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# LAND USE POLICY STATEMENT

HUERFANO • LAS ANIMAS AREA  
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

# LAND USE POLICY STATEMENT

Prepared By

HUERFANO-LAS ANIMAS AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

County Courthouse - Room 104  
Trinidad, Colorado 81082

101 East Fifth Street  
Walsenburg, Colorado 81089

DATE: June 1974



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HUERFANO-LAS ANIMAS AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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## INTRODUCTION

Within the Council of Governments planning jurisdiction, varied and numerous land use policies have been articulated. Both Huerfano and Las Animas Counties and several incorporated municipalities, including Trinidad and Walsenburg, have prepared comprehensive plans. Land use policy statements represent a major portion of each plan. In addition to the policies found in comprehensive plans, several local and state organizations have prepared documents which set forth their individual views with regard to the future physical structure of the region.

One of the primary responsibilities of the Council of Governments is the formulation of a regional land use plan in order to guide growth and to eliminate incompatibilities between political entities. Prior to the preparation of such a plan, it is necessary to establish region-wide land use policies. Therefore, it is the intent of this Land Use Policy Statement to: 1) present a list of all documents which relate to land use; 2) evaluate existing land use policies and assess the degree of their implementation with regard to the current and future regional land use needs; and 3) formulate an overall land use policy statement.

## CHAPTER I

### LAND USE POLICY DOCUMENTS

The purpose of this section is to identify those documents which relate to land use in the Huerfano-Las Animas Area. The reports are listed alphabetically according to the title. Each reference contains the title; the name of the author; date of publication and/or adoption; the agency for whom it was prepared; the source and location of additional copies; and an abstract of the contents.

**TITLE:** Aguilar Master Plan  
**AUTHOR:** Las Animas Regional Planning Commission  
**DATE:** May, 1972  
**AGENCY:** Las Animas Regional Planning Commission

**SOURCE** Huerfano-Las Animas Area COG  
**OF PLANS:** Las Animas County Courthouse, Room 104  
Trinidad, Colorado 81082

**ABSTRACT:** The Master Plan evaluates the natural setting, population, economy, and housing of Aguilar; presents an analysis of neighborhood characteristics, open space, parks, and community facilities within Aguilar; and, determines the present and future needs for utilities, roads and land use in Aguilar.

**TITLE:** An Analysis of Redevelopment and Rehabilitation needs and Opportunities in Walsenburg, Colorado

**AUTHOR:** Oblinger-Smith Corporation  
**DATE:** June, 1973  
**AGENCY:** Walsenburg Urban Renewal Authority

**SOURCE** Walsenburg Urban Renewal Authority  
**OF COPIES:** Walsenburg, Colorado 81089

**ABSTRACT:** The report inventories existing physical characteristics of land use in the Walsenburg Neighborhood Development Program area. Major concentrations of physical blight are identified along with possible causal factors. Generalized recommendations are offered as actions required to eliminate blight and provide an environment conducive to renewal effort.

**TITLE:** Comprehensive Over-All Economic Development Program for Huerfano County Redevelopment Area

**AUTHOR:** Arthur D. Little, Inc.  
**DATE:** January, 1973  
**AGENCY:** Colorado State Planning Division, Colorado Department of Employment, Huerfano Area Redevelopment Committee

**SOURCE** Colorado State Planning Division  
**OF COPIES:** 1575 Sherman Street  
Denver, Colorado 80203

**ABSTRACT:** The document explores the economy of Huerfano County and examines obstacles to economic growth. A recommended program for improving the economic climate of the County is presented. The appendices offer a statistical profile of the Huerfano County Economic Redevelopment Area and assesses the potential of locating specific industries in the area.

**TITLE:** Comprehensive Plan for Las Animas County, Colorado

**AUTHOR:** Sam Huddleston and Associates

**DATE:** January 15, 1963

**AGENCY:** Las Animas County Planning Commission

**SOURCE**  
**OF COPIES:** Sam L. Huddleston  
Planning Consultant  
Denver, Colorado

**ABSTRACT:** The Comprehensive Plan evaluates transportation, trade, tourism, climate and industries within Las Animas County; the plan includes a summary and evaluation of present land use, existing roads and utilities and sets forth guidelines for future land use in Las Animas County.

**TITLE:** Comprehensive Study and Analysis of Operation for Trinidad Water, Sewer, Natural Gas and Electric Systems

**AUTHOR:** Beottcher and Company, Ralph E. Vail, Consulting Engineer  
Willard E. Lewis, Utility Analyst  
Dawson, Nagel, Sherman and Howard, Legal Counsel

**DATE:** October 9, 1968

**AGENCY:** City of Trinidad

**SOURCE**  
**OF COPIES:** City Manager's Office  
City Hall  
Trinidad, Colorado 81082

**ABSTRACT:** The report is a study and analysis of the water, sewage, natural gas and electric utilities in Trinidad; contains detailed studies of the revenues and expenses of all utilities, the existing consumer rates, the needs for immediate improvements in each utility system and the means by which the City of Trinidad can legally and economically obtain the improvements; as well as a projection of future operating capacities.



*TITLE:* Economic & Market Analysis Study: Walsenburg, Colorado  
*AUTHOR:* George C. Perkins & Associates  
*DATE:* January 30, 1973  
*AGENCY:* Walsenburg Urban Renewal Authority  
*SOURCE OF COPIES:* Walsenburg Urban Renewal Authority  
Walsenburg, Colorado 81089  
*ABSTRACT:* The report provides an economic and market analysis of the City of Walsenburg for urban renewal purposes. The economy of the City is evaluated and the future market potential of each major land use category in the Walsenburg Neighborhood Development Program area is determined.

*TITLE:* Huerfano County Master Plan Update, 1972  
*AUTHOR:* Sam L. Huddleston  
*DATE:* January 15, 1972  
*AGENCY:* Huerfano County Colorado Comprehensive Planning Project  
*SOURCE OF COPIES:* Sam L. Huddleston  
Planning Consultant  
Denver, Colorado  
*ABSTRACT:* The 1963 Master Plan for Huerfano County is updated based on changing conditions that occurred in the time lapse since the original plan was prepared. Present land use activity is summarized. Appendices are provided that describe eight year platting activity, Walsenburg's annexations, Huerfano County traffic counts and Huerfano County's overall economic development program.

*TITLE:* Las Animas County Overall Development Plan, 1990  
*AUTHOR:* Las Animas Regional Planning Commission  
*DATE:* May, 1972  
*AGENCY:* Las Animas Regional Planning Commission  
*SOURCE OF COPIES:* Huerfano-Las Animas Area Council of Governments  
Las Animas County Courthouse, Room 104  
Trinidad, Colorado 81082



**ABSTRACT:** The Development Plan evaluates the population, economy, housing, transportation, environmental conditions and water resources in Las Animas County; sets forth development goals and recommendations for development of Las Animas County.

**TITLE:** Las Animas County Subdivision Regulations

**AUTHOR:** Las Animas Regional Planning Commission

**DATE:** September 15, 1971

**AGENCY:** Las Animas Regional Planning Commission

**SOURCE OF COPIES:** Las Animas County Zoning and Building Enforcement Office  
Las Animas County Courthouse, Room 100  
Trinidad, Colorado 81082

**ABSTRACT:** The regulations govern the division of land in Las Animas County in parcels of thirty-five and smaller; requirements are stated for planning and design standards and for guarantee of improvements in accordance with the Colorado State laws regulating subdivisions.

**TITLE:** Las Animas County Zoning Resolution

**AUTHOR:** Huerfano-Las Animas Area Council of Governments

**DATE:** Text Last Amended October 4, 1973

**AGENCY:** Huerfano-Las Animas Area Council of Governments

**SOURCE OF COPIES:** Las Animas County Zoning and Building Enforcement Office  
Las Animas County Courthouse, Room 100  
Trinidad, Colorado 81082

**ABSTRACT:** The zoning text specifies the type of development allowed in each zone either by right or by special permit; sets forth the procedure for change in zoning; sets standards for the placement and size of structures within each zone; defines Planned Unit Development and sets forth fees for zone changes.

*TITLE:* The Master Plan: Huerfano County and Walsenburg, Colorado

*AUTHOR:* Sam L. Huddleston

*DATE:* August, 1963

*AGENCY:* Huerfano County Planning Commission, Walsenburg  
Planning Commission

*SOURCE  
OF COPIES:* Sam L. Huddleston  
Planning Consultant  
Denver, Colorado 80206

*ABSTRACT:* The report analyzes existing conditions in Walsenburg and Huerfano County with respect to physiography, transportation, utilities service, community facilities and land use. Recommendations for future land use, traffic circulation with a proposed plan for action.

*TITLE:* The Master Plan Update: Walsenburg, Colorado

*AUTHOR:* Sam L. Huddleston

*DATE:* June, 1973

*AGENCY:* Walsenburg Planning Commission

*SOURCE  
OF COPIES:* Sam L. Huddleston  
Planning Consultant  
Denver, Colorado 80206

*ABSTRACT:* After ten years of activity, the 1963 Master Plan for Walsenburg is updated. Revised plans for future land use and circulation are recommended. A summary of specific planning recommendations is provided with priorities rank ordered according to importance.

*TITLE:* Mobile Home Park and Campground Ordinance

*AUTHOR:* Sam L. Huddleston

*DATE:* Adopted October 10, 1973

*AGENCY:* Huerfano County Planning Commission

*SOURCE  
OF COPIES:* Huerfano County Planning Commission  
Huerfano County Courthouse  
Walsenburg, Colorado 81089

**ABSTRACT:** This document establishes minimum standards governing the construction and maintenance of mobile home parks and campgrounds. Provisions are established for issuing permits and licenses for mobile home parks and campgrounds.

**TITLE:** Monument Lake Recreation Area Development Plan

**AUTHOR:** Arthur D. Little, Inc.

**DATE:** February, 1965

**AGENCY:** City of Trinidad

**SOURCE  
OF COPIES:** City Manager's Office  
City Hall  
Trinidad, Colorado 81082

**ABSTRACT:** The purpose of this plan is 1) to prepare a detailed site development plan of proposed commercial-recreational facilities at Monument Lake, 2) to develop the attendant engineering costs, 3) to assess the economic feasibility of this project, 4) to prepare estimated capital and operating statements for three different time periods, and 5) to recommend a priority and phasing program that the community should follow to finance and promote the suggested facilities.

**TITLE:** Outdoor Recreation Potentials in Huerfano County, Colorado

**AUTHOR:** U. S. Department of Agriculture--Soil Conservation Service

**DATE:** January, 1968

**AGENCY:** Huerfano County Technical Action Panel

**SOURCE  
OF COPIES:** District Conservationist  
U.S. Soil Conservation Service  
Walsenburg, Colorado 81089

**ABSTRACT:** The report analyzes the recreational potential of twelve kinds of recreational activities in Huerfano County. Conclusions are offered regarding the potential for future development of important kinds of recreational area and enterprises.

*TITLE:* Outdoor Recreation Potential in Las Animas County, Colorado

*AUTHOR:* U.S. Department of Agriculture--Soil Conservation Service

*DATE:* February, 1970

*AGENCY:* Las Animas County Technical Action Panel

*SOURCE*  
*OF COPIES:* Soil Conservation Service  
422 East 1st Street  
Trinidad, Colorado 81082

*ABSTRACT:* This report examines the potentials for recreation in Las Animas County. It also includes the role people and existing facilities, as well as natural resources, have in outdoor recreation potentials. The potentials for ten kinds of recreation enterprises are rated individually.

*TITLE:* Overall Economic Development Program for Las Animas County Redevelopment Area

*AUTHOR:* Arthur D. Little, Inc.

*DATE:* September, 1962

*AGENCY:* Las Animas Redevelopment Committee

*SOURCE*  
*OF COPIES:* City Manager's Office  
City Hall  
Trinidad, Colorado 81082

*ABSTRACT:* This development program evaluates the four principal economic elements of comprehensive economic development for Las Animas County. These elements are: 1) an analysis of the redevelopment area and its economy; a survey of population, employment, and economic trends in the area; a background picture of the area as a place in which to live and work, 2) evaluation of the potentials for economic growth, 3) identification and appraisal of the obstacles that appear to block economic progress and the needed adjustments, and 4) preparation of a program of action for creating new employment opportunities or otherwise reducing unemployment and underemployment--a program involving local, state and Federal responsibilities.



*TITLE:* Preliminary Report: Sewage Treatment Facilities Evaluation,  
City of Walsenburg

*AUTHOR:* Nelson, Haley, Patterson and Quirk, Inc.

*DATE:* December, 1973

*AGENCY:* Walsenburg City Council

*SOURCE  
OF COPIES:* City of Walsenburg  
Walsenburg, Colorado 81089

*ABSTRACT:* This report evaluates the existing sewage treatment facilities for the City of Walsenburg in terms of projected needs and state and Federal effluent quality requirements. Proposed improvement alternatives are provided with suggestions on financing.

*TITLE:* Preliminary Report: Street Improvements, City of  
Walsenburg, Colorado

*AUTHOR:* Nelson, Haley, Patterson and Quirk, Inc.

*DATE:* September, 1968

*AGENCY:* Walsenburg City Council

*SOURCE  
OF COPIES:* City of Walsenburg  
Walsenburg, Colorado 81089

*ABSTRACT:* The report analyzes the existing conditions of Walsenburg's streets and drainage system. Priorities for proposed improvements to the streets and drainage system are established. Details on cost estimates and suggested financing are also provided.

*TITLE:* Proposed Plan: Cuchara Water & Sanitation District

*AUTHOR:* Sam L. Huddleston & Associates

*DATE:* November 1, 1973

*AGENCY:* Huerfano County Commissioners, Huerfano-Las Animas Area  
Council of Governments

*SOURCE  
OF COPIES:* Sam L. Huddleston  
Consulting Planner  
Denver, Colorado



*ABSTRACT:* The report presents the need for a new sewer and water district to serve the area and surroundings of Cuchara, Colorado. The maximum population of the proposed service area is projected to provide estimates of the cost of construction of water and sewer facilities.

*TITLE:* Review and Update: Comprehensive Master Plan, Trinidad, Colorado

*AUTHOR:* THK Associates, Inc.

*DATE:* March 18, 1971

*AGENCY:* Las Animas Regional Planning Commission

*SOURCE OF COPIES:* Huerfano-Las Animas Area Council of Governments  
Las Animas County Courthouse, Room 104  
Trinidad, Colorado 81082

*ABSTRACT:* The plan reviews and updates the comprehensive Master Plan for the City of Trinidad, prepared by Sam Huddleston in 1962. The report documents existing conditions and identifies the most important elements pertaining to land use and zoning, traffic circulation and parking, natural features and ecology, urban structures and design, public facilities and institutions, housing and neighborhood facilities, with planning, recommendations for proposed land utilization.

*TITLE:* Review and Update: Overall Economic Development Program, Las Animas County

*AUTHOR:* THK Associates, Inc.

*DATE:* April 5, 1971

*AGENCY:* Las Animas Regional Planning Commission

*SOURCE OF COPIES:* Huerfano-Las Animas Area Council of Governments  
Las Animas County Courthouse, Room 104  
Trinidad, Colorado 81082

*ABSTRACT:* The plan evaluates the Arthur D. Little Comprehensive Plan of 1963; presents conclusions and recommendations for employment, population, income; and presents a basis for economic growth.

*TITLE:* River Valley Corridor Study Development Plan, Trinidad, Colorado

*AUTHOR:* THK Associates, Inc.

*DATE:* April 30, 1971

*AGENCY:* Las Animas Regional Planning Commission

*SOURCE OF COPIES:* Huerfano-Las Animas Area Council of Governments  
Las Animas County Courthouse, Room 104  
Trinidad, Colorado 81082

*ABSTRACT:* The development plan documents existing conditions in the river valley corridor; identifies areas of significant concern; states specific recommendations pertaining to land use, traffic circulation and parking, urban structure and design, public facilities and institutions, natural features and ecology, historic development and housing; and presents programs for the implementation of planning recommendations.

*TITLE:* Subdivision Regulations: Huerfano County

*AUTHOR:* Sam L. Huddleston

*DATE:* September 11, 1972

*AGENCY:* Huerfano County Planning Commission

*SOURCE OF COPIES:* Huerfano County Planning Commission  
Huerfano County Courthouse  
Walsenburg, Colorado 81089

*ABSTRACT:* This document establishes procedures for the subdivision of land within Huerfano County in accordance with the provisions of Colorado Senate Bill 35 of 1972. Subdivided land is defined according to Senate Bill 35 and procedures are established for submission and review of sketch, preliminary and final plat plans.

*TITLE:* Subdivision Regulations: Walsenburg, Colorado

*AUTHOR:* Sam L. Huddleston

*DATE:* August 15, 1963 (Date prepared)

*AGENCY:* Walsenburg Planning Commission

*SOURCE* City Clerk  
*OF COPIES:* City Hall  
Walsenburg, Colorado 81089

*ABSTRACT:* This document establishes procedures for subdivision of land with the City of Walsenburg in accordance with the provisions of Colorado Revised Statutes 139-59. Subdivided land is defined and procedures are established for submission and review of preliminary and final plat plans for subdivision.

*TITLE:* Trinidad Metro Area Comprehensive Master Plan, 1980-1990

*AUTHOR:* Las Animas Regional Planning Commission

*DATE:* May, 1972

*AGENCY:* Las Animas Regional Planning Commission

*SOURCE* Huerfano-Las Animas Area Council of Governments  
*OF COPIES:* Las Animas County Courthouse  
Trinidad, Colorado 81082

*ABSTRACT:* The plan sets forth policies for the development and implementation of long-term objectives dealing with open space, community facilities and housing; presents a study of the neighborhoods, environment and transportation; establishes goals and policies for the Trinidad Metro Area relating to the above mentioned elements.

*TITLE:* Water & Sewer Facility Plan, 1972; Huerfano County, Colorado

*AUTHOR:* Oblinger-Smith Corporation

*DATE:* 1972

*AGENCY:* Colorado Division of Planning

*SOURCE* Colorado Division of Planning  
*OF COPIES:* 1575 Sherman Street  
Denver, Colorado 80203

*ABSTRACT:* The report establishes a comprehensive plan for the development of municipal or public water and sewer systems to satisfy both present and future needs of towns and municipalities in Huerfano County. The plan is general in nature and generalized recommendations are offered on required improvements.



*TITLE:* Water and Sewer Facility Plan for Las Animas County, Colorado  
*AUTHOR:* Oblinger-Smith Corporation  
*DATE:* November, 1972  
*AGENCY:* Las Animas Regional Planning Commission  
*SOURCE OF COPIES:* Huerfano-Las Animas Area Council of Governments  
Las Animas County Courthouse  
Trinidad, Colorado 81082  
*ABSTRACT:* The water and sewer plan presents a basis for a comprehensive plan for the development of a municipal water and sewer system to satisfy needs in Las Animas County. Excluded from the plan are cities with a population of 5,500 or more, as indicated by the 1970 census.

*TITLE:* Zoning Ordinance: Walsenburg, Colorado  
*AUTHOR:* Sam L. Huddleston  
*DATE:* August 15, 1963 (Date prepared)  
*AGENCY:* Walsenburg Planning Commission  
*SOURCE OF COPIES:* City Clerk  
City Hall  
Walsenburg, Colorado 81089  
*ABSTRACT:* The ordinance establishes zoning districts in Walsenburg, Colorado, and regulates the use of buildings, structures and land according to geographic location. Standards are established for various lot sizes, set-back requirements, allowable lot coverage and permitted uses in each of six district zone classifications. Penalties for violation and procedures for amendment are also included.

*TITLE:* Zoning Resolutions: Huerfano County  
*AUTHOR:* Sam L. Huddleston  
*DATE:* Adopted September 24, 1969  
*AGENCY:* Huerfano County Planning Commission

*SOURCE* Huerfano County Planning Commission  
*OF COPIES:* Huerfano County Courthouse  
Walsenburg, Colorado 81089

*ABSTRACT:* The resolution establishes zoning districts in Huerfano County, Colorado, and regulates the use of buildings, structures, and land according to geographic location. Standards are established for various lot sizes, set-back requirements, allowable lot coverage and permitted uses in each of six distinct zone classifications. Penalties for violation and procedures for amendment are also included.



## CHAPTER II

### IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION OF LAND USE POLICIES

The following section presents generalized statements which set forth land use policies found in the published documents listed in Chapter I. Several statements were directly abstracted; others have been synthesized from various related policy statements.

For the purpose of this Chapter, the Huerfano-Las Animas Area is divided into four geographic areas:

1. Huerfano County
2. Walsenburg Metro Area
3. Las Animas County
4. Trinidad Metro Area

## HUERFANO COUNTY

### SCENIC VISTAS

*Scenic areas, as viewed from accessible roads in the county, are one of the most important assets of the area and these areas must be protected from development.*

The policy has been somewhat successful, partly as a result of enforcement of county zoning and subdivision regulations; but also as a result of the slowing down of economic activity in the area. Highway commercial activities and residential development have encroached on some of the scenic open space around Walsenburg and in the Cuchara area, but with these exceptions, most of the scenic vistas have been preserved intact. Stronger regulation of the scenic vistas will be required in the future to protect them from development. Important scenic areas should be inventoried and a priority system established for preservation. Zoning regulations could be strengthened by increasing the set-back requirements from highways and designating special scenic zones along major highways intersecting the county. Stronger regulation of outdoor advertising is also required.

### GEOGRAPHIC ZONES

*Geographically, the county can be divided into three zones: plains, front range, and forested mountainous areas. Land use in each of the zones should be regulated to promote the highest and best use of the natural environment.*

This policy has only been partially implemented in the county's zoning resolutions. The vast majority of undeveloped land in the county is categorized under one general umbrella as agricultural use. While sub-categories of grassland, brushland, and forest land are defined, unless these areas are depicted on a land use map, and regulated as such, these subclassifications require literal interpretation, which is likely to be subjective.

### OPEN SPACE

*Additional outdoor space is needed for the following recreational activities: swimming, fishing, boating, hunting, outdoor games, golf, tennis, picnicking, skiing and skating. The county must be able to provide some amenities to tourists in addition to scenic roadsides, in order that tourists might spend a greater portion of their vacation time in this area before continuing on their journey.*

This policy has not been implemented and the tourist potential of the county's open space areas still remains virtually untapped. One large scale ski resort development has been proposed by the private sector, but implementation is still some time away. An open space plan is required to delineate outdoor recreation needs for the county.

## AGRICULTURAL USE

*Agriculture is too important to the county economically to permit the loss of hay, grazing and crop lands to other use. In some cases, this land also has potential to function simultaneously as outdoor recreation space. With the exception of a possible public recreational facility at Cucharas Canyon, the most appropriate land use east of Interstate 25 is agricultural.*

This policy has not been totally successful in preserving agricultural land. In 1971 alone, prior to enactment of county subdivision regulations that complied with Senate Bill 35, over 7,600 acres of subdivision proposals were approved for recording of plats. In spite of this, most agricultural land has remained as such. In the future, stronger zoning and subdivision regulations will be required to preserve these agricultural lands. The current single umbrella agricultural classification is much too broad to encompass all that is permitted under agricultural use. Additionally, minimum lot areas per dwelling unit should be expanded considerably to discourage residential construction in agricultural zones.

## CIRCULATION

*The county road system should be upgraded to eliminate superfluous roads in some locations and improve inadequate access to summer residence and recreational areas.*

This policy has not been implemented in any large scale. Accessibility to mountain recreational areas still remains a problem.

## COMMERCIAL USE

*Retail and service industries will continue to be a major source of employment in the county. The location of these businesses should be controlled to prevent wide and unsightly dispersment along major highways. The expansion of commercial land use serving agricultural areas and areas with seasonal homes should be limited to La Veta and Gardner.*

This policy has been only partially successful in implementation. Some commercial activity has been allowed to locate in other than designated areas. More stringent zoning enforcement will be required in the future.

## FUTURE GROWTH

*All future development must have access to a safe water supply, whether it be through an organized water district or individual system. Water availability and surity bonding for the construction of improvements should be prime considerations prior to any authorization to begin construction.*



This policy has been somewhat successful in implementation. The county's subdivision regulations, as enacted in accordance with Senate Bill 35, do not provide regulation over the subdividing and platting parcels over 35 acres each. While the scope of these subdivision regulations is established at the state level, more stringent zoning regulation could afford additional control over development on sites over 35 acres.

*Private development along the banks of the Cucharas River poses a serious threat to the water quality of the area and should be regulated to insure public health standards will be maintained.*

At present, control over this policy is provided by the county subdivision regulations and regulations of the State Health Department. Creation of the Cuchara Water and Sanitation District will alleviate much of the potential problems in the Cucharas area. Nonetheless, more direct control over the banks of the river could be provided if a lineal strip of open space use was designated along each bank of the river. There has been no major effort to relocate existing campsites from the banks of the Cucharas River.

*Future development must be restricted from extending into flood prone areas.*

This policy has not been successfully implemented. While the county's subdivision regulations prevent construction in a designated floodway with a return frequency more often than a 100 year flood, no floodways have been designated on the county zoning map. More direct control over flood plain areas could be exerted if these areas were defined and regulated in the county's zoning regulations.

#### RESIDENTIAL USE

*Urban fringe and rural slum areas such as abandoned coal camps contain much land in blighted use. Practically all of the dwellings in these areas are substandard. These areas should be cleared up and redesignated to other land use.*

This policy has not been implented. The only change that has occurred is that the City of Walsenburg has annexed some of the urban fringe areas, changing jurisdictional control from county to city.

*There is adequate forested land in the county in the La Veta Park area for considerable seasonal homes development without infringing on grasslands. Seasonal homes can be secluded in the forest without spoiling the natural scene.*

This policy has been effective in the Cuchara area. However, as accessibility increases and as the real estate potential of this area is realized, more stringent enforcement tools will be required. Regulation over site plans and construction materials will be required to ensure the scenic beauty of these mountain areas is not destroyed.

#### INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

*The county should attract light industry into designated industrial parks where their development can be controlled and they can be effectively separated from other types of land use.*

The county has been unsuccessful in attracting desirable industries into the area. It has failed to reorient from a coal economy to other employment sources.

### WALSENBURG METRO AREA

#### FRINGE AREA DEVELOPMENT

*Urbanization should be confined to develop within a clearly established perimeter, beyond this perimeter the city should be surrounded by structured open space.*

The intent of enveloping the city's urban area with structured open space is to prevent urban sprawl, preserve the scenic beauty of major portals into the city, and act as a buffer to protect useful agricultural land from acquiring urban land values. This policy has been only partially successful in the fringes of Walsenburg. Highway commercial activities have encroached on some open space areas around Walsenburg; but most of the surrounding area is still preserved as open space. In large part, this is not the result of vigorous enforcement, but because of lack of economic activity. The battle against urban sprawl has not been won-- it has simply been postponed. Current land use planning for Walsenburg has not defined the specific perimeter in which urbanization should be allowed. Since 1970 the city has annexed over 500 acres of land, virtually all vacant. City land use policies are superimposed over county land use policies with essentially no overlap. Urban land use extending to the current city perimeter, is surrounded by county land zoned for agricultueal use. Without structured open space clearly defined or without clear objectives on city annexation, the present policy for structured open space surrounding the city is easily vulnerable.

In economic terms, neither the city nor the county is financially capable of purchasing the required amount of land to protect open space. Unless funding is made available at either the state or Federal level, the only other alternative is stronger use of police powers to control land use in the fringe areas.



*The city should coordinate policies with the county through the Spanish Peaks Regional Planning commission so that development will occur in areas that are advantageous to the interests of both the city and the county.*

This policy has been less than successful and the need for adopting stronger guidelines is increasingly apparent. In numerous instances, new subdivision proposals are being presented to the County Planning Commission that must rely on city services to meet subdivision standards. Objective evaluation of these proposals is difficult when neither the county nor the city has all the required information to base its decision on. While coordination between county and city planning is required, the Spanish Peaks Regional Planning Commission seems to be an inadequate planning base at this time to fulfill this need.

*Walsenburg should furnish water, sewer, gas, and other municipal services only to developments that can and will annex and that will come into the city with all municipal type facilities completed and utility lines so there is no undue burden on the city to furnish these services.*

Since 1970, over 500 acres of land have been annexed to the city of Walsenburg, with the vast majority of this land being vacant. Eventually the responsibility for furnishing services to these annexed areas, as they are developed, undoubtedly will fall on the city. Without clear objectives, annexation of land and the extension of municipal services to unincorporated areas can create problems and place an undue burden on the city. Fortunately, the city of Walsenburg is attempting to reverse this past trend and adopt procedures and guidelines on annexation of land and the extension of municipal services to unincorporated areas to insure firm compliance with the stated policy.

*Major U.S. Highways intersecting Walsenburg make the city an important port of entry into the vast scenic areas of southern Colorado and New Mexico. Presently, the four major portals to the city of Walsenburg all contain protrusions of urban development into the unincorporated areas of the county which are seriously deteriorating and unsightly reminders of blight. These areas should be improved by the elimination of sub-standard housing through renewal action and removal of junk yards to industrial locations where they could be shielded from public view by fences or appropriate buffers.*

Other than the addition of new highway commercial activity, there has been little change in land use of the portal areas into Walsenburg. As long as the four major portals into Walsenburg display prominent outward signs of blight, it will be very difficult to change the physical image of the city to visitors. Elimination of physical deterioration and blight has important bearing on providing a good impression for tourists and potential new industry. Stricter enforcement of the city and county ordinances is required. Relocation alternatives for property owners should be explored.

## FUTURE GROWTH:

The projected additional land use requirements for Walsenburg to meet 1990 demands are as follows:

### *Additional Land Requirements*

<i>USE</i>	<i>ACRES</i>
<i>Residential</i>	<i>27.1</i>
<i>Commercial</i>	<i>.8</i>
<i>Industrial</i>	<i>5.4</i>
<i>Public/Semi Public</i>	<i><u>8.1</u></i>
	<i>41.4 Acres</i>

*(Based on a 1972 Report)*

Barring any major change in socio-economic activity in the Walsenburg area, all population projections for the area predict a fairly stable population over the next twenty years with a leveling off of the past decline in population. On this basis, new land use requirements must be seriously evaluated in terms of what land is already available inside the present city limits.

*Vacant land parcels should be developed before new land is annexed into the community since there is available vacant land already serviced with water and sewer facilities.*

Including over 500 acres of mostly vacant land the city has annexed since 1970, approximately half of all land within the present city boundaries is vacant. The policy of containing development within city boundaries has been unsuccessful since the city's boundaries have expanded considerably. Hopefully, a sterner attitude toward the extension of municipal services into vacant and unincorporated land will prevent "leap-frogging" of development into what should be preserved as structured open space.

## CIRCULATION

*The city should adopt measures to insure the safe and efficient movement of vehicular traffic:*

- (a) The city street system is extremely costly in the land area it occupies. Citizens are paying a high price for unduly wide and generous streets. Most of the street blocks in Walsenburg are only 300 to 400 feet long and modern subdivision design provides for much longer blocks.*



- (b) *Unnecessary streets and alleys should be vacated.*
- (c) *Circulation in residential areas should be improved by limiting commercial land use to specific uses along major thoroughfares.*
- (d) *Through truck traffic should be relocated off Main Street.*

There has been only minor efforts to implement any of the above policies. Commercial land use has been restricted to major arteries as a matter of economic necessity and under the influence of zoning. Relocation of truck traffic off Main Street has been proposed several times to the State Highway Commission but no action has been taken. Implementation of this proposal is out of the control of local authorities. The city has not been able to implement a plan to vacate unnecessary streets and alleys.

#### PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

- (a) *There is need for a community park which could adequately provide outdoor family recreational activities for the city and its visitors. The southwest quadrant of the city, along the Cucharas River, has been suggested for this park as a possible river beautification project. This would clear out an isolated pocket of deteriorating housing which cannot, without high cost, be served adequately with municipal services. The land in the area is narrowly confined between hill and river and cut by railroad lines. The abandoned railroad and river could provide the outlines of a linear park which could serve as a destination point to bike-hike trails.*
- (b) *Neighborhood parks should be developed in each quadrant of the city to provide neighborhood outdoor facilities for young people and also promote neighborhood identity.*
- (c) *Existing school and outdoor park areas should be brought up to reasonable standards in land area.*

These policies have never progressed to the planning and implementation stages. Existing park facilities have not been substantially improved nor has new land been acquired to fulfill this policy. If new private development or improvements are allowed to occur in the suggested community park area, acquisition of required land will become unfeasible.

#### PUBLIC FACILITIES

*Local government units are scattered throughout the city. A consolidated city-county center should be developed.*

No progress has been made on the development of a new administrative center. The designation of the Huerfano County Courthouse and Jail on the National Register precludes its abandonment, as was once proposed, and also limits the amount of city-county consolidation of office space that can occur. A new City Hall-Civic Center remains one of the most important capital improvement needs for Walsenburg.

#### DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT

*Walsenburg needs to revitalize its downtown areas to make it more aesthetically appealing to local shoppers and improve its image in the eyes of visitors and potential investors. To achieve this end, there should be more intense use of commercial property in the downtown commercial district. Present commercial use is scattered primarily along two major highway routes intersecting the city. Most of the present commercial activity consists of single story structures.*

- (a) future commercial development, in most instances, should occur contiguous to existing business areas or in vacant commercial structures through redevelopment.*
- (b) Vacant parcels in commercial areas should be developed in order to foster a more compact downtown area.*
- (c) The city needs to protect existing downtown commercial activity against continuous proliferation of commercial uses on highways.*
- (d) The CBD should remain unchanged in boundaries, but commercial activity should expand into vacant or non-conforming uses inside its present boundaries.*
  - (1) Approximately 1000 square feet of additional private office space could be absorbed by the Walsenburg market between now and 1890.*
  - (2) Population and growth projections do not warrant the dedication of more commercial land in the downtown area at this time.*

None of the major policies aimed at downtown renewal have been implemented or, for that matter, even considered by a broad segment of the community. Sign control provisions in the Walsenburg Zoning Ordinances aimed at improving the visual appeal of the downtown area have had little effect since enforcement is lacking. Additionally, existing provisions offer little control over the aesthetic appeal of signs. Private store owners have little incentive to improve their store fronts. Urban renewal in commercial activity areas has been generally unsuccessful unless private owners are organized and/or offered some financial incentive to improve their property.



## HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL USE

*To prevent over extension of highway commercial activities along scenic roads, tourist commercial strips should be contracted in length but expanded in depth to allow commercial development in designated areas. Tourist commercial activities should be segregated from the central business district and developed at nodes near major highway intersections. Tourists should be able to leave the road and find food and lodging near the perimeter of the central city, retaining the option of coming into the central business district if they desire to carry on business.*

This policy has not been totally successful in application, as evidenced by the increased spread of tourist oriented commercial activities along major highways. While county and city zoning have attempted to regulate strip highway commercial development, these instruments can only be credited with partial success.

## INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

*The city should attract light industry into designated industrial park areas where their development can be controlled and they can be effectively separated from other types of land use, especially residential development.*

- (a) Extensive industrial land use should be designated near the I-25 Colorado 10 interchange.*
- (b) An area of wholesale commercial and special industrial uses should be designated west of the CBD to accomodate small establishments not totally antagonistic to nearby commercial activities but unsuited to more intense industrial areas.*
- (c) Hazardous bulk storage of petroleum should be relocated to a designated industrial area and away from residential areas.*

Attracting light industry and wholesale commercial activities to designated industrial areas has not met with much success. The most notable development was the start and subsequent failure of a modular homes construction plant in 1972. There has been no organized effort to relocate existing wholesale and industrial activities, mostly junk yards, feed storage and petroleum storage to designated areas. The city purchased an industrial park site near the I-25 and U.S. 10 interchange, but without improvements, private investment incentives, and a skilled labor force, its ability to attract industry to this location is hampered. Early indications are that soils in the industrial park area are unsuitable for intense construction activity. The city has also designated on its future land use plan an area for wholesale commercial and special industrial activity.

## RESIDENTIAL USE

- (a) *Existing residential areas should be renewed through rehabilitation, clearing and reconstruction.*
- (b) *There should be increased use of multi-family dwellings inside the present city limits, including row houses and apartments for senior citizens. These units should be located adjacent to the present CBD and provide adequate land area for each dwelling unit.*
- (c) *Mobile home development should be restricted to specific areas where their appearance and siting can be controlled.*

More residential land use near the CBD should be designated for multi-family dwellings. The city requires a detailed mobile home ordinance to regulate mobile home development. High interest rates and low economic activity have stifled new residential construction and home rehabilitation. Existing federal programs are hardly adequate to change the form and character of residential land use in Walsenburg.

## LAS ANIMAS COUNTY

### URBAN SPRAWL

*Prevent the creation of urban sprawl and linear strip development. Create "nodes" or centers of development along easily serviced major transportation corridors. These nodes would be separated by agricultural areas so that specific development areas could maintain and enhance their character and individual identity.*

The Las Animas County Zoning Resolution provides for low density residential use in the major transportation corridors, thus failing to support the "Corridor and Growth Node" policy. Very few homes have been constructed in those corridors, however, the potential for development in these areas is tremendous. Because new development has been slow to occur in Las Animas County, the long range plans, in this instance continue to be implemented by default.

### OPEN SPACE

*Overdevelopment of the County's scenic and open space resources would be self-defeating, and all recreation-oriented developments should locate so as to be able to guarantee the long-term provisions of open space.*

Las Animas County has successfully utilized the "Planned Unit Development" concept to partially implement this policy. Planned unit development requires that twenty five percent of the developable land shall be preserved in open space.



## PREMATURE SUBDIVISION

*Premature subdivision of land takes productive agricultural land out of production and saddles government with scattered developments that do not pay their share of taxes; these should be discouraged and prevented where possible.*

County Zoning and Subdivision Regulations control the location and design of proposed housing developments. Unfortunately, the County's Subdivision Regulations do not apply to parcels of land that are larger than 35 acres. Thus, the potential for sale of agricultural grazing land in parcels of 35 acres or more is tremendous.

## SCENIC VISTAS

*Special scenic areas should eventually be protected through reimbursement of landowners for scenic easements.*

The lack of adequate financial resources at the local level has precluded the purchase of scenic easements in Las Animas County. However, sources of revenues are at times available at the state and federal levels. The Huerfano-Las Animas Area Council of Governments is in the process of developing an area-wide open space plan which will identify outstanding scenic vistas along major roadways. This represents the first step in the process of acquiring scenic easements.

## AGRICULTURAL USE

*Prime irrigated agricultural lands around Trinidad should be preserved.*

The County zoning resolution prohibits residential, agricultural and/or industrial development in the prime irrigated agricultural land unless it is demonstrated that the proposed use will benefit the County to a greater extent than the present agricultural activity. The policy recognizes that the highest and best use of the land in Las Animas County must be encouraged.

Further, Las Animas County closely scrutinizes any requests for a change in land use designation in order to ensure the best use of the land.

## NEW DEVELOPMENT

*Planning for new development should take a "physio-cultural" approach with consideration given to natural features such as slope, drainage, water supply, soils and geology.*

The County's subdivision regulations provide the necessary guidelines for successful implementation of this policy. Each physiographic area in Las Animas County requires specific investigation with respect to existing and proposed changes in land use.

Further, each proposed change in land use is judged on its individual merits and its compatibility with the surrounding environment.

### GREENBELT

*A greenbelt should be established around the Trinidad Metro Area, utilizing hillsides, irrigated lands, flood plains and other needed areas.*

The establishment of a greenbelt should be based upon preserving the ecological, agricultural, and open space values of the area. A greenbelt has been proposed in the Trinidad Metro Area Master Plan which would encourage a maximum population of 25,000 to 30,000 for Trinidad. Additional population would be encouraged to locate in the smaller communities found in the transportation corridors leading into Trinidad.

### MOBILE HOMES

*Mobile Homes should be on foundations and harmonious with their surroundings, or they be placed in well-designed mobile home parks.*

The county zoning resolution has been amended to include a section on mobile home placement. Foundations are required unless the mobile home is placed in a mobile home park. Design criteria for mobile home parks has been established.

## TRINIDAD METRO AREA

### FRINGE AREA DEVELOPMENT

*A greenbelt should be established around the City of Trinidad by preserving prime irrigated land around the city and by preservation of scenic hillsides.*

The intent of surrounding the city's urban area with a greenbelt is to prevent urban sprawl, preserve the scenic beauty of the area, and to protect irrigated agricultural land from urban development. This policy has been partially successful to date, not from any vigorous enforcement but simply because of the lack of any substantial growth in the Trinidad Metro Area. Current land use planning for the Metro Area has not defined the specific perimeter in which urbanization should be allowed. Irrigated land in the county has been zoned accordingly in an attempt to protect it from urbanization. This zoning could fail in its objective, however, if the city were to annex these lands and convert them to urban uses. Neither the county nor the city have attempted to identify and preserve scenic hillsides.

The city and county need to work together to identify and preserve scenic hillsides. The city should adopt an annexation policy which would keep



irrigated lands in agricultural; annex only lands suitable for urban development; and annex only as the need for expansion arises. Neither the city nor the county is financially capable of purchasing land for a green-belt around Trinidad. Unless funding is available from the state or federal level for this purpose, the only other alternative is stronger use of police powers for controlling land use in the Metro Area.

*Fill in the buildable vacant areas of the city rather than encouraging development on the city fringes since the available vacant land is for the most part serviced with water and sewer facilities.*

An inventory of city land has shown that a large percentage of land within the city is vacant, most of it buildable. Although some building has occurred within the city on buildable vacant parcels, the city has done little to encourage this practice. Recent annexation by the city of a large tract of vacant land to the south along Country Club Drive will probably have the effect of encouraging residential construction in that area. A sterner attitude toward the extension of services into vacant unincorporated land and acceptance of premature annexation petitions should help encourage the development of buildable vacant areas of the city.

#### CIRCULATION

*Build a series of highway by-passes around the city to lessen congestion in the downtown area.*

Both the city and the county have for the last three years requested from the Highway Commission that a by-pass be constructed from Highway 350 to the Goddard Avenue Interchange on Interstate 25. Construction of such a by-pass would greatly reduce the through traffic which now slows through the downtown area. The implementation of this policy is out of the control of local authorities, and is at the state level. The city and county should continue to work together in petitioning the state to fund and undertake this worthwhile project.

#### REDEVELOPMENT AND BEAUTIFICATION

*Preserve scenic roads in the Trinidad Metro Area.*

Scenic roads need to be identified and a strategy for preserving their character must be formulated and adopted. A city and county sign code, special zoning and/or other regulatory devices are needed to preserve the character of scenic roads in the area. State and/or federal funding is needed to purchase any scenic easements, as the city and county do not have the necessary resources.

*Protect the scenic gateways to the City of Trinidad as the city is an important port of entry into the scenic areas of South Eastern Colorado.*

The scenic gateways to the Trinidad area have not been specifically identified and mapped. Due to slow development in the area, the scenic gateways remain undisturbed. But, specific controls (zoning or other) need to be adopted to protect them in the future.

*Develop the river corridor area through town as a place of beauty for pedestrians, shoppers, and tourists, and to complement the downtown business district as the focal point for the Metro Area.*

The Purgatoire River, as it flows through Trinidad, has the potential to become a great visual and recreational asset. Although some plans have been formulated to develop this potential, they have not been implemented.

*Beautify Interstate 25 through the city and enhance it and lessen its visual disruption of the city.*

The Las Animas Regional Planning Commission developed landscape plans to beautify Interstate 25. The plans were approved by the State Highway Department and the City of Trinidad. Recently (November 1973), the State Highway Department announced they had appropriated funds for this project but later the funds were withdrawn. Implementation of this policy remains largely at the state level.

#### COMMERCIAL USE

*Revitalize and beautify downtown Trinidad to upgrade it as the regional shopping area.*

Renovation of the Jaffa Opera House and the Construction of the downtown plaza represent successful attempts toward the implementation of this policy. In addition, the newly amended Trinidad Zoning Ordinance delineates downtown as the Corazone de Trinidad Historic Preservation District and requires that the Trinidad Historic Committee review and comment on all requests for building permits and plans for development.

*Discourage strip commercial along major roads away from downtown in order to strengthen downtown as "the commercial area."*

The newly amended Trinidad Zoning Ordinance lists commercial activity as a use permitted by right in the Historic Preservation District. A prudent policy toward annexation and extension of city utilities can influence the intensity of commercial development along major roadways.

*Begin the establishment of neighborhood shopping centers to meet the small purchase needs of neighborhood residents. These shopping centers could not threaten the downtown areas as the main shopping area of the region.*



This policy has not been generally implemented. Numerous neighborhood convenience stores are scattered throughout the city, but many of them are poorly served by roads for delivery of their stock. The Trinidad Zoning Ordinance provides for neighborhood commercial areas, but most are based on existing use. The city should identify areas suitable for neighborhood commercial centers and adjust the zoning map accordingly. A cursory examination shows the following areas may have potential for developing into neighborhood shopping centers: Main at Engle, Country Club Drive and Saddle Road, Highway 12 and San Juan Street, the area east of Trinidad State Junior College, and the area at North Avenue and Linden Avenue.

### INDUSTRIAL

*Attract light industry to Trinidad to be located in the new industrial park. Light industry is defined as those which utilize fairly low levels of energy and have very little adverse effect on the physical environment.*

Attempts to attract light industry to Trinidad have met with some success in recent years--Pepsi Cola and United Parcel Service constructed facilities in the Industrial Park. A barbed wire manufacturing company recently located in an existing industrial facility in the city. Local officials indicate that attracting industry has been hindered due to the lack of skilled labor force and inadequate housing for employees in the area. Trinidad State Junior College has offered to help train workers for industries that decide to locate in the area. The city and county should take advantage of this offer and should make it known to prospective industries. The city might also attempt to persuade members of the younger population who have left the Trinidad area in the past, and who may have acquired valuable skills since, to return to their home-town area in the event new jobs locate in the Trinidad area.

State policies also have a great impact on the ability of Trinidad to attract light industry. If the State adopts a policy of governmental decentralization and population dispersal away from the Denver-Front Range Megalopolis, Trinidad will be in a better position to attract industry. The city and county should champion decentralization and population dispersal as needed state policies.

### RESIDENTIAL

*The primary future extension of residential land use should be to the north of the city and west of Interstate 25.*

This policy appears to have been abandoned. City residential expansion is occurring to the south along Country Club Drive where the City has recently annexed a great deal of mostly vacant land. Other petitions for annexation are being considered for areas to the east of Trinidad.

*Mobile homes should be located in well designed and landscaped mobile home parks, located outside the city's main residential areas yet close enough in to become a part of the city's overall growth and development area.*

This policy is partially implemented by county adopted mobile home regulations which were adopted on October 5, 1973. The city provides for mobile home developments in the PUD section of the city zoning. There is a need for city and county agreement on uniform standards and design criteria for mobile home parks.

#### PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

*Establish parks in number and area necessary to meet acceptable standards.*

Trinidad Model Cities sponsored an intensive park and plaza project for the City of Trinidad. The project includes upgrading existing parks and the development of mini-parks and neighborhood parks.



## CHAPTER III

### REGIONAL POLICY STATEMENT

Within the Huerfano-Las Animas planning region, traditional land use controls are being administered by the elected officials of the local units of government. In addition, state legislation, through Colorado H.B. 1041, has charged the counties with the responsibility of identification, designation and regulation of numerous areas and activities of state-wide concern. Although the Huerfano-Las Animas Area Council of Governments does not at present administer land use controls, it is responsible for the formulation of a regional land use plan in order to guide growth in the two-county area. Local units of government will be requested to utilize the land use plan as a guide to aid their administration of land use controls.

Prior to the formulation of a Land Use Plan, the goals and policies upon which it is based must be identified. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to promulgate land use goals and objectives for the Huerfano-Las Animas planning region.

TO ENCOURAGE QUALITY DEVELOPEMNT IN AREAS DESIGNATED AS APPROPRIATE FOR GROWTH.

*Encourage the use of planned unit development in areas designated as appropriate for growth.*

Planned unit development is a technique used to ensure the high quality development of large-scale, single-ownership projects. The planned unit development technique combines zoning and subdivision control procedures with design regulations and detailed administration review of specific plans.

*Minimize unnecessary public costs by requiring the sponsors of future developments (including new communities) consider all costs, including those which are externalized to the public sector and future owners.*

Costs to be considered include: water, sewage, drainage, fire and police protection, schools, streets, health services, social services, and manpower development. Other social costs refer to public welfare and amenities such as: harmony with existing development, the need for landscaping and scenery, location of site in terms of traffic safety and privacy, consolidation of public or private open space, consideration on non-motorized paths, consideration of "staged" or "placed" development.

*Continue local government support of traditional land use controls, as well as participation in the 1041 program of identification, designation, and regulation of areas and activities of state-wide significance.*

Traditional land use controls include zoning, subdivision development regulations, annexation requirements and law, and building codes. Under H.B. 1041, impact studies should be required for any proposed large scale development. These studies would detail social costs and expected benefits from proposed developments and transfer the "burden of proof" to the developer.

*Link land use regulations to the local tax system.*

The property tax system should provide an incentive (either positive or negative) to use land wisely.

TO REVITALIZE THE PHYSICAL CONDITION OF EXISTING COMMUNITIES WITHIN THE REGIONS.

*Support the decentralization of State government agencies to the thirteen Planning and Development Regions.*

The Huerfano-Las Animas Area Council of Governments represents two of the three counties that comprise State Planning and Management Region #7. If decentralization along Planning and Management Regional boundaries becomes a reality, Walsenburg would be in an excellent physical location to be selected as the regional center of Region 7. Secondly, if Regions 6, 7, and 8 are combined to function as the Southeast Region, Walsenburg is, again, the geographical center and could serve as a Southeast regional center.

*Ensure that proposed land annexations to existing communities serve toward the betterment of the total community.*

Annexation must be properly understood and implemented to assure efficient and orderly growth. Communities are urged to adopt annexation procedures which follow generally accepted principles applicable in a sound annexation program. For example, the area considered for annexation should be reasonably well developed and land use trends firmly established; no area should be annexed unless the community is in a position to benefit from the annexation; the costs of providing permanent capital improvements as well as the cost of everyday municipal services should be fully analyzed and weighed against the benefits the community will derive from the increased tax revenues; and other considerations which may be stated in terms of basic annexation principles should be adopted.

TO ENSURE THAT NEW DEVELOPMENT IS NOT LOCATED OR DESIGNED TO CREATE OR BE SUBJECTED TO HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS.

*Counties and cities should participate in the identification, designation, and regulation of natural hazard areas.*

Under H.B. 1041, natural hazard areas are defined as floodplain, wildfire hazard areas, and geologic hazard areas. Various state agencies are developing "model" guidelines which local units of governments should use in order to contract development in these areas.

TO PRESERVE AGRICULTURAL LAND AND PREVENT EXTERNAL INFLUENCES FROM CONVERTING RURAL LAND FROM AN AGRICULTURAL-BASED WAY OF LIFE.

*Zone agricultural land in a manner which discourages speculation and encourages the continuation of the Region's agricultural-based economy.*

Agricultural lands, for both agricultural and aesthetic use, are irreplaceable resources. Once the decision is made to change use, the resource cannot be replaced nor can large tracts be reassembled after they are fragmented by subdivision. The change in use represents an irreversible commitment.

*Request the State Legislature to amend "Senate Bill 35" to cover subdivision of parcels of 35 acres or larger.*

The selling of 40 acre tracts in southeastern Colorado is becoming commonplace. Fragmentation of ownership removes the land from its traditional agricultural use of cattle grazing. In addition to subdivision controls, more strict zoning control on large tracts of vacant land should be emphasized.

*Request the State Legislature to amend the Municipal Incorporation Laws to require county approval for any new incorporation of an area.*

Counties cannot control development within incorporated areas. Consequently, developers who wish to avoid control are tempted to form new municipalities that they can dominate.



