

# Draft Vision Framework & Preliminary Goals

The Vision Framework is a narrative that illustrates what the County can achieve following the adoption of the Master Plan. The narrative is intended to be ambitious and inspirational, depicting the El Paso County community's collective desires, and serving as the foundation for the Plan's goals, objectives, and recommendations.

## Vision Framework

Projected to grow to nearly one million people by 2050, an increase of nearly 250,000, El Paso County will need to accommodate growth in specific areas of the County while maintaining the special character, unique places, and environmental and natural amenities that have helped define the region. Responsible development is necessary and will ensure that key areas grow appropriately without the unnecessary extension of infrastructure and services into valued natural areas and parts of the County that cannot support development. This will establish strategic areas of the County as complete communities with the necessary housing, commercial options, and public services to allow current and future residents to live comfortably.

To build off recent regional economic and employment successes, the County will utilize its existing assets to attract new potential businesses and employees. The continued advancement of established industries like healthcare and the availability of developable land in principal locations will help engage new businesses and capitalize on emerging markets. Regional and national access through the interstate highway system and Colorado Springs Airport will play a role in anchoring new businesses development and expansion while El Paso's regional attractiveness and national prominence as a hub for outdoor recreation will continue to buoy employee recruitment. As key land owners and employers, continued coordination with the military installations will also be imperative to the County's growth and success.

Connectivity will be critical to future prosperity in El Paso County. Strengthening east-west connections and creating alternative north-south routes will be imperative to improving travel within the County. While cars will continue to be the primary mode of transportation throughout El Paso County, greater emphasis should be placed on developing a complete transportation network with well-maintained infrastructure that supports cars as well as transit, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

The County's natural beauty is one of its key assets that will continue to attract new residents and visitors to experience life in El Paso County. It is one of the few places in the country where a person can experience so many different natural environments and biological diversity – from forests and prairieland, to deserts and mountains – in such close proximity. These natural areas need to be protected and preserved for future generations. Each of these environments provides its own unique opportunities for both passive and active outdoor recreation. The County's diverse environs also provide the backdrop for an excellent network of well-maintained parks, multiuse trails, and open spaces that can be enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.

Intergovernmental collaboration coupled with partnerships with external agencies will maintain first-rate community facilities and provide high-quality services to all parts of the County. Coordination and collaboration will be critical to the management of the County's precious natural resources and ensuring their longevity for future populations. A focus for utility services will be on establishing growth areas to prioritize future development in order to equitably manage water access and availability.

Through the development and use of the Master Plan, El Paso County will continue to grow as one of the most desirable places on the Front Range and in the State. It will be a place where any resident has the opportunity to enjoy the lifestyle they choose, from urban to suburban to rural and everything in between. It will be a healthy and sustainable community whose natural features, recreational amenities, strong employment opportunities, and diverse housing options provide all residents with a high quality of life.

## Preliminary Goals

### Land Use & Development

- Direct new development in a manner that ensures compatibility with established neighborhoods, commercial districts, and employment centers and alignment with infrastructure capacity.
- Coordinate with municipalities to develop annexation and growth strategies to limit leapfrog development, responsibly plan for extension of infrastructure, and promote context-sensitive design.
- Encourage a range of development types to support a variety of residential, commercial, recreational, and employment land uses throughout El Paso County.
- Continue to encourage policies that ensure “development pays for itself”, by minimizing cost burdens placed on the County to accommodate new development.

### Economic Development

- Continue to leverage the County’s diverse employment base and desirable location to recruit new businesses and spur the development of growing sectors.
- Support efforts to recruit, train, and retain a skilled workforce.
- Encourage the development of commercial districts in underserved areas of the County to better meet needs of the local residents and businesses.
- Utilize economic opportunity zones to support new business development.
- Work with the military installations to support their efforts to foster new development and create new jobs.

### Housing & Communities

- Promote development of a mix of housing types to accommodate growth in areas that have been appropriately identified for higher-density development.
- Utilize lower-density housing types and land conservation techniques to help preserve the character of rural and environmentally sensitive areas where more-intense development is not compatible.
- Locate attainable housing options that have convenient access to necessary goods, services, and employment opportunities.
- Support an aging-in-place approach to providing housing options that meet the needs of current and future populations through all stages of life.

### Transportation & Mobility

- Establish a complete transportation network that connects all areas to one another, emphasizing east-west routes, reducing traffic congestion, and promoting safe and efficient travel.
- Promote and encourage walkability and bikability in areas where multimodal transportation systems are feasible.
- Foster transit-supportive development in select locations and coordinate with appropriate agencies to expand public transportation options.
- Continue to encourage long-range transportation planning efforts and develop a sustainable funding mechanism for transportation infrastructure and maintenance.

### Community Facilities & Infrastructure

- Continue to improve coordination with local and regional organizations and agencies to provide high-quality community facilities, services and infrastructure to enhance the quality of life in El Paso County.

- Manage growth and development in appropriate areas to ensure adequate provision of utilities.
- Expand the use of best management practices to protect water quality, conserve water, minimize impacts of flooding, and beautify the El Paso County community.
- Continue to support and improve the effectiveness of public safety services through coordination, funding, and planning.

#### Military Base Compatibility

- Maintain good working relationships with military installations to help support planning efforts and the mutual success.
- Support compatible land uses within and in close proximity to the bases.
- Ensure coordinated planning efforts for transportation impacts and access.

#### Recreation & Tourism

- Continue to provide and support high-quality, sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities as a key amenity for residents and visitors.
- Explore projects, programs, and initiatives for enhancing tourism opportunities in unincorporated areas of the County to increase tourism and create employment opportunities.
- Continue to support efforts to plan for and provide parks, trails, and open space within the region.

#### Community Health

- Continue to support community environmental health initiatives through coordinated and collaborative efforts with other County or local organizations.
- Ensure that all residents, regardless of income or geographic location, have access to safe, affordable, and nutritious food.

#### Environment & Natural Resources

- Consider the environmental impacts related to natural resource conservation, air quality, water quality, wildlife habitat protection, and waste management during any planning process.
- Promote sustainable best practices with regard to development and infrastructure.

#### Resiliency & Hazard Mitigation

- Prioritize hazard mitigation as growth and development occurs.
- Continue to support planning efforts and best practices to ensure community resiliency.
- Continue to coordinate communication and activity among Office of Emergency Management (OEM), emergency service providers, and military installations to improve responses and recovery to natural hazards and emergencies.





## Black Forest Preservation Plan (1987)

### 1. Growth and Land Use Goal Statements:

1.A - Preserve and enhance the sensitive natural environment and unique community character of the Black Forest Planning Area. **Keep; applicable to many areas of the County.**

1.B -Uphold the adopted Land Use Scenario and Concept Plan which identifies areas to be used for agricultural and range lands, low and higher density residential development, commercial and industrial uses, and mixed, recreational, open space and semi-public uses (refer to the approved Land Use Concept in the Executive Summary). **Delete. New scenarios and perhaps revised character areas should be considered with the new Master Plan based upon the best available information and citizen input, and potentially irrespective of the hard boundary lines that currently isolate the small area plans.**

### Policies

1.1 Retain the Black Forest Planning Area as primarily a rural residential community with limited supporting commercial and industrial development. **Keep, sub-area specific. Based upon history since the plan was developed, consider adding allowances for destination commercial uses such as resorts, event centers, etc.) in areas that are in close proximity to the urban area, can be served by centralized services, and where the impacts of such uses can be appropriately mitigated.**

1.2 -Allow nodes of higher density residential, commercial and industrial development only in those areas specifically designated on the Concept Plan and described in the Land Use Scenario. **Keep the node concept, but add in limitations as appropriate where there is a likelihood of unmitigated impacts or transportation access limitations. Siting of such nodes is not likely to change from the current Land Use Scenario map, but additional nodes may be appropriate if supported by the findings of the new Master Plan.**

1.3 -Promote and plan a system of buffers around the Timbered Area, other planning units designated for low densities, and existing rural-residential subdivisions in which densities decrease between existing or planned development and these areas (refer to the Land Use Scenario for additional explanation). If decreasing densities are not feasible than(sp) substantial open space should be incorporated as part of the buffer. **Keep, but consider for general County wide applicability (with exception to “the Timbered Area”, which is obviously unique in this context to Black Forest). Inherent in the open space discussion throughout the plan and this analysis is the implication that all development will be in a PUD, unless some method is developed which would provide open space in a conventional subdivision.**

1.4 -Provide for a mix of compatible uses within designated urban density areas. **Keep, County wide.**

1.5 -Preserve open space as a means of retaining natural features and the separate identity of the Black Forest Planning Area. **Keep, County wide with regard to natural features. The “separate identity” of the Black Forest area likely needs to be re-thought with regard to some aspects due to considerable changes in the area since the Black Forest Plan was adopted.**

1.6 -Allow "low impact uses" as defined in this Chapter in areas designated for rural residential uses either through the Special Use review process or as part of carefully defined planned unit developments, Variances for low impact uses should be used sparingly and in all cases approvals should not result in a deviation, from the predominantly rural-residential character of these areas.

*LOW IMPACT USE: A use which, due to its low intensity, limited scale and predominantly rural character could be incorporated into an area otherwise designated for rural residential uses without significantly altering the character of that area. Consistency is dependent on site characteristics, available buffering, adjacent uses and the ability to strictly define the scope of the use through a development plan or other appropriate mechanisms. Uses which might meet this criteria include certain private educational institutions, some recreational uses, production and retail sales of certain agriculturally related commodities and certain services of a limited scope and intensity. Specifically not included in this definition are major industrial uses, predominantly commercial activities, high density recreational camps and any other uses specifically recommended for exclusion from these areas in this Plan.*

This area of the County should not be specifically exempt from many of the pressures of growth, including the siting of "less than perfect land uses", that are being experienced throughout the County and all along the Colorado Front Range. With that being said, land use compatibility should always be evaluated. The creation of character areas should help inform this evaluation.

1.7-Enhance the function of the area near the intersection of Black Forest and Shoup Roads as the "community center" of the planning area. ~~Delete. The County rebuilt this intersection. The phrase "enhance the function of the area...as the community center" is vague and uninformative from the perspective of evaluating land use applications. The argument can be made that it is by including and allowing a balanced amount all land uses that a community is able to function and sustain; surely including heavy industrial uses is not desired in this area of the County. If the desire is to encourage continued, and even expanded, civic and community functions in this area then the policy should be rewritten and should be rolled into a character area that includes this area along with others throughout the County having the same "function".~~

1.8 -Consider the overall economies of land development in the review of individual projects, but do not consider the price paid by an individual developer for land as a relevant factor. ~~Delete. There are no regulatory standards Countywide that support this "ask" with exception to the review of Special Districts, which is already accounted for in the applicable review criteria.~~

#### Proposed Actions

1.a The Board of County Commissioners should zone the unzoned portions of the planning area as either A-4 or A-35 (Agricultural) as recommended in the 1974 Land Use Plan, depending on current parcel size. ~~Delete, all remaining areas were zoned, including the northeast area as A-35 zoning which did not exist at the time of the 1974 Plan.~~

1.b Zone changes or variances resulting in densities which are inconsistent with the adopted Plan should be disapproved. ~~The Plan will be updated and incorporated into the new Master Plan, rendering this action obsolete in application. However, the concept should be retained but it should be applied~~

County-wide but it must consider societal changes such as gentrification, guest homes, mother-in-law quarters, etc. which generally were not considered when previous small area plans were developed.

1.c All land use items concerning the Black Forest Planning Area should be forwarded to the Black Forest Land Use Committee or other appropriate citizens group for review and comment prior to public hearing. This procedure could be formalized through a revision of the Land Development Code. **Keep, but reword for County-wide applicability with regard to identified community organizations, which is consistent with established processing practices. None of the organizations have regulatory jurisdiction over land use applications, therefore, a change to the Land Development Code should not be sought.**

1.d Applicants for subdivisions, zone changes, special use approvals and variances should address consistency with the Black Forest Preservation Plan as part of their submittals. **Delete, the Black Forest Plan, and all of the other existing small area plans, are being updated and incorporated into the new Master Plan. Master Plan consistency is a review criteria for many of the land use applications processed by the County, making this item regulatory in nature.**

## 2. Agricultural and Open Land

### Goal

2.A Recognize that agricultural, and other open lands are vital natural resources which should be protected from needless misuse and urban sprawl. **Keep, County wide but modify “needless misuse” since that is in the eyes of the beholder.**

### Policies

2.1 - Encourage the continuation of existing agricultural operations, especially in the northern and eastern portions of the planning area. **Keep, but for County wide application.**

2.2 -Minimize the adverse effects of new development on existing agricultural operations. **Keep, but for County wide application. Note that Colorado is a “right to farm” state, which is also acknowledged in the Land Development Code.**

2.3 -Support clustered development alternatives which result in the creation of permanently dedicated and maintained open space. **Keep, but for County wide application.**

### Proposed Actions

2.a Planned developments should be designed so that they adequately buffer existing agricultural uses. **Keep, but for County wide application. Note that Colorado is a “right to farm” state, which is also acknowledged in the Land Development Code.**

2.b Subdivision of the Northern Grasslands and Northeastern planning units should not be encouraged (refer to discussion in Land Use Scenario). **Reevaluate or delete this action. What was open agricultural grasslands 30+ years ago may now be low density rural residential development. This area has been zoned for 5 acre residential lots (since 1955 and 1965) and some lands have developed in this manner.**

Absent a county effort to rezone private property to A-35 zoning, it would be challenging to deny a subdivision that complies with zoning, but does not comply with master plan policies. The Black Forest area is not immune to growth, as evidenced by the last 30+ years.

2.c An A-35 (Agricultural) zone should be applied in the Northeastern Area. **Completed. Delete, this area was already zoned to A-35 by action in 1998.**

2.d The transfer of development rights to nonprofit institutions should be supported as a means of making open space preservation more economically feasible (refer to discussion of Overall Density Options in Chapter). **Delete, there is no regulatory structure for accounting for a facilitating the transfer of development rights. This is consistent with a prior discussion of the Advisory Committee.**

2.e The County Parks Department, the development community and the citizens of the planning area should cooperate in the identification of specific corridors to be incorporated into a publicly accessible open space network which can be used for non-motorized recreation, protection of visual amenities and preservation of the natural environment. **Keep, County wide.**

2.f If given the opportunity the County should coordinate with the City of Colorado Springs in the provision of buffer zones where developments on City property abut against the planning area. **Keep, but replace with reference to character areas, especially those rural areas that are existing and subject to urban encroachment. This is likely a County-wide issue (Highway 115, Ute Pass, Tri-Lakes, etc.). In addition to buffer zones, intergovernmental coordination should be improved regarding planning for logical annexations (also a County-wide issue).**

### 3. Residential Goal

3.A Promote a residential environment which perpetuates the rural-residential character of the Black Forest Planning Area. **Some areas within Black Forest have already developed at densities that are not considered "rural" in nature. Therefore, this goal should be reworded and should account for developments and development trends since the current Plan was drafted and should be considered for applicability in other character areas.**

#### Policies

3.1 -Continue the promotion of residential subdivisions with an overall average minimum lot area of 5 acres in the Timbered Area and other designated portions of the planning area. The minimum lot size for five-acre overall density areas should be at least 2 ½ acres in most instances (refer to Land Use Scenario and Concept Plan). **2.5 acres remains the minimum lot size for service by an individual sewage disposal system. An accounting of developable acreage within timber areas in Black Forest should be performed. Additional evaluation should be performed based upon where such developable areas are located in relation to existing developments. That exercise should inform the recommendations for development of any undeveloped timbered areas.**

3.2 - Give careful consideration to clustering alternatives in areas appropriate for subdivision as a means of preserving more open space, minimizing costs and environmental impacts and promoting aesthetic quality. **Keep, County wide.**

3.3 - Promote modified clustering in large lot rural residential subdivisions (those with individual well and septic systems) if it can be demonstrated that open space will be protected and maintained and that a precedent for higher density future development will not be set (refer to discussion in Land Use Scenario). **Keep, and consider for County-wide applicability in certain character areas.**

3.4 - Utilize traditional (full) clustering alternatives to maximize useable and perceptual open space in higher density residential areas as designated in the Land use Scenario and Concept Plan if adequate guarantees for open space preservation can be provided. **Keep, and consider for County-wide applicability in certain character areas.**

3.5 - Generally support residential development which compliments and enhances the area's terrain, vegetation and natural resources (refer to Visual Design Recommendations in Chapter I II). **Keep, County wide, but eliminate the reference to the VDR.**

3.6 Encourage the maintenance of safe and attractive dwelling units and the redevelopment of substandard structures. **Keep, but include references to the Code Enforcement limitations regarding the aesthetics of a building and defer to RBD authority over unsafe buildings.**

#### Proposed Actions

3.a The County Land Development Code should be considered or modifications which would facilitate the accommodation of overall density (clustering) options. **Delete. The PUD zoning district was put in place (1991) after development of this plan.**

3 b If communally held open space is incorporated into the plans for a project, one or preferably a combination of the following measures should be taken to ensure that the land will remain open and be maintained in relative perpetuity: **Keep, County-wide**

-if available use a planned unit development zone to legally bind together all of the uses in the overall density proposal apply the most restrictive large lot zoning to the open parcels **Keep, County-wide**

-where appropriate encourage the use of plat notes to clearly define the intended use of the property **Keep, County-wide**

-where applicable, require deed restrictions and support the use of protective covenants to achieve the above objectives **Delete, deed restrictions are difficult to track and the County does not enforce covenants.**

-support and assist in the organization of homeowners associations **Keep, County-wide but eliminate reference to "assist in the organization of". That is not a part of the statutory role of the County, but may be required for administration of water augmentation plans.**

-apportion the tax liability of the communally held parcels to individual lots. Changes to the El Paso County Land Development Code and in County policy may be necessary to provide these assurances.

Delete

3.c In existing small lot subdivisions in designated low density areas, the consolidation of as many lots as possible should be strongly encouraged in order to attempt to meet current minimum lot size requirements. **Keep, County wide. This is also regulatory under the Land Development Code and typically requires either a merger of lots or a Board of Adjustment lot area variance.**

3.d Minimum lot area criteria should be developed for nonconforming subdivisions in cooperation with property owners. **Minimum lot area standards are dictated by the applicable zoning of the property and by the LDC for existing nonconforming lots; delete.**

3.e The granting of lot area variances or the creation of additional small lots in designated low density residential areas should be discouraged except in the clear case of hardship. **Variances are evaluated based upon established criteria, including hardship. Consistency with the Master Plan, or a small area plan for that matter, is not a criteria to be considered by the Board of Adjustment.**

3.f All proposals for urban density or high impact uses located in proximity to existing rural residential development should specifically address the methods which will be used to buffer existing uses (refer to Land Use Scenario for Southern Transitional Area). **Keep, County wide, but delete reference to Land Use Scenario.**

3.g The Land Use Department should follow up on reported zoning violations with the assistance and cooperation of planning area residents and issue citations if appropriate. **Regulatory and procedural. Delete.**

3.h Property owners and developers should be encouraged to develop deed restrictions, covenants and other comparable controls to retain open space and enhance the visual image of the community and preserve the ecological integrity of the landscape by protecting native vegetation. **Keep, but revise to reference plat restrictions rather than deed restrictions and covenants since neither instrument is enforceable by the County, which is pertinent given that the new Master Plan is a County adopted planning document.**

3.i Developers who propose projects which involve land to be held in common ownership should address the degree to which their proposed means of maintenance will ensure that the land remains in open space in relative perpetuity. Any concerns which emerge should be addressed in developing the final maintenance plan as required in Section 38 of the Land Development Code. **Keep the first sentence, delete the second sentence.**

3.j The use of building materials, designs and facade treatments which allow structures to blend into or accent the natural environment should be encouraged (refer to Visual Analysis in Chapter I I) . **General concepts of use compatibility are included throughout various sections of the County's planning**

documents and Land Development Code; however, the County generally does not regulate the aesthetics of a building. Delete in favor of broader discussions on land use compatibility.

#### 4. Commercial

##### Goal

4.A Allow for limited commercial development which supports and enhances the Black Forest Planning Area. Keep, but revise to allow for County-wide applicability in certain character areas where large scale, or more intense, commercial is not appropriate but smaller scale, limited commercial may be appropriate. Commercial development must follow the allowed uses of the zoning district, which are not necessarily there to support a specific planning area.

##### Policies

4.1 - Restrict new commercial uses within the forested and low density residential areas to existing or proposed commercial nodes as defined in the approved Land Use Scenario and Concept Plan. Within these areas infill should be encouraged rather than expansion. Strip commercial development is not desired. Consider keeping for sub-area specific application. Infill opportunities are limited, minimal expansion to include a compatible mix of service retail uses may be appropriate to serve a moderately increasing Black Forest population. Consider retaining the identified locations of existing and identified commercial nodes in the area.

4.2 - Encourage more intensive and extensive commercial development to locate within designated mixed use centers and not adjacent to the buffer and transitional areas depicted in the Concept Plan. Keep, but consider rewording for County-wide applicability.

4.3 - Limit commercial activities within the forested and low density residential planning units to those which accommodate the needs of local residents. In these areas minimization of the number and scope of commercial areas should take precedence over convenience and accessibility. Commercial development must follow the allowed uses of the zoning district, which are not necessarily there to support a specific planning area or only to serve local residents. Keep the second sentence, but consider extending to other areas of the County having similar character traits.

4.4- Maintain the scale of new commercial uses so that it is in balance with existing uses. These needs to be re-evaluated as there may be imbalance of land uses in the planning area. The objective of this policy may no longer be reasonable.

4.5 - Discourage commercial uses if they are incompatible with existing or planned residential development. Keep, County-wide, but add better descriptors that reference residential character areas and proximity considerations. As written, this policy is vague and could be generally applied over an extended geographical area to broadly discourage all commercial uses.

4.6 - Encourage all new commercial development within the planning area to be compatible with the visual character of existing uses (refer to Visual Analysis in Chapter I I). This policy reads pleasant

enough, but is difficult to apply in reality because it effectively limits commercial to having similar visual character what essentially amounts to existing rural residential or agricultural uses. Certainly elements of commercial development can, and probably should, represent or otherwise incorporate elements of the character area, but notions of strict visual compatibility are probably not realistic. Delete or otherwise reword.

#### Proposed Actions

4.a Potential new commercial users in designated low density areas, should be encouraged to seek NBD (Neighborhood Business District) zoning for their property (refer to the Land Use Section in Chapter II for a more detailed discussion). Delete. This zoning descriptor and its subsequent replacement have been deleted from the Code. This should be driven by character area assessment and planning.

4.b New commercial uses should be encouraged to compliment the predominant rustic design theme (refer to Visual Analysis in Chapter II) . This is similar to 4.6 above. Delete or otherwise reword.

4.c Within the existing and proposed commercial nodes appropriate landscaping should be introduced for the purposes of unifying design and defining vehicle and pedestrian movements. Keep, County wide with acknowledgement of water conservation principles that support alternative landscaping designs.

#### 5. Industrial and Extractive

Note: The County's Master Plan for the Extraction of Commercial Mineral Deposits (1975 and 1978 (Revised 1996) or as amended) should be consulted in determining the consistency of mineral extraction operations with the County Master Plan. Keep, County wide and it should be incorporated generally into the new Master Plan.

#### Goal

5.A Accommodate a limited amount of industrial development in the planning area in a manner which minimizes adverse environmental, transportation, land use compatibility and visual impacts. Keep, but consider expanding to other similar character areas throughout the County as these areas are generally not appropriate for heavy industrial uses or large scale light industrial uses also due to the availability of services. It is important to note that the subject of where industrial uses "should go" within the County supports the current concept of comprehensively planning for the County as a whole.

#### Policies

5.1- Allow industrial development only in association with existing industrial areas and/or designated mixed use centers and not in the timbered or low density residential areas. Keep, sub-area specific.

5.2 - Do not approve expansions of the Vollmer Road industrial node beyond its present limits as designated and described in the Land Use Scenario and Concept Plan. Delete, as this area is likely to be included in a separate character area.

5.3 -Minimize negative visual and noise impacts of industrial development through a combination of buffering, siting and screening techniques. **Keep, County-wide.**

5.4 -Allow mineral extraction only in areas where its impacts are compatible with the natural environment and with adjacent development (refer to additional policies under Natural Environment). **Delete, the impacts from mineral extraction are rarely if ever “compatible with the natural environment”. Greater emphasis should be place on compatibility with existing uses in the area and on mitigation of associated negative impacts cause by mineral extraction operations.**

5.5 -Limit industrial development associated with mixed use centers to those "light" uses of a non-polluting, non-objectionable and non-hazardous nature. **Delete. Use specific allowances are dictated by zoning rather than master planning.**

5.6 -Predicate the approval of any extractive or industrial uses on their fair contribution to the mitigation of off-site transportation impacts, specifically increased truck traffic. **Keep, County-wide. Note that this may be site specific mitigation and also participation in the Road Impact Fee Program.**

5.7 -Discourage approvals of any expanded industrial and extractive activities if conditions placed on existing operations have not been complied with. **Keep, County-wide. It should also be noted that any failure to comply with conditions of approval are actionable code enforcement items.**

#### Proposed Actions

5.a A detailed analysis of any potential negative visual, environmental and transportation impacts should be required of the applicant prior to approving zone changes, variances, special uses or development plans involving industrial or extractive uses in the planning area. **Keep, County-wide. Additional detail may be needed to better inform any recommended regulatory changes.**

5.b Only PID (Planned Industrial District) zoning should be utilized for industrial developments associated with designated mixed use centers. **Delete since the PID zoning district no longer exists.**

5.c Special use approvals for industrial and extractive activities with potentially adverse impacts should be carefully conditioned to require maximum reasonable mitigation and reclamation. **Delete, regulatory, unless more specificity is provided to affect meaningful regulatory change, perhaps at the local and state level.**

5.d Within the planning area existing and proposed industrial operations should be carefully monitored for compliance with zoning regulations. Additional approvals should not be given until applicable conditions imposed on any previous projects or phases have been complied with. **Delete, regulatory.**

5.e During extraction operations stockpile top soil and protect it from blowing in order to allow for eventual reclamation. **Delete, regulatory under the County’s MS4 permit and State mining and reclamation requirements.**

#### 6. Transportation

The County's adopted Major Transportation Corridors Plan (1985 or as amended) should be consulted when reviewing proposed developments in the planning area. **Regulatory as a part of the County Master Plan, the consistency with which is a criteria that is considered in reviewing development applications.**

## Goal

6.A Provide an integrated transportation system which protects and compliments the environment and serves area and regional travel demands with safety, economy, efficiency and comfort. **Consider keeping for County-wide applicability if not as a County-wide objective.**

## Policies

6.1 -Design the transportation system so that disruption of sensitive environmental features, agricultural operations, and existing or platted residential areas is minimized. **Keep, County-wide.**

6.2 - Discourage unnecessary traffic through the forested and low density residential areas by providing alternative alignments and, where appropriate, incorporating designs which limit through traffic movements. **Delete or otherwise reword. Regional transportation planning efforts should not be inhibited by the unilateral objectives of a given sub-area. With that being said, appropriate consideration should be given to sensitive character areas of the County when planning for and constructing an efficient and sustainable transportation network.**

6.3 -Upgrade primary transportation corridors (e.g. Shoup, Black Forest, Vollmer) in low density residential areas to promote safety. Where possible these improvements should be made within existing rights-of-way. **Keep, but consider expanding the list to include similar roadways throughout the County.**

6.4 -Minimize direct access to the Timbered Area from any future expressway which may be constructed through the southern part of the planning area. **Keep, but consider expanding to other similar character areas in the County. Direct access to an expressway classification of road does not meet road criteria.**

6.5 -Reduce the need for single passenger vehicle trips by encouraging alternative modes of transportation, specifically ridesharing. **Keep, but expand to incorporate other multi-modal options that are supported by existing, adopted plans.**

6.6 - Reserve adequate rights-of-way for roads indicated as potential major transportation corridors. **Keep, County-wide, but also addressed in the dedication/reservation requirements of the Land Development Code.**

6.7 - Protect the right-of-way along Meridian Road for future upgrading, but encourage any north-south expressway to locate east of the tree line. **Keep.**

6.8 - Upgrade road layouts in existing subdivisions to accommodate school busses and emergency vehicles if access is needed. **Keep, but additional coordination with DPW is appropriate. Because many**

of the roads in the Black Forest and other parts of the county are substandard, but also platted prior to modern design standards, it is presumptive to believe that they can be unilaterally be upgraded.

6.9 - Ensure that roads within forested areas meet Wildfire Hazard Guidelines developed by the Colorado State Forest Service. **Delete.** Because many of the roads in the Black Forest and other parts of the county are substandard, but also platted prior to modern design standards, it is presumptive to believe that they can be unilaterally be upgraded.

6.10 - Develop the northern and eastern rights-of-way along paved roads for non-motorized use to improve public safety. **Delete, regulatory, not consistent with the Parks Master Plan.**

#### Proposed Actions

6.a In conjunction with the regional Ridesharing Program, a process should be initiated to designate sites for Park and Ride facilities. **Keep, but expand to County-wide applicability.**

6.b The investigation of subsidized, shared transportation alternatives initiated through the Rural Transportation Development Program should be supported. Special consideration should be given to the elderly and handicapped. **Delete, with recognition that other regional efforts have since implemented or otherwise supplanted this action.**

6.c An early decision regarding the alignment of major transportation corridors in and adjacent to the planning area should be reached. These corridors should be south and west of the trees. **Delete, in favor of continued efforts to update the Major Transportation Corridors Plan.**

6.d Subdivision roads should be designed to minimize direct access onto existing or planned major transportation corridors and to minimize the need for paving. **Delete, regulatory.**

6.e Direct access to Woodmen Road and State Highway 83 should be strictly limited to preserve their potential function as limited access expressways. **Keep, but recognize that access is strictly regulated and Highway 83 access is controlled by the State.**

6.f The preparation of Subdivision Improvements Agreements which postpone the extension, widening or paving of local streets until they are necessitated by demand should be supported. However, these agreements must ensure that the improvements are made at the developers expense when needed. In some cases plat restrictions may have to be employed (refer to the Transportation Section in Chapter II for additional discussion). **Delete.**

6.g Road rights-of-way and easements which upon review by the County Department of Transportation are determined not to be essential, and which may result in substandard roads or access points should be vacated. **Keep, but recognize that such efforts should be coordinated with adjacent landowners where possible and initiated on a case-by-case basis when appropriate.**

6.h Problem intersections and alignments such as Vollmer/ Black Forest Road should be redesigned. **Keep, but reword to allow for County-wide applicability and reference inclusion of responsible jurisdictions.**

6.i Roads should be designed to avoid blind intersections. **Delete, regulatory.**

6.j Strict enforcement of speed limits, load limits and control of unauthorized off-road vehicles should be employed. **Delete as this is not a comprehensive planning actionable item.**

6.k Reflective markers should be placed along roadways in open areas to enhance visibility. **Delete, regulatory.**

## 7. Government

Note: Policies which may be adopted as a result of the Co-operative Planning Program should be coordinated with and used in conjunction with these policies if applicable. **The referenced cooperative planning program is not in place.**

### Goal

7.A Promote responsiveness in government which results in cooperation between public and private entities and provides equitable representation for all citizens. **This is a great goal, but is also very vague. Delete in favor of more targeted goals and objectives in the new Master Plan.**

### Policy

7.1 -Encourage citizen awareness, education and participation in the planning process, especially in the continued implementation of the Black Forest Preservation Plan. **Keep, but reword to allow for County-wide applicability.**

### Proposed Actions

7.a Citizens of the planning area should continue to meet periodically to review, interpret, implement and propose amendments to the Plan. These activities should preferably be coordinated through a single organization such as the Black Forest Land Use Committee. **Delete in favor of similar intentional efforts on a County-wide scale. Actions like this should charge County planning staff with continually engaging citizens to ensure that El Paso County has a well-planned future that supports the objectives of the overall community.**

7.b Black Forest citizens should be invited to participate in the policy formulation stage of the Cooperative Planning Program. **Any cooperative planning program between the County and neighboring municipalities or counties, or governmental entities must be approved by the Board of County Commissioners. It is appropriate for citizens to provide input, but the Board of County commissioners must develop the policies.**

7.c Copies of all relevant land use petitions should be transmitted to the Black Forest Land Use Committee or other appropriate group for review and comment. It is suggested that proposals be informally presented by the applicant to planning area residents prior to formal submittal. Consistency with applicable Master Plan elements should be specifically addressed at this time. **Delete in favor of County-wide community engagement objectives for land development proponents. Referral of land use applications to recognized and geographically relevant community groups is the standard practice of the Planning and Community Development Department. Continued support for this practice should be articulated in the new Master Plan.**

7.d Copies of the Black Forest Preservation Plan Executive Summary should be widely disseminated among area residents and local decision makers. **Delete.**

7.e Local news media should continue to be used to inform residents of issues and to provide a forum for discussion. **Delete, somewhat vague.**

7.f Land use proposals affecting properties in proximity to the Tri-Lakes Planning Area should be transmitted for review to an appropriate citizens' group representing that area if such group is available. **See the response above to 7.c.**

## 8. Natural Environment Goal

8.A Protect the integrity of the natural systems in the Black Forest. **Keep, but reword for County-wide applicability.**

### Policies

8.1 Preserve and enhance the natural environment and wildlife of the planning area. **Keep, County-wide.**

8.2 -Protect and maintain the area's drainage courses in their natural condition by promoting designs and densities which are sensitive to natural drainage patterns. **Keep, County-wide.**

8.3 -Require sensible conservation and reclamation practices when extraction of natural resources in the planning area is necessary. **Consider deleting due to regulatory implications.**

8.4 -Protect the area's wildlife by preserving and enhancing habitat, especially wildlife corridors. **Keep, County-wide.**

8.5 -Encourage selective timber cutting to protect the health of the remaining stand and to mitigate wildfire hazards. **Keep, determine if there is countywide applicability for other forested areas, but reword to provide greater detail supported by best management practices and lessons learned from recent events.**

8.6 -Prevent overgrazing in the area. **Delete. The County does not regulate "grazing" or "overgrazing".**

8.7 -Minimize development of the meadows within the forested area. **Very vague. Delete in favor of consistency with character area descriptors.**

8.8 -Protect and encourage the proper use of all mineral resources and reclaim excavations in accordance with the County's Mineral Resources Master Plan and the State's Mined Land Reclamation requirements. **Delete. This is inherent in the county's approval of extraction operations, and reclamation is a primary function of the state.**

8.9 -Support development plans which minimize the need for regrading extensive areas, and which utilize phasing and prompt revegetation to reduce wind and water erosion impacts on those areas which are disturbed. **Partially regulatory, particularly with regard to erosion impacts. Keep the first line for County-wide applicability.**

8.10 -Use particular care in planning developments in the areas of high erosion potential in the southwestern portion of the planning area. **Keep, but reword for County-wide applicability. Targeting specific character areas for erosion sensitive policies may be appropriate in the new Master Plan.**

#### Proposed Actions

8.a Land owners should be encouraged to work with the State Forest Service to develop individualized forest management plans for disease prevention and wildfire hazard mitigation. **Keep, County-wide.**

8.b The large lot clustering alternatives (as described in the Overall Density Options Section of Chapter II) should be specifically promoted for the purpose of preserving unique natural features such as ponds and meadows. **Keep, but modify and consider countywide. The overall density options were developed before the county had adopted the PUD zoning regulations. This can be a valuable tool to implement subdivision open space desires and natural features.**

8.c Land owners should develop appropriate erosion control, watershed conservation and runoff control systems for their property with the assistance of the Soil Conservation Service. **Keep, County-wide.**

8.d Land owners should be encouraged to utilize fencing and land management techniques to prevent overgrazing of grasslands and meadows. **Keep, but expand the fencing language to address wildlife compatibility.**

8.e Firebreaks should be incorporated into the design of all appropriate subdivisions, road-ways and transmission lines. **Keep, County-wide where applicable.**

8.f The use of off-road vehicles in the planning area should be discouraged since they are a primary source of fugitive dust and noise. **Delete; the County does not generally regulate the use of such vehicles on private property. Regulatory on public property.**

8.g If development or mineral extraction plans are approved they should incorporate sequential phasing if possible. These plans should require reclamation or full stabilization of preceding phases prior to disturbance of additional areas. **Regulatory and addresses in the LDC. Delete.**

## Water Resources

### Policies (also see policies under Water/Wastewater)

8.11 -Ascertain and monitor the area's water supply by analyzing all sources and withdrawals in addition a long term program to regularly monitor water levels at various depths should be established to provide a satisfactory data base. **Keep, County-wide. Support for this is also found in the recently adopted Water Master Plan, however any monitoring should be developed in a systematic and scientific manner.**

8.12 -Preserve the quantity and quality of water resources through maximum retention, recharge and reuse of surface and ground water supplies. **Delete in favor of the Water Master Plan.**

8.13 -Preserve natural drainage channels and ground cover to protect the integrity of aquifers. **Keep, County-wide, although generally regulatory.**

8.14 -Minimize the use of water resources through education to encourage drought tolerant landscaping using native vegetation. **Keep, County-wide.**

8.15 -To the degree possible under its land use authority the County should discourage any exportation of groundwater which would adversely impact individual wells or the ecological integrity of the planning area. **Delete; determining the adverse impacts are beyond the regulatory authority of the County. The physical facilities to export water may be subject to the 1041 regulations, depending upon size of facilities.**

### Proposed Actions- Water Resources

8.h The U.S. Geological Survey, the Colorado Division of Water Resources and the County Hydrogeologist should more precisely determine and regularly monitor the water balance in the planning area. **Keep, but reword as appropriate. Consider as a more meaningful, highly prioritized action item of the new Master Plan and Water Master Plan. Any monitoring should be developed in a systematic and scientific manner.**

8.i The potential impact of exports of groundwater out of the planning area on local ground water levels should be carefully considered by the above agencies. **Delete; we cannot impose our Master Planning goals and objectives on federal and state agencies.**

8.j Developers should be encouraged to place deed restrictions on the gross land area which may be irrigated. **Delete.**

8.k In subdivisions with lots of two and one half (2 ½ ) acres or greater, encourage the use of well designed septic systems over the use of centralized systems as a means of minimizing consumptive water loss (subject to findings of adequacy by the State and County Health Departments). **Regulatory, delete. Interestingly, many water augmentation plans approved by the Court now require utilization of subsurface disposal to meet augmentation requirements.**

8.1 Where possible careful siting and setbacks rather than substantial channel modifications should be used to address drainage requirements. **Regulatory, delete.**

8.m When constructing drainage appurtenances consideration should be given to visual appeal and environmental sensitivity. **Keep, County-wide.**

## 9. Community Services and Public Facilities Goal

9.A Provide adequate, efficient and economically feasible community services and public facilities to the planning area. **Keep, but update, expand, or otherwise revise to allow for County-wide applicability.**

### Policies- Community Services

9.1 - Provide for emergency health care services which are readily available to the residents of the planning area. **Delete in favor of a broader County-wide discussion and policies pertaining to health care services.**

9.2 -Increase the library services to the planning area as the population increases. **Re-evaluate given advancements in technology and expansion of educational and library systems and facilities.**

9.3 -Encourage the continued use of the Black Forest Community Center and joint use of quasi-public and public buildings such as schools and churches: **Keep, sub-area specific.**

### Proposed Actions- Community Services

9.a The existing bookmobile service to the planning area should be promoted, and a permanent facility should be considered in the future. **Reevaluate and/or expand the conversation at a sub-area level based upon community input.**

9.b. Support the location of non-emergency out-patient medical facilities in appropriate commercial locations in the planning area. **Keep, but expand the scope to consider applicability in other similarly situated areas throughout the County.**

### Policies- Schools

9.4 - Encourage cooperation between the County, other governmental entities, the development community and area school districts to reserve adequate and appropriate school sites in a timely manner. **Countywide, keep, but recognize school district master planning efforts and the regulatory aspect of school land dedication and fees in lieu of land dedication. Creative solutions to identifying and reserving school lands for immediate or future use should be encouraged.**

9.5 -Promote multiple utilization of school facilities for such uses as recreation, adult education, vocational training, senior citizens programs and community events. **Keep, County-wide.**

### Proposed Actions- Schools

9.c Analyze proposed school sites to ensure that they are not located in flood plains or immediately adjacent to proposed major transportation corridors. **Modify as countywide. The county should coordinate with the school districts regarding dedication of school sites through the subdivision process.**

9.d The interconnection of school sites with recreation areas and trail corridors should be encouraged. **Keep, County-wide.**

#### Policies- Parks and Open Space

9.6 -Support the provision and enhancement of both usable and perceptual open space (refer to Land Use Scenario, Concept Plan and Visual Analysis). **Keep, County-wide, but replace with policies (perhaps from other more recently adopted plans) that have more depth or otherwise include more actionable language.**

9.7 -Preserve and improve existing park and recreation areas and reserve additional areas in advance to be developed as needed. **Keep as a generally desired goal, but defer to the expertise of the County Parks department for prioritization of County facilities.**

9.8 - Integrate drainage ways into a linear park and open space system where appropriate. **Keep, County-wide.**

9.9 -Encourage larger subdivisions to provide and maintain usable and preferably inter-connected open spaces. **Keep, County-wide.**

9.10 - Provide sufficient and accessible active recreation facilities (ball fields, tennis courts, etc.) in the planning area. **Keep, County-wide.**

#### Proposed Actions- Parks and Open Space

9.e Explore a program to fully utilize the recreation potential of large State parcels in the planning area. **Delete in favor of policies supporting collaboration with applicable State agencies.**

9.f Limit off-road use of snow-mobles and off road motorized vehicles to designated areas (also see policy under Natural Environment). **Delete, regulatory.**

9.g The Black Forest Trails group should be encouraged to continue and publicize their efforts to promote equestrian trails through the use of easements and fence setbacks. **Delete; unique to an established community group.**

9.h Specific stream corridors should be designated as open space corridors in cooperation with the County and City Parks Departments as well as the County Department of Transportation. **Keep as a generally desired goal, but defer to the expertise of the County Parks department for prioritization of County facilities.**

#### Policies- Water/Wastewater (also see policies under Water Resources)

Notes:

1) The adopted El Paso County Water Supply Regulations (November 20, 1986 or as amended) should be referred to County-wide statements on water policy. **Delete. These are regulations.**

2) The adopted Project Aquarius (208) Water Quality Management Plan Update (July, 1986 or as amended) along with the Land Development Code should be referred to for County-wide and management area statements on wastewater policy. **Delete, Regulatory in the LDC.**

9.11 - Discourage the construction of large centralized water and sewer systems in rural residential areas to avoid direct or indirect growth inducement. **Keep, County-wide unless otherwise compelled by regulatory standards.**

9.12 - Encourage the joint utilization of regional water and sanitation systems in urban density areas, and discourage the proliferation of small individual systems. **Keep, County-wide.**

9.13 - Discourage the drilling of wells in urban density areas for the purpose of landscape irrigation. **Keep, County-wide.**

9.14 - Support development proposals which incorporate water conservation, aquifer recharge and water reuse within the limits of the adopted Land Use Scenario. **Keep, but reword to incorporate recently adopted policy language from the Water Master Plan, as appropriate.**

#### Proposed Actions

9.i Support a change in the Colorado Division of Water Resources' administration of the Denver Basin Rules which would allow the option of providing water for horses (private stables) when otherwise restricting a new well permit to in-house use only. **Delete, regulatory and beyond the authority of the County.**

9.j Relevant elements of the Black Forest Preservation Plan should be incorporated into the Area-wide Water Quality Plan and process along with the direct input of citizen representatives. **Delete.**

9. k El Paso County should coordinate with the Denver Regional Council of Governments in the preparation and implementation of, their Cherry Creek Basin Water Quality Plan. **Delete.**

#### 10. Visual and Historical Goal

10.A To preserve and enhance the visual and historical resources of the planning area for the benefit of County residents. **Keep, County-wide, as appropriate given the respective character areas.**

Policies (also refer to the Visual Design Recommendations contained in this Chapter.)

10.1. - Encourage new developments to use innovative siting and design techniques to enhance prime visual features such as the Front Range, the Timbered Area edge, relict prairie meadows, natural drainage ways, the grasslands and farm structures. **Keep, County-wide.**

10.2 - Mitigate adverse visual impacts caused by road cuts, utility lines, outside storage, water tanks, building scale, through the use of color, siting, screening and berming. **Keep, but reword to ensure consistency with regulations.**

10.3 - Encourage advertising signs to be compatible with the surrounding environment, to have a low profile, and be shared where possible. **Regulatory, delete.**

10.4 - Protect historic sites and structures and preferably incorporate them as a part of development plans. **Keep, County-wide.**

10.5 - Prohibit commercial communications towers in the planning area. Any private towers which are constructed should be as unobtrusive as possible given technical, safety, economic and other considerations. **Delete, regulatory and unrealistic. Stealthing techniques should be emphasized where appropriate in select character areas throughout the County.**

10.6 - Minimize the number and visual obtrusiveness of utility corridors necessary in the planning area through a combination of advance planning and consolidation of facilities. **Conceptually retain, but update the language to support County-wide policies and goals for expansion and co-location of utilities. Also, siting of utilities is generally a regulatory issue pursuant to the County's 1041 regulations, notwithstanding a finding of master plan consistency for issuance of 1041 Permits.**

#### Proposed Actions

10.a The County should vigorously enforce zoning regulations pertaining to improper outside storage of materials, vehicles and heavy equipment in cases of valid complaints. **Keep, County-wide.**

10.b The County, the citizens of the planning area and the development community should routinely consider potential adverse visual impacts as a step in the development review process. Petitions for special uses and variances should be treated with discretion. **Keep, County-wide, but reword to acknowledge established regulatory screening requirements.**

10.c In areas where potentially significant historical sites or structures could be negatively impacted by proposed development, the State Historic Preservation Office should be notified to determine if a survey and mitigation steps would be appropriate. **Keep, countywide.**

10.d Consistent with the Visual Design Recommendations in this Chapter, utility corridors should be designed with a minimum disruption to view corridors and standing vegetation. Utility transmission towers less than two-hundred (200) feet in height should be designed and painted as unobtrusively as possible. **Delete in favor of broader, County-wide utility policies and actions.**

10.e Where practical and especially in open areas local utility lines should be placed below ground. **Keep, County-wide, but expand to elaborate on what constitutes "where practical".**

10.f Water tanks and other comparable facilities should be sited, designed and painted to minimize their visual obtrusiveness. **Keep, County-wide.**







## **BLACK FOREST TRAILS ADDENDUM (1999)**

### **Note LDC and ECM came after this plan**

#### A.4.1. Trail Integration

##### Goal

A.4.1.A. Create a County Regional Trail and Open Space System that serves residents of the Black Forest Planning Area, and allows residents to integrate neighborhood trails into that system. **Parks Master Plan**

Policy A.4.1.1. Support completion of the County Regional Trail and Open Space System in Black Forest. **Parks Master Plan**

##### Proposed Actions

A.4.1.a. Refine and establish the regional trail system through the Black Forest with the assistance of its residents and cooperation of the Development Community. (See map, Section A.5) **Parks Master Plan**

A.4.1.b. The Black Forest Trails Association should help the County Parks Department identify and map primary trail corridors in the Black Forest Planning Area. **Parks Master Plan**

#### A.4.2. Roads as Trails

##### Goal

A.4.2.A. Integrate unpaved roads and trails adjacent to paved roads into the trail network. **Parks Master Plan**

##### Policies

A.4.2.1. Support the DOT in creating the most conducive and safe means for transportation throughout the Black Forest. **Countywide**

A.4.2.2. Strongly encourage the DOT to consider the impact on the area's present and future trails when choosing dust abatement alternatives in Black Forest. **Countywide**

##### Proposed Actions

A.4.2.a. Provide a minimum 10-foot trail area along all new neighborhood roads in compliance with the County Road Surfacing Policy. This trail area will be platted as a public DOT non-motorized, shared-use easement when outside the road right-of-way. Public access within these easements will be protected by the County. **Regulatory. Not provided for in the ECM typical road cross sections or the LDC.**

A.4.2.b. Support creation of a county-wide bicycle plan that identifies appropriate transportation corridors within Black Forest, then direct the DOT to add bike lanes on the identified roads as additional

right-of-way is acquired, major road reconstruction is undertaken, and transportation enhancement funding permits. **Neither the PC or PCD can direct DPW to do something. Addressed in the MTCP.**

A.4.2.c. Incorporate guidelines for trails along neighborhood roads as well as guidelines for offset roads into all relevant DOT policies, manuals and guidelines. **Countywide, but note that neighborhood roads in mountainous or forested areas are different than prairie or urban settings.**

A.4.2.d. Adopt best management practices as county guidelines for the pruning and removal of trees in the road right-of-way, in order to make room for trails on right-of-way of existing roads. **ECM. Typically trails are not in the same right of way as the road. Previous efforts to prune or remove trees which were a road hazard resulted in strong neighborhood objection.**

#### A.4.3. Trails In New Developments

##### Goals

A.4.3.A. Provide neighborhood trails that can ultimately connect to the regional trail system for all new developments. **Parks Master Plan. This ignores the discontinuous boundaries of new development when it says "all".**

A.4.3.B. Protect trail easements recorded on plats and in covenants from closure through County action. **Eliminate. County actions which typically require a vacation action are public and deserve review on their own merit. (trail connection in Monument area, equestrian easements in Peyton Pines). Covenants are not a county issue.**

##### Policies

A.4.3.1. Encourage trail and public rights-of-way specific to: 1) the regional trails; 2) mapped trails in the planning area; 3) trails in adjacent and nearby neighborhoods; and 4) intra-development connecting trails. **Parks Master Plan**

A.4.3.2. Locate trails in areas that serve a multipurpose function and limit the impact on future property owners. Locations that may be considered but are not exclusive to trails are: utility easements, section lines, property lines, drainage ways, flood plains, preservation and conservation areas. **Parks Master Plan**

##### Proposed Actions

A.4.3.a. Include and protect trails on plat plans and by covenants. **Reflected on plats. County does not enforce covenants.**

A.4.3.b. Indicate all trails on plats and in covenants as open to all non-motorized trail users. **Regulatory. LDC requires trails to be shown on plats, and describe the use of those trails. Localized trails in urban area should be limited to walking trails, since horses are not necessarily allowed under the zoning in urbanized areas.**

A.4.3.c. Provide trail easements to allow convenient, non-motorized travel throughout the entire subdivision. For example, trail easements could be located along interior roadways as well as around the entire development with at least one interior trail connecting to the perimeter trail. Ultimately, each new development should design a trail system that best fits its natural topography and the needs of its future users, while remaining sensitive to the concerns of adjoining property owners. **Countywide, if this for a larger subdivision. However, most of the discussions about trails presume that there is someone to construct and maintain them. This will usually be through a HOA, or a Special District unless they are approved for dedication to the County. HOA's typically would not want to own and maintain a public trail, but would desire it to be utilized by its community members.**

A.4.3.d. Encourage developers to meet with appropriate community members and adjoining property owners to review and discuss all aspects of proposed development plans before finalizing them for County consideration. **Regulatory. Currently a part of the development process.**

A.4.3.e. Indicate that all trails are open on the plat plans and in the covenants, as long as watersheds are protected from defoliation and erosion and wildlife trails and corridors are preserved for wildlife. At a minimum, there should be one designated open trail that allows users to traverse a neighborhood to reach an adjoining neighborhood or trail. **Most of the discussions about trails presume that there is someone to construct and maintain them. This will usually be through a HOA, or a Special District unless they are approved for dedication to the County. HOA's typically would not want to own and maintain a public trail, but would desire it to be utilized by its community members.**

A.4.3.f. Encourage developers of business parks and commercial property to include a network of trails in their development plans. This network should also connect to surrounding neighborhoods and follow the policies stated above. **Countywide. Interesting that this is in the Black Forest Plan, where little commercial is entertained.**

A.4.3.g. Install signage on all trails to help insure that users stay on them. **Regulatory. If owned and maintained by the County then must follow Parks standards.**

A.4.3.h. Revise County Planning Regulations to require new, rural, residential subdivisions not suited for sidewalks, to include a system of public, shared-use trails. Regional park fees should not be waived when fulfilling this County requirement. **Rural (2 ½ acre lot size or larger) are not required to include a sidewalk. It is Parks Advisory Board that recommends waiver of fees, and BoCC that authorizes it.**

A.4.3.i. Recommend that the County actively support all platted trail easements by protecting them from closure, thus ensuring the continuity of a subdivision's planned trail system for perpetuity. **Except in a PUD, the county cannot make a trail easement on private property stay open. Closure, in the form of a vacation, requires a public process.**

#### A.4.4. Trails In Existing Neighborhoods

##### Goal

A.4.4.A. Recognize the value of trails and the important role they play in the daily lives and the lifestyles of all residents in existing developments. Trails are safer than roads for non-motorized uses. Trails help deter neighborhood crime. Trails encourage social interaction and create tighter-knit communities. **Statement, not a goal.**

#### Policies

A.4.4.1 Encourage residents to enforce and follow trail covenants and existing plat plans that include trails to ensure continuity of the trail system. **Countywide**

A.4.4.2. Encourage neighborhoods with trails to connect to the identified trail corridors (see map, Section A.5) as well as trails in adjoining neighborhoods. **Countywide**

A.4.4.3. Encourage residents in neighborhoods that do not have trails in their covenants or plat plans to create a local trail system. **Countywide**

#### Proposed Actions

A.4.4.a. Coordinate, between the County, residents, and homeowners associations, to work together to review plat plans of older subdivisions to identify and reopen abandoned trails and closed easements to ensure a complete trail system. **Countywide. Parks Department.**

A.4.4.b. Establish a "Neighborhood Trail System", supported by covenant and legal documentation. These trails, established by residents and homeowners associations, may be located on unpaved roads, along interior paved roadways, on utility easements, and section lines, as well as in drainage ways, floodplains and preservation areas for minimum impact on property owners and wildlife. **Could encourage neighborhoods to establish, but establishing trails on unpaved roads is perhaps contrary to county policy, trails have no rights to utilize a utility easement on private property, and trails are not authorized on undeveloped section lines .**

A.4.4.c. Indicate all trails on plats and in covenants as open to all non-motorized trail users. **Regulatory. LDC requires trails to be shown on plats, and describe the use of those trails. Localized trails in urban area should be limited to walking trails, since horses are not necessarily allowed under the zoning in urbanized areas.**

A.4.4.d. Install signage on all trails to help ensure that users stay on them. A.4.4.e. Support local trail associations' educational efforts to educate existing developments of the benefits of trails (i.e., safety, crime reduction, social interaction, property value, etc.) **Countywide. Can be through parks or a healthy community's initiative.**

A.4.4.f. Establish a tax rebate program, supported by the County, for landowners who allow trails easements on their property. These easements can either create a connection to the Regional Trail System or create an open trail that allows an adjoining, existing development access to the Regional Trail System. **Eliminate. Tax rebates must be authorized by statute?**

#### A.4.5. Networking with Government and Trails Organizations

##### Goal

A.4.5.A. Improve ongoing communication between government agencies and trails organizations to increase the likelihood of project coordination and the ultimate success of those projects.

Countywide

##### Policy

A.4.5.1. Promote an information-clearing house which government officials and trail advocates can access, to find each other and access project updates. Eliminate. Already provided by the Trails and Open Space Coalition.

##### Proposed Actions

A.4.5.a. Increase the opportunities for communication and cooperation among County Parks, Planning, Transportation, the Colorado Division of Wildlife, and all other appropriate county departments and state agencies to work together for trail development within the county. Countywide

A.4.5.b. Ensure that trails are entered into all the appropriate transportation plans of local, regional, state and federal agencies. Eliminate. Trails are not in the MTCP.

A.4.5.c. Utilize volunteers to create and maintain a current database of appropriate local, regional, state and federal government agencies as well as trail organizations. The information should include the contact person, address, phone, and the organization's focus. It should also include the status on key local, regional, and state trail projects. The County Parks Department should assist this effort. Already provided by the Trails and Open Space Coalition.

A.4.5.d. Make information available to all interested landowners, developers, and citizens from the database to help facilitate trail development. Already provided by the Trails and Open Space Coalition.

#### A.4.6. Funding for Trails

##### Goals

A.4.6.A. Obtain the funding necessary for the County to acquire and maintain regional trail corridors. Parks Department

A.4.6.B. Develop County programs that financially support the development of trails. Parks Department

##### Policies

A.4.6.1. Support increased County funding for trail development. Parks Department

A.4.6.2. Encourage the County to apply for private and government grants to fund trail development. **Parks Department**

#### Proposed Actions

A.4.6.a. Increase County Parks' overall budget, thereby increasing the amount earmarked for regional acquisition and development. **Parks Department**

A.4.6.b. Identify opportunities to establish public/private partnerships to facilitate new trail easements on private land. **Parks Department**

A.4.6.c. Investigate all funding sources and apply for those that are appropriate to finance trail projects. **Parks Department**

A.4.6.d. Form public/private partnerships whenever possible to increase the number of grants for which the County would be eligible. **Parks Department**

A.4.6.e. Utilize volunteers to work on fund-raising campaigns so that the County can raise the matching funds required to receive most trail grants. **Parks Department**

A.4.6.f. Direct the County Department of Transportation to apply for transportation enhancement funding to implement a county-wide bicycle plan that identifies appropriate transportation corridors within the Black Forest. **MTCP. Neither the PC or PCD can direct DPW to do something.**

#### A.4.7. Trail Maintenance

##### Goal

A.4.7.A. Preserve well maintained, clean trails important to the area's ecology and which add to the enjoyment of living in the Black Forest. **Countywide, Parks Department**

##### Policy

A.4.7.1. Encourage ongoing cooperation between government organizations, homeowners associations, trails organizations, community organizations and landowners to keep trails clean and in good repair and free of noxious weeds. **Countywide, Parks Department**

#### Proposed Actions

A.4.7.a. Organize, with the help of the Black Forest Trails Association, an annual Community Trail Day each spring to: 1) control and repair erosion; 2) repair and replace trail signs; 3) pick up trash; and 4) trim tree limbs to provide overhead and side clearance. Volunteers would also investigate and report on any recently closed trails. **Countywide, Parks Department**

A.4.7.b. Travel the trails each Fall to pick up trash and identify key project areas for repair during the next spring. Members of the Black Forest Trails Association should organize these trips. **Parks Department. Is this appropriate if (c) below is followed?**

A.4.7.c. Organize an adopt-a-trail program for ongoing cleanup of local trails. The Black Forest Trails Association should organize these groups. County trails will remain under the county adopt-a-trail program. **Countywide, Parks Department**

#### A.4.8. Trail Education

##### Goal

A.4.8.A. Foster trails education as the foundation for developing, maintaining and protecting a trail system in the planning area. **Countywide, Parks Department**

##### Policy

A.4.8.1. Support a comprehensive educational program for landowners and trail users of all ages that promotes the development of trails and their proper care and use. **Countywide, Parks Department**

##### Proposed Actions

A.4.8.a. Create a speakers bureau which will develop new and utilize existing printed materials, and institute a local media plan to help eliminate misconceptions and educate the community about trails. This should be done in cooperation among the County Parks Department, the Black Forest Trails Association, the Black Forest Land Use Committee, the County Department of Transportation, and the Trails and Open Space Coalition. **Parks Department**

A.4.8.b. Identify liaisons to work with the Black Forest Trails Association, the Black Forest Land Use Committee and government officials in support of trails. **Parks Department**

A.4.8.c. Name a trail coordinator, from homeowners associations with trails, who will educate and work with residents in their neighborhood to protect and maintain trails and encourage their proper use. **Parks Department**

A.4.8.d. Educate school students about proper trail etiquette by using every opportunity to work with local schools. **Parks Department**

#### A.4.9. Trails Design

##### Goal

A.4.9.A. Accommodate both the needs of wildlife and non-motorized trail users (including but not limited to walkers, joggers, hikers, off-road bicyclists, equestrians, and cross-country skiers) in the design of trails in the Black Forest. **Countywide, Parks Department**

##### Policy

A.4.9.1. Encourage trails that add to the general quality of life in Black Forest through their organized placement and natural dirt. **Eliminate. How to measure?**

#### Proposed Actions

A.4.9.a. Design the optimum trail system in a subdivision, whether new or existing, to allow users: 1) to travel from their homes to a desired location by choosing among a variety of connecting loop trails that may be located between property lines, on other existing easements, along roads, in designated open space and any other areas deemed appropriate. 2) to connect to trails in neighboring subdivisions, which could exist now or may be built sometime in the future. 3) to connect to the County Regional Trail from their homes. **Appropriate for urban density subdivisions, but not rural density.**

A.4.9.b. Ensure that trail easements are at least 20 feet wide to safely accommodate the variety of non-motorized users who may choose to utilize them. **Regulatory. ECM utilizes 10 foot for multi-use path width and LDC utilizes 25 foot for a regional trail.**

A.4.9.c. Retain the existing natural dirt base, for the trail itself, to keep the character of the surrounding environment and eliminate construction costs as well as benefit the needs of the most varied number of users (walkers, joggers, equestrians, cross-country skiers, wildlife, etc). Trail erosion has not been a problem in Black Forest, as evidenced by popular, well-used neighborhood trails that are at least 20 years old. These trails are primarily used by area residents, not the entire County, as is the case on regional park trails. **Regulatory. Parks Department.**

A.4.9.d. Ensure that when the County constructs a surfaced trail, a parallel track be identified and left natural for those users who benefit from a softer, natural base. **Regulatory. Parks Department.**

A.4.9.e. Place trails located along roads within treed areas on the north and west sides of the road, whenever possible, to allow sunshine to melt ice and snow off the trail. **Regulatory. Not in the ECM.**

A.4.9.f. Mark all trails with signage to help ensure that users stay within the designated trail easement. **Regulatory. If owned and maintained by the County then must follow Parks standards.**

A.4.9.g. Consider the potential impact of trails on the adjoining property owners when a neighborhood locates a trail along the adjoining property line of another subdivision. If warranted, the impact may be mitigated by landscaping, the use of topography in trail placement, and any other reasonable means that would address adjoining landowners' concerns. **Really only applies to new development, therefore would be regulatory.**

A.4.9.h. Direct land developers, land planners, County Staff, homeowners associations and Black Forest residents to design trails that will provide the most benefit to resident users and wildlife. **Really only applies to new development, therefore would be regulatory.**