
CHAPTER 7:
Agriculture Element

eeIntroduction

The purpose of the Agriculture Element is to establish the policies and systems to manage the help maintain maintenance of agriculture and coordinate its maintenance with in a coordinated plans for orderly community growth. The inclusion of an a separate Agriculture Element in this Master Plan is intended meant to contribute reinforce to the understanding in the community that agriculture is an important and valued activityway of life in Douglas County and a major contributor to the character of the community.

Agriculture is a mainstay of the Douglas County economy. It is also one of the predominant uses of land, a defining the fundamental character feature of the landscape and a ubiquitous reminder of the history and culture of the county. So long as agriculture prospers, the community at large will benefit from it. The following paragraphs catalog some of the ways in which agriculture serves to benefit Douglas County:

Agriculture contributes economically by providing jobs, creating wealth, offering tourism and agritourism opportunities, increasing real estate values, reducing the need for County services, providing passive infrastructure, and producing food and other products of the land.

Environmentally, agriculture contributes to the life of the county by offering wildlife habitat, flood protection, open space, greater water quality, aquifer recharge, effluent disposal, and the protection of night skies.

Maintaining agriculture benefits the community by helping to preserve local historical, cultural, and spiritual values, recreation, view sheds, and sense of place.

The nature of agriculture is changing, and will continue to change, as new markets emerge, new technologies are developed and new uses are identified for agricultural lands. It is the intent of this element to provide flexibility to allow the changes necessary to maintain agriculture as a viable and vibrant segment of the local economy. It is also the intent of this Element to identify agricultural lands through an agricultural overlay process and provide mechanisms for the maintenance of agricultural uses through the encouragement of free market mechanisms and other mechanisms based on the willing participation of agricultural landowners.

The prosperity of Douglas County agriculture depends on several fundamentals. These include recognizing agriculture for the non-agricultural benefit it brings the county, for ensuring adequate land and water resources, for maintaining ranching as an economically viable sector of the economy, providing an ample supply of housing affordable to those working in agriculture and supporting industries, planning for the succession of agricultural lands to the next generation, encouraging local leadership in support of agriculture, support for and collaboration with local agricultural organizations, and freedom to adapt and innovate. The future of agriculture in Douglas County also depends upon supporting policies that encourage agriculture to grow with emerging markets, adapt to new technologies and applications and encourage high value crops and value added agricultural education and tourism. The Master Plan can help implement each of these policies while accommodating anticipated population growth and safeguarding natural resources and the environment. It is the intent of this element to encourage investments in innovation and new technologies, and agritourism as a drivers in the new agricultural economy.

It must be acknowledged that for agriculture to remain a viable and vibrant sector of the economy, leadership in support of agriculture must first come from and be driven by the needs of the agricultural community, next be supported by public and private sector entities, and finally become an integral part of all planning at the County level. Agriculture should be considered in every facet of local decision-making that affects agriculture. To assist with this, and other policy objectives, the County should add a new position, hired with the active involvement and concurrence of the agricultural community, to help direct efforts to implement agricultural related policies and assist with agricultural support and fundraising. The Master Plan can help implement each of these objectives while accommodating anticipated population growth and safeguarding natural resources and the environment.

There are five primary strategies embedded within this Element.

1. Recognize agriculture for all of its benefits.
2. Provide policy and financial support for alternatives to the urban development of agricultural lands.
3. Limit residential development in agricultural areas.
4. Let farmers and ranchers farm and ranch by getting out of the way of routine agricultural activities and support the right to farm as discussed below.
5. Provide dedicated leadership in cooperation with the agricultural community to assist with funding and policy needs.

The Agriculture Element is intended to provide a link between the Growth Management, Land Use, and Economic Development Elements and provide a mechanism for directly linking agriculture to the Community Plans. It is also intended to assist with the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program by helping to identify the most important areas of focus and ensuring that the economic and community value of sending area easements and receiving areas generally equate with each other.

In addition, the Master Plan Value Statements and Open Space Plan and Agricultural Lands Preservation Plan suggest that the County should do more than simply regulate rural land use and avoid over-regulation of farming and ranching practices. There are many affirmative measures the County can and should take to help maintain the competitiveness and economic viability of agriculture. Some of the most important measures are reflected in the following, additional policy objectives:

- Cooperate with private agricultural interests in identifying and developing future opportunities for reducing production costs, expanding markets, and increasing competitiveness.
- Facilitate the purchase of conservation easements and the transfer of development rights to enable more agricultural landowners to capitalize on the equity in their property without developing uses that could jeopardize commercial agriculture.
- Outline a framework for a local Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program to be funded in part by a fee dedicated to fund PDRs.
- Support efforts to obtain federal and state funding and technical assistance for agricultural pollution control, implementation of best management practices, and construction of farm worker housing.
- Support efforts to obtain funding through the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act and voter approved Question 1

- Define open space within the context of Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) section 376A.010 as well as within the context of public outreach during the process of updating this Master Plan.
- Identify a number of existing and proposed techniques to preserve those open space lands.
- Create a primary means for implementation of the Conservation Element of the Master Plan.

In addition, the Agriculture Element seeks to ensure that new development will not overtax limited groundwater resources and result in the permanent impairment of water resources available to agriculture.

Right to Farm

It is the declared policy of Douglas County to conserve, protect, enhance, and encourage local agricultural operations. Further, it is the intent of the County to provide proper notification of its recognition of agriculture's right to farm.

Where non-agricultural land uses, and especially residential developments, extend into agricultural areas or exist with them side-by-side, agricultural operations have often become the subject of nuisance complaints. As a result, agricultural operations are sometimes forced to cease or curtail operations. Farmers and ranchers may then be discouraged from making investments in farm improvements. The result is detrimental to the operations that is subject of the complaints, to adjacent agricultural uses and to the economic viability of the county's agricultural industry as a whole.

It is the purpose of this Element to protect agricultural resources and to reduce the loss of agricultural lands by limiting the circumstances under which agricultural operations may be considered a nuisance. This Element is not to be construed as in any way modifying or abridging the provision of the NRS relating to nuisances; it is to be utilized in the interpretation and enforcement of the provisions of the NRS and County Code.

This Element is also designed to promote a "good neighbor" policy between farmers, ranchers and residents by advising purchasers and users of property adjacent to or near agricultural operations of the inherent potential problems associated with proximity to agricultural operations. These problems include but are not limited to the sounds, odors, dust and chemicals that may accompany agricultural operations. The hope is that these purchasers and users will understand the daily activities that accompany living side-by-side with agricultural uses and will be prepared to accept the problems as the natural result of living in or near rural areas.

The Right to Farm purposes described below are currently administered through the County Development Code.

- a. No existing or future agricultural operation or any of its appurtenances conducted in a manner consistent with proper and accepted standards on agricultural land shall become or be a nuisance, for purposes of all chapters of this code, provided that the agricultural operation complies with all chapters of this code and provided that the provisions of this section shall not apply with all chapters of this code and provided that the provisions of this section shall not apply whenever a nuisance results from the negligent or improper operation of any agricultural operation.
- b. Douglas County shall cause to be mailed to all property owners of real property within the county with the annual tax bill the following notice: "Douglas County has declared it a policy to protect and

encourage agricultural operations. If your property is located near an agricultural operation, you may at some time be subject to inconvenience or discomfort arising from agricultural operations. If conducted in a manner consistent with proper and accepted standards, these inconveniences and discomforts do not constitute a nuisance for purposes of the Douglas County Development Code.”

- c. Where a discretionary development permit, including but not limited to subdivision and special use permit, is sought on or adjacent to lands zoned to permit agricultural operations, the discretionary permit shall include a condition requiring the recordation of a deed restriction to notify any present or future owners, users and tenants of the notice contained in paragraph B above.

Urban Service Areas

The Agriculture Element supports the Growth Management Element by recommending that growth be directed to the identified Urban Service Areas. These areas are defined by the Land Use Element and map which indicate urban types and scales of development are permitted and where those types of development are discouraged. In this way the Agriculture Element can help maintain urban edges, foster compact urban form, and preserve rural character.

By creating agriculture overlay zones which coincide with the Urban Service Areas the County can plan for and require a full complement of urban services, including water, sewer, fire service, and paved streets in the appropriate places. The communities of Minden/Gardnerville, Gardnerville Ranchos, Airport, and Indian Hills contain Urban Service Areas. Other communities may become Urban Service Areas over time as critical infrastructure components are provided.

The Land Use Element recommends that urban growth occur only in Urban Service Areas and areas with densities of one unit per acre or greater. Areas outside Urban Service Areas should not be zoned for urban residential densities, and the Capital Improvement Program does not include urban facilities for those areas. The defined Urban Service Areas in this Plan contain two types of land. The first is infill sites that are platted, zoned, and ready for development. The second is Receiving Areas that are currently unplatted or not zoned for urban densities.

Receiving Areas have rural underlying zoning and are adjacent to areas with urban density and existing public utilities. They are currently not zoned for urban-sized lots or not platted for urban densities. They have been identified as available for development at the same densities existing in the adjacent urban area. In order to achieve this density, development rights must be transferred to the Receiving Areas through the use of clustering or TDRs. Owners of land within Receiving Areas retain the right to develop their land at the density allowed by rural underlying zoning if they do not wish to use TDRs.

Clustering of Development

In order to promote compact and patterns of development and to preserve agricultural lands, landowners of agricultural properties should be permitted and encouraged to cluster development rather than spread it out over the land. Clustering allows landowners to build to the same overall development density permitted within a given zoning district while doing so in patterns that are more efficient. Clustering is encouraged to

occur (1) within a parcel located outside a Receiving Area, or (2) from portions of a parcel outside a Receiving Area into portions of the same parcel within a Receiving Area.

When clustering occurs outside a Receiving Area, the owner should first calculate the number of large tracts that would be permitted to develop and would then be permitted to develop the same number of smaller rural lots. The rural lots should be a minimum of 2 acres and a maximum of 5 acres in size. The minimum development standards applicable to rural lots will apply. The remaining area that would otherwise have been developed as large residential tracts must be protected from future development through the use of a permanent conservation easement (the preferred method) or deed restriction. This clustering approach will allow landowners to develop more efficient parcels and to preserve large open areas without creating inappropriate nodes of urban density far from developed areas and urban services.

Since some lands are located partly within and partly outside Receiving Areas, clustering can also be used to move development potential from other parts of the property into the Receiving Areas and to develop lots within the Receiving Area at urban densities. The calculation of permitted residential tracts and lots should be exactly the same as for other areas, but the lots could be developed at sizes lower than 1 acre without a zone change because they would be closer to other developments of a similar density. Again, the clustering landowner must preserve the remainder of the parcel as open space and meet the minimum development standards and zoning criteria applicable to other lots of the same urban density.

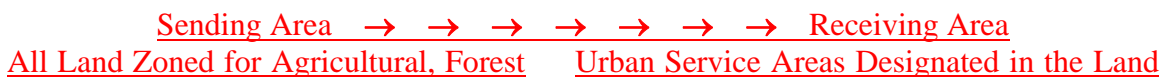
In either of the above cases, the resulting development should not contain more units than were originally permitted on the full parcel unless the landowner receives a bonus density. A density bonus of one hundred and fifty (150) percent can be applied if the remainder of the land is left with all of the water rights with a permanent restriction. (Adopted 4-4-2002).

Finally, clustering is permitted from irrigated agricultural land to contiguous or non-contiguous forest and rangeland. It is also permitted in both the A-19 (Agriculture, nineteen acre minimum net parcel size) and the FR-19 (Forest and Range, nineteen acre minimum net parcel size) zoning districts.

Transfer of Development Rights

In some cases, however, the need to direct growth toward Urban Service Areas may require the cooperation of the owners of two or more parcels of land. In particular, it is important that the use of development rights from the large areas of the county designated as resource lands (Agriculture and Forest and Range designations) be directed towards the Receiving Areas. A TDR program will help direct future growth from such lands into Receiving Areas.

Under the TDR program, resource lands serve as the "sending areas" from which development rights could be -- but would not have to be -- transferred for use in Receiving Areas. Transfers of development rights would only be permitted within the Carson Valley watershed or the Topaz watershed, and not from one watershed to another. The buyer and seller of those rights would establish prices for development rights without interference by the County -- unless the County chooses to buy and bank development rights under an acquisition program. The TDR program is summarized below.



and Range Uses

Use Element for Receiving Area

Transfers of development rights could involve one owner -- or two different owners -- or even more. If one landowner owns a parcel of land in a Receiving Area and another parcel outside it, that owner could move the allowable density from the second site onto the site in the Receiving Area. Or, if one landowner owns a parcel in a Receiving Area and another landowner owns a parcel somewhere else, the two owners could enter into an agreement to move the allowable density from the second site to the first site. Just as for the clustering of density described above, (1) resource land from which the density is transferred shall be preserved as permanent open space through conservation easements, and (2) the resulting development must meet the minimum service requirements and zoning requirements for other areas of the same density.

Since TDRs are potentially a stronger growth guidance tool than on-site clustering, the incentive to use TDRs should be greater to preserve agricultural lands. In order to create that incentive, bonus units should be provided when TDRs are transferred from agricultural lands to a Receiving Area. In addition, the bonus units offered when a cluster developer preserves the water rights in place shall also be available if a TDR seller leaves water rights in place and permanently restricts them or when the sending parcel is located in the primary flood plain. Limited bonus units are provided for TDR from forest and range lands. Unused densities from any property developed to less than its full entitlement are not to be eligible for use in the TDR system. It should also be noted that TDR incentives are to be investigated within the Development Code for preservation of historic properties and construction of trail systems.

Finally, the intent of any future adjustments to the TDR system bonus ratios shall be supported by and generally equates the economic and community values of sending area easements to the potential receiving area sites.

Transfer Development Rights Sending Area - Figure 7.1

	<u>DRAINAGE BASIN</u>	
	<u>Carson Valley</u>	<u>Antelope Valley</u>
<u>AREA (AC)</u>		
<u>Agriculture (Private)</u>	<u>35,976</u>	<u>3,471</u>
<u>Forest & Range (Private)</u>	<u>10,772</u>	<u>18,868</u>
<u>DWELLING UNITS</u>		
<u>Agriculture @ 1 Unit/19 Acres (Base Unit)</u>	<u>1,893</u>	<u>182</u>
<u>TDR Base Bonus @ 9 Units/19 Acres</u>	<u>17,037</u>	<u>1,638</u>
<u>TDR Water Rights Maintenance Bonus @ 7 Units/19 Acres</u>	<u>13,251</u>	<u>1,274</u>
<u>TDR Floodplain Bonus @ 7 units/19 Acres</u>	<u>5,782</u>	<u>525</u>
<u>Subtotal</u>	<u>37,963</u>	<u>3,619</u>
<u>Forest & Range @ 1 Unit/19 Acres (Base Unit)</u>	<u>566</u>	<u>993</u>
<u>TDR Flood Zone Bonus @ 1 Unit/19 Acres</u>	<u>96</u>	<u>106</u>

- **TOTAL*** - **38,625** **4,718**

Note: Carson Valley flood zone (A-19) = 15,700 acres; Carson Valley flood zone (FR-19) = 1,828 acres; Antelope Valley flood zone (A-19) = 1,432 acres; Antelope Valley flood zone (FR-19) = 2,016 acres

**Total does not include other bonus units that may be allowed when 100 acres or more of the Sending Area is included in the program, or when public access easements are provided to rivers, public lands, etc.*

Future Development & Receiving Area - Figure 7.2

	<u>DRAINAGE BASIN</u>	
	<u>Carson Valley</u>	<u>Antelope Valley</u>
<u>Future Development & Receiving Area (AC)</u>	<u>2,370</u>	<u>1,285</u>

Developed/Approved Tentative Map/Approved Specific Plan Receiving Area - Figure 7.3
(in acres)

	<u>DRAINAGE BASIN</u>	
	<u>Carson Valley</u>	<u>Antelope Valley</u>
<u>Developed Receiving Area</u>	<u>244</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Approved Tentative Map Receiving Area</u>	<u>2,184</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Approved Specific Plan Receiving Area</u>	<u>217</u>	<u>0</u>

-Purchase of Development Rights

Another way for the County to direct development towards Urban Service Areas is to create a program to purchase or lease development rights or easements that preserve land -- particularly agricultural, range, and forestry land -- in its current state. Purchase of Development Rights(PDR) programs can help maintain rural character, preserve agricultural lands, preserve sensitive environmental features, and maintain urban edges. Since acquired development rights are not available for private development, they also help reduce the pressure on the county's groundwater resources and Capital Improvements Program. Different variations on a PDR program could involve the purchase of conservation easements, scenic easements, or options or rights of first refusal to purchase the land itself. This could be done by the County or encouraged to be done through private resources, such as a land trust or conservancy.

The key steps in establishing an acquisition program are 1) identifying a source of funds, 2) prioritizing the land where rights or easements are to be purchased, and 3) deciding whether to retire or resell the rights acquired. Possible sources of funds include local option gaming revenues, sales tax, transient occupancy room taxes, bond issues, or establishment of an impact fee program when authorized by law. Prioritization of the rights to be acquired should focus on highly visible areas along major highways and open hillsides, lands at the outer edges of Urban Service Areas to establish buffers and create definition of boundaries where pressure to sprawl outward may be the greatest, and sensitive lands that cannot be protected through other means. At the time this program is established, the County will need to decide whether to retire the rights that it purchases (in order to make remaining development rights more valuable to their private

owners) or whether to hold the rights in a bank and make them available at reduced or no cost in order to promote desired development in Receiving Areas. The simplest program is to retire the rights or to buy conservation or scenic easements which eliminates the issue of County-owned development rights altogether. The County should initiate an open space acquisition program to strengthen and supplement other growth management tools. The County shall study the use of impact fees as a means of financing PDRs.

The goals and policies for the Agriculture Element include existing goals and policies previously found in the Conservation Element along with new goals and policies identified as part of the 2006 Master Plan update.

Agriculture Element Goals and Policies

- GOAL 7.01** Maintain agriculture as an important land use and preserve the rural character, cultural heritage and economic value of Douglas County. ~~agriculture shall be retained as an important land use and the open rural character, cultural heritage and economic value created by this land use encouraged.~~
- Policy 7.01.01 Douglas County shall plan for the continuation of agriculture as a distinct and significant land use in the county.
- Policy 7.01.02 Douglas County shall identify areas for future agricultural use on the Master Plan Land Use Map through ~~an~~ Agricultural Overlay Districts that recognize the inherent value to the community provided by existing agricultural lands such as accommodating flood flows, conveying storm drainage within existing ditches, creating direct and indirect economic benefit, preserving scenic views, visual characteristics, water quality, wildlife and culture. Douglas county shall recognize these values and may require compensation to private landowners. In general, irrigated agricultural lands, historic grazing lands and croplands shall be designated “Agriculture” while non-irrigated lands shall be designated “Forest and Range”.
- ~~Policy 7.01.03~~ Douglas County recognizes that the intent of these Overlay Districts is to identify additional values on private property and create a mechanism for protecting them. These mechanisms will require compensation to the landowner to the extent that such lands and values are not otherwise protected by state and federal regulations.
- Policy 7.01.043 Douglas County shall define agricultural uses as economic development and promote and encourage agriculture as an important industry and as a desirable land use which serves to define the desired character of the county.
- Policy 7.01.054 Douglas County shall encourage the industries that serve agriculture as a land use.
- Policy 7.01.065 Douglas County should encourage the industries that preserve and promote environmental quality, or serve the local needs of our communities.
- ~~Policy 7.01.06~~ ~~Douglas County should ensure that regulations applied to agricultural uses are appropriate to the type and intensity of proposed agricultural development.~~
- Policy 7.01.0707 Douglas County shall preserve a distinction between urban and rural areas, direct new growth to areas already committed to an urban level of development (e.g., cities, areas directly adjacent to cities, and densely developed unincorporated communities)

and preserve rural industries (e.g., farming, livestock grazing, mining), natural resource protection, and open space recreation uses.

Policy 7.01.0708 Douglas County shall establish a set of mandatory findings for the conversion of land zoned “Agriculture” or “Forest and Range” to urban uses.

Policy 7.01.09 Douglas County shall implement a program for monitoring of on-site storm water treatment facilities on privately developed parcels to ensure ground and irrigation water quality is maintained for downstream properties.

Policy 7.01.10 Douglas County shall facilitate the Master Plan and Zoning Amendment process to reflect actual and historic land uses in the Forest and Range and Agricultural land use areas.

GOAL 7.02 —Create alternatives to the urban development of existing agricultural lands, such as market based incentives, programs for financing compensation or development rights transfers, or the purchase of development rights in order to preserve these agricultural areas.

Policy 7.02.01 —Douglas County shall minimize development of commercially viable agricultural land and ensure that recognized needs for growth are met by infill and contiguous, compact development.

Policy 7.02.02 —Douglas County shall provide for a range of compatible uses on agricultural lands and means for agricultural property owners to obtain benefit from this land while achieving the public goal of agricultural preservation.

Policy 7.02.03 —Douglas County shall regularly consult with the agricultural community provide for new agriculture-related commercial and industrial uses and other compatible commercial uses in agricultural zoning districts and provide the appropriate updates to the Development Code. Such uses should include the sale or marketing of farm products, the provision of services or the rental of equipment similar to the equipment and services normally utilized as part of an agricultural operation, and the provision of agriculture-oriented tourism facilities. These uses should be compatible with ~~to~~ the primary agricultural uses within the agricultural zoning district affording flexibility to the landowner. They shall be of a scale and design to retain the agricultural character of the zoning district. The Development Code shall establish the specific regulatory provisions to implement this policy.

Policy 7.02.04 —Douglas County shall establish regulations to provide development options for lands designated “Agriculture” in the Land Use Element and Community Plans. These options shall include division of land into parcels that are suitable for continued agricultural use, clustering of residential development in one part of the property (while the remainder stays in agricultural use), and transfer of development rights.

Policy 7.02.05 In order to promote the financial viability of continued agricultural operations, Douglas County shall amend its development code to allow flexibility in the Clustering of Development provisions as well as allowing bonus density of one hundred and fifty (150) percent and the clustering of contiguous and non- contiguous lands.

Policy 7.02.06 Landowners with holdings of over 100 acres of irrigated agricultural may create a two acre parcel for sale once every five years. To be eligible for this parceling, the land must have been held by the same owner for the previous five years.

Policy 7.02.07 Landowners with holdings of over 100 acres of irrigated land under single ownership in Agricultural Overlay Districts shall be exempted from any future building permit allocation provisions on these holdings. One building permit is allowed every five years with the expiration within one year of issuance if not acted upon by the owner.

Policy 7.02.08~~5~~ Douglas County shall, in cooperation with the agricultural community, investigate and support the creation of a non-profit land trust for Douglas County.

Policy 7.02.09~~6~~ Douglas County shall provide procedures for the acquisition, dedication, or purchase of agricultural preservation easements, by public or non-profit entities, as a means to retain land in agricultural.

Policy 7.02.10~~7~~ Douglas County shall encourage the agricultural community to retain its water rights and protect water quality. When possible the County shall evaluate a program for public acquisition of agricultural water rights as a means to retain water for agricultural uses.

Policy 7.02.11~~8~~ Douglas County shall, in cooperation with the agricultural community, evaluate other programs to retain land in agricultural use while providing benefits to the property owner. Such programs may include purchase-leaseback of water for agricultural use through its policies and programs regarding water quality and quantity.

Policy 7.02.12~~9~~ Douglas County should coordinate its programs for public acquisition and development of open space areas with its efforts to protect land for agricultural use, so that adverse impacts of open space preservation and use on agricultural operations are minimized and the benefits to the county's open space character are maximized.

~~Policy 7.02.13~~ Douglas County shall investigate the creation of an impact fee program to fund the purchase of development rights if authorized by law.

GOAL 7.03 **Limit residential development in intensively farmed areas primarily to housing for farm and ranch families and agricultural workers.**

Policy 7.03.01 Douglas County shall allow residential development in farmed areas to house farm and ranch families and agricultural workers, and allow for exemptions from any future building permit allocation system for housing in this category.

Policy 7.03.02 Douglas County shall ~~limit new residential~~ require development to properties developing adjacent to existing urban services by requiring the provision of treated water and hooking into existing to connect to community water and community -sewer facilities capacity.

Policy 7.03.03 Douglas County shall provide a mechanism for location efficiency with preference given to projects with more efficient locations.

Policy 7.03.04 Douglas County shall limit development to no more than the underlying development rights, and allow the clustering of development on “Agriculture” and “Forest and Range” lands, with bonuses for second and third units that meet regional affordability goals adjacent to Urban Service Areas.

GOAL 7.04 Allow routine agricultural practices and structures used for agricultural production and processing without restriction, except for compliance with county health laws and federal and state environmental laws, and except where sensitive environmental resources would not be adequately protected.

Policy 7.04.01 Douglas County shall work with the agricultural community to identify ways to maintain “routine and ongoing agricultural activities” without further permission from the County and shall modify the Development Code to maintain those activities.

~~seek to maintain routine and ongoing agricultural activities without further permission from the County, unless they are new activities or operations that will be conducted in areas identified as significant for ecological or cultural significance.~~

Policy 7.04.02 Douglas County shall define "routine and ongoing agricultural activities" annually based on changing market conditions.

Goal 7.05 Provide leadership in the form of a dedicated staff person to match development rights on lands ~~zoned~~ “Agriculture” or “Forest and Range” to an identified set of urban infill or density bonus sites.

Policy 7.05.01 Douglas County shall establish and fund an Agricultural Opportunity Officer (AOO) to study and promote opportunities for increasing the economic viability and profitability of commercial agricultural in Douglas County. The AOO should be required to coordinate their activities with both public and private sector entities identified by the County Commissioners and Planning Commission, with advice from leaders in the agricultural community.

- Policy 7.05.02 The AOO shall be primarily responsible for proactively managing the Transfer of Development Rights policy, and facilitating Purchase of Development Rights policies, with the intent to preserve the “Agriculture” areas and lands identified in the ecological and cultural resources overlay map.
- Policy 7.05.03 The AOO should be secondarily responsible for raising the profile of the importance of Douglas County agriculture to local residents, state and national audience, with the intent of building a constituency for the preservation of agriculture.
- Policy 7.05.04 The AOO shall work with the Agricultural community and other interested parties in assisting with the identification of programs and practices which can reduce the threat of invasive plants, and manage vegetation for drainage, ecosystem and wildfire reduction benefits.
- Policy 7.05.05 The AOO should also be required, within two years of the ~~position’s~~position’s establishment, and regularly thereafter, to report to the County Commissioners on specific measures, consistent with this Plan, that local non-profit entities, the County, the state and federal governments can implement to encourage agricultural diversification, reduce agricultural production costs, improve competitiveness with outside producers, compensate landowners for ecosystem services, and expand the output of the agricultural sector while maintaining an adequate agricultural base and protecting the environment. Such a report should include a status report on the implementation of the TDR policy.
- Policy 7.05.06 Douglas County shall arrange a partnership with a non-profit entity to accept private contributions and grants to fund these activities.