

Chapter 3

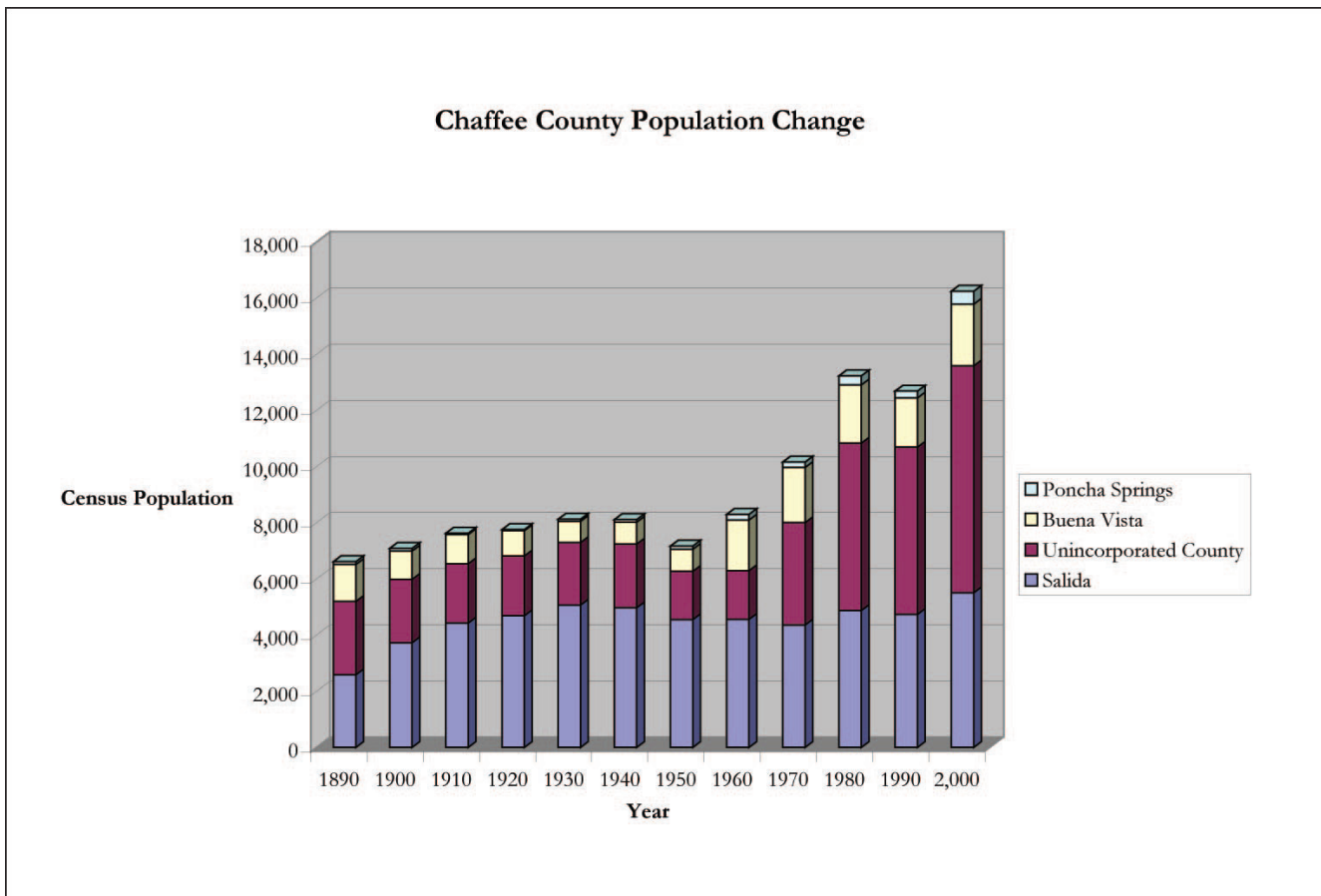
Land Use and Growth

This chapter looks at historic growth trends and projections made by the state and other sources. Considerations include the potential consequences of growth, the challenges of servicing that growth and the options for accommodating growth through practical land use changes. It will be important for the city to carefully make policy changes that will not detract from the character of the city but rather enhance the character valued by today's citizens. Several steps have been taken already by city staff and appointed and elected officials to create zoning districts that match the built environment. This process will continue that effort by identifying additional growth options that logically direct growth to take advantage of existing facilities and infrastructure.

Growth

Historic Trends

The population of the City of Salida has not changed considerably over the last 120 years. Historical Census records indicate that the population of Salida was 2,486 people in 1890 which is approximately half the population estimate of 2009. Steady growth occurred between 1890 and 1930 at which time the population was nearly equal to today's population. Population numbers began to decline through the mid part of the 20th Century until 1980 which marks the beginning of a 30 year period of steady growth to today's population estimate of nearly 5,500 residents.



Population ebbs and flows are typical and can usually be correlated with some historical event. For example, likely causes of population decrease around 1930 may be attributed to the Great Depression. World War II in the early to mid 1940's would be a likely cause for population decrease. The population increase seen in the 1970's is correlated with the mining boom at Climax Mine and a subsequent population decrease can be attributed to its closing in the early 1980's. Since that time the population has increased and is expected to continue with the anticipated retirement of the baby boomer generation to the Salida area.

Building Permits

Building permit information can be used as an indicator for growth activity as well as market performance. It may also help to validate the population projections made by the state. According to the [2008 Crestone Heights Market Feasibility Study](#), Chaffee County is largely a custom or built to suit new home market as opposed to a speculative market. This would lend validity to the ability to gauge building permit activity with population growth and market demand. It is important to note however that second home ownership has been on the rise and does not contribute to population increases. It does have effects on the local economy and will remain a part of the growth sector so anticipating the characteristics of that growth will be important in the future land use scenarios for the city.

The following chart is a compilation of building permits from 2000 through 2009. The first section represents the total number of building permits for all categories of construction while the second is for new residential construction only. The chart shows that most of the residential construction activity is occurring in unincorporated Chaffee County. Salida's permits have fluctuated throughout the eight year period but show an increase in 2007. The building permit numbers for new residential construction dropped from 49 in 2007 to 21 in 2008. New residential construction counts each new dwelling as a new permit. For example, a duplex would account for 2 new permits.

Chaffee County Building Permit Data

New Construction Permits, Total

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Unincorporated County	383	435	384	417	362	307	307	366	338	268
Salida	117	77	87	156	163	154	144	193	212	164
Poncha Springs	31	11	25	23	27	15	22	41	80	22
Buena Vista	76	70	76	107	79	56	71	88	25	82

New Construction Permits, Residential

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Unincorporated County	169	184	149	154	125	120	105	140	93	65
Salida	27	19	16	9	36	13	23	58	20	15
Poncha Springs	7	1	16	11	12	5	17	19	7	7
Buena Vista	36	28	30	23	31	17	28	34	20	12

Population Projections

Annual growth projections anticipate that over the next twenty-five years there will be a positive net change of nearly 500 people per year within Chaffee County. A 2007 Market Analysis completed by THK Associates, Inc. cited Salida's share of overall population growth in the county between 1990 and 2007 was 15.4%. Other sources indicate an expected growth rate in the city of 2% annually for the next twenty-five years. If this is true, assuming the city has enough developable land to accommodate such growth, the city's population could reach nearly 10,000 residents by 2033.¹ The numbers from these sources may need to be tempered as the recession was not considered when those numbers were released. Nevertheless, the overall growth projection may still be relevant.

According to the same Market Analysis completed by THK Associates Inc., there were 1,501 second homes in Chaffee County which represents 15% of the total units in the county. In Salida, second home purchases have been on the rise, representing 79% of the total change in housing stock occupancy from 2000 through 2005 as opposed to 14% from 1990 to 2000.² Second home ownership does not account for a year round increase in population so the current and projected population estimates should be adjusted to recognize this type of ownership.

Salida experiences population fluctuations throughout the year due to the influence of tourism, second home ownership and seasonal service industry employees. Summer is the height of the tourist season with fall and spring shoulder seasons experiencing more tempered population ebbs and flows.

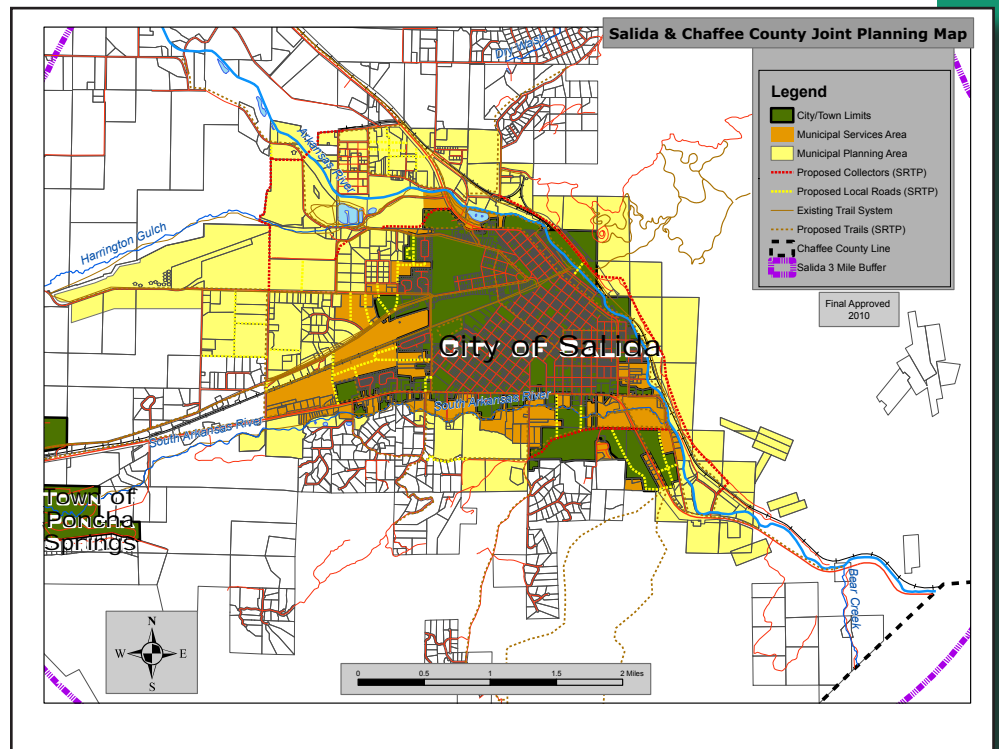
¹ Summit Economics, LLC, 2008, Market Feasibility Crestone Heights Affordable Housing Salida, Colorado, p. 32

² Applegate Group, Inc., 2009, Raw Water Master Plan, City of Salida, Colorado, P. 12

Cooperative Planning

The City of Salida and Chaffee County entered into an [Intergovernmental Agreement \(IGA\)](#) in 2008 for the purpose of directing growth in accord with the city and county comprehensive plans and coordinating management of development activities in the Salida area. The results of the cooperative planning efforts are intended to maintain the identity of the Salida community, promote the efficient provision of public services (central sanitary sewer and water, streets, police protection and other services) and protect open lands and agricultural lands.

The IGA identifies a Municipal Services Area (MSA) and Municipal Planning Area (MPA). The MSA, identified on the Joint Planning Map, is an area adjacent to the city's boundary that is eligible for annexation and can be served by city utilities and infrastructure. The MPA is an area outside the city boundary for coordinated planning efforts with the county and which maybe developed at urban or rural intensity,



depending on the specific area. The Joint Planning Map identifies the MSA to be wholly contained within the MPA.

Development applications within the Municipal Planning Area are reviewed by a Regional Planning Com-

mission (RPC) made up of six members. The county and city each appoint three members. The RPC makes recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners and City Council.

Demand for Residential and Commercial Space

The demand for residential and commercial space has increased steadily in Chaffee County since 1970. Such demand can be measured by indicators, which according to the THK Market Analysis are identified as employment and population trends. Employment trends are an indicator for economic growth and when there is a positive trend in employment, all sectors of the economy will typically experience growth. Similarly, a positive trend in population and household growth will dictate the demand in the real estate market.

Employment growth in Chaffee County has grown from 3,182 jobs in 1970 to 10,740 jobs in 2006. This represents 3.4% annual growth over the 36 year period. The increase in employment has spanned all employment sectors but the services industry has experienced the largest increase. Other sectors that have experienced strong growth include retail, construction and FIRE (Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate). It is expected that these employment sectors will continue to experience positive growth estimated at a 2% annual increase.³

Population growth will continue with an expected addition of 12,500 people to the county over the next 25 years. As discussed earlier, the city could expect an additional 4,000 residents by 2033 bringing the population total to approximately 10,000.

The expectation of growth in employment and population will require additional space for the residential and commercial real estate sectors. The THK Market Analysis discusses the demand for office, flex and research and development (R & D) space within the Vandaveer Ranch site. The demand for office space has been projected to be 55,006 square feet and for

3. THK Associates Inc., 2007, Mixed Use Market Analysis Vandaveer Ranch Salida, Colorado, p. 9

flex and R & D is expected to be approximately 10,600 square feet within the site by 2017. Demand projections for residential units within the Vandaveer Ranch site are expected to be 640 units at build out in 2017. This accounts for an annual absorption of forty-seven single family detached units, eight town-home units and nine multi-family units.

The projected demand timeline for residential and commercial development cited in the THK study will need to be adjusted based on the fact that construction was expected to have begun in 2007 and the economic downturn has led to a measurable reduction of population and employment in the county. Additional sources state that real estate brokers in Chaffee County have reported a 30% reduction in demand and the horizon for a strong real estate market is not anticipated until 2010 with pre-recession demand levels not expected until 2012.⁴

While the Market Analysis is specifically relevant to the Vandaveer Ranch site, it demonstrates the need for additional commercial and residential uses within the region. It also anticipates an overall projected market performance and population increase whose timeline may need adjustment but whose overall demand projections are likely accurate. Assumptions for population and market growth in Salida can be supported by the pre-recession activity and the looming en masse retirement of baby boomers. Salida has also received attention through national publications, reporting Salida as a desirable place to live because of the active lifestyle, local culture and temperate year round climate.

Consequences of Growth

It is inevitable that growth will occur within the city limits as well as in the unincorporated county surrounding Salida. City staff has been anticipating such growth and setting a course for the future, attempting to yield the best results for the city's residents. These efforts include working with county staff to develop municipal planning and municipal services areas, memorialized in an intergovernmental agreement.

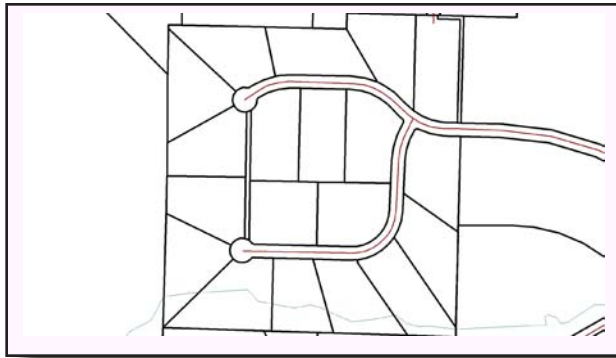
The city has adopted several overlay zoning districts within the city limits in an attempt to match the exist-

4. Summit Economics, LLC, 2008, Market Feasibility Crestone Heights Affordable Housing Salida, Colorado, pgs. 41 & 44

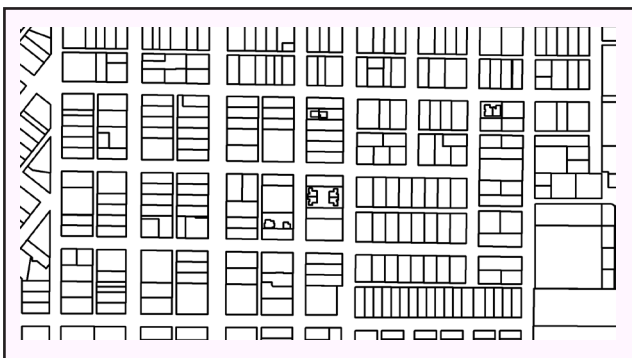
ing built environment and encourage more creative development. Despite the efforts made by the city, there will still be consequences of growth which will be discussed here and will translate into principles and policies so that the city can set a definite course for growing responsibly and efficiently.

It is first important to discuss two different scenarios for growth: suburban sprawl and traditional neighborhood development. Suburban sprawl is the result of a system of planning that separated uses and is dependant on the automobile to move through its landscape to accomplish ones basic daily needs. It often occurs as neighborhood clusters unattached to existing development and requiring extension of city infrastructure. Implemented largely after World War II and supported through the Federal Housing Administration and Veteran Administration, it focuses on new, single family detached housing. Separate

trip to the library, to the grocery store or to work all require a car ride. Alternatively, the traditional neighborhood, which is still the dominant pattern of habitation outside the United States and represents the original neighborhood model in Salida, is representative of mixed-use, pedestrian friendly communities. The traditional neighborhood has proven to be a more sustainable form of growth that has allowed development to occur without excessive infrastructure cost and more limited destruction of the countryside.⁵



2 Acre Sprawl Development



Traditional Neighborhood Development

from the housing or residential neighborhoods, zoning codes allow shopping centers, office parks, civic buildings and the roads to connect them together. There is no integration of uses so in most cases a



Monarch Spur Pocket Park

The city should anticipate the consequences of growth and plan carefully in order to maximize its benefits. For example, growth will create jobs both in the short term with the construction and trades industries as well as long term in the retail, services and FIRE (Finance, Insurance, Real Estate) industries. It also brings in sales tax to support the local government.

Growth can lead to overcrowding of existing civic and green spaces, cause traffic congestion, overburden existing infrastructure and change the local culture. It is therefore important that the city plan for and mandate that development occur at a net benefit to the community. New development should create or contribute to parks, trails and open space. It should occur as a logical extension of existing development to avoid costly extension of city owned

5. Duany, Andreas, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk and Jeff Speck. Suburban Nation: The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream. New York: North Point Press, 2000.

infrastructure. It should be done so that the social fabric of the city remains intact and new residents can be part of the community. This can be accomplished through the integration of uses, creation of community places and emphasis on the pedestrian and bicycling environment.

Zoning and Development

Zoning Districts

Salida has been divided into nine zoning districts that are meant to regulate the type and intensity of land uses. The goal of these districts is to achieve a compatibility of uses and character with the existing built environment which is guided by the vision of the city's Comprehensive Plan. The [City's 2000 Comprehensive Plan](#) established a direction for growth that was generated by the residents of the city and was broken into nine separate components. These are as follows:

1. *Improved standards for structures, landscaping, and signage will improve the overall attractiveness and livability of Salida.*
2. *New development will be focused within or adjacent to the city to preserve the rural, scenic character of the surrounding area's open spaces and agricultural lands.*
3. *Highway 50 will be an attractive commercial corridor that safely and efficiently accommodates pedestrians, bicycles, and automobiles.*
4. *Community gateways along major roadway corridors will create a positive and unique identity.*
5. *A balanced and sustainable economy will offer a variety of quality employment opportunities.*
6. *An appropriate range of housing types will be available to serve the varied lifestyles, ages, and income levels of residents.*
7. *A vibrant Downtown will be the cultural activity center of the community and the region, and provide a variety of shopping, entertainment, civic, residential, and recreational uses.*
8. *A system of interconnected parks, open spaces and trails will protect important natural areas and open spaces around Salida and serve the recreational needs of residents and visitors.*

9. *Public facilities and services will be provided in an efficient and cost-effective manner.*

City staff has been working to achieve this direction by making changes to the Land Use Code. Since the 2000 Comprehensive Plan, staff has created 7 new zoning districts/overlays that will protect the historic built environment, balance the need for commercial and residential property, protect quality of life, protect property values and respect the rights of property owners. These districts are as follows: Salida Downtown Historic District Overlay; Residential Mixed Use District; Historic Protection Overlay; SH 291 Corridor Overlay; Highway 50 Corridor Overlay; Local Historic Landmark Overlay; Sackett Overlay.

The city's land use code was overhauled in 2002 using the code from the City of Gunnison as a model.



Goal # 3 Hwy 50 Improvements



Goal # 7 A Vibrant Downtown

During that revision lot sizes in the existing neighborhoods were reduced to accommodate subdivision of 75' x 150' lots and encourage infill development. In addition, accessory dwelling units were added as an allowed use as long as lots met certain minimum size and density requirements.

Additional changes that have been made since that time include requirements for affordable housing, creation of the planned development process, revisions to land dedication requirements for parks, trails and open space and allowance of duplex and townhouse units rather than condominiums in some cases.

The changes to the land use code have identified the need for more responsible and sustainable development. This includes the need for extensions of the non-motorized transportation network, use of sustainable building materials and expansion of the urban forest. These modifications will lay the groundwork for maintaining a healthy and sustainable city.

Expansion/Establishment of Zoning Districts

In order to encourage the type of development desired by city residents and elected officials it will be important for the city's Land Use Code to provide an avenue by which developers and builders can meet the impending demand. Salida's codes were not immune to the post World War II sprawl model of planning. They were overlain on a built environment that was the traditional neighborhood model. As a result, the implementation and administration of the codes was difficult and began to change the look and feel of the city.

There has been an ongoing effort since the adoption of the city's Comprehensive Plan in June of 2000 to enhance the zoning districts to allow for development more akin to the traditional neighborhood. One such effort has been to match the built environment and its uses with the land use code. An example of this is the Residential Mixed Use zoning district, which will be looked at in this process and likely expanded to allow for more flexibility and encourage the extension of similar development already existing in the City. Another example is the establishment of a Parks and

Open Space zoning district. Currently, there is no such district nor guidelines for development within publicly owned parks and open spaces. City staff has also discussed the expansion of industrial zoning and commercial zoning.

The [Highway Corridor Improvement Plan](#) discusses opportunities for enhancing the highway corridor and highlighting the character of the city. Smelertown in



The 1st Street highway corridor outside the downtown has a mix of residential, office and retail which match the Residential Mix Use (RMU) Zoning



There is currently no Parks or Open Space Zoning

the Municipal Growth Area is identified as a potential site for expanding industrial uses.

There remain several areas of the land use code that

are out of date or which contradict other sections. The Land Use Code should be cohesive with other sections of the Salida Municipal Code. The schedule of uses in the Land Use Code is particularly antiquated and should be overhauled to address changing development patterns, new uses, business that have emerged in the past decade, and impacts associated with various types of users.

Infill/Redevelopment

The option for infill development on vacant and underutilized parcels presents an opportunity for the city to encourage creative and innovative design. The city has the option to offer certain incentives that may make development within the city more attractive than other development options. One incentive that already exists is the proximity of public utilities and infrastructure, which will keep development costs down. Other options may include density bonuses for residential development and offering other incentives to infrastructure standards for built connections to pedestrian and bicycle transportation corridors.

Infill development can benefit the city, developers and residents of Salida. It offers an opportunity to take vacant or underutilized parcels and using existing infrastructure create new commercial and residential options in the city. Land costs will often increase the price of homes and commercial spaces, but building within the city core or adjacent to it will often allow greater density, spreading the land cost among more units and creating a more affordable product. Pedestrian accessibility is also a benefit as proximity to existing sidewalks and trails offers options to reduce vehicle trips. It will offer a built environment that already has mature trees and established parks and open spaces for recreation. There are social benefits, too, as there is an existing community which makes meeting new people easier. Finally, it creates a continuity of the built landscape. It fills in the gaps that existed, which can create a sense of prosperity and social cohesion within the city.

Many of the vacant and underutilized parcels exist outside the downtown area but are within areas that have been developed or at least in areas that have been through the entitlement process and are ap-

proved for development. The majority of the underutilized or vacant commercial parcels exist in the downtown core, along Highway 50 and Highway 291. These locations can be served by city utilities. The Vandaveer Ranch site, which includes both commercial and residential, would require extension of city utilities and infrastructure.

The city has identified several areas of vacant residential parcels for infill development. In fact the majority of land identified for infill has been identified for residential development. Most of the vacant residential land exists to the west of the city and much of it exists within the city's Municipal Services Area, which would require annexation to develop it to city standards.

Other identified parcels of land include vacant and underutilized industrial properties. Similar to the residential parcels, these exist in the county and would require annexation to develop to city standards. Much of the land available for industrial development is located in Smelertown and near Harriet Alexander Field and would require major extension of public utilities.



Vacant Parcels Along the Hwy 50 Corridor

Annexation

Annexation allows the city an opportunity to expand its borders, address deficiencies in available space for industrial, commercial or residential lands and may create financial opportunities for the city. Such opportunities need to be studied carefully including the fiscal impact so that the city is not subsidizing development by assuming the additional burden onto its facilities and services.

Utilities and Infrastructure

The task of maintaining and replacing public utilities and infrastructure has been challenging for the city. New growth, especially when it requires the extension of utilities and infrastructure, places an added burden on the city. The additional infrastructure must be maintained and replaced over time and the existing infrastructure has an increased rate of deterioration because of the added use.

The city will need improvements to all its utilities and infrastructure as outlined in the recently completed water and wastewater utility studies. Each of these improvements will require expenditures by the city that will depend on growth to help pay the debt service for the costs associated with constructing the improvements. In some cases, like for streets, water and sewer lines, there is a better economy of scale for encouraging development to occur around existing infrastructure and higher density development.

Utilities and infrastructure are discussed in more detail in Chapter 10, Community Services.



Public Works Repairing Water Lines

Principles/Policy/Action Items

Principle LU&G-I. Community Character

Maintain and protect Salida's community, historic small town character and diversity.

Policy LU&G-I. 1 – New development within the city shall make the most appropriate use of the land using design standards that enhance and complement the historic built environment of the city.



Residential Neighborhood Currently Zoned Industrail

Action LU&G-I. 1.a. – Amend Salida's Land Use Code and Zoning Map to advance the objectives of this plan and consider appropriate zoning designations, densities and overlays that utilize setbacks and promote the traditional historic built environment.

Policy LU&G-I. 2 – Infill and redevelopment should be encouraged and will advance the objectives of this plan.

Action LU&G-I.2.a - Encourage projects to use maximum density allowances to make the best use of the available infrastructure.

Action LU&G-I.2.b – Encourage and incentivize the provision of affordable units where they were removed to make room for new development.

Action LU&G-I.2.c –Focus new development in the Salida area within the Municipal Services Area to ensure adequate provision of services and limit sprawl development around the city.

Policy LU&G-I. 3 – Uses on city owned parcels shall accommodate the needs of city residents.

Action LU&G-I.3.a – Use public process to determine the most appropriate use of vacant city owned parcels.

Action LU&G-I.3.b – Amend the city's Land Use Code to include a parks and open space zoning district.

Policy LU&G-I.4 – Respect rights of private landowners through open and inclusive public processes.

Action Item LU&G-I.4.a – Changes to the Land Use Code and Zoning Map shall include public process in accordance with local and state laws.

Principle LU&G-II. City Infrastructure

Maintain, enhance and protect the city's infrastructure, utilities and resources so the viability of these public assets remains intact.

Policy LU&G-II. 1 – Annexation should occur only when it is determined to be a net benefit to the city with the expectation that development pays it own way.

Action LU&G-II.1.a – Proposals for annexation should demonstrate that the development will not create a fiscal burden on the city.

Action LU&G-II.1.b – Any annexation shall bring water rights in an amount sufficient in quantity and seniority to serve the needs of the proposed development. In instances where water is not available an option for cash in lieu payment may be accepted.

Action LU&G-II.1.c – Any proposal for annexation will be evaluated with an expectation of urban density levels, inclusion of connections to pedestrian and bicycle corridors, and promotion of innovative, creative and energy efficient design.

Principle LU&G-III. Existing Structures and Streetscapes

Maintain valued structures and streetscapes within the city and allow new development that is compatible in design and also meets goals for innovation and energy efficiency.

Policy LU&G-III.1 – Ensure adequate public spaces as part of new development.

Action LU&G-III.1.a – Public spaces should be inventoried and a requirement for providing additional space should be a condition of approval for new development.

Action LU&G-III.1.b – Encourage the creation of an eclectic range of infill recreation opportunities in existing neighborhoods for all residents of the community to enjoy.



Loyal Duke Dog Park

Policy LU&G-III.2 – Ensure community separators to define and maintain Salida’s identity to avoid blending of communities as growth occurs.

Action LU&G-III.2.a – Work with the Town of Poncha Springs, Chaffee County and private landowners to maintain a substantial buffer of undeveloped land between the two municipalities.

Policy LU&G-III.3 – Reduce barriers and encourage more energy efficient construction.

Action LU&G-III.3.a – Work with the Chaffee County Building Department to ensure updates to the Building Codes allow for sensible adaptive sustainable building practices and use of the abundance of natural resources to heat and power existing structures in Salida.

Action LU&G-III.3.b – Investigate changes in the Land Use Code to allow the use of alternative energy such as wind power, solar and to ensure solar access.

Principle LU&G-IV. Natural Environment

Salida will sustain and enhance the beauty and health of the natural environment and provide access to recreation opportunities.

Policy LU&G-IV.1 – Development should not detract from the natural character in and around the city.

Action LU&G-IV.1.a – New development and infill/redevelopment should complement the natural environment and should not compromise identified natural and/or protected resources.

Principle LU&G-V. Sustainable Development

Salida will promote and provide opportunity for efficient and sustainable development opportunities.

Policy LU&G-V.1 – Salida will establish a regular schedule of review for chapters within the Land Use Code, building codes and Comprehensive Plan to ensure they are up to date and provide opportunity for sustainable development.

Policy LU&G-V.2 – Planning staff will perform an in-depth review of neighborhood densities compared to those allowed in the zoning code.

Action LU&G-V.2.a – Use public process to determine ideal densities in existing neighborhoods.

Policy LU&G-V.3 – Salida and Chaffee County should continue to work together to carry out the objectives of the 2008 Intergovernmental Agreement and update and enhance the policies contained within, when necessary.

Action LU&G-V.3.a – Work with the County to develop land use policies to maintain agricultural lands, develop appropriate sites to urban density and mitigate negative effects of sprawl development.