

Working Group (WG) Mtg. #23 Summary

July 19, 2010

DRO Recreation Center 4-6:30pm

NEXT MEETING DATE AND AGENDA

August 2 at 4 pm to 6:30 pm @ Durango Rec Center

Agenda:

- Review refinements to first draft of LPC Comprehensive Plan and La Plata County Implementation Responsibility on Land Use and Transportation Strategies.
- Review FAQs responses
- Review Glossary of Terms
- Introduction to LPC *Opportunities and Constraints Mapping/Suitability Analysis/Fiscal Impact Models*
- Review schedule and next steps:
 - August 5 Community Meeting at Smiley Bldg, 6 pm to prioritize County-responsible strategies on LU and Transportation.
 - August 9th – 12th: (4) Community meetings at a location near you.
 - August 30 Education Forum on Land Use Plans, Infrastructure and Fiscal Impact Analysis

FUTURE WG MEETING DATES

August 16- Review strategy prioritization results and develop Suitability Analysis data layers and weighting

September 13 (Note date change due to holiday) – Infrastructure and FLUP

September 20 – FLUP and Build-out scenario

July 19 MEETING SUMMARY

Meeting Participants:

Staff/Consultants: Tracie Hughes, Robby Overfield, Erick Aune, Shawn Nau, Mitch , County Attorney, Charlie Deans, Gabe Preston, Jason Meininger

Meeting Participants: Jennifer Lopez, Wade Moore, Peter Trguillus, Barbara Jefferies, Dick White, Dick Norton, Travis Craig, Brian Kimmell, Jenny Burbey; Commissioners: Wallace “Wally” White, Kellie Hotter, Joelle Riddle

Discussion:

Charlie talked about how the process of how we got to the highlighted matrix and strategies document from the first community meetings to the detail of the working group refining and tailoring them. He then explained the delineation between County responsible strategies and there were other strategies that may go best towards another organization.

Charlie asked the group to review the matrix and make sure that strategies weren't left out or others that may need to be deleted from the matrix. Peter asked about Economic Vitality 2(a) regarding home rule and why it didn't make it over to the matix. Jason replied that home rule is statutory in nature and something the county cannot control in land use and/or transportation. Peter asked about a few other strategies and why they weren't on the matrix, particularly sustainable development 3d. Peter referenced that there needs to be a buildout and vacant lands analysis. Jason replied that Robby and planning, consultants have already started working on preparing these maps so it didn't need to be included.

Wade commented there seemed to be several energy strategies missing in the matrix. Reducing energy usage is included several times in the plan, but few of them have made it into this matrix. Charlie replied that some of these were not applicable in terms of specific land use and transportation actions verses more programmatic applications. Jason mentioned A, F, and H in Housing strategies do have a nexus. Jennifer asked how the county interfaces with business. Kellie and Shaun replied the county does not get involved and unfortunately can't do business licensing (more of a statutory thing). Dick White mentioned a lot of the energy components belong in the building code, not land use and transportation, hence not on the matrix. However things like solar panel siting could be in a land use area for inclusions and or incentives. Dick White would like the opportunity to go down the list, look at the other 100 of the 155 strategies and make sure we are not overlooking something that could cross-over into the matrix.

Commissioner Hotter suggested we look at the 55 we put on the list, and the other 100 should be something the group looks at and recommends later what could or should change. Keypad polling was crossed off the agenda because the group is well versed in keypad polling. Commissioner Riddle had some questions regarding some of the specific language on the matrix in terms of its ambiguity. She has concern of disconnect and whether or not the County is prepared to delve into some of these priorities. Jason replied to some specific examples in the matrix. There was a reason to not specifically call out how the county was going to implement the strategies. Commissioner Riddle's concern is that this document will mandate the County to fulfill these strategies, with all finances etc. put aside. Charlie mentioned this is supposed to help with LPC's budget process. It is advisory and not a mandate to the BoCC; it is the public's opportunity to vet how they would like to see LPC resources allocated. Gabe also delineated the difference between voting and polling. The keypad polling is an opinion poll.

Jennifer Lopez mentioned to Commissioner Riddle that in the Housing element, many of these same issues occur where a financially unfeasible action comes up to the top of the list. It has been worked around by giving a very detailed response as to why that strategy is not feasible. Shaun added the implementation workbook will talk about which other entities will help implement some of these strategies. This will help keep the public from feeling disenfranchised when then don't see their strategy listed up front.

Commissioner Riddle suggested we add some clarifying words in this document so people have a more educated state of mind going into these documents and their decisions. Dick White observed that we are looking at these strategies without knowing the underlying which goal they are serving. It was decided that the goals that are tied to the strategies in the matrix will be included in the document to help with clarification.

At 5:30 the group continued to work through the 55 identified strategies on the developed matrix. Commissioner Riddle brought up a point that it's interesting that many of the strategies talk about waiving fees but the County uses fees as revenue source. These waivers were related primarily to the agricultural community. Jenny Burbey provided input from the Ag Subcommittee that the waivers were related specifically to agricultural ops and not general development. Brian raised the issue of inequity when one group receives special preference that others don't.

Several strategies were removed from the matrix because the group felt that they weren't either LPC controlled or closely connected to LU and Transportation. Charlie to revise 7(a) for housing and healthy communities about the term on all "new" development.

Comp Plan refinements:

In addition to the revisions at the joint WG/BoCC meeting, the following suggestions were received from some WG members and included in the current draft of the Comp Plan:

>a paragraph on page was added describing the RHA Action Plan.

LA PLATA COUNTY REGIONAL HOUSING ALLIANCE FIVE-YEAR ACTION PLAN

RHA's five point action plan, adopted in 2007, began laying the framework for new housing services in the region. The Regional Housing Alliance's Action Plan for 2007-2011 has five components: (1.) Fair Share Programs; (2.) La Plata Homes Fund; (3.) Land Banking and Development; (4.) Homebuyer Assistance; and, (5.) RHA's Policy Agenda. These programs, when implemented, can help communities in La Plata County create at least 500 new affordable housing opportunities over five years.

>a Guiding Principle was revised to be more of a principle:

Growth and development standards and decisions [that](#) are clear, predictable, consistent, fair, timely, and cost effective [serve the community and build confidence in government](#).

>Goal/strategy #7.a. in Sustainable Development was revised to reference the 35 ac subdivision exemption:

- a) Create an Agricultural Advisory Group to work with the La Plata County Commissioners on local, state, and federal policy reforms that benefit local producers [and maintain the 35 acre subdivision exemption](#).

A Glossary of Terms was developed and included in the current draft. The pdf is attached.

A set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) was developed from the suggestions that were received from the WG (also attached in the e-mail).

La Plata County Implementation Responsibility on Land Use and Transportation Strategies (Draft 2)

REVISIONS TO STRATEGIES/MATRIX FROM WG/BOCC JOINT MEETING

Economic Vitality Strategies	Priority/ Timeframe	Responsible Department	Funding Sources
A. Reduce the time and steps required in the permitting processes (planning, building, road and bridge).			
B. Determine the feasibility of creating a water and sewer authorities or other similar entity.			
C. Provide assistance to property owners to create improvement districts in designated rural centers.			
D. Build and operate recreational facilities that stimulate the local economy funded through voter approved financing and implement user fees that help cover the operating costs.			
E. Develop incentives to encourage the dedication of unique open space, scenic resources and public trails in future subdivisions and other development projects.			
F. Designate rural centers in existing rural communities where future non-residential and residential development will be encouraged.			
G. Establish an expedited county permitting process for development in designated rural centers and business parks.			
H. Provide development fee discounts or waivers for activities directly associated with agricultural operations, such as application fees, building fees, plumbing and mechanical fees, planning permit fees, impact fees, and road and bridge inspection fees.			

La Plata County Implementation Responsibility on Land Use and Transportation Strategies (Draft 2)

Sustainable Development Strategies	Priority/ Timeframe	Responsible Department	Funding Sources
A. Explore the feasibility of financing tools to support farm and agricultural organizations and land acquisitions projects.			
B. Promote local food production and agriculture uses during the development review process.			
C. Adopt a future land use plan and county wide zoning that designates future growth areas supported by the provision of new or enhanced infrastructure or utilization of existing infrastructure.			
D. Identify rural centers throughout the county that can provide neighborhood and agricultural-related retail services.			
E. Identify future commercial and employment centers in urban growth areas with sufficient existing/proposed infrastructure and traffic capacities.			
F. Create development regulations or policies that encourage community-scale renewable energy systems and waste water systems that allow for rural village centers.			
G. Develop land subdivision, zoning, and conservation incentives for agricultural land owners that maintain the integrity of productive agricultural lands while allowing for other forms of development.			
H. Amend the development code to incentivize agricultural production to remain viable by providing clear and simple regulatory processes.			
I. Utilize County tax policy to support and enhance agricultural production viability (e.g. property tax formula, agricultural inputs, acquisition fund, etc.).			
J. Adopt a Right to Farm/Ranch ordinance including content of Colorado’s revised statute 35-3.5-101: Nuisance Liability of Agriculture Operations.			

La Plata County Implementation Responsibility on Land Use and Transportation Strategies (Draft 2)

Transportation Strategies	Priority/ Timeframe	Responsible Department	Funding Sources
A. Adopt and implement zoning that promotes higher density development nodes.			
B. Prepare a comprehensive “multimodal development planning checklist” for use by developers when preparing applications and for staff during the review process to encourage inclusion of multimodal elements.			
C. Implement a range of process-based and financial incentives for developers to meet multimodal goals, such as additional staff support, faster review turn around, lower review fees, and possible tax incentives.			
D. Prepare a community-based transportation plan concurrently with the future land use plan and develop metrics and use them to review policy effectiveness.			
E. Create a Multi-Modal coordinator position, through reassigning an existing position or with a new position, to integrate with community and state transportation efforts to effect multi-modal planning and improvements.			
F. Update street standards and interconnectivity requirements, and provide incentives and road maintenance agreements, so that under certain conditions the County can accept existing sub-standard private roads and pathways that will interconnect neighborhoods.			
G. Ensure adequate and safe emergency access through all new developments and promote interconnectivity with existing developments.			
H. Adopt a Best Management Practices plan for wildlife control and crossings.			
I. Adopt and implement a “Complete Streets” policy and Safe Routes to School (SR2S) plan that addresses the cumulative effects of traffic.			
J. Implement a park-and-ride infrastructure plan.			

La Plata County Implementation Responsibility on Land Use and Transportation Strategies (Draft 2)

Natural Environment Strategies	Priority/ Timeframe	Responsible Department	Funding Sources
A. Map wildlife corridors, wetlands, and riparian habitats in collaboration with federal, state, and tribal agencies.			
B. Provide incentives to land owners who implement restoration and preservation guidelines on the portions of their property that are identified as wildlife corridors, wetlands, and riparian habitats.			
C. Develop conservation, zoning, and subdivision tools that provide incentives for protecting critical resource lands including habitat, wetlands, and riparian areas while allowing for other forms of development.			
D. Develop wildfire management overlay zones for high risk areas that control new development regarding density, building location and design and fuel management.			
E. Adopt noise and light regulations that consider specific land uses such as agriculture.			
F. Require reclamation plans to be in conformance with long term land use plans for the area to be reclaimed.			
G. Provide incentives and/or remove obstacles for establishing renewable energy infrastructure on impacted lands.			
H. Require development to be located outside of the floodplain and significant geologic hazards except on properties where there are no feasible development sites outside of the floodplain or outside of significant geologic hazards; where floodplain or significant geologic hazards cannot be avoided, mitigation standards will be implemented to minimize risk to public health and safety			
I. Require a 50 ft or greater setback from watercourses for on-site wastewater systems.			
J. Revise the land use code so that erosion and sedimentation control standards are effective in minimizing runoff and disturbance of adjacent properties.			

La Plata County Implementation Responsibility on Land Use and Transportation Strategies (Draft 2)

Housing Strategies	Priority/ Timeframe	Responsible Department	Funding Sources
A. Prepare and implement a countywide housing plan aimed at increasing the efficient use of resources for housing development and related supportive services.			
B. Provide incentives for residential and commercial land uses, such as accessory dwelling units and commercial/residential mixed use projects in appropriate locations.			
C. Create policies and incentives for development of higher density housing near to employment centers where multi-modal transportation routes exist or are planned.			
D. Explore the adoption of an “Inclusive home design ordinance” to provide reasonable access in all new home construction.			
E. Re-evaluate accessory dwelling unit standards that regulate smaller lots.			
F. Facilitate/develop guidelines to lower the life-cycle costs of housing.			
G. Provide incentives for rehabilitation of rental and owner-occupied buildings.			
H. Provide incentives for resource-efficient design and buildings.			

La Plata County Implementation Responsibility on Land Use and Transportation Strategies (Draft 2)

Healthy Communities Strategies	Priority/ Timeframe	Responsible Department	Funding Sources
A. All new subdivisions and commercial developments will include pedestrian and bicycle facilities and connections to public transportation.			
B. Adopt a land use plan and zoning code that allows by right skilled nursing facilities, long term care facilities, group homes, includes higher density development nodes, and promotes multi-modal transportation options.			
C. Regulate commercial and industrial uses regarding noise, water and light pollution levels on adjacent property.			
D. Evaluate and revise policies and regulations relating to child and elder care facilities to encourage availability of services county-wide.			
E. Provide developers options for dedicating access to public open space, recreation, and trails.			
F. Develop a plan for dedicated access to public lands in areas that are expected to experience significant new development.			
G. Develop, adopt, and implement a county recreation plan, assess the feasibility of creating a County Parks Department, and identify funding strategies.			
H. Develop public trails and recreation areas with adequate access, parking, restrooms, and wayfinding, and meet the needs of the elderly and disabled.			

WORKSHEET- highlighted strategies were used in matrix Economic Vitality Element

Economic Vitality Goals and Strategies

1. **Develop incentives for economic activities that promote business sustainability and diversity.**
 - a) Expand Buy-local programs in partnership with local governments, agencies, and non-government organizations and increase the local preference percentage in county procurement policies.
 - b) Reduce the time and steps required in the permitting processes (planning, building, road and bridge).
 - c) Support a business incubator and commercial kitchen in partnership with local governments, agencies, and non-government organizations that also serves as a one-stop shop that focuses on business recruitment and retention activities.
 - d) Establish incentives for business to utilize sustainable practices based on a score-card of sustainability indicators.
 - e) Encourage development of renewable resources.

2. **Actively collaborate with the municipalities, Sovereign Nations, State and Federal agencies, private sector, and non-profit entities to promote economic diversity and sustainability.**
 - a) Initiate a referendum to make La Plata County a home rule county.
 - b) Develop community and region-wide support for higher education advanced degree programs.

3. **Support the development and management of infrastructure necessary for a sustainable local economy: water, energy, waste, communications, housing, and transportation.**
 - a) Provide assistance to property owners to create improvement districts in designated rural centers.
 - a) Determine the feasibility of creating a water and sewer authority or other similar ~~entity~~ entities as a means of financing infrastructure.
 - b) Encourage sustainable use of locally generated materials and energy.

4. **Preserve and enhance our cultural landscape, scenic resources, recreational opportunities, and county-owned assets for residents, tourists, and businesses.**
 - a) Build and operate recreational facilities that stimulate the local economy- funded through voter approved financing- and implement user fees that help cover the operating costs.
 - b) Develop incentives to encourage the dedication of unique open space, scenic resources and public trails in future subdivisions and other development projects.

5. **Stimulate economic vitality by ~~maintaining~~ designating an adequate supply of land for businesses and industries and attracting and expanding businesses and industries that strengthen our community and provide livable wages.**

- a) Designate rural centers in existing rural communities where future non-residential and residential development will be encouraged.
 - b) Establish an expedited county permitting process for development in designated rural centers and business parks.
6. **Support agricultural innovations and sustainable technologies; promote and stimulate local markets as well as export markets for locally-produced agricultural products; encourage development of facilities for value-added products.**
- a) Provide **development** fee discounts or waivers for activities directly associated with agricultural operations, such as application fees, building fees, plumbing and mechanical fees, planning permit fees, impact fees, and road and bridge inspection fees.
 - b) Support processing and distribution for locally grown food and remove regulatory barriers to value-added production of agricultural products.
 - c) Exempt county sales tax on locally grown food.
 - d) Support the development of agricultural infrastructure which supports and increases the capacity of local agriculture and food supply (e.g., distribution center, commercial kitchens, etc).

Sustainable Development Element

Sustainable Development Goals and Strategies

1. **Support the enhancement of local food, fiber, and forest production systems (i.e. growing, processing, marketing, consumption).**
 - a) Support development of a resource guide that summarizes agricultural organizations and programs available in county.
 - b) Explore the feasibility of financing tools to support farm and agricultural organizations and land acquisitions projects.
2. **Promote access to healthy, affordable, culturally-influenced, and sustainably produced food, sourced as locally as possible.**
 - a) Investigate the use of agricultural cooperatives and value added agricultural products and provide the findings to the community for education and information.
 - b) **Promote local food production and agriculture uses during the development review process.**
 - c) Educate the community of the value of agriculture and encourage community gardens.
 - d) Encourage greenhouses to extend the local growing season.
3. **Promote resource-efficient growth and settlement patterns.**
 - a) **Adopt a future land use plan and county wide zoning that designates future growth areas supported by the provision of new or enhanced infrastructure or utilization of existing infrastructure.**
 - b) **Identify rural centers throughout the county that can provide neighborhood and agricultural-related retail services.**
 - c) **Identify future commercial and employment centers in urban growth areas with sufficient existing or proposed infrastructure and traffic capacities.**

La Plata County Implementation Responsibility on Land Use and Transportation Strategies (Draft 2)

- d) Determine through analyses the projected development build-out for the county and allocate growth to minimize future sprawl.
- 4. Meet local energy and materials needs as much as possible through efficiency and with locally or regionally renewable resources.**
- a) Encourage the locations of solar and wind farms and private co-generation.
 - b) Support local harvesting and processing of wood products in appropriate locations.
 - c) Maintain access to gravel that reduces transportation distance.
 - d) Provide education, incentives, and/or regulations to enhance energy efficiency and incorporate renewable energy in new construction and major renovations.
 - e) Create development regulations or policies that encourage community-scale renewable energy systems and waste water systems that allow for rural village centers.
 - f) Encourage energy efficiency in all buildings.
 - g) Encourage development of renewable infrastructure.
 - h) Educate the community, particularly youth, about the benefits of using energy and material efficiently and on using local and regional resources.
- 5. Support investment in adequate and sustainable water resources for social, environmental, and economic purposes.**
- a) Educate the community about practicing efficient water distribution and irrigation techniques without compromising water rights.
 - b) Advocate for legislation to create agricultural water-banking to protect water rights and promote conservation.
 - c) Promote the use of water harvesting, gray water systems, and reclaimed water, and increase the use of permeable surfaces.
- 6. Protect historic and prehistoric sites and promote cultural preservation to enhance heritage tourism and increase restoration of these sites.**
- a) Provide education about state and federal incentives to developers and property owners to voluntarily retain historic structures, trails, and ditches.
 - b) Support a property tax incentive for preservation of cultural resources.
- 7. Promote and encourage retention of agricultural lands.**
- a) Create an Agricultural Advisory Group to work with the La Plata County Commissioners on local, state, and federal policy reforms that benefit local producers.
 - b) Develop land subdivision, zoning, and conservation incentives for agricultural land owners that maintain the integrity of productive agricultural lands while allowing for other forms of development.
 - c) Amend the development code to incentivize agricultural production to remain viable by providing clear and simple regulatory processes.
 - d) Utilize County tax policy to support and enhance agricultural production viability (e.g. ~~property tax formula~~, agricultural inputs, acquisition fund, etc.)
 - e) Adopt a Right to Farm/Ranch ordinance including content of Colorado's revised statute 35-3.5-101: Nuisance Liability of Agriculture Operations.

Transportation Element

Transportation Goals and Strategies

- 1. Promote development that is accessed with multiple modes of transportation.**
 - a) Adopt and implement zoning that promotes higher density development nodes.
 - b) Prepare a comprehensive “multimodal development planning checklist” for use by developers when preparing applications and for staff during the review process to encourage inclusion of multimodal elements.
 - c) Implement a range of process-based and financial incentives for developers to meet multimodal goals, such as additional staff support, faster review turn around, lower review fees, and possible tax incentives.
 - d) Prepare a community-based transportation plan concurrently with the future land use plan and develop metrics and use them to review policy effectiveness.
 - e) Create a Multi-Modal coordinator position, through reassigning an existing position or as a new position, to integrate with community and state transportation efforts to effect multi-modal planning and improvements.

- 2. Prioritize a road and transportation network that connects new and existing developments and promotes multi-modal transportation options.**
 - a) Update street standards and interconnectivity requirements, and provide incentives and road maintenance agreements, so that under certain conditions the County can accept existing sub-standard private roads and pathways that will interconnect neighborhoods.
 - b) Ensure adequate and safe emergency access through all new developments and promote interconnectivity with existing developments.
 - c) Design and plan an interconnected multimodal network of streets, paths, and trails.

- 3. Promote a regional public transportation system that includes communities beyond the state and county boundaries.**
 - a) Assess support of a La Plata/Durango Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), and possible funding source(s) for transportation services and improvements.
 - b) Formalize and enhance coordination and communication between La Plata Co, Southwest Council of Governments, Farmington Metropolitan Planning Organization, and Northwest New Mexico Regional Planning Organization.
 - c) Evaluate intercity transit as a means for transporting goods as well as people to minimize vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

- 4. Minimize conflict between traffic and animals, both wildlife and livestock.**
 - a) Adopt a Best Management Practices plan for wildlife control and crossings.
 - b) Recognize historic rights of livestock passage on and across county and state roads.

- 5. Encourage the use of the most efficient, safe and environmentally healthy transportation designs and technologies.**
 - a) Adopt and implement a “Complete Streets” policy and Safe Routes to School (SR2S) plan that addresses the cumulative effects of traffic.
 - b) Formalize collaboration and partnerships with CDOT and municipalities.
 - c) Encourage low-emission transportation options.

- 6. Support the use of telecommunications infrastructure as an alternative to daily commuting and travel.**
 - a) Conduct an analysis to determine areas with poor internet service levels, and foster private provision of internet services in those areas.
 - b) Support Internet service in areas where fully-private service is not attainable.

- 7. Encourage land use and work patterns that reduce per-capita average daily trips, congestion, and vehicle miles traveled.**
 - a) Implement a park-and-ride infrastructure plan.
 - b) Collaborate with oil and gas industry to minimize service traffic.
 - c) Encourage flexible work hours.
 - d) Identify and locate activity nodes that support transit and multimodal transportation choices.

- 8. Promote the expansion of aviation services (number of flights, frequency, destinations) and support viable rail connectivity.**
 - a) Explore the feasibility of railroad connectivity.
 - b) Retain and expand air service at La Plata County/Durango Regional Airport with all willing partners.
 - c) Support improvements at the Animas Airpark facilities.

Natural Environment Element

Natural Environment Goals and Strategies

- 1. Protect and enhance healthy ecosystems.**
 - a) Develop a resource management plan for keystone species and programs to monitor health of various ecosystems throughout the county.
 - b) Support educational and interpretive programs to connect residents from urban and suburban communities to the natural environment.

- 2. Encourage preservation and restoration of wildlife corridors, wetlands, and riparian habitats.**
 - a) Map wildlife corridors, wetlands, and riparian habitats in collaboration with federal, state, and tribal agencies.
 - b) Provide incentives to land owners who implement restoration and preservation guidelines on the portions of their property that are identified as wildlife corridors, wetlands, and riparian habitats.

La Plata County Implementation Responsibility on Land Use and Transportation Strategies (Draft 2)

- c) Develop conservation, zoning, and subdivision tools that provide incentives for protecting critical resource lands including habitat, wetlands, and riparian areas while allowing for other forms of development.

3. Reduce wildfire hazards.

- a) Educate the public about insurance incentives available for reducing wildfire hazards around structures and ways to reduce fire hazard through defensible space and thinning operations.
- b) Develop guidelines for property owners on fire-wise house design, location and fuel management of the site.
- c) Develop wildfire management overlay zones for high risk areas that control new development regarding density, building location and design and fuel management.

4. Address risks to our natural environment and long-term water resources by appropriate mitigation and adaptation measures.

- a) Advocate to the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (COGCC) to adopt legislation requiring the oil and gas industry to inform county of any chemicals used in the extraction or production processes, and test for chemicals in ground and surface waters.
- b) Incorporate best management practices for protecting natural drainage systems, and aquifers.
- c) Identify contingency measures for prolonged drought.

5. Minimize noise and light pollution, light trespass, and glare from future development and encourage retrofit of existing sources.

- a) Identify best management practices for light and noise control.
- b) Adopt noise and light regulations that consider specific land uses such as agriculture.

6. Develop energy infrastructure to generate sufficient energy locally to meet future needs.

- a) Adopt renewable energy dividends (LPEA).
- b) Implement renewable energy tax districts.
- c) Incentivize the use of renewable energy for buildings and energy efficient building designs through the building code.
- d) Encourage hydropower generation from water projects.

7. Encourage the restoration or reuse of lands impacted by resource development.

- a) Require reclamation plans ~~to~~ for natural resource development ~~be in conformance with long term land use plans for the area to be reclaimed.~~
- b) Provide incentives and/or remove obstacles for establishing renewable energy infrastructure on impacted lands.

8. Restrict development in the floodplain and significant geologic hazard areas.

- a) Complete and update county mapping of geologic hazards and the 100 year floodplain.

La Plata County Implementation Responsibility on Land Use and Transportation Strategies (Draft 2)

- b) Develop a ranking system that identifies geologic hazards that pose a tangible risk to public health and safety and focus county regulation on those significant hazards.
 - c) Require development to be located outside of the floodplain and significant geologic hazards except on properties where there are no feasible development sites outside of the floodplain or outside of significant geologic hazards; where floodplain or significant geologic hazards cannot be avoided, mitigation standards will be implemented to minimize risk to public health and safety.
- 9. Protect and improve air and water quality and manage noxious weeds through collaboration with federal, state, Sovereign Nations, and local agencies.**
- a) Require notifications be sent to landowners when public right of way or well pad is sprayed with herbicide.
 - b) Require a 50 ft or greater setback from watercourses for on-site wastewater systems.
 - c) Revise the land use code so that erosion and sedimentation control standards are effective in minimizing runoff and disturbance of adjacent properties.
 - d) Work in partnership with the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission to continue monitoring water quality as part of the oil and gas permitting process.
 - e) Enforce the La Plata County Weed Code and implement the La Plata County Weed Management Plan.
 - f) Work in partnership with state and federal land management agencies and Sovereign Nations to prevent further proliferation of invasive plant species in La Plata County.
 - g) Work in concert with other agencies to enforce air quality standards in and near La Plata County.
- 10. Reduce, reuse, and recycle material resources.**
- a) Develop a County wide comprehensive recycling program that results in an increase in the types of materials (including appliances) that can be recycled and identifies convenient locations for drop-off and collection.
 - b) Create a composting program that would allow for the city/county to compost waste and promote composting by individuals.
 - c) Provide tax incentives to businesses and individuals who recycle and re-use material resources.
 - d) Collaborate locally and regionally on a "zero waste" effort.
- 11. Support the enhancement of renewable natural resource systems (forest and range products, fisheries, wildlife).**
- a) Promote forestry operations that are economically and environmentally sustainable.

Healthy Communities and Housing Element

Healthy Communities and Housing Goals and Strategies

- 1. Encourage and take an active role to increase the supply of affordable/attainable/workforce and senior housing.**
 - a) Prepare and implement a countywide housing plan aimed at increasing the efficient use of resources for housing development and related supportive services.
 - b) Analyze ways that land could be made more affordable for development through public sector policies and programs.
 - c) Provide financial support for subsidized housing developments that serve populations in need.
 - d) Offer technical assistance and incentives for affordable/attainable housing development near jobs and services.
 - e) Explore the potential of using manufactured housing to provide affordable housing opportunities.
 - f) Require properties that receive subsidy through the County to remain affordable over the long term.
 - g) Support a locally funded county-wide housing investment fund.

- 2. Integrate a mix of housing types near employment and services.**
 - a) Provide incentives for residential and commercial land uses, such as accessory dwelling units and commercial/residential mixed use projects in appropriate locations.
 - b) Create policies and incentives for development of higher density housing near to employment centers where multi-modal transportation routes exist or are planned.

- 3. Encourage the design, construction, and renovation of buildings to be safe, healthy, and energy efficient.**
 - a) Facilitate/develop guidelines to lower the life-cycle costs of housing.
 - b) Provide incentives for rehabilitation of rental and owner-occupied buildings.
 - c) Provide incentives to attract local housing production for modular/manufactured housing and/or housing components.
 - d) Implement in partnership with LPEA special districts for financing renewable energy.
 - e) Provide incentives for resource-efficient design and buildings.

- 4. Encourage life skills and lifelong learning opportunities.**
 - a) Identify joint or multiple use facilities for educational, cultural, community and recreational services.
 - b) Connect educational institutions and the private sector to achieve an integrated system of basic and career education, training and retraining for the community work force.
 - c) Improve and increase life skill resources and financial literacy through support of local programs.

5. **Support access to affordable healthcare and to a variety of providers.**
 - a) Adopt programs that encourage enrollment in healthcare educational programs.
 - b) Provide resources and support for a 2-1-1 Program (a social service information phone number) and Bridge to Success website.
 - c) Support access to care for Medicare, Medicaid, underinsured, and uninsured residents.

6. **Support a continuum of choices that helps seniors and disabled persons to thrive.**
 - a) Support the list of resources to connect people in need with each other.
 - b) Explore the adoption of an “Inclusive home design ordinance” to provide reasonable access in all new home construction.
 - c) Re-evaluate accessory dwelling unit standards that regulate smaller lots.
 - d) Support transit options for all, including seniors and disabled, connecting residents to critical destinations throughout the County.
 - e) Support the ongoing development of a dynamic, comprehensive, and coordinated system of uses/supports for seniors and disabled persons that enable them to live as healthy and independently as possible.

7. **Promote healthy communities through neighborhood design, transportation networks, and public education.**
 - a) ~~New~~ ~~All new~~-subdivisions and commercial developments will include pedestrian and bicycle facilities and/or connections to public transportation.
 - b) Adopt a land use plan and zoning code that allows by right skilled nursing facilities, long term care facilities, group homes, includes higher density development nodes, and promotes multi-modal transportation options.
 - c) Regulate commercial and industrial uses regarding noise, water and light pollution levels on adjacent property.

8. **Support quality care for children, elders and individuals with special needs in a manner that is widely available and affordable.**
 - a) Provide training and support, including tax credits, for individuals to provide child and elder care in their homes.
 - b) Evaluate and revise policies and regulations relating to child and elder care facilities to encourage availability of services county-wide.

9. **Encourage dedicated access to public open space, recreation, and trails.**
 - a) Provide developers options for dedicating access to public open space, recreation, and trails.
 - b) Develop a plan for dedicated access to public lands in areas that are expected to experience significant new development.
 - c) Develop, adopt, and implement a county recreation plan, assess the feasibility of creating a County Parks Department, and identify funding strategies.
 - d) ~~Provide for~~ ~~Develop~~ public trails and recreation areas with adequate access, parking, restrooms, and wayfinding, and meet the needs of the elderly and disabled.

10. Support and encourage partnerships with local agencies and jurisdictions in the provision of recreational and community services.

- a) Team with schools, religious institutions, and community groups and organizations, to share facilities for recreational, educational, and community activities.
- b) Create "kid trails" within the county and encourage local schools to offer incentives to children for their use.
- c) Participate in efforts to provide residents of the County such basic human needs as food, clothing, and shelter.

11. Encourage intergenerational involvement within the community.

- a) Partner with organizations to hold an annual arts collaboration of youth and seniors.
- b) Encourage community non-profits, cultural organizations, and services to recruit volunteers and market their programs.
- c) Formalize an agreement with the school districts to use schools as neighborhood centers for community social and recreational activities and healthcare services.

Organizational Excellence Element

Organizational Excellence Goals and Strategies

1. Provide citizens with user-friendly, consistent and efficient services.

- a) Utilize best management practices for customer service, such as providing checklists with submittal requirements for permits, instructions for permit applications, interactive user friendly website, and extended hours.

2. Collaborate with local governments, state and federal agencies, the Sovereign Nations, businesses and other organizations, to ensure efficient and effective service delivery.

- a) Establish a recurring forum for networking among social service agencies, state and local government agencies, and private & other non-profits to eliminate duplication of efforts and to fill gaps in service.
- b) Formalize relations between the County government and Federal and State Public Land Agencies (NFS, NPS, BLM,) by designating a County planner as a Public Lands Liaison, who will provide monthly reports and/or updates to County Commissioner on regional public land activities and notify residents of possible impacts to private property.

3. Engage and inform citizens in local decision making and develop transparent public processes that encourage respect among all individuals and groups.

- a) Develop an interactive website that allows citizens to participate and provide input.
- b) Conduct County Commissioner regularly-scheduled meetings at different locations around the county on a rotation basis.

4. Work towards excellence in all county practices.

- a) Annually review the outcomes of development decisions and submit report of findings to BOCC.
- b) At least biannually (every two years) review the outcome of development decisions and submit report of findings to BOCC.

5. Ensure two-way interaction between citizens and their county government that includes easy access to information, transparency, and opportunities for citizen input.

- a) Create county website for two-way communication between individuals & service providers.
- b) Implement a policy of "kids day" at the county to expose La Plata County students to daily operations.
- c) Provide an online forum for the public to communicate with public officials and County staff.

6. Align municipal and county goals, visions, and actions.

- a) Conduct joint public meetings between the municipalities and county on a scheduled basis and inform the public of the results of the meetings.



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) regarding the La Plata County

Comprehensive Plan, Land Use Planning, and Zoning

Land use decisions impact all of us. It affects our water, community character, wildlife and environment, public safety, roads, economy and government fiscal health to name a few. Local governments such as La Plata County, use both regulatory and non regulatory policies to guide development to ensure the public health, safety, and welfare of the community for the long term.

The La Plata County Comprehensive Plan is a guiding policy document that provides the overall framework and vision for community development. The Comprehensive Plan will have a Future Land Use Plan and strategies that will become implemented or codified in the Land Use Development Code and zoning map. While a comprehensive plan can include a wide variety of community development policies, the land use code is the implementation mechanism of the policies that have a specific regulatory land use component. The Land Use Code includes both Zoning and Subdivision regulations.

Land use regulations cover two elements.

1. Zoning, which deals with the location, intensity, and density of land uses and buildings; and,
2. Subdivision standards which deal with the division of land into two or more parcels having less than 35 acres to create building sites. This includes all the engineering specifications, site layout standards, many of the public health, safety, and welfare types of regulations such as water, sanitation, fire, and roads.

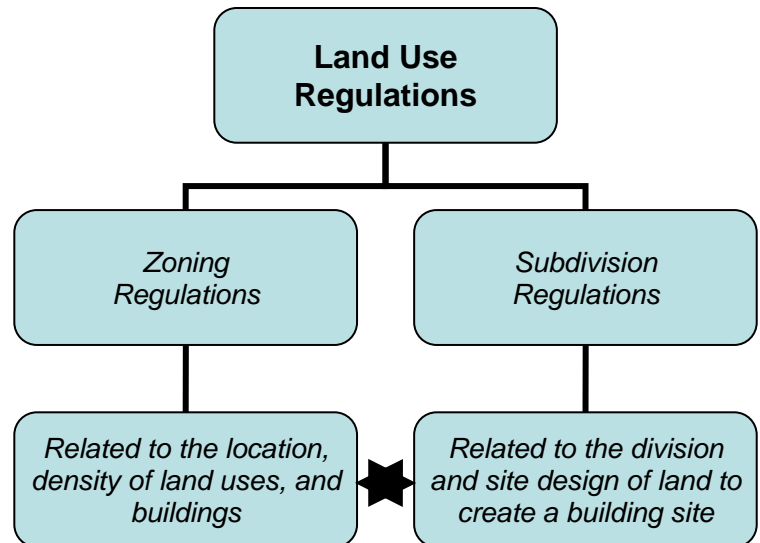
1. What is zoning?

Zoning is a regulatory process that allows local governments to plan for growth by addressing development through the regulation of some or all of the following: the location, intensity, land use, density and architectural elements of buildings.

Zoning has evolved over time and continues to evolve with many types of zoning approaches. Euclidian Zoning was instituted first in the early 1900's separating land use into districts. This is perhaps what most people think of when they think of zoning: separated uses in districts (Single Family Residential, Multi-Family, Commercial, Industrial, etc) with specified uses, lot setbacks, building heights, densities, etc. within geographically designated zoning districts.

In 1973 the Performance zoning era began with an emphasis on regulating the impacts of a use on neighboring parcels. Performance zoning created impact mitigation standards for use intensity and focused less on location. Beginning in the eighties, performance standards become more common in most land use codes. La Plata County's existing zoning regulations are considered a form of Performance zoning (although a not very effective form).

Floating or overlay zones were developed to help add additional layers for protection on an existing zone for natural and cultural resources or special types of land uses such as historic districts or airport environs.



Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) became another zoning tool that allowed the creation of specific a zoning designation written for a specific parcel or area; often this is used for areas with unique natural features or to allow for innovative master planned communities.

Form based zoning followed the heels of the neo-traditional neighborhood design movement to focus more on the building form and design and its relationship to the street, instead of specific land use type. Form based codes provide specific design standards that focus on the form and scale of buildings instead of specific uses.

Zoning codes have evolved over the years as urban planning theory has changed, legal constraints have fluctuated, and political priorities have shifted. In many instances, the best practices of these types of zoning are applied to achieve the community goals by essentially forming a hybrid zoning code that utilizes the strengths and advantages of the various zoning approaches described above.

2. When the Land Use Code is finished, will the County be zoned?

La Plata County currently uses “performance based” zoning (although the Animas Valley district plan utilizes a Euclidean form of zoning). The current code is unpopular due to the fact it is complicated, unclear, difficult to interpret and time-consuming. The goal of the comprehensive plan, future land use plan, and land use code update is to create more user friendly, predictable, and equitable zoning and subdivision regulations. The first step in determining what this may look like will occur during the development of the Future Land Use Plan.

3. Will the individual property owner be able to designate the type of zoning that their property will fall in?

The community engagement process during the development of the Future Land Use Plan will provide an opportunity for landowners to engage in the development of the types of land uses they want to see in their community. This will include an opportunity to discuss potential uses, intensities, densities, and locations of zoning types. During this process neighbors will work together to discuss the future of their community. Once this process is completed and agreed upon, the new land use code will codify the Future Land Use Map into a Zoning Map.

Generally individual land owners are discouraged from creating zoning solely for their own property versus as part of an overall area. This is usually referred to as spot zoning and occurs when a parcel or small area of land is singled out and placed in a different zone from that of neighboring properties similar in character within the zone. In some areas of the country the courts have found spot zoning illegal.

4. Will the new Land Use Code mean I can't do whatever I want with my property?

This depends on several factors, such as what the zoning may be on the property, and what use the property owner desires to place on the property. Not since 1926 has there been zoning that allows any use to go anywhere. While this is a frequently expressed and important personal value for some community members, it is important to note that the Courts have found that an individual's property rights are interwoven and entwined, and not independent of, other community member's property rights. A role of local government is to balance and protect all community members' interests and property. Thus even under the existing zoning regulations in La Plata County, individual land owners are unable to do whatever they want with their property. But property owners will always have the right to apply for approval to do whatever use they may want, but this approval will be subject to review by the Planning Director or the County Commissioners.

5. Will the new Land Use Plan make the value of my property go up/down? Will zoning decrease the value of some properties?

This is one of the most common questions, as well as concerns, regarding the impacts of implementing community regulations. The answer is it depends. Although legal and economic precedence is unable to definitively predict the results of specific land use regulation on the value of particular land parcels due to the complex interactions of restriction, amenity, and scarcity effects, the great majority of research shows that land use regulations and zoning

increase property values. In many cases, the amenity and scarcity effects of land use regulation offset the restriction effect, and property values increase. Studies show that property values are primarily driven by market demand rather than by supply restrictions resulting from land-use regulations.

Economic data indicate that land-use regulations produce three main effects that can both negatively and positively impact property values. These are:

1. restricting the allowable uses of a parcel of land (restriction effect);
2. creating benefits to the property owner and/or other property owners by regulation (amenity effect); and
3. limiting the supply of developable land (scarcity effect).

To summarize, restriction effects cause property values to decrease, while amenity and scarcity effects cause an increase in value. All three effects may impact the value of a specific property as a result of a particular regulation such that the individual effects are not separable. As a result, it is impossible using economic theory to definitively predict how a particular land use regulation will affect the property value of specific properties. For more information, see the Sonoran Institute report, *Economic and Fiscal Impacts of Smart Growth*, available at www.laplatacountyplan.com

6. Why does the comprehensive plan have strategies that are not implemented by a land use code?

The La Plata Count Comprehensive Plan is a broad policy document that covers a diverse range of community values such as housing, social services, organizational capacity, economic development, transportation as well as land uses. This is because these are all important considerations in creating a viable community with a high quality of life. While the county has several programs in place addressing some of these community values, it has been identified that land use and development in the county has been particularly challenging for the public, property owners and county officials. So the next focus of the Plan is to recommend an improved development process in the county through defining a Future Land Use Plan and revised land use code.

7. How will these strategies be implemented?

There are a number of ways in which these strategies will be implemented. The first step is to identify the strategies that the county can implement on their own that are related to land use and transportation. The next step is the defining of new or revised programs within the county to achieve the strategies. And lastly, many of the strategies will require collaboration and cooperation with the county's partners to implement. These partners can include other local cities, State agencies, Tribal government, school districts, and economic development organizations, to name a few.

8. How will the comprehensive plan be aligned with the county's annual budget process?

The Comprehensive Plan has been organized to align with the County *Compass* strategic plan. The *Compass* is the management and assessment tool that the county is using to develop the programs and actions to fund during its budget process. There are several strategies within the Comprehensive Plan that will be reflected in the annual updates to the *Compass* Plan.

9. How has the county incorporated the towns within the county as part of this process?

During the Comprehensive Plan planning process, the county staff and consultants have been meeting with the other town representatives as well as state agencies. This process is being formalized during the Future Land Use Plan phase

with the creation of a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) that will meet monthly to serve as an advisory group on the plan direction and growth assumptions.

10. How does the county comprehensive plan align with other community strategy documents like the Climate and Energy Action Plan (CEAP), Children Youth and Families' Master Plan, Regional Housing Alliance (RHA) Action Plan, TRIP 2030, etc.?

There are several ways that existing plans and organizations have been incorporated in the Comprehensive Plan process. First, in the Plan Community Profile (available online at www.laplatacountyplan.com), these existing plans and their recommendations have been summarized and evaluated. Second, the individuals involved in these plans or organizations are either on the Plan Working Group (members are listed on the plan website) or have been interviewed as part of the process. And third, there have been focus groups organized with individuals involved in the community dealing with housing, economic development, and agriculture.

11. Is there still time for me to be involved and provide input into the comprehensive plan process?

You bet! There are several ways to be involved and have your voice heard. There will continue to be community workshops and education forums around the county during the plan development (there have been over 70 to date); you can submit comments on the draft materials through the plan website at www.laplatacountyplan.com; and, request to be placed on the plan information listserv to receive information to your e-mail address.

There is still much work to be done that requires the community's involvement and input for the plan to be successful!

APPENDIX

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Accessory Dwelling Unit: A self-contained residential unit that is either attached to a principal single-family dwelling or in a separate structure on the same property.

Activity Nodes: Compact pedestrian-friendly areas, usually with multi-modes of transportation, situated where the highest concentrations of residential, employment, retail and other uses are located.

Affordable Housing: Owned or rented housing costing less than 30 percent of a household's total gross income, assuming that this income equals the median for a county or an area.

Agriculture: The production, keeping or maintenance for sale, lease or personal use, of plants and animals useful to man including, but not limited to: forages and sod crops; grains and seed crops; dairy animals and dairy products; poultry and poultry products; livestock, including beef cattle, sheep, swine, horses, ponies, mules or goats, or any mutations or hybrids thereof, including the breeding and grazing of any or all such animals; bees and apiary products; fur animals; trees and forest products; fruits of all kinds and vegetables.

Aquifer: An underground geologic formation that contains sufficient saturated, permeable material to yield significant quantities of groundwater to wells and springs.

Best Management Practice: Programs, practices, policies and procedures, and structures or activities that have been shown to be effective in management and protection of a given natural resource.

Board of County Commissioners (BOCC): The three elected officials, each representing a geographic district, that govern La Plata County.

Bridge to Success: A program to enable people to respond to the changing job market by providing training in professionalism, finance management and computer technology.

Building Code: Code requirements that a building or construction site is legally obligated to follow. La Plata County has adopted the International Building Code with amendments, additions and deletions as the La Plata County Building Code.

Buy-local program: Programs to encourage retention and creation of locally owned, independent businesses, whose dollars provide a large portion of annual revenue critical to funding public resources and services. These programs promote meeting local needs through locally owned enterprises.

CDOT: Colorado Department of Transportation

Co-generation: The simultaneous generation of electricity and the capture and use of heat, both from the same source. Also known as "combined heat and power" (CHP).

Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (COGCC): A state body that oversees the development of Colorado's oil and gas natural resources.

Complete Streets: Streets designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public transportation users of all ages and abilities are able to safely move along and across a complete street.

Comprehensive Plan: A statement of a community's desired future, intended to serve as the primary decision-making guide for growth and development in a county.

Conservation: The protection and management of resources and the natural environment to ensure the continued integrity of healthy, functioning ecosystems.

Compass or County Compass: La Plata County's strategic plan, which serves as the "guide" for the County's leadership in prioritizing new programs and initiatives, and evaluating existing ones.

Cultural Landscape: A visual demonstration of traditional interactions between humans and the natural environment over time.

Cultural Resources: An aspect of a cultural system that is valued by or significantly representative of a culture, or that contains significant information about a culture.

Defensible Space: The area between a structure and a potential oncoming wildfire where the vegetation has been modified to reduce the threat of ignition. This area provides an opportunity to "defend" the structure.

Development: Any human-made change to improved or unimproved land.

Development Node: A limited area that has experienced or is expected to experience development and a resulting growth in employment and/or population.

District Plan: Land use plans and/or mapping of land-use zoning districts for defined sub-areas of the unincorporated County that provide a framework for how development proposals relate to the planning district and to the County. Nine planning districts have been adopted by the Planning Commission and are currently used as advisory documents by the Board of County Commissioners.

Economic Vitality: A community's capacity to be economically competitive, resilient and attractive to private and public enterprise. Communities with economic vitality enable citizens to enjoy the satisfying economic activities (e.g., jobs) and the quality of life that sets the standard for long-term sustainability.

Ecosystem: The naturally interacting community of plant and animal species and their physical environment.

Element: A component or "chapter" of a comprehensive plan describing a set of related planning themes.

Erosion: The wearing away of soil and rock by weathering, mass wasting, and the action of streams, glaciers, waves, wind, and underground water.

Fire-wise Home Design: Preventing or minimizing the danger from wildfires through practices that address landscaping, building materials, and home design.

Floodplain: Any land area (typically adjoining a river, stream, lake, or other body of standing water) that is regularly subject to flooding, such as by a 100-year flood. A 100-year flood is a flood that has a 1 percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year.

Goal: A broad statement of desired outcomes to which effort is directed in order to bring a community closer to its overall vision of the future. It expresses the broad desired results of the plan.

Gray Water: Wastewater, collected separately from sewage flow, which originates from a clothes washer, bathtub, shower, or sink. Water collected from toilets is not gray water.

Greenbelt: An open area that is maintained in a natural state surrounding development, which is used as a buffer between land uses or to mark the edge of an urban or developed area.

Growth Area: An area designated to accommodate future growth and development.

Guideline: A statement of considerations that directs the decision-making process.

Habitat: The physical and biological environment where an organism lives. Often characterized by a dominant plant form or physical characteristic, habitat includes such components as cover, food, shelter, water, and breeding sites.

Heritage Tourism: Heritage tourism is traveling to experience the places, artifacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. It includes cultural, historic and natural resources.

Home Rule: The Colorado Constitution allows voters of a county to adopt a home rule charter establishing the organization and structure of county government. Home-rule counties are given their land use and other governing authority by the Colorado Constitution. Statutory counties' authority is limited to that given to them by the General Assembly. Home-rule counties derive their regulatory authority from the state constitution, and so have more flexibility to create their own rules than those established by the General Assembly.

Housing Investment Fund: A flexible source of funding that provides grants and loans to support affordable housing development. The fund may support a variety of activities including new construction, preservation, land acquisition, down payment assistance and helping to offset infrastructure costs through both loans and grants.

Impact Fee: A fee imposed on new development to help finance the cost of improvements or services necessary for the development.

Improvement District: A local unit of government (other than a city or county), authorized and regulated by statute, that is established for road improvements, water control, irrigation, fire, hospital, sanitary districts, and/or regional air quality control.

Inclusive Home Design: Design of single-family houses and town houses to meet at least the minimum standards of accessibility for persons with disabilities.

Infrastructure: Public facilities and services needed to support and sustain industry, residence, commerce and all other land use activities. It includes transportation, water and sewer, energy, telecommunications, recycling and solid waste disposal, parks and other public spaces, schools, police and fire protection, and health and welfare services.

Invasive Plant Species: A plant species not historically found in the local area. When introduced into an area, these species proliferate, replacing native species and reducing biodiversity.

Irrigation: A means of providing water to agricultural or landscaped areas, typically involving a system of canals and/or pipes and sprinklers.

Keystone Species: Species that have a disproportionately large effect on other species in a community.

Land Use Development Code: The implementation tool that provides regulations for how and where future land development may occur in La Plata County. The land use development code is the regulatory and legal framework for achieving the goals and strategies articulated in the comprehensive plan.

Land Use Plan: A basic element of a comprehensive plan that designates the present and future location, form, class and extent (size) within a planning jurisdiction for residential, commercial, industrial and institutional (public areas and buildings) use or reuse. The land use plan includes a map and a written description of the different land use areas or districts. The land use plan serves as the guide for land use decisions.

Land Use System (Land Use Code): The permitting system by which the Land Use Plan and the Land Use Development Code are regulated in La Plata County.

Landscape: The unique patterns, structures, and features such as landforms, vegetation, soil, and waterways that distinguish one part of the earth's surface from another.

Life-cycle Housing: A housing supply designed to meet the needs of individuals and families as they go through different stages of life so they can, if they wish, remain in the same community throughout their lives.

Light Pollution: The wasted light from streetlights and other sources that is created by humans, which lights up the night sky unnecessarily and can disrupt ecosystems and obscure the stars at night.

Light Trespass: An undesirable condition where light is cast where it is not wanted.

Livable Wage: A wage that is high enough to allow a greater percentage of the population to qualify for housing.

Local Preference: An advantage in consideration for award of a project granted to a bidder by reason of the bidder's residence, business location or origin of product offered.

LPEA: La Plata Electric Association

Metrics: Means of measuring performance and effectiveness objectively.

Mixed Use: A development pattern where a variety of complementary land uses occupy buildings in close proximity to each other, generally including residential, commercial, civic and business accommodations.

Mode: The different ways used to transport people or cargo. Examples are walking, bicycling, automobiles, buses, trains, motorcycles, and trucks.

Multi-modal (also Multimodal): The movement of people and goods using more than one mode of travel, thereby providing users with the best choices of service. Multi-modalism considers how policies for a single mode affect all other modes.

Native Species: A species that originates and occurs naturally in a particular region or environment.

Natural Area: Public land set aside to conserve and protect natural resources.

Natural Environment: The system of plants, animals, soils, water, and air that supports ecological processes.

Noise Pollution: Any unwanted man-made noise that penetrates the environment and is irritating and potentially harmful to humans and animals, such as traffic noise or noise from heavy machinery.

Noxious Weeds: Any parasitic or foreign plant that can injure crops, other useful plants, agriculture, livestock, fish or wildlife resources, or public health; any plant on the Federal Noxious Weed List or the Colorado State Noxious Weed List.

Open Space: A primarily undeveloped landscape that provides scenic, ecological, or recreational values or that is set aside for resource protection or conservation; an area of managed production such as forestland, rangeland, or agricultural land that is essentially free of visible obstructions and incompatible uses.

Overlay Zone: A zoning district that imposes additional requirements above that required by the underlying zone.

Planning Commission: A five-member board in La Plata County responsible to make, adopt and revise, as may be necessary, a master plan for the physical development of the unincorporated territory of the County; to develop, propose and recommend subdivision regulations and revisions thereto, as may be necessary, to the Board of County Commissioners; to develop, propose and recommend land use and environmental regulations and revisions thereto to the Board of County Commissioners; to conduct such review of land use requests and subdivision proposals as may be required by the land use and subdivision regulations duly adopted; to consult and cooperate with the planning commissions of incorporated municipalities within the County and to perform such joint planning functions as may be prescribed by directive of the Board of County Commissioners or by intergovernmental agreement.

Policy: A specific, guiding statement that outlines the process for achieving a goal.

Private Property Rights: The basic rights of individuals to the peaceful possession, control and enjoyment of the things they own as well as their rights to make contracts to rent, sell or give away all or part of their various ownership rights over these possessions (or these possessions' services) to any other people willing to accept the owners' terms.

(source:http://www.auburn.edu/~johnspm/gloss/private_property_rights)

Reclaimed Water: Wastewater that has been treated for reuse for purposes other than human consumption.

Renewable Energy: An energy source that is replenished continuously in nature or that is replaced after use through natural means. Renewable energy sources include the sun, the winds, flowing water, biomass and geothermal energy.

Renewable Resources: Natural resources that are capable of regeneration. Renewable resources are continuously produced (e.g., tree biomass, fresh water, and fish). The continued supply of renewable resources depends, in many cases, on proper management (e.g., tree biomass, fresh water, and fish).

Renewable Energy Dividend: A renewable energy dividend provides a fixed contract to the producers of renewable energy. The contracts afford the producer the ability to borrow against a guaranteed payment from their utility company and include long-term agreed upon prices that the utility company will pay the producers for the energy it buys. Also commonly known as a “feed-in tariff.”

Renewable Energy Tax Districts: A district that borrows money through bonds or other means and then uses it to make loans to homeowners for energy efficiency and renewable energy; each participating homeowner repays the loan through a special property tax assessment. Also known as “property assessed clean energy” (PACE).

Resource Management Plan: A written document that addresses the existing resources of an area and provides future objectives, goals, and management direction.

Right-to-Farm/Ranch Ordinance: A local government ordinance protects farmers or ranchers from nuisance complaints for standard farming practices.

Riparian Area (also Riparian Habitat): An area surrounding a river or stream that supports an ecosystem of wildlife, vegetation, soils, and water.

Runoff: The portion of rainfall, snowmelt, or other water that flows along ground surface and eventually collects in basins or contributes to the flow of a stream.

Rural: Of or relating to the country, country people or life, or agriculture.

Rural Center (also Rural Village Center): A centralized, concentrated collection of residences and locally oriented commercial, public, and semipublic services and activities within a rural area.

Safe Routes to School (SR2S): Programs to improve the health and well-being of children by enabling and encouraging them to walk and bicycle to school. SR2S programs examine conditions around schools and conduct projects and activities that work to improve safety and accessibility, and reduce traffic and air pollution in the vicinity of schools.

Scenic Resources: Landscape patterns and features that are worthy of preservation because they are visually or aesthetically pleasing with distinctive cultural, historic, natural, or other unique qualities that contribute affirmatively to the definition of La Plata County.

Species: Plants or animals grouped by common genetic attributes and assigned a scientific name. Species may also have common names.

Strategies: Statements that outline the approach or specific action to achieve a particular goal. A strategy is a short term action, policy, or regulation that is specific enough to be implemented.

Subdivision: A parcel of land that is divided into two or more parcels, separate interests or interests in common as defined in C.R.S. § 30-28-101, except as specifically exempted according to section 102-2.

Surface Water: Water found in lakes, ponds, and reservoirs or flowing on the earth's surface within a stream, wash, creek, or other natural drainage channel.

Sustainable, Sustainable Practices: Improving the quality of human life while living within the carrying capacity of supporting eco-systems.

Sustainable Development: Development that maintains or enhances economic opportunity and community well-being while protecting and restoring the natural environment upon which people and economies depend; it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Tax Incentive: A tax benefit offered in order to encourage or discourage targeted activities.

Trail: A linear public-access route for recreation or circulation. A trail may be multiple-use or single-use.

Transit: A transportation mode that moves larger numbers of people than an automobile; generally refers to passenger service provided to the public along established routes with fixed or variable schedules at published fares.

Urban: A highly developed area that contains a variety of residential, commercial, industrial, and cultural uses; usually an area where access to infrastructure is readily available.

Urban Growth Areas: Areas where growth may be directed in the future and where basic services, such as schools, sewers, water facilities, and police and fire protection, can be provided economically.

User Fee: A charge to the user for the use of a product, facility, or service.

Value Added Products: Products, such as raw agricultural products, which have been altered or processed in such a way that their value, and therefore their selling price, is increased.

Vision: A description of a realistic and credible desired future for the county. A vision is a key part of a strategic planning process.

Vision Statement: A statement that concisely expresses the mutually agreed upon vision of the County's future, reflecting the aspirations of the residents.

Wastewater: Used water drained from homes, business, and industries; primarily sewage flow.

Water Banking: An alternative agricultural water rights transfer mechanism that supports the lease, exchange or loan of legally stored water

Water Conservation: Any beneficial reduction in water loss, waste, or use.

Water Harvesting: The collection of rain or snowmelt for retention and future use or recharge.

Water Right: A right to use, in accordance with its priority, a certain amount of water.

Water and Sewer Authority: An agency responsible for the collection, treatment, storage, and distribution of potable water from the supply source to the consumer and the collection and treatment of wastewater from the consumer.

Watershed: The land area that contributes runoff to a given stream, river, or reservoir.

Wetlands: Areas that are inundated often enough to support plants and animals adapted to saturated soil conditions.

Wildlife Corridor: An often limited or constrained area providing connectivity between larger animal habitats.

Zero Waste: A design principle that takes a 'whole system' approach to the vast flow of resources and waste by maximizing recycling, minimizing waste, reducing consumption and ensuring that products are made to be reused, repaired or recycled back into nature or the marketplace.

Zoning: The delineation of districts and the establishment of regulations governing allowable land uses; placement, spacing and size of land and buildings; intensity of development; and environmental, historic, and cultural resources.

Zoning Code: A set of legally binding provisions adopted by ordinance by the Board of County Commissioners to govern zoning. Along with the subdivision ordinance, the zoning ordinance is a component of the Land Use Development Code.