A Development of tiny houses makes sense. Sharing a common water and sewer system and minimizing the cost of land and housing can bring down the move-in cost to under $129,000 with high quality features.

I bought my first vacant lot in neighboring Costilla County in 1968 and today we have over 1,800 customers who bought land from us. Land more than 40 miles from jobs sells for 5% of similar land in the Front Range of Colorado.

In Costilla County a nice 5-acre parcel of Valley Land sells for $3,000 today and treed mountain land starts at around $10,000 for 5 acres. But the price of the land is a small part of the cost of a future dwelling. Earth work will start at $1,500, a well will cost $6,000 to $10,000, a foundation will cost $6,000, a basement foundation and floor slab will cost up to $20,000. If power is within 1,000', to connect will cost between$3,000 and $8,000. My brother paid $18,500 to bring power to his cabin from 1/2 mile away.

Most of the 5 acre parcels of vacant land in Costilla County have no nearby power and solar power systems are needed. Power hogs such as electric stoves, ovens and hot water heaters are replaced with propane appliances. Well permits allow 15 gallon per minute well pumps which require up to 3 horsepower motors. To keep solar systems in a reasonable price range, a 1/2 horsepower well pump delivering 2-4 gallons per minute can be substituted. Solar power systems start at $2,500 and can cost up to $25,000. But with proper equipment selection, a good system to allow 10 minutes of microwaving and 20 minute vacuuming plus plenty of LED lighting and computer use can be added under $7,000.

Costilla County's land use code requires a minimum of 600 square feet for a permanent dwelling. They do not allow long term living in travel trailers or RV's. Many of our inquiries come from people that have a small pension or enough money to buy the land. Putting in a well, septic and solar power system and a second hand post 1976 mobile home will cost at least $4000. To add these things requires cash or a construction loan. The latter is only available with an iron clad pension income, since jobs in our area are far and few between.

One final possibility. There are town lots available in Blanca for $700 per 50'x140' lot. It takes two of these lots to build or bring in a post 1976 mobile home. With a little searching there are great mobile home buys in Colorado Springs, Denver and Fort Collins. Mobile home parks often only allow newer homes and 1977 to 2005 homes can be bought for $8,000 to $20,000. To move them and set them up with anchors and skirting will cost another $4,000. Connection to water, sewer and power in Blanca will cost around $6,000. A nice home in the little town of Blanca can be constructed for $30,000. But remember, there are few jobs in Alamosa and Costilla Counties.