stub connections except where unusual geographic or traffic flow conditions dictate otherwise. Rural Arterials have a high volume of through traffic; link major and secondary traffic generators; and have limited access, generally at-grade with one-half to one-mile intervals. Right-of-way width guideline for Rural Arterials is 80 feet. For specific street design criteria please reference the Fremont County Subdivision Regulations.

### ➤ **Rural Collectors:**

Rural Collector routes generally serve travel of primarily intra-county rather than statewide importance, and constitute those routes on which (regardless of traffic volume) predominant travel distances are shorter than on Arterial routes. Consequently, more moderate speeds may be typical. Their major functions are to distribute traffic to Arterials, and to link Local generators. Access to abutting property is a secondary function; and they use at-grade intersections. Right-of-way width guideline for Rural Collector streets is 60 feet. For specific street design criteria please reference the Fremont County Subdivision Regulations

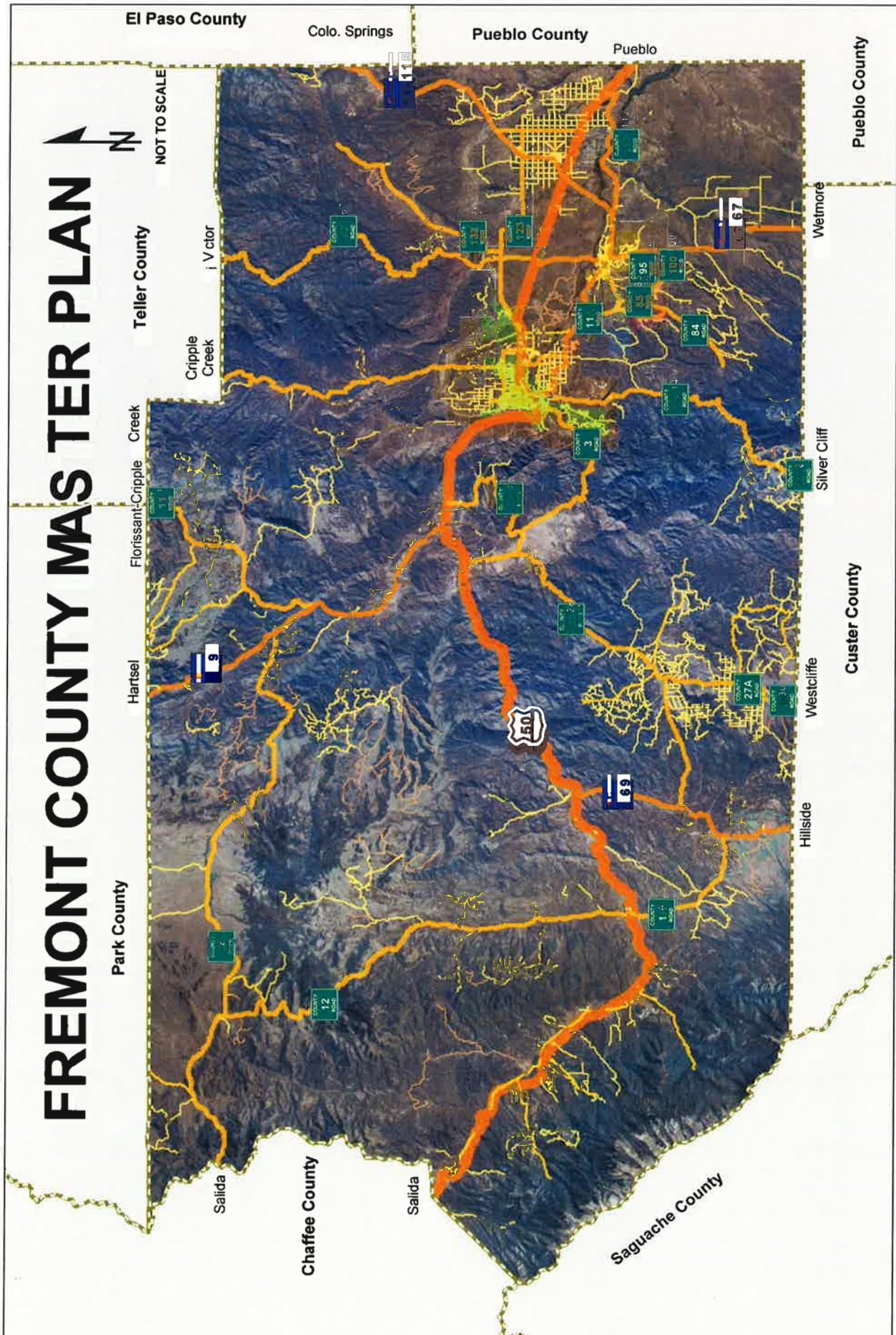
### ➤ **Rural Local Roads:**

The Rural Local road system, in comparison to Collectors and Arterial systems, primarily provides access to land adjacent to the Collector network and serves travel over relatively short distances. The Local road system constitutes all Rural roads not classified as principal Arterials, Minor Arterials, or Collector roads. The function is to abut property access, with access not restricted. Right-of-way width guideline for Rural Local roads is 50 feet. For specific street design criteria please reference the Fremont County Subdivision Regulations

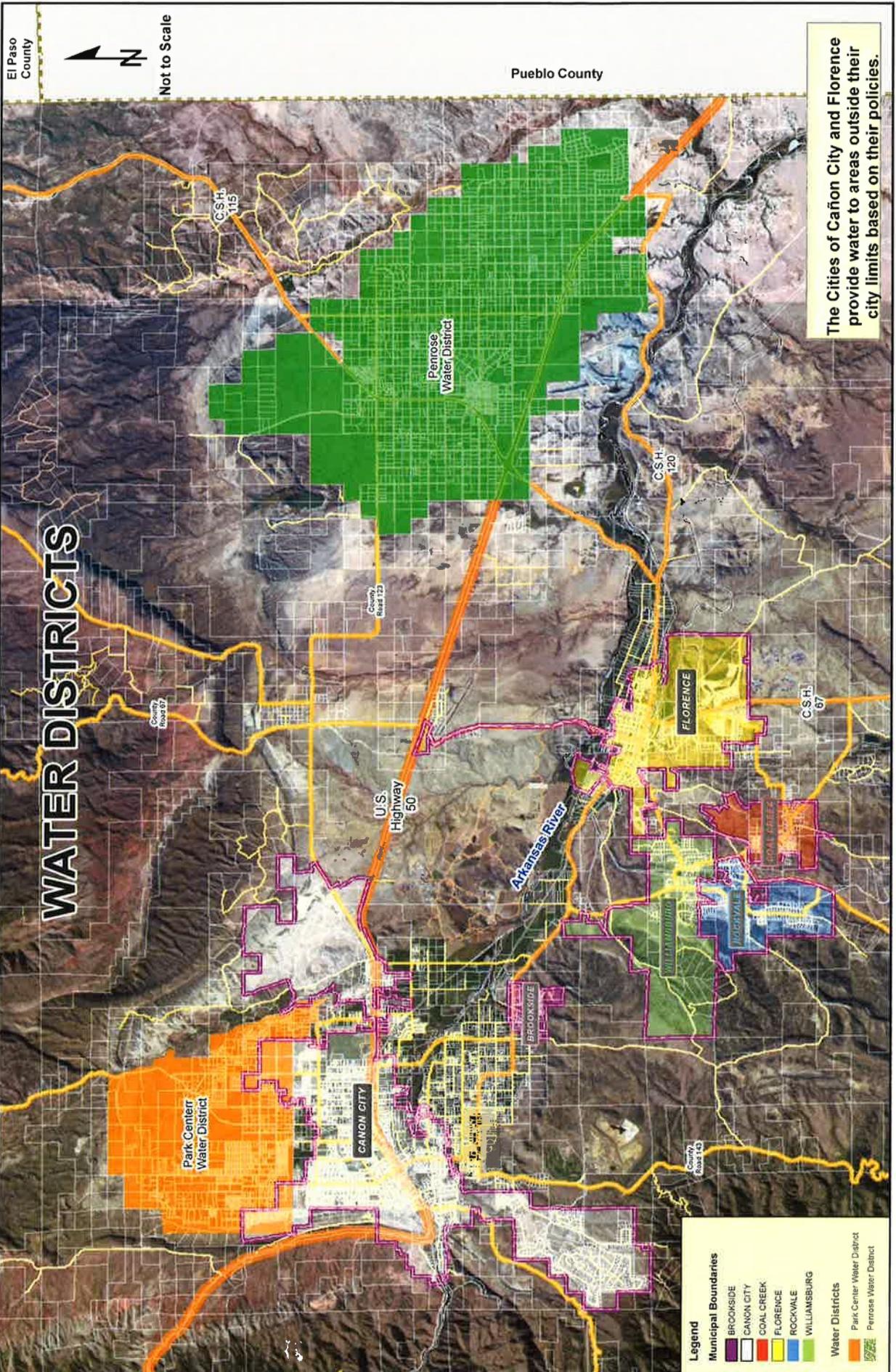
## State and Federal Highways

Colorado State Highways 9, 67, 69, 115, and U.S. Highway 50 are maintained by the Colorado Department of Transportation. Right-of-way widths, roadway design, access, and official road designation are regulated by the Colorado Department of Transportation.

# Appendix B – Master Plan Maps

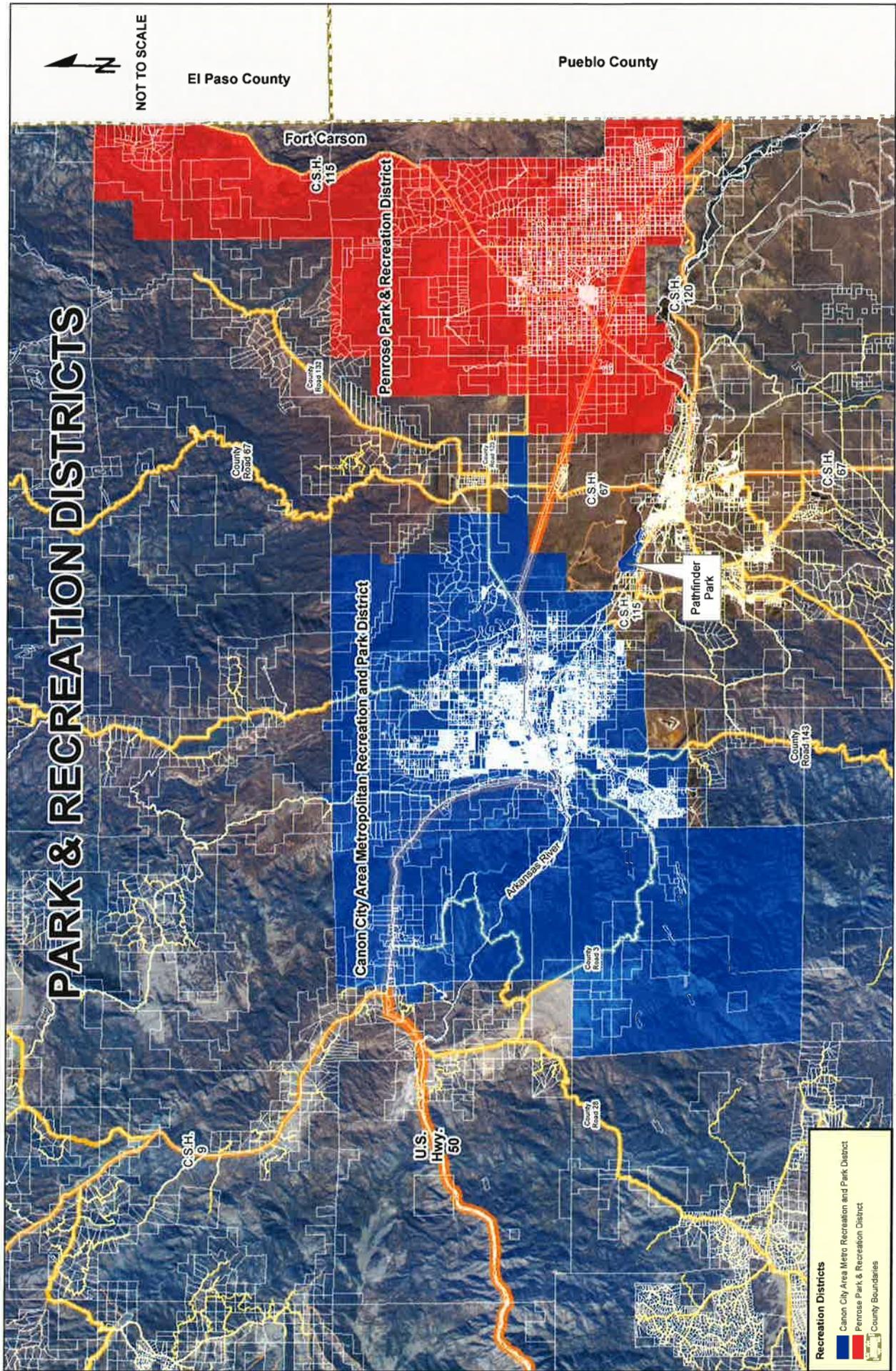






The Cities of Cañon City and Florence provide water to areas outside their city limits based on their policies.

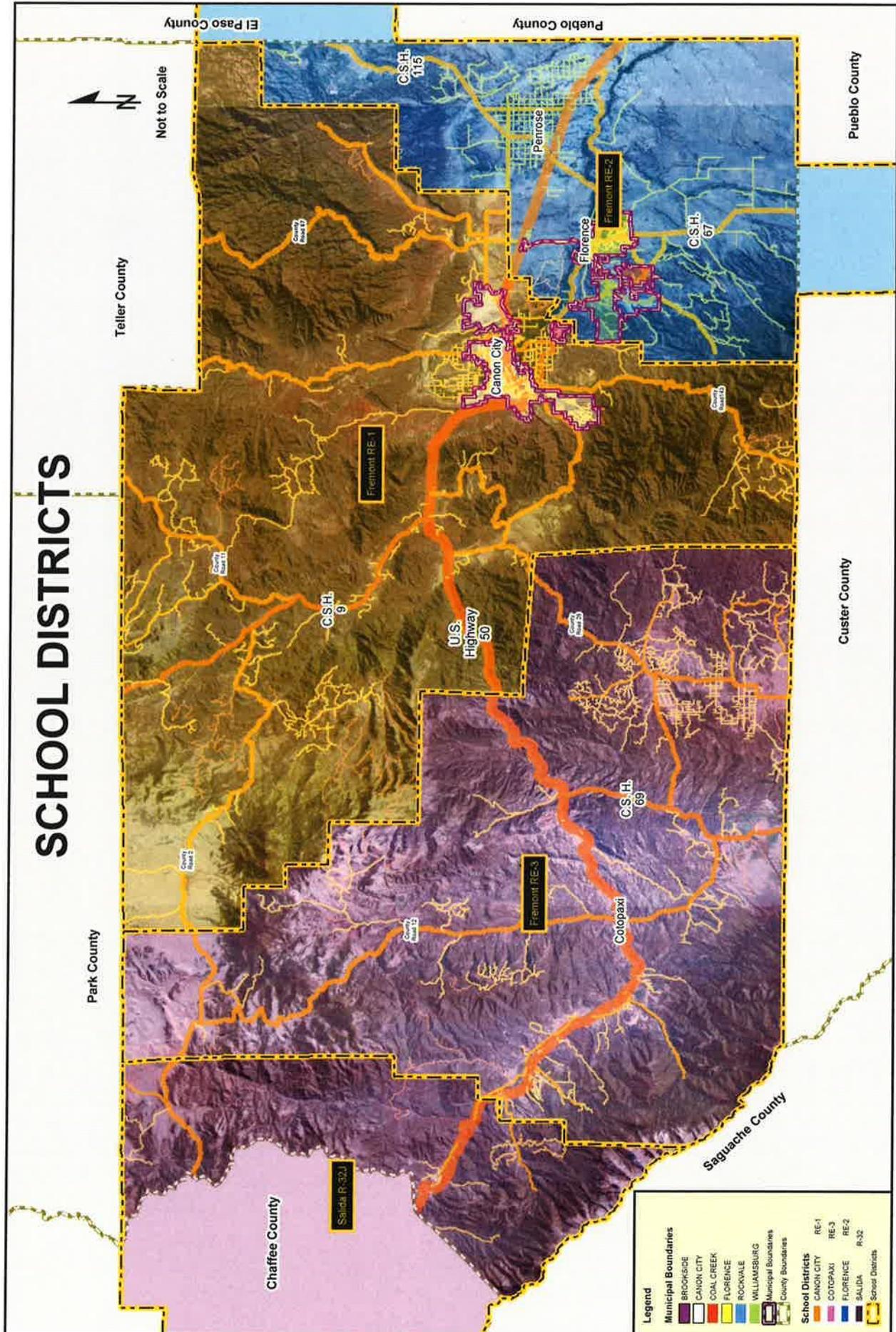
# PARK & RECREATION DISTRICTS



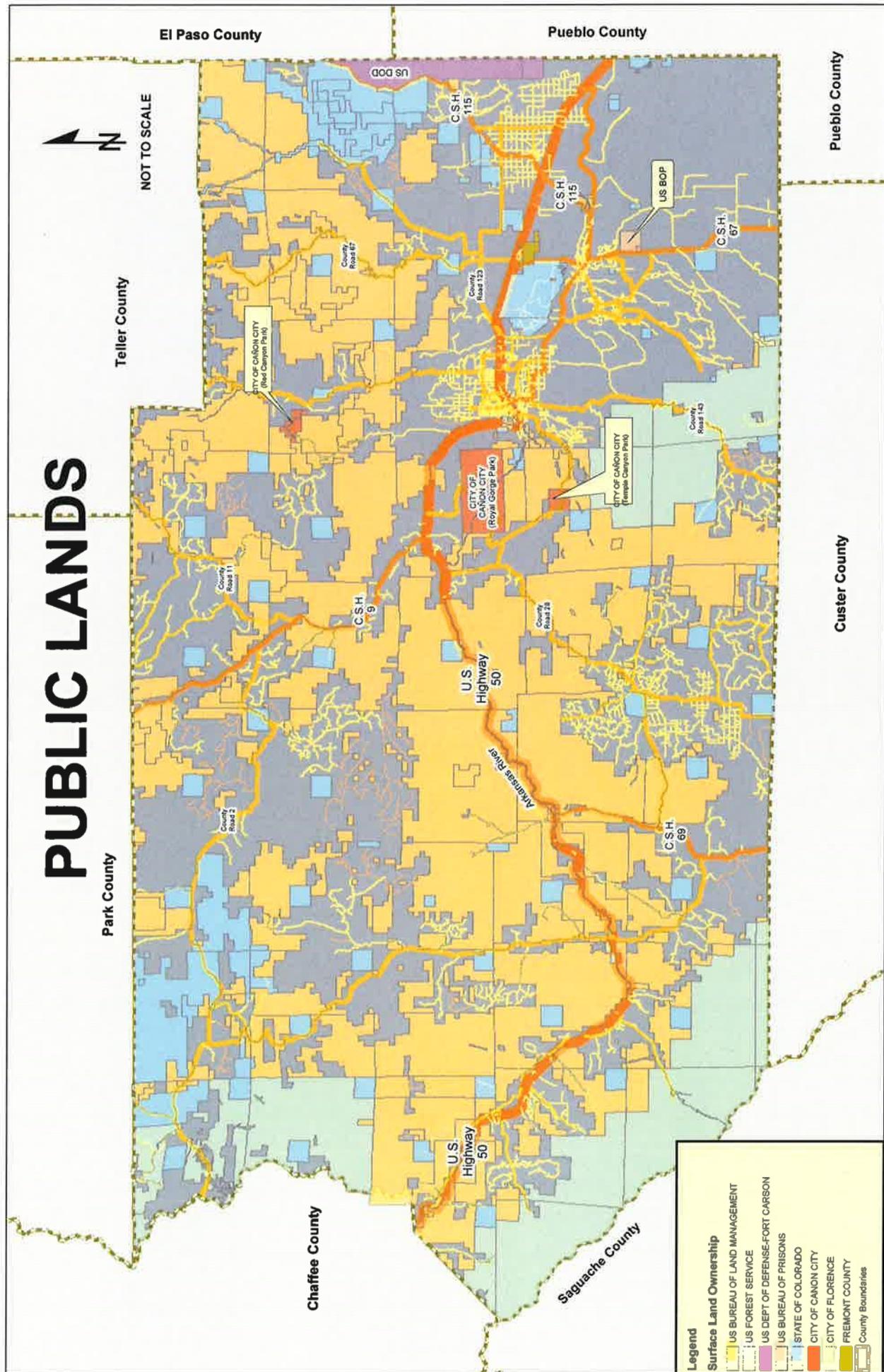
**Recreation Districts**

- Canon City Metro Recreation and Park District
- Penrose Park & Recreation District
- County Boundaries

# SCHOOL DISTRICTS



# PUBLIC LANDS



NOT TO SCALE

El Paso County

Pueblo County

Pueblo County

Teller County

Custer County

Park County

Chaffee County

Saguahe County

CITY OF CANON CITY  
(Red Canyon Park)

CITY OF CANON CITY  
(Royal Gorge Park)

CITY OF CANON CITY  
(Temple Canyon Park)

US BOP

US DOD

C.S.H. 115

C.S.H. 115

C.S.H. 67

C.S.H. 9

U.S Highway 50

C.S.H. 69

U.S Highway 50

Arkansas River

County Road 2

County Road 11

County Road 123

County Road 28

County Road 14

El Paso County

Pueblo County

# EASTERN FREMONT COUNTY ZONING MAP

Map is for Planning Purposes only.  
Check with the Department of Planning  
& Zoning for current zoning.

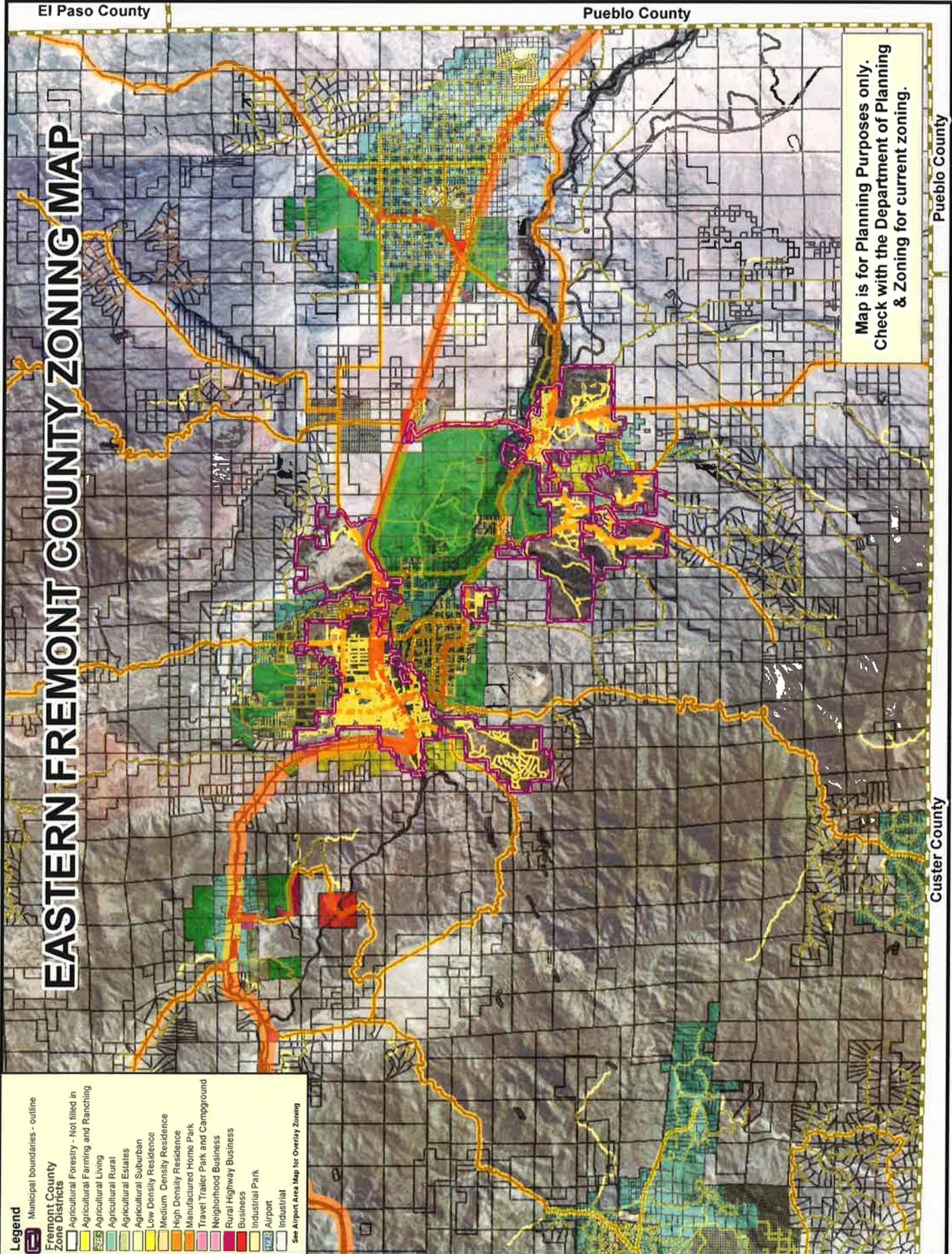
Pueblo County

Custer County

**Legend**

- Municipal boundaries - outline
- Fremont County Zone Districts**
- Agricultural Forestry - Not filled in
- Agricultural Farming and Ranching
- Agricultural Living
- Agricultural Rural
- Agricultural Estates
- Agricultural Suburban
- Low Density Residence
- Medium Density Residence
- High Density Residence
- Manufactured Home Park
- Travel Trailer Park and Campground
- Neighborhood Business
- Rural Highway Business
- Business
- Industrial Park
- Airport
- Industrial

See Airport Area Map for Overlay Zoning

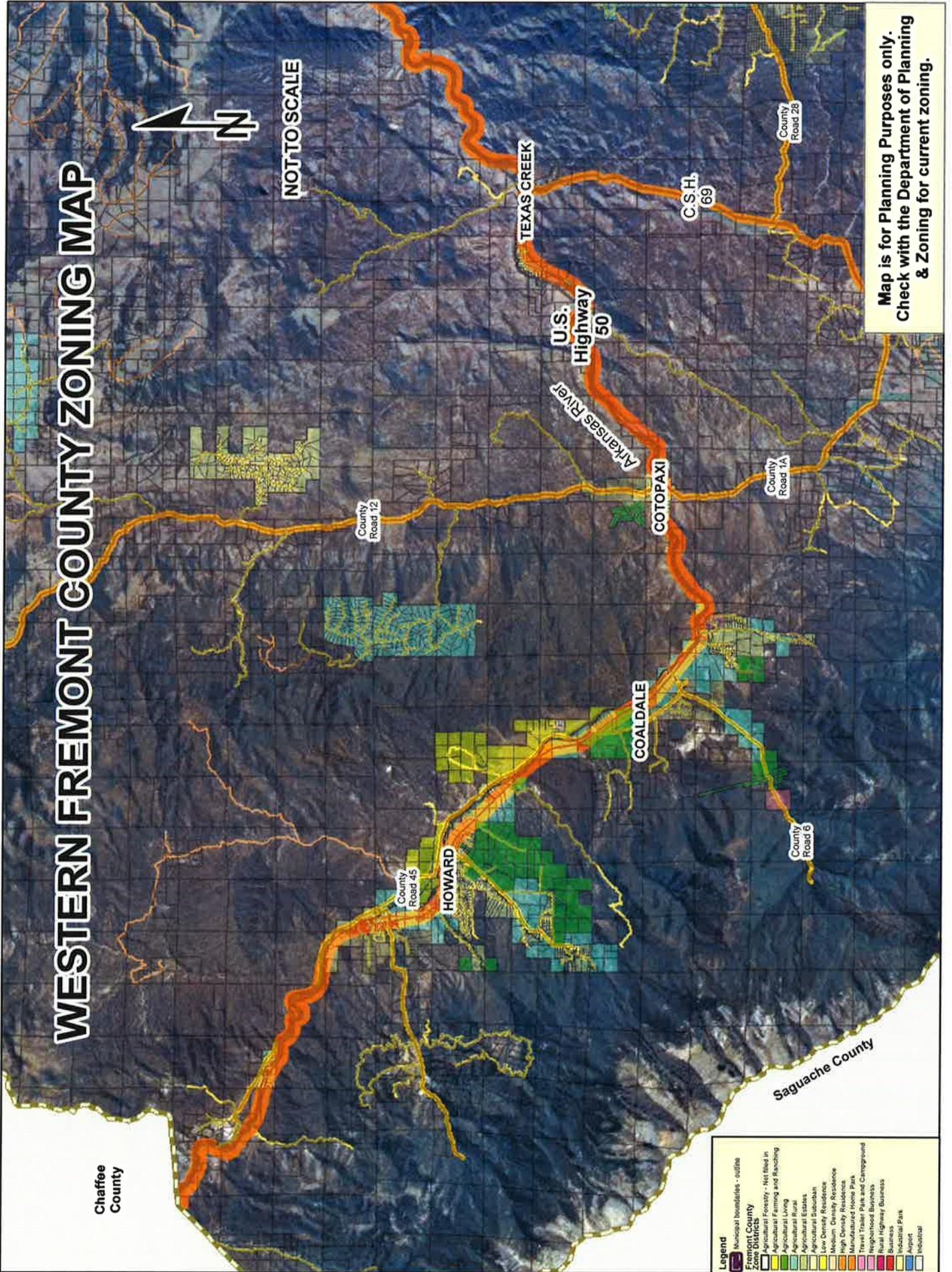


# WESTERN FREMONT COUNTY ZONING MAP

Chaffee County



NOT TO SCALE

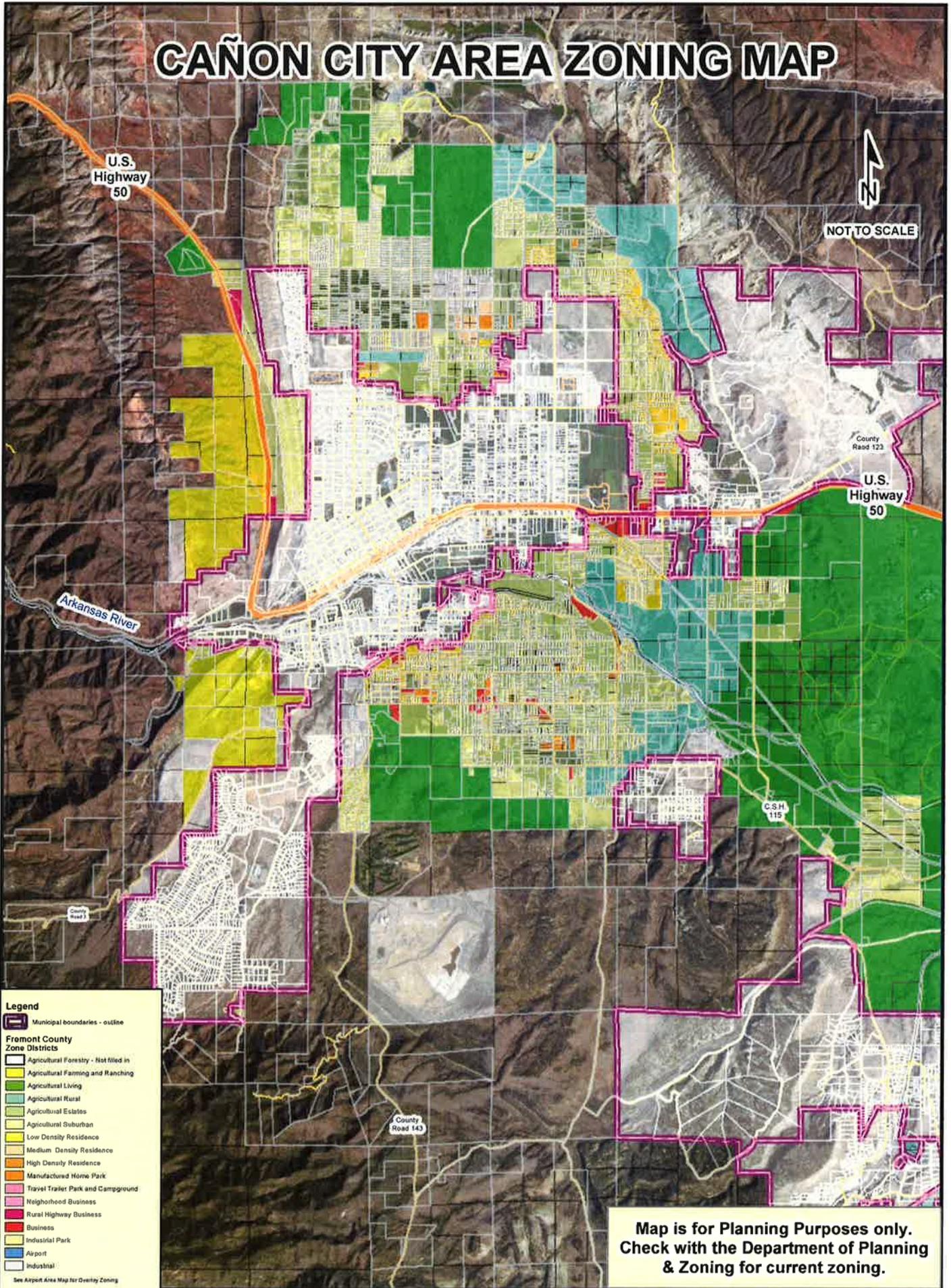


**Legend**

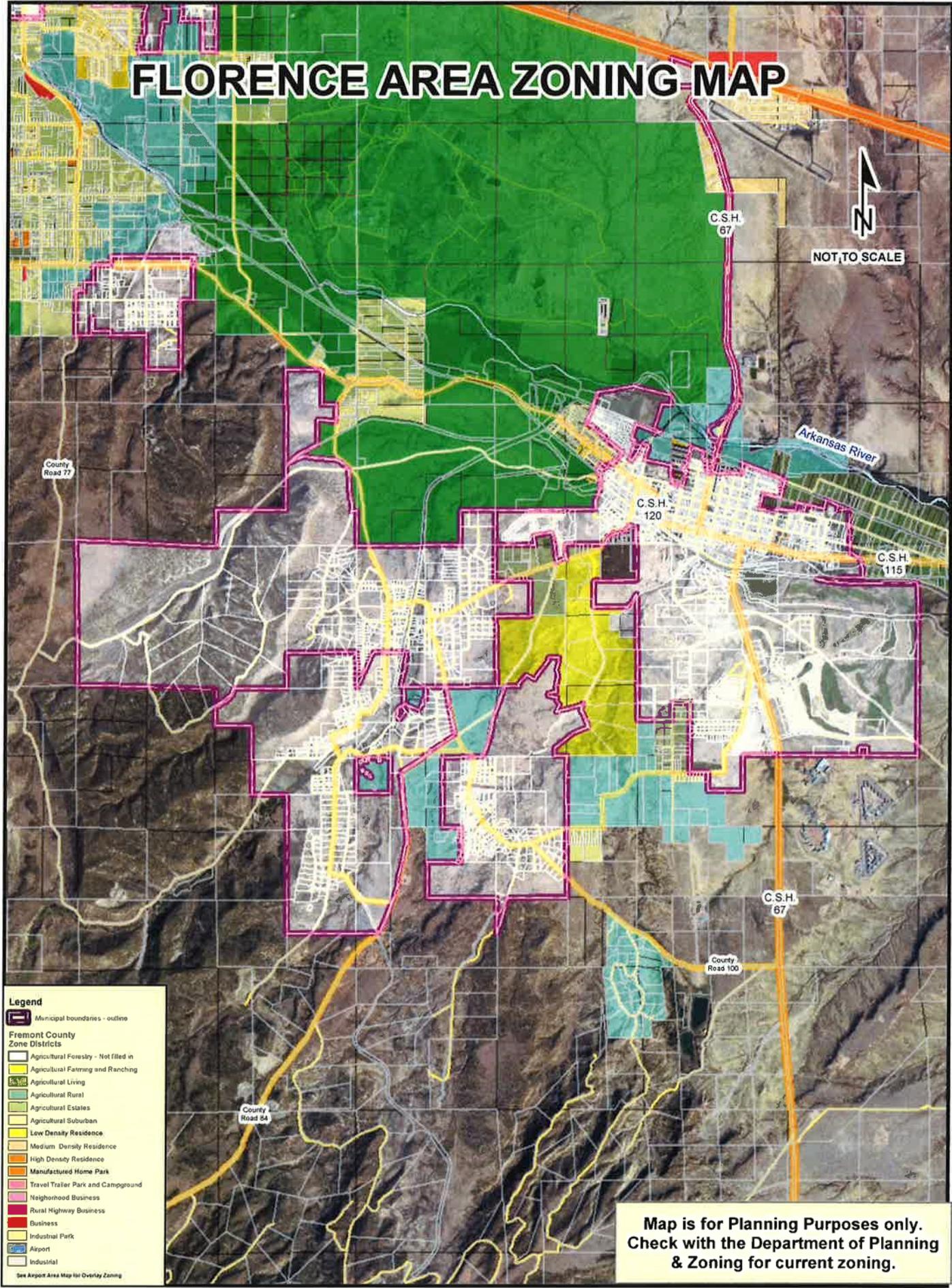
- Municipal boundaries - outline
- Fremont County**
- Agricultural Forestry - Not filed in
- Agricultural Farming and Ranching
- Agricultural Living
- Agricultural Rural
- Agricultural Estates
- Agricultural Suburban
- Low Density Residence
- Medium Density Residence
- High Density Residence
- Neighborhood Business
- Retail Trade, Pkgs and Shipyard
- Rural Highway Business
- Business
- Industrial Park
- Airport
- Industrial

**Map is for Planning Purposes only.  
Check with the Department of Planning  
& Zoning for current zoning.**

# CAÑON CITY AREA ZONING MAP



# FLORENCE AREA ZONING MAP



**Legend**

- Municipal boundaries - outline
- Fremont County Zone Districts**
- Agricultural Forestry - Not filled in
- Agricultural Farming and Ranching
- Agricultural Living
- Agricultural Rural
- Agricultural Estates
- Agricultural Suburban
- Low Density Residence
- Medium Density Residence
- High Density Residence
- Manufactured Home Park
- Travel Trailer Park and Campground
- Neighborhood Business
- Rural Highway Business
- Business
- Industrial Park
- Airport
- Industrial

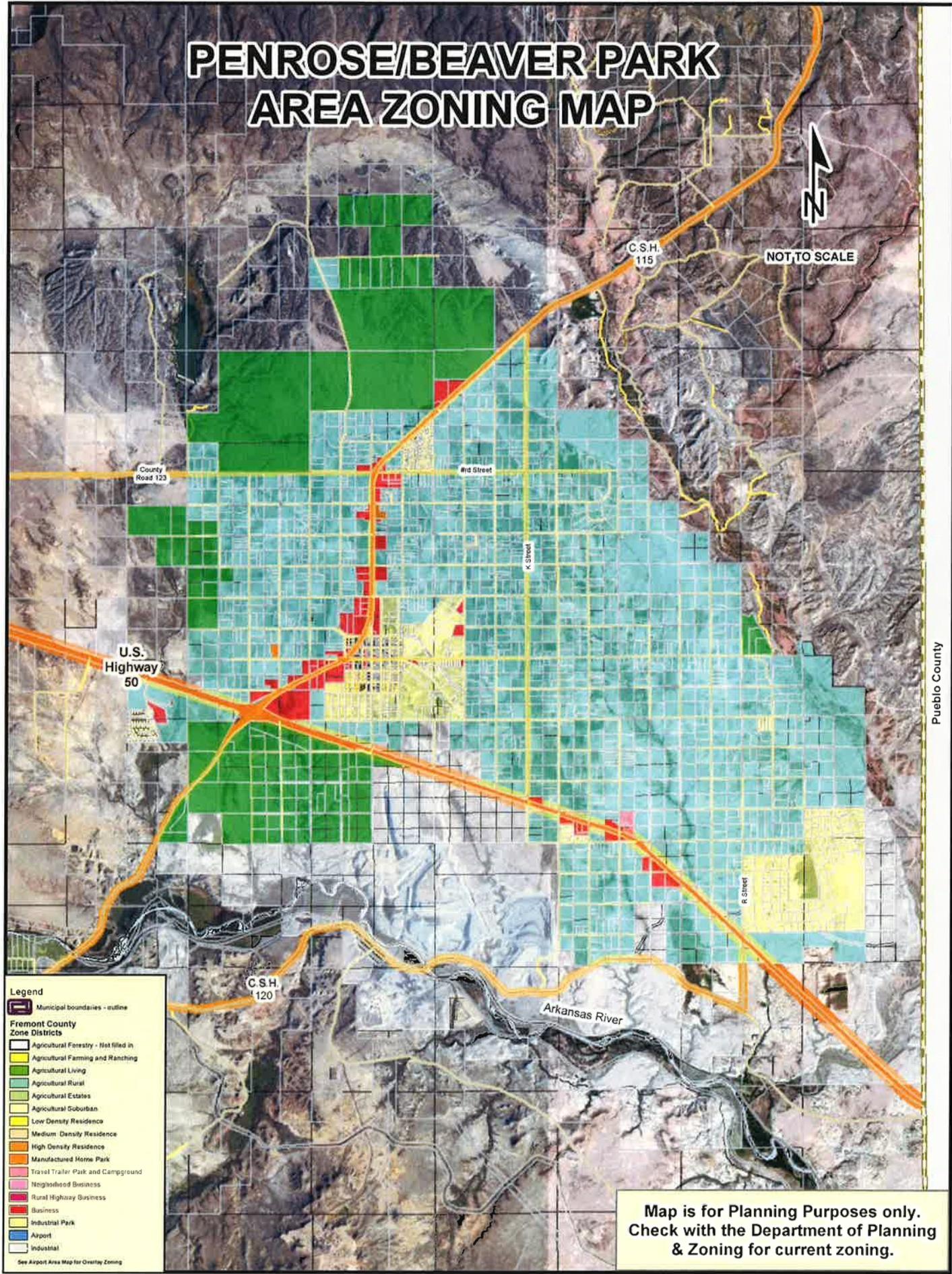
See Airport Area Map for Overlay Zoning

**Map is for Planning Purposes only.  
Check with the Department of Planning  
& Zoning for current zoning.**

# PENROSE/BEAVER PARK AREA ZONING MAP



NOT TO SCALE



Pueblo County

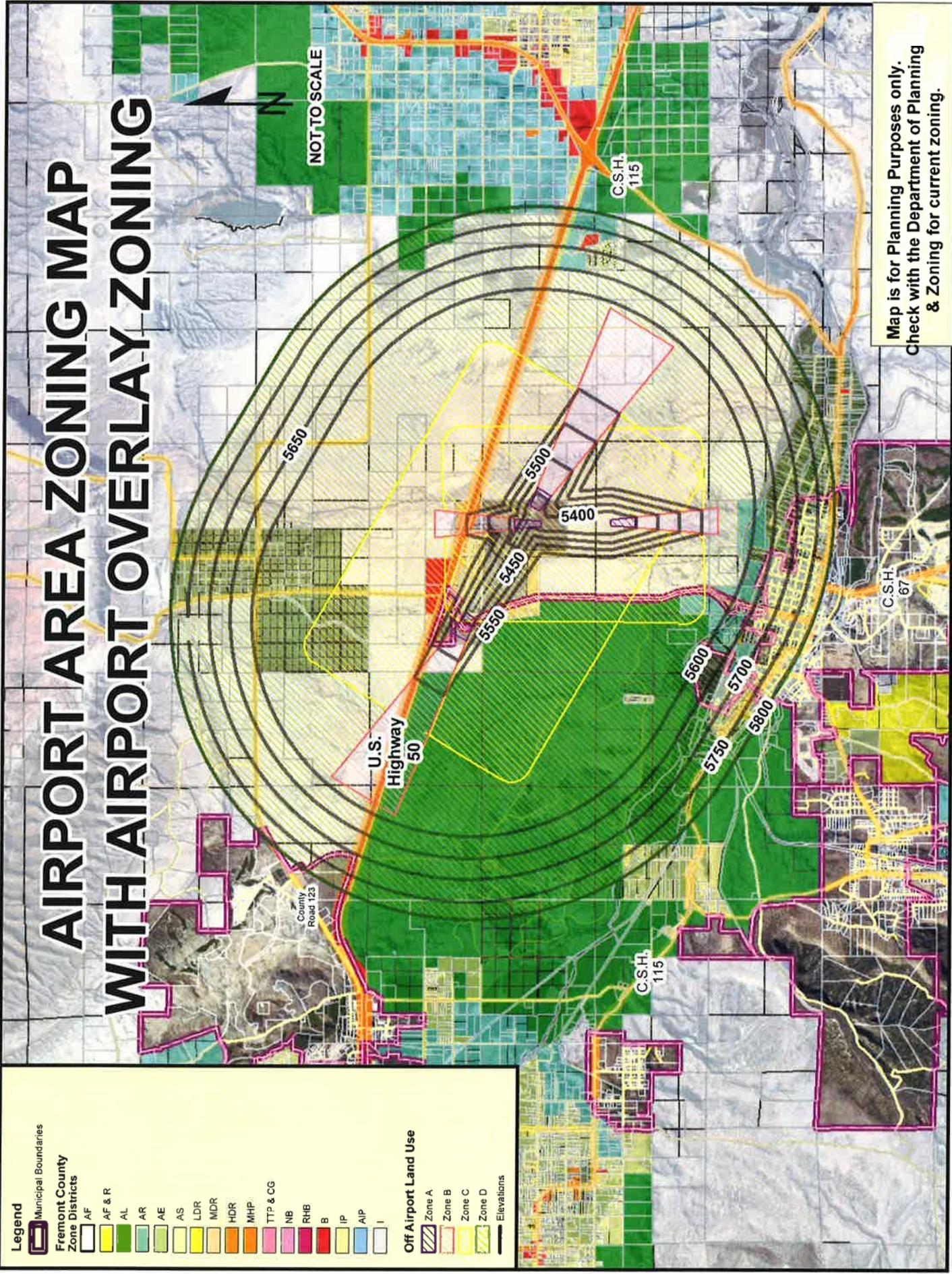
**Legend**

- Municipal boundaries - outline
- Fremont County Zone Districts**
- Agricultural Forestry - Not filled in
- Agricultural Farming and Ranching
- Agricultural Living
- Agricultural Rural
- Agricultural Estates
- Agricultural Suburban
- Low Density Residence
- Medium Density Residence
- High Density Residence
- Manufactured Home Park
- Travel Trailer Park and Campground
- Neighborhood Business
- Rural Highway Business
- Business
- Industrial Park
- Airport
- Industrial

See Airport Area Map for Overlay Zoning

**Map is for Planning Purposes only.  
Check with the Department of Planning  
& Zoning for current zoning.**

# AIRPORT AREA ZONING MAP WITH AIRPORT OVERLAY ZONING

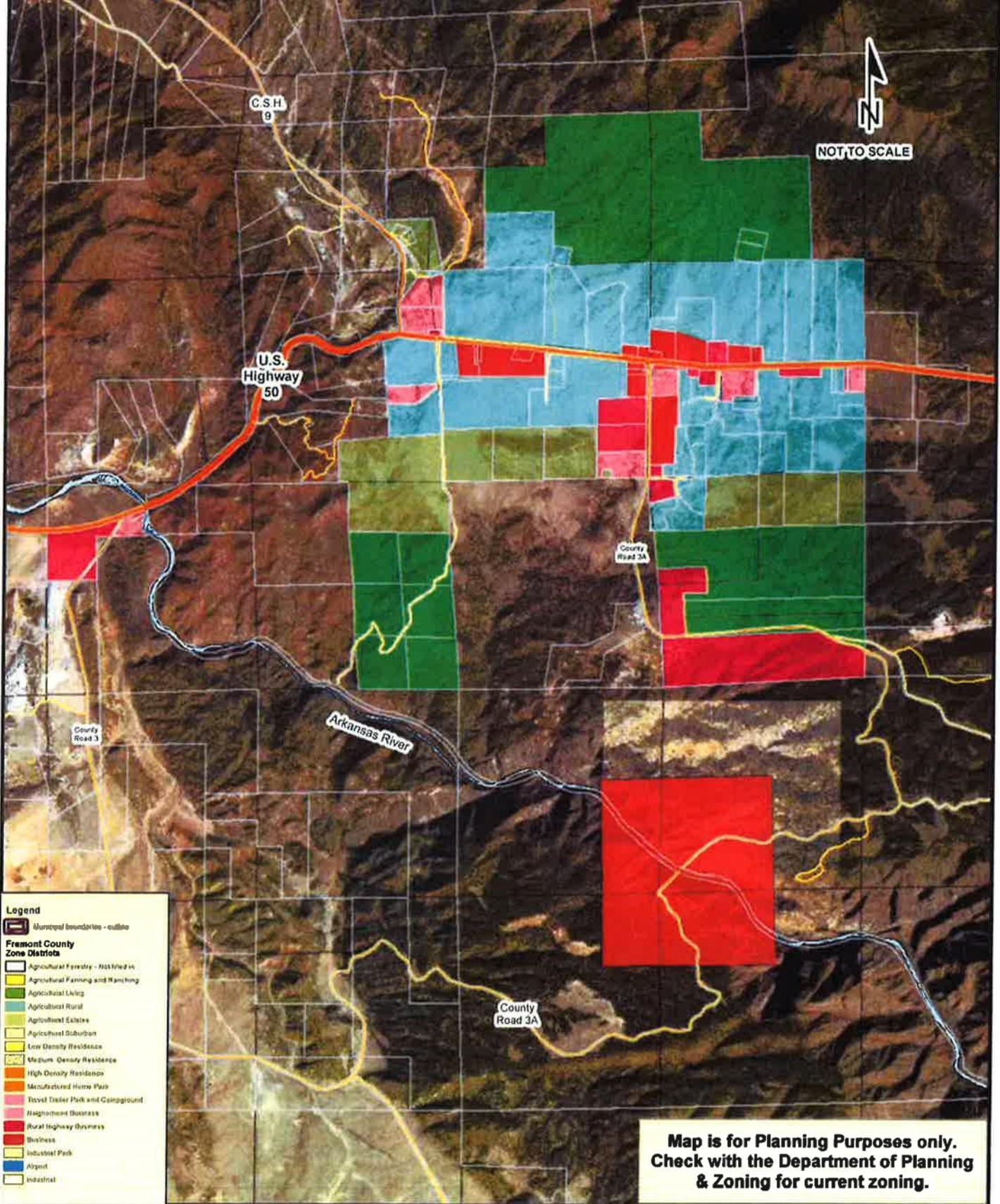


**Legend**

- Municipal Boundaries
- Fremont County Zone Districts
  - AF
  - AF & R
  - AL
  - AR
  - AE
  - AS
  - LDR
  - MDR
  - HDR
  - MHP
  - TT? & CG
  - NB
  - RHB
  - B
  - IP
  - AIP
  - I
- Off Airport Land Use
  - Zone A
  - Zone B
  - Zone C
  - Zone D
  - Elevations

Map is for Planning Purposes only.  
Check with the Department of Planning  
& Zoning for current zoning.

# ROYAL GORGE AREA ZONING MAP



**Legend**

- Municipal boundaries - outline
- Fremont County Zone Districts**
  - Agricultural Forest - Not Tilled
  - Agricultural Farming and Ranching
  - Agricultural Living
  - Agricultural Rural
  - Agropolitan Estates
  - Agricultural Suburban
  - Low Density Residence
  - Medium Density Residence
  - High Density Residence
  - Manufactured Home Park
  - Trailer Park and Campground
  - Neighborhood Business
  - Rural Highway Business
  - Business
  - Industrial Park
  - Algorit
  - Industrial

**Map is for Planning Purposes only.  
Check with the Department of Planning  
& Zoning for current zoning.**

## Appendix C – Glossary of Terms

**Access Plans** – Precise location of the intersection of a street or driveway with the highway.

**Adit** - An entrance to an [underground mine](#) which is horizontal or nearly horizontal by which the mine can be entered, drained of water, ventilated, and minerals extracted at the lowest convenient level.

**Allowable Densities** – The number of permitted units or structures per acre. Varies with differing zone districts and access to public utilities.

**Annexation** - The process by which an area of land, such as a portion of a county, is incorporated as part of another entity, such as a city (*with a resulting change in the boundaries of both*).

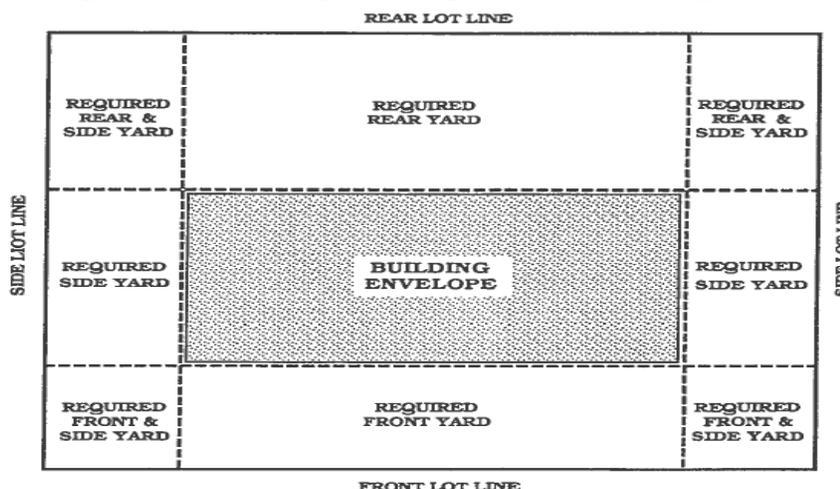
**Blue Line** – In Fremont County, the blue line defines the area within which the Upper Arkansas Water Conservancy District's blanket augmentation plan might benefit. The Augmentation Plan supplements the water supply of a stream affected by well depletion, in order to protect senior water rights on the stream. The UAWCD replaces water in the Arkansas River depleted by permitted wells inside the Blue Line.

**Board of Zoning Adjustment** - A local body, created by the Zoning Resolution and appointed by the Board of County Commissioners whose responsibility is to consider requests for deviations from Zoning Resolution requirements (*known as variances*).

**Buffer Zone** - A strip of land or feature created to separate and protect one type of land use from another for the purposes of reducing noise, glare, visibility of activities, etc. An example might be a screen of fencing or plantings used to insulate the surroundings from the noise, smoke, or visual aspects of an industrial zone or junkyard.

**Building** –Such as a house, barn, church, hotel, or similar construction created principally to shelter any form of human activity

**Building Envelopes** – The cubic space that remains for placing a structure onto a site after building setbacks (*front, rear and side yards*), lot width, building height, flood hazard areas, and bulk regulations are observed; also interpreted as a building site in a planned unit development.



**Capital Improvement Plan** - A description of the approximate location, size, time of availability, and estimates of cost for all facilities or improvements planned for the jurisdiction. Such plans may be the

basis for levying development impact fees. The types of facilities covered by the plan include: public buildings; facilities for the storage, treatment, and distribution of nonagricultural water; facilities for the collection, treatment, reclamation, and disposal of sewage; facilities for the collection and disposal of storm waters and for flood control purposes; transportation and transit facilities, including but not limited to streets and supporting improvements, roads, overpasses, bridges, harbors, ports, airports, and related facilities; parks and recreation facilities, or any other capital project.

**Cluster Development** – A type of development that allows the reduction of lot sizes below the zoning resolution’s minimum requirements if the land thereby gained is preserved as permanent open space for the community, or agricultural land to be privately held. While generally, no increase in overall density takes place; incentives such as density increases are sometimes used to promote clustered development. Cluster development naturally provides incentives by the need for fewer roads and service lines for the same number of development units.

**Conservation Easement** - A tool for preserving, unique natural features, open space and/or an endangered use of land with less than full-fee purchase, whereby a public agency or independent group buys only certain specific land use rights from the land owner.

**Cultural Resources** – Are defined by the National Park Service's National Register guidelines and recognized by History Colorado

**Curb cuts** - The opening along a curb line at which point vehicles may enter or leave the roadway.

**Density** - The number of dwellings units allowed per acre of land. Allowable density is usually determined by zone district and access to public water and sewer services.

**Density Transfer** – Density transfer allows the assignment of development rights from one property to a different property that is more appropriate for the proposed development. Density transfers are usually meant to preserve large acreages or natural features and to encourage infill development of suburban areas.

**Developer Impact Fees** – Fees imposed on a development that are based on a formula applied equally to all equivalent development projects. These fees compensate for specific impacts to public resources and infrastructure caused by the development, and be reasonable in relation to the magnitude of the impact.

**Distance Zones** – The Bureau of Land Management segments the visual resource into foreground, middle ground, background, and the seldom seen zone. Each distance zone is managed differently.

**Downzoning** - A change in the zoning classification of land to a classification permitting development that is less intensive or dense, such as from multiple family residential to single family residential or from commercial to residential. A change in zoning in the opposite direction is called up-zoning.

**Easement** - The right of a person, agency, government or public utility company to use public or private land owned by another for a specific purpose, such as access to power lines or for preservation of the land’s environmental or scenic qualities. Easements can be granted, bought or sold. Easements constitute a defined right of use of the described land but do not transfer ownership of property.

**Ecosystem** - An interacting system formed by a biotic (*living organisms*) community and its physical environment.

**Exaction** - An exaction is a specific form of condition on a public agency's approval of a development proposal. There are typically two kinds of exactions required by public agencies: **1)** dedications and **2)** fees. A dedication typically involves the provision of a benefit to the public as mitigation for the impact of a proposed project on public facilities. An example of one kind of dedication is a condition requiring the applicant to dedicate (*and perhaps improve*) roadways, provide easements or public greenbelts. Alternatively, the agency may require the owner to pay fees to finance public improvements (*sometimes referred to as "monetary exactions"*).

**Geologic Resources** – Reflect the changing nature of the surface of the earth and geologic time scale as it played out in what is now Fremont County and includes locations where dinosaurs and other fossils were discovered, unique geologic formations such as the Royal Gorge and Skyline Drive were formed and locations where material resulting in oil, coal, limestone, etc. was deposited.

**GIS Mapping** – Geographic Information System is a computer system for capturing managing, integrating, manipulating, analyzing and displaying data which is spatially referenced to the Earth. It permits the compilation of overlays that accurately depict the proximity of various geographic features to each other.

**Impact** – The direct or indirect effect or consequence resulting from a development upon land, the environment, the community or a segment thereof. The term shall include, but not be limited to physical, environmental, economic, visual, auditory or social consequences or effects.

**Infill Development** – Development of subdivisions and or commercial areas on vacant properties that are surrounded or adjacent on two sides to properties that have been similarly developed. Normally this type of development is encouraged in order to effectively use costly infrastructure and utilize community services.

**Infill parcel** – A vacant parcel of land surrounded by developed parcels, especially in an urbanized environment.

**Intergovernmental Agreements** – A provision in Colorado State Law permitting bodies of government to cooperate and contract with other governments involved in functions lawfully authorized to those bodies, including the joint exercise of the function. Commonly known as IGA - Intergovernmental Agreement or MOU - Memorandum of Understanding.

**Leapfrog Development** – Residential or commercial development that occurs with large vacant properties between the proposed development and the existing development. When the proposed development is similar to the existing area development, "leapfrogging" is discouraged due to the costly extension of infrastructure improvements (*roads & service lines*).

**Mandatory Dedication** – A dedication typically involves the provision of a benefit to the public as mitigation for the impact of a proposed project on public facilities. An example of one kind of dedication is a condition requiring the applicant to dedicate (*and perhaps improve*) roadways, provide easements or public greenbelts. Alternatively, the agency may require the owner to pay fees to finance public improvements (*sometimes referred to as "monetary exactions"*).

**Mill Levy** – A mill is one one-thousandth of a dollar, or a tenth of a penny. It is a unit of taxation. Mill levies for various purposes (e.g. property taxation) are determined by a vote of the citizens. Taxing entities have mill levies to support the function of the entity. The taxation is based on property and

improvement valuation, being proportionally equal for all property owners.

**Mineral Resource Area** – An area in which minerals are located in sufficient concentration in veins, deposits, bodies, beds, seams, fields, pools, or otherwise as to be capable of economic recovery. The term includes any area in which there has been significant mining activity in the past, there is significant mining activity in the present, mining development is planned or in progress, or mineral rights are held by mineral patent or valid claim with the intention of mining.

**Mine Subsidence** – A type of underground coal mining is “room and pillar” where coal veins were excavated in large areas (rooms) with spaced columns (pillars) to support the ceiling of the room. When the excavation of the room was complete the pillars containing coal would be removed allowing the ceiling of the room to collapse which can result in voids in the geologic strata that can result in layer failure causing the surface land to subside.

**Mitigation** – In action that will have one or more of the following effects: 1) Avoiding an impact by not taking a certain action or parts of an action; 2) Minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action or its implementation; 3) Rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating or restoring the impact area, facility or service; 4) Reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations; 5) Compensating for the impact by replacing or providing suitable biological and physical conditions and by replacing or providing suitable services and facilities.

**Mixed Use Zone** – A zone district that allows some combination of housing, commercial, office, industrial, and other land uses on a single site. An example would be housing units combined with retail and restaurant uses.

**Natural Resources** – Reflect the changing nature of the surface of the earth and geologic time scale as it played out in what is now Fremont County and includes locations where dinosaurs and other fossils were discovered, unique geologic formations such as the Royal Gorge and Skyline Drive were formed and locations where material resulting in oil, coal, limestone, etc. was deposited.

**Object** – Is used to distinguish from buildings and structures those constructions that are primarily artistic in nature or are relatively small in scale. District possesses a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, and/or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development.

**Open Space** – Essentially undeveloped land that is designated and protected from development by legislation, regulation, purchase or condition of approval. Normally established for the preservation of unique natural features, wildlife habitat, public health and safety or outdoor recreation.

**Overlay Zone** – A zoning district encompassing one or more underlying zones and that imposes requirements above and beyond that required by the underlying zone. Overlay zones are usually placed on properties due to a circumstance unique to that area, a hazard like mine subsidence that requires caution in development, a special land use like an airport that requires more specific restrictions, or for a unique natural feature like a special wildlife habitat that requires protection.

**Paleontological** – The scientific study of life existing in former geologic periods, as represented by plant and animal fossils.

**Paleontological Resources** – Reflect the changing nature of the surface of the earth and geologic time scale as it played out in what is now Fremont County and includes locations

where dinosaurs and other fossils were discovered, unique geologic formations such as the Royal Gorge and Skyline Drive were formed and locations where material resulting in oil, coal, limestone, etc. was deposited.

**Planned Unit Development** – An area specified by resolution which is to be planned, developed, operated and maintained as a single entity allowing a developer to mix different types of land use such as housing, shopping, recreation, business and so forth. Subdivision and zoning controls as well as density loads are applied to the whole project rather than to individual lots, allowing for clustering, reduced setback and coverage requirements and more open space.

**Planning Commission** – A local body established by law and regulation that makes land use recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners. Members are appointed by the Board of County Commissioners.

**Planning Districts (Master Plan)** – Areas within Fremont County that share issues, values, land uses or geography. Master Plan Planning Districts are determined by the County Planning Commission and principally have implications for patterns of land uses. Planning District boundaries are described in the Master Plan, with objectives important to each area and strategies providing guidance to accomplish the objective through land use planning procedures.

**Receiving Areas** – In a Transfer of Development Rights Program, receiving areas are designated to receive density transfers that have been granted or sold by a landowner in a sending area to a purchaser. This new owner may then apply the development right to increase the density of structures he or she builds within the receiving area beyond the allowable density for that zone district.

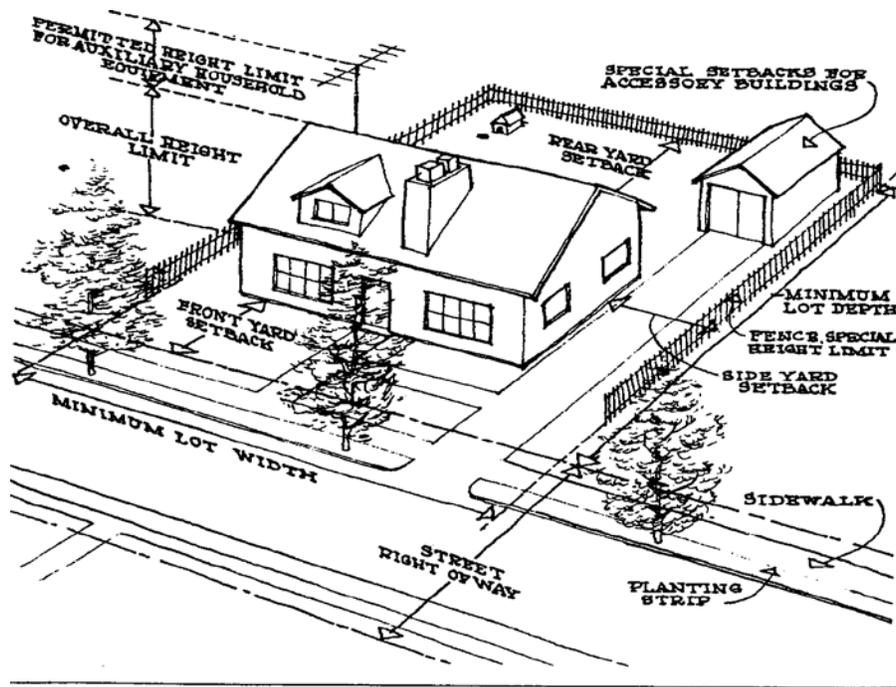
**Right-of-way** – Normally a strip of land occupied or intended to be occupied by certain transportation and public use facilities, such as, but not limited to, roadways, railroads and utility lines with ownership vested with a local governing authority or the entity using the land.

**Scenic Byways** – A designated unit of the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration's National Scenic Byways Program, or of the Colorado Department of Transportation's Colorado State Scenic Byways Program. The State program also includes five routes designated "Backcountry Byways", managed in cooperation with the Bureau of Land Management. Fremont County's Gold Belt Tour is one of these five.

*Scenic Corridors – A non-technical term used to describe many of Fremont County's scenic canyon roadways and the areas viewable from the roadway.*

**Sending Areas** – In a Transfer of Development Rights Program, property owners in sending areas may sell development rights from their lands inside the area to willing buyers. The development rights may then be applied to increase the allowable density for development on lands in sending areas. Lands in sending areas from which development rights have been sold are then legally withdrawn from construction of new development specified in the development right sale.

**Setback Requirements** - The requirements of local zoning regulations setting the distance that a building or structure must be from a lot or property line, easement or street. Setback requirements are included as part of the zoning resolution; and they often differ between zoning districts dependent on property size, public utility availability and allowed uses. Within a zoning resolution, setbacks define the building envelope, establish required yards and indicate permitted uses in each yard.



**Shaft** – An underground vertical or inclined passageway; a vertical or near vertical tunnel from the top down; a vertical passage used in some underground mines as access, more commonly used as mine ventilation to move fresh air underground and to remove stale air.

**Signage Ordinance (or Resolution)** – While there are numerous restrictions protecting free speech, local governments have the power to regulate many aspects of private and commercial signage as part of their authority to impose aesthetic controls in land use. Sign ordinances can regulate the overall size, width, height, color, illumination, and number of signs permissible both on-site and off-site of the promoted premises.

**Site** – Is the location of a significant event, a prehistoric or historical occupation or activity.

**Stewardship of Land** – The responsibility to care, plan, manage and conserve the land resource, to protect its integrity and value into the future.

**Stormwater Drainage** – Surface water generated from precipitation that does not leach into the ground and flows overland.

**Structure** – Is used to distinguish from buildings those functional constructions made usually for purposes other than creating human shelter and includes bridges, tunnels, dams, railroad grades, etc.

**Sub-Area Plan** – A Land Use Plan for a specific area of the County, equivalent to or smaller than a Planning District.

**Transfer of Development Rights** - A land development control tool used to preserve open space, unique natural features, wildlife habitat and farmland while directing development to suitable areas; TDR's involve the removal of the right to build or otherwise develop land in one "sending area" to land in another "receiving area" where such transfer is permitted.

**Up-Zoning** – The process of changing a zoning designation from a less intensive to a more intensive use.

**Urban Densities** – Densities of dwelling or business units per acre that are typical of urban areas. Single-family urban densities in Fremont County would be 8,500 square feet minimum lot size or just over 5 dwellings per acre and commercial urban densities of 7,500 square feet minimum lot size or just under 6 units per acre with access to public water and sewer service.

**Use Permit** - A use permit is issued for uses that are allowable within a zone district when conditions and requirements are placed on the use in order to minimize its impact to the neighborhood. Fremont County has three types of use permits: **1)** Special Review Use Permits are for uses that would have an undeterminable life and could allow for a permanent use; **2)** Conditional Use Permits are for uses that would have a determinable life and would be concluded within an estimated time frame; **3)** Temporary Use Permits are for uses that would have a short life.

**Viewshed** - An area exposed to the sight or lying within the range of vision from a specified point. Some viewsheds have recognized “visual values” which are thought worthy of protection through “visual resource management”.

**Viewshed Protection Zones** – Proposed areas where the viewshed is managed. These are proposed for designation in Fremont County through roadway and stream corridors in BLM Visual Quality Class II areas of the county. Only the middle ground and background of a viewshed protection zone would be managed.

**Zone District** – Zones Districts are geographic areas where a specific type of use has been established for existing buildings and land as well as future development. The type of uses allowed within a zone is governed by that zone’s “zoning regulations.” These regulations govern height, sizes and location of buildings, the number of dwelling units that can exist on a property. Zoning regulations may govern other activities as well, such as tree planting or car parking. A local government’s planning department will be able to provide information on allowed uses and other requirements for particular zones.

## **References**

*Visual Resource Management Training Module.* U.S.D.I. Bureau of Land Management.

*Common Land Use Terms and Issues.* Institute for Local Self Government. 1400 K Street, Suite 400, Sacramento, California 95841.

*Plan On It: A Citizen’s Guide to Land Use.* Colorado State University: Summit County Cooperative Extension Office.

*The Colorado Model Land Use Code of 2008*

*The California General Plan Glossary.*

## *Appendix D* – Public Meeting Input Summary

Three public meetings were held in April of 2015 to take input regarding the draft Master Plan revision. These meetings were to enable to give the public an opportunity to express their opinion on the draft revision orally. Each meeting was started with a brief presentation regarding what the plan was about, the changes with reference to a mining section being added to Chapter Four and the changes in planning district boundaries, that it was a living document that could be amended, that it was visionary not regulatory and it gave a guideline for the Planning Commission, Board of County Commissioners and Department of Planning and Zoning staff to reference during review of land use and subdivision applications.

The first meeting was held in Florence at the City of Florence's Municipal Building on April 13<sup>th</sup>. There were eighteen members of the public in attendance mainly from the general areas of Florence and Penrose. There were concerns expressed regarding a lack of discussion in the plan of the marijuana industry in Fremont County. It was explained that at present the Board of County Commissioners had decided to handle medical marijuana dispensaries and grow operations through a licensing process, rather than land use applications. The Board has decided not to allow recreational marijuana dispensaries or grow operations in Fremont County. Therefore the Planning Commission felt that it was not appropriate to address in the Master Plan at this time. There was discussion about what was felt by a few of the attendees as a lack of public input and opportunity for public to have input regarding the plan. It was explained that there had been an internet survey previously and that was what this series of meetings were intended to accomplish. Some of the attendees wanted a longer time frame for written content. There were concerns expressed about water resources in the Penrose area both for residential and agricultural needs. There were concerns expressed regarding sewage disposal in the Penrose area. It was explained that the Commission had no authority or resources to address water and sanitation other than to support and encourage the agencies and entities that do have the authority in these matters to do what they can to rectify the issues.

The second meeting was held in Cañon City at the Fremont County Administration Building on April 14<sup>th</sup>. There were seventeen members of the public in attendance mainly from the Cañon City, Penrose and Tallahassee (*a rural area in northwest Fremont County*) Areas. There was discussion as spoke to previously regarding marijuana and water and sewer issues in the Penrose area. There was conversation in reference to mining and oil drilling in the County and how the Master Plan may affect those industries. It was stated that those types of operations have to take place where the resources are and that the Master Plan's intent was not to restrict those uses but to encourage compatibility between those uses and the other existing and potential uses in the area of the operations. There were concerns expressed specifically about potential uranium mining in the Tallahassee area and its potential to affect the ground water in the area. It was explained that water issues and mining were addressed by the Colorado Division of Water Resources, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and the Colorado Division of Reclamation Mining & Safety. The Commission nor the Master Plan would have authority to supersede those agencies authority regarding ground water, water usage and mining or drilling. It was explained that there had been a mining section added to the plan with this revision and that it encourages that these and other compatibility issues be addressed when a land use application for those types of uses are made with the County. There were concerns expressed about the Cotter Uranium Mill site and its status as a federal superfund site and that it should be discussed in the plan. Since the Mill, which is not currently in operation, status has changed several times over the last few years, it would be difficult to address in the plan. Again there were concerns about public input and the time

frame for written input to be allowed. The Commission expressed their intent to extend the time frame for written public input.

The third meeting was held in Coaldale (*unincorporated community in the Arkansas River valley of western Fremont County*) at the Coaldale Community Center on April 16<sup>th</sup>. There was between fifteen and twenty members of the public in attendance (*the number varied due to weather conditions that night*) mainly from the Coaldale area. Again there were concerns expressed regarding the marijuana industry. Water rights and the ability of property owners to sell their water rights, as a severed interest, was of major concern and whether it could be addressed in the Master Plan. It was explained that water law in Colorado did allow for water rights to be a severed interest similar to mineral rights. This procedure was a legal process that did not necessarily involve land use applications with the County and since the plan is not regulatory it could only encourage agricultural water to remain with agricultural land, which it does. There was conversation regarding “The Heritage Conservation Fund” in Chapter 6 of the existing plan and the proposed revision. It was discussed as to whether or not this program could be used to purchase/fund conservation easement programs. It was stated that was one of the intended purposes when the concept of putting the reference in the existing plan but the County has not been able to fund the program. The Commission decided to leave the reference to the fund in the revision, hoping that at some point in time the County would be able to fund the program. The next subject that was discussed was the possibility of the County adopting “dark sky” regulations (*regulations regarding night time light pollution*). Light pollution is becoming an issue in some of the rural portions of Fremont County. There are references in the draft plan that encourage dark sky initiatives. As far as regulations, it was suggested that concerned citizens put together a request for such regulations and present that to the Commission, Department of Planning and Zoning or the Board of County Commissioners and see if the interest is there to put together a program. Not only would there have to be regulations in place, but also a program for enforcement of the regulations. The Commission expressed their intent to extend the time frame for written public input.