Table of Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan:

The 2018 Arapahoe County Comprehensive Plan, adopted by the Planning Commission on January 6, 2017, has been amended as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case #</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Resolution</th>
<th>Approval Date/Effective Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LR18-003</td>
<td>Administrative Amendment to Urban Area Land Use Map to include a portion of the Copperleaf Commercial Area into the Regional Commercial Land Use Category</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>May 16, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LR18-004</td>
<td>Administrative Amendment to revise the Urban Area Land Use Map for six areas to reflect developed land uses in these seven areas.</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>November 8, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LR19-004</td>
<td>Administrative Amendment to include townhomes and row houses in the description of Multi-Family in the Land Use Category descriptions in Chapter III.</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>October 16, 2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Table of Contents

## I. INTRODUCTION
- PURPOSE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ................................................................. 5
- AUTHORIZATION ........................................................................................................... 5
- PLAN PREPARATION ..................................................................................................... 5
- PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ............................................................................................... 6
- COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONTEXT ........................................................................... 6
- RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS ............................................................................... 7
  - 2035 TRANSPORTATION PLAN .............................................................................. 8
  - OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN .................................................................................. 9
  - BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN ................................................................. 10
  - MULTI-HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN .................................................................... 11
- SUB-AREA PLANS ........................................................................................................ 12
  - DENVER REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (DRCOG) METRO VISION 2040 13

## II. VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES
- OUR VISION .................................................................................................................. 17
- COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GUIDING PRINCIPLES ...................................................... 18
  - GROWTH MANAGEMENT ....................................................................................... 18
  - PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES ................................................................. 19
  - NEIGHBORHOOD LIVABILITY ............................................................................ 19
  - ECONOMIC HEALTH ............................................................................................... 20
  - TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY ................................................................... 20
  - NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY 21

## III. DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK AND LAND USE
- INTRODUCTION ............................................................................................................ 22
- DESIGNATED GROWTH AREAS .................................................................................. 23
  - URBAN AREA .......................................................................................................... 23
  - RURAL TOWN CENTER PLANNING AREAS ......................................................... 24
  - INCORPORATED CITIES AND TOWNS ................................................................. 24
  - RURAL AREA .......................................................................................................... 24
    - TIERS 1 AND 2 .................................................................................................. 24
    - URBAN RESERVE ............................................................................................. 25
    - TIER 3 ............................................................................................................... 26
    - REGIONAL WASTE DISPOSAL SITE ............................................................... 26
  - RIPARIAN AREAS AND SENSITIVE DEVELOPMENT AREAS ......................... 27
- LAND USE CATEGORIES ............................................................................................. 27
  - RESIDENTIAL LAND USES ............................................................................... 27
  - NON-RESIDENTIAL LAND USES ....................................................................... 29
  - RURAL AREA USES ............................................................................................. 34
IV. GOALS, POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW
ORGANIZATION
COUNTYWIDE GOALS AND POLICIES
GROWTH MANAGEMENT
URBAN DEVELOPMENT
REGIONAL COOPERATION
NATURAL AND MAN-MADE HAZARDS
PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES
PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY
WASTEWATER TREATMENT
STORMWATER MANAGEMENT
ON-SITE UTILITIES
PUBLIC SAFETY
SCHOOLS
LIBRARIES
ADEQUACY OF PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES
LOCAL AND REGIONAL PUBLIC FACILITIES AND UTILITY FACILITIES
SOLID WASTE
ACCESS TO COUNTY INFORMATION
NEIGHBORHOOD LIVABILITY
NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER AND DESIGN
HOUSING
OPEN SPACE, PARKS AND TRAILS
ECONOMIC HEALTH
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY
TOURISM
TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY
MOBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY
ALTERNATIVE MODES
LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION
NEW TECHNOLOGY
NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
NATURAL AREAS
CULTURAL RESOURCES
WATER QUALITY
AIR QUALITY
SUSTAINABILITY
MINERAL RESOURCE EXTRACTION
SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL
RURAL AREA GOALS AND POLICIES
GROWTH MANAGEMENT
PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES
NEIGHBORHOOD LIVABILITY
ECONOMIC HEALTH
TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY
NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
I. Introduction

PURPOSE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

A Comprehensive Plan is an official public document that guides land use and growth and development decisions. The Arapahoe County Comprehensive Plan looks beyond pressing current issues to provide a perspective on opportunities for the future. The Plan envisions what we want our County to be like in the future, and charts a course to get there. The Plan illustrates a generalized pattern of future land use, serves as a policy and strategy guide to update the County’s land use regulations, and establishes the foundation for new programs. This 2018 Comprehensive Plan updates and replaces the 2001 Arapahoe County Comprehensive Plan, as amended.

Because much of the land in the western one-fourth of the County is already developed or situated within municipal boundaries, this Plan emphasizes the creation of a framework for future development in the eastern three-fourths of the County.

The Plan is advisory, not regulatory, and should not be confused with the County’s zoning and subdivision regulations (the Land Development Code) or Capital Improvements Program (CIP). These are all more specific and detailed ordinances and programmatic documents that implement the goals and policies contained within this Plan.

AUTHORIZATION

In the State of Colorado, counties have the authority to plan for and regulate the use of land pursuant to Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S) 29-20-104. The general purpose of the comprehensive plan, as set out in C.R.S 30-28-108, is to guide and coordinate harmonious development of the County to promote health, safety, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the residents, in accordance with present and future needs and resources. The contents of a comprehensive plan are established in C.R.S. 30-28-16. A comprehensive plan is an official public document adopted by a quasi-legislative body, the Arapahoe County Planning Commission.

PLAN PREPARATION

The first phase of Plan preparation involved the identification of issues and opportunities, updating the inventory of existing conditions, and updating mapping. Staff reviewed the goals and policies of existing documents as well as the factors influencing change, such as population growth trends and projections, history of land use patterns and development trends, service district capacities, land capacity and location of sensitive resources. Appendix B provides detailed information on the planning influences which contributed to developing this Plan.

Evaluation of the 2001 Comprehensive Plan along with the amendments adopted in 2012, 2014 and 2015 concluded that the vison, guiding principles, and goals represented best practices in planning and growth management and no major deviations from the policy direction or growth philosophy for Arapahoe County were warranted. The growth philosophy directs growth of an urban intensity to the Urban Area, incorporated cities and towns and the Rural Town Centers of Strasburg and Byers. These areas have adequate infrastructure planned or in place to accommodate growth in an efficient and cost-effective manner. Lower intensity rural residential
development is appropriate for the eastern portion of the County where infrastructure cannot accommodate urban development. Agricultural activities are preserved in the eastern portion of the County. Adopting this same basic philosophy, the 2001 Plan was used as a basis for preparing the 2018 update.

Review was requested by County Departments and referral agencies, with comments and suggested changes incorporated into a public review draft that was made available on the County’s website beginning on October 20, 2017. Notification of its availability was published in The Villager Newspaper on November 2, 2017 and the I-70 Scout newspaper on October 31, 2017. A press release covering the availability of the Plan and how to submit comments appeared in the I-70 Scout on November 6, 2017.

As the entity responsible for adopting the Plan, the Arapahoe County Planning Commission served as the project’s primary review body, and began review of the draft document in July 2017. The Board of County Commissioners, who set the basic policy direction for the County, were briefed on the status of the update effort during two study sessions with County staff.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

During preparation and review of the Plan, the public had the opportunity to submit comments and suggestions online during the period from October 20 to November 27, 2017 and again beginning on December 14, 2017 through January 9, 2018. All comments were reviewed and many were incorporated into the Public Hearing draft of the Plan presented to Planning Commission for adoption on January 9, 2018.

The final round of comments and public input on the draft Plan was received at the public hearing conducted by the Planning Commission as required by C.R.S. 30-28-108. The Commission adopted the Plan by resolution on January 9, 2018.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONTEXT

Arapahoe County was Colorado’s first county. Originally a part of the Louisiana Purchase, it was one of the original 17 Colorado counties established in 1861 when the Colorado Territory was formed. Arapahoe County is named after the larger Plains Indian tribes that lived and hunted in the region for centuries before settlers began migrating west. In the 1820’s trappers began to permanently settle the area. In 1832, traders built the first trading post along Cherry Creek. About 1859, irrigated farming began when an irrigation ditch was built along Bear Creek. During the same era, large homestead farming and ranching occurred.
The first urban development began in 1872 along present-day U.S. Highway 85. The City of Littleton, which later became the County seat, incorporated in 1872. By 1970 – nearly a century later – the population of Arapahoe County had grown to 162,100 people, compelling the County to develop the first Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Arapahoe County first adopted a Comprehensive Plan in 1972 because it was experiencing growth pressures in the area generally west of Smoky Hill and Chambers Road. The County amended the 1972 Plan nineteen (19) times before adopting a new Comprehensive Plan in 1985.

The 2001 Comprehensive Plan replaced and updated the 1985 Plan. In 2001, the City of Centennial incorporated. At the time it was the single largest incorporation in the nation at 27 square miles. This incorporation meant Arapahoe County no longer had land use and zoning authority for those 27 square miles. The County adopted amendments to the 2001 Comprehensive Plan in 2002, 2012, 2014 and 2015.


The City of Aurora last adopted its Comprehensive Plan in 2010, but is in the process of preparing a new plan scheduled to be adopted sometime in 2018. Likewise, the City of Centennial is undertaking a 12-18 month process to update its first Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2004. The City of Greenwood Village Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2004 and was updated most recently in 2015. The Town of Bennett updated its Comprehensive Plan in 2015 as did the City of Sheridan. The Town of Bow Mar adopted its Community Plan in the same year. The City of Englewood adopted an updated Comprehensive Plan in 2016.

The Denver Metropolitan Area is projected to continue to grow, with an expected increase of one million residents and 600,000 jobs by 2040. There is limited developable land available in the western and southern portions of the metro area to accommodate growth; however, there are few physical barriers to development in Arapahoe County. The plans of Front Range Airport together with the presence of Interstate 70 contribute to the expectation that growth will continue to occur in Arapahoe County, primarily in the portion of the County west of Watkins Road and in the incorporated cities and towns and unincorporated towns. The County is using a population forecast of 875,000 for the entire County in the year 2040, with a population of 195,000 in the unincorporated areas. County employment is forecasted to increase to 525,000, an increase of 171,000 jobs from the 2015 level of 196,000. Most of the job growth is anticipated along the I-25 corridor (80,000 new jobs), followed by the eastern plains area with a total employment of 50,200 (38,100 new jobs).

Appendix B contains information regarding growth projections and maps of environmental and infrastructure conditions that will influence growth in Arapahoe County. Detailed and current demographic information can be found on the County’s website on the Demographics page located under the Planning and Land Development Division of the Public Works and Development Department.

The Comprehensive Plan is supported by many other planning documents that serve to shape development and the provision of County services. These other documents, together with this Plan, comprise the Arapahoe County Comprehensive Plan. The County has adopted the following plans that are incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan by reference (dates indicate the most recently adopted plan at the time of Comprehensive Plan approval – thee may be updated from time to time over the life of the Comprehensive Plan):

- 2035 Transportation Plan (adopted in 2010)
- Open Space Master Plan (adopted in 2010)
The goals, policies and strategies of the Comprehensive Plan reflect the key concepts contained in these other planning documents, which are summarized below. These Plans should be referred to for technical analyses, supporting information, and detailed implementation strategies.

**2035 TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

The land uses of an area and the transportation system to serve it cannot be considered in isolation. Zoning for a major employment center, for example, without an adequate road system in place, or plans to put that system in place, leads to congestion, air quality degradation, and lack of mobility. On the other hand, low intensity land uses such as ranching do not demand six-lane arterials to serve their mobility needs. Therefore, land use and transportation needs must be planned in concert.

The compact development concept of the Comprehensive Plan is intended to encourage shorter trips and alternative modes of travel (i.e., pedestrian, bicycle and transit, in addition to automobiles) throughout the County. Comprehensive Plan policies advocate increasing alternatives to the automobile and promoting land use patterns that support transit. As a result, transit services which connect nodes along the corridors should be an integral part of transportation system improvements.

The 2035 Transportation Plan for Arapahoe County focuses on the transportation needs of unincorporated areas, with an emphasis on the eastern portion of the County. The Transportation Plan identifies the roadways that should be developed during the short and long terms to adequately meet the traffic generated by planned land uses.

The Transportation Plan contains recommendations concerning the classification of streets and roadways in the County, along with recommended roadway cross-sections. Maps illustrating the recommended network of urban expressways, arterials and collectors along with rural arterial, collector and secondary roadways follow the Development Framework Maps and the Urban Area Land Use Plan Map in Chapter III.

Improvements to roadways in the western portion of the County are necessary to meet projected travel demand resulting from population and employment growth. Improvements consist of road widening, intersection or interchange improvements, bicycle/pedestrian improvements, and new roadway connections. The Plan addresses strategies such as travel demand management (TDM), traffic systems management, intelligent transportation systems (ITS), and alternative modes of transportation, such as bicycle and transit, and includes recommendations for changes to County standards or policies. For detailed recommendations, see the 2035 Transportation Plan.

The roadway system proposed in the eastern portion of the County provides a network of existing north-south roads generally connecting I-70 and Colfax Avenue to 6th Avenue, Quincy Avenue and County Line Road. Quincy Avenue is proposed to be extended south and east to potentially align with Woodis Road to connect to Deer Trail. Other than Watkins and Manilla Roads, these north-south roads will be two lanes. The proposed network will be necessary to accommodate current demands and the additional traffic generated as the Rural Town Centers and surrounding areas grow. The widely-spaced roadway grid will only serve development that is rural in nature. Any higher density development will be required to provide substantial roadway improvements.
The Transportation Plan also identified potential transit corridors along E-470, Parker Road, and I-70 to Bennett. Potential pedestrian/bicycle improvements were identified along Parker Road, E-470 Orchard Road/Piney Creek, Chambers Road, Broncos Parkway (Chambers to Parker Road) and Quincy Avenue.

The Transportation Plan and the policies of the Comprehensive Plan are essential tools to be used in the review of development applications, in the preparation of the County’s Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and to provide input into the regional planning process and project selection for local/regional/federal funding processes. Long term maintenance needs for existing and proposed infrastructure were identified as well as potential funding solutions.

The Transportation Plan contains recommendations for street and roadway classifications and improvements. In support of these recommendations, the Comprehensive Plan contains policies directing growth to areas where road infrastructure can accommodate the development, otherwise impacts must be mitigated. Development applications are required to include an analysis of the adequacy of the adjacent and nearby roadway network to accommodate the proposed development. Even if sufficient capacity exists in the roadway, the analysis may show the need for turn lanes, signalization or other improvements. Approval criteria generally enable the County to require these improvements. For major projects with substantial impacts, right-of-way dedication and the construction of multi-lane roadways are common.

In addition to the Transportation Plan, the following plans and studies provide details about the future County transportation system:

- Arapahoe Rd/ I-25 System Feasibility Study
- County Line Road Improvement Study - Chester to Inverness Drive South (Douglas County Lead)
- Dry Creek Road/I-25 Operations Study - Yosemite to Easter (Joint w/City of Centennial & Southeast Public Improvement Metropolitan District)
- I-25/Belleview Interchange System Study
- Santa Fe/85 & County Line South - Environmental Assessment (EA)/Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) - (Douglas County Lead)
- 6th Avenue Environmental Assessment (City of Aurora Lead)
- Speer/Leetsdale Mobility Study (City and County of Denver Lead)
- State Highway 79 / Kiowa-Bennett Road Planning Environmental Linkage (PEL)
- Iliff Ave. Corridor Study
- Parker Road Corridor Study
- Parker/Quincy/Smoky Hill (City of Aurora Lead)
- Yale Ave. Corridor Study (City and County of Denver Lead)

OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN

The Open Space Master Plan builds upon the successful accomplishments of the Arapahoe County Open Space Program since its passage in 2003 and subsequent re-authorization in 2013. The mission of the program is to “protect Arapahoe County’s treasured parks, trails, and open space for residents to enjoy today and forever.” To accomplish this mission, the County will acquire, conserve, protect and steward strategic land and water resources necessary to establish an interconnected network of open space, parks and trails.

In order to meet increased demands that accompany population growth and the consumption of land for the built environment, the Open Space Master Plan recommends the County take pro-active steps to conserve and protect vital open space resources – defined as “natural infrastructure” -- that will ensure an adequate supply of natural
landscapes, parks and trails to meet future needs, shape new development patterns and define a quality living
environment for future generations. The Master Plan sets out a framework for implementing the Open Space
Program vision and mission. The framework recognizes three distinct districts of the County: western, middle and
eastern.

The focus for the western third of the County is placed on “closing gaps” in the existing open space, parks and
trails system to meet current and future needs of residents. The Master Plan recommends placing a greater
emphasis on public access, diversity of recreational offerings, connectivity of trail and greenways and quantity of
parks, open spaces and trails. For the middle third of the County, where land development is now occurring, the
GOAL is to establish a “greenprint” comprised of conserved land and water resources as well as an
interconnected network of parks, designated heritage areas and trails, in order to define a framework for
accommodating growth. Assets to consider in creating this “greenprint” include riparian corridors, the Aurora
Reservoir, Arapahoe County Fairgrounds and Regional Park, State Land Board Lands, grasslands, and east-west
roadway corridors such as Quincy. The eastern third of the County will remain predominantly rural during the
timeframe of the Comprehensive Plan. The County will work with rural landowners and communities to conserve
land and water resources to ensure a viable rural lifestyle and enable landowners who wish to continue farming
and ranching activities.

The policies and strategies of the Comprehensive Plan align with the goals and implementation framework of the
Open Space Master Plan. While the goals and vision of the Open Space Plan are broad and countywide, the
Comprehensive Plan policies and strategies will aid in providing site-specific open space, parks and trails during
the development review process. Required land dedications or construction of trail segments will incrementally
provide the missing links or build upon the existing networks, which ultimately achieve the vision and goals of the
Open Space Master Plan.

BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN

The Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan (BPMP) elaborates on walking and bicycling concepts identified in the 2010
Arapahoe County Open Space Master Plan and the Arapahoe County 2035 Transportation Plan. A major focus of
the BPMP is improving the existing countywide network and developing new facilities to provide for improved and
safer bicycle and pedestrian commuting and recreational opportunities.

The major component of the BPMP is a comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian transportation network that could
consist of a variety of facilities such as pathways, trails, bike lanes, shared lanes, multi-use pathways, storm water
maintenance paths, easements, and other facilities. Implementation of the Plan over time will provide an efficient
alternative transportation system for those who choose to use it for commuting, recreation, and/or errands. The
Plan includes prioritized infrastructure projects needed to provide a comprehensive network.

The BPMP is the County’s first coordinated effort to plan connected bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout
the entire County, including municipalities, and to connect with areas outside of Arapahoe County. The proposed
network includes many missing gaps and the Plan strategically identifies the safest future connections to the
bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure already in place.

The proposed projects needed to complete the network are long term and vary in cost. Funding for the proposed
projects will come from many sources. The Plan’s proposed network and recommended projects provide a tool
for Arapahoe County and its municipalities to use to secure funding by demonstrating significant need as a result
of the BPMP planning and prioritization process.
The BPMP is intended to serve as a strategic plan to provide guidance to decision-makers when considering transportation improvements and connections between open spaces. The BPMP identifies alternatives/options and will assist in developing short- and long-term strategies for implementation of a complete bicycle/pedestrian network that is consistent with area land use plans.

MULTI-HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

In 2010, Arapahoe County adopted the Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan prepared by the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG). The County followed this planning effort with the preparation and adoption of the Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan in 2015. The Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) provides the blueprint for Arapahoe County and participating municipalities to become less vulnerable to natural hazards. The Mitigation Strategy provides goals that serve as guiding principles for future mitigation policies and project administration, along with a list of proposed actions deemed necessary to meet those goals and reduce the impact of natural hazards.

Development of the strategy included a thorough review of natural hazards and identification of policies and projects intended to reduce the future impacts of hazards. Land use information was used to inform the Risk/Vulnerability Assessment and the Mitigation Strategy. The areas identified as suitable for higher density development have not changed dramatically since the 2015 Hazard Mitigation Plan Amendment was adopted; as a result, it is assumed the Risk/Vulnerability Assessment is still valid.

Arapahoe County is vulnerable to the following natural hazards: severe winter storms, severe summer storms (including flash flooding, hail, lightning, and tornadoes), extreme temperatures, wildfires and drought. It is also vulnerable to pandemic events, which would be handled in conjunction with Tri-County Health Department. Technological hazards such as dam failures or hazardous materials spills are possible and would have potentially catastrophic consequences, but they are considered relatively low risk. The County’s Hazard Mitigation Plan only focuses on the natural hazards while the North Central Region Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) is more inclusive of all types of threats and hazards, including human driven hazards such as acts of terrorism and civil disturbances. The Hazard Mitigation Plan only included FEMA-mapped flood hazard areas in the risk assessment and plan. There are additional flood hazard areas that have been mapped by the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District (UDFCD), approved by the Colorado Water Conservation Board as regulatory floodplains, and regulated under the County's floodplain regulations.

Responses to hazard occurrences may be handled by the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) in the Sheriff’s Office according to procedures and processes outlined in the County’s Emergency Operations Plan. During an emergency, the Office activates and manages the Emergency Operations Center. Assistance is requested from other county or city agencies, mutual aid partners and the State as warranted. Some participating municipalities have their own emergency operations plans and centers that are activated when needed.

Six categories of mitigation actions were considered in developing the hazard mitigation action plan:

- **Prevention:** Administrative or regulatory actions or processes that influence the way land and buildings are developed and built.
- **Property Protection:** Actions that involve modifying or removing existing buildings or infrastructure to protect them from a hazard
- **Public Education and Awareness:** Actions to inform and educate citizens, elected officials and property owners about potential risks from hazards and potential ways to mitigate them.
- **Natural Resource Protection:** Actions that in addition to minimizing hazard losses also preserve or restore the functions of natural systems.
• **Structural Project Implementation:** Mitigation projects intended to lessen the impact of a hazard by using structures to modify the environment.

• **Emergency Services:** Actions that are often taken prior to, during or in response to an emergency or disaster and typically are not considered mitigation techniques, but reduce the impacts of a hazard event on people and property.

These mitigation actions are integrated into the Comprehensive Plan policies and strategies, where appropriate, to enhance the County’s ability to avoid, mitigate, respond to and recover from a hazard event. Many of the areas where hazards exist in the County are already identified and regulated, such as floodplains. Numerous areas exhibit a high risk of wildfire and are also wildlife habitats, which are encouraged to remain undeveloped as open space. Much of the eastern two-thirds of the County is slated to remain in agricultural use. All of these Comprehensive Plan strategies and regulations minimize the exposure of urban development to hazards and the associated risks to life and property. Many of the other hazards cannot be addressed through zoning or subdivision regulations (temperature extremes and tornadoes, for example), but can be addressed through various building codes.

The increase in the frequency and severity of heat, drought, insect outbreaks, wildfire, and flooding are key weather-related concerns for Colorado. These severe weather related conditions pose significant challenges for an already arid region that is expected to get hotter and significantly drier, further emphasizing the importance of integrating land use planning with hazard mitigation, water supply and conservation, landscaping requirements and allowances for alternative energy generation.

**SUB-AREA PLANS**

After adoption of the 2001 Plan, the County prepared sub-area plans for Strasburg (adopted 2002), Byers (adopted 2003), the Four Square Mile Area (adopted 2005) and the Lowry Range (adopted 2007). All of these subarea plans were adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan and remain incorporated into this update by reference. Community Needs Assessments were completed for Strasburg and Byers in 2007 and 2009, respectively, and concluded the sub-area plans still reflected the goals, desires and growth potential of those two communities. The Sub-area Plans for Strasburg and Byers address growth boundaries, public facilities and services, land use patterns, transportation, resource conservation and fiscal impacts. The Sub-area Plans for the Four Square Mile Area and the Lowry Range address local development challenges and opportunities. A portion of the Planning Reserve for the Watkins area established in the 2012 Comprehensive Plan Amendment has been incorporated into the Urban Area and Urban Reserve in this 2018 Update.

The Sub-area Plans provide further refinement of the desired land uses and densities for the Rural Town Centers of Byers and Strasburg, the Lowry Range and the Four Square Mile Area indicated on the Development Framework Map. Sub-area Plans must be used in conjunction with this Comprehensive Plan in order to gain a thorough understanding of the vision and desired future for these sub-areas.
DENVER REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (DRCOG) METRO VISION 2040

Metro Vision 2040 is the regional planning document for the Denver Metropolitan Region, prepared by the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG). The document is advisory only and is a tool to promote regional cooperation on issues that extend beyond jurisdictional boundaries. Metro Vision establishes shared regional expectations by outlining broad outcomes and objectives. Established regional performance measures and targets enable the region to track the progress in moving toward desired outcomes. Outcomes and objectives are organized under the following overarching themes:

- **An Efficient and Predictable Development Pattern**
- **A Connected Multimodal Region**
- **A Safe and Resilient Natural and Built Environment**
- **Healthy, Inclusive, and Livable Communities**
- **A Vibrant Regional Economy**

To equip local governments to take action to achieve regional outcomes, Metro Vision describes the types of improvements and contributions available to local governments, which are labeled strategic initiatives. These initiatives are voluntary actions, policies or investments local jurisdictions may implement either on their own or in collaboration with DRCOG and others.

The Arapahoe County Comprehensive Plan vision, principles and goals mirror the aspirations and outcomes of the region. The Comprehensive Plan includes recommended policies and strategies that reflect a majority of the voluntary strategic initiatives included in Metro Vision. In addition, the County has adopted numerous development regulations and design standards that implement many of the Metro Vision strategic initiatives. Key policies and strategies are summarized below:

**An Efficient and Predictable Development Pattern**
- The Urban Area and Rural Town Center Planning Areas provide a framework for managing growth. Development outside the Urban Area and Rural Town Centers is restricted to rural residential and agricultural uses. The Urban Reserve preserves opportunities for development beyond 2040.
- Goals, policies and strategies support a compact, mixed use development pattern which encourage land uses that support transit, a range of housing options and elements of the built environment that make neighborhoods livable and sustainable.
- Strategies call for the preservation of natural, scenic, and cultural resources; others call for regulations and incentives to limit development in sensitive areas and areas with significant natural resources and to incorporate natural features into new development plans.
- The Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Plan align land use and the transportation system by directing growth to areas served adequately by the planned road network.

**A Connected Multimodal Region**
- The County’s Transportation Plan reflects established and future land use patterns.
- Policies include reserving adequate rights-of-way in both urban and rural areas for pedestrian, bicycle, transit and roadway facilities.
- Adopted street and design standards address multimodal connectivity, focusing on pedestrians, bicycles and the needs of mobility-limited populations; policies support existing and potential future transit corridors.
- The Transportation Plan recommends strategies to encourage travel demand management.
The Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan proposes a continuous network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities with connections to regional facilities.

**A Safe and Resilient Natural and Built Environment**
- Policies and strategies aim to protect and enhance air and water quality, protect groundwater from contamination by various uses, support the use of alternative energy and alternative modes of travel, and promote water conservation.
- Key policies and strategies require adequate wastewater treatment systems to serve new urban development along with adequate, long-term, renewable water supplies.
- The Open Space Master Plan calls for the development of parks of various sizes and focuses on the completion of linkages to the region’s parks, trails and open spaces.
- A vast majority of existing agricultural land is preserved by directing growth to Designated Growth Areas; policies and strategies support the preservation of agricultural lands and operations through various means. Policies and current regulations support agritourism.
- The County has implemented many of its adopted Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan strategies by regulating floodplains and other hazard areas. Strategies encourage the construction of capital improvements that reduce or eliminate the risk posed by hazards. Included is a strategy to prepare a disaster recovery plan.

**Healthy, Inclusive, and Livable Communities**
- Policies and strategies promote the use of healthy community principles in new development, including actions that increase access to recreation areas or community gathering places, a mix of uses, active public spaces and “complete streets” that promote a safe and comfortable pedestrian environment.
- Local food production is encouraged. Adopted regulations permit community gardens and roadside produce stands.
- The Open Space Master Plan focuses on completing links in the regional trail network; links that enhance connectivity to or within the regional network.
- Policies and strategies support the integration of health services into readily accessible employment and activity centers.
- Policies and strategies promote a variety and mix of housing options, types and densities to meet affordable and accessible workforce and senior housing needs.

**A Vibrant Regional Economy**
- Policies and strategies support economic development in the urban area, but also support agritourism in the rural portion of the County, including the Rural Town Centers.
- Policies and strategies support locating employment, housing and other opportunities directly adjacent to transit stops and stations.
- Investments that will contribute to housing options and mobility enhancements for employment centers are supported by policies and strategies.
- Policies encourage cooperation in regional economic development activities.
- Policies recommend considering incentives to attract certain businesses and employers to the County.

The undeveloped portion of the Urban Area is a priority growth area consistent with the Metro Vision outcome to create an Efficient and Predictable Development Pattern. Metro Vision has been adopted by the DRCOG Board; however, growth allocations have not been addressed. It is not known whether growth allocations for jurisdictions will be revised, replaced or eliminated.
HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

In addition to this introductory chapter, the Plan is organized as follows:

- **CHAPTER II -- VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES.** The Vision and Guiding Principles establish the overall desired direction for growth and development in the County. They form the basis for the Development Framework, which illustrates, along with the text, where the County will encourage growth in the coming years.

- **CHAPTER III -- DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK.** The Development Framework Chapter depicts the desired areas for future growth in the County, and contains the Development Framework Map showing eight basic places organized by Urban and Rural designations. The desired concentration of future urban development is in Designated Growth Areas comprised of the Urban Area, the Rural Town Center Planning Areas, and Incorporated Cities and Towns. Agricultural uses, including residential uses allowed in the Agricultural zone districts, are desired for the Rural Area, which is composed of Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3, the Urban Reserve, and the Regional Waste Disposal Site.

  Chapter III also contains a more detailed land use map for the Urban Area. This map should be used to identify desired land uses in the unincorporated enclaves in the western portion of the County. Descriptions of each land use category illustrated on the Map are provided along with locational criteria. The locational criteria are intended to be used in conjunction with the Urban Area Land Use Map during the development review process to evaluate the appropriateness of proposed land uses at a specific location in the Urban Area.

- **CHAPTER IV -- GOALS, POLICIES AND STRATEGIES.** This Chapter identifies some fundamental choices to guide growth and development and balance competing demands. This Chapter establishes the basic policy direction for the County and is broken down into six categories, or elements, as follows:
  - Growth Management
  - Public Facilities and Services
  - Neighborhood Livability
  - Economic Health
  - Transportation and Mobility
  - Natural and Cultural Resources and Environmental Quality.

  The goals, policies and strategies are organized under two major headings: Countywide and Rural Area. Countywide goals, policies and strategies are applicable to all areas of the County, unless modified by Rural Area goals and policies or Sub-area Plans. In some instances there are policies and strategies addressing specific needs or situations in the Urban Area and Rural Town Centers that are found in the Countywide goals and policies. Sub-area plans should be consulted for goals and policies specific to the Four Square Mile planning area, Lowry Range, Byers and Strasburg.

  Supplemental goals, policies and strategies are established for the Rural Area, organized under the following headings: Tiers 1 and 2, Urban Reserve, Tier 3, and Regional Waste Disposal Site. In some instances, there will not be supplemental goals or policies under the categories noted above, and in such instances, Countywide goals, policies and strategies will apply. In order for the reader to understand the complete vision for various areas of the County, the Countywide goals and policies must be examined in addition to the Rural Area policies or any sub-area plan that may apply.
• CHAPTER V -- IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH. This Chapter defines how each goal and policy identified in this Plan will be achieved by identifying the actions to be taken, such as amending the Land Development Code, starting new programs or pursuing intergovernmental agreements. An Action Plan Matrix, summarizing the recommended actions, responsible parties and priorities, is included in Appendix D.

• CHAPTER VI -- COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVISIONS AND AMENDMENTS. This Chapter outlines the processes and procedures for revisions and amendments to this Comprehensive Plan. Included are procedures for amendments proposed by staff, the Planning Commission, or landowners.

• APPENDICES – Prepared as a separate document, Appendices have been prepared that provide additional information used in the preparation of this Plan. A Glossary is included as Appendix A and is also included in this document for convenience in understanding the various terms used throughout the Plan. Appendix B provides background information which serves as a basis for many of the policies and strategies contained in the Plan. Appendix C is an analysis of Tier 1, while Appendix D is the Action Plan Matrix. Appendix E is a listing of strategies completed from the 2001 Plan. Appendix F is the Fiscal Impact Model and Appendix G is the Eastern Arapahoe County Water Resources Study, both carried over from the 2001 Plan.

AFTER THE PLAN IS ADOPTED

Beyond serving as a guide to future growth and development, the Comprehensive Plan should be used to provide additional guidance in the following ways:

• The Plan should be consulted when reviewing and making decisions on land use and related applications, such as rezonings, uses by special review, location and extent hearings, 1041 applications, and wastewater treatment plant applications. The fundamental question to ask is: Is the application consistent with, or does it implement, the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan? Making land use decisions that are consistent with the Plan incrementally achieves the vision established by the Plan.

• The Plan establishes the foundation for amending the County’s Land Development Code. Regulations related to allowed uses, lot sizes, landscaping, and other elements common to zoning regulations serve to support the Plan’s guiding principles and work to achieve the vision established by the Plan. For example, modifications to agricultural zone district lot sizes may serve to preserve the rural character of the County. Likewise, code provisions requiring sidewalk connections and adequate landscaping increase the livability of neighborhoods, consistent with Plan guiding principles.

• The Plan serves to guide decisions concerning investments in infrastructure or land acquisition. Furthermore, recommendations for improvements to roads, trails and parks provide the basis for budget or grant requests. If approved and the improvement is built, the Comprehensive Plan vision comes one step closer to being achieved.

• The Plan can be the basis for new or revised programs offered by the County. Safe and decent housing may be a concern in portions of the County, and there may be opportunities to expand existing programs to address these needs.

NEXT STEPS

Chapter V contains a list of priority actions for the County to consider in implementing the goals, policies and strategies contained in this 2018 Comprehensive Plan.
II. Vision and Guiding Principles

INTRODUCTION

The Vision and Guiding Principles for Arapahoe County describe the County’s values and aspirations – what kind of place we would like our County to be over the next 20 years. The Guiding Principles build on the County’s best characteristics and identify needed changes in land use patterns that would be an overall improvement for the County. This Vision and associated Guiding Principles were established in the 2001 Comprehensive Plan by compiling information collected through public surveys, open house workshops, County staff comments and direction from elected and appointed officials. Participants in the 2001 planning process identified what they liked about the County and what they would like to see changed in the future, setting the foundation for the Comprehensive Plan. This vision was not altered during the preparation of the 2018 Plan, but greater emphasis was placed on the creation of more livable, healthy communities that are interconnected and built using sustainable development practices. Sensitive and hazardous areas are avoided for development, and the rural agricultural nature of the eastern part of the County is preserved, resulting in a safe and resilient natural and built environment.

This Comprehensive Plan update embodies planning best practices to create sustainable, resilient and healthy communities. **Sustainability** seeks to conservatively and wisely use the common, shared resources and opportunities that exist for current generations with a view to long-term preservation for future generations. **Resilience** is the ability to recover from disruption and change. Resiliency allows a community to respond to and recover from specific disruptive events. **A healthy community** is a community that recognizes the impacts of the built environment on public health by including goals and policies that ensure opportunities for and access to physical activity, healthy food choices, social interaction, increased mobility, and access to health care, while providing a safe and reliable water supply, protection from natural and man-made hazards, housing options that are safe, sanitary and in good condition in safe neighborhoods, access to living wage jobs, and safe streets and modes of travel.

OUR VISION:

ARAPAHOE COUNTY WILL BE A PLACE THAT…

- Values its unique communities, businesses, neighborhoods, and high quality of life.
- Maintains a balance between growth and the natural environment.
- Maintains its rural heritage and character.
- Provides diversified housing opportunities and safe, attractive neighborhoods that provide opportunities and places for social interaction.
- Facilitates expansion of diverse economic development opportunities and jobs.
- Ensures development is in harmony with the environment by conserving natural areas and environmental quality.
- Meets the mobility and transportation needs of residents and visitors.
• Protects its cultural and historic community treasures.
• Ensures sustainable, efficient and improved public services and facilities, including water, wastewater, streets, solid waste removal, fire protection, law enforcement, libraries, schools, parks, trails, and recreation facilities.
• Balances the cost of providing services and facilities with revenue received from development.
• Treats residents fairly in the process of making land use decisions.
• Is fair and equitable in providing for the housing, services, health, safety and livelihood needs of all citizens and groups.
• Collaborates and partners with neighboring jurisdictions and the region to plan for, connect with, and support plans and projects that benefit residents of the County and region.

These outcomes are achieved by integrating the following principles and best practices into the six elements or topics used to organize the goals, policies and strategies presented in Chapter IV: Growth Management, Public Facilities and Services, Economic Health, Transportation and Mobility, and Natural and Cultural Resources and Environmental Quality. The principles and best practices sometimes overlap two, three or more of these elements and there will appear to be redundancy among policies and strategies. The emphasis is slightly different between elements, however, and the apparent repetition serves to emphasize the County’s commitment to creating sustainable, resilient and healthy communities.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following six principles describe the community’s aspirations and establish the general ideals to be sought for the County over the next 20 years. The principles build on the County’s strengths, proposing changes where necessary. These principles are used as the basis for organizing the goals, policies and strategies set out in Chapter IV.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Arapahoe County will have a compact development pattern that encourages growth to locate within well-defined growth and urban reserve areas, and balances sustainable development and conservation of the natural environment. Development will occur in a sustainable manner that supports the urban pattern of the western portion of the County and that ensures the viability of the eastern communities along the I-70 corridor. Areas with a high hazard risk will be avoided for development in order to protect residents and businesses from losses of life and property.

Residents of our County’s rural areas have expressed a strong desire to maintain the rural character and lifestyle, viable agricultural operations, and natural areas they currently enjoy, including very low-density development, agricultural activities, and scenic views. The Plan recognizes the clear distinctions between the County’s urban and rural areas and incorporates strategies to maintain and enhance the rural character, viable agricultural operations and natural areas.
PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The availability of sustainable water, wastewater, fire protection, police protection, parks and other utilities and services affects the safety and quality of life for residents and the economic stability of the County. The development pattern promoted by this Plan in the Urban Area will allow the County to provide for long-term development needs, while achieving a more sustainable, cost-effective and efficient provision of infrastructure and public facilities.

Basic facilities and services will be provided in the Rural Area at a level to protect loss of life and property and to ensure a rural quality of life for residents. Development in the Rural Area will typically require infrastructure of less extent and scale than urban development, and residents of Rural Areas should expect facilities and service levels commensurate with living in areas distant from the Urban Area and service centers. In the Rural Area, the County will ensure basic infrastructure and services are available at an acceptable level to protect life and property.

NEIGHBORHOOD LIVABILITY

Neighborhood livability will be promoted through a mix of land uses, housing and transportation options which provide opportunities for citizens to be self-sufficient and to live, work, and travel within the community, enhancing the well-being of our residents. Additionally, the focus on growth management and compatible infill and redevelopment help to ensure that citizens can expect adequate County services and compatibility as growth occurs.

The County will promote sustainable, stable, safe and attractive new neighborhoods that contain a mix of land uses and diversified housing options, including housing that is affordable. The County will seek to incorporate new development in existing neighborhoods so that it is appropriate in size, scale, design and use. Residents of housing areas in Designated Growth Areas can expect a high quality of life and will have access to a full range of infrastructure, facilities and services needed for sustainable, healthy, and green places for living, working, recreating and interacting. (See III. Development Framework and Land Use: Development Framework: Designated Growth Areas for a description of Designated Growth Areas.)

The built environment influences a person’s level of physical activity. Physical activity will be promoted by providing convenient access to recreational facilities such as parks, sports fields and facilities, biking trails, public pools, and playgrounds by locating them closer to homes and schools, and ensuring access by people with various ability levels and limitations. The County will support equity in access to food choices and local food production by encouraging community gardens, produce stands, farm-to-table operations and individual homeowner food production. Community gardens will help build safe, healthy, green environments in neighborhoods, schools, and underutilized land. Public health needs are recognized and addressed through
provisions for access to healthy food choices, physical activity, access to recreation, health care, environmental justice, safe neighborhoods, and places for social interaction.

ECONOMIC HEALTH

A mix of land uses (housing, retail, employment, etc.) provides opportunities to grow and diversify the economy throughout the County and for citizens to meet their retail and services needs in a variety of locations. Emphasis on compact development and infill and redevelopment promotes the more efficient use of existing infrastructure and captures the value of existing energy and resources. Compact and infill development promotes fiscal sustainability in light of the County’s statutory limitations on revenue generation.

The County recognizes that employment opportunities are important to its residents and that a diversified tax base is important to the sustainable economic health of the County. The County will support and encourage well-designed employment centers and commercial development in the urban area and in the communities along the I-70 corridor, taking into consideration the economic development goals adopted by the I-70 Chamber of Commerce.

The County is prepared to deal with both positive and negative changes in its economic health and to initiate sustainable urban development and redevelopment strategies. New employment should contribute to the community by providing livable wages and minimal environmental impacts. Employment centers and commercial development should not occur in rural parts of the County or outside of Designated Growth Areas unless they are agriculture-related.

Economic Health also means the County will strive to balance necessary expenditures related to the provision and maintenance of public services and facilities with revenues received from new development and property taxes. Short- and long-term fiscal effects of growth will be considered to determine if development is paying its fair share, and if new tools and programs may be needed to ensure that a reasonable balance between expenditures and revenues is achieved. Many special districts provide services to County residents and businesses and the County will collaborate with those districts to ensure their fiscal health.

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

Mobility, efficiency and safety are important concerns for a transportation system. The County will address current and future mobility needs through appropriate land use decisions and through provision of an efficient transportation system with connected local and regional roads and viable transit alternatives. The County will ensure its streets and roads are designed to adequately accommodate a range of modes of travel, including pedestrian and bicycle, to coincide with new development. Review of new development and capital projects will emphasize connections to surrounding areas and uses, creating a healthy, walkable environment.
Land use and growth management decisions can dramatically affect environmental quality. Focusing on a compact development pattern, and establishing community separators and development buffers, help protect and maintain important habitat and open space areas. Preservation of floodplains and drainageways maintains wildlife habitat and provides opportunities for recreation. Emphasis on redevelopment, infill, historic preservation, and high-efficiency housing and buildings also helps to divert waste and conserve water, energy, and other environmental resources. A compact development pattern and transportation options help to reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality. In addition, the County will be prepared for natural hazard occurrences and will have plans in place for emergency response and recovery.

Residents of the County feel strongly about conserving resources and maintaining a healthy environment. The County will work to conserve its natural resources which provide wildlife habitat, maintain environmental quality and enrich the lives of residents through education, observation and outdoor recreation opportunities. The County will work to support and preserve cultural resources that enrich the lives of citizens through educational and entertainment opportunities, including collaborating to protect and provide cultural resource sites, public art and artistic performance venues, and agri-tourism destinations. The County will also promote human health and environmental quality by conserving water resources, protecting water quality, maintaining compliance with air quality standards, and planning for and mitigating natural and manmade hazards.
III. Development Framework and Land Use

INTRODUCTION

The Development Framework represents a fundamental element of the Comprehensive Plan. The Development Framework establishes the desired growth areas, land use and development patterns articulated in the goals and policies of this Plan (see Chapter IV). In keeping with the traditional role of a Comprehensive Plan, the document provides the framework to achieve the County’s desired land use pattern for the future.

There are several maps that together comprise the Development Framework. The first of these, the Development Framework Map, provides a broad, countywide representation of the desired growth areas. The Development Framework Map is presented in two parts – the western half of the County and the eastern half. This two-part map illustrates the locations of the eight basic building blocks of the Plan organized by Urban and Rural designations. Designated Growth Areas are comprised of the Urban Area, the Rural Town Center Planning Areas, and Incorporated Cities and Towns. The Rural Area is comprised of Tier 1, Tier 2, the Urban Reserve, Tier 3, and the Regional Waste Disposal Site. The second map is the Urban Area Land Use Plan which illustrates more detailed land uses for unincorporated enclaves located in the western, more urbanized part of the County. Descriptions of applicable land use categories for residential and non-residential land uses, as well as criteria for appropriate locations for each type of land use, follow the Development Framework descriptions and are found under the Land Use Categories heading.

The Development Framework Maps and the Urban Area Land Use Map illustrate the locations of riparian and sensitive development areas. A description of these areas follows the Rural Area descriptions.

Sub-area Plans have been adopted for the Rural Town Centers of Byers and Strasburg, the Four Square Mile Sub-area and the Lowry Range Sub-area. All of these Sub-area plans have been adopted and incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan by reference and remain incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan with this update. The Sub-area Plans provide further refinement of the desired land uses for the Sub-areas. The Planning Areas for these Sub-areas are shown on the Development Framework Maps and Urban Area Land Use Map.

DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The Development Framework Map illustrates the desired concentration of future urban development in distinct places – the Urban Area, Rural Town Center Planning Areas, and Incorporated Cities and Towns, together referred to as Designated Growth Areas. In the Designated Growth Areas, the County and service providers will carefully plan for new development and efficiently provide service and facilities so that the County’s investment in infrastructure will be reduced. The Designated Growth Areas will contain a greater mix of uses and higher densities than what is typically being developed today, and will provide employment opportunities near the places where people live.
The Plan distinguishes the Designated Growth Areas from the parts of the County that are not expected to see urban development, at least within the 20-year time frame of this Plan. In places outside of the Designated Growth Areas, it is intended that agricultural resources, open lands and Sensitive Development Areas will be conserved. (See Riparian Areas and Sensitive Development Areas later in this section for a description of Sensitive Development Areas.)

The Development Framework establishes the following distinct areas:

**DESIGNATED GROWTH AREAS**

**URBAN AREA**

The Urban Area is predominantly within or adjacent to areas of existing urban-level development in the western portion of the County. This is the place of the most intense urban activity and where annexations will likely occur. The undeveloped portion of the Urban Area is a priority growth area consistent with Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) Metro Vision outcome to create an Efficient and Predictable Development Pattern.

The Urban Area is generally located to the west of Imboden Mile Road north of Mississippi Avenue, and west of Hayesmount Mile Road south of Mississippi Avenue, as illustrated on the Development Framework Map (West Half) and the Urban Area Land Use Map. The Urban Area includes unincorporated land outside municipal boundaries occurring throughout the western portion of the County. These enclaves are subject to the Countywide goals, policies and strategies.

Land within the Urban Area is already zoned for urban development; however, some vacant land remains and some rezonings should be anticipated. The Urban Area includes several developed residential neighborhoods. In the Urban Area, new urban residential development, mixed with accompanying commercial and services uses, will be directed to areas contiguous to existing development. New development in these areas will be well-designed and offer multi-modal connections to surrounding areas to increase mobility and create walkable neighborhoods. It is the goal of this Plan to encourage these new developments to be annexed.

Most of the E-470 Corridor has been annexed into the City of Aurora. Areas that remain unincorporated are planned for a mix of uses, including residential and employment uses. In addition, an employment center will continue to develop around Centennial Airport/Dove Valley, because this area has a large concentration of vacant land zoned for employment uses south of Arapahoe Road to the County line and east of I-25. The desired future land uses are illustrated in the Urban Area Land Use Plan Map and described later under Land Use Categories.

The Four Square Mile Sub-area Plan delineates future land uses in this unincorporated enclave between the City of Aurora and the City and County of Denver. The Sub-Area Plan should be consulted for compatible uses and densities in the area.

The Urban Area also encompasses land included within the municipal boundaries of the incorporated cities in the western portion of the County, including Aurora, Centennial, Foxfield, Greenwood Village, Cherry Hills Village, Glendale, Littleton, Englewood, Sheridan, Bow Mar, and Columbine Valley. Adopted comprehensive plans and
zoning establish the future land uses within municipal boundaries. Unincorporated enclaves located adjacent to these municipalities are encouraged to be annexed.

**RURAL TOWN CENTER PLANNING AREAS**

The unincorporated eastern communities of Byers and Strasburg, targeted for future urban growth, are located along I-70 in the eastern portion of the County. The County needs to work closely with the districts providing water, sewer and fire protection services in the Rural Town Centers to plan for future growth. The availability of a reliable and renewable source of water is key to future growth in these communities.

The County will direct new development in the eastern part of the County to these rural communities, and will encourage development of a character and at densities as proposed in the applicable Rural Town Center sub-area plan, discouraging large lot development within the Planning Areas or at their fringes. Plan policies address the need for accompanying employment and commercial uses, along with neighborhood services, in the Rural Town Centers to generate jobs and revenue along with new housing, so the towns are not just “bedroom” commuter communities for the Denver Metro Area.

The County prepared and adopted community Sub-area Plans for Strasburg (2002) and Byers (2003) with involvement from local residents, property owners and service districts. The Sub-area Plans delineate growth area boundaries and land uses for the unincorporated communities. The amount of development that can occur in these communities will need to be carefully coordinated with the ability of the County, districts, and other responsible agencies to provide services (i.e., water, sewer, parks, roads, schools, and fire and police protection). A sub-area plan for Watkins has not been prepared because the Prosper development project encompasses the planning reserve for Watkins identified in the 2012 Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan. The Planning Reserve was an area reserved for future urban development which is now included in the Urban Area.

**INCORPORATED CITIES AND TOWNS**

The incorporated areas of the Towns of Bennett and Deer Trail are also included as Designated Growth Areas. The County will coordinate with the incorporated towns of Bennett and Deer Trail to plan for future growth in their growth areas. Urban Reserves have been established adjacent to these Towns. Incorporated cities include Aurora, Bennett, Bow Mar, Centennial, Cherry Hills Village, Columbine Valley, Englewood, Foxfield, Greenwood Village, Littleton, and Sheridan.

**RURAL AREA**

**TIERS 1 AND 2**

Tier 1 encompasses land situated up to four miles to the south of I-70, from approximately Monaghan Road east to Strasburg and excludes portions of the City of Aurora and the Town of Bennett. Included in Tier 1 is an Urban Reserve sub-area. Tier 2 extends four miles south of I-70 from Yule Mile Road to the southern County line south of Deer Trail. Tier 2 also extends to the north of I-70 for four miles, but narrows to the west of Bijou Creek where
the distance between the County line and I-70 decreases. Tier 2 excludes the Rural Town Center Planning Areas of Strasburg and Byers, the Town of Deer Trail, and an Urban Reserve.

Tier 1 contains several square miles that have been subdivided into 2.5-acre and larger parcels with single family homes. This land use pattern presents several challenges in accommodating urban density growth. These challenges include compatibility with existing land uses and establishing a road network to serve traffic generated by urban densities. Within Tier 1, the subdivision of parcels 55 acres or greater into urban and suburban scale lots may be allowed within Rural Town Center Planning Areas, subject to the availability of adequate infrastructure.

With the exceptions of the Rural Town Centers of Byers and Strasburg and the Town of Deer Trail, Tier 2 is primarily agricultural with a cluster of 19-acre and larger parcels southeast of the Byers Sub-area. Tier 2 is intended to remain rural, with agricultural and related uses and low density residential uses occurring during the timeframe of this plan.

Tiers 1 and 2 are labeled with an Agricultural / Use by Special Review (Ag/USR) designation. Except in the Urban Reserve, the intent of this designation is to allow uses by right and by special review under current zoning within the areas without the need for a Comprehensive Plan amendment or rezoning. The Ag/USR designation would allow for agricultural, agri-tourism and agri-tainment uses as well as very low density residential uses allowed under current zoning. (See Glossary for definitions of agri-tourism and agri-tainment.) The County will allow Uses by Special Review in Tiers 1 and 2, conditioned upon the reversion to agricultural uses should the Use by Special Review cease. The AG/USR designation serves to preserve the rural character of Tiers 1 and 2.

Where land within Tiers 1 and 2 borders the Incorporated Towns, collaborative planning efforts will be needed to address proposed development.

**URBAN RESERVE**

The 2012 Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan created the concept of “Planning Reserve.” That concept has been replicated in this update, but has been re-named “Urban Reserve.” The intent is to reserve this land for future development at an urban density. The Urban Reserve designation has been applied to areas generally within one to two miles of I-70 east of the Urban Area and along Watkins Road south of the Urban Area where annexation has not occurred. A small Urban Reserve is shown northwest of Deer Trail in addition to an area surrounding the Town of Deer Trail.

The Urban Reserve has the greatest potential to accommodate future urban growth given the presence of I-70 and Watkins Road, but only if infrastructure needs can be met. Under the growth forecasts prepared for this Comprehensive Plan update, the Urban Reserve areas are anticipated to develop during the timeframe of this plan. However, should growth exceed forecasts, additional land may be needed to accommodate growth, and areas beyond the Urban Reserve may need to be considered for development.

The Lowry Range, owned by the State Land Board, is the largest single-owner parcel in Arapahoe County. The Lowry Range Sub-area Plan prepared for this area proposes only a portion of this property located north of Quincy Avenue for development in the very long term future. This area is identified as an Urban Development Area, with one square mile designated a Future Development Area. Essentially six square miles are reserved for potential future urban development. The remainder of the Lowry Range sub-area is shown as a Conservation Area, with several potential surface water storage reservoirs occupying the property.
TIER 3

Tier 3 covers the eastern one-fifth of the County and the south-central portion of the County south of Jewell Avenue, east of the Lowry Range. In Tier 3, some large-lot residential development will continue to occur, but the primary activities will be agricultural. The County will strive to strengthen and maintain agricultural activities through the policies contained in this Plan. To promote conservation of agriculture and open lands, the County will encourage cluster residential development, rather than dispersed development. With cluster development, smaller lots are grouped together on a portion of a parcel, while a larger portion of the parcel is conserved for agriculture or open land. The County will discourage non-residential uses from occurring in the Rural Area, including uses permitted by special review, unless they are agriculture-related or are public facilities and services. The rural designation would allow for agricultural, “agri-tourism” and “agri-tainment” uses as well as low density residential uses allowed under current zoning. Groundwater supply and availability will be a significant factor that limits development density in the rural area, since most of the water supply is non-tributary and non-renewable.

REGIONAL WASTE DISPOSAL SITE

The Regional Waste Disposal Site encompasses land occupied by the Denver Arapahoe Disposal Site (DADS) and the former Lowry Landfill, now a Superfund Site, and Lowry Trust Properties. Encompassing approximately 1,800 acres, the DADS site is operated by Waste Management as a regional landfill facility that provides disposal, recycling and composting services for communities, businesses and industries serving the Denver Metro and surrounding areas. The facility is engineered with environmental protection systems that include engineered liners and covers, leachate collection and removal, and landfill gas collection and control. Leachate is managed onsite through recirculation or used for operational dust control. Groundwater is currently monitored at 15 wells, which are both upgradient and downgradient of the waste disposal site. The groundwater is sampled and analyzed semi-annually in accordance with the facility’s groundwater sampling and analysis plan.

The former Lowry landfill site, covering 507 acres, is currently designated as an EPA Superfund site. Remediation consists of protective measures, finalized in 2006, to prevent movement of contamination off site above safe levels. The overall goal of containment is to prevent human exposure to landfill gas, waste pit liquids, and unsafe levels of contamination in soil, surface water, and groundwater. Operation and maintenance activities and monitoring are ongoing. Of specific concern to the community, Tri-County Health Department, the State Department of Public Health and Environment and EPA is the groundwater remedy effectiveness.

The landfill facility is estimated to have a remaining life of a little over 100 years. Because the life of the landfill extends beyond the time horizon of this Plan and the Superfund Site containment remedy does not include removal of contaminants from the site, these areas are not suitable for future development. Only uses associated with landfill operations and Superfund site monitoring are appropriate uses for these areas.

Adjacent to the Regional Waste Disposal Site is land managed by the Lowry Environmental Protection/Cleanup Trusts. This area is shown on the Urban Area Land Use Map and the Development Framework Map (West Half). Deed restrictions and covenants implemented as part of the remedy for the Superfund site provide on-site and off-
site restrictions on well installations and land uses. Future land use will be determined by a sub-area plan to be prepared for the Regional Waste Disposal Site environs.

**RIPARIAN AREAS AND SENSITIVE DEVELOPMENT AREAS**

The Development Framework Map and the Urban Area Land Use Plan illustrate the riparian areas (i.e., 100-year floodplains and associated vegetation) along creeks such as Bijou Creek, Box Elder Creek, Kiowa Creek, Coal Creek, and Wolf Creek, that should be kept free of development to the maximum extent possible. The Plan maps also show Sensitive Development Areas, including prairie grasslands, riparian areas, wildlife habitats, and threatened species conservation areas, where development should be carefully evaluated and designed to minimize impacts on the land (see also Section IV: Goals, Policies and Strategies - Natural and Cultural Resources and Environmental Quality). The County intends to be more proactive about conserving water resources and wildlife habitat. The Plan's policies and strategies chart the course for refining inventories and propose a combination of regulatory and voluntary techniques to conserve these resources.

**LAND USE CATEGORIES**

The Urban Area Land Use Plan map illustrates a combination of existing and new, more generalized, land use categories as defined below. In the various enclaves, located generally west of E-470 where land is already developed, the land use designations reflect the nature of current development. Vacant parcels are given designations that are compatible with surrounding existing land uses.

The land use categories are consistent with the policies in this Plan which call for mixed-use development patterns in neighborhoods and employment areas. The land use categories allow each neighborhood and employment area to become a distinctive and diverse place with a mix of compatible activities. Characteristics and locational criteria, to be used during the development review process, will determine compatibility with the surrounding area. Additional criteria have been adopted in the County's Land Development Code.

The Rural Town Center Sub-area plans define more specific town-related land uses, so the following categories may not apply in those sub-areas.

**RESIDENTIAL LAND USES**

Residential land uses include Single Family Detached/Light Intensity, Urban Residential/Single Family Detached and Attached, and Multi-Family, as described below:
MAP 5: 2035 County Transportation System – East End
**Single Family Detached / Light Intensity**

**Uses**

*Primary:* Single Family Low Density Residential  
*Secondary:* N/A

**Characteristics**

Single Family Detached Light-Intensity (SFDLI) residential areas generally contain homes sited on individual lots, predominantly 2½ acres or larger per residence, with rural/suburban character. Life-styles are oriented to more rural activities, such as keeping horses. Residents also typically have accessory structures, such as barns and stables. Street and road configurations generally match natural topographic features, maximize scenic views and conserve natural vegetation. Roads are usually gravel, or are paved to a rural standard. Open space is on individual private lands.

**Location**

SFDLI areas are located at the fringe of urban development and emphasize privacy over convenience. This type of residential development is generally located where the terrain offers rolling and hillside sites and should fit the terrain. SFDLI development is encouraged and supported only where shown on the Urban Area Land Use Plan Map.

**Urban Residential / Single Family Detached and Attached**

**Uses**

*Primary:* Single Family Detached, Single Family Attached (duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhouses, and row houses, each with private entrance) and small Multi-Family units.  
*Secondary:* Support services, such as Neighborhood Commercial centers with locally oriented shops and services, parks and recreation facilities, places of worship and schools.

**Characteristics**

Urban Residential / Single Family Detached and Attached (UR/SFDA) development areas will contain primarily residential neighborhood development. Neighborhoods will contain a variety of housing types, combined with non-residential secondary land uses that are complementary and supportive. Urban Residential will be served by central water and sewer, paved streets, and other urban services.

The average gross density (dwelling units per gross acre) will vary in the UR/SFDA category. For Single Family Detached, density will range from one to six (1-6) units per acre. For Single Family Attached and small Multi-Family, density will range from six to twelve (6-12) units per acre. Small multi-family units may be attached floor to ceiling (stacked units). They must comply with all height restrictions and be similar in scale and character to single-family dwellings in order to be compatible with the neighborhoods in which they are to be located.

The secondary uses in UR/SFDA areas are intended to serve the neighborhood and should be developed and operated in harmony with its residential characteristics. Neighborhoods should meet a wide variety of every-day living needs, invite walking to gathering places and services, and integrate into the larger
community. Supporting commercial and service uses are encouraged to be included as part of a Neighborhood Commercial center, typically including a grocery store, retail shops, convenience stores, personal and business services, offices, community facilities, and other uses designed to serve the local area (see description for Neighborhood Commercial). Other supporting land uses, such as parks and recreation areas, religious institutions, and schools, may be included in Urban Residential areas.

**Location**

UR/SFDA development may occur anywhere in the Urban Area, excluding restricted areas within the Airport Influence Area (Centennial Airport, Buckley Air Force Base, Denver International Airport and Front Range Airport) and in or adjacent to other hazard areas. This type of residential development may occur in the Rural Town Center Planning Areas, as defined by Sub-area Plans. UR/SFDA neighborhoods typically should be in close proximity to major arterials and transit systems and bounded by major streets with a direct connection to work, shopping and leisure activities. Neighborhoods should be internally served by a system of collector and local streets and should adapt to the terrain.

**Multi-Family**

**Uses**

*Primary:* Multi-Family residential structures including apartments, cooperatives, townhomes, row houses, condominiums and their related uses.

*Secondary:* Neighborhood Commercial

**Characteristics**

The Multi-Family residential areas contain residences with shared parking access and other facilities within buildings or complexes. If sold separately from its neighbors, the deed of a Multi-Family unit describes the purchase of air space rather than land. Multi-Family areas generally emphasize convenient connections to work, commercial centers and leisure-time areas. Often these communities provide a transition between non-residential areas and lower density residential uses. The primary recreational emphasis is on larger common areas shared with other residents of the same or nearby developments. The average gross density of Multi-Family areas will be thirteen (13) or more units per acre.

**Location**

Multi-Family residential development will be located within the Urban Area, excluding restricted areas within the Airport Influence Area (Centennial Airport, Buckley Air Force Base, Denver International Airport and Front Range Airport) and in or adjacent to other hazard areas, and may occur in the Rural Town Center Planning Areas, as defined by Sub-area Plans. Multi-Family areas should be located near major arterials and transit systems and should be in proximity to neighborhood services and employment. Multi-Family development should occur on fairly level terrain.

**NON-RESIDENTIAL LAND USES**

Non-residential land uses include Employment Centers, four types of Commercial land use (Regional, Community, Neighborhood, and Convenience), Heavy Industry, Public Facilities, Mixed Use (E-470), Rural Area Uses and Open Space.
Other than indicating areas of existing zoned commercial and employment centers, the Development Framework Map does not identify specific locations for commercial development. Rather, it assumes that the appropriate location for commercial uses will be determined by application of the goals, policies, and strategies contained in this Plan (see Section IV), as well as the locational criteria outlined below. This approach is especially appropriate for the community, neighborhood, and convenience commercial land use categories. Additionally, appropriate locations for commercial and employment uses in the Rural Town Centers have been determined during the preparation of Sub-area Plans.

**Employment Centers**

**Uses**

*Primary:* Workplace uses such as research and development offices, major service and office center complexes, warehousing and light industrial uses, and major educational facilities.

*Secondary:* Supporting uses that complement the primary employment uses, such as restaurants, hotels, childcare, convenience shopping, and residential uses, if part of an overall planned development.

**Characteristics**

The Employment Centers designation applies to major concentrations of employment, including business parks and industrial areas. Employment Centers should integrate buildings, outdoor spaces, transportation facilities and, if appropriate, higher density residential uses. Minimal dust, fumes, odors, refuse, smoke, vapor, noise, lights and vibrations extend from Employment Centers. Terrain requirements are for reasonably level land, preferably with a maximum slope of five percent (5%), capable of being graded without undue expense, avoiding irregularly sloped or poorly drained locations.

**Location**

Employment Centers will be located in Designated Growth Areas – the Urban Area or the Rural Town Center Planning Areas, as determined by the community Sub-Area Plans. Employment Center sites should have direct access to existing or planned major transportation facilities (at least one major arterial and accessible to employment base with availability of public transit preferred). Generally, Employment Centers should be compatible with adjacent land uses.

**Regional Commercial**

**Uses**

*Primary:* Regional Commercial areas include general merchandise and comparison-shopping goods, including malls, "big-box" centers and auto dealerships.

*Secondary:* N/A

**Characteristics**

Regional Commercial areas include commercial activities with regional-level significance. They provide general merchandise and comparison-shopping goods, rather than emphasizing convenience and/or neighborhood-oriented shopping. Regional Commercial areas are generally defined as having a land area of 30 to 50 acres or more with adequate space
to accommodate peak parking, loading, open space, and other service needs. The gross leasable area typically ranges from 300,000 to more than 1,000,000 square feet. The trade area population is a minimum of 100,000 to 150,000 residents within a trade area of 10 to 15 miles.

**Location**
Regional Commercial areas should be located at the intersection of at least one major arterial and a highway, or at the intersection of two highways that service the trade area. Regional Commercial areas should have access to regional public transit service. Terrain requirements are for reasonably level land, preferably with a maximum slope of five percent (5%), avoiding irregularly shaped or poorly drained locations.

**Community Commercial**

**Uses**
Community Commercial areas typically include a large grocery store, other large retail stores (such as a junior department store or large specialty retail stores), convenience stores, personal and business services and offices, community facilities, and other similar uses designed to primarily serve the region within which they are located.

**Characteristics**
Community Commercial areas include commercial activities that serve a portion of a region comprised of numerous neighborhoods and employment areas. Community Commercial areas include many of the uses that are found in Neighborhood Centers, such as a grocery store, but typically also include a small department store or specialty variety store as an additional anchor. They are generally defined as having a land area of 10 to 30 acres or more with adequate space to accommodate parking, loading, open space, and other service needs. The gross leasable area typically ranges from 100,000 to 300,000 square feet, typically averaging 150,000 square feet. The trade area population is a minimum of 40,000 to 100,000 residents within a trade area of 5 to 10 miles.

**Location**
Community Commercial areas should have a location with access to one or more major arterials. Terrain requirements are for reasonably level land, preferably with a maximum slope of five percent (5%), avoiding irregularly shaped or poorly drained locations.

**Neighborhood Commercial**

**Uses**
Neighborhood Commercial centers typically include a grocery store, retail stores, convenience stores, personal and business services and offices, community facilities, and other similar uses designed to primarily serve the area within which they are located.

**Characteristics**
Neighborhood Commercial centers are designed to primarily serve the area within which they are located. Neighborhood Commercial centers typically range in size from 5 to 15 acres, and typically contain from
40,000 up to a maximum of 100,000 square feet of gross leasable area. Neighborhood Centers will often serve more than one neighborhood, but typically serve a trade area that is within a five-minute drive or a ten-minute walk or bicycle ride. Neighborhood Commercial centers should be designed to be compatible with surrounding neighborhoods as defined through building design, lighting levels, low canopies, pedestrian connections, height and size of building and signs.

**Location**

Neighborhood Centers should be located at the intersection of two collector streets or at an intersection of a collector street and an arterial. They should be designed in a manner that encourages direct pedestrian and bicycle access to and from adjacent and nearby neighborhoods, as well as convenient vehicular access.

### Convenience Commercial

**Uses**

Convenience Commercial centers typically include a mini-market that offers packaged groceries, gasoline sales, and sundries. These centers often include a fast-food operation, for on-premises consumption or take-out.

**Characteristics**

Convenience Commercial centers are designed to meet the convenience shopping needs of nearby residents and passing motorists, offering packaged groceries and a limited selection of all types of sundries. Convenience Commercial centers range in size from ½ to 2 acres, and typically contain from 3,000 to 5,000 square feet of gross leasable area. Convenience Commercial centers serve a trade area that is within a ½ to one (1) mile radius, as well as pass-by traffic on adjacent roadways. They should be designed in a manner that integrates well with the adjacent neighborhood.

**Location**

Convenience Commercial centers should be located at the intersection of a collector street and an arterial street, or at the intersection of a local street and a collector street if designed to integrate with the adjacent neighborhood. They should be designed in a manner that encourages direct pedestrian and bicycle access to and from adjacent and nearby neighborhoods, as well as convenient vehicular access. Convenience Commercial centers may also be operated as adjuncts to Neighborhood Centers.

### Heavy Industry

**Uses**

Heavy Industry land use includes manufacturing goods, wholesaling, warehousing, contracting, other miscellaneous categories and/or excavating natural resources (including factories, gravel pits, and concrete plants). Public and quasi-public facilities, such as sewage treatment plants and substations, are also considered heavy industrial uses.

**Characteristics**

Heavy Industry areas mainly involve manufacturing or resource excavation. Heavy Industry areas should be accessible to their intended employment base. The intensity, scale and environmental impacts are high. Heavy Industry typically involves outdoor storage as an accessory use. Terrain requirements are for reasonably level land, preferably with a maximum slope of five percent (5%). The site should be adequately sized to accommodate peak parking, loading, storage, open space, and other service needs. The average
floor area ratio is variable, depending on the number of building stories and parking, loading, storage and open space needs.

**Location**
Because of significant environmental impacts, Heavy Industry sites must be located away from population centers or be adequately buffered. Traffic generated by these uses should not pass through residential areas. Heavy Industry sites should have access to one or more major arterials or highways capable of handling heavy truck traffic. Railroad or airport access may also be used. Heavy Industry uses should be located to serve at a regional level.

**Public Facilities**

**Uses**
*Primary:* Schools (public and private), day care facilities, churches, libraries, jails, recreational centers, airports, hospitals, utility lines, power substations, power energy facilities, fire stations, police/law enforcement stations, active landfills, government offices and facilities and social service buildings, and other public uses.
*Secondary:* N/A

**Characteristics**
Public Facilities are provided by the State, County, municipalities, and special districts or by private companies and include the uses listed above. Public Facility sites should be adequately sized to accommodate parking and other service needs. Terrain, size and density vary depending upon the use.

**Location**
Depending on their compatibility with the surrounding area, quasi- and Public Facilities will be allowed in Designated Growth Areas and the Rural Area on a case-by-case basis except in the sensitive development and riparian corridor areas. Siting will be determined through the County’s land use review procedures. Public Facilities should be accessible by the population served.

**Mixed Use**

**Uses**
Commercial (Retail), Employment (Professional), Public Facilities, Residential (Single Family and Multi-Family) and Open Space.

**Characteristics**
Mixed Use developments contain a mix of land uses that are master-planned and include a variety of buildings, spaces and activities designed in harmony with a pedestrian-oriented site plan. Mixed Use in either a horizontal or a vertical pattern is desirable. Mixed Use areas should include many aspects of high-end development, with a focus on the corresponding development theme.

**Location**
Mixed Use will occur in the Urban Area and the Rural Town Center Planning Areas, as defined by Sub-Area Plans. Mixed Use development should have a location with access to at least one major arterial and should have access to regional public transit service.
Open Space

**Uses**
Public, quasi-public and private parks, country clubs, golf courses, trails, flood hazard areas, reclamation sites, reservoirs, wildlife corridors, conservation areas and landscape buffers.

**Characteristics**
Open space includes sites and areas for active and passive recreation, conservation, and mitigation of environmental hazards.

**Location**
The Development Framework Maps and the Urban Area Land Use Plan Map illustrate the location of existing parks and open spaces. The location, access, terrain, size and design vary for future Open Space, depending on the specific use.

RURAL AREA USES

**Uses**
*Primary:* Farming, ranching and other agriculturally related uses (irrigated and non-irrigated), including agri-tainment and agri-tourism uses.

*Secondary:* Very low density residential, including cluster development that allows for homes to be clustered on a smaller portion of a property, while preserving the remaining land for agriculture, wildlife, or open space.

*Special Review:* Mineral extraction, Agriculture-related-Business (including equestrian businesses, breeding and boarding, veterinary services, farm machinery sales), and public facilities on a case-by-case basis.

**Characteristics**
In the eastern part of the County, the vast majority of land is dedicated to agriculture, farming, ranching and agriculturally related uses (i.e., tree farming, horse breeding). Agricultural operations typically require very large lots. Scattered areas of very low-density residences are also located in the Rural Area. These residences rely on on-site (well) water and septic systems, and open space usually is owned privately.

**Location**
Agriculture, secondary Rural Area uses, and Special Review uses are located in the eastern part of the County. Agriculture depends on soil capabilities and requires some basic utility services. Agricultural operations should have access to minor County roads. Agriculture is permitted in floodplains and geologic hazard areas, subject to State and County regulations.
IV. Goals, Policies and Strategies

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

This section of the Arapahoe County Comprehensive Plan outlines the basic framework to guide land use decisions and other future actions that landowners, County staff, and elected and appointed officials will use. This framework is expressed as a set of goals, which represent an ideal or value to be sought; policies, which are a definite course of action to be pursued in attaining goals; and strategies, which outline specific measures, procedures or approaches to be taken in implementing the policy to which they relate.

These goals and policies are essential to setting a direction as the unincorporated portions of Arapahoe County develop and grow. They strive for balance among conflicting interests, serve to protect citizen and property owner rights, and reflect and affirm community values. The policies are intended to direct growth towards areas of the County that are appropriate for development; ensure that development is sustainable and accompanied by adequate infrastructure; encourage citizen participation in community planning; and use the authority of local government to realize the County’s goals by coordinating public and private sector efforts.

Because of the nature of policies, some may appear to conflict, particularly in the context of a specific development application, or as viewed from the different perspectives of persons whose interests or values may differ on a given issue. A classic example is the so-called “conflict” between policies that call for the “conservation of the natural environment” and policies that “support economic development.” Because policies do not exist in isolation, and must be viewed in the context of all potentially relevant policies, it is largely in their implementation that they can be balanced and reconciled by County staff and decision-makers. Exercise of judgment is critical to a comprehensive plan that seeks to provide general direction regarding the range of policies affecting growth and development.

ORGANIZATION

The goals, policies and strategies are organized into categories to make it easier to translate them into more specific actions. However, many of the policies have implications that overlap more than just the single category in which they are listed. While they focus mostly on physical surroundings, they also contain implications that affect environmental, economic, and social concerns. The goal, policies and strategies are organized under the following categories:

1. Growth Management
2. Public Facilities and Services
3. Neighborhood Livability
4. Economic Health
5. Transportation and Mobility
6. Natural and Cultural Resources and Environmental Quality
The goals, policies and strategies are further organized under two major headings: Countywide and Rural Area. Countywide goals, policies and strategies are applicable to all areas of the County, unless modified by Rural Area goals and policies or Sub-area Plans. In some instances there are policies and strategies addressing specific needs or situations in the Urban Area or Rural Town Centers that are found in the Countywide goals and policies. Sub-area plans should be consulted for goals and policies specific to the Four Square Mile planning area, Lowry Range, Byers and Strasburg.

Supplemental goals, policies and strategies are established for the Rural Area, organized under the following headings: Tiers 1 and 2, Urban Reserve, Tier 3 and Regional Waste Disposal Site. In some instances, there will not be supplemental goals or policies under the categories listed above, and in such instances Countywide goals, policies and strategies will apply.

In order for the reader to understand the complete vision for various areas of the County, the Countywide goals and policies must be examined in addition to the Rural Area policies or any sub-area plan that may apply. The applicability of goals, policies and strategies to the various framework areas is summarized in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Framework Area</th>
<th>Countywide</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban Reserve</th>
<th>RWDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Designated Growth Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Area</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes(^2)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Town Center</td>
<td>Yes(^1)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporated City/Town</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiers 1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>Yes(^3)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 3</td>
<td>Yes(^3)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Reserve</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Waste Disposal Site</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key:
- **Yes** = Goals, Policies and Strategies Apply
- **No** = Goals, Policies and Strategies Do Not Apply
- **N/A** = Goals and Policies of Incorporated Cities and Towns are Established in their respective Comprehensive Plans
- \(^1\) = Unless Modified by Sub-area Plan
- \(^2\) = If Proposed for Urban Development
- \(^3\) = Unless Modified by Rural Area Goals and Policies

The Comprehensive Plan is advisory and provides the context and framework for making land use decisions. Many of the policies and strategies included in the Plan indicate the County will undertake some action or encourage certain development practices. Because these policies and strategies are advisory, they are not binding on the County, developers or others seeking land use approvals. The use of “will” in the context of the policies and strategies is meant to convey a high level of commitment or intent by the County to undertake the particular action, encourage certain development practices or emphasize the relative importance of the policy or strategy.
COUNTYWIDE GOALS AND POLICIES

Countywide goals, policies and strategies are applicable to all areas of the County unless modified by Rural Area goals and policies or Sub-area Plans. Countywide goals, policies and strategies include a number of policies and strategies applicable to the Rural Town Centers of Strasburg and Byers.

Goals represent an ideal or value to be sought
Policies establish a definite course of action to be pursued in attaining goals
Strategies outline specific measures, procedures or approaches to be taken in implementing a policy

GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Intent

The primary objective of the Growth Management Policies is to determine where it is appropriate for new growth to occur in Arapahoe County, and how to achieve a balance between growth and environmental quality. The policies in this section encourage patterns of land use that result in the sustainable, efficient delivery of essential public facilities and services, help to maintain the rural character of eastern portions of the County, promote the efficient use of land for development and other purposes, and avoid areas affected by natural and man-made hazards.

Increasingly, development in the County has spread across the rural landscape because of the desirability of these rural environs. This development pattern is an inefficient use of land and natural resources. Dispersed development increases traffic congestion in some areas, and places a financial strain on the ability of the County and special districts to provide needed services and facilities, such as transportation, police, and fire and emergency medical services (EMS). A more compact land use pattern, on the other hand, shapes growth in a manner that conserves the County’s natural resources and enhances livability and sense of community.

The policies contained in this plan distinguish between areas of the County that are appropriate for urban development and those that are not. For purposes of this Plan, urban development is defined as those land uses typically associated with more densely populated areas with residential lot sizes generally one acre or less, with infrastructure and facilities such as paved streets, sidewalks, municipal/district water and wastewater facilities, and other similar characteristics. The Plan establishes an Urban Area that identifies lands in the western portion of the County that are currently most appropriate for urban development. These lands will be planned for urban development, with a full range of urban services including all utilities, and are encouraged to annex into incorporated towns and cities as development occurs.

In the eastern part of the County, the plan establishes the Rural Town Center designation for the unincorporated eastern communities of Byers and Strasburg. Development in these areas has been coordinated through the Sub-area planning process, so that balanced growth will occur without changing the rural town character currently enjoyed by residents. The Planning Reserve in the Watkins area identified in the 2012 Comprehensive Plan Amendment has been included in the Urban Area and Urban Reserve, so there is not a Rural Town Center Planning Area identified for Watkins. It is the intent of this Plan that development in these Rural Town Centers should occur at densities as proposed in the applicable Rural Town Center sub-area plan and should be served by an appropriate level of facilities and services, including public water and wastewater treatment, parks, adequate roads, and other necessary services.
Urban development is also appropriate in the incorporated Towns of Bennett and Deer Trail. Urban Reserves have been identified adjacent to these two Towns.

By directing growth to the Urban Area, the Rural Town Center Planning Areas and the Incorporated Cities and Towns (together these areas are referred to as the Designated Growth Areas), development can be more efficiently served, open lands and natural resources can be better conserved, public facilities and services can be delivered more effectively and sustainably, and a diverse range of transportation choices can be made available.

**URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

**GOAL GM 1 – Ensure a Compact Land Development Pattern**

Arapahoe County will have a compact land use pattern that maintains a balance between development and the natural environment. The Designated Growth Areas (described under Development Framework and Land Use, Introduction and shown on the Development Framework Maps) are suitable for future urban development based on availability of facilities and services to serve more dense population and where most publicly-supplied facilities and services will occur. Urban residential development and accompanying employment centers and commercial areas will be directed to the Urban Area (including incorporated cities), Rural Town Centers and incorporated Towns of Bennett and Deer Trail where facilities and services may be provided efficiently. Development in the Urban Area will be built at densities of at least four (4) units per acre and will be served by municipal/district water and wastewater treatment systems.

**Policy GM 1.1 – Direct Growth to the Urban Area**

Appropriate locations for urban development are the Urban Area and the Rural Town Center Planning Areas of the unincorporated communities of Strasburg and Byers.

**Strategy GM 1.1(a) – Restrict Urban Development in Areas Other than the Designated Growth Areas**

Because dispersed land uses cannot be served efficiently, the County will strive to avoid leapfrog development outside of Designated Growth Areas, and therefore generally will not zone land or facilitate or provide urban infrastructure or services outside of Designated Growth Areas.

**Strategy GM 1.1(b) – Create Incentives for Development in Designated Growth Areas**

Incentives to consider include expedited development approvals and lower fees, prioritized infrastructure improvements, public/private partnering, targeted rezoning of lands within Designated Growth Areas, and revisions to the County’s development regulations to promote development within Designated Growth Areas.

**Strategy GM 1.1(c) – Allow Urban Development within the Designated Growth Areas Only When All Urban Services and Infrastructure Can Be Provided**

Some unincorporated lands are already zoned for urban development. The County will consider urban development in these areas when provisions have been made to provide a complete range of facilities and services, including but not limited to water and wastewater treatment, parks, libraries, fire protection and emergency medical service (EMS), and other essential public services.
Strategy GM 1.1(d) – Review and Amend Residential Zone Districts
The County will review, and amend as necessary, the residential zone districts in the Land Development Code to ensure urban densities can be achieved and to accommodate current trends in lot sizes and housing product types.

Policy GM 1.2 - Encourage Infill Development and Redevelopment
Arapahoe County will encourage infill development that is compatible with existing land uses in the Urban Area to take advantage of existing public infrastructure and services.

Strategy GM 1.2(a) - Create Incentives and Remove Barriers to Infill Development
For infill development areas, incentives that may encourage infill development are targeted infrastructure improvements, revised regulations that are context-oriented rather than rigid, and expedited processing of development reviews.

Strategy GM 1.2(b) - Prepare Subarea Plans
Within the Urban Area, the County will determine areas that may need detailed land use planning and prepare Sub-area Plans when necessary. Such Subarea Plans will be adopted as elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Subareas of potential priority include:

- South Parker Road Corridor
- Centennial Airport Employment Center
- Federal Boulevard Corridor
- Platte Canyon Road Corridor
- Tier 1 / Urban Reserve
- Regional Waste Disposal Site Environments

Policy GM 1.2 – Implement the Comprehensive Plan in a Manner that Respects the Rights of Property Owners and the Community
The County will strive to implement the Plan in a manner that respects individual property rights, respects the values of the individuals in the community, considers the cumulative impacts and future generations, and applies due process in all deliberations.

Policy GM 1.3 – Promote Environmental Justice
The County will fairly treat and encourage involvement of all people, regardless of age, race, color, national origin, religion, or income, in the development, implementation and enforcement of policies, regulations, and capital improvement investments.

Strategy GM 1.3(a) – Promote Geographic Equity
All residential areas will be avoided when making decisions about the location of uses with nuisance or adverse environmental or health impacts.

Strategy GM 1.3(b) – Promote Procedural and Social Equity
The County will employ measures to ensure impacted community members are meaningfully involved in land use decisions in their community, including scheduling public hearings at convenient times and places for the community.
Policy GM 1.4 - Encourage Improvements to the County’s Development Review Process
As an incentive to encourage the development patterns that are promoted by the goals and policies, the County will explore opportunities to streamline the review process for development proposals that readily meet the goals and policies of this Plan.

Strategy GM 1.4(a) – Continue to Identify Opportunities to Streamline the Development Review Process
The County will consider streamlining development review procedures for proposals that meet the policy intent of this Plan and that meet applicable standards and regulations.

Policy GM 1.5 – Establish Consistency between the Comprehensive Plan and County Development Regulations
Arapahoe County will work to achieve consistency between the policies contained in this Plan and the County’s land development regulations.

Strategy GM 1.5(a) – Amend Land Development Code to Include General Conformance with the Comprehensive Plan as a Criterion for Approval
Current regulations require general conformance with the Comprehensive Plan for approval of Planned Unit Developments. The approval criteria for conventional rezonings should be amended to include this same language instead of the current language requiring compliance. Development that is not in general conformance with the Plan will be strongly encouraged to be preceded by a Comprehensive Plan amendment prior to consideration of development applications. (See Chapter VI, Plan Revisions and Amendments.)

Strategy GM 1.5(b) – Review and Amend Development Regulations
The County will review its development regulations to determine whether zone districts and associated permitted uses and performance standards sufficiently align with the intent of the Development Framework categories. Amendments will be made if necessary.

Policy GM 1.6 – Direct Growth to the Rural Town Center Planning Areas
A limited amount of land around the Rural Town Centers of Strasburg and Byers is designated for future growth. It is intended that development in these areas will have a compact land use pattern to maintain the small town character of the communities. Development will be evaluated for consistency with the Transportation Plan and the Sub-area Plans adopted for Strasburg and Byers, with particular consideration given to the ability of the County and service districts to provide services.

Strategy GM 1.6(a) - Require Development to be Contiguous to, Compatible with, and at Densities as Proposed within the Applicable Rural Town Center Sub-area Plan
Development within the Rural Town Center Planning Areas will be contiguous to existing development in the towns, occur at densities as proposed in the applicable Rural Town Center sub-area plan, and must be served by a full range of facilities and services (i.e., roads, water, wastewater, all utilities, parks and schools).

Strategy GM 1.6(b) - Revise Zoning and Subdivision Regulations for the Unincorporated Rural Town Centers
The County will revise the zoning and subdivision regulations to allow development at densities as proposed in the applicable Rural Town Center sub-area plans. Current zoning does not allow urban density development.
Strategy GM 1.6(c) – Consider the Rezoning of Properties for Rural Residential Development Only in the Rural Town Center Planning Areas
The County will consider rezoning of properties which result in lot sizes of between 1 and 2.5 acres (R-A and R-E Zone Districts) only in the Rural Town Center Planning Areas, as well as for densities and lot sizes as proposed in the applicable Rural Town Center sub-area plan.

REGIONAL COOPERATION

GOAL GM 2 - Coordinate Regional Planning
Arapahoe County will coordinate with towns and municipalities at a regional level to improve patterns of development, coordinate land use and transportation planning, and maintain the character of the Rural Area.

Policy GM 2.1 - Encourage Growth in the Incorporated Towns
The County will encourage growth in the Towns of Bennett and Deer Trail. The County will encourage developers of urban density development to annex to the Towns.

Strategy GM 2.1(a) - Coordinate the County’s Planning Efforts with the Incorporated Towns
The Towns of Bennett and Deer Trail have adopted Comprehensive Plans. The County will coordinate its planning efforts with the plans adopted by these communities.

Policy GM 2.2 – Require New Urban Development to Make a Reasonable Effort to Annex into Incorporated Cities and Towns
The County will require all proposed urban development to make a reasonable effort to annex into cities and towns.

Strategy GM 2.2(a) – Encourage and Support Annexation of New Urban Development
The County will require applicants proposing new urban development to make a reasonable effort to annex into cities or towns prior to development commencing.

Strategy GM 2.2(b) – Encourage Annexation of Total Community
The County will support the annexation of a total community into a municipality. Annexation of only commercial development without the corresponding residential areas is inconsistent with the goals and policies of this Plan.

Policy GM 2.3 - Promote Intergovernmental Cooperation
Arapahoe County will pursue and promote opportunities for regional growth planning with neighboring towns, municipalities, counties, and the Denver Regional Council of Governments.

Strategy GM 2.3(a) - Review Growth Areas on a Periodic Basis
The County will work with affected jurisdictions and communities to review the Urban Area and the Rural Town Center Planning Areas on a periodic basis to determine whether adjustments are necessary.

Strategy GM 2.3(b) – Support and Encourage Annexation of Enclaves
Numerous enclaves and unincorporated areas surrounded by multiple jurisdictions exist in the County which cause confusion in delivering services. The County will encourage municipalities to annex these enclaves through the following actions:

- Waive the annexation impact report requirement. (Impact Reports are required for enclaves greater than 10 acres in area.)
Support amendments to the State annexation statutes that ease requirements for annexing partially surrounded areas or areas entirely surrounded by multiple jurisdictions.

Enter into Intergovernmental Agreements in which, in exchange for annexing the unincorporated area, the County would offer to:
  - At the County’s expense, undertake street and sidewalk repairs in the unincorporated area, if needed, or construct missing sidewalks or trail connections, or
  - Distribute a portion of the County’s share of the open space sales tax to the municipality to use in a manner that benefits landowners in the unincorporated area, subject to approval of the distribution through the process required by the County’s Open Space Sales and Use Tax Resolution.

**Strategy GM 2.3(c) - Collaborate with Cities to Establish an Annexation Strategy for Development and Consider Intergovernmental Agreements**

The County will work with the municipalities in the County to develop an annexation strategy that includes the following:

- Requires that properties proposing urban development be first considered for annexation into a municipality, rather than developing in the unincorporated portions of the County.
- Requires that properties in the Urban Area be developed in accordance with urban standards for infrastructure and improvements.
- Memorialize these principles in an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA).

**Strategy GM 2.3(d) - Recognize and Defer to Adopted Plans in the Urban Area**

In the case where another jurisdiction has already planned for a subarea within the Urban Area, the County will recognize and defer to an adopted plan.

**Strategy GM 2.3(e) - Develop Intergovernmental Agreements with Special Districts**

The County should work with special districts to establish agreements regarding provision of essential services in the Designated Growth Areas to promote orderly and fiscally responsible development.

**Strategy GM 2.3(f) – Encourage Special District Master Plans to Be Submitted to County**

Future growth in the Designated Growth Areas is dependent upon the provision of services to serve that growth, and it is critical that the County be made aware of the future plans of the special districts providing services.

**Strategy GM 2.3(g) – Require Mitigation of Land Use Impacts between Jurisdictions**

The County will require mitigation of potential land use impacts of new unincorporated development adjacent to municipalities. The County will encourage municipalities to mitigate impacts on adjacent unincorporated County development.

**NATURAL AND MAN-MADE HAZARDS**

**GOAL GM 3 – Reduce the Loss of Life, Health and Property Due to Risks Posed by Natural and Man-made Hazards**

The presence of natural hazards can have a significant impact on existing and future development. The Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan has identified the major natural hazards affecting the County (flooding, wildfires, and major storm events) along with assessments of the risks posed by each hazard. Other hazards exist that pose threats to public health and safety, such as airport influence areas and highway noise zones. In order to protect existing
and future residents, the identification and mitigation of hazards will be incorporated into the County’s planning processes.

**Policy GM 3.1 – Direct Future Development to Areas with Low Risks from Natural and Man-made Hazards**
The County will direct future development to areas with low risk of being affected by natural hazards.

*Strategy GM 3.1(a) - Identify Potential Hazardous Areas*
The County maintains maps and other information that illustrate the location and extent of potentially hazardous areas, including but not limited to airport noise zones, highway noise zones, Superfund Sites, geologic hazard areas, flood hazard areas, steep slopes and potential wildfire areas.

*Strategy GM 3.1(b) – Restrict Future Development in Known Hazard Areas*
The County will direct future development away from known hazard areas.

**Policy GM 3.2 – Determine Appropriate Uses and Land Use Intensities for Natural Hazard Areas**
The County will restrict uses in hazard areas to those that are not significantly impacted by the hazard, such as open space or other low intensity uses.

*Strategy GM 3.2(a) – Adopt Hazard Area Zoning Regulations*
The County will amend its zoning regulations to allow appropriate uses and intensities of land uses within known hazard areas or to restrict inappropriate land uses and intensities within known hazard areas.

*Strategy GM 3.2(b) – Implement Geologic Hazard Regulations*
The County has adopted geologic hazard regulations (Section 12-105 of the Land Development Code) that permit uses minimally impacted by the presence of hazards to locate in geologic hazard areas, including agricultural uses, industrial or commercial use involving parking and storage yards, and public recreational uses not requiring permanent structures for human habitation. In areas with moderate to extreme expansive soil, mitigation measures are required for any uses other than these permitted uses.

**Policy GM 3.3 – Integrate Hazard Mitigation into Land Use and Capital Improvement Planning**
Avoidance or mitigation of natural hazards creates safe communities and neighborhoods. The County will consider the presence and mitigation of natural hazards in the development review process and in its capital improvement programming.

*Strategy GM 3.3(a) – Require Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment and Mitigation Plans for Development Applications*
The County will amend the Land Development Code to require development applications to include the identification and risk assessment of hazards affecting land associated with development applications. The Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan will be used to identify the hazards and level of risk posed.
by the hazards. Avoidance or appropriate mitigation measures will be required for approval of the application.

Strategy GM 3.3(b) – Coordinate with Fire Districts on Fire Hazard Mitigation
The County will coordinate development application review with the appropriate fire district to require wildfire mitigation in new development or redevelopment in accordance with the Eastern Arapahoe County Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP).

Strategy GM 3.3(c) – Provide Assistance in Reducing Wildfire Hazards
Assist local fire districts in implementing wildfire hazard mitigation measures established in the Eastern Arapahoe County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP).

Strategy GM 3.3(d) – Fund Capital Improvements that Mitigate Natural Hazards
The County should consider funding capital improvements that serve to lessen or mitigate natural hazards and/or improve and enhance the County’s ability to respond to natural disasters or other emergencies.

Strategy GM 3.3(e) – Plan and Fund Major Infrastructure Improvements that Avoid Areas Containing Natural Hazards
The County should program major infrastructure improvements in areas not subject to natural hazards in order to direct growth to safe areas.

Strategy GM 3.3(f) – Consider Acquisition of Hazard Areas
The County may consider the acquisition of hazardous areas for open space or parks.

Strategy GM 3.3(g) – Continue Restricting Development in Floodplains
The County has adopted regulations that restrict development in the FEMA and Colorado Water Conservation Board identified floodplains of the many waterways in Arapahoe County. Land in floodplains will not be developed and will remain in a natural state, with the exception of allowing for passive recreational uses such as hiking, biking, horseback riding, hunting and fishing.

The County will consider the establishment of setbacks for floodplains and natural waterbodies, the extent of which will depend upon floodplains established by approximate methods and on floodplains that are disposed to lateral migration (consider a minimum of 1,000 feet from the edge of a wetland, lake, stream, or floodplain for feasibility and appropriateness). In addition, the County will cooperate with FEMA, the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District, the Colorado Water Conservation Board, and the Southeast Metro Stormwater Authority to prevent flood damage and incompatible land uses in flood hazard areas.

The County’s floodplain regulations are based on a principle of floodplain preservation, which recognizes that floodplains must be preserved for the primary function of conveying unobstructed flood waters. Floodplain preservation protects people and property and provides benefits such as water quality enhancement, groundwater recharge, wildlife habitat, and recreation opportunities.
Strategy GM 3.3(h) – Locate Critical Facilities to Avoid Floodplains
The County will require that critical facilities avoid locating in 100-year floodplains, including water and wastewater treatment plants, fire and police protection facilities, community facilities, major utility substations or facilities, and other facilities of critical importance in an emergency or disaster. Critical facilities will be discouraged in the 500-year floodplain.

Strategy GM 3.3(i) - Adopt Standards to Limit or Mitigate Development in Other Hazard Areas
The County will adopt standards to limit or mitigate development in other hazard areas, such as steep slopes and geologic hazard areas.

Strategy GM 3.3(j) – Consider Amendments to Building Codes to Protect Structures from Extreme Temperatures, Severe Storms and Severe Wind/Tornados
The County will evaluate and consider adopting amendments to the various Building Codes that will provide a high degree of protection for structures during severe weather events.

Policy GM 3.4 – Prepare for Recovery from Disasters
Preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disasters and traumatic events is essential to the physical, economic and emotional health of the County’s communities and residents. The County has prepared a Community Recovery Framework that identifies a range of recovery support functions that can be applied to a variety of incidents. This Framework is a guide for identifying roles and responsibilities during disaster recovery situations.

Strategy GM 3.4(a) – Adopt Post-Disaster Procedures
The County should adopt Post-Disaster Procedures in the Land Development Code that address issues such as building and demolition permit issuance; approval/designation of debris disposal sites; moratoria on development; permit issuance for emergency repairs to infrastructure; temporary uses, structures and access; and similar conditions that occur as a result of a disaster.

Policy GM 3.5 – Protect Existing and New Development from Man-made Hazards
The County will take appropriate action to protect existing and new development from man-made hazards posed by Airport Influence Areas, highway noise zones, abandoned oil and gas flow lines, fires at oil and gas facilities, and other hazardous areas. The County’s actions will focus on the mitigation of such hazards.

Strategy GM 3.5(a) – Continue Enforcing Airport Influence Area Overlay Zone
The County has adopted an Airport Influence Area overlay zone which restricts and discourages residential and other noise-sensitive uses within certain noise contours, requires avigation easements, and requires disclosures to buyers of residential properties of the presence of low-flying aircraft and aircraft noise.

Strategy GM 3.5(b) – Establish Oil and Gas Operation Setbacks
The County will consider amending the Land Development Code to establish a minimum distance required to separate new residential and other uses from existing oil and gas wellheads and tank farms.
Policy GM 3.6 – Inform Citizens of Natural and Man-made Hazards
Arapahoe County will inform residents about potential man-made hazards in the County.

Strategy GM 3.6(a) - Increase Public Awareness about Potential Environmental Hazards
The County will develop a manual or public information (to include the County website) regarding the hazards of developing and living in hazardous areas.

Strategy GM 3.6(b) – Consider Requiring Disclosure Statements
The County will consider amending its Land Development Code to include requiring disclosure statements for any natural or man-made hazard that may affect a property.

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Intent
The Public Facilities and Services Policies are intended to ensure that adequate community resources, public facilities and public services are provided in the County at the time of new development. Public facilities and services are vital to protecting and promoting the safety and wellness of County residents. Provision of facilities and services that serve a growing and an aging population will be important for service providers to address in the short term and into the future. Facilities and services include but are not limited to: water storage and treatment facilities, water distribution and supply lines, wastewater treatment plants and lines, stormwater drainage, and fire and EMS and police protection, as well as parks, libraries, schools, and utilities.

PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY

Since adoption of the 2001 Arapahoe County Comprehensive Plan, several events have occurred which highlight the importance of linking water to land use planning:

- Drought of 2002.
- Adoption of legislation dealing with water and land use.
- State Engineer directives to Planning Departments state-wide.
- Legislative bills to educate planners to the issue of water and land use.
- Preparation of the Colorado State Water Plan based upon the Governor’s directive. The Plan contains directives to address the state-wide water gap forecasted in 2050 resulting from the increase in population and the lack of water supply for the increased population. The Plan emphasizes the need for collaboration between water providers and land use planners.
- Adoption of legislation prohibiting the sale low-efficiency water fixtures in the State.
- Movement to use less groundwater aquifers (non-renewable) and more surface water (renewable).

Because Arapahoe County is not a water provider, one of the few ways for the County to assist water providers in closing the gap between water demand and water supply is to identify the issue in this Water Supply section of the Comprehensive Plan update and to recommend strategies for the County and water providers to pursue to develop, manage and conserve water supplies to meet future demand.

The Colorado Water Plan projects a gap between water demand and available supplies of 560,000 acre-feet by 2050. That’s 182.5 billion gallons.
Arapahoe County relies on municipal departments and special districts to provide water to County residents. Most of the development in the Urban Area is served by municipal water systems with renewable sources, but many of the water and sanitation districts serving urban development and the Rural Town Centers of Strasburg and Byers rely on groundwater as one, if not the sole, source of their water supply. The provision of water from a renewable, reliable source is an important constraint to overcome in planning for future growth in the County. The goals, policies and strategies that follow are intended to apply to urban density developments where centralized water systems are in place or proposed, generally in the Designated Growth Areas. Rural Area goals and policies address water concerns in the rural portion of the County.

**GOAL PFS 1 – Ensure an Adequate Water Supply in Terms of Quantity and Quality for Existing and Future Development**

The County will work with water providers and the Colorado Water Conservation Board to explore options in providing a renewable, reliable water supply for development and communities in the County. The County is following the guidance provided in the Colorado Water Plan to require and promote water demand management, efficiency and conservation.

**Policy PFS 1.1 - Explore Options to Obtain an Adequate Long-Term Water Supply for Communities in the County**

Arapahoe County does not consider non-tributary groundwater to be an adequate long-term water supply for its communities. The County will encourage service providers to consider options to obtain and secure adequate renewable, non-tributary sources of water for communities.

*Strategy PFS 1.1(a) – Support Statewide Legislation*

The County will support state-wide legislation that would facilitate the provision of renewable water supplies in the County.

*Strategy PFS 1.1(b) – Study Water Supply Options*

The County, in conjunction with water suppliers, will conduct a study to determine options for the County to consider in providing a permanent, long-term water supply.

*Strategy PFS 1.1(c) – Support Efforts to Monitor Groundwater Use*

The County will actively support agencies and institutions involved in monitoring groundwater usage, water-level declines, pumping rates and similar conditions affecting groundwater supply.

*Strategy PFS 1.1(d) – Develop and Maintain Partnerships with Water Providers*

The County will develop a forum for water providers and the County to share issues of mutual concern on a periodic basis and work collaboratively to address long-term water supply concerns.

*Strategy PFS 1.1(e) – Support the Efforts of the South Metro Water Supply Authority to Obtain Renewable Water Supplies for its Members*

The County will support efforts of the Authority to obtain renewable water supplies through the Water Infrastructure and Supply Efficiency (WISE) project. Support would include streamlining or prioritizing permit approvals and processing.

**Policy PFS 1.2 - Reduce Dependence on Aquifers for Long-Term Water Supply**

Aquifers provide a finite source of water and should not be relied upon as a permanent, long-term water supply.
Strategy PFS 1.2(a) – Require Renewable Water Supplies for New Urban Development
To the extent allowed under the law of the State of Colorado, the County will require applicants for new urban development to submit water supply plans that document renewable sources of water for proposed development.

Strategy PFS 1.2(b) – Require Use of Groundwater Supplies Only in Drought or Emergency Conditions
To the extent allowed under the law of the State of Colorado, the County will require water supply plans, utility plans and resiliency (conservation) plans to include provisions that any decreed groundwater supplies will be used only in drought conditions or in emergency conditions, such as floods or other disasters when surface water may not be available.

Strategy PFS 1.2(c) – Promote Renewable Water Supplies
The County will encourage water providers, businesses, residents and elected officials to support efforts to provide renewable water supplies and to promote groundwater conservation.

Strategy PFS 1.2(d) – Reduce Barriers to Constructing Additional Water Storage Reservoirs
In an effort to encourage water providers to construct additional reservoirs in the County, the County will amend the Land Development Code and the 1041 regulations to simplify and streamline the approval process for water storage reservoirs.

Policy PFS 1.3 – Request Water Supply Impact Information for Annexations
The County will encourage municipalities to address the impact on water supply when annexing land.

Strategy PFS 1.3(a) – Request Assessment of Impacts on Water Supply by Annexing Municipality
The County will request a municipality that is annexing land to address the impacts on the water supply of the water provider (municipality or district). The County will encourage the use of renewable water supplies for annexations.

As population continues to grow in Colorado, greater awareness is needed to protect drinking water sources and delivery systems -- everything from public water systems, home and commercial plumbing, watershed health and management, to ground and surface water protection. Awareness is the key to addressing this challenge; getting planners and elected officials to understand the issues involved with water supply, water quality and the limited resources available.

Policy PFS 1.4 – Protect and Enhance the Quality of Drinking Water in the County
Drinking water that meets Federal Clean Water Act standards, as implemented by the State Department of Public Health and Environment, is a necessity for existing and future residents of the County. The County will work with water providers, stormwater management agencies and State agencies to ensure drinking water sources are protected from contamination and meet or exceed established standards.

Strategy PFS 1.4(a) – Participate in and Collaborate on Regional Water Quality Planning Activities
The County will pursue a watershed approach in collaborating with water and wastewater service providers and stormwater management agencies to reduce point and non-point source pollution, protect and restore natural water systems and conserve water resources.
**Strategy PFS 1.4(b) – Support State Legislation**
The County will encourage and support State legislation that preserves and protects all drinking water sources in the County.

**Strategy PFS 1.4(c) – Consider Memoranda of Understanding to Ensure Drinking Water Quality**
Collaboration between the County, municipalities, water and wastewater service providers and regional and State agencies can be accomplished through Memoranda of Understanding. MOUs should address shared source water protection, mutual concerns impacting water quality, and commitments to refer development applications to the public water provider for review and comment. Collaboration should also include sharing GIS information and providing input to the State Water Quality Control Division and the Cherry Creek Basin Water Quality Authority.

**Strategy PFS 1.4(d) – Continue to Ensure Water Quality Is Preserved through Proper Design, Construction and Maintenance of Stormwater Detention Facilities**
The County, along with Urban Drainage and SEMSWA, will continue to review and inspect developments for conformance with detention and water quality standards.

**GOAL PFS 2 – Integrate Water and Land Use Planning**
The adequacy of water is a critical factor in approving development and it is incumbent upon the County to coordinate land use planning with water demand, efficiency and conservation.

**Policy PFS 2.1 – Require Adequate Water Availability for Proposed Development**
The County will require documentation of the adequacy of water for proposed development, including adequate fire flow.

**Strategy PFS 2.1(a) – Require Water Supply Plan at Zoning**
To the extent allowed under the law of the State of Colorado, the County will require the submission of a water supply plan documenting an adequate supply of water to serve a proposed development at the earliest stage of the development process, usually at the zoning stage. The water supply plan will be required to be prepared by the applicant with review and approval by any special district water provider. The County does not consider a “will serve” letter to be adequate documentation except where consistent with statutory requirements. In addition, the County will require a report documenting progress made in implementing the water supply plan as new phases or stages of development are proposed.

**Strategy PFS 2.1(b) – Adopt a 300-year Water Supply Requirement**
The County will require new development to provide a 300-year water supply. This requirement should be included in the Land Development Code and apply to all development applications.

**Strategy PFS 2.1(c) – Require Utility Plans to Document Water Demand Management**
The County will require utility plans to document the demand management measures to be undertaken to conserve water in the proposed development.

**Strategy PFS 2.1(d) – Develop Water Supply Checklist to Assist in Development Review**
The County will develop a checklist to be used in the development review process to ensure adequate information is provided to determine the adequacy of water supplies for new development.
Policy PFS 2.2 – Encourage Development to Incorporate Water Wise Development Practices

The County will encourage development that incorporates water wise landscaping principles.

Strategy PFS 2.2(a) – Review Zoning District Performance Standards

The performance standards of the various zone districts should be examined and amended to ensure they are consistent with promoting water-wise development, especially the residential zone districts. Lot sizes, permitted maximum densities and required percentage of open space need to be analyzed. Consideration should be given to establishing maximum lot sizes (or minimum densities) in order to reduce the amount of space potentially needing irrigation.

Strategy PFS 2.2(b) – Encourage Developers to Permit Water Conservation Landscaping Techniques in Covenants

The County will encourage developers to allow water conservation landscaping techniques in covenants, including allowing no or minimal areas of irrigated turf, allowing the use of xeriscape and drought-tolerant plant materials, and allowing rain barrels, rain gardens, and non-living landscape materials.

Policy PFS 2.3 – Incorporate Water-Saving Actions into Land Use Planning Activities

The County will undertake actions to incorporate water-saving actions and requirements into its development review process.

Strategy PFS 2.3(a) – Encourage Development Patterns and Land Uses that Conserve Water

The County will encourage a compact development pattern and higher density, mixed use developments that conserve water.

Strategy PFS 2.3(b) – Encourage Water-Saving Buildings and Developments

In an effort to encourage buildings and developments that incorporate water efficiency and conservation measures, the County should consider expediting those approvals. The County will need to work with special districts and review agencies to establish procedures for expedited permitting if this strategy is considered.

Strategy PFS 2.3(c) – Create Incentives for Incorporating Water Saving Measures

The County will consider creating tax or other incentives for incorporating water efficiency measures for new development and redevelopment.

Strategy PFS 2.3(d) – Work with Fire Districts to Identify Water Efficiency and Conservation Measures

Fire and building codes include provisions that reduce fire risk, and these provisions also can serve to reduce overall water supply infrastructure required for fire protection. The County will work with fire districts to identify code provisions to adopt or modify that will aid in efforts to efficiently use and conserve water.

Strategy PFS 2.3(e) – Amend Land Development Code to Incorporate Best Management Practices for Water Demand Management, Water Efficiency and Water Conservation

The County will undertake amendments to the Land Development Code to incorporate water-saving standards, such as:
• Installation of xeriscaping or native and drought-tolerant landscaping
• Installation of water-saving irrigation techniques
• Maximum percentage of landscaped area covered with non-native turf
• Increase in the percentage of landscape area that can be covered with non-living landscape material
• Design elements that could be included in landscaped area calculations (patios, courtyards, etc.)

**Strategy PFS 2.3(f) – Support Development that Implements Net-Zero Water Practices**
Through a combination of rainfall harvesting, conservation, and water reuse, buildings and sites can achieve self-sufficiency and reduce or eliminate their reliance on public water infrastructure. Developments employing these practices are supported by the County.

**Strategy PFS 2.3(g) – Create Incentives for Installing WaterSense Irrigation Components**
The County should consider creating incentives for installing WaterSense irrigation components, such as:
• Reduction in percentage of lot required to be landscaped
• Increase in the percentage of lot that can be covered by non-living landscape material
• Reduction in the number of landscape islands required in a parking lot or allow non-living landscape materials in islands

**Strategy PFS 2.3(h) – Adopt Resolution Allowing Graywater Use and Prepare Graywater Control Program**
Under state law, a county is permitted to adopt a resolution that authorizes the use of graywater and establishes a graywater control program.

**Strategy PFS 2.3(i) – Promote Use of Graywater Systems in Structures**
The County has amended the International Plumbing Code to permit the use of graywater piping within structures. If the County adopts a graywater resolution and control program, architects, builders and contractor should be made aware of this potential water conservation and reuse opportunity.

**Strategy PFS 2.3(j) – Encourage Water Providers to Implement Graywater Programs**
To promote water reuse, the County will encourage water providers to implement graywater programs, including use in individual buildings, sites and in appropriate areas in developments.

**Strategy PFS 2.3(k) – Incorporate Water Saving Measures in County Facilities and Projects**
The County should consider incorporating water saving measures in all new County facilities and projects, including environmentally sustainable building practices, WaterSense products and programs, and Water Wise Development practices. The County should also consider retro-fitting fixtures and landscaping at older facilities with new, water-saving alternatives.
GOAL PFS 3 – Reduce Overall Water Consumption in the County

Consistent with the State Water Plan, the County will work with water providers to address and implement methods to close the gap between water demand and water supply projected by the year 2050.

Policy PFS 3.1 – Encourage Water Providers to Implement Best Management Practices for Reducing Water Demand

Arapahoe County has developed best management practices for water management and conservation based upon information presented in the Colorado Water Plan:

- Public Education on Best Management Practices for Water Conservation
- Conservation measures for building sites with outside areas:
  1. Use of Low Impact Development techniques for parking areas, sidewalks and driveways
  2. Use of efficient sprinkler systems and drip irrigation
  3. Use of drought resistant plant materials appropriate for an arid climate
  4. Reduction in areas planted with irrigated turf
  5. Creation of Landscape and Riparian buffers
  6. Installation of rain gardens and rainwater harvesting features
  7. Saving and reuse of topsoil or amendment of soil with organic materials after construction.
- Conservation measures for inside buildings:
  1. The use of water-efficient (WaterSense-listed) plumbing fixtures as a result of recently adopted State legislation
  2. Installation of graywater systems for re-using water.
- Conservation measures for subdivisions:
  1. Reduction in the size and amount of irrigated turf areas
  2. Work with recreational districts on Open Spaces with water conservation plans
  3. Work with special districts
  4. Reduce impervious surfaces, thereby reducing runoff
  5. Installation of rain gardens and rainwater harvesting features
  6. Manage irrigation systems to prevent losses and waste
  7. Reduce water pollution from streets, parking lots and driveways by design
  8. Use swales to promote infiltration and reduce stormwater runoff volumes.

Strategy PFS 3.1(a) – Assist Water Providers in Demand Forecasting

The County will coordinate with water providers to assist in the preparation of demand forecasts by sharing information about population growth and new industries or developments in the County that will increase the demand for water.

Strategy PFS 3.1(b) – Support Water Resiliency Plans Prepared by Water Providers

State regulations require any water provider delivering more than 2,000 acre-feet of water per year to develop and submit a water resiliency (water conservation) plan to the Colorado Water Conservation Board. Water conservation best practices encouraged by the County include:

- Rate structures that encourage low levels of consumption
- Tap fee structures that lower fees for high density, infill and Water-wise development
- Water system management practices such as:
  - Use of water budgets
  - Use of smart metering
  - Instituting comprehensive water loss management programs
Improved data collection to track usage, savings and estimating

- Standards for plumbing and irrigation systems that promote water savings, consistent with standards adopted in County codes and regulations
- Standards that allow the use of graywater systems and water reuse in buildings, individual building sites, and in appropriate areas within a development such as landscaped areas.

The County will encourage smaller water providers to prepare water conservation plans considering the same conservation best practices.

**Strategy PFS 3.1(c) – Require Water Conservation Measures to be Included in New Special District Master Plans**

The County will require utility master plans for new special districts to include water conservation measures, including the use of graywater.

**Strategy PFS 3.1(d) – Work with Local Water Providers to Reduce Residential Consumption**

The County will work with water districts, water and sanitation districts and metropolitan districts to reduce residential consumption with a target of 130 gallons or less per capita per day.

**Strategy PFS 3.1(e) – Prepare and Promote Water Conservation Handbook**

The County will prepare a water conservation handbook in conjunction with water providers to educate residents and businesses about ways to conserve water in their homes and businesses. The handbook will be accompanied by a public outreach program.

**Policy PFS 3.2 – Create Partnerships to Implement Water Demand Management and Water Conservation Measures**

The County will partner with water providers to encourage implementation of water demand management and water conservation measures.

**Strategy PFS 3.2(a) – Work with Water Providers to Create and Implement Incentives and Standards Designed to Reduce Water Demand and Conserve Water**

The County will collaborate with water providers to jointly devise and implement incentive packages and standards that reduce water demand and promote water conservation.

**Strategy PFS 3.2(b) – Collaborate with Water Providers to Educate the Public about Water Conservation**

The County will collaborate with water providers to produce and distribute materials that provide education about the importance of water conservation and what actions individual homeowners can take to reduce their water consumption.

**Strategy PFS 3.2(c) – Work with the Landscape Industry and Property Managers to Implement Efficient Landscape Installations Including Retro-fits**

The County will work with representatives of the landscape industry, along with property managers, to collaborate on zoning and building code amendments that promote decreased water demand coupled with water conservation for residential developments.
Strategy PFS 3.2(d) – Work with the Home Building Industry to Encourage Construction of Water-Smart Homes
The County will work with home builders and developers to collaborate on zoning and building code amendments that promote decreased water demand coupled with water conservation for residential developments.

Policy PFS 3.3 – Support Actions to Reuse Water
The County has amended the plumbing code to allow the reuse of water in buildings. The County will continue to support actions to reuse water.

Strategy PFS 3.3(a) – Encourage the Reuse of Water by Water Suppliers and Individual Users
Many water suppliers in the County use reclaimed water for irrigation and other appropriate uses. The County supports these efforts and encourages the continued practice. The County supports efforts to expand the reuse of water to individual users.

Strategy PFS 3.3(b) – Support Regional and Expanded Local Water Reuse Options
The County will not object to efforts by water providers to increase their ability to sell or share reuse water supplies as long as non-renewable resources are not affected.

Strategy PFS 3.3(c) – Support the Development and Use of New Technology that Allows for the Reuse of Water Used in Oil and Gas Operations
The County will support the reuse of water used in oil and gas operations as new treatment technologies make this feasible and safe.

Policy PFS 3.4 – Encourage Water Providers to Adapt to Drought Conditions
The occurrence of drought conditions and higher temperatures are becoming more frequent and longer in duration. In an arid region with limited water supplies, these extreme weather conditions must be taken into account by water providers in order to deliver a reliable and safe water supply.

Strategy PFS 3.4(a) – Encourage Water Providers to Incorporate Drought Conditions into Their Water Supply and Demand Planning Activities
The County will encourage water providers to incorporate drought conditions and higher temperatures in their supply and demand forecasts in providing future and existing water supplies.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT

GOAL PFS 4 – Ensure the Adequacy of Wastewater Treatment Facilities
The County’s role in the treatment of wastewater is in reviewing and approving plans and permits for new or expanded treatment plants under its 1041 Regulations and Location and Extent powers. As a designated management agency, the County also has a formal review role under the State Water Quality Control Division’s site application process. Site application plan permits are reviewed by Tri-County Health Department and ultimately approved by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. The County will ensure that new or
expanded plants will meet the needs of future growth while, at the same time, protecting water quality in County waterways and beyond.

**Policy PFS 4.1 - Support Expansion of Wastewater Treatment Facilities in Designated Growth Areas**
Arapahoe County will support the expansion of wastewater treatment and distribution facilities in the Designated Growth Areas as necessary to support development and ensure that treated wastewater meets or exceeds requirements of the Clean Water Act and State regulations.

*Strategy PFS 4.1(a) - Work With Existing Service Districts to Plan for Capacity/Expansion*
The County will work with existing service districts in Designated Growth Areas to ensure that they are planning for expansion of facilities to meet future growth demands. The County should consider providing technical assistance for expansion planning.

*Strategy PFS 4.1(b) – Support Existing Service Districts in Developing Reclaimed Water Systems.*
The County will support the efforts of existing service districts providing water to develop reclaimed water systems which can provide water for irrigation or industrial uses.

**Policy PFS 4.2 - Support Provision of New Wastewater Treatment Facilities in Designated Growth Areas**
The County will support the approval and construction of new wastewater treatment facilities in Designated Growth Areas only when no other feasible or practicable alternatives are available to provide treatment.

*Strategy PFS 4.2(a) - Work With Districts to Plan for New Wastewater Treatment Facilities*
The County will cooperate with sanitation or metropolitan districts created in Designated Growth Areas to ensure that they are planning for adequate capacity to meet future growth demands.

*Strategy PFS 4.2(b) – Require New Districts to Reclaim Treated Wastewater*
In review of utility plans for districts serving new development, the County will require the development of reclaimed water systems.

**Policy PFS 4.3 - Require Adequate Wastewater Treatment**
Within Designated Growth Areas, the County will require public wastewater treatment service for all types and levels of new development. On-site alternatives for the provision of wastewater treatment will only be allowed where they do not potentially conflict with planned expansions of public systems.

*Strategy PFS 4.3(a) - Develop and Adopt Public Wastewater Requirements*
The County will develop and adopt criteria that establish requirements for public wastewater treatment for all new development in the Designated Growth Areas.

*Strategy PFS 4.3(b) – Adopt Standards for On-site Waste Treatment Systems*
The County will adopt minimum lot size requirements for the use of on-site waste treatment systems (OWTS). Lots using an OWTS will have a minimum of 2.5 acres. Lots less than 2.5 acres will have both central water and sewer systems. The County will encourage and support Tri-County Health Department’s enforcement of regulations governing the installation, management and maintenance of OWTS.
STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

GOAL PFS 5 – Ensure the Adequacy of Stormwater Conveyance and Treatment Systems
Stormwater systems help control flooding and protect water quality. In the western, more urbanized portion of the County, the County relies on The Urban Drainage and Flood Control District (UDFCD) and the Southeast Metro Stormwater Authority (SEMSWA) to construct and maintain stormwater systems. In the rural, eastern portion of the County, establishing and maintaining stormwater facilities is the responsibility of the County.

Policy PFS 5.1 – Continue to Coordinate Stormwater and Flood Control Plans
The County requires review of all land development applications in the western portion of the County by SEMSWA and UDFCD (for construction and improvements in or near a floodplain) for requirements for stormwater detention, conveyance and treatment, and erosion control.

Strategy PFS 5.1(a) – Continue to Implement Stormwater and Erosion Control Requirements
The County will continue to require improvements and procedures as recommended by UDFCD and SEMSWA during the development review process.

Strategy PFS 5.1(b) – Encourage Development of Consolidated Facilities
The County will encourage the development of consolidated facilities to support a higher intensity use of land in the Urban Area. Consolidated facilities provide a regional approach to stormwater management while decreasing the need for on-site detention on individual properties.

Strategy PFS 5.1(c) – Require Storm Drainage Improvements in New Development
In areas not served by UDFCD and SEMSWA, the County will require new development to provide any needed storm drains and drainage facility improvements to the local drainage system.

Strategy PFS 5.1(d) – Encourage Low Impact Development Techniques
The County will encourage low impact development techniques to be incorporated into new development or redevelopment to reduce water runoff for site improvement and construction activities.

Strategy PFS 5.1(e) – Restrict Development in the 100-year Floodplain
County regulations restrict development in the 100-year floodplain in order to preserve the flood carrying capacity of the stream and to preserve natural areas and wildlife habitat. Grading or filling of a floodplain is restricted on a case-by-case basis.

Strategy PFS 5.1(f) – Prepare Master Drainage Plans for Creeks in the Eastern Portion of the County
Creeks east of Box Elder Creek are not in UDFCD, and floodplains identified by FEMA and CWCB are approximate. The County is currently preparing a master drainage plan for Kiowa Creek to more accurately identify the 100-year floodplain and the improvements needed to convey floodwaters. The County should prepare master drainage plans for the Wolf Creek, Comanche Creek, and West Bijou Creek watersheds as future development is anticipated in these watersheds.

Policy PFS 5.2 - Manage Stormwater to Preserve Water Quality in Designated Growth Areas
Increased runoff due to development impairs water quality in wetlands and streams because it contains high levels of particulates (e.g., sediment) and pollutants (e.g., fertilizers and oil). Arapahoe County will plan for stormwater drainage so it does not impair water quality. On the other hand, increased stormwater runoff may create opportunities to establish new wetlands, riparian areas and wildlife habitat.
Strategy PFS 5.2(a) – Continue to Implement a Stormwater Drainage Program in the Urban Area
The County will continue to implement a stormwater drainage planning and facility program in the Urban Area.

Strategy PFS 5.2(b) - Manage Stormwater Drainage Regionally
The County will continue to collaborate with adjacent municipalities, Urban Drainage and Flood Control District, the Southeast Metro Stormwater Authority and the Water Quality Control Commission to develop and implement outfall system plans, master drainage plans, and flood hazard delineation studies, in addition to individual site development drainage plan reviews and requirements. The County will support an integrated watershed approach in addressing stormwater management issues and non-point source pollution control.

Policy PFS 5.3 – Encourage the Use of Natural Infrastructure to Manage Stormwater
As a low impact development technique, the use of natural infrastructure can manage stormwater in a more natural way.

Strategy PFS 5.3(a) – Collaborate with UDFCD and SEMSWA to Develop Standards
The County will work with UDFCD and SEMSWA to develop and adopt standards for natural infrastructure, including the use of:
- rain gardens
- permeable pavements
- bioretention facilities
- vegetated rooftops
- rainwater harvesting
- curb buildouts, bioswales and street planters

These standards would apply to all unincorporated areas of the County.

Strategy PFS 5.3(b) – Revise Landscaping Regulations
The County will revise its landscaping and site development standards to permit the use of permeable pavement and the use of rain gardens, bioswales and vegetated rooftops to be considered in meeting landscaping requirements.

ON-SITE UTILITIES

GOAL PFS 6 – Ensure the Adequacy of Electric, Natural Gas, Telephone, Cable and Internet Utilities in Existing and New Development
Several companies provide electric, natural gas, telephone, cable and internet utilities throughout the County.

Policy PFS 6.1 – Continue Collaboration with Utility Companies in the Development Review Process
The County uses a referral process to include utility companies in the development review process to determine requirements for serving the development. Developers are encouraged to coordinate development plans with utility companies to ensure adequate service is available.

Strategy PFS 6.1(a) – Continue Collaboration with Utility Companies
The County will continue to include utility companies in the development review process to determine requirements for service to be provided. Additionally, the County will collaborate with utility companies in
the installation of new or upgraded equipment to serve existing or proposed development through the Location and Extent process or 1041 Regulations, as applicable.

**Strategy PFS 6.1(b) – Work with Cable and Internet Providers to Improve Service**

The County should work with internet and cable providers to enhance and expand service throughout the County, with emphasis on service delivery to existing and future employment areas. Service is wireless in much of the Rural Area, and the County should collaborate with providers to provide better service in the eastern portion of the County.

**Strategy PFS 6.1(c) – Provide Alternative Energy Access**

The County will ensure that new development and redevelopment provides for access to solar, wind, and other alternative energy sources. Development will be required to take advantage of topography and solar orientation so that good building sites are provided and utilities can be provided most economically.

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

**GOAL PFS 7 – Ensure Existing and New Development have Adequate Police and Fire Protection**

The County will ensure that new development is served with an adequate level of police and fire protection. The County provides police protection through the County Sheriff Department, while fire protection and emergency medical services are provided by fire districts.

**PFS Policy 7.1 – Continue Collaboration with Service Providers to Ensure an Adequate Level of Service Is Provided to Existing and New Development**

The Sheriff’s Office and fire districts are consulted in the development review process relating to their ability to serve new development and the enforcement of applicable code requirements for development.

**Strategy PFS 7.1(a) - Develop Standards for Law Enforcement and Police Protection**

The County should establish standards to ensure that residents are provided adequate law enforcement and police protection.

**Strategy PFS 7.1(b) - Work with Fire Districts in the Eastern Portion of the County to Develop Standards for Fire Protection and EMS**

The County will develop intergovernmental agreements with fire districts in the eastern portion of the County to determine service standards for fire protection/EMS and necessary locations for future fire stations.

**Strategy PFS 7.1(c) – Restrict Development with Inadequate Police or Fire Protection**

Adequate law enforcement service and adequate fire/EMS protection, including adequate access and response time, will be required of new development.

**Strategy PFS 7.1(d) – Request Fire District Information Regarding Fire Fighting Capabilities**

The County should request the following information from fire districts to help in determining the adequacy of fire protection: map of the area served with response times; locations of any fire-fighting infrastructure such as fire hydrants and water storage tanks or cisterns, and any mutual aid agreements.
Strategy PFS 7.1(e) – Withhold Approvals in Areas without Fire Protection
An adequate level of fire protection will be a crucial requirement in approving any permits or development applications located in areas not included in a fire protection district. Protection by an adjacent fire district through inclusion in the district or by agreement may satisfy this requirement. Absent such inclusion or agreement, the County may consider the approval of uses with a low fire risk.

Strategy PFS 7.1(f) – Adopt the International Fire Code
In order to standardize requirements for the issuance of building permits, the County will evaluate and consider adopting the International Fire Code to apply to all fire districts in the County. Alternatively, the County will encourage all districts to adopt the IFC with any amendments and thereafter adopt the IFC to apply to the district as is the current practice. Districts not adopting the IFC locally would be subject to the County adopted IFC.

GOAL PFS 8 – Provide Rapid and Comprehensive Response to Natural Disasters
The County will strive to coordinate with other agencies and provide rapid and thorough response to natural disasters and severe storm events in accordance with its Emergency Operations Plan.

Policy PFS 8.1 – Ensure an Effective Emergency Response Program
The County should continue to evaluate its Emergency Response Procedures and Operations in order to improve and enhance response to emergency situations.

Strategy PFS 8.1(a) – Implement Mitigation Actions of Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan
The County should implement the mitigation actions identified in the Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Strategy PFS 8.1(b) – Continue to Evaluate and Update Emergency Operations Plan
The County should continue to evaluate and update its Emergency Operations Plan in collaboration with other agencies and local jurisdictions.

SCHOOLS

GOAL PFS 9 – Ensure that the Educational Needs of Existing and New Developments Are Met
Five school districts serve the unincorporated portions of Arapahoe County. The County relies on the school districts to assess impacts to the district resulting from new development.

Policy PFS 9.1 – Continue to Collaborate with School Districts to Address Educational Needs
The County will continue to collaborate with school districts to address the educational needs of new development during the development review process.

Strategy PFS 9.1(a) - Coordinate with School Districts to Reserve Land for Future School Sites
The County has adopted school site dedication standards to ensure that adequate school sites are provided in new development. The County will coordinate with the school districts to ensure that adequate sites are provided to meet current and future needs.
Strategy PFS 9.1(b) – Collaborate with School Districts in New and Expanded Facility Planning
The County will cooperate with the school districts on new school planning and school facility expansions to support the provision of cost-effective services and to minimize negative impacts of school expansions on neighborhoods.

Strategy PFS 9.1(c) – Require Documentation of Facility Needs
The County will require school districts to provide information regarding projected enrollment and school capacity in order to document facility needs to support site dedication requirements and/or cash-in-lieu of dedications. Reports should be required every five (5) years.

Strategy PFS 9.1(d) – Encourage Alternative Funding Methods for School Construction
The County encourages school districts to explore and implement methods for securing funding to meet school construction needs. Such alternative methods may include formation of a 501(c)3 foundation that obtains funding from developers for capital construction projects or other capital needs.

Strategy PFS 9.1(e) – Optimize Joint Use of School Facilities for Community Use
The County encourages school districts to optimize the use of school facilities for sports and recreation programs and for community meetings and events.

LIBRARIES

GOAL PFS 10 – Ensure Adequate Access to County Library Resources in Existing and New Development
The Arapahoe County Library District provides library facilities and resources in the unincorporated portions of Arapahoe County, as well as in Centennial, Cherry Hills Village, Columbine Valley, Glendale, Greenwood Village, Foxfield, and Sheridan. Aurora, Littleton and Englewood each provide library services in their respective municipalities.

Policy PFS 10.1 – Work With the Library District to Identify Unmet Library Needs in the County
The County will work with the Library District to provide library services to all residents of the County.

Strategy PFS 10.1(a) - Continue Collaborative Planning Efforts with the Library District
The County will continue to collaborate with the Library District to identify and provide facilities to meet the library needs of existing and future residents.

Strategy PFS 10.1(b) – Encourage the Provision of Branch Libraries in Eastern Arapahoe County
Libraries can serve as activity centers for communities. The County will encourage the District to continue to provide library facilities in the Rural Town Centers. The facilities in Byers and Deer Trail may need expansions to serve projected growth.
ADEQUACY OF PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

GOAL PFS 11 – Ensure the Provision of Adequate Public Facilities and Services
As development occurs, Arapahoe County will facilitate and ensure the provision of adequate public facilities and services (including functional water and wastewater lines, fire protection, police protection, utilities and other government services) in a fiscally responsible manner and under consistent standards. This will require coordination with the special districts created to provide many of these services in the County.

Policy PFS 11.1 - Coordinate County and City Development Standards
Arapahoe County will coordinate with municipalities to adopt consistent development standards for infrastructure requirements within the County’s Designated Growth Areas that overlap with municipal Growth Areas.

Strategy PFS 11.1(a) – Develop Intergovernmental Agreements Regarding Development Standards
The County will develop Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) with municipalities, including the City of Aurora, the City of Centennial, the Town of Bennett and other applicable jurisdictions, to ensure that standards are consistent for development in the Urban Area.

Strategy PFS 11.1(b) – Encourage Service Providers to Share Master Plans for Future Facilities
In order for the County to evaluate land development applications and the adequacy of facilities and services to serve the development, all service providers (including water and sanitation districts, school districts, park and recreation districts, fire districts, utility companies, and communication and broadband providers) are encouraged to provide the County with their plans for new facilities or system expansions.

Policy PFS 11.2 – Develop and Implement Level of Service and Land Dedication Standards for Public Facilities and Services
Arapahoe County has developed dedication standards for parks, schools and other public facilities as well as right-of-way and level of service standards for urban and rural roadways. The County needs to work with special districts to develop level of service standards for the provision of water and wastewater facilities and fire protection.

Strategy PFS 11.2(a) - Work with Special Districts to Develop Level of Service Standards
When necessary, the County will work with special districts to establish level of service standards to ensure quality and dependability of service for the provision of water and wastewater facilities and fire protection.

Strategy PFS 11.2(b) - Develop Level of Service Standards for Police Protection
The adequacy of service for new development is critical in the development review process. As the provider of these services in the unincorporated portion of the County, the County should develop level of service standards for these facilities and services.

Strategy PFS 11.2(c) – Avoid Natural Hazard Areas when Siting Critical Public Facilities
The County will locate its facilities and encourage special districts to locate their critical facilities in areas not affected by natural hazards as identified in the Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Policy PFS 11.3 - Require Adequate Facilities and Services at Time of Development
Arapahoe County will require that new development conform to standards that require adequate facilities and services at the time of development.
Strategy PFS 11.3(a) – Consider Adopting “Concurrency” Regulations
The County will consider adopting regulations which require public facilities and services to be in place or planned prior to development. Absent such legislation, the County will approve new development only when documentation is provided that demonstrates that adequate public facilities and services are available at the time of development, or when the proportionate share of necessary improvements are made as part of the development project by the developer.

Strategy PFS 11.3(b) – Continue to Require Dedication of Land for Public Facilities
The County has adopted requirements for the dedication of sites for needed public facilities including but not limited to schools, parks and other public facilities. Cash paid in lieu of land dedication, if a land dedication is not feasible or desirable, should be based on appraised value.

Strategy PFS 11.3(c) – Consider Implementing Impact Fees
The County has implemented an impact fee for rural roads and the Regional Transportation Improvement Fee (RTIF) for the Smoky Hill area. The County will consider the imposition of impact fees for parks and law enforcement. The County will support districts implementing impact fees for water and sanitary sewer facilities and fire protection/EMS facilities.

Policy PFS 11.4 - Adequately Maintain Facilities in Designated Growth Areas
Arapahoe County will facilitate or adequately maintain public facilities in Designated Growth Areas to serve the needs of current and future residents.

Strategy PFS 11.4(a) - Target Public Investments to Designated Growth Areas
The County will target its capital investments in infrastructure, and operational funds in maintenance (e.g., for roads, stormwater drainage and parks), into Designated Growth Areas to leverage its investments made through its Capital Improvement Program.

Policy PFS 11.5 - Limit Approval of New Special Districts in the Rural Town Centers
Arapahoe County will work with the existing special districts to focus resources in the Rural Town Centers. New water and wastewater districts will be considered only when the property to be served is located in the Rural Town Center Planning Area and existing providers or municipal systems are unable to provide services.

Strategy PFS 11.5(a) - Establish Criteria for New Special Districts
The County will develop criteria for the approval of new special districts. The formation of new special districts will be limited, unless it can be demonstrated that existing districts are unable or unwilling to provide service.

Policy PFS 11.6 - Ensure that the Rural Town Centers are Adequately Served by Existing Special Districts
Arapahoe County will work with existing special districts on a proactive basis to facilitate provision of water and wastewater services, fire and emergency services protection, library facilities, schools, and other essential public services to adequately serve the Rural Town Centers.

Strategy PFS 11.6(a) - Cooperate with Water and Sanitation Districts in the Rural Town Centers
The County will work with existing water and sanitation districts to ensure that the identified Planning Areas and other planning activities in the Rural Town Centers are coordinated and consistent with district service plans.
Strategy PFS 11.6(b) - Cooperate with Fire Districts that Serve the Rural Town Centers
The County will continue to cooperate with the fire districts in identifying and providing for fire protection needs.

Strategy PFS 11.6(c) - Cooperate with School Districts that Serve the Rural Town Centers
The County will continue to cooperate with the school districts in identifying and providing for school needs in and around the Rural Town Centers.

Strategy PFS 11.6(d) - Cooperate with the Arapahoe Library District to Provide Service to the Rural Town Centers
The County will cooperate with the District to continue to provide library service in the eastern portion of the County, including the potential expansion of facilities serving Byers and Deer Trail. The County will support efforts to provide a branch library in Strasburg if the District determines a library is needed to meet demand.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL PUBLIC FACILITIES AND UTILITY FACILITIES

GOAL PFS 12 – Minimize Impacts of Local and Regional Public Facilities and Utility Facilities
Regional utility facilities are necessary to provide service to future development in the County and region. While necessary, the facilities are usually large and can have significant impacts on surrounding land uses.

Policy PFS 12.1 – Thoroughly Evaluate Development of Public Facilities
The County recognizes that certain public facilities and services provided by public entities are required to ensure the preservation of the quality of life, health, and safety of the general community. Public facilities include but are not limited to: fire protection and EMS, police protection, parks, libraries, and schools.

Strategy PFS 12.1(a) – Require Appropriate Siting of Public Facilities on a Case-by-Case Basis
The County will consider the appropriateness of proposed public facilities sites throughout the County, except in the sensitive development, riparian corridor, and natural hazard areas, subject to the applicable Location and Extent process, 1041 Regulations, Use by Special Review or other land use procedures. This Strategy is not to be construed as allowing a governmental or private applicant to avoid the required planning processes or development criteria of the Land Development Code. While such uses and facilities are allowed in the County, not all locations are appropriate for these uses, and each such application will be subject to the required approval processes on a case-by-case basis.

Policy PFS 12.2 - Consider Utility Needs to Support Growth and Development of the Region
Arapahoe County will consider the need for utility facilities to be located throughout the County on a case-by-case basis. Utilities include, but are not limited to, the following facilities operated or owned by either a public utility or private company: water storage and treatment facilities, water distribution and supply lines, wastewater treatment plants and lines, stormwater drainage facilities, solar and wind farms, electric transmission lines, oil and natural gas transmission pipelines, and wireless communication towers and antennas, including small cell towers and small cell networks. Some areas of the County are not appropriate for these types of uses, including sensitive development areas, floodplains and riparian areas, wildlife habitat, geologic hazard areas, areas of visual significance, and sites within ¼ mile of cultural resources and conservation easements.
Strategy PFS 12.2(a) – Consider Utility Facilities on a Case-by-Case Basis
Local and regional utility uses or facilities will be considered based upon the proposed location, associated impacts and all necessary approval criteria established for such use by the applicable Location and Extent process, 1041 Regulations, Use by Special Review or other land use procedures.

Policy PFS 12.3 - Require Land Use Compatibility when Siting Local and Regional Utility Facilities
Arapahoe County will require regional utilities, operated or owned by either a public utility or private company, to build in locations and in a manner that is safe and compatible with surrounding land uses, while considering customer needs and safety. Regional utilities include: water storage and treatment facilities, water distribution and supply lines, wastewater treatment plants and lines, stormwater drainage facilities, solar and wind farms, electric transmission lines, oil and natural gas transmission pipelines, wireless communication towers and antennas, and landfills and waste disposal facilities. Local utilities will be encouraged where compatible with surrounding land uses and where negative visual impacts are minimized.

Strategy PFS 12.3(a) - Develop Standards for Regional Utility Facilities
The County will develop standards that address the location of regional utilities. Standards to consider include:

- Location near similar uses
- Visibility, noise, glare and other environmental impacts are minimized
- The existing County road system can adequately serve the use or improvements will be made to mitigate impacts
- Existing fire and EMS providers can provide an adequate level of fire and EMS protection
- The use is compatible with the surrounding environment, land uses and existing distribution/collection systems
- The location avoids sensitive development areas, riparian areas and floodplains, wildlife habitats, and areas of visual significance, conservation easements, and areas with geologic hazards
- Sites should not be located within ½ mile of cultural resources
- Provide buffers or screening of these uses

Strategy PFS 12.3(b) - Require Local Utility Distribution Lines to Be Buried within New Developments
The County will require local lines within new developments to be buried beneath the surface of the ground by the developer.

Strategy PFS 12.3(c) - Require Mitigation of Impacts from Regional Utility Facilities
The County will require regional utilities to mitigate impacts of their facilities on property owners and residents of the County.

Strategy PFS 12.3(d) – Continue Encouraging Co-location, Streamlining and Stealth Techniques in Locating Commercial Mobile Radio Service Facilities
The County will continue to encourage these techniques to reduce the visual impacts of Commercial Mobile Radio Service (CMRS) installations. When feasible, locate facilities on existing structures.
(preferred) or in locations where the existing topography, vegetation, buildings, or other structures provide the greatest amount of screening/backdrop. In the case of small cell facilities attached to County infrastructure located in the right-of-way, the County will ensure that the small cell facility are compatible with the surrounding natural and built environment, and will not interfere with vehicular, pedestrian or bicycle traffic. The County will create a checklist for review of small cell facilities.

SOLID WASTE

GOAL PFS 13 – Divert a Larger Portion of Waste from Landfills
The County will consider measures to reduce the amount of waste generated by residents and businesses that ends up in landfills.

The County will investigate and implement measures to divert more waste from ending up in landfills.

Strategy PFS 13.1(a) – Encourage Recycling by Waste Haulers
The County encourages haulers and collectors of waste to provide composting and recycling options for customers.

Strategy PFS 13.1(b) – Educate the Community on Recycling Options
The County will educate the community on options they have for recycling and resource recovery.

Strategy PFS 13.1(c) – Encourage Recycling and Resource Recovery
The County encourages operators of final disposal sites or trash transfer sites to implement recycling and resource recovery measures.

Strategy PFS 13.1(d) – Encourage LEED Construction Practices
The County will encourage builders to seek LEED certification which includes recycling their own materials and the use of recycled materials.

ACCESS TO COUNTY INFORMATION

GOAL PFS 14 – Provide Exceptional Access to County Information
Arapahoe County will strive to improve residents’ access to County information and government services.

Policy PFS 14.1 - Improve Residents’ Access to County Information
Arapahoe County will investigate efficient ways to disseminate County information and will ensure that County regulations, meeting schedules, and other government informational items are available in a timely fashion for residents.

Strategy PFS 14.1(a) – Continue to Provide County Information on the Internet
The County provides the Comprehensive Plan, County regulations and other County information in digital format and makes it available on the Internet. The County will update Internet information on a regular basis to ensure it is up-to-date and accurate.
Strategy PFS 14.1(b) - Consider Developing Satellite Services in the Rural Town Centers and Eastern Incorporated Towns

As Bennett, Strasburg, Byers and Deer Trail grow, the County may need to consider developing satellite services in order to improve residents’ access to County services and information.

NEIGHBORHOOD LIVABILITY

Intent

The Neighborhood Livability goals and policies are intended to bring about safe yet functional neighborhoods that offer a variety of housing options and living environments to satisfy the needs of residents in Arapahoe County. In the future, both new and existing neighborhoods should contain a mix of land uses (e.g., parks, neighborhood retail services, civic centers, schools, transit stops and places of worship) as well as a mix of housing (e.g., houses, apartments and townhomes). The arrangement of land uses within neighborhoods should allow residents to walk and bicycle to and from their daily activities and easily travel to nearby neighborhoods. Redevelopment projects should be sensitive to existing neighborhoods to maintain their character. While low-density residential development will continue to occur in the Rural Area, it is not the County’s intent to encourage dispersed housing patterns. The County is unable to provide public services to dispersed development due to fiscal constraints.

These policies are also intended to have a positive impact on housing cost and availability for low- and moderate-income households and lead to greater provision of special-needs housing opportunities within the County’s Designated Growth Areas. The rising average price of homes is a problem, compelling people to live further away from employment centers and leading to more dispersed development.

These policies suggest using open space as a means to help direct growth, maintain rural character, conserve wildlife habitat, create edges to the urban environment and provide opportunities for education, scientific research, wildlife observation, hiking and passive and active recreation activities. The policies are consistent with the goals of the Open Space Master Plan.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER AND DESIGN

GOAL NL 1 – Create Livable Mixed Use Neighborhoods in Designated Growth Areas

Arapahoe County will promote stable, safe, attractive neighborhoods in Designated Growth Areas and will encourage a mix of land uses in new developments whenever appropriate. The arrangement of land uses within new neighborhoods should ideally allow residents to conveniently walk and bicycle to and from parks, schools, work, shopping, places of worship, and transit stops. Neighborhoods should be served by public transportation where it is available.

Policy NL 1.1 - Encourage Mixed Use Neighborhoods in Designated Growth Areas

Arapahoe County will amend zoning regulations, as applicable, to allow a greater mix of residential and compatible non-residential uses within Urban Area neighborhoods and in the Rural Town Centers.

Strategy NL 1.1(a) - Revise Zoning Regulations Pertaining to Mixed Use Development

The County will revise its zoning regulations to simplify the use of the Mixed Use Zone District. Consideration will be given to limiting the use of this zone district to parcels of 10-15 acres or less in size.
Strategy NL 1.1(b) – Consider Amending Zoning Map to Include Areas for Mixed Use Zoning
The County will consider amending the zoning map to zone appropriate areas for mixed use development.

Policy NL 1.2 - Encourage Mixed Use Neighborhoods that Are Served by a Multi-modal Transportation System

Strategy NL 1.2(a) – Implement Complete Streets Standards
During the development review process, the County will require the construction of complete streets to include facilities to accommodate walking, bicycling, transit users (where applicable), and mobility devices such as wheelchairs.

Strategy NL 1.2(b) – Construct Complete Streets Using the Capital Improvement Plan
As part of the capital improvement planning process, the County will identify existing streets providing access to schools or other community uses, commercial or employment centers, or transit stops/stations as candidates for conversion or retro-fitting to complete streets.

Policy NL 1.3 - Encourage Higher Density Development in New Neighborhoods within the Urban Area
Arapahoe County will encourage new residential development projects within the Urban Area to develop at higher densities than what is currently typical to reduce the amount of land consumed and to ensure efficient use of infrastructure. The County will establish an overall minimum average density requirement for new residential areas and a mix of housing types.

Strategy NL 1.3(a) - Require Overall Minimum Average Density in the Urban Area
The County will require an overall minimum average density of four (4) units per acre in the Urban Area where service capacity exists, with a mix of housing types that are master planned over a land area of size adequate to meet this minimum density. Zoning regulations will be revised as appropriate.

Policy NL 1.4 - Encourage New Neighborhoods to Develop at Densities and Patterns as Proposed in the Applicable Rural Town Center Sub-area Plan
Arapahoe County will encourage new residential developments within the Rural Town Center Growth Areas to develop at densities and patterns as proposed in the applicable Rural Town Center Sub-area Plan and to be compatible with the small town character of these communities.

Strategy NL 1.4(a) - Develop Standards for Densities as Proposed in the Rural Town Center Sub-area Plans
The County will require densities as proposed in the applicable Rural Town Center sub-area plan, with a mix of housing types, within the Rural Town Center Planning Areas. The County will revise zoning regulations as appropriate.

Policy NL 1.5 - Encourage New Development and Redevelopment to Incorporate Environmentally Sustainable Development Techniques and Energy Conservation Measures
Environmentally sustainable building and development practices that meet LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards are energy and resource efficient and reduce waste and pollution.
Strategy NL 1.5(a) – Consider Incentives to Encourage LEED Certified Buildings and Neighborhoods
The County will evaluate and consider incentives that encourage the design and construction of LEED certified buildings and neighborhoods.

Strategy NL 1.5(b) – Adopt Building Code Amendments that Require Energy Efficiency and Promote Environmental Sustainability
The County has adopted the International Energy Conservation Code. Additional code amendments will be considered which require environmentally friendly and sustainable building techniques.

Strategy NL 1.5(c) – Continue Funding the Community Resources Department’s Weatherization Program
This program provides grant funding for current residents to weatherize their homes, making them more energy efficient.

Strategy NL 1.5(d) – Encourage the Use and Protection of Natural Infrastructure
New development and redevelopment will be encouraged to utilize a network of parks, greenways, and open spaces, landscape features and other elements to manage stormwater runoff and to provide recreational opportunities and wildlife habitat.

Policy NL 1.6 – Upgrade Infrastructure and Facilities in Older Neighborhoods
Aging infrastructure and facilities affect the quality of life of existing residents and can affect their safety. The County will support efforts by other agencies or utility companies to upgrade infrastructure in older areas of the County. The County should pursue upgrades to County infrastructure as funding allows.

Strategy NL 1.6(a) – Inventory Older Areas of the County for Infrastructure Deficiencies
Before upgrades can be undertaken, an inventory of existing conditions should be conducted by the County.

Strategy NL 1.6(b) – Include Older Area Infrastructure Upgrades in Capital Improvements Plan
The County should consider including infrastructure upgrades in older unincorporated areas in its Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Strategy NL 1.6(c) – Support Infrastructure Upgrades by Other Agencies
The County will support infrastructure upgrades undertaken by other agencies, special districts and utility companies. In older areas, any necessary permits and approvals should be given priority for review.

GOAL NL 2 - Ensure Compatibility between New Development and Existing Neighborhoods
Arapahoe County will ensure compatibility between new development and existing neighborhoods in the Designated Growth Areas.

Policy NL 2.1 – Require New Development to be Compatible with Existing Residential Neighborhoods
Arapahoe County will strive to ensure compatibility between new development and existing residential neighborhoods, taking into consideration the character and physical elements (i.e., natural features, cultural resources, parks and schools) that contribute to the identity of the neighborhood. When adjacent to existing residential neighborhoods, new development and infill and redevelopment should be compatible in scale, use and character.
Strategy NL 2.1(a) – Review and Amend Zoning Regulations to Include Compatibility Criteria
The County will review and amend, as necessary, zoning regulations to include elements of compatibility as approval criteria for any rezoning, use by special review or special exception use.

Strategy NL 2.1(b) - Encourage Active Community and Neighborhood Participation
The County will encourage participation from neighborhood-based community organizations, residents and property owners in land development decisions as well as services and facilities planning. The County will notify organizations that may be affected by decisions in a timely manner so they have an opportunity to participate and/or sponsor meetings.

GOAL NL 3 – Ensure New Development and Redevelopment Provides Opportunities for Healthy Living
The County will actively encourage development that incorporates principles of healthy communities and active living.

Policy NL 3.1 – Encourage Development That Supports Healthy Communities
The County will encourage development proposals to incorporate principles of healthy communities and active living into development plans. These principles are incorporated in the policies and strategies which follow.

Strategy NL 3.1(a) – Minimize Conflicts Resulting from Intensive Nonresidential Uses
During the development approval process, the County will encourage the location and design of intensive nonresidential land uses to minimize conflicts with residential developments, agricultural uses, wildlife areas, and environmentally or visually sensitive areas.

Strategy NL 3.1(b) – Review and Update Land Development Code to Support Principles of Healthy Communities
The County will review its zoning regulations and Development Design Principles to require site development that supports principles of healthy communities, including, but not limited to:

- Providing pedestrian and bicycle friendly facilities
- Providing convenient connections to transit stations, parks and open space
- Allowing community gardens, farmer’s markets, and neighborhood grocery stores that provide fresh produce
- Allowing under-utilized land to be used for food production
- Requiring pedestrian safety and crime prevention measures in transit stations and high pedestrian traffic generators such as schools, community centers, parks, and high density housing developments
- Increasing access to cultural resources
- Encouraging the provision of public art

Strategy NL 3.1(c) – Consider Requiring Health Impact Assessments
The County will consider requiring a Health Impact Assessment for any land use application subject to the County’s 1041 regulations.

Strategy NL 3.1(d) – Encourage Access to Sources of Healthy Food Options
The County will encourage access to sources of healthy food, including but not limited to:

- Reviewing the Land Development Code to permit community gardens, rooftop gardens, farmer’s markets, and the sale of locally grown food in the appropriate zone districts
Where appropriate, encouraging development plans for new development to include neighborhood grocery stores and permitting community gardens, rooftop gardens, farmers markets, and the sale of locally grown food.

*Strategy NL 3.1(e) – Support the Integration of Health Services into Designated Growth Areas*
Through development review and modifications to zoning regulations, the County will support the integration of health services into employment centers, retail centers, Rural Town Centers and other activity centers and will support accessibility to all users.

*Strategy NL 3.1(f) – Implement Transportation Improvements Where Mobility Needs are Greatest*
The County will collaborate with public health professionals, area hospitals, health and social service providers, and other regional stakeholders to implement transportation system improvements in areas with the greatest mobility needs.

*Policy NL 3.2 – Provide All Residents and Workers with Opportunities for Recreation and Physical Activities in Close Proximity to Homes, Schools, Employment Centers, and Community Facilities*
Access to recreation and physical activities by residents and workers provides opportunities for active living and healthy lifestyles.

*Strategy NL 3.2(a) – Require the Development of Parks, Trails and Open Space Concurrently with New Development*
The County currently requires the dedication of park sites in developments. The County will review the Land Development Code and revise it as necessary to require construction of parks and trails concurrently with new development.

*Strategy NL 3.2(b) – Coordinate with Public Entities and Utility Companies to Allow Easements to Be Used as Parks and Trails*
The County will coordinate with public entities and utility companies to negotiate use of easements for parks or trail corridors.

*Strategy NL 3.2(c) – Encourage School Districts to Allow School Properties to Be Used during Non-School Hours*
The County will encourage the various school districts to allow residents to use school properties during off hours for recreational, educational and social programs.

*Strategy NL 3.2(d) – Adopt Park Design Standards*
The County should adopt park design standards to address the location of different types of parks and the facilities to be provided in these parks.

*Strategy NL 3.2(e) – Incorporate Design Features to Reflect the Community*
The County should consider incorporating design features in the parks and open space network that reflect the sense of place and unique characteristics of the surrounding community.
Strategy NL 3.2(f) – Address Safety Concerns in Park Design Standards and Plans
The County will require adequate lighting, street visibility, and defensible space when reviewing development plans and when designing parks, trails and open space.

Policy NL 3.3 – Encourage the Provision of Community Gathering Places
The County will encourage the provision of community gathering places in new development to provide a sense of place and provide a place for community events.

Strategy NL 3.3(a) – Review and Amend Development Design Principles
The County will review its Development Design Principles and revise them as necessary to include standards and guidelines for creating community gathering places. Regulations should be amended to require the application of these principles during appropriate development review processes.

Strategy NL 3.3(b) – Encourage Provision of Neighborhood Centers in New Development or Redevelopment
The County will encourage the provision of neighborhood centers as a focal point and gathering space for residents. Neighborhood centers might include:
- Elementary school
- Neighborhood park or open space with amphitheater, band shelter or stage
- Small single- and mixed-use retail or retail with residential above
- Recreation center or other public or neighborhood facility
- Linked trails/pedestrian paths

Policy NL 3.4 – Require Design Elements in the Public Realm to Enhance the County’s Image and Reflect Local Character
Arapahoe County will require new development and redevelopment projects to incorporate design elements to enhance its positive image and identity and reflect a high standard of architectural quality, visual interest, and local character. Particular emphasis will be placed on the public realm, including streetscape design and public buildings, as well as on new non-residential development (see Policy EH 2.1).

Strategy NL 3.4(a) – Implement the Development Design Principles and Streetscape Guidelines
The County has adopted design standards and guidelines and streetscape guidelines for new development; however, zoning regulations need to be amended to require the use of these principles and guidelines during the development review process.

Strategy NL 3.4(b) – Incorporate Development Design Principles and Design Elements into County Capital Projects
The development design principles and guidelines should be applied to the construction of County roadways and facilities. Design elements reflecting the County’s image and local character should be included in capital improvement projects.
Strategy NL 3.4(c) – Incorporate Public Art into Development Projects and Capital Improvement Projects
The County will encourage developers to consider including public art in their development proposals. The County will consider the inclusion of public art as part of appropriate capital improvement projects.

Policy NL 3.5 – Ensure Public Facilities and Services are Accessible to Persons of All Ages, Incomes and Abilities
As the population of the County ages, it will be important to provide facilities and services that accommodate users of all ages, incomes and physical abilities.

Strategy NL 3.5(a) – Require Public Facilities to be Planned and Designed to Accommodate People of All Ages, Incomes, and Those with Mobility Impairments
Planning and designing facilities for access by people of all ages and abilities ensures these facilities can be used and enjoyed by all citizens across generations.

Strategy NL 3.5(b) – Incorporate Design for All Ages and Abilities into Capital Improvements
The County should ensure that construction of capital improvements accommodates users of all ages and abilities.

Strategy NL 3.5(c) – Support DRCOG Programs and Services for Older Citizens
As the federally designated Area Agency on Aging, DRCOG provides programs and services to older citizens in the region. The County will continue to support DRCOG efforts to provide these programs and services in coordination with the Arapahoe County Council on Aging.

Strategy NL 3.5(d) – Implement Recommendations of Boomer Bond Assessment
The County undertook a Boomer Bond Assessment, a tool prepared by DRCOG, to assess infrastructure, service, housing and mobility conditions affecting an older population in the County. The County will undertake or collaborate with other agencies to implement the recommendations of the Assessment.

Strategy NL 3.5(e) – Work with Developers and the Regional Transportation District (RTD) to Provide Transit Stops
In new development involving uses such as senior or assisted housing, health care facilities, grocery stores, and similar facilities serving transit-dependent customers, the County will work with developers and RTD to require and provide transit stops and/or bus route changes to serve these facilities. RTD does not provide service east of E-470 and the County will need to work with developers and potentially other transit providers to provide transit service in the eastern portion of the County.

Policy NL 3.6 – Undertake Measures to Increase Public Safety
The built environment can have a significant impact on the safety of the general public. Beyond police and fire protection, design of public improvements and spaces can reduce the exposure to crime and injury.

Strategy NL 3.6(a) – Incorporate Principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) into Design Standards
The County will incorporate CPTED principles into its design standards to be implemented during the development review process. The County should incorporate CPTED principles in the planning and design of County facilities.
Strategy NL 3.6(b) – Support the Mitigation and Redevelopment of Brownfield Sites
Brownfield sites often pose health and safety hazards to nearby residents or businesses. The County will support efforts to redevelop brownfield sites for productive uses and assist in providing any information needed for environmental assessments.

Policy NL 3.7 – Minimize Impacts to Property from Man-Made Hazards
The County will implement measures to minimize the impacts of man-made hazards on existing and future development.

Strategy NL 3.7(a) - Require Noise Mitigation
The County will require a noise analysis during the applicable development review process for lands potentially affected by 65db(A) or greater noise level caused by highways and major arterials, railroads, and industrial noise. A noise analysis will also be required for lands lying within Airport Influence Areas that are potentially affected by aircraft generated noise of 55db(A) or greater. Where noise cannot be abated at the source, the County will require developers to mitigate noise in new residential areas using setbacks, berms and building materials. High sound walls without landscaping and that block views are not consistent with the intent of this policy.

Strategy NL 3.7(b) - Designate Compatible Land Uses Within Airport Influence Areas
Land uses within and immediately adjacent to Airport Influence Areas should be compatible with the associated hazards and noise of airports. Current regulations allow residential development only in designated areas within the Airport Influence Areas; residential development is not allowed in areas affected by 60db(A) or greater noise level.

Strategy NL 3.7(c) - Provide a Transition of Non-residential Uses between Incompatible Uses and Near Hazardous Land Uses
Residential development will be directed away from hazardous land uses, such as Superfund Sites.

Strategy NL 3.7(d) – Continue to Monitor and Compel Appropriate Parties to Mitigate Hazardous Conditions or Impacts Resulting from their Operations
The County will continue to monitor containment and cleanup efforts and impacts to surrounding uses on land containing hazardous conditions. Of special concern are the State Land Board land (Lowry Range), the Lowry Landfill (superfund site) and Denver Arapahoe Disposal Site (DADS).

HOUSING

As housing costs continue to rise, an increasing percentage of the County's population will find it more difficult to obtain safe and decent housing. The County supports the provision of housing that is affordable to persons with low and moderate incomes.

GOAL NL 4 – Ensure a Diversity of Affordable Housing Types to Accommodate All Age Groups, Incomes, Family Sizes and Residents with Special Needs
Arapahoe County will strive to increase housing options for people with low and moderate incomes and for people with special needs, including the elderly, homeless, victims of domestic violence, handicapped, mentally ill and disabled. The County will promote housing types that enable residents to age in place.
Policy NL 4.1 - Promote a Diversity of Housing Types
As demographic trends change, Arapahoe County will promote diverse types of housing, lot sizes and densities that are appropriate to meet the changing needs and assure options for residents of all income levels and ages.

Strategy NL 4.1(a) – Review Land Development Code and Amend as Necessary
The County will review zoning regulations and make amendments as necessary to permit a diverse range of housing types, lot sizes and densities that accommodate independent living, co-housing, accessory dwelling units, tiny houses, assisted living, and nursing care options.

Strategy NL 4.1(b) – Coordinate Housing Programs with Cities and the Private Sector
The County will coordinate the use of CDBG for housing with the non-entitled cities in the County and private sector housing providers to assist in funding diverse, affordable housing throughout the County.

Policy NL 4.2 - Support New Affordable Housing Opportunities and Retain Existing Affordable Housing
Arapahoe County will support the provision of an adequate supply of housing for low and moderate-income households in addition to retention of existing affordable housing stock in older residential neighborhoods to the maximum extent feasible.

Strategy NL 4.2(a) - Reduce Local Government Barriers to Affordable Housing
The County will reduce local government barriers to construction of affordable units, including consideration of the following strategies:

- Waive or defer fees on affordable housing;
- “Fast track” permitting – to accelerate approval or waiver of process for affordable units;
- Rezone specific lands to allow higher density development;
- Amend zoning regulations to allow accessory units;
- Amend zoning regulations to enact inclusionary zoning;
- Provide flexible design standards (i.e. reduced parking requirements, reduced street widths, flexible sidewalk standards, and combining utilities);
- Expansion of the qualifications of the first time homebuyers down payment assistance program through the CDBG program;
- Sliding scale bonus with greater density for greater set aside of affordable units;
- Implementation of deed restrictions for a term of 15 years, on a resale of an affordable housing unit to a qualified buyer, where appreciation is limited to the original owner, in efforts to keep the units affordable for future needs of primary workers; and
- Establishing development tax or value capture incentives

Strategy NL 4.2(b) – Continue to Support Programs that Provide Financial Assistance to Low and Moderate Income Households for Housing Unit Improvement and Modernization
The County will continue to support programs that provide technical and financial assistance to low and moderate income households for improvements and modernization, especially those that conserve energy, such as the Weatherization Program.
Strategy NL 4.2(c) - Increase Funding for Affordable Housing
The County will identify and use funding available through grants, private activity bonds and other funding mechanisms to reduce the cost of housing for lower income households and provide financial resources for building affordable housing.

Strategy NL 4.2(d) - Integrate Affordable Housing
The County will integrate affordable housing into neighborhoods in a complementary way, so it is not segregated in separate development areas. Higher density affordable housing should be located within walking distance of transit stops, employment centers, shopping areas, and recreational opportunities, or along transit routes that provide access to these land uses.

Strategy NL 4.2(e) - Work with Non-profit Organizations and Developers to Increase Affordable Housing Supply
The County will support and encourage non-profit organizations and developers to increase the affordable housing supply. The County will evaluate and determine viable incentives for developing affordable housing.

Strategy NL 4.2(f) – Encourage the Preservation and Development of Manufactured/Mobile Home Parks
Manufactured and mobile homes provide an important housing option for many households. The County zoning regulations include a Manufactured/Mobile Home zone district which allows the creation of manufactured/mobile home parks. The County will encourage the preservation of existing manufactured/mobile home parks and support the development of new parks that meet requirements established in the Land Development Code.

Policy NL 4.3 – Ensure Residential Development is Located in Areas of Low Risk from Natural Hazards
The County will ensure that neighborhoods are safe from natural hazards by requiring that residential development avoid areas containing moderate to high risk natural hazards.

Strategy NL 4.3(a) – Avoid Locating Residential Development in Hazard Areas
The County will restrict residential development in 100-year floodplains and in other moderate to high risk natural hazard areas.

Strategy NL 4.3(b) – Reduce or Eliminate Hazards Affecting Existing Residential Areas
The County should make a reasonable effort, when feasible, to reduce or eliminate any hazard affecting an existing residential area, including manufactured/mobile home parks where relocation assistance may also be considered.

Strategy NL 4.3(c) – Adopt Building Code Requirements to Reduce Risks from Natural Hazards
The County will consider adopting building code requirements that promote structures that are able to better withstand severe weather and wind events.

Policy NL 4.4 - Support Provision of Special-Needs Housing in Designated Growth Areas
Arapahoe County should support the provision of facilities for group homes, shelters for homeless persons and victims of domestic violence, elderly housing and housing for handicapped, mentally ill and disabled residents in Designated Growth Areas.
**Strategy NL 4.4(a) - Investigate Funding Options for Special-Needs Housing**

The County will identify and use funding available through grants and other funding programs to provide special-needs housing and to develop incentives for building it.

---

**OPEN SPACE, PARKS AND TRAILS**

A system of parks and open space provides relief from the built urban environment and opportunities for passive or active recreation. The County will require future development to incorporate areas of open space in all plans for development.

**GOAL NL 5 – Develop a Countywide Open Space, Parks and Trails System**

Arapahoe County will have a countywide connected system of open space, parks, trails and recreation facilities in the County, as described in the Open Space Master Plan and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. Arapahoe County will work to develop a connected system of open space and increase residents’ access to public parks and trails.

**Policy NL 5.1 – Implement Actions to Create a Countywide System of Connected Open Space, Public Parks and Trails**

The adopted Open Space Master Plan identifies priority open space lands, sets level of service standards for parks and addresses regional connections. The County has adopted park dedication standards and encourages voluntary techniques for creating an open space system.

**Strategy NL 5.1(a) – Coordinate Development Review with the Open Spaces Department**

The Open Spaces Department will be included as a referral in the review of new development proposals in order to coordinate the provision of parks and open space in new development, consistent with the Open Space Master Plan, and in other areas of the County as opportunities arise. (See Strategy NL 5.1(c) below).

**Strategy NL 5.1(b) - Establish Regional Open Space Connections**

The County should work with adjacent counties, cities, Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife, and parks and recreation districts to establish a regional interconnected open space system.

**Strategy NL 5.1(c) – Continue to Fund Open Space Acquisition and Improvements**

- The County should continue to use proceeds from the Open Space Sales Tax to acquire lands, maintain open space areas and build and improve park facilities.
- The County should identify other possible financing strategies, including but not limited to general obligation bonds, grants and other funding sources for acquisition and maintenance.
- The County should also consider a variety of voluntary conservation measures, including land dedications and conservation easements, and should work with non-profit organizations and land trusts to leverage local funding.

**Strategy NL 5.1(d) – Continue to Implement Park Dedication Requirements for Private Development**

The County will continue to require park dedications for private development, or cash in lieu of dedication, to provide access to adjacent public lands and to provide adequate land for parks.
Strategy NL 5.1(e) – Evaluate Change to Park Dedication Standard
The County will evaluate a change to the park dedication standard that assesses the adequacy or need for parks based on the percentage of population within walking distance of a park instead of the current method of requiring acres per capita.

Strategy NL 5.1(f) – Evaluate Establishing Open Space Standards
The County will consider amending the Land Development Code to include standards for open space to be set aside in various types of development. Consideration should be given to including passive recreation amenities in open spaces.

Strategy NL 5.1(g) – Investigate Impact Fees for Parks.
The County will consider the imposition of impact fees to provide parks to meet demands of a growing population.

Policy NL 5.2 – Provide Parks and Trails in Designated Growth Areas
Arapahoe County will strive to meet the level of service standards established in the Open Space Master Plan and the Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan for parks, trails and recreational facilities in Designated Growth Areas. Parks and trails should meet the needs of all residents, including senior citizens, children, teenagers and people needing special accessibility considerations.

Strategy NL 5.2(a) – Coordinate with Special Districts Providing Parks and Recreation
The County should coordinate with existing parks and recreation districts to establish agreed-upon standards to achieve consistency with the County Open Space Master Plan.

Strategy NL 5.2(b) – Require New Development to be in General Conformance with the Open Space Master Plan and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan
The County will review development proposals for general conformance with the Open Space Master Plan with regard to the provision of parks, open space and trail connections.

Strategy NL 5.2(c) - Encourage Shared Use of School Recreation Facilities
The County should work with school districts to determine if shared use of school facilities is appropriate to expanding active recreation opportunities.

Strategy NL 5.2(d) – Consider Adopting Highline Canal Vision Plan
The County will consider adopting the Highline Canal Vision Plan as one of its planning documents.

Strategy NL 5.2(e) – Implement the Highline Canal Vision Plan
The County will collaborate with the Highline Canal Conservancy to undertake appropriate actions outlined in the Highline Canal Vision Plan to preserve and enhance the Highline Canal Trail, neighborhood connectivity, the adjacent ecosystems, and the natural character of the canal as a refuge for the region's population and wildlife.

Policy NL 5.3 – Plan and Construct a Countywide Non-Motorized Trails System with Connections to the Regional System
The County will promote trails planning to provide a non-motorized transportation alternative.
Strategy NL 5.3(a) – Implement Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan
The Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan includes recommendations for on-street and off-street trails in the County. The County should work with other jurisdictions and parks and recreation districts to implement the recommended bicycle and trail system improvements.

Strategy NL 5.3(b) – Provide Funding for Countywide Trails Network
The Open Space Master Plan and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan identify “gaps” in the existing trail network in the County. The County should provide funding through the 5- and 10-year Capital Improvement Plan and/or provide funding through the Open Space Sales Tax to construct the links that close these gaps.

Strategy NL 5.3(c) – Refine and Enforce Connectivity Standards
The County has adopted connectivity standards in its Development Design Principles, but they need to be expanded and refined. The County will amend the Design Principles related to connectivity and continue to require pedestrian, bicycle and, where appropriate, equestrian links between neighborhoods, commercial areas, civic uses, parks and open spaces (see Transportation and Mobility Policies).

ECONOMIC HEALTH

Intent
Employment opportunities and commercial services are integral to the economic health of Arapahoe County residents and their quality of life. Commercial development provides greater tax revenues and jobs in the County, yet it sometimes creates traffic and adverse impacts in neighborhoods if not well planned. The County recognizes that establishing a mix of housing with employment and commercial land uses in Designated Growth Areas is important so residents do not have to travel far between home, work, shopping, and other activities. Consequently, the County encourages employment and commercial development to occur in designated locations in the Urban Area and the Rural Town Centers. The County will allow new employment and commercial development in the Rural Area only if it is agriculture-related.

While the County intends to foster economic development and employment opportunities in Designated Growth Areas, this development must be balanced with other community values. Commercial developments should be sensitive to the character of existing neighborhoods and should be designed to portray a positive image of the community and allow alternative transportation connections and safe pedestrian access.

These policies are intended to foster economic land use in a manner that ensures that Arapahoe County’s costs of providing infrastructure and services for development are met or exceeded by revenues generated by that development.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL EH 1 - Expand the County’s Existing Economic Base
Arapahoe County will continue to provide opportunities for industrial and commercial development and employment, primarily in Designated Growth Areas.
Policy EH 1.1 – Retain and Promote Existing Industrial Lands in Designated Growth Areas
Arapahoe County will identify and maintain existing industrial lands and undeveloped industrial parcels from the encroachment of other land uses. Rezoning these lands would limit future beneficial industrial development or relocation, including industrial distribution uses.

Strategy EH 1.1(a) – Create Economic Development Department
The County should consider creating and funding an economic development department to spearhead the County’s business expansion, retention and attraction efforts in order to be competitive with other jurisdictions within and adjacent to Arapahoe County.

Strategy EH 1.1(b) - Limit Rezoning of Existing Industrial Lands in Designated Growth Areas
The County should limit rezoning of existing industrial lands to ensure an adequate supply of land in appropriate locations for industrial development in Designated Growth Areas.

Strategy EH 1.1(c) - Supply an Adequate Amount of Land for Industrial and Manufacturing Use
The County will revise zoning regulations and the Zoning Map as necessary to supply an ample amount of land for industrial and manufacturing uses in Designated Growth Areas.

Strategy EH 1.1(d) - Establish Criteria for Industrial Distribution Uses in Designated Growth Areas
The County will establish criteria for locations of employment uses that rely on movement of goods and materials to locate in areas convenient to railroads, airports, or arterial roads and highways and within or near employment centers.

Policy EH 1.2 – Encourage Environmentally Friendly Businesses and Jobs in Arapahoe County
These types of businesses offer environmentally friendly products and services through sustainable business models and practices. Environmentally friendly jobs occur in many sectors and contribute substantially to preserving or restoring environmental quality.

Strategy EH 1.2(a) – Provide Incentives for Environmentally Friendly Companies to Locate in Arapahoe County
The County should evaluate and consider creating incentives to attract companies involved in environmentally friendly businesses to the County. Incentives might include tax abatements or expedited permit processing.

Strategy EH 1.2(b) – Support Efforts to Attract Companies that Research or Provide Manufacturing Support for Alternative Energy Sources.
The County will support economic development efforts to attract companies involved in research or manufacturing of components used in alternative energy development to locate in Arapahoe County. The County will consider developing incentives to attract such companies to the County.

Strategy EH 1.2(c) – Review Zoning Regulations to Allow Environmentally Friendly and Sustainable Businesses
The County will review its zoning regulations to ensure environmentally friendly businesses are permitted uses in non-residential zone districts. Attention should be given to zoning that allows a particular business to recycle wastes that are used as raw materials in another manufacturing operation.
Policy EH 1.3 – Encourage Community-based Economic Development and Revitalization
Community-based economic development promotes, supports and invests in businesses that serve local needs and are compatible with the community. Local resources are used to enhance economic opportunities while supporting locally owned businesses and locally produced goods and services.

Strategy EH 1.3(a) – Focus Economic Development Efforts on Locally Owned Businesses
Economic Development efforts will emphasize retention and expansion of locally owned businesses.

Strategy EH 1.3(b) – Continue Allowing Home Occupations
The County allows home occupations in residential zone districts and will continue to permit home occupations that meet the requirements and restrictions of the home occupation regulations.

Strategy EH 1.3(c) – Review Home Occupation Standards
The County will review its Land Development Code pertaining to home occupations to ascertain if some of the restrictions could be reduced to enable larger operations where impacts to neighbors would be minimized due to larger lot sizes.

GOAL EH 2 – Expand Employment and Commercial Development Opportunities in Designated Growth Areas
Arapahoe County will have viable employment centers and commercial development in Designated Growth Areas that provide employment and services to residents and that make a positive contribution to the community. Employment or commercial development in the Rural Area, other than that which is agriculture-related, is not consistent with this goal.

Policy EH 2.1 - Support Employment and Commercial Development in Designated Growth Areas at Appropriate Locations
Arapahoe County will support employment and commercial development land uses in Designated Growth Areas in designated locations.

Strategy EH 2.1(a) - Collaborate with the Business Community and Economic Development Groups
The County will work with the business community and economic development organizations to continue to encourage and support economic development in appropriate areas to increase private investment, provide jobs, attract new business and improve economic opportunities for residents.

Strategy EH 2.1(b) – Encourage Employment and Commercial Centers in Designated Growth Areas
The County will encourage employment centers and commercial development to locate only in Designated Growth Areas where convenient access, efficient and safe pedestrian circulation, efficient transit circulation and connections and other necessary infrastructure and services are available. The Urban Area Land Use Plan designates general locations for employment centers and regional commercial development in the Urban Area. Further refinement of categories and locations for commercial development in the Rural Town Centers are identified in the adopted Sub-area Plans.

Strategy EH 2.1(c) – Utilize Locational Criteria to Determine Appropriate Locations for Employment and Commercial Uses in Designated Growth Areas
Chapter III includes locational criteria for various types of commercial centers as well as for industrial and employment uses. The County will use these criteria to target new commercial development to planned commercial areas.
Strategy EH 2.1(d) - Target and Rezone New Locations for Employment Centers
The County should rezone locations for employment centers in areas with access to interstate highways and arterial roads, future transit, rail and airport facilities.

Strategy EH 2.1(e) - Restrict Rezoning of Land for Linear “Strip” Commercial Development
To prevent strip commercial development along highways and arterial roads, the County will restrict rezoning of land for such uses.

Strategy EH 2.1(f) – Amend Development Design Principles to Provide Standards for the Location and Siting of Large, Freestanding Commercial Uses
The Development Design Principles should be amended to include standards for large, freestanding commercial uses, using the locational criteria found in Chapter III for Regional Commercial uses as a basis for those standards. The standards should address the adequacy of transportation, water, sewer, and other public facilities and services to serve the use. The location of such uses in remote areas where adequate public facilities cannot be provided is not consistent with this strategy.

Policy EH 2.2 - Promote a Mix of Uses in New Commercial Development and Redevelopment in Designated Growth Areas
Arapahoe County will promote a mix of uses in new commercial development and redevelopment projects, avoiding large, single-use buildings with dominating parking areas.

Strategy EH 2.2(a) – Revise Mixed Use Zone District Regulations
The County Land Development Code includes a Mixed Use Zone District, but it requires the Planned Unit Development rezoning process. Consideration should be given to amending the Mixed Use District to make it a stand-alone district with allowable uses and development standards and restricting the use of the district to parcels 10-15 acres or less in size.

Strategy EH 2.2(b) – Amend Zoning Map to Zone Areas for Mixed Use
After or concurrently with amending the Mixed Use Zone District provisions, the zoning map should be amended to re-zone appropriate areas for mixed use development.

Policy EH 2.3 - Encourage Employment and Commercial Development in the Rural Town Centers
To reinforce the role of the Rural Town Centers as rural service centers, Arapahoe County will encourage employment and commercial uses to develop within the “downtown” or core of the Rural Town Centers, consistent with the Sub-area Plans. Commercial uses will be at a scale and design compatible with the “downtown” and must have adequate services at the time of development.

Strategy EH 2.3(a) - Support Downtown Improvement Efforts to Attract Business to the Rural Town Centers
The County will work with local business organizations and support local efforts to attract business. In addition, the County should consider funding for public improvements that may attract private investment.
Strategy EH 2.3(b) - Provide Incentives for Commercial Development in the Downtowns of the Rural Town Centers
The County will evaluate and consider creating incentives for employment and commercial development to occur in downtown areas of the Rural Town Centers. (For example, incentives may be lower impact fees in the communities than in the Rural Area).

GOAL EH 3 – Establish High-Quality Commercial and Industrial Development
Local character and an image of high-quality design should be conveyed in new commercial development.

Policy EH 3.1 - Promote a High-Quality Urban Environment in all New and Redeveloped Employment Centers and Commercial and Industrial Development
Arapahoe County will promote design and site planning of the physical environment of employment centers and commercial development that conveys a positive image for the community.

Strategy EH 3.1(a) – Evaluate and Revise Development Design Principles
The County has adopted Design Standards and Guidelines and streetscape standards for non-residential and mixed use development for both the urban and rural portions of the County. The County will evaluate the effectiveness of these requirements and update them as necessary. Zoning regulations need to be amended to require the use of these principles and standards during the development review process.

Strategy EH 3.1(b) – Update Landscaping Regulations
Current landscaping regulations are cumbersome and require minimum landscape areas along with prescribed plant quantities. Consideration should also be given to modifying these regulations to simplify the requirements and provide flexibility in landscape design, but also to provide guidance in the effective use of landscaping for screening and transitions between new uses and existing neighborhoods. Modifications should also strengthen the requirements for xeriscaping, water-conserving irrigation techniques, and maintenance and replacement of dead or diseased landscaping.

Strategy EH 3.1(c) – Update Requirements for Multi-modal Site Planning in Commercial Development
The County has adopted Design Principles that need to be updated to address the provision of facilities for walking, bicycling, and creating a transit-supportive environment for all employment centers and commercial development.

Policy EH 3.2 - Redevelop Strip Commercial Areas in the Urban Area
Outdated strip commercial centers are areas suitable for redevelopment and are opportunities for the County to achieve its goal of creating a compact, mixed use development pattern.

Strategy EH 3.2(a) - Provide Incentives for Redevelopment of Strip Commercial Areas
The County will support and encourage the gradual evolution of existing, auto-dominated strip commercial centers into compact, mixed use places designed to be pedestrian-oriented. The County will consider providing incentives for redevelopment of strip commercial areas, such as lower fees and/or a streamlined development review process.
FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY

GOAL EH 4 – Achieve Fiscal Sustainability
Arapahoe County will strive to balance necessary expenditures related to the provision and maintenance of public services and facilities to residents, business owners and visitors with revenues received.

Policy EH 4.1 – Consider New Revenue Sources to Help Balance Revenues with Ongoing Infrastructure and Maintenance Costs
In places of Arapahoe County that are already developed and where facilities have maintenance requirements that strain the budget, the County may need to consider new revenue sources to pay for recurring infrastructure and operational costs.

Strategy EH 4.1(a) – Explore and Evaluate New Revenue Sources
The County will evaluate and consider implementing new revenue sources such as use taxes and sales taxes to balance the costs of providing services with revenues received from development.

Policy EH 4.2 - New Development Will Pay Capital and Operational Costs for Services and Infrastructure
New development will pay the proportionate capital costs of required public services and facilities (i.e., streets, utilities, and parks) that are attributable to the new development and ensure that the long-term provision of these services is sustainable.

Strategy EH 4.2(a) – Use the Fiscal Impact Model in the Evaluation of New Development Proposals
The County has developed a Fiscal Impact Model for use in determining the costs and revenues associated with new development. This tool should be used by the Planning Division in the analysis and evaluation of new development proposals.

Strategy EH 4.2(b) - Approve Only New Development that Pays its Proportionate Costs
The County should approve only development that demonstrates that revenues generated in the form of property taxes or other means are sufficient to meet the proportionate costs of serving the proposed development.

Strategy EH 4.2(c) – Obtain Commitments for Roadway Improvements in the Urban Area
The County will consider the use of development agreements to require roadway improvements to serve new development, including on-site road construction, off-site road widening or intersection improvements, interchange improvements or modifications, and traffic signal installations.

Strategy EH 4.2(d) - Pursue the Use of Impact Fees
The County will explore cost recovery systems that ensure that development pays its fair share. Development impact fees, in accordance with State authority, may cover costs of roads, police protection and parks. The County has adopted a rural road impact fee and the Regional Transportation Improvement Fee (RTIF) that applies in the Smoky Hill area.

Policy EH 4.3 – Ensure a Balanced Mix of Land Uses
A balanced mix of land uses, including residential, commercial and industrial, better enables the County to balance the cost of providing services in relation to the revenues received from new development.
Strategy 4.3(a) – Monitor Zoning and Land Use Approvals
The Planning Division, with assistance from the Mapping Program of the Support Services Division, will monitor zoning and land use approvals to determine the current and future land use mix in the County.

Strategy 4.3(b) – Prepare Countywide Cost/Revenue Analysis
For residential and non-residential uses, the County should prepare an analysis of the costs of providing services compared to the revenue received from these uses.

TOURISM

GOAL EH 5 – Develop the Tourism Industry in Arapahoe County
Arapahoe County will work to identify potential opportunities to create attractions and promote tourism in the County. There are many cultural resources as well as agri-tourism and agri-tainment opportunities that could provide the foundation for attracting tourists to the area. (See Rural Area Goal RA EH 2.)

Policy EH 5.1 - Support the Designation of Cultural Resource Landmarks or Districts on Local, State or National Registers
Arapahoe County will support landowner-initiated requests for designation of structures or places on the local, State or National Registers.

Strategy EH 5.1(a) – Adopt Cultural Resource Preservation Regulations
The County will consider revising its zoning regulations to include a local cultural resource site designation and approval process.

Strategy EH 5.1(b) – Encourage the Designation of Places and Structures with Cultural Resource Significance
The County will encourage community landowners and leaders in the unincorporated Rural Town Centers and incorporated cities and towns to identify structures or places of cultural resource significance. The County will support landowner-initiated requests for designation on local, State or National Registers.

Policy EH 5.2 - Support Efforts to Promote Tourism in Arapahoe County
The County will work with the incorporated Towns and the Rural Town Centers to identify potential attractions and promote tourism in the County.

Strategy EH 5.2(a) - Collaborate with the Rural Town Centers and Business Community
The County will support efforts of business leaders in the unincorporated Rural Town Centers, appointed officials of the incorporated Towns, the business community and the Regional Economic Advancement Partnership (REAP) to encourage the identification and promotion of potential tourism attractions. (See Rural Area Economic Health policies.)

Strategy EH 5.2(b) – Encourage Development of Agri-tourism, Agri-tainment and Other Destination Attractions
The County zoning regulations permit the location of agri-tainment uses and destination attractions such as guest ranches and commercial stables in some agricultural zone districts. The County should encourage the development of such uses in order to attract more tourists to the County.
Strategy EH 5.2(c) – Evaluate Zoning Regulations Regarding Agri-tourism, Agri-tainment and Other Destination Attractions

While the County encourages these uses, the regulations for temporary uses and special uses need to be evaluated and revised as necessary to address the differing scales and impacts of such uses ranging from ranch visits (low impacts) to weekend festivals (high impacts).

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

Intent

Mobility is a concern to residents of Arapahoe County who desire to travel around the region efficiently and safely. As in other parts of the region and throughout the United States, the automobile is the dominant mode of transportation in the County. However, continued reliance on the automobile will degrade air quality, increase traffic congestion and driving times, require expensive road improvements and consume land for roads. If new growth continues to be dispersed, the challenges of improving existing road corridors and giving people multi-modal choices are even greater. The Transportation goals and policies, which follow in this section, mirror those of the 2035 Transportation Master Plan and encourage an efficient and balanced transportation system with local and regional connectivity for all modes of travel. These policies are not intended to supplant the 2035 Transportation Plan, but to reflect its overall goals and provide specific, more detailed strategies to be implemented through the development review process and/or modifications to development standards and requirements.

MOBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY

GOAL TM 1 - Develop an Efficient and Balanced Transportation System

Arapahoe County will have an efficient, safe transportation system that addresses current and future mobility needs and reduces dependency on the automobile.

Policy TM 1.1 – Facilitate Development of a Multi-Modal Transportation System throughout the County

Arapahoe County will promote a balanced transportation system that provides options to residents in public transit, walking, bicycling and automobile travel. The County will encourage alternatives to traditional commuting patterns, such as telecommuting.

Strategy TM 1.1(a) – Update the 2035 Transportation Plan

The County Transportation Plan was prepared in 2010 and should be updated to reflect the projections and land use recommendations of this Plan. The update should explore the establishment of utility/transportation corridors in the eastern portion of the County and address road capacity, a hierarchy of road cross-sections, traffic controls and operations, and regional road connectivity.

Strategy TM 1.1(b) – Implement Transportation Level of Service Standards

The adopted countywide Transportation Plan establishes level of service standards for urban and rural arterials and collectors, which provide a measure of roadway capacity versus traffic volume. The Plan also includes thresholds for paving gravel roads. These standards and thresholds will be used when reviewing new development applications to determine roadway requirements for new development, as well as in preparing the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP).
Strategy TM 1.1(c) - Establish Safe Multi-Modal Corridors
The Transportation Plan identifies several potential multi-modal corridors. The County should study the feasibility of establishing these multi-modal corridors and initiate actions to implement them, such as providing funding in the Capital Improvement Plan and requiring right-of-way dedications or easements from proposed developments.

Strategy TM 1.1(d) – Develop Standards for Transit-Oriented Development
Although no light rail stations are currently located in unincorporated Arapahoe County, unincorporated areas lie within ½ mile of existing stations. Other transit corridors may be developed in the future. The County will develop standards for transit-oriented development to apply to land within ½ mile of existing and future transit stations along I-25, E-470 and I-70.

Policy TM 1.2 - Establish Long-Term Road Maintenance and Improvement Priorities
Through the Transportation Improvement Plan, the County establishes priorities for road maintenance and improvements according to the roadway categories developed in the Transportation Plan. The Plan includes recommended priorities for State of Colorado investments in State highways that serve as arterial roads.

Strategy TM 1.2(a) - Continue to Prepare the Transportation Improvement Plan and Update Annually
The County should continue to update its Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) on an annual basis.

Strategy TM 1.2(b) - Fund and Prepare Alignment and Feasibility Studies
The Transportation Plan includes recommendations for the completion of several studies for interchanges and road alignments in the eastern part of the County. The County should fund the preparation of these studies, including matching funds where required.

Strategy TM 1.2(c) - Direct Funding of Improvements to Eastern Part of County
The County has prepared several transportation studies that recommend improvements in the eastern part of the County to improve safety and mobility for those businesses and residents. In some cases the improvements are to the State or federal highway system where a local funding match may be needed. The County should request funding for – or fund, as applicable – the improvements shown on the 2035 Transportation Plan East End Map, Map 4.

Strategy TM 1.2(d) - Establish a Funding Program for Major Investments and Partnering
The County should develop a funding program to address critical large-scale transportation improvement investments in coordination with the cities within the county and with adjacent jurisdictions.

Policy TM 1.3 - Require Connectivity and Continuity in Local and Regional Roads to Minimize Unnecessary Driving and Increase Safety
Connectivity and continuity – in local and regional roads between adjacent neighborhoods, between neighborhoods and nearby commercial and employment areas, and between incorporated areas and unincorporated areas – has many benefits, including minimizing unnecessary driving, decreasing vehicle miles traveled and thereby improving air quality, achieving a better distribution of traffic across the road network, and avoiding unnecessary congestion on collector and arterial streets. Connectivity and continuity also provide secondary and emergency connections, thereby increasing the safety of residents and businesses in emergency situations.
Strategy TM 1.3(a) – Review, Revise as Needed and Continue Implementing Connectivity Guidelines
The County has developed connectivity guidelines that should be amended to provide for vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian connections between neighborhoods, commercial areas and employment centers. The County will amend the Land Development Code to require the use of these guidelines during the applicable development review processes.

Strategy TM 1.3(b) – Require Secondary and Emergency Connections Within and Between Subdivisions
The County will require secondary and/or emergency connections within and between subdivisions during the development review process.

Strategy TM 1.3(c) – Ensure Road Layouts in Subdivisions and Meet Response Requirements for Emergency Services
During the development review process, emergency service providers will be requested to provide access and connectivity requirements for emergency responses.

Strategy TM 1.3(d) – Consider Hazard Areas when Planning and Constructing Capital Improvements
The location and design of capital improvements should avoid moderate to high risk hazard areas and thereby direct growth to areas with lower risks. If avoidance of hazard areas is not feasible, the capital improvement should be designed to withstand the hazard or mitigation should be part of the improvement.

Strategy TM 1.3(e) – Ensure Safe Routes to Schools
Safe Routes to Schools is a program administered by the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT). The County has identified safe routes to schools in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan process. The County should work with schools to ensure that recommendations are implemented to provide safe walking and bicycling routes to schools.

Strategy TM 1.3(f) – Construct Missing Links
The County should fund the construction of missing links in the sidewalk, trail, bike lane and street systems in the County’s capital improvement plans.

Strategy TM 1.3(g) – Coordinate Roadway Planning with Cities and Adjacent Jurisdictions
The County should coordinate proposed transportation improvements with transportation plans of cities within the County and with adjacent jurisdictions to ensure connectivity and continuity of roadway.

Strategy TM 1.3(h) – Reserve Right-of-Way and Require Off-site Improvements When Warranted
The County will reserve right-of-way as development occurs to ensure that future roadway needs can be met. This includes requiring the dedication of right-of-way in accordance with the Transportation Plan. Where needed for capital improvements, the County will acquire right-of-way sufficient to meet future needs. Construction of off-site improvements will be required when warranted.
**Policy TM 1.4 - Reduce Traffic in Residential Neighborhoods**

Arapahoe County will ensure that streets in residential areas will be designed to discourage cross-town through-traffic, but allow sufficient connections with adjacent neighborhoods and with the regional road system. The County will work to achieve a better distribution of traffic across the road network and avoid congestion on collector and arterial streets by ensuring connectivity and continuity in local roads.

*Strategy TM 1.4(a) – Continue to Implement the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program*

The County Traffic Engineer should continue to implement neighborhood traffic calming strategies following the procedures as outlined on the Arapahoe County Neighborhood Traffic Management Program Manual.

**ALTERNATIVE MODES**

**GOAL TM 2 – Develop Alternative Transportation Solutions**

The County will promote and facilitate the development of alternative transportation solutions to provide multiple travel options for residents and workers.

**Policy TM 2.1 – Promote Strategies and Technologies to Reduce Travel Demand**

The County will encourage and support travel demand management (TDM) strategies and emerging technologies in coordination with transportation management associations operating in the County to reduce vehicular travel demand.

*Strategy TM 2.1(a) – Consider Incentives for Implementing TDM Strategies*

The County will consider amendments to the Land Development Code that create incentives for businesses or developers to implement TDM strategies, such as reduced parking requirements or increased buildable square footage.

**Policy TM 2.2 - Support Public Transit**

Arapahoe County will work with Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), E-470 Transportation Authority and the Regional Transportation District to support the enhancement of mass transit along I-25, I-225, and I-70 and other major employment and key transportation corridors in the County and to provide efficient connections with such a system.

*Strategy TM 2.2(a) - Coordinate with Public and Private Transit Providers*

The County will coordinate with public transit providers to ensure that urban development areas have access to public transportation. The County will support the inclusion of new developing areas into the Regional Transportation District if inclusion is requested. The County should undertake appropriate measures to preserve existing corridors and rights-of-way for future implementation of long range transit improvements.

*Strategy TM 2.2 (b) – Collaborate with Transit Providers and Others to Provide Efficient and Convenient Connections to Transit and Transit Related Amenities*

Collaboration with transit providers, other agencies and transportation management associations can provide efficient and convenient connections between public transit stops/stations and places of
employment or residential areas. The County should work with transit providers to expand transit related amenities such as sidewalks, benches, shelters, and lighting at transit stops or stations.

**Strategy TM 2.2(c) – Work with Developers and the Regional Transportation District (RTD) to Provide Transit Stops**

In new and existing development involving uses such as senior or assisted housing, health care facilities, grocery stores, and similar facilities serving transit-dependent customers, the County will work with developers and RTD to provide transit stops and/or bus route changes to serve these facilities.

**Strategy TM 2.2(d) - Create a Land Use Pattern to Support Transit in Designated Growth Areas**

The County will encourage and support development efforts that enhance major transit corridors by creating a high-density, mixed use land use pattern necessary to support alternative modes of travel.

**Policy TM 2.3 - Accommodate Pedestrian Needs**

Arapahoe County will plan future development in Designated Growth Areas to accommodate pedestrians with a safe, convenient system of connected sidewalks, walkways, crosswalks and paths which meet minimum pedestrian facility design standards, including Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.

**Strategy TM 2.3(a) – Require Sidewalks in New Development**

The County will require streets and sidewalks and/or walkways in developing areas to form an interconnected network within neighborhoods and commercial areas and between neighborhoods and commercial areas and to other parts of the region.

**Strategy TM 2.3(b) - Coordinate Pedestrian Improvements with Other Projects**

The County should include in its roadway and facility capital projects improvements which accommodate pedestrians. The County will encourage special districts and CDOT to include pedestrian facilities in their capital projects as appropriate.

**Policy TM 2.4 - Establish a Countywide Bicycling Network**

Arapahoe County will plan future development in Designated Growth Areas to provide bicyclists with safe, convenient bicycling facilities including shared use paths, bike lanes, designated bike routes, bike parking, and signage for bike facilities. These facilities should meet AASHTO (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials) Guidelines and the recommendations of the County’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

**Strategy TM 2.4(a) - Designate Bicycling Routes and Paths**

The County has identified a bicycle route and path plan in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. The recommendations of that Plan should be implemented.

**Strategy TM 2.4(b) – Require Bicycle Parking in New Development**

The County will adopt standards for bicycle parking at commercial, office, public facilities, and transit locations, in accordance with DRCOG’s *Sample Regional Bicycle Parking Ordinance* (2001) or other relevant standard.

**Strategy TM 2.4(c) - Promote the Bicycling Network**

The County should promote the bicycling network through actions contained in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.
Strategy TM 2.4(d) - Coordinate Bicycle Improvements with Other Projects
The County should include, within its roadway and facility capital projects, facilities which accommodate the use and storage of bicycles. The County will encourage special districts and CDOT to include bicycle facilities in their capital projects as appropriate.

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION

GOAL TM 3 - Ensure Land Uses are Adequately Served by the Transportation System
Arapahoe County will have adequate streets and an efficient transportation system to coincide with new development in Designated Growth Areas.

Policy TM 3.1 - Promote an Efficient Transportation System through Appropriate Land Use Patterns
Arapahoe County has adopted the Transportation Plan that proposes a transportation system that supports the desired land use pattern of compact development and a mix of uses described in this Comprehensive Plan. The County will require that future development in Designated Growth Areas is planned and designed so that land uses are readily accessible by all modes of travel. In addition, the County will direct new non-residential development to locate in designated employment and commercial centers to better accommodate multi-modal forms of transportation.

Strategy TM 3.1(a) – Consider Conformance with Land Use Plan and Development Framework in Development Applications
The County has established appropriate land uses and a sufficient roadway network to serve those land uses shown on the Development Framework Map and the Urban Area Land Use Plan. Consistency of proposed land uses, in terms of density and type of use, with the Urban Area Land Use Plan and Development Framework Map will be considered in reviewing applications for development. (See Policies GM 1.1 through 1.2).

Policy TM 3.2 – Require New Development to Be Served by Adequate Transportation Facilities
The review of new development applications will include an assessment of the adequacy of the existing and planned transportation facilities to serve all phases of the development. New development will occur only where existing transportation facilities are adequate to serve it or where the developer will pay for necessary transportation improvements and on-going costs for the development of all other facilities and services.

Strategy TM 3.2(a) - Require Adequate Roads to be Provided Contemporaneously with New Development
The County will require roads to be in place or planned for construction prior to development occurring. The County requires conformance to specified standards as a condition of approval.

Strategy TM 3.2(b) – Require New Development to Provide Facilities for Other Modes of Travel
The County’s Land Development Code includes provisions requiring sidewalks, trails and bicycle lanes in new development. The County will continue to require these improvements.

NEW TECHNOLOGY

GOAL TM 4 – Adapt the Transportation System to New Technology
Emerging technology has the potential to alter the way streets, highways and land are used. The County should plan for these changes in technology.
Policy TM 4.1 – Incorporate Autonomous Vehicles into Planning Efforts
The advent of autonomous vehicles and evolving technology will have a dramatic impact on travel behavior, roadway usage and design, and the built environment.

Strategy TM 4.1(a) – Monitor Autonomous Vehicle Technology
The County should monitor how autonomous vehicle technology is evolving and what impacts it may have on travel behavior, roadway design and the built environment.

Strategy TM 4.1(b) – Incorporate Autonomous Vehicles into Long Range Plans
Autonomous vehicles will impact roadway design and functionality and signage requirements. The County should address these issues in any updates to the Transportation Plan and road signage policies.

Strategy TM 4.1(c) – Develop New Roadway Design Standards
The use of autonomous vehicles will require adoption of new roadway designs, functional classifications and standards for other infrastructure, such as drop-off zones and pick-up areas. These standards should include the integration of bicycle and pedestrian networks into this infrastructure.

Strategy TM 4.1(d) – Develop New Site Development Standards
With less car ownership and more ride-sharing, the need for parking is diminished. Vehicles that are not owned by the user will require drop-off areas of sufficient size and layout and location so as not to impede vehicle and pedestrian movements on adjacent roadways or interfere with circulation on site. Storage areas will be needed for autonomous vehicles when not in use. The County will revise its site development and parking standards, when warranted, to include lower parking ratios in combination with allowing shared parking arrangements among land uses and commercial lots and to establish design standards for drop-off areas. Consideration should also be given to including provisions for the storage of autonomous vehicles during non-peak times.

Strategy TM 4.1(e) – Identify Redevelopment Opportunities
Existing parking lots provide opportunities for redevelopment. The County should revise zoning regulations to allow the redevelopment of these lots with uses that may not be allowed under current zoning or PUDs (for example, residential uses).

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Intent
Arapahoe County residents in cities and rural places appreciate the natural environment and the value it provides for people and wildlife. As the population in the County has grown, community interest in conserving natural and cultural resources has increased. The Natural and Cultural Resources and Environmental Quality policies are intended to promote conservation of important natural and man-made resources, such as streams, wetlands and cultural resources, and minimize damage due to development. Policies addressing environmental hazards are intended to educate residents about avoiding hazards in the built environment. The policies also support maintaining and enhancing air and water quality as a means of promoting public health. Energy conservation and sustainable development practices are also encouraged.
NATURAL AREAS

GOAL NCR 1 - Conserve Natural Areas
Arapahoe County will strive to conserve its natural areas and resources that provide habitat, maintain environmental quality and enrich the lives of residents by providing opportunities for education, scientific research, nature interpretation, fishing, hunting, art, observation and outdoor recreation.

Policy NCR 1.1 - Conserve and Enhance Riparian Areas
Conservation and enhancement of Riparian Areas (which include wetlands, streams, rivers and their associated vegetation and soils) can be accomplished through innovative planning, design, buffering, best management practices, open space planning and restoration where appropriate. Buffers control soil erosion and remove sediment, fertilizers, pesticides and other potential contaminants from runoff; 100-year floodplains along Bijou Creek, Cherry Creek, Box Elder Creek, Kiowa Creek, Coal Creek and Wolf Creek are important areas of focus.

Strategy NCR 1.1(a) - Create an Inventory of Riparian Areas
The County will identify floodplains, wetlands and other Riparian Areas and create better data and inventory maps that are updated as new information becomes available. An inventory will also help to establish priorities for Riparian Areas that are important to consider for conservation or restoration.

Strategy NCR 1.1(b) - Restrict Development in Riparian Areas
The County will continue to implement its floodplain regulations which restrict development in the 100-year floodplains. The County will limit development within the inventoried Riparian Areas to the maximum extent feasible and revise zoning regulations as necessary.

Strategy NCR 1.1(c) - Establish Setbacks for Riparian Areas
The County will consider establishing setbacks for floodplains and natural water bodies to direct residential, commercial, and industrial development, as well as public facilities and utilities, away from Riparian Areas. Setback widths will depend on the quality, or priority, of Riparian Areas, the upstream drainage area, and the density of development. Consideration should be given to establishing a setback of 1,000 feet.

Strategy NCR 1.1(d) - Consider Various Methods for Preserving Riparian Areas, Including Voluntary Actions
The County should consider using Open Space Sales Tax funds for the acquisition of Riparian Areas. Conservation easements may be considered where land trusts hold the easements. Incentives for providing buffers to Riparian Areas may be another voluntary approach. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has established financial incentives for providing riparian buffers (such as filter strips and grassed waterways). The County will develop criteria for Riparian Areas for acquisition or use of conservation easements.
Strategy NCR 1.1(e) - Identify Funding Sources for Riparian Area Conservation and Restoration
The County should consider pursuing grants and developing partnerships with non-profit organizations and land trusts to leverage County funding for conservation and restoration.

Policy NCR 1.2 - Conserve Wildlife Habitat and Corridors and Sensitive Development Areas
Arapahoe County should develop a program to identify and conserve lands and plants that provide food, forage and breeding grounds for wildlife. In many cases, the Riparian Areas are the best wildlife habitat, so the preceding strategies for Riparian Areas are applicable. Sensitive Development Areas, defined as intact ecosystems, including prairie grasslands and threatened species conservation areas, are also important habitat. The County will further inventory habitat and sensitive areas, consider acquisition and other voluntary conservation measures, and develop standards so that these areas are avoided for infrastructure and utility projects.

Strategy NCR 1.2(a) – Update Inventories of Wildlife Habitat and Sensitive Development Areas
Updated habitat and sensitive development area inventories should be prepared as new information becomes available.

Strategy NCR 1.2(b) - Consider Acquiring Land and/or Using Conservation Easements for Wildlife Habitat
The County should consider using the Open Space Sales Tax to acquire wildlife habitat land. If considered not appropriate, the County should consider the use of conservation easements to preserve wildlife habitat.

Strategy NCR 1.2(c) - Work with Partners to Conserve and Manage Wildlife Habitat Lands
The County should work with other organizations and public and private landowners to conserve and develop wildlife management plans for public lands. In addition, the County should identify grants and other sources of funding for conservation and management.

Strategy NCR 1.2(d) - Continue to Implement the County’s Noxious Weed Program
The County currently administers a noxious weed program to help control the spread of State identified noxious weeds. Arapahoe County is committed to limiting the impact of noxious weeds on the County by performing the following functions:

- Properly manage noxious weeds on County rights of way, open spaces and other property.
- Assist landowners with noxious weed issues by identifying plants and providing recommendations on how to properly manage weeds.
- Promote noxious weed education through community presentations, internet, direct mailings and site visits.
- Enforce the Colorado Noxious Weed Act when necessary.

Strategy NCR 1.2(e) - Develop Standards and Guidelines for Infrastructure Projects in Sensitive Development Areas
The County will consider developing standards that address location of roads to minimize impact on wildlife habitat and movement corridors. Such standards would require suitable crossings for wildlife when building new roads or upgrading existing roads. Other public works projects and utilities should adhere to site planning guidelines to minimize their impacts on Sensitive Development Areas.
Strategy NCR 1.2(f) - Create and Adopt Site Development Standards
The County will create and adopt site development standards to minimize negative impacts of development in Sensitive Development Areas and wildlife habitat. Standards should be developed for buildings, other structures, and any site disturbance, as well as fencing.

Strategy NCR 1.2(g) - Provide Wildlife Educational Materials
The County will develop and provide educational materials (i.e., a “Handbook”) for landowners about living with wildlife, including site planning, domestic pet control and noxious weed control.

Policy NCR 1.3 - Preserve Significant Views and Ridgelines
Arapahoe County should identify and preserve significant views, ridgelines, and high points to the maximum extent feasible to minimize degradation of scenic quality.

Strategy NCR 1.3(a) – Utilize Inventory of Visual Resources
The County has an inventory of visual resources, including a skyline analysis and viewshed analysis, prepared by the Trust for Public Land. This inventory will be used in the development review process to encourage these resources to be preserved or minimally impacted.

Strategy NCR 1.3(b) - Create Site Development Standards for Views and Ridgelines
The Design Development Principles will be amended to include site development standards to preserve views and ridgelines, including setbacks, height limits, and controls on quality, color and material of building roofs.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

GOAL NCR 2 - Preserve Cultural Resources
Arapahoe County will endeavor to preserve its cultural resources since they add to a high quality of life for residents and provide a foundation for developing the tourism industry in Arapahoe County.

Policy NCR 2.1 - Preserve Cultural Resources
Arapahoe County will assist in the identification of structures and districts with cultural resource significance and support their preservation.

Strategy NCR 2.1(a) - Identify and Designate Cultural Resources
The County will use field surveys and will work with community groups to identify and designate important cultural resources.

Strategy NCR 2.1(b) – Require Documentation of Cultural Resources
The County will amend sections of the zoning regulations to require documentation and preservation of cultural resources, including renovation design standards and demolition controls. The County will consider adopting regulations establishing a local designation and preservation process.

Strategy NCR 2.1(c) – Encourage Preservation of Cultural Resources
The County will encourage developers or landowners to preserve cultural resources by incorporating them into development plans. Cultural resources could become focal points or community uses in the development.
Strategy NCR 2.1(d) - Provide Incentives to Preserve Cultural Resources
The County will consider providing incentives, such as a density bonus, to preserve cultural resources.

Strategy NCR 2.1(e) - Seek Funding for Preservation of Cultural Resources
The County should work with non-profit organizations and target grants and other sources of funding to preserve cultural resources.

Strategy NCR 2.1(f) – Encourage the Designation of Places and Structures of Cultural Resource Significance
The County will encourage community groups in the unincorporated Rural Town Centers and incorporated Towns to work toward the identification of structures or places of cultural resource significance. The County will support landowner-initiated requests for designation on local, State or National Registers.

WATER QUALITY

GOAL NCR 3 - Maintain High Standards for Water Quality
Arapahoe County will facilitate human health and environmental quality by maintaining high standards for water quality. (See also, Goals and Policies for Public Facilities and Services, Stormwater Management.)

Policy NCR 3.1 – Improve the Quality of Water Discharged to Streams and Other Water Bodies in the Region
The County will continue to work with the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District, the Southeast Metro Stormwater Authority and the Colorado Water Quality Control Division to require best management practices in dealing with drainage and erosion control.

Strategy NCR 3.1(a) - Provide Education about Best Management Practices (Control Measures)
The County should develop a “handbook” or guide for developers and landowners that addresses erosion control, including a list of “best management practices,” or “control measures,” to be used during and after construction projects. The County will work with the Tri-County Health Department, SEMSWA, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and other interested parties to develop this handbook.

Strategy NCR 3.1(b) – Continue to Require Soil Erosion Control
The County requires developers to replace or rehabilitate topsoil and vegetation disturbed or destroyed by construction, as applicable. The County will continue to implement these regulations.

Strategy NCR 3.1(c) - Require Septic Systems to Be Managed
The County will require new development and subdivisions that are served by septic systems to be managed by a Responsible Management Entity, such as a special district or homeowner’s association, with assistance in developing a management plan provided by Tri-County Health Department. The County will require the use of DRCOG’s Septic Management Planning Process, or alternate accepted process, where applicable.
AIR QUALITY

GOAL NCR 4 - Meet Environmental Standards for Air Quality
Arapahoe County will promote human health and environmental quality by maintaining compliance with National Ambient Air Quality Standards that control stationary and mobile source emissions of pollutants.

Policy NCR 4.1 - Improve Air Quality
Arapahoe County, while it has limited authority in air quality control, should undertake efforts to improve air quality in the region by reducing growth in total vehicle-miles of travel, encouraging non-polluting industries to locate in the County, and supporting air quality technological and educational programs.

Strategy NCR 4.1(a) - Continue Emphasis on Vehicle Mile Travel Reduction to Improve Air Quality
To contribute to improved air quality, the County will encourage reducing dependence on automobile travel by promoting higher density and mixed use development in Designated Growth Areas.

Strategy NCR 4.1(b) - Support Programs and Education about Air Quality
Because vehicle miles are expected to increase, the County should support air quality programs and increase education to help improve air quality, including but not limited to fuel standards, auto inspections, dust reduction on unpaved roads and at construction sites, wood burning restrictions, alternative road construction methods, and emissions standards for commercial and industrial sources.

Strategy NCR 4.1(c) – Attract Clean, Non-Polluting Industries to the County
The County’s preference is for clean, non-polluting industries to locate in the County.

SUSTAINABILITY

GOAL NCR 5 – Seek Opportunities to Advance Sustainability Initiatives
Arapahoe County has instituted many sustainability measures in its facilities and fleet. The County will seek opportunities to extend these practices to internal County operations and with external partners.

Policy NCR 5.1 – Initiate Sustainability Practices in County Operations
Arapahoe County should undertake sustainability measures in accordance with a Sustainability Plan.

Strategy NCR 5.1(a) - Prepare Sustainability Plan for Internal County Operations
The County should identify and pursue goals that address increasing the efficiency related to internal County operations (e.g., reduced energy and fuel consumption, waste diversion, and water conservation).

Strategy NCR 5.1(b) – Initiate Community Outreach Concerning Sustainability
The County should seek opportunities to increase awareness of the County’s sustainability initiatives and provide opportunities for community participation.

Strategy NCR 5.1(c) – Provide Staff Training to Advance Sustainability Initiatives
The County should provide opportunities for training and education to support the advancement of sustainability measures undertaken by the County.
Strategy NCR 5.1(d) - Adopt Energy Efficiency Requirements
The County should adopt energy efficiency requirements for County-owned facilities, leaseholds, and County operations consistent with a County Sustainability Plan.

Policy NCR 5.2 - Encourage Sustainable Development Practices
The County will undertake measures to encourage site development and building construction techniques that support sustainable use of the land and conservation of resources.

Strategy NCR 5.2(a) – Review and Amend Building Codes and Development Regulations to Advance Sustainability in New Development
The County should examine the current Building Code and development regulations to identify amendments that may be needed to advance sustainability, such as examining ways to support solar and wind energy systems, water and energy conservation, and a compact development pattern.

Strategy NCR 5.2(b) – Review and Amend Building and Energy Conservation Codes to Promote Sustainable Building Practices
The County should review current building and energy codes in order to determine amendments that could be made to allow builders and designers to introduce new approaches to designing and building safe, comfortable buildings through the introduction of innovative building technologies using alternative materials, design, methods of construction and equipment.

Strategy NCR 5.2(c) – Consider Incentives for LEED Designed Buildings and Neighborhoods
The County should consider providing incentives for buildings and neighborhoods that are designed to LEED silver, gold or platinum standards.

Strategy NCR 5.2(d) – Encourage the Use of Energy Star (or Future Equivalent) Products and Certified Buildings
The County encourages the use of Energy Star-rate appliance and building components (e.g., windows and doors) and construction of Energy Star certified buildings throughout the County, or products and standards of any other energy conservation rating programs that might be created in the future. Adoption of building codes in the future should consider Energy Star certification or equivalent requirements for building permits.

GOAL NCR 6 – Reduce Energy Consumption in the County
The County will investigate and evaluate measures to reduce energy consumption in its facilities and in new and existing development. Achieving this goal will result in conserving resources, improving air quality and reducing emissions.

Policy NCR 6.1 - Encourage Reductions in Energy Consumption
Arapahoe County will encourage reductions in energy consumption to conserve resources and to maintain air quality.

Strategy NCR 6.1(a) - Support Energy Conservation Programs and Education
The County will support programs and education to reduce energy consumption, research solar and other clean energy alternatives, and encourage energy efficient building design and solar-oriented site planning.
Strategy NCR 6.1(b) - Consider Incentives for Buildings and Site Planning that Conserve Energy
The County will consider incentives to support energy efficient building design and solar-oriented site planning.

Strategy NCR 6.1(c) – Support Installation of Facilities Serving Electric Cars
The County will amend its zoning regulations to allow the installation of charging stations and other facilities used by electric cars. The County will consider installing charging stations at County-owned facilities.

Policy NCR 6.2 – Encourage the Development and Use of Alternative Energy Sources
The County will encourage alternative energy companies to develop facilities and generate energy from alternative sources. The County will encourage the use of energy from alternative sources by residents, businesses and utility companies.

Strategy NCR 6.2(a) – Encourage the Development of Solar Energy Facilities
The County provides an Administrative Use by Special Review procedure for solar facilities generating less than two megawatts and less than 20 acres in size. The County will continue to use this administrative process to encourage solar facilities in the County. Facilities larger than 20 acres and generating more than two megawatts require review at a public hearing.

Strategy NCR 6.2(b) – Establish Standards for Solar Farms
The County will amend the Land Development Code to adopt standards for solar facilities in excess of 20 acres and generating more than 2 megawatts of power. Standards should address the size and spacing of solar farms along with impacts to surrounding land uses and wildlife.

Strategy NCR 6.2(c) – Consider Amending Zoning Regulations to Allow the Development of Alternative Energy Sources such as Biofuel Facilities, Wind Farms, Biomass Gas Generation, and Geothermal Systems
The County will consider amending its zoning regulations to allow these alternative energy facilities to locate in appropriate zone districts in the County. Regulations should include approval criteria that address the potential impacts of these facilities on surrounding land uses.

Strategy NCR 6.2(d) - Review County Regulations to Remove Any Barriers to the Use of Small-scale (Individual) Wind Generators.
County zoning regulations permit small wind energy conversion systems in agricultural and rural residential zone districts. The County will review its regulations and permitting process to ensure that they do not present barriers to the use of these systems.

Strategy NCR 6.2(e) - Review County Regulations to Remove any Barriers to the Use of Small-scale (Individual) Solar Energy Collectors.
County regulations permit the use of small solar energy collectors on individual residences and buildings. The County will review its regulations and permitting process to ensure that they do not present barriers to the use of these systems. The County will consider creating incentives to promote the use of these systems.
Strategy NCR 6.2(f) – Encourage Companies Involved in Research or Development of Alternative Energy Sources to Locate in the County
The County will encourage companies that research, develop or provide alternative energy sources to locate in Arapahoe County. Alternative energy sources include biofuels, wind, solar, biomass and geothermal systems.

Policy NCR 6.3 – Improve Energy Efficiency in County Operations
The County has undertaken measures to use alternative energy sources, improve energy efficiency and reduce the amount of emissions attributable to its operations.

Strategy NCR 6.3(a) – Utilize Environmentally Friendly and Sustainable Development Practices
The County should consider utilizing environmentally friendly and sustainable development practices that reduce emissions attributable to capital improvement projects, both during construction and once the improvement is operational.

Strategy NCR 6.3(b) – Implement Purchasing and Maintenance Practices that Reduce Emissions
The County should consider instituting purchasing and maintenance practices that reduce emissions associated with the production, use and disposal of goods and services it purchases.

Strategy NCR 6.3(c) – Utilize Alternative Fuel Vehicles
The County should evaluate and consider the use of alternative fuel vehicles and alternative fuels in its various vehicle fleets.

Strategy NCR 6.3(d) – Improve Energy Efficiency and Produce Renewable Energy at County Facilities
The County should continue to improve energy efficiency at its facilities and utilize solar, wind or other energy sources to meet a portion of the energy demand at these facilities. The County should strive for LEED certification in the design, construction and operation of any new facilities and implement environmentally friendly and sustainable practices at existing facilities.

Policy NCR 6.4 – Encourage and Support Energy Conservation Countywide
The County will encourage and support activities that reduce emissions and improve air quality countywide through sustainable land use and construction practices and transportation infrastructure.

Strategy NCR 6.4(a) – Encourage Energy Conservation Countywide
The County will encourage industries, water and wastewater utilities, and major public facility providers (e.g., school districts, park and recreation districts) to utilize alternative sources of energy at their facilities.

Strategy NCR 6.4(b) – Encourage Mixed-Use Development Patterns
The County will encourage new development that creates a compact, mixed use development pattern in combination with providing alternatives to the use of the automobile as the sole means of travel in the development.

Strategy NCR 6.4(c) – Support the Use of Transit and Non-Motorized Travel Modes
The County will collaborate with RTD and other transit providers to accommodate transit facilities in existing neighborhoods and in new development. The County will require facilities for walking and
bicycling in new development and implement the recommendations of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan to provide a connected system for non-motorized travel throughout the County.

Strategy NCR 6.4(d) – Consider Adopting Environmentally Friendly Building Codes
The County should consider adopting amendments to building codes, including the International Energy Conservation Code, which require the use of low-emission materials and construction techniques and reduce future energy demands.

MINERAL RESOURCE EXTRACTION

As used in this Section, “commercial mineral deposits” and the extraction of mineral deposits will refer to those minerals identified in C.R.S. 34-1-301 which include limestone used in construction, coal, sand, gravel and quarry aggregate. “Mineral resources” means commercial mineral deposits and oil and gas deposits. “Extraction” and “mineral extraction” refer to both commercial mineral deposit extraction and oil and gas extraction, unless otherwise noted.

GOAL NCR 7 - Conserve Lands Which Contain Commercial Mineral Deposits for Potential Future Use in Accordance with State Law (C.R.S 34-1-305)
Areas of known commercial sand, gravel and quarry aggregate resources have been mapped, and the County has developed regulations that include permitted and prohibited land uses in mineral resource areas.

Policy NCR 7.1 – Conserve Areas of Known Commercial Mineral Deposits
State statute requires the preservation of limestone used for construction purposes, coal, sand, gravel and quarry aggregate, which is or will be commercially feasible for extraction or which has significant economic or strategic value.

Strategy NCR 7.1(a) – Prepare and Adopt Mineral Extraction Plan
The County should prepare and adopt a Mineral Extraction Plan in accordance with C.R.S. 34-1-304. The Plan will identify areas that are valuable for resource extraction and allow extraction of subsurface resources.

Strategy NCR 7.1(b) – Update Map of Known Commercial Mineral Deposits
In implementing the Mineral Extraction Plan, the County should prepare an updated map depicting known commercial mineral deposits (coal, sand, gravel, and quarry aggregate deposits.) Landowners should be given an opportunity to modify the Commercial Mineral Deposits Map and demonstrate that an area does not contain a commercial mineral deposit.

Strategy NCR 7.1(c) - Consider Access to Future Mineral Resource Development Areas on a Case-by-Case Basis
County regulations require applications for development in areas of known mineral deposits to provide evidence that the development will present no obstacle to extraction of the mineral resource present. Applicants also are required to notify mineral rights owners of the development proposal.

Strategy NCR 7.1(d) – Restrict Development in Areas of Known Commercial Mineral Deposits
The County has developed regulations identifying permitted and prohibited land uses in areas known to contain sand, gravel and quarry aggregate commercial mineral deposits. The regulations permit
development in an area of known mineral deposits if an applicant provides evidence that the proposed development will be of greater economic value than the minerals present on the subject property.

*Strategy NCR 7.1(e) – Consider Allowing Extraction in Conservation Easements*

The County may consider allowing the extraction of commercial mineral deposits on lands in conservation easements if allowed under the deed restrictions of the easement.

*Policy NCR 7.2 - Encourage the Reasonable Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources*

The County has developed regulations and procedures to allow for the extraction of sand, gravel and quarry aggregate commercial mineral deposits. The regulations identify land uses permitted in identified mineral resource areas. These permitted uses will minimally impact the ability to extract the commercial minerals. The County has limited control over oil and gas exploration and extraction, but such operations are permitted under the Use by Special Review procedure.

*Strategy NCR 7.2(a) – Continue Applying County Procedures and Requirements to Proposed Mining and Quarry Operations*

The County requires an analysis of the commercial feasibility of extraction, an analysis of impacts (including water resources), and a reclamation plan.

*Strategy NCR 7.2(b) – Continue Processing Oil and Gas Requests under Current Regulations*

The County will continue processing oil and gas extraction requests under the Use by Special Review procedure in which the County imposes certain conditions and performance standards on the operation. An administrative Use by Special Review process is available to oil and gas operators which shortens the review time by eliminating public hearings in exchange for the operator agreeing to certain conditions in the County-approved Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

*Strategy NCR 7.2(c) – Update and Revise the Oil and Gas Memorandum of Understanding*

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was developed several years ago and much in the oil and gas industry has changed. The MOU needs to be revised and updated, especially to address the trend toward larger sites with more wells and tanks, visual impacts, fire protection concerns, and traffic impacts.

*Strategy NCR 7.2(d) – Conserve Water in Extraction Operations*

The County will encourage mineral extraction operators to conserve water in their operations. If groundwater use is proposed, the County encourages the use of water from the Laramie-Fox Hills aquifer.

*Policy NCR 7.3 - Minimize On-site Hazardous Conditions Related to Extraction Activities*

Through the Use by Special Review process, the County has the ability to impose conditions or stipulations on the approval of an extraction operation to address potential hazardous conditions during and after extraction operations.
Strategy NCR 7.3(a) – Impose Conditions to Reduce or Eliminate Hazardous Conditions
In reviewing the operational and reclamation plans for a mining operation, impose such conditions as necessary to minimize or eliminate the potential adverse impact of the hazard posed by the operation on surrounding properties by requiring:

- Appropriate site-specific security fencing be erected and maintained around extraction sites, as necessary, to minimize potential attractive nuisance hazards associated with operations located near urban uses.
- The use of warning signs, fences, guards, lighting and other means to warn and protect people from site hazards such as steep slopes, holes, ponds and heavy equipment. Enforce trespass laws to ensure public safety.
- All extraction operations conform to federal, State and local safety standards.
- Periodic on-site inspections, as warranted.

Strategy NCR 7.3(b) – Require Compliance with Floodplain Regulations
Ensure that operators comply with County floodplain regulations.

Strategy NCR 7.3(c) – Support Changes to State Legislation and Oil and Gas Commission Rules
The County should support changes to legislation and/or rules that expand the inspection powers of the Local Government Designee (LGD), establish setbacks for oil and gas operations from residential areas, and establish standards for flowlines and stricter standards for old, inactive wells.

Policy NCR 7.4 - Minimize the Impacts of Mining and Quarry Activities on the Environment, Surrounding Land Uses, and Road Network
Mining, quarry and earth extraction operations are allowed only in the Agricultural Zone Districts (A-E and A-1) as a Use by Special Review. This review procedure allows the County to impose conditions or stipulations on the application to address extraction impacts or operations.

Strategy NCR 7.4(a) – Impose Conditions to Mitigate Impacts When Approving Mining and Quarry Operations
In reviewing an application for a mineral extraction operation, consider the cumulative impacts of the mining activity on surrounding land uses and County infrastructure. Minimize impacts by:

- Locating and designing excavated areas, structures, machinery, equipment storage, and stockpiling of mined materials to be considerate to surrounding land uses in terms of general use, scale, density, traffic, dust and noise.
- Maintaining, where practical, roadside and perimeter vegetation and setback requirements which serve to shield mining operations, including storage of equipment, stockpiled soils and materials, from public view.
- Locating access roads to, and within, the site in a manner which minimizes traffic impacts on surrounding land uses.
- Buffering batch plants and processing equipment from adjacent uses where possible.
- Promoting the safety of all citizens that are in relatively close proximity to extraction and processing facilities.

Strategy NCR 7.4(b) – Require Improvements to Roadways when Warranted
The County should ensure that the extraction applicant demonstrates that the street or highway facilities providing access to the mining activity are adequate in functional classification, width and structural capacity to meet the requirements of the proposed mining activity. The County will require traffic improvements and traffic controls wherever necessary to mitigate traffic impacts.
Policy NCR 7.5 – Minimize the Impacts of Oil and Gas Development on the Environment, Surrounding Land Uses and the Roadway Network

The County has limited ability to review and impose conditions on oil and gas development due to State statutes and rules of the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission. The Use by Special Review process enables the County to address the impacts of oil and gas extractions to the land and land uses and to ensure complete restoration of the areas impacted.

Strategy NCR 7.5(a) – Encourage the Installation of Pipelines for Transport of Crude Oil and Produced Water

The County will encourage and support the installation of pipelines for the transport of crude oil and produced water in order to reduce the number of vehicles using County roads and to minimize the number of on-site storage tanks and the amount of on-site equipment.

Strategy NCR 7.5(b) - Encourage Use of Existing Service Roads and Require Improvements to Roadways when Warranted

The County will encourage the use of existing service roads to provide access for oil and gas activities. The County should ensure that the extraction applicant demonstrates that the street or highway facilities providing access to the mining activity are adequate in functional classification, width and structural capacity to meet the requirements of the proposed mining activity. The County will require traffic improvements and traffic controls wherever necessary to mitigate traffic impacts.

Strategy NCR 7.5(c) – Support Limiting Drilling Windows

Drilling windows (the area where wells may be drilled in a specific section of land) are established by the COGCC. The County will support efforts to limit the number and size of drilling windows allowed on a section of land. The County should encourage the use of directional drilling from existing drilling windows.

Strategy NCR 7.5(d) - Enforce Use by Special Review and Building Permit Requirements

The County will enforce all applicable Use by Special Review and building code requirements for oil and gas facilities, including field monitoring to ensure compliance.

Strategy NCR 7.5(e) - Encourage Use of Combined Drill Window

The County will support changes to state laws and regulations to allow landowners seeking to subdivide land the ability to designate a single combined surface drill window adequate for drilling and production operations as an option to the current multiple-window approach of COGCC.

Strategy NCR 7.5(f) – Conserve Ground and Surface Water and Minimize Water Quality Impacts

The County will encourage oil and gas operators to conserve ground and surface water and minimize the impact on the quality and quantity of ground and surface water. If ground water is used in the operation, the County encourages the use of deeper aquifers for supplying groundwater, i.e., the Laramie-Fox Hills aquifer.

Strategy NCR 7.5(g) – Establish Setbacks from Oil and Gas Operations for New Development

The County will amend the Land Development Code to establish a minimum required distance between new residential and other uses and existing oil and gas wellheads and tank farms.
Strategy NCR 7.5(h) – Require Gathering System Mapping by Oil and Gas Operations
The County will require oil and gas operators to provide the locations and maps of active and abandoned gathering systems as part of the oil and gas facility approval process.

As used in this Plan, a gathering system is defined as the flowline and pipeline network and process facilities that transport and control the flow of oil or natural gas from the wells to a storage or processing facility.

Policy NCR 7.6 - Provide for Timely Reclamation of All Mineral Extraction Sites and Promote their Beneficial Reuse
The County requires the approval of grading, erosion and sediment control plans which specify reclamation requirements for extraction operations. The State Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety (DRMS) and the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (COGCC) approve reclamation plans for mining operations and oil and gas operations, respectively, and are responsible for ensuring the reclamation is completed according to the approved plan. Oil and gas operations typically have interim and final reclamation plans.

Strategy NCR 7.6(a) – Consider Potential Adverse Environmental Impacts when Reviewing Extraction Plans
Adverse environmental impacts from concluded mining operations will be considered in the evaluation of mineral extraction applications. The County will continue to impose conditions to mitigate any adverse impacts as appropriate.

Strategy NCR 7.6(b) – Minimize Surface Disturbance
In the review of mineral extraction operation applications, the County should ensure that operators minimize the disturbance of vegetation and overburden in advance of and during mining activities.

Strategy NCR 7.6(c) – Protect Fish and Wildlife Habitat
In the review of mineral extraction operation applications, the County should ensure that operators take all reasonable and practical measures to protect the habitat of fish and wildlife.

Strategy NCR 7.6(d) – Work with the State to Ensure Sites are Reclaimed
Work with the State DRMS and COGCC to ensure that the operator and owner maintain the reclaimed mine site until it has been stabilized and vegetation is reestablished in accordance with the interim (if applicable) and final reclamation plan, and until any County imposed conditions have been met.

Strategy NCR 7.6(e) – Encourage Beneficial Re-use of Mining and Quarry Extraction Sites
The County will encourage the reuse of reclaimed mining and quarry extraction sites for water storage for Arapahoe County water providers and/or for recreation, conservation, or habitat preservation uses.

Strategy NCR 7.6(f) – Consider Revising Oil and Gas MOU to Address Reclamation and Future Use of Well Sites
The County will consider modifications to its oil and gas MOU that address closure and reclamation of well sites using techniques that do not impair future use of the property due to environmental or safety problems, or due to the existence of improperly abandoned or unknown locations of equipment.
SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

As used in this section, the term “solid waste” refers to any garbage or refuse, sludge from a wastewater treatment plant, water supply treatment plant, or air pollution control facility and other discarded material, resulting from industrial, commercial, mining, and agricultural operations, and from community activities. Solid waste may be liquid, semi-solid, or contained gaseous material. This section includes supplemental policies dealing with septage/sewage and hazardous wastes.

GOAL NCR 8 – Prevent Negative Impacts on Human Health and the Environment from Solid Waste Processing or Disposal Operations

The County will strive to prevent negative impacts on human health and the environment resulting from solid waste processing or disposal operations.

Policy NCR 8.1 – Require all Solid Waste Disposal or Transfer Facilities to Locate, Develop and Operate in a Manner that Minimizes Interference with Agricultural Uses and Existing Residential Areas

Although the Denver Arapahoe Disposal Site (DADS) is expected to be in operation for several more years, new waste disposal or transfer facilities may be proposed in the County. The location, development and operation of existing and future solid waste disposal sites should be planned and designed in a manner to have minimal impacts on surrounding land uses.

Strategy NCR 8.1(a) – Discourage New Solid Waste Disposal Facilities from Locating in the County

The County will discourage the location of new waste disposal facilities from locating in the County.

Strategy NCR 8.1(b) – Restrict Solid Waste Disposal and Transfer Facilities from Locating in Sensitive Development Areas

The County will consider modifying its zoning regulations to restrict disposal facilities from locating in or near riparian areas, wildlife habitats, cultural resource sites, and conservation easements.

Strategy NCR 8.1(c) – Require State of the Art Design for New Solid Waste Disposal Facilities

The County will consider modifying its zoning regulations to require that waste disposal sites employ state-of-the-art design that provide multiple levels of protection to assure long-term isolation of waste from the environment.

Strategy NCR 8.1(d) – Require Compatibility with Existing and Future Land Uses

During the review process, the County will require solid waste disposal site applicants to demonstrate compatibility with existing and future land uses, taking into consideration visual impacts, pollution prevention and control, traffic, dust, noise, land use scale and density, infrastructure, alterations to topography, operating plans, closure and reclamation plans and buffer zones. Land use incompatibilities may require additional mitigation if it is determined that the waste disposal facility site is causing negative environmental impacts.

Strategy NCR 8.1(e) – Require Adequate Infrastructure and Mitigation Measures

During the application review process, the County will require adequate infrastructure to be in place to serve solid waste disposal facilities. Applications submitted for final disposal facilities will be evaluated by the Department of Public Health and Environment and Tri-County Health Department for compliance with federal, State and County statutes, regulations and ordinances.
Strategy NCR 8.1(f) – Encourage Consideration of Resource Recovery and Recycling as an Alternative to Disposal

The County will encourage new solid waste disposal facility applicants to implement resource recovery and recycling programs, or demonstrate that they have been adequately studied, as an alternative to or component of the disposal operation.

Strategy NCR 8.1(g) – Consider Collecting Surcharges to Fund Waste Reduction Programs

The County should consider collecting surcharges from final disposal facilities, which can be used to fund waste-monitoring tasks performed by staff, road maintenance, litter pickup, public education, household hazardous waste collection and any other costs identified by the Board of County Commissioners.

Policy NCR 8.2 – Prohibit the Land Application of Septage and Sewage

The County has adopted regulations prohibiting the land application of septage or sewage anywhere in the County.

Strategy NCR 8.2(a) – Continue to Prohibit the Land Application of Septage and Sewage in the County

The County will continue to prohibit the land application of septage and sewage on any land in the County.

Policy NCR 8.3 – Encourage the Application of Biosolids Only in Areas Where Minimal Impacts Will Occur to Adjacent Land Uses

The County has adopted regulations that allow the land application of biosolids (treated material) only where there is a CDPHE permit in place. Application of biosolids in the County may occur anywhere in the County. The County encourages CDPHE to consider impacts to adjacent land uses in issuing these permits.

Strategy NCR 8.3(a) – Monitor Permitted Areas

The County will monitor the areas permitted for land application of biosolids to report any complaints to CDPHE.

Policy NCR 8.4 - Encourage the Minimization, Careful Collection and Proper Disposal of Hazardous Components, Products and Waste

The County will encourage hazardous waste to be minimized and to be disposed of properly.

Strategy NCR 8.4(a) – Require Compliance with Federal, State and County Regulations

The County will require all producers of regulated hazardous waste and users of regulated hazardous materials within the County to comply with federal, State and County regulations regarding use, reporting, storage and disposal of regulated hazardous waste or products.

Strategy NCR 8.4(b) – Restrict Hazardous Disposal Facilities from Locating in the County

The County will discourage permanent and final regulated hazardous waste disposal facilities from locating in the County because of the risk of permanent damage to life, health and the environment.

Strategy NCR 8.4(c) – Continue Participation in Household Hazardous Waste Program

The County will continue to participate in the household hazardous waste program of the Southeast Metro Stormwater Authority (SEMSWA) that provides curbside collection and disposal or recycling of household hazardous wastes for County residents.
RURAL AREA GOALS AND POLICIES

The Rural Area of Arapahoe County as defined in the Plan lies generally east of Aurora Reservoir south of Quincy Avenue and east of Hayesmount Road north of Quincy. The Rural Area consists of the following areas: Tier 1, Tier 2, Urban Reserve, Tier 3, and Regional Waste Disposal Site. The Urban Reserve is considered a sub-area of Tier 1, but with different goals and policies from the remainder of Tier 1. Goals, policies and strategies are established for these areas as set forth below. Unless modified by the Rural Area goals and policies, the Countywide goals and policies also apply to the five areas that comprise the Rural Area.

As used in this section of the Comprehensive Plan, the following terms describing desirable and appropriate land uses are not based on current zone district categories used in the Land Development Code. The terms used, their meanings in the context of this Plan, and their relation to current zone districts are as follows:

- Agricultural – Uses associated with farming, ranching, agri-tainment, agri-tourism, and residential lots of 35 acres or larger (A-E zoning)
- Very Large Lot Residential – Residential lots greater than 19 acres and less than 35 acres in size (generally consistent with A-1 Zoning)
- Large Lot Residential – Residential lots greater than one acre, but less than 19 acres (generally consistent with A-2, R-A, R-E Zoning)
- Urban – Commercial, retail, and industrial uses, and residential uses on lots one acre or less in size

OVERALL RURAL AREA GOALS AND POLICIES

GROWTH MANAGEMENT

GOAL RA GM 1 – Preserve the Rural Character of the Rural Area

The predominant land uses in Tiers 1 and 2 are agricultural and very large lot residential uses. Maintaining the existing zoning will perpetuate these land uses and preserve the rural character. Development activities in Tiers 1 and 2 (not including the Urban Reserve) will be carefully considered in order to maintain this rural character and minimize the County’s cost of providing services. Tier 3 land uses consist of very large lot residential and agricultural uses, with agricultural uses predominant east of Behrens Road. Development activities in Tier 3 will be minimized to maintain the open and rural character, conserve agricultural activities and minimize the County’s cost of providing services.

Policy RA GM 1.1 - Discourage Linear Development along I-70 and Major Arterials Outside of Designated Growth Areas

Arapahoe County will discourage new employment centers and commercial developments that are dispersed along the I-70 corridor and other major arterials, such as 6th Avenue, which compete with the Rural Town Centers.

Strategy RA GM 1.1(a) - Revise Zoning Regulations as Appropriate to Prevent Isolated Employment Centers and Commercial Development

The County will revise zoning regulations as necessary to prevent strip commercial development along I-70 and major arterials outside of Designated Growth Areas. Employment centers and commercial development will be allowed only in the Designated Growth Areas and only where services are available.
Strategy RA GM 1.1(b) – Create Community Separators
The County should preserve open space along the I-70 corridor to create community separators through acquisition, creation of conservation easements, or designation of open space in development plans. Alternatively, the County will discourage rezonings that lead to continuous development along I-70.

Policy RA GM 1.2 - Encourage Development that Offers an Alternative to Dispersed Development on 35-Acre Parcels
Arapahoe County has adopted cluster residential zoning and subdivision procedures to provide an alternative to the current dispersed development pattern of homes on parcels of 35 acres or larger and not part of an approved subdivision. The cluster development option has been used very sparingly.

Strategy RA GM 1.2(a) – Evaluate the Cluster Zoning and Subdivision Processes
The cluster development zoning and subdivision processes have rarely been used. The County will evaluate the current regulations to address streamlining the processes, creating conservation areas to be used for agricultural purposes, and the standards for roads and other infrastructure. The County should consider creating improved incentives to encourage cluster development.

Strategy RA GM 1.2(b) - Provide Technical Assistance to Landowners
The County will provide technical planning assistance to landowners who are considering cluster development.

Strategy RA GM 1.2(c) – Support Changes to State Legislation Concerning Cluster Subdivisions
The cluster development zoning and subdivision processes are based on State enabling statutes which provide the County with limited flexibility in using the cluster subdivision process. The County will support efforts to amend the statutes to create more flexibility for the County in using cluster subdivisions.

Policy RA GM 1.3 - Prohibit Urban and Large Lot Residential Development in the Rural Area
The County will maintain the rural character by limiting development to very low densities in the Rural Area, in accordance with existing County zoning, and prohibiting higher densities other than for cluster residential development.

Strategy RA GM 1.3(a) - Maintain Agricultural Zoning
The County will restrict rezoning of land in the Rural Area for urban development or large lot residential development.
Strategy RA GM 1.3(b) – Restrict Approvals of Uses by Special Review
The County will restrict the approval of Uses by Special Review, except for those dealing with agricultural operations or agri-tainment or agri-tourism uses.

Strategy RA GM 1.3(c) – Direct Rural Residential Development to the Rural Town Center Planning Areas
Rezoning of land for lots ranging from one acre to 2.5 acres is appropriate only in the Rural Town Center Planning Areas.

Strategy RA GM 1.3(d) - Restrict Incompatible Land Uses in the Rural Area
The County will amend zoning regulations as necessary to restrict new incompatible land uses from occurring in the Rural Area to the maximum extent feasible. Where it is not possible to restrict uses, developers must provide buffers and locate incompatible uses away from existing agricultural operations.

Strategy RA GM 1.3(e) - Limit Formation of New Special Districts Outside of Designated Growth Areas
The County will consider the formation of new special districts in the unincorporated Rural Area only in instances where the County determines a need for a new district.

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

GOAL RA PFS 1 – Ensure the Provision of Basic Facilities and Services at an Adequate Level in the Rural Area
The availability of water, wastewater, fire protection, police protection, roads, open space and trails, and other utilities affects the safety and quality of life for residents. Development in the Rural Area typically requires infrastructure of a lesser extent and scale than urban development, and residents of Rural Areas should expect facilities and service levels commensurate with living in areas distant from urban areas and service centers. In the Rural Area, the County will ensure basic infrastructure and services are available at an acceptable level to protect life and property.

Policy RA PFS 1.1 - Provide Basic Public Facilities and Services in the Rural Area
While rural residential development will still occur in the Rural Area, Arapahoe County will assume limited responsibility for ensuring additional services. Basic facilities and services are roads and road maintenance, sidewalks where required, drainage improvements and maintenance, snow removal according to policies, Sheriff’s protection, and limited passive recreation opportunities. Basic services provided by other agencies include fire protection, emergency medical service, schools, and in some instances parks and recreation.

Strategy RA PFS 1.1(a) - Establish Rural Standards for Fire Protection and EMS
The County should develop intergovernmental agreements with the fire districts to determine rural service standards for fire protection and necessary locations for future fire stations in the Rural Area. The County will not approve development proposals that do not prove availability of adequate fire protection. The County should consider adopting regulations requiring new residential development to contain sprinklers if a minimum standard for fire protection is not attainable.

Strategy RA PFS 1.1(b) – Adopt International Fire Code Countywide
In order to standardize requirements for the issuance of building permits, the County will consider adopting the International Fire Code to apply to all fire districts in the County. Alternatively, the County will encourage all districts to adopt the IFC with any amendments and thereafter adopt the IFC to apply to the district. The County should adopt the IFC so that any fire district not adopting the IFC will be subject to those requirements and restrictions.
Strategy RA PFS 1.1(c) - Establish Rural Standards for Law Enforcement and Police Protection
The County will establish rural standards for law enforcement and police protection, and inform rural area residents that they should not expect rapid response from law enforcement personnel.

Strategy RA PFS 1.1(d) - Require "Buyer Beware" Disclosures at Time of Land Sale and Building Permit
The County will develop educational materials to notify landowners in the Rural Area that services and facilities will operate at minimum standards.

Strategy RA PFS 1.1(e) – Collaborate with Service Providers to Improve Internet Service to the Rural Area
Higher-speed cable service is available in Bennett, Strasburg, and Byers, as well as along Colfax Avenue to Bennett and Highway 36 to Byers. Outside of these areas, service is wireless. The County will collaborate with providers to provide better Internet service in the eastern portion of the County.

GOAL RA PFS 2 – Ensure Adequate Water Supply for Development in the Rural Area
The majority of development in the Rural Area will be dependent upon individual wells with aquifers as the source of water. Wells permits are issued for individual lots by the State Engineer for limited uses of water.

Policy RA PFS 2.1 - Maintain the Viability of the Water Supply for Rural Area Residents
Arapahoe County will establish water service requirements that seek to ensure the long-term viability of the water supply in the Rural Area.

Policy RA PFS 2.2 – Require Adequate Water Availability for Proposed Development
The County will require documentation of the adequacy of water for proposed development in the Rural Area.

Policy RA PFS 2.3 – Encourage Measures that Will Reduce Water Demand in the Rural Area
Aquifers are a finite source of water for rural developments, and reducing demand and encouraging conservation will help ensure a long-term supply of water for uses in the Rural Area.

Strategy RA PFS 2.3(a) – Encourage Existing and Future Rural Area Developments to Incorporate Best Management Practices to Reduce Water Demand, Increase Water Efficiency and Promote Water Conservation
The County will encourage developers and homeowners to incorporate water-saving measures into building sites, including:
• Installation of xeriscaping or native and drought-tolerant landscaping
• Use of water-saving irrigation techniques and components
• Minimize areas covered with non-native turf
• Use of non-living landscape materials

**Strategy RA PFS 2.3(b) – Promote Use of Graywater Systems in Structures**
The County has amended the International Plumbing Code to permit the use of graywater piping within structures. Architects, builders and contractors should be made aware of this potential water conservation and recycling opportunity. [See Countywide Strategy PFS 2.3(h) for action the County must take before allowing the use of graywater systems.]

**Strategy RA PFS 2.3(c) – Encourage Rainwater Harvesting**
The County will encourage landowners to harvest rainwater to meet some of their demand for outdoor water usage.

**Strategy RA PFS 2.3(d) – Require Fire Suppression Features in Rural Development**
With concurrence of the fire districts in the eastern portion of the County, the County will amend the Land Development Code to require fire suppression features, such as cisterns or ponds, in rural developments.

**NEIGHBORHOOD LIVABILITY**

**GOAL RA NL 1 – Ensure a High Quality of Life in the Rural Area**
The County will ensure the development of sustainable, safe and attractive neighborhoods in the Rural Area that are appropriate in size, scale, design and use. Residents of housing areas in Rural Areas can expect a high quality of life and will be provided with basic facilities and services.

**Policy RA NL 1.1 - Ensure Residential Development in the Rural Area is of High Quality**
The County will ensure that residential development in the Rural Area is of high quality, including requiring development patterns, design features, amenities and architecture that support a high-quality rural character.

**Strategy RA NL 1.1(a) – Implement Road Standards for Rural Area Subdivisions**
The County has developed standards for roads in the Rural Area. The County will continue to apply these standards when reviewing rural residential subdivisions.

**Strategy RA NL 1.1(b) – Encourage Shared Access in New Development**
The County will encourage shared access from developments onto perimeter roadways, spaced according to County standards.

**Strategy RA NL 1.1(c) – Require Connectivity and Secondary Access in New Development**
The County will require roadway and pedestrian connections to surrounding properties to be included in new development, where feasible, to ensure connectivity between adjoining properties as they develop.

**Strategy RA NL 1.1(d) – Encourage Design Elements to Reflect a High Quality Rural Character**
The County will encourage the use of perimeter treatments, entryways and architectural design criteria to be individually tailored to each new development proposal to reflect a high-quality rural character.
Strategy RA NL 1.1(e) - Develop a "Rural Character Design Techniques" Handbook
The County will prepare a handbook that would offer suggestions for subdivision layout and street designs that maintain the look and feel of rural Arapahoe County.

Strategy RA NL 1.1(f) - Review Zoning Regulations to Ensure that Performance Standards Reflect a Rural Character
The County will review setbacks and other performance standards to ensure they reflect the character and goals of Rural Area residential development.

Strategy RA NL 1.1(g) – Ensure Connectivity of Community to Schools and Open Space
The County will ensure that schools and open spaces are accessible to residential developments in the Rural Area via a connected network of roads and trails. Maintenance of school bus routes should be a high priority for the County.

Strategy RA NL 1.1(h) – Require Lot Management Plans
As a requirement of issuing a building permit on lots greater than five acres in size, land owners will be required to submit a lot management plan outlining the measures to be used to control wind and soil erosion and noxious weeds. Implementing this requirement will involve an amendment to the zoning regulations.

Policy RA NL 1.2 – Ensure Compatibility with Railroad
Through the development review process, the County will ensure all new land uses located in the vicinity of the Union Pacific rail line are compatible with railway noise, air-quality, visual, fire, and access impacts, or such impacts are mitigated.

Strategy RA NL 1.2(a) – Support Efforts to Minimize Railroad and Vehicular/Pedestrian Conflicts
The County will support efforts to construct grade-separated crossings or to upgrade crossing warning devices in order to increase the safety of rail and vehicular operations in the County.

ECONOMIC HEALTH

GOAL RA EH 1 - Maintain Agricultural Operations in Arapahoe County
Farming and ranching are important components of Arapahoe County’s heritage and economy. It is important that these activities continue to flourish in the County.

Policy RA EH 1.1 – Restrict Development that is Not Directly Related to or Dependent upon Agriculture.
The County will preserve the agricultural suitability and character of the rural portions of the County by limiting commercial and industrial development that will negatively impact existing uses and character.

Strategy RA EH 1.1(a) - Discourage Rezoning of Land in the Rural Area for Commercial Development
The County will restrict rezoning of land within the Rural Area for employment or commercial uses, other than for agriculture-related businesses, public facilities, or natural resource extraction industries that are dependent upon a rural location. Criteria for approval for these other uses should consider the impact to surrounding properties and the adequacy of services and infrastructure. These commercial and industrial
uses should be encouraged to locate in areas that minimize the removal of agricultural land from production.

**Strategy RA EH 1.1(b) - Reduce Zoning Barriers to Agriculture**
The County will assess whether zoning regulations unduly discourage desirable agricultural activities and services and will revise zoning regulations where necessary. The County will allow essential agriculture-related businesses in the Rural Area outside rural centers, as allowed under the Use by Special Review process.

**Strategy RA EH 1.1(c) - Work with the Agricultural Community to Establish Programs in Support of Agricultural Activities**
The County will work with the agricultural community to identify ways to support agricultural activities. In some cases, working with non-profit organizations may increase educational opportunities about financing, tax incentives for conservation easements, and other options for landowners to continue farming.

**Strategy RA EH 1.1(d) - Develop a “Right to Farm” Ordinance**
The County will develop a “Right to Farm” Ordinance, in accordance with State policies. Such an ordinance would help shield farmers and ranchers who are using accepted agricultural and management practices from nuisance lawsuits. Such lawsuits are often filed by neighbors who move in after the agriculture operation is established.

**Strategy RA EH 1.1(e) - Increase Education about Rural Area Activities**
The County will develop educational programs that address issues and potential risks associated with building and living in the Rural Area, including weed control, domestic pet control, and information about living near working ranches and farms.

**Strategy RA EH 1.1(f) – Assist Landowners in Preserving Agricultural Operations**
The County should assist landowners interested in preserving working lands or starting a new farming operation by directing them to programs and incentives available through the American Farmland Trust, Colorado Open Lands and other organizations.

**Policy RA EH 1.2 - Encourage the Continued Use of Union Pacific Rail Corridor to Serve Existing and Future Industrial and Agricultural Uses.**
The Union Pacific Railroad corridor generally parallels I-70 through Arapahoe County and provides an important transportation link for some industrial uses in the Rural Town Centers.

**Strategy RA EH 1.2(a) – Support Use of Railroad Infrastructure**
The County will support the continued and expanded use of existing railroad infrastructure for industrial uses. The County recognizes the need for rail-related uses in the County and will allow them to make effective use of the rail line.

**GOAL RA EH 2 – Create Cultural and Heritage Tourism and Recreation Attractions**
The rural character and heritage of eastern Arapahoe County present opportunities to create attractions in support of tourism and recreation.
**Policy RA EH 2.1 – Encourage Business Owners, Land Owners, and Ranchers to Develop Agri-tainment or Agri-tourism uses**

The County will encourage business and land owners and ranchers to create agri-tainment or agri-tourism uses, including events and sites such as concerts, mazes, fairs, rodeos, farm-implement museums, horseback riding and similar activities.

*Strategy RA EH 2.1(a) – Provide Adequate Support Services and Facilities*

The County should provide adequate support services and facilities necessary for the establishment of agri-tourism and agri-tainment, consistent with other goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

*Strategy RA EH 2.1(b) - Work with Local Businesses and Landowners*

The County should work with local businesses and landowners to encourage development of agriculture and agriculturally related businesses and industries in underdeveloped areas where existing resources can support agri-tainment or agri-tourism uses.

*Strategy RA EH 2.1(c) – Review Rezoning and Use by Special Review Procedures*

The County will review procedures to promote a streamlined review process and administrative approval for agri-tourism or agri-tainment and related uses with minimal impacts. The County will investigate other regulatory and non-regulatory options that promote and enable rural tourism events and sites.

**Policy RA EH 2.2 - Continue to Support Resource-Based Recreation in the Rural Area**

Arapahoe County will continue to support resource-based recreation in the Rural Area (e.g., hunting and fishing) on private lands if such activities can occur without adverse impacts on surrounding lands. The County will consider whether to allow such activities on public lands if the County acquires land in the Rural Area.

*Strategy RA EH 2.2(a) - Allow Resource-Based Recreation in the Rural Area*

The County will examine current regulations to ensure resource-based recreation uses (including hunting and fishing) are allowed in appropriate zone districts in the Rural Area.

**TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY**

**GOAL RA TM 1 – Provide a Multi-Modal Transportation System Serving the Needs of the Rural Area**

Land uses in the Rural Area do not require the level of transportation infrastructure that the Urban Area does. Challenges of providing a multi-modal transportation system in the Rural Area include increasing mobility and safety by constructing missing segments of the road system, bringing existing roads up to adopted standards, maintenance of roads and rights-of-way, and lack of funding. The County has adopted rural road standards and level of service standards that will help ensure the future road network meets vehicular as well as pedestrian and bicycling demands.

*Policy RA TM 1.1 - Maintain Rural Roads at a Rural Level of Service Standard*

The County will maintain roads in the Rural Area at level of service standards adopted in the Transportation Plan. The County will address the need to provide sufficient regional and local connections.
Strategy RA TM 1.1(a) – Implement Rural Area Transportation Level of Service Standards
The County has adopted level-of-service standards for rural roads, establishing traffic volume thresholds for widening and other improvements, including paving. Application of these standards to school bus routes should be a priority of the County.

Strategy RA TM 1.1(b) - Require Alternative Routes and Secondary Access
For new developments, the County will require supplemental access and secondary road connections to minimize singular access to regional roads.

Policy RA TM 1.2 - Improve North-South and East-West Road Connectivity in the Rural Area
Arapahoe County will consider the need to improve north-south and east-west road connectivity in the Rural Area by exploring opportunities to extend and improve major arterial roads. The County Transportation Plan establishes priorities for future north-south and east-west road connections in the eastern part of the County.

Strategy RA TM 1.2(a) - Reserve Right-of-Way in the Rural Area and Require Improvements when Warranted
Through the development review process as appropriate, the County will reserve right-of-way in the eastern part of the County as development occurs to ensure that future road needs can be met. Roadway improvements will be required when warranted. As capital improvements are planned in the Rural Area, right-of-way for future needs should be acquired.

Policy RA TM 1.3 - Promote Safe Corridors for Walking, Cycling and Other Modes of Transportation in the Rural Area
The County will promote and support corridors that accommodate alternative modes of transportation.

Strategy RA TM 1.3(a) – Utilize Existing Road and Highway Network
The County will utilize the existing road and highway network to develop a network for walking and cycling. The County will encourage off-road paths or trails for pedestrian and bicyclists in new development.

Strategy RA TM 1.3(b) – Require Bikeways and Sidewalks in New Developments
The County will require bikeway and sidewalks in new development where warranted and will require bikeways to link residential uses to employment areas, commercial centers, recreational areas, open spaces and educational facilities.

Strategy RA TM 1.3(c) – Explore Options to Provide Transit Service and/or Car/Vanpooling Facilities in the Rural Area
A significant portion of the workers in the Rural Area commute to the Metro Area to work, and many already carpool. The County should explore options to expand transit service along the I-70 corridor and provide facilities, such as parking lots, for use by car or van pools.
Strategy RA TM 1.3(d) – Develop Design Standards for Rural Corridors
The County should develop standards for utilizing paved shoulders, grade separations and other appropriate design considerations to enhance the safety and capacity of routes for pedestrian and bicycle traffic in the Rural Area.

Strategy RA TM 1.3(e) – Construct Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements in the Rural Area
As funding allows, the County should fund construction of bikeways and pedestrian walkways in the Rural Area in accordance with the Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan.

GOAL RA NCR 1 – Preserve Lands of Agricultural Importance
In order for Arapahoe County to continue to have a viable agricultural industry, agricultural lands need to be preserved.

Policy RA NCR 1.1 - Conserve Prime Agricultural Lands
Arapahoe County will identify prime agricultural lands that should be conserved and actively encourage agricultural land use and agricultural production to continue on these lands.

Strategy RA NCR 1.1(a) - Consider Acquiring Land and/or Using Conservation Easements to Conserve Prime Agricultural Lands.
The County will work with ranchers and farmers to preserve prime agricultural land in the County, either through acquisition or the use of conservation easements.

TIERS 1 AND 2 GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL T1&2 GM 1 – Ensure New Development is Compatible with Existing Land Uses
Very large lot residential development and agricultural uses are the predominant land uses in Tiers 1 and 2. These uses are appropriate in Tiers 1 and 2 where compatible with existing development. Large lot and urban development may be compatible with existing development in certain circumstances in Tier 1.

Policy T1&2 GM 1.1 – Retain Very Large Lot Residential and Agricultural Uses in Tiers 1 and 2
Agricultural uses and very large lot residential development are appropriate uses within Tiers 1 and 2.

Strategy T1&2 GM 1.1(a) – Evaluate A-E Zone District Performance Standards
The County will evaluate the lot size performance standard for the A-E Zone District to align the lot size standard with the intent of the Agricultural designation used in this Plan for the eastern portion of the County. Amended standards or the creation of a new zone district should be evaluated.

Strategy T1&2 GM 1.1(b) – Recognize Existing Semi-urban Development within Tier 1
The County will recognize parcels of 55 acres or less, but without urban services in 2014, within Tier 1. The County will approve continued development within these parcels at non-urban densities (parcels of 1 acre or larger), while supporting landowners who wish to move to a more urban category. This strategy will not unduly affect the role of the Urban Reserve to preserve areas for future urban development.
Strategy T1&2 GM 1.1(c) – Restrict the Rezoning of Properties for Large Lot Residential Development in Tiers 1 and 2
The County will restrict the rezoning of property for large lot residential development (R-A and R-E Zone Districts) in Tiers 1 and 2. Smaller lot sizes are not considered consistent with the rural character sought to be preserved. Use of the rural cluster option is appropriate in Tiers 1 and 2 with a minimum lot size of 5 acres.

Strategy T1&2 GM 1.1(d) – Allow Uses by Special Review Only with Reversion to Agricultural Uses
The County will consider allowing Uses by Special Review (as permitted in the A-1 and A-E Zone Districts) in Tiers 1 and 2, but only with the condition that should uses or operations cease, the use of the property will revert back to agricultural.

Strategy T1&2 GM 1.1(e) – Support Changes to State Legislation Concerning Subdivision Exemptions
The County will support changes to State legislation to modify the definition of “subdivision” or other changes that would subject the division of land into parcels 35-acres and greater to the County’s subdivision review and approval process. Such divisions are currently exempt under State law.

Policy T1&2 GM 1.2 – Prepare Sub-area Plan for Tier 1
Although the Urban Reserve is set aside for future urban development, the pattern, extent and character of that development needs to be established in a sub-area plan.

Strategy T1&2 GM 1.2(a) – Initiate Collaborative Planning Effort for Tier 1, Including the Urban Reserve
The County will initiate a sub-area planning process with the City of Aurora and Town of Bennett to determine the character and density of future land uses, roadway connections, provision of public facilities and services, and potential areas for annexation within Tier 1.

Policy T1&2 GM 1.3 – Discourage the Location of Regional Utility Facilities in Tiers 1 and 2
Regional utility installations are generally incompatible with existing rural development and are potentially incompatible with future rural or urban development proposed in Tiers 1 and 2. However, some of these facilities are needed to serve urban development and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Such utilities include, but are not limited to, the following facilities operated or owned by either a public utility or private company: water storage and treatment facilities, water distribution and supply lines, wastewater treatment plants and lines, stormwater drainage facilities, solar and wind farms, electric transmission lines, oil and natural gas transmission pipelines, and wireless communication towers and antennas, including small cell towers and small cell networks.

Strategy T1&2 GM 1.3(a) – Develop Standards for Regional Utility Facilities
[See Countywide Strategy PFS 12.3(a)]

URBAN RESERVE GOALS AND POLICIES

GROWTH MANAGEMENT

GOAL UR GM 1 – Preserve the Potential to Accommodate Future Urban Development
The Urban Reserve areas are located outside of the County’s existing Urban Area and Rural Town Center Planning Areas and are projected for use during the 20-year planning time horizon of this Comprehensive Plan.
Policy UR GM 1.1 – Implement Measures to Preserve the Potential for Future Growth in the Urban Reserve Areas

The Urban Reserve areas represent future economic and growth opportunities for the County, but only if that potential is not compromised by development or uses which are incompatible or inconsistent with this vision.

Strategy UR GM 1.1(a) – Restrict Rural Development in Urban Reserve

The County will not approve requests for rural residential or agricultural uses in the Urban Reserve unless such uses are reviewed under a Use by Special Review with a condition of approval to sunset the use.

Policy UR GM 1.2 – Consider Urban Development Proposals in the Urban Reserve

Although not anticipated until the middle to end of the time horizon of this Plan, growth in the County may exceed the forecasts assumed in this Plan update, and urban development may be proposed in the Urban Reserve. The County may consider approval of urban development in the Urban Reserve, but only if it is provided with a full range of urban services and facilities. Urban development proposed in the Urban Reserve will not require a Comprehensive Plan Amendment, but will require an applicant to demonstrate that:

- The adjacent municipality, if any, does not consent to annexation in a timely manner, or annexation is not legally possible.
- The proposed urban development is compatible with the adjacent municipality’s comprehensive plan, if applicable.
- The availability of land for development in the nearest Designated Growth Area (the Town of Bennett, the Town of Deer Trail, the Strasburg Rural Town Center Planning Area, or approved developments in the Urban Area) is limited; specifically, the nearest Designated Growth Area, or approved development project in the Urban Area, is at least 75% built-out as measured by land area and approved residential units.
- A full range of services can be provided to serve the residents and businesses in the new development.
- Impacts to public facilities and services and roads are minimized or mitigated to acceptable levels.
- A diversity of land uses is proposed in a compact, mixed-used development pattern.
- Strip or linear development along I-70 and arterials is avoided.
- A balance of housing and employment is proposed.
- A range of housing opportunities for residents of all ages will be provided.
- Sustainable development practices will be incorporated, including a renewable water supply.
- A multi-modal transportation network that interconnects with that of the region will be provided.
- Access to arterials with sufficient capacity to accommodate additional traffic will be required.
- Offsite improvements to the road network may be required.
- Design and development is consistent with the County’s development and design standards.

Strategy UR GM 1.2(a) – Adopt Approval Criteria for New Urban Development in the Urban Reserve

The County will amend its 1041 Regulations for new communities to include approval criteria for urban development in the Urban Reserve based on the above policy.
PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

GOAL UR PFS 1 – Ensure Adequate Public Facilities and Services for New Urban Development
The County will ensure that any new urban development in the Urban Reserve is served with a full range of facilities and services at an adequate level to protect public health, safety and welfare.

Policy UR PFS 1.1 – Ensure Capacity of Urban Reserve Areas to Accommodate Growth
Arapahoe County will need to determine what kinds of limitations, or capacity to serve, may exist in the Urban Reserve areas.

Strategy UR PFS 1.1(a) - Determine Development Capacity for the Urban Reserve Areas
The County will analyze the development capacity of the Urban Reserve areas to determine if the lack of roads, water, wastewater, utilities, and fire and police protection may be constraints to development. Assessing the impact that new infrastructure (such as roads and utilities) and new development will have on natural areas, water quality, and adjacent communities, will be important considerations in determining development capacity of the area.

Policy UR PFS 1.2 – Ensure New Urban Development Is Provided with a Full Range of Services
The County will ensure a full range of services is provided in new urban development.

Strategy UR PFS 1.2(a) – Encourage Expansion of Existing Districts
The County will encourage the provision of services by existing districts in proximity to the proposed new development and will support expansion to serve new development upon a demonstration that the district has the financial and physical capability to serve the new development.

Strategy UR PFS 1.2(b) – Restrict Formation of New Special Districts
The County will approve new special districts only upon demonstration that an existing district is unable or unwilling to serve the new development and the new district has the financial and physical capability to serve the new development. A renewable water supply will be a requirement for approval.

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

GOAL UR TM 1 – Ensure New Urban Development Is Served with an Adequate Transportation System
The County will ensure that any new urban development is served with an adequate transportation system that accommodates all modes of travel.

Policy UR TM 1.1 - Preserve Transportation Options in Urban Reserve Areas
Arapahoe County will reserve right-of-way in the Urban Reserve areas and require roadway construction as development occurs to ensure availability of right-of-way for a connected transportation system.

Strategy UR TM 1.1(a) - Reserve Right-of-Way in the Urban Reserve Areas
Through the development review process as appropriate, the County will reserve right-of-way in the Urban Reserve areas to ensure that future road and access needs can be met. As capital improvements are planned in the Urban Reserve areas, right-of-way for future needs will be acquired.

Strategy UR TM 1.1(b) – Require Construction of Roads in the Urban Reserve Areas
The County will require the construction of roads to provide safe and multiple points of access to new development, consistent with the County’s urban roadway standards and subdivision requirements.
Strategy UR TM 1.1(c) – Require Construction of Sidewalks and Trails in New Development
The County will require the construction of sidewalks and trails to serve new development, consistent with the County’s subdivision requirements and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

Strategy UR TM 1.1(d) – Work With Transit Providers to Provide Service
The County will work with the Regional Transportation District (RTD) and property owners to expand the District to serve new areas in Arapahoe County. The County will work with RTD and other transit providers to establish transit routes and stops to serve new development in the Urban Reserve areas.

TIER 3 GOALS AND POLICIES

GROWTH MANAGEMENT

GOAL T3 GM 1 – Preserve the Rural, Agricultural Character of Tier 3
Tier 3 land uses are predominantly agricultural, with residential uses associated with agricultural operations. With limited infrastructure and water availability, Tier 3 is intended to remain agricultural.

Policy T3 GM 1.1 – Retain Agricultural Uses in Tier 3
Agricultural uses are an important part of the history and economy of the eastern portion of the County. The County will preserve agricultural uses in Tier 3.

Strategy T3 GM 1.1(a) – Evaluate A-E Zone District Performance Standards
The County will evaluate the lot size performance standard for the A-E Zone District to align the lot size standard with the intent of the Agricultural designation used in this Plan for the eastern portion of the County. Amended standards or the creation of a new zone district should be evaluated.

Strategy T3 GM 1.1(b) – Consider Rezoning Western Portion of Tier 3
The County will consider rezoning the western portion of Tier 3, currently zoned A-1, to A-E. The A-1 Zone District allows a minimum lot size of 19 acres, which is inconsistent with the desire to maintain lot sizes of 35 acres or greater.

Strategy T3 GM 1.1(c) – Restrict the Rezoning of Properties for Very Large Lot Residential and Large Lot Residential Development in Tier 3
Agricultural uses and residential lots 35 acres and greater are consistent with the character sought to be preserved in Tier 3. The County will restrict A-1, A-2, R-A and R-E rezonings in Tier 3.

Strategy T3 GM 1.1(d) – Allow Uses by Special Review Only with Reversion to Agricultural Uses
The County will allow Uses by Special Review in Tier 3, but only with the condition that, should uses or operations cease, the use on the property will revert back to agricultural.

REGIONAL WASTE DISPOSAL SITE GOALS AND POLICIES

The Regional Waste Disposal Site consists of the following areas: Lowry Superfund Site, Denver Arapahoe Disposal Site (DADS), and the Lowry Trust Properties. These distinct areas are shown on the Urban Area Land Use Map and the Development Framework Map (West Half).
GOAL RDS GM 1 – Protect Existing and Future Residents and Businesses from Impacts Associated with Operations within the Denver Arapahoe Disposal Site and the Lowry Superfund Site
Waste disposal at the current landfill is expected to continue well beyond the timeframe of this Plan. The Superfund Site is being monitored for compliance with approved site decision documents. Because of these factors, the sites are not suitable for future development, other than for activities associated with waste disposal or superfund site monitoring and containment of contaminants.

Policy RDS GM 1.1 - Restrict Development in the Denver Arapahoe Disposal Site
The County will not approve development in the Denver Arapahoe Disposal Site, except as related to compatible and associated operations at the site on a case by case basis and subject to the applicable County review process. Compatible and associated operations may include, by way of example only, recycling drop-off, concrete and asphalt recycling, manufacturing of new products using recycled materials, use of waste materials for energy generation, or similar activities.

Strategy RDS GM 1.1(a) – Restrict Land Use Approvals in the Denver Arapahoe Disposal Site to Those Associated with Waste Disposal
The County will approve development in the Denver Arapahoe Disposal Site on a case by case basis only if it is related to waste disposal, resource recovery and recycling, energy generation or monitoring efforts.

Strategy RDS GM 1.1(b) – Evaluate and Revise the Land Development Code
The Denver Arapahoe Disposal Site is zoned A-1 and A-E. Solid waste disposal and resource recovery operations are permitted uses in the A-E zone district, but not in the A-1 zone district. The County should evaluate the Land Development Code in light of these uses and consider amendments to the Code.

Strategy RDS GM 1.1(c) – Restrict Rezoning of Lands Adjacent to the Denver Arapahoe Disposal Site
The County will restrict rezoning of lands for residential uses within one mile of the Denver Arapahoe Disposal Site.

Policy RDS GM 1.2 - Prohibit Development in the Lowry Superfund Site
The County will not approve development in the Lowry Superfund Site except as related to operations involving remediation, containment of contaminants, or groundwater monitoring.

Strategy RDS GM 1.2(a) – Support Continued Monitoring Efforts and Removal/Containment of Contaminants on the Lowry Superfund Site
The County will support continued monitoring efforts at the Lowry Superfund Site and support efforts to remove or contain contaminants remaining on the site.

Strategy RDS GM 1.2(b) – Continue Monitoring Remediation Efforts on the Lowry Superfund Site
The County will continue to review progress reports and monitor the efforts at the Lowry Superfund Site.
Policy RDS GM 1.3 – Collaborate with the City and County of Denver to Plan for Future Development on the Lowry Trust Properties

The Lowry Trust Properties are subject to covenants recorded against the properties that restrict future uses and ground water use. Except for the parcel in Section 1, east of E-470, zoned MU, the parcels are zoned A-1. A master plan has been prepared for the properties, but is in need of updating.

Strategy RDS GM 1.3(a) – Prepare Sub-Area Plan for the Regional Waste Disposal Site Environs

The County will initiate a sub-area planning process for the area including and surrounding the Regional Waste Disposal Site, to include at a minimum the Lowry Trust Properties, Lowry Superfund Site, DADS, State Department of Human Services parcel, and the County Fairgrounds.

Strategy RDS GM 1.3(b) – Consider Development Approvals on the Lowry Trust Properties on a Case-by Case Basis

The County will consider rezoning requests for the Lowry Trust Properties on a case by case basis, with an emphasis on the proposed development’s impact on, and compatibility with, adjacent land uses, infrastructure capacity, the site and surrounding institutional controls and land use restrictions and their implementation, and findings of the most recent EPA five-year review of the Lowry Superfund Site approved remedy.
V. Implementation Approach

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

A key aspect of any plan is how it is carried out after it is adopted. This Implementation Approach section summarizes how the County may best apply the strategies outlined in this Plan and recommends a variety of actions to initiate the Plan’s strategies as outlined in Section IV. Also included is a description of the Fiscal Impact Model to be used to evaluate proposed development.

ACTIONS

To apply the Plan’s strategies, it is necessary to identify the types of actions that will be required, determine the responsible party or parties, and determine the priority and timing of the actions so the County is able to allocate necessary resources. The Action Plan Matrix supplements this Chapter (see Appendix D). The Matrix categorizes each of the strategies according to the type of action that each will take to implement and lists the relative priority of actions. The necessary actions are: Regulatory Procedures, Policy Decisions, Programs and Plans, Intergovernmental Agreements, Subarea Plans and Infrastructure Assessment. Each of these categories is briefly described below. A summary of the highest priority actions is located at the end of this section.

REGULATORY PROCEDURES

The County’s development regulations and various standards and codes will need to be consistent with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan for it to be realized. Several recommendations are made to review and revise as necessary the County’s development regulations and standards, (including zoning, subdivision regulations, roadway standards, and development review procedures). For example, the County may wish to incorporate sustainability or healthy living principles into the approval criteria for new development. There are also recommendations to analyze different zone districts and make modifications to permitted uses and lot sizes or to create new zone districts. Strategies also include continued enforcement and implementation of current regulations and practices, such as requiring the submission of grading and erosion control plans in order to protect water quality.

POLICY DECISIONS

The Plan identifies a number of strategies that will be carried out during day-to-day policy decisions made by the planning staff, Planning Commission, and Board of County Commissioners. The Board of County Commissioners will continually make decisions regarding development proposals and plan amendments. For example, resolving to restrict rezoning of lands in the Rural Area is a policy decision that is consistent with the intent of the Plan policies in Section IV. The Plan serves to guide such policy decisions that will occur throughout the life of the Plan.

PROGRAMS

The Comprehensive Plan establishes a foundation for new programs to carry out the goals of the Plan. For example, some strategies involve participating in planning efforts with other jurisdictions, such as developing a subarea plan for the Urban Reserve and Tier 1 south of I-70 and west of Bennett in collaboration with the Town of Bennett and possibly the City of Aurora. Special area studies may be necessary to accomplish other goals and
policies, such as natural area conservation. Other policies may require the initiation of other planning efforts, such as cultural resources surveys. Programs have varying levels of priority, depending on the issues involved. Consequently, the County will initiate Programs at different timing intervals.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENTS

A number of the Comprehensive Plan recommendations will best be achieved through Intergovernmental Agreements between the County and other governmental entities, such as cities, towns, or special districts. For example, the Plan recommends that the County develop agreements with municipalities in the Urban Area to establish policies that encourage the annexation of land slated for development. Intergovernmental Agreements are generally a high priority for the County – to be initiated as soon as possible and completed within one to two years. Once established, they will continue to be operative for as long as the agreements intend.

SUBAREA PLANS

As mentioned above, a subarea plan is recommended to be prepared for the Urban Reserve south of I-70 and west of Bennett in collaboration with the Town of Bennett and the City of Aurora. The subarea plan should address land use, transportation, water and sewer service and potential annexation areas. Adopted subarea plans establish growth areas for the unincorporated communities of Byers and Strasburg, based on the ability of service districts and the County to provide needed community services and facilities. Subarea Plans have also been adopted for the Four Square Mile Area and the State Land Board Lowry property. The County should continue to work with those landowners and districts to assess their capabilities to accommodate growth. As was done since the subarea plans were adopted, the County undertook an assessment of the plans and communities to determine if the plans still reflected the goals and direction of the unincorporated communities. The County should continue to periodically perform these assessments. In addition, the Comprehensive Plan recommends preparing additional sub-area plans for several major road corridors in the County and the DADS/Lowry Landfill environs.

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT

In some cases, the Plan recommends that the County take a proactive role in working with service districts to assess current and future needs and plan for expansion and improvement to services and facilities. For example, the Plan recommends that the County work with water and sanitation districts in the eastern portion of the County so that they may provide the infrastructure needed to support development in proposed Rural Town Center Planning Areas. The County will be involved with Infrastructure Assessment throughout the life of the Plan.

FISCAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A Fiscal Impact Model was developed as a part of the 2001 Comprehensive planning process. The County will update the Model to reflect current per capita costs and other financial data needed as input in the Model. It should be used in the development review process to evaluate fiscal impacts of proposed development. It will allow decision makers to gauge the additional costs and revenues that a proposed development will generate. While the model is a useful tool for evaluating financial considerations, the County may also need to consider other factors when making a decision about the viability of a development proposal. Some of these factors might include, but are not limited to, economic development objectives, proposed mitigation of fiscal impacts, or provision of needed affordable housing.
SUMMARY OF PRIORITY ACTIONS

The Comprehensive Plan identifies a number of immediate priority items that should be implemented as soon as possible, in order to ensure that the County’s land use actions and decisions are aligned with the policies contained in the Plan. These are summarized below, within the six categories that are contained in the goals and Policies section of the Plan.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT

- Prepare a sub-area Plan for the Urban Reserve and Tier 1.
- Prepare a sub-area plan for the DADS/Lowry Landfill Environs.
- Evaluate the lot size requirement of the A-E zone district and consider either amending the minimum lot size or creating a new agricultural zone district. Rezone areas of Tier 3 currently zoned A-1 to A-E.
- Amend the Land Development Code to require hazard identification and risk assessment during the development review process using the Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan to identify hazard areas, risks and mitigation measures.
- Analyze enclaves in the western portion of the County to determine how to address current and future needs in terms of services, infrastructure and zoning. Discuss annexation of these enclaves with municipalities, emphasizing the advantages of assuming land use control, consolidation of services and efficient delivery of services. The County should consider offering incentives to municipalities to annex these areas. Once agreements are reached, terms should be memorialized in an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) and the County should cooperate with municipalities to annex these areas.
- Initiate Sub-area planning for urban corridors, to include:
  - South Parker Road Corridor
  - Centennial Airport Employment Center
  - Federal Boulevard Corridor
  - Platte Canyon Road Corridor
- Continue to identify opportunities to streamline the development review process.
- Create incentives and remove barriers to infill development.
- Revise Zoning and Subdivision Regulations to encourage economic development in the Rural Town Centers.

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

- Amend the Land Development Code to require centralized water systems for rural developments proposing lots 2½ acres or smaller.
- Prepare a countywide Water Supply Plan. The County and water providers need to collaborate to plan for long-term, renewable supplies and identify capabilities of suppliers to serve new development beyond current service areas, particularly in the eastern area of the County where options for alternative supplies of water are limited.
- Amend the Land Development Code to require a 300-year water supply for new development.
- Review and amend landscape requirements and building codes to incorporate best practices for lowering water demand, increasing water efficiency and promoting water conservation.
- Develop Intergovernmental Agreements regarding development standards.
- Amend the Land Development Code to require adequate public facilities and services to be provided contemporaneously with new development.

**NEIGHBORHOOD LIVABILITY**

- Revise Zoning Regulations to allow mixed use development in new neighborhoods.
- Amend Zoning Code to allow a mixture of housing densities in growth areas.
- Continue to work with the Open Space Advisory Committee on developing County-wide open space and trail systems.

**ECONOMIC HEALTH**

- Update and use the Fiscal Impact Model to evaluate the impacts from new development on the County.
- Create and staff an office of Economic Development.
- Work with landowners and business owners to identify and develop uses and attractions that can serve as a basis for establishing tourism in the County, including cultural resources and agri-tainment and agri-tourism uses.

**TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY**

- Update the 2035 Transportation Plan. At a minimum, in conjunction with the subarea planning process, update the Transportation Plan as it pertains to Tier 1 and the Urban Reserve.
- Initiate Capital Improvement Projects to implement priority recommendations of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.
- Update the Land Development Code and infrastructure design standards to implement the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.
- Promote an efficient transportation system by implementing the Development Framework and the Urban Area Land Use Plan.
- Require adequate roads to be provided contemporaneously with new development.

**NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

- Prepare and adopt a Mineral Extraction Plan.
- Update the Mineral Resources Map.
- Undertake a Cultural Resources Inventory.
- Consider adopting cultural resource preservation regulations.
- Amend the Land Development Code to advance sustainable development practices.
- Prepare a Sustainability Plan for internal County operations and facilities.
VI. Plan Revisions and Amendments

INTRODUCTION

The Comprehensive Plan sets out a vision for growth and development for the next 20 years. Factors that influenced the development of this Plan may change over time. Economic changes, market forces, demographic shifts and new development trends may make portions of the Plan out-of-date and in need of amendment or revision. This section sets out the processes to be used in making these changes. Revisions and amendments to the Plan are considered legislative actions by the Arapahoe County Planning Commission and must include a public hearing and public notice, except as noted below for Administrative Amendments. Amendments to the approved Comprehensive Plan and Subarea Plans will follow the procedures described below.

INTENT

Regular evaluation of the approved Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan) by the Planning Commission is necessary to provide an accurate statement of County development goals and policies based on current data and the needs of County citizens. Therefore, when changes in the social, physical or economic conditions of the County occur, it becomes necessary to reevaluate and change development goals and policies. In addition, consistency with the Comprehensive Plan is considered a fundamental criterion for a positive recommendation for zoning and other development applications. The following procedures have been established to amend the Comp Plan.

Generally, amendments to the Comp Plan by be initiated by two groups:

A. Landowners and other members of the private sector community may initiate amendments only to the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Plan map or subarea plan maps. Such amendments shall be considered Major Amendments. Members of the community may include: individuals, landowners and/or their representatives, homeowners associations, and other parties affected by the plan.

B. The public sector, including the Arapahoe County Planning Commission, either on its own or at the request of members of the community, the Board of County Commissioners, or the Planning Division staff, may initiate either major or administrative amendments which affect the Land Use Plan map, the goals, objectives, and policies of the Comp Plan or any subarea plans.

Major amendments are defined as those amendments that have a significant effect on the intent of the goals, objectives, policies, and maps of the Comp Plan. Examples of these are as follows:

A. A comprehensive update of the Comp Plan conducted approximately every ten years.
B. The preparation of additional or more specific elements of the Comp Plan or subarea plans.
C. The revision of elements or portions thereof (including maps) as new information becomes available.
D. Modifications or Amendments to a Subarea Plan.

Administrative amendments include changes that do not affect the goals, policies, or Framework or Land Use Maps in any substantive way. Examples of these are as follows:

- Updating the Land Use Plan map to show areas newly designated as preserved or conserved.
- Updating the Land Use Plan map to show newly annexed areas or incorporated municipalities.
- Updating other maps in the Appendices as new information becomes available, such as newly identified critical wildlife habitat or revised floodplain areas.
- Updating population and employment forecasts.
- Updating background information in Appendix B, such as information concerning water districts or fire districts.
- Formatting changes.

PRIVATE SECTOR AMENDMENTS

Plan amendments initiated by the private sector can be submitted and processed at any time during the year. Such requests include landowner requests to amend the Plan to achieve conformance with proposed development requests.

Procedure

Presubmittal Meeting. Prior to submittal of a Comp Plan amendment application, the applicant shall meet with staff to review the proposal and discuss the procedures and submittal requirements. The applicant shall contact the Planning Division and schedule a presubmittal meeting which may include other referral agencies, as deemed necessary. The applicant shall provide the following:

A. Project Narrative (per Section D of the Submittal Requirements, herein).
B. Comp Plan Amendment Map (per Section E of the Submittal Requirements, herein).
C. Summary of initial meetings with stakeholders (homeowner associations, citizens, chambers of commerce, and groups such as the Four Square Mile planning committee).

Staff shall provide to the applicant a comment summary on the proposed amendment; its compliance with the intent of the amendment provisions; explain the amendment process; and identify any additional submittal requirements. The staff comment summary should not be considered an indication of the staff's recommendations regarding the proposal or the Planning Commission's intention to approve or deny the amendment request.

Neighborhood Meeting. The applicant shall hold a neighborhood meeting in the affected area to discuss the proposed plan amendment. The applicant will prepare a summary of the meeting that shall include:

A. An explanation of how any issues identified at the neighborhood meeting have been addressed.
B. Names and addresses of all participants/attendees.

The meeting summary shall be provided to the Planning Division.
Amendment Application. The Comp Plan amendment application shall be submitted only after the presubmittal meeting has been completed and a copy of the comment summary has been provided to the applicant. Comp Plan amendments shall then be processed as follows:

A. The applicant shall submit the required information to the Planning Division. The submittal shall be reviewed for completeness within 10 working days. The applicant shall be notified of any inadequacies. An incomplete submittal shall not be processed until the deficiencies in the submittal have been remedied. An electronic copy of the application will also be submitted.

B. The applicant shall submit an application fee deposit of $7,500 payable to Arapahoe County. At least 10 working days prior to final Planning Commission action, the Planning Division will calculate the actual cost of processing the plan amendment request. If the cost is less than the $7,500 application fee deposit, the difference will be refunded to the applicant. If the cost is greater than $7,500, the applicant shall submit an additional fee equal to the difference between the actual cost and $7,500. The additional fee shall be submitted at least 5 working days prior to the Planning Commission publicly noticed hearing at which action on the amendment is scheduled. Failure to remit this fee prior to the meeting will result in withdrawal of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment application.

Referral Process. The Comp Plan amendment will be referred to agencies affected by the proposal for review and comment.

A. For complete applications, staff shall notify the applicant of the referral agencies to receive referral packets. The applicant shall provide referral packets in unsealed envelopes large and durable enough to accommodate all packet materials, addressed to the appropriate referral agency, with all information identified in parts A, D, and E of the Submittal Requirements, properly folded and compiled. Referral packets shall also be provided to known homeowner associations within two miles of amendment areas (or the area of the subarea plan) and any other homeowner association potentially affected by the development. At staff’s discretion, some or all referral packets may be submitted only in electronic format for distribution by email.

B. Staff shall mail or email the referral packets to the referral agencies. The applicant shall submit any revised plans or documents for distribution to the referral agencies, as required by staff.

C. The referral agencies shall comment within 20 working days from the date of mailing a complete submittal unless the applicant grants an extension of no more than 10 working days. The applicant is encouraged to meet with the referral agencies, staff, and public interest groups to address any concerns prior to the end of the referral period. The amendment shall be referred to the Division of Planning of the Department of Local Affairs in conformance with C.R.S. §30-28-122.

Required Hearing.

A. The staff planner will review the referral comments, discuss the concerns with the applicant, schedule a public hearing before the Planning Commission, notify the applicant of the hearing date and time, and prepare a staff report.

B. The applicant shall be responsible for public notification in accordance with the Public Notice Requirements Section herein.
Planning Commission Action.

A. The Planning Commission shall evaluate the application, referral comments, staff report, and public testimony, and take one of the following actions:
   1. Approve the request.
   2. Approve the request with conditions.
   3. Table for further study when that is an option.
   4. Continue the request to a time and date certain in order to obtain more information and to take additional public testimony.
   5. Deny the request.

B. The Planning Commission’s decision shall be based on the evidence presented and compliance with the standards for approval, as listed in the Approval Criteria section, and shall be in the form of a resolution.

C. The Planning Commission decision shall be by resolution and shall identify the approved amendment map and be signed by the Planning Commission Chair.

D. If the amendment request is approved, all post-approval requirements shall be completed, as identified in the Approval Actions section.

Public Notice Requirements

The applicant shall be responsible for public notification concerning the public hearing. Such notice shall be made available to all residents and property owners in the area affected by the proposed amendment. If the area is within an adopted subarea plan, the affected area will be considered the planning area included in the subarea plan. The following methods shall be used:

A. Communication with Homeowners Associations. At least 20 working days prior to the Planning Commission hearing, the applicant will provide written notice to the president of each homeowners association within the affected area. The Planning Division can provide the applicant with a list of homeowners associations in the county.

B. Written Notice. At least 10 working days prior to the Planning Commission hearing, the applicant shall mail a written notice of the hearing by first-class mail to the address of each abutting landowner and landowners within one quarter mile included in the list as required in Paragraph F under Submittal Requirements. The notice shall read substantially the same as the published notice also required by this section and shall include a County website link to the staff report and supporting information prepared for the hearing.

C. Published Notice. At least 10 working days before the Planning Commission hearing, staff shall publish a notice in at least one publication of The Villager newspaper and, if the proposed amendment is in the area east of E470, in The I-70 Scout, and will place a notice on the County website. The notice shall contain the date, time and location of the public hearing, as well as a description of the proposed amendment and the County website link to the staff report and supporting information prepared for the hearing.

D. At least 5 working days prior to the public hearing, the applicant shall submit the following to the Planning Division:
   1. A copy of the notice sent to the landowners.
   2. The certificate of mailing.

Submittal Requirements

The Comp Plan amendment application shall include:

A. Completed Land Use Application Form (copy available from the Planning Division).
B. Application Fee Deposit (submit check for $7,500 payable to Arapahoe County Planning at time of submittal).
C. Proof of Ownership, using information available from Arapahoe County’s online GIS map, ArapaMAP.
D. Project Narrative (8-1/2" x 11" document) supplemented with appropriate maps that describe the following:
   1. Intent of amendment.
   2. Conditions that have changed in the County to warrant the amendment.
   3. Consistency with the vision, guiding principles, goals, policies, and intent of the Comprehensive Plan.
   5. Consistency with regional plans including Metro Vision, the Regional Transportation Plan, etc.
   6. Compatibility with surrounding land uses, density, and zoning.
   7. Environmental conditions and hazards shown on the current Comprehensive Plan.
   8. Important natural features, riparian corridors, wildlife habitat, and movement corridors shown on the current Comprehensive Plan.
   9. Cultural resources identified on the current Comprehensive Plan.
  10. Relationship to the existing road network and transportation element of the Comprehensive Plan.
  11. Capabilities of, and impacts on, existing or planned special districts affected by the amendment.
  13. Availability of public facilities such as schools, parks and trails, libraries, fire stations, etc.
E. Comprehensive Plan Amendment Map (24" x 36") illustrating or containing the following:
   1. Vicinity map at a scale of 1" = 2,000’ clearly showing location of the amendment in relation to major roads, section lines, existing subdivisions, and other pertinent features.
   2. Legal description and acreage of the property submitted for amendment.
   3. Drawing of the area proposed to be amended, at an appropriate scale determined by staff, that includes the following:
      i. Topography in the area at 10-foot contour intervals.
      ii. Major roads on, or adjacent to, the site and their functional classifications.
      iii. Existing and proposed Comprehensive Plan Land Use Plan map (or subarea plan map) land-use designations.
      iv. Comprehensive Plan Land Use Plan map (or subarea plan map) designation of adjacent areas.
      v. Any significant natural features or environmental conditions on or adjacent to the site.
F. A list of abutting landowners and landowners within one quarter mile of the proposed amendment, compiled from information available through ArapaMap. Staff will review the map for accuracy and provide the applicant with any modifications.
G. A copy of the staff comments from the presubmittal meeting and any additional information, as requested by staff. A written response to all questions and comments raised through the presubmittal process is recommended.
H. Evidence of ability to develop a sufficient water supply.
I. A Traffic Impact Study may be required.
J. An electronic copy of the application and all materials will be submitted.
Approval Criteria

All of the following criteria shall be considered by the Planning Commission when approving or disapproving Comp Plan amendment requests. The applicant has the burden of proof to demonstrate that an amendment meets the following criteria for approval:

A. Consistency with the vision, guiding principles, intent, goals, and policies of the Comp Plan, specifically to address:
   1. Compatibility with surrounding land uses and zoning.
   2. Compatibility with existing, natural, and environmental conditions of the proposed amendment and preservation of important natural features, riparian corridors, wildlife habitat and movement corridors, and cultural resources.
   3. Adequate water supply, water and sewer treatment facilities, transportation networks, access, fire protection, school facilities, and parks and trails for the development.
   4. How existing and planned capabilities of the affected special districts can adequately handle the service demand.

B. How the social, economic, or land-use conditions of the County have changed or are in the process of changing in such a manner to support the proposed amendment to the Comp Plan.

PUBLIC SECTOR AMENDMENTS

Amendments initiated by the Planning Commission or County Staff may be Major Amendments or Administrative Amendments.

Major Amendment Procedure

Referrals. All major amendments shall be sent out to appropriate referral agencies for comment. The referral agencies shall comment within 20 working days after receiving a submittal. The amendment shall be referred to the Division of Planning of the Colorado Department of Local Affairs in conformance with C.R.S. §30-28-122.

Public Hearing. The Planning Division shall schedule a public hearing before the Planning Commission and prepare a staff report. At least 10 working days before the Planning Commission hearing, staff shall publish a notice in at least one publication of The Villager newspaper and, if the proposed amendment is in the area east of E470, in The I-70 Scout, and will place a notice on the County website. The notices shall include the County website link to the staff report and supporting information prepared for the hearing.

Planning Commission Action.

A. The Planning Commission shall evaluate the proposed amendment, referral comments, staff report, and public testimony, and take one of the following actions:

   1. Approve the request.
   2. Approve the request with conditions.
   3. Table the request for further study.
4. Continue the request to a date and time certain in order to obtain more information and to take additional public testimony.

5. Deny the request.

B. The Planning Commission’s decision shall be based on the evidence presented, and compliance with the standards for approval, as listed in the Approval Criteria section, and shall be in the form of a resolution.

C. The Planning Commission decision shall be by resolution and shall identify the approved amendment map and be signed by the Planning Commission Chair.

D. If the amendment request is approved, all post-approval requirements shall be completed as identified in the Approval Actions section.

Submittal Requirements

Information submitted to the Planning Commission should be of sufficient detail to clearly explain the proposed amendment. A narrative describing reasons for the proposed amendment and maps or data supporting the amendment shall be included.

Administrative Amendment Procedure

As needed, the staff shall prepare a staff report describing the amendment, which may include text and map revisions to the Comprehensive Plan, and provide that report to the Planning Commission. Following Planning Commission review and comment, the Planning Division Manager shall approve administrative amendments. No public hearing shall be required.

PLAN PUBLICATION

All amendments approved shall be included in the next publication of the Comprehensive Plan or Sub-area Plan.

PLAN CERTIFICATION

The Planning Commission shall certify a copy of the amended Comprehensive Plan to the Board of County Commissioners, as well as the planning commissions of all municipalities in the County.
Glossary of Terms

**Affordable Housing:** Housing which has a sales price or rent within the means of a low or moderate-income household as defined by local, state or federal legislation.

**Agri-tainment:** As defined in the County Land Development Code, a for profit business providing educational and/or entertainment opportunities to its patrons in an agriculturally oriented environment by way of activities, events, demonstrations, displays, interactive participation, tours, lectures, and/or the sale of agriculturally related products. Examples include animal petting zoo and farm animal centers; bed and breakfast; camps; community event and conference center; country store/craft shop; cultural, special event, and religious festivals; farm tours; farmers market (year round); farmhouse restaurant; guest ranch/farm house lodging; thematic vacations or events; and winery operations.

**Agri-tourism:** As defined under State legislation, an activity related to the conduct of normal agricultural operations which is engaged in by participants for entertainment, pleasure, recreational or educational purposes, regardless of whether a fee is charged. Activities may include planting, cultivation, irrigation, or harvesting of crops; practices of animal husbandry; rodeo and livestock activities; and maintenance of farm or ranch equipment. The term also includes hunting, shooting, swimming, diving, tubing, and riding or operating a motorized recreational vehicle on or in proximity to the property of an agricultural operation.

**Annexation:** The incorporation of land into a municipality, resulting in a change in the boundaries of that municipality.

**Arterial Street (Major):** Major arterials permit relatively unimpeded movement of heavy through traffic within the metropolitan area. Major arterials link communities and major land use concentrations (e.g., Parker Road, University Boulevard and Arapahoe Road).

**Arterial Street (Minor):** Minor arterials are intended to permit relatively unimpeded movement of through traffic within the metropolitan area. However, traffic is generally less heavy and the roadways are more local in nature than major arterials.

**Aquifer:** An underground bed or stratum of earth, gravel or porous stone that contains water.

**Basic Facilities and Services:** Basic facilities and service are roads and road maintenance, sidewalks where required, drainage improvements and maintenance, snow removal according to policies, Sheriff’s protection, and limited passive recreation opportunities. Basic services provided by other agencies include fire protection, emergency medical service, schools, and in some instances parks and recreation.

**Best Management Practices (Also referred to as Control Measures):** Any activities, practices, procedures, programs, or other conservation measures designed to prevent or reduce the discharge of chemical, physical or biological pollutants directly or indirectly into surface water or groundwater to control soil loss and achieve water quality conservation goals.

**Best Practices:** Techniques or methodologies that, through experience and research, have proven to reliably lead to a desired result.

**Bonus Development Units:** An increase to the otherwise maximum allowable number of units on a specific site in exchange for the developer’s proposal to provide a public benefit or amenity.

**Buffer:** An area of land established to separate land uses, or a natural area designed to intercept pollutants and manage other environmental concerns or provide for open space.

**Cluster Development:** A development design technique which concentrates buildings on a portion or portions of a site to leave the remainder undeveloped and used for agriculture, open space and/or natural resource protection.

**Collector Street:** A Street that collects traffic from local streets and connects with major and minor arterials.
Compact Development: A focused layout of developed land that directs growth to well-defined contiguous areas. Compact development maintains the region’s natural environment, livability and sense of community, conserves open lands and natural resources, and ensures that public facilities and services are delivered efficiently.

Complete Streets: Street that are designed and operated to enable safe and comfortable travel and access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities.

Conservation Easement: A property interest or right granted by the landowner to a land trust to maintain in a natural state or limit the use of that land.

Cultural Resources: Tangible remains of past human activity. These may include buildings, structures, prehistoric sites, historic or prehistoric objects or collection, rock inscription, earthworks, canals, or landscapes. In Arapahoe County, cultural resources include Designated Heritage Sites.

Density: The average number of dwelling units per gross acre of land on a development site, including all land within the boundaries of the site for which the density is calculated.

Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG): A voluntary association of 49 municipal and county governments in the greater Denver area which work together to address issues of regional concern, including growth management, transportation, and services for an aging population.

Designated Growth Areas: As defined in this Plan, Designated Growth Areas consist of the Urban Area, Rural Town Center Planning Areas, and the incorporated towns and cities. These areas are appropriate for urban development because they contain or are planned for urban facilities and services typically associated with more densely populated areas, such as paved streets; neighborhood parks; public water and wastewater systems; and police and fire service.

Design Guidelines: Written statements, explanatory material, graphic renderings and/or photographs which are intended to provide property owners and the public with specific examples of techniques and materials that can be used to achieve the stated design objectives.

Design Standards: Regulations adopted in the Code that set forth criteria for the physical development of a site including requirements pertaining to heights, landscaping, parking, setbacks and other physical requirements.

Development: The process of converting land from one use to another, including the rezoning of land; subdivision of a parcel of land into two or more parcels; the construction, reconstruction, conversion, structural alteration, relocation, or enlargement of any structure; and any mining, excavation or landfill.

Drilling Window: The area approved by the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission that defines where a well or wells may be drilled.

Employment Center: Major concentrations of employment, including existing business parks and industrial areas. Centers should integrate buildings, outdoor spaces, transportation facilities, and if appropriate, residential uses.

EMS: Emergency Medical Service, typically provided by mobile units.

Environmentally Friendly Business/Jobs: Environmentally friendly businesses or jobs are either 1) Jobs in businesses that produce goods or provide services that benefit the environment or conserve natural resources, or 2) Jobs in which workers’ duties involve making their establishment's production processes more environmentally friendly or use fewer natural resources.

Environmentally Friendly / Sustainable Building: The planning, design, construction, and operations of buildings with consideration given to its energy use, water use, indoor environmental quality, material section and the building’s effects on its site. Environmentally friendly and sustainable buildings oftentimes receive LEED certification under the LEED building rating system.

Floodplains: Lands adjacent to lakes and streams subject to periodic flooding. Floodplains naturally store floodwater, conserve water quality and are valuable for recreation, and fish and wildlife habitat. Floodplains can be mapped by FEMA or the Colorado Water Conservation Board by Floodplain Hazard Areas Delineation studies, or be unmapped.
Gathering System: The flowline and pipeline network and process facilities that transport and control the flow of oil or natural gas from the wells to a storage or processing facility.

Graywater: That portion of wastewater that is collected from fixtures within residential, commercial, or industrial buildings or institutional facilities for the purpose of being put to beneficial use for nondrinking purposes. Sources of graywater may include discharges from bathroom and laundry room sinks, bathtubs, showers, laundry machines, and other sources, but does not include the wastewater from toilets, kitchen sinks, dishwashers, or non-laundry utility sinks.

Groundwater: The supply of fresh water under the surface in an aquifer or soil that forms a natural reservoir.

Healthy community: A community that ensures opportunities for physical activity, healthy food choices, social interaction, increased mobility, access to health care, while providing a safe and reliable water supply, protection from natural and man-made hazards, housing options that are safe, sanitary and in good condition in safe neighborhoods, access to living wage jobs, safe streets and modes of travel. A healthy community provides options to use of the automobile by building homes, businesses, schools, churches and parks closer to each other so that people can more easily walk or bike between them and allows persons, if they choose, to age in place and remain all their lives in a community that accommodates their changing lifestyles and physical capabilities.

Highway: A high speed, limited access road. Interstate-25 (I-25), Interstate-70 (I-70), Interstate-225 (I-225), and Extension-470 (E-470) are designated as highways. The primary function of a highway is to more traffic unimpeded within the region and to provide through movement to other cities and states.

Impact Fees: Charges that are assessed on new development to help pay for the capital facilities need by new development. Impact fees are based upon a standard formula and predetermined fee schedule.

Implementation: Carrying out or fulfilling plans and proposals.

Incorporation: The act or process of forming or creating a municipality.

Infill Development: The development of new housing or other uses on vacant parcels and scattered vacant sites within already built-up areas.

Infrastructure: Facilities such as roads, water and sewer lines, treatment plants, utility lines and other permanent physical facilities in the built environment needed to sustain industrial, residential or commercial activities.

Infrastructure, Natural: An approach to managing stormwater water that reduces and treats stormwater at its source using vegetation, soils, landscape features, natural areas, and other elements and practices to restore some of the natural processes that filter stormwater runoff. At the city or county scale, natural infrastructure is an integrated patchwork of natural areas storing and absorbing stormwater that also provides additional benefits by providing wildlife habitat and open space, flood protection, and a method of stormwater treatment. At the neighborhood or site scale, landscape features and other elements of the management system mimic the natural environment to absorb and store water. (See Low Impact Development.)

Intergovernmental Agreement: A written agreement between two or more governmental jurisdictions.

Intersection: A location where two or more roads cross at grade.

Land Use Plan: A plan showing the existing and proposed location, extent and intensity of future land development for varying types of residential and non-residential uses of land.

LEED: An acronym that stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. Developed by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), it is a worldwide green building certification program that includes a set of rating systems for the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of green buildings, homes, and neighborhoods. The goal of the program is to help building owners and operators be environmentally responsible and use resources efficiently. There are four levels of certification: certified, silver, gold, and platinum.

Level of Service Standard: An expression of the minimum capacity required to satisfy needs for a particular service or facility.

Low Impact Development: A stormwater management approach that manages stormwater with on-site controls that infiltrate, filter, store, evaporate, and detain runoff close to its source. Stormwater management is accomplished through small landscape features located on the lot, including open space, rooftops, streetscapes, parking lots, sidewalks, and medians.
Mitigate: To make less severe; alleviate; relieve.

Mixed Use: The development of a tract of land, building or structure with two or more different uses including, but not limited to, residential, retail and personal services, employment, public facilities or commercial.

Multi-Family Residential: A residential development containing three or more units, not including hotels, motels or group accommodations with an average gross density of thirteen (13) or more units per acre.

Municipal/District Water and Sewer: The provision and distribution of potable water and collection and centralized treatment of wastewater for all of the properties within a municipality, or for a geographic area which encompasses a number of separately developed areas for residential housing and/or non-residential land uses.

Municipality: A public corporation created by the legislature for governmental purposes that possesses local legislative and administrative powers.

Neighborhood: An area of a community with characteristics that distinguish it from other community areas, and which may include distinct ethnic or economic characteristics, schools or social clubs, or boundaries defined by physical barriers such as highways, or natural features such as rivers.

Net Zero Water Practices: Practices involving a building and/or site that is designed, constructed, or renovated and operated to greatly reduce total water consumption, use non-potable sources as much as possible, and recycle and reuse water in order to return the equivalent amount of water as was withdrawn from all sources, including municipal supply, without compromising groundwater and surface water quantity or quality.

Non-Point Source Pollution: Multiple, diffuse areas of land surface or points of origin that contribute pollutants to a water source.

Non-residential: Any business, commercial or industrial development that does not contain residential dwelling units.

Open Space: Any parcel or area of land or water essentially unimproved and set aside, dedicated, designated, or reserved for public or private use or enjoyment, or for the use and enjoyment of owners and occupants of land adjoining or neighboring such open space.

Park: A tract of land designated and used by the public (or privately used if privately owned), for active and passive recreation.

Public Facilities: Land uses including schools, day care facilities, churches, libraries, jails, recreational centers, airports, hospitals, fairgrounds, utility lines, power substations, fire stations, police/law enforcement stations, government offices, and power energy facilities.

Public Improvement: Any improvement, facility or service, together with its associated public site or right-of-way, necessary to provide transportation, drainage, public or private utilities, energy or similar essential services.

Public Water and Sewer: The provision and distribution of potable water, and collection and centralized treatment of sewage, for a residential subdivision or non-residential development that is owned, maintained, and operated by an entity for the sole purpose of providing such water and sanitary sewer service for the benefit of the development to which services are provided.

Recreation, Active: Developed facilities used for recreation (e.g., including but not limited to soccer, baseball, softball, running tracks, paved bicycle trails, volleyball and tennis, off-road vehicle parks). Active recreation implies a high level of human use of an open space area or park.

Recreation, Passive: Relatively undeveloped lands used for recreation (e.g., unpaved trails for non-motorized use, picnic tables and interpretive sites). Passive recreation implies a lower level of human use of an open space area or park.

Redevelopment: The replacement or reconstruction of buildings that are not making efficient and effective use of the land on which they are located, or are in substandard physical condition.

Renewable Water Supply: A water supply that is continually replenished with precipitation or through other methods such as diversions or reclamation and re-use. Groundwater is not considered a renewable water supply.

Regional Waste Disposal Site: An area encompassing the former Lowry Landfill superfund site together with the Denver Arapahoe Disposal Site (DADS) which is not suitable for most development activities during the time horizon of this Plan due to the expected life of the disposal site and the presence of the superfund site.
Resiliency: The ability to recover from disturbance and change. Resiliency allows a community to respond to and recover from specific disruptive events.

Riparian Area: The upland area adjacent to a natural drainage way, lake, pond, reservoir or wetland characterized by a narrow band of lush vegetation within much drier surroundings.

Rural Town Center Planning Areas: Towns and their environs that create manageable planning units for addressing land use, transportation, facility, demographic and growth analysis. These places along I-70 are mapped on the Development Framework Map.

Sensitive Development Area: Habitat and intact ecosystems, such as short grass prairie and conservation areas as designated by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program.

Service Area: The defined area of government- or district-supplied public facilities and services.

Single Family Attached / Urban Residential: A residence containing no more than one unit that is attached to one or more residences. Density ranges from 6 to 12 units per acre. This would include small multi-family dwellings that are compatible in character to single-family detached residences.

Single Family Detached / Urban Residential: A residence containing no more than one unit that is not attached to any other residence or building by any means, including mobile homes and manufactured housing situated on a permanent foundation. Density ranges from 0 to 6 units per acre.

Solid Waste: As defined in the 1976 Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), solid waste means any garbage or refuse, sludge from a wastewater treatment plant, water supply treatment plant, or air pollution control facility and other discarded material, resulting from industrial, commercial, mining, and agricultural operations, and from community activities. Solid waste is not limited to wastes that are physically solid; some are liquid, semi-solid, or contained gaseous material.

Special District: A district created by act, petition or vote of the landowners for a specific purpose, with the power to construct improvements, levy taxes and incur debt.

Sub-area Plan: A plan for a defined community or area within the County, typically developed with the involvement of residents of the area that is adopted as an element of this Comprehensive Plan.

Subdivision: The division of a lot, tract, or parcel of land into two or more plats, sites, or other divisions of land for the purposes, whether immediate or future, of sale of a building or development.

Superfund Site: A U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) program established by Congress in 1980 to clean up waste sites posing health and environmental risks. The Superfund program locates, investigates and cleans up hazardous-waste sites throughout the country. Lowry Landfill was placed on the EPA's National Priorities List of Superfund sites in 1984.

Sustainability: Managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources and institutional operating practices in a way, or at a rate, which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural well-being while: 1) preserving the potential of natural and physical resources (excluding minerals) to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations, 2) safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil, and ecosystems; and 3) avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of man’s activities on the environment. Sustainability presumes that resources are finite, and should be used conservatively and wisely with a view to long-term preservation for future generations.

Transit-Oriented Development: Urban development designed to accommodate pedestrians and non-vehicular forms of transportation on site and that has densities high enough to sustain transit use (i.e., typically at least seven dwelling units per acre).

Urban Development: An area with physical characteristics, levels of service, and land uses typically associated with more dense population, such as paved streets, neighborhood parks, curb, gutter, and sidewalk, public water and sewer, storm drainage systems and police and fire services. Urban development includes industrial, commercial/retail, or residential uses with an overall density of at least one unit per acre.

Urban Area: The area that defines where urban development and expected growth should occur. Within the Urban Area contiguous and orderly growth is encouraged to prevent inefficient development and its burdens on
infrastructure and service provision. The urban designation distinguishes the use of land from that which is unimproved or rural.

**Urban Reserve:** An area reserved for future urban development during the time horizon of this Plan (20 years). Collaborative planning with adjacent jurisdictions will be needed to determine future land uses.

**WaterSense:** A program sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), is both a label for water-efficient products and a resource for water conservation. The WaterSense label identifies water-efficient products, new homes, and programs that meet EPA’s criteria for efficiency and performance.

**Water Wise Landscaping:** Landscape planning and designing for water conservation and efficiency using xeric plants, efficient irrigation methods, practical turf and non-turf areas, soil improvement, and mulching to reduce water demand and losses.

**Zoning:** The dividing of the County into districts, and the establishment of regulations governing the use, placement, spacing and size of land and buildings within those districts.