Acknowledgement

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District #2 – Commissioner Linda Isenhart
District #3 – Commissioner Gail Watson – Chair

Interagency Task Force Representation
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Colorado Department of Transportation
Colorado Division of Mining
Colorado Division of Water Resources
Colorado Parks and Wildlife
NoCo Places 2050
Black Hawk Central City Sanitation District
Clear Creek County
Boulder County
Jefferson County
Grand County
City of Central City
City of Black Hawk
Town of Nederland
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Gilpin County Senior Leadership Team
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Opposite Page: View from Gilpin County Courthouse
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Executive Summary

Gilpin County's Draw

Known to be one of the smallest counties in Colorado, Gilpin County has a unique character defined by large areas of publicly accessible state and federal land (more than 50% of the County) and the Peak to Peak Scenic Byway along CO 119 with beautiful views to the surrounding mountains. Following the Gold Rush that began in 1859, major settlement occurred giving rise to Black Hawk and Central City. In order to keep the two cities alive after decades of economic decline, mining was replaced by the gaming industry in 1990. Regardless of mining and gaming, a main draw for people moving to Gilpin County has always been its relative isolation with little, if any, tourism.

Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan

Growth for the last 20+ years has been slow for Gilpin County. However, being located less than an hour from Denver, a major employment center, and the ease with which people can work remotely, the question is not whether development will occur, but rather when. For that reason, it is necessary to manage the County with care and make the development of new housing stock to be difficult and expensive. Growth within the County is imminent. The establishment of villages that are predetermined by the County as appropriate and feasible for future development. However, prospective businesses, developers and homebuilders should not only be directed toward these villages, but also be required to meet the highest standards of precaution and quality to support environmental sustainability and the rural community values.

Natural Resources

A study of existing conditions revealed that several areas within Gilpin County possess high ecological value due to their ecological diversity, sensitivity, or importance as wildlife migration corridors. These areas are critical to the long-term stewardship of natural resources in the County and should be considered for policies and initiatives that promote long-term conservation and stewardship.

Economics

Economically the gaming industry at Black Hawk and Central City generates significant sources of income, employment, and tax revenue for the County, but the industry’s growth has not stimulated economic diversification. The County’s rural character with a small and dispersed population hinders its ability to support important local service, such as healthcare facilities, let alone attract new, desired services, such as broadband internet, a grocery, or a bank. The lack of these services, in turn, limits the County’s ability to attract new residents or house the gaming industry’s work force. Limited water and wastewater resources, and a lack of developable private land, cause the development of new housing stock to be difficult and expensive.

Visioning

Public engagement is foundational to the planning process. Educating the community about the role of a comprehensive plan was followed by a schedule of regular meetings and surveys to learn about the preferences of the people living and doing business in Gilpin County. The outcome was the formulation of a Vision Statement that reads:

Vision Statement:
“High-quality mountain living that balances environmental sustainability & rural community values with economic diversification & resiliency.”

Six Goals:
The Vision Statement led to six goals:
1. Protect and Sustain Gilpin County’s rural mountain community and natural environment by focusing resources and density in less-intrusive development nodes.
2. Prevent Overuse by managing recreational tourism with focused infrastructure improvements.
3. Economic Diversification calls for development to be concentrated in nodes, while promoting a diversity of commercial/retail ventures.
4. Interagency Coordination to focus resources and efforts.
5. Maintain Gilpin County’s Unique Character with County control over development.
6. Manage Growth to Protect Community Values responsibly and with care.

Strategies:
The vision and goals combined inspired strategies for resilient and sustainable growth within the County i.e.:
1. Mixed Used Development - including a mix of Residential & Commercial (retail, entertainment, hospitality, etc.) and industrial (limited to cottage industry) will lead to much needed economic diversification.
2. Concentrated Development - in small, focused areas called villages will result in economic resiliency and the protection of vulnerable and sensitive natural and cultural areas.
3. Managed Growth - including the predetermination of where growth should take place, the quality of such growth, and regulating development that allows for predictability AND flexibility, is necessary to achieve the vision for the County.

Growth Management Framework

Development within the County is imminent. The growth management framework directs toward the establishment of villages that are predetermined by the County as appropriate and feasible for future development. However, prospective businesses, developers and homebuilders should not only be directed toward these villages, but also be required to meet the highest standards of precaution and quality to support environmental sustainability and the rural community values.
Development Regulations

One of the primary tools to implement the vision for the County is found in development regulations. However, to be effective, zoning regulations need to abide by three key rules:

Rules for Regulations

Dynamic:
Dynamic zoning regulations make it easy to do the right thing in the right place while responding to changing market and other contexts. They should be predictable and consistent while being easy to use and update.

Well Defined:
Well defined rules help inform potential developers that the County has a vision. Clear expectations allow developers to work within clearly defined rules providing a sense of protection for any potential investment.

Flexible:
Regulations should be flexible enough to accommodate unknown opportunities, yet specific enough to help staff make day-to-day decisions.

Conclusion

The multifaceted challenges facing Gilpin County require multifaceted solutions. By concentrating development and infrastructure requirements in pre-determined locations and managing outdoor recreation, the County gains greater control over the character of the County, while simultaneously encouraging appropriate development and economic diversification.

County Villages

Mixed use villages versus dispersed development hold multiple benefits that include cost effective infrastructure, affordable housing, limited disturbance footprint, sense of community and walkability, while promoting community values and protecting the natural environment. Villages are characterized by compactness, minimized development impact, multi-modal connectivity and vibrant places that are welcoming to residents, business owners, commuters, and tourists. The basic configuration of a village includes a mixed use village core and transition zone, surrounded by a residential zone.

The implementation of the villages requires the creation of a vision plan for each village. This Village Vision Plan is to serve as the blueprint for its development over time whether it takes 20, 50 or 100 years for a village's build-out. The premise is that no matter how long it takes to reach a village's full capacity, it is about a roadmap that guides development over time based on developer interest, market forces and the community’s capacity and tolerance for development.

In summary, villages will serve as the catalyst for economic diversification, the protection of areas of natural and cultural importance, and the primary means to achieve the vision and goals for the County.

However, for the successful implementation of the villages, it is necessary that the County AND landowners are patient in order for county villages that mature from small yet intentional to prosperous and diverse.
Report Overview

The Gilpin County Comprehensive Plan is the culmination of a planning process in which the consultant team reviewed existing documents, worked collaboratively with various agencies and governing bodies, engaged at numerous points with county residents, and brought industry-specific knowledge to assist the County in establishing a vision and formalizing actions and goals focused on achieving the County’s vision. The following describes an overview of each chapter of the Comprehensive Plan report.

Chapter 1: Purpose & Process

Chapter 1 describes a comprehensive plan as a cohesive document that accounts for various county-wide elements (economics, land use, transportation, and recreation) in a comprehensive and integrated manner.

The process to establish a Comprehensive Plan provides predictability and fairness for citizens, appointed and elected officials, county staff and the development community by providing clear recommendations for the desired type, location, and scale of new development and redevelopment within the County.

The planning process evaluates: 1) where are we now; 2) where do we want to be; 3) what are our options; and 4) how do we get there?

Chapter 2: Existing Conditions

Chapter 2 references the Existing Conditions report, which is the result of the consultant team reviewing existing county documents, discussions with the staff of Gilpin County as well as other agencies, publicly available information such as from the U.S. Census Bureau, the Colorado State Demographer, and numerous other sources.

The Existing Conditions report exists as a standalone document which provides context for the Comprehensive Plan. Topics addressed in the Existing Conditions report include: County character, demographics, land use, housing, transportation & mobility, economy, taxation, development impact, and market & economic constraints & opportunities.

Chapter 3: Community Engagement

The public engagement strategy for the Gilpin County Comprehensive Plan emphasized community input and public education simultaneously. Therefore, this effort necessarily included a wide-range of community touchpoints and input opportunities, such as a series of Board of County Commissioner (BOCC) meetings, Planning Commission (PC) meetings, Inter-agency Task Force meetings, Community Workshops, three community-wide surveys and the Comprehensive Plan website.

The Public Engagement process had a number of phases that provided themes for the team to focus on when establishing the vision and strategies to achieve the County’s goals (see Figure RO-1: Public Engagement Phases & Themes).

1. Phase 1
   - Discovery & Establishing a Vision
     - Community Pride & Identity
     - Think Big About Staying Small
     - Collaboration & Inclusivity
     - Economic Diversification
     - Environmental Awareness

2. Phase 2
   - Developing Plan Elements
     - Right Uses, Right Places
     - Economic Diversification
     - Financial Sustainability
     - Transportation Needs

3. Phase 3
   - Finalizing the Plan
     - Protect & Sustain, Prevent Overuse
     - County Villages & Development Guidelines
     - Natural Hazards of Concern
     - Need for County Regulations

Figure RO-1: Public Engagement Phases & Themes
Chapter 4: Visioning

Chapter 4 reflects the culmination of public engagement expressed as community values and priorities, a vision statement, and six goals and strategies to implement the vision, all of which were collaboratively developed throughout a nearly year-long planning process.

The level of community investment in this effort is mentioned as unprecedented in the history of Gilpin County.

The chapter concludes that the community’s ultimate commitment to undertaking this comprehensive planning process in the face of adversity of historic proportion, provides a Comprehensive Plan that will endure and deliver the County’s vision to provide:

High-quality mountain living that balances environmental sustainability & rural community values with economic diversification & resiliency

Chapter 5: Economics

This chapter provides an overview of Gilpin County’s governmental funds and how their respective revenue sources and cost structures react to growth under varying development patterns.

It includes a fiscal evaluation of three future land use scenarios (consisting of residential and commercial land uses) based on forecasted data from the Colorado State Demographer’s Office and scenarios developed with County and community input as part of the Comprehensive Plan process.

This chapter highlights the relationship between land use and government finances specific to Gilpin County and serves as one of many inputs to the comprehensive planning process.

Chapter 6: Land Use

Chapter 6 describes existing development that is mainly focused in the cities and along CO-119, while 50% of the County is public land that will never be developed.

The proposed growth management framework recognizes the existing fiscal responsibilities for the County and the inevitability of residential growth and development pressure due to the expansion of the Denver metro area. This growth management framework is based on three main tenets: 1) Diversify the economy to include uses other than residential, 2) Concentrate future growth in development nodes called “villages”, and 3) Predetermine growth that is predictable yet flexible.

The village concept is described in terms of their benefits, the criteria for choosing their location, the characteristics and configuration of a typical village, and the proposed footprint for each of the various proposed villages.

The implementation of the village concept describes the creation of Village Vision Plans to evaluate feasibility, development parameters that meet the County’s needs, and to serve as the blueprint for development over time. This is followed by a description of the regulations that need to be in place for each village.

Chapter 7: Transportation

Chapter 7 describes a strategy for the Gilpin County transportation system that prepares the County for future land use changes and the population, employment, and recreational growth those changes may produce.

Countywide policies include greater collaboration with adjacent counties and CDOT, increasing multimodal infrastructure to enhance safety, investing in safety and emergency preparedness, and strengthening shared-use transportation services.

County Village toolbox items focus on the types of street regulations and tools that would be most effective in enhancing the village character and ensuring safe and efficient travel in and around the villages.

Chapter 8: Capital Improvement Plan

This chapter describes the context of Gilpin County whereby capital projects are geared towards two broad goals: financial sustainability and long-range planning. Capital planning is described as being useful for tracking and prioritizing impending projects from various departments to incorporate into land use planning and economic development. CIP strategies include:

• Equitable growth by addressing socioeconomic needs where most needed.
• Maintaining quality of life with infrastructure that keeps pace with population growth and the ability to support the growing numbers of recreational visitors.
• Growth management by directing investment to priority areas for future residential and commercial development in a manner that is consistent with stated community goals.
• Focus on social and financial rates of return with the careful examination of costs, available funding, and feasible timelines.
• Differentiate capital and maintenance expenditures.

Alternative and innovative sources of funding are described as:

• Taxes and fees in terms of user fees, impact fees, and sales and lodging taxes.
• State and federal grants offer funding mechanism for local governments to invest in capital projects.
• Borrowing to fund capital projects contingent on careful assessment of its debt capacity and the usefulness of the capital project against the costs of intergenerational equity, i.e., disseminating the costs of capital projects over their useful lives.
• Public-private partnership (P-3) allows for private entities to share costs, risks, and revenues with a public agency.
• Philanthropic funding by individuals and foundations have become increasingly targeted at economic and social development outcomes.

Chapter 9: County Regulations

This chapter includes a suggested set of rules to prepare effective zoning regulations, land use and engineering regulations for the County, and is followed by 1) describing the approach applied to amending the zoning and land use regulations, and 2) an introduction to the County’s new engineering regulations called the “Gilpin County Standards and Specifications for Design and Construction.”
Chapter 10: Implementation Plan

The implementation plan is a necessary part of the Comprehensive Plan creating a list of action items, prioritized, and described to help the County realize the vision set out in the Comprehensive Plan. The Implementation plan for Gilpin County includes two categories of action items: Catalyst items and General items.

- **Catalyst actions** are primary actions that lead to other actions to be initiated that otherwise may have cost more, taken longer, or in some cases would never have taken effect.
- **General actions** are actions taken to achieve desired goals (“secondary actions”) but not necessarily causing the precipitation of other actions.

All actions are categorized in terms of economic actions, land use actions, transportation actions, recreation actions, and other actions.

Appendices

**Appendix A** includes the summaries of existing County documents and plans, i.e. Quality of Life Survey Highlights, Strategic Plan Summary, and Gilpin County Master Plan Summary.

**Appendix B** serves as a supplement to Chapter 3: Community Engagement and includes an overview of the public meetings, the SCORE analysis, results of the three Community Surveys, summaries of the Interagency Task Force meetings, summaries of the Community Workshops, and a list of Interagency Task Force Members invited to the various Task Force meetings.

**Appendix C** is a compilation of references related to natural resources as discussed in Chapter 2 of the Existing Conditions Report.
1 Introduction
Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 What is a Comprehensive Plan?
As the name indicates, a comprehensive plan considers various county and city plan elements e.g. economic, land use, transportation and recreation in a comprehensive manner. That means not only the comprehensive exploration and studying of a particular element county wide, but also a focus on the interaction and interrelationship between the various plan elements. The objective is for the elements to holistically inform and influence each other, all while serving as tools to achieve the vision for the study area, which in this case is Gilpin County (“County”). The vision itself is based on the community’s values and formulated as a result of public engagement.

1.2 Purpose
A comprehensive plan is essential to all communities. It provides predictability and fairness for citizens, appointed and elected officials, county staff, and the development community by providing clear recommendations for the desired type, location, and scale of new development and redevelopment within the county. It is the means to coordinate all county functions including infrastructure investment needed to accommodate the desired type and level of growth. To that end, a comprehensive plan guides the County’s Capital Improvements Program (CIP) with respect to spending on public infrastructure.

This Comprehensive Plan is the foundation of defining and implementing a long-range policy including zoning for the orderly growth and development of Gilpin County. In addition, the purpose of this Plan is to identify and articulate the vision for the future and outline a set of goals and objectives to achieve the desired vision. Key to this is the Future Land Use Plan that guides the future development of the community.

In essence, the Comprehensive Plan is a blueprint for collaborative decision making on the County’s growth; it provides the Board of County Commissioners, Planning Commission, County Staff, and the community at large with a road map to implement a vision reflective of the desires and dreams of the County’s citizens. By its nature, the Comprehensive Plan is a living document which is subject to periodic review and revision as necessary to reflect life and values within the County.

1.3 Planning Process
In general, a comprehensive plan evaluates four questions:
1. Where are we now? – this means an analysis of existing conditions in the County
2. Where do we want to be? – answered by means of a visioning process
3. What are our options? – considered by exploring alternative scenarios
4. How do we get there? – defined by the plan elements and implementation actions

The comprehensive planning process in context with other County initiated studies and/or actions, is illustrated in Figure 1-1: Planning Process. The center column represents the steps taken during the development of this planning process. It includes an analysis of existing conditions to determine the baseline data; community visioning to articulate the County’s future; consider alternative futures or development scenarios, plan elements recommendation and the prioritization of implementation actions to realize the vision. Public engagement and participation occur throughout the process by means of the Planning Commission, Interagency Task Force, Focus Groups, Community Workshops, and a series of Community Surveys.

The two directional arrows to the left are indicative of detail studies and plans that are either prepared prior to, simultaneously, or as a result of the comprehensive planning process. In the case of Gilpin County, the Economic Analysis and Transportation Plan are conducted simultaneously during the comprehensive planning process, whereas the Open Space, Parks & Trails Plan will be done with input from the Comprehensive Plan as and when funding becomes available. Other studies and plans also dependent on funding, include a Historic Preservation Plan and a Hazard Mitigation Plan.

The column to the right represents new and/or revisions of ordinances, standards and regulations that serve as tools to implement the Comprehensive Plan.

![Figure 1-1: Planning Process](image-url)
Chapter 2: Existing Conditions

The Existing Conditions report is the result of the consultant team reviewing existing county documents, discussions with the staff of Gilpin County as well as other agencies, publicly available information such as from the U.S. Census Bureau, the Colorado State Demographer, and numerous other sources.

A summary of the main findings from this review are discussed below; however, the full text can be found in the Existing Conditions report that serves as a support to the Gilpin County Comprehensive Plan.

2.1 Character

Gilpin County is the second smallest county in Colorado by land area and more than 50% of the County is owned by the Federal or State governments.

Due to fragmented land management and dispersed public and private ownership, the County will likely be managing and regulating unincorporated county land in perpetuity.

The county is entirely mountainous which limits development potential but results in impressive views that are valued and cherished by the County’s residents.

2.2 Natural Resources

Several areas within Gilpin County possess high ecological values due to their ecological diversity, sensitivity, or importance as wildlife migration corridors. These areas are critical to the long-term stewardship of natural resources in the County and should be considered for policies and initiatives that promote long-term conservation and stewardship.

Uncontrolled development and unmanaged recreation in similar rural areas result in human intrusion, disturbance, or removal of wildlife habitat. Additional impacts of increased development are typically hydrology changes i.e. hard surfaces that cause less ground infiltration of stormwater runoff resulting in an increase of runoff, and the introduction or spread of invasive non-native species, resulting in reduced abundance, distribution and range of native species.

2.3 Demographics

The County’s demographics are unique compared to other communities along the Front Range. The County’s population growth has been relatively modest over the last decade and current projections suggest that the County may add no more than 100 additional residents over the next 30 years if current trends persist.

The County’s population is also aging as a result of out-migration by younger residents, in-migration by older residents, and the desire of older residents to age-in-place. The median age of Gilpin County residents is older than in Metro area counties such as Jefferson County and Denver, and older than average across Colorado.

2.4 Land Use

The total planimetric area of Gilpin County is 150 square miles of which 82.5 square miles (55%) are public land. The amount of acreage under County control comes to 68 square miles or 43,560 acres.

From a land use point of view, the patchwork of County and public land causes the presence of isolated County land. Coupled with lack of easy access such isolated land may be limited in terms of potential land use.

Residential land use covers the largest area (46%) of County-controlled land at 19,740 acres or 30.8 square miles. This is followed by agricultural at 13,430 acres or 21 square miles that equals 31% of County-controlled land.
2.5 Housing

Gilpin County’s housing stock is widely distributed across rural subdivisions found throughout the County. Since 2010, housing development in the County has been slow, with less than 150 units being constructed. The slow rate of new home development reflects both the County’s relatively slow population growth during this time and the physical and legal challenges related to water and wastewater requirements for new residential development.

The County’s rugged mountain landscape and large proportion of publicly owned land limits the geographic area available for new housing development, but availability of domestic water supplies is perhaps the primary constraint to developing housing in the County’s unincorporated areas. Facing similar challenges, neighboring Clear Creek County has established a water bank to help facilitate new development. A water bank is a voluntary, market-based tool that leases water from willing sellers and ‘banks’ that water for others to use in exchange for a fee.

Many residences rely on local or forest service roads for access, and often these roads are less regularly maintained and may be challenging or slow to navigate in poor weather conditions, making emergency travel more challenging.

CO-119 is a designated scenic byway as well as a regional bicycle corridor from Boulder County to Black Hawk. However, it may be perceived as unsafe for bicycling due to inconsistencies in the presence and width of roadway shoulders north of Black Hawk, and the lack of opportunity for shoulders through the narrow, steep section of highway south of Black Hawk to US 6. CO-46 is another popular roadway for bicycle travel as it offers direct access to Golden Gate State Park and recreational opportunities in Jefferson County. Similar to CO-119, safety is a primary concern for bicyclists along CO-46 due to existing roadway conditions.

2.6 Transportation & Mobility

While Gilpin County roads aren’t heavily congested, the County does experience seasonal congestion at points along CO-119 associated with traveler behavior during summer and fall viewing seasons. Similarly, CO-72 and CO-46 are scenic winding roads that serve as the primary east/west connections and carry local residents and recreational visitors to adjacent county destinations such as Golden Gate State park.

2.7 Economy

The economy of Gilpin County is largely centered around the Cities of Black Hawk and Central City and their gaming economies.

The gaming industry generates significant sources of income, employment, and tax revenue for the County, but the industry’s growth has not stimulated much economic diversification.

The County’s small and dispersed population makes it difficult to attract or support businesses like healthcare providers, grocers, and banks. The lack of these services, in turn, limits the County’s ability to attract new residents or house the gaming industry’s work force.

2.8 Taxation

Gilpin County’s Government is financed through a combination of property taxes, specific ownership taxes, gaming taxes, grants and other unrestricted funds, investment earnings and other sources. There is no County sales tax in Gilpin County.

Gaming taxes are the largest – and therefore most important – source of the County’s annual tax revenues and often account for 50 percent or more of annual tax receipts.

Property taxes account for the next largest share of annual County tax receipts, but the County’s relatively low mill levy rate limits the amount of tax revenue the County receives from this source.

2.9 Development Impact

The 2008 downturn and the recent COVID-19 pandemic demonstrate the challenges associated with the County’s fiscal dependence on gaming.

Adjusted for inflation, County gaming revenues have been flat for 15 years. Revenues per resident have declined.

Additional dispersed, large lot residential development (similar to existing development in the County’s unincorporated areas) would require service expenditures that exceed the revenues generated by those new residents.

2.10 Market + Economic Constraints + Opportunities

The County’s rural character (small and dispersed population) hinders its ability to support important local service (such as healthcare facilities) let alone attract new, desired services (such as broadband internet, a grocery, or a bank).

Population growth is limited by available housing supply and ability to develop additional housing. Limited water and wastewater resources, along with a lack of developable private land, mean developing new housing stock is difficult and expensive.

A relatively low cost of living and a potential increase in telecommuting position Gilpin County to be an appealing growth area if managed properly.

The County may be able to capitalize on visitors and tourists by promoting recreational and historic tourism, potentially bolstering and diversifying the economy.
Community Engagement
Gilpin County Comprehensive Plan
Chapter 3: Community Engagement

The community engagement process for Gilpin County’s first Comprehensive Plan is unprecedented in the County’s more than 150-year history. Gathering meaningful, collaborative, and inclusive community input throughout the planning process was a primary driver in developing the Comprehensive Plan.

3.1 Engagement Strategy

The Public Engagement Strategy for the Gilpin County Comprehensive Plan emphasized community input and public education simultaneously. Therefore, this effort necessarily included a wide-range of community touchpoints and input opportunities, such as a series of Board of County Commissioner (BOCC) meetings, Planning Commission (PC) meetings, Inter-agency Task Force meetings, Community Workshops, three community-wide surveys and the Comprehensive Plan website. Additionally, a significant education component was incorporated throughout the effort to raise community awareness about the process, need and benefits of long-range planning.

Community Surveys

Over the nearly 10-month community-driven dialogue, more than 862 survey responses were gathered from community members who participated in the three community-wide surveys and workshops (see Appendices B.3 to B.5 for full results of all three community surveys).

Each community survey received the following number of total participants; however, it should be noted that repeat participants completed each survey. This repeat participation was intended and desirable because each survey was designed to provide unique feedback to complement prior touchpoints.

Community Survey Touchpoints:

- Community Survey #1: 358 total responses
- Community Survey #2: 305 total responses
- Community Survey #3: 199 total responses

Comment: the recorded number of responses do not equate to unique respondents but are the number of touchpoints (minimum 1 and maximum 3) with any of the survey respondents.

Website

To make it easier for residents to navigate information related to the Comprehensive Plan, Gilpin County built and maintained a website dedicated to the Comprehensive Plan: CompPlan.GilpinCounty.org. This website provided key information about the project and served as the virtual base for outreach to the community. The website was updated at key milestones to reflect the most accurate information and promote engagement activities.

Outreach

The community workshops and surveys were promoted virtually on the Gilpin County website, the Comprehensive Plan website, social media accounts and sent out in email blasts. In addition to virtual promotion, workshops were promoted by local newspapers and the County sent a postcard to residents encouraging them to participate in the process. These outreach efforts were complemented by the more than 50 members of the Interagency Task Force and Gilpin County Planning Commission sharing upcoming meeting dates and survey deadlines with their networks.

Railroad bypassing Rollinsville
3.2 Public Engagement Timeline

The engagement timeline for the Comprehensive Plan span over a period of eleven months. A description and graphic representation of this timeline are provided below.

Phase 1: Project Kickoff & Discovery

Phase 1 consisted of researching existing conditions and current data, preparing for community outreach by testing questions and proposed engagement processes with community members and coordinating the Interagency Task Force, as well as focus group meetings with leadership and elected officials from the County, Central City and the City of Black Hawk.

The results of Phase 1 included the integration of the data from the Quality of Life survey recently completed by the County and the development of the Interagency Task Force. The Task Force included more than 50 invited members from local municipalities, adjacent counties, and regional and statewide agency partners. In the first Task Force meeting, a SCORE (Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, Results, Environment) analysis was conducted (see Appendix B.2 for full results of the SCORE Analysis).

Phase 2: Establishing a Vision

In Phase 2, the emphasis was on beginning the broader community conversation about the Comprehensive Planning process and listening to the community feedback provided. This phase included two community workshops, the second Interagency Task Force meeting and the completion of the first community-wide survey.

These community engagement opportunities provided clear community input themes, identified below in the Community Input Summary which drove the development of the Community Vision Statement and identified aspirational goals for the County’s future (see Appendix B.6, Task Force Meeting #2 for results of the exercise to identify and define Issues, Needs, Opportunities and BHAGs (Big Hairy Audacious Goals) for various factors including: County Character, Natural Resources, Market & Economics, County Fiscal Position, Vehicular Network, Bicycle Network, Transit Services, Land Use, Subdivisions & Neighborhoods, Public Land + Parks + Trails.

Phase 3 + 4: Developing Plan Elements

Phases 3 and 4 consisted of continued community engagement in order to dive further into the details of the community issues, needs and opportunities as it related to future land use, transportation and economics. These details were discussed in third and fourth Interagency Task Force meetings, the third Community Workshop and the completion of the second community-wide survey.

The results of Phase 3 and 4 included the exploration of development scenarios and the refinement of community input themes as they specifically related to land use, transportation, and economics.

Phase 5: Finalizing Plan & Reporting

Phase 5 finalized and confirmed the community input received and closed out the community engagement process with the third and final community survey and fourth community workshop. Recommendations related to land use, transportation, economics based on the community feedback received thus far in the community engagement process were presented to the community during these final outreach opportunities.

Phase 5 will be completed as the results of the Comprehensive Planning process are shared broadly with the community, Board of County Commissioners and County Planning Commission.
3.3 Roles & Expectations

To clearly manage expectations from the outset of the planning process, roles and responsibilities were established across the full spectrum of engaged stakeholders. This project management structure identified the integrated levels of participation and the ultimate decision-making process to effectively incorporate a wide-range of multi-disciplinary input into the Gilpin County Comprehensive Plan.

- Provides expert advice
- Recommends process and structure
- Brings a fresh perspective informed by industry standards & best practices
- Provides professional recommendations & feedback
- Conduit between all groups
- Serve as Advisors
- Serve as ambassadors
- Provides regional context
- Point of contact for collaboration
- Community input
- Helps establish priorities
- Participates in meetings
- Completes survey
- Engages through social media
- Creative engagement via art competition
- Listens to the community’s needs + desires
- Participates in establishing the vision
- Provides guidance + recommend
- Reviews + comments on draft + final report
- Recommends plans/policies for adoption
- Represents the interests of the community
- Ratifies the final comprehensive plan

Consultant Team

Staff

Inter-agency Task Force

Public

Planning Commission

County Commissioners

3.4 Community Input Summary

The distillation and summarization of the substantial feedback received from the community can best be described as Community Input Themes. These themes were cultivated and established during three distinct time periods marked by each of the three community surveys and the associated public meetings and workshops.

Community Input Themes: March to June 2020

The following themes were present throughout the diverse community feedback that collected multiple viewpoints during the initial phases (Phases 1 and 2) of the Comprehensive Planning process:

1. Community Pride & Identity
   Gilpin County residents know and love their community and the high quality of life it affords. At every turn of the community engagement process, an appreciation of and commitment to the County’s rural mountain character was emphasized.

2. Think Big About Staying Small
   While there is a consistent desire for economic diversification and opportunities to improve access to amenities within the County, strong emphasis was placed on the desire to carefully balance any potential additional growth very intentionally with preservation of the County’s rural mountain character and rural values.

3. Collaboration & Inclusivity
   There is an eager willingness to share information, studies, and best practices among other cooperating public agencies and the County. Equally, community members and organizations maintained a strong focus on ensuring that feedback continues to be proactively sought from residents, visitors, and the business community.

4. Economic Diversification
   There was widespread consensus that the County must think creatively about how to diversify its economy and increase revenue in order to maintain and enhance current services, as well as prevent financial instability.

5. Environmental Awareness
   Gilpin County residents and organizations share a strong commitment to stewardship of natural resources when considering options for the future. There is shared interest in creative solutions regarding outdoor recreation, wildlife, and natural resource management, while acknowledging challenges such as land ownership, mining claims, emergency management, and access to utilities.
Community Engagement

3 Community Engagement

Community Input Themes: June to September 2020

The following themes were present throughout the community feedback collected through Phase 3 and 4 of the Comprehensive Planning Process:

1. Right uses, Right Places
   While some residents expressed a desire for no development at all, most were open to some residential and/or commercial development if located in areas that allow for the County’s rural mountain character to be maintained. This feedback informed Survey #3 and will allow for the further exploration of recommended nodes for future development.

2. Economic Diversification
   To achieve economic diversification, Gilpin County residents expressed support for enhancing remote working conditions (e.g., high-speed internet, home-based businesses) and attracting businesses to provide local goods and services.

Community Input Themes: September to November 2020

The following themes were identified by the community’s response to the third and final community survey and supplemental feedback collected through Phase 5 of the Comprehensive Planning Process:

1. Protect & Sustain, Prevent Overuse
   Building on the feedback received in Survey #2, residents reaffirmed their interest in the following planning goals:
   - Protect & Sustain: Protect the rural mountain character and natural environment, while allowing for fiscally sustainable growth and services.
   - Prevent Overuse: Protect the natural environment from damaging overuse.

   Specific interest was expressed for planning strategies that focus resources and density in less-intrusive locations by creating development nodes/villages; provide criteria that hold all potential development to a consistent and predictable standard; enforce and manage high impact activities such as shooting, dispersed camping, off highway vehicles, etc.

2. County Village(s) & Development Guidelines
   Outside of Central City and Black Hawk, residents voiced a preference for only one or two county village(s) and for that village to be located in or near Rollinsville. Interest in living and/or retiring in or a near a County was split, with 47% of respondents saying “yes” and 53% saying “no.”

   Residents broadly expressed an interest in developing tools and mechanisms that provide the County control over how and where development may occur.

   When considering what development guidelines are most important, specifically for the County Village(s), residents highlighted preservation of views and vistas as the most important while also flagging the need for an acceptable level of density and regulated building heights.

3. Natural Hazards
   In an assessment of concern regarding natural hazards in Gilpin County, residents shared that drought, severe wind and wildfire were of their greatest concern. Some residents chose to share a natural hazard not listed in the survey. Of those, abandoned mines, highway mines and air/water quality were shared as concerns. Many indicated that these hazards and the County’s ability to respond were impacted by budget cuts and an overall lack of financial resources.

4. County Regulations
   In an overview of County Regulations, Gilpin County residents expressed that updates to regulations managing noise and trash were extremely important. Respondents also highlighted that updates to County Regulations surrounding maintenance of homes and buildings, junk cars and camping were important to them.

   Residents expressed an interest in developing tools and mechanisms that provide the County control over how and where development may occur.

   When given the opportunity to list any County Regulations that need to be updated that were not included in the survey, several respondents listed County Regulations pertaining to light pollution (dark skies) and shooting, referenced by respondents as “shooting that disturbs neighborhoods, target shooting especially for the residents along South Beaver Creek Road and Highway 72, and a ban on shooting.”
Chapter 4: Visioning

The multifaceted community engagement strategy applied throughout the planning process, created a wide-range of public engagement and input opportunities. This integrated approach allowed residents to provide milestone-based feedback that started with community visioning and continued through detailed input on fundamental planning components.

4.1 Community Values & Priorities

The planning process began with a values-based community dialogue to collaboratively define a vision for the future as described by residents of the County. The values identified and refined by the community served as the foundation for the planning process. The residents of Gilpin County were highly engaged in this effort. Throughout every planning phase, hundreds of community members, including more than 850 total survey responses, invested significant time and energy into providing countless hours of public input. The combined results of public meeting participation, social media engagement, email communications, and community surveys led to an understanding of community values and priorities, culminating in a vision statement, which were ultimately translated into specific planning goals and strategies. Community values and planning strategies are illustrated in Figure 4-1.

4.2 Vision Statement

Driven by comprehensive feedback the following vision statement for Gilpin County was developed and refined throughout the public engagement process:

High-quality mountain living that balances environmental sustainability & rural community values with economic diversification & resiliency

This vision statement is a reflection of an extensive community conversation to thoroughly understand the values and priorities of Gilpin County’s approximately 6,000 residents.

Over the course of the planning process, these values solidified to directly inform the goals and strategies incorporated into the Gilpin County Comprehensive Plan.

4.3 Goals & Strategies

Gilpin County’s Comprehensive Plan is a community plan. The level of community engagement in this effort was unprecedented with hundreds of residents providing countless hours of public input at each planning milestone, including more than 850 total survey responses, as well as public meeting participation, email communication, and social media engagement at milestone-driven community touchpoints.

This community investment in the planning process produced distinct community priorities, preferences and themes that were directly applied to the development of specific planning goals and strategies which reflect community values and vision for the future. See Figure 4-2: Goals and Strategies for a distillation of six goals based on community input, and strategies to achieve the goal statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Values ...</th>
<th>... Application Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Pride + Identity: Preserving rural mountain character and high-quality of life</td>
<td>Create a land use plan + codes/regulations to protect the community values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think Big About Staying Small: Protecting our values requires strategic thinking + being prepared</td>
<td>Develop a roadmap that includes protective measures for all levels of growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration + Inclusivity: Community outreach and input are essential for the success of this plan</td>
<td>50+ interagency partners for existing &amp; future collaboration; Community-driven plan directly informed by 3 workshops; 3 surveys; and over 800 survey responses to date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Diversification: Advancing policies for responsible economic + commercial development</td>
<td>Encourage low impact home occupations; improve telecommuting infrastructure and services; attract healthcare and food services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Awareness: At the forefront of environmental sustainability policies and trends</td>
<td>Sustainability best practices and principles at the foundation of policies + future growth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4-1: Community Values and Application Strategies
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Community Input</th>
<th>Goal Statement</th>
<th>Planning Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1 Protect and Sustain| • Think big about staying small                                                  | • Protect the rural mountain community character and natural environment, while allowing for fiscally sustainable growth and services | • Focus resources & density in less-intrusive locations by creating development nodes  
• Provide criteria for development for these nodes as well as the county at large, so that all potential development is held to a standard that satisfies or exceeds County Goals |
| 2 Prevent Overuse    | • A major concern is: “loving the natural environment] to death” due to overuse | • Protect the natural environment from damages caused by overuse                  | • Manage recreational tourism with focused infrastructure improvements  
• Educate the public about public/private lands and access |
| 3 Economic Diversification | • Economy is too dependent on Gaming  
• Low taxes are a great draw to living in Gilpin County (which is in part made possible by the gaming industry)  
• Need for a high-quality healthcare provider and grocer to support basic services demanded by residents | • Diversify the economy to be more resilient while keeping individual taxes low | • Encourage healthy blend of large- and small-scale sustainable entrepreneurship  
• Allow for more flexibility on private lands for commercial/retail ventures  
• Bring high-speed internet to more remote parts of the county as a way to foster remote/work-from-home opportunities  
• Concentrate development in mixed-use nodes |
| 4 Interagency Coordination | • Coordination with other agencies is essential to leveraging and making efficient use of county resources | • Coordinate with other agencies to focus resources and efforts | • Communicate with neighboring counties and vested organizations, including Central City and Black Hawk to identify common interests  
• Set groundwork for County to pursue action plans and other long-term interagency strategies  
• Pursue opportunities for state and federal grants and other funding sources  
• Apply best management practices for stormwater drainage and erosion control in accordance with Regional (Mile High Flood District), State (Colorado Dept. of Public Health and Environment and Federal (Environmental Protection Agency) guidance |
| 5 Maintain Unique Character | • Gilpin County is a unique place with a strong sense of community & identity that is unlike its neighboring counties  
• Some wants to avoid becoming a bedroom community for Denver/ Boulder metro area, while others want to promote it | • Preserve Gilpin County’s unique character independent of Denver/Boulder metro area | • Develop tools and mechanisms that provide the County control over how and where development may occur within the county  
• Allow for diversity and flexibility of land use  
• Seek opportunities for balanced live, work and play |
| 6 Manage Growth to Protect Community Values | • The community feels very sensitive about future growth | • Protect community values under any market force and economic condition by managing growth responsibly and with care | • Whether development takes place within 5, 20 or 100 years, or never, create a plan that is environmentally and economically sustainable  
• Allow incremental growth to take place, as market forces demand, according to a predetermined roadmap  
• Develop a toolkit for where and how growth takes place over time |

Figure 4-2: Goals and Strategies
4.4 Public Engagement & Visioning Conclusion

The Gilpin County Comprehensive Plan is a community plan. The values, vision, goals, and strategies it includes were collaboratively developed throughout a nearly year-long planning process. The level of community investment in this effort is unprecedented in the history of Gilpin County.

The residents of Gilpin County care deeply about their community. While there are (and always will be) a multitude of diverse opinions within the County - and any community - the residents of Gilpin County collectively share a strong set of mutual values. These shared community values established the common ground and goodwill needed to address the most complex issues facing the County’s future and the tradeoffs associated with them - from growth and economic sustainability to natural resource management and hazard mitigation.

In addition to the long-range strategies included in the Comprehensive Plan itself, the planning process established communications mechanisms and an awareness of the County’s planning approach that will continue to serve and benefit County residents well into the future.

As the Plan is implemented, this understanding and the outreach tools utilized during this effort will provide a strong foundation for community engagement on the many complementary initiatives sure to follow. Furthermore, the inter-agency collaboration and dialogue established during the process among entities inside and outside of the County will continue to pay dividends.

Ultimately, the community’s commitment to undertaking this comprehensive planning process in the face of historic adversity - a global pandemic and unparalleled disruption of the local economy - provided a Comprehensive Plan that will endure and deliver the County’s vision to provide:

*High-quality mountain living that balances environmental sustainability & rural community values with economic diversification & resiliency*

Opposite Page: View of the Great Divide from Tolland Road
Chapter 5: Economics

This chapter provides an overview of Gilpin County’s governmental funds and how their respective revenue sources and cost structures react to growth under varying development patterns. It also includes a fiscal evaluation of three future land use scenarios based on forecasted data from the Colorado State Demographer’s Office and scenarios developed with County and community input as part of the Comprehensive Plan process. The future land use scenarios consist of residential and commercial land uses.

5.1 Summary of Findings

- Gilpin County will see growth and development in the future, but the exact extent is uncertain;
- Low mill levy and lack of sales tax mean there are minimal fiscal benefits to development, but growth can be managed to create other benefits and minimize fiscal impacts;
- Gaming revenues make up a large part of the difference between tax revenues from development and the costs of County services;
- If the rate of residential and commercial growth substantially exceeds the rate of growth in gaming revenues, the County will run a fiscal deficit; and
- To be financially sustainable, the County must grow in harmony with gaming revenues.

5.2 Future Land Use Scenarios

Projecting the future path of population growth is an uncertain exercise as the future is uncertain. Scenarios analysis is a way of planning for uncertain futures by examining impacts of likely outcomes. During discussions with County staff and residents, three future scenarios of population growth and development emerged that merit further analysis and consideration in this comprehensive plan. These scenarios are listed below and conceptually illustrated in terms of future County population levels in Figure 5-1:

- **Status Quo.** The status quo could mean very little growth, with the State Demography Office projecting only a few hundred additional residents over the next three decades. Growth would be dispersed on previously platted parcels in rural areas of unincorporated parts of the County.
- **Middle Path.** A middle path scenario could fall in the middle between status quo and substantial growth. The County could manage and benefit from this growth by zoning for denser residential and mixed-use development in villages or nodes accessible on the County’s main transportation arteries. This type of development could bring some of the services residents would like to see, but less so than under the substantial growth scenario.
- **Substantial Growth.** A substantial growth scenario would be driven by development pressure in the growing Denver Metro area and finding creative solutions to alleviate current housing supply constraints leading to a doubling of the current County population over the next three decades. Denser zoning for residential and mixed-use commercial space in villages or nodes accessible on the County’s main transportation arteries and sufficient population levels would attract more of the services residents would like to see.

Figure 5-1: Population Growth Under Future Growth Scenarios shows the projected population growth under all three scenarios. Currently, the County has a population of approximately 6,110 residents. Under the Status Quo scenario the population would remain largely unchanged between now and 2050, with less than 100 residents added to the County’s population during that time. The Middle Path scenario reflects a more likely future where population growth follows existing trends, resulting in a population of 9,340 people in 2050, an increase of 3,230 residents compared to the current population. Under the Substantial Growth scenario, the County’s population would more than double from its current level, reaching 13,025 residents by 2050.

The future land use scenarios consist of residential and commercial land uses. The fiscal analysis presents the County revenues and costs associated with each future land use, in addition to evaluating the cumulative impact. The analysis highlights a general relationship between future land uses and government finances specific to Gilpin County and serves as one of many inputs to the comprehensive planning process. There are other important issues that the community must weigh when selecting an appropriate mix of future land uses including transportation impacts, contiguous land use compatibility, job creation potential, desired community characteristics and other considerations.

The residential unit and commercial square footage values are developed using future growth projection shown in Figure 5-2 Growth Scenario Projection Summaries and developed in collaboration with County staff as part of the comprehensive planning process. For reference purposes, the average yearly number of single-family dwelling permits issued by Gilpin County from 1990 through 2020 was forty (40) permits.
Figure 5-1: Population Growth Under Future Growth Scenarios

Figure 5-2: Growth Scenario Projection Summaries

As Figure 5-2 shows, residential growth rates and commercial growth rates vary between the three scenarios. The Status Quo scenario assumes that the County will develop a total of 2,835 housing units by 2050, up from the existing number of 2,785 housing units. Under the Middle Path and High Growth scenarios, the County is projected to develop a total of 4,174 and 5,674 housing units, respectively. The Status Quo scenario does not project any new commercial development, but the Middle Path and High Growth scenarios do, as shown in Figure 5-2 above.

Figure 5-3: Growth Scenario Annual Averages and Cumulative Totals displays the average annual growth rate of residential and commercial development depicted in Figure 5-2. It depicts the separation of future residential growth into single family homes and medium and high-density mixed-use development, in addition to displaying the cumulative change in residential and commercial development depicted in each scenario over the next 30 years. In the Status Quo scenario, only 50 new residential housing units are projected to be built between 2020 and 2050. In contrast, the Middle Path and High Growth scenarios project that 1,389 and 2,889 additional housing units will be developed in the County over the next 30 years. While there are approximately 10,500 vacant and potentially buildable parcels in Gilpin County, to be buildable, these parcels must be able to meet all applicable setbacks and separations, to provide a source of water, and to accommodate an onsite wastewater treatment system.

The Middle Path and High Growth land use scenarios outlined above assume relatively steady growth spread out over the next 30 years. However, areas of Gilpin County may experience different growth rates, which will require a fluid approach to land use decision-making. Additionally, large-scale developments may alter future land uses due to decreased land availability or the need for complimentary and support industries/businesses. For example, if the County were able to develop one of its villages into a recreation hub (e.g. Rollinsville), the development would likely lead to new spinoff businesses (lodging, dining, entertainment, etc.), which would lead to higher than average commercial growth over a given timespan.

In subsequent years, commercial growth may trend lower to achieve and maintain equilibrium. In the end, the County should monitor and evaluate development trends by land use, and if the development blend starts becoming unbalanced, evaluate the implications of that continued future land use path and take action accordingly.

Table 5-3: Growth Scenario Annual Averages and Cumulative Totals

Source: Colorado State Demographer’s Data and Census Data; BBC Research & Consulting.
5.3 Fiscal Evaluation

The above scenarios are evaluated by estimating impacts on key municipal revenue sources, service expenditures, capital expenditures, and gaming revenues obtained from Gilpin County’s staff. Additional information on departmental expenditure and land use was obtained through discussions with County staff and data collected from the County Assessor’s office. The fiscal evaluation presented in this memorandum focuses on operational costs and revenues under the County’s governmental funds, which includes capital costs paid by the County. The following describes the methodology used to perform the fiscal evaluation of Gilpin County’s future land use scenarios.

**Methodology**

The primary objective of this analysis is to inform County officials, as well as the general public, about the financial consequences of future land development. As such, a Gilpin County-specific fiscal model was developed to analyze the fiscal impacts of the three future land use scenarios, as well as sensitivity analysis that illustrates the model’s sensitivity to changes in future land use parameters. Assumptions made in the model include:

- Fixed and variable service delivery costs;
- Fixed and variable County revenues; and
- The differing service requirements of residential and non-residential land uses.

The model is calibrated to replicate revenue patterns and expenditure requirements documented in the County’s 2019 Audited Financial Statement and adjusted to align with the County’s current financial projections. In order to calculate marginal costs (i.e., those costs that rise with growth as opposed to fixed costs, which are largely unaffected by changes in community size) a two-step research approach was followed.

**Budget analysis**

An in-depth analysis of the County’s 2019 budget to identify costs and revenues that would change as the County grows. Expenditure data in each department’s budget was reviewed and estimates of the likely marginal costs and revenues developed.

**Departmental interviews**

To augment the budget analysis, the consulting team conducted interviews with the County’s finance department to identify revenues and expenses thought to be most impacted by County growth. These interviews explored which departmental costs and revenues would change with new development and how different types of development would influence departmental costs and revenues.

After completion of these two steps, a fiscal impact model was created that reflects the County’s budgetary characteristics, which is then utilized to evaluate the three future land use scenarios. The calculations in this fiscal model are based on assumptions about the growth and type of projected development (see Figure 5.3: Growth Scenario Annual Averages and Cumulative Totals) and assumptions about the service delivery patterns associated with each type of development. Review of past County budget documents also revealed that gaming revenues make a significant contribution to the County finances. This contribution was accounted for by projecting gaming revenues over the next 30 years, accounting for the current downturn due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

5.4 County Revenue & Expenditure Assumptions

Fiscal impacts of proposed development are calculated by developing per unit and per square foot expenditure values and applying these estimates to the future land use scenarios. It is important to note that default estimated expenditure values are based upon the current cost of services and cost of capital, and do not account for any current “deficits” or the need to “catch up” in certain areas.

Four steps are involved in calculating governmental revenue and expenditure values (expanded proportionately with new growth) in Gilpin County.

**Step 2: Estimating Residential/Non-Residential Revenues & Expenditures**

A second step involves splitting the total variable revenues and expenditures between residential and non-residential growth. As with Step 1, these estimates are obtained through interviews with department staff, an analysis of the budget and consultant experience.

**Step 3: Per Unit/Square Foot Allocation**

After allocating variable residential and non-residential revenues and expenditures, these values are divided by the number of current residential units and non-residential square feet in the County. These calculations generate intermediate marginal revenues and costs for each land use type, which are further refined in Step 4.

**Step 1: Estimating Fixed & Variable Revenues & Expenditures**

For every revenue and expenditure category, financial projections of the County’s future revenues and expenditures were defined as fixed or variable based on interviews with department staff and past consultant experience. These future revenues and expenditures were projected into the future assuming an average annual growth rate of 3.6 percent and 4.6 percent respectively, after adjusting for a 2 percent rate of inflation. These growth rates reflect the County’s current expectations regarding the growth in revenues and expenses.
Step 4: Future Land Use Cost Multipliers

Lastly, calculated per residential unit and per commercial/industrial square foot values are interacted with a future land use cost multiplier. The fiscal model is constructed in such a way that medium and high-density residential cost multipliers are relative to the single-family (low density) cost multiplier of 1.00 (baseline). No cost savings are anticipated from new commercial development as compared to existing commercial development, so new commercial development uses a cost multiplier of 1.00. The resulting calculations generate specific current marginal revenues and costs for each land use type in each scenario.

Steps 1 through 4 are illustrated in Figure 5-4, Figure 5-5, and Figure 5-6 on the following pages for the governmental finances. To complete the fiscal analysis, these per unit and per square foot costs are multiplied by the previously described future land use scenarios (Figure 5-3: Growth Scenario Annual Averages and Cumulative Totals) to generate the annual and cumulative service costs of projected development. The projected costs are then evaluated against projected revenue to calculate a net fiscal impact for each scenario. Capital costs related to new development are not explicitly accounted for since those costs can be recovered by the County with impact fees.

### Figure 5-4: Gilpin County Governmental Funds Expenditure Allocations (2020 dollars)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gilpin County Expenditures</th>
<th>Governmental Funds Budget</th>
<th>Variable Residential Share</th>
<th>Variable Non-residential Share</th>
<th>Residential Variable Cost</th>
<th>Non-residential Variable Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Government</td>
<td>$6,818,929</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>$4,420,704</td>
<td>$1,362,886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Safety</td>
<td>$7,222,268</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>$363,133</td>
<td>$3,611,134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highways and Streets</td>
<td>$2,612,665</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>$2,090,132</td>
<td>$621,507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Welfare</td>
<td>$1,988,583</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>$1,864,594</td>
<td>$2,504,989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture and Recreation</td>
<td>$1,026,617</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>$1,020,766</td>
<td>$51,851</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Development</td>
<td>$650,383</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>$650,383</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Outlay</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest on Long-term Debt</td>
<td>$650,162</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$650,162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total General Fund Expenditures</td>
<td>$21,074,307</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>$10,058,832</td>
<td>$5,995,836</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Residential Variable Costs: $10,058,832

Total Non-Residential Variable Costs: $5,935,866

Total Fixed Costs: $5,379,968

### Figure 5-5: Gilpin County Governmental Funds Revenue Allocations (2020 dollars)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gilpin County Revenues</th>
<th>Governmental Funds Budget</th>
<th>Variable Residential Share</th>
<th>Variable Non-residential Share</th>
<th>Residential Variable Revenue</th>
<th>Non-residential Variable Revenue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes</td>
<td>$4,727,205</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>$802,715</td>
<td>$3,904,490</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gaming Taxes</td>
<td>$4,700,000</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>$167,740</td>
<td>$4,532,260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licenses and Permits</td>
<td>$181,230</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>$181,230</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intergovernment</td>
<td>$8,164,783</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>$2,014,026</td>
<td>$6,150,757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charges for Service</td>
<td>$3,067,322</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>$429,929</td>
<td>$2,637,403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment Earnings</td>
<td>$134,015</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>$134,015</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>$86,416</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>$38,905</td>
<td>$47,511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Budget Adjustment</td>
<td>$9,900,002</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,069,829</td>
<td>$8,830,173</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Residential Variable Revenues: $3,904,490

Total Non-Residential Variable Revenues: $8,830,173

Total Fixed Revenues: $8,254,255

### Figure 5-6: Future Land Use Service-Cost Multipliers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Future Land Use</th>
<th>Cost Multiplier</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single-Family (Low Density)</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-family (Medium Density)</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-family (High Density)</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Non-residential variable revenues are approximately $1.64 per square foot. Assuming the average residential unit in Gilpin County is approximately 1,800 square feet, the average variable revenue from each home is approximately $0.77 per square foot.

Source: Gilpin County; BBC Research & Consulting

### Figure 5-7: Growth Scenario Annual Averages and Cumulative Totals

Note: Growth Scenario Annual Averages and Cumulative Totals

Source: Gilpin County; BBC Research & Consulting
5.5 Scenarios Fiscal Impact Analysis

The following describes the fiscal impacts of the three future land use scenarios.

Status Quo Fiscal Impact

Figure 5-7: Governmental Funds Net Fiscal Impact: Status Quo Scenario presents the revenues and expenditures of the Status Quo scenario per ten-year periods from 2020 until 2050, as well as the cumulative change for the entire future land use scenario. Under the Status Quo, population increases by an average of 3 to 4 people per year. Between 2020 and 2030, the County would add about 110 new residents. This would result in approximately 50 new single-family homes being constructed during the next 30 years.

The pace of new residential development would increase County revenues by approximately $2.8 million over the next thirty years, while increasing County expenses by approximately $9.8 million during the same time. On net, the new single-family home residential development would cost the County approximately $7.0 million to serve over the next thirty years.

Middle Path Fiscal Impact

Figure 5-8: Governmental Funds Net Fiscal Impact: Middle Path Scenario presents the revenues and expenditures of the Middle Path scenario per ten-year period from 2020 until 2050, as well as the cumulative change for the entire future land use scenario. Under the Middle Path scenario, population increases by an average of 100 people per year. Between 2020 and 2050, the County would add about 3,000 new residents to the County’s population. This would result in approximately 1,390 new dwelling units being constructed during the next 30 years, including 972 single-family homes and 417 multi-family units. In addition, approximately 2,000 square feet of commercial space would be built each year, for a total of 60,000 additional square feet of commercial space by 2050.

The pace of new residential and commercial development would increase County revenues by approximately $66.8 million over the next thirty years, while County expenses related to new residential and commercial development would increase by approximately $212.8 million during the same time. On net, the new residential and commercial development would cost the County approximately $146.0 million to serve over the next thirty years. While new residential development would create net costs for the County, new commercial development would increase County revenues by approximately $3.2 million over the next thirty years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development Period</th>
<th>Cumulative Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2020 to 2030</td>
<td>2030 to 2040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Revenues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single-Family (Low Density)</td>
<td>$0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-family (Medium Density)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-family (High Density)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$0.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| New Expenditures | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| 2020 to 2030 | 2030 to 2040 | 2040 to 2050 |
| Single-Family (Low Density) | $0.27 | $2.96 | $6.61 | $9.64 |
| Multi-family (Medium Density) | - | - | - | - |
| Multi-family (High Density) | - | - | - | - |
| Commercial | - | - | - | - |
| Total | $0.27 | $2.96 | $6.61 | $9.64 |

| Net Surplus (Deficit) | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 2020 to 2030 | 2030 to 2040 | 2040 to 2050 |
| Single-Family (Low Density) | $(0.18) | $(2.07) | $(4.78) | $(7.03) |
| Multi-family (Medium Density) | - | - | - | - |
| Multi-family (High Density) | - | - | - | - |
| Commercial | - | - | - | - |
| Total | $(0.18) | $(2.07) | $(4.78) | $(7.03) |
High Growth Fiscal Impact

Figure 5-9: Governmental Funds Net Fiscal Impact: High Growth Scenario presents the revenues and expenditures of the High Growth scenario per ten-year period from 2020 until 2050, as well as the cumulative change for the entire future land use scenario. Under the High Growth scenario, population increase by an average of 210 people per year. Between 2020 and 2050, the County would add about 6,300 new residents to the County’s population. This would result in approximately 2,889 new dwelling units being constructed during the next 30 years, including 1,733 single-family homes and 1,156 multi-family units. In addition, approximately 4,000 square feet of commercial space would be built each year, for a total of 120,000 additional square feet of commercial space by 2050.

The pace of new residential and commercial development would increase County revenues by approximately $106.2 million over the next thirty years, while County expenses related to new residential and commercial development would increase by approximately $326.9 million during the same time. On net, the new residential and commercial development would cost the County approximately $220.7 million to serve over the next thirty years. Unlike new residential development, which creates net expenses for the County, new commercial development would increase County revenues by approximately $4.9 million over the next thirty years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development Period</th>
<th>Cumulative Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2020 to 2030</td>
<td>2020 to 2040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Revenues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single-Family (Low Density)</td>
<td>$3.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-family (Medium Density)</td>
<td>$1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-family (High Density)</td>
<td>$0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>$0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$6.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Expenditures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single-Family (Low Density)</td>
<td>$10.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-family (Medium Density)</td>
<td>$3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-family (High Density)</td>
<td>$2.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>$0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$15.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Surplus (Deficit)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single-Family (Low Density)</td>
<td>$(7.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-family (Medium Density)</td>
<td>$(1.82)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-family (High Density)</td>
<td>$(1.16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>$0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$(9.89)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5-9: Governmental Funds Net Fiscal Impact: High Growth Scenario
($ millions 2020 dollars)

Source: BBC Research & Consulting.
5.6 Sensitivity Analysis

The following describes a sensitivity analysis that illustrates the model’s sensitivity to changes in future land use parameters.

**Figure 5-10: Sensitivity Analysis of Model Assumptions** presents four sensitivity analyses to illustrate the model response to different assumptions. The sensitivity analysis’ adjust assumptions (residential development location and type, property taxes, and municipal service costs) and future land use development projections. Each analysis’ fiscal outcome is evaluated as the change compared against the net fiscal position of the respective scenario baseline.

For example, the Status Quo generated a net fiscal deficit of $7.0 million under the baseline assumptions. Under the assumptions of sensitivity analysis 2, below, the Status Quo would produce a net fiscal deficit of $6.84 million, a net change of $0.16 million.

The sensitivity analysis results provide insight into Gilpin County’s fiscal sensitivity to the location of residential development, property taxes, municipal service costs, and future land use development.

Locating all new residential development in rural neighborhoods is shown to have a large negative impact on the County’s fiscal situation, as this change results in about a $10.0 million decrease in net fiscal performance under the Middle Path scenario and a $55.8 million decrease under the High Growth Scenario (see **Figure 5-10**).

Increasing property taxes by 25 percent is shown to have a modest fiscal impact due to the County’s low mill levy, with a net increase of about $0.16 million under the Status Quo scenario, and $3.5 million under the Middle Path scenario and $5.5 million under the High Growth Scenario (see **Figure 5-10**).

Reducing municipal service costs by 25 percent would have the largest fiscal impact on County finances amongst the four analyses under consideration as part of the sensitivity analysis.

Reducing service costs by 25 percent would improve County’s net fiscal position by $16.7 million under the Middle Path scenario, and $29.7 million under the High Growth Scenario (see **Figure 5-10**).

Reducing commercial development by 50 percent would result in about $1.2 million less revenue to the County under the Middle Path scenario and $2.5 million less revenue under the High Growth scenario (see **Figure 5-10**).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sensitivity Analyses</th>
<th>Net Change in Surplus (Deficit)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Status Quo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis 1: All new residential growth is single-family homes</td>
<td>$ -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis 2: Property taxes increase by 25 percent</td>
<td>$0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis 3: Municipal service costs nodes decrease by 25 percent due to more efficient service delivery, and</td>
<td>$ -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis 4: The projections for commercial growth were overly optimistic and only 50 percent of zoned land is developed.</td>
<td>$ -</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 5-10: Sensitivity Analysis of Model Assumptions** (2020 dollars)

Notes: The net surplus (deficit) value corresponds to the fiscal impact model output in year 2050 as compared to the net surplus (deficit) of the respective scenarios as reported on Figure 5-7, Figure 5-8, and Figure 5-9.

Source: BBC Research & Consulting.

5.7 Discussion

It should be noted that the results shown above only reflect the additional revenues and expenses that the County could expect under different future development scenarios. The results do not offer a comprehensive picture of the County’s finances now or in the future, but they do offer insight into the predominant financial constraints facing new development in Gilpin County.

The results show that the low property tax rate and lack of sales tax in Gilpin County create limited pathways for development to pay for itself. That is why the net contribution of additional development is negative under all three scenarios. The County has completed a study to determine how much revenue a sales tax could generate, but similar to most development in Gilpin County, gaming revenues will continue to be needed to offset the County’s costs to serve new development. In order to maintain fiscal balance, the pace of new development will need to seek balance with the pace of growth in gaming revenues.

This will be particularly challenging following the COVID-19 pandemic, which has caused a large reduction in gaming revenues in the County and resulted in layoffs of County staff, cutbacks to capital investment, and reductions in departmental budgets. Moreover, the County has an unfunded Capital Improvement Plan with more than $42 million of identified expenditures that are necessary for the health, safety, and wellbeing of residents.

Gaming revenues will recover with time as they grow, so can the County. Even though this analysis may make the Status Quo seem desirable from a fiscal perspective, it is important to remember that new development is not just a fiscal consideration. New development can bring important services, like a grocer, bank, and healthcare provider to the County, in addition to capturing more spending from the County’s many visitors and creating jobs for County residents. The services mentioned are important to the County’s residents and their quality life which need to be balanced with the fiscal impact of new development.
Chapter 6: Land Use

6.1 Future Growth

In order to make a projection of the future growth of Gilpin County, the current growth pattern is a good indication of how that growth might occur (see Figure 6-1: Existing Land Use Map).

While it is anticipated that 55% of the County’s land surface will stay public in perpetuity with little to no development, it is discernible that privately owned land, which comes to 45% (about 44,000 acres) of land within the County boundary will continue to undergo change. Of the 44,000 acres, a total of about 3,200 acres are under the jurisdiction of the two cities, while an additional 5,800 acres are within the cities’ individual and combined growth boundaries. Together at 9,000 acres this constitute about 20% of privately owned land in the County, which leaves about 35,000 acres or 80% privately owned land under the control of the County. Residential land use is the predominant land use within the County-controlled boundary, followed by agriculture and mining claims, while commercial land use is negligible. Residential development is thus a reliable indicator of the future growth pattern within the County.

Noticeable about residential land use is that current County zoning regulations allow for three options i.e. lots larger than 20 acres (Resource Residential shown as light yellow), lots subdivided in lots sizes between 5 and 20 acres (shown in light yellow/orange), and PUDs (planned unit developments) that include lots 5 acres and smaller (showed in dark yellow/orange). This reveals a pattern of development that ranges between higher and lower concentration. Added to this are the very light green areas identified as Agriculture which has the same development rights as Resource Residential, but with no residences constructed on agriculture designated properties. The occurrence of residential density is further illustrated by a Population Heat Map of the County (see Figure 6-2: Population Density) defined with a spectrum of colors between blue (less populated) and pink (more populated).

From this map it is clear that the densest populations in the County (other than Central City and Black Hawk) are associated with CO 119, CO 46 and somewhat along CO 72. While this pattern is partly the result of the limiting factors of physical access (often due to topography), access to domestic water, and the capability of sewage disposal, it can be expected that future development will continue to occur in the same pattern of density pockets spread out over the landscape. In fact, new technology, money and large land holdings under single ownership will make it possible (if not yet feasible) to develop the currently mostly undeveloped areas associated with the area north of Tolland and the southwest corner of the County. See Figure 6-3: Large Land Holdings under Single Ownership.

While most people agree with the need for the County to be economically diverse, sustainable, and resilient, which necessitating new development, a strong sentiment is to keep the status quo with little if any development. However, it is pivotal that future growth within the County be managed according to a plan that is thoughtful and proactively lead to the right kind of growth—growth that is orderly, feasible and realizes the community’s vision, values and goals. This Comprehensive Plan, which is the first for Gilpin County, is not only such a plan, but a road map for growth over time from today for the next 20 to 50 years and beyond.
6.2 Growth Management Framework

The existing fiscal responsibilities of the County, coupled with the inevitability of residential growth due to the expansion of the Denver metro area creates an untenable condition in which the County must take action now in order to stay ahead of impending pressure for development. Primary amongst those actions is the balancing of growth against feasible infrastructure improvements to support the growth.

Gilpin County’s sparsely concentrated population in difficult terrain, results in unproportionally high County expense in terms of infrastructure and services, exacerbated by not being offset by residential taxes. Conversely, the tax revenue generated by land uses, such as commercial and industrial, tend to pay for itself and outweigh the burden on County provided infrastructure and services.

The Vision Statement and goals, established during the planning process, provide clear direction for growth within the County. The Vision Statement for the County points to:

- **High-quality mountain living that balances environmental sustainability & rural community values with economic diversification & resiliency**

This is further defined by six goals of which five have direct bearing on growth within the County:

1. **Economic Diversification** aims for an economy that is more resilient, calls for development concentrated in nodes, and promotes a diversity of commercial/retail ventures.
2. **Protect and Sustain** calls for the protection of Gilpin County’s rural mountain community and natural environment by focusing resources and density in less-intrusive development nodes.
3. **Prevent Overuse** suggests the management of recreational tourism with focused infrastructure improvements.
4. **Maintain Gilpin County’s Unique Character** suggests tools be crafted to provide County control over development.
5. **Manage Growth to Protect Community Values** calls for growth to be managed responsibly and with care.

The growth management framework recommended for Gilpin County is based on three main tenets:

1. Diversify the economy to include uses other than residential
2. Concentrate future growth in development nodes called “villages”
3. Predetermine growth that is predictable yet flexible

For commercial/retail ventures to be successful, it requires a population of a certain size and concentration that cannot be achieved with the current growth pattern in the County. What is needed is a self-sustained and self-supported, critical mass and mixture of businesses and residents. This can be achieved with strategically located mixed-use developments, recommended to be configured in nodes of development called villages. The purpose is for these villages to serve as economic drivers within the County while minimizing County expenditure for infrastructure and services.

Growth concentrated in villages has the added benefit of preventing development in the path of views, wildlife corridors and sensitive habitats, therefore allowing for better protection of the environment.

The importance of making an educated and informed determination about future development cannot be overstated, as it establishes a level of predictability for both developers and landowners. Even so, plans need to be flexible in order to accommodate changing needs and market realities over time.

Development within the County is imminent. Prospective businesses, developers and homebuilders should not only be directed toward villages that the County has predetermined as appropriate and feasible, but also be required to meet the highest standards of precaution and quality to support environmental sustainability and the rural community values.

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**Strategies for Sustainable Growth**

**Strategy 1 - Mixed Used Development**
Encourage a mix of use – Residential & Commercial, including retail, entertainment, hospitality, etc.

**Strategy 2 - Concentrated Development**
Concentrate development in small focused areas or nodes - called villages with limited footprints

**Strategy 3 - Managed Growth**
Predetermine and manage growth - that allows for predictability AND flexibility

**Figure 6-4: Strategies for Sustainable Growth**
6.3 County Villages

The Growth Management Framework for Gilpin County unambiguously directs toward the establishment of villages as places of future development within the County. This calls for a thorough exploration of what such villages may look and feel like. Villages are destinations for people and for various reasons: to gather and socialize, opportunities for commerce, and for people to engage in the rhythms of life and new ideas.

In response to the Growth Management Framework, the benefits of concentrated Mixed Use villages versus dispersed development, include the following:

**Financial**
- Reducing the fiscal impact of dispersed growth
- Creating a more diverse and resilient property tax base
- Making infrastructure feasible & cost effective
- Allowing for housing that is affordable

**Community**
- Bringing needed services to the community
- Bringing people together in venues like parks and event spaces
- Creating a sense of place with monumentation, streetscape and placemaking

**Cultural**
- Promote community values
- Protecting viewsheds
- Creating memories

**Environment**
- Protecting the natural environment
- Limiting the disturbance footprint of development

**Multi-Modal Transportation**
- Creating and encouraging walkability
- Minimizing the need for expanded and thus expensive transportation infrastructure

Benefits of Villages

While it is necessary to understand how to plan for villages, it is also fitting to have a comprehensive grasp of the multiple benefits of mixed use villages versus development that occurs in a dispersed manner in the landscape (for a listing of village benefits, see Figure 6-5: Benefits of Mixed Use Villages).

1. **Access**
   - Access from and to major roads
   - Access to utilities & infrastructure or the ability to provide it

2. **Existing development**
   - The occurrence of existing development means:
     i. Already established infrastructure
     ii. Indicative of a location that was found suitable in the past
     iii. Some level of available domestic water and sewage disposal capabilities

3. **Topography**
   - Moderate terrain that is buildable
   - Terrain that is walkable

4. **Conditions to avoid**
   - Viewsheds and vistas to the magnificent landscape that abounds within and outside the boundaries of Gilpin County
   - Known wildlife corridors
   - Creek and floodplain corridors as they serve multiple functions:
     i. Conveying floodwaters efficiently when left intact
     ii. Wildlife habitat and migrating routes
     iii. Presence of biodiversity

5. **Positive environmental outcomes**
   - Mitigate & enhance wildlife habitats by keeping development at bay
   - Opportunity to clean-up disturbed and polluted areas

Village Locations

The criteria for the location of villages is described in Figure 6-6: Village Location Criteria. Keeping the village location criteria in mind, four villages are recommended for Gilpin County (see Figure 6-7: Land Use & Future Villages also presented as Exhibit 1). While consideration was given to a fifth location at North Clear Creek, due to lack of buildable land along CO 119, this location is instead recommended to be a retail destination.
Considering the criteria for locating these villages, the anticipated interface between the villages and a series of factors are demonstrated in Exhibits 2, 3 & 4 as follows:

**Exhibit 2: Villages Interface I**, including the four villages interfacing with:
- Wetlands + Floodplains
- Natural Heritage
- Wildlife Corridors
- Wildfire Risk

**Exhibit 3: Villages Interface II**, including the four villages interfacing with:
- Elk Range
- Black Bear Range
- Moose Range
- Mule Deer Range

**Exhibit 4: Villages Interface III**, including the four villages interfacing with:
- Views + Vistas
- Slopes
- Single Ownership Large Land Holdings

### Village Characteristics

Closely associated with the benefits of villages are the common characteristics that should be aimed for, particularly associated with the village core, when creating these development nodes. See **Figure 6-8: Village Characteristics** that describes features and conditions that should be found in close proximity of the core of the village.

- **Compactness**
  - Walkability with places in close proximity
  - Park once and walk everywhere
  - Infrastructure optimized
  - Regular and tight block structure

- **Minimized Development Impact**
  - Limited development footprint
  - Stormwater managed with sustainable water storage, infiltration and conveyance tools

- **People Places that are Welcoming**
  - Placemaking focused on vibrancy, comfort and enjoyable moments
  - Wide sidewalks that allows for strolling and on-street dining
  - Parks and plazas that are save and multi-purposed
  - Focused to serve:
    - Residents
    - Business owners
    - Commuters
    - Tourists

- **Multi-modal Connectivity**
  - Usable for pedestrians, bicyclists, vehicles and transit
  - Safe for all, including children and seniors
  - Utilization of CO 119 and CO 46 as “main street”
  - Compact street design with street calming features
  - Shared use parking for different times of the days and week

---

**Figure 6-8: Village Characteristics**
Village Configuration

The configuration of the villages within the context of the County, can best be described with a transect (see Figure 6-9: Gilpin County Village Transect) that defines zones from the core of the village to its edge and beyond. The Village Core and Residential Zone constitutes the bulk of the village. In between is a Transition Zone.

Integrated with, but not part of the village, is the Rural Zone, beyond which the Natural & Public Lands Zone is found. While the configuration between the Village Core and the Residential Zone is fairly consistent, there will be situations where the Residential Zone abuts the Natural & Public Lands Zone. See a description of zones specific to the village in Figure 6-11: Village Zones Description.

A second node, called a Hamlet, is also illustrated in Figure 6-9: Gilpin County Village Transect. While a village is typically associated with a transportation thoroughfare, a hamlet is the assemblage of homes in the countryside that are not along a major thoroughfare. Only a few commercial/retail buildings are typically found in a hamlet. Many of the PUDs in Gilpin County resemble a hamlet, the difference being the general absence of commercial/retail structures.

By way of comparison, a transect for Central City and Black Hawk is illustrated in Figure 6-10: Gilpin County & City Transect. For the cities themselves, three zones are defined: Urban Center, General Urban, and Sub-urban. Beyond the cities, the Rural and Natural & Public Lands Zones are found, similarly to the land beyond the County villages.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village Zones</th>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>Street Layout</th>
<th>Density: Units/Acres</th>
<th>Building Height</th>
<th>Unique Characteristic</th>
<th>Visual Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Village Core | • Vertical & horizontal Mixed Use consisting of a mix of Residential + Commercial + Cottage Industry  
• Single Family Residential including rowhouses + loft apartments  
• Multi-family Residential including apartments + condominiums  
• Commercial including retail, hospitality, entertainment, office & services  
• Industrial: Cottage Industry | • Pattern: Grid / Modified grid  
• Block size: width & depth vary between 200' and 300'  
• Street edge: Preferably curb and gutter  
• Combination of on-street parking & distributed surface lots | 12 to 25 units | 2 & 3 stories | • Focuses on major thoroughfares: CO 119 & CO 46  
• Wide sidewalks to include on-street dining  
• Sidewalk overhangs & awnings  
• Ample pedestrian amenities  
• Includes plazas  
• No front-loaded garages | ![Image 1], ![Image 2], ![Image 3], ![Image 4], ![Image 5], ![Image 6] |
| Transition Zone | • Mixed Use with horizontal mix of uses more prevalent than vertical mix of uses  
• Consisting of a mix of Residential + Commercial + Cottage Industry  
• Single Family Residential including single family detached, townhouses & rowhouses  
• Multi-family Residential including duplexes, apartments & condominiums  
• Commercial including retail, hospitality, entertainment, office & services (with less entertainment & office than in the Village Core)  
• Industrial: Cottage Industry | • Pattern: Modified grid  
• Block width no longer than 500'  
• Block depth +/- 300' near Village Core up to 450' as it nears the Residential Zone  
• Street edge: Curb & gutter optional  
• On-street & on-site parking | 8 to 14 units | Mostly 1 & 2 stories, 3 stories closer to the Village Core | • Closely associated with the Village Core  
• Focused on walkability  
• Includes common open space commons & plaza  
• No front-loaded garages | ![Image 7], ![Image 8], ![Image 9], ![Image 10], ![Image 11] |
| Residential Zone | • Residential only  
• Single Family Residential including single homes  
• Multi-family Residential including duplexes | • Pattern: determined by topography  
• Street edge: Curb & gutter optional | 2 to 10 units | 1 & 2 stories | • Housing clustered to preserve open space & provide alternative to rural residential  
• Includes neighborhood parks | ![Image 12], ![Image 13], ![Image 14], ![Image 15], ![Image 16] |

Figure 6-11: Character Table

Visual Examples Credit: images #1, #3, #5, #6, & #9: courtesy of © Sandy Sorlien for transect-collection.org; #2 Creede, Colorado, Copyright: This photo by Steve Huntley is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License; #4 A pedestrian bypass parklet in Canmore, Alberta, Canada Copyright 2019 Elizabeth Esposito, from the American Planning Association’s Image Library; #7 Springdale, Utah, Copyright: This photo by Ken Lund is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 Internation License; Images #8, #10, & #11: © DTJ Design 2021
Village Footprint

The footprint for each village is illustrated in Exhibit 5: County Villages Footprints. These footprints were determined by a cursory review of key factors of each site, including topography, creeks, floodplains, and walkability.

Topography

Steep, unbuildable terrain is typically excluded from the villages. Where it does occur, it would typically define the boundary of a particular village.

Creeks & Floodplains

Creeks and floodplains are considered important features from an environmental and aesthetic point of view. Based on a principle of no reclamation or encroachment of the 100-year floodplain, where it does occur it is either left untouched within the village or serve as a boundary to the village.

Walkability

Walkability is a factor of both distance and quality of the walk. A quarter mile distance is typically considered a comfortable 5-minute walk. However, it has also been proven that longer distances may also be considered walkable, depending on the quality of the environment, of which the inverse is also true.

Village Implementation

Vision Plan to Build-Out

A comprehensive plan level assessment does not do justice to the level of investigation and exploration that is required to create a vision for any of the identified villages. A specific study, called a “small area plan” needs to be conducted for each village. For County control purposes, such a plan should ideally be initiated by the County but could also be done as a P-3 (Public-Private Partnership) effort, which allows sharing of the cost to prepare such a plan.

Essential tasks of the planning exercise should include an assessment of key conditions, including geology (specifically to determine the location and potential impact of old mines activity and potential contamination, and underground water), water sources and process to acquire it, and sewer treatment issues. Other key items to be evaluated include land ownership, view sheds, wildlife corridors, sensitive habitats, and topography.

The next step would be to conduct a Design Charrette which is either a single or multi-day event to provide stakeholders the opportunity to provide their input on the development of a plan or concept. The idea with a design charrette is to explore 2 to 3 options, review those, determine the best of each and develop a draft concept for final review before creating the final vision plan. In short: The Village Plan is to serve as the blueprint for its development over time.

The premise with any of the villages is that no matter how long it takes to reach a village’s full capacity, it is about a roadmap that guides development over time based on developer interest, market forces and the community’s capacity and tolerance for development. Similar to the establishment and growth of towns historically, it may be 20, 50 and even 100 years before the full potential of a particular village is realized. For the best outcome any of the villages should grow organically and incrementally over time.

Village Regulations

It is essential that Gilpin takes measures to ensure that the right business, the right developers, and the right homebuilders are engaged to achieve the right results for the community. That means companies that support and buy into the vision and goals of the County, as well as the idea that the County controls and directs the location and quality of development.

For that to occur it is necessary to have zoning regulations and land use codes prepared that is predictable, yet flexible. Predictability not only gives a developer the assurance that he/she will not be confronted by unexpected roadblocks, but it also protects the interests of the existing residents and landowners.

The premise is that the incremental growth of a villages will take on a character that is appropriate for the surrounding areas and market demands. Some villages may be primarily higher density residential, while others may have very little residential but may have commercial or industrial uses as the primary economic driver. In short, community and leadership foresight to encourage organic growth is necessary to allow for and welcome change over time reflected by changing priorities, lifestyles and outside forces including environmental factors.

Ideally and from a community perspective, the villages will cater to the surrounding community with places and venues for residents to gather, interact and celebrate events, while adding to the character and vibrancy of the County, not only during the early stages of the village, but to fully mature to a place that is self-contained and self-sustained.

Finally, for the successful implementation of the villages, it is necessary that the County AND landowners are patient. To use a wine analogy, this approach will result in the County villages that mature from green and fresh to rich and full bodied OR from an investment point of view, will result in a village that matures from small yet intentional to prosperous and diverse.

“The Village Vision Plan is to serve as a blueprint for its development over time”

Figure 6-12: Iconic View of Rollinsville

This view of Rollinsville is quintessential Gilpin County. It illuminates the association between village on the hill and the valley below. Perceived as an important environmental and cultural asset, it is considered “sacred” and not to be disturbed by any form of reclamation for development or otherwise; together with the railroad, it serves as a natural edge or buffer to the village.
6.4 Existing & Future Land Use

Existing Land Use Guiding the Future

Existing land use serves as the guide for future growth and development within the County. This is partly based on the vision and goals that were established during the course of the planning process for the County’s first Comprehensive Plan. The two goals most fitting for this argument is:

1. Economic Diversification

Economic Diversification aims for an economy that is more resilient, calls for development concentrated in nodes, and promotes a diversity of commercial/retail ventures.

The most efficient way to ensure diversity of commercial activities and services is to concentrate them all together. In fact, it is a well recorded fact that two or three of the same businesses that offer the same product do better when in close, walking distance proximity rather than each being isolated from each. This is due to human nature that prefers more than one option to choose from.

Rather than having business spread out in the County, concentrating them in villages will have a better outcome for the community. Having the focus directed to these villages cause no reason to change the current land use of parcels outside the villages, other than perhaps to be placed into conservation due to Transfer of Development Rights, or another compelling reason why the existing land use needs to change.

2. Protect and Sustain

Calls for the protection of Gilpin County’s rural mountain community and natural environment by focusing resources and density in less-intrusive development nodes.

This goal alone is already good reason for encouraging growth to take place in area where it will have the least impact on the landscape, hence concentrated in the villages. This is another reason for land use not to change from the current designation, other than in the footprints of the various villages.

Another reason for no change to the existing land use outside of the village boundaries is the sentiment of the community, which was to keep the status quo, interpreted in this case to mean no or little growth (at least in the areas not earmarked as villages).

Based on this discussion, Exhibit 1: Land Use & Future Villages serves as the guide for future development within Gilpin County.

Existing Land Use Categories

The following is a brief description of the thought process behind the various land use categories as presented on the Comprehensive Plan maps and exhibits, specifically Exhibit 1: Land Use & Future Villages.

The data made available by the County was applied to reflect the assessor’s tax related codes for existing land use. While assessor’s codes are not directly related to zoning districts’ permitted uses contained in the Zoning Regulations, complete zoning data was not available. Assessor’s codes were therefor used as a proxy for land use as this was the most complete regarding current land uses within Gilpin County. Additionally, there are a number of tax-exempt properties that are coded to reflect specific exempt designations. The assessor’s codes are generally as follows:

- 0-1000: Vacant Land
- 1000-1999: Residential Land
- 2000-2999: Commercial
- 4000-4999: Agriculture
- 5000-5999: Natural Resources (including mining claims)
- 8000-8999: State Assessed Property
- 9000+: Exempt

Note: There are no 3000, 6000, or 7000 series codes.

The land use categories follow the assessor’s codes with a couple of minor clarifications.

“Agriculture” is referenced in the assessor’s codes; however, in the zoning code, agricultural uses are only allowable within the Resource Residential land use category.

“Faith/Charity” includes religiously affiliated uses and certain social/civic clubs (i.e. Elks Club) which do not have a direct religious or charitable affiliation but also do not constitute a commercial enterprise.

“Commercial” - the assessor does not specify the type of commercial on each parcel; however, in the zoning code, Commercial may include everything from C-3 (Light Commercial) to C-5 (Industrial). However, for the land use category shown as “Commercial” on the map, it is not known if industrial uses currently exist within the parcels designated as Commercial by the assessor.

“Residential” - for residential properties, it became apparent, based on the County’s zoning regulations, that the size of residential parcel had greater bearing on allowed uses than a general “residential” category could capture. Of note is that these separate designations for Residential help to clarify the types of residential found throughout the County and where populations and development are concentrated.

“Residential >20 acres” - residential parcels 20 acres and greater can be zoned as “Resource Residential” which is the most flexible zoning category allowing the greatest variety of uses of any zoning designation.

“Residential <5 acres” - all residential parcels under 5 acres are non-conforming and are likely the result of a “Planned Unit Development” (PUD).

“Mining Claims” is specific to the 5000 series assessor codes (“natural resources”). A mining claim is a parcel of land for which the claimant has asserted a right of possession and the right to develop and extract a discovered, valuable, mineral deposit. In many cases in Gilpin County, the mining claims were never actually mined. Most mining claims are zoned Resource Residential and are subject to the regulations for Resource Residential zoning found in the Gilpin County Zoning Regulations. For clarification purposes, the differences between patent and leased mining claims are as follows:

- Patented mining claims can be bought and sold and allow for house construction.
- Leased mining claims cannot be bought and sold and the only allowable structure is what is needed for the extraction of minerals.

“County” - exempt lands typically include an underlying land use. Therefore, if the exempt code references a county use, the parcel is designated “County.”

“Ind. School Dist.” (ISD) references property owned by the Gilpin County Independent School District.

“State” references property that was designated by the assessor as state owned. This designation excludes state parks and other public open spaces owned by the state. However, for purposes of specificity, within the map legend, the “State” under land use refers to state property outside the state parks.

“Vacant” - in addition to parcels designated as Vacant by the assessor, all parcels without a designation were assumed vacant.

Note: There are no 3000, 6000, or 7000 series codes.

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VIEWS + VISTAS

VIEW LEGEND
1. Towards James Peak
2. Towards the Continental Divide
3. Towards Rollins Pass
4. A panoramic view of the Continental Divide including multiple peaks
5. Towards James Peak = Indian Peaks Wilderness
6. Towards Mt. Jepeet, South Arapahoe Peak, and surrounding peaks
7. Into Golden Gate Canyon State Park
8. Towards Grey and Torreys (they 14er peaks)
9. Canyon View toward Black Hawk + Central City

Sources: Esri, Airbus DS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodatastyrelsen, Rijkswaterstaat, GSA, Geoland, FEMA, Intermap and the GIS user community

GIPLIN COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

LARGE LAND HOLDINGS

EXHIBIT 4

SINGLE-OWNERSHIP

Villages Interface III
7 Transportation

Gilpin County Comprehensive Plan
Chapter 7: Transportation

7.1 Transportation Overview

The strategy for the Gilpin County transportation system prepares the County for future land use changes and the population, employment, and recreational growth those changes may produce. Gilpin County remains a pristine mountain location outside of the Denver metro area where the demand for residential and commercial growth continues to rise and the need for outdoor recreational opportunities increases.

Recognizing that growth is inevitable, Gilpin County aims to proactively plan for a strong central transportation system along CO 119, coupled with sustainable transportation improvements in areas of growth that offer flexibility, balance, and management opportunities. To be poised for change, Gilpin County will need to cultivate relationships with neighboring counties and CDOT to partner on future transportation improvements and expand funding opportunities. In doing so, all transportation improvements will seek to retain the character, views and vistas of Gilpin County, while supporting a transportation system that moves people and goods safely and effectively.

Recommendations for transportation in Gilpin County are described in terms of Countywide policies and an implementation toolbox for the County Villages.

Transportation Policies

Six transportation policies are followed with implementation strategies for each policy.

County Village Toolbox

The County Village Transportation Toolbox describes flexible transportation infrastructure and operational safety improvements (tools) in a sustainable manner and to be implemented incrementally as the villages develop over time.

7.2 Transportation Policies & Strategies

Policy 1: Facilitate Regional Collaboration & Coordination

Gilpin County recognizes the value of developing partnerships and collaborating with local cities, neighboring counties and CDOT to develop a sustainable land use and transportation system, supported by collaborative funding strategies.

NoCoPlaces 2050

Gilpin County recognizes that achieving large goals, such as transportation system improvements, often requires proactive, regional coordination.

An exemplary existing collaboration is Gilpin County’s active participation in NoCoPLACES 2050 (NoCo), which is a collective of eight public land management agencies in the northern Front Range mountains.

The NoCo Vision is “to protect and conserve natural and cultural resources while providing equitable access and a quality recreation experience for current and future generations.”

Strategy 1.01 Work with CDOT

Establish a strong working relationship with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and coordinate on a regular basis to identify specific transportation improvement projects and related funding opportunities or strategies.

Strategy 1.02 Collaborate with adjacent Counties

Collaborate with adjacent counties of Boulder County, Jefferson County and Clear Creek County to leverage area investments and seek opportunities to partner on transportation funding pursuits.

Strategy 1.03 Communicate with Local Cities

Increase communication with the local cities of Central City and Black Hawk to manage future growth and leverage future recreational opportunity.

Strategy 1.04 Bi-Annual Inter-agency Meetings

Formalize regular bi-annual meetings with CDOT to monitor County transportation needs and prepare for future improvements and funding opportunities. Encouraging and promoting bi-annual task force meetings with neighboring jurisdictions and the local cities should continue based on efforts initiated in this Comprehensive Plan process.

Strategy 1.05 Collaborate with Regional Partners

Consider joining the I-70 Coalition for the purpose of establishing a vision for Rollinsville to serve as a part of the regional I-70 rail connection and facilitate recreation-based rail travel into Gilpin County.

Lump Gulch HWY, Gilpin County
Policy 2: Partner with CDOT in the future of the Highway Network serving the County

Gilpin County in coordination with the BoCC, Planning Commission, and community input, should collaborate with CDOT in future operations, access opportunities and maintenance strategies associated with CO 119 in order to shape and strengthen the highways serving the County.

Strategy 2.01 Road Illumination
Jointly identify locations along CO 119 and CO 46 for targeted illumination improvements where appropriate with an accompanying engineering study, in order to increase roadway safety while minimizing impact on wildlife activity and dark skies.

Strategy 2.02 Snow Removal
Identify snow removal strategies for CDOT and the County that meet the County’s travel needs, even during fiscally constrained circumstances.

Strategy 2.03 Access Control Plan
Develop a CO 119 Access Control Plan to manage access decisions and practices prior to future development demands.

Strategy 2.04 Vehicle Turnouts
Manage increasing visitor travel throughout the County by establishing formal vehicle turnouts or viewing areas at locations relevant to Gilpin County views and vistas. Work with CDOT to confirm viable locations including the following:

- CO 119 and Douglas Mountain Rd (busy travel stop and intersection)
- CO 119 north of CO 46 (popular aspen viewing)
- Gap Rd at Panorama Point (busy visitor viewing area)

Strategy 2.05 Viewing Areas
Turnouts at high volume areas should be evaluated for future design as supporting Gilpin County “viewing areas” that also accommodate short-term parking, provide restroom facilities and showcase Gilpin County history and position along the Peak to Peak Highway.

Strategy 2.06 Safe & Reliable Bicycle Travel
Support safe and reliable regional bicycle travel through Gilpin County along CO 119 as part of a broader state bicycling network. Maintain and improve existing shoulder along CO 119 as needed, and develop future facilities to support bicycle travel from Black Hawk to CO 6 and the Clear Creek Greenway.

Strategy 2.07 Bicycle Signage
Install “Share the Road” and/or “Bikes May Use Full Lane” signage along CO 119 and CO 46 in coordination with CDOT practices and Jefferson County signage guidelines.

Strategy 2.08 Gap between Black Hawk and Clear Creek Greenway
As CDOT looks to widen CO 119 in the future, evaluate the design of shoulder or dedicated bicycle facilities to address the gap between Black Hawk and the Clear Creek Greenway.

CDOT Turnout Guidelines
It will not always be economically feasible to provide passing lanes or desirably wide shoulders continuously along the highway through deep rock cuts or where other conditions limit the cross-section width. In such cases, consideration should be given to use of intermittent sections of shoulder or turnouts along the highway.

Such turnouts provide an area for emergency stops, overlook areas along scenic byways, trailhead parking, and also allow slower moving vehicles to pull out of the through lane to permit following vehicles to pass.

Turnouts should be located so that approaching drivers will have a clear view of the entire turnout in order to determine whether the turnout is available for use.

Consider sight distance for vehicles re-entering the road. Refer to Table 3-32 of AASHTO’s Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets for recommended lengths of turnouts including taper.

Source: CDOT’s Roadway Design Guide, 2018

Figure 7-1: Vehicle Turnout
A Turnout is a widened, unobstructed shoulder area that allows slow-moving vehicles to pull out of the through lane to give passing opportunities to following vehicles. Length of turnout varies by speed of facility and terrain but can be estimated at approximately 400 to 550 feet in length.
Policy 3: Safe & Efficient County-wide Transportation System

Maintain a safe and efficient County Transportation System that respects natural features, wildlife and existing community character, while recognizing anticipated growth in travel demand and needs of residents and visitors in the future.

Strategy 3.01 Multimodal Safety
Ensure the County transportation system safely accommodates vehicular travel, as well as opportunities for taking local rideshare services, walking within the communities, and regional bicycle connectivity.

Strategy 3.02 Establish County Roadway Standards
Establish County-wide roadway standards that identify the function and role of the roadway facility within the County, and establish a minimum public right-of-way of 20'-24' for County roads in keeping with emergency needs.

Strategy 3.03: Preserve Roadside Views
Preserve roadside views as future development occurs, particularly along CO 119, CO 46, and CO 72, as well as Lake Gulch Road, Virginia Canyon Road, Tolland Road, Mammoth Gulch Road and The Central City Parkway.

Strategy 3.04 Continue Public Rights-of Way Easements & Dedication
Private development approvals or agreements in Gilpin County should address minimum roadway standards and require future right-of-way dedication. In addition, identify opportunities for private development support of transportation infrastructure relevant to the development or surrounding area.

The practice of requiring easements and/or right-of-way dedications as a condition of land use approval should be continued and supported with County purchases of right-of-way where necessary to expand the County roadway system.

Strategy 3.05 Improve Primary High-use Roads
Evaluate paving and safety improvements for three primary, high use roadways within the County to ensure future safe travel for residents and visitors, as well as effective snow removal and maintenance:

- Gap Road from the Gilpin County border to CO 119
- South Beaver Creek Road from CO 119 to CR 72
- Tolland Rd. from CO 119 at Rollinsville to the Moffat Tunnel Recreation area

Strategy 3.06 Funding Resources
Seek Transportation-specific funding resources within the County. Evaluate the organization and implementation of County Transportation Districts to support ongoing road maintenance and snow removal schedules along all County roads. Align Transportation Districts with School District boundaries and establish a dedicated funding source for maintenance and roadway improvements relevant to each Transportation district.

Exhibit 6: Transportation Plan illustrates the collection of transportation and mobility recommendations proposed through the Comprehensive Plan. The exhibit locates potential boundaries for future transportation districts, improvements to regional bikeways, locations at which to apply village toolbox strategies, high use roads to consider for paving, and vehicle turnouts.

Peak to Peak Scenic Byway
CO 119 is the southern-most segment of the Peak to Peak Scenic Byway, which originates in Black Hawk and continues north along CO 72 through Nederland and CO 7 into Estes Park and Rocky Mountain National Park.

As the Peak to Peak is Colorado’s oldest scenic byway, recreational improvements to CO 119 can be paired with wayfinding and signage that help highlight the rich history and natural beauty of this corridor.

Figure 7-2: Tolland Road
Increasing vehicular travel demand along Tolland Rd. due to recreational use, trailhead access and potential future access to the Eldora ski mountain resort will require a plan for increased maintenance and potential paving of this primary roadway facility.
Policy 4: Bicycle Travel & Recreational Trails

Identify opportunities to strengthen regional bicycle travel and recreational trail opportunities within the County through coordination with partner cities, counties and CDOT.

Strategy 4.01 Inter-jurisdictional Coordination
Coordinate with Central City and Black Hawk to leverage and provide access to existing bicycle and recreational investments and future identified improvements in accordance with the Central City Trail Master Plan.

Strategy 4.02 Wayfinding
Increase wayfinding signage along CO 119, CO 46, and County roads to support bicycling and recreational tourism, in line with CDOT priority bicycle corridors.

Strategy 4.03 CDOT TAP Funding for Recreational Signage
Pursue CDOT Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) funding for County-wide recreational signage and coordinate signage design with neighboring counties.

Strategy 4.04 Bicycle Travel between Black Hawk & US 6/Clear Creek Greenway
Address the gap in regional bicycle travel along CO 119 between Black Hawk and US 6/Clear Creek Greenway. Work with CDOT to include sufficient shoulder or dedicated bike facility in the future expansion of CO 119 from Black Hawk to US 6 to allow for a direct facility connection to the Clear Creek Greenway existing and future facility.

Exhibit 7: Bicycle Travel & Recreation illustrates recommendations to improve bicycle travel and recreation opportunities in Gilpin County. The attributes highlighted on the map include existing trail, trailheads, and bicycle connections while also indicating with dashed lines corridors that may be suitable for future bicycle improvements. The identified bicycle improvements are focused on facilitating regional bicycle travel.

Figure 7-3: CDOT Bicycle Policy
CDOT has identified segments of CO 119, CO 46, and CO 72 as Tier 1 High Demand Bicycle Corridors, which means CDOT will prioritize these corridors when allocating resources to improve bicycling throughout the state. The identification criterion for these corridors include bicycle levels of use, connectivity to the transportation network, crash rates, and bicycle level of stress.

Figure 7-4: Black Hawk Hidden Treasures Trailhead & Bridge across CO 119
Gilpin County should seek to access and leverage regional recreational investments and opportunities being developed by neighboring jurisdictions.
Policy 5: Safety & Emergency Preparedness

Strategy 5.01 Wildfire Management & Emergency Operations Plans
Confirm and update the recommendations of the Gilpin County Wildfire Management Plan and Emergency Operations Plan from 2013. Revisit these existing documents to confirm recommendations, safety practices and communication protocols and review all standards with the Gilpin County multi-agency Task Force.

Strategy 5.02 Emergency Preparedness
Through the County-wide safety and emergency preparedness plan and in coordination with County Sheriff and CDOT, confirm residential evacuation routes and county access profile to pinpoint location and direction of multiple points of ingress and egress on roads that support two-way traffic flow in and out of the County. Coordinate with Gilpin County Emergency Management, Black Hawk Fire Department, Central City Fire Department, and Timberline Fire Authority, to develop an emergency operations plan that provides clear and mutually acceptable protocols concerning out-of-district response areas, incident dispatching, communications, and mutual aid procedures for both in and out of County available resources.

Strategy 5.03 Emergency Access
Fund and implement paving and safety improvements along roadways essential to County-wide safety and emergency preparedness. Identify primary and secondary access and evacuation routes, corresponding roadside forest thinning and seasonal maintenance locations. Identify 4WD "backdoor" roads that provide essential access to main roads for safety improvements as needed.

Strategy 5.04 Informational Materials
As residents and visitors increase throughout the County, advance community friendly materials for increased awareness of evacuation and safety measures as an ongoing County resource.

Exhibit 8: Evacuation Routes calls attention to key corridors within the County that may enable safe and efficient travel in case of emergency, including CO 119, CO 72, CO 46, Gap Road, and S Beaver Creek. The exhibit indicates "time until fire arrival" for CO 72, CO 46, and Gap Road. One strategy identified in the comprehensive plan is to confirm residential evacuation routes and County access profile.

Policy 6: Provide Shared-Use Transportation Services

Strategy 6.01 Provide Safe Shared-Use Access
Provide safe access to opportunity and mobility for residents of all ages, incomes and abilities, including elderly, people with disabilities and all vulnerable users.

Strategy 6.02 Diversify Funding
Diversify funding to increase sustainability of shared transportation services provided by the County through Gilpin Connect through coordination with CDOT’s rural transit funding program.

Strategy 6.03 Strengthen Transit Connections
Strengthen shared transportation service connections to regional transit options offered through RTD by providing County connections to regional transit services out of Evergreen and Nederland.
7.3 County Village Transportation Toolbox

The Transportation Toolbox for Gilpin County is a resource to support future land use change within the village centers and provide flexible transportation infrastructure and operational safety improvements in a sustainable, as-needed manner. Tools within the toolbox tie to strategies around pedestrian safety, bicycle connectivity and vehicle movement. These tools define potential solutions once development reaches the necessary threshold or any time that the need for such tools arises.

Village Tool #1 Diversify Transportation Funding

For a flexible and responsive transportation strategy within the village center, the costs for improvements or construction should be funded in part through developers, CDOT as a partner in CO 119 and dedicated funds from gaming industry revenues and County transportation districts.

Village Tool #2 Flexible & Incremental Transportation Improvements

In support of incremental Village growth, collaborate with CDOT to provide flexible transportation improvements. Identify the transportation tools and improvements that respond to growth and ensure safety of residents and visitors along CO 119 as the highway through the villages. Future street design should address safety, function, a variety of users and contribute to placemaking, especially in the village core. Tools within the Toolbox include the following:

- Pedestrian Safety and Signalization
- Bicycle Travel
- Speed Reduction
- On-street Parking

Traffic lanes help guide vehicles and establish order within the travelway; Leadville, CO

Rollins Pass sign off CO 119 at Rollinsville

Figure 7-6: Example State Highway
An example of State highways accommodating multi-modal transportation and streetscape improvements, while interfacing with on-street dining.

Source: Colorado Downtown Streets: A Tool for Communities, Planners, and Engineers, August 2016

Figure 7-7: Travel Lanes
Traffic lanes help guide vehicles and establish order within the travelway; Leadville, CO

Source: Colorado Downtown Streets: A Tool for Communities, Planners, and Engineers, August 2016
Village Tool #3 Pedestrian Safety & Signalization

As growth within the villages occurs, pedestrian activity can be expected to increase, especially if recreational opportunities and entertainment or dining venues grow. Providing safe pedestrian crossings, pedestrian crossing signals or traffic signals may be an important improvement to ensuring a safe walking environment and crossing of CO 119.

Additionally, sidewalk improvements should include curb ramps to provide comfortable access to destinations for all modes of travel and all users. All future improvements to CO 119 within the village centers should be designed and implemented in coordination CDOT.

Walkway
A walkway is any type of defined space or pathway for use by a person traveling by foot or using a wheelchair. These may be pedestrian walkways, shared use paths, sidewalks, or roadway shoulders.

In some rural or suburban areas, where these types of walkways are not feasible, roadway shoulders provide an area for pedestrians to walk next to the roadway. Walkable shoulders should be considered along both sides of rural highways routinely used by pedestrians.

Paved shoulders can reduce crashes involving pedestrians walking along roadways by 71%.

Source: FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasures

Sidewalk
Sidewalks provide dedicated space intended for use by pedestrians that is safe, comfortable, and accessible to all. Sidewalks are physically separated from the roadway by a curb and gutter or unpaved buffer space.

Sidewalks should be at least 5 ft wide, or wider in places where the pedestrian environment includes other amenities. This permits side-by-side walking and meets accessibility guidelines for turning and maneuvering.

Sidewalks can reduce crashes involving pedestrians walking along roadways by 65 – 89%.

Figure 7-8: Sidewalks
Example of a sidewalk and bicycle route
Source and Guidance: Alta’s Rural Design Guide

Curb Ramps
Curb ramps and blended transitions provide access between the sidewalk and street for people using wheelchairs or walkers, pushing baby strollers, towing luggage, etc. A curb ramp is a short ramp cutting through a curb or built up to it. A blended transition is a depressed corner that basically turns the corner into one large ramp.

It is often difficult or impossible for a person using a wheelchair, scooter, walker, or other mobility device to cross a street if the sidewalk on either side of the street ends without a curb ramp. It is also dangerous. If curb ramps are not provided, these individuals are forced to make a difficult choice between not traveling to their chosen destination, or risking their personal safety by traveling alongside cars and other vehicles in the streets.

Figure 7-9: Curb ramps
Curb ramps provide access between sidewalk and street; Rifle, CO
Source: Colorado Downtown Streets: A Tool for Communities, Planners, and Engineers, August 2016
Pedestrian Crosswalk Visibility Improvements

This group of countermeasures includes improved lighting, advance or in-street warning signage, pavement markings, and geometric design elements such as curb extensions. Such features may be used in combination to indicate optimal or preferred locations for people to cross and to help reinforce the driver requirement to yield the right-of-way to pedestrians at crossing locations.

Crosswalk visibility enhancements can reduce crashes by 23 – 48%.

Pedestrian Refuge Islands

The presence of a pedestrian refuge island at a midblock location or intersection allows pedestrians to focus on one direction of traffic at a time as they cross, and gives them a place to wait for an adequate gap in oncoming traffic before finishing the second phase of a crossing.

Refuge islands are highly desirable for midblock pedestrian crossings on roads with four or more travel lanes, especially where speed limits are 35 mph or greater and/or where annual average daily traffic (AADT) is 9,000 or higher. They are also a candidate treatment option for uncontrolled pedestrian crossings on 3-lane or 2-lane roads that have high vehicle speeds or volumes. When installed at a midblock crossing, the island should be supplemented with a marked high-visibility crosswalk.

Pedestrian refuge islands can reduce crashes by 32%.
Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB):
RRFBs are pedestrian-actuated conspicuity enhancements used in combination with a pedestrian, school, or trail crossing warning sign to improve safety at uncontrolled, marked crosswalks. The device includes two rectangular shaped yellow indications, each with an LED-array-based light source, that flash with high frequency when activated. RRFBs can reduce pedestrian crashes by 47%.

Traffic Signals
Traffic signals can be used to prevent the most severe type crashes (right-angle, left-turn). Consideration to signalize an unsignalized intersection should only be given after (1) less restrictive forms of traffic control have been utilized as the installation of a traffic signal often leads to an increased frequency of rear-end type crashes on major roadways and introduces congestion and (2) signal warrants have been met. A signal may be warranted through high vehicular, pedestrian, or bicyclist volumes, or due to crash history, or proximity to a rail crossing. However, if installed in an unwarranted location, new signals can encourage disobedience or re-routing, moving the problem but not solving it.

Curb Extensions
Curb extensions or “bulb-outs” visually and physically narrow the roadway by extending the curb line into the edge of traveled way, reducing the width of the street. Curb extensions are typically applied at intersections; however, they can also be applied to midblock locations. Curb extensions provide several benefits such as:

- Safer and shorter crossings for pedestrians
- Increased available space for street amenities such as benches, plantings, and trees.
- Increased visibility of pedestrians and motorists by aligning pedestrians with the parking lane.
- Tightened intersection curb radii that encourages slower vehicle turning speeds.
- Reduced vehicle speeds as a result of the narrowed roadway width.

If curb extensions are used where parallel parking is present, the curb line should extend 6 feet towards the roadway centerline, but should not extend into traffic or bicycle lanes.
Village Tool #4 Safe Regional & Local Bicycle Travel

Provide for safe Regional Bicycle Travel through and within the Villages through appropriate facility design and appropriate measures in speed reduction.

Lane Striping Modification
Includes reducing the width of existing wider travel lanes down to 10-11 feet, or reconfiguring pavement markings. Lane striping is typically modified on streets with wider travel lanes and documented speeding to slow traffic while accommodating improved bicycle, pedestrian, and parking opportunities.

Village Tool #5 Accommodate Parking

Provide for on-street parking solutions relevant to the village center land use changes, higher parking demand and increased pedestrian activity.

On-Street Parking
On-street parking is the allocation of paved space for parking and can be either parallel or angled; however, parallel parking is generally preferred for maximum speed reduction. On-street parking can effectively narrow the roadway travel lanes by adding side friction to the traffic flow. Additionally, on-street parking provides a buffer between vehicular travel lanes and pedestrian walkways, improving pedestrian safety and comfort. On-street parking can be combined with curb extensions for protected parking.

It is noted that angled parking is prohibited on state highways according to C.R.S.42-4-1205. A local jurisdiction can create an ordinance allowing it, but CDOT still has to pass a resolution for approval.

Speed Feedback Signs
Speed feedback signs (SFS), also known as dynamic speed displays, provide drivers with feedback about their speed in relationship to the posted speed limit. When appropriately complemented with police enforcement, SFS can be an effective method for reducing speeds at a desired location.

SFS should be placed near the location of the intended speed reduction. In addition, speed reductions from SFS are maintained only through short distances and therefore should not be considered a speed enforcement solution at a corridor level.

Lane Striping Modification
Includes reducing the width of existing wider travel lanes down to 10-11 feet, or reconfiguring pavement markings. Lane striping is typically modified on streets with wider travel lanes and documented speeding to slow traffic while accommodating improved bicycle, pedestrian, and parking opportunities.

On-Street Parking
On-street parking is the allocation of paved space for parking and can be either parallel or angled; however, parallel parking is generally preferred for maximum speed reduction. On-street parking can effectively narrow the roadway travel lanes by adding side friction to the traffic flow. Additionally, on-street parking provides a buffer between vehicular travel lanes and pedestrian walkways, improving pedestrian safety and comfort. On-street parking can be combined with curb extensions for protected parking.

It is noted that angled parking is prohibited on state highways according to C.R.S.42-4-1205. A local jurisdiction can create an ordinance allowing it, but CDOT still has to pass a resolution for approval.

Figure 7-15: Lane Striping for Bicycles
Source: NACTO Urban Street Design Guide

Figure 7-16: Speed Feedback Signs
Source: Transportation Research Board Spatial Effectiveness of Speed Feedback Signs, 2012

Figure 7-17: On-Street Parking
Guidance: CDOT’s Colorado Downtown Street, January 2020 and FHWA’s Traffic Calming ePrimer

1 Universal Citation: CDOT’s Colorado Downtown Street, January 2020 and FHWA’s Traffic Calming ePrimer
Can be found at this link: https://law.justia.com/codes/colorado/2016/title-42/regulation-of-vehicles-and-traffic/article-4/part-12/section-42-4-1205/
Chapter 8: Capital Improvement Plan

8.1 CIP Context

In the specific context of Gilpin County, current outstanding capital projects are geared towards two broad goals: financial sustainability and long-range planning, including fire mitigation. In total, the County has identified approximately $43.0 million of capital projects, of which about $1.8 million are meant to make the County more financially sustainable and about $41 million are designed to meet long term development needs. (Figure 8-1: Capital Improvement Plan Costs by Strategic Area). The County prioritized into three priority tiers based on their expected impact and the availability of alternatives to the proposed projects. The majority of high cost projects fall under long range planning.

In Tier 1, most capital funding requests are for emergency preparedness and facilities maintenance. Specifically, $5 million has been requested for emergency preparedness, including a fire response water supply system for deepening reservoirs, installing cisterns, and other related activities, including fire mitigation. Overall, Tier 1 projects would require funding of approximately $1.6 million per year if the costs were allocated over five years, or about $0.8 million, if they spanned ten years.

Similar patterns prevail in Tier 2 projects, where the high cost projects tended to be related to long range planning, particularly as it concerns the Public Works department, road maintenance, and roof replacement for the community center. The cost of Tier 2 projects totaled $29,289,600, which is primarily driven by the $21 million requested by Parks and Recreation for structural renovations. In total, the CIP would require between $8.6 and $4.3 million of funding per year to complete currently identified projects over the next five and ten years, respectively.

8.2 CIP Strategies

Capital improvement Plans have proven to be an important complementary element alongside general and comprehensive development plans. Capital planning is useful for tracking and prioritizing impending projects from various departments to incorporate into land use planning and economic development.

Capital planning helps achieve long-term progress in the following ways:

Equitable growth

An important element of CIP is that it is preceded by careful evaluation of an investment project with respect to returns on investment, as well as the social and economic impact. With strategic planning, this can channel the investment towards serving residents, geographical areas and address socioeconomic needs where most needed.

Maintaining quality of life

Maintaining existing infrastructure is an important piece of serving the public at current levels of service. However, new capital projects need to be developed to ensure infrastructure keep pace with population growth and specifically in Gilpin County’s case, the ability to support growing numbers of recreational visitors, which is essential to maintain important community values.

Growth management

CIP help direct investment to priority areas for future residential and commercial development in a manner that is consistent with stated community goals. For example, targeted investment in public projects can substantially help foster small business development in specific locations or mitigate the impact of a large increase in outside visitation.

Focusing on simple strategies can help make the best use of funds available for implementing capital projects:

Focus on social & financial rates of return

Although CIP, whether for new infrastructure or maintenance, tend to require high levels of investment, the return on those investments often outweighs the costs over long periods of time. Moreover, deferring investment in the present leads to higher costs in the future as the expense to address deferred maintenance or develop new infrastructure increases over time.

To ensure social and financial returns are aligned with expectation, the CIP process requires careful examination of costs, available funding, and feasible timelines. Furthermore, even though some long-term benefits and welfare gains are intangible, it is important to estimate net benefits to justify the project alternative projects that are competing for the dollars.

Differentiate capital & maintenance expenditures

CIP often pertain to two broad categories of investment: capital and maintenance. New capital expenditures help substantially with growth in all the four domains discussed above: equitable, population, targeted and tailored growth, and therefore, are lucrative avenues for investment.

However, maintenance expenditures are often deferred to maximize the gains of their initial investments, among other considerations. This poses a significant and hidden opportunity cost because deferred maintenance can only accrue over time and reactive measures cost much more than preemptive maintenance, because repairs become replacements.

Table 8-1: Capital Improvement Plan Costs by Strategic Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requiring Department</th>
<th>Strategic Area of Focus</th>
<th>Financial Sustainability</th>
<th>Long Range Planning</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
<th>5 year</th>
<th>10 year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tier 1</td>
<td></td>
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<td>$40,000</td>
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<td>Parks &amp; Rec</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Works</td>
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<td>$3,254,000</td>
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<td>Grand Total</td>
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<td>$12,289,000</td>
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<td>$12,289,000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
8.3 Mechanisms for Funding CIP

Gilpin County has identified a number of capital projects that will need to be funded over the coming years and decades. However, in the present, the County faces difficult fiscal circumstances due to the COVID-19 pandemic and as a result, funding for capital projects has been deferred into the future. Even during periods when fiscal circumstances are better, the County has identified approximately $43.0 million worth of projects that would need to be funded.

Under the County’s existing fiscal structure, generating excess revenue to pay for capital expenses can be challenging. This warrants considerations of alternative and innovative sources of funding, which could be combined to fund some of the top priority projects.

Taxes & fees

Currently, the County uses revenues from property taxes, gaming taxes, grants, and intergovernmental transfers to fund capital improvements. However, user fees, impact fees, and sales and lodging taxes are also common sources of revenue for funding capital improvement projects.

The County and its departments could explore how some of these fees and taxes can bring in more revenue. For example, a property tax increase could be proposed with a sunset clause to lift the increase as revenues recover to pre-COVID-19 levels in about three to five years, as experts predict.

State and federal grants/ stimulus

State and federal grants offer another funding mechanism for local governments to invest in capital projects. For example, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) from the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development is a good source of funding for community development projects. There are also grants for recreation and conservation infrastructure from Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), that use a portion of Colorado Lottery proceeds.

Borrowing

Like private entities, the government can also borrow to fund capital projects contingent on careful assessment of its debt capacity and the use of the capital project against the costs of intergenerational equity, i.e., disseminating the costs of capital projects over their useful lives. For instance, the City of Sugar Land in Texas, issues a variety of bonds through which they can borrow from the bondholders with interest, to ensure consistent funding for investments that are crucial for the well-being and development of the community.

These bonds are mutually beneficial for lenders because on top of interest, these bonds come with more security and obligation from the City to pay it back. Borrowing, while more costly than paying as you go, can offer more stability for financing CIPs since funding can be secured up front.

Public-Private Partnership

Another mechanism gaining popularity in the U.S. is a public-private partnership (P-3), that allows for private entities to share costs, risks, revenues and in some cases, receive availability payments which entail payments from future public budgets. Under this type of model, a private firm often pays for a portion of the costs of a capital project in exchange for the right to receive future user revenues produced by the project.

A P-3 model is the most prevalent in large-scale projects, such as transportation. An example from Colorado includes the Central I-70 project that is a partnership between Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and Kiewit Meridian Partners, who managed the design and construction for future toll revenue shares. Given the nature of capital projects identified in Gilpin County’s CIP, there are not many opportunities to pursue this type of funding model.

Philanthropy

Increasingly, high net-worth individuals and foundations are seeking opportunities to contribute to targeted sustainable and socioeconomic development goals or simply to make tax-exempt contributions to a good cause. Funds from philanthropic individuals and foundations have become increasingly targeted at economic and social development outcomes. For example, Social Finance USA connects philanthropic partners to governmental entities, and provides end to end management in projects pertaining to economic mobility, health, education, environment, and more.

In other cases, granting individuals or foundations may offer competitive grant funding for certain activities or projects. While philanthropy can be an attractive option due to its donation-based nature, it also puts governments at the mercy of funders, who can be hard to find and connect to and may have their own ideas for implementing actions and projects.
Chapter 9: County Regulations

The planning process for Gilpin County’s first Comprehensive Plan includes the review and amendment of the County’s zoning, land use and engineering regulations. While a comprehensive plan is a visionary guide or roadmap for the future, regulations are the tools to implement the vision.

9.1 Zoning Code & Land Use Regulations

The goal for amending Gilpin County’s zoning regulations is to help create a dynamic tool to implement the County’s vision as formulated in the 2020 Gilpin County Comprehensive Plan. The objective is to establish a tool that ties sound policy implementation to effective governance procedures.

Rules for Effective Zoning Regulations

Suggested rules for zoning regulations to be effective for the implementation of a vision, includes the following:

- Simple language with no jargon
- Flexible (without being too flexible)
- Allows for incremental decision making
- Dynamic to respond to changing market and different contexts (existing and future)
- Allows for incremental decision making
- Easy to use and to update
- Clear approval process
- Simple language with no jargon

Dynamic Zoning Regulations

A well-crafted set of dynamic zoning regulations is essential for the successful implementation of a vision and should have the following attributes:

- An effective tool to implement the community’s vision as defined in the Comprehensive Plan
- Allows AND encourages the types of new development and redevelopment in areas predetermined for that purpose, which in context of the Comprehensive Plan, refer to development nodes called villages; the purpose is to “make it easy to do the right thing in the right place.”
- Easy to understand and administer through the simplification of overly complex standards and procedures
- Dynamic to respond to changing market and different contexts (existing and future)
- Allows for incremental decision making
- Flexible (without being too flexible)
- Predictable and consistent
- Easy to use and to update
- Clear approval process
- Simple language with no jargon

Economic Considerations

From an economic point of view, properly written zoning is essential to ensure a County attracts new development with the associated economic benefit of jobs, business, retail, and services. The following are some of the economic benefits of well-written zoning regulations:

- Proper zoning regulations tell a prospect that the County has a vision for what they want to be. If a company or developer is going to invest in the County, they want to know that their investment is protected and is part of an overall plan/vision that is being led by the County.
- Developers want to know the rules. The rules need to be fair and consistent. While developers typically don’t mind tight rules, they need to know them before they begin their financial and construction pro formas. Zoning regulations/codes/ordinances/rules that randomly change can put the developer in financial jeopardy.
- Well-written regulations that are published online tell a prospect that the County is professional and ready for business. Prospects and developers may start online and never make a personal contact with County staff. Poorly-written, confusing or non-published regulations drive off a prospect.
- Effective zoning regulations will ensure that the mixed use areas and residential neighborhoods within the proposed villages are fiscally sustainable and include amenities and characteristics such as quality public plazas, open space, connectivity, and trails that add value to the villages and the County at large. In addition, this approach will be critical in order for Gilpin County to attract quality commercial development within these villages.

In conclusion, private capital follows the path of least resistance. If the regulations make it difficult for the developer, he goes somewhere else; however, it does not mean that the developer should be allowed to do “whatever he wants” but rather the requirements need to be understood easily and applied consistently (even if the requirements are constraining). In fact, it is known that bad zoning makes developers walk away.

Flexible and Specific

The strategy with the revised zoning regulations is to be flexible enough to accommodate unknown opportunities, yet specific enough to help staff make day-to-day decisions.

Approach to Amending the Zoning Regulations

After evaluating the existing zoning regulations, the planning team prepared a few key and higher-priority amendments in an effort to 1) clarify and streamline development review processes, 2) clean up the zoning regulations in terms of cross referencing, and 3) creating the framework for implementing some of the key elements of the Comprehensive Plan, all while maintaining the overall set of existing regulations that, for the most part, have served the County well.

The objective for this effort was to place priority on amendments that are most relevant to the context of the County and current development needs. It is intended to be a living document that should be modified and amended as conditions and needs in the County change in the future.

Provided as a stand-alone document, the deliverable is a strike-through and underlined version of the current Zoning Regulations that were adopted in 2018. It also indicates the sections that have been added and modified.
9.2 Engineering Regulations

As part of the effort to complete the Comprehensive Plan, the County’s existing engineering standards and specifications were thoroughly reviewed across all currently adopted and approved documents and zoning codes. One of these documents was the Gilpin County Road Regulations, Policies, Standards, and Specifications that was initially approved in 1975 with only minor revisions being completed over the last four decades.

It was decided, through input from the County, that the most desirable path forward would be the creation of entirely new regulations to replace this document. In order to produce new engineering regulations, the neighboring municipalities with similar environmental conditions and demographics were investigated to find what engineering and design practices would best suit Gilpin County. The “Gilpin County Standards and Specifications for Design and Construction” is included as a stand-alone document to serve as the County’s Engineering Regulations.
Chapter 10: Implementation Plan

The successful implementation of any comprehensive plan lies in the clarity with which actions are defined and prioritized. Two key factors serve to guide the prioritization of action items for Gilpin County, namely: 1) Community Vision and 2) the Catalytic Capability of an action item.

Community Vision

The vision for the future of Gilpin County is based on a comprehensive process of public engagement. Seeking to realize this vision is considered the primary priority of the Implementation Plan.

Six goals and strategies associated with the vision are defined and described in Figure 4.3: Goals and Strategies of Chapter 4: Visioning, which are summarized as follows:

1. **Protect and Sustain** calls for the protection of Gilpin County’s rural mountain community and natural environment by focusing resources and density in less-intrusive development nodes.
2. **Prevent Overuse** suggests the management of recreational tourism with focused infrastructure improvements.
3. **Economic Diversification** aims for an economy that is more resilient, calls for development concentrated in nodes, and promotes a diversity of commercial/retail ventures.
4. **Interagency Coordination** which is to coordinate with other agencies to focus growth, and managing/ regulating development that allows for predictability AND flexibility.
5. **Manage Growth to Protect Community Character** suggests tools be crafted to provide County control over development.
6. **Maintain Gilpin County’s Unique Values** calls for growth to be managed responsibly and with care.

In support of the Vision, the second most important priority is to establish villages that contain a mix of uses that are concentrated within a predetermined limited area.

In terms of the Implementation Plan, the question should be asked:

How does a particular action 1) contribute to achieving the community’s vision for the County, 2) support the three strategies for resilient/sustainable growth, and 3) lead to the development of villages successfully and sustainably?

Catalyst Actions

A simple definition of the word “catalyst” is that it is a causal agent that produces an effect or an action responsible for a result. For purposes of the Implementation Plan, it is the primary action/s that lead to other/secondary actions to be initiated that otherwise may have cost more or taken longer time to take effect, or in some cases would never have taken effect.

Establishing villages within the County is a catalyst for economic diversification and the protection of areas of natural and cultural importance. It leads to achieving the vision and goals for the County. The relevant question to ask is:

What are the catalyst actions that will result in the successful development of villages?

General Actions

By nature of its name, a comprehensive plan covers a great number of issues within any given community. In fact, the plan itself serves as a “catalyst” to recognizing and identifying the needs of a community. That in itself leads to the formulation of actions to meet these needs.

General Actions (in addition to Catalyst Actions) are categorized in terms of: Economic Actions, Land Use Actions, Transportation Actions, Recreation Actions, and Other Actions.

Summary of Actions

Figure 10-1: Implementation Actions Summary, is a summary of relevant actions identified during the course of the comprehensive planning process. The catalyst and general actions are furthermore categorized as described in Figure 10-2 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation Categories</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Implementation Tools</th>
<th>Funding Source</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C Catalyst</td>
<td>ZR</td>
<td>Zoning Regulations</td>
<td>CEDC Colorado Economic Development Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>H High</td>
<td>GCO</td>
<td>County Operations</td>
<td>CIP Capital Improvement Program</td>
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<td>County ServicesCDBG</td>
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<td>Rural Economic Development Innovation Initiative</td>
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Figure 10-2: Implementation Actions Summary Key
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<td><strong>CATALYST ACTIONS</strong></td>
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<td>Village Vision Plan</td>
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<td>o Create a vision plan and implementation framework for each village</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CIP; CDBG grant</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>Village Regulations</td>
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<td>o Following the Vision Plan, develop regulations that safeguard the vision, intent and integrity of the villages</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CIP</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Attract Development to Village</td>
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<td>o Implement process for attracting development within village, including incentives</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Establish a process that accounts for water and sewer utilities to ensure access and availability for developments</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>County</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Catalyst Support Actions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Sustainable Infrastructure Investments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Determine a strategy for fiscally sustainable infrastructure investments (water, sewer, roads), e.g. sharing costs with developers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Developers</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CIP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Services to Villages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Determine Funding needed to provide services to village nodes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$, $$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>County tax revenues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Geological Assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Complete Geological assessments for county villages, with specific attention to location and potential impact of mines and water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Developers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>$</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CIP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Water &amp; Sewer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Study village requirements and potential source for water use and other necessary systems/utilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Determine efficacy of sewer systems for villages and what requirements are needed to connect to these systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Determine the process to secure water through independent water districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Establish regulation requirements for sewer and/or septic relating to villages</td>
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<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Developers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
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<td></td>
<td>County</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Tools:** ZR: Zoning Regulations  
GCO: Gilpin County Operations*  
GCS: Gilpin County Services*  
Cost: $: <100K  
$$: 100-500K  
$$$: >500K  
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<th>GCS</th>
<th>Partnerships</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Funding Source</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>GENERAL ACTIONS</strong></td>
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<td><strong>ECONOMIC ACTIONS</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Actively Apply for grants from various grantees</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>OEDIT</td>
<td>$ (per grant proposal)</td>
<td>OEDIT grant; COT tourism grant; DOLA grant; REDI grant; CDBG grants; EIAF grants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Review Taxation Structure</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$, $$</td>
<td>County tax revenues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Establish metrics to measure desirable/sustainable growth within the county</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CDPHE</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>County tax revenues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Coordinate with CDPHE</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>CDPHE Brownfields Cleanup Grant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>CIP Prioritization</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>OEDIT</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>County tax revenues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Market the County for new Businesses</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>OEDIT</td>
<td>$, $$, $$$</td>
<td>OEDIT grant; COT tourism development grant; County tax revenues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Locally-owned Businesses</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CEDC</td>
<td>$, $$</td>
<td>County tax revenues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Local Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
<td>County</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Tools:** ZR: Zoning Regulations, GCO: Gilpin County Operations*, GCS: Gilpin County Services*  
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<th>Funding Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>LAND USE ACTIONS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Development Feasibility</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<td>County</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Prepare a complete list identifying what is needed to make development feasible</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Coordinate with Cities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Black Hawk, Central City</td>
<td></td>
<td>County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Coordinate with Black Hawk and Central City to ensure land uses are compatible</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>RECREATION ACTIONS</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Recreation Focus Areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>$</td>
<td></td>
<td>GOCO and other recreational use grants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Identify and create a vision plan and implementation framework for recreation focus areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Regulations for Recreation Focus Areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>$</td>
<td></td>
<td>GOCO and other recreational use grants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Prepare regulations for recreation focus areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Educational Material &amp; Information Kiosks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>National Forest Service; BLM; CO State Parks</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>GOCO and other recreational use grants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o For the recreational use of public land within the county, coordinate with the National Forest Service, Colorado State Parks and BLM to design and implement educational and information material with a consistent message</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Develop and implement information kiosks to distribute the education material</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Publish, update and maintain educational material online</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tools:** ZR: Zoning Regulations  GCO: Gilpin County Operations*  GCS: Gilpin County Services*  Cost: $: <100K  $$: 100-500K  $$$: >500K

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<th>Funding Source</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>TRANSPORTATION ACTIONS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Village Transportation Toolbox</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Implement context-specific strategies from the Transportation Toolbox</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>as County Villages develop in the future</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Roadway Illumination in Coordination with CDOT</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$-$-$</td>
<td>CDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Jointly identify locations along CO 119 and CO 46 for targeted illumination improvements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Snow Removal in Coordination with CDOT</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
<td>County Operations Budget, CDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Identify snow removal strategies for CDOT and the County that meet the county’s travel needs, even during fiscally constrained circumstances</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Access Control Plan in Coordination with CDOT</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
<td>CDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Develop a CO 119 Access Control Plan to manage access decisions and practices prior to future development demands</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Vehicle Turnouts in Coordination with CDOT</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$-$-$</td>
<td>CIP, CDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Establish or enhance existing vehicle turnouts or viewing areas at locations relevant to Gilpin County views and vistas</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Safe &amp; Reliable Bicycle Travel</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$-$-$</td>
<td>CDOT, Black Hawk, County Gaming revenues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Maintain and improve existing shoulder along CO 119 as needed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Develop future facilities to support bicycle travel from Black Hawk to CO 6 and the Clear Creek Greenway</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Bicycle Use Signage</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
<td>CDOT TAP funds, GOCO and other recreational use grants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Install “Share the Road” and/or “Bikes May Use Full Lane” signage along CO 119 and CO 46 in coordination with CDOT practices and Jefferson County signage guidelines</td>
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<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Wayfinding</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
<td>CDOT TAP funds, GOCO and other recreational use grants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Increase wayfinding signage along CO 119, CO 46, and county roads to support bicycling and recreational tourism, in line with CDOT priority bicycle corridors</td>
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<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Establish County Roadway Standards</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
<td>CIP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Establish County-wide roadway standards that identify the function and role of the roadway facility within the County</td>
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<td></td>
<td>o Establish a minimum public right-of-way of 20’-24’ for county roads in keeping with emergency needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Improve Primary High-use Roads</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$$$</td>
<td>CIP, District revenues, grants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Evaluate paving and safety improvements for Gap Road, S Beaver Creek Road, and Tolland Road to ensure future safe travel for residents and visitors, as well as effective snow removal and maintenance.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Tools:** ZR: Zoning Regulations  GCO: Gilpin County Operations*  GCS: Gilpin County Services*  
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<th>Priority</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **H**    | **Funding Resources**  
  o Evaluate the organization and implementation of County Transportation Districts to support ongoing road maintenance and snow removal schedules along all County roads  
  o Establish a dedicated funding source for maintenance and roadway improvements relevant to each district |
|          |        |
| **H**    | **Emergency Preparedness**  
  o Coordinate with Gilpin County Emergency Management, Black Hawk Fire Department, and Timberline Fire Authority, to update wildfire management and emergency operations plans  
  o Identify primary and secondary access and evacuation routes, corresponding roadside forest thinning and seasonal maintenance locations  
  o Identify 4WD “backdoor” roads that provide essential access to main roads for safety improvements as needed |
|          |        |
| **H**    | **Emergency Access**  
  o Fund and implement paving and safety improvements along roadways essential to County-wide safety and emergency preparedness  
  o Identify primary and secondary access and evacuation routes, corresponding roadside forest thinning and seasonal maintenance locations  
  o Identify 4WD “backdoor” roads that provide essential access to main roads for safety improvements as needed |
|          |        |
| **L**    | **Diversify Shared Transportation Funding**  
  o Diversify funding to increase sustainability of shared transportation services provided by the County through Gilpin Connect through coordination with CDOT’s rural transit funding program. |
|          |        |
| **L**    | **Health**  
  o Establish mobile health care clinics  
  o Coordination with state and federal for mobile clinics |
|          |        |
| **L**    | **Health**  
  o Establish incentives for retired physicians to relocate to Gilpin County |
|          |        |
| **M**    | **Mining Pollution Mitigation**  
  o Create and implement mitigation and reclamation plan for mining areas within the county to counteract potential pollution issues associated with mining practices and environmental impacts |
|          |        |
| **L**    | **County-Specific Character & Culture Events**  
  o Hold Gilpin County Cultural Events celebrating the character of Gilpin County and what makes it a unique place to live and visit |

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