

Growth Alternatives

INTENT/INTRODUCTION

The evaluation of alternative Growth Management scenarios provides a conceptual framework for visualizing the future use of land and resources. Strategies for planning become apparent in terms of possible development patterns, corresponding land consumption requirements, anticipation of the services and facilities needed to accommodate development, identification of other social, environmental, economic, political, and governmental impacts.

This section of the Plan, Growth Alternatives, will be divided into four subsections: First, the intent is explained; second, a brief description of each Growth Management Alternative is presented; third, in a table format, an evaluation of each alternative's implications and impacts are identified; and fourth, a selection of the alternative best suited for the management of growth and development for Teller County and its Communities is proposed and justified.

The evaluation of a number of alternatives, instead of a single course of action, should result in a more accurate and effective choice concerning the best growth management strategy for the County and its Communities. Each alternative has associated with it identifiable costs, benefits, advantages, and disadvantages.

Three possible general Growth Management alternatives can be reviewed by Teller County, and its Communities, in regard to future development, they are:

- 1.) Unlimited Growth
- 2.) No Growth
- 3.) Directed Growth.

Thus, a comparison provides an opportunity to discover what particular advantages one strategy may have over another.

A primary focus of this evaluation and comparison is an examination of the interrelationship of residential, commercial, industrial, recreational,

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agricultural, and mineral extraction land uses.

The alternatives should also be examined to determine how effectively each could achieve the County's and Communities' goals, and the purposes and objectives of this plan.

A majority of the evaluations are, by their very nature and the level of research, subjective and intuitive, such as, the value of aesthetics or view, and the "quality of life".

To effectively evaluate these growth management alternatives one basic assumption must be made and understood: The population of Teller County and its Communities will increase. This increase will vary from area to area and from year to year, but it will increase.

Thus, the assumption can reliably be made that Teller County's population is projected to be 21,758 in the year 2,000, an increase of 7,305 persons or 270% percent from the last official census in 1980. Growth and development will occur. This assumption is applied

to each Growth Management Alternative.

CONTROLLING SPRAWL BY REDIRECTING GROWTH WOULD BENEFIT CENTRAL CITY DWELLERS THROUGH REHABILITATION AND REVITALIZATION OF THE CENTRAL CITY, WOULD BE ENVIRONMENTALLY BENEFICIAL BY PRESERVING AGRICULTURAL LAND AND OPEN SPACE, WOULD AID IN REDUCING ENERGY CONSUMPTION AND WOULD, BY LIMITING THE AREA OVER WHICH SERVICES MUST BE EXTENDED, REDUCE THE COST OF SERVICES TO SUBURBANITES AND AID IN THE FISCAL SOLVENCY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS. BECAUSE SO MANY VARIOUS INTEREST GROUPS CAN BE BENEFITED BY EFFECTIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT, IT SHOULD NOW BE POSSIBLE TO FORM COALITIONS TO COMBAT THIS HYDRA-HEADED PROBLEM.

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Saving the Land

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DESCRIPTION OF GROWTH MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES

There are three possible basic Growth Management alternatives that can be reviewed by Teller County, and its Communities, in regard to its future development, they are:

- 1.) Unlimited Growth
- 2.) No Growth
- 3.) Directed Growth.

This subsection of the Plan will explain the important elements, significance, and characteristics of each alternative.

Table V 1, Growth Alternatives Table, examines the area of impact of each alternative and its significance.

The selection of a specific County wide growth alternative policy will not preempt a specific planning activity in the separate planning regions i.e. Woodland Park, Divide, Cripple Creek, Florissant, Victor, or the Four Mile Area.

Unlimited Growth

The unlimited growth alternative represents a model of growth and development management that would offer no restraints upon land use. It provides for the greatest exercise of personal individual property rights and calls for the complete removal of all local governmental regulations regarding the use of land. It allows the individual landowner to determine the use and disposition of his property.

It provides for the least compact arrangement of developed land use and would allow development to spread over a wide area of the County (sprawl).

The developer would have a land development market unaffected by local government regulation; this may present both positive and negative consequences. The amount of time and funds saved by not following required review processes may be a benefit and the housing market could offer a wider selection of homes. The cost of homes may decrease due to

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local government not requiring paved streets, drainage improvements, erosion control measures, geological and technological studies, park dedications, and other public improvements. However, in the future state and federal mandates may require corrective action at the taxpayer's expense. The cost of some types of land owner's insurance may be increased and/or become unavailable (flood, fire, other disasters).

Under an unlimited growth situation, land speculation and its profits would increase, but the consequences would be an artificially inflated market.

This alternative could radically alter the character of the County. The potential would exist for intense, widely disbursed development throughout the entire area; the County could become satiated with rural subdivisions, each at different levels of occupation, and all demanding services and facilities. The unlimited growth alternative is also the least protective of personal community property rights, not only allowing extensive sprawl, but possibly establishment of incompatible land uses

and thus, an increase in complaints and nuisances. Extensive "strip" and "spot" development, would occur.

Without review and approvals of developments, areas not suited for growth may not be identified and the chances of environmental degradation would increase. No circumstances of location or characteristics of the site would be brought to bear upon development, i.e. floodplains, steep and unstable slopes, unsuitable soil characteristics, etc.

One of the major impacts would be continued escalation of required governmental services and facilities from limited funds. The County and its Communities would continue to "react" to growth problems and would not be a position to be "pro-active."

Increases in traffic on the County's and Communities' road and street systems (without controls placed upon proximity to already developed areas) would skyrocket maintenance costs; costs of providing school busing would also increase.

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The tax base would most likely be broadened, but the costs of sewer and water extensions, road maintenance and other services would increase. The County and Communities would be forced to investigate methods of increasing taxes to provide for these increased service demands. For instance, the amount of publicly owned parks and open space could decrease in order to increase and maximize the tax base. Police and fire protection services will be required to service a much greater land area without a corresponding increase in tax base.

No Growth

The no growth alternative represents a model of growth and development management that would offer maximum restraints upon land use. It provides for the greatest restriction upon personal individual property rights and calls for the development of restrictive local governmental regulations regarding the use of land. It does not allow the individual landowner complete determination over the use and disposition of his property. This alternative may be considered unlawful in many instances due to the "taking" of persons' private property rights.

The no growth alternative provides for the most compact arrangement of developed land use and would restrict growth to areas of the County already developed or to an "in-fill" strategy, thus precluding options for expansion.

The developer's market would be impacted by local government's previous approvals; this may present negative consequences. The housing market could only offer a limited selection of

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residential opportunities due to higher land costs.

Under the no growth scenario land speculation and its profits would decrease, but the consequences would be an artificially inflated market. The cost of available land would increase dramatically. There is also the possibility of competition for land between residential and other uses; the high demand for land would make Teller County an expensive place to locate a home or a business and it would probably be difficult to house the associated work force.

This alternative would alter the character of the County. There would be no opportunity for new innovative development.

The potential would exist for concentrated development only in existing areas using existing or proposed services and facilities and not allowing extensive sprawl.

The no growth alternative may provide for the protection of personal community property rights in some cases.

However, it increases the possibility of the establishment of incompatible land uses as development would occur on vacant parcels, primarily in the Communities, thus increasing complaints and nuisances resulting in decreasing property values.

Areas suitable for growth and development could not be used. The chances of environmental degradation would decrease but possible overuse of some areas would not guarantee that it would not occur. An example would be where antiquated subdivisions, those using septic tanks and wells to serve very small lots (1/4 acre or less), could increase in density to an unhealthy, or even dangerous level. No circumstances of location or characteristics of the site would be brought to bear upon development since prior approvals would have already been made.

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One of the major impacts of the no growth alternative would be continued provision of required governmental services and facilities from limited funds. The County and its Communities would continue to "react" to growth problems and would not be in a position to be "pro-active." Requests for variances and exceptions would increase, thus placing the regulatory burden on the land owner.

The tax base would most likely be depleted and become static. The costs of extending, maintaining, and upgrading sewer and water facilities where there are deteriorating systems, obsolete systems, failures of septic and well systems, would increase in order to maintain the existing standard level of service. Increases in traffic on the County's and Communities' existing road and street systems, where they are not built to current standards and under increased usage at "build-out," would strain maintenance costs. Under these conditions, the County and Communities would be forced to investigate methods of increasing individual taxes to provide for maintaining existing service levels.

THE COUNTY, AND ITS COMMUNITIES,
ARE MERELY MAKING A PLANNING
AND POLICY DECISION
AS TO WHERE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT
SHOULD LOGICALLY OCCUR,
RATHER THAN A LEGALLY
EXCLUSIONARY DECISION TO
LIMIT THE AMOUNT AND TYPE OF GROWTH.

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Directed Growth

The directed growth alternative represents a model of growth and development management that would offer reasonable requirements upon land use. It provides for and recognizes individual property rights as well as the good of the community. It calls for the development of reasonable local governmental regulations regarding the use of land. It allows the individual landowner and community, working together, to determine the best use and disposition of property.

The underlying assumption of the directed growth alternative is the recognition of the land of Teller County as a significant natural resource. By accepting this statement the protection and preservation of the land becomes a priority in the development of County and Community policy. This ensures that the environmental significance of the land is protected as the economic base of the County.

It provides for the compact arrangement of developed land use and would encourage growth to areas of the County best suited for such use based upon the established goals and objectives of the County and its Communities.

The developer's market would be influenced by local government regulation which over time would provide a positive consequence. The amount of time and funds spent by following the required review processes will be a benefit to the developer. Reasonable regulations will offer predictable outcomes for many diverse projects. The housing market might offer a good variety of quality residential opportunities.

Under the directed growth alternative, land values would stabilize, offering a fair real estate market. Appropriate quantities of land will be available for residential and other uses; reasonably located and priced land in Teller County would make it an excellent place to locate a business and house the associated work

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force.

This alternative would maintain the character of the County, would allow ample opportunity for a variety of housing choices including "country mountain living," new innovative development, and mobile home areas. The opportunity would exist for encouraging in-fill development using existing or proposed services and facilities, providing for new development in appropriate areas, and not allowing extensive sprawl.

The directed growth alternative will provide for the protection of personal and community property rights. It decreases the possibility of the establishment of incompatible land uses as development would occur in appropriate areas, thus decreasing hardships, complaints, and nuisances.

Areas suitable for growth and development would be used appropriately. The chances of environmental degradation would decrease due to thoughtful and conscientious planning and review processes. Circumstances of

location and characteristics of the site would be brought to bear upon all development.

One of the major benefits of the directed growth alternative would be the provision of required governmental services and facilities in a timed, staged, and efficient manner. The County and its Communities would be in a position to be "pro-active" based upon an approved and adopted rational plan for development.

The tax base would most likely continue to increase at predictable levels, hence the standard level of service would be maintained or improved for existing facilities and services and traffic on the County's and Communities' existing road and street systems would not strain maintenance costs. The costs of new sewer and water extensions, and other services would be provided for by the developer as orderly development occurs. The County and Communities would implement methods to provide for maintaining the existing service levels, without increasing individual taxes.

TABLE V 2
GROWTH ALTERNATIVES TABLE

PLEASE NOTE: THIS TABLE INCLUDES SUBJECTIVE EVALUATIONS AND IS INTENDED TO PROVIDE ONLY A BASIS OF COMPARISON AND ANALYSIS.

AREAS OF IMPACT	UNLIMITED GROWTH	NO GROWTH	DIRECTED GROWTH
INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS	Unrestricted	Severely restricted	Maintained or improved
COMMUNITY PROPERTY RIGHTS	Severely restricted	Maintained or decreased	Maintained/improved
QUALITY OF LIFE	Degraded	Degraded	Enhanced
LAND USE REGULATION	Complete removal	Extremely restrictive	Reasonable requirements
LAND USE PATTERNS DETERMINATION	No predictable pattern	Existing pattern	Predictable/planned
HOUSING AVAILABILITY	Short term increase Long term unpredictable	Severely impacted	Provided by market conditions
HOUSING TYPES	Improved	Limited/high land cost	Provided/market conditions
LAND SPECULATION	Very high/no land use restrictions	High/limited land availability	Moderate/predictable growth patterns
CHARACTER OF COUNTY	Chaotic, no identifiable character	Certain areas of the County will be dense	Enhanced/maintained/life style
SERVICES AND FACILITIES DEMANDS	Increased/not cost effective	Increased/not cost effective	Timed/staged in an efficient manner
LAND CONSUMPTION	Unlimited/dictated by market	Highly restricted	Timed/staged
FUNDING FOR SERVICES AND FACILITIES	Unpredictable/burden falls on individual tax payer	Tax base static, no major opportunities for enhancement	Predictable increases/pay as you go/burden shifted to developer
METHOD OF ADDRESSING GROWTH	Reactive	Reactive	Pro-active
TAX BASE	Unpredictable	Static	Potential improvement at predictable levels
IN-FILL	Not encouraged	Limited options for development elsewhere	Encouraged in areas where appropriate
STABILITY, PREDICTABILITY, DEFINED EXPECTATIONS	None	Very limited	Achieved with long term plans
PROPERTY VALUES	Unpredictable/potential for decrease	Unpredictable, short term gains, potential devaluation/land use incompatibility	Enhanced/long term stability
DEVELOPMENT QUALITY	Undetermined	Undetermined	Appropriate to development types
CONTINUED CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT	None	None	Required to continue process
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES	Short term gains - opportunities will be used up immediately, long term instability	Severely limited	County becomes more attractive/growth patterns predictable
ACCOUNTABILITY OF ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS	None required	Undetermined	Accountability built into process/monitoring required
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	Adverse	Adverse	Maintained/improved
NATURAL RESOURCES	Market determined	Undetermined	Market determined

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SELECTION OF THE BEST GROWTH MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVE FOR TELLER COUNTY AND ITS COMMUNITIES

The best Growth Management Alternative for Teller County and its Communities is the Directed Growth Strategy. This section has attempted to evaluate the three possible general growth management alternatives of Unlimited Growth, No Growth, and Directed Growth and to identify the benefits and impacts of each.

The Directed Growth Strategy should provide for the greatest benefits and should lessen the impacts of growth upon all three of the following: the citizens and taxpayers of the County, the developers and users of land, and the County and Communities' governments.

This strategy provides for the greatest number of positive aspects and the least number of negative aspects for the citizens, developers, and governments of the County, as compared to the other two alternatives. The selection of this alternative will encourage quality growth management and development for the term of this plan

for Teller County and its Communities.

Therefore, the selection of the best Growth Management alternative for Teller County, and its Communities, is the Directed Growth Strategy and is so documented by the preliminary approval of this section by the Planning Commissions on November 1, 1988, and the final approval of this plan.

The Planning Commissions found that an effective Directed Growth Management Strategy should benefit the County and its Communities, both in the short term and long term.

The Planning Commissions find:

- That individual property rights will be maintained or improved.
- That community property rights will be greatly improved.
- That the quality of life will be enhanced.

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- That reasonable land use and other regulations will be drafted and implemented.

- That land use patterns will be predicible and planned.

- That housing availability and types will be provided for under fair market conditions.

- That land speculation would be moderated due to predicible growth patterns.

- That the character of the County would be enhanced and a "country mountain life style" would continue.

- That services and facilities demands will be timed and phased in an efficient manner.

- That land consumption requirements will be met in a timed and staged manner.

- That funding for new services and facilities will be shifted to the developer. Existing services and facilities will be maintained based

upon a predicible funding sources.

- That pro-active methods will be used in addressing growth issues.

- That the tax base will be improved at predicible levels.

- That in-fill will be encouraged in appropriate areas.

- That stability, predictability, and defined expectations will be achieved with long term plans.

- That long term stability will enhance property values.

- That appropriate development quality standards will be determined by development type.

- That continued citizen involvement will be necessary to assure the success of this planning effort.

- That the County becomes much more attractive to economic development opportunities due to predicible growth patterns.

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- That the accountability of elected and appointed officials is built into this process.

- That environmental quality will be maintained or improved based upon sound protection policies and required mitigation measures.

- That natural resource extraction and use will be determined by the market but that their development will be enhanced by a predictable level of support businesses and employee housing.

THE SELECTION OF THE BEST
GROWTH MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVE
FOR TELLER COUNTY,
AND ITS COMMUNITIES,
IS THE DIRECTED GROWTH STRATEGY.

