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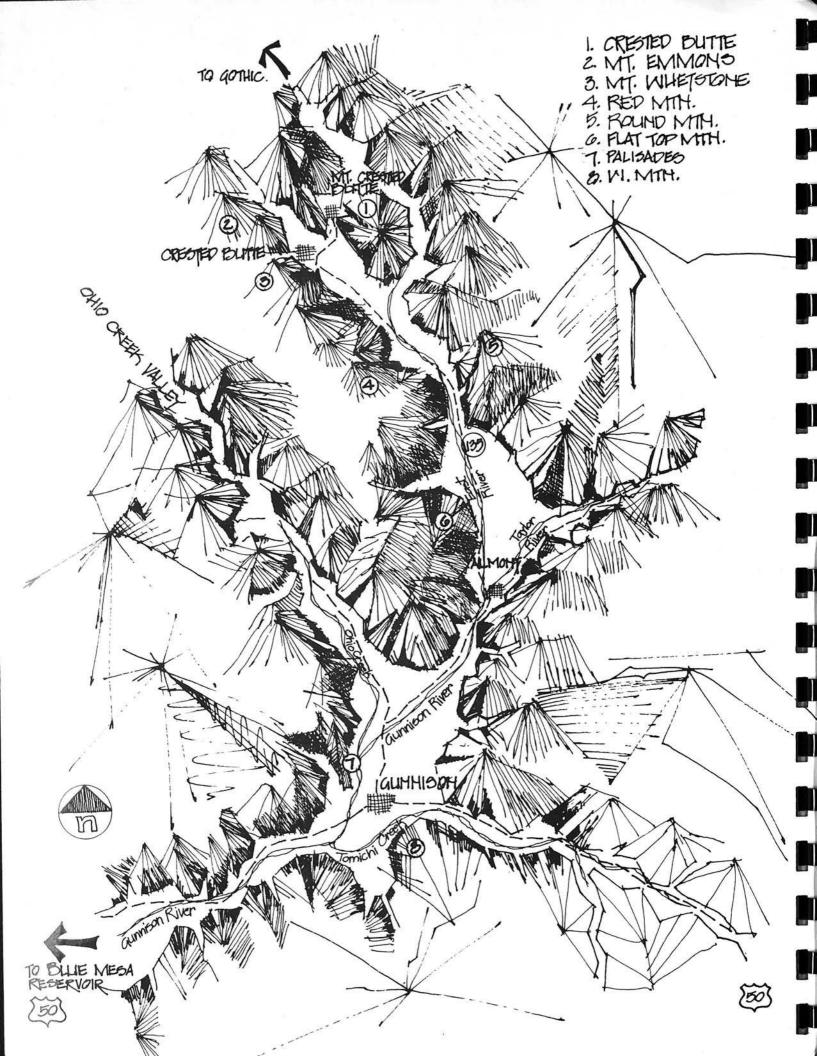
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PURPOSE OF THE MISSION, THE CONTEXT

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The R/UDAT Team has been invited to Gunnison, Colorado to assist the community in charting a course for its future. Aided by the Town Administration, Gunnison County is now in the process of updating its General Plan and Zoning Regulations; this, indeed appears to be a very appropriate time to receive the AIA Team imput into the community planning process. Primary concerns are centered around the use of the valley which extends northward from the town of Gunnison, along the East River, to the old mining town of Crested Butte and the adjacent, new development: Mt. Crested Butte.

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The major concerns and issues confronting the County centers are the various interests of the people who have settled here and their concern regarding growth and development and the use of public lands. These issues are of particular importance in the East River basin between Gunnison and Mt. Crested Butte and are the focus of a draft EIS prepared by the Forest Service. The use of the land, its natural resources --- on the surface, as well as underground --the environment and the "taking issues" are the concerns of the special interest groups which depend on the use of the land and have conflicting demands upon it.

The ranchers represent a political base which is respected in the

community. Their major concerns are that traditional zoning concepts do not work and that new land use controls could "green-belt them in" and limit their borrowing power. They are also concerned about being pushed off public land, the future viability of ranching and the impact of additional tourists on the grazing operation.

Environmentalists are concerned about the impacts of additional tourism and mining operations.

Retailers and businessmen are concerned about the economic base of the community, the seasonality of business, lack of sufficient work force and the unattractiveness or lack of image in downtown Gunnison.

Local residents are concerned about the high cost of everything, from housing and retail goods to lift tickets and that they might eventually lose the way of life that brought them to Gunnison.

County planning focuses on two key areas which are closely interrelated and form the "life-line" of "Gunnison Country": the valley of East River and the Town of Gunnison. The 28 mile long valley encompasses the beauty and all the amenities that only the Western Slope of the Colorado Rockies offers. The town of Gunnison provides residents with a County seat, urban housing and most of the services they need. In addition, Gunnison also accomodates the faculty and over 3,000 students of Western State College: a cultural resource which greatly enhances life in the region. Route #50 and the airport make the town into a gateway to "Gunnison Country," a unique world of its own.

After a brief but intensive consultation period with the County Commissioner's office, cattle growers, ranchers, businessmen, educators, public officials and other representatives of the

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community, the R/UDAT Team has decided to address chief concerns that have been identified.

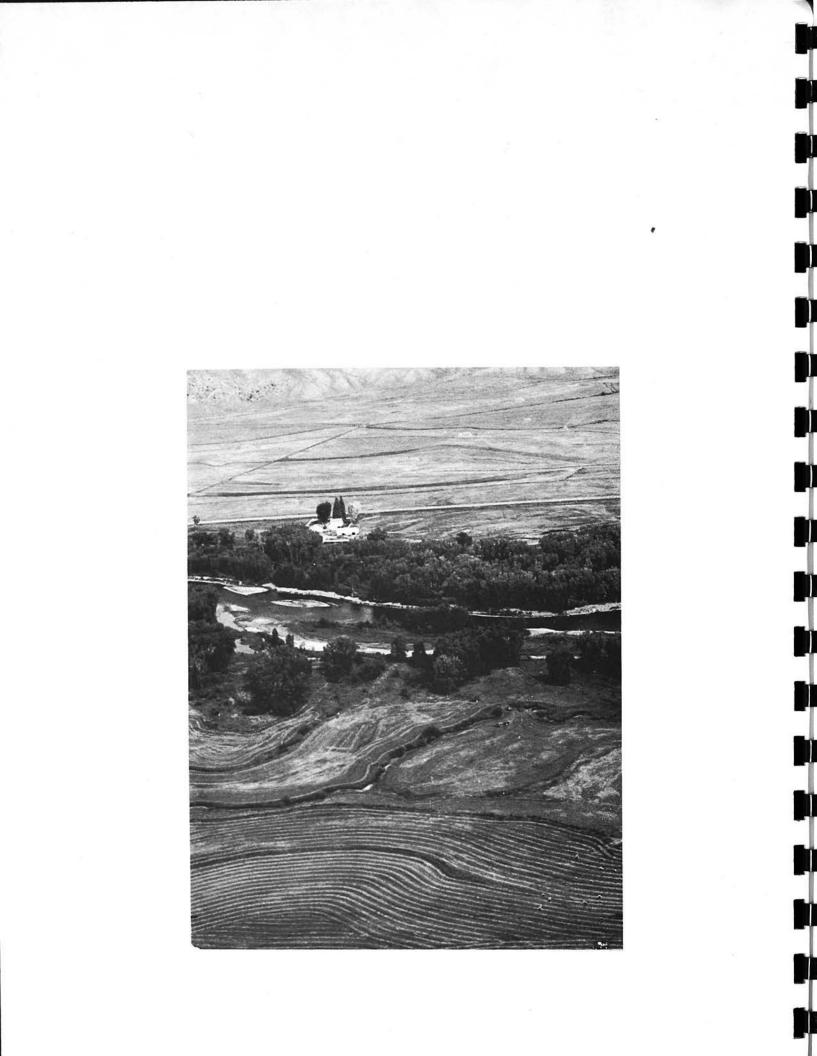
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In keeping with the Team's charge, recommendations are directed to key concerns, dealing with issues that are regarded to have a major impact on people's lives. R/UDAT recommendations are based on both Team members nationwide experience and a review of the most pertinent sources of local information. Due to the brevity of time, a detailed analysis of data was not possible and therefore, detailed recommendations are not intended. The Team's charge is to <u>guide</u> local planning and to spark action where new opportunities are seen. On the following pages we state our understanding of the communities' major <u>concerns</u> in relation to the <u>people</u> who are most affected by them and we spell out our recommendations for related action. Team members sincerely hope that our joint effort will bear fruit and that our collaboration will be of real value to the community.



RANCHING

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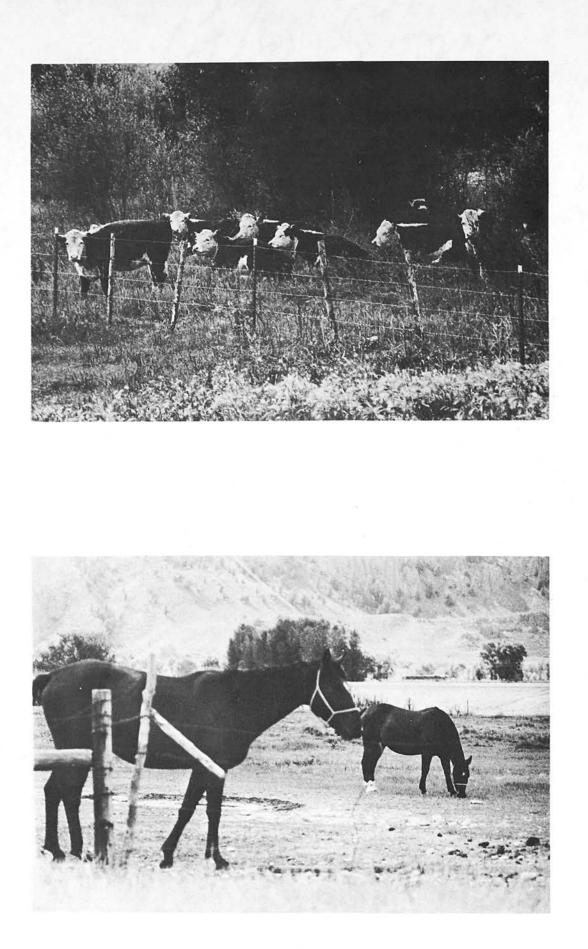
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The greatest environmental asset of the Gunnison area is its natural setting. A sense of openness and scenic beauty is offered by the green valleys and surrounding mountains.

The mountains are primarily in public ownership and managed by the U.S.Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. The valleys are held by the ranchers in various individual fee ownerships. There are approximately 85 operating ranches in Gunnison County. The typical and most efficient ranches are those which can be operated by and support a family. The average ranch has 2,000 deeded acres and supports approximately 350 to 400 animals.

The guest ranch is another category of ranching in Gunnison County. As a rule, it is considerably smaller than the operating ranch and derives its principal source of revenue from tourists. Both the guest ranch and the operating ranch contribute to the rural character of the country.

Nationally, low beef prices and inflating costs have reduced the profitability of ranching. Locally, population growth, and expanding tourism increased pressure on ranching by complicating the ranch management, and increasing operating



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costs. These pressures combined with the demand for ranch land by the residential subdivider or speculator present the major threat to the viability of ranching in Gunnison County.

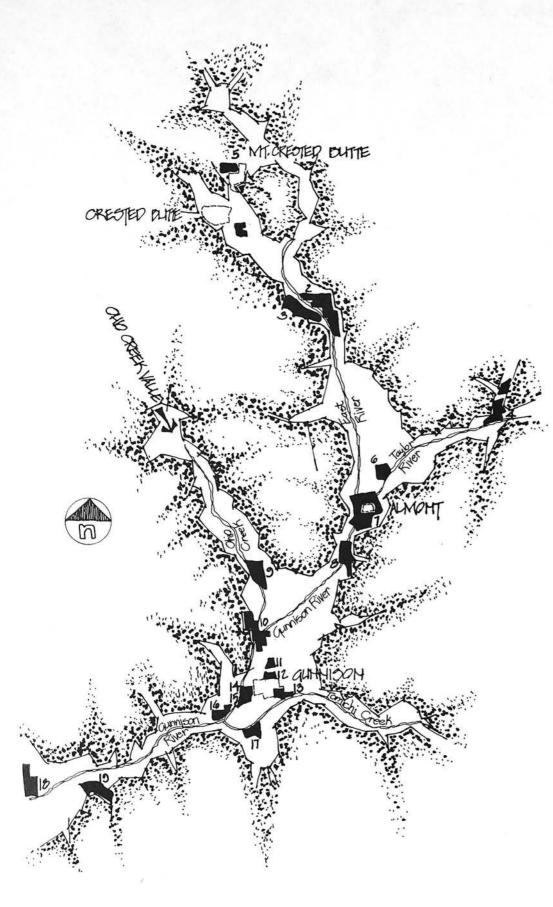
Subdivision of choice ranchland is a major issue for the rancher, governmental agencies and the ordinary citizen who moved to Gunnison to enjoy the rural environment. As ranch lands are removed from cattle production the costs and operating diffuculty are increased for the remaining ranchers. As development occurs and the population increases (both permanent and tourist) the costs again increase and it will become more difficult to keep ranches operating.

Some new residential subdivisions will demand services that cannot be efficiently provided in scattered and sparsely settled developments. Citizens will see a gradual erosion of the rural character.

From another perspective the planning restrictions that may be necessary to prevent subdivision of prime meadow lands appear to be unpopular with ranchers.

A strict land use policy or what has been termed a "lockedin zoning" would inhibit a rancherfrom realizing a speculative or development price for his assets if he chooses to sell.

These restrictions could also limit the rancher's line of credit and potential to split off a parcel to generate capital. The issue of short-term capital generation can be resolved with other techniques but the ranchers' desire to maintain their options to sell for speculation is a problem for which there is no easy solution. However, it is important to remember that for the forseeable future there simply is <u>not enough speculative demand</u> to absorb the ranch land even in the more



- 1 Riverbend
- 2 Crested Butte South Allen Homesites
- 3 Mountainlair (proposed)
- 4 Eubank's Spring Creek Taylor River Acres Spring Creek Tract Fifer Tract & Allen's Taylor River'Tract White Water Estates
- 5 Meridian Lake Park
- 6 Dunbar Tracts
- 7 Mountain View Sterling-Graham Tracts Homestead Almont Subdivision
- 8 Lost Canyon Womble Tracts
- 9 Fairview Subdivision
- 10 Ohio Meadows Gunnison River
- 11 Giambaldo Subdivision
- 12 Sun Park Addition
- 13 Tomichi Heights Tomichi Heights Ranchettes
- 14 Gunnison Rainbow Acres Zugelder Subdivision
- 15 Gunnison Island Acres
- 16 Heatherwood Dos Rios
- 17 Hartman Rocks
- 18 Steenbergen Tracts
- 19 Blue Mesa Estates, Ltd.

accessible areas. This means that if speculative selling undermines the viability of ranching, those who are forced out of production last will find a very limited market.

To promote the viability of ranching and preserve land use options the R/UDAT Team suggests some alternatives for consideration:

1. Form ranching <u>associations</u> or in some other way cooperate to share overhead management costs, unskilled labor, equipment, and legislative lobbying expense. This could minimize the cost of the management operation and allow for the greater economies of scale in central operations.

2. Create an <u>image</u> for <u>Gunnison</u> <u>beef</u> either for breeding stock or in the open beef market by active participation and promotion. This could include development of a breed of cattle that could be processed locally, sold locally to the tourist industry and thereby increase the potential yield of the stock when they are sold (the beefalo concept).

3. Look into the economics of a <u>cooperative</u> packing plant in Gunnison to serve the local market and the tourist trade.

4. If a ranch is to subdivide, development could be grouped on the least productive lands and the remaining more <u>productive land</u> <u>leased</u> to commercial ranchers.

5. Establish a <u>committee</u> with representatives from ranching, local government, and the community to seek solutions to ranching problems.

6. Explore the potential market for guest ranches as a use more

compatible with ranching than residential development.

7. Land use regulations should reflect the fact that in many areas of the county open agricultural uses of land are the only realistic possibility. Such areas should be differentiated by zoning classification from those areas, such as the East River Basin, in which pressure for further residential development can be expected. In these latter areas, subdivided residential development should be made contingent upon approval of a conditional use permit or planned unit development. Such approval should be subject to proof of mitigation or elimination of adverse environmental consequences and proof that such development will not adversely effect the use of adjoining and nearby lands for ranching.

In summary, it appears necessary to explore means by which ranching can continue either by more efficient management techniques or by increasing the marketability and profitability of the product of the individual ranches. If ranching is not economically feasible, then other markets should be explored for selling the land that does not have the environmental impact generally associated with residential development. If certain pieces are feasible for residential development and impacts can be mitigated, efforts should be made by the ranchers, the developer, and the local government to minimize the impact on surrounding operating ranches.

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THE COLLEGE

Gunnison's major "industry" is its college, which contributes about \$21 million a year to the city and county. Western State College is a resource but, it is safe to say, an underutilized resource; the usual "town-gown" division separates the school from the community. Gunnison on one hand recognizes the value of the college and takes pride in it; on the other hand, townspeople sometimes regard professors as occasionally useful but basically irrelevent people with lots of leisure time (teaching isn't <u>real</u> work), and the students as a source of much-needed labor (i.e. restaurant waiters), but also as a bit of a nuisance, cluttering available housing* and being rowdy at times.

The majority of the Faculty nourish their image by participating little in the life of the town (although there are notable exceptions) or the solution of its problems; students complain that townspeople are not particularly friendly to them and that local stores do not cater very well to their needs.

* see the social issues section for a full discussion of student housing problems

About half the current population of Gunnison is made up of college students, faculty, and staff. The school offers professional programs in education and business, and courses in:

languages and literature art and industrial arts speech and drama communications and journalism creative writing health, physical education, and recreation music biology, botany, and zoology chemistry and physics geology mathmatics economics history and geography philosophy political science psychology and sociology

Clearly, the course offerings are many and varied; students can earn B.A. degrees with a variety of majors and M.A. degrees in business, education, english, speech, music, science, and social studies (with emphasis either upon history or the behavorial sciences).

Gunnison is uniquely endowed, since few small towns boast a college of such size and diversity. The college, in turn, has unique opportunities, being located in a major recreation area, with an opportunity to contribute to the development and enhancement of the region. It seems unfortunate, therefore, that town and college have taken so little advantage of one another, although they do come to each other's aid in time of crisis, such as when the student population fell and townspeople enrolled 1)

in classes to avoid a reduction in faculty.

In this section, the R/UDAT Team has defined its task as that of finding a mechanism for town-gown cooperation. Both college and town are made up of two resources: physical facilities and people; but the two groups of people seem to interact with each other and to use their physical facilities in very different ways. However, with no change in the organization of either, the community and region could use the college to help <u>define</u> its <u>problems</u> and to <u>assist in finding solutions</u>; the college in turn, could use the community and the <u>region as a</u> <u>laboratory</u>. Student intern programs, with academic credit given for internships, could benefit both town and college by providing much-needed aid in the hospital, schools, local businesses, community and regional planning etc., and valuable educational experience.

Students, faculties and the Chamber of Commerce might jointly <u>identify</u> and attempt to <u>solve community problems</u>. Nor is cooperation limited to academic activities. Joint effort in the housing area could enable the college to avoid expanding its "housing business" while providing townspeople with additional income: <u>perhaps the student housing problem</u> can be turned into a <u>housing</u> <u>asset</u>! For example, rather than legislating <u>against</u> dwellings in "garages", an effort could be made to legalize such low-cost and often comfortable housing by bringing it up to code. Additionally, one might ask: need mobile homes <u>always</u> be eyesores?

If one or two of the stop sign laden streets connecting the college with downtown could be turned into summer bikeways/winter skiways, two simultaneous benefits might result: the physical linkage between college and community, connecting various community assets (i.e. pioneer Society Museum, American Legion Park, High School, and River), could be strengthened as a <u>safe trans</u>-

portation corridor for people who cannot (or prefer not to) utilize private automobiles. Such a corridor could be landscaped urban "green area", implemented by a public/private effort, with townspeople, academic botanists, and forest service personnel cooperating.

At present, the college is a visually undistinguished -- in fact, nearly invisible -- component of the town, viewed from any access route. Why not <u>emphasize</u> the college, especially its entrances, rather than hiding it? Something striking could also be done, for example, with the two metallic water towers on the hill to the northeast of the campus; the investment of a few cans of paint in appropriate "supergraphics" could turn these "eyesores"into assets. So simple an action might have immediate beneficial effects.

Town-gown <u>social</u> interaction can be furthered, as well. Festivals could be celebrated by closing-down roads for street fairs, dances, and, in winter weather, snowman-building, etc. Some cultural programs, nearly all of which now occur on campus, could be brought back into town, and some town-based social activities moved onto campus. The Winter Carnival, for example, is an event in which <u>all</u> ought to have the opportunity to participate.

The R/UDAT Team unanimously supports the establishment of a Small Towns Institute or Rural Communities <u>Institute at Western State</u> C<u>ollege</u>, devoted to teaching, applied research and community service in the region. Other universities have formed organizations to serve their own areas, and the Front Range has similar services as well, but communities on the Western Slope have been largely ignored. The proposed WSC Communities Institute would tackle the problems of snall towns on the Western Slope, in several ways;

1. As an information/data-gahtering base;

2. As an applied research center;

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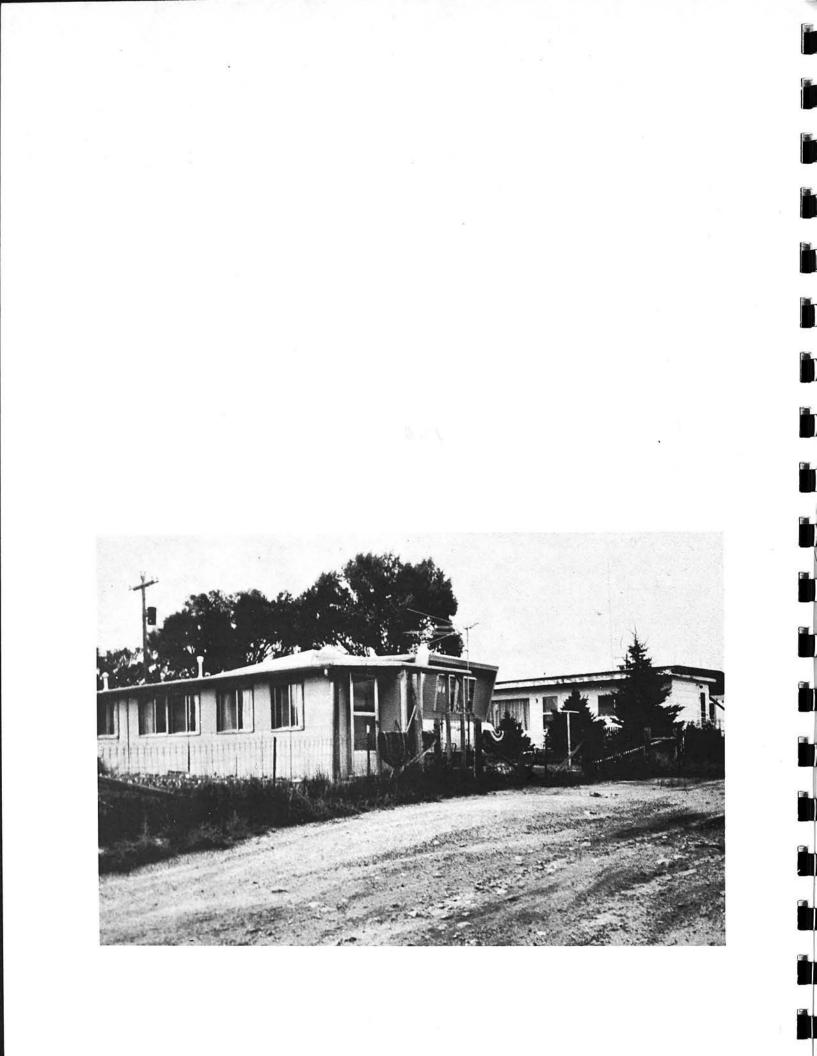
3. As a community educational center;

4. By interacting with colleges in other small towns in the region; i.e. Mesa College (Grand Junction, Adams State College (Alamosa), and Ft. Lewis A.& M (Durango);

5. By organizing the use of college buildings by the communities and community buildings by the college in such a way that the Institute can best serve the region's needs.

The Institute would have a small permanent staff, made up largely of college faculty and townspeople, with visitors--outside academics, professionals, etc., and other community political, social, and business leaders (people with experience in rural areas)--both visiting for periods of one month to a year or more. They could run "short courses" of a week to a month's duration, relating to <u>current issues</u> (i.e. energy, agriculture, ranch management, community arts, extractive industries, recreation management, rural public transportation), and sponsor <u>workshops</u>, <u>seminars</u>, and <u>continuing educational programs</u> (for community professionals and others who wish to "re-tool", i.e. to learn new says of handling enduring problems).

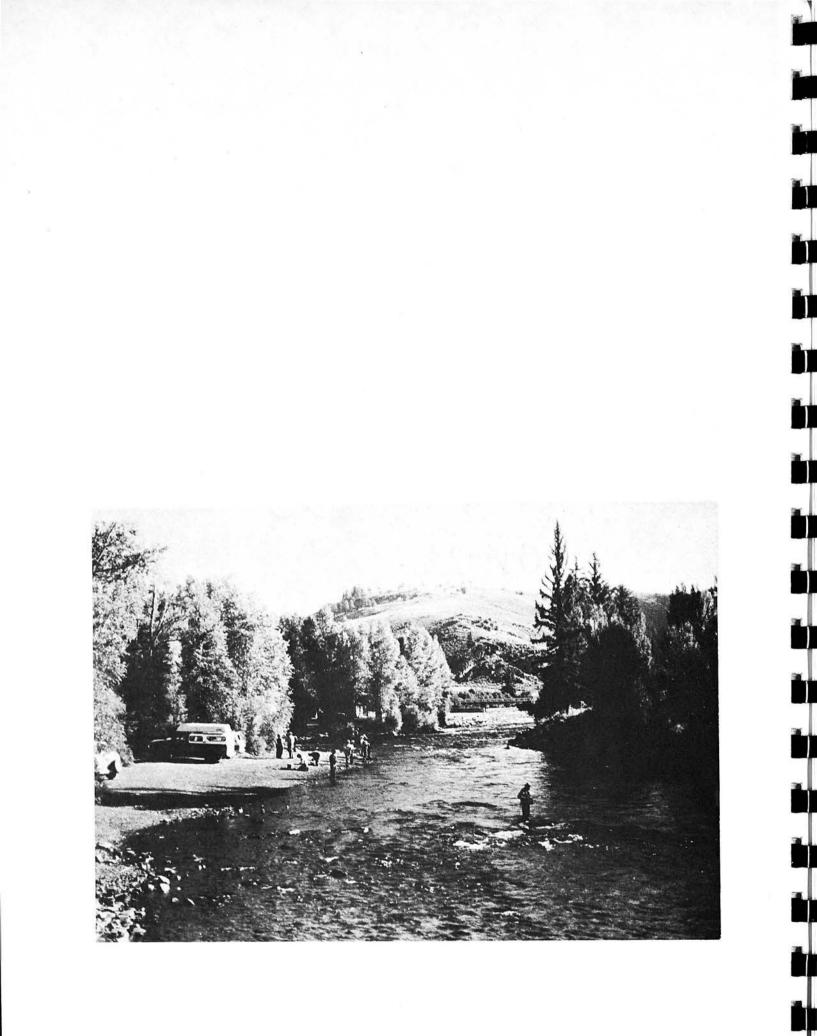
The educational effort could include, on a longer-term basis, degree programs in community development, and training programs for community paraprofessionals: building inspectors, planning inventory specialists, consumer affairs specialists, medical paraprofessionals, educational aides, community counselors



(in such areas as substance abuse), etc. Students from small towns can take such educational experience "back home" and apply it immediately to local problems.

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Major metropolitan areas, which had been gaining population for decades, are now losing people to small and moderate sized towns. The institute we propose is therefore timely, as well as necessary, and "seed money" for initial funding should be available from the state and a variety of other sources.



participating promotion should be established whereby each seasonal business should work together to balance inquiries and to share in benefits of joint promotion of "Gunnison Country" as a year-round recreation area.

The Team also strongly recommends that a regional transportation program be worked out to bring visitors from major metropolitan areas and from one recreation activity to another once they have arrived in the area.

The second problem associated with tourism involves a potentially increasing environmental impact, often termed "People Impact." This impact can be felt in two areas at two levels:

a. Summer visitors represent a hazard to wildlife as well as to the cattle operation;

b. Many visitors respond to the beauty of "Gunnison Country" by purchasing real estate. Summer visitors tend to buy land, and skiers are more apt to purchase living accomodations.

Gunnison County has been blessed with many of the natural assets which man has chosen to use to satisfy his recreational desires in his ever increasing amount of spare time. The activities that attract the tourist to Gunnison are all outdoor oriented and therefore generate a greater than normal impact on the environment. An added problem is created by the fact that Gunnison is a reasonably long distance from any major metropolitan area and the visitor needs temporary lodging and other facilities that are not necessary for a day trip or one of short distance.

Many times the experience is so pleasant for the average tourist that he immediately begins to look for a piece of property to purchase so he can either build a second residence or just say

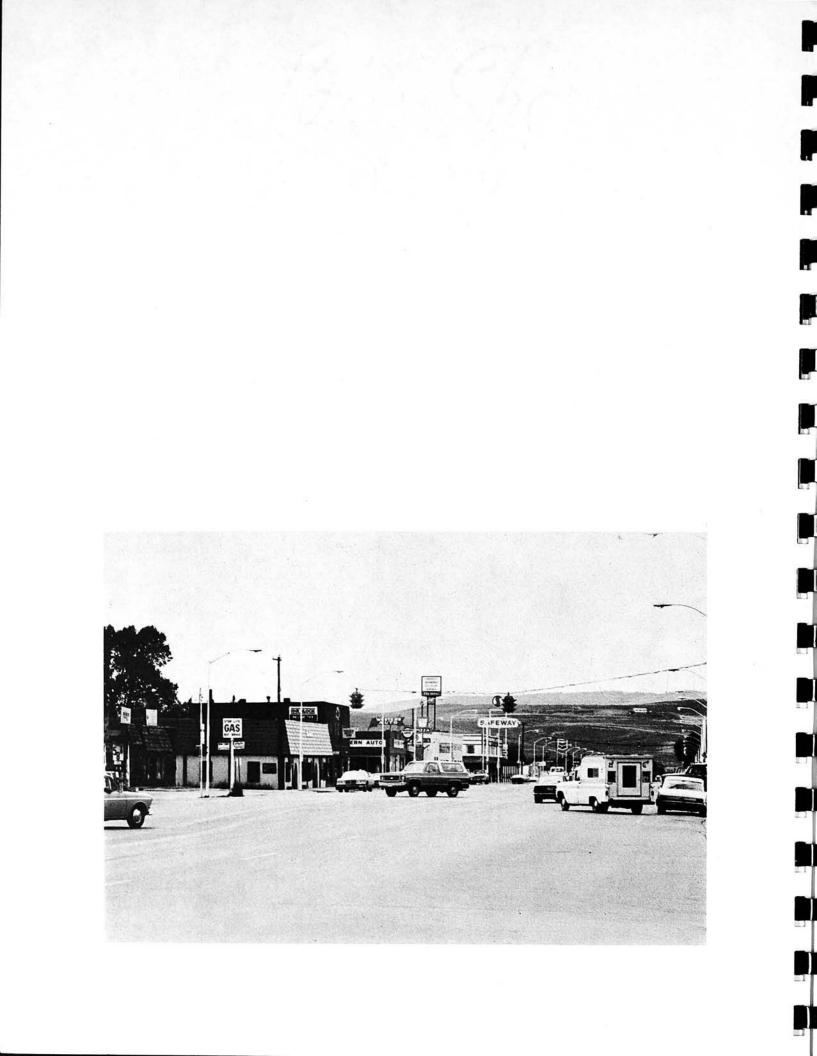


he "owns a piece of ground" in one of the most beautiful parts of the United States.

The location of the recreational facilities and the desire to have a piece of land has placed a considerable burden on the traditional and historical uses of the land. There is an increasing effort on the part of local government to understand these demands and impacts and respond to them in a manner that will protect the historical land use interest, take maximum advantage of the potential economic increases created by the tourist industry, and allow the maximum number of visitors to enjoy the benefits of this fragile part of the state of Colorado.

The R/UDAT Team believes that without <u>adequate protection</u> of the valley environment indigenous as well as traditional values of the Gunnison area will be destroyed. The major recreational facilities, the existing merchants, local governments, and other parties must communicate their interests, needs, and desires in order to insure the visitor a pleasant experience so that he will continue to return.

It appears that with <u>good planning</u> and <u>cooperation</u> it should be possible to maximize and enjoy the economic benefits of tourism, protect the environment in which it happens, and minimize the impact on the non-beneficiaries of this industry if it is carefully promoted and the specific inherent results are planned for.



LOCAL BUSINESS

Gunnison is the retail service center of the County. The Central Business District (CBD) in Gunnison has developed in a manner similar to many of the towns in the Colorado Rockies. The main business district is at the crossroads of the two main highways: Highway 50 (Tomichi) and Colorado State Highway 135 (Main). From the "100% corner" at the intersection, the business area extends three blocks north, 2 blocks east, about 3 blocks west and 1 block south.

The business center consists of an adequate though not exceptional assortment of retail services to satisfy the basic needs of the primary and secondary marketing areas of Gunnison County. The primary and secondary market areas include - nearly all of the county and extend south to Lake City in Hinsdale County. There is substantial leakage of retail spending to the Denver area because of the limited range of goods.

Retail sales in Gunnison County have increased by nearly 75% in the last five years. Continued growth can be expected with the expansion of the major tourist attractions and the attendant increase in the work force. It appears likely that retail sales could be generated in the Gunnison C.B.D., in addition to those that will naturally arise. out of the increase in population and tourism.

The following are R/UDAT Team suggestions for the enhancement of Gunnison's Commerical Center.

1. Form an active <u>downtown merchants</u> <u>association</u> to share retailing ideas and advertising. The basic goal of the group should be to promote and reinforce the downtown as the county's commercial center.

2. Enhance the attraction of the business area by adopting and consciously pursuing a "theme".

3. Organize special events and promotional activities to bring people to the downtown at special times.

4. Promote and support a community facility downtown for use by community groups. This could contain:

- a. Swimming pool
- b. Youth Center
- c. Square dancing facility
- d. Meeting room
- e. Historical displays
- f. Trade shows

g. Special classes put on by the Chamber of Commerce, fly tying, fishing, backpacking, rock climbing, cooking, macrame, needlework, leather tooling, wine making, etc.

5. Install benches along the sidewalks in the summer for people to sit in shade or under the sky.

6. Install kiosks and bulletin boards for handbills and

announcements of special events, sales, advertisements, etc.

7. Set up special celebrations for national events such as:

a. Special contests for the first day of frost during the fall.

b. Temperature pools with contests and prizes for the time when the temperature first breaks below O.

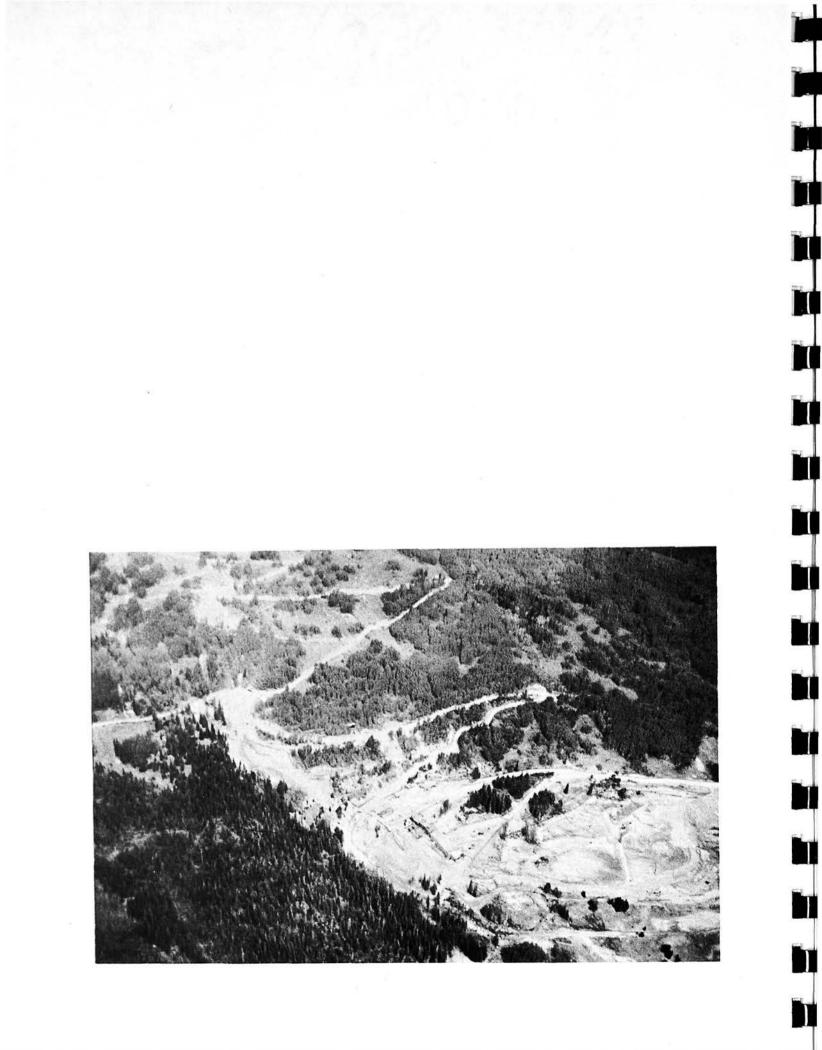
c. Winter snow and cold festival.

8. Continually evaluate possible opportunities for new, noncompeting business enterprises. Such ideas should be survey tested and opinions on needed services solicitied.

The business establishments in Crested Butte and Mt. Crested Butte offer a more limited range of retail goods and services. These business establishments, especially those in Mt. Crested Butte, suffer from marked seasonal fluctuations in retail sales with substantial turnover rates among the weaker businesses. As a result, residents of these two communities often find it necessary or desirable to make a 56 mile round trip to Gunnison for their retail shopping needs.

Recommendation:

Concrete cooperative action by local government and local businessmen will be necessary to expand the retail base of Crested Butte and Mt. Crested Butte. The R/UDAT Team recommends approval and implementation of the proposed "umbrella" organization of Crested Butte, Mt. Crested Butte, and Crested Butte Development Corporation that is designed to expand the recreational business of the two communities and attract new retail stores to them.



MINING

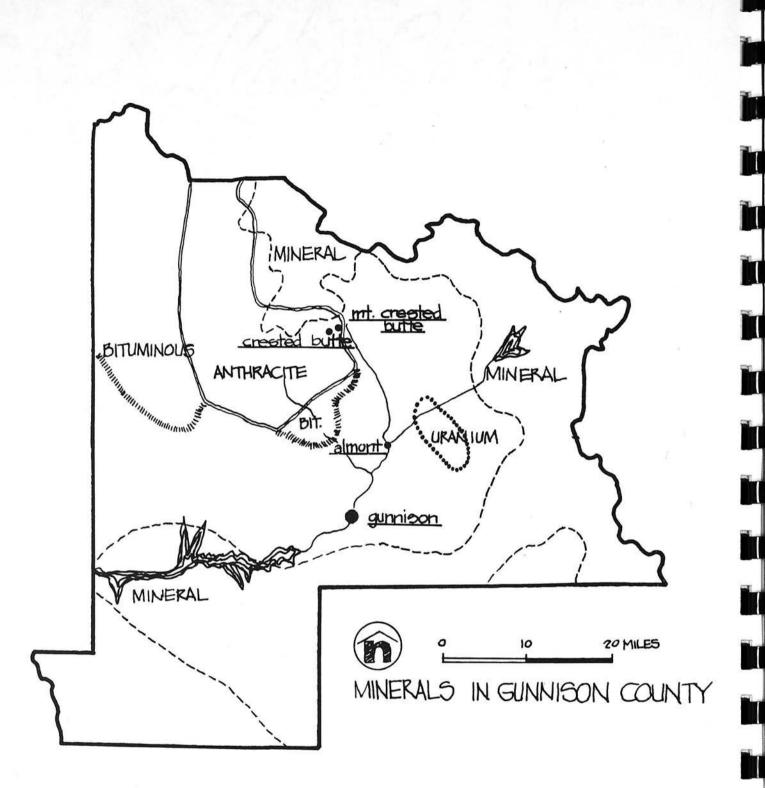
Within Gunnison County, known mineral deposits include coal, titanium, uranium, iron, manganese, thorium, gold, silver, lead and sources for geothermal energy are also present. Active mineral extraction and extraction-related activities include coal mining, open pit mining and smelting.

With respect to prospective mining activity, the R/UDAT team noted three significant facts:

1. County officials and the general public are largely unaware of the mineral extraction and processing plans of the mining industry. The R/UDAT team found an almost total lack of communication between industry representatives and either local government or the general public.

2. Local public officials and the general public do not appear to be well informed about existing federal and state laws, rules, and regulations that can impose environmental protection requirements and require minimization of mining impacts.

3. More than eighty percent of surface rights and mineral rights are owned by federal agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. As to such minerals, decisions



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to permit extractions or extraction related activities that will impact the county will be made by federal agencies rather than by county or local governments.

Potential Population Impacts of Industrial Growth

The county could experience large scale employment growth due to the expansion of mining. What, for example, might be the probable effects of the creation of 500 new mining jobs?

While some mining jobs could be filled by current residents, the great majority would be filled by people who currently do not reside in Gunnison County.

The newcomers would bring families and require new services. The new services would in part be provided by other newcomers who would bring families.

Local purchasing by the mining company could generate additional employment and secondary population impacts.

Making some reasonable assumptions, the potential population impact can be estimated.

500 miningjobs x 3 persons per household1500Plus500service jobs x 3 persons per household15003000

The actual population impact could vary up or down as much as 1000. The point is that the population is much larger than simply the miners and their families.

Recommendations

 An extensive information inventory should be launched in order to generate at least the following information:
 <u>Mineral deposit map</u> with quantitative and qualitative data.
 For example, a coal deposit could be pinpointed as to location of coal deposit, overburden thickness (or most economic and efficient method of coal extraction), coal seam thickness, tonnage of total deposit, coal content analysis such as BTU content, sulfur, ash, and trace elements contents.

b. Mineral ownership

c. Surface ownership

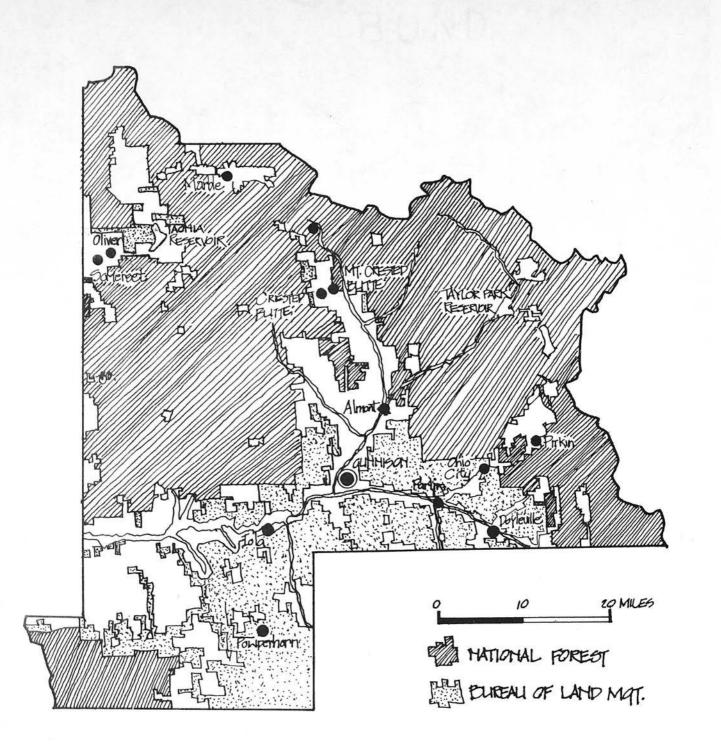
d. Existing and potential surface land use categorization

2. There should be a coordination agreement executed between the federal and the local government agencies. The federal agencies should agree to release information about mineral-related activity on federal land or federally owned mineral deposits periodically (such as quarterly or semi-annually) and to give local governments an adequate opportunity to respond to proposals for mineral extraction and processing. The information furnished by the federal agencies should include, but not necessarily be limited to:

a. Mineral leasing status, i.e. a list of applicants and their application contents as related to mineral exploration and mineral extraction,

b. Action taken or to be taken by a federal agency related to such application.

3. Incorporate necessary <u>mitigation measures</u> into zoning ordinances in order to minimize environmental impacts generated by the mining related activities.

4. Incorporate mining inventory into the county-wide <u>data bank</u> and resources management plan, which is discussed in the section dealing with management of natural resources. 

MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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Natural Resources, including air, water, soil, vegetation, wildlife and mineral deposits are part of our life support systems. They provide opportunity for various human activities such as agricultural, mining and mineral processing; natural preservation for scientific and educational uses; wildlife refuge and recreation.

In the primeval time, human activities were simple, i.e. the social structure was either nomadic or agrarian. As technology improved, materials and population increased and human activities involving utilization of natural resources increased in types and complexities. As a result, human activities now compete with each other for resources and space; potential conflicts, therefore, exist. An example of these potential conflicts is:

Large scale mining activity and mine-mouth industrial development can acquire a major piece of land and also can cause great influx of population. As a result, exisiting resources and space that could be used for other activities such as ranching or recreation, will be reduced and existing rural setting and rural ways of life will be altered. In order to minimize the potential conflicts among various human activities and to optimize resource utilization, management of natural resources is essential.

Gunnison County is sparse in population, rich in natural resources and blessed with natural beauty. These resources provide the county with an economic base and a sense of identity. Beyond that they are also of regional and national significance and their effective management is a critical concern.

The R/UDAT Team has considered the question of resource management and presents the following comments and recommenda-tions.

Ecological Resources

As a result of historic isolation, portions of Gunnison County provide unique opportunities for biological study free from the impact of man. The Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory at Gothic is an institution that has, since 1928, utilized these opportunities to contribute significantly to the scientific knowledge of high altitude environments. With the increase of development and human activity in the East River Valley in the last decade, some research programs have been threatened.

The unique opportunities for ecological study should be recognized for their scientific importance and policies to protect them should be implemented in the planning process. The R/UDAT Team concurs with the Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory in making recommendations for the preservation of the ecological resource. 1. The following areas contain populations of rare species which should be protected in the planning processes:

a. Upper Cement Creek including Italian Mountain, Mount Tilton, and Crystal Peak;

b. Upper Crystal River and East River including North Pole Basin, Galena Mountain, Treasury Mountain, Schofield Pass, and Bellview Mountain;

c. Virginia Basin and Copper Creek including Conundrum Pass and Copper Creek Basin;

d. Aquatic habitats in Upper Coal Creek including Copley Lake, Lily Lake (above Splain's Gulch) and Leechmere Lake (above Floresta);

e. Cumberland Pass and Cebolla Hot Springs.

2. The following areas have sufficient data available so that truly sophisticated questions are now being examined both in theoretical as well as in field biology:

- a. East River Valley
- b. Black Mesa

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c. Galena Mountain and North Pole Basin

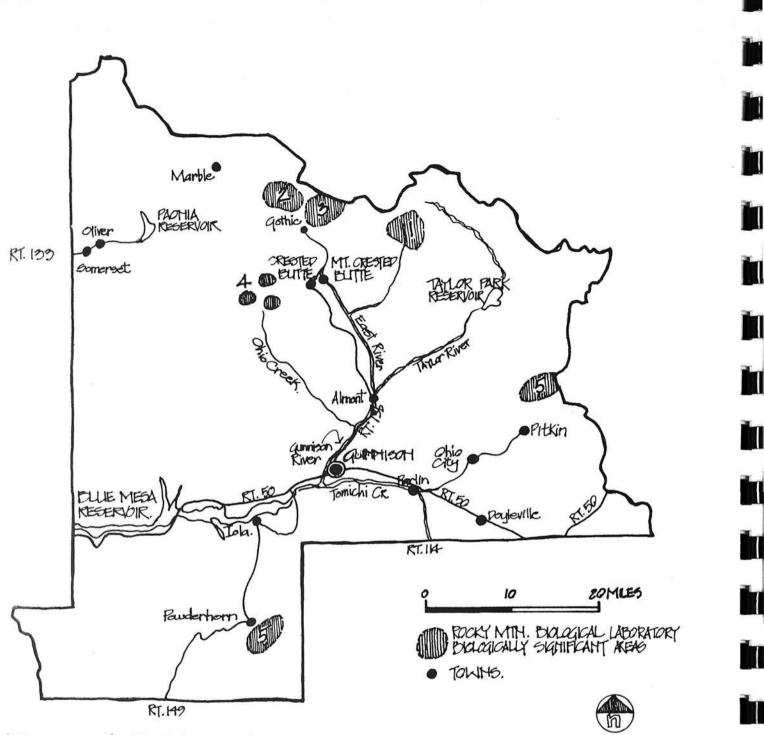
Their scientific value should be recognized and planning programs implemented to prevent excessive human impact.

3. Wildlife migration routes between summer and winter ranges should be protected and maintained.

4. The Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory should be consulted on major programs or projects which will affect any natural habitat in Gunnison County.

Fish and Wildlife

The fish and wildlife resource annually contributes \$18 million to the local economy. Management of the resource is under juris-



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AREAS OF RARE SPECIES

- 1. LIPPER CEMENT OREEK: ITALIAN MITH ; MT. TILTON & ORISTAL PEAK
- 2. LIPPER ORTEDTAL RIVER DEADT RIVER INCLUDING MORTH POLE DASIN, GALENA MITH, TREASURY MITH., SCHOPIELD PASS & DELLIVIEW MITN.
- 3. VIRGINIA BASIN & COPPER CREEK HOLDING CONLINDRUM PASS & COPPER CR. BASIN.
- 4. AQUATIC HABITATS IN UPPER COAL CREEK INCLUDING COPLEY LAKE, LILY LAKE & LEECHMORE LAKE
- 5. CUMBERLAND PASS & CEDOLLA HOT SPRINGS

diction of the Colorado Division of Wildlife whose efforts require the cooperation of federal land holding agencies, the county and private property owners. The basic limitation on the wildlife resource especially large game animals, is the availability of winter range. Recent state legislation (HB 1041 and HB 1034) gives the counties the appropriate regulatory tools to protect winter range on public land. Some prime winter range is on private lands. Acquisition of these lands would be desirable, but in most cases high land values prohibit such acquisition. Land exchanges are the more feasible and are promoted by the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management where possible. However, preservation of much of the winter range is dependent on county land use policies. High priority should be given to minimizing development in the key winter range areas and mitigating the impacts of any development permitted to occur.

Recreation Landscape

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Physical grandure and scenic beauty are Gunnison County's most precious natural resources. Protection and sensitive utilization of these resources must be the county's highest priority.

Public control of much of Gunnison County lessens county government's responsibility for managing scenic resources. However, federal planning is not always attentive to local concerns. Close coordination with the local population should be promoted by the federal agencies. Openess and cooperation is the key to the trust necessary to achieve mutually desirable goals.

Major expansion of recreation facilities should be undertaken only after full exploration of social, economic and environmental impacts of such expansion. Federal agencies should work closely with the county and other groups to generate guidelines for major recreational development.

The summer recreation potential such as backpacking, hiking and horsebacking riding has not been fully tapped. Limited trail and facility improvement in the back country and designation of appropriate wilderness and primitive areas should be encouraged.

Energy

Energy resources availability and potential for large scale energy development in Gunnison County is undetermined. Due to the mountainous land form of this region which imposes significant emission dispersion problems, it is unlikely that a major coalfired electric generation plant will be located here. There has been speculation about possible geothermal resources in this area because of the existence of several hot springs. If any large scale geothermal power plant development (or any other type of generation plant with a size bigger than 50 MW or 100 MW) were to be proposed in this county, the lack of a utility facility siting statute and authority at the state level, may deprive the county of assistance from state government to ensure that the development is warranted, and that the development is of minimum impact on environment, on local social and economic structure. But federal agencies inevitably will be involved, therefore, local concerns can be considered through the National Environmental Policy Act processes.

Small scale renewable alternative energy resources development and energy conservation methods should be explored. Such methods include various solar energy collection devices, heat pumps, and fireplaces as supplemental and auxiliary systems to the primary heating system. Supplemental funding for this type of research and demonstration can be obtained from the Energy Research and Development Administration. The local AIA office can provide technical assistance in obtaining this type of funding.

Resource Management Tools

In order to manage and optimize the utilization of natural resources in Gunnison County, we recommend that the County .proceed with the following action:

Establishment of an <u>intensive</u> and <u>extensive</u> <u>information</u> <u>center</u> or data bank in order to provide bases for decision-making processes.

This data bank should include social, economic and environmental data. The categories of data assembled should include:

Social:

population census data population projections tourism public service capacity - i.e. sewer, water, health, fire and police protection, schools, etc.

Economic: taxation revenue local economic structure economic input and output statistics

Environmental: mineral

geology and soil vegetation wildlife hydrology meteorological and climate

Since eighty percent of the land within Gunnison County is managed by federal agencies, such as the U.S. Forest Service, and the Bureau of Land Management, it is necessary that this data bank be established jointly by federal and local government. Because of the limited budget available for planning at county and local community levels, the federal government should provide long term financial aid and manpower support in establishing this data bank. Manpower support to county government can be achieved through the Intergovernmental Personnel Act of 1971.

As discussed in the section on the College, faculties and students in related fields such as biology, botany, zoology, geology, economics, recreation, sociology and proposed Small Town Institute should assist in the establishment of this data bank.

Information collected by LANDSAT and automatically interpreted by various available computer programs should be examined as a possible mehtod of information collection. LANDSAT can provide information for 20 to 30 various land covers. Financial aid on the practical application of LANDSAT data to local planning is available from NASA. Doug Mutter of the Federation of Rocky Mountain States, Denver, Colorado (telephone 303-458-8000) could be contacted for further exploration.

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Establish mechanisms that can be used to obtain either public or private funds for impact relief purposes.

The construction phase of major development projects such as a large scale ski resort or power plant will cause a great influx of population from several hundred to several thousand persons for a period of several years. During this period of time, schools could become congested, sewer and water service capacity could be exceeded, housing could become inadequate, mobile home residents would probably increase, market prices of commodities could inflate and local ways-of-life could be affected. Once construction is completed and construction workers leave, a boom and bust situation is likely. In order to avoid or to minimize these impacts, it is necessary to expand these public service systems temporarily prior to the construction. Temporary expansion of such systems requires funds; therefore, it is necessary to establish mechanisms at state and federal levels to ensure the availability of this type of funding. At the present, no federal laws provide package funding for total impact relief purposes, but such funding can be obtained on an individual basis such as highway funds for highway expansion and Housing and Urban Development funds for housing and local recreational facilities. On the other hand, it is not uncommon for developers to provide funds for impact relief. If the probable impact relief contribution were to be substantial, it might be necessary to explore ways and means of allowing such contributions as a credit against subsequent real property taxes.



GUNNISON

In early work-sessions with public officials twelve planning issues associated with Gunnison have been identified by the Manager's office. Of these the R/UDAT team addressed those which seemed within its area of competence:

1. Improving the use of land

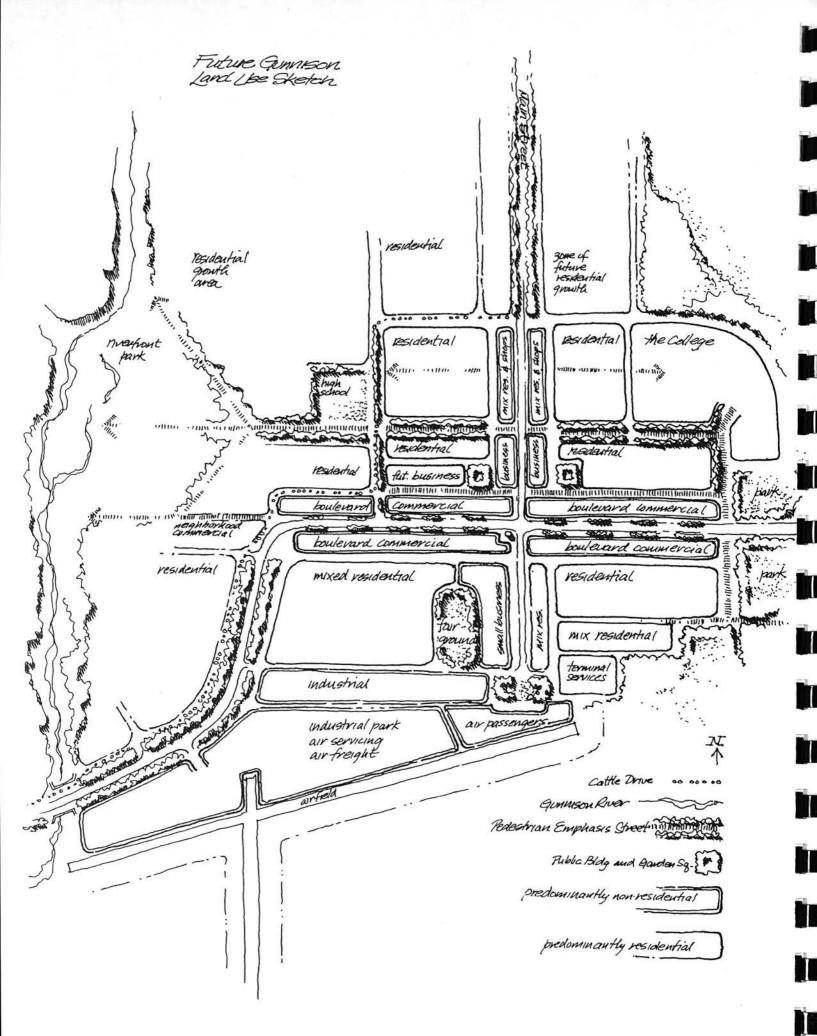
Issues: Strengthening the town center involves issues of where and how to grow. Can the supply of business zoned land be increased? Can Gunnison people enjoy greater shopping choice? Can visitor traffic be increased by physical changes in the central area?

Concerned Groups: Business community, town residents, town government, county-wide shoppers, students.

Recommendations:

a. Inventory current business space, building condition, available and potential parking, and other factors affecting business change.

b. Define an acceptable extension of the central business core, probably east-west, but, possibly north on Main Street;



also, revise zoning to discourage unwanted peripheral competition draining strength from the center.

c. Coordinate a new off-street parking program with growth of the shops.

d. Insure the new design spirit reflects <u>Gunnison</u>. Reinforce Gunnison's connection with a unique national recreation landscape, ranching area, college, and winter sports area.

e. Examine blocks adjacent to and in the retail area for mid-block parking opportunities to minimize disturbance to street frontages.

f. The overall image of Gunnison can be greatly enhanced and the value of neighborhoods increased by the distinct boundaries additional greenways and greenbelts can provide. One possible configuration for these improvements is shown in the diagram on the opposite page.

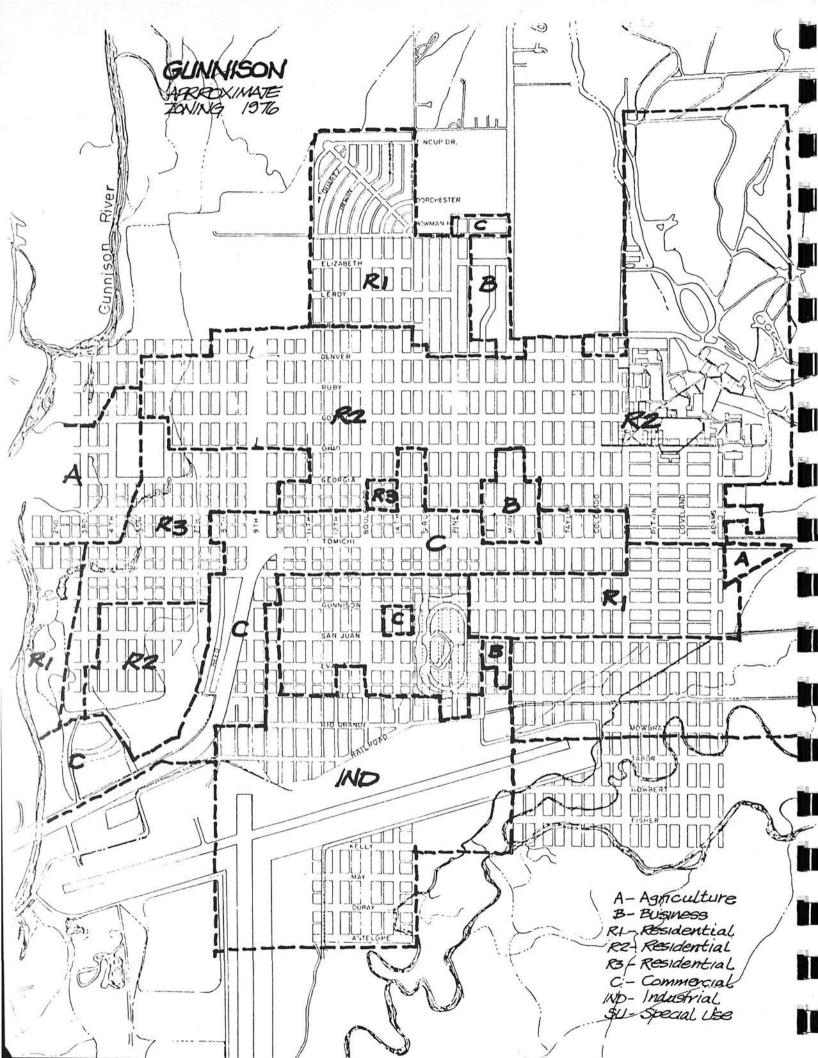
2. Upgrading Housing Policy

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Issues: The land use ordinances of a municipality should serve to implement the housing policy of the community. Gunnison is one of the more important educational and commercial centers on the Western Slope and, as such, requires a housing stock that offers a reasonably broad range of housing opportunities. In particular, the presence of a substantial number of students who elect to live off-campus, housing creates a steady demand for moderate cost rental housing that would not otherwise exist.

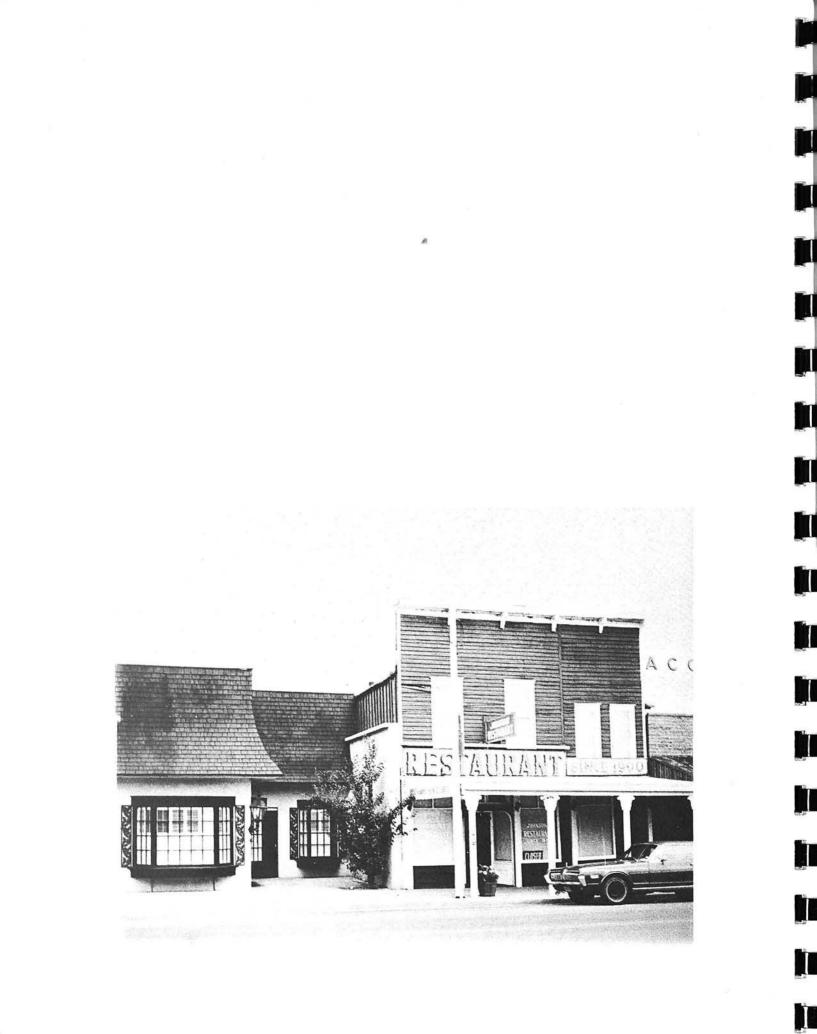
Concerned Groups: All Gunnison residents



The current zoning ordinance of the City of Gunnison has some deficiencies that have recently been responsible for needless public misunderstanding and which will almost certainly produce controversy in the future. The following deficiencies are particularly striking:

a. There are <u>no density limitations on multiple family</u> <u>dwellings</u>. There is a minimum lot size requirement of 6,250 square feet, but there is no provision relating lot size to permitted number of dwelling units (for example, 1,200 square feet of lot area for each dwelling unit). As a consequence the only limit on the number of multiple family dwelling units that can be constructed on any given parcel is the zoning envelope created by the 40% maximum lot coverage, the 35-foot maximum height, and (in the R-2 zone only) the 400 square feet per dwelling unit open space requirement.

b. In the R-3 zone mobile home parks are permitted as a matter of right if the mobile home park meets standards set in the ordinance. As a consequence, mobile home parks could be interspersed with traditional residential buildings.
c. Although the R-2 zone appears to be substantially built up with single family residences, two-family and multiple family residences may be constructed in that zone.
d. The zoning ordinance is silent about what may be a very common practice -- the renting of one or two rooms in a single family residence to students. Renting of guest rooms is prohibited only in the Agricultural zone. Rooming and boarding houses, which are undefined terms, are an allowable conditional use in the R-3 zone, but the ordinance leaves it unclear whether renting one or two rooms to students would make a single family home a rooming house.



In addition, the data base of the city does not include a detailed land use inventory. In particular, there is no parcel inventory of housing stock and actual use of residential structures. As a result, the city has been hindered in developing a housing policy.

We perceive four issues with respect to housing policy in Gunnison:

a. Should the city continue its present practice of permitting single family and multiple family residences to be intermingled in two of its three residential zones?b. Should the city adopt a specific density limitation for multiple family dwellings?

c. Should mobile home parks remain a permitted use in the general residential area?

d. Should the zoning regulations take explicit account of the market for student rental housing?

Recommendations: The R/UDAT team has the following recommendations relative to the housing policy of the city:

a. A detailed parcel by parcel <u>land use inventory</u>, including occupancy of residential structures, should be undertaken.
When completed, the inventory should be kept current with data from building permits and occupancy certificates.
b. The city should eliminate multiple family dwellings, but not duplexes, as a permitted use in the R-2 zone. The implementation of this recommendation should await completion of the detailed land use inventory so that the probable number of nonconforming uses that would be created can be determined. The land use inventory would provide a basis for determining if existing multiple family dwellings might logically be reclassified in the R-3 zone.

c. The R-3 residential district regulations should be revised by placing a density limit on multiple family structures and by removing mobile home parks as a permitted use. The city should make it clear that the R-3 zone is in intended primarily for multiple family buildings, whether the dwelling units are rental apartments or condominimums, title to which is held by individual owners.

d. A separate zoning district should be established for mobile home parks and existing mobile home parks should be placed in this new zone. Applications to reclassify presently vacant parcels in the mobile home park district should be subject to standards relating to the location of the proposed mobile home park and its internal design and arrangement. The zoning regulations should recognize that mobile home parks are, for Gunnison, a relatively high density, moderately priced, multiple family use that is entitled to a residential environment and should not be relegated to commercial sections of the community. The zoning ordinance standards for mobile home parks should provide generous setbacks from perimeter lot lines and landscaping of mobile home sites should be required. The minimum lot size and spacing requirements in the present ordinance are adequate (except for double-wide units which should have a minimum lot size of 2,400 square feet), but those requirements should be strictly enforced in future mobile home parks.

e. The city needs to deal candidly with the provision of student lodging accomodations in its established residential districts. We recommend that rental of one or two rooms to students be permitted in single family and two-family dwellings in all residential zones (but not in mobile homes or apartments because living space is more limited). Such a regulation would encourage the provision of additional

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decent, economical housing for students and would enhance the family income of many households.

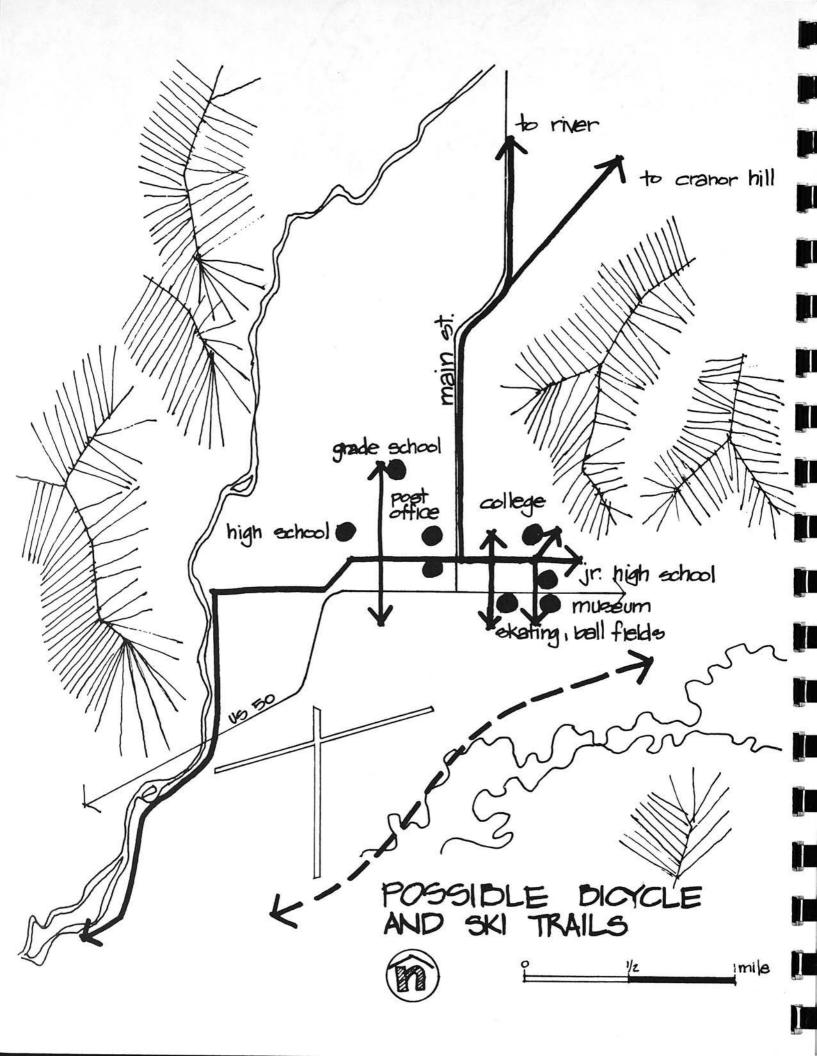
3. <u>Recreation Facilities</u> -- Issues and recommendations evaluating the importance of additional community recreation facilities are covered in the social problems and college sections of this report. The great beauty provided by Gunnison's present stand of cottonwoods form a framework for additional greenway and park planning. Some preliminary thoughts on combining such planting with pedestrian and bikeways, cross country skiing, and other outdoor recreation is discussed below.

Issues: The <u>need for</u> open space or <u>greenbelt areas</u> within and around Gunnison was expressed to the R/UDAT team on several occasions. Efforts in this direction have included a comprehensive recreation report prepared by Colorado University students, apparently with little impact.

There is a real opportunity present to landscape portions of Tomichi Avenue and Main Street.

Concerned Groups: This would provide an amenity to students and town people, and encourage pedestrian shopping, as well as serve as an attraction for tourists. This could be accomplished through tree plantings, (as appear in residential areas) small grass areas and benches. The town irrigation system can also be integrated to provide a green strip as a welcome relief to the extensive presence of hard surfaces downtown. On Tomichi Avenue this strip could terminate at the museum at the east end of town.

An additional consideration should be the continued <u>preservation</u> of some of the <u>unique lands</u> around the town such as the broad fields at the eastern approach of town, and areas along the river. These areas can be tied together with the green strip



along Tomichi Avenue.

Bicycle/Ski Trails

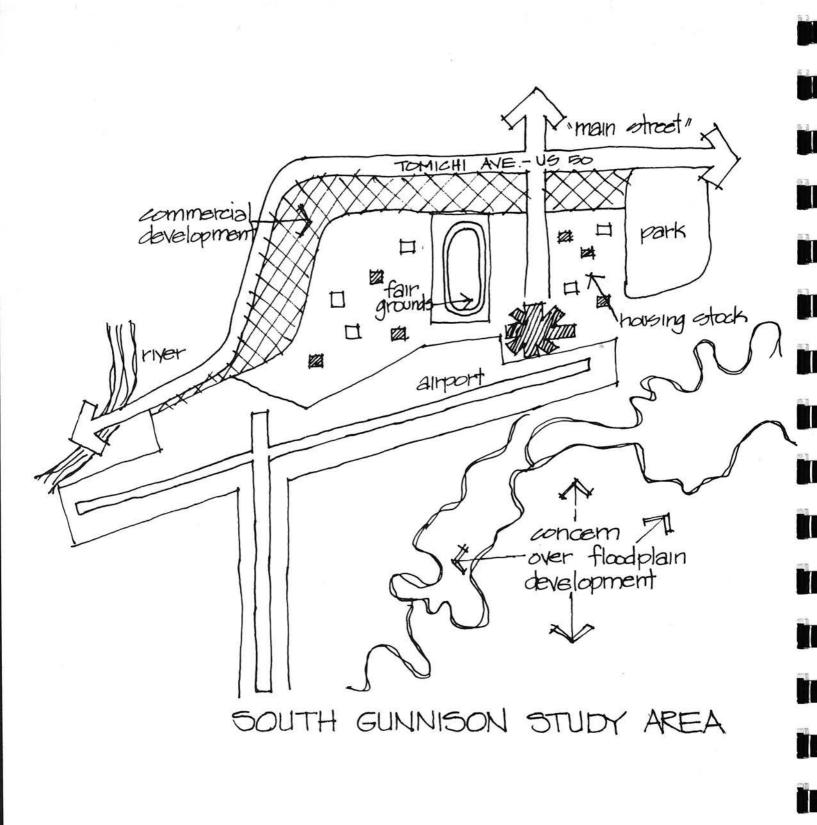
Gunnison also must meet the needs of bicyclists and cross country skiers in the town. A system of trails has been proposed by a member of the planning commission and was subsequently turned down by the planning commission, apparently due to concern over conflicts between cars and bicycles. The R/UDAT team is confident that these conflicts can be eliminated through a well studied design. If the bicycle and ski trail system is established separate from auto rights of way, then safety hazards will be greatly reduced from auto rights of way, then safety hazards will reduced and the town's residents will benefit from less traffic and alternate means of moving about in town.

The proposed system attempts to link potential destinations of bicycle and ski traffic: the college; elementary, junior high and high schools; the retail commercial area; and recreation facilities in town. Connections are also provided north to the existing trail out of town, and west to the river and Blue Mesa reservoir.

It is important to consider climate in locating the trails. When possible on east-west segments, trails should be located on the north side of the street so that buildings provide wind protection. Similarly on north-south segments, locating on the west side will do the same.

4. South Gunnison and the Airport

Issue: A number of environmental problems are keeping the area generally south of Tomichi from realizing its full value to the community, including the airport.



Concerned Groups: Townspeople, air travelers, county-wide visitors and residents passing through the area, businesses and tourists on Highway 50.

Recommendations:

a. Surface drainage from city streets plus meanders of the Tomichi River saturate an area well into the subdivided blocks. The city should examine the removal of subdivision in wetlands south of the main runway, and provide drainage for blocks to the north.

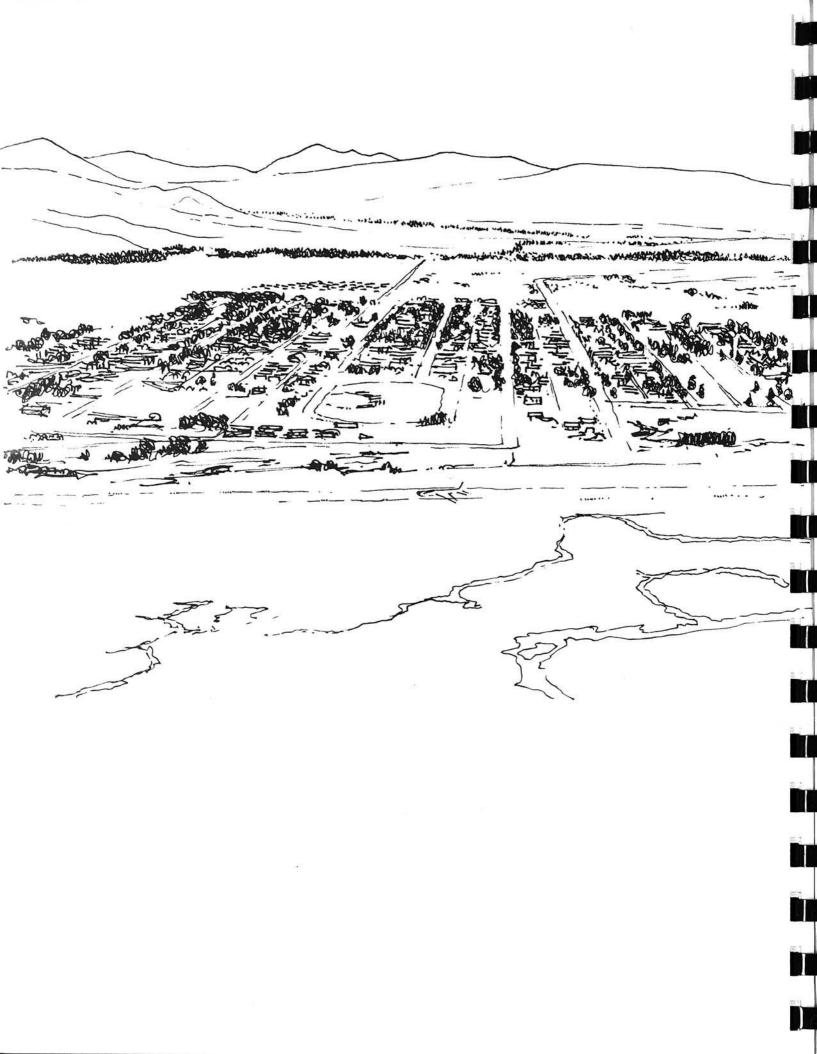
b. The city should encourage study of the merits of moving the airport terminal facilities to the foot of Main Street, and design the building(s) in a welcoming and special spirit. Perhaps rehabilitation of the old rail terminal can be reconsidered if a preservation grant were obtained.

c. The County fairgrounds represent a particular opportunity due, in part, to its large parcel. Greater use of the grounds might be achieved if it were scheduled into school recreation and entertainment programs. As South Gunnison's potential neighborhood park, it could still function for County-wide celebrations, special days, festivals.

d. The strip of automotive commercial frontage on the south side of Tomichi would welcome visitors and function to support the town's economy if more attractive street design and landscaping were provided. See the portion of this section on bike trails for further thoughts.

e. The mixture of trailer homes irregularly sited among permanent residential structures will not threaten property values throughout the neighborhood if a block by block code enforcement program corrects the most flagrant site planning and building condition problems. An improvement in housing for many residents and students will result.

f. Sign restrictions along Highway 50 and in other parts of Gunnison are relaxed and often detract from the scenery,



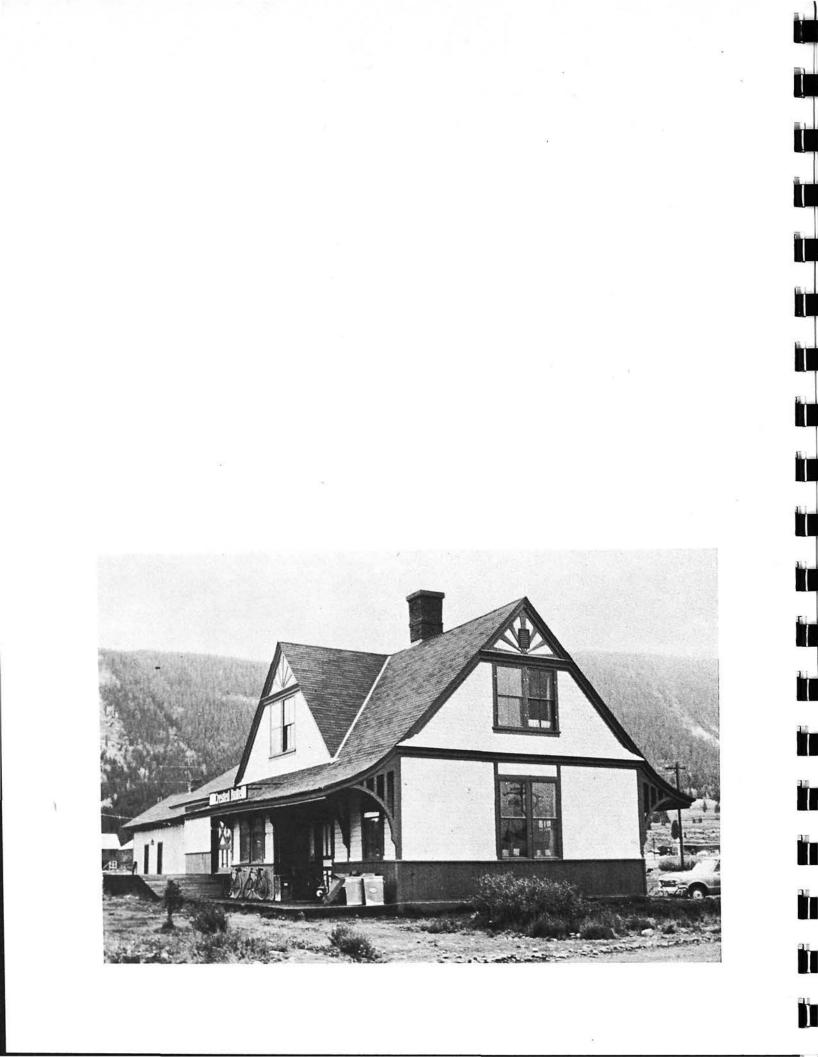
views, and other important characteristics of Gunnison. Early attention should be given to revised sign regulations that would ban off-site advertising in the central area, and might go much further in the control of size, lighting, height, and materials used.

5. A General Comment

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The R/UDAT team discovered a consistent disregard for the potential public benefits of a more systematic analysis of the town's environmental changes and needs. A significant portion of funds and subsidies from state and federal programs to assist local planning may be lost to Gunnison because of inadequate long-range planning in the city.

This is not to say that Gunnison's physical beauty and attractive living environment has been achieved without years of long effort on the part of the town's government and citizens. We are simply concerned that the rate of change occurring in the valley today cannot be successfully met by the city's present administrative structure. In that regard, we would urge the inclusion of new skills, new internal working relationships and new capabilities to protect and enhance the extraordinarily beautiful site and townscape Gunnison enjoys.



CRESTED BUTTE

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Crested Butte is an example of a community unique not just to Gunnison County but to the nation as a whole. It displays a unique approach to its problems, as well. These, as identified by the town government, fall into three categories:

1. Environmental degradation:

a. <u>air pollution</u> resulting, in the winter, from burning locally available fuels in Crested Butte and Mt. Crested Butte, and from automotive exhausts;

b. expansion of the mining industry;

2. Transportation: what to do with the <u>private automobile</u> and how to control it;

3. Subsistence: how to increase the <u>income</u> levels of community residents without further aggravating "1" and "2" above.

We have chosen to describe Crested Butte in considerable detail, <u>not</u> because it has <u>more</u> problems than any other community surveyed by R/UDAT, but because it is an example of a community that <u>recognizes</u> its problems and is taking creative steps toward a solution. Crested Butte started as a mining town. Immediately after the mines had closed, the only residents were former miners. About 1970, a number of young people moved into town; because of their modes of dress, their social attitudes, and the fact that those who were employed tended to be artists and artisans, they were dubbed "hippies" by people outside Crested Butte, and the image, sadly, remains.

Other groups arrived later, until in 1976 the population composition was more or less as follows; diverse groups with differing points of view on desirable futures for Crested Butte:

1. "Old-Timers" (maximum 5%-10% of the population);

2. "New old-timers" (arrived before 1970);

3. Families arriving after 1970;

Self-employed and seasonly employed young people (including some "ski bums");

5. A small residue of assorted drop-outs;

6. "Trust-funders" (an affectionate term for people who receive checks from home at the Post Office).

Some permanent residents live in Crested Butte year-round; others depart during the Spring and Fall.

Crested Butte is a rapidly growing town. Its population, which barely topped 370 in 1970, has risen to 1000 by 1976. It

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represented only 5% of Gunnison County's population in 1970, but extrapolations of current trends (assuming growth continues at the present rate) indicate that it will contain between 15% and 20% of the County's permanent residents by 1985, less than 10 years from now.

A 1973 study, performed by BKR Associates, and supported in part by HUD 701 funding, stated: ". . . compared with national figures, it is obvious that Crested Butte is a very unusual town. The statement was based on the characteristics of 218 people who completed an attitude survey in April and May, 1973. The responses, more representative of recent residents (and, probably, some transients) than of old timers, indicated that of the people responding to the questionnaire:

70% were between 20 and 30 years of age 87.5% came from metropolitan areas (64.1% in the Western U.S.A.) 80% had lived in Crested Butte less than five years 17% had lived in Crested Butte more than 10 years 84.8% has at least started college 45.4% had received Bachelor's degrees 28.6% had at least some graduate study 56% said they were planning to reside in Crested Butte more than five years 28% planned to reside from 2 to 5 years 48% own homes 44% rent homes

But, the Crested Butters' incomes do not reflect their apparent unusually high level of education. In 1973, 68% earned less than \$5,000 annually and only slightly over 12% more than \$10,000 a year, according to the survey.

The rapid rise in populaton points to several issues. Water, sewage, and garbage disposal, while under attention, continue to be problems: Coal Creek is subject to flooding, only primary treatment is applied to sewage, and much garbage has to be carted out of the community. The town has opted for full development within its existing boundaries, which minimizes transportation problems and adverse impact upon surrounding natural areas, but increases such problems as storage of local fuels (coal and wood) the burning of which also pollutes the air.

Housing continues to be a problem in at least two senses: many houses, while extremely attractive, are not up to code, and, as is the case with students in Gunnison, houses (and the sheds behind them) are often occupied by more people than existing ordinances, inadequately enforced, permit. This is in part a reflection of its major problem: lack of income-producing work.

The governing body of the town, young, vital, and well-informed, fully recognizes the problem of Crested Butte's current economic situation:

". . . the perils implicit in a one-dimensional economy, based on recreation and tourism, are real and potentially dangerous. One goal is to broaden this base in a manner consistent with our other goals, so as to insure greater community stability and a wider range of services."

Recent arrivals in Crested Butte came because of the incomparable mountain scenery, the charming and historic little town, the clean air, the surrounding open spaces, and the recreational opportunities 1

of the area. For these amenities, they appeared willing to sacrifice the American Dream of success, to subsist in some cases on income from the $4\frac{1}{2}$ month ski season and meager earnings from the few off-season tourists visiting the town. The presently-initiated Crested Butte Summer Events have apparently been quite successful and have brought additional income into the town, but not as much as will eventually be needed if current housing and other difficulties are to be overcome.

Clearly, additional sources of income are needed, and the prospects are at the moment currently uncertain. Expansion of skiing capacity at Mt. Crested Butte and the possible opening of Snodgrass Mountain to skiing might increase available jobs but by increasing vehicular traffic as well during the winter season, destroy some of the area's amenities. Establishment of year-round mining activities would provide more jobs and make it feasible to open more stores in Crested Butte, but would destroy other amenities. Strip mining would have obvious effects upon the visual quality of the landscape, as would shaft mining with exposed tailings. Trucks might have to pass through the town, adding noise and air pollution. Perhaps mining companies might be induced to hire people already resident in Crested Butte; if not, or if the number of Crested Butte residents qualified and willing to do mining were inadequate, miners would have to be brought in from elsewhere, adding to the pressure for additional subdivisions, and markedly changing the current population composition of Crested Butte, and adding additional pressure for expanding the primary school.

Further residential development in the neighboring area would provide construction work, and, if architecturally and

geographically controlled, could have minimal impact upon the visual attractiveness of the town and its surroundings, but would probably increase the in-season parking problem. The 1973 report recommended attracting "environmental education programs to the town in an effort to diversity the economy," and the 1976 summer season was a small step in that direction.

Of course, there are a number of small shops and stores in Crested Butte, but the turnover rate among "New-Timer" businesses appears to be quite high. One possible reason relates, again, to the negative image attached to "New-Timers". Work, to many people, means an activity engaged in steadily and continuously, at fixed times, a fixed number of hours per day and days per week. Some shop-owners in Crested Butte work hard, but seasonally and at odd hours; other, enthralled by the surrounding scenic beauty or unsurpassed recreational opportunities, "close shop" whenever they feel like hiking or skiing. The absence of a highly visible work ethic unfortunately is thus a cause both of a negative image and of lost income.

The town government has been quite imaginative in its search for funds to support public works efforts, securing money from the Farm Home Administration, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Bicentennial Commission. But the need for a variety of economic solutions is acute. ". . . leisure time resort prices are driving out people on fixed incomes and dissuading a mix of economic and social levels from entering town."

Economically, as the citizens recognize, Crested Butte is almost entirely dependent upon surrounding communities. The tourists who visit in the winter are coming primarily to the nearby ski area in separately incorporated Mt. Crested Butte, and not to Crested Butte itself. Supplies must be brought in from Gunnison, nearly 30 miles away. At present, hitch-hiking, in the absence of public transportation, serves adequately for transporting people, but private cars are currently indispensable for transporting goods. Crested Butte's town businesses subsidize a winter bus service owned by Crested Butte Development Corporation which connects Crested Butte with Gunnison, meets incoming planes, allowing Crested Butte residents who work in Mt. Crested Butte ski area to commute back and forth, and Crested Butte residents who wish simply to ski to leave their private cars at home. Indeed, it seems that attitudes toward the limitation of automobile use vary greatly between Crested Butte and Mt. Crested Butte. An attitude survey conducted in the ski town in 1976, roughly parallel to the 1973 Crested Butte study, received responses from 60 property owners, 2/3 of these disfavored or strongly disfavored the limitation of private automobile use in Mt. Crested Butte; in the earlier study, almost 3/4 of Crested Butters surveyed favored or strongly favored limitation of automobile use in their own community.

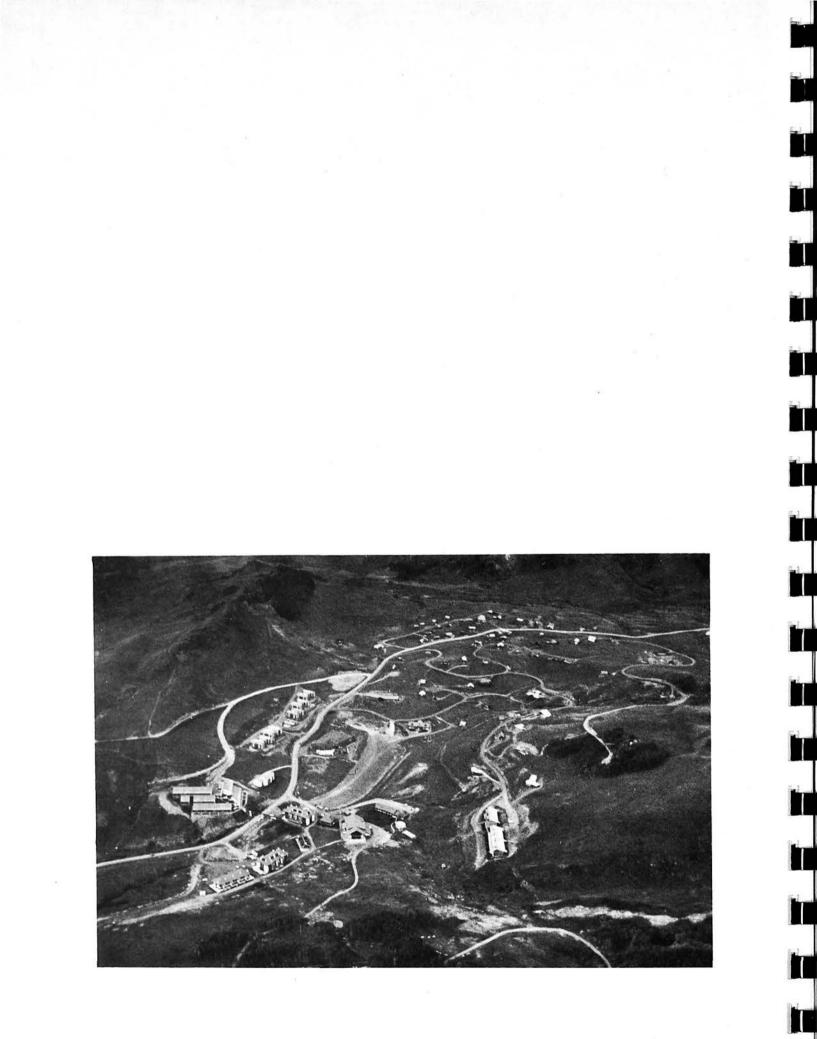
What can a R/UDAT team bring to a community such as the now-young, recently rejuvenated, historically significant Crested Butte? We have attempted to respond to concerns characterizing the entire population of the town: a desire to preserve assets inherent in the natural and built environments, coupled with a need to move toward a sounder, more stable economy, better integrated into the economy of the surrounding region. Toward this end, the human and environmental pros and cons of several alternative courses of action have been indicated in the preceding section. Our recommendation is that the citizens of Crested Butte continue to respond to their well-recognized problems with the concern they have already displayed.

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MT. CRESTED BUTTE

The challenge to planners in addressing the emergence of Mt. Crested Butte lies in the answer to the question: How can a major development and a subsequent new municipality be incorporated in an area of modest human scale without disrupting various aspects of community life?

The development at Mt. Crested Butte has had a significant impact on the surrounding area. The impact of this development has been, and continues to be felt by Gunnison County and the communities of Gunnison, Almont, Crested Butte in the East River Valley.

Mt. Crested Butte is currently an incorporated town with its own sewer system, water system, mayor and city council, fire district, zoning code, and police protection.

Mt. Crested Butte has a year round population of 129 residents, with a peak residency of permanent and temporary residents of approximately 2,250, more or less, on an annually fluctuating basis. It is estimated that Mt. Crested Butte contributes \$12,000,000 both directly and indirectly to the local economy. Mt. Crested Butte is a semi-independent economic entity that has problems and issues to deal with. Some issues it must solve with its own ingenuity and perseverance for others it is dependent on the cooperation of Crested Butte and the surrounding communities.

Some of the issues that Mt. Crested Butte must solve on its own behalf are:

How to establish an identity as a ski area and as a community.
 How can Mt. Crested Butte minimize the seasonality of visitors to the area?

3. What kind of a cooperative effort with interested parties can be instigated to financially strengthen and accelerate occupancy of existing condominiums and properties?

The R/UDAT team offers the following suggestions related to Mt. Crested Butte:

 In order to establish the desired identity at this point in time it appears that several factors must be taken into consideration:
 a. To what segment of the skier market is Mt. Crested Butte attempting to appeal?

b. Can the skier market be geographically identified?

c. Is the image emphasis to be placed on skiing or apres-ski?d. How can the areas identified be carried over to the non-ski seasons to maximize the benefit of image creation?e. What permanent major off-season activity can be incorporated into the facility that may assist with this image?

2. The following alternatives may be explored to minimize the seasonality of the Mt. Crested Butte area.

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a. A major scale off-season annual repeat activity which fits into the overall image of the Crested Butte area and can be expanded in future years without changing the basic image and format.
Examples: The Shakespearean Festival in Ashland, Oregon; the Music Festival at Aspen; the Mardi Gras in New Orleans; the Sante Fe Opera, etc.
b. Creation of other events that take advantage of the recreational assets in Gunnison County. Learn to Water Ski Week at Blue Mesa Lake, photographic seminars, horseback trips, rock climbing seminars, etc.

3. Every effort should be made for cooperation between interested parties for the creative marketing plans of the non sold condominium units.

a. Consider marketing as a block on an attractive basis to local Gunnison investors so the residents of the community can feel a part of the ski area community.

b. Look at the possibility of selling week units in specific units to insure activity on a year round basis and attempt to get some cash flow out of existing structures.

Other issues which Mt. Crested Butte must solve in conjunction with other communities are:

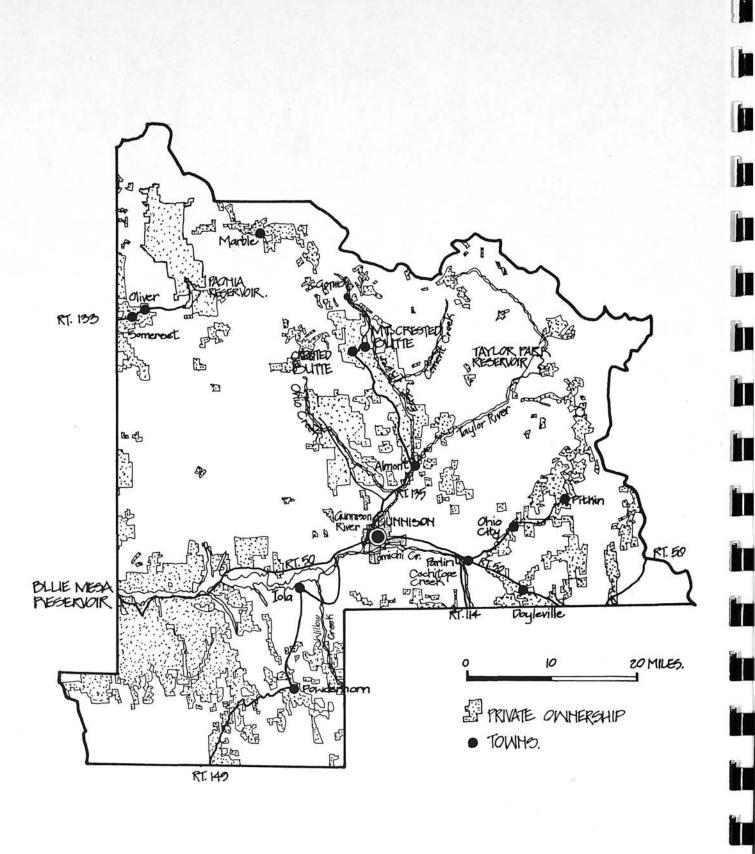
1. How can a transportation system be jointly created with surrounding communities to insure the tourist the greatest ease in arriving at Mt. Crested Butte at any time during the year?

2. How can design issues, boundary issues, municipal services, cooperation with other common issues be mitigated so the towns of Mt. Crested Butte and Crested Butte are headed in the same direction?

3. What activities and events can be created by other communities

that may use the facilities available at Mt. Crested Butte on a year round basis?

On all of the issues that Mt. Crested Butte must solve in conjunction with other communities, it is the recommendation of the R/UDAT team that a straightforward communication line be kept open between all parties. It has been the observation of the R/UDAT team that the resources for resolution, the desire to solve problems on a fair and equitable basis exists in every entity and level of local government that we encountered and we have no other suggestions that that communication be encouraged and expanded.



OTHER COMMUNITIES

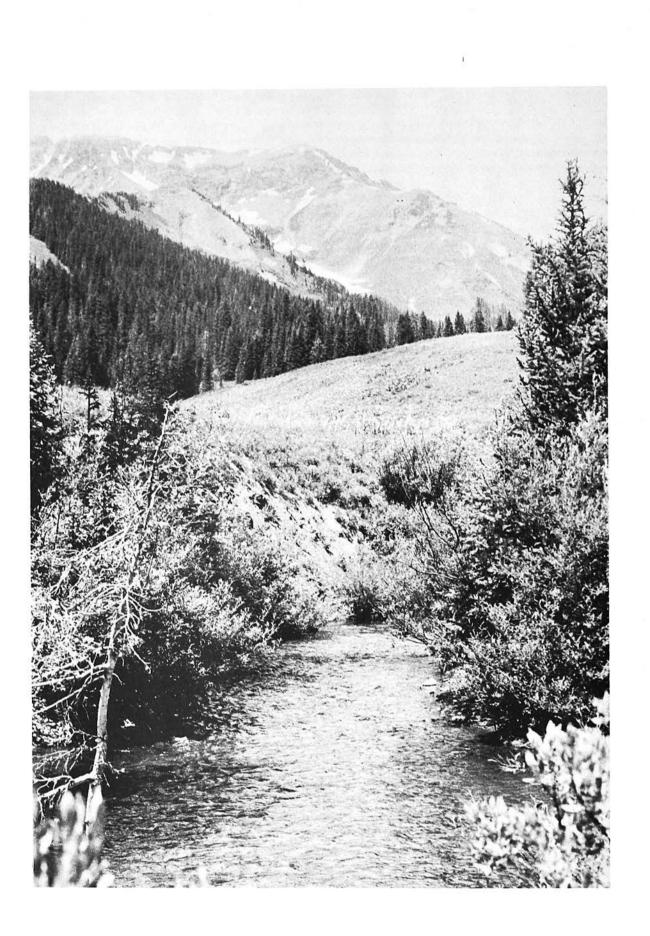
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In addition to the cities a number of settlements are scattered throughout the county. One interesting example is the coal mining town of Somerset on the northwestern edge of Gunnison County. This community is functionally tied to Delta County with schools and services being provided by the town of Paonia, yet makes a considerable contribution in taxes to Gunnison County by virtue of the coal mining operation. Generally the town feels that it gets few services compared to the taxes paid. When the county studies the Somerset Watershed it should address the following concerns:

1. need for a park of children's play area

2. improvement of police and sewer service and road maintenance

3. speed controls on Highway 135 through town.

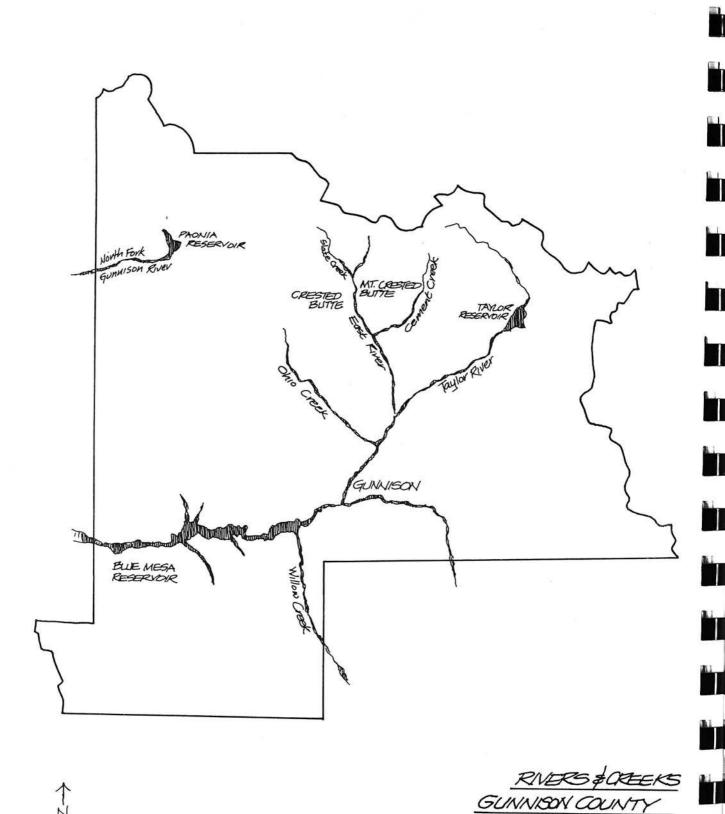


THE RIVERS

Perhaps the most challenging planning problem which faces Gunnison County planners relates to the three streams which bring life and beauty to the river-basin upstream from Gunnison.

The streams are part of the Upper Gunnison Sub-drainage Basin and represent a true "life-line" along the valley which connects the County Seat with the old and the new Crested Buttes. Gunnison River is born at Almont from the confluence of the East and Taylor Rivers. The first one originates above Crested Butte, while East River starts at the Butte--true to its name--from the east.

Along their courses, the Slate, East and Gunnison Rivers are still largely undeveloped, though, of course, much of the river frontage is in private ownership. They offer a wide variety of recreation opportunities and scenic experiences -- where public access is provided. There is a threat however that unless public action is taken -- unless access-rights to the shores of the rivers are purchased by the public, -- the rivers will be gradually "built up" with private lots and the general public will be restricted to a few campgrounds or "public beaches" and fishing areas kept open by the authorities.



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The rivers are an irreplaceable asset to the people and the R/UDAT Team urges the County that:

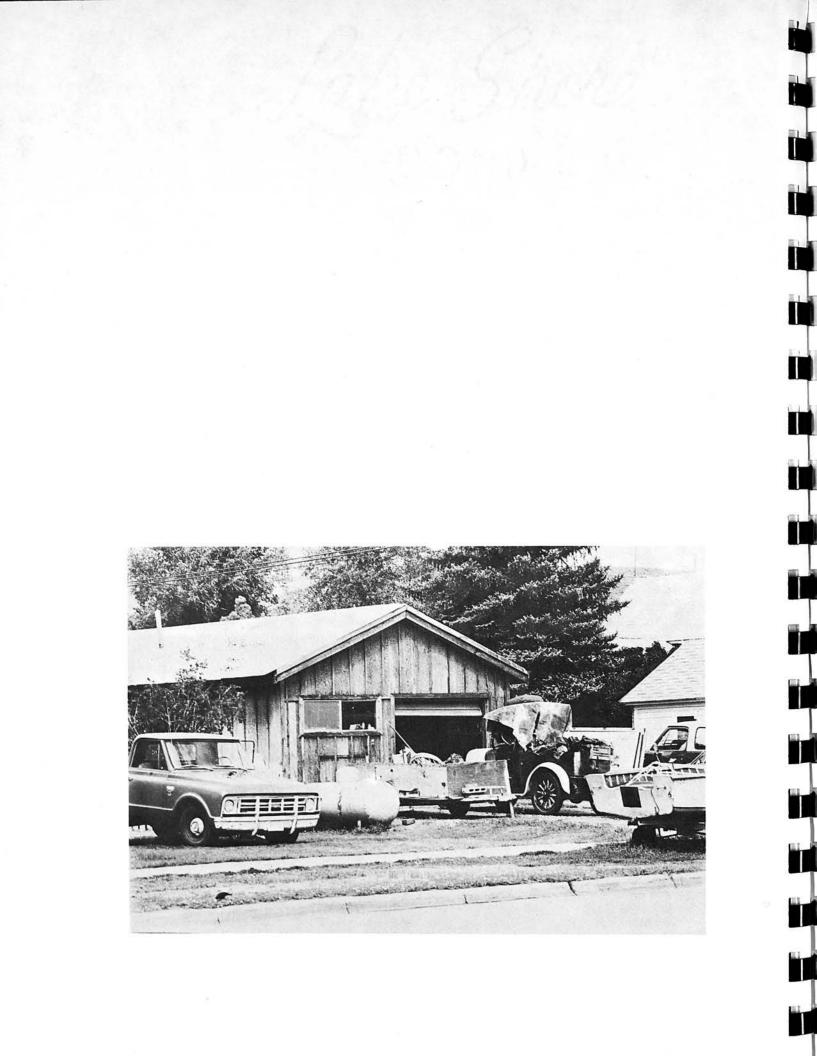
1. A careful survey of the river-frontages be made to gain a full understanding of their scenic and recreational potential and

2. Plans be prepared for the conservation and/or the public use of the rivers and their environs. These plans will have to identify public access, potential use, recommended conservation measures and/or improvements and, most importantly, estimated costs and recommended methods of financing.

Without the purchase of the use of scenic rights of the riverfronts most residents will gradually lose access to the rivers, a sad prospect indeed. We recommend that the County and the related towns move to secure public rights to the three rivers without delay.

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SOCIAL ISSUES

"Social Issues" might be defined as those topics on which citizens seem most anxious to avoid discussion. They are generated by the presence in Gunnison County's municipalities of a diverse population with some conflicting interests, of physical facilities which fail to meet the needs and desires of one or more groups, and of "social problems".

Certain aspects of the division between "Town and Gown" in Gunnison constitute a social issue. A significant element of this division concerns housing. As in Crested Butte, where the nature of housing occupancy frequently violates local ordinances, offcampus student residences in Gunnison often violate both local ordinances and local sensibilities. College housing is adequate for only half the student body. At least 1500 students seek quarters in town. Some students find apartments, others share houses, still others occupy converted garages or mobile homes, or take rooms out-of-season in local motels.

Some townspeople have a rather negative image of student dwellings; students are thought to be party-giving rowdies, destructive of property and devoid of common courtesies, heedless of their nonstudent neighbors. The image is far from the reality, but persists nontheless. Some residents of Gunnison would like to see dwellings for students confined to a single area of town, creating areas where students can "raise hell" without disturbing neighbors. Others see value in having students living in various locations. ("Without kids we'd be in bad shape intellectually and economically", said one resident.) Some remedies for the problem are suggested in the section of this report entitled "The College".

The concern extends beyond student housing to all multiple dwellings; clearly the transition between R-1 and R-2 in Gunnison in terms both of visual characteristics and population density, is harsh indeed. The negative feeling about multiple dwellings has led to some townspeople suggesting that all condominiums, town houses and student "communes": be clustered together in annexations. It seems that a change of attitude toward multiple dwellings is required; simply rezoning Gunnison will not solve the problem. It may be possible, for example, to establish additional apartments over downtown shops and stores.

Finally, the cost of housing and of utilities (especially heating fuel, is making it difficult for people on fixed or moderate incomes to meet expenses without markedly reducing their standards of living. "The money we pay for heating bills would pay the whole rent if we moved somewhere else", commented one person.

Recreation is another social issue. The ski area at Mt. Crested Butte, for example, is now priced out of the reach of some residents of Gunnison and of many students, creating hard feelings. But the problem exists concerning recreation <u>within</u> municipalities, as well. There are inadequate recreation facilities in Gunnison for children, adolescents and senior citizens. The only place where senior citizens can congregate is Webster Hall; it is "their" social center, but generally agreed to be dingy, rundown, and depressing. It is also the place where high school and junior high school dances are held. When school is not in

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session, there is virtually no place for adolescents to "hang out". The usual result of this is petty crime; that it has been occurring is suggested by a headline in the September 6, 1976, <u>Gunnison Country Times</u>: "Police have their hands full--thefts, vandalism are increasing".

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Many citizens have voiced the need for additinal parks, perhaps utilizing river frontage, and for a community recreation center, incorporating a swimming pool and other facilities.* The Cranor Hill Area offers winter recreational opportunities for Gunnison's children, but requires added public investment.

People older than adolescents but younger than senior citizens apparently find things to do in their evening leisure time. Gunnison boasts a variety of clubs, service societies, etc; and the college attracts or creates numerous cultural activities and opportunities for those who wish to take advantage of them at the college; the town's nightcap gives tourists the impression that "nothing is happening". Further, the college is closed in the summer, the peak for Gunnison's tourism.

"Social problems" include crime, alcholism, drug abuse, and emotional difficulties. A comprehensive community mental health center was established in Gunnison in 1968 as a subsidiary for the mental health center in Montrose. Until the summer of 1976 this facility was woefully understaffed, but the addition of two staff members in late August was made possible by the award of a conversion grant in August, 1976. Prior to this time, only crisis intervention was possible, but preventive therapy can now be

*There are pools at the college and the Golf Club, but the college is not open in summer, and the golf club has threatened to close its pool to public use if membership increases. undertaken. The center, which treats alcoholics and addicts in addition to people with emotional difficulties, reports that the rate of alcoholism appears to be somewhat higher than the national average - the determination of just <u>how much</u> higher, however, awaits the completion of statistical analyses now underway.

"Travelling counsellors" make periodic trips to such communities as Crested Butte and Lake City. The "cabin fever" (experienced in winter by people with no particular love for the outdoors) and high divorce rates* reported in these areas may be problems of adjustment of relatively new arrivals to some aspects of Gunnison County life.

Volunteer Counselling Services, Inc., currently provides presentence investigation, probation services, family counselling, juvenile diversion, referrals to job corps and vocational rehabilitation centers, and an alcohol education school; but its future is uncertain. VCS's funding terminates on June 30, 1977; only if support is obtained beyond that time from Gunnison County and its municipalities can the last three services be continued beyond the middle of next calendar year.

What do Gunnison County residents <u>want</u>? What <u>don't</u> they want? What would they <u>like</u> to have?

An attitude survey of Gunnison County residents was conducted by the Gunnison County Citizen's Committee for the Gunnison County Planning Commission in July and August, 1974. About 410 households in Gunnison County were randomly sampled and 335 questionnaires returned. The responses to four questions were of particular interest to the R/UDAT Team:

*Do people come to Gunnison County "to save their marriages"?

1. "If you were allocating the Gunnison County tax dollar, please indicate your feelings as to <u>the importance</u> of each... area of community concern" and "which of these areas of community concern needs the most immediate action?" "Education" and "Community Services" received the highest "importance" ratings. Greatest need for immediate action scored "Planning and Zoning" and "Community Services".

2. "What is it in Gunnison County that you would like to see retained or preserved?" Most frequently mentioned in response to this question, in decreasing order of frequency, were the following ten items: Heritage Environment Small town atmosphere Open space Ranching Community features Air and water quality Wildlife Small Population Education

3. "What would you like to see added in Gunnison County?" The following were the ten most frequently mentioned topics: Planning Recreational activities, general Recreational facilities, general Commercial activities and facilities Recreational facilities for youth Roads Health Local government

Culture

General facilities and services Education

4. "What is it in Gunnison County that you would like to see avoided, prevented, kept out, or eliminated?" This question, perhaps the most difficult to interpret, yielded the following difficult-to-interpret responses in decreasing order of frequency of mention:

Industry (heavy, polluting; the "Pueblo type")

Overpopulation

Land development

People ("hippies"; newcomers from Texas and the East;

"freaky", "unworthy", "pushy" people; and lazy, non-contributing, or selfish types)

Degradation of air and water quality

Housing development

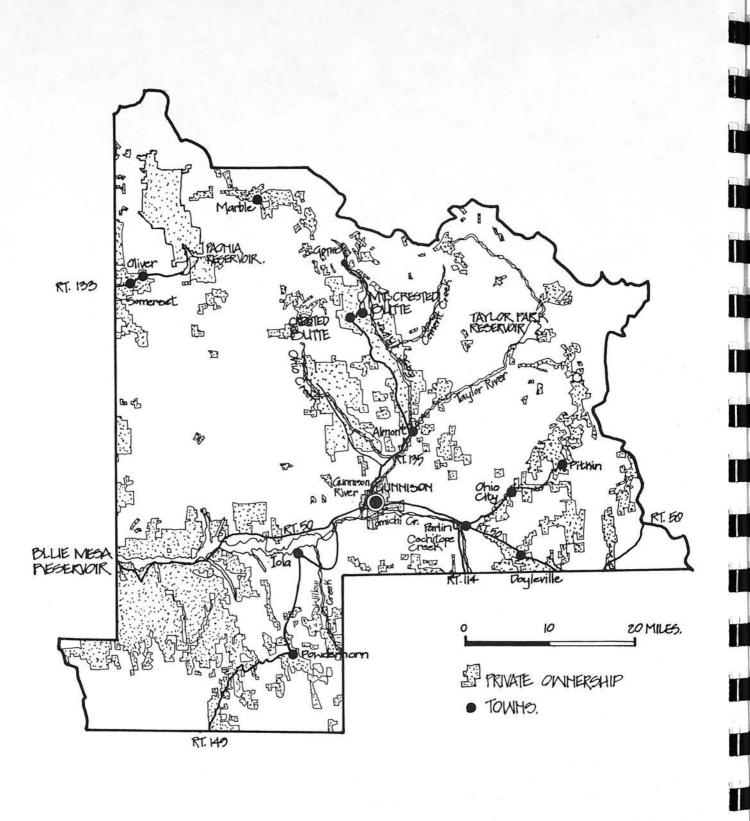
Lack of planning

("Trashy") appearance

Transportation (further expansion of highways) Crime

In summary, Gunnison County residents want to preserve natural and historic features of their area, the open spaces and the ranching activities which make the open spaces possible, and their rural lifestyle. They have a <u>strong</u> desire for more (and presumably, more varied) recreational and cultural activities and facilities, for all age groups, as well as additional and improved commercial and transportation facilities, social services, and governmental autonomy. They fear the incursion of polluting industries and the in-migration of many more people. Most important of all, to R/UDAT, is the <u>high</u> priority given to planning as (we assume) a mechanism by which existing amenities may be

preserved, future amenities secured, and the pitfalls of uncontrolled growth avoided.



THE REGIONAL PLANNING PROCESS

The need to protect and preserve the environmental character and aesthetic quality of Gunnison County was a concern voiced by almost everyone with whom the R/UDAT Team met. There is a general recognition that the continued economic vitality of recreational business in the county depends upon the area remaining attractive in winter and summer.

Despite the common interest of governmental units and private citizens in maintaining and enhancing the environmental amenities of Gunnison County, there has been very little organized effort to coordinate the land use planning in the region.

With the aid of funds provided under H.B. 1041, the county has embarked upon a thorough collection of environmental data and has begun the process of transforming those data into useful graphic material. The county has also begun to prepare regulatory ordinances implementing the planning process and may benefit from suggestions as to the form that these ordinances should take.

ISSUES

The R/UDAT Team has identified six issues that relate to the regional planning process:

1. How should the data and materials being assembled and produced by the county be utilized?

2. Should the county plan deal only with the unincorporated area of the county?

3. Should the county zoning resolution place the entire county in one use district with various environmental hazard overlay districts?

4. Should there be an effort made to coordinate the planning of various governmental agencies in Gunnison County?

5. Should coordinated planning be institutionalized in a formal organization?

6. Should there be a permanent planning staff in the county?

RECOMMENDATIONS

The R/UDAT team makes the following recommendations relative to the regional planning process:

1. The data bank and overlay process should be used to:

a. Provide information to the land owner/buyer/developer

b. Encourage development in appropriate sites and of appropriate types

c. Provide a basis for resource management programs. The process should be the technical basis for a general categori-

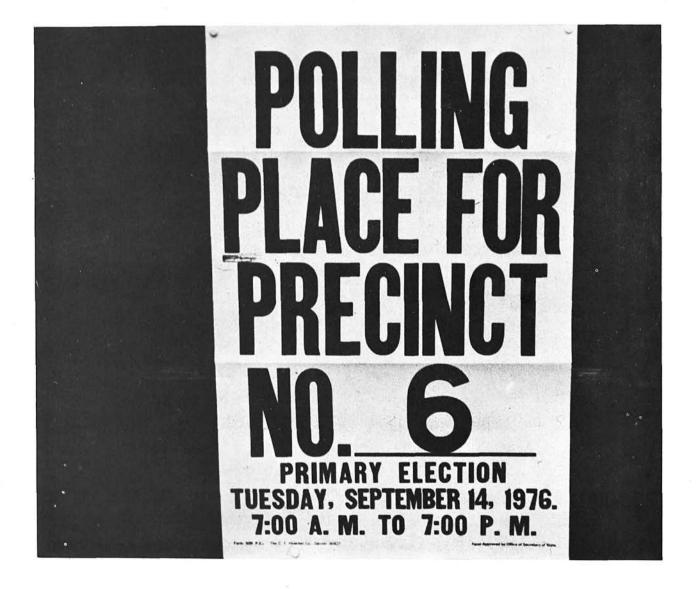
zation of permitted uses or development. At least in a general sense, the land owner should know the development potential of his land without having to propose a development.

2. The county comprehensive land use plan and zoning resolution should provide the framework for all planning 'in the county. Both in content and in process, planning of the cities, the federal government, and special districts should be compatible with, and reinforcing to, the county plan.

3. The county zoning resolution should not attempt highly innovative regulations that may not survive judicial challenge. Thus, we recommend that the county cast its zoning regulations in a more traditional mold and <u>not</u> attempt to <u>place</u> the <u>entire county in a</u> <u>single zone</u> in which every new building or development would be a land use change that would require special approval.

There should be two agricultural districts, one that is strictly rural and one that while still rural is subject to urbanizing pressures. Existing commercial uses in the unincorporated area should be in a commercial zone that reflects the present character of development.

The guidelines with respect to environmental constraints could be the basis for environmental combining districts that would impose a requirement of proof of elimination or mitigation of environmental constraints as a condition of developmental approval. In this context, residential development in agricultural zones would be a conditional use subject to evaluation in the light of mapped environmental constraints. While we recognize that there will be a continuing demand for residential development in some rural areas, county policies should discourage such development. The county



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pursuant to the authorization in C.R.S. 30-28-105. The regional commission should include as members Gunnison County, the municipalities of Gunnison, Crested Butte, and Mt. Crested Butte, and such other incorporated municipalities as desire to participate. The county and each participating municipality are required by law to have at least one voting member on a regional planning commission and they could have more.

Public members of the regional commission could be selected from among the prominent organizations and interest groups within the county, such as the ranchers, recreational and commercial business groups, and educational bodies like the local school board and Western State College. In addition, we recommend that the Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, and the Colorado Division of Wildlife be invited to designate individuals to represent them on the regional commission. However, in the case of representatives from federal and state agencies, both the agencies and the participating local governments might find it more desirable to limit the participation of agency representations to a non-voting status.

Proposals for planning policies, master plans (or segments thereof), land use changes, and subdivision plats sould be reviewed by the regional commission. The commission would hold public hearings in all instances in which such hearings were either required as a matter of law or deemed desirable. Where public hearings are a statutory requirement, the hearing should be held by the regional commission unless the pertinent statute requires a different procedure.

The regional commission would forward its findings and recommendations on all matters coming before it to the governing authority of the municipality involved or to the Board of County Commissioners in the case of unincorporated land. The final decision on all matters would be reserved to the corporate

should not be in the urban development business.

In preparing a new zoning resolution, careful attention should be paid to the provision of public notice and a public hearing on all land use changes. Both the county zoning legislation and procedural due process require notice and a hearing. Specific standards and precise language should be employed whenever possible so as to minimize the risk that the resolution will be unconstitutionally vague or a delegation of legislative authority without adequate standards.

We view the use of the subdivision platting procedure as a vehicle for processing land use change requests as unwise. The approval . of subdivision plats is a technical process that calls for a purely ministerial determination with respect to compliance with subdivision design and improvement specifications. The more discretionary <u>site</u> <u>plan review procedure</u> should be employed as an aid to evaluation of requests for approval of conditionally permitted uses.

4. Unless there is coordination of planning in the county, there will be an ever present risk that the policies of one agency will be determined without knowing whether those policies conflict or harmonize with policies of other agencies. Opportunities to eliminate or compromise conflicts will be more readily available if there is a joint planning effort. Quite apart from policy formulation, a joint planning effort could make available to each of the other participating local governments professional and technical staff services that might otherwise be beyond their financial capability.

Therefore, the R/UDAT team regards coordination of planning activities in the county as a desirable objective to be sought at an early date.

5. We recommend that coordination of planning activity be formalized with the establishment of a "regional planning commission"

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authorities of the governmental agency that had statutory jurisdiction over the matter.

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We believe that the adoption of this recommendation would create an organizational framework in which to evolve common, mutually beneficial land use policies for the Gunnison region while preserving the statutory autonomy of individual governmental units.

6. We recommend that the regional commission employ a permanent planner and that the planning functions presently being carried on by the county and the county and the municipalities be transferred to the regional commission.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

In this report the R/UDAT team identified key concerns related to Gunnison County with emphasis on the heart of the region: the East River Valey and the well-established town of Gunnison. A sincere effort was made to evaluate all concerns within their specific, social and economic contest and to make recommendations which <u>can be carried out</u>.

In the following we present a brief summary of our team's recommendations in keeping with the organization of this report and with an indication of the related pages.

<u>Ranching</u>--Cattle growers should collaborate to reduce their overhead costs, create an excellent image for "Gunnison beef", look into economics of a cooperative packing plant, establish a joint working committee with ranchers and government representatives and explore the potential market for guest ranches. The team calls for special land use regulations to protect both the ranchers and the irrigated environment. (Pages 9-10) <u>The College</u>--The college and the townsfolk should make a genuine effort to collaborate toward mutual benefit and toward solution of the student housing problem. The team should establish an institute devoted to teaching applied research and community services. (Pages 15-19)

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<u>Tourism</u>--Work toward a solution to the seasonality of tourism and the protection of the environmental values that make tourism possible. Collaborate with other resorts and the County toward better transportation. (Pages 22-25)

<u>Mining</u>--Initiate an extensive information inventory in order to generate the following information: mineral deposit map with quantitative and qualitative data, coordinate with federal agencies ' periodically regarding leasing of mineral rights and federal response to individual applications. Incorporate mitigation measures into zoning ordinances in order to minimize environmental impacts generated by the mining related activities. Incorporate mining inventory into the County-wide data bank and resource management plan. (Pages 33-34)

<u>Management of Natural Resources</u>--Preserve the ecological resources as recommended by the Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory (RMBL). Protect and maintain wildlife migration routes between summer and winter ranges. Consult with the RMBL on major projects which affect any natural habitat in Gunnison County. Minimize development in the key winter ranges and mitigate the impacts of any development which is permitted to occur. Encourage limited trail and facility improvement in the back country and the delineation of appropriate wilderness and primitive areas. Explore small scale renewable, alternative energy resources development and energy conservation methods. (Pages 39-44)

Gunnison--Prepare inventory of downtown businesses; make note of

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Social Issues---Work toward better solutions in the areas of student housing, of multiple dwelling sitings and a change of attitude toward students in apartments. Increase recreational opportunities in town for elderly people, children and adolescents. A marriage counseling service should be instituted. Continued sources of funding should be found. Volunteer Counceling Services, Inc. and other needed community services. Consciously apply planning techniques to improve life in the community. (Pages 87-90)

The Regional Planning Process--There should be a coordinated regional planning effort in the County. Regional planning should -involve comprehensive plans as well as particularized land use change decisions. The coordinated regional planning effort should be implemented by the creation of a regional planning commission. (Pages 94-95)

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R/UDAT PROGRAM

For a decade, the Urban Planning and Design Committee of the American Institute of Architects has been sending Regional/ Urban Design Assistance Teams to various American communities.

The Gunnison County Team is the 36th such team to be invited into a specific area to address regional and community issues which deal with a wide range of problems from a county or regional level to a small town, and in type from specific focus to public policy and implementation methods.

The Teams respond to the problems as described by local members of the AIA and their sponsors from the local community leadership.

Each Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team is specially selected to include professionals from various disciplines who are experiences in the particular problems of the area under study. Members are not compensated for their service and agree not to accept commissions for work resulting from their recommendations. The Team acquaints itself with the community and its people

. . . developes its analysis from a fresh perspective

. . offers its recommendations

. . . perhaps with a new perspective for planning and action.

Objectives

The objectives of the R/UDAT program are:

- to improve physical design throughout the nation

- to illustrate the importance of regional and urban planning

- to promote a better understanding of the major issues

- to stimulate public action

- to give national support to local AIA Chapters and communities in their efforts to improve their own communities and become actively involved in urban design and planning issues.

An "Assistance Team" cannot provide a detailed analysis or solutions nor final plans to complex problems in the 4-day visit but it can objectively approach long standing problems with:

- a new look by experienced outsiders

- a new impetus and perhaps new directions for community action - and to make clear and comprehensive recommendations which are professionally responsible as well as politically and economically feasible and publically understandable.

The Visit

The request for a R/UDAT Team was approved in the Spring of 1976 and in July, Ronald A. Straka, liason for the R/UDAT committee, made a reconnaissance visit to Gunnison to observe and discuss the details of the Team's visit. A Team was organized and was sent background material on the Gunnison County and its municipalities in advance of the visit.

On September 10-13 the Team made its visit. The Team surveyed the county by air, auto and on foot and meet with county and municipal officials and staffs, federal, state and regional agencies and officials, civil leaders and organizations, special interest groups and concerned citizens. THE TEAM Members of the American Institute of Architects Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team Gunnison County, Colorado 10-13 September, 1976

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Architect, planner, urban designer, who has been actively involved in a national and international practice of planning and design of urban core areas, new communities, and resort planning. Has taught urban design at Columbia University and Polytechnical University of Budapest and is a member of the NAIA Urban Planning and Design Committee and the ULI's Executive Council on Recreation.

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Architect, planner, urban designer who is active in regional and urban development and architecture, with special emphasis on land use, growth, agricultural and recreational community development. He has taught, lectured, and done research in various urban design areas, and alternative energy sources.

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Economic development consultant who is actively involved in feasibility and market studies for both the public and private sectors in land use development in rural and urban centers in the western states.







With this information, the Team engaged in intensive work sessions which culminated in a public presentation on September 13.

This report was presented at that time.

Sponsorship

The request to the NAIA was accompanied by letters of interest and support from the Colorado Central Chapter of the AIA, the city and county of Gunnison, the Gunnison County Chamber of Commerce and other various community interest groups.

Financial support for the expenses of the R/UDAT Team visit and this report were underwritten by Gunnison County, the City of Gunnison, the Gunnison County Chamber of Commerce and interested businesses and individuals.



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Attorney, who is involved in counseling and representing municipal governments and developers on a variety of land use issues, zoning concepts, land use litigation, rural-urban fringe land use controls, and major legal developments in land use planning. He has taught and lectured, and published many articles, on land use mechanisms and controls.

DAVID STEA

School of Architecture and Urban Planning UCLA Los Angeles, California

Environmental social scientist whose major concerns focus on the housing and settlement needs and desires of small native American communities, and upon the relationship of designed environment to cultural frameworks. He has taught and lectured in various universities and has authored many books and articles on environmental human settlement patterns and other social problems.

ALBERT TSAO, Ph.D. Montana Department of Natural Resources Helena, Montana















ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The R/UDAT visit to Gunnison was coordinated by the Gunnison County R/UDAT committe under the leadership of Carl Pickett (chairman), J.W. Campbell, Jim Cole, Dorothy M. Johnson, Jim Kuziak, Art Norris and Ron Straka, representative of AIA Urban Planning and Design Committee.

Members of the Team were assisted by Chuck Adkisson, Chris Jones, and Rod Lister, graduate students in the College of Environmental Design, University of Colorado at Denver.

Valuable assistance was also provided by various federal, county and city agencies and staffs.

An important contribution to the R/UDAT study was the active interest and participation of county and city leaders, officials and citizens of Gunnison County.

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Town of Somerset United States Forest Service Western State College

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