

From Judy V.

April 9, 2021

To: El Paso County PCD - Mark Gebhart, Craig Dossey ,Nina Ruiz
To: Houseal Lavigne Associates (HLA) - John Houseal, Brandon Nolin
CC: El Paso County Commissioners, Former EPC Local Outreach Team Members, T.A. Stokka, CNHP

To all,

It is now the final day of the one-month Public Comment Period for the new EPC Master Plan "Your El Paso".

I appreciate the opportunity to comment and I apologize for not using the official HLA format. Only having two weeks to review the March 26, 2021 version, with all chapters, has been a challenge.

I would submit that there has not been sufficient time and information for the public (and perhaps also for the Master Plan Advisory Committee MPAC) to review and interactively discuss the latest version of this complex document. The initial Prescribed Process scheduled about 5 months in 2020 following the release of the preliminary Visioning and Land Use Chapters in June of 2020, for public discussion which initially included public meetings.

Covid short-sheeted that, but little information and opportunity was afforded to substitute other venues (especially the posing of draft materials on the HLA website in a readable format, and with assistance to the interested public. There were huge gaps from Sept. 2020 to Jan. 2021 and, again from Jan. 2021 to April of 2021 when no information was offered to the public, and then only 30 days was allowed with first an incomplete version released on March 9 and then the March 26, 2021 update. The actual draft .pdf was difficult to download at nearly 600MB and impossible to print. This confined review only to those able to access this document online. StoryMap was viewable online, but the narrative contained detail, was very cryptic and did not include all maps.

There were 13 Chapters in the March 9, 2021 draft (Intro, Vision and 11 Topical Chapters).

The March 26, 2021 Update was not completely parallel. It had a 14th Chapter (Implementation) but it truncated the Topical Chapters to 10 chapters by combining two separate Topic Chapters in the draft March 9 release (Infrastructure Chapter (8), with the Community Facilities Chapter (7) for the March 26, 2021 Chapter 14 organization. The March 26 draft version still had Chapters 7 and 8 in the main part of the report Pages 1-139), but the Implementation Chapter 14 (pp. 140-169) did not include Chapter Numbers and only used the titles.

This resulted in a huge imbalance of the Topical Chapters with regard to numbers of Goals, Objectives and Specific Strategies. Also the order of topics in Chapter 8 (Water (page 97), Gas (page 106), Electric (page 107), Alternative Energy (page 108), Telecommunication (page 109)) was reversed in the presentation of Goals, Objectives and Specific Strategies when these subjects reappeared in Chapter 14 under the Title of Community Facilities, which also included Fire Protection, Services, Law Enforcement and Schools.

This created an extreme, unwieldy Communities Facilities Chapter with one Core Priority, four Goals, Twenty-eight Objectives and 74 Specific Strategies (Total of 107 items) which all appeared to be in rather random order.

I decided the first things I needed to Observe was the Structure (Framework) of this Master Plan with respect to the Vision of the Plan, the scale, diversity and applicability and how those affected the order of the Topical Chapters, whether the physical presentation of the material assisted the reader in understanding both the whole and the details. I asked myself what would the reader learn, in what order, and remember.

How could this document be made more understandable, easier to use, and affordable and easy to print?

So I mustered up the hard lessons I have learned from two decades of teaching, many years in higher education, working in the USFS for nearly a decade as an Ecologist involved in planning for the combination of two National Forests across State Boundaries (Routt/Medicine Bow) and 17 years as a weekly newspaper publisher.

Considerations?

THE OVERALL FORMAT - large format (11 x 17), landscape orientation and full color-double sided.

Conclusions: Flexible format for the consultant to use over a two year time period where a basic structure of categories with paragraphs could be built incrementally and pictures/maps could be placed in holders and were resizeable. Allowed textual information to be minimalist and in Size 9 font. Excessive photos, too much wasted white space, and inefficient Chapter Titles in giant fonts (and whole page) at the sacrifice of presenting useful, documentable information.

Resulted in large files difficult to download and extremely expensive to hardcopy.

The public did not have access to copies of this (exception was the 2019 **Existing Conditions Report** which only had one draft in December of 2019 and was posted on the HLA Website.

MPAC members received hardcopies during 2019 and the first months of 2020 (perhaps after April of 2020) and I assume electronic copies in 2021, so at least they had the advantage of seeing the text more than once. At the broadcast MPAC Meetings no text, legends or map labels were readable to the public. The public had to wait until March 9, 2021 to ever see this document, and other than responding to directed questions online had little opportunity to meaningfully participate. The data speak to that.

Most literate adults are used to reading information on portrait-oriented 8 1/2 x 11 sheets, from left to right and top to bottom. The large format, landscape oriented format does not have a common "reading route" on each page and often forces reading across then down, across then down, across then down for as many as seven columns.

This combined with many odd fonts, various size fonts, italic and non italics, bold and not bold in a variety of colors often embedded in photos provides an impressive glitzy document, but in my opinion adds to the difficulties of reading and comprehension.

I would prefer a simple 8 1/2 x 11 portrait format that can go into a 3-ring binder, and have fold out maps.

PLANCOS has this kind of format and it costs about \$30 to buy a full hardcopy.

The RFP specifies a number of hardcopies as a deliverable, but it will be up to the County to make a useful digital copy from what I read.

I don't like this format - I think the document would be more useful if it were simpler.

INFORMATION STRUCTURE

Common way to organize written material emphasizes:

Subordination (General to specific), Left to right, top to bottom (i.e. Outline)

Parallelism (Create a structure that each Topical Chapter uses and carries forward to the Implementation Chapter for the topics). This means that EACH Topical CHAPTER NEEDS A PARTNER IN THE IMPLEMENTATION CHAPTER.

Together these mean to put the most general, or the most important point(s) first, keep that order for everything, and be consistent in use of intents, fonts, etc. to guide the reader as to what is a subset of what and how things relate.

The Master Plan as structured has a lot of anomalies that need editing.

It also suffers from Euphemisms, weasel words and gish galloping. **This is why there needs to be accuracy editing and a Glossary for this document.**

DOCUMENTATION

With few exceptions there is not much documentation of where information came from other than vague generalities and arm waving. HLA had two subcontractors, Tetra Tech and HB &A which are mentioned on the contents page, but nowhere does the document tell you what they contributed, or what information they are accountable for. This Master Plan does have specifics in the Existing Condition Assessment, and in some if its predictive material, but there is little to no documentation of how this was created or where it came from. This is a pervasive problem.

LABELING, TITLING AND NUMBERING of Graphics

All Figures and Tables should have a Title, Chapter Number and Item number and these should be listed, as part of the Table of Contents, in a Figures List, and a Tables List which also reference Page numbers in the report. Perhaps HLA is waiting to the end. All maps and aerial photos should cite a source, have a north arrow and a scale.

PRINCIPLES, GOALS, OBJECTIVES, SPECIFIC STRATEGIES

VERBS AND NOUNS

This report has a lot of confounding of the usual purposes of:

Broad Overall Report Goals- Called Core Principles in this report. I **would suggest calling these "Desired Future Condition"** - a ideal state of being for each Chapter Topic. It should encompass all lower level Objectives and Specific Strategies - Actions. Many of the Core Priorities could just as well be a Goal, Objective or Specific Strategy. See page on DFC

Broad Chapter Topical Goals Labeled as Goals (Primary Goals) but should be carefully inspected to see **if they are what they need to be** (wording) and **if they are presented in a sensible order** (i.e. Most >>>Least Important or General>>> Specific.

Narrower Chapter Objectives (Secondary Goals) These should be more focused in time and space. CONSIDER ORDERING THEM THAT WAY in how they Are Presented (remember subordination).

ACTIONS (Specific Strategies) -why not just call them Recommended Actions. The organization of these really rough. Consider how better to group them. There is an attempt to make a matrix of time (O,M,S,L) but o and s are really the same thin, and the list would be better as clustered first by geographic area.

GLOSSARY A glossary is absolutely essential. I heard the arguments of Mr. Dossey and Mr. Houseal against this at the last MPAC Meeting where MPAC members asked for Glossary. IT helps a lot with weasel words too. It would also help to be very specific for terms like "Minimal Change: Developed" and "Minimal Change: undeveloped " to explain this much more specifically in the text.

Appendices could also be a place for some of the details - like the long list of Funding Sources, or some of the extremely Specific Strategies.

The following pages contain my Rationale and Analyses for recommendations.

Vision: Graphic from public Visioning Meeting - Water and Environment were the winners.

In ONE word, what was the most important topic discussed tonight with regard to the Master Plan?



Answers to this poll are anonymous

December 11, 2019 Public Meeting at PCD. Chaired by John Houseal.

BALANCE OF INFORMATION

I tallied up all the **Core Principles (one for each of 13 chapters)**

Goals

Objectives

Specific Strategies

from Chapter 14.

There are three graphs on the next page.

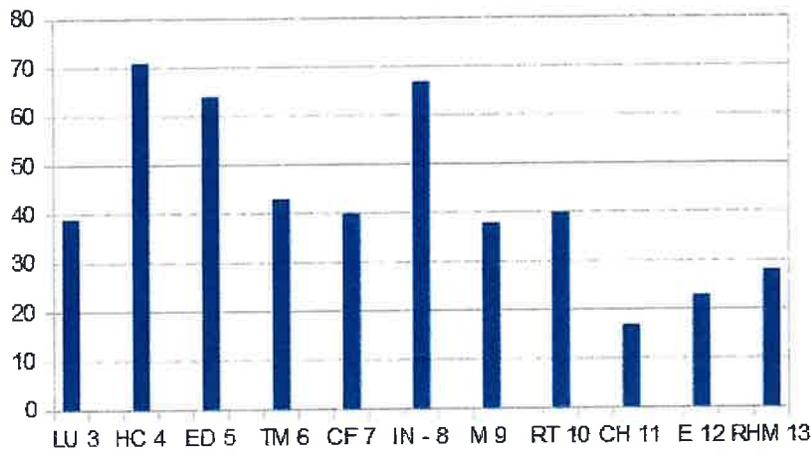
Graph One is based on Chapters 1-13 (from March 9) (where Community Facilities and Infrastructure were not collapsed into one Giant Community Facilities Chapter (Chapter 14))

Graph 2 is for the March 26, 2021 Draft plan where there are still Chapter 7 and 8 in the the first thirteen chapters, but Chapter 14 has a huge combined Chapter 7-8 for Community Facilities.

I am recommending a Re-ordering of the Chapters so that ENVIRONMENT, RESILIENCY and LAND USE TOPIC CHAPTERS are presented FIRST and the other Chapters flow from those "UMBRELLA" topics. This requires renumbering the chapters, and I am suggesting beefing up the Environment Chapter (I would be happy to help) and putting Conservation Design into that and put the Priority Development map into Chapter 3.

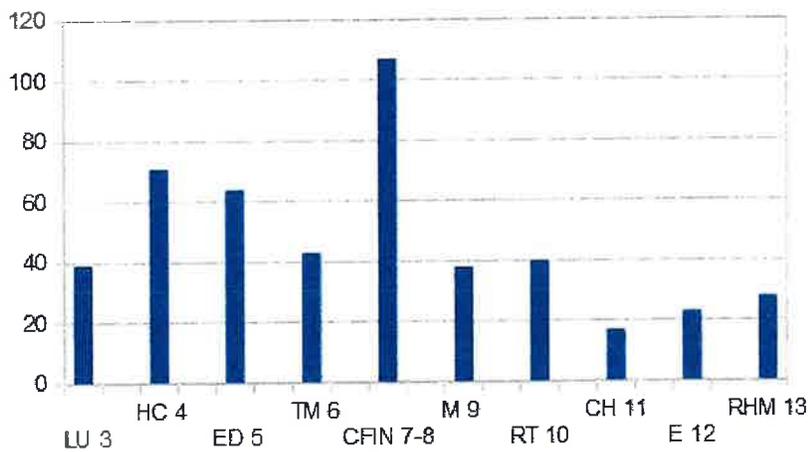
I submit this provides a better structural information flow and is also related to the relationships of built environment topics.

11 Topic Chapters - Original 1-13



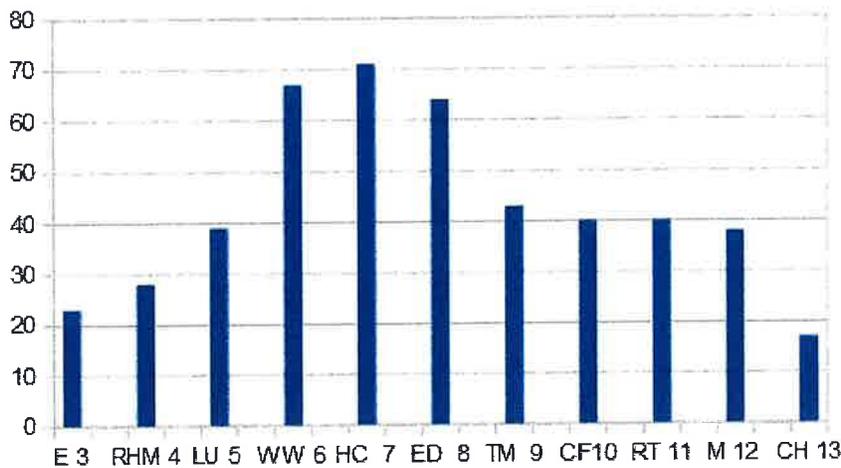
Topic	Ch #	ITEM TOTL
LU 3		39
HC 4		71
ED 5		64
TM 6		43
CF 7		40
IN 8		67
M-9		38
RT 10		40
CH 11		17
E 12		23
RHM 13		28

10 Chapters based on CH 14 -combine 7/8



Topic	Ch #	ITEM TOTL
LU 3		39
HC 4		71
ED 5		64
TM 6		43
CF & IN 7/9		107
M-9		38
RT 10		40
CH 11		17
E 12		23
RHM 13		28
Add CH. 14		Combine 7/8

11 TOPIC CHAPTERS - RE-ORDERED



Topic	Ch #	ITEM TOTL
E 3		23
RHM 4		28
LU 5		39
WW 6		67
HC 7		71
ED 8		64
TM 9		43
CF 10		40
RT 11		40
M-12		38
CH 13		17

RE-ORDERED CHAPTERS

YOUR

EL PASO

ENVIRONMENT

RESILIANCY

HAZARD

LAND USE

MITIGATION

**WATER /WASTEWATER
HOUSING & COMMUNITIES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY
COMMUNITY FACILITIES
RECREATION & TOURISM
MILITARY
COMMUNITY HEALTH**

1. INTRODUCTION

8. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

2. COUNTY COMMUNITY VISION

9. TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

11 TOPIC CHAPTERS

10. COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Global Topics *3*

11. RECREATION & TOURISM

3. ENVIRONMENT

12. MILITARY

4. RESILIANCY & HAZARD MITIGATION

13. COMMUNITY HEALTH

5. LAND USE

14. IMPLEMENTATION

Focused Topics *8*

6. WATER & WASTEWATER

APPENDICES

7. HOUSING & COMMUNITIES

“CORE PRINCIPLES”
Recast as Re-Ordered DESIRED FUTURE CONDITIONS
by Chapter Topic
(CAPS INDICATE SUGGESTED REWORDING)

ENVIRONMENT 3

Prioritize and protect the County’s natural environment BY EFFECTIVE REGLATIONS APPLIACABLE IN ALL LAND USE AND INFRASTRUCTURE DECISIONS.

- **This entire chapter needs to be significantly expanded.** It is a very weak Chapter. The Environment was a Top CITIZEN PRIORITY. It is currently only ONE PAGE out of 171 pages (large format.
- Environmental Preservation/Conservation is a TOP PRIORITY
- Move the CONSERVATION DESIGN items from Ch.4 and elsewhere into a Subsection of this Chapter - up front and IMPORTANT
- Bring in the Conservation Easement and other tools discussion.
- Eliminate the misleading map and Discussion of Conservation Districts (Pages 64 and 65)
- Include a succinct Description of the Topogrphic and Ecosystem Diversit on this County. IT IS unique in Colorado but NO INFO AS TO WHY.
- Include not only Palentology but also Archeology, History and Geomorphology and how/why those are inportant for this plan.
- Move the State Lands Map **and ADD STEWARDSHIP TRUST LAND CODED** on the map and explained in the text from where it is (Recreation and Tourism Chapter 10 (page 119) & just incude State and Federal Lands that are avaiable for recreation and toursim oin that chapter. Except for Turkey Creek on Fort Carson, the Regional trail on the perimeter of Sec 16 in Black Forest, and Chico Basin Ranch which has public events, andCheyenne Mtn State Park, most STate Lands are privately leased and not open to the public. HOWEVER, significant State Land areas ARE PROTECTED by Special Management in the State Land Board’s Stewardship Trust. While this is not as strong protection as a Conservation Easement or publically- owned Park or Open Space, there is a map on the State Land Board Site that identifies these special lands and some are Candidate Open Spaces on the 2013EPC Parks Master Plan. It should be its own map in the Environment Chapter. **The Parks Master Plan 2013 Candidate Open Spaces Map could also go in this Evironment Chapter as identified areas for special consideration and protection of the natural environment.**

RESILIENCY & HAZARD MITIGATION 4

~~Support efforts~~ **DEVELOPMENT WHICH reduces exposure to natural and man made hazards across the County and support efforts to PREPARE FOR and RESPOND TO EVENTS. ~~and react.~~**

- Most of the “mitigation” for some hazards depends mostly on NOT ALLOWING DEVELOPMENT to be built in the path of danger, or to manage land (via the REGULATORY CODE to reduce the exposure to catastrophic events.

-The SAME REGULATORY CODE needs to be much more protective of the Environment.

- For Other hazards (esp weather) will happen when they happen and the mitigation follows the damage, rather than lessens or prevents exposure.

LAND USE 5: Manage growth to EFFECTIVELY ensure a variety of compatible land uses that ENHANCE AND PROTECT COMMUNITY INTEGRITY and preserve all character areas of the County.

FOCUSED TOPICS (RE-ORDERED)

WATER AND WASTEWATER 6

~~Continue to~~ **Coordinate with local and regional agencies to provide well-managed, high-quality AFFORDABLE AND SUSTAINABLE WATER & WASTEWATER SERVICES.**

HOUSING & COMMUNITIES 7 Preserve and develop neighborhoods AND COMMUNITIES WHILE PROVIDING ~~with~~ a mix of COMPATIBLE housing types WHICH RESPECT COMMUNITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD INTEGRITY.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (8) ACHIEVE A STRONG, DIVERSE AND SUSTAINABLE ~~Strengthen the economy. with a skilled workforce and targeted investment.~~

TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY (9)

Connect all areas of the County with a safe and efficient ROAD ~~transportation system,~~ and SUPPORT MULTIMODAL OPTIONS WHERE APPROPRIATE.

- (This could be combined with Communities Facilities (minus water and wastewater). This would bring the number of Chapters back to 14.

- Water and Wastewater (like Transportation) needs to be its OWN

CHAPTER. Super important and overarching TOPICS.

- Both Transportation and Water/Wastewater ARE Infrastructure too.
- (-ALL THE FLOOD and FLOOD MITIGATION STUFF in the Water/Wastewater section should go to Resiliency and HAZ Mitigation.

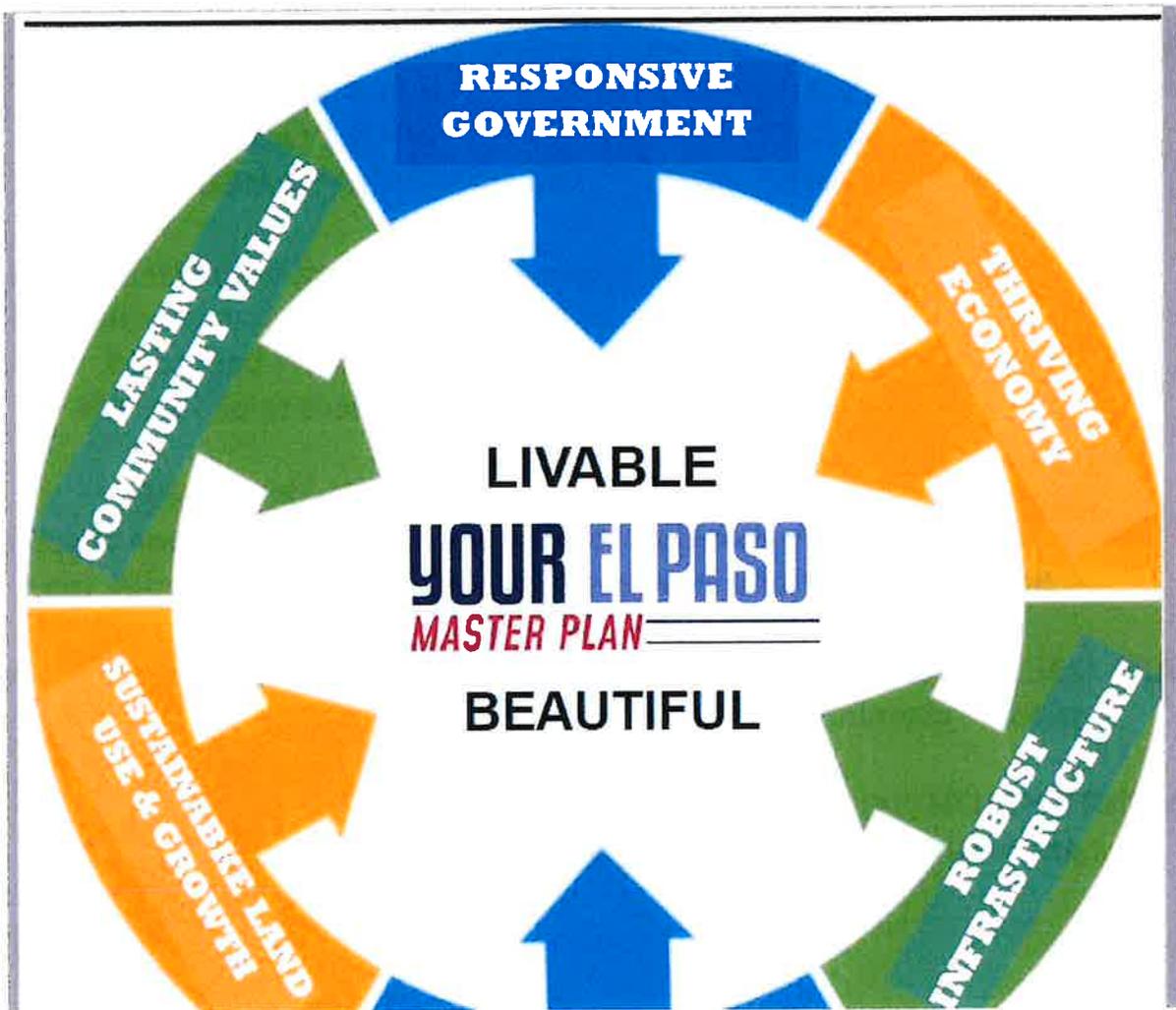
COMMUNITY FACILITIES (10) Continue to coordinate with local and regional agencies TO SUPPORT CREATION AND MAINTENANCE OF provide well-managed, high-quality, AFFORDABLE LAW ENFORCEMENT, FIRE, EDUCATIONAL AND COUNTY-BASED services.

- (The combined Chapters 7/8 in the March 26th draft IMPLEMENTATION CHAPTER could be combined Communities Facilities (minus water and wastewater). This would bring the number of Chapters back to 14.
- Water and Wastewater (like Transportation) needs to be its OWN CHAPTER. Super important TOPICS.
- ALL THE FLOOD and FLOOD MITIGATION STUFF in the Water/Wastewater section should go to Resiliency and Haz Mitigation chapter.
- Both Transportation and Water/Wastewater ARE Infrastructure too.

MILITARY (13) Foster effective working relationships with military installations to support planning efforts and mutual success.

COMMUNITY HEALTH (14) ACHIEVE improved public health by focusing on local partnerships, food access, and all aspects of environmental quality.

A Kinder, Simpler County



I will be sending another suggestion for the better analysis of Chapter 14 and also the spreadsheet for numerical Analysis of Chapter 14 under separate cover.

I fervently hope that the Review Period can be extended through May and involve the full Planning Commission, and perhaps a revised DRAFT that is easier to work with than this one.

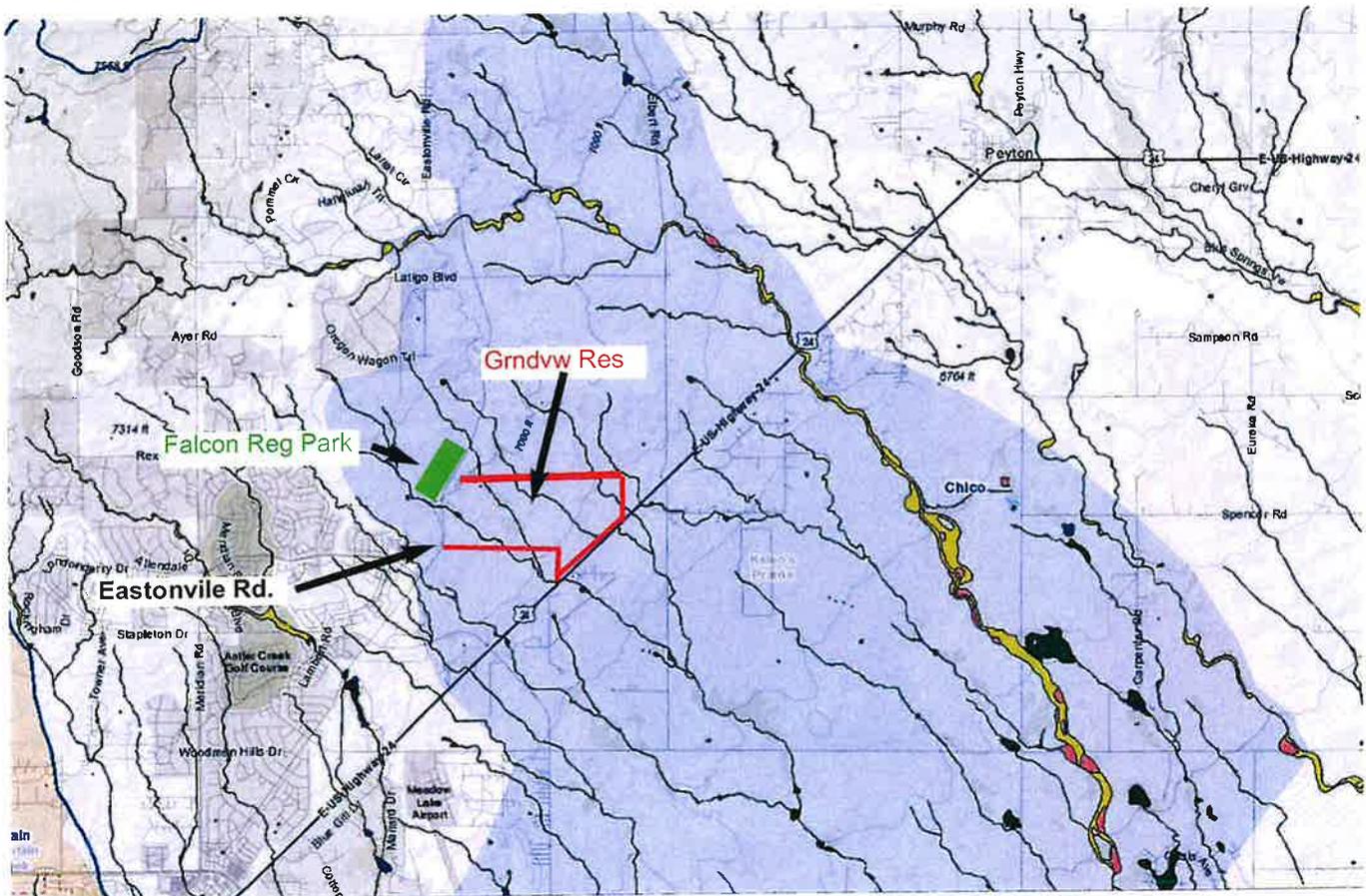
This is such an important document for the County and the integrity of its Communities and Neighborhoods.

Thanks you,
//Judith von Ahklefeldt

April 7 and 8, 2021

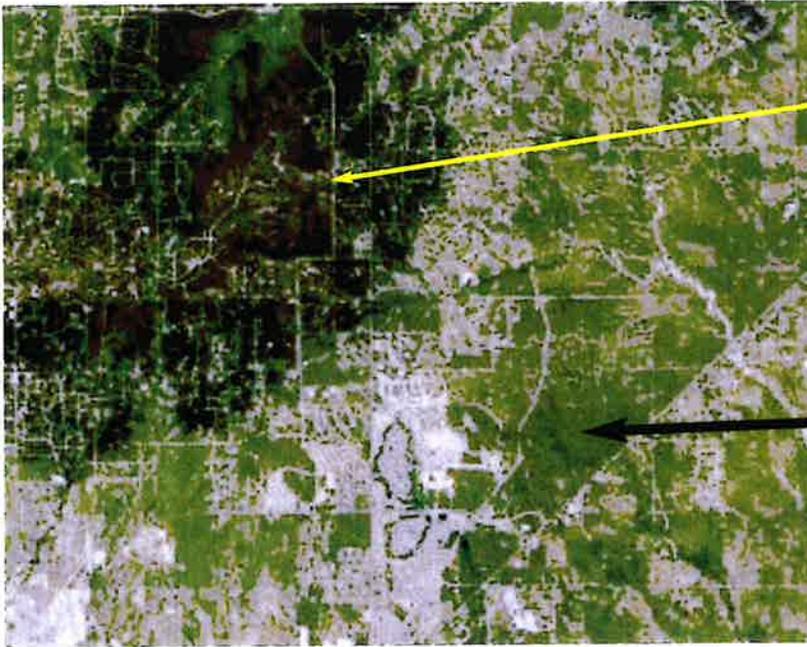
For the Master Plan Review from Dr. Judith von Ahlefeldt, PhD Landscape Ecologist:
Here are Observations, Rationales and Recommendations for items missing in the EPC draft Master Plan of 03/26/2021 from Placetypes Map (CH 3) and Environment Chapter (12). EPC Parks Master Plan Candidate Open Spaces need to be on Regional Open Spaces Placetypes Map on Page 38 of Chapter 3 of the Draft Plan and discussed in Chapter 12, perhaps also Chapter 10.

1. The first map below is from Colorado Natural Heritage Program showing Kelso's Prairie (formerly Judge Orr Road PCA) with regard to seasonal and perennial wetlands of the western Tributary of Upper Black Squirrel Creek Headwaters. The PCA is north and south of US 24 and has Eastonville Road passing through the western part of it. I have electronically sketched the Grandview Reserve Sketch plan boundary onto this (~765 ac) in red and border on the west by Eastonville Road, partly across the the new Falcon Regional Park (green).



This is a current Colorado Natural Heritage Program Potential Conservation Area (PCA Map - Kelso's Prairie - formerly Judge Orr Road PCA.

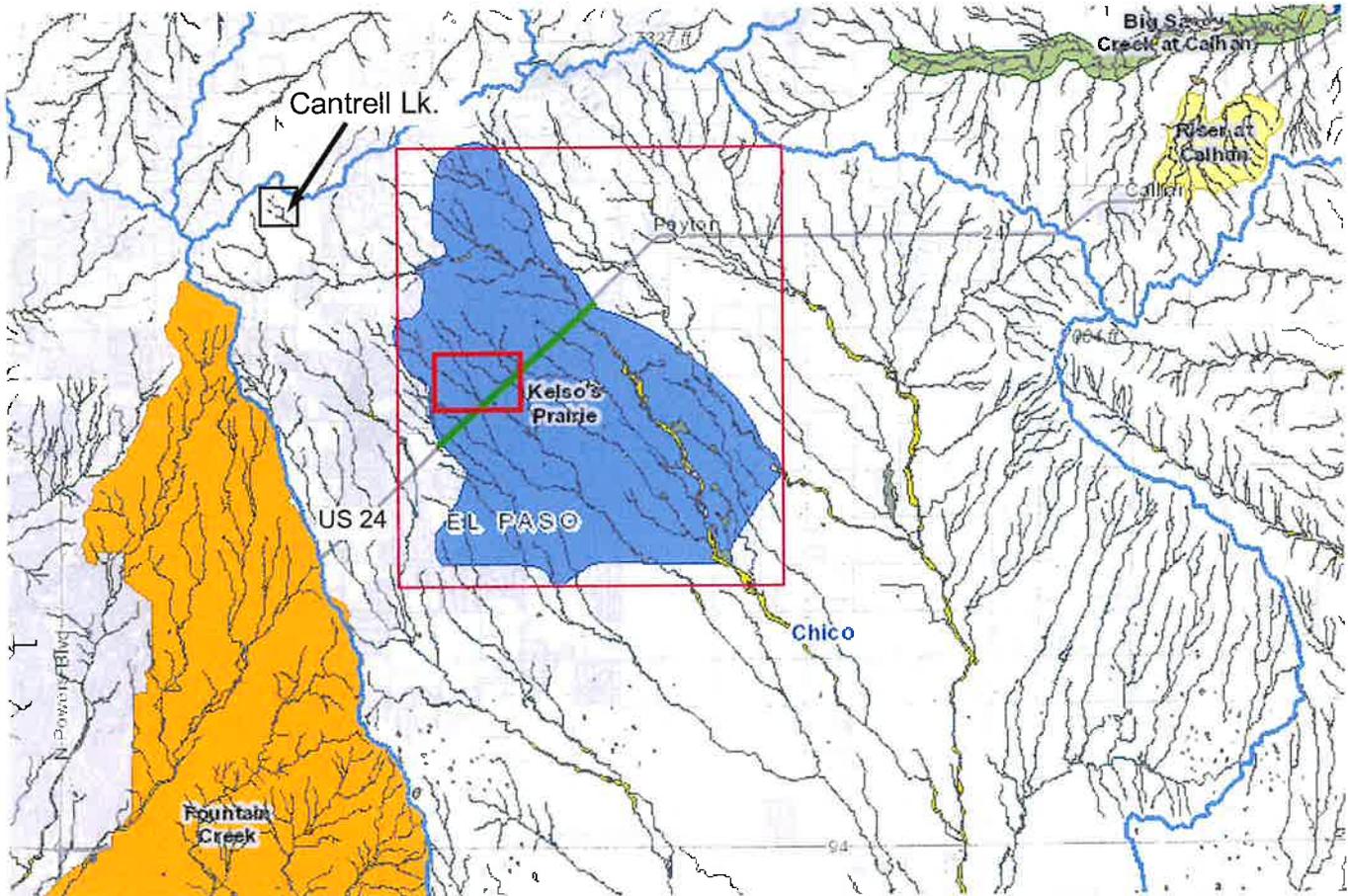
2. The second item, (below) is the Aerial Photo of the Upper Black Squirrel Creek Kelso Prairie area and Black Forest which is on page 2 of the New Master Plan Draft. It is hard to actually see the east-west part of Upper - Black Squirrel Creek that Snipe Creek from Black Forest comes into, but I noted Cantrell Lake which is west of the XCEL powerline, and near the Palmer Divide in the BF Burned area. (Many StateLevel rare plant species populations - some in La Foret PCA, some in the Prairie).



Cantrell Lake (top of Snipe Creek) is the white spot in the box. West of Excel Power Line. BF Fire Scar is visible to the west.

Darker green of the seasonal wetlands within Grandview Reserve are visible on this aerial photo. The "relatively intact" prairie of Central El Paso County.

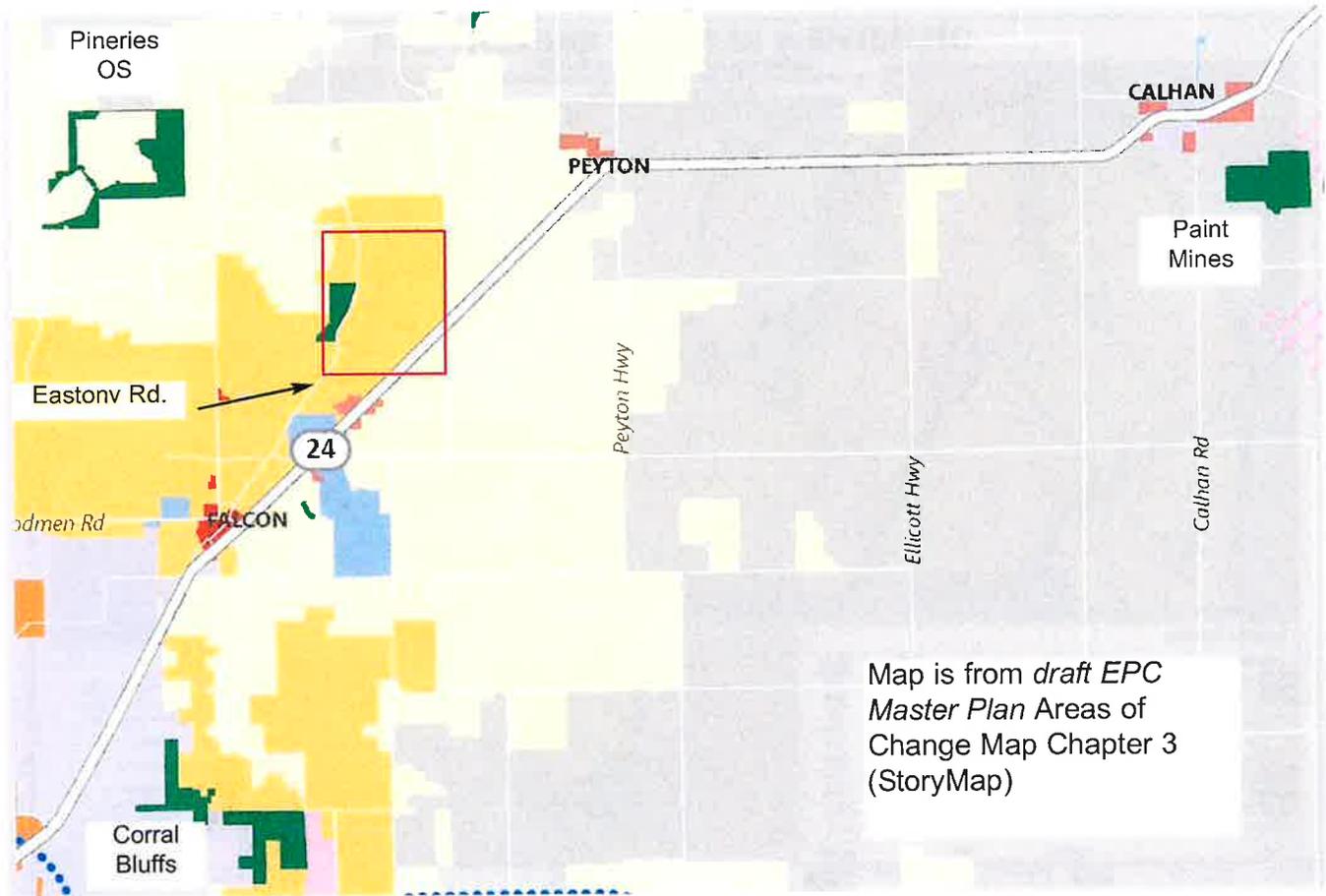
Photo is from page 2 of EPC draft Master Plan. No source or date given.



Recent PCA MAP from CNHP but Eastonville Road layer not provided. Blue lines are major drainage basins. Red square is approx location of Grandview Reserve subdivision Sketch Plan which as approved by BoCC last Sept. - but not the five Metro Districts - and no rezone. This parcel previously was suggested for 2.5 ac tracts but never submitted in early 2020. Instead was changed to 3260 lots. Was earlier part of the 4 Way larger parcel and two Metro Districts on 6000+ acres.

deadline for last Nov. Tabor election. The Developer is currently working on a resubmittal of the Metro District Service Plan.

4. A good land mark mark (not on your PCA MAP) is the green Falcon Regional Park (Dog Park) on the east side of Eastonville Road (with in the PCA and across Eastonville Road from Grandview Reserve). The red square is approx location of the Grandview Reserve within the PCA, and **also within the anticipated AREA OF (URBAN) Change in the new County MASTER PLAN- GOLD COLOR**



I think the Kelso Prairie is a logical eastward expansion of the Falcon Regional Park and could provide that much-needed Prairie Preserve! **Perhaps could be acquired like Greenland Ranch was and provide a critical Open Space for EPC. This map is from the current draft El Paso County Master Plan and shows the anticipated “Areas of Change” in Chapter 3 (Land Use).**

I noted the Falcon Regional Park “Dog Park” and Eastonville Road and also put the Grandview Reserve Sketch Plan Overlay on this. By now you are probably getting the drift of how high risk this is. If this Master Plan is approved with this in it, it will sanction this leap-frog urbanization and zeroing out this wet prairie. Note: on this EPC draft Master Plan Map the Area of Change goes BEYOND the north boundary of Grandview Reserve which was noted as “Candidate Open Space” on hearing maps - the ENTIRE JUDGE ORR PCA POYLGON SHOULD HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AS CANDIDATE OPEN SPACE but was not! The green polygons are Current County Parks (Pineries Open Space upper left, Paint Mines (upper Right) and Corral Bluffs owned by the City and the 200 ac Falcon Regional Park (Dog Park) along Eastonville Rd.. The turquoise area is Meadowlake Airport and a commercial area North of US 24. The gold area is all the “Areas of Change’ (urbanization) on this COUNTY MASTER PLAN MAP and most gold area includes annexation potential to Colorado Springs. The Light Yellow is the Large lot Placetype and Green is Rural Placetypes (which in my opinion will last until some Developer buys it). The pink polygon on the south is the County Landfill along Hwy 94 which is just off the map. All the 2020 submittal info for Grandview Reserve is on the County EDARP Page under Active Projects.

<https://epcdevplanreview.com/Public/Active List/>

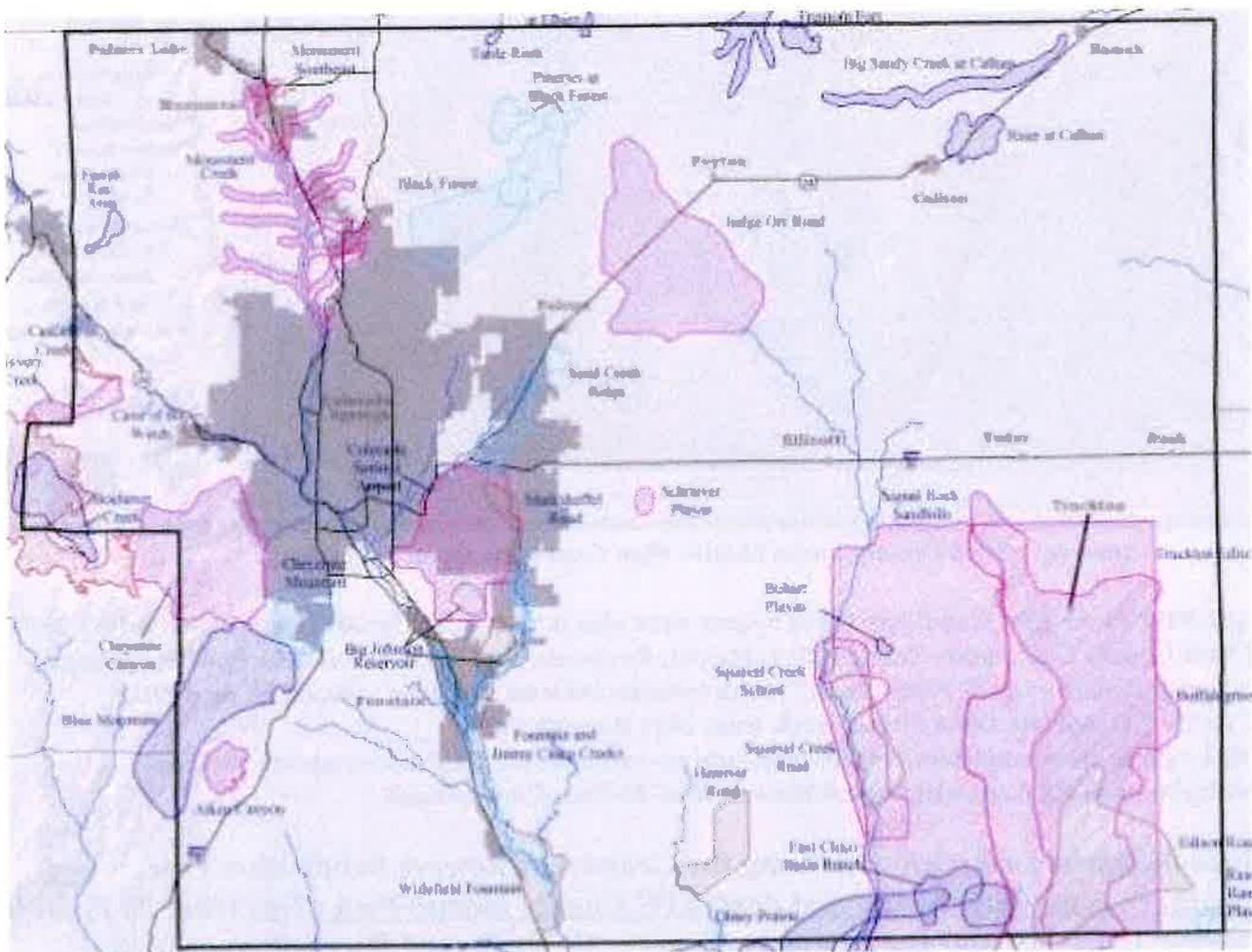
Here is the direct link to the Drainage Master Plan for Grandview Reserve.

<https://epcdevplanstorage.blob.core.windows.net/project/9e69e4aa-2e6c-4cf9-83b9-5c4c48d4aee2/d7009078-503c-4682-82dd-b9dd7a6899cd.pdf> (See drainage plan)

AND NOW FOR THE REST OF THE (UNTOLD STORY)

What is now Kelso's Prairie per CNHP was the Judge Orr PCD in the 2001 CNHP Report on Critical Biological Resources of El Paso County (40 areas identified). This was contracted to CNHP by El Paso County through EPC Parks. See map below which is lipped form the full county PCA Map. The large lavender PCA polygon, labeled "Judge Orr Road (PCA)" includes the entire north end of the longest tributary of Upper Black Squirrel Creek. this includes the Grandview Reserve and some of the 4- Way Ranch and other smaller properties. It straddles US 25 for about 5miles north and south, aswell as for about 5miles along the highway. In is nearly squarely in the center of EPC. Several other PCA's in central/northern EPC are visible.

The PCA work, identifying Critical Biological Resources within El Paso County that were of State (and

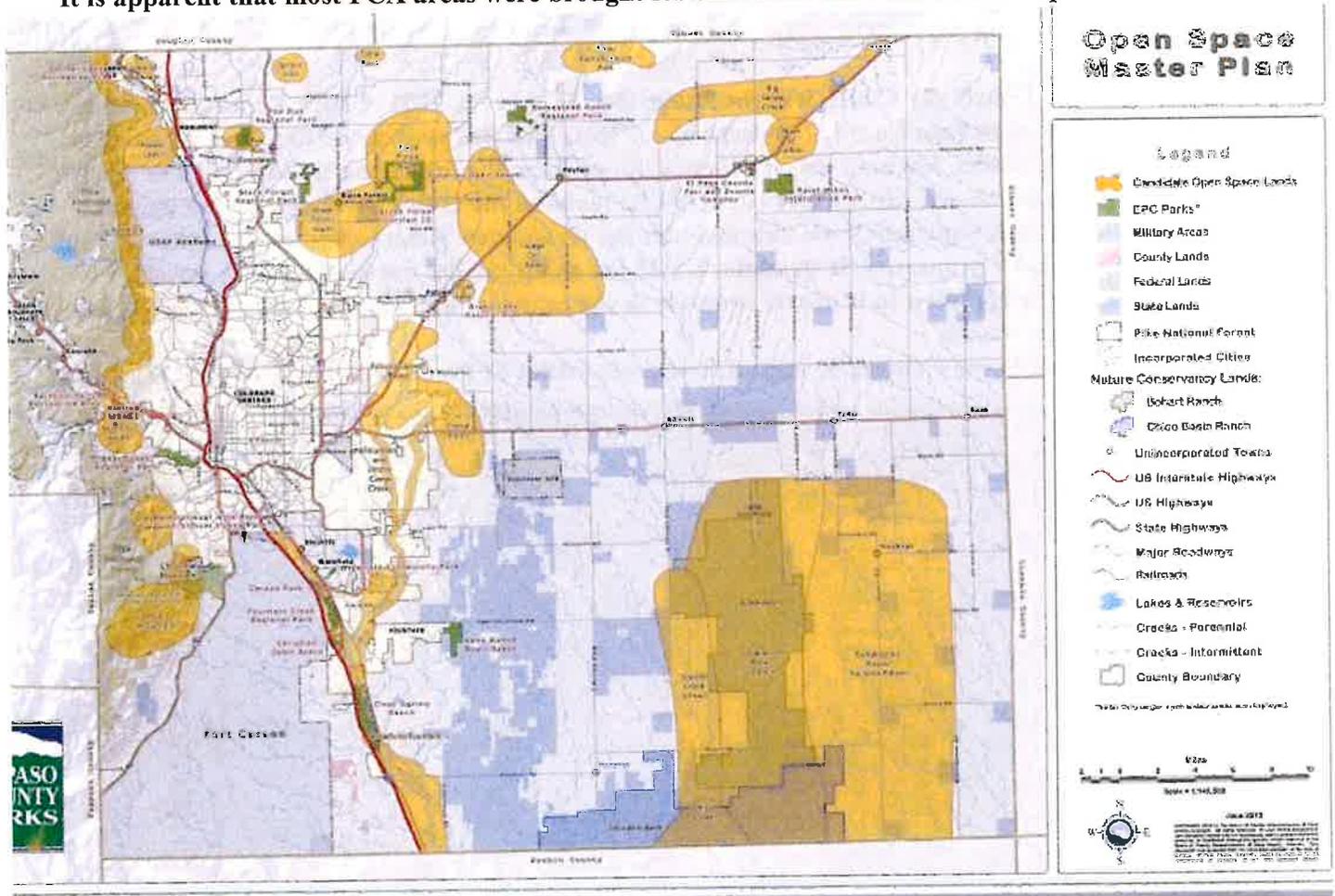


The full suite of 40 Potential PCAs are found in a variety of governmental jurisdictions and ownerships (USFS, State, Federal (Military), El Paso County and private lands). Many (other than State and Federal Lands are clearly in the jurisdiction of EPC outside of Municipalities. Open Space Lands can be protected in many ways and by cooperation.

in some cases because of TES) Federal Interest, which was done by CNHP for El Paso County, was brought forward in the County Planning Process in both the 2006 and 2013 El Paso County Parks Master Plans as Candidate Open Spaces. County Parks also added other Candidate Open Spaces to its document. The 2006 and 2013 County Master Plan documents both became parts of the County Master Plan during their respective times. The 2013 County Parks Master Plan is still in effect in 2021 and will continue on as a Topical Element with the new Master Plan, until the Parks Master Plan is updated in 2021 or soon after.

Here is the 2013 County Parks Master Plan Candidate Open Space Map (map8-3 p 181)

It is apparent that most PCA areas were brought forward from the 2001 CNHP Report into the 2013



(current) 2013 County Parks Master Plan Candidate Open Space Map

The CNHP PCAs/EPC Candidate Open Spaces were also the basis for the 2013 and revised (May) 2020 El Paso County Community Services Department, Environmental Services Division Booklets entitled *Biological Resources of El Paso County*, which includes information largely based on the CNHP PCAs/EPC Candidate Open Spaces work from 2001 through 2020.

<https://assets-communityservices.elpasoco.com/wp-content/uploads/Environmental-Division-Picture/Natural-Resources/Biological-Resources-of-El-Paso-County-1.pdf>

These documents were ignored during the Grandview Reserve Subdivision Process and are not recognized by the Current draft EPC County Master Plan effort (Your El Paso) in Chapter 12 (Environmental Chapter), Chapter 10 (Parks and Recreation) or in the Regional Open Space Placetypes Map in Chapter 3 on page 38. These need to be addressed in the current Master Plan Review.

The Long-Term Vision of the *Black Forest Preservation Plan* and the 2021 El Paso County Master Plan ReDo 04-07-2021 JVA

1974 BFPP p. 1. “The *Black Forest Preservation Plan* is a policy guideline for decision making relative to the Black Forest Area... It is the physical manifestation of a process by which citizens, government, and specialists attempt to structure the physical environment so that reality best approximates the ideal.”

1987 BFPP Update. Overview p. 1. “Over the past 13 years circumstances and planning approaches have changed in some cases, but not the overall goal of maintaining the unique natural and residential character of the Black Forest Planning area.”

2021 - What/Where is Black Forest?

The 1974 *Black Forest Preservation Plan* was the first citizen-based Small Area Plan in Colorado. It was financed in part through a Comprehensive Planning Grant from the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

State enabling legislation in the early 1970s allowed creation of County Planning Commissions and tasked them with creating and adopting a Master Plan and making recommendations for development per the Master Plan (CRS 106-2-5.) The legislation also passed the baton for local land use planning and control to Statutory Counties as a Power of Local Government (106-08-104) “so as to provide planned and orderly use of land and protection of the environment in a manner consistent with constitutional rights.” (L.74 H.B. 1034)

The 1974 Plan provided five Alternative Development Scenarios for the Planning Area - from the least development and lowest population to the most development and highest population. Four of the scenarios included private land low-density buffers around most of the forested area. All of the scenarios had discontinuous expected nodes of urban densities around the south and west sides of the treed area.

The maximum density/highest population scenario was all around the west and south sides of Black Forest from Hwy 105/I-25 to Falcon along Woodmen Road.

The Plan covered 104,874 ac (~163 square miles) acres and was bounded on the north by the County’s north line, along much of the west side by I-25, along the westside by Eastonville Road to its intersection with Meridian Road, and on the south partly by Woodmen Road and an alignment parallel to, and 1.5 miles north of, Woodmen Road.

2021 EPC Master Plan STORYMAP (4/2021)

“These ‘Key Areas’ have their own unique identity and are generally localized into smaller geographic areas with distinct characteristics that distinguish them from other areas of the County. It is important to note that these Key Areas are not defined by past planning boundaries or arbitrary jurisdictions, but instead are defined geographically by area-specific characteristics.” (**Black Forest is not a Key Area**)

“The placetypes classify specific areas based on defining character, scale, form and function...the collective mix of uses that establish a place within the El Paso County community...sorts places by their unique identity and character. (**Black Forest is not a Placetype**).

Land Use Planning Time Line:

1965 - Major Administrative five-acre minimum Zoning by the BoCC for the Black Forest area. This was approximately a decade after the USAFA was built to the west of Black Forest.

1971 - Enabling Legislation by the State to allow Counties to control local land use, and for Planning Commissions to work with communities to develop Master Plans.

1974 - *Black Forest Preservation Plan* adopted in August. Cooperative effort among citizens, Planning Commission, Developers and Planners. Broad brush scenario of land use for 104,000 ac between I-25 and Eastonville Road, and Approximately north of Woodmen Road to the County Line excluding a quadrant NW of Hwy 105 and SH 83 and along the City Boundary on the Southwest.

1980 - **El Paso County Planning Information Base Sourcebook**- Replace 1990 Land Use Plan, and an element in a major planning effort in the early 1980s which included transportation, the beginnings of the County Code. Foundational reports and maps were done by the El Paso County Land Use Department during this time.

1983- **Large Annexation by the City of Colorado Springs of much of the SW corner of the 1974 BFPP** (Briargate and Wolf Ranch)

1985 - **Major Transportation Thoroughfares Task Force** and report.

1986 - **Annexation of Northgate** area.

1987 - **Annexation of Banning Lewis Ranch by Colorado Springs and Update of *Black Forest Preservation Plan* (~82,000 ac)** reaffirming the vision for protecting the Black Forest and surrounding prairies.

1998 - **First El Paso County Policy Plan**

1999 - **Trails Addendum to 1987 *Black Forest Preservation Plan*** for local trails and trail contiguity.\.

Black Forest, Tri-Lakes and Falcon in the Context of County Planning 1971 - 2021

Document and Maps assebled by Judith von Ahlefeldt (JVA) Citizen April 7, 2021

El Paso County has a long history of Land Use Planning which ramped up in the early 1970s with the enabling land use control legislation fro the State.

First known as “County Planning”, the deparment later became Land Use, then Land Use and Development, then Development Services, and is now called Planning and Community Development (PCD). The Director is attorney-trained Craig Dossey (speciliaty in Water Law) who was hired as a planner in the 1990s, and Mark Gebhart (Deputy Director) who has been with the Department over 30 years and is the primary author of the County Code.

By the time Mr. Dossey became Director, most County Small Area Plans had been through one update (although all plans originally called for more frequent updates), and

the County had begun to develop Countywide Topical Plans (Transportation, Parks, Drainage etc.).

The County had a massive Policy Plan written in 1998, based loosely on the topical elements found in the Small Area Plans and Topical Plans.

The County’s main focus from the early 2000s to the present was to develop the REGULATORY Land Development Code (LDC) and Engineering Criteria Manual (ECM) which is also regulatory.

These Codes, largely urban in content, context and basis set minimum regulatory criteria standards for subdivisions of land for all types of uses.

The Board of County Commissioners, as an elected body, has the legal authority to allow land use changes (whether

or not the Planinng Commisison recomends them).From the early 1970s until the Code became robust, BoCC Land Use Decisions, at public hearings were based on the Advisory Comprehensive Plans (including Small Area Plans), the Coounty Policy Plan and discretionary findings based on the quasi-judicial land use hearing process.

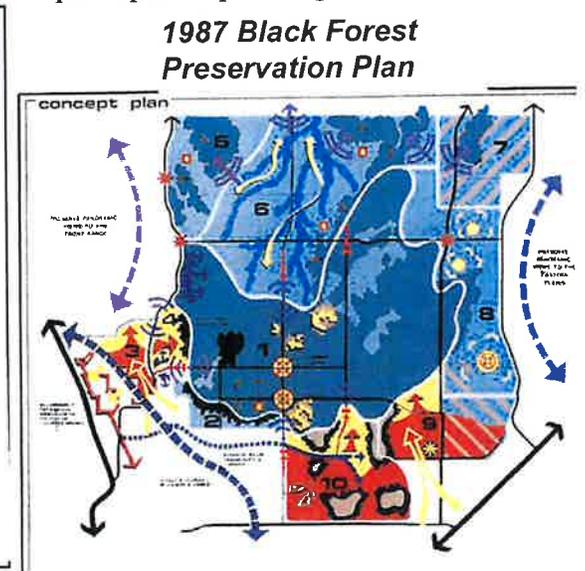
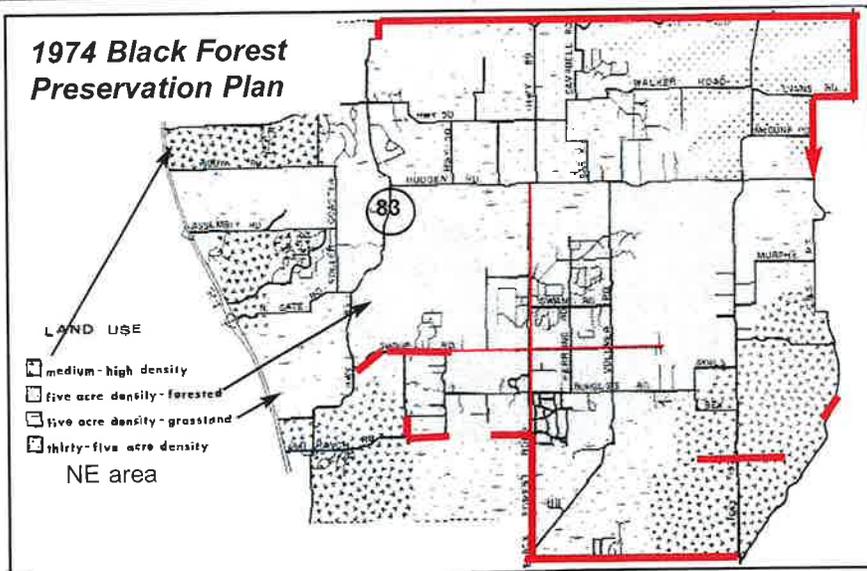
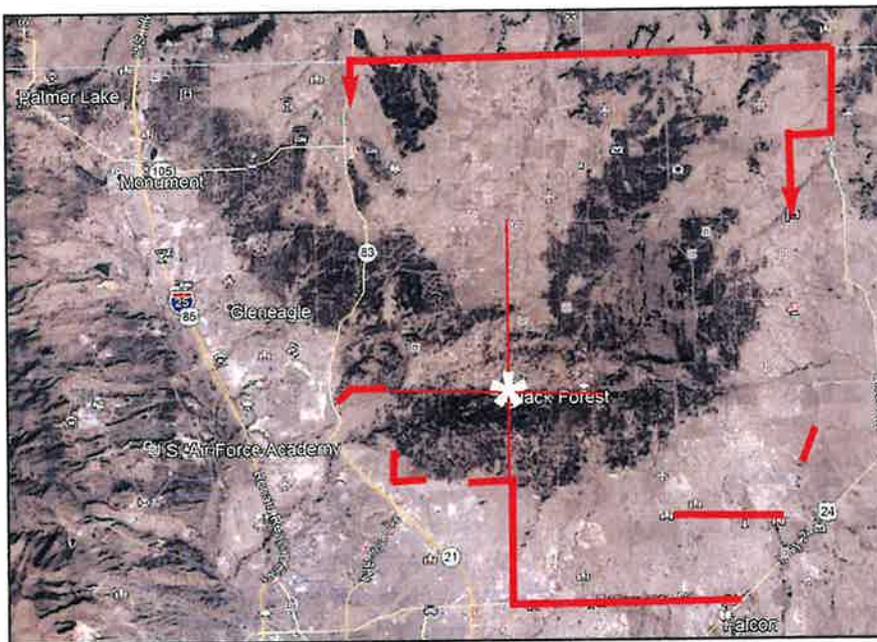
Now, as long as a land use change proposal meets the Regulatory Criteria in the opinion of County Staff, it is usually approved.

The new “Your El Paso” is the new Advisory County Plan.

Read it for yourself.

Official Public Review ends April 9, 2021 but comments can be sent through April to: <MarkGebhart@elpasoco.com>

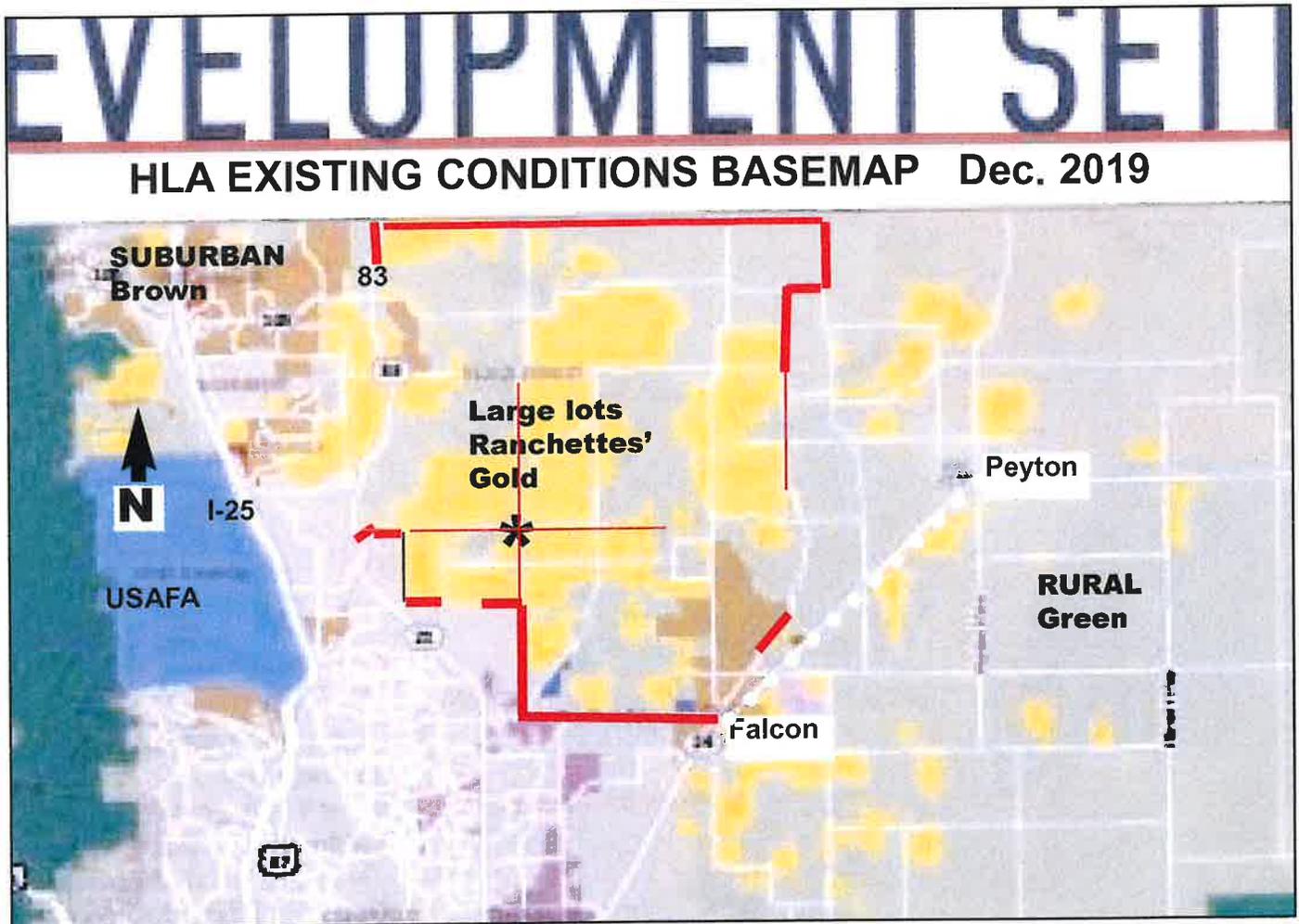
Send in comments by April 9, 2021 to: <https://el Paso-hlplanning.hub.arcgis.com/>



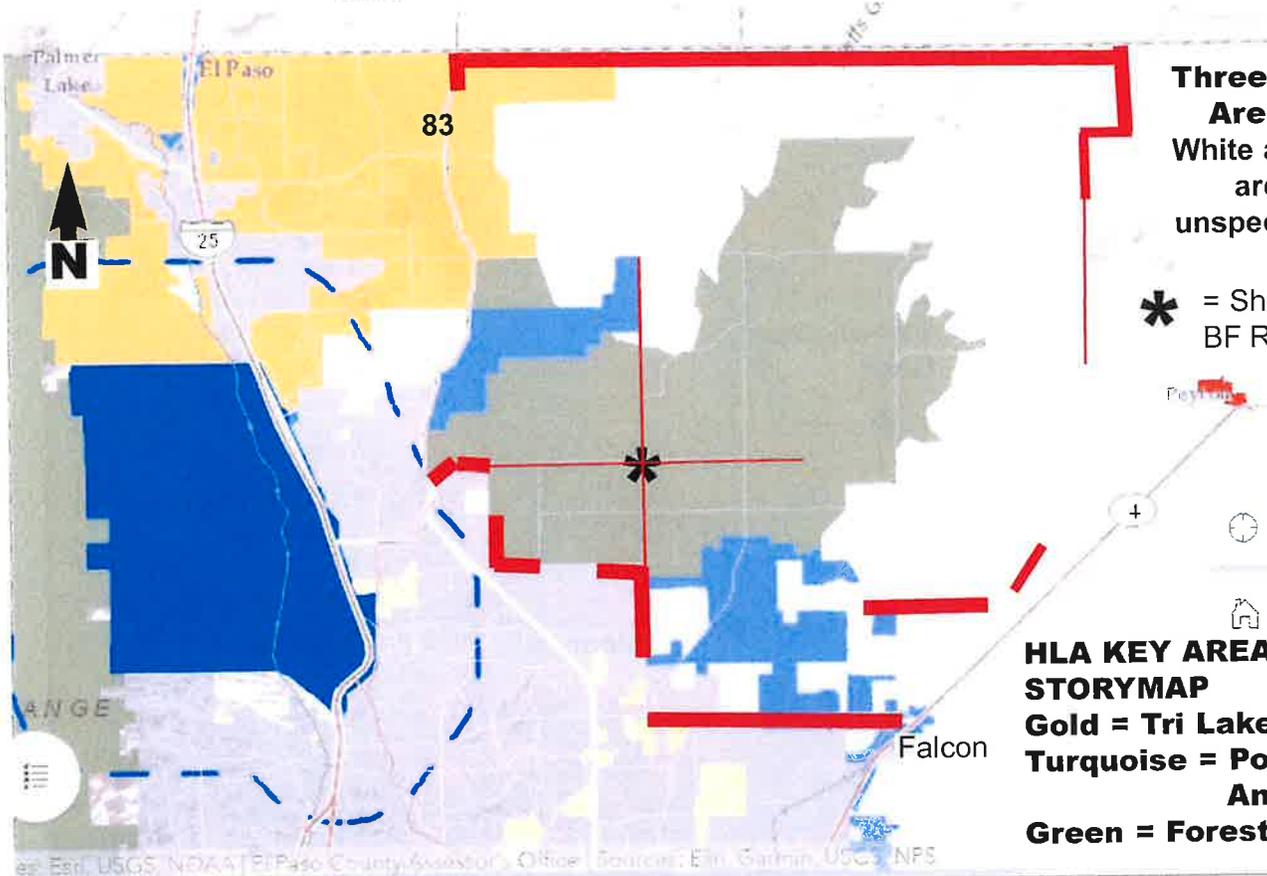
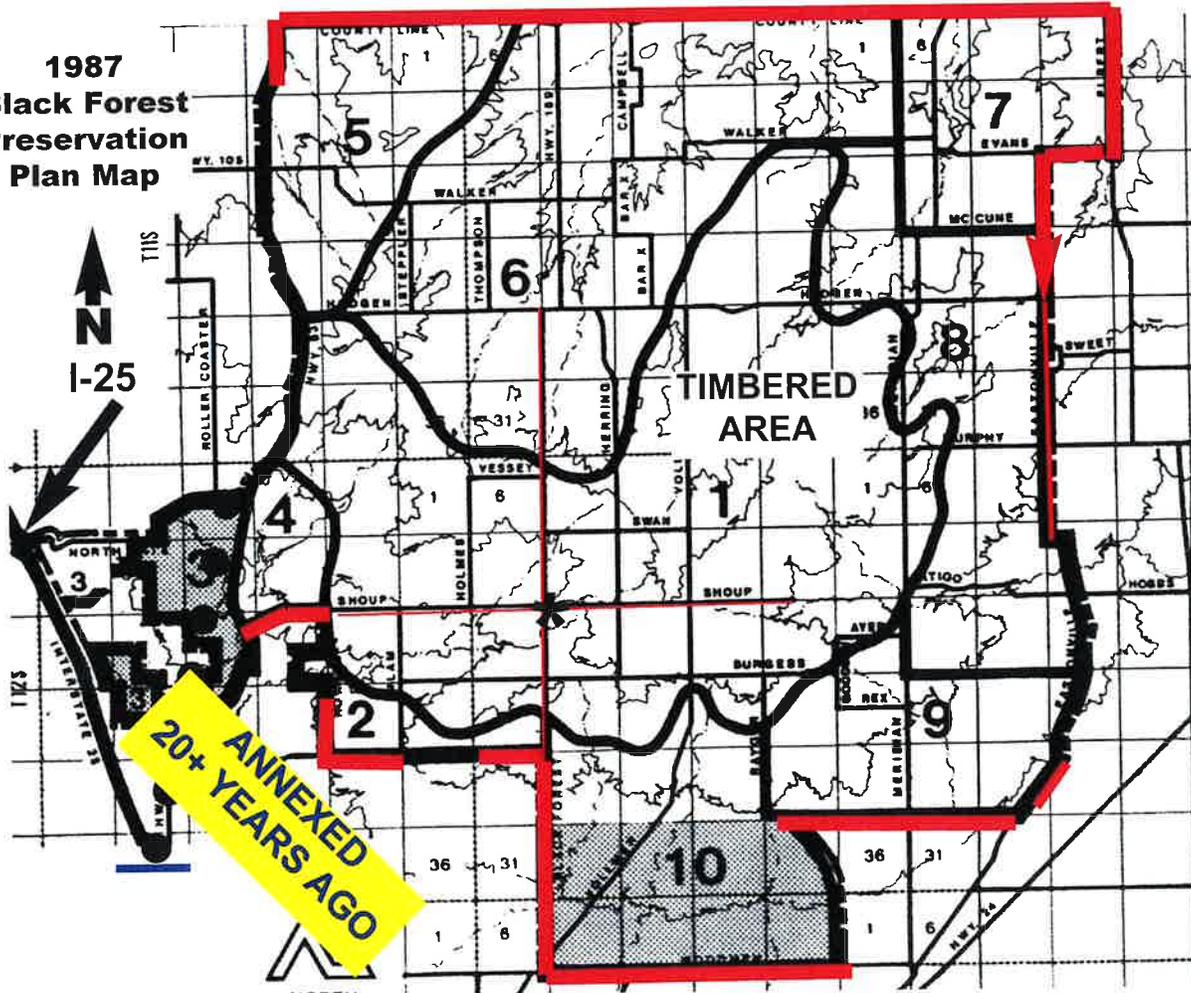
**The Critical Maps in the HLA/County Draft Master Plan,
and City Draft Revised Annexation Policy
as of April 4, 2021 based on published data on HLA.El Paso County
Master plan Website, and from EPC PCD to BF Land Use
Committee/Friends of Black Forest**

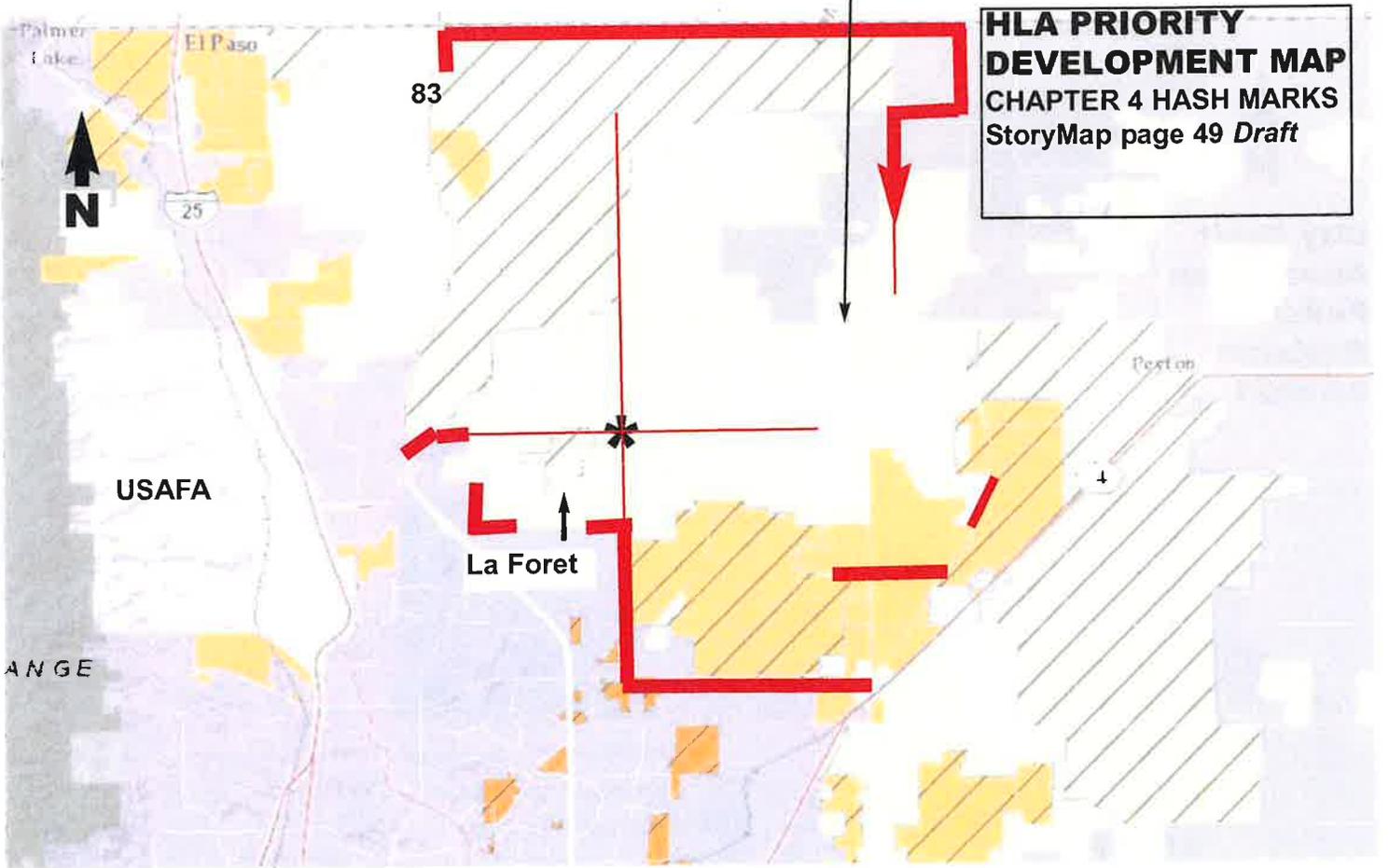
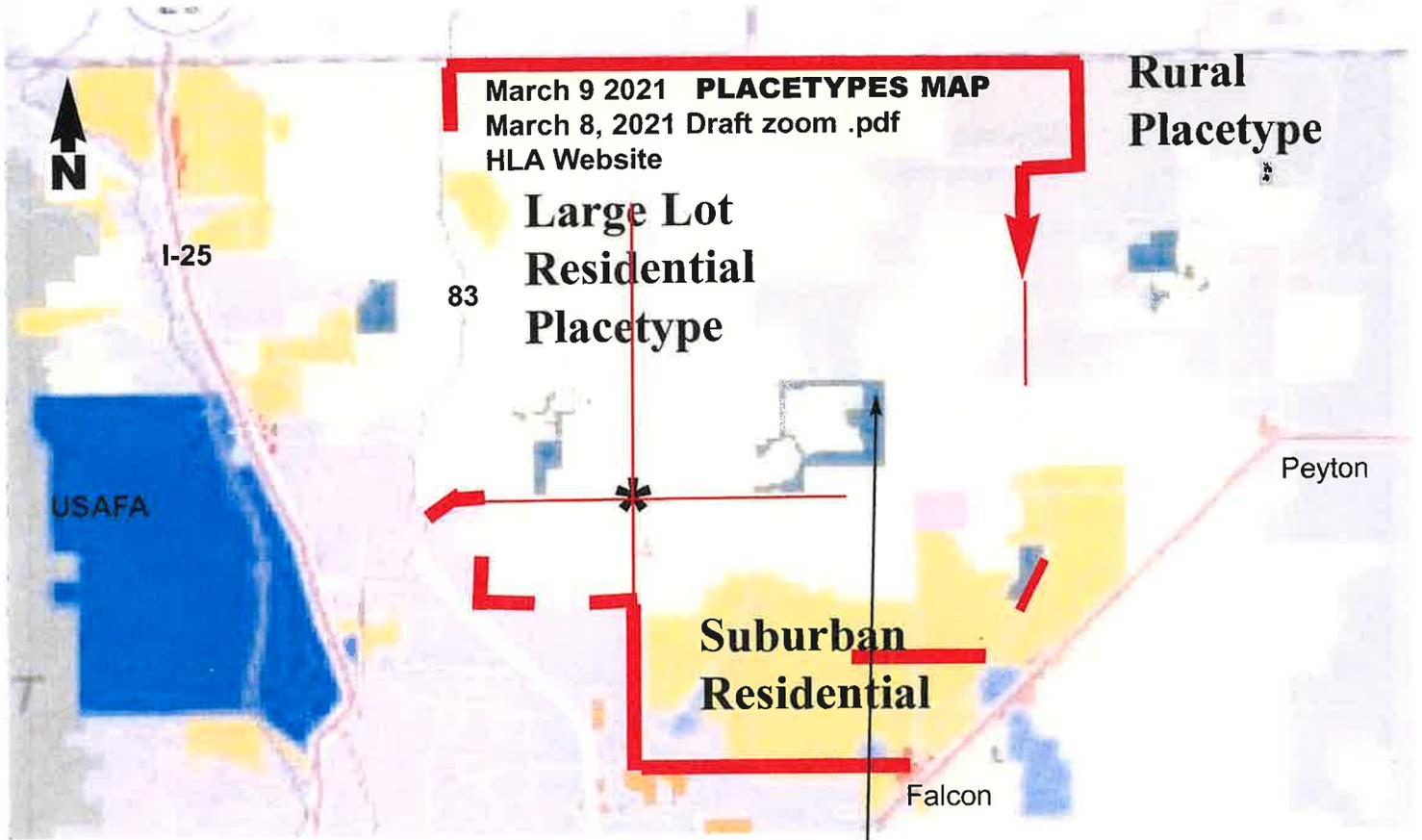
Compiled by Judith von Ahlefeldt - citizen volunteer

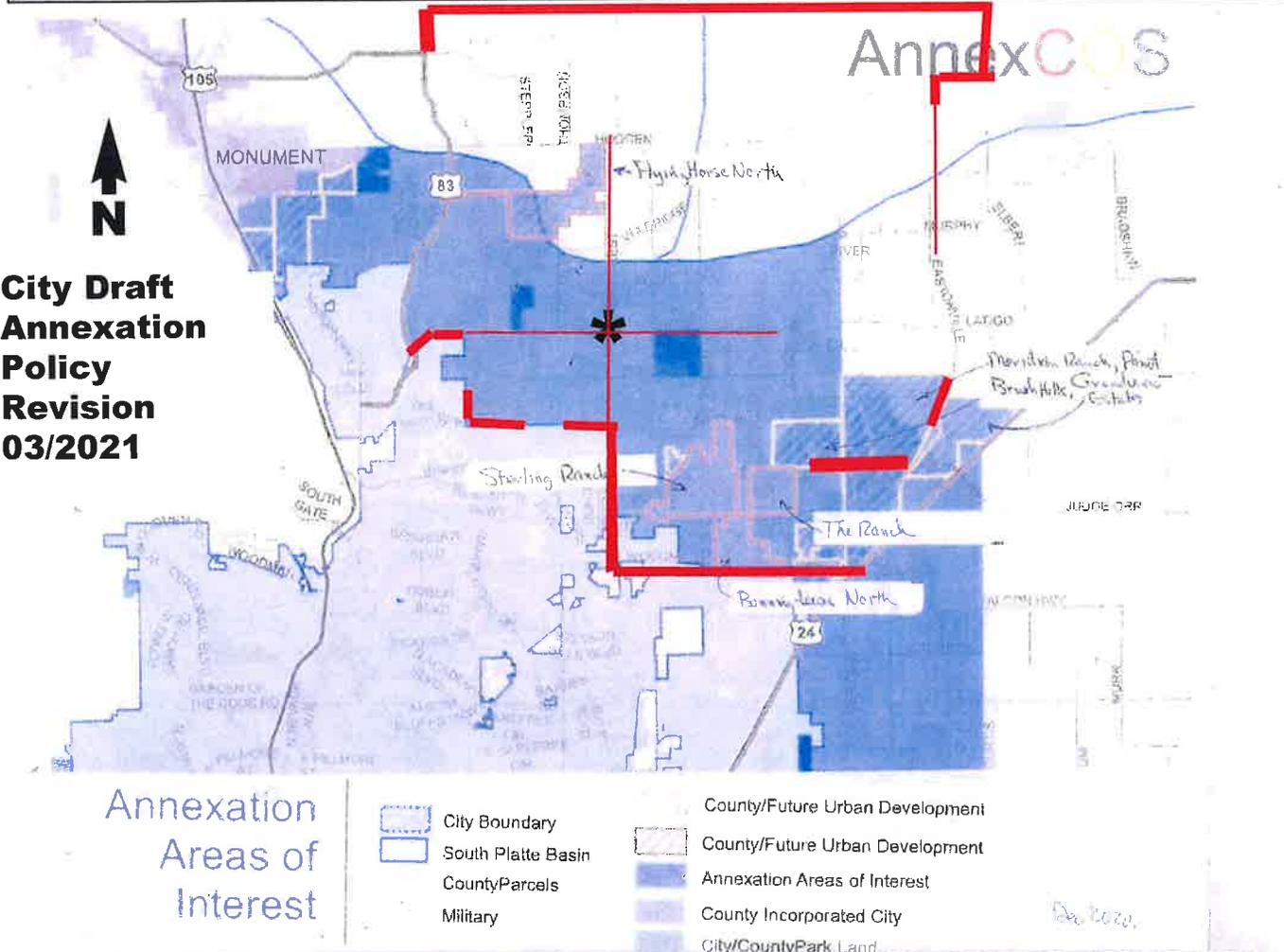
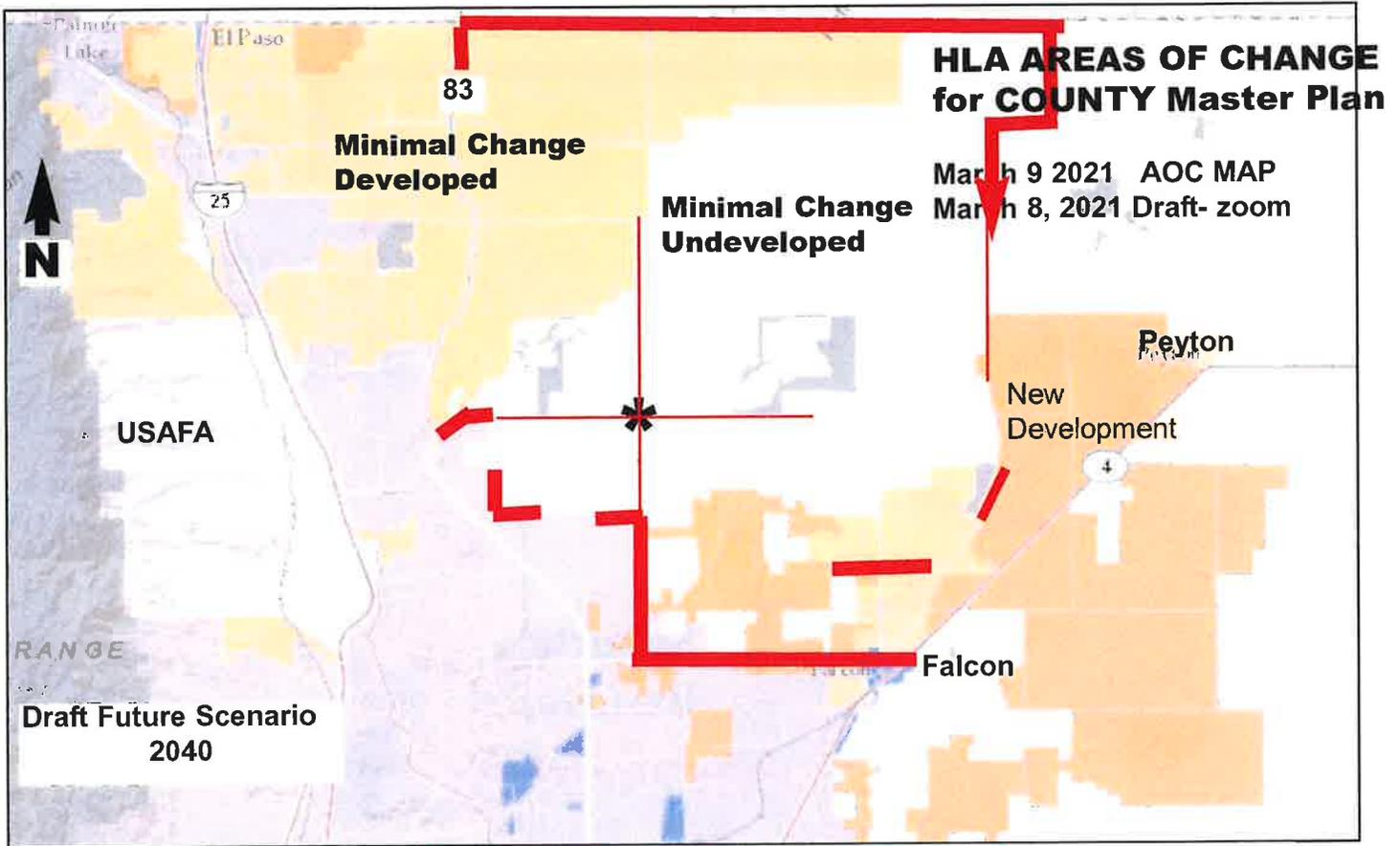
The four map pages, including this page, present (with annotations and with approximate *Black Forest Preservation Plan* area edges **in red**) graphics of northwestern El Paso County El Paso County excerpts from: • the **Existing Development Setting Map (12/2019)** for Houseal Lavigne Associates (LA) of Chicago (Consultant for El Paso County) below; next page • The **1987 *Black Forest Preservation Plan* Boundary Map** (update of the 1974 *Black Forest Preservation Plan*), • the HLA **draft KEY AREAS MAP** (Storymap - HLA Master Plan Website), • the HLA **draft PLACETYPES MAP** (HLA Master Plan Website). • the **HLA draft Priority Development Map** (HLA Master Plan Website - which is an overlay of the Placetypes Map, and on the last page: last • the **HLA Areas of Change Map** (*draft* scenario for 2040- HLA Master Plan Website) and • and last the **draft City of Colorado Springs Areas of Interest Annexation Map** which is under discussion for the City's Annexation Policy update from 2006, and must include areas within three miles of current Municipal Boundaries. With the exception of the City Areas of Annexation Interest Map (electronically from Terry Stokka), all other maps are online. The 1987 *Black Forest Preservation Plan Map* (and full plan - see Chapter 3) are at: <dawog.net > BFPP > bfpp>. All of the HLA/County Maps are currently under review (until April 9) at: <<https://elpaso-hlplanning.hub.arcgis.com/>> which has the full available Master Plan Website and directions for submitting comments. I hope this summary is helpful for your review.



**1987
Black Forest
Preservation
Plan Map**







CHAPTER 14 IMPLEMENTATION

March 26 2021 draft Extract

PAGE 140 IMPLEMENTATION

Your El Paso Master Plan provides direction for growth and development within El Paso County and serves as a guide for County staff, officials, residents, and stakeholders. The Master Plan is the product of a collective effort between County staff and elected and appointed officials, the Master Plan Advisory Committee, the Planning Commission, the Board of County Commissioners, and most importantly, the residents of El Paso County. It represents the end of a 30-month planning process, but also the first step towards guiding change within the community and implementing the recommendations of the Plan.

The Implementation chapter is intended to translate the Master Plan's recommendations into proposed actions. This chapter outlines specific steps to assist the County in achieving Your El Paso Master Plan's long-term vision. It includes an action matrix detailing recommendations to realize the Plan's supporting strategies and identifies a variety of potential funding sources to support these efforts.

Next Steps

Land Development Regulations

Administration

Funding Regulations

Action Matrix

PAGE 141

Next Steps

This section briefly highlights the next steps that should be undertaken to begin the process of implementation. These include:

- Regular use of the Plan at both the regional and local level, including the review of development applications
- Encouraging the reviewing and updating of zoning and subdivision controls to reflect policies presented in the Plan, where appropriate
- Updating the Plan at regular intervals
- Enhancing public communication regarding long-range planning
- Promoting cooperation with municipalities and key stakeholders
- Exploring possible funding sources and implementation techniques

Administration

The Master Plan should be used daily, functioning as the official policy guide for land use, development, and community improvement in El Paso County. It should act as the “go-to” document to assist County staff, the Board of County Commissioners, and other commissions by providing guidance for the review and evaluation of future projects, development proposals, and initiatives. In addition, the County should encourage service providers and partner organizations to utilize the Plan when establishing goals and analyzing future development, new facilities, infrastructure extensions, and programming.

Regularly Use the Plan

To ensure routine usage and further educate the community about Your El Paso County Master Plan, the County should:

- Make a digital version of the Plan and associated maps available online.
- Aid the public by explaining the Plan and its relationship to public and private development projects and other proposals, as appropriate.
- Meet with department directors and officials to explain the purpose, importance, and intended benefits of the Plan.
- Provide a Plan “orientation” for new staff, officials, and board members that highlights key takeaways and major goals of Master Plan that are essential to local policy and initiatives.
- Maintain a list of recommended amendments, issues, or needs that may be the subject of changes, additions, or deletions from the Plan.

Develop & Maintain Partnerships

El Paso County should be the primary lead for Plan implementation, coordinating administrative actions, reviewing and approving land development applications, and public improvement projects as identified within the Master Plan. The success of implementation will be reliant on developing and maintaining partnerships with the numerous stakeholders throughout the County, including public agencies, community groups, municipalities, the local business community, foundations, and the private sector. Given the breadth and scope of the Plan, these organizations will be essential to assisting the County in reaching the established goals and vision for the future of El Paso County.

Per the recommendations of the Plan, the County should identify specific organizations and agencies to assist with implementation and explore opportunities for potential partnerships and collaborations. Discussions should continue to occur following adoption of the Plan regarding how implementation of the goals and recommendations can be jointly accomplished with partner agencies. Further, the County should ensure that property owners and developers plan for and construct improvements that are consistent with the directives of the Plan.

Maintain Public Communication

The Master Plan was supported by an outreach process intended to gather public input and foster a sense of stewardship and excitement for the Plan. Through outreach events, public workshops, the project website, online surveys, interactive mapping tools, and other media, residents and stakeholders were able to get involved and stay informed of the Plan's development. This public participation throughout the process helped communicate the importance of long-range planning and provide individuals with a better understanding of ongoing efforts to improve their community and the overall quality-of-life in El Paso County.

The outreach process should serve as a foundation for continued communication with members of the public throughout the implementation process. The County should ensure that major recommendations and the overall vision for El Paso County, as defined within the Plan, are conveyed to the entire community. This should be supported by regular updates, coverage of major milestones, and additional opportunities for residents to voice their opinion. In addition, the County should maintain avenues by which residents and stakeholders can communicate with County staff and receive information about planning and development efforts. This includes methods for residents to voice questions and concerns that are then reviewed and addressed in a timely manner.

Update Regularly

Noting the County's dedication to thoughtful planning, the Master Plan should not exist as a static document, but rather the center of a continuous planning process. Following adoption of the Plan, the community will continue to move forward, change, and evolve. As such, the Plan should be reviewed and updated as necessary on a regular basis to respond to these changes, addressing shifts in community aspirations, increasing growth pressures, changing market and demographic conditions, as well as new and unexpected issues as they arise. The County should regularly undertake a systematic review and analysis of the Plan.

In general, a review of the Plan should be completed at least every two to three years and should include preparing a report of findings for discussion by the Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners. This review should be referred to, as appropriate, when developing the County's forecasted budget, Strategic Plan, and Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), enabling recommendations and projects from the Plan to be considered as part of upcoming funding commitments. Establishing a routine for review of the Plan will ensure the document remains relevant to the needs and desires of El Paso County.

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PAGE 142 LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

The County's Land Development Code, including zoning, development standards, subdivision design, overlay districts, division of land, annexation, and more, governs the use and development of property and provides a legal framework for many of the Master Plan's recommendations. Simply put, zoning is a powerful and effective tool for Master Plan implementation. The purpose of the County's Land Development Code is to preserve and improve the public health, safety and general welfare of the citizens and businesses of El Paso County, and to:

- Implement the Master Plan.
- Promote predictability, consistency, and efficiency in the land development process.
- Ensure appropriate opportunities for participation in the development process.
- Ensure due consideration is given to protecting private property rights, rights of individuals, and rights of the community as a whole.
- Guide future growth and development of the County in accordance with the Master Plan.
- Guide policy and action to provide adequate and efficient transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks, playgrounds, recreation, and other public facilities.
- Establish reasonable standards of design and procedures for the subdivision of land.
- Ensure public facilities and services are available concurrent with development and will have a sufficient capacity to serve the proposed subdivision.
- Prevent the pollution of air, streams, and ponds; assure the adequacy of drainage facilities; and encourage the wise use and management of natural and biological resources throughout the County to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the community and the value of the land.

Code Amendments & Updates

It is important that the Land Development Code, particularly zoning, be reviewed and amended as necessary to ensure consistency and alignment with the principles, goals, and recommendations of the Master Plan, and to ensure these regulations remain an effective tool for plan implementation.

Your El Paso Master Plan establishes the overall character and intensity of land use and development throughout the County, as well as the policies and goals related to infrastructure, transportation, facilities and services, the natural environment, and much more. Based on the Master Plan's vision, principles, goals, and recommendations, the County should audit the existing Land Development Code and amend as necessary and appropriate to better meet the needs and desires of the El Paso County community. With guidance from the Master Plan, it is likely that several items may need to be evaluated in the Code, including but not limited to:

- Variances of use, special uses, and development review standards
- Conservation design standards
- Special use applications for mineral extraction
- Landscaping standards for new development
- Storage facilities and contractor equipment yards
- Shooting ranges including siting and safety considerations

- Billboards for the purpose of addressing visual clutter and light pollution
- Consolidation or elimination of obsolete zoning districts

Guidance for Evaluating Land Use Applications

A key value of the Master Plan is using it to help inform and guide decision-making related to land use applications (zoning and subdivision), including use variances, special uses, planned unit development, standard district rezoning, sketch plans, preliminary subdivision plans, and final plats. Depending on the proposal being considered, the applicability for and level of needed Master Plan alignment will range significantly.

For example, a standard rezoning request or Planned Unit Development (PUD) would necessitate a thorough compatibility review of the proposed land use application and the Master Plan. On the other hand, review and approval of a final plat of subdivision will already have been reviewed for land use, placetype, and areas of change compatibility, and will require a much less strenuous applicability review relative to the Master Plan. However, while acknowledging the various level of discretion and review needed, it is important that all land use related request be evaluated relative to compatibility, consistency, and overall support of the Master Plan.

Guidance for Evaluating “One-Off” Uses & Development Requests

It is important to recognize that over time, uses and development will be proposed that were not anticipated are not consistent with some parts of the Master Plan, but may ultimately be determined to be desirable and appropriate. The Master Plan should be relied upon for guidance when considering a land use related application and consistency with the Plan should be added to the Land Development Code as one of the criteria for approval when taking formal action to approve or deny the land use application.

By using the Master Plan as an evaluation tool and decision-making guide, questions like those below can help determine land use compatibility and overall appropriateness and desirability from a planning perspective:

- Is land use/development consistent with the Placetype character and objectives within which the property is located?
- Will the proposed use/development enhance or, in the alternative, negatively conflict with the unique identity or character of a Key Area?
- Will the proposed use/development further the County’s objective of meeting the Vision, Principles, Goals, and recommendations of the Master Plan?
- Will the proposed use/development support or, in the alternative, negatively conflict with the conservation design principles or other best practices identified in the Master Plan?

These are just some of the questions that could be asked and are examples of how applying the Master Plan can help guide the decision-making process specific to variances of use.

The County should continue to perform detailed review of land use related requests by comparing the proposed land use with the regulations outlined in the Land Development Code and in determining whether the proposed use could have significant adverse impacts on nearby properties resulting in

use-to-use compatibility issues. While the use request may propose a use not anticipated or identified in the Master Plan's designated Placetypes, it is important that the proposed use or development is still compatible with the surrounding land uses and supports the overall character of the area. It is not possible to know, predict, or forecast all potential future uses or opportunities. As such, the Master Plan should serve as a guide to assist the County in the process of evaluating land use requests.

Requests for "One-Off" Uses

One-off requests often require some form of zoning relief including variances, special uses, PUDs, rezoning, and others. While these proposed one-off requests include uses that may be desirable, they are often uses that were not previously predicted or anticipated and can be inconsistent with aspects of the Master Plan.

Usually, market forces and demand for land use types, such as residential, commercial, businesses, and employment centers, can be forecasted through market analyses and can be planned for in terms of location, infrastructure, and character. However, with atypical land uses, such as concrete batch plants, mineral extraction operations (mining), large-scale energy generation facilities, and landfills, for example, market demands and locational needs cannot be predicted due to lack of data and the industries' variable nature. Instead, the siting of such uses can sometimes be solely based upon opportunities that can arise and change at any given time.

Considering this, the County should remain open-minded and adaptable to such uses, seizing opportunities that benefit the economic vitality and development potential of the community, while responsibly managing natural resources and preserving the overall character of each placetype. Again, considering and accommodating these often necessary but sometimes locally undesirable "one off" uses should be informed by and guided by the Master Plan.

Factors to be Considered

There are numerous factors to take into consideration when reviewing a land use request. This includes determining potential impacts to the surrounding area, existing and proposed infrastructure, and the environment, including but not limited to the following:

- **Major Roadway Access.** Connectivity and access to major roadways as well as traffic impacts and roadway degradation must be considered. If the proposed use is expected to create a large influx of traffic, existing roadway capacities must be assessed to ensure they can sufficiently support it. The County and development should reach an agreement on an approach to capacity improvements and safety enhancements in order to ensure public safety and to minimize the impacts to County infrastructure. If the proposed use is anticipated to cause undue degradation to County roadways, then the use should be carefully considered along with all necessary mitigation measures.

- **Larger Land Area.** Many single large parcels or multiple smaller parcels owned by a single landowner exist in the County that create desirable opportunities for siting larger land uses through the redevelopment process. Multiple parcels under the same ownership, for example, could be consolidated to support and mitigate the impacts typically associated with large-scale land uses, such as energy generation facilities, landfills mining operations, or concrete batch plants.
- **Environmental Impacts.** El Paso County contains a wide variety of environmentally sensitive areas

that are cherished by residents and visitors alike. It is important that any approved use changes do not significantly impact these natural areas.

- Environmental Impacts. El Paso County contains a wide variety of environmentally sensitive areas that are cherished by residents and visitors alike. It is important that any approved use changes do not significantly impact these natural areas.

- Well-Integrated Within Established Placetype. While some land use development changes are bound to propose a use that is different than what a respective placetype typically anticipates, it is crucial that the County ensures that the use is in keeping with the character of the placetype and that it is generally compatible and cohesive with existing uses in the area. This includes making sure the siting, scale, intensity, setbacks, and architectural character can be appropriately integrated into the surrounding area. Where proposed uses exhibit some degree of use-to-use incompatibility, buffering and screening should be provided at a scale that ensures reasonable mitigation of negative impacts.

- Connectivity to Adjacent Placetypes. It is important that all approved use changes are well connected to adjacent placetypes. This means ensuring new roadways are appropriately paved, well-maintained, and integrated into the surrounding network; preventing dead-end arterial and collector roads; and providing safe, well-connected pedestrian access near residential areas and areas that provide daily goods and services. Environmental connectivity, such as wildlife migration corridors, open space contiguity, and drainageways are also key considerations.

A Flexible Plan

Recognizing that it is impossible to foresee or forecast all future land use or development requests and given the unpredictable nature of land use requests, this Plan was written with the intention of remaining open and flexible to such opportunities. Moving forward, while using the Master Plan as a foundational guide for decision-making, it will be the role of County officials to implement the Plan by making decisions on land use requests in a manner that best fits the needs and vision of El Paso County.

Land Use Request Master Plan Evaluation Checklist

The Land Use Request Master Plan Evaluation Checklist, provided below, is meant to serve as a guide to ensure the Master Plan is used in the decision-making/evaluation and approval process. Using the checklist, various relevant components of the Master Plan can be used to determine compatibility of a proposed land use. It is a given that not all land use requests will be compatible or supportive of every Master Plan component. But in the end, to be approved, a land use request should demonstrate that overall, it is compatible with and supportive of the Master Plan, even if not on every checklist item.

As part of Master Plan implementation, the Land Use Request Master Plan Evaluation Checklist should be produced as standalone document and provided to the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners along with every land use application submittal packet of materials, as well as provided to all applicants. This checklist should be used throughout the public hearing process by Plan Commission members to track questions and responses and to more systematically and consistently use the Master Plan to evaluate land use requests.

**SEE MASTER PLAN CONSISTENCY MASTER PLAN CHECKLIST in HLA DRAFT
March 26 2021 Page 143**

WORKING DRAFT Master Plan Consistency Evaluation Checklist

The Master Plan Consistency Evaluation Checklist has four categories of considerations to use to facilitate the review of a proposed land use related project.

- Baseline Considerations are the minimum that should be asked to determine if the land use request is viable and beneficial to the County.
- Geographic Considerations help answer if the location of the proposed land use request is compatible with the Master Plan Placetypes, Areas of Change, and Key Areas.
- County Systems Considerations evaluate the land use request against its accessibility to existing infrastructure and services, and or the proposed provision of necessary infrastructure.
- Best Practices Considerations determine if the proposed project is utilizing the best tools and techniques to support development in the County.

To use the Checklist, answer each question Yes or No for the specific request. If the request does not meet the specific condition (No), or if you have particular considerations or concerns of note, record you comments as to how concerns could be mitigated.

Each item has Yes or No and Mitigation Comments

Baseline Considerations

1. Is there a desirability or demand within the community for this use?
2. Does the market support the need for the use/would it be viable if built right now? 3. Would the use be providing necessary housing or essential goods and/or services?
3. Would the use be providing necessary housing or essential goods and/or services?

Geographic Considerations

1. Is the proposed use located within a Key Area? If so, does it fit with the development recommendations for that particular Key Area?
2. Does the use promote the level of change identified in the Areas of Change?
3. Does the use fall within the primary or supporting land uses within the appropriate Placetype?
4. Is the use located in a Priority Annexation Area? If so, does it align with the growth and development plans for the nearby municipality?
5. Is the use located within a Housing Priority Development Area? If so, is it one of the allowed housing types?
6. Is the use located within a Commercial Priority Development Area? If so, is it one of the allowed commercial uses for that area?
7. Is the use located within an Employment Priority Development Area? If so, is it one of the allowed employment-focused uses for that area?

County Systems Considerations

1. Is there existing infrastructure to which the development can connect? If so, what infrastructure exists? If not, are there existing or proposed plans to extend infrastructure to this area?
2. Does the development trigger the need for such infrastructure?
3. Does the proposal trigger the need for pedestrian or multimodal connections and are those connections being provided?

Best Practices Considerations

1. Does the development appropriately include conservation design best practices to protect/preserve existing natural resources?
2. Does the development include best practices to protect existing natural resources and prevent unnecessary property damage? If not does it includes methods for impact mitigation?

Actual text copy:

Considerations
Geographic Considerations
County Systems Considerations
Best Practices Considerations
 2. Does the market support the need for the use/would it be viable if built right now? 3. Would the use be providing necessary housing or essential goods and/or services? 1. Is the proposed use located within a Key Area? If so, does it fit with the development recommendations for that particular Key Area? 1. Is there existing infrastructure to which the development can connect? If so, what infrastructure exists? If not, are there existing or proposed plans to extend infrastructure to this area? 1. Does the development appropriately include conservation design best practices to protect/preserve existing natural resources? 2. Does the use promote the level of change identified in the Areas of Change? 3. Does the use fall within the primary or supporting land uses within the appropriate Placetype? 4. Is the use located in a Priority Annexation Area? If so, does it align with the growth and development plans for the nearby municipality? 5. Is the use located within a Housing Priority Development Area? If so, is it one of the allowed housing types? 6. Is the use located within a Commercial Priority Development Area? If so, is it one of the allowed commercial uses for that area? 7. Is the use located within an Employment Priority Development Area? If so, is it one of the allowed employment-focused uses for that area? 2. Does the development trigger the need for such infrastructure? 2. Does the development include best practices to protect existing natural resources and prevent unnecessary property damage? If not, does it includes methods for impact mitigation? 3. Does the proposal trigger the need for pedestrian or multimodal connections and are those connections being provided?

PAGE 144 FUNDING SOURCES

Some policies and strategies recommended in the Master Plan may require special financing or expertise. In these cases, the County should pursue external partnerships and funding sources. A list of potential funding sources and incentives is provided in the following section. County staff should regularly monitor these sources to account for legislative or statutory changes that may influence the applicability or availability of funding, as well as proactively seek new, available funding sources. The following list provides a general overview of potential tools and resources rather than a detailed list of all requirements and applications.

Housing

Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)

LIHTCs are dollar-for-dollar federal tax credits for the creation of multifamily, affordable housing units. A developer could receive either a four or nine percent credit to cover the costs of redeveloping a multifamily building. This credit helps to increase the housing stock of livable housing units in neighborhoods. In addition, it provides affordable options for low-income families and helps them to access better neighborhoods.

Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit (HTC)

HTCs are subsidies used for the preservation of historically significant buildings and/or neighborhoods. A developer could receive up to a 45 percent tax credit for the rehabilitation and maintenance of a historic property. The Federal Historic Tax Credit provides a 20 percent federal income-tax credit to renovate income-producing, historic buildings. The State's Historic Preservation Tax Credit allows developers to obtain up to a 25 percent state income-tax credit on the rehabilitation of a historic property. By using HTCs qualifying housing could be saved, and properties of significance preserved.

Senior & Active Military Property Tax Deferral Program

The Colorado Department of Treasury makes payments directly to the County for property taxes of qualifying seniors and active military personnel. This direct payment of property taxes is a lien against the property and does not have to be paid back until the individual is no longer eligible for deferment. Seniors must be at least 65 years old. Military personnel must be actively serving by January 1 of the year they sign up for the program. All previous years' property taxes must be paid and participants must own and occupy the property to participate in the program. As of 2016 El Paso County had 61 participants in the Deferral Program, second-most in the State behind Boulder County with 364.

Senior & Veteran Property Tax Abatement Program

The Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) administers this program for seniors, their surviving spouses, and veterans living with disabilities. Through DOLA, the State Treasury distributes funds that cover half of the first \$200,000 in actual value of their property. Seniors must be at least 65 years old and have owned and occupied the property as their primary residence for the past ten years.

Veterans must be rated by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs as permanently disabled and owned and occupied the property as their primary residence on January 1 of their application year. In 2019, El Paso County had approximately 27,000 seniors and 2,400 veterans in the program totaling nearly 30,000 applicants. Among all counties in Colorado, Jefferson County had the largest number of applicants with almost 40,000.

Local & State Housing Authorities

Local and state housing authorities are established to help promote affordable housing and community development within their respective geographies. These organizations facilitate the operations of various programs to provide needs such as Section 8 housing, public housing, senior housing, loans and bonds, and tax credit partnerships. The following Housing Authorities are active in the County: El Paso County Housing Authority, Colorado Springs Housing Authority, Fountain Housing Authority, and Colorado Housing Finance Authority.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program provides local governments, in conjunction with citizen participation, the opportunity to address a wide range of unique community development needs. The CDBG prioritizes activities benefiting low- and moderate-income residents, aiding in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight, or meeting an urgent community need. The following reports were conducted by the County to inform CDBG prioritization:

- 2017-2021 Assessment of Fair Housing Report – Assessed fair housing conditions and identified issues in El Paso County.
- 2017-2021 Community Development Block Grant Consolidated Plan – Five-year planning document that identifies housing, community, and economic development needs throughout the County and outlines strategies for prioritizing and addressing needs.
- 2018 Community Development Block Grant Annual Action Plan – Compilation of prioritized objectives and activities to be undertaken in 2018 that was informed by the Consolidated Plan and the Fair Housing Assessment.
- 2017 Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) – Report outlining the progress the jurisdiction has made in carrying out its strategic and action plans.

County Programs

The Economic Development Department works with El Paso County Housing Authority (EPCHA) to help build affordable housing units in the County. Several housing programs administered by the El Paso County Economic Development Department currently operate within El Paso County to help provide communities with suitable living environments as well as assistance to homeowners for repairs and rehabilitations.

- **Single Family Turnkey Plus Mortgage Program** – Provides a partially forgivable Down Payment Assistance (DPA) Loan to eligible individuals and families who want to purchase a home anywhere in El Paso County.
- **Single Family Housing Rehabilitation Program** – Provides eligible County residents with a grant or loan funding to remove accessibility barriers for person with disabilities as well as health and safety improvements to the home.
- **Multifamily Mortgage Bond Program** – Finances the development of multifamily housing

through the issuance of tax-exempt bonds in return for some or all units set aside for County residents of low- to moderate-income.

- **Housing Trust Fund** – An internally self-sustained fund available in the form of loans or the direct purchase of services that prioritizes the development of new, affordable, and accessible housing units.

- **Housing Resource Hotlines** – Phone-based assistance available to County residents in need of housing resources.

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Economic Development

Small Business Development Center

The Pikes Peak Small Business Development Center (SBDC) is El Paso County's resource for small business establishment. The center offers a wide range of services including free consulting, workshops, networking events, and long-term programs. The County's Economic Development Department hosts the SBDC as a component unit of the Department. Being under the Economic Development umbrella has created a strong collaborative relationship that has spurred the development of several strategic programs to support small businesses in the County including Bundle Up for Small Businesses and Leading Edge. Coordination between the SBDC and the Economic Development Department ensures that all programs have a financial component and supportive services. As the County continues to grow and begins the process of updating its Five-Year Strategic Plan, it should continue to collaborate internally across departments to create incentives and policies that support the efforts of the SBDC.

Colorado Main Street Loans

This loan program offers character-based financing options for small businesses unable to secure a conventional loan or start their business. Loans range between \$5,000 to \$50,000 and are intended to support a variety of business purposes in underserved communities. Funds are available for start-up expenses, working capital, purchasing equipment, leasehold improvements, buying a business or franchise, or business debt refinancing. Funding for this loan program comes from a variety of sources, including Colorado Lending Source, banks, foundations, private entities, investors, and government agencies.

Planning Program & Local Technical Assistance Program

The Local Technical Assistance program strengthens the capacity of local or state organizations, institutions of higher education, and other eligible recipients to create regional economic development plans to improve economic prosperity and resiliency of an area, such as through feasibility studies and impact analyses. The Program is administered by the Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration and offers up to \$300,000 with a cost-share/match requirement.

Existing Industry Customized Training Programs

Administered by the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade and the Colorado Community College System, the program provides up to \$1,200 per full-time employee. The training program provides funds for net new hire training and focuses on businesses relocating to or expanding in Colorado and are in need of training workers with the skills necessary to improve their productivity, increase wages, and reduce the need for public support. The program focuses on established Colorado companies to assist them in remaining competitive within their industry, adapt to new technology, and prevent layoffs.

Biotechnology Sales & Use Tax Refund

Qualified taxpayers may seek a refund every year for all Colorado sales and use taxes they paid on purchases of tangible personal property used directly in research and development of biotechnology. This includes properties such as microscopes, chemical reagents, and software.

Colorado Historical Foundation (CHF) Revolving Loan Fund: Preservation Loans

The Colorado Historical Foundation established the CHF Revolving Loan Fund to provide financing for preservation projects and the acquisition of historically designated properties. CHF Revolving Loan Fund loans are for rehabilitation, restoration, or adaptive reuse. Projects must adhere to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Buildings. The funds can also be applied to the purchase of a national or local historically designated property in Colorado.

Tax Incremental Financing/Urban Renewal Areas

Urban Renewal Areas (URA) provide the opportunity to fund eligible improvements within a specific geographic area as property tax revenue increases. The increase in tax revenue, or increment, over the base year of establishing tax increment financing (TIF) can be leveraged for infrastructure improvements, property acquisition, improvements to existing development, and related allocations. The duration of the TIF is 30 years with the opportunity for renewal for up to 50 years at 50 percent of the TIF.

Rural Technical Assistance Program

The State of Colorado's Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT) operates a program specifically for rural economic development. The Rural Technical Assistance Program (RTAP) offers a community-centric approach to strengthening economies in the State's rural areas. Communities qualified for the Rural Jumpstart or Enterprise Zone programs are automatically eligible to participate in the RTAP. With the ultimate goal of creating and retaining jobs in rural communities, RTAP includes seven different initiatives for supporting existing businesses, bolstering existing industries, and removing barriers for entrepreneurs. The initiatives include:

- Certified Small Business Community
- Community Placemaking
- Coworking 101
- Colorado Rural Academy for Tourism (CRAFT) Studio 201
- Creativity Lab of Colorado
- Film Festival
- Grow Your Outdoor Recreation Industry

The Economic Development Department, in collaboration with the SBDC, should promote these initiatives in its unincorporated communities. The SBDC has had recent success in bolstering rural economies in the Falcon and Peyton areas, but these initiatives can help expand that success. The County should also consider working directly with interested communities to apply for these initiatives.

Pikes Peak Enterprise Zone Program

The Pikes Peak Enterprise Zone Program (EZ) was established to improve the local business climate and facilitate economic growth in targeted areas of El Paso County. The EZ is a state income tax credit incentive which encourages new and established businesses to locate and expand in economically distressed areas.

Commercial Aeronautical Zone (CAZ)

The Commercial Aeronautical Zone (CAZ) was established to attract local businesses and allow them to succeed at the Colorado Springs Airport. Aeronautical businesses can benefit from numerous tax rebates within the CAZ by resolution adopted by the Board of County Commissioners.

Business Personal Property Tax Credit

Since 2000, El Paso County has provided a credit to businesses for the County's share of business personal property taxes. All businesses receive this credit and it is applied as a Tax Rate Reduction/Credit on Property Tax Statements from the El Paso County Treasurer. All types of businesses, from restaurants to manufacturers, are provided this incentive.

New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC)

Administered by the Department of the Treasury, the NMTC increases the flow of capital to businesses and low-income areas by providing a modest tax incentive to private investors, businesses, and communities across the country. The Colorado Housing and Finance Authority (CHFA), through the Colorado Growth and Revitalization (CGR) fund, administers NMTCs in the State of Colorado.

PAGE 146 Economic Funding continued

Opportunity Zones (OZ)

Enacted as part of the 2017 tax reform package (Tax Cuts and Jobs Act), Opportunity Zones are federal tax incentives to increase investment in low-income urban and rural communities. This economic development incentive allows investors to support distressed communities through private equity investments in businesses and real estate projects. The incentive is the deferral, reduction, and potential elimination of specific federal capital gains taxes. Investments are only applicable in a federally designated low-income census tract. Investments must be made into a Qualified Opportunity Fund (QOF). The QOF then must deploy 90 percent of the funds into qualified opportunity zone properties or businesses within six months.

Manufacturing Sales & Use Tax Exemption

This tax exemption is offered through the Colorado Department of Revenue. It provides an exemption from state sales and use tax on purchases of manufacturing machinery, machine tools, and parts. Industrial businesses throughout El Paso County may be eligible for this exemption.

Colorado FIRST Grants

Administered jointly between the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade and the Colorado Community College System, the grants offer up to \$1,400 per full-time employee for companies relocating to or expanding in Colorado to assist with training funds for net new hires.

Advanced Industry Investment Tax Credit

This tax credit administered through the Colorado Office of Economic Development helps Colorado advanced industry companies that are headquartered in Colorado receive more capital from Colorado investors. Colorado's seven advanced industries are Advanced Manufacturing, Aerospace, Bioscience, Electronics, Energy/Natural Resources/Cleantech, Infrastructure Engineering, and Technology and Information. The investor, the investee, and the investment all must meet certain criteria (more detailed information available on the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade website).

Renewable Energy Sales & Use Tax Exemption

Applicable businesses may receive this exemption annually for all Colorado sales and use taxes they paid on purchases of tangible personal property used directly in research and development of biotechnology.

Clean Tech and Media Tech Sales & Use Tax Refund

Through the Colorado Department of Revenue, this refund is available to businesses employing fewer than 36 full-time employees in Colorado with its headquarters or 50 percent of all employees in the State. Covered items and activities include the sale, storage, use, or consumption of property used for research and development of clean or medical technology.

Job Growth Incentive Tax Credit

This state funding source through the Colorado Office of Economic Development is intended to provide a state income tax credit to businesses undertaking job creation projects that would not occur in

Colorado without this program. Businesses need to create at least 20 new jobs in Colorado, with an average yearly wage of at least 100 percent of the county average wage rate based on where the business is located. A business located in an Enhanced Rural Enterprise Zone must create at least five new jobs in Colorado, with an average yearly wage of at least 100 percent of the county average wage. All new jobs must be maintained for at least one year after the positions are hired to qualify.

Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)

This tax credit encourages employers to hire nine targeted groups of job seekers: Welfare/TANF recipients, Veterans receiving Food Stamps, Disabled Veterans, Ex-Offenders, Designated Community Residents, Vocational Rehabilitation, Food Stamp recipients between the ages of 18 and 39, Supplemental Security Income recipients, and Long Term TANF Recipients. The tax credit is administered by the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trades, and eligible employers can receive \$2,400 to \$9,000 per new employee.

Transportation

There are various federal and state-funded programs for which El Paso County may apply. Most of the programs require a local match depending on the type of program. Below are a few of the programs available:

- Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)
- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
- Off-System Bridge Program (BRO)
- Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
- Highway Users Tax Fund
- Congressional Appropriation Earmarked Federal Funding with Local Match (Demonstration)

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Parks, Open Space & Trails

Land & Water Conservation Fund

This fund provides matching grants to states and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities (as well as funding for shared federal land acquisition and conservation strategies). Funds are provided through the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, and Bureau of Land Management.

Nonmotorized Trail Grants

The mission of the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Trails Program is to promote understanding and stewardship of Colorado's outdoors by providing opportunities for the public use and support of Colorado's diverse system of trails. The grant program is a partnership among Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), the Colorado Lottery, the federal Recreational Trails Program (RTP), and the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF).

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) can be used to improve parks and trails and other recreational opportunities in low- and middle-income areas of the County.

Colorado Springs Health Foundation Grants (CSHF)

Colorado Springs Health Foundation Grants (CSHF) grants focus on lower- and middle-income areas as well.

Environment & Sustainability

Colorado Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund (CBRLF)

This fund is intended to facilitate the reuse and/or redevelopment of contaminated sites by making low-cost funding available for financing environmental cleanups. It is administered by the U.S. EPA and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

Natural Resources Matching Grants Program

This program provides matching state funds towards the costs of on-the-ground conservation projects and educational conservation activities. Grant funds range between \$1,000 and \$25,000. Administered through the Colorado Department of Agriculture, the matching grant is a competitive program. A committee of government and private conservation experts score the applications based on the following criteria: focused approach with measurable outcomes, conservation impact, feasibility, district involvement, and partner involvement.

Source Water Assessment & Protection Pilot Planning Project

The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment provides funds for source water protection entities that develop exemplary and comprehensive source water protection plans. Funding ranges between \$25,000 and \$50,000.

Protection Plan Development & Implementation Grants

This grant program provides funds for source water protection entities to develop and implement a protection plan up to \$5,000. It is administered by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

Wildlife Restoration Program

This program provides grant funds to states and insular areas fish and wildlife agencies for projects to restore, conserve, manage, and enhance wild birds and mammals and their habitats.

Colorado Healthy Rivers Fund Grants

Administered by the Colorado Department of Natural Resources, this fund provides both project and planning grants. Project grants are intended for projects that promote the improvement and/or protection of the condition of the watershed. Planning grants are for the planning of successful watershed restoration or protection projects. Eligible applicants include locally based watershed protection groups who are committed to a collaborative approach to the restoration and protection of lands and natural resources within Colorado's watersheds.

Colorado Watershed Restoration Grants

The Colorado Department of Natural Resources provides grants for watershed/stream restoration and flood mitigation projects throughout the State.

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Action Matrix

The Action Matrix offers a comprehensive list of all implementation strategies, policies, and recommendations contained within the Your El Paso Master Plan. The matrix provides staff with a tool to prioritize implementation activities and projects over the life of the Plan. In addition, the matrix allows the County to approve specific, actionable items on an annual basis and evaluate progress based upon completed implementation strategies. The implementation action matrix offers a brief description of each action or project, priority actions, and time frame.

Responsible Entity & Partner Organization

For each recommendation, responsible entities and/or partner organizations are discussed in the appropriate sections of each chapter (1-13). To reference these organizations please go to the page number listed next to each Specific Strategy.

Time Frame

'S' = Short-Term (1-3 Years)

'M' = Mid-Term (3-5 Years)

'L' = Long-Term (5+ Years)

'O' = Ongoing (Requires immediate action and continued attention throughout the life of the Plan)

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(LISTING BY CHAPTER TOPICS (Chapters 3-13), CORE PRINCIPLES, GOAL, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES with Time Frame and Page Reference)

Land Use (Ch. 3)

Core Principle: (CP3)

Manage growth to ensure a variety of compatible land uses that preserve all character areas of the County.

Goal LU1 (CP3)

Ensure compatibility with established character and infrastructure capacity.

Objective LU1-1 (CP3): Some areas of the County should be planned for new development, while other areas should be preserved, protected, or see little new development.

Objective LU1-2: (CP3) Continue to partner with all of the military installations to maintain compatible use transitions and buffers adjacent to each installation through open space protection and site-specific development restrictions.

Objective LU1-3: (CP3) Protected/Conservation Areas should be preserved due to their local, ecological, or historical influence.

Specific strategies: (SS,CP3, LU1 1-3))

1 **Priority:** Due to its unique nature and overall importance, the Mountain Interface placetype must be appropriately preserved to help maintain the natural beauty of the County and protect the habitats of its abundant and diverse wildlife. New development within the Mountain Interface placetype must be well managed against the necessity of preservation and protection of this unique environmental area of the County. O-40 **(SS-1,CP3, LU1 1-3)**

2 Fountain Creek should continue to be protected by limiting development in and near the Fountain Creek Watershed, Flood Control, and Greenway District boundaries. Any proposed development within the District will need to adhere to the District's land use standards to prevent or otherwise mitigate any negative impacts. O-18 **(SS-2,CP3, LU1 1-3)**

3 All new development and redevelopment in the Forested Area should strictly adhere to the transportation and infrastructure, stormwater requirements, built form, and transition guidelines outlined in their appropriate placetypes. Each development proposal should also be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine its specific impact on the Forested Area and the established character of the individual community. O-19 **(SS-3,CP3, LU1 1-3)**

4Corral Bluffs should be considered as an open space buffer to preserve the character of the adjacent rural areas to the east. O-19 (SS-4,CP3, LU1 1-3)

5Extending the boundaries of Paint Mines Park should be considered to help preserve this distinct County amenity and provide more public open space in the future. M -19 (SS-5,CP3, LU1 1-3)

6New development and any redevelopment in Forested Areas should be of a lower intensity to mitigate any impacts on the Forest, properly manage stormwater, provide safe access to major roads and state highways for the traveling public and emergency response vehicles and adhere to the strictest building codes to prevent any hazards such as fires and soil erosion related to poor planning, design, and construction. O-19 (SS-6,CP3, LU1 1-3)

7The Minimal Change: Undeveloped areas should experience some redevelopment of select underutilized or vacant sites adjacent to other built-out sites, but such redevelopment will be limited in scale so as to not alter the essential character. O-21 (SS-7,CP3, LU1 1-3)

8Conservation design (or clustered development) should routinely be considered for new development within the Large-Lot Residential placetype to provide for a similar level of development density as existing large-lot areas while maximizing the preservation of contiguous areas of open space and the protection of environmental features. O-26 (SS-8,CP3, LU1 1-3)

Goal LU2 (CP3)

Coordinate context-sensitive annexation and growth strategies with municipalities

Objective LU2-1: Continue to coordinate with the individual cities and towns as they plan for growth. Collaboration with the individual communities will prevent the unnecessary duplication of efforts, overextension of resources, and spending of funds.

Objective LU2-2: The character and intensity of new development or redevelopment in County enclaves should match that of the development in the municipality surrounding it.

Objective LU2-3: Prioritize the annexation of existing unincorporated County enclaves as opportunities arise.

Specific Strategies:

1Priority: Continue to prioritize nonresidential growth in the Colorado Springs Airport area to help expand the employment center in unincorporated El Paso County. O-19 (SS-1,CP3, LU2 1-3)

2Priority: Coordinate with the U.S. Forest Service and the City of Colorado Springs to identify opportunities for the County to help ensure Pikes Peak is preserved and maintained as both a natural amenity and an economic asset. O-19 (SS-2,CP3, LU2 1-3)

3 Regularly revisit discussions with the City of Colorado Springs and other municipalities regarding possible annexation of enclaves to explore means to finance improvements and service debt to make annexation a feasible consideration. **O-19 (SS-3,CP3, LU2 1-3)**

4 Coordinate future development adjacent and within the Peterson Air Force Base flight area buffer with the military installations to ensure growth doesn't negatively impact the primary functions of Peterson Air Force Base. **O-19 (SS-4,CP3, LU2 1-3)**

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Goal LU3.

Encourage a range of development types to support a variety of land uses.

Objective LU3-1: Development should be consistent with the allowable land uses set forth in the placetypes first, and second to their built form guidelines.

Objective LU3-2: The agricultural lands within the Rural placetype represent a valuable economic resource and unique lifestyle that should be preserved.

Objective LU3-3: The Suburban Residential placetype should be characterized by predominantly residential areas with mostly single-family detached housing.

Objective LU3-4: The Urban Residential placetype should consist of established neighborhoods immediately adjacent to equally dense or more dense urban neighborhoods in incorporated areas, as well as new, largely residential neighborhoods in previously undeveloped areas where centralized utility services are available.

Specific Strategies:

1 Priority: The New Development areas will be significantly transformed as new development takes place on lands currently largely designated as undeveloped or agricultural areas. Undeveloped portions of the County that are adjacent to a built out area should be developed to match the character of that adjacent development or to a different supporting or otherwise complementary one such as an employment hub or business park adjacent to an urban neighborhood. **O-21 (SS-1,CP3, LU3 1-4)**

2 Priority: The Transition areas are fully developed parts of the County that may completely or significantly change in character. In these areas, redevelopment will to be intense enough to transition the existing development setting to an entirely new type of development. **O-21 (SS-2,CP3, LU3 1-4)**

3Future development in the Tri-Lakes Area should align with the existing character and strengthen the residential, commercial, employment, and entertainment opportunities in the adjacent communities of Monument, Palmer Lake, and Woodmoor. **O-19 (SS-3,CP3, LU3 1-4)**

4The Minimal Change: Developed areas are likely to see more intense infill development with a mix of uses and scale of redevelopment that will significantly impact the character of an area. Regardless of the development that may occur, if these areas evolve to a new development pattern of differing intensity, their overall character should be maintained. **O-21 (SS-4,CP3, LU3 1-4)**

5As a gathering place and town center for rural areas, development within the Rural Center placetype should be located along a community's main street or near the intersection of an area's most-frequented roadways. **O-32 (SS-5,CP3, LU3 1-4)**

6The Regional Open Space placetype includes undeveloped areas with significant ecological value as well as programmed parks accommodating passive and active recreation, both of which may function as stormwater-management facilities. **O-38 (SS-6,CP3, LU3 1-4)**

7The Utility placetype, which includes facilities such as landfills, power plants, water treatment facilities, and water reservoirs, is often located adjacent to the Rural or Large-Lot Residential placetypes as these are largely uninhabited areas. **O-44 (SS-7,CP3, LU3 1-4)**

Goal LU4.

Continue to encourage policies that ensure “development pays for itself.”

Objective LU4-1: Foster collaboration among the Forest Service and the other destinations in the Pikes Peak influence area to coordinate events and activities that capitalize on the high volume of visitors to Pikes Peak to further bolster the County's economy.

Objective LU4-2: The Regional Center placetype should include large scale shopping centers that house a variety of commercial businesses and support a high activity of users on a regular basis such as grocery stores, pharmacies, clothing stores, automotive centers, restaurants, entertainment opportunities, home improvement stores, and other major retailers.

Objective LU4-3: Employment Centers should comprise land for industrial, office, business park, manufacturing, distribution, warehousing, and other similar business uses.

Specific Strategies:

1Priority: Continue to evaluate development impact fees, requiring adequate private investment to ensure any long-term maintenance of new development will not overburden County resources, and will be served by adequate infrastructure until they can be incorporated if necessary or desired. **O-45 (SS-1,CP3, LU4 1-3)**

2Priority: Annexation should be considered as development occurs. 0-45 (SS-2,CP3, LU4 1-3)

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Housing and Communities (Ch. 4)

Core Principle: (CP4)

Preserve and develop neighborhoods with a mix of housing types.

Goal HC1 (CP4, HC1)

Promote development of a mix of housing types in identified areas.

Objective HC1-1: In Larger Enclaves, vacant industrial should be redeveloped to an entertainment use or small commercial retail center to better support residents.

Objective HC1-2: In Larger Enclaves, redevelop deteriorating single-family homes and sporadic commercial businesses to single-family attached or multifamily units to increase density where appropriate in the context of the existing neighborhood.

Objective HC1-3: Prioritize higher-quality redevelopment of any primary or supporting land use for the Urban Residential placetype as opportunities arise.

Objective HC1-4: In Suburban Residential areas, clustered development should be encouraged to increase density while also preserving open space and such development should consist of a mix of single-family detached, single-family attached, and multifamily units.

Objective HC1-5: Focus detached housing development in Large-Lot Residential and Suburban Residential areas given the increasing infrastructure and environmental constraints associated with such development to help maintain the established character of rural communities.

Objective HC1-6: Single-family attached housing such as townhomes, rowhomes, and multi-unit apartment homes should be used to create seamless transitions between low-intensity and high-intensity neighborhoods as well as nonresidential uses.

Specific strategies:

1Priority: Continue to prioritize Suburban Residential in this area along Highway 24 in an effort to sustain Falcon's growth momentum. Suburban Residential would match the community's existing character and utilize available land to accommodate a sizable portion of the County's expected population growth without negatively impacting adjacent areas. L-52 **(SS-1,CP4, HC1 1-6)**

2Infill development in the Colorado Centre area should further support single-family detached units with some single-family attached, possibly along Horizon View Drive. O-51 **(SS-2,CP4, HC1 1-6)**

3Single-family attached and detached housing units should be developed in the Highway 105 & Interstate 25 area in a cohesive manner that establishes a seamless transition between different housing types, as opposed to large, isolated clusters or blocks of a single type of housing. Maintaining a mixed development pattern in this area should be prioritized by the County to preserve the existing residential character. O-52 **(SS-3,CP4, HC1 1-6)**

4Residential development near municipal boundaries adjacent to Falcon may include single-family attached and multifamily units. O-52 **(SS-4,CP4, HC1 1-6)**

5Immediate adjacency to Highway 24 should be utilized for larger commercial development, not only to support neighborhoods but also to capture commuters. L-52 **(SS-5,CP4, HC1 1-6)**

PAGE 151**Goal HC2 (CP4, HC2)**

Preserve the character of rural and environmentally sensitive areas.

Objective HC2-1: While large expanses of undeveloped land exist throughout the County, particularly in the Rural placetype, development should be prioritized elsewhere to efficiently utilize and extend existing infrastructure, conserve water resources, and strengthen established neighborhoods.

Objective HC2-2: Provide input and support to municipalities when updating their annexation plans to help identify areas for incorporation into municipalities based on infrastructure needs, maintenance costs and available funding, municipal interest and capacity, and other factors.

Objective HC2-3: Coordinate regularly with municipalities to maintain knowledge of plans for annexation.

Objective HC2-4: Ensure all future municipal annexations are contiguous to municipal limits to prevent the formation of enclaves of unincorporated

Objective HC2-5: All future development proposals should be review to ensure they will not negatively impact the natural, environmental, or economic functions of the Mountain Interface placetype.

Objective HC2-6: Continue to carefully analyze each development proposal for their location, compatibility with the natural environment, and cohesion with the existing character.

Objective HC2-7: Regardless of the placetype within which future development is proposed, new development and redevelopment within El Paso County should be designed to incorporate a conservation design approach, where appropriate.

Specific Strategies:

1 Actively participate in the development of any new or updated comprehensive annexation plans being prepared by the incorporated municipalities, as appropriate. O-50 (SS-1,CP4, HC2 1-7)

2 Develop an intergovernmental agreement to coordinate with each of the municipalities experiencing substantial growth. O-50 (SS-2,CP4, HC2 1-7)

3 Prioritize suburban residential in the Highway 94 Priority Development Area to provide a transitional buffer between the City and less-dense unincorporated County to the east, helping to protect its rural character. L-53 (SS-3,CP4, HC2 1-7)

4 Efficiently use land to help preserve open space and reduce impacts on the critical missions being performed at Schriever Air Force Base and adjacent rural areas. O-53 (SS-4,CP4, HC2 1-7)

5 The County should prioritize Suburban Residential in the Fountain area to support annexation of this area into Fountain. O-53b(SS-5,CP4, HC2 1-7)

6 Denser development should be allowed in the Fountain Priority Development Area if compatible with the existing development pattern in the City of Fountain and central water and sewer services are extended. O-54 (SS-6,CP4, HC2 1-7)

7 Carefully plan the Black Forest/North Central Large-Lot Residential Priority Area to ensure preservation of natural areas while still accommodating new development for future residents. O-54 (SS-7,CP4, HC2 1-7)

8 Maintain existing and expand the Large-Lot Residential placetype in Black Forest/North Central area in a development pattern that matches the existing character of the developed Black Forest community. O -54 (SS-8,CP4, HC2 1-7)

9 While an overall density of 2.5 acres per lot should be maintained within the Highway 24 Large-Lot Residential Priority Area, consistent with the Large-Lot Residential placetype, denser development should be allowed if compatible with the existing development pattern and central water and sewer are being extended to provide a transition to expanding Suburban Residential development in Falcon and areas to the south **O-54. (SS-9,CP4, HC2 1-7)**

10 Denser development is appropriate in areas with access and connectivity to the Highway 94 corridor with compatible development patterns and extension of central water and sewer infrastructure from an existing provider. This should also occur in the areas surrounding Ellicott. **L-54 (SS-10,CP4, HC2 1-7)**

11 Prioritize protection and conservation over new development and redevelopment in the Mountain Interface placetype, where appropriate. **O-56 (SS-11,CP4, HC2 1-7)**

12 Smaller-lot single-family detached homes that are sustainable and compatible where central services are available should be the only residential use allowed in the Mountain Interface placetype. **O-56(SS-12,CP4, HC2 1-7)**

13 Residential development on individual well and septic should be limited in the Mountain Interface placetype. **O-54 (SS-13,CP4, HC2 1-7)**

14 Adequate emergency services, particularly fire management, and appropriate utility infrastructure should be present before approval of residential development is considered in the Mountain Interface placetype. **O-54 (SS-14,CP4, HC2 1-7)**

15 Emphasize the use of conservation easements to protect open space and farmland. **O-64 (SS-15,CP4, HC2 1-7)**

16 Density bonuses should also be considered in exchange for allocating areas for conservation when development is proposed within a suburban area or in large lot residential areas adjacent to growth areas. **O-64 (SS-16,CP4, HC2 1-7)**

17 Function as a coordinating body between the multiple conservation entities active within the region to streamline policies, identify recreation opportunities, identify land for purchase/transfer, and centralize properties into a singular GIS database. **O-64 (SS-17,CP4, HC2 1-7)**

18 Work with property owners (for both existing and future developments) to identify strategies to address stormwater runoff, leveraging stormwater best management practices (BMPs) and low-impact development (LID) techniques whenever possible. **O-65 (SS-18,CP4, HC2 1-7)**

19 Within the Large-Lot Residential placetype, conservation design should be primarily utilized for preserving El Paso County's rural character, defined by large swaths of open space with minimal development. **O-65 (SS-19,CP4, HC2 1-7)**

20 Large-Lot Residential development should not be allowed within a certain distance of the critical natural assets to ensure they are not negatively impacted by future development. Evaluate new developments on a case-by-case basis to determine their impact on these natural assets. O-65 (SS-209, CP4, HC2 1-7)

21 Conservation design should help establish a central commercial area in a Rural Center without encouraging sprawling land-consumption. O-65 (SS-21, CP4, HC2 1-7)

PAGE 152 Housing & Communities Continued

Goal HC3 (CP4, HC3)

Locate attainable housing that provides convenient access to goods, services, and employment

Objective HC3-1: Emphasize redevelopment of smaller enclaves to denser urban residential uses such as multifamily and single-family attached dwelling units where compatible and appropriate in the context of the existing neighborhood, which may also require parcel consolidation if existing businesses leave.

Objective HC3-2: Support mixed-use development, where feasible, in some of the smaller enclaves with appropriate parcel consolidation, roadway configuration, and design.

Objective HC3-3: Redevelopment in the smaller enclaves should emphasize residential development first and then accommodate supporting uses.

Specific Strategies:

1 Priority: Consider increasing densities in key areas to reduce the land cost per unit for development. The primary focus should be in Urban Residential and Suburban Residential placetypes, which are appropriate for accommodating significant density that still conforms to the community's desired character. Single-family attached and multifamily units should be located directly adjacent to commercial focal points to accommodate density in the County. O-61 (SS-1, CP4, HC3 1-3)

2 Priority: Permit projects that include a mix of housing types and increase market-driven affordability, including promoting missing middle housing options (duplexes, triplexes, multiplexes, courtyard apartments, and townhouses) on infill parcels within single-family neighborhoods to increase density and maintain neighborhood character. O-61 (SS-2, CP4, HC3 1-3)

3 Consider multifamily apartments on the west side of Horizon View Drive to help provide affordable options for future residents, many of which could be working at existing or new

businesses around the Colorado Springs Airport. L-51 **(SS-3,CP4, HC3 1-3)**

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4Emphasize Stapleton Road, Woodmen Road and Vollmer Road as connectivity corridors that provide important access to necessary goods and services in surrounding communities, which also generally supports suburban residential development in the Falcon area. M-52 **(SS-4,CP4, HC3 1-3)**

5Emphasize the Stapleton Road/Curtis Road corridor as a connectivity corridor that provides important access to necessary goods and services in this community, which also generally supports suburban residential development in the Highway 24 area. M-522 **(SS-5,CP4, HC3 1-3)**

6Support the completion of Stapleton Road to improve connectivity between Falcon and Colorado Springs. M-52 **(SS-6,CP4, HC3 1-3)**

7Neighborhood-level commercial uses and public services should also be considered in Falcon at key intersections. L-52 **(SS-7,CP4, HC3 1-3)**

8Consider allowing attached housing units throughout the Highway 94 Suburban Residential Priority Development Area on a case-by-case basis depending on the size and scale of each development. O-53 **(SS-8,CP4, HC3 1-3)**

9Consider supporting commercial uses particularly along Highway 94 to serve the neighborhoods and workers at Schriever Air Force Base. L-53 **(SS-9,CP4, HC3 1-3)**

10Prioritize suburban development to help increase density in the Schriever Air Force Base area with smaller-lot sizes, attached housing, and multifamily apartments. L-53 **(SS-10,CP4, HC3 1-3)**

11Encourage expansion of the Rural Center in Ellicott to support the daily commercial needs of residents near Schriever Air Force Base. L-53 **(SS 11,CP4, HC3 1-3)**

12Additional commercial uses should be developed at the Highway 94 and Enoch Road intersection in a manner compatible with and supportive of base operations as well as the anticipated suburban residential development. M-53 **(SS-12,CP4, HC3 1-3)**

13Commercial nodes should be considered where appropriately served by the transportation network in the northern portion of the Black Forest/North Central Large-Lot Residential Priority Development Area to provide commercial goods and services within closer proximity to the population in this area and to reduce unnecessary travel to other parts of the County and establish key commercial areas within the communities that need them. L-54 **(SS-13,CP4, HC3 1-3)**

14Allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs), where appropriate, as another tool to support more affordable rents and proactively promote the construction of ADUs by providing local fee waivers, pre-approved unit plans, assistance navigating the permit process, and by working with local lenders to ensure construction and permanent financing is available for homeowners wishing to build ADUs. O-61 **(SS-14,CP4, HC3 1-3)**

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15 Consider reducing parking provisions, particularly for multifamily, to help reduce the amount (and cost) of land needed per unit. (Mid-Term) (Page 61) M-61 O-61 (SS-15,CP4, HC3 1-3)

16 Coordinate with the Economic Development Department and EPCHA as key partners in procuring, marketing, and utilizing housing incentives. O-61 (SS-16,CP4, HC3 1-3)

17 Consider partnering with existing affordable housing organizations such as El Paso County Housing Authority (EPCHA), Colorado Springs Housing Authority, and Fountain Housing Authority to establish a regional CLT and continue to work with Rocky Mountain Community Land Trust and Ithaka Land Trust to improve housing affordability in El Paso County. O-63 (SS-17,CP4, HC3 1-3)

18 Support and promote housing cooperatives in all residential areas, partnering with related organizations to help establish them when appropriate. O-63 (SS-18,CP4, HC3 1-3)

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Goal HC4 (CP4, HC4)

Support aging-in-place housing options to meet residents' needs through all stages of life.

Objective HC4-1: Denser housing development should occur in Suburban Residential, Urban Residential, Rural Center, and Regional Center placetypes.

Objective HC4-2: Duplexes, townhomes, multifamily apartments, condominiums, and senior housing projects should be considered in each of the residential placetypes on a case-by-case basis where they can be integrated into the character of a given neighborhood.

Objective HC4-3: Support the development of housing types that further support aging in place.

Specific strategies:

Priority: Encourage inclusion of single-family attached housing when a residential developer or property owner begins the development application process within the Suburban Residential, Urban Residential, Rural Center, and Regional Center placetypes. O-57 (SS-1,CP4, HC4 1-3)

Priority: Encourage inclusion of single-family attached housing when a residential developer or property owner begins the development application process within the Suburban Residential, Urban Residential, Rural Center, and Regional Center placetypes. O-52 (SS-2,CP4, HC4 1-3)

Continue coordinating with institutions that have group quarters to ensure they have appropriate space for any growth or changes to their installations that their current available land cannot accommodate. O-57 (SS-3,CP4, HC4 1-3)

Economic Development (Ch. 5)

Core Principle: (CP5)

Strengthen the economy with a skilled workforce and targeted investment.

Goal ED1 (CP5, ED1)

Recruit new businesses and spur the development of growing sectors.

Objective ED1-1: Identify barriers to mixed-use, including zoning, development, and subdivision provisions that prohibit such development.

Objective ED1-2: Evaluate the use of form-based code or zoning overlays to increase regulatory flexibility while maintaining consistent and context-sensitive design.

Objective ED1-3: To help activate spaces, provide more options for fun and recreation to residents.

Objective ED1-4: Attract more visitors to the County by emphasizing development of entertainment uses in Regional Centers.

Objective ED1-5: Allow residents to manage compatible, low-intensity personal businesses from their home to create greater opportunities for new companies to be established.

Objective ED1-6: Large employers should be located on major roadways to improve connectivity and minimize their impact on daily traffic.

Objective ED1-7: Transit routes and stops at or near all Employment Centers should be strategically located as these areas continue to develop and redevelop

Specific strategies:

1Priority: Collaborate with leading businesses in growing regional sectors including healthcare, technology, and logistics to identify and develop strategies to further expand these industries through cooperative arrangements with chambers of commerce, the Economic Development Department, and other organizations. O-74 (**SS-1,CP5, ED1 1-7**)

2Consider supporting smaller office uses to provide professional services in the Gleneagle community. O-68 (**SS-2,CP5, ED 1 1-7**)

3Consider prioritizing Meadow Lake Airport for new employment uses to capitalize on the existing distribution network. O-68 (SS-3,CP5, ED1 1-7)

4Conduct a market analyses to identify gaps in retail, employment, and transit service and promote mixed use development in addressing these gaps. O-70 (SS-4,CP5, ED1 1-)

5Light and heavy industrial should be the primary businesses in the Meadow Lake Airport area. O-71 (SS-5,CP5, ED1 1-7)

6Continue to support existing businesses but also help the Security-Widefield Employment Center transition to more formal industrial uses as redevelopment allows. O-71 (SS-6,CP5, ED 1-7)

7Allow office uses along the edge of the Security-Widefield Employment Center to help buffer adjacent residential uses. O-71 (SS-7,CP5, ED1 1-7)

8Require improved screening as redevelopment occurs in Security-Widefield while emphasizing the importance of internal placement in order to keep new non-residential uses well-separated from existing adjacent residential uses. L-71 (SS-8,CP5, ED1 1-7)

9Identify areas with enough land to support companies that require a significant development footprint as development continues to occur. L-71 (SS-9,CP5, ED1 1-)

Goal ED2

Support efforts to recruit, train, and retain a skilled workforce.

Objective ED2-1: Transit routes and stops at or near all Employment Centers should be strategically located as these areas continue to develop and redevelop.

Objective ED2-2: Foster and further develop all partnerships that are essential to workforce development in the community to ensure residents have access to the tools and training they need to live and work in El Paso County.

Specific strategies:

1**Priority:** Continue to work closely with the PPWFC and promote access to the PPWFC through its website and consider highlighting access to this resource in social media and promote not just the Center, but also the training opportunities it provides underscoring the grant based and free programs it offers. O-76 (SS-1,CP5, ED2 1- 2)

2Continue to support the existing industrial businesses in the Bradley Road area. O-70 (SS-2, CP5, ED2 1- 2)

3Consider providing direct access to this PPWFC through the Economic Development Department's website as a way to connect more residents to apprenticeship opportunities. O-76 (SS-3,CP5, ED2 1- 2)

4Work with partners like Pikes Peak Community College and other Colorado Community Colleges and public and private universities to circulate PPWFC resources among enrolled and prospective students to connect them to careers in in-demand industries. S-76 (SS-4,CP5, ED2 1- 2)

5Encourage Pikes Peak Community College, in partnership with the Economic Development Department and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), to promote the Existing Industry job training program with established businesses in the community and make information on the program widely available online through their websites and social media. O-77 (SS-5,CP5, ED2 1- 2)

6Encourage the SBDC to consider providing application assistance to businesses in the community interested in utilizing the program for staff training and also utilize the Colorado First grant program to attract new businesses to El Paso County. O-77 (SS-6,CP5, ED2 1- 2)

7Work with the Pikes Peak Library District to expand the Adult Education program to communities in El Paso County outside of the City of Colorado Springs to promote wider access to these services. S-77 (SS-7,CP5, ED2 1- 2)

8Collaborate with the University of Colorado Colorado Springs College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences to learn from their experience during the Discovery Phase and executing the Action Phase of the Work-based Learning Lab program and utilize LAS as a partner to connect communities interested in the program to the CWDC and assist them with requirements of the program and ensure their Action Phase is successful. O-77 (SS-8,CP5, ED2 1- 2)

9Consider expanded partnerships with the network of Colorado Community Colleges and public and private universities in the County to ensure these institutions have the tools and capacity they need to plug in and utilize the CDLE Apprenticeship Directory and, in the case of LAS, support them in completing the Action Phase of the CWDC Work-based Learning Lab program. O-77 (SS-9,CP5, ED2 1- 2)

10Consider extending relationships to community groups that would be well suited to conduct the Work-based Learning Lab program such as community development corporations or educational institutions outside of Colorado Springs. O-77 (SS-10,CP5, ED2 1- 2)

11Foster a relationship with is the Pikes Peak Library District to work towards County-wide offerings for adult education and similar programs. O-77 (SS-11,CP5, ED2 1- 2)

Goal ED3.

Encourage the development of commercial districts in underserved areas.

Objective ED3-1: Continue promoting commercial development to serve increasing residential neighborhoods in the Falcon area.

Objective ED3-2: Highly consider entertainment businesses in order to foster more-engaging activity in Falcon, including but not limited to movie theaters, concert/theater venues, or sports and recreation facilities.

Objective ED3-3: Emphasize the development of grocery stores, restaurants (both drive-thru and sit-down), gas stations, pharmacies, and neighborhood-scale services along Highway 24.

Objective ED3-4: Strongly encourage mixed-use development within the Urban Residential placetype.

Objective ED3-5: Prioritize commercial development within or near rural communities and within the Rural Center placetype to limit barriers to shopping districts and employment centers.

Objective ED3-6: Prioritize commercial use as development opportunities arise in order to support the growing residential base in the rural areas.

Specific Strategies:

1**Priority:** Work to expand the Ellicott Rural Center with additional commercial uses to help support the surrounding growing residential including a larger grocery store, additional restaurants, coffee shops, and service businesses. L-69 **(SS-1,CP5, ED3 1- 6)**

2Expand the Regional Center in Gleneagle to include larger commercial development, including large retail centers to support more residents and travelers along Interstate 25. L-68 **(SS-2,CP5, ED3 1- 6)**

3The Regional Center in Falcon and the Rural Center in Peyton should be expanded to meet the growing commercial needs of the expanding residential development in this area. L-68 **(SS-3,CP5, ED3 1- 6)**

4New residential uses in the Ellicott community would further support expansion of the Ellicott Rural Center area, which could help provide areas to the east with better access to goods and services. O-69 **(SS-4,CP5, ED3 1- 6)**

5Prioritize the development of Rural Center in the Highway 24 Commercial Priority Development Area to serve adjacent Suburban Residential to the north of Highway 24 and the Large-Lot Residential to the south, which should also provide some general commercial directly adjacent to Meadow Lake Airport to support the employee population. O-69 **(SS-5,CP5, ED3 1- 6)**

6Promote the development of undeveloped land and redevelopment of existing commercial areas in the Security-Widefield Commercial Priority Development Area near the Can Am Highway for commercial use to serve Security-Widefield and capture local commuters. O-69 (SS-6,CP5, ED3 1- 6)

7Assist unincorporated communities in providing financial and regulatory incentives such as a height or density bonus or tax abatement to facilitate mixed use development in locations where mixed use is not a proven concept. O-70 (SS-7,CP5, ED3 1- 6)

8Vacant land along Main Street in Security-Widefield should be redeveloped to strengthen the commercial nature of this street. O-70 (SS-8,CP5, ED3 1- 6)

9Assist unincorporated communities in providing financial and regulatory incentives such as a height or density bonus or tax abatement to facilitate mixed use development in locations where mixed use is not a proven concept. O-70 (SS-9,CP5, ED3 1- 6)

10Encourage the consolidation of smaller commercial businesses for redeveloped into a more employment-centric businesses along Bradley Road. L-72 (SS-10,CP5, ED3 1- 6)

Goal ED4.

Utilize economic opportunity zones to support new business development.

Objective ED4-1: Continue to collaborate internally across departments when updating the Five-Year Strategic Plan to create incentives and policies that support the efforts of the SBDC.

Objective ED4-2: Target growing sectors of the region including professional services, healthcare, and technology for Highway 21 (Powers Boulevard).

Objective ED4-3: Emphasize the proximity to Peterson Air Force Base as an opportunity to support companies with a military focus.

Specific strategies:

Priority: Identify opportunities for infill and redevelopment such as underutilized properties along major transportation and transit corridors such as vacant commercial center properties or industrial brownfields and coordinate these opportunities with the County's existing Urban Renewal Authority process. O-71 (SS-1,CP5, ED4 1- 3)

Limit future development in the Colorado Springs Airport area to align with existing APZs. O-71 (SS-2,CP5, ED4 1- 3)

New or redevelopment around COS Airport should be light or heavy industrial businesses such as warehousing or distribution. L-71 (SS-3,CP5, ED4 1- 3)

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Encourage the develop of unincorporated portions of the Highway 21 (Powers Boulevard) Employment Priority Development Area as a formal Employment Center. O-72
(SS-4,CP5, ED4 1- 3)

Priority businesses along Highway 21 (Powers Boulevard) should match those that already exist around the Colorado Springs Airport such as industrial flex, manufacturing, and distribution. O-72
(SS-5,CP5, ED4 1- 3)

Continue to prioritize non-residential growth along Highway 21 (Powers Boulevard) to help establish the first true Employment Center in unincorporated El Paso County. M-72 (SS-6,CP5, ED4 1- 3)

Support the development of the railyard by Fort Carson as a catalyst for the creation of a strong employment hub to serve the entire County. M-72 (SS-7,CP5, ED4 1- 3)

Promote rural business initiatives in unincorporated communities and consider working directly with interested communities to apply for these initiatives. O-73 (SS-8,CP5, ED4 1- 3)

Work to better serve and support people from disadvantaged groups in their efforts to start a company and improve the County's overall economy and partner with the Minority Business Office to promote and utilize its resources and services in El Paso County. O-73 (SS-9,CP5, ED4 1- 3)

Partner with local educational institutions, property owners, rural chamber of commerce, and developers to evaluate the potential for the construction of coworking spaces, particularly in rural communities far from Colorado Springs. O-73 (SS-10,CP5, ED4 1- 3)

Partner with local educational institutions, property owners, rural chamber of commerce, and developers to evaluate the potential for the construction of coworking spaces, particularly in rural communities far from Colorado Springs. O-73 (SS-11,CP5, ED4 1- 3)

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Transportation & Mobility (Ch. 6)

Core Principle: (CP6)

Connect all areas of the County with a safe and efficient multimodal transportation system.

Goal TM1 (CP6)

Establish a transportation network that connects all areas to one another, emphasizing east-west routes, reducing traffic congestion, promoting safe and efficient travel.

Objective TM1-1: Ongoing coordination should continue to occur at all levels of government in order to maintain open lines of communication and to ensure transportation projects align with the desires of the community.

Objective TM1-2: Continue to stay involved as a member of the PPRTA.

Objective TM1-3: Continue to prioritize the improvements listed in MTCP.

Objective TM1-4: Encourage sidewalks and other multimodal facilities in all new development in placetypes, as appropriate, and upgrade existing infrastructure to these types of facilities when maintenance is needed.

Objective TM1-5: Continue the close relationship with CDOT to ensure the maintenance and development of a complete transportation network throughout El Paso County.

Objective TM1-6: Continue to support transportation projects along Highway 94, South Academy Boulevard, and other major access corridors in order to maintain safety and support the readiness of military installations and their missions, which includes supporting current efforts underway as part of the Military Access, Mobility and Safety Improvement Project.

Objective TM1-7: Help facilitate communication between the other airports to prevent conflicts between their operations and those of Colorado Springs Airport, Meadow Lake Airport, and all military installations.

Objective TM1-8: Apply 1041 powers as given through the Colorado General Assembly to ensure that local government maintains a seat at the table on rail projects and that placement of such corridors maximizes economic opportunities for the communities.

Specific strategies:

1**Priority:** Review and update the Master Transportation Corridor Plan (MTCP) regularly to ensure that it can be relied upon over the Master Plan if conflicts arise. O-78 (SS-1, CP6, TM1 1- 8)

2As proposed roadway improvements are planned and developed, the guidelines and standards associated with their classification and function should be considered to the degree practical and appropriate. O-79 (SS-2, CP6, TM1 1- 8)

3Continue working with Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG) and participating on its various committees to ensure coordination occurs on all transportation plans and projects in the El Paso County. O-80 **(SS-3,CP6, TM1 1- 8)**

4Work with Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to complete its list of east-west priority projects along Highway 94 and Highway 24. These include widening a portion of Highway 94 between US 24 and Enoch Road to add passing and turn lanes set to be completed in up to four years and the widening of a section of Highway 24 east through Falcon to four lanes set to be completed in five to ten years. L-81 **(SS-4,CP6, TM1 1- 8)**

5Conduct a study to identify possible new roadways that create more east-west and north-south connections to ensure the east side of the County has efficient access to Colorado Springs and other County destinations. S-81 **(SS-5,CP6, TM1 1- 8)**

6Continue to require that new subdivision developments in the County have multiple points of access to existing roadways to minimize congestion and improve emergency access. They should be sited in a manner that improves connectivity to adjacent areas. S-82 **(SS-6,CP6, TM1 1- 8)**

7Encourage existing subdivisions to find ways to expand points of access and open up connections to neighboring developments and subdivisions such as through stub roads or easements. O-82 **(SS-7,CP6, TM1 1- 8)**

8Undertake a reassessment of facility needs and compliance as projects in the current Meadow Lake Airport Master Plan near completion to continue strengthening this asset. O-88 **(SS-8,CP6, TM1 1- 8)**

9Continue to utilize the 2013 Colorado Springs Airport Master Plan to ensure compatibility between future development and airport operations. O-88 **(SS-9,CP6, TM1 1- 8)**

10Help facilitate the development of the railyard located adjacent to the Fort Carson spur of the shared BSNF and UP line. O-89 **(SS-10,CP6, TM1 1- 8)**

Goal TM2.

Promote walkability and bikability where multimodal transportation systems are feasible.

Objective TM2-1: Transportation improvements should prioritize active modes of transportation and connections to local destinations over vehicular travel and regional trips.

Objective TM2-2: Continue to prioritize projects as recommended by the MTCP as they expand multimodal transportation infrastructure in the County.

Specific strategies:

1**Priority:** Require new developments in more dense areas to supply sidewalk connections to adjacent developments (both residential and commercial) and in less dense areas detached sidewalks and off-road trails should be utilized as a way to provide multimodal transportation options. O-86 (SS-1,CP6, TM2 1- 2)

2Roadways that provide access points should also include sidewalks and bike lanes where appropriate to support multimodal transportation options in the County. O-82 (SS-2,CP6, TM2 1- 2)

3Detailed sidewalk data regarding locations, repairs, and gaps is not currently available and should be collected as an initial next step. O-86 (SS-3,CP6, TM2 1- 2)

4Require all new residential development within suburban and urban placetypes and commercial development to build internal sidewalk networks in order to promote pedestrian connections. O-86 (SS-4,CP6, TM2 1- 2)

5Additional network improvements should be pursued to provide alternative routes for commuters currently passing through Urban Residential and Suburban Residential placetypes to reduce unnecessary traffic on major roadways. O-86 (SS-5, CP6, TM2 1- 2)

Goal TM3.**Foster transit-supportive development and coordinate to expand public transportation options.**

Objective TM3-1: Encourage increased public transportation use in the region by using existing and expanded platforms and connections within the community.

Specific strategies:

1**Priority:** Any new Park-N-Ride facilities developed in the County needs to be integrated into the public transit network whether they be bus or commuter rail. Balancing this type of infrastructure with growth should be a priority of the County to ensure access throughout the region. O-85 (SS-1, CP6, TM3 1)

2**Priority:** Continue to support PPACG in conducting assessments of the current service provided against future needs across the County. O-85 (SS-2, CP6, TM3 1)

3Coordinate with Mountain Metro Transit (MMT) to ensure routes are meeting the needs of the community as it grows and changes in the future. This may mean additional routes need to be added or existing routes redrawn as land use changes and new development occurs. O-84 (SS-3, CP6, TM3 1)

4Work with MMT to increase route frequencies and reliability of service through adding buses to the fleet or redrawing routes in smaller loops to create quicker turn around for service. L-84 (SS-4, CP6, TM3 1)

5 Consider conducting studies to find gaps and provide solutions to mass transit issues and consider working with MMT to find strategies to keep fare cost down for those that are least able to pay. S-84 (SS-5, CP6, TM3 1)

6 Support Calhan Connection increased ridership by promoting and advertising the service in the County, which should include searchable service information under the transportation section of the County website and social media postings to let residents know where and how to access the service along with other details. S-84 (SS-6, CP6, TM3 1)

7 Assist transit providers with finding a way to utilize a “universal” fare card system that would allow users to transfer between services without having to pay double fares to complete their journey. M-84 (SS-7, CP6, TM3 1)

Goal TM4

Develop a sustainable funding mechanism for transportation infrastructure and maintenance

Objective TM4-1: Require multimodal transportation with all new projects as there are specific federal funding opportunities for these types of projects.

Objective TM4-2: Prioritize denser development adjacent to municipal limits to encourage annexation.

Specific Strategies:

1 Priority: Share responsibilities with municipalities to maintain, at a minimum, County roadways segments that are within their municipal boundary or develop agreements with the municipalities to maintain roadways within and near enclaves. O-83 (SS-1, CP6, TM4 1-2)

2 Priority: Continue to actively seek out Federal and State funding sources to supplement maintenance and the expansion of the roadway network. Funding sources should not only serve to close the current gap but provide continued dollars to deal with maintenance into the future. O-83 (SS-2, CP6, TM4 1-2)

3 Consider promoting the renewal of the Pikes Peak Regional Transit Authority sales tax into the next 10-year period by advocating to voters the major need to continue regional transportation improvements to keep pace with growth and increasing maintenance obligations. M-80 (SS-3, CP6, TM4 1-2)

PAGE 159 **Community Facilities (Ch. 7 AND 8 - Infrastructure)**
Core Principle: (CP 7 &8)

Continue to coordinate with local and regional agencies to provide well-managed, high-quality community facilities and services.

(Mian text Same CP for Chapters 7 & 8) Combined int CF here)

Goal CFIN1 (CFIN 7&8)

Coordinate with agencies to provide high-quality community facilities, services, and infrastructure to enhance quality of life.

Objective CFIN1-1: Continue to develop and establish strong relationships and coordination with partner agencies to ensure they are not, or even perceived to be, operating in a silo.

Objective CFIN1-2: Support efforts by the school districts to develop individual long-range capacity and facilities plans based on planned growth in El Paso County in order to accommodate actual growth.

Specific strategies:

1**Priority:** Ongoing and regular meetings should be conducted with partnering agencies to discuss plans, projects, needs, and opportunities for collaboration and coordination. O-91 (SS-1,CP7&8)CFIN1 1-2)

2Require new developments to participate in and join the closest fire district. O-92 (SS-2,CP7&8,CFIN1 1-2)

3Explore possible planning solutions to shorten response times for emergency services across El Paso County. O-93 (SS-3,CP7&8,CFIN1 1-2)

4Collaboration with the Emergency Services Authority (ESA) to conduct a County-wide assessment of contractual response areas based on current and projected population/development growth in the County. This assessment should consider planned infrastructure projects and work closely with developers during the planning process to design appropriate access roadways suitable to support emergency response times. O-92 (SS-4,CP7&8,CFIN1 1-2)

5Long range capacity plans prepared by school districts should inventory current educational facilities and capacity as well as anticipated needs over the next 10 to 20 years and include transfer of dedicated school land until a time when it is needed for development. In addition, they should be considered living documents that needs to be updated at least every few years to measure whether the school districts are on track with meeting the needs of the educational community. These capacity plans should explore the feasibility of new construction and the utilization of joint facilities that can be shared by elementary, middle, and high schools in the same district such as athletic fields or pod/mobile classrooms as supplements to permanent space.O-95 (SS-5,CP7&8,CFIN1 1-2)

6In addition, new construction of any educational facility should be strategic and planned out to meet the continued needs of the community, this means utilizing designs that have support structures that allow for expansion out or up in the way of additional stories in the future. O-95 (SS-6,CP7&8,CFIN1 1-2)

7Support plans for the siting of additional treatment plants or modification of existing facilities to allow for more effective use of non-potable water and to promote plans for responsible aquifer recharge. O-98 (SS-6,CP7&8,CFIN1 1-2)

Goal CFIN2.

Improve the effectiveness of public safety through coordination, funding, and planning.

Objective CFIN2-1: Support more direct and regular communication with elected and appointed officials and staff, including considering enhanced virtual forums where participants can post or discuss how the County, residents, and businesses can better communicate and collaborate.

Objective CFIN2-2: Continue to periodically reassess the existing road network and service nodes in the 2016 Master Transportation Corridors Plan

Specific strategies:

1Continue to assess department and staff needs to gauge the capacity and level of service the County is currently able to provide and determine where additional staff may be needed. O-91 (SS-1,CP7&8,CFIN2 1-2)

2Consider adopting a Wildland Interface Code which would require construction permit applicants to supply a fire protection plan, vegetation management plan, and building material classifications in accordance with ULI or other equivalent fire standard ratings. S-92 (SS-2,CP7&8,CFIN2 1-2)

3Continue to require new developments provide multiple points of access into subdivisions to help decrease response times. O-93 (SS-3,CP7&8,CFIN2 1-2)

4Partner with schools to design projects that make crossing major intersections in order to ensure that routes to school are safer for students. (SS-4,CP7&8,CFIN2 1-2)

5Encourage school districts to secure federal funding sources for safe routes to school and related projects around pedestrian and bicycle safety and support schools through the planning and implementation processes. O-95 (SS-5,CP7&8,CFIN2 1-2)

6Encourage school districts to conduct a study to assess the current and anticipated needs for security funding for all schools in the County and publish findings with school districts and circulate educational media to residents. O-95(SS-6,CP7&8,CFIN2 1-2)

Goal CFIN3.

Ensure adequate provision of utilities to manage growth and development.

Objective CFIN3-1: After serving residences with water for all necessary functions such as drinking and cleaning, the priority for water supply in new development should be for fire suppression capabilities, rather than for ancillary residential uses such as landscaping.

Objective CFIN3-2: Promote urban level development in areas served by centralized utilities.

Objective CFIN3-3: Periodically update the County Master Plan, particularly the placetypes and land use component, to better identify and plan for areas of future growth in a manner that is consistent with the WMP.

Objective CFIN3-4: Locate new development where it can take advantage of existing or proposed water supply projects that would allow shared infrastructure costs.

Objective CFIN3-5: Continue to improve coordination with fire districts, developers, and other groups to ensure that new development provides appropriate fire suppression water supplies and infrastructure.

Objective CFIN3-6: In general, all forms of energy generation should be considered and appropriately sited in the County as opportunities arise.

Objective CFIN3-7: Create public-private partnerships to extend broadband infrastructure.

Objective CFIN3-8: If it is economically feasible, wastewater service should be provided in regional and sub-regional publicly owned wastewater treatment facilities, and smaller privately owned facilities will be avoided.

Objective CFIN3-9: Ensure wastewater treatment systems will be properly operated and maintained and that they will not exceed the maximum treatment capacity if future growth is planned.

Specific strategies:

1**Priority:** Create a structure of both resources and an internal organization structure to sustainably execute the Broadband Strategic Plan. S-109 (SS-1,CP7&8,CFIN3 1-8)

2All site applications for the region, prior to being submitted to Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment (CDPHE), should include a coordinated review by the Water Quality Management Committee, Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG) staff, and appropriate management agencies within the watershed. The site application will be reviewed against the 208 Plan, CDPHE Regulation 22, and other appropriate local and state regulations and policies. It should also be reviewed with El Paso County for potential 1041 applicability. O-103 (SS-2,CP7&8,CFIN3 1-8)

3Coordinate with PPACG staff to review proposed changes to applicable CDPHE water quality standards, regulations, or policies affecting the review of site applications and discharge permits. O-103 (SS-3,CP7&8,CFIN3 1-8)

4Onsite Wastewater System (OWS) greater than 2,000 gallons per day should connect to a designated management agency's wastewater system if it is economically and technically feasible. OWS systems of less than 2,000 gallons per day that serve homes or small businesses should be encouraged to connect to a designated agency's system when it becomes accessible and continue to be reviewed by the local County health department where it will be constructed. O-103 (SS-4,CP7&8,CFIN3 1-8)

5Lift stations must provide enough emergency storage capacity at peak flow for the specific entity to respond to an emergency, and either fix the problem or remove the wastewater through trucks. O-103 (SS-5,CP7&8,CFIN3 1-8)

6Monitor the development of new technologies as it continues to consider new opportunities for wind energy. O-103 (SS-6,CP7&8,CFIN3 1-8)

7Develop assets that align to a strategic plan and make them available through partnerships with the private sector in order to address underserved broadband areas. O-109 (SS-7,CP7&8),CFIN3 1-8)

8Create key Targeted Improvement Zones and additional projects that can improve services for underserved populations. O-109 (SS-8,CP7&8,CFIN3 1-8)

9Consider creating a working group of telecommunication providers that would meet quarterly to discuss issues of interest to both the County and their private partners. O-109 (SS-9,CP7&8,CFIN3 1-8)

10 Create a Dig-Once/Joint Build policy, which will help to develop assets and extended broadband coverage. In addition, the County's pavement degradation and street cut policies should be updated to ensure full cost-recovery. O-109 (SS-10,CP7&8,CFIN3 1-8)

11 Consider adopting additional policies to govern the deployment of 5G/small cell infrastructure. O-109 (SS-11,CP7&8,CFIN3 1-8)

Goal CFIN4.

Use best management practices to protect water quality, conserve water, minimize impacts of flooding, and beautify El Paso County.

Objective CFIN4-1: Directly help communities identify the projects they need funded and assist in sourcing funds from state and federal grants as an alternative to paying for projects through local tax funds.

Objective CFIN4-2: Protect and enhance the quality, quantity, and dependability of water supplies by encouraging and supporting legislation that preserves and protects all drinking water sources in the County.

Objective CFIN4-3: Plan for water resources in a thoughtful way that recognizes the nonrenewable nature of water resources in the area, accommodates existing and historical uses, and allows for sustainable, planned growth.

Objective CFIN4-4: Encourage water infrastructure projects to be sited and designed in a manner that promotes compatibility with adjoining uses and provides reasonable mitigation of any adverse visibility and other environmental impacts.

Objective CFIN4-5: Consider allowing higher residential densities for new developments, in appropriate locations, where such developments will be served by water providers that are optimizing their supplies through established reuse and conservation measures.

Objective CFIN4-6: Encourage development that incentivizes and incorporates water-efficient landscaping principles.

Objective CFIN4-7: Recognize and plan for the water supply challenges and limitations inherent in each of the regional planning areas of the Water Master Plan. Place emphasis on Regional Planning Area 3 (Falcon) due to its current reliance on nonrenewable Denver Basin wells and the Upper Black Squirrel Creek (UBSC) alluvium, which is renewable but limited and over appropriated.

Objective CFIN4-8: Support the implementation of conservation projects by water providers.

Objective CFIN4-9: Support appropriate efforts by water providers to incorporate drought conditions in their supply and demand forecasts in providing future and existing water supplies.

Objective CFIN4-10: Support efforts by water providers to effectively and environmentally implement potable and non-potable water re-use including augmentation.

Objective CFIN4-11: Collaborate with the State and other stakeholders to extend the economic life of the Denver Basin aquifers.

Objective CFIN4-12: Denver Basin groundwater should be preserved as much as practical through water conservation and efficiency, extending the economic useful life.

Objective CFIN4-13: Promote collaboration among the County, municipalities, water service providers and regional and State agencies using Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) or similar arrangements. Use MOUs to address shared source water protection and mutual concerns impacting water quality.

Objective CFIN4-14: Reach a broad geographic range of community members and stakeholders, and gather feedback on water issues including location-specific input, strategy preferences, and open-ended feedback.

Objective CFIN4-15: Municipalities, counties, utilities, and other water providers should promote local water conservation and use of non-potable water by supporting appropriate educational efforts and ordinances.

Specific strategies:

1Priority: Encourage the submission of a water supply plan documenting an adequate supply of water to serve a proposed development at the earliest stage of the development process, as allowed under state law. The water supply plan should be prepared by the applicant in collaboration with the respective water provider. O-97(SS-1,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)

2Priority: Encourage the development of water resources surveys through monitoring programs and studies that could result in an increased understanding of the quality, quantity, and rate of depletion of available water supplies in the area, including but not limited to private wells. O-99 (SS-2,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)

3Priority: Support further research to determine non-potable water use strategies that have been found to be effective in other cities and counties. O-103 (SS-3,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)

4Priority: Where site conditions require wastewater collection and central treatment, efforts should be made to consolidate treatment plants. Consideration, however, needs to be given to protection of instream flows, wastewater reuse opportunities, and water rights obligations. Every effort should be made to consolidate management agencies and special district boundaries where possible and financially feasible. At a minimum, proper long-term operation and maintenance should be provided by a responsible operating entity. O-103 (SS-4,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)

5Priority: Any water supply element should include conservation policies. These may include goals as a condition of development approvals, including subdivisions, planned unit developments, special use permits, and zoning changes. O-105 (SS-5,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)

6To address residents' concerns the County should offer more opportunity for public participation on County projects. O-91 (SS-6,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)

7Continue to require documentation of the adequacy or sufficiency of water, as appropriate, for proposed development. O-97 (SS-7,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)

8Incorporate meaningful water conservation measures in those areas with higher-density, mixed-use developments. O-97(SS-8,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)

9Consider amendments to the Land Development Code to incorporate water efficiency standards, such as: allowing xeriscaping or native and drought-tolerant landscaping and allowing water efficient irrigation techniques. S-97(SS-9,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)

10Minimizing the percentage of landscaped area covered with non-native turf and increasing the percentage of landscape areas that can be covered with non-living landscape material. O-97 (SS-10,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)

11Encourage land use proposals to expressly declare water source(s), quality, quantity, and sustainability in terms of years and number of single-family equivalents. O-97 (SS-11,CP7&8),CFIN4 1-15)

12 Encourage re-use of treated wastewater for irrigation and other acceptable uses when feasible. O-97 **(SS-12,CP7&8),CFIN4 1-15)**

13 Consider opportunities to demonstrate the benefits of using non-potable sources of water and to dispel negative perspectives. O-98 **(SS-13,CP7&8),CFIN4 1-15)**

14 Encourage land uses that accommodate the reuse of water, including capture of non-consumptively used water within the basin and use of reclaimed water for irrigation, within legal parameters and providing that water quality is maintained. O-98 **(SS-14,CP7&8),CFIN4 1-15)**

15 Explore options for the use of non-potable water and further research into the use of reclaimed and renewable water. O-98 **(SS-15,CP7&8),CFIN4 1-15)**

16 Work with water providers to advocate for legislation and regulations which allow appropriate water reuse, promoting safe and effective reuse throughout the County, and improve public understanding of water reclamation. O-98 **(SS-16,CP7&8),CFIN4 1-15)**

17 Assist water providers, to the greatest extent practicable, in any future efforts to prepare demand forecasts by sharing information about population growth and new industries or developments in the County that will increase the demand for water. O-98 **(SS-17,CP7&8),CFIN4 1-15)**

18 Evaluate cluster development alternatives during planning to determine if water savings could occur. O-98 **(SS-18,CP7&8),CFIN4 1-15)**

19 Promote water-conscious developments through improved land-use policies. O-98 **(SS-19,CP7&8),CFIN4 1-15)**

20 Discourage individual wells for new subdivisions with average lot sizes smaller than 2.5 acres when there is a reasonable opportunity to connect to an existing central system or construct a new central water supply system when the economies of scale to do so can be achieved, especially in the Laramie-Foxhills, Lower Arapahoe, Denver and Lower Dawson aquifers. O-98 **(SS-20,CP7&8),CFIN4 1-15)**

21 Encourage water providers to pursue additional water storage opportunities, including surface storage as well as storage in both bedrock and alluvial aquifers. O-99 **(SS-21,CP7&8),CFIN4 1-15)**

22 Incentivize the use of deeper Arapahoe and Laramie-Fox Hills aquifers by central water providers, leaving or deferring the use of the shallower aquifers for the more dispersed domestic well users. O-99 **(SS-22,CP7&8),CFIN4 1-15)**

23 Encourage plans to recharge the UBSC Aquifer if such plans are based on sound science and can be demonstrated to not adversely impact water quality or water rights, with a preference for those plans which will maintain or enhance the available water supply at a regional scale O-99 **(SS-23,CP7&8),CFIN4 1-15)**

24 Encourage the development of water resources surveys through well monitoring throughout the County, with an emphasis on the Denver Basin aquifer fringe areas. O-99
(SS-24,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)

25 Encourage the development of water resources surveys through the systematic monitoring and careful administration of the bedrock aquifers to avoid over-allocation of groundwater. O-99
(SS-25,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)

26 Encourage continued collection and analysis of data for the purpose of better determining the extent and availability of groundwater in areas which do not overlie either the Denver Basin or a studied alluvial aquifer. O-100 **(SS-26,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)**

27 Review the data and analysis of groundwater studies, as appropriate, to determine if regulatory modifications are needed and consider implementation. O-100 **(SS-27,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)**

28 Share educational water management and project-specific materials with property owners and developers. O-100 **(SS-28,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)**

29 Educational campaigns should be pursued to involve the community and provide a broader basis of understanding regarding water supplies and conservation strategies. O-100
(SS-29,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)

30 Communicate and gather input from the community on complex, and at times, contentious water and land use considerations. O-100 **(SS-30,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)**

31 Full compliance with the Colorado Operator Certification Act should be required. The state should emphasize the legal responsibility of the plant owner and should support the plant operator with timely repairs and reimbursement for operations. The state should promptly begin enforcement actions for chronic poor operation of treatment facilities. O-103
(SS-31,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)

32 Biosolids generated by municipal and industrial wastewater treatment plants should be managed in accordance with applicable state or federal permits and Certificates of Designation. O-103 **(SS-32,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)**

33 Encourage the reuse of biosolids as a primary application on crop and pastureland, land reclamation sites, nurseries, commercial landscapes, and re-use of treatment plant effluent. Efforts to beneficially use biosolids should be supported by local governments where financially feasible. O-103 **(SS-33,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)**

34 Make certain that all site applications for wastewater systems that are over 2,000 gallons per day have been reviewed and are consistent with applicable County and state ISDS regulations as well as 1041 regulations. O-103 **(SS-34,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)**

35 Encourage the reuse of biosolids as a primary application on crop and pastureland, land reclamation sites, nurseries, commercial landscapes, and re-use of treatment plant effluent. Efforts to beneficially use biosolids should be supported by local governments where financially feasible. O-103 (SS-35,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)

36 Make certain that all site applications for wastewater systems that are over 2,000 gallons per day have been reviewed and are consistent with applicable County and state ISDS regulations as well as 1041 regulations. O-103 (SS-36,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)

37 Require an analysis of costs associated with hookup to a central wastewater treatment facility. O-103 (SS-37,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)

38 Require thorough state, regional, and local reviews of all proposed subsurface disposal systems. These systems are a growing problem in the region, and with reduced federal funding for centralized facilities, these ISDSs are likely to see increased use. O-103 (SS-38,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)

39 Make sure location, depth, installation, operation and maintenance of systems and other information is put into a central database tracking system. O-103 (SS-39,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)

40 Consider the consolidation of districts so that wastewater services can be regionalized and regulated appropriately to help standardize enforcement between districts. Consolidation should be considered so that they could regionalize wastewater services and regulate accordingly. O-103 (SS-40,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)

41 Direct discharge of stormwater to a lake, stream, or drainage way should be minimized. O-104 (SS-41,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)

42 Erosion and sedimentation control plans should be required for areas of one acre or larger and should show proper measures for controlling erosion and reducing sedimentation. These plans, when required, should be completed (unless waived by the Water Quality Control Commission) prior to the start of any work and include all proposed excavation, filling, and grade work for improvements. O-104 (SS-42,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)

43 Disturbance management and revegetation plans should be developed when necessary and should include details of vegetation disturbance (schedule, area involved, equipment to be used, etc.) and a description of all measures to be taken during and following disturbance to minimize water quality impacts, including monitoring to determine effectiveness of the measures taken. O-104 (SS-43,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)

44 Whenever possible, disturbances should be planned to occur at those times of the year when water quality impacts will be minimized. For example, disturbances immediately prior to or during the winter season may require more mitigation before the site can be revegetated. O-104 (SS-44,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)

45 Consideration should be given to limiting the area of disturbance which occurs at any one time, particularly in locations where water quality impacts may be. **SS-45,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)**

46 Soil erosion controls and protection of surface waters should occur promptly after vegetation disturbance. O-104 **(SS-46,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)**

47 Regular inspections should be made of a disturbed site to ensure that the operation is in conformance with grading and erosion control and that water quality impacts are being controlled to the maximum extent practicable. O-104 **(SS-47,CP7&8),CFIN4 1-15)**

48 Inspections of the disturbed site after completion of the operation are necessary to ensure that measures to control water quality impacts are effective and to determine if remedial actions are required. O-104 **(SS-48,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)**

49 Financial assurances should be secured to ensure that erosion control plans, including prompt and successful revegetation of disturbed areas, are implemented. O-104 **(SS49-30,CP7&8),CFIN4 1-15)**

50 Building restrictions on slopes greater than 30 percent should be considered as a means of limiting the water quality impacts of soil disturbance (e.g. Colorado Springs Hillside Area Overlay Zone District 2.504). O-104 **(SS-50,CP7&8,CFIN4 1-15)**

Military (Ch. 9)

Core Principle: (CP9)

Foster effective working relationships with military installations to support planning efforts and mutual success.

Goal M1 (CP9)

Support compatible land uses within and in close proximity to bases and associated facilities.

Objective M1-1: Continue to include military installation representatives in regional planning efforts such as transportation plans, master plans, and facilities planning to ensure compatibility among future desired development and military operations.

Objective M1-2: Educate local planning staff and elected officials on the effects of incompatible development on military operations.

Objective M1-3: Prioritize the construction of roads as necessary to improve connectivity to and support the operations of Schriever AFB.

Specific Strategies:

1 Continue to participate in discussions with installation representatives and CDOT regarding proposed changes along Highway 115 that could impact the installation. O-112
(SS-1,CP9,M1 1-3)

2 Coordinate with Schriever AFB on all land use development within the two-mile notification buffer (as required by state law). O-112 (SS-2,CP9,M1 1-3)

3 Implement consistent and compatible zoning regulations for land areas within Accident Potential Zones (APZs). S-113 (SS-3,CP9,M1 1-3)

4 Continue to pursue conservation and compatible land use buffering efforts with Fort Carson through various programs and initiatives, including the Sentinel Landscape Program and Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB). O-113 (SS-4,CP9,M1 1-3)

5 Notify Peterson AFB of renewable energy developments, including in areas beyond the state-required two-mile notification zone. O-114 (SS-5,CP9,M1 1-3)

6 Coordinate land use development applications located between Peterson AFB and Schriever AFB to limit radio frequency spectrum impacts. O-114 (SS-6,CP9,M1 1-3)

7Manage encroachment issues from development that can interfere with operations on Runway 13/31 at Peterson AFB and special-use aircraft taking off in hot weather. O-114 (SS-7,CP9,M1 1-3)

8Limit commercial or industrial uses that pose a security threat to Colorado Springs Airport and Peterson AFB operations (storage, shipping, truck trailers, etc.). O-114 (SS-8,CP9)M1 1-3)

9Coordinate with the Air Force Academy to ensure that proposed development within the Academy's formally designated accident potential zones remain compatible with airfield activities. O-115 (SS-9,CP9,M1 1-3)

10Potential impacts near the Academy beyond its Clear Zone and Accident Potential zones should be minimized by limiting the intensification of current low-density residential or agricultural land uses.

O-115 (SS-10,CP9),M1 1-3)

11Potential impacts near the Bullseye Auxiliary Airstrip (south of Sanborn Road approximately 5 miles southeast of Ellicott), which supports practice landings, takeoffs and touch-and-goes of airmanship program participants, should be minimized by limiting the intensification of current low-density residential or agricultural land uses. (SS-11,CP9,M1 1-3)

12Collaborate with Pikes Peak Regional Building Department to review and update Regional Building Department Guidelines and policies that may impact military air operations during the construction process. O-115 (SS-12,CP9,M1 1-3)

13Coordinate with the Air Force Academy to ensure its training areas in eastern El Paso County are preserved. O-115 (SS-13,CP9,M1 1-3)

14Coordinate on land use development projects north of the Air Force Academy to ensure compatibility with the activities that regularly occur within Jack's Valley, an outdoor training complex and small arms training range. O-115 (SS-14,CP9)M1 1-3)

Goal M2.

Ensure coordinated planning efforts for transportation impacts and access

Objective M2-1: Manage future transportation projects that could affect gate traffic and associated stormwater impacts.

Objective M2-2: Continue to work with CDOT to prioritize transportation improvements along the routes that serve military bases.

Objective M2-3: Cooperate with CDOT and the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG) to meet regional military transportation needs

Specific strategies:

- 1 **Priority:** Ensure transportation projects leave at least one access route unaffected by interference from road construction at any given time. O-111 **(SS-1,CP9,M2 1-3)**
- 2 Work with Cheyenne Mountain AFS and other partners regionally to address wildfire risks along the mountain range. O-111 **(SS-2,CP9,M2 1-3)**
- 3 Consult with Schriever AFB to ensure utility and other infrastructure projects promote compatibility with their operations. Private utility providers should be included in this coordination when necessary. O-112 **(SS-3,CP9,M2 1-3)**
- 4 Continue to support CDOT transportation improvement projects along Highway 94 in order to maintain safety and support the readiness of Schriever AFB missions. O-112 **(SS-4,CP9,M2 1-3)**
- 5 Coordinate with Schriever AFB to address key corridors including Curtis, Irwin, Bradley, and Enoch Roads. O-112 **(SS-5,CP9,M2 1-3)**
- 6 Coordinate with Fort Carson, the Fountain Creek Watershed District, and Colorado Springs Utilities, where possible, to reduce stormwater impacts from new development. These groups should also partner together to implement the Monument Creek Watershed Restoration Plan (particularly in the upper watershed where possible), develop regional criteria, and improve flood monitoring practices. O-113 **(SS-6,CP9,M2 1-3)**
- 7 Work with Fort Carson, CDOT, and local municipalities to improve the safety and effectiveness of the transportation network along major Highway 115 and I-25. O-113 **(SS-7,CP9,M2 1-3)**
- 8 Improve Charter Oak Ranch Road outside Gate 19 at Fort Carson. M-113 **(SS-8,CP9,M2 1-3)**
- 9 Evaluate current methods for addressing road safety issues associated with trash-hauling activities on Highway 94. (Short-Term) (Page 114) S-114 **(SS-9,CP9,M2 1-3)**
- 10 Develop an alternate rail connection to Fort Carson to support redundant and increased rail service. M-113 **(SS-10,CP9,M2 1-3)**
- 11 Facilitate public outreach and communication from Peterson AFB regarding PFOAs and water-quality issues. O-114 **(SS-11,CP9,M2 1-3)**
- 12 Where possible, El Paso County should coordinate with the Air Force Academy, the Town of Monument, the Fountain Creek Watershed District, and Colorado Springs Utilities to reduce stormwater impacts from new development. These groups should also partner together to implement the Monument Creek Watershed Plan (particularly in the upper watershed where possible), develop regional criteria, and improve flood monitoring practices. O-115 **(SS-12,CP9,M2 1-3)**
- 13 El Paso County should continue to support coordination efforts with the Academy, CDOT, and the City of Colorado Springs to ensure that transportation infrastructure and operations can meet the demands of the Academy's workforce and its visitors. O-115 **(SS-13,CP9,M2 1-3)**

14 Create a fire mitigation plan with residents (potential fire-resistant materials, defensible space, fire suppression systems, etc.) to reduce potential wildfire impacts in neighborhoods adjacent to installations and training areas. M-115 (SS-14,CP9),M2 1-3)

15 Craft a wildfire mitigation and watershed preservation plan for higher elevation forest areas surrounding each installation to include insect infestation management. M-115 (SS-15,CP9,M2 1-3)

PAGE 164 **Recreation & Tourism** (Ch. 10)

Core Principle: (CP10)

Maintain and expand the County's recreation and tourism options

Goal RT1 (CP10)

Support high-quality, sustainable outdoor recreation as a key amenity for residents and visitors

Objective RT1-1: Wherever possible new park facilities should partner and co-locate with municipal service facilities or public amenities such as schools.

Objective RT1-2: Wherever possible new parks facilities should be located along or share connections to County and regional trails to ensure a robust network of connections for residents to these amenities.

Objective RT1-3: Management for state and federal land agencies should foster working relationships that allow for the flow of information in a consistent and reliable manner between the organizations in order to provide the highest and best level of service to the community.

Specific strategies:

1 Priority: The construction of neighborhood parks should be undertaken by the developer as they would specifically serve that particular neighborhood or subdivision. Maintenance responsibilities should then be transferred to the Homeowners Association or Special District to ensure they are in safe operating conditions. O-118 (SS-1,CP10,RT1 1-3)

2 Encourage implementation of universal design standards in new construction to ensure all residents can utilize recreational amenities. S-118 (SS-2,CP10,RT1 1-3)

3Consider performing a needs assessment of special service transportation vehicles with ADA access. S-118 (SS-3,CP10,RT1 1-3)

4Utilize defensive environmental design standards to create well-lit and visible pathways in order to promote safety along trails. O-119 (SS-4,CP10,RT1 1-3)

5Continue to support the addition of staff members to promote safety in the parks system. O-119 (SS-5,CP10,RT 1-3)

Goal RT2

Plan for and provide a variety of parks, trails, and open space within the region.

Objective RT2-1: Expand funding sources for sustainable maintenance of parks and trails as well as the acquisition of additional open spaces.

Objective RT2-2: Continue to foster timely and reliable communication between the Colorado Parks and Wildlife, USDA Forest Service, and the County Parks Division to ensure programming and planning initiatives across the County are coordinated.

Specific Strategies:

1As a quality of life factor associated with access to parks, expanded public transportation options should be created to service populations of the County without cars and those that may also need ADA accommodations. O-118 (SS-1,CP10,RT2 1-2)

2Expand the trail and path network for commuting and destination travel to encourage more residents to walk and/or bike over driving. This should be done by closing gaps in existing infrastructure and bringing all paths and trails up to an acceptable level of repair. O-118 (SS-2,CP10,R2 1-2)

3Help complete the iconic Pikes Peak “Ring the Peak Trail”. M-118(SS-3,CP10,RT2 1-2)

4Consider expanding public transit service in areas of the County with the highest populations without car access and those most likely to take public transit and connect them to recreation areas that offer multiple amenities. Perform a study of potential routes in order to map out extensions and new routes that would service these populations. O-118 (SS-4,CP10,RT2 1-2)

5Work with CDOT, municipalities, and transit service providers to ensure road improvements and new roads have appropriate wayfinding, sidewalks, bike lanes, and bus access. O-123 (SS-5,CP10,R2T 1-2)

6Pedestrian and cyclist improvements should be in accordance with the El Paso County Major Transportation Corridors Plan Update (2016), the El Paso County Parks Master Plan, and the COS Bikes! Colorado Springs Bike Master Plan (2018) and provide an inviting network of pedestrian and bike paths for residents and tourists. O-123 (SS-6,CP10,RT2 1-2)

Goal RT3.**Explore projects, programs, and initiatives for enhancing tourism in unincorporated areas.**

Objective RT3-1: Prioritize partnerships and support for the marketing and programming of City for Champions projects.

Objective RT3-2: Appropriate funding for maintenance and improvements should be a high priority for existing tourism assets.

Objective RT3-3: Consider expanding the arts and culture industry to take a leading role in tourism especially during the tourism off season in order to make the region a destination during all four seasons.

Specific strategies:

1Priority: Continue to maintain and improve existing natural assets and destinations including parks, trails, and open space facilities that support outdoor recreation tourism in the region. O-123 (SS-1,CP10,RT3 1-3)

2Promote regional arts and culture tourism by funding public art campaigns and securing partnerships with organizations that draw residents and visitors to new places across the County with mural or sculpture walks, festivals, and other programming. O-121 (SS-2,CP10,RT3 1-3)

3Expanded upon existing events and festivals and develop new signature events to provide tourist attractions throughout the year. Support improvements to existing, as well as development of new, arts and culture indoor and outdoor venues. O-121 (SS-3,CP10,RT3 1-3)

4Leverage the Ent Center for the Arts to promote arts and cultural programming and partnerships throughout the community. O-121 (SS-4,CP10,RT3 1-3)

5Improve existing facilities and find appropriate locations for new development to attract athletic tourism opportunities and the economic benefit that they encompass with increased spending at local restaurants, hotels, and retail establishments. O-121 (SS-5,CP10,RT3 1-3)

6Work with and not against shared-economy businesses as they do provide niche services that fill gaps and make the County more accessible for visitors. O-121 (SS-6,CP10,RT3 1-3)

7Regional partners should consider conducting a feasibility study for a new public or private convention center in El Paso County, possibly in Downtown Colorado Springs. The study should include the potential for direct public transportation access from the Colorado Springs Airport to the convention center. O-121 (SS-7,CP10,RT3 1-3)

8Utilize the findings and recommendations from the 2019 Broadband Study to help expand cellular service and Wi-Fi coverage throughout the region to eliminate dead spots and enhance safety, GPS navigation, and sharing of experiences on social networks. L-121 (SS-8,CP10,RT3 1-3)

9Protect and strengthen recreational tourism resources, natural and developed, permanent and temporary, due to their crucial importance to El Paso County’s tourism industry and overall economy. O-123 **(SS-9,CP10,RT3 1-3)**

10Explore the feasibility of expanding and developing new indoor sports venues in the region to host regional tournaments. O-123 **(SS-10,CP10,RT3 1-3)**

11Work with the City of Colorado Springs to leverage the Olympic City USA brand and Olympic partners to promote the County as a destination with an Olympic legacy to attract additional sports tourism opportunities. O-123 **(SS-11,CP10,RT3 1-3)**

12Work with host organizations to ensure programming and events are inclusive of the aging population including holding activities in ADA accessible facilities with access to public transportation. O-123 **(SS-12,CP10,RT3 1-3)**

13Continue to maintain and create new partnerships with organizations and sponsors for events, festivals, and conferences to enhance the visitor experience in El Paso County. O-123 **(SS-13,CP10,RT3 1-3)**

14Partner with military installations to provide recreational and tourism information and discounts for military families to invite them to explore the region and foster a connection to its landscape. O-123**(SS-14,CP10,RT3 1-3)**

15Continue to partner with the USAFA to coordinate and enhance the visitor experience as it relates to the renovated planetarium, new visitor center, renovated Cadet Chapel and areas open to the public. O-123 **(SS-15,CP10,RT3 1-3)**

16Coordinate with the Colorado Springs Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Colorado Tourism Office (CTO) to promote and market El Paso County and its tourist destinations to a broader audience. To help support this effort, the County should support efforts secure additional funding for branding and marketing specifically targeting tourist attractions and activities in the off season to promote year-round tourism. O-123 **(SS-16,CP10,RT3 1-3)**

17Encourage hotels, restaurants, and entertainment venues to offer packaged deals and discounts including unique regional experiences to help make it easier for business travelers to “make a trip” out of their time in El Paso County O-123 **(SS-17,CP10,RT3 1-3)**

Community Health (Ch. 11)

Core Principle: (CP11)

Improve public health by focusing on local partnerships, food access, and environmental quality.

Goal CH1 (CP11)

Support community environmental health initiatives through collaborative efforts with other organizations.

Objective CH1-1: Work collaboratively with various transportation organizations to create a continuous, connected system of regional trails.

Objective CH1-2: Prioritize and locate trail connections using criteria and proposed action items identified in the Parks Master Plan.

Specific strategies:

1Priority: Update the Community Health Improvement Plan regularly to ensure the County's key health concerns are continuing to be identified and addressed. O-126 (SS-1,CP11,CH1 1-2)

2Priority: Provide an overall vision for a system of regional trails within the County and connected to adjacent counties and participate in the Regional Nonmotorized Trails and Bike Plan Update to identify standards and address needs as part of a multi-modal transportation network. Ensure that regional trail corridors are secured. O-126 (SS-2,CP11,CH1 1-2)

3Consider expanding HEAL policies/programs outside of Colorado Springs to unincorporated parts of the County. M-125 (SS-3,CP11,CH1 1-2)

4Identify potential high priority connections based on identified connection criteria and considering a variety of acquisition strategies and tools including funding and partnership opportunities. Locate trails minimizing conflicts between trail development and wildlife habitat and other sensitive natural and cultural resources. O-126 (SS-4,CP11,CH1 1-2)

Goal CH2.

Ensure all residents have reasonable access to safe, affordable, and nutritious food.

Objective CH2-1: Support food-access practices that not only serve to address food access issues but also help foster and strengthen a sense of community.

Objective CH2-2: Strengthen private property rights to encourage urban agricultural activities.

Objective CH2-3: Reduce barriers for local food producers who wish to sell local food products.

Objective CH2-4: Build awareness among residents regarding nutrition, food skills, and the sources of their food.

Objective CH2-5: Seek ways to improve access to safe, affordable, nutritious food for residents, regardless of their income level or geographic location.

Specific strategies:

1Priority: Consider potential interventions at the neighborhood level including small retail markets, farmers' markets, community gardens, community kitchens, backyard farms, farm stands, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) pick-ups at schools, mobile pantries and markets, partnerships between small-scale food producers and corner/convenience stores, expansion of Double Up Food Bucks, and Produce Rx. O-127 **(SS-1,CP11,CH2 1-5)**

2Study regional agriculture on both large and small scales and on public and private land and develop a matrix for identification and prioritization of land with high agricultural potential O-127. **(SS-2,CP11,CH2 1-5)**

3Assess the effects of urban land use policies and regulations on the viability of food production, processing, distribution, and access. O-127 **(SS-3,CP11,CH2 1-5)**

Environment (Ch 12)

Core Principle: (CP12)

Prioritize and protect the County's natural environment

Goal E1 (CP12)

Consider the environmental impacts related to natural resource conservation, air quality, water quality, wildlife habitat, and waste management during all steps of the planning and approval process.

Objective E1-1: Establish or expand public or private neighborhood parks, reserves, and other protected areas (e.g., wildlife sanctuaries and private reserves).

Objective E1-2: Enhance degraded or restore missing habitats and ecosystem functions (e.g., creating forest corridors, riparian tree plantings, breaching levees, and creating/enhancing wetlands)

Specific strategies:

1**Priority:** Enhance knowledge and skills of students with formal education program about wildlife and habitat protection (e.g., public schools, colleges and universities, and continuing education). O-130 (SS-1,CP12,E1 1-2)

2Manage protected areas and other resource lands for conservation (e.g., site design, demarcating borders, putting up fences, and training park staff). O-130 (SS-2,CP12,E1 1-2)

3Control and/or prevent invasive and other problematic plants, animals, and pathogens from establishing and growing in El Paso County. O-130 (SS-3,CP12,E1 1-2)

4Expand the opportunity for the exchange of knowledge, skills, and information among practitioners, stakeholders, and other relevant individuals in structured settings outside of degree programs (e.g., monitoring workshops or training courses, learning networks or how-to manuals, and stakeholder education on specific issues). O-130 (SS-4,CP12,E1 1-2)

5Manage specific plant and animal populations of concern. O-130 (SS-5,CP12,E1 1-2)

6Manipulate, enhance, and restore specific plant and animal populations. (e.g., artificial nesting boxes, clutch manipulation, supplementary feeding, disease/parasite management, and vaccination programs). O-130 (SS-6,CP12,E1 1-2)

7Improve understanding of species/habitat distribution through field inventory, modeling, and ground-truthing. O-130 (SS-7,CP12,E1 1-2)

8 Create or provide nonfinancial support & capacity building for nonprofits, government agencies, communities, and businesses (e.g., creating new local land trusts). O-130 (SS-8,CP12,E1 1-2)

9 Form and facilitate partnerships, alliances, and networks of organizations (e.g., Conservation Measures Partnership). O-130 (SS-9,CP12,E1 1-2)

10 Create, implement, change, influence, or provide input on formal government sector legislation or policies (e.g., state ballot initiatives, providing data to policy makers, zoning regulations, and species protection laws). O-130 (SS-10,CP12,E1 1-2)

11 Consider industry best practices for improving solid waste management such as collection services for multifamily apartments, recycling programs for commercial businesses, and composting programs. O-131 (SS-11,CP12,E1 1-2)

Goal E2.

Promote sustainable best practices with regard to development and infrastructure.

Objective E2-1: Promote conservation design techniques for any future development near riparian areas to protect them through incorporation into the development.

Objective E2-2: All future water planning efforts should reference the Water Master Plan to ensure alignment with its key policies and recommendations.

Objective E2-3: Promote alternative products and services that substitute for environmentally damaging ones.

Specific strategies:

1 Priority: Establish, revise, and implement voluntary standards and professional codes that govern private sector practice (e.g., Conservation Measures Partnership Open Standards, corporate adoption of forestry best management practices, and sustainable grazing by a rancher). O-130 (SS-1,CP12,E2 1-3)

2 Priority: Monitor and enforce compliance with laws, policies and regulations, and standards and codes (e.g., water quality standard monitoring, and initiating criminal and civil litigation). O-130 (SS-2,CP12,E2 1-3)

3 Develop enterprises that directly depend on the maintenance of natural resources or provide substitute livelihoods as a means of changing behaviors and attitudes (e.g., ecotourism). O-130 (SS-3,CP12,E2 1-3)

4 Utilize market mechanisms to change behaviors and attitudes (e.g., certification, financial incentives, grass and forest banking, and valuation of ecosystem services such as flood control). O-130 (SS-4,CP12,E2 1-3)

5Conservation design should be considered and evaluated alongside development considerations such as land use, zoning, traffic, infrastructure, and utilities as part of any development review and approval process in the County. O-131 (SS-5,CP12,E2 1-3)

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Resiliency & Hazard Mitigation (Ch 13)

Core Principle: (CP13)

Support efforts to reduce, respond, and react to natural and manmade hazards across the County.

Goal RHM1 (CP13)

Prioritize hazard mitigation as growth and development occurs.

Objective RHM1-1: Promote cross-boundary mitigation planning and prioritization with public land managers, military installations, municipalities, utilities, fire protection districts, and unincorporated communities.

Specific strategies:

1Share information about mitigation funding opportunities with local communities, Firewise committees, and fire protection districts. O-135 (SS-1,CP13,RHM1 1)

2Encourage fire protection districts to support wildfire prevention activities. O-135 (SS-2,CP13,RHM1 1)

3Encourage small communities to create their own Community Wildfire Protection Plans. O-135 (SS-3,CP13,RHM1 1)

4Coordinate with Colorado Springs and other municipalities on the update of their CWPPs as necessary. O-135 (SS-4,CP13,RHM1 1)

5Advise county managers of opportunities to support the goals of local CWPPs, through normal maintenance of county-owned lands and rights of way. O-135 (SS-5,CP13,RHM1 1)

6Brand the region in a way that brings people together and creates “buy-in.” Creating and fostering a Pikes Peak-based identity can increase individuals’ pride in being from and/or residing in El Paso County. It encourages communities to work together, and younger and transient populations to settle in the County and work towards a better future for the region. O-139 (SS-6,CP13,RHM1 1)

Goal RHM2.

Continue to support planning efforts and implementation of best practices to ensure community resiliency.

Objective RHM2-1: Maintain cooperation among wildfire first responders by supporting interagency planning and training.

Objective RHM2-2: Promote standard zoning and building codes that mitigate fire dangers between communities throughout the County.

Objective RHM2-3: Support coordinated stewardship and management of natural resources.

Objective RHM2-4: Support environmental preservation for aesthetic, recreational, and risk reduction purposes is a key element of building countywide resiliency.

Specific strategies:

1Priority: El Paso County’s vision of creating a resilient Pikes Peak region includes creating a balance between the built and natural environments. Therefore, support for this focus on the natural world speaks to the need for natural resource stewardship. O-139 **(SS-1,CP13,RHM2 1-4)**

2Priority: Increase community capacity to reduce impacts from shocks and stresses. Increasing resiliency is more than disaster mitigation. Acting before disasters to reduce risk can save lives and money; however, when conditions are good, it can be difficult to motivate people to take action. The County strives to move beyond community involvement and “buy-in” to increasing the community capacity as a whole. This requires a shift to a culture of responsibility at the individual level, such as mitigating the danger of wildfire or preparing families for disasters. Local government action is also needed, such as devoting public resources for stormwater management, maintaining and restoring forest health, fostering emergency preparedness, and maintaining infrastructure. O-139 **(SS-2,CP13,RHM2 1-4)**

3Encourage County land managers and planners to take steps to reduce wildfire risk while achieving other land management goals. Consider wildfire risk, mitigation, and response when codes are revised for areas in the WUI. O-135 **(SS-3,CP13,RHM2 1-4)**

4Encourage the creation of neighborhood Firewise committees to coordinate education and mitigation in local communities. O-135 **(SS-4,CP13,RHM2 1-4)**

5Encourage the development of new industrial uses for small woody biomass. **(SS-5,CP13,RHM2 1-4)**

6Encourage mitigation projects undertaken by municipalities, military installations, and utilities,

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Goal RHM3.

Continue to coordinate communication and activity among the Office of Emergency Management (OEM), emergency service providers, and military installations to improve responses and recovery to natural hazards and emergencies.

Objective RHM3-1: Promote collaborative discussions about fuel reduction along boundaries of US Forest Service lands, including fire protection districts, municipalities, and public utilities.

Objective RHM3-2: Promote mutual aid and sharing of military fire fighters with County fire districts.

Objective RHM3-3: Foster a paradigm shift toward comprehensive, collaborative planning and implementation with sustainable funding and stakeholder engagement.

Objective RHM3-4: Create cultural awareness of the need for personal connections in communities and between communities.

Specific strategies:

1Priority: In order to build resiliency, existing planning and stakeholder engagement processes need to be brought together. Quality of life and emergency preparedness depend on looking to the future to ensure that development does not increase risk or create problems, such as traffic, pollution, and unemployment. In addition, even the best plan cannot be fulfilled without identifying sustainable funding sources and committing to them. O-139 (SS-1,CP13,RHM3 1-4)

2Priority: Resiliency to both shocks and stresses is increased with the connections between people and between communities. Any effort to build and maintain ties, especially across neighborhoods, jurisdictions, and sectors, will increase capacity to handle an uncertain future. O-139 (SS-2,CP13,RHM3 1-4)

3When winter weather is in the forecast, residents should follow local weather warnings and follow news from local officials online. Residents are also encouraged to take the necessary precautions to prepare their family, home, and vehicles accordingly and ensure they have a plan and adequate supplies to stay at home for at least 72 hours, if necessary. O-133 (SS-3,CP13,RHM3 1-4)

Mark Gebhart

From: Judy von Ahlefeldt <blackforestnews@earthlink.net>
Sent: Thursday, April 29, 2021 2:34 PM
To: Mark Gebhart
Cc: EXTERNAL Black Forest News; John Houseal; Craig Dossey
Subject: Some review comments questions:

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April 29, 2021

Hi Mark,

I have thoroughly looked over the Public Review comments you sent me on April 17 - thank you for those.

However, in the interest of completeness:

1. EDARP - the Parks Advisory Board (PAB) comments went directly to you or Craig or, into the "final text" but the date on the EDARP Post is 3/29, so I assume they did not make the 3/26/21 draft, but are they in the 04/23/21 draft for May 5, 2021 Planning Commission? Is that correct? I have no idea what the comments were about.
2. Also on EDARP the County Attorney's comments were sent directly to PCD staff - so those are not available either. Is there some reason these are basically redacted from public view too?
3. There is also a note on EDARP from Todd Sturtevant at CSU on April 22 where they offered to communicate but never heard from PCD. So does this mean that there was no discourse at all between the County (whoever) and CSU on anything they might interact with, and the April 23rd draft does not include anything from them?
4. I could not find where David Anderson's CNHP April 9 letter, sent on April 9, 2021 was ever recorded as received as input for the Master Plan, and responded to. It apparently was not sent to MPAC members unless I missed it what you sent on April 17 for HLA. and not presented at the Review Meeting on April 14.
5. Were there earlier comments from Carl Schueler not included in that you sent?
6. I saw on the video/meeting, and in the materials you sent that you had the cover letters I sent with my documents/comments, including the .pdf on April 9, and the two supporting documents for the .pdf (spreadsheet and a .doc file for Chapter 14 as editable text), and also

the e-mail about the photo on page 2 of the Master Plan not including the whole County, but the attachments themselves did not appear to be available for anyone to view either at the MPAC meeting, and possibly not in what was sent either, not were shown at the MPAC meeting per Andrea Barlow's directive - nor was there any content summaries of my .pdf , .xls or .doc files.

7. How will the April 14, 2021 MPAC meeting minutes be certified and posted since the MPAC was dissolved on April 14, 2021 when the meeting was over?

8. If the Planning Commission wants anything changed on May 5 how will that be handled. Will it be posted on the HLA site with a new date? When? Who receives comments on changes? and how?

9. Are there e-mails for the Planning Commissioners to use for the PC Review/Adoption process from now until May 26, 2021?

Thanks,

Judy von Ahlefeldt

Landscape Ecologist

--

This email has been checked for viruses by AVG.

<https://www.avg.com>

Mark Gebhart

From: Judy von Ahlefeldt <blackforestnews@earthlink.net>
Sent: Thursday, April 29, 2021 9:48 AM
To: John Houseal; Craig Dossey; Mark Gebhart
Cc: Stan VanderWerf; Longinos Gonzalez, Jr; Cami Bremer; Carrie Geitner; Holly Williams; 'Doug Stimple'
Subject: Fwd: Dimmer switch

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the El Paso County technology network. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. Please call IT Customer Support at 520-6355 if you are unsure of the integrity of this message.

A topic important for the EPC Master Plan - but not included.

Dark skies was one of the first values residents identified at every one of the seven rogue meetings I held in Back Forest in 2019 (thinking I might be contributing something useful to the County Master Plan effort) when I asked people what were things they liked about Black Forest and wanted to keep (protect forever, continue to enjoy, pass on to their kids). This is called Community Vision.

Judith von Ahlefeldt, Ecologist

The dimmer switch

When bright lights threatened to flood their skies, a small Colorado community worked to restore the darkness—and all that relies on it to thrive.

ON HARDCRABBLE PASS in south-central Colorado, bighorn sheep, patches of ice, and blown-over snow regularly threaten drivers on February days. But once they come out the other side and dive down into the Wet Mountain Valley, the first breathtaking glimpse of the Sangre de Cristo range comes into view. The peaks rise from nothing and seem to take up half the sky, reaching their rocky and forbidding fingers more than 14,000 feet. Near their base, the fraternal-twin towns of Westcliffe and Silver Cliff abut each other and log a combined population of around 1,300 people.

At the edge of the Cliffs, as they're called, just past the bowling alley and as Main Street yields to rural openness, there's something unusual for such a small community: a public observatory, designed to look like a weathered mining structure, with a substantial telescope inside.

On a cold-but-not-as-cold-as-it-could-be evening, Clint Smith—Custer County attorney and president of the advocacy group Dark Skies of the Wet Mountain Valley—stands inside readying the scope. He's swathed in an L.L.Bean parka and a blue hat with "CLINT CLINT CLINT" knit into tidy, regular rows. The telescope's wide tube turns on a red mount bolted to an iron pier. The instrument's primary mirror is 14 inches wide—a much smaller aperture than those in professional models, which often exceed 80 inches across, but considered big for an amateur setup.

Smith leans over to crank open the building's triangular roof so that both we and the telescope can see the celestial canopy overhead. But first, the computer hooked up to a large screen in front of the setup needs an update. As we wait, Smith describes local efforts to make the Wet Mountain Valley a place that preserves the view above: the inky heavens, dotted by stars, sprayed by the Milky Way. In 2015, Westcliffe and Silver Cliff jointly became the ninth place in the world—the first in Colorado—certified as an International Dark Sky Community by the International Dark Sky Association (IDA), a nonprofit dedicated to combating inappropriate and excessive use of artificial light.

Smokey Jack Observatory, as this facility is called, brings cosmic contemplation down to Earth, demonstrating why the average person should care about the heavens getting washed out. Incautious photons can ruin the vistas—of nebulae nearby or galaxies millions of light-years away.

“Nobody had any expectation this would be a popular attraction,” says Smith, moving the telescope so it points southwest. Dark Skies of the Wet Mountain Valley built the observatory in 2015, and the following year, the *Today* show did a segment on it. “The phone started ringing off the hook,” says Smith, “and it was my phone.”

The group was a leader in the attempt not just to preserve night-sky places that had always been that way—like remote areas only backpackers reach, or unpopulated deserts—but also to turn back the proverbial clock and make bright places less so, and keep them that way, without necessarily hindering development. Since 2015, the IDA has certified dozens more towns in the US and abroad that have taken steps to minimize artificial ambient light. “In the past decade, there’s been a nice uptick in awareness and activism,” says Robert Stencel, a professor of astrophysics and astronomy at the University of Denver and the Denver Astronomical Society’s representative to the IDA. Since the start of 2020, a period that has mostly been Pandemic Times, the organization has deemed 35 new spots Dark Sky places of one sort or another.

Protecting the nighttime canopy is obviously good for astronomers, enabling them to see the dim and distant objects they study. But it might also have positive effects on ecological systems and human health. The frugal-minded find it’s a way to save on energy costs. Any of those things can convince a town to go darker. But so too can a simpler and more philosophical idea: “I want my grandkids to see the Milky Way the way I did,” says Smith, glancing over the open wall toward the space beyond.

DARK SKIES of the Wet Mountain Valley owes its existence to the late rancher Suzanne Jack. Nobody called her that, though; she was Smokey Jack. Her land looked out on the heaved earth and up at the heavens. She loved that view: so many stars you wouldn’t even bother to start counting, the glow of our galaxy arcing from horizon to horizon. She wanted those who came after her to have access to it too.

In the 1990s, Jack saw development coming for the remote valley—first an influx of new residents and then, chasing them, chain stores whose corporate HQs would install standard, sky-searing bulbs. Even without that growth, the small towns already had spillover from fixtures that shone upward. In 1998, she attended an astronomy meeting in Boulder and found out about the IDA. Soon she held a community gathering in the Cliffs.

The group of six that came together began asking residents whether they’d support a zoning law requiring shielded security lights that beamed only groundward from dusk to dawn. Slowly they made their case, amassing the contact info of interested parties. Later that year they formally organized as the nonprofit Dark Skies of the Wet Mountain Valley.

After that, their projects spiraled outward. Jack convinced the hospital to install shielded lights; the group raised \$15,500 toward the cost of hooded streetlamps; the school’s parking-lot bulbs got metal tops. Eventually the water treatment plant, county courthouse, town grocery store, fire station, and electric, gas, and disposal companies followed suit. “That was what we did most,” says longtime member Jim Bradburn, “cover lights, cover lights, cover lights.”

Eventually Dark Skies was even able to get both towns' trustees to pass land-use ordinances that put light mitigation on a par with air, water, noise, and odor pollution and codified ways to make fixtures nighttime-friendly. For example, lights should be shielded, be filtered if they're of the fluorescent or halide variety, and keep their illumination within property lines. Those seemingly small changes were enough to start to dim the skies.

JACK HAD INTRODUCED valley dwellers to the philosophy and practicality of protected skies, but she wasn't there to see all the fruit. She passed away in 2004 from pneumonia. A plaque on one of the school's light poles commemorates her, as does the observatory.

Bradburn, an architect who designed Denver's iconic airport terminal, became the Dark Skies president in the years after Jack's death. He'd grown up in Southern California in the shadow of Mount Wilson and its observatory, and he'd often taken his telescope to the top. He'd liked that he could see the moon, Venus, Saturn—but even then, light pollution had marred the field. When he moved to the Wet Mountain Valley, he decided to one-up his childhood and build his own observatory.

When he joined Dark Skies in 2004, its prospects were dimming. "Without the leader, it was kind of hard to continue," he says. Plus, one of the members was an in-your-face guy, confrontational with locals about the changes the group sought. "I just said, 'You know, this ain't gonna go anywhere, because these people who live in this valley aren't going to stand for anybody to tell them what to do,'" Bradburn says.

When he took over, he slewed in a different direction: They would educate neighbors and do that win-friends-and-influence-people thing of showing why an idea is actually good for them.

Today, when residents build a home, their welcome packet from the county includes light pollution information. Local amateur astronomers give talks at the bowling alley and host star parties, where people can look through telescopes and get tours of the heavens. There's a Dark Skies scholarship for science-minded students, powered by donations and named after founding member Sam Frostman, who used to do educational programs with elementary school classes. The group also sponsors an art contest, in which kids paint their own vision of the nighttime sky. "The first time, they were all copies of Van Gogh's *Starry Night*," says Bradburn. Now the kids depict their valley. Home.

Thinking about the next generation can bring around the older ones—even, sometimes, the tough ranchers who've lived through droughts and blizzards and the continued invasion of second-homers. These longtime residents don't tend to like the government or regulation.

They do, though, often like the stars—and they remember how the celestial sphere shone when they were kids. Passing that on can feel important. "It's like keeping the old ranching ways. It's their heritage," says Frostman. "The heritage of the sky."

Around 2014, the Cliffs decided to apply for official designation with the IDA, a move that required them to show their dedication through night-sky-focused policies and citizen support of the ideal of a dark canopy, among other criteria. Bradburn had been talking about it to everyone he could.

He'd focused on the reasoning that seemed to work best: capitalism. "I kept arguing that this was an economic thing," he says. "Think of the dark skies as an asset, not as just something you'd like to see." After all, people who come to stare at the stars must stay the night. And IDA's research suggests 30 percent of all artificial light is wasted—blasted where it doesn't need to go, when it doesn't need to, at too high a wattage, with old bulbs. With improved outdoor fixtures, electric-bill payers could cut costs by 60–70 percent.

Eventually the group convinced enough skeptics that they weren't the enemy but instead part of the town, with its interests in mind. With that, in 2015, the Cliffs became an International Dark Sky Community.

That same year, they built the observatory with donated funds, labor, and materials, placing Bradburn's telescope inside. It collects around 3,000 times as much light as the unaided eye. That changes the view from the field considerably: Through the scope, you can see the details of Jupiter's clouds, the gaps in Saturn's rings, the colors in nebulae, double stars that look like a single one before you step to the eyepiece, and galaxies millions of light-years beyond ours.

While a professional observatory would show even more stunning shots, those aren't typically open to the public on a Saturday night. Smokey Jack's star parties have since proven so popular that this past year, the group built pedestals and power outlets outside for others to attach their scopes to, and an amphitheater to display the images streaming into the big instrument's eyepiece on a screen. People have started coming to starlit towns from all over the world, spurring a spike in tourism in Colorado's rural communities.

Inside the observatory this February, though the sky is beset by clouds, it's easy to see why the crowds come calling. From here, only the mountains hamper the view, and they're allowed. With the roof rolled back, standing halfway inside and halfway out, you feel both part of the human Earth and part of the vastly bigger space above and beyond.

Smith pulls up images of his favorite celestial objects—the ET Cluster, the Coat Hanger Cluster—and talks about how long their light takes to reach us (around 8,000 years for the former, and more than 2,000 years for the stars making up the latter), the sheer number of them in our galaxy (between 100 and 500 billion), and the tally of galaxies in the universe (perhaps 200 billion). It forces him, even as someone who's the county attorney, to put day-to-day struggles and politics in perspective. "All the stars and the planets, it's all matter, and matter is never destroyed," Smith says. "Once our sun is gone, our atoms will still exist. Maybe we were already part of some other lifetime."

WHEN SMITH and the rest of the Cliffs crew wanted to secure their sky status, they turned to the organization with the official stamp—the IDA—and employees like John Barentine, the IDA's director of public policy. Barentine trained as an astronomer, and when he joined the group in 2013, he mostly thought of light pollution as something that disrupted those celestial studies. "It just did not register with me that it had these other effects that a broader swath of society might care about," he says. But he began to get his education right quick—starting with his job interview for a program manager position.

The conversation was unconventional, beginning with the question, "Can you come to Florida for a week?" At the time, the IDA was working with the state Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to make beach lights safer for sea turtles. Once they emerge from their eggs, hatchlings must scurry toward the sea to survive. If the shore is brightly lit, they sometimes venture inland instead. Soon, Barentine himself was on the beach, wearing an orange safety vest and carrying a clipboard. "Peering through binoculars at lights on people's houses and hopefully not getting shot at by any of them," he quips. Just a couple of years ago, the group finished helping Florida retrofit fixtures at oceanfront houses, using settlement money from the 2010 BP oil spill.

The IDA, like astronomers, quantifies light pollution by measuring how bright the sky's background is—its magnitude—on a logarithmic scale. The details can become pedantic, but the gist is that a tally of 17.8 represents a typical big city, where you can see a few hundred stars and the canopy is gray. At around 19, you can begin to pick out the Milky Way. At about 20, the Milky Way beams down but gets washed out near the horizon. A bit above 21, you can see not just the Milky Way but the differential in its sheen, with dimmer lanes and brighter swaths. The Cliffs hovered around 21.4 in 2020.

Since Barentine came aboard, he's learned why dark skies matter to people beyond those with big telescopes. Too much light pollution can alter predator-prey relationships, since hunters rely on illumination but prey need the shadows. Frogs and toads that croak nocturnally to find mates can find their flirtation disrupted by two-car-garage floodlights. And birds that use the moon and stars to navigate can get thrown off by bulbs and travel in the wrong direction, or at the wrong time. One research group examined migrating birds' responses to the twin beams that shine upward during New York City's annual September 11 memorial. Their study, published in

Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America in 2017, ran over seven years and estimated that the installation influenced more than 1 million birds, which gathered around the spotlights in densities 20 times higher than normal, slowed down, flew in circles, and “vocalized frequently.” When the two shafts were gone the next night, the off behaviors disappeared.

Most concerning to Barentine are the insects, whose notable decline—40 percent of all species worldwide are on the downslope—seems to be influenced by light pollution. This is especially true of the pollinating bugs that keep much of the ecosphere, not to mention agriculture, in balance. For example, a 2017 *Nature* article describes a project in which researchers placed mobile streetlamps in seven of 14 meadows in Switzerland. In the lit spots, insects visited plants 62 percent less often.

Barentine says excess brightness is “not the dominant pressure as far as we can tell,” but it does seem to have some effect. That’s important, because reducing any stressor helps. Conservationists have started to pay more attention to light pollution as something more straightforward to control than oil companies.

Stray light matters to humans too. Our circadian rhythms run on day-night cycles. Brightness during slumber can cut down on the body’s production of melatonin, a chemical that helps you nod off. Preliminary work, like a study published in *JAMA* in 2013, suggests that chronically suppressed levels correlate with an increased risk of cancer and diabetes.

In the real world, it’s hard to tease out cause and effect in light-pollution research. But the data gathering is increasing, helped in part by a program called Globe at Night, a project at the National Science Foundation’s NOIRLab that lets citizen-scientists upload brightness measurements to assemble a map of conditions. As of 2020, people in 180 countries had produced more than 200,000 samples, which scientists and the public can use to find correlations between changes in light and things like wildlife behavior.

Just as you don’t have to raze all factories to keep air and water pollution under control, you don’t have to totally avoid development to see more darkness overhead. To become a Dark Sky Community like the Cliffs, towns must have outdoor lighting ordinances, education efforts, and support from officials. And because one cannot press “undo” on big cities, there are Urban Night Sky Places for locales much brighter than the Cliffs that have signed on to best mitigation practices. These lure back the night by installing lights only where they’re needed, turning them on only when they’re useful, making them no stronger than necessary, and using the appropriate energy-efficient bulbs.

There are other designations for places with fewer people. Your favorite gazing spot could become a Dark Sky Park, like Bryce Canyon in Utah, or a Dark Sky Reserve, like Aoraki Mackenzie in New Zealand. If it’s vantablack, the location might become an International Dark Sky Sanctuary, like the !Ae!Hai Kalahari Heritage Park in South Africa. So far, 130 places have one of those designations, and 29 others have earned the community title.

Tonight at the Smokey Jack Observatory, the stars are steadfastly hiding behind clouds. Defeated, Smith begins closing up. But once the weather warms, the site will start taking reservations for private parties and then—pandemic willing—begin its public gatherings again. In April 2021, the group will install a new Planet Walk, a scale model of the solar system that pedestrians can follow through both towns, past Pluto and toward the cosmic wilderness. Maybe they’ll think about the billions of light-years beyond, the gravity of far-off objects tugging ever so slightly on their sleeves. It’s a literal concrete commitment to celestial matters.

Barentine acknowledges things don’t always go as well as they did in the Cliffs. “Everybody is drawn into two camps on every issue now, no matter how mundane it is,” says Barentine. “We are finding in certain places there is a very knee-jerk negative response. And it isn’t about dark skies.”

Over the past quarantined year, more people did seem to care about dark skies, stuck, as they were, at home. “Some of them stepped outside onto their balcony or into their backyard, and really, for the first time, looked up at the night sky,” says Barentine. “And the reaction in some cases was, “Where are the stars?””



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