

Rural Pitkin County- preserve and protect our natural environment

Demonstrable public benefits of conservation

In order to maintain the economic viability of rural Pitkin County we need to continue to conserve land; provide leases for farmers and ranchers, preserve wildlife habitat and ensure public access to parks and wilderness.

Ecological

Rural land provides essential ecological services, fosters interconnected economies like farming and ranching, and protects and preserves rural spaces - essential to our mountain lifestyle and economy. Rural equates to life supporting resources, valued water sources, open pastures and calving land. Rural respects hay cultivation and farming, sheep in meadows, gardens, open space, cattle ranching.

Access

Public access to trails, wilderness and nature. Provide trail easements for horseback, cycling, hiking, and ice climbing. Record and document public fishing access points. Our largest valley land managers are the USFS and BLM. The county needs to continue provide public access to these incredible lands. Through leases and trail easements we can couple environmental protection for wilderness with recreational needs.

The land use code effectively balances the needs of the rural resort economy, with the protection of our wilderness. Less dense rural areas balances the dense economies and land use patterns found in the rural resort municipalities.

Updates to land use code

We managed to update the large lot exemption for GMQS, to benefit and preserve rural Colorado and Pitkin County. We need to continue to update the land use code and add protection for scenic view corridors, like we do for scenic highways and byways in the county and add protection for scenic trail preservation.

Rural and Remote protected

Incentives are in place to conserve large parcels intact and engage in land use planning. Conservation easements, and public ownership, ensures minimal disturbance, defines allowable use and keeps large areas of land available undeveloped. Pitkin's established land use code fosters transfers of square footage from rural, unserviced areas to more urban developed land. TDR's protect the scenic beauty of our valley. TDR's ensure growth patterns- for example, reducing sprawl-favored by the caucuses and larger community.

Could TDR's and conservation easements effectively counter the potential harm from "overdevelopment in the rural valley" (My life as a child, p. 92)?

Draft:

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