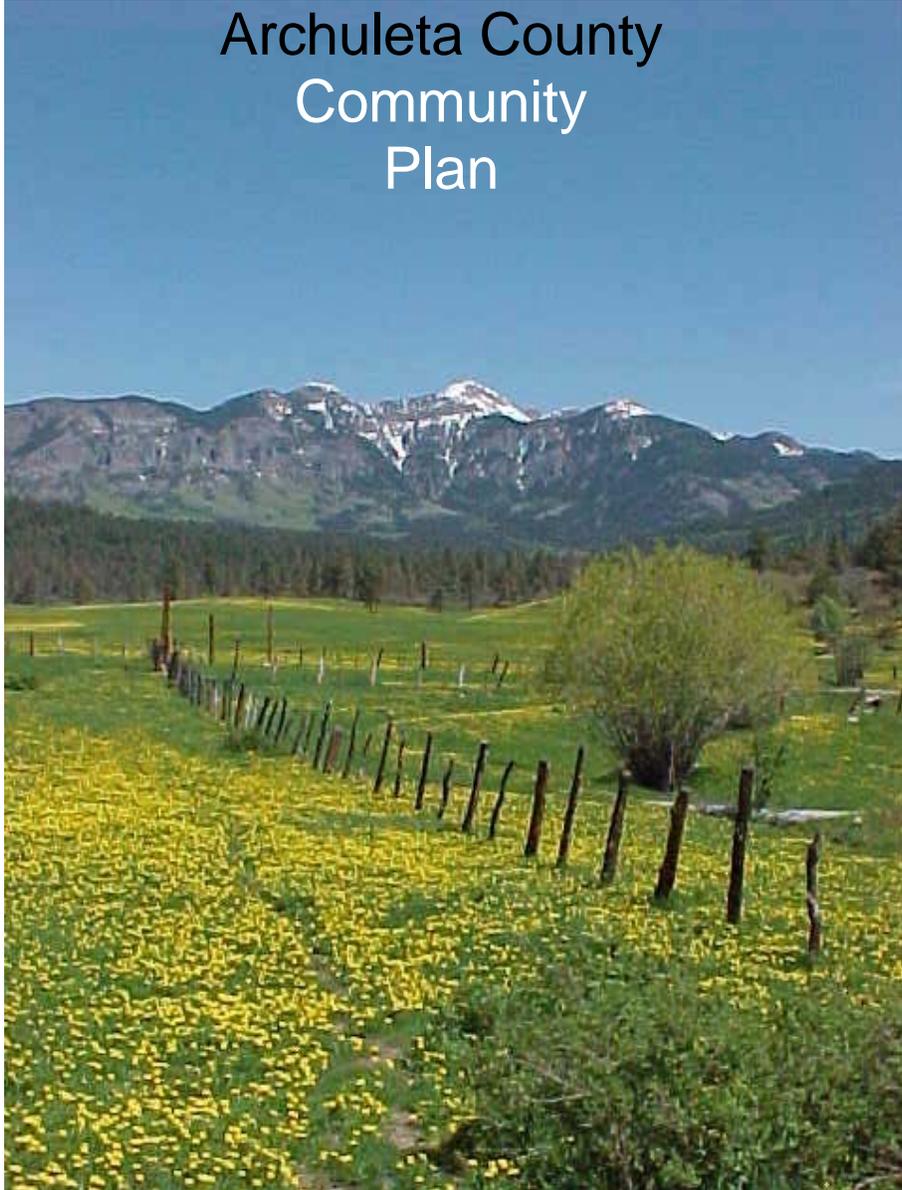


Archuleta County Community Plan



Adopted by the Planning Commission March 28, 2001

**Endorsed by the Board of County Commissioners
May 23, 2001**

**Amended 2008, 2011*

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

WHY PLAN?

A community plan is an official public document designed to guide the future development or redevelopment of a community in order to create and maintain a desirable environment and to promote the public health, safety, and welfare. The plan is intended for use by public officials, citizens, and developers in making decisions about future development of Archuleta County and the Town of Pagosa Springs.

While the plan is an advisory document only¹, it is the basis for revising existing regulations or enacting new regulations, and for evaluating development proposals and guiding project review recommendations. The plan serves as the foundation for intergovernmental agreements and detailed studies and programs. The plan can be used as supporting documentation for pursuing grants for community development projects and activities. The plan is also used to guide residents, property owners, and the development community concerning land planning in Archuleta County. The plan affects new development and expansions of existing development. Existing development, other than expansions, is not affected by the plan, except that voluntary compliance with new policies is encouraged. The plan is broad in scope and does not address individual parcels, however, it should be interpreted to apply generally to all properties in Archuleta County.

The plan recognizes that protection of individual property rights is a fundamental legal and philosophical principle of the nation, the State of Colorado, and Archuleta County. However, the plan also recognizes a common vision, expressed by county residents at 22 public workshops, to preserve community character and environmental and scenic qualities, while enhancing economic opportunities and creating a more diverse economy. The plan attempts to strike an appropriate balance between the unrestrained exercise of individual property rights and achieving the common vision.

The belief that property rights means, “I can do whatever I please with my private property” must be qualified, by considering the impact of one owner’s exercise of his property rights on the rights of other property owners. In short, one person’s unrestrained exercise of property rights can have the effect of “taking” property values from other owners.

“Where my property rights end, and where yours begin ” should be a key consideration in the formulation of any new regulations. Property values are enhanced by a level of regulation and public investment that protects the attractiveness, and supports the development potential, of private property. There is also a point at which over-regulation and excessive public costs can

¹ Although it states the Plan is “advisory only” the State Statute where this specific language is found (CRS 30-28-106 (3) (XI) (F) (f)) was deleted.

diminish property values. There is an optimal level of regulation and public investment that maximizes property values. This should be the goal of the citizens of Archuleta County. This community plan contains various elements that address the interrelationships between the physical layout of a community, public facilities, the provision of government services, and preservation of community character. The plan establishes a framework for managing new growth in a manner that attempts to preserve quality of life while fostering or enhancing a healthy economy.

CREATING THE PLAN

Planning is a process that involves many steps, culminating in the preparation of a plan with maps and text. The steps leading to this plan included: engaging the public through meetings with the Steering Committee, 22 public workshops, collection and analysis of pertinent data; developing a vision statement and desired future conditions for each planning element; development of alternative growth management scenarios; selection of a preferred growth scenario; and development of the comprehensive plan.

Engaging the Public - Citizen participation in the planning process was encouraged throughout the study. Three primary methods were used to solicit public input: meetings with the Steering Committee, public workshops, and written comments.

The Steering Committee consisted of 13 citizens appointed by the County Commissioners, representing various geographic areas of the county. This committee functioned as the primary working-level citizen's group, providing detailed comments on consultant presentations and on information that was presented to the public.

Three series of public workshops were held to solicit public input during the early, middle, and late phases of the planning process. The purpose of the first series of workshops was to identify issues, concerns, and special values, and to facilitate the development of a long-range vision. Several questions were asked to stimulate a discussion about the county's future:

- ◆ What do you like about Archuleta County and what would you like to retain?
- ◆ What do you dislike about Archuleta County and what would you like to change?
- ◆ What is the appropriate balance between catering to tourists and making room for newcomers and maintaining the quality of life and culture that have been part of the area's heritage for the past century?

Eight workshops were held throughout the county during a two-week period in February 2000. Each meeting was targeted to a particular geographic area, although everyone was invited. The meetings were held at:

- ◆ Chromo, for the southeastern part of the county.
- ◆ County Fairgrounds (two meetings: one for the northeastern part of the county; and one for the eastern part of the county).
- ◆ Chimney Rock area, for the northwestern part of the county.
- ◆ Arboles, for the southwestern part of the county.
- ◆ Pagosa Lakes.

- ◆ Pagosa Springs.
- ◆ Pagosa High School (for the entire Junior and Senior classes).

About 860 people attended the first series of workshops, including about 230 students at the high school workshop. The total number of participants did not include Steering Committee members, county and town staff, County Commissioners, and County Commissioner candidates.

At the second series of public workshops, held in May 2000 for the seven geographic regions, four alternative growth scenarios with accompanying maps and policies were presented. The alternative growth scenarios are summarized in Chapter 5. At each of the workshops, small group discussions were facilitated to examine and debate various policy options in detail. The results of these discussions were then summarized when the workshop participants reconvened into one large group. About 250 people attended the second series of workshops, (not including Steering Committee members, county and town staff, County Commissioners, and County Commissioner candidates).

The Draft Community Plan was presented at the third series of public workshops, also held for the seven geographic regions in September 2000. About 265 people attended the third series of workshops, (again, not including Steering Committee members, county and town staff, County Commissioners, and County Commissioner candidates).



Collection and Analysis of Data - Existing information and studies were reviewed and analyzed. Data was obtained from interviews with key individuals as well as written reports. The consultants also conducted field studies of scenic corridors and existing land use. An existing land use map was prepared which delineated parcels according to the types of existing land uses, and tables were created summarizing the data.

Vision Statement and Desired Future Conditions - Based on input obtained from the first series of public workshops, the vision statement developed for the 1997 Master Plan was modified slightly, and statements of desired future conditions for each planning element were written. While the vision statement is broad and general, statements of desired future conditions

reflect more specific values, issues, and concerns. Desired future conditions, often called goals, are defined as long-term ideals or end products that are desired. Since they are ideals, desired future conditions are rarely fully achieved. Statements of desired future conditions are derived from citizens' expressions of special values, issues, concerns, and needs stated or implied at the public workshops.

Statements of desired future conditions are presented in the following chapters with each of the eight planning elements, such as community character and traditions, and land use and growth management.

VISION STATEMENT

Archuleta County should retain its outstanding scenic and natural qualities while providing quality employment, housing, education, and recreation to its residents. Tourism, recreation, and agriculture will remain major segments of the economy, but attempts will be made to diversify and encourage other types of economic development. The majority of youth should be able to have a career and eventually raise a family without being forced to leave. A healthy and vibrant community will continue to evolve and the rural character and small town atmosphere will be preserved.

Policies and Action Items - Desired future conditions are achieved by developing and implementing policies that provide guidance to county officials as well as individuals and businesses that present development proposals for approval.

- ◆ A policy is defined as a statement describing the general philosophy that guides decision making consistent with achieving a desired future condition.
- ◆ An action item is defined as a specific step that should be accomplished to implement a given policy.

Policies and action items are presented in the following chapters with each of the eight planning elements, such as community character and traditions, and land use and growth management.

Development of Alternative Growth Scenarios - Four alternative growth scenarios were developed, with maps and policy options, and presented to the Steering Committee and then to the public at the second series of public workshops for comment. The public was invited to indicate in writing its preferences for growth scenarios and policies. One hundred thirty written responses were received.

Selection of a Preferred Growth Scenario and Development of the Future Land Use Map - Based on input from the Steering Committee, the second series of public workshops,

and written comments, a preferred growth scenario and the draft future land use map were presented to the Steering Committee and then to the public at the third series of public workshops.

COMMUNITY ROOTS

Archuleta County is located near the headwaters of the San Juan River, just downstream from the Continental Divide. The county is roughly rectangular in shape and covers 1,364 square miles. The northern and eastern parts of the county are mountainous while the southern part consists of mesa cut by stream valleys. About half of the land is owned and administered by the U.S. Forest Service, approximately 15 percent is owned by the Southern Ute Indian Tribe, and the remaining 35 percent is privately owned.

Archuleta County has existed as a political entity since 1885. The Town of Pagosa Springs was incorporated in 1891 and is the only incorporated municipality in the county. Over the years other communities grew and declined, with only Arboles and Chromo surviving from the 19th to the 21st centuries.

With the coming of the railroad along the southern boundary of the county in 1881, the lumber industry became the dominant sector of the economy, also boosting ranching by providing a practical way to ship cattle and sheep to market. The railroad was extended to Pagosa Springs in 1900 and ceased to operate in 1935.

Due to improved transportation, increasing affluence of the American populace, and the area's unique scenic beauty, Archuleta County has been transforming during the past several decades from a rural, agrarian past to a tourist-based economy with booming residential growth.

FROM THE PAST INTO THE FUTURE: GROWTH TRENDS

During the past 20 years, the permanent population of Archuleta County has nearly tripled from 3,664 in 1980 to about 10,000 today. In addition to the permanent population, there is a significant seasonal population. According to the Colorado Office of Demography (COD), Archuleta County's "vacant housing units" (the estimated number of unoccupied dwelling units) totals 1,912. The COD categorizes "vacant housing units" as those utilized by seasonal, or part-time, residents. Assuming a household size of 2.0, and further assuming that 70% of these vacant housing units could be occupied at peak season, a part-time resident population of 2,676 persons is estimated. Adding this part-time resident figure to the approximately 1,100 motel rooms, RV spaces and camping sites, Archuleta County's population could temporarily increase to nearly 15,000.

According to the COD, Archuleta County's annual average growth rate from 1980 to 1990 was 3.8 percent. During the period from 1990 to 1999, the county's annual growth rate increased to 6.5 percent. From 1994 to 1998, Archuleta County had the second highest rate of growth among all counties in Colorado and the highest growth rate in southwestern Colorado. For comparison purposes, the average annual growth rate in all of Colorado was 2.6 percent from 1994 to 1998.

Most of this growth has occurred in the subdivisions within ten miles of Pagosa Springs, particularly in the Pagosa Lakes area. Growth within the Town of Pagosa Springs has been slower, increasing from 1,331 in 1980 to an estimated 1,825 in 1999. However, much of this growth has occurred during recent years as the town has annexed more land.

The COD expects that Archuleta County will continue to grow, as more people are attracted by the area's scenic character and quality of life. As shown in Figure 1, the COD estimates that at an approximate 3.5% annual rate of growth, the population of the county is projected to double to about 20,000 in 2020, (increasing to about 15,000 in 2010). However, if the 6.5 percent annual growth rate experienced from 1990 to 1999 were to occur from 2000 to 2020, Archuleta County's population would increase to about 35,000 in 20 years, (and to about 19,000 in 10 years).

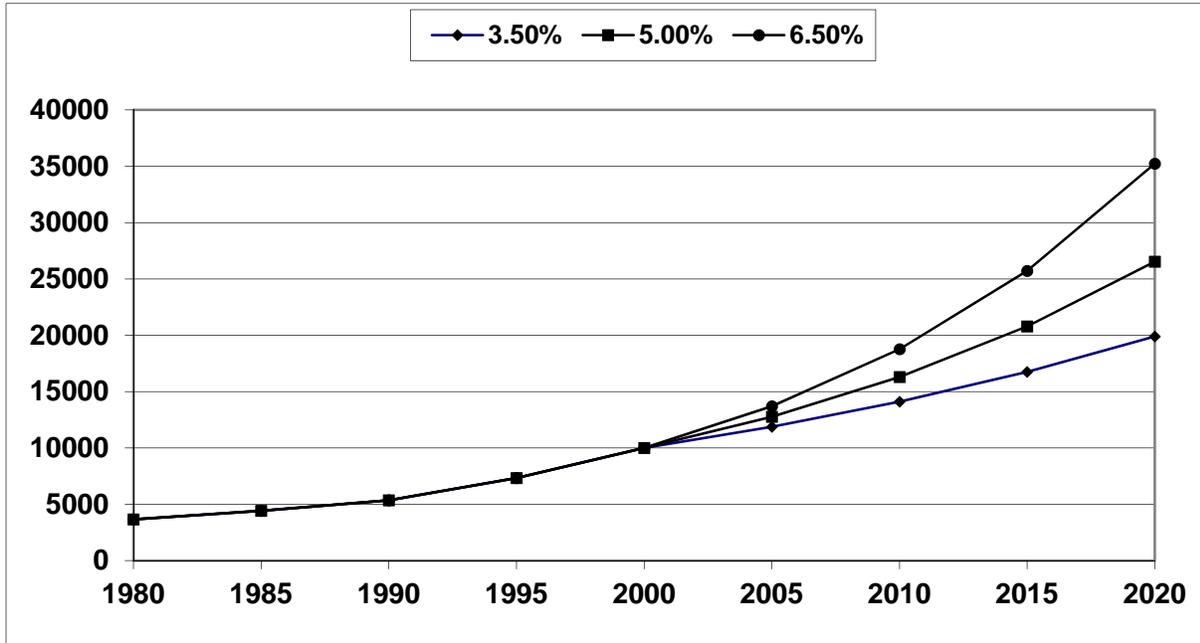
Map 1 Location

Map 1: Location



The Land Use Plan Update for the Town of Pagosa Springs estimates that, with future annexation of much of Pagosa Lakes, the population within the town will increase to about 9,200 by 2020. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 5, Growth Management.

**FIGURE 1
ARCHULETA COUNTY POPULATION GROWTH
(HISTORIC AND PROJECTED)
1980 - 2020**



In the above chart, the lower line (3.5%) represents the Colorado Office of Demography (COD) projection from 2000 thru 2020, the upper line represents a continuation of the average annual growth rate from 1990 thru 2000 (6.5%), and the 5% line represents a middle path between the two. The average annual growth from 1980 thru 1990 was 3.8%, 0.3% greater than the 3.5% currently projected by COD.

CHAPTER 2

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Scenic beauty, abundant wildlife, and free flowing rivers are but a few of the qualities that contribute to the environment and lifestyle that are so attractive to residents of Archuleta County. The natural environment plays an important role in the quality of life of the county and the economy. Vistas of majestic mountains, abundant wildlife, wide-open meadows, and the rural atmosphere have aesthetic and economic value. Citizens desire to strike a balance between accommodating development and preserving the clean air, clean water, wildlife, and beauty of Archuleta County.

Archuleta County is fortunate to have thousands of acres of permanently protected lands. Some of these lands are more dramatic, others more biologically significant, but all are important for Archuleta County's quality of life and identity. Currently protected lands include the following:

- ◆ **National Forest Lands** - The San Juan National Forest stretches along the northern and eastern edges of the county.
- ◆ **Wilderness** – One wilderness area, the South San Juan, has been set aside within the National Forest.
- ◆ **Bureau of Land Management** – This Federal agency manages approximately 9,800 acres in Archuleta County.
- ◆ **Bureau of Reclamation/Colorado State Parks** – Navajo Lake State Park. This 15,000 surface-acre reservoir, with 150 miles of shoreline, extends for 35 miles south into the State of New Mexico. Navajo State Park is located in the southwest corner of Archuleta County.
- ◆ **Conservation Easements** - 16 conservation easements, consisting of 6,231 acres, have been set aside to permanently protect private lands from development. See Map 1a.
- ◆ **Reservoir Hill & San Juan River** – The Town of Pagosa Springs has acquired key open space lands in these areas.

Although much of the land valuable for its scenic beauty enjoys permanent protection, many areas do not have protection to ensure preservation of scenic qualities in the future. Overwhelming support for the protection of agricultural activity, scenic areas and wildlife habitat was demonstrated at public workshops throughout the planning process. Some of these unprotected areas include:

- ◆ **Major Rivers** - 90% of wildlife species depend on riparian areas for survival. Recreation along rivers is increasing each year. Major rivers that need protection include: San Juan, Blanco, Navajo, Piedra. See Map 2.
- ◆ **Wildlife Areas** - If wildlife populations are to remain healthy, areas that are important to wildlife for winter range, calving, migration, and nesting need to be preserved. See Maps 2 and 5.

Desired Future Condition

The scenic beauty of Archuleta County remains intact. The dramatic mountain backdrop with vistas of agricultural buildings, ranches, and open space in the foreground is preserved. The air is clean, rivers run free and clear, and wildlife populations remain healthy through preservation of habitat and migration corridors on public as well as private land.

Policy 1 –Design and locate new development to avoid or minimize damage and disruption to wildlife habitat and avoid or minimize damage to other environmentally sensitive areas.

Action Items:

1. In consultation with the Colorado Division of Wildlife and the affected landowners, develop criteria for reviewing development proposals to ensure that damage to wildlife habitat and migration corridors is avoided or minimized.
2. Develop regulations that establish standards (requirements) and guidelines (incentives) to ensure that new development is designed and located to avoid or minimize damage and disruption to wildlife habitat.
3. Adopt additional standards and guidelines to protect the environment when reviewing and approving development proposals pertaining to such items as building on steep slopes, wetlands, and floodplains.

Policy 2 – Water districts should provide incentives for water conservation, for residential and commercial uses.

Action Items:

1. Archuleta County and the Town of Pagosa Springs should formally request that water districts develop incentives to encourage water conservation for residential and commercial customers.
2. In cooperation, the water districts, the County and the Town should appoint a committee to evaluate and recommend the most appropriate water conservation techniques.
3. Develop a public education program to encourage the widespread use of water conservation measures and devices.

Policy 3 - Protect adjudicated water rights pursuant to Colorado State law, including the use of riparian areas for livestock.

Policy 4 – New development is encouraged to use landscaping practices that conserve water and enhance the appearance of the built environment.

Action Items:

1. Develop guidelines and incentives to encourage new development to be landscaped with water-conserving plants.
2. Develop guidelines and incentives to encourage the preservation of mature growth trees, in commercial, industrial, and multi-family developments.
3. Develop guidelines and incentives to encourage the planting of native trees, in commercial, industrial, and multi-family developments.

Policy 5 - The local power cooperative should provide incentives for energy conservation measures, including use of solar power, for all new construction and major renovation.

Action Item:

1. Archuleta County and the Town of Pagosa Springs should formally request that the local power cooperative develop incentives to encourage energy conservation for residential and commercial customers, including the use of alternative energy sources, such as solar power.

Policy 6 - Require energy conservation measures for all new construction and major renovation as part of the local government approval process.

Action Item:

1. Archuleta County and the Town of Pagosa Springs should amend their building codes as necessary, to require appropriate energy conservation measures, such as adopting an energy code.

Policy 7 – Local government should encourage the use of alternative energy sources, such as active and passive solar energy, geothermal, wind, water, etc.

Action Items:

1. In cooperation with the local power cooperative, Archuleta County and the Town of Pagosa Springs should develop and distribute public information materials about the use of solar energy in homes and business structures.
2. To encourage the use of alternative energy sources in homes and business structures, Archuleta County and the Town of Pagosa Springs should examine the potential use of tax incentives.

Policy 8 - Locate new gravel pits to minimize visual and environmental impacts. Require site reclamation and site mitigation.

Action Items:

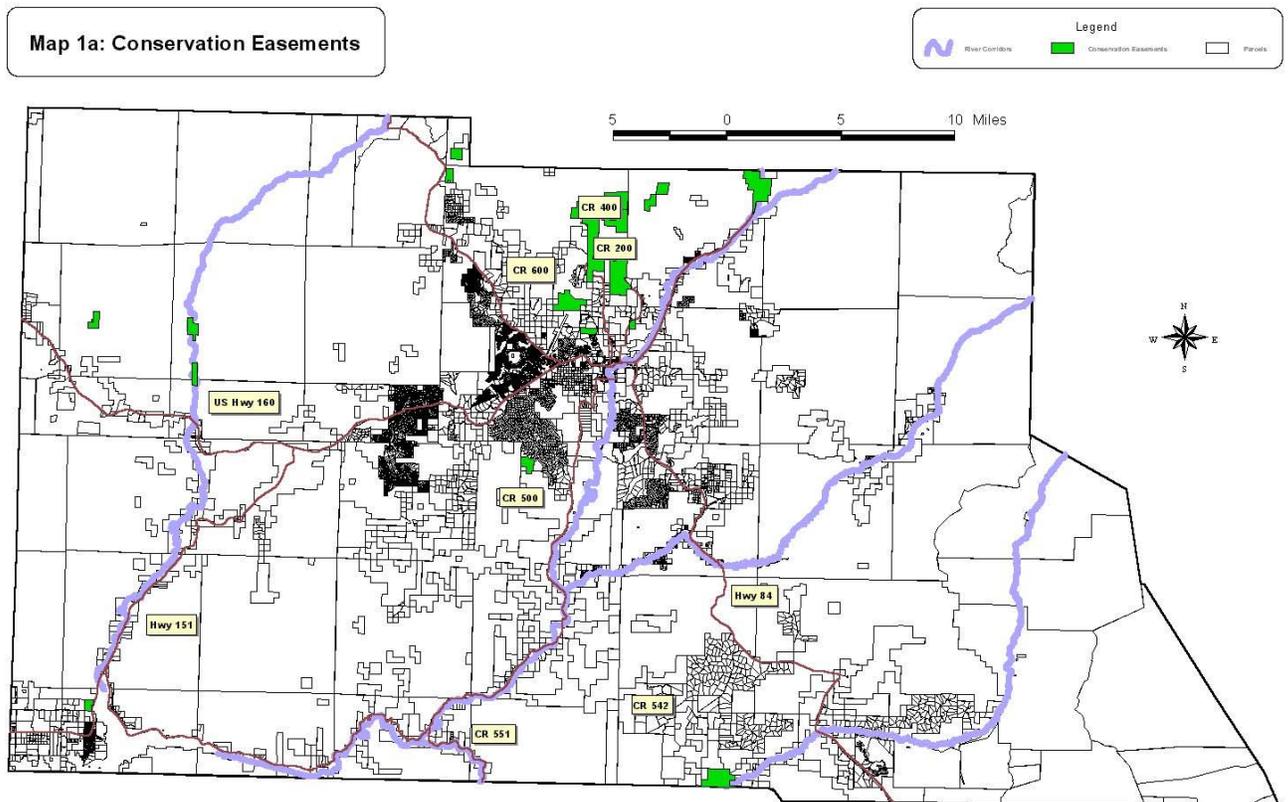
1. Develop county standards and criteria for approving and locating new gravel pits, in addition to the State Review Agency requirements and conditions of approval.
2. Develop a plan establishing the long-range need for gravel in Archuleta County, an inventory of gravel resources, and suitable locations for gravel extraction.

Policy 9 – Property owners should control noxious weeds, as defined by State and County law, under penalty of a fine.

Action Items:

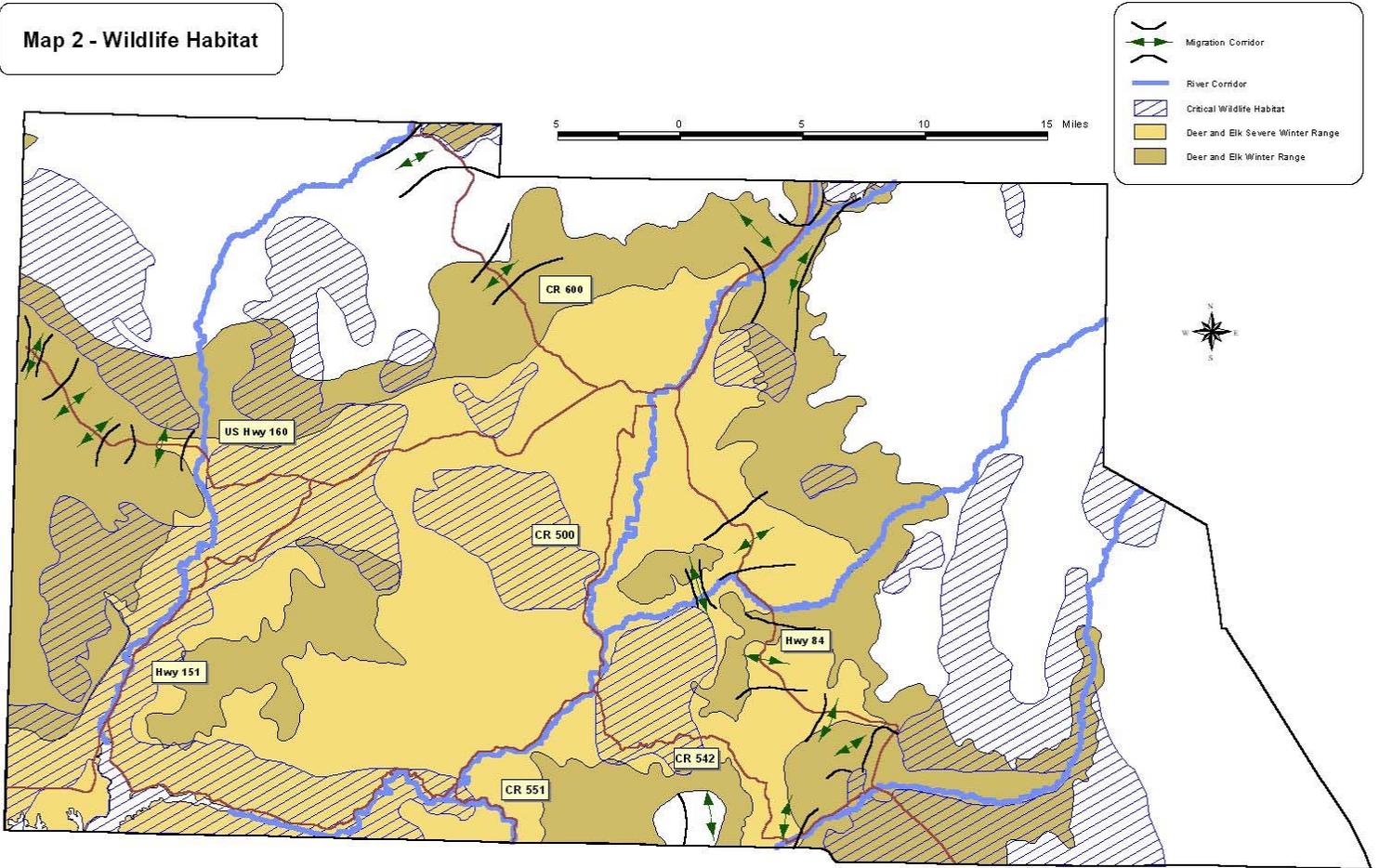
1. Support and utilize programs to educate private property owners about noxious weeds, so that they can be good neighbors and control noxious weeds on their property.
2. Develop an eradication program for noxious weeds.
3. Expand the existing county program to better control noxious weeds.
4. Encourage the use of non-toxic weed control methods to protect the health and safety of our citizens and our environment.

Map 1a



MAP 2 Wildlife Habitat

Map 2 - Wildlife Habitat



CHAPTER 3

COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND CULTURAL TRADITIONS

There are numerous factors that contribute to the community character of Archuleta County. The area's history, agricultural heritage, cultural mix, small town atmosphere, and low population density all contribute to the quality of life in Archuleta County. Maintaining the character of the community means holding on to each of these components over the long run.

The Anasazi were the earliest known inhabitants, followed by various Indian tribes who hunted in the area and used the hot mineral springs. Spanish explorers and missionaries arrived prior to 1848 when Mexico ceded most of the present Southwest to the United States. Through a series of treaties, the U.S. government "bought" most of the Indian land, and the Southern Ute Indian Reservation was established in its present location in 1879.

Archuleta County has a rich ranching heritage. Livestock grazing has been a local custom since the Spanish arrived. Ranch claims were established along the San Juan River in the 1870s. Cattle and sheep ranchers were issued grazing permits on the National Forest as early as 1908, and stock drives date back to then.

More recently, tourists and new residents have been attracted by the scenic beauty, small town atmosphere, and the serene, rural ambiance of Archuleta County.

Desired Future Condition

The small town atmosphere, rural character, agricultural and ranching heritage, mix of cultures, and diversity of life styles is preserved.

Policy 1 – Preservation of historic buildings and historic districts is encouraged.

Action Items:

1. Conduct a study to designate places and structures with historic character as historic places and/or districts.

2. Develop incentives, including tax incentives, to encourage restoration of historic buildings and establishment of historic districts.
3. Develop architectural guidelines to preserve facades of historic buildings.
4. Establish a county historic preservation committee to address items 1 – 3 above.

Policy 2 - New development is encouraged to be architecturally compatible with community character and heritage.

Action Item:

1. Develop architectural guidelines to encourage new development to be compatible with community character and heritage (excluding agricultural buildings).

Policy 3 - The County should consistently follow and uniformly apply state statutes and regulations governing the determination of “agricultural land” classifications.

Policy 4 - The County should develop incentives that would:

- ◆ Encourage genuine farming and ranching operations to continue long into the future.
- ◆ Encourage the preservation of agricultural land.

Action Item:

1. Appoint a committee to study and evaluate incentives to encourage the continuation of genuine farming and ranching operations and preservation of agricultural land.

Policy 5 – Approve new commercial development, including chain stores and fast food franchises, only if such development is architecturally compatible with community character.

Action Items:

1. Develop design standards for all new commercial development, including franchises.
2. Consider the adoption of a moratorium on certain types of commercial development until design standards are developed and approved.

CHAPTER 4

APPEARANCE AND SOUND OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

When considering the built environment, one aspect that is impossible to ignore is the relationship between what has been created by man, and the surrounding landscape. This is particularly true for a place of dramatic beauty such as Archuleta County.

When residents and tourists visualize Archuleta County, images of the San Juan River, the hot springs, and the breathtaking landscape of the San Juan Mountains and the Continental Divide may come to mind. The human dominance over nature so common elsewhere is not to be found in this isolated corner of the world. Old timers stay, and new residents come, because of the increasingly rare balance between man and nature that can be found in Archuleta County. Key aspects of preserving the qualities that have been present historically are:

- ◆ **Concentrated Development** - The one settlement that has withstood the test of time is Pagosa Springs. Other areas have come and gone with the boom and bust cycles earlier in the last century.
- ◆ **Farms and Ranches** - Outside of Pagosa Springs, agriculture, forestry, and other resource-based activities have been the land uses found in rural areas, with ranching by far the dominant activity.
- ◆ **Darkness at Night** - Residents across the county attended planning meetings where they made it clear that excessive lighting is not acceptable. Dark skies are part and parcel of the life that people have come to expect in Archuleta County.
- ◆ **Quiet** - Residents expect to be free of undesirable and excessive noise.

Desired Future Condition

Developed areas are well designed and architecturally compatible with community character, cultural heritage, and the natural environment. Quiet prevails with a minimum of loud or offensive noise.

Policy 1 – Require new commercial, residential, industrial, and governmental development to minimize the effect of night lighting on neighboring properties, public rights-of-way, and the night sky.

Action Item:

1. Develop standards and criteria to ensure that all new development minimize the effect of night lighting on neighboring properties and public rights-of-way.

Policy 2 – Owners of existing residential, commercial, industrial, governmental, and other property are encouraged to minimize the effect of night lighting on neighboring properties and public rights-of-way.

Action Item:

1. Develop guidelines, including a list of appropriate lighting devices, to encourage existing residential, commercial, industrial, governmental, and other land uses to minimize the effect of night lighting on neighboring properties and public rights-of-way.

Policy 3 – Prohibit new billboards (off-site advertising), and support the removal of all existing billboards within five years (acknowledging that local government may have to pay compensation for removal).

Policy 4 – Ensure that the signage associated with all new commercial development is appropriately designed and located. Encourage all existing signs to conform to established standards within five years (acknowledging that local government may have to pay compensation for such action).

Action Item: (applies to Policies 3 and 4)

1. Develop and adopt a sign code that prohibits new billboards, and establishes standards for the design, size, number and location of signs for all new commercial development.

Policy 5 – New development is encouraged, and, in some cases, required to be designed so that it is visually compatible with community character and the natural environment.

Action Items:

1. Develop guidelines, educational materials and incentives, which encourage the construction of buildings that are compatible with the area and the natural environment.
2. Develop design and landscaping standards for all new commercial and industrial development.
3. Establish architectural, site planning, and landscape design standards for all new industrial, commercial, and multi-family residential development.
4. Develop design standards to minimize the occurrence of repetitive, concentrated residential development.
5. Develop specific setback requirements and standards for commercial development along Put Hill, to preserve open space and to create a visual buffer between the Pagosa Lakes area and the Town of Pagosa Springs.

6. Encourage use of private covenants, created by the individual developer, in new subdivisions. These covenants shall be for residential developments to protect features such as unique environmental resources, wildlife habitats, and architectural design.

Policy 6 – Loud and offensive noise is discouraged.

Action Items:

1. Develop noise standards for sounds commonly deemed offensive; such as loud music, generators, barking dogs, loud vehicles, discharge of firearms, and jake brakes on trucks (in specific areas).
2. Develop standards for firing ranges.

CHAPTER 5

LAND USE AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT

This chapter describes existing land uses in the county and presents a conceptual plan to guide decisions about the use of land over the next 20 years. Data developed as part of the *Land Use Plan Update for the Town of Pagosa Springs*, completed in January 1999, is included in this Community Plan. The Town of Pagosa Springs adopted this plan in 1999.

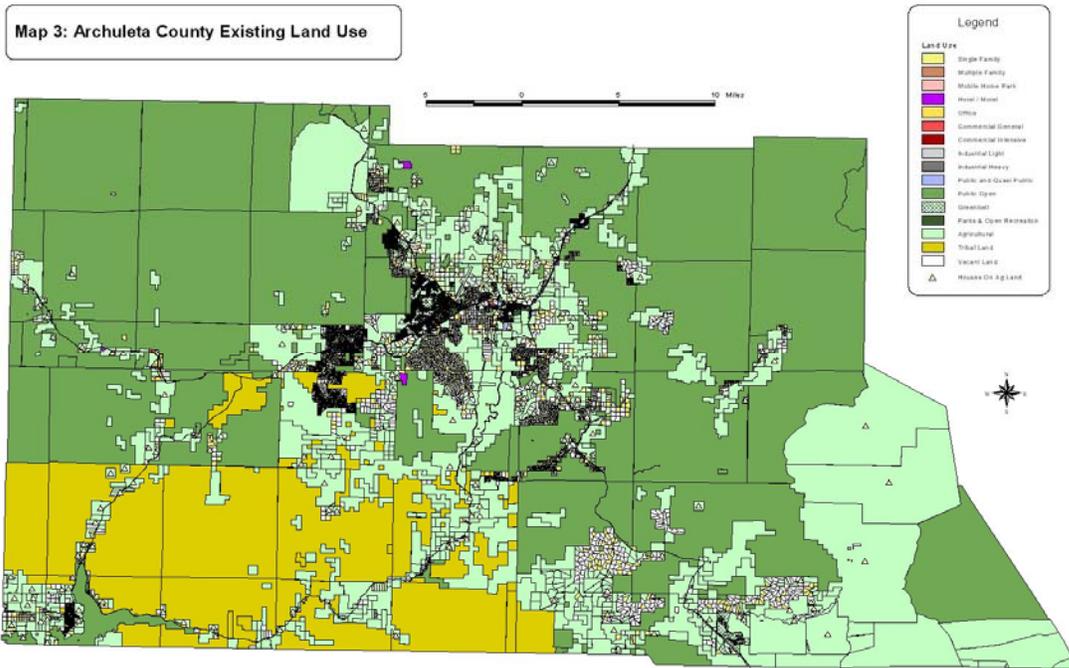
EXISTING AND FUTURE LAND USE

Approximately two-thirds of the total county area is owned and managed by federal, state, and tribal governments. The remainder of the land is privately owned or owned by local governmental and quasi-governmental entities. As indicated in Table 1, the county has a huge inventory of undeveloped and vacant parcels (as categorized by the Archuleta County Assessor's Office) – nearly 10,500. The next largest category is parcels with single family or mobile homes, about 3,850. Existing land use is depicted on Map 3, which shows the entire county, and on Map 4, which shows the Pagosa Hub (the Greater Pagosa Springs Area), which includes the Town of Pagosa Springs and the Pagosa Lakes area.

Most of the county's recent growth has occurred in the Pagosa Hub area. The *Land Use Plan Update for the Town of Pagosa Springs* provided estimates and projections of population and housing units for the town and the surrounding area, generally defined as the incorporated town and areas that could eventually be annexed, including much of the Pagosa Lakes area.

Estimates and projections of population, residential housing units and vacant residential lots for the Town of Pagosa Springs and the Pagosa Hub Area are presented in Table 2 (Source: *Land Use Plan Update for the Town of Pagosa Springs, January 1999*).

MAP 3 Existing Land Use



MAP 4 Existing Land Use – Greater Pagosa Springs Area

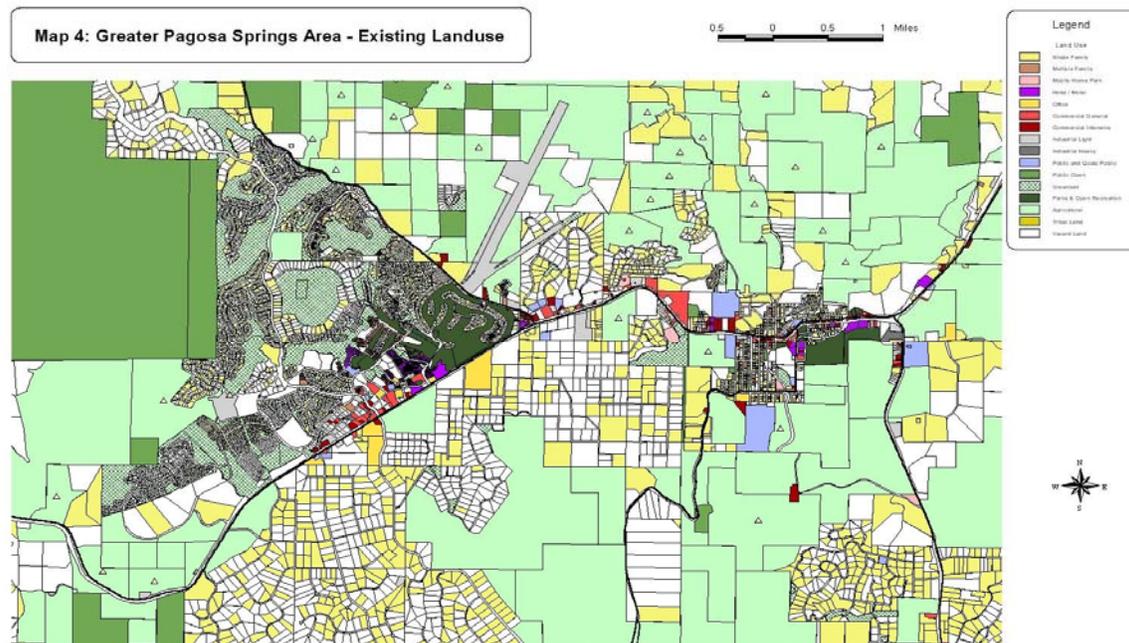


TABLE 1
ARCHULETA COUNTY PARCELS BY CATEGORY

PARCEL CATEGORY	# PARCELS	# ACRES	% OF TOTAL ACREAGE*
Single Family and Mobile Homes:	3,851	13,571	4.91%
Multi-Family:	48	33	0.01%
Motel and Condo:	634	382	0.14%
Business:	297	827	0.30%
Industrial:	26	1,059	0.38%
Public:	32	529	0.19%
Undeveloped and Vacant:	10,463	259,723	94.06%
0 – 34.9 acres	9,328	23,692	8.58%
35 – 100 acres	811	39,435	14.28%
> 100 acres	324	196,596	71.19%
TOTALS:	15,351	276,124	100.00%

* Total acreage does not include USFS, BLM, Tribal, and State lands.

(Note: Shaded areas are a sub-set of “Undeveloped and Vacant” and are not included in totals)

Much of the town’s anticipated growth is expected to occur in areas that are likely to be annexed during the next 20 years. Several subdivisions have been recently annexed, due in part to a desire by subdivision residents to benefit from town services. This trend is expected to continue, given the lack of county funds to provide adequate urban services, such as road improvements. Also, the town has already annexed most of the commercial area of Pagosa Lakes and the highway corridor connecting this area with the older part of the community.

Table 2 (Source: *Land Use Plan Update for the Town of Pagosa Springs*), describes population estimates and residential unit counts in areas that are likely to be annexed into the Town of Pagosa Springs by 2020. For planning purposes, it is assumed that annexations will proceed gradually, with certain areas joining the town in five-year intervals from 2000 to 2020. Under these assumptions, a cumulative total of nearly 3,000 new units would be added to the town by 2020. Assumptions used by the Town of Pagosa Springs to develop these estimates are:

- ◆ Vacant residential lots will be developed at an average annual rate of 8.15%.
- ◆ Current Pagosa Hub area population is approximately 63 percent of total county population. It is assumed that this area will continue to have about the same percentage of the county's population through 2020.
- ◆ Other assumptions are presented as footnotes to Table 2.

According to the *Land Use Plan Update for the Town of Pagosa Springs*, the town’s population is expected to increase from 1,767 in 1997 to more than 9,000 by 2020, which includes nearly 2,500 within the area covered by the current town limits, plus about 6,700 in areas that will eventually be

annexed. With regard to commercial usage, the total commercial square footage in the Pagosa Hub area in 1997 was 1,398,646. It is assumed that by 2020 there will be 150 square feet of commercial floor space per person in the Pagosa Hub area, or about 3,000,000 square feet. This more than doubles the existing total.

TABLE 2
PAGOSA AREA POPULATION ESTIMATES AND PROJECTIONS 1997 THROUGH 2020
Source: Land Use Plan Update for the Town of Pagosa Springs, January 1999

YEAR	ARCHULETA COUNTY	GREATER PAGOSA SPRINGS AREA	CURRENT TOWN LIMITS			FUTURE ANNEXED AREAS			TOTAL TOWN		
			# Res. Units	# Vac. Res. Lots Left	Population	# Res. Units Added	# Vac. Res. Lots Left	Population	# Res. Units	# Vac. Res. Lots	Population
1997	8,450	5,300	588	240	1,767	0	5,147	0	588	5,387	1,767
2000	10,107	6,400	618	210	1,854	106	5,041	243	724	5,251	2,097
2005	12,602	7,900	668	160	2,004	598	4,549	1,369	1,266	4,709	3,373
2010	15,080	9,500	718	110	2,154	1,442	3,705	3,302	2,160	3,815	5,456
2015	17,535	11,000	768	60	2,304	1,930	3,217	4,420	2,698	3,277	6,724
2020	19,949	12,600	818	10	2,454	2,936	2,211	6,723	3,754	2,221	9,177

1 Current Pagosa Hub area population is approximately 63 percent of total county population. It is assumed that this area will continue to have about the same percentage of the county's population through 2020
2 Assume an average of 10 new dwelling units constructed per year based on recent trends.
3 1997 population estimated by Colorado Office of Demography. Number of persons per household = 3.0. Population estimates for 2000 through 2020 are calculated by multiplying the number of year-round residential units X 3.0.
4 Number of persons per household in Greater Pagosa Springs area outside current Town limits in 1997 is estimated to be 2.29 (3,533 people divided by 1,542 units). This number is assumed to remain constant through 2020.
5 See Land Use Plan Update for the Town of Pagosa Springs, January 1999, for description and assumptions about future annexed areas.
6 US Census Count for 2000 for the County is 9898

ALTERNATIVE GROWTH SCENARIOS

Four alternative growth scenarios were developed as general concepts to help Steering Committee members and the public to visualize alternative spatial patterns that could evolve over the next twenty years. Committee members and the public were asked to indicate their preferences, and workshop participants were encouraged to debate the advantages and disadvantages of each scenario prior to indicating their preferences. The four alternative growth scenarios are:

- ◆ Continuation of Existing Growth Patterns;
- ◆ Open Space Vistas;
- ◆ Pagosa Hub; and
- ◆ Villages.

A detailed description of each alternative growth scenario is on file in the Archuleta County Planning Department.

PREFERRED GROWTH SCENARIO

After careful analysis of citizen input at the second series of public workshops and review of 130 written responses, the preferred growth scenario was developed. This scenario is a blend of many of the elements from the Open Space Vista, Pagosa Hub, and Villages scenarios.

The Preferred Growth Scenario is focused on a very strong community desire to retain and promote Archuleta County's cultural heritage, as well as preserve its natural beauty. Specifically, residents valued the continued existence of the large ranches in the county and their associated "open space" benefits. It was recognized by many citizens, particularly during the initial series of "visioning meetings" held in February, that a healthy and viable agricultural community would not only preserve our cultural heritage, but would also provide many of the natural and scenic qualities that Archuleta County's citizens desire. The primary challenge in this growth scenario is to locate the appropriate balance, between the protection of individual property rights and values, and the overall vision and goals of the community at-large.

Preferred Growth Scenario:

Local government policies and actions actively support citizens' vision to maintain a high quality of life in Archuleta County. Policies and actions are adopted to preserve wildlife habitat, open space, and the rural and small town atmosphere through a combination of incentives and requirements governing the development of private land, and an aggressive effort is mounted to acquire open space or conservation easements. Economic opportunities are enhanced by diversifying the economy, consistent with maintaining a high quality of life. While most residential and commercial development is located in the Pagosa Springs/Pagosa Lakes area, village centers at Arboles, Aspen Springs, and Chromo, provide residents of outlying areas with small, nearby shopping and service centers and additional housing choices. This scenario includes the following specific elements:

Designation of the following on a Future Land Use Map:

- Wildlife habitat areas and migration routes.
- Major rivers, some of which could be included as wildlife habitat, along the Blanco, Navajo, Piedra, and San Juan Rivers.
- General areas that could serve as future industrial parks.
- General areas that could serve as village centers.

Adoption of guidelines (incentives) and standards (requirements) governing development of private land for, but not necessarily limited to, the following items:

- Development within wildlife habitat areas and migration routes, to mitigate disruption of wildlife and preserve a healthy ecosystem.
- Preservation of environmental quality, including water and energy conservation, control of gravel pits and weeds.
- Quality of the built environment, including lighting, signs, building design and landscaping, and noise, to preserve and enhance the quality of life.
- Clustering of commercial and residential development to preserve open space and minimize commercial strip development, urban sprawl, and rural sprawl. In rural areas, the

35-acre lot size is the base density, but strong incentives exist to encourage clustering, such as increasing the base density based on specific criteria. In wildlife areas, special standards apply, which could include clustering or lots larger than 35 acres.

- Separation of incompatible land uses.
- Provision of affordable housing.
- Development of high density residential areas within village centers and medium density residential areas around village centers.

Adoption of local government policies that encourage:

- Purchase of open space and conservation easements, or voluntary dedication of conservation easements and/or development rights.
- Purchase of wildlife easements, (production areas, winter concentration areas and migration corridors).
- Continuation of farming and ranching operations.
- Preservation of historic buildings and districts.
- Expanding economic opportunities by attracting clean, light industries.
- Efficient use of water resources, including central water and sewer systems.
- Effective waste management and recycling.
- Efficient delivery of public safety services
- Provision of parks, trails, and recreation facilities.
- Efficient, safe road network, and a modest, well-run public transit system.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The future land use is shown on Map 5. This map is intended to guide Archuleta County and the Town of Pagosa Springs in decision making about the use, location and density of various land uses that may be proposed in the future. Many of the policies and action items described below pertain to the land use districts depicted on the Future Land Use Map. The map, policies, and action items should provide a basis for developing regulations, incentives, and procedures necessary to implement the land use and growth management provisions of the Community Plan.

Joint Influence Area² – Resultant from a long series of joint Town and County Planning Commission work sessions to align existing uses with potential future uses, The Joint Influence Area is intended for a mix of compatible uses which may include commercial, light industrial and/or medium to high density residential. This area may also be prime for annexation into the Town of Pagosa Springs (Town) as it is included in the Town’s Future Land Use Plan contained and described in the Comprehensive Plan. Proposals in this area should parallel the Town’s zoning districts as described in Article 3 of their Land Use and Development Code.

The Joint Influence Area coordinates land uses between the existing Town boundary and the unincorporated County as described in the Town’s Comprehensive Plan Area so that unplanned and incompatible uses do not disrupt the quality of life existing residents enjoy. At the same time, it allows for and anticipates commercial activity in areas identified as appropriate in which existing

² Amended May 18, 2011

commercial or potential for new commercial may best be located. The “Joint Town County Planning Commission Zoning Discussion 2010” map shall guide rezoning proposals in these areas.

These Joint Influence Areas may be most compatible for rezoning to commercial, industrial or Planned Unit Development alone or in anticipation of annexation to the Town. A rezoning request for property within this area could be processed concurrently with the associated land use application to streamline permitting and provide predictability to the planning process.

Very Low Density Residential District – This district includes most of the rural land within the county that is in private ownership. The base density is 35 acres per dwelling unit, with incentives for clustering. Although some parcels within this district are smaller than 35 acres, lot consolidations are encouraged to help preserve the open character. However, residential buildings would be allowed on these smaller parcels if nothing more than a building permit were required.

Incentives for clustering will allow a higher average density, if dwellings are clustered on smaller lots, thereby preserving more open space. In areas of special consideration, such as wildlife habitat, it may be appropriate based upon the review and analysis of individual site characteristics, to require clustering or lots larger than 35 acres, if necessary to carry out the intent of the Wildlife Habitat Overlay District.

Low Density Residential District – Residential densities in this district range from five to 35 acres. Land within this district is located within the service area of the Pagosa Area Water and Sanitation District. Larger parcels in the Pagosa Lakes area north of US 160, parcels in the area south of US 160 accessed by South Pagosa Blvd., and subdivisions southeast of Pagosa Springs accessed by Highway 84 are included in this district.

Medium Density Residential - Residential densities in this district range from two to five acres. This district includes the Aspen Springs area, parcels in the Pagosa Lakes area south of Hatcher Lake, and parcels in the area generally south of US 160, accessed by South Pagosa Blvd. Although smaller lots exist in these areas, the consolidation of lots less than two acres are encouraged where central water and sewer do not exist.

High Density Residential - Residential densities in this district range from multi-family units, up to two units per acre. This area includes the Town of Pagosa Springs, most of Pagosa Lakes, and the San Juan River Resort Metro District (northeast of Pagosa Springs). It is the intent of this Community Plan to concentrate new development in this density range in the Pagosa Hub and the San Juan River Resort Metro District areas, except for small pockets of high density housing at future village centers.

Commercial – Four areas of concentrated commercial development are designated: downtown Pagosa Springs, (including future expansions along Hot Springs Blvd.); the junction of U.S. 160 and Highway 84; the area centered at the junction of U.S. 160 and Piedra Road; and the existing commercial area at Pagosa Lakes (centered at the junction of U.S. 160 and Pagosa Blvd.).

According to the Land Use Plan Update for the Town of Pagosa Springs (January 1999), relating to development along U.S. 160 west, “virtually all of those interviewed supported preserving existing open space along U.S. 160 as a way to maintain the character of the community.” The Land Use

Plan Update further states “the open and wooded character along the U.S. Highway should be preserved. Future development should be set back into the wooded area to preserve the scenic visual character of the major access roads”. It should be noted that the majority of the lands that have frontage on U.S. 160, from Great West Avenue to Pagosa Boulevard to the west, are currently located within the municipal limits of the Town of Pagosa Springs. It is the intent of this plan to encourage most commercial uses to locate on the north side of U.S. 160 and to limit westward expansion (beyond Vista Boulevard), thereby encouraging the infill of lots near or adjacent to the existing commercial properties.

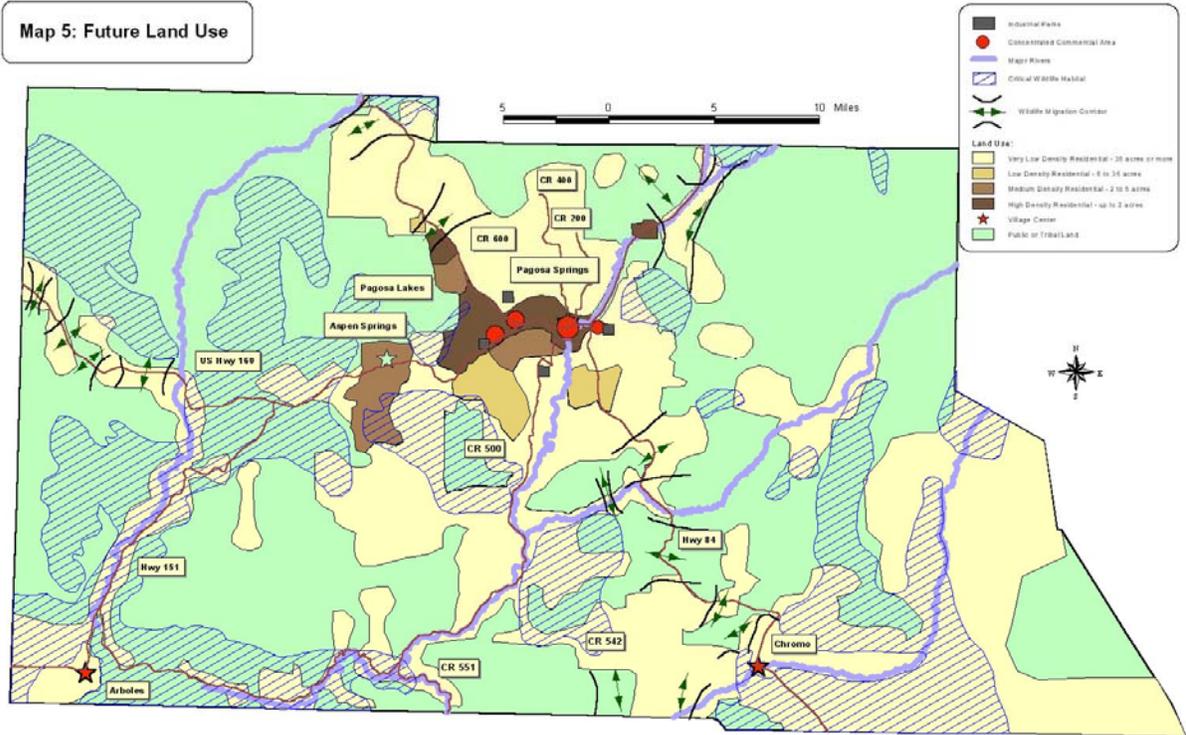
Industrial Parks – Four areas are designated for heavy commercial and light industrial land uses: the existing Cloman Industrial Park located northeast of Piedra Road; the existing light industrial area at the western edge of the Pagosa Lakes commercial area; an area east of the old sawmill site near the junction of US 160 and Highway 84; and an area south of Pagosa Springs along Trujillo Road. Although all four of these sites may not be needed during the next 20 years, it is important to set aside possible locations for industrial parks to encourage the development of a more diversified economy. (See Chapter 7 for a more detailed discussion.)

Village Centers – Village centers are designated at Aspen Springs, Chromo, and Arboles. The Future Land Use Map depicts the general locations with a star, indicating that specific locations of small-scale commercial and service activities and nearby higher density residential areas will be determined through the development review process. The intent of village centers is to provide opportunities for residents of outlying areas to shop for basic necessities and receive services such as emergency medical, without having to travel to the Pagosa Hub or out of the county.

Wildlife Habitat Overlay District – Land depicted on the map as wildlife habitat, as identified by the Colorado Division of Wildlife’s local managers to show where special site planning criteria (to be developed in consultation with the affected landowner) may be required to avoid or minimize disruption to animal habitat. Actual boundaries of such areas in any proposed development (whether shown as such on the map or not) will need to be determined at the time the development is proposed. These areas include winter concentration areas, calving areas, migration corridors, and riparian areas. Such areas should receive top priority, for purchase of conservation easements. Special review procedures should include a case-by-case analysis of the potential effect of proposed development on wildlife habitat and use of appropriate measures applicable to specific sites as needed to mitigate adverse impacts to wildlife. Such measures could include clustering, large lots, location of buildings based on terrain, or location and design of subdivision roads.

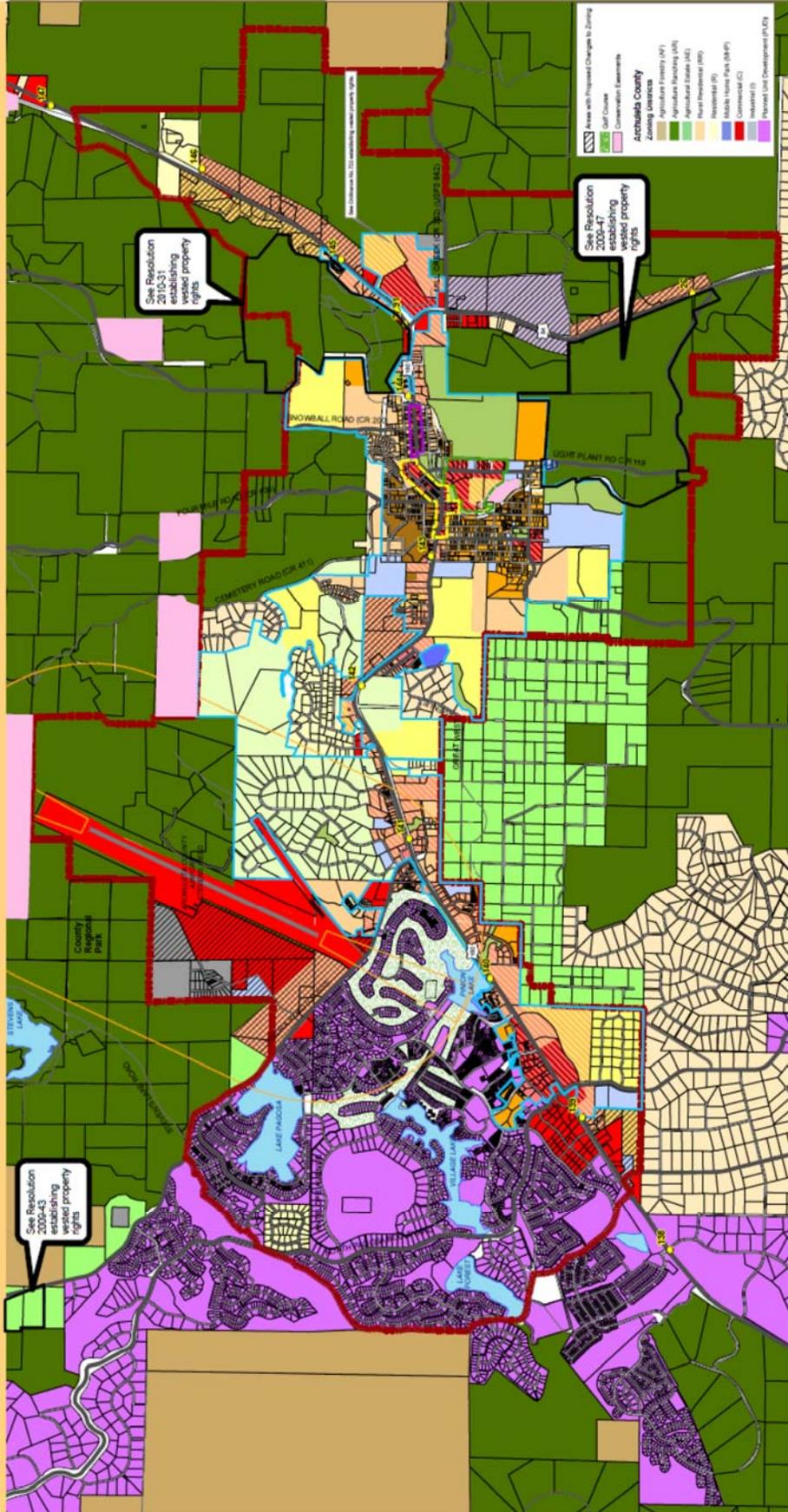
MAP 5

FUTURE LAND USE MAP



(Amended 2008)

JOINT TOWN COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION ZONING DISCUSSION 2010



Nov. 22, 2010

Legend

RESIDENTIAL

- Agricultural/Residential (R-A)
- Rural Transition (R-T)
- Town Residential-Low Density (R-L)
- Town Residential-Medium Density (R-M)
- Town Residential-High Density (R-H)

MIXED-USE

- Mixed-Use Residential (MU-R)
- Mixed-Use Corridor (MU-C)
- Mixed-Use Town Center (MU-TC)

NON-RESIDENTIAL AND OTHER

- Commercial (C)
- Light Industrial (LI)
- Public/Quasi-Public (PQ)
- Open Space (OS)

OVERLAY DISTRICTS

- Downtown Business and Lodging (DOB)
- Downtown Each Village (DOE)
- Mt. Springs Boulevard (MSB)
- Planned Development (PD)

Planning Area Boundary (Red line)
Town Boundary (Blue line)

See Ordinance No. 709 establishing vesting property rights on Lots 3 thru 8, Block 28, Township of Piquette Springs.
 See Ordinance No. 710 establishing vesting property rights on Lots 311 thru 324, Block 24, Township of Piquette Springs.

Scale: 0 0.2 0.4 0.8 Miles

North Arrow

Archbald County Zoning Districts Legend:

- Agricultural Forestry (AF)
- Agricultural Transition (AT)
- Agricultural Estate (AE)
- Rural Residential (RR)
- Industrial (I)
- Medium Density Residential (MDR)
- Planned Development (PD)

Desired Future Condition

Growth and development are managed to preserve and enhance the quality of life that attracted original settlers, more recent arrivals, and tourists to Archuleta County.

Policy 1 – Encourage the design and location of new development to minimize the impacts on Archuleta County’s rural and scenic character, wildlife habitat and mountain vistas.

Action Items:

1. Lands along major roadways should be considered for the application of special design and site planning criteria. These areas should be evaluated on an area-by-area basis, with serious consideration of the input from the residents of those areas, and any desired site planning or design criteria should be customized to reflect the values of those residing in the area. The intent of this action item is to preserve or enhance the scenic character of the foreground and the more distant mountain vistas. Lands within these areas should also receive top priority, along with wildlife habitat, for purchase of conservation easements and/or purchase of development rights.
2. Consider the creation of a purchase of development rights program. Examine all potential funding sources and give serious consideration to a separate and segregated, permanent funding source, such as a voter approved increase in the local mill levy, or impact fees. Local funds should be used to leverage additional State and Federal dollars.

Policy 2 – Acknowledging that the preservation of ranch land is a high priority, maintain and promote a sustainable and viable agricultural and ranching community.

Action Items:

1. Adopt a county right-to-farm policy, which would recognize and strengthen Colorado’s existing right-to-farm State law.
2. Recognizing the need for flexibility to construct and locate farm-related structures, continue to exempt agricultural structures from local building and land use regulations.
3. Work with landowners and public land agencies (such as the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management) to trade portions of private lands that are unusable for agricultural operations, for adjacent public lands that are better suited to agricultural or ranching operations.

Policy 3 – Compatibility with adjacent, existing agricultural uses should be considered when reviewing development proposals in the rural areas of the county.

Policy 4 – The current Archuleta County policy, which establishes a base density of 35 acres (the minimum lot size), will be continued in all unplatted areas without central water or sewer services. The county promotes a policy, which may require the clustering of development, for those

developments located within “wildlife habitat areas”, and further, the county provides incentives (such as density bonuses and smaller lots sizes) to encourage such clustering. Lots larger than 35 acres may be required in certain locations, when clustering is not proposed.

Action Items:

1. Develop guidelines to encourage cluster development for new commercial and residential subdivision development in appropriate locations, such as in wildlife habitat areas. Consider the use of incentives, such as density bonuses or transfer of development rights, to encourage voluntary clustering of development and the preservation of open space.
2. As an alternative to the 35-acre subdivision (which according to State Statute is exempt from county subdivision review), consider the adoption of the voluntary and incentive-based “rural land use” process (C.R.S. §30-28-401 – 30-28-404); whereby landowners can create densities of up to two units per 35 acres, provided 2/3 of the overall site is preserved as contiguous open space.
3. Develop standards and criteria for increasing the 35-acre minimum lot size in appropriate locations, such as in wildlife habitat areas, riparian areas, wetland areas, and floodplain areas; or require the clustering of development.

Policy 5 - Encourage development on existing platted lots and discourage subdividing large parcels.

Policy 6 – Approve new high and medium density residential development only in and around the Greater Pagosa Springs Area and the village centers.

Policy 7 - Encourage consolidation of small, unbuildable, or marginally buildable lots in areas without urban services.

Action Items:

1. Identify specific areas where small, unbuildable, or marginally buildable lots without urban services are located.
2. Maintain Archuleta County’s current procedures, with low processing fees, to streamline lot consolidations.
3. Develop incentives, to encourage the consolidation of small, unbuildable or marginally buildable lots.

Policy 8 – Locate new commercial development in designated areas to minimize commercial strip development.

Action Items:

1. Develop and adopt regulations designating areas suitable for commercial development and standards governing the design of commercial buildings and sites.
2. Develop regulations for recreation-oriented commercial activities, such as dude ranches and wilderness lodging.

Policy 9 – Avoid locating incompatible land uses in close proximity to each other.

Action Items:

1. Develop standards and criteria for determining the types of land uses that are incompatible with each other.
2. Establish land use districts throughout the County to ensure that incompatible land uses are not located in close proximity.
3. Establish guidelines and policies to assure compatible land uses and to discourage residential development within the Airport Influence Area, as defined by the current FAA Federal Aviation Regulations, Part 77 and any future revision thereof.

Policy 10 - Where it can be calculated that the cost of providing public facilities and services to new development exceeds the amount the development contributes in taxes for such facilities and services, collect impact fees to make up the difference.

Action Items:

1. Develop a road impact fee schedule.
2. Conduct impact fee studies for other items, such as open space and public safety services.

Policy 11 – The County should take an active role, while continuing to cooperate with organizations that pursue acquisition or donation of conservation easements/development rights.

Action Items:

1. Establish an open space acquisition program (to purchase land or conservation easements) that would aggressively pursue state, federal and private funding sources including GOCO, Land and Water Conservation Fund, private foundations, and other sources to assist in setting aside key open space parcels.
2. Establish a fund, paid for by local taxes, subject to voter approval, and supplemented by state/federal funds, to acquire conservation easements/development rights on key open space parcels.

CHAPTER 6

HOUSING

ANALYSIS OF THE HOUSING STOCK

According to the Colorado Office of Demography, there were a total of 5,531 housing units in Archuleta County as of July 1, 1999. Between July 1, 1999, and November 30, 2000, the Archuleta County Building Department issued 724 residential building permits, thus increasing the total number of housing units to 6,255. About 63 percent of these units are located in the Pagosa Hub area, about 9 percent in Aspen Springs, about 4 percent in Arboles, with the remaining 24 percent scattered throughout the county.

According to the Colorado Office of Demography, of the 5,531 housing units, it is estimated that there are about 1,912 seasonal or part-time resident units, which comprises approximately 35 percent of the county total. Many of these seasonal units, about 1,100, are located in the Pagosa Lakes area, and approximately 550 of these are timeshare units.

While many of the recent arrivals, both year-round and seasonal residents, are relatively affluent and have purchased upscale housing, there is a growing number of retail and service workers who need affordable housing. Although organizations such as the Archuleta Housing Corporation, Southwest Community Resources, and Habitat for Humanity provide housing assistance to some residents, this plan includes strategies to increase the supply of affordable housing provided by the private sector.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

The number of residential building permits (for new living units) issued each year by Archuleta County has increased significantly during the 1990's. The table below provides the historical data and illustrates the increase in the number of building permits issued for new living units:

YEAR	# PERMITS		YEAR	# PERMITS
1984	248		1992	127
1985	198		1993	138
1986	154		1994	218
1987	119		1995	390
1988	134		1996	307
1989	82		1997	309
1990	90		1998	405
1991	85		1999	401

The upward trend in the number of residential building permits, for new living units, has extended into the year 2000. Through the month of December 2000, 476 building permits have been issued for new living units. Of these 476 residential building permits, the numbers issued for the various types of units were as follows:

Single-Family	326
Mobile Home	74
Duplex	8
Townhouse	10
Apartment	2
Timeshare	49
4-Plex	4
Tri-Plex	1

In 1999, 42 percent of all building permits were issued for parcels in Pagosa Lakes, 14 percent in Aspen Springs, 3 percent in Arboles, 27 percent in other subdivisions, and 14 percent in the unsubdivided areas. This was almost identical to the distribution of permits in 1998, when 47 percent of all building permits were issued for parcels in Pagosa Lakes, 16 percent in Aspen Springs, 3 percent in Arboles, 23 percent in other subdivisions, and 11 percent in the unsubdivided areas.

According to information compiled by the Pagosa Springs Area Association of Realtors, the average residential sales price for the year 2000 was \$224,454 and the average home size was approximately 1,550 square feet. As a comparison, the average residential sales price for the year 1991 was \$75,153.

Desired Future Condition

The housing stock is safe, well maintained and compatible with community character and the natural environment with a wide price and rental range adequate to house all income levels and age groups.

Policy 1 – Archuleta County and the Town of Pagosa Springs should encourage the construction of new affordable housing units.

Action Items:

1. Develop incentives for developers to encourage them to build aesthetically pleasing affordable housing units.
2. Develop incentives to encourage that a certain number of affordable housing units are built as a percentage of total houses constructed.
3. Recognizing that mobile homes are affordable housing units, develop standards for design, landscaping, and screening new mobile home parks and subdivisions.

CHAPTER 7

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND OPPORTUNITY

ECONOMIC TRENDS

According to the Colorado Office of Demography, total estimated employment in Archuleta County has increased from 2,824 in 1985 to 4,864 in 1998. This is an increase of 72 percent, (an average annual rate of about 5 percent). The service sector accounted for 30 percent of total employment in 1998, followed by wholesale and retail trade (27.2 %), construction (13.5%), and government (10.6%). The remaining sectors totaled about 32 percent, including agricultural products and services (5.8%).

From 1985 to 1997, total retail sales approximately doubled from \$43.6 million to \$86.6 million. However, most jobs in the retail and service sectors pay relatively low wages, which accounts for the low per capita income in 1998 for Archuleta County, \$16,919. This is only 56.4 percent of the state per capita income of \$29,994.

In a tourist-based economy, it is likely that retail trade and service sectors will continue to provide most of the employment in the county, paying low wages typical for these sectors. However, there may be a trend toward increased telecommuting with more independent “lone eagles” moving to the area to enjoy its high quality of life.

The recommendation in this plan to designate areas for industrial parks (see Chapter 5) is an attempt to foster a diversification of the economy and provide more high paying jobs for local residents. The intention is to attract new heavy commercial and light industrial businesses to Archuleta County, and to provide a location for such businesses in industrial parks. Some existing heavy commercial uses, such as an auto body shop, for example, would be more suitable in an industrial park than in a commercial/retail area. It is acknowledged that certain industrial uses, due to their specific nature, cannot be located in an industrial park. For example, gravel operations, which are typically viewed as industrial-type uses, need to be located in close proximity to a gravel source. Therefore, it is appropriate to consider such uses outside of designated industrial parks, with careful consideration given to the mitigation of potential negative impacts on adjoining properties.

It is not the intent to attract new heavy industry to Archuleta County. While both light and heavy industry typically manufacture or assemble goods, or transform raw material into another product, heavy industry usually has negative off-site impacts, such as noise and air or water pollution, while light industry does not. A computer assembly plant is an example of light industry, and a steel mill is an example of heavy industry.

Desired Future Condition

Tourism, recreation, and agriculture remain important parts of an economy that has become more diverse by attracting other economic sectors, compatible with community character and the natural environment, which provide well-paying jobs for local residents.

Policy 1 – Archuleta County should attempt to attract new, and retain existing, clean businesses and industries; and support the expansion of existing clean businesses and industries to further develop and diversify the economic base; and discourage new heavy industry from locating in the county.

Action Items:

1. Develop incentives to attract new, and expand existing clean businesses and industries.
2. Designate areas for industrial parks to attract new clean business and light industry and to provide an alternative location for some existing businesses.
3. Require an economic impact study and a needs analysis prior to approving new large commercial development.

Policy 2 – High-speed telecommunication access should be available for all residents of Archuleta County, with initial prioritization given to the business, educational and governmental sectors of the county.

Action Items:

1. Support the Southwest Telecommunications Consumer Consortium (Region 9 Economic Development).
2. Develop a county-wide “technology plan”, which would include the evaluation of network requirements, technological alternatives, feasibility and risk management (engineering and economic), implementation strategies, etc .
3. Develop a comprehensive strategy to promote the future availability of high-speed telecommunication capabilities, such as the proposed State-wide multi-use network.

CHAPTER 8

COMMUNITY SERVICES, ACTIVITIES, AND FACILITIES

A high quality of life is impossible without adequate community services, activities, and facilities. In Archuleta County, a large number of public and quasi-public entities have built facilities and recruited professionals in various fields to provide services such as education, recreation, police and fire protection, emergency medical, and water and sewer. Archuleta County has a combination of special service districts, local governments, and companies that provide vital services and facilities. These include:

- ◆ Local governments: Archuleta County and the Town of Pagosa Springs.
- ◆ Special districts and metro districts providing water and/or sewer service: Pagosa Area Water and Sanitation District, Pagosa Springs Sanitation District, San Juan River Village Metro District, and Piedra Park Metro District.
- ◆ Metro districts providing road improvements and maintenance: Alpha-Rock Ridge Metro District and Aspen Springs Metro District.
- ◆ Water conservation: San Juan Water Conservancy District, and Southwestern Water Conservation District.
- ◆ Schools: School Districts 50 JT, 11JT, and 10JT-R.
- ◆ Fire protection: Pagosa Fire Protection District.
- ◆ Miscellaneous special districts and authorities: Archuleta County Airport Authority, Upper San Juan Hospital District, and Upper San Juan Library District.
- ◆ Private utilities: La Plata Electric, Citizens Utilities Company (natural gas), Century Telephone, and Pagosa Vision, Inc. (cable TV).

In addition, there are many property owners associations within the county, the largest of which is the Pagosa Lakes Property Owners Association.

Most of the recent growth in Archuleta County has occurred in the Pagosa Hub, and this plan recommends that most future growth be concentrated in this area. According to the major utilities – water, sewer, electric, and telephone – they should have adequate capacity to support projected growth in the hub area during the next 20 years. However, the absence of central water and sewer in Aspen Springs may constrain future growth in this area. Many residences are served only by hauled water.

The ability of the major utilities to serve the Pagosa Hub area is described below. Virtually the entire hub area is within the service districts of the major utilities.

Water – According to the Pagosa Area Water and Sanitation District, they have enough water rights to serve a population of about 30,000. Since 1994, taps have increased by about 250 per year, mostly in the Pagosa Lakes area. The primary sources of water are Lake Hatcher, Stevens Lake, and the San Juan River. Water treatment plants are located at the two lakes and on Snowball Road, north of Pagosa Springs. Based on peak summer usage, the treatment plants operate at between 70 to 85 percent capacity. The San Juan pipeline project will add about three million gallons per day to the system, enough water to meet demand for the next ten to fifteen years. Some of the water distribution lines will have to be enlarged to satisfy increased water demand.

Sewer – The Pagosa Area Water and Sanitation District generally provides sewer service to Pagosa Lakes and areas west of Piedra Road, while the Pagosa Sanitation District serves the Town of Pagosa Springs and areas to the east and south. The Pagosa Sanitation District has a management agreement with the town. The town may take over the district entirely in the near future. The Pagosa Sanitation District treatment plant has enough capacity to handle growth for at least five years, after which a plan will be needed for future expansion. The Pagosa Area Water and Sanitation District has two treatment facilities: the Vista Wastewater Treatment Plant, which operates at about 50 percent of capacity; and a small lagoon that serves the Hatcher Lake vicinity, operating at about 30 – 40 percent of capacity. It may be necessary to expand the treatment capacity within the next ten years.

Electricity – The entire county is within the service area of LaPlata Electric Association. According to LaPlata Electric, the distribution system can handle the growth projected for the next 20 years. All new customer line extensions are placed underground.

Telephone – Residents have complained about the quality of service and lack of capacity to adequately handle the increasing amount of telecommunications traffic. This issue needs to be addressed to ensure that county residents and businesses can communicate throughout the world.

Desired Future Condition

Government services and facilities are adequate to serve urban, suburban, and rural areas without excessive tax burdens for individuals, property owners, and businesses. Quasi-public and private organizations provide a variety of cultural, recreational, medical, communications, and other services, activities, and facilities to maintain and enhance the quality of life in Archuleta County.

Policy 1 - Encourage and support the extension of central water and sewer service to existing developed areas that need such services.

Policy 2 - Support the extension of central water and sewer systems (such as those operated by the Pagosa Area Water and Sanitation District and the Town of Pagosa Springs) to undeveloped, remote, or sparsely developed areas only if necessary to serve new high to medium density cluster development.

Policy 3 – Archuleta County and the Town of Pagosa Springs are committed to a comprehensive waste management system.

Action Items:

1. Develop a more comprehensive, financially viable recycling program and promote it more aggressively.
2. Improve the waste collection system and place more solid waste transfer stations around the county.
3. Develop “nuisance” regulations governing trash disposal and removal of unsightly items, such as junk cars.

Policy 4 - Maintain the necessary level of public facilities and services (including police/sheriff patrols, fire protection, emergency medical services, health care services, schools, and recreation facilities) to adequately serve the population.

Action Item:

1. Conduct studies of various public facilities and services to determine if they are adequate and develop recommendations for expansion of services and facilities where they are needed, or reduction of facilities if appropriate.

Policy 5 - Archuleta County and the Town of Pagosa Springs should encourage the development of additional neighborhood and community parks in developed areas.

Action Item:

1. Amend existing regulations or adopt new regulations as necessary to encourage or require the provision of new neighborhood and community parks.

Policy 6 - Domestic animals should be controlled in a manner consistent with maintaining public health, safety, and welfare.

Action Item:

1. Provide funds for an animal control officer in the county.

Policy 7 - Archuleta County and the Town of Pagosa Springs are committed to providing an effective and efficient local government.

Action Item:

1. Establish a commission to explore the pros and cons of changing the governmental form of Archuleta County and the Town of Pagosa Springs to home rule.

Policy 8 - Archuleta County and the Town of Pagosa Springs are committed to fostering cooperation between local, state, federal, and tribal government entities, including, but not limited to Hinsdale, La Plata, and Mineral Counties, the States of Colorado and New Mexico, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Southern Ute Indian Tribe.

CHAPTER 9

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation networks tie a community together and link it to the outside world. As in most of rural America, roads and individually owned vehicles provide the network and the primary means of travel. However, limited public transportation exists in the Pagosa Hub area and between Aspen Springs. Archuleta County Transit, a non-profit organization, provides transportation to elderly and handicapped citizens. A trail network is gradually developing in the Pagosa Lakes area through recent and on-going planning studies and construction projects.

Archuleta County is served by US 160, which runs generally east west and connects the county with other parts of the state and the nation. State Highway 84 provides access to and from New Mexico on the south, and State Highway 151 links US 160 to the southwestern part of the county and to southeastern La Plata County. A “spider web” network of county roads generally radiates from the Pagosa Hub area, connecting close and distant parts of the county. A network of Forest Service roads provides access to public land from highways and county roads.

The US and State highways and major county roads provide transportation and also opportunities to see mountain vistas and experience the rural, agricultural ambiance of Archuleta County.

Recognizing that roads are straining to keep pace with the travel needs of a rapidly growing population, Archuleta County conducted a road impact study, completed in 1998, to assess the condition of county roads and recommend needed improvements. The study also recommended adoption of road impact fees to ensure that new development pays a fair, proportional share of needed road improvements.

The road impact study is only one element of a long-range Transportation Plan that should be developed. The plan should identify transportation planning needs and deficiencies and should develop alternatives for system improvements and maintenance.

Another important element of the local transportation system is the Archuleta County Airport – Stevens Field. Increasingly, America utilizes air transportation for business and commerce, emergency services, and recreation and tourism. The Archuleta County Airport provides a vital link to the national airspace system and is a contributor to the local economy.

Desired Future Condition

Roads are improved and maintained to provide safe and efficient transportation, keeping pace with the demands of increased traffic. Public transit connects major population centers, and a network of trails provides opportunities for non-motorized travel and recreation.

Policy 1 – Maintain existing county regulations that require new subdivision roads to be built to county standards before lot sales are allowed.

Policy 2 - A long-range plan for road maintenance and snow removal is required for each new development.

Policy 3 - The formation of new metro districts to maintain roads is encouraged to reduce the burden on the county and to give more responsibility to people who use local roads.

Policy 4 - Assure that the Archuleta County Airport is continually capable of serving the air transportation needs of Archuleta County.

Action Items: (apply to Desired Future Condition)

1. Develop a long-range Transportation Plan.
2. Conduct a study of the existing public transit system, including whether or not the transit system should be expanded, and identify locations for park and ride areas to meet current and projected future needs.
3. Allocate additional local funds for trails, to increase the required match for State funds, thereby creating more trails sooner.
4. Establish a countywide trail system that would eventually link an extensive trail network in developed areas with existing National Forest trails.
5. Continue to mandate the use of Avigation Easements in the Airport Influence Area (per the adopted Building Resolution), and encourage compatible land uses in areas bordering or adjacent to the Airport Influence Area. The Airport Influence Area is generally defined as the area that is within one-mile from the runway, in all directions.

CHAPTER 10

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMUNITY PLAN

This Community Plan, developed over a period of approximately 12 months and with extensive involvement by the community, is a comprehensive guide for residents, existing and future property owners, business owners, and for county and town officials responsible for comprehensive planning activities. Although this plan is intended to provide general direction over the next 15 to 20 years, it is recommended that this plan be updated and reviewed at least every 3 to 5 years. The initial results from the 2000 U.S. Census are expected to be available during late spring/early summer of 2001. As the Census results become available, the demographic information contained in this Community Plan, and perhaps the prioritization of certain Action Items, should be updated to reflect this latest Census information.

The large number of citizens who participated in the 22 public workshops was a clear indication of public interest in the future of Archuleta County. Many citizens expressed concern about the best way to achieve the desired future conditions, especially since they believe that many undesired changes have already occurred. As previously stated in the introductory chapter of this plan, the protection of existing private property rights was a concern expressed by many of the participants during the public workshops. While there was clearly a strong consensus of the citizens to protect our environmental resources and open spaces by strengthening Archuleta County's existing Land Use Regulations, the citizens also expressed concern that existing property rights not be diminished in the process. It is important to emphasize, particularly during the implementation process, that existing legally subdivided lots and existing legal land uses be "grandfathered-in" against future land use controls.

The recommended implementation program is divided into short-term and long-term actions.

SHORT-TERM ACTIONS:

The first action step will be the adoption of the plan by the appointed officials (Town and County Planning Commissions) and by the elected officials (Town Board and County Commissioners). While Colorado Statutes do not require adoption by the elected officials, the plan will have more legitimacy and therefore be more likely to be implemented if the Board of County Commissioners and the Pagosa Springs Town Board adopt the plan, (in addition to adoption by the County and Town Planning Commissions). Immediately upon adoption of the plan, the policies contained in the plan would become public policies, meaning that decisions concerning land use and public facilities can be guided by policies in the plan. Development proposals will be evaluated based upon their conformance with the plan.

One way to view this Community Plan is as a community “to-do checklist”, with roughly 70 items (the Action Items) to check off. It is recommended that the Vision Statement, as well as the desired future condition or overall goal, be continually emphasized when tackling a specific Action Item.

Immediately after the adoption of the plan, either the Upper San Juan Regional Planning Commission, or a steering committee consisting of Planning Commission members and others, should be appointed to assist in the preparation of rules by which the county and town will guide development. The committee should work with county and town staff to help create the basic framework of the rules and establish priorities as to which policies and specific Action Items should be implemented first. While many of the rules and regulations already enacted by the county and town may still be applicable, some may need to be modified and new rules may need to be created to carry out the plan’s policies.

Subcommittees of the steering committee should be supplemented by citizens (in the affected areas) with expertise in various areas, such as open space preservation, ranching, wildlife, signs, or site design. Focus groups could meet on the various topics, providing advice on the best ways to implement plan policies.

The public involvement process does not end with the adoption of this Community Plan. The evaluation and subsequent adoption of the implementation strategies and tools will also include significant public involvement. It is envisioned that additional public workshops and public hearings will be held throughout the implementation phase of this plan. It is recommended that, as needed, public workshops be held in the various geographic sub-areas of the county to allow for maximum public participation.

A temporary moratorium, on certain types of development applications, could be considered while regulations necessary to implement plan policies are prepared.

These short-term actions should be accomplished within six months of the adoption of the Community Plan.

LONG-TERM ACTIONS:

The input of the Planning Commission and/or the Steering Committee and the focus groups is the first part of the long-term actions necessary to implement the Community Plan. Actual preparation and adoption of the various design guidelines and standards, which are called for in many of the action items contained in the plan, will take significantly more than six months to accomplish. The plan calls for the creation of a separate long-range Transportation Plan, which would include an update to the existing road impact study.

Planning Districts – public comments expressed during the Community Plan process highlighted the diversity of values, issues and needs throughout Archuleta County. Members of the public indicated a desire for the potential creation of regional planning districts, or sub-area plans, to be developed in Archuleta County. Recognizing that regional plans can be an appropriate comprehensive planning tool, it is recommended that any future regional plans be developed within the policy framework established in this Community Plan.

Finally, as a summary, the following is an outline of the numerous ways in which this Community Plan can be used by the various County and Town Boards, Commissions, Department Heads, residents and business owners:

- Provide a framework for planning the future of Archuleta County.
- Guide decision-making in subdivision, conditional use and limited impact use reviews.
- Serve as a basis for responding to adjoining County or Federal or State project requests.
- Present a framework for updating the County's existing Land Use Regulations.
- Supply data and solutions to planning issues.
- Recommend future planning studies to be carried out.
- Assist in the development of a capital projects budget and program.
- Direct the formulation of departmental policies and strategies.

CHAPTER 11

DEFINITIONS AND TERMS

The following definitions and terms are intended to assist in the clarification of certain terms used in this Community Plan. It is recognized that such definitions may be modified, as necessary, during the implementation of the Action Items in this plan, and through the adoption of specific land use regulations.

Cluster Development – A development design technique that concentrates buildings in specific areas within a project to allow remaining land to be used for recreation, common open space, or for the preservation of historically or environmentally sensitive features.

Development: Any man-made change to improved or unimproved real estate that requires a permit or approval other than a building permit from the Town of Pagosa Springs or Archuleta County; including but not limited to the construction, reconstruction, conversion, or enlargement of any structure; and any mining, dredging, filling, excavation or drilling operation; with the exception of agricultural operations.

Special Site Planning Criteria: The comprehensive evaluation of a development and its impact on the natural environment, neighboring properties and the community as a whole, such as site and landscape design, materials, colors, lighting, and signs, in accordance with an established set of adopted criteria and standards.

Wildlife Habitat: As generally indicated on Maps 2 and 5 of this Community Plan, Wildlife Habitat is defined as those areas of Archuleta County that include:

- ***Elk production areas*** – that part of the overall range of elk occupied by the females from May 15 thru June 1 for calving; or
- ***Deer, elk and bighorn sheep winter concentration areas*** – that part of the winter range of a species where densities are at least 200% greater than the surrounding winter range density during the same period (the first heavy snowfall to spring green-up) used to define winter range in the average five winters out of ten; or
- ***Deer and elk migration corridors*** – a specific mappable site through which large numbers of animals migrate and the loss of which would change migration routes; or
- ***Resident elk population areas*** – an area used year-round by a population of elk which cannot be subdivided into seasonal ranges. It is most likely included within the overall range of the larger population.