



# GRAND COUNTY GENERAL PLAN 2030

*"Adventurous Small Town Spirit"*

## SECTION FIVE: SUSTAINABILITY

### 5.1 OVERVIEW

Comprehensive plans like this Plan echo the County Strategic Plan core value statements that are integrated in this Plan.

The relationship between strategic planning, master plans, studies, and indicators are expressed in Figure 2:

These values connect to the Plan, tied to indicators and actions in the implementation section.

Vision - Balance - *As a small and diverse community we collaborate with our partners to create resilient educational and economic opportunities for residents while balancing social and environmental values.*

#### Core Values

Secondarily, the County Commission charges Administration with strategies that reinforce practice and direction. The Strategic Goals strengthen the fabric of the Plan elements and can be referenced to each element such as land use, infrastructure, parks and recreation, finance, public safety and decision making:

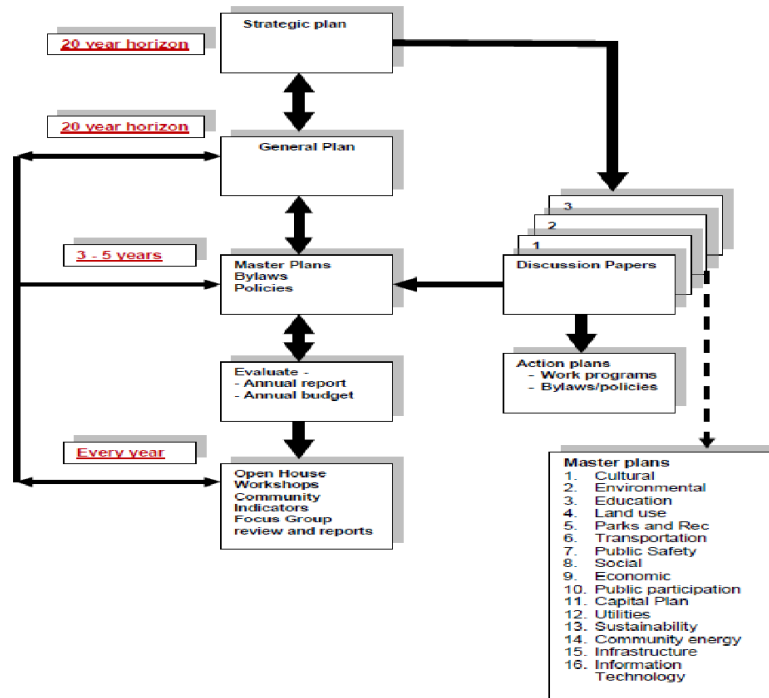
1. Sustainability - *We encourage sustainable development that promotes resource conservation and preservation and takes into account ecological constraints.*
2. Stewardship - *Public lands are a tremendous community asset and we acknowledge our responsibility as stewards of those lands. We strive to preserve and protect wildlife habitat, dark night skies, rivers and watersheds, cultural resources, and our scenic natural beauty.*
3. Small town feel - *We value the unique small town feel of our community and aim to preserve it as the community continues to grow and develop*
4. Responsive and Inclusive Governance - *We welcome diverse perspectives and initiatives by continuously engaging residents, reducing physical and technological barriers and improving access to County resources.*
5. Livable community - *We strive to maintain a livable community in which future generations are nurtured, vulnerable populations are supported, the health and safety of residents is reinforced, and a diversity of cultural and educational opportunities is present.*
6. Economic diversity - *We encourage responsible and diverse economic development that enhances our community, provides a wide range of employment opportunities and supports small businesses.*
7. Collaboration - *We collaboratively plan and act with all partners including Moab City, Castle Valley, San Juan County, and State and federal land management agencies.*



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Figure 1 - Planning Relationships  
Strategy, Act, Measure and Report  
June 2021



## 5.2 SMART GROWTH AND THE COUNTY VISION

Grand County Strategic Vision Statement:

***Balance - “As a small and diverse community we collaborate with our partners to create resilient educational and economic opportunities for residents while balancing social and environmental values.”***

The following interrelated statements and values express principles which collectively establish the qualitative framework of this Plan. Smart Growth principles form the fundamental schools of best practice and frame this Plan.

Grand County will be:

1. A global destination community that values quality backcountry and rural experiences and seeks innovation and diverse employment, retail and service opportunities;
2. An inclusive, safe and diverse community rich in culture with a lot to offer and that is proud of its heritage;
3. A community where all sectors collaborate and use the strengths within the community to ensure a sustainable social, economic and physical environment;
4. A community of variety and opportunities (e.g. commercial, education and training, recreational, transit, health and housing) accessible to all;
5. A County of quality urban and rural form, with the River, Parks, Scenic Corridors and View Sheds



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as the foci;

6. A County that integrates long-term planning into our everyday decision-making process and makes investments today with the future in mind;
7. A growing community that assumes stewardship for its natural environment, that respects the natural environment, and that acknowledges the role that the natural environment has in promoting a high quality of life for the residents and visitors;
8. A County with a responsible ethical government that makes good decisions, which benefit all;
9. A County that supports diverse socio-economic development;
10. A sustainable community, using the best available science to anticipate challenges presented by climate change and implement strategies that include adaptation resiliency; and
11. A community of informed citizens and residents that includes full time residents and seasonal workers and enables participation in the planning process.

### **5.3 SUSTAINABILITY AND STEWARDSHIP**

This Plan assumes a holistic approach that speaks to collaboration and building relationships within complex and challenging environments. The health of a County depends upon its natural environment and is linked to the economy, its built environment, and its social infrastructure.

Sustainability and stewardship are cornerstone values of the Plan. Stewardship is the concept of shared responsibility and requires commitment from all residents in a community. This is a theme that is integrated throughout the goals and objectives of the Plan.

Land stewardship and protection involves accepting personal responsibility for caring for our land, air and water and sustaining the natural processes on which life depends. Stewards of the land will want to recycle, limit energy use, conserve water, use best management practices and participate in programs that conserve and restore wild species and their habitats.

Stewardship and protection of our natural and environmentally sensitive areas will improve our air and water quality and protect important natural features and wildlife habitat.

Sustainability involves meeting the needs of current and future generations by integrating environmental stewardship, and economic and social development. A sustainable community is one where the natural environment is conserved by reducing waste, preventing pollution, promoting efficiency and local economic development, and leading to an improved quality of life and social equity.

Embracing recycling programs, limited energy use, water conservation, best management practices and program participation that conserves and restores wildlife and their habitats is imperative in sustaining a healthy and vibrant community.

The County is committed to building complete neighborhoods and achieving sustainability objectives that are dynamic and unique but that respond to change. Complete neighborhoods are places where residents can enjoy their specific choice of lifestyle - housing options, employment, services, retail, transportation options, educational and recreational facilities and programs.



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Different land use decisions characterize each neighborhood and quality decision making requires active and long range planning and public participation. A sustainable community preserves the natural environment and nurtures and cares for its citizens.

The Smart Growth principles challenge traditional auto-centric land use (e.g. sprawl, divisional zoning or gated communities) practice:

1. Create a range of mixed and compatible land uses;
2. Create diverse housing opportunities;
3. Create well designed, compact and walkable neighborhoods;
4. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration;
5. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place and unique neighborhood identity;
6. Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost effective;
7. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas;
8. Provide a variety of transportation choices;
9. Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities;
10. Take advantage of compact building design; and
11. Utilize smarter and cheaper infrastructure and green buildings.

### **5.4 GOALS AND POLICIES**

This Plan recognizes the following goals and policies in building a community with a sustainable quality of life and where all development should conserve and manage energy, land and natural resources.

**Goal: Establish County integrated sustainability programs that update the General Plan through an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan.**

**Policies:**

- i. Enhance and further develop the County recycling and composting program as a model for neighboring communities;
- ii. The County should consider achieving 100% renewables by 2030;
- iii. Develop an incentive-based checklist (see Appendix 17.2) and possible scoring methodology that gauges the "green" quality of developments for all land use actions including rezoning, land use permits and General Plan and regulatory amendments;
- iv. Measure and report on program successes while providing accessible data and indicators; and
- v. Integrate Smart Growth principles into all GP elements.

**Goal:**

Promote development patterns consistent with water availability and climate change impacts.

**Policies:**

- i. Participate in a County wide groundwater monitoring program;



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- ii. Create a County water committee that tracks water use, integrates information from water monitoring and scientific studies with the land use code; and sets thresholds to protect drinking water, and riparian areas.

### **Goal:**

Promote development patterns that support safe, effective, and multi-modal transportation options, including auto, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit; reducing single occupant vehicle dependency.

### **Policies:**

- i. Provide a mixture of land uses that promote walkability and compact building form, and complete street design and construction;
- ii. Establish measurable sustainability objectives based on smart growth, supporting the County's Strategic Plan and the long term needs of the community;
- iii. Develop proactive plans with groups to conserve land and infrastructure, increase transportation efficiencies (transportation demand management), and encourage County incentives such as funding and models of "green" projects and operations;
- iv. Formulate parking strategies that reduce the need for on-site parking; and
- v. Evaluate and suggest improved parking options, including temporarily removing parking with parklets and pop-up park options.

### **Goal:**

Establish the County as a model energy steward using all "green best practices" in its own operations.

### **Policies:**

- i. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from County operations through anti-idling policies and alternative fuel use;
- ii. Update and monitor the current Green House Gas Inventory (GHG) from 2020 and regularly report on progress;
- iii. Streamline Public Works operations and centralize where justified;
- iv. Promote energy code changes at the state and municipal levels and develop Land Use Code development standards;
- v. All new construction and major renovations to County properties should achieve a LEED gold standard or equivalent;
- vi. Work to develop connected commuter trails, bike routes and walkways throughout the Spanish Valley;
- vii. Continue to work at the State and Federal level on energy best practices standards, incentives and regulations with all partners; and
- viii. Accelerate energy efficiency through meaningful community consultation that supports the development of low impact alternative and renewable energy sources having minimum impacts on:
  - Natural ecosystems;
  - Community water supplies;
  - Recreational amenities; and



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- Visual impacts from any development including infrastructure and transmission lines.

### **Goal:**

Develop smart growth land use decisions while equitably distributing community services.

### **Policies:**

- i. Formulate smart growth regulations, policies and principles that specifically reduce impacts through land use, zoning, transportation, parks and recreation, energy use, and other elements of the Plan; and
- ii. Facilitate partnerships with interested community groups, rural municipalities and other agencies to foster sustainability, measure impacts and formulate implementation strategies.

### **Goal:**

Establish the efficient use of land, infrastructure and other resources in accommodating growth and change through growth management and levels of service strategies.

### **Policies:**

- i. Develop funding mechanisms to offset costs of implementing sustainability initiatives;
- ii. Develop a buildable lands analysis to adequately articulate balanced land use;
- iii. Establish the County as a steward of land assembly and development, adequately sourcing diverse land opportunities, and creating partnerships and advocating smart growth principles.

### **Goal:**

Enhance and embed community safety and green practices in neighborhood design and construction.

### **Policies:**

Develop programs that promote sustainable living. These could include:

- i. Develop "green" demonstration projects through proactive planning and visualization;
- ii. Support innovative infrastructure including "green" strategies and infrastructure such as rain gardens, stormwater filtration systems, gray water recycling, silt fences, and other best management practices;
- iii. Reduce light pollution through continued dark skies policies, regulations, and demonstration projects;
- iv. Reduce noise pollution through business engagement, collaborative enforcement, and regulation;
- v. Incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles in land use decisions considering all principles as defined by the International Association - <https://www.cpted.net/>;
- vi. Consider energy efficiency and emission reduction in all development decision making through collaborative permitting and policies; and
- vii. Foster educational programs to model best practices and engage builders, developers, businesses, educational practitioners and entrepreneurs.

### **Goal:**



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Encourage convenient access to work, recreation, parks and open space and natural areas.

### **Policies:**

- i. Integrate live and work opportunities where appropriate into development;
- ii. Allow for employment opportunities and consistent zoning within or adjacent to neighborhood hubs and new neighborhoods;
- iii. Improve the trail network for multi-modal uses and for recreation and commuting; and
- iv. Support and expand transit services to all places of employment especially service sector retail outlets.

### **Goal:**

Embrace collaborative planning processes that involve all stakeholders (landowners, Administration, school boards, community associations, utilities and other external agencies).

### **Policies:**

- i. Provide meeting and engagement opportunities that highlight demonstration projects, visualization and conceptual designs. Venues should include public meetings, design charrettes, technical workshops and virtual opportunities; and
- ii. Meet with stakeholders to update strategic and comprehensive plans and mutually report on successes and failures.

### **Goal:**

Ensure that redevelopment is established in neighborhoods and supports the health and livability of our citizens.

### **Policies:**

- i. Support neighborhood revitalization, redevelopment and residential infill that contributes to the livability and adaptability of established neighborhoods;
- ii. Accompany residential density increases with enhancements to public spaces, open spaces and amenities;
- iii. Optimize the use of existing infrastructure in association with increased density;
- iv. Identify large infill redevelopment projects to assist in long term community building; and
- v. Collaborate with school boards in support of long term redevelopment efforts.

### **Goal:**

Develop and implement design guidelines for new neighborhoods and integration within existing communities.

### **Policies:**

- i. Establish focal points or unique identifiers within each neighborhood;
- ii. Provide a mixture of residential, commercial and institutional uses;



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- iii. Establish formal and informal public and open spaces;
- iv. Achieve higher density mixed-use development near town centers or established transit routes; and
- v. Establish land use patterns which provide flexibility for future redevelopment.