

Executive Summary

Introduction

The *Heavy Services Action Plan* is a systematic study of issues associated with the potential development of industrial land in Teller County, Colorado, for “heavy services” uses—waste transfer facilities, recycling centers, bulk fuel sales, utility service centers, and the like. The study assists the County to identify and evaluate potential sites that may be suitable for light industrial development. The study also recommends policies and courses of action that might be pursued to enhance the base of industrial land in the County.

Background

Historically, there has not been significant demand for industrial land in Teller County and therefore, not much land zoned for this purpose. However, the projected growth of the County at approximately three (3) percent per year increases the demand for activities that provide essential or convenient services to County residents and government alike. To date, most services have been provided from Colorado Springs; however, the demand for local service providers is increasing. County residents, planners, administrators, and decision makers will face an increasing number of development proposals—such as the recent applications for a waste transfer facility and a temporary asphalt batch plant—for approvals to locate these businesses within the County.

Heavy Services Under Consideration

- Waste Transfer Facilities
- Recycling Centers
- Bulk Fuel Sales
- Utility Service Center (i.e. for the storage of power poles and wire)
- Construction Yards (not lumber yard for sales)
- Towing Yards
- Body Shop and Vehicle Repair
- Junkyards
- Batch Plants

The challenge to the County is to find suitable sites that do not detract from the area’s quality of life. Heavy service uses are perceived as objectionable—as they tend to produce a certain level of noise, odor, dust, and traffic—and, in many cases, these perceptions may be accurate. The community wishes to avoid potential negative impacts associated with heavy services and preserve Teller County as an attractive place to live.

The Heavy Services Action Plan (HSAP)

Teller County is undertaking an effort to objectively evaluate heavy services issues and establish a systematic process to provide a comprehensive review of proposed heavy services sites. The County retained Higginbotham/Briggs & Associates, LLC (HB&A), a planning firm based in Colorado Springs, to provide assistance in developing an objective methodology to identify and evaluate potential heavy services sites. This study examines heavy services siting issues, the possible impact upon local communities, and policy options to enhance the base of industrial land. The *Heavy Services Action Plan* sets out to:

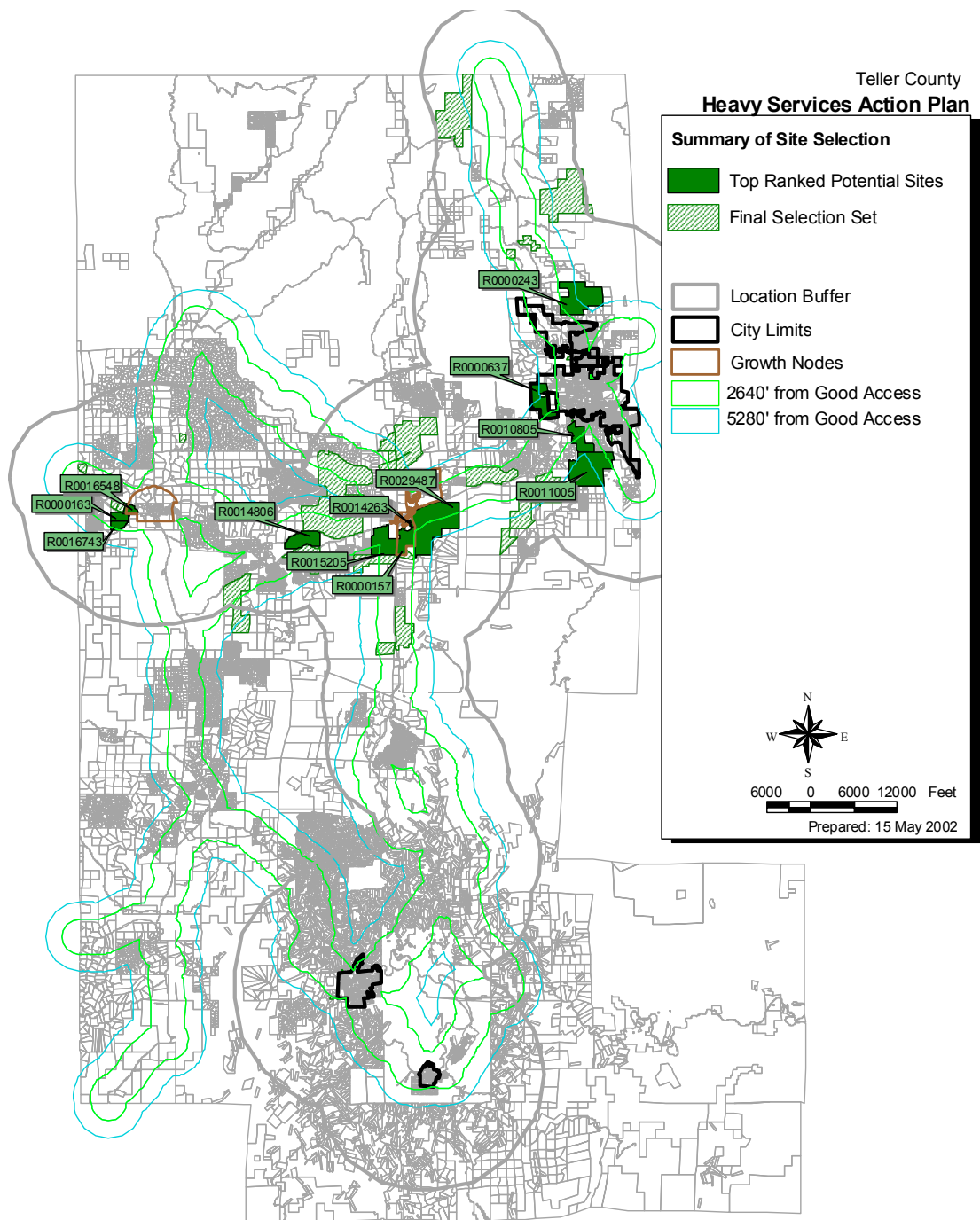
- Plan for the future rather than wait for the future to arrive—opportunities to make good decisions may be lost or overlooked without the foresight provided by a plan.
- Establish a systematic methodology to identify and evaluate potentially suitable sites.
- Suggest policies and courses of action needed to secure a base of industrial land.
- Assist property owners and private business interests in identifying suitable sites and developing proposals.
- Allow evaluation of future applications and sites, regardless of their location (sites not recommended within this study are not necessarily excluded from consideration in the future).

The ultimate outcome of this study is to provide a basis for making difficult decisions in siting potential heavy services uses. An impartial way of looking at heavy services sites—where the selection and evaluation factors are clearly stated—is the best way of resolving the public policy and land use issues associated with heavy services uses.

Site Selection and Evaluation Process

1. Identify Site Attributes
2. Eliminate Unsuitable Sites
3. Apply Locational Criteria
4. Apply Basic Site Selection Criteria
5. Apply Performance Criteria (Thresholds)
6. Develop Performance Standards
7. Identify Focused Set of Sites for Evaluation
8. Develop Weighted Site Evaluation Matrix
9. Assess Site-Specific Attributes
10. Rank Sites by Composite Score
11. Document Site Characteristics
12. Present Sites for Acceptance

Transparent criteria allow the County and other parties to clearly analyze whether the heavy services criteria are appropriate for Teller County, adjust the selection and evaluation criteria to create a best fit between community goals and potential heavy services uses, and apply consistent criteria to the evaluation of future heavy services applications or sites not included within the current study.



Results

Forty-six potential sites, totaling 11,412 acres are recommended as suitable for evaluation. While the total acreage may seem high, it should be remembered that a very small percentage of each heavy service site is usable flat ground. In addition, the study evaluates 15 separate parcels that support current heavy services uses.

The site evaluation builds upon the site selection phase of this study to evaluate sites and rank them in terms of how well they meet objective community, regulatory, and performance criteria.

The Heavy Services Plan goes on to recommend optimum uses for each of the potential sites and mitigation measures that may be required should any of the sites be developed for future heavy service uses.

The identified sites are ranked and then presented to County decision makers for review.

The final step in the process formulates recommendations for the County to consider if it wishes to secure a stable base of industrial land. The policy and implementation strategies define options—land use regulations, capital investments, finance, and new agency formation—that may facilitate the reservation and development of industrial land.

<i>SITE RANKING</i>		
<i>Site Identification (Rw_acctno)</i>	<i>Composite Score</i>	<i>Overall Rank</i>
R0000637	1649	1
R0000157	1434	2
R0010805	1383	3
R0000243	1368	4
R0011005	1352	5
R0016548	1344	6
R0029487	1336	7
R0016743	1316	8
R0015205	1313	9
R0000163	1299	10
R0014806	1297	11
R0014263	1284	12
Note: a composite score of 1865 is the maximum and a composite score of 373 is the minimum possible under the current weighted evaluation matrix.		

The HSAP provides a preliminary analysis of the heavy services question by identifying those factors that influence the location of heavy services sites and the evaluation of the merits of individual sites. However, the study limitations—related to the complex nature of heavy services issues and the preliminary nature of this general investigation—restrict the ability of the HSAP to provide in-depth recommendations that may be directly used to implement the study. More detailed engineering feasibility studies and site-specific analyses will be required in order to fairly evaluate the merits and negative aspects of future development applications for heavy services uses.

This study provides a common base of knowledge and clearly states the assumptions, community values, and technical criteria that define the suitability of heavy service uses throughout the County. The HSAP opens the conversation and provides a foundation for future public discussions of this issue.