

# **Durango District Plan**

**Adopted December 12, 2013**

**Resolution #2012-005**

**Exhibit 1 to the Resolution is the City of Durango Comprehensive Plan, hereby adopted as the Durango District Plan**

**Exhibit 2 to the Resolution is the map that identifies the boundary of the Durango District**

Exhibit 1

# City of Durango

## 2007

# Comprehensive Plan



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Marsha Porter Norton

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for the inspiring volunteer efforts of **Katherine Holt** and **Kathy Turner**  
to develop a regional vision that truly reflects the desires of our  
community.

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**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

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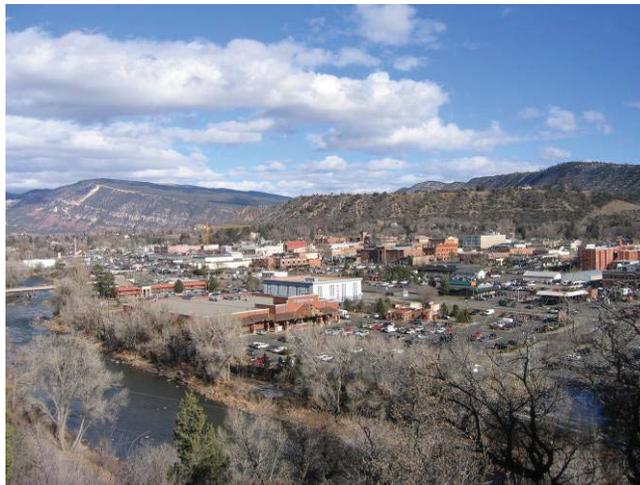
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## CITY OF DURANGO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

### CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

This Comprehensive Plan is an update of the 1997 Comprehensive Plan. While the vision of the 1997 Plan and many of the goals, objectives and policies remain valid, community changes since 1997 necessitate this update. This update plans for community growth through 2030. It is the product of the efforts of hundreds of citizens who volunteered their concerns, aspirations and problem solving skills over the course of several years.



This Plan is based on many assumptions, most of which reflect observable regional or national trends, such as the aging of the population, the increasing cost and decreasing availability of fossil fuels, the unsustainability of transportation based on single occupancy automobiles, economic pressures that are reducing Durango's diversity, the importance of Durango's environmental quality to its economic vitality and quality of life, and the critical need to develop regional solutions to regional challenges, such as transportation, housing, air quality and growth coordination.

A key assumption guiding the formation of this Plan Update is that the population will continue to grow in the planning area, both in the City and the County in accordance with the State Demographer's population projections. The policies of this Update are based upon County-wide growth estimates of the State Demographer as refined through the development of 2030 Trip: The Durango/La Plata County Regional Transportation Study, which projects that there will be an increase of 8,300 households (18,600 people) and 13,300 jobs in the planning area by 2030. Through this plan update process, the distribution of jobs and housing has been modified, though the 2030 growth totals for the planning area remain consistent with the Regional Transportation Study. Although it is unlikely that the planning area will achieve this precise amount of growth in the exact time frame defined by the Study, this Update assumes the validity of these projections as a reasonable estimate of future growth. The local, regional and national conditions that impact growth must be monitored on an on-going basis in order to periodically adjust growth assumptions and the local strategies employed to address growth.

While the State Demographer has historically generated reliable growth projections, there are many local or global events or trends that could dramatically alter Durango's future, including:

- More rapidly escalating oil costs and diminishing availability of fossil fuels;
- Climatic changes that reduce water supplies or snow needed for the skiing resorts;
- Rural development of Ewing Mesa or other planned growth centers; or
- Natural or man-made disaster that destroys significant portions of the built or natural environment.

These or other events could have significant impacts on the growth assumptions on which this plan is based.

Throughout the planning process, citizens were provided the opportunity to discuss the issues facing Durango, evaluate the implications of alternative ways to address those changes and voice

## CHAPTER 1

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### INTRODUCTION

their opinions about the best ways to address changes in Durango. Some of the changes that necessitated this plan update are:

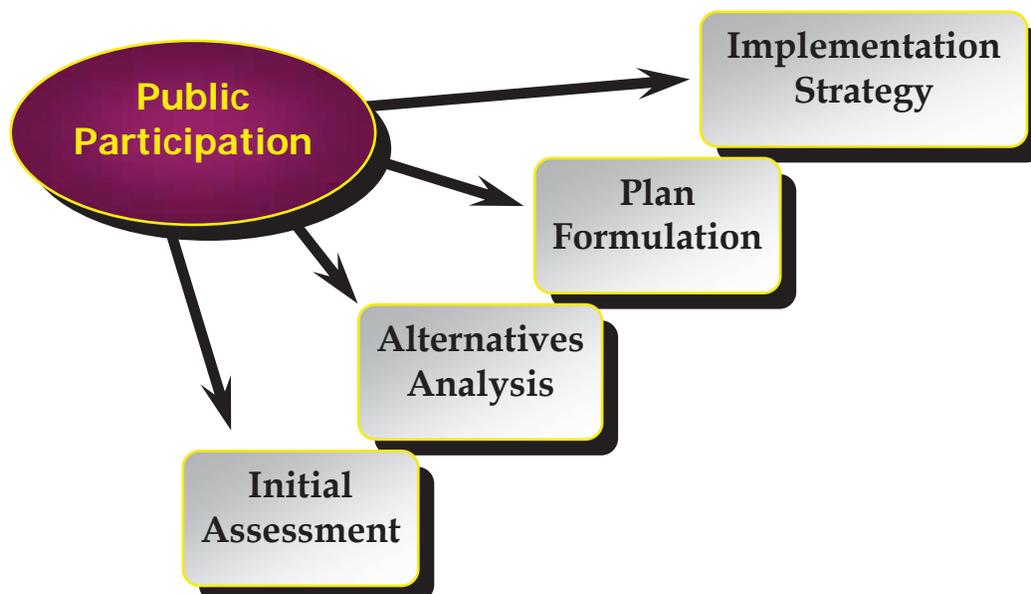
- The move of the Mercy Medical Center to a large-scale traditional neighborhood development known as Three Springs in Grandview;
- Completion of a new bridge linking La Posta Road with the Highway 160/550 corridor and the resulting development pressures on Koshak Mesa and Animas Air Park;
- Changes to the future land use map affecting Ewing Mesa, Grandview, Kroeger Ranch and other areas of the City;
- The adoption of a regional transportation study that will be used to update the City's capital improvements and transportation impact fee studies;
- The formation of La Plata County Regional Housing Authority, which created a forum to address housing challenges at a county-wide level;
- Pressure to increase City-County coordination on many growth management challenges, including transportation, housing, utility and land use issues;
- The development of the Animas-La Plata reservoir (Lake Nighthorse);
- Dramatic progress on the expansion of recreational facilities, as well as the open space and trail networks; and
- Increased debate about the City's overall growth strategy.

The plan update process, illustrated below and described in more detail in **Appendix A**, was guided by a 20 member Citizens Review Committee (CRC) Committee appointed by the City Council to consider the City's growth options and recommend policies and strategies to address the many challenges facing Durango. Public workshops, a statistically valid survey, interviews and other strategies to engage the public were employed throughout the process, using innovative outreach techniques, including Keypad polling technology, public cable broadcasts, a project website and CommunityViz software. Developed by the Orton Foundation, CommunityViz provides GIS-based analysis and real-world 3D modeling that allows people to envision land use alternatives and understand their potential impacts. This Plan incorporates the results of both the City's extensive citizen participation program and the results of an independent County-wide Appreciative Inquiry process to establish a common vision and strategies to achieve that vision.

After reviewing existing conditions, trends and projections, as described in **Chapter 3** and **Appendix B**, the CRC and the public defined a range of growth alternatives and evaluated the impacts of three distinct growth scenarios. After considering the impacts of these scenarios (see **Appendix C**) and engaging the community in an extended debate about the merits and deficiencies of each scenario, the CRC recommended a preferred scenario on which this Comprehensive Plan update is based. The preferred scenario was refined as the CRC weighed various policy options against the goals of individuals and the community as a whole.

**CITY OF DURANGO**  
**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

**The Plan Update Process**



This Comprehensive Plan reflects a shared community vision of Durango's future, and guides decision-makers towards that vision through updated goals and prioritized implementation strategies.

**A Guide for Action**

Durango's City Charter states that:

"The Council shall adopt and may from time to time modify a comprehensive plan, which may be integrated into the plans of other governments, and which shall set forth policies concerning the future development of lands, public facilities and public services."

"The Comprehensive Plan shall serve as a guide for all future Council action concerning land use and development regulations and expenditures for capital improvements."

"All proposed annexations shall be in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan."

The Comprehensive Plan is:

- An ongoing exercise of local self-government;
- A tool for democratic discourse;
- The only formal unified overview of life in the community;
- An ongoing status report on the community's performance;
- A statement of the community's view of itself;
- The public officials' most basic statement of public policy;
- A description of how the City should act to achieve its desired future;
- A means to inform the public and all stakeholders and to enhance their confidence; and

## CHAPTER 1

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### INTRODUCTION

- A tool to assist in the management and stewardship of the City.

The Comprehensive Plan should help guide public and private individuals in decisions about land use, development, housing and a wide range of other issues throughout the planning area, illustrated in **Figure 1**. However, it should not be the only document considered prior to making decisions. Public and private decision-makers should consider the City's land use and development regulations, capital improvement plans and other documents that implement this Plan.

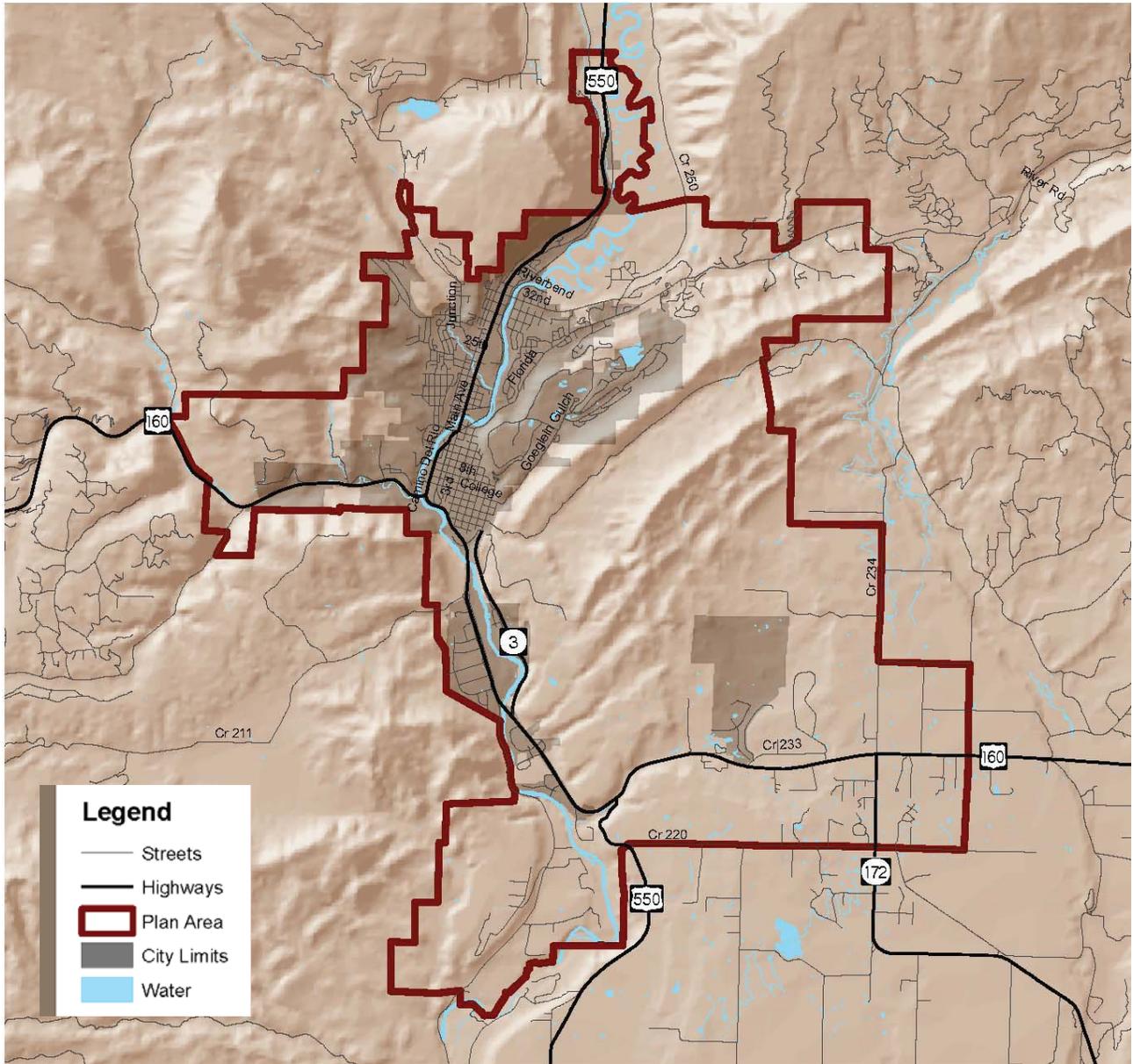
The Plan is intended to be a dynamic document that responds to change in the community. Implementation is fundamental to any planning process, and strategies in this Plan have been designed to achieve Durango's vision, goals and objectives, provide clear priorities, and describe specific tasks. The Plan outlines a strategy to preserve or enhance residents' quality of life, while addressing the many growth related challenges facing the City.

This Plan describes how Durango will coordinate with the County, private property owners, service providers, businesses and institutions to protect important community resources and make efficient investment decisions that manage growth, maximize the benefits of growth while minimizing its burdens on existing tax and rate payers, and enhance the City's ability to provide the facilities and services that contribute to the high quality of life that distinguishes Durango. Key directives in this plan include:

- An emphasis on coordinating growth management efforts with La Plata County – only through an effective partnership can we address our most challenging issues;
- A focus on sustainability – establishing Durango as a model for visionary and pragmatic actions to achieve economic, environmental, energy and socially equitable sustainability; and
- The enhancement of the quality of life of all residents.

# CITY OF DURANGO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Figure 1: Durango Planning Area



## CHAPTER 2

### VISION

## CHAPTER 2 - VISION

Durango's Comprehensive Plan defines a long-term vision for the future of the planning area. As the foundation of the planning process, the vision was developed through a parallel consensus-based process that included all interested community members (see **Appendix A** for a discussion of the visioning processes). The vision statement helps citizens and decision-makers remember the ends to which the Plan aspires. In concert with the guiding principles and plan goals, it should guide the interpretation, application and amendment of the Plan over time.

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### Vision

**Durango is an authentic and diverse community living in harmony with its natural environment, pursuing economic, environmental and social sustainability.**

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### Guiding Principles

The following principles are intended to clarify the intent of the above vision statement and establish the context for the goals, objectives and policies in each of the Plan elements. The principles are grouped in four categories that arose from the Grassroots Vision Process (see discussion in **Appendix A**).

**Healthy Community:** We flourish as a community by caring about everyone's needs and supporting efforts to reach our full potential.

**Environmental Stewardship:** We honor and respect our natural environment, realizing that our lives are interdependent with the Earth's well-being.

**Economic Vitality:** Our community experiences economic prosperity through diversification, self-reliance, interdependence and adaptability.

**Sustainable Systems:** We design human solutions that promote the long-term health and preservation of complex natural and cultural systems.

Recognizing these core values, the City will implement this Comprehensive Plan in accordance with the following guiding principles:

- Actively involve and serve all of our residents;
- Respect individual rights, yet be guided by our concern for the common good;
- Minimize our ecological footprint;
- Protect the water that allows us to live here;
- Conserve our natural resources, while protecting our lands, wildlife and air quality;
- Flourish through the sustainable use of our natural resources;
- Model our growth on the beauty, efficiency and resiliency of our natural systems;
- Shop and invest in our community to create jobs and local prosperity;
- Leverage our collective knowledge and ingenuity to anticipate and respond to emerging needs; and
- Develop community wisdom and share knowledge central to our success.

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## CITY OF DURANGO

### COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

The Vision and guiding principles are broad statements that are refined through the remaining text in this Comprehensive Plan. The vision and goals of the plan describe the ends to which the community aspires. The objectives are steps to be taken in achieving these ends. The guiding principles and policies describe how the City will achieve its vision and goals. The strategies included in the Plan Implementation Program reflect the short-term priorities for action.

## CHAPTER 3

### GROWTH TRENDS

## CHAPTER 3 - GROWTH TRENDS

### Overview

Rapid population growth has created consistent challenges in Durango and La Plata County for the last 15 years. Demographic trends and projections shape Durango's needs and opportunities. Changes in the size and characteristics of the City's population may have profound impacts on the fiscal, economic, social and natural environment. Population increases generate demands for additional facilities and services. Different age and income segments of the population have different needs, which shape demands for housing, services and infrastructure. A complete assessment of growth trends in Durango is found in **Appendix B - Demographic Profile**.

The Demographic Profile examines historic and projected population growth, as well as residential and non-residential development trends. These trends provide baseline assumptions upon which future land uses, fiscal needs, housing needs, public infrastructure and service demands will be measured.

The key demographic trends shaping the directives in this Comprehensive Plan are:

- The disparity between wages and the cost of living in Durango;
- The need for a broad range of housing choices for all income and age groups;
- Increasing service demands for all ages and income groups; and
- The diverse and increasing mobility needs of a population that is spread over a wider area.

### Demographic Snapshot

#### Population Increase

- La Plata County's population steadily increased from 19,225 in 1960 to 43,941 in 2000 (129% increase), while the City of Durango's population also increased, from 10,530 in 1960 to 13,922 in 2000 (32%).
- While this Plan is for the City of Durango and its planning area, and not the County, County growth has a tremendous impact on the City from the perspective of facilities and services, employment and traffic. It is projected in *2030 Trip: The Durango/La Plata County Regional Transportation Study* that the County is expected to grow at a rate of approximately 2.06% over the planning horizon.
  - The 2030 population of the County is projected to be 80,921, which is an 84.16% increase over the 2000 population of 43,941.
  - The County, including Durango, was home to 17,346 households in 2000, which is expected to increase with the population to a total of 33,995 households by 2030.

#### Age

- Overall, the population of Durango is younger than that of the nation – the median age in 2000 in Durango was 29.2 years, while the median age in the U.S. is 35.3 years.

#### Employment

- 80% of workers over the age of 16 in Durango, or 5,806 people, worked within the City, and 97% worked within the County.
- 75% of Durango workers commute via car, truck or van.

## CITY OF DURANGO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

- Almost a quarter of Durango's workforce is employed in education, health care or social services.
- The largest occupational sector for Durango workers in 2000 was management, professional and related occupations, with sales and office occupations forming the second highest employment category by sector.

### Income

- The City's household median income of \$34,892 is consistent with the smaller household size for the City, and was below that of the County, state and nation by over \$5,000.
- While the median household income in Durango was only 76% of the national median income in 1990, by 1999 that number had increased to 83% of the national median.
- Of the projected new County households, the majority are expected to be middle income households, which are defined as those households with an annual income of between \$25,000 and \$75,000. .



### Housing Costs

- Housing has become increasingly unaffordable.
- As of the 2000 U.S. Census, a total of 1,023 renters and 313 owners were reported as paying over 35% of their incomes for housing. This amounted to 24% of Durango's 5,538 households that were tallied by the Census. The federal standard for rental housing affordability is 30% of income for all housing costs, including utilities. There is no such standard for home ownership affordability, but many lenders now consider 33% of income as affordable for the mortgage payment, taxes and insurance.
- Since 2000, the median home sales price in Durango has increased from \$195,500 to \$436,050, a 220% percent increase. The income gains of low and moderate income families in Durango for the same period are not known, but nationally, estimates of income increases for this population group show only increases of a few percentage points. As a result, the percentage of cost-burdened Durango households is substantially higher than 24%.

## CHAPTER 4

### NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ELEMENT

## CHAPTER 4 - NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ELEMENT

### Overview

This element addresses Durango's natural environment -- the source of the community's primary assets and constraints. The Animas River, air quality, abundance of wildlife, easy access to outdoor recreational opportunities and to natural open space areas: all are highly valued by area residents. At the same time, the underlying geology, topography, soils and floodplains impose constraints on development in many areas. Most of the unconstrained areas in Durango have already been developed. As pressures increase to develop more constrained sites, the community is faced with decisions to balance the demand for additional urban land with issues of public safety, environmental integrity and community character.

"Sustainability" is a cornerstone of the City's Plan that is supported by the majority of participants in the planning process, especially in regard to the natural environment, with many participants voicing a desire to move beyond sustainability to enhance the surrounding environment as Durango grows, rather than minimizing harms. This concept is discussed in greater detail throughout the Plan, including in the Key Issues section of this Chapter.

### Context for Planning

Durango's natural environment is a valuable community resource - it is the dominant feature of the community's character; it makes Durango unique; and, ironically, it is the attractiveness of the Animas River, the hillsides and open spaces that make Durango so attractive for development that could in turn degrade the quality of the natural environment. Because today's development decisions will shape environmental and open space opportunities for generations to come, it is critical to prioritize natural resources and to maintain a balance between built and natural environments.

### Topography and Geology

As shown in **Map 1**, Durango is located in La Plata County, in southwestern Colorado. Downtown Durango is located in the Animas River Valley at an elevation of 6,500 feet above mean sea level ("msl"), surrounded by mountains and mesas of the San Juan Mountains. The edges of these mesas, ridges and mountains are characterized by steep slopes; **Map 2** identifies areas with greater than 30 percent grades. These slopes generally are less stable, more susceptible to erosion, rock falls, landslides, stormwater and floodwater damage, and increasing development costs.

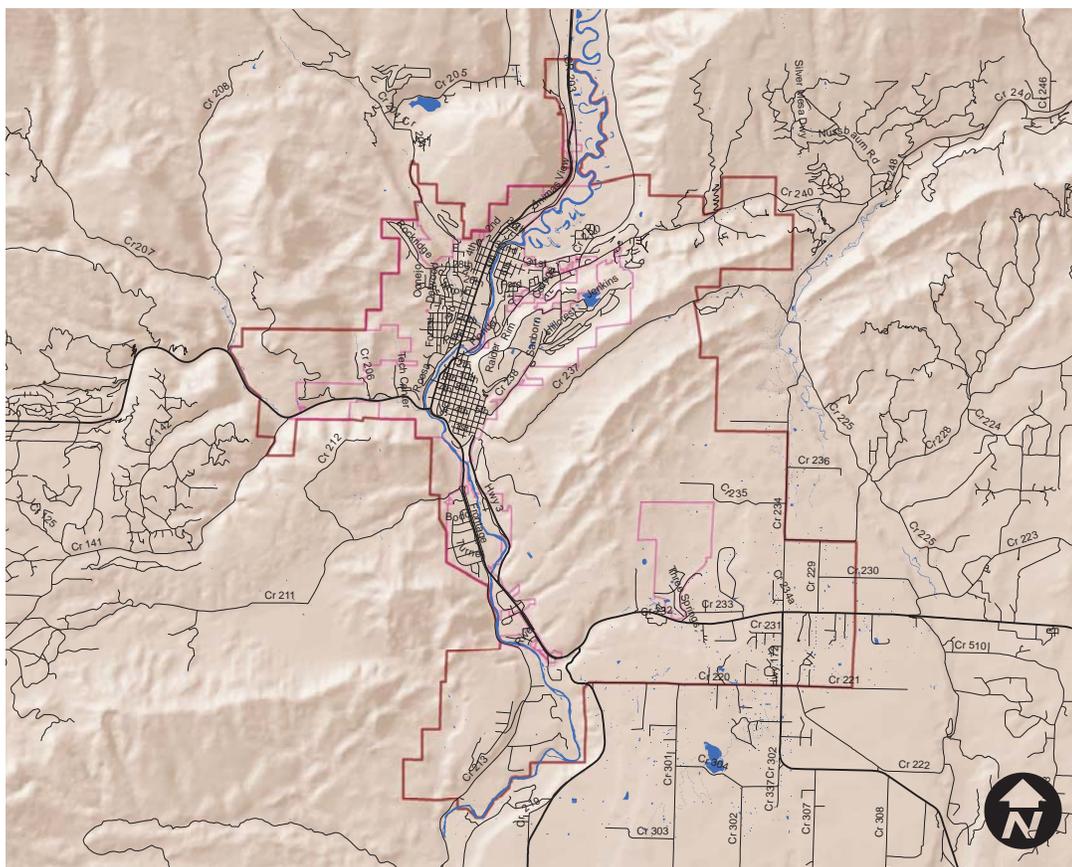
Geologic constraints, shown in **Map 3**, include:

- rock falls (areas below very steep slopes or cliffs subject to periodic rock falls);
- potentially unstable slopes (those subject to failure if disturbed improperly);
- unstable slopes (slopes subject to failure, such as creep, but not known to be landslides);
- landslides (known areas of slope failure, including avalanches and rotational and translational slides);
- the Fruitland Outcrop, an area in which natural gas is close to the earth's surface and prone to seeping into wells and the surface;
- debris fans (areas subject to torrential wash from tributary streams); and
- seismic faults.

# MAP 1 : REGIONAL SETTING

CITY OF DURANGO

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE



### Legend

- Plan Area
- City Limits
- Roads
  - Highway
  - Local
  - Water



0 0.5 1 2 Miles

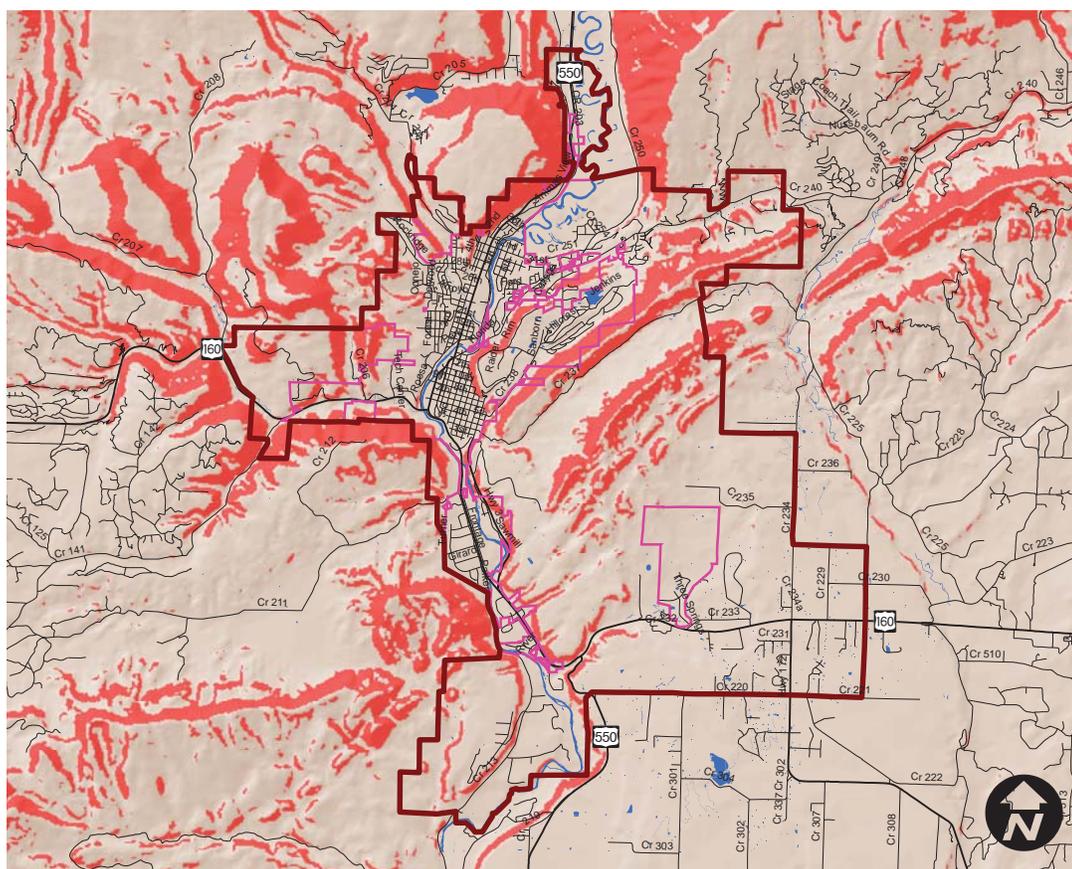


PLANNING WORKS

## MAP 2 : STEEP SLOPES

CITY OF DURANGO

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE



### Legend

- Plan Area
- City Limits
- Roads**
- Highway
- Local
- Less Than 30% Slope
- Steep Slopes
- Water

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

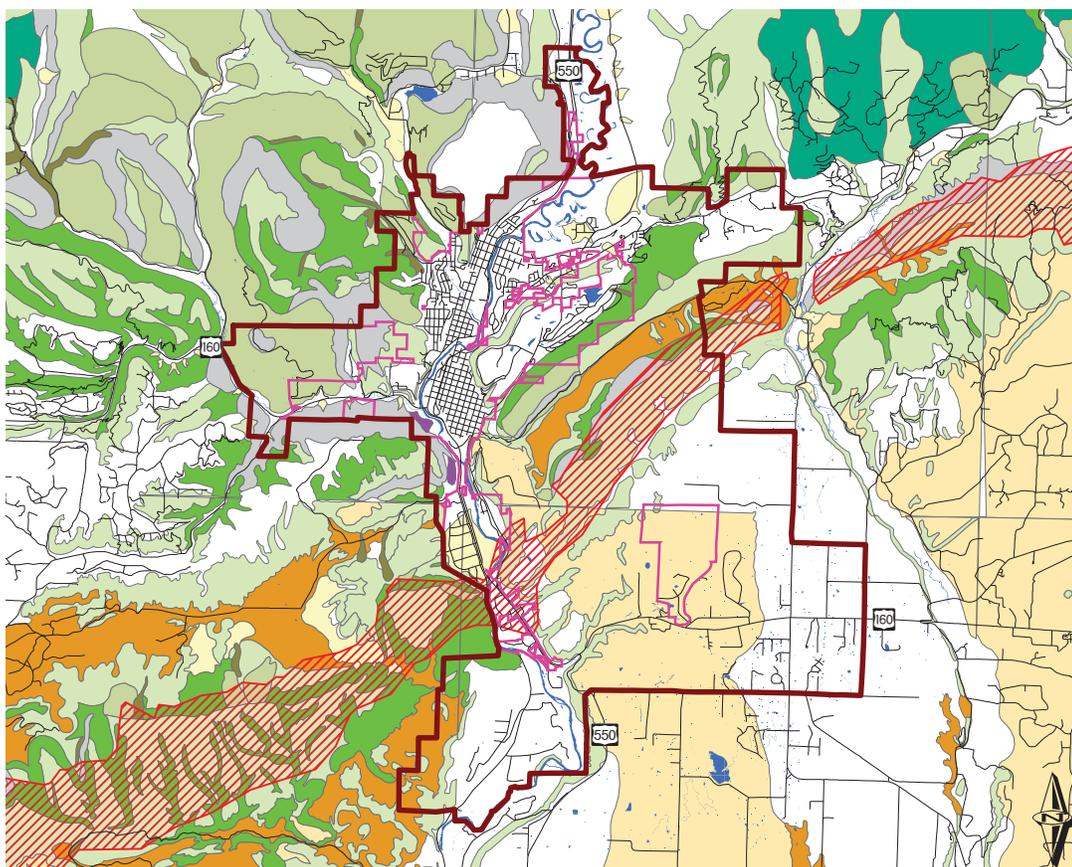


PLANNING WORKS

### MAP 3 : GEOLOGIC CONSTRAINTS

CITY OF DURANGO

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE



#### Legend

- Plan Area
- City Limits
- Roads
- Fruitland Outcrop
- Water
- Avalanche
- Debris Fans
- Moderate Erosion Potential
- High Erosion Potential
- Potentially Unstable Slopes
- Unstable Slopes
- Slope Failure Complex
- Landslides
- Mud Flows
- Radioactivity
- Rockfall

0 0.5 1 2 Miles



Map Document: (G:\Client\Durango, CO\Maps\CompPlan\Map 3 - Geologic Constraints.mxd)  
3/8/2007 - 2:56:48 PM

Data Source: City of Durango, La Plata County, US Census, FEMA, USGS

## CHAPTER 4

### NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ELEMENT

Soil suitability also limits development, as characterized by the following predominant soil types found in the Durango region:

- Zyme-Rock Outcrop-Ustic Torriorthents, which are found on foothills, ridges and terrace escarpments to the south and east of Durango. These soils are moderately fine to moderately coarse textured, drain well and are highly valued for livestock grazing and wildlife habitat. Shallow depth to bedrock, steep slope and high shrink-swell potential are the main limitations to development. Off-site sewage disposal systems are more satisfactory than on-site.
- Pescar-Tefton-Fluvaquents are found in floodplains and low terraces along the Animas River in Durango and running north. These soils are deep and somewhat poorly drained, with a moderately coarse texture. These soils are primarily used for irrigated field crops and pasture, rangeland and wildlife habitat. Frequent flooding, seepage and a high water table frequently require extensive engineering designs, for drainage protection and to minimize flooding, as these sites are developed.
- Shalona-Sedillo-Mikim soils are prevalent on river terraces and alluvial fans along the Animas River south of Durango. These soils are deep and well-drained with a medium texture. These soils are used for irrigated field crops and pastures, non-irrigated crops, rangeland and wildlife habitat. Low soil strength and high shrink-swell potential are the primary development limitations. Moderate to slow permeability may limit on-site sewage capabilities.
- Archuleta-Goldvale-Hesperus soils are found on hills, ridges and mountainsides and in valleys. These soil types are common in the areas north, northeast and northwest of Durango. These soils may be shallow or deep, and typically are well drained, with a medium to moderately coarse texture. These soils support woodlands, livestock grazing, irrigated and non-irrigated crops and wildlife habitat. Depth to bedrock and steep slopes are primary development limitations.

Durango's planning area encompasses many sub-basins that drain directly to the Animas River and its tributaries, such as Junction Creek, Dry Creek and Lightner Creek. **Map 4** shows available information<sup>1</sup> for portions of the 100-year floodplain, as designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency ("FEMA").

Mineral reserves are located throughout the planning area, as illustrated in **Map 5**, and include gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc, barite, uranium and vanadium. There also are significant bituminous and sub-bituminous coal deposits located southwest, southeast and east of Durango, ranging from 150 to 3,000 feet in depth. Natural gas deposits are located south and east of Durango in the Ignacio-Blanco gas fields. Sand and gravel deposits also are prevalent throughout the Animas River Valley, as well as on surrounding mesas.

#### Fruitland Formation Outcrop

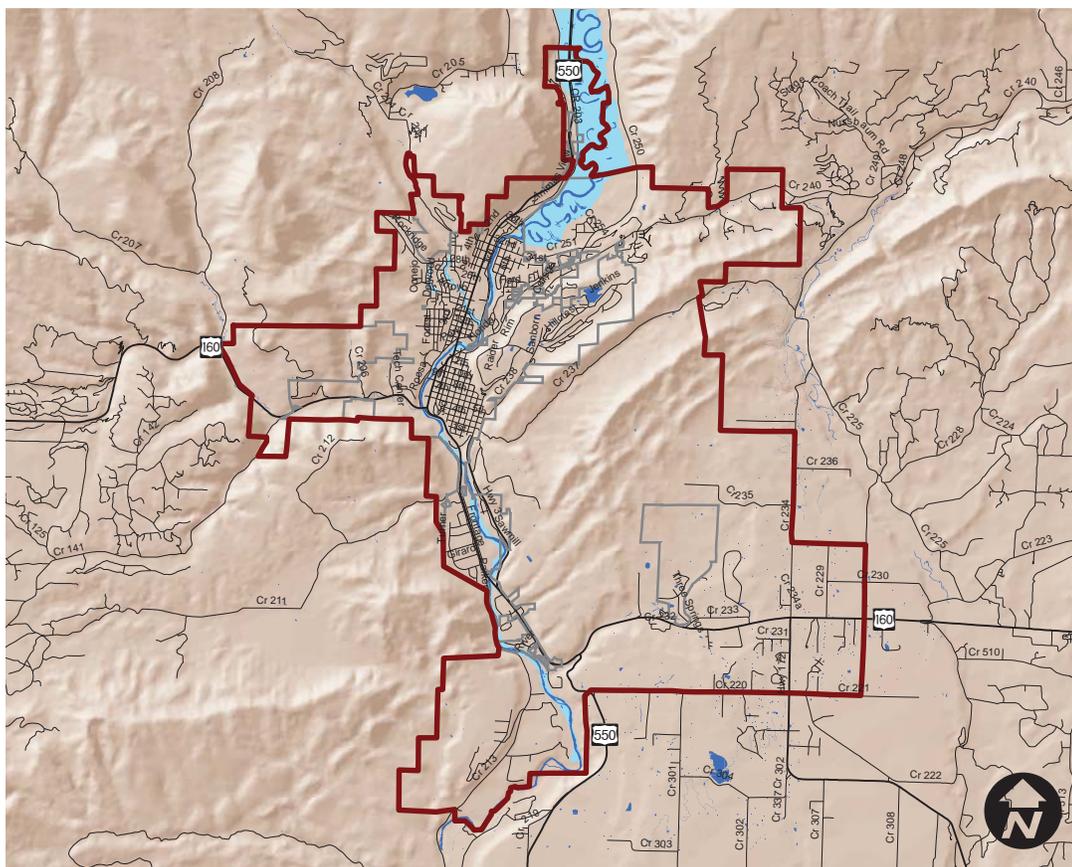
The Fruitland Formation, shown in **Map 3**, is a natural gas (coalbed methane) formation that extends southward from Durango underneath the San Jan Basin. The Fruitland Outcrop, where the Fruitland coal seam crops out at the surface of the Northern San Juan Basin rim, extends for about 90 miles across southwestern Colorado. A great amount of gas is found at shallow depths in the Fruitland

<sup>1</sup> Digital floodplain data are not available for large portions of the planning area.

## MAP 4 : FLOODPLAINS

CITY OF DURANGO

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE



### Legend

- Plan Area
- City Limits
- Roads**
- Highway
- Local
- 100 Year Floodplain
- Water

Note: FEMA has not completed digitizing FIRM Floodplain maps for La Plata County. Please refer to area specific FIRM maps for complete Floodplain information available at [www.FEMA.gov](http://www.FEMA.gov).

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

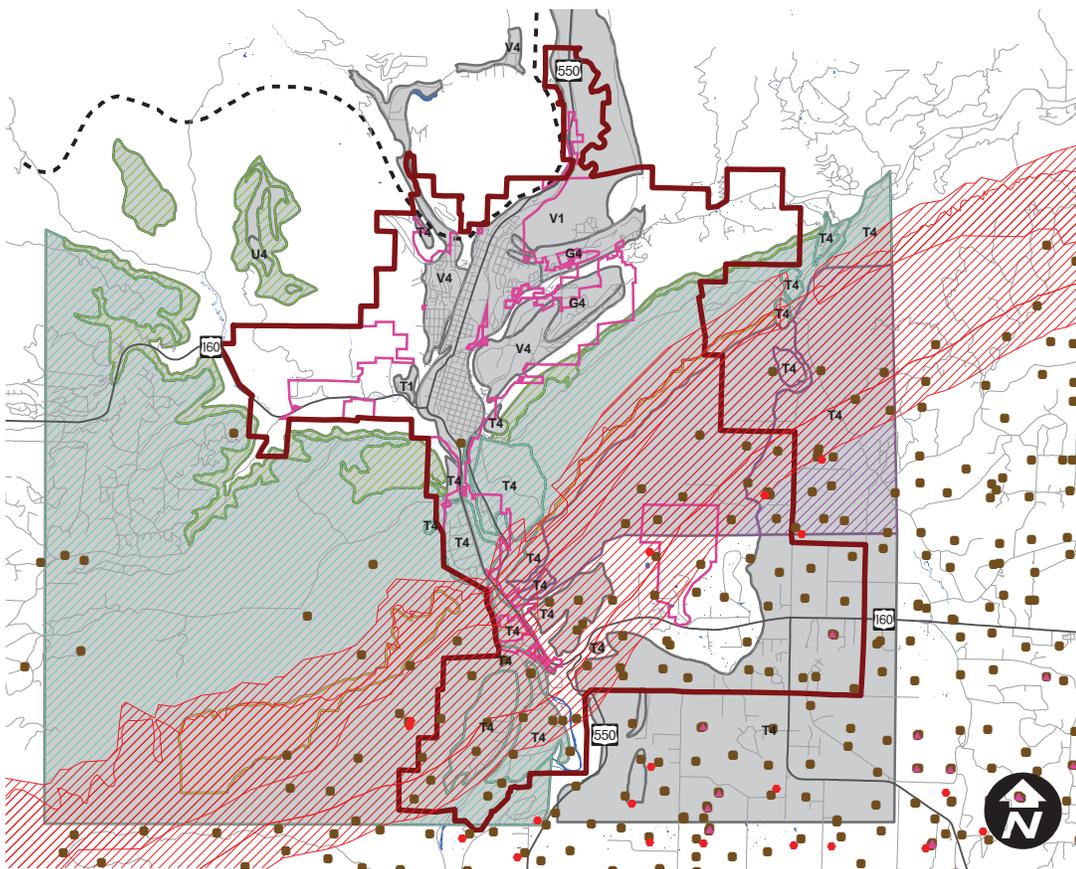


PLANNING WORKS

# MAP 5 : MINERAL RESERVES

CITY OF DURANGO

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE



### Legend

- Oil and Gas Facilities
- ▲ Oil and Gas Permits
- Oil and Gas Wells
- ▨ Fruitland Outcrop and Buffer
- ▭ Plan Area
- ▭ City Limits
- Highway
- Local
- - - La Plata Mining District
- ▨ Outcrop of coal-bearing Fruitland FM
- ▨ Outcrop of coal-bearing Menfee FM
- ▨ Area underlain by both coals
- ▨ Area underlain by Menfee coals
- Water

### Landform

- V-Valley Fill
- T-Stream Terrace
- U-Upland Deposit
- G-Glacial Deposit

### Classification

- 1-Gravel-Relatively Clean
- 4-Unevaluated, but possible resource



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Formation, making it a valuable natural resource for gas mining. Many operating gas wells exist in the area, leading to local concerns about the impacts of those mining activities, including increased traffic congestion and the need for new roads to serve the wells, environmental impacts such as noise and/or degraded air and water quality, and potential threats to historical and cultural resources. The Outcrop poses potential threats to public health and safety due to methane seepage, which has caused vegetation in the area to die off as well as underground coal fires.

#### **Biology**

There are diverse indigenous and introduced vegetation and wildlife in the planning area. Cottonwood trees, willow trees and hardy grasses grow along the Animas River. Piñons, junipers, ponderosa pines and sagebrush are common in the areas surrounding Durango to the south, east and west. A mix of aspen, conifers, ponderosa pine and Douglas fir are found north of the City. Noxious weeds are a concern throughout the planning area. There is abundant wildlife along the Animas River; the river valley serving as a habitat for a wide variety of wildlife, including fish, bald and golden eagles, peregrine falcons, marsh and red-tailed hawks, kestrels, beavers, muskrats, mule deer and elk.

#### **Water and Air Quality**

The Animas and Florida Rivers are the source of Durango's public water system. Approximately 40 percent of La Plata County's population relies on some type of unregulated water system. There is limited water quality data available, but existing studies have cited historic contamination of the Animas River from sediment, salts and heavy metals. Naturally occurring sediment in the Animas River is exacerbated by sediment from human activities, which could be better managed. While groundwater from the La Plata, Animas, Florida and Pine Rivers' alluvium is high quality in many areas, sulfur and other mineral contaminants have been found in some alluvial wells. Non-alluvial water throughout the County can contain a variety of contaminants, including bacteria, selenium, fluoride, methane gas, hydrogen sulfide and salinity. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment recommends the design and implementation of a rural water system.

Durango's air quality is very good; it is an attainment area for all air pollution criteria, including ozone, carbon monoxide and PM10. Durango occasionally experiences localized air quality problems and decreased visibility common to western slope communities. Despite the City's attainment status, residents have expressed concern about air quality problems from wood stoves and the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, which operates coal-fired trains shuttling tourists between Durango and Silverton. Air quality also depends upon regional policies, particularly energy production throughout the Four Corners region.

Durango enjoys moderate temperatures year-round -- the average summer temperature in Durango is 65°F; the average winter temperature is 28°F, with average winter temperatures ranging from the teens to near 40°F and average summer temperatures ranging from near 50°F to the mid-80s. Durango averages 18 inches of precipitation and 67 inches of snowfall per year (though higher elevations can receive as much as 250 inches of snowfall per year).

#### **Key Issues**

##### **Building Sustainability**

"Sustainability" is one of the key principles on which this Plan is founded, which is inclusive of economic, social and environmental sustainability. Many people view these elements as interdependent from the viewpoint of sustainability. In terms of the natural environment, sustainability can refer to development patterns that minimize the impacts of the development on the

## CHAPTER 4

### NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ELEMENT

environment, construction techniques that use “green” alternatives to conventional materials and systems, reliance on renewable sources of energy and an overall philosophy that balances the human impact on natural systems and resources in an effort to achieve positive outcomes for both people and the environment.

#### **Conserving Energy**

Rising energy costs across all sectors, especially in regard to natural gas and gasoline, have had a large and immediate impact on personal, corporate and public budgeting and wealth over the past few years. Diminishing supplies are likely to accelerate these cost increases. Budgetary impact, combined with a strong feeling of personal and public responsibility to minimize human impact on the environment, has fueled the impetus for energy conservation in the community, including increased interest in green building techniques and the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards, as well as support for alternative forms of transportation. In response to concerns about energy consumption and its environmental impacts, the City Council adopted the U.S. Mayors’ Climate Protection Agreement on October 17, 2006.

#### **Protecting the Animas River**

In addition to being a source of water for community residents and wildlife, the Animas River has become an increasingly important recreational amenity.<sup>2</sup> The river is used extensively for rafting, kayaking and fishing. The community has focused considerable effort in the development of a recreational trail system throughout the length of the community. The City has a strong interest in maintaining the quality of the water and protecting stream flows.

#### **Maintaining High Air Quality**

The overall air quality in Durango is excellent, though localized pollution from the train, wood stoves, fugitive dust and fires cause periodic degradation. The community will continue to weigh the costs and benefits of managing pollution from the train and wood stoves. Fugitive dust can be moderated to a limited extent through improved pavement management practices as they become cost effective. As the population and traffic increase in the area, auto emissions are likely to become an increasingly significant source of pollution.

#### **Preserving Wildlife Habitat and Corridors**

Elk, deer, hawks, eagles, bears, mountain lions, and other wildlife are common sights in Durango. As development occurs in the Animas River Valley and along arterial roads leading into Durango, there will continue to be increasing conflicts between development and wildlife. There is a high potential for disruption of normal movement through open space corridors that could damage local animal populations. By preserving adequate open space corridors around the City and by increasing awareness of ways to limit wildlife/people problems (e.g. bears and trash), Durango can reduce conflicts between humans and wildlife without damaging wildlife populations. Area residents have voted to support funding for open space preservation.

#### **Ensuring Public Safety**

<sup>2</sup> While Durango currently relies primarily on the Florida River for potable water, the Animas provides non-potable water and is likely to play an increasingly important role as a source of potable water, particularly through water diverted to the Animas-La Plata Water Project.

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As development has consumed most of the readily developable sites in the community, there is increasing pressure to develop environmentally constrained properties, such as the hillsides and floodplains. While limited development may be appropriate in some of these areas, it should be designed to minimize risks from natural hazards such as wildfire and flooding.

#### **Balancing Urban Growth and Environmental Integrity**

While sustainability is a simple and appealing concept, it is difficult to measure. Incremental losses of open space or habitat rarely have measurable or predictable impacts -- it is the cumulative impact of many decisions over time that has more profound effects. This, combined with the fact that developed land is rarely redeveloped as open space, increases the importance of ensuring that adequate land is set aside to maintain the community's environmental integrity.

#### **Preserving Access to and Vistas of Natural Areas**

By protecting hillsides and ridgelines overlooking the community from inappropriate development, Durango has secured significant open space land to supplement state and federal lands to establish and maintain the natural vistas that form an "emerald necklace" around the City. Public and private development should be designed to minimize disturbance of hillsides and to ensure that community residents will enjoy safe access to the public lands surrounding Durango.

As flat land becomes scarcer, pressure to develop along hillsides has increased, prompting aesthetic, engineering and safety concerns. Development on the City's tree-covered hillsides is highly visible. Hillsides outside of the current City limits serve as wildlife habitat areas, yet also represent significant wildfire hazards. While building safety and some environmental impacts from development on hillsides and steep slopes can be mitigated through engineering techniques, these techniques have little effect on residents' views and negative effects on area wildlife.

#### **Natural Resource Goals, Objectives and Policies**

**Goal 1: To maintain or improve the quality of Durango's natural resources.**

**Objective 1.1: Maintain an up-to-date GIS-based inventory of natural resources and monitor the impacts of growth on those resources.**

Policy 1.1.1: Promote studies from the Colorado Department of Wildlife ("CDOW") and appropriate federal agencies to identify trends in wildlife populations.

Policy 1.1.2: Promote Federal, State, Tribal and other efforts to identify the impact of different sources of pollution in the Animas River and evaluate strategies to minimize significant sources of pollution.

Policy 1.1.3: Promote and support air quality studies and initiatives as appropriate.

Policy 1.1.4: Monitor forest health in coordination with the Colorado State Forest Service.

## CHAPTER 4

### NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ELEMENT

Policy 1.1.5: Coordinate with the La Plata County Animal Damage Advisory Committee to identify areas of predator concerns and management.

**Objective 1.2: Adopt and implement cost-effective resource management strategies in collaboration with citizens, businesses, La Plata County and other public agencies.**

Policy 1.2.1: Require development to mitigate impacts on natural resources, including surface and groundwater contamination, soil erosion or contamination, air quality degradation and loss of vegetation.

Policy 1.2.2: Continually evaluate and refine the City's Storm Water Quality Management practices and requirements, including the riverfront development review process, to achieve cost effective outcomes, improve the quality of runoff and comply with Federal standards.

Policy 1.2.3: Work with the State, residents and employers to reduce significant sources of air pollution.

Policy 1.2.4: Support growth and water resource management strategies that help maintain the aesthetic, recreational and environmental value of the Animas River Greenway and the SMART 160 corridor. Coordinate these efforts with the Animas River Task Force and other applicable interests.

Policy 1.2.5: Maintain 'best management practices' grading and construction standards to minimize erosion and sedimentation from public and private construction sites and completed development projects.

Policy 1.2.6: Include water quality impacts when evaluating open space acquisitions and when designing roadway, snow storage, stormwater management and other public improvements.

Policy 1.2.7: Favor natural or landscaped drainageways over built drainage systems whenever the natural drainageway can accommodate anticipated runoff. Where projected runoff cannot be accommodated by natural drainageways, seek improvements that retain the natural characteristics of water courses and floodplain areas to the greatest extent feasible.

Policy 1.2.8: Coordinate with La Plata County, the Animal Damage Advisory Committee, State and Federal organizations to implement effective strategies to maintain healthy wildlife populations in open spaces surrounding the community, balanced with human use of open space. Such strategies will include the protection of key habitat and migration corridors and the provision of facilities to reduce wildlife deaths on highways.

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- Policy 1.2.9: Pursue regional and local strategies to preserve the Animas River Greenway, SMART 160 corridor and all trails within the City limits as recreational and environmental amenities for future generations.
- Policy 1.2.10: Ensure that mineral and gas extraction activities are consistent with the conservation of other natural resources and are compatible with adjacent land uses and local governmental directives.
- Policy 1.2.11: Ensure the continuation of control and management of noxious and exotic weeds and management of appropriate plant species in the City of Durango.
- Policy 1.2.12: Use the development review process to ensure that development activities comply with local, state and federal environmental laws.
- Policy 1.2.13: Work with citizen groups, including the Animas River Task Force and City Council appointed advisory boards on activities along the Animas River Greenway.
- Policy 1.2.14: Allow wood burning fireplace inserts and stoves in residential units only when such units meet or exceed emission standards for EPA Phase II Wood Burning Devices. Allow no more than one open fireplace within hotel and lodge lobbies and restaurants.

**Objective 1.3: Conservatively use and reuse natural resources.**

- Policy 1.3.1: Expand the scope of local and regional recycling efforts and the use of recycled products.
- Policy 1.3.2: Use billing structures, public education, collection policies and other strategies to minimize waste flow.
- Policy 1.3.3: Provide education and leadership promoting conservation, recycling and reuse of resources.

**Goal 2: To maintain Durango's views of natural hillsides and mountains.**

**Objective 2.1: Identify key parcels needed to preserve a natural greenbelt along hillsides and ridgelines.**

- Policy 2.1.1: Limit development densities on steep slopes over 30%.
- Policy 2.1.2: Map protected ridgelines and develop setbacks and other design standards to retain the natural appearance of skylines that are visible from primary public streets.
- Policy 2.1.3: Retain the natural appearance of hillsides by encouraging dedications of conservation easements or land on steep and moderately steep hillsides, and by minimizing hillside cut and fill for buildings, roads or other development.

## CHAPTER 4

### NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ELEMENT

Policy 2.1.4: In areas where cut and fill is necessary to provide safe access to development, require landscape improvements to reduce the visual impact of such work.

Policy 2.1.5: Oppose efforts to use publicly owned hillside lands for private development or enterprises unless the City finds that the public benefit exceeds the negative impacts and the parcels are not identified as key elements of the scenic backdrop.

**Goal 3: To protect sensitive floodplains, hillsides, wetlands and wildlife habitat from inappropriate development.**

**Objective 3.1: Secure a continuous band of open space<sup>3</sup> through or around the City of Durango to provide habitat areas and corridors for the movement of wildlife populations that work in conjunction with human use in those spaces.**

Policy 3.1.1: Preserve public and privately owned open space corridors in coordination with La Plata County, the Colorado Division of Wildlife ("CDOW"), the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management and other land owners.

Policy 3.1.2: Support cost-effective habitat conservation strategies such as dedications, targeted acquisition of land or development rights, and mandatory clustering of development.

Policy 3.1.3: Work with La Plata County, the Southern Ute Indian Tribe, CDOW, the Southern Rockies Ecosystem Project and the Colorado Department of Transportation ("CDOT") to incorporate design alternatives that provide safe routes for wildlife crossing State highways or reduce the need for wildlife crossings.

**Objective 3.2: Protect people, property and water quality by limiting inappropriate development in floodplains and wetlands.**

Policy 3.2.1: Maintain up-to-date GIS records of available floodplain, wetland and critical riparian habitat data to implement the City's floodplain and riparian regulations.

Policy 3.2.2: Minimize grading and construction activities within the Animas River floodplain. Permit development within tributary floodplains when consistent with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) guidelines, City floodplain requirements and City stormwater management standards.

<sup>3</sup> Durango is surrounded by significant public land holdings controlled by federal, state and local governments. This objective assumes that these public lands will be combined with private land holdings.

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Policy 3.2.3: Limit development in the floodway to bridge crossings, utilities, trails and river access improvements. Low intensity recreational uses may be authorized by the City for development in the floodplains.

Policy 3.2.4: Minimize erosion and sedimentation of the river from land use and development along the river.

**Objective 3.3: Minimize loss of life or property to natural hazards such as wildfires and geologic hazards.**

Policy 3.3.1: Limit development in or near identified natural hazard areas, unless mitigating measures are undertaken to minimize the risk of injury to persons and loss of property.

Policy 3.3.2: Enforce building safety codes to ensure that development can reasonably withstand impacts from natural occurrences such as heavy snowfall.

Policy 3.3.3: Work with La Plata County to develop methane seep setback and avoidance strategies to protect people and development from methane seep dangers.

Policy 3.3.4: Ensure that safe and adequate access is provided to wildfire-prone properties prior to development approvals. Require defensible site designs that minimize the risks to life and property development in these areas.

## CHAPTER 5

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

## CHAPTER 5 - COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

### Overview

This element focuses on key development issues facing Durango and surrounding parts of the community including:

- Community Character/Land Use;
- Growth Management;
- Economy/Tourism; and
- Cultural/Historic Resources.

Since the early 1990s, Durango and La Plata County have experienced sustained growth. Growth within the City and in surrounding areas has brought increased revenues, housing and employment, but it also has:

- Developed formerly open lands;
- Increased traffic congestion in the City and County;
- Increased demands for a variety of public utilities, facilities and services; and
- Increased housing costs.

This Comprehensive Plan element highlights the key community development issues facing the community, defines community goals and objectives, identifies local development and environmental policies, and recommends strategies to achieve community goals. The future land use plan and the policies of this element were developed based on extensive input from a broad cross-section of the public (see Appendix A).

### Context for Planning

#### Community Character/Land Use/Built Form

Durango area residents value a unique community character that blends the best elements of small town life, the college community, access to rural land, the Animas River and open space, and the cultural offerings of much larger cities. The planning area encompasses a variety of existing land uses and development patterns, which include agricultural land, recreation and open space uses, low-density residential uses, mid- and high-density residential uses and commercial and business uses (primarily in the downtown core and along arterial street corridors). Planning for appropriate land use availability, distribution and compatibility will maintain and enhance Durango's character and quality of life while providing for growth. The land use element proposes a mix of land uses intended to:

- Preserve environmental and natural resources;
- Assure that there is sufficient land available to accommodate projected growth;
- Preserve or enhance the existing areas of the City and its neighborhoods; and
- Indicate appropriate locations for future land uses.

The Durango planning area has maintained a relatively compact development pattern, though sprawl is becoming more prevalent at the edges.

#### Growth Management

Durango and La Plata County have grown significantly since the 1997 Comprehensive Plan. The County's growth has been due to many factors, including cheaper, more developable lands,

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development standards that minimize the cost of non-urban development and the desire for a rural lifestyle with easy access to jobs and services.

While the City has continued to grow, constraints on the remaining land in the City and at the urban fringe limit future development potential. The City has three remaining areas with significant development potential within the planning area – Ewing Mesa, the La Posta Road area, and Grandview. Ewing Mesa and Grandview are subject to currently adopted area plans that will be modified by this plan. The La Posta Road area is subject to a new area plan. Because these areas are largely outside the city limits, Durango will need to coordinate with La Plata County and affected property owners to manage development so that it:

- Establishes a balanced, compatible and well integrated mix of uses;
- Achieves sufficient densities to support efficient service provision;
- Is coordinated with the availability of adequate public facilities; and
- Is consistent with the City's comprehensive plan and development standards.

### **Economy/Tourism**

Durango's economy has historically been tied to natural resources. Recreational opportunities along the Animas River and in the vast open areas surrounding the City drive the local economy and attract much of the region's growth. The shift from mining to tourism has improved environmental conditions, but has not created a significant source of moderate to high wage jobs. Through the efforts of various local trade organizations and economic development corporations, *e.g.* Region 9 Economic Development District, Durango Industrial Development Foundation, Durango Chamber of Commerce, The Durango Business Improvement District, etc., the community has increased the diversity of its economic base and its economic stability. While resource-based tourism will remain an important element of the local economy, it will be subject to fluctuations in energy costs and environmental conditions (*e.g.*, lack of snow, wildfires, drought). The community's challenge is to foster sustainable and stable employment opportunities that provide a living wage for Durango residents.

### **Historic Preservation / Cultural Assets**

Historical and cultural assets can maintain and improve residents' quality of life, including Durango's character and "home town" atmosphere. In addition to the community's climate and access to wooded mountains, ski slopes, mountain bike trails, the Animas River, desert and other natural resources, Durango's small-town charm helps drive the tourist industry and make the City a desirable place to live.

Durango has been concerned about and sensitive to its historic roots. In 1975, the Heritage for Tomorrow, a plan for the central business district which included historic preservation, was adopted. It recognized that downtown was the focal point of residents and visitors -- for government and business, for the city and southwestern Colorado. Key elements of this plan/report included provisions for land uses, circulation improvements (vehicular and pedestrian) and other aesthetic and tourism issues.

While planning for the celebration of the Durango Centennial in 1981, many area residents focused on the need to get the community involved in preserving its legacy of historic buildings. Recognizing that historic preservation ('HP') was more than preserving symbols in the downtown area and requiring a community-wide view, Durango began to expand its strategy. *Little Pieces of Time*, published in 1984, is a pictorial review of the City's development, complete with background text and captions describing or explaining the photographs (many of which came from personal collections). Although this was not a 'planning document', it helped whet Durango's appetite for a historic preservation plan for the City.

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### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

In 1990, The Durango Historic Preservation Plan was adopted. The Preservation Plan summarized local historic preservation issues, inventoried known and potential historically significant properties and areas, made recommendations and identified implementation techniques. A focal point of the Preservation Plan is to identify, evaluate and protect significant historic resources – significance being the resource's potential to make a valuable contribution to Durango's history. While there are sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places located in Durango, the Preservation Plan expands the concept of historically significant to encourage a 'local register' that recognizes sites for their contribution to the City's growth and development and their impact on the region. Preservation Plan goals were designed to:

- Make historic preservation a continuous process;
- Increase public awareness of historic preservation;
- Integrate principles of historic preservation and economic development;
- Preserve historically significant properties; and
- Pursue state and federal historic preservation funding.

Cultural and recreational assets in the Durango area emphasize the community's geographic and historical significance. A major attraction for the area is the Durango and Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, providing access and atmosphere to these two communities. Other opportunities to enjoy and learn can be found at the Animas Museum, traditional Native American and Western art galleries, dinner theaters, Purgatory Ski Country, Mesa Verde National Park and the Anasazi Cliff Dwellings, passive and active outdoor activities, wildlife reserves, casinos and numerous local fairs and concerts.

The economic impact for the City by visitors is significant. Tourism has been steadily increasing in recent years, with 182,000 riders on the Durango and Silverton Narrow Gauge Railway, 519,645 visitors to Mesa Verde National Park and 554,892 overnight visitors to Durango in 2005. Based on the number of riders on the railway and visitors to Mesa Verde, tourism in Durango has not recovered to the levels attained prior to the national decline in tourism after September 11, 2001, however levels have been steadily increasing since then and are projected to continue to grow at healthy levels. The exception to this growth is the local ski industry. The 2005/06 ski season saw the lowest number of skier days recorded since the Durango Area Tourism Office began tracking such data in 1995/96, with only 211,000 skier days recorded. While prior years have shown steady ski industry performance, continued success depends upon adequate snowfall. The Durango Area Tourism Office estimates that there were 577,089 overnight visitors to Durango in 2006, and has set a 5% annual growth rate goal for the next five years, targeting a total of 737,222 overnight visitors by 2011. It is projected that the City will collect \$730,000 in gross lodgers tax in 2007.

Much of Durango's tourism is dependent upon the region's climate and access to the energy required to visit this somewhat remote area of the country. Drought, higher temperatures, and higher energy costs are all potential threats to a vital tourism industry.

#### Key Issues

##### Coordinating New Growth with the City's Ability to Serve

As growth occurs, the City must provide additional facilities and services to maintain the community's desired levels of service. The City has limited resources (*e.g.*, staff, funds, infrastructure for water storage) with which to serve new development. By establishing adequate level of service standards and phasing development approvals with the City's ability to meet those service standards, Durango can ensure that new growth does not outstrip its ability to serve.

Typically, adequate public facilities are defined by levels of service for public services which are necessary to promote the public's health, safety and welfare, such as minimum standards for transportation, water, sewer, stormwater and emergency service facilities. See the Housing Element for a more in-depth discussion of housing adequacy.

### **Maintaining the Community's Character**

Durango's quality of life continues to attract new residents. The resulting increases in housing, commercial development, traffic congestion and unfamiliar faces continue to change the community. Changes such as the downtown revitalization, river corridor development and redevelopment of commercial and industrial sites have improved the quality of life in Durango. Residents are now concerned about changes that affect their neighborhoods and Durango's small town atmosphere

### **Enhancing the Community's Built Form**

A key element of the City's character includes the predominance of traditional neighborhood development patterns that are consistent with new-urbanist development design principles. These principles should be followed to the greatest extent practical in the large Greenfield development areas of Grandview and Ewing Mesa. [*see Principles of New Urbanism inset*]. Moreover, the City's recent Commercial Use Design Guidelines and Infill Residential Standards and Guidelines should be followed up with Multi-family Residential Design Guidelines, new Guidelines for the Camino Del Rio Character Area, and Guidelines for Regional Centers Development

### **Providing a Balance of Future Land Uses**

Durango is a regional center for employment, shopping and services. Historically, the City has had a mixture of different types of housing and commercial uses. Commercial development has occurred along major arterial corridors; residential development has extended out to the valley walls. As the City reaches its geographical limits, there is a need to find the balance between residential and non-residential land uses on the remaining developable land.

### **Coordinating Growth with La Plata County**

Much of the growth in the community occurs on the urban fringe. Development pressures are high in the unincorporated area surrounding the City, where Durango's regulatory authority is limited. This is particularly true when extra-territorial<sup>4</sup> property can be developed at urban densities and non-urban standards. The City and La Plata County should continue to implement, refine and expand the 2005 Intergovernmental Agreement on Joint Planning to ensure that urban development outside the City is developed to appropriate standards, densities, and character.

### **Providing for Economic Diversity**

Durango's shift from mining to tourism improved the environmental quality of the City. However, the tourist-based economy fluctuates and is heavily weighted towards lower paying service sector jobs. Increases in light manufacturing, professional services and other sectors have improved the economic stability of Durango. While tourism will continue to play a vital role in the economy, increased economic diversification will moderate the "boom-bust" economic cycles that have been part of the community's history.

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<sup>4</sup> Extra-territorial properties are those that are outside of the City limits and the city's regulatory jurisdiction.

## CHAPTER 5

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### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

#### **Protecting Cultural/Historic Resources**

The Durango area has provided a desirable human habitat since pre-historic times. Visitors from locations around the globe who come to view cliff dwellings in Mesa Verde discover the historic charm of Main Avenue and surrounding neighborhoods in Durango. Historic and prehistoric sites are relatively common in the Durango area. These links with the recent and distant past are a valued part of the community fabric and should be preserved for future generations.

### **THE PRINCIPLES OF NEW URBANISM**

The principles of New Urbanism can be applied increasingly to projects at the full range of scales from a single building to an entire community.

#### **1. Walkability**

- Most things within a 10-minute walk of home and work
- Pedestrian friendly street design (buildings close to street; porches, windows & doors; tree-lined streets; on street parking; hidden parking lots; garages in rear lane; narrow, slow speed streets)
- Pedestrian streets free of cars in special cases

#### **2. Connectivity**

- Interconnected street grid network disperses traffic & eases walking
- A hierarchy of narrow streets, boulevards, and alleys
- High quality pedestrian network and public realm makes walking pleasurable

#### **3. Mixed-Use & Diversity**

- A mix of shops, offices, apartments, and homes on site. Mixed-use within neighborhoods, within blocks, and within buildings
- Diversity of people - of ages, income levels, cultures, and races

#### **4. Mixed Housing**

- A range of types, sizes and prices in closer proximity

#### **5. Quality Architecture & Urban Design**

- Emphasis on beauty, aesthetics, human comfort, and creating a sense of place;
- Special placement of civic uses and sites within community. Human scale architecture & beautiful surroundings nourish the human spirit

#### **6. Traditional Neighborhood Structure**

- Discernable center and edge
- Public space at center
- Importance of quality public realm; public open space designed as civic art
- Contains a range of uses and densities within 10-minute walk

#### **7. Increased Density**

- More buildings, residences, shops, and services closer together for ease of walking, to enable a more efficient use of services and resources, and to create a more convenient, enjoyable place to live.
- New Urbanism design principles are applied at the full range of densities from small towns, to large cities

#### **8. Smart Transportation**

- A network of high-quality trains connecting cities, towns, and neighborhoods together
- Pedestrian-friendly design that encourages a greater use of bicycles, rollerblades, scooters, and walking as daily transportation

#### **9. Sustainability**

- Minimal environmental impact of development and its operations
- Eco-friendly technologies, respect for ecology and value of natural systems
- Energy efficiency
- Less use of finite fuels
- More local production
- More walking, less driving

#### **10. Quality of Life**

- Taken together these add up to a high quality of life well worth living, and create places that enrich, uplift, and inspire the human spirit.

Source: [www.newurbanism.org/newurbanism.html](http://www.newurbanism.org/newurbanism.html)

## CHAPTER 5

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

#### Community Development Goals, Objectives and Policies

**Goal 4:** To develop a coordinated growth management strategy in conjunction with La Plata County, the Towns of Bayfield and Ignacio, and the Southern Ute Indian Tribe.

**Objective 4.1:** Establish complementary strategies to address land use, economic development, housing and transportation challenges.

Policy 4.1.1: Participate in regular forums to discuss mutual growth challenges.

Policy 4.1.2: Seek mutually beneficial ways to address county-wide growth challenges.

**Goal 5:** To maintain and enhance the diverse, small town charm of Durango as the City grows.

**Objective 5.1:** Maintain a future land use map that provides guidance on land use decisions for public and private decision-makers.

Policy 5.1.1: Use **Table 1** to categorize future land uses. Each category may permit land uses and intensities from more than one zoning district, as shown in **Table 1** and explained in **Table 2**. Land uses are listed as examples and should not be considered all-inclusive. Densities are either listed as a maximum gross density or as a range of appropriate densities for each residential use category. Residential densities are expressed in dwelling units (“DUs”) per gross acre of a project, including streets and other dedication areas.

**Table 1: Future Land Use Categories**

Land Use	Density Restrictions	Description	Applicable Zoning District
Rural*	Max 1 DU/ 35 acres	Private land that will remain in parcels of 35 or more acres. Most of these parcels will receive no urban level services.	R
Rural Estates*	Max 1 DU/ 10 acres	Private land that will remain in residential parcels of 10 or more acres. Most of these parcels will receive no urban level services.	R
Rural Residential*	Max 1 DU/ 10 acres	Private land that will consist of residential lots typically served by wells and/or septic systems.	R

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Land Use	Density Restrictions	Description	Applicable Zoning District
Residential - Large Lot*	Max 1 DU/acre	Single family residential lots which typically are served by public water and/or wastewater systems.	RS-R
Residential - Low density	up to 4.99 DUs per acre	Single family residential lots generally ranging from 6,000 SF to 1 acre that receive full urban services. This land use includes other dwelling types through planned developments. Limited neighborhood scale non-residential uses may be established subject to appropriate design and location standards (see policy 5.2.3).	RS-R, RS-4, RS-5
Residential - Medium Density**	From 5 to 11.99 DUs per acre	Single family residential lots smaller than 6,000 SF. Other dwelling types, including duplexes, triplexes, patio homes, apartments and townhomes are permitted. Limited neighborhood scale non-residential uses may be established subject to appropriate design and location standards (see policy 5.2.3).	RS-5, RST-8, RM-10
Residential - High Density**	From 12 -24 DUs per acre	Includes multi-family dwellings and group dwellings. Limited neighborhood scale non-residential uses may be established subject to appropriate design and location standards (see policy 5.2.3).	RM-16, RM-24
Mixed Use**	6 to 24 DUs per acre	Requires an integrated mix of both residential (typically multi-family units) and commercial development. Non-residential uses should be limited to retail, office, service and quasi-public uses with no outdoor storage, display or operations. Areas designated mixed use are strongly encouraged to be designed in accordance with “new urbanist” principles. The scale of commercial development should be consistent with the site location, but, regardless of scale, it should be designed to support pedestrians, bicylists and transit riders.	PD, LC
Multiple Use**	<24 DUs per acre	Allows a mix of residential and commercial development or single use development. Non-residential uses should be limited to retail, office, service and quasi-public uses with no outdoor storage, display or operations.	RM-10, RM-16, RM-24, NB

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### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

Land Use	Density Restrictions	Description	Applicable Zoning District
Commercial**	NA	Permits a wide range of commercial development (e.g., office, retail, service), with all operations and storage being contained within the primary buildings (e.g., grocery stores, the mall, factory outlet stores, hotels, restaurants).	NB LC
Mixed Commercial / Light Industrial**	NA	Permits business park, commercial and light industrial uses with outside storage, display and operations (e.g., office/warehouse uses, auto sales, auto repair shops, lumber yards, light manufacturing). Additional buffering and more stringent design standards should apply to this category when adjacent to arterial roads or residential land uses.	LC HC I
Downtown CBD	NA	Permits a mix of residential and non-residential uses, but requires retail, service or office uses on all street level floors.	CB
Industrial	10-acre site, minimum	Permits mining, gas production, batch plants and manufacturing uses with outdoor operations.	HC I
Institutional / Public	NA	Public and quasi-public uses, such as schools, government facilities, cemeteries, hospitals and churches.	PB
Parks & Recreation	NA	Public and private land designated for passive or active recreational uses.	PB
Conservation / Open Space	NA	Public or private land which will remain undeveloped as natural open space. Minor improvements such as trails and parking areas may exist to provide access.	PB

\*While these uses are not urban in intensity, they are included within the City's planning area to establish appropriately low densities on environmentally sensitive lands or to establish transitional land uses in areas that are not anticipated to receive urban utilities in the next 20 years.

\*\*Maximum densities for these future land use categories are subject to additional limitations described in the Grandview Area Plan.

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**Table 2: City of Durango Zoning Districts**

Zoning District	District Name	Density per Gross Acre	Description
RS-R	Residential Single-Family Rural	2	Provides for low density rural and agricultural uses which are annexed into the city. It is anticipate these areas will develop into urban densities.
RS-4	Residential Single-Family	4	Medium density single-family development within urban areas.
RS-5	Residential Single-Family	5	Higher density single-family development within urban areas.
RST-8	Residential Single / Two-Family	8	High density single-/two-family urban zone.
RM-10	Residential Multifamily	10	Low density multifamily.
RM-16	Residential Multifamily	16	Medium density multifamily.
RM-24	Residential Multifamily	24	Higher density multifamily.
RM-32	Residential Multifamily	32	High density multifamily.
RM-42	Residential Multifamily	42	High density multifamily.
NB	Neighborhood Business District	n/a	Provide shopping and services to nearby neighborhoods.
CB	Central Business District	n/a	Concentrated indoor retail and services, but not regional shopping (malls).
PK	Parking District	n/a	Provides areas required for designated off-street parking.
LC	Light Commercial	n/a	Retail requiring large amounts of land or access to a major street system. Suitable for regional shopping centers.
HC	Heavy Commercial	n/a	Wholesale, warehousing, fabrication, and light assembly oriented to heavy truck traffic.
I	Industrial	n/a	Provides for heavy and concentrated manufacturing and industrial uses.
PB	Public District	n/a	Facilities owned by federal, state, and local government or special taxing districts.

Policy 5.1.2: **Map 6** is the Future Land Use Map.<sup>5</sup> Use the Future Land Use Map in conjunction with the other goals, objectives and policies of this Plan

<sup>5</sup> The official Future Land Use Map is on file in the City Planning Department. The map in this document is for general reference only, and should not be used as a basis for public or private land use decisions.

## CHAPTER 5

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

and specific Area Plans to guide zoning and development decisions. Coordinate with La Plata County to ensure that:

- City and County decisions about the type and intensity of land uses will be consistent with the Future Land Use Map; and
- The City and County will review development proposals for consistency with the Future Land Use Map and compatibility with site specific conditions.<sup>6</sup> Site specific review is needed to ensure that development proposals are consistent with other City policies, including but not limited to policies addressing natural hazards, environmental protection, neighborhood compatibility/stability, design, and concurrency.

Policy 5.1.3: Allow residential dwelling types other than those specifically listed in **Table 1** (e.g., small lot, duplex, multi-family, patio homes, zero lot line development) for each residential category through the use of administrative design standards in the Land Use Development Code (LUDC).

**Objective 5.2: To use the Future Land Use Map in conjunction with plan policies and the Land Use Development Code to achieve neighborhood stability, comprehensive plan goals and objectives and economic opportunity.**

Policy 5.2.1: The Future Land Use Map establishes a land use pattern that will accommodate anticipated commercial and residential growth in the community. Prior to amending the Future Land Use Map, make findings that the proposed amendment:

- Would be consistent with the Plan priorities;
- Would be compatible with future land uses for surrounding areas of the community;
- Would not create a shortage of any particular type of residential or non-residential land; and
- Will enhance the overall quality of life in the community.

Policy 5.2.2: Protect the character of existing neighborhoods from incompatible development

Policy 5.2.3: Protect neighborhoods from encroachment of incompatible land uses by ensuring that zoning is consistent with the Future Land Use Map, by developing and implementing area plans and by enforcing compatibility standards that address noise, traffic and aesthetics.

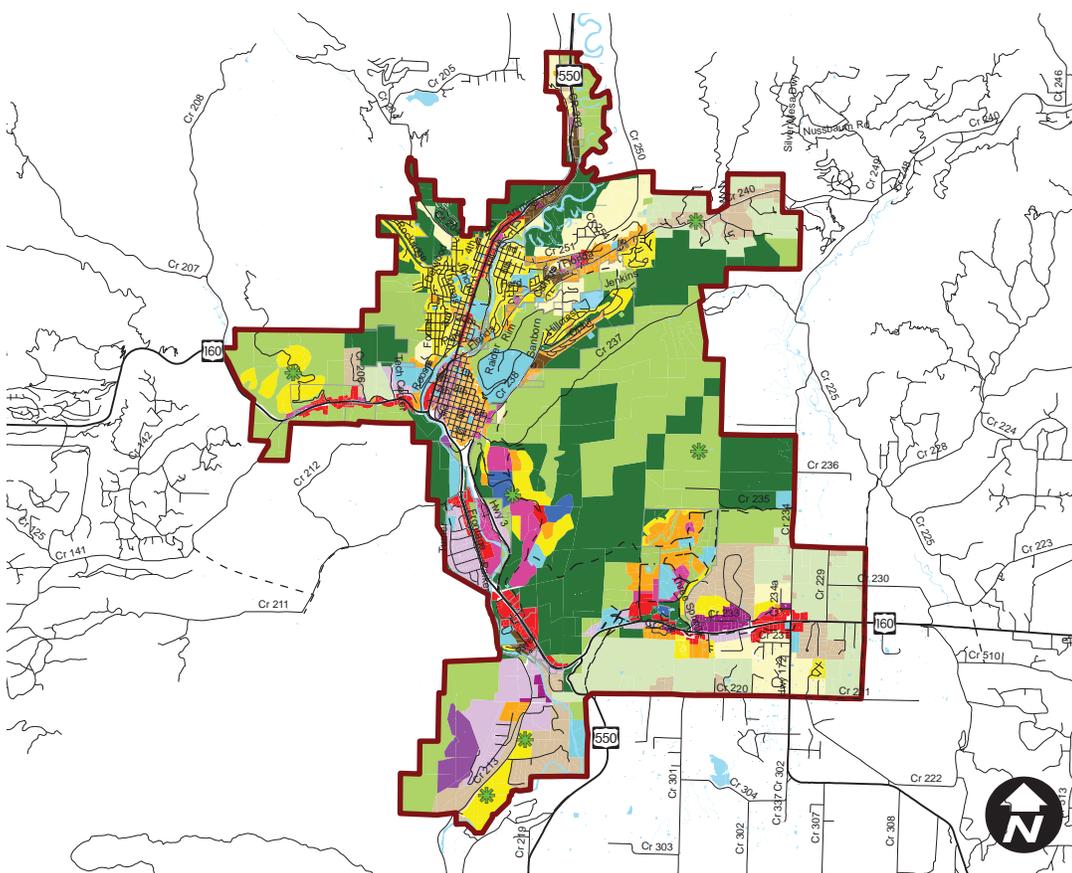
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<sup>6</sup> This policy is not intended to promote dual review. It is intended to ensure that both entities use the same standards and land use plan to review proposed development in the City's planning area.

# MAP 6 : FUTURE LAND USE

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**Legend**

- Specific Policy Area
- Future Roads
- Plan Area
- City Limits

**Roads**

- Highway
- Local
- Water

**Future Land Use**

- Conservation Open Space
- Park and Recreation
- Rural (1 DU per 35 Acres, Minimum)
- Rural Estates (1 DU per 10 Acres, Minimum)
- Rural Residential (1 DU per 3 Acres, Minimum)
- Large Lot Residential (1 to 3 Acres)
- Low Density Residential (1 to 4.99 DUs / Acre)
- Medium Density Residential (5 to 11.99 DUs / Acre)
- High Density Residential (12 - 24 DUs / Acre)
- Mixed Use (Up to 24 DUs / Acre)
- Central Business Mixed Use (Up to 24 DUs / Acre)
- Multiple Use
- Commercial
- Mixed Commercial/Industrial
- Industrial
- Business Park
- Public/Quasi Public

These areas are subject to specific policies, affecting the timing, type, density and location of authorized land uses.



Map Document: G:\Clients\Durango, CO\Maps\CompPlan\Map 6 - Future Land Use.mxd  
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Data Source: City of Durango, La Plata County, US Census, FEMA, USGS

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- Policy 5.2.4: Permit the development of limited neighborhood service and retail uses for sites that are sufficiently large to allow such uses to be integrated compatibly with proposed residential development. Standards for these uses should achieve compatibility through a combination of building form, building scale and site and building design standards. Non-residential uses generally should be located on collector or higher order streets.
- Policy 5.2.5: Establish standards to ensure that non-residential development occurs at appropriate scales and locations. Standards should ensure that uses (including home occupations) within or adjacent to residential areas are compatible with the residential uses.
- Policy 5.2.6: The Future Land Use Map identifies with asterisks areas for which area plans need to be developed or specific policy direction provided within the Plan. These areas include portions of Grandview Ridge, State School Property, North Grandview, La Posta Road, Ewing Mesa, the Upper Florida Road Corridor, and the Twin Buttes area, which are subject to the following specific policies:

#### **Grandview Ridge:**

- The City will coordinate with the Bureau of Land Management to address transportation, future land use, resource extraction, utility and ownership issues related to this area.

#### **State School Section:**

- The City will coordinate with the County, State and School District 9R to address planning issues related to land uses, the timing of development, the provision of utilities and transportation, recreational use of the land, and/or the relocation of the County Fairgrounds when the School District considers developing the site for a school or other public uses are being considered.

#### **North Grandview Property:**

- Development in Grandview will be guided by the general policies of the Plan and the specific policies of the Grandview Area Plan.
- The City will allow greater flexibility for the retention or expansion of non-conforming situations, while attempting to mitigate incompatibilities created by historic development patterns in this area.
- Coordinate with property owners and applicable service providers to develop a phasing and financing plan for extension of adequate water, sewer and transportation facilities throughout the urbanizing areas.
- Coordinate with property owners, applicable service providers and the County to establish standards for the expansion of the urbanizing area boundary and appropriate modifications of future land uses.

#### **La Posta Road:**

- Development in the La Posta Road area will be guided by the general policies of the plan and the specific policies of the La Posta Road Area Plan;
- The City will coordinate with property owners, the County and applicable service providers to plan centralized water and sewer service extensions to this area; and

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- In the low density residential areas located along the southern portion of La Posta Road, encourage the development of a mix of residential unit types that incorporate meaningful greenways and open spaces. Also within these areas, allow for limited neighborhood scale retail and service development supporting surrounding residential development.

**Ewing Mesa:**

- Development of Ewing Mesa will be guided by the general policies of the Plan and the specific policies of the Ewing Mesa Area Plan;
- Development of Ewing Mesa should not encroach upon Horse Gulch;
- Protect skyline views by requiring setbacks from the rim of the mesa, but allow greater heights near the slopes rising above the mesa; and
- Achieve an integrated mix of residential and non-residential development that is consistent with New Urbanist development principles.

**Twin Buttes:**

- Coordinate access to and development of the Twin Buttes property with the development of McIntyre Ranch property;
- Limit development in the upper elevations to rural intensities or open space through the use of cluster development techniques;
- Limit development along visible ridgelines;
- Limit development in areas of severe wildfire hazard
- Retain critical wildlife habitat, feeding areas and migration corridors; and
- Require trail access to and through all new developments in accordance with the trail policies of this Plan and the City's Parks, Open Space and Trails Plan.

**Upper Florida Road Corridor:**

- Upon a determination by the City Council to consider the extension of City water or sewer services, prepare an area plan addressing land use, transportation and utility improvement needs, and facility funding needs.

**Objective 5.3: To retain a mix of healthy residential, business and tourism uses in downtown Durango.<sup>1</sup>**

Policy 5.3.1: Maintain the majority of all governmental offices in the Central Business District ("CBD") to enhance the area's long-term stability.

Policy 5.3.2: Do not allow the Central Business District or the commercial corridor along College Drive and E. 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue to encroach on residential neighborhoods east of 2nd Avenue.

Policy 5.3.3: Require businesses along College Drive to develop compatibly with adjacent residences. Compatibility standards will address building design, noise, dust, lighting, parking, setbacks, buffering and traffic flow.

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<sup>1</sup> See the Downtown Area Plan for a detailed discussion of development goals and strategies for the CBD.

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Policy 5.3.4: Encourage a mix of residential and commercial uses in the CBD to increase the community's housing stock and the vitality of downtown Durango business areas.

**Objective 5.4: To increase the supply of developable business park land.**

Policy 5.4.1: The Future Land Use Map identifies locations appropriate for mixed commercial/industrial land uses. Encourage the coordinated development of business parks in these areas to promote attractive design, lower improvement costs and provide adequate public facilities.

Policy 5.4.2: Work in cooperation with Bayfield, Ignacio and the Southern Ute Indian Tribe on regional matters related to economic development, housing, transportation and growth management.

**Objective 5.5: To promote more attractive development/redevelopment along the City's transportation and recreational corridors.**

Policy 5.5.1: Continue to refine river corridor development regulations to enhance the compatibility of this valuable recreational corridor with adjacent development.

Policy 5.5.2: Enhance the appearance and safety of the City's arterial roadways through better site design that addresses the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users as well as motorists.

Policy 5.5.3: Actively participate in the planning and design of State arterial roadway improvement projects and support the development of appropriate landscaping, transit stops and shelters, pedestrian and bicycle facilities and other operational and design enhancements.

Policy 5.5.4: Provide wetlands and water retention, where feasible, along the river corridor to capture and slow runoff into the Animas River

**Goal 6: To retain or enhance the aesthetic value of Durango's natural and built environments.<sup>7</sup>**

**Objective 6.1: Maintain public spaces as strong visual amenities.**

Policy 6.1.1: Retain key open spaces in their natural condition where feasible. Where improvements are made in open space areas, those improvements will be designed and located to minimize their visual impacts from public areas.

Policy 6.1.2: Design, construct and maintain parks as visual and recreational amenities. Parking areas, trails, structures and landscaping shall be designed and improved with an emphasis on aesthetics and sustainability.

<sup>7</sup> See the Parks and Open Space Element for additional information.

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- Policy 6.1.3: Require low maintenance, site-appropriate street trees and, where appropriate, planted medians to enhance the street environment.
- Policy 6.1.4: Encourage the State to allow for and improve landscaping within State rights-of-way and on other State-owned land.
- Policy 6.1.5: Meet or exceed minimum design standards for municipal facilities to provide examples of the community benefits of good building and site design, as well as models for sustainable development practices.
- Policy 6.1.6: Support the establishment of community-based gardens on appropriate vacant public and private lands.

**Objective 6.2: Enhance the aesthetic value and sustainability of the built environment through improved development standards and design guidelines.**

- Policy 6.2.1: Use administrative development standards and the design review process to promote improved site and building design. Design standards should provide flexibility while promoting aesthetics, traffic safety, land use compatibility and sustainability.
- Policy 6.2.2: Foster the compatible integration of residential development with the public spaces, public facilities and businesses to facilitate access and reduce automobile dependency.
- Policy 6.2.3: Limit visibility of existing and future outdoor commercial and industrial operations from roadways, parking areas, the Animas River, public facilities, residential neighborhoods and tourist related commercial development sites through landscaping and other attractive screening techniques.
- Policy 6.2.4: Require that medium and high density residential projects have usable open space<sup>8</sup> incorporated into the project or off-site open space that is reasonably linked to the project.
- Policy 6.2.5: Apply landscaping requirements to promote land use compatibility, to increase screening of outdoor storage and operations areas and to provide visual relief within large parking areas. The City will retain flexibility within its landscaping code to encourage design variations and promote public safety.
- Policy 6.2.6: Encourage the retention of mature trees within development sites. The intent of this policy is to ensure that healthy, mature trees are not removed and replaced with saplings or other immature landscaping.

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<sup>8</sup> Usable open space must be of a size and configuration to serve its intended purposes. Open space standards for the City should address minimum dimensions, slope, connectivity, location, amenities and other factors affecting its usefulness for recreational and/or environmental purposes.

## CHAPTER 5

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

- Policy 6.2.7: Promote the use of signage that is consistent with community character and appropriate for the size, location and use of the site. The intent of this policy is to reduce unnecessary visual clutter produced by large, garish, brightly lit and over-abundant signage.
- Policy 6.2.8: Achieve compliance with the City's dark skies standards through the capital improvements program and appropriate site design standards.
- Policy 6.2.9: Establish green building standards and/or performance measures that encourage energy efficient building design and construction.
- Policy 6.2.10: Ensure that development is located and designed to minimize contaminants in stormwater runoff.

**Goal 7: To encourage public awareness and participation in community activities.**

**Objective 7.1: Increase opportunities for public access to the public decision-making process.**

- Policy 7.1.1: Encourage citizen participation in the Comprehensive Plan and Area Plan updates. The City will provide opportunities for "grass roots" participation in the annual assessments and the annual updates of budget priorities reflected in the Plan Implementation Program.
- Policy 7.1.2: Use CitySpan television as well as web-based options to keep citizens informed of public decisions and processes.
- Policy 7.1.3: Encourage the media to cover all significant City activities and decisions and provide informational materials.
- Policy 7.1.4: Encourage participation from a broad cross-section of the population in elected and appointed boards, committees and commissions.
- Policy 7.1.5: Facilitate citizen involvement in public decision-making processes and supporting grass-roots citizen initiatives where appropriate.
- Policy 7.1.6: Encourage broad participation in Citizen Advisory Boards that are open to the general public on policy issues for recommendation to the City Council.

### Growth Management Goals, Objectives and Policies

**Goal 8: To establish land use patterns that are coordinated with and make the most efficient use of community facilities, while allowing for equitable funding strategies.**

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**Objective 8.1: Coordinate the timing, location and intensity of growth with the concurrent provision of adequate public facilities.**

Policy 8.1.1: Designate urban growth areas to guide public investment and urban development decisions in a logical manner. **Map 7** shows the urbanizing areas within Durango's planning area. The urbanizing area is anticipated to experience urban development as adequate water and wastewater services become available over the course of the next 20 years. Rural areas outside the urbanizing area, but in the planning area, may be included within the urbanizing area, subject to the development of phasing plans for the extension of City water service and the provision of sewer services that are consistent with standards mutually agreed upon by the City and La Plata County.

Policy 8.1.2: Manage growth in urbanizing areas by coordinating the timing of development with the ability to provide adequate public facilities in a cost effective manner for the City.

Policy 8.1.3: Require adequate public services and facilities to be in place or assured prior to the approval of urban development so that capacity will be available concurrently with new demands. Minimum levels of services will be defined in the City's Land Use and Development Code (LUDC).

Policy 8.1.4: Encourage the County to adopt level of service and concurrency standards for new urban development within the City's planning area that are consistent with City standards.

Policy 8.1.5: If additional improvements are required for a proposed development to meet adequacy standards, the City may approve all or a portion of the proposed development, subject to any of the following arrangements:

- Installation of improvements at the developer's expense;
- Joint City/Developer participation (joint financing, bonds, improvement districts); or
- Phased development subject to installation of improvements in accordance with the City's Capital Improvements Program ("CIP") or other plan acceptable to the City.

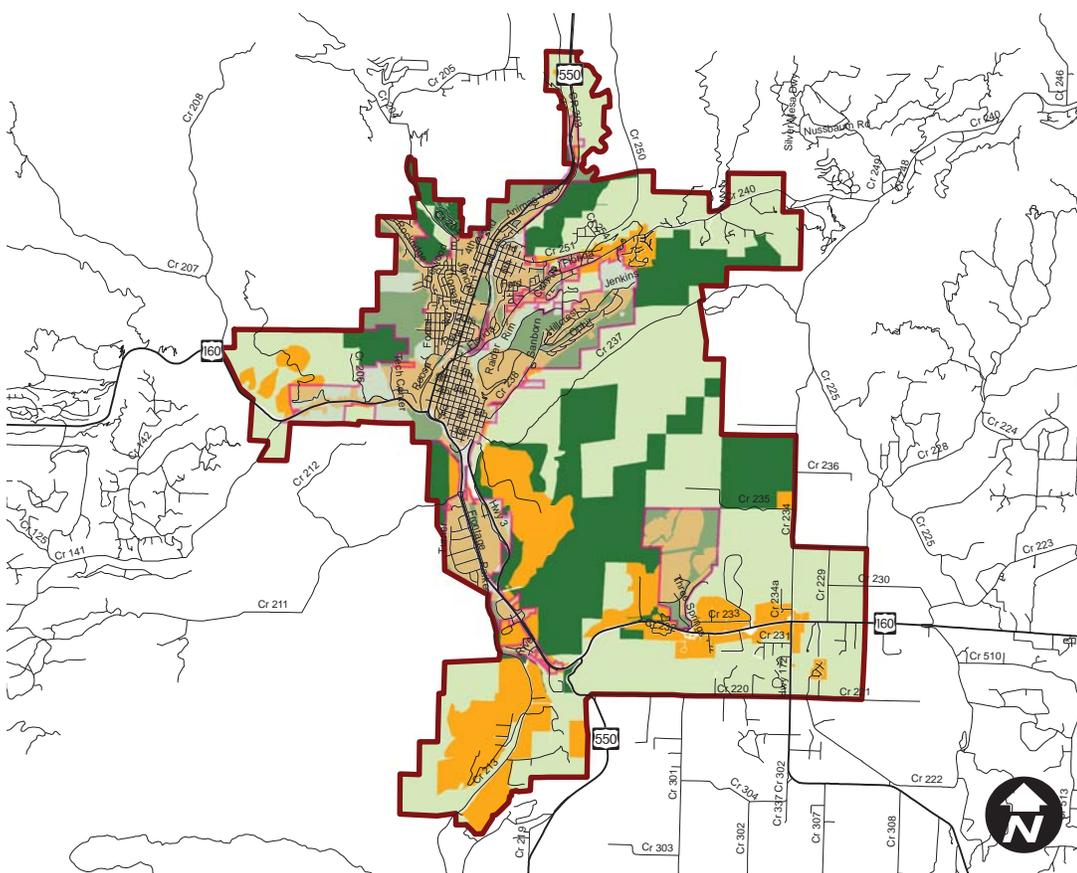
Policy 8.1.6: Expand the boundaries of the urbanizing area when urban facilities and services can be extended in a cost-effective manner, subject to the following guidelines:

- Funds are available for construction, maintenance and operation of urban facilities to the new area;
- There is not an adequate supply of land within the existing urbanizing area to accommodate growth for the next ten years;
- There is a long-term benefit to the City's residents from extending the urbanized area; and
- Utility and other needs of the area will not significantly affect the cost of service to existing City property owners and residents.

## MAP 7 : URBANIZING AREA

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- Legend**
- Plan Area
  - Roads**
    - Highway
    - Local
  - City Limits
  - Open Space / Park
  - Non-Urban
  - Urban / Urbanizing



Map Document: (G:\Client\Durango, CO\Maps\CompPlan\Map 7 - Urbanizing Area.mxd)  
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Data Source: City of Durango, La Posta County, US Census, FEMA, USGS

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- Policy 8.1.7: Accommodate development that is adjacent to existing public facilities. Encourage development in areas that have adequate public facilities in place or that provide needed connections of facilities between urban development areas. Discourage development that is separate from existing urban services (i.e., "leap-frog" development<sup>9</sup>) unless the City finds that there is a significant public benefit from the development.
- Policy 8.1.8: Whenever the extension of water, sewer, drainage or street facilities is required to adequately service new development, extension costs shall be borne by the new development or the development shall be deferred until the required improvements are in place, pursuant to the schedule in the Capital Improvements Program or another acceptable plan to fund and provide required improvements.
- Policy 8.1.9: Extend sewer, water, street and drainage improvements to the furthest property boundary which is created by new subdivision activity or annexation unless extension of facilities beyond the subdivision is not feasible or the City finds that the need for future extension can not be reasonably anticipated.
- Policy 8.1.10: Develop fair and equitable cost sharing or reimbursement policies between property owners for situations in which the installation of public facilities directly benefits an adjacent property.
- Policy 8.1.11: Require interim improvement of streets when it is not appropriate to install full street improvements at the time of development, subject to the execution of agreements providing for the future construction of full street improvements.
- Policy 8.1.12: Prior to approval of new development, assess water, sewer, street and drainage facilities which serve or will be impacted by the new development. If deficiencies in any of these systems would result from the development, require the developer to correct the deficiencies or defer the development until the necessary improvements are installed by the City in accordance with the Capital Improvements Program or another acceptable plan to fund and provide required improvements.
- Policy 8.1.13: Require new development to fund its proportionate share of off-site capital improvement costs for transportation,<sup>10</sup> water, sewer, stormwater management and neighborhood parks multi-purpose trails,<sup>11</sup> and to provide all on-site improvements.

<sup>9</sup> Application of this policy should achieve relatively contiguous growth patterns, recognizing that some property owners will chose to retain vacant parcels that will be skipped over for development. This policy is intended to avoid large gaps in urban development that must be traversed by costly infrastructure.

<sup>10</sup> Transportation improvements may include roads, commuter trails or transit-supportive capital facilities.

<sup>11</sup> Neighborhood parks contributions should include land and funding for neighborhood park facilities.

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Policy 8.1.14: When off-site improvements related to planned CIP projects are required to serve a new development, consider raising the priority of necessary projects within the structure of the Capital Improvements Program when consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, thus achieving savings to both the City and the developer through joint participation.

Policy 8.1.15: When over-sizing of public improvements is required, the City may participate (depending upon availability and priority of funding) in the funding of these over-sizing costs for the additional improvements. If funds are not readily available, require the facilities to be over-sized, but provide for reimbursement of over-sizing costs through subsequent user fees or other equitable funding source.

Policy 8.1.16: When direct benefit is to be gained by a property owner for improvements to the infrastructure system, involve the property owner as an active participant in paying or repaying financial obligations for the improvements. Authorize the City to participate in such projects only to the extent that the improvements benefit the general citizenry. The mechanisms for such improvements may include general improvement districts, special districts, development authorities and cooperative agreements. Projects for which such devices are appropriate include: street improvements, repair and replacement of water, sewer and drainage facilities, and other improvements that benefit the area or neighborhood adjacent to the proposed development.

Policy 8.1.17: Use tiered water consumption charges to encourage conservation and efficient use of water resources.

**Objective 8.2: Establish a fiscally responsible annexation program that serves the needs of Durango's residents.**

Policy 8.2.1: Annex contiguous areas where municipal services already are being provided and facilities are designed to City standards.

Policy 8.2.2: Coordinate with residents, property owners and La Plata County to equitably fund improvements required to bring potential annexation areas into compliance with City standards. Require residents and property owners of such areas to bear primary responsibility for required upgrade costs.

Policy 8.2.3: Prior to annexations requiring City commitments to invest in public facilities, prepare an annexation plan that evaluates the costs and benefits of the proposed annexation to the City and the property owners and addresses land use, public improvements and other development issues.

Policy 8.2.4: Use annexation agreements to assign responsibility for resolving infrastructure and design issues and to ensure that development in the areas complies with City plans and standards.

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- Policy 8.2.5: Annex enclave areas in accordance with State Law upon resolution of public service and improvement issues, including emergency access, street design standards, street conditions, water system needs, wastewater system needs and drainage needs.
- Policy 8.2.6: Where feasible, annex land along existing property boundaries and annex all contiguous parcels under common ownership unless subject to a phased development and annexation plan.
- Policy 8.2.7: When urban development occurs within the City's service area but on parcels not eligible for annexation, require an implied consent agreement stating that the project will be developed to City standards, that City water and/or sewer service will be provided and that voluntary annexation will occur when the property is eligible.
- Policy 8.2.8: When annexed areas do not comply with existing zoning and site improvement standards, provide for the gradual elimination of non-conforming situations in accordance with annexation agreements or the City's LUDC.

**Objective 8.3: Encourage growth to occur in areas that can be served by existing facilities.**

- Policy 8.3.1: Maintain an adequate inventory of developable land for medium and high density residential purposes, for commercial purposes and for commercial/industrial purposes. Prior to "re-zoning" from any of these districts, determine that there is an adequate supply of developable land to meet the demand for the district for the subsequent ten years based on historical building trends
- Policy 8.3.2: Encourage development of compatible infill projects.

**Economy/Tourism Goals, Objectives and Policies**

**Goal 9: To promote a healthy, sustainable, balanced economy that capitalizes on the community's natural, recreational, cultural and human resources.**

**Objective 9.1: To encourage sound economic and social conditions by supporting the development and retention of a balanced mix of retail, service, tourism and industrial enterprises in Durango.**

- Policy 9.1.1: Support tourism through lodging tax revenues.
- Policy 9.1.2: Invest in parks, recreation, trails and open space and river whitewater park amenities that serve residents and visitors.

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### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

- Policy 9.1.3: Continue public investments in the Main Avenue/Central Business District area to enhance access for residents and visitors. (See also the Downtown Area Plan.)
- Policy 9.1.4: Support efforts to locate and develop additional business park or industrial land.
- Policy 9.1.5: Help identify alternatives that enable the business owner to expand while maintaining compatibility with adjacent development. If no such alternatives exist, identify areas of Durango where the proposed business can be accommodated by existing zoning.
- Policy 9.1.6: Link incentives for investment to the fiscal benefits for the community.
- Policy 9.1.7: Continue efforts to preserve recreational water rights, whitewater park development and maintenance of in-stream improvements including bank restoration.

**Objective 9.2: Reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions that contribute to global climate change and increase the community's vulnerability of rising energy prices.<sup>12</sup>**

- Policy 9.2.1: Reduce City energy consumption in its vehicles and buildings. After establishing project sustainability goals use the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for New Construction and Major Renovations (LEED-NC) program standards as design guidance in the development of all public buildings.
- Policy 9.2.2: Reduce commercial and residential building energy consumption through a cost-effective combination of standards, incentives and other measures.
- Policy 9.2.3: Coordinate with La Plata County, La Plata Electric and other entities to promote increased use of other renewable energy sources such as wind, solar, biomass, hydro, geo-thermal, etc..
- Policy 9.2.4: Reduce public and private vehicle emissions through a combination of strategies that reduce automobile usage and promote cleaner transportation choices.
- Policy 9.2.5: Support efforts to educate all citizens about the benefits of energy conservation.

<sup>12</sup> On October 17, 2006, the Durango City Council adopted the U.S. Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement which resolves that the "U.S. Conference of Mayors endorses the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement as amended by the 73rd annual U.S. Conference of Mayors meeting and urges mayors form around the nation to join this effort" and that the "U.S. Conference of Mayors will work in conjunction with ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability and other appropriate organizations to track progress and implementation of the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement as amended by the 73rd annual U.S. Conference of Mayors meeting."

## **Cultural/Historic Resources Goals, Objectives and Policies**

**Goal 10: To preserve and enhance historic and cultural resources that symbolize Durango's identity and uniqueness.**

**Objective 10.1: To identify, preserve and protect significant scenic, cultural, historical and archaeological sites in Durango for the benefit of existing and future generations.**

Policy 10.1.1: Develop and maintain a database of buildings, districts and sites of historical, architectural, archaeological or cultural significance that should be protected.

Policy 10.1.2: Preservation and rehabilitation of such buildings, districts and sites by the private sector shall be encouraged by the City through the creation of incentives programs, designation of landmark buildings and districts, design review, public improvements and other tools.

Policy 10.1.3: Review and comment on the impacts of public and private development on the community's scenic, cultural, historical, architectural and archaeological resources. Public and private development shall preserve, to the maximum extent feasible, significant buildings and sites.

Policy 10.1.4: Historic public buildings should be retained as community facilities when the buildings can be feasibly adapted to public uses. When redevelopment is proposed, sensitivity to the existing context will be required and preservation of historic resources will be encouraged or required.

Policy 10.1.5: Continue to develop and implement strategies that preserve the human scale and historical and architectural character of the City's older neighborhoods and business areas. Ensure that building and site design result in a compatible interface between residential neighborhoods and business areas.

## CHAPTER 6

### HOUSING ELEMENT

## CHAPTER 6 - HOUSING ELEMENT

### Overview

The City has historically struggled to quantify demands for affordable housing. Since the local economy is rich in lower wage service and retail jobs, many of those who work in the City can't afford to live in Durango, and a significant portion of the regional low to moderate income housing demand is being met in Bayfield, Ignacio, rural La Plata County and northern New Mexico.

### Definitions

Providing a balance of housing types within the community can be a challenging endeavor. Local housing issues often involve a broad range of considerations and terminology. Before any meaningful discussion can occur on housing policy, it is important to clarify specific definitions frequently used by those who are addressing local housing issues in the community.

There are both national definitions created by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and locally defined housing definitions that should be clarified. According to HUD, the term **affordable** refers to the ability of a person or household to pay no more than 30% of their (gross) income for housing. **Low/Mod income** household is HUD's definition for families earning 80% or less of Area Median Income (AMI). The majority of federal and state subsidy programs are geared to assist Low/Mod income households.

However, Durango, like many other mountain communities, recognizes that households earning more than 80% are also in need of some form of housing assistance. In recent years the City has used the term **attainable** to refer to households earning between 80% and 125% of AMI. Through participation with the La Plata County Regional Housing Authority (LPCRHA), the City will participate in a housing report entitled **Expanding Affordable Housing Opportunities in La Plata County (Housing Report)** which will create housing programs to meet the needs of both low/mod income households as well as families earning above 80% of AMI. The types of programs, eligibility requirements and income guidelines will be determined once the housing report is completed (in 2007).

An umbrella term being used locally to refer to both target populations is **workforce housing**. This term refers to the concept of providing programs that meet Durango's diverse workforce housing needs and consists of both owner- and renter-occupied housing that is affordable to the local workforce and carefully located to meet their needs. Lack of housing that is affordable to the local workforce causes increased commuting times, increased pollution, increased roadway congestion and less time at home with family. Quality of life suffers and the social balance of the community is disrupted.

There are also **special needs** populations outside of the workforce who need housing assistance. These groups include seniors, persons with disabilities, and the homeless. The specific needs and possible actions that the City can take to address these needs will also be provided in the housing report.

Because of the presence of Fort Lewis College, **student households** make up an estimated 29% of the existing households requiring affordable housing. For the 2005-06 academic year, Fort Lewis had an enrollment of 3,946 students, 2,644 of which lived off-campus. Of those, 123 were freshmen, who are generally required to live with their families, leaving 2,521 students who required other off-campus housing. Assuming an average of three students per off-campus, non-family household, there were 881 student households in the planning area in the 2005-2006 school year. This has a significant

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impact on the availability of housing affordable to working families and special needs populations. The City will work with the RHA and the college to explore ways of increasing rental units for the college population. The college has a goal of achieving growth up to an enrollment of 5,000 students by 2011, a 25% increase over current enrollment, and then maintaining a constant enrollment at this level. Assuming that the proportion of students living on and off-campus remains constant, this would result in 1,064 student households seeking affordable housing by 2011, an increase of 183 student households. The provision of off-campus student housing is an important factor in the health of the college.

### Context

Because of the dynamic *housing market*, the City has historically lacked sufficient numbers of decent homes and rental units that are affordable to these target populations. Since the local economy is reliant on lower wage service and retail jobs, many of those who work in the City cannot afford to live within the city limits of Durango, and a significant portion of the regional low to moderate income housing demand is being met in Bayfield, Ignacio, rural La Plata County and across state lines into northern New Mexico. It is the City's intent to remain an active partner in the provision of workforce and special needs housing for residents of Durango and the surrounding area.

Housing is central to a community's quality of life, and the provision of adequate workforce housing helps to prevent neighborhood deterioration and supports economic development. Provisions for adequate housing allow for the continued economic growth of the City, and housing choices allow residents to maintain residency in the City as their life circumstances change, which is especially important to an aging population, many of whom have spent their working lives as residents of Durango.

According to the *City of Durango/La Plata County Housing Needs Assessment* completed in 2003, the most diverse housing types in the region are found within the City of Durango. The majority of housing units within the City and County are single-family detached units, with attached multi-family units being only 14% of all units in the County. Of those attached units, approximately two-thirds are within the City of Durango, meaning that the City currently fills an important role in providing housing choices within the region. In contrast, most housing in other parts of La Plata County is single-family detached homes.

Although the *2003 Housing Needs Assessment* indicates that the vast majority of residents in the City and County prefer single-family detached dwellings, it is important to have housing choices for those who cannot afford or prefer not to live in a detached dwelling. Housing diversity allows people to live in the City as their housing needs and preferences change. For instance, some households cannot afford to purchase or rent a detached home, and rely on apartment housing. Students, young householders and retirees often prefer or require housing that is less expensive and requires less maintenance, such as rental or owner-occupied apartments or town homes.

Given the complexity and extent of the housing needs in Durango, the City actively participated in the formation of the La Plata County Regional Housing Authority (LPCRHA) in partnership with La Plata County and the Town of Ignacio. LPCRHA was authorized through a 2001 state statute which gives jurisdictions the ability to form regional housing authorities through an intergovernmental agreement between entities. The LPCRHA began operations in 2006. Funded through an intergovernmental funding agreement and governed by a representative board of nine members (three from each entity), the LPCRHA is responsible for facilitating the creation of housing opportunities for the workforce and special needs populations in Durango and La Plata County. The LPCRHA will undertake this task

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### HOUSING ELEMENT

through the creation of a housing study entitled “Expanding Affordable Housing Opportunities in La Plata County”, which will include data analysis, and a strategic plan outlining specific actions for the LPCRHA and its member entities to take in order to expand housing opportunities in the region.

Addressing workforce and special needs housing is vital to sustaining a good economy and a high quality of life for the community, this includes creating assistance for essential workers - police, fire, health care, utilities, teachers and child care workers - retail, industrial, office and service industry workers, entry- and mid-level professionals and public sector - government and non-profit community organizations - employees. The relationship between commercial enterprises and the location and availability of workforce housing is key to our region having an adequate workforce that can afford to live near their jobs. As fossil fuel prices continue to fluctuate it will become even more critical to ensure workforce housing opportunities are available near employment centers and public transportation.

To summarize the housing needs of Durango, recent housing market trends reflect drastically increased housing costs which have widened the gap between what working families can afford and what is available in the local market resulting in very few workforce housing options. Accordingly, any future opportunities will rely heavily on special efforts to increase the workforce housing supply. To meet these needs, the City will work primarily through the LPCRHA at a regional level to adopt new housing policies. Density, affordability, availability, diversity, choice and financial subsidies are interrelated issues that need comprehensive treatment. Durango’s future housing policy will take into consideration the City’s role as a regional provider of medical care, government services, education, culture and commerce.

#### Housing Affordability Challenges

The strong local economy and attractive quality of life have all contributed to increased demand for housing in general, and for more workforce housing in particular. Often, workers must seek housing in other more affordable communities, forcing them to commute long distances to work. The challenge is creating workforce housing opportunities in a community with limited developable land.

As of the 2000 U.S. Census, a total of 1,023 renters and 313 owners were reported as paying over 35% of their incomes for housing. This amounted to 24% of Durango’s 5,538 households that were tallied by the Census. The comparable numbers for all of La Plata County (including Durango) were 3,029 households (17% of all households) paying over 35% for housing. The federal standard for rental housing affordability is 30% of income for all housing costs, including utilities. There is no such standard for home ownership affordability, but many lenders now consider 33% of income as affordable for the mortgage payment, taxes and insurance.

Although more recent statistics are not available, the number of Durango households facing housing affordability problems has no doubt increased dramatically since the Census data was collected in 1999. Since 2000, the median home sales price in Durango has increased from \$195,500 to \$436,050, a 220% percent increase. The income gains of low and moderate income families in Durango for the same period are not known, but nationally, estimates of income increases for this population group show only increases of a few percentage points. As a result, the percentage of cost-burdened Durango households is substantially higher than 24%.

An annual income of \$75,000 is the approximate minimum income threshold for purchasing homes. At the low end of the Durango home market, a few homes and new condos are available at a price affordable to this group—approximately \$225,000 or less. Most of the home purchase opportunities in this price range are in the County, and are predominantly factory-built homes built in accordance with HUD’s Manufactured Housing Code (mobile homes).

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As of the 2000 Census, the number of Durango households with incomes of less than \$75,000 was 4,046, or 74% of the city's population. While incomes have increased since the Census year, it is clearly the case that the great majority of Durango families are priced out of the home purchase market.

#### Special Needs of Elderly Residents

Retired people often have smaller household sizes, reduced incomes, and can suffer impaired abilities and mobility as they age. Without housing choices, long-time residents may be forced to leave the community they have always lived in to find appropriate housing as they age. According to an *Elderly Housing Needs Analysis* prepared in 2002, 18% of the population of the City of Durango was over 62 years in 2000. In 2000, the median income for elderly households was 20% below that of the median for all households in Durango. The *Elderly Housing Needs Analysis* states that there are few housing choices for elderly people seeking affordable rental housing, and at the time of the report all income-restricted housing developments were 100% occupied with waiting lists. Although the overall *Housing Needs Assessment* does not indicate a pressing need for more senior housing choices immediately, it is expected that this will be a growing concern as baby boomers age and more people choose Durango as their retirement location.

Senior housing is generally based on market-rate rents, and provides a community for seniors, which provides for their increasing needs. Communities that are designed for those 55 years of age and older are increasingly committed to an "active lifestyle" for seniors and cater to the increased health and vitality of today's seniors. Community input has indicated that there are seniors living within the community that are interested in market rate, senior-specific housing. Many middle-income seniors that are looking for housing do not qualify financially for the available government-subsidized senior housing. The preference of many seniors is to obtain modestly-sized residences where they can live near to their children and grandchildren.

#### Special Needs of Persons with Disabilities

The Southwest Center for Independence is a nonprofit organization serving individuals with disabilities in La Plata County. As a recipient of Housing Choice Vouchers from the state of Colorado they are able to subsidize rental units for persons with disabilities. Currently there are 75 vouchers in their program; however the waitlist for vouchers implies that the actual need is nearly double (150 families). This organization has found it challenging in finding rents that are compatible with the mainstream voucher program, which requires rental rates much lower than rates that actually exist in Durango. Due to the relatively low population density, the rapid growth of the area and the rental pressure due to tourism and the local college population, housing availability and affordability are major issues for persons with disabilities. Furthermore, approximately 46% of the families currently using mainstream vouchers do not have personal transportation available for their use.

#### Housing Goals, Objectives and Policies

**Goal 11: To provide for the development of a variety of housing types throughout the Durango planning area that meets the diverse needs of the community.**

**Objective 11.1: Promote housing affordability for all residents through efficient development patterns as well as design standards**

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**that minimize long-term costs to residents, considering up-front costs, operating costs and health impacts of construction materials. The City will also consider diverse housing types and promote development patterns that minimize transportation costs.**

Policy 11.1.1: Encourage the provision of various types of housing in mixed-use and mixed income projects.

Policy 11.1.2: Encourage residential development in areas where the necessary public facilities and services can be provided economically and efficiently.

Policy 11.1.3: Encourage high-density residential development in areas that are located near work, retail, service and community facilities (such as parks, playgrounds and schools) to reduce transportation related costs.

Policy 11.1.4: Promote subdivision design which provides non-vehicular access to trails and transit routes.

**Objective 11.2: To provide for opportunities for a variety of housing types.**

Policy 11.2.1: Encourage a mix of housing types to provide a greater volume of workforce housing by allowing greater densities.

Policy 11.2.2: Encourage residential development with convenient pedestrian and bicycle access to schools, neighborhood commercial centers and other public facilities designed to serve neighborhood residents. For large developments, on-site development of such facilities will be encouraged.

Policy 11.2.3: Facilitate development of mixed density projects and other creative housing options that reduce housing costs and provide adequate amenities.

**Goal 12: Increase housing opportunities for workforce and special needs housing populations (target populations) through public/private partnerships.**

**Objective 12.1: Support La Plata County Regional Housing Authority's (RHA) efforts to identify housing needs and advance coordinated public and private sector efforts through the creation of a Regional Strategic Housing Plan.**

Policy 12.1.1: Provide financial and administrative support to the RHA to:

- (1) maintain data documenting the demand for and supply of housing for Durango's workforce and special needs households,
- (2) quantify the linkage (rational nexus) between new development and affordable housing demand;
- (3) facilitate provision of needed housing options; and

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(4) create policies, in partnership with La Plata County, which will facilitate development of housing that is affordable to target populations.

- Policy 12.1.2: Assist the RHA's efforts to develop and implement a comprehensive toolbox of effective affordable housing strategies to increase housing options for target populations.
- Policy 12.1.3: Support the retention of existing housing through active monitoring of the supply of housing by type, condition and tenure, encouraging the maintenance and rehabilitation of units in sub-standard condition and requiring rehabilitation or demolition of dangerous housing units. Illegal units should be brought into compliance with zoning and housing codes or vacated.
- Policy 12.1.4: Work with the RHA to establish a permanent housing trust fund and its potential sources of revenue. The fund will be used to subsidize the development of workforce and special needs housing.
- Policy 12.1.5: Ensure that housing units meet minimum safety codes.
- Policy 12.1.6: Encourage the provision of various types of affordable housing in mixed-use and mixed-density projects. Assist the RHA in identifying and acquiring land for the development of mixed-income neighborhoods that will provide a range of opportunities to the target populations.
- Policy 12.1.7: Permit development of accessory apartments on parcels that are large enough to compatibly accommodate structures and required parking.
- Policy 12.1.8: Work with the RHA to increase the development capacity of both for profit and nonprofit developers to deliver housing that is affordable to the target populations.
- Policy 12.1.9: Support public/private sector housing initiatives to increase housing options that are compatible with market rate housing and surrounding development for the target populations.

## CHAPTER 7

### AREA PLANS

#### CHAPTER 7 - AREA PLANS

Durango's planning history includes the development of plans and studies for sub-areas within the planning area. These area plans provide detailed goals, policies, specific design and development criteria and implementation measures, for public and private development, that otherwise would not be possible in a community-wide Comprehensive Plan. Most of these plans contain extensive background analysis, establish policy direction and propose land use patterns. The following plans are hereby incorporated into the Durango Comprehensive Plan by reference.

##### Grandview Area Plan

The Grandview Area Plan, adopted in January 2004, applies to the area east of Farmington Hill straddling US Hwy 160 to both the north and south to the County Road 234 and State Highway 172 intersection. The Grandview Area, because of its size and mixture of uses, offers a great opportunity for the creation of dynamic neighborhoods of varying character. Many large, undeveloped tracts of land exist, and the relocation of Mercy Hospital to this area will be a cornerstone for future development in the Three Springs traditional neighborhood development and the surrounding area. As the City and County face increasing transportation constraints it is essential that this urban area, which will capture most of Durango's growth in the next decade, should be developed with the mix of uses and designs necessary to achieve high rates of internal trip capture. In other words, Grandview neighborhoods should provide opportunities for residents to shop, work and play, thereby reducing the need to contribute to peak hour traffic congestion on Highways 160 East and 160/550.

##### Ewing Mesa Area Plan

This area plan, adopted in January 2004, is intended to guide development decisions for one of Durango's largest undeveloped areas. It provides guidance for decisions affecting land use, visual character, and transportation, relationships to adjoining areas, parks and open space, and public utilities, facilities, and services. The plan area includes 1,495 acres. The steep slopes of the mesa form the southern and western boundaries of the study area as the edge of the mesa descends to Highway 3 and the 160/550 corridors. The area's eastern boundary is defined by Telegraph Ridge and by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) property known as Grandview Ridge. The Horse Gulch area defines the northern plan boundary. A portion of the plan area extends down across Highway 3 to the Animas River. Most of Ewing Mesa is located approximately 300 feet above Highways 3 and 160. The most significant challenges facing the potentially developable area are provision of infrastructure including access, community character and providing an appropriate balance of uses that reduce peak hour traffic generation. The plan, which promotes the use of Traditional Neighborhood Development on the Mesa, should be modified to eliminate encroachment into Horse Gulch while retaining the overall mix of uses and intensities in the original area plan.

##### La Posta Road Plan

In progress, concurrent with this Comprehensive Plan Update.

##### Downtown Durango Vision & Strategic Plan

Adopted in 2005, this plan provides for the long-term development of the area known as the Central Business District. It envisions increased public open space along the Animas River and reinforces a strong downtown with the government anchor on the north and the tourism anchor on the south. The Vision for Downtown Durango is to continue to build on its diverse mixed-use consisting of a rich blend of civic and professional services, support businesses, niche retail stores for both locals and tourists,

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housing, and cultural and entertainment uses. Access to and within downtown is provided by a variety of transportation modes and linkages, especially to and from the Animas River trail.

### **U.S. 160/550 Corridor Plan**

This corridor plan, adopted in the summer of 1996, provides for the long term development of this primary entry arterial corridor south of Durango. The plan envisions an automobile-oriented highway corridor with a network of independent trails for bicyclists and pedestrians. While the corridor will be developed for commercial uses, the area plan provides for some residential development set back from the highway and recreational amenities along the Animas River.

### **U.S. 160 West Corridor Plan**

This corridor plan, done in conjunction with its annexation in 2001, provides for mixed-use development along this entry corridor, with commercial services, motels and residential uses. The plan envisions that this entry highway from the west will include additional bicycle and pedestrian amenities for hotel guests and other residents of the corridor. The corridor will continue to be dominated by the arterial roadway, but via the creek and along adjacent trails, improved access for people without automobiles is anticipated.

### **College Mesa Plan**

The College Mesa Plan reinforces the **College Mesa Precise Plan**, which was adopted in 1997 to address the desire to manage development based on the availability of public services, and in anticipation of the Skyridge Development Plan. Public services that were analyzed include capacity of the Hillcrest water tank (water service limited to 1,000 units), capacity of the vehicular circulation system (identified need for a looped collector along Jenkins Road, minor arterial upgrades for Goeglein Gulch Road – currently underway - and reserving additional land for roadway purposes), land use compatibility (calculations roughly allocated between commercial, residential, municipal and park uses). Capacity and demand was also considered for sewage, drainage, parks, bikeways and schools. Ultimately, timing of development was determined to be based on improvements to Goeglein Gulch Road.

### **Northeast Quadrant Area Plan**

This plan, also adopted in 1997, provides additional direction on land use, parks and transportation issues relating to the northeast quadrant of the City. The plan provides for a mix of uses, with higher density residential development along the Florida Road corridor; a moderately-sized commercial node at the intersection of Florida Road and East Animas Drive; and medium to low-density residential development throughout the remainder of the corridor. The plan also identifies some major roadway improvements reflected in the Major Street Plan, including an arterial roadway extension from the intersection of East Animas and Florida Roads south to College Mesa.

### **Old Durango Residential Plan**

This area plan, adopted in 1986, focused on three residential neighborhoods in south Durango. Neighborhood property owners, who were concerned about the conversion of residential properties to non-residential uses, sought assistance in preserving Durango's oldest residential areas. The Old Durango Residential Plan established goals of maintaining the residential character of "The Boulevard" neighborhood (including insuring that any renovation or expansion meets historic guidelines),

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### AREA PLANS

minimizing the impact of transitional land use changes in South Durango and preserving the stable Old Durango neighborhood.

#### **Junction Creek Area Land Use Plan**

The City Council adopted the Junction Creek Plan in 1986, covering land within the City of Durango as well as some unincorporated areas adjacent to the City. Proposals for several residential developments in the Junction Creek area generated concern about the impacts on public facilities. The plan recommended that all development in Junction Creek area be required to connect to the City's sewer system, which led to an intergovernmental agreement with La Plata County. The agreement described future services and related these services to development approvals. Durango recently purchased approximately 178 acres of land, known as Dalla Mountain Park, abutting Junction Creek for open space preservation,

#### **Animas River Corridor Plan**

This corridor plan was adopted by the City Council in June, 1994. The plan focused on the preservation, protection and enhancement of the Animas River and its riverine environment. The plan's goals included enhancing the visual quality of the river, development of recreational opportunities on the Animas River, increasing River accessibility and maintenance of the River's natural ecology. River overlay zones were established to control development and use of the River Corridor. The City should implement the Animas River Master Plan to provide for the development of whitewater park amenities and bank stabilization. It also should monitor the river corridor downstream of the Animas La Plata Water Project pumping station across from Santa Rita Park and work to minimize the impacts with appropriate agencies.

#### **East Fassbinder Homestead Neighborhood Plan**

This neighborhood plan, adopted in September 2006, focuses on the balance between residential property owners and the redevelopment of the old Mercy Hospital campus, including the construction of the new public library. The plan includes policies that address types of uses to be allowed on the old campus, balancing the needs of the property owners to redevelop the site while still addressing neighbors' concerns. The recently-approved plan will help maintain the desirability of the neighborhood while permitting redevelopment of the site and construction of the new library.

#### **Downtown Design Guidelines**

Though not really area plans, Durango employs an array of Design Guidelines to achieve specific design goals and objectives throughout the City.

The first and most venerable of these guidelines are the Downtown Design Guidelines, intended to preserve the character of the downtown area by identifying subareas and providing renovation guidelines applicable to each of these districts. There are three distinct subareas downtown: the Main Avenue District (the "core" downtown, from 5<sup>th</sup> Street to 12<sup>th</sup> Street), the Camino del Rio District (described as the gateway to downtown) and the Second Avenue District (a transition area from the Main Avenue District and historic residences on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue). Design guidelines are provided for building alignment, design, color and material composition, entrance ways, architectural style, landscaping, views to the river and site relationships.

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The Commercial Use Design Guidelines, the Residential Infill Design Standards and Guidelines, the Three Springs Codes and Standards are all recent additions to the City's code, aimed at providing design guidance for specific issues in specific areas.

Over time the City may need to revise these standards, guidelines and area plans, or draft new area/neighborhood plans. Area plans should be developed in conjunction with proposed annexations of large tracts of partially developed land. Neighborhood plans should be drafted to address concerns of existing developed areas of the City.

## CHAPTER 8

### TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

## CHAPTER 8 - TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

### Overview

The Transportation Element, which along with the Regional Transportation Plan (2030 Trip) jointly developed by the City and La Plata County, identifies key transportation challenges facing the community, establishes goals, objectives, policies and strategies addressing those issues, and serves as the City's Major Street Plan. As Durango seeks to meet the mobility needs of future residents, employees and visitors, it will strive to provide transportation choices that are affordable and accessible for all segments of the community. In addition, Durango will pursue a transportation system that is built and operated in a sustainable fashion. The future transportation system should provide choices between alternative modes, including: automobile, transit, cycling and pedestrian travel. The Plan recognizes that continuous expansion of the street and highway system is not a sustainable transportation solution from either a geographic or financial standpoint. The resulting system should effectively serve the anticipated population while being sensitive to the natural and built environments.

System improvements must be within the fiscal means of the City and should provide the flexibility to evolve as needs and technology change. The location and design of new facilities should be compatibly integrated into the community fabric -- protecting the character of individual neighborhoods and the community as a whole. Transportation system planning is an ongoing process that should be flexible, comprehensive and open to public participation.

While transportation system facilities and services are the focus of this element, they will not work effectively unless development patterns support a range of transportation choices. These choices become increasingly important as energy prices rise and carbon emissions are limited. Therefore, transportation policies and their implementation are closely coordinated with the Community Development policies in Chapter 5.

### Context for Planning

**Transportation System.** The Southwest Transportation Planning Commission serves as the regional planning organization for the Durango planning area for major roadways that are eligible for state and federal funding. The City is an active participant in the MPO's planning and decision-making processes. Pursuant to the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21), the regional planning organization is responsible for transportation planning, including the preparation and update of a Transportation Improvement Plan ("TIP"). This Plan projects traffic needs based on local assumptions about population and employment growth. To the extent that the City and County comprehensive planning programs modify existing assumptions about future development, population and employment projections used to set priorities in the TIP will need to be adjusted accordingly.

A review of the area's road network indicates the following problems: (i) the seasonal influx of a significant visitor population, (ii) the convergence of federal and state highways and county roads within the planning area, (iii) topographical constraints within the planning area, and (iv) extra-territorial growth dependent on the highway system through the City. Durango has limited

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opportunity to expand existing roadways or to create new major arterial streets because the narrow Animas Valley is largely developed.

The layout of the existing street network is illustrated in **Map 8**. The road system consists of major arterial, minor arterial, collector and local streets. Arterials typically are designed to carry through traffic at relatively high speeds, though development and traffic intensity during peak hours limit the flow of traffic on most arterials in Durango. Collector streets are intended to carry traffic from the local street system to the arterial streets. Local streets primarily provide access to individual lots. The steep sides of the Animas Valley have resulted in a transportation system with a predominantly north-south bias. Within the City, east-west roadways primarily provide access via minor arterials and collectors. On the south side of the community, U.S. 160 intersects U.S. 550 from the east, proceeds north along the U.S. 550/160 corridor and branches off to the west on the southwest side of downtown.

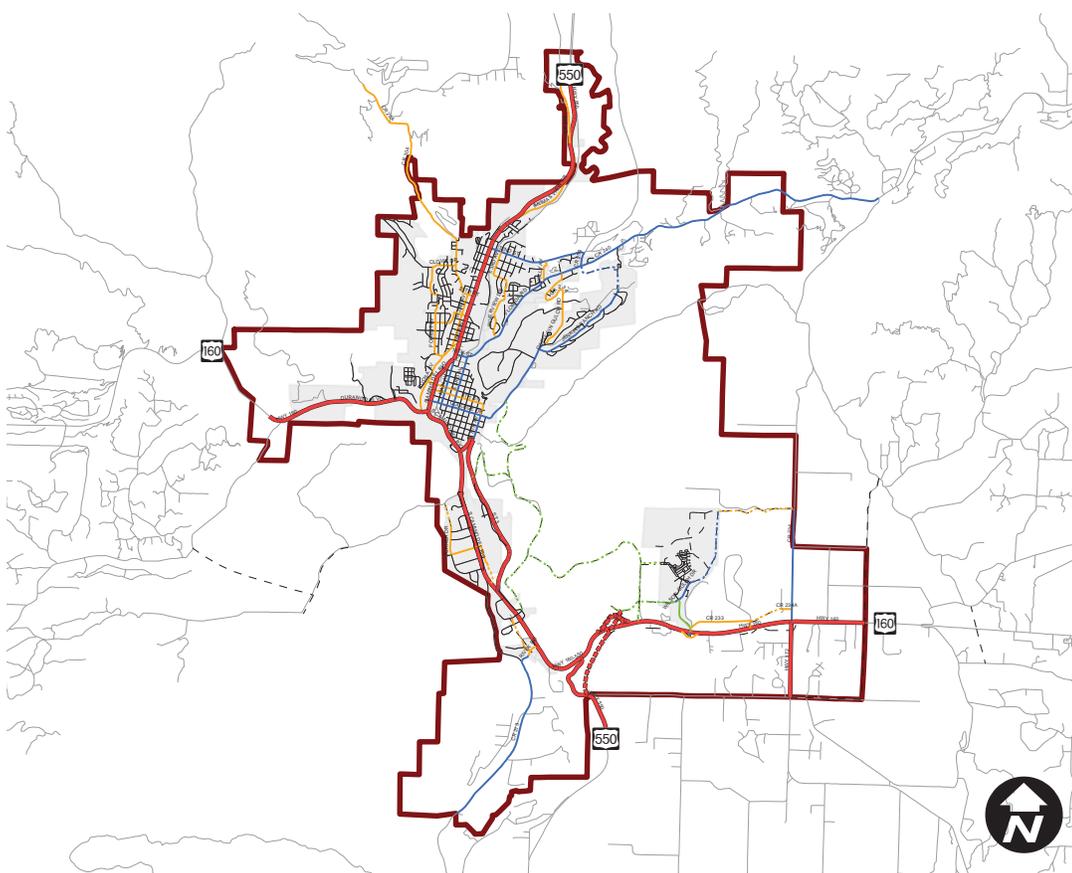
While the downtown area is laid out in a grid street system, major streets radiate out from the downtown, with key spokes extending out U.S. 550 to the north and south, U.S. 160 to the east and west, Florida Road to the northeast, and Junction Street to the northwest. This radial pattern has led to congestion near downtown along U.S. 550 and at the intersection of Florida Road, 3rd Avenue and 15th Street. Other areas of congestion in the planning area include:

- **U.S. 160 east of Farmington Hill.** The design and mix of uses on Florida Mesa has contributed to delays and automobile crashes due to numerous access points and high volumes of traffic relying on this major arterial. The intersection of U.S. 550 and U.S. 160 at the base of Farmington Hill is a particularly hazardous area, due to poor sight distances, high speeds of traffic, high traffic volume, poor intersection layout and the susceptibility to weather problems. The addition of a second westbound through lane should reduce problems at the base of Farmington Hill. Intersection and interchange improvements to the east, combined with more aggressive access limitations should improve the safety and capacity to the east.
- **The intersection of Main Avenue and Camino del Rio at 14th Street.** Heavy traffic loads and the number of streets converging near this intersection make this a challenging intersection. CDOT reports that this intersection operates at a level of service F on some peak tourist days in August.
- **Florida Road/15th Street/3rd Avenue intersection.** The design of this three-way intersection, located on the edge of a hill, creates numerous conflicts. Perhaps due to public awareness of its dangerous configuration, drivers have managed to keep accidents here to a minimum.
- **U.S. 550/160 Corridor.** While traffic generally moves well through this corridor, delays at traffic signals have become more prevalent. Increased development along the corridor and in outlying parts of the County will exacerbate these problems, resulting in levels of service E and F, according to the Regional Transportation Study. The addition of a third lane or the conversion of a corridor to a limited access freeway would temporarily improve the level of service, but there currently are no plans to pursue either of these projects.

## MAP 8 : OFFICIAL STREET CLASSIFICATION

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### Legend

- STATE HIGHWAY
- PRIMARY ARTERIAL
- MINOR ARTERIAL
- COLLECTOR
- PROPOSED STATE HIGHWAY
- PROPOSED PRIMARY ARTERIAL
- PROPOSED MINOR ARTERIAL
- PROPOSED COLLECTOR
- LOCAL
- FUTURE ROADS
- Other
- Plan Area
- City Limits

0 0.5 1 2 Miles



PLANNING WORKS

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- **River Road.** This road's intersection with US Highway 160/550 is critical to the function of La Posta Road. River Road serves as the primary outlet for traffic from La Posta Road, as well as a significant amount of development in the vicinity of the new Home Depot. The City will need to coordinate with CDOT and La Plata County to coordinate traffic capacity through this intersection with the approval of development along La Posta Road.

Residents of Durango have a wide selection of trails in the planning area, including paved and unpaved bicycle and mountain bike, hiking and ski trails. These trails provide transportation-related and recreational benefits to many residents.<sup>13</sup> A 1990 City-wide poll indicated that almost 80 percent of the respondents believed that Durango needed more bicycle paths. Since then, there have been several additional surveys, including one completed in 2004, that have reinforced support for the completion of the Animas River Trail and other multi-use trails in the community. In both 1990 and 2000, the Census reported that over 15 percent of Durango's population commuted to work by foot or on bicycle, which is a much higher proportion than on the State or National level.

The City has a paved Bike Route System that is primarily located on existing streets. A comprehensive paved multi-use trail system is also planned and/or under construction in the City, including the Animas River Trail; the Goeglein Gulch/College Mesa Trail; the SMART 160 Trail; and the Junction Creek Trail. This trail system includes an assortment of grade-separated crossings of U.S. Highways 550 and 160. Non-paved trails include the Animas Mountain Trail (primarily on Bureau of Land Management "BLM" land), Junction Creek/Colorado Trail (primarily on U.S. Forest Service land), Lightner Creek/Perins Peak Trail, Smelter Mountain/Ridges Basin Trail (part of Bodo Wildlife Preserve), Fort Lewis/ Goeglein Gulch Trail (including the Centennial Trail), Horse Gulch Trail (partly on private and BLM land) and Missionary Ridge/Haflin Creek/Animas Valley Trail (crossing private land).

As Durango expands its system of trails, it should distinguish between trails that serve transportation purposes from those that primarily serve recreational purposes. This element assumes that bike and pedestrian trails will be an important component of the multi-modal system serving Durango's long term transportation needs.

The Durango-La Plata County Airport and Animas Air Park provide air transport to the Durango area. La Plata County Airport is jointly funded by the City and County. It accommodates commercial and general aviation (mostly turboprops), and is capable of serving the Animas Valley's commercial air passenger and freight transportation needs for the foreseeable future. Though the airport is located twenty minutes from Durango, limousine, van and shuttle bus services are available. Animas Air Park, located southeast of the City along LaPosta Road, primarily provides service for private aircraft.

Recreational rail transport is provided by the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, which operates four trains (five during peak periods) from its main station in Durango to Blair Street in Silverton, Colorado, a distance of 45 miles, as well as specialty recreational trains, such as Thomas

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<sup>13</sup> For an examination of trails serving recreation purposes as well as being an important part of the transportation network, see Chapter 10: Parks, Recreation, Open Space & Trails Element.

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the Tank Engine, the Polar Express, etc. During the winter months (from January to April), weather typically permits only one daily train to run for only half the route. While train ridership peaked at more than 200,000 annual riders, there was a drop concurrent with the national tourism slowdown after September 11 and the Missionary Ridge Fire in 2002. There has been a steady increase since then, with 182,000 riders in 2005.

The City of Durango provides public transportation by bus, paratransit bus and trolley. Durango Transit (T) serves most of the City, including Fort Lewis College. In addition, trolley service travels along Main Avenue between College Drive north to the Days Inn Hotel (northern Boundary of the City limit. The trolley provides alternative transportation to the central business district. The Durango fixed route public transportation system has had a growth in ridership of approximately 20% over the last three years and remains popular with many Durango residents. At present, transit ridership is less than one percent of auto-occupant travel and is expected to remain a small percentage in the foreseeable future. Durango's Dial-a-Ride service, also known as the Opportunity Bus, provides "door-to-door" transportation to disabled, elderly or other persons unable to use Durango's fixed route system. This service also operates within the City limits.

#### Key Issues

##### Mobility for Multiple Users and Purposes

As a regional center for tourism, employment, goods and services, Durango must cope with significant external transportation system demands, as well as its internal demands. The community's transportation system should provide mobility for residents and non-residents in automobiles. It must provide for truck access to transport goods to and from the community. It also must provide for movement of significant numbers of residents and visitors on bicycles or on foot. It should provide transit access for those persons who do not own a vehicle, or who choose not to operate a vehicle under certain circumstances. Transportation system design should accommodate a variety of users who travel for a variety of purposes, including business, shopping, school and recreation.

##### Building in a Constrained Environment

The mountains, the Animas River and existing development severely limit opportunities to increase the capacity of the City's street system. If current driving habits continue, the level of service on Durango's streets will significantly deteriorate during the life of this Plan. Because new traffic routes are limited, Durango will need to explore all opportunities to manage traffic demands.

##### Multi-Modal Approaches

The transportation system provides choices, such as pedestrian walkways, streets, on- and off-street bicycle trails, a fixed route and paratransit bus systems. Automobiles currently are the dominant form of transportation. However, as the street and highway system nears capacity, the benefits of other modes of transportation will increase in importance. It will be crucial to plan to expand transit's service area to a regional bus system. As roads become more congested, a fixed guideway option that will continue to provide a high level of service in spite of increasing traffic congestion should be explored. This element encourages development of a multi-modal system, thereby reducing dependence on the automobile as the primary mode of transportation. Specifically, all roadway improvements should be designed to meet the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and transit vehicles, including pull-out lanes for buses and adequate space for bus stop amenities such as signage and bike racks.

### **Transit System Development**

The City should work with regional providers and La Plata County to address increasing regional transit needs, such as expansions to the transit service area and necessary funding strategies for a coordinated regional transit system. Durango should construct a downtown transit center that will be adjacent to the central business district as a hub for regional operations. Durango's local fixed service should continue to provide thirty minute frequency during normal business hours to major commercial centers such as Wal-Mart, Fort Lewis College, and major shopping centers. The City should assist regional entities in the coordination, planning, and establishment of regional transit infrastructure as may be dictated by service area expansions and service needs. Such infrastructure would include, but would not be limited to, dedicated bus high occupancy vehicle lanes, park and ride facilities, regional transit centers, bus stop shelters and other amenities

### **Protecting Neighborhoods and the Environment**

The superior quality of life in Durango is directly related to its natural and built environments. The transportation system should increase opportunities for people to enjoy these resources while supporting the viability of existing neighborhoods. Protection of neighborhood edges and mitigation of transportation-related noise will reduce the negative effects of an expanded system. Where feasible, additional traffic should be directed around the edges of neighborhoods. As new roads are developed along hillsides or near the river, they should be designed to mitigate their visual and environmental impacts.

### **Coordinating the Transportation System with Land Use Goals**

Transportation planning should ensure that planned land uses and the transportation system are mutually supportive. The transportation system should be designed to support higher intensity nodes and encourage infill development, yet it also must be designed at an appropriate scale and character to support existing low density neighborhoods.

### **Design and Safety**

The transportation system must be designed to meet acceptable safety standards -- not only for normal use by traffic and service vehicles, but also for emergency vehicles and during adverse weather conditions. The City will need to balance the desire to provide access to difficult development sites with the need to protect the public health, safety and welfare.

### **Planning and Evaluation**

One of the goals of transportation system planning is to achieve the maximum benefit at the least cost. Each transportation mode will have diverse short and long term implications. The analysis of these implications should include both tangible and intangible consequences. Level of service criteria, social impacts, health impacts, economic impacts, and environmental impacts are important criteria for assessment of individual transportation projects as well as the entire transportation system.

### **Shared Responsibility**

The planning area includes roadways under the jurisdiction of various public and private entities including the City, La Plata County, the Southern Ute Indian Tribe the Colorado Department of Transportation ("CDOT") and private owners. Coordination with other entities is essential to ensure that system improvements will support projected demands.

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#### Cost-Effectiveness and Funding

Finite financial resources must be managed so that the most impact is achieved with the fewest dollars. The City needs creative mechanisms for accomplishing its transportation goals. Facing more limited state and federal funding, local governments will need to explore new funding mechanisms for capital and maintenance costs to increase the effectiveness of each transportation dollar.

#### Transportation Corridors and Circulation

Important to the effectiveness of Durango's transportation system is the need for an effective and complete hierarchy of roadways with transportation corridors and nodes that reflect access management strategies and alternatives to corridor access.

#### Expanding the Trails Network

Durango's residents and visitors have enthusiastically supported the growth of the City's trail network -- a network that currently consists of formal and informal trail segments. The completion of the Animas River and the SMART 160 trail systems as multi-modal, hard surface ADA compliant trails are high priorities. The City must prioritize remaining trail segments that provide connections to other trails, based on its ability to fund initial construction and provide long-term maintenance.

#### Planning for Future Mass Transit

Dedicated mass transit corridors or additional right-of-way within existing arterial corridors will be required so that the transit system continues to be functional as the road and highway system becomes more congested over time. The City should begin the process of identifying these corridors immediately, so that as growth occurs, they can be acquired through the annexation and development approval process. In this way the City will be in the position to implement a light rail or similar system when the time comes

#### Future Roadway Network

The future roadway network established in this Plan identifies the approximate alignments and functional classifications of major roadways needed to serve planned development. In outlying areas, the densities and locations of collector roadways will depend on the actual density of development. For instance, if Florida Mesa is developed at densities that are greater than shown in the future land use plan, additional collector streets will be needed. The design of the future roadway network must be a dynamic process -- planned roads must be adjusted to reflect approved development. Similarly, the City and County should assess the impacts of proposed development to ensure that it can be safely accommodated on the planned roadway system. In addition, ongoing traffic monitoring and periodic system modeling should be conducted to adjust priorities in proposed capital improvements.

#### Transportation Goals, Objectives and Policies

**Goal 13:** To maintain a transportation system that safely and efficiently meets the needs of residents, businesses and visitors.

**Objective 13.1:** Develop and maintain a comprehensive transportation system that efficiently carries a variety of modes of traffic within and through the community.

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- Policy 13.1.1: Increase mobility options for all Durango residents through support of pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users and motorists.
- Policy 13.1.2: Reduce demands for new transportation facilities through better integration of land uses that enable residents to work, play and shop in closer proximity to their homes.
- Policy 13.1.3: Ensure that land uses, site designs, and street improvements do not limit future mobility options. Unless there are convenient parallel facilities, all major roads that are not highways should safely accommodate bicyclists, pedestrians and transit.
- Policy 13.1.4: Require new development to contribute its proportionate share of the costs of transportation system capacity, including the costs of streets, bike lanes, bikeways, transportation-related trails, sidewalks and transit infrastructure.

**Objective 13.2: Improve street system capacity to meet increasing demands for all modes of transportation.**

- Policy 13.2.1: Coordinate with the County and major community employers to implement cost-effective strategies to reduce peak hour traffic. Such strategies may include, but are not limited to, park and ride sites, adjustments to work schedules, transit incentives, ride-sharing incentives and improved bicycle/pedestrian facilities.
- Policy 13.2.2: Reduce reliance on single occupancy vehicles to alleviate traffic congestion through transit and parking policies.
- Policy 13.2.3: Design and construct all existing and proposed streets in accordance with adopted standards and policies.
- Policy 13.2.4: Maintain street design and construction standards based on the functional classification. Modify standards to safely accommodate significant physical features, such as waterways, trees, buildings or hillsides.
- Policy 13.2.5: Recognize that street design influences prevailing traffic speeds and design streets to support traffic speeds that are consistent with the function of the street and the neighborhood through which it travels. Traffic calming may be incorporated into street designs, but reliance on speed humps should be discouraged. When designing intersections, evaluate the use of roundabouts and other creative designs to improve traffic flow and public safety.
- Policy 13.2.6: Street and road systems will be designed and engineered to be safe, cost-effective and efficient to maintain, while serving all users, including bicyclists, pedestrians and transit users.
- Policy 13.2.7: Design streets to balance the need to provide adequate access for emergency services (i.e., police, fire, ambulance), transit services,

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sanitation services, street maintenance (including snow removal), and utility maintenance with the desire to slow traffic and increase safety for surrounding property owners and other users of the streets.

- Policy 13.2.8: Maximize connectivity between streets to increase travel options.
- Policy 13.2.9: Maintain and periodically update the Official Street Classification Map shown in **Map 8**, as part of the Major Street Plan to determine the locations and appropriate classifications of existing and future streets in the community. Future streets that are not shown in this exhibit shall be classified based on their logical function at full development and added to the Official Street Classification Map. Proposed street alignments are approximate; actual alignments in areas undergoing development may be adjusted to reflect future development patterns.
- Policy 13.2.10: The Official Street Classification Map will be used to identify right-of-way needs where new development is proposed, to set priorities for capital improvements and to help design street improvements. New development must be designed to accommodate adequate rights-of-way.
- Policy 13.2.11: Maintain a level of service "C" or better on all local and collector streets within the planning area. Maintain a level of service "D" or better on all arterial streets.

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- Policy 13.2.12: Traffic congestion is projected to exceed adopted levels of service on 160/550, Camino Del Rio and North Main. For these facilities:
- (1) Conduct periodic reviews of road segment and intersection levels of service (LOS) that account for existing traffic and approved, but un-built development;
  - (2) Approvals of development that would impact intersections with substandard LOS for which practical improvements have been identified should be linked to commitments to fund these improvements;
  - (3) Minimize the impacts of City development approvals that would deteriorate the LOS through traffic reduction measures or design features;
  - (4) Rezoning or land use map amendments that increase traffic generation on the corridor over existing future land use or zoning designations should be avoided; and
  - (5) Coordinate with CDOT and La Plata County to manage traffic in these constrained corridors.

*Comment: While Durango will not preclude development due to traffic congestion in these constrained corridors, it may require site designs to address access and safety concerns, and/or contributions to fund needed intersection or other capacity improvements.*

*A number of possible expansions to 160/550 are identified in the 2030 Trip study, all of which provide some degree of relief for congestion when measured against post 2030 conditions. A dedicated corridor for mass transit separate from 160/550 is another alternative, one that would be unaffected by the level of congestion on the highway system. The City should work with CDOT and La Plata County to explore the full range of transportation options that provide solutions over the long term. Such improvements would provide the basis for revising this policy.*

*For sub-item (2) above, where conditions warrant, the City may require one or more developers to fund proportionate shares of the costs of the improvements. The intent of this policy is to link the timing of development to the availability of all funds for required improvements.*

- Policy 13.2.13: Coordinate with CDOT and La Plata County to monitor levels of service using the regional traffic model. Use the results to guide land use and transportation policies and practices, as well as to identify road improvements, transit enhancements and trail linkages required to maintain adopted levels of service.
- Policy 13.2.14: Maintain a five-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP) that prioritizes transportation system improvements based on need, as measured by improved capacity, safety enhancements, maintenance and linkages. The CIP for streets should establish priorities based on the following factors:

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- **Demand Management** – improvements that lead to reductions in vehicle miles traveled or effectively reduce demands for new capacity should be considered for high priority.
- **Street Classification** -- high priority should be given to streets designed to carry higher volumes of traffic. In general, local street projects will be assigned lower priority than projects involving collector or arterial streets.
- **Existing volume to capacity ratio** -- the higher the volume to capacity ratio, the worse the level of service and the greater the traffic congestion. Therefore, priority should be given to projects that increase the capacity of streets with high demand to capacity ratios.
- **Design deficiencies** -- streets with inadequate pavement widths, lane deficiencies, poor drainage, lack of bike/ped facilities or other design deficiencies should be given higher priority than adequately designed streets.
- **Location** -- higher priority should be given to streets that serve existing development within the City. Projects which serve planned development or future annexation areas generally should be given lower priority over those that serve existing demands.
- **Maintenance problems** -- timely maintenance is far more cost-effective than waiting until severe problems arise. The CIP should set aside adequate funds for regular maintenance (e.g., resealing, resurfacing, shoulder maintenance) and repair of unanticipated maintenance problems (e.g., pot holes, curb/pavement failure).
- **Functional problems** -- higher priority should be given to resolving areas where traffic problems frequently occur. High numbers of accident reports, severe accidents, and high numbers of complaints can be used to identify locations experiencing functional problems.
- **Alternative funding sources** -- planned projects that can have commitments for funding from federal, state, county or private sources may be given a higher priority, provided that their principal purpose is to benefit existing city residents.
- **Private development** -- under certain circumstances, the City may increase the priority of a CIP project based on private sector activity. If the City can achieve cost savings by coordinating a planned public improvement with a private development project, then the City should consider increasing the priority of its CIP project. Rights-of-way typically are less

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expensive if acquired prior to, or in conjunction with, a particular development project.

- **Alternative Modes** - The potential to improve transportation system function through development of facilities serving transit, pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

Policy 13.2.15: Use the following information, derived from the Regional Transportation Plan, to guide the initial transportation CIP.

Location	Improvement
E 32 <sup>nd</sup> St / CR 250 from Holly Ave to Florida Rd	Add center turn lane, curb, gutter, and bike lane
Florida Rd from E 3 <sup>rd</sup> Ave to East of CR 250	Add center turn lane, curb, gutter, and bike lane
Jenkins Ranch Rd from existing terminus to Florida Rd	Extend as Collector
Turner Dr from existing terminus to CR 211	Extend as Collector
Frontage road from La Posta south of Turner to Sawyer at US 555	New underpass and frontage road
Escalante from Dominguez Dr to River Rd	New Collector
CR 235 from New Grandview arterial to CR 234	New Arterial
La Posta Road	Add center turn lane, curb, gutter, and bike lane
US 160 EIS Preferred Alternative	Relocation of the Farmington Hill interchange and widening of US 160 from 2 to 4 lanes east to Bayfield
Ewing Mesa Access (Dominguez)	New Arterial to be constructed as 4 lane parkway or divided one-way pairs.
Ewing Mesa Access (Hwy 3)	New Arterial to be constructed as 4 lane parkway or divided one-way pairs.
Ewing Mesa Access (Goeglein)	New Arterial
Ewing Mesa Arterial	New Arterial
Grandview Connection (South Alignment)**	New Arterial to be constructed as 4 lane parkway or divided one-way pairs.
State Hwy 3 from Ewing Mesa to 8 <sup>th</sup> Ave.	Widen to 4 lanes

The Regional Transportation Study identifies 16 arterial intersections in need of improvements to address projected traffic demands. The City is currently reviewing intersection number 14 (River Road and U.S. 160/550) in light of proposed land use changes recommended in the future land use map for the La Posta Road area. Each of these intersections are scheduled for additional turn lanes and/or other enhancements.

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Intersection #	Intersection
1	32 <sup>nd</sup> and Main
2	25 <sup>th</sup> and Main
3	22 <sup>nd</sup> and Main
4	Park and Main
5	14 <sup>th</sup> , Camino and Main
6	9 <sup>th</sup> and U.S. 550
7	College and U.S. 550
8	U.S. 550 and U.S. 160
9	Gateway and U.S. 160/550
10	CR 211 and U.S. 160/550
11	Sawyer and U.S. 160/550
12	SH 3 and U.S. 160/550
13	Dominguez and U.S. 160/550
14	River Road and U.S. 160/550
15	U.S. 550 and U.S. 160
16	SH 172 and U.S. 160

**Objective 13.3: To coordinate site development with the region's multi-modal transportation system.**

Policy 13.3.1: Minimize direct vehicular access from development facing arterial streets.

Policy 13.3.2: Before improving streets that pass through residential neighborhoods, balance the desires of residents with the need to maintain a street system that safely and efficiently moves traffic throughout the community. The character and function of existing roadways may be maintained through limited access, improved transit facilities, speed limits and/or parking regulations.

Policy 13.3.3: Limit through-traffic within industrial developments to reduce conflicts between automobiles and commercial vehicles.

Policy 13.3.4: In areas where there are inadequate street improvements, annexation, land use approvals or site development should be conditioned upon agreements being in place to fund improvements needed to bring the street system into conformance with City standards, including necessary upgrades for transit service. Areas with private streets that do not meet City standards may be annexed if an assessment district or association provides assurances that the roads will either remain privately maintained or the organization will fund improvements to bring the streets up to City standards.

Policy 13.3.5: In areas where roads can not be improved to City standards (due to steep grades, inadequate right-of-way or other physical constraints), annex the property subject to an agreement for alternative service arrangements. Such arrangement may include the private provision of sanitation and snow removal services, the

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installation of enhanced fire safety infrastructure (e.g., residential sprinklers), and/or other measures to mitigate the exceptional costs of service to substandard development.

- Policy 13.3.6: Prohibit the use of private streets. This policy is not intended to require public streets in place of common driveways.
- Policy 13.3.7: When new development is proposed along planned arterial streets and it is impractical to install full improvements prior to development, the City may, at its discretion, allow the development to proceed if partial improvements are made and/or the developer provides assurances for participation in full improvements at a later date.
- Policy 13.3.8: Require new subdivisions to be designed so that the internal local street system provides access from lots to collector streets. Whenever possible, access to arterial streets shall be limited to collector and arterial street intersections.
- Policy 13.3.9: Require turnouts for school buses and safe waiting areas for school children along minor arterial and collector streets where they enhance public safety. This policy is intended to be carried out in coordination with the school districts.
- Policy 13.3.10: Limit new traffic demands on local streets through residential neighborhoods. Large-scale multi-family uses generally should not take primary access through a lower density residential neighborhood unless it is by way of a collector or arterial street. Traffic to and from a commercial land use should not be routed through a residentially zoned area unless it is by way of an arterial street.
- Policy 13.3.11: Abandon or vacate rights-of-way only after finding that:
- there is no short- or long-term need for the right-of way for street, trail drainage or utility purposes;
  - no parcel will be land-locked by the abandonment;
  - no public or private interests will be damaged by the abandonment; and
  - no expansion of a non-conforming use would result.
- Policy 13.3.12: Use improvement districts to provide and replace sidewalks, trails and bikeways in the community. Jointly fund district improvements through property owner assessments, grants and utility or general fund revenues, as appropriate.
- Policy 13.3.13: Plan for transit stop pull-outs and other accommodations for public transit services on minor arterial and collector streets.

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**Objective 13.4: Provide adequate off-street parking in areas where street-pavement is needed for traffic flow.**

Policy 13.4.1: Require off-street parking for all new development, redevelopment projects and changes of use where parking demand is increased.

*Comment: This policy is not applicable to changes of use within the Main Avenue overlay district and may not be applied to traditional neighborhood developments of sufficient size to address all required parking on-site through a combination of on-street and off-street parking.*

Policy 13.4.2: Limit on-street parking when:

- street pavement width is not sufficient to accommodate desired traffic flow and on-street parking;
- high on-street parking demands interfere with safe access to adjacent parcels;
- traffic volumes and speeds are too great to safely allow on-street parking; and
- special conditions dictate such limitations, such as when snow plowing is required or during special events.

Policy 13.4.3: Address public parking demands in the CBD area in cooperation with downtown businesses and property owners benefiting from the availability of public parking.

Policy 13.4.4: Enhance the safety of parking areas through improved design. Reduce on-street parking through requirements for the provision of adequate off-street parking.

Policy 13.4.5: Limit oversized vehicle parking within public rights-of-way.

Policy 13.4.6: Evaluate existing parking requirements and design standards and revise as appropriate for Durango. Allow reduced parking standards where new development provides trail and/or transit facilities.

Policy 13.4.7: Establish convenient temporary access within the City Parking lots or a temporary parking area during summer months for RV parking in the CBD.

Policy 13.4.8: Encourage increased use of shared parking areas throughout the planning area.

Policy 13.4.9: Evaluate the use of residential parking permits to protect the integrity of downtown neighborhoods.

Policy 13.4.10: Monitor downtown parking demand and assess the viability of structured public parking.

**CITY OF DURANGO**  
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**Goal 14: To provide employees, residents and visitors with realistic opportunities to use various modes of transportation.**

**Objective 14.1: Develop and maintain a transportation network and demand management strategies that minimize anticipated increases in single occupancy automobile traffic.**

Policy 14.1.1: Establish corridors and obtain rights-of-way to support the future creation of High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes, bus rapid transit, light rail or other transit system. Identification of the geographic scope, location and width of the corridor(s) should be completed in the near future so that opportunities for acquisition will not be lost.

Policy 14.1.2: Continue to operate the Durango Transit (T) or Durango Public Transportation System. Ridership will be monitored and residents periodically surveyed to assess system demands and needs. Rates, routes, vehicles and pick-up frequencies will be adjusted as needed to improve the efficiency and appeal of this public transit service. Require dedication of transit facilities within major community activity areas (e.g., large shopping, employment or residential developments).

Policy 14.1.3: The Transit Development Plan should be updated at least every five years to evaluate expansions to the Durango Loop, Trolley routes and the Opportunity Bus.

Policy 14.1.4: Develop safe, well-lit and attractive transit stop facilities to enhance the appeal of transit use. Facilities should include well lit shelters and emergency phones in isolated areas.

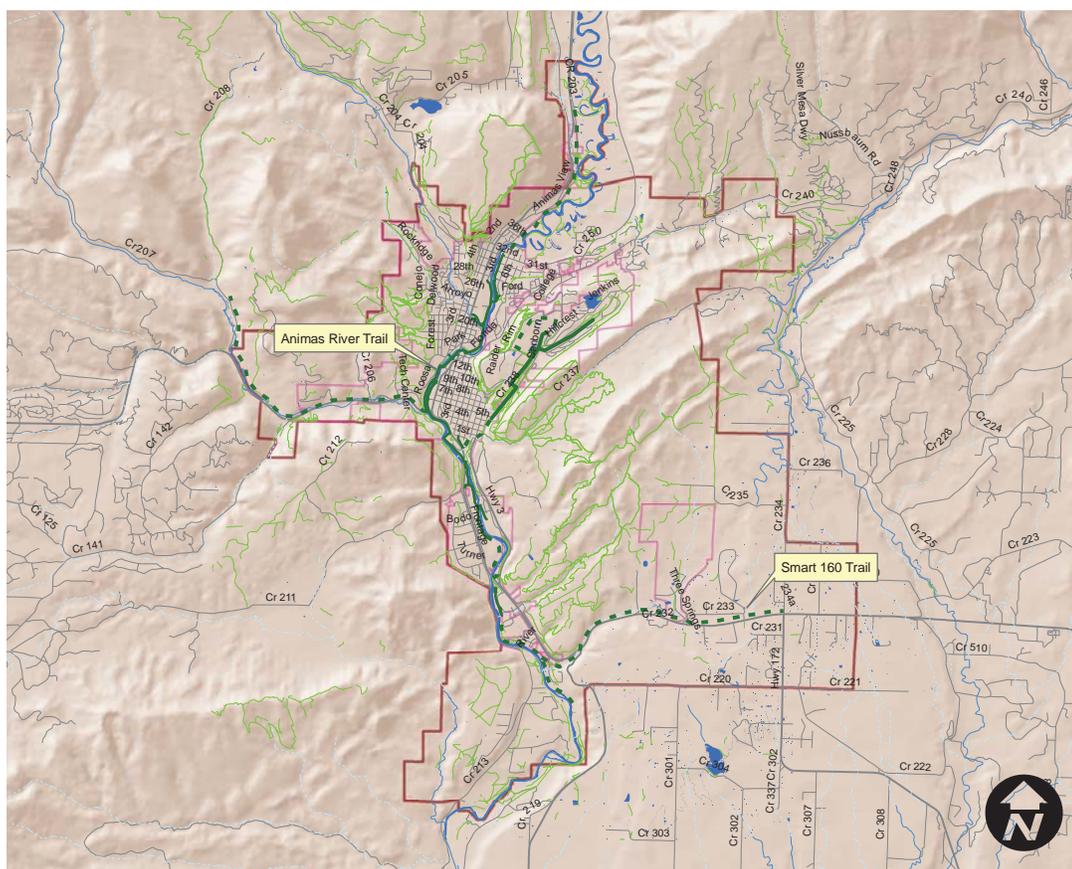
Policy 14.1.5: **Map 9** shows the planned on and off-street trail system in Durango. Develop and maintain this trail network as an alternative transportation network and a recreational amenity. On-street bikeways and pedestrian facilities will be constructed in conjunction with planned road improvements. Provide incentives for dedication of key trail segments in the river corridor and in other parts of the community where dedication requirements are not viable.

Policy 14.1.6: Evaluate alternative transportation demand strategies to reduce peak hour traffic. Evaluate the establishment of a park and ride site, limits on downtown employee parking, a ride sharing program, improved bicycle parking facilities and other transportation demand management alternatives.

## MAP 9 : TRAILS

CITY OF DURANGO

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE



### Legend

- Recreational Trails
- Multi-Purpose Trails**
  - Existing
  - - - Proposed
- Hydrology**
  - - - Intermittent stream, river, or wash
  - Perennial stream or river
- Roads**
  - Highway
  - Local
  - Water
  - City Limits
  - Plan Area

0 0.5 1 2 Miles



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**Objective 14.2:      Develop a multi-modal trail system that is safe, convenient and pleasant for commuting, shopping and recreational purposes.**

- Policy 14.2.1: Connect activity centers such as schools, parks, employment centers and shopping areas, with safe trails, bike lanes and bike routes. Incorporate educational trail kiosks to address travel safety, environmental and energy conservation.
- Policy 14.2.2: Integrate the trail system with mass transit to facilitate further use of both systems.
- Policy 14.2.3: Separate bicycle and pedestrian trail facilities from arterial roads where space and funding allow.
- Policy 14.2.4: Encourage new development to provide facilities for bicycle and pedestrian users such as bike secure parking, storage and employee locker and shower facilities.
- Policy 14.2.5: Incorporate trails with greenway preservation and development projects. Where drainageways are preserved, enhanced and restored, consider trail development projects, when appropriate.
- Policy 14.2.6: Construct underpasses where trails cross major streets and highways. Construct grade-separated crossings of major streets and highways. Underpasses should be well lit and as wide as possible.
- Policy 14.2.7: Light all designated hard-surface trails and all underpasses.
- Policy 14.2.8: Native plantings should be incorporated with trail corridor projects. Consider trail alignments that minimize traffic noise for the trail user. Use features such as walls, berms and landscaping in the design of trail segments to reduce noise levels on trails. Screen unsightly features from trails where feasible. Plantings, walls, fences and berms shall be incorporated in trail design where appropriate
- Policy 14.2.9: Provide pedestrian amenities along trails in City parks, such as: picnic tables, benches, shelters, lighting, pullout “overlook” at key locations, stream and river access points, restrooms, historic and environmental interpretive information, directional signage, dog waste bags, trash cans, and drinking fountains.
- Policy 14.2.10: Incorporate public art into trail projects, both through the overall design process and also with stand-alone works.
- Policy 14.2.11: Require new developments to provide trail linkages to adjacent neighborhoods.
- Policy 14.2.12: Apply AASHTO standards to hard surface multi-use trail construction to the greatest extent practical.

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### TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

Policy 14.2.13: Ensure public safety by patrolling the trail system with police officers and park rangers.

Policy 14.2.14: Encourage trail use and reduce trail conflicts with signage and education and promotion.

**Objective 14.3: To develop an interconnected bike lane network on existing streets, roads and highways that is safe, pleasant, efficient and convenient.**

Policy 14.3.1: Use AASHTO and Complete Streets philosophy standards for development of bike lanes. Where streets are not wide enough to allow for a standard bike lane of 5 foot width, consider narrowing travel lanes and bike lanes. Stripe and sign bike lanes on all roads with ADT counts of 4,000 or greater.

Policy 14.3.2: Develop highly visible and protected bike turn lanes where desirable and feasible.

Policy 14.3.3: Install traffic-activated signal detectors that are sensitive to bicycles, including those located in left-turn lanes. Bicyclists should not be required to dismount in order to activate a signal.

Policy 14.3.4: Provide signage to inform motorists of the presence of bike lanes and routes and allow bicyclists greater right-of-way at narrow curves and roundabouts.

Policy 14.3.5: Establish a network of striped bike lanes on existing streets and highways that enhance the safety and convenience of bike riding.

## CHAPTER 9 - UTILITIES ELEMENT

### Overview

The Utilities Element identifies key water and wastewater issues facing the community and establishes goals, policies and strategies addressing those issues. As Durango seeks to meet the utility needs of future residents, employees and visitors/tourists, it should strive to provide utility services in a reliable and affordable manner.

The City needs to expand its water system soon, but the best choice depends on the area and population that the system ultimately will serve. This element outlines the City's options for addressing future water and wastewater system needs throughout the planning area. The City's wastewater treatment system is adequate to meet anticipated needs in the City's service area. However, the 160/550 growth corridor and the Grandview area are served by the South Durango Sanitation District, which does not have sufficient capacity to meet anticipated demands.

As Durango grows, increased development within new and existing drainage basins will create additional stormwater management needs. The existing stormwater management plan does not address potential impacts of increased runoff from Grandview, Ewing Mesa or the 160/550 corridor. This element establishes policies that will enable the City to update the stormwater management plan.

### Context for Planning

The City's infrastructure policies require that water, wastewater and drainage system improvements are constructed concurrent with new development and are adequate to meet demands from existing and new users. While the City does not currently provide utilities for the entire service area, it does require that adequate utilities be provided for all new development. If facilities are not available, then a developer may:

- wait until facility improvements are installed through the approved Capital Improvements Program;
- seek participation from the City, other service providers or other property owners to finance the improvements; or
- install the facilities.

**Water System.**<sup>14</sup> The City's existing water system is shown in **Map 10**. The City provides water to about 18,500 residents in the incorporated area and unincorporated areas adjacent to Durango. The City's raw water is supplied primarily from the Florida River, however in summer months the raw water supply is supplemented by water from the Animas River. As the community grows the City will rely more and more on supplies from the Animas River because the supply from the Florida River is limited.

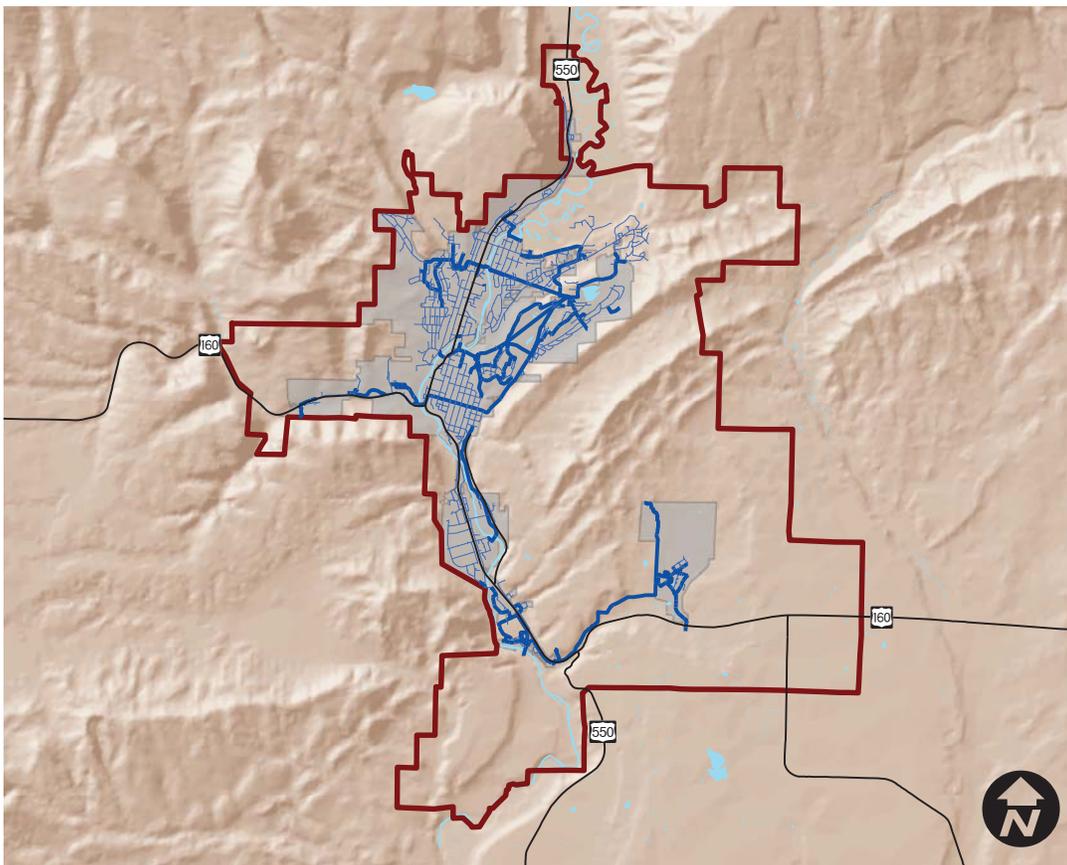
Water from the Florida River supply flows by gravity through a 9-mile water transmission line to Terminal Reservoir located on College Mesa. Water from the Animas River is pumped to Terminal Reservoir from one of two pump stations on the Animas River in Durango. In addition to the potable water supply, the City uses untreated water for the irrigation of public lands in Durango. In addition

<sup>14</sup> For a detailed analysis of Durango's water system capacities and alternatives, see the *City of Durango Comprehensive Plan Update Utilities Report, January 2007*, by Boyle Engineering.

## MAP 10 : DURANGO WATER SYSTEM

CITY OF DURANGO

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### Legend

— Highways

#### Water Line

##### Pipe Diameter

— 2in - 8in

— 10in +

▭ Plan Area

▭ Water

▭ City Limits

0 0.5 1 2 Miles



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to treating about 1.5 billion gallons a year at the Durango Water Treatment Plant, the City provides approximately 200 million gallons per year in raw water irrigation supplies.

The Durango Water Treatment Plant is capable of supplying 14 million gallons per day (MGD) for potable use. Peak demands in 2006 were about 8.5 MGD.

The distribution system provides potable water and fire protection needs for the City's water customers in a looped network of primarily 14-inch and smaller distribution lines. The existing system meets the water supply and fire system needs at the present time with the exception of some isolated fire protection deficiencies.

Future water system needs have been identified in a report prepared by Boyle Engineering Inc., entitled *City of Durango Comprehensive Plan Update Utilities Report, January 2007* (see Appendix I) The City's current plan for meeting additional water supply needs is participation in the Animas-La Plata Water Project, a Bureau of Reclamation joint use project currently under construction immediately west of the City of Durango. The City has an option to purchase sufficient water from the project to support a population of 40,000 residents using the current rate of water consumption by City water customers. While this water is more than adequate for projected growth through the year 2030 under drought conditions, additional storage capacity will be required to accommodate proposed build-out populations under drought conditions. Several options to address these long-term needs are addressed in Appendix I. Pumping costs for each of these options would be affected by energy cost increases.

The City's water treatment facility has served the City since 1959 with modifications and enlargements over the years. As the City grows it is the City's plan to build a new water treatment plant at a site south of Durango. The plant can be constructed and enlarged over the years to provide adequate water treatment needs for the City in the future.

The City's distribution system includes six pressure zones and nine treated water storage tanks located throughout the City. As the City grows, two new pressure zones with pumping stations and treated water storage facilities will be added to serve the Twin Buttes area west of Durango and the Ewing Mesa development east of State Highway 3.

Water distribution improvements to support a growing service area will generally be supplied by developers although over \$14 million in system improvements are planned that are not provided by developers. Treatment capacity can be added incrementally as demand increases. Water supply needs may be met in a number of ways including increasing the water supply from the Animas-La Plata Project or by construction of a reservoir to provide water storage in times of drought. The present "preferred alternative" provides for a future build-out population of about 41,394 people.

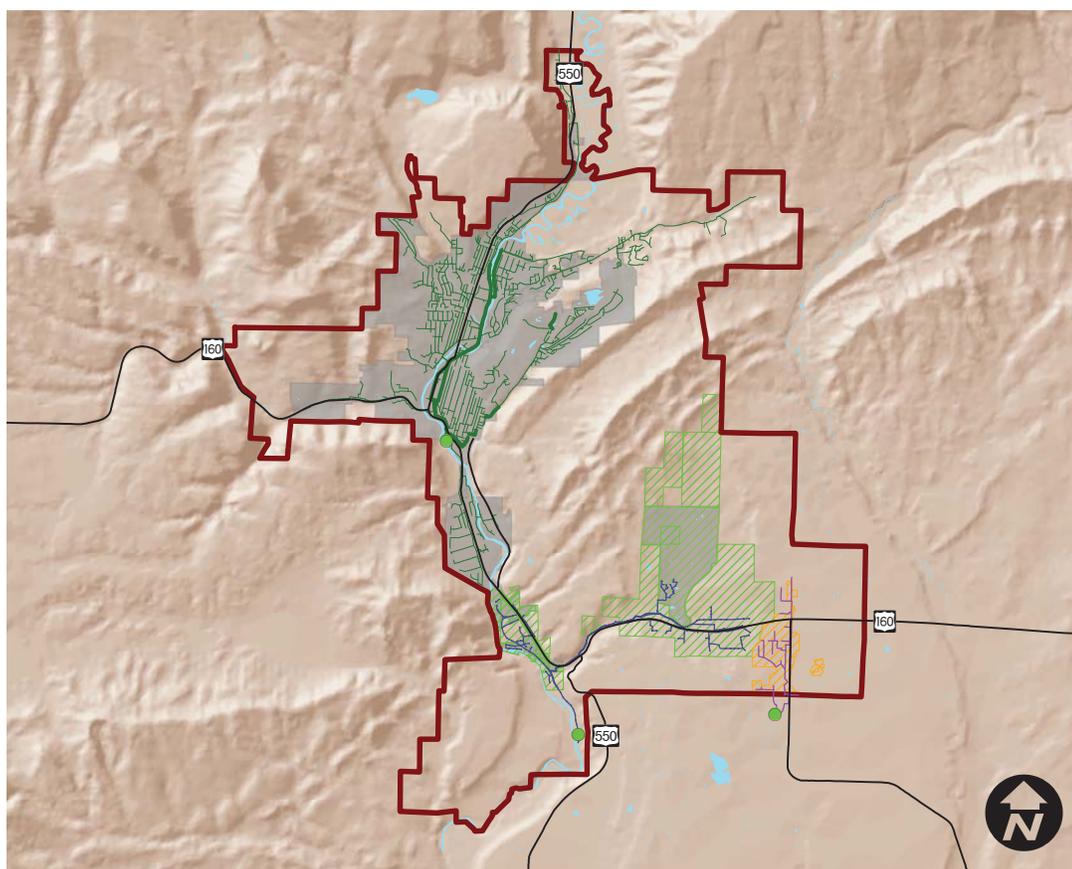
**Wastewater Collection Systems.** As shown in **Map 11**, Durango provides sanitary sewer service to an area that extends from approximately one mile north of the current City limits (along Hwy. 550) through Bodo Industrial Park (along the south 160/550 corridor). The South Durango Sanitation District serves the area south of the High Bridge on Highway 160/550 and to portions of the Grandview area. Loma Linda Sanitation District serves the eastern-most portions of the planning area.

**Existing Service Population.** The population served by the Durango wastewater collection system in 2005 was 17,000. The Durango wastewater collection system has grown from a service population in 1980 of 13,800 to the present population. Most of the commercial and industrial property around Durango is served by Durango wastewater collection system including Fort Lewis College, the Central Business District and Bodo Industrial Park. The area south of Bodo Industrial Park is served by the

## MAP 11 : SANITARY SEWER SERVICE AREAS

CITY OF DURANGO

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE



### Legend

- WW Treatment Plants
- Highways
- South Durango SD Lines
- Loma Linda SD Lines

### City of Durango Sewer Lines

#### Diameter

- 4in - 8in
- 10in +

- Plan Area

### Sanitary Sewer Districts

- ▨ Loma Linda Sanitation
- ▨ South Durango Sanitation
- City Limits

0 0.5 1 2 Miles



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South Durango Sanitation District (SDSD) including the properties around Wal-Mart. In 2006 Mercy Hospital relocated to the Grandview area, which is served in part by the SDSD. In 2005, the SDSD had 909 Equivalent Residential Taps. An Equivalent Residential Tap is defined as the average wastewater flows from a typical single family dwelling. Based on an average 2.5 persons per household, the flows to the SDSD plant are equivalent to a "population" of 2,273. However, SDSD does serve a substantial number of commercial and institutional establishments, so the actual residential population in the South Durango area may be substantially less. The SDSD was formed in 1983. Prior to that time residences in the area were served with individual waste treatment facilities.

The entire population of the Durango wastewater collection system is served by the 3 million gallons per day (MGD) wastewater treatment facility located approximately one mile south of City Hall. The entire population of the South Durango Sanitation District is served by the 0.3 MGD wastewater treatment facility four miles south of City Hall. The Loma Linda Sanitation District is served by a 0.125 mgd wastewater lagoon located at the south end of the district west of S. H. 172.

**Existing Wastewater Demands.** Wastewater flows to the existing 3 MGD plant operated by the City amounted to an annual average daily flow of 1.98 MGD in 2005. Wastewater flows to the South Durango Wastewater Treatment plant averaged 0.10 MGD in 2005. There is no significant inflow or infiltration to the Durango or South Durango wastewater collection systems. Consequently, any reductions in per capita flows would rely on changes in appliances or user practices.

Annual variation in flows to the Durango wastewater system are the result of increased flows from tourist activities from May through August, and decreased flows from Fort Lewis College from May through August. Summertime flows to the South Durango Sanitation District treatment facilities between May and October are typically 25% higher than during the other months of the year. This is due largely to an increase in commercial activity in the South Durango area during those months.

**Sewer Collection Facilities.** The wastewater collection system of the City includes 90 miles of lines. The wastewater collection system for the South Durango Sanitation District includes 12 miles of lines. No sewer lines in either system have flows that exceed or are approaching the capacity of the system. System upgrades to the South Durango collection system include a replacement of the interceptor that serves the Wal-Mart area, which is scheduled for construction in 2007. Lines to serve the proposed future development in the Grandview area were completed in 2005.

The South Durango Sanitation District prepared a master plan in 2002 describing the proposed sewer system improvements and wastewater treatment facilities needed to service the district over the next 50 years. This plan will be updated upon the completion of the La Posta Road Area Plan.

Two of the three mains that serve the Durango wastewater treatment plant, the Animas River interceptor and the Bodo Park force main are adequately sized to accommodate projected growth in the Durango sewer collection system. The South Durango-Goeglein sewer main is inadequate to accept projected flows from the Ewing Mesa area of the City.

**City of Durango Wastewater Treatment Plant.** The Durango Wastewater Treatment Plant is sized to treat 3 MGD. The hydraulic capacity of the piping at the plant is in excess of 6 MGD. The plant is designed to provide secondary treatment of wastewater flows and is not designed for nutrient removal. Changes in regulations that may require nutrient removal or removal of other constituents beyond the capability of secondary treatment may require modifications to the treatment facilities. The wastewater flow to the Durango Wastewater Treatment Plant in 2030 is estimated to be 2.4 MGD

## CHAPTER 9

### UTILITIES ELEMENT

based on a service population of 23,000. State regulations require that planning for expansion of treatment works begin when the flows to the treatment facility reach 80% of the capacity of the facility. The City of Durango should begin planning for expansion of the treatment facilities in 2015.

**South Durango Sanitation District Wastewater Treatment Plant.** The SDSD is actively in the process of expanding its facilities to meet future demand. SDSD recently completed an expansion of its wastewater treatment facility from 145,000 gallons per day (gpd) to 300,000 gpd. That plant is now operating at about 50% capacity; however with the projected growth in both the South Durango and Grandview areas, the District has commenced design of the next expansion (Phase 2) of its plant which is scheduled for completion in the spring of 2008. Originally the Phase 2 expansion would have increased the plant from 300,000 gpd to 600,000 gpd, but the SDSD is now exploring an increase to 1 million gpd. The SDSD has been approved for \$500,000 in grant funds under the WET Initiative. The remainder of the funding will require a revenue bond or other financing arrangement. SDSD requires those requesting new service to pay for the new facilities required to provide that service through tap fees. Based on cost estimates prepared in 2002, those tap fees would be approximately \$8,000 per single family equivalent connection. The financing of expansion of the wastewater treatment plant capacity may determine the rate at which facilities will be available for use. Although SDSD tap fees are substantially higher than the City's, those tap fees are consistent with the capital cost of providing new wastewater collection and treatment facilities. SDSD reviews tap fees in light of actual capital costs and makes adjustment when necessary.

**Loma Linda Sanitation District Wastewater Treatment Plant.** The LLSLSD plant has a design capacity of 125,000 gpd. At the present time, flows are about 50% of that capacity. There has been very little growth in the District for the last several years. LLSLSD anticipates that a substantial portion of the unused capacity will be utilized by the Vista Montana development located south of Florida Mesa Elementary School. After completion of that development, there are no other known projects which could utilize the remainder of the LLSLSD plant capacity. There has been some discussion about development in the Elmore's Corner area; however without central water, intensive development of that area is unlikely and could probably be served by the existing capacity in the LLSLSD plant. The Board of Directors of LLSLSD approved funds in the 2007 Budget for an analysis of the capacity in the plant and alternatives for expansion.

#### Key Issues

##### Growing Into the Future Service Area

This Plan provides for water service to all of the urbanizing area. City service to the potential urban areas should be determined through negotiations with La Plata County. Extending City service further onto Florida Mesa and the La Posta Road areas will require a significant initial capital investment and would be more costly on a per unit basis than to the existing service area. The City will need to influence the timing, location and intensity of development through its utility extensions in ways that protect existing ratepayers from subsidizing new development. This will require creative partnerships with property owners to ensure that new development fully funds the capital and operations costs of service.

##### Securing Adequate Water Supplies

The City will have adequate water supplies to meet the needs of projected growth if it protects existing rights and secures rights to some water from the Animas La Plata project. However, long-term drought may limit the availability of water and necessitate more aggressive conservation efforts.

**Ensuring Adequate Wastewater Service for Grandview, La Posta Road and South Durango.**

The City's future land use plan anticipates intensive development along the 160/550 corridor, in Grandview and along La Posta Road. An estimated two-thirds of the City's future growth will be served by the South Durango and Loma Linda Sanitation Districts, which may not currently have sufficient capacity to meet long term demands, although the SDSD is actively pursuing facilities expansion. The City may rely on the districts to expand their plant and lines to serve future development, or it may acquire one or both of the districts and assume their service responsibilities. Due to the higher capital costs of services in these districts, the City would need to determine how to fund these higher costs without shifting the burdens to its existing rate base.

**Providing Adequate Stormwater Management.**

Historically, the City's stormwater management system has served the role of safely transporting runoff to the Animas River. As development has increased along tributaries upstream of existing development, the potential for flooding has increased. Cuts and development on the hillsides has resulted in increased volumes of runoff moving at higher velocities. As new development occurs the City must ensure that the risk of flooding to downstream properties is not increased. Historically the City has required management of increased runoff and sedimentation on individual development sites. As larger upstream development occurs (along Lightner Creek, Junction Creek, Ewing Mesa, and Grandview), it may be more cost effective to reserve land for regional detention and sedimentation facilities.

**Utilities Element Goals, Objectives and Policies**

**Goal 15: To balance the demand for expanding urban development with the efficient provision of facilities and services.**

**Objective 15.1: To serve anticipated urban development in a cost-effective manner.<sup>15</sup>**

Policy 15.1.1: Provide water and wastewater utilities to all urban development within the urbanizing area when commitments for annexation have been secured.

Policy 15.1.2: Water and wastewater system extensions to serve new development shall be funded by new development. Maintain water system impact fees that recover the full capital cost attributable to new development. Improvement and maintenance costs attributable to existing development shall be borne by all rate payers.

Policy 15.1.3: Work with other utility providers to identify opportunities to increase service efficiencies through joint service provision and coordinated construction arrangements.

Policy 15.1.4: Oppose the establishment of independent water or sewer systems or districts within the urbanizing area, except for the specified purpose of

<sup>15</sup> See related growth management policies under Goal 8 of this plan.

## CHAPTER 9

### UTILITIES ELEMENT

making improvements which will be transferred to the City when the cost of improvements is paid.

- Policy 15.1.5: Coordinate with La Plata County to establish consistent improvement standards and funding strategies for water and sewer providers throughout the planning area.
- Policy 15.1.6: Exchange land use monitoring and capital improvement programming information with other service providers.
- Policy 15.1.7: Pursue long-term water supply, storage and treatment options which provide the flexibility to accommodate full development within the planning area, as well as the flexibility to adapt to problems associated with any single water source.
- Policy 15.1.8: Evaluate the use of raw water and/or treated effluent to meet irrigation needs in parks and for other large-scale water uses not requiring potable water. Costs for this service should be recovered through user fees.
- Policy 15.1.9: Reduce per capita water demands and wastewater generation through on-going conservation efforts addressing education, use practices, fixtures, and system maintenance.

**Objective 15.2: To ensure that water, wastewater and storm drainage systems are adequate to meet basic and emergency needs of development.**

- Policy 15.2.1: Maintain a water supply and distribution system that will meet existing and future domestic and fire protection demands for the urbanizing area.
- Policy 15.2.2: Maintain wastewater and stormwater management systems that will meet existing and future domestic demands in the urbanizing area.
- Policy 15.2.3: Continue to implement the Water Efficiency Management Plan to help defer capital investments in increased supplies.
- Policy 15.2.4: Systematically upgrade all undersized mains in the City as repairs, expansions and other capital improvement projects provide the opportunity. All replacement mains shall be sized to provide adequate volumes of water to meet established fire flow standards at full development.
- Policy 15.2.5: Where natural drainageways cannot effectively accommodate stormwater runoff, the City will use the street system as a key element of the storm drainage collection system. Curbed streets may provide drainage outfall for adjacent properties.

- Wherever possible, street layouts and grades shall be designed to avoid excessive runoff concentrations and to minimize the need for storm sewers.
- Site grading shall provide for runoff from sites toward the streets or off-street stormwater conveyances.
- If major drainageways exist or are proposed through a development, the storm runoff shall be routed to that drainageway.
- Storm sewers or surface drainage channels and culverts shall be installed when the carrying capacity of the street is exceeded.
- All storm drainage systems, or portions thereof, shall be approved by the City and constructed in accordance with the City's LUDC and the Development Standards for Public Improvements and Construction Specifications.

## CHAPTER 10

### PARKS RECREATION, OPEN SPACE & TRAILS ELEMENT

## CHAPTER 10 - PARKS, RECREATION, OPEN SPACE & TRAILS ELEMENT

### OVERVIEW

The Parks, Open Space and Trails (POST) Master Plan of the City of Durango includes three closely related, but independent elements<sup>16</sup> which form a stand-alone component of the City's Comprehensive Plan. The existing POST Plan is available as **Appendix H** to this Plan. Adopted in 2001, the POST Master Plan refines and implements the general directions established in the 1997 Comprehensive Plan, the purpose being to identify the current parks, recreation, open space and trails needs of the community and to ensure that community facilities will be adequate to meet future needs.

The POST Plan was developed through a variety of public inputs, including:

- Focus group
- Interviews
- Public meetings
- Public review of the draft document
- Public hearings

It also incorporates data from opinion surveys conducted prior to the formulation of the Master Plan.

### Parks and Recreation

In addition to many standard park and recreation facilities (tennis courts, baseball and softball fields, etc.), Durango has expanded facilities that enhance its park and recreation system, including:

- A state-of-the-art community recreation center
- An extensive network of mountain bike trails
- Rafting and kayak put-ins on the Animas River
- A ski hill
- An ice arena
- Durango Mountain Park
- Dalla Mountain Park

Durango is a regional center, providing active recreation programs and facilities for a large portion of La Plata County. In addition, Durango also receives several hundred thousand tourist visitors each year, a significant number of whom use portions of the City's park and recreation system. These non-resident users put an extra burden on the City's recreation facilities, but also make a significant contribution to the local economy.

### Summary of Recommendations

1. Begin immediately to locate and plan one or more major sports field facilities in community or regional parks.
2. Refurbish and make selective improvements to several parks.
3. Complete the Animas River Trail and preserve the Animas River Greenway.
4. Monitor the use of City recreation facilities.
5. Adopt a level-of-service methodology for parks planning.

<sup>16</sup> The POST Plan addresses parks, open spaces and trails used for a variety of purposes.

The Plan defines three park types that vary in size and service area radius, and identifies planned new park facilities, several of which have been built in the five years since the adoption of the POST Plan. Regional, community and neighborhood parks, which serve the areas indicated by their names, have distinct criteria for size, facilities, access and uses. The Parks Plan recommends policies and standards for the dedication, design, development and maintenance of current and future park types in the City.

Actions, policies and responsible parties are enumerated as part of the Plan's implementation element in order to achieve the goals of the Plan. The actions are listed in order of priority, as follows:

1. Ensuring public safety
2. Preserving future opportunities through effective long range planning
3. Assuring the cost effectiveness of the park acquisition and development process
4. Upgrading the design of new and existing parks

### **Open Space**

For purposes of the POST Plan, the term "Open Space" refers to land that is:

- In a natural, or primarily natural state
- Contains significant natural, visual or cultural features that warrant protection
- Permanently protected

Although Durango is surrounded by large amounts of public land (Forest Service, BLM, etc.), some of the open space surrounding the City is in private ownership and therefore subject to development. Additionally, public land can also be subject to varying levels of development if not permanently protected (e.g. via land exchange).

Identifying these risks, and the desire for the City to take specific actions to preserve desirable open space, the Plan is intended to guide the preservation of Open Space using various tools and methods. The plan generally identifies desired open space, priorities and potential tools for preservation. It also outlines a variety of ways to work with potential partners to achieve multiple open space objectives, including:

- Ground water recharge
- Stormwater management
- Protection of wildlife habitat
- Preserving visual relief from development
- Air quality improvement

Open space is important from cultural, recreational and environmental perspectives. As there are many methods of preserving open space, and many public agencies that have jurisdiction over land, the Plan is meant to help coordinate the various public and private efforts, and assure that resources of the community are used most effectively in the preservation of open space.

The Plan identifies 24 general open space areas that might be appropriate for preservation and compares the characteristics of those areas to determine the most valuable areas, such as:

- Mountain views
- Unique aesthetic features
- Valuable wildlife habitat
- Cultural and recreational opportunities
- Other areas important to human health and safety, including steep slopes, drainage ways, watersheds and flood plains

## CHAPTER 10

### PARKS RECREATION, OPEN SPACE & TRAILS ELEMENT

The plan assesses the risk and likelihood of development in desirable open space areas, as well as the current degree of protection for those areas and the different local, state and federal programs that are currently in place.

#### Open Space Strategy

There are a number of steps that must be taken to implement the open space component of the Parks, Open Space and Trails Plan for Durango, including:

- Build/test public awareness
- Maintain a dependable, ongoing funding source
- Creatively utilize multiple resources to protect Open Space.
- Purchase open space only when necessary
- Consolidate open space responsibilities in one individual that can effectively coordinate the efforts of other departments, other agencies, and the public
- Work with landowners to find win/win solutions
- Work with partners whenever possible to leverage other resources
- Prioritize protection efforts using the Open Space Evaluation Form
- Make acquired Open Space permanent

#### Preservation Tools

The following include tools outlined in the Plan for the preservation of open space, many of which can be used together:

- Conservation easement
- Cluster development
- Deed restrictions/covenants
- Reserved life estate
- Cash purchase
- Donation or gift
- Land exchange
- Purchase of development rights (PDR)
- Transferable development rights (TDR)
- Estate planning
- Land preservation development
- Intergovernmental agreements (IGAs)

The Plan identifies open space management responsibilities and roles, as well as open space policies, including short and long range action steps for implementation.

#### Trails

Durango's trails and bikeways connect homes to parks, shopping areas, businesses, schools, Ft. Lewis College and to the trails on public land surrounding the City. The Parks, Open Space and Trails Master Plan provides a vision of Durango's existing and proposed trail system, and establishes a framework for prioritizing trail development activities. The Plan addresses trail management – priorities, policies and standards regarding design, maintenance, and general stewardship responsibilities.

The POST Plan identifies objectives and general goals to establish a framework for the City's overall trail system. Specific trail projects are discussed, including detailed descriptions for Animas River Trail (ART) projects. These projects are prioritized and planning level cost estimates are provided in the Plan's Appendix. Opportunities for obtaining right-of-way for trail construction are discussed.

## CITY OF DURANGO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Major trails defined in the Plan include:

- Animas River Trail and Greenway
- Neighborhood Trails
- College Mesa Trails
- Fringe Trails / Public Lands Connections
- Bicycle Commuter Roads

The various users of these trail types are considered in the recommended design specifications. Identifying missing links to a comprehensive trail system and exploring alternative connections to complete the system is an important part of the Plan, as is delineating policies and trail management considerations. Design guidelines for various trail styles are included as well.

### **Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails<sup>17</sup> Element Goals, Objectives and Policies**

**Goal 16:** To develop and maintain a system of open space throughout the planning area that serves as a visual and/or recreational amenity, allows for appropriate human use while serving the wildlife population, and provides adequate<sup>18</sup> habitat to sustain healthy wildlife populations.

**Objective 16.1:** Develop an open space system consisting of green belts, greenways, special feature parcels, parks and trails that together will serve one or more of the following purposes: 1) preserve scenic vistas; 2) serve as buffers between land uses; 3) provide increased human access to adjacent public lands, the Animas River and other drainage corridors; 4) provide a mix of active and passive use areas; 5) preserve and enhance important wildlife habitats and migration routes; 6) provide opportunities for environmental education; 7) protect habitat corridors for movement of wildlife in Durango and/or 7) preserve and develop an interconnected trail system throughout the planning area.

**Policy 16.1.1:** Prohibit the conversion of public open space land to private development except where land exchanges enhance the environmental value of public open spaces.

**Policy 16.1.2:** Formally request that all State and Federal agencies managing lands within the City's planning area consult with the City regarding any plans for changing management objectives or ownership of public lands.

<sup>17</sup> While trails provide important recreational opportunities, they also serve a vital transportation function. For this reason, Chapter 8 includes most of the City's trails policies.

<sup>18</sup> Habitat adequacy should be defined in terms of quantity, quality and diversity.

## CHAPTER 10

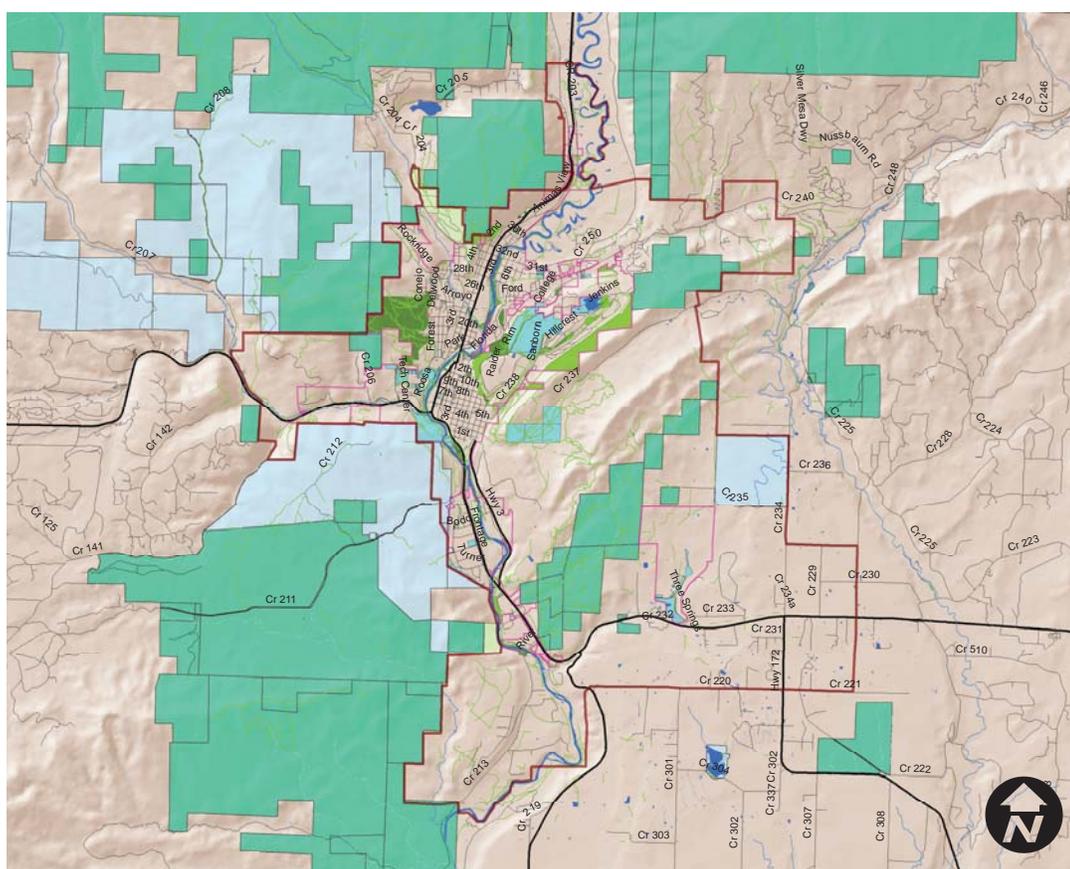
### PARKS RECREATION, OPEN SPACE & TRAILS ELEMENT

- Policy 16.1.3: Pursue private dedications of open space land or conservation easements in areas adjacent to public open space, the Animas River or in other locations that support the community's open space objectives.
- Policy 16.1.4: Work cooperatively with other public and private groups to help establish greenbelts and preserved open areas in and around the City consisting of a network of public lands, hillsides and private lands.
- Policy 16.1.5: Consider retention of lands that are not suitable for development (e.g. steep grades, poor soils, floodplain areas, etc.) as open space areas, or, where appropriate, the development of recreational uses.
- Policy 16.1.6: Preserve areas of outstanding scenic and/or natural beauty and, where possible, include these areas in a permanent open space system. The City will be a partner with numerous local, state and federal agencies and organizations, including, but not limited to the CDOW, BLM, San Juan National Forest, Bureau of Reclamation, State Land Board, Ft. Lewis College, La Plata Open Space Conservancy, the Nature Conservancy, Trails 2000, La Plata County, and other interests in the development of these open space preservation strategies.
- Policy 16.1.7: Preserve open space buffers around development areas, provide recreational opportunities and visual amenities, and protect ecological systems. Open spaces, greenways and green belts will be used as buffers and to link activity centers, recreation areas and other open spaces with neighborhoods and the community in general.
- Policy 16.1.8: Review all utility and public works projects for consistency with the City's open space goals, objectives and policies. Wherever feasible, utility corridors, easements, drainage crossings, transportation corridors and associated development projects shall be designed and constructed to achieve the City's open space goals and objectives.
- Policy 16.1.9: **Map 12** shows the locations of the community's parks, open space areas, and trails. Use this exhibit as a guide to identify and secure land and facilities needed to retain the quality of life for the community's residents -- humans and wildlife.
- Policy 16.1.10: Consult with CDOW on all development proposals that could have an impact on wildlife habitat and/or forage diversity to strategically locate housing clusters in a way to minimize negative impacts to game and non-game wildlife and to minimize human-wildlife conflicts.

## MAP 12 : PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS

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### Legend

- Plan Area
- City Limits
- Existing Trail
- Proposed Trail
- Hydrology**
- Intermittent stream, river, or wash
- Perennial stream or river
- Roads**
- Highway
- Local
- Water
- Dedicated Open Space
- Purchased Open Space
- Other City-Owned Lands
- City Parks/Recreation Facilities
- Federal Land
- State Land

0 0.5 1 2 Miles



PLANNING WORKS

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### PARKS RECREATION, OPEN SPACE & TRAILS ELEMENT

Policy 16.1.11: When setting priorities for parks and open space, consider the retention of public and private lands that have historically fulfilled public parks and open space needs.

**Objective 16.2: To work cooperatively with private land owners to promote open space preservation and access.**

Policy 16.2.1: Help establish a land stewardship education and incentive program for existing land owners with property within identified open space areas. These education efforts should be provided in partnership with organizations like the La Plata Open Space Conservancy, Colorado Forest Service, Natural Resource Conservation Service and the CDOW.

Policy 16.2.2: Encourage clustering of dwellings on a portion of development sites where the remainder of the site can be reserved for open space.

Policy 16.2.3: Encourage voluntary land dedications, conservation easements, and other forms of open space preservation.

Policy 16.2.4: Pursue fee-title acquisition of open space lands only after all other preservation techniques have been considered.

Policy 16.2.5: Review all new developments to identify opportunities for consistency with the POST plan, as well as the potential for new trails and trail connections.

**Objective 16.3: To maintain and continue to develop funding programs and opportunities for open space preservation and maintenance.**

Policy 16.3.1: Use all available funding sources for open space preservation and maintenance.

Policy 16.3.2: Explore all available opportunities to team with private individuals and agencies such as GOCO, Nature Conservancy, the Trust for Public Lands, etc., to secure additional funds for open space preservation.

Policy 16.3.3: Encourage public participation and consultation with the Parks, Open Space and Trails Citizens Advisory Board regarding funding for parks, open space and trails.

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**Goal 17: To develop and maintain an interconnected system of parks, trails and other recreational facilities.**

**Objective 17.1: To develop a network of passive and active green belts and greenways consisting of open space, parks and trails.**

Policy 17.1.1: **Map 9** shows the proposed system of on and off street trails. Coordinate with trails interest groups to secure and construct a trail system that is consistent with this exhibit. Modify routes, on an interim or permanent basis, to promote system connectivity and traffic safety.

Policy 17.1.2: Participate in the development of a full, balanced and readily accessible program of recreation areas, activities and facilities.

Policy 17.1.3: Improve access to neighborhood park facilities in areas that are presently under-served by existing facilities.

Policy 17.1.4: Plan for future development of neighborhood parks to coincide with proposed residential development.

Policy 17.1.5: Pursue opportunities to reclaim and enhance open space and encourage recreational use of public lands along the Animas River and in other areas where such uses are appropriate.

Policy 17.1.6: Take advantage of physical barriers, such as the Animas River, the railroad tracks and the steep slope of College Mesa, to create pedestrian paths and bicycle trails.

Policy 17.1.7: Work with neighborhood groups to provide useable open space in areas where facilities are lacking.

**Objective 17.2: To develop and maintain a system of parks and recreation facilities, open space and trails that adequately serve the needs of the community.**

Policy 17.2.1: Provide recreation facilities that are consistent with local standards and NRPA guidelines.

Policy 17.2.2: The parks and recreation facility level of service (LOS) standards should be evaluated. Pending evaluation, this LOS standard should be used to plan for adequate parks and recreation facilities to meet the needs of the City's population.

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### PARKS RECREATION, OPEN SPACE & TRAILS ELEMENT

- Policy 17.2.3: Require new residential development to contribute its proportionate share to the establishment of neighborhood parks through park improvement fees and land dedication requirements.
- Policy 17.2.4: Continue to regularly update the parks, recreation, open space and trails capital improvements plan that inventories existing facilities, identifies proposed facilities and acquisitions, estimates improvement and acquisition costs and proposes funding alternatives.
- Policy 17.2.5: Appropriate locations for parks, recreational facilities, open spaces and trails should be identified as part of the Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Master Plan update process, which should occur every 5 to 7 years with broad public participation.
- Policy 17.2.6: Ensure that new development is consistent with the Parks, Open Space and Trails Master Plan.
- Policy 17.2.7: Obtain land for parks and recreation facility sites through public investment, private contributions, developer dedications or fees-in-lieu and implementation of a development impact fee program. Development projects should contribute to the acquisition or improvement of parks and recreation facility sites proportionate to the demand created by the new development.
- Policy 17.2.8: Coordinate parks and recreation facility development and improvements with other service providers, including but not limited to school districts, the County and the State.
- Policy 17.2.9: New recreation facility planning should account for existing and projected deficiencies.
- Policy 17.2.10: Monitor demands for the City's recreational center and plan for its expansion or the construction of an additional facility when feasible.
- Policy 17.2.11: Implement the Animas River master plan and provide sustainable put-in/take-out locations along the river.

**Objective 17.3: To complete the Animas River Trail as the major north/south trail artery in the planning area with a connection to the SMART 160 trail.**

- Policy 17.3.1: Explore a variety of methods in conjunction with property owners along the Animas River to secure trail easements and dedications where feasible.

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- Policy 17.3.2: Acquire key parcels for riverfront trail segments where public river access is critical.
- Policy 17.3.3: Encourage land dedications for trail construction in the development review process.
- Policy 17.3.4: Maintain public ownership of public lands along the Animas River and protect the corridor from additional commercial or industrial encroachment.

**Goal 18: To develop and maintain a trail system throughout the planning area that serves as a recreational amenity and transportation facility. (Also see Goal 14)**

**Objective 18.1: Provide a variety of trail experiences for trail users.**

- Policy 18.1.1: Develop loop trail opportunities along the Animas River Greenway.
- Policy 18.1.2: Develop loop trail opportunities from Durango neighborhoods to surrounding mesas and ridges. Acquire land and easements necessary for park access from adjacent neighborhoods (Folsom, Pioneer).
- Policy 18.1.3: Require new development to provide trail linkages to public lands nearby. Natural features such as drainages and ridges may, if appropriate, be the preferred alignments for these trail segments.
- Policy 18.1.4: Consider acquisition of property as it becomes available along drainageways, ridgelines and other natural features for open space and trail development.

**Objective 18.2: To enhance non-motorized access between Downtown Durango and the Animas River, and elsewhere in the City.**

- Policy 18.2.1: Develop safe and accessible pedestrian/bicycle linkages across Highways 550, 160 and 160/550. (Also see the Downtown Vision and Strategic Plan)
- Policy 18.2.2: Acquire riverfront property between 9th Street and 12th Street for parkland and open space and a pedestrian underpass crossing Camino del Rio.
- Policy 18.2.3: Develop a multi-use trail between the southern terminus of the Animas River Trail and the Grandview/Three Springs area.

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### PARKS RECREATION, OPEN SPACE & TRAILS ELEMENT

Policy 18.2.4: Develop an underpass at 25th and Main or a Main Avenue crossing near Durango High School.

Policy 18.2.5: Coordinate with 9R to get more children to walk or ride their bikes to school by developing a Safe Routes to School program.

## **CHAPTER 11 - PUBLIC SERVICES & FACILITIES ELEMENT**

### **Overview**

Durango's community benefits from numerous public facilities and services provided by the City and other public and private agencies. This chapter focuses on the facilities and services not previously addressed in this plan, including: fire protection, law enforcement, education and library services.

### **Police/Communications Services**

#### **Overview<sup>19</sup>**

The City of Durango Police Department (DPD) has been serving the needs of the Durango community for over 100 years. The general administration of the Police Department is vested in the Chief of Police, the executive officer of the Department, with authority over the organization. Currently, the Durango Police Department has 54 sworn peace officers assigned to either the Administration Division or Operations Division.

The Operations Division is the larger of the two divisions and is comprised of the Patrol Bureau, Community Programs Bureau and the Investigations Bureau. The Patrol Bureau is responsible for protecting and serving the public 24 hours a day, including active patrol of local residential and business district and emergency response through Central Communications. Patrol also provides security and traffic control and assistance for special events throughout the year, as well as an active DUI detection and apprehension program, funded when possible through DUI grants from the Colorado Department of Transportation Safety.

The Investigations Bureau is responsible for investigating major crimes, processing crime scenes, assisting patrol officers with investigations, conducting crime prevention programs, narcotics enforcement, warrant extradition for municipal court cases, pawn detail, fingerprinting, and liquor investigations for the Liquor Licensing Authority. Members participate in meetings with the Child Fatality Review Board, Four Corners Investigations, Civil Forfeiture Board, Crime Stoppers, Social Services Child Protection Team, Drug Enforcement Administration, Farmington Police Gang Intelligence, and the Southwest Mental Health Community Support Team.

The Administration Division is responsible for records, property, evidence, training, and internal investigations. The Division is responsible for the Citizens Police Academy and recruitment, including testing of new hires, promotional testing, employee orientation, field training programs, wellness and fitness program, and the volunteer program. Members of Records are responsible for entering reports into the Department's computer system, maintaining records, delivering reports and paperwork to the courts and the District Attorney's office, and reception duties at the front counter.

Crime prevention and community awareness are important aspects of the Durango Police Department's mission. The Citizens' Police Academy is a ten-week program designed to provide residents of La Plata County first-hand information on how the Durango Police Department works. The Community Policing office in the Durango Mall has been open since September 22, 1998, and is staffed by volunteers who are Citizens' Police Academy graduates. The School Resource Officer, classroom teachers and school counselors, utilizing a team teaching concept, teach a drug resistance program called On TRACK in fifth-grade classes in School District R-9.

<sup>19</sup> Durango Police Department, 2004 Annual Report.

## CHAPTER 11

### PUBLIC SERVICES & FACILITIES ELEMENT

Within the Durango Police Department, training is given one of the highest priorities in an effort to better serve the community and to reduce liability. In January of each year, command staff review the training needs of the Department and set priorities accordingly. The Department experienced a total of 7,170 hours of training in 2004.

The Mission Statement of the Department states:

*The Durango Police Department, as representatives of the people, is dedicated to providing a peaceful, safe and orderly community through interaction with the community, its citizens and visitors, performing its duties in a caring and professional manner in order to promote mutual respect, open communication, honesty and integrity, resulting in fair and impartial treatment for all.*

#### Budget & Performance

The 2006 adopted annual budget allocates \$993,322 to the Administrative program and \$4,032,610 to the Operations program for a total budget of \$5,025,932. The Administrative Department has a budget of \$9,550 for capital outlay in 2006, and the Operations Department has a budget of \$34,810 for the purchase of an additional vehicle.

It is estimated that there will be 37,499 calls for service in 2006, and a total of 2,517 arrests. The response time to high priority calls is projected to be 4.0 minutes, up from an estimated 3.5 minutes in 2005, but in line with the actual response time of 4.0 minutes in 2004.

The Police Department projects that the incidence of major crimes reported per 1,000 residents will drop to .51 in 2006, down from an estimated .67 in 2005, and an actual .55 in 2004. In 2006, it is projected that 129 people will be injured in non-traffic related criminal activities, and almost one million dollars in property loss will occur due to crime. The Department expects to clear or solve 91% of cases in 2006, in line with an estimated 90% in 2005 and actual 91% in 2004, and to recover 32% of stolen property, compared to an estimated 34% in 2005 and an actual 23% in 2004.

#### Communications<sup>20</sup>

The Communications division of Public Safety provides the City and County with an enhanced 9-1-1 center and provides central communications to the responding agencies who in turn provide law enforcement, fire, medical and human services. There are 19 staff members in Communications, who are projected to handle 170,000 calls in 2006, up slightly from an estimated 168,449 calls in 2005 and an actual 169,084 in 2004. The average number of incidents that are dispatched in a 24-hour period is projected to be 193 in 2006, with 97.7% of 911 calls being answered in less than five seconds. The adopted budget for Communications is \$1,085,524 in 2006.

#### Fire Protection & Emergency Medical Services

##### Overview

The Durango Fire and Rescue Authority (Authority) was created in 2001 through an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between the City of Durango, Animas Fire Protection District (A.F.P.D.), and Hermosa Cliff Fire Protection District (H.C.F.P.D.). Concurrently, the Ambulance transport service provided by Mercy Hospital was also absorbed to provide fire and emergency medical services to the service areas

<sup>20</sup> City of Durango, Public Safety 2006 Budget.

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of the City of Durango, Animas Fire Protection District, Hermosa Cliff Fire Protection District, and to continue A.L.S. Ambulance service in those areas of LaPlata County where it was being provided by Mercy Hospital. The Authority provides fire protection services to a 325 square mile area, the boundaries of which begin in the south at the New Mexico state line and run north into San Juan County Co. to Molas Pass. The eastern boundary is formed roughly by the Florida River on the east, and runs to the top of Hesperus Hill on the west.

D.F.R.A. operates 70 pieces of fire and emergency response apparatus out of 16 stations (3 career and 13 volunteer). Mutual Aid and Automatic Aid agreements are in place with bordering Fire Districts, including Fort Lewis Mesa Fire Protection, Upper Pine River Fire Protection District and Los Pinos Fire Protection District. The Authority operates under a Board of Directors, which consists of 2 representatives from A.F.P.D., 2 representatives from H.C.F.P.D., 2 representatives from the City of Durango and one at large representative. The Chief of the Department answers directly to the Board.

The City and the two protection districts fund the Authority jointly, while EMS operations are partly funded through user charges. The Authority leases all facilities from the City and the two protection districts, except for one Administration building that was purchased by the Authority in 2005. The Authority is comprised of 167 career and volunteer members. In addition to more than 3600 emergency responses in 2006, a total of 12,840 training hours were conducted and attended by members of the department.

In 2006 the Authority focused its attention on the process of addressing the need for future capital replacement funds. In 2005 the Authority assembled a blue ribbon committee made up of community leaders, staff members and volunteers to study the Authority's capital needs and the options available to solve its capital funding problem. The committee recommended that the Authority pursue voter approval of a unified special district with its own mill levy, which was placed on the November 2006 ballot. The voters approved the formation of the Durango Fire Protection district, but did not approve establishment of a mill levy. Until such funding is approved, the Authority will continue to operate as under the previous Intergovernmental Agreement established in 2001.

The Mission Statement of the Authority states:

- Providing emergency services to our community*
- Protecting our community from risk*
- Preventing emergencies through education and training*
- Performing all duties with courage, dedication and respect*

### **Budget & Performance**

The 2007 adopted annual budget is \$ 8,791,000. Of this, \$8,390,000 is for operations and \$421,000 is for capital purposes. The budget is funded through the 3 funding partners and funds collected from EMS user charges.

### **Schools**

#### **Durango R-9 School District<sup>21</sup>**

<sup>21</sup> *Community Guide to Understanding Public School Finance and the 9-R Budget, Fiscal Year 2005-2006*, Prepared by the Durango School District 9-R Public Information Office and Office of Business Service, available online at: <http://www.durango.k12.co.us/supt/home.htm>.

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### PUBLIC SERVICES & FACILITIES ELEMENT

The Durango R-9 School District is the largest school district in Southwestern Colorado, with enrollment of almost 5,000 students. The district is composed of seven elementary schools, two middle schools, a high school and a charter school.

Durango High School has a 2005 enrollment of 1,473 students, and was recently remodeled to accommodate a student population of 1,700. The high school offers a variety of educational programs to accommodate individual student needs, including extensive electives in music, art, theater; business, technology and vocational education.

In May, 2005, the Durango School District 9-R Board of Education approved more stringent graduation requirements for district students that more closely align with new college admission requirements that the Colorado Commission on Higher Education adopted in 2004.

Overall, the achievement levels of the students of the Durango R-9 School District exceed that of the students of the state of Colorado.

- The district-wide student-to-teacher ratio is 14.2-to-1 compared with an average of 16.8-to-1 statewide and 15-to-1 in Southwest Colorado school districts.
- Durango High School's graduation rate improved from 87.6 percent of Spring 2003 to 91.6 percent in Spring 2004.
- The district-wide graduation rate improved from 76 percent in 2003 to 82 percent in 2004.

The 2005 Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) scores for the district in reading, writing, math and science showed that the district beat the state score across every subject and grade level by a significant margin. All scores for the district showed either a stable or upward trend over time.

In 2004, District juniors earned an average composite score of 21.3 points on the ACT exam, compared with 20.2 points statewide, and more than 77 percent of District graduates pursue post-secondary study.

For 2005-06, Durango School District 9-R has established a preliminary budget of \$34.2 million funded by local property taxes, specific ownership taxes, and state and federal funds, among other sources. Enrollment in the district has remained static over the past five years. Since student enrollment drives funding, the available budget for the district has also remained flat, which might prove problematic for the district over time.

#### Higher Education

Fort Lewis College is Colorado's public four-year liberal arts institution, with a 2005 enrollment of 4,500 students, offering 24 degree programs in the schools of Arts & Sciences, Education and Business Administration. Both Pueblo Community College Southwest Center (PCCSC) and Fort Lewis College are located within the City of Durango. PCCSC is a fully-accredited two-year college with an open door admissions policy. A partnership with San Juan Basin Area Technical School allows students to complete certificate programs and to obtain associate degrees in Nursing, Electronics, Business and Office Technologies. Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, Associate of Applied Science and Associate of General Studies two-year degrees may also be earned.

#### Library

The Durango Public Library is a regional provider of library services, funded through an agreement between the City of Durango and La Plata County, both of which contribute 50% towards the Library's budget from a joint use sales tax. The Library's budget for 2004 was \$1,198,214. The Main Library

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facility has 15,353 GSF on two levels, offers approximately 66 public seats and is open 70 hours a week.

Two additional joint-use library service facilities are located at Fort Lewis Mesa Elementary School and at Sunnyside Elementary School. These locations share the school library space while providing limited materials for adults and extended hours, and are both funded by and located in La Plata County. Both branches are open 20 hours a week. Durango Public Library card holders may borrow materials from the Fort Lewis College Library as well as other Colorado libraries through the Colorado Library Card program.

A Facilities and Services Needs Assessment<sup>22</sup> for the Durango Public Library was completed in June 2001, which identified service deficiencies for the Library. According to the Report, 1999 Bibliostat performance statistics show that the Durango Public Library has a collection of 74,676 items, 1.68 items per capita, and circulated 257,416 items in 1999. The Durango Public Library is well-used, with circulation per capita and visits per capita double the statewide average for all libraries. The Facilities and Services Needs Assessment identified three priority directions:

- The development of a new main library building with a minimum of 33,000 SF; expandable to 40,000 as the population grows toward the year 2020;
- Improvement in existing services and staffing; and,
- Concentration on developing the library's economic strength, its countywide service ability, and its community visibility.

In April 2005, voters approved a measure to increase sales tax in order to fund a new library. The City has since contracted to purchase the Mercy Hospital site which was vacated by the hospital in 2006. A conceptual master plan for the site has been completed, and it is planned that the library will be constructed and operational by September 2008. When the new library is constructed, the LOS is projected to triple, to 2,886 GSF per 1,000 residents.

### Other Agencies

Because Durango is the largest community in the five-county region, several state and federal agencies have offices in the planning area. All these agencies provide services to the City's residents, as well as to adjacent counties, all have been an economically stabilizing force for the City, and all have plans and recommendations which will affect Durango's future. Key agencies include:

- The United States Forest Service, which manages the San Juan National Forest, is a major part of the recreation base for residents and tourists, and is integral to protecting habitat and wildlife corridors (animals migrate across and graze on private lands between federal properties) and providing fire protection in the area.
- The Bureau of Land Management manages public lands around Durango, including administration of gravel leases on the Grandview Ridge. The BLM also has the same interest in trails, wildlife and fire hazards as the Forest Service.

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<sup>22</sup> EXECUTIVE SUMMARY of the Facilities and Services Needs Assessment Final Report, Durango Public Library, "A New Library for a New Century," Prepared by: Florence M. Mason, F. Mason and Associates in Association with Hidell Associates Architects, June 4, 2001.

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- The Colorado Division of Wildlife and State Forest Service protect and preserve wildlife habitat and open space areas.
- La Plata County provides a variety of services to Durango planning area residents, such as through the Social Services Department (state-mandated social services), the Building Inspection Department (inspection services for all unincorporated areas), and Engineering Department (road improvements and permits/inspects construction in County right-of-way).
- Other agencies include the Durango Housing Corporation (a private, non-profit organization that provides assisted housing), Southwest Community Resources and the San Juan Basin Health Unit (state-mandated health-related inspection and licensing services, issues permits for individual waste treatment systems required for all dwellings not connected to public systems).

#### Key Issues

##### **Providing adequate public safety services.**

In addition to providing police services for the City's resident population, Durango must serve a summer tourist population that reaches up to 10,000 people. As Durango's boundaries expand, additional patrols will be needed to provide adequate response times throughout the City limits. The City is poised to construct a new Police Substation in the Grandview area and has budgeted for additional patrols as well. As development in rural areas increases the risks and costs of wildfires also increase, additional emphasis should be placed on emergency access and the creation of defensible space around development in areas subject to wildfires.

##### **Supporting public education for all residents.**

The City has historically supported School District 9-R and Fort Lewis College in their efforts to provide quality education. In addition, the City jointly supports the Library with La Plata County. As the City continues to grow, the use of these facilities will increase. Durango will need continued efforts to coordinate its growth with the growth of these facilities and search for innovative joint service agreements that improve the efficiency of mutually provided services.

##### **Expanding cultural opportunities for residents and visitors.**

Durango's population has expressed an increasing desire for cultural facilities. Such facilities will enhance the quality of life for community residents and visitors. The City, in partnership with other public and private groups should explore opportunities to expand cultural opportunities.

##### **Retaining Durango as a regional medical center.**

As the largest community in southwest Colorado and the second largest community on the western slope in the State, Durango has established itself as a regional service center. While Mercy Regional Medical Center meets many of the regional medical needs, the changing health care environment has resulted in the closing or downsizing of several similarly situated facilities. Durango should continue to support the growth of Mercy Regional while protecting the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

#### Public Services Goals, Strategies and Policies

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**Goal 19: To foster cost-effective services and facilities that enhance the lives of community residents.**

**Objective 19.1: To provide for fire protection services at adequate service levels.**

Policy 19.1.1: Coordinate with the Durango Fire & Rescue Authority (DFRA) to secure development of at least two additional fire substations to improve response times to southern and northeastern Durango.

Policy 19.1.2: Pursue joint-use facilities and other cooperative service strategies with the Fire Authority that enhance the efficiency of fire protection services, while ensuring adequate levels of service for Durango's residents and property owners.

Policy 19.1.3: Coordinate with DFRA to reduce risks and increase emergency access to development subject to wildfires.

**Objective 19.2: To protect businesses and residents from crime.**

Policy 19.2.1: Promote coordination and cooperation among all law enforcement agencies.

Policy 19.2.2: Use advanced methods and procedures of law enforcement as they become necessary and cost-effective.

Policy 19.2.3: Monitor levels of service as the City annexes new areas and adjust staffing as needed to maintain adequate response times. As new fire substations are developed, incorporate adequate office space for police department substations.

**Objective 19.3: To promote excellence and diversity in educational services and facilities.**

Policy 19.3.1: Encourage the provision of well-located educational facilities. Elementary and middle schools should be located near the neighborhoods they serve to minimize the need for students to cross arterial streets and reduce the need for busing, while providing safe access (sidewalks, trails, bike lanes).

Policy 19.3.2: Promote the construction of joint-use facilities for education, community recreation and other appropriate community services.

Policy 19.3.3: Encourage providers of educational services to continually improve educational opportunities for all age groups.

**Objective 19.4: To encourage and support cultural activities and facilities that improve the quality of life for residents and visitors.**

Policy 19.4.1: Support the development and expansion of cultural activities and facilities for all sectors of the community.

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Policy 19.4.2: Increase the amount and variety of meeting facilities in cooperation with public and private entities to better meet the needs of residents and visitors.

**Objective 19.5: To support the provision of cost-effective medical services for residents and visitors at adequate service levels.**

Policy 19.5.1: Work with the medical community to encourage enhanced specialized medical services where such expansions can be made compatibly with the community.

Policy 19.5.2: Support the provision of responsive, high-quality emergency services.

Policy 19.5.3: Coordinate with medical service providers to ensure that there are adequate emergency medical services throughout the City.

Policy 19.5.4: Work with other government entities, the medical community and residents to ensure that all residents have access to primary health care.

**Objective 19.6: To support and make cost-effective telecommunications and electric service available to all Durango residents and businesses**

Policy 19.6.1: Use franchise agreements to ensure that high quality services are available to all residents and businesses at reasonable prices.

Policy 19.6.2: Support private property owners' efforts to develop funding mechanisms to shift utilities underground.

**Goal 20: Strengthen families and improve outcomes for children and youth, and sustain the efforts over time.**

**Objective 20.1: Create, in collaboration with citizens in La Plata County, its other towns, and its school districts, a Master Plan for Children, Youth and Families.**

Policy 20.1.1: To create the plan, municipal staff will assure that the process is inclusive by working with elected officials, citizens, as well as representatives from juvenile justice, schools, youth organizations, youth, parents, businesses, library, economic development, mental and physical health, colleges, civic organizations, the faith community and athletic leagues.

Policy 20.1.2: Include the following seven categories in the Master Plan:

- i. Early Childhood Development
- ii. Youth Development
- iii. Educational Excellence and After School Services
- iv. Health and Safety
- v. Youth in Transition

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- vi. Family Economic Success
- vii. Neighborhoods and Communities
- viii. Perpetual Learning

- Policy 20.1.3: Commit to engaging both adults and young people in legitimate community activities.
- Policy 20.1.4: Increase opportunities for youth to develop as citizens engaged in civic affairs including opportunities to :
  - i. Obtain youth participation in identifying needs, opportunities and priorities for youth in Durango; and
  - ii. Obtain youth voice and engagement in boards, commissions and committees; and
  - iii. Encourage youth to participate in public service and volunteer work
- Policy 20.1.5: Incorporate perennial training of adults and youth to enable effective and inclusive partnerships.
- Policy 20.1.6: Measure progress over time through the use of a community “scorecard” or set of benchmarks that tracks key outcomes and places them within the context of a broader report on the status of children, youth and families.

## CHAPTER 12

### PLAN ADMINISTRATION/IMPLEMENTATION

## CHAPTER 12 - PLAN ADMINISTRATION/IMPLEMENTATION

### Overview

Durango's Comprehensive Plan is intended to be a dynamic document -- one that responds to changing needs and conditions. To assess the Plan's effectiveness in responding to changing conditions, the City will need to monitor actions affecting the Plan. As a result of these monitoring efforts or private development requests, the City will need to amend the Plan periodically. However, Plan amendments should not be made lightly. City Council and Planning Commission members should consider each proposed amendment carefully to determine whether or not it is consistent with the Plan's goals and policies. In addition, the cumulative effect of many changes may be a change in policy direction. For this reason, Comprehensive Plan amendments must be evaluated in terms of their significance to overall City policy.

This chapter describes the processes to annually review, monitor and amend the Plan, Plan goals, objectives and policies and the Future Land Use Plan Map. The detailed amendment process will be subject to adopted code provisions and the inter-governmental agreement between Durango and La Plata County.

### Annual Review/Monitoring

Department Directors should provide to the City Manager an annual review of Comprehensive Plan related activities prior to the initiation of the budget process each year. The annual review is intended to:

- measure the City's success in achieving plan goals through the recommended strategies;
- propose strategies to be pursued under the coming year's budget;
- identify unlisted strategies that will achieve Plan goals;
- document growth trends and compare those trends to plan projections;
- list development actions which affect the plan's provisions; and
- explain difficulties in implementing the plan.

This annual review should include statements identifying that respective departments' progress in achieving the goals of the Plan, the impact of the Plan on service provision, and proposed programs to help achieve the Plan's goals. The annual review should be used as a tool to help set budgetary priorities.

### Land Use Amendments

The Future Land Use Plan map is intended to serve as a guide for public and private development and land use decisions. The City has adopted a formal amendment process the LUDC. Land use amendments are anticipated as growth occurs and market conditions change. While land use amendments may occur more frequently than policy changes, they should not occur more than three times per year. By limiting opportunities to amend the future land use plan, the City will reduce the potential for incremental land use changes to result in unintended policy shifts.

### Policy Review/Amendment

To ensure that the Comprehensive Plan remains an effective guide for decision-makers, Durango should conduct periodic major evaluations of the plan policies and strategies. These evaluations should be conducted every three to five years, depending on the rate of change in the community, and should consider the following:

- Progress in implementing the Plan;

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- Changes in community needs and other conditions that form the basis of the Plan;
- Fiscal conditions and the ability to finance public investments recommended by the Plan;
- Community support for the Plan's goals and policies; and
- Changes in State or federal laws that affect the City's tools for Plan implementation.

The major review process should encourage input from merchants, neighborhood groups, developers and other community interests through the creation of a Citizen Review Committee. Plan amendments that appear appropriate as a result of this review would be processed according to the adopted Plan amendment process.

### Plan Implementation Program

**Table 3** is an initial list of implementation measures recommended to achieve the goals and objectives in Durango's Comprehensive Plan. The matrix is intended to guide the City Council and City Staff as they develop work programs during the life of the plan. The matrix:

- Correlates implementation measures with specific Comprehensive Plan goals and policies;
- Sets a general time frame to carry out each strategy;
- Identifies action tools (*i.e.*, existing and proposed codes, ordinances, regulations, standards, requirements and policies) to implement action items; and
- Assigns responsibility for implementing the action items and lists other entities that should be involved in the process.

**Table 3** is not intended to be an exhaustive list. The City may pursue different strategies and adjust priorities, depending on changing opportunities and resources. The City should update this strategy table on an annual basis, adjusting time frames and tasks that are included in each year's budgeted work programs.

Each year, in conjunction with the presentation of the annual plan monitoring report, the City should conduct a public forum to discuss the City's progress in the implementation of the plan. Following this forum, the Planning Commission should conduct a work session and hearing to develop recommendations for updates to the Plan Implementation Program to be presented to the City Manager and City Council to guide the annual budget update.

**Table 3: Plan Implementation Program**

Strategy Number	Strategy	Policy References	Year Started/ Finished	Lead Entity
1	Update the LUDC to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require consistency between development decisions and the comprehensive Plan</li> <li>• Establish standards and procedures for dedication of neighborhood parks and contribution to neighborhood park facilities</li> <li>• Establish regulations for steep slopes, ridgelines and skylines</li> <li>• Mandate cluster development standards in habitat conservation areas and provide incentives for cluster development in other areas</li> <li>• Establish "by right" TND standards as well as standards for alternative lot patterns (e.g., patio home lots, zero-lot line)</li> <li>• Clarify mixed use development design standards and use requirements</li> <li>• Clarify multiple use requirements</li> <li>• Create business park standards</li> <li>• Create neighborhood business design standards</li> <li>• Refine requirements for landscaping, open space and other amenities for medium and high density residential projects</li> <li>• Require certificates of consistency with City standards prior to provision of water, sewer or electrical service</li> <li>• Require secondary access to developments based on vehicle trips per day</li> <li>• Require trail access dedication for new subdivisions and site plan approvals for development other than single family lots</li> <li>• Establish criteria for accessory dwelling units</li> <li>• Establish context sensitive compatibility standards between dissimilar land uses</li> <li>• Review street design standards</li> <li>• Create multi-family design standards</li> </ul>	1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.5-1.2.7, 1.2.10, 1.2.12 2.1.1,-2.1.4, 3.1.2, 3.2.2- 3.2.4, 3.3.1, 3.3.4, 5.1.3, 5.2.2, 5.2.4, 5.3.3, 6.2.1, 6.2.4, 6.2.5- 6.2.7, 6.2.9, 8.1.3, 9.1.2, 10.1.5, 11.1.1, 11.1.2, 11.1.4, 12.1.7, 13.1.3, 13.1.4, 13.2.6, 13.3.1, 13.3.8, 14.2.5, 14.2.11, 15.1.2, 15.1.3, 16.1.7, 16.2.2, 16.2.5, 17.1.4 17.2.3	2007/08	Planning/ Public Works/ Parks
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise the sign code</li> </ul>	5.3.3, 6.2.7	2007-08	Planning
3	Evaluate the establishment of a stormwater utility to fund capital and operations costs for stormwater management	8.1.13, 15.2.2	2008	Public Works/ Finance

Strategy Number	Strategy	Policy References	Year Started/ Finished	Lead Entity
4	<p>Adopt adequate public facility standards for water, sewer, stormwater and transportation facilities.</p> <p><i>Comment: Standards and procedures for transportation system adequacy should be drafted to provide the flexibility to permit development contributing to traffic congestion in the constrained corridors along Highways 160/550 and North Main Avenue subject to appropriate design standards. Transportation adequacy requirements should allow for mitigation through transportation demand management techniques and other strategies that reduce demands for peak hour trips.</i></p>	8.1.2, 8.1.3-8.1.5, 8.1.8, 8.1.12, 8.2.7 13.2.11, 13.2.12, 13.3.4, 13.3.5, 13.3.7, 15.1.5, 15.2.1, 15.2.2	2008	Public Works/ Planning
5	<p>Following the update of the City's long-range street improvements plan, update the major street impact fee to include components for major streets and transportation-related trails and other transportation-related capital facilities</p> <p><i>Comment: in conjunction with task 8, the City should explore the potential for a joint City/County transportation system impact fee addressing all major roads in the County. This may occur in conjunction with or after the update of the City's impact fee.</i></p>	8.1.11, 13.14	2007	Public Works
6	<p>Maintain and refine the regional transportation study, specifically addressing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed and funded improvements affecting road segment or targeted intersection capacities.</li> <li>• Targeted intersection capacities and improvement options along Highway 160/550 and North Main Ave.</li> <li>• Existing development and related demands</li> <li>• External traffic demands</li> <li>• Projected demands based on approved, but un-built developments and projected growth in background traffic</li> <li>• Conduct a city-wide review of LOS at least every four years</li> </ul>	13.2.12, 13.2.13	Ongoing	Public Works
7	<p>Conduct an energy audit of City operations and identify life-cycle cost-effective strategies to increase energy efficiency and decrease reliance on fossil fuels. As the City builds new or modifies energy related components for existing structures, comply with LEED-NC standards .</p>	9.2.1, 9.2.2	2007/08	City Manager, General Services
8	<p>Work with La Plata County to establish regular multi-agency forums involving Durango, Bayfield, Ignacio, CDOT, the LPCRHA, and the Southern Ute Indian Tribe to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• discuss transportation (including coordinated funding, transit, trail, and park-and-ride options), affordable and attainable housing, economic development and other inter-jurisdictional growth issues</li> <li>• develop coordinated growth management programs that are mutually supportive of each entities goals</li> </ul>	1.2.8, 3.1.1, 3.1.3, 4.1.1, 4.1.2, 5.1.2, 5.4.2, 8.1.4, 12.1.1, 12.1.3, 13.2.11, 13.2.13, 15.1.5	Ongoing	City Council

Strategy Number	Strategy	Policy References	Year Started/ Finished	Lead Entity
9	Update the Parks, Open Space and Trails Plan to address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate level of service standards for all types of parks</li> <li>• Appropriate uses and stewardship of City-owned open spaces</li> <li>• Parks, recreation and trails facilities improvements program</li> <li>• Open space acquisition and preservation funding options and priority sites for acquisition</li> </ul>	6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.2.4, 9.1.2, 9.1.6, 14.2.1, 16.1.1-16.1.11, 17.1.1-17.1.7, 17.2.1-17.2.10, 17.3.4, 18.1.1-18.1.4, 18.2.1-18.2.5	2008	Parks
10	Assist in the preparation and regular updates of the La Plata County Regional Housing Authority Needs Assessment and Linkage Study. Upon completion of the study and each update, evaluate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjustments to City affordable housing policies and its participation in affordable housing projects</li> <li>• The appropriateness of establishing or updating affordable housing linkage fees</li> </ul>	12.1.1 12.1.3 12.1.4	Ongoing	Planning
11	Update the City/County inter-governmental agreement to reflect revisions to the comprehensive plan affecting urbanized, urbanizing and joint development areas in the Grandview and the La Posta Road areas.	8.1.1 8.1.4	2007	City Manager
12	Modify refuse and cleanup billing practices to encourage waste stream reductions and to fund expanded recycling efforts.	1.3.1 1.3.2 1.3.3	Ongoing	City Manager
13	Formalize the process for evaluating the joint development of public facility sites such as schools, libraries and parks for multiple public uses by multiple agencies.	17.2.8	2008/09	City Manager

Strategy Number	Strategy	Policy References	Year Started/ Finished	Lead Entity
14	Establish and maintain a tracking system for existing, approved and planned land supplies. The tracking system should provide a parcel-based land use information system that documents existing improvements, permitted improvements, zoning history, subdivision status, available information on occupancy and planned land use. <i>(comment: coordinate this with the development tracking system developed in task 3)</i>	8.3.1	2008/09	Planning
15	Conduct joint workshops with affected property owners and service providers to establish a program to fund water, sewer and transportation facilities required to serve planned development along La Posta Road and near Animas Air Park	7.1.5, 8.1.2, 8.1.4-8.1.16, 8.2.1-8.2.8, 13.3.12	2007/09	Public Works/ Planning/ Finance
16	Conduct a City facilities master plan, to include the establishment of a new City Hall in downtown Durango	5.3.1	2009	City Manager
17	Coordinate with La Plata County to facilitate the preparation of a county-wide Master Plan for Children, Youth and Families	20.1.1 20.1.2	2008/09	City Council
18	Develop a Sustainability Action Plan to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement the City's Climate Protection Resolution</li> <li>• Increase public energy use efficiency for buildings, vehicles and operations</li> <li>• Evaluate the establishment of a renewable energy mitigation fund</li> <li>• Increase opportunities for and the attractiveness of energy efficient mobility throughout the City</li> <li>• Use recycled materials in City operations and facility improvement</li> <li>• Minimize waste generation</li> <li>• Coordinate wildlife protection efforts with state and private entities, including the formal mapping of critical habitat areas and corridors</li> <li>• Establish programs to increase the efficiency of private homes and other buildings</li> <li>• Analyze the implications of developing high performance building standards and incentives to meet the goal of carbon neutrality for all buildings by the year 2030.</li> <li>• Meet the "2030 Challenge" proposed by the American Institute of Architects and endorsed by the National Council of Mayors</li> <li>• Retain a Sustainability Program Coordinator to manage and implement the Sustainability Action Plan.</li> <li>• Address the Sustainability Alliance's recommendations regarding the promotion of local businesses and local investment</li> </ul>	1.1.3-1.1.5, 1.2.8, 1.2.1, 1.3.2, 1.3.3, 6.2.9, 6.2.10, 9.2.1-9.2.5	2007/08 ongoing	City Manager and all applicable Departments

Strategy Number	Strategy	Policy References	Year Started/ Finished	Lead Entity
19	Undertake a Downtown Parking Management Plan to address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• updated downtown parking supply and demand, future parking demand and recommendations to address identified deficiencies;</li> <li>• the potential creation of a downtown parking authority, or a parking benefit district, to coordinate and manage public and private parking supplies and demands;</li> <li>• required off-street parking requirements,</li> <li>• options for increased public parking opportunities,</li> <li>• residential parking permits,</li> <li>• adjustments to the in-lieu parking fee,</li> <li>• on-street space management and pricing, and</li> <li>• additional strategies to reduce downtown parking demand while meeting downtown parking needs</li> </ul>	13.2.2 13.4.1-13.4.9	2007-2008	Planning, General Services, City Manager's Office
20	Initiate, participate in, and potentially help fund a public/private partnership to conduct a Regional Center Master Plan in the Grandview Area, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic analyses and potential pro-rata share contributions to flyover</li> <li>• Economic analyses, marketing strategies, and analysis of relationship to downtown Durango</li> <li>• Mix and intensity of uses</li> <li>• Integrated urban design</li> <li>• Relationships to adjoining properties, including design and land use</li> </ul>	5.2.2 5.2.4 5.5.3	2007-2008	Planning, Public Works City Manager's Office

Strategy Number	Strategy	Policy References	Year Started/ Finished	Lead Entity
21	<p>Prepare a Mobility Analysis and Character Area Design Guidelines for the Camino del Rio corridor, to address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• intergovernmental/interjurisdictional issues, including traffic, transportation, and access configurations</li> <li>• infrastructure improvements, both public and private, including pedestrian and non-motorized</li> <li>• redevelopment options and constraints for various properties</li> <li>• urban design (mass, bulk, scale, setbacks and stepbacks, and height issues for new construction and renovation on both sides of the Camino</li> <li>• improved connectivity of the larger CBD to the river and visual connectivity to the river and Perins Peak</li> <li>• riverfront placemaking, character guidelines, and overlay zone mix of uses</li> <li>• Systematic capital improvements for the Downtown, including as priorities: a Camino Traffic Control Plan with CDOT, and a Public Infrastructure Implementation Plan, to address as priorities: pedestrian access and safety along and across Camino; a Wayfinding program; new public parking structures, expanded public transit; etc.</li> </ul>	<p>6.2 6.2.1 6.2.2 6.2.3</p>	<p>2007-2008</p>	<p>Planning, Public Works</p>
22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update Plant Investment Fee schedules for water and sewer.</li> </ul>	<p>15.1.2</p>	<p>2007</p>	<p>Public Works</p>
23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate with South Durango Sanitation District to develop the most effective means of meeting projected wastewater service demands for the entire planning area.</li> </ul>	<p>15.1.1, 15.1.3, 15.1.6, 15.2.2</p>	<p>2007</p>	<p>City Manager, Planning, Public Works, Financing</p>

## **APPENDIX A**

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### **THE PLANNING PROCESS**

## **APPENDIX A – The Planning Process**

## APPENDIX A

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### THE PLANNING PROCESS

## APPENDIX A - THE PLANNING PROCESS

### Since 1997

Planning is not a single event – the adoption of a particular document at a fixed point in time. Rather, it is an ongoing process involving actions by the City and other local, state and regional agencies, the private sector and the community-at-large. The Plan is intended to be a dynamic document that responds to changing needs and conditions in the community on an on-going basis. To that end, the City's 1997 Comprehensive Plan recommended that major evaluations of Plan policies and strategies should be conducted every three to five years. In 2002, the City initiated a review of major land use and growth assumptions and an assessment of the impacts growth alternatives on Durango's long-term future.

At two workshops conducted in January, 2002, the community met to discuss the long-term community form of Durango. Discussions at those workshops focused on support for walkable, mixed-density, mixed-use development (traditional neighborhood development), particularly on Ewing Mesa and in other greenfield areas. The importance of incorporating open space within neighborhoods and the desirability of clustered development patterns, as well as the importance of affordable housing were also discussed at that time. There was some controversy regarding the potential development of Kroeger Ranch, also known as River Trails Ranch, located at the northern edge of the City, with participants expressing a range of opinions from preserving the site as open space to developing it as a mixed use, moderate density development.

Subsequently, the City planning staff met with a City Council appointed Citizens Review Committee to update the existing plan and to revisit policies and the future land use map. The staff and CRC met for approximately 18 months, reviewing in detail the Plan's policies. Many of these policy directions were re-reviewed under the current Comprehensive Plan update and incorporated in the new Plan's policies.

The on-rush of current planning and high-priority projects consumed all available staff resources. The Grandview Area Plan, the move of Mercy Hospital to Grandview, Three Springs development, the Ewing Mesa Area Plan, the Downtown Plan, the new Commercial Use Design Guidelines, revised Downtown Design Guidelines, the Dark Skies ordinance, the River Trails Ranch controversy, the development of Residential Infill Design Standards all diverted staff from the Comprehensive Plan revision. By the end of 2004, the City Council decided to resume the Comprehensive Plan update process, and sought consultant assistance to begin the process.

In the spring of 2005, three visioning workshops were conducted by the Sonoran Institute. From those workshops, the following Themes & Priorities were defined:

#### Themes

- Diverse and Affordable Housing Options
- Diversified Transportation Choices
- Economic Vitality

#### Top Priorities

- Ensure Diverse and Affordable Housing Options
- Support Locally-Based Economic Vitality
- Protect and Strengthen Downtown as the Heart of Durango
- Expand Transportation Options
- Encourage Active Public Engagement

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From these planning activities and due to many changes in the City and County, it was determined that it was time for a complete planning process to occur, focused on growth impacts and management with intensive public participation components. The 1997 effort included broad participation from many sectors of the community and, when completed, seemed to enjoy wide support. Based on input received between 2002 and 2005, the City initiated a more formal comprehensive plan update process in October 2005, which is described in more detail below.

### 2005 Comprehensive Plan Update

The 2005 Plan update process involved four key phases – an initial assessment, an analysis of different growth scenarios, plan development and implementation. Community involvement was incorporated into each of these phases, and will continue to be a key element of the City's planning efforts as the plan is implemented.

### Participation

#### Citizen Review Committee (CRC) Role

The City Council appointed a 20-member Steering Committee representing a cross-section of community views, to guide the planning process. Known as the Citizen Review Committee, or CRC, the group met at least once a month to:

- Communicate the concerns of all interested community groups regarding the long-range development of the City;
- Provide a forum for discussion of differing views;
- Help communicate with the general community;
- Refine objectives and policies, in the context of staff's technical analysis;
- Prioritize strategies to achieve the Plan's goals and objectives; and
- Recommend a draft plan to the City's Planning Commission.



#### Citizen Participation

Durango's citizen-based planning process promoted broad community involvement in many ways, including:

- The Citizen's Review Committee provided ongoing direction;
- Interviews with key City, County and community leaders at the outset of the process were used to identify information sources, community opinions and suggestions for making the planning process and Plan more valuable to the community;
- Special Topic sessions were conducted to identify the concerns relating to regional planning, neighborhoods, transportation issues, building and development concerns, utility issues and housing needs;
- Community-wide and area specific workshops were conducted to identify key community issues, opportunities to address those issues and a sense of community values. Workshops and open houses also were conducted at each decision-making point in the process to gather input on the initial alternatives, the preferred alternative, the goals and policies and the final plan draft;
- Media outreach, through press releases, newspaper articles, service groups, radio and television, was conducted at key decision-making points in the process to promote public participation and awareness;

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- Keypad polling was used at several community meetings, where participants were given hand-held polling devices and asked to respond to questions about a variety of planning topics and techniques. Instant feedback and compilation of the results were presented in the meetings to give the participants an idea of the general consensus and to allow everyone an equal voice;
- A project website was created that included meeting schedules, draft documents, a mapping forum for community response to draft map documents, project updates and contact information; and
- In an effort to integrate technology and increase participation, one of the community workshops using keypad polling was simulcast on community cable television. At-home viewers were able to participate in the polling exercise by responding to questions via an on-line survey available in real-time with the workshop survey.



This combination of techniques was intended to provide all community residents with a variety of ways to express their concerns, values and ideas during the long-range planning process. These techniques offered residents and non-residents a chance to have a "seat at the table" while maintaining a balance among interested groups.

#### Grassroots Vision Project

This Plan incorporates the results of both the City's extensive citizen participation program and the results of an independent County-wide process, known as the Grassroots Vision Project, to establish a common vision for the region along with a community action plan.

The Grassroots Vision Project was started by a volunteer group of Durango and La Plata County residents in December, 2005. Their goal was to solicit a wide cross-section of input from citizens throughout the County and use that input to identify core values and create a vision for 2030 along with strategies and action steps to achieve the vision. Volunteers were trained in a process called Appreciative Inquiry (AI) - defined as the practice of asking questions that strengthens a community's capacity to understand, anticipate and heighten positive potential. The steering committee identified 32 stakeholder groups for outreach efforts. A total of 440 people participated in interviews, online surveys, or mini-surveys. Three all-day community summits were conducted using the AI approach for people to Discover (analyze data to identify core values and strengths), Dream (create visions for 2030 and 2106 along with guiding principles), and Design (develop strategies, action steps, and progress indicators). Four Vision Workout sessions were also held to get input from outlying areas. The resulting vision framework was reviewed by community members at the May 12 Operation Healthy Communities Summit.

After that, Vision Teams were formed around the four core values: Healthy Community, Environmental Stewardship, Sustainable Systems, and Economic Vitality. All major organizations in the County were invited to participate on one of the teams. The Vision Teams are examining the proposed framework to ensure that the strategies and action steps are relevant and desirable. They are aligning the strategies with efforts that are already underway in Durango and La Plata County. Lead Partners are being identified to begin implementing the action steps in collaboration with other partners. The Grassroots Vision Steering Committee plans to submit the final Vision Action Plan to La Plata County Commissioners in mid-2007.

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#### Citizen Survey

In response to a request from the CRC, a scientifically-valid telephone survey was conducted in May, 2006 to gauge the views of Durango citizens. Four hundred randomly selected adults were interviewed regarding their perceptions about the quality of life in Durango, their priorities for City of Durango issues, their attitudes and perceptions regarding growth and growth management tools and priorities, and their assessment of housing affordability and the provision of affordable housing. The complete results of this survey are available in **Appendix \_\_\_ - City of Durango 2006 Citizen Survey**.

#### Initial Assessment

The first phase of the planning process focused on assessing the changes that have occurred in the community since the adoption of the 1997 Plan. The initial assessment was conducted to establish a clear understanding of existing conditions, trends, community needs, key community issues and opportunities for future actions. In addition to a comprehensive review of available reports, area plans and guidelines adopted since 1997, studies and data, the initial assessment included public outreach to assess the values/vision of the community that should be reflected in the Comprehensive Plan. A demographic report was completed to analyze growth trends and changes in the community, as well as to assess the need for specialized facilities and services. This report is found in **Appendix B - Demographic Profile**.

At the November 2005 kick-off workshop, the public was asked to share their desired outcomes from the Comprehensive Plan Update process. From these discussions, recurring themes were extracted:

#### Encourage Planning with a Regional Perspective

Recognizing that the City of Durango is a part of La Plata County and that development in the County has an immediate impact on the quality of life and levels of service in the City, it is important for the City and County to coordinate planning efforts, especially with regard to growth management, land use and transportation issues.

#### Manage Growth

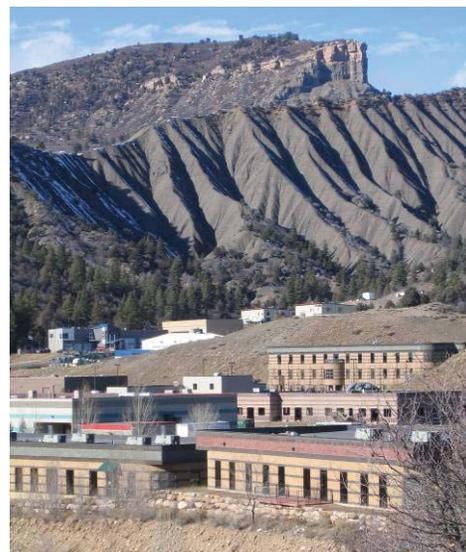
The City should take a proactive role in the management of growth, encouraging higher-density uses in urbanizing areas and lower-density uses in the rural parts of the planning area and County. A wide variety of implementation tools should be considered, including adequate public facilities requirements, concurrency requirements, targeted infrastructure investments, directing growth to appropriate locations and increased density requirements. Protection of open space is a priority.

#### Achieve Economic, Social & Environmental Sustainability

A balanced approach towards growth and maintenance of the environment and other quality of life issues was promoted. Sustainability is important in terms of economic and social diversity, respect for the environment in the City and County and economic health<sup>23</sup>. New growth should positively contribute to the character of the community.

#### Provide Housing Choices

Housing affordability is of significant concern to community members who do not want Durango to become an exclusive resort community, but would instead prefer to be inclusive and diverse. It is



<sup>23</sup> Sustainability typically is defined in terms of social equity, the environment, the economy and service/infrastructure efficiency.

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important to long-time residents that their children will be able to afford to live in Durango in the future, and to younger residents that they will be able to find employment and attainable housing in the future.

#### **Improve Traffic Management & Transportation Alternatives**

Traffic congestion is a significant factor that has both qualitative and quantitative impacts on a community. Traffic congestion and limited mobility options will impact the future quality of life in Durango. Improved travel options should be pursued, including better transit, bike and pedestrian facilities, which will be of great value to the community in the future.

#### **Alternative Scenarios**

The Alternative Scenarios project phase began with community workshops, where citizens allocated commercial and residential growth projected to occur through 2030 in the form of various land uses throughout the planning area. Using these recommendations and various concepts proposed by workshop participants, three growth scenarios were defined, which include:

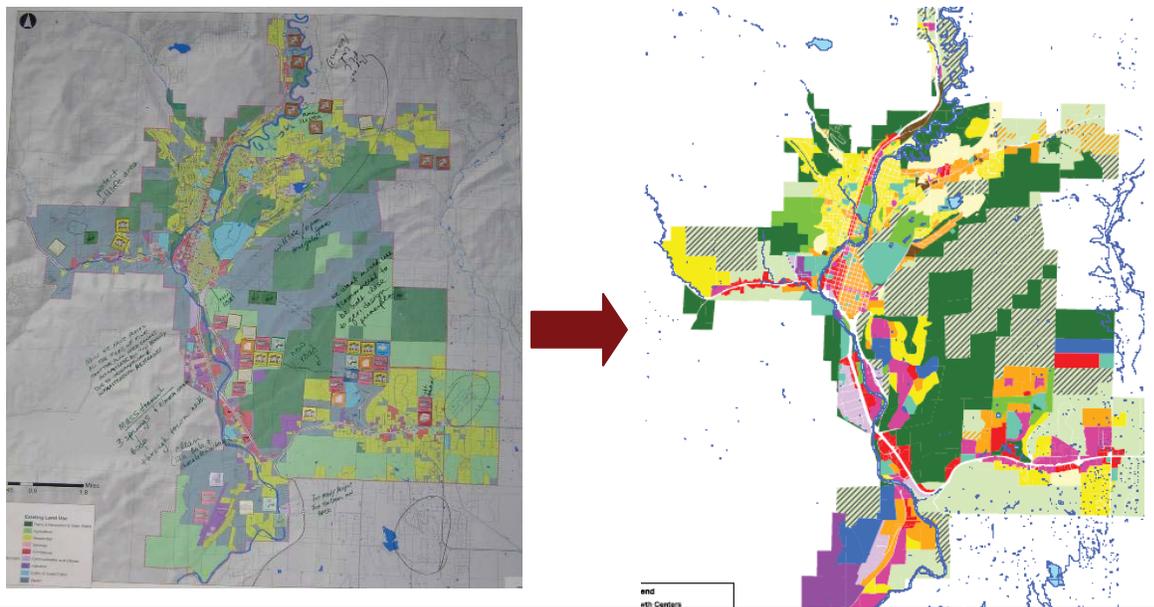
- **Scenario A – 1997 Plan and Subsequently Adopted Area Plans (1997 Plan Plus)**
- **Scenario B – Growth Centers**
- **Scenario C – Compact Growth**

Each of the scenarios:

- Accommodates projected population and employment growth within the planning area;
- Assumes significant retention of green space;
- Focuses on Downtown as the community's civic center;
- Plans for a significant mix of jobs and housing on Ewing Mesa and Grandview; and
- Plans for little or no development on Kroeger Ranch/Riverside.

A Scenarios Analysis Report (**Appendix C**) was completed that includes a CommunityViz-based comparison of three growth scenarios. The analysis compares the scenarios in the year 2030 and at full build-out. Population and employment projections for the year 2030 match the total projections for the planning area used in *Trip 2030, La Plata County and City of Durango Regional Transportation Study*. The analysis assisted the City's Steering Committee in its understanding of the impacts of different growth patterns, thus facilitating refinements to the existing land use map.

## CITY OF DURANGO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE



*Community-created growth allocation maps are reviewed for similarities and differences, and are then used as a basis for the creation of alternative growth scenarios.*

A brief summary of the three scenarios follows:

### **Scenario A – 1997 Plan Plus**

Scenario A largely reflects currently adopted future land use plans, taking into account several developments that are in the conceptual and planning stages that are very likely to happen within the planning horizon. The most important aspects of this Scenario are the management of anticipated growth to make efficient use of land and retain open spaces. Mixed uses and minimum densities are encouraged as a way to increase mobility options and make the most efficient use of developable land. This scenario discourages premature development at the periphery of the planning area. Increasing the “internal capture” of trips within new development is a goal to reduce congestion in the main transportation corridors. Rural densities are limited to Horse Gulch, Kroeger Ranch, portions of Koshak Mesa and portions of Grandview in this scenario. Density is encouraged close to the existing City core to minimize urban sprawl. Creating and supporting transportation options is very important. Expanding recreational uses and open space preservation are considered equal priorities. The key distinction between this scenario and the currently adopted future land use plan is the reduction of density planned for Kroeger Ranch to reflect the recently County-approved density and the inclusion of La Posta Road

### **Scenario B – Growth Centers**

Scenario B focuses on expanding commercial uses to the edges of the City's planning area to increase the capture of regional sales tax revenues. This Scenario is similar to Scenario A in that mixed uses and densities are encouraged in most developable areas, but differs in the amount of commercial development and residential densities near to the edges of the planning area. This Scenario maintains the existing commercial corridors and downtown, but also defines more intense commercial nodes on La Posta Road and at Elmore's Corner. Conservation subdivisions and cluster developments are techniques that will be used in the rural and low density areas to preserve open space. Overall, there are more mixed, medium and high density development than in the 1997 Plan Plus, which has slightly more rural and low density housing. This Scenario places a higher priority than the other Scenarios on establishing a publicly accessible trail and open space system throughout the planning area.

## APPENDIX A

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### THE PLANNING PROCESS

#### Scenario C: Compact Growth

This Scenario places the highest priority on the efficient use of land and the retention of future development potential within the Planning Area. Medium to high density residential and mixed use development are the primary building blocks for new neighborhoods. Limited low density residential development is allowed, with most of the outer reaches of the planning area being retained for future development after infill areas are nearly fully developed. Compatible infill is encouraged in existing neighborhoods, including accessory dwelling units and some attached housing types. Open space is retained within moderate to high intensity developments creating more vibrant and active parks and trails. This scenario will rely on the City's ability to effectively phase development in extra-territorial development areas.

#### Preferred Scenario Selection

The selection of a preferred growth scenario was used to refine the City's Future Land Use Map and guided the selection of growth management tools that are appropriate for use in Durango. This Comprehensive Plan Update defines a preferred growth scenario in terms of the future land use and policies necessary to achieve this land use in a way that is consistent with adopted goals and objectives. This preferred scenario was selected and refined through a series of community workshops, area-specific meetings, CRC meetings, Joint Workshops and the formal public hearing and adoption process.

#### Plan Development

After the selection of a preferred growth scenario, the CRC refined the growth scenario through the development of goals, objectives, policies and implementation strategies. Through the summer and fall of 2006, the CRC reviewed and updated the goals, objectives, policies and implementation strategies of the 1997 plan, and then defined and reviewed potential new policies and strategies to help achieve the new preferred growth alternative.

#### Implementation

Implementation is key to the relevancy and success of the Plan. Updating and monitoring the Plan are important elements that are required in order for the Plan to respond to change in the community. Implementation is discussed at length in **Chapter 12**.

#### Vision

Durango's Comprehensive Plan defines a long-term vision for the future of the planning area. As the foundation of the planning process, the vision was developed through parallel consensus-based process that included all interested community members. The vision statement helps citizens and decision-makers remember the ends to which the Plan aspires. In concert with the guiding principles and plan goals, it should guide the interpretation, application and amendment of the Plan over time.

---

#### Vision

**Durango is an authentic and diverse community living in harmony with its natural environment, pursuing economic, environmental and social sustainability.**

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#### Guiding Principles

The following principles are intended to clarify the intent of the above vision statement and establish the context for the goals, objectives and policies in each of the Plan elements. The principles are grouped in four categories that arose from the Appreciative Inquiry process.

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## CITY OF DURANGO

### COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

**Healthy Community:** We flourish as a community by caring about everyone's needs and supporting efforts to reach our full potential.

**Environmental Stewardship:** We honor and respect our natural environment, realizing that our lives are interdependent with the Earth's well-being.

**Economic Vitality:** Our community experiences economic prosperity through diversification, self-reliance, interdependence and adaptability.

**Sustainable Systems:** We design human solutions that promote the long-term health and preservation of complex natural and cultural systems.

Recognizing these core values, the City will implement this comprehensive plan in accordance with the following guiding principles:

- Actively involve and serve all of our residents;
- Respect individual rights, yet be guided by our concern for the common good;
- Minimize our ecological footprint;
- Protect the water that allows us to live here;
- Conserve our natural resources, while protecting our lands, wildlife and air quality;
- Flourish through the sustainable use of our natural resources;
- Model our growth on the beauty, efficiency and resiliency of our natural systems;
- Support and invest in our community to create jobs and local prosperity;
- Leverage our collective knowledge and ingenuity to anticipate and respond to emerging needs; and
- Develop community wisdom and share knowledge central to our success.

## **APPENDIX A**

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### **THE PLANNING PROCESS**

## **APPENDIX B – DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE**

# **Appendix B**

## **Demographics and Trends Analysis**



## **Section 1 – Demographic Analysis**

The Demographic Analysis provides an understanding of the population of the City of Durango. This analysis demonstrates the overall size of total population by specific age segment, race and ethnicity, and the overall economic status and spending power of the residents through household income statistics.

### **1.1 Summary**

Durango was founded in 1880 by the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad, when they extended their line from Durango to Silverton in order to haul precious metals from high country mines. A flourishing adventure, arts and entertainment culture that includes Ski Resorts, Casinos, Archeological Sites, Museums, Hot Springs, Hunting, Rock Climbing, Canoeing and Kayaking further reinforce the image of Durango as a destination offering something for everyone.

The Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, in proximity to Mesa Verde National Park and the picturesque topography serve as the key attractions to potential residents and hundreds of tourists year round.

That these attributes have succeeded in drawing more people to Durango can be attested to by the continued population growth in the City. From 2000 to 2008, the City population has grown by 10.9%. This translates into a population increase of about 1,710. Projecting ahead, the City's growth rate is expected to continue, though, at a slightly decreasing rate. The projected population in 2023 is expected to be approximately 19,094.

The City of Durango population by major age segment demonstrates a significant proportion of youth and early working age professionals (ages 18-34). Currently two out of five individuals (41%) fall within this age segment, and this is expected to stay relatively consistent through 2023. The next highest growing age segment is expected to be the active adult population (55+) that is projected to comprise 25% of the total population in the next fifteen years.

The City of Durango is primarily homogeneous with a small minority of American Indian and people describing themselves as Some Other Race. In 2000, over eighty-five percent (86.8%) of the City is classified as white only, accounting for approximately 12,090 total persons. The next largest single race is American Indian (5.51%; 767 persons).

The gender composition is marginally in favor of males (51%) and this trend is projected to remain constant over the years.

Currently, there are an estimated 6,298 households in the City of Durango with an average household size of 2.26 persons. The income characteristics are similar to national averages and marginally below those for the State of Colorado. However, future projections do exhibit positive growth trends with the service area median household income poised to grow from \$48,529 in 2008 to \$79,808 by 2023. This represents more than a 100% increase from the 2000 median income (\$34,916). The per capita income too is expected to increase significantly from \$19,353 in 2000 to \$44,001 in 2023.



## 1.2 Methodology

Demographic data used for the analysis was obtained from Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI), the largest research and development organization dedicated to Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and specializing in population projections and market trends. All data was acquired in August 2008, and reflect actual numbers as reported in the 2000 Census and demographic projections for 2008 and 2013 as estimated by ESRI; straight line linear regression was utilized for projected 2018 and 2023 demographics. The City of Durango was utilized as the demographic analysis boundary (Figure 1).

## 1.3 Demographic Profile and Analysis

### Population

The City of Durango has grown at a moderate pace over the last several years. From 2000 to 2008, the population has grown by 10.9%. This translates into a population increase of about 1,710. Projecting ahead, the City's growth rate is expected to increase at a slightly decreasing rate from 2008 to 2023 when the population is expected to be 19,094. The growth rate is expected to be 7.5% from 2008 to 2013, 6% from 2013 to 2018 and 5.9% from 2013 to 2018.

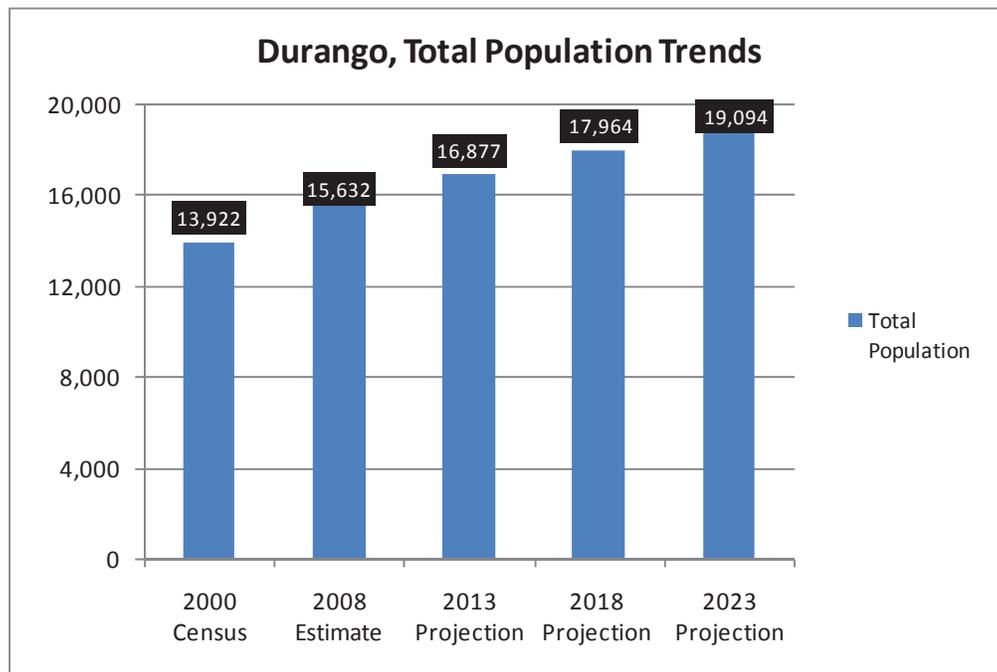


Figure 1 – City of Durango, Total Population Trends

Based on the projections, the City is expected to have approximately 7,897 households by 2023.



## Age Segment

The City of Durango population by major age segment demonstrates primarily a huge proportion of youth and early working age professionals (ages 18-34). Currently, over 40% of the population falls within this age segment and this is expected to stay relatively consistent through 2023. There is also some evidence of an aging trend in the population (see Figure 2). This is similar to nationwide trends that point to a growth pattern in the 55+ age group as a result of increased life expectancies and the baby boomer population entering that age group.

As Figure 2 demonstrates, in 2000, the 55+ population comprised 16% of the population and it is projected to make up almost 25% of the population by 2023. Essentially by 2023, one out of four residents will be over the age of 55.

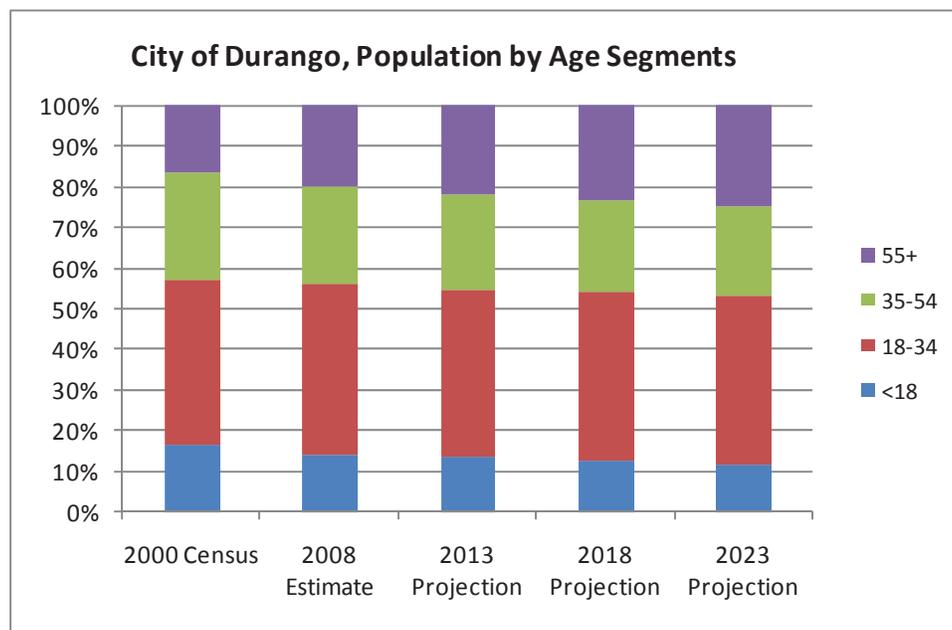


Figure 2 - Population by Major Age Segment

This population composition will require the City to provide a wide variety of recreational, health and wellness, adventure sports, educational and entertainment options focused on family activities, youth, and active adult programming. These could include programs that will place a heavy emphasis on community - wide special events, performing arts, therapeutic recreation programs, life skill programs, family activities such as biking, walking, and swimming, and general entertainment and leisure activities, among others.



**Gender**

The gender distribution for the City of Durango is slightly skewed towards the male population, which accounts for approximately 51% of the population in 2000 (Figure 3). This distribution is projected to remain constant throughout the next five, ten, and fifteen year study periods.

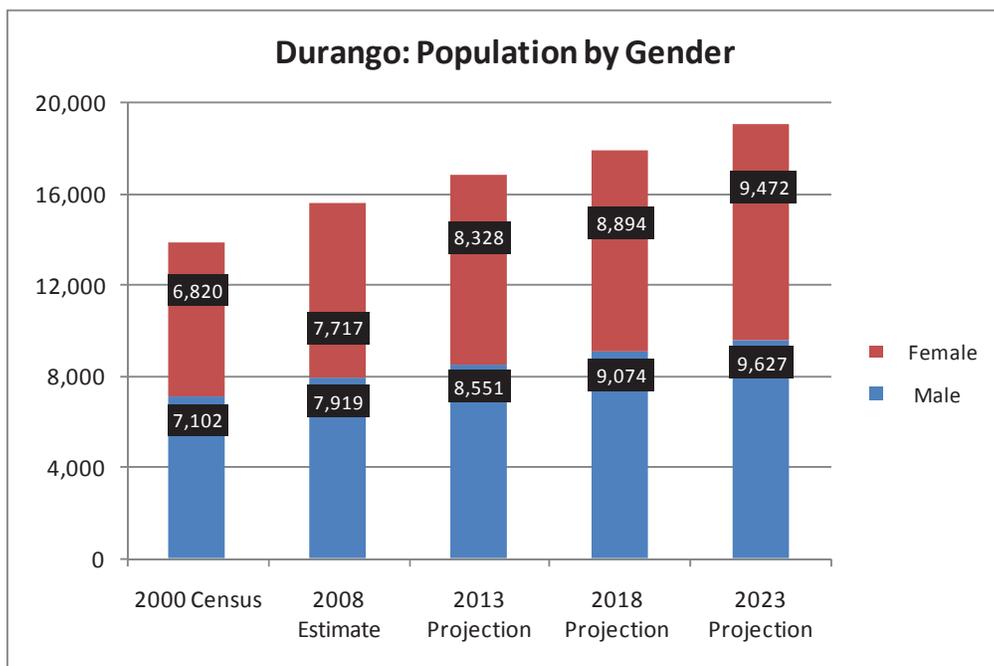


Figure 3 – City of Durango Population by Gender

National recreational trends indicate that Americans participate in a sport or recreational activity of some kind at a relatively high rate (65%). Female participation rates, however, are slightly lower than their male counterparts – 61% of women participate at least once per year in a sport or recreational activity compared to a 69% participation rate of men. According to recreational trends research performed in the industry over the past twenty years, the top ten recreational activities for women are currently:

- |                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Walking            | Basketball      |
| Aerobics           | Lifting weights |
| General exercising | Golf            |
| Biking             | Swimming        |
| Jogging            | Tennis          |

The top ten recreational activities for men are:

- |            |                 |
|------------|-----------------|
| Golf       | Jogging         |
| Basketball | Biking          |
| Walking    | Lifting weights |



Football Fishing  
Hiking Hunting

While men and women share a desire for six of the top ten recreational activities listed above, men claim to participate in their favorite activities more often than women in any ninety-day span. With more women not only comprising a larger portion of the general populace during the mature stages of the lifecycle, but also participating in recreational activities further into adulthood, a relatively new market has appeared over the last two decades.

This mature female demographic is opting for fewer team oriented activities which dominate the female youth recreational environment, instead shifting more towards a diverse selection of individual participant activities, as evident in the top ten recreational activities mentioned above.

**Race and Ethnicity**

The City of Durango is primarily homogeneous with a small minority of American Indian and people listing themselves as Some Other Race (not including Black Only, Pacific Islander or

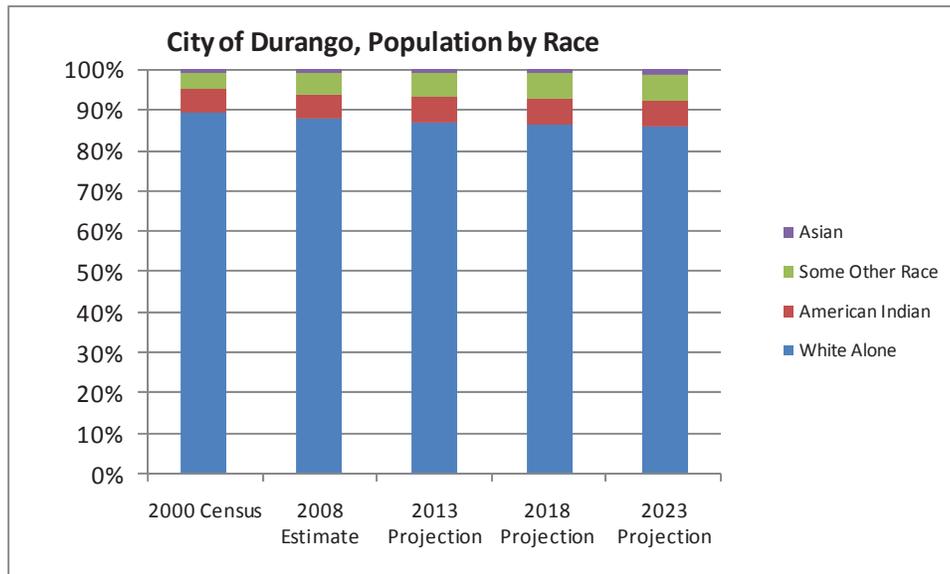


Figure 4 - Population by Race/Ethnicity

Asian). In 2000, over eighty-five percent (86.8%) of the service area was classified as white only, accounting for approximately 12,090 total persons. The next largest single race was American Indian (5.51%; 767 persons), as shown in Figure 4.

Projecting ahead, the City is expected to see some increase in diversity. The White alone population is projected to decrease to 82% by 2023 while the Some Other Race population will increase to 6.5% overtaking the American Indian population which is projected to be 6.1% by 2023.

Persons of any race in combination and classified as being of Hispanic or Latino origin accounted for about 10.3% of the population in 2000 and they are projected to increase to 16.1% by 2023.



### **National Participation Trends by Race/Ethnicity**

The white population as a whole participates in a wide range of activities, including both team and individual sports of a land and water based variety; however, the white populace has an affinity for outdoor non-traditional sports, many of which are offered in great variety in Durango.

Ethnic minority groups in the United States are strongly regionalized and urbanized, with the exception of Native Americans, and these trends are projected to continue. Different ethnic groups have different needs when it comes to recreational activities. Ethnic minority groups, along with Generations X and Y, are coming in ever greater contact with white middle-class baby-boomers with different recreational habits and preferences. This can be a sensitive subject since many baby-boomers are the last demographic group to have graduated high school in segregated environments, and the generational gap magnifies numerous ideals and values differences which many baby-boomers are accustomed to. This trend is projected to increase as more baby-boomers begin to retire, and both the minority and youth populations continue to increase.

Hispanic and Latino Americans have strong cultural and community traditions with an emphasis placed on the extended family, many times gathering in large recreational groups where multiple activities geared towards all age segments of the group may participate. Large group pavilions with picnicking amenities and multi-purpose fields are integral in the communal pastime shared by many Hispanics.

The Asian population is a very different yet distinct ethnic group compared with the three main groups in the U.S. – white, black, and Hispanic. The Asian population has some similarities to the Hispanic population, but many seem to shy away from traditional team sports, and outdoor and water based activities.

Utilizing the Ethnicity Study performed by American Sports Data, Inc., a national leader in sports and fitness trends, participation rates among recreational and sporting activities were analyzed and applied to each race/ethnic group.

A participation index was also reviewed. An index is a gauge of likelihood that a specific ethnic group will participate in an activity as compared to the U.S. population as a whole. An index of 100 signifies that participation is on par with the general population; an index less than 100 means that the segment is less likely to participate while more than 100 signifies the group is more likely than the general public to participate.

The most popular activities for those classified as white alone in terms of total participation percentage, the percentage by which you can multiply the entire population by to arrive at activity participation of at least once in the past twelve months, are:

- Recreational Swimming – 38.9% participation rate (38.9% of the population has participated at least once in the last year);
- Recreational Walking – 37.0% participation rate;
- Recreational Bicycling – 20.6% participation rate;
- Bowling – 20.4% participation rate;



- Treadmill Exercise – 19.1% participation rate;

High participation percentages in freshwater fishing (17.3% participation rate), hiking (17.2% participation rate), and tent camping (17.2% participation rate) demonstrate the high value that the white population places on outdoor activities. Sailing (Index of 124), kayaking (Index of 121), and golf (Index of 120) are three activities that the white population is more likely to participate in than the general public.

The top five recreational activities for the Asian populace in regards to participation percentages are:

- Recreational Walking – 33.3% participation rate;
- Recreational Swimming – 31.9% participation rate;
- Running/Jogging – 21.6% participation rate;
- Bowling – 20.5% participation rate;
- Treadmill Exercise – 20.3% participation rate;

The Asian populace participates in multiple recreational activities at greater rate than the general population with lacrosse being the activity boasting the greatest index of 615. Squash (Index Of 414), mountain/rock climbing (Index of 262), yoga/tai chi (Index 229), martial arts (227), artificial wall climbing (224), badminton (222), and rowing machine exercise (206) each represent an activity that Asian's are more than twice as likely to participate in than the general public.

The five most popular and most participated in activities for those of Hispanic descent are:

- Recreational Swimming – 33.2% participation rate;
- Recreational Walking – 31.2% participation rate;
- Recreational Bicycling – 19.7% participation rate;
- Bowling – 18.5% participation rate;
- Running/Jogging – 18.0% participation rate;

In terms of participation index, the Hispanic populace is more than twice as likely as the general population to participate in boxing (Index of 264), very likely to participate in soccer (Index of 177), and more likely to participate in paintball (Index of 155) than any other ethnic group. For comparison reasons, although Hispanics are nearly twice as likely to participate in soccer as any other race, only 9.0% of the Hispanic population participated in the sport at least once in the last year.



**Households and Income**

Currently, there are an estimated 6,298 households in the City of Durango with an average household size of 2.26 persons.

The City’s median household income is currently at \$48,529 and is projected to increase significantly to \$79,808 by 2023 (see Figure 5). This represents more than a 100% increase from the 2000 median income (\$34,916). The median household income represents the earnings of all persons age 16 years or older living together in a housing unit. The per capita income, too, is expected to increase significantly from \$19,353 in 2000 to \$44,001 in 2023.

Additionally, as the Comparative Income Characteristics in Figure 6 demonstrate, the City of Durango is comparable to national averages and is marginally lower than the income figures for the State of Colorado.

Durango’s median household income (\$48,529) is similar to the national average (\$48,451) while Colorado’s median household income is \$54,262.

These marginally below average income characteristics combined with the tough current economic conditions put greater emphasis on the City to provide affordable and quality recreational offerings that cater to the diverse age groups and varying segments in the community.

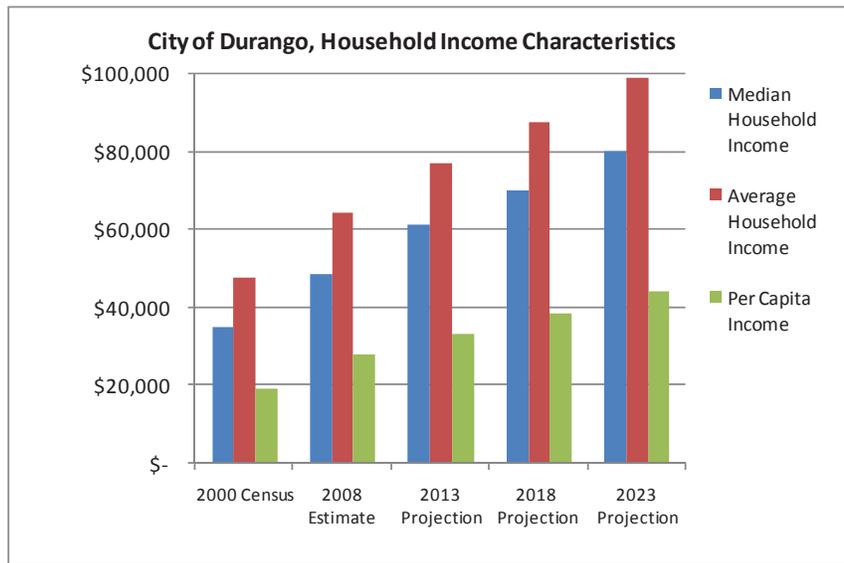


Figure 5 – City of Durango Service Area Income Characteristics

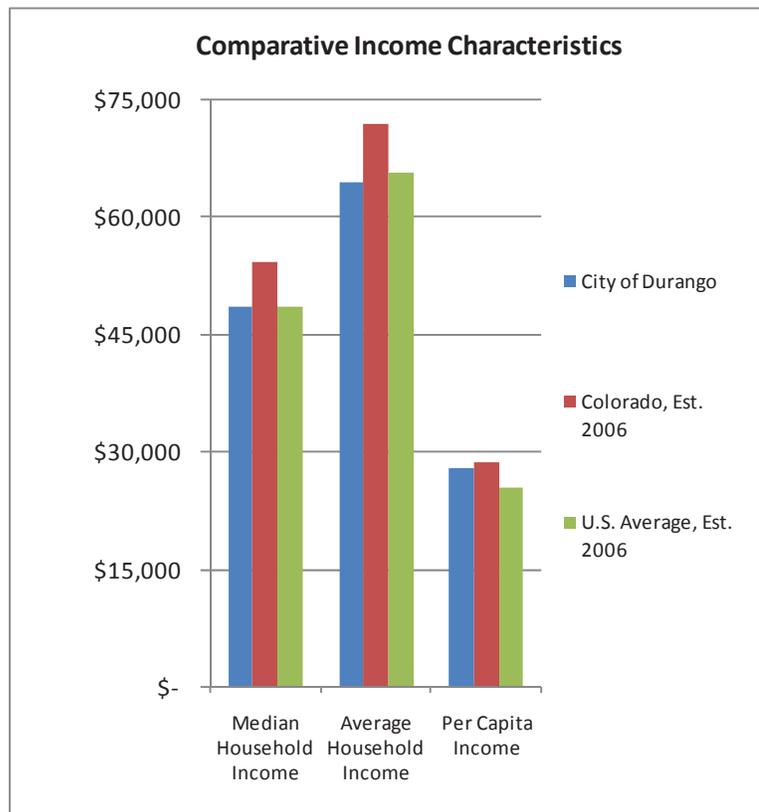


Figure 6 – City of Durango Comparative Income Characteristics



## Section 2 – National and Colorado Participation

The data for this analysis is obtained from the American Sports Data (ASD) 2007 – 2008 SUPERSTUDY®. The SUPERSTUDY® is an annual syndicated tracking study which presents a comprehensive overview of sports participation in the United States based on responses obtained from over 15,000 statistically -valid surveys nationwide. The study identifies and analyzes general patterns, trends, and relationships within a full range of 103 sports and activities. Participation trends for some key sports and recreation activities popular in the Denver MSA and the State of Colorado are presented. The index of participation indicates the popularity of that activity in comparison to a national index of 100.

The following tables demonstrate the notable participation trends for a variety of recreation activity areas within the State of Colorado and the Denver Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). While these trends may not be identical to the Durango area, it would be safe to assume that the general popularity of most of these activities would be reflected.

**Figure 7** demonstrates the participation trends by Fitness Activities. As can be seen, a large percentage of participants within the Colorado area fall within the Denver MSA. Fitness bicycling, pilates training and stationary cycling are among the most popular fitness activities, which is unsurprising considering Colorado’s reputation as being among the fittest states in the country.

	Total U.S. (000)	Colorado (000)	Denver MSA (000)	CO Participants / 100 people	Denver MSA Participants / 100 people	CO Index	Denver MSA Index
<b>Fitness Activities</b>							
Fitness Bicycling	10601	323	232	7.6	8.1	192	205
Pilates Training	10232	265	230	6.2	8.1	163	211
Stationary Cycling (NET)	29859	596	464	14	16.2	126	146

**Figure 7 – Fitness Activities Participation Trends**

**Figure 8** shows the trends for Team Sports and all but baseball have high participation rates in the State and the MSA. Baseball participation rates seem to be very high within the state but are below average within the Denver MSA. Given the year - round programming ability of the sport, indoor soccer seems to be a popular sport within the region. However, from a participation index standpoint, volleyball ranks among the highest. It is also interesting to note that though softball as a whole ranks very high, the participation rate is primarily driven by regular softball and not fastpitch. In fact, fastpitch softball has among the lowest participation rates of any sport in the region (Colorado Index – 24; Denver MSA Index – 14).

	Total U.S. (000)	Colorado (000)	Denver MSA (000)	CO Participants / 100 people	Denver MSA Participants / 100 people	CO Index	Denver MSA Index
<b>Team Sports</b>							
Volleyball (NET)	19793	597	506	14.1	17.7	190	239
Softball (NET)	15224	456	344	10.7	12	189	253
Baseball	9162	263	64	6.2	2.2	181	65
Football	18211	479	88	11.3	3.1	166	132
Lacrosse	1590	37	37	0.9	1.3	147	219
Soccer (Indoor)	4819	99	81	2.3	2.8	130	158

**Figure 8 - Participation Trends Team Sports**



*Parks, Open Space, Trails, and Recreation Master Plan  
Demographic and Trends Analysis*

**Figure 9** shows the participation trends for racquet / personal contact sports and skating sports. Tennis and skateboarding both seem to be popular participation activities in the region. However club / team wrestling seems to be preferred less in the Denver MSA as compared to the Colorado region.

	Total U.S. (000)	Colorado (000)	Denver MSA (000)	CO Participants / 100 people	Denver MSA Participants / 100 people	CO Index	Denver MSA Index
<b>Racquet / Personal Contact Sports</b>							
Wrestling (Club / Team)	2362	123	13	2.9	0.4	327	51
Tennis	18201	371	290	8.7	10.1	128	149
<b>Skating Sports</b>							
Skateboarding	11470	244	131	5.7	4.6	134	107

**Figure 9 - Participation Trends Racquet / Personal Contact Sports and Skating Sports**

Trends for Other Recreational Activities as well as Outdoor Activities are shown in **Figure 10**. It comes as no surprise that a variety of hiking, biking and camping activities figure high on the list of activities in this region. The culture of fitness coupled with adventure, topographic diversity and a love for the outdoors are prime reasons for the high participation indices for these activities.

Mountain biking and rafting in particular have significantly higher participation rates, though, in terms of participants / 100 people, recreational bicycling, hiking and camping are more pervasive with over 25% of the total population partaking in those activities.

	Total U.S. (000)	Colorado (000)	Denver MSA (000)	CO Participants / 100 people	Denver MSA Participants / 100 people	CO Index	Denver MSA Index
<b>Other Recreational Activities / Outdoors</b>							
Bicycling (BMX)	2554	87	52	2	1.8	215	190
Bicycling (Recreational)	48979	1044	664	24.6	23.2	134	127
Mountain Biking	5760	404	275	9.5	9.6	441	448
Mountain / Rock Climbing	2225	65	50	1.5	1.8	185	211
Hiking (NET)	38596	1096	752	25.8	26.3	179	182
Camping (Recreational Vehicle)	18430	508	340	11.9	11.9	174	172
Camping (NET)	48412	1128	721	26.5	25.2	147	139
Rafting	4781	200	111	4.7	3.9	264	218
Fishing	5819	147	84	3.5	2.9	160	136

**Figure 10 - Participation Trends Other Recreational Activities and Outdoors**



*Parks, Open Space, Trails, and Recreation Master Plan  
Demographic and Trends Analysis*

It goes without saying that the state perceived as the ‘Snow Capital’ of the country would boast high participation rates for Snow Sports. The participation trends for snow sports shown in **Figure 11** bear ample testimony to that fact. Downhill or Cross Country Skiing, Snowboarding, and Snowshoeing have a high participation index. Even Scuba Diving (a water sport) is extremely popular.

	Total U.S. (000)	Colorado (000)	Denver MSA (000)	CO Participants / 100 people	Denver MSA Participants / 100 people	CO Index	Denver MSA Index
<b>Snow Sports</b>							
Skiing (Downhill)	10822	768	625	18.1	21.8	447	540
Skiing (Cross-Country)	2305	104	57	2.5	2	285	230
Snowboarding	7076	449	262	10.6	9.2	400	347
Snowshoeing	2683	158	131	3.7	4.6	370	457
Scuba Diving	2763	84	59	2	2.1	191	200

**Figure 11 - Participation Trends Snow Sports**

Other notable mentions particularly for the Denver MSA include Elliptical Motion Trainer and Upright Bike (Spinning) that have indices of 193 and 155 respectively. Overall, the Colorado region and the Denver MSA have a resident base that has an affinity for sports and recreation - be it fitness activities, team or snow sports or outdoor recreation activities. These naturally translate into high participation trends across the region and it is important to ensure adequate programming opportunities to meet the need of this growing participant base.



## **2.4 Conclusion**

The City of Durango's population is generally active in a variety of outdoor recreational activities including bicycling, hiking, camping, rafting/kayaking and fishing. Participation in organized adult and youth team sports has remained strong over the past 10 years, with hockey and lacrosse being emerging sports. Individual activities including swimming, skiing and fitness programs have a high participation rate in the City of Durango.

Based upon the Demographics and Trends Analysis, there is every indication that the active lifestyle commonly found in Durango will continue in the foreseeable future.

## **APPENDIX C - PLAN ALTERNATIVES**



# **City of Durango Comprehensive Plan**

## **Appendix C – Plan Alternatives**

**March 6, 2007**

Selecting a  
Preferred  
Alternative

# City of Durango, Colorado

## Alternative Growth Scenarios Analysis Report

*Including*  
Supplemental  
Preferred Scenario Summary



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**March 6, 2007**

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

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**OVERVIEW**

This report summarizes the CommunityViz-based comparison of three growth scenarios that were defined as part of the public participation process to update the City of Durango's comprehensive plan. It has been supplemented with an analysis of the preferred scenario that was selected based on citizens' review of the initial comparison. The initial analysis was intended to assist the City's Steering Committee in its understanding of the impacts of different growth patterns, thus facilitating refinements to the currently adopted future land use map.

The analysis compares the scenarios in the year 2030 and at full build-out. Population and employment projections for the year 2030 match the total projections for the planning area used in *Trip 2030, La Plata County and City of Durango Regional Transportation Study*. At community workshops, citizens allocated this projected 2030 growth in the form of various land uses throughout the planning area. Using these recommendations and various concepts proposed by workshop participants, three growth scenarios were defined, which include:

- **Scenario A – 1997 Plan and Subsequently Adopted Area Plans (1997 Plan Plus)**
- **Scenario B – Growth Centers**
- **Scenario C – Compact Growth**

Each of the scenarios:

- Accommodates projected population and employment growth within the planning area;
- Assumes significant retention of green space;
- Focuses on Downtown as the community's civic center;
- Plans for a significant mix of jobs and housing on Ewing Mesa and Grandview; and
- Plans for little or no development on Kroeger Ranch/Riverside.

**Scenario A – 1997 Plan Plus**

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Scenario A largely reflects currently adopted future land use plans, taking into account several developments that are in the conceptual and planning stages that are very likely to happen within the planning horizon. The most important aspects of this Scenario are the management of anticipated growth to make efficient use of land and retain open spaces. Mixed uses and minimum densities are encouraged as a way to increase mobility options and make the most efficient use of developable land. This scenario discourages premature development at the periphery of the planning area. Increasing the "internal capture" of trips within new development is a goal to reduce congestion in the main transportation corridors. Rural densities are limited to Horse Gulch, Kroeger Ranch, portions of Koshak Mesa and portions of Grandview in this scenario. Density is encouraged close to the existing City core to minimize urban sprawl. Creating and supporting transportation options is very important. Expanding recreational uses and open space preservation are considered equal priorities. The key distinction between this scenario and the currently adopted future land use plan is the reduction of density planned for Kroeger Ranch to reflect the recently County-approved density and the inclusion of La Posta Road

**Scenario B – Growth Centers**

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Scenario B focuses on expanding commercial uses to the edges of the City's planning area to increase the capture of regional sales tax revenues. This Scenario is similar to Scenario A in that mixed uses and densities are encouraged in most developable areas,

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but differs in the amount of commercial development and residential densities near to the edges of the planning area. This Scenario maintains the existing commercial corridors and downtown, but also defines more intense commercial nodes on La Posta Road and at Elmore’s Corner. Conservation subdivisions and cluster developments are techniques that will be used in the rural and low density areas to preserve open space. Overall, there are more mixed, medium and high density development than in the 1997 Plan Plus, which has slightly more rural and low density housing. This Scenario places a higher priority than the other Scenarios on establishing a publicly accessible trail and open space system throughout the planning area.

**Scenario C: Compact Growth**

This Scenario places the highest priority on the efficient use of land and the retention of future development potential within the Planning Area. Medium to high density residential and mixed use development are the primary building blocks for new neighborhoods. Limited low density residential development is allowed, with most of the outer reaches of the planning area being retained for future development after infill areas are nearly fully developed. Compatible infill is encouraged in existing neighborhoods, including accessory dwelling units and some attached housing types. Open space is retained within moderate to high intensity developments creating more vibrant and active parks and trails. This scenario will rely on the City’s ability to effectively phase development in extra-territorial development areas.

Each of the scenarios is based upon growth that already exists in the planning area. The planning area is shown in **Figure 1**. In 2004, which is considered the base year for the analysis, there were 18,960 people, 8,434 households and 21,063 jobs in the planning area. The projections from the **2030 Trip** study are shown in **Table 1**.

**Table 1: Growth Projections for Durango Planning Area**

	Population	Households	Employment
2004	18,960	8,705	21,063
Increase 2004-2030	13,837	6,190	13,289
Total 2030	32,797	14,895	34,352

This report describes the impacts of each growth scenario on the City and County in both quantitative and qualitative terms. Since the available land in the planning area can accommodate growth beyond what is projected for 2030, this report focuses on both the impacts of the growth scenarios in 2030 as well as the potential build-out of each scenario, which is expected to occur sometime beyond 2030.

Because build-out potential exceeds the amount of development projected in 2030, the 2030 population and employment have been distributed based upon development suitability. Development suitability for each piece of land or parcel is determined by weighting criteria such as proximity to major roads, utilities and existing development. Overlap with development constraints such as floodplain and steep slopes and proximity to oil and gas wells subtract from the overall weight for each parcel. The Three Springs sub-area and Ewing Mesa were designated as hot spots, due to current development activity and development interest. A random weighting factor was also included in the model. The areas that accrue the greatest total weight are deemed most suitable for development and therefore most likely to develop first. The amount of projected growth was summarized by Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZs) that were created in the Trip



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#### Scenario Impacts

The selection of a preferred growth scenario will be used to refine the City's Future Land Use Map and will guide the selection of growth management tools that are appropriate for use in Durango. **Table 2** describes the future land use categories. **Table 3** and **Figure 2** compare the land use mix in each scenario. The mix and distribution of future land uses is the basis for the analysis in this report.

**Table 2: Future Land Use Categories**

Land Use	Density/Size Restrictions***	Description
Rural	35 acres minimum	Private land that will remain in parcels of 35 or more acres. Most of these parcels will receive no urban level services.
Rural Estates	10 acres minimum	Private land that will remain in parcels of 10 acres or more unless developed as part of a clustered development. Most of these parcels will receive no urban services.
Rural Residential	3 acres minimum	Private land that will consist of lots typically served by wells and/or septic systems.
Residential – Large Lot	1 to 3 acres	Single family residential lots which typically are served by a public water and/or wastewater system.
Residential – Low Density	1 to 4.99 DUs per acre	Single-family residential lots 6,000 sq. ft. to 1 acre that receive full urban services.
Residential – Medium Density	5 to 11.99 DUs per acre	Single-family residential lots smaller than 6,000 sq. ft. Other dwelling types, including duplexes, triplexes, patio homes, mobile home parks, apartments and townhomes permitted.
Residential – High Density	12 or more DUs per acre	Includes multi-family dwellings and group dwellings.
Commercial*	--	Permits a wide range of commercial development (e.g., office, retail, service), with all operations and storage being contained within the primary buildings (e.g., grocery stores, the mall, factory outlet stores, hotels, restaurants).
Industrial	--	Permits mining, batch plants and manufacturing uses with outdoor operations.
Mixed Use	6 DUs per acre (average)	Permits a mix of residential (typically multi-family units) and commercial development.
Mixed Commercial/Light Industrial**	--	Permits light industrial uses.
Office/Business Park**	--	Permits offices for personal and professional services.
Institutional/Public	--	Public and quasi-public uses, such as schools, government facilities, cemeteries, hospitals and churches.
Parks & Recreation	--	Public and private land designated for passive or active recreational uses.
Conservation/Open Space	--	Public or private land which will remain undeveloped as natural open space. Minor improvements such as trails and parking areas may exist to provide access.

\*The Local Commercial category from the 1997 Plan has been removed as a future land use category.

\*\*The Office category is new categories not included in the 1997 Plan.

\*\*\*Transportation constraints reduce residential densities for portions of the Grandview Area Plan.

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**Table 3** illustrates the current existing land use in the City, and **Table 4** compares the scenarios by the total amounts of land use at build-out as allocated in the future land use map.

To facilitate future land use analysis, the following bullets and tables summarize broad classes of land uses:

- Compact Growth and Growth Centers have the greatest percentages of open lands.

Percentage of Study Area in Rural, Parks and Open Space	Scenario		
	1997 Plan Plus	Growth Centers	Compact Growth
	40	45	46

- 1997 Plan Plus devotes the greatest acreage to large lot development, followed by Compact Growth. Growth Centers devotes the least acreage to these uses.

Percentage of Study Area in Rural Estates, Rural Residential and Large Lots	Scenario		
	1997 Plan Plus	Growth Centers	Compact Growth
	35	21	27

- Growth Centers and 1997 Plan have the greatest proportions of mixed use development.

Percentage of Study Area in Mixed Use	Scenario		
	1997 Plan Plus	Growth Centers	Compact Growth
	4	5	1

- Growth Centers has the greatest acreage devoted to commercial, office, mixed use and industrial development.

Percentage of Study Area in Commercial & Industrial Development	Scenario		
	1997 Plan Plus	Growth Centers	Compact Growth
	11	16	6

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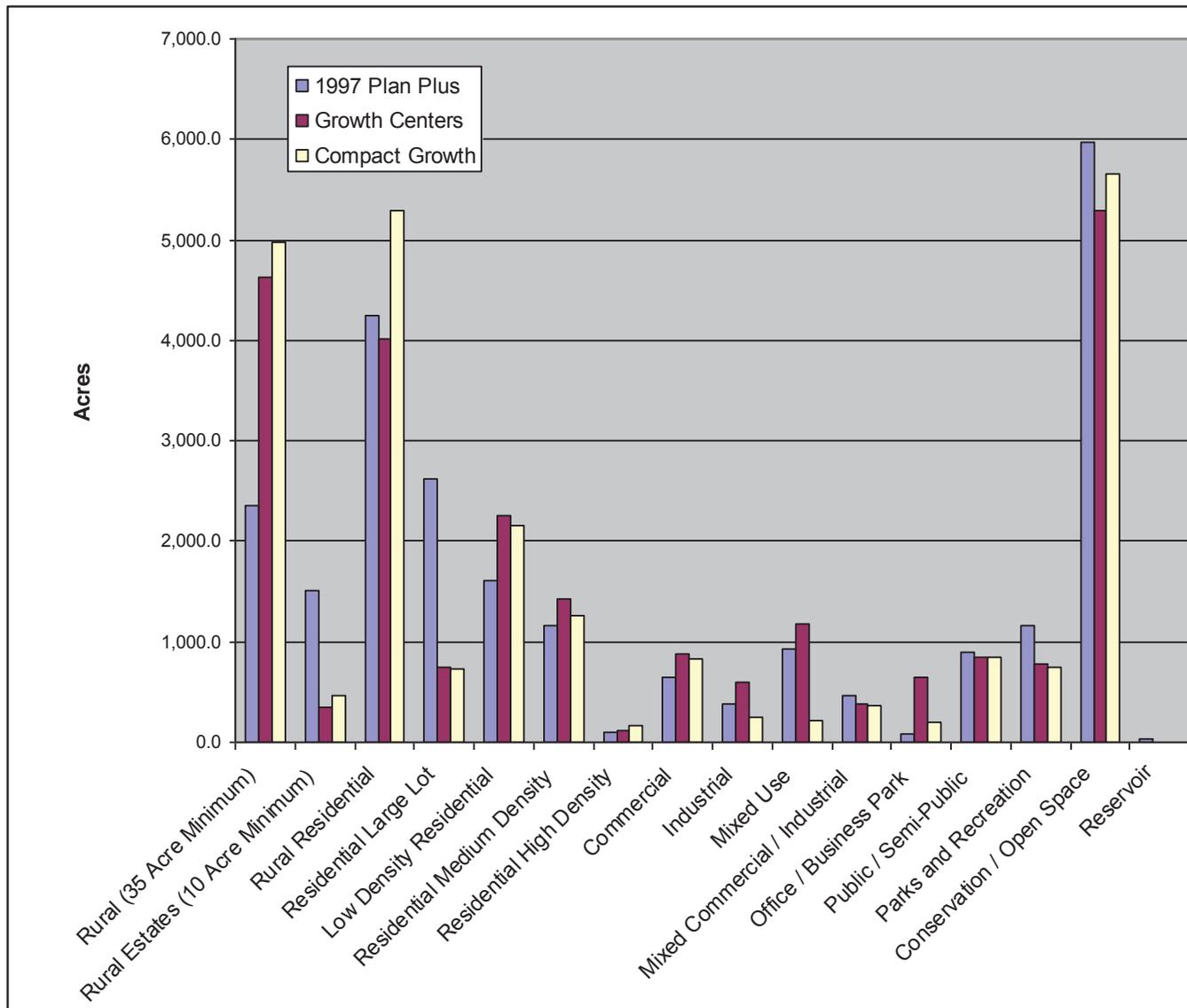
**Table 3: Existing Land Use Mix (2006)**

Use	Acres	Percent
Open Space	4,640	19%
Agricultural	4,653	19%
Residential	4,667	19%
Service	156	1%
Commercial	688	3%
Utilities	152	1%
Industrial	764	3%
Public	589	2%
Vacant	7,695	32%
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,004</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 4: Scenario Land Use Comparison**

Use / Average Density	1997 Plan		Growth Centers		Compact Growth	
	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent
Rural (35 Acre Minimum)	2,346	10%	4,636	19%	4,972	21%
Rural Estates (10 Acres Minimum)	1,514	6%	349	1%	462	2%
Rural Residential (1 DU/3 Acres)	4,244	18%	4,015	17%	5,294	22%
Residential - Large Lot (1 DU/Acre)	2,615	11%	742	3%	729	3%
Residential - Low Density (3 DU/Acre)	1,613	7%	2,261	9%	2,161	9%
Residential – Medium Density (8 DU/Acre)	1,164	5%	1,429	6%	1,263	5%
Residential - High Density (16 DU/Acre)	98	0%	115	0%	158	1%
Commercial	649	3%	879	4%	822	3%
Industrial	381	2%	596	2%	242	1%
Mixed Use (9 DU/Acre)	925	4%	1,183	5%	208	1%
Mixed Commercial / Industrial	466	2%	378	2%	369	2%
Office/Business Park	84	0%	653	3%	203	1%
Institutional / Public	891	4%	853	4%	853	4%
Parks & Recreation	1,158	5%	771	3%	750	3%
Conservation / Open Space	5,972	25%	5,289	22%	5,665	23%
Reservoir	28	0%	N/A	-	N/A	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,150</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>24,150</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>24,150</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Figure 2: Scenario Land Use Comparison**



**Dwelling Units**

Since one of the objectives of the three alternative scenarios is to accommodate the projected growth for 2030 through alternative land use choices, all three scenarios contain roughly the same amount of population and employment growth between 2004 and 2030. The projected increase in dwelling units between 2004 and 2030 is 6,601 units.

As is shown in **Table 5** and **Figure 3**, the 2030 increase in dwelling units is inclusive of both infill and redevelopment projects as well as new construction, which will occur on vacant, greenfield sites. In each scenario, the number of existing units plus the number of total new projected units is equal to the total number of dwelling units in the planning area in 2030.

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Infill will accommodate a minimal amount of growth over the next 25 years, at most, infill only accounts for 6% of the total new projected units in the scenarios (Growth Centers). Infill is considered a preferred method for accommodating growth, as it protects open space and takes advantage of existing infrastructure. However, while people theoretically support infill, they tend to protest increased densities in their own neighborhoods. While the occasional “granny flat” is acceptable to many, proposals for dense multi-family projects in existing single-family neighborhoods often are protested as threats to neighborhood character and generators of increased noise and traffic.

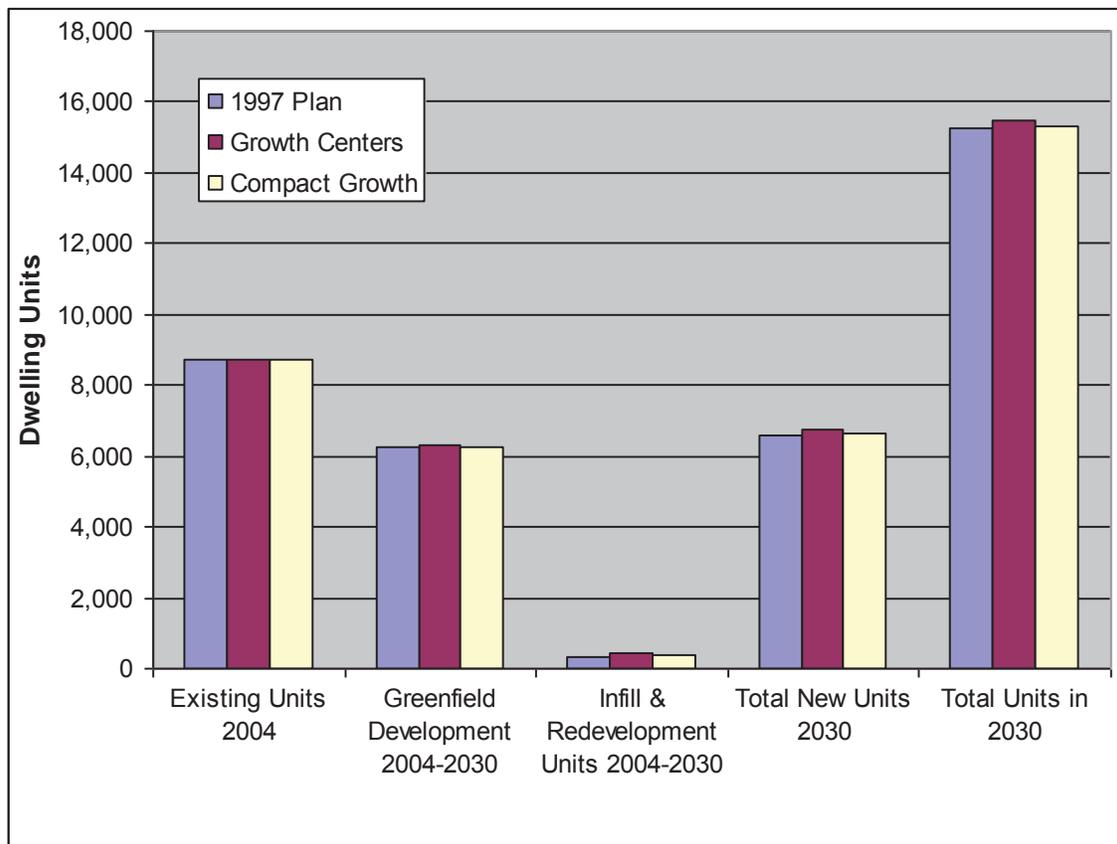
It often is more difficult and expensive to locate and develop small infill projects, due to older infrastructure, potential environmental contamination on brownfield sites, awkward sites and difficulties identifying willing sellers during land assembly. While not precluding some redevelopment, it is unreasonable to expect infill and redevelopment to accommodate a significant portion of future growth in Durango. The majority of new residential development will continue to occur in greenfield locations.

The myriad difficulties of infill and redevelopment highlight the importance of planning and developing neighborhoods and places that are appropriate for their locations from the beginning. It is unreasonable to expect that land uses and structures will easily and automatically redevelop as the location becomes more urban, or less appropriate for such a use or structure. Many uses and development styles preclude the provision of urban facilities and services, or make the provision of such prohibitively expensive. For instance, when large-lot developments are approved in planned urban areas, infrastructure must be extended through those areas to reach other development that occurs farther from the City at higher densities. It is important for the City to influence and guide development that occurs on its fringes, to protect its future ability to provide services efficiently.

**Table 5: Dwelling Units by Scenario (2030)**

	1997 Plan	Growth Centers	Compact Growth
Existing Units 2004	8,705	8,705	8,705
Greenfield Development 2004-2030	6,257	6,335	6,248
Infill & Redevelopment Units 2004-2030	317	428	373
Total New Units 2030	6,574	6,763	6,621
<b>Total Units in 2030</b>	<b>15,279</b>	<b>15,468</b>	<b>15,326</b>

**Figure 3: Dwelling Units by Scenario (2030)**



While the model was designed to meet a certain goal for dwelling units based on a projection for 2030, the build-out potential of each scenario is determined solely through a multiplication of the number of buildable acres of each land use, as defined in the scenario maps, by the densities of each land use as defined in the Future Land Use categories (**Table 2**), taking into account existing development and potential infill and redevelopment.

There are substantial differences in the build-out potential of each scenario, as is illustrated in **Table 6** and **Figure 4**. While the Compact Growth scenario allows for a build-out of 17,570 units, the 1997 Plan Plus allows for a build-out of 20,127 and the Growth Centers scenario provides for 22,098 units. The difference between the highest and lowest scenarios is 4,528 households, which, at 2.23 people per household (the average in Durango according to the 2000 U.S. Census), would be a difference of 10,097 people. The 1997 Plan Plus potentially accommodates 44,883 people, Growth Centers accommodates 49,279, and Compact Growth accommodates 39,181.

As growth occurs in the County and region even after the City of Durango achieves full build-out, the population of Durango will continue to decrease as a proportion of the County and region, which had occurred during the past decade as La Plata County has grown at a faster rate than the City. In the absence of large annexations, Durango's tax base will eventually stagnate, while demands for services will not diminish, especially if Durango maintains its role as a regional

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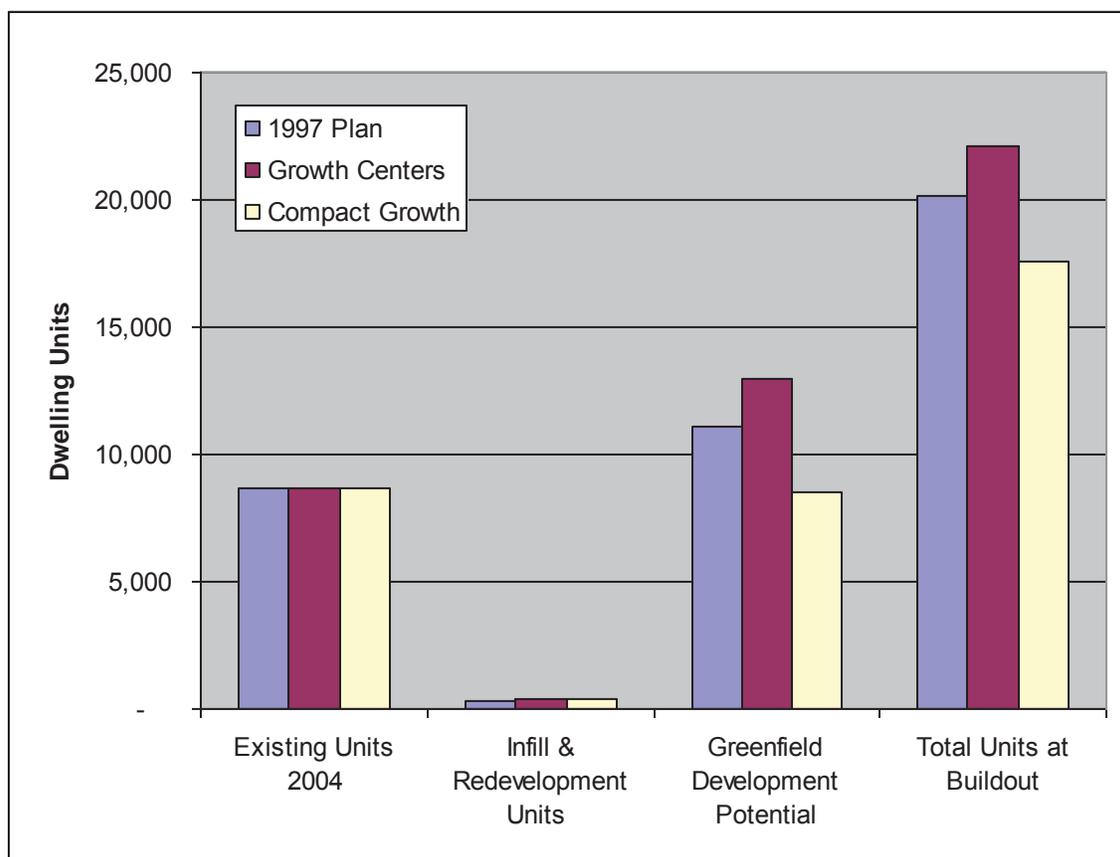
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service provider. Maximizing the City's tax base and postponing build-out by achieving higher densities within the buildable planning area is one argument in favor of the selection of a higher growth scenario.

**Table 6: Scenario Build-out Potential**

	1997 Plan	Growth Centers	Compact Growth
Existing Units 2004	8,705	8,705	8,705
Infill & Redevelopment Units	317	428	373
Greenfield Development Potential at Build-out	11,105	12,965	8,492
<b>Total Units at Build-out</b>	<b>20,127</b>	<b>22,098</b>	<b>17,570</b>
<b>Population</b>	<b>44,883</b>	<b>49,279</b>	<b>39,181</b>

**Figure 4: Scenario Build-out Potential**



**The Growth Centers Scenario has the greatest residential development potential.**

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For purposes of this analysis, the residential density of development is used as a proxy for the potential affordability of housing. **While higher densities do not guarantee the provision of affordable housing, they do make it more feasible by reducing per unit land and infrastructure costs.**<sup>2</sup> Clearly, recent market trends reflect increased housing costs regardless of density, which suggests that the actual percentage of affordable units will depend on local efforts to increase the affordable housing supply. For purposes of analyzing affordability potential, a different proportion of low, middle and high income households is projected for each density. Low income includes households with an annual income of less than \$25,000, middle income includes households with annual income between \$25,000 and \$75,000, and high income includes households with more than \$75,000 in annual income. It is important to note that the actual proportion of affordable housing that will be available is dependent upon City policies.

**Table 7** shows the percentage of housing in each residential land use category that is projected to be for low, middle or high income households. The high proportion of low income housing in medium density, mixed use and high density residential products will not be attainable without significant changes in public policy.

**Table 7: Household Income Assumptions\***

	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income
Rural	0	0	100%
Rural Estates	0	5%	95%
Rural Residential	0	10%	90%
Rural Large Lot	0	20%	80%
Low Density Residential	5%	55%	40%
Medium Density Residential	30%	50%	20%
Mixed Use	50%	40%	10%
High Density Residential	50%	40%	10%

\*Household income assumptions are derived from *Trip 2030, La Plata County and City of Durango Regional Transportation Study*, by Donley Associates and Planning Works. The proportion of low income housing is highly dependent upon the City's affordable housing policies.

**Table 8** and **Figures 5** and **6** compare the housing mix of each scenario and the existing housing mix in 2004. The number of units and percentage mix are shown for each scenario. While the Growth Centers scenario allows for the greatest percentage of housing for low income households (31%), none of the scenarios exceed the percentage of low income housing available under the existing mix (33%). Each of the three scenarios provides for a greater percentage of high income units on a percentage basis than the current mix. While the Compact Growth scenario provides the highest percentage of middle income units (43%), the actual number of middle income units (7,558) is less than the other two scenarios, due to the fact that the Compact Growth Scenario provides a lower overall number of units.

<sup>2</sup> Higher density housing types are assumed to allow for more affordable housing because they require less land, therefore lower land costs are built into the cost of the housing. Additionally, higher densities allow for reduced infrastructure costs, since utilities do not have to be extended to detached dwelling units over large areas. Additionally, lower densities reduce the overall capacity for housing in the planning area, which can drive up prices due to a shortage of available units.

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Due to Fort Lewis College, student households make up an estimated 29% of the existing households requiring affordable housing. For the 2005-2006 school year, Fort Lewis had an enrollment of 3,946 students, 2,644 of which lived off-campus. Of those, 123 were freshmen, who are generally required to live with their families, leaving 2,521 students that required other off-campus housing. Assuming an average of three students per off-campus, non-family household, there were 881 student households in the planning area in the 2005-2006 school year. The college has a goal of achieving growth up to an enrollment of 5,000 students by 2011, a 25% increase over current enrollment, and then maintaining a constant enrollment at this level. Assuming that the proportion of students living on and off-campus remains constant, this would result in 1,064 student households seeking affordable housing by 2011, an increase of 183 student households. As the college currently has no plans to expand beyond 5,000 students, student households will make up a declining proportion of all households seeking affordable housing through 2030.

**Table 8: Potential Mix of Dwelling Types by Income at Build-out**

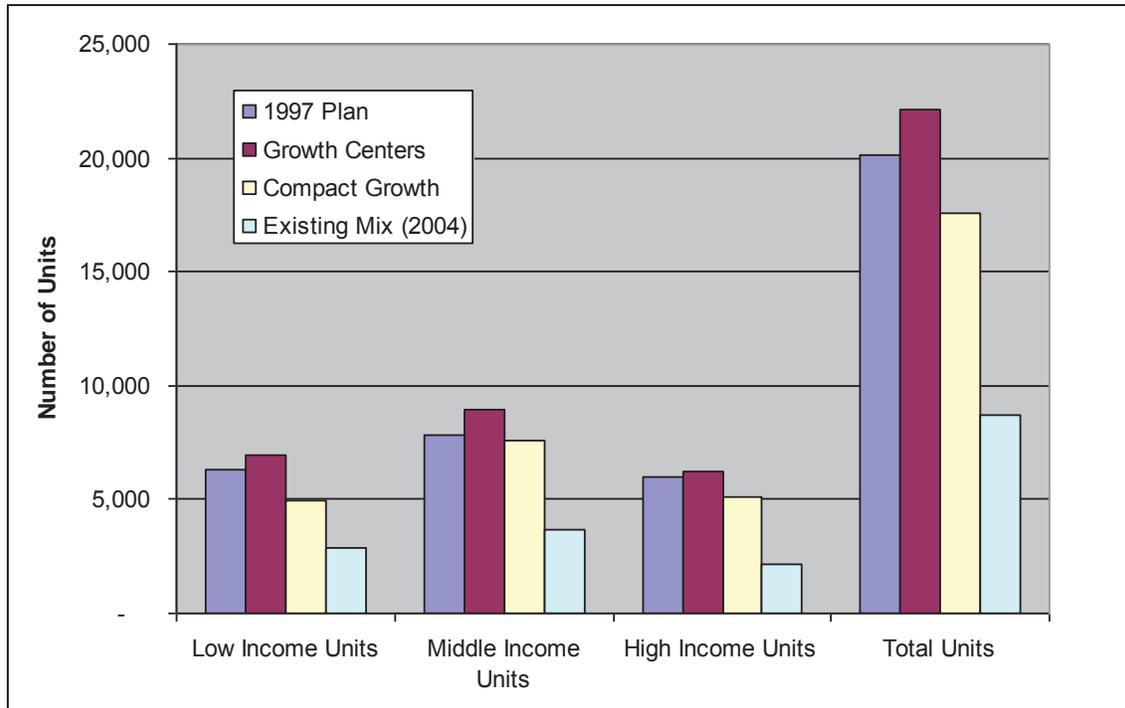
	1997 Plan		Growth Centers		Compact Growth		Existing Mix (2004)	
	Units	Percent	Units	Percent	Units	Percent	Units	Percent
Low Income Units	6,300	31%	6,926	31%	4,936	28%	2,894	33%
Middle Income Units	7,802	39%	8,927	40%	7,558	43%	3,685	42%
High Income Units	6,024	30%	6,247	28%	5,077	29%	2,126	24%
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>20,127</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>22,098</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>17,570</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>8,705</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Student households due to Fort Lewis College make up an estimated 29% of existing affordable households, a percentage that is expected to remain relatively constant over time in comparison to the overall population of Durango. The actual proportion of low, middle and high income units is dependent upon public policy.

**Public housing policy is likely to have a greater impact on affordable housing adequacy than the selected scenario.**

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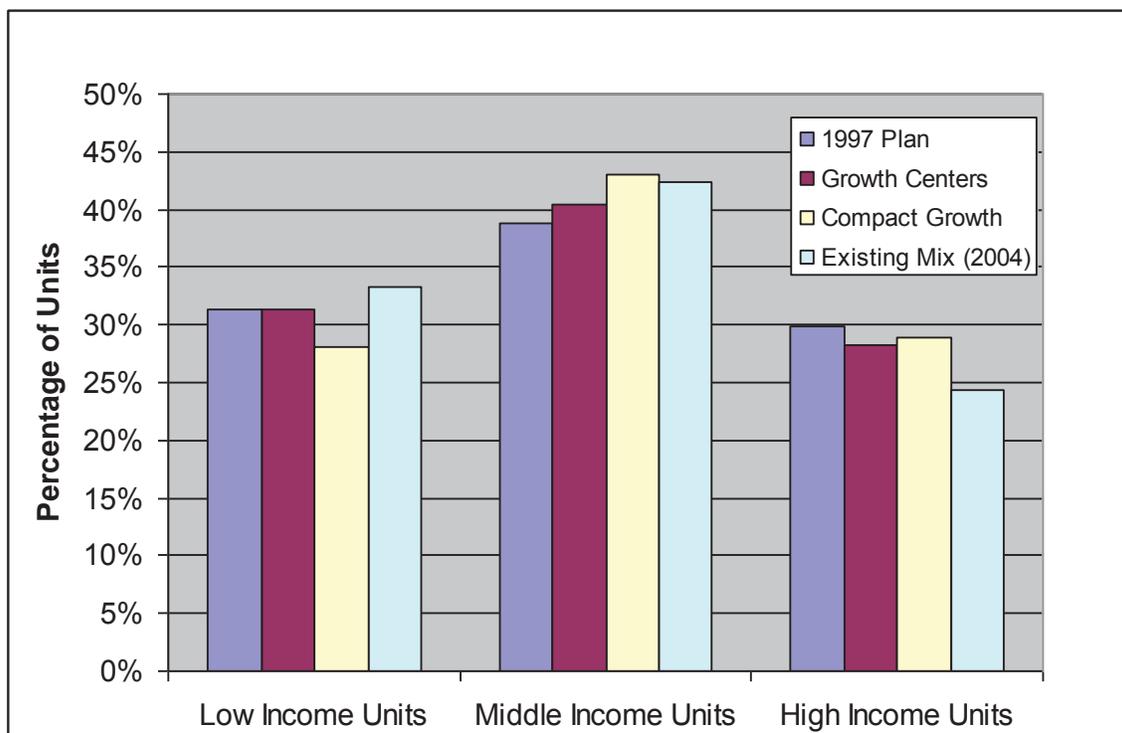
**Figure 5: Comparison of the Potential Mix of Dwelling Types by Income at Build-out by Number of Units\***



\*Note: The actual mix of incomes served for each scenario is heavily dependent upon housing policy. The potential mix is based on the assumption that higher densities increase the potential to provide affordable units due to reduced land and infrastructure costs.

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**Figure 6: Comparison of Existing and Potential Mix of Dwelling Types by Income at Build-out**



The majority of housing diversity in the region is found within the City of Durango. According to the *City of Durango/La Plata County Housing Needs Assessment* completed in 2003, the majority of housing units within the City and County are single-family detached units, with attached multi-family units being only 14% of all units in the County. Of those attached units, approximately two-thirds are within the City of Durango, meaning that the City currently fills an important role in providing housing choices within the region. While current numbers are not available, a significant portion of the regional low to moderate income housing demand is being met in Bayfield, Ignacio and northern New Mexico.

Although the *Housing Needs Assessment* indicates that the vast majority of residents in the City and County prefer single-family detached dwellings, it is very important to have housing choices for those that cannot or prefer not to live in a detached dwelling. Housing diversity allows people to live in the City as their housing needs and preferences change. For instance, some households cannot afford to purchase or rent a detached home and rely on apartment housing. Students, young householders and retirees often prefer or require housing that is less expensive and requires less maintenance, such as rental or owner-occupied apartments or townhomes.

Retired people often have smaller household sizes, reduced incomes, and can suffer impaired abilities and mobility as they age. Without housing choices, long-time residents may be forced to leave the community they have always lived in to find appropriate housing as they age. According to an *Elderly Housing Needs Analysis* prepared in 2002, 18% of the population of the City of Durango was over 62 years in 2000. In 2000, the median income for elderly households was 20% below that of the median for all households in Durango. The *Elderly Housing Needs Analysis* states that there are few housing choices for elderly people seeking affordable rental housing, and at the time of the report all income-restricted housing developments were 100%

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occupied with waiting lists. Although the overall *Housing Needs Assessment* does not indicate a pressing need for more senior housing choices immediately, it is expected that this will be a growing concern as baby boomers age and more people choose Durango as their retirement location.

Individual housing policies and trends should not be considered in isolation. Density, affordability, availability, diversity and choice, are interrelated issues that need comprehensive treatment. Durango's housing policy should be considered in light of its role as a regional provider of medical care, government services, education, culture and commerce. As such, the residents of Durango have a variety of housing needs, which each scenario would address in varying ways.

Topping the list of concerns at public workshops and in the *Housing Needs Assessment* is affordability, with the 2001 median home sales price of \$183,000 cited as a barrier to entry into the home market, which according to HUD standards would require an annual households income of \$55,000. With the cost of housing in Durango far outpacing gains in income between 1990 and 2000, housing affordability will continue to be a significant issue. There is a wide range of techniques used to address affordable housing, ranging from the least aggressive, such as a development allocation system, to the most, such as a mandatory inclusionary zoning ordinance. (A development allocation system limits the number of development permits issued and allocates permits based on a point system that awards the inclusion of affordable housing. A mandatory inclusionary zoning ordinance requires developers to set aside a specific portion of each housing development above a certain size for sale or lease to low- and moderate-income households.)

None of the scenarios are projected to accommodate as much affordable housing as currently exists in Durango, indicating that more aggressive tactics will be necessary to meet the future need for such housing. Households that need affordable housing often also rely on mobility options and nearby goods, services and employment opportunities, and locating in the County isn't always an option for those households.

**Employment**

As with dwelling units, the projected increase in employment between 2004 and 2030 is the same among the scenarios, while the build-out potential beyond 2030 varies. The projected increase of 13,289 employees within the planning area was based upon totals determined in the previously referenced Regional Transportation Study.

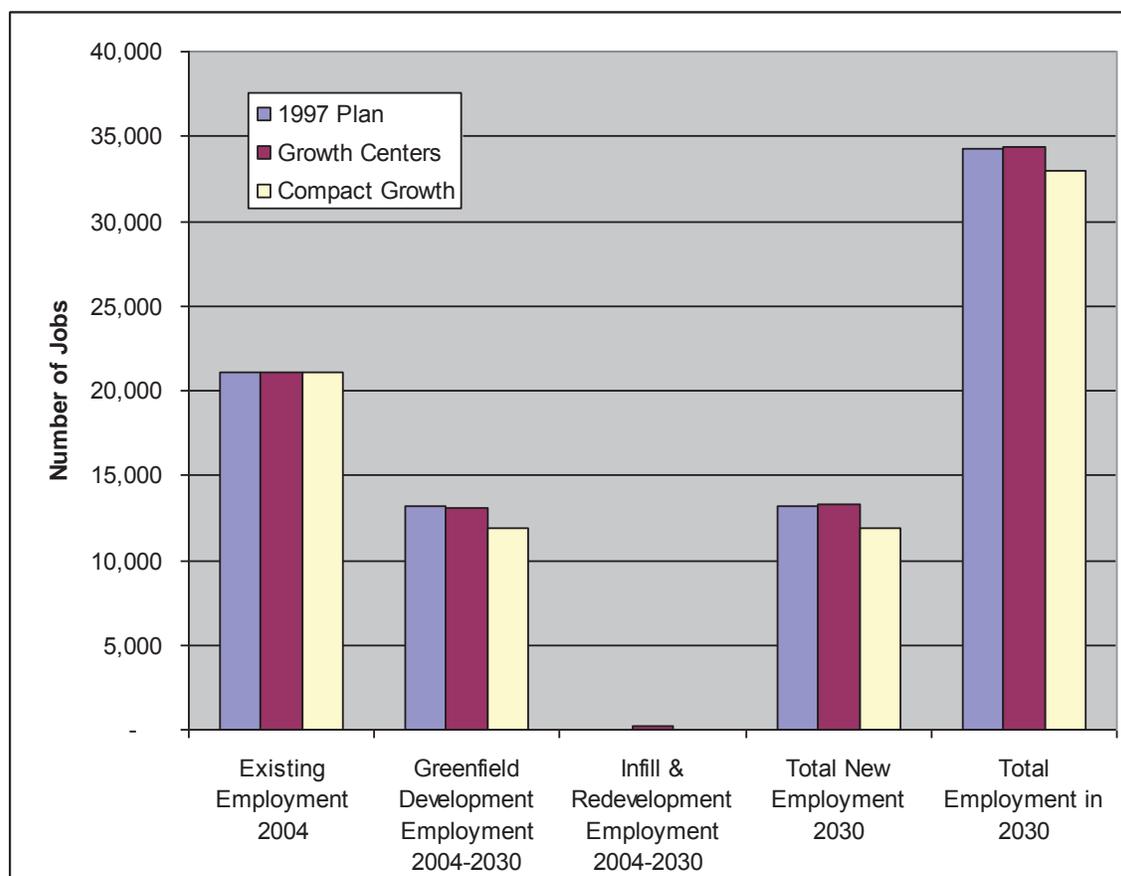
As is shown in **Table 9 and Figure 7**, the 2030 increase in employment is inclusive of jobs that are created due to development of infill and redevelopment projects as well as new construction that occurs on vacant greenfield sites. In each scenario, the number of existing jobs plus the number of total new projected jobs is equal to the total number of dwelling units in the planning area in 2030. The Growth Centers scenario relies on the greatest amount of infill and redevelopment to create jobs to meet the projected demand for employment in 2030, while the 1997 Plan Plus scenario relies minimally on infill to accommodate projected demand. The Compact Growth scenario actually loses jobs to redevelopment and infill, as some existing commercial land is redeveloped for residential uses in this scenario. As with the housing analysis, infill is a relatively insignificant issue for the provision of employment generating land uses, and greenfield development will provide nearly all future employment growth. The Growth Centers scenario is the only scenario that reaches the targeted employment projection for 2030.

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**Table 9: Employment by Scenario (2030)**

	1997 Plan	Growth Centers	Compact Growth
Existing Employment 2004	21,063	21,063	21,063
Greenfield Development Employment 2004-2030	13,166	13,112	12,155
Infill & Redevelopment Employment 2004-2030	38	178	-236
Total New Employment 2030	13,204	13,290	11,919
<b>Total Employment in 2030</b>	<b>34,267</b>	<b>34,409</b>	<b>32,982</b>

**Figure 7: Employment by Scenario (2030)**



**Table 10** and **Figure 8** show the total employment potential of the three scenarios at build-out. The Growth Centers scenario has the highest potential for increased employment, while the

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Compact Growth scenario has the least, with 30% fewer jobs, which will approach non-residential build-out in 2030. **Table 11** compares the amount of projected household growth with the amount of future employment growth. In all of the scenarios, there will be fewer jobs in comparison to households than currently exists. As some participants at public workshops have indicated that they would prefer to increase the amount of employment to housing in Durango, increasing the amount of land dedicated to commercial uses might be appropriate, particularly for the Compact Growth scenario. The availability of appropriate sites, while necessary, isn't likely to induce economic growth on its own. However, the lack of appropriate sites is likely to limit economic growth.

**Table 10: Employment by Scenario at Build-out**

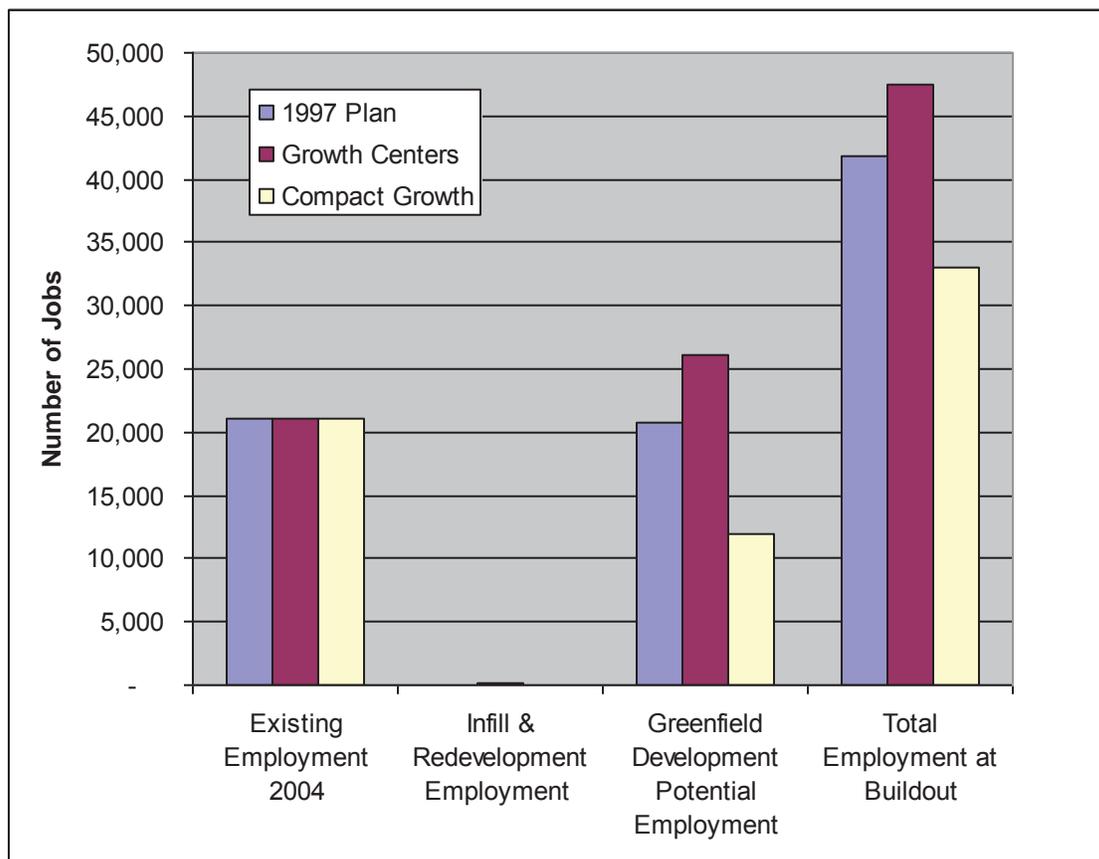
	1997 Plan Plus	Growth Centers	Compact Growth
Existing Employment 2004	21,063	21,063	21,063
Infill & Redevelopment Employment	38	178	-236
Greenfield Development Potential Employment	20,712	26,177	12,155
<b>Total Employment at Build-out</b>	<b>41,813</b>	<b>47,418</b>	<b>32,982</b>

**Table 11: Jobs/Housing Ratio**

	Households at Build-out	Employment at Build-out	Jobs/Housing Ratio
Current (2004)	8,705	21,063	2.42
1997 Plan Plus	20,127	41,813	2.08
Growth Centers	22,098	47,418	2.15
Compact Growth	17,570	32,982	1.88

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**Figure 8: Employment by Scenario at Build-out**



**The Compact Growth Scenario will approach build-out for employment opportunities by the year 2030.**

**Table 12** and **Figures 9** and **10** compare the employment mix by sector both among the scenarios, and to the mix of employment that existed in the planning area in 2004. The number of jobs and percentage mix are shown for each scenario. While the percentage mix among the scenarios is comparable to the existing mix, the total employment potential varies significantly, with the Growth Centers scenario showing the greatest potential for total number of jobs, followed by the 1997 Plan Plus.

On a percentage basis, the service sector provides just above half of all jobs across the scenarios. The service sector includes professional and personal services, which covers a wide range of income levels and working conditions. The remaining half of employment is almost evenly split between basic and retail sector jobs. Retail jobs generally offer low wages and minimal benefits. In Durango, both service and retail jobs currently serve regional needs, while basic sector jobs, such as production and mining, include exports that bring money into the local economy from a broader area. Although a generally declining portion of the national economy, basic sector jobs are important to local economies as they contribute net gains and provide

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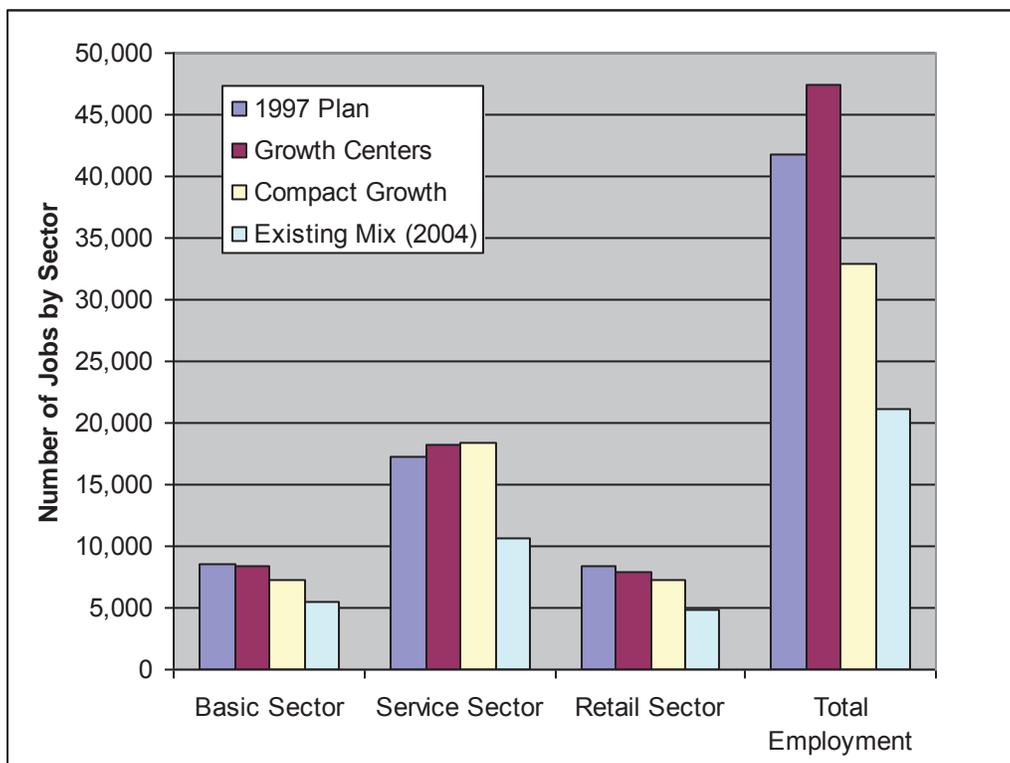
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higher quality jobs. Durango relies on tourism, related retail and other service sectors, such as education, government and health care, for the bulk of local employment. At public workshops, while there was a clear preference against expanded industrial uses that generate pollution or have other detrimental impacts, there was also some support for “clean” industrial uses that provide good jobs while not harming the environment.

**Table 12: Comparison of Employment by Sector at Build-out**

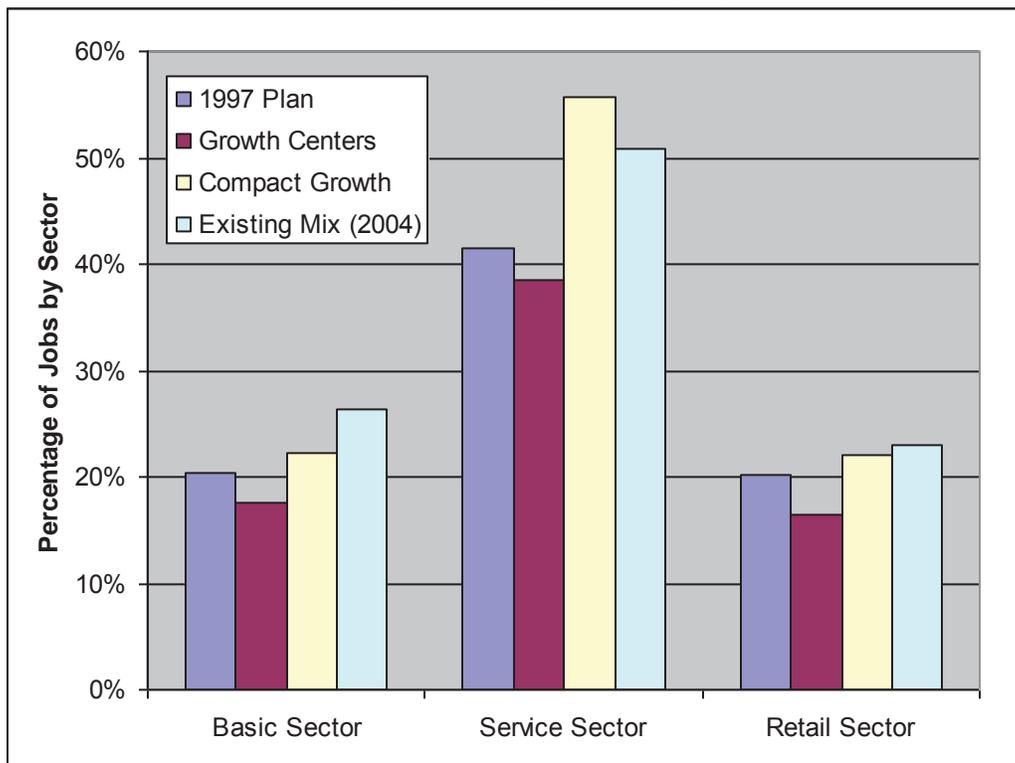
	1997 Plan Plus		Growth Centers		Compact Growth		Existing Mix (2004)	
	Jobs	Percent	Jobs	Percent	Jobs	Percent	Jobs	Percent
Basic Sector	9,710	23%	10,896	23%	7,259	22%	5,532	26%
Service Sector	22,274	53%	25,295	53%	18,392	56%	10,697	51%
Retail Sector	9,829	24%	11,171	24%	7,274	22%	4,834	23%
<b>Total Employment</b>	<b>41,813</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>47,266</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>32,925</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>21,063</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Figure 9: Comparison of Employment by Sector at Build-out by Number of Employment**



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**Figure 10: Comparison of Employment by Sector at Build-out by Percentage of Employment**



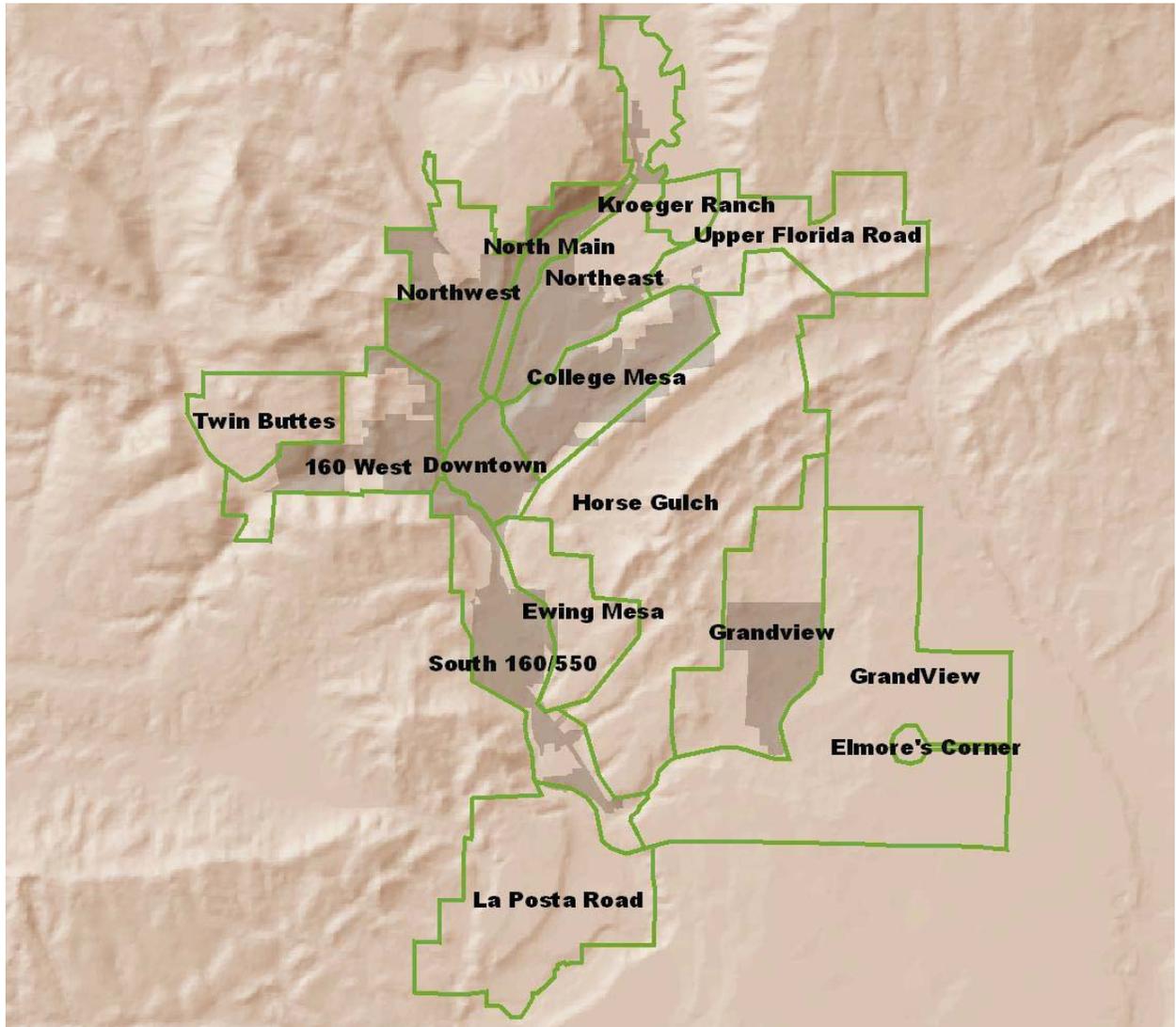
**The Growth Centers Scenario has the greatest potential for employment opportunities across all sectors.**

**Land Use by Sub-Area**

For the purposes of this analysis, the 14 sub-areas illustrated in **Figure 11** were designated to compare the areas where the most significant variations between scenarios were designated. The sub-areas include: 160 West, College Mesa, Downtown, Elmore's Corner, Ewing Mesa, Grandview, Horse Gulch, Kroeger Ranch, La Posta Road, North Main, South 160/550, Three Springs, Twin Buttes and Upper Florida Road.

**Figures 13 – 21** compare the land use mix within each sub-area by scenario. There is no discussion for sub-areas that are not significantly different among the scenarios, such as the Northwest sub-area. The Future Land Use categories are shown in the legend in **Figure 12**.

**Figure 11: Sub-Areas**

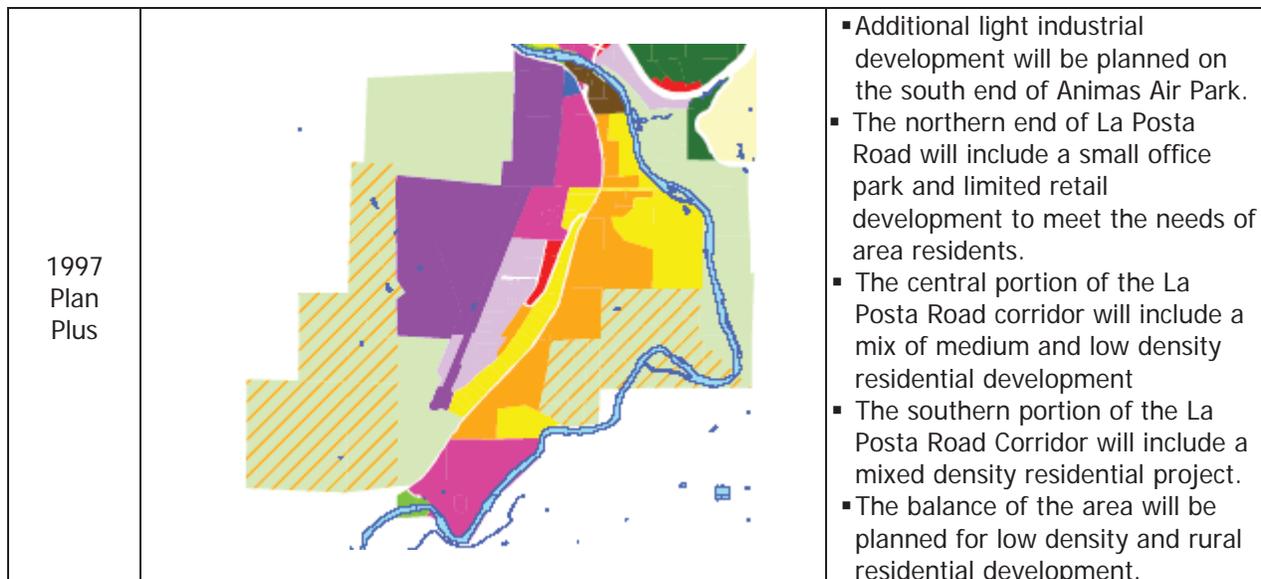


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**Figure 12: Future Land Use Category Legend**



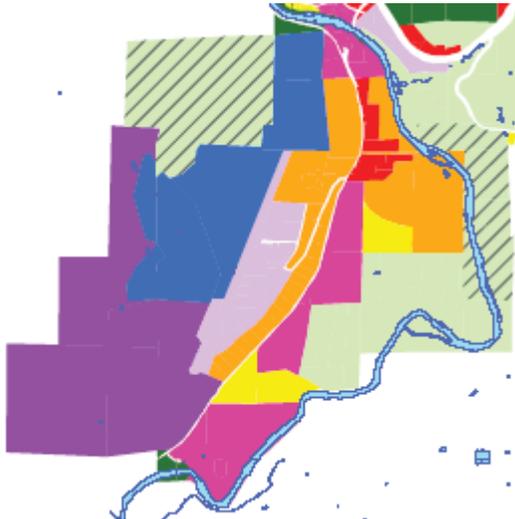
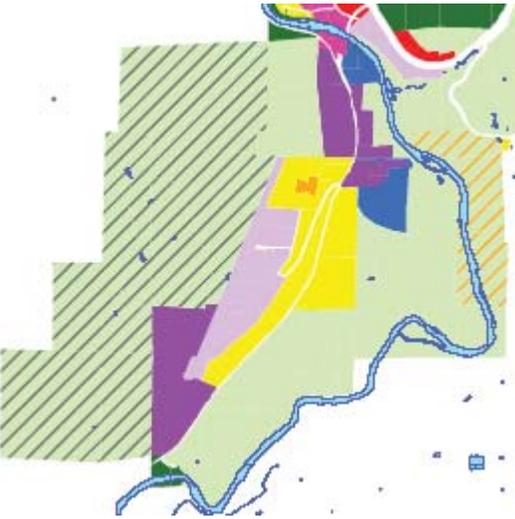
**Figure 13: La Posta Road Scenario Comparison**



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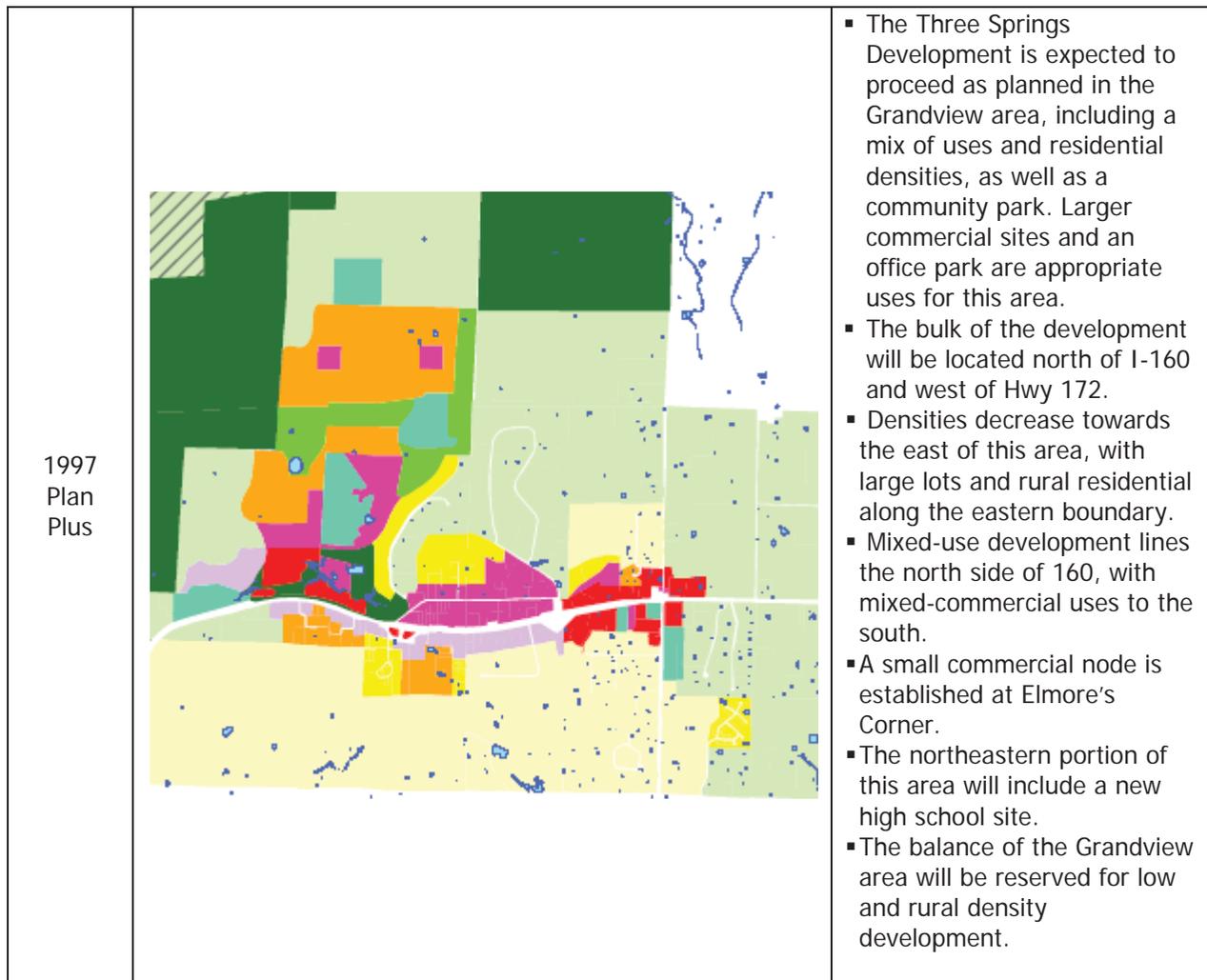
<p>Growth Centers</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Additional light industrial development will be planned on the south end of Animas Air Park.</li> <li>▪ The northern end of La Posta Road will include a community-scale retail and office park development</li> <li>▪ The central portion of the La Posta Road corridor will include 2 mixed-use centers surrounded by medium and low density residential development connected by a system of greenbelts</li> <li>▪ The southern portion of the La Posta Road Corridor will include a mixed density residential project.</li> <li>▪ The balance of the area will include clustered low density residential development with greenways and a community park.</li> </ul>
<p>Compact Growth</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Additional light industrial development will be planned on the south end of Animas Air Park.</li> <li>▪ The northern end of La Posta Road will include a mixed retail/residential commercial center.</li> <li>▪ The balance of the area will be developed as low-density neighborhoods as other areas build out.</li> </ul>

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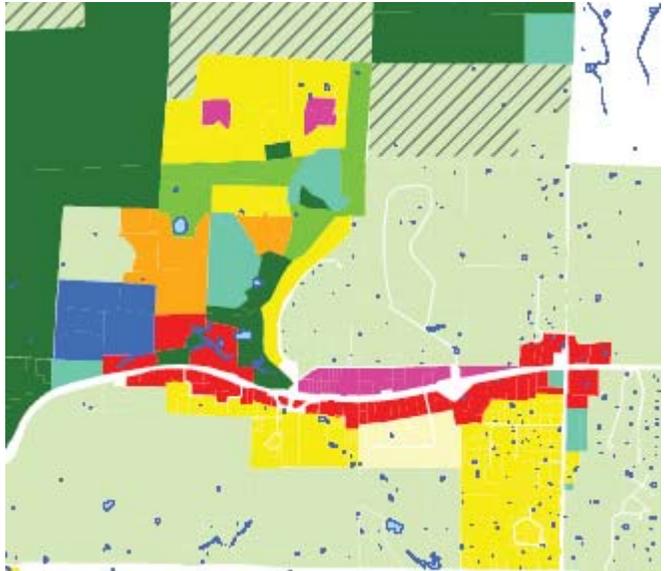
**Figure 14: Three Springs / Grandview / Elmore's Corner Scenario Comparison**



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<p>Growth Centers</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Three Springs Development is expected to proceed as planned in the Grandview area, including a mix of uses and residential densities, as well as a community park.</li> <li>▪ Larger commercial sites and an office park are appropriate uses in the Three Springs vicinity and at Elmore's Corner.</li> <li>▪ Elmore's Corner will be developed as an intensive commercial center to capture incoming trips from Bayfield and, with the exception of the cemetery, mixed use development will be appropriate on all sides of the 160/Hwy172 intersection.</li> <li>▪ The balance of the Grandview area will be reserved for low and rural density development, with lots clustered around an interconnected system of open spaces.</li> </ul>
<p>Compact Growth</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Three Springs Development is expected to proceed as planned in the Grandview area, including a mix of uses and residential densities, as well as a community park. Development should be concentrated in the Three Springs area.</li> <li>▪ Larger commercial sites and an office park are appropriate west of from the Three Springs development.</li> <li>▪ Development at Elmore's corner will be limited until Three Springs area approaches build-out.</li> <li>▪ In the remainder of the Grandview area, new development will be discouraged to retain land for future urban development.</li> </ul>

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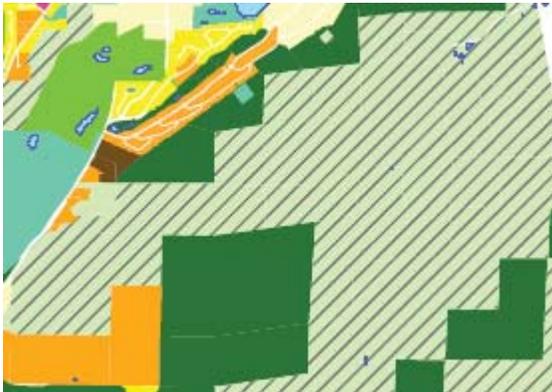
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**Figure 15: South 160/550 Scenario Comparison**

<p>1997 Plan Plus</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ This scenario includes mixed use development along the river with mixed commercial (light industrial) development on the western edge of the sub-area.</li> </ul>
<p>Growth Centers</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ This scenario includes mixed use development along the river with mixed commercial (light industrial) development on the western edge of the sub-area.</li> </ul>
<p>Compact Growth</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ This scenario includes more medium density residential along the river in lieu of mixed use.</li> </ul>

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**Figure 16: Horse Gulch Scenario Comparison**

<p>1997 Plan Plus</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Public land will be retained and the reservoir site will be protected.</li> <li>▪ Maintain a band of open space through Horse Gulch to retain access to trails and views in the area.</li> <li>▪ This scenario assumes the limitation of intensities in the Gulch to 1 dwelling per 35 acres on privately-owned property, with incentives provided to retain the existing trail network.</li> </ul>
<p>Growth Centers</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Public land will be retained and the reservoir site will be protected.</li> <li>▪ This scenario envisions the retention/purchase of undeveloped areas of Horse Gulch as open space land, with access limited to trails and the existing County Road.</li> </ul>
<p>Compact Growth</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Public land will be retained and the reservoir site will be protected.</li> <li>▪ This scenario will limit development in Horse Gulch to rural cluster development at densities of 1 dwelling per 35 acres.</li> </ul>

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**Figure 17: College Mesa Scenario Comparison**

<p>1997 Plan Plus</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The most significant difference in this scenario is increased low-density residential in the northeastern portion of the sub-area.</li> </ul>
<p>Growth Centers</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ This scenario includes large lot residential as opposed to low-density in the northeastern portion of the sub-area.</li> </ul>
<p>Compact Growth</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ This scenario includes large lot residential as opposed to low-density in the northeastern portion of the sub-area.</li> </ul>

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**Figure 18: Downtown / North Main Scenario Comparison**

<p>1997 Plan Plus</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Downtown will remain the center of civic and governmental activities, and actions will reinforce downtown as the institutional core of the region. Parking lots on Second Street will be redeveloped as structural parking is developed.</li> <li>▪ Some infill and redevelopment along Camino del Rio will occur in accordance with the recently adopted Downtown Vision and Strategic Plan.</li> </ul>
<p>Growth Centers</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Downtown will remain the center of civic and governmental activities, and actions will reinforce downtown as the institutional core of the region. Parking lots on Second Street will be redeveloped as structural parking is developed.</li> <li>▪ Structured parking should be provided to support infill development and redevelopment within existing commercial areas.</li> <li>▪ This Scenario seeks to establish a green corridor along the river.</li> </ul>

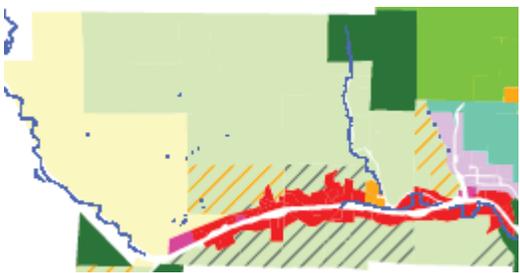
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<p>Compact Growth</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Downtown will remain the center of civic and governmental activities, and actions will reinforce downtown as the institutional core of the region. Parking lots on Second Street will be redeveloped as structural parking is developed.</li> <li>▪ Medium to high density residential development will be encouraged along the river.</li> </ul>
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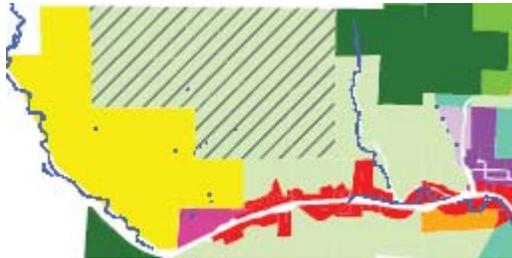
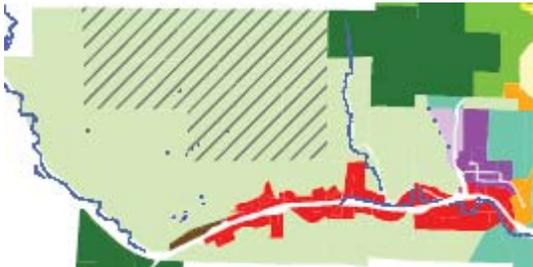
**Figure 19: Hwy 160 West / Twin Buttes Scenario Comparison**

<p>1997 Plan Plus</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The area west of Downtown on Hwy. 160 will continue the current mix of uses and residential densities.</li> <li>▪ Mixed commercial uses will continue to develop alongside the residential development in the area.</li> <li>▪ Uses will transition from high to low intensity on a continuum moving westward, with rural housing located on the western edge of the planning area.</li> <li>▪ Twin Buttes will be limited to low density residential uses, with higher densities on lower benches and low to rural densities on top.</li> </ul>
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<p>Growth Centers</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue development of a mix of residential densities and commercial uses, including both medium and high density development.</li> <li>▪ Generally, development will be more intense than in Scenario A, particularly in the western portions of this corridor.</li> <li>▪ Lower stretches of the Twin Buttes property should be developed at relatively high densities, with most of the upper reaches retained for open space or 35 acre parcels.</li> </ul>
<p>Compact Growth</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ This scenario is consistent with the Growth Centers scenario with the exception that development of upper areas of the Twin Buttes that are visible from Downtown will be clustered.</li> </ul>

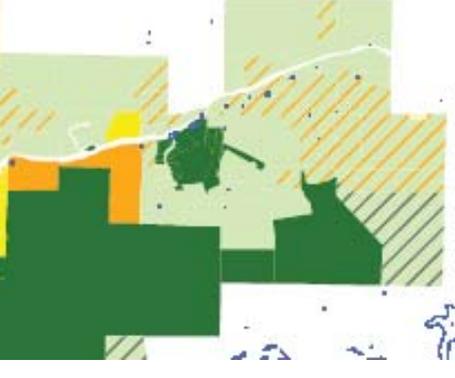
**Figure 20: Upper Florida Road Scenario Comparison**

<p>1997 Plan Plus</p>		<p>East of Timberline to Edgemont Ranch, this area will be limited to rural or rural residential density uses.</p>
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<p>Growth Centers</p>		<p>This area includes more low and medium density development.</p>
<p>Compact Growth</p>		<p>East of Timberline to Edgemont Ranch, this area will be limited to rural or low density uses, with more low and medium density development.</p>

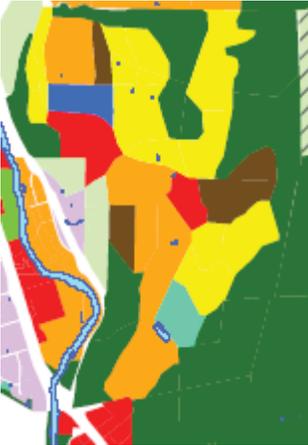
**Figure 21: Ewing Mesa / Oak Ridge Scenario Comparison**

<p>1997 Plan Plus</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A large proportion of projected residential and commercial growth should be accommodated on Ewing Mesa.</li> <li>▪ A mix of residential densities and non-residential uses should be accommodated to create a semi-autonomous collection of neighborhoods with a high rate of internal trip capture.</li> <li>▪ Some of the employment, retail and service needs will be served by development in 160/550 corridor and Downtown areas.</li> </ul>
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<p>Growth Centers</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A large proportion of projected residential and commercial growth should be accommodated on Ewing Mesa.</li> <li>▪ This scenario envisions the creation of medium to high density neighborhoods surrounding mixed use centers on Ewing Mesa.</li> <li>▪ Development will be clustered around an interconnected system of greenways that define neighborhood edges.</li> <li>▪ Development will not be allowed to sprawl out from the edges of Ewing Mesa, but will be clearly contained within the neighborhood boundaries.</li> </ul>
<p>Compact Growth</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A large proportion of projected residential and commercial growth should be accommodated on Ewing Mesa.</li> <li>▪ The primary distinction between this scenario and Scenario A is an increased emphasis on higher density development served by commercial centers. This will increase the amount of open space retained within the development.</li> <li>▪ This scenario accommodates greater amounts of non-neighborhood based commercial space and office park development.</li> </ul>

**Water/Wastewater Assessment**

While the utility plans and improvements should be based on the build-out populations of the scenarios, the 2030 population projections should be used for the scheduling and prioritization of utility improvements and extensions. The City will provide water and sewer utilities to the areas proposed for development. The following observations have been offered by the City's Public Works Director in regard to provision of water and wastewater services in Durango under the three scenarios:

- The difference in population among the scenarios in "Old Durango," north of the High Bridge, is only 4,000 people. Therefore, the populations served by the Durango WWTP can be handled at the present site with minor additions.
- The population served by the South Durango Sanitation District (SDSD) varies from 7,000 to 17,000 among the scenarios. This is a major difference for sewer and wastewater treatment planning. The limits on SDSD expansion are only financial limits, not physical limits of the treatment plant site. Planned expansion by the SDSD allows for growth to serve up to 12,000 people. Expansion to serve 16,000 to 17,000, as called for in the Growth Centers and 1997

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Plan Plus Plan should occur after the City and SDSD have mutually agreed on financing a capital program or takeover by the City.

- The water supply for Durango is currently secured for a population of 40,000 people. This exceeds the expected service area population of 34,000 forecast for all three scenarios in the year 2030.
- At Build-Out
  - The water distribution system planning based on the 1997 Plan Plus is adequate to serve any of the three scenarios, since all of the difference is in an area south and east. Similar to the traffic analysis, minor adjustments on line size and order of construction may occur with minimal fiscal impact. If any scenarios were to favor expansion to the West, North or Northeast, the distribution system planning would change considerably.
  - Water supplies to serve the Compact Growth build-out scenario of 39,000 are secure and committed.
  - The City would have to rely on its water rights senior to the ALP water rights in order to serve Growth Centers estimated build-out population of 49,000. Serving an additional 9,000 people will require a new pumping plant on the Animas River and a new raw water supply system or a revised contract for all water. However, these improvements can be added after 2020 when populations are closer to 30,000. The Growth Centers scenario, although it has the greatest potential population, may have reduced per capita water needs as a result of the planned higher densities. A specific needs assessment should be conducted if this scenario is chosen.
  - The water treatment plants to serve growth located below Ridges Basin plant capacity can be expanded if the Growth Centers option is selected. Construction of plant in 2014 is planned and incremental expansion is a reasonable approach so long as the growth is occurring on the South and East as shown in all three scenarios.
- The costs for water and sewer expansions should be assessed to those that create the need. Water system capital costs through the next 15 years are estimated at \$41,000,000. Of that, \$31,000,000 is due to growth. For the build out population of 49,000 people, the total capital needs in addition to the \$31,000,000 total capital needs amount to:

Water Supply	\$ 8,600,000
Water Treatment	\$ 8,000,000
Water Distribution	<u>\$42,000,000</u>
	\$58,000,000

However, much of the \$42,000,000 in distribution costs is directly paid by development.

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**Conclusion: The City's water and sewer systems are adequate or can be made adequate to serve projected development under each of the scenarios without significant impact on utility rates. The heavy reliance of the Growth Centers and 1997 Plan Plus scenarios on the South Durango Sanitation District and the District's relatively high impact fees could affect market pressures and the timing of development within that district's service area.**

**Transportation**

The street system is projected to become increasingly congested under each of the growth scenarios through 2030. Most of the 160/550 corridor will operate at level of service (LOS) E or F under each of the growth scenarios. Despite this bleak prognosis for Durango's key arterials under any growth scenario, **Table 13** and the Maps included in **Appendix B** show a few distinctions between the scenarios' traffic impacts. Each of the scenarios was tested on a county-wide road network that includes improvements planned through the year 2030 in accordance with *Trip 2030, La Plata County and City of Durango Regional Transportation Study*. **Appendix B** also shows the relative lack of traffic congestion shown for the modeled street system in 2004.

There are dramatic differences between 2030 traffic under each of the scenarios and the existing condition. While the total numbers of trips doubles the amount of congestion related delay will increase ten-fold. Differences in the key indicators illustrated in **Table 13** for the year 2030 are largely insignificant, with the exception of Growth Centers' higher average vehicle hours of congestion delay. This is largely attributable to the extensive development located along La Posta Road, and the associated failure of that roadway to accommodate traffic demand. This deficiency is illustrated in **Appendix B**.

Table 13 shows more significant differences between the scenarios at build-out. Because Compact Growth shifts significant non-residential growth outside the planning area, three of the travel factors show significant differences – total vehicle hours of travel and vehicle hours of congestion both increase, and the percent of trips that are made within a TAZ decreases. A higher percentage of intrazonal trips (e.g., trips taken within a TAZ) indicates shorter trips and a greater potential for walking or biking. Growth Centers retains a higher number of hours of congestion related delay than the 1997 Plan Plus scenario, but most of this difference is attributable to the inadequacy of La Posta Road to carry projected traffic.

Model limitations do not account for potential changes in the future mode split, which is the proportion of trips taken by car, van pool, bus, bike or foot. Given the high levels of congestion, and the likelihood of escalating energy costs, there will be an increased incentive to use modes other than single occupancy vehicles. The extensive mixed use component of the Growth Centers scenario offers the greatest support for different mode choices, provided that a balanced mix of uses is established within centers, and the centers are designed to support bike, pedestrian and transit trips. Given historical mode choice data, even a dramatic increase in the use of alternative modes is not likely to have a significant impact on traffic congestion.

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**Table 13: County-Wide Transportation Performance Factors**

Travel Factor	2004	2030		1997 Plan Plus	Build-Out	Compact Growth
		1997 Plan Plus	Growth Centers			
<b>Total Auto Trips</b>	157,807	392,284	394,619	533,493	536,181	537,075
<b>Total Vehicle Miles Traveled</b>	184,340	3.56M	3.58M	4.95M	4.98M	5.05M
<b>Vehicle Hours Traveled</b>	41,743	82,679	83,785	123,542	125,521	129,101
<b>Vehicle Hours of Congestion Delay</b>	302	3,129	3,538	12,307	13,515	15,042
<b>% Within TAZ</b>	13.87%	18.91%	19.06%	31.18%	31.50%	15.30%

The maps show some interesting distinctions between the scenarios. Both the 1997 Plan Plus and the Growth Centers scenarios result in traffic loads that exceed the capacity of the northern reaches of La Posta Road. Growth Centers and Compact Growth result in the failure of some stretches of Florida Road and Goeglein Gulch Road. Compact Growth also overloads the western end of 32<sup>nd</sup> Street. While little can be done to eliminate congestion along Hwy 160/550, alternative road improvements could reduce excessive congestion along other roadways.

**Observations:**

- Traffic congestion will be much worse in 2030 than it is today.
- All scenarios result in significant new congestion along the 160/550 and North Main corridors by the year 2030.
- Traffic modeling does not show a significant difference between scenarios for most travel factors.
- The Growth Centers scenario results in more hours of congested travel and more vehicle hours of congestion delay, which can be attributed to the overloading of La Posta Road in this scenario.
- The Compact Growth and Growth Centers scenarios result in some additional congestion along Florida Road due to proposed medium density residential development just east of the existing city limits.
- At build-out, Compact Growth shifts traffic outside the City, which increases congestion, congestion delays and average trip lengths
- Growth Centers has the potential to provide greater travel mode choices to future residents, but this will provide an alternative to driving through congestion rather than relieving congestion.

**Fire Response**

The Durango Fire Authority has identified potential station locations that will likely be necessary to provide an acceptable emergency response time as development occurs in the planning area. These locations and estimated timing are listed in **Table 14** and illustrated in **Figure 22**. A volunteer station is one with no permanent staff, a resident station has one firefighter living at

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the station and a career station is one with permanent, professional staff. The BODO Station is slated to become a volunteer station in 2009. However, since it is located adjacent to the Fire Authority headquarters, it will have a much faster response than other volunteer stations.

According to the Durango Fire Authority, new fire stations cost an estimated \$2.41 million to construct and furnish with necessary equipment. This estimate is based on a new station cost of \$1 million, estimated at \$225 per square foot in construction costs and \$45,000 for land. Equipment for each station costs an additional \$1.41 million. This figure does not include the high costs of operating the station.

**Table 14: Potential Fire Station Locations**

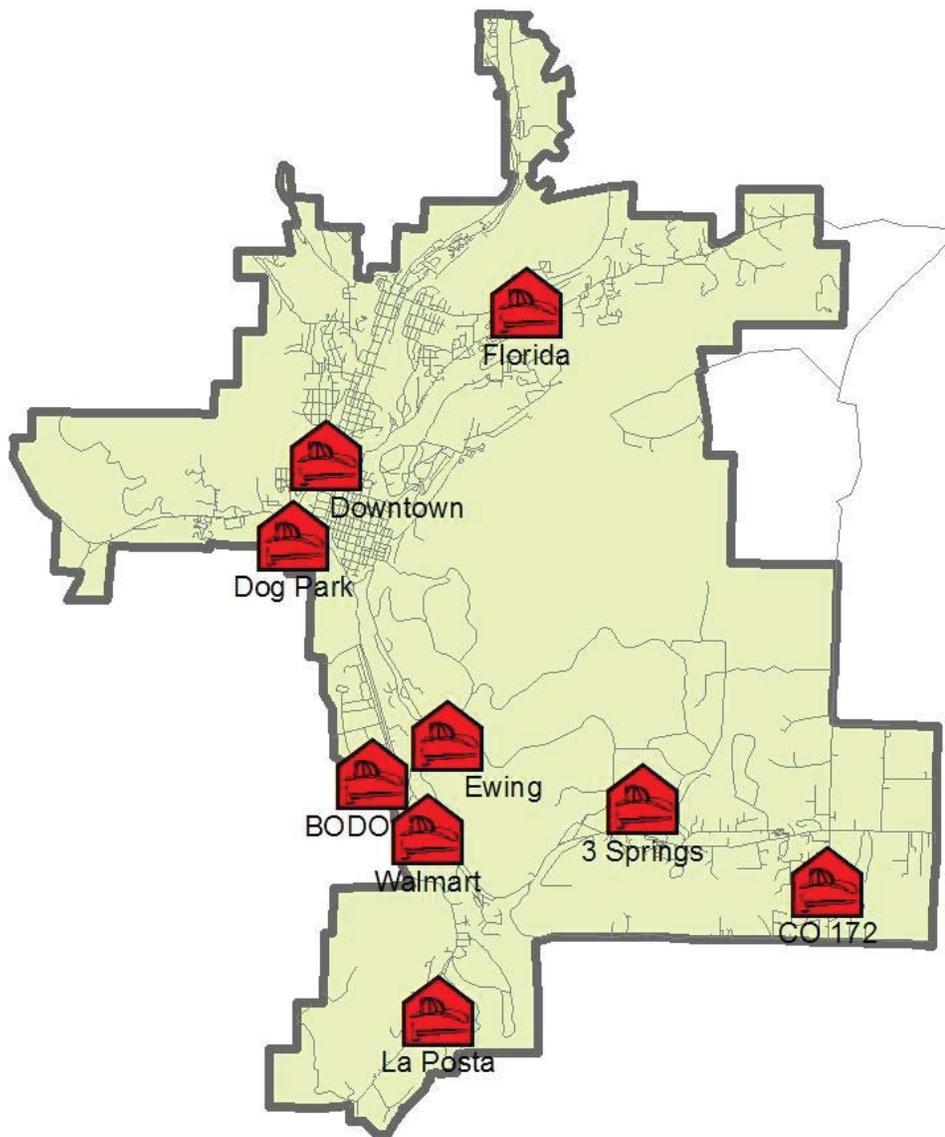
<b>Location</b>	<b>Type / Timing</b>
CO 172	Volunteer
Florida Road	Resident, Career in 2008
Downtown	Career, Close in 2012
Dog Park	Career, Open in 2012
BODO	Career, Volunteer in 2009
Ewing Mesa**	Career, Open before 2030
Wal-Mart*	Career, Open before 2030
La Posta Road**	Career, Open before 2030
Three Springs	Career, Open in 2009

\*Alternative 1

\*\*Alternative 2

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**Figure 22: Potential Fire Station Locations (2030)**



Two alternatives were modeled using a Routed Street Network and an edited street map. This means that fire response is based on equipment driving down existing roads at speeds that are adjusted to reflect existing street conditions. Street speeds are adjusted downward to account for traffic and stops. For 50 mile per hour (mph) streets, average travel speed was estimated at 32 mph, for 35 mph streets 25 mph was used and for 20 mph streets 10 mph was used. Given the high levels of congestion projected for the future, average speeds are likely to be lower during peak travel hours. These delays will shrink the service response area boundaries shown in Figures 23 and 26, meaning that the stations will be able to respond to a smaller area with an acceptable response time because of traffic delays.

Response times also were adjusted to account for the different station types; volunteer stations have slower response times than career stations. The turn-out time, from the time a call is received to when the truck leaves the station, was added to the road routing time. The turn-out

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time for a resident station is calculated as 4:17 minutes, for a volunteer station is 5:23 minutes and for a career station is one minute. It is estimated that 82% of calls are for EMS, with 52% of calls resulting in a trip to the hospital. It is important to note that the “out-of-service” time will increase dramatically as the new hospital is occupied.

A street connection was added to the model between Three Springs and Ewing Mesa to account for future conditions. Currently undeveloped areas have poor response times due to a lack of existing road network. This will change with new development, but it depends upon the design of the street network, and the amount of connections, through streets and access to highways. Development with a grid street pattern will have the greatest effect on reducing response times. Since the model does not include smaller local streets that might be built in the future, it is possible that some areas could have a better response time than indicated below. This is especially likely in the northeast portion of Ewing Mesa, south of Hwy 160 and west of La Posta Road. As is evident on the maps, the model includes a buffer from roads to reflect the length of hoses.

Only new, greenfield development projected to occur through 2030 was included for analysis in the tables and charts. The first alternative included the addition of stations at: Florida Road, the Dog Park, BODO, Three Springs, CO 172 and Wal-Mart. Alternative 1<sup>3</sup> is illustrated in **Table 14** and **Figures 23, 24 and 25**. The areas in green signify an average four minutes response time, the areas in yellow have an average eight minutes response time and the areas in red have an average response time beyond eight minutes.

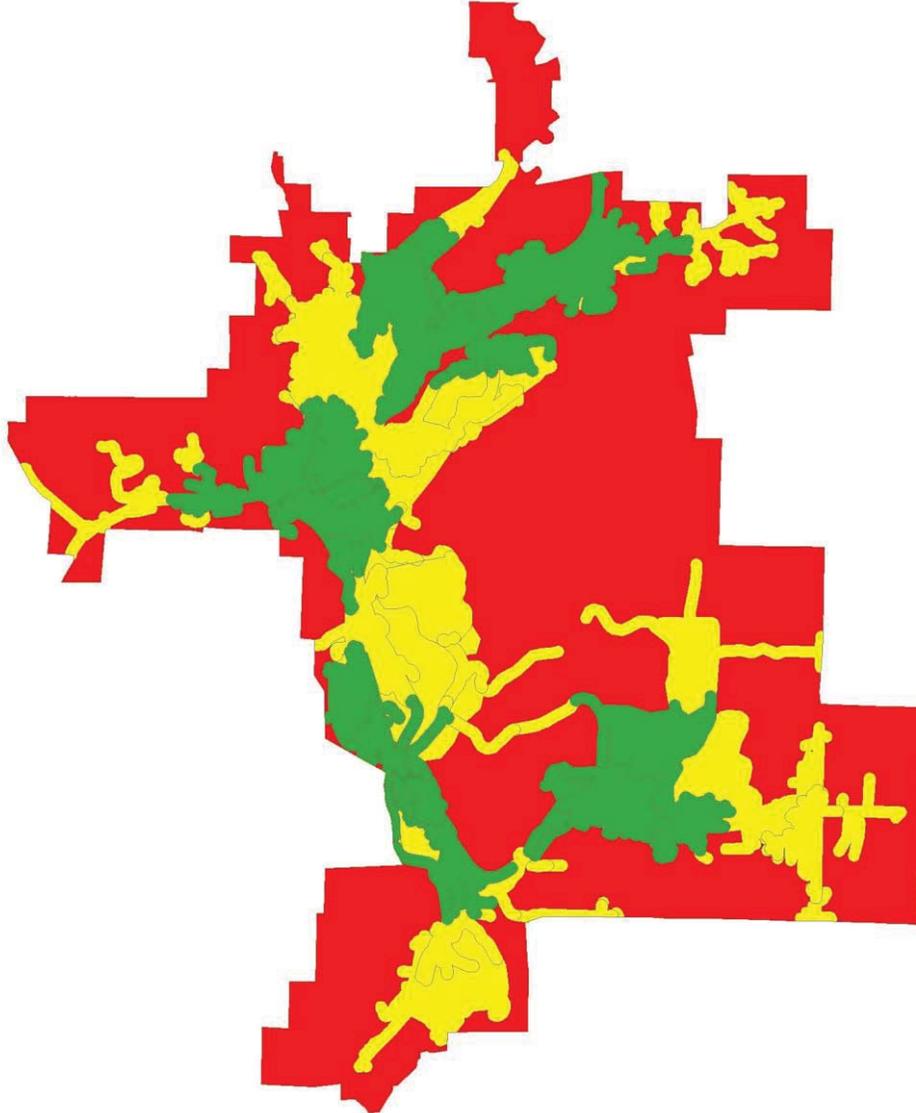
The second alternative includes stations at Ewing Mesa and La Posta Road, and does not include the station at Wal-Mart. Alternative 2 is illustrated in **Table 15** and **Figures 26, 27 and 28**.

Across all three scenarios, Alternative 2 provides a quicker response time for the most homes due to better coverage of the growth areas at La Posta Road and Ewing Mesa. Under both fire station alternatives, homes in the 1997 Plan Plus receive the quickest response time. There are both a greater number of units and a greater percentage of all units served in less than four minutes in the 1997 Plan Plus. In the second fire station alternative, 66% of all units are served in less than 4 minutes in 1997 Plan Plus, and 63% of all units are served in under 4 minutes in the Growth Centers scenario. The Compact Growth scenario has the highest percentage and number of units outside of an eight minute response time under both fire station alternatives. The Preferred Scenario falls between Growth Centers and Compact Growth in terms of numbers of homes within an 8 minute response time and overall response performance.

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<sup>3</sup> This alternative is no longer feasible as the site is no longer available. The Preferred Scenario was not evaluated for alternative 1.

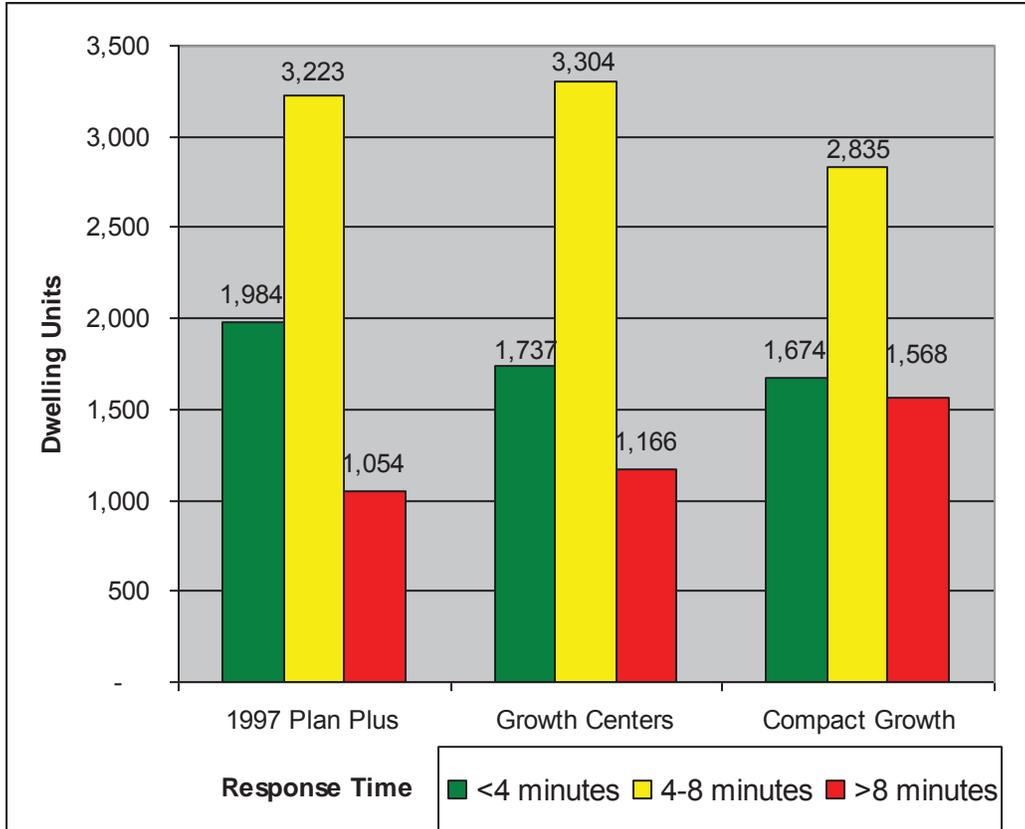
**Figure 23: Fire Alternative 1 – Includes Wal-Mart Station**



**Table 15: Alternative 1**

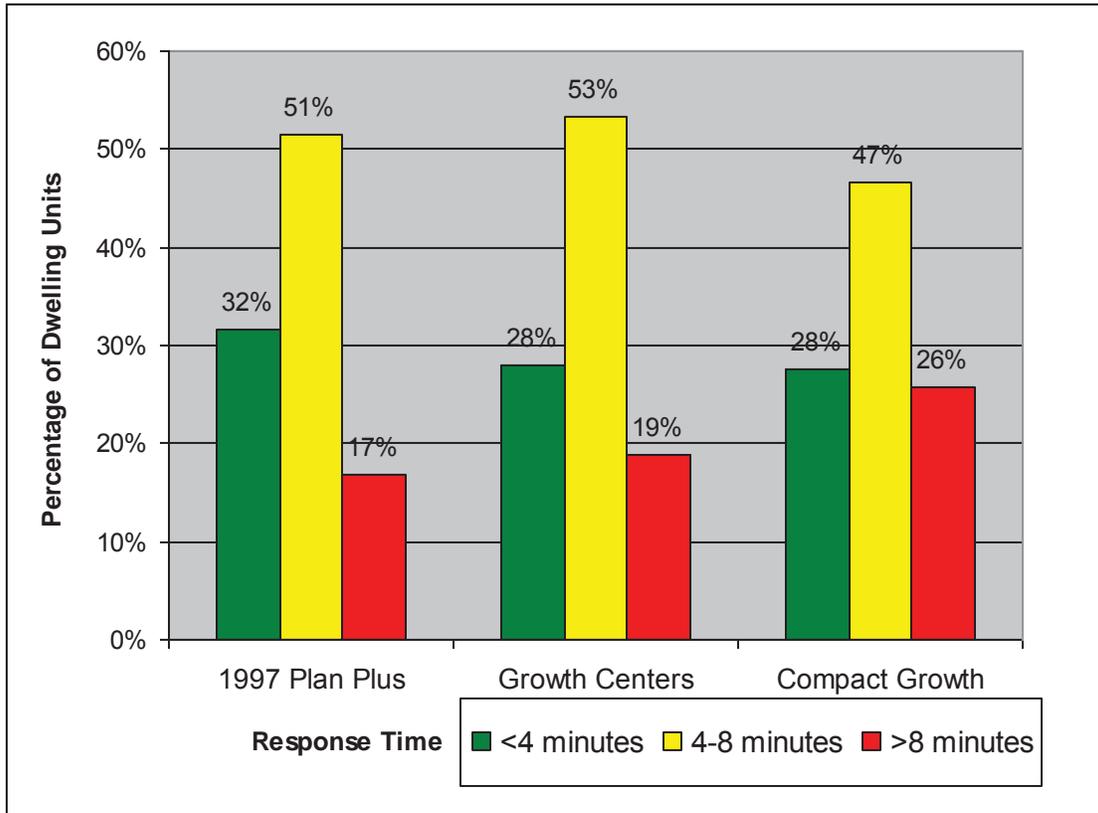
	1997 Plan Plus		Growth Centers		Compact Growth	
	Dwelling Units	Percent	Dwelling Units	Percent	Dwelling Units	Percent
<4 minutes	1,984	32%	1,737	28%	1,674	28%
4-8 minutes	3,223	51%	3,304	53%	2,835	47%
>8 minutes	1,054	17%	1,166	19%	1,568	26%
Total	6,261	100%	6,207	100%	6,077	100%

**Figure 24: Alternative 1 - Dwelling Units by Response Time**



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**Figure 25: Alternative 1 – Percentage of Dwelling Units by Response Time**

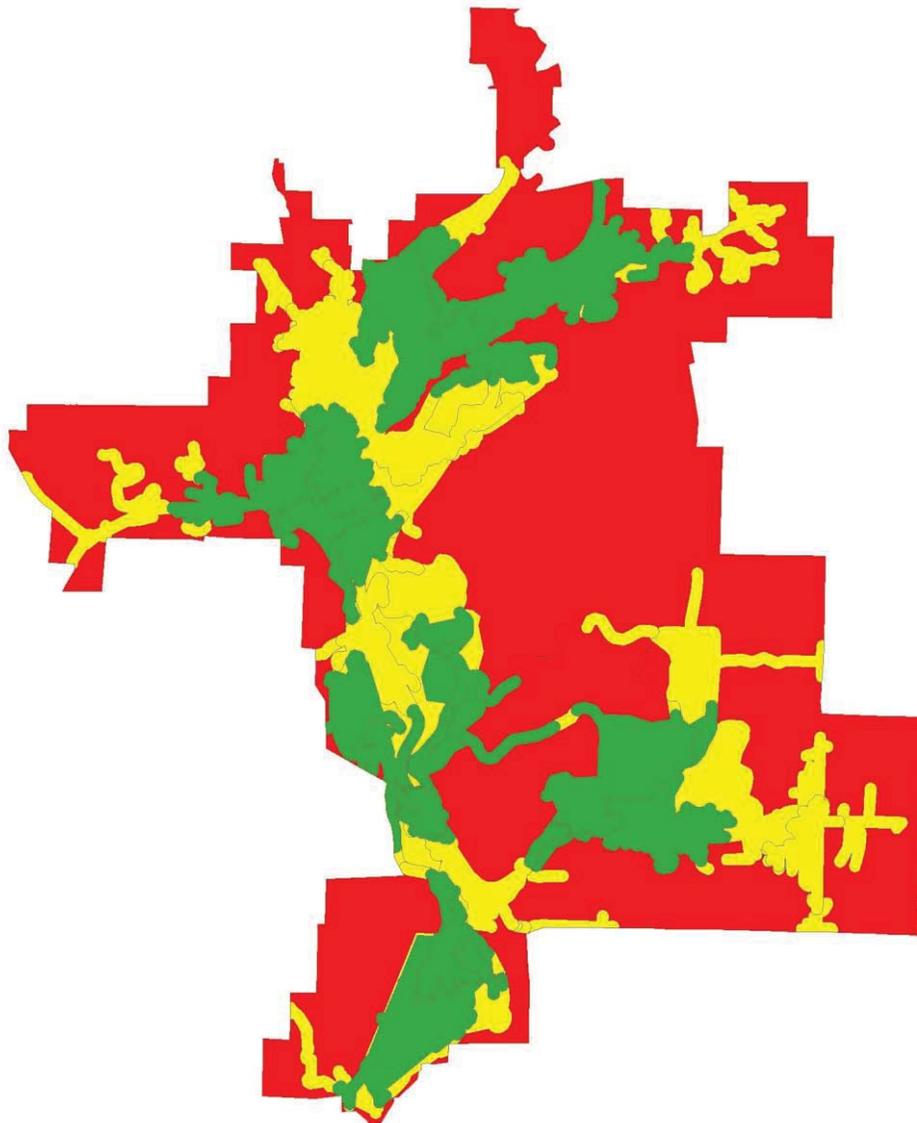


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**Figure 26: Fire Alternative 2 – Includes Ewing Mesa & La Posta Road Stations**

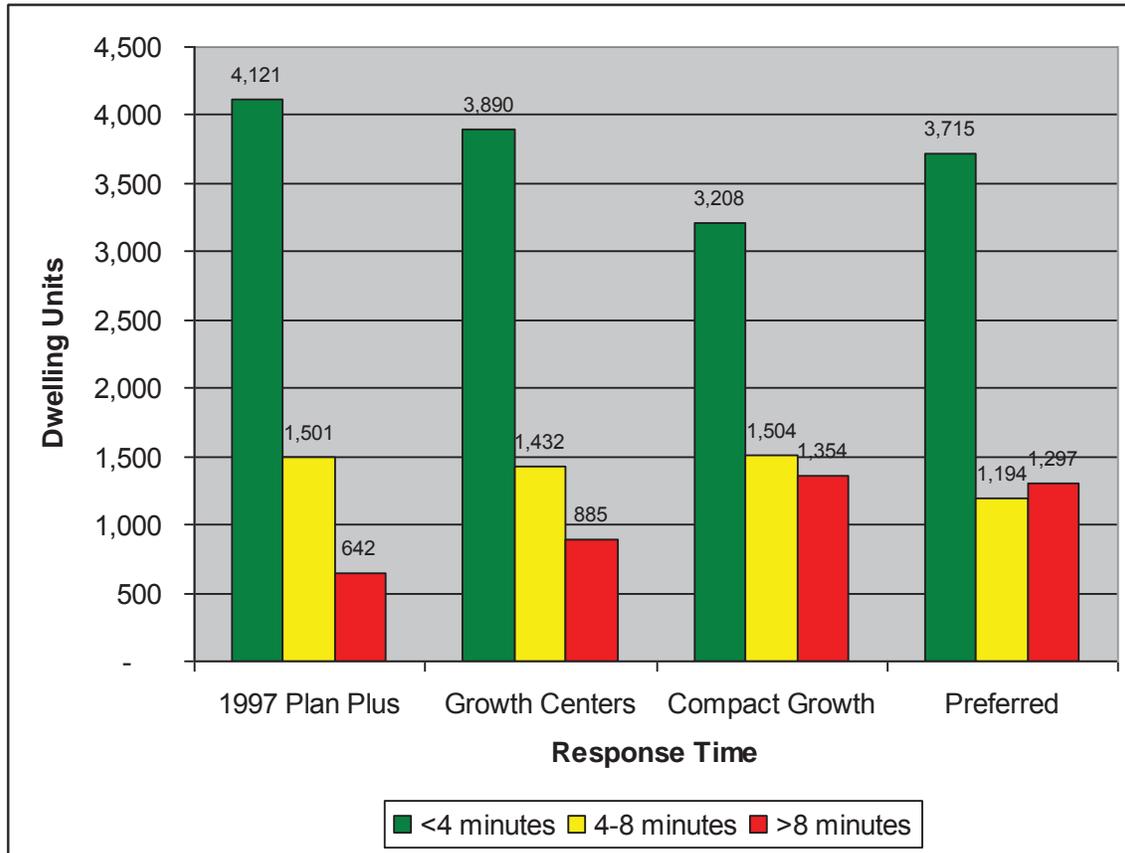


**Table 16: Alternative 2**

	1997 Plan Plus		Growth Centers		Compact Growth		Preferred	
	Dwelling		Dwelling		Dwelling		Dwelling	
	Units	Percent	Units	Percent	Units	Percent	Units	Percent
<4 minutes	4,121	66%	3,890	63%	3,208	53%	3,715	60%
4-8 minutes	1,501	24%	1,432	23%	1,504	25%	1,194	19%
>8 minutes	642	10%	885	14%	1,354	22%	1,297	21%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,264</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>6,207</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>6,066</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>6,206</b>	<b>100%</b>

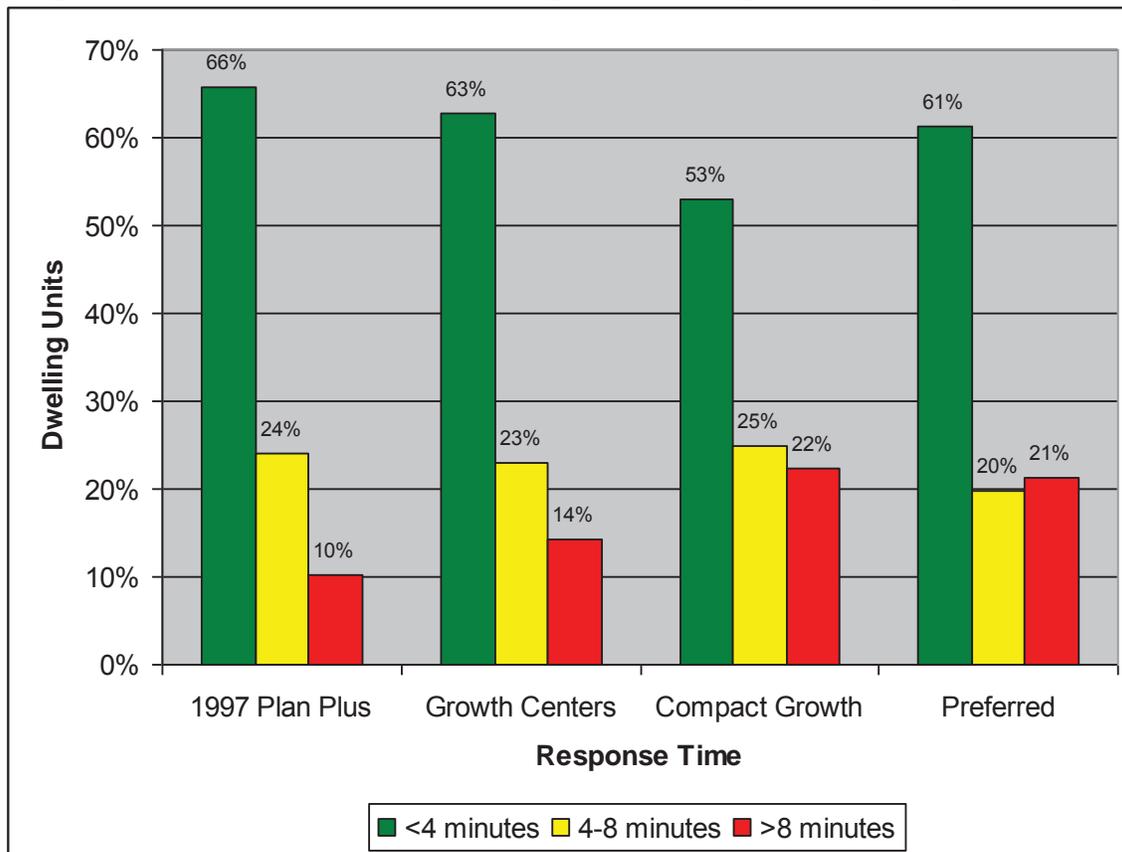
**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

**Figure 27: Alternative 2 - Dwelling Units by Response Time**



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**Figure 28: Alternative 2 – Percentage of Dwelling Units by Response Time**



**The 1997 Plan Plus Scenario has the greatest potential to serve the most homes within a four minute response time under either fire station alternative. Compact Growth results in the greatest number of dwellings located beyond 8-minute response time under either fire station alternative.**

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**SCENARIO CONSISTENCY WITH DURANGO 1997 PLAN GOALS**

The following paragraphs evaluate the relative consistency of the scenarios with the City of Durango's adopted comprehensive plan goals. Due to the general nature of goals, the discussion sometimes focuses on the mitigation required to ensure consistency with the plan's goals. Note that several potential goals have been added for consideration based on input from Citizens Review Committee members and participants in the community workshops. For each goal, the most consistent scenarios are highlighted in the table following the goal

**Natural Environment Goals**

**Goal 1: To maintain or improve the quality of Durango's natural resources.**

Resource	1997 Plan Plus	Growth Centers	Compact Growth
<b>Air Quality</b>	See transportation analysis for more details		
<b>Water Quality</b>	Stormwater quality mitigation could be used to similar effect for each scenario. Each scenario is subject to		
	Less intensive riverfront development slightly reduces non-point pollution loading		Proximity of higher density development to riverbank increases non-point contamination risks over other scenarios
<b>Open Space/Habitat Encroachment</b>	Results in the most extensive	Mandatory conservation subdivision offers the greatest <b>long-term</b> potential for habitat conservation	This scenario offers the greatest <b>short-term</b> potential for habitat conservation if the rural lands are protected from premature development, but encroaches into Horse Gulch
<b>Energy Conservation</b>	Energy consumption from buildings will depend on City sustainability policies.		
		Offers greatest <b>long-term</b> opportunity for energy efficient travel mode choices.	

**Goal 2: To maintain Durango's views of natural hillsides and mountains.**

1997 Plan Plus	Growth Centers	Compact Growth
Hillside and ridgeline protection strategies could be employed with any of the scenarios		
Has the most intensive development of the top of the Twin Buttes area, which is clearly visible from much of the City	Conservation subdivisions offer opportunities for retention of most meaningful open space	Has least encroachment into the La Posta Road and Twin Buttes hillsides and ridges

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**Goal 3: To protect sensitive floodplains, hillsides, wetlands and wildlife habitat from inappropriate development.**

1997 Plan Plus	Growth Centers	Compact Growth
See comments for goals 1&2		
Conservation subdivisions in Growth Centers offer better opportunity protection of natural features. This tool can be applied in any of the scenarios.		

**Community Development Goals**

**Goal 4: To maintain and enhance the diverse, small town character of Durango.**

1997 Plan Plus	Growth Centers	Compact Growth
Each scenario focuses significant attention to the retention of a vital downtown.		
	Combination of mixed use centers and conservation subdivisions will result in most vibrant neighborhood centers, but will develop the largest urban area.	Will urbanize the least area, but will not necessarily result in the most active civic spaces. Downtown residential development along the river and limited urban growth area will provide the greatest support for commercial vitality downtown and along North Main

**Goal 5: To retain or enhance the aesthetic value of Durango's natural and built environments.<sup>4</sup>**

1997 Plan Plus	Growth Centers	Compact Growth
Aesthetic outcomes are primarily dependent upon design standards that may be applied to each scenario. Conservation subdivisions are likely to be most successful in retaining open feel to rural development areas		

**Goal 6: To encourage public awareness and participation in community activities.**

1997 Plan Plus	Growth Centers	Compact Growth
No difference between scenarios, though participation may be facilitated through increased contact resulting from mixed use centers.		

<sup>4</sup> See the Parks and Open Space Element for additional information.

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*Growth Management Goals*

**Goal 7: To establish land use patterns that are coordinated with and make the most efficient use of community facilities, while allowing for equitable funding strategies.**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>1997 Plan Plus</b>	<b>Growth Centers</b>	<b>Compact Growth</b>
<b>Funding Equity</b>	Funding equity is not dependent upon the future land use pattern		
<b>Utility Efficiency</b>	Less efficient than Compact Growth, but more limited service area than growth centers	Most extensive water and sewer service area mandates effective management of the timing of utility extensions	Most efficient use of existing infrastructure and least new infrastructure required
<b>Fire Protection Efficiency</b>	See fire service analysis		
<b>Other Service Efficiency (e.g., police, recreation, transit, and various administrative services)</b>	Require similar distribution of public service provision		Least extensive service requirements due to exclusion of large portions of Grandview and La Posta Road from urban services

Potential Goal: To coordinate extra-territorial development with La Plata County to facilitate long-term growth, provide equity for property owners and protect existing property owners from bearing the costs of growth.

<b>Factor</b>	<b>1997 Plan Plus</b>	<b>Growth Centers</b>	<b>Compact Growth</b>
<b>Intergovernmental Coordination</b>	Benefits of intergovernmental coordination similar under each scenario		
		Extension of water service provides the greatest incentive for supporting coordinated growth management program	Limited water extension creates the greatest pressure on County to act independently of long term city growth plans in Grandview and La Posta Road areas
<b>Long-term Growth Options</b>	Build-out potential falls between other scenarios for population and employment	Has the greatest build-out potential for population and employment	Has the lowest build-out potential for population and employment
<b>Private Property Equity</b>	Most balanced alternative between growth demand and service area	Will require the greatest funding commitment to provide necessary services, which is likely to be partially shifted to existing tax/rate-payers	Will require most aggressive growth management to prevent premature development of non-urban areas

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Potential Goal: To foster compatible redevelopment, revitalization and/or changes of use in designated infill areas.

1997 Plan Plus	Growth Centers	Compact Growth
Rising energy prices are likely to increase the desirability of infill development		
Likely to promote more infill than Growth Centers, but less than Compact Growth	Ample greenfields planned for urban development are more likely to compete with infill development	Limited growth area is more likely to increase pressures for infill and redevelopment

**Housing Goals & Objectives**

**Goal 8: To encourage the development of a variety of housing types for community residents.**

Resource	1997 Plan Plus	Growth Centers	Compact Growth
<b>Housing Diversity</b>	Has the most balanced mix of housing		Has greatest mix of moderately priced housing types, but limited supply

**Goal 9: To promote the provision of adequate affordable housing opportunities for community residents.**

1997 Plan Plus	Growth Centers	Compact Growth
Housing affordability is contingent on public/private efforts – with local success being more dependent upon public policy than land use mix		
Good mix of unit types, but supply is more constrained than for Growth Centers	Provides the greatest opportunity for higher density housing, which will facilitate provision of affordable housing.	Limited supplies are likely to result in higher housing prices

**Economy/Tourism Goals & Objectives**

**Goal 10: To promote a healthy, sustainable, balanced economy that capitalizes on the community's natural, recreational, cultural and human resources.**

1997 Plan Plus	Growth Centers	Compact Growth
Provides ample opportunity for future job growth in all sectors	Provides the greatest employment opportunities and the largest potential region from which to generate sales tax revenues	Limited employment potential is likely to reach built-out by the end of the planning period. Small retail area will lead to greater sales tax leakage than for other scenarios

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*Cultural/Historic Resources Goals & Objectives*

**Goal 11: To preserve and enhance historic and cultural resources that symbolize the community's identity and uniqueness.**

1997 Plan Plus	Growth Centers	Compact Growth
Historic and cultural resource retention is more dependent upon policies than upon the future land use patterns. Compact Growth patterns will increase pressure for reinvestment in historic properties, but also may increase pressure for replacement of historic structures. Growth Centers may divert capital away from historic structures in favor of less expensive greenfield development.		

*Transportation Goals*

**Goal 12: To maintain a transportation system that safely and efficiently meets the needs of residents, businesses and visitors.**

1997 Plan Plus	Growth Centers	Compact Growth
There are no significant differences among the scenarios, with the exception of vehicle hours of congestion delay. See transportation analysis for more details.		
	Growth Centers has approximately 28% more vehicle hours of congestion delay than that other scenarios due to the failure of La Posta Road associated with increased development in that area.	

**Goal 13: To provide employees, residents and visitors with realistic opportunities to use alternative modes of transportation.**

1997 Plan Plus	Growth Centers	Compact Growth
See transportation analysis for more details		
Least supportive scenario for alternative modes of transportation	Mixed use centers support transit, bike and pedestrian use within and transit between centers	Smaller urban area supports alternative modes of transportation and results in smallest transit service area, but large rural population will be more auto-dependent than for other scenarios

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*Utility Goal*

**Goal 14: To balance the demand for expanding urban development with the efficient provision of facilities and services.**

1997 Plan Plus	Growth Centers	Compact Growth
	Highest cost utility to for city utilities, but least likelihood of the development of competing systems	Lowest cost utility to for city utilities, but greatest likelihood of the development of competing systems

*Parks, Recreation and Open Space<sup>5</sup> Goals*

**Goal 15: To maintain a system of open space throughout the planning area that serves as a visual and recreational amenity, and provides sufficient habitat to sustain healthy wildlife populations.**

**Goal 16: To develop and maintain an interconnected system of parks, trails and other recreational facilities.**

**Goal 17: To develop and maintain a trail system throughout the planning area that serves as a recreational amenity.**

1997 Plan Plus	Growth Centers	Compact Growth
Open space preservation, recreation facility development and trail system expansion will be dependent upon ongoing funding to secure and manage lands currently under private ownership		
Protects Horse Gulch, but allows significant development on Twin Buttes	Retains lowest intensity on targeted open space areas and secures connections through conservation subdivisions in rural areas	Some high density development encroaches upon Horse Gulch

*Public Services Goal*

**Goal 18: To foster cost-effective services and facilities that enhance the lives of community residents.**

1997 Plan Plus	Growth Centers	Compact Growth
Require similar distribution of public service provision		Least extensive service requirements due to exclusion of large portions of Grandview and La Posta Road from urban services

<sup>5</sup> While trails provide important recreational opportunities, they also serve a vital transportation function. For this reason, Chapter 8 includes most of the City's trails policies.

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**INITIAL DIRECTION ON SCENARIOS**

The attached slideshow illustrates the results of the keypad survey conducted at workshops conducted on April 10 and 11. These initial opinions were provided without the benefit of detailed evaluation of the scenario impacts. The following bullet points summarize the opinions of participants at two community workshops, a La Posta Road citizens workshop, and a joint workshop of the Citizens Review Committee, Planning Commission and City Council:

- The City should manage projected growth whether or not it is successful in reaching a coordinated growth management strategy with La Plata County. Note that some participants felt that the City should try to capture a higher percentage of projected growth if the City and the County do not coordinate their growth management strategies
- The city should retain existing densities in stable neighborhoods, but also should consider encouraging accessory units and redevelopment at the edges of commercial areas.
- Participants preferred a scenario that increased densities somewhat on **Kroeger Ranch** if development is clustered near the East Animas Drive.
- Some additional medium density residential development should be allowed near the western end of **Upper Florida Road** (just east of the existing city limits).
- In the **Three Springs** sub-area, all scenarios generally supported the existing area plan. Polling results and individual comments suggested a preference for a scenario that would be consistent with the adopted plan.
- On the balance of **Grandview**, citizens were divided on whether to extend urban growth to the area east to Elmore’s Corner or to support a more compact growth pattern that would attempt to contain urban development, with two-fifths of participants supporting the former and one-third supporting the latter.
- On **Ewing Mesa**, participants expressed a preference for some higher density development, supported green spaces without a golf course, and containing the development on the mesa (outside of Horse Gulch).
- Along the eastern side of **La Posta Road**, participants expressed the preference for the compact scenario that confined urban development to the northern end of the area. The Growth Centers scenario received support from nearly one-third of the workshop participants.
- For **Animas Air Park**, participants overwhelmingly supported the Growth Centers scenario that maximized the area of industrial and business park development west of the air strip.
- For the **Twin Buttes** sub-area, participants were evenly divided in their support for scenarios B and C, both of which limited development in the upper reaches of the property. The primary distinction between these scenarios was the increased residential densities allowed on the western side of this sub-area under alternative B.
- Along **North Main**, two-fifths of the participants supported the existing plan, which provides for mixed uses along the northern end of the corridor. Nearly one-third of participants expressed a preference for a scenario that would allow significant amounts of high density development along Animas View Drive.
- Overall, participants preferred the Growth Centers (40.0%) to the Compact Scenario (34.3%)
- Factors affecting participants’ choices included residential densities, employment opportunities, open space preservation and the proportion of mixed use development. When responses were correlated to determine how these factors affected the selection of a preferred scenario participants cited the following positive and negative factors:

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- Scenario A:
  - Positive: amount and location of open space should be increased
  - Negative: employment opportunities (unclear intent)
- Scenario B:
  - Positive: amounts of mixed use and employment opportunities
  - Negative: amount of employment uses and open space should be increased, as should residential densities
- Scenario C:
  - Positive: residential densities and amount of open space retained,
  - Negative: lack of mixed use, commercial, industrial and open space lands.

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**ALTERNATIVE FUTURES**

While we rely on past trends and reasonable expectations to project growth and change within the City, predicting the future is an inexact science at best. In the absence of a crystal ball, it is foolish not to consider alternate futures for the City. While only a few possible alternatives are discussed here, they remind us that a Plan must be flexible enough to accommodate changing needs and opportunities, while firm enough to maintain the standards and vision of the City. The following alternatives are referred to as “wild cards,” as the realization of any of these situations could drastically change the way that the City grows and develops, and would create a new paradigm for planning.

**Wild Card #1 – Rising Energy Costs**

Rising energy costs have led the headlines in recent years, and the impacts on personal, corporate and public budgeting and wealth cannot be discounted in planning. Although transportation and heating costs are often the first two problems associated with rising fuel costs, the effects are eventually felt throughout the economy, with higher costs and inflation impacting all aspects of production and shipping of goods and services. Rising construction costs and inflation can depress growth and change consumer preferences. Rising fuel costs could dramatically undercut tourism, one of the pillars of the local economy. What if gasoline were to rise to \$5 or \$10 per gallon? While there are not many short-term solutions to the problems this will cause, there are many ways that the City can respond in the long-run that will ease this burden on the community.

- One of the first ways that rising costs will impact the Durango community is in transportation and shipping costs. As most goods are shipped into Durango via truck, rising trucking costs will be passed onto consumers as part of a rising cost of goods, impacting local retailers and reducing discretionary spending.
- As operating private automobiles becomes cost prohibitive, it is likely that people will want to live closer to their jobs, and to have more mobility options, including transit, car/van pooling, park and ride, walking and biking.
- It is important to avoid development typologies that would preclude transit options as they become more necessary in the future. Transit is neither cost effective nor convenient to use in low-density neighborhoods. Generally, residential areas must be at a density of 8 or more units per acre to make transit a viable option.
- An additional way to encourage transportation options is to mix uses, so that people have the opportunity to live, work and shop in the same neighborhood, removing the need to travel long distance for employment options and daily necessities.
- As costs to heat and cool homes increase, consumers might prefer smaller, more efficient homes that take advantage of passive solar other alternative heating/cooling systems.
- Tourism is very important to the City of Durango and the surrounding areas. If discretionary spending were to decrease drastically across the nation due to high energy costs, the tourism and hospitality industries would experience a great contraction, leading to layoffs and job loss in the service and retail sectors.

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**Wild Card #2 – “Aspen-ization” of Durango**

Aspen, Colorado is well recognized as a place that is unaffordable, by any definition, for the “regular” people who live and work there. As a high-priced resort town with an overwhelming number of wealthy, second-home owners, people who actually work in Aspen are priced out of the in-town real estate market. Those workers often live in the surrounding communities, and must commute to work at the hotels, shops, restaurants and resorts.

As Durango shares many of the characteristics that make Aspen such a desirable locale, such as a scenic location, a ski resort, a healthy downtown and high quality dining and cultural activities, many Durango residents have voiced the concern throughout the planning process that Durango could become “Aspen-ized.” This is interpreted as the fear that housing will become even more unaffordable for middle income residents, that second-homeowners will increase as a proportion of homeowners in the community, that downtown will become host to exclusive national chains as opposed to local shops, and that the overall character and values of the community will change in a negative way. The strong recent growth and growth projections presented as part of this planning process have helped to fuel this fear, as many long-term residents see Durango moving away from its small town roots and more towards a role as a regional employment and service center.

It is important to note that there are varying views in the community on how Durango's growth will impact the “Aspen-ization” of the City. In public workshops, some participants decried the growth in the area and want to slow growth in an effort to remain a small town, while others want to allow growth to relieve the pressure driving home prices up. It is possible in either a low growth or high growth setting to see Durango become more like Aspen in terms of character. If this were to occur, there would be several ways the City could respond.

- The City would need to become more aggressive in affordable housing policies to allow service workers to live near their jobs in the City, to maintain the employee base in the area and protect existing residents.
- Even with affordable housing policies, a great amount of the population would likely be pushed further from the center of Durango to the growth fringes, necessitating expansion of urban facilities and services into the County. Taxes and rates would likely increase to pay for increased and expanded services in formerly rural areas.
- Surrounding towns, such as Bayfield and Ignacio would likely grow as fewer workers could afford to live in Durango. This would increase traffic along highway corridors throughout the region, possibly necessitating increased transit options among the region's communities.
- An influx of wealthy second homeowners would change demands for services within the City. Additionally, the different consumer preferences of wealthy residents and visitors will change the existing mix of businesses, especially in the downtown area. Second homeowners, who reside only part of the year in Durango, could bring an influx of money into the area that could help expand services for year-round residents. Conversely, seasonal occupancy would amplify seasonal peaks and lulls in traffic, utility demands and retail/service business. More importantly, seasonal occupancy would change neighborhood and community dynamics.
- Additional resorts will locate near Durango, bringing increased service employment opportunities. Resorts and other tourist-based industries might assert political influence to keep other industries out of Durango, such as base sector jobs, in order to maintain the scenic nature of the City and its desirability as a tourist location.

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**Wild Card #3 – Rural Development of Ewing Mesa**

In all three of the defined scenarios, Ewing Mesa is expected to develop with a mix of uses at urban densities, accommodating much of the projected growth over the next 25 years. If market conditions, the high costs of infrastructure, or some other factor were to preclude development of the Mesa at urban densities, a great deal of the projected growth would have to locate elsewhere, leap-frogging to outlying areas where infrastructure and services would have to be expanded in a less efficient and more costly way.

- If Ewing Mesa is not developed at urban densities, the City would need to define alternate locations that are appropriate for growth, to prevent even more fragmentation of activity centers and urban development in the community. Greater intensities would be needed along La Posta Road or in Grandview to accommodate projected growth. These and other areas would be removed further from the City and the existing employment and service centers, thus increasing the need for new development to contain a mix of uses and have a high internal capture rate of trips to avoid excessive traffic generation.
- To prevent leap-frog development, which would occur if Ewing Mesa develops at 35-acre parcels, which are not subject to development regulations, the City could a) coordinate with the property owner to address infrastructure challenges that impede urban development, or b) purchase the Mesa to facilitate urban development. Either of these approaches would require a funding source, public-private development agreements and other fiscal, regulatory and development expertise.

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**Table 17: Summary Scenario Comparison**

Land Use / Average Density	1997 Plan Plus		Growth Centers		Compact Growth		Existing*	
	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent
Rural (35 Acre Minimum)	2,346	10%	4,636	19%	4,972	21%		
Rural Estates (10 Acres Minimum)	1,514	6%	349	1%	462	2%		
Rural Residential (1 DU/3 Acres)	4,244	18%	4,015	17%	5,294	22%		
Residential - Large Lot (1 DU/Acre)	2,615	11%	742	3%	729	3%		
Residential - Low Density (3 DU/Acre)	1,613	7%	2,261	9%	2,161	9%		
Residential – Medium Density (8 DU/Acre)	1,164	5%	1,429	6%	1,263	5%		
Residential - High Density (16 DU/Acre)	98	0%	115	0%	158	1%		
Commercial	649	3%	879	4%	822	3%		
Industrial	381	2%	596	2%	242	1%		
Mixed Use (9 DU/Acre)	925	4%	1,183	5%	208	1%		
Mixed Commercial / Industrial	466	2%	378	2%	369	2%		
Office/Business Park	84	0%	653	3%	203	1%		
Institutional / Public	891	4%	853	4%	853	4%		
Parks & Recreation	1,158	5%	771	3%	750	3%		
Conservation / Open Space	5,972	25%	5,289	22%	5,665	23%		
Reservoir	28	0%	N/A	-	N/A	-		
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,150</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>24,150</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>24,150</b>	<b>100%</b>		
Housing & Population	Units	Percent	Units	Percent	Units	Percent	Units	Percent
Low Income Units	6,300	241%	6,926	933%	4,936	677%	2,894	33%
Middle Income Units	7,802	298%	8,927	1203%	7,558	1037%	3,685	42%
High Income Units	6,024	230%	6,247	842%	5,077	696%	2,126	24%
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>20,127</b>	<b>770%</b>	<b>22,098</b>	<b>2978%</b>	<b>17,570</b>	<b>2410%</b>	<b>8,705</b>	<b>100%</b>
Total Population (2.23 persons/household)	44,883		48,991		39,605		18,960	

\*Existing Land Use is detailed in Table 3.

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**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

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<b>Employment</b>	<b>Jobs</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Jobs</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Jobs</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Jobs</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Basic Sector	8,481	20%	8,310	18%	7,316	22%	5,532	26%
Service Sector	17,331	41%	18,256	38%	18,392	56%	10,697	51%
Retail Sector	8,455	20%	7,844	17%	7,274	22%	4,834	23%
Total Employment	41,813	82%	47,418	73%	32,982	100%	21,063	100%
Jobs/Housing Ratio	2.08		2.16		1.9		2.42	
<b>Transportation Impacts</b>								
	<b>2030</b>			<b>Build-Out</b>				
	<b>1997 Plan Plus</b>	<b>Growth Centers</b>	<b>Compact Growth</b>	<b>1997 Plan Plus</b>	<b>Growth Centers</b>	<b>Compact Growth</b>		
Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)	3,047,090	3,051,681	3,090,194	4,177,090	4,200,845	4,308,348		
Vehicle Hours Traveled (VHT)	58,671	58,537	59,159	87,879	89,628	94,210		
Vehicle Hours of Congestion Delay	3,071	2,673	2,785	12,047	13,265	14,592		
Congested VMT	383,297	434,074	409,629	1,294,309	1,244,781	1,127,131		
Percent VMT Congested	12.60%	14.20%	13.30%	31.00%	29.60%	26.20%		
Percent Lane Miles Congested	3.00%	3.60%	3.10%	10.10%	9.30%	9.50%		
Total Trips	280,333	280,949	281,862	381,884	383,811	384,369		

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

**IMPLEMENTATION IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

The three scenarios offer distinct approaches to development of key greenfield (undeveloped) properties in the Planning Area. As previously discussed, these scenarios have distinct implications for development capacity, and, in the case of the La Posta Road area, traffic congestion. Each scenario also has distinct implementation implications – strategies that will need to be pursued to ensure that the scenario is consistent with the City's goals.

**South Durango Sanitation District.** For each scenario, the South Durango Sanitation District's policies and capacities generate considerable uncertainty. The District's ability and willingness to expand, combined with the historically high costs for connectivity, could reduce development pressures within the District, increase development pressures outside the District, and create pressure for development of alternative wastewater systems outside the City and the District. Each of these events would reduce the viability of the City's future land use plan, particularly under the Growth Centers and 1997 Plan Plus scenarios. To minimize this risk, the City could pursue some combination of the following strategies:

- Seek to take over the South Durango Sanitation District – note that purchase of the district would likely force the City to increase rates and fees throughout its service area, or to establish a two tier rate and fee structure.
- Coordinate with the South Durango Sanitation District to help fund needed improvements – this arrangement may be less costly than purchase of the District, but would likely increase City liabilities.
- Coordinate with La Plata County to ensure that no new sewer service is provided that would compete with the City or South Durango Sanitation District; that densities are limited outside planned service areas to preclude the need for additional sewer service; and that densities within planned sewer service are sufficiently high to ensure sewer service feasibility.

**Coordinated Growth Management.** As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the City's extra-territorial growth management strategy is contingent on coordination with La Plata County. The City and the County have a long history of coordinating on developments that abut the City. However, the further the property is located from the City and its utility services, the more political capital it requires for the County to manage growth. The Compact Growth scenario, by virtue of its limited boundaries could promote sprawl at its edges, unless the County enacted stringent growth management measures. This sprawl could preclude or severely limit future growth of the City and result in the loss of future tax base. Under the other two scenarios, City plans to extend facilities would reduce pressure for premature development at the fringes of the Planning Area. However, as discussed in the next section, some City/County coordination would be required to ensure that development decisions are consistent with the availability of adequate public facilities.

**Adequate Public Facilities (APF) Requirements.** Each of the scenarios relies to some degree on the provision of new water, sewer, transportation and other infrastructure to support demands from new development. The City's existing goals and policies require growth to pay its proportionate share of capital costs and to ensure that facilities are available at adopted levels of service at the time new demands are generated. Implementation of APF requirements has been relatively easy when the City is the sole provider of the facility. However, when the City must rely upon the State, South Durango Sanitation District or other providers to ensure adequacy, coordination with public and private entities is essential. For instance, if the Growth Centers scenario is selected for the La Posta Road area, the City is likely to need to:

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- Coordinate with the County to ensure that premature development is not approved;
- Coordinate with South Durango Sanitation District to ensure that service can and will be provided;
- Coordinate with the County and CDOT to ensure that development does not generate more traffic than the road system (existing and improved) can accommodate; and
- Coordinate multiple property owners to help address the funding challenges associated with the provision of adequate water, sewer and street capacity.

Highways 160 and 550 create the most significant challenges to the implementation of APF standards for streets. The combination of internal and external traffic on these highways will generate high levels of congestion under any of the scenarios. Reduction of the development potential in portions of the City and its planning area or the programming of additional improvements could reduce spot congestion in most areas of the City, but will have limited impact on 160/550. Absent dramatic and potentially undesirable investment in improvements (e.g., bypasses, double-deck roads or freeway construction through the City), Highways 160 and 550 are likely to become increasingly constrained.

**Housing Policy.** The affordable housing potential is not significantly different between the three scenarios in the year 2030, though the Growth Centers has a greater long-term potential to provide affordable and attainable housing. While this report quantifies the relative potential for affordable housing, the current market is unlikely to provide significant low or moderate income housing unless the public sector encourages or requires its provision.

**Quality of Life.** Each resident has an independent system for evaluating the quality of life in Durango, but there are several common themes, which are summarized in the City's goals listed earlier in this report. As with housing, these quality of life factors could be maintained to similar degrees under each of the scenarios. There is no doubt that continued growth has and will continue to bring change to the City, resulting in the development of currently undeveloped property, more traffic congestion and more unfamiliar faces. However, under each scenario, the City has similar abilities to define and protect natural and built assets through clear policies, regulations and investments.

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**PREFERRED SCENARIO**

The preferred scenario primarily combines aspects of each of the other scenarios. **Table 18** shows the land uses for the Preferred Scenario. **Table 17**, above, compares land use by alternative for reference. The Preferred Scenario includes additional land use designations that were developed during the planning process as well as designations intended to accommodate those used in specific area plans. The Preferred Scenario is expressed through the Future Land Use Map, included in **Appendix A**. Note that the update to the fire protection analysis is provided on page 36 of this report.

**Land Use Comparison**

The Preferred Scenario has a greater amount of both Rural land use (24.0%) and Rural Estates (6.6%) than any of the three Alternatives. However, there is much less Rural Residential (6.8%). Large Lot, Low, Medium and High Density Residential uses are within the average range of the Alternatives. While there is a higher percentage of total Mixed Uses (2.0%) in the Preferred Scenario than the Compact Growth Scenario (1%), there is less than in the 1997 Plan (4%) or Growth Centers (5%). These reductions occurred in the Grandview, La Posta Road, and Animas View Drive areas and in other areas where Mixed Use was converted to Multiple Use – a designation in which mixed uses are optional. While the amounts of independent Commercial (2.6%) and Industrial (1%) are on the low end of the ranges defined in the Alternatives, the amount of Mixed Commercial/Industrial is higher, with 3.6% for the Preferred Scenario compared to 2% for the three Alternatives. Much of this increase occurred in the Grandview and La Posta Road areas to reflect existing conditions. The amount of Office/Business Park (.6%) in the Preferred Scenario is closest to that of the Compact Growth Scenario. There is slightly more Institutional/Public Land (4.9%) than in any of the three Alternatives, and the amounts of Parks/Recreation (3.4%) and Conservation/Open Space (22.1%) are within the average ranges of the three Alternatives.

**Table 18: Preferred Scenario Land Use**

Use / Average Density	Preferred Scenario	
	Acres	Percent
Rural (35 Acre Minimum)	5,800	24.0%
Rural Estates (10 Acres Minimum)	2,589	10.7%
Rural Residential (1 DU/3 Acres)	1,645	6.8%
Residential - Large Lot (1 DU/Acre)	1,337	5.5%
Residential - Low Density (3 DU/Acre)	1,908	7.9%
Residential – Medium Density (Grandview)	255	1.1%
Residential – Medium Density (8 DU/Acre)	715	3.0%
Residential - High Density (16 DU/Acre)	146	0.6%
Commercial	638	2.6%
Industrial	252	1.0%
Central Business Mixed Use	79	0.3%
Mixed Use (9 DU/Acre)	409	1.7%
Mixed Use (Grandview)	78	0.3%
Mixed Commercial / Industrial	875	3.6%
Multiple Use	153	0.6%
Multiple Use (Grandview)	1	0.0%
Office/Business Park	150	0.6%
Institutional / Public	963	4.0%

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Use / Average Density	Preferred Scenario	
	Acres	Percent
Parks & Recreation	819	3.4%
Conservation / Open Space	5,328	22.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,140</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Land Use by Sub-Area**

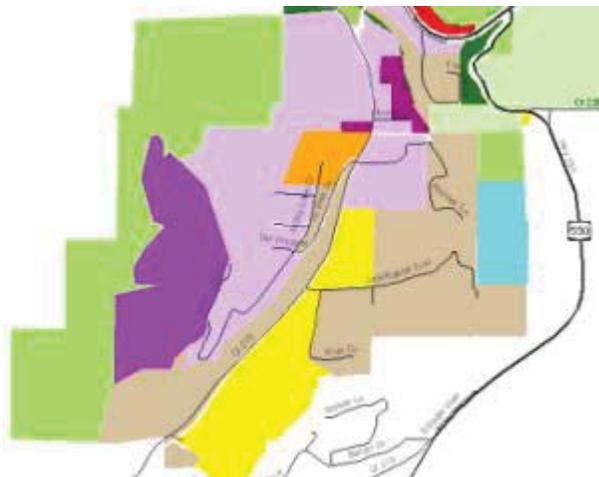
This section describes the land uses that are designated in the future land use map for some of the major sub-areas in the Planning Area, which were compared above for each Alternative Scenario. **Figure 29** shows the future land use legend. The complete Future Land Use Map is found in **Appendix A**.

**Figure 29: Future Land Use Legend**



**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

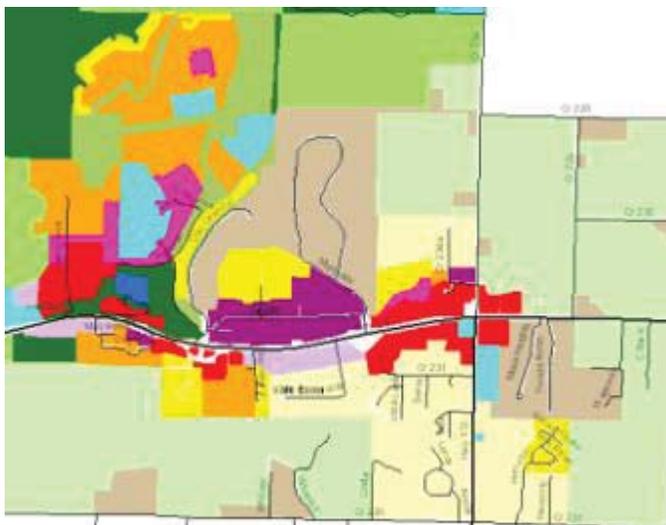
**Figure 30: La Posta Road Future Land Use**



- The far western reaches of the La Posta Road Area are reserved for Rural use due to steep slopes in the area.
- The Animas Air Park is designated for Industrial Use, with Mixed Commercial/Industrial uses extending to the north and east, along both sides of La Posta Road.
- Two pockets of Multiple Use are located near the northern portion of the area, with an area of Medium Density Residential Uses on the east side of La Posta Road.
- A long stretch of Low Density Residential follows the La Posta Road Corridor on the eastern side of the Road, while lower density Rural Residential stretches south along the western side.
- Additional Rural Residential uses fill in the eastern portion of the area, with small pockets of Public, Rural, Rural Estates and Conservation/Open Space in the northeastern corner of the site.

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**Figure 31: Three Springs / Grandview / Elmore's Corner Future Land Use**



- The Three Springs Development is expected to proceed as planned in the Grandview area, including a mix of uses and Medium and High Density Residential, as well as a community park. Development is concentrated in the Three Springs area.
- The bulk of the development will be located north of I-160 and west of Hwy 172.
- Densities decrease towards the east of this area, with Large Lot and Rural Estates along the eastern boundary. The exception is an area of Low Density Residential located in the southeast corner of the area.
- Large Lot Residential is located south of Hwy 60 along Hwy 152.
- Commercial Uses are clustered around Elmore's Corner.
- Multiple Uses and Low Density Residential surround CR 233.
- Mixed Commercial/Industrial uses are designated along the southern portion of the Hwy 160 corridor, with Commercial and Low and Medium Density Residential Uses on the western end of the corridor.
- Commercial uses are also designated in the far western portion of this area.

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

**Figure 32: South 160/550 Future Land Use**



- This scenario includes Mixed Use development along the Animas River with some Commercial development on the eastern side of the River.
- The northwestern portion of the sub-area is reserved for Conservation/Open Space.
- The southwestern portion is designated for Mixed Commercial/Industrial use.
- There is a significant center with Mixed Use, Low and Medium Density Residential and Office/Business Park uses in the northeastern portion of the sub-area.
- There is also Conservation/Open Space and some small Rural areas in the eastern half of the sub-area.

**Figure 33: Horse Gulch Future Land Use**



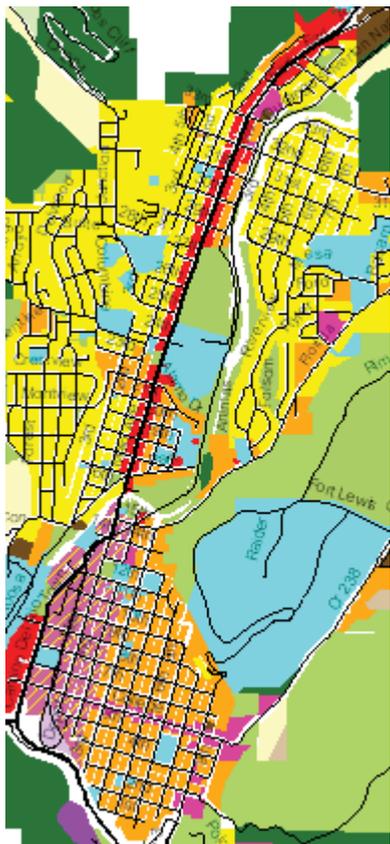
- Public land will be retained and the reservoir site will be protected as Conservation/Open Space.
- Much of the site is designated for Rural Use, which allows 1 dwelling unit per 35 acres.

**Figure 34: College Mesa Future Land Use**



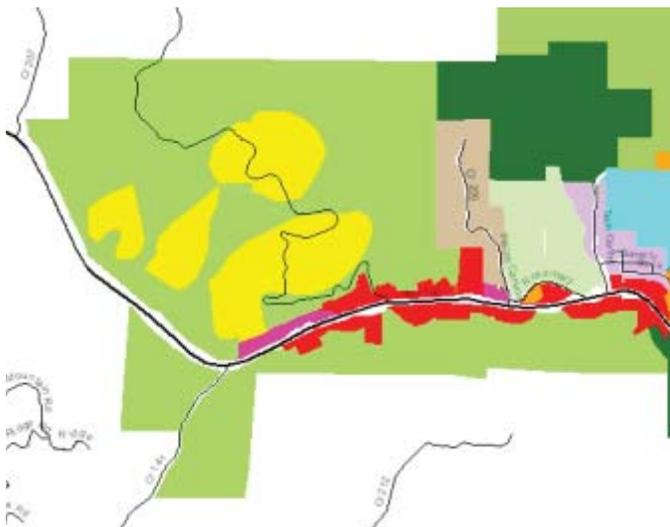
- The northeastern portion of the College Mesa area is Conservation/Open Space and Rural.
- A band of Low and Medium Density Uses stretch from southwest to northeast, with a small area of High Density Residential anchoring the southwest corner.
- Large Lot Residential is located in the north central portion of the sub-area.
- Public Uses (the College) fill a significant percentage of this sub-area.
- Low and Medium Density Residential fill in most of the remainder of the northwest area.

**Figure 35: Downtown Future Land Use**



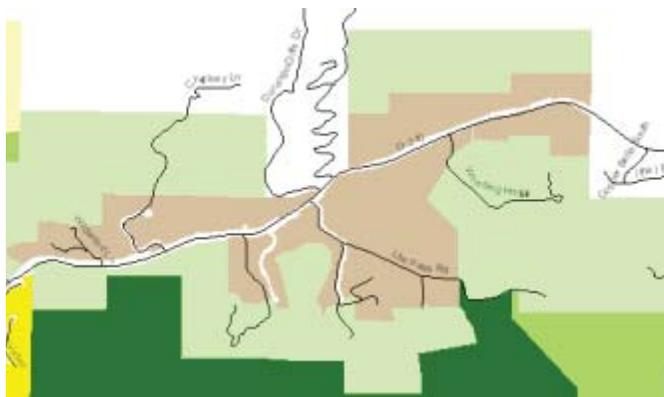
- Downtown will remain the center of civic and governmental activities, and actions will reinforce downtown as the institutional core of the region.
- Some infill and redevelopment along Camino del Rio will occur in accordance with the recently adopted Downtown Vision and Strategic Plan.
- Low and Medium Density Residential, Commercial and Mixed Uses will be the predominant land uses.

**Figure 36: Hwy 160 West / Twin Buttes Future Land Use**



- The area west of Downtown on the Hwy. 160 corridor is designated for Commercial and Mixed Uses.
- The entire western portion of the sub-area will be predominately Low Density and Rural.
- Twin Buttes will be reserved for Conservation/Open Space.
- A small amount of Rural Residential is designated to the west of the Buttes.
- Some Public and Mixed Commercial/Industrial are located in the eastern portion of the site.
- Parks and Recreation land use reserved in the northeast portion of the sub-area.

**Figure 37: Upper Florida Road Future Land Use**



- East of Timberline to Edgemont Ranch, this area will be limited to Rural Estates and Rural Residential density uses.
- The southern portion of the sub-area is Rural and Conservation/Open Space.
- There is very limited residential development in this sub-area.

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

**Figure 38: Ewing Mesa Future Land Use**



- A large proportion of projected residential and commercial growth will be accommodated on Ewing Mesa.
- Low and Medium Density Residential surround Mixed-Use centers.
- There are two areas of Office/Business Park centers, and a small Commercial Center.
- The development area is surrounded by Rural and Conservation/Open Space.

**Dwelling Unit Comparison**

The Preferred Scenario achieves a similar amount of infill and redevelopment units to that of the Growth Centers Alternative, however, it includes less greenfield development potential for residential use than either the 1997 Plan or Growth Centers. At a final build-out the Preferred Scenario can accommodate 18,562 dwelling units, as is shown in **Table 19**. The implications of this reduced build-out potential are an increased need to address housing affordability challenges and an increased importance of monitoring land supplies.

**Table 19: Preferred Scenario Dwelling Unit Build-Out Potential**

	<b>1997 Plan</b>	<b>Growth Centers</b>	<b>Compact Growth</b>	<b>Preferred</b>
Existing Units 2004	8,705	8,705	8,705	8,705
Infill & Redevelopment Units	317	428	373	426
Greenfield Development Potential at Build-out	11,105	12,965	8,492	9,431
<b>Total Units at Build-out</b>	<b>20,127</b>	<b>22,098</b>	<b>17,570</b>	<b>18,562</b>
<b>Population</b>	<b>44,883</b>	<b>49,279</b>	<b>39,181</b>	<b>41,394</b>

**Employment Comparison**

The Preferred Scenario accommodates more employment at build-out than either the 1997 Plan or Compact Growth Alternatives, but less than the Growth Centers Alternative, as shown in **Table 20**. At final build-out, the Preferred Scenario designates enough employment-generating land uses to result in total employment of 42,320, which exceeds projected growth through 2030, but increases the importance of monitoring non-residential land supplies.

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

**Table 20: Preferred Scenario Employment Build-Out Potential**

	<b>1997 Plan Plus</b>	<b>Growth Centers</b>	<b>Compact Growth</b>	<b>Preferred</b>
Existing Employment 2004	21,063	21,063	21,063	21,063
Infill & Redevelopment Employment	38	178	-236	-68
Greenfield Development Potential Employment	20,712	26,177	12,155	21,325
<b>Total Employment at Build-out</b>	<b>41,813</b>	<b>47,418</b>	<b>32,982</b>	<b>42,320</b>

**Transportation Comparison**

The Preferred Scenario results in more projected auto trips than any of the Alternatives. While the trips result in essentially the same number of miles being traveled, they result in greater traffic delay than those in the 1997 Plan Plus or Growth Centers scenarios. These delays are due to increased congestion. The preferred scenario also results in a significantly lower percentage of trips being captured within traffic analysis zones (TAZ) than the 1997 Plan Plus or Growth Centers scenarios. In other words, more of the total trips involve traveling from one TAZ to another. These reductions in performance of this scenario are due to a variety of factors, including:

- Shifting of traffic to roads that are not programmed for improvement in the traffic model, but can and should be improved (e.g., La Posta Road, Ewing Mesa Road and the Grandview Connector);
- Increased traffic loads on Highway 160/550, which increases the importance of expanding capacity along this critical corridor;
- Less mixed use development in the preferred scenario than in the 1997 Plan Plus or Growth Centers scenarios;
- Changes in the future land use map to reflect already developed or approved single-use development; and
- Changes in the basic assumptions of some of the future land use categories (e.g., density reductions reflect Grandview categories, the addition of the multiple use category that assumes less mixed use, and area).

As is noted in the Transportation Section above, the street system is projected to become increasingly congested under each of the growth scenarios through 2030. As shown in the level of service maps in **Appendix B**, most of the 160/550 corridor will operate at level of service (LOS) E or F under each of the growth scenarios, including the Preferred Scenario. This congestion is already addressed in Comprehensive Plan policies. The maps do indicate the need to upgrade portions of La Posta Road, River Road, Florida Road, the Ewing Mesa spine road and the Grandview/Ewing Mesa connector. Congestion on the first three of these roads may be addressed through creation of a three lane minor arterial cross-section. The latter two will require four lanes of traffic, which should be provided through a parkway or one-way pairs to best fit the desired character and terrain.

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**Table 21: 2030 & Build-Out Traffic Comparison**

Travel Factor	2030					Build-Out			
	2004	1997 Plan Plus	Growth Centers	Compact Growth	Preferred	1997 Plan Plus	Growth Centers	Compact Growth	Preferred
<b>Total Auto Trips</b>	157,807	280,333	281,936	281,261	285,455	381,844	383,811	384,369	412,567
<b>Total Vehicle Miles Traveled</b>	184,340	3.55M	3.58M	3.60M	3.40M	4.95M	4.98M	5.05M	4.94M
<b>Congested Vehicle Miles Traveled</b>	41,743	79,721	83,785	83,374	81,767	123,542	125,521	129,101	130,406
<b>Vehicle Hours of Congestion Delay</b>	302	3,071	3,538	2,853	4,707	12,307	13,515	15,042	19,246
<b>% Within TAZ</b>	13.87%	18.91%	19.06%	19.12%	13.13%	31.18%	31.50%	15.30%	17.93%

\* Note - This plan is Exhibit 1 and the application of this plan and its contents shall be limited to only those areas identified in Exhibit 2

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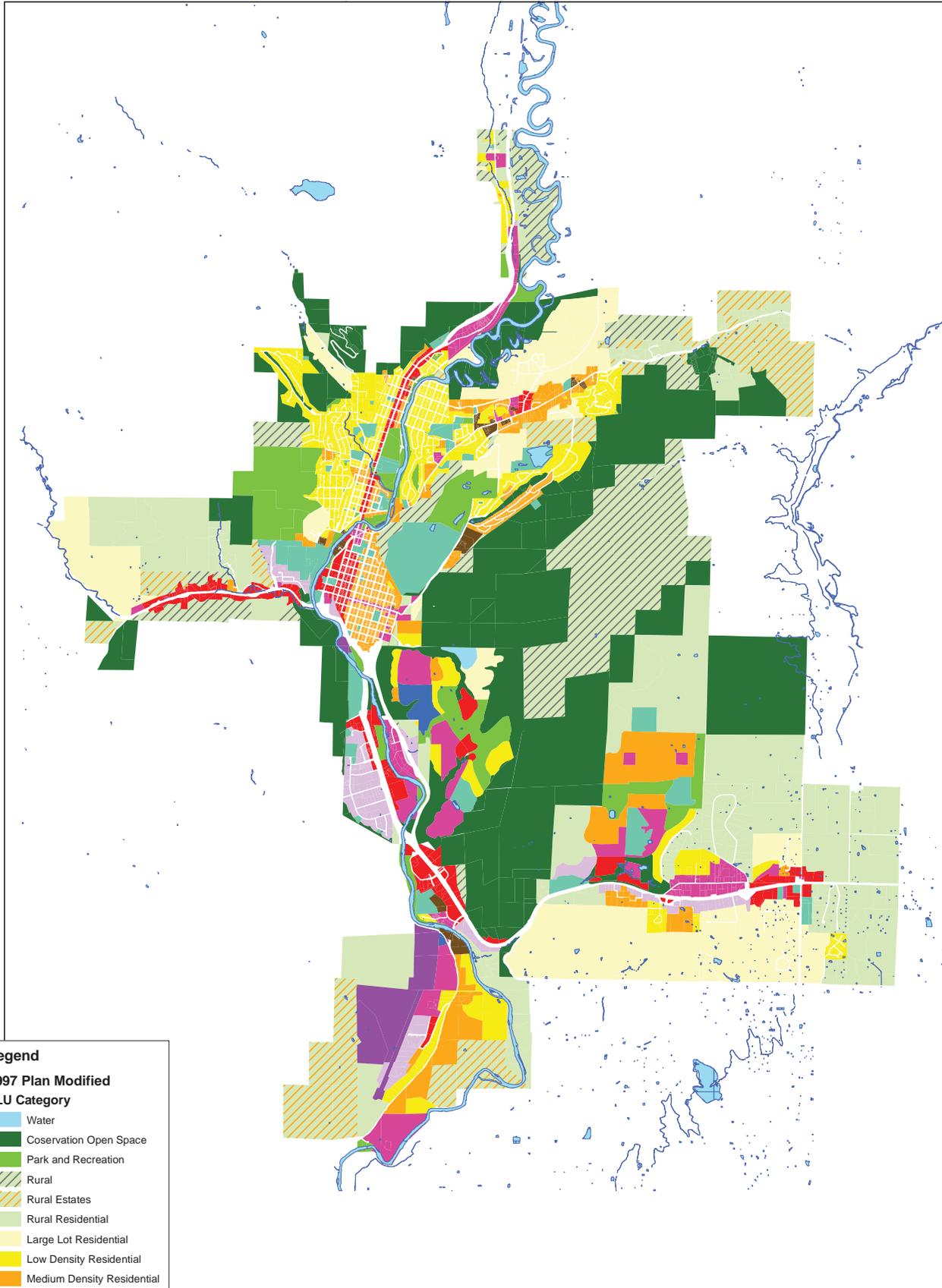
**SCENARIO COMPARISON**

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## **APPENDIX A**

**Scenario Land Use Maps & Preferred Scenario (Future Land Use Map)**

# Scenario A - 1997 Plan Plus



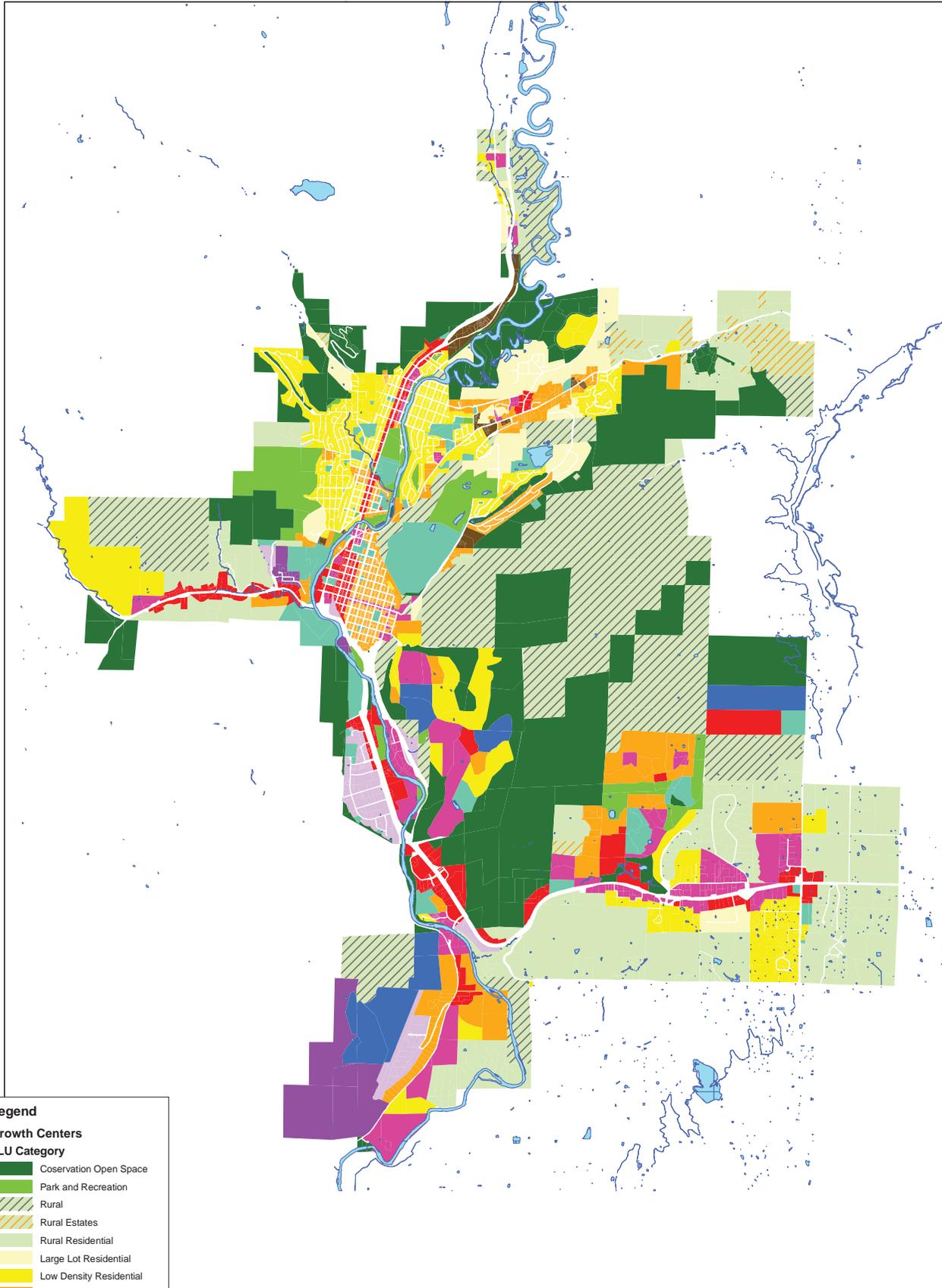
**Legend**  
**1997 Plan Modified**  
**FLU Category**

- Water
- Coservation Open Space
- Park and Recreation
- Rural
- Rural Estates
- Rural Residential
- Large Lot Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Mixed Use
- Commercial
- Mixed Commercial/Industrial
- Industrial
- Business Park
- Public/Quasi Public



Please use this map as a guide and not as definitive information. The areas depicted by this map are approximate and are provided for illustrative purposes only. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy, completeness, correctness, and timeliness of information presented within this map, the burden for determining appropriateness for use rests solely with the user. This map is provided "as is" with no warranties, express or implied.

# Scenario B - Growth Centers Scenario



**Legend**

**Growth Centers**

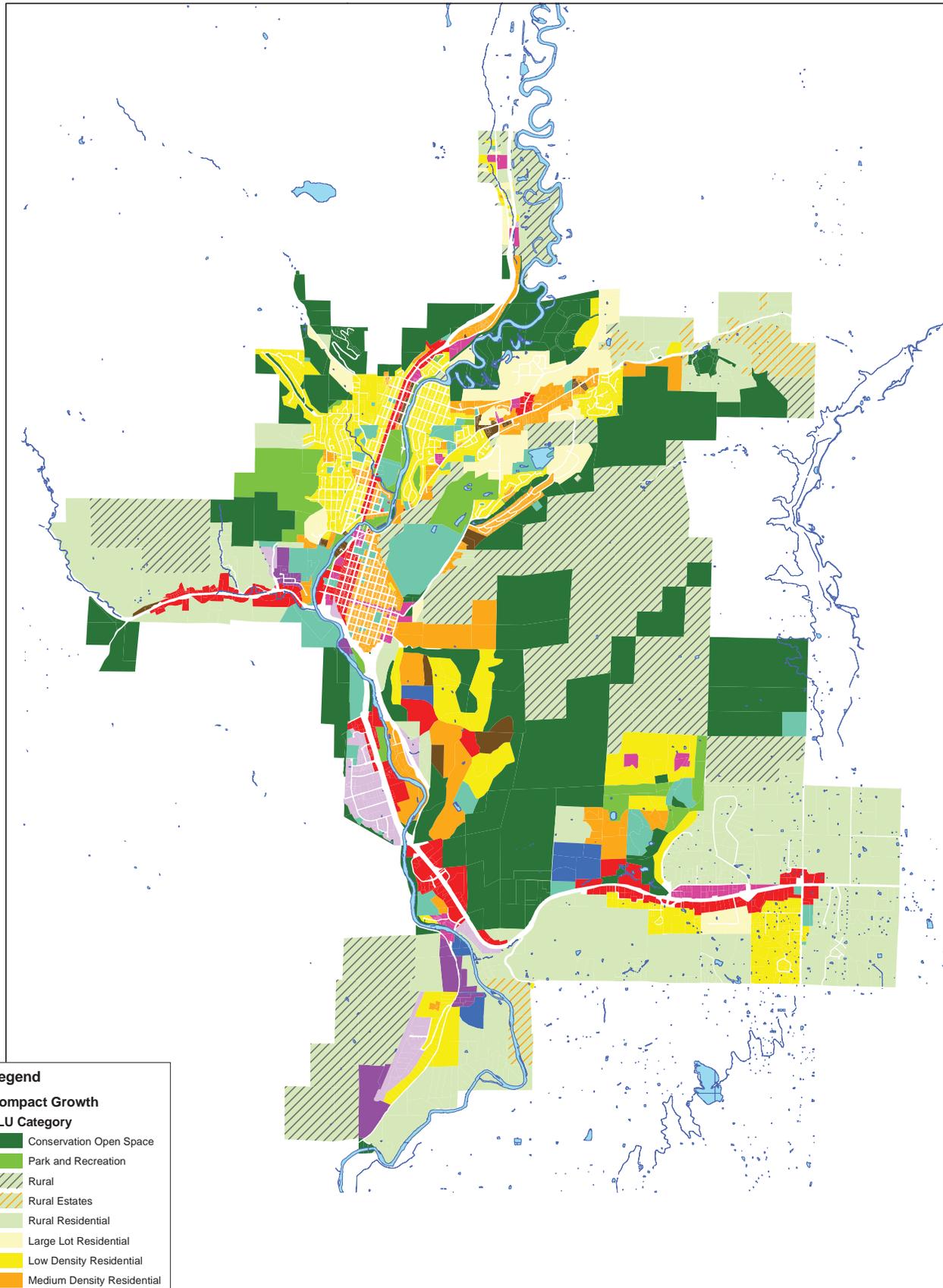
**FLU Category**

- Conservation Open Space
- Park and Recreation
- Rural
- Rural Estates
- Rural Residential
- Large Lot Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Mixed Use
- Commercial
- Mixed Commercial/Industrial
- Industrial
- Business Park
- Public/Quasi Public



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# Scenario C - Compact Growth



**Legend**

**Compact Growth**

**FLU Category**

- Conservation Open Space
- Park and Recreation
- Rural
- Rural Estates
- Rural Residential
- Large Lot Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Mixed Use
- Commercial
- Mixed Commercial/Industrial
- Industrial
- Business Park
- Public/Quasi Public

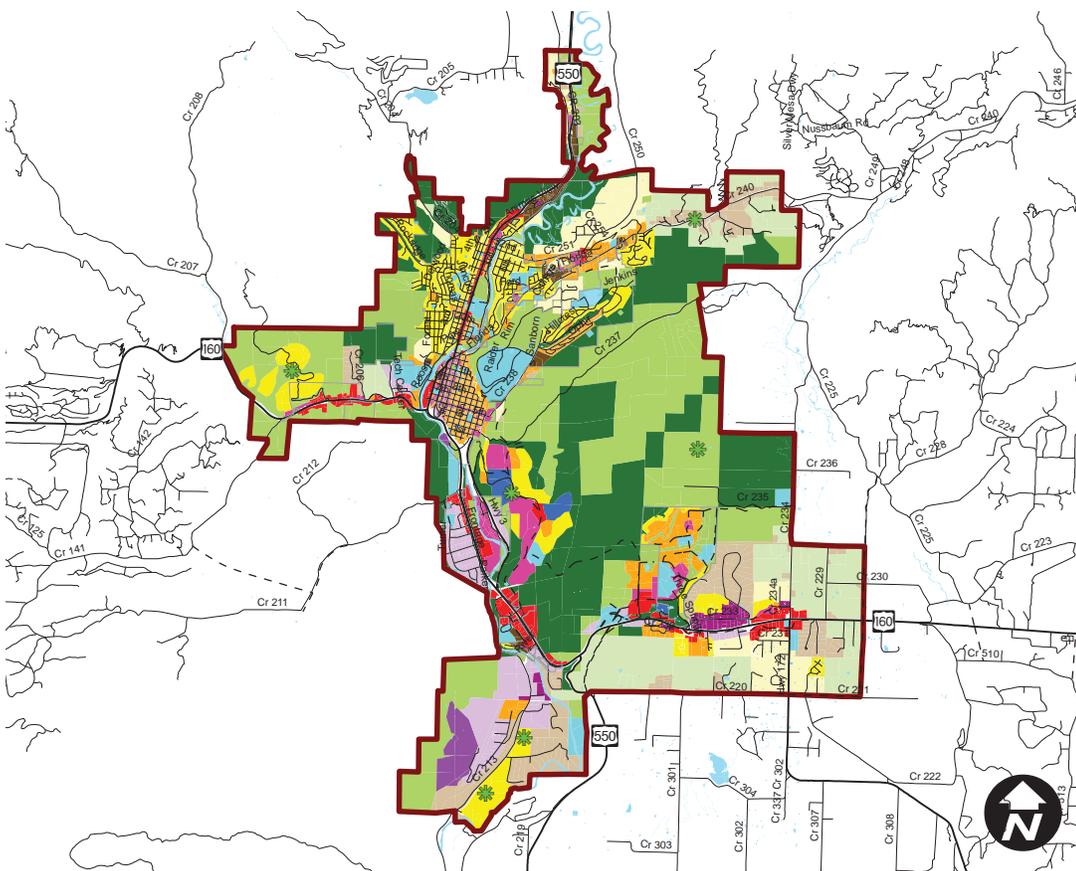


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# FUTURE LAND USE

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### Legend

- Specific Policy Area These areas are subject to specific policies, affecting the timing, type, density and location of authorized land uses.
  - Future Roads
  - Plan Area
  - City Limits
- Roads**
- Highway
  - Local
  - Water
- Future Land Use**
- Conservation Open Space
  - Park and Recreation
  - Rural (1 DU per 35 Acres, Minimum)
  - Rural Estates (1 DU per 10 Acres, Minimum)
  - Rural Residential (1 DU per 3 Acres, Minimum)
  - Large Lot Residential (1 to 3 Acres)
  - Low Density Residential (1 to 4.99 DUs / Acre)
  - Medium Density Residential (5 to 11.99 DUs / Acre)
  - High Density Residential (12 - 24 DUs / Acre)
  - Mixed Use (Up to 24 DUs / Acre)
  - Central Business Mixed Use (Up to 24 DUs / Acre)
  - Multiple Use
  - Commercial
  - Mixed Commercial/Industrial
  - Industrial
  - Business Park
  - Public/Quasi Public



\* Note - This plan is Exhibit 1 and the application of this plan and its contents shall be limited to only those areas identified in Exhibit 2

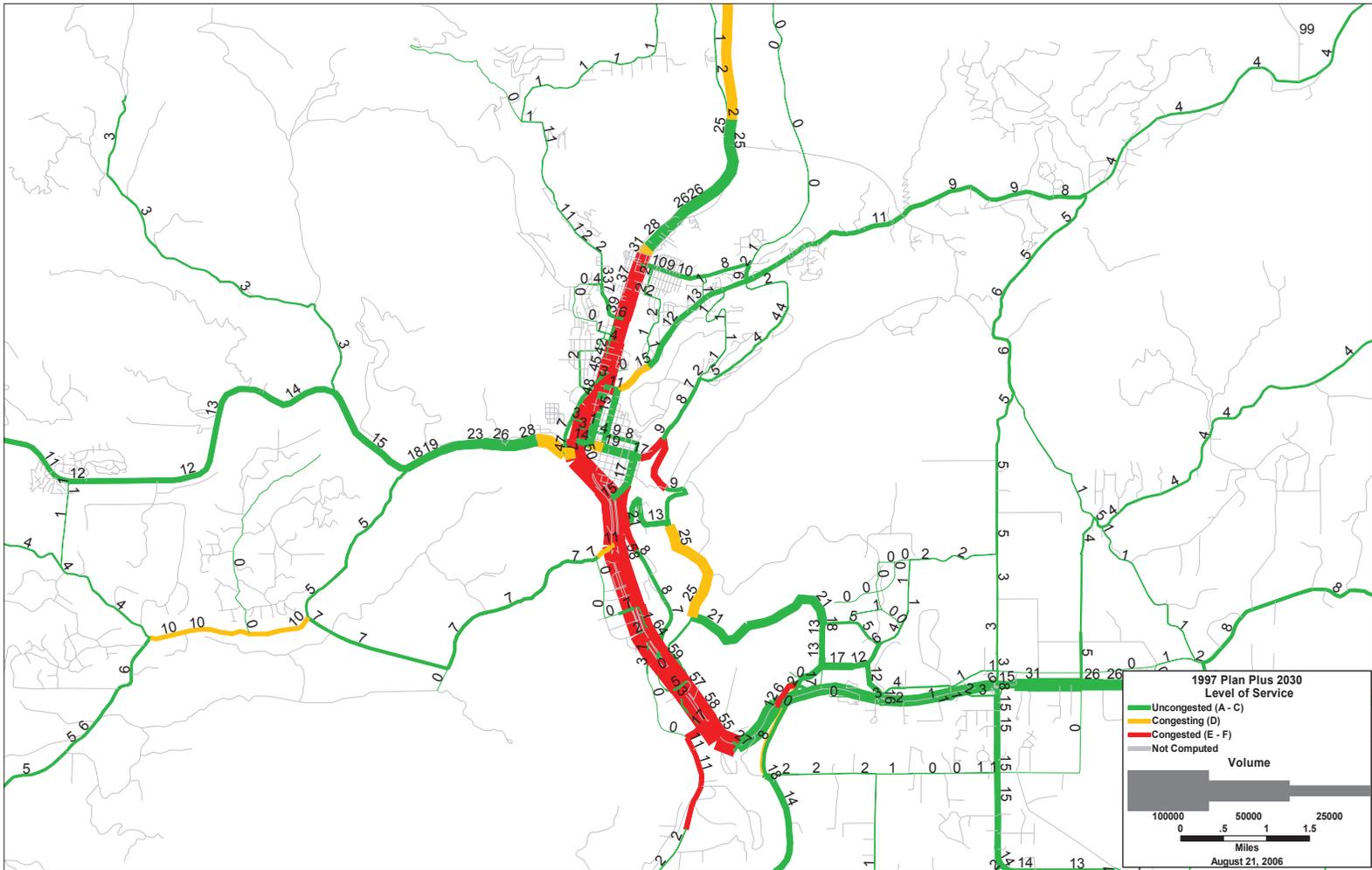
**CITY OF DURANGO**

**SCENARIO COMPARISON**

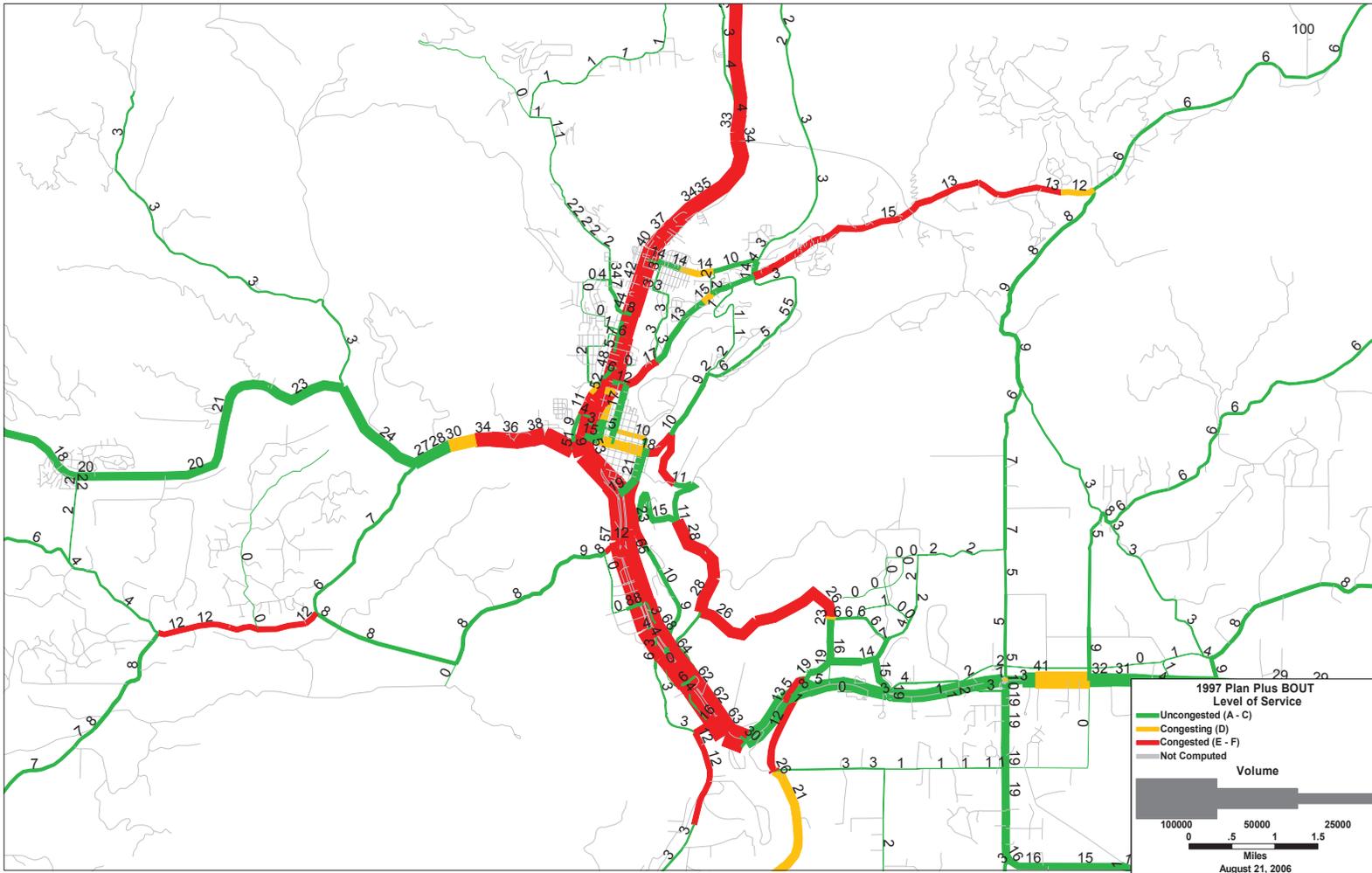
**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

## **APPENDIX B**

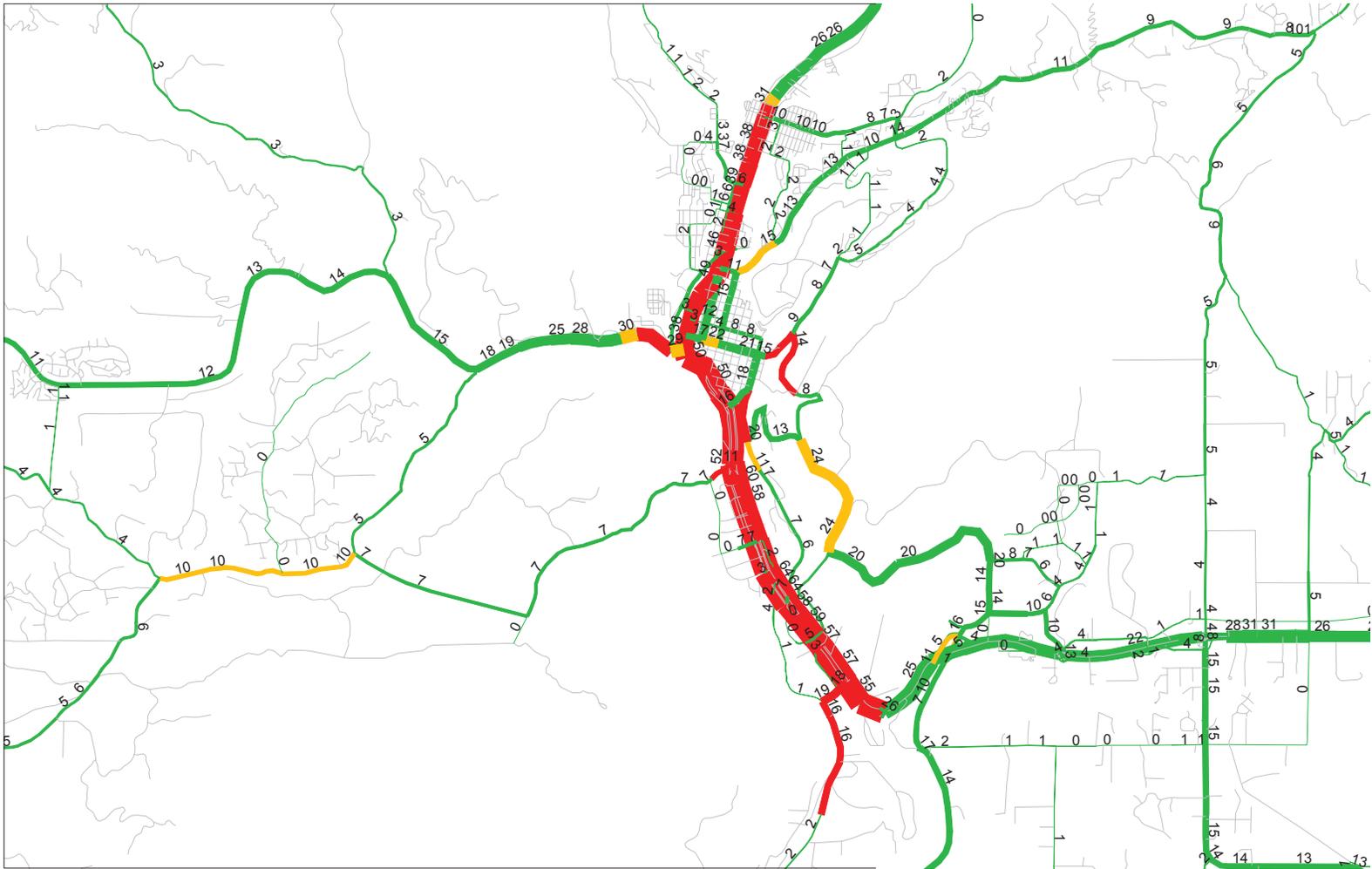
### **Transportation Level of Service Maps**

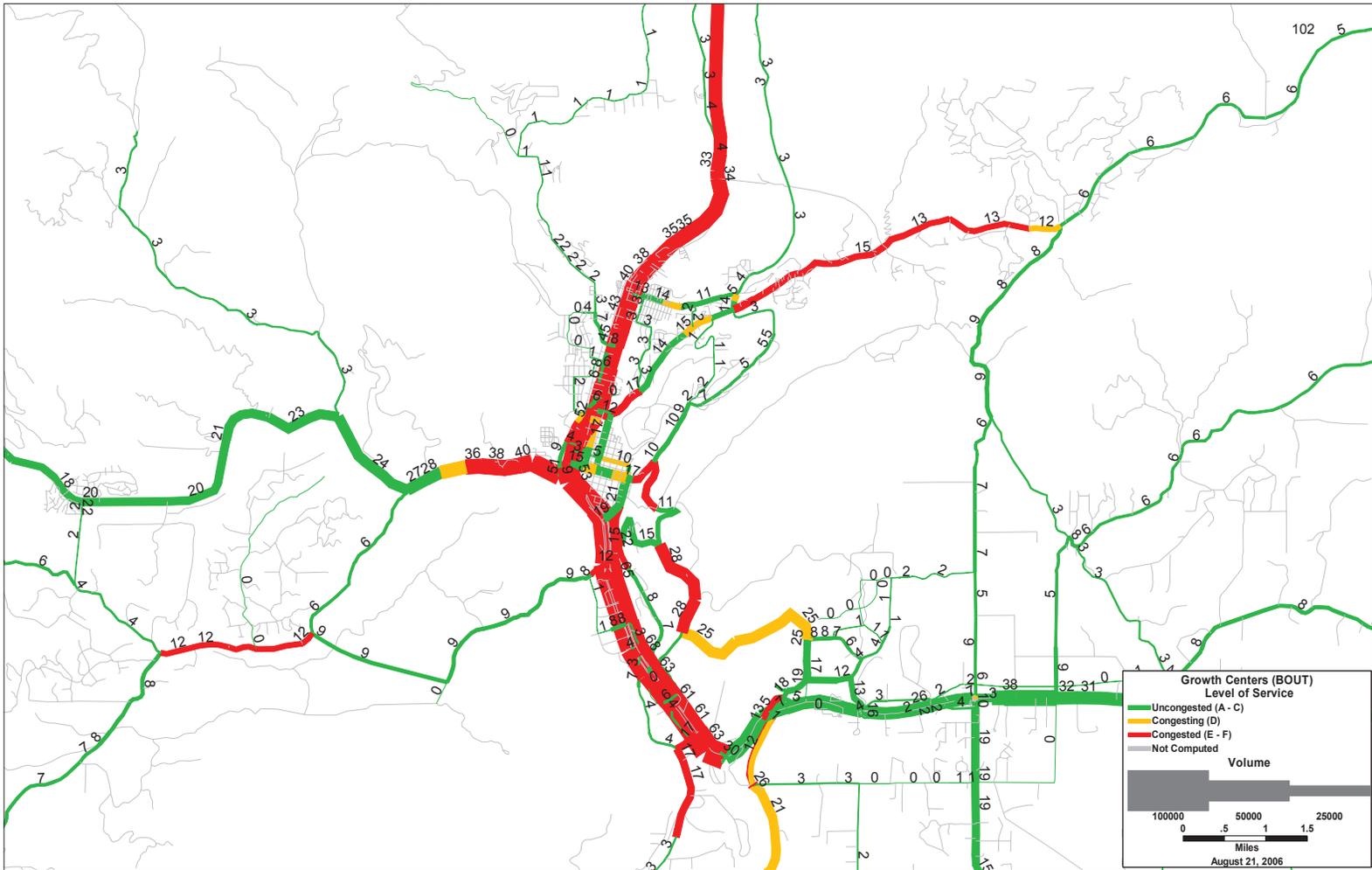


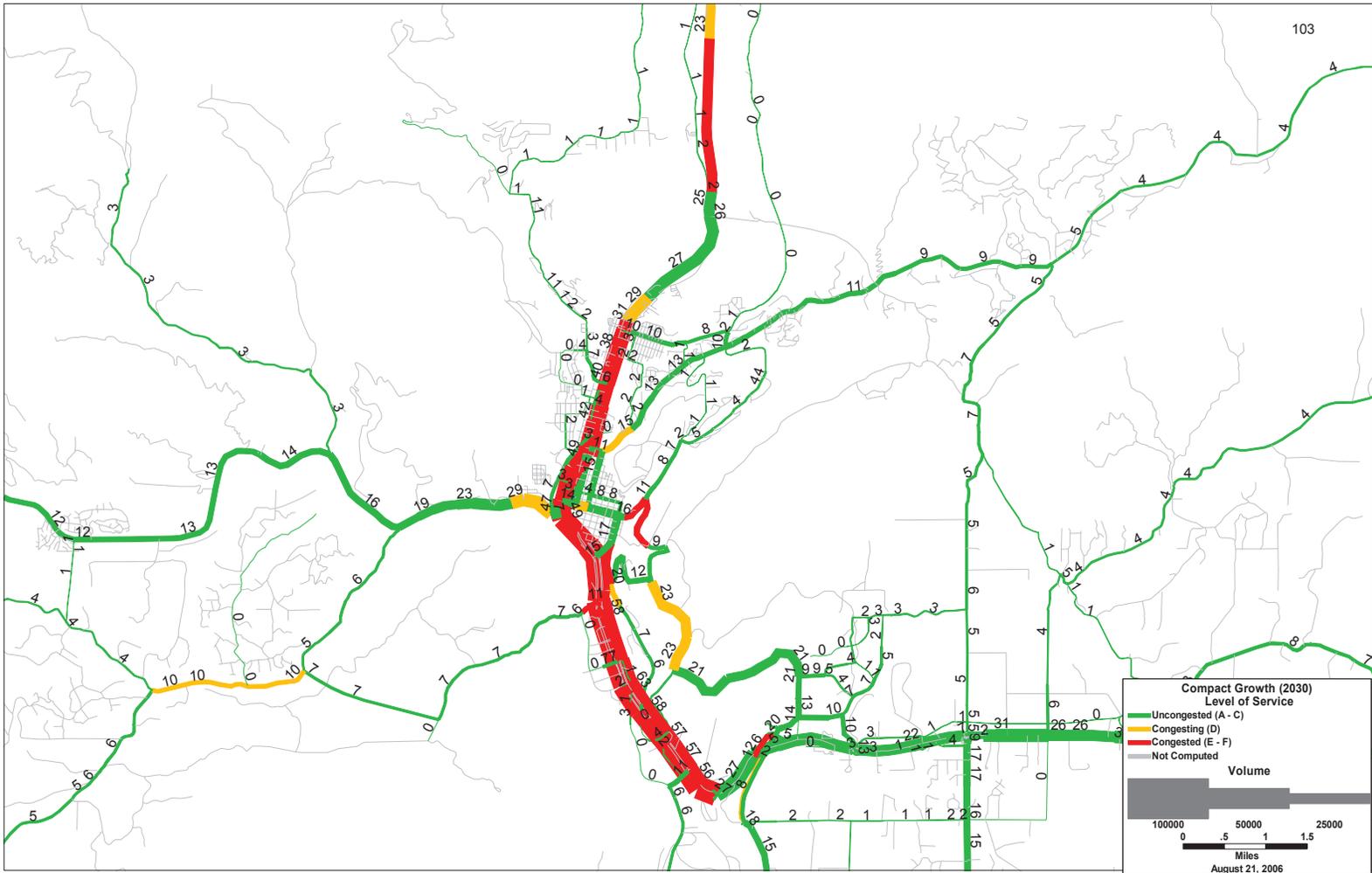
\* Note - This plan is Exhibit 1 and the application of this plan and its contents shall be limited to only those areas identified in Exhibit 2

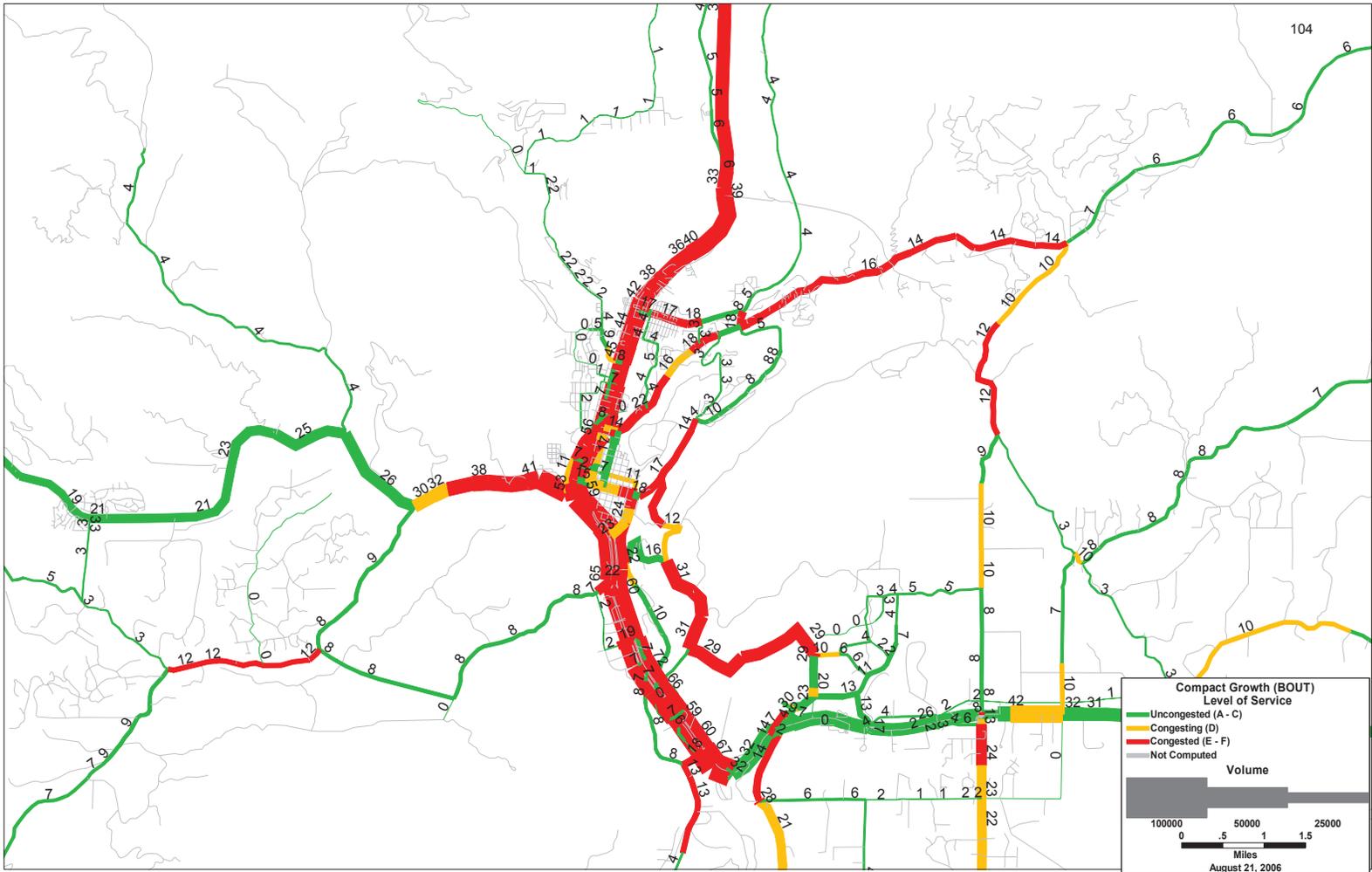


\* Note - This plan is Exhibit 1 and the application of this plan and its contents shall be limited to only those areas identified in Exhibit 2









## **APPENDIX D - GLOSSARY**

A Glossary of was never created for the Comprehensive Plan, despite there being a reference in the Table of Contents.

## **APPENDIX E - RESOURCE DOCUMENTS**

A list of Resource Documents was never created for the Comprehensive Plan, despite there being a reference in Table of Contents

**APPENDIX F - COMMUNITY SURVEY**



# **CITY OF DURANGO**

## **2006 CITIZEN SURVEY**

**MAY 2006**

**Prepared By:**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2006 Durango Citizen Survey was conducted with a telephone survey of 400 randomly selected adults residing within the City of Durango and within the Comprehensive Land Use Plan Area. The primary purpose of the survey was to provide input to the update of Durango's Comprehensive Plan.

### ■ **Perceptions About Quality of Life**

- Durango residents are very positive about the quality of life in Durango. More than eight out of ten residents (84%) rated the quality of life as either excellent (36%) or good (48%).
- The quality of life ratings in the 2006 survey were very similar to the quality of life ratings in the 2000 Durango Citizen Survey.

### ■ **Priority for City of Durango Issues**

- Durango residents place a high priority on *planning for growth and managing its impacts*. More than three-fourths of the residents (77%) rated this issue a high priority, while 18% rated it a medium priority and only 4% rated it a low priority. This issue was also chosen by 31% of the residents as the one issue among eight that should receive the City's highest priority.
- A majority of residents rated several other issues as having high priority:

<i>Providing more low and moderate income housing</i>	64%
<i>Improving traffic flow throughout the city</i>	60%
<i>Developing a more diversified economic base</i>	59%
<i>Maintaining the character of the Main Avenue business district</i>	57%
- Some issues were not considered a high priority among the majority of residents:

<i>Providing more public transit for Durango residents</i>	42%
<i>Providing more parks for active recreation and sports</i>	29%

*Redeveloping Camino del Rio and the Animas River  
between 9<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Streets*

24%

■ **Attitudes About Growth in Durango**

- Overall, most residents are aware that growth outside the City in the County impacts the City and contributes significantly to the traffic congestion within Durango. Residents generally support the City's policies and actions regarding new growth and development, and perceive that growth is necessary for the City's future economic health. Residents support the development of low and moderate income housing in their neighborhoods. Most residents do not believe that the Durango area has an adequate supply of employment opportunities for them. Most residents perceive traffic congestion to be bad only at peak hours, but they do not believe traffic congestion will improve if growth is stopped.
- Nine out of ten residents (90%) agreed that *if the City of Durango limits future growth, it would still have to deal with the negative impacts of growth outside the City.*
- Seven out of ten residents (69%) agreed that *growth is necessary for the City of Durango to be economically healthy over time.*
- Three out of four residents (77%) agreed that *they would support the development of low and moderate housing in their neighborhood.* This was consistent with the high priority residents placed on this issue.
- Durango residents do not think that *the Durango area has an adequate supply of jobs and employment opportunities for people like themselves* (58% disagreed with this statement).
- The majority of residents (56%) agreed that *they support the City of Durango's policies and actions regarding new growth and development*, while 32% disagreed and 13% had no opinion.
- Persons who do not support the City's growth policies most frequently cited "lack of/poor planning," "density of new development too high," "lack of affordable housing," and "not addressing traffic problems" as the reasons for their lack of support.

■ **Perceptions About Rate and Amount of Growth**

- The majority of residents (66%) perceive that Durango is growing too fast. They were more likely to perceive that Durango is growing a **little faster than it should be** (37%) than growing **much too fast** (29%). Nearly three out of ten residents (28%) perceived that growth in Durango is **about right**, while only 2% perceive that growth is **too slow**.
- Residents have similar perceptions about the current rate of growth outside the City limits in the County as they do about the City of Durango. The majority (58%) perceive that the rate of growth outside the City limits is too fast – a **little faster than it should be** (31%) or **much too fast** (27%). Nearly one-third (32%) perceives that the growth is **about right**, while only 3% perceive it to be **too slow**.
- Perceptions were mixed when residents were asked, “If the population of La Plata County is to grow by an additional 35,000 people in the next 20 years, how much of that growth should be accommodated in the City of Durango?” One-third of the residents (33%) thought the City should accommodate less than 5,000 people over the next 20 years, while another one third (33%) thought the City should accommodate up to 10,000. One out of five residents (21%) thought the City should accommodate more than 10,000 – 14% up to 15,000 and 7% more than 15,000. A significant portion of residents (12%) had no opinion regarding how much growth the City should accommodate.

■ **Support for City Revenue Bonds to Improve Durango Roadways**

- *Improving traffic flow throughout the City* was an issue that the majority of residents said should receive a high priority. More than three-fourths of the residents (76%) said they would support the passage of City revenue bonds with no increase in property taxes to improve roadways in Durango. Only 16% said they would not support City revenue bonds, while 8% don’t know at this time.

■ **Proposals to Provide More Affordable Low and Moderate Income Housing**

- The provision of more affordable low and moderate income housing in Durango is a major issue among its residents. The majority of residents supported each of four proposals that the City could use to provide more affordable low and moderate income housing:

<i>Accessory housing such as granny cottages and garage apartments</i>	68%
<i>Require developers to set aside a specific portion of each new residential development for low and moderate income housing even if it increases the cost of the other housing units</i>	61%
<i>Allow developers to build higher density developments in exchange for providing low and moderate income housing</i>	55%
<i>Use tax dollars to develop low and moderate income housing</i>	53%

■ **Criteria for Evaluating New Developments**

- When the City evaluates new residential developments, no single impact is considered most important by a majority of the residents. One-fourth (26%) selected *impact on traffic congestion*, while nearly one-fourth (23%) selected *impact on schools*. One out of five residents (21%) thought that the City should give most attention to the *amount of low and moderate income housing the development will provide*. Smaller percentages thought that the *visual impacts on the community and neighborhood* (14%) and *impacts on parks and open space* (10%) should receive the most attention.
- When the City evaluates new commercial development, nearly one-half of the residents (49%) thought that the City should give most attention to the *quality of jobs it will generate*. The next most frequently selected impacts were *impact on existing downtown stores and businesses* (17%) and *impact on traffic congestion* (16%). Considered most important by small percentages of residents were *quality and attractiveness of development* (8%) and *amount of tax revenues it will generate for City* (5%).

■ **Possible Tools for Managing Future Growth in Durango**

➤ Among nine possible tools for managing future growth in Durango, the largest percentage of residents supported *annexation to the City of areas in the County that may develop in the future so that the City can control when and how these areas will develop* (71% thought this tool was a good idea).

➤ The majority of residents considered six other growth management tools to be a good idea:

*Allowing higher density projects with narrow streets and walkable neighborhoods* 65%

*Requiring existing employers to implement measures such as staggered work hours, carpooling and alternative transportation modes to alleviate traffic congestion* 61%

*Creating a boundary beyond which no urban development shall occur* 60%

*Limiting the number of new dwelling units permitted in any given year* 58%

*Allowing higher density developments on infill areas* 57%

*Prohibiting the extension of City water and sewer service to properties lying outside of the proposed annexation area* 54%

➤ Residents were about evenly divided between those who thought *reducing the amount of development currently approved on some vacant land but compensating the land owner for the loss of market value* was a good idea (48%) or a bad idea (44%).

➤ The majority of residents (53%) thought that *allowing higher density residential development along the Animas River, but still protecting the Animas Greenway and access to the river* was a bad idea for managing future growth.

■ **Perceptions About City of Durango Revenue Sources**

- Sales taxes account for approximately 53% of Durango's revenues, while other sources such as fees (9%), property taxes (3%) and federal grants (2%) account for significantly smaller percentages of City revenues. City residents do not have a good understanding regarding the City's revenue sources. When asked which one of these four sources provided *most of the money for the City of Durango to build public facilities and fund the services it provides to its residents*, only 41% correctly selected sales tax. Although the property tax provides only 3% of City revenues, it was perceived to provide the largest portion by four out of ten residents (39%).
- Durango homeowners pay, on average, approximately \$50 per year in property tax to the City. Awareness of how much property tax is paid to the City is very minimal. Only 7% of the residents thought that the average amount of property tax paid annually to the City was in the correct range of \$50 - \$99. Another 3% thought that the average amount was under \$50. Nearly seven out of ten residents (69%) perceived the average City property tax to be much higher than the actual average. The largest segment of residents (40%) thought that the average City property tax was \$300 or more, while smaller percentages thought it was \$100 - \$199 (14%) or \$200 - \$299 (15%). One out of five residents (20%) didn't have an idea regarding the average City property tax.

## I. INTRODUCTION

### ***BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES***

---

The City of Durango is in the process of updating its 1997 Comprehensive Plan. The City engaged The Howell Research Group to conduct a survey of Durango area residents to provide input to the planning process. The City Council and staff continue to deal with conflicting attitudes regarding Durango's future growth and development, as well as inconsistent citizen visions and desired benefits. The 2006 Durango Citizen Survey was designed to provide the City with a clearer understanding of the knowledge, attitudes and desires of its residents regarding future growth and development.

The 2006 Durango Citizen Survey was designed to provide the City with information based on a scientific cross-section of public opinion that is representative of the entire City and its planning area, not merely the "vocal few." The specific research issues included in the survey were:

1. Citizen perceptions regarding the overall quality of life in Durango.
2. Attitudes about existing and future growth in Durango.
3. Priority that should be given to major issues facing the City of Durango.
4. Support for City of Durango policies and actions regarding growth and development and reasons for not supporting the City's policies and actions.
5. Perceptions about the rate of growth occurring in the City of Durango and outside the city limits in the County.
6. Perceptions about how much future growth should be accommodated in Durango over the next 20 years.
7. Support for passage of City revenue bonds to improve roadways in Durango.
8. Attitudes about proposals to provide more affordable low and moderate income housing.
9. Impacts that should receive the most attention when evaluating new residential and commercial developments.
10. Perceptions about possible tools for managing future growth in Durango.
11. Awareness regarding the City's primary source of funding.
12. Awareness about the amount of property tax paid by Durango homeowners.
13. Variances in awareness, attitudes and perceptions among different demographic segments.

## **METHODOLOGY**

---

The 2006 Durango Citizen Survey was conducted with a telephone survey of 400 randomly selected adults (18 years or older) residing within the City of Durango and within the Comprehensive Land Use Plan Area.

A list of all phone numbers and addresses within the Durango area was obtained from Directory Plus. Since this directory includes households outside both the City limits and the planning area, the City of Durango's G.I.S. Department filtered the directory to produce two sublists – City of Durango and Comprehensive Planning Area outside the City.

The final survey sample was defined based on the proportion of households within the City and households outside the City but within the planning area.

	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Survey Sample</u>
Households within City	83.5%	334
Households outside City/within Planning Area	<u>15.5</u>	<u>66</u>
TOTAL	100.0%	400

The survey sample was also stratified to include 50% men and 50% women. The survey was conducted between April 25 and May 1, 2006. The average length of interviews was 14 minutes.

Overall, the citizen survey results are statistically reliable within  $\pm 4.9\%$  at the 95% confidence level. In other words, 19 out of 20 times (95%), the survey results will be within  $\pm 4.9\%$  of how the entire City/Planning area would respond if everyone could be interviewed. Subgroups of the survey sample may have larger margins of error based on the size of each subgroup.

## II. SURVEY FINDINGS

### PERCEPTIONS ABOUT QUALITY OF LIFE IN DURANGO

*Quality of life* is a term often used to describe the overall economic, physical and social well being of a community. Residents were very positive about the quality of life in the Durango area. More than eight out of ten residents (84%) rated the quality of life as either **excellent** (36%) or **good** (48%). A small segment of residents (12%) rated the quality of life as **average**, while only 3% rated it **poor** and less than 1% rated it **very poor**. (Refer to Table 1 and Figure 1.)

Quality of life ratings increase as household incomes increase. For example, 19% of those with household incomes under \$25,000 rated quality of life as excellent compared to 53% of those with household incomes of \$100,000 or higher. Married persons were also more likely (43%) than single persons (26%) to rate quality of life as excellent.

The City of Durango conducted a citizen survey in 2000. The quality of life ratings in that survey were very similar to the ratings in the 2006 Citizen Survey. A slightly higher percentage in 2006 (36%) than in 2000 (33%) rated quality of life as excellent, while the same percentage (48%) in both surveys rated quality of life as good.

**TABLE 1 PERCEPTIONS ABOUT QUALITY OF LIFE IN DURANGO: 2000 & 2006**

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2006</u>
Excellent	33%	36%
Good	48	48
Average	14	12
Poor	3	3
Very Poor	*	*
No Opinion	1	-
Total**	99%	99%
Base	( 400 )	( 400 )
Mean Score***	4.1	4.2

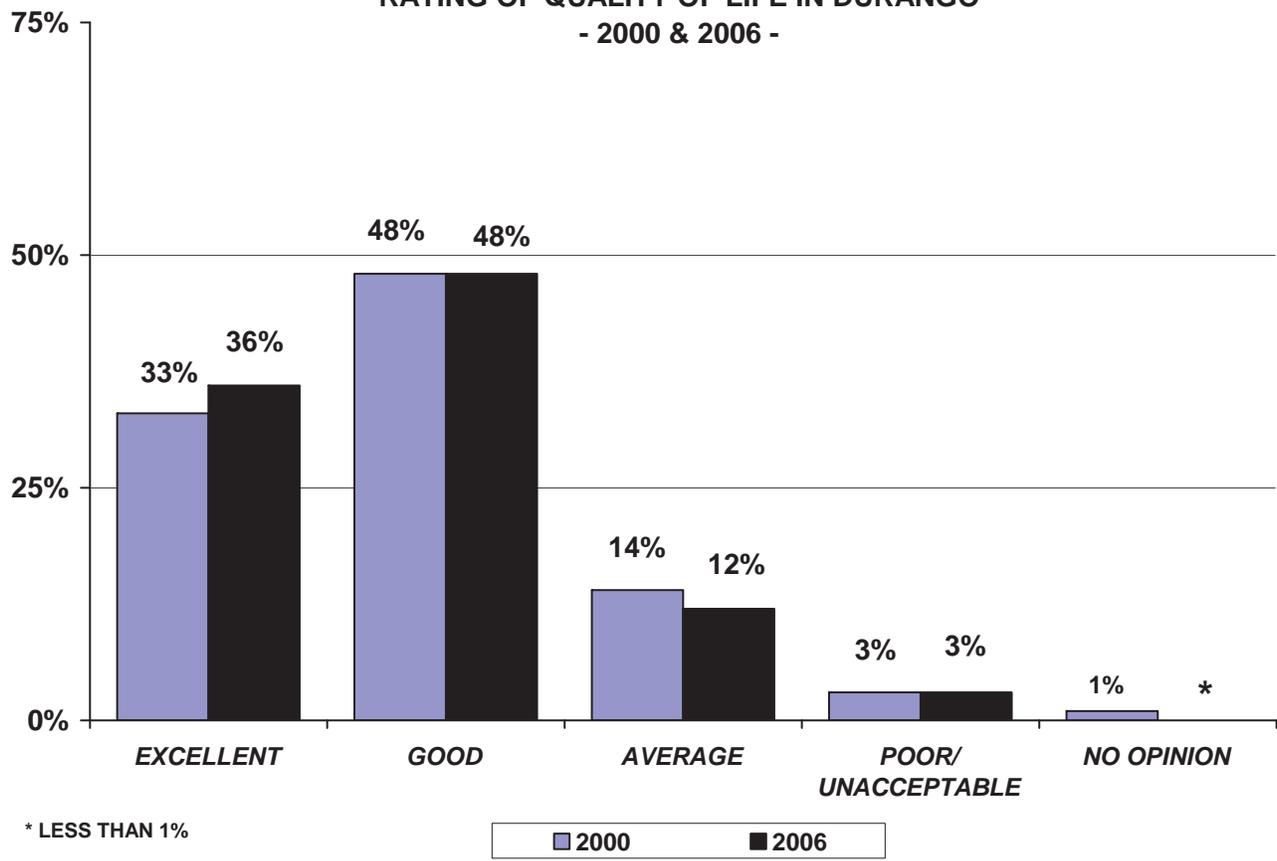
\* Less than 1%.

\*\* Adds to less than 100% due to rounding.

\*\*\* Mean score is calculated by assigning integer values of "5" to **excellent**, "4" to **good**, "3" to **average**, "2" to **poor**, "1" to **very poor**, and disregarding the **no opinions**.

Source: The Howell Research Group

**FIGURE 1**  
**RATING OF QUALITY OF LIFE IN DURANGO**  
**- 2000 & 2006 -**



## ***PRIORITY FOR CITY OF DURANGO ISSUES***

---

Residents were asked what priority (low, medium or high) should be placed on specific issues facing the City of Durango. The majority of residents rated all issues to be at least a medium priority. (Refer to Table 2 and Figure 2.)

More than three-fourths of the residents (77%) rated *planning for growth and managing its impacts* as a high priority. The majority of residents also gave a high priority to *providing more low and moderate income housing* (64%), *improving traffic flow throughout City* (60%), *developing a more diversified economic base* (59%) and *maintaining the character of the Main Avenue business district* (57%). Nine out of ten residents rated each of these issues as either a medium or high priority.

*Providing more public transit for Durango residents* was rated as a high priority by 42% of the residents, while 39% rated it as a medium priority. Residents were equally divided between rating *providing more parks for active recreation and sports* as either a low priority (30%) or high priority (29%), while 41% rated it as a medium priority.

Only 24% of the residents rated *redeveloping Camino del Rio and the Animas River between 9<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Streets* as a high priority. Four out of ten residents (41%) rated this issue as a medium priority, while 31% rated it as a low priority.

When asked to select the one issue that should receive the highest priority, *planning for growth and managing its impacts* (31%) and *providing more low and moderate income housing* (30%) were selected most frequently. Other issues selected for highest priority by at least 10% of the residents were *developing a more diversified economic base* (15%) and *improving traffic flow throughout the City* (10%). (Refer to Figure 3.)

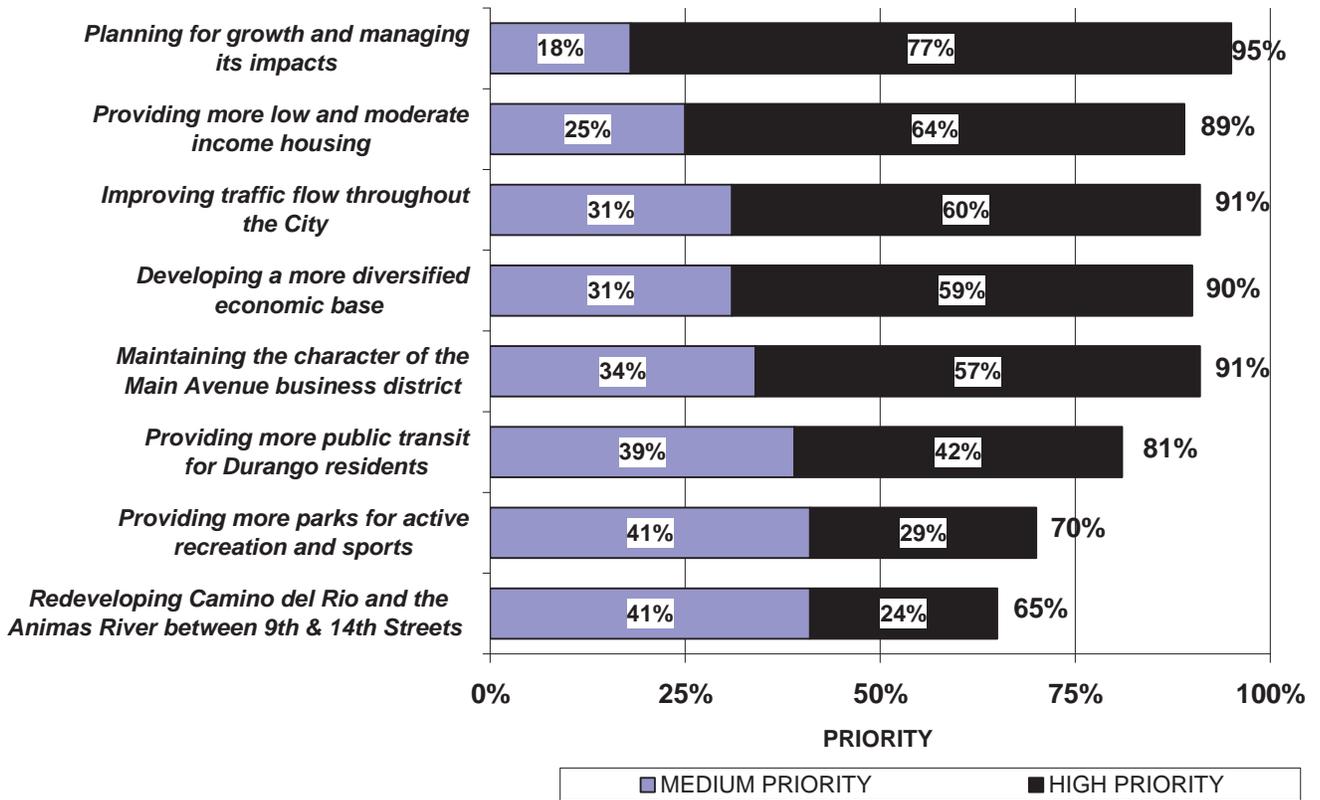
**TABLE 2 PRIORITY FOR CITY OF DURANGO ISSUES**

	Priority				Mean Score*
	Low	Medium	High	No Opinion	
<i>Planning for growth and managing its impacts</i>	4%	18%	77%	1%	2.7
<i>Providing more low and moderate income housing</i>	10	25	64	1	2.6
<i>Improving traffic flow throughout the City</i>	8	31	60	1	2.5
<i>Developing a more diversified economic base</i>	8	31	59	3	2.5
<i>Maintaining the character of the Main Avenue business district</i>	9	34	57	1	2.5
<i>Providing more public transit for Durango residents</i>	18	39	42	1	2.2
<i>Providing more parks for active recreation and sports</i>	30	41	29	1	2.0
<i>Redeveloping Camino del Rio and the Animas River between 9<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Streets</i>	31	41	24	5	1.9
Base	----- ( 400 ) -----				

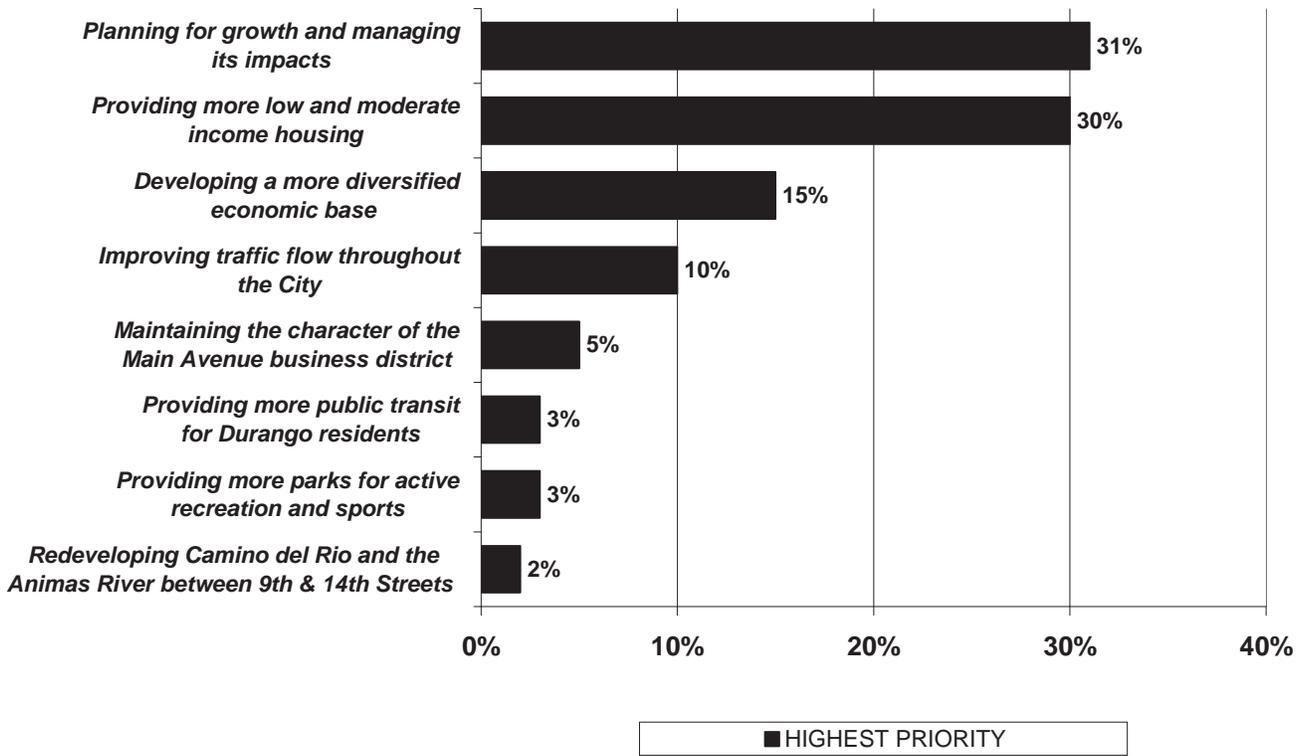
\* Mean score is calculated by assigning integer values of “3” to **high**, “2” to **medium**, “1” to **low**, and disregarding the **no opinions**.

Source: The Howell Research Group

**FIGURE 2  
PRIORITY OF CITY OF DURANGO ISSUES**



**FIGURE 3**  
**ISSUE RESIDENTS BELIEVE SHOULD RECEIVE HIGHEST PRIORITY**



## ***ATTITUDES ABOUT GROWTH IN DURANGO***

---

Survey respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed (strongly or somewhat) with eight specific statements regarding growth and development in Durango.

Overall, most residents are aware that growth outside the City in the County has impacts on the City and contributes significantly to the traffic congestion within Durango. They generally support the City's policies and actions regarding new growth and development and perceive that growth is necessary for the City's future economic health. Residents support the development of low and moderate income housing in their neighborhoods. Most residents do not believe that the Durango area has an adequate supply of employment opportunities for them. Most residents perceive traffic congestion to be bad only at peak hours, but they do not believe traffic congestion will improve if growth is stopped.

Nine out of ten residents (90%) agreed either strongly (61%) or somewhat (29%) that *growth outside the City in the County contributes significantly to the traffic congestion within Durango*. Seven out of ten residents (71%) agreed (35% strongly and 36% somewhat) that *traffic congestion within Durango is bad only at peak hours*. Two out of three residents (66%) disagreed (36% strongly and 30% somewhat) that *traffic congestion within Durango will improve if we stop growth in Durango*. (Refer to Table 3 and Figure 4.)

Nearly nine out of ten residents (89%) either strongly agreed (52%) or somewhat agreed (37%) that *if the City of Durango limits future growth it will still have to deal with the negative impacts of growth outside the City*.

Nearly seven out of ten residents (69%) agreed (31% strongly and 38% somewhat) that *growth is necessary for the City of Durango to be economically healthy over time*.

Three-fourths of the residents (77%) either strongly (44%) or somewhat (33%) agreed that they *would support the development of low and moderate income housing in their neighborhood*. Support for low and moderate income housing in their neighborhood was stronger among renters (86%) than among homeowners (72%), and slightly stronger among persons with household incomes under \$50,000 (82%) than those with household incomes of \$50,000 or more (75%).

The majority (58%) disagreed (33% strongly and 25% somewhat) that *the Durango area has an adequate supply of jobs and employment opportunities for people like yourself*. Disagreement that *the Durango area has an adequate supply of jobs and employment opportunities* was consistent among all demographic segments including age and household income.

The majority of residents (56%) agreed (10% strongly and 46% somewhat) that they *support the City of Durango's policies and actions regarding new growth and development*. About one-third (32%) disagreed, while 13% had no opinion. Those living in Durango were more likely than those living outside the City in the planning area to support the City's growth policies (58% vs. 42%). Men were more likely than women (61% vs. 50%) to support the City's growth policies.

Those who disagreed that they *support the City's policies and actions regarding new growth and development* were asked (unaided) why they did not support the City's policies and actions. Among these respondents (32% of total), the most frequently mentioned reasons were "lack of/poor planning" (14%), "density of new development too high" (12%), "lack of affordable housing," (12%) and "not addressing traffic problems" (9%). It should be noted that each of these responses was mentioned by a small percentage of all respondents. (Refer to Table 4.)

**TABLE 3 ATTITUDES ABOUT GROWTH IN DURANGO**

	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Agree</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>	<u>Mean Score*</u>
<i>Growth outside the City in the County contributes significantly to the traffic congestion in Durango</i>	2%	6%	29%	61%	2%	3.5
<i>If the City of Durango limits future growth, it will still have to deal with the negative impacts of growth outside the City</i>	3	6	37	52	3	3.4
<i>You would support the development of low and moderate income housing in your neighborhood</i>	10	9	33	44	3	3.2
<i>Traffic Congestion within Durango is bad only at peak hours</i>	14	13	36	35	3	2.9

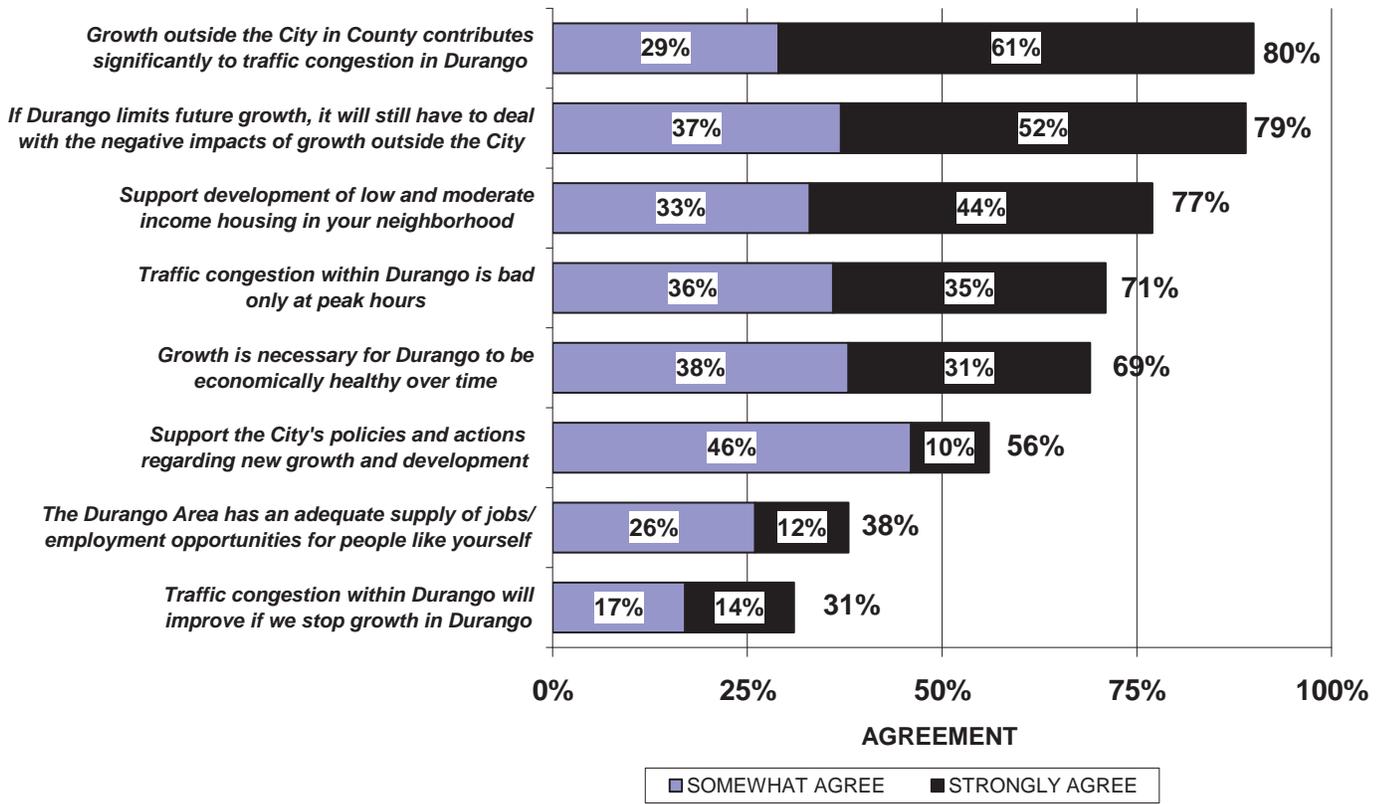
**TABLE 3 ATTITUDES ABOUT GROWTH IN DURANGO (Continued)**

	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Agree</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>	<u>Mean Score*</u>
<i>Growth is necessary for the City of Durango to be economically healthy over time</i>	11	18	38	31	3	2.9
<i>You support the City of Durango's policies and actions regarding new growth and development</i>	14	18	46	10	13	2.6
<i>The Durango area has an adequate supply of jobs and employment opportunities for people like yourself</i>	33	25	26	12	4	2.2
<i>Traffic congestion within Durango will improve if we stop growth in Durango</i>	36	30	17	14	3	2.1
Base	----- ( 400 ) -----					

\* Mean score is calculated by assigning integer values of "4" to **strongly agree**, "3" to **somewhat agree**, "2" to **somewhat disagree**, "1" to **strongly disagree**, and disregarding the **no opinions**.

Source: The Howell Research Group

**FIGURE 4  
ATTITUDES ABOUT GROWTH IN DURANGO**



**TABLE 4 REASONS FOR NOT SUPPORTING CITY OF DURANGO POLICIES AND ACTIONS REGARDING GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (UNAIDED)**

<u>Reasons</u>	<u>Percent of Persons Who Do Not Support City Growth Policies</u>	<u>Percent of All Residents</u>
Lack of/poor planning	14%	5%
Density of new development too high	12	4
Lack of affordable housing	12	4
Not addressing traffic problems	9	3
Too easy with developers	7	2
City growing too large	6	2
Poor leadership/policies/decisions	6	2
Need to be more pro-growth	5	2
Not addressing water supply issues	4	1
Need to attract better industry/employers	3	1
Don't like City's infill policies	3	1
Not providing enough open space	2	1
Spend too much on recreation	2	1
Require too much of developers	2	1
Need higher density development	2	1
Other	21	7
Don't know	9	3
Support City's growth policies	-	68
Base	( 129 )	( 400 )

\* Reflects multiple responses.

Source: The Howell Research Group

## ***PERCEPTIONS ABOUT RATE AND AMOUNT OF GROWTH***

---

### ■ ***Current Rate of Growth in Durango***

The majority of residents (66%) perceive that Durango is growing too fast. They were more likely to perceive that Durango is growing a **little faster than it should be** (37%) than growing **much too fast** (29%). Nearly three out of ten residents (28%) perceived that growth in Durango is **about right**, while only 2% perceive that growth is **too slow**. (Refer to Table 5 and Figure 5.)

Persons living outside the City limits in the planning area were more likely (75%) to perceive that Durango is growing too fast than persons living within the City (65%). Longer-term residents (more than 10 years) were more likely (76%) than shorter-term residents (47%) to perceive that Durango is growing too fast. As expected, persons who did not support the City's growth policies were more likely (75%) than those who supported the City's growth policies (62%) to perceive that Durango is growing too fast.

### ■ ***Current Rate of Growth Outside City Limits in County***

Residents have similar perceptions about the current rate of growth outside the City limits in the County as they do about the City of Durango. The majority (58%) perceive that the rate of growth outside the City limits is too fast – a **little faster than it should be** (31%) or **much too fast** (27%). Nearly one-third (32%) perceives that the growth is **about right**, while only 3% perceive it to be **too slow**. (Refer to Table 5 and Figure 6.)

Persons living outside Durango (75%) were more likely than persons living within the City (57%) to perceive that growth outside the City limits is too fast. Longer-term residents (more than 10 years) were twice as likely as shorter-term residents to perceive that growth outside the City limits was too fast (69% vs. 35%).

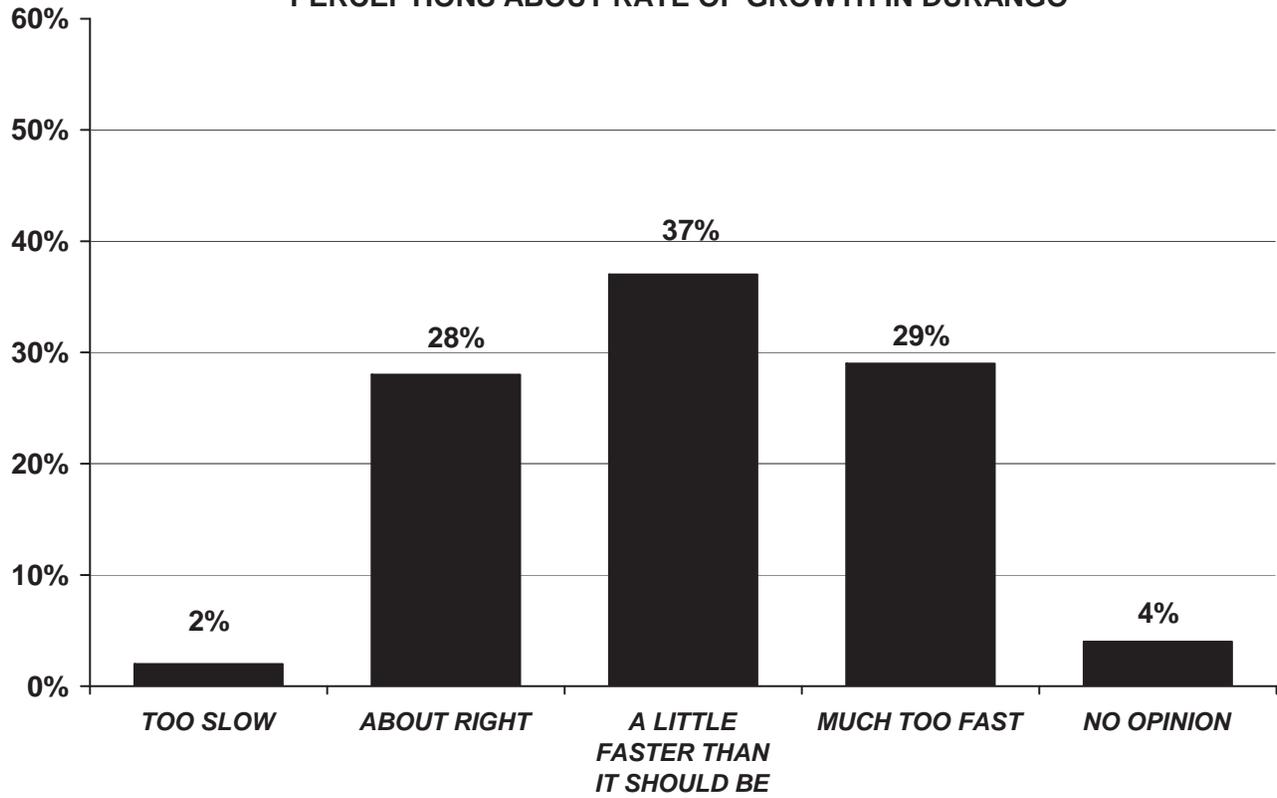
**TABLE 5 PERCEPTIONS ABOUT RATE OF GROWTH IN DURANGO AND OUTSIDE CITY LIMITS IN THE COUNTY**

	<u>Growth In Durango</u>	<u>Growth Outside Durango in County</u>
Too Slow	2%	3%
About Right	28	32
Little Faster than It Should Be	37	31
Much Too Fast	29	27
No Opinion	<u>4</u>	<u>6</u>
Total*	100%	99%
Base	( 400 )	( 400 )

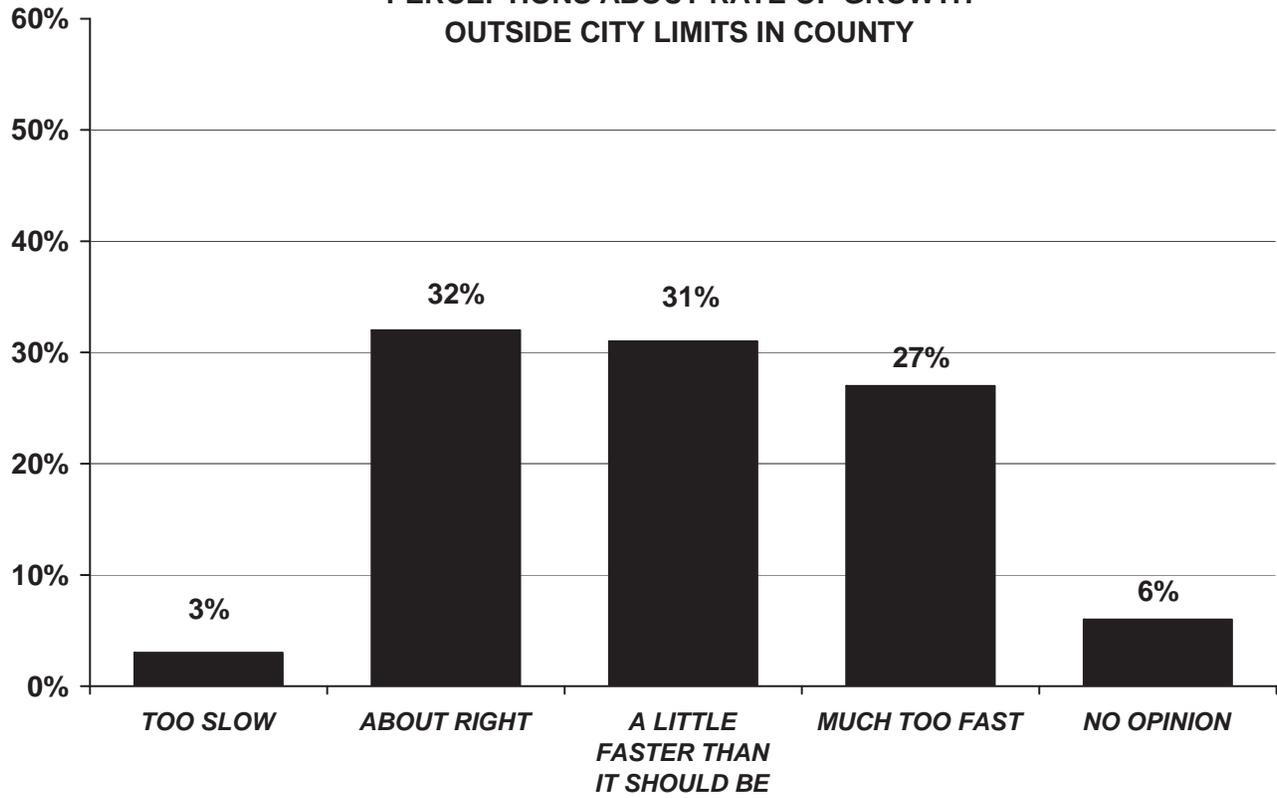
\* May add to less than 100% due to rounding.

Source: The Howell Research Group

**FIGURE 5  
PERCEPTIONS ABOUT RATE OF GROWTH IN DURANGO**



**FIGURE 6  
PERCEPTIONS ABOUT RATE OF GROWTH  
OUTSIDE CITY LIMITS IN COUNTY**



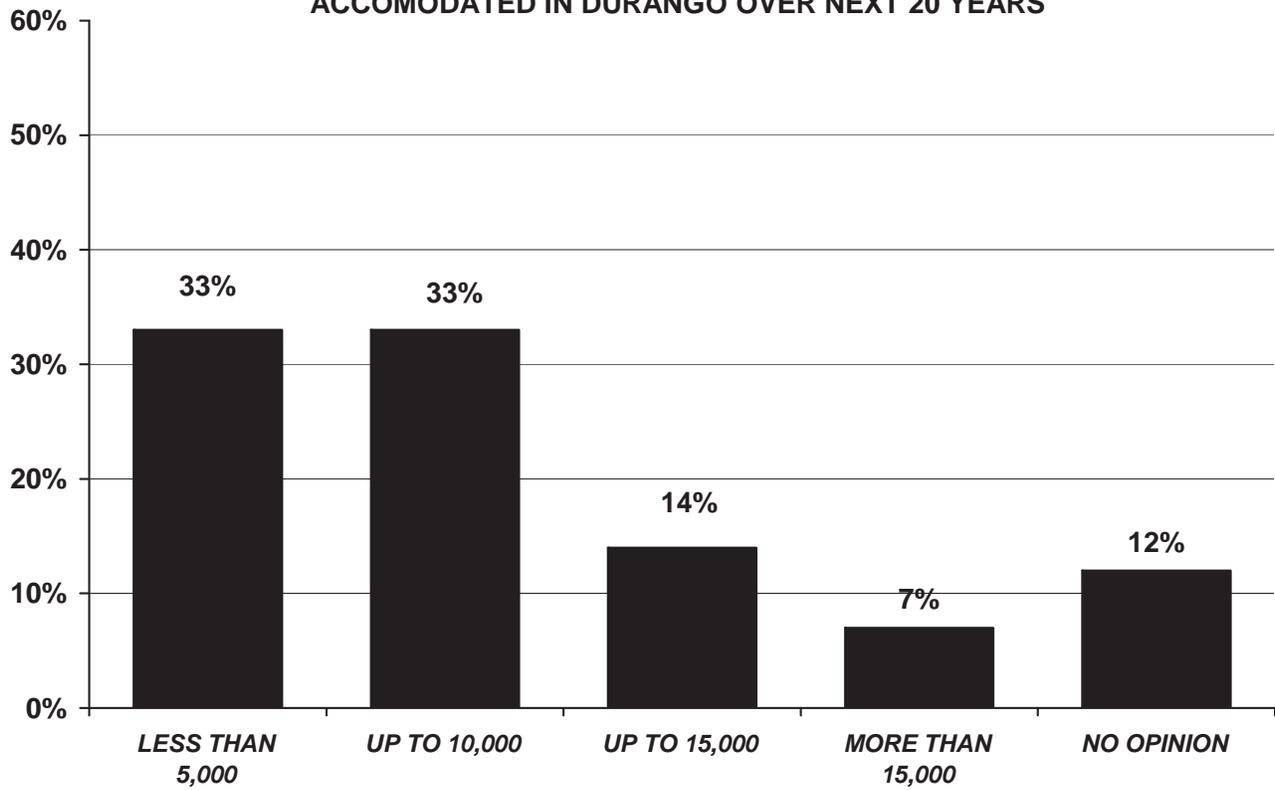
■ ***Amount of La Plata County's Future Growth that Durango Should Accommodate***

Survey respondents were asked, "If the population of La Plata County is to grow by an additional 35,000 people in the next 20 years, how much of that growth should be accommodated in the City of Durango?" Residents had mixed perceptions regarding the amount of future growth that Durango should accommodate.

One-third of the residents (33%) thought the City should accommodate less than 5,000 people over the next 20 years, while another one-third (33%) thought the City should accommodate up to 10,000. One out of five residents (21%) thought the City should accommodate more than 10,000 – 14% up to 15,000 and 7% more than 15,000. A significant portion of residents (12%) had no opinion regarding how much growth the City should accommodate. (Refer to Figure 7.)

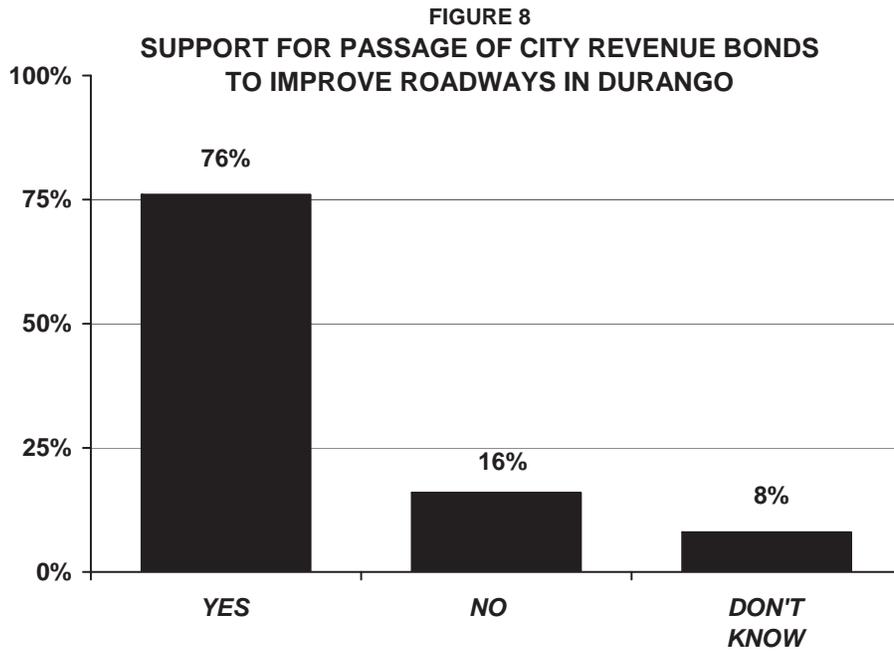
Persons living in the City were more likely than persons living outside the City in the planning area to think that Durango should accommodate more than 10,000 additional population (23% vs. 17%). Men were more likely than women to think that Durango should accommodate more than 10,000 additional population (27% vs. 17%).

**FIGURE 7**  
**HOW MUCH OF LAPLATA COUNTY'S FUTURE GROWTH (35,000) SHOULD BE ACCOMODATED IN DURANGO OVER NEXT 20 YEARS**



## SUPPORT FOR CITY REVENUE BONDS TO IMPROVE DURANGO ROADWAYS

Improving traffic flow throughout the City was an issue that the majority of residents (60%) said should receive a high priority. More than three-fourths of the residents (76%) said they would support the passage of City revenue bonds with no increase in property taxes to improve roadways in Durango. Only 16% said they would not support City revenue bonds, while 8% didn't know at this time. Support for revenue bonds to improve roadways was generally consistent among all demographic segments. (Refer to Figure 8.)



## ***PERCEPTIONS ABOUT PROPOSALS TO PROVIDE MORE AFFORDABLE LOW AND MODERATE INCOME HOUSING***

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The provision of more affordable low and moderate income housing in Durango is a major issue among its residents. It was perceived as a high priority by 64% of the residents and was selected as the highest priority by 30% of the residents. The majority of residents supported each of four proposals that the City could use to provide more affordable low and moderate income housing.

Residents expressed their strongest support for *accessory housing* such as granny cottages and garage apartments. Nearly seven out of ten (68%) thought this proposal was a good idea. Support for *accessory housing* was higher among renters (76%) than homeowners (66%). This was the only proposal that was considered a good idea by the majority of both persons who supported (71%) or did not support (55%) the development of low and moderate income housing in their neighborhood. (Refer to Table 6 and Figure 9.)

Six out of ten residents (61%) thought it was a good idea to *require developers to set aside a specific portion of each new residential development for low and moderate income housing even if it increases the cost of the other housing units*. Support for this proposal declines as household income increases. The implication is that support declines as one's housing value increases.

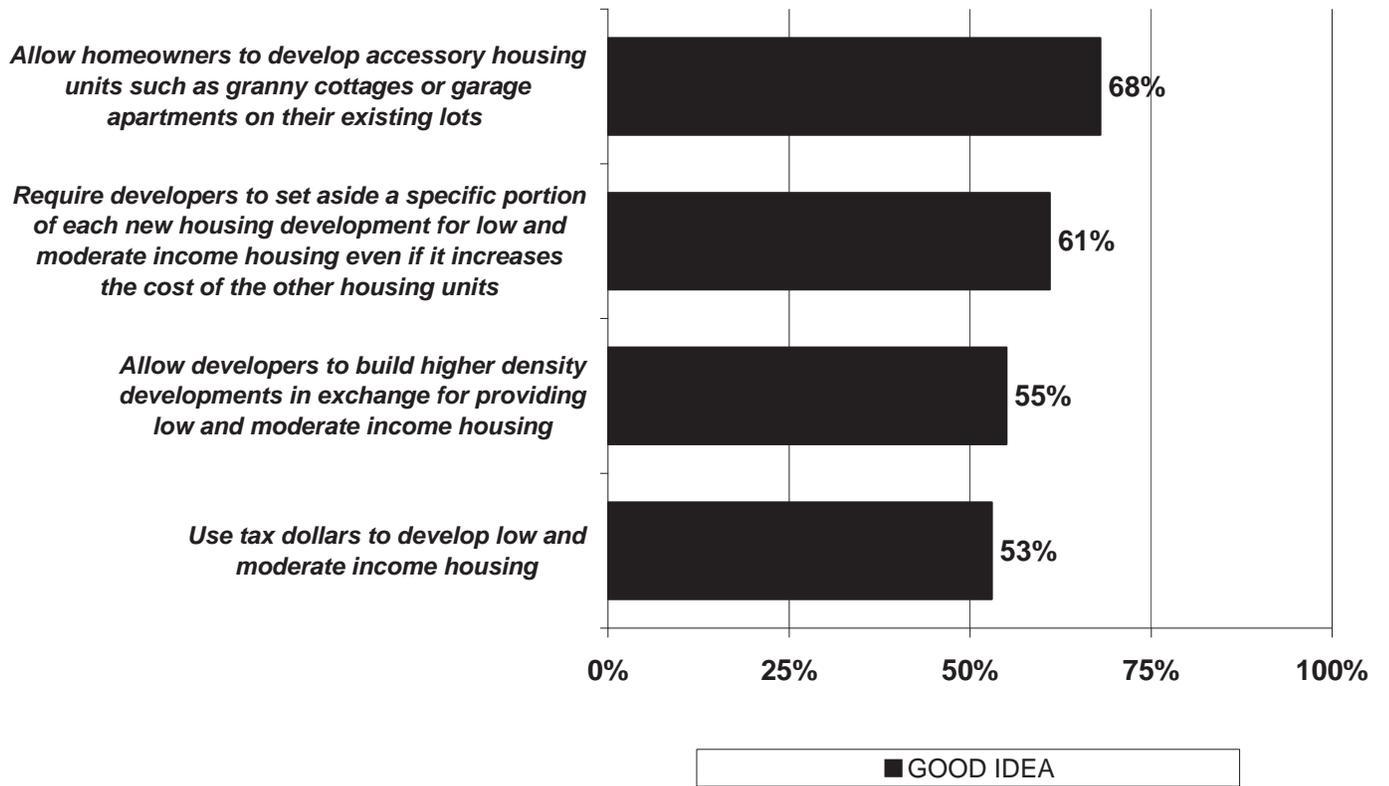
The majority of residents also thought it was a good idea to *allow developers to build higher density developments in exchange for providing low and moderate income housing (55%)* and to *use tax dollars to develop low and moderate income housing (53%)*.

**TABLE 6 PERCEPTIONS ABOUT PROPOSALS TO PROVIDE MORE AFFORDABLE LOW AND MODERATE INCOME HOUSING IN DURANGO**

<u>Proposals</u>	<u>Good Idea</u>	<u>Bad Idea</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>
<i>Allow homeowners to develop accessory housing units such as granny cottages or garage apartments on their existing lots</i>	68%	27%	5%
<i>Require developers to set aside a specific portion of each new housing development for low and moderate income housing even if it increases the cost of the other housing units</i>	61	33	6
<i>Allow developers to build higher density developments in exchange for providing low and moderate income housing</i>	55	40	6
<i>Use tax dollars to develop low and moderate income housing</i>	53	40	7
Base	-----	( 400 )	-----

Source: The Howell Research Group

**FIGURE 9  
PERCEPTIONS ABOUT PROPOSALS TO PROVIDE MORE  
LOW & MODERATE INCOME HOUSING IN DURANGO**



## ***EVALUATION OF NEW DEVELOPMENTS***

---

Respondents were asked to select which one impact should receive the most attention when the City evaluates new residential and commercial developments. Selection of one impact to receive the most attention does not mean that the other impacts are not important to residents.

### **■ *New Residential Developments***

When the City evaluates new residential developments, no single impact is considered most important by a majority of residents. One-fourth (26%) selected *impact on traffic congestion*, while nearly one-fourth (23%) selected *impact on schools*. (Refer to Figure 10.)

One out of five residents (21%) thought that the City should give most attention to the *amount of low and moderate income housing the development will provide*. Smaller percentages thought that the *visual impacts on the community and neighborhood* (14%) and *impacts on parks and open space* (10%) should receive the most attention.

Older residents (55 and older) were more likely (37%) than younger residents (21%) to think *impact on traffic congestion* should receive the most attention. As expected, persons with children under 18 were more likely than persons with no children under 18 to select *impact on schools* (28% vs. 21%) and *impacts on parks and open space* (14% vs. 8%).

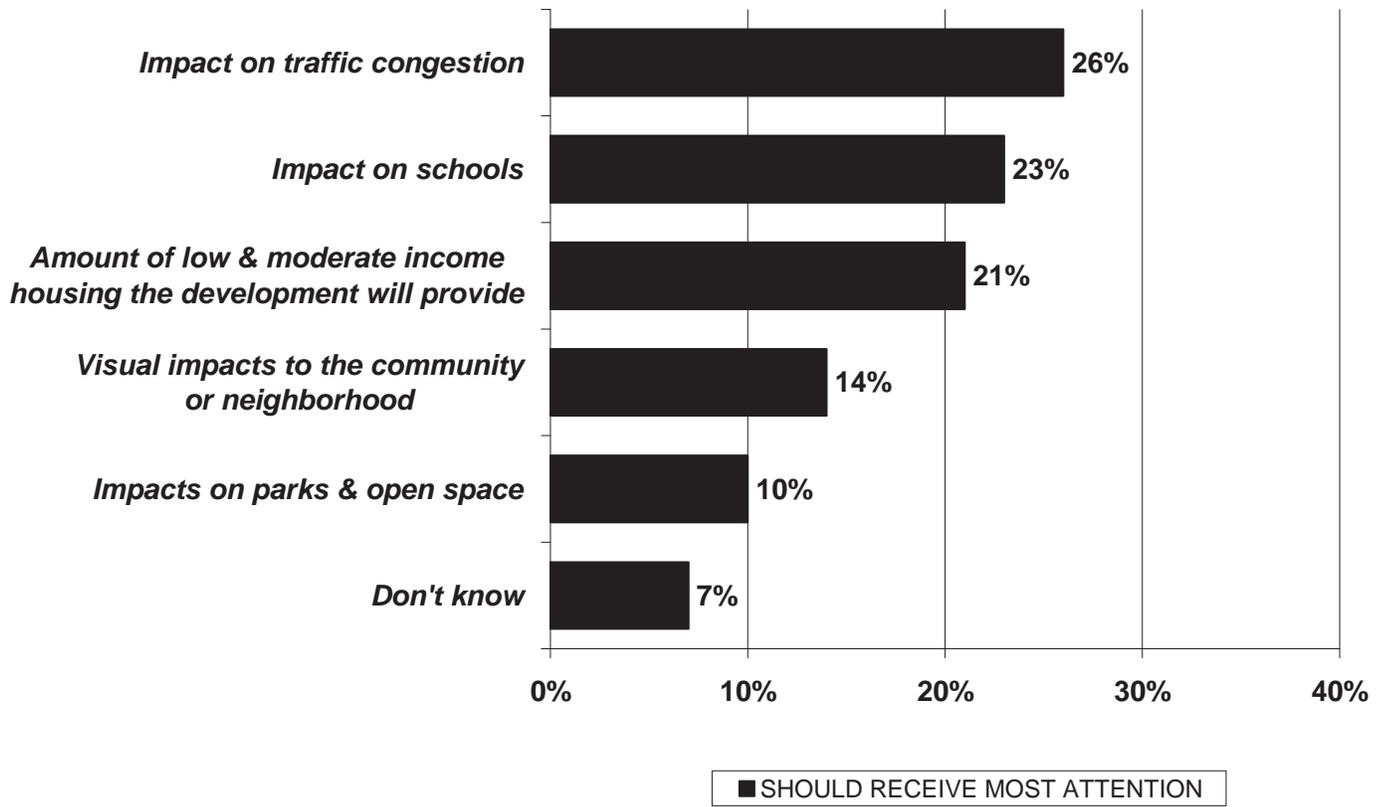
### **■ *New Commercial Development***

When the City evaluates new commercial development, nearly one-half of the residents (49%) thought that the City should give most attention to the *quality of jobs it will generate*. The next most frequently selected impacts were *impact on existing downtown stores and businesses* (17%) and *impact on traffic congestion* (16%). (Refer to Figure 11.)

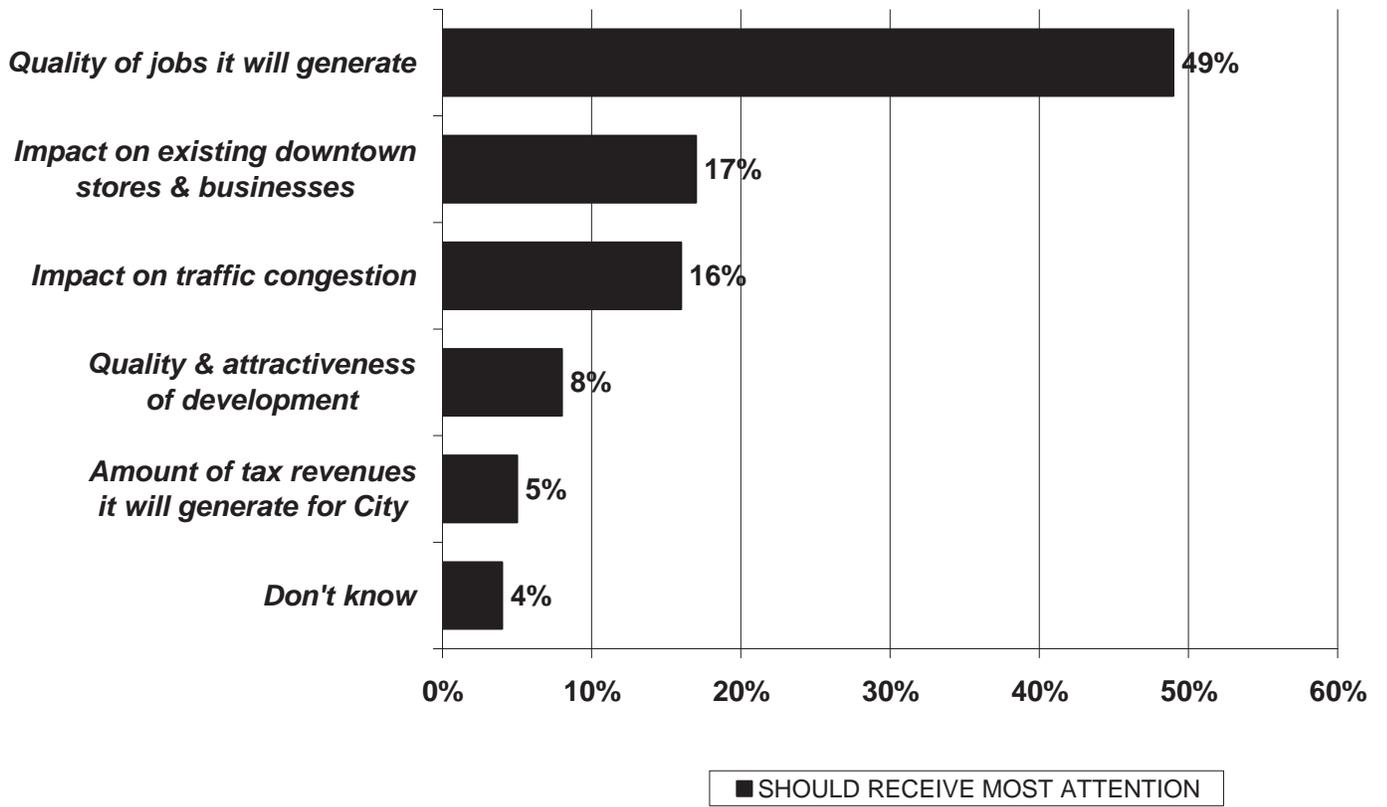
Considered most important by small percentages of residents were *quality and attractiveness of development* (8%) and *amount of tax revenues it will generate for City* (5%).

*Quality of jobs that it will generate* was the most frequently selected impact among all demographic segments.

**FIGURE 10**  
**WHICH ONE IMPACT SHOULD RECEIVE THE MOST ATTENTION**  
**WHEN DURANGO EVALUATES NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS**



**FIGURE 11**  
**WHICH ONE IMPACT SHOULD RECEIVE THE MOST ATTENTION**  
**WHEN DURANGO EVALUATES NEW COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENTS**



## **PERCEPTIONS ABOUT POSSIBLE TOOLS FOR MANAGING FUTURE GROWTH IN DURANGO**

Respondents were asked if they thought each of nine possible tools for managing future growth in Durango was a good or bad idea. Seven out of ten residents (71%) thought *annexation to the City of areas in the County that may develop in the future so that the City can control when and how these areas will develop* was a good idea. Persons living outside the City in the planning area were less likely (55%) to think *annexation* was a good idea than those living within Durango (74%). (Refer to Table 7 and Figure 12.)

Two out of three residents (65%) considered *allowing higher density projects with narrow streets and walkable neighborhoods* to be a good idea for managing future growth. Residents 65 years and older were far less likely (42%) to consider this possible tool a good idea than persons under 65 (70%).

Six out of ten residents thought that *requiring existing employers to implement measures such as staggered work hours, carpooling and alternative transportation modes to alleviate traffic congestion* (61%) and *creating a boundary beyond which no urban development shall occur* (60%) were good ideas.

Nearly six out of ten residents also supported *limiting the number of new dwelling units permitted in any given year* (58%) and *allowing higher density developments on infill areas* (57%). Women were more likely than men to support *limiting the number of new dwelling units permitted* (66% vs. 51%). On the other hand, men were more likely than women to support *allowing higher density developments on infill areas* (66% vs. 47%).

The majority of residents (54%) thought that *prohibiting the extension of City water and sewer service to properties lying outside of the proposed annexation area* to be a good idea for managing future growth. Those living in the City were more likely than those living outside the City to consider this tool a good idea (57% vs. 42%).

Residents were about evenly divided between those who thought *reducing the amount of development currently approved on some vacant land but compensating the land owner for the loss of market value* was a good idea (48%) or a bad idea (44%). Those living outside the City were more likely than those living within the City to consider this tool a good idea (61% vs. 45%).

The majority of residents (53%) thought that *allowing higher density residential development along the Animas River, but still protecting the Animas Greenway and access to the river* was a bad idea for managing future growth. Men were more likely than women (51% vs. 37%) and younger residents under 45 were more likely than residents 45 and older (53% vs. 39%) to think that this was a good idea for managing future growth.

Conventional wisdom would imply that those who do not support the City's policies and actions regarding new growth and development to be more supportive of possible new tools for managing future growth. However, those who do not support the City's current policies were less likely than those who do support the City's policies to support all of the possible tools except one: *limiting the number of new dwelling units permitted in any given year* (60% vs. 59% said it was a good idea).

**TABLE 7 PERCEPTIONS ABOUT POSSIBLE TOOLS FOR MANAGING FUTURE GROWTH IN DURANGO**

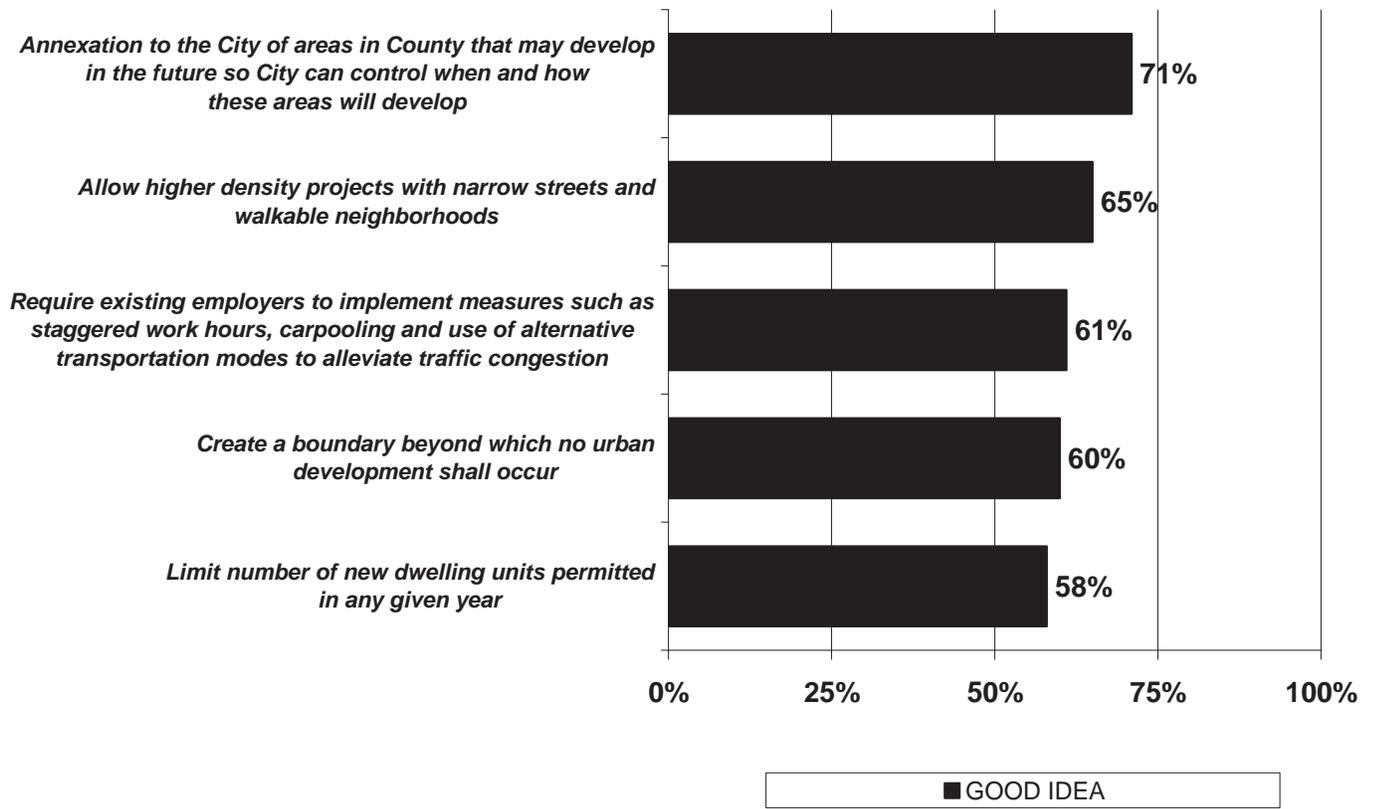
<u>Possible Growth Management Tools</u>	<u>Good Idea</u>	<u>Bad Idea</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>
<i>Annexation to the City of areas in the County that may develop in the future so that the City can control when and how these areas will develop</i>	71%	21%	8%
<i>Allow higher density projects with narrow streets and walkable neighborhoods</i>	65	32	3
<i>Require existing employers to implement measures such as staggered work hours, carpooling and use of alternative transportation modes to alleviate traffic congestion</i>	61	35	4
<i>Create a boundary beyond which no urban development shall occur</i>	60	34	6
<i>Limit the number of new dwelling units permitted in any given year</i>	58	35	7

**TABLE 7 PERCEPTIONS ABOUT POSSIBLE TOOLS FOR MANAGING FUTURE GROWTH IN DURANGO**  
(Continued)

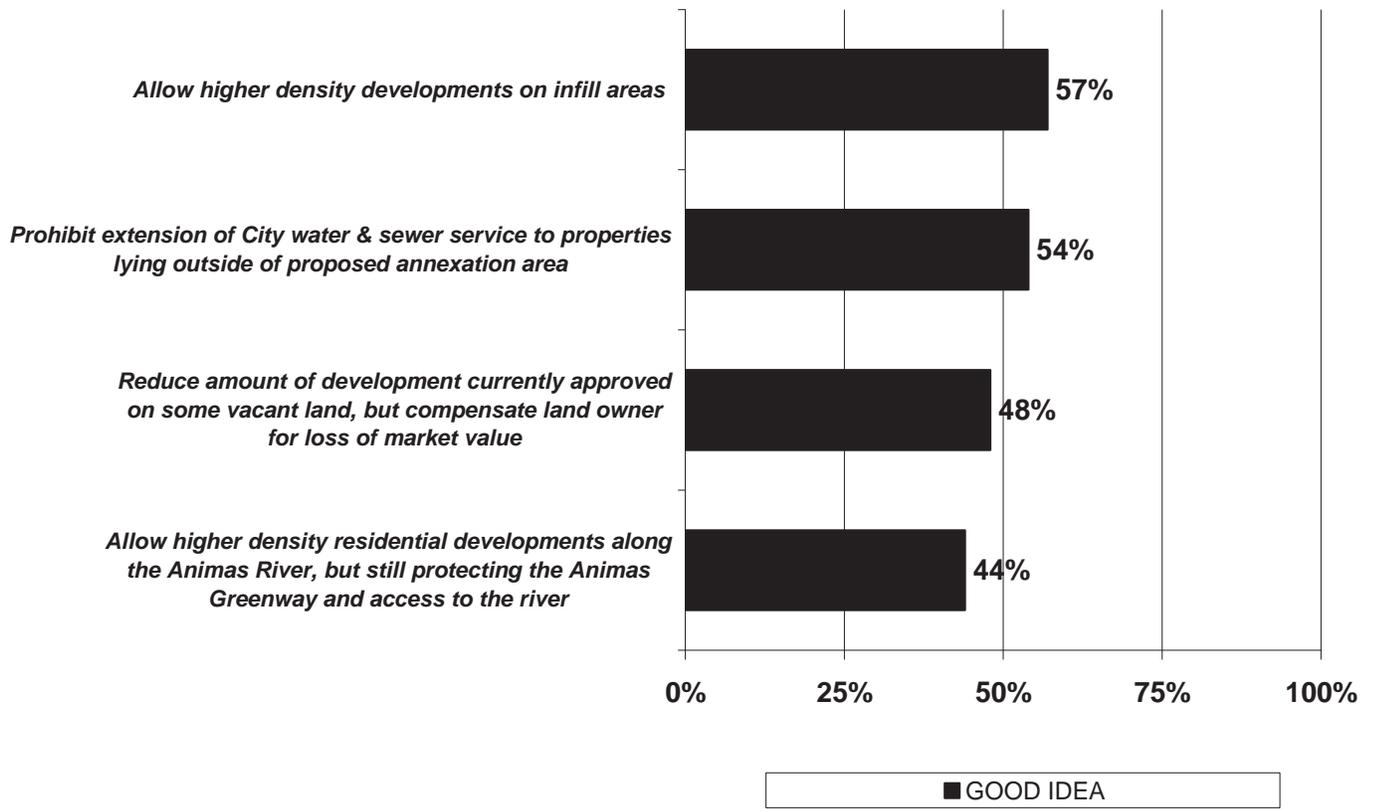
<u>Possible Growth Management Tools</u>	<u>Good Idea</u>	<u>Bad Idea</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>
<i>Allow higher density developments on infill areas. Infill areas are vacant lots surrounded by existing development</i>	57	36	7
<i>Prohibit the extension of City water and sewer service to properties lying outside of the proposed annexation area</i>	54	38	7
<i>Reduce the amount of development currently approved on some vacant land but compensate the land owner for the loss of market value</i>	48	44	8
<i>Allow higher density residential developments along the Animas River, but still protecting the Animas Greenway and access to the river</i>	44	53	3
Base	----- ( 400 ) -----		

Source: The Howell Research Group

**FIGURE 12  
PERCEPTIONS ABOUT POSSIBLE TOOLS FOR  
MANAGING FUTURE GROWTH IN DURANGO**



**FIGURE 12 (Continued)  
PERCEPTIONS ABOUT POSSIBLE TOOLS FOR  
MANAGING FUTURE GROWTH IN DURANGO**



## ***PERCEPTIONS ABOUT CITY OF DURANGO REVENUE SOURCES***

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### **■ *Primary Source of City Funds***

Sales taxes account for approximately 53% of Durango's revenues, while other sources such as fees (9%), property taxes (3%) and federal grants (2%) account for significantly smaller percentages of City revenues. City residents do not have a good understanding regarding the City's revenue sources. When asked which one of these four sources provided *most of the money for the City of Durango to build public facilities and fund the services it provides to its residents*, only 41% selected sales tax. (Refer to Figure 13.)

Although the property tax provides only 3% of City revenues, it was perceived to provide the largest portion by four out of ten residents (39%). Small percentages of residents thought that federal grants (6%) and fees (1%) provided the largest portion of City revenues. A substantial percentage of residents (13%) did not know which source provided most of the City's funds.

Correct awareness that the sales tax provides the largest share of City funds was higher among men than women (48% vs. 35%), longer-term residents (more than 10 years) than shorter-term residents (46% vs. 32%), and persons with household incomes of \$75,000 or more than persons with household incomes less than \$75,000 (57% vs. 34%).

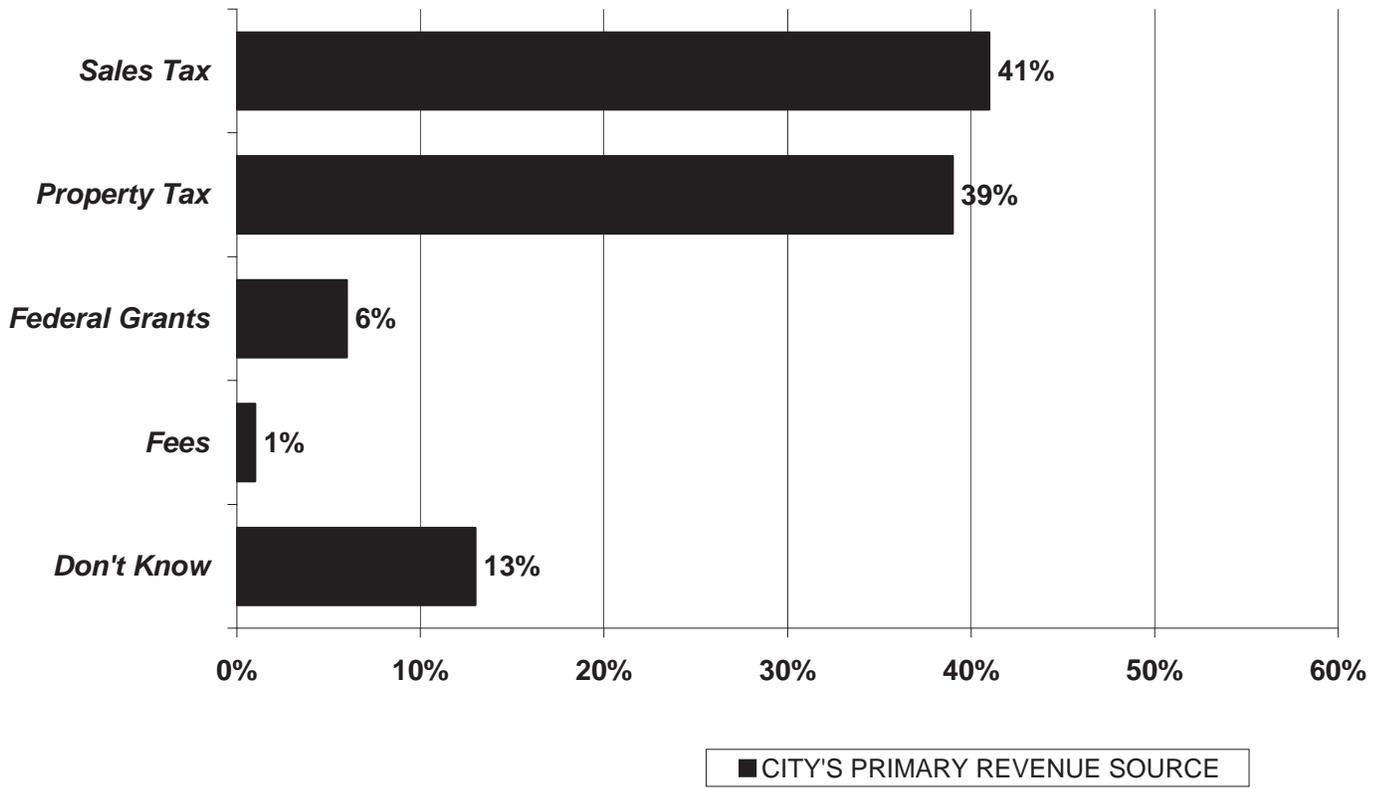
### **■ *Perceptions About City Property Tax***

Durango homeowners pay, on average, approximately \$50 per year in property tax to the City. Most of their property taxes go to the school district and LaPlata County. Awareness of how much property tax is paid to the City is very minimal. Only 7% of the residents thought that the average amount of property tax paid annually to the City was in the correct range of \$50 - \$99. Another 3% thought that the average amount was under \$50. (Refer to Figure 14.)

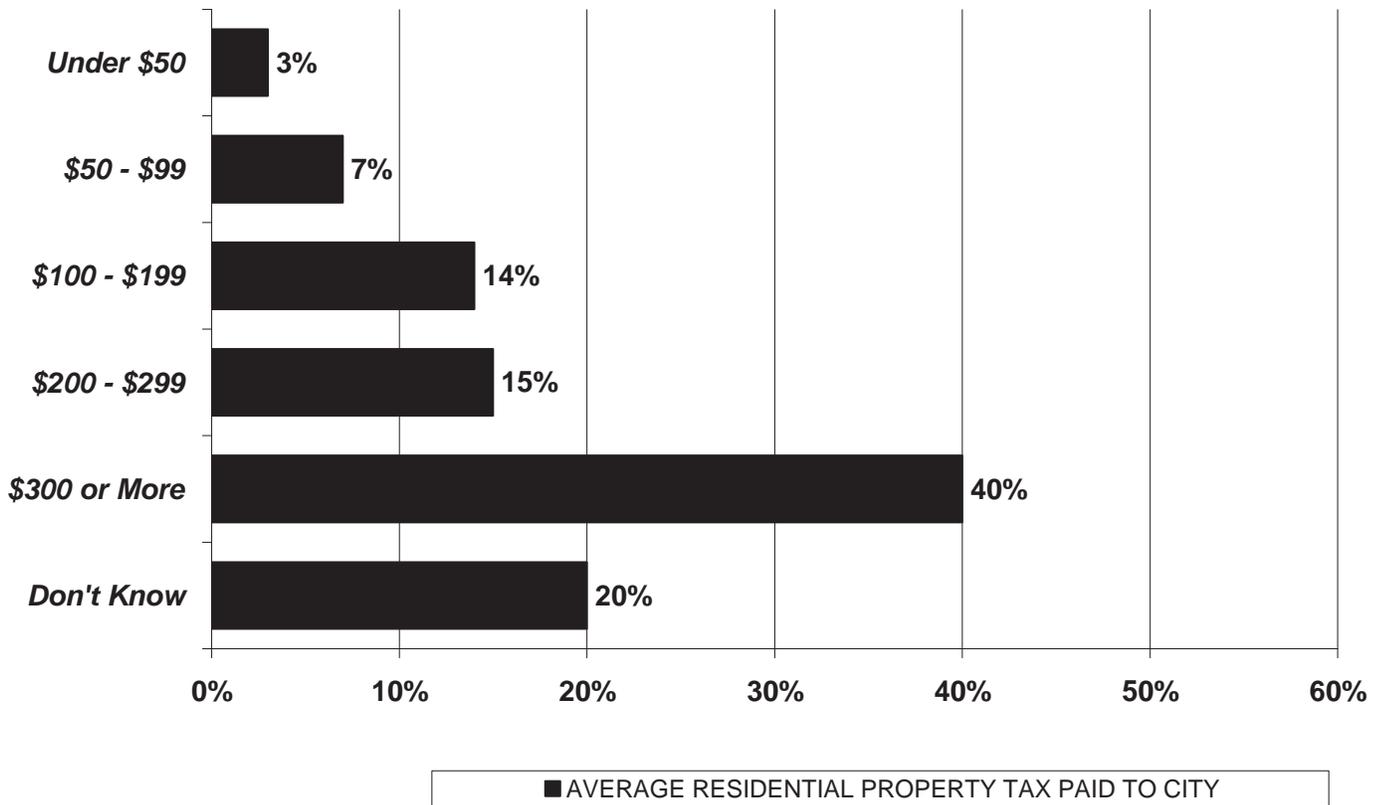
Nearly seven out of ten residents (69%) perceived the average City property tax to be much higher than the actual average. The largest segment of residents (40%) thought that the average City property tax was \$300 or more, while smaller percentages thought it was \$100 - \$199 (14%) or \$200 - \$299 (15%). One out of five residents (20%) didn't have an idea regarding the average City property tax.

Persons living in the City were more likely than those living outside the City to select the correct range for the average City property tax (9% vs. 0%). Interestingly, there was no difference between homeowners (7%) and renters (7%) regarding the correct range.

**FIGURE 13  
PERCEPTIONS ABOUT PRIMARY SOURCE OF CITY FUNDS  
TO BUILD PUBLIC FACILITIES & PROVIDE SERVICES**



**FIGURE 14**  
**PERCEPTIONS ABOUT AVERAGE PROPERTY TAX**  
**PAID TO CITY BY DURANGO HOMEOWNERS**



**DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS**

The demographic characteristics of the survey respondents are profiled in Table 8. The survey respondents represent a good cross-section of Durango Area residents. Although 2006 population age data is not available, it appears that based on the 2000 Census persons 18 – 34 are somewhat under represented in the survey respondents.

**TABLE 8 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS**

Gender

Male		50%
Female		50
	Total	100%
	Base	( 400)

Age

18 – 24		4%
25 – 34		13
35 – 44		20
45 – 54		33
55 – 64		15
65 or older		15
	Total	100%
	Base	( 400)

Marital Status

Married		61
Single		39
	Total	100%
	Base	( 398)

**TABLE 8 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS (Continued)**

Number of Children Under 18 in Household

0		65%
1		15
2		15
3 or more		<u>5</u>
	Total Base	100% ( 399)

Student at Fort Lewis College

Yes		2%
No		<u>98</u>
	Total Base	100% ( 400)

Home Ownership

Own		76%
Rent		<u>24</u>
	Total Base	100% ( 492)

**TABLE 8 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS (Continued)**

Length of Residence in Durango Area (Years)

2 or less		10%
3 – 5		11
6 – 10		16
11 – 15		12
16 – 20		10
21 – 25		8
26 or more		<u>34</u>
	Total*	101%
	Base	( 400)
	Median (Midpoint)	15

Household Income

Under \$15,000		7%
\$15,000 - \$24,999		10
\$25,000 - \$49,999		27
\$50,000 - \$74,999		25
\$75,000 - \$99,999		17
\$100,000 or more		<u>15</u>
	Total*	101%
	Base	( 366)

\* Adds to more than 100% due to rounding.

Source: The Howell Research Group

***APPENDIX A***

Questionnaire Used for 2006  
City of Durango Citizen Survey

## CITY OF DURANGO CITIZEN SURVEY

HELLO, MY NAME IS \_\_\_\_\_ WITH \_\_\_\_\_, A PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH FIRM. WE HAVE BEEN ASKED BY THE CITY OF DURANGO TO CONDUCT A SURVEY OF DURANGO AREA RESIDENTS TO DETERMINE CITIZEN VIEWS ON VARIOUS CITY ISSUES. YOUR PHONE NUMBER HAS BEEN RANDOMLY SELECTED AND YOUR RESPONSES ARE ENTIRELY CONFIDENTIAL.

1. In order to ensure a representative survey sample, may I ask which one of the following categories includes your age? (READ LIST, EXCEPT REFUSED)

Under 18.....	1	(ASK TO SPEAK TO PERSON IN HOUSEHOLD WHO IS 18 OR OLDER, OTHERWISE THANK & TERMINATE)
18-24 .....	2	
25-34 .....	3	
35-44 .....	4	
45-54 .....	5	
55-64 .....	6	
65 or older .....	7	
Refused .....	8	(THANK & TERMINATE)

2. Do you live within the city limits of the City of Durango?

Yes .....	1	
No.....	2	
Don't Know/Refused .....	3	(THANK & TERMINATE)

3. How many years have you lived in the Durango Area? \_\_\_\_\_ Years

(ENTER "0" FOR *LESS THAN 1* AND "999" FOR *REFUSED*)

4. Quality of life is a term often used to describe the overall economic, physical, and social well being of a community. Would you rate the quality of life in Durango as **excellent, good, average, poor** or **very poor**?

Excellent .....	5
Good.....	4
Average .....	3
Poor .....	2
Very Poor.....	1
No Opinion.....	0

5. There are many issues that the City of Durango may address in the next several years. For each issue I read, please tell me if the City should give it a **low priority, medium priority or a high priority.** (READ & ROTATE LIST)

	<u>Low Priority</u>	<u>Medium Priority</u>	<u>High Priority</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>
a. Developing a more diversified economic base.....	1	2	3	0
b. Providing more low and moderate income housing.....	1	2	3	0
c. Providing more parks for active recreation and sports ...	1	2	3	0
d. Maintaining the character of the Main Avenue business district	1	2	3	0
e. Redeveloping Camino del Rio and the Animas River between 9 <sup>th</sup> and 14 <sup>th</sup> Streets	1	2	3	0
f. Improving traffic flow throughout the City	1	2	3	0
g. Providing more public transit for Durango residents .....	1	2	3	0
h. Planning for growth and managing its impacts .....	1	2	3	0

5a. Which one of these issues do you think should receive the City's highest priority? (READ ONLY ITEMS RATED "HIGH PRIORITY" – IF NONE, THEN READ ONLY ITEMS RATED "MEDIUM PRIORITY." IF NO "HIGH" OR MEDIUM" PRIORITIES, ENTER "99" FOR "NONE." ONE RESPONSE ONLY)

\_\_\_\_\_

6. We are interested in your general feelings about Durango growth and development. Please tell me if you **strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree** with each statement I read to you. (READ & ROTATE)

	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Somewhat Agree</u>	<u>Somewhat Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>
a. Traffic congestion within Durango is bad only at peak hours .....	4	3	2	1	0
b. The Durango area has an adequate supply of jobs and employment opportunities for people like yourself.....	4	3	2	1	0
c. You would support the development of low and moderate income housing in your neighborhood.....	4	3	2	1	0
d. Growth is necessary for the City of Durango to be economically healthy over time .....	4	3	2	1	0
e. Growth outside the City in the County contributes significantly to the traffic congestion within Durango.....	4	3	2	1	0
f. Traffic congestion within Durango will improve if we stop growth in Durango.....	4	3	2	1	0
g. If the City of Durango limits future growth, it will still have to deal with the negative impacts of growth outside the City	4	3	2	1	0
h. You support the City of Durango's policies and actions regarding ..new growth and development.....	4	3	2	1	0

(IF Q.6h = "SOMEWHAT DISAGREE" OR "STRONGLY DISAGREE"  
ASK Q.7, OTHERWISE SKIP TO Q.8)

7. What specifically do you NOT support about the City of Durango’s policies and actions regarding growth and development? (PROBE & CLARIFY)

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8. Would you support the passage of City revenue bonds with no increase in property taxes to improve roadways in Durango?

- Yes..... 1
- No ..... 2
- Don’t know ..... 3

9. Do you think the growth in Durango is . . . . . ? (READ LIST THROUGH, EXCEPT “DON”T KNOW”)

- Too slow ..... 1
- About right ..... 2
- A little faster than it should be..... 3
- Much too fast ..... 4
- Don’t know ..... 5

10. Do you think the growth outside the Durango city limits in the County is . . . . . ? (READ LIST THROUGH, EXCEPT “DON”T KNOW”)

- Too slow ..... 1
- About right ..... 2
- A little faster than it should be..... 3
- Much too fast ..... 4
- Don’t know ..... 5

11. If the population of La Plata County is to grow by an additional 35,000 people in the next 20 years, how much of that growth should be accommodated in the City of Durango? Should the City accommodate . . . . . ? (READ LIST THROUGH, EXCEPT “DON”T KNOW”)

- Less than 5,000 ..... 1
- Up to 10,000 ..... 2
- Up to 15,000 ..... 3
- More than 15,000..... 4
- Don’t know ..... 5

12. Various proposals have been made to provide more affordable low and moderate income housing in Durango. For each proposal I read, please tell me if you think it is a **good idea or bad idea**. (READ LIST – DO NOT ROTATE)

	<u>Good Idea</u>	<u>Bad Idea</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>
a. Allow homeowners to develop accessory housing units such as granny cottages or garage apartments on their existing lots .....	1	2	0
b. Allow developers to build higher density developments in exchange for providing low and moderate income housing	1	2	0
c. Require developers to set aside a specific portion of each new housing development for low and moderate income housing even if it increases the cost of the other housing units.....	1	2	0
d. Use tax dollars to develop low and moderate income housing.....	1	2	0

13. When the City of Durango evaluates new residential developments, which one of the following issues should receive the most attention? (READ & ROTATE LIST THROUGH, EXCEPT “DON”T KNOW.” ONE RESPONSE ONLY.)

- a. Visual impacts to the community or neighborhood.....1
- b. The amount of low and moderate income housing the development will provide .....2
- c. Impact on traffic congestion .....3
- d. Impact on schools ..... 4
- e. Impacts on parks and open space .....5
- f. Don't know .....6

14. When the City of Durango evaluates new commercial developments, which one of the following issues should receive the most attention? (READ & ROTATE LIST THROUGH, EXCEPT “DON”T KNOW.” ONE RESPONSE ONLY.)
- a. The quality and attractiveness of the development.....1
  - b. The amount of tax revenues it will generate for the City .....2
  - c. Impacts on traffic congestion .....3
  - d. The quality of jobs that it will generate .....4
  - e. Impact on existing downtown stores and businesses .....5
  - f. Don’t know .....6
15. The City of Durango is evaluating different ways to manage future growth. I will read some of these possible growth management tools and would like to know if you think it is a **good idea** or a **bad idea** for Durango. (READ & ROTATE LIST)

	<u>Good Idea</u>	<u>Bad Idea</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>
a. Annexation to the City of areas in the County that may develop in the future so that the City can control when and how these areas will develop	1	2	0
b. Require existing employers to implement measures such as staggered work hours, carpooling, and use of alternative transportation modes to alleviate traffic congestion.....	1	2	0
c. Create a boundary beyond which no urban development shall occur	1	2	0
d. Limit the number of new dwelling units permitted in any given year.....	1	2	0
e. Reduce the amount of development currently approved on some vacant land but compensate the land owner for the loss of market value	1	2	0
f. Allow higher density projects with narrow streets and walkable neighborhoods	1	2	0

- g. Allow higher density developments on infill areas.  
 Infill areas are vacant lots surrounded by existing  
 development ..... 1 2 0
- h. Allow higher density residential developments along  
 the Animas River, but still protecting the Animas  
 Greenway and access to the river 1 2 0
- i. Prohibit the extension of City water and sewer service  
 to properties lying outside of the proposed  
 annexation area ..... 1 2 0

16. Where do you think most of the money comes from for the City of Durango to build public facilities and fund the services it provides to its residents? Does most come from . . . . .? (READ LIST THROUGH, EXCEPT “DON’T KNOW” - ONE RESPONSE ONLY.)

- Property Tax ..... 1
- Sales Tax..... 2
- Fees..... 3
- Federal Grants ..... 4
- Don’t know ..... 5

17. What do you think is the average amount of property tax paid annually to the City by Durango homeowners? Do not include property taxes paid to the county or to the school district. Is it . . . . ? (READ LIST, EXCEPT “DON’T KNOW.”)

- Under \$50 ..... 1
- \$50 - \$99..... 2
- \$100 - \$199..... 3
- \$200 - \$299..... 4
- \$300 or more ..... 5
- Don’t know ..... 6

MY LAST FEW QUESTIONS ARE ABOUT YOU AND YOUR HOUSEHOLD. THIS INFORMATION IS USED FOR CLASSIFICATION PURPOSES. YOUR ANSWERS ARE COMPLETELY CONFIDENTIAL AND USED ONLY IN COMBINATION WITH OTHERS WHO ARE INTERVIEWED.

18. Do you own or rent your home?

- Own ..... 1
- Rent..... 2
- Refused ..... 3

19. How many children under the age of 18 live in your household? \_\_\_\_\_

20. Are you married or single?

- Married..... 1
- Single ..... 2
- Refused ..... 3

21. Are you a student at Fort Lewis College?

- Yes..... 1
- No ..... 2
- Refused ..... 3

22. As I read the following income groups, please stop me when I reach the one that best represents your total annual household income before taxes. (READ LIST EXCEPT "REFUSED")

- Under 15,000 ..... 1
- \$15,000 - \$24,999..... 2
- \$25,000 - \$49,999..... 3
- \$50,000 - \$74,999..... 4
- \$75,000 - \$100,00..... 5
- \$100,00 or more ..... 6
- Refused ..... 7

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP IN ANSWERING OUR QUESTIONS

23. Gender (BY OBSERVATION)

- Male ..... 1
- Female..... 2

## **APPENDIX G - AREA PLANS**

There are a number of Area Plans listed in Chapter 7 of the Comprehensive Plan; however many of them are not applicable because they focus on property that is annexed and not subject to county land use policies.

CITY OF DURANGO

# GRANDVIEW AREA PLAN

An Element of the  
Durango Comprehensive Plan



Adopted by The  
Durango City Council  
January 2004

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## Executive Summary

In the coming months, the people of Durango and surrounding La Plata County will make annexation decisions that will impact the long-range character of the Grandview area, the City and the County. The decision to annex or not will impact the provision of water and possibly sewer services, transportation and connectivity, density, land use, open space and parks, and a host of other issues that will define how the Grandview area develops in coming years. These are not simple decisions. They must be considered in terms of costs and benefits, impacts, and the desires of the community members most affected by the decision. The City of Durango commissioned this planning effort, the Grandview Area Plan, and several related reports to address these issues.

Several things motivated the City of Durango to initiate this planning effort. One was a request for annexation by a landowner interested in developing a regional retail center. Another is the uncertain future of water availability which has caused some Grandview area residents to explore the idea of annexation. Finally, the pending completion of an analysis feasibility study by the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) for highway improvements to US Highway 160 could dramatically change the traffic and land use patterns of this area.

Once the planning effort began, the Tierra Group LLC purchased two of the largest private properties in the planning area. Together with Mercy Hospital, the Tierra Group LLC is pursuing significant development proposals which include the relocation of the Hospital and hundreds of residential units and commercial development supportive of the Hospital and the new neighborhoods. This recent vision for a sizeable portion of the Grandview planning area also became a substantial influence in development of the plan and plan analysis.

The Grandview Area Plan is a vision for the next 20 years. The Plan attempts to organize the road network and traffic circulation more efficiently and guide future development in a more thoughtful manner than has occurred historically. The Plan also incorporates CDOT proposals for capacity improvements and traffic safety measures for US Highway 160 between US Highway 550 at Farmington Hill and State Highway 172. The proposed Plan includes provisions for a regional retail center and hospital campus, three school sites, roughly 5,467 units of single family and multi family housing, recreational amenities such as a regional park, local parks, pedestrian and bike pathways throughout the study area and extending outside the study area, and street circulation improvements.

Overall, the Plan proposes a greater level of compact development, better organization of land uses and more diverse housing styles than currently exists in the Grandview area. The Plan recommendations affecting future development are intended to promote more efficient use of the land, the creation of open space buffer zones to prevent development from sprawling into the County and a reduction in auto dependency by locating residences near jobs, schools and commerce. The land use recommendations also support a grid pattern of connectivity to encourage local traffic on local streets thereby promoting safety and preserving highway capacity for through trips.

The Grandview Area Plan document is divided into six chapters. The first three chapters are background material: introduction, existing conditions, and a description of the public process that was conducted to gain a community consensus on the issues and concerns of the area prior to drafting the Plan. Two public process sessions were conducted. One week was spent with various area residents at the beginning of this plan effort and another two days were spent with residents after the Tierra Group LLC and the Hospital made their intentions public.

Chapters 4 and 5 of the Plan are the heart of future land use and transportation planning in the Grandview area and contain future land use maps, proposed street hierarchy maps and policy recommendations for the planning area. Because of the large size of the planning area, approximately six square miles and roughly 3,562 acres (excluding right of way), the area was divided into five sub areas. Chapter 4 introduces each sub area, generally describes the existing conditions and details the proposed land uses for that area.

Within Chapter 4, several land planning techniques are discussed to accomplish the goals of the Plan. For example, the Plan recommends the establishment of a Transfer Development Rights (TDRs) program between the City and County. Potential development (typically numbers of dwelling units) is severed from a "sending site" and transferred to a "receiving site." Typically the sending site is an area where limited development is desired and the receiving site is an identified area that has the capacity to support greater levels of development. In the case of the Grandview Area Plan a buffer zone of undeveloped open spaces surrounding the east and south sides of the planning area as well as an area designated as a green buffer along US Highway 160 are recommended as sending sites. The receiving sites are identified for three sub areas in the planning area where infrastructure is proposed to accommodate a greater level of development than currently exists.

Another land use planning technique recommended in Chapter 4 is intended to support the tenets of traditional neighborhood development (TND) in order to support live/work development scenarios, reduce the dependency on the automobile for daily necessities and moderate consumptive land development patterns. It is one of the goals of the community to prevent further sprawl development into the surrounding county.

This Plan and the use of TND reinforce this goal by concentrating and planning for future development and attendant infrastructure within the Grandview planning area. In support of this philosophy, mixed-use and multiple-use land use designations are recommended for several sub areas to foster greater live/work opportunities and to provide existing residents with commercial resources near their neighborhoods. Three new school sites are proposed to support the new neighborhoods, and greater pedestrian amenities and bike path improvement are recommended for the entire planning area.

Finally, Chapter 4 addresses the proposal to relocate Mercy Hospital to the planning area as well as the interest to develop a regional commercial hub near the intersection of High Llama Lane and US Highway 160. The Chapter closes with a series of policy recommendations to implement the goals of the Plan.

Chapter 5, Street Circulation Plan, focuses on the proposed improvements to US Highway 160 and the effects of these improvements on the rest of the planning area. Because US Highway 160 forms the "spine" of this planning area and pending improvements to the highway will have significant impacts upon future development of the area, Chapter 5 and Appendix C suggest methods by which the City and the County can build a partnership with CDOT to facilitate a coordinated approach to highway improvements. Of importance is the recommendation to use existing County Roads 232 and 233 that parallel portions of US Highway 160 as future frontage roads when the highway is improved and access onto the highway is restricted.

In addition, Chapter 5 details recommended transportation improvements outside of the highway corridor. Because significant levels of new development will occur via an annexation and plan review process, the Grandview Area Plan

capitalizes on the City's ability to require a more efficient street circulation pattern that supports local traffic, pedestrian and bike amenities as well as street upgrades to the existing street network. Chapter 5 draws to a close with a series of policies recommended to facilitate the Plan's implementation.

The Coordinated Implementation Plan, Chapter 6, concludes the Grandview Area Plan. Chapter 6 provides policies that lay out a strategy for implementing the Plan and annexations, as well as highlighting several land planning strategies such as the development of a Transfer Development Rights program and special improvement districts.

The use of Intergovernmental Agreements is also recommended to facilitate working relationships with La Plata County to create a coordinated development review process that supports the goals of the Plan for those cases where a property owner is seeking development review prior to annexation. Agreements are also recommended for the provision of sewer services by the South Durango Sanitation District as well as the Loma Linda Sanitation District. Finally, a partnering strategy for CDOT is also recommended to ensure that the City of Durango and La Plata County are working in tandem with CDOT regarding highway improvements for the Planning Area.

Appendix E documents the Fiscal Analysis that was conducted to understand the costs and potential revenues associated with a planning project of this magnitude.

In summary, this is a general plan and site specific land planning should occur on a site specific basis, development by development. However, as the City of Durango contemplates annexation of all or some of this area, the adopted Grandview Area Plan can help shape growth in a manner that is consistent with the goals in this Plan which have been derived from the extensive Design Dialogue

sessions that were conducted with the community as well as goals that were established during the City's Comprehensive Plan process. If the policies recommended in this Grandview Area Plan are followed and consistently applied, this Plan will provide a tool against by which public actions can be measured and private proposals treated equitably.

## 1.0 Introduction

The City of Durango is in the process of evaluating the possible annexation of some or all of the Grandview area of La Plata County. The Grandview area consists of the area east of Farmington Hill straddling US Highway 160 to both the north and the south to the County Road 234 and State Highway 172 intersection. The former Artesian Valley Ranch and surrounding properties in the valley are included within the study area as well as properties north of County Road 233 extending east to County Road 234. South of US 160 the study area extends to County Road 220 and County Road 221. (See Figure 1.1 Map of Study Area)

### 1.1 Purpose of This Plan

The City is conducting this planning analysis as a logical extension of the City's comprehensive planning process, and to respond to recent actions in the area, including: inquiries by property owners regarding annexation and water provision; a proposal for a regional retail center; the potential relocation of Mercy Hospital; and CDOT's ongoing Environmental Impact Statement of U.S. Highway 160, Durango's eastern gateway.

## 1.2 Process for Development of Plan

Development of the Grandview Area Plan is a three-phase process. Phase I was completed in spring of 2001 when the Durango City Council redefined the area as an Urbanizing Area, an area that is anticipated to experience urban development as adequate urban services are provided.

Phase 2 is the creation of the land use plan of the study area for adoption by City Council. The Land Use Plan element of the Grandview Area Plan examines existing land use patterns, and future land use opportunities. A Design Dialogue process was used to maximize public input in the development of the Plan. The Grandview Area Plan focuses on land use and transportation. A fiscal impact and growth financing plan is found in Appendix C. A municipal utility plan is being developed by the City's Public Works Department and will be a separate report.

Phase 3 of the process will include use of the adopted Grandview Area Plan in negotiations with landowners seeking annexation. The City may also use the Grandview Area Plan to comment on the CDOT Environmental Impact Statement for Highway 160 expansion and to inform discussions with CDOT regarding interim improvements.



Figure 1.1 The Grandview Area, circa 2004

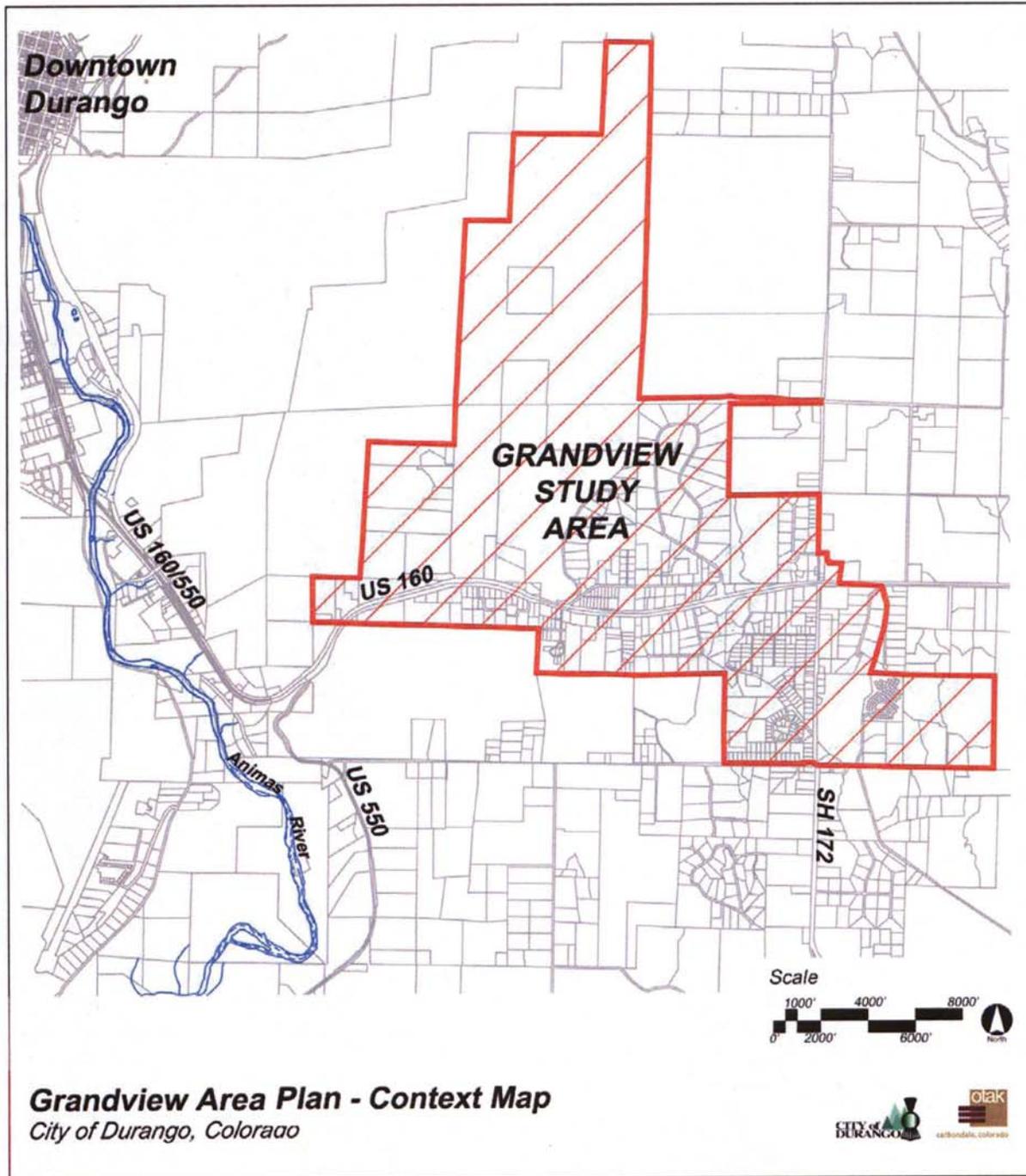


Figure 1.2 Map of the Study Area

## 1.3 City of Durango Comprehensive Plan Goals

The proposed Land Use Plan and the planning process for the Grandview Area Plan is consistent with the goals of the City of Durango Comprehensive Plan. Analysis of potential annexations must consider whether City policy can guide future development in a manner that is compatible and consistent with the goals of the City.

**Goal 1:** To maintain or improve the quality of Durango's natural resources.

**Goal 2:** To maintain Durango's views of natural hillsides and mountains.

**Goal 3:** To protect sensitive floodplains, hillsides, wetlands and wildlife habitat from inappropriate development.

**Goal 4:** To maintain and enhance the diverse, small town character of Durango.

**Goal 5:** To retain or enhance the aesthetic value of Durango's natural and built environments.

**Goal 6:** To encourage public awareness and participation in community activities.

**Goal 7:** To establish land use patterns that are coordinated with and make the most efficient use of community facilities while allowing for equitable funding strategies.

**Goal 8:** To encourage the development of a variety of housing types for community residents.

**Goal 9:** To promote the provision of adequate affordable housing opportunities for community residents.

**Goal 10:** To promote a healthy, sustainable, balanced economy that capitalizes on the community's natural, recreational, cultural and human resources.

**Goal 11:** To preserve and enhance historic and cultural resources that symbolize the community's identity and uniqueness.

**Goal 12:** To maintain a transportation system that safely and efficiently meets the needs of residents, businesses and visitors.

**Goal 13:** To provide employees, residents and visitors with realistic opportunities to use alternative modes of transportation.

**Goal 14:** To balance the demand for expanding urban development with the efficient provision of facilities and services.

**Goal 15:** To maintain a system of open space throughout the planning area that serves as a visual and recreational amenity, and provides sufficient habitat to sustain healthy wildlife populations.

**Goal 16:** To develop and maintain an interconnected system of parks, trails and other recreational facilities.

**Goal 17:** To develop and maintain a trail system throughout the planning area that serves as a recreational amenity.

**Goal 18:** To foster cost-effective public services and facilities that enhance the lives of community residents.

## 2.0 Overview of Grandview Study Area

### 2.1 Existing Conditions

The Grandview study area comprises approximately six square miles of land extending east from the existing City of Durango boundary along the north and south sides of US Highway 160 (US 160) between US Highway 550 (US 550) and State Highway 172 (SH172).

The study area is on the doorstep of the Florida Mesa, a productive farming/ranching area in La Plata County. The area is comprised of gentle rolling hills on stair-stepped mesa terrain. High desert vegetation with pinion/juniper forest is interspersed throughout with agricultural open areas. The Grandview Ridge bounds the study area to the west. The eastern edge is less defined, with low density residential subdivisions interspersed in a rural/agricultural landscape.

Although agricultural land uses have historically defined the Florida Mesa, the Grandview area has evolved into an eclectic pattern of land uses including residential, light industry and small local commercial activity. Development is concentrated along US 160 and SH 172 with transition into large lot residential developments. Small lot residential subdivisions are scattered throughout the landscape. The surrounding land is rural and agricultural in nature, but is under constant pressure from development. There are a few undeveloped large tracts remaining, such as the former Artesian Valley Ranch and the Crader property. Several locally serving commercial outlets such as a convenience store, a gas station, and a liquor store dot key intersections. An elementary school and fire station are located near the intersection of US 160 and SH 172.

The South Durango Sanitation District and the Loma Linda Sanitation District provide sewer

service to the majority of properties within the study area. When this annexation analysis was initiated, the Vallecito Water Company was planning to create a water district that would serve the Grandview area, but an inability to obtain financing led to the Water Company proposals' demise. At the time of this publication, La Plata County has approved the formation of a new water district, subject to a general election vote in November, 2004. No analysis of this water districts' impacts on this plan has as yet been conducted.

Oil and gas wells are found throughout the study area. Drilling windows are also mapped. According to the oil and gas activity map provided by La Plata County, there are approximately 17 gas wells and 12 drilling windows within the Grandview study area. The Fruitland Outcrop, a source of methane gas, lies underneath the Grandview Ridge. During the Design Dialogue, oil and gas interests pointed out that the State of Colorado Oil and Gas Commission regulates extraction and there is approximately a 50-year supply in this area. However, industry representatives believe that the gas industry can co-exist with future development. Currently in Durango, the city's oil and gas regulations allow for such installations only in the Industrial zone district. As property is annexed into the City, the City will need to regulate oil and gas drilling.

Gravel resources found in the Grandview Ridge are estimated to be a 60-year supply. Current gravel extractions are located on private property and expansion into BLM land is being contemplated. Access to one active quarry is currently off of US 160 west of High Llama Lane. The commingling of gravel trucks with general traffic poses some concerns.

#### 2.1.2 Current Conditions in the Grandview Study Area

The 2000 population of the Grandview planning area is 923 people. There are 442 known

residential units in Grandview. Historically, the Florida Mesa area has been rural and agricultural in character. It has been the largest and most productive agricultural area in La Plata County. However, in recent years, its proximity to Durango, highway access and the large, open flat areas have made it attractive for residential and commercial development. County land use policies in the recent past hastened that transition in the area by making it easy to subdivide to three (3) acre lots through the Minor Exempt Subdivision process. That process was significantly revised in the late 1990's, making fewer properties eligible to use that process. Still, State law allows parcels of 35 acres or greater to be subdivided without local approval and many farm holdings have been dispersed using that method.

Water is a key issue for development in Florida Mesa. Development is dependent on wells. A

recent study by the US Geologic Survey quoted in the County's Florida Mesa Land Use Plan states that the wells in the area are dependent upon water that percolates into the ground, the largest portion of which comes from irrigation water from farming. As more and more farms are lost to subdivision development and therefore less area is irrigated for agricultural use, water problems will become more apparent.

Another key issue identified in the County's Florida Mesa Land Use Plan is the potential for scattered commercial development to proliferate given the lack of traditional zoning. It is feared that this will undermine the rural character of the area. In addition, population growth brought on by the increasing residential and commercial development in the district is pressuring the County's road system.

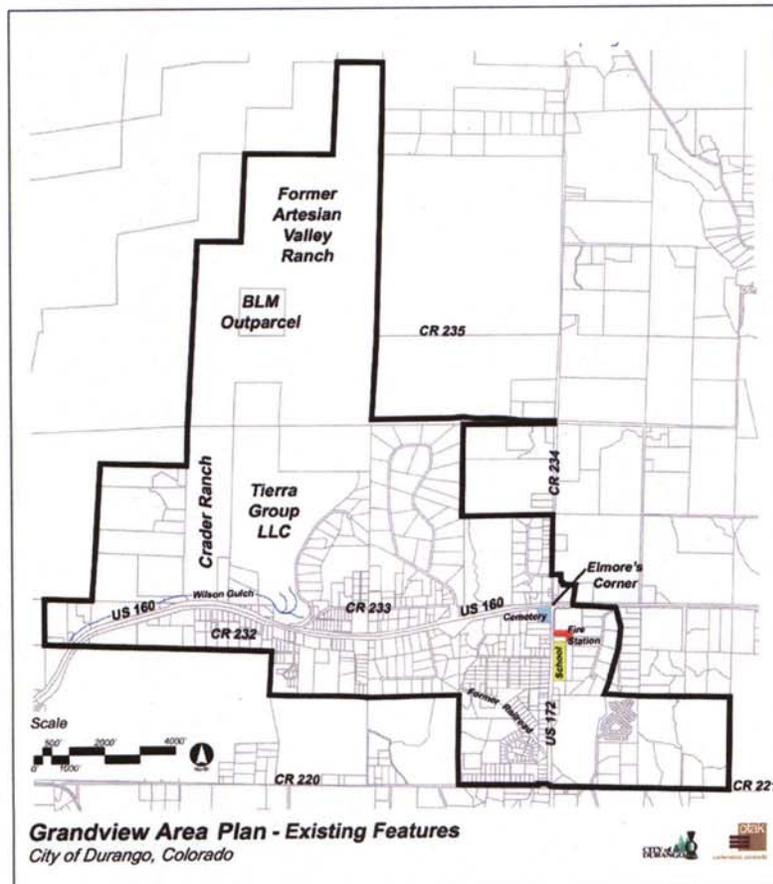


Figure 2.1 Existing Features in Study Area

## 2.1.3 La Plata County Demographics

La Plata County is comprised of 1,083,085 acres (1,692sq. miles). Of these 43% are private lands, 16% are tribal lands (Southern Ute and Ute Mountain Ute), and 41% are state and federal lands. The foremost issue that the county currently faces is population growth. Implications of growth include increased demand for services; infrastructure needed to serve development; changes to the environment; and impacts on the overall quality of life in the county. This information was provided by Southwest Colorado Access Network.

### 2.1.3.1 Population

In 2000 the county's population was 43,941. According to the 2000 Census the median age was 35.6. Males comprised 51% and females comprised 49% of the total population. The average household size was 2.43 people.

	<u>Total</u>
<b>Residential Units</b>	442
<b>Land Use by Acreage</b>	
Commercial	134
Agricultural	1828
Mixed Comm/Lt Industrial	92
Single Family	1445
Other & Exempt	63
Total Acres w/o ROW	3562

These numbers represent the amount of acreage devoted to a specific land use as identified by the county Assessor.

**Table 2.1 Existing Land Use & Dwelling Units in the Grandview Study Area**

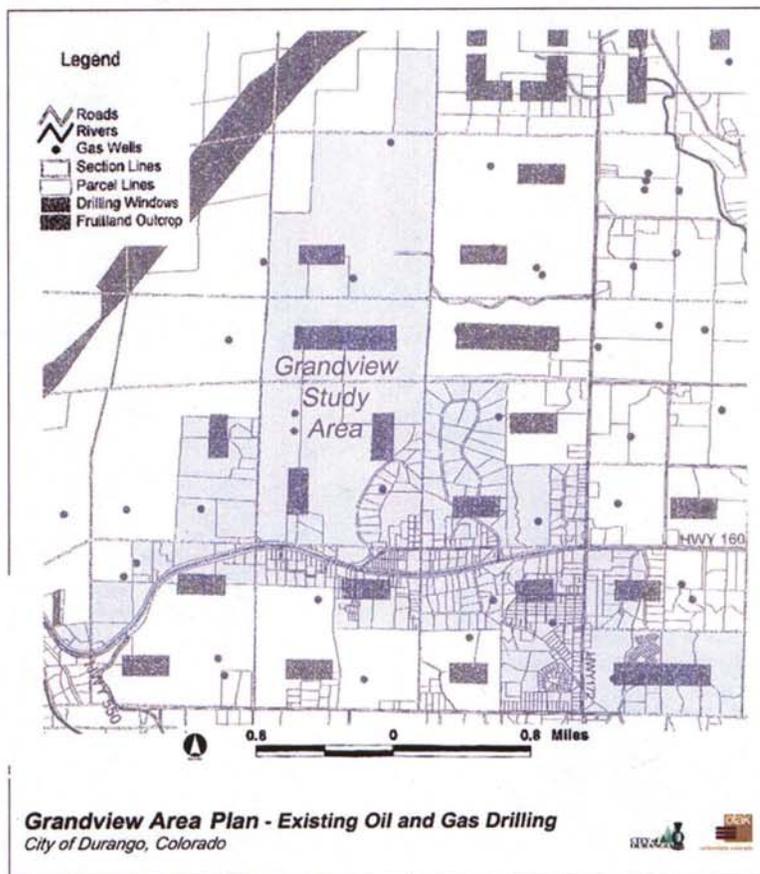


Figure 2.2 Oil & Gas Well Activity in Study Area

Between 1990 and 2000, La Plata County averaged 3.61% annual growth. The City of Durango grew by an average of 1.27% annually, and is experiencing rapid expansion of infrastructure such as transportation and water use in newly annexed areas. The Town of Bayfield is growing quickly as well. A primary goal for Bayfield is to provide for orderly growth in a way that does not adversely affect the community's small town character, while providing the infrastructure for expansion. In the Town of Ignacio population has been slowly declining but with the advent of casino gambling on the Southern Ute Reservation and other expanding tribal enterprises, that trend is likely to reverse. As residents of these two communities commute through the Grandview area to reach jobs and amenities in Durango, the growth and land use policies of these communities impacts the larger planning area.

### 2.1.3.2 Housing

According to the 2000 Census there were 20,765 housing units in La Plata County. Of these 83.5% were occupied and 16.5% were vacant. Of the total there were 12% used for seasonal, recreational or occasional use. In 1999 (latest figures available) only about 57% of families would be able to purchase a median priced home of \$154,450 in rural La Plata County. In Durango, about 57% of families would be able to purchase a median priced home of \$153,500. In Bayfield about 65% of families would be able to purchase a median priced home of \$122,650. In Ignacio about 78% of families would be able to purchase a median priced home \$72,000 [Source: Operation Healthy Communities].

### 2.1.3.3 Livable Wages

Operation Healthy Communities (OHC) has determined that in 2000 a minimum of \$9.67/hr provided a livable wage in Durango, \$9.32/hr in Bayfield, and \$9.32 in Ignacio for a single person renting a one- bedroom apartment. The median family income for La Plata County was estimated at

\$50,994 [Source: Housing and Urban Development].

### 2.1.3.4 Economic Trends

Historically, La Plata County developed as a result of resource extraction, including minerals and timber, and ranching. Since the 1970's La Plata County has been in transition from a traditional rural county to a more urban environment in which tourism is the current number one industry. People moving in for quality of life issues or "amenity migration" drove population growth in the 1990's.

Within La Plata County, Durango has developed as a tourist crossroads and regional trade center. Bayfield has served as a supply town and social center for area farmers and ranchers, and more recently as a bedroom community for Durango. Ignacio serves as a supply center for the surrounding reservation and ranches and is a crossroads for the gas and oil industry. The Southern Ute Tribal Headquarters is located just north of the town limits and provides administration and services to tribal members.

Data for Bayfield and Ignacio are relevant to the Plan because residents and visitors from both communities must travel through the Grandview area to access the City of Durango.

### 2.1.3.5 Income and Employment

In 2000 Total Personal Income (TPI) in La Plata County was estimated at \$1,209,549,000. Per Capita Personal Income (PCPI) was estimated at \$27,527.

The largest proportion (65%) of TPI is generated through employment earnings. Retired persons collect benefits that account for 12% (\$148,351,000) of TPI in La Plata County. Retirees make significant contributions to the economy by purchasing goods and services with income from outside sources (i.e. transfer

payments), bringing "new" money to circulate in the local economy. This new money also creates employment opportunities. The amenities that follow these individuals - higher end housing, fine restaurants, golf courses, and increased shopping opportunities- are on the rise.

The composition of the economy supports a low unemployment rate although seasonal fluctuations are generally seen in the winter months. The unemployment rate is going down, but still is not on a par with state unemployment rates. However, current figures are not available since the latest downturn in the Colorado economy.

The Center for Business and Economic Forecasting (CBEF) estimates that in 2000 there were 900 people commuting out of the county for work, and 5,559 people commuting into the county for work.

Wage and employment information can be used to measure the strength of the various economic sectors. The ratio of earnings to employment indicate which sectors are high earning sectors, on average, compared to those sectors which generate lower earnings.

About \$420.6 million (35%) comes into La Plata County as new dollars being drawn into the local economy through direct base industries such as regional goods and services (i.e. tourism) as well as government payments to retirees and others. Jobs relating to tourism, including those in construction and real estate, account for 25% (7,929) of total employment and 19% (\$146,158,000) of total employment income. Indirect base (supporting) industries account for another \$223.2 million (18.5%). Residential services provide about \$565.7 million (47%) in the local economy. Again, these numbers do not reflect the recent downturn in the state's economy.

## 2.2 Report Abstracts

Over the past several years a significant portfolio of information on the Grandview area has been developed. In addition to the City and County Plans, consultant reports and studies have documented the priorities and values of residents in La Plata County. This background information was intended to provide a starting place for the Area Plan. The documents that were identified include:

- Florida Mesa District Land Use Plan
- City of Durango Parks Open Space and Trails Master Plan
- 1997 Comprehensive Plan For The City of Durango
- La Plata County Trails Plan 2000
- Alternative Alignment Screening Report: US160 Conceptual Design
- The City of Durango Planning & Community Development LUDC – Chapter 27

A summary of these documents has been completed and is found in Appendix A.

Additional related background information was obtained from CDOT consultant URS Corporation, local newspaper articles, January 9, 2001 Council Study Session Documentation and other information from City and County officials.

## 3.0 Public Process

### 3.1 The Design Dialogue

The City of Durango and their consultant, Otak, undertook a public process designed to engage community stakeholders in a discussion that would shape the land use plan and inform the process as a whole. Otak conducted two series of meetings where citizens who had a common interest in the study area were asked to participate and interact with the planning and design team in small group sessions, a process known as a "Design Dialogue". These short but intense work sessions are designed to allow stakeholder groups to participate with the design and decision making process up front. During these meetings the team recorded the input and illustrated plan concepts from the discussions, so that the ideas, suggestions and comments gathered could be developed into the final Grandview Area Plan. At the end of the series of meetings, an open house was held to present and confirm the concepts already received.

Two sets of Design Dialogue meetings were held. The first weeklong series of meetings was held in September of 2001. The design dialogue process culminated in an open house on September 11, 2001 as well as a presentation in a joint work session with the City Council and the Board of County Commissioners. A report, Grandview Area Plan Design Dialogue Report – September 11, 2001, was prepared for the joint work session that summarized the process to date and included all public comments that were recorded during the five days of meetings with community members. Due to the unfortunate timing of the open house and work session, a second set of meetings was held in November 2001.

While Otak was completing the draft land use plan and conducting the fiscal analysis of annexation, the ownership of the two largest parcels within the

study area (the Mason and Artesian Valley Ranch properties) changed hands. As a result, the City requested a supplemental revision of the draft plan with community stakeholders in order to predict more accurately the cost and benefits of annexation of the new development as proposed. A second series of Design Dialogue meetings was therefore held on August 26 and 27 of 2002. A report, The Grandview Area Plan Supplemental Design Dialogue Report – August 29, 2002, was prepared and presented at a joint meeting with the City Council, Board of County Commissioners and Planning Commissioners.

### 3.2 Design Dialogue Process and Participants

The City of Durango realizes that a successful outcome will involve a partnership between the public and private sectors and between the City, County and State governments. In such partnerships, public sector decision-makers desire to make informed decisions based on the best available information and after hearing from their constituents.

From September 6 to September 10, 2001 the project team held a series of meetings with groups of stakeholders who have like interests. This allowed the opinions of all parties to be heard in a constructive and non-confrontational atmosphere. During these Design Dialogue meetings the design team integrated the input of diverse parties into a plan concept through a combination of drawings and text.

A similar community dialogue was conducted in August 2002.

#### 3.2.1 Participants

The following stakeholder groups, as identified by city staff and confirmed by City Council, were invited to participate in the Design Dialogue Process:

- Grandview Area Plan Steering Committee
- CDOT and URS, the consultant for Highway 160 planning
- Bureau of Land Management
- State Department of Wildlife
- Gravel and oil and gas interests
- Grandview area small businesses
- Owners of undeveloped property in the Southfork area
- Representatives of the Durango design community
- Owners of property with frontage on Highway 160
- Owners of undeveloped property in Grandview
- South Grandview area neighborhood leadership
- North Grandview area neighborhood leadership
- County Road 220/221/222 and Highway 172 area neighborhood leadership
- Durango area housing advocates
- Durango area environmental community representatives
- Florida Mesa Planning Committee
- Special Districts (Sewer, Water, School, Ditch Company)
- Parks & Forestry Board, Trails 2000, Regional Park Committee
- City and County staff
- The general public
- La Plata County either adopts the Plan or agrees that it is an acceptable Plan.
- Project stakeholders and other community members acknowledge that they have been afforded ample opportunity to participate in the plan-generation process.
- All properties that are eligible for annexation eventually annex into the City of Durango.
- The City and Water District agree on specific service boundaries and service is provided to properties.
- Key open space in the Grandview Area is preserved and accessible for public use.
- Regional commercial uses are contributing tax revenue to the City.
- Growth does not cost the City of Durango more than the revenue generated by the growth.
- Streetscape amenities and transportation management measures are implemented.
- The proposed realignment of the intersection of Highways 160/550 has a design approved that provides for highway safety, pedestrian and bicycle safety and addresses access needs and aesthetics to the community's general satisfaction.
- Improvements to the Highway 160 corridor are completed in a manner beneficial to the City and the property owners.
- Gravel operations on the BLM property generate no new impacts to area residents or local traffic conditions.

### 3.3 Measures of Success

Project stakeholders and other community members that participated in planning for the Grandview Area Plan should be able to track the success of their work with quantifiable measures. The Grandview Area Plan will be a success when/if:

- The Durango City Council and Planning Commission adopt the Plan

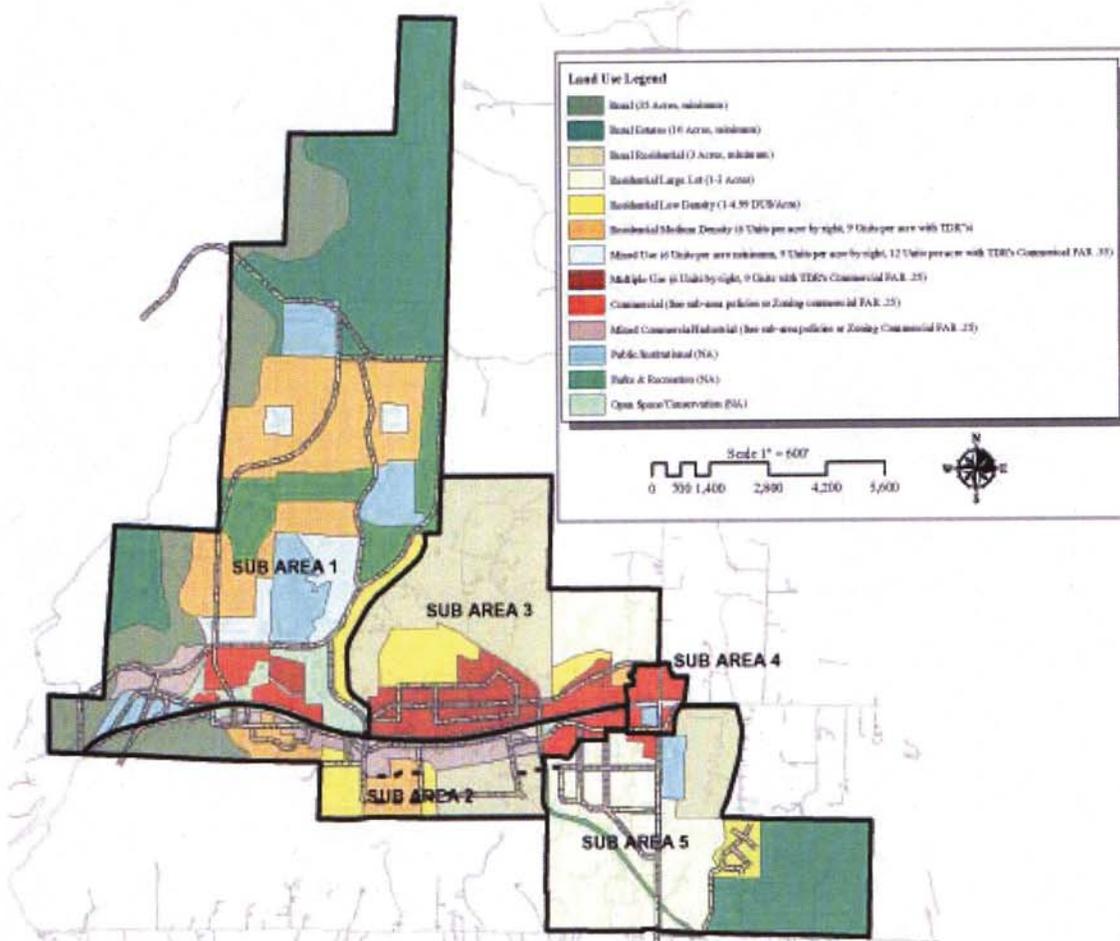
For complete details on each of the Design Dialogue sessions, please refer to the reports generated for those meetings found in Appendix B.

## 4.0 Land Use Plan

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes existing land use patterns, opportunities for change, and general land use recommendations for the Grandview area. The study area is divided into five sub areas for review of existing and future land uses. Figure 4.1 illustrates the five sub areas of the Grandview planning area. This Land Use Plan is to be used as a tool to guide future growth decisions within the area.

The Land Use Plan element first reviews the general land use opportunities that are applicable to the entire study area. This chapter then describes each sub area, the existing conditions, and the proposed land uses for build out. Comments and concerns expressed by participants in the Design Dialogue processes are woven throughout the Plan and played a significant role in the outcome of this Plan. Although the policies from the City of Durango's Comprehensive Plan are relevant for this Plan and remain applicable, new policies are recommended to ensure implementation of the Land Use Plan.



## 4.2 Existing Conditions and Future Land Use

Table 4.1 displays, by sub areas, existing land use by acres as well as the approximate number of dwelling units that exist in the planning area. These numbers represent the amount of acreage devoted to a specific land use as identified by the County Assessor.

Table 4.1 Existing Conditions by Sub Area

	<u>Sub Area I</u>	<u>Sub Area II</u>	<u>Sub Area III</u>	<u>Sub Area IV</u>	<u>Sub Area V</u>	<u>Total</u>
<b>Residential Units</b>	20	84	107	2	229	442
<b>Land Use by Acreage</b>						
Commercial	37	54	17	18	8	134
Agricultural	1514	0	129	0	185	1828
Mixed Comm/Lt Industrial	64	6	5	0	17	92
Single Family	157	295	550	0	443	1445
Other & Exempt	0	41	2	0	20	63
<b>Total Acres w/o ROW</b>	1772	396	703	18	673	3562

Table 4.2 charts the proposed lands uses and their acreage, commercial and industrial square feet of floor area, and the number of dwelling units all by sub area.

Table 4.3 is a table of the land use definitions for the proposed land uses in the Grandview Area Plan.

Table 4.2 Proposed Land Uses by Sub Area

<b>Land Use by Acre at Build Out</b>	<b>Sub Area I</b>	<b>Sub Area II</b>	<b>Sub Area III</b>	<b>Sub Area IV</b>	<b>Sub Area V</b>	<b>Total</b>
Residential	1184	255	526	0	642	2607
Commercial	45	39	32	14	0	130
Mixed Use	88	0	0	0	0	88
Multiple Use	13	0	132	0	0	145
Mixed Commercial/Light Industrial	37	74	0	0	0	111
Hospital	60	0	0	0	0	60
Schools	40	0	0	0	19	59
Public Facilities	31	0	0	4	0	35
Parks/Open Space/Conservation	274	28	13	0	12	327
<b>Total Acres</b>						<b>3562</b>
<b>Proposed New Dwelling Units</b>						
Low Density	253	184	385	0	305	1127
Medium Density/Multiple Use	2954	0	462	0	0	3416
Mixed Use	924	0	0	0	0	924
<b>Total Dwelling Units</b>	4131	184	847	0	305	<b>5467</b>
<b>Proposed New Square Feet of Non-residential Floor Area</b>						
Commercial	490050	424710	348480	152460	0	1415700
Mixed Use	1341648	0	0	0	0	1341648
Multiple Use	70785	0	718740	0	0	789525
Mixed Commercial/Light Industrial	402930	805860	0	0	0	1208790
Hospital	653400	0	0	0	0	653400
School	261360	0	0	0	124146	385506
<b>Total Square Feet</b>	3220173	1230570	1067220	152460	124146	5794569

Table 4.3 Grandview Land Use Categories and Definitions

Land Use	Density / Size Restrictions	Description
Rural	35 acres, minimum	Private land that will remain in parcels of 35 or more acres. Most of these parcels will receive no urban level services.
Rural Estates	10 acres, minimum	Private land that will remain in parcels of 10 or more acres. Most of these parcels will receive no urban level services.
Rural Residential	3 acres, minimum	Private land that will consist of lots typically served by wells and/or septic systems.
Residential - Large Lot	1 to 3 acres	Single family residential lots which typically are served by a public water and/or wastewater system.
Residential - Low density	1 to 4.99 DUs per acre	Single family residential lots ranging from 6,000 SF to 1 acre that receive full urban services. As policies are refined, this land use may be defined to include other dwelling types.
Residential - Medium Density	6 units per acre by right, 9 units per acre with TDR's	Single family residential lots smaller than 6,000 SF. Other dwelling types, including duplexes, triplexes, patio homes, mobile home parks, apartments and town homes permitted.
Mixed Use	6 units per acre minimum, 9 units per acre by right, 12 units per acre with TDR's Commercial FAR .35	A mix of residential and neighborhood serving commercial uses are combined in a single building or on a single site in an integrated development project with significant functional interrelationships and a coherent physical design.
Multiple Use	6 units by right, 9 units with TDR's Commercial FAR .25	Permits low intensity retail, neighborhood service, office and multi-family residential uses that are compatible with residential development. Also allows the development of a mixed use development.
Commercial	See sub-area policies or zoning Commercial FAR .25	Permits a wide range of commercial development (office, retail, service), with all operations and storage being contained within the primary buildings (e.g., grocery stores, the mall, factory outlet stores, hotels, restaurants).
Mixed Commercial / Light Industrial	See sub-area policies or zoning Commercial FAR .25	Permits outside storage and display, but not outside operations (e.g., office/warehouse uses, auto sales, auto repair shops, lumber yards, light manufacturing).
Public / Institutional	NA	Public and quasi-public uses, such as schools, government facilities, cemeteries, hospitals and churches.
Parks & Recreation	NA	Public and private land designated for passive or active recreational uses.
Conservation / Open Space	NA	Public or private land which will remain undeveloped as natural open space. Minor improvements such as trails and parking areas may exist to provide access.

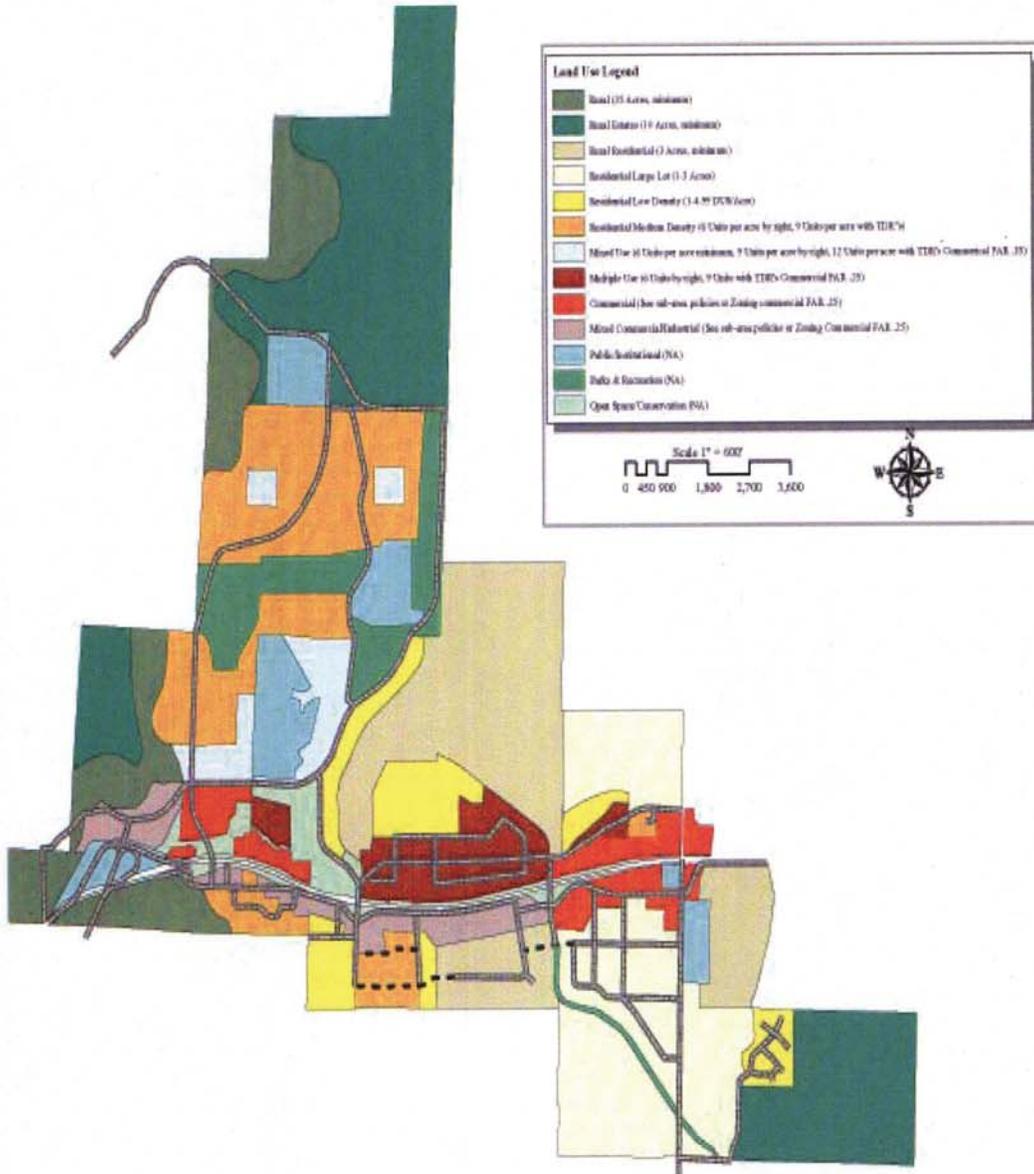


Figure 4.2 Future Land Use Map

### 4.3 Opportunities and Issues

The Grandview study area, because of its size and mixture of uses, contains many features that offer unique opportunities to the City of Durango. Rather than homogenous tract development, community stakeholders believe that this area offers an opportunity to create dynamic neighborhoods of varying character that will help establish a new vision for Durango. Large tracts of undeveloped land still exist, providing the opportunity to meet the City's goals for cutting edge urban design concepts, creative economic development, attainable housing, new school facilities, and park and recreational facilities.

The western boundary of the planning area is adjacent to BLM land that is a prime resource area (gravel, wildlife) but also a recreational outlet for residents. At the eastern end of the planning area is the busy intersection of US Highway 160 (US 160) and State Highway 172 (SH 172). SH 172 connects to the regional airport and US 160 is the primary travel route east from Durango. Improvements to this intersection could be used to create a new gateway at the eastern access point into the Durango area.

Providing a cornerstone for new development in the area is the proposed relocation of Mercy Hospital to the Tierra Group LLC property thus creating an anchor for development in the western portion of the Grandview area. One of the Hospital's goals for development is to create a "healing environment". According to hospital representatives, who participated in Design Dialogue meetings, the design will include open space, a healing garden and other indoor and outdoor areas creating a campus that focuses on healing of both the body and the mind. These design goals, combined with the associated uses that will gravitate to this regional industry, should quickly transform the area into a regional hub.

A proposed regional retail center off of High Llama Lane was one of the original issues that prompted the City of Durango to consider a study of the Grandview area. The City has also fielded annexation inquiries from property owners seeking to obtain a reliable source of water.

The ability to examine the entire study area as a whole provides the City with a basis by which to analyze potential traffic impacts, infrastructure demands and cost and revenue sources. It enables the City to guide new development that is compatible with surrounding land uses while encouraging progressive design concepts and a new design vernacular for the area.

As part of the public process, citizens expressed support not only for a better organization of existing land uses and traffic circulation patterns but encouraged containment of development that has been allowed to filter into the rural countryside. Development policies address the need to preserve the rural nature of the County using the rural edges of Grandview to buffer the rural areas from proposed development in the urbanized incorporated area. The implementation of a Transfer Development Rights program, described later in this document, could assist in the preservation of a rural buffer.

In addition, the existing rural residential zone district in the City's land use code supports large lot residential land uses and the ability to maintain livestock and ranch/farm outbuildings on large parcels (one dwelling unit per 10 to 35 acres). The proposed land use map for the Plan supports this transition from urban to rural land use patterns.

Improvements to the road network create further opportunities. The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) has begun to reevaluate the timeframe and extent of the US 160 corridor improvements. Many of the upgrades for safety and congestion management were to occur over a

longer time period than originally proposed when the planning process began in September of 2001, but recent initiatives and fund may bring about such improvements in the near and mid term. This Plan will provide guidance as CDOT plans improvements to US 160 through the Grandview area. There is an opportunity that did not exist prior to 2001 for this Plan to move out in front of other agency planning efforts providing a guideline for other agencies to consider in their work in the area.

The area offers ample opportunities for improved transportation connectivity. County roads parallel portions of US 160, which can be converted to frontage roads to provide internal circulation improvements today as well as when the highway is eventually expanded to four lanes and access is restricted. A former rail corridor bisects the planning area; the sections that have been preserved for public access offer pedestrian and bike path opportunities.

Although exciting opportunities exist for the redevelopment of this area, basic infrastructure is lacking in most of Grandview. There has been no central water system to date, and sewer has traditionally been provided by special districts or by septic tanks. Pedestrian amenities necessary to support increased vehicular traffic are non-existent and congestion and highway safety have become primary issues for residents. The existing road network does not meet City standards. Finally, the eclectic mix of uses and the lack of traditional zoning in La Plata County pose a strong challenge for future planning and redevelopment efforts. However, with the adoption of a plan for growth and development, the City of Durango can work with developers and small property owners to ensure development is rational. The City can also ensure that the necessary infrastructure improvements are provided to support new

development.

## 4.4 General Plan Elements

The following Elements emerged during the Design Dialogue process as common themes for the study area.

### 4.4.1 Institutional

In the year following the September 2001 Design Dialogue, Mercy Hospital made arrangements to relocate to the former Mason Ranch property which was purchased by the Tierra Group LLC. Due to the associated activities that will locate near the hospital such as medical offices and other support services as well as the substantial residential development proposed by the Tierra Group LLC, the development planning for this area has shifted. US 160 safety and access issues, although important issues along the entire Grandview corridor, are critical issues to resolve within this area. A greater variety of mixed-uses are proposed and enhanced by the hospital's intention to develop a campus dedicated to wellness with an outdoor healing garden, complemented by open space and pedestrian friendly access to the traditional neighborhood village. Both the Tierra Group LLC and the hospital support a compact urban form and Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) principles for their new development within the study area.

The School District participated in the Design Dialogue sessions and advocated for the need for additional schools in the Grandview area due to the increased level of residential development. The original plan proposed three new school sites in Sub Area I. However, further discussions with the School District have resulted in one large forty acre K-8 school site located on the east side of Sub Area I adjacent to the regional park.

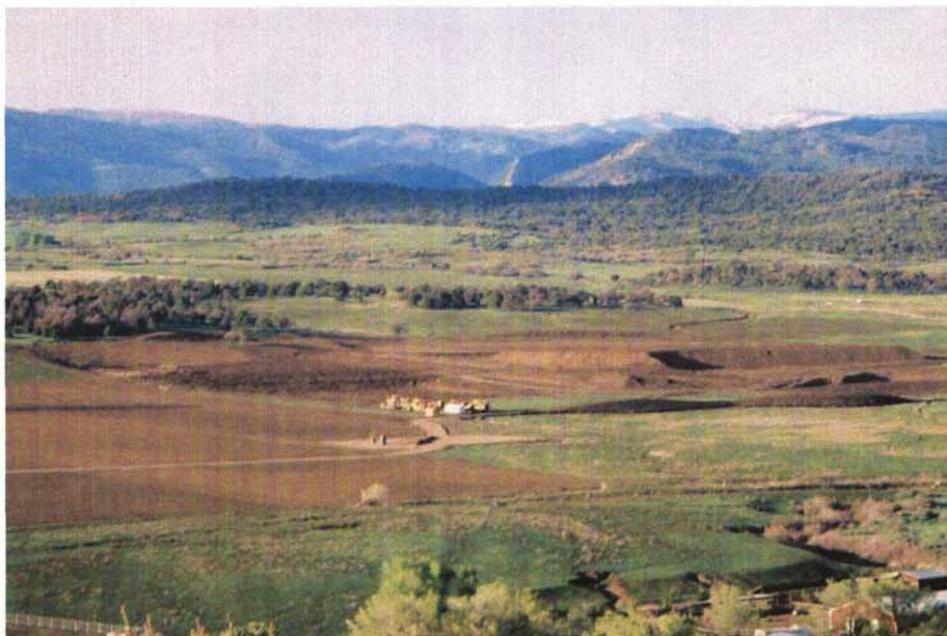


Figure 4.3 Mercy Hospital Site

#### 4.4.2 Regional Retail

A request to establish a regional retail center near the High Llama Lane intersection was the original impetus to study this area for possible annexation. Although the hospital and Tierra Group LLC are further along in their planning, a regional retail center is still being proposed at the western end of

the study area. It is proposed that the retail will transition into a mixed commercial and office area adjacent to the proposed hospital.

The intent to locate such intensive land uses at the High Llama Lane intersection is accommodatable, given CDOT's intention to upgrade the intersection to a grade separated interchange as part of a US 550 and US 160 realignment. If regional retail development occurs prior to CDOT making this highway improvement, this Plan recommends that a full signalized intersection be

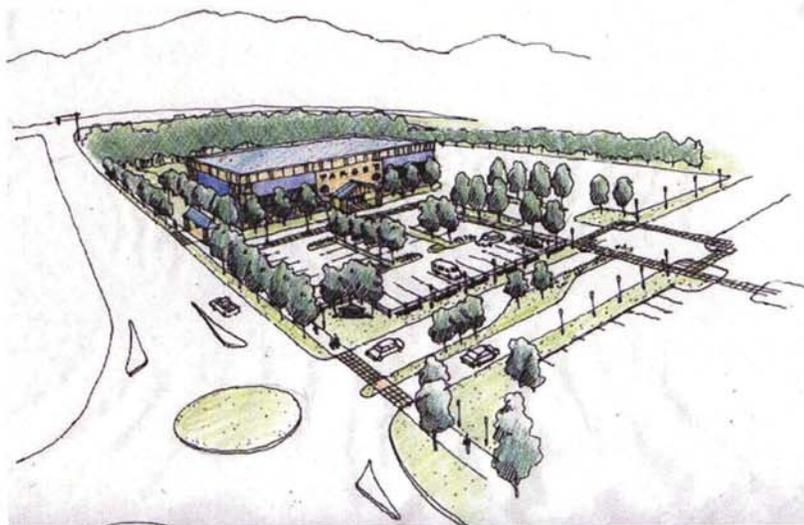


Figure 4.4 Regional/Retail Commercial

constructed or if traffic studies warrant, an interchange constructed as a requirement of the commercial development.

#### 4.4.3 New Urbanism/TND/Urban Design

The City of Durango believes that Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) principles, also referred to as *new urbanism*, should be applied within this Plan wherever appropriate. There are several opportunities within the study area to apply TND principles most notably in Sub Area I. The relatively undeveloped nature of the Crader and Tierra properties, the comprehensive planning effort for this area and the desire to entertain significant development presents a unique opportunity to implement TND principles from the beginning. In January 2003, the Tierra Group LLC commissioned a design charrette for their property. The outcome of that site-specific planning effort supported a Traditional Neighborhood Development pattern which included the relocated hospital, mixed-use commercial and other support services to the hospital, and traditional neighborhoods as well as park and recreation facilities and a school campus. The Grandview Area Plan supports the January

2003 concepts but provides guidance for new land uses in a more general manner. Site specific development should be reviewed on a development by development basis using the adopted Plan as a guide.

In addition, the conceptual streetscape designs and pedestrian amenities proposed in this Plan should be used as a guide for all future planning in the study area. Again, they are a foundation from which development may be further defined based upon review of site specific development proposals and specific traffic patterns. Please refer to Appendix D for recommended street design concepts.

In addition to the emphasis on TND principles for future development within the study area, the Plan recommends a more cohesive land use pattern along CR 233 suggesting new land use categories and requiring buffering to be implemented as land uses change or new development occurs. Changing the character of CR 233 to a frontage road and adding pedestrian and other amenities along the new frontage road will increase connectivity. Multiple-use is proposed along CR 233 which could provide residents with local serving commercial business thus reducing automobile dependence.

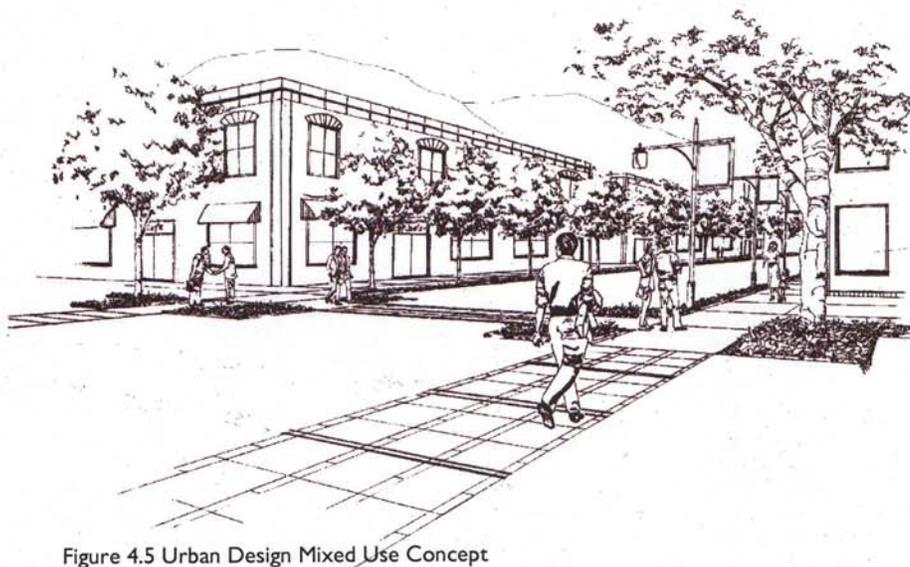


Figure 4.5 Urban Design Mixed Use Concept



Figure 4.6 Traditional Neighborhood Development

#### 4.4.4 Overlay District

It is often difficult to retrofit current zoning into areas currently developed. Therefore the City should consider an overlay district for those areas of the Grandview study area that are currently developed.

An overlay district can also facilitate an upgrade of the streetscape improvements and pedestrian amenities as areas are annexed. As significant frontage road improvements occur, the overlay district can guide improvements without requiring the property to be rezoned. The overlay district should incorporate new development standards for uses, bulk and mass. These standards should address specific issues of compatibility between existing and proposed land uses.

An overlay district could be tailored to the specific sub area as annexation occurs to best reflect the existing characteristics of the sub area as well as the recommendations of this Plan for the specific sub area.

#### 4.4.5 Mixed-Use and Multiple-Use

During the Design Dialogues several themes emerged: live/work, less dependency upon the

automobile, better pedestrian amenities, and the ability to shop locally for small convenience items. The promotion of mixed-use and multiple use within this Plan is intended to meet the goals of providing more locally serving businesses that are within close proximity to residential neighborhoods and directly adjacent to some dwelling units. In addition, it is intended to provide a more compact pattern of land development and contain sprawl thus reducing the cost of infrastructure and providing transition zones from strict commercial and highway impacts to the more rural less dense portions of the study area.

The mixed-use land use classification differs from the multiple-use classification with regard to commercial allowable floor area and minimum and maximum residential densities. Multiple-use provides a lower floor area for the commercial component and a lower residential density. Both land use classifications can utilize transferable development rights to increase the density of a project.



Figure 4.7 Mixed Use Development

#### 4.4.6 Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)

The City and County desire to develop a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) pilot program for use in the Plan area. TDRs are a planning tool intended to preserve existing open space by “transferring” density from one area to another. In this case, it is proposed that density be transferred from within the County immediately surrounding the Grandview area to specific “receiver sites” within the study area. A base level of density will be set in the receiver sites, and then density can be increased through the use of TDR’s. This creates a win-win partnership for the City and County. It saves money on infrastructure costs by creating a level of density that can be served cost effectively, creates an open space buffer adjacent to urban development and identifies receiver sites up front eliminating future political battles over density issues.

A successful TDR program can also be used entirely within the Grandview Area (both sending and receiving sites are within the Plan area). For example, rather than waiting for CDOT improvements to provide the proposed green buffer along US 160, development rights could be transferred off the edge of the highway into designated receiver sites within the Plan area.

In order to establish several receiver sites for TDRs within the Plan area, it is recommended for areas designated medium density residential that the baseline density be set at six dwelling units per acre with the ability to go up to nine dwelling units per acre with the purchase of TDRs.

Areas designated mixed-use and multiple-use could also become receiver sites. For mixed-use it is recommended that a baseline density be established at nine dwelling units per acre with the ability to increase the density to 12 dwelling units per acre with the purchase of TDRs and a minimum density requirement of six dwelling units per acre. For multiple-use it is recommended that

the baseline density be set at six dwelling units per acre with the ability to increase to nine dwelling units per acre with the purchase of TDRs.

#### 4.4.7 Nonconforming Uses

Currently the City of Durango Land Use Code allows a nonconforming use to remain in operation but does not allow expansion of the use or structure, a change from one nonconforming use to another, and a discontinuation for longer than one year. However, as areas of Grandview annex into the City and the City applies zoning in conformance with the land use classifications that are recommended in this Plan, some existing uses will become nonconforming. In addition, these nonconformities may remain nonconforming for many years as the rate of transformation and build out might evolve slowly in some areas. It is not the desire of the City to plunge many businesses into nonconformity when looking at a 20 year planning horizon.

Therefore, it is recommended that the City review its nonconforming regulations and consider a nonconforming use policy which enables a use to continue and permits modest expansion in square footage or operations *with* the requirement that the expansions of space or of the use must comply with the pedestrian amenities, street design standards and other development standards recommended in the Plan as well as any necessary building or access reorientation for those properties along the proposed frontage road alignments. This could include closing access onto US 160 and the possible dedication of right-of-way for the frontage roads. If a nonconforming use ceases operation for a year or more, then the new use must conform to the land use classification and zoning that would ultimately be applied upon annexation.

#### 4.4.8 Redevelopment Transitions

As parts of the Grandview area begin to annex into the City, as discussed in the previous section, some uses will become nonconforming.

Furthermore, there may be uses that, while conforming, the intensity of use recommended in the Plan may be different. For example there are several mobile homes parks along US 160 that the Plan recommends to become multiple-use. However, as land values increase reflecting a greater level of residential density, these parks may be eliminated.

Mobile home parks have traditionally offered a lower cost housing unit but without stability, as most people do not own the land and many homes are "pre-HUD" and cannot be relocated. As this trend continues, a number of affordable units are lost from the community. The City should include this issue in their affordable housing policies and consider options to assist the residents of mobile home parks. One idea that could be explored is to establish a loan fund to support a resident buy down of their mobile home park. For example, it is common that residents own their home but not the land. An attainable housing fund could enable the homeowners to buy the land from the park owner and subdivide the park into lots for individual purchase by existing residents. Purchase of individual parcels ultimately pays back the fund. This type of buy down program not only preserves attainable housing but encourages home owners to upgrade their older mobile homes. In some examples, mobile homes have been pulled off the site and owners have constructed a "stick-built" home.

As redevelopment occurs around existing land uses, particularly uses that are not going to evolve in the near future such as large lot subdivisions, it will be important for the City to employ Planned Development techniques for site specific developments to ensure that uses are buffered from possible increased traffic, noise and other impacts. Buffering of existing subdivisions is important throughout the Grandview Area. The applicant for a new subdivision or new development may either create lots along the

property line that are not less than one-half the average size of the adjacent subdivided property or create a buffer zone with an enlarged set back and adequate screening.

It is important to recognize that mixed-use can be used as a buffer from impacts of the highway, and provide a transition from the strict commercial uses of Sub Area I.

#### 4.4.9 Housing

As discussed in the Design Dialogue session for Housing Advocates, it is estimated that up to 44% of the local community cannot qualify for home loans based upon median income and local housing costs. This Plan recommends a mixture of housing types and product to support diversity and affordability. It also recommends that senior housing be located near activity centers and recreational amenities including open space and trails.

The Plan proposes several areas for medium density housing and promotes mixed housing development patterns and the use of TND principles versus a traditional suburban layout to facilitate a diversity of homes and a range of prices. Costs to develop can be reduced and a mix of housing prices and densities may appeal to a broader range of home buyer. In addition, there is a potential for a future housing authority to serve a redevelopment function in the Grandview Area as a greater level of density is proposed in areas that are already developed. Finally, the use of TDRs encourages increased density and helps to reduce infrastructure costs as well as preserving open space, which should assist all in providing quality affordable dwelling units.

Finally, the Plan recommends the City require a certain percentage of attainable housing to be included in new subdivisions and multi-family development proposals. One mechanism to achieve this goal outside of the annexation process



Figure 4.8 Above Garage Lofts in a TND

is through the adoption of an inclusionary housing standard.

#### 4.4.10 Buffer Zone/Joint Review IGA

A common expression made during the Design Dialogue meetings was the desire and necessity to prevent the urbanization that has historically spread into the County thereby compromising the rural character of the County. It is therefore important to encourage joint review for properties that are not annexing and adoption of this Plan by both the City and the County. Several recommendations are made suggesting the adoption of Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) that can establish a joint review process between the City and the County. These IGAs should ensure that future growth occurs consistent with the recommendations of the Plan even if certain areas of the Plan have not yet been annexed.

A buffer zone should also be identified that rings the Plan area and becomes the sending site for TDRs not only to conserve open space around the Grandview area but to further define the Urbanizing Area from the rural County. The City and County should map the buffer zone and utilize a joint development review process to ensure that

new development or redevelopment within the buffer zone is consistent with the Plan and is not negatively influenced by new development pressures in the Grandview area as well as the ultimate improvements to US 160.

#### 4.4.11 Plan Amendments

During the public process associated with the development of this Plan, several properties adjacent to the study area were discussed in a general manner. This discussion focused primarily upon either the property owners desire to be included within the Plan or the effect future development within the Plan area may have upon adjacent properties. In particular there is a large state land board parcel directly east of the upper portion of Sub Area I. This property could eventually be included within future planning of this northern portion of the sub area. A property owner of a parcel adjacent to the southern boundary of Sub Area V expressed an interest to be included within the Plan. The property was originally considered as a neighborhood park but was eliminated from the study area in order to focus park resources in Sub Area I. However, if adjacent properties are to be considered for development planning

in the future either by the private or public sector, a Plan amendment and Land Use Map amendment will be required.

#### **4.4.12 Transportation Improvements**

CDOT has been planning for improvements to US Highways 160 and 550 through the Grandview area since 1996. When the Grandview Area Plan process commenced in the summer of 2001, CDOT was completing an Environmental Assessment (EA) and preliminary engineering for the expansion of US 160 and the relocation of US 550. As a result of the findings of the EA process, the agency commenced an Environmental Impact Statement process (EIS) in 2003. The EIS process is ongoing and is expected to be completed in late 2004.

Conceptual CDOT plans presented in 2001 included expanding US 160 to four lanes with a center landscaped median, improved vertical and horizontal alignment based upon a higher design speed, access control, provision of frontage roads, and improvement to the intersections of US 160 with SH 172 and CR 233. US 550 south of US 160 would be shifted to the east to the Southfork area and a new trumpet interchange with US 160 would be constructed. The determination that an EIS is required will necessitate the consideration by CDOT of all reasonable alternatives for the improvement of US 160 and US 550; thus details of specific improvements are no longer predictable.

When CDOT began its analysis of improvements to US 160 and US 550, the agency was required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and related Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and CDOT regulations to consider local land use plans in its decision making process. NEPA requires consistency with local plans and/or justification for actions that might impact those plans and proposals for mitigating those impacts. At the time of the CDOT EA, the adopted local

plan for the Grandview area was the Florida Mesa District Land Use Plan, adopted by La Plata County in 1998. This plan foresaw mixed-use and light industrial land uses along the highway in addition to increases in residential density.

The adoption of an amendment to the City's Urbanizing Area to include Grandview and planning and development efforts within that boundary has substantially changed the nature and intensity of land use adjacent to US 160 between SH 172 and US 550. Any subsequent NEPA clearance sought by CDOT will have to consider this change.

As Grandview is proposed to be a significant destination, with regional institutional, commercial, and parks and recreation land uses as well as over 5,000 homes, CDOT design parameters for the state highways in the area should evolve. Design speed, character of highway cross sections, access control, landscaping, and pedestrian and bicycle amenities adjacent to a regional center are quite different from those adjacent to rural land. Should a significant portion of the urbanizing area annex to the City of Durango, the City should be a partner with CDOT during the highway planning and project development process. This partnership may go so far as to include the negotiation of a formal Participating Agency Agreement between CDOT and the City for the NEPA process. Although participating agencies are typically federal resource agencies, the designation of a local government as a participating agency in the NEPA process is not without precedent.

Please refer to Chapter 5 for specific transportation improvement recommendations to support the proposed land use plan as well as complement CDOT improvements for US 160.

#### 4.4.13 Parks & Open Space

Additional park facilities and open space conservation are high priorities for the City. Preservation of open space and conservation of wildlife habitat are important to local residents.

The Plan recommends a regional park and several neighborhood parks in Sub Area I. The park land is located on the east and west edges of Sub Area I adjacent to the school campus and is recommended to serve as an extension of the school campus.

#### 4.4.14 Utilities (Water & Sewer)

Most homes and businesses in the Grandview area obtain potable water from wells. A few have to truck water in because of the lack of a good groundwater supply. Access to City water is one of the major motivations for property owners to seek annexation into the City.

Most homes and businesses in the Grandview area lie within one of the two local sanitation districts. The South Durango Sanitation District serves the western two thirds of Grandview, roughly to the top of the hill on US 160. The remaining eastern

one third of the area is served by the Loma Linda Sanitation District. There are homes and businesses within the districts that are on septic systems. The sanitation districts indicate that they have adequate capacity and/or capital improvement plans in place to accommodate the growth forecasts in the Grandview Area Plan.

The City of Durango Public Works Department is developing conceptual plans and estimating the cost, by sub area, of providing water service to Grandview. Public Works is also coordinating with the Sanitation Districts regarding the cost and other issues surrounding the provision of sanitary sewer service. These analyses will be provided by the City in a separate report.

As annexation occurs, the City and the South Durango Sanitation District should consider negotiating an agreement regarding operations and the potential takeover of South Durango Sanitation by the City. If and when annexation begins to occur in areas covered by the Loma Linda Sanitation District, comparable agreements should be negotiated.

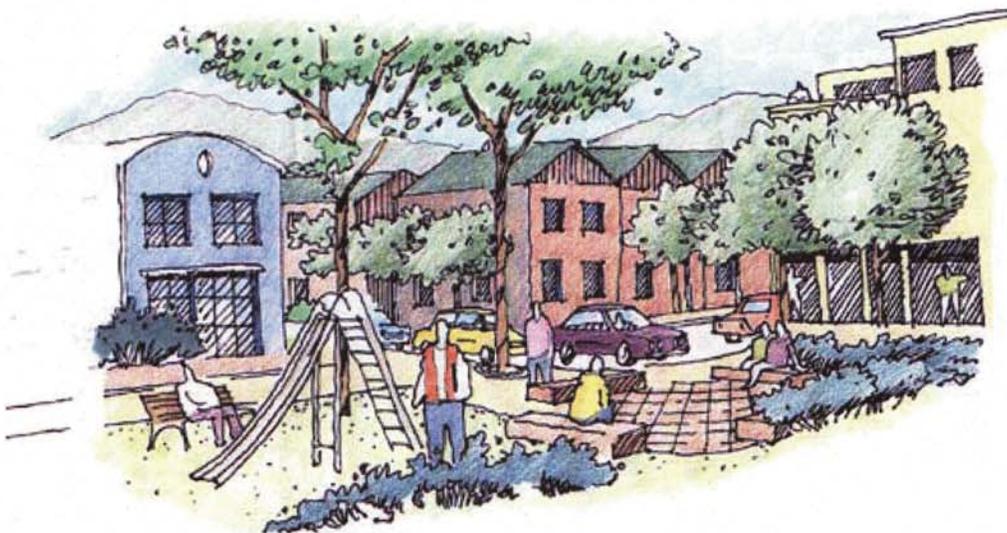


Figure 4.9 Pocket Parks Surrounded by Residential Development

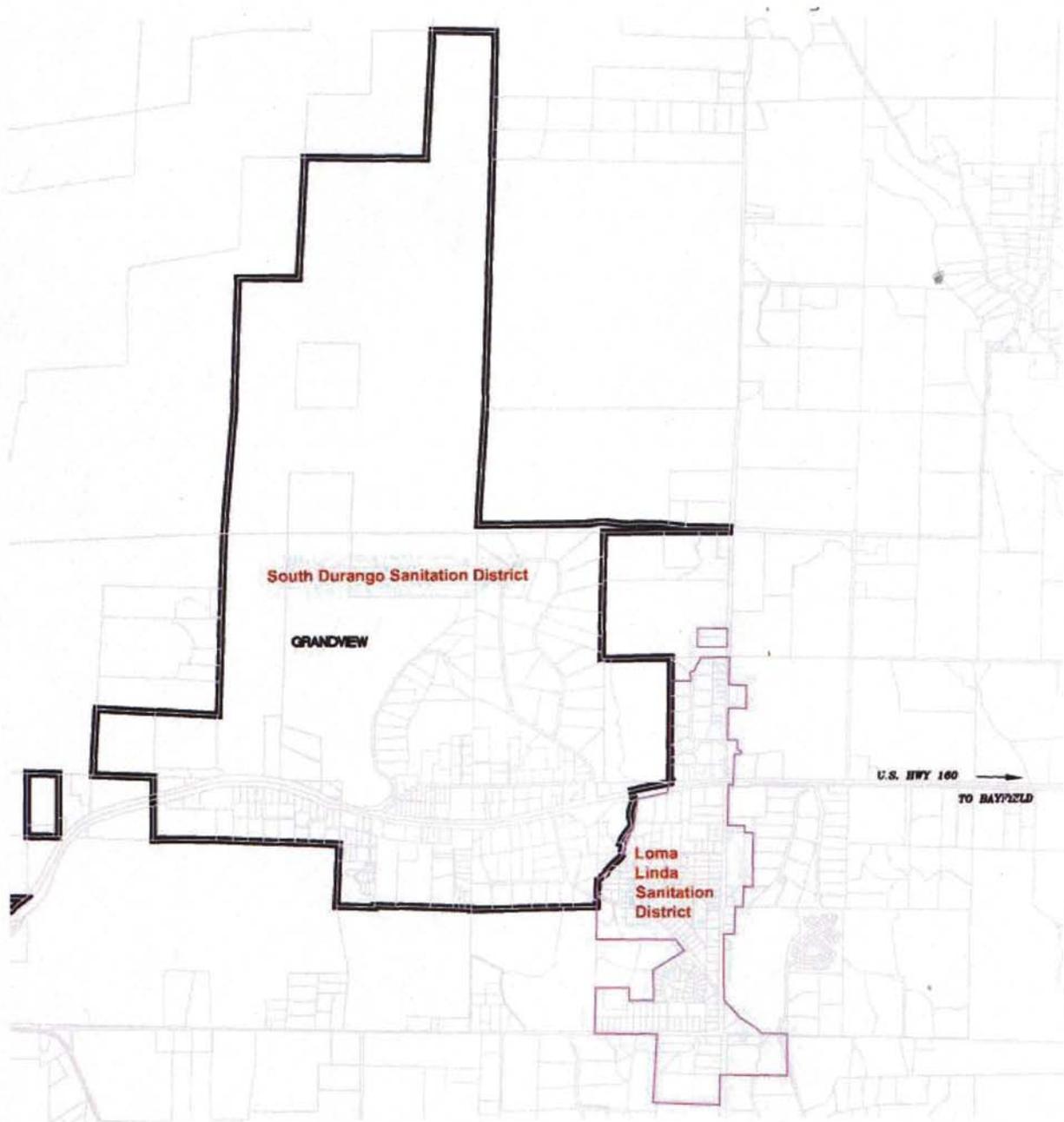


Figure 4.10 South Durango Sanitation District & Loma Linda Sanitation District Boundaries

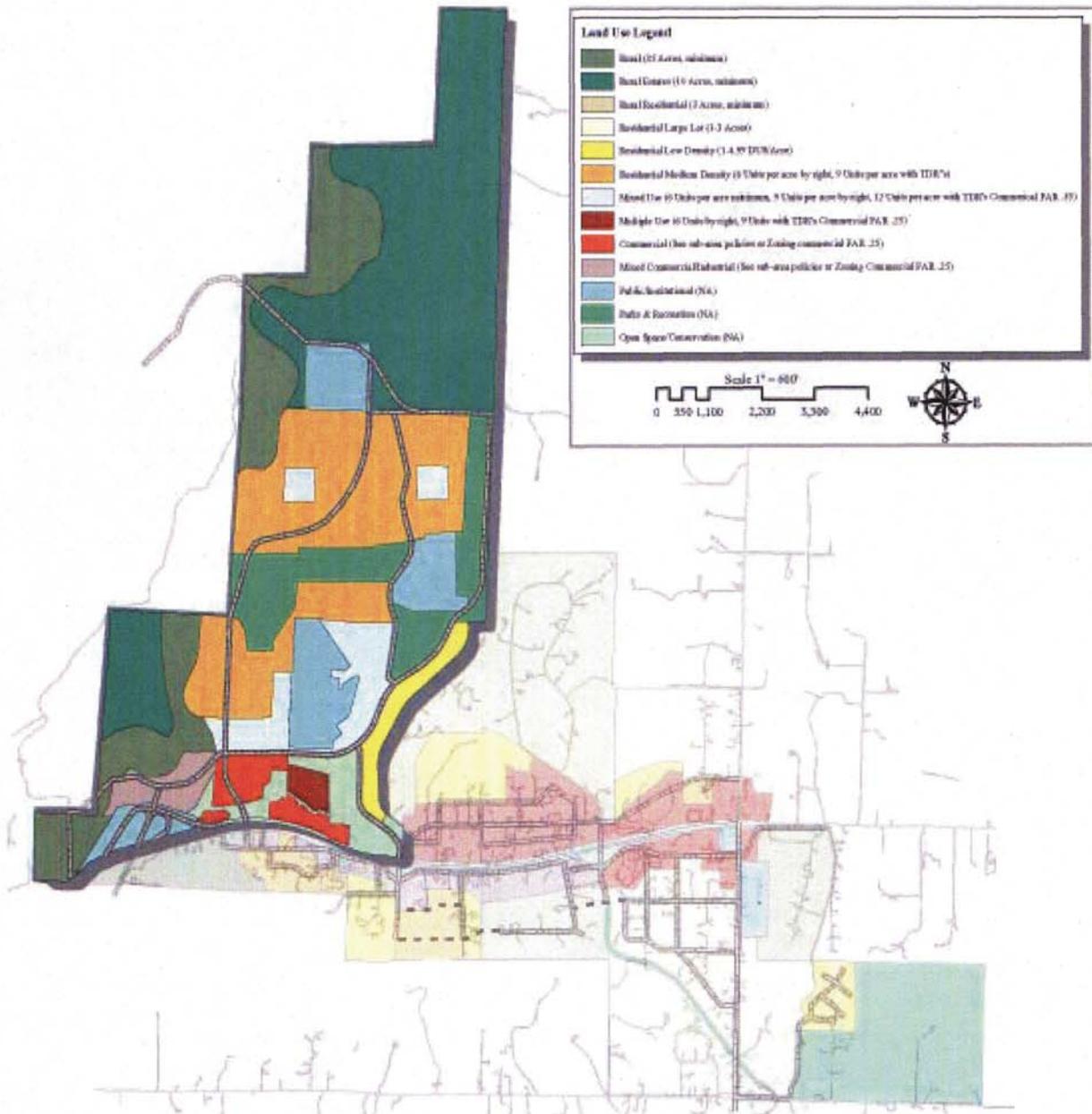


Figure 4.11 Sub Area I Land Use Plan

## 4.5 Sub Area I

### 4.5.1 Existing Conditions – Sub Area I

Sub Area I is a wide valley that is north and perpendicular to US 160. Several rural homesites and ranches are spread throughout the landscape. The former Artesian Valley Ranch (AVR) encompasses approximately 991 acres. The former AVR is home to a winter elk herd and has significant open space that is valued by surrounding residents. The ranch sits between Grandview Ridge to the west and State School land and other rural properties to the east. A 40-acre BLM outparcel is surrounded by ranch property. Several years ago La Plata County approved development for the Artesian Valley Ranch; however that approval has since expired. The Crader property and former Mason Ranch also dominate this sub area between US 160 and AVR. Oil and gas wells are scattered throughout.

The Tierra Group LLC recently purchased the southern end of AVR and also acquired the Mason property via a land trade that provides the Tierra Group LLC a ten year option to buy the northern end of the sub area which is the northern end of the former AVR property. The current focus for development is on the former Mason property and the southern end of the former AVR property for a total of 682 acres. The Tierra Group LLC, in pursuit of development in the southern end of this sub area, consulted the Crader family in order to incorporate their ranch properties into the build out vision for this valley. To that end, the Tierra Group LLC and the Crader family conducted a design charrette for their properties in January of 2003.

Primary access to the area is from County Road 233 (CR 233). A signalized intersection at CR 233 is to be constructed by the Tierra Group LLC. The area around the High Llama Lane intersection is being considered by CDOT for a possible grade separated interchange to be realigned with US

550. However, if commercial development is proposed before CDOT's interchange improvements, and there are no monies allocated for the interchange, this Plan recommends a full signalized intersection on to US 160 near High Llama Lane to accommodate future growth. Significant commercial development may not be allowed until such time as the interchange is constructed.

This area is attractive to regional retail development. The properties are large acreages, undeveloped, close to Durango, and accessible from US 160. The C & J Gravel gravel quarry, west of this sub area, has its own access onto US 160. The Plan proposes access for the quarry from the High Llama Lane intersection/interchange.

At the southern end of this sub area, there are several small commercial uses scattered along US 160. An abandoned rail corridor traverses the southern end as well paralleling the highway. Wetlands are present in Wilson Gulch and adjoining properties.

### 4.5.2 Opportunities and Issues

This sub area plan proposes a regional retail center composed of commercial, office and mixed-use intended to support and complement the Mercy Hospital relocation. Mixed commercial/light industrial uses are proposed for the western portion of the sub area. A large school site is located within Sub Area I as well. In order to support TND principles, medium density residential development is proposed north of the hospital campus. The provision of medium density housing facilitates affordable or attainable housing, thereby encouraging a diversity of residents that will contribute to a balanced neighborhood.

The northern half of Sub Area I, north of the boundary with the BLM parcel that is surrounded by the former AVR property, is proposed as Rural Estates, one dwelling unit per 10 to 35 acres, in

order to preserve open space and wildlife habitat and provides a transition from the more developed portion of the sub area. If a greater level of development is proposed for the northern portion of this valley, a map amendment, as well as a Plan amendment, will be required. Code language should also be adopted to ensure clustering of development and other wildlife friendly requirements such as specific fencing that supports migration, seasonal trail closures, kenneling of dogs, etc.

One hundred and sixty-five (165) acres of parkland are proposed for active recreational use within this sub area including two park areas (one on the eastern edge and one on the west) with a connecting green belt. One school site is proposed adjacent to the parks to facilitate an efficient use of common infrastructure.

As development is proposed on Ewing Mesa, an opportunity exists for future development in Sub Area I to connect roads and trails onto the Mesa. Trail and road connections are conceptually identified that could connect to Ewing Mesa as well as to other public lands adjacent to Sub Area I.

As stated earlier in this document, there is a unique opportunity to plan for long-term development in this undeveloped area to provide a mix of uses that support City goals. The retail uses combined with office and mixed-use both adjacent to the hospital campus and supported with a pedestrian trail network to the parks, schools, and housing creates an integrated pattern of land uses that encourage non-auto oriented movement between uses. The mix of uses provides the ability to share infrastructure such as roads, parking, open space and park amenities, and utilities.

Development of this area must be closely coordinated with CDOT and existing property owners to ensure that the elements of this Plan are accomplished. Adequate provision for access into

the sub area is critical as well as circulation within the sub area. It will be important for the City to carefully review and analyze proposed development on a site specific basis to make certain that impacts are mitigated and development occurs in a cohesive manner. For example, some existing uses along US 160 use the highway for access. The City, working with CDOT, should require a reorientation of the highway access to frontage roads as redevelopment and US 160 improvements occur.

#### **4.5.3 Specific Sub Area Plan Elements**

Descriptions of each of the land use elements specific to this sub area are presented below. These elements emerged during the Design Dialogue process and subsequently from community meetings and staff analysis. They reflect the synthesis of community vision for the area.

##### **4.5.3.1 Hospital and Medical Office Campus**

The former AVR and Mason properties constitute a specific area of concern and opportunity. During the first series of public meetings, the Grandview Area Plan Steering Committee encouraged an AVR development proposal that considered the rural character of the area. Property Owners suggested cluster development to balance open space with the property owner's development value of the land.

The purchase of the AVR and Mason properties and anticipated relocation of Mercy Hospital changed the original plan premises significantly. During the second Design Dialogue in August of 2002 (which preceded the design charrette conducted by the Tierra Group LLC and the Crader family), an overflow crowd at a public open house supported the hospital relocation and other development ideas proposed for this area.

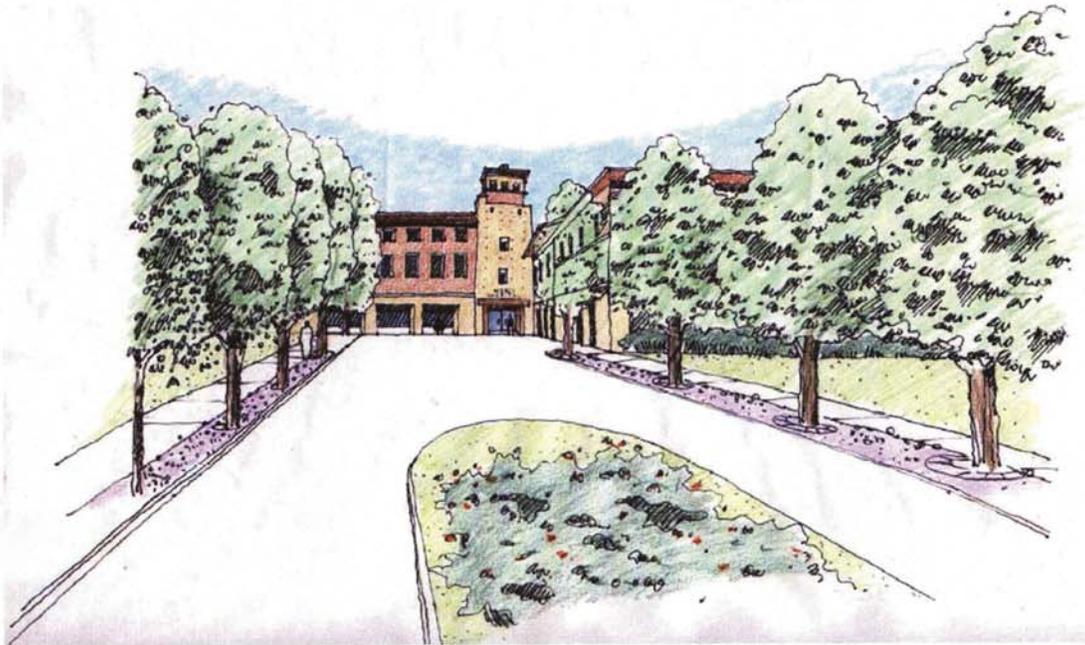


Figure 4.12 Mercy Hospital Campus

The hospital campus will attract support businesses that will relocate to this area. Both the property owners and the hospital desire a compact development that incorporates new street design standards, compact, walkable neighborhoods, and connectivity for pedestrians throughout this sub area.

#### 4.5.3.2 Regional Retail/Office Center

The Plan proposes a regional retail center in the vicinity of the current High Llama Lane alignment near the US 160 intersection. However, CDOT is planning a significant realignment of the US 160/550 interchange that will affect the High Llama Lane intersection.

The Plan envisions approximately 45 acres of regional retail flanking High Llama Lane and commercial land continuing to exist along US 160. The uncertain nature of the timing of CDOT's highway improvements does not interfere with this sub area plan. Although road improvements will be required, the regional retail center is planned in a location that best utilizes existing road networks and can take advantage of the long term highway

improvements proposed by CDOT.

Retail uses are clustered at the southern end of Sub Area I. A large open space corridor that preserves the character of Wilson Gulch is also proposed. Access to gravel resources is through the commercial uses rather than residential neighborhoods and the road network will be designed to accommodate this mix of traffic.

#### 4.5.3.3 Mixed-Use

For this sub area the Plan proposes a mixed-use land use classification, including commercial and residential. The allowable floor area ratio for commercial use in this classification is .35:1. The residential density shall be established with a use by right of nine dwelling units per acre (the minimum is six dwelling units per acres) which can be increased up to 12 dwelling units per acre with the purchase of TDRs.

The mixed-use land use classification is proposed as a transition area from the strict commercial uses of the retail center into the hospital campus.



Figure 4.13 Mixed Use Development

#### 4.5.3.4 Business / Light Industrial Park

The plan incorporates 37 acres of Mixed Commercial / Light Industrial property. This area was originally shown as commercial, however, the intersections could not support the traffic volumes and the new land use was chosen to decrease the traffic generated. The inclusion of the Mixed Commercial / Light Industrial land use also allows for the potential development of a small business park, which is a need that was identified during the public review process.

#### 4.5.3.5 Schools and Other Public Uses

The Plan sets aside approximately 40 acres of land for one new K-8 educational facility. The school site is located on the east side of the sub area adjacent to the proposed regional park and south and east of medium density residential neighborhoods.

The school will enhance the active mix of uses located in this sub area, add to the diversity of the neighborhood and support the mixture of housing product. A separate pedestrian trail and sidewalks will connect through this sub area to the school

and the rest of the area.

A 40-acre BLM parcel is also designated as Public on the Land Use Map. It is anticipated that this parcel will be utilized for a public purpose, which may include parkland. The land needed for the potential future interchange is also shown as public.

#### 4.5.3.6 Pedestrian Ways, Connectivity

Pedestrian and bike connections are important amenities that are necessary for any redevelopment or new development in the Grandview study area. Retail commercial, offices, and the hospital are sited in a compact form that encourages pedestrian and neighborhood connectivity. A trail is proposed in Wilson Gulch to connect the Animas River trail system with Sub Area I. The Plan proposes conversion of the old rail corridor, with preservation of the trestle, as part of that trail connection. This trail is also intended to extend into other sub areas and east toward Bayfield.

Pedestrian connections are also planned to the school sites, from residential neighborhoods to the

retail commercial center, and to a potential park and ride lot west of the intersection of High Llama Lane/US 160. A utility easement provides an opportunity for an east/west pedestrian connection between the parks. The new road network will include sidewalks and landscaping that will also enhance pedestrian connections to the schools and parks, other uses throughout this sub area and into other sub areas. Street and pedestrian design concepts are found in Chapter 5 and in the appendix.

It is proposed within this sub area that pathways connect to future recreational amenities along the Grandview Ridge. The potential exists to connect across Grandview Ridge to Ewing Mesa and downtown Durango.

#### 4.5.3.7 Access, Intersections and Streets

This sub area is proposed to be connected to US 160 via CR 233 and a realigned High Llama Lane. The Plan recommends ample pedestrian connections as well as a new road network that maximizes internal access without requiring the use of US 160. Gravel pit access, as mentioned previously, takes advantage of the relocated High Llama Lane intersection and new road network planned for the regional retail center. It will be important to utilize street design concepts that support both gravel trucks and bike users along this alignment.

The relocation of Mercy Hospital will require a full movement signalized intersection at the west end of CR 233 and US 160, at the boundary with Sub Area III. It is proposed that this intersection be



Figure 4.14 Parks and Pedestrian Ways Adjacent to Housing

constructed by the Tierra Group LLC. Based upon traffic projections, this Plan recommends that development of the regional retail center be required to construct a grade separated interchange near High Llama Lane if CDOT has not already completed those highway improvements. In the interim, the Plan recommends a full signalized intersection relocated to the east of the existing High Llama Lane intersection to ensure safe access and appropriate intersection capacity as the surrounding area develops.

As mentioned previously in this Plan, there is also the possibility to connect Grandview and Ewing Mesa over Grandview Ridge. This Plan shows a conceptual alignment. Rights-of-way should be secured during the development review process.

Finally, it is recommended that County Road 235 (CR 235) be upgraded to connect to County Road 234 (CR 234) providing another access for Sub Area I. The existing topography and existing alignment may require significant upgrades to accommodate future traffic. The character of this roadway should be consistent with the desire to provide arterial access to Grandview, not a highway through Grandview.

#### **4.5.3.8 Park and Ride/Transit**

A park and ride/intercept lot is recommended just west of the US160/High Llama Lane intersection until the interchange is constructed. It is also proposed that the intercept lot be integrated with the interchange when built. The interim park and ride provides an opportunity to encourage alternative transit. Although CDOT has acquired this parcel for right-of-way purposes, the actual improvement may be years away.

Transit connections will be enhanced in response to the increased level of development. Local

transit providers recognize the need to expand the service boundary to the Grandview area particularly with the relocation of Mercy Hospital. In addition, internal transit loop systems should be provided by the developer of large properties.

#### **4.5.3.9 Parks and Open Space**

The Plan recommends approximately 274 acres of park and open space land in Sub Area I. The park and open space are to be comprised of 165 acres devoted to regional park use and facilities, and approximately 69 acres of additional land set aside for conservation and open space. The locations of the regional park lands provide a buffer to the existing neighborhood to the east and a connection to Grandview Ridge and other pedestrian amenities.

There are other possible recreational amenities within this sub area: potential bike/hike connections to Grandview Ridge and the pedestrian/bike path slated for Wilson Gulch and the old rail corridor. In addition, a 640 acre State Land Board parcel is located east of the study area. The Plan preserves the possibility to link the State Land via the trails to Grandview Ridge.

The Plan recommends preserving existing high quality wetlands at the southern end of the valley and incorporates them into the Wilson Gulch open space. All uses are designed to maximize the road network necessary to support the new development but to enable containment of that network in a manner so as not to bisect important open space.

The Plan identifies slopes greater than 30% and recommends a rural residential classification to reduce impactive hillside development. To enhance the open space between Sub Area I and the neighbors to the east, the Plan provides a low density residential buffer between Sub Area I and the existing neighbors.

#### 4.5.3.10 Housing

The Plan proposes medium density residential for the bulk of residential land uses in the sub area. This land use classification is recommended to become a receiver site for TDRs. Therefore density may be increased from six dwelling units per acre to nine dwelling units per acre with the purchase of TDRs. The use of TDRs may encourage increased density and a reduction in housing costs. Using medium density residential as a potential receiving area should bolster the pilot TDR program because of the potential for strong development pressure in this study area due to controlled access off of US 160, planned infrastructure improvements to support future growth and other public amenities that support housing.

The location of multi-family within a mixed-use land use classification provides a transition from the commercial retail uses to the single-family residential neighborhood. The multi-family housing is located within walking distance of shopping and the school sites. A small neighborhood commercial node is proposed in the middle of the medium density residential neighborhood as well.



Figure 4.15 The Greater South Fork Ranch Area

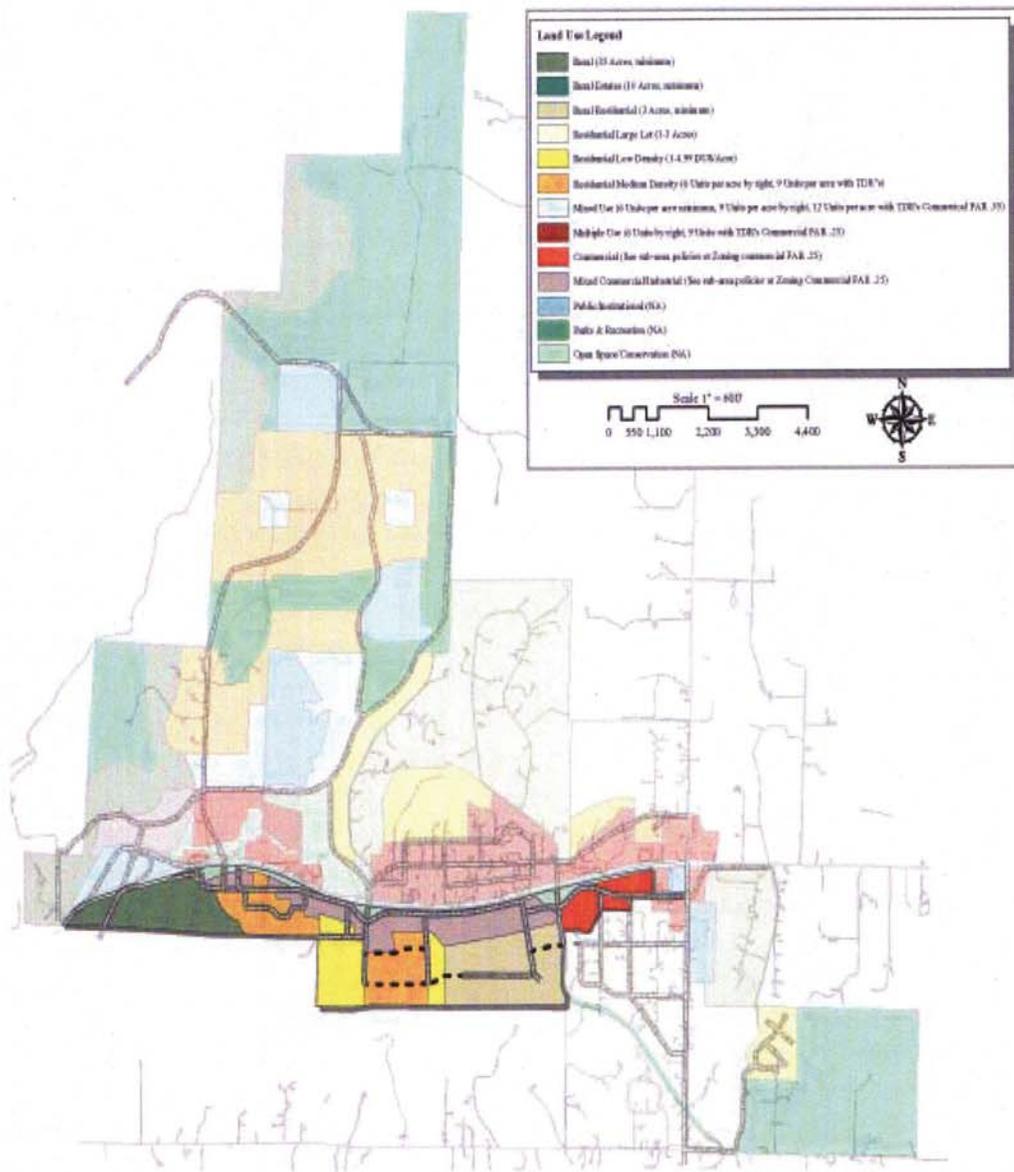


Figure 4.16 Grandview Area Future Land Use Plan - Sub Area II

## 4.6 Sub Area II

### 4.6.1 Existing Conditions – Sub Area II

Sub Area II encompasses a strip of land along the south side of US 160, stretching nearly from Farmington Hill to Elmore's Corner. It is a fairly narrow strip of land, only about a half mile deep, bordered roughly at the ridgeline one can see from the highway.

This area contains a mixture of commercial, light industrial and residential uses. Commercial enterprises, including the Grandview Store, a restaurant, several building supply enterprises and manufactured home sales outfits, and several used car lots line the highway. Areas of residential housing exist behind the commercial/light industrial uses. Several mobile home parks are located on the west end of the study area off of County Road 232 (CR 232). Several subdivisions were platted on the hillside to take advantage of the views. A larger lot (3 acres or larger) subdivision, Valle Escondido, is located in the eastern portion of the sub area. In addition to the subdivisions, there are home sites scattered throughout the area.

Like the north side of US 160, there are many driveways that access directly onto the highway. Access will be restricted as part of CDOT's planned upgrades for US 160. CR 232 parallels US 160 through a portion of this sub area, and could be extended to create a frontage road.

### 4.6.2 Opportunities and Issues

The pending CDOT improvements will create an opportunity to improve access, parking and circulation, and neighborhood connectivity for the mix of business and residential traffic. Improved traffic circulation will support future development within this area. The Plan recommends maintaining the existing light industrial/commercial land uses along the highway and incorporating low and

medium density housing behind the light industrial uses. The light industrial/commercial businesses transition into the medium and low density residential land uses to buffer the commercial and roadway impacts from the residential uses.

Implementing City street standard concepts, consolidating highway access and shifting traditional business access points will be required for redevelopment. In addition, as land use transitions from current uses to those proposed by the Plan, it may be necessary for the City of Durango to reevaluate the non-conforming use policy to facilitate a smooth transition as discussed previously. Planned Development strategies that establish dimensional requirements for a specific development and are sensitive to specific site constraints should be used to provide a smooth transition and adequate buffer between the areas designated for different uses.

### 4.6.3 Specific Sub Area Plan Elements

Descriptions of each of the land use elements specific to this sub area are presented below. These elements emerged during the Design Dialogue process and subsequently from community meetings and staff analysis. They reflect the synthesis of community vision for the area.

#### 4.6.3.1 Frontage Roads and Access

It is the goal of CDOT to limit driveway access onto US 160 for safety reasons. This presents an opportunity for CDOT and the City to improve safety and circulation in this sub area. This Plan proposes to extend an upgraded CR 232 east to SH 172 and to create an intersection on the west end with a realigned High Llama Lane. This new frontage road will allow access points onto US 160 to be limited.

In order to facilitate movement on or off of the "frontage road", the Plan recommends a right-in, right-out intersection with US 160 at the former

east end of CR 233. Access onto the west end of the frontage road will occur from an intersection at US 160 and a realigned High Llama Lane. Another signalized intersection is proposed midway with US 160/CR 233 and an extended CR 232.

This proposal also allows for a green buffer to be created between US 160 and the businesses located along an extended CR 232. The internal road network of this sub area can be upgraded by connecting existing lanes and drives together and linking them with the realigned CR 232.

It is proposed that the frontage road and access be developed by CDOT as part of US 160 upgrades. However in the interim, the City, County and CDOT can work with individual property owners to begin to secure rights-of-way and to reorient new development off of the highway.

#### **4.6.3.2 Future Mixed Commercial/Light Industrial Uses**

Mixed Commercial/Light industrial uses are proposed on the south side of the highway and organized around the frontage road. This area has traditionally provided this type of service and it is logical to continue to support these uses as they provide an important service to the region. These uses will also help provide a buffer to the highway from the residential uses proposed behind. The Plan proposes the extension of the road network to support the existing and proposed uses in this area. In addition, the provision of a frontage road will increase traffic safety and encourage a more cohesive business district.

#### **4.6.3.3 Housing**

Medium density residential uses are recommended, in some areas of this sub area, behind the mixed commercial/light industrial areas accessed off of the new frontage road. Because the topography does not lend itself to large commercial or light industrial uses or large lot subdivisions, clustered housing should be tucked into the hills on this side

of US 160.

The medium density housing in Sub Area II will enable an affordable housing product adjacent to existing service areas and in close proximity to the proposed commercial center just across the highway in Sub Area I.

Design standards for landscaping as well as Planned Development review criteria should be used to ensure that medium density housing is compatible with adjacent less dense residential developments.

## **4.7 Sub Area III**

### **4.7.1 Existing Conditions – Sub Area III**

Sub Area III is a sizeable area of land on the north side of US 160, extending from the western intersection with CR 233 east to CR 234. Although some of the properties access directly onto US 160, CR 233 provides primary access to most of the area. CDOT's long-range plan for US 160 proposes to restrict access onto the highway. This plan recommends using CR 233 as a frontage road servicing properties adjacent to US 160.

This area contains a mixture of residential, commercial and light industrial uses. As with Sub Area II, Sub Area III is characterized by commercial uses along US 160, shifting to residential uses further from the highway. Residential areas closer to the highway tend to be medium- to low-density, on ½ -acre or larger lots. The northern portion of this sub area is characterized as rural residential with homes on 8-acres or larger parcels in the La Paloma Subdivision. The Palo Verde Subdivision located on the western edge of Sub Area III and the Durango Heights Subdivision located on the eastern edge both have lots that are three-acres or larger in size. Oil and gas wells are scattered throughout.

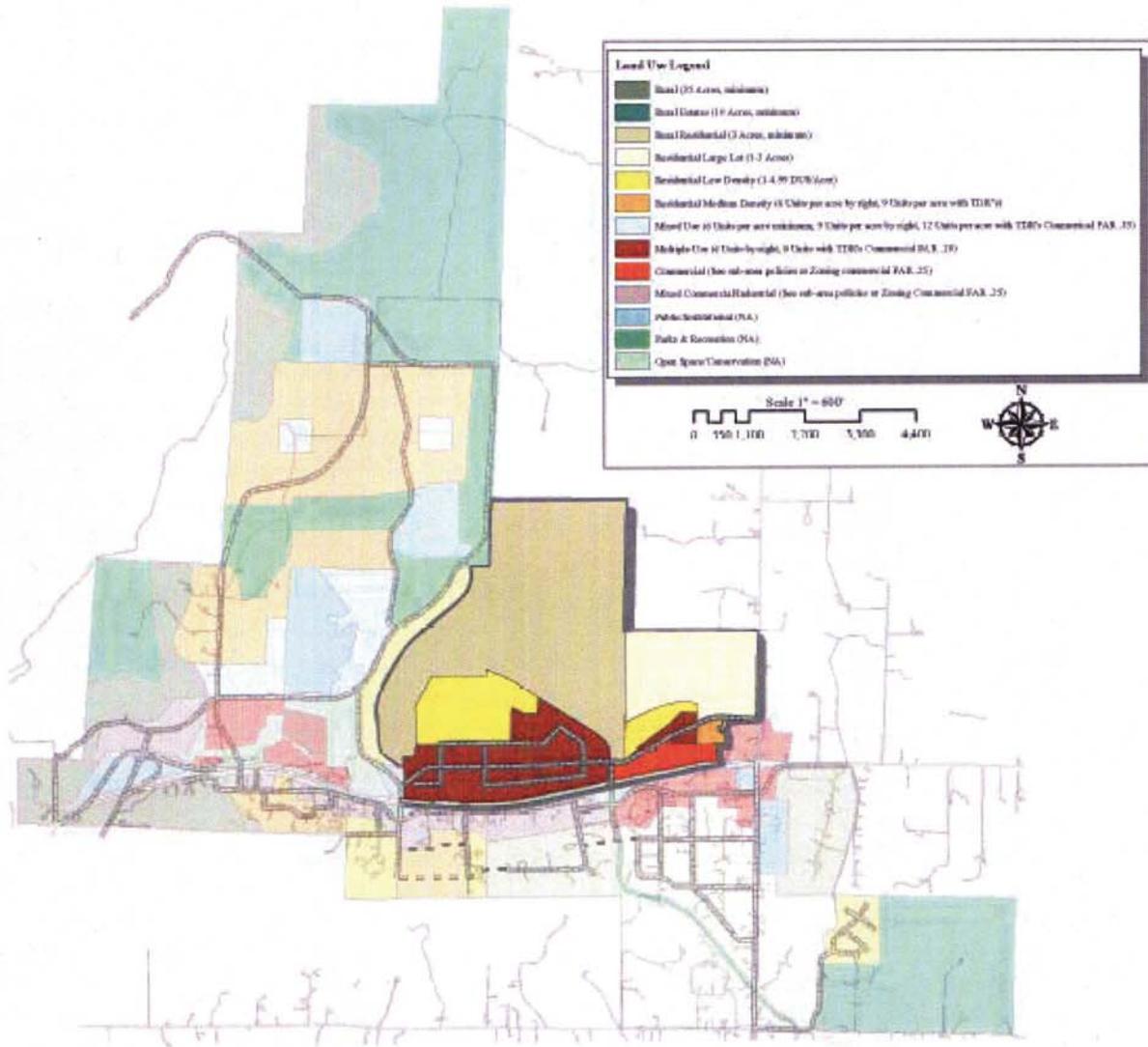


Figure 4.17 Sub Area III

### 4.7.2 Opportunities

The proposed Plan utilizes the existing road network to reduce the need to carve new roads out of the land. CR 233 parallels US 160 through a large portion of the sub area and provides an opportunity to create a new frontage road when access is restricted onto US 160. With the opportunity to focus the neighborhood onto CR

233 and away from US 160 and implement street and pedestrian design standards, it is possible to transform this sub area into a locally serving commercial area that is more pedestrian oriented. Furthermore, as the area's land uses become better organized and future amenities and improvements are installed, redevelopment opportunities will be enhanced. For example, there are approximately 82 acres of undeveloped land

that would gain direct access onto an extended CR 233. This access will enable the development of a mixture of residential densities. Transforming CR 233 into the new frontage road could provide a greater green buffer to be created between US 160 and the existing development along the highway.

The recommended land use designations for this sub area recognize the existing uses particularly the large lot subdivisions on the north boundary. Multiple-use (commercial and residential) designations are concentrated along CR 233. Commercial uses are proposed south of the CR 233 extension to CR 234.

### 4.7.3 Specific Sub Area Plan Elements

Descriptions of each of the land use elements specific to this sub area are presented below. These elements emerged during the Design Dialogue process and subsequently from community meetings and staff analysis. They reflect the synthesis of community vision for the area.

#### 4.7.3.1 Transportation/Connectivity

In order to improve not only the connectivity within each sub area but in between sub areas, this Plan proposes extending the current alignment of CR 233 east to connect into CR 234. The western

end of CR 233 will intersect the new road accessing Sub Area I. This connection provides an alternative to US 160 for local residents to access the regional retail area, hospital, and other activities planned for Sub Area I. Using existing CR 233 as a frontage road for the highway prevents an additional roadway from being carved out of the landscape.

CDOT proposes a signalized intersection at the west end of CR 233 and US 160. In addition, the Plan proposes a right-in, right-out intersection at the east end of CR 233 and US 160. Because of the parallel nature of CR 233 to US 160, the Plan proposes that CR 233 be upgraded at the time CDOT proposes improvements to US 160.

This Plan proposes generous setbacks from US 160 to accommodate hard surface, separated bicycle and pedestrian path improvements. Street treatments should strive to balance vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

Near the existing east end of CR 233, a pedestrian underpass is proposed under US 160 to connect the two areas of the Grandview study area. This proposed connection, to be accomplished during the US 160 highway improvements, will provide a greater degree of safety for pedestrians and



Figure 4.18 Low Density Housing

cyclists crossing the highway.

Street design concepts for pedestrian amenities and the frontage road are found in Chapter 5 and in the appendix as well as specific design standards proposed for pedestrian/bike paths within the setback from US 160 and other pedestrian/bike ways.

#### 4.7.3.2 Vegetated Buffer

Using this Plan as a foundation for future decision making, the City of Durango should negotiate with CDOT for desired improvements at the time CDOT considers upgrades to US 160. Due to CDOT's analysis and preparation for timely improvements, this Plan proposes several recommendations to ensure that CDOT improvements are compatible and advance the street and pedestrian amenities that are envisioned and desired for this area.

A significant improvement that could occur as part of the highway improvements is a green buffer along US 160 between the edge of pavement and development oriented toward the new frontage road. The green corridor is proposed to be wide enough to accommodate a bike/pedestrian path that can extend all the way through Grandview. The provision of curb and gutter on US 160 would enable additional landscaping to be installed. The green space will provide a buffer from high-speed traffic and provide a safety zone between the highway and development.

The proposed buffer along the north side of US 160 is wider than on the south side due to structural and topographic constraints on the south side.

#### 4.7.3.3 Multiple-Use and Commercial

The Plan recommends this sub area as the area within Grandview for small multiple-use oriented businesses. This sub area lends itself to a mixture of locally serving businesses and office space due to its close proximity to a variety of residential land uses and its adjacency to Sub Area I.

Using the new frontage road as a focal point, a spine for this neighborhood, the Plan proposes to strengthen the existing commercial uses with locally serving commercial, office and residential uses creating a multiple-use neighborhood.

Multiple-use is proposed in between the two intersections with US 160. The floor area ratio and residential density of the multiple-use is .25:1 and a maximum of six dwelling units per acre which can be increased up to nine dwelling units per acre with the purchase of TDRs.

## 4.8 Sub Area IV

### 4.8.1 Existing Conditions – Sub Area IV

Sub Area IV is the eastern boundary of the Grandview study area. It is comprised of the intersection of US 160, SH 172, and CR 234, known as Elmore's Corner, extending for approximately ¼ mile in all directions from the intersection. This area holds a mixture of scattered residential units, with locally serving commercial uses, and a cemetery on the southwest corner. SH 172 leads south to the Durango La Plata County Airport, while CR 234 leads north to Florida Road.

The US 160/ SH 172/ CR 234 intersection is currently a signalized intersection that is slated for upgrades when CDOT makes improvements to US 160. As the major crossroads at the eastern edge of the study area, this intersection has the potential to grow into an active commercial center.

### 4.8.2 Opportunities

This sub area has been included in CDOT's plan for upgrades to US 160. This is the edge of the study area and the land east of this intersection is relatively rural in nature therefore creating a natural buffer that should be maintained to help contain the denser redevelopment to the west within the study area. This intersection can define the new City boundary and provide a unique statement for the east entrance to the City.

### 4.8.3 Specific Sub Area Plan Elements

Descriptions of each of the land use elements specific to this sub area are presented below. These elements emerged during the Design Dialogue process and subsequently from community meetings and staff analysis. They reflect the synthesis of community vision for the area.

#### 4.8.3.1 Gateway

It is recommended that this intersection become recognized as the eastern gateway into the City of Durango. US 160 is the eastern portal to the Durango area from all points east and the regional airport is located approximately 5 miles south, on SH 172. The Plan proposes to begin the green buffer on both sides of US 160 at this intersection. Because the highway improvements propose a divided highway from this location to the west, there is the potential to include plantings to create a boulevard treatment not only at this intersection but extending west down the highway. Establishing a boulevard, lowering highway speed limits, developing appropriate signage, and promoting sensitive land use treatments, including public art on all four corners and in the medians, would create a unique and attractive entry for the City.

#### 4.8.3.2 Commercial Uses

The plan proposes commercial land use on all four corners and preservation of the cemetery. Commercial land uses are proposed to the north of the intersection and along the extended CR 233 heading west through Sub Area III.

#### 4.8.3.3 Transportation/Connectivity

The Plan supports the concept of a park and ride facility at the northeast corner of the US 160/SH 172 intersection to intercept commuter traffic from Bayfield to the east and traffic arriving along SH 172 from the south. The new frontage road (extended CR 233) is proposed to connect into CR 234 just north of this intersection.

An important pedestrian connection is proposed in the Plan from the north side of the highway to the elementary school and fire station south of the intersection via an upgraded at-grade crossing at the intersection.

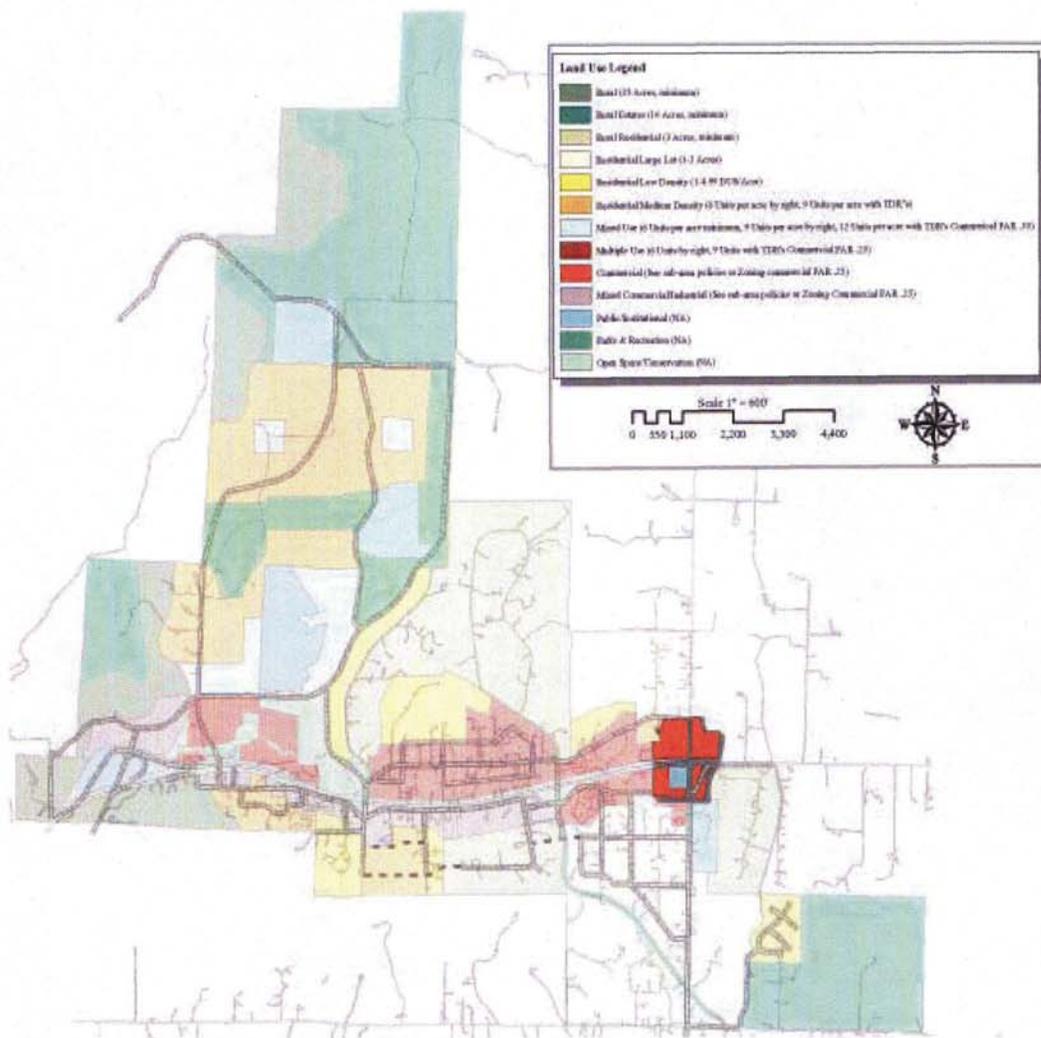


Figure 4.19 Sub Area IV

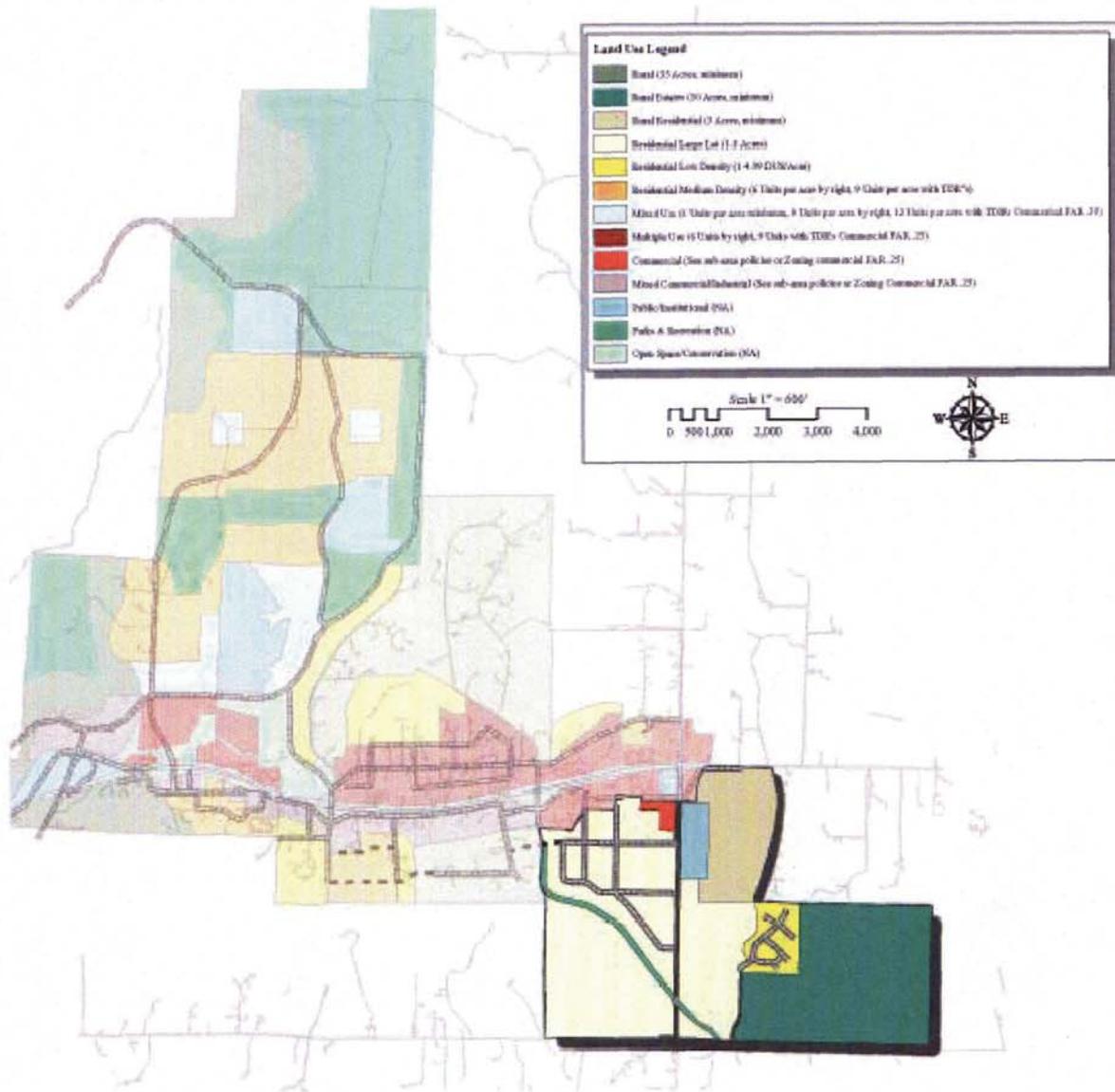


Figure 4.20 Sub Area V

## 4.9 Sub Area V

### 4.9.1 Existing Conditions – Sub Area V

The southeast portion of this sub area has developed into a variety of residential densities. Many parcels have been subdivided for low-density residential development with very little connectivity between neighborhoods. One small mobile home park adds to the residential make-up

of this area. There are some mid-sized parcels left on the edges of this sub area. An elementary school and fire station are located on the east side of SH 172 close to the US 160/SH 172 intersection.

County Road 221 (CR 221) forms the southern boundary of this sub area to the east of SH 172 and County Road 220 (CR 220) to the west of SH 172.

On the east side of SH 172 a rural, sparsely developed, land use pattern still exists. Recently, an affordable, single-family residential subdivision has been developed. However, very little vehicular or pedestrian connectivity has been provided to this new neighborhood. A large vacant parcel adjacent to this new subdivision to the east has been promoted for higher density affordable housing.

SH 172 is a rural highway that bisects this sub area north to south. However, the portion within the study area, from the US 160 intersection to the CR 220 and CR 221 intersection, takes on the characteristics of a suburban arterial due to the density of land uses adjacent to the right-of-way. Realignment of the highway to the east was discussed in the Design Dialogue sessions. That realignment is not reflected in this Plan but the potential improvements for this portion of SH 172 are discussed in Chapter 5.

#### **4.9.2 Opportunities and Issues**

There is a former rail corridor that bisects some of the neighborhoods from the northwest to the southeast. The corridor ties into the proposed right-in right-out intersection and pedestrian underpass on US 160 near this intersection. The properties on the east edge of this sub area have retained a more rural character providing a buffer into the county from the study area.

#### **4.9.3 Specific Sub Area Elements**

Descriptions of each of the land use elements specific to this sub area are presented below. These elements emerged during the Design Dialogue process and subsequently from community meetings and staff analysis. They reflect the synthesis of community vision for the area.

##### **4.9.3.1 Street Connectivity**

The proposed plan recommends incorporating a modified grid pattern of roadways to facilitate

vehicular and pedestrian circulation within the neighborhoods. The connectivity between neighbors reduces heavy traffic flows on specific streets and encourages pedestrian use between neighborhoods. The Plan proposes several connections onto the proposed frontage road (CR 232) to enhance internal circulation and reduce the emphasis on SH 172. If a traditional grid pattern is laid over the existing lot lines, roads and cul-de-sacs, connectivity between residences and neighborhoods appears to be achieved with relative ease. As new development occurs within this sub area, it is recommended that opportunities be found to connect existing roadways (or pedestrian connections at a minimum) in this area.

##### **4.9.3.2 Pedestrian/Bike Connections**

The former railroad alignment provides a unique opportunity to enhance the pedestrian connectivity within the neighborhood providing an off road alternative between SH 172 and US 160. The Plan recommends conversion of the rail corridor into a pedestrian/bike path which will tie into the right-in right-out intersection on US 160 and the proposed pedestrian underpass. To safely extend the trail on the rail corridor further into the County, a pedestrian underpass should be considered underneath SH 172 near the southern boundary of this sub area.

##### **4.9.3.3 Buffer Zone with County**

Transitions between “urban” and “rural” need to be better defined to curb sprawl. The recommended TDR program could help maintain a buffer between the study area and the more rural county land. The eastern and southern portions of this sub area have been identified as buffer zone areas and are potential sending sites for a TDR program. Intergovernmental Agreements with La Plata County can also help facilitate a buffer zone surrounding the Grandview study area.

##### **4.9.3.4 State Highway 172**

This portion of the highway as it traverses the sub area is a narrow, busy, straightaway with many

curb cuts including access to an elementary school, fire station, and a moderately dense residential development to the west of the road. Pedestrian amenities are undefined. When CDOT proposes an upgrade to the highway, the City or County should require significant upgrades to the pedestrian amenities that reflect the urban service characteristics of this alignment.

In order to achieve the conversion of State Highway 172 into an urban service highway with pedestrian oriented features and perhaps realignment, the City should adopt formal comments that could be presented to CDOT if and when CDOT proposes highway improvements for this stretch of SH 172.

## 4.10 Recommended Policies – Grandview Land Use Plan



Policies are statements prescribing a course of action to accomplish a vision. The following policies apply to the Grandview Area. They prescribe public and private actions in addition to those listed in the City-wide sections of the Comprehensive Plan that will help achieve the vision for this area.

### 4.10.1 Annexation

#### 4.10.1.1

Require that annexations are compliant with the Grandview Area Plan, the Future Land Use Map Figure 4.1 and the Durango Comprehensive Plan.

### 4.10.2 Natural Environmental

#### 4.10.2.1

Classify areas with a slope of 30% or greater as Rural on Future Land Use Maps.

#### 4.10.2.2

Limit development in wetlands as well as development that impacts wetlands.

#### 4.10.2.3

The City should develop and adopt wetland protection standards. Items addressed should include delineation, setbacks and buffers, education and mitigation measures.

#### 4.10.2.4

The city should develop and adopt air quality standards.

#### 4.10.2.5

Coordinate with La Plata County and the State to implement effective strategies to improve air quality.

#### 4.10.2.6

Promote better air quality through monitoring, prohibiting new wood burning fireplaces; and other appropriate measures.

### 4.10.3 Land Use

#### 4.10.3.1

Promote the development of land uses that are consistent with the Future Land Use Map Figure 4.1 and the Plan policies.

#### 4.10.3.2

Establish land use criteria, zoning and a development review process that encourages mixed-use and multiple-use development in a compact format.

#### 4.10.3.3

Adopt a Transfer of Development Rights program in conjunction with the County. The TDR program should consider the establishment of TDRs for residential density as well as commercial and industrial square footages.

#### 4.10.3.4

Establish densities for mixed-use in Sub Area I, at the time of annexation, with a required minimum density of six dwelling units per acre and a use by

right of nine dwelling units per acre which can be increased to 12 dwelling units per acre through a Transfer of Development Rights program established in conjunction with La Plata County.

**4.10.3.5**

Establish densities for multiple-use in Sub Area III, at the time of annexation, with a use by right of six dwelling units per acre which can be increased to nine dwelling units per acre through a Transfer of Development Rights program established in conjunction with La Plata County.

**4.10.3.6**

Adopt Traditional Neighborhood Development principles that reflect the tenets of new urbanism as defined by the Congress for the New Urbanism.

**4.10.3.7**

New residential development, where appropriate given the existing land uses, shall be in the form of neighborhood clusters, centered around a civic space with the furthest home being not more than ¼ mile from it. Each neighborhood should be a minimum size of 40 acres.

**4.10.3.8**

Encourage upper floor residential units over the commercial and office uses in the mixed-use and multiple-use areas.

**4.10.3.9**

Encourage the development of a neighborhood-scale commercial development in the center of each neighborhood.

**4.10.3.10**

Promote a mix of dwelling types and sizes in new residential areas; discourage the formation of new residential areas having a uniform housing type and size throughout.

**4.10.3.11**

Promote the development of good quality housing for all income groups through zoning, design review

and building regulations, consistent with efforts to increase the City's affordable and attainable housing stock.

**4.10.3.12**

Utilize Planned Development criteria to vary density, mix of use, and dimensional requirements, and address compatibility with adjacent uses, sensitivity to topographical constraints, preservation of open space, and development of trails systems.

**4.10.3.13**

Determine the environmental, visual and functional impacts through site plan review of proposed development or redevelopment for all uses except single-family homes. Cut-and-fill impacts should be carefully reviewed.

**4.10.3.14**

Require redevelopment of existing properties to be consistent with the adopted Grandview Area Plan and also consistent with city standards.

**4.10.3.15**

Create an Overlay District to facilitate redevelopment that is consistent with the plan and addresses uses, bulk and mass, as well as street and pedestrian standards, where appropriate.

**4.10.3.16**

Adopt a standard for nonconforming uses that allows expansion of the structure(s) but requires pedestrian and street improvements and other development standards that are consistent with the Plan. However, when a use is discontinued for more than one year or is proposed to change, the use must come into conformity.

**4.10.3.17**

Develop a review process to ensure that as redevelopment occurs the transition of uses and buffers between existing and proposed uses are adequate to mitigate impacts caused by new development and/or redevelopment.

#### 4.10.3.18

Require new development to create lots along the property line that are not less than one-half the average size of the adjacent subdivided property or create a buffer zone with an enlarged set back and adequate screening.

#### 4.10.3.19

Establish a development review process for gas/oil extraction activities. Develop criteria and standards for drilling and operation that reflect the developed nature of the area.

#### 4.10.3.20

Require buffers, vegetation, water treatment, dust control, noise control and other measures as deemed necessary to protect the physical and social environment where mineral extraction will be carried out.

#### 4.10.3.21

Create and implement Intergovernmental Agreements between La Plata County and the City of Durango to ensure that the land use development patterns and uses are contained within the urbanizing boundary and are developed to appropriate standards.

### 4.10.4 Community Character and Design

#### 4.10.4.1

Adopt new development standards that support large commercial development in a manner that is more pedestrian friendly and less auto-oriented, and reduces the impact of large commercial square footages.

#### 4.10.4.2

Minimize the visual impact of parking areas by requiring architectural features and/ or landscape screening along edges. Parking lots should be broken up by building placement and interior landscaping. Locate parking areas to reduce

visibility from the major roads.

#### 4.10.4.3

Develop street design and landscaping/open space standards for US 160, SH 172, and CR 234, that require new development along the rights-of-way to install significant roadside landscaping.

#### 4.10.4.4

Develop a unifying theme of landscaping, signage and urban design for the "gateway" in Sub Area IV.

#### 4.10.4.5

Promote the development of integrated residential neighborhoods in the Grandview Area.

#### 4.10.4.6

Create attractively landscaped entrances to each neighborhood/development as well as into the various enclaves of the Grandview Area.

#### 4.10.4.7

Provide for an outdoor gathering space in each neighborhood.

#### 4.10.4.8

Develop architectural guidelines and standards for each neighborhood. The architectural guidelines and standards shall incorporate an integrated and cohesive design based on a regional architectural syntax.

#### 4.10.4.9

Establish an architecture review committee for each neighborhood to enforce the design guidelines.

#### 4.10.4.10

Encourage the utilization of green building techniques in all developments.

#### 4.10.4.11

Consider and accommodate solar access where possible in new development.

**4.10.4.12**

Protect views in building design and placement.

**4.10.4.13**

Utilize dark sky principles in all new development.

**4.10.4.14**

Establish design standards that allow for functional and compatible mixed-use development.

**4.10.4.15**

Require, in new developments, that all garages served from the street be set back at least 15 feet from the front of the house or rotated so the garage doors do not face the street.

**4.10.4.16**

Create private spaces for each housing unit utilizing design elements such as blank walls, enclosed back yards, window placement, etc.

**4.10.4.17**

Require the development of residential amenities to create a high-quality image and character for residential development in the Grandview Area.

**4.10.4.18**

Locate buildings to front on the streets. Maximum setbacks, in addition to minimum setbacks, should be established for each neighborhood.

**4.10.5 Parks, Open Space, Recreation and Trails**

**4.10.5.1**

Work with utility providers to secure an easement under the power line in Sub Area I for a pedestrian and bike trail connecting the two parks in this Sub area.

**4.10.5.2**

Coordinate with La Plata County and other open space and trail organizations to purchase and enhance the existing railroad corridor in Sub Area V for pedestrian and bike pathway purposes.

**4.10.5.3**

Encourage pedestrian linkages throughout the Plan area. Require sidewalks to City standards, as appropriate, or multiple-use paths (separate from streets) in all new developments.

**4.10.5.4**

Integrate the trail system with public transit facilities.

**4.10.5.5**

Connect activity centers such as schools, parks and shopping areas with trails and bike lanes.

**4.10.5.6**

Develop a trail system within the Grandview Area that connects the commercial/recreational areas with the residential development.

**4.10.5.7**

Provide trails linking the Grandview Area to surrounding developed areas.

**4.10.5.8**

Provide trails linking the Grandview Area to surrounding public lands.

**4.10.5.9**

Utilize natural features such as drainages and ridges for the preferred alignments for trails.

**4.10.5.10**

Accommodate horses on some of the natural trails (as appropriate) to provide connections to public lands.

**4.10.5.11**

Develop mini parks throughout Sub Area I so that every residential unit is no more than one-quarter of a mile from a park. Mini parks must be designed to meet the standards in the Parks Master Plan. Neighborhood associations shall be responsible for the maintenance of mini parks.

#### **4.10.5.12**

Develop a regional park designed in accordance with the guidelines in the Parks Master Plan and include enough land to allow for the development of active recreational fields.

#### **4.10.5.13**

Maintain the draws and gulches as open space.

### **4.10.6 Joint Development Review**

#### **4.10.6.1**

With La Plata County identify a buffer area surrounding the Grandview study area and develop a joint review process with the County for development that is proposed within the buffer area.

#### **4.10.6.2**

The City of Durango and La Plata County should adopt an Intergovernmental Agreement between the City and the County that supports the goals of the Grandview Area Plan and requires a joint review process of development proposals.

### **4.10.7 Public Facilities and Services**

#### **4.10.7.1**

Coordinate with existing service providers to ensure City standards are met and service continues and/or is extended in an efficient and cost productive manner for property that is annexed into the City. Agreements with the South Durango Sanitation District and Loma Linda Sanitation District and the City should address the provision of services as well as a joint review process for new development requiring services.

#### **4.10.7.2**

Utilize the City of Durango's Stormwater Quality Program policies when planning for development.

#### **4.10.7.3**

Provide elementary school sites that are located centrally to the residential population.

#### **4.10.7.4**

Provide or reserve additional land for schools as requested by School District 9R when in accordance with their Master Facilities Plan.

#### **4.10.7.5**

Pursue the construction of joint-use facilities for education and community recreation.

#### **4.10.7.6**

Provide a combined police and fire substation site at a location agreeable to the Durango Fire and Rescue Authority and the City of Durango.

#### **4.10.7.7**

Provide for public space that can accommodate public functions, including a branch library.

### **4.10.8 Housing**

#### **4.10.8.1**

Require provision of affordable housing within all new residential subdivisions of three or more parcels or for the development of more than three multi-family housing units.

#### **4.10.8.2**

Require the location of senior housing to be near activity centers and open space and recreational amenities.

## 5.0 Street Circulation Plan

### 5.1 Introduction

#### 5.1.1 Overview

It is reasonable to expect that development activity will occur in the Grandview area over time in response to market forces. The development community will be responsible for ensuring the adequacy of public facilities, including transportation facilities, for specific developments as a part of the development application process. The City response to development proposals within the Plan area should ensure that appropriate rights-of-way are reserved and transportation improvements made to support both the specific developments in question as well as the long-range plan. The City also needs to work closely with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to ensure that the Grandview Area Plan is given proper consideration during project development for US 160 and 550.

The Street Circulation Plan proposes a network of streets with an appropriate hierarchy (minor arterial, collector, local) to access proposed land uses. The street network is a redundant grid system, with more than one way to access specific sites to the extent that topography and property ownership allow for connectivity. The City will need to ensure that specific development proposals are consistent with and build on the Street Circulation Plan from the perspective of traffic capacity, design speed, roadway section, access control, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, landscaping, and urban design adjacent to the rights-of-way. Plans should be consistent with but do not have to adhere to the specific alignments shown in this Plan if the City and the applicant mutually agree that new alignments are in the best interest of all parties.

Given that the Grandview area is proposed to be a regional destination with an urban character, high

speed facilities with rural or suburban road sections would be inappropriate. Highway planning for the US 160 and 550 corridors should consider the Grandview area as an urban destination, with an appropriate multimodal design treatment. Arterials and collectors within Grandview should be designed to provide access to the regional institutional, parks and recreation, and commercial uses proposed for the area, not as new high-speed alignments between other regional destinations that happen to traverse through the area.

#### 5.1.2 Existing Conditions

The existing street hierarchy of the study area includes the mixture of a US Highway, State Highway, County Roads and rural local streets. While US Highway 160 (US 160), State Highway 172 (SH 172), County Road 220 (CR 220), County Road 232 (CR 232), County Road 234 (CR 234) and County Road 233 (CR 233) are all paved, the majority of the rural local streets are not paved and all of the roads lack conventional curb and gutter drainage system and sidewalks.

The main thoroughfare, US 160, provides the primary vehicular connection for the majority of traffic heading westbound into Durango from outlying areas. SH 172 provides a connection between US 160 and the Durango-La Plata Airport and areas further south. The County Roads provide connections for neighborhoods and outlying communities to Durango via other County Roads, State or US Highways.

The existing street system in the Grandview area does not provide access sufficient to serve proposed land uses. Existing roads are, for the most part, not built to City standards, lack multimodal facilities, and have little connectivity. The proposed Street Circulation Plan creates a network of pedestrian and vehicular activity that will support development in an appropriate manner and create a true town-like setting for the Grandview area.

### 5.1.3 Transportation System Capacity

The land use plan developed through the Design Dialogue process sets an aggressive agenda for change in the Grandview area. For example, in the 2000 census La Plata County was reported to have 43,941 residents. Grandview at full build out could contain 11,000 residents, a number equal to 25 percent of the current County population. Grandview provides the City of Durango and La Plata County with an exciting opportunity to absorb anticipated growth in a compact, urban form. Coupled with a county-wide transfer of development rights (TDR) program, Grandview could be the centerpiece of a regional smart growth strategy.

However, growth creates travel demand and compact urban forms tend to concentrate transportation issues into relatively small geographic areas. Currently US 160 and SH 172 are the only regional facilities providing access to the Grandview area. While a regional transportation planning process is beyond the scope of this study, an overview of the person trips that may need to be accommodated on the regional system with build out of one of the land use scenarios was provided and is found in Appendix C.

## 5.2 Transportation Improvements within the Plan Area

This section addresses transportation improvements that should be considered internal to the sub areas that make up Grandview if and when those areas are annexed. Improvements in the US 160 corridor that would be the responsibility of the CDOT are discussed in a later section.

In undeveloped or redeveloping areas, transportation improvements would be the

responsibility of the developer. In developed areas that are stable, these improvements would be the responsibility of the property owners, perhaps through a local improvement district. In distressed areas, the City may want to assist property owners as a means of stabilizing or enhancing land values and enhancing quality of life.

### 5.2.1 Multimodal Street Hierarchy

As the study area begins to redevelop and annexation options are further discussed, the opportunity exists to create a truly multimodal street system. While it was a goal to work with the existing road network and associated rights-of-way as much as possible, increasing density and uses will result in increasing road usage and the need to increase capacity. Therefore, a new and improved street network and hierarchy needs to be established.

The improved street network and hierarchy provides a transportation framework for redevelopment of the Grandview area (see figure 5.1: *Proposed Multimodal Street Hierarchy*). The Plan calls for urban development with town-like densities, necessitating vehicular and pedestrian links that are clear and safe. Finally, the new street hierarchy has been designed to carry traffic to, from and throughout the study site in a safe and efficient manner.

### 5.2.2 Multimodal Street Design Concepts

Although the road hierarchy within Grandview has been defined by minor arterial and collector roads as described in City of Durango street standards, Appendix C recommends additional design detail based on the character of adjacent land uses and specific amenities associated with specific transportation corridors. While some of the design concepts call for changes from existing City street standards, the policy remains to create a street hierarchy which provides for the safe and efficient movement for pedestrian and vehicular

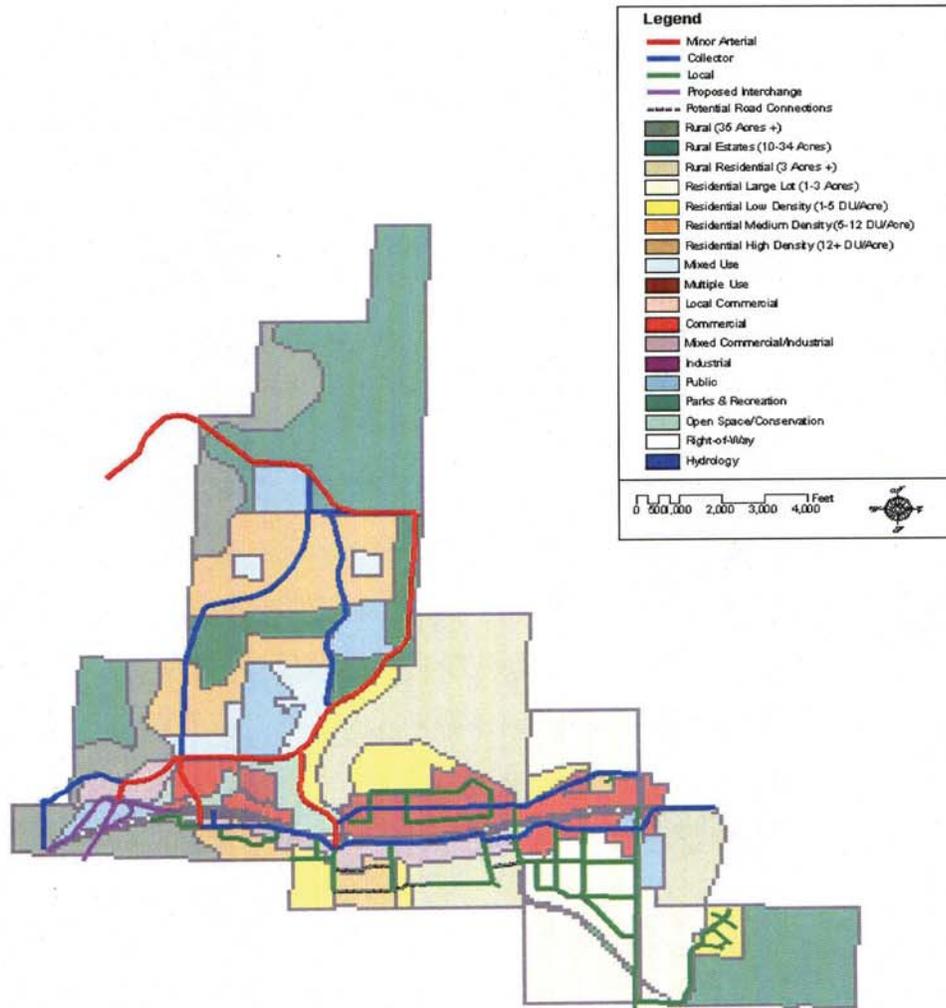


Figure 5.1 Proposed Multimodal Street Hierarchy

traffic. Local street concepts are not defined within this Plan, as they will be considered in the context of existing City standards when development is proposed or upon annexation of existing neighborhoods.

Street design plays an important role in the overall functionality, character and identity of a community. Based upon the existing City of Durango standards, the new design concepts found in Appendix D have been developed to help promote a unique character within the Plan area.

### 5.2.3 Quantities of New and Upgraded Streets

The proposed street system includes several miles of new or upgraded minor arterial, collector, and local streets, as shown in Figure 5.1. The proposed street system include the proposed frontage roads. These roads are improvements to and extensions of CR 233 and CR 232. Frontage road improvements would typically be the responsibility of the CDOT as a portion of the US 160 improvement project, but the City may want to partner on enhancements to these facilities. If

private development that requires access to US 160 is proposed prior to CDOT improvements, the City and CDOT should work together to ensure that any improvements required of the developer by CDOT are consistent with the long-range plan.

City policy requires that private local streets within existing neighborhoods be improved to City standard at the time of annexation for the City to take over ownership and maintenance. These improvements could be financed through the formation of local improvement districts, with or without subsidy from the City. Some form of public subsidy for street improvements may be required as a part of annexation negotiations.

#### 5.2.4 Additional Plan Enhancements

Beyond the new multimodal streets and the improvements in the US 160 corridor described later in this chapter, other pedestrian and traffic enhancements should be encouraged that will further enhance the quality of life and functionality of the Grandview area (see Figure 5.2 ). Implementing these enhancements should be coordinated with CDOT, La Plata County, the Bureau of Land Management, and property owners within and adjacent to the Plan area.

*Roundabouts* – The proposed plan shows roundabouts at major intersections along the frontage roads on both sides of US 160. A roundabout is a circular intersection with yield control on all approaches (unlike a traffic circle or rotary, traffic entering the roundabout yields to traffic in the roundabout), islands to separate flows of traffic from each other and from pedestrians, and geometric features to slow (not stop) traffic. Roundabouts often have lower delays than traffic signals, often have smaller queues of traffic, can reduce the need to widen roadways between intersections, and present fewer conflicts between vehicle movements than traditional intersections.

While operational analysis will be required before designing the roundabouts proposed for the Plan area, an urban single lane roundabout can typically accommodate 20,000 vehicles per day, with urban double lane configurations accommodating substantially more traffic. Recent examples in Colorado include the roundabouts on the Interstate 70 frontage roads in Vail and the roundabout on SH 82 in Aspen.

*Durango Lift Service* – The Durango Lift service has been integrated into the Grandview Area Plan. Transit service will include an extension into Sub Area I of the route that currently terminates at the Wal-Mart south of downtown Durango. In addition, when the hospital is developed in Sub Area I the Durango Lift will provide service directly to the hospital. Direct, safe, and convenient pedestrian connections between the other sub-areas and Sub-Area I are proposed to provide access to transit from those areas.

The City should consider extending bus service to the east as the area annexes and funding becomes available. The City should also work with CDOT and the development community to fund Durango Lift service as a means of reducing automobile trips on US 160.

Two park-n-ride lots are proposed within the Plan. One lot is proposed to be located near the US 160/SH 172 intersection (the exact location is not shown) and one lot is near the US 160/High Llama Lane intersection. The High Llama Lane lot should eventually be incorporated into the interchange of US 160 and 550.

*Green Buffer and Wilson Gulch Trail* – During the Design Dialogue, there was great concern regarding the visual and sound aspects of expanding US 160. This visual impact is not just the view from Grandview to the highway, but also the view from the highway as the motorist enters this gateway to Durango from the east. This gateway concept is supported in the La Plata

County Trails Plan. As a result, this Plan recommends a green buffer on both sides of US 160.

This green buffer will create a parkway-like setting and act as a linear greenway to enhance the overall entrance to Durango. On the northside of US 160, the green buffer expands to a width of approximately 70 to 80 feet. This will allow for a pedestrian path to be constructed that will connect to and be part of the Wilson Gulch Trail.

The Wilson Gulch Trail runs parallel to the US 160 on the west end of the study area. The trail system will connect the regional retail and commercial center, west to the Animas River Trail, east to the Railroad Greenway and eventually toward Bayfield. Topographical constraints (vertical change) limit the width of the green buffer area on the south side of US 160. However, the vertical grade change allows enough separation to act as a buffer between the highway and adjacent

land uses. The enhancement of the green buffer and Wilson Gulch Trail should be accomplished via intergovernmental agreement. The acquisition of right-of-way for the green buffer along the US 160 corridor should be pursued as mitigation for the impacts of the CDOT US 160 improvement project. Once the land acquisition occurs, the proposed trail within the green buffer and Wilson Gulch Trail could be constructed by CDOT or the City of Durango. Ongoing maintenance could be provided by the City of Durango.

*Railroad Greenway* – To fully utilize the pedestrian undercrossing at US 160 and CR 233 mentioned earlier in the Plan, the City of Durango should work with La Plata County and trail advocates to purchase and develop the abandoned railroad right-of-way south of US 160 and convert it into a pedestrian greenway, extending to the south. The greenway would become a pedestrian spine that would link the southwest quadrant of the study area to the north.



Figure 5.2 The Proposed Wilson Gulch Trail is incorporated as part of the Green Buffer Greenway Trail.

On the north side of US 160, the greenway could connect with the US 160 trail that is planned to be incorporated into the "green buffer", which will ultimately connect to the Animas River Trail. The City of Durango should also work with La Plata County to extend the Railroad Greenway south and east into the county.

*Connections to Ewing Mesa and County Road 234 –* The City of Durango, La Plata County, and landowners seeking to develop their lands have been discussing a network of arterial streets south and east of Durango. These streets would provide access to Grandview and Ewing Mesa areas from US 160, US 550, SH 172, and CR 234. The conceptual road network proposed in the Grandview Plan is consistent with current alignment concepts. Specifically within Sub Area I, conceptual connections to Grandview Ridge and CR 234 have been identified.

Permitting and constructing these connections would be no small undertaking and should be considered as long-term opportunities supportive of the later stages of Plan implementation and build out. A connection to CR 234 would involve improvements to CR 235, a partially improved road with limited right-of-way that crosses portions of the State School parcel between the Plan area and CR 234. Connections to Ewing Mesa would involve constructing new alignments across challenging terrain on Bureau of Land Management property.

The design speed, roadway section, access control, and amenities proposed for these improvements within the urbanizing area boundary should be given the same careful attention as the through routes on the US Highways. Given that the Grandview area is proposed to be a regional destination with an urban character, high-speed facilities with rural or suburban roadway sections would be inappropriate. Arterials within Grandview

should be designed to provide access to the regional institutional, parks and recreation, and commercial uses proposed for the area, not as new high-speed alignments between other regional destinations that happen to traverse through the area.

*State Highway 172 Improvement Alternatives –* SH 172 is an important minor arterial, connecting the Durango-La Plata Airport and areas to the south with US 160. The CDOT traffic report for the expansion of US 160 reflects future high traffic volumes on SH 172. These volumes result in the need to plan for a roadway expansion or realignment. The option of expansion would result in a five-lane highway and two sidewalks, which includes a center turning lane due to the high number of curb cuts along this corridor within the study area. The option of realigning the highway would include relocating it to the east of the Grandview study area. The realignment would only need to be four lanes, with strategically placed turning lanes.

*State Highway 172 Pedestrian Undercrossing –* In association with the CDOT roadway upgrade, a pedestrian undercrossing should also be considered where the Railroad Greenway intersects with SH 172. The undercrossing would allow easy pedestrian access to the southeastern boundary of the study area and eventually beyond into unincorporated La Plata County.

*Upgrade County Road 234 –* CR 234 is the eastern edge of the study area north of US 160 and connects rural La Plata County with SH 172 and US 160.

Growth in the Grandview area and lands to the north and east will likely result in increased traffic on CR 234. Therefore, this transportation corridor should be improved on both the pedestrian and vehicular level. The road should be upgraded to two twelve-foot wide travel lanes with sidewalks and curb and gutter. A center lane

for turning purposes should also be strategically placed where traffic volumes meet the need for this. If the City annexes to CR 234, an agreement would have to be reached with La Plata County regarding the responsibilities of each jurisdiction for the roadway.

**Upgrade County Road 220** – CR 220 defines the southern edge of Sub Area V and connects rural La Plata County with SH 172 and US 550. It provides inviting views to the San Juan Mountains but due to the topography has many blind spots. corridor, including any mitigation for community impacts. The City should work closely with CDOT and Grandview property owners during the NEPA process. The parties to this process may wish to enhance the transportation project with local funding. There are also many driveways along the road.

Growth in the Grandview Area and south and east toward the airport will likely result in increased traffic on CR 220. Therefore, this transportation corridor should be improved on both the pedestrian and vehicular level. If the City annexes to CR 220, an agreement would have to be reached with La Plata County regarding the responsibilities of each jurisdiction for the roadway.

### 5.3 Improvements within the US Highway 160 Corridor

The Street Circulation Plan has been developed with US 160, the primary surface transportation corridor. The plan includes the nature of intersections, the provision of pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and mitigation for potential noise and visual impacts (see Figure 5.2 *Improvements with the US Highway 160 Corridor*).

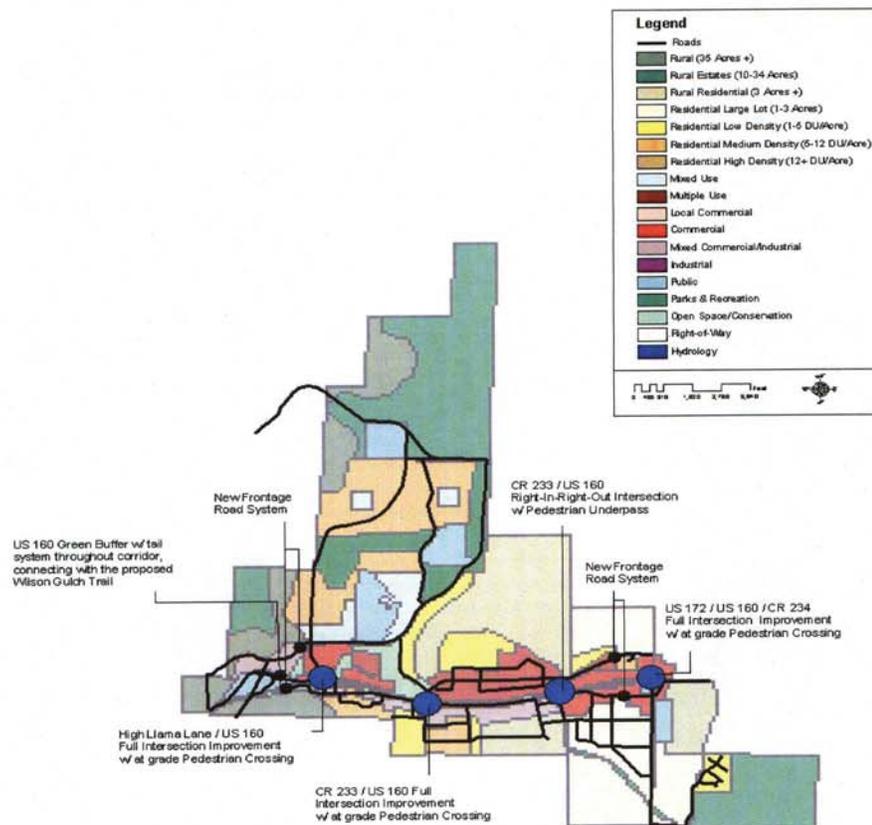


Figure 5.3 Improvements with the US Highway 160 Corridor

While the Grandview Area Plan assumes highway improvements that were presented to the community by CDOT in 2001, on facility in the area, as its backbone. This plan proposes alterations to the 2001 CDOT conceptual plans for US 160, including the alignment of frontage roads, the location and the actual nature of US 160 improvements will be developed through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. NEPA requires that CDOT consider a broad range of alternatives in the US 160 corridor, and that CDOT not pre-determine or otherwise prejudice the solution to be implemented in the corridor prior to the completion of the NEPA process. The City may propose solutions that best serve its interests during the NEPA process. Once adopted, the Grandview Area Plan will serve as the basis for City input into the NEPA process.

Once the NEPA process is complete, CDOT will be responsible for funding the design and construction of the preferred alternative for the corridor, including any mitigation for community impacts. The City should work closely with CDOT and Grandview property owners during the NEPA process. The parties to this process may wish to enhance the transportation project with local funding.

### 5.3.1 Frontage Roads

The Grandview Area Plan calls for two new frontage roads, similar to those identified in the 2001 CDOT US 160 Environmental Assessment. However, the area plan frontage road layout better supports the land use plan by supporting compact development at intersections and internal to Grandview rather than a commercial strip the length of the highway frontage.

The proposed northern US 160 frontage road includes incorporating and upgrading CR 233 and connecting with the new road proposed in Sub Area I and extending east to CR 234. A new street will parallel the highway north of Wilson Gulch and connect High Llama lane and the main

entry road into Sub Area I. This new road would provide access to BLM gravel resources west of High Llama Lane. The north side road system includes four connections to US 160:

- A realigned High Llama Lane (via the new 550/160 interchange or an interim signal controlled intersection)
- CR 233-west entrance (signal controlled)
- CR 233-east entrance (right-in right-out only)
- CR 234 (signal controlled).

The proposed southern US 160 frontage road, which runs parallel to US 160, is an upgrade and extension of CR 232 designed to conform to the topographical constraints of the area. The southern frontage road also connects with US 160 at four locations:

- A realigned High Llama Lane (interim signal controlled intersection)
- CR 233-west entrance (signal controlled)
- CR 233-east entrance (right-in right-out only)
- SH 172.

### 5.3.2 State Highway 172/US Highway 160/County Road 234 Intersection Upgrade

This intersection at the eastern end of the Plan area is an important urban design component because it acts as a gateway into the urbanized area and is at a critical junction both in terms of transportation capacity and land use. Currently, the intersection is not designed to handle pedestrian traffic in concert with vehicular traffic. Pedestrian connectivity is a critical component of the Grandview Area Plan. As part of the CDOT US 160 widening project, this intersection should be upgraded to include appropriate travel and turning lanes, traffic signals, and pedestrian crosswalks and signals. The exact configuration of the intersection will be developed based upon CDOT analysis of future traffic volumes.

### 5.3.3 Right-In Right-Out Intersection at East end of County Road 233

In order to manage traffic and add access to the frontage roads, two right-in right-out intersections with US 160 are also proposed in the Street Circulation Plan. The two are across US 160 from one another and are located at the existing eastern intersection of CR 233 and US 160. By providing the northern access, westbound traffic on US 160 will have easy access to adjacent mixed use and commercial areas. Traffic on the southern frontage road will have an opportunity to enter the eastbound traffic lane on US 160. Finally, by providing the two right-in right-outs, along with the three traffic signal controlled intersections proposed on US 160, four evenly spaced access points to US 160 are provided on both southern and northern frontage roads. These right-in right-out upgrades are part of the access control of US 160 and should be part of the CDOT US 160 improvement project. A full movement intersection at this location was considered and rejected by CDOT due to sight distance constraints. The right-in right-out improvements should occur concurrently or after CR 233 is connected to CR 234.

### 5.3.4 Pedestrian Undercrossing

The proposed pedestrian undercrossing is located at the CR 233/US 160 intersection. This intersection is planned as right-in right-out on each side of US 160. Since the intersection has been designed as right-in right-out, this will not be a traffic signal controlled intersection.

The pedestrian undercrossing would be a component of the proposed Railroad Greenway (described later), that crosses the US 160 right-of-way near CR 233. This improvement will provide a pedestrian-safe connection between the northern and southern components of the Plan.

The programming, planning and construction of the pedestrian undercrossing at the CR 233/US 160 intersection should be included in the CDOT US 160 improvement project.

The intersection should be upgraded with a traffic signal, pedestrian crosswalks and signals, appropriate travel, stacking and turning lanes. The intersection should be constructed as part of the CDOT US 160 improvement project. If private development impacting the intersection is proposed prior to CDOT improvements, the City



Figure 5.4 High Llama Lane circa 2004

and CDOT should work together to ensure that any improvements required of the developer by CDOT are consistent with the long-range plan.

### 5.3.6 High Llama Lane/US Highway 160 Full Intersection Upgrade

The 2001 CDOT US Highway 160 Environmental Assessment proposed a grade-separated interchange of US 160 and US 550 near the High Llama Lane intersection. The anticipated costs exceed current CDOT revenue expectations. Because of the unknown timeframe for the construction of the new interchange, this plan prescribes an interim solution of a signalized intersection near US 160 and High Llama Lane. US 550 is presumed to remain connected to US 160 in its current location for the foreseeable future.

To provide safe access to US 160 from lands north and south of the highway between CR 233 and the existing alignment of US 550, the Plan proposes the construction and operation of a full movement signalized intersection in the general vicinity of High Llama Lane and the US 160 unless US 550 is relocated and a grade separated interchange with US 160 is constructed, or until traffic congestion warrants construction of an interchange near the High Llama Lane signal. If CDOT relocates the US 550-US 160 intersection, CDOT should incorporate grade separated access across US 160 at or near High Llama Lane to connect CR 232 and the frontage road on the south side of the highway with the new interchange.

If private development impacting the intersection is proposed prior to CDOT improvements, the City and CDOT should work together to ensure that any improvements required are consistent with the long-range plan.



Figure 5.5 Location for Proposed Interchange

## 5.4 Recommended Policies - Grandview Transportation Plan Element

Policies are statements prescribing a course of action to accomplish a vision. The following policies apply to the Grandview Area. They prescribe public and private actions above and beyond those listed in the City-wide sections of the Comprehensive Plan that will help achieve the vision for this area.

### 5.4.1 Road Improvements

#### 5.4.1.1

Design and construct all existing and proposed streets in accordance with the street design concepts and the functional street classifications set forth in this Plan. Use the proposed street hierarchy plan in coordination with new development.

#### 5.4.1.2

Maintain street construction based on current City of Durango Code and the functional street classifications set forth in this plan. Modify concepts to safely accommodate significant physical features such as wetlands, trees, buildings and hillsides.

#### 5.4.1.3

Future development shall advance proposed street alignments that best reflect site specific development patterns and/or constraints.

#### 5.4.1.4

The Street Hierarchy Map set forth in this plan will be used to identify right-of-way needs where development is proposed to set priorities for capital improvements. New development must dedicate adequate rights-of-way and design development to accommodate those rights-of way.

#### 5.4.1.5

Require existing roads to upgrade to the City of Durango street design standards. In the event City standards cannot be achieved but health and safety is not compromised, the City should consider modified road standards.

#### 5.4.1.6

Provide adequate road systems to accommodate future traffic projections.

#### 5.4.1.7

Develop a conceptual plan including cost estimates for road improvements in to the Grandview Planning Area.

#### 5.4.1.8

Develop a traffic impact fee to recover, from new development, an appropriate share of road improvement costs to accommodate projected traffic impacts on roads within the study area and other regional routes.

#### 5.4.1.9

Plan new streets in a grid or modified grid pattern with streets interconnecting to the greatest extent possible.

#### 5.4.1.10

Modified TND street design concepts may be used within residential neighborhoods as long as development meets the TND criteria.

#### 5.4.1.11

The City of Durango shall develop a roadway plan in conjunction with the Bureau of Land Management to identify road(s) connections from Sub Area I to the Grandview Ridge, with due regard to costs, geologic constraints, connections and wildlife impacts. The development of Sub Area I shall require the dedication of rights-of-way for roads by the developer, as appropriate. Minimized scarring of the hillsides should be a priority when designing the precise location of the roadways.

#### **5.4.1.12**

Utilize alleys in the TND neighborhoods wherever it is feasible and do not allow driveways to access directly onto the street in such neighborhoods.

#### **5.4.1.13**

Consider traffic calming techniques on proposed local roads.

#### **5.4.1.14**

Consider utilizing shared parking wherever appropriate to reduce the amount of required off-street parking.

#### **5.4.1.15**

Prohibit direct vehicular access from developments facing arterial streets except at 300-foot intervals.

#### **5.4.1.16**

Limit new traffic demands on local streets through residential neighborhoods. Large-scale multi-family uses generally should not take primary access through a lower density residential neighborhood unless it is by way of a collector or arterial street. Traffic to and from a commercial land use should not be routed through a residentially zoned area unless it is by way of an arterial street.

#### **5.4.1.17**

Provide access to and through the plan area concurrently with development based on traffic impact studies for each development or phase of development. When required by City Staff, these traffic studies shall use a computerized traffic model as approved by City Staff and shall consider the impacts of the proposed development on the arterial streets of the city.

#### **5.4.1.18**

Participate in a regional transportation plan with La Plata County and CDOT.

### **5.4.2 Parking Improvements**

#### **5.4.2.1**

Discourage designated parallel parking lanes on arterials.

### **5.4.3 Trail Improvements**

#### **5.4.3.1**

Develop trails and trail networks consistent with City trail policies for design, development and maintenance.

#### **5.4.3.2**

Utilize natural and existing features such as drainages and railroad grades for preferred alignments for pedestrian and bike trails.

#### **5.4.3.3**

Develop and maintain a trail system as an alternative transportation network and recreation amenity. Ensure that trails have access to major activity centers, schools, parks, open spaces, and residential neighborhoods and to park and ride areas throughout the Grandview area.

#### **5.4.3.4**

Require dedication of trail segment linkages to major activity centers, parks, open spaces, schools, neighborhoods and to park and ride areas.

#### **5.4.3.5**

Separate vehicular traffic from pedestrian traffic.

#### **5.4.3.6**

Establish a bicycle and pedestrian trail network as part of the street hierarchy on all new and upgraded streets.

#### **5.4.3.7**

Develop a campaign to educate the public that "bikes share roads".

#### **5.4.3.8**

Construct new underpasses where trails cross major streets and highways. Develop grade-

separated crossings where trails intersect major streets and highways. Underpasses should be well-lit and as wide as possible.

## **5.4.4 Transit Improvements**

### **5.4.4.1**

Expand the Transit Development Plan to establish Durango Lift and Trolley Routes throughout the Grandview Area. Coordinate efforts of the public transportation system to work with the park and ride areas. Require dedication of transit facilities within major community activity areas (e.g., large shopping, employment or residential developments).

### **5.4.4.2**

Incorporate public transportation in the development plans and include both internal connections provided by the developer of the project as well as connections out of the Grandview Area that may be provided by either the developer or the City.

### **5.4.4.3**

Require the developer to be responsible for providing public transit connections to the existing City transit service until such time as the City can provide transit service. The timing of the initial provision of transit service and when the City will take over the service shall be established during the annexation / development review process.

### **5.4.4.4**

Work cooperatively with developers and major employers to plan and provide improvements needed for future transportation demand generated by projected growth, and especially to develop strategies for alternative and public transportation to reduce the need for new roads and parking facilities.

### **5.4.4.5**

Coordinate with the County and major community employers to implement cost-effective strategies to reduce peak hour traffic. Such strategies may include, but are not limited to, park and ride sites, adjustments to work schedules, ride-sharing incentives and improved bicycle/pedestrian facilities.

### **5.4.4.6**

Develop safe, well-lit and attractive transit stop facilities to enhance the appeal of transit use. Facilities should include well-lit shelters and emergency phones in isolated areas.

### **5.4.4.7**

Integrate the trail system with mass transit to facilitate further use of both systems.

## **5.4.5 Working with the Colorado Department of Transportation**

### **5.4.5.1**

The City shall use this adopted Plan to provide formal comments to the Colorado Department of Transportation for inclusion in the Environmental Impact Statement for US 160.

### **5.4.5.2**

The City should strive to acquire the following elements as part of CDOT's enhancement items for upgrades to US 160:

- Pedestrian pathways within the US 160 ROW as well as amenities to connect the pathways to a trail network and transit facilities; and
- Acquire the ROW and maintenance agreements for a green buffer along US 160 alignment that will provide a transition from the highway and related impacts to adjacent land uses, and create a sense of open space along the US 160 corridor.

**5.4.5.3**

Adopt urban highway design standards for the portion of SH 172 within the Grandview study area to be applied when CDOT begins this highway improvement process.

**5.4.5.4**

Actively participate in State arterial roadway improvement projects and support the development of appropriate landscaping, pedestrian facilities and other design enhancements.

**5.4.5.5**

Coordinate with CDOT and La Plata County to monitor traffic levels and identify road improvements, transit enhancements and trail linkages required to maintain adopted levels of service.

## 6.0 Coordinated Implementation Plan

The following Action Plan provides a guide and outline of specific actions necessary to implement the Grandview Area Plan. The City of Durango is in a unique position to negotiate land uses, establish standards for infrastructure improvements, and apply creative zoning techniques to the Grandview study area as annexations occur.

The Action Plan outlines the steps for implementation of the Plan as well as identifies the responsible parties.

### 6.1 Adopt the Grandview Area Plan



It is the intent of the City of Durango to adopt this Plan for the Grandview area in order to guide annexation and subsequent development review for the area. It is also contemplated that the City of Durango will work closely with La Plata County to facilitate implementation of the Plan and use the goals prescribed in the Plan to affect development in the area including significant upgrades proposed for US 160.

Chapters 4 and 5 of the Area Plan provide many *policies* that will ensure that new development or annexations are compatible with this new Plan. Because the entire Grandview study area is outside the Durango City boundaries, the City has the opportunity to ensure that annexation proposals and subsequent development are consistent with the policies and recommendations of this Plan. The City may proactively negotiate with entities seeking to annex with regard to site specific development standards and the cost of infrastructure improvements and maintenance.

The City should use the adopted Grandview Area Plan to inform the CDOT Environmental Impact Statement process during the analysis and design of US 160 upgrades.

#### 6.1.1 Action:

The City of Durango should work with La Plata County to recognize the Grandview Area Plan as the guiding document for considering development review projects.

#### 6.1.2 Action

Utilize the Plan and recommended policies in order to facilitate annexation review and agreements, guide future development and land use patterns, implement design and development standards, and ensure adequate infrastructure upgrades.

### 6.2 Adopt an Annexation Strategy

It is recommended that the City, over time, pursue annexation. However, as the City begins to annex properties within the plan area, careful consideration should be given to the exact boundaries and specific parcels within the boundaries defined by Plan. The Grandview Area Plan process did not include a parcel by parcel annexation analysis. It is possible that some areas included within the sub-area boundaries may not be appropriate for annexation. For example, a large lot subdivision may not be annexed or a residential subdivision that has provisions for water and sewer may not be appropriate for annexation. In a similar fashion, if a parcel adjacent to the Grandview study area that could comply with the goals of the Grandview Area Plan requests municipal services, an annexation may be considered after the Plan was amended.

A phased annexation approach will be more efficient based upon existing service boundaries, CDOT's highway improvements and existing

development pressures. Currently on the development horizon is Mercy Hospital's desire to relocate to Sub Area I by 2005. Annexation is necessary to obtain City services and can be a series annexation with contiguity achieved across the BLM land located on Grandview Ridge. It is anticipated that future development of the rest of Sub Area I will closely follow infrastructure improvements required for the Hospital relocation. The next phase of annexations should follow CDOT US 160 improvements or at least finalization of the improvement plan.

Although the Grandview Area Plan creates distinct sub area boundaries, the district boundary between the South Durango Sanitation District (SDSD) service area and the Loma Linda Sanitation District (LLSD) provides a natural break between the sub areas. The SDSD district includes Sub Areas I, II, and most of Sub Area III, and the LLSD district includes Sub Areas IV and V, and a small portion of Sub Area III. The City of Durango should utilize the service boundary of the SDSD and the LLSD to determine the annexation boundary between Sub Area II and V and negotiate for continued service from LLSD for Sub Area IV and the small portion of Sub Area III.

### 6.2.1 Action:

The City should adopt an annexation strategy that includes a phased approach to annexation as follows:

- first pursue annexation of the land owned by the Tierra Group LLC;
- second pursue annexation of the Crader family ranch and the balance of Sub Area I when development is proposed; and
- follow closely with annexations of Sub Areas III and IV to support the annexation of Sub Area I
- annex Sub Area II once CDOT has begun their improvements to US 160 in order to coordinate infrastructure improvements.
- Consider annexation of Sub area V within

the next 10 years; in the interim designate Sub Area V as a Potential Urban Area

## 6.3 Intergovernmental Agreements

Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) are a tool that the City should use to facilitate the implementation of the Grandview Area Plan's goals. Not only are there recommended policies that affect land in the County's jurisdiction but until all sub areas are annexed it would be important to guide new development and redevelopment in a manner that is consistent with the Grandview Area Plan.

IGAs with La Plata County as well as joint development review agreements with the two local sanitation districts should establish reciprocal and coordinated development review procedures.

Sewer service is already provided to most of the area within the Grandview Area Plan but Agreements should be established to ensure that service continues with either annexation or pending annexation. The Agreements should include the ability to negotiate costs of service, requirements to upgrade infrastructure to meet City standards, and what services the District will retain. The Agreement should also define a joint referral process between the Districts and the City to address service needs.

When Sub Areas IV and V are considered for annexation, the City should negotiate with the Loma Linda Sanitation District to contract for services.

### 6.3.1 Action:

The City should enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with La Plata County to ensure the implementation of the goals of the Grandview

Plan particularly for land in the study area that has not yet annexed into the City of Durango. The IGA should also establish a joint development review process for development in the Grandview Area Plan study area as well as a defined buffer zone outside of the Plan area.

### **6.3.2 Action:**

The City should negotiate an Agreement with the SDSD when Sub Areas I, II and III are annexed to ensure service to those sub areas. The Agreement should include a joint review process between SDSD and the City to address services needs.

### **6.3.3 Action:**

The City should negotiate an Agreement with the LLSd, if Sub Area III is annexed to ensure service to the eastern end of Sub Area III. In addition, the City should negotiate an Agreement with the LLSd, if Sub Area IV or V are considered for annexation, to ensure service to those sub areas. The Agreement should also define a joint review process between the District and the City to address service needs.

## **6.4 Joint Review**

This Implementation Plan recommends a phasing of annexations. Until annexations can occur, it will be important to establish a joint development review process between the City and County, preferably via an IGA. A joint review process can help ensure that development is in compliance with the Grandview Area Plan including TND principles and other policies adopted with this Plan.

In addition, areas within the County that are not recommended for annexation in this plan but may be annexed in the future should be identified as a Potential Urban Area to ensure that development within that zone is in compliance with the Plan as well as County land use plans and standards.

It is recommended that Sub Area V be included within the Potential Urban Area. This Plan recommends against annexation of Sub Area V for at least 10 years. However, as the area is redeveloped there may be a time when the citizens wish to annex into the City, in order to receive City services for example. Therefore it would be important that the area redevelops to selected City standards as spelled out in the IGA. A joint review process can advance the goals of the Grandview Area Plan

A joint referral process will also be critical between the Sanitation Districts and the City of Durango to ensure the efficient and cost effective provision of services and to ensure that all goals of the Grandview Area Plan are met.

### **6.4.1 Action:**

The City and the County should establish a joint review process for reciprocal development review and/or referral comments.

### **6.4.2 Action:**

The City and County should identify a Potential Urban Area that requires development proposals within that zone to be reviewed by both the City and the County.

### **6.4.3 Action:**

The City, the SDSD and the LLSd should establish a referral process for development proposals.

## **6.5 Regulatory Changes**

### **6.5.1 Land Use Classification Districts -**

When the City completes annexation of areas within the Grandview study area, land use categories from the Comprehensive Plan should be applied in recommended areas.

#### 6.5.1.1 Action:

The following land use classifications should be applied within the Grandview Area Plan:

- Rural
- Rural Estates
- Rural Residential
- Residential – Large Lot
- Residential – Low Density
- Residential – Medium Density
- Mixed-Use
- Multiple-Use
- Mixed Commercial/Light Industrial
- Public/Institutional
- Open Space/Conservation
- Parks

#### 6.5.1.2 Action:

Future zoning should be in accordance with the Future Land Use Map.

#### 6.5.1.3 Action:

Develop new zone districts if necessary to reflect the character of the study area and existing development.

### 6.5.2 Traditional Neighborhood Development

Throughout the planning process, the City staff, elected officials and participants believed a significant opportunity existed to create Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) to influence new development as well as redevelopment where feasible and desirable.

The Plan recommends street and pedestrian enhancement standards that reflect TND ideals. The Grandview Area Plan provides the City with a base of standards that are not typical of historic Durango development. The Plan recommends that standards be established as a TND template that can be further refined with site specific development proposals.

#### 6.5.2.1 Action:

The City should adopt Traditional Neighborhood Development Design Standards to comply with the goals of the Grandview Area Plan for new development within the Grandview study area.

### 6.5.3 Overlay District

It is always difficult to guide change within the built environment. The use of an *overlay district* that is applied through a zoning action to an area that is being annexed will provide a TND framework for new development and/or redevelopment. Therefore, the City does not have to develop a new zone district in order to implement TND standards and to enhance pedestrian and vehicular amenities. In addition, existing development does not become non-conforming upon annexation and rezoning.

An Overlay District could also be applied to Sub Areas II and III to take advantage of the pedestrian amenities and vehicular upgrades proposed for the new frontage roads on CR 232 and CR 233.

Also, if the City eventually pursues annexation of Sub Area V then the *overlay district* concept is a tool that can be used to ensure that redevelopment is consistent with the Plan.

#### 6.5.3.1 Action:

The City should adopt an Overlay District to guide new development and redevelopment in compliance with new TND standards and other pedestrian amenities

#### 6.5.3.2 Action:

The City should establish a Special Improvement District in Sub Areas II, III, and IV which will, in tandem with the Overlay District, support the upgrade of water and possible sewer infrastructure as well as pedestrian and street circulation enhancements.

## 6.5.4 Transfer of Development Rights Program

In order to preserve the rural character and undeveloped edge of the Grandview Area, the City and County have been working together to create a Transfer of Development Rights program. The program will enable the transfer of density out of the County and into the Grandview study area, which in turn will preserve the rural character and open space surrounding the City's edge. In addition, the ability to increase density will help reduce infrastructure costs for new development.

The most successful TDR programs identify a receiver site. The Grandview Area Plan recommends land areas designated Residential – Medium Density and areas designated Mixed-Use to be designated receiver sites. The northern portion of Sub Area I, the land area designated Rural Estates, could also possibly be a receiver in the future following a plan amendment. Failure to identify the receiving sites during the beginning stages of a TDR program can slow down an effective start to the program and/or prevent the resolution of development rights from the land that is desired to be preserved. It can also undermine property owner's trust in a TDR program. Thus, an early effort toward receiver site identification can ensure the County and property owners that the TDR program is reliable. In a similar fashion the City and the County should identify sending sites to guarantee that a rural buffer in the County protects the annexed land.

### 6.5.4.1 Action:

The City and County should enter into an IGA to create a Transfer Development Rights Program. The IGA will identify receiver sites within the City and future City and identify those areas in the County that are potential sending sites.

### 6.5.4.2 Action:

The City should establish a baseline density for property designated as Residential – Medium Density at 6 dwelling units per acre to be

increased to 9 dwelling units per acre with the purchase of TDRs.

### 6.5.4.3 Action:

The City should establish a baseline density for property designated as Mixed-Use at a minimum of 6 dwelling units per acre, 9 dwelling units per acre as of right to be increased to 12 dwelling units per acre with the purchase of TDRs.

### 6.5.4.4 Action:

The City should establish a baseline density for property designated Multiple-Use at 6 dwelling units per acre to be increased to be increased to 9 dwelling units per acre with the purchase of TDRs.

## 6.5.5 Gateway Signage and Design

From the intersection of SH 172 and US 160 westward, a gateway opportunity exists for the City of Durango as most traffic from the airport and traffic from east of Durango will enter the City from this direction. Coordinated signage and design will greatly assist in achieving this gateway opportunity.

### 6.5.5.1 Action:

The City of Durango should adopt signage and urban design standards for this corridor to ensure that the upgrades to this corridor reflect the unique character of the City of Durango.

## 6.5.6 Impact fees

Durango has an existing major street impact fee. It is recommended that a new fee be established for the Grandview Area Plan in order to pay for major road improvements needed for new development and redevelopment in the Grandview Area.

### 6.5.6.1 Action:

The City should develop a new street impact fee that is appropriate to provide for future roads in the Grandview Area.

### 6.5.7 Inclusionary Housing Program

A significant level of new residential development is proposed and planned for within the Grandview Area Plan. It is recommended that the City establish an inclusionary housing requirement for new development to support the goal of adding attainable housing to the housing inventory.

#### 6.5.7.1 Action:

The City should adopt inclusionary housing criteria to be applied to new development and significant redevelopment.

## 6.6 Open Space Parks and Recreational Improvements

There are many opportunities for the City to increase the open space, parks and pedestrian/bike amenities within the Grandview study area. The former railroad corridor presents one of those opportunities. Regardless if the area is annexed into the City, the former rail corridor should be acquired through a coordinated effort between the City, County, State and other parties to enhance the trail network and pedestrian amenities that are proposed for the rest of the Grandview study area.

Similarly, the City of Durango should require that the Wilson Gulch area be enhanced as a pedestrian amenity and seek to tie those improvements into a more extensive trail system through Sub Area I and to the Animas River trail system. The former railroad corridor that traverses Sub Area I should also be upgraded for pedestrian and bike users.

The utility corridor in Sub Area I provides an obvious pedestrian trail linkage connecting the regional park in that sub area. The City should require that trail to be developed as a public amenity for Sub Area I.

There are additional trail linkage opportunities within Sub Area I. Bureau of Land Management land (Grandview Ridge) abuts this sub area on the north and west sides. The City of Durango should require future development to work with the City and BLM to develop trailheads where appropriate.

Several areas within the Grandview Area Plan are identified for public parks. There are large tracts of proposed parkland within Sub Area I as well as several pocket parks interspersed throughout the neighborhood. The City of Durango should secure land through dedication and other means sufficient in size and form to support creation of a regional park complex.

Finally, the Grandview Area Plan recommends the implementation of a Transfer Development Rights program. The primary goal of the TDR program is to transfer potential development out of an identified "buffer zone" on the edge of the planning area in order to preserve the buffer zone as open space. Although this open space will most likely remain private property, the buffer zone should become a visual open space amenity.

#### 6.6.1 Action:

The City of Durango, through a coordinated effort with La Plata County, the State, and other open space and trail entities, should acquire the former railroad corridor.

#### 6.6.2 Action:

The City should work with developers and other public trail organizations to acquire, develop and enhance the former railroad grade that traverses Sub Area I and Wilson Gulch as part of the annexation process and site specific development approvals.

#### 6.6.3 Action:

The City should secure sufficient park areas necessary for the creation of a regional park in addition to pocket parks as part of the annexation

process and site specific development approvals.

**6.6.4 Action:**

The City of Durango should work with the BLM and developers with site specific development proposals to secure trailheads and access to adjacent public land.

## 6.7 Coordinated Pedestrian, Street & Highway Improvements

Chapter 5 of the Grandview Area Plan recommends a variety of pedestrian and highway improvements to be applied throughout the Plan area. The proposal to utilize CR 232 and CR 233 as frontage roads to US 160 will improve circulation, connectivity, and street side amenities. Highway upgrades are also recommended for SH 172 in the event CDOT pursues improvements. Those upgrades should reflect the City's desire to support pedestrian amenities, safety, and connections throughout the neighborhood including at-grade signalized crossings or grade separated crossings for pedestrians and bikes.

It is also intended that the adopted Grandview Area Plan be used as the basis for the City's response to CDOT's design process during CDOT planning.

In addition, as local roads are being improved and created, the City of Durango and La Plata County should coordinate long range planning and project development. They should also coordinate improvements in response to development activity. The basis of coordinated activity can be promulgated in a Memorandum of Understanding that would spell out City and County responsibilities, including public involvement and coordination with CDOT, during that process. The goal should be joint "ownership" of project decisions and coordinated interaction with project stakeholders.

The City of Durango and La Plata County should also partner in their response to the transportation impacts of development activity in the Grandview area. The approval of development applications in both jurisdictions should consider the impact of specific development proposals on a rational arterial street network as well as on US 160.

**6.7.1 Action:**

The City of Durango should adopt streetscape standards and pedestrian amenities for County Roads 232 and 233.

**6.7.2 Action:**

The City should adopt new streetscape and street improvement standards for State Highway 172 in the event CDOT upgrades the highway.

**6.7.3 Action:**

The City of Durango should seek to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with La Plata County to facilitate a partnership between the two agencies to coordinate long range planning and project development and support local review efforts with CDOT.

## 6.8 Working with CDOT

As has been discussed throughout this Plan, the City of Durango has the opportunity to coordinate with CDOT long range planning and project development. Should a significant portion of the urbanizing area annex to the City of Durango, the City should be a partner with CDOT during the highway planning and project development process. This partnership may go so far as to include the negotiation of a formal Participating Agency Agreement between CDOT and the City for the NEPA process. Although participating agencies are typically federal resource agencies, the designation of a local government as a participating agency in the NEPA process is not without precedent.

A Participating Agency Agreement, in addition to providing the City with enhanced standing in the CDOT process, would also spell out the City's responsibilities during that process. The goal should be joint "ownership" of project decisions and coordinated interaction with project stakeholders.

Adoption of the Grandview Area Plan enables the City of Durango to make recommendations on interim highway improvements in response to development activity. Review of development that impacts highway improvements should be done in partnership with CDOT. The two agencies have complementary authorities (i.e., eminent domain and development exaction) that should be coordinated to ensure that development in the Grandview area pays its way, is commensurate with highway capacity, and that interim improvements are consistent to the extent possible with unfolding long-range plans.

#### **6.8.1 Action:**

The City of Durango should seek to negotiate a participating agency agreement or similar memorandum of understanding with CDOT to facilitate a partnership between the two agencies in the development of the US 160 corridors.

#### **6.8.2 Action:**

The City of Durango and CDOT should partner in their response to the transportation impacts of development activity in the Grandview area.

#### **6.8.3 Action:**

Encourage the construction of an interchange west of High Llama Lane.

#### **6.8.4 Action:**

The City of Durango should work with CDOT to ensure adequate highway improvements are planned for and implemented in accordance with the Grandview Area Plan.

## **6.9 Priorities and Responsibilities**

The following table (Table 6.1) summarizes the recommended priorities for the major actions proposed, and designated the body with the major responsibility for carrying out these actions.

Table 6.1 Implementation Plan Responsibilities

Implementation Plan Responsibilities										
Action Item	Priority	Responsibility								
		City Staff	City Council	PC	BOCC	County Staff	SDSD Board/ staff	LLSD Board/ staff	CDOT Commission & staff	Trail & Open Space Advocates
Adopt Grandview Area Plan	1	X	X	X	X					
Adopt Annexation Strategy	1	X	X	X						
Adopt IGA w/ City & SDSD	2	X	X				X	X		
Adopt IGA w/City & LLSD	3	X	X					X		
Adopt IGA w/City & County for Development Review	2	X	X		X	X				
Identify Transition Zone	2	X				X				
Establish Joint Review Process w/City & SDSD & LLSD	2	X					X	X		
Zone Annexed Property	on going	X	X	X						
Adopt TND Standards, Streetscape Standards & Pedestrian Amenities	1	X	X	X						
Create an Overlay District	2	X	X	X						
Establish SID in Sub-Areas II, III & IV	3	X	X							
Adopt IGA w/City & County for TDRs	1	X	X	X	X	X				
ID Receiver sites w/baseline density for TDRs	1	X	X	X						
Adopt Signage & Urban Design Standards for Sub-Area IV	3	X	X	X						
Adopt Road Impact Fee	2	X	X	X						
Adopt Inclusionary Housing Criteria	2	X	X	X						
Acquire former Rail Corridor in Sub-Area V	3									X
Designate and acquire land parcels for regional and pocket parks	3	X	X							X
Acquire former Rail Corridor in Sub-Area I & Enhance Wilson Gulch	3	X								X
Negotiate MOU w/City & County	1	X	X		X	X				
Negotiate Participating Agency Agreement w/City & CDOT	1	X	X						X	

## Appendix A – Area Plan Summaries

The date of the report, the party the report was prepared for and the report author(s), has been identified. A report synopsis outlines the contents of the report.

### A.1 Florida Mesa District Land Use Plan

Completed: April 24, 1998  
Prepared For: Florida Mesa District  
Prepared By: La Plata County

#### Report Synopsis

Before the adoption of the Florida Mesa District Land Use Plan in 1998, development proposals were considered on a case by case basis resulting in some negative visual and physical impacts. The primary objective of the Florida Mesa Land Use Plan is to preserve the agricultural and rural character while accommodating growth. The underlying premise is to provide landowners with general guidance and incentives for evaluating development proposals. The plan has developed a framework of goals, objectives, policies and actions for the citizens, Planning District, and County that defines a vision for the next twenty years.

On August 2, 2000 the La Plata County Planning Department completed the Florida Mesa Planning District Land Use Classification Map. All future development activities will be reviewed in accordance with both of these planning tools to ensure that development activities are consistent and can uphold the vision of its citizens, Planning District and County as a whole.

From the County's perspective, the Florida Mesa is undergoing a transition from the farming and ranching community of fifteen years ago to a service, tourist, and retirement community. Current subdivision activities are developing the

Mesa into smaller and smaller lots reducing lands available for open space, changing the area's rural character, property values, infrastructure needs and costs, and the area's natural beauty.

The goal for water and sewer in the Florida Mesa District Land Use Plan is to ensure the future availability of ground water and protection from contamination, wastewater, and other pollutants. Objectives recommend to "anticipate and plan for alternatives" to the current water and sewage disposal system, strengthen county regulations, and the County and irrigation water providers in the District to work cooperatively to address development and allocation issues prior to development approval.

In the absence of zoning, commercial uses are or will likely be scattered throughout the District that could undermine the rural, low-density characteristics, property values, and/or attraction for the adjacent property owners.

#### Roads and Transportation

Growth related activities in the Florida Mesa District have "out-paced" CDOT's ability to keep up with costs associated with road improvements to State highways 550, 160 and 172. La Plata County's recent growth rate and the need for roadway improvements exceed the fiscal resources available.

It is a goal of the Plan to maintain a significant portion of the land in the Florida Mesa District as agricultural farm and ranch land.

A final key concern in the Florida Mesa District Land Use Plan is the need to offset the costs of infrastructure and service delivery costs of new development. The County is considering the creation of a fee schedule that reflects the impacts of development. This would involve the execution of intergovernmental agreements between various special districts and the County to institute one fee that is used to address a variety of impacts.