Mesa Countywide Land Use Plan
From Issues to Action

October 1996
CHAPTER FOUR
RURAL PLANNING AREA
FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

GOALS, POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

Mesa County Land Use Plan
From Issues to Action
Updated February 2, 2006
Revised September 28, 2010
Revised February 24, 2011
Revised April 28, 2011
Revised May 23, 2013
Sincere thanks to all Mesa County residents who participated in the 2005-2006 update of the Rural Area Master Plan.

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GOALS, POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION
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February 2, 2006
Resolution MCPC 2005-04: Adoption of an Update of the Rural Planning Area Future Land Use Plan, Chapter 4 of the Mesa Countywide Land use Plan, an Element of the Mesa County Master Plan and Certification of the Master Plan Element to the Board of Mesa County Commissioners

October 28, 2010
Resolution MCPC 2010-004: Approval of an Amendment to the Mesa County Rural Master Plan to Correct Errors; Update the Plan to Reflect Completed and Ongoing Actions; and Revise or Delete Certain Implementation Measures

February 24, 2011
Resolution MCPC 2011-02: Adopting Amendments to the Future Land Use Map of the Mesa County Master Plan Regarding the Urban Residential Reserve Designation in the Palisade and Fruita Areas and Certifying the Adopted Master Plan Amendments to the Board of Mesa County Commissioners

April 28, 2011
Resolution MCPC 2001-03: Adopting Amendments to the Mesa County Rural Master Plan Regarding the Buffer (Cooperative Planning Area) Future Land Use Classification and Certifying the Adopted Master Plan Amendments to the Board of Mesa County Commissioners

May 23, 2013
Resolution MCPC 2013-04: An Update of Section LU3.1.C.1, Rural Community, of the Mesa County Rural Master Plan as an Amendment to the Mesa County Master Plan and Certification of the Amendment to the Board of Mesa County Commissioners
INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The Rural Planning Area Future Land Use Plan, Chapter 4 of the Mesa Countywide Land Use Plan, was adopted by the Mesa County Planning Commission in 1996. This plan was intended to provide guidance for land development for a maximum of 15 years (about 2010). Many of the goals and policies identified in this plan have been implemented over the past 10 years. However, since the adoption of the 1996 plan, development pressure, changing situations, and identified issues and conflicts in land development strongly suggested that a plan update was needed. The Plan recommends updates every five to seven years to reflect changing conditions and trends.

Purpose of 2005 Rural Master Plan Update

Mesa County has experienced steady growth over the past 10 years. Significant development activity has occurred both in areas previously anticipated for development, such as areas adjacent to the cities of Grand Junction and Fruita; and in outlying rural and agricultural areas and rural communities where limited development was anticipated in the past. Some of the major issues which were reviewed in preparing this updated plan are summarized below:

- The Rural Future Land Use Classification (implemented through the AFT zone district) does not provide a predictable, compatible or consistent density pattern for new development.

- The Rural Communities of Mesa, Mack, Powderhorn and most recently Gateway, have established public sewer systems and are now experiencing significant urban development. Whitewater is one of the fastest growing areas of Mesa County, and with the possibility of having public sewer system in the near future, has the potential to significantly change the character of the community and adjacent rural areas.

- Public sewer service may need to be expanded into many areas adjacent to the existing municipalities and Urban Growth Boundaries eventually to accommodate anticipated growth. Land uses and development patterns in these areas which could be detrimental to future redevelopment at urban densities (when public sewer service is available) are a concern.

- The agricultural economy is transitioning in many areas of the County from production to recreation and lifestyle oriented development. Many previously agricultural areas in the Mid and Lower Valley are in transition to other land uses including suburban, estate, and rural residential uses.

- The conversion of agricultural land to other uses is widespread in the Mid and Lower Valley.

- Farmlands surrounding the City of Fruita and the Lower Valley Area are experiencing a high percentage of the new residential development in the County. This development has the potential to significantly impact the ability to provide adequate public services and may incur large investments of public funds to upgrade roads and infrastructure.

- East Orchard Mesa and areas surrounding the Town of Palisade are increasingly being recognized as having statewide significance for its soils, micro-climate and ability to produce vineyards and orchards crops. Maintaining appropriate parcel sizes to allow for economically viable agricultural operations in this area is a concern.
• Capital Improvements Programs are increasingly needed to be coordinated with the Master Plan.

• New development located considerable distances from existing communities typically increases the costs of providing services. Inefficient development could result in reduced services and/or increased taxes.

• Policies and Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) have been finalized since the adoption of the 1996 Master Plan, such as the Cooperative Planning Areas (Buffers) between Grand Junction and Fruita and Palisade, which need to be integrated into the overall Master Plan.

• Incentives are insufficient or lacking to promote good development practices.

• Land use applications, such as conditional use permits, have allowed uses not consistent with the Master Plan.

• Master Plan recommendations and zoning districts are not consistent in some areas.

• New development will require a higher level of planning and coordination with all municipalities and service providers to address impacts. Actively maintaining and updating the Plan directs conservation of its social, economic, and natural resources for change in a manner consistent with community desires.

• Energy development has the potential to impact many areas at levels not previously anticipated.

Summary of Major Changes
The 2005 update of the 1996 Rural Planning Area Future Land Use Plan has been developed with substantial community input and represents a year-long planning process. The changes in this updated plan are designed to address issues identified in the review of this plan summarized above and to reflect comments received from the public participation process.

The 2005 update of the 1996 Rural Planning Area Future Land Use Plan depicts a direction for future land use patterns. As opportunities arise in the County to guide and direct land use changes (through plan amendments, Code amendments/implementation, and zone changes), the Plan will serve as a resource to the public, staff, and decision-makers. Major changes from the 1996 Plan include:

• Additional Future Land Use classifications are recommended that specifically reflects the localized changes occurring in the rural planning area. The classifications depict an orderly transition in land uses from most intense (the Rural Communities) to large tracts of farm and ranchland (Large Lot Rural/Ag 35+ acre classifications). These classifications also generally reflect graduated reductions in density (intensity of land use) based on increased distance from urban services.

• Recommendations to amend the Land Development Code to require all land use approvals to be consistent with the Master Plan.
• Establishment of predictable densities in all areas of the County. Densities should be consistent with available infrastructure and good planning as identified in the Master Plan. The availability of all required services (including transportation, roads, water, fire protection, emergency services, schools, and medical facilities) and cost of providing services to accommodate growth is a major consideration in establishing densities.

• Coordinate Capital Improvements Programming with the planning process to ensure maximum efficiency in the use of public funds.

• Areas where public sewer service and urban development are anticipated to be expanded within the planning horizon are to be protected from premature development which would be detrimental and inefficient to future development at urban densities. An Urban Residential Reserve future land use classification accomplishes these goals while still allowing development prior to the construction of urban services.

• A new land use category for the East Orchard Mesa Area which recognizes the importance of and continued use of the area for fruit and vineyard production by requiring a 10-acre minimum lot size for new development.

• An incentive based density (Density by Design) policy has been added to allow additional densities for properties under development utilizing good design, upgraded services, minimal impacts to agriculture and public lands, and promoting the public good.

• A general pattern of less density as the distance from existing rural and urban communities increases is reflected in the Future Land Use classifications.

• Coordinate planning and develop Intergovernmental Agreements for land uses and development between Mesa County and all municipalities to minimize conflicts and to provide predictable densities and design criteria for all development applications within urban growth boundaries (201 sewer service boundaries) and areas of influence which may be annexed by a municipality in the future.

• Policy and implementation item statements have been rewritten so that they are clear as to intent.

• Suggests the County establish major utility corridors policies in areas impacted by energy development to minimize conflicts with landowners and adjacent land uses.

Land Use and Growth Management (LU)
LU Goal 1: To protect the rural character of individual areas of Mesa County as identified in the Master Plan including the Community and Area Plans.

 Policies:
LU 1.1 New residential development shall be compatible with existing land uses.

LU 1.2 Maintain buffers between municipalities, public lands and communities to preserve the distinct identity/character of each community.
Implementation:
LU1.A Approve development applications only if consistent with the Master Plan. (Implemented through the Land Development Code)

LU1.B Establish desired land uses, design standards, and public improvements in buffer areas between municipalities, public land, and communities. (Intergovernmental Agreements, Development Code)

LU1.C Continue to update area and community plans to accurately reflect the character of these areas as they change. Conduct annual reviews of community and area plans.

LU Goal 2: To recognize and support the continued development of existing communities as growth areas.

Policies:
LU2.1 Future urban growth will be focused within existing urban and rural communities as identified in adopted Community and Area Plans.

LU2.2 A suitable supply of commercial land shall be identified within rural communities.

Implementation:
LU2.A Direct the expenditure of capital improvements and new development to existing growth centers and rural communities. (Capital Improvements Plan, Intergovernmental Agreements)

LU2.B Enter intergovernmental agreements with the County’s municipalities to jointly plan for areas of joint concern – generally the statutory municipal 3 mile area of influence.

LU Goal 3: Establish land use classifications to implement the goals and policies of the Master Plan

Policies:
LU3.1 Land Use Classifications

Intent:
1. Establish land use categories that identify potential development density based on existing conditions while anticipating future development that will best serve the community.
2. To be consistent with adopted Community and Area Plans and maintain rural character\(^1\) of each of the unique areas identified by the Future Land Use Classifications.
4. Support development which is consistent with surrounding areas within the Future Land Use Classification.

\(^1\) Rural Character is different in each of the Future Land Use Classifications. Descriptions of rural character is described in each future land use classification based on existing conditions at the time the plan was updated in 2005 and extensive community input.
Implementation:
LU3.1.A  Adopt provisions requiring decisions about the type and intensity of land uses to be consistent with the Master Plan. (Development Code)

LU3.1.B  Adopt overlay districts, and design criteria/guidelines specifically for geographic areas described in the Future Land Use Classification definitions (in particular the Urban/Residential Reserve FLU classification). (Development Code).

LU3.1.C  These Future Land Use Classifications and the associated Future Land Use Map will be reviewed and updated at least every 7 years by the Mesa County Planning Commission to respond to changed conditions and trends.

Future Land Use Classification Definitions

LU3.1.C.1. Rural Community

Generally, Rural Communities are early settlement town sites with existing development patterns that serve as the community and civic centers for the area. These unincorporated communities should be recognized as unique in character with their needs addressed in the respective community plans.

Transferable Development Rights/Credits:
The Mesa County Land Development Code identifies sending areas for the Mesa County transferable development rights/credits program. Designated receiving areas are specified in the Mesa County Land Development Code and may include one or more of the six Rural Communities of Gateway, Loma, Mack, Mesa, Powderhorn, and Whitewater. The unique characteristics and service capabilities of each Rural Community need to be evaluated to determine whether the area should be a designated receiving area for transferable development rights.

Specifically, the Rural Communities are:

GATEWAY
The Gateway Rural Community is comprised of two sub-planning areas. Together they total about 2,115 acres or about 3.3 square miles. The total acreage in the “A” area is about 279 acres, which is a relatively small area. The distance from the Wayside Chapel to the Colorado Department of Transportation Road Shop near the Dolores River is only 1,100 feet or about 3 city blocks long; its width varies but is not more than 2 blocks wide at its widest location. Area “A” is serviceable by a gravity sewer system. It is not served by a community water system. Area “A” contains numerous small lots, and long-standing, small residential structures.

The area surrounding the core community in Area “B” is approximately 1,836 acres or about 2.8 square miles. This area will be served by sewer when collection lines and lift stations are economically feasible. This area is not presently served by a community water system. Area “B” contains a mixture of large and small lots, land uses, housing size and age, and zoning.

Transferable Development Rights/Credits:
There is no specific program in place to transfer development rights into Gateway.
LOMA
The Loma Rural Community is about 3,059 acres, or 4.8 square miles. The original
townsite has an area of about 160 acres and contains numerous small lots platted in the
early 1900s. Some of the rights-of-way for the streets and alleys in the original townsite
have been vacated. The area around the community includes low-density rural
neighborhoods. The Loma Community Plan identifies areas for commercial, mixed use
and medium low- to medium-high residential densities at the center, surrounded by estate
densities. Domestic water service is provided by Ute Water. Implementation of the
Loma Community Plan will require extension of public sewer from the Mesa County
Lower Valley Public Improvement District to the area and creation of a mechanism such
as an urban services public improvement district to provide other urban services.

Transferable Development Rights/Credits:
There is no specific program in place to transfer development rights into Loma.

MACK
The Rural Community of Mack totals about 647 acres, or about one square mile. The
Mack Rural Community is implemented by the Mack Overlay Zoning District of the
Mesa County Land Development Code, which is comprised of two tiers. Tier 1 is 95
acres and is designated for the downtown core area of Mack, where small lots and a mix
of zoning classifications occur. All of Tier 1 is served by the Mesa County Lower Valley
Public Improvement District (MCLVPID), which provides sewer service. Domestic
water service is provided by Ute Water. The intent of this tier is to allow and promote a
mix of business, commercial, and residential uses. Streetscape standards are designed to
allow these types of uses on the small lots located in the center of Mack.

Tier 2 is 420 acres and is intended to accommodate a mix of business, commercial, and
residential uses for those areas outside the downtown core of Mack (Tier 1) that are better
suited to less intensive uses where urban type development can occur. Parts of Tier 2 are
served by the MCLVPID’s sewer system. Domestic water service is provided by Ute
Water. Lots in this area are typically larger than what would be found in Tier 1, but still
within the Mack Core Area (Rural Community). An additional 127 acres were added to
the Mack Rural Community in 2012 and are recommended to be added to the Overlay
District.

Transferable Development Rights/Credits:
As stated in the Mesa County Land Development Code, Tier 2 is designated as a
receiving area for transferable development rights/credits. The Mack Sending Area is
that area within the Large Lot Rural/Agricultural 35+ (LL R/A 35+) and the Rural/
Agricultural 35+ A (R/A 35+ A) future land use classifications located within the Lower
Valley north of the Colorado River.

MESA
The Mesa Rural Community is about 257 acres or 0.4 square miles in size. Domestic
water and sewer service is provided by the Mesa Water and Sanitation District. The area
contains numerous small lots, including remnants of the original Mesa townsite. The
Village of Mesa Overlay zoning district in the Mesa County Land Development Code
implements the Mesa Rural Community designation in the Mesa/Powderhorn Plan and
allows mixed uses.
Transferable Development Rights/Credits:
There is no specific program in place to transfer development rights into Mesa.

POWDERHORN
The Rural Community of Powderhorn encompasses about 2,559 acres or 4 square miles. Approximately 857 acres of the Rural Community is located in the Grand Mesa Metropolitan District, which provides sewer and domestic water service. The community contains numerous small lots, condos, and businesses associated with the Powderhorn Ski Resort.

Transferable Development Rights/Credits:
There is no specific program in place to transfer development rights into Powderhorn.

WHITEWATER
The Whitewater Rural Community is about 7,300 acres, or 11 square miles. The Whitewater Rural Community is also included in the Urban Development Boundary of the Grand Junction Comprehensive Plan. At its core is the early Whitewater town site, which covered about 80 acres and is the center of the community. Domestic water is provided by Clifton Water. Sewer service is provided to part of the area by the Whitewater Public Improvement District. Other services are planned for the area through the Whitewater Urban Services Public Improvement District.

Transferable Development Rights/Credits:
As stated in the Mesa County Land Development Code, transfer of development rights into Whitewater are limited to a receiving area on designated Bureau of Land Management (BLM) properties slated for disposal by the BLM and identified in the Whitewater Community Plan. The primary Sending Area for the Whitewater TDR/C is that area within the Large Lot Rural Agricultural 35+ (LL R/A 35+) future land use classification located within the Whitewater/Kannah Creek area.

LU3.1.C.2. Residential Single Family - Estate (RSF-E)

Intent and Applicability
The Residential Single Family - Estate density classification is intended to accommodate low-density, estate type development on lots of at least 2 acres. This classification is applicable to the areas depicted on the 2006 Future Land Use Map, including the area from 25½ to 26 Road and I½ to I Road but excluding the Joint Urban Planning Area. Also, areas in the Rural Communities (as specified in their respective area plans) may be appropriate for this designation.

Considerations
The character of these areas of the County is large lot residential development. This classification is not necessarily appropriate adjacent to urban areas since the lot size does not allow for future redevelopment.

The minimum parcel size eligible for major subdivision in this classification is 4 acres.

Implementation
a. Update the RSF-E zone district to be consistent with the revised and amended Future Land Use Map.
   b. New development must meet the zone district standards and Master Plan policies.
   c. A density bonus is not permitted in this classification.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Density = Acres/lot (Minimum Acreage Eligible for Subdivision)</th>
<th>Lot Size (acres)</th>
<th>Density Bonus</th>
<th>Required Reserve %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RSF - E</td>
<td>2-5 (4)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LU3.1.C.3. Urban/Residential Reserve (U/RR)

**Intent and Applicability**
The Urban/Residential Reserve Land Use Classification is intended to be applied to areas where there is potential in the future for public sewer to be extended (in the reasonable foreseeable future). Maximum rural densities can be achieved today and the allowance for urban development is provided for the future. New development has a mandatory reserve of 40% of the site so as to permit redevelopment when urban infrastructure/services (sewer, water for fire flow, roads that include pedestrian and bicycle facilities, increased traffic circulation, etc.) become available. Further, it requires a subdivision design and an open land reservation that will result in an overall project (including the residual lot) configuration that will reinforce its future redevelopment potential. The cumulative impact of the undeveloped reserved land will result in benefits to the community with respect to circulation and access and other public infrastructure requirements as the area population and density increases.

The density of this classification is applicable to the areas depicted on the 2006 Future Land Use Map.

**Considerations**
The character of these areas of the County is transitioning from farm and rural residential to urban residential uses. The areas are generally close to or adjacent to urban areas/centers. They do not have a public sewer system presently, but the intent of the classification is to allow sewer service to expand to these areas in the future. The roads are not currently designed or built to urban classifications and standards but will be required to be built as such to accommodate urbanization. Land owners are able to develop properties under this classification at the full rural density, and in addition, are allowed to develop the reserve area at full urban density when sewer service is available.

*Structure Grouping:* In the U/RR Future Land Use Classification, non-agricultural development shall be grouped to retain the maximum amount of contiguous land in agricultural production or available for future agricultural/residential use. Homes, roads, residential support facilities, and other non-agricultural development, will be grouped on no more than sixty percent of the gross acreage of the parent parcel, with the remaining acreage retained in agricultural production and/or open land until sewer service is available and redevelopment is anticipated.
Development in the Urban/Residential Reserve areas must conform to the Road Access Policy including all adopted circulation maps and adopted transportation plans. This shall include planning and design of road/streets to serve the future urban density developments on the reserved lands including access standards and road/street construction. In most cases this will preclude the ability to use shared driveways for access to the initial development. It will also require that road/street design and construction conform to urban standards and be completed to the limits of the developed area.

The reserve area is to be designed to avoid significant diminution of the existing or potential agricultural use of the land. Extensive grading is not consistent with the natural topography of the site, removal of significant vegetation, and degradation of the natural visual qualities of the site. Proposed development shall also be sited to minimize impacts on scenic resources, wildlife habitat and streams, and adjacent agricultural operations and infrastructure.

The minimum parcel size eligible for major subdivision in this classification is 10 acres.

**Implementation**

a. New development must meet the zone district standards and Master Plan policies.

b. Continue to provide specific subdivision/development design standards consistent with this future land use classification including provisions to allow for future road and urban infrastructure extensions as the area urbanizes.

c. If sewer service is not available within a specified time frame after platting, the reserved lot may be developed with the subdivision having an overall density of no more than 1 unit per 2 acres.

d. Future redevelopment of the reserved lot with sewer service will be allowed only after an approved zone change to an urban zone district. New development must meet the zone district standards and Master Plan policies in place at that time.

### Urban/Residential Reserve Future Land Use Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Density = Acres/lot (Minimum Acreage Eligible for Subdivision)</th>
<th>Lot Size (acres)</th>
<th>Density Bonus</th>
<th>Required Reserve %</th>
<th>Structure Grouping</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban/Residential Reserve 5</td>
<td>2 (10)</td>
<td>Land Development Code Wastewater standards</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Achieved through design</td>
<td>40% Required</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LU3.1.C.4.  Rural Estate 3 (RE/3)

Intent and Applicability
The Rural Estate 3 density classification is intended to accommodate low-density, estate type development. This classification is applicable to the areas depicted on the 2006 Future Land Use Map, including the area north and east of the City of Fruita, generally east of 17 ½ Road, east of 20 Road and north of J Road to generally coincide with the City of Fruita’s Community Plan.

Considerations
The character of these areas of the County is agricultural and large lot residential development. This classification is appropriate as a transition between lower density rural/agricultural areas, the Buffers (Cooperative Planning Areas), and urban areas where future sewer service is not anticipated in the foreseeable future.

The minimum parcel size eligible for major subdivision in this classification is 6 acres.

Implementation
a. Create the RE- 3 zone district to be consistent with the revised and amended Future Land Use Map.
b. New development must meet the zone district standards and Master Plan policies.
c. A density bonus is permitted through the Land Development Code “Cluster Development Standards.”

Rural Estate 3 - Future Land Use Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Density = Acres/lot (Minimum Acreage Eligible for Subdivision)</th>
<th>Lot Size (acres)</th>
<th>Density Bonus</th>
<th>Required Reserve %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RE-3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Base Bonus</td>
<td>Minimum Maximum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 (6) 2 (6)</td>
<td>Land Development</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Land Development Code “Cluster Development Standards”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LU3.1.C.5.  Rural/Residential 5 (R/R5) (5 Acre Average Lot Size)

Intent and Applicability
This is a designation for areas where public sewer service is not anticipated within the planning horizon (5 to 7 years) and a five acre average is consistent with existing development patterns. This future land use classification is applicable to the area depicted on the 2006 Future Land Use Map (e.g. Vinelands Area).
Considerations
The characteristics of these areas of the County are predominately farms and to a lesser
degree rural residential development. Density is tied to availability of services and
infrastructure. Lot size averaging is encouraged and appropriate to promote larger lots
for agricultural operations.

The minimum parcel size eligible for major subdivision in this classification is 10 acres.

Implementation
a. New development must meet the zone district standards and Master Plan policies.
b. No density bonuses are allowed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rural/Residential 5 Future Land Use Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural/Residential 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LU3.1.C.6. Fruita 201-10 (10 Acre Minimum Lot Size)

Intent and Applicability
The area within the City of Fruita’s 201 Sewer Service Boundary (Fruita Urban Growth
Boundary) is intended to ultimately urbanize as part of the City of Fruita. This
classification is intended to promote a land use pattern favorable to future urban
development (consistent with Fruita’s Community Plan) as properties are annexed into
the City of Fruita. Until annexed by the City of Fruita development in this area will be
limited to a minimum 10 acre lot size.

Considerations
This land use classification will have sewer service within the Urban Growth Boundary.
The area will transition to urban development density as Fruita grows. The classification
provides a unique opportunity to coordinate land development activities between Mesa
County and the City of Fruita.

The minimum parcel size eligible for major subdivision in this classification is 20 acres.

Implementation
a. Enter an intergovernmental agreement with Fruita to establish a joint plan.
b. Develop an annexation agreement with the City of Fruita including provisions
   that all proposed non-residential development within the Fruita 201 should be first
   annexed to the City of Fruita.
**Fruita 201-10 Future Land Use Classification**
The minimum parcel size eligible for major subdivision in this classification is 20 acres.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Density = Acres/lot (Minimum Acreage Eligible for Subdivision)</th>
<th>Lot Size (Acres)</th>
<th>Density Bonus</th>
<th>Required Reserve %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Base Bonus</td>
<td>Minimum Maximum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruita 201-10</td>
<td>10 (20) N/A</td>
<td>10 N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**LU3.1.C.7. EOM 10 - (10 Acre Minimum Lot Size)**

**Intent and Applicability**
The intent of the EOM 10 (ten) Future Land Use Classification is to recognize and encourage the economic importance of and continued use of the area for fruit and vineyard production. The classification maintains parcel sizes (10 acres minimum) that a farmer would want to lease or buy for agricultural purposes. Averaging and or clustering introduce residential/agricultural conflict and are not considered appropriate in this area. Rural residential development is discouraged; rural multi-lot subdivision is highly discouraged.

This classification is applicable to the areas depicted on the 2006 Future Land Use Map. Generally the area includes East Orchard Mesa - south of the Colorado River, east of 35 Road, west of 38 ¼ Road, and north of C Road. It is also applicable to the portion of the Palisade Buffer that is located south of the river (see Section LU3.1.C.13).

**Considerations**
The character of this area of the County is distinctly agriculture; it is comprised almost entirely of fruit orchards and vineyards. Density is tied to the minimal viable lot size needed to produce orchard and vineyard crops. Public infrastructure such as water, fire flow and high capacity roads are usually limited. The area is very unique not only to the Valley but the State of Colorado in terms of its soils and micro-climates suitable for orchards and vineyards.

The minimum parcel size eligible for major subdivision in this classification is 20 acres.

**Implementation**
  a. New development must meet the zone district standards and Master Plan policies.
  b. Voluntary use of conservation easements is encouraged.
  c. No density bonuses are allowed.

**EOM 10 Future Land Use Classification**
The minimum parcel size eligible for major subdivision in this classification is 20 acres.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Density = Acres/lot (Minimum Acreage Eligible for Subdivision)</th>
<th>Lot Size (Acres)</th>
<th>Density Bonus</th>
<th>Required Reserve %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Base Bonus</td>
<td>Minimum Maximum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EOM 10</td>
<td>10 (20) None</td>
<td>10 N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LU3.1.C.8. Rural/Agricultural 10 – (R/A10) (10 Acre Average Lot Size)

**Intent and Applicability**
The Rural/Agricultural 10 (ten) Future Land Use Classification is intended to provide a transition area between areas of future urban redevelopment and larger lot agricultural and residential areas more distant from urban services (sewer, water for fire flow, roads that include pedestrian and bicycle facilities, increased traffic circulation, schools, medical, etc.). Within this plan’s timeframe, sewer service extension is not anticipated. A higher density may be appropriate utilizing the Density by Design policy.

This classification is applicable to the areas depicted on the 2006 Future Land Use Map and includes those properties with smaller lot acreage, intensive farming, and lifestyle agriculture operations. It is also applicable to transition areas between the Rural/Residential 5 and the Rural/Agricultural 20 future land use classifications and includes those portions of the Fruita and Palisade Buffers that are located north of the Colorado River (see Section LU3.1.C.13).

**Considerations**
The character of these areas of the County is distinctly transitional, moving away from traditional agriculture; it is comprised almost entirely of small farms and few large commercial agricultural operations. Density is tied to the minimal lot size that encourages and supports small farms and lifestyle agriculture. Lot size averaging is encouraged to create a range of acreages, preserve rural vistas instead of creating large-lot subdivision development and minimize cost of infrastructure. This classification also requires that subdivisions be sited and designed to minimize impacts on scenic resources, wildlife habitat and streams, and adjacent agricultural operations and infrastructure. A ten-acre average lot size is permitted only if public infrastructure such as water for fire flow and safely designed roads and pedestrian networks are provided to support the density.

**Implementation**
a. New development must meet the zone district standards and Master Plan policies.
   b. A density bonus may be achieved by meeting development design standards set forth in the Mesa County Land Development Code.
   c. A mix of lot sizes is encouraged as set forth in the Land Development Code.

### Rural/Agricultural 10 Future Land Use Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Density = Acres/lot (Minimum Acreage Eligible for Subdivision)</th>
<th>Lot Size (Acres)</th>
<th>Density Bonus</th>
<th>Required Reserve %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural Ag 10</td>
<td>10 (20)</td>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>By design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 (10)</td>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>By design</td>
<td>50% for Bonus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Land Development Code Wastewater standards</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LU3.1.C.9. **Rural/Agricultural 17 A – (17 Acre Average Lot Size)**

**Intent and Applicability**
The Rural/Agricultural 17 A (seventeen - A) Future Land Use Classification is intended to provide a transition area between the R/A 10 acre areas and larger lot agricultural areas in the 35 + future land use classifications. This classification is actively farmed and is more distant from urban services (sewer, water for fire flow, roads that include pedestrian and bicycle facilities, increased traffic circulation, schools, medical, etc.). Five-acre density is not appropriate in this classification area at this time. Additional density may be achieved utilizing the Density by Design policy. The Rural/Agriculture 17 A Future Land Use Classification is consistent with the agricultural policies of this Plan.

This classification is applicable to the areas depicted on the 2006 Future Land Use Map. It applies in various locations in the County – and mostly outside the boundaries of incorporated municipalities’ statutory 3 mile planning areas.

**Considerations**
Historically, this area has been agricultural with associated infrastructure and residential uses limited to rural agricultural families. The characteristics of this classification include farm to market roads, and small diameter domestic water lines that are not sized for fire flow. Active agricultural uses still continue, and it is important that where new residential development is introduced, conflicts are minimized. This classification also requires that subdivisions be designed and sited to minimize impacts on scenic resources, wildlife habitat and streams, and adjacent agricultural operations and infrastructure.

**Implementation**
a. New development must meet the zone district standards and Master Plan policies.
b. Conflicts between land that is either productive for farming or actively farmed and new residential development will be minimized.
c. A density bonus may be achieved by meeting development design standards set forth in the Mesa County Land Development Code.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Density = Acres/lot (Minimum Acreage Eligible for Subdivision)</th>
<th>Lot Size (Acres)</th>
<th>Density Bonus</th>
<th>Required Reserve %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural Ag 17 A</td>
<td>17 (34)</td>
<td>Land Development Code Wastewater standards, N/A</td>
<td>By design</td>
<td>50% for Bonus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9 (18)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LU3.1.C.10. Rural/Agricultural 20 NB – (20 Acre Average Lot Size) – No Bonus

**Intent and Applicability**
The Rural/Agricultural 20 NB (twenty - NB) Future Land Use Classification is intended to provide a transition area between the R/A 10 acre areas and public lands or larger lot agricultural areas in the 35+ areas more distant from urban services (sewer, water for fire flow, roads that include pedestrian and bicycle facilities, increased traffic circulation, schools, medical, etc.). The classification is consistent with the agricultural policies of this Plan.

This classification is applicable to the areas depicted on the 2006 Future Land Use Map. It applies in various locations in the County – including the Rapid Creek area east of Palisade, parts of Unaweep Canyon and parts of the Whitewater planning area. It generally applies to areas that are either productive for farming; are actively farmed or are transition areas between higher density future land use classifications and the Rural/Agricultural 35+ future land use classification.

**Considerations**
Residential structures within the areas of this Future Land Use Classification were originally built for rural agricultural families and as a result have limited infrastructure and services. The character of these areas in the County is a mix of large lot residential and agriculture. Areas are predominately agriculture, rural, large lot (lifestyle agriculture) subdivisions with limited availability of services. This classification also requires that subdivisions be designed and sited to minimize impacts on scenic resources, wildlife habitat and streams, and adjacent agricultural operations and infrastructure.

The minimum parcel size eligible for major subdivision in this classification is 40 acres.

**Implementation**
a. New development must meet the zone district standards and Master Plan policies.

### Rural/Agricultural 20 NB Future Land Use Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Density = Acres/lot (Minimum Acreage Eligible for Subdivision)</th>
<th>Lot Size (Acres)</th>
<th>Density Bonus</th>
<th>Required Reserve %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural/ Ag /20 NB</td>
<td>20 (40)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Land Development Code Wastewater standards</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The minimum parcel size eligible for major subdivision in this classification is 40 acres.
LU3.1.C.11. Rural/Agricultural 35+ A (35 Acre Average Lot Size)

**Intent and Applicability**

The Rural/Agricultural 35+ Future Land Use Classification is intended to: maintain the maximum amount of land in large and very large parcel sizes suitable for ranching and farming; and to avoid the conversion of agricultural lands to residential or nonagricultural commercial uses. The classification is consistent with the agricultural policies in the Master Plan. Rural residential development with an average lot size smaller than 35 acres in multi-lot subdivisions is highly discouraged for the following reasons:

- New development cannot meet subdivision standards in the Land Development Code due to limited services: currently outside a fire protection district; domestic or other sources of water is typically not available for fire flow.
- Roads are designed for farm-to-market use – they do not meet modern safety design/build specifications.
- This plan promotes and supports the ongoing agricultural activity in the area.
- Proximity to public lands (which is used for grazing).
- The area is a significant distance from employment and commercial centers.
- New development adds additional service demands on limited infrastructure.
- Averaging lot sizes allows the ability to create and sell lots smaller than 35 acres as an alternative to 35 acre subdivisions and will keep a larger base of productive land in use.

This classification is applicable to the areas depicted on the 2006 Future Land Use Map. It applies generally in the Plateau Valley and DeBeque areas, and specifically in the Lower Valley area currently outside of the Lower Valley Fire Protection District.

**Considerations**

This Future Land Use Classification identifies areas suitable for agricultural, forestry, and large lot rural residential uses. The classification is consistent with the agricultural policies in the Master Plan. Rural high-density, multi-lot subdivisions are highly discouraged. Public infrastructure and services are very limited; roads are designed and built at rural standards, maintenance is limited, Emergency Management Services are limited, and potable water is very limited.

This classification is not eligible for major subdivision.

**Implementation**

a. Create and adopt new zoning districts with larger minimum acreage standards per dwelling unit, such as AF 80, AF 120, or AF 160, that will be available for voluntary implementation consistent with the Rural/Agricultural 35+ future land use classification and the future land use map.

b. New development will be consistent with the Rural/Agricultural 35+ A future land use classification and the future land use map.

c. Continue to include provisions for Agricultural Land Divisions as an alternative to 35 acre subdivisions.

d. Encourage private conservation easements.

e. A density bonus is not permitted in this classification.

f. Review and study the Lower Valley area with the R/A 35+A designation in regard to fire protection service and infrastructure no later than 5 years from adoption of this plan update (no later than 2011).
Rural/Agricultural 35+ A Future Land Use Classification
This area is not eligible for major subdivision.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Base</th>
<th>Bonus</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural/Agricultural 35+ A</td>
<td>35 (N/A)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Land Development Code Wastewater standards</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LU3.1.C.12. Large Lot Rural/Agricultural 35+ (35 Acre Minimum Lot Size)

Intent and Applicability
The Large Lot Rural/Agricultural 35+ Future Land Use Classification is intended to maintain the maximum amount of land in large and very large parcel sizes suitable for ranching and farming and to avoid the conversion of agricultural lands to residential or non-agricultural commercial uses. The classification is consistent with the agricultural policies in the Master Plan. No new lots should be created under 35 acres in size.

This classification is applicable to the areas depicted on the 2006 Future Land Use Map. Generally: Horse Canyon, Glade Park/Pinyon Mesa, municipal watersheds, Unaweep Canyon, Upper Kannah Creek, and the base of Mt. Garfield and the Bookcliffs north of Interstate 70.

Considerations
The Large Lot Rural/Agricultural 35+ Future Land Use Classification areas have historically consisted of large-lot ranches and open land. They are characterized by interaction with public lands for uses such as grazing allotments. This classification recognizes the ranching business requires larger tracts of land than other agricultural uses, and may require the use of public lands to remain viable. Rural residential development is discouraged; rural high-density, multi-lot subdivisions are highly discouraged. These areas are more often adjacent to or surrounded by public lands and are important to maintain wildlife habitat, watersheds, natural features and recreational uses.

Services are very limited due to the remoteness of these areas:
- roads are designed and built to serve farms to market and some are only seasonally maintained,
- land may be outside of a fire protection district,
- medical facilities are located far from these areas, and
- potable water may be limited or over-appropriated.

The Fruita reservoirs on Pinyon Mesa should not serve the Glade Park residents with potable water since this action would encourage development where roads and other services are extremely limited.

This classification is not eligible for major subdivision.
Implementation

a. Create and adopt new zoning districts with larger minimum acreage standards per dwelling unit, such as AF 80, AF 120, or AF 160, that will be available for voluntary implementation consistent with the Large Lot Rural/Agriculture 35+ future land use classification and the future land use map.
b. New development will be consistent with the Large Lot Rural/Agriculture 35+ future land use classification and the future land use map.
c. Adopt amendments to the Mesa County Land Development Code to prohibit Simple Land Divisions in these areas.
d. Encourage private conservation easements.
e. A density bonus is not permitted in this classification.

### Large Lot Rural/Agricultural 35+ Future Land Use Classification

This classification is not eligible for major subdivision.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Density = Acres/lot (Minimum Acreage Eligible for Subdivision)</th>
<th>Lot Size (Acres)</th>
<th>Density Bonus</th>
<th>Required Reserve %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Base Bonus Minimum Maximum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Lot Rural/Agricultural 35+</td>
<td>35 N/A 35 N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### LU3.1.C.13. Buffer (Cooperative Planning Area)

#### Intent and Applicability

To implement the intent and purpose of the Cooperative Planning Agreements, (aka Community Separators), adopted by the Board of County Commissioners in Resolutions MCA 98-10 and MCA 98-11. Density determination within the Buffer is dependent on location. The Future Land Use north of the Colorado River, in both the Fruita and Palisade Buffers, is Rural/Agricultural 10 – (R/A10) (10 acre average lot size) (see Section LU3.1.C.8). South of the Colorado River in the Palisade Buffer, the Future Land Use is EOM 10 (10 acre minimum lot size) (see Section LE3.1.C.7). South of the Colorado River and within the Fruita Buffer, within the AFT zone district, density will be determined by compatibility with existing lot sizes in the notification area (2,500 feet). This means the average lot size (excluding public lands) in the area determines the density of new development. Areas with urban zoning may not create lots less than two acres in size (for example the Redlands).

#### Considerations

These areas were created through intergovernmental agreements to: maintain separation between municipalities in the Valley, protect rural landscapes (Fruita) and their agricultural importance (Palisade). As a result of the IGAs, active implementation activities include: purchase of conservation easements with state, local and federal funding; and an established Transfer of Development Credits/Rights program with Fruita.
**Implementation**

a. Density calculations in the buffer areas shall be consistent with the Master Plan and the Intergovernmental Agreements.

b. Adopt design standards in the Land Development Code for future development within the buffers.

c. A density bonus is only permitted in this classification for properties located north of the Colorado River. (See R/A 10, Section LU3.1.C.8) Continue to prohibit eligibility for density bonuses in the portions of the Buffers located south of the Colorado River.

d. Rezone the area within the Buffer south of the Colorado River on the Redlands to AFT.

e. Remove the area south of Highway 340 from the Buffer.

**Buffer Future Land Use Classification**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Density = Acres/lot (Minimum Acreage Eligible for Subdivision)</th>
<th>Lot Size (Acres)</th>
<th>Density Bonus</th>
<th>Required Reserve %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Base</td>
<td>Bonus</td>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>Maximum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruita Buffer North of River (R/A 10)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Land Development Code Wastewater standards</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td>(10)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruita Buffer South of River</td>
<td></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Land Development Code Wastewater standards</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palisade Buffer North of River (R/A 10)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Land Development Code Wastewater standards</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td>(10)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palisade Buffer South of River (EOM 10)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td>(20)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
FUTURE LAND USE CLASSIFICATION SUMMARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Density = Acres/lot (Minimum Acreage Eligible for Subdivision)</th>
<th>Lot Size (acres)</th>
<th>Density Bonus</th>
<th>Required Reserve %</th>
<th>Structure Grouping</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural Community</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estate</td>
<td>2-5 (4)</td>
<td>N/A 2**</td>
<td>5 N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urban/Residential Reserve</td>
<td>2 (10)</td>
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<td>Land Development Code Wastewater standards</td>
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<td>Rural Residential</td>
<td>5 (10)</td>
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<td>Land Development Code Wastewater standards</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruita 201-10</td>
<td>10 (20)</td>
<td>N/A 10</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>EOM 10</td>
<td>10 (20)</td>
<td>N/A 10</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Ag 10</td>
<td>10 (20)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Land Development Code Wastewater standards</td>
<td>By design</td>
<td>50% for bonus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Ag 17 A</td>
<td>17 (34)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Land Development Code Wastewater standards</td>
<td>By design</td>
<td>50% for bonus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural/Ag 20 NB</td>
<td>20 (40)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Land Development Code Wastewater standards</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural/Ag 35+</td>
<td>35 (N/A)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Land Development Code Wastewater standards</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Lot Rural/Ag 35+</td>
<td>35 (N/A)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* see Community or Area plan for specific recommendations  ** determined by Environmental Health Department
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Density = Acres/lot (Minimum Acreage Eligible for Subdivision)</th>
<th>Lot Size (acres)</th>
<th>Density Bonus</th>
<th>Required Reserve %</th>
<th>Structure Grouping</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fruita Buffer North of River</td>
<td>10 (20)</td>
<td>Land Development Code Standards</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>By Design</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North of River (R/A 10)</td>
<td>5 (10)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>50% for Bonus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruita Buffer South of River</td>
<td>5-35</td>
<td>Land Development Code Standards</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palisade Buffer North of River</td>
<td>10 (20)</td>
<td>Land Development Code Standards</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>By Design</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North of River (R/A 10)</td>
<td>5 (10)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>50% for Bonus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palisade Buffer South of River</td>
<td>10 (20)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(EOM 10)</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* see Community or Area plan for specific recommendations  
** determined by Environmental Health Department
Policies:
LU3.2 Incentive Based Density (Density by Design)

**Intent and Applicability**
This policy is applicable to those Future Land Use Classifications as defined in the Land Use and Growth Management Policy LU 3.1 of this plan and summarized below. Density bonuses shall not exceed the maximum density in the applicable Future Land Use Classification and as recommended in the applicable Community or Area Plan.

Mesa County supports incentive based density using the concept of “density by design”. Density bonuses may be achieved by meeting the goals of the plan and exceeding the standards in the *Land Development Code*.

There are three Future Land Use Classifications that allow incentive based density: the reserve area where urban services will be eventually available (Urban/Residential Reserve) and the rural agricultural areas (Rural/Agricultural 10 and Rural/Agricultural 17). A set of criteria will be developed to implement the intent of each area. In the Buffer, incentive-based density will only be permitted in those areas north of the Colorado River where the underlying Future Land Use Classification is Rural/Agricultural 10.

In the rural agricultural areas, the intent is to protect the character of the area (the values, rural residential being compatible with those existing land uses, agricultural, water quality, character, etc.) In the reserve area, the intent is to promote future urban development.

**Implementation**

**LU3.2.A.** Continue to implement the Urban Residential Reserve Zoning District density standards for the Urban/Residential Reserve Future Land Use Classification areas. Such standards should include the requirements for grouping/clustering of lots and urban design and infrastructure improvements (street sections, pedestrian circulation, dry-line sewers, entryways, landscaping, etc.)

**LU3.2.B.** Continue to provide incentive based density standards and options for the Rural/Agricultural 10 and Rural/Agricultural 17 classifications. Such standards should include the requirements for grouping/clustering of lots and water service upgrades to meet fire flow standards. Design and service options should include but are not limited to, the following concepts:

- Designated open land adjacent to other designated open land
- Existing, mature, desirable vegetation will remain on site (large trees, etc.)
- Preservation in perpetuity of wildlife habitat and/or sensitive lands
- Retention and maintenance of on-site agricultural related improvements, investments and infrastructure
- Public access is provided to public lands or open space (in consultation/agreement with public land managers)
- Provision of school bus or transit bus pullouts where necessary with an approved shelter
- Provision of pedestrian paths or sidewalks on internal streets connecting to adjacent paths where available
- A school bus stop within a ¼ mile walk on a County road with a safe walking surface off of the driving surface (e.g., sidewalk, adequate shoulder, detached trail, etc.)
- Promote a variety of housing sizes (no limits on minimum square footage)
- Limiting visibility of new structures from roads—e.g., behind topographic features, below ridgelines, etc.

**SUMMARY Incentive Based Density**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Future Land Use Classification</th>
<th>Density (Average Acres/Lot)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bonus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban/ Residential Reserve</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural/ Agricultural 10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural/ Agricultural 17</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buffer, north of River only (Fruita and Palisade) (R/A 10)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Community Character/Image (CC)

CC Goal 1: To protect and maintain the unique rural features and characteristics which are significant links to the past, present, and future.

Policy:  
CC1.1 New development will identify important rural features, scenic vistas/corridors, and natural areas impacted by the proposed development (e.g., large trees, waterways, historic structures, farming practices, balance of visual and traffic impacts on location of accesses, etc.) and mitigate such impacts.

CC1.2 New development shall be compatible with existing land uses.

Implementation:
CC1.A Approve development applications only if consistent with the Master Plan. (Implemented through the Land Development Code)

CC1.B Create and adopt a checklist of important rural features which are unique to or define/reinforce a distinct positive characteristic of the community’s image (e.g., established trees, homestead lots, historic structures, etc.) as an evaluation tool for new development. (Area Plans, Resolution, Development Code)

CC1.C Create and adopt a County historic register. (Resolution and Development Code)

CC1.D Establish mixed use standards and incentives to intensify activity within the six Rural Communities. Ensure facilities are mutually supportive and attract people to complimentary activities (e.g., churches, post offices, schools, etc.) (Development Code)

CC1.E Establish guidelines for new development along designated scenic roadways. (Development Code)

CC1.F Define, through the area plan process, the identity or distinct character of a rural community (e.g., ranching, field crops, fruit, orchard, mineral extraction, recreation, Colorado and Gunnison River corridor, etc.). (Area Plans, Development Code)

CC Goal 2: Future development shall be designed to complement or create appropriate community features such as roads, trails, open space and building patterns, while respecting the unique sense of existing community that distinguishes one area from another.

Policies:  
CC2.1 Well-defined community centers shall provide focal points for individual rural communities.

CC2.2 Recognize the distinction between rural communities and support design variations that are consistent with the character of individual communities.

Implementation:
CC2.A Implement these policies through the adoption and update of Rural Community Plans.
Agriculture (AG)
AG Goal 1: Conservation of agricultural and range lands capable of productive use.

Policies:
AG1.1 Locate new development on land least suitable for productive agricultural use.
AG1.2 Clustering of dwellings is encouraged on a portion of the site where the remainder is reserved for open space or agricultural land.
AG1.3 Buffering of new development is required adjacent to agricultural operations.
AG1.4 Enhance methods of communicating the right-to-farm/ranch policy and provisions to educate non-farm/non-ranch users on the characteristics of an agricultural economy (e.g., noise, spraying, dust, traffic, etc.).
AG1.5 Require consultation with the appropriate land and resource manager and area residents to minimize and mitigate conflicts new development proposals may create between wildlife and agricultural uses.
AG1.6 Agricultural production practices will be honored and protected when development is allowed adjacent to or near productive agricultural lands.
AG1.7 Development will not be allowed to interfere with irrigation water used for agricultural production. Delivery of full water rights to farmland using irrigation water shall be guaranteed by the developers and/or subsequent Homeowners Association through a proper delivery system. Historic irrigation easements shall be respected and formalized or conserved.
AG1.8 Support farmers' markets and promote the purchase of local goods.
AG1.9 Support and promote voluntary techniques to preserve agricultural lands.
AG1.10 Promote multiple/compatible uses of agricultural lands.
AG1.11 Provide a streamlined process that allows limited creation of small parcels from larger bona fide lands in agricultural production to assist agricultural operations to remain viable.
AG1.12 Continue and expand the Transfer of Rights programs where appropriate throughout the County.
AG1.13 Recognize that the ranching business requires larger tracts of land than other agricultural uses and may require the use of public lands to remain viable.
AG1.14 The County does not support development that strips the water rights from the land.

Implementation:
AG1.A Work with the National Forest Service and BLM to encourage the retention of grazing leases for ranchers in Mesa County. (Intergovernmental Agreements)
AG1.B Continue to enforce the Mesa County Right to Farm and Ranch Policy.

AG1.C Adopt provisions in the *Mesa County Land Development Code* to ensure new development is designed and built to standards of individual irrigation water providers and that new development does not take more than its share of irrigation water. Discourage residential development in areas where large investments in irrigation improvements have been put in place. (Development Code).

AG1.D Encourage the use of agricultural conservation easements.

AG1.E Support the ongoing efforts of the Landowner Planning and Conservation Assistance Team (formerly TRAC) to work with landowners on alternatives to conventional subdivision of land and understanding the benefits of conserving land.

AG1.F Continue to provide incentives such as density bonuses and TDRs to encourage retention of large tracts of productive agricultural lands. (Development Code).

AG1.G Continue to permit Agricultural Land Divisions in order to be more flexible and streamlined and to allow the creation of smaller lots as an alternative to 35-acre subdivisions.

AG1.H Revise the *Land Development Code* to establish minimum buffering requirements between agricultural uses and new development.
Conservation and Environment (CE)

**CE Goal 1: To protect, conserve and efficiently manage the county’s public lands.**

**Policies:**

CE1.1 Coordinate land use planning with public land and resource management agencies.

CE1.2 Work with land owners and appropriate agencies to identify fuel hazard areas and reduce the threat of wildfire.

**Implementation:**

CE1.A Continue to coordinate land use planning and consultation with all applicable local, state, and federal land and resource managers through review agency consultation, intergovernmental agreements and a variety of cooperative and coordinated efforts.

**CE Goal 2: To conserve sustainable ecosystems.**

**Policies:**

CE2.1 New development shall conserve and protect native wildlife and vegetation habitat, water, open lands, vistas, minerals, etc. Development will not diminish these systems.

**Implementation:**

CE2.A Encourage the use of conservation easements.

CE2.B Revise the Development Code to implement the Incentive Based Density policy.

CE2.C Complete a study to identify, with the DOW, USFS, BLM, and State Forest Service, areas where wildlife and natural processes are threatened. (Build on existing DOW Wildlife Study.) (Wildlife Study)

CE2.D Establish an IGA with the Division of Wildlife.

**CE Goal 3: To preserve public access to public lands.**

**Policies:**

CE3.1 Require the dedication of access easements across private property to public land for public access in coordination with the appropriate land or resource management agencies.

CE3.2 Encourage the preservation of open space required for new developments to be located adjacent to public lands.

CE3.3 New development should provide buffers and setbacks adjacent to public lands where appropriate.

**Implementation:**

CE3.A Revise the Development Code to encourage new development to provide access easements or dedications to public lands through the development process (in conjunction with Federal, State, and local land managers). Establish a means of acquiring access easements through private lands to major tracts of public land which are otherwise difficult to reach unless the nature of the public land is such as to make access undesirable. (Development Code, Intergovernmental Agreements)
CE3.B Revise the Development Code to direct that open space required in a new development be located adjacent to public lands wherever feasible. Initiate/coordinate a study to define buffer areas and setbacks adjacent to public lands and municipalities. Include the following considerations:

- Establish graphic menu of buffering techniques/design standards.
- Require impact mitigation (minimize impacts from private land development and use).
- Establish interagency buffer standards.
- Form a conservation design guideline committee. (Development Code, Intergovernmental Agreements)

CE3.C Identify private lands presently needed for public access easements to public lands. (Public Lands Access Study)

CE3.D Complete and adopt the joint study of a Countywide system of trails throughout private and public lands. (Joint Trails Study, Intergovernmental Agreements)

CE Goal 4: To protect the citizens of Mesa County from the effects of man-made or natural hazards (geologic, avalanches, earthquakes, soils, floodplains, air pollution, odor, noise, and wildfire).

Policies:
CE4.1 Any proposed land use or development must identify hazard areas, i.e., floodplains, drainage areas, steep slope areas, geological fault areas, and other areas hazardous to life or property. Such proposals will require an evaluation to determine the degree to which the proposed activity will:

- Expose any person, including occupants or users of the proposed use or development, to any undue natural hazard.
- Create or increase the effects of natural hazard areas on other improvements, activities or lands.
- Impact the natural environment and be unduly destructive to the natural resources of an area.

CE4.2 Development will not be allowed in hazard areas to minimize the risk of injury to persons and loss of property unless appropriate mitigating measures are taken.

CE4.3 Proposed land uses will address soil, erosion and surface geologic characteristics of the development site through proper design, engineering and construction.

Implementation:
CE4.A Initiate/adopt a natural hazards study of "critical and sensitive" lands (i.e., floodplains, drainage areas, steep slopes over 25 percent, geological fault areas, and wildfire hazards) to identify and establish standards for new development. Coordinate with GIS databases.

CE4.B Adopt these "critical and sensitive" lands as an overlay and part of the Development Code. (Development Code, Resolution)
CE Goal 5: To maintain or improve the quality of air, water and land resources.

Policies:
CE5.1 New development will be designed to protect critical/sensitive lands as defined in the Mesa County Land Development Code.

CE5.2 Protect natural areas/resources through incentives and flexible options for land development.

CE5.3 Preserve the floodplain of the Colorado and Gunnison Rivers, major stream corridors, and associated wetlands as important green spaces, waterway corridors, and trail linkages.

CE5.4 New development must meet air and water quality standards of the county, state and federal governments.

CE5.5 Protect raw water supplies and municipal watersheds.

CE5.6 New development in areas which have historically had access to irrigation water shall utilize such water for non-domestic purposes.

Implementation:
CE5.A Work with public land/resource managers to adopt consistent mitigation standards, review procedures, and criteria for development. (Development Code, Intergovernmental Agreements)

CE5.B Provide incentives/guidelines to protect natural areas/resources and for concentrated node development in rural communities which allow multi uses (e.g., residential/business/commercial PUDs.). (Development Code)

CE5.C Revise the County Drainage Manual.
- Establish erosion control standards for new development.
- Require paved parking lots where appropriate.
- Combine drainage facilities with open space/park uses.
- Coordinate drainage facility capital improvements with other capital projects (e.g., roads, parks, etc.). (Drainage Manual)
Open Lands and Trails (OLT)
OLT Goal 1: To protect important open lands within Mesa County.

Policies:
OLT1.1 Continue to provide voluntary open land techniques available for private property owners.
OLT1.2 Coordinate and participate in the development of a countywide trail system with linkages to a regional network.
OLT1.3 Support the preservation of historic trails.
OLT1.4 Support the maintenance of open lands in continuous tracts to allow the continuation of agricultural operations and to protect the rural character where appropriate.
OLT1.5 Support the work of LPCAT, public and private agencies to find equitable means for protecting and maintaining open lands and trails.

Implementation:
OLT1.A Approve development applications only if consistent with the Master Plan. (Implemented through the Land Development Code)
OLT1.B Conduct and adopt an open lands plan.
OLT1.C Complete and adopt the joint study of a Countywide system of trails throughout private and public lands (Joint Trails Study, Intergovernmental Agreements). All identified trail systems shall be incorporated into new development.
OLT1.D Inventory and prioritize the Countywide trail system and historic trails as part of both an Open Lands and Trails Plan. (Trails Study)

OLT Goal 2: Protect important wildlife habitats.

Policies:
OLT2.1 Establish buffer areas to preserve riparian areas and waterways, their banks, and adjacent vegetation areas.
OLT2.2 In consultation with the Division of Wildlife and the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Mesa County will conserve important wildlife habitats such as nesting and production areas, winter ranges, feeding areas, and concentration areas for threatened and endangered species, species of special concern, or indicator species. Where such actions result in significant financial impact on private land owners, compensation will be paid using public funds such as lottery and Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) money.
OLT2.3 Conserve movement corridors for migratory species such as deer and elk.
OLT2.4 New development shall incorporate existing vegetation into project plans wherever possible and utilize native vegetation in new landscaping.
OLT2.5 Developments occurring in identified human/wildlife conflict areas shall use practices aimed at reducing possible conflicts with wildlife.

Implementation:
OLT2.A Work with the Colorado DOW to update and revise the wildlife impact maps in the development standards related to habitat, hunting and nesting areas, and human/wildlife conflict areas in the Development Code. (Development Code)

OLT2.B Coordinate with the DOW to identify (especially on private property) important wildlife habitat, and establish preservation techniques and incentives. (Intergovernmental Agreements)

OLT2.C Require development to incorporate existing mature vegetation (especially 3-inch plus caliper trees) wherever possible, or replace with smaller native vegetation (one and one-half inch caliper) at an appropriate ratio. Encourage the replacement of mature native shrubs and ground covers. (Development Code)

OLT Goal 3: To assure that open land is recognized as a limited and valuable resource which must be conserved wherever possible.

Policies:
OLT3.1 Conservation of open land is important, not only for the maintenance of the County's economy, but also for the assurance of the continued availability of land for food production, for the enjoyment of scenic beauty, for recreation, and for natural resource usage.

OLT3.2 Leapfrog development which prematurely converts open land to urban uses shall not be allowed.

Implementation:
OLT3.A Adopt both an Open Lands and Trail Plan to identify and prioritize lands. Include a viable range of voluntary preservation and compensation techniques to protect agricultural lands, natural areas, and open space resources. (Open Lands and Trails Plans)

OLT Goal 4: To identify and protect existing and future major trail linkages and intersections in the County.

Policies:
OLT4.1 Continue to communicate regularly with all public entities in Mesa County responsible for open space, parks, and trails through an established, formal system to plan, protect, acquire and manage lands under their jurisdictions.

OLT4.2 Offer incentives to developers and property owners for linking private trails to a public trail system or for providing public trail access through their properties and to school sites.

OLT4.3 Provide carefully planned and developed parking areas at trail heads and trail linkages to facilitate trail usage.
OLT4.4  Provide appropriate public facilities at major trail linkages and intersections.

OLT4.5  Minimize conflicts trails may have with important wildlife habitats, property owners, and other sensitive resources such as wetlands.

Implementation:
OLT4.A  Establish a regular formalized communication system between public entities for planning, protecting, acquiring, and managing open lands, parks and trails. (Intergovernmental Agreements)

OLT4.B  Establish access easement requirements or dedication incentives for land owners or developers to provide private trail linkages to public trails. (Development Code)

OLT4.C  Require new development to set back trails from streets and separate motorized and non-motorized trails wherever possible. (Development Code)

OLT4.D  Include in the Countywide Trails Plan major trail linkages and intersections (present and future) and prioritize need for public facilities and parking.
Parks and Recreation (PR)
PR Goal 1: Provision of adequate lands to meet the parks and recreation needs of the residents of Mesa County.

See Board of County Commissioner’s Parks Policy.

Implementation:
PR1.A Implement the Mesa County Parks Policy adopted by the BCC. Resolution MCM 2001-183 and as may be revised.
Community Services/Facilities & Intergovernmental Coordination (CS)
CS Goal 1: To maximize the efficient use of public resources.

Policies:
CS1.1 New development shall be compatible with existing land uses.

CS1.2 Maintain a five to ten year capital facilities/improvements program which establishes priorities for constructing necessary facilities consistent with the Mesa County Master Plan.

CS1.3 New community facility locations should be reserved in accordance with planned areas of growth. Priorities for constructing these facilities will be established through a capital facilities/improvements plan before development is approved.

CS1.4 Continue to work with special districts and other service providers to develop capital improvement programming consistent with this plan.

CS1.5 Mesa County should review the service plans of service providers to determine their consistency with the Mesa County Master Plan and request that service providers make revisions to their plans so they are consistent with the Mesa County Master Plan.

CS1.6 Service providers are encouraged to follow their service plans and be consistent with the Mesa County Master Plan when establishing new services or facilities or when extending or expanding existing services facilities.

Implementation:
CS1.A Approve development applications only if consistent with the Master Plan. (Implemented through the Land Development Code)

CS1.B Continue to coordinate with all service providers to develop and maintain GIS databases for all services, facilities, capacities, etc. (Intergovernmental Agreements)

CS1.C Prepare and maintain a 5 - 10 year Capital Improvements Plan consistent with this plan. Update and prioritize annually. (CIP)

CS1.D Work with communities seeking new or improved services to create Public Improvement Districts where the Board of County Commissioners acts as the board of directors.

CS Goal 2: To minimize public costs for private development.

Policies:
CS2.1 Essential and adequate rural levels of services and facilities shall be provided by the developer concurrent with new rural development.

CS2.2 Cooperate with the school districts by regularly updating the County's school land dedication requirements, ensuring that development mitigates the demands for land that it places on the school systems.
Implementation:
CS2.A Work with communities seeking new or improved services to create Public Improvement Districts where the Board of County Commissioners acts as the board of directors.

CS2.B Keep development application and impact fees up-dated and current to reflect the costs of development.

CS2.C Establish and adopt rural and urban levels of service and relate them to the CIP. (CIP, Intergovernmental Agreements, Development Code)

CS2.D Establish incentives encouraging compatible new development to utilize existing services/facilities that meet level of service requirements. (Development Code, Resolution)

CS2.E Coordinate regularly with the school districts to update their land dedication requirements to ensure their adequacy in meeting demand, proper location and distribution, and fee in lieu of land dedications. (Intergovernmental Agreements)

CS2.F Identify the location of necessary capital facilities in area plans. (Area Plans, CIP)

CS Goal 3: To ensure that future development occurs in an orderly fashion, avoiding and minimizing non-contiguous, scattered development throughout the County.

Policies:
CS3.1 The County and its five municipalities will coordinate long-range planning and capital improvement programming efforts.

Implementation:
CS3.A Continue to implement the Cooperative Planning Agreements establishing the community separators or buffer areas.

CS3.B Approve development applications only if consistent with the Master Plan. (Development Code)

CS Goal 4: To maximize the capability of the County, its municipalities, and other government agencies to make collaborative land use decisions in areas of mutual concern and/or influence.

Policies:
CS4.1 Establish and enforce compatible development standards with the municipalities and other government agencies.

CS4.2 Mesa County and its 5 municipalities will jointly prepare and adopt plans for the future development of the municipalities’ respective areas of influence as defined in the Revised Colorado Statutes.

CS4.3 Mesa County will enter intergovernmental agreements and memoranda of understanding with municipal, federal and state agencies to address coordination of many efforts.
CS4.4 Refer land development applications to public land managers and service providers. The County will encourage service providers to provide recommendations as to the adequacy of services for development based upon the level-of-service standards. Mesa County encourages service providers to work together to establish and maintain consistent standards for facilities and equipment that can facilitate future consolidation of services and that will allow for certain facilities and equipment to be shared.

CS4.5 Mesa County encourages the consolidation of special service districts where there is a fiscal benefit to do so and where service levels can be maintained or enhanced. The County will discourage the proliferation of small service districts and the creation of new service districts when services are available from an existing district.

Implementation:
CS4.A Create more opportunities for cooperation between the County and its municipalities. Hold regular meetings including those at staff level. (Intergovernmental Agreements)

CS4.B Explore cost share preparation of area plans, or plans for municipal areas of influence, and offer assistance with the area plan process. (Area Plans, CIP)

CS4.C Initiate a County communication tool such as a newsletter to keep the public informed on IGAs, etc. (County Newsletter)

CS4.D Direct the expenditure of capital improvements and new development to existing growth centers and rural communities. (Capital Improvements Plan, Intergovernmental Agreements)

CS4.E Enter intergovernmental agreements with the County’s municipalities to jointly plan for areas of joint concern – generally the statutory municipal 3 mile area of influence.

CS4.F Continue to enter and keep up to date IGAs and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with communities and public agencies to ensure that data is shared and updated. The County should serve as a clearinghouse for such databases. (Memoranda of Understanding, Intergovernmental Agreements)

CS4.G Enter into IGAs with special districts to minimize duplication of services where there is fiscal benefit to the public and where service levels can be maintained or enhanced. (Intergovernmental Agreements)
Community/Area Plans (COM)

General Policies:

COM1.1 New development must be compatible with existing land uses and consistent with goals, policies, and implementation items depicted in Area plans.

COM1.2 Community and Area plans are key elements of the Mesa County Master Plan.

COM1.3 Community and Area plans are based on the Mesa Countywide Plan and provide more detailed guidance for future land use and development.

COM1.4 Community and Area plans shall be reviewed and/or updated every 5 to 7 years. Conduct annual reviews of Community and Area Plans.

COM1.5 The most recent revisions to the Master Plan supersede previously adopted elements of the Master Plan. For example: where inconsistencies exist between this 2005 update of the Rural Planning Area Plan and the 2004 Loma/Mack Area plan the 2005 update supersedes.