



Chaffee County Citizen's Land Use Roundtable Recommendations FINAL November 17, 2008

Preamble

In 2001, the County Commissioners directed the Planning Commission to update the County Land Use Code to reflect the Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2000. Between 2001 and 2004, the County adopted many regulatory updates with regards to subdivision development.

In 2004, the Planning Commission began to work on a County Zoning Resolution. However, in February 2006, following a public comment meeting where citizens expressed their concerns with the proposal, the County Commission rejected the Planning Commission's recommendations and began a more extensive public involvement process.

Since 2006, nearly eighty citizens as well as local officials have been participating in a process to update the County Land Use Code. The process began with a meeting facilitated by Bob Chadwick of Consensus Associates which generated a community vision. The participants of the Chadwick meeting represented various stakeholder groups from around

the county including: agriculture; real estate and development; business commercial/industrial; government; heritage; recreation and tourism; sustainable growth; and water. These participants were formally brought together to form the Citizen's Roundtable.

Through this two year process, this group has worked together to develop recommendations to improve County land use patterns and procedures. With assistance of planning consultants Community Matters Inc. and the Sonoran Institute, the group has developed the following recommendations for the Chaffee County Board of County Commissioners.

These consensus recommendations are the result of extensive discussion, debate, and active listening and represent the Roundtable's best effort to come to win-win solutions that will work for the citizens of Chaffee County as a whole.

Roundtable Participants

Approximately 200 members of the community were invited to be involved in the roundtable. The original list of participants were composed mainly of special interest groups who provided two representatives per each focus group. Participants and the level of engagement at the interest group level varied and was flexible enough to allow people to come and go, however, representatives from each of the focus groups at the Roundtable was consistent throughout. While many attended several of the meetings, the individuals listed below should be recognized for their commitment for attending the majority of the meetings throughout the entire process. Asterisks following names indicate roundtable group representatives.

Focus Groups That Participated in Final Consensus Process:

Production Agriculture: Bruce Cogan, Albert Eggleston, Brady Everett*, Frank Holman, Ken McMurry*, Nancy Roberts

Heritage: Bruce Goforth, Katy Grether, Cheryl Brown Kovacic*, Dara MacDonald, Jackie Powell, Melanie Roth, Alan Robinson

Sustainable Growth: Keith Baker*, Karen Dils, Kathy McCoy*, Conrad Nelson, Alan Robinson, John and Alison Abdelnour

Development & Real Estate: Karin Adams*, Mike Allen*, Judy Everett, (Paul Crabtree)

Governmental: Pat Alderton, Darrell Donahue, Dara MacDonald*, Dee Miller, Rick Roberts, Bev Kaiser, Cara Russell*

Water: Reed Dils, Jeanne Foster*, Gene Rush, Fred Henderson, Gene Rush, Frank McMurry*

Chaffee County Board of County Commissioners

Jim Osborne, District 1
Jerry Mallett, District 2
Tim Glenn, District 3

Chaffee County Planning Commission

Ted Richardson, Chair
Gloria Charrette, Vice Chair
Judy Everett
Milt Francis
Frank Holman
Sig Jaastad
Paul Jensen
Fred Rasmussen
Dick Scar
Dave Williams

Chaffee County Planning Department

Don Reimer
Kim Antonucci

Planning Consultants

Marjo Curgus, Sonoran Institute
Barb Cole, Community Matters Inc.

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Citizen Land Use Roundtable Recommendations

The Chaffee County Citizen's Land Use Roundtable propose the following recommendations to the Chaffee County Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners in order to update the Land Use Code.

Recommendation 1 - Land Use Zoning

Implement the Roundtable recommendation for new Land Use Classifications, the Future Land Use Map, and accompanying density proposal, to achieve a desired future land use pattern that both enhances and protects Chaffee County's character.

1. Update the Land Use Code to reflect the recommended zoning density and Land Use Classifications.
2. Update the Zoning Map to reflect the Future Land Use Map and Land Use Classifications.
3. Update the Land Use Code to reflect specific site guidelines and standards for the different zoning designations as outlined in the Land Use Classifications.
4. Amend the existing zoning standards to encourage mixed use developments as defined in the Land Use Classifications.
5. Update the Land Use Code to offer additional development options and incentives as outlined in the density proposal including:
 - A. Complete and adopt the draft Planned Unit Development Ordinance as a means to stimulate creative and mixed use developments, that allows variations from existing regulations.
 - B. Adopt the Colorado Statutory Cluster Ordinance as an alternative to 35-acre subdivision exemptions.
 - C. Modify the existing ROSI clustering standards to allow for smaller and flexible lot sizes.
 - D. Adopt a cluster subdivision ordinance with specific site design guidelines and clustering performance standards.

Recommendation 2—Agricultural Lands

Implement equitable tools to encourage and financially motivate ranchers to seek alternatives to land subdivision and that support the continuation of agriculture in the County.

1. Complete, adopt and find appropriate funding sources for the Purchase of Development Rights Program.
2. Evaluate the feasibility, benefits and potential consequences of both a Transfer of Development Rights program and an Agriculture Land Lease program.
3. Adopt a voluntary agricultural overlay district that allows existing agricultural land owners to utilize their property with more flexible commercial and development options.
4. Encourage collaboration with land trusts, agricultural land owners and governmental agencies to seek funding to develop and implement a Ranchlands Strategic Plan, as defined in the Chadwick Report.
5. Support efforts that increase community awareness of the role and importance of agriculture with respect to the economy, heritage significance as well as scenic and natural resource protection.
6. Work with affected property owners and municipalities to develop voluntary incentives (e.g., a transfer of developments rights program) to ensure a community separator between municipalities (e.g. Poncha and Salida).

Recommendation 3—Crossroads Communities and Municipal Planning Areas

Plan appropriate land uses in and around existing towns and crossroads communities in cooperation with citizens, business owners, and town governments.

1. Execute intergovernmental agreements for planning areas between the County and municipalities which formally delineate growth areas, outline annexation procedures, and which describe service availability and/or constraints.

2. Create a density bonus incentive for the PUD during the land use code update to incentivize higher density developments in jointly designated appropriate locations.
3. Identify and promote additional appropriate incentives for sustainable urban growth patterns in and around existing communities.
4. Continue to collaborate with the City of Salida, the Town of Buena Vista and the Town of Poncha Springs to ensure that land use and development are commensurate with population projections, utilities and infrastructure, public services, sensitive environmental areas and other concerns.
5. Collaborate with municipalities, crossroad communities, and landowners to seek grant funding for the development of "sub-area" plans in and around existing communities.
6. Update the Land Use Code to include traditional neighborhood design guidelines in and around crossroads communities.

Recommendation 4—Commercial & Industrial Development

Focus commercial and industrial development in or near existing towns or existing developed commercial areas.

1. Existing commercial and industrial zones shall remain in the new code.
2. Allow existing Special Land Use Permits to remain and be grandfathered into new zoning.
3. Some of the current Special Land Use Permits and Conditional Permit uses are proposed to become allowable uses in the proposed LUCs. The County should undertake a thorough study of all existing special and conditional use permits to determine if any additional uses might be appropriate for allowable uses or rezoning.
4. Continue to implement the existing Commercial Land Use Policy.
5. Adopt mandatory site design standards for new commercial buildings in commercial zones located along state and federal highways.
6. Develop architectural design guidelines for new commercial buildings in commercial zones located along state and federal highways.

Recommendation 5—Community Character

Preserve the unique community character of Chaffee County.

1. Implement the Heritage Area and Scenic Byway Management Plan, review recommendations and further evaluate the proposed implementation strategies.
2. Adopt a historic overlay district to allow for voluntary designation of historic structures outside of townsites.
3. Promote local, state and federal incentives to preserve historic and traditional buildings and architecture.
4. Encourage efforts of historic preservation organizations and commissions in Chaffee County.
5. Develop voluntary design guidelines for developers and homeowners that would promote sensitive use of historic structures.
6. Provide voluntary height, mass and scale architectural guidelines for residential buildings and provide education on why these are important.
7. Develop and adopt mandatory architectural design guidelines in historic townsites.
8. Evaluate the existing lighting standards for new developments and strengthen so that external lighting is aesthetically pleasing, functional, and preserves dark night skies. Educate the public on available incentives on retrofitting lighting systems (*Excel Energy programs, tax write offs, reduced costs, etc.*)
9. Pursue grant funding for trails, open lands and preservation of historic sites, such as GOCO (Great Outdoors Colorado) State Heritage Fund, and CDOT.

Citizen Land Use Roundtable Recommendations

Recommendation 6—Planning Documents

1. Utilize the Chaffee County Comprehensive Plan as a visionary document to be used for future planning.
2. Utilize the Chaffee County Trails Master Plan as a review criteria for future development and redevelopment to enhance transportation planning and trail networks.
3. Utilize municipal documents for those areas directly impacting municipal services. (See also Rec#3).
4. Utilize the Heritage Plan as a review criteria for future development and to promote site sensitive design.
5. Complete and adopt the Regional Transportation Plan.

Recommendation 7— Resource Standards

Ensure Chaffee County's unique natural and cultural resources are sustained for future generations.

1. Promote conservation of cultural and natural resources through adoption of more sensitive site design and development options as outlined in the Land Use Classifications..
2. Evaluate resource protection standards that are sensitive to private property rights for water, wildlife, productive soils, vegetation, visual resources during the land use code update.
3. Utilize existing studies and pursue additional studies that increase the knowledge base and scientific understanding of Chaffee County's watersheds that can be reviewed and disclosed during development applications.
4. Work with the Upper Arkansas Water Conservancy District and municipalities to coordinate the water supply and wastewater treatment policies throughout the valley and develop a Water Resources Availability Map.
5. Disclose the USGS study and map as well as the Upper Arkansas Water Conservancy District's Augmentation Map as sources of information to developers during subdivision review until a Water Resources Availability Map can be developed. Overlay the UAWCD boundary within GIS as data layers become available.
6. Revise the Chaffee County Land Use Code to require water supply standards for disclosure of a sustainable water supply during subdivision review.
7. Educate the public on how development can adversely affect sensitive resources on adjacent public lands.
8. Conserve and enhance terrestrial and aquatic habitat by supporting guidelines or policies of other agencies.

Recommendation 8— Transportation

Encourage long-range multi-modal transportation planning to meet the needs of anticipated growth.

1. Determine funding mechanisms to develop and implement a County-wide Transportation Plan which involves collaboration with other agencies and organizations.
2. Work with CDOT to ensure that local transportation needs are met.
3. Amend land use code so that developments review standards include connectivity, trails and potential mass transit opportunities for long-range transportation planning as included in the Land Use Classifications.
4. Evaluate the existing road standards to consider maintenance costs and resource protection. Modify road standards, if necessary, during the land use code update.
5. Encourage new development to include easements for future transit infrastructure, where appropriate, and tie to Regional Transportation Plan when it becomes available.
6. Develop a capital improvements plan for future land acquisition for transportation planning.

Recommendation 9—Land Use Code Improvements

In addition to all recommendations to update the code included in this report amend the Land Use Code & Procedures to be more user friendly and streamlined.

1. Evaluate the existing land use regulations to determine if staff and/or planning commission can review minor applications without BOCC approval, such as boundary line adjustments, plat amendments or special land use applications for home businesses, so long as specific review standards provide for consistency.
2. Suggest pre-application site visits in addition to pre-application conferences with staff to ascertain resource constraints early in the application process.
3. Update the Land Use Code to include specific performance criteria for land uses which require site specific review such as campgrounds, commercial nurseries, drive-through food and beverage facilities, mobile homes parks and churches.
4. Create a Sustainable Energy Ordinance specifying and developing a permitting process related to solar, wind, geothermal or other alternative energies.
5. Create specific standards that clearly articulate the difference between small and major resort developments for the Rural and Resort zones.
6. Adopt sub area plans around municipalities and in crossroad communities.
7. Complete and adopt the Planned Unit Development ordinance.

Recommendation 10—Economic Development

Promote economic development and diversification in Chaffee County through the following implementation strategies:

1. Host an economic development summit that brings together governmental entities, business owners, chambers of commerce, etc. to review economic data, celebrate successes, explore options for future economic development strategies, and further refine the economic development vision for the County.
2. Support the Heritage Committee's interpretive plan, included in the Heritage Area and Scenic Byways Management Plan, promoting heritage tourism development within Chaffee County.
3. Create incentives to stimulate commercial economic development.
4. Educate the public on good and bad examples of public/private partnerships and evaluate criteria that will bring economic gain to Chaffee County without burdening taxpayers.
5. Encourage quality resort facilities that will attract additional visitors.
6. Promote new technologies to provide high quality internet communications and countywide broadband that will attract high-tech and knowledge based businesses.
7. Stimulate and expand the scope and impact of Colorado Mountain College to promote educational opportunities and workforce development.
8. Continue to support and foster a vibrant cultural community.
9. Specifically define and encourage agricultural tourism (Agritourism) that creates additional economic opportunities for working ranches (fix fence, put up hay, cattle drives).
10. Evaluate benefits and impacts of agritourism and determine if it could become a "use by right".
11. Support efforts that create value-added economic activities.
12. Support efforts that generate locally grown and produced agricultural products.