

# **JOINT UPPER BLUE MASTER PLAN**

## **FOR SUMMIT COUNTY AND THE TOWNS OF BRECKENRIDGE AND BLUE RIVER**



PREPARED BY:

**JOINT UPPER BLUE MASTER PLAN  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**ADOPTED JUNE 30, 2011**

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BRECKENRIDGE AND BLUE RIVER**

Adopted June 30, 2011

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*Breckenridge Ski Resort viewed from Boreas Pass Road.*

## Organization of the Plan

The Joint Upper Blue Master Plan is organized and presented in the following sections:

- I. **Executive Summary:** Overviews the core themes and identifies the significant goals, policies/actions and recommendations contained in the Plan.
- II. **A Vision:** Presents a statement of the community's vision for the Upper Blue Basin's future on which the goals, policies/actions, and implementation strategies of the Plan are based.
- III. **Introduction:** Includes basic information on the purpose and scope of the Plan and the guiding tenets.
- IV. **Overview & Background:** Presents a summary of the development and adoption of the Plan in 1997, implementation, and background on the update to the Plan in 2011.
- V. **Basin Overview/Existing Conditions & Future Growth Projections:** Provides an overview of the Upper Blue Basin's geographic setting, land use inventory and ownership, population, visitation, build-out and community character.
- VI. **Land Use:** Identifies and defines Upper Blue Basin specific land use issues accompanied by related goals and policies/actions.
- VII. **Backcountry Protection:** Summarizes efforts to protect the backcountry and reinforces reasons to champion continued programs to safeguard it.
- VIII. **Affordable Workforce Housing:** Reviews the importance of continuing to provide for affordable workforce housing, overviews the estimated demand for affordable workforce housing, and provides policy directive to reduce density to offset the impacts of new affordable workforce housing on the overall activity levels within the Basin.
- IX. **Transportation & Transit:** Overviews previous studies, recommendations and accomplishments to address transportation and transit system capacity in the Upper Blue Basin, and identifies strategies to continue to increase efficiency and effectiveness of said systems.
- X. **Other Significant Issues:** Identifies other important issues in the Upper Blue Basin and provides a general policy foundation and statements that can be used and referenced.
- XI. **Implementation Strategies:** Provides a list of measures that should be pursued to implement the action steps identified by goals and policies/actions contained in the Plan. Strategies are prioritized and agencies responsible for implementation identified.

**APPENDIX – UPPER BLUE BASIN DENSITY REDUCTIONS:** Presents a detailed analysis of the density reduction targets included in the 1997 edition of the JUBMP and the actual density reductions achieved since adoption of the 1997 JUBMP.

## **I. Executive Summary**

Through the goals and policies/actions contained in the following pages, the Joint Upper Blue Master Plan, hereafter referred to as “the Plan,” seeks to sustain the quality of the Upper Blue Basin's resources and the character of the community as we know it today. Meaningful ways to accomplish this are through: encouraging reduced development density and activity levels and insuring that new development is compatible with surrounding land uses that reflect the policies set forth herein, protecting the Upper Blue Basin’s backcountry areas and natural systems, promoting enhancements to transportation and transit systems, and promoting adequate availability of affordable workforce housing. The Plan recognizes that some amount of additional growth will inevitably occur. Therefore, the Plan fosters an urban and rural development pattern, emphasizes the need to develop in a manner sensitive to the existing environment, and accommodate affordable workforce housing availability, recreation and open space to serve the needs of the community and visitors as it grows. The Plan's goals and policies/actions are intended to preserve a sense of place and spirit of the community while allowing for growth that can be accommodated without requiring dramatic increases in infrastructure and service capacity.

Following are the principal goals and policy directions contained in the Plan. These represent the major policy conclusions and recommendations:

- Maintain a cap on overall density in the Upper Blue Basin (i.e. no upzonings in the Basin without utilizing Transferable Development Rights/TDRs).
- Recognize a new realistic build-out, which is higher than the one contained in the 1997 edition of the Plan and includes the density associated with affordable workforce housing.
- Target a recognized realistic build-out of 14,000 residential units that reflects implementation of effective density reduction strategies.
  - The targeted build-out in the Upper Blue Basin is based on maintaining community character, not necessarily infrastructure capacity.
- Continue to preserve the undeveloped character of the Upper Blue Basin’s backcountry areas and limit development in the backcountry to the maximum extent possible.
- Reduce density when building new affordable workforce housing units to offset corresponding activity levels and development impacts.

## II. A Vision

The Upper Blue Basin (hereafter referred to as “the Basin”) is both a valuable and vulnerable resource. The Basin sustains the community in many ways. The sense of place and the spirit of the community are largely defined by the high alpine setting and pristine natural environment of the Upper Blue. The relatively unspoiled quality of the Basin’s resources - its clean air and water, spectacular mountain vistas, abundant open spaces, diverse wildlife and vegetation; relative lack of urban problems or annoyances such as serious crime, noise and light pollution; easy access to multiple outdoor recreation and opportunities for solitude in the backcountry; and the small town atmosphere are some of the attributes which define this community. It is the value of these intangibles, much more than measurable components like traffic volume and sewer capacity, which define our community.

The Basin’s resources and character have always been the mainstay which attracts residents and visitors to this area and defines the community for what it is today - a thriving resort area. At the same time, economic success can threaten these values. Recognizing that our high alpine setting is a fragile ecosystem, "killing the goose that lays the golden eggs," is a real risk if urbanization or unplanned growth and the resulting impacts created degrade the valley's resources.

The Plan’s vision, succinctly, is to preserve the quality of the valley's resources and the character of the community. That is not to suggest that continued economic growth should not or will not occur. Rather, a chief goal of this Plan is to ensure that such economic vitality, borne in the unique character of the community, be maintained. The guiding theme of the Plan is to implement a shared set of policies among the towns of Breckenridge and Blue River and the County in order to preserve the high alpine environment along with the character and spirit of the community as growth and inevitable change occurs.



*Upper Blue Basin residents and visitors participating in the Annual Rubber Duck Races at the Breckenridge Riverwalk Center.*

### **III. Introduction**

#### Purpose and Intent

The Plan articulates a common vision for the future and informs citizens, landowners and developers of the goals, policies and desired actions which will shape the future of the Basin. The purpose of the Plan is to serve as an advisory guide to sustain community character in light of changes implicated by future growth and development in the Basin. In this context, it will be used by the Upper Blue Planning Commission, Board of County Commissioners (“BOCC”), Breckenridge Planning Commission, Breckenridge Town Council, Blue River Town Trustees and Town of Blue River Planning and Zoning Committee as a reference and guide for decisions which affect the physical development of the Basin. It also provides a means for communication and coordination among the towns of Breckenridge and Blue River, Summit County (“the County”), special districts and federal, regional and state agencies.

The Plan is not the equivalent of zoning or other land use regulations and it does not regulate use of land. The Plan is not binding upon the decision making authority of the County or the towns of Breckenridge and Blue River. However, it is recognized that the Plan should inform all such decisions and that each of these jurisdictions will strive to make decisions which are aligned and consistent with the Plan.

#### Guiding Tenets of the Plan

The underlying tenets that guide how the Plan is intended to be interpreted and applied include the following:

##### **Narrative**

The narrative contained herein serves to explain some of the background and important considerations in developing the Plan, and provides a summary of significant issues and policy direction presented. The narrative does not serve as a goal or policy/action in its own right, or the basis for any determination as to applicable master plan goals and policies, and is for illustration and guidance only.

##### **Umbrella Document/Hierarchy of Master Plans**

For the unincorporated portions of the County located in the Basin, the Joint Upper Blue Master Plan is intended to provide general policy guidance and serve along with the County’s Countywide Comprehensive Plan as the umbrella documents for the Upper Blue Master Plan. In contrast, the Upper Blue Master Plan serves as the primary document for particular guidance envisioned for the Basin and is intended to be in harmony with the Countywide Comprehensive Plan and Joint Upper Blue Master Plan. It is expressly intended that the Countywide Comprehensive Plan and Joint Upper Blue Master Plan address broader issues and defer specific goals and policies/actions to the Upper Blue Master Plan for specific issues pertaining to unincorporated portions of the Basin. In turn, the County’s Countywide Comprehensive Plan and the Joint Upper Blue Master Plan are also expressly intended to complement each other and shall be interpreted in a harmonious nature whenever possible.

For the Town of Breckenridge, the Town’s Comprehensive Plan provides specific policy direction for the Town as it considers future decisions affecting the Town’s land use, transportation systems and a host of other important issues. The Comprehensive Plan is intended more fully to carry out the general policy guidance provided in the Joint Upper Blue Master Plan and Town’s Vision Plan. Specific development review guidance is provided in the Town of Breckenridge’s Development Code and Land Use Guidelines.

For the Town of Blue River, the Town’s Municipal Code provides specific direction on future land use decisions. The Joint Upper Blue Master Plan can be used in conjunction with the zoning to help guide or evaluate proposed changes in land use within the Town’s limits.

The County and towns of Breckenridge and Blue River should also use the Plan in conjunction with the other plans which may address more specific issues, limited areas or functions such as subbasin and neighborhood plans, trails plans and open space plans.

### **Consistency Between Goals and Policies**

The goals and policies/actions articulated in the Plan are the primary mechanisms to carry out the vision of this particular master plan. Nevertheless, the vision, goals and policies/actions in the Countywide Comprehensive Plan, Upper Blue Master Plan and Town of Breckenridge Comprehensive Plan, all are intended to be in harmony with each other.

### **Advisory Nature, Application and Interpretation**

The Plan is an advisory document and contains goals and policies/actions recommended to carry out the vision for the community in a number of different areas. Such goals or policies/actions do not have the force and effect of law. Nevertheless, the County's Land Use and Development Code makes "*general conformance*" with the provisions of master plans a requirement for certain development applications. The BOCC and County planning commissions have the authority to consider and even require compliance with the Plan and certain goals and policies contained herein in particular applications (i.e., rezonings, PUDs, subdivisions, conditional use permits and regulatory revisions).

### **Density and Zoning – County Considerations**

A number of considerations under federal, state and local law allow or enable the County and towns to impose more restrictive development standards or otherwise create a higher degree of restriction on the development of property, including the density related thereto. It is expressly anticipated that the application of this Plan's provisions and other policy documents by the County during the review of a development proposal, as well as other laws and regulations, may limit and affect the type of land uses and/or related density that may be located on a given property to a level below the maximum potential density permitted by zoning.

Accordingly, this Plan, by design, goes beyond the simple linear or direct contemplation of density afforded by zoning and establishes overarching goals and policies that attempt to shape the actual physical development of the community and the Basin. Thus, this Plan, in conjunction with the Upper Blue Master Plan and Countywide Comprehensive Plan, may have the effect of limiting the potential development of the theoretical maximum density allowed by zoning on property.

### **Review Authority – County**

When using and applying a master plan, a County Review Authority (i.e., BOCC, planning commission or staff) is entitled to discretion in evaluating whether there has been "*general conformity*" and compliance with the county's master plans and assigning weight to particular goals and policies/actions in the Plan on a case-by-case basis. Accordingly, Chapter 15 of the County's Land Use and Development Code defines general conformance as:

“When a development application is evaluated regarding its general conformance with applicable master plans, the Review Authority shall evaluate the application against the entirety of the goals, polices and actions contained in the master plans and need not require compliance with every provision contained therein. Nonetheless, the Review Authority may require that an applicant satisfy any particular goal, action or policy if such compliance is deemed necessary to attain general conformance.”

### **Nexus to County's Land Use and Development Code**

In the County, master plans are utilized to set out the broad goals, policies, information and concerns that speak to the issues implicated by growth and development and, in turn, may affect the manner in which such

development occurs. In this regard, within the framework of master planning, local ordinances and land use regulations are developed and adopted in consideration of master plan policies. Thus, such regulations, including the County's Land Use and Development Code and regulations contained therein for procedures such as subdivisions, rezonings and permits, are regulatory and contain specific standards.

#### **IV. Overview & Background**

##### Background – 1997 Edition of the Plan

In the early 1990s the towns of Breckenridge and Blue River, together with the County, started a cooperative planning effort to address land use and related issues which were considered crucial to maintaining the special sense of community and quality of life in the Basin. In 1994 the Joint Upper Blue Master Plan Committee was formed and charged with the challenging task of reviewing the existing master plans for the Basin and charting a course for the future. As stated in the 1997 edition of the Plan, the goal of this effort was to “adopt a seamless plan which provides for a unified vision and consistent land use policy for the entire basin.”

Once initiated, the Plan took 3 ½ years to develop and over 30 public meetings were held to discuss issues and garner community input. The Joint Upper Blue Master Plan Committee began public meetings in March 1994 and in-depth analyses of existing development, build-out, zoning, subdivided areas, land ownership patterns and environmental factors were started for the entire Basin. As part of the planning effort there were three significant professional studies conducted. These studies were important as they served as the backbone and foundation to form the Plan's framework and included:

**Land Use Inventory and Analysis** – Prepared in October 1995 by RRC Associates, John Humphreys Associates and RG Plans. The land use inventory analyzed potential and projected build-out by subdivision in the Basin.

**Upper Blue River Basin Transportation Plan** – Prepared in January 1996 by Felsburg, Holt & Ullevig. The Transportation Plan defined and quantified the major transportation constraints and opportunities in consideration of potential build-out of the Basin.

**Commercial Zoning Analysis Upper Blue River Basin** – Prepared in June 1997 by Economies Research Associates. The commercial zoning analysis assessed and projected the amount of supportable commercial development in the Basin in consideration of future residential build-out and visitor volume growth.

In August 1997, the County, along with the towns of Breckenridge and Blue River, adopted the Plan. In 1998 the Colorado Chapter of the American Planning Association recognized and awarded the Plan as an “Outstanding Project” at their annual conference. The following year the Plan was awarded the 1999 Governor's Smart Growth Award.

##### Significant Themes and Goals - 1997 Edition of the Plan

The 1997 edition of the Plan was developed in response to heightened pressures and awareness related to growth and development in the Basin. The Plan was unique for a number of reasons: First, it represented a collaborative effort between the towns of Breckenridge and Blue River and the County to create a common vision and goals and strategies for the Basin; Second, the Plan attempted to focus on both broad as well as specific policies to guide and direct overall growth within the entire Basin.

It was apparent in developing the Plan that the Basin's community showed support for the concepts of no new density (with the exception of affordable workforce housing), reducing development potential and

controlling land use development patterns in the Basin. As a result, the more significant key goals/policy directives developed and provided in the 1997 edition of the Plan included:

- **Density Cap** - No additional density should be created in the Basin (with the exception of deed-restricted affordable workforce housing).
- **Reduce Activity Levels and Density Levels (Basin Density Target of 75% of Build-Out Potential)** – Reduce activity levels and ultimate build-out in the Basin to less than could potentially be allowed by existing zoning. Target a reduction of 2,500 residential units and adopt strategies to reduce development levels to this target of 75% of the projected full build-out.
- **Backcountry Protection** - Preserve the undeveloped character of the Basin’s backcountry areas, limit development in the backcountry to the extent possible and establish an open space/development rights acquisition program and a new backcountry zoning district.
- **Establish Transferable Development Rights (“TDR”) Program** - Develop a TDR program and a requirement that upzonings on properties only be allowed when TDRs are used to transfer the density to the property proposed for upzoning. Moreover, designate the backcountry as the TDR sending area.
- **Recreational Resources** - Preserve and enhance recreational and trail use opportunities in the Basin.

The following excerpts from the 1997 edition of the Plan best summarize the rationale behind the basic premise, driving tenets and framework for capping density, reducing activity levels and build-out and protecting the backcountry:

“Public testimony and research conducted by the Joint Upper Blue Master Plan Committee show that at the zoned maximum potential, full build out would erode the quality of life, change the character of the community, degrade aesthetic qualities and threaten the associated economic benefits so critical to a resort community’s economic well being.”

“In summary, through the recommendations contained in the following pages, the plan seeks to sustain the quality of the valley’s resources and the character of the community as we know it today through protecting community assets and natural systems, allowing for reduced development potential that is compatible with surrounding land uses, promoting adequate supplies of affordable housing and providing for efficient delivery of services.”

#### Implementation – 1997 Edition of the Plan

The 1997 edition of the Plan has been recognized as a very successful joint planning venture. There was a strong desire, commitment and steady resolve by the towns and County to implement the Plan after it was adopted. Overall, there were 22 key goals/policies contained in the Plan and approximately 90 recommended actions/implementation strategies. As of 2011, approximately 85% of the recommended actions and identified strategies were implemented or realized to some degree. Some of the significant accomplishments between 1997 and 2011 included: reducing density by 1,825 units through identified density reduction strategies<sup>1</sup>; development of an award winning joint TDR program which protected 987 acres of backcountry and generated \$1,572,000 to supplement the County’s and Town of Breckenridge’s open space programs; rezoning of approximately 450 properties to a newly created Backcountry Zone District; adoption of the Upper Blue Master Plan by the Upper Blue Planning Commission; and acquisition/purchase of approximately 3,820 acres for open space protection (of which 2,003 acres was backcountry). As a result of these implementation efforts, approximately 78% of the backcountry lands

<sup>1</sup> For a more detailed analysis of the density reduction targets included in the 1997 edition of the JUBMP and the density reductions achieved since adoption of the 1997 JUBMP, reference the Appendix – Upper Blue Basin Density Reductions.

within the Basin have been protected from development as of February 2011.

There were only approximately 13 (or 15%) of the recommended actions and implementation strategies contained in the Plan that were not realized to some degree between 1997 and 2011. These strategies centered on: use of residual density, the Highway 9 corridor, modified town transit, traffic/transportation, parking and roadway design standards. Implementation of most of these strategies was explored, but various impediments precluded their full implementation.

### 2011 Plan Update Effort

In the later part of 2010 the staffing resources and work program priorities of the towns and County were galvanized to undertake a joint effort to update the Plan. The important circumstances that prompted the need to update the Plan included:

- The Plan was over thirteen years old and it was recognized that an update would enable conditions that had changed since 1997 to be reflected in the Plan (e.g., the Plan's density target has been exceeded and must be revised; the build-out numbers, density reduction strategies and implementation strategies also needed to be revisited and updated).
- In August 2009 the BOCC reprioritized the County's Planning Department's work program to amend all of the County's master plans and Land Use and Development Code to more thoroughly address issues related to the balance and interaction among the various master plan policies. This direction was squarely based on the implications of a decision at the Colorado District Court level (i.e. Polanski, May 2009) which appeared to suggest that the Countywide Comprehensive Plan worked to establish an absolute mandate that zoned density be allowed and that any basin plans that served to abrogate such zoned density were invalid because they were in conflict with the Countywide Comprehensive Plan.
- An update would provide an opportunity to address new issues that the community and elected officials identified as significant in consideration of changing conditions, future growth and community values.



*Rural hillside flanking the Ten Mile Range.*

Still, it was felt that the existing Plan was a sound planning document and continued to be relevant and useful. As such the update was not intended to be a comprehensive revision but rather a refining effort to clarify and update certain issues and address salient new topics of concern. In light of this envisioned scope and mindset, in October 2010 a Joint Upper Blue Master Plan Advisory Committee was formed to serve as the body to work through the core issues and develop the majority of the update to the Plan. The Advisory Committee was modeled after the committee created to develop the 1997 edition of the Plan and included seven members: two Breckenridge Town Council members, two Town of Blue River Trustees, two Upper Blue Planning Commissioners and one County Commissioner.

The Advisory Committee met eight times between November 2010 and June 2011 to work through issues and develop consensus. The committee expressed continued support for the key policy directives and recommendations provided in the 1997 edition of the plan. Specifically, in the context of maintaining community character: continue to cap overall density in the Basin (i.e. no upzonings in the Basin without TDRs), support density reductions and protect the backcountry. Additionally, the committee recognized the need to update realistic build-out and adjust it to reflect density reduction strategies which could

realistically be pursued.

It was acknowledged that the realistic build-out number would be higher than the 10,500 units targeted in the 1997 edition of the Plan. This change in realistic build-out is primarily due to the completion of a more detailed analysis and better understanding of existing land inventories. In addition, it was recognized that the prior numeric goal to reduce activity levels and density by a flat numerical target of 25% may not be the most practical means of articulating density reduction objectives in the updated version of the Plan. Therefore, a more realistic build-out target, in consideration of potential density reduction strategies, was developed. This modified build-out target remains focused on the very effective results of the prior 25% target. However, as discussed in greater detail in this Plan, that target is best characterized by means of a qualitative rather than flatly quantitative approach.



*Joint meeting to adopt the updated Plan on June 30, 2011.*

As the update to the Plan progressed, opportunities for ongoing feedback among the Advisory Committee, elected officials, planning commissions and the public were provided. Additionally, a community open house was held on April 21, 2011 to seek public input and feedback. The Plan was endorsed by the Advisory Committee on June 3, 2011. Due to the multijurisdictional nature of the Plan and procedural issues, it was adopted by the respective entities at a joint meeting on June 30, 2011.

## **V. Basin Overview/Existing Conditions & Future Growth Projections**

This section is intended to provide an understanding of the physical and social context of the Basin and provide an overview of the Basin's key characteristics, existing conditions and future growth projections. The overview includes information on the Basin's geographic setting, population and visitation, land ownership, residential and commercial build-out and transportation systems. It concludes with a synopsis of the desired community character.

### Geographic Setting

Located in west central Colorado, the Basin is approximately 75 miles west of Denver and lies entirely on the western slope of the Continental Divide. The Basin is positioned in the southern end of the County and includes the towns of Breckenridge and Blue River as well as unincorporated areas of the County.

The majority of the Basin is defined by beautiful and undeveloped mountainsides, a high alpine environment and serves as the headwaters of the magnificent Blue River. The Blue River runs northwest through the Basin until it reaches the Dillon Reservoir/Farmer's Korner area, which defines the Basin's northern limits. The rest of the Basin is completely surrounded by mountain ranges, as it is bounded on the east and south by the Continental Divide and on the west by the Ten Mile Range. Elevation in the Basin ranges from approximately 9,014 feet at Lake Dillon to 14,265 feet at the summit of Quandary Peak. Traffic is funneled into the Basin on Highway 9 from two points: southern traffic crosses over Hoosier Pass (elevation 11,542 feet) and traffic from the north comes through the Town of Frisco and Farmer's Korner.

### Land Use Inventory & Ownership

The Basin contains approximately 80,412 acres, of which 5,222 acres (6.5%) are located within the incorporated towns of Breckenridge and Blue River and the remaining 75,190 acres (93.5%) are located within the unincorporated areas of the Basin.

Jurisdiction	Approximate Acres	% of Total Upper Blue Basin Land Area
Town of Blue River	1,471	1.83%
Town of Breckenridge	3,751	4.66%
Unincorporated Areas <sup>1</sup>	75,190	93.51%
<b>Total Basin Land Area</b>	<b>80,412</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Summit County Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Department.

<sup>1</sup> Approximately 62,446 acres (83%) of the unincorporated areas within the Basin are National Forest System lands, leaving approximately 12,744 acres (17%) of unincorporated areas outside the National Forest System.

As shown in Table 2, approximately 86% of the land in the Basin is publicly owned and managed. The majority of this publicly owned land is National Forest System land (approximately 62,446 acres, or 78% of the total Basin land area). The County and towns are also significant landowners, owning approximately 4,979 acres or 6% of the total Basin land area. Privately owned lands within the Basin make up approximately 14% of the total Basin land area, with approximately 3,638 acres of privately owned land located within the incorporated towns and approximately 7,735 acres of privately owned land in the unincorporated areas of the Basin.

Entity	Approximate Acres	Percent Ownership of Total Upper Blue Basin Land Area
<b>Publicly Owned Land:</b>		
National Forest System lands	62,446	77.66%
Summit County Government & Town of Breckenridge	4,889	6.08%
CDOT / Public Rights-of-Way	1,129	1.40%
Denver Water	244	0.30%
Summit School District	113	0.14%
Town of Blue River	90	0.11%
Colorado Springs	85	0.11%
Upper Blue Sanitation District	30	0.04%
Other Publicly Owned Lands <sup>1</sup>	13	0.02%
<b>Publicly Owned Land Total</b>	<b>69,039</b>	<b>85.86%</b>
<b>Privately Owned Land:</b>		
Town of Blue River Jurisdiction	1,166	1.45%
Town of Breckenridge Jurisdiction	2,472	3.07%
County Jurisdiction	7,735	9.62%
<b>Privately Owned Land Total</b>	<b>11,373</b>	<b>14.14%</b>
<b>Total Basin Land Area</b>	<b>80,412</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Summit County Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Department.

<sup>1</sup> Other Publicly Owned Lands includes 5 acres owned by the U.S. Postal Service, 5 acres owned by the Summit Historical Society, and 3 acres owned by the Summit County Finance Corporation.

## Population & Visitation

Population in a resort community includes permanent residents, second homeowners, overnight visitors and day visitor components. Over the past 45 years, the Town of Breckenridge and Upper Blue Basin have been transformed from a small isolated mountain community of 400 people to a thriving year round resort community of approximately 8,600 permanent residents and over 58,000 people during peak periods. Under these conditions, Breckenridge and the surrounding developed areas take on many of the characteristics of a small city.

The 1997 edition of the Plan noted that in 1995 there were approximately 5,500 permanent residents living in the Basin and that over 35,000 people could be accommodated during maximum peak periods. Since 1995, the permanent resident population has grown by approximately 3,100 people or 57%. Moreover, it is now estimated that the Basin accommodates up to approximately 58,387 people per day during peak periods. Visitation to the Basin is primarily driven by Breckenridge Ski Resort, which hosted more than 1.6 million skier visits during the 2009-2010 ski season. The ski area regularly accommodates over 23,000 visitors on peak days and is consistently the first or second most heavily visited ski resort in North America.

In consideration of existing development approvals and growth trends, it is projected that the permanent resident population could grow by approximately 3,800 residents, or 45%, with approximately 12,500 permanent residents living in the Basin at full build-out. As build-out approaches it is also projected that the Basin could experience nearly 72,300 people per day during the "high" season peak periods (typically occurring during December and March). This represents a projected growth of 24% in peak population. Thus, full build-out of the Basin could result in an estimated permanent population of approximately 12,500 residents and an estimated maximum peak population of approximately 72,300 people per day.

Permanent resident and peak population estimates are shown in Table 3 below. These estimates are based on assumptions about occupancy rates and build-out that are described in the footnotes.

<b>Table 3. Upper Blue Basin Permanent Resident and Peak Population Estimates</b>							
	1995 Estimate	2010 Estimate	Increase 1995 - 2010		Projected Population at Build-Out	Projected Increase 2010 – Build Out	
			People	Percent		People	Percent
<b>Permanent Residents</b>	<b>5,513</b>	<b>8,633<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>3,120</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>12,498<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>3,865</b>	<b>45%</b>
<b>Maximum Peak Population<sup>3</sup></b>							
Permanent Residents	5,513	8,633	3,120	57%	12,498	3,865	45%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Homeowners/ Overnight Visitors	25,324	39,531	14,207	56%	48,600	9,069	23%
Day Skiers & Visitors <sup>4</sup>	4,619	10,223	5,604	121%	11,245	1,022	10%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>35,456</b>	<b>58,387</b>	<b>22,931</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>72,343</b>	<b>13,956</b>	<b>24%</b>

Source: Summit County and Town of Breckenridge planning departments.

1. The 2010 permanent resident population estimate was calculated using the U.S. Census Bureau's 2010 Census counts for the Town of Breckenridge (4,540 people) and the Town of Blue River (849 people), and by estimating the population within the unincorporated areas of the basin by multiplying the total existing housing units in the unincorporated County (per the attached build-out analysis) by the estimated occupancy rate and persons/household within the unincorporated County that are enumerated in the 2010 Census: [3,381 housing units built x 39.81% occupancy x 2.41 persons/household = 3,244 permanent residents in the unincorporated areas of the basin].
2. The projected permanent resident population at build-out was calculated by multiplying the projected number of housing units that will exist at realistic build-out (incorporating targeted density reductions) by the occupancy rates and number of persons/household enumerated in the 2010 Census for each respective jurisdiction. It was assumed that the projected 778 additional affordable workforce housing units that could be built within the basin would all be owner-occupied at 100% occupancy with the number of persons/household enumerated in the 2010 Census for each respective jurisdiction. Using these assumptions, the projected permanent resident population at build-out for each jurisdiction was calculated as follows:

Town of Breckenridge: [8,026 housing units x 28.16% occupancy x 2.33 persons/household] + [628 affordable workforce housing units x 100% occupancy x 2.33 persons/household] = 6,729 permanent residents.

Town of Blue River: 838 housing units x 46.28% occupancy x 2.53 persons/household = 981 permanent residents.

Unincorporated Summit County: [4,613 housing units x 39.81% occupancy x 2.41 persons/household] + [150 affordable workforce housing units x 100% occupancy x 2.41 persons/household] = 4,788 permanent residents.

These estimates were then added together to arrive at a projected population of 12,498 permanent residents at build-out.

3. Maximum Peak Population estimates include: permanent residents, second homeowners/overnight visitors, and day skiers and visitors during peak season. Maximum peak population was calculated using the methodology for projecting the permanent resident population described in footnotes #1 and #2, and the following methodology and assumptions regarding 2<sup>nd</sup> homes / overnight accommodations:
  - The percentage of the housing stock that is second homes in each jurisdiction, as enumerated in the 2010 Census (71.84% in the Town of Breckenridge, 53.72% in the Town of Blue River, and 60.19% in the unincorporated areas of the basin), will be 100% occupied with 5.5 persons per unit during maximum peak periods.
  - At peak occupancy, 100% of the lodge units within the basin will be occupied with 2.5 persons/lodge unit. Within the Town of Breckenridge the estimated number of lodge units is based on the historic percentage of lodge units being 7.44% of the existing housing units. Within the unincorporated areas of the County, the actual number of existing lodge units and projected lodge units at build-out were utilized. No lodge units were accounted for within the Town of Blue River.
  - Day skiers are estimated based on a peak day at Breckenridge Ski Resort with approximately 23,000 skiers, assuming approximately one-third (7,667) are day skiers. Day visitors are then estimated based on the assumption of one non-skier for every three day skiers (2,556). 7,667 day skiers + 2,556 non-skier day visitors = 10,223 day visitors. (Source: Town of Breckenridge 2009 Overview.)
4. Future growth in day visitors at full build-out of the Basin is difficult to project and could range significantly from a conservative estimate of 2% to a more aggressive estimate of 10%. For purposes of projecting the potential maximum peak population at build-out, an estimated 10% growth in day visitors was utilized.

### Basin Build-Out

A very thorough and extensive analysis of existing and potential build-out within the Basin was conducted by the County and Town planning departments in 2010 as part of the update to the Plan. The

build-out analysis was critical to gaining an understanding of growth trends since 1997, development potential remaining in the Basin, and to provide a solid foundation for the update effort. Moreover, the build-out analysis was intended to illustrate the status and the scope of potential additional development that could occur in the Basin given existing development regulations and standards. An overview of the build-out analysis conducted is provided below.<sup>2</sup>

#### Residential Growth Experienced Since 1997

The build-out analysis included in the 1997 edition of the Plan indicated that, as of the end of 1996, there were approximately 7,664 residential units built within the Basin. The 2010 build-out analysis indicated that 3,189 residential units had been built in the Basin since 1996, bringing the total number of units in the Basin to approximately 10,853. This amount of development roughly equates to adding the number of housing units within the Town of Frisco to the Basin over the past 13 years. As shown in Table 4 the majority of this development (81%) has occurred within the Town of Breckenridge.

Jurisdiction	1996 Existing Units	2010 Existing Units	Units Increase 1996 – 2010	Percent Increase 1996 - 2010	Percent of Total Basin Growth
County	2,843	3,381	538	19%	17%
Breckenridge	4,243	6,812	2,569 <sup>1</sup>	61%	81% <sup>1</sup>
Blue River	578	660	82	14%	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,664</b>	<b>10,853</b>	<b>3,189</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Summit County and Town of Breckenridge planning departments.

<sup>1</sup> A significant portion of the Town of Breckenridge’s growth over the 13 year period was a result of annexation of unincorporated portions of the County by the Town of Breckenridge (e.g., Warrior’s Mark). Residential unit counts for the County were correspondingly decreased based on these annexations.

#### 2010 Build-Out Analysis: Three-Tiers

The 2010 residential build-out analysis shown in Table 5 is broken out into three categories: 1) absolute build-out, 2) realistic build-out, and 3) realistic build-out with implementation of the density reduction strategies recommended in this Plan. An explanation of each build-out category is provided below.

Jurisdiction	2010 Existing Units	Projected Absolute Build-Out (Including Future Affordable Housing)	Current % of Absolute Build-Out	Projected Realistic Build-Out (Including Future Affordable Housing)	Current % of Realistic Build-Out	Projected Realistic Build-Out with Future Density Reductions	Current % of Realistic Build-Out with Future Density Reductions
County	3,381	5,820	58%	5,455	62%	710 - 1,459 units targeted to be reduced	
Breckenridge	6,812	9,290	73%	9,126	75%		
Blue River	660	838	79%	838	79%		
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>10,853</b>	<b>15,948</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>15,419</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>13,960 - 14,709</b>	<b>74% - 78%</b>

<sup>2</sup> The detailed build-out analyses conducted for the unincorporated areas of the Basin and the Town of Blue River are on file at the Summit County Planning Department in the case file for the 2011 JUBMP Update (Planning Case #09-056) and the detailed build-out analysis conducted for the Town of Breckenridge is on file at the Breckenridge Community Development Department.

Source: Summit County and Town of Breckenridge planning departments.

<sup>1</sup> Accessory dwelling units (i.e. accessory apartments, caretaker units and guest units) have not been included in the residential build-out analysis for two main reasons: 1) Estimating the potential for new accessory apartments or caretaker units to be constructed on single-family residential lots throughout the basin is very difficult to predict. Since most single-family residential property in the Basin has the potential ability to construct an accessory dwelling unit (if approved in accordance with applicable regulations), estimating the total number of accessory dwelling units that could exist at full build-out could artificially inflate the projected build-out, and is speculative and problematic. 2) Unapproved / illegal accessory dwelling units are difficult to account for.

### **Absolute Build-Out (Including Future Affordable Workforce Housing)**

Absolute build-out represents an evaluation of the existing zoning on every parcel of land in the Basin and identifies the maximum potential residential development allowed by such zoning on each respective parcel. This is referred to as absolute build-out because it represents the absolute or ultimate build-out potential that is permitted by existing zoning.

#### *Inclusion of Future Affordable Workforce Housing Units*

Both absolute and realistic build-out have been calculated to account for additional density that could potentially be added to the Basin beyond what is currently permitted by existing zoning. This includes a total of 914 deed-restricted affordable workforce housing units, as identified in the Town of Breckenridge 2006 Housing Needs Assessment (above what had been built or was projected to be built during development of the 2006 Housing Needs Assessment).

It is important to note that inclusion of these 914 affordable housing units in the build-out analysis does not imply that these units *will* be constructed. Rather, it is recognized that the 914-unit target is a *goal*, which is currently based on the 2006 Housing Needs Assessment. Affordable housing needs within the Basin will be continually evaluated over time. Thus, the 914-unit target may change over time, in response to improved assessment techniques, changing market conditions, available inventories of deed-restricted and market rate housing, and other factors. Nevertheless, the current goal of 914 additional affordable housing units has been factored into the build-out analysis, so the potential impacts of these units on the overall activity levels and carrying capacity of the basin can be accounted for and appropriately mitigated when making future planning decisions.



*Gibson Heights Neighborhood.*

#### *Methodology Used to Add Projected Affordable Workforce Housing Units into Build-Out Analysis*

To account for projected affordable housing units in absolute and realistic build out, County and Town planning staff referred to the Town of Breckenridge 2006 Housing Needs Assessment, prepared by RRC Associates, which identifies a future need for an additional 914 affordable housing units throughout the Upper Blue Basin. Staff then evaluated the affordable housing units that have been planned and/or constructed since completion of the 2006 housing needs assessment (e.g., Wellington Phase 2) to verify that, at this time, no housing units should be subtracted from the projected 914-unit need. Staff then analyzed all existing opportunities for future affordable housing developments, which have been identified on specific properties in the basin (e.g., Stan Miller, Block 11, Claimjumper). Overall, there are approximately 629 affordable housing units that could potentially be accommodated on these identified parcels. Using our knowledge of these future

developments, staff calculated the density already permitted on these parcels by existing zoning and the new density that would need to be created to accommodate the planned affordable housing developments on these parcels (beyond what is already permitted by existing zoning). This analysis indicates that 136 units of density are already permitted on the identified parcels by existing zoning. Therefore, in order to construct the 629 units planned, 493 new units of density would need to be created, which are not currently allowed by zoning.

In addition to the 493 new units of density that would need to be created on these potential sites, there are another 285 affordable housing units needed (based on the 2006 housing needs assessment), which are not currently allocated to a particular property. For purposes of calculating build-out, it was assumed that none of these 285 units are currently allowed by zoning and that new density would need to be created for all 285 units.

	Projected Future Units	Estimated Units of Additional Density Needed (not already permitted by underlying zoning)
Viable Housing Opportunities on Identified Parcels	629	493
Additional Housing Needed in Currently Undetermined Locations	285	285
<b>Upper Blue Basin Total</b>	<b>914</b>	<b>778</b>

*Summary of Absolute Build-Out*

Without accounting for future deed-restricted affordable housing units, projected absolute build-out of the Basin is approximately 15,170 units. Using the methodology described above, overall it is estimated that an additional 778 units of density would be created in the Basin to meet the identified affordable housing needs outlined in the 2006 Housing Needs Assessment (914 total units – 136 units already permitted by zoning = 778 new units). Adding these 778 affordable housing units to the Basin’s build-out results in a projected absolute build-out of approximately 15,948 units. Thus, with approximately 10,850 units now constructed, the Basin is approximately 68% built-out in terms of absolute build-out.

**Realistic Build-Out (Including Future Affordable Workforce Housing)**

Realistic build-out considers natural constraints and development standards that could preclude realization of the full development potential allowed under the existing zoning regulations (e.g., access or environmental constraints such as steep slopes or wetlands). Thus, realistic build-out is intended to represent a more likely picture of the build-out that may occur in the Basin, which accounts for the fact that it is unlikely absolute build-out will be realized. Realistic build-out also contemplates to a degree the wide array of regulatory restrictions that are reflected in the various planning documents and Codes adopted by the respective communities.

As shown in Table 5, projected realistic build-out of the basin is approximately 15,419 residential units (including the 778 affordable housing units discussed above). Thus, with approximately 10,850 units now constructed, the Basin is approximately 70% built-out in terms of realistic build-out. This recognizes approximately 4,566 units remaining to be built in the Basin over the coming years.

### **Realistic Build-Out (Inclusive of Recommended Density Reduction Strategies)**

As discussed in detail in the Land Use section below, one of the main goals of the Plan is to reduce overall activity levels and impacts from potential build-out and density in the Basin through the implementation of various density reduction strategies (e.g., extinguishing density to offset the impacts of new affordable housing units). The Land Use section sets forth policies aimed at reducing overall density in the Basin, ranging from a conservative reduction of 710 units to a more aggressive targeted reduction of 1,459 units. Thus, depending on how aggressively the density reduction strategies identified in the Plan are implemented, realistic build-out of the Basin could be reduced to approximately 13,960 – 14,709 units.

In consideration of the density reduction strategies recommended in this Plan, there are still approximately 3,100 – 3,900 units remaining to be built in the Basin. According to the build-out analysis, approximately 55% of this remaining development potential is located within the Town of Breckenridge (1,700 – 2,145 units), 41% within the unincorporated areas of the Basin (1,270 – 1,600 units), and the remaining 4% within the Town of Blue River.

### Commercial Build-Out Analysis

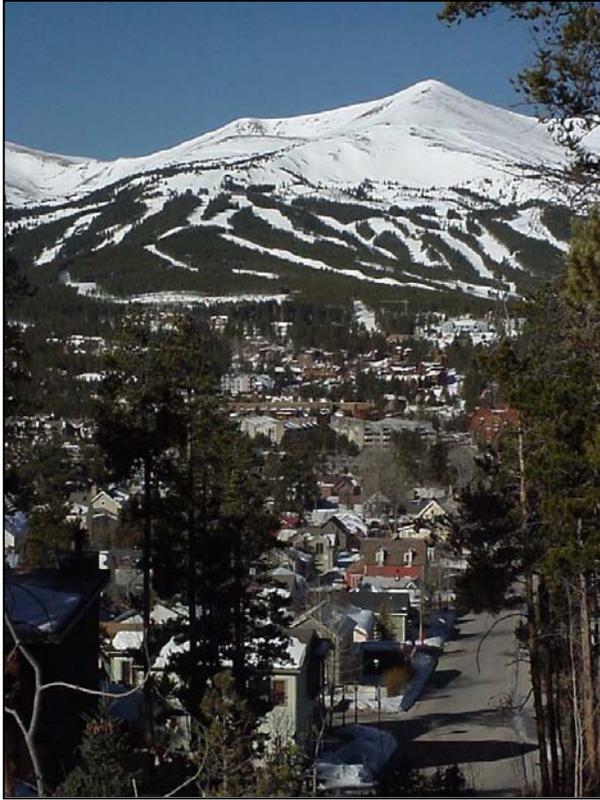
In conjunction with the above residential build-out analysis, an estimate of commercial build-out in the Basin was conducted by the County and Town of Breckenridge planning department staffs based on existing commercial zoning and development approvals. Included in the estimates is all retail, office, warehousing and other business uses in the Basin. Hotel and lodge rooms are not included as commercial - they are counted in the residential estimates noted above.

Jurisdiction	2010 Existing Commercial (sq. ft.)	Projected Absolute Build-Out (sq. ft.)	Current % of Absolute Build-Out	Projected Realistic Build-Out (sq. ft.)	Current % of Realistic Build-Out
Breckenridge	1,615,171	2,353,098	69%	2,257,065	71%
County	354,488	728,574	49%	594,828	60%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,969,659</b>	<b>3,081,672</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>2,851,893</b>	<b>69%</b>

Currently there is approximately 1.97 million square feet of commercial development in the Basin. The majority of this commercial (82%) is located within the Town of Breckenridge. The commercial build-out analysis indicates that, according to existing zoning, absolute build-out of commercial space within the Basin could total up to approximately 3 million square feet. However, realistic build-out accounts for the fact that realization of absolute build-out is unlikely due to site constraints and other limiting factors.

Realistically, the Basin could see up to 2.85 million square feet of commercial space developed at full build-out, most of which would be located within the Town of Breckenridge. Of the approximately 882,000 square feet of commercial space remaining to be built in the Basin, 73% is located within the Town of Breckenridge (approximately 642,000 square feet) and 27% is located in the unincorporated areas of the County adjacent to the Town of Breckenridge (approximately 240,000 square feet). The majority of the remaining realistic commercial development within the Town of Breckenridge is located in the Parkway Center (137,800 square feet) and the Breckenridge Airport Subdivision (92,163 square feet).

## Community Character



*Washington Street looking west toward Breckenridge Ski Resort.*

During the creation of the 1997 edition of the Plan and the 2011 update to the Plan, citizens repeatedly expressed concern that values connected to the natural environment and small town atmosphere in the Basin may become endangered by unrestrained growth and development. The high quality of the character and natural environs of the Basin play a key role in not only the aesthetic appeal of the community, but also in its economic vitality. Accordingly, the public has expressed a strong interest, both aesthetically and economically, in ensuring that the character of the community is preserved and protected from the impacts of future development. The public has expressed a strong desire to curtail development potential, preserve the rural character of outlying or backcountry areas and the small mountain resort character of the Town of Breckenridge. Additional high priority concerns expressed by the public include affordable housing, traffic and parking - issues typically found in urban and resort areas.

Ski town development is unique and is frequently characterized as "micro urban." That is to say that the typical development pattern is a small urban community surrounded by rural areas and public lands. Such a micro urban community must provide

urban levels of service and contend with planning and development issues that are common in urban areas. At the same time, these types of communities are often identified with characteristics reflecting rural or small town qualities. That identity also fosters a strong economic appeal for residents and visitors, and preserves and enhances property values in the process. The community and this Plan place a high priority on maintaining a small town lifestyle and preserving our rural surroundings. Residents and visitors value the surrounding open spaces, a high quality natural environment, easy access to recreation on public lands, comfort in knowing one's neighbors and the friendly lifestyle that is associated with a small community. However, residents and visitors also desire urban services and amenities such as reliable mass transit, high quality law enforcement, fire and emergency response, recreation centers, arts and cultural programs, and varied opportunities for dining and entertainment.

Retaining a small mountain town character and rural surroundings while enjoying the benefits of urban type amenities and conveniences defines the challenge of planning in a resort community. It follows that not only the continued community character but also the very economic vitality of this major tourist destination rely on planning for the proper balance of these community values. As development in the Basin continues, the concerns and issues that define this challenge will continue to become more and more critical unless strategies and programs are put in place to address them.

## **VI. Land Use**

### Basin Development Pattern

The nature of development pressure and the resulting activity patterns in a mountain setting such as the Upper Blue Basin is very different from areas with fewer constraints. The amount of developable land in the Basin is severely limited by the extensive public land holdings: approximately 78% of the land area in the Basin is managed by the U.S. Forest Service and approximately 6% is owned by the County and Town of Breckenridge. Most of the private land that is suitable for higher densities is already developed. Within the unincorporated areas of the Basin, a large portion of the remaining private land to be developed is generally too steep, too remote or too wet for all but low density rural residential development.

As stated in the 1997 edition of the Plan, the overall development pattern in the Basin can best be described as linear - generally following the Blue River Valley from Farmer's Korner to Hoosier Pass. Breckenridge is the urban (or "micro urban") center. South to Hoosier Pass the predominant pattern is single family residential in the 1 unit to 2 units per acre range. North and east of Breckenridge, densities tend to transition from urban or suburban to rural. The more remote areas of the Basin (Upper Swan, French Gulch, and Upper Boreas) are largely undeveloped. Since 1978, land use planning in the basin has embraced a growth center concept where high density development is concentrated in an urban core. Outside of the core, densities are significantly lower and eventually transition into a rural or undeveloped character.

The desired development pattern and growth center concept has not changed for the Basin since the Plan was adopted in 1997. However, the updated edition of the Plan attempts to redefine the growth center concept into a more clearly delineated development pattern of "urban" and "rural". It is felt this will provide more consistency with development patterns established in master plans that have been adopted since 1997.

### Growth Center Concept

*"One of the keys to achieving a "seamless" land use plan is to reach consensus on development patterns in transition areas where town and county jurisdictions meet."*  
-- 1997 Joint Upper Blue Master Plan

The growth center concept in the 1997 edition of the Plan can best be described as an urban or micro urban core and limited transition areas within the development area, surrounded by rural or undeveloped lands. Per the 1997 Plan, the urban/micro urban area consists of what is best described as the developed portions of the Basin. It includes all of the incorporated areas within the towns of Breckenridge and Blue River, and most of the developed or partially developed areas in the County. Land uses include high density residential, lodging, commercial and mixed use development in the core area of Breckenridge, service commercial and light industrial uses located along County Road 450, Airport Road and north valley areas, and moderate to lower density residential areas surrounding the towns and in outlying areas. The Breckenridge Ski Area is also located within the urban/micro urban area. The focus of the urban/micro urban area is to provide for high quality development of a full service resort community while maintaining the rural/small town character of the Basin as additional development occurs.

The 1997 edition of the Plan affirmed the growth center concept. However, in doing so it significantly modified the transition scheme of the 1988 Upper Blue Master Plan (the County's basin master plan for all unincorporated property in the Basin) by defining a boundary between development and rural/backcountry - i.e. a rural/backcountry boundary. The 1997 Plan contemplated that rural and backcountry areas remain primarily undeveloped. As a consequence it is important to note that many of the transition areas in the 1988 Upper Blue Master Plan were significantly reduced or eliminated

altogether.

### Transition to Urban and Rural Concept

The growth center concept contained in the 1997 edition of the Plan (i.e., urban or micro urban core and limited transition areas within the development area, surrounded by rural or undeveloped lands) significantly influenced subsequent master planning conducted by the County. Primarily, the growth center concept carried over into master plan discussions and decisions in updating the County's 2003 Countywide Comprehensive Plan and all ensuing basin and subbasin master plans (particularly the 2005 Upper Blue Basin Master Plan).

The County's 2003 Countywide Comprehensive Plan recommended that new development be focused within or adjacent to existing urban areas (primarily to limit impacts of development in rural or environmentally sensitive areas). More specifically, the Countywide Comprehensive Plan embraced the notion that land use should be characterized as either "urban land use" or "rural land use". The Countywide Comprehensive Plan embodied this concept through specific goals and policies/actions in the Land Use Element, such as: 1) focus development within existing urban areas and 2) future land use decisions in rural areas should be consistent and harmonious with the rural character of the land. Moreover, the Countywide Comprehensive Plan prescribed that "urban" and "rural" areas be identified in basin master plans and provided criteria and considerations for determining such designations.

The significance of the urban/rural framework established in the County's 2003 Countywide Comprehensive Plan to the Basin was that when the 1988 Upper Blue Master Plan was amended in 2005, the land use maps and land use designations were delineated and focused into urban or rural categories. Although pre-existing land use patterns in the Basin may not completely fit within the urban/rural land use concept, it is the intent of the Plan that future development follow this concept to the fullest extent possible.

### Basin Growth and Development – Infrastructure Considerations

As a result of land ownership and development constraints in the Basin, the settlement pattern of the valley as it is currently configured has emerged. The densities at the heart of this settlement pattern (i.e., the downtown area of Breckenridge) are high and relatively concentrated for a small community. This development pattern has necessitated more urban style solutions in terms of public transportation infrastructure, such as the use of remote parking lots and the development of a substantial public transit system to link with the downtown core and the Breckenridge Ski Area.

The approach of building more and larger infrastructure elements to keep pace with continued development is a perpetual cycle that could have multiple negative consequences for the community. A self fulfilling prophecy can occur where expanding infrastructure allows additional growth which, in turn, creates demand for more infrastructure. When this happens without regard to more important and significant community values, the results can be detrimental to the community. At the root of the constraints is the roadway network serving the valley and the Town of Breckenridge, which was established in the historic mining era. Given the small amount of land on the valley floor and the existing development patterns, there are very few alternatives for adding meaningful roadway capacity in the Basin. While new road way configurations and capacity increasing improvements could be designed and possibly funded, they probably cannot be constructed without dramatically altering the landscape and creating significant aesthetic and functional impacts that are not consistent with the community's values and its distinctive character.

In addition, the economic impacts of an expanding infrastructure pattern can be detrimental to the

community. This is particularly so given the dramatic fluctuation in the demand placed upon such infrastructure at varying times of the year, week, and, even, day. In light of the current pressures on local governments to effectively budget for maintenance of existing infrastructure and services, it is simply not feasible to allow for expanded infrastructure in expanded service areas away from the present urban core. Accordingly, a crucial goal of this Plan is to direct greater compaction towards that urban core.

Goal and Policies/Actions

**Goal A. Future land use decisions should advance an urban/rural development pattern and not increase overall density in the Basin.**

- Policy/Action 1. Locate new development within existing urban areas to the maximum extent possible.
- Policy/Action 2. Land use decisions in rural areas should be consistent and harmonious with protecting the backcountry character of the Basin.
- Policy/Action 3. No new density (beyond that currently zoned) shall be approved or allocated to any parcel within the Basin unless such density is transferred to the proposed development site in accordance with the guidelines established in basin transferable development rights (TDR) programs and the Towns and County Development Codes.
- An exception to the density cap shall be allowed for deed-restricted affordable workforce housing units, as described in the Affordable Workforce Housing section.
- Policy/Action 4. Rezoning or other actions which increase density beyond the level currently zoned should require a transfer of development rights in accordance with established TDR program regulations. Exceptions to the transfer requirements include community facilities and institutional uses and affordable housing as identified in the Affordable Workforce Housing section.
- Identified TDR Receiving Areas for density transfers shall be able to accommodate additional development within the limits of available services and infrastructure, site constraints and neighborhood compatibility, and also be in conformance with the Towns and County Development Codes.
  - In the County, in addition to rezonings/upzonings, TDRs may be used as an equity tool when evaluating other types of development applications. Utilization of TDRs for such applications may be warranted as a means of mitigating impacts of proposed developments and to address development and planning concerns that allow discretion, such as:
    - Attaining general conformance with other master plans and applicable master plan goals and policies.
    - Mitigating impacts to the immediate neighborhood or community.
    - Negating unusual/atypical types of impacts.
    - Addressing other development policies.
- Policy/Action 5. Vacant land annexations should restrict development levels to the density established by the applicable County zoning, Town of Blue River zoning, or the Town of Breckenridge Land Use Guidelines recommended density, whichever is less, unless additional density is transferred to the site.
- Policy/Action 6. Commercial activity is not encouraged in rural or outlying areas of the Basin, but rather should be focused in the urban core or urban areas.

Policy/Action 7. Individual sites should be developed within the limitations of site specific constraints and overall infrastructure and service capacities within the Basin.

### Activity Level Approach

It is the goal of the Plan to establish a balance between preserving the Basin's small town, rural character and allowing a reasonable increment of growth. This is based on public response and the Plan's theme to reduce potential build-out and that the burden of any reductions should be fairly distributed among the various land use types and activity generators within the Basin. Therefore, the Plan identifies and recommends strategies to reduce or control activity levels. The following identifies and describes the key components that contribute to activity generation in the Basin:

#### **Human and Vehicular Activity**

Activity levels are best defined as the amount of human and vehicular activity associated with a specified level of development. The hustle and bustle of Breckenridge Main Street creates an exciting and vibrant downtown. However, as more and more people are attracted to the commercial core area of Breckenridge, the congestion that results from large numbers of cars and people moving into and through downtown can be a negative component of activity. Similarly, traffic activity on Highway 9 leading into and out of Breckenridge can easily become a negative experience during peak periods. Thus, activity levels can have negative impacts on the economic vitality of the community.

#### **Residential Development**

Activity levels can also be related to residential development in the Basin. Neighborhoods that are quiet most of the year can experience the negative aspects of increased activity when single family homes or other residential units are occupied by large numbers of short term and overnight visitors who come and go frequently in private automobiles or shuttles. This dramatic fluctuation in activity levels threatens to negatively impact the character of existing neighborhoods and also places demands upon infrastructure and services, which invariably place great stress on the resources of a community and its ability to meet such demands.

#### **Recreation**

There are also activity level impacts associated with recreational pursuits. With more and more visitors and residents looking for solitude or a backcountry experience, it is inevitable that a favorite backcountry road or trail will become more crowded and more user conflicts will occur. Day skiers are also a significant contributor to activity levels as they generate traffic flow into the Breckenridge area and drive the need for additional parking facilities and transit service.

#### **Day Skiers**

Day skier impacts are difficult to quantify, but have a significant effect on activity levels within the Basin. It is expected that day skier numbers and impacts from that demographic will continue to grow in the foreseeable future as population on the Front Range grows. Day skiers impact the activity levels and increase demand in the Basin in many ways, including traffic congestion and parking; infrastructure (water, sewer, roads, sidewalks); provision of adequate public and private services (transportation, medical, auto related, police); and services and housing related to the need for seasonal employees.

From a more intangible perspective, increasing activity levels will result in an increasingly faster urban pace and lifestyle, consequences which are contrary to the community's expressed desire to retain a small town character and informal lifestyle. However, it is recognized that limiting future growth will have an effect on the affordable nature of the community and could result in a more expensive community to live

in. Already high housing costs could be pushed even higher, forcing more workers to live elsewhere and commute into the valley, adding to traffic congestion and overall activity levels. Over time, the result could be a loss of community diversity and increased activity levels as more workers are forced to drive into the valley every day. Strong incentives and other measures which seek to provide adequate availability of affordable workforce housing must be coupled with any limitations on development.

Goal and Policies/Actions

**Goal B. Potential activity levels within the Basin should be reduced to a level which is consistent with the vision of this Plan and desired community character.**

Policy/Action 1. Additional density should not be created anywhere within the Basin, whether through upzonings, annexations or some other mechanism. An exception is for community facilities and institutional uses and those identified in the Affordable Workforce Housing section.

Policy/Action 2. The County and towns should work with the Breckenridge Resort Ski Area to mitigate existing and future impacts associated with day skier visits.

Reducing Build-Out Impacts

The basic premise of this Plan is to strike a reasonable balance between those who feel strongly that the Basin is at its capacity now, and those who believe that few if any restrictions are necessary. Activity levels and development impacts associated with absolute and realistic build-out in the Basin, coupled with growth in day skier numbers, could lead to a scenario that is inconsistent with the community's vision and values.

As noted, the effects of such impacts are far more than aesthetic. The myriad of economic impacts that could emanate from growth through full build-out of the Basin could have significant effects on the fiscal health of the community. For example, expanding infrastructure to accommodate such growth could encumber the budgets of local entities and homeowners. Also, development resulting in full build-out could compromise the character of the community and dilute the qualities that make the Basin such an attractive destination for tourists and residents. The fiscal impacts felt in that regard could be very real and underscore the need to pursue density reduction strategies.



*Forested hillsides surrounding Quandary Peak.*

The 1997 edition of the Plan proposed that the build-out level for the Basin should not exceed the equivalent of 10,500 residential dwelling units, or approximately 75% of the zoned maximum potential density (the specific target was to reduce residential density by 2,550 units). This conclusion, premised upon a detailed 1996 study, was based primarily on a concern that build-out beyond this level would dramatically change the character of the community and erode the quality of life in a way that is contrary to the vision of the Plan. However, as indicated in the build-out section, as of January 2011, the 10,500 target had been exceeded and approximately 10,853 units were built in the Basin.

Nevertheless, this quantitative reduction strategy, as applied, has proven to be highly effective in preserving the character of the community, its economic vitality, and ensuring that development and community demands do not outstrip the infrastructure or services available or developed. Therefore, a key focus in this edition of the Plan is to address density reduction concerns in a more qualitative manner, while still recognizing and memorializing the great benefits that have been realized by the longstanding density reduction approach of the Plan.

In updating the Plan it was recognized that the realistic build-out of the Basin could approach 14,900 units. This is significantly more than the 10,500 units originally targeted in the 1997 edition of the Plan, which served as the barometer of a desired comfortable carrying capacity and associated activity levels. Thus, the update to the Plan in 2011 brought to light the fact that another 4,000 units could be built in the Basin and those units would invariably have a considerable impact on community character. Therefore, the Plan stresses the need to continue to pursue strategies to reduce anticipated development levels in order to maintain a desirable activity level at build-out.

### Density Reduction Strategies

This section identifies strategies which, if realized, will move the Basin toward a reduced targeted build-out. The strategies represent a wide range of realistic alternatives that distribute the burden of reductions among a range of land use types and activity generators in the Basin. Each strategy includes a conservative and aggressive estimate of the development level reduction that might be expected if the strategy is realized. These projections were based on the updated build-out analysis and in-depth review of the density reduction strategies achieved between 1997 and 2011.

The strategy which could result in the largest reduction in density is extinguishing development rights for new affordable workforce housing projects, with the County and Town of Breckenridge retiring density on County and Town-owned properties in conjunction with new affordable housing developments. This strategy is discussed in more detail in the Affordable Workforce Housing section. When combined, all of the identified strategies will, if realized, move the Basin toward a targeted build-out of approximately 14,000 residential units and reduce realistic build-out by a range of 710 to 1,459 units.

A slight deviation from the recommendations to reduce density in the Basin is recognized for the Town of Blue River, allowing the Town to be excluded from implementing these types of strategies. A land use inventory and zoning analysis of remaining development potential in the Town revealed very few opportunities to reduce density within their boundaries. The lack of opportunities to reduce density coupled with the Town's desire to increase its property tax base advances the notion that the Town of Blue River should not be subject to the identified density reduction strategies outlined below.

While overall numerical goals have been articulated in these strategies, the means to attain those goals are set forth in policies that reflect a more qualitative approach to each development. Each land use application will be reviewed on its own merits, and, as applicable, the various strategies and goals enumerated below will be considered in the review process. The qualities reflected in successful subdivisions and development in the past, which incorporated any number of approaches to attain a successful project that reflected a significant reduction in realistic density, such as Big Star PUD in the County and Delaware Flats in the Town of Breckenridge, set forth a model of the qualitative level of successful density reduction that future development should seek to attain. Regulatory provisions as well as master plan policies should be established and applied that direct any future development towards such standards.

### Goal and Policies/Actions

**Goal C. Pursue strategies to reduce density and development potential anywhere from 710 to 1,459 residential units in the Basin.**

Policy/Action 1. The County and Town of Breckenridge shall encourage and facilitate the reduction of density and development potential in the Basin through implementation of the strategies identified and summarized in Table 8 below.

- The Town of Blue River shall not be subject to the recommended density reduction strategies to be pursued by the County and Town of Breckenridge.

<b>Table 8. Upper Blue Basin: Density Reduction Strategies &amp; Estimated Reduction in Density</b>			
Realistic Strategies	Potential Density Reduction		Comment
	Conservative	Aggressive	
Affordable Workforce Housing	195	778	Extinguish development rights to offset impacts from new affordable workforce housing developments.
Review of Development Applications in Town and County	435	470	As part of reviewing development applications, density may be reduced through application of goals and policies in the Plan or development standards in the Codes or other planning documents of the respective jurisdictions.
Town and County Single Family Lot Combinations	30	55	On contiguous platted parcels owned by the same individual – encourage density reductions through the vacation of lot lines and recordation of a perpetual restrictive covenant on the property prohibiting re-subdivision.
Conversion of Density Through Acquisition of Backcountry Property	20	36	The County and Town will continue to purchase properties zoned Backcountry (BC) for open space protection. Density reduced through the TDR conversion ratio would result in a reduction of density (i.e. conversion from 1 unit per parcel to 1 unit per 20 acres), application of effective merger regulations or other means available.
Creation of Site-Specific Master Plans Within the Town of Breckenridge	10	60	Extinguishing 25% of zoned density may be considered an eligible public benefit as part of a Development Agreement for large projects.
Mitigating Impacts of Development Proposals Through Use of TDRs	5	15	Applicants may voluntarily propose to utilize (i.e. “retire” or “extinguish”) development rights/TDRs as a means of mitigation to ameliorate concerns with development project proposals other than rezonings/upzonings.
Conservation Easements	5	15	Voluntary conservation easements placed on properties by private landowners, land trusts or other entities.
U.S. Forest Service Land Trades	5	15	County and Town owned land traded to the U.S. Forest Service would effectively reduce the density previously entitled or zoned on the property.
Other Strategies	5	15	There could be other strategies or unanticipated situations which result in density being extinguished.
<b>Total</b>	<b>710</b>	<b>1,459</b>	<b>This represents a 4.6% to 9.5% reduction in realistic build-out.</b>

Policy/Action 2. Work with the County Assessor’s office to create incentives or other voluntary mechanisms to encourage single family lots to be combined. Incentives from local government could be provided for properties ineligible for Federal tax deductions. For example, savings in property tax payments that may be realized when single family zoned lots are combined.

Policy/Action 3. As part of the Town of Breckenridge development review process and procedures, 25% of zoned density may be extinguished and considered an eligible public benefit (e.g., as

part of a Development Agreement for large projects).

- Policy/Action 4. When a property within the Basin is traded to the U.S. Forest Service, the property should subsequently be rezoned to the County's Natural Resources (NR-2) zoning district to permanently extinguish any density that previously existed on the property.
- Policy/Action 5. To enable a better understanding of the impact of various land uses on activity levels and their interrelationship, the towns and County shall continue to monitor build-out and reductions in development potential that occur in the future.

#### Other Density Reduction Strategies

In addition to the strategies identified in Table 8 above, reductions in density and potential build-out can be expected elsewhere and through other actions. However, it is difficult to estimate how many development rights could be reduced through these types of actions. Examples of these types of strategies include but are not limited to:

- Voluntary reduction efforts on properties purchased or owned by the County or Town of Breckenridge.
- Selected rezonings initiated by either individuals or the County or Town of Breckenridge of properties in zoned areas that are markedly out of conformance with respective master plan/comprehensive plan land use designations or guidelines, incompatible with present area development, or otherwise inconsistent with the conditions in the vicinity.
- Selected rezoning of antiquated zoning designations, where deemed effective at attaining the overall policies and goals of this Plan.
- Reductions in commercial build-out.
- Establishment of development standards and regulatory restrictions and application of the same to reduce or mitigate the impacts of development at levels approaching realistic build-out. Ensure that future developments seek to attain density reductions comparable to successful existing developments throughout the Basin, which have incorporated approaches to achieve a significant reduction in realistic density.
- Adjustments to the density ranges contained within the Town of Breckenridge Land Use Guidelines in consideration of the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

#### Goal and Policies/Actions

**Goal D. Pursue other voluntary and market driven decreases in density and potential development as opportunities present themselves.**

- Policy/Action 1. The County and Town of Breckenridge shall commit to exploring other creative density reduction strategies in the future. Examples of these strategies include, but are not limited to: voluntary reduction efforts and rezoning of properties significantly out of conformance with respective master plans.
- Policy/Action 2. The County and Town of Breckenridge should look for opportunities to limit or reduce the amount of commercial development that can occur. This approach should recognize the unique location and market sector factors that influence commercial development potential within existing commercial nodes or commercial areas, traffic impacts, infrastructure availability, and compatibility with surrounding areas.
- Policy/Action 3. Ensure that all new development meets current site design and development standards regardless of the zoning designation on the parcel.

Policy/Action 4. Review and, where necessary, adjust the density ranges contained within the Town of Breckenridge Land Use Guidelines, giving consideration to the following factors:

- Updates to the Town’s Comprehensive Plan.
- Changes to the Town’s Land Use and Development Code.
- Refined information on physical characteristics of land within the Town.

## VII. Backcountry Protection

The 1997 edition of the Plan expressed an overwhelming desire to see development in the rural/backcountry area limited to the greatest extent possible. This desire was driven, in large part, by the importance of protecting the diverse wildlife habitat, unspoiled ridgeline and mountain vistas, forested hillsides and backdrops, along with the opportunities for solitude and outdoor recreation that characterize the rural/backcountry areas of the Basin. Put another way, protecting the rural/backcountry areas was considered a critical component to help maintain the sense of place and spirit of the community that existed in the Basin. As stated in the 1997 edition of the Plan, “These areas provide residents and visitors a respite from the urban activity of Breckenridge and the more developed areas of the Basin, in addition to major metropolitan areas where most visitors come from.”

To help protect the rural/backcountry areas, the implementation strategies included in the 1997 edition of the Plan placed emphasis on: designating the rural/backcountry area as a sending area for transferable development rights; establishing an Upper Blue Basin open space/development rights acquisition program; and establishing a new backcountry zoning district that could be applied to backcountry areas and limit the impacts of development by limiting structure size, site disturbance and the construction of new roads. As indicated in the Overview and Background section, these strategies were successfully implemented and have resulted in approximately 5,635 acres, or 78% of the backcountry zoned properties within the Basin being protected from development as of February 2011.



*Wetlands in the backcountry south of Quandary Peak.*

In 2001, the County adopted the backcountry zoning district, which was applied to approximately 7,200 acres of property in the Upper Blue Basin. The adoption of the backcountry zoning district implemented a major goal in the 1997 Plan. The zoning regulations ensure that development on backcountry properties is constructed in a manner that preserves the rural, high alpine character of these areas. The zoning district works together with the TDR regulations, giving a property owner the choice to either build on their property in accordance with the backcountry zoning regulations, or to voluntarily sell or transfer their development right out of backcountry areas to more suitable locations in the urban/developed portions of the Basin. The Towns and County recognize the success of this zoning district and are supportive of maintaining the backcountry zoning district to keep this effective tool in place for protecting the character of the Basin’s backcountry areas.

Although the Basin's rural or backcountry areas are, for the most part, sparsely developed or substantially protected, there is remaining development potential that could have detrimental impacts. There are

currently 122 private properties zoned Backcountry (21.9% of the Backcountry zoned properties). It is anticipated that the County and Town of Breckenridge will continue to pursue the purchase of many of these remaining privately owned Backcountry zoned properties. Using a conservative estimate, the County and Town will probably acquire at least half of these claims. Thus, in light of the remaining development potential and possible impacts, continued implementation of programs to protect and preserve the rural/backcountry areas of the Basin is recommended.

Goal and Policies/Actions

**Goal E. Preserve the natural resources and undeveloped character of rural/backcountry areas to the fullest extent possible.**

- Policy/Action 1. As opportunities present themselves, programs, regulations or policies should be enacted and land use recommendations adopted in order to preserve and protect the character of the backcountry.
- Policy/Action 2. Continue to explore the creation of incentives that encourage landowners to limit the scale and intensity of development, preserve open spaces, views and other environmental values, and retain access to roads, trails and public lands.
- Policy/Action 3. Continue to encourage and incentivize development rights to be transferred out of designated backcountry TDR sending areas to designated TDR receiving areas in the urban area, which are more appropriate for development.
- Policy/Action 4. The County and Town of Breckenridge shall continue to coordinate open space protection programs and other innovative methods to acquire properties zoned Backcountry (BC) for open space protection.
- Policy/Action 5. Encourage land exchanges which increase the amount of public land in rural/backcountry areas as suggested in the Land Ownership Adjustment Analysis for the Dillon Ranger District. Identify and map national forest system lands properties that should not be transferred to private ownership, and move expeditiously to preserve them as publicly held whether through acquisition or some other method.
- If National Forest System land comes into private ownership it shall retain its NR-2 zoning until such time as a rezoning is approved by the County. If a proposed rezoning of NR-2 zoned property is determined to be in conformance with applicable master plans and other applicable County regulations, and is subsequently approved by the County, development rights shall be transferred to the property when the approved rezoning results in new density being created on an NR-2 zoned property. The amount of development rights transferred to the property shall correspond with the requested density.
- Policy/Action 6. Preserve the existing character of roads in rural/backcountry areas to the fullest extent possible given the need to provide for reasonable access to properties and the protection of public health, safety and welfare.
- Policy/Action 7. Discourage construction of new roads in rural/backcountry areas.
- Policy/Action 8. Winter maintenance of roads in the rural/backcountry areas that have significant value for over the snow recreational uses should be prohibited or restricted to the fullest extent possible.
- Policy/Action 9. The County should continue to maintain its Backcountry Zoning District as a means of preserving the backcountry character of the Basin.

## **VIII. Affordable Workforce Housing**

Low inventories of affordable housing are consistently identified as one of the most pressing challenges within the Basin. An adequate supply and availability of affordable housing is critical to supporting a healthy community and economy. In order to meet the full range of housing needs for local residents, a diverse supply of housing types are needed, including ownership units, rental units, accessory apartments and caretaker units.

During the creation of the 1997 edition of the Plan, the median price of a single family home in the Basin was approximately \$265,000. In 2010, the median price of a single family home in the Breckenridge area had increased to \$735,000, per a March 2011 report by Land Title Guarantee Company. This represents a 177% increase in the price of a single family home between 1996 and 2010 for the Breckenridge area. In comparison to median home price, the area median income (AMI) for a 4 person family in the Basin in 1996 was \$56,350 and increased to \$87,200 in 2010. This represents an AMI increase of 55% over the same 14-year timeframe. Thus, it is evident that real estate appreciation significantly outpaced the increase in the median income of workers in the area during the same time period.

Overall, current home prices within the Basin are beyond the means of most area workers. Therefore, many people live in surrounding areas and commute to work from elsewhere in the County or from adjacent counties where housing costs are lower. This has contributed to increased traffic congestion and demand for parking in Breckenridge and on Highway 9 due to workers commuting into the Breckenridge area. Over the long term, an increasing shortage of workforce housing could lead to a loss of community diversity and vitality. As a result, the “gap” between the cost of housing and the income of workers merits frequent monitoring.

### Affordable Workforce Housing – Increase in Supply Since 1997

The 1997 edition of the Plan recognized a shortage of affordable workforce housing within the Basin as a significant issue of concern. Therefore, the Plan identified the need to create a strategic affordable housing plan and recommended a number of other policies and implementation strategies aimed at increasing the supply of affordable housing throughout the Basin.

Since adoption of the 1997 Plan, the Town of Breckenridge has taken a leading role in proactively pursuing efforts to develop affordable housing. The Town adopted an Affordable Housing Strategy in 2000, which outlined a program to utilize resources to incentivize the private sector to develop workforce housing and strategies for the Town to participate directly in the development of affordable housing projects such as the Valleybrook Subdivision. Although the lack of affordable units within the Basin remains an issue, progress has been made since adoption of the 1997 edition of the Plan. Table 9 displays that, as of February 2011, a total of 706 deed-restricted affordable housing units have been developed within the Basin. The majority of these units (89%) are located within the Town of Breckenridge. With the addition of another 79 units currently planned and vested within future phases of the Valleybrook and Wellington Neighborhoods, there will be a total of 785 affordable workforce housing units developed within the Basin at build-out of said projects. 90% of these (704 of 785 units) will be located within the Town of Breckenridge limits.

<b>Table 9. Upper Blue Basin: Inventory of Affordable Workforce Housing Units Provided Between 1997 – February 2011</b>				
<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Average Area Median Income (AMI) Target</b>	<b>Existing Units</b>	<b>Planned Future Phase Units</b>	<b>Total Units (Existing &amp; Future Planned)</b>
<b>Town of Breckenridge Housing Units</b>				
Wellington 1	99%	98		98
Wellington 2	110%	78	50	128
Gibson Heights	71%	40		40
Vista Point	113%	19		19
Breckenridge Terrace	90%	180		180
Pinewood Village	83%	74		74
Vic's Landing	86%	24		24
Valleybrook	85%	13	29	42
Other Dispersed Units	N/A	99		99
<b>Total Units in Town of Breckenridge</b>		<b>625</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>704</b>
<b>Unincorporated Area Housing Units</b>				
<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Average Area Median Income (AMI) Target</b>	<b>Existing Units</b>	<b>Planned Future Phase Units</b>	<b>Total Units (Existing &amp; Future Planned)</b>
Kennington Townhomes	N/A	36		36
Farmers Grove	N/A	15		15
Monarch Townhomes	90%	13		13
Other Dispersed Units	N/A	17		17
<b>Total Units in Unincorporated Area</b>		<b>81</b>		<b>81</b>
<b>Total Affordable Workforce Housing Units Built or Approved in the Upper Blue Basin</b>		<b>706</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>785</b>

Source: Town of Breckenridge and Summit County planning departments.

#### Projected Affordable Workforce Housing Needs

Projected needs for additional affordable workforce housing units within the Basin are based on a 2006 Housing Needs Assessment that was completed for the Town of Breckenridge by RRC Associates, Inc. This housing needs assessment identified a potential need for 914 additional affordable housing units throughout the Basin by the time realistic build-out is reached (above what had been built or was projected to be built during the 2006 housing needs assessment). This 914-unit target includes 600 ownership housing units (65.6%) and 314 rental housing units (34.4%). It is recognized that the 2006 assessment, now 5 years old, will need to be updated regularly to reflect current market dynamics and changes in local economic growth rates.

The housing needs identified in the 2006 assessment included both “catch-up” housing and “keep-up” housing. Catch-up housing is housing needed to address current deficiencies in the existing housing supply. Catch-up housing needs are based on an evaluation of current resident households with housing problems (e.g., cost-burdened, overcrowded or substandard living conditions), local renters looking to purchase housing, and in-commuters that would prefer to live in the Breckenridge area if affordable and suitable housing was available. Keep-up housing is housing that will be needed to keep up with projected future demands for housing. Subject to the actual rate of demand, keep-up housing needs focused on new housing units that may be needed as a result of job growth within the Basin. The housing needs assessment has been considered a conservative study, as it did not account for the projected loss of

existing market-rate units, which are currently owned and occupied by area employees, as these employees retire or relocate and sell their units over time at market prices which may now be unaffordable to local workers.

It is important to acknowledge that the current 914 unit target is a “living number” that will need to be continually re-evaluated over time. Recognizing this, the Plan establishes a policy stating that the Basin’s affordable workforce housing needs should be continually analyzed over time by conducting periodic housing needs assessments and considering available inventories of homes for sale within affordable price ranges. Thus, the 914-unit target could change over time, in response to changing market conditions, improved assessment techniques, additional loss of employee occupied market-rate units as units are sold over time to second homeowners, and other factors.



*Valley Brook Neighborhood in Breckenridge.*

Lastly, it is also important to note that, since the 914 unit target was first established in the 2006 housing needs assessment, the first phase of the Town of Breckenridge’s Valleybrook development (13 units) has been completed, thus reducing the projected need to 901 units. Upon completion of the remaining phases of the Valleybrook development (an additional 29 units), the projected housing need will be reduced to 872 units.

Future affordable housing projects planned on identified properties within the Basin will help to further close the previously estimated 872 unit gap. Based on market conditions, completion of the Town of Breckenridge’s future Block 11

development, which has been planned for 350 units, would reduce the projected affordable housing need to 522 units. Additional affordable housing projects being planned on identified properties within the Basin, if developed, would provide an estimated 200 additional housing units, thus reducing the projected affordable housing need to approximately 300 units that are not currently planned on identified properties.

#### Other Adopted Affordable Workforce Housing Plans

Since adoption of the 1997 edition of the Plan, there have been a number of affordable workforce housing-related plans developed, which outline specific goals, policies and implementation strategies to increase the supply of affordable workforce housing within the Basin, as well as within other areas of the County. These include the Countywide Comprehensive Plan Housing Element, Upper Blue Basin Master Plan Housing Element, Joint Summit County Housing Strategy, and Town of Breckenridge 2008 Workforce Housing Action Plan.

The primary goal for the Basin, which is expressed in the aforementioned plans, is to ensure that adequate levels of affordable housing are available by the time the Basin reaches realistic build-out. This goal is to be achieved through a combination of local government resources, impact fee and sales tax revenue, incentives, policies placed on new development, and partnerships among the towns, County, Summit Combined Housing Authority, and other appropriate entities.

#### Appropriate Locations for Affordable Workforce Housing

When planning for the development of additional affordable workforce housing within the Basin, it is recognized that suitable locations have been identified within urban core areas across the County. Key criteria in selecting locations include being within close proximity to employment centers, sited to allow employees convenient access to public transit, the existence of adequate infrastructure to accommodate residential densities (i.e., minimize required extension of services into rural, outlying areas), and identified opportunities for infill and redevelopment within the existing urban area. Concentrating affordable workforce housing within existing urban core areas is consistent with the vision of this Plan, and the County's Countywide Comprehensive Plan and Upper Blue Master Plans' philosophy and goals of focusing development in existing urban areas and protecting rural, outlying areas of the Basin from development.

Accordingly, a policy has been included in this section of the Plan, stating that affordable workforce housing should be located within urban areas of the Basin. It is important to note that this policy applies to both new construction of affordable housing units and buy-down efforts to deed-restrict existing housing units for affordable housing purposes. The Plan also recognizes that the County and Town of Breckenridge will not allow housing units within the Town of Blue River to be deed restricted as a way of meeting County or Town of Breckenridge affordable housing obligations. This is primarily based on keeping affordable workforce housing in close proximity to the urban employment center. Similarly, the County, Town of Breckenridge and/or Summit Housing Authority are not encouraged to purchase buy-down units in the Town of Blue River or other locations outside of the urban areas of the Basin where public transit service is not available.

#### Density Reduction Strategy: Mitigating Impacts on Density & Activity Levels

The 1997 edition of the Plan included a policy that exempted affordable housing projects targeted to low and moderate income residents and employees from requirements to transfer in density, thus allowing "free" density to be created for affordable housing units as an exception to the basin-wide density cap. The purpose of this exemption was to prevent the basin-wide density cap and corresponding transferable development rights requirements from impeding the construction of affordable housing within the Basin.



*Single family homes in the Wellington Neighborhood.*

As noted above, since 1997, there have been approximately 706 affordable workforce housing units constructed within the Basin and the 2006 Housing Needs Assessment points to an identified potential need for an additional 914 affordable housing units by the time realistic build-out of the Basin is reached. Thus, at realistic build-out of the Basin, there could be a total of approximately 1,620 deed-restricted affordable workforce housing units. These units are required to be occupied on a full-time basis by persons residing and employed within the County, thus creating real impacts on overall activity levels and service demands within the Basin.

During the 2011 Plan update process, it was recognized that continuing to create "new" density for affordable workforce housing units could significantly increase activity levels within the Basin in a manner that is not consistent with the vision of this Plan and would likely result in the degradation of the desired community character within the Basin. For this reason, the Breckenridge Town Council and Board of County Commissioners expressed the desire to begin offsetting the impacts of new affordable housing units on the overall density and activity levels within the Basin. The Town Council and BOCC

therefore committed to establish a new Plan policy, stating that the Town and/or County will permanently extinguish density on County and Town of Breckenridge-owned properties to mitigate the impacts of new affordable workforce housing developments.

Both the Town of Breckenridge and County own lands that have density assigned to the properties. In order to meet the obligations of the above referenced policy, the Town and County will endeavor to extinguish density or transfer the density that they own to new affordable housing projects as they are developed. The policies below contain guidelines for the County and Town for the amount of density to be extinguished or transferred to affordable workforce housing sites. At the time of Plan adoption, the amount of density committed to be transferred by the Town to affordable housing sites was based on a compromise position of the Breckenridge Town Council.

As noted in the discussion of residential build-out above, it is estimated that an additional 778 units of density would need to be created in the Basin to meet the identified need for an additional 914 affordable workforce housing units outlined in the 2006 Housing Needs Assessment (914 total units – 136 units already permitted by zoning on identified housing parcels = 778 new units). Establishing a policy that requires existing density located elsewhere in the Basin to be extinguished or transferred to an affordable housing site in conjunction with new affordable housing projects will help to reduce the impact of these 778 units on the realistic build-out of the Basin, thus reducing overall activity levels at build-out and helping to maintain the desired community character expressed in this Plan. Some general guidelines or goals for each jurisdiction to consider when implementing this policy have been included in the policy (Goal G, Policy/Action 2). The guidelines outline suggested ratios for extinguishing or transferring density within each jurisdiction that have been recommended / agreed upon by the Breckenridge Town Council and Upper Blue Planning Commission during the 2011 JUBMP update.

#### Goal and Policies / Actions

**Goal F. Consistent with demand studies, increase the supply of affordable workforce housing within the Basin by pursuing the goals, policies and implementation strategies set forth in the County’s Countywide Comprehensive Plan Housing Element, Upper Blue Master Plan Housing Element, Joint Summit County Housing Strategy, and Town of Breckenridge 2008 Workforce Housing Action Plan.**

Policy/Action 1. Affordable workforce housing should be located within urban areas of the Basin or within close proximity to employment centers, and should be sited to allow convenient access to public transit, to ensure the efficient provision of infrastructure and utilities (i.e., minimize required extension of services into rural, outlying areas) and to provide opportunities for infill and redevelopment within the existing urban area.

- Affordable workforce housing or buy-down units will not be located within the Town of Blue River to meet or fulfill County or Town of Breckenridge affordable housing requirements or obligations.

Policy/Action 2. Subject to updated demand forecasts, the County and Town of Breckenridge should continue to work together to provide affordable workforce housing on the Valleybrook and Claimjumper sites, and to pursue other housing projects within and adjacent to the Town as jointly determined to be appropriate. Cooperative efforts to provide affordable workforce housing within the Basin should focus on the following prioritized locations, which have been identified as appropriate areas to accommodate affordable workforce housing:

- Block 11, Airport Subdivision on Airport Rd.

- County-owned property on CR 450 adjacent to Kennington Townhomes (currently utilized for a recycling drop-off center and other County uses).
  - Stan Miller Property along Highway 9.
  - City Market redevelopment on Park Avenue.
  - Alpensee Condos/Farmer's Grove area in Farmer's Korner.
- Policy/Action 3. The County and Town of Breckenridge should work together to ensure sufficient water rights and supply are allocated to connect future affordable housing developments to public water systems.
- Policy/Action 4. The local governments should provide appropriate incentives such as land, density, and, to the extent possible, financing, fee waivers and tap fees to facilitate the development of affordable workforce housing within the Basin by the private sector.
- Incentives and other measures, which seek to provide adequate supplies of affordable workforce housing, shall not be pursued at the expense of other important master plan policies or development standards that would otherwise limit development (e.g., regulations intended to protect wetlands or other environmentally sensitive areas from development).
- Policy/Action 5. Work to preserve existing market-rate units that are now occupied by local residents or employees for continued occupancy as affordable workforce housing into the future through buy-down initiatives (i.e., acquisition and resale / rental or buying the right to impose deed restrictions) or other appropriate strategies.
- Policy/Action 6. Explore and develop appropriate strategies or incentives to encourage and facilitate the construction of additional accessory apartments and caretaker units within the Basin, such as:
- Revise building code requirements, procedures or fee structures that are unnecessary inhibitors to the development of accessory apartments and caretaker units.
  - Provide public outreach/education on the benefits of constructing accessory apartments and caretaker units and the applicable permit requirements.
  - Consider providing exemptions or waivers from applicable permit fees for accessory apartments and caretaker units.
  - Work jointly with water and sewer districts to reduce the cost of associated water and sewer tap fees.
- Policy/Action 7. The Breckenridge Ski Resort and other major employers in the Basin should be encouraged to actively participate in providing housing for their employees with special attention to the needs of seasonal employees.
- Local governments should collaborate with employers to provide additional affordable workforce housing for their employees within the urban areas of the Basin.
- Policy/Action 8. The County, Town of Breckenridge and Summit Combined Housing Authority should work to continually analyze the Basin's affordable workforce housing needs over time (including both ownership and rental housing needs), by conducting periodic housing needs assessments. The scope of these assessments should consider local economic growth and employment trends, inventories of existing homes for sale and for rent within affordable price ranges, available funding and financing, and the resulting forecast of new affordable housing demand.

**Goal G. Mitigate the impacts of new affordable workforce housing on the overall density and**

### activity levels within the Basin.

- Policy/Action 1. Affordable workforce housing, as defined by respective jurisdictions, shall not be subject to transferable development rights (TDR) requirements.
- Policy/Action 2. The impacts of new affordable workforce housing on the overall density and activity levels within the Basin should be mitigated by permanently extinguishing density on County and/or Town of Breckenridge-owned properties. Recommended guidelines or goals for each jurisdiction to take into consideration when evaluating implementation of this policy are as follows:
- The County should strive to permanently extinguish density on County-owned properties at a minimum 1:2 ratio (i.e., extinguish 1 development right for every 2 affordable workforce housing units permitted to be built).
  - When new affordable workforce housing units are developed, the Town of Breckenridge should transfer density it owns to the affordable workforce housing site at a 1:4 ratio (i.e., transfer one development right for every four affordable workforce housing units permitted to be built).
  - This policy of extinguishing density to offset the impacts of new affordable workforce housing units is not applicable within the Town of Blue River.

## IX. Transportation & Transit

During development of the 1997 edition of the Plan, a traffic analysis (“Upper Blue River Basin Transportation Plan”, January 1996) was completed by Felsburg, Holt & Ullevig (“FHU”). The Plan evaluated the current transportation system and road capacities within the urban/micro urban area of the Basin in 1996. The key findings of this analysis were:

- If the then-projected build-out of 13,762 units were realized, the resultant travel demands would exceed the existing 1996 transportation system capacity by 50% to 60%. Thus, travel demand management options would need to be pursued within the Breckenridge core area to accommodate projected travel demands at build-out.
- The existing 1996 transportation system would reach capacity at approximately 9,000 units. However, there were identified improvements recommended to the existing system that would increase efficiency of movement and allow the system to adequately serve up to 10,500 dwelling units and an associated level of commercial development.
- Physical improvement options to the Highway 9 corridor north of Breckenridge were limited to a four lane configuration or developing a two lane parallel road west of the Blue River.



*Highway 9, looking south toward Breckenridge.*

The recommendations in the Transportation Plan fell into two categories: “Highway 9 Corridor Alternatives” and “Breckenridge Travel Demand Alternatives”. Regarding the Highway 9 Corridor Alternative, the Transportation Plan stressed: mass transit solutions over increasing highway capacity north of Breckenridge to preserve the existing rural small town character of the valley; and minor improvements to accommodate a desired build-out of 10,500 units. However, if build-out was to exceed 10,500 dwelling units, it was recommended that Highway 9 north of Breckenridge be widened to a full four lane cross section with turning lanes as needed

(this alternative was preferable to a west valley floor arterial).

Although creating four lanes was not the recommended strategy in the 1997 edition of the Plan, the widening of Highway 9 to four lanes north of Breckenridge to Tiger Run Road was realized in 2010 and has helped to significantly address overall capacity and congestion in the Basin. Interestingly, the build-out of the Basin was at approximately 10,800 units when the four lanes were constructed. The 1996 Transportation Plan accurately noted that 10,500 dwelling units would serve as a tipping point for additional increased capacity needs on Highway 9 north of Breckenridge.

The 1996 Transportation Plan projected a significant increase in congestion within the Town of Breckenridge if improvements were not made to the Town's transportation system to address capacity (particularly at a build-out of 10,500 units and in light of potentially expanding Highway 9 north of Breckenridge to four lanes). The Transportation Plan broke the Breckenridge Travel Demand Alternatives into the following categories: intercept parking/mode transfer facilities, expanded/modified transit, core area parking management, pedestrian and bicycle and other. Under each category there were a number of specific strategies ranging from developing a downtown circulator to making improvements to turning lane configurations at major intersections with Highway 9. Almost every strategy identified under the Travel Demand Alternative section of the Plan was addressed to some degree between 1997 and 2010.



*Cyclists enjoying the County Rec Path.*

A catalyst to implement the Breckenridge Travel Demand Alternatives was *The Town of Breckenridge Transportation, Circulation and Main Street Reconstruction Plan* produced in 2001 by Charlier and Associates. This 2001 Transportation Plan built upon the recommendations contained in the 1997 edition of the Plan and similarly outlined several specific recommendations for improvements to the transportation system within the urban/micro urban area of the Basin. Some of the key recommendations contained in the Transportation Plan, which have subsequently been implemented, include:

- Realignment of State Highway 9 from Main Street to Park Avenue, and re-design of the Main Street and Park Avenue intersection (completed in 2006).
- Creation of an intermodal transit center within the Town of Breckenridge, and construction of a gondola from the intermodal transit center to Peaks 7 & 8 (completed in 2006).
- Creation of a parking management plan (analyzed yearly).

Overall, the Town transportation system's efficiency and capacity have been successfully enhanced to accommodate the projected increase in demand, as originally identified in 1996 Upper Blue River Basin Transportation Plan.

In 2008, the Town of Breckenridge worked with FHU to further analyze existing roadway capacity within the Basin and estimate future traffic levels based on updated build-out projections and skier information. This analysis estimated that there are currently approximately 20 days of traffic congestion per year within the urban/micro urban area of the Basin. According to the FHU analysis, the number of traffic congested days is projected to increase to 40-45 days at full realistic build-out of the Basin, if no further transportation improvements are implemented. However, the FHU study notes that the additional travel demands anticipated at build-out can be accommodated without increasing the number of days of traffic congestion if upgrades to the Basin's transit system and roadways are implemented.

Nevertheless, successfully addressing transportation, transit, parking, pedestrian and related congestion issues will remain an ongoing challenge in the years ahead. Continued development pressure coupled with likely increases in visitation will make it essential to increase the efficiency and capacity of travel and transit systems through improved performance and management. In this regard some of the salient strategies that could still be evaluated and implemented in the Basin include:

- Consider construction of an in-town people mover to facilitate non-automobile transportation within the Town of Breckenridge downtown core.
- Extension of the Riverwalk south under Park Avenue and north from Ski Hill Road to French Street.
- Improved public transportation along the entire Highway 9 corridor, including the area south of the Town of Breckenridge to the Town of Blue River and south towards Hoosier Pass. Public transportation improvements along the northern portion of the Highway 9 corridor (i.e., connecting Frisco to Breckenridge) could include expanded bus service and/or a fixed transit corridor, while realistic / appropriate public transportation services south of the Town of Breckenridge will likely be limited to expanded bus service.
- Additional commuter parking lots and transit stops north and south of the Town of Breckenridge to facilitate the use of public transportation.
- Widening of Highway 9 from Tiger Road to Agape/Farmer's Korner.
- Improving Highway 9 from Frisco to Farmer's Korner.
- Construction of roundabouts at Park Avenue and Four O'Clock Road, and at Park Avenue and French Street.

An overarching theme or goal of the policies/actions in the Transportation and Transit section is to reduce the air pollutant emissions associated with vehicle travel by expanding and improving accessibility to alternative modes of travel throughout the Basin (i.e., working to shift the transportation modal split away from automobile use towards expanded use of transit, walking and bicycling).

#### Goal and Policies/Actions

**Goal H. Maximize the capacity and efficiency of the existing transportation and transit systems through improved performance and management or construction of appropriate transportation improvements.**

Policy/Action 1. Enhance and improve transit service throughout the Basin based on existing development patterns to better serve visitors, commuters and employees.

- Specifically, expand and improve public transportation services along the entire Highway 9 corridor, including the area south of the Town of Breckenridge to the Town of Blue River and south towards Hoosier Pass. Public transportation improvements along the northern portion of the Highway 9 corridor (i.e., connecting Frisco to Breckenridge) could include expanded bus service and/or a fixed transit corridor, while realistic / appropriate public transportation services south of the Town of Breckenridge will likely be limited to expanded bus service. As identified in Policy/Action 2 below, public transportation improvements along the Highway 9 corridor should include construction of appropriate commuter parking lots and other transit-oriented improvements (e.g., transit stops and stations).

Policy/Action 2. Work to facilitate a shift of the transportation modal split from auto to transit through investments in new commuter parking lots and other transit-oriented improvements (e.g., transit stops and stations).

- Explore and, where appropriate, construct commuter parking lots on the north and south ends of the Basin (e.g., Tiger Road area, Town of Blue River Town Hall, Tordal Estates and Blue River Condos) to increase commuter and day skier use of the Summit Stage and mitigate impacts to parking in Breckenridge.
- Policy/Action 3. Pursue improvements to increase the capacity and efficiency of the Basin’s transportation system, including:
- Extend the Riverwalk south under Park Avenue and north from Ski Hill Road to French Street.
  - Widen Highway 9 from Tiger Road to Agape/Farmer’s Korner.
  - Improve Highway 9 from Frisco to Farmer’s Korner.
  - Construct roundabouts at Park Avenue and Four O’Clock Road, and at Park Avenue and French Street.
- Policy/Action 4. Encourage and emphasize the use of roundabouts rather than improvements to turning lane configurations and additional traffic signals whenever possible, to enable the transportation system to reasonably handle the traffic associated with realistic build-out in a manner that effectively accommodates multiple modes of travel (i.e., efficiently move traffic through intersections, while providing pedestrian friendly road crossings).
- Policy/Action 5. Increase opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle modes of travel and enhance their related facilities, including commuter routes and connections and construction of “complete streets” when roadway improvements are undertaken. “Complete streets” are designed to accommodate all modes of travel within the roadway (e.g., pedestrians, bicyclists, automobiles, transit riders).
- Extension of the County Rec Path along Highway 9 south of Breckenridge to Hoosier Pass should be pursued.
- Policy/Action 6. To the extent possible roadway design should be compatible with a mountain resort community image and the unique constraints of a high mountain environment.
- Policy/Action 7. Marketing for visitor accommodations should emphasize the use of mass transit and the ability to move around the Basin and County without a car.
- Policy/Action 8. Consider the effects of noise from Highway 9 and design future improvements to reduce the impacts of noise from Highway 9.

## **X. Other Significant Basin Issues**

This Plan is intended to articulate a common vision for the future and serve as an advisory guide for decisions that affect the physical development and community character of the Basin. It provides a public policy base from which sound planning decisions can be made and guidance for decisions pertaining primarily to land use, density and development potential. However, master plans can address a host of other important issues, as they are effective mechanisms to guide and assist in the decision-making processes that invariably accompany growth and changes in a community.

In this regard, this section is intended to identify and describe other issues that are important to recognize in the context of joint planning, growth and the future of the Basin. The section seeks to provide information and broad goals and policies that speak to the significant issues in relation the Basin’s vision, activity levels and community character. These issues are not addressed in the level of detail or

specificity as the issues above, but are important to acknowledge. These issues will also play a role in shaping the Basin's community character, services and infrastructure. As such, the following issues and policies should be evaluated and weighed in making decisions or evaluating programs or projects that affect the Basin.

### Community Sustainability

Although the phrase "Sustainability" was not expressly used in the 1997 edition of the Plan, many of the core concepts contained in the 1997 edition of the Plan carry a sustainable message, despite the fact that the term was not part of the lexicon or vocabulary at the time. For example, the policy to not create new density in the Basin was established to avoid a situation where the population could eventually overwhelm the Basin's infrastructure and negatively impact the character of the community. In other words, a sustainable and livable community for the long-term was envisioned.

Today, "Sustainability" is being embraced by many communities, including the Town of Breckenridge and Summit County. Both jurisdictions have recently undertaken efforts to adopt "Sustainability Plans". In the Town's case, the Sustainable Breck effort has emphasized a broad-based approach towards taking action on the different components that make up a sustainable community (e.g., housing, energy consumption, economy). In the County's case, the effort has been more focused on steps that County government can undertake to reduce its carbon footprint (particularly regarding improvements to County facilities and operations).

In 2010, the High Country Conservation Center (a local non-profit organization) started to facilitate a community-based, collaborative planning process to develop and implement a community-wide Energy Action Plan for the County. The Energy Action Plan, when completed, is intended to guide collaborative efforts to reduce energy use and fossil fuel emissions, and increase renewable energy production throughout the multiple jurisdictions within the County. The Energy Action Plan is being developed and implemented with input from a local Energy Advisory Group, which is made up of representatives from the County and town governments, Colorado Governor's Energy Office, Xcel Energy, Vail Resorts, and other local businesses and community organizations.

This section, thus, has been added to the Plan not because its tenor was absent before, but as recognition of the efforts that have been taken in subsequent years regarding this topic. There is a much better understanding today of the ways in which different planning efforts impact community sustainability.

#### Goal and Policies/Actions

**Goal I. Future land use and growth decisions in the Basin should be based on our ability to sustain for future generations the resources and community character that currently exist.**

Policy/Action 1. Protection and maintenance of the Basin's environment and natural systems should continue to be emphasized in all public decision making.

Policy/Action 2. New development in the Basin should strive to be completed in a manner that fits with the natural environment and minimizes the carbon footprint and energy consumption required by such new development.

- Renewable energy sources should be explored and encouraged for public and private development in a manner that is complimentary to the natural environment.

- Policy/Action 3. Goals and policies of this Plan are intended to complement and support governmental efforts such as the Summit County Energy Action Plan, Sustainable Breck Plan, and Summit County Sustainability Action Plan for County Facilities & Operations to help reduce the overall carbon footprint of the developed areas within the Basin.
- Policy/Action 4. Transportation planning and road construction projects should occur with a focus on making streets, sidewalks, and other movement corridors easily accessible and useable by bikers, walkers, and transit users, making such uses viable and important alternative modes of transportation, without significantly sacrificing the ability of visitors to use cars.
- Policy/Action 5. Land in the Basin should be acquired and/or designated to accommodate the possible location of community solar gardens and/or other appropriate forms of renewable energy production.
- Policy/Action 6. Through adopting or implementing applicable programs, regulations or policies support the establishment of community food gardens and the ability to produce foods locally.

Forest Management

The severe regional drought that occurred in 2002 left the County’s monoculture lodgepole forests in a greatly compromised state, affecting its ability to ward off stand clearing infestations like the mountain pine beetle infestation, which has been experienced from about 2006 to the present (2011). The Basin’s forest lacks species and age diversity, has an overly dense growth pattern, and is nearing the end of its normal life expectancy. The presence of all these stress factors in the forest made it ripe for the effects of the mountain pine beetle to become greatly exacerbated. Forest health experts predict an eventual lodgepole mortality rate to be as high as 90-95% in the Basin and County.



*Forested areas in the Upper Blue Basin backcountry.*

Efforts to combat the unprecedented, rapid and widespread advance of the pine beetle have proven to be largely ineffective. Management agencies have refocused their efforts on the wildfire related public safety concerns and on restoring the forest to a more healthy condition in the aftermath of the infestation. The potential for large fires in the wildland urban interface (“WUI”), where many subdivisions are at risk, has attracted the most public resources to date.

Related to mitigating risks in identified WUI areas there are a number of other initiatives to protect valuable public infrastructure elements such as power lines, roads and watersheds that provide municipal drinking water supplies. All of these efforts to protect the public infrastructure are

coordinated by the Summit Wildfire Council and are consistent with their guiding policy document, the Summit County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), first adopted in 2006, (subsequently updated in 2010) by all the local governments and fire districts in the County, the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS), and the USDA Forest Service (U.S. Forest Service).

In the broad scheme, the strategy the agencies are implementing in accordance with the CWPP can be

thought of as being arranged in a layered fashion in scale, ranging from the broad landscape approach of the U.S. Forest Service fuels reduction projects to homeowner associations creating fuel breaks between their subdivisions and the forest beyond and down to individual property owners creating defensible space around their homes. This approach fills in gaps that address the wildfire threat and avoids the duplication of efforts. Moreover, the adoption of the CWPP qualifies programs for state and federal funding assistance.

Goal and Policies/Actions

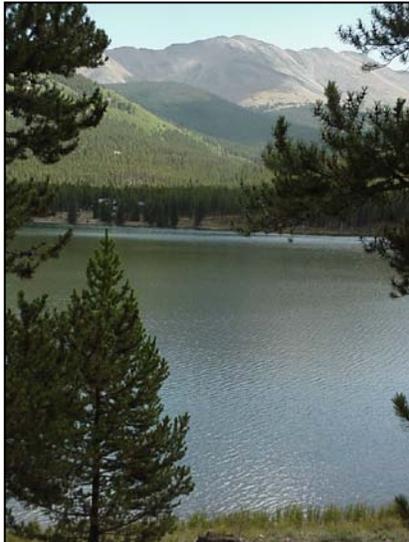
- Goal J. Continue to design, fund and implement projects in the Basin that will:**
- **Protect the public safety at the home owner level, the subdivision level and the community level.**
  - **Protect the public infrastructure.**
  - **Protect healthy forests.**
  - **Incentivize reforestation.**
  - **Restore forest health and maintain the health of the surrounding ecological structure.**
  - **Maintain the aesthetic qualities of the Basin wherever feasible by striking an appropriate balance between aesthetics and what is necessary to protect the public safety and infrastructure.**

- Policy/Action 1. Support the U.S. Forest Service in their efforts to implement their broad scale forest management and fuels reduction projects in the WUI. As part of this effort, encourage the preservation of recreation and intrinsic resources through commenting on and contributing to the design of U.S. Forest Service proposals.
- Policy/Action 2. Work with the Summit Wildfire Council, CSFS, Red White and Blue Fire Protection District and homeowner associations in creating fire breaks and reducing fuel loads in subdivisions and on non-federal public properties in accordance with the CWFP.
- Policy/Action 3. Support individual property owners in: creating defensible space; reducing fuels on their properties; using firewise plant materials; and using fire resistant exterior building materials and construction methods. At the same time, work with home owners to retain and replant visual buffers wherever feasible.
- Policy/Action 4. Use integrated pest management measures to address and prevent pine beetle attacks in established formal landscape areas around homes, public buildings and recreation facilities, etc. Integrated pest management includes a combination of tree cutting, selective preventative treatment outside of wetlands or riparian areas, and the creation of species diverse firewise landscapes.
- Policy/Action 5. Implement public education strategies about what homeowners can do to protect themselves and their property from the effects of a wildfire.
- Policy/Action 6. Continue to work with local police, sheriff, and fire districts to ensure that adequate wildfire emergency evacuation planning is in place.
- Policy/Action 7. Incentivize and increase reforestation efforts including reseeding, weed control, and replanting of trees and shrubs to promote forest and habitat regeneration, watershed protection and species and age diversification.
- Policy/Action 8. Explore and pursue diverse funding sources to secure the resources needed to implement recommended forest health projects.
- Policy/Action 9. Plan for the financial implications of fighting a major wildfire in the Basin.

Policy/Action 10. In light of deforestation, deteriorating forest health and loss of critical habitat caused by the pine beetle epidemic, make efforts to protect existing healthy forests in the Basin.

### Water Resources/Watershed Protection

Water quantity pertains to water as it is owned, operated, stored, moved and runs in streams and rivers. Water is a scarce resource and there are a host of considerations that make water quantity and supply in the County an ominous issue. The entire State of Colorado and Rocky Mountain region is finding its water supply stretched and over allocated, with potential significant shortfalls in the future. In addition, Front Range residents and industry are expected to need more water annually, a significant portion of which comes from a network of dams, diversions, pumps and pipelines in Summit County. Moreover, water quantity shortfalls will likely be exacerbated by anticipated climate change, declining snowpack or earlier spring runoff. These changes to the water cycle will likely have negative implications for reservoir storage, aquatic habitat, tourism, ski seasons, rafting seasons and water quality. In this context, protecting rivers and streams, and finding creative ways to better manage and conserve much-needed water in the County will be imperative to the health of the Basin in the future.



*Goose Pasture Tarn and Red Mountain.*

In response to the aging and “at risk” health of the Basin’s forest, planning to maintain its water resources, water quality and protect sensitive habitats is a reoccurring and important topic. Drinking water for the Town of Breckenridge residents and visitors is provided solely by the Blue River, which is stored in the Goose Pasture Tarn reservoir, located within the Town of Blue River. The water serving unincorporated portions of the County and the Town of Blue River is primarily derived from groundwater/wells. The Blue River, which runs through the Basin and feeds into Lake Dillon, provides access to rich recreational opportunities and serves as a significant water resource for the City of Denver.

A wildfire in the Basin could significantly impact water quality in the Basin (e.g., resulting in loss of vegetation that anchors soil and minimizes erosion). It is anticipated that melting snow and rain in the aftermath of a wildfire, accompanied by loss of vegetation, could result in erosion and increased sedimentation in locations such as the Good Pasture Tarn. To prevent degradation of water quality and increased soil erosion, watershed management is important. Protecting the Basin’s watershed is critical for restoring soil conditions and vegetation, protecting important ecosystems such as wetlands, preserving other natural resources and ultimately protecting human health.

#### **Goal K. Protect and preserve water resources in the Upper Blue Basin watershed.**

Policy/Action 1. Monitor water development activities and legislative initiatives that affect water quality or quantity in the Basin.

Policy/Action 2. Provide opportunities to enable the County and towns to protect and enhance the quality of the Basin’s waters, while facilitating the responsible use of those resources.

Policy/Action 3. Explore techniques and creative methods to better manage and conserve water to meet future water needs.

Policy/Action 4. Watershed Protection:

- Pursue cooperative efforts among the County, towns, and U.S. Forest Service for specific watershed protection strategies designed to prevent post wildfire sedimentation from impacting the Goose Pasture Tarn water treatment plant and reservoir and other water bodies throughout the Basin.
- Continue to purchase properties that contain high quality wetlands or wetlands of concern through the County's and Town's open space acquisition programs and manage these properties to protect or improve their wetland functionality.
- Explore the feasibility of establishing a wetland mitigation bank within the Upper Blue River Basin in order to implement the recommendations found in the "Conceptual Strategy for the Enhanced Management of Wetlands within Summit County".
- Pursue a "pump back" solution for increased water system capacity and storage for the benefit of the residents and visitors of the County and towns in the Basin.

Open Space and Trails

Since adoption of the 1997 edition of the Plan, the County and Town of Breckenridge have forged a very impressive partnership aimed at protecting important open space and backcountry lands in the Basin. Over 3,800 acres have been acquired by the two entities (of which most has been jointly acquired). The Town has recognized the value of protecting lands that, although they may be five or more miles from Town limits, are still used and appreciated by the Town's residents for various recreational pursuits. One acquisition, the old B&B Mines land acquisition, amassed close to 2,000 acres of backcountry land in close proximity to the Town of Breckenridge.

The Basin has a rich and varied trail network consisting of old ditches, burro trails, historic mining roads, jeep trails, single track, bike paths, and newer recreation trails. In addition to the Basin's internal trail network, there are many important trails or routes that connect to areas outside of the Basin. Georgia Pass and Boreas Pass were some of the first routes into the Breckenridge area.



*Hiking on a backcountry trail.*



*Cross country skiing in the Upper Blue Basin.*

There are many important trails or routes that connect to areas outside of the Basin. Georgia Pass and Boreas Pass were some of the first routes into the Breckenridge area. The Colorado Trail and Wheeler Pack Trail are two significant backcountry hiking trails that have statewide and regional importance. In recent years, the County and Town of Breckenridge have constructed many miles of new trails that have added to the Basin's system and increased connectivity for users. The Basin's trail system is a profound community asset. The ability to enjoy a quiet walk in the woods, access to a favorite fishing spot, motorized vehicular trail, or mountain bike trail is critical to overall quality of life and ability to hike, ski or ride in the Basin's backcountry and alpine areas.

Many trails in the Basin, particularly those located east of Highway 9, cross through a patchwork of private and public lands created by mining claims which were patented during the Basin's mining era. In many cases, public access across private lands has not been restricted,

due in large part to the undeveloped status of most of these areas. However, as development expands outward into more remote areas and fills valley bottoms, public access could be endangered. Ensuring continued public access to this valuable trail network and the public lands and waters of the Basin is a high priority of this Plan.

One of these large recreational areas east of Highway 9 includes the Golden Horseshoe area. This area, some 8,900 acres in size, is a mix of predominantly public lands (national forest system lands along with jointly held County/Town land) and some smaller private lands. Due to its close proximity to the Town of Breckenridge and the relatively heavy levels of recreational use it receives from a diverse group of recreationists, in 2006 an extensive public planning process was undertaken. In late 2007, the County and Town agreed to a draft management plan for the Golden Horseshoe, pending final approval on national forest system lands by the U.S. Forest Service. The Golden Horseshoe plan primarily focuses on the Golden Horseshoe's trail network and identification of open routes and the appropriate types of users allowed on each route, with protection of natural and historic resources being a focus. The recommendations of this management plan represent the outcome of months of extensive discussions among different user groups and carefully considered agreements. The County, Town, and U.S. Forest Service have committed to continue to work together to manage uses and activities in the area in a sustainable manner, based on the recommendations of the management plan.

#### Goals and Policies/Actions

**Goal L. The County and Town of Breckenridge should continue to work cooperatively to jointly acquire and protect open space and improve the trail network in the Basin.**

- Policy/Action 1. A rich and varied trail network that provides a variety of recreational opportunities should be preserved and enhanced. This network shall also provide for easy accessibility from residential neighborhoods and the core area of Breckenridge to public lands, trails, water and other recreation areas.
- Policy/Action 2. Public access to public lands and water should be retained wherever it exists and should be obtained wherever feasible where it does not currently exist.
- Policy/Action 3. Commuter use of bicycle and pedestrian trails should be accommodated and encouraged wherever possible. Extension of the Rec Path along Highway 9 south of Breckenridge to Hoosier Pass should be pursued.
- Policy/Action 4. Management of trail systems and trail head access should promote shared use among various user groups, minimize environmental impacts and provide for a high quality recreational experience.
- Policy/Action 5. Improve and develop trail heads in order to facilitate easy public access to trails and minimize potential user conflicts.
- Policy/Action 6. A uniform requirement for improvement of shoulders to occur concurrent with improvement to state highways and other roads that are primary bicycle routes should be pursued.
- Policy/Action 7. The County, Town of Breckenridge, and the U.S. Forest Service should work cooperatively to implement the goals and actions of the Golden Horseshoe Management Plan.
- Policy/Action 8. Local governments should take an active role in facilitating the expansion of noncommercial recreational activities. Examples could include: fishing access, active play/park areas in neighborhoods, nordic/backcountry skiing, recreational trails,

wildlife viewing, sightseeing, etc.

- Policy/Action 9. Maintain, establish or re-establish access to the backcountry.
- Policy/Action 10. Trail design and construction standards, which result in trails which follow natural terrain with minimal environmental impact and provide buffers between trails and developed areas, should be adopted.
- Policy/Action 11. Traffic impacts and parking needs should be considered before establishing new trail heads or trail access points within neighborhoods.

### Recreation

In addition to the bountiful open space and trails system found in the Basin, there are also numerous other developed recreational facilities (e.g., ballfields, formal parks, etc.). It is the goal of this Plan to see new developed recreational facilities constructed or expanded to meet the needs of current and future residents and visitors in the Basin.

Neighborhood recreation facilities include small park areas, open spaces and local pathways. In many of the Basin's neighborhoods, undeveloped private properties have often functioned as open space. These undeveloped areas often have pathways where residents can walk and also can provide safe places for children to play. These lots are slowly being developed as neighborhoods continue to grow and develop. In many cases, there are no nearby parks or playground areas.

#### Goal and Policy/Action

**Goal M. Develop active recreational spaces and public parks within the urban areas of the Basin to continue to meet the needs of the Basin's current and future population.**

- Policy/Action 1. Opportunities to acquire and develop small neighborhood parks should be identified. Both developed pocket parks and natural areas should be provided.
- Policy/Action 2. Prior to the development of any neighborhood park within the unincorporated areas of the County, provisions shall be made to ensure the ongoing maintenance of the developed park space by a neighborhood association or other appropriate entity.

### Infrastructure & Community Services

The adequacy of infrastructure (i.e., water and sanitation services, utilities and community facilities) is key to a well functioning community. Service levels must be sufficient to serve existing users as well as anticipated future development. Central water and sewer services are currently provided within the Town of Breckenridge and most of the larger residential subdivisions adjoining the town (e.g., Woodmoor, Tyrollean Terrace, Silver Shekel, Peak 7). Service providers include the Town of Breckenridge, Upper Blue Sanitation District and Swan's Nest Metropolitan District.



*Skier parking at the Peak 8 base area.*

The Town of Blue River's water is provided entirely by individual wells with sewer service provided by on site septic in most portions of the town. However, most of the Town has been annexed into the Upper Blue Sanitation District. The Upper Blue Sanitation district operates the South Blue River Waste Water Treatment Plant, which serves a vast majority of the Town via lift stations. Utilization of the treatment plant and lift stations addresses ground water recharge and channel bypass issues. These lift stations will need to be monitored and maintained and it is the goal of the Sanitation District to provide sanitary sewer service to the entire Town of Blue River by 2021. The remaining lower density and remote areas in the Basin are served by on site wells and septic systems. Other utilities (electricity, cable

and phone) are generally available within all developed portions of the Basin.

The potential public benefits of sewer extensions into developed areas that are currently served by individual sewage disposal systems (i.e., septic systems) include improved public health and water quality through removal of older septic systems that may have been poorly designed, located in areas of marginal soil suitability or are not performing properly. Additionally, converting septic systems to central sewer could decrease septic effluent impacts on local ground and surface water and will reduce the amount of phosphorus loading in Dillon Reservoir. With that said, conversion of septic systems to central sewer could have impacts to ground water recharge, which should be considered and monitored. In cases where a home is served by an individual on-site well and septic system, the ground water extracted through the well is ultimately returned through the on-site septic system to recharge the ground water on the site. If the home were to be connected to a central sewer system, this ground water recharge would no longer occur and could present problems, which should be taken into consideration prior to approving a central sewer connection.

The County and Town of Breckenridge provide a variety of community services and facilities (recreation center, library and social services). The Summit School District RE-1 provides K-12 education. Colorado Mountain College provides both community and college level education programs. Fire and emergency response protection in the Basin is provided by the Red, White and Blue Fire Protection District and Summit County Ambulance. An emergency medical clinic is located in Breckenridge.

#### Goal and Policies/Actions

**Goal N. Develop adequate levels of infrastructure to support the potential realistic build-out identified in this Plan while respecting compatibility with the Basin's high alpine environment and community character.**

Policy/Action 1. Development should be located adjacent to existing communities, when consistent with desired land use patterns, and designed so as to minimize the need for expansion of services.

Policy/Action 2. New growth should be responsible for funding the capital improvements which it requires. The developers of new residential or commercial density should be responsible for all necessary capital improvements.

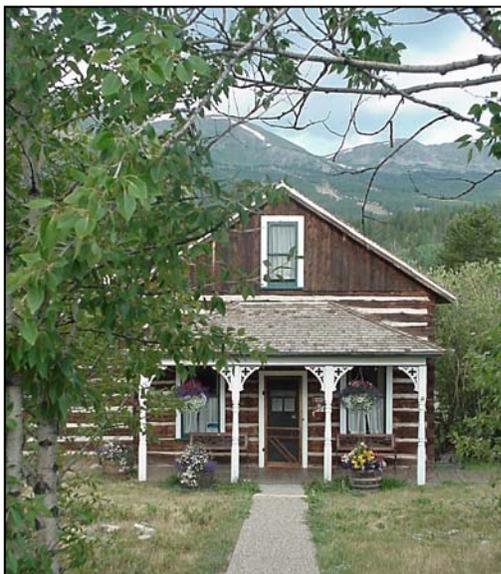
Policy/Action 3. The County and towns should cooperate in coordinated planning for schools, parks

and other related facilities with the Summit School District.

- Policy/Action 4. The Town of Breckenridge and County should investigate opportunities to partner on new water or service opportunities and infrastructure, such as the Pumpback project from Dillon Reservoir to Breckenridge, and provision of services for affordable workforce housing developments.
- Policy/Action 5. The Upper Blue Sanitation District should continue to work with appropriate jurisdictions and property owners to meet its ten-year goal to extend central sewer systems into the Town of Blue River and other areas identified as having poor suitability for septic systems, substandard or failing systems. Areas with potential public health and water quality concerns should have priority for extension of central sewer service. (However, conversion of septic systems to central sewer could have impacts to ground water recharge which should be considered and monitored.)
- The Upper Blue Sanitation District should continue to offer incentives and financing provisions to connect septic systems to central sewer.
- Policy/Action 6. Careful consideration should be given to the growth impacts and potential change in character that may result as central sewer becomes widely available within the Basin. Many lots which are currently "unbuildable" may be developed if central sewer is available.
- Policy/Action 7. The impact of new development on water tables that serve existing homes on individual wells should be evaluated on a project by project or specific area basis.
- Policy/Action 8. Explore the feasibility of implementing storm water management regulations which address groundwater recharge issues in the Basin for public and private development. For example, where possible, increased runoff should be mitigated by infiltration management strategies.

### Cooperative Planning & Design Standards

The design and appearance of development can greatly impact the overall sense and feel of the community. The welfare of the Basin is based to a great extent on the natural beauty of the valley, scenic backdrops, and other natural features. Because of the importance of visual aesthetics to the community, views are crucial and must be preserved. Protecting the scenic backdrop of the valley helps to protect



*Historic Carter Museum.*

property values, enhances the visitor and resident experience, improves recreation experiences, expands the economic viability of the local economy, increases the desirability of the town and county as a destination resort, and adds to the overall health of the community. From an overall community character perspective, preservation of important view corridors, ridgelines and prominent hillsides from major roadways and public areas is imperative. Poor location and design of development in these areas can significantly detract from overall community appearance and sense of place.

Design issues range from view corridors and ridgeline development to more neighborhood and site specific concerns with basic site layout, massing of structures and identification of appropriate building design and materials.

Landscape scale issues are usually addressed as part of the land use approval process (i.e., zoning and subdivision). Site plan review addresses site layout, building mass, building design, materials and colors on individual lots.

The Towns of Breckenridge and Blue River have detailed architectural review processes which occur in conjunction with site plan development. The Town of Breckenridge's development regulations are particularly rigorous within the historic district. Currently, there are some basic architectural design standards included in the County's Development Code (e.g., design standards addressing exterior building materials, colors, and lighting), and there are also heightened or more specific design guidelines outlined for certain subdivisions or properties, as specified in respective planned unit developments (PUDs).

In response to the recommendations of the 1997 Plan, the Town of Breckenridge has adopted design regulations restricting development on hillsides and ridgelines, residential home size, landscaping and firewise planting material, solar devices, exterior lighting, and appropriate subdivision updates. During the 2011 Plan update, it was suggested by the Town of Breckenridge that the County adopt an Overlay District, which would apply design standards similar to those of the Town of Breckenridge within certain areas surrounding the Town, which are visible from major roadways or public spaces.

#### Goal and Policies/Actions

**Goal O. The visual appearance of the Upper Blue Basin should be one where spectacular mountain vistas and unique environments are retained, and development blends with the natural landscape to the fullest extent possible.**

Policy/Action 1. Significant view corridors and other highly visible properties adjacent to the Town of Breckenridge should be identified, and special design criteria should be established for future development within these areas. This effort should focus on identifying: properties which are visible from major transportation routes within the Basin; properties that serve as a gateway into the Town; and properties that are visible from other important public spaces within and adjacent to the Town.

Policy/Action 2. The County should explore adopting an Overlay District encompassing the identified boundary of the highly visible properties described above, which includes heightened design standards more compatible with the Town's within the Overlay District. These standards could address issues associated with:

- a. Setbacks
- b. Street standards and sidewalks
- c. Landscaping
- d. Building design, height, materials and colors
- e. Building massing
- f. Ridgeline and hillside development
- g. Utilities
- h. Solar devices
- i. Exterior lighting
- j. Disturbance envelopes

Policy/Action 3. The Towns and County should explore and develop an enhanced collaborative referral process for properties within the County's Overlay District as well as incorporated parcels in close proximity to the unincorporated boundaries or unincorporated area annexation proposals.

#### Transferable Development Rights (TDRs)

As a means to help achieve important goals of the Plan and protect the rural/backcountry areas in the Basin, one of the high priority implementation strategies included in the 1997 edition of the Plan was to establish a transfer of development rights mechanism that allows for development rights to be moved from “sending areas” to “receiving areas”. Moreover, the Plan recommended that each jurisdiction adopt an ordinance with consistent goals and an Intergovernmental Agreement allowing the transfer of development rights across jurisdictional boundaries. As indicated in the Overview and Background section, this strategy was successfully implemented through the establishment of an operational and permanent TDR program for the Basin.

In July 2000 the County and Town of Breckenridge adopted the “Intergovernmental Agreement Between Summit County and the Town of Breckenridge Concerning Transferred Development Rights”. The IGA accomplished two primary purposes: 1) allowed density to be transferred from TDR Sending Areas in the County to TDR Receiving Areas mainly in the Town of Breckenridge; and 2) established the Joint Upper Blue TDR Bank—an administrative program run by the County which both purchases and sells development rights. Per Section 6.8 of the IGA, the County and Town of Breckenridge are required to set a sales price for TDRs to be sold from the Joint Upper Blue TDR Bank on an annual basis. As a result, the price of a TDR sold from the TDR Bank has ranged from \$30,000 in 2000 to \$45,870 in 2011. The methodology used to establish the sales price of a TDR has changed somewhat over the years but has been based on either sales prices of parcels in the backcountry or the change in assessed value of backcountry zoned properties.



*Mt. Helen and Quandary Peak.*

The County and towns have had the opportunity to observe how the different sales prices of TDRs have worked. There are a number of reasons that could possibly warrant revisiting the methodology to determine a new sales pricing of a TDR. These reasons range from the perceived value of a development right when it lands in a TDR Receiving Area to the differences in value of vacant backcountry zoned properties. As such, this Plan recognizes the need for the County and towns to jointly re-evaluate the current methodology used to determine the price of a TDR sold by the Joint Upper Blue TDR Bank and amend Section 6.8 of the IGA accordingly.



*Historic cabin in the Upper Blue Basin backcountry.*

Another component of the IGA is the “Official Upper Blue Basin Transferable Development Rights Sending and Receiving Areas Map” (the Map was last amended in April 2007). The IGA governs respective TDR programs and transactions, and the accompanying TDR Map identifies TDR Sending and Receiving areas. The significance of the Official TDR Map is that County and town development and rezoning applications need to be consistent with the TDR Map designations.

In 2010 the Upper Blue Master Plan TDR Map was significantly amended to address changing conditions, growth and development patterns, land use approvals, availability of infrastructure and community sentiments (the Upper Blue Master Plan provides

policy guidance and recommendations for the unincorporated portions of the Basin). The amended TDR Map focused on refining and identifying appropriate TDR Receiving and Neutral areas on unincorporated properties. Neutral Areas delineate those parcels that have been determined not to be suitable for transferring development rights from or to, and therefore are not eligible to send or receive density. To complement the County’s new Upper Blue Master Plan TDR Map, Upper Blue TDR program regulations and spirit and intent of the IGA, it is recommended that the parties amend the IGA to incorporate a new Official TDR Map for the entire Basin.

In 2005 the Town of Blue River approved a subdivision proposal that required the applicant to purchase TDRs. This demonstrated the Town’s commitment to uphold the intent of the Plan and not create new density unless it is transferred in. However, as part of this master plan update process, it was recognized that the IGA should be amended to more clearly make the Town of Blue River a party to its provisions. More formally including the Town of Blue River as part of the IGA would create more consistency and clarity in allowing density transfers across jurisdictional boundaries.

Goal and Policies/Actions

**Goal P. Amend the “Intergovernmental Agreement Between Summit County and the Town of Breckenridge Concerning Transferable Development Rights” to address changing conditions.**

- Policy/Action 1. The County and towns should re-evaluate the current methodology used to annually determine the price of a Transferable Development Right sold by the Joint Upper Blue TDR Bank, and amend the IGA accordingly.
  - A new methodology or TDR pricing should, to the extent practicable, strike a balance between encouraging protection of the backcountry, utilization of the TDR program and adequate valuation.
  
- Policy/Action 2. Amend the IGA to reflect consistency with the Upper Blue Master Plan TDR Map (particularly identified Receiving and Neutral areas on unincorporated properties), where mutually agreed upon by all parties to the IGA.
  
- Policy/Action 3. Amend the IGA to include the Town of Blue River as a party to its provisions and regulations.

Service Commercial/Light Industrial Uses



Service commercial/light industrial uses include uses such as auto repair, landscaping/nurseries, mini-storage and contractor yards. These uses serve vital needs of the community. In the Basin, service commercial uses are located primarily in three outlying locations - along Airport Road, and areas of County Road

450 and Farmers Korner. These areas are largely built-out and there is a limited opportunity for new development, although there are some redevelopment opportunities. As land values increase there is a concern that alternative, more lucrative land uses (e.g., offices, retail) may eventually replace the few remaining parcels available for service commercial/light industrial space. As a result, service commercial/light industrial uses may eventually be displaced, potentially to locations outside of the Basin. This Plan recognizes the need to maintain these types of important uses in the Basin to meet the needs of the Upper Blue community.

Goals and Policies/Actions

**Goal Q. Properties currently zoned and designated for service commercial/light industrial land uses should be retained for such uses to the maximum extent possible.**

Policy/Action 1. The County and Town of Breckenridge should discourage the conversion of service commercial/light industrial land uses to other uses, unless determined to be appropriate in light of other equally important master plan goals and policies that would be achieved.

Policy/Action 2. The County and Town of Breckenridge should look for opportunities to designate additional land areas to accommodate service commercial/light industrial uses, provided they are sited in a compatible manner in appropriate locations.

Redevelopment



*Corner of Main St. & Lincoln Ave. Before & After Redevelopment*

*Farmers Korner Area*

As the Basin continues to approach realistic build-out and vacant land becomes more scarce, development activity will inevitably shift away from “green field” or vacant land development toward infill, redevelopment and adaptive reuse of existing developed properties.

This projected shift toward infill and redevelopment has the potential to significantly reshape the physical development of the Basin over the next 10 – 20 years. Redevelopment provides opportunities for the public and private sectors to act collaboratively to renew and revitalize important components of the community. Key benefits of redevelopment include spurring economic development, utilizing land more efficiently, and improving the aesthetic appeal and overall quality of life within important community spaces. Recognizing the potential benefits that redevelopment could bring to the Basin, during the 2011 Plan update process, the community emphasized that there is an opportunity to begin proactively planning for such redevelopment activities.

Redevelopment planning should include an analysis of potentially viable redevelopment opportunities within the Basin, and development of appropriate strategies, parameters and criteria for encouraging and facilitating redevelopment within these areas. Potentially appropriate areas in the Basin to encourage and facilitate redevelopment activities include underutilized and/or deteriorating properties in urban areas and gateway locations along major transportation corridors (e.g., Farmers Korner area, and properties at the north end of the Town of Breckenridge near the Highway 9 / CR 450 intersection).

Goal and Policies/Actions

**Goal R. Plan for infill and redevelopment of properties within the urban areas of the Basin, to guide such development activities in a manner that is consistent with the vision of this Plan and desired community character.**

Policy / Action 1. Conduct a thorough analysis of properties within the Basin to identify potentially appropriate and viable redevelopment opportunities. The analysis should focus on identifying underutilized and/or deteriorating properties within the urban areas of the Basin and within gateway locations along major transportation corridors while preserving important view corridors.

Policy / Action 2. Develop a plan to guide redevelopment activities within the areas identified as viable redevelopment locations. The plan should:

- Outline appropriate strategies to encourage, facilitate and provide incentives for recommended redevelopment activities within these identified areas.
- Establish specific parameters and criteria to guide redevelopment of appropriate properties (e.g., provisions for density and the use of TDRs in receiving and potentially even neutral areas).

Policy / Action 3. Explore and evaluate mechanisms and opportunities to implement identified redevelopment strategies in appropriate locations within the Basin.

## XI. Implementation Strategies

The following represent the major recommendations and key strategies that should be prioritized and pursued to implement the action steps identified by goals and policies/actions contained in the preceding sections of the Plan.

<b>Prioritized Joint Upper Blue Master Plan Implementation Strategies</b>			
<b>Goal, Policy/Action</b>	<b>Project Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Recommended Timeframe to Initiate Project</b>
<b>Land Use</b>			
C.1	The County and Town of Breckenridge shall encourage and facilitate the reduction of density and development potential in the Basin through implementation of the strategies identified and summarized in Table 8 of this Plan.	High	Ongoing
C.2	Work with the County Assessor’s office to create incentives or other voluntary mechanisms to encourage single family lots to be combined. Incentives from local government could be provided for properties ineligible for Federal tax deductions. For example, savings in property tax payments that may be realized when single family zoned lots are combined.	Medium	2-4 years
<b>Backcountry Protection</b>			
E.5	Encourage land exchanges which increase the amount of public land in rural/backcountry areas as suggested in the Land Ownership Adjustment Analysis for the Dillon Ranger District. Identify and map national forest system lands properties that should not be transferred to private ownership, and move expeditiously to preserve them as publicly held whether through acquisition or some other method.	Medium	Ongoing
<b>Affordable Workforce Housing</b>			

**Prioritized Joint Upper Blue Master Plan Implementation Strategies**

Goal, Policy/Action	Project Description	Priority	Recommended Timeframe to Initiate Project
F.2	<p>The County and Town of Breckenridge should continue to work together to provide affordable workforce housing on the Valleybrook and Claimjumper sites, and to pursue other housing projects within and adjacent to the Town as jointly determined to be appropriate. Cooperative efforts to provide affordable workforce housing within the Basin should focus on the following prioritized locations, which have been identified as appropriate areas to accommodate affordable workforce housing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Block 11, Airport Subdivision on Airport Rd.</li> <li>- County-owned property on CR 450 adjacent to Kennington Townhomes (currently utilized for a recycling drop-off center and other County uses).</li> <li>- Stan Miller Property along Highway 9.</li> <li>- City Market redevelopment on Park Avenue.</li> <li>- Alpensee Condos/Farmer’s Grove area in Farmer’s Korner.</li> </ul>	High	Ongoing
F.5	<p>Work to preserve existing market-rate units that are now occupied by local residents or employees for continued occupancy as affordable workforce housing into the future through buy-down initiatives (i.e. acquisition and resale / rental or buying the right to impose deed restrictions) or other appropriate strategies.</p>	High	Ongoing
F.7	<p>The County, Town of Breckenridge and Summit Combined Housing Authority should work to regularly analyze the Basin’s affordable workforce housing needs by conducting periodic housing needs assessments.</p>	High	Ongoing
<b>Transportation &amp; Transit</b>			
H.1	<p>Enhance and improve transit service throughout the Basin based on existing development patterns to better serve visitors, commuters and employees. Specifically, expand and improve public transportation services along the entire Highway 9 corridor, including the area south of the Town of Breckenridge to the Town of Blue River and south towards Hoosier Pass.</p>	High	Ongoing
H.2	<p>Work to facilitate a shift of the transportation modal split from auto to transit through investments in new commuter parking lots and other transit-oriented improvements (e.g., transit stops and stations).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explore and, where appropriate, construct commuter parking lots on the north and south ends of the Basin (e.g., Tiger Road area, Town of Blue River Town Hall, Tordal Estates and Blue River Condos) to increase commuter and day skier use of the Summit Stage and mitigate impacts to parking in Breckenridge.</li> </ul>	High	Ongoing
H.3	<p>Pursue improvements to increase the capacity and efficiency of the Basin’s transportation system, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Extend the Riverwalk south under Park Avenue and north from Ski Hill Road to French Street.</li> <li>- Widen Highway 9 from Tiger Road to Agape/Farmer’s Korner.</li> <li>- Improve Highway 9 from Frisco to Farmer’s Korner.</li> <li>- Construct roundabouts at Park Avenue and Four O’Clock Road, and at Park Avenue and French Street.</li> </ul>	High	Ongoing
H.5	<p>Increase opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle modes of travel, and enhance their related facilities, including commuter routes and connections and construction of “complete streets” when roadway</p>	High	Ongoing

**Prioritized Joint Upper Blue Master Plan Implementation Strategies**

Goal, Policy/Action	Project Description	Priority	Recommended Timeframe to Initiate Project
	<p>improvements are undertaken. “Complete streets” are designed to accommodate all modes of travel within the roadway (e.g., pedestrians, bicyclists, automobiles, transit riders).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Extension of the County Rec Path along Highway 9 south of Breckenridge to Hoosier Pass should be pursued.</li> </ul>		

**Community Sustainability**

I.4	<p>Transportation planning and road construction projects should occur with a focus on making streets, sidewalks, and other movement corridors easily accessible and useable by bikers, walkers, and transit users, making such uses viable and important alternative modes of transportation, without significantly sacrificing the ability of visitors to use cars.</p>	High	Ongoing
I.5	<p>Land in the Basin should be acquired and/or designated to accommodate the possible location of community solar gardens and/or other appropriate forms of renewable energy production.</p>	High	1-2 years

**Cooperative Planning / Design Standards**

O.1	<p>Significant view corridors and other highly visible properties adjacent to the Town of Breckenridge should be identified, and special design criteria should be established for future development within these areas. This effort should focus on identifying: properties which are visible from major transportation routes within the Basin; properties that serve as a gateway into the Town; and properties that are visible from other important public spaces within and adjacent to the Town.</p>	Medium	2 – 4 years
O.2	<p>The County should explore adopting an Overlay District encompassing the identified boundary of the highly visible properties described above, which includes heightened design standards more compatible with the Town’s within the Overlay District. These standards could address issues associated with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setbacks</li> <li>• Street standards and sidewalks</li> <li>• Landscaping</li> <li>• Building design, height, materials and colors</li> <li>• Building massing</li> <li>• Ridgeline and hillside development</li> <li>• Utilities</li> <li>• Solar devices</li> <li>• Exterior lighting</li> <li>• Disturbance envelopes</li> </ul>	Medium	2 – 4 years
O.3	<p>The Towns and County should explore and develop an enhanced collaborative referral process for properties within the County’s Overlay District as well as incorporated parcels in close proximity to the unincorporated boundaries or unincorporated area annexation proposals.</p>	Medium	2 – 4 years

**Transferable Development Rights (TDRs)**

P.1	<p>The County and towns should re-evaluate the current methodology used to annually determine the price of a Transferable Development Right sold by the Joint Upper Blue TDR Bank, and amend the IGA accordingly.</p>	High	1 year
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<b>Prioritized Joint Upper Blue Master Plan Implementation Strategies</b>			
<b>Goal, Policy/Action</b>	<b>Project Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Recommended Timeframe to Initiate Project</b>
P.2	Amend the TDR IGA to reflect consistency with the Upper Blue Master Plan TDR Map (particularly identified Receiving and Neutral areas on unincorporated properties), where mutually agreed upon by all parties to the IGA.	High	1 year
P.3	Amend the IGA to include the Town of Blue River as a party to its provisions and regulations.	High	1 year
<b>Redevelopment</b>			
R.1	Conduct a thorough analysis of properties within the Basin to identify potentially appropriate and viable redevelopment opportunities. The analysis should focus on identifying underutilized and/or deteriorating properties within the urban areas of the Basin and within gateway locations along major transportation corridors while preserving important view corridors.	Medium	2 – 4 years
R.2	Develop a plan to guide redevelopment activities within the areas identified as viable redevelopment locations, which outlines appropriate strategies to encourage, facilitate and provide incentives for recommended redevelopment activities within these areas.	Medium	2 – 4 years