



TOWN HALL PO Box 10 | 201 N. Railroad Street | Ridgway, Colorado 81432 | 970.626.5308 | www.town.ridgway.co.us

To: Honorable Mayor Clark and Ridgway Town Council
From: Preston Neill, Town Manager
Date: July 8, 2025
RE: **Town Manager's Report**

INTRODUCTION

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

LIVE LIKE YOU LOVE IT – TIPS TO CONSERVE WATER OUTDOORS

To check out some easy tips for conserving water outdoors, click [HERE](#).



A MESSAGE FROM YOUR TOWN MANAGER: PLEASE CONSERVE WATER

Dear Ridgway Residents,

Today, I'm reaching out with an important and urgent request: we need your help conserving water.

Due to ongoing drought conditions, increased demand during the summer months, and the fact that we're still working to fix the Beaver Creek Diversion, our water supply is under significant strain. Every drop truly matters — not just for today, but for the future of our families, our neighborhoods, and our local environment.

We're asking all residents to take simple but impactful steps to reduce water use, such as:

- Limiting lawn watering to designated days and times
- Fixing leaks promptly
- Running dishwashers and washing machines only with full loads
- Turning off taps while brushing teeth or shaving
- Using water-efficient appliances and fixtures whenever possible

These actions may seem small, but collectively they can make a major difference. To check out more tips, to read about the Stage 3 Water Restrictions that are currently in effect, or to get updates on the status of the Beaver Creek Diversion Restoration Project, go to townofridgway.colorado.gov.

I want to thank you for the care and pride you show in our community every day. We're all in this together. With your support, we can protect our precious water resources and ensure that our town continues to thrive.

Thank you for doing your part!

Preston Neill
Ridgway Town Manager





RIDGWAY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

In May 2025, Downtown Colorado, Inc. (DCI) partnered with the Colorado Tourism Office (CTO) to lead two dynamic ninety-minute workshops focused on economic development, building on the foundation of previous tourism planning efforts. To shape the content and outcomes of these workshops, it was important to draw upon a wealth of local knowledge—including existing plans, stakeholder meetings, and committee insights.

DCI conducted a series of planning meetings, a review of recommended actions from the CTO's Destination Blueprint Program, the Business Revitalization Committee, recent Business Roundtable discussions, FUSE Creative Main Street Program, and the Ridgway Area Chamber of Commerce. This groundwork helped clarify core challenges to local business success and opened the door to collaborative, community-driven solutions for economic resilience and growth.

At the suggestion of the planning committee, DCI also reached out to peer communities together with case studies and success stories from places facing similar dynamics — particularly those navigating tourism as a primary economic force. So far, three communities have shared their experiences, with outreach ongoing to two more.

Throughout the process, a strong theme emerged: the community itself is Ridgway's greatest strength. Participants echoed this sentiment during the workshops, culminating in a word cloud that prominently featured "COMMUNITY" as a central asset.

The summary, available [HERE](#), outlines key takeaways, identifies opportunities to align ongoing efforts, and presents recommended actions and next steps to support Ridgway's economic development goals.

RIDGWAY DRINKING WATER QUALITY REPORT COVERING DATA FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2024

We are pleased to present to you this year's water quality report, available [HERE](#). Our constant goal is to provide you with a safe and dependable supply of drinking water. Please contact PRESTON NEILL at 970-318-0081 with any questions or for public participation opportunities that may affect water quality.



STAGE 1 FIRE RESTRICTIONS IMPLEMENTED IN RIDGWAY

The Town of Ridgway followed the lead of Ouray County and several other agencies in implementing "Stage 1" fire restrictions that took effect at 12:01 a.m. on July 2, 2025. The Town Manager formally enacted these emergency restrictions on burning and fires within the Town and the restrictions shall remain in effect until modified or revoked by further order of the Ridgway Town Council.



Fire managers base decisions about fire restrictions on specific moisture measurements in vegetation and other risk factors such as predicted weather and current fire activity.

The following activities are currently prohibited in the Town of Ridgway:

- All campfires and fires in open pits;
- All fires and burning of any kind or the burning of any material of any kind on public or private property within the Town, including all outdoor charcoal or wood grills, but shall not prohibit the use of propane grills on private property where the propane grill has an “on/off” switch so that the fuel can be turned off;
- Fireworks or the use of explosives;
- Smoking on public property, except in an enclosed vehicle or building;
- Disposal of any cigarette anywhere outdoors;
- Operating any chainsaw, except with a fire extinguisher and shovel kept within immediate reach;
- Welding or use of torch with open flame, unless inside an enclosed structure and as an allowable use in the zoning district.
- Other activities determined to be of high risk in creating a wildfire and potential for loss of life or significant damage to personal property.

For more information, please visit <https://townofridgway.colorado.gov/> or call 970-626-5308.

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES UPDATE

From Tera Wick, Community Initiatives Facilitator:

Public Art Component – Artspace Ridgway Space to Create Mural

The Town of Ridgway, in partnership with Artspace, has completed the public art component on the Artspace Ridgway Space to Create Building. The vibrant new mural was completed by professional muralist Yulia Avgustinovich on the southeast-facing walls of the Space to Create Building on Clinton Street.

This project emerged from a competitive RFP process issued in late 2024, which solicited proposals from qualified artists with a proven track record of completing public murals of significant scale. The selection committee—comprised of Town and Artspace representatives and local artists—reviewed 17 proposals and unanimously selected





Avgustinovich based on the strength of her design and prior experience.

Yulia worked on-site from June 5–18, often painting from dawn to dusk. Her design—a dynamic collage featuring native flora, livestock, and wildlife—reflects Ridgway’s deep connection to land, heritage, and renewal. The mural’s vibrant aesthetic and scale have already made it a landmark within the Creative District.



A well-attended dedication celebration was held June 20, featuring music from Old Man Polly, locally made ice cream from Brown Chicken Brown Cow, face painting by Faery & Fae, and games provided by Chloe’s Wine Bar. Special thanks go to Billings Artworks, for creating and donating a commemorative plaque affixed to the wall near the mural, Kate’s Place for accommodating space for the project installation, Jack Petruccelli for providing the lift, and to Mayor Clark, Traci Stoffel (Colorado Main Street), and Dana Mattice (Artspace) for sharing words of inspiration during the celebration. The event drew strong community participation and enthusiasm.

Community response to the mural has been overwhelmingly positive, with reports of more than 200 comments across social media expressing pride and excitement for this new piece of public art. Many described the work as “transformative” and praised its role in energizing Clinton Street as the heart of Ridgway’s Creative District.

This project was made possible through funding from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA)/Colorado Main Street Program and the Western Colorado Community Foundation (Dave and Mary Wood Fund), with a total investment of \$25,000 in grant support. It now stands as the largest public art installation in Ouray County and a symbol of the community’s ongoing commitment to creativity and place-making.

FUSE Strategic Planning

On June 5, 2025, the FUSE Creative Main Street program hosted a strategic planning session facilitated by Matt Ashby of Ayres Associates, with support from the Colorado Main Street program through the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA). The session synthesized a year’s worth of community input—including feedback from the Business Revitalization Committee, Ridgway Area Chamber of Commerce roundtables, and the Downtown Colorado, Inc. (DCI) economic development workshops held May 22 and 27. The resulting draft strategic plan outlines key priorities in business vitality, creative placemaking, downtown activation, and organizational



partnerships, and will guide the program’s work over the next 2–5 years. The FUSE Committee intends to finalize the plan and present it to Town Council at the August 13, 2025, meeting.

DCI Economic Development Workshops

Sponsored by the Colorado Tourism Office, the DCI workshops engaged local stakeholders in identifying short- and mid-term action steps across six lenses of economic development: education and training, human capital, social capital, culture, regulation, and financial capital. Recommendations included improving calendar coordination, expanding workforce housing and training opportunities, strengthening collaborative marketing, and aligning regulations to support small-scale development. The final DCI report will also be presented at the August 13 Town Council meeting.

First Friday Art Walks

First Friday Art Walks continue monthly through December, taking place the first Friday of each month from 5–8 p.m. These events feature rotating exhibitions by regional artists, with galleries and studios open town-wide. Many venues offer refreshments and live entertainment, and participating locations are marked with tie-dyed flags. Event details can be found at www.ridgwayfuse.org/firstfridays.

The Decker Room

The Decker Room (675 Clinton St.) maintains regular open hours—Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.—based on observed pedestrian traffic. In recent months, the space has hosted art openings, community meetings, meditation nights, film club gatherings, and other public events, as listed on the FUSE calendar at www.ridgwayfuse.org/Calendar.

FUSE is currently developing a user survey to gather feedback from Decker Room users to inform future improvements. Looking ahead, FUSE is excited to support the Decker Room in adding “community resiliency hub” to the many ways it serves the public. Upcoming enhancements include installing device charging stations for emergency use and adding exterior signage to improve visibility. FUSE looks forward to co-hosting a ribbon-cutting event for the microgrid project in collaboration with the Sustainability Work Group.

Ouray County Calendar Collaborative

The Ouray County Calendar Collaborative—a work group comprising staff from the Town of Ridgway, City of Ouray and Ridgway Area Chamber of Commerce —is working to develop a strategy for a centralized, modernized public events calendar for the county. The group is in active dialogue with event organizers as well as current and past calendar administrators to better understand community needs, platform limitations, and opportunities for alignment. A range of software options has been reviewed, and a draft recommendation with cost-sharing proposals will be presented to Town Council at the August 13 meeting.



UPDATE ON CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS FOR RIDGWAY ATHLETIC PARK BASEBALL FIELDS AND PICKLEBALL COURTS

DHM Design is currently working on the 30% construction documents and will have a package for the Town on July 18th. There are some things the DHM team needs to discuss with staff based on the Geotech report and the shallow groundwater. They want the Town's input on the layout before they do their 3D rendering for the upcoming Open House this summer.

The DHM team has submitted a pre-application/project scoping request to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Albuquerque District. Since the Town is proposing to disturb the small section of wetlands in the undeveloped section of the Athletic Park, the town will be required to do a full wetland delineation, report and additional coordination with the USACE, even if it is non-jurisdictional.

REGIONAL GREEN GRANTS

Regional Green Grants through EcoAction Partners are now available as part of a brand new pilot program! Direct funding comes from the Telluride Foundation, San Miguel County and Silverton Team GOLD prize money. Grants of \$500 to \$25,000 are available to qualified applicants. Learn more [HERE](#)!

STATEWIDE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The Draft Active Transportation Plan is available for public comment. Review the draft Statewide Active Transportation Plan and share your thoughts to help shape a safer, more connected Colorado for people walking, biking, and rolling. First, click [HERE](#) to download the Draft Active Transportation Plan. Then, once you've had a chance to review, submit your comments via the form available [HERE](#).

USDA DROUGHT DESIGNATION FOR OURAY COUNTY

A USDA disaster designation letter was recently issued to Governor Jared Polis that formally designates Ouray County as a Primary natural disaster area/Disaster County due to ongoing drought conditions. This status makes eligible agricultural producers in Ouray County potentially eligible for emergency loan assistance through the Farm Service Agency (FSA), subject to meeting individual eligibility criteria. Any local producers who believe they may be eligible should reach out to their local FSA office for more information and to begin the application process, if needed.



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MARSHAL'S OFFICE UPDATE

From Shane Schmalz, Town Marshal:

Pictures of the new Ford F-150 Lightning





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RIDGWAY CONCERT SERIES

THE TOWN OF RIDGWAY & PICKIN' PRODUCTIONS

**THE 18TH ANNUAL
RIDGWAY
CONCERT
SERIES**

JULY 3
HIGH STEP SOCIETY
The Little Mercies

JULY 10
DAN TYMINSKI BAND
Mama Lingua

JULY 17
J & THE CAUSEWAYS
Improvement Movement

JULY 24
ARTIKAL SOUND SYSTEM
Angela Autumn

JULY 31
TAJ FARRANT
Seth Mulder & Midnight Run

Food Vendors, Beer, Wine & Margaritas
No dogs or Outside Alcohol Permitted

FREE - 6PM SHOWTIME

HARTWELL PARK
Ridgway - Colorado

Ridgway Real Estate - Alpine Bank - Chipeta Lodge Resort & Spa
MTN Lodge Ridgway & The Million Roadhouse - Dave & Julie Duff
Billings Artworks - Todd W. Hoffman Foundation
The Market at Ridgway - Orvis Hot Springs - KVN Public Radio

PDP Marketing MMXXV



BEAVER CREEK DIVERSION RESTORATION PROJECT WEBPAGE

<https://townofridgway.colorado.gov/beaver-creek-diversion-restoration-project>

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

- **Town Council Regular Meeting** – July 9, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. in-person at Town Hall and virtually via Zoom
- **Second Concert of Ridgway Concert Series!** – July 10, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. at Hartwell Park
- **FUSE Committee Meeting** – July 15, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. at the Decker Room
- **Planning Commission Meeting** – July 16, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. at Town Hall and virtually via Zoom – **CANCELLED**
- **Third Concert of Ridgway Concert Series!** – July 17, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. at Hartwell Park
- **Fourth Concert of Ridgway Concert Series!** – July 24, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. at Hartwell Park
- **Fifth Concert of Ridgway Concert Series!** – July 31, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. at Hartwell Park
- **Sustainability Advisory Board Meeting** – August 5, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. at Town Hall and virtually via Zoom
- **Town Council Regular Meeting** – August 13, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. in-person at Town Hall and virtually via Zoom

JOKE OF THE DAY

What's a lawyer's favorite drink?

Subpoena colada.

Bonus Joke from Terry Schuyler, Council member:

You'll need to ask Terry to tell you the joke.