

CHAFFEE COUNTY HERITAGE AREA
PO Box 1522
Salida, CO 81201



August 22, 2016

Dan Swallow, Director of Development
Jon Roorda, Planning Manager
Chaffee County
PO Box 699
Salida, CO 81201

Dear Mr. Swallow and Mr. Roorda,

The Chaffee County Heritage Area Advisory Board (CCHAAB), which also manages the Collegiate Peaks Scenic & Historic Byway, would like to take this opportunity to formally address the Planning and Zoning Commission on the proposed Chaffee County Land Use Code changes in regards to visual analysis requirements.

The Chaffee County Heritage Area was established by the Board of County Commissioners in 2004 (Resolution No. 2004-45) to protect and preserve the historic, cultural, natural, and economic resources of Chaffee County by establishing a Heritage Area; to enhance property values through protection, preservation, and enhancement of important natural, cultural, economic, and recreational characteristics of Chaffee County; and to increase economic and financial benefits as a result of the attraction of tourism and visitors to Chaffee County.

The Chaffee County Heritage Area / Collegiate Peaks Byway Management Plan was approved by the Board of County Commissioners (Resolution No. 2008-56). The strategic plan contained within the management plan states that the CCHAAB will promote the value of the scenic view sheds and the 'priority' views and support and advocate responsible development and sustainable land use planning. CCHAAB supports zoning and development approaches that protect scenic character.

Through our efforts, the scenic byway and heritage program to date has brought in over \$570,000 in grants to the county. The county commissioners have invested in every one of the projects with financial match support.

We are concerned that the removal of the visual analysis piece of the preliminary plan review for both major and minor subdivisions creates less measurable means of assessing public view corridors. The removal of the major subdivision requirement for a "detailed visual analysis that illustrates the existing features of the site as viewed from the roadway corridor, and depicts the location and design of the proposed development" jeopardizes the byway designation itself. It also does not honor the findings of the management plan: that the scenic character of the valley is important to the county's tourism and recreational base, and is also highly valued by residents as it provides a sense of place and contributes to the county's quality of life.

The Planning and Zoning Commission has a challenging job as it works to manage the inevitable growth of the county for the benefit of all citizens and businesses, while to the extent possible, maintaining the rural and scenic heritage that attracts visitors and supports the economic engine of our local economy. Therefore, the Chaffee County Heritage Area Advisory Board / Collegiate Peaks Scenic Byway Board ask that the Planning and Zoning Commission carefully consider the needs of all county residents before making revisions to the 2014 Land Use Code, which will result in major, and perhaps irreversible, long term changes to the county's rural and scenic heritage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Melanie Roth'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Melanie Roth
Chair, Chaffee County Heritage Area Advisory Board

cc: Commissioners Dennis Giese, Frank Holman and Dave Potts
Buena Vista Heritage, Historic St. Elmo/Chalk Creek Canyon Inc., Historic Salida Inc. and Salida Museum Assoc.