



WRITTEN REPORT

To: Honorable Mayor Clark and Ridgway Town Council
From: Preston Neill, Town Manager
Date: April 13, 2021
RE: **Town Manager's Report**

INTRODUCTION

This report serves as an update to Council on key projects, activities, and community issues.

COVID-19 DIAL UPDATE

Ouray County currently sits in **Level Green: Protect Our Neighbors** on the State of Colorado's COVID-19 Dial. While capacity restrictions are laxer in many areas in Level Green and while vaccine distribution continues to ramp up, it remains imperative that our community continue to practice social distancing and employ other techniques to keep transmission rates low.

Governor Polis' latest Executive Order (dated April 3rd) regarding face coverings states, "In counties with one week disease incidence rates of 35 or fewer per 100,000 (Level Green under PHO 20-36), counties may lift or modify face covering requirements to the extent permitted under this Executive Order." This prompted the Ouray County Board of County Commissioners to consider and adopt a local mask order (OCPHA No. 11) requiring all persons to wear a face covering when waiting to enter, entering, or within any public indoor space. This new local public health order will remain in effect through May 8th.

Click [HERE](#) to visit the COVID-19 Dial Dashboard and learn about metrics and capacity restrictions in each level. **Please note that there are rumblings from the State level that the Dial will be retired/sunset on April 16th.**

ANNUAL CLEAN UP DAY EVENT

The Town will hold the annual Clean Up Day event on Saturday, April 24th in the lot behind the Ridgway Public Library on Railroad Street. The Town will provide dumpsters and residents are encouraged to bring their refuse to the site between 8:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Alpine Bank will not be providing an electronic recycling component to this event and is hoping to host a stand-alone electronic recycling event this summer.

WATER METER REPLACEMENT PROGRAM

The Town budgeted approximately \$55,000 in the FY2021 Budget for year 1 of the Town's Meter Replacement Program. Randy Barnes has been spearheading the efforts to get the new

**TOWN OF RIDGWAY
Annual Clean Up Day**
(for Town residents only)

**Dumpsters will be
provided**

Saturday, April 24th
from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm
(or until filled)

**in the lot behind the library
off Railroad Street**

**PLEASE NO DUMPING of
appliances, furniture, toxic liquids
(ie: paint, stain, oil, etc.),
tires, or commercial trash**



water meters and MXUs installed by the end of the spring. MXUs are radio signal devices which permit off-site meter reading via radio signals. As of the time of writing this, 135 water meters and MXUs have been replaced, leaving 15 left for this year. Randy hopes to have the rest completed in the next few days.

VISITOR CENTER IMPROVEMENTS

While the Visitor Center-Heritage Park Advisory Committee continues to meet with the ultimate goal of formulating recommendations for improving the Heritage Park/Visitor Center area, staff has been working with the Ridgway Area Chamber of Commerce on identifying functional and COVID-19-related upgrades to the Visitor Center to undertake prior to its opening in May. As reported last month, Town staff and Chamber representatives have met to confer and agree on cost allocation and responsibilities for repairs, pursuant to the existing lease agreement. The remodel work is currently in process.



LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE

The Town has entered into a Professional Services Agreement with Heidi Grows Up, LLC, for maintenance of the landscaping in the downtown/streetscape area this summer.

UPDATE TO TOWN'S LANDSCAPING REGULATIONS

The *Town of Ridgway 2021 Strategic Plan* contains a strategy to “Update the Town’s landscaping regulations to encourage water conservation or require low water usage landscaping or xeriscaping.” In late 2020 and early 2021, the Planning Commission held several discussions about the Town’s landscape regulations and Community Planning Strategies (CPS) is in the process of reviewing all the comments and notes gathered so far. CPS is aiming to have an ordinance updating the landscape regulations drafted for the Planning Commission to review at the May Planning Commission meeting.

UPDATE ON PLANNER POSITION

Now that we have gotten TJ and his team at Community Planning Strategies, our planning consultant, acquainted with the Town’s planning and development processes and procedures, staff is close to being able to turn attention to reviewing resumes and applications we’ve received for the full-time Principal Planner position and beginning the hiring process.

UPDATE ON OPERATOR IN RESPONSIBLE CHARGE POSITION

Over the last few months, the Town has solicited for resumes and applications for the Town’s regular, part-time Operator in Responsible Charge (ORC) position for the Town’s Water and Wastewater Treatment Plants. The ORC is responsible for performing a variety of duties related to the construction, installation, maintenance and repair of the Town’s utility systems including water treatment and transmission and wastewater collection and treatment. Unfortunately, the



Town has yet to find the right candidate to fill the role as it is currently structured. Chris Bolane, our current ORC, was originally planning to leave the role by April 1st but he has been kind and flexible enough to stay in the position until the Town either fills the position or figures out an alternative way to structure the ORC role. Chris has expressed interest in transitioning from the regular, part time position to an independent contractor-type role, where he would still perform all the same tasks and provide all the same services, including the CDPHE-required compliance monitoring and sampling. Staff is in the process of exploring and considering this independent contractor option, which, if pursued, is not expected to impact the budget. If pursued, the Town would continue to advertise for the regular, part-time ORC position.

PARKS AND TRAILS MAP UPDATE

The *Town of Ridgway 2021 Strategic Plan* contains a strategy to update the Town's Parks and Trails Map. Staff is in the process of soliciting quotes from various graphic design firms to undertake an overhaul of the existing map so that it fits Ridgway's adopted brand. This project will include a community engagement component as we will look to the Parks, Trails and Open Space to Committee for feedback and guidance on the updates to the map.

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN

The historic American Rescue Plan Act was signed into law on March 12th, delivering \$65 billion of direct and flexible aid to America's cities, towns, and villages. The U.S. Department of Treasury is in the process of developing and finalizing spending guidance and refining the estimates for allocations from the State and Local Fiscal Relief Funds, but estimations for each municipality have been released. The Town of Ridgway's estimated funding allocation, according to the National League of Cities website, is \$222,982.03.

EARTH DAY CELEBRATION

On April 22nd at 11:30 a.m. (Earth Day), SMPA and Ridgway Secondary School are hosting an Earth Day Celebration at the Secondary School. The main purpose of the event is to celebrate, via a ribbon cutting ceremony, the installation of EV charging stations at the Secondary School. There will also be an Electric Vehicle Parade to celebrate low-emissions travel and attendees will have the opportunity to learn about SMPA's Beneficial Electrification Rebates. More information is available at https://mcusercontent.com/45794dd4deb0a48d92b415574/files/452d83f5-5abb-4d15-9790-a966162bd4f3/EarthDay_Ribbon_Cutting.pdf.

CLERK'S OFFICE UPDATE

From Pam Kraft, Town Clerk/Treasurer:

Annual Clean Up Day Event

The annual cleanup day, with dumpsters available for use by community members, will be held on Saturday April 24th. The event will be moving back to being staged on the Town's property behind the library and will held from 8:00 am until 1:00 pm.



Alpine Bank will be hosting an electronic recycling again this year, but it will not be held in conjunction with the Town's event. They are scheduling for some time in June.

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES UPDATE

From Diedra Silbert, Community Initiatives Facilitator:

Ridgway Space to Create Predevelopment

Artspace staff are continuing to juggle many high-priority relationships and document as the finish line gets closer on the project's financial closing. A State bill (as yet, unnumbered) is anticipated any time now that could open up this year's stimulus funding for shovel-ready projects such as this one. Colorado Creative Industries and DoLA are both working diligently to assist in finding ways to fill the funding gap. Artspace has opened up conversations with all investors regarding additional funding. The building permit is in the final stage of plan review and is expected to be issued shortly. Stryker wants to rent the lot at the southwest corner of Clinton and N. Laura Streets and has been made aware that neighbors have concerns about this. A temporary use permit will be discussed at the April 27th Planning Commission meeting for the purpose of construction equipment and materials staging on the lot. Discussions continued regarding ways to mitigate impacts on the neighborhood and to communicate what will take place. (May through July will likely be the period with the most dust, assuming an early May start.) Groundbreaking could happen as soon as the financial closing takes place. Montrose County Housing Authority is fully on board as a limited partner.

Heritage Park/Visitor Center Improvements

Three facilitated meetings of the ad hoc Visitor Center-Heritage Park Advisory Committee have now taken place. Based on the group's consensus to not construct a new Visitor Center building, to remove the current Visitor Center building, to add a restroom building, and to build a new picnic shelter, an implementation and budget plan will be drafted for Council's consideration. One final meeting will take place with the ad hoc committee to review that plan before it goes to Council. The Town received three bid proposals in response to a Request for Bids from contractors to install an irrigation system paralleling Highway 62 and to plant landscaping around the current visitor Center and eastward along the property (contractor approval on your agenda). The Chamber has moved forward with necessary renovations to the full Visitor Center space, funded in part by the Town.

Two Historic Buildings

The State's new Heritage Energy Pilot Project kicked off this week at the old bank building on Clinton St. with Chantal Unfug, State Division of Local Government director (and Ridgway resident), and Patrick Rondinelli, Department of Local Affairs Regional Manager, present. Larry Lucas, Colorado Main Street Architect, toured the building with local architect and owner's representative, Sundra Hines, and Tim Stroh, principal of Springboard Preservation in Montrose.



Sundra detailed current renovation plans for the building, and Larry gathered data to create a baseline energy assessment, as well as noting potential energy-saving improvement ideas. Larry Lucas also met onsite with representatives of the owners of the old post office building which burned. He will act as a liaison to History Colorado and the State Historical Fund to facilitate the process of understanding which grants and strategies might be useful to bring that building back to life. The County granted Landmark Designation status to the old post office building which might be helpful in grant applications.

Conferences

Mayor Clark and Diedra Silbert attended the statewide virtual convening of creative districts over four days. They were invited to present a workshop session about negotiating change which was well-received. Preston Neill attended that day (for a taste). Mayor Clark, Brenda Ratcliff, and Diedra Silbert will attend the virtual national Main Street Now conference the week of this meeting. Invitations to this conference were extended for free to businesses, but none responded that they would attend.

Merging Creative Main Street Community Engagement

Information and an application are being distributed community-wide and on the Town website to recruit volunteers for the new Creative Main Street Group (<https://townofridgway.colorado.gov/town-government/community-development>). The objective is to broaden downtown and community representation to include business, nonprofit, citizen, and building owner representation. Please help spread the word. First Fridays have been given a green light at this time with no restrictions per County Public Health. Volunteers are needed for this. Planning is underway for the 7th Ridgway Independent Film Festival in November.

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

- **Regular Town Council Meeting** – April 14, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom
- **COVID-19 Multi-Agency Coordination Group Meeting** – April 21, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. via Zoom

Seeking Volunteers for Ridgway



Do you love your community and want to keep its downtown scene authentically "Ridgway" and vibrant? Do you want to take action to support Ridgway's downtown as a great environment for thriving businesses, organizations, and activities?

New Group Forming
The "Ridgway Creative Main Street Group" merges two Town initiatives, Ridgway Creative District and Ridgway Main Street, into one community engagement effort to benefit our downtown district. Through inclusive representation and involvement of Ridgway's community and economic sectors, the Ridgway Creative Main Street Group will work to advance a downtown community and business environment that encourages innovation, creative expression, and entrepreneurship, and the ability to live and work in Ridgway.



JOIN US

Contribute to the vibrancy, health and success of your community. Find local partners to support your business' success. Gain access to learning opportunities and local, state, and national networks.

Please apply by April 29th to become part of this new stakeholder group organized by the Town and starting up this spring. Monthly meetings, plus additional projects, approximately 5 hours/month.

Your community needs your energy and ideas!

For more info and to apply, visit <https://townofridgway.colorado.gov/town-government/community-development>





- **Annual Clean Up Day Event** – April 24, 2021 from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. behind Ridgway Public Library
- **Planning Commission Regular Meeting** – April 27, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom
- **Fourth Meeting of the Visitor Center-Heritage Park Ad Hoc Advisory Committee** – TBD via Zoom
- **Special Joint Policy Group Work Session** – TBD via Zoom

JOKE OF THE DAY

My coffee cup was stolen.

Now I have to go to the police station and look at mugshots.