

January 21, 1998

To: Teller County Planning Commission, and
Teller County Board of Commissioners

Subject: Update to the 1991 Divide Region Growth Management Plan

The enclosed Divide Regional Plan is an update to the 1991 plan, and is submitted as a replacement for that plan.

The Divide Planning Committee began meeting in November 1995. The Board of County Commissioners in April 1996 approved a charter for this committee to update the 1991 plan. In February 1997 the County Commissioners reaffirmed this charter.

This plan was unanimously approved by members of the Divide Planning Committee at its regular meeting held November 20, 1997. This plan is submitted as a balanced document which should not be subject to line item modifications. Compromises were necessary to obtain the support of the full committee. Therefore, various provisions of this plan are dependent upon the existence of other items which cannot be modified without upsetting the balance of the plan.

While supporting this plan, the members of the Divide Planning Committee do not forfeit their rights to express individual opinions on matters that affect the Divide region. This document is the result of many hours of deliberate and painstaking negotiations. We believe it is a fair and just plan that accommodates growth, directs growth, and will lead the Divide region of Teller County into the next century.

Sincerely,
The Divide Planning Committee
James Irving, Steering Committee Chairman

Voting to Adopt the Plan on November 20, 1997:

John Collins	Betty Gunnoe	Terry Mann	Doug Page
Dan Dellinger	Evelyn Irving	Marvin McCully	Chuck Pierce
Helen Dyer	Jim Irving	Lawrence Oliver	
Maryann Fairbanks	Pete Kuyper	Anne O'Connor	
Keith Faulds	Chuck Mann	Bill Page	

DIVIDE REGIONAL PLAN - MARCH 10, 1998

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I. VISION

The **Divide Region** stretches before the majestic northern slope of Pikes Peak offering a unique and beautiful environment enjoyed by residents, business owners, and passersby. Preservation of our vistas (and all they imply), dramatic through each of our seasons and equally spectacular year-round in the night sky, is a driving motivation for the implementation of this protective plan.

The vision reflects a small town community made up of three planning areas wherein growth is managed by a phasing process. This plan aims to balance the needs of humans, the environment, wildlife, and economic development while improving the character and infrastructure of the area.

The **Town Center** blends a tight-knit, pedestrian friendly, residential and concentrated commercial district, adopting the "node" concept of growth and discouraging "strip" commercial growth. Visual impacts of structures in the downtown area will be consistent with architectural guidelines.

Rural Residential consists of existing parcels of less than 35 acres, including existing subdivisions. The lifestyle in these areas should be protected, and reduced density should be encouraged.

Rural Lands consist of tracts of 35 acres or larger. Rural lands should be encouraged to stay as they are.

Government lands (Federal, State, and County) should be encouraged to abide by the policies of this plan as well as County Regulations.

Goals and Policies will address the preservation of a small mountain community. The flavor of this community is defined and guided by community input and natural resource restrictions. This plan provides a method for responsibly dealing with the impacts of regional growth.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED IN THIS PLAN

Carrying capacity of land - how much development is possible on a piece of land after considering physical constraints (such as steep terrain) or considering infrastructure (such as minimum spacing requirements between wells and septic systems).

Cultural sites - areas of historic or archaeological significance

Downtown - the Town Center Business Area

Environmentally significant areas - significant wildlife habitat, scenic and highly valued landscapes, and state or national parks.

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Growth - (1) The construction or expansion of nonagricultural buildings which increases density, or (2) Rezoning to a more intense use, or (3) subdivision to a greater density. Excluded from this definition are remodelling, additions and accessory buildings that do not increase density.

Infrastructure - Facilities and services which include, but are not limited to: roads, drainage, water, sewer, school, parks, fire and sheriff protection. Water includes both community systems and individual wells. Sewer includes both community systems and individual septic. **Adequate Infrastructure** exists when growth does not increase the demand on facilities beyond their capacities.

Natural hazards - flood plains, steep slopes, wildfire lands and geological hazards

Public lands, roads and areas - (1) Areas and rights-of-way owned by a government jurisdiction or agency, and (2) a road on private land for which public access has been established.

Resource protection corridors extend from the edge of the Town Center to the region's boundary for 600 feet on each side of the major roads (Highway 24, Highway 67, County Road 5, Cedar Mountain Road) and along Mueller State Park.

Scenic and highly valued landscapes - as identified in County land use regulations. (Resolution 3-28-96-21:

- Areas within 1 mile of a national forest, national monument, national park, state forest or state park;
- Views from scenic roadways: Highway 24, Highway 67, North Road also known as County Road 5, Four-Mile Road, Lazy S Road, Blue Mountain Road, Guffey Road, High Park Road, and Gold Camp Road;
- Views from wildlife viewing roadways: Upper Twin Rock Road, Lower Twin Rock Road, Cedar Mountain Road.

Sensitive areas include natural hazards, environmentally significant areas, and cultural sites.

Town Center - A more intensely developed area that includes the uses, facilities, or development character that would identify the area as a **Node**, **Community Center**, or **Urban Service Area** (as those terms are used in other Teller County plans and regulations).

Wildlife habitat, significant - those areas shown on the "Significant Wildlife Habitat Overlay Map, Teller County, CO" as having Very High, High, or Moderate potential for impact - map prepared by the Colorado Division of Wildlife in 1996.

III. GOALS AND POLICIES

A. WATER: In the Divide Region we are concerned about water quantity and quality, which future growth might affect adversely.

- A1. Water supply is limited, essential to the entire community, and should be protected.
- A2. Limit development that might jeopardize the water supply.
- A3. Err on side of conservatism rather than overbuild where water information is limited.
- A4. Develop standards for water conservation and for prevention of over-exploitation.
- A5. Development will comply with requirements for adequate legal supply (paper water), adequate physical supply (wet water), and adequate firefighting supply and facilities.

B. AMOUNT OF GROWTH: The population of the Divide Region should no more than double in the next 20 years.

- B1. No more than doubling in next 20 years to a maximum population of 10,000 in 2020.
- B2. Limit of 60 new dwelling units (DU's) per year for the first 10 years.
- B3. After 10 years, may be increased to no more than 75 new DU's per year.
- B4. Once the limit has been reached in a year, a person may build one new dwelling unit for each lot that person vacates or eliminates.
- B5. Units allowed but not built in one year may be carried over into the following year.

C. PLANNING AREAS: The Divide Region consists of 3 distinct planning areas: the TOWN CENTER includes both businesses and residences, the RURAL RESIDENTIAL area includes existing lots and parcels smaller than 35 acres, and RURAL LANDS are large tracts making up the rest of the Region. (See Maps 1 and 2)

C1. General

- C1.01 Rural Lands: Maintain existing uses, density, and open character.
- C1.02 Rural Residential: Continue infilling of existing lots, encourage vacation of lot lines.
- C1.03 Town Center: Includes business and residential areas, has a specific Outer Boundary, and grows within that boundary according to a phasing plan
- C1.04 Require developers to mitigate identifiable impacts

C1.05 Locate high impact uses (e.g. industry) to minimize pollution of land, air, soil and water.

C1.06 Encourage energy conservation

C1.07 Prevent commercial and industrial development outside of the Town Center

C1.08 Establish the carrying capacity of the land.

C1.09 Maintain peaceful and desirous place to live, work, recreate in beautiful mountain environment.

C1.10 Exterior lighting shall be downcast and shielded to prevent glare onto adjacent properties and roadways.

C1.11 Develop sign regulations and apply in all 3 Planning areas.

C2. Town Center - General (See Map 2)

C2.01 There is only one town center in the Divide region

C2.02 All new commercial, denser residential, and light industry shall be in the Town Center.

C2.03 Provide land uses for living, shopping, working, and recreating

C2.04 Promote compact, cohesive pedestrian community over strip vehicular community

C2.05 Phasing of growth should be based upon infrastructure, community values, and physical opportunities and constraints

C2.06 Town Center shall develop in planned phases, rather than leapfrog pattern.

C2.07 Before the Town Center expands beyond the outer boundary shown on Map 2, (1) any infrastructure needed in the expansion area must have been approved already, and (2) development must have begun in the area of the Town Center's last phase.

C3. Town Center - Business Area

C3.01 Encourage distinct, cohesive, attractive, efficient downtown and business parks

C3.02 Encourage infill and redevelopment before any expansion of the business area

C3.03 Encourage businesses that don't need retail visibility to locate further from the highways

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- C3.04 Prevent strip commercial zoning along highways 24 and 67 -- Town Center area should expand in a nodal form rather than along highway strips.
- C3.05 Promote strong downtown commercial areas, to help create a broader tax base
- C3.06 Promote the maintenance and repair of downtown buildings and County owned facilities.
- C3.07 Discourage downtown business encroachment on residential or adjacent land uses. Encroachment includes "external effects" such as noise, glare, and dust, as well impact on views.

C4. Rural Residential Areas - Existing parcels of less than 35 acres

- C4.01 Promote design and site planning compatible with the area's character
- C4.02 Protect existing neighborhoods from the intrusion of higher intensity land uses
- C4.03 Existing Rural Residential area may not expand without:
 - (a) Paved road access from the Town Center, adequate for the additional traffic
 - (b) Central water and sewer, paved roads, adequate fire safety, schools, and parks
 - (c) Reduction of 2 existing lots for each new lot created
- C4.04 Adhere to State and County noise regulations.

C5. Rural Lands, including Resort Areas - private tracts 35 acres or larger

- C5-1. Resorts may occur outside Town Center with an approved plan but without commercial uses, consistent with County Regulations.
- C5-2. Restrict new developments that will cause noise, visual blight, or noxious odors.

D. Phased Growth: To promote a cohesive community, growth in the Town Center will be master-planned.

- D1. Outer Boundary may not expand before the Town Center is 95% built out
- D2. Residential development will take place in at least 3 specific and defined phases
- D3. Development may begin in the next phase, when all of the following are true:
 - (a) Current phase has achieved 25% buildout or 85% sale of lots
 - (b) Development in the current phase has been consistent with this plan
 - (c) There will be adequate facilities and mitigation for the next phase

- D4. Encourage high quality buildings.
- D5. Encourage development that is compact, environmentally positive, and aesthetically pleasing.
- D6. Monitor progress of development with the goals and policies of the plan

- E. Parks, Trails, Open Space and Wildlife Preservation**
- The Divide Regional Plan incorporates the Teller County Parks Master Plan and the Wildlife Development Guidelines
- **Parks:** The plan encourages the Divide Park Board, Inc., to continue its efforts to provide support for community and neighborhood parks
 - **Trails:** Public trails in the Divide Region should connect the Town Center and Rural Residential areas to schools and recreation areas, providing safe, non-motorized travel routes.
 - **Open Space and Wildlife Habitat:** Preservation of natural vistas, pristine environments, and wildlife habitats is encouraged as recommended in the above guidelines.

- E1. At Rule Creek provide for both wildlife migration and a trail under Highway 24.
- E2. Development will comply with:
 - (a) Colorado Division of Wildlife 1996 recommendations for wildlife habitat
 - (b) Specific standards limiting external effects (noise, glare, dust, fumes, vibrations, smoke, etc.)
 - (c) Design standards that reduce visual impact (such as large parking areas)
- E3. Identify and protect sensitive areas, and restrict incompatible development or activities.
- E4. Protect significant wildlife habitat areas shown on Division of Wildlife maps.
- E5. Encourage open space/recreation easements as an alternative to land acquisition.
- E6. Support acquisition of environmentally significant lands and cultural sites by nonprofits and trusts.
- E7. Protect sensitive areas from established and proposed transportation corridors.
- E8. Trails should comply with the County's plan for Parks, Trails, and Open Space.
- E9. Recognize and encourage the preservation of ranch and range lands.
- E10. Require adequate parks for future residents in proposed residential developments.

- E11. Encourage existing subdivision residents and associations to plan for their recreational needs.
- E12. Public trails in the Divide Region should be compatible with the Parks Master Plan
- E13. Trails should connect the Town Center and Rural Residential areas to schools and recreation areas, including state parks and the national forest
- E14. Proposed public trails in residential developments shall connect with and continue the Parks Master Plan trail system.
- E15. Road expansion & improvements should provide for trails where shown in the Master Plan.
- E16. Investigate and seek available funds for trails, such as ISTEPA and State Trail Grants.
- E17. Preserve rural character including large ranches and A-1 zoned tracts, natural vistas, pristine environments, and wildlife habitat as provided in the Parks Master Plan.

F. Adequate Infrastructure: Any future growth must be supported by adequate infrastructure.

- F1. Growth anywhere in the Divide Planning Region must pay for itself.
- F2. Adequate infrastructure must be available concurrently with any growth.
- F3. Establish impact fees for roads, drainage, fire, and sheriff.
- F4. Impact fees apply throughout the entire Divide Region.
- F5. School and park dedications will be equal to the need that will be created by a development.
- F6. Impact fees for an existing parcel are waived when the owner vacates a lot line in the Divide Region.
- F7. Provide for adequate land for infrastructure and other utilities.
- F8. Discourage new subdivisions with lots less than 35 acres in size in areas served by community water unless community sewer is also provided.
- F9. Encourage all utilities to be underground.
- F10. Plan for public infrastructure to support no more than a doubling of population in 20

years.

- G. Commerce and Industry:** Plan for small businesses and light, clean industries, including tourism, to help provide the tax base needed to support local services. Areas should not be offensive, overwhelming in scale, or create visual blight or noise pollution.
- G1. Provide for business opportunities to serve the region, and for employment opportunities for those living in the region.
- G2. Development scale and character must be consistent with existing Divide region.
- H. Development Character and Quality:** The buildings, landscaping, and signs in the Town Center should have the distinct, cohesive character of a mountain community. Parking and traffic should be handled in a way that is hospitable to pedestrians.
- H1. The Town center will be a whole community and not isolated separate communities - roads, walks and trails, architecture and arrangement of buildings, parking areas, lighting, signs, and landscaping will reinforce the image of one community.
- H2. In the Town Center, building design standards do not apply to single family detached dwellings.
- H3. In the Town Center, Set minimum standards for construction and maintenance of buildings and sites to prevent deterioration leading to blighted conditions.
- H4. In the Town Center, design of buildings and sites will present a rural or residential character and will be oriented to the Town and not to the highway.
- H5. In the Downtown, encourage the County to work with businesses and residents to develop standards for architecture, signs, lighting, and landscaping that promotes a visually attractive and high quality development.
- H6. Throughout the Divide Region, site planning techniques and design standards should be compatible with natural topographic conditions and climate.
- H7. Require retail businesses and their products to be located in permanent structures as defined by Teller County's building codes. This policy is not intended to prohibit the use of temporary structures or outdoor display for special events such as weekend craft shows, festivals, or retail sales not normally subject to state sales tax.
- H8. The character of development in the Town Center Business Area should reflect the natural setting, climate, history and architecture that distinguishes Divide as a rural mountain community.

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H9. County-owned property located in the Town Center that is visible from Highway 24 should be screened with landscaping. Non-usable vehicles should not be stored on County roads. Landscaping and tree berms should be part of the 25% PUD open space requirement. New buildings should be consistent with architectural guidelines.

I. **Traffic:** We are concerned about the quality of roads and the effects growth may have upon the roads.

- I1. Design and locate driveways and parking so as not to interfere with the flow of traffic
- I2. Provide adequate sidewalks in the Town Center
- I3. Encourage reduced driving by locating car pool or park-n-ride lots to serve the region.

IV. Implementation

- J1. Adopt regulations to carry out this plan at the same time this plan is adopted.
- J2. The Divide Planning Committee should continue (1) as a point of contact in the Divide region for those proposing or reviewing developments and other land use matters directly affecting the Divide region, and (2) to clarify the intent of the Plan and its contents. Developments and other land use matters include:
 - Residential, Industrial and Commercial Development;
 - Transportation Facilities;
 - Recreational Facilities;
 - Educational and Cultural Facilities;
 - Water/Sewer Lines and Treatment Stations for incorporation into District Facilities Plan;
 - Review and adopt the Divide Water and Sanitation District's Facilities Plan if it provides means to achieve objectives;
 - Site Plan Review for Commercial Development;
 - Development of Covenants providing guidelines for Architecture/Signage/Lot Requirements/Walkways/Landscaping;
 - Identify adequate land for growth
- J3. The Committee should provide a forum for development decision making and plan implementation.
- J4. Appointments to all County boards and commissions should be representative of the Divide region.
- J5. Encourage the County to strictly interpret variance criteria, particularly with respect to maximum steepness of driveways and buildings sites.