



# **TOWN OF RIDGWAY**

## **Community Profile**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## ABOUT THE MASTER PLAN

The Town of Ridgway is in the process of developing a comprehensive master plan to guide future growth and public/private investment over the next ten to twenty years. The Master Plan will draw from the Town's existing master plan elements, the many related plans and studies the Town of Ridgway has completed or participated in, as well as input from the Master Plan Steering Committee, elected and appointed officials, local and regional partners, and the community at large.

## ABOUT THIS REPORT

The Community Profile report presents data and statistics on a range of topics and trends relevant to the Town of Ridgway's Master Plan process. It is intended to help inform and serve as a foundation for ongoing discussions related to the Master Plan and serve as a resource for the community in the future. The following topics are addressed in the report:

- Population & Demographics
- Housing
- Growth & Development
- Economy
- Natural Environment
- Infrastructure & Services
- Parks & Recreation
- Transportation
- Municipal Governance

This information will continue to be refined and expanded as new information becomes available.

### Note on Data

The data included in this report represents the best available data as of September 2018. Data for 2016 is the most recent date for which statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau, one of the primary sources of data in this report, are available. Data for other statistics is only available at the county level, such as employment data produced by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. It is intended that this document will be updated as new data becomes available, as needed, to support future Master Plan updates.





## MAJOR TRENDS AND KEY ISSUES

**Although the rate of growth has slowed and development activity is still below pre-recession levels, Ridgway and the surrounding region are expected to see sustained growth.**

Despite seeing increases over recent years, development activity in the Town of Ridgway is still below that seen prior to the Great Recession. 239 new residential units were built between 2000 and 2008, compared with 67 units between 2009 and 2017. By 2050, the Town of Ridgway is expected to add between 150 and 700 new residents, and additional infrastructure and services will be needed to meet future demand. During the same timeframe, the population of the three-county region (Montrose, San Miguel, and Ouray counties) is expected to nearly double—from 54,265 to 97,252. While most of this growth is projected to occur in neighboring Montrose and San Miguel counties, regional growth will continue to have direct and indirect impacts on Ridgway’s transportation system, housing market, ranching heritage, and overall economy. The Town and Ouray County have a variety of established plans, policies, and regulations in place to help manage growth. These tools will need to be reviewed as part of the Master Plan process to ensure they continue to reflect the values of the community.

### **Questions to consider as part of the Master Plan process:**

- What additional steps should we take to help protect, preserve, and nurture critical aspects of Ridgway’s small town character, ranching heritage, scenic beauty, natural environment, and creative culture as the community grows and changes over time?
- To what extent does the community wish to try to proactively accommodate projected residential and employment growth through the expansion of infrastructure and services?

**The extent to which—and the rate at which—Ridgway can absorb projected future growth is dependent on a variety of factors.**

The Town of Ridgway’s 2011 Land Use Plan reflects the community’s desire to maintain a compact pattern of growth that concentrates new development close to existing development and services and protects surrounding agricultural and ranch lands in Ouray County. The Land Use Plan anticipates an ultimate “buildout” of between 561 and 945 residential units within the Initial Growth Boundary (IGB), and an additional 500 to 895 residential units within the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). Based on recent population growth scenarios, the Town has at least a 70-year supply of land within the Initial Growth Boundary (IGB). It will take much longer for the UGB to reach buildout. However, many of the areas planned for growth within the IGB do not have the infrastructure in place—water, sewer, roads—needed to accommodate future development. The Town is in the process of assessing the capacity of its facilities and infrastructure, and has begun to explore long-term strategies with regard to water service

provision. However, current Town policy states that development should “pay its own way” and the Town has not historically put in infrastructure in anticipation of new development.

**Questions to consider as part of the Master Plan process:**

- Are the locations of land uses within the community and the density/intensity assumptions associated with each land use class in the Town’s 2011 Land Use Plan still aligned with the community’s vision for the future? If not, what types of changes should be explored?
- Should the Town work to secure additional water supplies to help support the ultimate buildout of the Town’s 2011 Land Use Plan?
- Should the Town consider incentivizing development in priority locations through investments in infrastructure, public/private partnerships, regulatory incentives (e.g. formalizing density bonuses, proactive rezoning), or other mechanisms?
- In light of the above, what potential changes are needed to help “right size” the Land Use Plan to the Town’s ultimate infrastructure and service capacity?

**Ridgway’s housing market is shifting and has become more expensive due to the economic recovery and high desirability of our community. This shift is putting pressure on our residents, businesses, and institutions.**

The largest shifts in our housing market have been in affordable single family homes and rentals. Our median family home sale price is double that of Montrose, and our rental costs resemble a high cost market. One in five lower income renters and one in ten owners struggle with housing costs, which is higher than Ouray County and the State of Colorado overall. While we are still a community of permanent residents—many of whom commute to jobs in Telluride or Montrose—continued price increases could adversely affect our socioeconomic diversity. Anecdotally, public and private sector employers in the Town have cited housing and land costs and a general lack of supply in both for sale and rental housing as key factors in their ability to attract and retain employees. The Town has been working in coordination with Ouray County and the City of Ouray as part of a regional Housing Advisory Committee to explore a range of strategies. In addition, the Town has taken steps to expand housing options through its accessory dwelling unit program, and is currently seeking grant funding for the Space to Create project—which will include affordable housing units geared toward the workforce and creative sector in the community, and possibly studio and/or commercial space. Likewise, alternative housing models such as a co-housing community and smaller single-family dwellings are beginning to emerge through the private and non-profit sectors. While progress is being made on these various fronts, a range of strategies will need to be explored through the Master Plan process to help clarify Ridgway’s priorities and positions as a community.

**Questions to consider as part of the Master Plan process:**

- What potential barriers to affordable/attainable housing exist in the Town's current policies and regulations? What steps can be taken to remove these barriers?
- What other steps are we willing to take as a community—or in partnership with others in the region—to help ensure our workforce and others who wish to remain in or relocate to Ridgway have access to housing options that are attainable?

**Our local economy is growing and evolving, but continues to be intrinsically linked with that of the three-county region.**

Ouray and San Miguel Counties did not reach pre-recession levels of employment until 2017—four years behind the State of Colorado as a whole. However, Ouray County's workforce grew at nearly double the rate of growth as Montrose and San Miguel Counties between 2000 and 2016. Although employment in manufacturing industries has grown as a share of Ouray County's economy, approximately half of all jobs are related to tourism. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimated that tourism jobs—those in the accommodation and food services, retail trade, and arts, entertainment, and recreation industries—made up the largest share of Ridgway's economy (at 27% of all jobs) in 2016. However, the mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction; education services; and accommodation and food services industries made up the top three industries in terms of employment. Tourism-related industries typically pay lower wages, are subject to more volatile swings, and tend to attract a more transient workforce.

While the number of jobs located in Ridgway has more than doubled since 2005, 76% of Ridgway resident commuted elsewhere for work in 2015 and 89% of workers employed in Ridgway commuted in from Montrose, the City of Ouray, or points beyond. This commuting pattern has been reinforced by rising housing costs and higher wages being paid to workers in surrounding counties.

Recent public and private investment in the heart of Downtown Ridgway—particularly along Clinton Street—has resulted in new restaurants, the initial phases of the renovation of the Sherbino Theatre, and other new businesses. As a result, sales tax revenue collected by the Town has nearly doubled since 2009. However, Ridgway residents are still not able to meet all of their needs within the community. As a result, they purchase retail goods from businesses outside of Ridgway (or online). This “leakage” in spending indicates there are opportunities for businesses in Ridgway to meet this demand. However, pursuit of these opportunities needs to be weighed against some residents' preferences for maintaining Ridgway's small town character, acknowledging that some retail sectors and formats (such as big box stores) may not be feasible or desired in town.

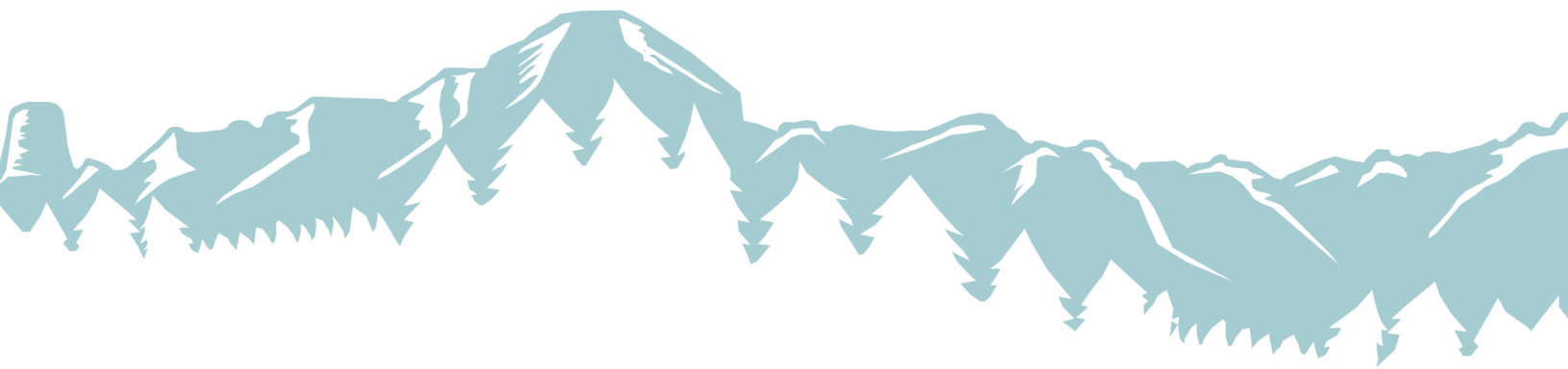
The Town of Ridgway became a 5-year State-Certified Creative District in 2013, and again in 2018, as well as Candidate and then Designated status as a Main Street community during the same time period. Having a Creative District and participation in the Main Streets program

provides the Town with financial and technical resources, which were expended in part initially, in developing a strategic plan. Since 2013, the Town has used the assistance it receives to fund a staff member who works closely with creative individuals and creative entrepreneurs, economic development organizations, and other local and regional partners to help enhance Ridgway's economic and civic capital. The Town leveraged its Creative District designation to receive and manage State funding to install creative downtown furnishings and public art, and was selected for the opportunity to design and build a Space to Create facility. Data collected from Creative Vitality Suite indicates these efforts are paying off. Since 2015, there has been a 10% gain in cultural nonprofit revenues (up \$78,000) and a 4% gain in creative jobs in Ouray County. The Town has tracked that more than 20% of Ridgway residents are Creatives, as defined by the Ridgway Creative District and Colorado Creative Industries. This estimate includes those who are fully employed in a creative industry, those who are attempting to support themselves at least partially through work in a creative industry, and those who are hobbyists.

**Questions to consider as part of the Master Plan process:**

- What potential policy or regulatory barriers exist to business retention and attraction in Ridgway? What steps should we take to help remove these barriers?
- How can we continue to leverage the community and Town's investment of social and financial capital into the Creative District and Main Street? What role should these initiatives play in Ridgway's future?
- What other steps are we willing to take as a community—or in partnership with others in the region—to help ensure our workforce and others who wish to remain in or relocate to Ridgway have access to housing options that are attainable?
- What role should the Town play in promoting Ridgway's economic vitality in the future?

# POPULATION & DEMOGRAPHICS



## POPULATION GROWTH

### Past Growth and Projections for Future Growth, 1980 – 2050

Town of Ridgway and Ouray County

YEAR	RIDGWAY	AVERAGE ANNUAL GROWTH*	OURAY COUNTY	AVERAGE ANNUAL GROWTH*
1980	369	---	1,925	---
1990	423	1.4%	2,295	1.8%
2000	744	5.8%	3,775	5.1%
2010	925	2.2%	4,446	1.6%
2016**	1,016	1.6%	4,844	1.4%
2020***	---	---	5,094	1.3%
2030	---	---	5,210	0.2%
2040	---	---	5,303	0.2%
2050	---	---	5,568	0.5%

\*Rates of growth reflect annual average growth that occurred over the previous 10 years.

\*\*Annual average growth rate is for the period from 2010 – 2016.

\*\*\*Annual average growth rate is for the period from 2016 – 2020.

*Source: State Demographer's Office, Colorado Department of Local Affairs; Clarion Associates*

**Ridgway is growing.** The Town of Ridgway's population has grown by 647 residents since 1980. The rate of growth has varied decade by decade.

**Ridgway is one-fifth of Ouray County's population.** In 2016, residents of Ridgway comprised 21% of Ouray County's population. Approximately 52% of the county's population lives in unincorporated Ouray County.

**Ouray County will grow in the future.** Ouray County is expected to have a population of 5,568 residents by 2050, an increase of 724 residents.

### Past Growth and Projections for Future Growth, 2016 – 2050

Montrose County, San Miguel County, and Ouray County

YEAR	MONTROSE COUNTY	AVERAGE ANNUAL GROWTH*	SAN MIGUEL COUNTY	AVERAGE ANNUAL GROWTH*	OURAY COUNTY	AVERAGE ANNUAL GROWTH*	REGION TOTAL	AVERAGE ANNUAL GROWTH*
2016	41,421	---	8,000	---	4,844	---	54,265	---
2020	44,144	1.6%	9,050	3.1%	5,094	1.3%	58,288	1.8%
2030	53,355	1.9%	11,742	2.6%	5,210	0.2%	70,307	1.9%
2040	64,331	1.9%	14,590	2.2%	5,303	0.2%	84,224	1.8%
2050	74,391	1.5%	17,293	1.7%	5,568	0.5%	97,252	1.4%

\*Rates of growth reflect annual average growth that occurred over the previous 10 years, except for the year 2020, where an interval of 2016-2020 was used.

*Source: State Demographer's Office, Colorado Department of Local Affairs; Clarion Associates*

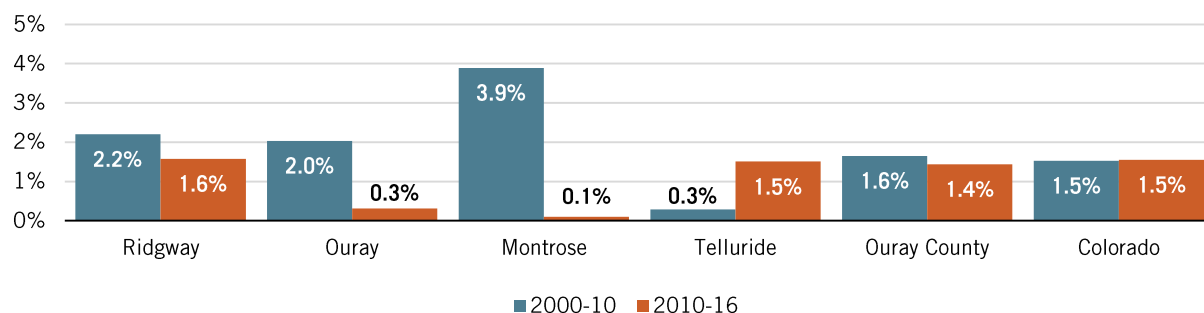
## Town of Ridgway Community Profile: Population & Demographics

**Surrounding counties will also grow.** The counties surrounding Ouray County are also expected to grow. San Miguel County is forecast to see some of the fastest annual rates of growth over the coming decades, and could more than double in size by 2050.

**Our region could grow to almost 100,000 people.** This three-county region (which includes Montrose, Ouray, and San Miguel County) is forecast to grow by 43,000 residents by 2050, reaching a population of just under 100,000 by 2050.

### Average Annual Growth Rates, 2000-2016

Surrounding Region

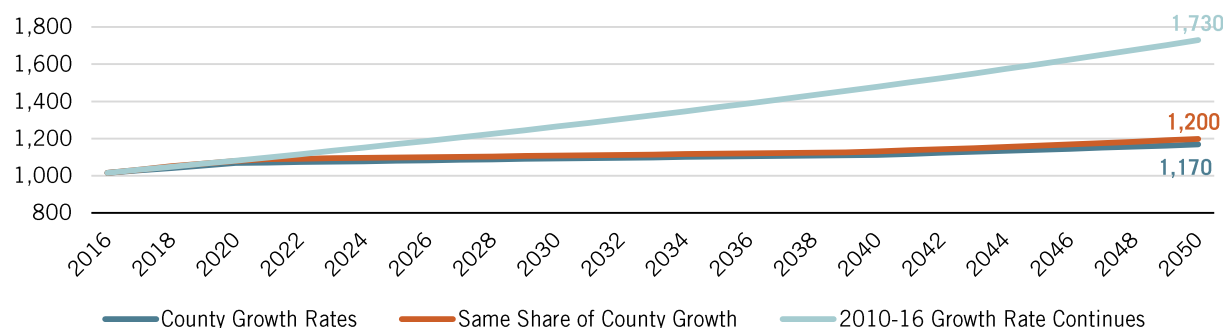


**Source:** State Demography Office, Colorado Department of Local Affairs; Clarion Associates

- **Rates of growth are slowing.** Rates of population growth have decreased across the region, except for in Telluride, where the annual average growth rate increased between 2000-10 and 2010-16. This decrease was most pronounced in Montrose, where it fell from almost 4% per year to 0.1% per year. Although Ridgway's rate of growth decreased compared to the previous decade, the town still grew by an average of 15 residents each year since 2010, compared to 18 residents per year between 2000 and 2010. In other words, while growth rates may have declined, the average number of new residents in Ridgway decreased only slightly from the previous decade.

### Population Growth Scenarios, 2016 - 2050

Town of Ridgway



**Source:** State Demography Office, Colorado Department of Local Affairs; Clarion Associates

**Forecasting Ridgway's future growth.** Population forecasts are not available from the State of Colorado for municipalities. However, it is possible to estimate what Ridgway's population might be in the future using a variety of growth scenarios:



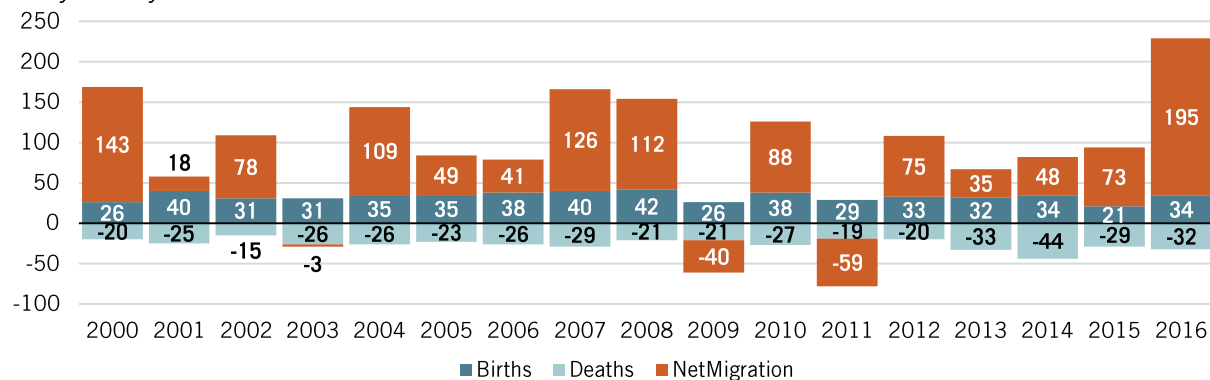
- **County Growth Rates:** Under this scenario, the Town of Ridgway will experience the same annual rates of growth as Ouray County. By 2050, the town's population would reach 1,170, an addition of 154 residents.
- **Same Share of County Growth:** Under this scenario, the Town of Ridgway will capture the same amount of county growth as it has, on average, since 1980 (roughly 25%). By 2050, the town's population would reach 1,200, an addition of 184 residents.
- **2010-16 Growth Rate Continues:** Under this scenario, the Town of Ridgway will continue to grow by the same average annual rate of growth experienced between 2010 and 2016 (1.6%). By 2050, the town's population would reach 1,730, an addition of 714 residents.

While it is not certain the growth projected in these scenarios will occur over the next 30 years, they are helpful in showing a range of possible futures that might come to pass under certain conditions. There are many constraints in Ridgway that are likely to limit growth, from the availability of water, to the availability of land to support residential development, to economic shocks that could reduce growth across the region, state, or country.

## DRIVERS OF GROWTH

### Components of Population Change, 2000 - 2016

Ouray County



Source: State Demography Office, Colorado Department of Local Affairs

**Net migration is driving growth.** The largest driver of growth in Ouray County since 2000 has been net migration (the difference between people moving to the county versus moving from the county in a given year). Years where net migration was negative (more people moved away from the county than moved to it) resulted in a loss of population.

**Net migration is likely to slow.** Net migration to Ouray County reached a peak in 2016. Forecasts by the State Demographer's Office predict that annual migration to Ouray County will decline substantially between 2017 and 2050 (from an average of 64 migrants per year between 2000 and 2016 to an average of 23 per year between 2017 and 2050). However, many factors influence migration making it a difficult variable to predict.

## Town of Ridgway Community Profile: Population & Demographics

**Most migrants come from other states.** In 2016, approximately 58% of the 471 migrants to Ouray County came from another state, although Colorado (excluding Ouray County) was the top location from which new residents moved.

### Migration Patterns, 2016

Ouray County

WHERE PEOPLE ARE MOVING FROM?	WHERE PEOPLE ARE MOVING TO?
1. Colorado <sup>1</sup>	1. Colorado <sup>2</sup>
2. New York	2. Oregon
3. Wisconsin	3. California
4. Michigan	4. Minnesota
5. North Carolina	5. New York

1. Primarily Denver County and San Miguel County

2. Primarily Montrose County and Pitkin County

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2016 American Community Survey; BBC Research & Consulting*

## AGE

### Median Age, 2000, 2010, and 2016

	2000	2010	2016
<b>Ridgway</b>	35.1	43.7	48.0
<b>Ouray</b>	42.0	45.1	50.9
<b>Montrose</b>	40.1	39.9	43.1
<b>Telluride</b>	31.0	35.9	36.5
<b>Ouray County</b>	43.4	50.0	53.3
<b>Colorado</b>	34.3	36.1	36.4

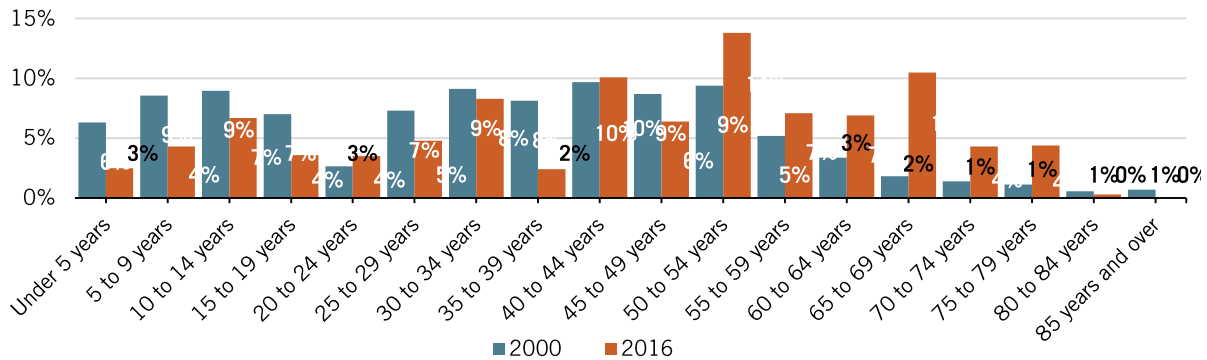
*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2016 American Community Survey*

**Our population is getting older.** The median age of Ridgway residents was 48 in 2016, older than in 2010. The median age of residents increased over this period throughout the region, mirroring state-wide trends.

**We are one of the oldest communities in the region.** Besides the City of Ouray, Ridgway had one of the highest median ages in the region in 2016. Telluride was the youngest, at 36.5 years, while Ouray County as a whole was the oldest, at 53.3 years.

### Distribution of Population by Age, 2000 and 2016

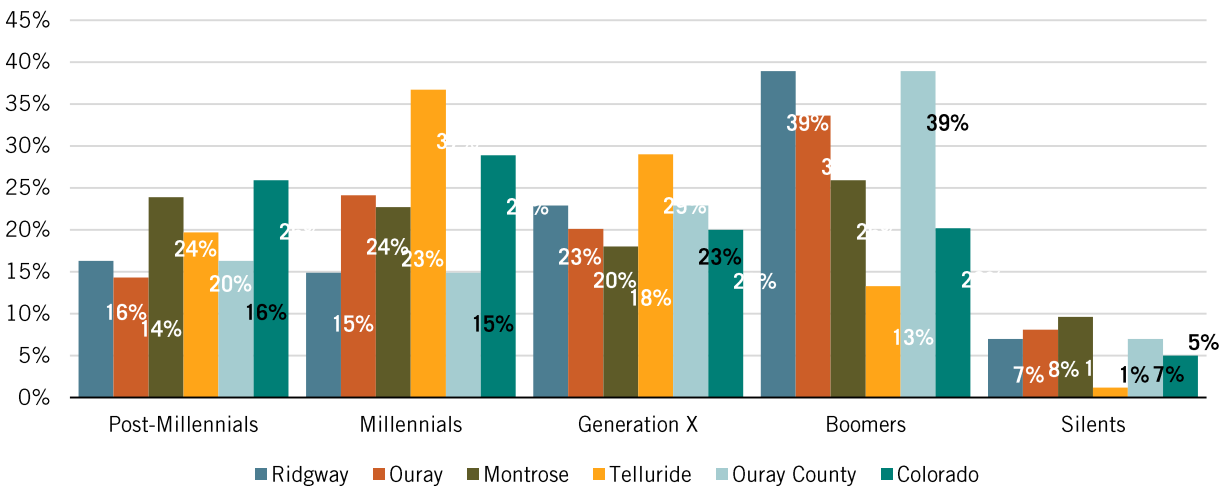
Town of Ridgway



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial Census; U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey

**Our age distribution reflects our aging population.** The distribution of Ridgway residents by age has shifted since 2000. During that year, 31% of residents were under the age of 19, compared to approximately 17% in 2016. A similar shift occurred among residents over the age of 65. In 2000, this age group accounted for 6% of Ridgway's population, compared to 20% in 2016.

### Generational Composition, 2016



Post Millennials (under 19); Millennials (20 to 39); Generation X (40 to 54); Boomers (55 to 74); Silents (75 and over)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey; Pew Research Center

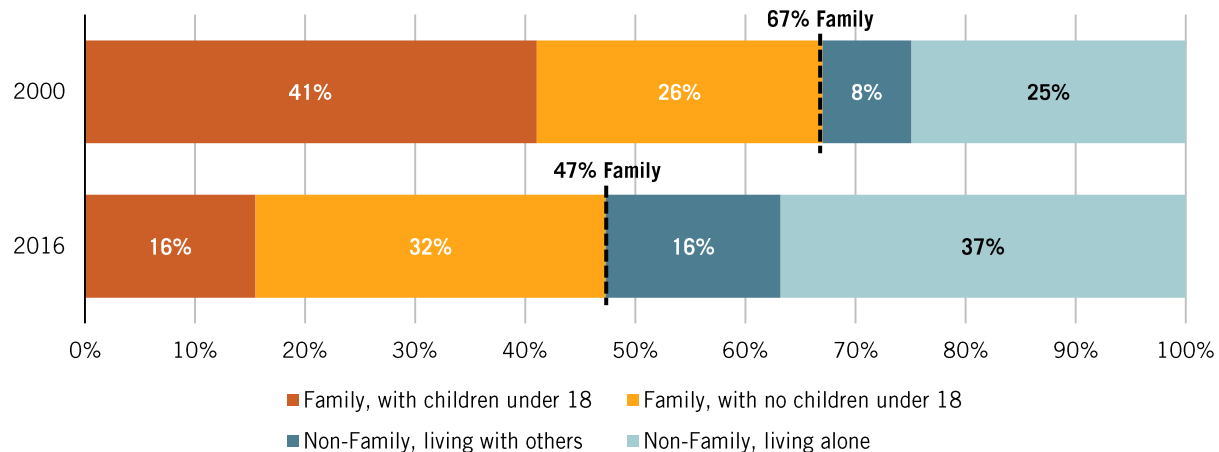
**More than one-third of us are boomers.** Boomers (residents 55-74 years old) were the largest generational group in Ridgway in 2016 at nearly 39% of the population. This is unlike Telluride and Colorado as a whole in which only 13.3% and 20% of the population falls into this generational group, respectively.

**Few of us are millennials.** Millennials (residents 20-39 years old) were one of the smallest generational groups (after Silents) in Ridgway in 2016. In contrast, this generational group was the largest in Telluride and one of the largest in Ouray and Montrose. Millennials were the largest generation in Colorado as a whole during 2016.

## HOUSEHOLDS

### Household Composition, 2000 - 2016

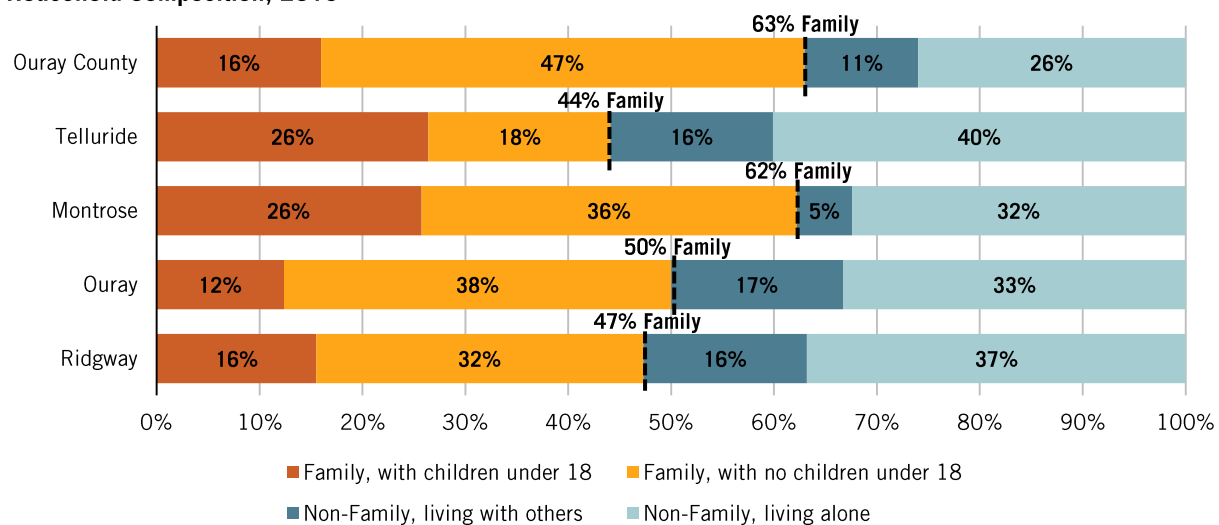
Town of Ridgway



**Source:** U.S. Census Bureau. 2000 Decennial Census; U.S. Census Bureau. 2012-2016 American Community Survey

**Families are becoming less common, particularly those with children.** While the overall number of family households living in Ridgway grew between 2000 and 2016, the share of all households that were made up of families has decreased from 67% in 2000 to 47% in 2016. Of these family households, only 33% were families that included children under 18 (16% of all households). This is a smaller share than in 2000, when families with children under 18 accounted for 41% of all family households, and 26% of all households (family and non-family).

### Household Composition, 2016



**Source:** U.S. Census Bureau. 2012-2016 American Community Survey

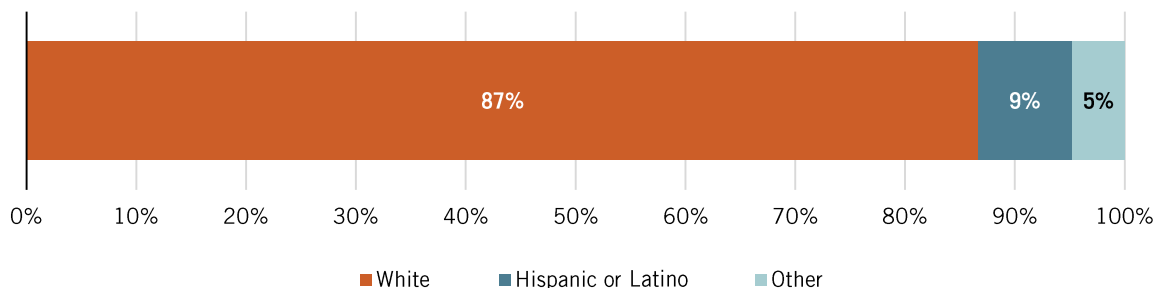
**Ridgway's household composition is similar to Telluride.** Compared to other communities in the region, Ridgway's household composition was most similar to that of Telluride in 2016. In both

communities, the majority of households were not families, unlike Ouray County, the City of Ouray, and the City of Montrose. In every community except for Montrose, the share of family households has decreased since 2000.

## RACE & ETHNICITY

### Race/Ethnic Composition, 2016

Town of Ridgway



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2016 American Community Survey

**We are mostly white.** Approximately 87% of Ridgway residents identified as being White with no Hispanic or Latino origin. This is a smaller percentage than Ouray County as a whole (92%) but larger than Colorado (69%).

**Hispanic/Latino residents are our largest minority group.** Residents with Hispanic/Latino origins were the largest minority group in Ridgway, accounting for approximately 9% of the population in 2016. In all, 14% of our population came from a non-white racial/ethnic group.

## INCOMES

### Median Household Income, 2000, 2010, and 2016

	2000	2010	2016
<b>Ridgway</b>	\$57,400	\$55,620	\$55,370
<b>Ouray</b>	\$50,660	\$58,940	\$66,920
<b>Montrose</b>	\$47,370	\$49,990	\$41,550
<b>Telluride</b>	\$72,975	\$76,945	\$62,929
<b>Ouray County</b>	\$59,100	\$63,840	\$62,800
<b>Colorado</b>	\$66,250	\$61,730	\$62,520

Incomes for 2000 and 2010 were adjusted for inflation to be comparable to 2016

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial Census; U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey; U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey

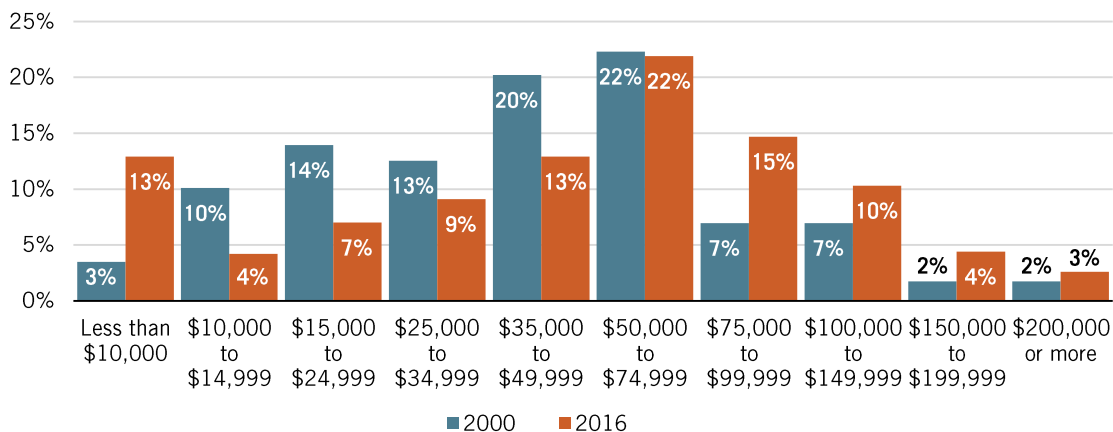
**Real household incomes have decreased.** The median household income in Ridgway decreased from 2000 when adjusted for inflation. This same trend occurred in Montrose, Telluride (although incomes increased between 2000 and 2010), and the state as a whole, but not in Ouray or Ouray County, which saw inflation-adjusted median incomes increase.

## Town of Ridgway Community Profile: Population & Demographics

**Our median household income is lower than that for Colorado as a whole.** In 2016, the median income for a household in Ridgway was lower than in Ouray, Telluride, or Ouray County as a whole. However, the median income was higher than for households in Montrose.

### Income Distribution, 2000 and 2016

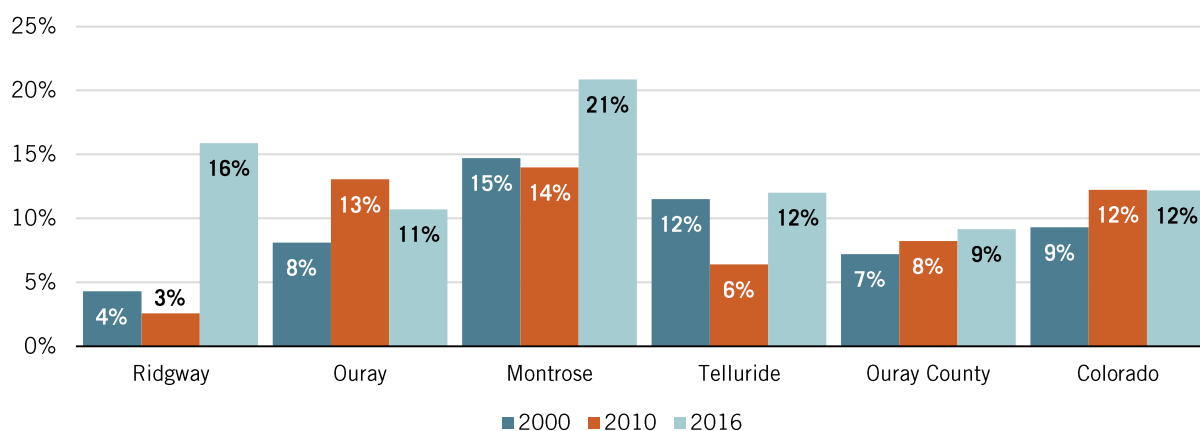
Town of Ridgway



*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial Census; U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey*

**We've seen significant shifts in income distribution.** The percentage of households earning less than \$10,000 grew the most between 2000 and 2016, increasing from 3.5% of all households in Ridgway to 12.9%. The share of households earning over \$75,000 also increased over this period. The share of households with incomes between \$10,000 and \$74,999 decreased from nearly 80% of all households in 2000 to 55% of households in 2016.

### Population Living in Poverty, 2000 - 2016



*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial Census; U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey; U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey*

**Poverty has increased.** In 2016, approximately 16% of Ridgway residents were estimated to be living in poverty. This marks a sharp increase from 2010, when just 3% of residents had incomes under the poverty line.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR RIDGWAY?

**Managing Population Growth:** Ridgway, Ouray County, and the wider region are expected to see their populations increase over the coming 30 years. As such, the Town of Ridgway will need effective tools and policies in place to manage this growth in a way that preserves the quality of life, small town atmosphere, ranching heritage, and scenic beauty of Ridgway and its surroundings.

**Increased Demand for Infrastructure and Services:** Even if managed well, new residents living in Ridgway and the surrounding region will need to be served with additional infrastructure and services, and we'll need strategies for how to pay for them. While new water and sewer facilities, increased school capacity, additional parks and trails, etc. will be needed to serve Ridgway's growing population, investments at a regional scale will also be necessary to ensure regional infrastructure, such as roadways, are adequate to serve the region's growing population. Collaboration and coordination among neighboring jurisdictions, and regional and state entities (such as Region 10 and the Colorado Department of Transportation) will be necessary to ensure the region is prepared for future growth.

**Aging Population:** Ridgway's population is getting older. Looking to the future, the Town will need to consider how its policies, programs, and services might need to adapt to address the unique needs of this population group. Typically, these needs include, but are not limited to, demand for medical services, improved accessibility in public spaces, public facilities, and residences for those with mobility challenges, and financial challenges due to living on a fixed income.

**Attracting Millennials:** Millennials are the largest generation in our nation's workforce. However, they were one of the smallest generational groups living in Ridgway in 2016. Creating a community that is accessible and attractive to millennials will be essential for employers in Ridgway as they look to replace retiring workers from the Boomer and Generation X generations. Other nearby communities, for a variety of possible reasons, appear more accessible or attractive to millennials than Ridgway. Millennials made up a larger share of Telluride's, Montrose's, and Ouray's overall population in 2016 than they did in Ridgway. As a result, local employers likely look to these places as a source of employees.

**Stagnating Incomes and Purchasing Power:** The median income for a household in Ridgway has decreased since 2000, controlling for inflation. This means that household incomes have increased at a slower rate than the cost of everyday goods and services. As a result, the relative purchasing power of many households is likely lower than it was 18 years ago. Stagnating incomes are a concern in many communities across the country, and can exacerbate housing affordability. However, housing is not the only area where residents are feeling pinched by this trend. The cost of things like child care services, food, healthcare, and utilities (electricity, cable, telephone services, etc.) have also likely increased faster than incomes, making these goods relatively more expensive for residents than they were in 2000.

# **GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT**

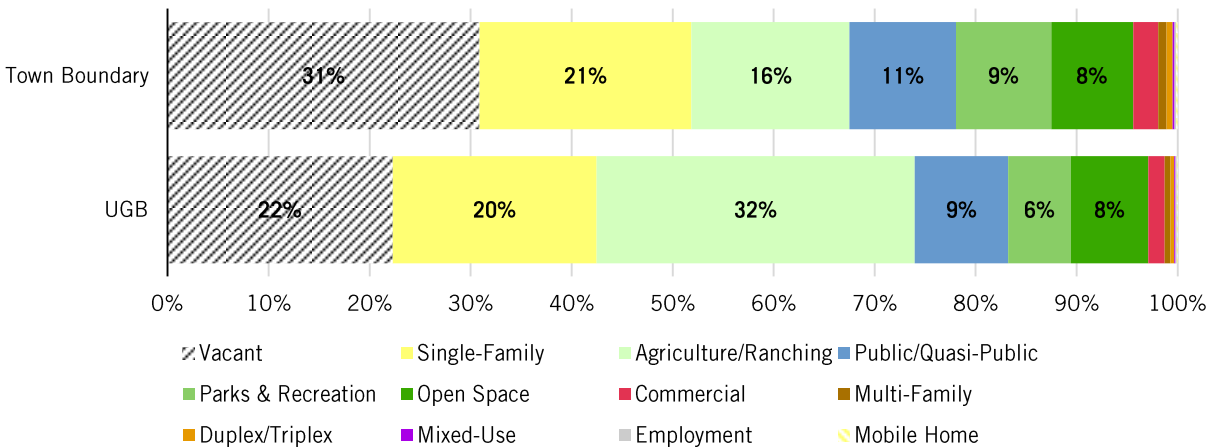




## CURRENT LAND USE

### Current Land Use, 2018

Town of Ridgway and UGB



**Source:** Ouray County Assessor; Town of Ridgway; Clarion Associates

**Initial Growth Boundary and Urban Growth Boundary.** Ridgway's 2011 Land Use Plan creates a two-tiered framework for encouraging compact growth. The Initial Growth Boundary (or IGB) includes the areas within which the Town will encourage urban levels of growth in the short term. This area is contiguous to existing development that is served by Town utilities and services and to those areas where utility extensions can be provided or can be provided efficiently or logically. The Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) includes areas outside the, as defined in an intergovernmental agreement with Ouray County. This area may support urban development if those areas are annexed into the Town of Ridgway. Otherwise, development in this area should not require urban-level utilities and services. Since areas outside the IGB are in unincorporated Ouray County, development in these areas is subject to the zoning and development regulations of the County.

**Agricultural/ranching uses most prevalent.** Within Ridgway's UGB (including the Town boundary), agricultural/ranching uses were most common, making up roughly 32% of all land within this area. An additional 22% of land was recorded by the Ouray County Assessor as vacant. Single-family residential uses make up the largest developed land use in the community, 20% of all land within the UGB.

**Most land outside Town boundary used for ranching.** The UGB includes roughly 550 acres of land outside of Ridgway's municipal boundary. Ranching and other agricultural uses were most prevalent in this area. In all, 344 acres or 62% of all land was dedicated towards this use. Single-family residential uses were the second most common use, at 103 acres.

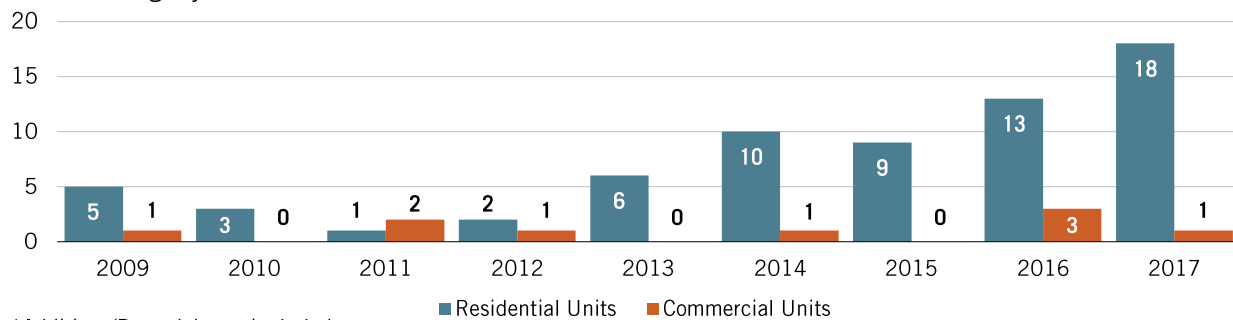
**Undeveloped lands are planned for other uses.** In all, approximately 366 acres of land in Ridgway is considered vacant by the county assessor. Some of this vacant land is in subdivisions or PUDs that have yet to build out, while others are larger parcels that are zoned for other uses. In

addition, 732 acres within the Town's UGB are currently used for agriculture or ranching, but have been designated for different uses in the Town's 2011 Land Use Plan.

### DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

#### Total Number of New Construction Units, 2009 -2017\*

Town of Ridgway



\*Additions/Remodels not included

Source: Town of Ridgway

**Development activity has increased.** Development activity in Ridgway has increased since 2009. That year, the Town saw 5 residential units built, compared to 18 units in 2017. Non-residential development has remained fairly low but steady during this period.

**Development activity is still below pre-recession levels.** Despite seeing increases over recent years, development activity is still below that seen prior to the Great Recession. 239 new residential units were built between 2000 and 2008, compared with 67 units between 2009 and 2017.

**Accessory dwelling units are providing new residential options.** Between 2009 and 2017, 8 accessory dwelling units (ADUs) were built in Ridgway. While this marks a decrease from the total number of ADUs built between 2000 and 2008 (13 units), it represents a higher share of all units built (12% between 2009 and 2017 compared to 5% between 2000 and 2008).

**Building permits have increased in value.** Over the period between 2009 and 2017, the value of building permits issued in Ridgway increased. In 2009, permits issued were valued at \$2.3 million, compared to \$6.7 million in 2017. This includes both residential and commercial permits.

### GROWTH CAPACITY

**2011 Land Use Plan.** The Town of Ridgway's vision for the growth and development of the community is reflected in the Town's 2011 Land Use Plan. This document sets forth a number of policies related to growth and development, as well as a Future Land Use Framework map covering the entire UGB. Eleven future land use classes are included on the map, and descriptions of each class and promoted residential densities are provided.

**Relationship to underlying zoning districts.** While the 2011 Land Use Plan established the community's vision for growth and development, the Town's zoning ordinance is the mechanism through which new development is regulated. The densities encouraged in the Land Use Plan may or may not align with what would be allowed under the Town's zoning code.

#### Residential Growth Capacity

Town of Ridgway and Urban Growth Boundary

LAND USE CLASS	ACRES <sup>1</sup>	DENSITY (LOW) <sup>2</sup>	DENSITY (HIGH) <sup>2</sup>	DENSITY (BONUS) <sup>3</sup>	DWELLING UNITS (LOW)	DWELLING UNITS (HIGH)	DWELLING UNITS (BONUS)
<b>Within Initial Growth Boundary</b>							
<b>Mixed Use Business<sup>4</sup></b>	10.9	12	18	4	100	150	30
<b>Mixed Use Residential<sup>4</sup></b>	33.3	12	18	4	300	450	100
<b>High Density Residential<sup>4</sup></b>	0.0	12	18	4	0	0	0
<b>Medium Density Residential<sup>5</sup></b>	33.0	5	11	2	80	180	30
<b>Low Density Residential<sup>6</sup></b>	155.5	2	4	N/A	80	155	0
<b>Very Low Density Residential<sup>6</sup></b>	40.7	0.1	1	N/A	1	10	0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>273.4</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>945</b>	<b>160</b>
<b>Outside of Initial Growth Boundary</b>							
<b>Mixed Use Business<sup>4</sup></b>	34.7	12	18	4	310	470	100
<b>Mixed Use Residential<sup>4</sup></b>	0	12	18	4	0	0	0
<b>High Density Residential<sup>4</sup></b>	4.8	12	18	4	45	65	15
<b>Medium Density Residential<sup>5</sup></b>	45.8	5	11	2	115	250	45
<b>Low Density Residential<sup>6</sup></b>	40.5	2	4	N/A	20	40	0
<b>Very Low Density Residential<sup>6</sup></b>	286.6	0.1	1	N/A	10	70	0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>412.4</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>895</b>	<b>160</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>685.8</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>1,061</b>	<b>1,840</b>	<b>320</b>

1. Acres represents the areas of parcels that were classified as vacant or agricultural by the county assessor. Since agricultural uses are not included as part of the Town's 2011 Land Use Plan, it was assumed that these would transition to new uses over time per the Land Use Plan.

2. The high and low densities represent the ranges for the land use classes included in the Town's 2011 Land Use Plan.

3. This density represents additional units the Town would allow to be built in these land use classes in return for certain community benefits, such as cluster development, green space, or connectivity to trails. These incentives are provided for in the Town's 2011 Land Use Plan.

4. Total acreage for these land use classes reduced by 25% to account for development efficiencies

5. Total acreage for these land use classes reduced by 50% to account for development efficiencies

6. Total acreage for these land use classes reduced by 75% to account for development efficiencies

**Source:** Town of Ridgway; Ouray County Assessor; Clarion Associates

**Significant capacity for residential growth.** Based on the densities for residential land uses included in the Town's 2011 Land Use Plan, vacant and agricultural parcels could support between 1,061 and 2,160 new housing units. This would represent a significant increase in the number of housing units present in Ridgway (currently the town has 589 housing units) if the community were to buildout according to the Plan.

## Town of Ridgway Community Profile: Growth & Development

**Most of the development capacity remains unrealized.** Although the Land Use Plan supports the development of a substantial amount of new housing units, relatively few new housing units are in the pipeline. In all, approximately 100 units would be built in subdivisions and planned unit developments that are either proposed or pending Town approval.

### Non-Residential Growth Capacity

Town of Ridgway and Urban Growth Boundary

LAND USE CLASS	ACRES <sup>1</sup>	FAR (LOW) <sup>2</sup>	FAR (HIGH) <sup>2</sup>	SQUARE FEET (LOW)	SQUARE FEET (HIGH)
<b>Within Initial Growth Boundary</b>					
<b>Commercial<sup>3</sup></b>	18.2	0.1	0.3	51,595	155,000
<b>Mixed Use Business<sup>4</sup></b>	10.9	0.2	0.4	71,300	145,000
<b>Institutional</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0
<b>Parks/Open Space</b>	9.4	0.0	0.0	0	0
<b>Light Industrial<sup>5</sup></b>	38.8	0.1	0.3	84,525	250,000
<b>Green Enterprise<sup>5</sup></b>	5.8	0.1	0.3	12,690	40,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>83.1</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>220,110</b>	<b>590,000</b>
<b>Outside of Initial Growth Boundary</b>					
<b>Commercial</b>	0.0	0.1	0.3	0	0
<b>Mixed Use Business</b>	34.7	0.2	0.4	227,000	454,000
<b>Institutional</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0
<b>Parks/Open Space</b>	85.8	0.0	0.0	0	0
<b>Light Industrial</b>	0.0	0.1	0.3	0	0
<b>Green Enterprise</b>	0.0	0.1	0.3	0	0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>120.5</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>227,000</b>	<b>454,000</b>
<b>Total FT<sup>2</sup> Capacity</b>	<b>685.8</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>447,110</b>	<b>1,044,000</b>

1. Acres represents the areas of parcels that were classified as vacant or agricultural by the county assessor. Since agricultural uses are not included as part of the Town's 2011 Land Use Plan, it was assumed that these would transition to new uses over time per the Land Use Plan.

2. The high and low densities represent the ranges for the land use classes estimated by Clarion Associates based on existing development.

3. Total acreage for these land use classes reduced by 35% to account for development efficiencies.

4. Total acreage for these land use classes reduced by 25% to account for development efficiencies.

5. Total acreage for these land use classes reduced by 50% to account for development efficiencies.

**Source:** Town of Ridgway; Ouray County Assessor; Clarion Associates

**Capacity to more than double non-residential space.** Based on the vacant and agricultural lands designated for non-residential development in the Town's 2011 Land Use Plan, Ridgway could see between 447,110 and 1,044,000 square feet of non-residential development based on existing capacity. At the high end, the amount of non-residential development that could be built within Ridgway's IGB would more than double the 358,652 square feet of commercial and industrial space currently built.

**Lack of infrastructure and services constrains development.** One of the largest constraints to development in Ridgway is, and will continue to be, the availability of necessary infrastructure and services. Over half of the Town's residential development capacity is located outside of the IGB, and not all areas within the IGB have the infrastructure and services in place that would be necessary to support new development.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR RIDGWAY?

**Abundance of Undeveloped Land/Agricultural Lands:** Most of the land within Ridgway's Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) is undeveloped or is currently used for ranching or agriculture. In terms of land area alone, the Town has the potential to expand significantly from its current footprint in the future as development pressures increase, assuming property owners in these locations are interested in selling/developing their property and being annexed into the Town.

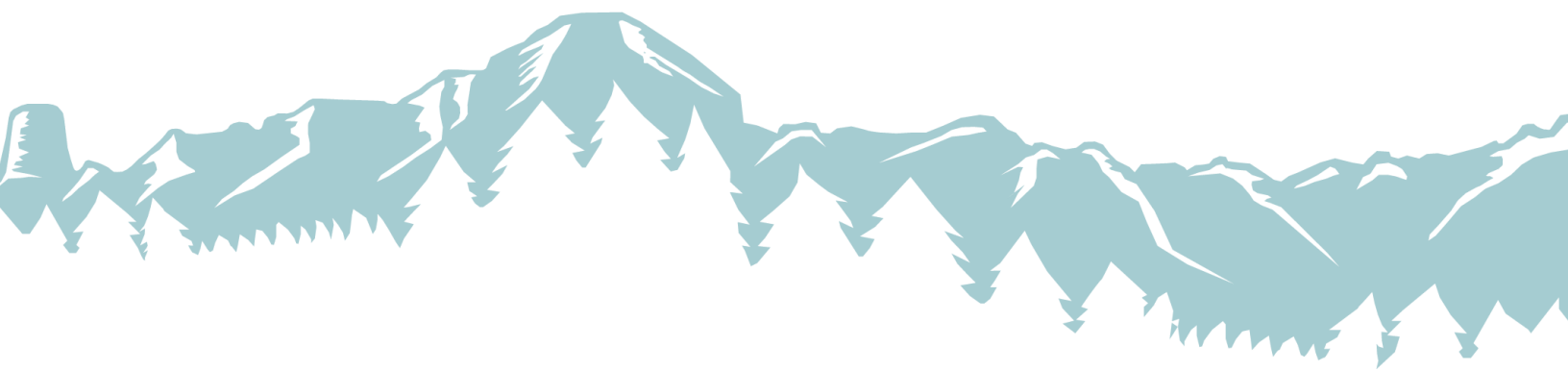
**Potential Growth Capacity Exceeds Expected Demand within the Planning Horizon:** If Ridgway were to develop according to the Town's 2011 Land Use Plan it could add somewhere between 1,061 and 2,160 new housing units. Assuming the current average household size in Ridgway remains constant into the future (2.01 persons per household), this would result in a population increase of between 2,130 and 4,340 residents. Based on population growth estimates, Ridgway would need between 580 and 860 new housing units to accommodate expected growth to 2050. Based on this expected rate of growth (8 units per year), it would take close to 270 years for the Town to reach build out under the Land Use Plan.

**Regional Growth Pressures:** Both the City of Ouray and the Town of Ridgway have intergovernmental agreements with Ouray County to limit growth (except for large-lot residential development and agricultural uses) to their Urban Growth Boundaries. Most of the growth that is forecast for the future is likely to occur in the Town of Ridgway, as topography constrains the City of Ouray's capacity for growth. Ridgway is also likely to experience growth pressures from surrounding counties. Although Ouray County is expected to grow by around 725 people, the combined population of Montrose, Ouray, and San Miguel Counties are forecast to double by 2050. Growth in Telluride, as in the City of Ouray, is constrained by topography and Ridgway is an attractive alternative.

**Infrastructure and Policies Constrain Growth:** A number of factors will constrain future growth. A major constraint is the availability of infrastructure and services (such as water). Almost all areas outside of the Initial Growth Boundary (IGB) lack the infrastructure and services needed to support urban development, and not all areas within the IGB have available infrastructure and services. The overall supply of water available to the Town is another constraint, and will prevent the town from reaching buildout under the Land Use Plan unless major efforts are made on the part of the Town to acquire more water rights. In addition, the Town's policy encourages urban development to occur within the Town's IGB, which will limit both the amount and the locations in which future development can occur.

**Proactive Management of Future Growth.** While the Town's growth capacity will not be reached within the next 20 years, now is the time to consider where new development should occur within Ridgway's Urban Growth Management Area and how much should occur in those areas. Through the Master Plan update process, the Land Use Plan will be updated to ensure it aligns with the community's vision for the future of Ridgway. In addition, current development and growth management regulations and policies should be revisited to ensure they provide Town staff and elected officials the tools they need to enforce the vision set forth in the Master Plan.

# HOUSING



## HOUSING STOCK & TENURE

### Housing Characteristics, 2016

	TOTAL HOUSING UNITS	OWNER-OCCUPIED	RENTER-OCCUPIED	AVG. HOUSEHOLD SIZE	HOMEOWNER VACANCY RATE	RENTAL VACANCY RATE
Montrose	8,654	61%	39%	2.30	2.0%	6.2%
Ouray	746	65%	35%	2.14	10.2%	23.5%
Ridgway	589	56%	45%	2.01	5.7%	5.1%
Telluride	2,020	37%	63%	2.33	9.5%	22.0%
Ouray County	3,179	71%	29%	2.15	4.7%	12.2%
Colorado	2,284,863	64%	36%	2.56	1.3%	4.8%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey; BBC Research & Consulting*

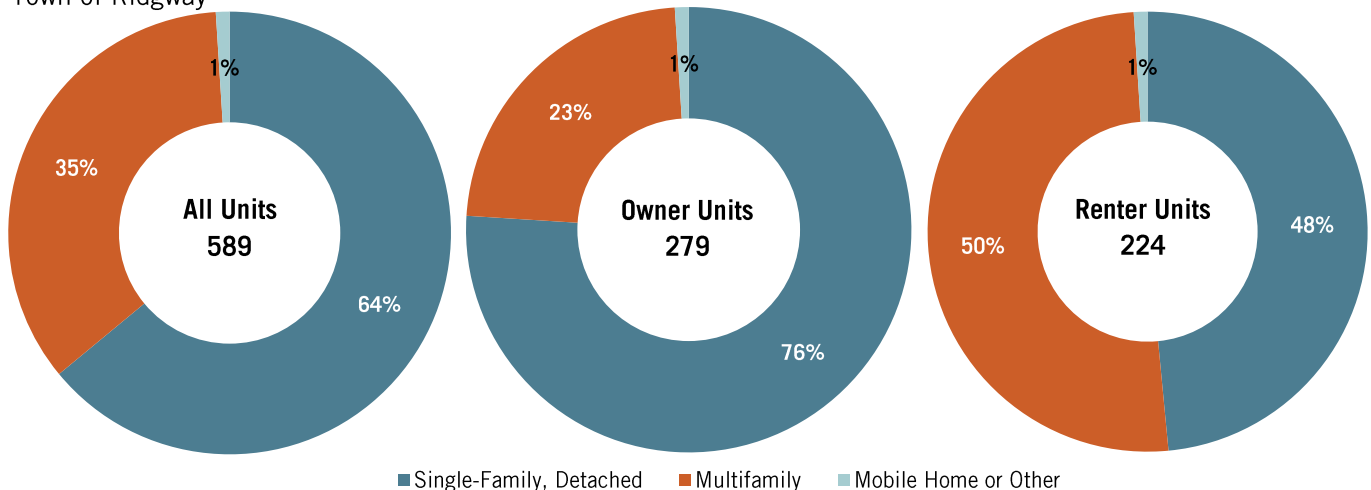
**Ridgway's housing is small share of County.** In 2016, Ridgway had a total of 589 housing units, accounting for approximately 19% of the total housing units in Ouray County.

**Low rate of homeownership.** Ridgway had one of the lowest rates of homeownership (at 56%) compared to nearby communities, Ouray County, and the state.

**Vacancy rates are stable.** Both homeowner and rental vacancy rates in Ridgway are stable at around 5%. The double-digit rates seen in Ouray and Telluride reflect their high share of vacation and second homes. Ridgway's rental vacancy rate does not suggest the Town had the same type of vacation and second home dynamic in its housing market, i.e., Ridgway is still mostly a community of permanent residents.

### Housing Type by Tenure, 2016

Town of Ridgway



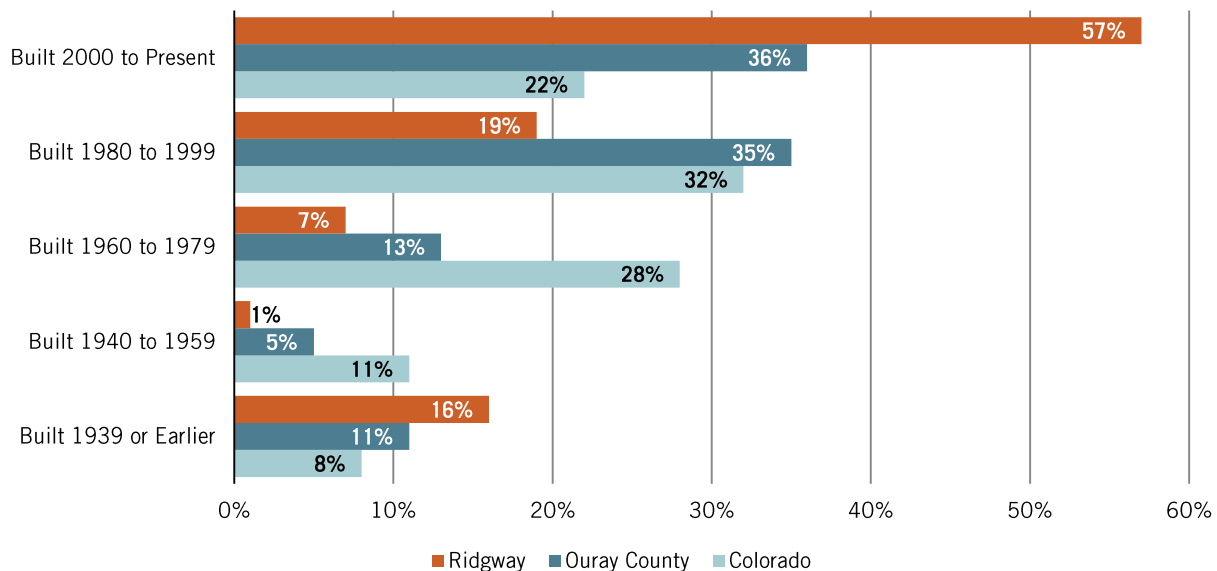
*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey; BBC Research & Consulting*

## Town of Ridgway Community Profile: Housing

**Single-family homes dominate housing market.** In 2016, Ridgway had a large number of single-family, detached homes compared to multifamily or mobile homes. Very few mobile homes existed in Ridgway that year.

**Owners and renters lived in different housing types.** Owners were more likely to live in single-family detached homes in 2016, whereas renters lived in both single-family and multifamily homes at nearly the same rates.

### Age of Housing Units, 2016



*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey; BBC Research & Consulting*

**The majority of housing was built in the last 15 years.** Ridgway's housing stock in 2016 was newer than the housing stock of Ouray County and the State of Colorado overall. Over half of the Ridgway's housing units were built after 2000.

## HOUSING COSTS & AFFORDABILITY

### Median Home Values, 2016

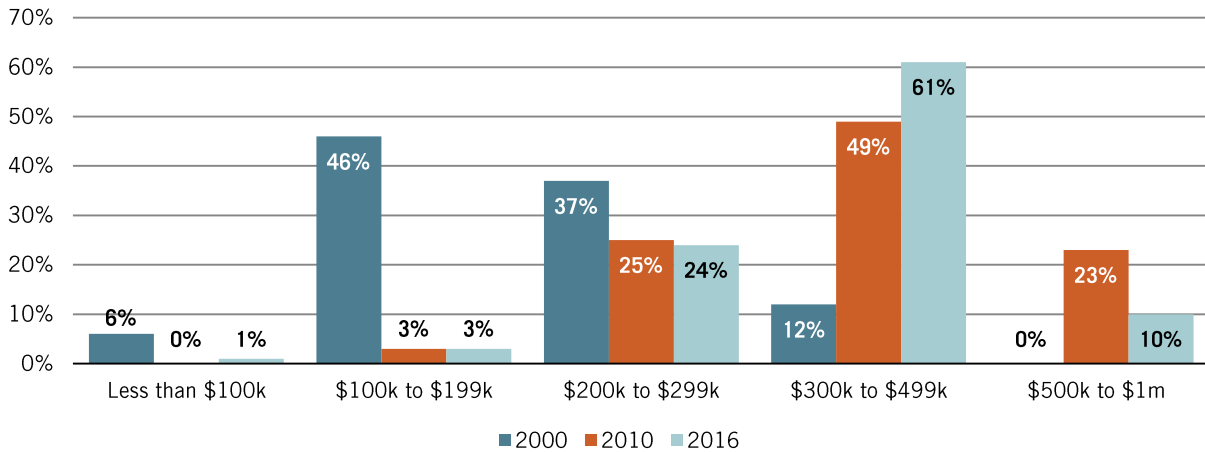
COMMUNITY	MEDIAN VALUES
Montrose	\$182,300
Ouray	\$351,400
Ridgway	\$368,400
Telluride	\$794,800
Ouray County	\$399,400
Colorado	\$264,600

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey; BBC Research & Consulting*



**High median home values.** Ridgway's median home value in 2016 (\$368,400) was higher than the median home value in surrounding communities and the state overall. Only homes in Ouray County and Telluride had higher median values.

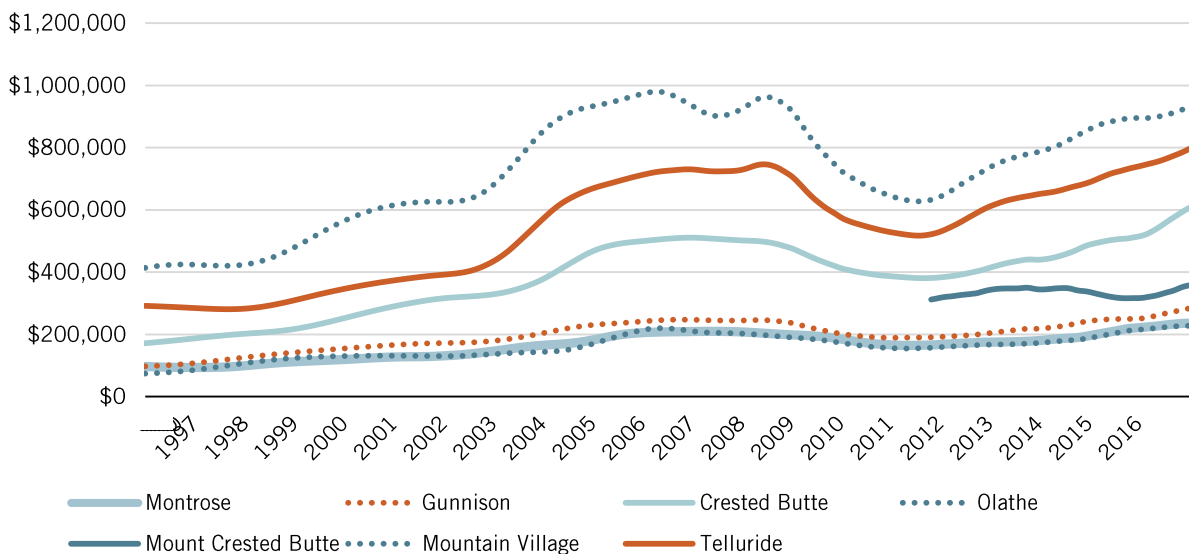
**Home Value Distribution, 2000, 2010, and 2016**  
Town of Ridgway



**Source:** U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial Census; U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 and 2012-2016 American Community Survey; BBC Research & Consulting

**Loss of inexpensive housing.** Over the last decade, Ridgway experienced an increase in homes valued between \$300,000 and \$500,000 and a loss in homes valued under \$300,000—parallel to home value trends in the state overall. In contrast, Ouray County saw the largest home value growth for homes between \$100,000 and \$200,000.

**Nearby Home Value Growth, 1997 to 2018**  
12-Month Rolling Average



**Note:** Zillow data is unavailable for Ridgway, and only available for Mount Crested Butte after 2013  
**Source:** Zillow; BBC Research & Consulting

## Town of Ridgway Community Profile: Housing

**Home value trends in mountain communities.** Historically, mountain resort communities have higher home values than surrounding towns, but every community experienced a similar rise in home values prior to the recession and a drop in values after 2008. Home values in almost every community, except for Mountain Village, have reached peak pre-recession values or surpassed them.

### Median Gross Rent, 2016

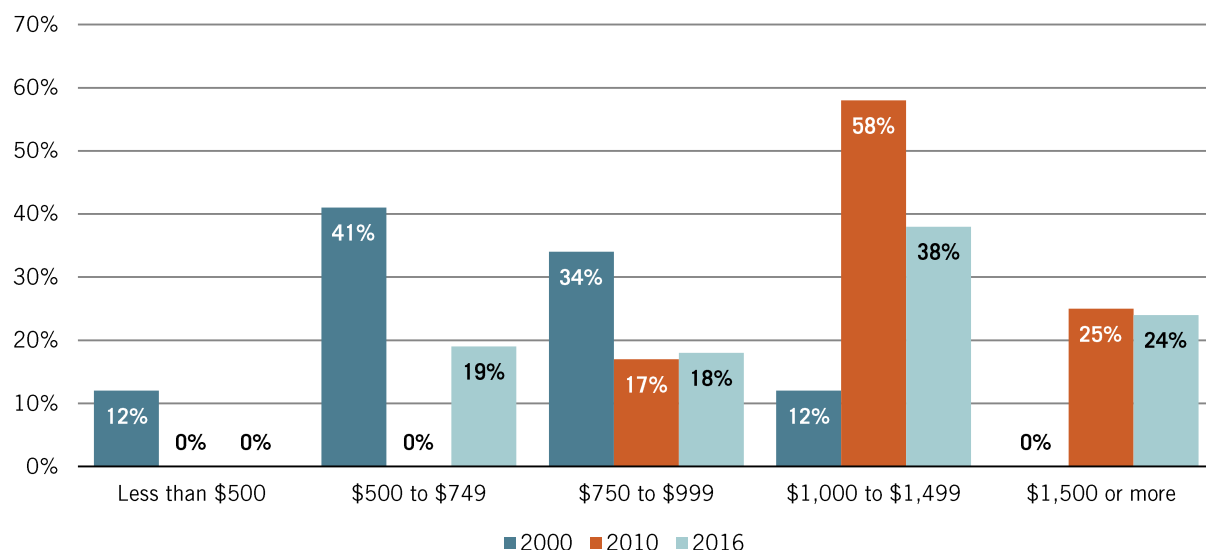
COMMUNITY	MEDIAN GROSS RENT
Montrose	\$806
Ouray	\$976
Ridgway	\$1,114
Telluride	\$1,313
Ouray County	\$1,088
Colorado	\$1,057

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey; BBC Research & Consulting*

**High rents.** With the exception of Telluride, Ridgway had the highest median gross rent (\$1,114) compared to surrounding communities, the county, and the state.

### Gross Rent Distribution 2000, 2010, and 2016

Town of Ridgway



*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial Census; U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 and 2012-2016 American Community Survey; BBC Research & Consulting*

**Increase in rental prices.** Since 2000, Ridgway has experienced increasing rental prices, particularly for units priced at more than \$1,000 per month.

### Cost-burdened Households, 2016

HOUSEHOLD INCOME	RIDGWAY		OURAY COUNTY		COLORADO	
	OWNERS	RENTERS	OWNERS	RENTERS	OWNERS	RENTERS
Less than \$20,000	12.5%	21.9%	10.6%	15.9%	5.5%	19.3%
\$20,000 to \$34,999	11.1%	15.6%	5.3%	14.2%	5.3%	15.9%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	5.4%	9.4%	4.0%	6.4%	4.9%	8.2%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	7.2%	1.3%	8.0%	0.5%	5.1%	4.3%
\$75,000 or more	9.7%	4.5%	5.5%	1.6%	3.2%	0.8%

*Note:* Numbers highlighted in red indicate cost-burdened households of 15% or more of total households

*Source:* U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey; BBC Research & Consulting

**Housing is unaffordable to lower-income renter households.** Renters earning less than \$35,000 are more likely to be cost-burdened (paying 30% or more of their income on housing) compared to owners or renters earning over \$35,000. Ridgway's renter population is slightly more cost-burdened than the county and the state. Ridgway households who experience the highest rates of cost-burden—shown in red above—are renters who earn less than \$35,000, especially those earning less than \$20,000. In Ridgway, a higher proportion of these residents face cost-burden than in the state overall.

## PRIMARY HOUSING NEEDS

- Until recently, Ridgway's housing market has offered a relatively good opportunity for workers, renters, and families to live in a desirable, rural community. Ridgway is less expensive than nearby resort towns, yet offer a comparable lifestyle, access to recreation, and close-knit community.
- Ridgway's market is shifting and has become more expensive due to the economic recovery and high desirability of our community.
- The largest shifts in Ridgway's market have been in affordable single family homes and rentals. The Town's median family home is double that of Montrose and rental costs resemble a high cost market.
- In our town, one in five lower income renters and one in ten owners struggle with housing costs, which is higher than Ouray County and the State of Colorado overall.
- Ridgway is still a community of permanent residents, many of whom commute to jobs in Telluride or Montrose. Continued price increases could adversely affect our socioeconomic diversity.
-

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR RIDGWAY?

**Changing household composition:** Ridgway is experiencing both rapid household growth and changing household composition. There are not as many children living in Ridgway compared to 2010 and there has been an increase in non-family households.

**Increasing housing cost:** While Ridgway is not as expensive as resort communities like Telluride, housing costs have increased and created more cost-burden. Residents making less than \$35,000 are more likely to be cost-burdened than other households, particularly renters. Residents in Ridgway are more likely to be cost-burdened than the county or the state. In 2000, the majority of rentals were priced below \$1,000. Today, the majority of rentals are priced above \$1,000. Owner households have experienced a similar increase in housing costs.

**People are moving to affordability.** Montrose is a more affordable alternative to Ridgway and has more housing supply. Median rent in Montrose is almost \$300 less than Ridgway. As of 2015, the top location where Ridgway workers live is Montrose, followed by Ouray. Only 76 employees both live and work in Ridgway. More workforce housing is needed in Ridgway to meet the demand of local employees.



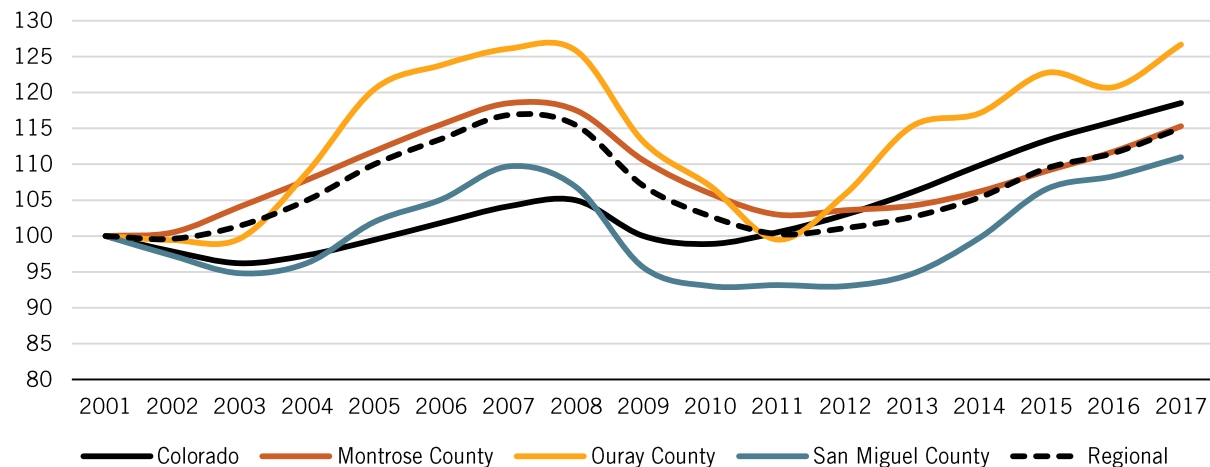
# ECONOMY



## EMPLOYMENT

### Change in Employment, 2001 - 2017

Colorado, Montrose County, Ouray County, and San Miguel County



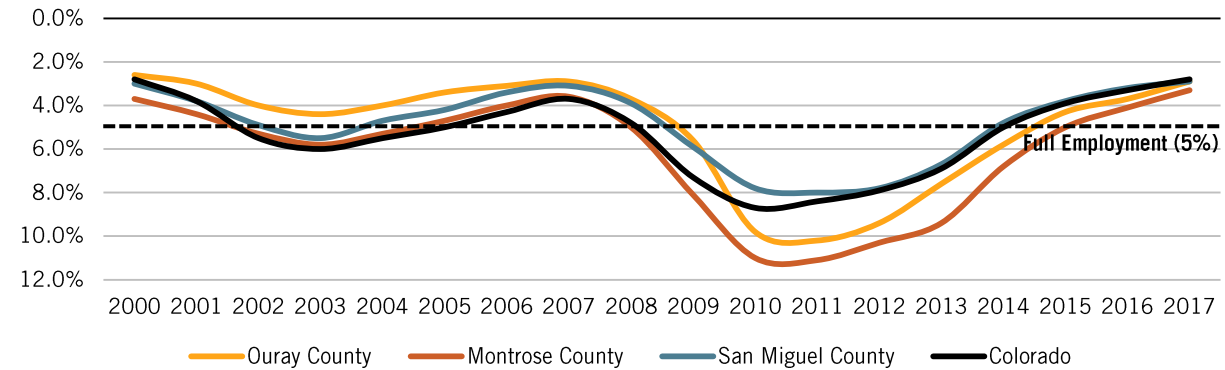
100 = 2001 levels of employment

**Source:** U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

**Ouray County experienced fastest rates of job growth.** Including public and private employees, Ouray County had a total employment of 1,690 workers in 2016. This was the smallest workforce among Ouray, Montrose, and San Miguel Counties. Despite its small size, Ouray County's workforce has seen some of the fastest rates of growth over the past two decades. Between 2000 and 2016 the county saw its workforce grow by an annual average rate of 1.5%, nearly double the rate of growth seen in Montrose and San Miguel Counties.

**Recovery from the Great Recession has been slow.** Unlike the State of Colorado as a whole, which reached pre-recession levels of employment around 2013, Ouray and San Miguel Counties did not reach pre-recessions levels of employment until 2017. Montrose County still has not recovered the number of jobs it had in 2007, but should in the coming years if current trends continue. However, private sector employment (i.e., excluding federal, state, and local government jobs) in Ouray County has yet to recover to pre-recession levels.

Unemployment Rate (not seasonally adjusted), 2000 - 2017



100 = 2001 levels of employment

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Data

**Ouray County is at full employment.** The unemployment rate in Ouray County was at 2.9% in 2017. This was similar to other counties in the region, and the State of Colorado as a whole. Unemployment in Ouray County peaked in 2011 at 10.2%, and has fallen every year since. The Federal Reserve considers economies with unemployment rates below 5% to be experiencing full employment.

## Town of Ridgway Community Profile: Economy

### Employment by Industry, 2011 and 2016

Ouray County

INDUSTRY	2011	PERCENT OF TOTAL	2016	PERCENT OF TOTAL	ANNUAL AVG. GROWTH
Accommodation and Food Services	354	25.4%	451	26.7%	5.0%
Public Sector	368	26.5%	382	22.6%	0.7%
Retail Trade	140	10.1%	161	9.5%	2.8%
Construction	117	8.4%	160	9.5%	6.5%
Manufacturing	41	2.9%	85	5.0%	15.7%
Professional and Technical Services	62	4.5%	82	4.9%	5.8%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	36	2.6%	55	3.3%	8.8%
Other Services, Except Public Administration	44	3.2%	51	3.0%	3.0%
Health Care and Social Assistance	ND	---	49	2.9%	---
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	5	0.4%	42	2.5%	53.1%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	54	3.9%	41	2.4%	-5.4%
Finance and Insurance	42	3.0%	36	2.1%	-3.0%
Administrative and Waste Services	28	2.0%	23	1.4%	-3.9%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	13	0.9%	21	1.2%	10.1%
Educational Services	ND	---	14	0.8%	---
Information	17	1.2%	12	0.7%	-6.7%
Transportation and Warehousing	ND	---	9	0.5%	---
Management of Companies and Enterprises	5	0.4%	7	0.4%	7.0%
Utilities	ND	---	ND	---	---
Wholesale Trade	ND	---	ND	---	---
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,391</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,688</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3.9%</b>

**Note:** Total employment includes employment numbers for industries that were not disclosed (see below), and will be higher than the sum of employment in the industries reported above.

**ND:** Not disclosable; data do not meet Bureau of Labor Statistics or Colorado Department of Labor & Employment disclosure standards. As such, the sum of the employment numbers given for each industry will not equal the total.

All figures for 2017 are preliminary, and could be revised in the future by BLS.

**Source:** U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages*

**Most jobs in Ouray County are in the service sector.** In 2016, over half of all jobs in Ouray County were in the service sector. Together, employment in these industries (wholesale trade; retail trade; transportation and warehousing; utilities; information; finance and insurance; real estate and rental and leasing; professional, scientific, and technical services; management of companies and enterprises; administrative and waste services; educational services; health care and social assistance; arts, entertainment, and recreation; and accommodation and food services) accounted for 971 of Ouray County's 1,688 jobs.

**Ouray County's top industries experienced swings in employment.** Trends in employment have varied by industry since 2001. The accommodation and food services industry and the construction industry have been two of the most volatile industries over this period. Employment in accommodation and food services peaked in 2005 at 550 employees, but decreased to 354 (a drop of 196). Employment in construction peaked at 305 employees in 2008, but decreased to 117 in 2011 (a drop of 188 employees). Public sector employment (including local, state,



federal governments and the school district) in contrast has remained stable throughout this period, growing from a low of 278 in 2002 to a high of 383 in 2015.

**Manufacturing's share of employment has grown.** Employment in manufacturing industries has grown as a share of Ouray County's economy. In 2016, employment in manufacturing accounted for 7% of all employment in Ouray County, greater than 2011 when manufacturing jobs accounted for 4% of all employment.

**What is location quotient?** Location quotient is a measure used by economists to understand which industries are concentrated in a particular geographic area. The analysis compares the share of employment in a particular industry in one geographic area compared to the share of employment in that same industry in a larger geographic area. Generally, industries with location quotients greater than 1.0 are considered to employ a greater share of workers in the target geography compared to the larger geographic area used in the analysis. The chart below shows the location quotients in Ouray County for industries compared to Ouray County, Montrose County, and San Miguel County combined.

**Resource extraction jobs are most concentrated in Ouray County.** Compared to Ouray County, Montrose County, and San Miguel County combined, Ouray County had a much higher concentration of jobs in the mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction industry. Ouray County also had a high concentration of jobs in the accommodation and food services and arts, entertainment, and recreation industries compared to the region as a whole. The accommodation and food services industry also had the highest levels of employment in the county, suggesting that this industry serves as an important part of the economic base of Ouray County.

**Retail trade industry is declining.** According to the analysis in the table below, the retail trade industry in Ouray County is a declining industry. Not only does it have a location quotient of below 1 (meaning jobs in this industry make up a lower share of Ouray County's population than they do for the region as a whole), but employment in this industry declined between 2010 and 2017. Despite the large number of employees, this industry appears to be uncompetitive compared to the retail trade industries in surrounding counties.

## Town of Ridgway Community Profile: Economy

### Location Quotient Analysis, 2010-2017

Ouray County (as Compared to Ouray, Montrose, and San Miguel Counties)

INDUSTRY	LOCATION QUOTIENT	JOB GROWTH, 2010-2017	TOTAL EMPLOYMENT, 2017
<b>Strong &amp; Advancing</b>			
Accommodation & Food Services	3.7	32%	496
Public Employment	1.1	4%	390
Construction	1.4	10%	171
Professional & Technical Services	1.4	8%	71
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	3.5	54%	57
Healthcare & Social Services	2.5	13%	52
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil & Gas Extraction	6.2	282%	42
Educational Services	3.1	229%	23
<b>Strong &amp; Declining</b>			
Agriculture, Forestry & Hunting	2.0	-21%	41
Finance & Insurance	1.2	-16%	36
<b>Weak &amp; Emerging</b>			
Manufacturing	0.8	144%	88
Other Service (Except Public Administration)	0.8	13%	36
Administrative & Waste Services	0.5	17%	28
Real Estate and Rental & Leasing	0.5	53%	23
Management of Companies & Enterprises	1.0	100%	10
Wholesale Trade	0.2	13%	9
Transportation & Warehousing	0.2	13%	9
<b>Weak &amp; Declining</b>			
Retail Trade	0.9	-1%	177
Information	0.8	-22%	14

**Strong & Advancing Industries:** Industries that are more concentrated in Ouray County than the region and have seen employment growth.

**Strong & Declining Industries:** Industries that are more concentrated in Ouray County than the region but have seen declining employment.

**Weak & Emerging Industries:** Industries that are less concentrated in Ouray County than in the region but have seen employment growth. These industries could move up to the "Strong & Advancing" category if they continue to grow and prosper.

**Weak & Declining Industries:** Industries that are less concentrated in Ouray County than in the region and have seen declining employment.

**Source:** U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

## WAGES

### Average Wages, 2016

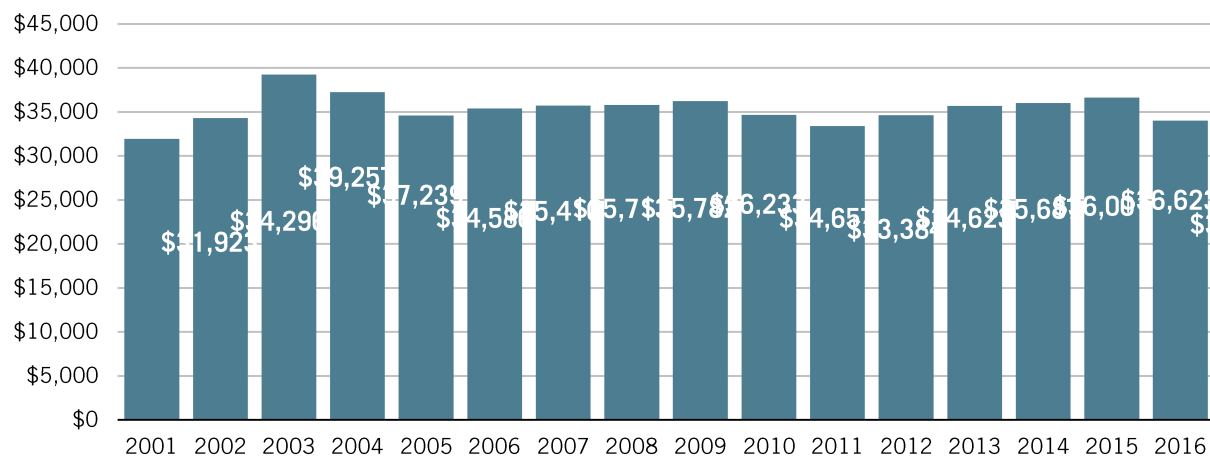
	AVERAGE HOURLY WAGE	AVERAGE YEARLY WAGE
<b>Ouray County</b>	\$19.23	\$39,998
<b>Montrose County</b>	\$18.09	\$37,630
<b>San Miguel County</b>	\$19.17	\$39,878
<b>Colorado</b>	\$26.28	\$54,664

*Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages*

**Ouray County had the highest wages in the region.** The average worker in Ouray County earned \$19.23 per hour or \$39,988 per year in 2016, more than in Montrose or San Miguel Counties.

### Average Annual Wages (in 2016 dollars), 2001 - 2016

Ouray County



Figures adjusted for inflation

*Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages*

**Average annual wages remain the same.** Adjusting for inflation, the average annual wage paid to employees in Ouray County has remained more or less unchanged since 2001. Wages peaked in 2003 at \$39,257, almost \$5,000 more than wages in 2016. This stagnation in wage growth mirror the stagnation seen in median household incomes.

**Average annual wages varied by industry.** Annual wages for workers in Ouray County varied by industry. Workers in the management of companies or enterprises industry earned the highest average annual wage in the county in 2016, at \$84,043. The lowest wages in the county were paid to workers in the accommodation and food services industry, with an average annual wage of \$20,627.

**Largest industry pays lowest wages.** The accommodation and food services industry paid the lowest wages in Ouray County in 2016, but employed the most people. In all, 60% of workers earned less than the average wage for the county as a whole (\$32,874).

### Average Yearly Wages by Top Industries, 2016

INDUSTRY	OURAY COUNTY	MONTROSE COUNTY	SAN MIGUEL COUNTY
Accommodation and Food Services	\$20,627	\$17,100	\$30,625*
Retail Trade	\$22,392	\$27,987	\$31,610
Construction	\$45,069	\$43,276	\$52,529
Manufacturing	\$28,102	\$38,155	\$42,641

\*Average wage for 2015 used, as average wage for this industry was not disclosable in 2016

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

**Wages in top industries higher in surrounding counties.** With some exceptions, wages paid to workers in Ouray County's largest industries were higher in Montrose County and/or San Miguel County in 2016. That said, workers in the accommodation and food services and construction industries in Ouray County earned more, on average, than workers in Montrose County.

## COMMUTING

### Commuting Patterns, 2015

Town of Ridgway

WHERE WORKERS LIVE	#	%	WHERE RESIDENTS WORK	#	%
Montrose	114	16%	Ridgway	76	24%
Ouray	78	11%	Ouray	58	18%
Ridgway	76	11%	Montrose	20	6%
Loghill Village CDP	57	8%	Mountain Village	19	6%
Delta	6	1%	Telluride	17	5%
Olathe	6	1%	Denver	10	3%
Portland CDP (CO)	6	1%	Colorado Springs	7	2%
Phoenix, AZ	5	0.7%	Grand Junction	7	2%
Durango	5	0.7%	Delta	4	1%
Mountain Village	5	0.7%	Loghill Village CDP	4	1%
All Other Locations (59) <sup>1</sup>	347	49%	All Other Locations (33) <sup>2</sup>	96	30%
<b>Total</b>	<b>705</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>100%</b>

1. Less than four work commuted from one of the 59 "other" locations.

2. Less than 3 residents commuted to one of the 33 "other" locations.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics 2015 data

**Most workers do not live in Ridgway.** 89% of workers employed in Ridgway commute from another location. The most common origin of workers commuting into Ridgway was the City of Montrose, followed by the City of Ouray. Only 11% of the town's workforce lived in Ridgway in 2015.

**Ridgway is the most common location for residents to work.** Nearly one in four of Ridgway's estimated 318 employed residents worked in Ridgway in 2015. The remaining 76% of residents commuted to other communities for work. The City of Ouray and the Telluride area (Telluride and Mountain Village) were the second and third most common locations for Ridgway residents to work after Ridgway, respectively.

### Travel Time to Work for Workers 16 and Older, 2000 - 2016

Town of Ridgway

	2000		2010		2016	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Less than 10 min	125	32%	137	27%	205	41%
10 to 29 min	72	19%	123	25%	90	18%
30 to 59 min	105	27%	186	37%	93	18%
60 to 89 min	34	9%	25	5%	51	10%
90 min or more	0	0%	6	1%	16	3%
Worked at home	52	13%	22	4%	50	10%
Avg. Travel Time	23.8 min		25.0 min		23.1 min	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey

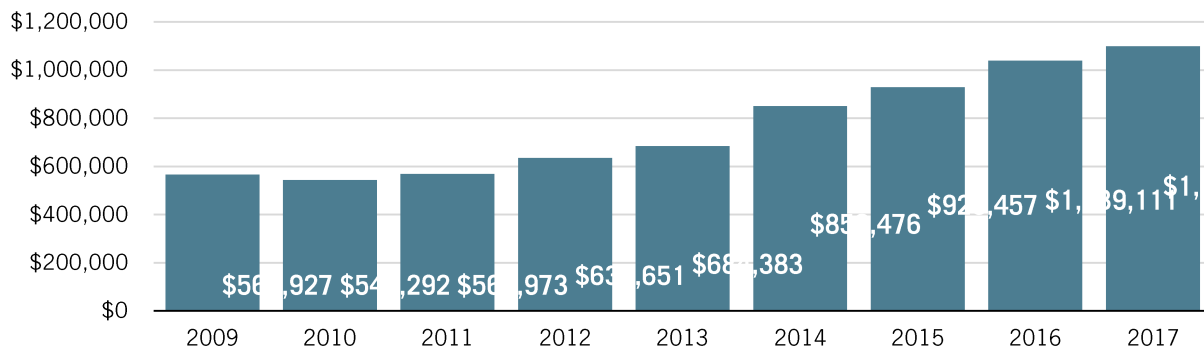
**Commute times have not changed significantly for Ridgway residents.** Commute times for workers living in Ridgway have not changed significantly since 2000. The median commute time has remained around 23 minutes. However, there has been a slight uptick in the number of workers commuting more than an hour to work since 2000, despite a dip in 2010.

**One in ten residents worked from home.** Approximately 50 residents worked from home in 2016, accounting for 10% of employed residents over the age of 16. This was higher than the number of residents working from home in 2010, but similar to the amount in 2000. A number of these employees may also work in Ridgway's recently opened co-working space, Proximity Space. There were 22 active members of Proximity Space as of June 2018. Co-working spaces are attractive to who work from home or are able to work remotely and provide both a physical space and community for these types of workers.

## ECONOMIC HEALTH

### Combined Sales Tax Revenue, 2009 - 2017

Town of Ridgway



Sales tax revenue amount for 2017 is an estimate.

Source: Town of Ridgway, 2018 Fiscal Year Budget

## **Town of Ridgway Community Profile: Economy**

**Sales tax revenue has grown.** Revenue collected by the Town of Ridgway from sales tax has increased over the past decade. Sales tax revenue in 2017 was projected to be approximately \$1.1 million, nearly double revenues collected in 2009.

**Summer months are strongest for sales.** Sales tax revenue collected by month has peaked during the month of July since 2013. May through October see much higher sales activity than during November through April, except for a small bump during December.

**Retail sales exceed demand.** As captured in a 2017 report prepared by RPI Consulting, LLC for the Town of Ridgway, total retail sales in Ridgway were \$22.7 million in 2016, higher than the \$18.1 million in demand generated by town residents. This means approximately \$4.6 million in retail sales (20% of the total that year) were due to spending by regional residents, tourists, or those passing through Ridgway.

**Residents spend money outside our local economy.** Despite an overall surplus in retail sales compared to local demand, residents of Ridgway purchase retail goods from businesses outside of Ridgway. Approximately \$9.3 million was spent outside Ridgway (or online) in 2016. This “leakage” in spending outside of Ridgway indicates that businesses in Ridgway do not provide all of the goods and services residents need, and could represent an opportunity for the town to further develop its retail base.

**Retail leakage varies by retail sector.** Not all retail sectors experienced leakage (residents spending money at businesses outside of Ridgway). Of the \$9.3 million of spending that occurred outside of Ridgway, 30% was spent at automobile dealers, 18% at department stores, and 17% at grocery stores. For categories like automobile dealers, department stores, furniture stores, etc., demand was met completely through purchases outside Ridgway. In other categories, such as grocery stores, clothing stores, and building material and supplies dealers, demand was partially met by businesses in Ridgway.

**Challenges for businesses owners.** A 2017 survey conducted by RPI Consulting, LLC of business owners in Ridgway found that the two most common challenges facing business owners were seasonal swings (23%) and hiring/retaining employees (21%). Although asked in a separate question, nearly 29% of business owners rated their internet service as poor or nonexistent.

**The creative economy is growing.** The Town has tracked estimates that more than 20% of Ridgway residents are Creatives, as defined by the Town of Ridgway Creative District and Colorado Creative Industries. This estimate includes those who are fully employed in a creative industry, as well as those who are attempting to support themselves at least partially through work in a creative industry, and those who are hobbyists. Since 2015, there has been a 10% gain in cultural nonprofit revenues (up \$78K) and a 4% gain in creative jobs in Ouray County. In addition, a study by Colorado Creative Industries found that art sales in Ridgway’s 81432 zip code was approximately \$4.7 million in 2016.

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## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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**Chamber of Commerce.** The Ridgway Chamber of Commerce is an important player in promoting economic development in Ridgway. The chamber runs the visitor's centers and other tourism initiatives, in addition to providing support to local businesses through marketing, maintaining a community calendar of events, and acting as a local "Better Business Bureau".

**Creative District.** The Ridgway Creative District was first certified as a designated creative district by the state in 2013. The Creative District program is a statewide initiative which supports and promotes creative businesses and industries in creative districts across the state. Since 2013, the Town has sought to leverage the assistance it receives by funding a staff member who works closely with creative individuals and creative entrepreneurs, economic development organizations, and other local and regional partners to help enhance Ridgway's economic and civic capital. The Town further leveraged its Creative District designation to receive and manage State funding to install creative downtown furnishings and public art and to successfully apply for and be selected for the opportunity to design and build a Space to Create facility. This program aims to attract both creators and visitors to Ridgway and help revitalize and beautify Ridgway.

**Main Street Program.** Since 2012, Ridgway has also participated in the Colorado Main Street program, a statewide program that supports community-led downtown revitalization. This has allowed the Town to leverage technical resource provided through this program, having recently completed a market study and opportunity assessment. Because the Main Street program and Creative District program share many of the same objectives, the Town is often able to leverage resources available from both programs.

**Scenic and Historic Byways.** Ridgway is located along the San Juan Skyway Scenic and Historic Byway (SHB). This SHB is part of a statewide program to promote cultural and heritage tourism, as well as the protection and preservation of scenic landscapes. The Town coordinates with other local governments, chambers of commerce, and other stakeholders to manage and promote the San Juan Skyway. A study by the Colorado Department of Transportation found that the San Juan Skyway the tourism and other economic activities generated along the byway had a cumulative economic impact of \$301 million dollars between 2009 and 2014 in the areas through which the SHB runs.

## AGRICULTURE & RANCHING

### Agriculture Statistics, 2007 – 2012

Ouray County

	2007	2012	% Change
<b>Number of Ranches &amp; Farms</b>	105	108	3%
<b>Land in Ranches &amp; Farms</b>	93,839 acres	81,321 acres	-13%
<b>Average Size of Ranches &amp; Farms</b>	894 acres	752 acres	-16%
<b>Market Value of Products Sold per Ranch or Farm</b>	\$34,328	\$39,577	15%
<b>Production Expenses per Ranch or Farm</b>	\$50,287	\$63,659	27%
<b>Government Payments per Ranch or Farm</b>	\$1,915	\$3,486	82%

*Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2012 Census of Agriculture*

**Ranches and farms are smaller, but more valuable.** Although the number of ranches and farms increased slightly between 2007 and 2012, the total land in ranches and farms decreased. While ranches and farms got smaller during this period, the average value of products sold has increased by 15% per ranch or farm over this same period.

**Production expenses for ranchers and farmers have increased.** In 2012, the average ranch or farm in Ouray County spent approximately \$63,660 on expenses related to the production of agricultural goods. This marks a 27% increase from 2007. Over this same period, production expenses increased at a faster rate than the market value of products sold in the county.

**Government payments to ranchers and farmers increased.** The average amount of payments from the government received by ranches and farms in Ouray County increased between 2007 and 2012. Such payments include conservation payments, direct payments, loan deficiency payments, disaster payments, and payments from various other federal programs.

**Cattle ranching is the most prominent agricultural activity.** Sales of cattle and calves in Ouray County accounted for \$3.3 million of the \$4.3 million, or about 77%, of agricultural products sold in 2012. Statewide, the value of cattle and calves sold in Ouray County was the 11<sup>th</sup> lowest of Colorado's 62 counties.

**Ranchers and Farmers are old and getting older.** The average age of the principal operator of ranches or farms in Ouray County was 59.1 years in 2012. This is an increase from 2007, when the average age of a principal operator was 57.8 years.



## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR RIDGWAY?

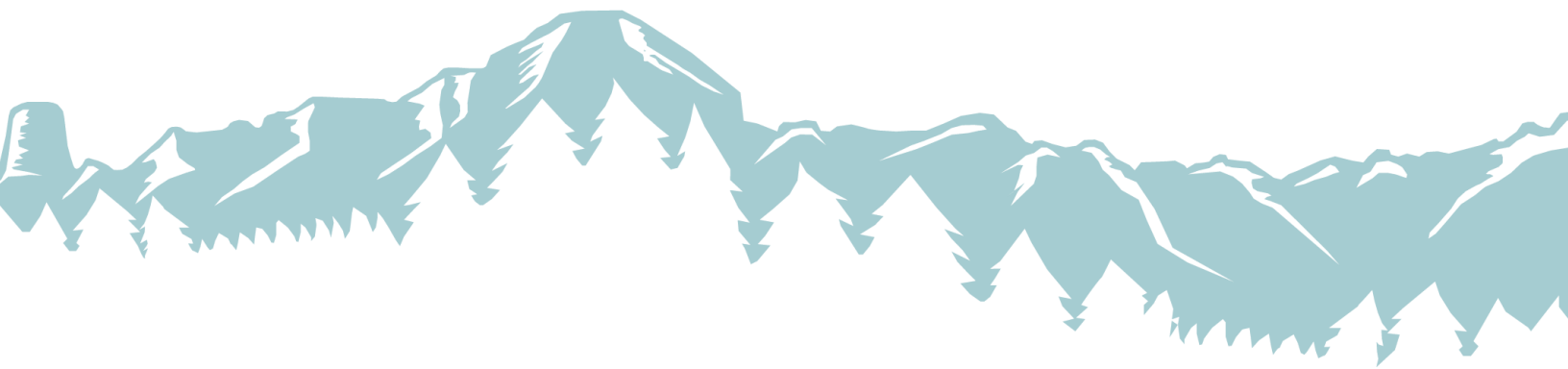
**Recovery from the Great Recession:** Employment figures suggest that Ouray County, as well as other counties in the region, have largely recovered from the impacts of the Great Recession. Employment in Ouray County is back to its pre-recession peak (although private employment is still slightly below where it was in 2008) and unemployment has dropped to below 5%, a general indicator of an economy at full employment. However, this recovery has not been felt across all industries. For instance, employment in the construction industry is a little under half of what it was at its peak in 2008. In addition, while low unemployment numbers are a good indicator of economic health, they can also be a sign of a tight labor market, where the number of available jobs exceeds the number of available workers. This can lead to employer difficulties in finding workers to fill available jobs.

**Wages Exacerbate Affordability Challenges:** Similar to household incomes, the average wage paid to workers in Ouray County has remained more or less the same since 2001, accounting for inflation. In addition to stagnating wages, the average wages paid to workers in some of the county's largest industries tend to be lower than the countywide average. The accommodation and food services industry and retail trade industry, which accounted for 47% of employment in Ouray County in 2016, paid average wages of \$20,627 and \$22,392, respectively, well below the average wage of \$33,998 for all industries. Low wages combined with slow growth in wages means that workers in Ouray County are largely sensitive to changes in prices of other goods and services, particularly housing.

**Interdependent Regional Economies:** Commuting data indicates that the economies of Ouray County, Montrose County, and San Miguel County are interdependent. Workers in the region are very mobile, and most commute distances more than ten minutes for work. Most workers in Ridgway do not live in town, and most residents of Ridgway commute to other communities for work. Given the tight labor markets in each county, employers in Ridgway likely compete with employers in Ouray, Montrose, and Telluride for employees. As such, changes in the economies of Montrose and San Miguel Counties will have an impact on Ridgway's residents and businesses. For example, increases in average wages paid to workers in the accommodation and food services industry in Montrose County could exacerbate the challenges Ridgway's businesses already face in recruiting and retaining workers, as fewer workers from Montrose County will be willing to commute to Ouray County when they can earn more by staying closer to home.

**Economic Development Opportunities:** Ridgway residents regularly travel to other communities to purchase needed goods and services. This "leakage" in spending indicates there are opportunities for businesses in Ridgway to meet this demand. Opportunities for increasing the number and diversity of jobs available in Ridgway are also worth exploring. However, it may not be feasible or desirable to develop certain retail sectors in Ridgway, as some residents are content with traveling elsewhere to purchase certain services and goods in exchange for keeping certain retail formats, such as big box stores, from locating in the community.

# NATURAL ENVIRONMENT



## HYDROLOGY

**Rivers and Streams.** The Uncompahgre River is the most prominent hydrologic feature in the Town of Ridgway and its Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). Cottonwood Creek is another notable waterway that flows through the community, and is one of the two sources of Ridgway’s drinking water.

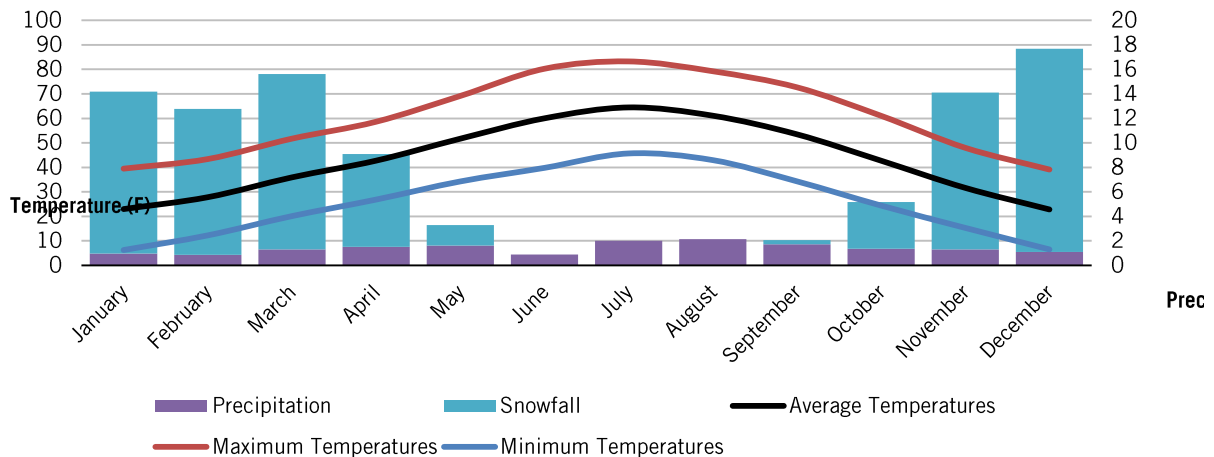
**Uncompahgre River Watershed.** The Uncompahgre River watershed drains 1,115 square miles of Ouray, San Miguel, San Juan, Hinsdale, Montrose, Gunnison, and Delta Counties. It flows nearly 75 miles from Lake Como in the San Juan Mountains to the Gunnison River in the City of Delta. The watershed is part of the larger Gunnison Basin.

**Parts of Ridgway are in a flood hazard zone.** Roughly 24 large and undeveloped parcels in Ridgway’s UGB are located within the floodplain of the Uncompahgre River. This means that these parcels have a 1% chance each year of being affected by flooding. In all, the improvements built on these parcels is equal to \$9,744,300 according to the Ouray County assessor, and could be vulnerable to damage or destruction during a flood event.

## CLIMATE

### Average Monthly Temperatures and Precipitation, 1988 - 2017

Town of Ridgway



**Source:** National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Centers for Environmental Information

**Warm summers, cold winters.** Ridgway’s climate is characterized by warm temperatures during the summer months and cold temperatures during the winter months. Typical of many mountain communities, daily temperatures can vary substantially. For example, there was a 40°F difference between the maximum and minimum temperatures seen during the month of June. July has been the warmest month on average, with an average maximum temperature of 83°F between 1988 and 2017. January saw the coldest months on average, with an average minimum temperature of 6°F.

**Most precipitation is in the form of snow.** As is typical of arid climates, the majority of Ridgway's precipitation falls as snow during the winter months. Rainfall averages less than 2 inches in any given month of the year over the past 30 years. On average, most snow falls during December, while June tends to be the driest month of the year.

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## **CLIMATE CHANGE**

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**Temperatures are expected to increase by 2050.** According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA's) Western Water Assessment Team, all climate model projections used by climate scientists indicate statewide average temperatures in Colorado will warm by 2.5°F to as much as 6.5°F by 2050, depending on the emission scenario. Increasing temperatures will not just affect humans; heat stress could directly threaten livestock such as cattle, increasing their vulnerability to disease, reducing their weight gain, and even causing death.

**Summers will warm more than winters.** Although temperatures throughout all seasons will increase, climate models project that summer temperatures will warm slightly more than winter temperatures. Under medium to low climate emission scenarios, summers will still be warmer than all but the very hottest summers previously seen in Colorado (such as in 2018) by 2050.

**Precipitation projections are uncertain.** Since changes in participation are harder for current climate models to project, a range of possible scenarios could occur. Depending on the model and carbon emissions scenario, precipitation in Colorado could change anywhere between -5% and 8% by 2050. It is likely that precipitation during winter will increase under all scenarios, but due to warmer temperatures may not necessarily fall as snow.

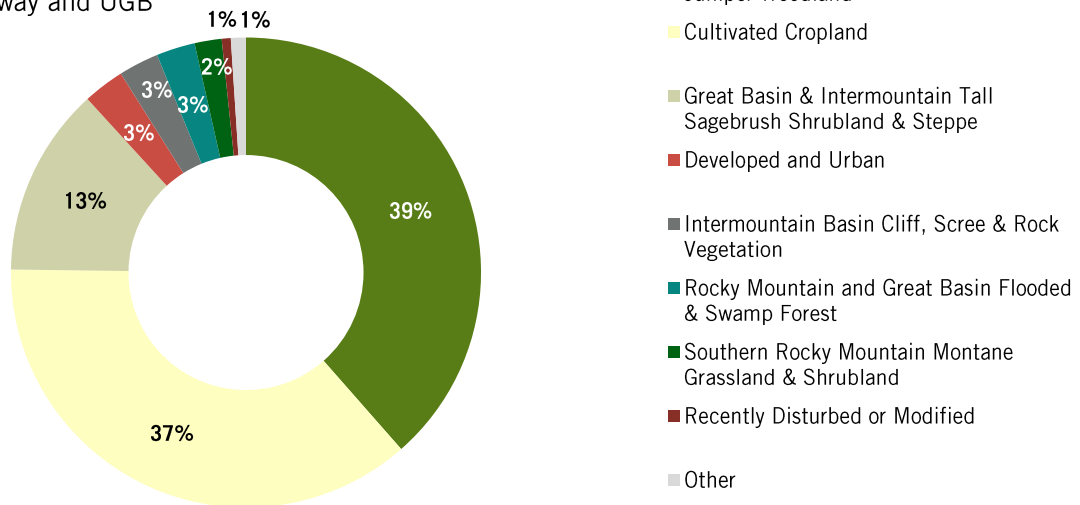
**Reduced stream-flows are likely.** Climate model results indicate that the amount of water flowing in Colorado's rivers, streams, lakes, and reservoirs will likely decrease. Rising temperatures will lead to greater evaporation and evaporative loss from surface waters, soil, and plants. Warmer temperatures will also lead to longer growing seasons, extending the amount of water used by plants (particularly crops).

**Increased frequency and magnitude of weather and natural hazard events.** Given these climatic changes, NOAA predicts that the frequency and severity of heat waves, droughts, wildfires, and extreme precipitation events will increase.

## VEGETATION & WILDLIFE

### Vegetation Macrogroups

Town of Ridgway and UGB



Source: U.S. Geological Survey

**Dominant habitat types are notable for wildfires.** While a range of habitats can be found within Ridgway’s Urban Growth Boundary, the most prominent are pinyon-juniper woodlands and sagebrush shrublands. Together, these habitat types account for over 50% of the land area within the UGMA. Fire is a key ecological process that occurs in such habitats.

**Cultivated cropland is a prominent “man-made” habitat.** Cultivated cropland, a cultural or “man-made” habitat, is the second largest by area in Ridgway’s Urban Growth Management Area. It accounts for 37% of all land cover in this area.

**Pinyon-Juniper habitat form part of larger landscape patches.** According to the Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP), the pinyon-juniper habitats found in Ridgway form part of two larger patches that covers roughly 380,000 acres (patches are divided by the Uncompahgre River). The patch to the east of the river is ranked as having poor integrity by CNHP (meaning it has been heavily impacted by other land uses), while the patch to the west is of good integrity.

**Potential conservation area along the Uncompahgre River.** CNHP evaluates natural areas throughout the state to determine whether the environmental or ecological values of a site warrant protection and conservation. One potential conservation area identified by CNHP lies within Ridgway’s UGMA along the Uncompahgre River. Beginning at the San Miguel Power Association site, the potential conservation area follows the river until it crosses the Town’s northernmost boundary. It is recommended for conservation due to the presence of globally vulnerable riparian plant species, including narrowleaf cottonwoods, strapleaf willows, and silver buffaloberry. The Town’s recently adopted Uncompahgre River Overlay District provides the Town with additional tools to manage impacts to this and other areas located along the river from new development.

**Imperiled and vulnerable species.** Ridgway and the surrounding area are home to a number of bird and animal species that are considered to be imperiled or vulnerable. Black-footed ferrets are considered to be critically imperiled in Colorado and globally, while the grey vireo (a bird species)

are considered to be imperiled in Colorado. Black-footed ferrets are also listed as endangered under the U.S. Endangered Species Act. The northern leopard frog is vulnerable in Colorado, but globally widespread, abundant, and secure.

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## HAZARDS

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**Ouray County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan.** The Town of Ridgway participated in a county-wide plan to identify potential hazards in Ouray County, evaluate risks posed by these hazards, and develop mitigation strategies. The resulting Ouray County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan was adopted in 2013, and was a joint effort between Ouray County, the City of Ouray, Log Hill Mesa Fire Protection District, and Ridgway School District, in addition to Ridgway.

**Wildfires have been small in recent history.** While the majority of wildland fires in Ridgway and Ouray County have not been large enough to be considered major fires, the town and county are still at risk from wildfires. Since 2000 there have been three small wildland fires in the areas surrounding Ridgway. Each was caused by lightning, but were less than 0.3 acres in size. Despite their small size, any wildfire has a chance of growing into larger, more intense fires.

**Wildfire threat is moderate to low.** According to the Colorado State Forest Service, approximately 21% of Ridgway and its UGB are considered to be at moderate threat from wildfires. The majority of the community (52%) is at the lowest threat from wildfires. However, areas outside of Ridgway's UGB are at high or the highest threat from wildfires, and fires that might occur in these areas could impact Ridgway in some way.

**Geologic hazards are not widespread.** The Colorado Geological Survey has identified areas throughout the state vulnerable to certain geologic hazards. These include areas northeast of the Vista Terrace subdivision in Ridgway, just outside of the Town's UGB.

**Large earthquakes are relatively rare.** While no significant earthquakes have occurred in or around Ridgway in the town's history, there are potentially active fault lines in Ouray County that could create 6.25 magnitude earthquakes. However, the likelihood of such an event is small. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, there is approximately a 10% to 15% chance of a magnitude 5 or greater earthquake will occur in Ridgway or the vicinity over the next 50 years.

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## CONSERVATION TOOLS

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**Ouray County Visual Impact Regulations.** Since 1997, Ouray County has regulated the visual impact of new structures built within 1.5 miles of Highway 550, Highway 62, County Roads 5, 7, 8, 10, 24, 24A, and portions of County Road 1 in order to preserve the scenic and rural character of areas in unincorporated Ouray County.

**County Zoning and IGA.** Although not explicitly a conservation tool, the low densities allowed in most of unincorporated Ouray County serve to limit the amount of development that can occur in the areas surrounding Ridgway, including those areas within Ridgway UGB. Ridgway is

surrounded by areas in Ouray County's Valley, Alpine, and South Mesa zones. The Valley and Alpine Zones allow for a maximum residential density of 1 unit per 35 acres, while the South Mesa Zone (which applies to Log Hill and is largely developed) allows for 1 unit per 6 acres. In addition, the Town has an intergovernmental agreement with the County that directs growth to the Town, as opposed to the County.

**Uncompahgre River Overlay District.** The Town of Ridgway recently adopted a new overlay district to its zoning code, applicable to areas located along the Uncompahgre River. The purpose of this overlay district is to preserve, improve, and protect the river corridor as a Town amenity, regulate buildings and structures to maximize river access, and mitigate the impacts of new development on the river and its ecosystems. The overlay restricts development within 75 feet of the river's high water mark unless it is approved as a conditional use by the Planning Commission and Town Council. It also prohibits discharge of storm water directly into the river, among other new regulations.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR RIDGWAY?

**Preservation of Natural Areas:** In light of projections for growth, the Town and community will need to begin thinking about where and how they'd like to preserve natural areas and open spaces in and around the community so that these resources are not lost as new development occurs. Such actions are one of the objectives listed under Goal 1 of the Town's Parks, Trails, Open Spaces, and Facilities Plan. While many areas within the Town are protected, the Town does not own or manage any open space outside of the Town's boundaries.

**Planning for Hazards:** While Ridgway is not at great risk from natural hazards, this does not mean that a hazard event could not occur in the future. The Town should continue to participate in county-wide planning efforts to mitigate potential hazards, and regularly monitor its risk for hazards. Many environmental hazard ratings are based on historic events, which may no longer be accurate at predicting the likelihood or frequency of hazard events as our climate changes in the future.

**Promoting Resilience:** Given economic activity in Ridgway is greatest during the summer months, the impact of a hazard event, such as a wildfire, could have a dramatic impact on the economic health of the community, even if the Town was not directly threatened. Proactive efforts should be considered to encourage local business resilience, and their ability to bounce back following a disruptive event.





# INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICES



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## WATER & SEWER

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**Surface water is the Town's primary source of water.** Ridgway's primary sources of drinking water are Beaver Creek and Cottonwood Creek, two tributaries of the Uncompahgre River located south of town. In 2012, the Town had rights to 1,365 acre feet/year from these water sources. The Town's water supply was further expanded in 2014 with the Town's purchase of about 30 acres to accommodate Ridgway's decreed storage capacity for the Lake Otonowanda reservoir. The Town renovated both the reservoir basin and outlet the following year to directly deliver water from Lake Otonowanda to the Town's water treatment plant. The Public Works Department is currently in the process of evaluating Ridgway's water supply to understand how large of a population it will be able to serve in the future given current resources. The provision of water and operation of the Town's water treatment plant are the responsibility of the Public Works Department.

**Source water protection area.** The Town of Ridgway has designated the watersheds upstream of the intake structure on Cottonwood Creek and Beaver Creek, in addition to areas surrounding the Ridgway Ditch and Lake Otonowanda, which delivers water from Beaver Creek to the Town's water treatment plant as its source water protection area. A total of 8.22 square miles are included within the protection area.

**Potential sources of contamination.** While the Town currently provides customers with clean and safe drinking water, development and other activities within the source water protection area will need to be monitored to ensure continued quality. Potential sources of contamination include impacts from transportation on roads, impacts from development and land use changes, agricultural activities, septic systems, changes in public land management practices, wildfires, decline in forest health, climate change, and lack of maintenance of homes located within the protection area.

**Sewer and wastewater services.** The Town also provides sewer and wastewater services to residents. The Public Works Department operates a wastewater treatment facility, which discharges treated wastewater into the Uncompahgre River. As with water, the Town is also evaluating its wastewater treatment capacity.

**Other service providers.** The Tri-County Water Conservancy District also provides water to areas surrounding the Town of Ridgway as well as the three Sweetwater subdivision lots and the RiverSage subdivision. The district was formed in 1957, and serves areas in Montrose, Delta, and Ouray Counties.

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## POWER & OTHER UTILITIES

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**Power is provided by San Miguel Power Association.** The San Miguel Power Association is a member-owned, locally-controlled, rural electric cooperative. Unlike some power utilities, SMPA is primarily responsible for supplying power to rural areas, not generating electricity itself. SMPA

purchases the electricity it supplies from the Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, which serves cooperatives in Wyoming, Colorado, Nebraska, and New Mexico.

**Growing use of renewable energy.** According to Tri-State, 30% of the energy it supplies its cooperative members comes from renewable energy sources. The cooperative is one of the largest purchasers of federal hydropower in the West, including the 8 megawatts produced by the Tri-County Water Hydropower project in Ridgway. San Miguel Power also offers rebates to customers that install renewable energy generation systems.

**Natural gas.** Black Hills Energy is a private utility that provides natural gas to Ridgway. They serve communities in Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Wyoming.

**Private utilities and service providers.** Besides from water, sewer, and electricity, a number of private utilities provide a range of services to customers in Ridgway. These include internet, telephone, and television services.

**Regional efforts to improve internet service.** Lack of competition in internet service providers in the wider region has limited choices available to residents and businesses, according to Region 10, a non-profit organization that facilitates regional planning and transportation initiatives in Delta, Gunnison, Montrose, Ouray, San Miguel, and Hinsdale Counties. Region 10, in collaboration with communities located within this region, has been working to expand broadband internet service throughout these rural counties. The Town of Ridgway has also spent money to improve broadband internet access in town, which is seen by many as a barrier to economic development.

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## SCHOOLS

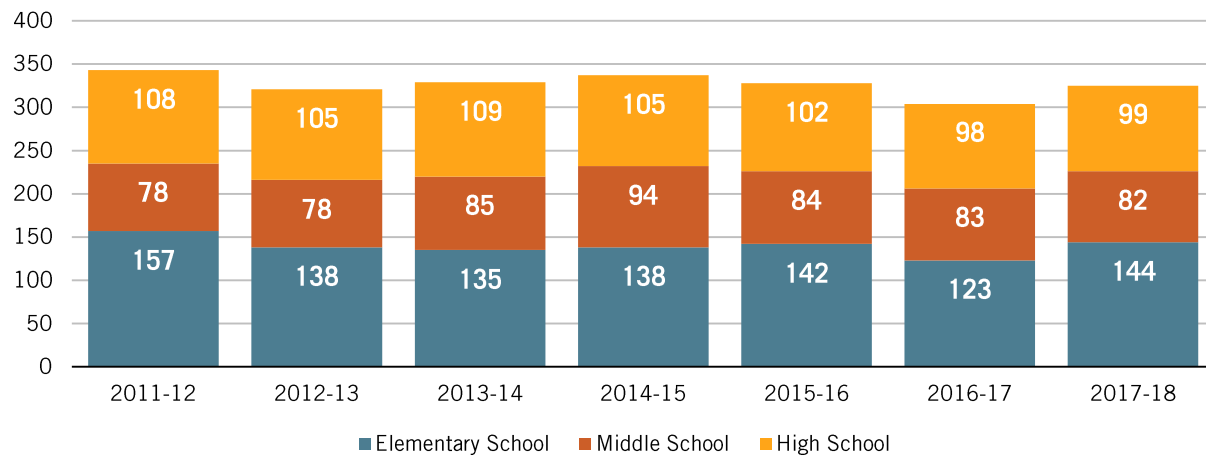
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**School Facilities.** The Ridgway School District has three facilities in Ridgway: an elementary school, a secondary school (that includes middle school and high school), and a district office.

## Town of Ridgway Community Profile: Infrastructure & Services

### School District Enrollment

Town of Ridgway



*Source: Colorado Department of Education*

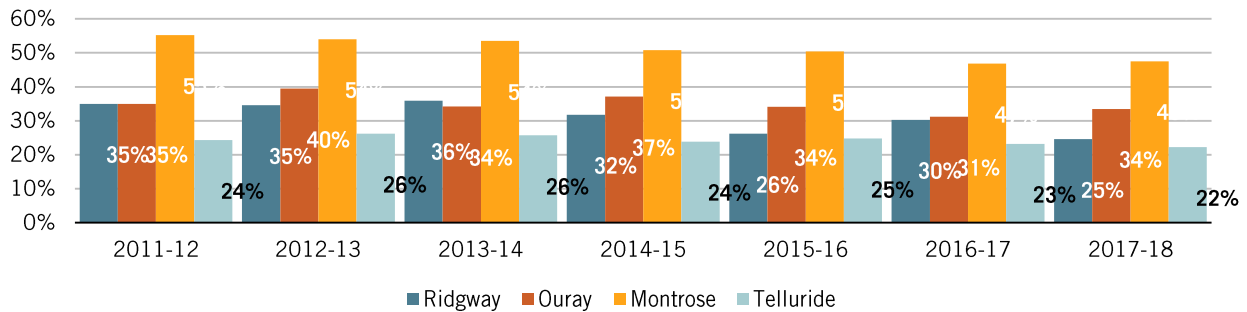
**School enrollment is stable.** Enrollment in the Ridgway School District has remained fairly stable over the past six school years. Total enrollment averaged approximately 326, just one over the enrollment of 325 students seen during the 2017-18 school year.

**Students perform above statewide averages.** Students enrolled in Ridgway schools have outperformed students statewide on Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) tests for English Language Arts, Math, and Science between 2015 and 2017. While English learners, minority students, and free/reduced priced school lunch eligible students performed below scores for their school as a whole, they performed above their peers across the state. However, free/reduced priced lunch eligible students did not always have test scores that met expectations set in the state's school accountability framework, the only cohort to miss this benchmark.

**Schools provide additional services beyond education.** Schools in the Ridgway School District provide a range of extracurricular programs and health and human services to students in addition to educational services. One such program is the free and reduced price school lunch. Eligibility for this program is based on household size and household income; in 2018 a 4-person household earning less than \$32,630 a year would be eligible for the free program, while a 4-person household earning less than \$38,433 (but more than \$32,630) would be eligible for the reduced price program. During the 2017-18 school year, roughly 25% of students in the district were eligible for the program.

### Free and Reduced Lunch Eligibility, 2011 - 2018

By School District



Source: Colorado Department of Education

**Youth Resources.** Aside from the schools, the Town of Ridgway hosts a range of resources for youth. These include organizations such as the Voyager Youth Program and Weehawken Creative Arts. However, there are gaps in the community. The capacity of daycare facilities is not enough to meet demand, and there is a lack of resources and programs available to meet the needs of infants and toddlers.

## PUBLIC SAFETY & EMERGENCY SERVICES

**Fire Services.** Fire protection services are provided by the Ridgway Volunteer Fire Department, a team made up of around 30 volunteers. Although the newly expanded fire station is located in downtown Ridgway, the fire department serves a large area in Ouray County outside of the municipal limits.

**Law Enforcement Services.** Law enforcement services are provided by the Ridgway Marshal's Office. The office consists of one marshal, two full-time and one part-time deputy, and a victim advocate who is based in Ridgway but serves all of Ouray County.

**Emergency Rooms.** There are no emergency rooms in the Town of Ridgway. The closest emergency rooms are in Montrose and Telluride, roughly 27 miles and 39 miles from Ridgway respectively.

## HEALTH & HEALTH SERVICES

**Ouray County Regional Service Authority.** The Town of Ridgway does not directly provide residents with any health or medical services. However, the Ouray County Regional Service Authority (RSA) was formed in 2000, after voter approval, to ensure the provision of medical services in Ouray County. It is funded through a mil levy and is tasked with ensuring medical services remain available in Ouray County. The legislation which established the RSA will sunset in 2020. Currently, it contracts with a private practice physician who runs the Mountain Medical Center located in Ridgway.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR RIDGWAY?

**Maintaining Services as Ridgway Grows:** Although the Town of Ridgway and other governmental entities, such as the school district, are able to provide adequate infrastructure, facilities, and services to meet the needs of Ridgway's residents and businesses, a growing population means that these infrastructure and services will need to be maintained, upgraded, and expanded to meet future demand. Already the Town is preparing for such growth by examining in greater detail its ability to meet current and expected future demand for water, sewer, and other Town facilities.

**Continued Collaboration:** As detailed in this chapter, the Town of Ridgway is not responsible for providing all of the infrastructure and services residents depend on. Some, like schools, electricity, and healthcare, are managed by other local government entities, private enterprises, or jointly by Ouray County, the City of Ouray, and the Town of Ridgway. Coordination with these entities will be necessary to ensure the services they provide are able to meet our expected future needs. In addition, as the Town looks to add more services, it should be sure to look to other local governments in the region to understand whether joint provision of such services, such as through a county-wide recreation district for example, would result in a more efficient use of government resources and taxpayer funds.

**Adapting Services to Meet Changing Needs:** As the community continues to age, the service needs of residents will change. If more older residents choose to remain in Ridgway, there will be a higher demand for health care and other services oriented towards seniors and older adults. The Town currently does not provide any of these services, nor are there private providers located in Ridgway to provide these services, such as assisted living facilities. Region 10, the region's Area Agency on Aging, provides services to this wider region, but transportation challenges may make these inaccessible to residents of Ridgway.

**Improving Internet Service:** The lack of reliable, fast, and affordable broadband internet service in Ridgway has been a concern for the Town, residents, and businesses for some time. While the community is engaged in regional efforts to improve service, it should continue exploring local efforts to expand the types of services or number of providers available to customers in Ridgway.



# PARKS & RECREATION



## EXISTING PARKS & OPEN SPACES

### Parks and Open Spaces Inventory

Town of Ridgway

NAME OF PARK/OPEN SPACE	TYPE	OWNERSHIP	ACRES
Dennis Weaver Memorial Park	Park	Public	60.8
RiverSage HOA	Open Space	Private	44.3
Cedar Creek Minor Land Trust	Other	Private	28.1
Fairgrounds and Heritage Park	Other	Public	20.5
Sweetwater Land Trust	Other	Private	20.2
Solar Ranches HOA	Open Space	Private	18.5
Regional Athletic Park	Park	Public	18.4
Hartwell Park (including BMX area)	Park	Public	8.4
Rollans Park (Park Subdivision Tract B)	Open Space	Public	7.0
Green Street Park	Park	Public	7.0
Solar Ranches Trails	Other	Public/Private	6.6
Vista Terrace Open Space	Open Space	Public	5.6
Secondary School Soccer Field	Other	Public	5.1
River Park HOA	Open Space	Private	4.4
Cottonwood Park	Park	Public	4.2
Triangle Subdivision Lot 1 (Weitz Parcel)	Open Space	Public	3.8
Baseball Field (County and School)	Other	Public	1.9
Parkside Open Space	Open Space	Public	0.8
Cedar Creek Minor (parks and utilities)	Other	Public	0.5
River Bank Minor Outlot A	Open Space	Public	0.4
Cottonwood Park HOA	Open Space	Private	0.1
<b>Public Sub-Total</b>	---	---	<b>144.3</b>
<b>Private Sub-Total</b>	---	---	<b>115.4</b>
<b>Other Sub-Total</b>	---	---	<b>6.6</b>
<b>Total</b>	---	---	<b>266.6</b>

**Source:** Ridgway Parks, Trails, Open Spaces, and Facilities Comprehensive Plan Element. 2012.

**Park level of service is very high.** The town boasts roughly 97 acres of public parks per 1,000 residents in 2018. This is very high compared with other communities in the United States. Nationally, the National Recreation and Park Association found that the national average was close to 10 acres per 1,000 residents. Communities with less than 20,000 people had an average of 18 acres per 1,000 residents, still well below the acres of parkland available to residents of Ridgway.

**Much of Ridgway's parklands must remain parks.** Through subdivisions and annexations, the Town has negotiated with developers for open space and park land. Most of these lands were deeded as perpetual park or open space as part of the development agreement between the developer and the Town, and can never be developed beyond that.



**Hartwell Park.** Hartwell Park is a historic park located near Ridgway's downtown core. It is a centerpiece of the Ridgway community and includes facilities like picnic areas, playgrounds, bathrooms, a performance stage, and a gazebo. There is also a BMX pump track just north of the park. One unique feature of Hartwell Park is its collection of 100+ year-old trees, many of which were planted on Arbor Day in 1892.

**Fairgrounds.** The Fairgrounds serve as a large event space for the Town of Ridgway and are home to the annual Labor Day rodeo. The fairgrounds also house the 4-H event center and barn, the Railroad Museum (which is in the process of moving to a new location over the next few years), Ridgway Area Chamber of Commerce, and a Park-and-Ride area.

**Regional Athletic Park.** The Regional Athletic Park provides space for a variety of recreational activities for the Ridgway community. This park is made up of a variety of sports fields and courts, public restrooms, connecting trails, a pump track, and a skate park.

**Cottonwood Creek Park.** Cottonwood Creek Park has a notably natural character. Cottonwood Creek is an intermittent drainage way which runs through the park. Wildlife like Elk and Deer are often found in Cottonwood Creek Park. The trees in Cottonwood Creek Park are in decline due to disease, fungus, and lack of water.

**Green Street Park.** In its native and organic form, this park lies in the northwest part of town between Ridgway's schools and River Park subdivision and industrial park. It is the new home to the Ridgway Community Garden and is expected to be developed over the next few years.

**Dennis Weaver Memorial Park.** The 60-acre Dennis Weaver Memorial Park provides several multi-use trails through a less developed area in the park, a developed memorial park, picnic areas, and a number of unique features.

**Cedar Creek Minor Park.** This half-acre site remains an undeveloped park and exists in its native and organic state.

**Rollans Park.** Rollans Park and nearby open space parcels (River Bank Minor Outlot A and Triangle Subdivision Lot 1) are part of the greater restoration effort along the Uncompahgre River Corridor and serve to restore and maintain a healthy river corridor while creating river access and recreational activities. This area also acts as a scenic stop and gateway to Ridgway on the San Juan Skyway, a scenic and historic byway. The park is home to many native species and becomes an outdoor classroom for the local schools.

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## TRAILS

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**Uncompahgre RiverWay Trail.** Originally an old railroad grade, the Uncompahgre RiverWay Trail now connects the Town of Ridgway to Ridgway State Park. This trail connects to most of the other trails in Ridgway.

## **Town of Ridgway Community Profile: Parks & Recreation**

**Solar Ranches Trails.** Created with the development of the Solar Ranches subdivision, these trails are a mix of publicly open trails and private trails for subdivision residents. The Solar Ranches Trails connect to the Cottonwood Creek Park and Regional Athletic Park.

**Dennis Weaver Memorial Park Trails.** The trails in Dennis Weaver Memorial park connect to the Uncompahgre RiverWay Trail which runs through the park.

**BLM and State Park Trail Networks.** In addition to the trails within Ridgway's town boundary, Ridgway is also in close proximity with extensive trail networks on a 40-acre tract of federally managed BLM land and Ridgway State Park. The Uncompahgre RiverWay Trail connects the Town of Ridgway to these two sites, but there is community desire for safer crossings of Highway 550 to access the trails and open spaces east of the highway.

**Ridgway Area Trails.** Although not located within Ridgway's town boundary, the Ridgway Area Trails (RAT) is a tremendous recreational resource for the community located on BLM land. The idea for a trail system in this area was conceived of in 2004 by a local resident. Since then, the system has grown to include over 30 miles of trails with support from the state, federal government, Town of Ridgway, and local residents.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR RIDGWAY?

**Expansion and Maintenance of System:** Residents of the Town of Ridgway enjoy access to a large number of parks and open spaces. Moving forward, the Town will need to continue maintaining its existing system, and will need to consider carefully whether it has the staff and financial capacity to care for or manage new parks or open spaces that might be added to the system in the future.

**Adapting to Changing Needs and Preferences:** As the community continues to change, it will be important for the Town to regularly check-in with residents to ensure the types of amenities and programming provided in parks aligns with their needs and preferences.

**Preparing for Growth:** The community is expected to grow in the future. Parcels that are currently vacant (and thought of as open space) may be developed over the next 10 to 20 years. Residents and the Town should prepare for this growth by identifying and prioritizing areas of environmental, cultural, or recreational significance that should be preserved as parks or open space. While most of the Town owned/managed lands that form the community's parks and open space network are located within the Town boundaries, the community may want to consider looking at preserving parcels in unincorporated Ouray County as a means of both managing the impacts of future growth and protecting the rural and visual quality of the surrounding landscape that is so important to the quality of life and character of Ridgway.



# TRANSPORTATION



## ROADWAYS

**Functional Classifications.** The Town's Transportation Plan Element includes a Street Map that classifies all roads within Ridgway into three unique classifications: Arterial, Collector, and Local. Each roadway classification has its own unique function/character that serves the Town's overall transportation system.

### Functional Road Classifications

Town of Ridgway

DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS	ARTERIAL	COLLECTOR	LOCAL
<b>Function/Character</b>	Lines communities and urban centers; carries high and moderate volumes of traffic with continuous traffic flow; access tightly controlled; traffic signals may be required	Links arterial and local roads; carries moderate volumes of traffic at low speeds; designed to carry traffic through neighborhoods to arterials; access from individual lots is limited	Provides access to individual lots; carries low volumes of traffic at low speeds; discontinuous; designed to discourage use by through traffic; stop signs at most intersections
<b>Traffic Lanes</b>	2-6	2-3	2
<b>Minimum Right of Way Width</b>	80' to 100'	80' (60' potentially in residential areas)	60'
<b>Typical Speed Limit</b>	25-40 mph	20-30 mph	15-25 mph
<b>Sidewalk</b>	Required on both sides – 16' aggregate where engineering and safety concerns allow, not less than 5'	Required on both sides – 12' aggregate where engineering and safety concerns allow, not less than 5'	Required on both sides – 10' aggregate where engineering and safety concerns allow, not less than 4'

**Source:** Ridgway Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element. 2007.

**Daily Traffic and Travel.** The two principal highways that bisect Ridgway (Highway 62 and 550) carry a large volume of traffic relative to the town's small population. The majority of this traffic is pass-through traffic from the work force of the neighboring community of Montrose. Tourism also represents a significant portion of Ridgway traffic. In 2017, it was estimated that between 7,400 and 11,400 automobiles and trucks pass through Ridgway on Highway 62 and 550 per day (CDOT, 2017).

## TRANSIT

**Transit Providers.** Both private and public transportation services run along Highways 62 and 550 connecting Ridgway to its surrounding region. These services include the San Miguel County van pool service which connects Montrose and Ridgway to Telluride. The Town of Mountain Village also offers a commuter shuttle service for Ridgway residents that work in Mountain Village. All Points Transit, the largest provider of non-resort transportation in the region, also organizes a

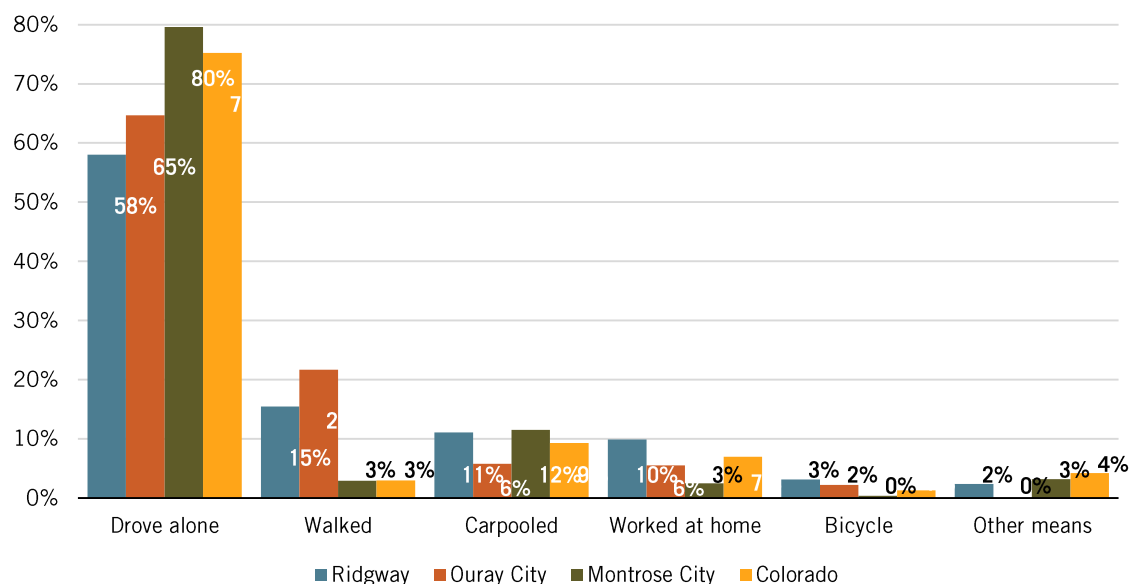
## Town of Ridgway Community Profile: Transportation

shuttle system that services Ridgway. The Colorado Department of Transportation recently extended its Bustang service to Ridgway, connecting the town to all towns between Grand Junction and Durango. There will also be service from Gunnison to the City of Denver and points in-between.

**Transit Demand.** The 2012 Four County Transit Feasibility Study Update revealed an increasing demand for more specialized and work-related transportation services with demand for service between Ouray County and Montrose City ranging between 9 and 17 one-way passenger trips per day (2,331-4,403 annually). However, the cost of providing these specialized services between Ouray County and Montrose City are high, with weekly cost per round trip of \$268.

## TRANSPORTATION MODES

### Means of Transportation to Work, 2016



**Source:** U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

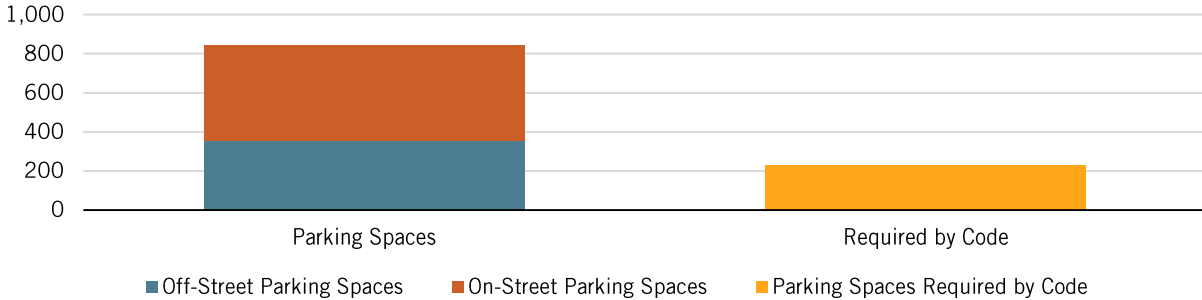
**Mode split.** A smaller proportion of Ridgway residents drive alone to work than residents of nearby cities and Colorado as a whole. A greater proportion of Ridgway residents bike to work and work from home than compared to Ouray, Montrose, or Colorado.

**Walkability and bikeability are a focus for downtown.** Encouraging walking and biking has been a focus of recent transportation investments made by the Town, particularly in Downtown Ridgway. Pedestrian amenities like sidewalks, benches, wayfinding signs, and crosswalks have been added to many streets. Parking is also available for 82 bikes, and bike lanes have been added to Sherman Street.

## PARKING IN DOWNTOWN

### Inventory of Parking in Downtown

Town of Ridgway



Source: Ridgway Parking Assessment. 2018

### Use of Existing Parking Inventory in Downtown During a Farmer's Market\*

Town of Ridgway

TYPE OF PARKING	EXISTING SPACES	EFFECTIVE PARKING SUPPLY*	EFFECTIVE PARKING SUPPLY FACTOR*	OCCUPIED SPACE	UTILIZATION RATE
On-Street Parking	457	388	85%	159	40.98%
Off Street Parking	97	87	90%	64	73.56%

\*Effective Parking Supply (EPS) is considered to be the threshold at which the parking supply operates at its peak efficiency: 85 percent for on-street spaces and 90 percent for off-street spaces

Source: Ridgway Parking Assessment. 2018

**Parking Supply is Adequate.** A parking assessment completed for Downtown Ridgway in 2018 revealed that, on an average day, only 31% of the on-street parking and 32% of the public off-street parking in the area is occupied. The demand for parking increases during special events, such as the Farmers Market. However, there is still enough demand to meet supply. 41% of the on-street parking and 74% of public off-street parking were recorded as occupied during a Farmers Market in summer 2018.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR RIDGWAY?

**Increased Demand for Regional Transit Services:** As the three-county region continues to grow, the demand for more transit services to serve the growing workforce and aging population will also increase. Careful considerations will need to be made in order to account for the different users within Ridgway as well the surrounding region in order to ensure that their unique travel needs are accommodated. These services will likely need to consider a combination of private and public transit services.

**Future Parking Needs.** Ridgway's current parking infrastructure is adequate to accommodate years of future growth, allowing for new infill development to occur in Downtown based on current parking requirements without requiring it to build additional large parking lots. The parking assessment recommends taking careful measures in the future that will support the vibrancy and walkability of Downtown which includes proper education on parking, promoting alternative modes of transportation, management of event parking, exploration of shared parking, and enhanced wayfinding.





# MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE



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## TOWN GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

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- **Town Council and Manager.** Ridgway is governed by the Town Council which consists of seven members. This includes the mayor, which is also an elected position. The Town Council members are elected for two-year terms. The Town Manager, appointed by the Town Council, serves as the legislative liaison for the Council overseeing the administration and management of the Town in accordance with the policies determined by the Town Council. In addition to their duties, the Town Council also serves as the board for the Ridgway Main Street program.

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## BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

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- **Planning Commission.** The Ridgway Planning Commission consists of seven members. Five at-large members are appointed by the Mayor and the Mayor and one other member of the Town Council serve as ex-officio members of the Commission. The duties of the Planning Commission include the review of land use submittals, including zoning, subdivision, conditional use permits, and variances, with recommendations sometimes forwarded to the Town Council. The Planning Commission is also vested with the duty of recommending elements and revisions to the Town's Comprehensive Plan.
- **Ouray County Housing Advisory Committee.** The Ouray County Housing Advisory Committee (OCHAC) is comprised of 5 members: one member is appointed by the City of Ouray; one member is appointed by the Town of Ridgway, and one member is appointed by Ouray County; and two joint members are appointed by Ouray, Ridgway and Ouray County. This committee is a partnership between these entities to create and recommend strategic actions to address the region's housing needs.
- **Parks and Open Space Committee.** The Parks and Open Space Committee consist of four committee members and three council members. This committee was originally formed to develop and recommend an action plan for the Town's parks, trails, facilities, and open spaces as an element of the Town of Ridgway Comprehensive Plan. After the adoption of the plan, the Committee now works to develop priorities and help guide the implementation of the plan.
- **Ridgway Creative District Creative Advocacy Team.** This 11-member standing committee is appointed by the Town Council to serve as the citizen arm of the Creative District. Its mission is to advocate for creatives and to celebrate and sustain innovation in Ridgway.

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## TOWN DEPARTMENTS

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- **Staff.** A total of 18 staff members are currently employed by the Town of Ridgway.
- **Department.** The Town of Ridgway consists of five departments: Town Manager, Clerk Department, Marshal's Office, Community Development, and Public Works.

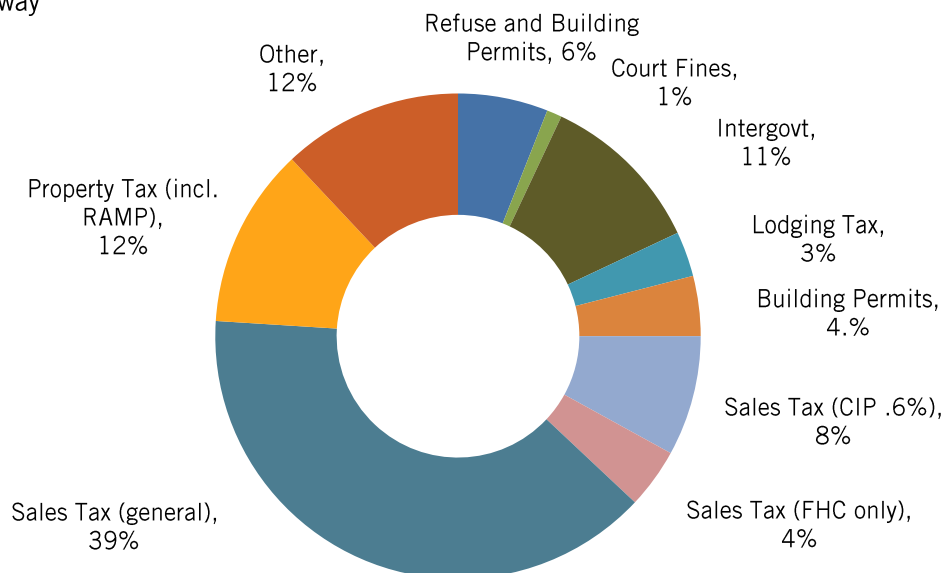
- **Town Manager.** The Town Manager serves as the legislative liaison for the Council overseeing the administration and management of the Town in accordance with the policies determined by the Town Council.
- **Town Clerk.** The Town Clerk provides administrative support to the Town Council and Planning Commission and is responsible for other administrative tasks that support the function of the Town government.
- **Marshal.** The Marshal's Office provides general law enforcement to maintain public peace and safety; protect life and property and prevent crime.
- **Community Development.** The Community Development department consists of Planning, Building, as well as the Main Street, Space to Create, and Creative District initiatives. Together these divisions are responsible for development, land use, building permit reviews, and economic vitality efforts.
- **Public Works.** The Public Works Department is responsible for the operation, maintenance, and repair of the Town's infrastructure. This includes parks, water, sewer, and streets.

## REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

- **Town Revenue.** The majority of the Town's General Fund revenues come from sales and property taxes. Sales tax revenue increased significantly in 2014, and has continued to increase up through 2017. The Town also saw significant increases its lodging tax revenue in 2015, doubling their annual revenue from its lodging tax. However, this is largely due to a change in how that tax is levied rather than a change in economic conditions in Ridgway.

### 2018 General Fund Revenue (as budgeted)

Town of Ridgway

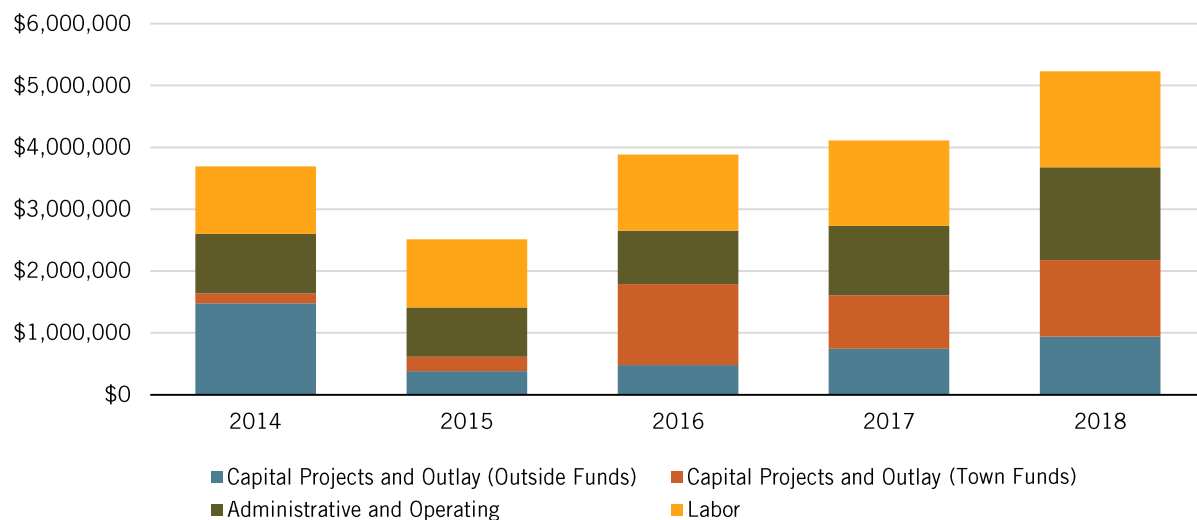


Source: Town of Ridgway. 2018 Fiscal Year Budget

## Town of Ridgway Community Profile: Municipal Governance

- **Town Expenditure.** The Town has invested in numerous capital projects over the last 5 years. However, the Town has been successful in leveraging a significant amount of outside funding to help augment the Town's smaller revenue base to fund and complete these projects.

**Total Expenditure from All Funds, 2014 - 2018,**  
Town of Ridgway



**Source:** Town of Ridgway. 2018 Fiscal Year Budget

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR RIDGWAY?

**Maintain a Healthy General Fund:** Due to the small population of Ridgway and its smaller revenue base, the Town may face a continued challenge to keep up with the ongoing maintenance and development of new infrastructure, staffing, and facilities that are needed to support the Town's high quality of life. As a result, the Town will have to continue leveraging outside resources and funding to augment the Town's smaller tax base. The town will also have to look for opportunities to increase their revenue through additional fees or increase in tax rates as demonstrated by the Town's recent decision to increase the tax rates on lodging.



