

INTERVIEW SUMMARIES

INTRODUCTION

A total of 21 people were interviewed by phone including five Planning Commissioners, two Fairplay residents, four Shawnee residents, six Bailey residents, three Lake George residents and one Teller County resident who works in Lake George and whose son attends the Lake George Community Charter School. This summary includes the information gathered from all the interviews. It is categorized by theme and region. It is important to note that there is a Bailey and a Kenosha Pass to Pine Junction region, these were broken up to specify which responses applied only to Bailey and which applied to the surrounding area. The numbers in the brackets [3] indicate the number of individual responses collected that were the same or similar to that particular comment or topic.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

COUNTYWIDE

- The 2001 Strategic Master Plan Vision wasn't bad, but a lot of the people who were involved aren't here anymore.
- The county has two distinct areas: Population east of Kenosha is tied to Denver. Everywhere else people are moving there for the lifestyle.
- Only one bank.
- No major grocery stores.
- No major medical facility.
- Majority of business owners interviewed feel there was an overreaction to big events. Regulations are too strict. There is a feeling that the economic impact on local businesses was not fully considered.
- Mixed feelings and strong views on Marijuana.
- Center of Colorado Water Conservation District - formed to counteract Aurora's desire to buy and dry Park County's water. CCWCD was formed to buy up park county water rights to retain the water in Park County. They now lease the water to fund the district. They have James Tinkle Reservoir, Smelter Pipeline Reservoir.
- Need bright people in the county, producing value and shipping goods/services throughout the country.
- Even though 285 is a good road, any business that would locate in Park County would put itself at a disadvantage because of the winter conditions/closures. Any business that would be successful would require a "pipeline" electronic pipelines etc. Investing in better internet services,
- Need to figure out a way to balance the needs of and satisfy the desires of the anti-fracking groups. There are some oil and natural gas possibilities.
- Sense that towns are not being listened to by county [4].



- Want law enforcement [3]
- Alma is isolationist.

FAIRPLAY

- Fairplay is the county seat but can be isolationist, should work with the county more.

BAILEY

- Has great sense of community [7].
- Denver Water often leaves the river low and fish in danger. It was suggested that Park County buy more water to maintain river.
- Don't want to be a way to shoehorn in high density development (rural center). Find a mechanism to allow ranchers to make money off of water without selling it. Lease it to someone else.
- Woodside subdivision, Tanglewood, too dense for mountain environment. Tanglewood, serious opposition and also had water problems, dried up the augmentation for Woodside (existing subdivision). Woodside park water users association. The Woodside augmentation plan is dependent on a live stream, Tanglewood could dry up Elk Creek.
- Woodside LID formed to pave road, then Road and Bridge didn't do it. Once a year they grade and fix the drainage, this past time they didn't do the drainage. Now there is a big ditch on the downhill side of the road.

LAKE GEORGE

- Lake George Community Charter School.
- Large number of student commute to Teller County schools. Few Teller County students attend Lake George. (This impacts the money the school receives, property taxes)
- Lake George has a great sense of community, frequently raise funds to support the park, library, community center, and community members in need [4].

ROADS AND TRAFFIC

COUNTYWIDE/GENERAL

- Hwy 285 is overloaded with traffic. Expansion and alternative routes are needed (.
- Recreation tourists often hike/bike on Hwy 285, extremely dangerous.
- CR 64 is a possible alternative route that can be made hiker/biker friendly but no one knows it's there (At some point Bailey Trails proposed CR 64 become alternate route but residents along road were not informed?). Wayfinding needed to alternative route.
- There is a need for public restrooms along Hwy 285 [5].



FAIRPLAY

- Limited parking is a perennial issue in Fairplay, parking requirements must be waved for any new business. (Fairplay Comprehensive Plan does not allow large hard surface parking).
- The county and CDOT should coordinate to fix the truck stop in Fairplay, turn radius is not wide enough for semis to turn.
- Intergovernmental coordination between the county, CDOT, and Fairplay to improve the 285 corridor to attract regular traffic into Fairplay while keeping truck traffic out of town [3].
- Need more coordination between Fairplay and County on trail connections, parks and open space [2].

BAILEY

- There is a large congestion area at the stoplight on the top of Crow Hill at the junction of Hwy and CR 43 where the uphill traffic merges into one lane to allow for a turning lane.-(a suggestion was made to connect on and off ramps a little down the road to the stoplight.)
- There is limited public parking, parking designations and signage are needed in Bailey [4].
- Opportunity for a walking bridge over highway that connects a new parking area with the town.
- Wayfinding directing people to public parking and restrooms between Pine Junction and Grant would be really useful [2].
- Bailey has drainage issues and would like county assistance to fix this.
- In Bailey the Historical Society runs a public restroom in the summers, would like county to help support the costs of maintaining bathrooms. Also a public restroom at McGraw Park but no one knows it's there.

HARTSEL

- Roads are not improved.

LAKE GEORGE

- Not enough County Road maintenance. Ex. CR 90 and CR 92 have a huge amount of summer recreation traffic to Elevenmile Reservoir that cause a lot of wear and tear[3].
- Hwy 24 has a 60mph speed limit in front of Lake George Community Charter School and no turning lane going east. Hwy goes right through Lake George and is difficult to turn onto from driveways and side streets [2].
- Traffic on Hwy limits access to businesses on side roads. Travelers will wait to Denver rather than try to exit and reenter the Hwy.



GROWTH AND LAND USE

COUNTYWIDE/GENERAL

- Rezoning along Hwy 285 to allow for more commercial growth (Mixed feelings about this-some encourage commercial near 285, some say farther away from 285).
- New Reservoir, Wildhorse, out on CR 53 is a holding reservoir for wet years.
- New water plan says they want to increase output to Denver by 50%.
- Worried there is going to be a buy and dry.

FAIRPLAY

- Support for Fairplay to annex the areas around town that have access to water. (Tier 1 proposed annexations in the Fairplay Comprehensive Plan)
- There is a need for coordination between the county and Fairplay to increase open space and link trails.
- Views itself as a historic town that makes its money off of tourism.
- Had a snowboard company that left because they couldn't get approval for a larger building.
- County and other tax exempt buildings (CDOT?) are occupying potential commercial space in the Fairplay business district, would like to see them move farther away.
- The large number of tax exempt entities are getting support from the tax payers, there isn't a good balance. Mill levy for sanitation is part of this issue.
- Fairplay took over sewer operations from sewer district. They have been successful in lowering user fees.
- Jail is outside Fairplay town limits but uses town's water system.

KENOSHA PASS TO PINE JUNCTION

- Early settlement was vacation homes.
- Later settlement was commuters getting away from city. Wanted services, didn't have them, no good plan for where to put them.
- Back in the day (10 years ago) the idea was that we need rooftops. Counter posed to that are people that came to paradise and wanted to pull the bridges and keep everyone else out.
- Lack of understanding how mixed use works. Compatibility is a worry with mixed use.
- Infrastructure not compatible with mixed use.
- Infrastructure has not been improved to accommodate growth.
- Water went dry in some subdivisions, people have abandoned housing because of water.
- Tanglewood: 2nd phase of development went bankrupt. (400 lots vacant?)
- County should buy 2nd phase land as for Open Space



BAILEY

- Geography limits growth.
- Need rezoning in Bailey to encourage business.
- Many residents run businesses out of their homes, zoning should support this.
- A number of vacant buildings downtown. Should be filled in before growth is considered elsewhere.
- Potential for larger commercial growth along Hwy 285 (no consensus on this, some people interviewed support this, others want commercial farther away from Hwy 285)
- Opportunity for tourism businesses along river and in town, and services (bank, grocery store) on Crow Hill.
- Proposed ropes park/zipline on Crow Hill denied. Area is surrounded by retirees and wetlands. Traffic on feeder roads was a concern.

HARTSEL

- 64 people in Hartsel.
- Support for growth.
- 1 Square mile conservation easement by the river.
- Nothing has changed in Hartsel, no water, roads are not improved, electrical infrastructure.
- Can't have sustainable development without a support structure.
- Water is the biggest barrier.
- Water table is 50 feet.
- Lots are only 5 acres. County has been trying to get owners to consolidate adjacent lots.
- There is cross pollution and not enough room to put in a well and septic, the lots are so small.
- Unincorporated and has no way of raising money.
- Damned if they do, damned if they don't.
- There is a community center
- Tried to get the aerial park but there was not enough traffic.
- Create another Pueblo West between Hartsel and Wilkerson?
- Need some zoning for light industrial. Only 17 miles from Hwy 285.

LAKE GEORGE

- Some growth supported, important to still stay a small community.
- Most important thing is to preserve the natural environment.
- Public lands near Lake George do not get enough Forest Service attention or rule enforcement, 4-wheelers cause damage and paths are not well maintained.
- Have a great park and trails.
- The reservoirs are a huge attraction for summer recreation users.



GUFFEY

- Has many corporate ranchers. Need to be there to help the area evolve.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

COUNTYWIDE/GENERAL

- Economic Development Council was tasked to bring businesses to South Park, Fairplay dropped out, projects were shot down. They never funded a staff person.
- Water limits growth for much of the county.
- Want to see more county support of economic growth (1 interviewed want this, but were unable to specify what type of support).
- Want more tourist oriented businesses with a focus on recreation [10]
- Need countywide coordination to draw in visitors [10]
- The two Chambers of Commerce in the county have an opportunity to work together.
- A countywide heritage tour was suggested with one night stays in each location (Fairplay, Alma, Guffey...) [4]
- People consider healthcare when deciding where to live and the services provided in the county are limited. Internist in Alma, (is there anything else?) [2]
- Want more access to broadband internet county wide. [3]
- Opportunity for more recreation businesses, especially year round and winter recreation, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, ice fishing, snowmobiling.
- Opportunity for light industrial [2]

FAIRPLAY

- There is a boom and bust pattern in Fairplay. The town provides sales tax rebates and offsets property taxes for new businesses but more help is needed.
- There has been a push to be an “artsy” community, but this is a common trend in lots of small towns. Fairplay needs to distinguish its unique draws, nature, history...
- Need more tourist oriented businesses and businesses in general, (no big box) [2]
- There is potential for more higher-end businesses than town currently has. (More like Calamity’s Cabin, a home decorating store).
- Resistance to industrial development[2].
- An asphalt company tried to create a temporary base in an area zoned mining to make asphalt while they repaired roads throughout the county. There was large opposition and the company turned down road repair contract.
- Biofuels pellet plant denied because it would ruin the landscape.



BAILEY

- Geography and winters affect and limit growth
- Important to keep the area local friendly, businesses should cater to locals and tourists alike [4]. Many residents commute to work and don't arrive home until after 6pm
- Aspen Peak Cellars has provided community with an attraction for locals and visitors. It is a success story for the area. Attracts visitors from Denver area, holds weekend events and winter activities like their snowshoe socials.
- Would like to see, steady, thought out, and realistic growth. Most important is to maintain the small community and natural environment. [5]
- Support for growth by business owners. Bringing new businesses to the area will benefit all businesses [5].
- Bailey has a large retired community, need to accommodate their needs.
- Need for wider range of recreation activities [6]. Anglers often say they would bring their whole family if there were more diverse activities (better trail connections, biking hiking).
- Restaurants in Bailey are doing well.
- Bailey has a number of longtime businesses, Cutthroat Café, Rustic Station, Conoco, Laundromat...
- Potential opportunity for a higher end restaurant.
- Opportunity to create a sales tax (follow up on this)
- Opportunity for campsites with RV hookups.
- More heritage tourism supported
- Need a hotel/motel [6]
- Someone is considering opening a brewery.
- Bailey has made an effort to be physically more attractive, businesses such as the Riverbend Café have made small, affordable improvements that show a large impact on the buildings physical appearance.

HARTSEL

- Want a reason for children to go to college and want to return to the area afterwards.

LAKE GEORGE OPPORTUNITIES

- Feel ignored by the county, county meetings rarely held
- Taxes need to be evaluated and potentially adjusted.
- Lake George has nothing to draw in businesses.
- Keeping businesses going will keep everything else going.
- Want some growth while still maintaining small town feel [4].
- Opportunity for restaurants and a gas station in Lake George [3].
- Residents would like to see the gas station reopened, but it would require replacing all the tanks and lines [3]. Closest gas station in 4 miles away in Teller County.



- Lake George Library needs to be relocated, and the Community Center needs renovations. The Lake George Community Association raises funds but want more county support too [3].
- Has a number of lone eagle entrepreneurs.

GUFFEY

- Got the internet!
- 3 Restaurants, 1 Bar, 1 General Store

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

COUNTYWIDE/GENERAL

- Tourists really love the old tunnel on the way to Elevenmile Reservoir.
- Many local efforts to preserve historic buildings and heritage. Potential area for more coordinated efforts.

