



## MASTER PLAN SNAPSHOT ADOPTED JUNE 12, 2019

### A SNAPSHOT OF RIDGWAY'S MASTER PLAN

After a year of community engagement, hundreds of pages of comments from community members, much consideration, and many long discussions, the Town of Ridgway Master Plan ("the Plan") was developed. Five community values and their associated goals emerged, which speak to Ridgway's identity, vision, and desired future. The full Master Plan and its appendices, including a Community Profile, can be found at [www.colorado.gov/ridgway](http://www.colorado.gov/ridgway).

#### Role of the Plan

The Plan is an officially adopted advisory document that outlines the community's vision and goals for the next ten to twenty years, and beyond. The Plan is comprehensive in nature—addressing issues related to land use, growth and development, community character, historic preservation, economic development and tourism, parks and open space, and other topics of importance to the community. The Plan establishes goals, policies, and actions to help achieve the community's vision. It also provides a blueprint for future growth within the Town of Ridgway and its defined boundaries that is implemented through the Town's zoning and subdivision regulations and other regulatory tools. Achieving the vision and goals outlined in the Plan will not occur overnight; rather, the Plan will be implemented incrementally over time through day-to-day decision-making, and through the specific actions outlined in the Action Plan.

## COMMUNITY VISION

*Ridgway is a vibrant, welcoming, and community-minded small town situated in a beautiful mountain valley. We are diverse in age, background, and economic means. We share a deep connection to the outdoors, the lifelong pursuit of learning, and our railroad, ranching, and creative cultures. We are committed to being economically and ecologically sustainable.*



# COMMUNITY VALUES & GOALS

Achieving our vision will require us to strive to maintain certain aspects of Ridgway that the community values today, while recognizing that we will need to adapt in the face of a certain amount of growth and change over the next ten to twenty years. Our ability to adapt successfully will require a continual focus on—and balance between—five community values: healthy natural environment, sense of community and inclusivity, small town character and identity, vibrant and balanced economy, and well-managed growth.

## Community Value 1

### Healthy Natural Environment

From the Uncompahgre River to the Sneffels and Cimarron mountain ranges, Ridgway's incredible natural surroundings, and the recreational opportunities they provide, are one of the top reasons residents choose to live in our community. Protecting both the scenic values and ecological functions of natural areas in and surrounding Ridgway through responsible environmental practices is something the community values strongly. Ridgway must grow in a way that is attuned to its natural environment to protect these valuable resources. Ridgway residents must also be aware of the changes to our local environment that could arise as a result of climate change.

#### Goals:

**ENV-1:** Preserve, protect, and restore natural habitats, including for wildlife and ecosystems.

**ENV-2:** Strengthen the Uncompahgre River corridor as a community asset and environmental resource.

**ENV-3:** Proactively manage and protect Ridgway's water resources.

**ENV-4:** Advocate for the efficient use of resources and sustainable practices that work to eliminate harmful impacts to the health of the community or natural environment.

**ENV-5:** Maintain a healthy and resilient community forest.







## Community Value 2

### Sense of Community & Inclusivity

Another aspect of living in Ridgway that residents highly value is the community, its inclusivity, and its diversity. Ridgway's residents represent a range of age groups, income levels, cultures, lifestyles, and political persuasions, and describe each other as friendly, welcoming, and close-knit. Residents also value how the community comes together in times of crisis or need to help one another. This strong sense of community is also demonstrated in how engaged residents are with Town affairs. Trends like increasing housing costs and a lack of affordable childcare make it difficult for many people to live in Ridgway. Looking to the future, residents would like to see Ridgway remain a diverse and inclusive community, not one that is homogeneous and unwelcoming of "others." Residents want to avoid the kinds of changes that have occurred in other small mountain towns, such as an influx of second homeowners.

#### Goals:

**COM-1:** Maintain Ridgway as a community that is accessible to a range of income levels, ages, and households.

**COM-2:** Encourage a diversity of housing options that meet the needs of residents.

**COM-3:** Encourage citizen participation and dialogue with elected and appointed officials and town administration in order to foster broad-based representation and input for local government decisions.

**COM-4:** Strive to be a model for transparency, efficiency, and good governance.

**COM-5:** Encourage a range of health, human, youth, senior, and other community services in Ridgway.

**COM-6:** Support education and lifelong learning in our community.

**COM-7:** Provide public safety and emergency response services to engage and protect the community.



### Community Value 3

## Small Town Character & Identity

Although they may differ on how to define “small town character,” residents feel strongly that it’s a key part of Ridgway’s identity. This small town character is evident in the size of the community, the slower and more laid back pace of life, the unpaved streets, the surrounding ranch land and associated activities, the ability of residents to easily walk from one end of town to the other, and the many activities and businesses that are geared toward locals. Although these characteristics are common among many small towns across Colorado, Ridgway stands out from other tourism-dependent communities as a town that relies on tourism to some degree—but retains its commitment to locals and still feels very much like a “real” community. Beyond small town character, this feeling is derived from a blend of Ridgway’s historic past as a western railroad town, its ranching and agricultural community, its proximity to the mountains and outdoor recreation, and its Creatives and innovative entrepreneurs.

### Goals:

**CHR-1:** Support vibrant, diverse, safe, and well-connected neighborhoods.

**CHR-2:** Protect and preserve Ridgway’s historic assets.

**CHR-3:** Promote Ridgway’s identity as a ranching and agricultural community and preserve the rural character of landscapes surrounding Ridgway.

**CHR-4:** Promote Ridgway’s identity as a creative and innovative community where creative individuals and enterprises thrive.

**CHR-5:** Promote a range of opportunities and spaces for community gatherings and interactions.

**CHR-6:** Maintain and enhance Ridgway’s gateways, entry-corridors, and scenic vistas.

**CHR-7:** Develop an interconnected system of parks, trails, open space, and recreational facilities that meets the needs of Ridgway’s residents and visitors.





## Community Value 4

# Vibrant & Balanced Economy

Ouray County's economy is largely centered on service industries oriented towards tourism, particularly industries such as food services and accommodation. While Ridgway's reliance on tourism is somewhat less than the County, it is still subject to seasonal fluctuations in business activity. These service jobs tend to pay low wages that make it even more difficult for those who work in Ridgway to live here as well. Residents expressed a strong desire to diversify the local economy and to create well-paying, full-time, year-round jobs. Through its participation in the Main Street and Creative District programs, the Town has been active in promoting community and economic development in recent years. While a number of businesses and Creatives have chosen to base their operations in Ridgway for quality of life reasons, many employers struggle to hire qualified employees, find space as they grow, market their creations, and face other challenges. Larger shifts in the national economy towards telecommuting mean that workers no longer need to physically commute to an office. With fast internet speed, residents will increasingly be able to pursue job opportunities and careers in industries not currently located in Ridgway. Alternatively, home-based entrepreneurs will be able to access customers or clients located around the globe.

## Goals:

**ECO-1:** Create a vibrant, diverse, and sustainable year-round local economy that reflects Ridgway's social fabric, values, and character.

**ECO-2:** Support the retention and expansion of local businesses.

**ECO-3:** Balance the need to preserve the quality of life for residents with business needs.



## Community Value 5

### Well-Managed Growth

Based on projections in the Community Profile, Ridgway is expected to add between 150 and 700 new residents by 2050. In addition, growth in the surrounding region—which includes Ouray, Montrose, and San Miguel counties—will continue to have direct and indirect impacts on Ridgway’s housing, transportation system, environment, and quality of life. Growth limitations in the City of Ouray and Ouray County will further amplify growth pressures on the Town of Ridgway. Uncertainty regarding the extent of and potential impacts of future growth are of critical concern to the community. However, Ridgway has the ability through its policies and regulations, intergovernmental agreements, and other tools to help inform where and how growth will occur in the future, the types of growth the community would like to see, and guide the character and form of future development.

#### Goals:

**GR0-1:** Manage growth and development in order to maintain Ridgway’s small town character, support a diverse community, and create employment opportunities.

**GR0-2:** Ensure public infrastructure, utilities, facilities, and services are sufficient to meet the needs of residents and businesses as the town grows.

**GR0-3:** Proactively mitigate natural and human-made hazards.

**GR0-4:** Develop a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation system, balancing the needs of all users.

**GR0-5:** Utilize Ridgway’s parking resources effectively.



# GROWTH FRAMEWORK

## Key Objectives

Key objectives for the Growth Framework (Part IV of the Master Plan) are to:

- Encourage infill and redevelopment within the Town's existing limits and where infrastructure and services already exist;
- Grow in an orderly, logical and sequential pattern outward from the existing Town core;
- Accommodate diverse housing options;
- Support sustainable development practices;
- Plan for a balanced mix of uses that allows more residents the ability to live and work in Ridgway; and
- Protect the natural resources and visual qualities that make Ridgway unique.

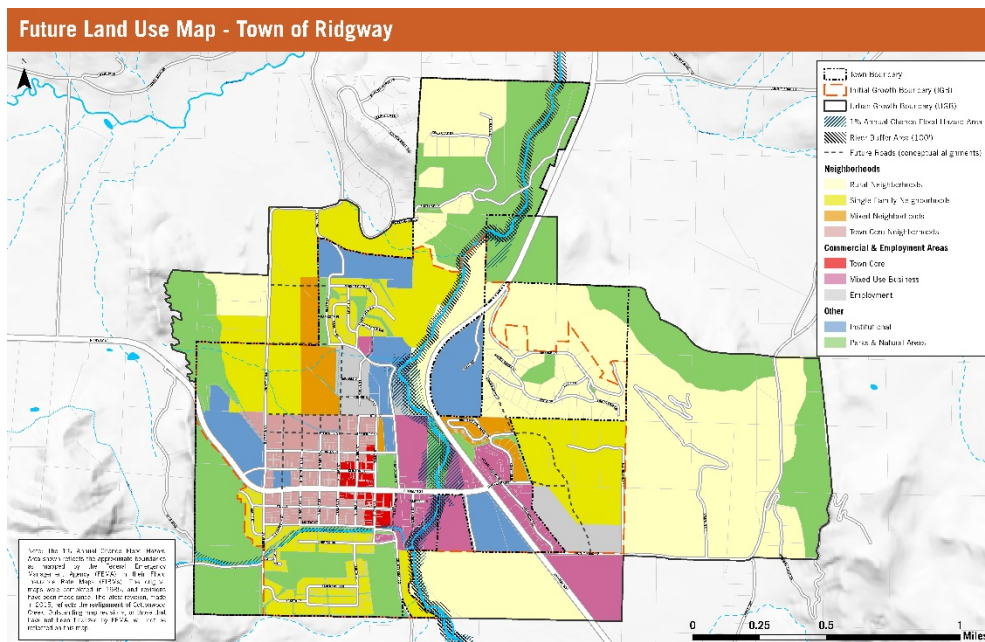
The Growth Framework of the Master Plan should be used in conjunction with the goals and policies contained in the Goals and Policies to evaluate all growth-related decisions.

## Future Land Use Plan

The Future Land Use Plan is a tool to guide the type, intensity, and location of future development within the Town and its various growth boundaries. It will be applied through day-to-day decision-making as a means to help implement a shared vision for the physical growth of the Town and portions of Ouray County. The Future Land Use Plan is intended to be used by Town staff, the Planning Commission, and the Town Council to:

- Help guide future rezoning and annexation requests;
- Inform future updates to existing zoning districts and development standards;
- Track the Town's overall capacity for future development;
- Inform infrastructure and facility planning; and
- Ensure future development is supportive of the community's vision.

The Future Land Use Plan is comprised of a map and the associated land use categories detailed in the Plan document.



The full Master Plan document is available at:  
[www.colorado.gov/ridgway](http://www.colorado.gov/ridgway).

