

Preferred Scenario Proposed Land Use Directions

v. 12 Revised 06.16.10 by [the Planning Commission](#)

1. Encourage a significant portion of future growth to locate in areas that have urban services.

- a. **Infill and redevelopment.** The plan recognizes existing [municipal](#) plans and strongly supports and encourages infill and redevelopment of our existing communities. These are the preferred locations in Garfield County for growth—that desire urban services. They are also the preferred locations for commercial and employment uses—that can take advantage of supporting infrastructure and a close by client base that reduces travel demands.

The County will encourage growth to infill within current [municipal](#) boundaries by minimizing commercial competition between unincorporated communities and rural centers and existing downtowns and by directing residential growth to incorporated areas.

- b. **Growth in Growth Areas adjacent to Municipalities.** The plan recognizes the need for existing Cities to be able to expand into immediately surrounding areas. The County supports and encourages orderly expansion of existing communities by:

- i. [Entering into, or revising, an IGA that encourages growth in designated and planned “Growth Areas” and that may contain elements such as:](#)
1. [Acknowledgement that annexation is the preferred means of growth within the Growth Area.](#)
 2. [Incorporation of the appropriate portion of the Growth Area Plan into the Garfield County Comprehensive Plan by using County land uses to create a “close approximation” of the community’s plans.](#)
 3. Development in the Growth Area is required to obtain a local review/comment (not approval) before submitting for County review.
 4. [A procedure for efficient, coordinated local input into County Planning Commission decisions \(such as a joint planning commission that has representation from both the County and municipal planning commissions for specific land use items\) prior to making recommendations to Board of County Commissioners.](#)
 5. [Agreement that the community will extend services and infrastructure to development in the Growth Area that reasonably complies with their Growth Area plan.](#)
- ii. Tools for Focusing growth In “Growth Areas”:
1. [Pre-annexation Agreements. Urban developments in the Growth Areas are encouraged to annex into the respective municipalities. If annexation does not occur at the time of development, landowners and the respective cities are strongly encouraged to enter into pre-annexation agreements that provide commitments with respect to extensions of services and infrastructure, densities, etc.](#)
 2. [Major Street Plan.](#) Under existing state statutes¹, a community may adopt a “major street plan” for its growth area. If also approved by the

¹ See Colorado Revised Statutes, 31-23-212, relating to subdivision control outside the municipal boundaries with respect to a major street plan.

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County, both entities are then required to adhere to it for approvals in the area covered by the plan).

3. Urban Residential Reserve (URR) – a proposed process.

If a property owner commits to following the Growth Area plan, but requires a short term development option before services can be extended, he/she can subdivide a portion of the property into lots that permit the use of individual or group treatment systems, keeping the remainder parcel in reserve for urban densities when services are available.

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iii. In the Area of Influence (3-Mile Boundary):

- 1. This area is under County jurisdiction but development here can impact city plans. For this reason, the intent is to increase coordination and communication between the cities and the County.
- 2. An applicant is required to obtain a local review/comment (not approval) before submitting for County review.

c. **Growth in Unincorporated Communities.** The Comprehensive Plan acknowledges the existence of several unincorporated communities (such as Battlement Mesa) that have comprehensive urban services provided by special districts.

New unincorporated communities are discouraged. However, new (or expansion of existing) unincorporated communities should meet the following guidelines:

- i. Not within Growth Area of existing communities
- ii. Served with urban services (e.g. sewer, water, police protection, etc) by a special district or contract
- iii. The development must upgrade connecting County roads (or compensate through an impact fee or fee-in-lieu).
- iv. Fiscal costs and benefits to the service providers will be considered in the review of new unincorporated communities..
- v. Transit opportunities are provided
- vi. Recreation and other public amenities are provided
- vii. Provide a mix of uses, including convenience commercial
- viii. May provide school sites (these locations preferred over schools in rural areas)

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d. **Growth in Designated Rural Centers.** There are a number of small concentrations of non-rural uses that primarily serve the needs of surrounding rural residents and rural businesses. These centers add to the economic diversity of the County. The ongoing viability of these existing centers is encouraged, and the creation of new ones must meet the general guidelines identified below. Several types of rural centers are envisioned.

- i. Potential uses
 - 1. Neighborhood Centers.
 - a. Commercial development intended primarily for the convenience needs of surrounding residential development.
 - b. Small concentration of residential (mixed-use)
 - c. Small civic uses (post office)
 - d. Examples of existing neighborhood centers include:
 - i. Colorado Mountain College – Spring Valley
 - ii. Catherine’s Store
 - iii. Red Canyon
 - iv. Apple Tree

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2. Rural Employment Centers

- a. Small light industrial and business park uses.
- b. Examples include the light industrial area near the West Rifle interchange, and several other small pockets of construction yards, equipment repair, and storage areas along I-70.
- 3. Regional Employment Center
 - a. Areas that provide economic benefit and opportunity to the entire region.
 - b. The primary examples are the light industrial area near the County airport, and the heavy industrial/energy processing area on Parachute Creek [and Roan Creek](#).
- ii. Requirements for new centers, [excluding Regional Employment Centers, are:](#)
 - 1. In an effort to make existing subdivisions more self-sufficient, rural centers may be added to existing major residential subdivisions; and
 - 2. Is located at intersections and interchanges (can take advantage of passing traffic); and
 - 3. [Are compact](#)—designed to fully utilize the land that has been graded and prepared, leaving unused areas in natural condition.
- e. **New Major Residential subdivisions with internal services.** There are several major subdivisions in Garfield County that provide their own internal services (road maintenance, water, sewer) through special districts or homeowners associations. However, these subdivisions are typically far from commercial centers and require travel for even convenience needs—which increases traffic and requires higher maintenance of county roads. The Plan recognizes new major subdivisions ([15 units or greater](#)) may occur, but encourages them to be more self-sufficient (having, or being near, convenience services). In order to be more self-sufficient, new major subdivisions will require:
 - i. Safe reliable access and transit opportunities
 - ii. Developer to construct (or upgrade existing) offsite connecting county roads and intersections.
 - iii. Fiscal costs [and benefits](#) to [service providers](#), will be considered in the review of new subdivisions More than 15 dwellings
 - iv. Internal roads maintained by a special district or HOA
 - v. Access to central water and sewer through a special district (quasi public, not private).
 - vi. Public amenities that meet the needs of residents, such as trails, open areas, parks, etc
 - vii. [New Neighborhood Centers may be added to these Major Subdivisions](#)
- 2. **Protect agriculture, sensitive and hazardous lands and preserve rural character:**
 - a. When growth occurs outside of municipal growth areas, it should be clustered to preserve agriculture and rural character.
 - i. Rural Cluster characteristics
 - 1. Rural Clusters are developments of less than 15 dwellings,
 - 2. They may have individual or group septic system (HOA)
 - 3. A variety of lot sizes are encouraged
 - ii. Tools that encourage rural clustering:
 - 1. Current subdivision exemptions (minor, rural, conservation, etc.)
 - 2. Proposed density bonus for clustering on < 1 acre lots and preserving 50% [to 70%](#) of the land area.
 - 3. Sequential exemptions are not permitted
 - b. Tools that protect Garfield County’s Natural Resource Framework:

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- i. Achieve Maximum density by preserving and/or mitigating impacts to natural resources or constrained areas (eg. geologic hazards i.e. flood areas, steep slopes, etc).
- ii. Conservation easements
- iii. Designating Public Lands as open space, as appropriate.
- c. Purchase/Transfer of Development Rights The Plan recommends removal of non-rural uses from the Limited Impact Review in the County's Rural zoning classification.

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3. Diversify the County Economy:

- a. Assure that the county has tools to bring about an adequate supply of affordable housing.
- b. Preserve rural character of rural areas to support the appeal of the County to potential employers and employees
- c. Improve and maintain the visual character of new development adjacent to major highways (gravel mining, oil drilling, industrial areas and subdivisions).
- d. Assure that an adequate supply of land is designated for industrial and light industrial uses.
- e. Facilitate growth of institutions that educate the county work force.
- f. Tourism is a vital part of the Garfield County economy. Where appropriate ensure that new development enhances tourism in order to sustain it as an economic and employment base in Garfield County.

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4. Modification to the following land uses from the 2003 Plan:

- a. Change Outlying Residential (1 dwelling/2 acres) in the Colorado River Valley to Residential Medium High (1 dwelling unit/ 2-6 acres)
 - i. Purpose: retain rural character
 - ii. Zoning equivalent: Rural (2 acre lot size)
 - iii. Base density
 - 1. 1 du/6 acres with lots average size 2ac or larger
 - 2. 1 du/4 acres with clustering that leaves 50% open (1 ac lot size average)
 - 3. This provides an alternative lot size that is more desirable (there are many more 1 acre lots than 2 acre lots throughout the County)May achieve 1 du/2 acres with cluster to leave 70% open with added protection of Natural Resource Framework lands and a significant public benefit (i.e., public access to trails, water, etc.)
 - iv. Uses:
 - 1. Establish criteria for non-residential uses that may be allowed through Limited Impact review.
 - 2.
- e. Resource Lands (formerly Outlying Residential in Roan Plateau)
 - i. Zoning equivalent: Resource Lands Upper Plateau Zone
 - ii. Density remains 1 du/35 acres
 - iii.

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