



# GRAND COUNTY GENERAL PLAN 2030

*"Adventurous Small Town Spirit"*

## SECTION TWELVE: HEALTHY ECONOMY

### 1. OVERVIEW

A healthy economy leads to increased job opportunities and contributes to the general wellbeing of a community; and links to broader community initiatives such as neighborhood nodes, heritage, arts, culture and tourism. Redevelopment projects are also products of a healthy economy and involve reusing land and buildings, contributing to a more sustainable community. However, a healthy economy also requires an adequate commercial and industrial land base and proper land use planning is essential in helping to balance the supply and demand.

### 2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Economic Development Department is a vital part of the County's development planning. It provides economic diversification facilitation, workforce development, business retention, and research and data collection. As a partner to the Economic Development department, the Moab Area Travel Council was established for the county in 2015.

The department promotes and encourages local tourism to help broaden and strengthen the County's economic base. One focus is to strategically identify market niches in tourism and other sectors. A significant increase in site visits is recorded on *discovermoab.com* along with requests for informational materials. Current data collection includes business growth, development, and tourism visits.

Staff helps analyze trends while adjusting to market trends and policy adjustment. The Moab Chamber of Commerce, with 275 members, is active and represents current business interests, with the following mission statement that guides the need to increase economic diversity:

*Engage, empower, and educate businesses for greater success.*

The County is the retail and service center for the greater region. The majority of services are located in the City of Moab, along with the Health Region, federal government offices and several support services. The health of the economy has an impact on quality of life. It is important to remember that even though the social, economic, and environmental dimensions are addressed in separate sections in this document, they are all interrelated.

The goals and objectives in each section should be implemented in connection with each other. The Plan places value on sustainable economic development that reflects economic growth, social development and environmental protection.

The County's policies should aim to diversify the economic base to ensure the sustainable long-term health and vitality of the economy. Strategies that encourage the development of the information technology industry, tourism, manufacturing and other sectors are actively pursued by the Economic Development Advisory Board.

However, it is important to note that a strong diversified economy alone is not enough to ensure that all residents in the County have access to meaningful employment and an adequate income. Appropriate social supports such as education, job/skill training as well as parks, recreation and cultural opportunities need to be in place to attract and retain a locally skilled labor force and foster economic growth.



# GRAND COUNTY GENERAL PLAN 2030

## *"Adventurous Small Town Spirit"*

Maintaining a business friendly climate is vital to creating a vibrant economy that allows local businesses to thrive while attracting new business and industry into the County. An example of the progress that is being made is the streamlining approvals and permits process through online platforms to make it more convenient and much quicker for new businesses.

### **Goal:**

Foster a diverse and resilient economy by investing in existing industries and businesses while expanding our economic base.

### **Policies:**

- i. Prioritize sustainable desert recreation education and respectful recreation opportunities;
- ii. Identify strategic Transient Room Tax goals, objectives and measurable outcomes and report on a quarterly basis through community indicators and an online dashboard;
- iii. Continue to support the Sustainable Trail subcommittee as an important guidance resource and as potentially a standing committee of the Commission;
- iv. Monitor and mitigate impacts of wilderness activities that generate noise, dust and other nuisances;
- v. Within the land use study identify key development locations for serviced industrial, commercial, mixed use and business activities;

### **Goal:**

Invest and economically leverage our natural and cultural amenities to maximize the quality of life and preserve our unique community character.

### **Policies:**

- i. Work with community groups and business partners to collaborate on tourism education and responsible promotion;
- ii. Continue to develop broadband access for all sectors and increased high speed cellular services (see Schedule 16.35);
- iii. Update the County's Information Technology strategic plan through a community and departmental collaborative that increases and integrates customer services;
- ii. Consider economic sector support for emerging industries that are compatible and complementary with the community and enhance existing residents' job opportunities;
- iii. Foster community and business engagement and feedback through an annual forum;
- iv. Ensure a development and business friendly environment to help attract diverse and long-term economic growth through partnerships between business, government and the community;
- v. Encourage development of incentives in collaboration with government and organizations to attract new industries and business sectors within and beyond the region;
- vi. Cooperate with other agencies and industry in fostering the County's position as the major supply and service center for the region;

### **Goal:**

Balance economic growth and resilience to support a high quality of life for residents through job-based support programs, initiatives that promote entrepreneurship, and community development. Invest in



# GRAND COUNTY GENERAL PLAN 2030

## *"Adventurous Small Town Spirit"*

stable communities with a local resident population while mitigating temporary and short term residential/commercial uses.

### **Policies:**

- i. Advocate and support investment initiatives into education, skills training and entrepreneurship programs to promote a locally skilled labor force while meeting the expanding needs of businesses and industry;
- ii. Continue to pursue attractive community amenities and features conducive to encouraging a growing economic and employment base and resident labor force through provision of parks and open spaces, recreation and cultural opportunities, affordable housing options, K-12 education and other community amenities that bring about a good quality of life;
- iii. Create viable, diverse commercial areas in the county that provide opportunities for working, shopping and entertainment activities;
- iv. Promote competitive advantage to existing and new business and targeted sectors;
- v. Cooperate with tribes and minority groups to encourage and support tribal business and training opportunities, and support inclusive economic development wherever possible;
- vi. Create internal and external marketing strategies to retain and support existing businesses and attract new businesses;
- vii. Continue to work with the Regional Economic Action Committee, Chamber of Commerce, Tourism and any other stakeholders in promoting business and tourism opportunities;
- viii. Invest in policies and projects that reduce cost of living burdens on employees and remove constraints on the available labor pool that hamper entrepreneurship and small business development;
- ix. Consider an incubator or startup fund to offset the cost and risk of new business development;
- x. Expand and support the labor pool through public-private partnerships and impact fees to invest in employee housing. Consider housing requirements for large employers particularly non-residential proprietors;
- xi. Seek ways to reduce land use conflicts between commercial and residential uses through appropriate guidelines; and
- xii. Ensure a sufficient reserve of serviceable commercial lands ready for development to support a healthy, competitive economy.

### **3. URBAN RENEWAL AND REDEVELOPMENT**

To help achieve the goal of sustainability, the County should undertake the renewal and redevelopment of the built environment when and where appropriate. Our existing building stock could be the focus of an effort to save energy and conserve resources while drawing inspiration from the past.

Urban renewal and redevelopment applies to functionally obsolete or vacant residential (see Residential Infill and Development section), commercial, industrial and institutional land and buildings where existing infrastructure and services are already established. Urban renewal and redevelopment



# GRAND COUNTY GENERAL PLAN 2030

## *"Adventurous Small Town Spirit"*

involves reusing and/or rehabilitating land and buildings. Examples of this are County Offices and facilities.

### **Goal:**

Encourage the redevelopment or rehabilitation of functionally obsolete or vacant residential, commercial, industrial and institutional land and buildings where economically feasible and where compatible with prescribed existing land uses.

### **Policies:**

- i. Explore providing property tax incentives to encourage residential and commercial development nodes;
- ii. Explore incentives to encourage renovations, upgrades, infill development in the County and surrounding neighborhoods such as tax breaks/abatements, incentives, and grants;
- iii. Consider the following uses for recycling vacant buildings such as closed schools, churches and other vacant buildings:
  1. Community Center;
  2. Health Care Services;
  3. Office/Retail;
  4. Housing; and
  5. Private Schools;
- iv. When considering the reuse/conversion of vacant buildings ensure issues related to land use conflicts, potential environmental contamination, parking, National Building Code requirements, fire safety, etc. can be resolved;
- v. Endeavor to provide opportunities for public input in decisions regarding reuse of vacant buildings (e.g. through open houses, and public hearings); and
- vi. Ensure that redevelopment maintains and enhances the character of each area.

### **3. BUSINESS/RESEARCH PARKS**

Business parks are intended to accommodate business and light industrial uses that are seeking a high quality environment with respect to overall site and building design. Business parks complement the more traditional forms of industrial development by providing an overall setting with a prestigious and distinct identity. Business parks may be sufficient in size to form a comprehensively planned area.

Business parks designation are meant to promote such activities as business service, advanced technologies, research and development, light manufacturing, prototype development, related office uses, and compatible industrial activities. Business park uses may be located adjacent to residential areas because they shall not create land use conflicts related to smoke, noise, vibration, dust, odor or potential environmental contamination during their normal course of operations. The physical design of business parks should conform to the guidelines and provisions of the Land Use Code and subdivision approval process.



# GRAND COUNTY GENERAL PLAN 2030

*"Adventurous Small Town Spirit"*

## **Goal:**

Support new business park type development that incorporates clean technology and that promotes energy efficient and green buildings.

## **Policies:**

- i. Ensure business parks are strategically located with adequate access to transportation, utilities, and public transit. Proximity to the Airport Industrial Hub, the Educational Hubs and other hubs would be desirable for future business parks; and
- ii. Encourage business parks to maintain aesthetic qualities compatible with the surrounding areas while promoting energy efficiency and green building.

## **4. SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT**

### **OVERVIEW**

The residents value a healthy community where everyone can feel safe to live, learn, play, interact, work and grow. The social environment is important not only on a County-wide scale but a neighborhood scale.

The viability of each of the neighborhoods is important to the health of the community as a whole. Residents want to enjoy a community that offers education and training, health facilities and essential services.

This Plan acknowledges that education and training play a role in personal wellbeing and access to employment. Health facilities create a community where people can live, work and play in healthy ways while fire protection and emergency medical services are essential in fostering the health and safety of residents and visitors.

The Center for Disease Control generates Social Determinants of Health, specifically Healthcare Access and Quality, Social and Community Context, and Neighborhood and Built Environment. These domains directly impact community/ individual health for whole entire populations – reference <https://www.cdc.gov/socialdeterminants/about.html>

### **HEALTH**

#### **Goal:**

Promote a viable and active community by taking action on the conditions that influence the health and wellbeing of the citizens through a Health Impact Assessment.

#### **Policies:**

- i. Support where possible the efforts of the Health Region to pursue funding for the development and improvement of health care facilities;
- ii. Consider partnerships at all levels of government, community agencies and other appropriate parties to ensure adequate provision of services that affords high quality health care services for residents and neighboring regions;



# GRAND COUNTY GENERAL PLAN 2030

## *"Adventurous Small Town Spirit"*

- iii. Encourage nutritional self-sufficiency through support of small-scale agriculture and locally grown food;
- iv. Expand support and investment in elder care, long-term care facilities, and senior living developments; and
- v. When planning for development ensure all residents have access to the necessary health care services and programs and prioritize the needs of lower income residents and those who rely on public transportation.

### **INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE COMMUNITIES**

An inclusive community means a place where all people or groups of people have access to facilities and services. An inclusive community is a place where all people or groups feel safe, are mobile, have choices, are protected and are free to participate in community life.

Barrier-free buildings, sidewalks and public areas allow for the greater movement, safety and comfort of people with special needs. Considering people with health problems or disabilities in the design of service provision and facilities can help reduce mobility limitations and increase ability to access services and facilities. It is important to recognize cognitive disabilities and mental health conditions, other chronic health conditions, and those struggling with substance use disorders, LEP (limited English proficiency), source of income, time constraints such as inability to attend meetings or provide input, access to transportation, criminal history, immigration status, or membership in a protected class.

#### **Goal:**

Ensure all of the County's services and facilities are accessible, regardless of physical or financial ability, and the County promotes inclusivity.

#### **Policies:**

- i. Ensure that language access tools are properly funded and maintained for healthcare, law enforcement, and all other County services;
- ii. Promote trauma-informed approaches within all County departments;
- iii. Ensure that citizens of all socio-economic levels have access to essential services and facilities;
- iv. Encourage barrier-free access (e.g. wheelchair accessibility and universal access) for the physically challenged in all new developments, infill projects, and street and sidewalk construction;
- v. Encourage barrier-free access and proper maintenance of outdoor routes for people of all ages and abilities;
- vi. Encourage barrier-free access to municipal facilities;
- vii. Consult with representatives of different cultural, demographic, and ability groups and consider forming a standing diversity and inclusion advisory committee;
- viii. Conduct an annual audit of County development, communication, and policies assessing the diversity of cultures and integration within the community; and



# GRAND COUNTY GENERAL PLAN 2030

*"Adventurous Small Town Spirit"*

- ix. Recognize and accommodate the unique needs of the various cultural groups.