

# PARK COUNTY, COLORADO

## STRATEGIC MASTER PLAN

Prepared by:

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Durango, Colorado

Adopted in 2016

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# CHAPTER 1 STRATEGIC PLAN

## INTRODUCTION

### PREFACE

Park County has unmatched geographic diversity and there is no other place in Colorado that compares. Its diverse geography presents great opportunities. The characters of the communities in the county are as diverse as the geography. Mountain communities east of Kenosha Pass are tied to the Front Range economy and most have chosen to live in Park County because they prefer mountain/rural living. The Town of Fairplay is the county seat and the long established service hub for South Park with a mix of highway commercial, civic facilities, schools and a walkable, historic downtown. Alma is a mountain town and like all other communities in Park County, people choose to live in Alma or in the county around Alma because they like it. The same holds true for the other historic outposts in the county: Lake George, Guffey, Hartsel, Como, Jefferson, Grant, Shawnee, Bailey and Pine Junction. These places are the heart and soul of the county and have great potential to evolve and expand their roles as hubs and outposts.

Much has been accomplished since the 2001 Park County Strategic Master Plan was adopted to protect the natural and historic resources that have motivated people to make a life here, buy a vacation home or come recreate. The historic and recreation assets and rural lifestyle and landscape that have brought people to Park County remain intact. The challenge today is how to build a sustainable economy that fits these strengths. About two-thirds of working households commute out of the county for work. Commuting will always be part of the economy, but the vision is to plan longer term towards the next generations and develop more sustainable local economies. Preserving the character of the county will be part of the growth strategy, so economic growth needs to be in keeping with the attributes that have sustained Park County so far.

In between the municipalities and other historic places in the county are vast acreages of agricultural land, rough terrain and many thousands of vacant residential lots. On one hand, this is an oversupply of residential lots in a sparsely populated county and on the other hand, it is an opportunity. Park County has been successful because people want to live here and visit. Future residents and visitors are the key to building a sustainable economy and will generate demand for local goods and services, augment the tax base and most importantly, will bring businesses and skills. Many of the access roads to these subdivisions are built and are already maintained by the county and/or state. Internet and cellular phone and road infrastructure are crucial components for attracting residents to build on these lots and buy homes that will build long term sustainability into the economy.

With a balance between careful preservation and sustainable economic growth, Park County can evolve without sacrificing the things that make it ‘home’ to its residents and that attract visitors.

## ROLE OF THE STRATEGIC MASTER PLAN

The Strategic Master Plan is a document that provides not just a vision for the future but also sets out specific goals, policies, land use planning, and action steps for achieving the vision. The plan provides direction for county decisions about water and land conservation, economic development, land use and development patterns, infrastructure and services and coordination between Park County and the municipalities of Fairplay and Alma.

This is the community’s document and it can be used to protect the unique qualities and natural amenities that continue to make Park County such a unique place to live and visit. This plan will also serve to set the general guidance for future development and inform land-use decisions.

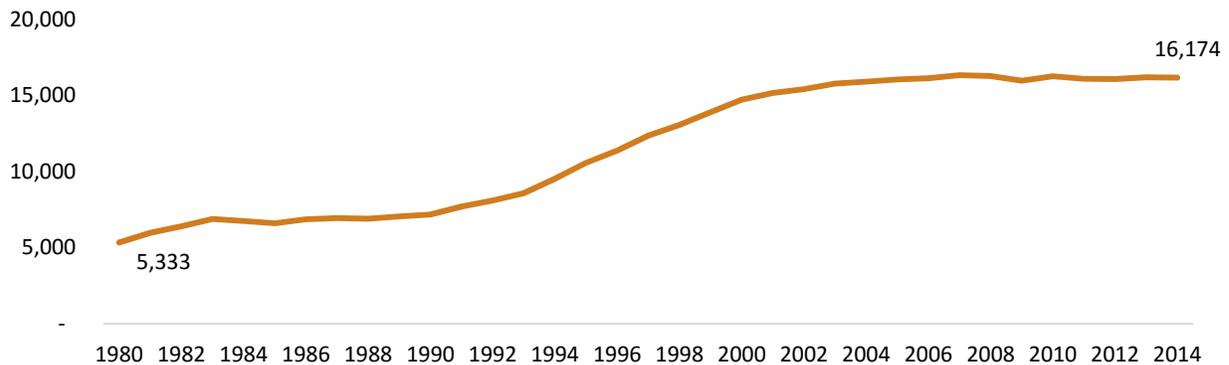
The Strategic Master Plan is not regulatory and does not change existing regulations, nor does it create new regulations. It is an advisory document that charts a direction for strategic economic and infrastructure planning and provides guidance for changes to the Land Use Regulations as a component of this strategic planning.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

It has been 15 years since the last Strategic Master Plan update and much has changed. The steep growth predicted by demographers in 2001 did not occur, growth has been slow. Two-thirds of working households work outside of the county and 11% of earners work from home. Incomes are highest in northern Park County where commuters have higher paying jobs on the Front Range. This overview shows how much the population distribution and economic basis vary throughout the county and compares Park County to other nearby counties to show how unique it is in the region.

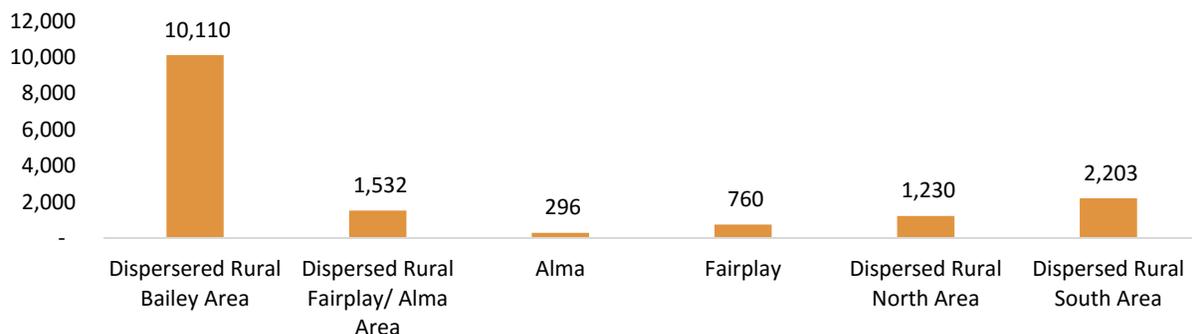
## DEMOGRAPHICS

**Figure 1. Park County Population 1980 – 2014**  
-US Census Bureau



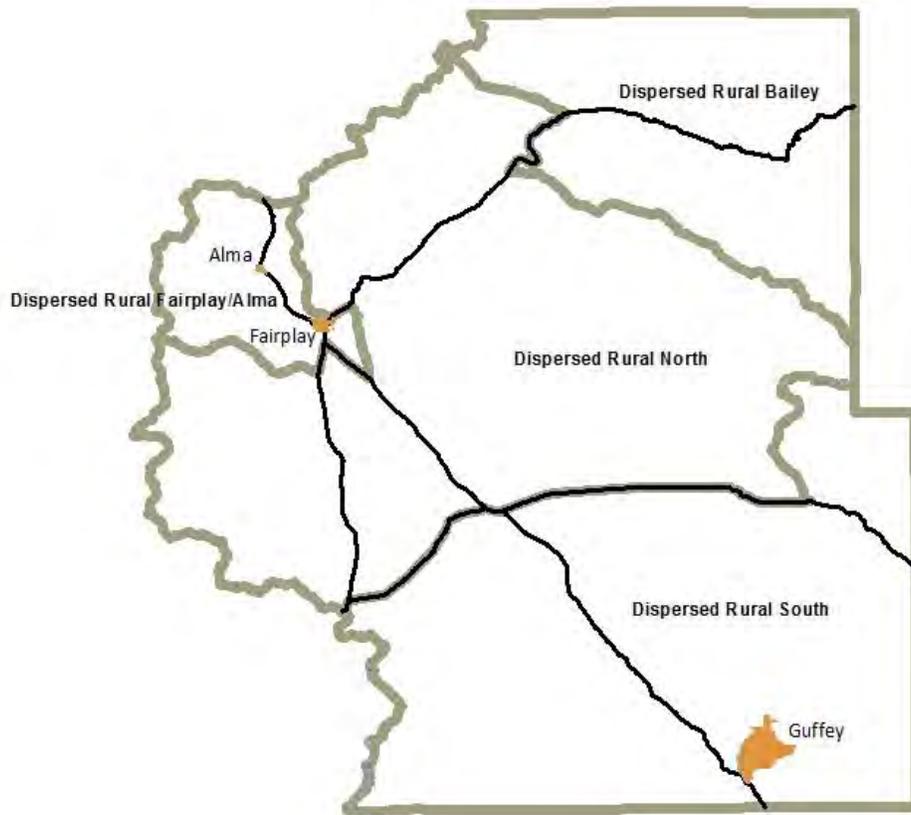
The population in Park County increased by 10,841 people between 1980 and 2014. In 1990 the population was 7,174 and by 2000 the population more than doubled to 14,729. The population continued to grow in the 2000's right up until the Great Recession hit in 2008 and people went elsewhere for jobs, since then the population has fluctuated but now seems to be slowly increasing.

**Figure 2. Total Population by Census Area 2013**  
-US Census Bureau



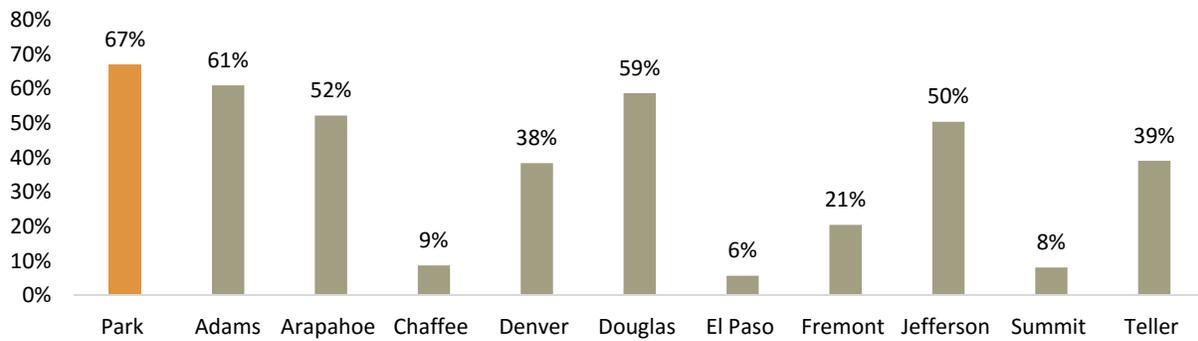
63% of Park County residents are located in the US Census Bureau’s dispersed rural Bailey area (see map below). The rural Bailey area appeals to people who want to work in the Denver Metro Area and live in a more rural and natural environment. The two municipalities in Park County, Alma and Fairplay, together make up 7% of the total population. The remaining 30% of the population is located in the dispersed rural north area, dispersed rural south area, and dispersed rural Fairplay/Alma area.

**Figure 3. US Census Designated Areas**



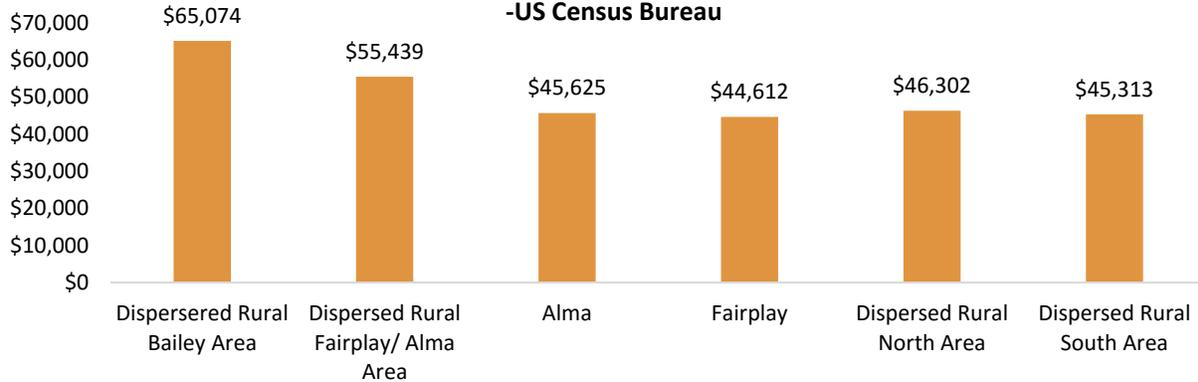
## ECONOMY

**Figure 4. Worked Outside of County of Residence 2013**  
-US Census Bureau



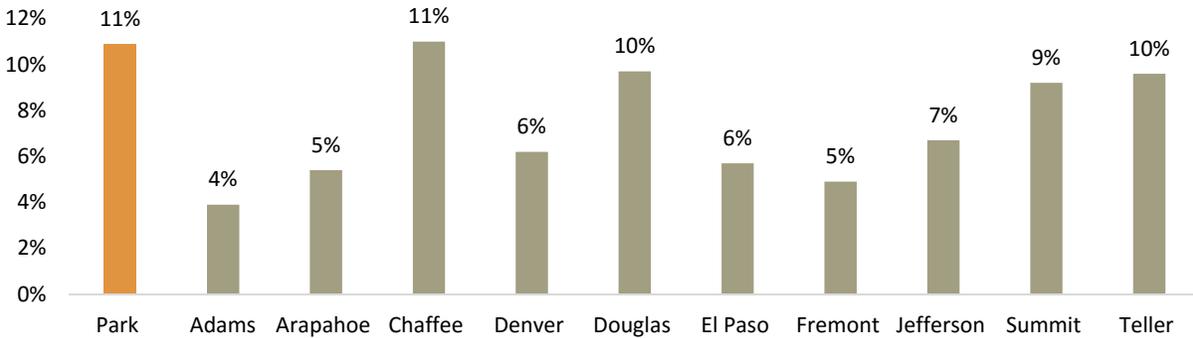
When compared to nearby counties, Park County has the highest percentage of residents who work outside of the county with 67% of the population commuting to other counties for employment. El Paso, Chaffee, and Summit Counties have very low percentages of residents working outside of their county of residence, indicating a more balanced job to population ratio.

**Figure 5. Median Household Income by Census Area 2013**  
-US Census Bureau



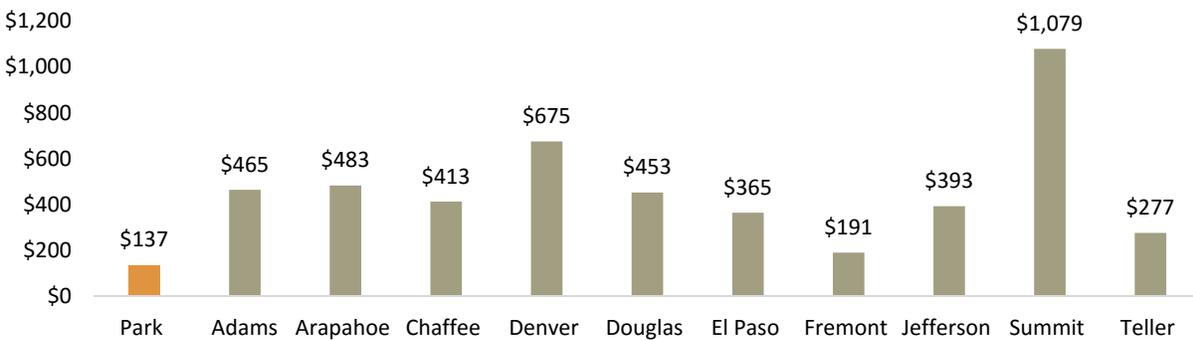
The median household income varies throughout the county. The rural Bailey area's median household income is \$65,074 and the household income in the rural south is \$45,313. A large percentage of the population in the dispersed rural Bailey area commute to the Front Range for employment bringing in higher incomes.

**Figure 6. Percentage of Population Working from Home 2013**  
 -US Census Bureau



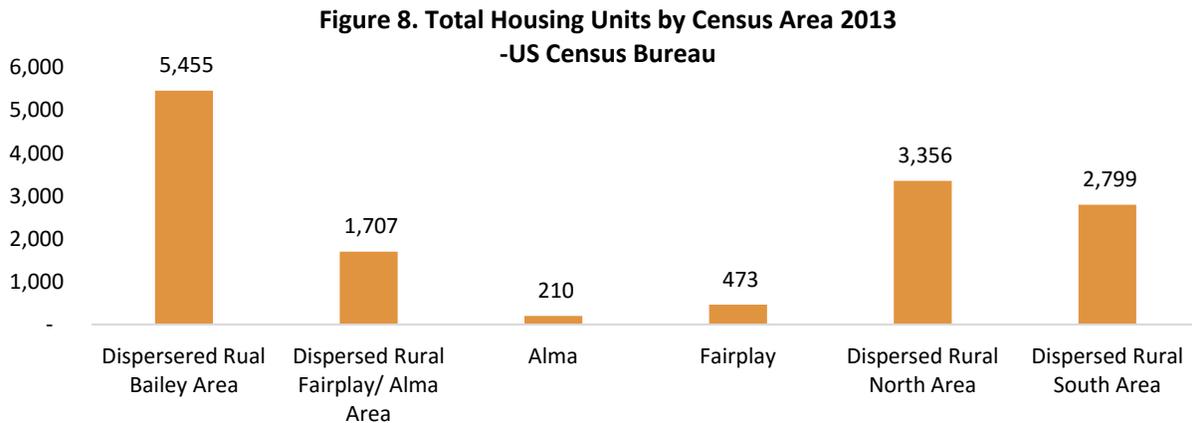
Park County is tied with Chaffee County for the highest percentage of the population working from home with 11%. This includes people providing services and products locally such as attorneys, professionals, massage therapists, as well as a growing number of location neutral businesses allowing people to work from their home via the internet. This is a tremendous opportunity for Park County going forward.

**Figure 7. State Sales Tax Per Capita 2014**  
 -Colorado Department of Revenue

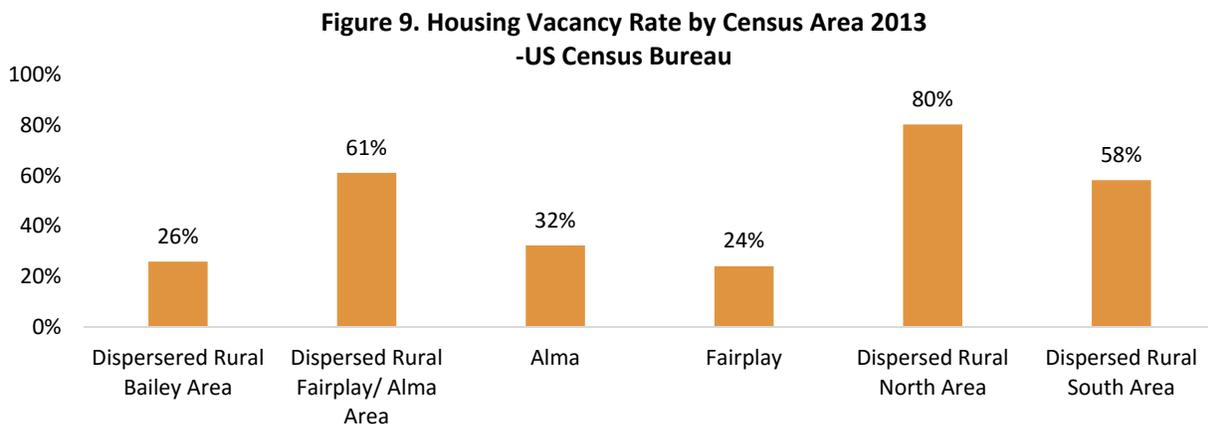


The state sales tax in Colorado is 2.9%. In 2014 Park County had a state sales tax collection of \$137 per capita. This is lower than all surrounding counties and represents the limited commercial development located in the county as well as the fact that many residents commute out of the county to work and tend to purchase goods and services near their place of work instead of near their homes. The high state sales tax revenues per capita in Summit County are indicative of its nature as a resort area for day trips originating in the Front Range. This “leakage” of sales to nearby counties represents an opportunity to better capture more resident spending by Park County businesses. There is a need for coordinating tourism and economic development groups to better capture local, year round sales and more visitor sales.

## HOUSING

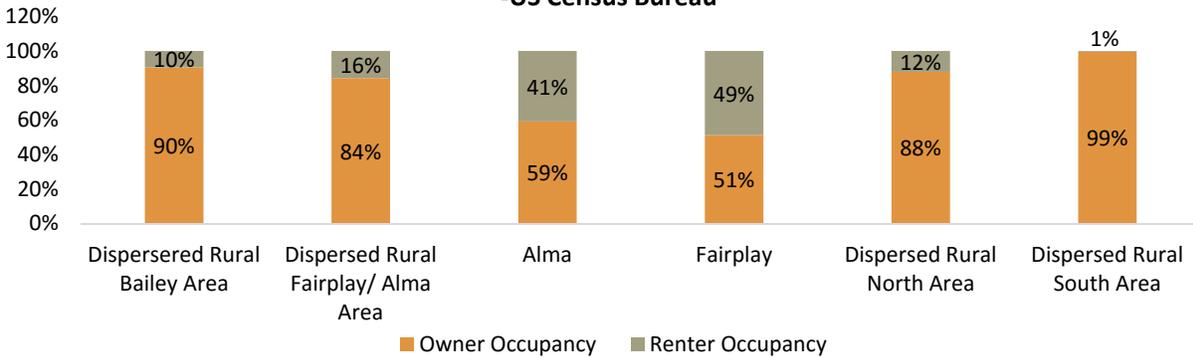


There are a total of 14,000 housing units in the county. 39% of the housing units are located in the rural Bailey area, more than in any of the other census areas. Fairplay and Alma combined have just under 5% of the total housing units.



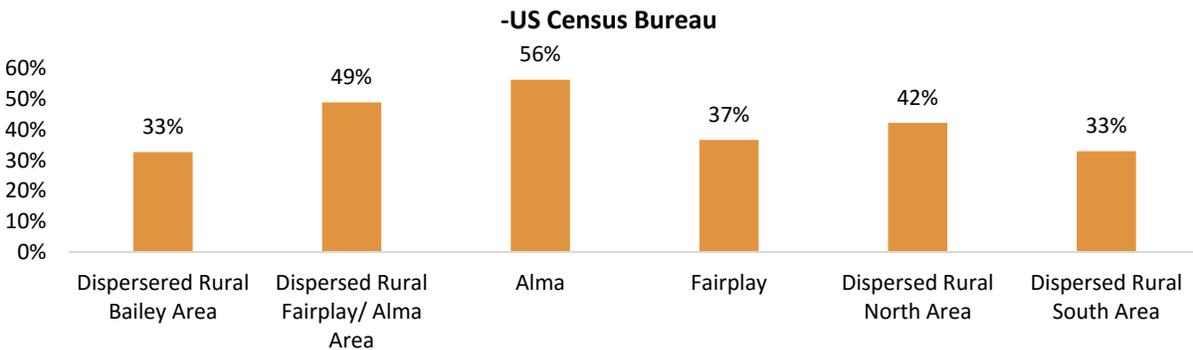
50% of housing units are classified as vacant by the US Census Bureau. The census counts unoccupied homes, seasonal second homes, and any home that is not listed as a primary residence as a vacant home. The highest vacancy rate is in the dispersed rural north area at 80%. The lowest vacancy rates are in Fairplay, Alma and the dispersed rural Bailey area, which are within commuting distance of major economies and also have their own employment base. Working households fill most available units.

**Figure 10. Housing Tenure by Census Area 2013**  
-US Census Bureau



Rentals are reportedly scarce in Park County and the municipalities serve an important role in supplying rental housing. Throughout the county, more housing units are owner occupied than renter occupied. In the dispersed rural areas of the county the percentage of owner occupied housing units is high. The dispersed rural south area has the highest rate with 99% owner occupancy followed by 90% owner occupancy in the dispersed rural Bailey area and 88% in the dispersed rural north area. In the two municipalities the occupancy rates are more evenly split between owner and renter with 51% of housing units in Fairplay owner occupied and 59% owner occupied in Alma.

**Figure 11. Percentage of Households Paying 30% or More of Income on Housing Payments by Census Area 2013**  
-US Census Bureau



Housing costs can be a burden on a household if they are high in relation to household income. HUD defines a household as being “cost-burdened” if rent or mortgage payments combined with utility payments exceed 30% of the household income. Alma has the highest number of cost-burdened households with 56% followed by the rural Fairplay/Alma area with 49%. This is tied to high costs and lower incomes. The dispersed rural Bailey area has higher housing costs but also has the highest median income in the county making its percentage of cost-burdened households 33%.

## PLANNING PROCESS

The previous Strategic Master Plan (SMP) was completed in 2001. The first step to completing the 2015 update was a thorough review of the previous plan to understand what was implemented, what has changed since the plan was completed, and what is still relevant today.

## IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

The consulting team created a matrix which evaluated the level of implementation line by line of every single goal and strategy from the 2001 SMP. The results of this evaluation found that the majority of the plan had been implemented. Many of the goals and strategies in the plan were preservation-oriented. The 2001 SMP was heavily focused on regulation and procedure, a large portion of the plan was implemented through updates to the Park County Land Use Regulations and zoning changes. Implementation also occurred through the development of preservation programs.

## INTERIM ASSESSMENT AND ROAD MAP

The Interim Assessment outlined the general themes from the 2001 SMP, their level of implementation and identified goals that still appeared to be supported and relevant to the 2015 update. This was done in tandem with a series of interviews with local officials and community members and evaluation of changes that occurred since 2001. The second part of the Interim Assessment identified themes and topics that were not addressed in the previous plan, and new areas of importance to be addressed in the 2015 update. With the initial evaluation and research complete, the consulting team outlined the step by step process for completing the 2015 Strategic Master Plan in the Road Map.

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The public input process was integral to the development of the updated Strategic Master Plan. The SMP is a community document that incorporated public input throughout the process to ensure that the final product is a publicly supported plan that addresses the concerns and wishes of the public. The public input process included meetings with county and town officials and the planning committee; interviews with local residents, business owners and organizations; a community workshop series, two online surveys and an open house series.

Initial meetings with the county and planning commission kicked off this process which was followed by phone interviews with over 30 residents throughout Park County. Interviews included residents, business owners, county officials, representatives from Fairplay and Alma, and local organizations. The meetings, interviews, and thorough review

of relevant planning documents including the 2001 Strategic Master Plan provided the foundations for the Community Vision Workshop Series.

## VISION WORKSHOPS

Six Vision Workshops were held throughout Park County in Hartsel, Fairplay, Guffey, Lake George, Alma and Bailey. A total of 190 community members attended a workshop in their area. At each workshop community members participated in two sessions, a live survey using keypad polling and a visioning exercise. During the keypad polling survey participants were presented with concepts and strategies using PowerPoint and were able to ask questions and discuss before responding anonymously. The results were calculated in real-time for all to see (for complete results see Appendix B). The polling session had two parts, the first part focused on identifying elements of the 2001 SMP that are still relevant and supported by community members today. The second part addressed ideas and issues identified from phone interviews and extensive research.



**Keypad Polling Participants in Bailey**

The visioning exercise was less structured and allowed community members to identify new directions and issues to be addressed in the Strategic Master Plan Update. This exercise was an interactive, energetic event with small and large group discussions structured on these questions:

What do we treasure and want to preserve about Park County?

What concerns do we have about Park County and what changes are needed for the future?

Each small group compiled their responses to the questions and presented their results out to the larger group. The results from each workshop were compiled by theme and combined into one document (Appendix C).

## ONLINE SURVEY

An online survey with the same structure as the keypad polling session was also conducted. The Strategic Master Plan online survey provided an opportunity for residents who were unable to attend one of the workshops to provide their input (see Appendix D for complete results). In addition to the Strategic Master Plan Survey, Park County conducted its own countywide survey, the 2015 Park County Community Survey and the results from this survey were also incorporated into the public input process. Regular communication with the Planning Commission, Park County staff and leadership, and representatives from the Towns of Fairplay and Alma also played an integral role in developing of this plan.



**Visioning Exercise Participants in Hartsel**

## 2015 PARK COUNTY COMMUNITY SURVEY

Prior to the start of the Strategic Master Plan update the County Commissioners had begun a separate mail-out community survey in an effort to hear from Park County residents on a variety of topics. The results of this survey became available during the SMP update process in July 2015. The Park County voter registration list was used to sample local residents. The 2015 Park County Community Survey was mailed to 2,508 people and had a total of 735 responses. There were six areas identified for community input: county government services, county marijuana regulations, demographics, strategic planning, values and assessment, and county government priorities. The results from this survey are used throughout the Park County Strategic Master Plan.

## OPEN HOUSES

The final step in the public input process was a series of open houses held throughout the county. At this stage a public review draft of the Strategic Master Plan was made available. The open houses consisted of a presentation on the draft goals and strategies, group discussions and an exercise where participants identified their priority strategies and evaluated the various parts of the plan (see Appendix H for complete activity results). The open houses provided a venue for comments about the updated SMP. Minor changes and edits were made and the Final Draft of the Strategic Master Plan was presented to the County Commissioners.

## COUNTYWIDE GOALS AND STRATEGIES

This Plan Summary is a narrative overview of the Park County Strategic Master Plan. The summary does not contain all of the details and policies in the SMP and is meant as a starting point to direct the reader to the chapters in the plan containing the vision, goals, strategies and Future Land Use Plan. In order to gain the full understanding of the policy direction contained in this plan, it is necessary to read the main body of the plan and to refer to the Appendices for further detail and background, (Appendix F contains a consolidated list of countywide goals and strategies).

### PLAN ELEMENTS THAT CARRY-OVER FROM THE 2001 PLAN

Having just experienced the unprecedented boom of the 1990s, the community and leaders in 2001 were concerned that growth trends and development patterns were a threat to the qualities that drew them to Park County and motivated them to stay. The 2001 Strategic Master Plan was very much focused on preservation and establishing more robust land development regulations designed to protect scenery, habitat, agricultural land, water conservation and other key elements and that would result in more reasonable residential densities.

The preservation goals in the 2001 Strategic Master Plan are still well-supported by the community and this group of plan elements carries over from the 2001 plan to the 2016 Strategic Master Plan Update.

#### 1. AGRICULTURAL LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION

Agricultural and water conservation have been goals for the county for many years. This stems from a historic trend of separating water rights from the land and selling the water rights to Front Range metro water providers. Previously part of the 2001 Strategic Master Plan, this topic is still very relevant and strongly supported by the county and residents. The county has incentives and provides assistance to landowners wishing to conserve land and water. A major focus is preventing the separation of water rights from the land. The county created the Land and Water Trust Fund specifically for this purpose. Funding for the Land and Water Trust Fund comes from a 1% county sales tax. Strategies in this section include continuing the efforts and programs currently in place and charting the next steps for land and water conservation.

#### 2. CURTAILING THE PROLIFERATION OF SMALL LOT RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Rural sprawl, water quantity and quality, and preservation of the rural character and natural beauty of Park County are all concerns associated with small lot residential

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development. Currently the county maintains a five acre minimum for residential lots and residents have expressed support for this regulation. Curtailing the proliferation of small lot residential does not mean that small lots are completely inappropriate in the county. On the contrary, small lots make sense in unincorporated towns and in municipalities where infrastructure can accommodate them. Currently, Bailey is the only unincorporated town with water and sewer but other unincorporated towns may reach an “economy of scale” that makes central sewer/and or water infrastructure feasible in the future. Many lots were platted before the five acre minimum standard and would require consolidation prior to development. Strategies supported by residents include continuing the current minimum acreage, encouraging consolidation where feasible, and supporting lower density for intact agricultural land.

### 3. WHAT TO DO WITH 20,000 VACANT LOTS

The county has 20,000 vacant residential lots. They have long been considered a burden, if they were to buildout they would strain county infrastructure and services. Some of the lots are small, platted on steep slopes, far away from resources such as major roads and regional centers and are realistically not going to develop, while other lots have reasonable access to services and roads, are on flat ground and meet the five acre minimum or could potentially be consolidated. Rather than viewing this legacy of vacant lots as a burden, this plan element actively addresses the challenge and identifies potential opportunities.

### 4. PROTECT THE SCENIC QUALITY AND IMPROVE THE VISUAL APPEAL OF HISTORIC UNINCORPORATED TOWNS AND MUNICIPALITIES

Throughout the process to update this Strategic Master Plan the protection and preservation of the scenic quality, rural character and natural beauty of Park County have been considered of utmost importance to county residents. Residents identified these three qualities as their top reasons for living in Park County. Park County’s beauty is one of its best attributes. Ensuring future development fits with the surroundings and does not impact scenic corridors is one of the best ways to protect the natural beauty and scenic quality of the county. In order to keep current residents and attract new ones, the county must continue to offer the wonderful qualities that have made residents move here in the first place.

The visual appeal of the county’s unincorporated towns (Bailey, Shawnee, Grant, Como, Jefferson, Hartsel, Guffey, Lake George and other unincorporated places) and municipalities (Fairplay and Alma) is central to the identities and future successes for these communities. Not only do these serve as activity centers for locals, they are also points of interest to tourists and visitors. Most of the unincorporated towns are located directly on the major highways. Developing attractive signage, encouraging renovations

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and community cleanups are all ways to improve the visual appeal of the historic unincorporated towns.

## 5. WATER SUPPLY, CONSERVATION AND STREAM CORRIDOR RESTORATION

Water is a top priority in Park County. A history of selling water rights to Front Range metro water providers has left the county in short supply. To curtail this trend, the county originally developed the Land and Water Trust Fund (LWTF), whose purpose is to protect the water and land in Park County. The Upper South Platte Water Conservancy District and the Center of Colorado Water Conservancy District are also focused on protecting the supply of water in the county. In recent years the water conservancy districts have built up water storage for augmentation water and successfully facilitated the conservation of over 18,000 acres of agricultural land with water rights tied to the land. Recently the Land and Water Trust Fund have started to focus more attention and resources towards corridor restoration and water quality. This plan element is focused around continuing current efforts and planning the next steps.

## PLAN ELEMENTS THAT ARE UNIQUE TO THIS UPDATE

The growth projected back in 2001 has not occurred and survey results indicate that many county residents are supportive of an economic growth strategy. The new plan elements are oriented towards growing the local economies located throughout Park County. These county wide planning elements articulate the broad goals and strategies while the Subarea Growth Strategies (Chapter 3) section of this plan looks at each distinctive geographic areas in Park County and the unique set of opportunities each contains.

## 6. EVOLVE AND EXPAND TOURISM

Park County has amazing historic and outdoor recreation assets. With its location near the Denver Metro Area and Colorado Springs, it has great potential to build tourism.

Throughout the process to update the SMP residents regularly expressed support for expanding tourism that maintains the character of Park County and utilizes local assets. Two types of tourism were highly supported, heritage tourism, and outdoor recreation tourism such as fishing, hiking, hunting and biking. This element of the plan details strategies for growing tourism in a targeted and thoughtful manner, building on existing tourist attractions and providing more support for growing the tourism industry in Park County. Expanding tourism will help support and diversify the local economy. However, in order to attract and capitalize on visitor markets, the county needs more restaurants, hotels and entertainment businesses to entice people to stop and stay in Park County's communities. This effort includes targeted marketing, county support for current and new

tourism efforts, and coordination and partnerships between the county, local nonprofits, private businesses and landowners.

## 7. DIVERSIFY THE ECONOMY

Maintaining the economic sustainability of Park County is vital to the success of the county. In 2013, the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) reported that 56% of employment in the county is fueled by households who commute out of the county for work, and who then spend part of their earning in Park County where they live. The dollars that commuter households spend are earned from outside of the local economy and add fuel to the local economy. While commuting will always be part of the Park County economy, there is a desire to become more self-sufficient in the long term.

This plan element is focused on diversifying the economy in Park County through incentives, infrastructure investment and business support. Economic diversification in the county needs to be appropriate to the environment, culture and resources available. The strategies presented in this section are intended to support a healthy economy and ensure a sustainable future while still maintaining the integrity and rural nature of Park County.

## 8. BUSINESS SUPPORT AND TRAINING

Business support and training were first identified as a need during interviews with local residents. Upon review, it was found that business support services in Park County are minimal. During the vision workshop and online survey residents continued to express the need for business support and training in Park County. Increasing the success rate of new businesses as well as helping current businesses adapt and expand will benefit the county through increased revenues, local employment opportunities and a thriving local economy. Strategies include networking between businesses, job training programs for high schoolers, and access to funds for business expansion. The county can provide leadership and support for business support and training, but these services are typically offered by non-profits such as a business development center and/or a workforce training center. No such organization exists today in Park County, so the first step is to build partnerships to develop an organization whose mission is to provide workforce training and support for local businesses.

## 9. COUNTY CORE SERVICES, INFRASTRUCTURE AND ASSETS

Road conditions and maintenance were identified in interviews, vision workshops and online surveys as an area in need of serious improvement by Park County residents. Residents want increased maintenance, and more open communication between the Public Works Department and county residents. There are many obstacles facing the county in terms of road maintenance. Park County is one of the largest in Colorado with an area of

2,193 square miles and 1,622 miles of road to maintain. Maintaining and improving roads is both costly and constant. The fact that the county cannot feasibly maintain all county roads at the same level was stressed throughout the planning process. Road maintenance prioritization was supported by residents, but they want to be involved in the prioritization process. The goals and strategies in this document are intended to produce a procedure for open and clear communication between the county's Public Works Department and residents, with the end goal being a publicly supported maintenance and improvements plan.

There are seven fire protection districts serving the county. With seven districts and 2,193 square miles of land in the county, much of it forest service, wilderness, and state land, there is a serious need for support and coordination between the county, the fire protection districts and state and federal fire management agencies. Wildland fire mitigation, emergency preparedness, and resident education are all areas requiring coordination.

The Park County has library branches in Fairplay, Bailey, Lake George, and Guffey, and community centers in Fairplay, Lake George, Guffey, and Shawnee. The libraries and community centers are regarded as important assets in the county. Continued support and maintenance of both is an integral part of providing basic services to residents.

## 10. FUTURE OF UNINCORPORATED HISTORIC TOWNS

These are unincorporated communities with a sizable population, public services, infrastructure and commercial zoning. The communities are Pine Junction, Crow Hill, Bailey, Jefferson, Como, Guffey, Hartsel, and Lake George. While each town site is distinctive and has a history and future different from any other, there are some commonalities among the town sites. All of these communities provide some level of access to public services and commercial businesses for residents in and around each community. This plan element is focused on general goals and strategies applicable to unincorporated historic towns. Input was gathered through interviews, survey results and vision workshops throughout the county in order to develop this plan element.

## 11. STRATEGIC COORDINATION WITH MUNICIPALITIES

The two municipalities in Park County are Fairplay and Alma. They have their own governments and are independent towns within the county. Both Park County and the towns will benefit greatly by increasing the amount of strategic coordination between the county and Fairplay and Alma. When Fairplay and Alma are successful, the county benefits. Areas where increased coordination will be beneficial include land use decisions in the three mile area around municipal boundaries, town entrances and rights of way, municipal watersheds, trails and pathways, and economic development.

## 12. COUNTY GOVERNANCE

Maintaining an educated and informed citizenry is an important element of county governance. There must be open communication between the county and the public in order for Park County to provide the best service possible to its residents. Despite strong efforts by the county, residents identified communication between the county and residents as an area in need of improvement. This plan element evaluates current procedures, addresses resident concerns and provides strategies to identify best practices and improve communication between residents and the county.

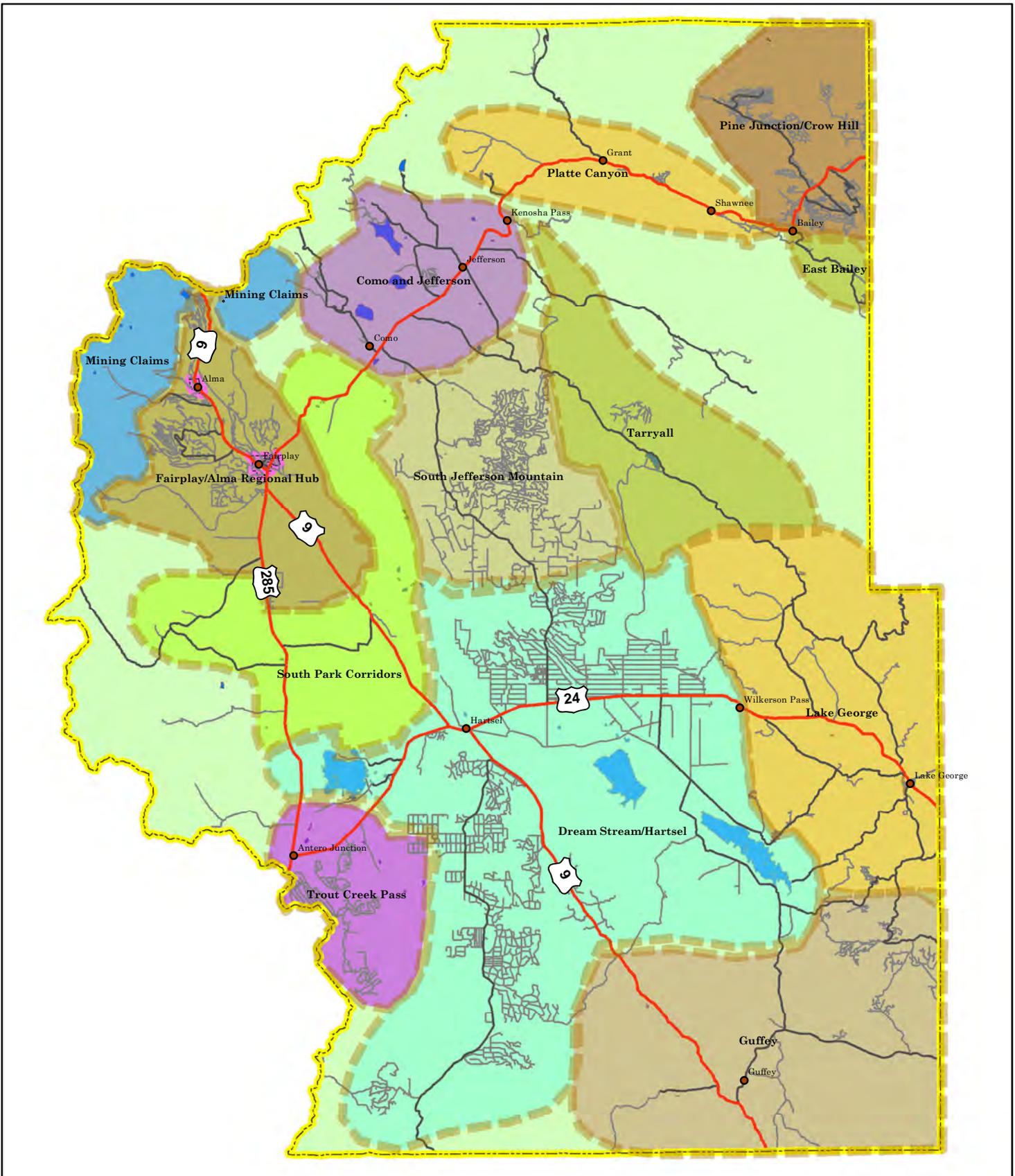
## SUBAREA GROWTH STRATEGIES

One of the more significant changes from the 2001 Strategic Master Plan is that the growth strategy in this plan is structured around geographically unique subareas. Many of the subareas are centered around communities such as Hartsel, Jefferson and Bailey but cover the entire geographic area tied to each community. The municipalities (Fairplay and Alma) are treated individually and include customized growth/annexation areas. The key to Park County's success is its diverse rural and mountain landscapes and the subareas identify these unique geographies. The growth strategy builds from the strengths and opportunities for each subarea.

The 2001 Strategic Master Plan growth strategy focused on what were termed "rural centers" including Pine Junction, Crow Hill, Bailey, Jefferson, Como, Guffey, Hartsel, and Lake George. The Towns of Fairplay and Alma were also considered rural centers and not considered specifically as municipalities. The notion in 2001 was that growth was going to continue to pour into Park County as it did throughout the 1990s. Community leaders encouraged higher density residential development and commercial development to occur in rural centers and called for lower densities in the rural areas. It was somewhat of a math problem in 2001: "Where to fit the projected growth without losing the rural character and scenery?" Rural centers were the answer to this question, but developing central sewer and/or water in these historic/rural mountain communities was and remains extremely difficult if not completely infeasible. Higher density and significant commercial development in these unincorporated places is very unlikely absent central water and sewer. Only the Town of Fairplay, Town of Alma and unincorporated Bailey have both sewer and water today, just as it was in 2001.

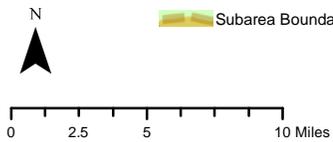
This plan builds from the rural center concept but shifts towards subareas (see map below) that better delineate the terrain and human geography of the county and offer unique opportunities for economic growth that is feasible and accepted by the community. Each subarea has its own growth strategy designed to address the potential or lack of potential for future growth in the subarea and are not designed to divide communities. Some strategies are repeated in multiple subareas as they are relevant to more than one area, but are not so universal that they qualify as a countywide strategy. A close examination of the

Park County Zoning Map shows that commercial, planned unit development and rural center mixed use zoning exists throughout the county both inside and outside of the formerly categorized rural centers. These historic and newer commercial properties, including vacant lots, offer opportunities for economic growth that already fits the development pattern. Residential lots are plentiful throughout the county and many decades of residential development can be accommodated by existing subdivisions and road networks.



**Legend**

- Highway
- Major Road
- Local Road
- Park County Line
- City Limits
- Public Lands and Inholdings
- Subarea Boundary



***Subareas***

# CHAPTER 2 COUNTYWIDE GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Countywide plan elements each have their own set of goals (what we want to achieve) and strategies (how to achieve each goal). The plan elements are grouped into two subsets, elements that carry over from the 2001 Strategic Master Plan and are still well supported and new plan elements not contained or not as well developed in the 2001 plan. Refer to the Strategic Master Plan Summary above for an overview of each plan element.

## **Plan Elements That Carry Over From the 2001 Plan**

1. Agricultural Land and Water Conservation
2. Curtailing the Proliferation of Small Lot Residential Development
3. What to do with 20,000 Vacant Lots
4. Protect and Enhance Scenic Quality
5. Water Supply, Conservation and Stream Corridor Restoration

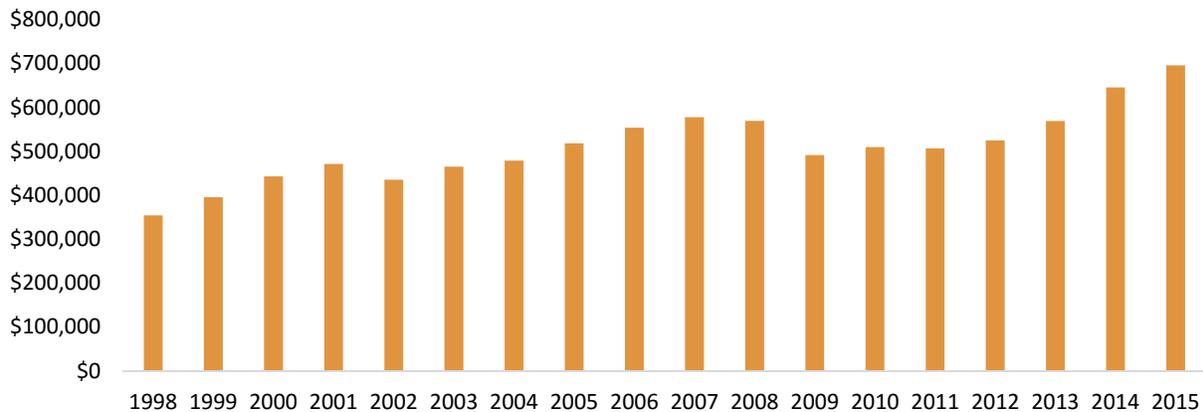
## **Plan Elements That Are Unique To This Update**

6. Evolve and Expand Tourism
7. Diversify the Economy
8. Business Support and Training
9. County Core Services, Infrastructure and Assets
10. The Future of Unincorporated Historic Towns
11. Strategic Coordination with Municipalities
12. County Governance

# 1. AGRICULTURAL LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION

Park County is dedicated to preserving and protecting agricultural land and water. The county has programs in place to help achieve this goal. The Park County Land and Water Trust Fund (LTWF) is the primary county entity working to protect land and water. Founded in 1998 with an eight person board and funded by revenues from a 1% sales tax, the LWTF’s original purpose was to develop a defense to Aurora water grabs. Today the LWTF works to “preserve, protect, acquire, improve and maintain Park County’s remaining water resources as well as lands in Park County containing water rights and resources”. Since 1998 efforts by the Land and Water Trust Fund have resulted in the conservation of a dozen ranches and the water rights tied to those ranches totaling over 18,000 acres of land conservation. While the Land and Water Trust Fund facilitates the conservation process and pays for the transaction expenses, Colorado Open Lands holds most of the conservation easements, the majority of which include water rights so they cannot be separated from the land. Recently the Land and Water Trust Fund has shifted focus towards water quality and stream restoration.

**Figure 12. Land and Water Trust Fund Annual Sales Tax Revenues (1% Sales Tax)  
-Land and Water Trust Fund**

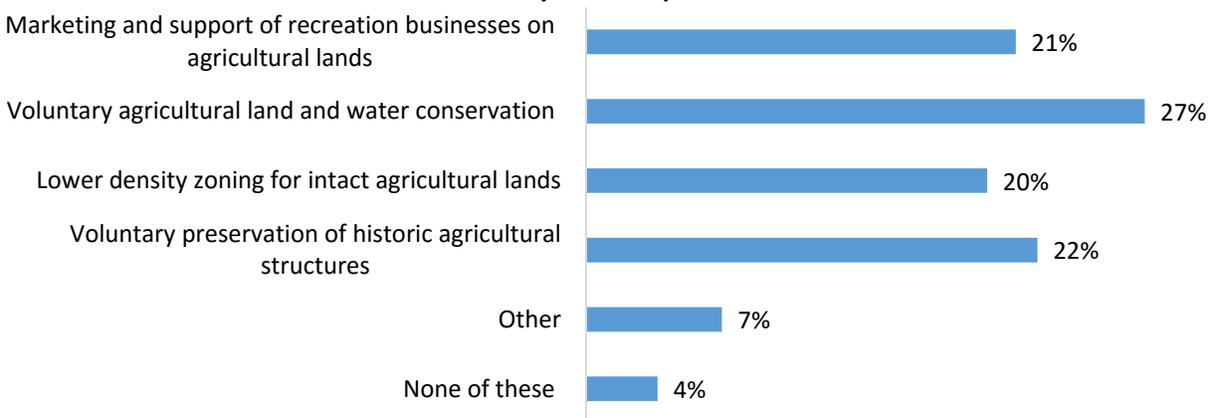


The county also supports the economic viability of agricultural lands and ranches by promoting outdoor recreation on ranchlands such as fishing, guided hunting and guest ranches. The county Office of Recreation Development provides public fishing on private ranches by reservation at [southparktrout.com](http://southparktrout.com) and maintains a record of public fishing easements.

In addition to protecting and preserving agricultural lands, the county’s Historic Preservation Program, part of the Heritage, Tourism & Community Development Department, has assisted with getting over 60 structures/compounds listed on the historic and/or national historic register, many of which are ranching and agricultural structures or compounds. The program has also leveraged funding for stabilization and rehabilitation of several historic agricultural buildings.

Park County residents are very supportive of county efforts to sustain and preserve agriculture. During the community workshop series participants identified top strategies for preserving and sustaining agriculture.

**Figure 13. Top Strategies for Sustaining and Preserving Agriculture  
- Community Workshop Series 2015**



## GOAL 1.1 – SUSTAIN THE ECONOMIC VIABILITY OF AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS.

**Strategy A** – Utilize Land and Water Trust Fund revenues to track changes in ownership of agricultural lands using the county assessor database and identify future opportunities for land and water conservation.

**Strategy B** – Facilitate business diversification on agricultural lands with uses such as guided outdoor trips, fishing access, guest ranches, retreats, ranching/range science and marijuana facilities.

**Strategy C** – Continue to refine land use and zoning regulations to allow for diversification of businesses on intact agricultural lands while maintaining the agricultural use and character of these intact agricultural lands.

**Strategy D** – Lead marketing programs to promote diversified businesses on intact agricultural lands.

## GOAL 1.2 – PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR AGRICULTURAL LAND OWNERS WHO WANT TO PRESERVE THEIR PROPERTY AS AGRICULTURAL AND/OR OPEN LAND.

**Strategy A** – Facilitate voluntary agricultural land and water conservation.

**Strategy B** – Facilitate stream and riparian corridor restoration and habitat improvement on intact agricultural lands to encourage the use of these corridors for complementary business uses such as trout fishing and guided tours.

**Strategy C** – Combine agricultural land conservation with historic structure and site preservation.

## 2. CURTAILING THE PROLIFERATION OF SMALL LOT RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

People choose to live in Park County because of its natural environment and rural character. Preventing residential sprawl is key to maintaining the characteristics which distinguish Park County and entice people to live here. Residential densities also need to account for the fact that water rights in Park County are limited and can be expensive and difficult to obtain. The 2015 Park County Community Survey identified preservation of rural character and open space as the top two

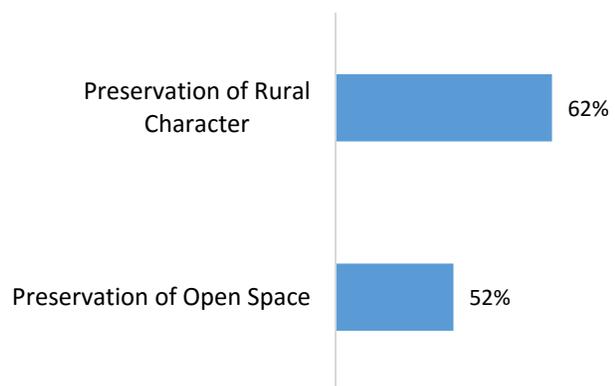
most important priorities. Maintaining the rural character, natural environment, and scenic quality of Park County were also identified as the top priorities for county residents during the Vision Workshop Series when residents were asked about what they treasure and want to preserve about Park County.

Today, the land use regulations allow 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres in the residential zone district. According to Section 5-203 of the land use regulations it's required that the following standards be met in order to rezone land:

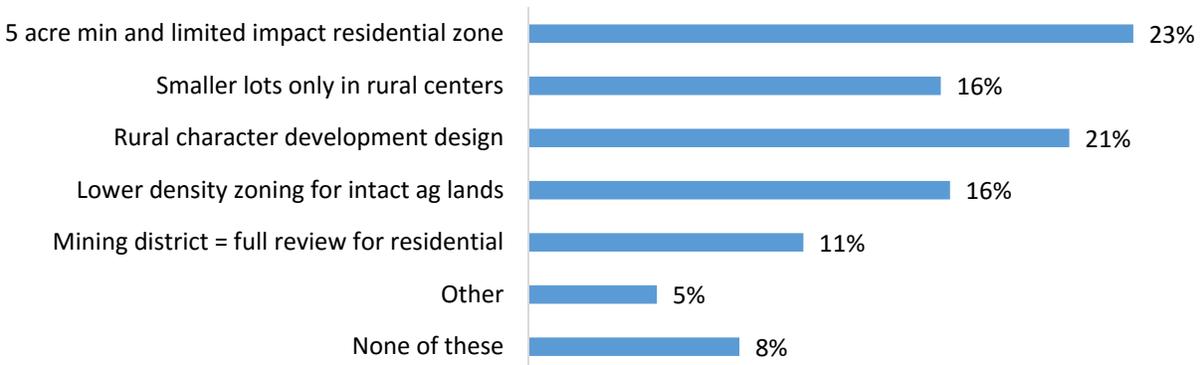
- Consistency with the current strategic master plan
- Consideration of landscape and community character that are not compatible with a proposed rezoning
- Consideration of circumstances that have changed since master plan adoption that support the proposed zoning change.

These standards for rezoning have the effect of discouraging undesirable residential sprawl in areas designated for agricultural and other commercial uses and conversion of agricultural and open lands to residential neighborhoods.

**Figure 14. What are the most pressing issues Park County will face in the next five years? - Park County Community Survey 2015**



**Figure 15. Top Strategies for Curtailing Small Lot Rural Sprawl  
- Community Workshop Series 2015**



## GOAL 2.1 – IMPLEMENT AND ADAPT LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE STANDARDS THAT PROTECT THE RURAL AND ALPINE LANDSCAPE.

**Strategy A** – Maintain the five acre minimum residential lot size.

**Strategy B** – Consider and review residential subdivisions with lots smaller than five acres and/or multi-family housing where central water and sewer infrastructure are in place to accommodate higher densities.

**Strategy C** – Maintain zoning for intact agricultural lands that supports an environment where agricultural business operations can thrive and avoid conflict with dispersed residential subdivisions and other incompatible uses.

**Strategy D** – Continue to review residential uses in the mining zoning district on a case-by-case basis.

**Strategy E** – Implement rural subdivision design strategies, such as avoiding sensitive lands such as wetlands, big game migration corridors and calving areas, steep slopes, and prominent meadows.

## 3. WHAT TO DO WITH 20,000 VACANT LOTS

There are 20,000 vacant residential lots in Park County, which is more than the number of developed residential lots. This legacy has long been viewed as unmanageable. Many of the vacant lots were subdivided prior to the five acre minimum regulation, are small and do not meet the development requirements. Lots smaller than five acres can still be developed, but only if they were subdivided legally and can contain accommodate a well and an individual septic system or an approved cistern and holding tank for part-time use. Lots less than five acres that do not meet these requirements would need to be consolidated if they are to be developed. Additionally there are environmental factors, infrastructure needs and water quality and quantity considerations. The vacant lots are spread

throughout the county with the highest concentrations located in the central and south central portions of the county, especially in the area around Hartsel.

At first glance, the situation appears insurmountable. Upon closer evaluation however, specific, targeted strategies can address this legacy. Vacant lots and subdivisions near county roads and public services pose a better opportunity for buildout than remote, difficult to access lots. Focusing county infrastructure improvements to areas with existing development patterns will encourage development in feasible areas.

### GOAL 3.1 – FACILITATE THE BUILDOUT OF THE MOST VIABLE RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISIONS.

**Strategy A** – Prioritize maintenance and improvements to county collector roads accessing the most populated and established subdivisions.

**Strategy B** – Expand and improve high speed internet and cell phone communications infrastructure.

### GOAL 3.2 – ADAPT UNBUILT AND ANTIQUATED SUBDIVISIONS TO RESULT IN MORE FEASIBLE DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS.

**Strategy A** – Encourage lot consolidations that create more viable residential development sites.

**Strategy B** – Adapt land use regulations to encourage redevelopment of platted subdivision lots under consolidated ownership for better road access, conservation areas, and lower, more reasonable densities. For example, an antiquated subdivision that contains small lots on steep slopes could be redeveloped to accommodate a smaller number of larger lots on the most level and accessible areas. This will be most feasible where subdivisions or clusters of subdivision lots are owned by one or just a few entities/individuals.

**Strategy C** – Better understand groundwater quality and quantity in emphasizing future growth opportunities and to determine the viability of existing platted lots based on quality and quantity of groundwater.

**Strategy D** – Encourage a transition to agricultural uses with more livestock than would be typically allowed in a platted residential subdivisions in unbuilt and antiquated subdivisions where lot sizes are large enough, where lot consolidations are possible or where contiguous common ownership already exists. Special attention should be given to the compatibility of agricultural uses on platted subdivisions with nearby residential development.

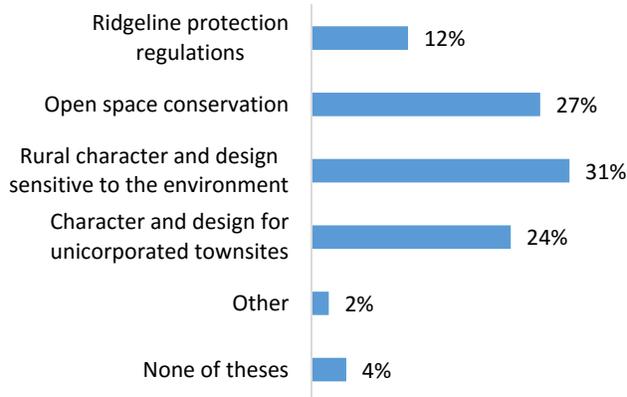
## 4. PROTECT AND ENHANCE SCENERY AND VISUAL QUALITY

The natural beauty of Park County is an integral reason why people live and visit the area. Unincorporated towns such as Guffey, Lake George, Como and Jefferson are located throughout the county and serve both locals and visitors. If they are not visually appealing potential customers are less inclined to stop and spend money. Similarly, the scenic view from main highway corridors is negatively impacted when a development obstructs the view.

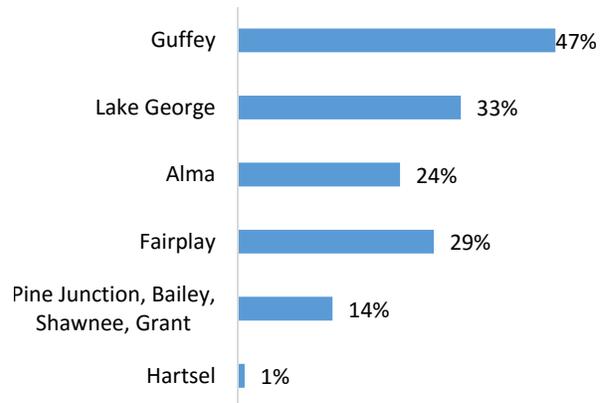
Ridgeline regulations limit the impact a structure has on the view from below natural ridgelines through height restrictions and development location limitations. During the Community Workshop Series, each of the scenic preservation strategies were supported with similar levels, with the exception of ridgeline protection which had drastically different levels of support depending on the workshop. Participants at the Hartsel workshop did not support ridgeline regulations while 47% of participants at the Guffey workshop supported ridgeline regulations.

Unincorporated towns, especially those seen from major highways are positively impacted when they are visually appealing. During interviews with residents and comments made during vision workshops it was identified that there is a desire among residents to improve the visual appeal of unincorporated towns. Multiple residents made comments highlighting the positive impact made by small façade improvements recently completed by a business in Bailey.

**Figure 16. Scenic Preservation and Community Character Strategies - Community Workshop Series 2015**



**Figure 17. Support Ridgeline Protection Regulations by Workshop - Community Workshop Series 2015**



## GOAL 4.1 – IMPLEMENT DESIGN STANDARDS IN NEW DEVELOPMENT THAT MINIMIZE IMPACTS ON THE SCENIC QUALITY OF THE RURAL, AGRICULTURAL AND MOUNTAIN LANDSCAPE.

**Strategy A** – Carefully monitor the outcomes of the ridgeline protection regulations and evaluate the need for adaptation.

**Strategy B** – Carry forward the Visual Priority Map from the 2001 Plan and continue to use this map to guide ridgeline protection priorities.

**Strategy C** – Develop and implement site design that mitigates the visual impact of future development as seen from scenic corridors including techniques such as clustering development in less visible areas, avoiding impacts on streams and riparian areas, avoiding steep, visible slopes and utilizing existing vegetation to screen development. Utilize the Visual Priority Map from the 2001 Plan to guide scenic protection priorities.

**Strategy D** – Continue to review residential uses in the Mining Zone District as conditional uses and consider scenic impacts, impacts on public roads, safety and emergency services, compatibility with future mining activities and ecological impacts when reviewing proposed residences in the Mining Zone District.

## GOAL 4.2 – IMPROVE THE VISUAL APPEAL OF UNINCORPORATED TOWNS.

**Strategy A** – Facilitate the development of obvious parking and informational signage in unincorporated towns to make them more appealing places to stop.

**Strategy B** – Encourage small scale commercial and the renovation and occupancy of vacant structures in unincorporated towns.

**Strategy C** – Facilitate community clean-up in unincorporated towns.

## LEGEND

### VIEWS INTO PARK COUNTY

1-2-3 HIGHEST VISIBILITY  
HIGHEST SCENIC QUALITY

**A** HIGHEST VISIBILITY, HIGHEST SCENIC QUALITY

**AA** BACKGROUND-HIGH VISIBILITY, HIGHEST SCENIC QUALITY

**B** HIGH VISIBILITY, HIGHEST SCENIC QUALITY

**C** HIGH/MODERATE VISIBILITY, HIGH SCENIC QUALITY

**D** HIGH/MODERATE VISIBILITY, HIGH SCENIC QUALITY

**E** LOW VISIBILITY

### MOUNTAIN/HILL VIEWS

1 HIGHEST VISIBILITY, HIGHEST SCENIC QUALITY

2 HIGH VISIBILITY, HIGH SCENIC QUALITY

3 MODERATE VISIBILITY, MODERATE SCENIC QUALITY

4 LOW VISIBILITY, LOW SCENIC QUALITY

SCENIC DRIVES

SIGNIFICANT VIEW ORIGIN AND DIRECTION

SUMMIT

TO BE DETERMINED BY COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

VISUAL QUALITY INFORMATION FROM SOUTH PARK HERITAGE AREA STUDY

N

0 2 4 MILES

VISUAL QUALITY INFORMATION FROM SOUTH PARK HERITAGE AREA STUDY

N

0 2 4 MILES

CARRY OVER FROM 2001 STRATEGIC MASTER PLAN  
SOURCE: HARRISON DATA SETS, SOUTH PARK HERITAGE AREA STUDY

# VISUAL PRIORITY MAP

## PARK COUNTY STRATEGIC MASTER PLAN

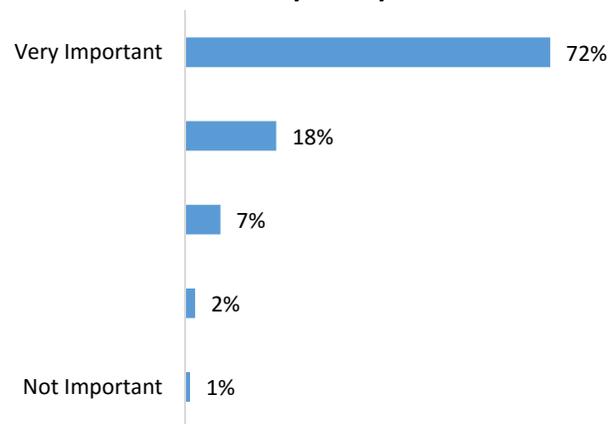
PARK COUNTY,  
COLORADO MAY 2001

## 5. WATER SUPPLY, CONSERVATION AND STREAM CORRIDOR RESTORATION

Water supply and water quality were rated as very important in the 2015 Park County Survey, 72% rated water quality/quantity as very important and 18% rated it as important. 7% were neutral and only 3% rated it as not very important. This stems from the history of limited water supply and the selling of water rights in Park County to the Front Range.

In the past Park County experienced “de-watering” of ranch lands through the sale of water rights to Front Range water service providers and other investors. The Park County Land and Water Trust Fund, along with two water conservancy districts, the Center of Colorado Water Conservancy District (CCWCD) and the Upper South Platte Water Conservancy District (USPWCD), work to preserve the remaining water rights in the county, maintain a sufficient supply of water, restore stream corridors and preserve water quality.

**Figure 18. How important is water quality/quantity? - Park County Community Survey 2015**



In 2013 Governor John Hickenlooper issued an Executive Order to develop the Colorado Water Plan (CWP). The CWP sets a course for water planning on a statewide level in Colorado utilizing a grassroots approach that incorporates local knowledge from each river basin. The CWP includes individual plans for each of the nine river basins. The South Platte Basin Implementation Plan (SP-BIP) covers Park County, the entire Denver Metro Area and extends all the way to the Nebraska border. The SP-BIP is the guiding plan for the entire South Platte River. The major goals of the plan are listed below:

- better address the current and projected demand for water,
- minimize adverse impacts to agricultural economies,
- transition away from “buy and dry”,
- utilize Alternative Transfer Methods and monitor their success,
- promote the development of multi-purpose water storage,
- continue water conservation and reuse,
- protect and enhance environmental and recreation attributes,
- facilitate education and public outreach,
- research new technologies and strategies.

The South Platte Basin Implementation Plan component of the Colorado State Water Plan documents the South Platte as “fully appropriated”, meaning that all the water rights are already owned and being used and that the only water not yet appropriated is only

available during periodic high flow runoff events. Capturing this intermittent water requires storage facilities to collect water only during peak flows and to store this water until it is needed. The Land and Water Trust Fund (LWTF) was originally formed in 1998 to defend against Aurora water grabs but in recent years it has shifted focus towards stream restoration and water quality.

The Upper South Platte Water Conservancy District (USPWCD) was formed in 1955 and funded by a .134 mill levy. The USPWCD covers Park County and parts of Jefferson, Teller, Douglas, and Clear Creek Counties. The Center of Colorado Water Conservancy District was formed in 1997 and is funded by a 1 mill levy. The two districts partnered to form the Headwater Authority of South Platte (HASP), a water rights enterprise which allows the two districts to buy, sell and lease water augmentation. The two water conservancy districts together own and operate the following water resources:

- Supply-700 acre feet from the Bargas Ranch near Jefferson, 30 acre feet consumptive water on Deer Creek, and 37 acre feet in Spinney Mountain Reservoir.
- Storage-200 acre feet of the James Tingle Reservoir, 26 acre foot Smelter Pipeline Reservoir, 50 acre feet of in Spinney Mountain, and two Twin Lakes Shares on the Arkansas River.

Land Use Regulations Article VII Division 7 Water Quantity and Quality require a demonstrated reliable and legitimate water supply for new development, so any new subdivisions with lots less than 35 acres and any commercial development will need to own water or purchase it to be able to develop. The lack of water supply is a real limitation on development in Park County.

## GOAL 5.1 – KEEP EXISTING WATER RIGHTS IN PARK COUNTY.

**Strategy A** – Work with land and water conservation entities to facilitate voluntary agricultural land and water conservation.

**Strategy B** – Support the efforts of water conservation entities to obtain water rights for the purpose of serving future uses in Park County.

## GOAL 5.2 – BUILD AND MAINTAIN WATER SUPPLY FOR THE FUTURE.

**Strategy A** – Expand water storage facilities for economic growth.

**Strategy B** – Support the efforts of water conservation district to purchase water rights and employ the expertise required to develop storage and sell water to Park County businesses and residents.

**Strategy C** – Coordinate land use and water/sewer infrastructure planning with the Towns of Alma and Fairplay.

**Strategy D** – Explore feasibility of shared water systems and districts in unincorporated towns.

**Strategy E** – Minimize impacts on groundwater supply & quality.

**Strategy F** – Restore streams and riparian corridors to improve habitat, water quality and enrich outdoor recreation opportunities.

## GOAL 5.3 – BETTER UNDERSTAND AND TAKE STEPS TO IMPROVE GROUNDWATER AND SURFACE WATER QUALITY.

**Strategy A** – Continue to coordinate with the Towns of Fairplay and Alma and the Bailey Water and Sanitation District to manage watersheds in order to preserve and improve their water quality.

**Strategy B** – Complete the countywide groundwater quality study that is currently underway to better understand where groundwater quality suffers and where ground water is adequate for household use.

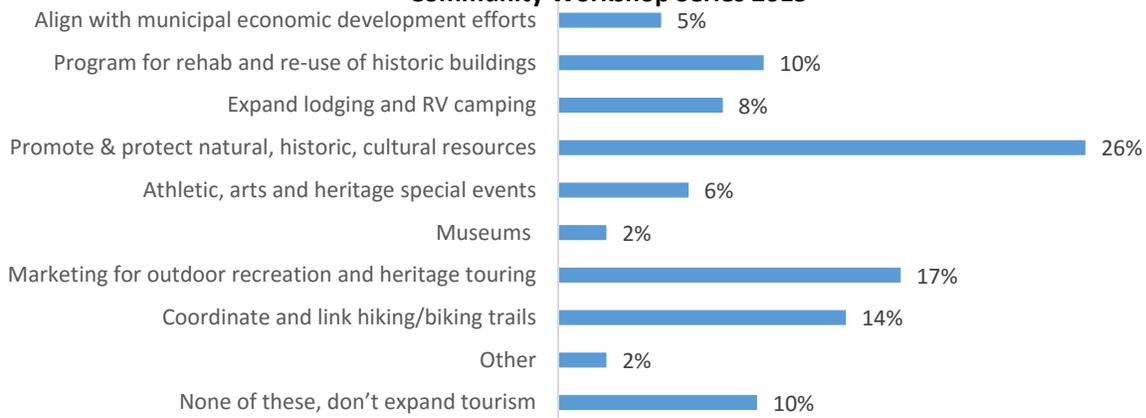
**Strategy C** – Complete a countywide study and inventory of water quality impaired streams affected by mining.

**Strategy D** – Remediate non-point pollution sources on priority water quality impaired drainages.

## 6. EVOLVE AND EXPAND TOURISM

Tourism is an important part of Park County’s economy. In 2013 tourism accounted for 13% of employment in the county according to the Department of Local Affairs. Increasing tourism will increase jobs opportunities, support local businesses, and provide additional revenues to the county. The county has many tourist assets including outdoor recreation opportunities, heritage attractions, and special events. Volunteer citizens’ trails groups are working to maintain access to existing trails and create additional trails and access. During the Vision Workshop Series 90% of respondents were supportive of expanding tourism in the county. Top strategies identified by residents include promotion and protection of natural, historic and cultural resources; tourism/recreation/heritage marketing; and coordinating and linking hiking, biking and equestrian trails.

**Figure 19. Top Strategies for Evolving and Expanding Tourism  
- Community Workshop Series 2015**



### Department of Heritage, Tourism and Community Development

This department works on a range of tourism and economic projects including historic preservation, marketing, grants management and business support. The Office of Historic Preservation works to preserve and protect historic and cultural resources, and encourages heritage tourism. They offer small matching grants for historic structure rehabilitation and stabilization, public education programs, interpretation, and other projects endorsed by the Park County Historic Preservation Commission.

The Office of Tourism works to market the county to visitors and potential residents. The office connects visitors to local attractions, administers grant projects and help facilitate entrepreneurial business development while the Office of Community Development facilitates partnerships and programs for economic development.

### South Park National Heritage Area

South Park was designated a National Heritage Area in 2009. The South Park National Heritage Area (SPNHA) is managed by a partnership between the South Park National Heritage Area Advisory Board and Park County through the Department of Heritage, Tourism, and Community Development. South Park’s designation as a heritage area provides access to funding resources for preservation and protection, and heritage tourism. Since 2009 the SPNHA has worked on or helped fund a number of projects in the following areas: historic rehabilitations and restorations, historic structure assessments, resource surveys, national historic places nominations, educational programs, and community outreach. A five year Management Plan was created in 2013 outlining how the SPNHA will be managed and what they plan to accomplish.

SPNHA’s website is regularly updated and provides useful information for prospective visitors. The website offers resources about lodging, heritage, recreation, and shopping and dining opportunities in South Park.

## **Office of Recreation Development**

The Office of Recreation Development works to develop and promote recreation opportunities for locals and visitors. The department manages the Ranch Recreation Program which offers support and programs for encouraging ranch operators to realize revenues from their properties. The department has taken an innovative approach to supporting recreation on private lands by operating and managing the website Southparktrout.com. This website successfully facilitates the reservation of private ranches for fly fishing. The department also manages information about trails and public fishing opportunities.

In addition to the county departments and resources, there are a number of local groups and organizations working on tourism in Park County including, the Town of Fairplay, South Park Chamber of Commerce, Platte Canyon Area Chamber of Commerce, Park County Historical Society, Shawnee Historical Society, and the local nonprofit trails groups. With multiple county departments and local groups and organizations all working individually on tourism there is a strong need for a strategic marketing plan outlining Park County's goals and strategies, and coordination with other entities. With so many groups working on the same end goal, efficiency can be achieved by coordinating efforts to prevent duplication, share data and research, and promote the area as a whole.

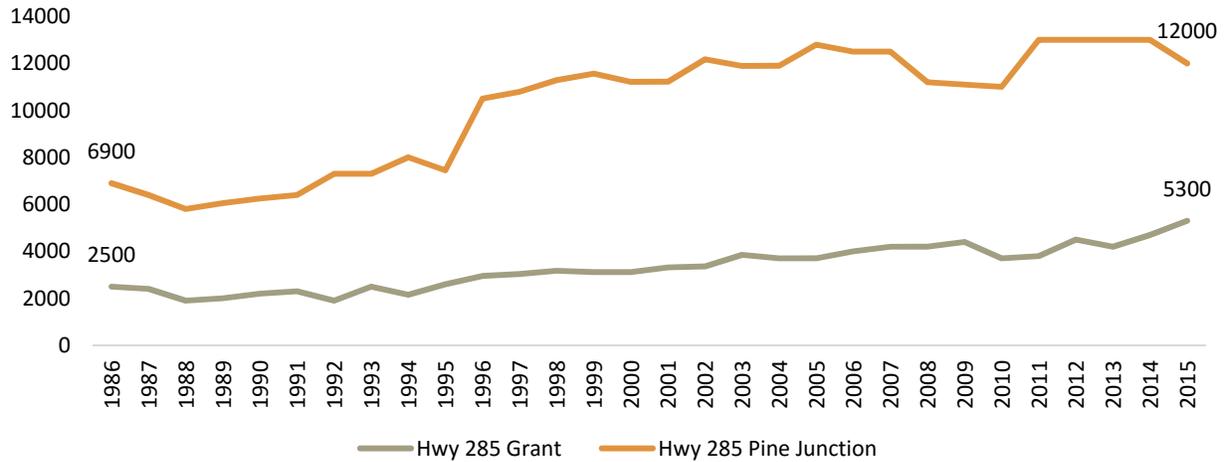
### **Tourism marketing**

Marketing existing heritage and recreation attractions is one of the top strategies identified by county residents. The county should develop a long range, comprehensive marketing strategy for attracting visitors to Park County including a study identifying target audiences and successful marketing strategies. Developing regional partnerships to create joint marketing efforts could prove to be an efficient way to reach a larger market. The county is in the process of developing their marketing plan currently. This involves identifying target markets (heritage tourism, summer recreation, winter recreation, special event participants) and developing marketing materials specifically tailored to each niche. The current South Park Heritage website is already well-established. The National Heritage Area website includes tours, history and maps. The county also runs Southparktrout.com which allows online booking of private fisheries. The Ranch Recreation program is in place and offers support and programs for encouraging ranch operators to realize revenues from their properties.

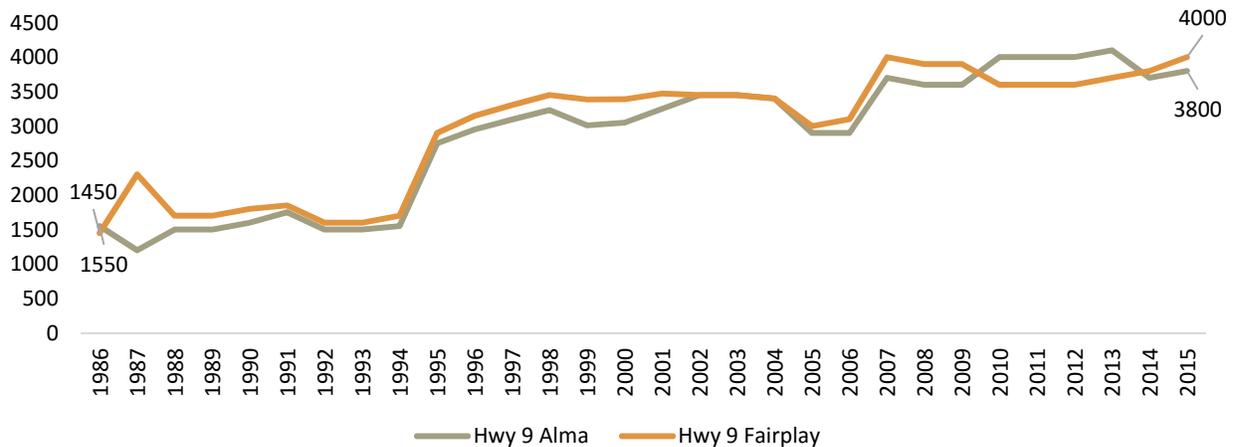
Traffic on Highway 285 has been steadily increasing over the years. In 1986 the average number of daily trips on Highway 285 in Grant was 2,500, by 2015 it had increased to 5,300. The highway is a major route from Denver heading south, traffic is only going to increase. Highway 24 has also seen increased traffic in recent years. Traffic on Highway 9 has remained steady with only a slight increase in number of average daily trips since 1986, according to CDOT traffic counts on Highway 9 near Guffey. Park County has an opportunity to make visitors out of some of the pass through traffic. Building more signage

alerting travelers to local attractions and assets, and facilitating easy visitor access to unincorporated towns will support local businesses and promote a sustainable local economy.

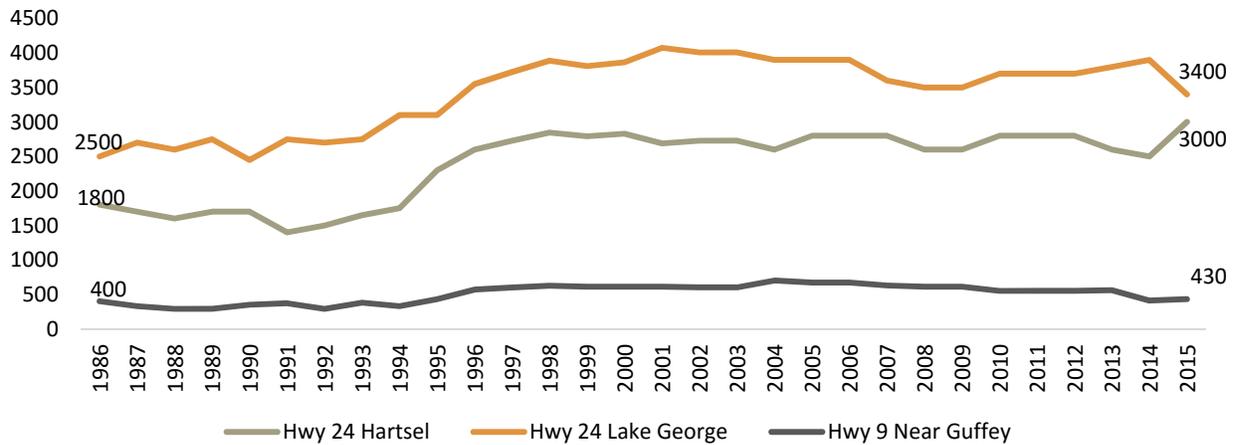
**Figure 20. Annual Average Daily Trips on Highway 285  
- Colorado Department of Transportation 1986-2015**



**Figure 21. Annual Average Daily Trips on Highway 9  
- Colorado Department of Transportation 1986-2015**



**Figure 22. Annual Average Daily Trips Highway 9, Highway 24  
- Colorado Department of Transportation 1986-2015**



## GOAL 6.1 – BUILD ON ESTABLISHED VISITOR ATTRACTIONS AND MARKET THEM.

**Strategy A** – Define the roles of the state, county tourism office, and the local chambers in marketing and developing tourist attractions and services.

**Strategy B** – Market outdoor recreation, scenic and heritage touring.

**Strategy C** – Encourage investment in Grant to establish it as a supply outpost for travelers along the recently upgraded Guanella Pass Road and Scenic Byway.

**Strategy D** – Establish visitor information at key gateways to Park County including kiosks on the Hoosier Pass Summit, the Kenosha Pass Summit, Trout Creek Pass and in Grant at the entrance to Guanella Pass.

**Strategy E** – Collect and analyze baseline data on the existing visitor market in Park County including origin, purpose of visit, satisfaction levels, length of stay, lodging/camping arrangements and other key information.

**Strategy F** – Create and regularly update a multi-year strategic marketing plan to attract target visitor markets to Park County.

**Strategy G** – Work with regional tourism marketing organizations and businesses to broaden the regional visitor experience to include day trips into Alma, Fairplay and South Park.

**Strategy H** – Promote existing campgrounds, hotels/motels and bed & breakfasts.

## GOAL 6.2 – MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE VISITOR ATTRACTIONS AND SERVICES.

**Strategy A** – Promote and protect natural, historic and cultural resources.

**Strategy B** – Coordinate and link hiking/biking trails.

**Strategy C** – Support heritage, athletic, and arts special events.

**Strategy D** – Promote and support the development of a multi-use events center.

**Strategy E** – Provide a program for rehabilitation and re-use of historic buildings.

**Strategy F** – Communicate directly with property owners and potential tenants to offer planning assistance and other incentives to get vacant businesses up and running.

**Strategy G** – Encourage the expansion of existing lodging and RV camping sites.

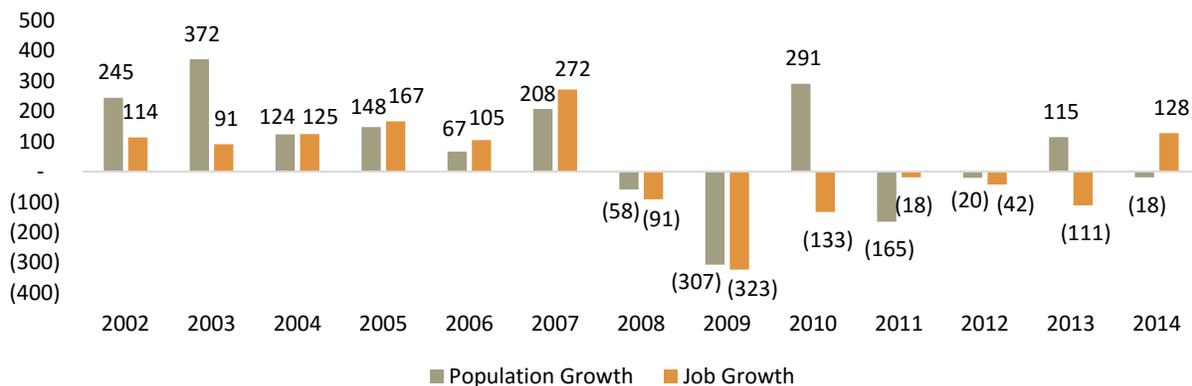
**Strategy H** – Encourage and support local volunteer trails groups.

**Strategy I** – Continue to search for opportunities for public open space/conservation property especially in the Grant to Pine Junction corridor where it has been difficult to find land conservation funding partners and protected lands are limited to a few parcels and federal/state lands.

## 7. DIVERSIFY THE ECONOMY

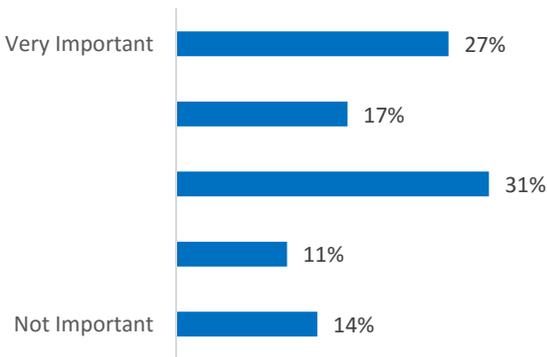
In 2001, demographers and planners thought that population growth in the mountain counties of Colorado had just begun and that thousands of new residents would continue to move to the mountains and build second homes. Growth slowed in the early 2000s, and then gained momentum again by 2007 and then slowed again in 2008. The Census shows that Park County’s population declined during most of the years between 2008 and 2014. The economic future looks much different today than it did in 2001.

**Figure 23 - Annual Added Population and Jobs 2002-2014  
- Colorado Department of Local Affairs**

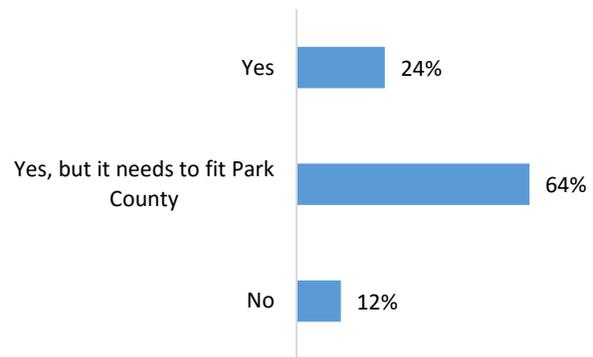


When residents were asked whether or not they support the county working to diversify the economy the response was overwhelmingly for diversification. During the Park County Community Survey there were more respondents who rated economic development as important or very important than there were who rated it as not important. Only 12% of participants at the Community Workshop Series were opposed to economic diversification efforts while 24% of participants voted yes with no qualifiers and 64% voted yes, as long as it fits Park County.

**Figure 24. How Important is Economic Development?**  
- Park County Community Survey 2015



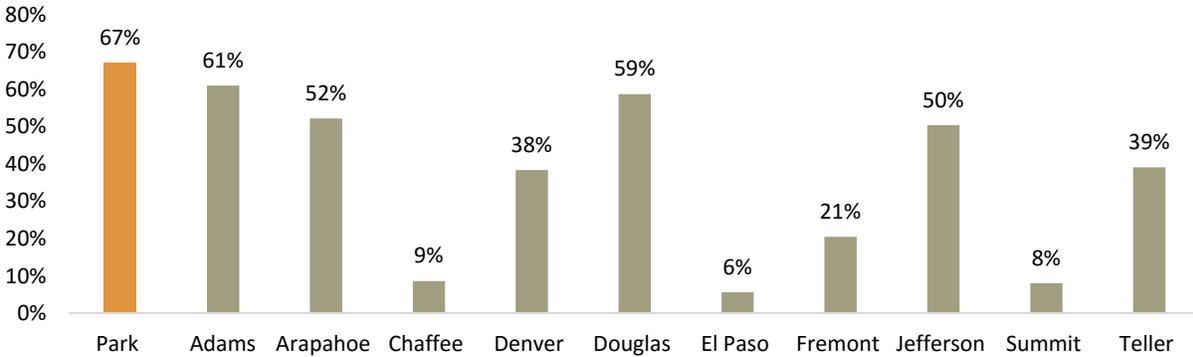
**Figure 25. Should the Community Work Together to Diversify the Economy?**  
- Community Workshop Series



**Opportunities for diversifying revenues from agricultural lands** - The Ranch Recreation program is in place and offers support and programs for encouraging ranch operators to realize revenues from their properties. This has proven to be a very successful project by the county and should continue to be supported with occasional review for areas of improvement. Continued communication and feedback from website users and ranches will guide improvements.

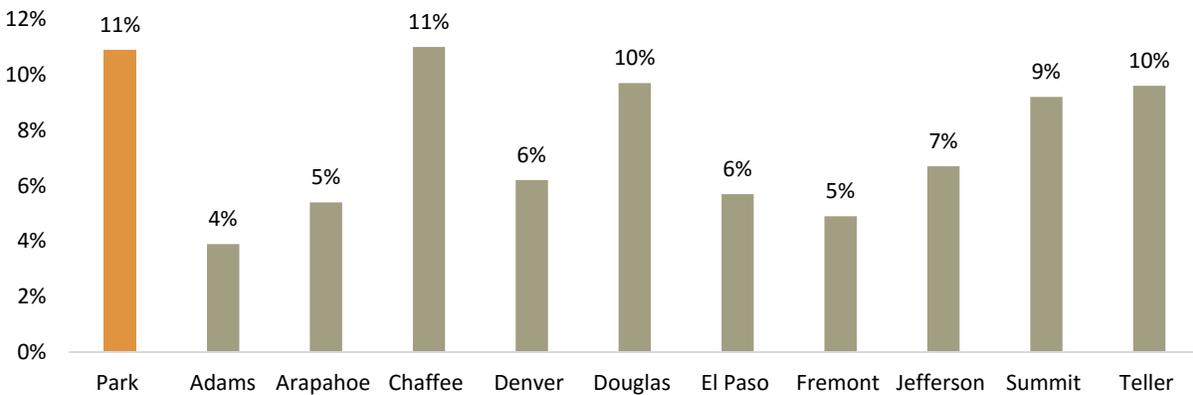
**Expanding and diversifying primary jobs in Park County** - As of 2013, the Census shows that 67% of employed persons in Park County commute outside of the county for work. This means that the vast majority of wealth in Park County is earned somewhere else. In other words, for most of the day, two-thirds of the working residents are not in the county and not buying goods and services or participating in civic activities. It also means that the economic activity and tax revenue generation associated with the industries employing two-thirds of working residents is captured in neighboring counties. The high altitude setting with mountains and natural landscapes in all directions could be the perfect setting for new base industries that generate new dollars in the county. Base industries could include mountain science organizations; outdoor equipment research, design and manufacturing; high altitude athletic training; medical services and research, agricultural research and innovations; marijuana facilities; and other businesses that can capitalize on the elevation and/or setting in Park County.

**Figure 26. Percentage of Residents who Worked Outside of County of Residence 2013**  
-US Census Bureau



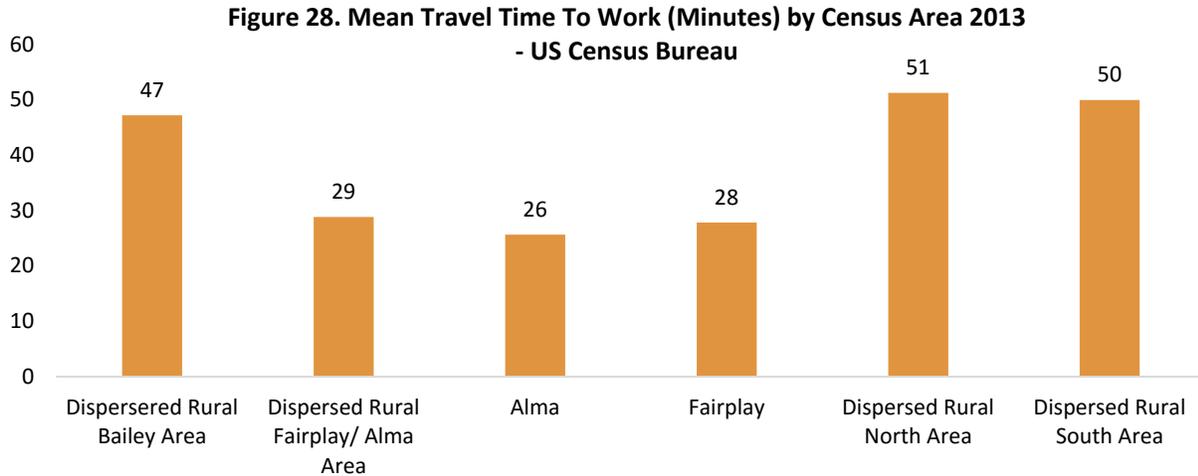
**Telecommuting and home occupations** – The census bureau shows that 11% of employed persons work at home in Park County, a remarkable number when compared to urban economies such as Denver, where only 6% of employed people work at home. This is somewhat of a new frontier in economic development and it is rare that a county would actively support telecommuters through economic development programs. This is one economic trend that seems to be working for Park County and supporting growth in telecommuter businesses including improved internet and cell service and zoning allowing home occupations will further economic diversification in an innovative manner.

**Figure 27. Percentage of Population Working from Home 2013**  
- US Census Bureau



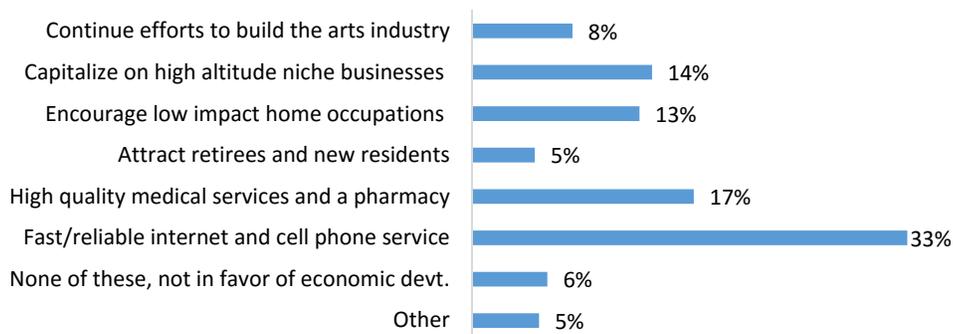
**Better capitalize on the proximity to the Front Range economy** – 10,000 of the county’s 16,000 residents live along the Highway 285 corridor east of Kenosha Pass and 74% of the working residents in this area commute out of the county for work. With several communities or nodes along the Highway 285 corridor (Grant, Shawnee, Bailey, Crow Hill, Pine Junction) that have commercially zoned land, there should be a good market for neighborhood scale commercial development that would also serve visitor traffic

along Highway 285. There may also be opportunities for residents to establish a base of operations for mobile businesses closer to where they live and deliver goods and services to the customers that are likely on the Front Range.



**Broadband and Cellular Phone Service** – Increasing cellular and internet infrastructure was the top strategy for diversifying the economy. Park County has recently increased cell service through the installation of two cell towers. The county is also investing in broadband infrastructure in the Bailey area. The county recently completed a web survey to identify current internet access and demand. Although this is the top priority, it is an expensive investment that requires phasing.

**Figure 29. Top Strategies for Diversifying the Economy**  
- Community Workshop Series 2015



**Medical Services** – Medical services are an important element of economic development. Businesses, entrepreneurs, and prospective residents consider the availability and quality of medical services when deciding where to locate. Today, county residents drive to nearby communities for medical services or prescriptions from a physician. Park County is served by fire/ambulance districts and independent ambulance districts which provide emergency medical services and treat patients in transit to a clinic or hospital. During the Community

Workshop Series residents showed concern about the lack of medical facilities and also expressed a desire for a pharmacy.

## GOAL 7.1 – DIVERSIFY THE ECONOMY AND EXPAND LIVELIHOODS IN PARK COUNTY.

**Strategy A** – Maintain and improve core infrastructure and services emphasizing cell phone and internet, major collector roads and water storage.

**Strategy B** – Continue to encourage low impact home occupations.

**Strategy C** – Attract and facilitate the development of consistent and high quality medical services.

**Strategy D** – Promote opportunities for high altitude niche businesses.

**Strategy E** – Continue efforts to build the arts industry.

**Strategy F** – Promote the incentives offered by the enterprise tax credit incentives:

- Vacant building rehabilitation tax credit
- Investment tax credit
- New employee tax credit
- Employer sponsored health insurance credit
- Research and design tax credit

**Strategy G** – Attract new residents with improvements to basic infrastructure (roads and telecommunications) in the most viable residential neighborhoods. Support occupancy of vacant homes and further develop these viable neighborhoods.

**Strategy H** – Explore areas for small scale light industrial where water and sewer infrastructure are available and that are otherwise feasible and align with the mountain environment.

**Strategy I** – Carefully evaluate transportation costs and logistics when determining feasible locations for light industrial uses.

**Strategy J** – Many retail and commercial services will likely be covered by Front Range economies and by nearby communities such as Aspen Park, Woodland Park, Summit County and Cañon City. Encourage specialty niches that serve both recreational/visitor traffic and local residents.

**Strategy K** – Prioritize areas already zoned for business as sites for future commercial/nonresidential uses.

**Strategy L** – Consider rezoning land to accommodate commercial/non-residential uses if the proposed development includes adequate sewer and water, if it is proposed on a historic commercial/non-residential site, if it supports the relevant goals and strategies in this

master plan and if impacts on nearby residential neighborhoods are adequately considered and mitigated.

**Strategy M** – Encourage and support business development and the development of a diversity of housing types in Fairplay and Alma.

**Strategy N** – Where adequate sewer and water infrastructure and safe access exists or can be developed, allow densities supporting affordable multi-family and townhome formats.

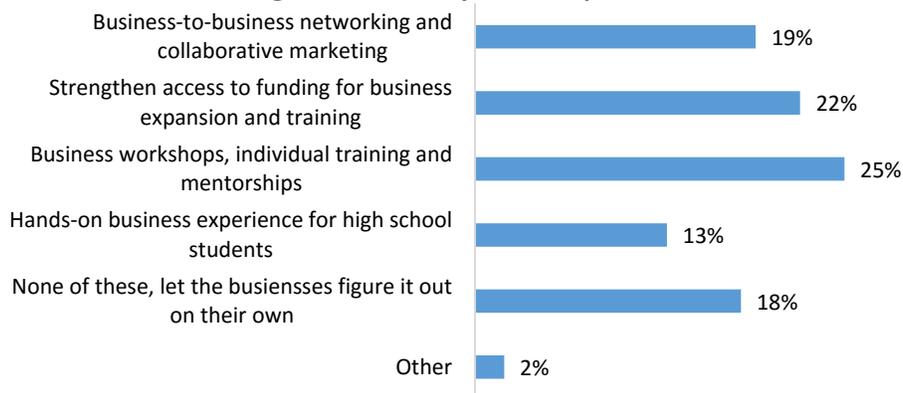
**Strategy O** – In preparation for potential investment in fluid mineral development, maintain relations with the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission and the Bureau of Land Management and follow adopted plans by these agencies.

## 8. BUSINESS SUPPORT AND TRAINING

Currently there is not a formal business support program in Park County. In the past the county has offered support through tax incentives, but there is no official training or support program for businesses operating in the county. Recently Park County has made moves to increase business support; in 2015 Park County became part of the Upper Arkansas Enterprise Zone which also includes Chaffee, Custer, Fremont and Lake Counties. As part of the enterprise zone businesses now have access to additional tax incentives including an employee training tax credit of 12% of qualified training expenses. Park County residents identified business assistance as a need during interviews and the Community Workshop Series. This signals the need for a business support and start-up assistance program to help with business planning, to educate businesses about the economic realities of seasonal swings in revenues, and to direct businesses to state and federal business development resources and financing.

During the Community Workshop Series the majority of participants were supportive of strategies to increase business support. The top three strategies were: business workshops, individual training and mentorships; strengthening access to funding for business expansion and training; and business-to-business networking and collaborative marketing.

**Figure 30. The most useful business support and training strategies - Community Workshop Series 2015**



## GOAL 8.1 – SUPPORT EFFORTS OF LOCAL NON-PROFITS TO DEVELOP BUSINESS SUPPORT AND TRAINING SERVICES.

**Strategy A** – Support and encourage the Platte Canyon Area Chamber of Commerce and the South Park Chamber of Commerce to partner with local governments, state agencies and other non-profits to:

- Support business-to-business networking and collaborative marketing.
- Strengthen access to funding for business expansion and training.
- Encourage and support business workshops, individual training and mentorships.
- Promote hands-on business experience for high school students.
- Promote the Colorado Enterprise Zone employee training tax credit (12% of qualified training expenses) to encourage workforce training.

**Strategy B** – Continue to provide a web-based community profile that will inform business decisions through Park County Department of Heritage, Tourism and Community Development.

## 9. COUNTY CORE SERVICES, INFRASTRUCTURE AND ASSETS

Investments in infrastructure that improve quality of life and support commerce will positively affect local residents and provide a significant economic impact by increasing the overall appeal of Park County. The county will work to provide financially sustainable infrastructure and core services that serve the needs of the community. Maintaining the fiscal soundness of the county in current and future economic cycles is of utmost importance for achieving community goals and maintaining health and quality of life.

### County Facilities and Assets

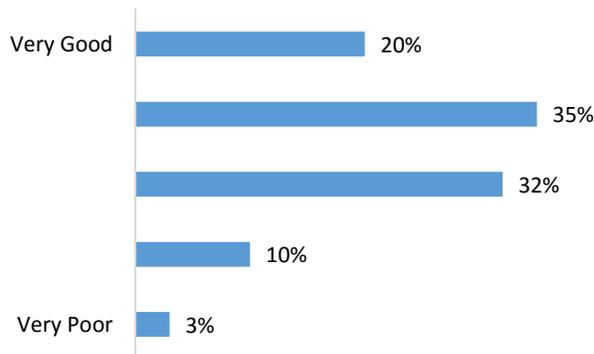
The county manages four community centers, the Park County library system, and the fairgrounds. Community centers are located in Fairplay, Lake George, Shawnee, and Guffey. Residents throughout the county have identified community centers as important community assets and support continued maintenance of the community centers. Park County library system has four library branches in Fairplay, Lake George, Guffey, and Bailey.



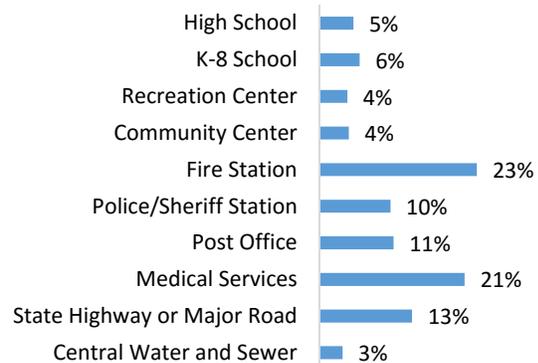
**Park County Library in Fairplay**

When residents were asked to rate the Park County library service in the 2015 Park County Survey the response was positive. 55% percent rated library service as good or very good, 35% were neutral and only 13% gave a rating of poor or very poor. During the Community Workshop Series small-group sessions participants identified the county library branches as something they treasure and want to preserve.

**Figure 31. How would you rate library service in Park County?**  
- Park County Community Survey 2015



**Figure 32. Most important infrastructure and services to be near.**  
- Community Workshop Series 2015



**Fire and Emergency Medical Services**

Park County is a large and rural county with an area of 2,193 square miles and a very low population density of 7 people per square mile. During the Community Workshop Series participants were asked what infrastructure and services were most important to be near. 23% identified fire stations and 21% identified medical services as the most important. The county has seven fire protection districts, (two of the fire districts are joint ambulance/fire districts) and two independent ambulance districts. With seven fire districts and 2,193 square miles of land in the county, much of it forest service, wilderness, and state land, there is a serious need for support and coordination between the county, the fire protection districts and state and federal fire management agencies. Wildland fire mitigation, emergency preparedness, and resident education are all areas requiring coordination.



**Hartsel Fire Protection District**

Today, Park County residents must drive long distances to receive medical attention or prescriptions from a physician. During the community workshop series residents showed concern about the lack of medical facilities and also expressed a desire for a pharmacy.

Providing these services will require partnerships with state and federal health agencies and healthcare organizations and businesses.

The following fire protection districts cover Park County:

- Platte Canyon Fire Protection District
- Elk Creek Fire Protection District
- Hartsel Fire Protection District
- Jefferson-Como Fire Protection District
- Lake George Fire Protection District
- North-West Fire Protection District
- Southern Park County Fire Protection District

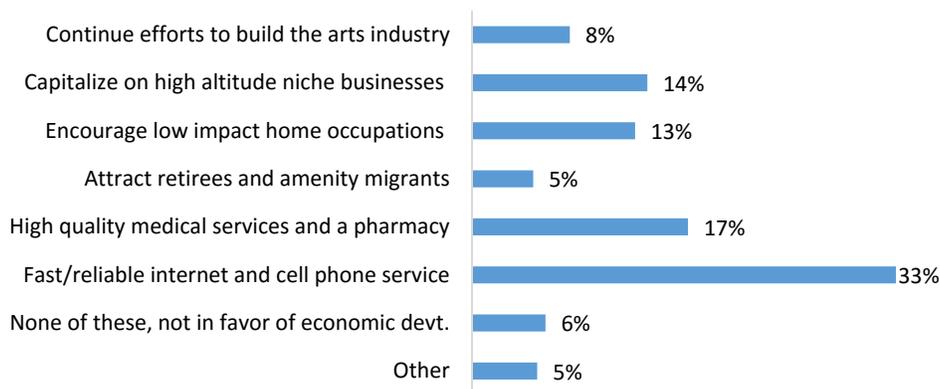
Ambulance services in Park County include:

- South Park Ambulance District
- Ute Pass Regional Ambulance District
- Southern Park County Fire Protection District
- Platte Canyon Fire Protection District

### Telecommunications Infrastructure

There is strong support throughout the county for increased access to internet and cellular service. The county is focused on improving the telecommunications infrastructure and are working to incrementally increase access to both cellular and internet infrastructure. The Park County Connect online survey was recently completed and identifies current internet access of county residents and the demand for internet.

**Figure 33. Strategies for Diversifying the Economy  
- Community Workshop Series 2015**



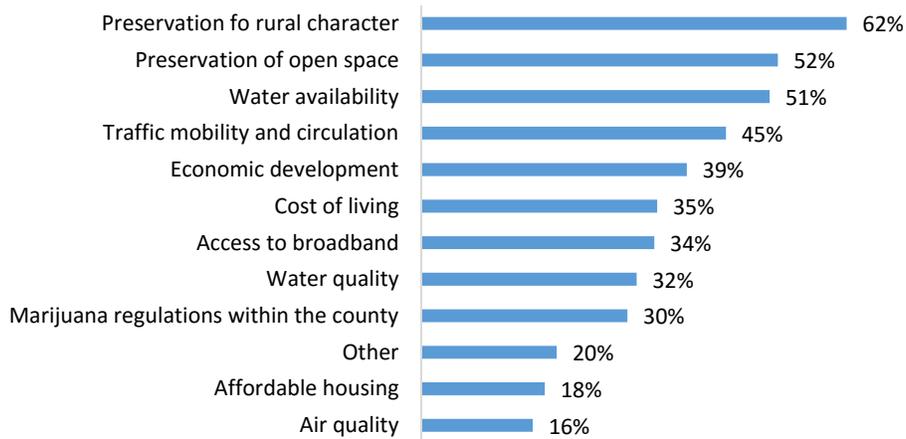
### Cellular

Park County is making strong efforts to increase access to cellular and broadband internet services in the county. This requires regular communications with companies that provide cellular phone infrastructure and some level of investment.

## Broadband

The county developed a broadband initiative and is working to expand high speed internet access incrementally. In 2015 the county took advantage of a first time telecommunications grant from the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) to install six miles of fiber optic cables in the Bailey area, connecting the school and government buildings to broadband. The county is working to build broadband infrastructure and install fiber optic cables in Bailey followed by Fairplay. The county’s investments are strategic and are intended to attract service providers through investments in middle mile infrastructure. The county needs to continue to build the telecommunications infrastructure incrementally throughout the county.

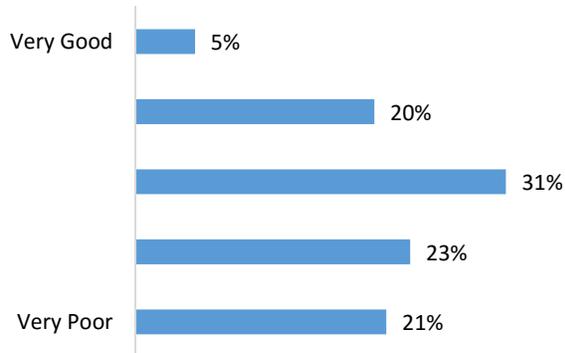
**Figure 34. What are the Most Important Issues Facing Park County in the Next Five Years?**  
**- Park County Community Survey 2015**



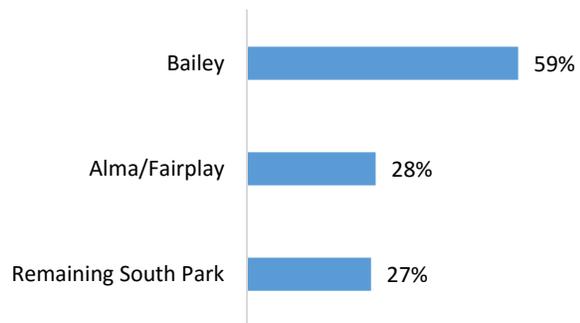
## Public Works

Roads in Park County were clearly identified as needing improvement in the 2015 Park County Community Survey and during the Community Workshop Series. In the 2015 Park County Community Survey residents were asked to rate the quality of county services from very poor to very good. 43% of respondents rated Road & Bridge services as poor or very poor, 31% were neutral and 25% rated it as good or very good. During the Community Workshop Series small-group breakout session participants were asked, “what concerns do you have about Park County and what changes are needed?” The top responses were road conditions and road maintenance. Additionally, residents expressed a desire for more openness from the county about road maintenance plans and priorities, stating that they wanted road maintenance schedules. During the keypad polling session of the Community Workshop Series participants were asked to identify top strategies for transportation improvements. 27% identified incrementally improving busy collector roads as the top strategy. Other strategies supported include identifying and improving dangerous intersections and improving drainage on residential roads.

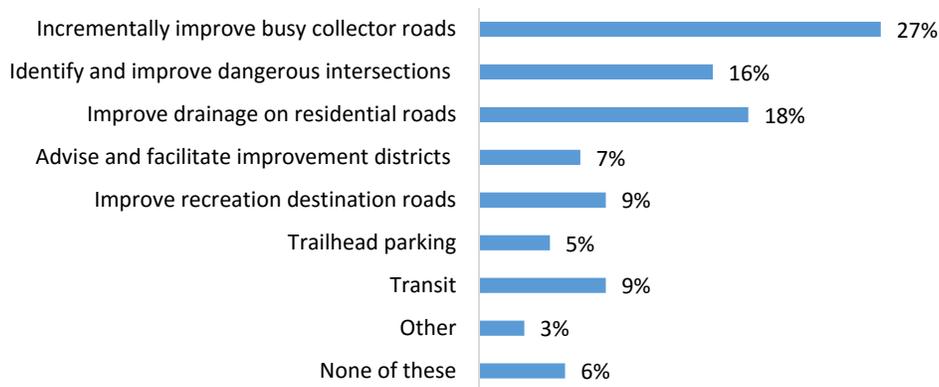
**Figure 35. How would you Rate Road and Bridge Service?  
- Park County Community Survey 2015**



**Figure 36. Percentage of Respondents who Feel Traffic Mobility is an Important Issue for the Next Five Years?  
- Park County Community Survey 2015**



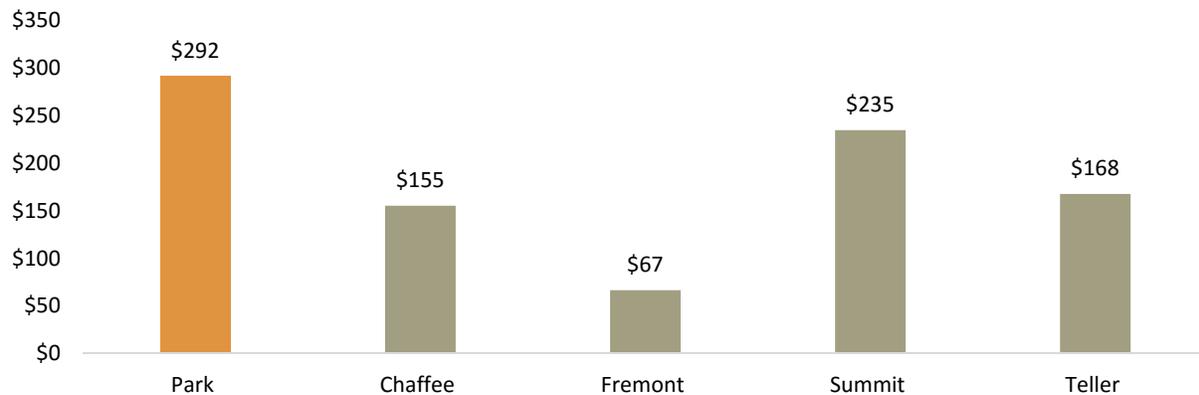
**Figure 37. What are the Top 2 Transportation Improvement Needs? - Community Workshop Series 2015**



The Public Works Department (formerly the Road and Bridge Department) has approximately 1,622 miles of road to maintain and a limited budget. Because of the sheer size of the county, the rural dispersed population and the 1,622 miles of road the county is responsible for, the county spends more per capita on road and bridge than all neighboring counties. In 2014 Park County spent \$292 per capita on public works and road and bridge. It is not realistic to fix every road in the county all at once, roads must be prioritized and maintenance will occur incrementally.

The county supports the formation of Local Improvement Districts (LIDs) which allow the county to work with property owners to make road improvements in a localized area. The property owners pay for a portion of the improvements and spread the cost between the county property owners. The LID group pays their portion of the improvements over a ten year period. LIDs are limited to roads currently maintained by the county and does not include private roads.

**Figure 38. Public Works/Road and Bridge Per Capita Expenditures 2014  
- County Financial Audits**



## GOAL 9.1 – MAINTAIN AND INCREMENTALLY IMPROVE BUSY COLLECTOR AND DRIVING TOUR ROADS.

**Strategy A** – Create a long range plan and program for prioritizing maintenance and road improvements that integrates several factors:

- Traffic volumes
- Surface types
- Level of buildout and viability of subdivisions/developments
- Access to communities and public facilities
- Routes that are alternatives to highways (‘cutoff’ roads, highway closure detours).
- Dangerous intersections and other hazards

**Strategy B** – Maintain recreation destination roads and historic/scenic driving tours routes, such a Tarryall Road, Guanella Pass Road and the roads accessing the reservoirs in South Park.

**Strategy C** –Work with federal and state land management agencies and private property owners to improve trailhead parking.

## GOAL 9.2 – SYSTEMATIZE ROAD MAINTENANCE IN RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISIONS.

**Strategy A** – Establish an annual road maintenance schedule and communicate it to homeowners, neighborhood associations and businesses each year.

**Strategy B** – Facilitate the formation and management of local improvement districts in new developments and in existing neighborhoods that want to make specific road improvements or initiate localized maintenance and snowplowing.

**Strategy C** – Educate residents in more remote neighborhoods about snow plow schedules and set realistic expectations for the timing of plowing during winter storms.

## GOAL 9.3 – EXPAND AND IMPROVE CELLULAR PHONE AND INTERNET INFRASTRUCTURE.

**Strategy A** – Continue to coordinate with regional counties, municipalities, schools, businesses, residents and telecommunications companies to improve and expand cell phone and internet infrastructure.

**Strategy B** – Make investments in priority telecommunications infrastructure such as cell phone towers and broadband extensions.

## GOAL 9.4 – SUPPORT FIRE DISTRICTS EFFORTS TO PROVIDE FIRE AND EMS.

**Strategy A** – Support the continuance of the cooperation that exists today among fire districts, state and federal fire protection agencies, and local governments and strengthen these partnerships to increase the regional capacity to prepare for and mitigate hazards and respond to emergencies.

**Strategy B** – Encourage coordination between insurance companies and fire districts to educate property owners about defensible space and emergency access insurance standards and policy enforcement.

**Strategy C** – Consider fire hazard, fuels mitigation and access for fire apparatus in reviewing future development proposals.

## GOAL 9.5 – MAINTAIN AND INCREMENTALLY UPGRADE COUNTY FACILITIES.

**Strategy A** – Continue to update and refine long range maintenance and replacement schedules.

**Strategy B** – Replace the county’s main offices in Fairplay.

# 10. THE FUTURE OF UNINCORPORATED HISTORIC TOWNS

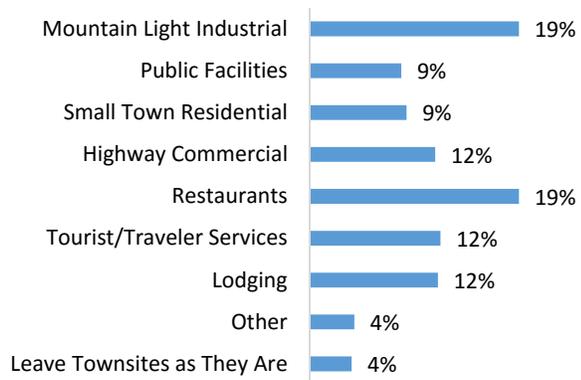
There are eight unincorporated communities in Park County. They have a sizable population, public services, infrastructure, and contain commercial zoning. The unincorporated communities include Pine Junction, Crow Hill, Bailey, Jefferson, Como,

Guffey, Hartsel, and Lake George. Each community is unique with its own history and development patterns, however, there are similarities among them.

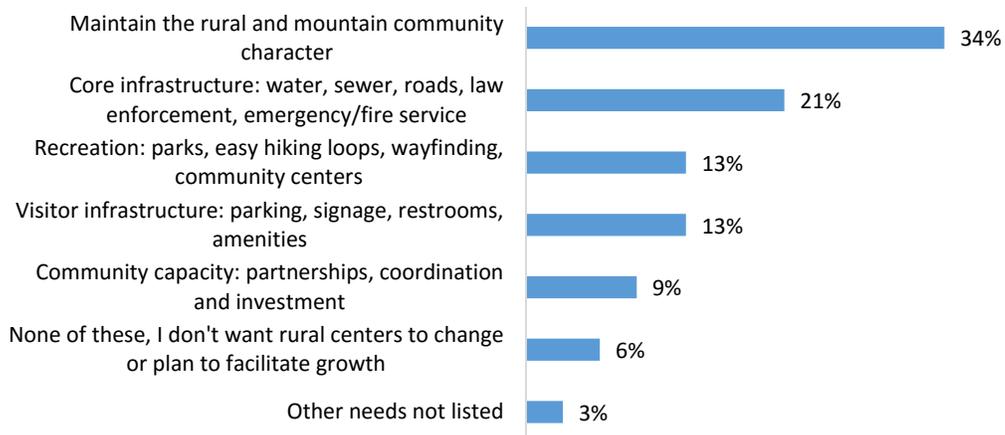
During the Community Workshop Series keypad polling session participants were asked to identify the best commercial uses for unincorporated towns. The top two commercial uses identified were mountain light industrial and restaurants, each received 19% of votes. Highway commercial, tourist and travel services, and lodging each received 12% of votes and public facilities and small town residential received 9% of votes. 4% voted for other, while the remaining 4% voted to leave unincorporated towns as they are.

Participants at the Community Vision Workshops identified maintaining the rural and mountain community character and core infrastructure as the two most important pieces of unincorporated towns. It is extremely important to residents that any commercial development in unincorporated towns fits the rural, mountain character of the community. This means small-scale, and appropriate to the level of infrastructure and services provided.

**Figure 39. What are the Best Commercial Uses in Unincorporated Town Sites? - Community Workshop Series 2015**



**Figure 40. What are Most Important for Unincorporated Town Sites? - Community Workshop Series 2015**



## GOAL 10.1 – INCREASE THE APPEAL AND ECONOMIC ROLE OF UNINCORPORATED TOWNS.

**Strategy A** – Maintain the rural and mountain community character.

**Strategy B** – Facilitate the development of visitor infrastructure: parking, signage, restrooms, and amenities.

**Strategy C** – Increase community capacity: partnerships, coordination and investment.

**Strategy D** – Ensure that commercial uses in unincorporated towns are small-scale and fit the rural/small town character:

- Mountain Light Industrial
- Public Facilities
- Highway Commercial
- Restaurants
- Tourist/Traveler Services
- Lodging

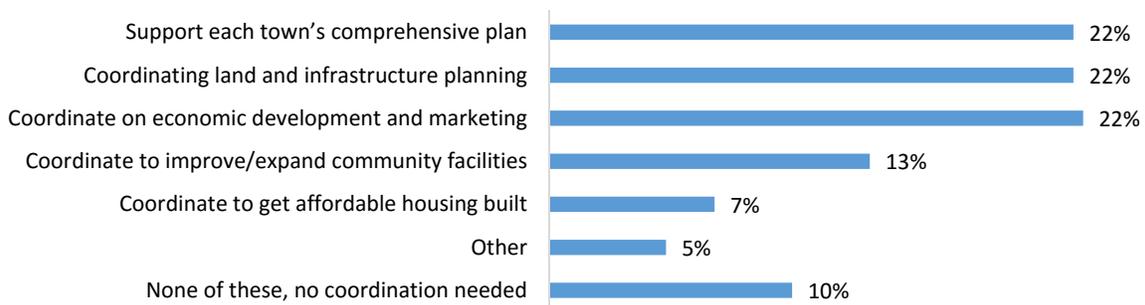
**Strategy E** – Make unincorporated towns more visually appealing to visitors and residents.

**Strategy F** – Invest in wayfinding, easy and obvious parking, visitor amenities and restrooms to attract more people to stop.

## 11. STRATEGIC COORDINATION WITH MUNICIPALITIES

The county, the Town of Fairplay and Town of Alma will each benefit from strategic coordination amongst each other. The two municipalities and Park County all have their own goals and leadership, and where they impact each other, or align with one another, it is logical to coordinate and communicate. When the municipalities are successful, the entire county benefits. It is important that the county utilizes each town’s Comprehensive Plan and that the town’s both utilize the county Strategic Master Plan. Areas where increased coordination will be beneficial include land use decisions in the three mile area around municipal boundaries, town entrances and right of ways, municipal watersheds, trails and pathways, and economic development.

**Figure 41. Top Strategies for Coordination with Fairplay and Alma  
- Community Workshop Series 2015**



## GOAL 11.1 – COORDINATE WITH ALMA AND FAIRPLAY AND IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS (ALSO SEE “REGIONAL HUB” SUBAREA IN CHAPTER 3).

**Strategy A** – Consider each municipality’s comprehensive plan when reviewing land use proposals and during planning infrastructure improvements in the periphery around the town boundaries.

**Strategy B** – Refer to the growth and annexation areas when considering development applications in these areas as delineated in the Regional Hub subarea discussion in Chapter 3.

**Strategy C** – Coordinate planning and establish protocols for communications between county and municipalities for development and infrastructure in the municipal peripheries.

**Strategy D** – Work with the Town of Fairplay and Colorado Department of Transportation to create objectives and develop a funding strategy to establish wayfinding, gateway signage and monumentation leading into town and at key intersections in town.

**Strategy E** – Reexamine the potential for improvements that would attract more community and visitor use of the Park County Fairgrounds and seek funding partners.

## 12. COUNTY GOVERNANCE

The county government strives to keep residents informed but the size and rural nature of Park County make the spread of information a challenge. Park County has a number of systems currently in place for resident notification.

**Code Red** – Park County uses the Code Red’s reverse 911 notification system to inform the community about emergencies and critical community alerts. The service provides notifications via landline, cellphone or email, and offers text messages as an option. The alert system provides information such as: evacuation notices, bio-terrorism alerts, boil water notices, and AMBER Alerts. Optional weather alerts are also available through Code Red. Residents sign up for the service and select their notification preference on the county’s website.

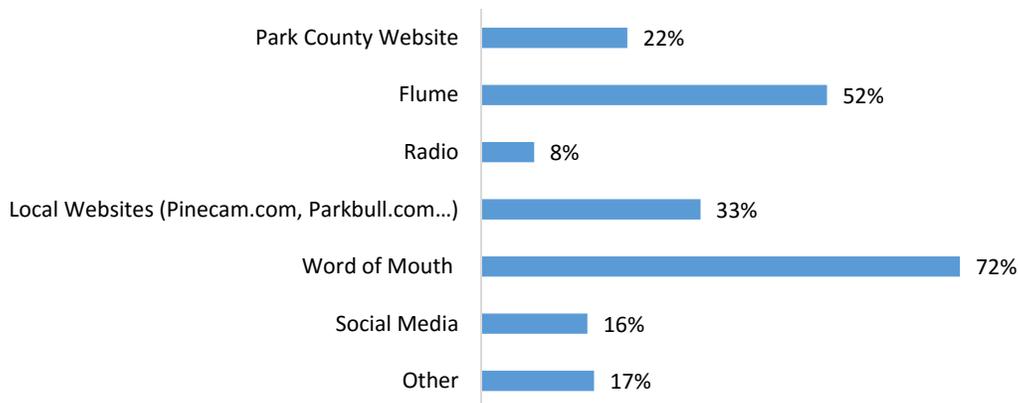
**Notify Me** – This notification service is offered on the county website and provides notifications on a wide variety of topics including: county newsletters, meeting agendas, BOCC meeting minutes, road maintenance schedules, hazard alerts, and news flashes for each department. It requires the user to subscribe and select the notifications they wish to receive via text or email.

Email Blasts – The county uses an email list to send out mass notifications to county residents.

Flume Publications –The county posts announcements in the weekly publication; the paper also contains a section dedicated to county news and updates.

Despite strong efforts by the county, residents identified communication between the county and residents as an issue that needs to be addressed during the Community Workshop Series small-group breakout sessions. Participants discussed a lack of information from the county on current issues, meeting schedules, and emergency notification. The Notify Me system on the county website is regularly updated with county news and emergency alerts are sent out by the Code Red system, yet only 22% of respondents to the 2015 Park County Survey identified the county website as a resource used for obtaining county news, 72% said they get their county news by word of mouth. Further investigation by the county is needed to identify best practices for informing county residents about county news and emergencies. This includes research to identify what methods are preferred by residents, whether residents are aware of the information services provided currently, and what changes are needed to ensure that residents are getting county information in a timely manner.

**Figure 42. How do you find out about county events and issues?  
- Park County Community Survey 2015**



## GOAL 12.1 – IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS TO INCLUDE CONSISTENT OUTREACH TO ALL COMMUNITIES.

**Strategy A** – Inform residents of the Notify Me system on the Park County website which provides email and text alerts for upcoming events, emergencies, meeting schedules, newsletters and more. Conduct a major Notify Me sign-up campaign.

**Strategy B** – Evaluate effectiveness of the current system for providing county residents with important information and consider improvements and alternatives to increase

efficient and timely spread of county information. For example, notifications and outreach to second home owners will require a customized approach.

**Strategy C** – Increase outreach to rural areas by offering more town hall style meetings with the County Commissioners, Public Works Department, and other county departments as needed in the unincorporated towns throughout the county.

**Strategy D** – Improve the system for providing important information to residents such as county meetings, road maintenance schedules and road closures.

## GOAL 12.2 – INCREASE THE CONSISTENCY AND GEOGRAPHIC REACH OF ENFORCEMENT OF COUNTY REGULATIONS.

**Strategy A** – Establish a funding strategy for increasing enforcement capacity.

## GOAL 12.3 – ENSURE THAT YOUTH AND THE ELDERLY ARE ADEQUATELY REPRESENTED AND CONSIDERED.

**Strategy A** – Plan for the medical and housing needs of an aging population.

**Strategy B** – Engage students in county government with tours and presentations at the schools and encourage young people to participate in local government.

**Strategy C** – Support efforts to develop youth recreation opportunities.

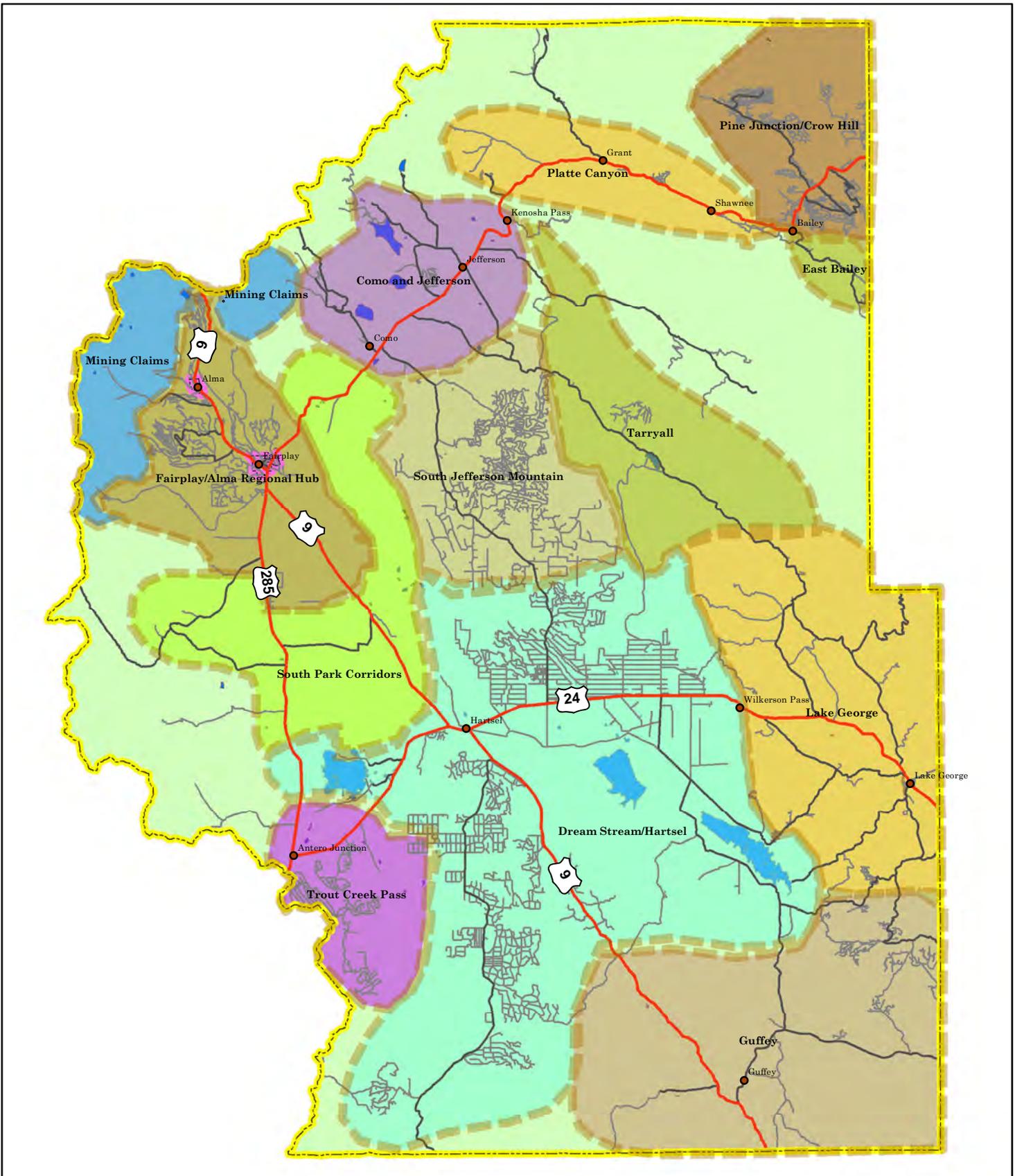
# CHAPTER 3 SUBAREA GROWTH STRATEGY

## INTRODUCTION

The key to Park County's success is its diverse rural and mountain landscapes and the subareas identify these unique geographies. Chapter 2 addresses Park County as a whole and articulates countywide goals and strategies. This chapter looks at the county as 12 subareas (see map below). The subareas delineate the terrain and human geography of the county and they each reveal a unique growth strategy.

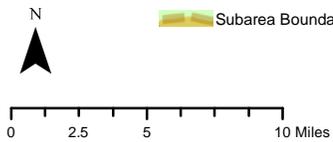
Many of the subareas are centered on unincorporated historic towns such as Hartsel, Jefferson and Bailey, but cover the entire geographic area tied to each community. The municipalities (Fairplay and Alma) are treated together as one subarea and also separately with customized growth and annexation areas articulated by each town. The growth strategy builds from the strengths and opportunities of each subarea. The subareas are not intended to divide the county or its communities, rather they are designed to address the individual growth strategies for unique areas. While the countywide goals and strategies in Chapter 2 encompass all subareas, it is unrealistic to expect one growth strategy could be successfully implemented across the entire county. A secondary level of examination where individual strategies for each subarea are developed is necessary.

A close examination of the Park County Zoning Map shows that zoning allowing commercial uses is in place throughout the county. These existing commercial properties, including vacant lots, offer opportunities for economic growth that already fits the development pattern. Residential lots are plentiful throughout the county and decades of residential development can be accommodated by existing subdivisions and road networks. To illustrate and characterize the growth potential, subarea metrics were established and measured using the county GIS mapping database. The subareas offer growth strategies for the diverse geographies in Park County.



**Legend**

- Highway
- Major Road
- Local Road
- Park County Line
- City Limits
- Public Lands and Inholdings
- Subarea Boundary



***Subareas***

## SUBAREA LAND USE METRICS

Many factors need to be considered in each subarea to identify realistic and feasible opportunities for growth. Three subarea metrics were designed to highlight unique opportunities and challenges for each subarea.

- **Demographics:** total population, housing units, rentals/ownership/vacation homes, commuting.
- **Core Services Facilities and Growth Efficiency:** an inventory of infrastructure, community/civic/education facilities and a growth efficiency score for each subarea based on the proximity of development lots to these necessary components.
- **Land Use and Development Patterns:** the inventory of land zoned for commercial uses, the number and size of vacant commercial zoned land and the number of built vs. vacant residential lots.

### DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographics include average commute times to work, percentage of the population who commutes outside of Park County for work, housing unit vacancy rates, and full-time population counts from the Census Bureau. The average commute times to work represent the one-way driving time between a person's residence and their place of employment. The census counts unoccupied homes, seasonal second homes, and any home that is not listed as a primary residence as a vacant home. For example, a housing vacancy rate of 33% means that a third of the housing units are either unoccupied, or used only part of the year. The remaining 77% of housing units are considered fulltime residences or primary residences.

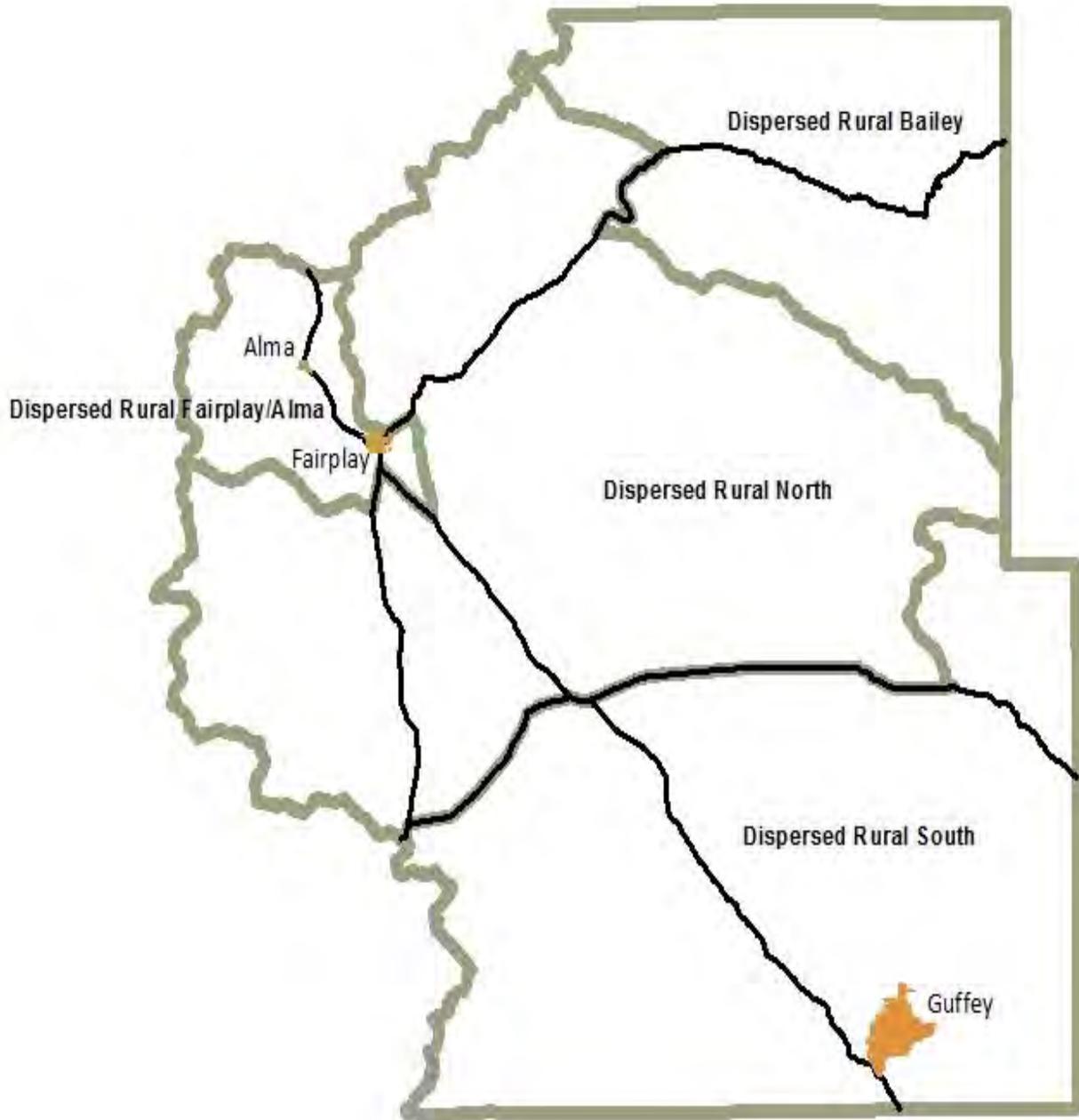
There are five defined census tracts in Park County and two municipalities (Fairplay and Alma). Two of the five tracts were consolidated to produce a total of six demographic areas: Dispersed Rural Bailey (composed of two tracts), Dispersed Rural North, Dispersed Rural South, Dispersed Rural Fairplay/Alma (contains only information on the population living outside the municipalities), Fairplay, and Alma (see map below). Demographic data are available from the US Census in 'tracts' and 'designated places', which do not directly align with the subareas. The demographic data presented in each subarea is the data for the census tract containing most of each subarea.

The subareas contained within each census tract follow:

- Dispersed Rural Bailey: Pine Junction/Crow Hill, East Bailey, Platte Canyon
- Dispersed Rural Fairplay Alma: Mining Claims, Regional Hub (unincorporated area only, Fairplay and Alma are excluded)
- Fairplay: Town of Fairplay
- Alma: Town of Alma
- Dispersed Rural North: South Park Corridors, Jefferson/Como, Tarryall, Indian Mountain, the northern portion of Dream Stream/Hartsel and Lake George

- Dispersed Rural South: Trout Creek Pass, Guffey, the southern portion of Dream Stream/Hartsel and Lake George

Figure 43. Demographic Areas Map Based on US Census Tracts

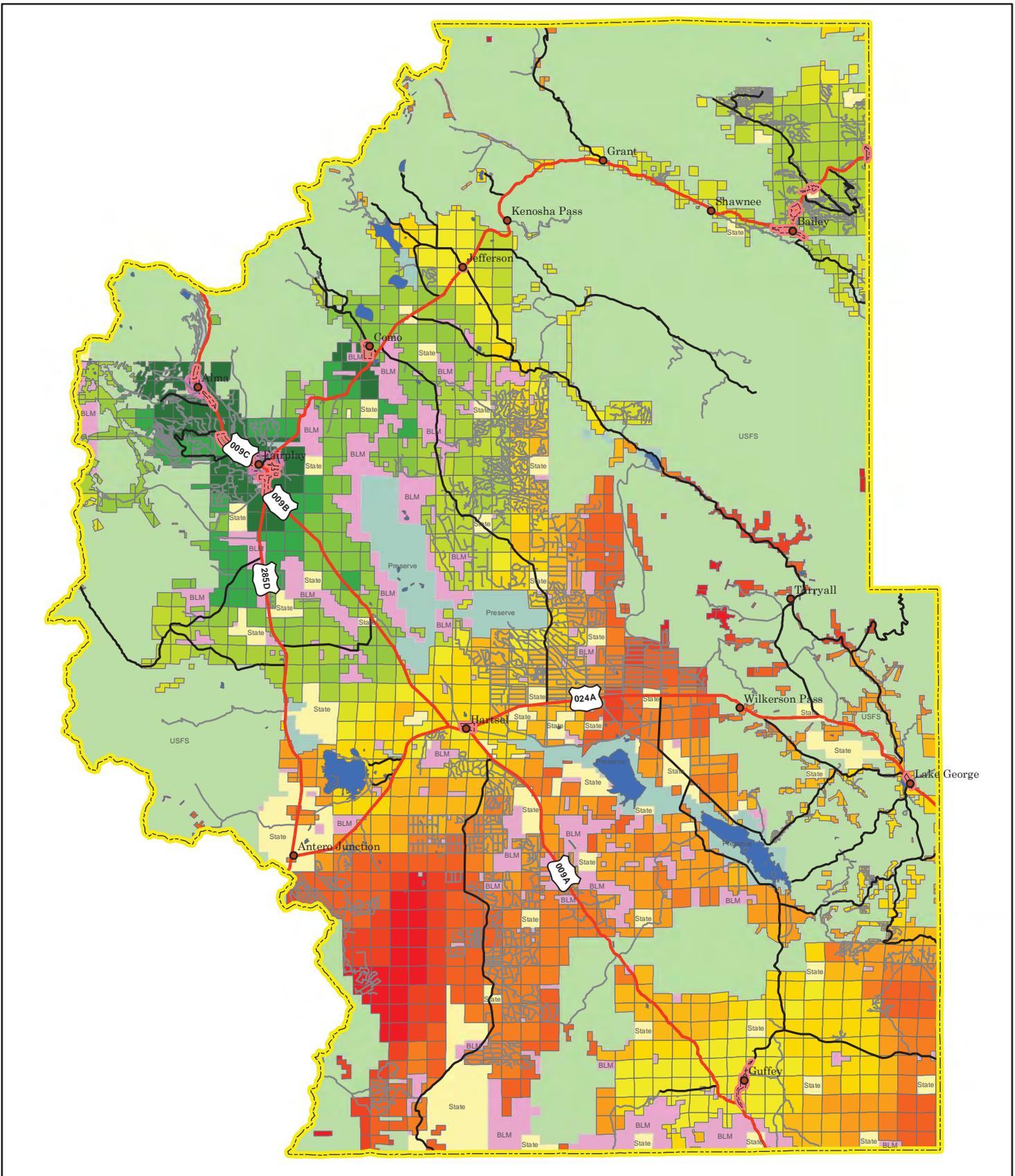


## CORE FACILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE AND GROWTH EFFICIENCY

This metric describes the public services available within each subarea and presents a Growth Efficiency Score for each subarea. The growth efficiency score measures how close a subarea is geographically to the following 13 public services and facilities:

- Elementary School
- Middle School
- High School
- Fire Station
- Community Center
- Library
- County Administration
- Law Enforcement
- Post Office
- Medical
- Highway
- Major Road
- Water/Sewer

The more public services and infrastructure available in close proximity, the higher the growth efficiency score, with the highest possible score of 13. For example, the Regional Hub subarea which includes the municipalities of Fairplay and Alma has an average growth efficiency score of 12.8, a very high score indicating easy access to nearly all public facilities and infrastructure. On the other end of the spectrum is the remote Tarryall subarea which has a much lower average growth efficiency score of 4.4 because it is far from a community center, library, major highway, schools, and other core community facilities, infrastructure and services. A brief discussion of fire and ambulance districts serving each subarea area is also included in this section. There are seven fire districts, two of which are combined fire and ambulance districts, and two independent ambulance districts serving the county.



**Legend**

- Park County Line
- Highway
- Major Roads
- Local Road
- City Limits
- Subarea Boundary
- BLM
- Preserve
- State
- USFS

**Growth Efficiency Cumulative Score**

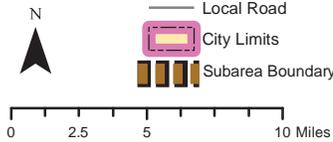
- 0 No Access to Services
- 1
- 2
- 3

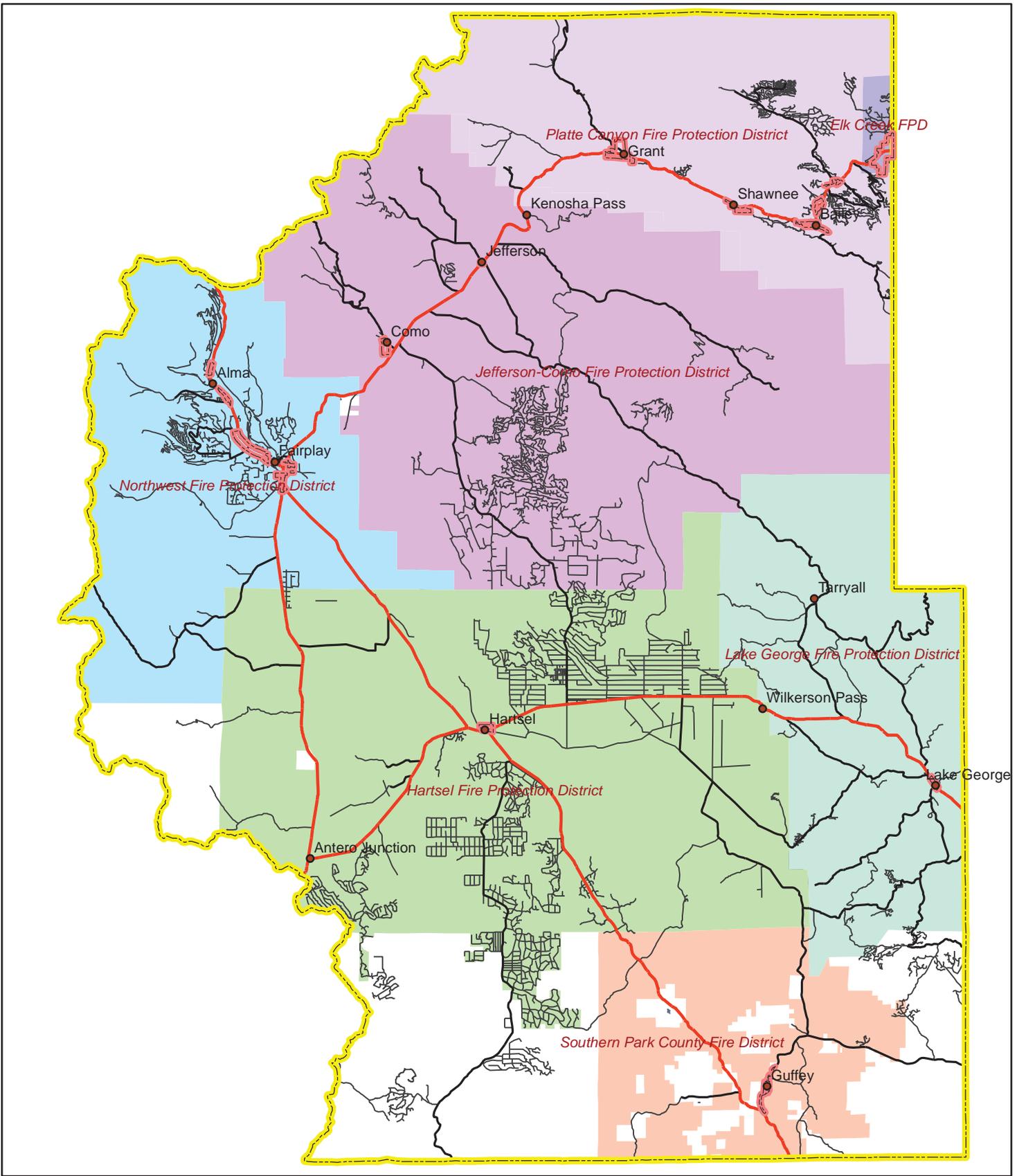
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14 Best Access to Services

**Growth Efficiency**

*Measures access to public facilities and service in county green to red is best to worst*

Growth Strategy  
Park County, CO

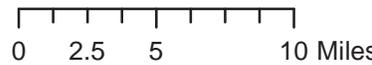




- Legend**
- Park County Line
  - Highway
  - Major Roads
  - Local Road
  - City Limits
  - Rural Center

- Legend**
- Fire Districts
- Northwest Fire Protection District
  - Platte Canyon Fire Protection District
  - Jefferson-Como Fire Protection District
  - Hartsel Fire Protection District
  - Lake George Fire Protection District
  - Southern Park County Fire District
  - Elk Creek FPD

## Fire Districts



## LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

The subarea land use and development patterns metrics are designed to assess the potential for residential and commercial development in each of the subareas.

Commercial development potential is gauged by comparing the number of acres and parcels that are zoned for commercial use against the number of parcels that currently have a commercial use as defined by the Park County Assessor. Land use data from the Assessor's Office is the best source of information for determining what uses are currently present in each subarea. For example, if a subarea has ten parcels of zoned commercial land but only five parcels of assessed commercial land, there is potential for significant commercial development in the subarea.

Residential development patterns are analyzed by comparing the number of developed residential lots in a subarea with the number of vacant lots in the subarea. The number of vacant lots compared to the number of existing residences shows how much residential development could occur in each subarea. For example, a subarea with 200 developed lots and 50 vacant lots indicates limited potential for residential development and will not significantly change the nature of the subarea, however an area with 200 developed lots and 1,000 vacant lots holds the potential for significant residential change. The residential lot size metric shows the density of development occurring in the subarea. The percentage of the land zoned agricultural indicates what proportion of the subarea has rural/agricultural character and land use patterns.

The land use metrics are summarized below:

<b>Metric</b>	<b>Methodology and Data</b>
Unincorporated Towns and Municipalities	Names of the unincorporated communities and municipalities in the subarea
Commercial/Industrial/Mixed Use Zoning (Acres)	Acres of land zoned commercial, industrial, or mixed use by the County's existing zoning map
Commercial/Mixed Use/Industrial Zoning (Parcels)	Total Number of parcels in commercial, industrial, or mixed use zoned areas, using Park County existing zoning Map and GIS parcel layer
Commercial/Mixed Use/Industrial Assessed (Parcels)	Total number of parcels in the Park County Assessor's Database assessed as commercial, industrial or mixed use
Developed Residential Lots	Number of developed residential parcels (lots with addresses) in the Park County GIS parcel Layer
Vacant Residential Lots	Number of residential parcels, and parcels in subdivisions without an improvement or address in the Park County GIS parcel layer
Average Residential Lot Size	Average size in acres of residential lots from Park GIS parcel layer
% of Private Land Zoned Agricultural	Percentage of privately owned land zoned agricultural under the County's existing zoning map

## PINE JUNCTION AND CROW HILL

Located in the northeast corner of the county, Pine Junction/Crow Hill subarea contains the largest concentration of rural residential subdivisions and homes in the county. The housing vacancy rate in the Pine Junction/Crow Hill subarea is 26% indicating that 74% of housing units are occupied by fulltime residents. Over two thirds of the workforce in the county commutes out of county for work, mostly to the Front Range metro area. Residents value the rural and mountain lifestyle and landscape and hope that those core values are not compromised. Still, there is support and tolerance for small scale commercial and mountain light industrial uses that fit the landscape and lifestyle and a value for identity and more economic self-sufficiency. Pine Junction is a limited extension of a highway and neighborhood commercial hub that is mostly located in Jefferson County, but Crow Hill possesses characteristics and land that are suitable for commercial uses.

### Core Services and Infrastructure

The Pine Junction/Crow Hill subarea has an average growth efficiency score of 9.2. This relatively high score indicates the area has reasonable access to public services and infrastructure. Highway 285 passes through the subarea, schools are located in the Crow Hill area and nearby in Shawnee. The area is also close to the post office and Sheriff's substation in Bailey. The subarea is served by the Platte Canyon Fire Protection District which offers both fire and ambulance services and has its headquarters on Crow Hill.

Growth Score	9.2 out of 13 Points
Fire Districts	Platte Canyon FPD, Elk Creek FPD
Ambulance District	Platte Canyon FPD
Water Conservation Districts	Upper South Platte WCD, Center of Colorado WCD

### Land Use

The Pine Junction/Crow Hill subarea contains two unincorporated towns, Pine Junction and Crow Hill. There are 82 parcels zoned for commercial use and 68 commercially assessed parcels, with a total of almost 200 acres of land zoned commercial and rural center mixed use. The subarea has more developed residential lots than vacant residential lots, yet there are still nearly 2,000 vacant residential lots. The average residential lot size in this subarea is 2.9 acres, which is the smallest lot size when compared with other subareas in the county. One third of private land in the Pine Junction/Crow Hill subarea is zoned agricultural, much lower than most other subareas.

This subarea has significant potential for both commercial and residential development and currently acts as a commercial center for residents in the northeast portions of the county as well as the most extensively developed residential area in the county.

Name	Pine Junction/Crow Hill
Unincorporated Towns	Pine Junction, Crow Hill
Commercial/Industrial/Mixed Use Zoning (Acres)	198
Commercial/Mixed Use/Industrial Zoning (Parcels)	82
Commercial/Mixed Use/Industrial Assessed (Parcels)	68
Developed Residential Lots	2,989
Vacant Residential Lots	1,922
Average Residential Lot Size (Acres)	2.9
% of Private Land Zoned Agricultural	33%

### PINE JUNCTION UNINCORPORATED TOWN

Pine Junction is located on the border of Park County and Jefferson County. The Jefferson County side of this town site has a gas station liquor store, convenience store, and restaurants. The lumber yard is located in both Jefferson and Park County. The Park County side of Pine Junction contains a modest cluster of parcels zoned rural center mixed use that are poised as a neighborhood for expansion of the commercial and light industrial uses complementary to those on the Jefferson County side.

### CROW HILL UNINCORPORATED TOWN

Crow Hill has the potential for new commercial development and already contains some commercial development. The area has potential for commercial development near Highway 285. Several public facilities are located in this community including Deer Creek Elementary School and Preschool and Platte Canyon Fire Protection District Station #2 which also serves as a venue for public meetings.

### STRATEGIES

**Strategy A** – Work with CDOT to ensure commercial growth on Crow Hill and in Pine Junction coincides with any necessary improvements to Highway 285.

**Strategy B** – Prioritize maintenance and improvement of major collector roads and scenic byways.

**Strategy C** – Encourage the development of public facilities, small scale neighborhood commercial, restaurants, small scale mountain style light industrial, highway commercial serving both travelers and locals, small scale offices, and tourism/traveler services.

**Strategy D** – Encourage and support the buildout of viable vacant residential subdivision lots so that existing platted development is utilized before new subdivisions are developed that further add to the inventory.

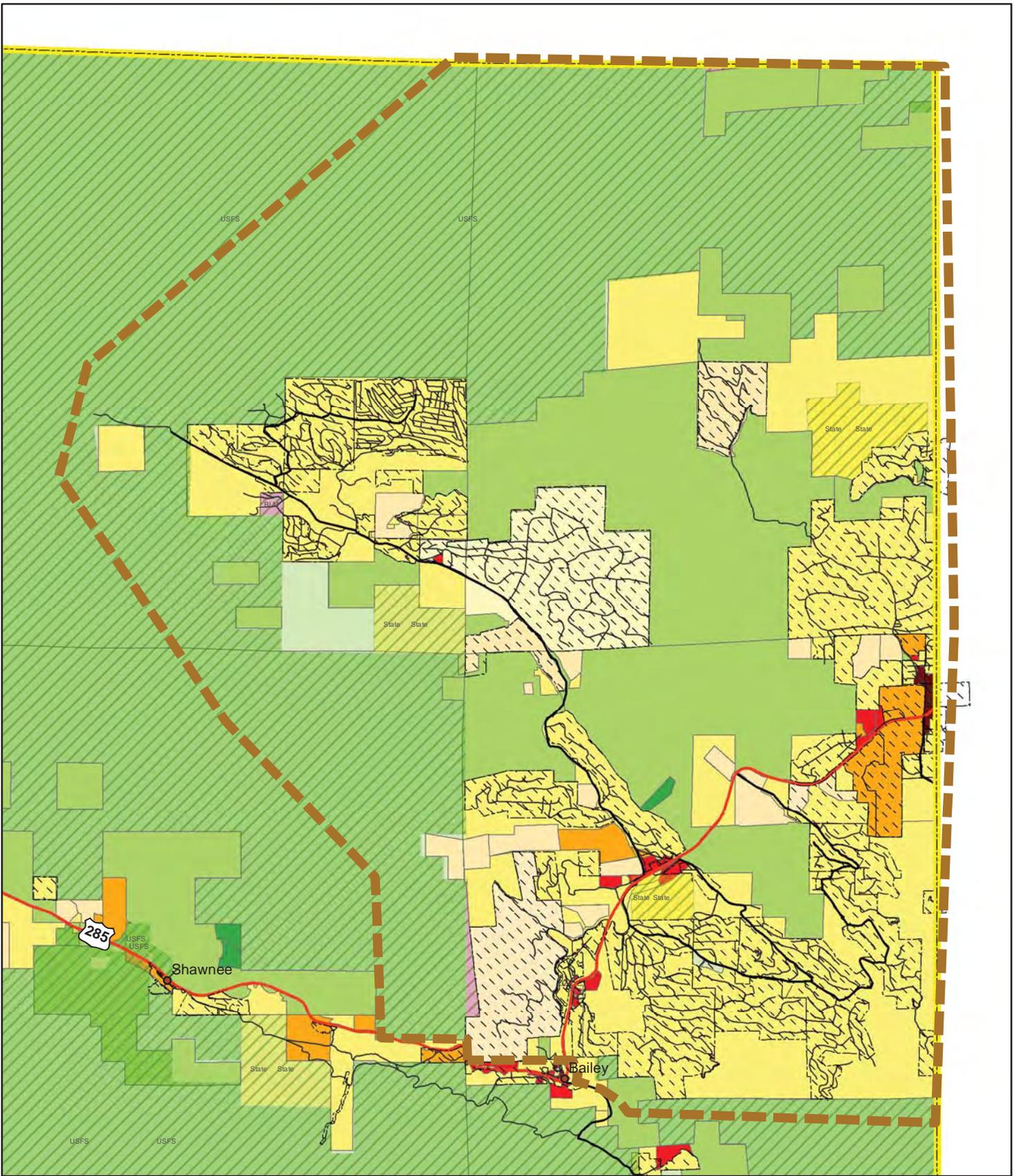
**Strategy E** – Encourage redevelopment of vacant platted subdivisions or phases of subdivisions that were not designed realistically given the terrain, access and available infrastructure.

**Strategy F** – Work carefully with Jefferson County to ensure adequate access to parcels zoned for commercial uses in Pine Junction.

**Strategy G** – Work with community organizations and funding partners to identify and purchase public recreation open space in northern Park County.

**Strategy H** – Encourage the Platte Canyon Chamber of Commerce and business leaders to network with business lenders to increase the pool of commercial finance options in northern Park County.

**Strategy I** – Work with CDOT to ensure pedestrians have safe Highway 285 crossings in commercial areas.



**Legend**

- Park County Line
- Highway
- Major Roads
- Local Road
- City Limits
- Subarea Boundary

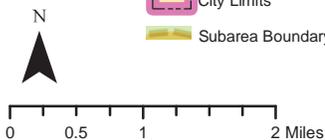
- Public/Protected/Preserved
- Annexation Areas
- Subdivisions
- BLM
- Preserve
- State
- USFS

**Zoning Districts**

- Agricultural
- Agricultural Small Lot
- Commercial
- Conservation/Recreation
- Industrial
- Mining
- Mobile Home Park
- Mountain Residential
- Planned Unit Development
- Recreational Vehicle Park
- Residential
- Residential Estate
- Residential Ranch
- Rural Center Mixed Use

# *Pine Junction / Crow Hill*

Growth Strategy  
Park County, CO



## EAST BAILEY

This subarea is located just east of Bailey. It is the smallest subarea with few houses dispersed throughout. The main access to this subarea is on County Road 68 (Wellington Lake Road) which connects to Highway 285 in Bailey. This subarea has a growth efficiency score of 9.1 with reasonable access to services and amenities and a portion of the main access road (County Road 68) is paved. This subarea also has access to the schools near Crow Hill and Shawnee. It is unlikely that there will be much growth in the area as there are limited opportunities.

### Core Services and Infrastructure

Growth Score	9.1 out of 13
Fire District	Platte Canyon FPD
Ambulance District	Platte Canyon FPD
Water Conservation Districts	Upper South Platte WCD, Center of Colorado WCD

### Land Use

The East Bailey subarea contains only 18 developed residential lots. The subarea also has a relatively small amount of vacant residential property with only 33 vacant residential lots. The East Bailey subarea does not hold potential for significant residential or commercial development and is best suited for agriculture and dispersed low density rural development pattern.

Name	East Bailey
Unincorporated Town	None
Developed Residential Lots	18
Vacant Residential Lots	33
Average Residential Lot Size (Acres)	7.45
% of Private Land Zoned Agricultural	35%

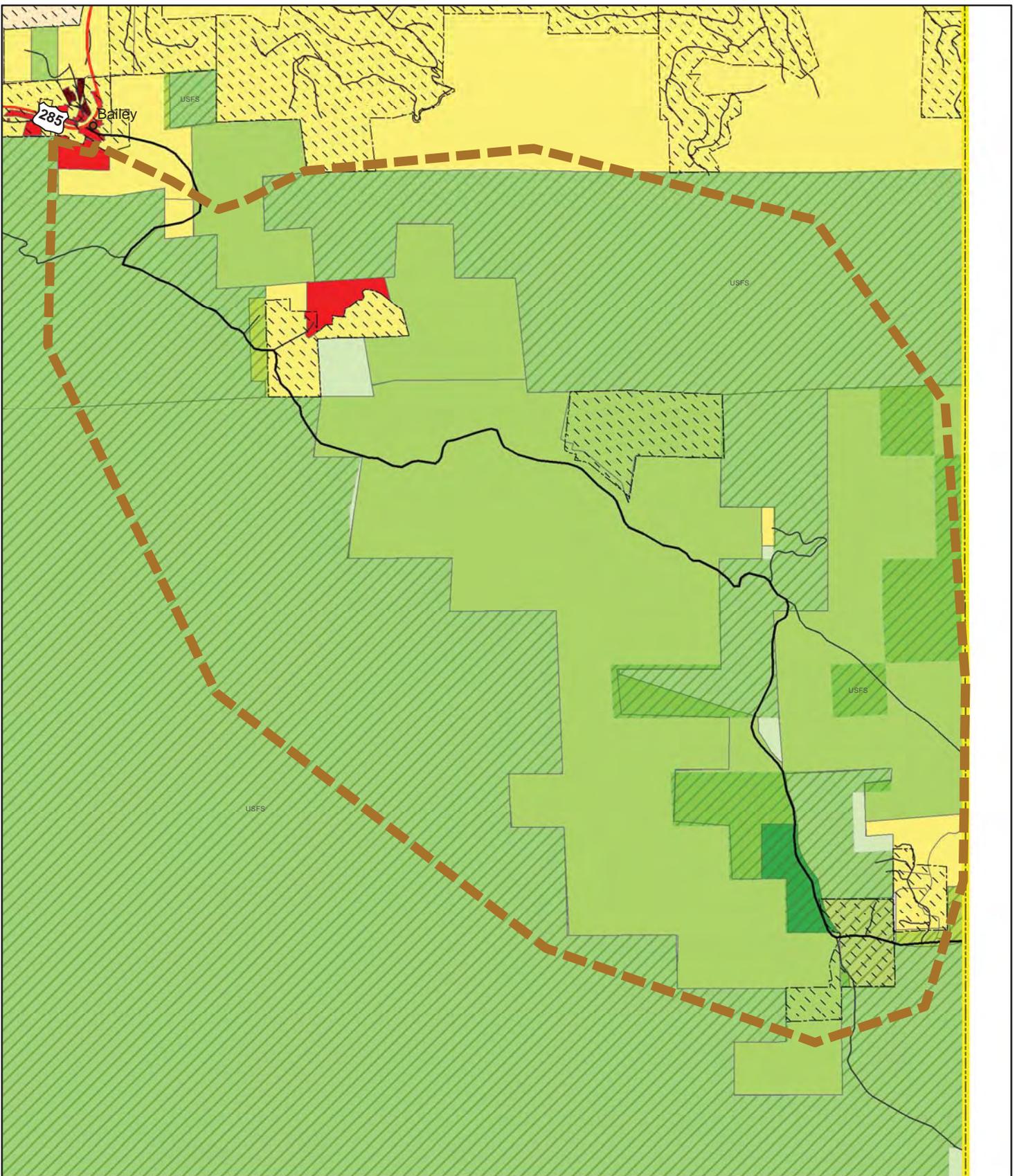
### STRATEGIES

**Strategy A** – Maintain the rural and scenic character of this unique pocket in Park County.

**Strategy B** – Encourage the buildout of existing viable subdivisions.

**Strategy C** – Maintain the scenic integrity of the North Fork of the South Platte River below Bailey.

**Strategy D** – Maintain, manage and promote public access for whitewater kayaking in “Bailey Canyon” and educate kayakers about private property with signage at public access points.



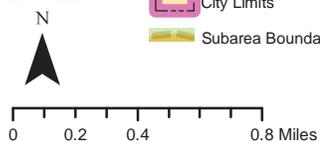
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- City Limits
- Subarea Boundary

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- Annexation Areas
- Subdivisions
- BLM
- Preserve
- State
- USFS

**Zoning District**

- Agricultural
- Agricultural Small Lot
- Commercial
- Conservation/Recreation
- Industrial
- Mining
- Mobile Home Park
- Mountain Residential
- Planned Unit Development
- Recreational Vehicle Park
- Residential
- Residential Estate
- Residential Ranch
- Rural Center Mixed Use



*East  
Bailey*

Growth Strategy  
Park County, CO

## PLATTE CANYON

Platte Canyon extends down the South Platte from Kenosha Pass to Bailey. This scenic canyon has great potential as a recreation and traveler outpost for goods and services and currently provides basic commercial and public facilities for residents in Northern Park County. Many residents in this subarea commute to Denver for work, census tract data show that the average commute to work for residents in this subarea is 47 minutes and the median household income is \$65,074, higher than the countywide median income of \$61,570. Platte Canyon also has a housing vacancy rate of 26%, indicating that 74% of housing units are occupied by fulltime residents. There is great potential in Platte Canyon to develop businesses that serve residents, passers through, and recreation visitors.

### Core Services and Infrastructure

The Platte Canyon subarea has an average growth efficiency score of 7.5. The subdivisions in this area have reasonable access to services in Bailey (an unincorporated town) which contains a range of core services and infrastructure including central water and sewer, fire and law enforcement, post office, as well as reasonably close access to Highway 285. Deer Creek Elementary is located off of Highway 285 on County Road 43 while Platte Canyon High School and Fitzsimmons Middle School are located west of Bailey in Shawnee. The high school provides recreation opportunities to students and as well as limited public access. The pool is open to the public for drop-in use on a regular schedule. Other school facilities such as the football field, running track, basketball court, gymnasium, and conference room can be reserved for public use scheduled around school events.

Growth Score	7.5 out of 13
Fire Districts	Platte Canyon FPD
Ambulance Districts	Platte Canyon FPD, South Park AD
Water Conservation Districts	Upper South Platte WCD, Center of Colorado WCD

### Land Use

Platte Canyon subarea has 128 acres of commercial property, 66 zoned commercial parcels and 66 assessed commercial parcels. The subarea has the third largest amount of commercial zoned land after Pine Junction/Crow Hill subarea and the Regional Hub subarea (containing Fairplay and Alma). The Platte Canyon subarea has 330 developed residential lots and 139 vacant residential lots. The average residential lot size is 5.5 acres, and 28% of private land in the area is zoned agricultural, reflecting the rugged terrain.

Due to its canyon geography Platte Canyon has relatively low potential for residential development beyond buildout of existing vacant residential lots. However, the inventory of commercial zoned land in this subarea, located in Bailey, Shawnee and Grant, has potential for new commercial development and/or redevelopment of existing commercial.

Name	North Platte Canyon
Unincorporated Towns	Bailey, Shawnee, Grant
Commercial/Industrial/Mixed Use Zoning (Acres)	128
Commercial/Mixed Use/ Industrial Zoning (Parcels)	66
Commercial/Mixed Use/Industrial Assessed (Parcels)	66
Developed Residential Lots	330
Vacant Residential Lots	139
Average Residential Lot Size (Acres)	5.5
% of Private Land Zoned Agricultural	28%

### BAILEY UNINCORPORATED TOWN

Bailey is an unincorporated town in Platte Canyon at the base of Crow Hill with a number of commercial businesses including restaurants, galleries, a liquor store, laundromat, The Flume’s office, Moore Lumber, a winery and more. A number of businesses in Bailey cater to both visitors and locals. Bailey is geographically constrained by the canyon and has limited expansion prospects, yet new businesses have arrived recently including a brew pub and restaurant. There is a sense among residents that if Bailey had more commercial development opportunities, there would be more activity. However, some recent development efforts have not been well embraced by, or gained consensus from the community, indicating that market and compatibility issues should be well understood by potential future developers in order to garner success.



**Sudz Laundromat and River Canyon Gallery**

Because of its location on Highway 285 and its proximity to Denver and the Front Range, Bailey sees continuous traffic and has thousands of potential customers passing through every day. In 2014 there were an estimated 7,300 average daily trips on Highway 285 in Bailey according to CDOT traffic counts. Interviews with residents and comments made during the sticky note portion of the Community Workshop held at the Platte Canyon Fire Station showed that a number of residents would like to have a better system of accommodating visitors in Bailey. Clear and consistent signage, and clearly identified parking are another priority for Bailey.

## STRATEGIES

**Strategy A** – Improve drainage and road conditions in Bailey and incorporate regular maintenance of such in the Road Maintenance Master Plan.

**Strategy B** – Increase visual appeal of Bailey by supporting façade painting and community cleanups.

**Strategy C** – Work with the Bailey community to review parking and create a master parking plan including clear signage for public and private parking.

**Strategy D** – Support the development of a diversity of commercial uses serving both local residents and highway travelers.

**Strategy E** – Work with community organizations and land conservation funding partners to identify and purchase public recreation open space in northern Park County.

**Strategy F** – Maintain, manage and promote public access for whitewater kayaking in “Bailey Canyon” and educate boaters about private property with signage at public access points.

**Strategy G** – Promote the Guanella Pass Scenic Byway with signage and web marketing and establish Grant as the southern outpost with supplies, lodging and restaurants.

**Strategy H** – Promote area campgrounds, lodging, and guest ranches.

**Strategy I** – Establish Grant and Bailey as supply and lodging outposts for recreation trips.

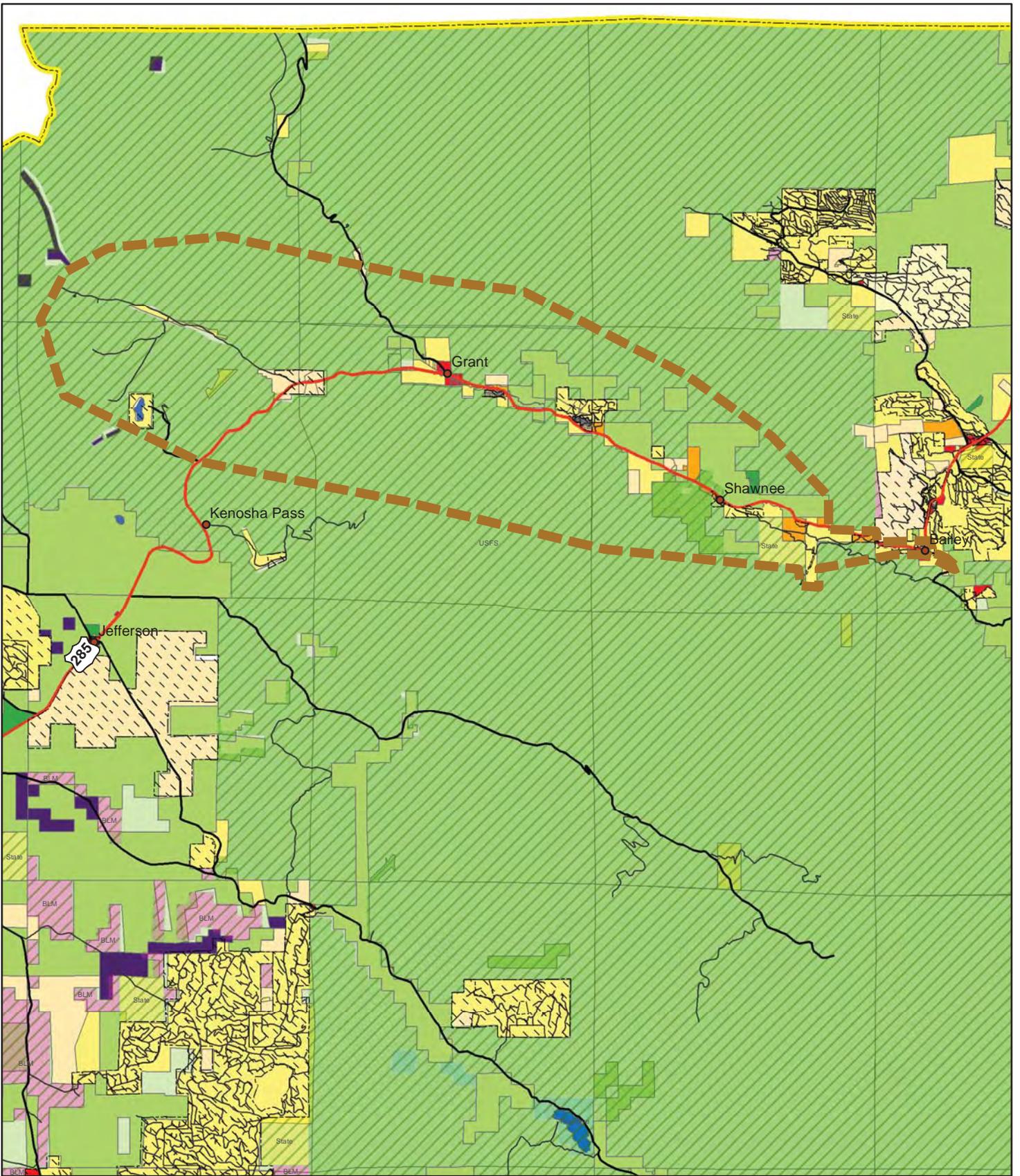
**Strategy J** – Encourage neighborhoods that wish to improve their access roads to form local improvement districts to fund the desired improvements.

**Strategy K** – Maintain the rural and scenic character of the Platte Canyon Corridor.

**Strategy L** – Maintain the scenic integrity of the North Fork of the South Platte River above Bailey.

**Strategy M** – Continue to identify historic buildings and sites and support voluntary preservation, restoration, and occupancy of vacant historic structures.

**Strategy N** – Work with CDOT to ensure pedestrians have safe Highway 285 crossings in commercial areas.

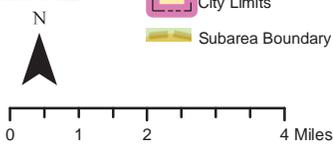


**Legend**

- Park County Line
- Highway
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- Local Road
- City Limits
- Subarea Boundary
- Public/Protected/Preserved
- Annexation Areas
- Subdivisions
- BLM
- Preserve
- State
- USFS

**Zoning Districts**

- Agricultural
- Agricultural Small Lot
- Commercial
- Conservation/Recreation
- Industrial
- Mining
- Mobile Home Park
- Mountain Residential
- Planned Unit Development
- Recreational Vehicle Park
- Residential
- Residential Estate
- Residential Ranch
- Rural Center Mixed Use



# Platte Canyon

Growth Strategy  
Park County, CO

## COMO-JEFFERSON

Because this part of South Park is so rich in scenic, historic and natural resources, the subdivisions in this area have performed well and achieved a significant level of buildout. The subdivisions are well established and further buildout would only benefit the economic future of Como and Jefferson. With enough people living in and near Como and Jefferson, an economy of scale could be established for increased commercial and public services.

Because these neighborhoods are connected to Como and/or Jefferson, within reasonable distance to Highway 285 and show a proven demand for lots with respectable levels of buildout, these are clearly viable neighborhoods. Road maintenance and improvements, and water supply are also important factors as these neighborhoods build out. One advantage of encouraging and supporting buildout of these neighborhoods is that there will be additional customers for Jefferson and Como, potentially stimulating business growth in these historic towns. Telecommunications will be essential for attracting and serving new residents in these neighborhoods.

### Core Services and Infrastructure

The area has an average growth efficiency score of 9.1 and has reasonable access to most public facilities and services. The area is served by the Jefferson-Como Fire Protection District and the South Park Ambulance District. Como and Jefferson offer basic commercial and public facilities. The area is within reasonable driving distance to Fairplay, the regional center which offers a broad range of services and amenities including preschool through high school, county administration and the recreation center.

Growth Score	9.1 out of 13
Fire Districts	Jefferson-Como FPD
Ambulance Districts	South Park AD
Water Conservation Districts	Upper South Platte WCD, Center of Colorado WCD

### Land Use

The subarea has 119 acres of commercially zoned land with 185 total parcels, only 20 of which are currently classified as commercial parcels by the county assessor. This indicates that there is far more commercial land available than is being utilized for commercial use. The area is less than half way to full build out with 364 developed residential lots and 441 vacant residential lots. The subarea has the highest percentage of agriculturally zoned private land (70%) with relatively few developed residential lots, and vacant residential lots.

Name	Como and Jefferson
Unincorporated Towns	Jefferson, Como
Commercial/Industrial/Mixed Use Zoning (Acres)	119

Commercial/Mixed Use/ Industrial Zoning (Parcels)	185
Commercial/Mixed Use/Industrial Assessed (Parcels)	20
Developed Residential Lots	364
Vacant Residential Lots	441
Average Residential Lot Size (Acres)	9.4
% of Private Land Zoned Agricultural	70%

### COMO UNINCORPORATED TOWN

Como is located roughly a half mile west of Highway 285 at the base of Boreas Pass. It has a rich history and was once on the Denver, South Park and Pacific Railroad (D, SP&P Railroad) which is represented by the still active Como Hotel & Depot and the rehabilitated Roundhouse where trains stopped before heading over Boreas Pass. Como currently has a post office and a couple of commercial businesses including the Como Hotel & Depot, as well as the art gallery. The community contains a number of historic structures, some of which have been restored and/or preserved.

Como has great potential as a heritage tourism destination and has yet to really capitalize on this potential. Visiting Como requires a brief side-trip off Highway 285 and is not visible from the highway. The challenge is to communicate to travelers that this historic place is a three minute drive from Highway 285 and that it is worth seeing.

### JEFFERSON UNINCORPORATED TOWN

Jefferson is located at the base of Kenosha Pass with Highway 285 running through the middle. Like Como, Jefferson's past is tied to the D, SP&P Railroad. The Jefferson Depot is an important historic attraction in the community and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The community has a small number of businesses and services including a post office, real estate office, Jefferson store, gas station, and the caboos. Surrounding the community are cattle ranches, agricultural lands and dispersed subdivisions. Jefferson is a center of activity and offers services to a number of neighborhoods to the north and south.

### STRATEGIES

**Strategy A** – Place a visitor kiosk on the top of Kenosha Pass informing visitors of trails, history, nearby attractions, and places to visit on either side of the pass.

**Strategy B** – Promote Jefferson as a supply center and gathering place for the area, including a small grocery store, restaurants, and possibly a liquor store.

**Strategy C** – Continue to identify historic buildings and sites in the Jefferson and Como area and encourage and support voluntary preservation and restoration, and increase the occupancy of vacant historic structures.

**Strategy D** – Encourage and support further renovations and occupancy of the Como Hotel, Depot and Roundhouse and promote them as attractions.

**Strategy E** – Establish a targeted marketing strategies to promote historic buildings and sites and scenery in Como and the Boreas Pass Historic Auto Tour to visitors.

- Identify target markets (heritage and scenic driving, railroad history, winter recreation)
- Branding and tagline
- Website
- Collateral materials
- Promotional campaign

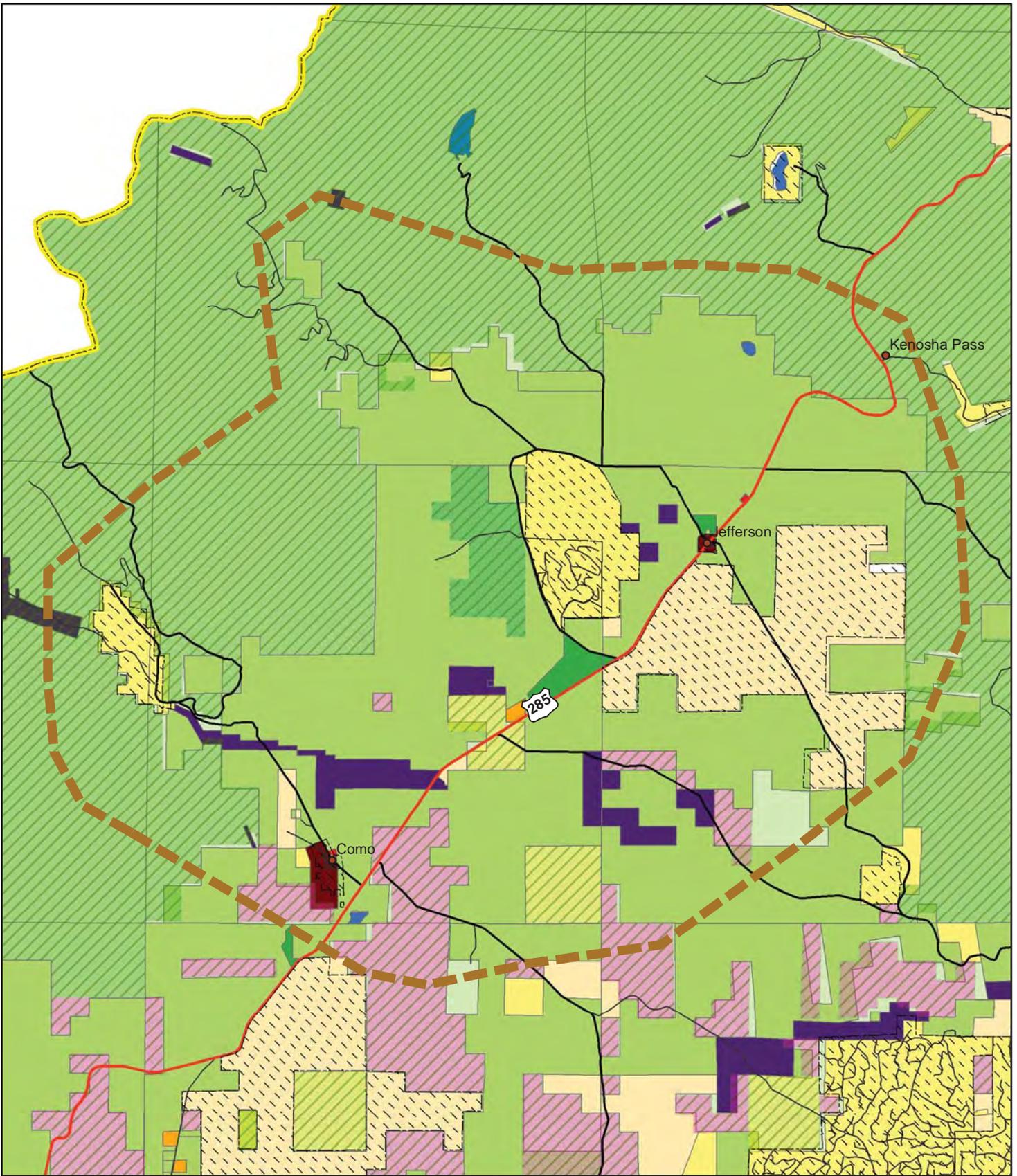
**Strategy F** – Establish Jefferson as an outpost for winter recreation such as Nordic skiing, backcountry skiing, snowshoeing and snowmobiling.

**Strategy G** – Encourage the continued buildout of existing vacant subdivision lots around Como.

**Strategy H** – Stage special events in Como that are scaled and managed appropriately given the quiet rural context.

**Strategy I** – Promote the Tarryall Valley Scenic and Historic Auto Tour and Jefferson as an outpost on the tour.

**Strategy J** – Encourage neighborhoods that wish to improve their access roads to form local improvement districts to fund the desired improvements.



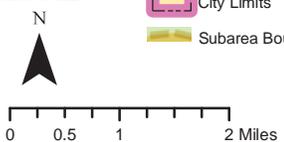
**Legend**

- Park County Line
- Highway
- Major Roads
- Local Road
- City Limits
- Subarea Boundary

- Public/Protected/Preserved
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- Subdivisions
- BLM
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**Zoning Districts**

- Agricultural
- Agricultural Small Lot
- Commercial
- Conservation/Recreation
- Industrial
- Mining
- Mobile Home Park
- Mountain Residential
- Planned Unit Development
- Recreational Vehicle Park
- Residential
- Residential Estate
- Residential Ranch
- Rural Center Mixed Use



# Como and Jefferson

Growth Strategy  
Park County, CO

## TARRYALL

South Park’s ranching heritage is prominent with many historic frontier ranching sites preserved in this subarea, especially along scenic Tarryall Creek. As a place with incredible assets and little future development potential for residential or commercial projects, the emphasis for this subarea is on preservation and recreation. There are a handful of guest ranches and private fisheries in the Tarryall Valley as well as ample access to roads and trails into public lands, public streams and Tarryall Reservoir.

This is a one of a kind driving tour with access to public lands and easily accessible fishing. Significant acreage of intact historic ranch land has been protected through conservation easements. There is an 80% housing vacancy rate for the census tract containing Tarryall subarea indicating that a high number of housing units are vacation/seasonal residences. This is a prime opportunity to cultivate niche destination recreational industries in Park County.

### Core Services and Infrastructure

The Tarryall Road subarea has an average growth efficiency score of 4.4 out of 13, reflecting its remoteness and distance to public services and amenities. The area does not contain an unincorporated town and is far from schools, medical facilities, grocery stores and other basic services and facilities. The area is served by three fire protection districts and two ambulance districts. Tarryall Road serves as the main access road to the subarea.

Growth Score	4.4 out of 13
Fire Districts	Jefferson-Como FPD, Lake George FPD, Hartsel FPD
Ambulance Districts	South Park AD, Ute Pass Regional AD
Water Conservation Districts	Upper South Platte WCD, Center of Colorado WCD

### Land Use

The Tarryall subarea is accessible from Tarryall Road and is primarily federal land. The subarea has roughly seven acres of land zoned for commercial uses, 160 developed residential lots, 170 vacant residential lots and future development is likely on the best remaining lots. Many of the homes in Tarryall are seasonal/recreational homes, but there is a core of year round residents. There are four commercially zoned parcels and six parcels assessed as commercial use. Over half of the private land in the subarea is zoned agricultural and several historic ranches and fisheries are preserved via conservation easements facilitated by the Land and Water Conservation Trust Fund.

Name	Tarryall
Commercial/Industrial/Mixed Use Zoning (Acres)	7
Commercial/Mixed Use/ Industrial Zoning (Parcels)	4

Commercial/Mixed Use/Industrial Assessed (Parcels)	6
Developed Residential Lots	155
Vacant Residential Lots	169
Average Residential Lot Size (Acres)	9.2
% of Private Land Zoned Agricultural	56%

## STRATEGIES

**Strategy A** – Sustain the historic, agricultural, ecological and scenic integrity of the Tarryall Valley.

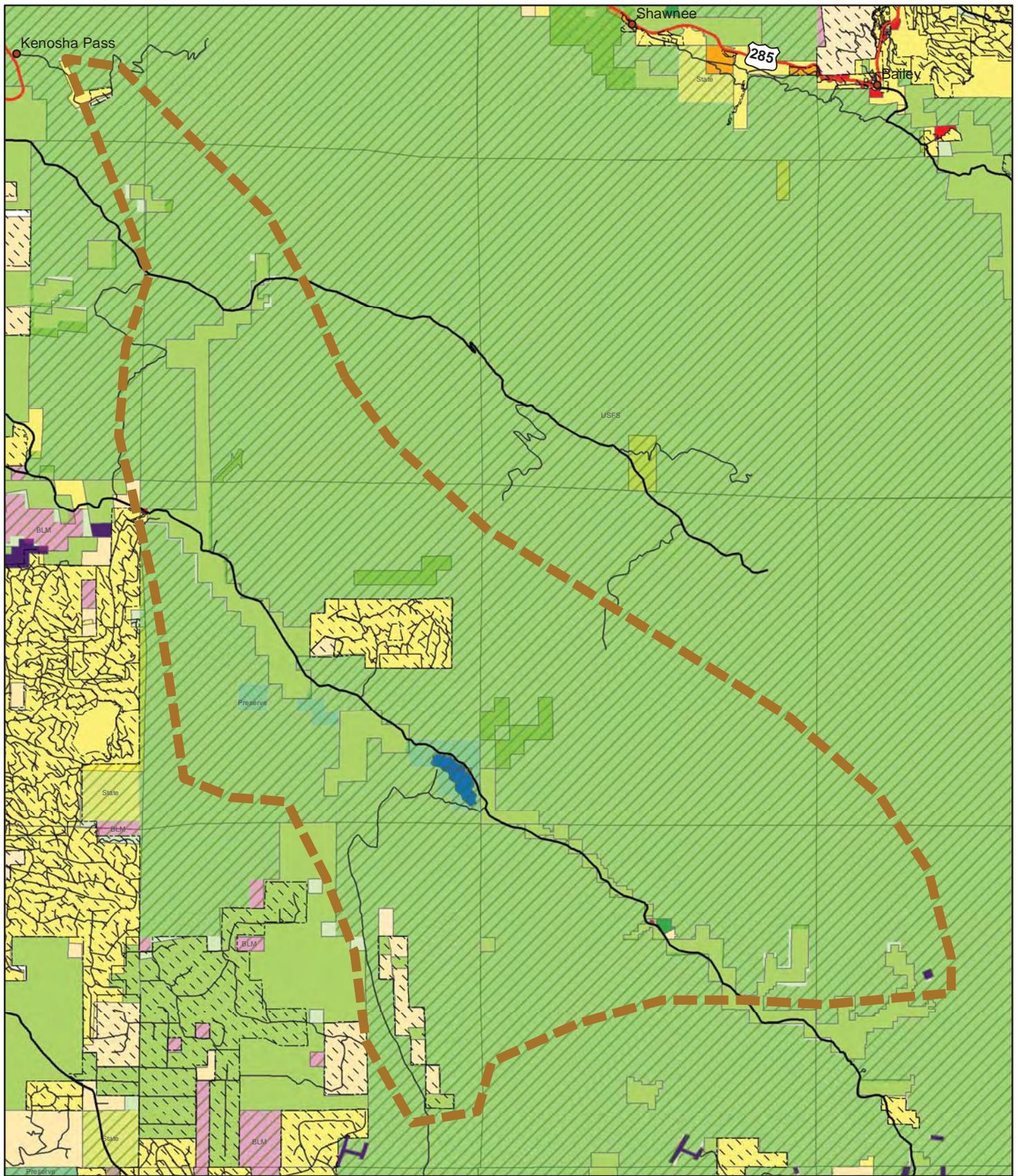
**Strategy B** – Maintain and enhance the ecological health of riparian corridors.

**Strategy C** – Maintain and continue to enhance the recently upgraded Tarryall Road.

**Strategy D** – Work with funding partners, landowners and public land managers to develop pull-outs, interpretive signage and trailheads at scenic and historic sites and public lands access points.

**Strategy E** – Encourage and support efforts to establish low impact outdoor recreation businesses, such as guiding services, guest ranches, private fishing, outdoor education and mountain research.

**Strategy F** – Promote Jefferson and Lake George as traveler supply and service outposts for the Tarryall Valley Scenic and Historic Driving Tour and encourage an interior outpost along Tarryall Road.



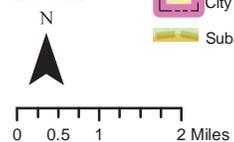
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- Mountain Residential
- Planned Unit Development
- Recreational Vehicle Park
- Residential
- Residential Estate
- Residential Ranch
- Rural Center Mixed Use



*Tarryall*

Growth Strategy  
Park County, CO

## INDIAN MOUNTAIN

This is a large interconnected network of subdivisions. The level of buildout reflects the fact that many home sites in this subarea have big views and remoteness. Census data encompassing this subarea show an 80% housing unit vacancy rate, meaning that the vast majority of homes are second/recreation homes. The average commute time to work in this subarea is 51 minutes.

There are about 4,000 vacant residential lots in this area, and road networks are not complete. The miles of roads in this area alone make it a challenge to provide more than basic road maintenance and its remoteness means that snow plows may not be there the day of the storm. The northern reaches of this cluster of subdivisions are within a more reasonable driving distance to Highway 285, and Town of Fairplay, and are more built out than the remote southern reaches of this subarea.

### Core Services and Infrastructure

The average growth efficiency score for Indian Mountain is 7.8 out of 13. This score indicates a surprisingly high level of access to public services and facilities. It is important to note that this is the average for the entire subarea, the more efficient areas are on the northern edge while the least efficient areas are located farther south. Postal services are available in Jefferson and Como, and other facilities and services are located in Fairplay.

Key improvements particularly on the northern edge of this cluster of neighborhoods may result in additional development within a reasonable distance to Fairplay, Jefferson and Como, would tie residents to the local economy and incrementally increase business activity. Mapping collector roads that connect Elkhorn Road to Tarryall Road through the subdivisions is an early step. The next step is to prioritize maintenance and incremental improvements to the best collector loop route through these subdivisions. Consistent maintenance and incremental improvements to collector roads in these northern neighborhoods will ease travel for residents and make the area more accessible for emergency services.

Growth Score	7.8 out of 13
Fire District	Jefferson-Como FPD
Ambulance District	South Park AD
Water Conservation Districts	Upper South Platte WCD, Center of Colorado WCD

### Land Use

Indian Mountain subarea is comprised of a complex network of subdivisions and roads in often rugged terrain and contains 1,709 developed residential lots and 3,820 vacant residential lots. The only subarea with more vacant residential lots is Dream Stream/Hartsel. The Indian Mountain subarea also has a relatively low proportion of agriculturally zoned land compared with other subareas.

Subarea	Indian Mountain
Commercial/Industrial/Mixed Use Zoning (Acres)	35
Commercial/Mixed Use/ Industrial Zoning (Parcels)	2
Commercial/Mixed Use/Industrial Assessed (Parcels)	1
Developed Residential Lots	1,709
Vacant Residential Lots	3,820
Average Residential Lot Size (Acres)	5.1
% of Private Land Zoned Agricultural	46%

## STRATEGIES

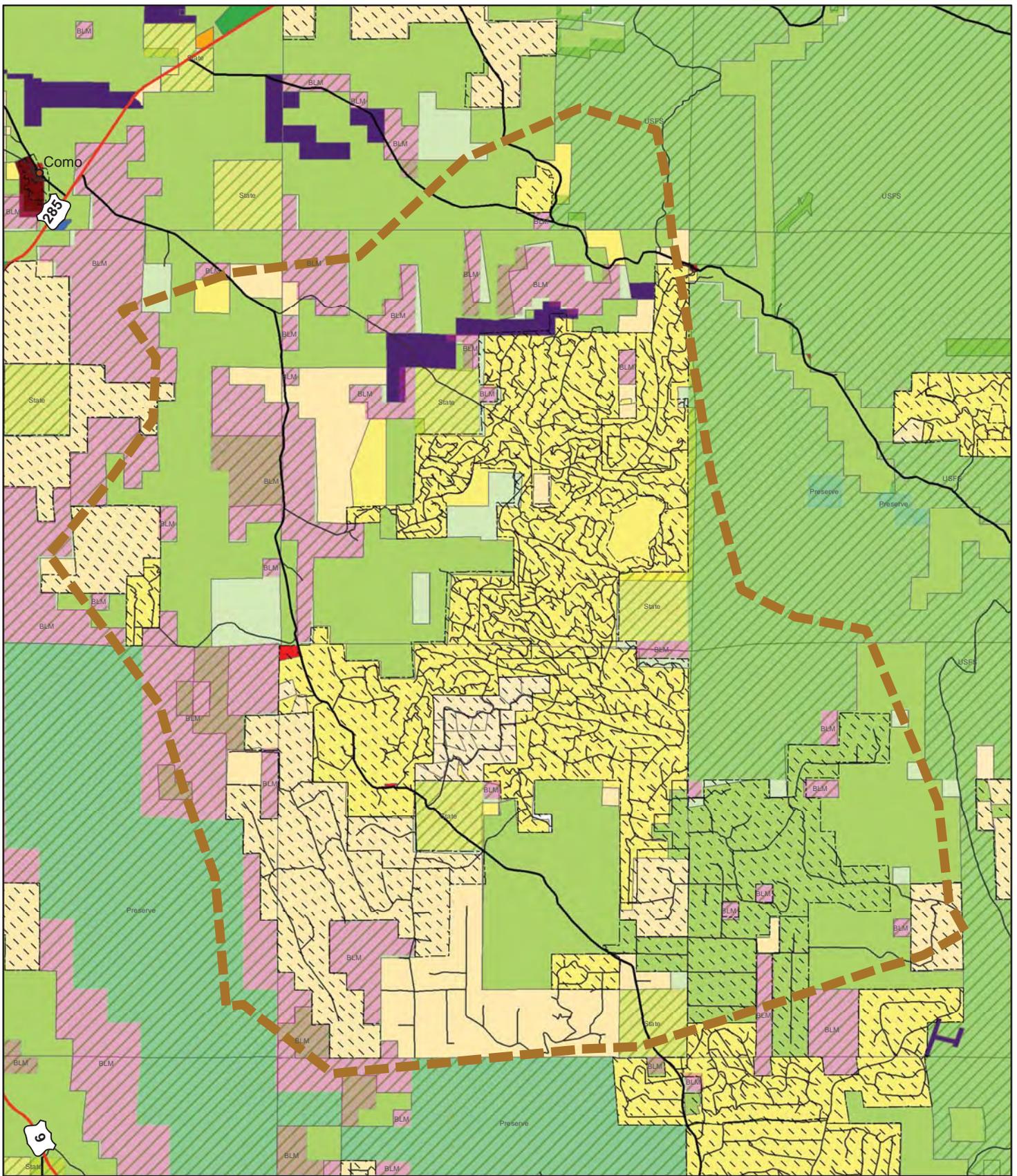
**Strategy A** – Identify a collector road route connecting Elkhorn Road to Tarryall Road through existing subdivisions and incrementally improve this route to increase accessibility and safety of the neighborhoods.

**Strategy B** – Encourage lot consolidations to create feasible home sites.

**Strategy C** – Adapt land use regulations to encourage redevelopment of antiquated subdivisions for better access, conservation areas, lower densities and/or to create a more physically feasible layout of these subdivisions.

**Strategy D** – Encourage forest neighborhoods to manage wildfire fuels along roads and driveways and to create defensible space around structures.

**Strategy E** – Encourage neighborhoods that wish to improve their access roads to form local improvement districts to fund desired the improvements.



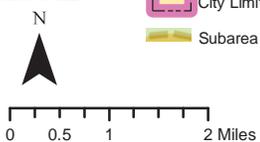
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- Rural Center Mixed Use



# Indian Mountain

Growth Strategy  
Park County, CO

## FAIRPLAY AND ALMA REGIONAL HUB

The Regional Hub subarea contains the two municipalities in Park County, Fairplay and Alma, and the area surrounding both municipalities which has a number of developed mountain subdivisions. The area surrounding Fairplay and Alma exhibits a high degree of buildout, this is largely attributed to the proximity of subdivisions to Fairplay and Alma, the resources the two towns provide, and to the high country location that is attractive to both fulltime and part-time residents. There are two main highways in the Regional Hub subarea, Highway 9, and Highway 285, which intersect in Fairplay. The population living in this subarea have ties to both Park County and Summit County, especially when it comes to employment. The main employment drivers in this subarea are Fairplay, the visitor economy in Summit County, and Alma, all of which are accessed by Highway 9. Commute times for residents in the Regional Hub Subarea are lower than the county average of 44 minutes due to the proximity to employment centers.

While these neighborhoods are well established there are still vacant residential lots. Existing neighborhoods are close to community services, schools, fire protection, and are tied to the communities of Fairplay and Alma. Because of the combination of these factors, these are priority neighborhoods for road maintenance and needed improvements. Preventative fire hazard mitigation and water storage are also important factors for these neighborhoods. Ideally, these subdivisions would build out.

Both municipalities also have long range plans for potential annexations and associated service extension. See Fairplay and Alma maps for the areas adjacent to the Fairplay and Alma that may be considered for annexation were owners to petition.

### Core Services and Infrastructure

This subarea has the highest average growth efficiency score in the entire county with a score of 12.8. The area is served by the Northwest Fire Protection District and the Hartsel Fire Protection District. Ambulances services are provided by the South Park Ambulance District. The Regional Hub subarea contains Fairplay, which provides all public services and infrastructure used to measure the growth efficiency score.

Growth Score	12.8 out of 13
Fire Districts	Northwest FPD, Hartsel FPD,
Ambulance District	South Park AD
Water Conservation Districts	Upper South Platte WCD, Center of Colorado WCD

### Land Use

The Regional Hub subarea includes two municipalities and has 103 zoned commercial parcels distributed over 322 acres of commercial zoning, most of which are inside municipal boundaries. 198 parcels in the subarea are classified as commercial. The subarea has the

second largest number of developed residential lots of any subarea with over 2,700. There is still potential for significant growth with 3,221 vacant residential lots. With the exception of the Pine Junction/Crow Hill subarea, the Fairplay Alma Regional Hub subarea has the smallest average residential lot size at 4.6 acres, indicating a relatively dense development pattern in the mountain subdivisions and the small town densities in Fairplay and Alma. Because it is in the mountains, the area also has a relatively low percentage of private land zoned agricultural.

This subarea has significant potential for residential and commercial land use. Relatively small commercial properties in Fairplay and Alma are more likely to be affordable and include a diversity of walkable and highway commercial. The property in municipal boundaries is under town jurisdiction, but they serve a pivotal role in the long term sustainability in the county as a whole and particularly in South Park. Commercial and non-residential properties served by municipal water and sewer are generally more feasible, less complicated and affordable sites for commercial ventures than properties dependent on an individual well and septic disposal system.

Subarea	Fairplay Alma Regional Hub
Municipalities	Fairplay, Alma
Commercial/Industrial/Mixed Use Zoning (Acres)	322
Commercial/Mixed Use/ Industrial Zoning (Parcels)	103
Commercial/Mixed Use/Industrial Assessed (Parcels)	198
Developed Residential Lots	2,719
Vacant Residential Lots	3,221
Average Residential Lot Size (Acres)	4.6
% of Private Land Zoned Agricultural	35%

## FAIRPLAY

Fairplay is the county seat, houses county offices and courts in town, and has a population of 679. Fairplay is also the main location for daily necessities and resources for a large rural area with a grocery store, restaurants, post office, fire station, law enforcement, courts, county offices, gas stations, and retail. Highway 285 and Highway 9 head through town with thousands of vehicle trips per day. Fairplay is also a hub for traveler services and has established its own tourist market with its art galleries, shops, walkable downtown, festivals, unmatched scenery and proximity to alpine public lands. Within a reasonable driving distance over Hoosier Pass lies Summit County, the most accessible and intense recreation mecca in all of Colorado and thousands of jobs to which many Fairplay and Alma area residents commute.

## ALMA

Alma is six miles north of Fairplay on Highway 9 and has a population of 296 people. It has restaurants/bars, a health food store/coffee shop, general store, post office, liquor store, and other commercial businesses catering to locals and visitors. The town has a community park, frisbee golf course, a riverwalk and hosts community festivals in the park. Alma itself has less than 300 residents but several hundred additional residents living in the unincorporated county consider Alma their hometown. These residential subdivisions and the mountains east and west of town limit the expansion of the town for development purposes. However, annexation of residential subdivisions may make sense in the future should the town upgrade to a higher capacity sewer treatment plan.

### INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION WITH MUNICIPALITIES

Park County and the Towns of Fairplay and Alma will mutually benefit from an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) that lists the protocols for communication between each of the towns and the county about development applications in the three mile coordinated planning and referral area around municipal boundaries. By creating a formal agreement with each of the towns, both sides benefit from clear protocols for coordinated planning and communication procedures thereby eliminating inconsistencies and miscommunications. County applications within a yet to be determined coordinated planning and referral area are to be referred to the Town of Fairplay or the Town of Alma at least 21 days in advance of the first public hearing on the land use request. Responses from Town of Fairplay or the Town of Alma will be integrated into the public record regarding the development application.

The Town of Fairplay previously identified specific annexation areas in their 2014 comprehensive plan. The tier one annexation areas are areas that are contiguous with the current boundaries of the town and are located close to municipal infrastructure. The tier two annexation areas are contiguous with the current town boundaries or tier one, but would require significant extension of municipal infrastructure such as water and sewer. Alma has also outlined areas they are interested in annexing into town limits.

### STRATEGIES

**Strategy A** – Coordinate with the Town of Fairplay and the Town of Alma to adopt a formal communications protocol (intergovernmental agreement) outlining communications and referral procedures for development applications in the interface between Park County and each municipality.

**Strategy B** – Work with the Town of Fairplay, Town of Alma and CDOT to improve the gateways into town.

**Strategy C** – Coordinate with Town of Fairplay and Town of Alma on the town streets/county roads interfaces on the edge of town.

**Strategy D** – Coordinate with Town of Fairplay, Town of Alma and Summit County to establish regional pathways.

**Strategy E** – Support the Town of Fairplay’s and Town of Alma’s efforts to protect their municipal watershed and preserve water quality and quantity.

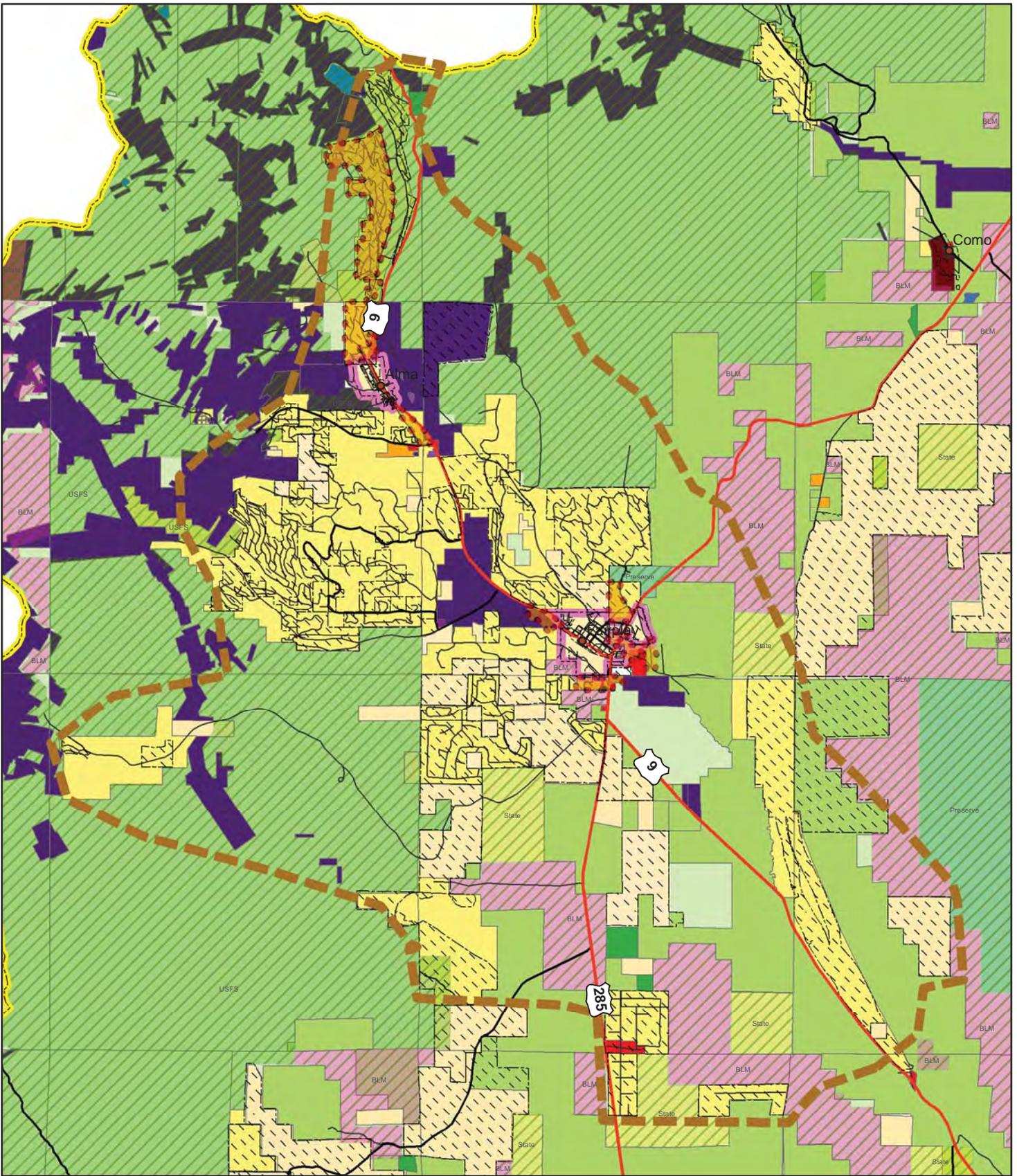
**Strategy F** – Coordinate with the Town of Fairplay to establish Fairplay as a more complete regional center and expand the availability of healthcare, pharmacies, restaurants, banks, and professional services such as legal and accounting.

**Strategy G** – Coordinate with Town of Fairplay and the South Park Chamber of Commerce to develop signage, monumentation, web marketing and collateral materials to entice more passersby to stop in Fairplay.

**Strategy H** – Continue to work together with Towns of Fairplay and Alma on stream corridor restoration and developing thoughtfully designed public access that minimizes ecological impacts.

**Strategy I** – Coordinate with the Town of Fairplay regarding eventual repurposing and redevelopment of county owned structures inside the town.

**Strategy J** – Encourage neighborhoods that wish to improve their access roads to form local improvement districts to fund the desired improvements.



**Legend**

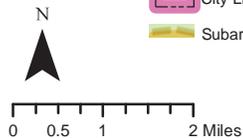
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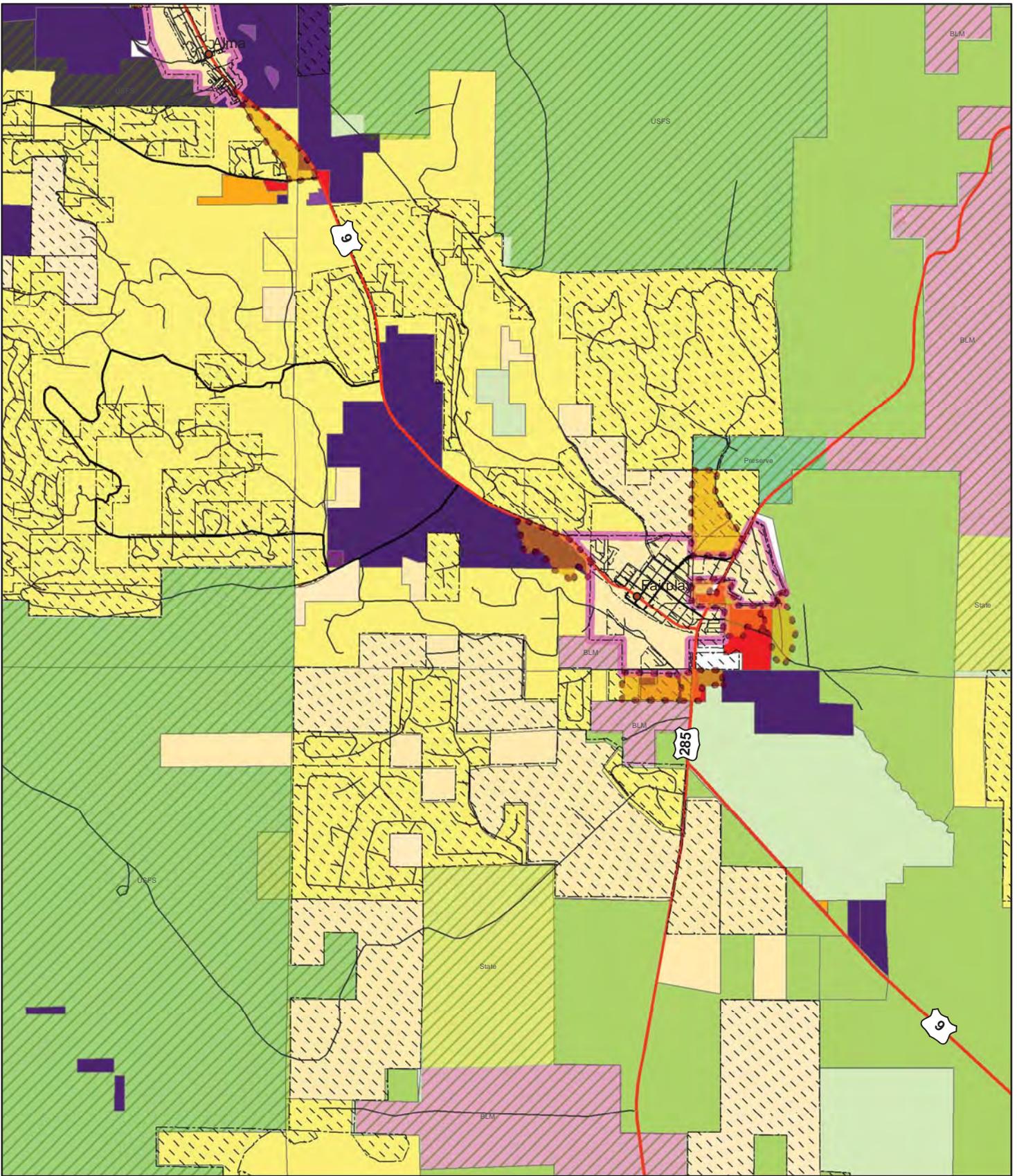
**Zoning Districts**

- Agricultural
- Agricultural Small Lot
- Commercial
- Conservation/Recreation
- Industrial
- Mining
- Mobile Home Park
- Mountain Residential
- Planned Unit Development
- Recreational Vehicle Park
- Residential
- Residential Estate
- Residential Ranch
- Rural Center Mixed Use

***Fairplay/Alma  
Regional Hub***

Growth Strategy  
Park County, CO





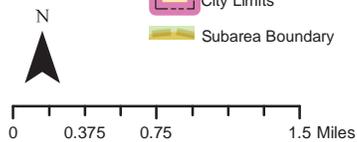
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# Fairplay Townsite

Growth Strategy  
Park County, CO



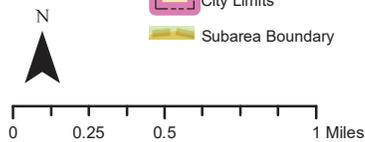
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# Alma Townsite

Growth Strategy  
Park County, CO

## SOUTH PARK CORRIDORS

These are estate density rural subdivisions and meets and bounds lots that require from five to thirty minutes of drive-time to get to Fairplay. Scenery is unmatched in this subarea and the west side has several subdivisions that border national forest land and have ready access to mountain recreation. It is called South Park Corridors because it contains scenic stretches of Highway 285 and Highway 9. The subdivisions that have built out most successfully are located in the forested foothills. The lots in the grasslands are large enough lots and parcels to accommodate household-scale agricultural uses, most are vacant.

### Core Services and Infrastructure

South Park Corridors received an average growth efficiency score of 10.4 out of 13. Its high score is attributed to the proximity of this subarea to the services and facilities in Fairplay and the close access to Highway 285 and Highway 9. The subarea is served by three fire protection districts. Ambulance services are provided by South Park Ambulance District.

Growth Score	10.4 out of 13
Fire Districts	Hartsel FPD, Jefferson-Como FPD, Northwest FPD
Ambulance District	South Park AD
Water Conservation Districts	Upper South Platte WCD, Center of Colorado WCD

### Land Use

Agriculture, open lands and low density estate residential characterize this subarea. South Park Corridors has the largest average residential lot size of any subarea with an average lot of 34.9 acres and 58% of the land area is zoned agricultural. The subarea has 199 developed residential lots and 508 vacant residential lots which is a significant number of vacant lots, but much less than the Indian Mountain, Regional Hub and Dream Stream/Hartsel subareas.

Name	South Park Corridors
Commercial/Industrial/Mixed Use Zoning (Acres)	19
Commercial/Mixed Use/ Industrial Zoning (Parcels)	1
Commercial/Mixed Use/Industrial Assessed (Parcels)	4
Developed Residential Lots	199
Vacant Residential Lots	508
Average Residential Lot Size (Acres)	34.9
% of Private Land Zoned Agricultural	58%

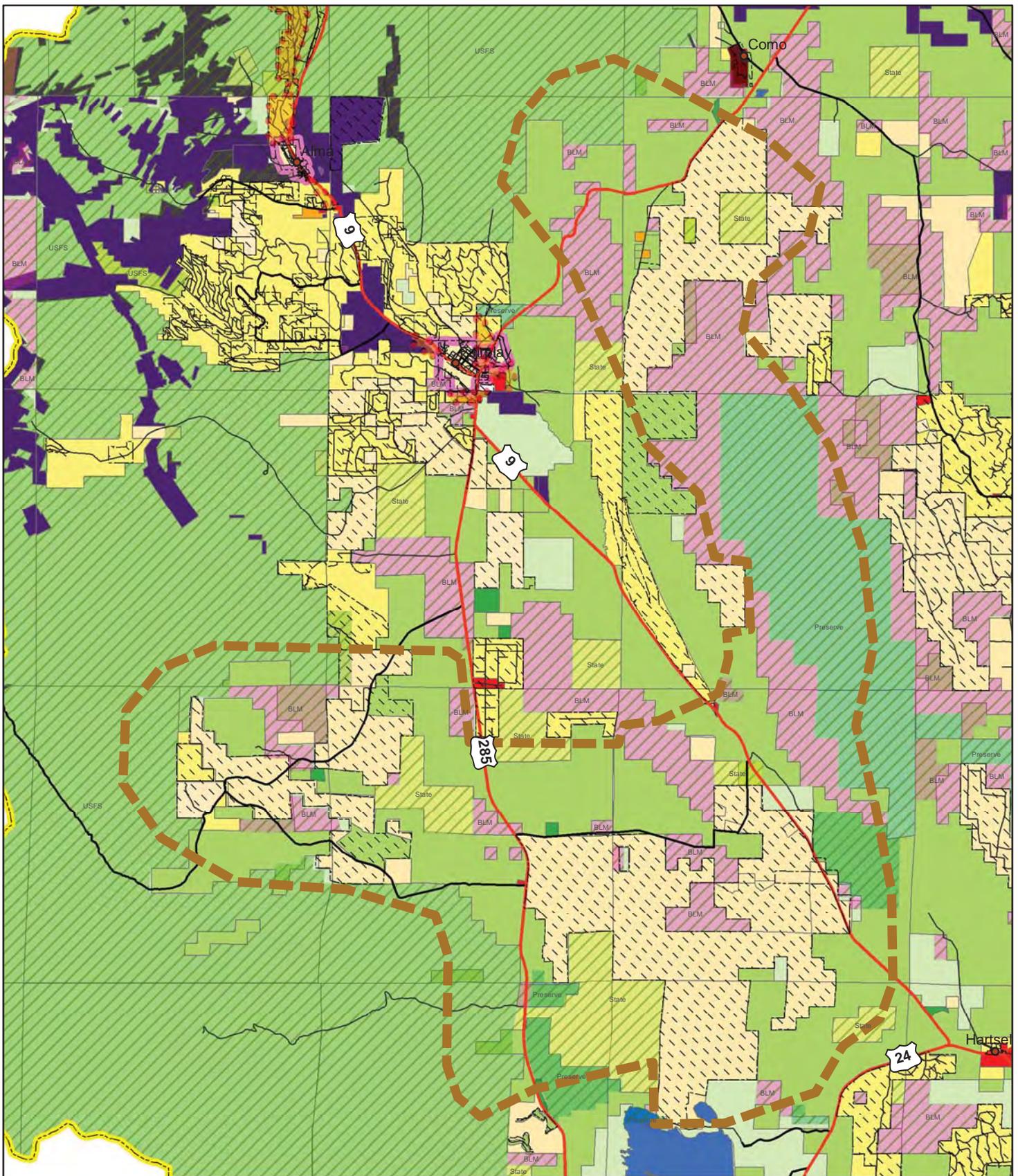
## **STRATEGIES**

**Strategy A** – Sustain the agriculture, open lands and low density estate residential character of this subarea.

**Strategy B** – Encourage buildout of the vacant subdivision lots in this area that relate directly to Fairplay and have ready access to the goods, services and public facilities available in Fairplay.

**Strategy C** – Prioritize maintenance and improvements to major collector roads.

**Strategy D** – Adapt land use regulations to encourage redevelopment of antiquated subdivisions and 35 acre subdivisions to create a combination of better access, conservation areas, and better home sites.



**Legend**

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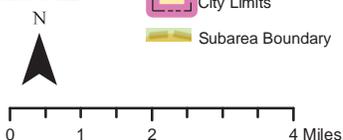
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- Residential
- Residential Estate
- Residential Ranch
- Rural Center Mixed Use

# South Park Corridors

Growth Strategy  
Park County, CO



## MINING CLAIMS

### Core Services and Infrastructure

There are several hundred mining claims and private parcels located in the backcountry well beyond the paved road network. The land use ownership pattern is set as a patchwork of patented mining claims. Providing increased levels of county road maintenance and snowplowing in these remote portions of the county would put further strain on the already tight county budgets. From an EMS and fire-protection standpoint, this patchwork of private parcels and mining claims is at higher risk and more difficult to access. Because the Mining Claims Subarea is more expensive to serve with basic county services and is more difficult to access in the event of an emergency, it is not an area where further subdivision or traffic-intensive development is encouraged.

### Core Facilities and Services

The area is remote and areas that are accessible for development of any type are served by rough mountain roads that are only passable by vehicles during the summer and early fall when there the roads are free of snow. The Northwest Fire Protection District and South Park Ambulance District serve the area.

Primary Fire District	Northwest FPD
Primary Ambulance District	South Park AD
Water Conservation Districts	Upper South Platte WCD, Center of Colorado WCD

### Land Use

From a development perspective the Mining Claims subarea has the least potential for residential or commercial development in part because it covers rugged alpine terrain and in part because it is in the Mining Zone District. Although this area is relatively close in distance to the Regional Hub subarea containing Fairplay and Alma the area is still viewed as remote. The Mining Claims subarea contains no town sites, no commercial zoning, no commercially assessed property and only 11 developed residential lots and 23 vacant residential lots. Future development is likely to be small scale cabin and seasonal residences developed on patented mining claims.

Subarea	Mining Claims
Developed Residential Lots	11
Vacant Residential Lots	23
Average Residential Lot Size (Acres)	29.8
% of Private Land Zoned Agricultural	0%

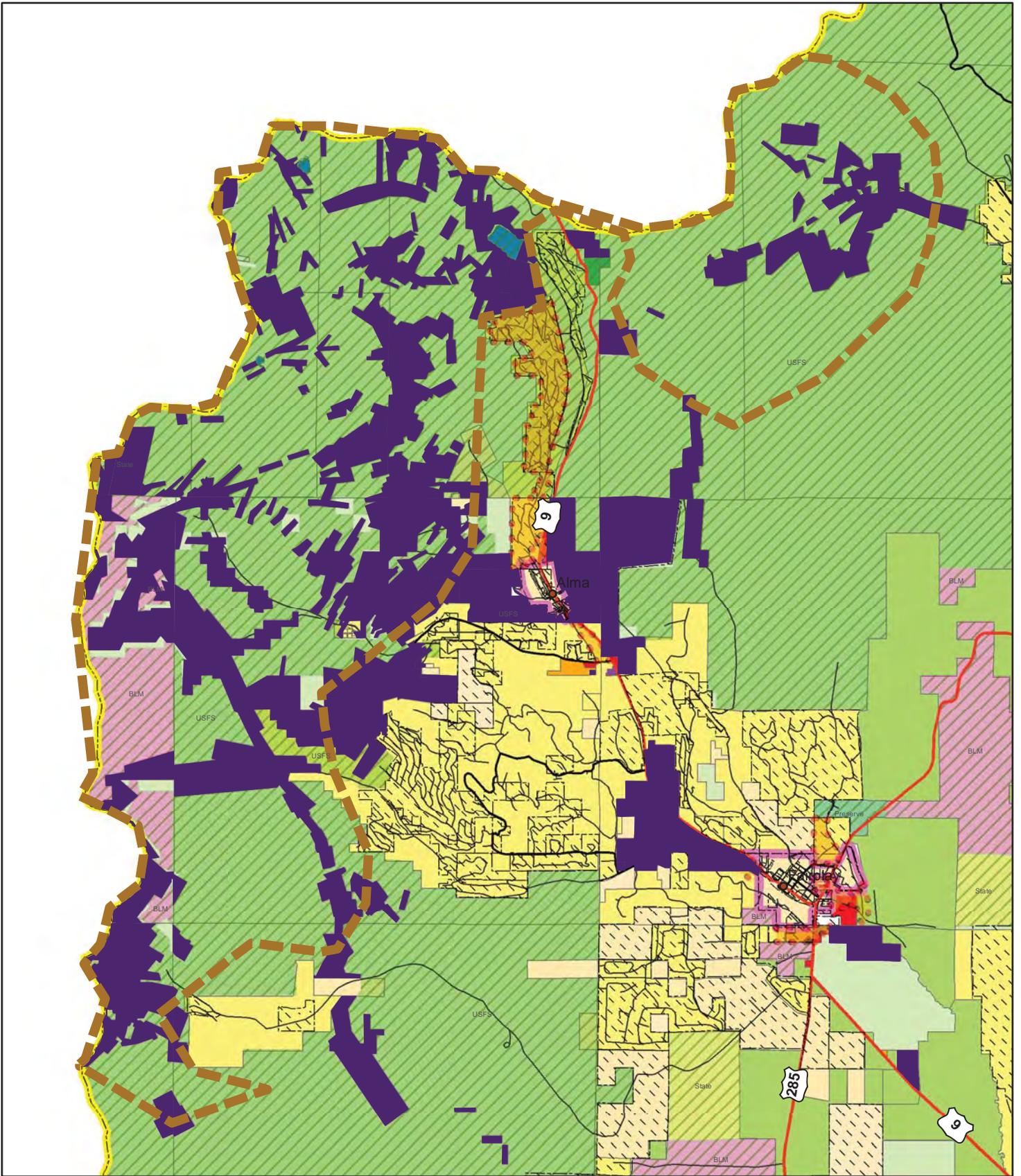
**Strategy A** – Continue to review residential uses in the Mining Zone District as conditional uses and consider scenic impacts, impact on public roads, impacts on historic sites, safety and emergency services, compatibility with future mining activities and ecological impacts when reviewing proposed residences in the Mining Zone District

**Strategy B** – Work with land owners and the forest service to provide road head and trailhead parking at popular public lands access points.

**Strategy C** – Educate landowners about the limits of county road maintenance and the challenge for serving this alpine area with basic public safety.

**Strategy D** – Demarcate public road rights of way and easements through patented mining claims to avoid closure of backcountry roads and trails.

**Strategy E** – Encourage high altitude research and training and other low-impact mountain science activities.



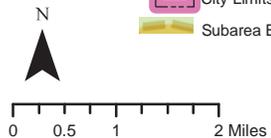
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# Mining Claims

Growth Strategy  
Park County, CO

## TROUT CREEK PASS

This area is more tied to the employment centers in Arkansas Valley socially and economically than it is to South Park. According to discussions with the County Sheriff, many of the residents work in Buena Vista, Leadville and Salida and drive down and back every day on Highways 285. Because it is close to employment centers in the valley, it has been developed incrementally, but many dozens of vacant lots remain.

There has been a market for homes in these subdivisions, and many of the lots are flat and favorable sites. One significant challenge is the distance of this cluster of subdivisions from the municipalities and town sites where basic public services are available. While the economic effects of these mountain neighborhoods mostly land in the Arkansas Valley, these are neighborhoods that will continue to grow incrementally. Road maintenance and improvements are tempered by the remote mountain location. Tracking development trends will allow the county to adjust services as this large group of subdivisions develops.

### Core Services and Infrastructure

With an average growth efficiency score of 1.9, this subarea has the most restricted access to Park County public facilities and services. It is located closer to Buena Vista than it is to Fairplay, so presumably many residents access public facilities in Buena Vista. Many of the subdivisions are located far from major roads and highways and require significant drive times. While the proximity to Buena Vista renders this subarea less remote than many parts of the county, it is far from core county services and requires long drive times for county road maintenance and law enforcement. The area is served by Hartsel Fire Protection District and South Park Ambulance District.

Growth Score	1.9
Fire District	Hartsel FPD
Ambulance District	South Park AD
Water Conservation Districts	Upper South Platte WCD, Center of Colorado WCD

### Land Use

The Trout Creek Pass subarea has 480 developed residential lots and 1,161 vacant residential lots. There are almost 111 acres of commercially zoned land among 4 commercially zoned properties. Residential lot size is small, with an average lot size of 4.7 acres. The majority of private land in this subarea (70%) is zoned agricultural. It is a residential and agricultural corner of the county more related to Chaffee County economically and socially than it is to Park County. The views in this ridge country are expansive and the western most portion of this subarea abuts public lands sloping down to the Arkansas River. There are over 1000 vacant lots, so much development potential remains.

Name	Trout Creek Pass
Commercial/Industrial/Mixed Use Zoning (Acres)	111
Commercial/Mixed Use/ Industrial Zoning (Parcels)	4
Commercial/Mixed Use/Industrial Assessed (Parcels)	2
Developed Residential Lots	480
Vacant Residential Lots	1,161
Average Residential Lot Size (Acres)	4.7
% of Private Land Zoned Agricultural	70%

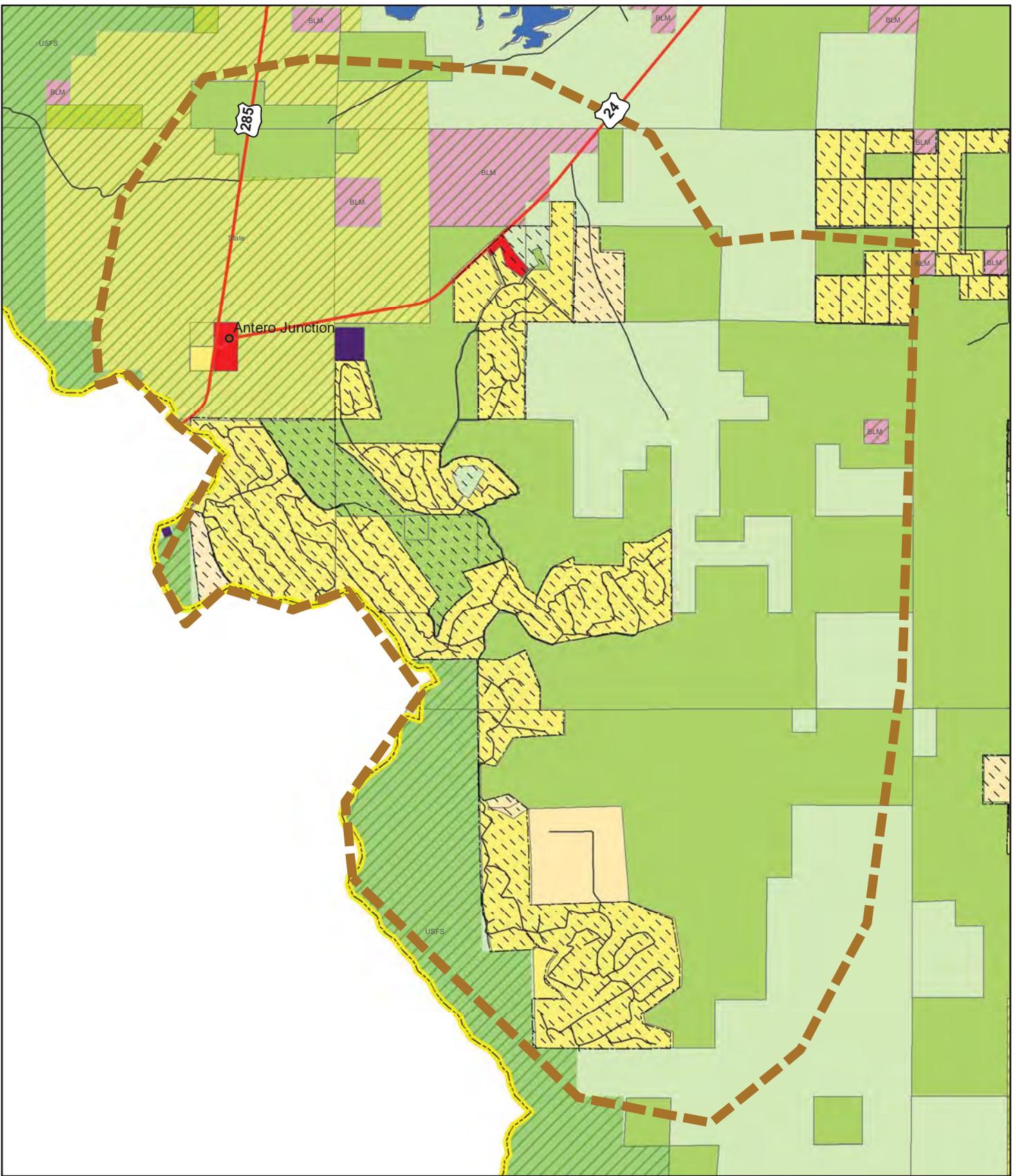
## STRATEGIES

**Strategy A** – Initiate communications and educate existing and future residents about living in Park County and the limits of public services in this remote area of South Park.

**Strategy B** – Coordinate with Chaffee County to prioritize maintenance and improvements to major collector roads.

**Strategy C** – Initiate county-resident communications in this subarea and keep residents and landowners up to date and involved in Park County.

**Strategy D** – Encourage neighborhoods that wish to improve their access roads to form local improvement districts to fund the desired improvements.



**Legend**

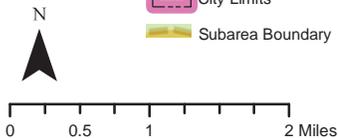
- Park County Line
- Highway
- Major Roads
- Local Road
- City Limits
- Subarea Boundary

- Public/Protected/Preserved
- Annexation Areas
- Subdivisions

- BLM
- Preserve
- State
- USFS

**Zoning District**

- Agricultural
- Agricultural Small Lot
- Commercial
- Conservation/Recreation
- Industrial
- Mining
- Mobile Home Park
- Mountain Residential
- Planned Unit Development
- Recreational Vehicle Park
- Residential
- Residential Estate
- Residential Ranch
- Rural Center Mixed Use



# Trout Creek Pass

Growth Strategy  
Park County, CO

## DREAM STREAM/HARTSEL

This subarea is named after the area known as the “Dream Stream” of incredible fishing between Elevenmile Reservoir and Spinney Reservoir. This subarea also contains Antero Reservoir, the subarea sees regular recreation traffic during the summer months. The area is mostly agricultural with over half of all private land zoned agricultural. Hartsel is the center of activity in this subarea and the basic supply outpost for a large area. Highways 9 and 24 both pass through the subarea, and overlap in Hartsel. Much of the development in this area is remote and dispersed. The average commute time to work is 50 minutes and presumable commuters are driving all directions for work. There are no significant employment centers in the subarea.

### Core Services and Infrastructure

Dream Stream/Hartsel has a low growth efficiency score of 3.6 because of its vast size and remote location. The subarea is covered by four fire protection districts and two ambulance districts. There is a post office, community center and public library in Hartsel and two main highways in the subarea, but all other public services require long drives.

Growth Score	3.6
Fire Districts	Hartsel FPD, Southern Park County, FPD, Lake George FPD, Jefferson-Como FPD
Ambulance Districts	South Park AD, Southern Park FPD, Ute Pass Regional AD
Water Conservation Districts	Upper South Platte WCD, Center of Colorado WCD

### Land Use

The Dream Stream/Hartsel subarea contains the historic unincorporated town of Hartsel. The area has 25 acres of commercially zoned land, 32 zoned commercial parcels and 58 assessed commercial parcels, mostly located in Hartsel. The subarea has the fourth highest number of developed residential lots, 1,312, and a very high number of vacant residential lots totaling over 12,000. Vacant residential lot counts in this subarea are greater than the total of developed residential parcels in the county as a whole. 57% of private land in the subarea is zoned agricultural and the average residential lot size is relatively large at 12.1 acres. The subarea has potential for future commercial development centered around Hartsel and the potential for very significant residential development.

Subarea	Dream Stream/Hartsel
Unincorporated Town	Hartsel
Commercial/Industrial/Mixed Use Zoning (Acres)	25
Commercial/Mixed Use/ Industrial Zoning (Parcels)	32
Commercial/Mixed Use/Industrial Assessed (Parcels)	58
Developed Residential Lots	1,312

Vacant Residential Lots	12,438
Average Residential Lot Size (Acres)	12.1
% of Private Land Zoned Agricultural	56%

### HARTSEL UNINCORPORATED TOWN

Hartsel is the only town site in the Dream Stream/Hartsel subarea and is located at the connection of Highways 9 and 24. The small community offers a convenience store/gas station/liquor store, a restaurant/bar, real estate office, trading post and public services. The community manages its own library and community center. During the Community Workshop held in Hartsel, residents expressed a desire for more regular outreach from the county including occasional county meetings held in the area. The community has potential to further develop as an outpost serving locals, passersby and recreation visitors.



**Hartsel Community Library**

### STRATEGIES

**Strategy A** – Support local efforts to promote the world class fishing in this subarea, establish messaging, a brand and tagline and promote on the web and via collateral materials.

**Strategy B** – Prioritize maintenance and improvements to major collector roads.

**Strategy C** – Increase maintenance of county roads leading to Elevenmile and Spinney Reservoirs (CR 90 and CR 92) to account for truck & trailer, and tourist traffic.

**Strategy D** – Encourage the extension of electrical and phone infrastructure to viable development areas near Hartsel.

**Strategy E** – Design and install signage along Highways 9 & 24 directing tourists and visitors to Hartsel, and nearby historic and recreation attractions.

**Strategy F** – Improve the functionality, drainage and appearance of Highway 24/9 through Hartsel.

**Strategy G** – Encourage lot consolidations to create feasible home sites.

**Strategy H** – Adapt land use regulations to encourage redevelopment of antiquated subdivisions for better access, conservation areas, lower densities and/or to create a more physically feasible layout of these subdivisions.

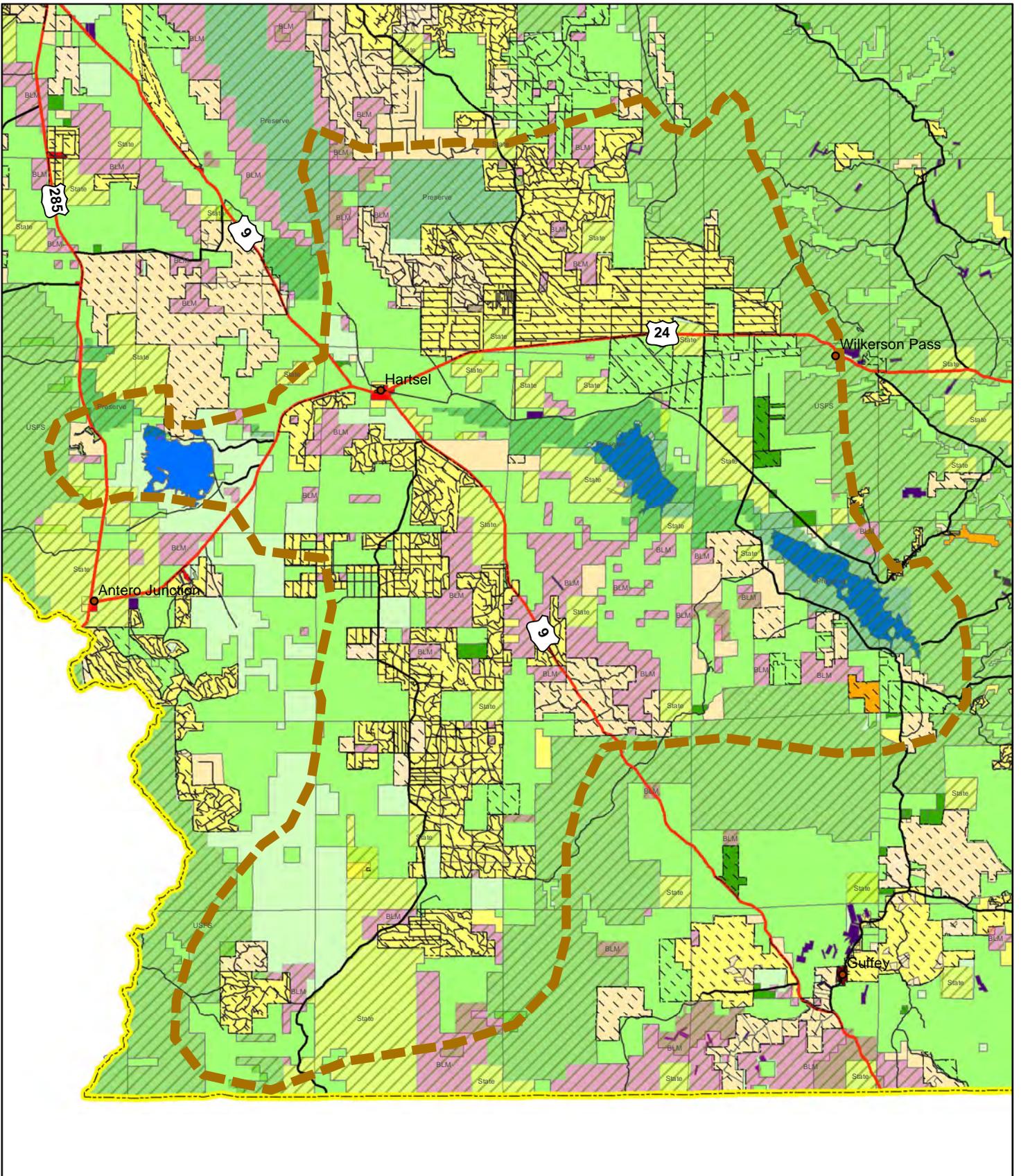
**Strategy I** – Encourage and support the buildout of viable vacant residential subdivision lots so that existing platted development is utilized before new subdivisions are developed that further add to the inventory.

**Strategy J** – Encourage forest neighborhoods to manage wildfire fuels.

**Strategy K** – Support the utilization and development of the Hartsel Hot Springs.

**Strategy L** – Establish a short walking path/route through and around Hartsel.

**Strategy M** – Promote road bike routes such as CR 53 and CR 15 and other bike routes and mountain bike trails as tourism assets and attractions.



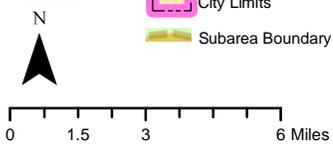
**Legend**

- Park County Line
- Highway
- Major Roads
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**Zoning District**

- Agricultural
- Agricultural Small Lot
- Commercial
- Conservation/Recreation
- Industrial
- Mining
- Mobile Home Park
- Mountain Residential
- Planned Unit Development
- Recreational Vehicle Park
- Residential
- Residential Estate
- Residential Ranch
- Rural Center Mixed Use



***Dream  
Stream/  
Hartsel***  
Growth Strategy  
Park County, CO

## GUFFEY

The Guffey subarea covers the very scenic southeast corner of the county. This network of canyons and ridgelines contains over 800 dwelling units, mostly in a low density rural development pattern. Guffey is the center of activity within the subarea and provides basic public facilities including a post office, community center, preschool through elementary school and a public library. Guffey is 33 miles from Cañon City, which is a full service city and employment center. Cripple Creek with its gaming industry is also a nearby employment center, 28 miles from Guffey. Census tract data for this area shows an average commute time to work of 50 minutes, reflecting long drives on county roads to access state highways. So while Guffey is remote, it is within commuting distance to jobs. Over two thirds of private land in the Guffey subarea is zoned agricultural. While subdivisions near highway 9 and Guffey have reasonable access to services, the subdivisions northeast of Guffey are remote with long drives on county roads.

### Core Services and Infrastructure

Guffey subarea has an average growth score of 5.1 out of 13. Subdivisions closer to Highway 9 and Guffey have a slightly higher growth score, the farther up remote county roads the lower the score since access to public services and amenities decreases. The lowest scores for the Guffey subarea are located along the county line with Teller County. The main road passing through the subarea is Highway 9. The Guffey subarea is served by Southern Park County Fire Protection District and Lake George Fire Protection District, ambulance services are covered by Southern Park County FPD and Ute Pass Regional Ambulance District.

Growth Score	5.1
Fire Districts	Southern Park County FPD, Lake George FPD
Ambulance Districts	Southern Park County FPD, Ute Pass Regional AD
Water Conservation Districts	Upper South Platte WCD, Center of Colorado WCD

### Land Use

The area has 76 zoned acres of commercial land, 154 parcels of zoned commercial property and 15 parcels assessed as commercial. The 15 assessed parcels represent less than 10% of the total zoned commercial parcels indicating a potential for future commercial development. The subarea has 813 developed residential lots and 1,695 vacant residential lots. 66% of the land in the subarea is zoned agricultural and the area has the second highest average residential lot size at 23.1 acres. The subarea has potential for commercial development in Guffey and residential development throughout the subarea.

Subarea	Guffey
Unincorporated Town	Guffey
Commercial/Industrial/Mixed Use Zoning (Acres)	79
Commercial/Mixed Use/ Industrial Zoning (Parcels)	154
Commercial/Mixed Use/Industrial Assessed (Parcels)	15
Developed Residential Lots	813
Vacant Residential Lots	1,695
Average Residential Lot Size (Acres)	23.1
% of Private Land Zoned Agricultural	66%

### GUFFEY UNINCORPORATED TOWN

Guffey is the only unincorporated town in the Guffey subarea. The community offers a view into the past with historic buildings and landscape. Guffey has commercially zoned land that could be used for more businesses catering to locals and visitors. Guffey is located just off of Highway 9 on County Road 102. Highway 9 passes through the subarea north to Fairplay, Alma and on to Summit County, and south to Cañon City.

During the vision workshop held in Guffey residents expressed a desire for more commercial businesses in Guffey, specifically a small grocery store. Also identified during the community workshop was a need for wayfinding and signage in the Guffey area including attractive signage along Highway 9 directing people to Guffey. Because Guffey is not located directly on Highway 9 it loses potential customers and visitors who are unaware of the opportunities waiting just a short drive up County Road 102. Also needed are signs directing visitors to local heritage and recreation attractions. During the sticky note portion of the vision workshop a number of residents expressed a desire for a polling place in Guffey.

### STRATEGIES

**Strategy A** – Maintain the character and sustain the remote community lifestyle.

**Strategy B** – Design and install wayfinding directing visitors to Guffey and nearby historic and recreation attractions.

**Strategy C** – Support businesses looking to locate in Guffey, including a gas station, general store/small grocery store, lodging, restaurants, especially those catering to both locals and visitors.

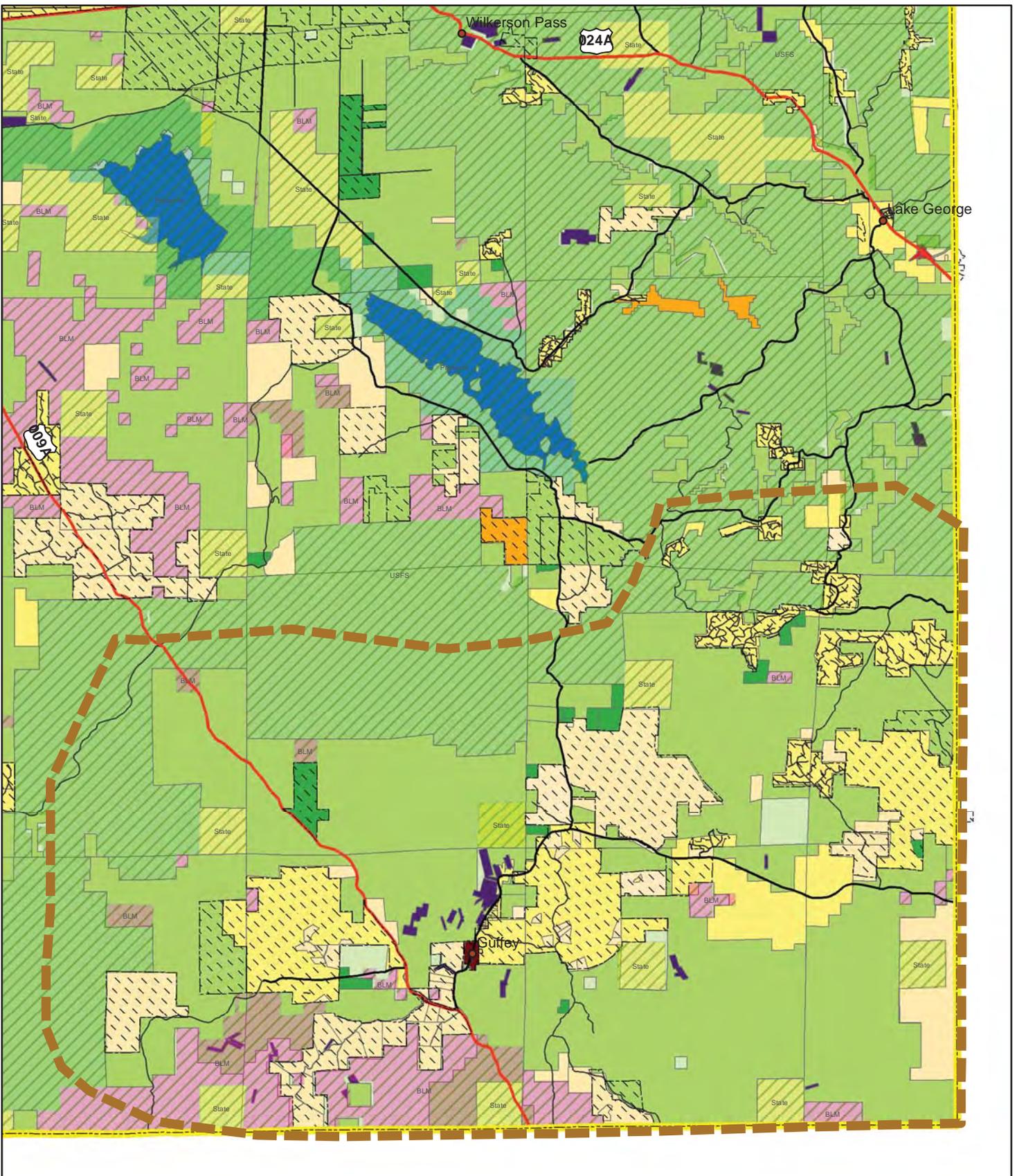
**Strategy D** – Work with property owners and CDOT to design and install highly visible signage along Highway 9 directing tourists and passersby to Guffey and listing its businesses.

**Strategy E** – Support and encourage efforts to enable Guffey property owners to purchase South Platte augmentation water rights for use in southern Park County.

**Strategy F** – Continue to invest in cellular phone and internet infrastructure to provide geographically extensive, high quality and affordable communications for customers.

**Strategy G** – Promote Guffey’s special events to the region: Heritage Day, 4<sup>th</sup> of July, school events.

**Strategy H** – Work with BLM to resolve parking and congestion issues in the Guffey Gorge and participate in the BLM’s efforts to implement a management plan to better limit and mitigate the impacts of increasing visitor use in this special area.



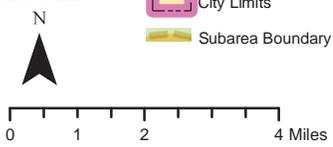
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**Zoning District**

- Agricultural
- Agricultural Small Lot
- Commercial
- Conservation/Recreation
- Industrial
- Mining
- Mobile Home Park
- Mountain Residential
- Planned Unit Development
- Recreational Vehicle Park
- Residential
- Residential Estate
- Residential Ranch
- Rural Center Mixed Use



*Guffey*

Growth Strategy  
Park County, CO

## LAKE GEORGE

This subarea has a unique development pattern with narrow bands of private land along drainages with a few residential subdivisions and a limited number of lots scattered throughout the area. The northern reaches of the Lake George area extend up Tarryall Road. This area has the distinct advantage of being connected to the Lake George unincorporated town which provides services and amenities such as the Lake George Charter School, a fire station, a Sheriff's station, community center, community park, restaurant, post office and public library. Lake George is also the gateway to Elevenmile Canyon Reservoir and receives regular visitor traffic during the summer.

The development pattern offers limited options for more residential development than is offered currently. This is a region that offers remote lifestyles and second homes, the terrain is complex and this is not an area that will accommodate significant residential development beyond what is already platted. However it can be successful as it is, and more residents and visitors will add fuel to the Lake George economy and make businesses more viable. Lake George town site is an ideal location for future commercial development. Sustaining road maintenance that is sufficient for a dispersed development pattern with several roads is always a challenge. The goal is to establish a long term strategy and communications protocol for balancing the rural and dispersed geography of the area with available resources for road maintenance.

### Core Services and Infrastructure

Lake George has an average growth efficiency score of 3.5, a relatively low score. Highway 24 passes through the subarea, Lake George provides several public facilities, but other county services are located in Fairplay on the opposite end of the county. The Lake George Charter School offers preschool through grade six with an online curriculum available for seventh and eighth grade. Divide, located 13 miles from Lake George in Teller County also offers amenities and supplies, including a grocery store and other commercial businesses. The Lake George subarea is served by two fire protection districts and two ambulance districts.

Growth Score	3.5
Primary Fire Districts	Lake George FPD, Hartsel FPD
Primary Ambulance Districts	Ute Pass Regional AD, South Park AD
Water Conservation Districts	Upper South Platte WCD, Center of Colorado WCD

### Land Use

The Lake George subarea has 48 acres of zoned commercial land, 48 zoned commercial parcels and 15 assessed commercial parcels. The residential lots in this subarea are roughly halfway built out with 735 developed residential lots and 766 vacant residential lots. The subarea has potential for commercial development in the community of Lake

George, and buildout of existing vacant residential lots located in terrain that provides feasible development opportunities.

Name	Lake George
Unincorporated Town	Lake George
Commercial/Industrial/Mixed Use Zoning (Acres)	48
Commercial/Mixed Use/ Industrial Zoning (Parcels)	15
Commercial/Mixed Use/Industrial Assessed (Parcels)	39
Developed Residential Lots	735
Vacant Residential Lots	766
Average Residential Lot Size (Acres)	5.3
% of Private Land Zoned Agricultural	67%

### LAKE GEORGE UNINCORPORATED TOWN

Lake George is an historic outpost with an agricultural past. Located on Highway 24, it is considered the gateway to Elevenmile Reservoir and receives regular tourist traffic headed to the reservoir for recreation. Lake George has a number of assets, including the very active Lake George Community Association. The association worked with the county to develop the Lake George Park which is located on county land but managed by the association. The park has a tennis court, basketball court, arena, sports fields, a playground and bathrooms. The community of Lake George offers some commercial services such as a Lake George Pizza and Starky's general store to the larger subarea and to recreation and heritage tourists.

### STRATEGIES

**Strategy A** – Increase maintenance of county roads leading to Elevenmile and Spinney Reservoirs (CR 90 and CR 92) to account for heavy truck & trailer, and tourist traffic.

**Strategy B** – Work with the Lake George community to renovate or relocate the library.

**Strategy C** – Renovate and maintain the Lake George Community Center or construct a new facility.

**Strategy D** – Maintain and support the development of active recreation opportunities in Lake George. Work closely with the Lake George Community Association.

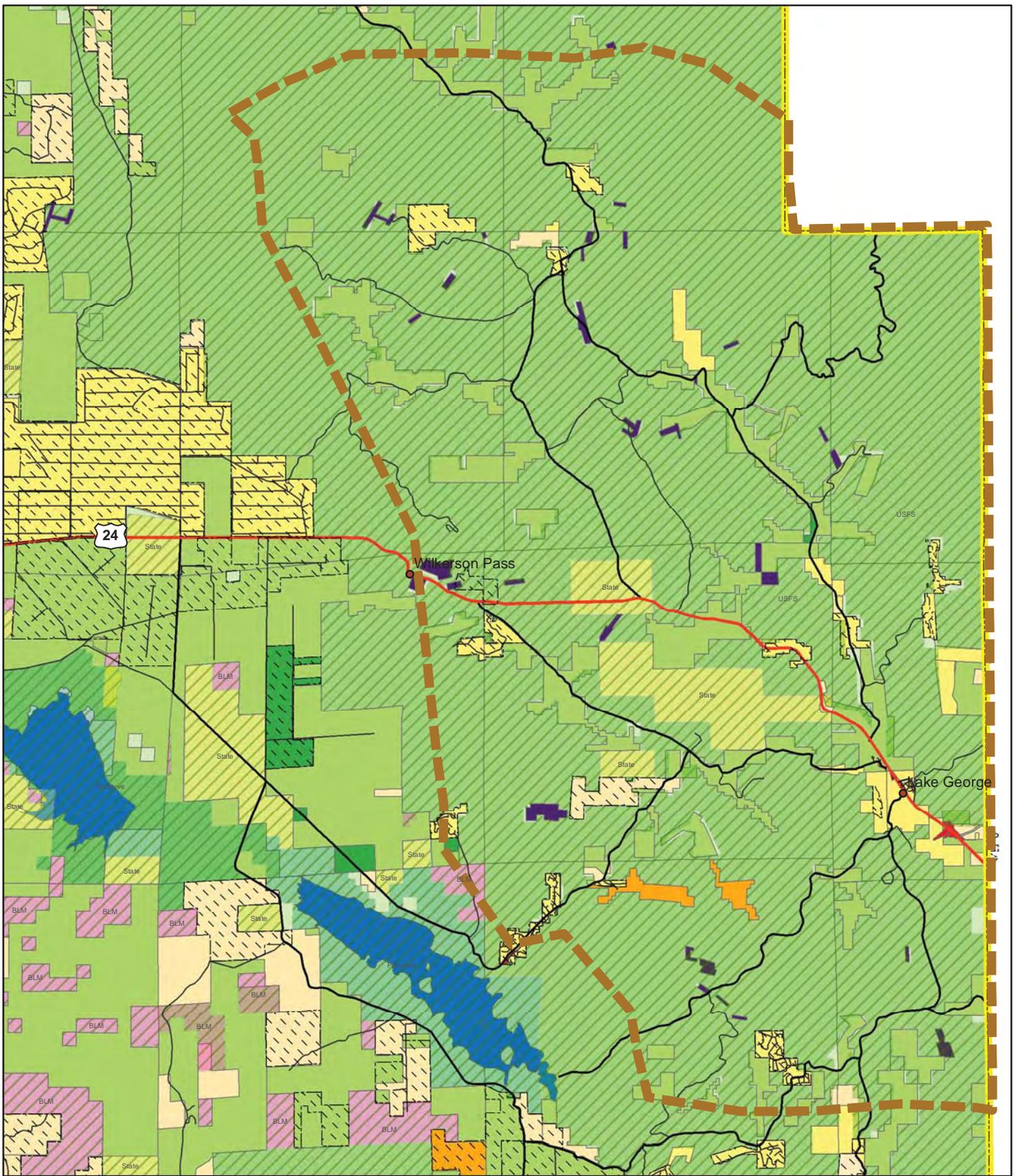
**Strategy E** – Encourage the development of Lake George as a services and supply outpost to locals and tourists.

- Support entrepreneurial efforts to open a gas station and convenience store.
- Provide signs along the highway and at the reservoirs identifying the resources and services available in Lake George.

**Strategy F** – Provide consistent and aesthetic signs along the highway and at the reservoirs identifying the resources and services available in Lake George.

**Strategy G** – Work with tourism marketing partners to include Lake George and its offerings as part of countywide tourism marketing efforts, business guides, websites and other promotional materials.

**Strategy H** – Encourage CDOT to install a digital information/alert sign for westbound traffic on Highway 24.



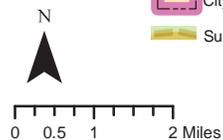
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**Zoning District**

- Agricultural
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- Conservation/Recreation
- Industrial
- Mining
- Mobile Home Park
- Mountain Residential
- Planned Unit Development
- Recreational Vehicle Park
- Residential
- Residential Estate
- Residential Ranch
- Rural Center Mixed Use



# Lake George

Growth Strategy  
Park County, CO

# CONCLUSION

Much has been accomplished since 2001 when the previous Strategic Master Plan was adopted. Among the greatest successes are the ranchlands and associated water rights that have been voluntarily protected by landowners through the Land and Water Trust Fund. The land use regulations were also significantly updated and overhauled to create zoning that better keeps agricultural lands in-tact and offers broader opportunities for businesses on agricultural lands that allow land owners to yield revenues from their land so that they can afford to keep their property. Scenic ridgelines are now protected with ridgeline regulations that minimize the protrusion of structures into the skyline as seen from scenic corridors below. Organizations are working to provide augmentation water for those needing water rights. More thoughtful residential zoning standards and densities have replaced the regulations that allowed the densely packed residential subdivisions platted decades ago. Going forward residential subdivisions will be at lower densities and designed more carefully.

Over the course of developing the 2016 Strategic Master Plan and during the extensive public outreach program, it was firmly established that the conservation and preservation principles articulated the 2001 Strategic Master Plan are still strongly supported by county residents and community leaders. The goals and strategies and background information contained in this updated plan have integrated and refreshed these core values.

The world has changed rapidly since the 2001 plan was adopted, most notably, the financial crisis, housing bubble and recession struck in the late 2000s. Jobs growth has been sometimes slow, sometimes flat, and sometimes in decline. About 2 in 3 employed people in Park County commute out of the county for work to the Front Range, Summit County, and other employment centers such as Cripple Creek, Cañon City, Buena Vista and Salida. The community outreach program and surveys show that there is broad support for economic development that is appropriate for the community and practical given the remoteness and rural character of the county.

When viewed in its entirety, there are great economic possibilities in Park County, all of which stem from the incredible scenic, historic, recreation and lifestyle assets it contains. The terrain ranges from alpine to arid canyon country and all points in between with South Park connecting it all together. The communities throughout the county are as unique as the geography and there are a variety of choices from small mountain town living in Alma to wide open solitude. Nearly all residents agree that they do not want to jeopardize the qualities in Park County that they value, but there is broad agreement that an economic growth strategy to evolve the local economy and expand livelihoods is necessary. Without a stronger local economy, many will continue to struggle to earn a living and young people and families will not have a way to move to, or return to Park County and enjoy all it has to offer in future generations. This Strategic Master Plan is designed to jointly address

environmental and cultural preservation, and the need for economic development in the county. This plan is designed to ensure a sustainable future for Park County.

The county, the municipalities, the chambers of commerce and other community groups have been working individually on efforts to increase business activity throughout the county. Future economic progress will require county leadership and support. The county is already working on economic development in niche areas such as recreation and heritage tourism and is leading efforts such as the heritage program, promotional materials distribution, and niche recreation development and promotion. To affect economic change, efforts need to be coordinated and center around common goals and outcomes and the hard work needs to get done. This plan provides countywide goals and strategies for increasing livelihoods and localized strategies for increasing business activity in the various historic towns throughout the county.

This plan reflects broad support and willingness of Park County leadership and residents to strike a balance between preserving the character, quality and treasured features of this place and the implementation of a practical growth strategy to build the local economy. Park County can have both of these at once and this plan is the roadmap for achieving this balance.