

introduction

pierce comprehensive plan

june 1976

The preparation of this material was financed, in part, through a comprehensive planning grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

CERTIFICATE OF ADOPTION

This document is adopted by the Pierce Planning Commission and Town Board as the official Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Pierce, Colorado. The Plan is intended to serve as a guide for the harmonious development of the Town and its environs, which will, in accordance with present and future needs, best promote health, safety, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare, as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development, including adequate provision for light and air, the promotion of healthful and convenient distribution of population, the promotion of good civic design and arrangement, wise and efficient expenditure of public funds, and the adequate provision of public utilities and other public requirements. All maps, tables or other descriptive matter accompanying this document and all other matters intended to form the whole or part hereof are hereby made a part of this document and are adopted herewith.

Adopted this 22 day of JUNE, A.D., 1976, by the Planning Commission of the Town of Pierce, Colorado and recommended to the Town Council for Adoption.

Signed: Flora M. Rowe

Chairperson, Planning Commission
Pierce, Colorado

Signed: Carolyn P. White

Secretary, Planning Commission
Pierce, Colorado

Adopted this 6 day of JULY, A.D., 1976, by the Town Board of Pierce, Colorado.

Signed: Benjamin P. Yellator

Mayor, Pierce, Colorado

Attest: Loris Sautler

Town Clerk, Pierce, Colorado

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Special appreciation to Lois Souther, Town Clerk; Leona Brumfield; Marian Cogswell; Reverend W. S. Ickler; Laurel Schnell; and all those who offered their comments and suggestions towards the completion of the Pierce Plan.

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Department of Planning Services

Weld County, Colorado

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PIERCE PLAN: INTRODUCTION

The purpose of a comprehensive plan is defined by Colorado State law as follows:

"The plan shall be made with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of the municipality and its environs, which will, in accordance with present and future needs, best promote health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare, as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development, including among other things, adequate provision for traffic, the promotion of safety from fire, flood waters, and other dangers, adequate provisions for light and air, the promotion of healthful and convenient distribution of population, the promotion of good civic design and arrangement, wise and efficient expenditure of public funds, and the adequate provision of public utilities and other public requirements." 1973 CRS 31-23-107

The primary purpose of the Pierce Comprehensive Plan is to provide the town with the best possible guideline to decisions concerning the future physical development of the town. The Pierce Plan is a collection of general policies or guidelines for the town and its planning area that will accommodate and encourage those activities that contribute to the overall well being of all the citizens of the Town. In general, the Pierce Plan indicates how the town citizens want the town to develop in the future. It is important to note that the zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, annexation procedures and other town documents will be used in conjunction with the Pierce Plan. Briefly, zoning is designed to prevent undue population congestion, to restrict areas that are unsuitable to build upon, and to protect land values by ensuring citizens that land use changes will be made in a coherent and

logical way. Subdivision regulations establish procedures and set standards which insure that developments have adequate domestic water, sanitary sewers, other necessary utilities, good drainage, public access and other improvements. These regulations, however, cannot be administered without a general guide or framework in which the long term effects of specific land use decisions can be analyzed. Such regulations and development standards should be considered an overall part of the Comprehensive Plan.

The authority to adopt a comprehensive plan is given to the Pierce Planning Commission under Colorado State Law:

"Master Plan - It is the duty of the municipal planning commission to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the municipality, including any areas outside of its boundaries, subject to the approval of the legislative or governing body having jurisdiction thereof, which in the commission's judgment, bear relation to the planning of such municipality." 1973 CRS 31-23-106

While the Pierce Planning Commission is authorized to adopt the comprehensive plan the Pierce Town Board has worked continuously with the Pierce Planning Commission by suggesting revisions and offering constructive criticism. The Pierce Plan, in part, represents this cooperation and close relationship among Pierce Town Officials, as well as the interest and involvement of the Town residents in completing the Town Plan.

The desire to develop a Pierce Comprehensive Plan is, in part, brought about because the Pierce Future Development Plan (sketch plan) which was written in June, 1972, is generally outdated and is no longer a useful future development guide. Perhaps the most important reasons for Pierce desiring a comprehensive

sive plan is the fact that between 1970 and 1976, the town population increased roughly from 450 to 980 people; an increase of 117%. Moreover, the town has recognized the importance of keeping pace with its growing population and the related demands for town services and facilities. Finally, without guidelines for future development, the Town of Pierce will be forced to maintain its present course and will likely be caught up in numerous financial and other related growth problems. Through a Town Plan it is felt that town officials will have within their means a guide which establishes the general direction for future growth and development, and which will protect the assets of the Town.

The Pierce Plan is based on two basic assumptions:

1. Pressures for urbanization and growth will continue to increase in and around the Town of Pierce.
2. The town can, through its development regulations and comprehensive plan, ensure an orderly pattern of growth and quality development in the Town and vicinity as these growth pressures continue.

In adopting the Pierce Plan, town officials have accepted a logic of land use that they feel is in the best interest of the citizens of Pierce. In addition, the Town of Pierce realizes that as the town expands new residents from other regions will bring different viewpoints, aspirations and values with them. These additional viewpoints should be integrated over time in the Pierce Plan to prevent the plan from becoming static. Finally, the Pierce Town officials are confident that the Pierce Plan reflects the locality as a whole, and provides a unique opportunity for the town to maintain and enhance the cultural and historical features and traditions of Pierce.

GEOGRAPHY

The Town of Pierce is at an elevation of 5,041 feet. The climate of the area is characterized by relatively mild, warm summers, and cool winters. The area receives an average of 10 to 15 inches of precipitation per year. The town contains approximately 405.55 acres, and is located in northeastern Colorado in Weld County, 15 miles north of Greeley on U. S. Highway 85. Please refer to the Pierce Vicinity Map, Figure 1, page 5.

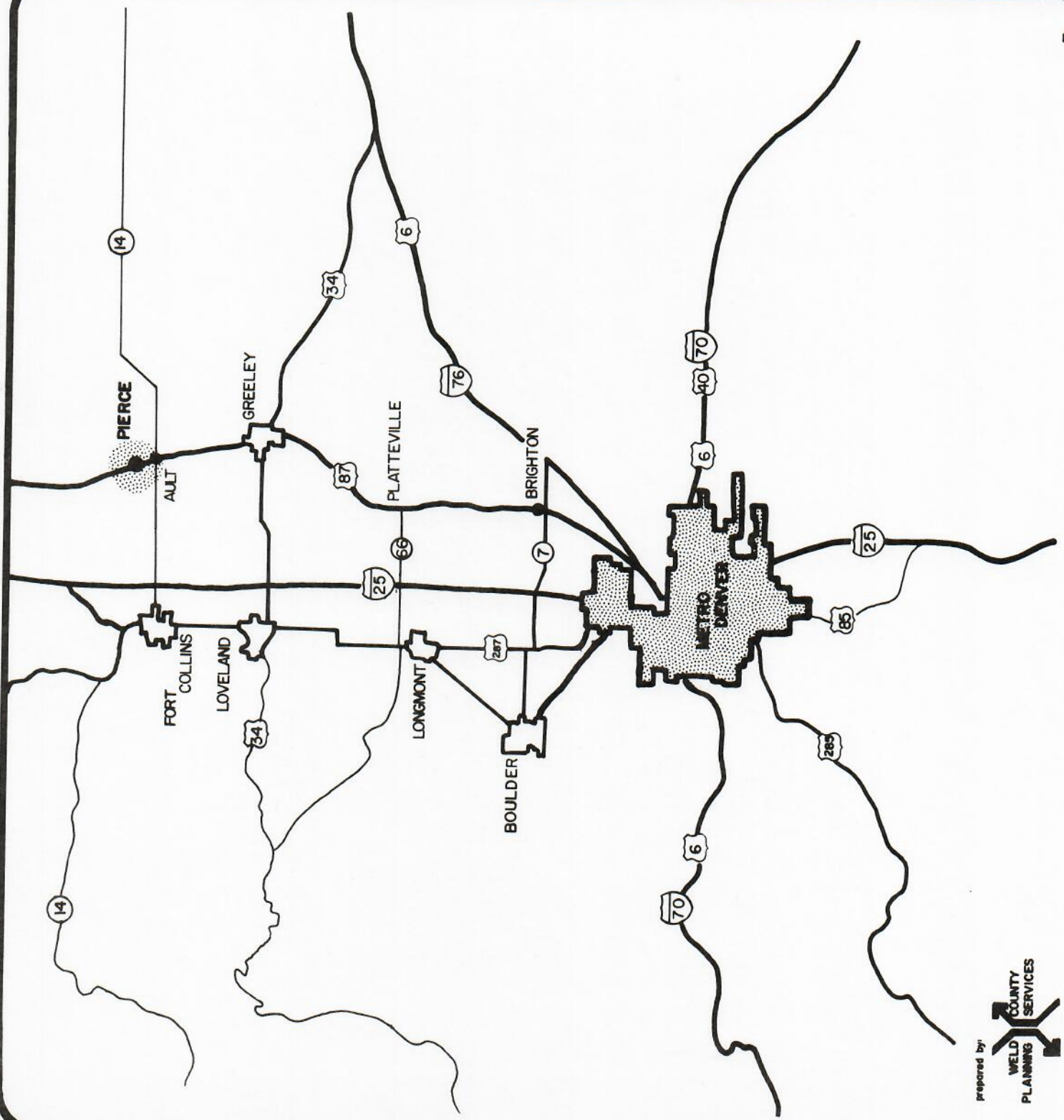
The general lay of the land around Pierce is level, except for a general inclination to the southeast toward Spring Creek located east of the town. The soil in the Pierce area is generally a rich sandy loam, and is especially suited for farming. The community is situated in an area with irrigated farming to the south and east and rangeland to the north and west. In addition, there are several oil field basins which are located to the west of town.

Some of the geographic limitations in the Pierce area have historically centered on the Spring Creek Watershed. The Spring Creek Watershed area originates in Larimer County and extends in a southeasterly direction into Weld County, four miles west of Carr. The land use of the watershed consists of approximately 9,300 acres (13%) of irrigated cropland; 38,900 acres (55%) of dry cropland; 22,900 acres (32%) of rangeland, and 100 acres (1%) of urban land use. Both Pierce and Nunn are located within the Spring Creek Watershed area.

Vicinity map



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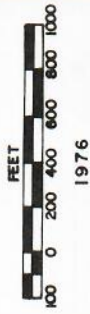
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PLANNING

The primary problem associated with the watershed is caused by frequent summer rains which generate floodwaters through the Town of Pierce. In the past, the floods have caused erosion of town streets, flooding of basements, damage to the Pierce water system, and clogging of the Pierce lateral from the sediment produced from the upper watershed runoff. While the Spring Creek Watershed area represents the most limiting area for future town development there are areas located generally to the southwest of Pierce which are suitable for future urban development. In considering limits to future areas of town development the Spring Creek Watershed area affecting Pierce should be considered because of the flood and drainage problems mentioned above.

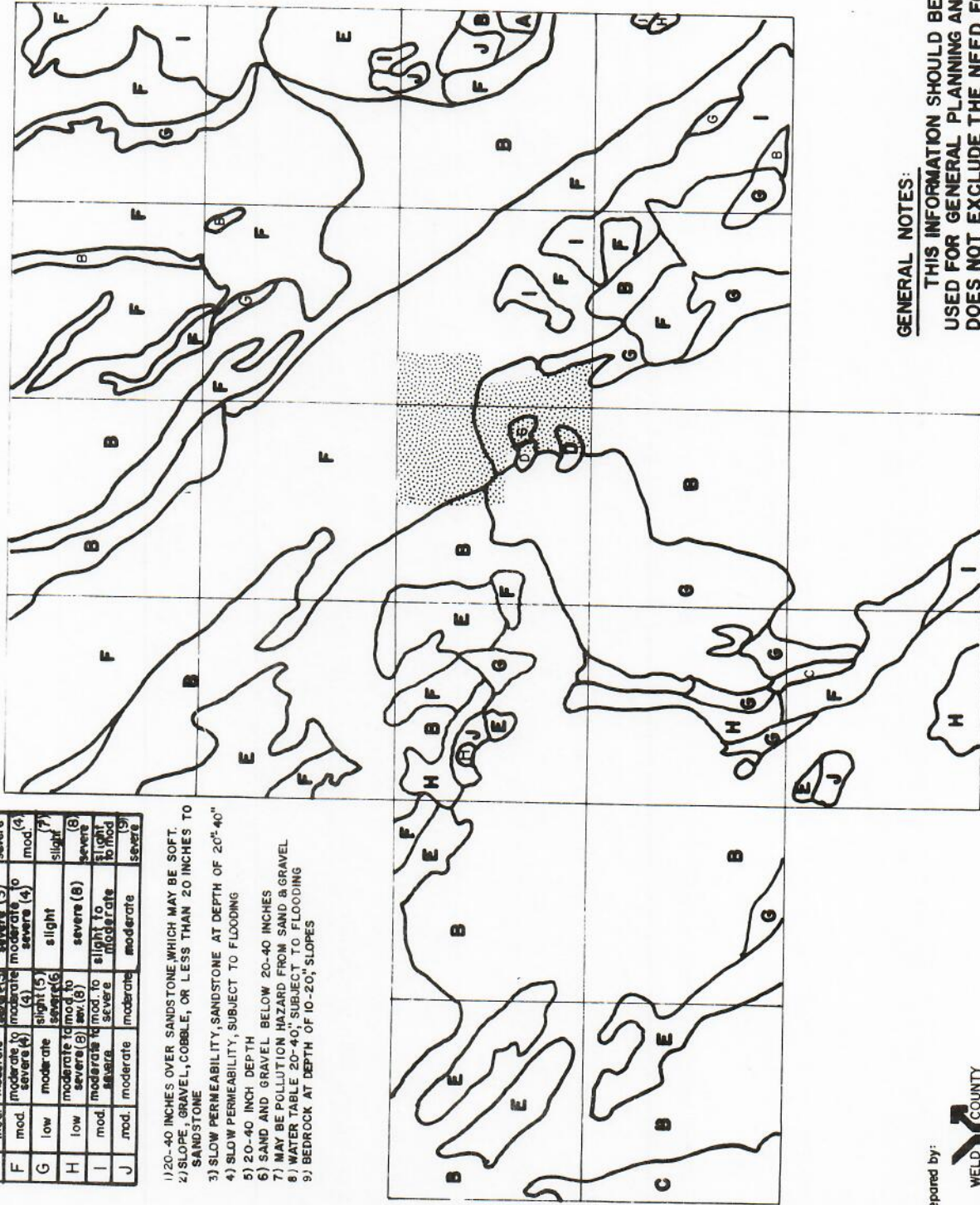
In the same way that knowledge of the Spring Creek Watershed will help in defining potential areas of future growth knowledge of soil limitations can help to avoid, and identify flood damage, shrink-swell potential, soil erosion, and sedimentation. The suitability of soils for accomodating septic tank filter fields, local roads and streets, and urban development are also examined and identified through a soil survey. (Please refer to Pierce Area Soils Map, Figure 2, Page 7). The soil limitations to the southwest of Pierce are primarily slight to moderate. Slight limitations can readily and economically be overcome with proper planning, careful design, and average management. Severe limitations are costly to overcome, if possible at all.

It is important to note that the soil information contained in the Pierce Plan is general. Obviously, general soil information is useful only for general planning and does not exclude the need for on site investigation for specific engineering purposes.

SOILS



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GENERAL NOTES:
 THIS INFORMATION SHOULD BE USED FOR GENERAL PLANNING AND DOES NOT EXCLUDE THE NEED FOR ON SITE INVESTIGATION FOR SPECIFIC ENGINEERING.

2

SOILS	SPRINK LOCAL ROADS & STREETS	SHALLOW EXCAVATION	DWELLINGS SEPTIC TANK FIELD
A	low to moderate	moderate to severe (1)	moderate to severe (1)
B	low to moderate	slight to moderate	slight to moderate (2)
C	low to moderate	moderate to severe (2)	moderate to severe (2)
D	moderate	moderate	moderate
E	low to moderate	moderate to severe (3)	moderate to severe (3)
F	moderate to severe (4)	moderate to severe (4)	moderate to severe (4)
G	low to moderate	slight to moderate (5)	slight to moderate (5)
H	low to moderate	moderate to severe (6)	moderate to severe (6)
I	moderate to severe	slight to moderate (7)	slight to moderate (7)
J	moderate	moderate	moderate

- 1) 20-40 INCHES OVER SANDSTONE WHICH MAY BE SOFT.
- 2) SLOPE, GRAVEL, COBBLE, OR LESS THAN 20 INCHES TO SANDSTONE
- 3) SLOW PERMEABILITY, SANDSTONE AT DEPTH OF 20"-40"
- 4) SLOW PERMEABILITY, SUBJECT TO FLOODING
- 5) 20-40 INCH DEPTH
- 6) SAND AND GRAVEL BELOW 20-40 INCHES
- 7) MAY BE POLLUTION HAZARD FROM SAND & GRAVEL
- 8) WATER TABLE 20-40", SUBJECT TO FLOODING
- 9) BEDROCK AT DEPTH OF 10-20", SLOPES

prepared by:

 WELD COUNTY
 PLANNING SERVICES

HISTORY

A brief discussion of Pierce's history provides an opportunity for its residents to better understand how their town was founded. The following historical account of the Town of Pierce is, in part, taken from research collected by Mrs. Leona Brumfield.*

On November 8, 1869, the Rails of the Denver Pacific reached Mile Post 67 from Denver and installed a side track which was named Pierce, in honor of General John Pierce, late of the Union Army - but at that time was President of the Denver Pacific R. R. A well was dug to supply water for the steam engines, which supplied plenty of good water without going very deep. A windmill and tank were put up which stood for many years. The Railroad Co. allowed the homesteaders to haul water from there until such a time when the people could dig their own wells, which in some cases was several years. This well is still in use by the town.

In 1904, a one room school house was built just west of where the water tank stood, and east of where Van Whys Garage and business place are now. Before that the children had to walk to the Rowe School, three miles South. The teachers in the one room school from 1904 to 1909 were: Miss Ethel McCloud, Miss Alma Nelson, Miss Pearl Row, Mr. McFadden and Miss Florence Thompson. School programs, an occasional square dance, and a Literary Society provided activity and community entertainment. Sunday School was organized and conducted at the school house.

In 1905 the Railroad Co. built a depot which was in use until 1963 when the Union Pacific decided that Pierce and a number of other small towns did not need a depot since local railroad traffic was being decreased and Amtrak was coming into existence.

*Ms. Brumfield is a long time resident of the Town of Pierce, and has written much of the town's history. The written material contained in this section of the Pierce Plan represents only a part of what Ms. Brumfield has written on Pierce's history.

A small grocery store was started by L. N. Priddy in 1905. Before that time, Ault was the nearest place to do any buying, except when some roving peddler came by in his covered cart loaded with everything from needles and thread, a few pieces of cloth and other notions, to pots and pans, liniment, castor oil, and even sticks of candy to tempt the children, at a penny a stick. That was before the days of Rawleigh and Watkins dealers. The rumors of an irrigation ditch that would come into the district brought many people to settle on farms or establish businesses, so that by 1907 Pierce was booming.

About that time twenty-seven loaded box cars that had been disconnected from the rest of the train at a side track named Athol, near Cheyenne, started rolling back down the hill. When they went past Carr at a terrific speed the agent there at once telegraphed the agent at Pierce who ran with all speed to the North Switch and made it just in time to turn the cars onto the side track which derailed them and caused quite a pile-up. Had they gone down the main line they might possibly have run into another train. The merchandise in the cars was strewn in all directions; there was everything from sacks of sugar to furniture and imports. But strangest of all, three hoboes, having a free ride, not knowing the cars were loose from the engine, came out of it alive and not badly hurt.

Pierce soon became a thriving town and could boast of a community Church which was dedicated in August 1907, and a resident minister, the Reverend James Coffman. Also there was a hardware store and a Post Office, two grocery and dry goods stores, a bakery, telephone office, restaurant, cobbler shop, implement store, doctors, a bank, a meat market, barber shop, candy shop, jewelry store, harness shop, planing mill, two lumber yards, two livery stables, two hotels, a cement block factory, real estate office, a lawyer, drug store, feed store, newspaper, picture show, blacksmith shop, mortuary, a notions store, grain elevators, and a new two story brick school house which was built in 1909 at the North side of town.

When irrigation became a reality the community prospered. Sugar beets were added to the farm crops and soon a beet dump was built for loading the beets into railroad dump cars to be shipped to the Great Western Sugar Factory at Eaton.

A few of the prominent people in business and in the development of Pierce from 1907 for the next several years were John and Bert Shafer, Gabe Jones, Spencer, Cave, Dawson and Bristoe, Myers, Daniels, Hubbert, Margrave, Winkler, Evans, Dr. Agan, Odgen, Cashman and Stovall, Munger, who later became the first Mayor, and there was

Harry Waring who edited our first newspaper, the Pierce Record. Later a Mr. Reed published the Pierce Leader for a few years. Hotel Alma opened for business in 1907 and 1908 with Mrs. Whitnah as proprietor, and in later years it was called the Commercial Hotel under management of Mr. and Mrs. Jim Kinney and Mrs. Lena Worley.

Since the Town of Pierce incorporated on August 30, 1918, the town has grown substantially. However, between the years of 1930 and the early 1960's Pierce grew slowly without much town activity (see Table II). This period gave way to the 1970's which brought unprecedented growth to the Town of Pierce. Most of the growth in Pierce has taken place in the southern section of town. During the past several years, the town has encouraged a diversification of residential, commercial and light industrial developments. While the town has historically served as an agricultural service center, Pierce hopes to provide its future residents with more services and additional employment opportunities.

POPULATION

Population figures indicating the size and characteristics of the Town of Pierce are extremely important in planning for future growth. Population estimates and figures also serve an important function in day-to-day decisions relating to several public works and land development activities.

Population size gives an indication of the overall dimensions of the physical environment and provides a firm basis for determining space needs for various types of land use. When this size is projected into the future years, it becomes a basis for estimating future dimensions and future space requirements.

The population composition for the Town of Pierce considers the qualitative characteristics of the population such as age groups, household sizes, and income levels. In addition, the Town's population composition will also assist in determining the amount of space needed for recreation areas, schools, and other community facilities for all segments of the town population.

Table I lists some basic population statistics from a print-out of first count 1970 census data from the Bureau of Business and Public Research, University of Northern Colorado, Greeley. It should be noted that Table I indicates a 1970 population count of 447 while the U.S. Census figures show a 1970 population count of 452. The 452 population figure is the most recent and accurate for 1970 according to updates and new census count information.

TABLE I

BASIC POPULATION STATISTICS
1970 Census Data

AGE GROUP	Census Tract 24		Count of Persons: 447		Enumeration District 8	
	MALE NUMBER	MALE PERCENT	FEMALE NUMBER	FEMALE PERCENT	TOTAL NUMBER	TOTAL PERCENT
Under 5	22	9	13	6	35	8
5 - 18	97	40	60	29	157	35
19 - 24	17	7	17	8	34	8
25 - 64	85	35	88	43	173	39
Over 64	20	8	28	14	48	11
TOTAL	241	100	206	100	447	100