

The Crystal River Valley Master Plan – Executive Summary

The Crystal River Valley Master Plan is a community based Master Plan, developed jointly by Pitkin County and the residents and Caucus of the Crystal River Valley.

The Plan is intended to be used by Crystal River Valley residents, the Caucus, Pitkin County staff and decision-makers to guide future development, inform land use decisions and enhance the public amenities that abound within the valley.

The Plan

The Plan is divided into two volumes. Volume I, completed in August 2001 is the existing conditions report with the results of the community survey. Volume II contains the core values, goals and objectives, and action items for seven topic areas. Those topic areas include: Growth; Housing; Commercial and Retail Uses; Recreation; Environment and Open Space; and Transportation.

Significant Issues In the Plan

Many of the objectives drafted by the Task Force support current actions or direction being applied by Pitkin County staff or other entities to affect growth and development within the Crystal River Valley and are therefore not followed by an action item(s). Similarly some objectives are statements of fact and do not require an action item. The Plan does however, include action items that are intended to influence future development and activities within the Crystal River Planning Area. Several of these action items are detailed recommendations necessary to implement the goals and objectives of the Plan.

The Task Force focused the discussion of house size limitations into this Master Plan process. The Task Force recommends house size limitations and that the Crystal River Valley Planning Area should be divided into two separate zones for application of the limitations. The first zone is from the north end of the BRB Campground north to the Pitkin County line including Prince Creek and the majority of the “Western Periphery” except for Coal Basin. The second zone is from the BRB Campground south for the rest of the planning area. Based upon the topography of the Crystal River Valley Planning Area the Task Force agreed that larger homes are better suited for the wide open, flatter landscape between Carbondale and the BRB Campground. Smaller home sizes are more appropriate for the narrower and steeper portions of the study area that are found south of the BRB Campground.

The Task Force expands upon Pitkin County’s existing Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program. The Task Force established a maximum square footage as a right (the Speed Bump) that can only be exceeded to an ultimate limit (the Brick Wall) with the purchase of TDRs or by the use of a landowner’s own TDRs.

Preservation of open space and active agricultural land has been a goal in Pitkin County for several decades. This was also a goal promoted by the Task Force. In order to achieve not only agricultural preservation of land but to encourage ongoing ranching operations within the planning area, the Task Force developed an Ag District that provides incentives and bonuses based upon the amount of acreage that is preserved.

In order to provide incentives for large landowners to preserve open space, it is recommended that the limitations on residential square footage be more generous in the proposed Ag District. In addition, the ability to use TDRs could be added as a further incentive to preserve ranch acreage for open space and active ranching.

In addition, the Task Force recommends the adoption of a Crystal Ranch Lands District that is intended to provide long term planning flexibility for large land owners. The district concept encourages property owners to place their property into a state of preservation immune from changing zoning regulations until such time the property owner is ready to consider master planning the property. The Crystal Ranch Lands District concept does not negate the Ag District. The Ag District is a development tool, while the Crystal Ranch Lands district should be used as a long range planning tool.

The Task Force determined that the existing Tourist (T) zone district was not appropriate with the existing land uses and characteristics of the Crystal River Valley. In order to best implement the goals and objectives of the Master Plan the Task Force considered and recommended changes to the Tourist zone district and recommends that the revised district be called the “Crystal River Tourist Zone District.”

The Crystal River Valley Master Plan specifically excludes the area included within the Redstone Master Plan adopted in February 1995.

The Task Force discussed at length the necessity and unique opportunities for Home-Based Business/Cottage Industry and Limited (small-scale) Commercial Activities within residential properties and on ranching operations outside of the Redstone Master Plan area. For some residents a cottage industry is a financial necessity. For others it provides the means to work from one’s home without impacting the road system. A limited commercial activity may be the opportunity to provide a unique commodity for the general public, i.e. a bed and breakfast in a quality environment. In order to clarify and support this type of commerce in a manner that is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Plan, the Task Force recommends several changes to the Pitkin County Land Use Code.

The land within the Crystal River Valley is divided among many owners and appeals to many users. It was the sentiment of the Task Force that commercial recreational activity could easily overwhelm the very features that attract residents and tourists to the valley. The Task Force supports these recreational activities as long as they are low impact and limited in scale. Therefore, the Task Force recommends revisions to the Pitkin County Land Use Code to help limit Commercial Recreational Activities.

The Crystal River Valley Master Plan - Introduction

History of the Crystal River Valley Master Planning Process

The comprehensive planning process is the cornerstone for a community to define land use patterns into the future. Although planning statutes use the terms “master plan,” “land use plan” and “comprehensive plan” without distinction, they are not identical products. In Colorado, comprehensive planning is generally understood to include planning for social factors beyond the traditional land use plan. This relative flexibility opened by the existing statutory language allows the community to transcend traditional physical growth policies and broaden the impact of the comprehensive plans to include issues that reach beyond simply the physical development of the Crystal River Valley.

In August of 2000, a Task Force was formed representing members of the Crystal River Caucus, and assigned the task of guiding the Master Plan effort. In November of 2000, the Pitkin County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) provided the Crystal River Caucus the financial and staff resources to pursue the development of a Master Plan for the Crystal River Valley. The boundaries for the Plan were roughly the same as the boundary established by the Board for the Crystal River Caucus. The Crystal River Valley Master Plan does not affect the area defined in the Redstone Master Plan. However, residents that reside within the Redstone Master Plan boundary were involved in the Crystal River Valley Master Plan effort. Please see Exhibit 1 for a map of the planning area.

In addition, the overall study area was divided into four sub-areas to assist the Task Force in understanding distinctly different ecosystems and land use patterns that comprise the Master Plan study area. The boundaries for these sub-areas were defined based on unique geographical attributes (topography, drainage sub-basins, etc.) and existing land use patterns. The sub-areas defined in Volume I of the Master Plan were not a factor in creating the goals, objectives and implementing measures within Volume II and have been deleted from the map found in this Volume.

However, community surveys, used during the existing conditions analysis of the planning process, were coded by these sub-areas to help understand differing perceptions regarding land use issues facing the valley. Several meetings were held in January of 2001 to kick-off the development of the community survey. The survey was distributed to residents of the Crystal River Valley Planning Area in April of 2001, to elicit opinions on a wide range of issues pertaining to the future of the valley. The survey focused on demographics and attitudes regarding issues to be addressed by the Plan. The overall return rate was over thirty (30%), which is admirable for a mail out survey. A detailed description of the survey methodology is included within Section 3 of Volume I. The complete survey and results are included as Appendix A and B of Volume I. The results of the survey were posted on the Pitkin County website during the course of the Master Plan process.

At the same time, Otak, in cooperation with Pitkin County staff, developed a detailed analysis of existing conditions and potential buildout scenarios for the Task Force. This effort culminated in

the development of a wide range of background data and a land use map showing potential build-out of the valley under existing land use policies. This data and maps are included in Volume I. Volume I, Existing Conditions and Community Survey Results was presented to the Crystal River Caucus, the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners in the summer of 2001.

From August 2001 until February of 2003, the Task Force developed goals, objectives, and action items for seven topic areas. The Task Force took a detailed approach to drafting action items for certain topics:

- a Crystal River Tourist Zone District;
- specific house size limitations;
- a new Agriculture Plan (Ag Plan); and
- a new Crystal River Ranch Lands District.

Concepts rather than details of these topic areas, were adopted as part of the master plan.

To facilitate follow-through of the action items, the Task Force identified the party responsible for carrying out the implementing measure. The Task Force wanted the residents of the Crystal River Valley to take charge of the changes they envisioned for this master planning area.

The Caucus reviewed the Core Values, Goals, and Objectives sections of the Plan in detail on October 18, 2001. It was important that the Caucus review this phase of work before the Task Force proceeded to drafting the implementing measure of the Master Plan.

The Task Force was not a fixed group of interested individuals. Chuck Downey presided as President and Ron Sorter as Vice-President. However, the general membership was not an appointed body. Any resident within the Crystal River Caucus boundary, either permanent or seasonal, and was interested in attending became a voting member for the duration of the meeting. The number of attendees fluctuated based upon the time of year and the topic being considered. During the development of Volume II the Task Force implemented the use of Roberts Rules of Order and decisions were decided by up or down votes rather than consensus.

Outline of Plan

This plan includes the goals, objectives, and implementing measures for seven topic areas. Those topic areas include: Growth; Housing; Agriculture; Commercial and Retail Uses; Environment and Open Space; Recreation; and Transportation.

An appendix item called *“Taking Action: Resources and Relationship Building / Follow-Up Actions* is provided to identify follow-up actions which may be pursued by the Caucus to help implement the Plan. Relevant agencies are identified with an address and phone number followed by a list of implementing measures pertinent to that agency. Each entity listed in this section should receive a letter from the Crystal River Caucus along with a copy of the Plan.

The letters will highlight the key points of interest to the agency. Follow-up meetings may be scheduled as needed by Caucus members appointed to the task.

While it is not a part of the adopted Crystal River Master Plan, the Planning & Zoning Commission acknowledges the "*Crystal River Caucus Plan Report*" as a document that reflects the specific desires of a majority of the Crystal River Caucus regarding the development of elements such as zone districts, overlays, house size and definitions pertaining to the Crystal River Valley. This report, as well as the "*Minority Report*" dated July 15, 2003, are filed with the Community Development Department under separate cover, and are maintained for public review.

The Crystal River Valley Master Plan – The Plan

Crystal River Valley Core Values

Our valley is first and foremost a place where preservation of the natural environment and the protection of our rural character are valued. As the rest of our state becomes increasingly urbanized, the Crystal River Valley is a place where the rural character should remain substantially unchanged. We value the preservation of open space, wildlife habitat, the Highway 133 view plane, and water quality in the Crystal River valley. Agriculture is recognized as an irreplaceable treasure in our valley and we support using a range of tools and/or steps to ensure its continued presence and viability.

We support limiting growth in our valley, consistent with the core values outlined above, and believe that future development should not occur at the expense of endangering wildlife habitat(s) and should be limited to single-family homes. Commercial development shall be limited to small scale home-based businesses/cottage industry and limited (small scale) commercial activities. Any other commercial development should be confined to the area defined by the Redstone Master Plan. Historical, cultural and archaeological sites are valued and incentives that encourage their preservation should be developed.

We support safety improvements on Highway 133, the need to reduce highway noise and we seek to include a bike path within the existing highway right-of-way and/or on a separate grade where appropriate.

Goals, Objectives and Implementing Measures

The following portion of this Plan is divided into seven sections that identify land use planning and development related topics for this Master Plan. Each section begins with a broad goal that reflects the unique concerns of the topic within the Crystal River Valley Planning Area.

The Task Force identified objectives to further the goal statement. Some of the objectives require an implementing measure in which case the implementing measure follows directly after the related objective. Other objectives stand alone without an implementing measure. They are still to be considered as recommendations, an action to support the goal statement and core values, but these objectives do not require further clarification with an implementing measure. Finally, in order to facilitate communication with the various public and private entities that should anticipate using this Master Plan and to create a stronger working relationship with those entities and the Crystal River Caucus, a Resources and Relationship Building section is included in Appendix A. Appendix A lists the objectives and implementing measures that affect the various entities and recommends working closely with the Crystal River Caucus to achieve the recommendations.

A Future Land Use Map, Exhibit 2 identifies two sub areas within the Valley where larger and smaller home sizes may be appropriate. After Plan adoption, the Future Land Use Plan will be

amended to include recommendations for land use designations to be considered in conjunction with any zone changes that may occur subsequent to Plan adoption.

Section 1: GROWTH

Goal

“Ensure that future growth in the Crystal River Valley occurs at a limited rate; that it is consistent with the rural character of the valley; reflects a sensitivity to the natural and built environment; and is sustainable with respect to physical carrying capacity.”

Objectives and Implementing Measures

1.1 Support a limitation on growth to no more than the historic average annual 2% rate for the valley recognizing that there are significant reasons for exemptions.

Implementing Measure:

Recommend that the County review the GMQS to ensure that it maintains the historic growth rates for the Crystal River Valley Planning area.

1.2 New development must provide infrastructure concurrently and in a manner that complements the rural character of the valley.

Implementing Measure:

Recommend that the County develop code language that requires concurrency with infrastructure and development, which incorporates phasing, based on specific land use approvals.

1.3 Limit new development to projects that minimize detrimental impacts to water quality or quantity and that promote environmental and resource protection.

Implementing Measure:

Recommend that the County amend the Land Use Code to require proof of water for development that does not injure quality of water and ensures the quality and quantity in order to support the protection of natural resources (minimum stream flows and wildlife and plant habitat).

1.4 Ensure that zoning within the overall planning area promotes the rural character of the area, primarily allowing for the development of low density and/or rural clustered detached single family homes, while providing incentives for the preservation of open, agricultural or other resource lands.

Implementing Measure:

Recommend that the County develop rural low-density zoning and/or overlays including provisions for “rural” clustering of detached single-family homes, and incentives to preserve open, agricultural and resource lands.

Subsequent to Plan adoption, revise the Future Land Use Map to accomplish the following:

- a. Identify areas that may be appropriate for a voluntary agricultural zone district overlay and agricultural related commercial use designation;
- b. Identify the few areas such as those 35 acre tracts around Redstone that may be considered for a lower density (more than 10 acre) rural land use designation to ensure that low density rural character is maintained

- c. Identify public lands that may be appropriate for a “Forest/Natural Resource” land use designation.

1.5 Promote the concept and/or criteria for the use of transfer development rights to facilitate the preservation of resource lands.

Implementing Measure:

The County may consider, but not be limited to the following concepts as the basis for development of Ag and Ranch Land overlay zones for the Crystal:

Crystal Ranch Lands

- a. Establish legislation to enable landowners to voluntarily exchange a renewable non-development agreement with the County for preservation of the regulatory status quo. Such legislation should be crafted to encourage and facilitate continued preservation of open lands; careful and unhurried exploration of the techniques, strategies and resources for the preservation of and/or conservation planning for such lands.
- b. Permit submittal of a master plan for the entire property prior to the expiration of the agreement, or, if the agreement is not renewed, the property shall become subject to then-existing zoning laws.
- c. As one option for the master planning of such properties, develop a stand-alone PUD regulation.
- d. Consider the goals and objectives of the Crystal River Master Plan in evaluation of the property master plan.
- e. Expedite timeframe for County review of such master plans.

AG District

- a. Preservation of agricultural lands and large parcels is the major goal of an agricultural District or Overlay to be developed by the County.
- b. A goal of the agricultural district/overlay is to minimize the loss of agricultural lands.
- c. Establish a minimum acreage to opt in to a voluntary overlay district for agricultural properties containing open space and/or agricultural resources.
- d. Identify areas on the Future Land Use Map where this overlay/district may be applied (on a voluntary basis)
- e. Require a density reduction from density allowed by state land division
- f. Establish a sliding scale for house size where the size of the allowed house is allowed to increase based upon the amount of land that is conserved. Consider the use of TDRs or other zoning tools to increase the house size from an established “speed bump” to a “brick wall.” Use the County’s definition of floor area calculation to determine house size.
- g. Provide incentives such as tdr awards or other zoning tools for the *reduction* in allowable residential square footage.
- h. Site homes in accordance with the goals and objectives of the Crystal master plan.
- i. Exempt agricultural buildings from allowable square footage calculation for the property
- j. In addition to agricultural uses, allow commercial uses (to be determined), *by right* that are of a scale that is compatible with agriculture, the surrounding neighborhood

and the goals and objectives of the Master Plan. All other commercial uses are to be considered by special review.

- k. Establish standards, including floor area limits, for non-agricultural (including recreational) commercial uses on properties opting into the district. Allow such commercial uses, which are within established standards as “by right” uses and subject those uses exceeding the established limits to special review.
- l. Consider allowing TDRs to be used on-site for square footage increases, or for off-site sale.
- m. Exempt development on properties opting in to the district from growth management.
- n. Allow an extended vesting period for development approvals
- o. Simplify and expedite County review of development applications.
- p. Consider a density bonus approach for conservation of large parcels

NOTE: Decisions on the “TDR” aspects of the plan will be deferred until such time as all of the County master plans have been submitted and reviewed. At that time, all of the recommendations regarding TDRs may be considered in the context of an overall review of the current TDR regulations.

1.7. Where practical, based on a balancing of interests, direct future development away from areas with environmental constraints such as steep slopes, floodplain, avalanche, rockfall and wildfire or that contain resources such as critical wildlife habitat or view corridors.

1.8. Work with the Town of Carbondale on any future annexations within the Crystal River corridor to see if the goals of the Crystal River Valley Master Plan can be incorporated into their development review process.

Implementing Measure

Recommend that the County and The Town Of Carbondale enter into an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) to facilitate the goals of the Town master plan and the Crystal River Valley master plan.

1.9. Develop and/or revise growth control policies, land use criteria and recommended zoning to support residential development activities that reflect the rural character of the valley.

Implementing Measure

Develop and/or revise growth control policies, land use criteria and recommended zoning to support residential development activities that reflect the rural character of the valley

1.10. All uses not listed by right should be considered only by special review.

Implementing Measure

Recommend that the County develop new zone districts for the Crystal River Planning area that eliminate special review use lists and incorporate a new special review process which considers standards relative to home based/cottage industries and limited–small scale commercial development and incorporate the goals and objectives of this Plan. Special review requests should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

1.11. Support the efforts of the Pitkin County Open Space and Trails Board and/or other conservation groups as they continue to acquire conservation easements or real property from landowners.

Implementing Measure

Write letter and meet with the Pitkin County Open Space and Trails Board in support of the acquisition of conservation easements or real property from landowners.

Section 2: HOUSING

Goal

“Promote residential development patterns that fit within the context of the Crystal River Valley’s existing rural setting. Promote diversity of age and income levels in our population by encouraging some affordable housing for those who live and work in the Crystal River Valley.”

Objectives and Implementing Measures

2.1. Establish a house size square footage limitation that may be exceeded under specific circumstances, to a maximum house size cap, which may not be exceeded under any circumstances.

Implementing Measure

Recommend that the County adopt zone district revisions that incorporate house size limitations and ultimate caps based on the specific location, acreage of the property and use of the parcel. When developing square footage limitations within zone districts, consider the concept of a graduated house size based on acreage and the use of TDR’s as incentives for lower density. In addition, consider the direction of the Master Plan relative to the distinction between sub areas of the planning area as they relate to house size and character. Develop/revise zoning tools such as PUD’s, clustering and siting provisions to address potential impacts relating to house size. Furthermore, consider house size implications on the Countywide TDR program; and ensure that any sliding scale used provides *more* incentive to preserve larger acreages than to divide land into 35 acre tracts.

2.2. Support low-density attainable housing to encourage income diversity and housing for employees within the valley.

Implementing Measure

Support code amendments that encourage landowners to deed restrict existing homes for affordable housing; that allow for deed restricted (rental and sale) second dwellings on parcels where appropriate and where it furthers the goals of this master plan for attainable housing; and/or consider allowance for a second dwelling unit that is *not* deed restricted if there can be a reliable means established for keeping that rental (or sale) unit affordable.

2.3. Encourage the building of small houses.

Implementing Measure

Recommend that the county develop low cost processing as an incentive for homes that reduce and restrict home size below zone district requirements.

Section 3: AGRICULTURE

Goal:

“The valley recognizes the value and benefits of its agricultural lands and shall strive to retain these uses within the Crystal River Valley Planning Area while respecting individual private property rights.”

Objectives and Implementing Measures

3.1. Adopt policies that encourage the continuation of active agricultural uses.

Implementing Measure

- a. Ensure that zoning and land uses within the overall planning area promotes the agricultural character of the area. Please refer to Growth Sections 1.4 and 1.9 and Housing 2.1
- b. Recommend that the County amend the current PUD and 1041 regulations by adding flexibility in order to accomplish the overall goal of habitat, scenic and agricultural protection.
- c. Recommend that the caucus be referred and have a chance to comment on all code amendments that affect the Crystal River Valley Master Plan Area.
- d. Recommend that existing conservation easement agreements (including the Jerome Park easement) be unaffected by any zoning changes implemented by the County.

3.2. Support small-scale commercial activities that are compatible with and that augment the viability of the existing agricultural uses.

Implementing Measure

- a. Recommend that the County create and revise zone districts that allow small – scale commercial activities on agricultural parcels as a means to supplement the agricultural operations.
- b. In development of such zone districts, consider allowing non-agricultural commercial uses as a use-by-right where such uses comply with a specified floor area-to-parcel size ratio.

3.3. Encourage adoption of right to farm/ranch laws that protect agricultural uses from adjacent development.

Implementing Measure

Recommend that the County develop right-to farm legislation and amend the land use regulations and policies of the Land Use Code.

3.4. Projects proposed adjacent to existing agricultural uses should include appropriate buffers to mitigate impacts associated with urbanization.

Implementing Measure

Recommend that the County develop and adopt “buffer legislation” relative to adjacent residential and agricultural uses. This may be in the form of setbacks within newly established zone districts and should be reflected in legislation developed pursuant to section 3.3 above.

3.5. Support a comprehensive transferable development rights program that is creative and flexible and that offers long-term flexibility for land owners who want to preserve agricultural lands.

Implementing Measure

- a. Support code amendments that encourage landowners to deed restrict existing homes for affordable housing; that allow for deed restricted (rental and sale) second dwellings on parcels where appropriate and where it furthers the goals of this master plan for attainable housing; and/or consider allowance for a second dwelling unit that is *not* deed restricted if there can be a reliable means established for keeping that rental (or sale) unit affordable. (See section 2.2.1)
- b. Recommend that the County strengthen and expand the TDR program by expanding the market for the use of TDR's .

3.6. Encourage the purchase of conservation easements by the County and others to protect agricultural lands.

Implementing Measure

Write a letter to Pitkin County Open Space and Trails Board encouraging them to purchase conservation easements.

Section 4: COMMERCIAL AND RETAIL USES

Goal

“In order to preserve its rural character, the Crystal River Valley shall support only home-based/cottage business opportunities and small-scale commercial activities”

Objectives and Implementing Measures

4.1. Support limited small-scale home based/cottage businesses in the Crystal River Valley Planning Area.

Implementing Measure

The Crystal River Caucus recommends that revisions be made to the Pitkin County land Use code to support home-based /Cottage industry and that the County definition for “home-occupation” be expanded to make reference to “Cottage Industry.” Furthermore, consideration should be given to revising the current definition to ensure that uses allowed are not in direct conflict with private covenants; and do not utilize mechanical, electrical, or other equipment or items which produce excessive noise levels, electrical or magnetic interference, vibration, heat, glare, smoke, dust, odor or other nuisance outside the residential building or accessory structure.

4.2. Support limited small-scale commercial activities.

Implementing Measure

The Crystal River Caucus recommends amendments to the Pitkin County Land Use Code that consider limited small-scale commercial development as a special review use in areas to be defined on the Future Land Use Map after master plan adoption. At a minimum, any Code amendment analysis or subsequent standards for such uses will consider impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods and whether such commercial use is appropriate outside of Redstone.

4.3. Limit commercial recreational activities to those that are small-scale and low impact in nature.

Implementing Measure

Amend the Pitkin County land Use Code in order develop new standards for commercial recreational activities that limit the overall impact on the Crystal River Valley planning area. Consider the following criteria:

- a. Assure that commercial recreational activities conducted within the Crystal River Valley Planning Area are of limited scale and generate few impacts on the environment, neighborhoods and infrastructure.
- b. Establish threshold standards to differentiate between a use-by-right and a special review use. Two years after adoption of standards, review them with the Crystal River Caucus to determine their effectiveness.
- c. Allow passive recreational activities (to be defined) as a use by right if the use occurs on private property of a minimum size and involves a maximum number of people on a daily basis.

- d. Allow active recreational activities (to be defined) as a special review use subject to a public hearing, if the use exceeds the thresholds identified for passive activities.

4.4. Prohibit any strip commercial development.

4.5. Support the 1995 Redstone Master Plan as adopted by ordinance with regard to its recommendations for location and type of commercial uses.

4.6. Limit the development of new, and the expansion of old lodges, hotels or motels in the Crystal River Valley corridor outside the Village of Redstone.

Implementing Measure

Recommend that the County amend the Tourist zone district in the Land Use Code to update it relative to uses and scale appropriate for the Crystal River Valley and to uphold the goals of the Master Plan, including the limitation of this zone district to pre-existing sites zoned tourist. No additional tourist zones are supported within the Crystal River Master Planning area. Consider the following concepts when developing the district amendment.

- a. Create a new zone district to replace the existing Tourist Zone. As part of the District legislation consider adopting one of two alternatives:
 - i. Either require a Master Plan for development on properties within the district similar to the master plan requirement in the current AF-Ski Zone District; Determine which uses are by right, special review and or prohibited through the master planning process; or
 - ii. Identify uses allowed by right, by special review and those that are prohibited within the zone as part of the district revision.
- b. Place a limitation on the size of *individual* residential and commercial structures
- c. Place a limitation on the *total* allowed residential and commercial square footage
- d. Allow the total allowed residential and commercial square footage limitation to be exceeded up to a maximum square footage by special review.
- e. Subsequent to Plan adoption revise the Future Land Use Map to designate the area within the Crystal Valley that is appropriate for the tourist accommodation use.

4.7. Recommend that the Pitkin County Land Use Code require new or expanded commercial or lodge activities to mitigate their housing and road impacts. It is further recommended that home based cottage industry and small scale agriculturally related commercial uses, which meet specific standards (to be developed), be exempt from mitigation as an incentive to maintain agricultural operations and provide diverse economic support for the County.

4.8 Protect lands within the Crystal River Planning area from the environmental impacts of mining, mineral exploration, oil and gas drilling and exploration, sand and gravel pits, rock crushers, concrete batch plants and other extractive operations.

Implementing Measures:

- a. Apply strict enforcement of all applicable local, state and federal regulations governing mining, mineral exploration, oil and gas exploration and drilling, sand and gravel pits and all other extractive operations when such operations are proposed within the Planning area.
- b. Seek amendments to antiquated federal regulations providing preemption from local regulations for mining and mineral exploration and other extractive operations

Section 5: ENVIRONMENT AND OPEN SPACE

Goal:

“Public lands within the Crystal River Valley Planning Area should be maintained in a manner that preserves and protects the natural environment, grazing, encourages passive recreational activities and maintains the rural character of the valley. Future development and redevelopment projects must be sensitive to the unique landscape, physical features and viewsheds that define the valley; must preclude light and noise pollution; and must promote an environmental ethic which protects wildlife and wildlife habitat, air and water quality”.

Objectives and Implementing Measures

5.1. Support the efforts of the Pitkin County Open Space and Trails Board and/or other conservation groups as they continue to acquire conservation easements or real property from landowners.

5.2. Support Pitkin County’s efforts to provide incentives that encourage conservation-oriented development in the valley.

5.3. Require that new development address the needs of wildlife and their habitat.

5.4. Support the County’s efforts to reduce solid waste, improve air quality and reduce light and noise pollution.

5.5. Create a zoning overlay to protect viewsheds along State Highway 133 and other designated corridors.

Implementing Measure

In order to preserve the views along the Highway 133 and other corridors, the County should:

- a) Urge the Pitkin County Open Space and Trails Board to purchase viewplane easements.
- b) Recommend that Pitkin County revise the scenic and ridgeline regulations to be more effective and continue to prohibit ridgeline development where possible.

5.6. Develop and maintain a program to protect water quality and quantity and to control potential impacts from septic systems and other pollution sources.

Implementing Measure

In order to protect water quality and quantity and to control potential impacts from septic systems and other pollution sources, the Caucus should:

- a) Establish a subcommittee to inventory who is studying water quality in the valley, what they look for and where.
- b) Find an entity to develop a water quality monitoring program, including identifying impacts from septic systems and other pollution sources.
- c) Recommend that the County develop new zone districts in coordination with the Environmental Health Department to determine the most environmentally sound

water and waste water systems for various densities. These zone district regulations should be referred to the caucus for review and comments.

- d) Recommend that the County revise stream setback regulations, where appropriate, in order to provide an adequate buffer between development and streams. Regulations should be based on current erosion control standards.
- e) Contact the state engineers' office to obtain the data they use to justify future domestic water well permits.

5.7. Encourage appropriate government agencies and private stream protection organizations to establish a minimum streamflow and purchase the required rights to support wildlife, fisheries, recreation and economic stability, while opposing the construction of dams and reservoirs.

5.8. Prevent development of dams and reservoirs on the Crystal River in order to preserve its free-flowing nature while preserving private water rights.

Implementing Measure

The Caucus should form a subcommittee to deal with this objective after the Master Plan is complete.

5.9. Investigate the impacts of "Wild, Scenic and Recreational" designation for the Crystal River.

Implementing Measure

The Caucus should form a subcommittee to deal with this objective after the Master Plan is complete.

5.10. Encourage cross-country skiing, hiking, horseback riding, hunting and fishing, livestock grazing and other non-motorized uses on public lands, consistent with good conservation practices.

5.11. Manage the public lands within the Crystal River Valley in a manner that places the highest emphasis on protection and preservation of the natural environment, while maintaining passive recreational uses and livestock grazing. Encourage the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management to work with local agencies to achieve these local objectives.

Implementation Measure:

Recommend that Pitkin County make efforts to develop Intergovernmental Agreements (IGA) or Memorandums of Understanding (MOI) with Federal Land agencies regarding Land Management within the Crystal River Valley.

5.12. Prevent the development or construction of major physical infrastructure within the Crystal River Valley drainage.

Implementation Measure:

Recommend that the County strengthen the "Activities of State and Local Concern" provisions of 1041 in the Land Use Code.

Section 6: RECREATION

Goal:

“Support limited small-scale recreational opportunities”.

Objectives and Implementing Measures

6.1. Encourage each other to voluntarily permit access to our streams, trails and waters while respecting private property rights.

6.2. Limit the scale of future recreational development in the Crystal River Valley Planning Area.

Implementing Measure

Work with the Pitkin County Community Development Department to suggest revisions to the Land Use Code to address commercial recreational activity in the Crystal River Valley. (See Implementing Measure 4.4.1 under Commercial/Retail uses.

6.3. Limit expansion of and/or development of additional campgrounds within the existing Crystal River Valley Planning Area and support preservation of existing public campgrounds.

Implementing Measures

The Caucus should coordinate with the USFS on amendments to the White River National Forest Plan to ensure that limitations on campgrounds, access issues and motorized vehicular use on public lands are addressed with consideration of the Caucus goals (see objectives 6.3, 6.4 and 6.7).

6.4. Preserve access to recreational areas to meet the needs of the Crystal River Valley Planning Area.

6.5. Support small-scale educational/cultural activities.

6.6. Support the granting or purchase of conservation, fishing and trail easements in order to facilitate enjoyment of the natural resources by neighbors and visitors.

6.7. Prohibit off-road motorized vehicle use on public lands.

6.8 Refer to sections 7.2, 7.3, 7.4 and 7.8 from the following Transportation Section

Section 7: TRANSPORTATION

Goal:

“Encourage pedestrian and highway safety improvements, reduce noise, and provide for the inclusion of a bike path within the existing highway right-of-way on Highway 133 and other county roads”.

Objectives and Implementing Measures

7.1. Identify specific locations and options for improving pedestrian safety and highway improvements within the Crystal River Valley Planning Area.

Implementing Measure

The Caucus and Pitkin County should meet with Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) right-of-way (ROW) official and request a review and analysis of specific safety issues on Hwy 133 including speed limits, parking areas and the Thomas Road intersection.

7.2. Work with the Colorado Department of Transportation to create a paved bike path within the Highway 133 right-of-way and to provide paved shoulders on the Highway.

7.3. Support the consideration of new non-motorized trails that provide connections between existing trails both within and outside the Crystal River Valley Planning Area.

7.4. Work with Pitkin County and Colorado Department of Transportation to pursue, where appropriate, an off road bicycle/pedestrian path paralleling Highway 133.

7.5. Support the use of the Elk Park parking area to reduce traffic in Redstone and reduce noise and traffic on Highway 133.

Implementing Measure

Contact the Redstone Community Association and the West Elk Loop Scenic Byway Committee to discuss and suggest signage to direct people to the Elk Park parking area.

7.6. Encourage public/private transit options to reduce traffic and noise on Highway 133.

7.7. Encourage the enforcement of state statutes that reduce highway noise.

7.8. Support, where appropriate, the development of pedestrian and bike improvements on county rights-of-way. Such improvements should reflect the character of the surrounding neighborhood and countryside.

7.9 Discourage expansion of county and state roads with the exception of health/safety/pedestrian and bike improvements, as needed.

Taking Action: Resources and Relationship Building

Follow-up Actions

Each entity listed in the following section should receive a letter from the Crystal River Caucus along with a copy of the Master Plan. The purpose of this is to make them aware of the Master Plan and the desires of the Crystal River Valley Community. The letters will highlight the key points of interest to the agency. Follow-up meetings may be scheduled as needed by Caucus members appointed to the task.

Pitkin County, as an entity, is not included in the following pages. Once Pitkin County adopts the Master Plan, it is the responsibility of Pitkin County Staff to work with the Crystal River Caucus to implement the goals of the Master Plan. The entities listed below are organizations with which the Caucus should build strong working relationships to facilitate implementation of this Master Plan.

Colorado Department of Transportation

Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT)
Main Regional Office
202 Centennial
Glenwood Springs, CO 81601
(970) 947-9361

The following are a list of issues to be addressed with CDOT.

- 7.1** The Caucus and Pitkin County should meet with Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) right-of-way (ROW) official and request review and analysis of specific safety issues on Hwy 133 including speed limits, parking areas and Thomas Road intersection.
- 7.2.** Encourage creation of a paved bike path and paved shoulders of Highway 133.
- 7.4.** Encourage creation of an off road bicycle/pedestrian path paralleling Highway 133.
- 7.5** Contact the Redstone Community Association and the West Elk Loop Scenic Byway Committee to discuss and suggest signage to direct people to the Elk Park parking area.
- 7.7.** Encourage the enforcement of state statutes that reduce highway noise.
- 7.9.** Discourage expansion of county and state roads except as needed for health/safety improvements.

Pitkin County Open Space and Trails Board

Pitkin County Open Space and Trails Board
530 E. Main Street
Aspen, CO 81611
(970) 920-5232

The following are a list of issues to be addressed with the Pitkin County Open Space and Trails Board:

A key issue is to notify the Open Space and Trails Board and other appropriate public agencies and property owners of the Master Plan's Recreation Goals & Objectives concerning low impact, limited scale commercial recreation in the Crystal River Valley Planning Area and state the desire of the community to participate in establishing recreation thresholds and carrying capacities. The Caucus shall annually review that these entities are in fact using the Caucus as a referral agency.

1.11 Write letter and meet with the Pitkin County Open Space and Trails Board in support of the acquisition of conservation easements or real property from landowners.

3.6. Write a letter to the Pitkin County Open Space and Trails Board encouraging them to purchase conservation easements.

5.1. Support the efforts of the Pitkin County Open Space and Trails program and/or other conservation groups as they continue to acquire conservation easements or real property from landowners.

5.2. Support Pitkin County's efforts to provide incentives that encourage conservation-oriented development in the valley.

5.7. Encourage appropriate government agencies to establish a minimum streamflow and purchase the required rights to support wildlife, fisheries, recreation and economic stability, while opposing the construction of dams and reservoirs.

5.11. Manage the public lands within the Crystal River Valley in a manner that places the highest emphasis on protection and preservation of the natural environment, while maintaining passive recreational uses and livestock grazing. Encourage the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management to work with local agencies to achieve these local objectives.

6.4. Preserve access to recreational areas to meet the needs of the Crystal River Valley Planning Area.

6.6. Support the granting or purchase of conservation, fishing and trail easements in order to facilitate enjoyment of the natural resources by neighbors and visitors.

- 6.7.** Prohibit off-road motorized vehicle use on public lands.
- 7.2.** Work with the Colorado Department of Transportation to create a paved bike path within the Highway 133 right-of-way and to provide paved shoulders on the Highway.
- 7.3.** Support the consideration of new non-motorized trails that provide connections between existing trails both within and outside the Crystal River Valley Planning Area.
- 7.4.** Work with Pitkin County and Colorado Department of Transportation to pursue, where appropriate, an off road bicycle/pedestrian path paralleling Highway 133.
- 7.8.** Support, where appropriate, the development of pedestrian and bike improvements on county rights-of-way. Such improvements should reflect the character of the surrounding neighborhood and countryside.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

Bureau of Land Management
Glenwood Springs Resource Area
50629 Highway 6 & 24
Glenwood Springs, CO 81601
(970) 947-2800

The following are a list of issues to be addressed with the BLM:

- 5.10.** Encourage cross-country skiing, hiking, horseback riding, hunting and fishing, livestock grazing and other non-motorized uses on public lands, consistent with good conservation practices.
- 5.11.** Manage the public lands within the Crystal River Valley in a manner that places the highest emphasis on protection and preservation of the natural environment, while maintaining passive recreational uses and livestock grazing. Encourage the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management to work with local agencies to achieve these local objectives.
- 6.3.** Limit expansion of and/or development of additional campgrounds within the existing Crystal River Valley Planning Area and support preservation of existing public campgrounds.
- 6.7.** Prohibit off-road motorized vehicle use on public lands.
- 7.3.** Support the consideration of new non-motorized trails that provide connections between existing trails both within and outside the Crystal planning area.

United States Forest Service (USFS)

United States Forest Service (USFS)
District Rangers Office
0094 County Road 244
Rifle, CO 81650
(970) 625-2371

The following are a list of issues to be addressed with the USFS:

5.10. Encourage cross-country skiing, hiking, horseback riding, hunting and fishing, livestock grazing and other non-motorized uses on public lands, consistent with good conservation practices.

5.11. Manage the public lands within the Crystal River Valley in a manner that places the highest emphasis on protection and preservation of the natural environment, while maintaining passive recreational uses and livestock grazing. Encourage the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management to work with local agencies to achieve these local objectives.

6.3. Limit expansion of and/or development of additional campgrounds within the existing Crystal River Valley Planning Area and support preservation of existing public campgrounds.

6.7. Prohibit off-road motorized vehicle use on public lands.

7.3. Support the consideration of new non-motorized trails that provide connections between existing trails both within and outside the Crystal River Valley Planning Area.

Town of Carbondale

Town of Carbondale
511 Colorado Avenue
Carbondale, Colorado 81623
(970) 963-2733

1.7.1. Write a letter to the Town of Carbondale informing them of this objective and requesting that they work with the Caucus and/or Pitkin County to develop a TDR program where Carbondale could be a receiving site.

