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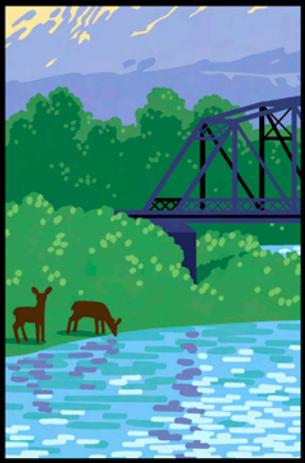
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COMPREHENSIVE • PLAN

CITY OF RIFLE, COLORADO

★ ESTABLISHED 1905 ★



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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“Healthy cities need an intricate and close grained diversity of uses that give each other constant mutual support, both economically and socially.”

- Jane Jacobs; **The Death and Life of American Cities**



Figure 1: Downtown Conceptual Model
Click the box to play movie (requires internet connection)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the next 30 years the City of Rifle is positioned to grow from a current population of 9,000 to a potential population between 25,000 to 40,000. The factors that will create this growth include:

- Location in the heart of the Western Slope of Colorado, a high-growth region due to its impressive recreational opportunities, climate, and high quality of life
- Location at the epicenter of significant natural gas and oil shale reserves
- Location on Interstate 70 and a key railroad corridor that will encourage the growth of commercial and industrial uses
- Proximity to the Roaring Fork Valley (Aspen) and the Vail Valley, and the lack of growth potential (affordable housing, vacant lands, etc.) in those areas that will push growth to Rifle

The purpose of this Comprehensive Plan is to direct and channel this growth to create a sustainable, highly-livable community with a diverse economic base—a great place to live, work, and play.

The key elements of the Comprehensive Plan include:

- Community Vision (Chapter 2): The Rifle City Council has created a vision and goals to direct the community over time. The Comprehensive Plan charts a course that implements Council's vision and goals.
- Future Land Use (Chapter 3): Future Land Use expresses the City's vision and goals. The **Future Land Use Map** indicates where the vision and goals are applied. This chapter also includes a detailed discussion of each of Rifle's neighborhoods.
- Sustainable Growth Patterns (Chapter 4). Rifle will protect its fiscal, environmental, and community health by preventing "leap-frog" development and directing growth towards the areas where infrastructure already exists. Rifle will encourage Traditional Neighborhood Design to create complete and livable neighborhoods, and increase density in appropriate locations. Rifle will encourage site and building design that creates a consistent architectural form.

“Achieve the Greater Good”

~ Mayor Keith Lambert ~

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- ☞ A Diverse Economic Base (Chapter 5). Rifle has already taken significant steps towards becoming an Energy Village—a community that bridges the gap between the current fossil-fuel economy and the evolving renewable energy economy. By taking advantage of the fossil-fuel reserves in our area, expanding the renewable energy sector of the local economy, and becoming the regional center for commerce and culture, Rifle will create a diverse economic base that buffers the booms and busts of the energy extraction industry.
- ☞ A Highly Livable Community (Chapter 6). There are many components of a highly-livable community—parks, schools, utilities, and transportation. Rifle will achieve a high level of quality within each component and integrate them to ensure that Rifle remains a great place to live.
- ☞ Influence External Factors (Chapter 7). Rifle's future is influenced by many factors that are beyond our city limits—from regional, state, and federal governments to multi-national corporations. Rifle will take a pro-active stance on issues that affect the City to increase our ability to shape our own destiny.

The Comprehensive Plan sets a direction for the next 20 years. By using this plan as a guide for future decisions, and updating it when necessary, the City of Rifle will move in the direction outlined by the City's vision statement.



Figure 2: Recent Rifle Projects
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CITY OF RIFLE

City Council

- Keith Lambert - Mayor
- Jay Miller - Mayor Pro-tem
- Jennifer Sanborn
- Jonathan Rice
- Alan Lambert
- Jeanette Thompson
- Randy Winkler

Planning Commission

- Ned Bascom - Chairperson
- Helen Rogers - Vice Chair
- Gary Osier
- Ken Plum
- Bruce Gallagher
- Bryan Burgess
- David Mead
- Chad LaFrenz- 1st Alternate
- Vacant Seat - 2nd Alternate

City Staff

- John Hier,-City Manager
- Matt Sturgeon - Assistant City Manager and Director of Planning
- Nathan Lindquist – Planner
- Erica Gentry - GIS Technician
- Charlie Stevens - Utility Director
- Aleks Briedis – Director of Parks and Recreation
- Charlotte Squires - Administrative Assistant

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN RESOURCES

Garfield RE-2 School District

- David Smucker – School Superintendent
- Craig Jay – Director of Facilities
- Theresa Hamilton – Director of System wide Services

Rifle Police Department

- Daryl Meisner – Chief of Police

Rifle Fire Protection District

- Garfield County Emergency Communication Authority*

Colorado Division of Wildlife

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONSULTANTS

Winston Associates, Inc

- Jeff Winston, Principal
- Paul Glasgow, Project Manager
- Chase Mullen, 3D modeling

Fore See Consulting

- Steve Mullen, Principal

BBC Research and Consulting

- Ford Frick, Managing Director

McCormick and Associates

- Kathy McCormick, Principal

Civic Results

- Ken Snyder, Director of Planning Tools

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CITY OF RIFLE, COLORADO
PLANNING COMMISSION
RESOLUTION NO. 1
SERIES OF 2009A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF RIFLE,
COLORADO, ADOPTING A COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN FOR THE
CITY OF RIFLE

WHEREAS, the City of Rifle is required by C.R.S. §31-23-206 to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the municipality, including areas outside of its boundaries; and

WHEREAS, the City's previous Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1997 and no longer serves as an adequate planning tool to direct and channel growth for the future; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to state statute and Section 2-6-20 of the Rifle Municipal Code, the Rifle Planning Commission is charged with making and adopting a master plan for the City; and

WHEREAS, the City, through a team of consultants and participation by both the Planning Commission and City Council, conducted extensive public outreach on the plan, including joint work sessions of the Commission and Council and public workshops; and

WHEREAS, on November 24, 2009, the Planning Commission held a duly noticed public hearing to consider adoption of the Rifle Comprehensive Plan, at which hearing the Commission considered comments from Rifle staff and the public; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission finds that the proposed Rifle Comprehensive Plan attached hereto satisfies the requirements of the Rifle Municipal Code and state statute; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission desires to adopt the attached Rifle Comprehensive Plan as the master plan for the City of Rifle.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF RIFLE, COLORADO, THAT:

Section 1. The foregoing recitals are incorporated herein as if set forth in full.

Section 2. Pursuant to C.R.S. §31-23-206, the Rifle Planning Commission at a duly noticed public hearing hereby adopts in its entirety the 2009 Rifle Comprehensive Plan attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by this reference as the official Master Plan for the City of Rifle.

Section 3. A copy of the 2009 Rifle Comprehensive Plan is available for review during

normal business hours at City Hall.

Section 4. The Planning Director shall have the authority to make non-substantive revisions to the Rifle Comprehensive Plan such as correcting grammatical and typographical errors and updating hyperlinks in the document without further approval by the Planning Commission.

THIS RESOLUTION, was read, passed and adopted by the Rifle Planning Commission at a regular meeting held this 24th day of November, 2009.

CITY OF RIFLE, COLORADO
PLANNING COMMISSION

By


Chairperson

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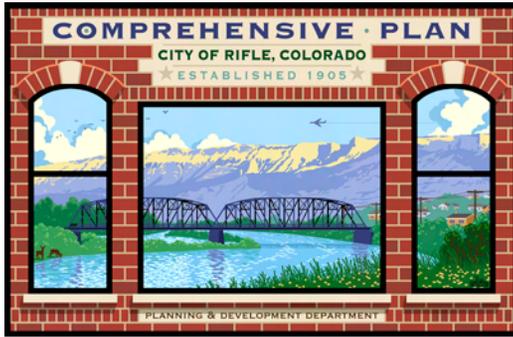
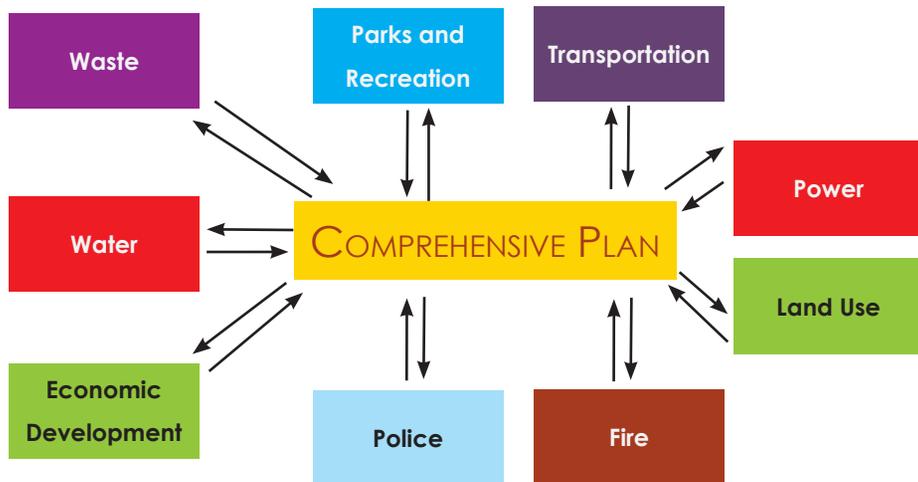


Figure 3: The Comprehensive Plan coordinates the plans of individual departments.



WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

By evaluating where we are today as a community, and where we eventually want to be, we can make decisions to get us from here to there. Just as importantly, we can avoid making decisions that will prevent us from getting there. A comprehensive plan does both. It directs the forces that shape the City to help attain the city's vision.

To do this, the Comprehensive Plan first defines the vision of Rifle that is held by its citizens and elected officials by answering questions like:

- What are the essential components of a livable community?
- What kind of identity should Rifle have to the region and Coloradoans generally?
- What areas of Rifle should be developed, or redeveloped, and what areas should be left alone?

- What type of industries and businesses are desirable and realistic for Rifle to attract?

A Comprehensive Plan guides decisions related to land use and community development. It encompasses areas within the City as well as areas that could annex into the City in the future. The Comprehensive Plan is comprised of:

- text (explanations, the vision, objectives, etc.)
- illustrations (diagrams and photos to illustrate concepts)
- maps (geographic references of the general plan objectives)

Taken together, the elements of comprehensive plan provide direction for public agencies as well as private individuals seeking information about land development objectives of the City.

Comprehensive planning helps local government protect public health, safety and welfare, safeguard property values and rights, promote economic development and preserve citizen's quality of life. It provides a comprehensive guide to the physical development of the City, zoning, budgeting, capital improvement decisions and policymaking. It is the guidebook that assists City Council, Planning Commission, other City boards, City staff, developers and residents when making decisions about future of the community.

- How do we direct growth so that the City can have the best infrastructure, provision of services, and a healthy municipal budget?

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THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IS BOTH A SHORT AND LONG-RANGE DOCUMENT



Some elements of the Comprehensive Plan may seem, at first, unrealistic. The Comprehensive Plan is, however, a long-range document looking at least 20 years into the future. Consider the change that has taken place in the last 20 years. Much of our surroundings today would have seemed barely imaginable 20 years ago. Some concepts incorporated in this document will take years to achieve.

The Comprehensive Plan is a valuable guide to the many small daily decisions that improve our community. These decisions lay the groundwork for the long-range vision. Over time, conditions will change and there may be a need to adjust the Plan to conform to new realities.



Figure 4: In just ten years, Rifle has experienced significant growth in North Rifle (2), a new Wal-Mart (1) and expansion on Graham Mesa (3)

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CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER DOCUMENTS AND REGULATIONS

The Comprehensive Plan (described in the previous section) is seldom used by itself. It is usually one of several documents used together or in sequence to make land-use decisions. Ideally, it is the first level in a three level process of documents that regulate land use.

Upon adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, it will be important that the City's land use ordinances, e.g. Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations and Building Permit Regulations remain consistent. This may be brought about in two ways: by amending ordinances not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, or by amending the Comprehensive Plan. It should be noted that either process must follow the City's required procedures, including public notices and public hearings.

The Zoning Ordinance has two parts: a map and text. The intent of the map and text is to codify as law certain land use policies recommended by the Comprehensive Plan. After adopting the Comprehensive Plan, zoning will need to be updated to become consistent with the plan. The zoning text typically describes permitted land uses, bulk and height requirements, setbacks, and other development standards (i.e. signage, parking, landscaping, architecture, etc.).

The third level is comprised of Subdivision Regulations and Building Permit regulations. Subdivision regulations offers a means to ensure new developments will have sewer, water, streets, utilities, and drainage systems as well as safe access. Building regulations ensure proper construction of buildings.

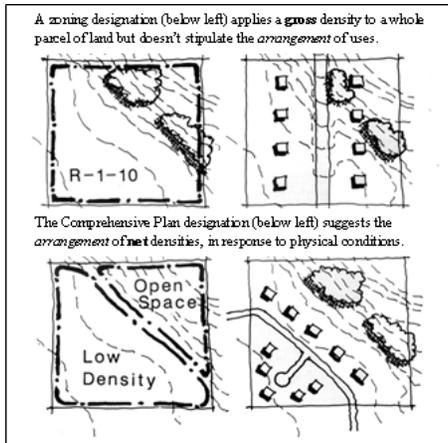


Figure 5: Differences between the Comprehensive Plan designations and Zoning designations.

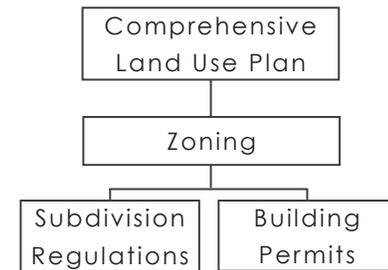


Figure 6: Relationship of the Comprehensive Plan to other regulatory documents.

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HOW WAS THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DEVELOPED?



Figure 7: Rifle Residents discussing and distributing future growth in the Citizen Planner chipgame.

Rifle's previous Comprehensive Plan was prepared in May of 1998. This current update to the Comprehensive Plan supersedes the May 1998 Comprehensive Plan. Much in Rifle has changed since 1998. This plan reflects current thinking in the community as well as keeping an eye towards the next 20-year planning period in and around Rifle.

This update was developed through a lengthy process of work sessions with the City Council and the Planning Commission, well-attended public charrette workshops and review by City staff and regional agencies. This plan was circulated for public comment. The Planning Commission and City Council then reviewed the input, and after appropriate revisions and public hearings; the City Council formally adopted the Plan.

Under the direction of City staff, the Comprehensive Plan consultants provided opportunities for the public and other stakeholders to participate at each key step of the Comprehensive Plan process. These methods of interaction are summarized below:

1.1 JOINT PLANNING & ZONING AND CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

Three joint work sessions with Planning and Zoning and City Council members were held at key points in the Comprehensive Plan process to solicit the viewpoints of these important community decision-makers.

1.2 PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

Three public workshops were held for the Future Land Use Map throughout 2005-2009. The first public workshop solicited public input via a "chip game" exercise. In small groups, participants placed "chips" representing various densities and land use types on a map of the City and adjacent area. This input was then synthesized into a concept plan that represented the majority preference for each land use type and location. A keypad polling system was used in this meeting to build consensus and gather additional information and opinions from the participants. The polling system is discussed in more detail below.

The second public workshop introduced the synthesized plan to the public. Participants were asked to vote on key areas of the plan utilizing keypad polling.

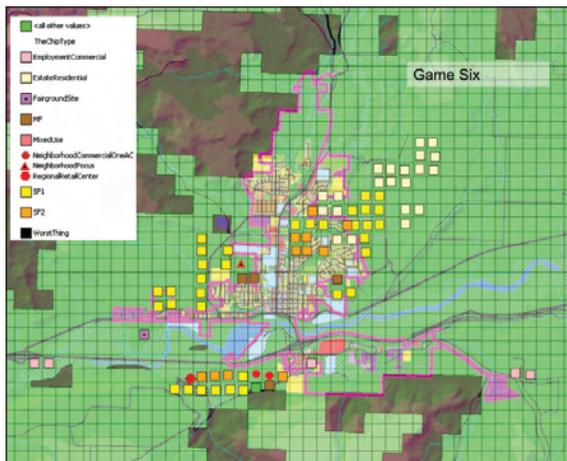


Figure 8: Game Six was one of the nine resulting growth patterns that Rifle citizens produced. All nine were synthesized into a consensus plan that formed the basis for the Future Land Use Map.

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The synthesis plan generated spirited discussion and provided guidance on key land use issues, such as future annexations, agricultural preservation, and locations for industrial uses, open space and residential growth. The resulting input strongly influenced the final Comprehensive Plan.

In 2009, after further refinement and technical input, Planning Staff held a public meeting to share the final Comprehensive Plan with the public.

The keypad polling system used throughout the process proved effective because there was direct involvement by and immediate feedback to all participants. This system of collecting public input overcomes "the reluctance to participate" because input was received anonymously. Dominant personalities did not coerce opinions and everyone's opinion was heard. Also, because feedback was instantaneous, consensus and concept "buy-in" was achieved successfully.

1.3 PROJECT WEBSITE

The Comprehensive Plan consultants maintained a project website that displayed documents generated during the planning process such as: meeting minutes, public survey results, proposed plans and drawings, photographs and meeting schedules. The website address was distributed at public workshops and a feedback e-mail address proved helpful in collecting pertinent comments on key plan issues.



Figure 9: A website was employed throughout the comprehensive plan process to distribute files, collect ideas and inform people about upcoming events.

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The Comprehensive Plan has little value to the community if it and City regulations are not kept consistent.

FUTURE UPDATES TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

This Comprehensive Plan evolved with input from the public, staff, and elected and appointed officials.

To be an effective guide for decision-making, the Plan must remain reasonably current. The Plan may change, as community needs change. The Planning Commission and City Council should amend the Comprehensive Plan as often as necessary to reflect changes in City policy. This could mean as often as several times a year. An update should take place at least every five years (the next update is scheduled for 2014).

Amending the Comprehensive Plan¹ should follow the same procedures as this update, except minor amendments that do not change the broader intent or purpose of the plan. It was created through a comprehensive analysis, and thus, it should be amended through a comprehensive analysis, including public notices and public hearings. The Rifle Land Use and Development chapter of the Rifle Municipal Code defines specific steps to amend the Comprehensive Plan and the Future Land Use Map.

¹ Other than minor amendments, such as clarifications and corrections that do not change the meaning and directions of the plan.

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COMPLIMENTARY AND CONCURRENT PLANNING EFFORTS

The following are complimentary and/or concurrent planning efforts which were on going at the time of this plan. Where possible and relevant the Comprehensive Plan has incorporated the direction elicited in these planning efforts.

The Rim Rock at Rifle, Rifle Airpark and Bryce's Valley areas that have all been master planned and their plans adopted by the City. This comprehensive plan has incorporated those plans. While the **Future Land Use Map** expresses general land use concepts that help formulate a comprehensive land use picture, Master Plans provide specific detail about where land use should occur. Any development in Rim Rock at Rifle, Rifle Airpark and Bryce's Valley area must follow the master plan or a new

master plan must be developed and adopted by the City. As the City grows and new master plans are developed and adopted, the City should incorporate these plans into the Future Land Use and the Comprehensive Plan.

1.4 "DEFINING RIFLE'S ECONOMIC FUTURE – REVITALIZATION OPPORTUNITY ASSESSMENT"

This is complimentary to the Comprehensive Planning process. These

two plans will work symbiotically to enhance Rifle's future economic standing in the Interstate 70 corridor.

Key recommendations in this study include developing Rifle as:

- a "River Town"
- an "Energy Village"
- a regional economic center

The recommended implementation strategies are incorporated throughout this document. To understand the background of the recommendations, please review the document "**Defining Rifle's Economic Future – Revitalization Opportunity Assessment**" – available at Rifle's City Hall.

1.5 A CASE STUDY OF COMMUNITY RENEWAL, GROWTH AND CHANGE IN NORTHWEST COLORADO

This 2007 analysis of the community's recent development experience and future growth prospects is a companion piece to a larger socioeconomic study entitled "**Northwest Colorado Socioeconomic Analysis and Forecasts**". The information has been incorporated into the Rifle Comprehensive Plan.

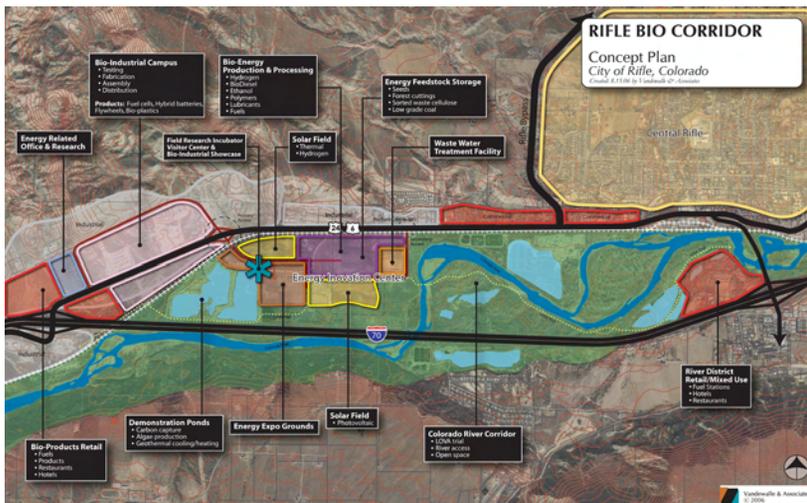


Figure 10: Biocorridor

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1.6 BIOCORRIDOR AND THE ENERGY INNOVATION CENTER

A conceptual plan was developed for the **West Rifle Gateway** which envisioned the gateway becoming an alternative energy hub. The plan included specific land uses which would help bridge Rifle's current oil and gas boom into a bio-mass and distributed energy center. The Biocorridor follows **State Highway 6** as it leaves Downtown Rifle and extends to the **West Rifle Interchange**. The Energy Innovation Center concept plan was developed for the eastern portion of the Biocorridor. The Energy Innovation Center houses an alternative fuels research facility and exposition center.

1.7 DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

During the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan, an advisory team of key downtown stakeholders created a Downtown Plan to help the City emerge as a regional economic center.

The Plan focused on increasing the strength and density of downtown without detracting from the historic core. Where possible the information has been incorporated into the Rifle Comprehensive Plan. Refer to the **Downtown Master Plan** for more detail. The Comprehensive Plan incorporated the Downtown Master Plan in the Subarea Section (See the **Downtown Subarea** section in **Chapter 3** for more detail.)

1.8 RIM ROCK AT RIFLE MASTER PLAN

Rim Rock at Rifle Master Plan is a plan for 350 acres in Northwest Rifle. The Rim Rock at Rifle Master Plan has been adopted by the City of Rifle. Any development must follow that plan or a new master plan must be developed and adopted by Rifle. The master plan anticipates a variety of housing types throughout the project that will reach a variety of price points in the local housing market. The plan includes a mix of residential and commercial units connected by roads, trails, bikeways and paths. Dedication of a school site is desired at a yet to be determined location in the northern portion of the project.

1.9 RIFLE AIRPARK MASTER PLAN

The Rifle Airpark Master Plan includes approximately 500 acres surrounding the Rifle-Garfield County Airport. It includes a modern industrial park concept with the intent of providing land for economic development and job creation. The area is highlighted with a "Special Area Plan" designation on the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map. The Rifle Airpark Master Plan has been adopted by the City of Rifle. Any development must follow that plan or a new master plan must be developed and adopted by Rifle. (See **Rifle Airpark Master Plan**.)

1.10 EAST GATEWAY SUBAREA PLAN

Rifle's east "gateway" gives visitors their first impression of the City and the Downtown. The **East Gate-**

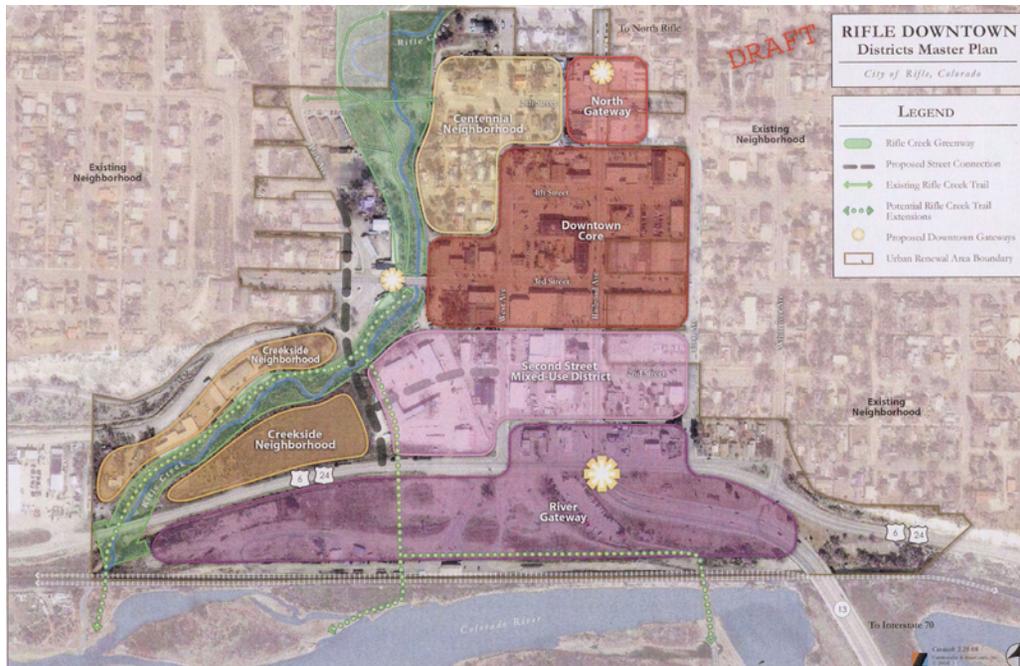


Figure 11: Downtown Master Plan

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way Subarea Plan was undertaken at the same time as the Comprehensive Plan to provide a vision for the Subarea's future. The Comprehensive Plan incorporated the East Gateway Subarea in the East Gateway Subarea section (See the [East Gateway Subarea](#) section in [Chapter 3](#).)

1.11 LOWER VALLEY (LOVA) TRAILS MASTER PLAN

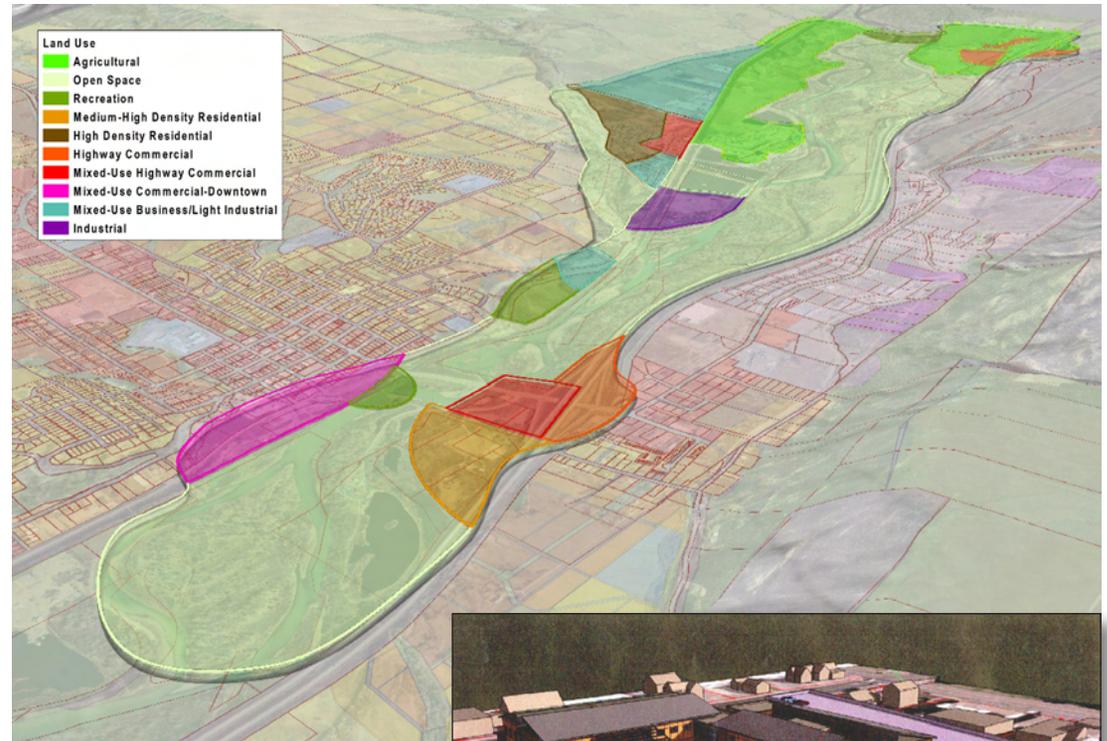
The [Lower Valley Trails Group Master Plan](#) was composed by the Lower Valley Trails Group, a non-profit made up of activist and outdoors people. The Plan supports the construction of a continuous non-motorized recreation trail along the Colorado River as it meanders through Garfield County.

1.12 CITY HALL AND LIBRARY REDEVELOPMENT

This plan combines the City Administration building and the Garfield County Public Library Branch. The plan includes the following strategies:

1. Fast-tracking design and starting construction in the summer of 2009
2. A facility capable of hosting a variety of outdoor programs
3. Structured parking
4. 42,000 square feet of combined interior space

Figure 12: The East Gateway Land Use Plan



1.13 COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (CDOT) ACCESS PLAN

At the end of the Comprehensive Plan process, CDOT undertook an [Access Control Plan](#) to investigate where to allow and limit access to the new State Highway 13 Bypass and State Highway 13 as it proceeds north out of Rifle.



Figure 13: City Hall and Library Redevelopment Concept

VISION, SWONs & OBJECTIVES

2



2035 VISION STATEMENT

SWON's

- 2.1 Strengths
- 2.2 Weaknesses
- 2.3 Opportunities
- 2.4 Needs

OBJECTIVES



RIFLE'S 2035 VISION STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Comprehensive Plan will guide development and re-development over the next 20-year planning horizon. The foundation for the plan, including its vision was established in both the Comprehensive Plan process and at City Council retreat sessions, where Council generated City of Rifle 2025 Vision Statement:

Rifle in 2025 is a community that:

1. Has preserved its small town values and cohesive sense of community.
2. Has a sustainable and growing economic base that offers ample employment and business opportunities.
3. Is environmentally sensitive.
4. Is comprised of diverse neighborhoods that are safe, secure, and have convenient access to services and amenities.
5. Offers a premier and integrated system of recreational, educational, and cultural activities for all ages and income levels.
6. Is the regional center of commerce and culture.
7. Has achieved a high level of resource efficiency and sustainability.

From this Vision Statement have been derived the following long-term directions for the Comprehensive Plan:

1. Promote economic vitality and a diverse economic base.
2. Expand with sustainable growth patterns (land uses, infrastructure, mobility).
3. Create a highly livable community; (infrastructure, schools, parks and recreation, housing,).
4. Influence external forces that affect the City.

2

2035 Vision Statement
SWON's
Objectives

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND NEEDS (SWON'S)

The following is a summary of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Needs (SWONs) generated at a work session with Planning Commission, City Council and City staff. The SWON analysis is a valuable tool for communities to gauge assets and liabilities, areas for improvement, and creating a "wish list" of community desires.

2.1 STRENGTHS:

- ☞ A healthy quality of life
- ☞ Strong school system including Colorado Mountain College
- ☞ Public servants - the people
- ☞ UMTRA sites - high visibility
- ☞ Plenty of City-owned property
- ☞ Wonderful historic buildings and a grid street network
- ☞ Proximity to Interstate 70 (ability to capture sales tax)
- ☞ City vision!

2.2 WEAKNESSES:

- ☞ The City periodically suffers from "Boom and Bust" economic cycles
- ☞ Lack of commercial diversity (thus jobs) forces many residents to commute long distances to places of work.
- ☞ Reinvestment in Downtown is lacking:
 - Public (Infrastructure)
 - Private (New businesses, facades, etc.)
- ☞ Downtown maintenance responsibilities are not clearly defined:
 - Public (Streets, sidewalks, furniture, landscaping and lighting)
 - Private (Façade clean up and on-going maintenance, building entries, signage and window displays, sweeping and building lighting)
- ☞ Code and parking enforcement mechanisms are lacking
- ☞ Existing land use code does not permit best practices

2.3 OPPORTUNITIES:

- ☞ Garfield County Fairground property
- ☞ Better IGA arrangement with County Commissioners
- ☞ Highway 13-only North/South connection to Interstate 70, railroad and airport
- ☞ Centennial Park and potential land uses around it
- ☞ Rifle / Garfield County trails connection to Mountain Parks
- ☞ The vast hunting community
- ☞ Mix of housing without subsidizing from higher end homes
- ☞ Keep affordable housing for City and regional residents even in an improving economy
- ☞ Mixing uses in residential neighborhoods
- ☞ Garfield County Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) to direct quality of growth in the county
- ☞ Gateway appearance and transportation center (bus, train, commuter parking)

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2.4 NEEDS:

- ☞ Comprehensive Plan written for ease of understanding and implementation by the development community
- ☞ Proper financing to accomplish goals
- ☞ Infrastructure upgrades (roads and sewer)
- ☞ Guidelines for Downtown Rifle & Centennial Park
- ☞ Utilities, community services to adequately serve growing populations
- ☞ Enforce “weed & junk” control
- ☞ Paving of key downtown streets
- ☞ Prioritized annexations
- ☞ Revise 3 mile boundary and/or areas of influence
- ☞ Fire protection and hazmat collaboration with other adjacent communities and organizations

OBJECTIVES

Every week, City elected officials and staff make a variety of decisions concerning the physical, economic and social development of Rifle: roads, utilities, parks, fiscal management, social programs and new developments. Individually, the decisions may not seem related; however, the cumulative effect of such decisions has a significant impact on the livability of the community and its quality of life. Clearly defined objectives help the government focus individual actions for the good of its citizens.

Objectives are specific measures to implement the vision. By adhering to objectives, the City can prioritize its objectives and assign responsibility to various departments and their staff. Because priorities and work plans change from year to year, City staff and officials should continually evaluate and update the Comprehensive Plan objectives at each update of the Comprehensive Plan.

As time passes, there will be a need to modify the objectives. Thus, the planning process is continually monitoring results and evaluating the relevance of the Comprehensive Plan direction. City Council may update objectives and even the vision statement at any time. These items should be reviewed during the next update of the Comprehensive Plan.

Many sections of the Comprehensive Plan contain objectives derived from, or targeted toward applying the Plan's vision to each subject area. Some objectives are simple and can be initiated immediately; others are more complicated and may take some time.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OBJECTIVES

1. All zoning and land use decisions, including the development of streets, parks, utilities and the provisions of public services shall be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Future Land Use Map.
 - a. In the next 18 months, amend the **Zoning Ordinance** and map to bring it into conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.
 - b. Incorporate the **Future Land Use Map** and **Objectives** into the review process (submittal requirements, review criteria) for land use decisions and infrastructure planning.
 - c. Make the Comprehensive Plan available to all groups/individuals participating in Rifle's land use decision-making process.
2. The Comprehensive Plan will be reviewed annually and updated every five years; updates will occur more frequently when necessary.
 - a. All City departments will create an annual to do list of action items consistent with the Comprehensive Plan in order to activate the Comprehensive Plan.
 - b. Set a date for the next annual review of the Comprehensive Plan.
 - c. Regularly budget funds for future Plan updates.

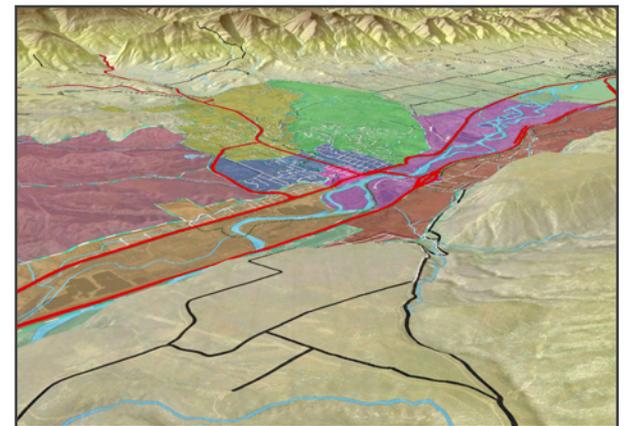
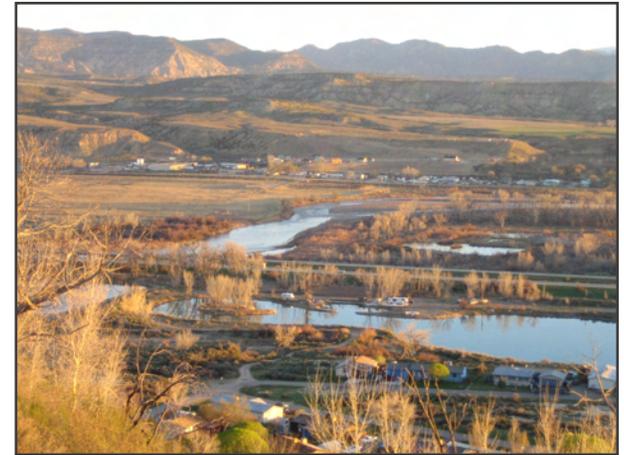
FUTURE LAND USE & SUBAREAS

LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

- 3.1 Land Use Designations and the Future Land Use Map
- 3.2 Land Use Designations and Community Form
- 3.3 Residential Land Uses
- 3.4 Commercial Land Uses
- 3.5 Employment Land Uses
- 3.6 Special Purpose Land Uses

RIFLE'S SUBAREAS

- 3.7 Downtown
- 3.8 Central Rifle
- 3.9 North Rifle
- 3.10 East Rifle (Graham Mesa)
- 3.11 East Rifle Gateway
- 3.12 South Rifle
- 3.13 West Rifle Gateway
- 3.14 West Rifle (Clough Ranch)



3

Land Uses Designations
Rifle's Subareas

LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

Future land use consists of both a text description, the Land Use Designations provided in this chapter and the Future Land Use Map, provided at the end of this text.

3.1 LAND USE DESIGNATIONS AND THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The **Future Land Use Map** is not a zoning map; it does not represent current zoning regulations. Rather, the Future Land Use Map is a graphic expression of the vision and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. The Map encompasses areas within the City as well as areas adjacent to the City that have potential for **annexation**.

The Map is a guide and its land use designations approximate. Land use designations respond more to the natural characteristics of the land than to property lines. Together, land use designations and the Future Land Use Map uses help predict appropriate zoning designations for each property.

The Map shall be used at the time of annexation to ensure that the zoning of newly annexed properties conforms to the City's Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map. When zoning, rezoning, subdividing or annexing land, the Planning Commission and the City Council shall review property-specific conditions, the Comprehensive Plan and the Future Land Use Map.

3.2 LAND USE DESIGNATIONS AND COMMUNITY FORM

The land use designation below prescribes recommended uses, density, locational criteria and character. Some land uses, due to their prominence and intensity, may require a higher level of guidance. For guidance on community form, including site and building design, please see **Community Form and Design** in Chapter 4.

The following are footnotes for all land use designations:

** Public schools and churches may occur in ANY land use designation, subject to availability of adequate infrastructure. City desires to work with these institutions to ensure they placed in locations identified by sound planning.*

*** The Density Ranges in the land use plan designations are intended to illustrate the range of densities which may be applied in each land use. No one is entitled to the highest density, but can achieve it by providing substantial public benefit. These ranges will help feather density between land use transitions and provide a mix of densities to avoid cookie cutter, one size fits all developments.*

**** The Rim Rock at Rifle, Rifle Airpark and Bryce's Valley areas that have all been master planned, and their plans adopted by the City. This comprehensive plan has incorporated those plans. While the Future Land Use Map expresses general land use concepts that help formulate a comprehensive land use picture, master plans provide specific detail about where land use should occur. Any development in Rim Rock at Rifle, Rifle Airpark and Bryce's Valley area must follow the master plan or a new master plan must be developed and adopted by the City. As the City grows and new master plans are developed and adopted, the City should incorporate these plans into the Future Land Use and the Comprehensive Plan.*

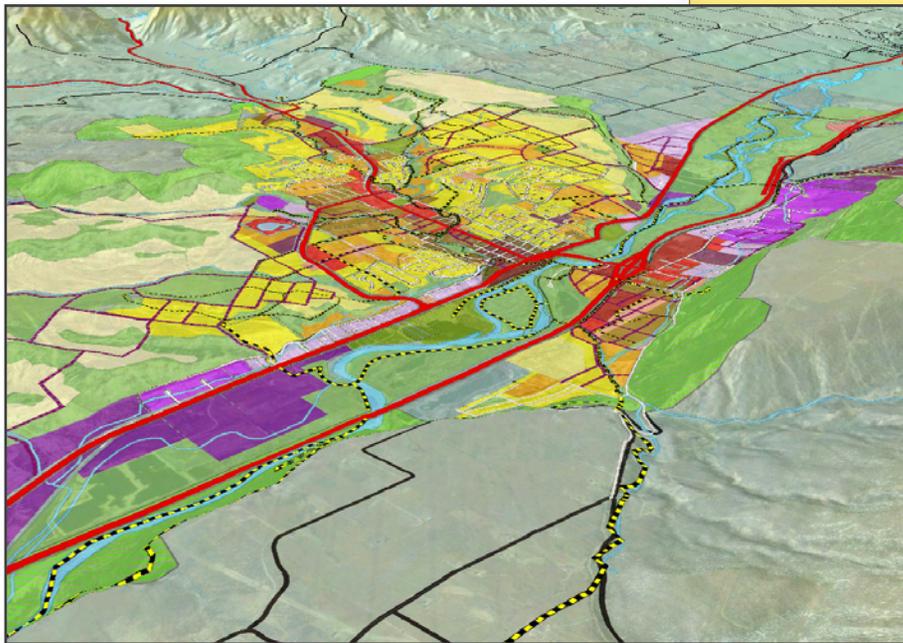


Figure 14: City of Rifle Future Land Use

RESIDENTIAL LAND USES

3.3 RESIDENTIAL LAND USES

Residential development in Rifle in the post-World War II era has generally consisted of single-family houses, on medium-sized lots (7,000 to 10,000 square feet) with front-loaded garages facing the street. Landscaping and street trees were left to the preference of the individual home owner.

Since 2000, more multi-family units have been built to accommodate the oil and gas industry workers, retirees, and young, single people moving to Rifle to take advantage of the growth by working as teachers, nurses, and other professions. However, much of this multi-family development has been isolated rather than integrated into well-planned mixed-residential communities where they are accessible to schools, recreation and shopping opportunities.

Today, the residential market is beginning to change. Many of the trends in residential preferences are reminiscent of the development patterns seen in the historic pre-World War II sections of Rifle. These development patterns include alley-loaded garages, smaller-lots, integration of multi-family units, street trees, ability to walk to retail, schools, and entertainment amenities, and a gridded-street pattern.

The Comprehensive Plan encourages **Traditional Neighborhood Design**. It achieves a broad range of home types, prices, and sizes to meet the diverse needs of Rifle's residents and its diverse labor force including housing for young families, families with single heads of households, large families, people with

disabilities, the elderly, low-income and moderate-income households. It offers an opportunity for Rifle to increase the sense of community within the City. Homebuyers want more opportunities to become part of a "community" as opposed to just living somewhere. In a recent national housing study, it has been found that a majority of homeowners and prospective homebuyers found the community more important than the house itself. Thoughtful master planning is encouraged to meet a strong, already-existing market demand for real community.

RESIDENTIAL LAND USE OBJECTIVES

1. Each residential land use designation is accompanied by a "dwelling units per acre" figure. Property owners and developers should not assume entitlement to the higher end of the density range when the City assigns zoning. The appropriate density for a development will be determined on a case-by-case basis based on the evaluation of the impacts to City infrastructure and surrounding neighborhoods; aspects influencing allowable density include traffic impacts, project design, how and where density is proposed on the property (i.e. building locations) and compatibility with adjacent land uses. Providing substantial public benefit (e.g. pedestrian amenities, street trees, etc.) will help a project increase its appropriate density.
2. In the "Very Low-Density and Ultra Low-Density" land use designations (1 DU per 5 acre and 1 DU per 20 acres, respectively), **cluster development**

- is encouraged for the purpose of maximizing the use of urban infrastructure and the preservation of open space.
3. Multi-family residential buildings should be broken-up architecturally, to avoid a box-like appearance.
4. Encourage dwelling unit design that will blend various residential types seamlessly (e.g., small apartments can be designed to blend inconspicuously into low-density neighborhoods).
5. Residential neighborhoods should be designed to include an integrated mix of housing types that include **a mix and range of densities** (e.g. single-family, townhomes, accessory dwelling units, apartments, condos).
6. Residential neighborhoods should be designed so garage doors do not dominate streetscapes.
7. The City supports and encourages **affordable housing** dispersed throughout the community, not concentrated in one area. Every effort should be made to blend affordable housing with housing designed for a higher-income market. Through the use of similar exterior materials, windows and building forms. Multi-family housing should not be segregated or isolated.
8. Allow large development projects with multi-year build-out schedules to incorporate entitlement processes that can react to market conditions related to housing.

RESIDENTIAL LAND USES Zoom in to see maps in greater detail

Mixed-Use Residential Urban (MURU)

Density: 15-30 du/acre

This high-density residential land use is primarily intended for multi-story multi-family uses. In order to facilitate appropriate higher densities near viable business centers, multi-family buildings are encouraged near Downtown Rifle. Street and open space designs in these areas shall be used to create a pedestrian-friendly streetscape. Some commercial uses are permitted, such as office or minor retail or restaurant, where appropriate. Vertical mixed-use is encouraged.

Locational Criteria: Areas next to Downtown Rifle; areas in close proximity to shopping, educational, and recreational facilities; Areas next to arterial streets or accessible to such without passing through less intensive land uses; and areas where high-density land uses are compatible with adjacent land uses.

For more information on mixed-use land uses, see 'Create Mixed-Use Neighborhoods'.



Figure 15: Examples of Mixed-Use Residential Urban

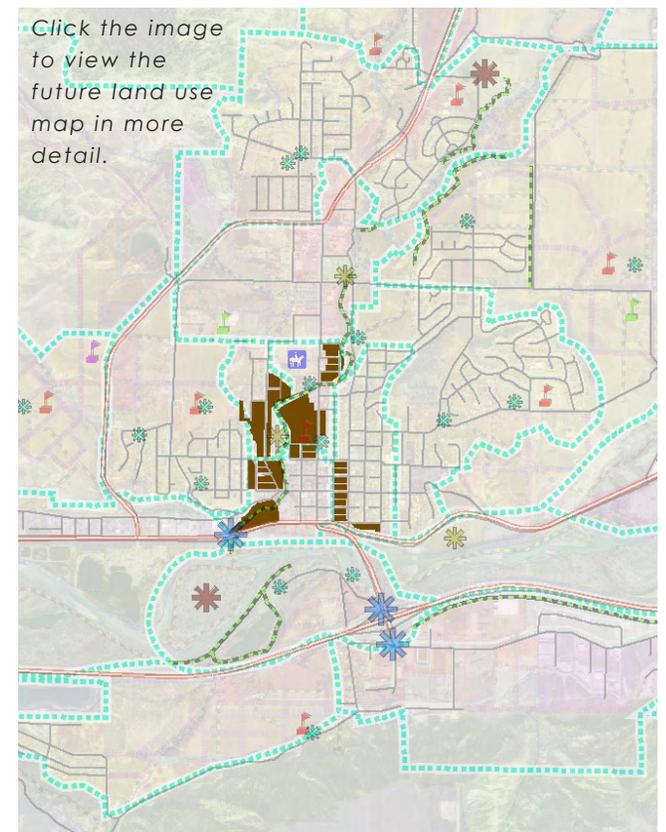


Figure 16: Location of Mixed-Use Residential Urban

APPLICABLE ZONES:

New Zone Required

RESIDENTIAL LAND USES Zoom in to see maps in greater detail

Mixed-Use Residential Neighborhood (MURN)

Density: 5-20 du/acre

MURN is primarily made up of medium-density residential uses in the form of townhomes, apartments, and small-lot single-family homes. It may also include small commercial operations, i.e. mom and pop stores, coffee shops, and offices that may be located along collector and arterial streets and designed to assimilate into the residential neighborhoods. Vertical mixed-use is encouraged.

Locational Criteria: Commercial should generally locate along collectors and arterials, and be buffered or make a gradual transition to the surrounding neighborhood.

For more information on mixed-use land uses, see '[Create Mixed-Use Neighborhoods](#)'.



Figure 17: Examples of Mixed-Use Residential Neighborhood

APPLICABLE ZONES:

New Zone Required

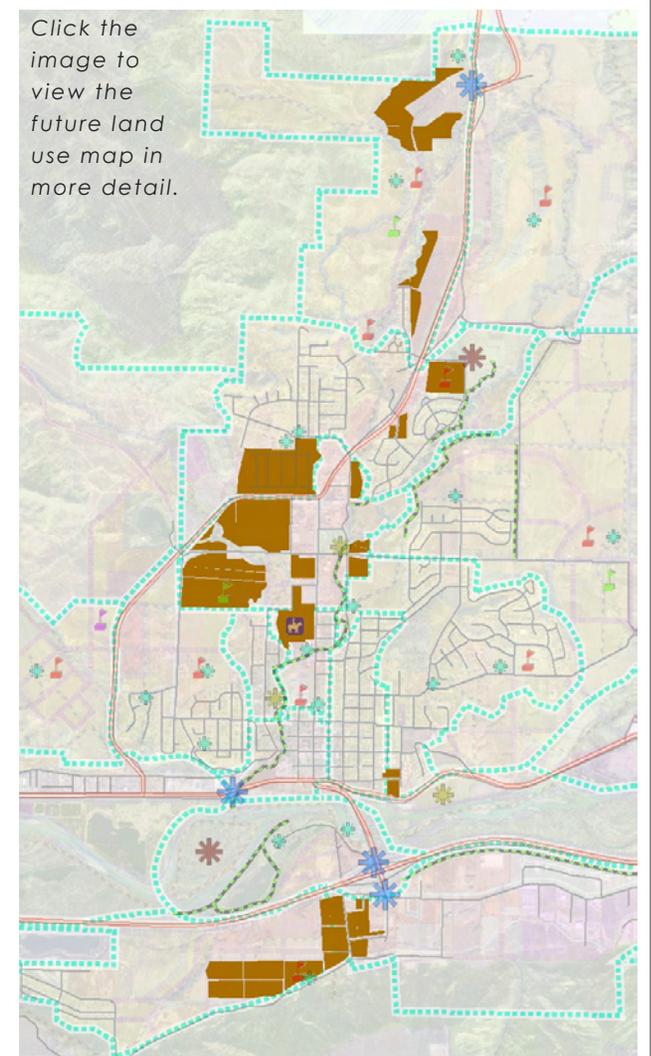


Figure 18: Location of Mixed-Use Residential Neighborhood

RESIDENTIAL LAND USES Zoom in to see maps in greater detail

Medium-Density Residential (MDR)

Density: 5-15 du/acre

This medium-density residential land use is intended for predominantly multi-family residential dwelling types such as townhomes, apartments, and condominiums in addition to single-family homes. Commercial uses are not permitted.

Locational Criteria: Areas serving as transitional land uses between low- and high-density residential uses; Areas next to arterial or collector streets or accessible to such without passing through less intensive land uses; areas where medium-density land uses are compatible with adjacent land uses; Areas where blight exists, multi-family residential is appropriate for revitalization.



Figure 19: Examples of Medium Density Residential

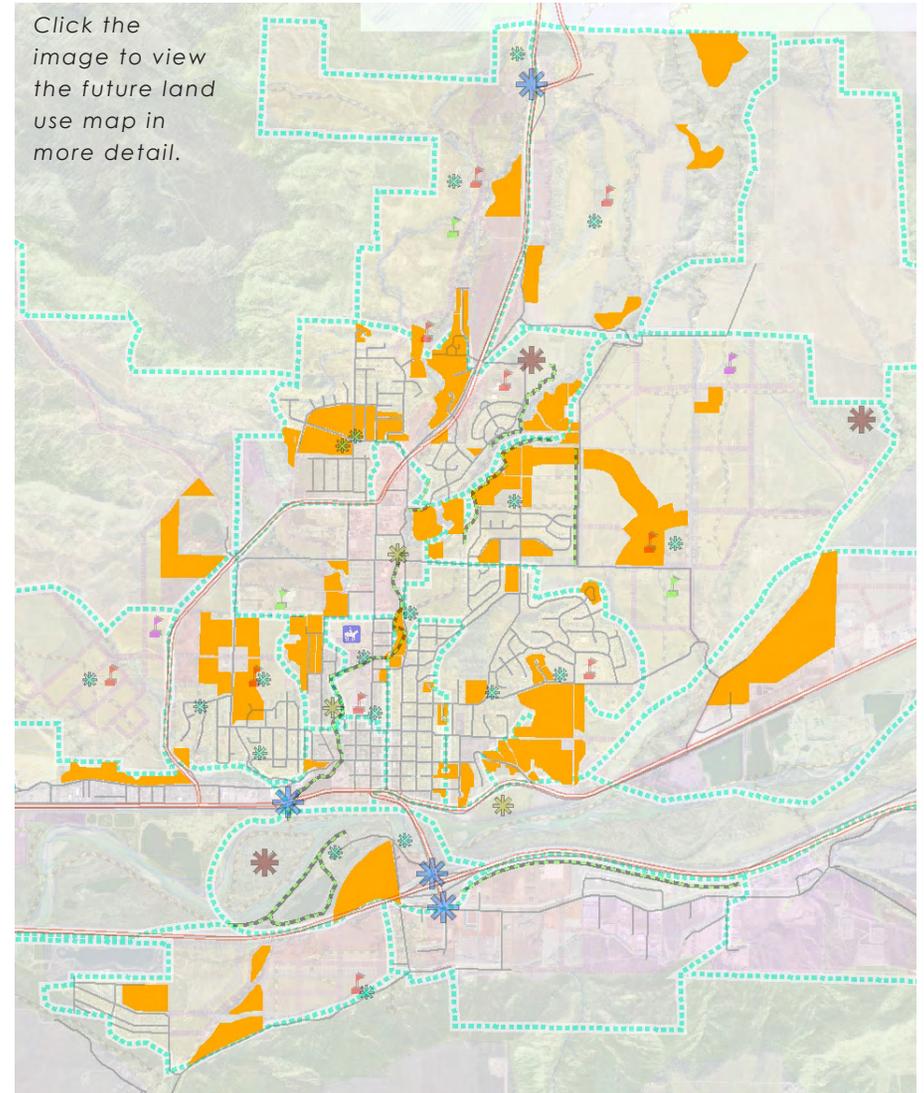


Figure 20: Location of Medium Density Residential

APPLICABLE ZONES:

- MDR-X - Redeveloping Medium-Density District
- MDR - Medium-Density Residential District

RESIDENTIAL LAND USES Zoom in to see maps in greater detail

Low-Density Residential (LDR)

Density: 3-6 du/acre

Single-Family Residential land use is a suburban type residential density allowing residential land use intended primarily for single-family uses on individual lots. Tree-lined local streets, interconnected pedestrian circulation systems and proximity to schools and parks characterize this zone. Duplexes and triplexes resembling large, single-family homes should be permitted but design must marry with other single-family homes and should be used primarily on corner lots for transitions. Accessory Dwelling Units should also be encouraged.

Locational Criteria: Areas that will not be adversely impacted by surrounding land uses; areas with no physiographic constraints; locations suitable for quiet neighborhoods; areas within walking distance of neighborhood shopping, educational, or recreational facilities but do not require close proximity to Downtown Rifle.

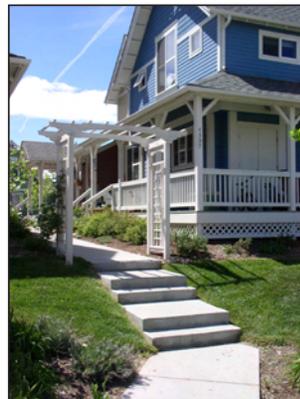
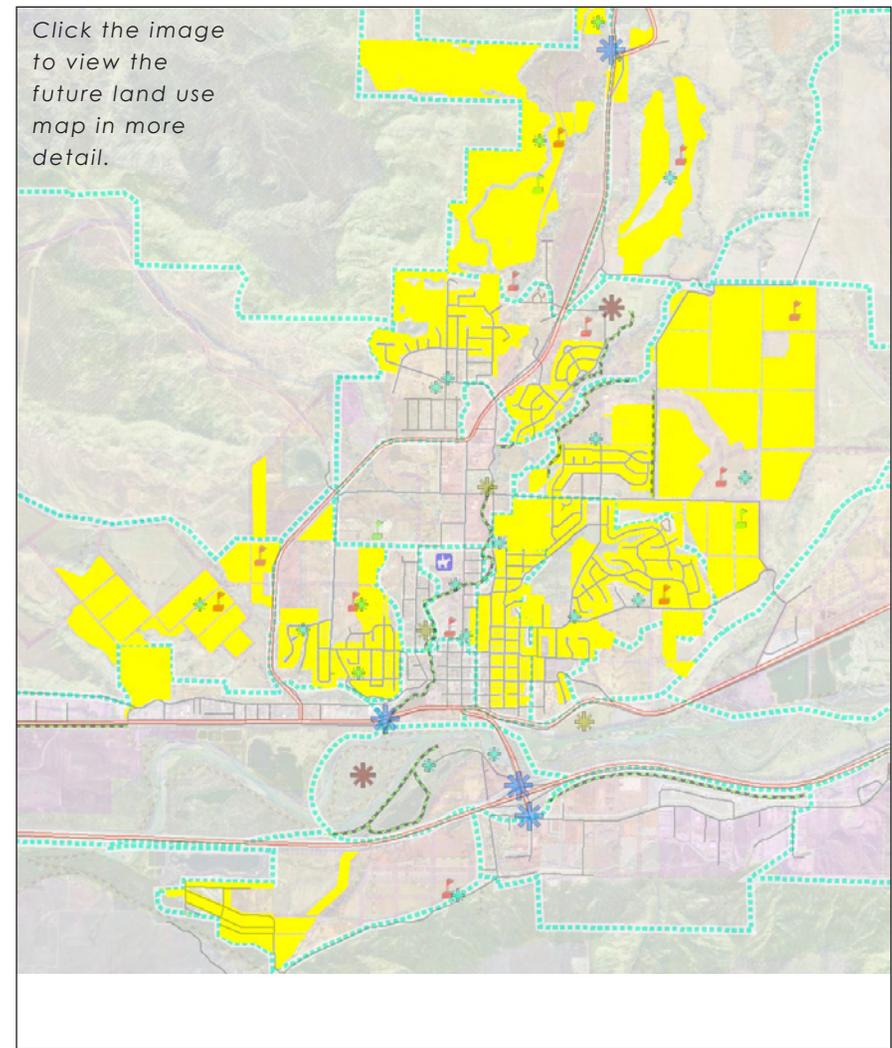


Figure 21: Examples of Low Density Residential

APPLICABLE ZONES:

LDR - Low-Density Residential District



Click the image to view the future land use map in more detail.

Figure 22: Location of Low-Density Residential

RESIDENTIAL LAND USES

Zoom in to see maps in greater detail

Very Low-Density Residential (VLDR)

Base Density: 1 du/5 ac - .20 du/ac

With Cluster Incentive, Very Low-Density has a minimum lot size of 20 acres and a maximum developable area of 40%.

Cluster Incentive: 1 du / 2 ac

This is a very low-density residential land use on large-lots, in more rural areas on the outskirts of the planning area. These densities are typically located on the edge of the growth area against corporate boundaries not likely to expand out because of geographical constraints, public land interface (BLM), and/or environmental/ecological protection. **Cluster development** and conservation easements would be encouraged and could be mandated.

Locational Criteria: Areas with physiographic constraints that make higher densities impractical; locations suitable for quiet neighborhoods; areas within short drive of neighborhood shopping, educational, or recreational facilities.



Figure 23: Example of Very Low Density Residential

APPLICABLE ZONES:

New Zone Required

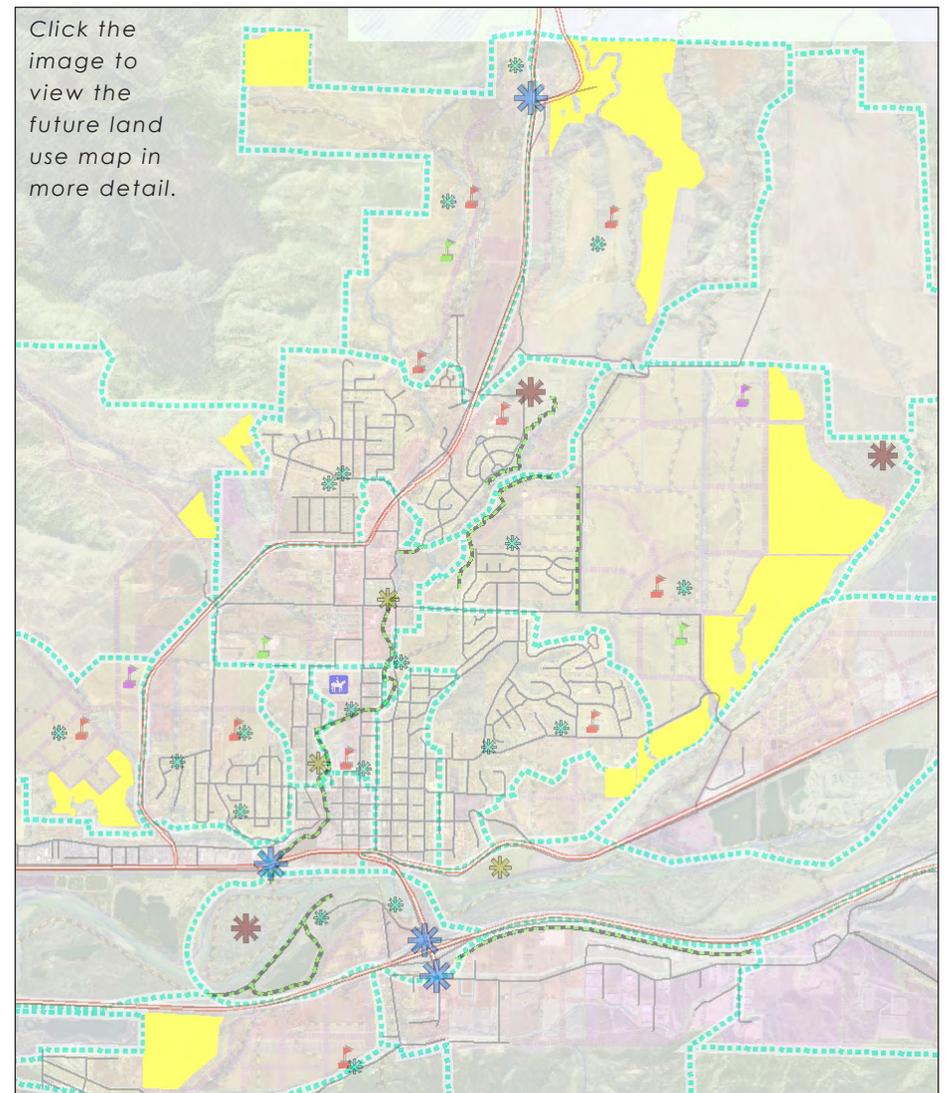


Figure 24: Location of Very Low Density Residential

RESIDENTIAL LAND USES

Zoom in to see maps in greater detail

Ultra Low-Density Residential (ULDR)

Conservation Subdivision

Base Density: 1 du / 20 ac - .05 du / acre

Cluster Incentive: 1 du / 5 ac

With Cluster Incentive, Ultra Low-Density has a minimum lot size of 20 acres and a maximum developable area of 50%.

Ultra Low-Density Residential (Conservation Subdivision): This is an ultra low-density residential land use intended in the short term to preserve open spaces, natural features and agricultural land and in the long-term to, as the City reaches buildout, to hold a place for future urban development. To do so, the land use recommends an ultra low base density which may be increased by **clustering** of single-family detached dwellings.

Locational Criteria: Areas designated for agricultural operations; homes to be clustered to the extent possible; areas with limited utility capacity; areas on well and septic systems; areas that may be part of a transferred development rights program.

APPLICABLE ZONES:

New Zone Required

Click the image to view the future land use map in more detail.

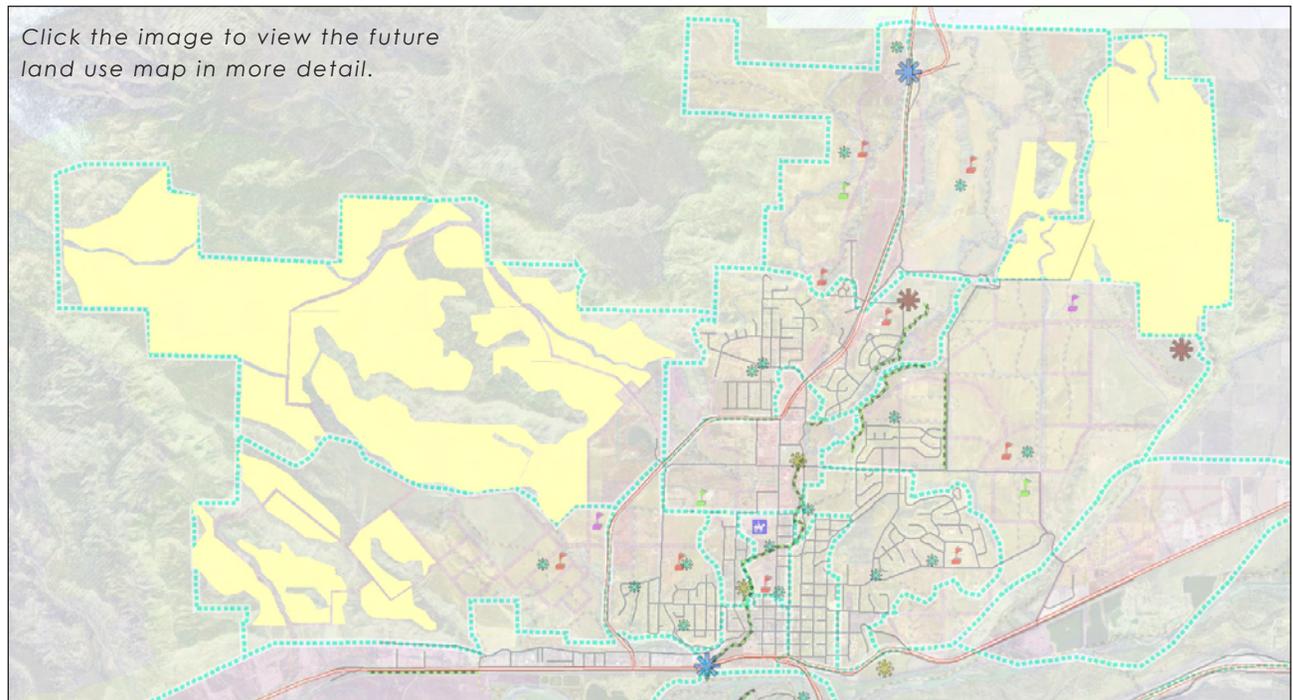


Figure 25: Location of Ultra Low Density Residential



Figure 26: Examples of Ultra Low Density Residential

COMMERCIAL LAND USES

3.4 COMMERCIAL LAND USES

Rifle seeks to create an environment that will continue to attract local, regional and national retailers, create a sustainable economic base and make Rifle the commercial center of the region. The energy bust of the 1980's was hard on Rifle's retail and commercial environment and caused many people to travel outside of Rifle to shop. As the energy boom returned in the 21st century, Rifle has already recovered much of its commercial vitality. Commercial development along **Airport Road, Railroad Avenue**, and in the Downtown has been robust. Rifle seeks to incorporate new commercial development into mixed-use centers.

COMMERCIAL LAND USE OBJECTIVES

1. Rifle will discourage typical strip commercial development. Instead, Rifle will encourage all commercial development to develop in clusters that promote pedestrian traffic enabling the shopper to park once to shop at many stores.
2. Parking placed beside or behind buildings in order to reduce the visual blight of parking lots and to facilitate pedestrian use.

COMMERCIAL LAND USES Zoom in to see maps in greater detail

Mixed-Use Downtown (MUDT)

See *Downtown Master Plan* bulk, form, and parking guidelines in Chapter 1.

The Mixed-Use Downtown is intended to reflect the character of the original downtown while allowing market flexibility. The City seeks to encourage a compact, amenity rich, dense and well designed Downtown through the employment of design guidelines and form-based codes. The Downtown shall provide a mixture of uses that will strengthen and expand the core of the community. Buildings are encouraged to be mixed vertically with street level commercial and upper level office and/or residences.

For more information on the Downtown Subarea, including specific subarea recommendations, see 'Downtown Subarea'



Figure 27: Example of Mixed-Use Downtown

APPLICABLE ZONES:

Central Business District -
A new Form-Based Zoning Code should be developed for Downtown Rifle.

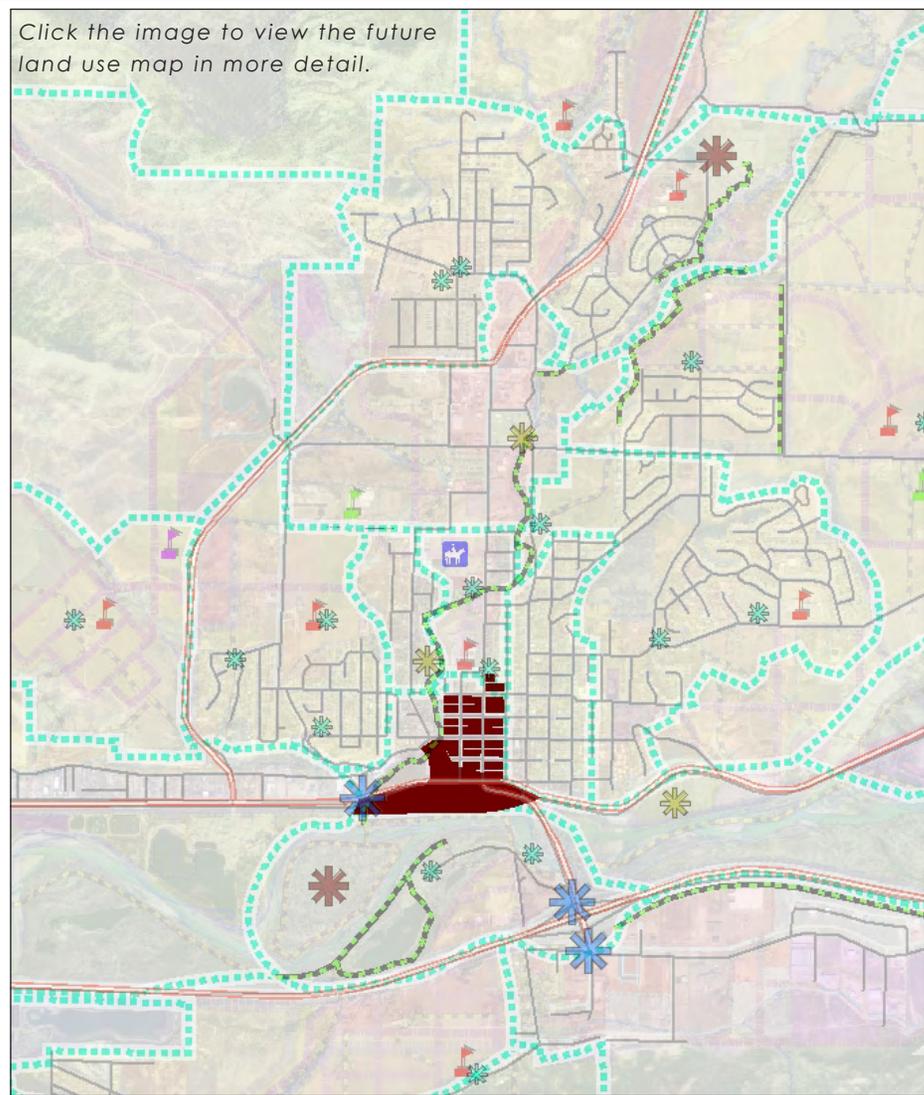


Figure 28: Location of Mixed-Use Downtown

COMMERCIAL LAND USES

Zoom in to see maps in greater detail

Mixed-Use Community Commercial (MUCC)

Density: Up to 8 du/ac

A predominantly commercial land including uses such as grocery stores, automobile services, and “small box” retail that are generally larger in square footage than those found in *Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial*. Commercial uses are both pedestrian-friendly as well as accessible by automobile. The MUCC gives special consideration to site and architectural aesthetics.

The Mixed-Use Community Commercial land use provides locations for retail stores and commercial services as well as an appropriate amount of residential along arterial and major collector streets that see heavy traffic. MUCC centers can be as large as 15 - 25 acres — large enough to host an “anchor” such as a grocery store. While it is more of an automobile-oriented land use than *Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial*, pedestrian-oriented design, e.g. clustering commercial buildings, ensuring safe and comfortable pedestrian access, is still essential.

Most MUCC designations are located at the edge of a neighborhood with

frontage along a major street where they receive most of their vehicular traffic. However, they are also adjacent to residential uses, as one moves away from the major street towards the interior of the neighborhood. These adjacent residential areas offer an opportunity to provide a pleasant streetscape that capture pedestrian and bike trips to the commercial center. Architecture and building placement along streets that connect residential areas to Mixed-Use Community Commercial areas should follow *General Urban Design Principles*.

Mixed-Use Community Commercial Objectives:

1. Incorporate a mix of uses, including retail, residential and office in traditional development patterns.
2. Encourage residential uses to be mixed with Community Commercial.
3. Carefully manage the amount of land designated as Mixed-Use Community Commercial. These land uses can only occur at very specific locations within Rifle and should not compete with land use activities that can occur in other areas.
4. Avoid traditional strip-mall type development by providing pedestrian amenities, generous landscaping, clustering buildings and locating parking to the side or behind buildings. One double-sided row of parking fronting the major street is usually enough.
5. Adjacent residential areas should follow General Urban Design Principles.

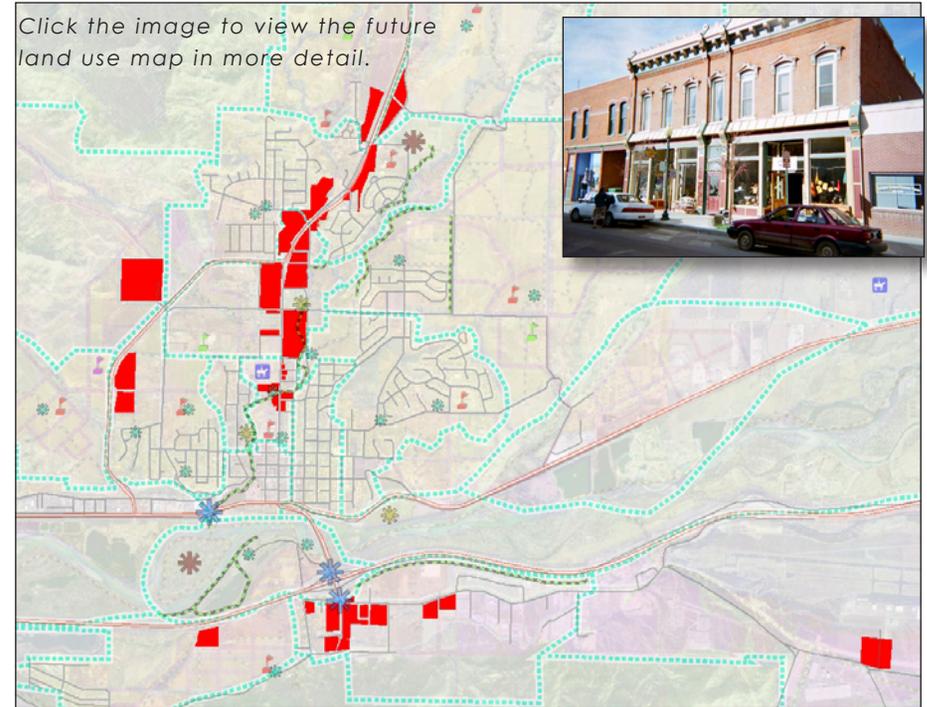


Figure 29: Location and example of Mixed-Use Community Commercial

Locational Criteria: Sites having frontage on an arterial street or two connector streets.

For more information on mixed-use land uses, see '*Create Mixed Use Neighborhoods*'

APPLICABLE ZONES:

New Zone Required

COMMERCIAL LAND USES

Zoom in to see maps in greater detail

Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial (MUNC)

Density: Based on neighborhood compatibility

The Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial land use is intended to support residential neighborhood convenience shopping, services and community facilities as well as multi-family residential uses that are scaled in size to the surrounding low-density neighborhood. These areas are a focal point for pedestrian activities and should be accessible to “walk-ins” from the surrounding neighborhood. Commercial uses are generally small or medium sizes. Buildings are encouraged to be mixed vertically with street level commercial and upper level office and/or residences.

In some instances MUNC acts as a transitional land use between big-box stores and the residential areas adjacent to them, providing pedestrian-oriented streetscapes that act as a buffer to preserve the livability of the neighborhood. A key element of MUNC is the application of *General Urban Design Principles* that makes this land use function like a “mini-downtown” that is pedestrian-friendly and walkable from the surrounding neighborhood. Buildings in higher density mixed-use areas should “feather” to lower density residential, reducing the need for landscaping buffers or fences. If more dramatic changes in density occur, such buffers may be needed.

Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial Objectives

1. A modest amount of Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial uses is encouraged in residential areas to increase convenience and reduce the need for cross-city travel. These nodes should be placed in appropriate locations (on busy streets or intersections) and should be compatible with (or appropriately buffered from) the surrounding neighborhood(s). They should also be placed in transitional areas between *Regional Commercial* and *Mixed-Use Community Commercial* and lower-density residential areas.

Locational Criteria: Sites having frontage on two collector streets; sites accessed by “walk-in” trade from adjacent residential or employment areas; impact of new commercial development does not negatively effect existing developments; developments are integrated and enhance surrounding neighborhoods.

For more on mixed-use land uses, see ‘*Create Mixed Use Neighborhoods*’.

APPLICABLE ZONES:

New Zone Required

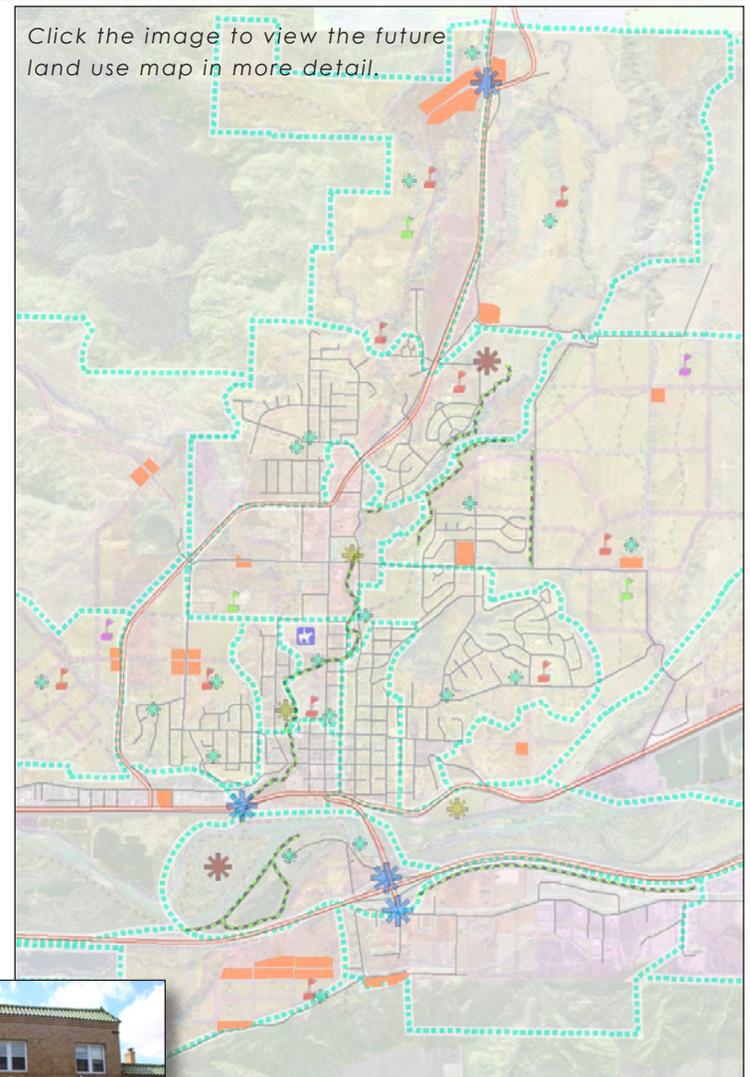


Figure 30: Location and example of Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial

COMMERCIAL LAND USES Zoom in to see maps in greater detail

Regional Commercial (RC)

Density: n/a

A goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to make Rifle the commercial center for the region. By increasing the amount of Regional Commercial uses in the city, Rifle can capture more of its own residents' shopping as well as shopping done by those who live in the wider region. Regional retail, offices, and business services often seek highway locations with high visibility. The most typical form is in shopping malls, strip centers and 'big box' centers¹ with large parking lots in front of stores interspersed with "pad site" stores (fast food, drive-up banks, etc.). Rifle's primary regional shopping is highway-oriented and located south of Interstate 70 on **Airport Road**. With its anticipated growth Rifle plans additional regional commercial uses in locations in North Rifle, South Rifle, and along **State Highway 6** in the **East Rifle Gateway**. Instead of the typical design of big-box stores, Rifle encourages a newer variety of major retail, often known as "lifestyle centers," which incorporate big-box stores in a more pedestrian-oriented setting. These regional shopping destinations often incorporate a wide range of community and regional retail uses, offices, hotels and personal and business services. Increasingly, they also accommodate multi-family housing over the stores and offices.

Regional Commercial Objectives :

1. Commercial and business development along Interstate 70 should have a pleasing appearance as viewed from the Interstate. Facades facing the Interstate should have finish materials and landscaping similar in quality to building fronts.

APPLICABLE ZONES: New Zone Required

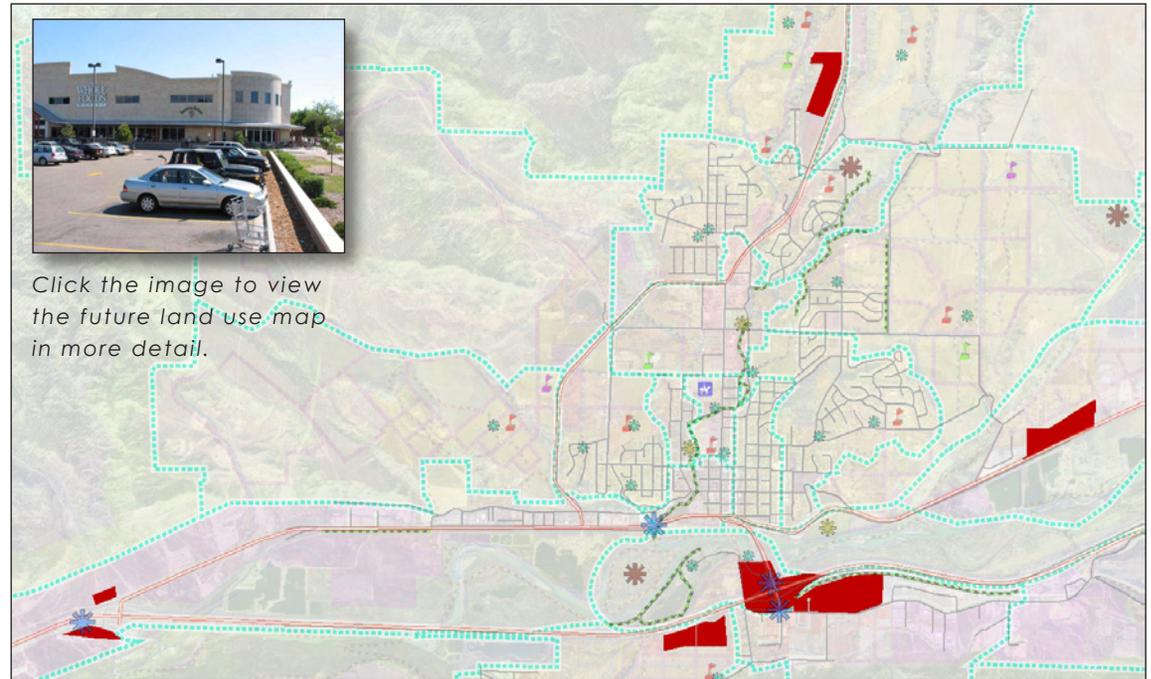


Figure 31: Location and example of Regional Commercial

2. Regional commercial centers are large traffic generators and should locate near major collectors, arterial or Interstates.
3. The transition between regional commercial uses and other less intensive uses, especially residential uses, should be carefully planned. Smaller commercial uses should be clustered around

larger big-box stores and integrated into a mixed-use setting that utilizes General Urban Design Principles.

Locational Criteria: Proximate to highway and access to arterial streets without the need to travel through residential or commercial land uses; May be adjacent to commercial and residential uses; access is provided for the entire City and serves markets outside of the City.

¹ "Big boxes" are large stores of 150,000 to 250,000 square feet, often housed in windowless buildings surrounded by large parking lots.

COMMERCIAL LAND USES Zoom in to see maps in greater detail

General Commercial (COM)

Density: n/a

This commercial land use is similar to community or regional commercial only that it does not allow any residential. This is employed to reduce the need for neighborhood services in areas where residential growth is not desired, but commercial uses are.

Locational Criteria: Far away from City services.

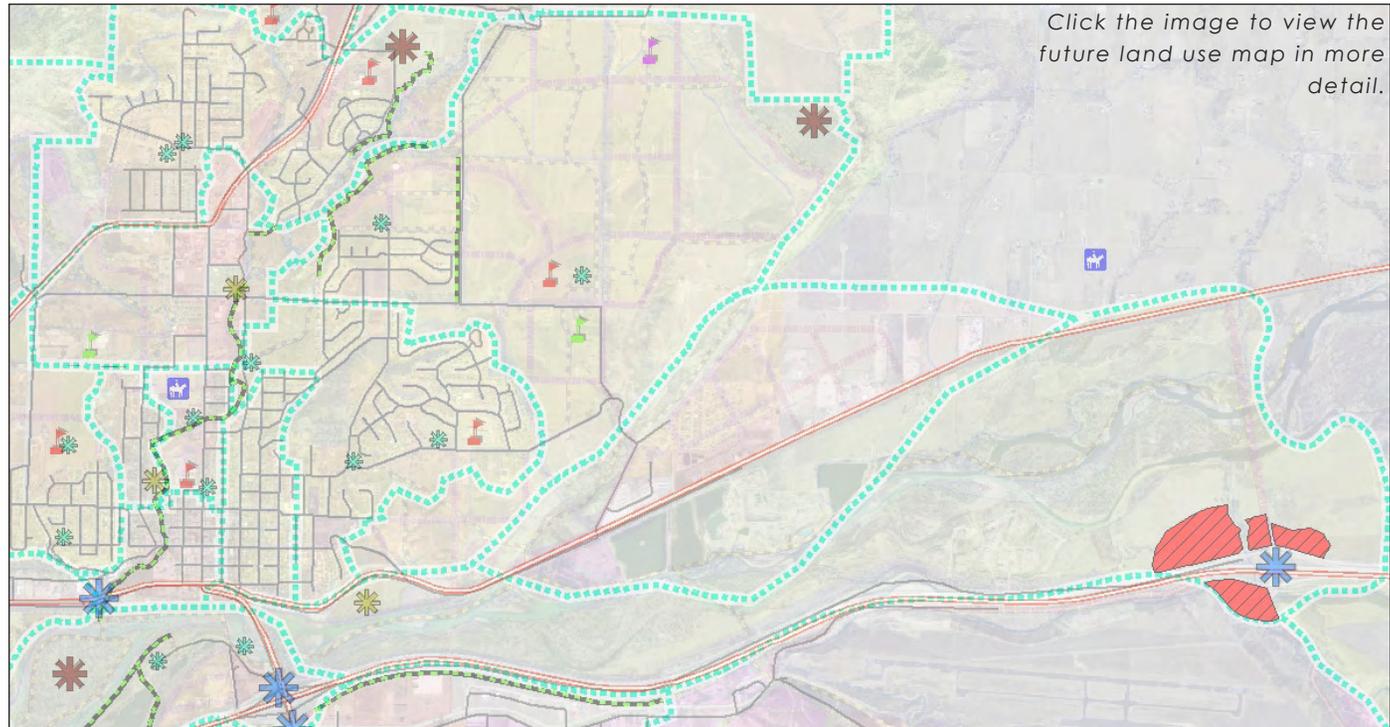


Figure 32: Location and examples of General Commercial

APPLICABLE ZONES:

CS - Community Service Business District

EMPLOYMENT LAND USES

3.5 EMPLOYMENT LAND USES

Creating a diversity of new job-producing land uses is the key to Rifle transitioning from primarily a “bedroom community” to one where residents can live and work in the community. Since many workers shop on their way to and from work, more jobs in Rifle will increase local shopping (reduce “leakage”), and increase sales tax revenues that help pay for parks, streets and other public amenities.

Healthy cities need local workers – people who raise families, shop in local stores, stroll through City streets and parks, and monitor their children’s performance in schools. To support a healthy economy, the City needs to facilitate a wide range of job producing land uses: industrial jobs for entry-level workers as well as office employment for managerial levels. The Future Land Use Map provides a mix of employment based land uses to help enable a diverse and sustainable economic base.

EMPLOYMENT LAND USES Zoom in to see maps in greater detail

Mixed-Use Business (MUB)

Density: up to 8 du / ac

The Mixed-Use Business land use provides locations for a variety of workplaces including general office, research, medical, and government. This use is intended to encourage the development of planned office and business parks, to promote excellence in the design and construction of buildings, outdoor spaces, transportation facilities and streetscapes. This use is also intended to accommodate secondary uses that complement and support the primary workplace uses such as hotels, restaurants, convenience shopping, childcare and housing. Any residential uses should have pedestrian connectivity and be located near, adjacent, or in close proximity to commercial, schools and parks.

Mixed-Use Business Objectives:

1. Major employment centers and other large traffic generators should locate near arterial roads and Interstate 70 exits.
2. The City encourages limited residential uses in the Mixed-Use Business land use where appropriate. Any residential component will require providing amenities where mixed-use residential is located.

Locational Criteria: Access to arterial streets without the need to travel through residential or commercial land uses; May be adjacent to commercial and residential uses; access is provided for the entire City and serve markets outside of the City.

For more on mixed-use land uses, see '[Create Mixed Use Neighborhoods](#)'.

APPLICABLE ZONES:

New Zone Required

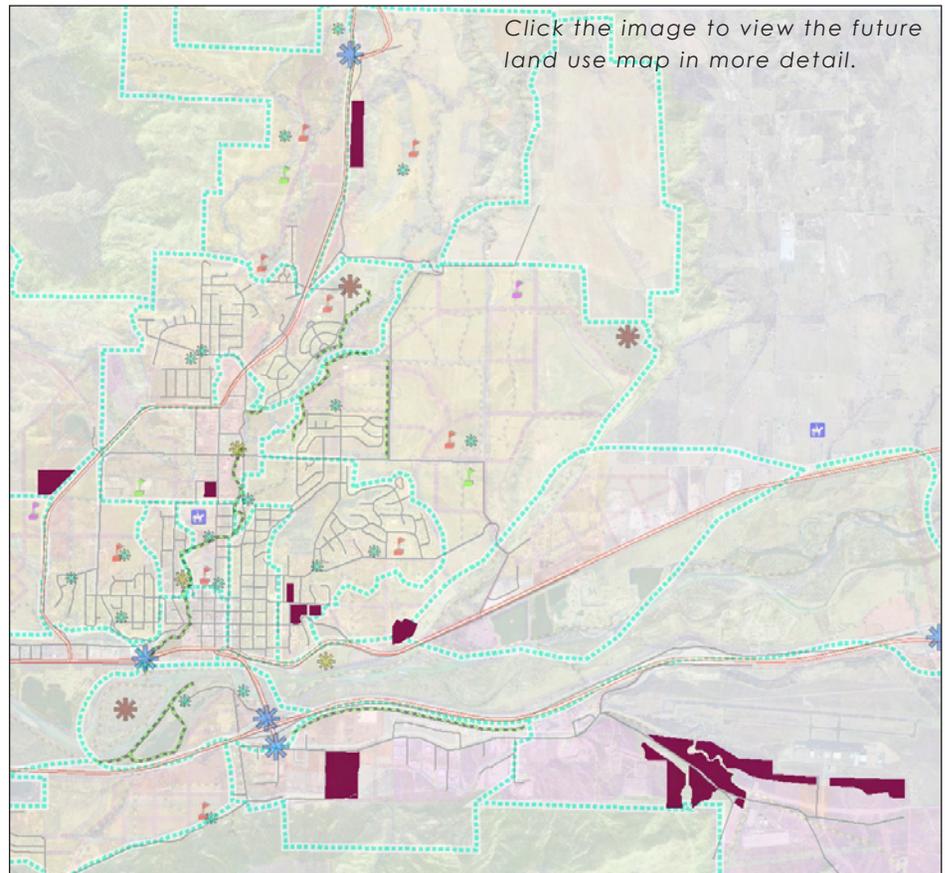


Figure 33: Location and example of Mixed-Use Business

EMPLOYMENT LAND USES Zoom in to see maps in greater detail

Mixed-Use Business / Light Industrial (MUBLI)

Density: up to 8 du / ac

The Mixed-Use Business/ Light Industrial land use contains a mix of residential, business and light industrial uses. It provides the same benefits that **Mixed-Use Business** provides, but adds an industrial option. Strict standards including architectural standards for building design and performance standards for heavy equipment usage, outdoor storage, truck servicing, and equipment leasing will ensure a livable atmosphere is maintained.

The Mixed-Use Business / Light Industrial land use provides locations for a variety of workplaces including indoor fabrication, contractor offices, design centers, research and development offices and institutions; oil and/or gas industry support services. It also can accommodate secondary uses that complement and support the primary workplace uses, such as restaurants, convenience shopping, and childcare. Additionally, it is intended to encourage the development of light industrial parks that promote excellence in the design and construction of buildings, outdoor spaces, transportation facilities and streetscapes. With a residential component, pedestrian amenities will be required in this land use included the **General Urban Design Principles** and **Key Principles of Traditional Neighborhood Design**.

MUBLI will help buffer residential and commercial areas from and transition them to industrial areas. Design in the MUBLI land will severely limit the impacts of any industry by requiring that industrial uses be enclosed in a building, or behind masonry walls and landscaping that limit the visual and audible impacts.

For more on mixed-use land uses, see '**Create Mixed Use Neighborhoods**'.

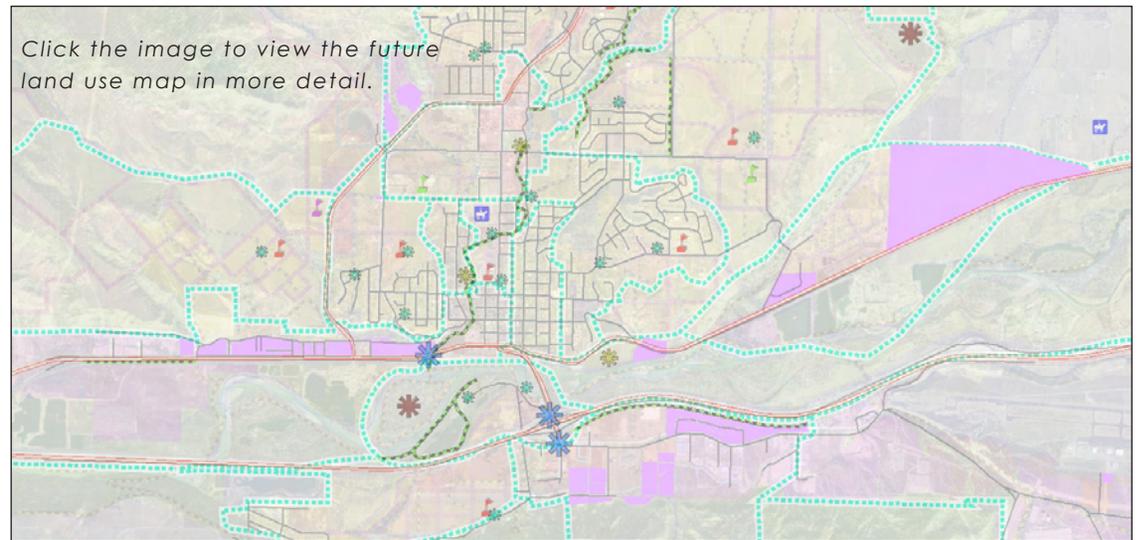


Figure 34: Location of Mixed-Use Business / Light Industrial

Mixed-Use Business / Light Industrial Objectives:

1. MUBLI is a transition zone which helps transition industrial uses to residential. Uses will transition from industrial adjacent to residential and commercial uses adjacent at major thoroughfares.
2. MUBLI will utilize **General Urban Design Principles**.
3. The City encourages limited residential uses in the Business land use where appropriate.

Any residential component will require providing amenities.

Locational Criteria: Access to arterial streets without the need to travel through residential or commercial land uses; May be adjacent to commercial and residential uses; Buffers Industrial and light industrial from less intensive uses.



Figure 35: Example of Mixed-Use Business / Light Industrial

EMPLOYMENT LAND USES Zoom in to see maps in greater detail

Light Industrial (LI)

Density: n/a

This Light Industrial land use provides locations for a variety of workplaces including indoor fabrication, contractor office, design centers, research and development offices and institutions; oil and gas industry support services. The Light Industrial land use designation will not permit heavy or dirty industrial uses. Design and performance standard will limit the visual impact of Light Industrial uses especially along major road corridors such as **Airport Road**.

Light Industrial Objectives:

1. To reduce the over-production of commercial land uses and encourage higher quality commercial throughout the community, Rifle prohibits restaurants, hotels, common household goods, personal service, and medical offices in light industrial and industrial land uses unless said uses are included in a master planned development approved by the City. Gas stations and truck stops shall be permitted in light industrial.

Locational Criteria: Proximate to highway and access to arterial streets without the need to travel through residential or commercial land uses; May be adjacent to commercial uses but not to residential uses.

APPLICABLE ZONES:

LI - Light Industrial District

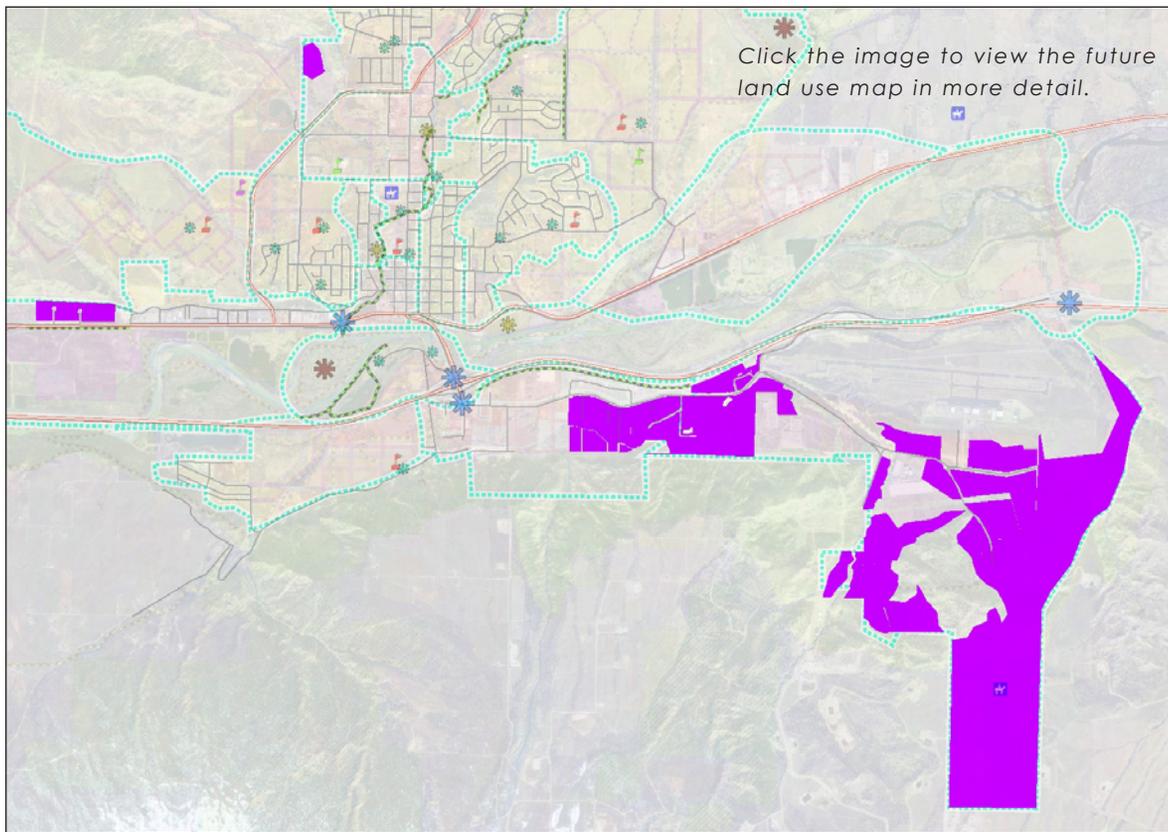


Figure 36: Location and examples of Light Industrial



EMPLOYMENT LAND USES Zoom in to see maps in greater detail

Industrial (IND)

Density: n/a

Rifle has a number of industrial land uses and growth opportunities for industrial uses. These areas will permit classic heavy industry. The burgeoning gas and oil industries will require additional industrial land within Rifle to grow their businesses and stay regionally competitive. Expanded industrial areas are proposed both west and east of downtown along **State Highway 6** and south of **Interstate 70 along Airport Road**. While recognizing the importance of growing the industrial land use zoning in Rifle, the City must also pay particular attention to the "public face" of these businesses and their operations. With this in mind, the City will institute enforceable design guidelines for the streetscape and visual / physical buffering of these businesses from adjacent land uses and the general public. These guidelines will also apply to existing industrial uses and these businesses will be asked to eventually come into compliance. The Industrial land use is intended to provide a location for employment opportunities such as manufacturing, warehousing and distributing, oil and

gas production facilities; indoor and outdoor storage and a wide range of commercial and industrial operations. This zone requires good access to major arterial streets and adequate water, sewer and power. Performance standards ensure that the public is protected from blight.

Industrial Objectives:

1. Separate industrial development from residential and commercial uses by a natural, physical or land-use buffer that gradually transitions from one land use type to the next.
2. Visually and physically buffer industrial developments requiring large outdoor storage yards or outdoor work areas from major collector or arterial roads and residential areas.

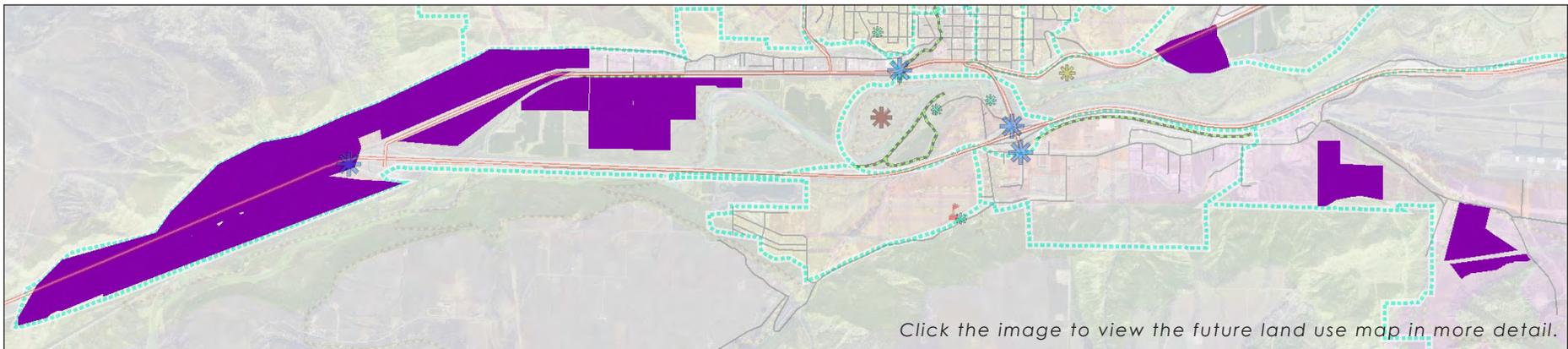
Locational Criteria: Proximate to highway and access to arterial streets without the need to travel through less intense land uses; away from residential or commercial areas; may be adjacent to light industrial business or open space.

APPLICABLE ZONES:

I - Industrial District



Figure 37: Location and example of Industrial



Click the image to view the future land use map in more detail.

SPECIAL PURPOSE LAND USES

3.6 SPECIAL PURPOSE LAND USES

Rifle's Special Purpose Land Uses include both Open Space, and Parks and Recreation, which both help to make Rifle 'A Highly Liveable Community'. Together, they provide the community with a variety of recreational opportunities as well as the opportunity to preserve its natural resources. These uses help shape a green framework that, when paired with trails, will augment the transportation system with a network of off-street trails, connecting various points throughout the City. They help protect the ecosystem functions of and promote recreational opportunities on the Colorado River. They also help in creating 'A Diverse Economic Base'. For more information, see both 'Parks, Recreation and Trails', as well as 'Open Space'.

SPECIAL PURPOSE LAND USES Zoom in to see maps in greater detail

Open Space (OS)

Density: n/a

The open space land use identifies public open space within City boundaries. It is intended to include permanent open space, but also allows for limited development such as gravel extraction, golf courses, livestock grazing, and recreational and public facilities. Generally Open Space lands fall into four categories:

1. Land containing High Ecological Value
2. Hazard Lands
3. Recreational Lands
4. Agricultural Lands

Locational Criteria: Areas located in floodplains and flood zones and in undevelopable areas due to severe geological hazards.

For more information, please see the [Open Space Chapter 6](#).

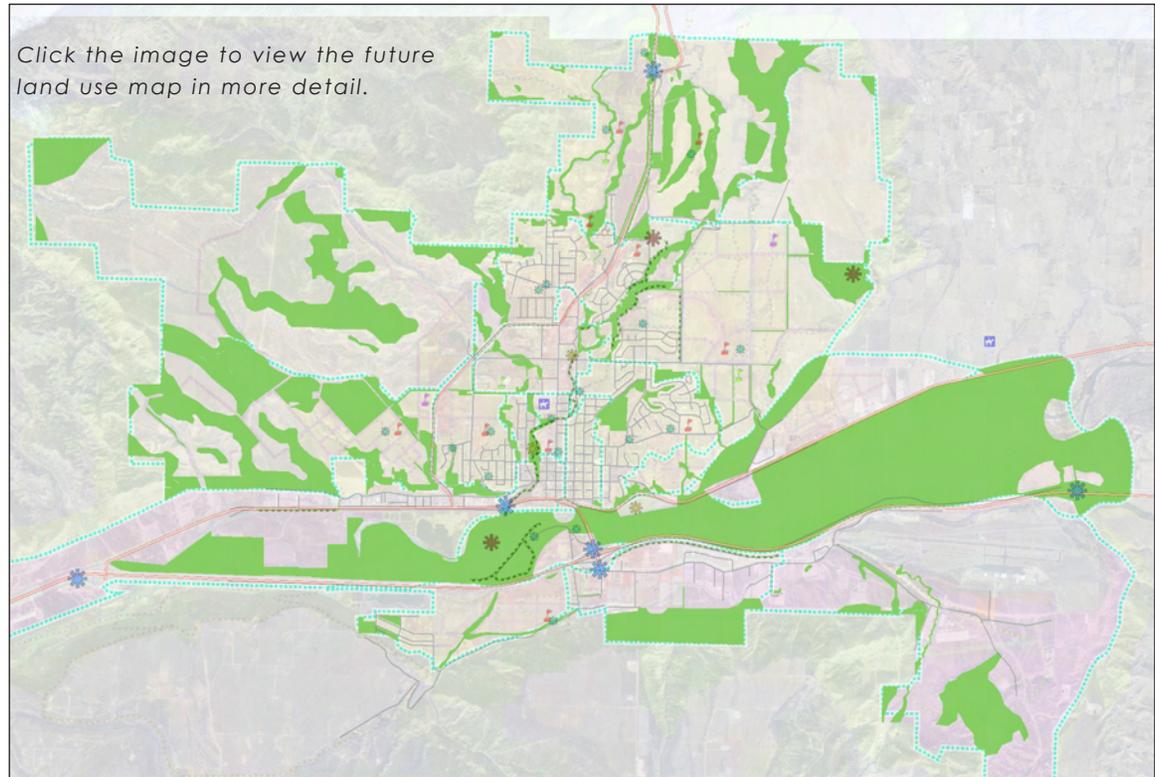


Figure 38: Location of Open Space



APPLICABLE ZONES:

New Zone Required

SPECIAL PURPOSE LAND USES Zoom in to see maps in greater detail

Parks and Recreation (PR)

Density: n/a

The Parks and Recreation land use is for neighborhood, community and regional parks, playgrounds, and recreation facilities.

Locational Criteria: All residents should have access within ¼ mile of a ½ acre park which is intended to provide for active and passive recreation as well as conserve natural and cultural areas.

For more information, please see the [Parks, Recreation and Trails](#) in Chapter 6.

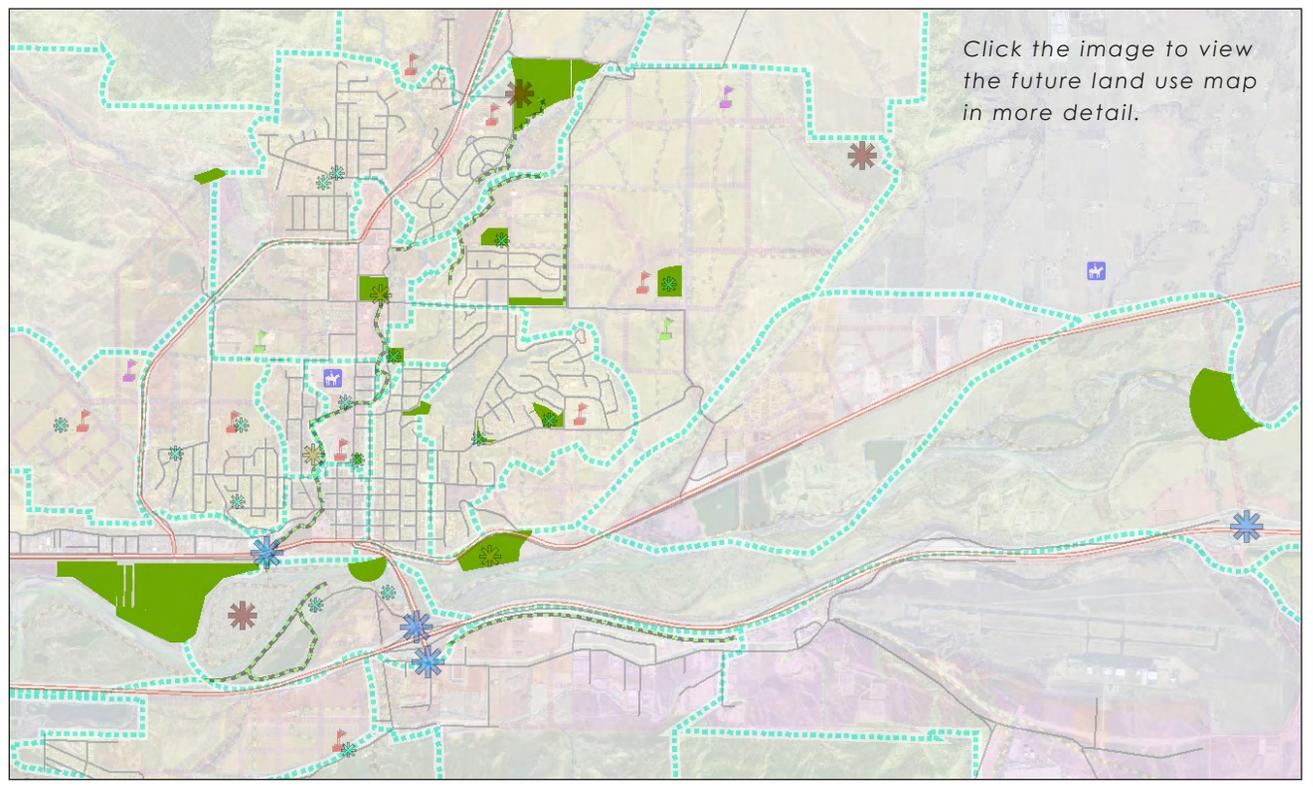


Figure 39: Location and example of Parks and Recreation



APPLICABLE ZONES:

New Zone Required

3 Land Uses Designations
Rifle's Subareas

RIFLE'S SUBAREAS

While a Comprehensive Plan provides broad general direction and a vision for the City as a whole, there may be some issues that need to be addressed at a more detailed scale—which can be done at the level of subarea plans and neighborhood plans. This provides an opportunity to compile the specific ideas, redevelopment opportunities, and future needs that will guide the City's future actions in the area, and give guidance to developers looking at projects in a certain area. The City recently completed two subarea plans, one for the East Rifle Gateway, entitled **East Gateway Subarea Plan** and one for Downtown Rifle entitled the **Rifle Downtown Master Plan**.

The City has eight (8) subareas:

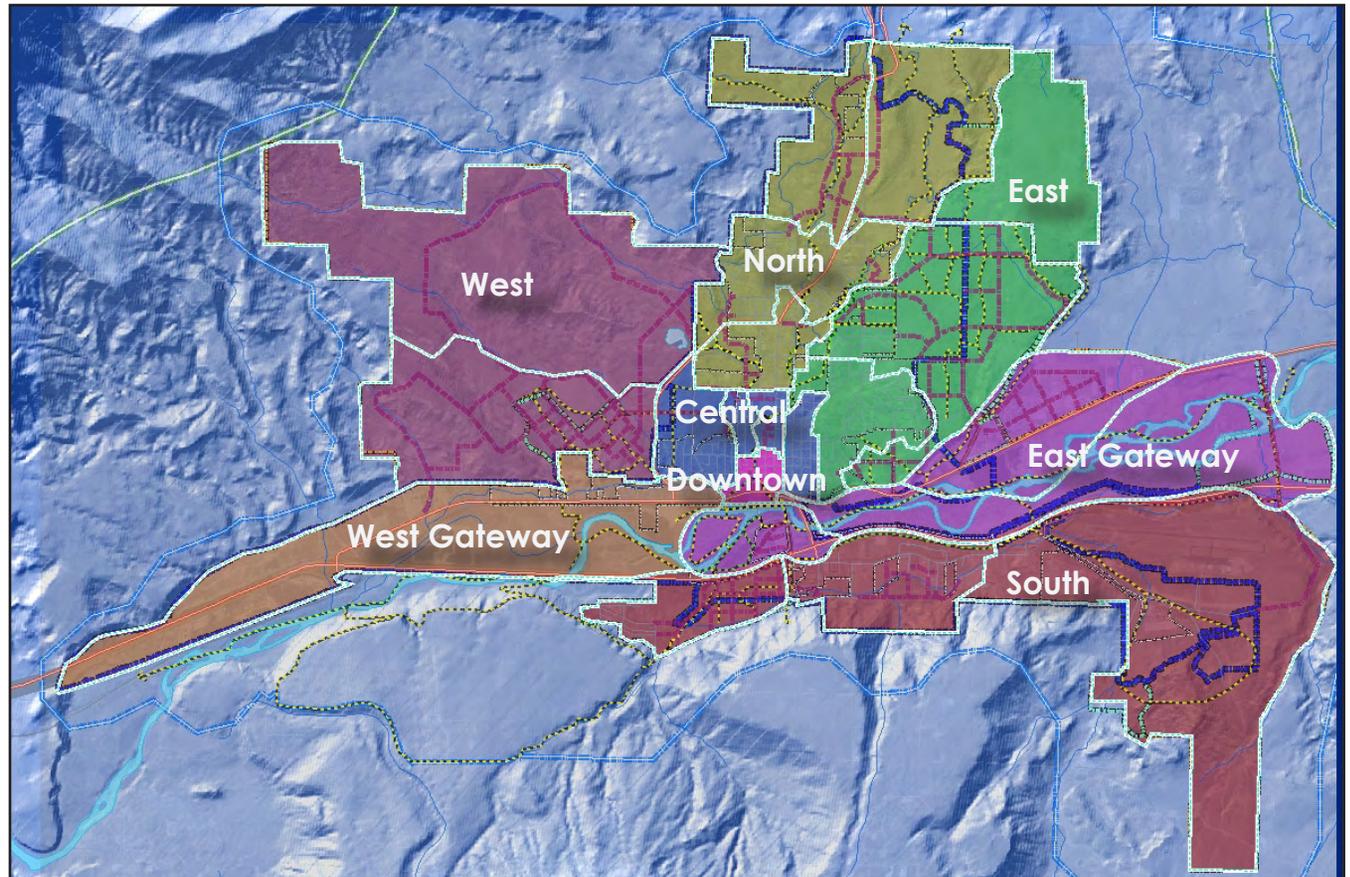
1. Downtown
2. Central Rifle
3. North Rifle
4. East Rifle (Graham Mesa)
5. East Rifle Gateway
6. South Rifle
7. West Rifle Gateway
8. West Rifle (Clough Ranch)

Click the image to view the future land use map in more detail

SUBAREA OBJECTIVES

1. Refine and update the subarea boundaries.
2. Prioritize the subareas, which will come first.
3. Create subarea plans for the identified subareas.

Figure 40: Rifle's subareas



The features that define a subarea can be topography, natural systems (rivers or creeks), a constrained circulation system, and/or physical development characteristics (building types, density of housing, etc.). For example, the East Gateway Subarea has three defining characteristics:

1. The area functions as a gateway to the City and Downtown Rifle,
2. The Colorado River is a prominent feature throughout the subarea, and
3. Interstate 70 runs the length of the Subarea.

Each subarea is typically comprised of multiple neighborhoods. Neighborhoods have individual characteristics that set them apart from other neighborhoods—historic or subdivision characteristics, proximity to an elementary school or a park, a common neighborhood commercial or mixed-use center.

Timing new development enables Rifle to reduce the impact of new development. Timing is controlled by the City's **tiered approach to growth**. This section describes which portion of the subarea develops in each tier.

At the conclusion of the Comprehensive Plan the City should examine each subarea in more detail to plan in greater specificity how to connect streets, where to locate parks and schools, and refine land use designations in greater detail. Beyond physical planning this subarea planning may also include a variety of special programming, e.g. the creation of a neighborhood improvement district..

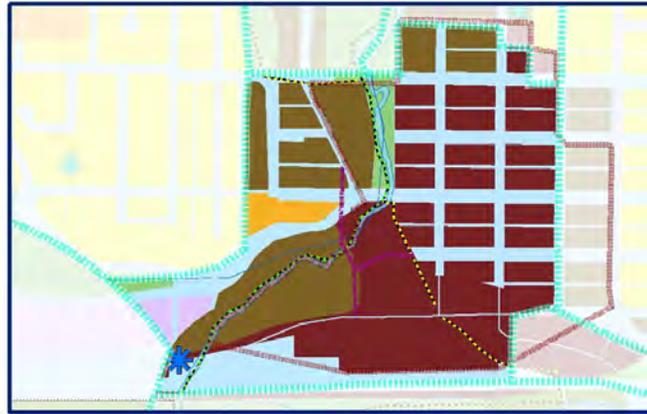


Figure 41: Downtown Rifle Subarea
Click the image to view the future land use map in more detail.

3.7 DOWNTOWN RIFLE

The strengths of Rifle's Downtown include:

- ☞ A historic street grid that lays a strong foundation for pedestrian mobility
- ☞ Historic character of many well-kept downtown buildings
- ☞ Pleasant streetscapes created by buildings built up to the sidewalk
- ☞ Downtown improvements such as benches, lights and landscaping
- ☞ Proximity to the Colorado River
- ☞ A convergence of the state and interstate transportation systems positioning downtown Rifle at the center of future growth

☞ A desire to reinvest downtown

A key direction of the Comprehensive Plan is to enhance the vitality of Rifle's Downtown in order to position the downtown as a center of regional entertainment, retail and urban living while helping position the City as a **regional economic center**. As Rifle grows there will be a significant opportunity to expand the downtown through infill development and the redevelopment of underutilized parcels.

In 2008, Rifle adopted the **Downtown Master Plan**. Concepts from the Downtown Master Plan are incorporated in this Comprehensive Plan, but we do not rehash everything in that plan. This plan includes broad objectives that create a unique, compact, dense and well-designed downtown that serves the City as it grows, yet retains appropriate market flexibility to develop the Downtown as a new regional center. Together, the **Mixed-Use Downtown** and the **Mixed-Use Residential Urban** land use categories,

Figure 42: Some existing downtown buildings exhibit the pleasant streetscape that the City wants to propagate created by pushing buildings up to the sidewalk.



the [Design Guidelines](#) and the [Downtown Master Plan](#) provide the outline necessary for the development of form-based zoning codes.

COMMUNITY FORM AND THE DOWNTOWN

Rifle's Downtown has always been the community's centerpiece, where residents and visitors to the community live, work, and play. This plan seeks to enhance that role through improvements to Rifle's Downtown that heighten the enjoyment of downtown living, shopping, entertainment and dining.

The design of the Downtown is crucial to its success. The design should emphasize pedestrian-friendliness, appropriate scale, safety, and opportunities for social interaction - see [General Urban Design Principles](#) for more detail. For example, higher density residential development, e.g. [Mixed-Use Residential Urban](#), in and around the Downtown can provide the critical mass necessary to support the economic viability of services like coffee shops, local grocery stores, or restaurants that serve dinner. By increasing the mix of uses in the Downtown, Rifle can create more living and shopping choices. Quality of life is improved by offering the choice to live close to work, to walk to a local store, or to bike to the local library.

Also critical are the gateways and connections between the Downtown and the rest of the City. The [Rifle Creek Bridge on State Highway 6](#) is the [West Rifle Gateway](#) into Downtown Rifle. To increase circulation in the subarea two new road connections are indicated. The first connects Park Ave to [State Highway 6](#). The second continues Second Street west and ties into the extended Park Avenue.

Two major [multi-use trail corridors](#) will connect the downtown to the rest of Rifle. The Rifle Creek Trail will follow the creek from the Colorado River north. The second multi-use trail corridor will proceed from the Interstate 70 [Main Rifle Interchange](#) northwest through the downtown, join the Rifle Creek Trail between West 3rd and West 5th Street, then proceed west to the bluff below the Prefontaine Mesa. The trail will utilize the bluff open space and will eventually connect to the top of the Mesa. The alignment of this second trail is general, indicating a desire for a path connecting these two locations. [Pocket parks](#) are not indicated throughout the downtown on the Future Land Use Map or the Downtown Subarea Map but are desired in appropriate locations to provide areas for relaxing; opportunities for the public to gather; and places for public art.

Rifle is currently exploring the combined redevelopment of [City Hall and the Rifle Branch](#) of the Garfield County Library. Rifle will use this project as a catalyst and example for the private development community to emulate good design and high aesthetic standards.

The direction provided in the objectives below offer the basic framework for maintaining Rifle's unique character as the Downtown grows into a regional economic center.



Figure 43: Rifle supports the preservations of historic downtown properties like the Midland building

DOWNTOWN FUTURE LAND USE OBJECTIVES

1. Ensure the Downtown has predictable and appropriate development codes.
2. Support vision of pedestrian-oriented, high-density, mixed-use core to serve as the economic and cultural heart of Rifle.

Culture and Design

- CD1. Preserve Historic Properties and areas like the Midland Building, the Rifle Creek Theater, and the Post Office.
- CD2. Celebrate Rifle's citizens and history using unique elements in public spaces.
- CD3. Provide a wide variety of activities in the Downtown, i.e. library, city hall, community meeting places, schools, open spaces/plazas and places of worship.

- CD4. Use public buildings and projects as catalysts and examples for the private development community to emulate good design and high aesthetic standards.
- CD5. Encourage and assist non-profit organizations or neighborhood groups to stage events and activities in the Downtown (e.g. farmers market, year-round seasonal fairs / events) to strengthens the community's "social infrastructure" and generate return visits.
- CD6. Work to create compelling, informative, and consistent signage throughout the Downtown to tell the story of Rifle, using the Centennial Park signage as a model.
- CD7. Explore the possibilities of the visibility of the downtown from the interstate. A marquee building downtown would alert passers-by



Figure 44: The City's joint Town/Hall/Garfield County Library redevelopment effort hopes to catalyze new development and serve as an example for the private development community to emulate.

that the core of Rifle is north of the interstate, making it more likely people would visit Rifle's historic commercial core.

Residential

- R1. Encourage dense residential housing in and around the Downtown to provide more patrons within walking distance of downtown businesses.

Mixed-Use

- MU1. Seek a full range of housing types and work places, where diverse ages and classes are integrated.
- MU2. Encourage a mix of businesses, residences, and civic uses, such as a Health and Wellness Center that promotes both day and nighttime activities in the Downtown.
- MU3. Preserve the opportunity to locate small and medium-sized retail establishments at street level by preventing non-complementary uses from dominating the streetscape. Careful evaluation of retail conversion to other uses should occur.
- MU4. Provide local, everyday services that will make the Downtown livable, such as pharmacies, home decorating, salons, dry cleaners, and pet groomers. This also helps provide a "Rifle" character and avoids a "could-be-anywhere" commercial mix.

- MU5. Follow and implement the Downtown Master Plan.
 - a. Obtain first right of refusal for the City for key redevelopment properties.
 - b. Redevelop Valley Lumber site into major entertainment and high-density, mixed-use destination.
 - c. Develop Martin property into high-density residential center.
 - d. Connect Park Avenue to **State Highway 6 / 24**.
 - e. Make State Highway 6 / 24 an urban pedestrian oriented street connected to the Downtown, not just a transportation corridor.
- MU6. Use City resources to support the development of a strong Downtown.
 - a. Create a 3-D Downtown Development Review Process that expedites the entitlement process while still providing careful public oversight.
 - b. Use the Urban Renewal Authority to share in the cost of infrastructure.
 - c. Consider the creation of a parking district in the Downtown to bring multiple facilities under common management and create greater efficiencies.
- MU7. **"Feather" densities** down as the Downtown transitions to lower density residential.

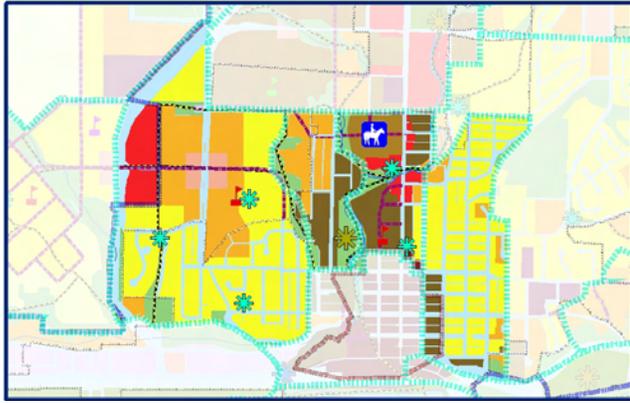


Figure 45: Central Rifle Subarea
Click the image to view the future land use map in more detail.

3.8 CENTRAL RIFLE

Central Rifle is composed of four neighborhoods:

1. North Railroad Avenue
2. Park Avenue
3. Old East Rifle
4. Prefontaine Mesa

Central Rifle is mostly composed of older residential neighborhoods, including Old East Rifle, Prefontaine Mesa, and Park Avenue. With a diverse range of housing types that includes everything from apartments to single-family homes (*Mixed-Use Urban Residential, Medium-Density Residential and Low-Density Residential* uses), the Central Rifle neighborhoods will provide substantial support for Downtown Rifle's entertainment and retail businesses. Central Rifle

also includes the commercial corridor of **Railroad Avenue** where **Mixed-Use Community Commercial** uses will take advantage of high traffic counts along Railroad Ave.

A key function of Central Rifle is to serve as a transition area between the high-density, urban character of the downtown and the lower-density residential neighborhoods that surround it. A “**feathering of densities**” is key to this transition.

Whenever possible, new development should continue the **historic pattern of grid streets and connect with the current street system**. This will increase pedestrian, bike and vehicle transportation options in Central Rifle. Opportunities for this in Central Rifle include the northern portion of the Prefontaine Mesa, potential redevelopments of the Fairgrounds, and at the current Esmá Lewis Middle School.

Almost all of the Central Rifle Subarea is in **Tier 1 development**, with a small portion of commercial development along the by-pass in Tier 2. New **multi-use trail corridors** will connect throughout the subarea taking advantage of the Prefontaine Mesa Bluff, the Rifle Creek Corridor and drainages. All development will provide several connections to the multi-use trails located throughout the subarea.

The **North Railroad Avenue** neighborhood is bounded by 6th Street to the south, Rifle Creek to the west, the alley between **Railroad Avenue** and East Avenue to the east, and 12th Street to the north. The North Railroad Avenue neighborhood is a mixed-use commercial corridor that serves as a key transition

area between the Downtown and the rest of Rifle. As such, south of 12th Street the Railroad Avenue corridor should maintain its pedestrian friendliness and a fine-grained mix of uses, in contrast to the larger big-box character of the commercial uses north of 12th Street. **General Urban Design Principles** should be implemented in this area, with buildings close to the sidewalk and parking on the side or rear of buildings.

The largest parcels within the North Railroad Avenue neighborhood are Esmá Lewis Middle School and the **Garfield County Fairgrounds**. Both of these properties have potential for redevelopment in the future. The middle school site redevelopment would have a **Mixed-Use Urban Residential** character and retain a small urban elementary school. A continuation of the grid street pattern would connect West Avenue with Railroad Avenue at 9th Street. Ideally, school children would have “**safe routes to school**” in this neighborhood.

The fairgrounds redevelopment offers a superb opportunity to create a new mixed-use residential neighborhood and is designated **Mixed-Use Residential Neighborhood**. Frontage along Railroad Avenue should follow pedestrian-friendly urban form principles (see **General Urban Design Principles**), with wide sidewalks and the potential for mixed-use. A grid street pattern within the fairgrounds should create new connections between Park Avenue and Railroad Avenue and include a mixture of housing types. Master planning of the fairgrounds property is required. The positive and negative aspects of fair-

ground relocation are discussed in [Garfield County Fairgrounds](#) relocation section of this plan.

The **Park Avenue** neighborhood is northwest of the Downtown. It is bordered by Prefontaine Mesa to the west, 5th Street to the south, Rifle Creek to the east, and West 12th Street to the north. The neighborhood has an aging housing stock that, due to proximity to the new Centennial Park and the Downtown, provides an excellent opportunity for redevelopment with increased density and appropriate mixed-use.

Old East Rifle is a mix of historic and contemporary homes. It includes stately residences and mature landscape adjacent to the downtown. There are many historic homes in this neighborhood worthy of preservation. The property between East Avenue and [Whiteriver Avenue](#) that borders the Downtown is designated as [Mixed-Use Residential Urban](#) and serves to [feather densities](#) and buffer the rest of the Old East Rifle neighborhood from the Downtown.

The old hospital, senior center, and the Rifle Housing Authority (senior housing) are also located in Old East Rifle. Expansion and/or redevelopment of the old hospital facility into a retirement community is a potential opportunity to revitalize this area of the city.

The **Prefontaine Mesa** neighborhood, although separated from downtown via steep hillsides, provides a mix of single-family and multi-family developments in close proximity to [Downtown](#). There will be a new road connection from Prefontaine Avenue to the

Clough Ranch intersection on the By-pass. A [Mixed-Use Community Commercial](#) development is slated for [Tier 2 development](#) to help support residential development in the East Rifle Subarea. Any development on the undeveloped portion of the Prefontaine Mesa will include a [neighborhood park](#) and an [elementary school](#). Ideally, school children would have ["safe routes to school"](#) in this neighborhood.

CENTRAL RIFLE FUTURE LAND USE OBJECTIVES

1. Encourage the Fairgrounds property to redevelop, include mixed-use and a mixture of housing types.
 - a. Prior to any redevelopment of the fairgrounds a master-plan will be developed. The master plan will include a street which connects Park Avenue to [Railroad Avenue](#).
 - b. Provide pedestrian oriented streetscape with mixed-use along Railroad Avenue.
2. Encourage the redevelopment of the middle school property to increase downtown traffic options, relieve congestion and increase housing density.
 - a. Continue West Avenue north to connect with Railroad Avenue at 9th Street.
 - b. Connect 7th Street from Railroad Avenue to West Avenue.
3.
 - c. Encourage an urban (two-story) elementary school in area to retain a school location in Central Rifle.
4. Encourage redevelopment of Park Avenue neighborhood into a high-density residential neighborhood that orients towards, e.g. ensures that design is a consideration on the park side of development, and takes advantage of the park.
 - a. Integrate redevelopment into the urban core.
 - b. Provide pedestrian connections to Centennial Park.
 - c. Where feasible, Park Avenue will connect to other roads.
 - d. Be aware of the constraints that the [floodplain](#) puts on this area.
5. Investigate the connection from Trapper Hollow/ Stillwell Avenue to high school/Gentry property. Depending upon physical constraints this connection may range anywhere from an official pedestrian and bike connection to a street.
6. Investigate the provision of matching grants to restore historic buildings in Old East Rifle.

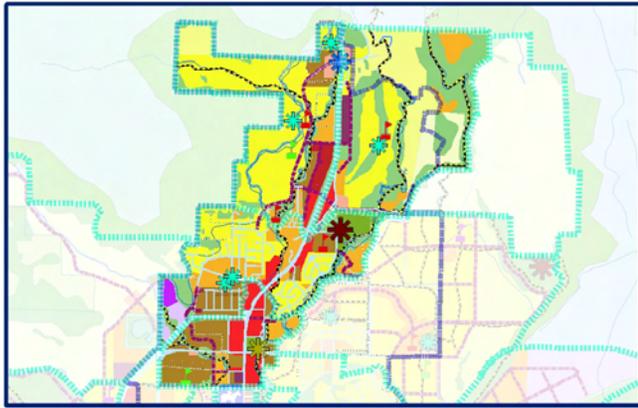


Figure 46: North Rifle Subarea
Click the image to view the future land use map in more detail.

3.9 NORTH RIFLE

North Rifle is composed of four neighborhoods:

1. North Rifle Center
2. Palomino Park and Deerfield Park
3. RimRock
4. Bryce's Valley

North Rifle is the area of the city where the majority of future residential and commercial development is likely to take place. It is almost entirely in Tier 1 with a small portion on the very northeast side of Bryce's Valley in Tier 2.

North Rifle is primarily defined by the State Highway 13 and Railroad Avenue corridors. A key recommendation of the Comprehensive Plan is to develop a network of streets in North Rifle that creates multiple

connections southward to the rest of the city. This will allow residents to have multiple pedestrian, bike, and vehicle routes that avoid State Highway 13 whenever possible, due to the extremely high traffic levels (especially truck traffic) that are expected on State Highway 13 in the future. The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) is currently completing an Access Control Plan that includes the North Rifle Subarea. The plan limits access to State Highway 13 to a few intersections at 24th Street, 26th Street, 30th Street, 33rd Street, 36th Street, and 41st Street. The Access Control Plan gives direction towards the creation of an alternative street network that will serve to access properties that have frontage on State Highway 13.

The most intense land uses in North Rifle (Mixed-Use Urban Residential Neighborhood, Mixed-Use Community Commercial, Mixed-Use Business, and Regional Commercial) will occur near State Highway 13 and Railroad Ave. As one moves further to the east and west of State Highway 13, densities will feather to less intense uses (Medium-Density Residential, Low-Density Residential and Very Low-Density Residential).

Significant recreational amenities are already present in North Rifle, including the Rifle Creek Trail, the Brainard Ditch Trail, Deerfield Regional Park and Metro Park. The Rifle Creek riparian corridor is another major natural amenity that must be protected by future development—low lying areas may be suitable for various types of playfields. Site-specific flood evaluation will need to be completed prior to development. The City requires a trail easement along the

Creek to complete a vital link of the proposed Rifle Creek Trail. This linkage will help reach the trail's goal of connecting Downtown Rifle to the Rifle Mountain Park, a world-class rock climbing destination.

With the influx of new residential units in North Rifle, the North Rifle subarea will likely need 3 new elementary schools, two new middle school and a few new neighborhood parks. Ideally, school children would have "safe routes to school" in this subarea.

The North Rifle Center neighborhood is bounded by 12th Street on the south, the edge of Graham Mesa on the east, State Highway 13 on the north, and the State Highway 13 Bypass on the west (including Queen's Crown north of the Bypass).

The North Rifle Center is currently the main commercial destination area north of Downtown Rifle. It includes two larger strip centers and a City Market. The State Highway 13 Bypass intersects with Railroad Avenue here, increasing access to the neighborhood and ensuring high traffic volume. The area serves as a shopping node for the residential development on Graham Mesa that accesses the area via 16th Street. Major public services are located in the neighborhood, including the Garfield County Health and Human Services building, the County Courthouse and the City/County Justice Center. Metro Park, with a swimming pool and skate park, is located here. Rifle High School is located here—when it transitions out of its current facility, Esma Lewis Middle School is expected to relocate to the site.

Development in the North Rifle Center is, and will be in the future, characterized by its larger scale—espe-

cially when compared to the North Railroad Avenue neighborhood to the south. The North Rifle Center is ideal for a variety of community-oriented commercial uses that are more car accessible, although developments will be required to include pedestrian amenities and include **General Urban Design Principles** and mixed-use wherever possible, with buildings close to the street and parking at the side or rear of buildings.

On both the east and west of Railroad Avenue, the North Rifle Center has undeveloped land ideal for larger scale multi-family developments that will create a population base within walking distance to the commercial areas of the North Rifle Center. This will support a **mixed-use and pedestrian-friendly neighborhood** that increases in commercial density closer to Railroad Avenue. A **Mixed-Use Business Light Industrial** Park in the Queen's Crown subdivision will add to the employment base of the neighborhood.

While some areas of the North Rifle Center are built-out, many parcels are ripe for redevelopment. For example, there is great potential for commercial redevelopment where light industrial and older commercial currently exist near the triangle of land formed by **Whiteriver Avenue** and State Highway 13. Infill development will be encouraged.

As new development occurs in the area, several transportation improvements will be necessary to improve traffic circulation. Acacia Avenue must be connected with Whiteriver Avenue. This connection could continue to the **Bypass/Railroad Avenue** intersection, while the currently existing 21st connection

could be closed off, as is recommended by CDOT's **Access Control Plan**. Another road connection must be made from West 16th Street on the Brown property to the intersection of Fairway Avenue and the State Highway 13 Bypass.

The Rifle Creek Trail runs North/South through the subarea along the creek, and should be finished as soon as funding is available. Other **multi-use trails** take advantage of drainages throughout the subarea. A RFTA bus stop is located on 16th Street at Metro Park. This bus stop is in serious need of upgrades.

The **Palomino Park and Deerfield Park** neighborhood is bounded on the east by the Brainard Ditch Trail, on the north by the RimRock and Bryce's Valley neighborhoods, on the west by the **North Clough Ranch Neighborhood**, and on the south by the **State Highway 13 Bypass** and the North Rifle Center neighborhood.

This area is almost built-out with a mix of multi-family and single-family dwellings. Many of these developments are fairly new. State Highway 13 offers limited access here due to CDOT's Access Control Plan, so commercial development opportunities are lacking beyond what already exists. Deerfield Park, a major regional park with multiple ball fields, is located in this neighborhood. Street trees and landscaping along 24th Street and Howard Avenue are recommended to beautify the neighborhood.

Future transportation improvements include the extension of Fairway Avenue to the south where

it will intersect the State Highway 13 Bypass and continue across the Bypass to eventually connect to **16th Street** through the proposed **Mixed-Use Neighborhood Residential** development on the Brown Property.

The **RimRock neighborhood** is bounded by State Highway 13 to the east, BLM land to the north and east, and Palomino Park to the south. RimRock is approximately a 600 acre undeveloped or underdeveloped piece of land on the northern edge of Rifle. The property is characterized by the mesas and cliffs that ring it, and its convenient access to State Highway 13. Several properties within the neighborhood, including the undeveloped Black Lyon property, have significant frontage on State Highway 13 that is prime commercial land. A portion of the neighborhood was annexed and platted during the oil shale boom of the 1980s.

The area should follow **Traditional Neighborhood Design** anchored by a mixed-use neighborhood center surrounded by a mixture of housing types. This area is a designated location for a **middle school and an elementary school** with a **neighborhood park** in close proximity.

The RimRock neighborhood will become a mixed-use commercial corridor with the most intense commercial uses occurring in the southern portion of the neighborhood and close to **State Highway 13** on and near the Black Lyon property. This **Regional Commercial** area offers the best opportunity in North Rifle for new large commercial uses (i.e. grocery stores, shopping centers.) The design of

these commercial uses shall integrate as much as possible with the neighborhoods surrounding them. Although these properties will benefit from visibility from State Highway 13, development on them will not be oriented towards the highway. Any operation activity including loading docks, outdoor storage and refuge/recycling facilities will be shielded from State Highway 13 so that through travelers will have the impression of good urban design and not unsightly development. Access will come from internal neighborhood streets running parallel to the highway. Care shall be put into the parking layout, the orientation of the buildings, and the relationship of larger buildings to smaller commercial and residential buildings to create a streetscape that is pedestrian friendly. Traditional "strip" centers shall be prohibited in this area. This area will also include a variety of commercial uses that serve neighborhood residents.

Further to the west of the commercial areas adjacent to State Highway 13, the RimRock neighborhood will feather down to lower density residential uses. A mix of housing types and densities will be encouraged in this transition. Any development will include a Modified Grid Road System, or at least interconnected street networks that allow southward movement without traveling on State Highway 13, and Traditional Neighborhood Design will be expected. Currently, a portion of this area is master planned, under the Rim Rock at Rifle Master Plan, any development in this plan must follow this plan or develop a new master plan.

Bryce's Valley neighborhood is bounded on the west by State Highway 13, on the north by the edge of Rifle's planning area, on the east by Tybar Ranch, and on the south by Deerfield Park.

Bryce's Valley is an undeveloped neighborhood on the north end of Rifle. It contains both Purkey and Biscuit Ranches. It has convenient access to State Highway 13, agricultural lands along Rifle Creek, and mesas that offer excellent views. Bryce's Valley contains development opportunities in all tiers. It is located next to Deerfield Regional Park and Wamsley Elementary School.

Bryce's Valley should generally follow the same development pattern that was described for RimRock on the other side of State Highway 13 in the Rim-Rock Neighborhood. Commercial intensity should focus on a mixed-use commercial center near State Highway 13 and Dokes Road with a mixed-use business center directly to the north. Residential density should feather from Medium-Density to Very Low-Density and Ultra Low-Density Urban Containment uses to the east and north. The street networks should be interconnected and allow circulation southward while avoiding State Highway 13. A school and neighborhood park should be included in the area. To the east, the large Biscuit Ranch property will accommodate very low-density residential development that maintains a rural character. Any development in Bryce's Valley must be master planned.

NORTH RIFLE FUTURE LAND USE OBJECTIVES

- Over the next 20 year planning period, highly visible and centrally located light industrial properties in the North Rifle Subarea will likely be rezoned to a retail/commercial land use similar to adjacent zoning. The relocation of industrial uses will benefit the City by increasing sales on a highly visible location more suited to commercial development. The City will work with businesses to investigate appropriate relocation incentives that will encourage the light industrial businesses located near the intersection of State Highway 13 bypass and Railroad Avenue to move to newly annexed and expanded light industrial areas.
- The City will create safe pedestrian crossings of State Highway 13 including a potential grade separated crossing for a future multiuse trail that follows Government Creek and intersecting State Highway 13 just north of the Whiteriver Avenue/State Highway 13 intersection.
- The City will work with Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to provide transportation connections across State Highway 13 at key locations.
- The City will encourage community gardens or Community Supported Agriculture operations to be included in new development.
- New development will participate in the provision of key transportation improvements identi-

fied in the Comprehensive Plan, including but not limited to the extension of Fairway Avenue, extension of Acacia Avenue, improvement of Whiteriver Avenue, completion of Rifle Creek Trail, and other improvements identified by the [CDOT Access Control Plan](#).

6. Encourage landscaping and street tree improvements in Deerfield and Palomino Park areas, including on Acacia Avenue, 24th Street and Howard Avenue.
7. Mitigate future high traffic levels (especially truck traffic) on State Highway 13 by instituting a landscape buffer on both sides of the highway and orienting development towards parallel street networks that will serve as the major commercial corridors for the area. Ensure that these commercial streets are pedestrian friendly and have streetscapes that incorporate [General Urban Design Principles](#). Well-landscaped parking lots are encouraged to locate along State Highway 13.
8. Facades facing the State Highway 13 should have finish materials and landscaping similar in quality to building fronts.
9. Mitigate the sound of truck traffic by passing a local ordinance restricting the use of Engine Compression Brakes to emergency situations and posting the ordinance along the highway.

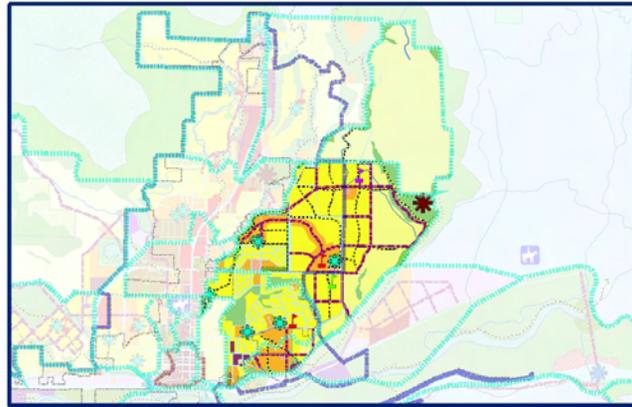


Figure 47: East Rifle - Graham Mesa
Click the image to view the future land use map in more detail.

3.10 EAST RIFLE - GRAHAM MESA

East Rifle is composed of three neighborhoods:

1. [Developed East Rifle](#)
2. [Undeveloped Graham Mesa](#)
3. [Tybar Ranch](#)

The East Rifle area is one of the City's growth areas. While Developed East Rifle is mostly built-out, Undeveloped Graham Mesa and Tybar ranch have significant room for growth in both the near and long-term futures. The area will have a network of [multi-use trails](#) that interweave each neighborhood. While the Subarea has pockets of [Mixed-Use Businesses](#) and [Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial](#) areas to help serve the need of the local neighborhood, the area mostly [feathers](#) density from [Medium-Density Resi-](#)

[dential to Very Low-Density Residential](#) at the urban fringe and [Ultra Low-Density Residential](#) in the [Urban Reserve](#). To increase circulation options, Fir Avenue will connect south to [State Highway 6](#).

Developed East Rifle is bounded by on the west by the edge of Graham Mesa and the Raynard Ditch Trail, on the south by 7th Street, on the east by the eastern edge of the Highlands East Subdivision, and on the north by East 17th Street. The Graham Mesa Neighborhood is composed of residential single-family subdivisions, with some multi-family buildings, built from the 1970s until the present.

This area is mostly built-out, but some key parcels remain undeveloped, including several large parcels in the North Pasture Subdivision that border [16th Street](#) and are designated as [Mixed-Use Residential Neighborhood](#). [16th Street](#), [Marrow Drive/E 9th](#), and [East 7th](#) are the principle connections between Graham Mesa and [North Rifle](#), [Central Rifle](#) and [Downtown Rifle](#). These streetscapes should be given careful consideration. Residential and/or mixed-use development should be oriented towards the street with detached sidewalks and street trees.

A key open space area exists in this area, located southeast of Morrow Drive near the City Cemetery. This area should be preserved as open space and a potential trail corridor.

Undeveloped Graham Mesa is comprised of the northeastern, undeveloped parts of Graham Mesa. The area is punctuated to the north, east and west by steep slopes that mark the end of the mesa.

Undeveloped Graham Mesa neighborhoods have many hills that offer excellent views.

Undeveloped Graham Mesa is designated for significant future growth. The area is primarily flat and adjacent to current residential lands. The development pattern on the mesa will be similar to Rifle's historic design: a traditional street grid that includes greenways and parks and a **mix of residential densities** with small pockets of retail and service uses in residential areas. By following these **Traditional Neighborhood Design Principles**, this area can incorporate a high-quality of life in a lower-density setting.

The Farm, a 160-acre mixed-residential development, is currently being master-planned. Its design incorporates many Traditional Neighborhood Design Principles. Townhouses and patio homes line well-landscaped boulevards, and an interconnected street system will offer good mobility within the neighborhood and to an elementary school within the development. A **Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial** area is located at the southeast corner of the proposed "development and also further to the north. Convenience retail and services in these locations will situate Graham Mesa residents within walking or biking distance of more of their everyday needs and encourage them to take advantage of their local pedestrian amenities. Higher density residential land uses incorporated with and adjacent to the commercial uses will help support the local businesses.

Within Undeveloped Graham Mesas, the **Tier 1/Tier 2 boundary** separates the existing 5-acre ranchettes

to the east from new, denser development that will happen to the west.

Vehicular access to the mesa from the downtown is primarily from East **16th Street**. Other access is achieved from Marrow Dr., E. 7th and from Colorado Route 293 which connects to **State Highway 6** (a steep and winding connection). Colorado Route 293 will eventually need to be upgraded to accommodate increased traffic demand in and out of the mesa.

The Tier 2 expansion of Graham Mesa is proposed to generally follow the same development patterns as Tier 1 to the west. A small neighborhood commercial area, with adjacent multi-family land uses, is proposed in the northern part of Tier 2 expansion to provide convenience goods and services to nearby neighborhoods. The existing ranchettes along the western side of Tier 2 are envisioned to eventually subdivide into smaller parcels, leaving the easternmost 5-acre ranchettes to create a natural transition area to the cliffs that form the eastern edge of the Graham Mesa—a natural termination for City. Roads and infrastructure systems would extend east while trails interconnect with parks, commercial and residential development to provide nearby amenities to the new neighborhoods.

A **new regional park** is proposed for the northeast corner of this Tier 2 expansion area. The site has many benefits as a regional park: it is fairly isolated, has good vehicular and pedestrian access and is buffered by natural landforms to the south and east. Furthermore, it is a key destination on the proposed

trail network through the adjacent open spaces areas on the east side of graham Mesa.

Potential locations for new elementary, middle, and high schools as well as the location of a few new neighborhood parks are illustrated on the **Future Land Use Map** and the **Subarea Plan Map**. Ideally, school children would have "**safe routes to school**" in this neighborhood.

Tybar Ranch, on the extreme northeast edge of Rifle, is currently composed of rangeland and located primarily in **Tier 3**. The City has obtained a 40-year conservation easement on this land that allows 40 rural home sites in exchange for temporary preservation of a significant amount of ranch land—a buffer between the residential developments to the west and the agricultural lands in the county to the east. The 40-year easement period allows time for Rifle residents to consider permanent protection or allow some form of further development.

Tybar ranch has the **Ultra Low-Density Land Use** designation indicating it is part of the Urban Reserve. At the time when the 30 year easement expires, if there is no substantial need for Tier 3 urban development, then cluster development will be encouraged. This is intended to reserve a substantial amount of land for urban development in Rifle's long-term future, but allow a limited amount of development between now and when the new lands are needed urban expansion.

EAST RIFLE FUTURE LAND USE

OBJECTIVES

1. Connect Graham Mesa to **State Highway 6** with a new street that will lessen congestion in Central Rifle.
2. Ensure a gridded network of streets in Undeveloped Graham Mesa.
3. Encourage a network of off street multi-use paths that meander through residential neighborhood and connect commercial, employment and recreational destinations.
4. Upgrade Colorado Route 293 to accommodate increased traffic demand in and out of the mesa.

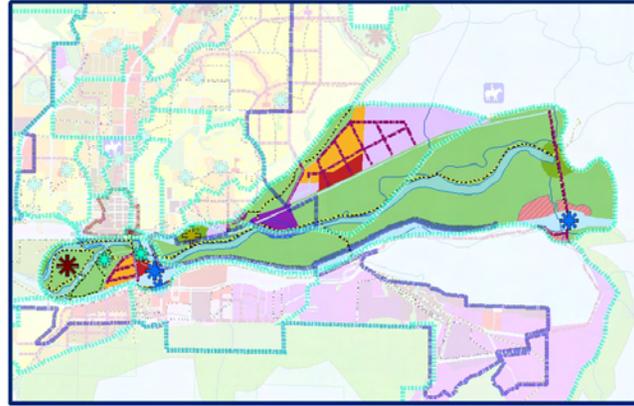


Figure 48: East Rifle Gateway
Click the image to view the future land use map in more detail.

3.11 EAST RIFLE GATEWAY

The East Rifle is composed of four Neighborhoods:

1. **Main Rifle Interchange**
2. **The East Rifle Center**
3. **The Colorado River**
4. **The Mamm Creek Interchange**

The Colorado River is one of the East Rifle Gateway's defining features. In accordance with the **Lower Valley Trails Group's Master Plan**, Rifle will encourage the construction of a multi-use trail that will stretch the length of the Colorado River as it passes through the City and the City's **Area of Influence**. The East Rifle Gateway is composed of two interchanges and a **Regional Commercial/Mixed-Use Business Light Industrial Center** and a few **Industrial** locations housing City of Rifle facilities.

A master plan has been developed for this subarea, and is summarized below. For more detailed information please see the **East Gateway Subarea Plan**.

The **Main Rifle Interchange** (a.k.a. Interchange 90) neighborhood is bounded on the south by Interstate 70, on the east by the **State Highway 13 Bridge**, and on the north and west by the Colorado River. It is a mostly underdeveloped area where a Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Interstate rest stop is located. The natural beauty of the adjacent Colorado River is a main feature of the neighborhood. Access to Interstate 70 and State Highway 13 provide pressure, and opportunity, for future growth.

The main Rifle interchange is to become an attractive gateway into Downtown Rifle. The City encourages the development of lodging and recreation-oriented commercial. Land use designations include **Regional Commercial** and **Medium-Density Residential**. Quality design will be a key component of development approval.

Near the current Colorado River boat launch site, the City would like to see a portion of the area developed as a Kayak / Whitewater Park. The appropriate location has yet to be determined, but it could be located near the historic Colorado Route 320 Bridge. A large portion of this area will remain open space.

No development will occur on the northeast corner of Interstate 70 and State Highway 13. This area is owned by the Colorado Department of Transportation and will be maintained as a riparian area. The

area east of State Highway 13 between the Interchange and Downtown will remain open space.

Any major development in the Main Rifle Interchange area will require a roundabout at the entrance to the area, north of the Interstate. This area must develop via the **East Gateway Subarea Plan**. If an alternative development scheme is desired, a new Master Plan for the entire Main Rifle Interchange neighborhood must be developed.

The **East Rifle Center** is bounded on the north and west by the edge of **Graham Mesa**, on the east by the edge of the Rifle planning area, and on the south by **State Highway 6**. It is currently an unannexed mobile home park, situated in the middle of an agribusiness / industrial area. South of the highway there are open agricultural fields, ponds and the City water intake. The site has good visibility from State Highway 6 / 24. Additional development of industrial uses in this neighborhood will help relocate industrial uses to Rifle's periphery and reduce truck traffic in town.

A proposed regional retail center on the north side of State Highway 6 will provide additional car-oriented commercial opportunity that can also serve as a local commercial center for a high-density work-force housing site (replacing the mobile home park) and surrounding mixed-business light industrial uses. Affordable housing will be a component of any redevelopment in this area. A mix of uses including office, light industrial, retail and residential uses are appropriate for the light industrial/business parks

on the east and west. Any development will have extensive pedestrian amenities.

A trail will connect the open space on Graham Mesa with the Colorado River through the City's land. A connected grid of walkable streets will tie into existing road sections and provide convenient circulation throughout the area. Development will focus around this network of walkable streets.

The existing Rifle water intake is located South of State Highway 6. A newly constructed solar municipal power plant will provide power to the plant and help achieve the City's goal of becoming an Energy Village.

The **Colorado River** riparian area contains **floodplain**, active gravel mines, and reclaimed gravel mines (i.e., ponds), and the Mamm Creek Interchange on **Interstate 70**. The railroad provides a barrier to accessing this neighborhood. Rifle will protect the Colorado River's riparian area from gravel mining including gravel pit operation by implementing **gravel pit operation and reclamation standards**.

With the addition of new development at the **Rifle-Garfield County Airport**, the **Mamm Creek Interchange** (a.k.a. Interchange 94) on Interstate 70 will take on new importance. The expansion of the airport will trigger road improvements from the south side of the interchange to the airport. As recommended in the subarea plan, the Mamm Creek Bridge itself should become an important city gateway feature for westbound Interstate 70 travelers. The north side of the Mamm Creek Interchange

is proposed for redevelopment in Tier 2. A road connection is proposed from the interchange, across the Colorado River and connecting to **State Highway 6** to the north. Due to a steep grade drop-off at the north side of the interchange and a Colorado River crossing, a bridge of significant size and cost will be required to span this stretch.

This connection will create an alternative to **State Highway 13** (Railroad Avenue) for Rifle-bound travelers. The interchange will accommodate limited commercial land uses that capitalize on the high visibility of Interstate 70 traffic.

1. In the near term, any Mamm Creek development will be dependent on septic.
2. If/when, the connection north to State Highway 6 is constructed, the commercial uses may be expanded. **Regional Commercial** may expand west across the area's north-south drainage and to the east side of the new road north.

The **open space** lands along the Colorado River north of the Mamm Creek Interchange may support fishing, rafting, trails, etc. Additional study (flood plain, feasibility analysis and engineering studies) of such uses would need to be performed to evaluate its suitability in the Colorado River corridor.

EAST RIFLE GATEWAY FUTURE LAND

USE OBJECTIVES

1. Any development in the **Main Rifle Interchange** area must develop via the **East Gateway Subarea Plan**. If an alternative development scheme is desired, a new Master Plan for the entire Main Rifle Interchange area must be developed.
2. Protect the Colorado River bottom from gravel extraction.
3. Support continuation of trail system and recreational opportunities on Colorado River, including the development of an urban trail network at the Main Rifle Interchange.
4. Redevelop the East Rifle Center.
5. Through a City/County intra-governmental agreement, create an overlay to ensure proper setbacks/buffering in the **State Highway 6** corridor until such time that the City annexes the corridor.
 - * Large setbacks (100 ft or greater) accompanied by naturally landscaped berms are required to shield development from highway travel.
 - * Consolidate access points to reduce potential conflicts.
 - * **Cluster development** will be encouraged in order to reduce the appearance of one long strip of retail.
 - * Discourage disorderly industrial storage facilities.



Figure 49: South Rifle Subarea
Click the image to view the future land use map in more detail.

3.12 SOUTH RIFLE

South Rifle is composed of three neighborhoods:

1. **South Business District**
2. **Airport Industrial**
3. **Power's Ranch**

South Rifle, separated from the rest of the city by the interstate and the Colorado River. It is surrounded by steep slopes on public land to the south. Open spaces designations protect steep hillsides and drainages. Dominant features include the Rifle-Garfield County Airport and Interstate 70. The main corridor through the area is **Airport Road**, on which new accesses should be limited due to the future expansion of the road and the heavy traffic expected in the future.

The **South Business District** is mostly composed of the Airport Road commercial corridor just south of the **Main Rifle Interchange**. It is bounded on the west by Garden Lane (County Road 320), on the north by Interstate 70, on the east by the **Rifle Airpark**, and on the south by open space. The South Business District has a variety of commercial, business, residential and industrial uses. The western edge of the neighborhood, on Garden Lane, is composed of older mostly single-family residential uses that have already begun to transition to high-density residential and commercial uses due to proximity to the Main Rifle interchange. Rifle envisages the continuation of this transition.

Moving east, the **Taugenbaugh Boulevard** commercial corridor is already home to restaurants, hotels, and offices, and it will become an even more heavily trafficked area once Taugenbaugh Boulevard is connected to Taugenbaugh Mesa and the future Powers Ranch development. New development in this area should follow **General Urban Design Principles**, as the area will be one of the most highly visible to visitors to Rifle. A more pedestrian-friendly character can be supported by the higher density residential that will develop in the Garden Lane area.

The western end of Airport Road is lined on the north side by **Regional Commercial** shopping including Wal-mart, several hotels and fast food restaurants that take advantage of the frontage along Interstate 70. The south side of Airport Road contains **Mixed-Use Community Commercial** uses. Recent

development in the Wapiti Court area exhibits many of the urban design principles that the Comprehensive Plan encourages. Buildings have brick facades, with one row of parking in the front and the potential for on-street parking on side streets. This development pattern should be continued both along Airport Road and to the south, where a mixed-use commercial/employment neighborhood with a **grid-street pattern** should take shape. The hospital anchors the eastern end of this area and is planning a medical complex on land it owns along Meghan Avenue. There is significant undeveloped land on both sides of Last Chance Drive that could complement both the medical complex and the commercial uses on Airport Road with a **Mixed-Use Business / Light Industrial** character. New street connections in this area will help to make it a pedestrian-friendly employment area.

Moving east along Airport Road, land uses begin to transition to a more Light Industrial character that includes heavy truck traffic, heavy equipment storage, and large storage yards screened by opaque fencing. However, a **Mixed-Use Business / Light Industrial** (MUBLI) buffer exists on undeveloped land immediately east of the Hospital, as well as in the current Rifle Business Park, whose Planned Urban Development (PUD) regulations already contain many of the elements of the MUBLI land use designation. Past the western end of Enterprise Court, as one moves east, land uses become fully **Light Industrial** (excluding the Rifle Business Park). In this plan Rifle has adopted preliminary design requirements for the Airport Road Corridor that make the streetscape at-

tractive, however, further study will determine if more guidelines are needed.

The City of Rifle in 2009 adopted a text amendment that prohibited residential uses in Light Industrial areas beyond a caretaker unit. The eastern Airport Road area was not planned with residential uses in mind therefore pedestrian amenities are lacking. Furthermore, the heavy truck traffic and predominance of gas and oil service companies make the area unappealing as a living environment.

A key future transportation connection is the continuance of South 7th Street to the west, where it will eventually connect to Last Chance Drive. This would create an alternative east-west route that would relieve congestion on Airport Road.



Figure 50: Rifle Airport Industrial

The **Airport Industrial** neighborhood is comprised of the Rifle-Garfield County Regional Airport and the **Rifle Airpark**, and large area of **Light Industrial** and **Industrial** use to be developed in **Tier 3**.

The Rifle-Garfield County Regional Airport has the land area and a runway large enough to accommodate commercial jets, but does not currently offer commercial flights. Light industrial land uses will be added to the Rifle-Garfield County Airport in Tier 2. This Light Industrial land uses will represent a “build out” of the Rifle-Garfield County Airport expansion Master Plan. The business park will contain warehouses, shops, cold storage and office space. Rifle-Garfield County Airport’s Master Plan proposes to realign the runway for more reliable all-weather service by clearing the approach and departure zones.

The **Rifle Airpark**, south of the airport, is geographically separated from the rest of South Rifle, but connected via the **Airport Road**. It is mostly undeveloped but is intended to be a mix of industrial, commercial, airport-related and governmental land uses that will be guided by a tightly controlled set of development standards. New development along Airport Road should consolidate access.

A new Colorado Mountain College campus is located adjacent to the airport. In close proximity to the airport is the American Atlas natural gas power plant.

Tier 3 will expand the light industrial uses south from the Rifle Airpark and give the City substantial Tier 3 industrial expansion potential.

Powers Ranch is primarily made up of a large piece of unannexed agricultural land south of Interstate 70 and west of existing retail areas on **Taughenbaugh Boulevard** and the **Airport Road** commercial corridor. The visibility of Powers Ranch from Interstate 70 offers the potential for future commercial and office development, with potential mixed-use neighborhoods extending away from the interstate.

Regional Commercial will be located next to the Interstate, with a "Main Street" of Neighborhood Commercial mixed-use buildings located to the south acting as a buffer for the mixed-residential neighborhoods further south. Before any development of the site, the entire Powers Ranch area must be master planned.

The western portion of the property is subject to flooding by Helmer Gulch, which drains from Taughenbaugh Mesa. A site-specific **floodplain** evaluation will be required prior to development in close proximity to Helmer Gulch.

Tier 2 land uses on the Powers Ranch require a significant expansion of roads and infrastructure. Land uses are primarily residential and include a mix of **Very Low-Density**, **Low-Density** and **Medium-Density Residential** uses as well as some mixed uses. Rifle Village South to the west will be considered for **annexation** in Tier 2, although the City will support Medium-Density Residential development that fol-

lows **Traditional Neighborhood Design Principles** in the meantime. Proposed roads will tie into the existing roads of this subdivision for additional vehicular and pedestrian connectivity.

A new **elementary school** adjacent **neighborhood park** located near Rifle Rulison Road (Colorado Route 320) will provide a level of self-sufficiency to the adjacent neighborhoods. Ideally, school children would have "**safe routes to school**" in this neighborhood. A large park must also be included in the neighborhood to provide recreation for South Rifle residents.

Open space, parks and trails on Tier 2 of Powers Ranch are extensive and interconnect amenities. Steep hillsides and drainages should be preserved with open space designations.

Powers Ranch will contain a number of **multi-use trails** connecting residential areas to **Downtown Rifle**, open spaces to the South, the school and commercial areas to the east.

SOUTH RIFLE FUTURE LAND USE OBJECTIVES

1. Strictly limit the residential and commercial uses that occur on the eastern end of **Airport Road**.
2. Take advantage of the Powers Ranch frontage on the interstate with a business park or retail project.
3. Rifle encourages the redevelopment of property along Garden Lane.
4. The City will follow the **Airpark Master Plan**.
5. Access along Airport Road will be consolidated whenever possible. New development will use combined access points.
6. Investigate the location of a **Community Park** with ball fields and picnic facilities to serve the residents of South Rifle and the whole community.
7. Support continuation of trail system and recreational opportunities on Colorado River.



Figure 51: West Rifle Gateway
Click the image to view the future land use map in more detail.

3.13 WEST RIFLE GATEWAY

The **West Rifle Gateway** is composed of two neighborhoods:

1. State Highway 6 & 24 Mixed-Use
2. West Rifle Industrial Center

The key elements of the West Rifle Gateway include the Colorado River riparian area, the State Highway 6 / 24 corridor, the western gateway into Downtown Rifle and a large industrial land base. The West Rifle Gateway land uses are designated in the Comprehensive Plan as Light Industrial and Industrial uses, a small area of Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial development and Mixed-Use Business / Light Industrial.

The **State Highway 6 & 24 Mixed-Use** neighborhood is bounded on the east by Rifle Creek, on the north by West 2nd Street (with the inclusion of the Pioneer Mesa Subdivision), on the west by the intersection of West 2nd Street and State Highway 6 & 24 near the entrance to the Pioneer Mesa subdivision, and on the south by the Colorado River. The area includes a mix of older residential uses (including RV Parks and mobile home parks), commercial, and light industrial uses along State Highway 6 / 24.

This historic mixed-use pattern makes transitions to any one land use challenging. The City will encourage enhancements such as landscaping and improved architecture, and prevent incompatible land uses from moving into the area (such as light industrial activities that include heavy equipment, high truck traffic, and large outdoor storage yards). Mixed-Use Business Light Industrial will require higher standards for landscaping, architecture, pedestrian amenities, and outdoor storage (e.g., requiring storage to be screened by more than just fencing, but berming, masonry walls, buildings, etc). A small amount of Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial will locate at the West Rifle Interchange.

The neighborhood also includes the intersection of the State Highway 13 Bypass and State Highway 6 / 24. Access to surrounding properties from the Bypass will be limited at this location by the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Access Control Plan. CDOT's participation would also be needed to improve the median between State Highway 6 & 24 and the Access Road, especially in the stretch be-

tween the Bypass and the Rifle Creek Bridge. Planting trees and landscaping in this area would greatly enhance the neighborhood and the entrance into the Downtown.

Rifle's old wastewater treatment plant location along the Colorado River should transition into a recreational area that includes an RV park along the banks of the old gravel pond. Access may come from the new wastewater plant entrance to the west.

A multi-use trail will pass through the Pioneer Mesa Subdivision and connect residential uses in the South Clough ranch and the RV park with the Colorado River Trail.

The **West Rifle Industrial Center** neighborhood is bounded on the east by the intersection of West 2nd Street and State Highway 6 / 24, on the north by open space, on the west by the limits of developable land accessible from the West Rifle Interchange area, and on the south by the Colorado River.

The West Rifle Industrial Center will increase Rifle's industrial land base. The eastern end of the neighborhood, around Gas Court and Oil Court, will remain light industrial in character due to the proximity to the State Highway 6 / 24 Mixed-Use. Further to the west, however, more Industrial uses will be permitted.

These uses are appropriate in this location because they:

- are easily serviced by convenient Interstate 70 access via the West Rifle Interchange.

- ☞ may alleviate some of Downtown Rifle's of heavy truck traffic as they may be accessed via the West Rifle Interchange and the Bypass.
- ☞ reduce incompatible land use conflicts that can be associated with heavy industrial land uses.
- ☞ provide an appropriate industrial area with which Rifle can grow its industrial base.

Rifle will focus its sustainable energy production efforts in the West Gateway. Concepts outlined in the *Bio-Corridor Concept Plan* and the *Rifle Energy Innovation Center Concept Plan* will help bridge Rifle's economy from petroleum to a more sustainable and diverse economic future.

WEST RIFLE GATEWAY FUTURE LAND USE OBJECTIVES

1. Support development of the Biocorridor and Energy Innovation Center concepts.
2. Support creation of an regional commercial node at *West Rifle Interchange*.
3. Support continuation of trail system, including the *LoVa Master Plan* and recreational opportunities on Colorado River.
4. Encourage a design standards for properties along the *State Highway 6 / 24* corridor, including:
 - a. Preserve rural feel of the Highway 6 entryway into town.

- b. Encourage *cluster development* with common access points.
 - c. Encourage landscaping of median between Access Road and State Highway 6 / 24.
5. Ensure that the Colorado River corridor is protected from *gravel mining operations* and incompatible development.

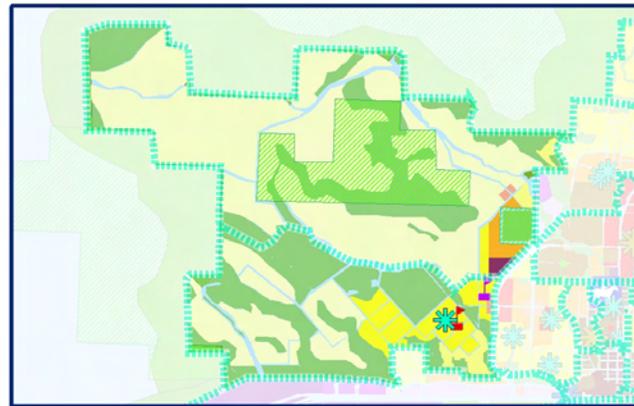


Figure 52: West Rifle - Clough Ranch
Click the image to view the future land use map in more detail.

3.14 WEST RIFLE—CLOUGH RANCH

West Rifle is composed of two neighborhoods:

1. *South Clough Ranch*
2. *North Clough Ranch*

Clough Ranch is currently rangeland. It is separated from Rifle by the *State Highway 13 Bypass*. The

Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) *Access Plan* allows limited access. Development along the Highway will require common access. Based on proximity to the City and special topographic considerations, the ranch is split into two neighborhoods. Uses in the area are primarily *Low, Very Low* or *Ultra Low-Density Residential*. Small *Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial* areas near the by-pass will allow Clough Ranch residents to obtain convenience commercial items within their neighborhood, facilitating walking and biking trips.

South Clough Ranch is bounded by the *State Highway 6 / 24* Corridor to the south, the *State Highway 13 Bypass* to the east, an irrigation ditch that separate it from North Clough Ranch to the north, and *Bureau of Land Management (BLM)* land to the west. It contains approximately 1,000 acres of the southeast portion of the Clough Ranch property. It will develop in *Tier 2*. While there are areas of hills and drainages, the majority of this neighborhood is relatively flat. This area is required to be master planned, and the preferred design incorporates *Traditional Neighborhood Design* principles (as suggested by the grid-street pattern). *Open space* is designated to preserve drainages and steep hillsides. Open space, *parks and trails* in South Clough Ranch should be generous and interconnect with neighborhood amenities. A frontage road connection is shown on the west side of the bypass to connect a small residential / commercial area north to County Road 24. Additionally, a new road is proposed to run east from this *interchange*, cross Prefontaine Road and eventually connect to Fairway Avenue. This connection will provide additional connectivity for

residents on Prefontaine Mesa to the State Highway 13 Bypass. A new **elementary and middle school** will be needed. Ideally, school children would have "safe routes to school" in this neighborhood.

South Clough Ranch also includes the Gentry property that borders the State Highway 13 Bypass, and has a Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) -**approved access point**. This property has an opportunity to be developed with more heavily-trafficked uses, including civic uses such as a new fairground.

A network of roadways service the land uses in this area. A secondary access / egress point is proposed on the west side of **Tier 3** connecting to West 2nd Street / Colorado Route 264 and eventually to State Highway 6. The roads should be designed with a rural character (no curbs, ample landscaping, and generous gravel shoulders) to preserve and enhance the experience of accessing this unique natural area of west Rifle.

A **multi-use trail** will loop through this neighborhood, providing access to all residents.

North Clough Ranch is bounded on the South by an irrigation ditch that separates it from South Clough Ranch, on the east by the **State Highway 13 Bypass**, and on the west and north by Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land. The neighborhood is located in **Tier 3**. It is considered a long-term urban reserve for the City.

North Clough Ranch **cluster development** is intended to provide a substantial amount of land for urban

development in the long-term future. The intent in North Clough Ranch is to allow a limited amount of residential development in the current planning horizon, while avoiding the placement of infrastructure and subdivided lots that would preclude future urban development at a higher density. Such urban development would almost certainly occur beyond the time horizon of this plan.

A small area of flat land near the by-pass is ideal for **Low-Density Residential** Development. Future mixed-use/mixed-density residential uses are recommended near the By-pass. A clustered subdivision extending west, punctuated by parks trails and open spaces will help to protect steep hillsides, drainages and pockets of agricultural land. The open space, parks, and trails should be extensive and interconnected.

A significant BLM "in holding" in this area should be annexed by the city and utilized for **Ultra Low-Density Residential** and **Open Space** land uses.

A BLM reservoir near the Forest Service office is used for drainage control and is not available for public access at this time.

WEST RIFLE - CLOUGH RANCH FUTURE LAND USE OBJECTIVES

1. Any development in the South Clough Neighborhood will be master planned with a traditional street grid. The master plan will include a road connection between the State Highway 24/Bypass intersection and Summit Drive. The master plan will also include a new elementary school located in the South Clough Ranch Neighborhood. Urban infrastructure west of the bypass has not yet been considered by the City of Rifle. Any development would require a significant analysis to determine the feasibility and capacity of extending city infrastructure.
2. If and when development occurs in West Rifle, the City will encourage cluster development in North Clough Ranch to preserve a variety of open lands and help preserve lands for future urban development.
3. Define trail corridors, parks and important open spaces for intermediate and future urban development.

4 SUSTAINABLE GROWTH PATTERNS

KEY PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 Strongly Discouraging "Leap-Frog" Development
- 4.2 Accounting for Growth
- 4.3 Create Mixed-Use Neighborhoods
- 4.4 Increase and Mix Densities in Appropriate Locations
- 4.5 Ensure Appropriate Land Use Transitions
- 4.6 Revise the Land Use and Development Code to Support the Comprehensive Plan

COMMUNITY FORM AND DESIGN

- 4.7 Traditional Neighborhood Design - The Old Is New Again
- 4.8 Key Principles of Traditional Neighborhood Design

4.9 Site and Building Design

URBAN CONTAINMENT - A TIERED APPROACH

- 4.10 Tier 1 Priority Growth Area
- 4.11 Tier 2 Secondary Growth Area
- 4.12 Tier 3 Rural Conservation / Urban Planning Reserve
- 4.13 Rifle's Open Space Buffer and Area of Influence

ANNEXATION

- 4.14 General Annexation Criteria
- 4.15 Extension of Municipal Services in Unincorporated Areas

INTRODUCTION

The Sustainable Growth Patterns chapter of the Comprehensive Plan charts a course for Rifle that accommodates growth while channeling it in a sustainable direction. The first section summarizes "key principles" that intend to guide growth in Rifle. The rest of the chapter describes in detail how the principles are applied to architectural elements, building design, neighborhood layout and annexations.



KEY PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

- 4
- Key Principles to Guide Future Development
 - Community Form and Design
 - Urban Containment - A Tiered Approach
 - Annexation

WHAT IS "LEAPFROG" DEVELOPMENT?

"Leap frog" development occurs when developments randomly dot the countryside with no connection to existing urban infrastructure.



Figure 53: Example of leap-frog development

The following land use principles sum up the most important ideas contained in this chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. These principles are designed to guide Rifle's future growth in a sustainable direction. They apply to all proposed development projects within and adjacent to the existing Rifle city boundary.

4.1 STRONGLY DISCOURAGING "LEAP-FROG" DEVELOPMENT

Rifle discourages "leap-frog" development. Leap-frog development creates unsustainable infrastructure costs over the lifetime of the community. Even if the developer initially installs the infrastructure connections to these sites from the existing City boundary, long-term maintenance costs fall to the City.

DEVELOPMENT PATTERN OBJECTIVES

1. The City opposes leapfrog development. There will be rare occasions when leap frog development is permitted; however, the City will require the developer to relieve the City of any increase in cost of services including additional infrastructure maintenance and public service (e.g. fire, police, trash, snow removal) costs. The City will review projects on

- a case-by-case basis and approve or deny the projects at its own discretion.
2. The City will only **annex** properties that benefit Rifle (e.g., providing affordable housing, water rights, new employment opportunities, or commercial properties with positive sales tax implications).
3. Follow the **tiered urban containment program** to ensure that new growth in Rifle occurs in a planned and logically sequenced manner.

4.2 ACCOUNTING FOR GROWTH

Annexations and new development often bring benefits to the community, including new neighborhoods and new patrons for local businesses that contribute sales tax to the city. At the same time, new development creates demands for services and infrastructure that frequently have costs that exceed the sales taxes they generate. The Comprehensive Plan supports the concept that growth should "pay its own way" and that growth must not place a financial burden on current residents of the City.

Development impacts include the provision of public services such as police protection, parks, street maintenance, utility extensions, and public facility expansion. To assure that new development “pays its own way,” Rifle assesses various “impact fees”. These fees are collected from new developments to fund infrastructure improvements required by that new development. Often a developer has the option to dedicate land and / or install the facilities/ improvements in lieu of paying an impact fee to the City. For more information on rapid growth and the City of Rifle, see [Section 7.1: The Challenge of Rapid Growth](#).

- c. Reevaluate the existing impact fee structure to ensure there is an equitable distribution of cost indentified for new development.

4.3 CREATE MIXED-USE NEIGHBORHOODS

The Comprehensive Plan promotes neighborhoods designed with [Traditional Neighborhood Design Principles](#) -- neighborhoods. A key element of these neighborhood is the inclusion of mixed-use.

Mixed-use is the inclusion of more than one use in the same building (vertical mixed-use) or different uses adjacent to one another in the same zoning district (horizontal mixed-use). The Comprehensive Plan encourages both kinds of mixed-use in appropriate locations like Downtown Rifle and in commercial centers throughout the city. While there is no stand-alone “mixed-use” land use designation, mixed-use is incorporated in most of the commercial land uses—except for Regional Commercial and General Commercial—and in many of the residential land uses.

Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity is another key element of neighborhood design. Trails and sidewalks will connect all residential neighborhoods with mixed-use commercial centers, school and other recreational amenities. Streetscapes and buildings will be designed from the point-of-view of the pedestrian, following [General Urban Design Principles](#).



Figure 54: Successful mixed-use centers provide comfortable outdoor spaces for the pedestrian and community interaction.



Figure 55: Example of a successful mixed-use community. (Source: Wolff-Lyon Architecture)

FISCAL IMPACT OBJECTIVES

1. Allow efficient and prudent extensions of infrastructure in a manner that ensures new growth pays its own way and considers both taxpayers and users; new developments should pay the costs for new on-site and off-site public infrastructure.
 - a. Create a system that evaluates the total City costs incurred to provide services to new developments.
 - b. Ensure the planning and development review process fairly allocates, and assesses the cost of the utilities and services that will be required to serve existing and new development. The cost of long-term maintenance for non-contiguous developments must be included.

This allows people to perform daily tasks without having to drive. The focal point of each neighborhood is the neighborhood center, which contains mixed-use buildings (such as bottom-floor commercial and upper floors condos). An advantage of mixed-use development is that it makes for more efficient use of the land, as shared parking strategies can be implemented so that less space is consumed by parking facilities.

MIXED-USE NEIGHBORHOOD

OBJECTIVES

1. While the City encourages mixed-use where appropriate, the first priority for a mixed-use shopping and entertainment district is downtown. Rifle recognizes that there are many different kinds of mixed-use, and that "downtown mixed-use" should not necessarily be replicated in other locations.
2. Encourage pedestrian-oriented design that promotes an enjoyable shopping experience, longer visits, and "cross-shopping"

WHAT IS DENSITY?

Density is the amount of residential development on a parcel of land. It is typically measured in dwelling units per acre – the larger the number of units permitted per acre, the higher the density; the fewer units permitted, the lower the density.

through sidewalk level shops and restaurants, wide sidewalks and appropriately-scaled architecture.

- a. Ensure buildings create comfortable "outdoor rooms" for streets and plazas (neither canyon-like nor too open) by striving for an overall 1:1 ratio between building height and street R.O.W. width.
 - b. Make building frontage permeable on commercial uses - connect the inside of the buildings and the sidewalk with doors and windows.
3. Mixed-use buildings should be flexible and responsive to the marketplace. To encourage this, the City shall, where appropriate, focus more on the form and design of buildings rather than narrowly prescribing uses.
 4. Retail and restaurants should be emphasized on first level. Office uses on the first-level of buildings are secondary.
 5. All commercial uses must be compatible with residential uses if mixed vertically.
 6. Provide regulatory incentives that facilitate land assembly to support mixed-use Comprehensive Plan recommendations. This may involve the City purchase and assembly of separate parcels to create new development opportunities.



Figure 56: Density allows the creation of neighborhoods that have nearby attractions such as shops, restaurants and parks that are within walking distance of neighborhood homes.

7. Encourage a mix of uses and/or a range of densities to foster a vibrant sense of place.
 - a. Create a diversity of housing choices within new designated neighborhoods or zoning districts.

4.4 INCREASE AND MIX DENSITIES IN APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS

BENEFITS OF INCREASED DENSITIES

Well-designed dense development is a critical element of a vibrant community. A land use design that places density in appropriate locations, with a suitable relationship to its surroundings including context sensitive architecture can have a wide-range of benefits. These ideas are not new. In fact, the principles use to locate density throughout Rifle consciously copy the design concepts that were used to create the beloved historic downtowns and mixed-use neighborhoods that are cherished to this day. Density, a key component of past successes, will provide Rifle with the following benefits:

Density helps create walkable neighborhoods. Density allows the creation of neighborhoods that have nearby attractions such as shops, restaurants and parks that are within walking distance of neighbor-

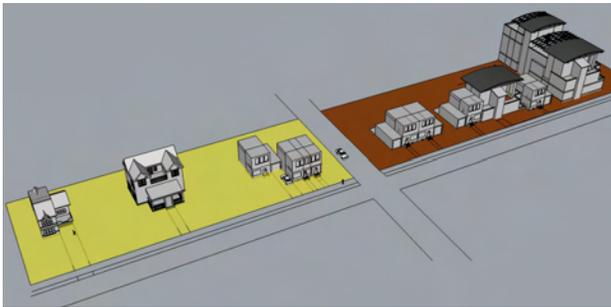


Figure 57: Density within one land use or parcel should transition when a lower density land use abuts a higher density land use. In this example, a road bisects a low density land use (left) with a high density land use (right).

hood homes. The standard rule is that people will frequently walk to destinations within 5 minutes, or a ¼ mile. They will walk farther if the streetscape is pleasant and interesting to the eye, a feature which is also supported by well-designed medium and high-density neighborhoods. Pedestrian amenities like wider, detached sidewalks and street trees make sense in higher density neighborhoods because they will be heavily used. Instead of each house having a large yard, each house can be located within walking distance of a neighborhood park, which becomes more financially viable when the density of neighborhoods is increased.

Density provides a built-in clientele for businesses.

Shopping that is surrounded by higher residential densities has more people within walking distance. For convenience shopping and dining needs, if residents have attractive choices within walking distance, they are less likely to drive to another location. Car-oriented commercial is always vulnerable to the next, newer development even if it is further away.

Density provides housing choice and affordability.

Communities that only allow low-density development limit housing choices and may drive up housing costs. By balancing lower, medium and higher-density developments, communities can offer a wider range of housing types and provide housing for all stages of life.

Density helps expand transportation choices.

Density provides the ridership necessary to make the bus a viable and competitive transportation option. For those who cannot drive (children, elderly, the

disabled and those who cannot afford a car) such a choice equals the opportunity to travel independently.

Density improves the efficiency of public infrastructure and services. Dense development reduces the amount of roads and utilities that must be factored into the cost of new development, as well as the amount of taxes needed to pay for future maintenance and services.

Density helps improve security. Crime is related to a variety of factors, including concentrations of poverty, and even lack of density (desolate, unwatched places). Greater social interaction and “eyes on the street” deter crime. The more people on the streets, the safer they feel.

Density helps protect the environment. Density reduces land consumption by concentrating development within a smaller geographic area. This reduction allows communities to protect valuable open space, habitat, farmland and ecologically sensitive areas.

Density allows for more amenities. Higher density places more units in a smaller area reducing infrastructure costs. These costs can be carried over to creating wider sidewalks, installing pedestrian lighting, and to landscaping details that all lead to a more pleasant pedestrian and overall living experience.

MIXED DENSITIES

It has been a standard practice for many years to assign a single density to a parcel, which is then

often developed with a single unit type. The Comprehensive Plan encourages a different direction—residential neighborhoods that contain a mix of densities and unit types. This creates the vitality, variety, and sense of community that already exists in older parts of Rifle and many other western communities.

A mix of densities allows families and individuals in different life stages (young families, empty-nesters, retirees) to co-exist in neighborhoods. It also permits families that have established long-term ties to a neighborhood or location to find larger and/or smaller homes as they change life stages without having to move to another part of town.

The average-density should be within the density range suggested for the particular land use. Thus a neighborhood may include both slightly higher density, and slightly lower density unit types that will average out to the designated density for the area.

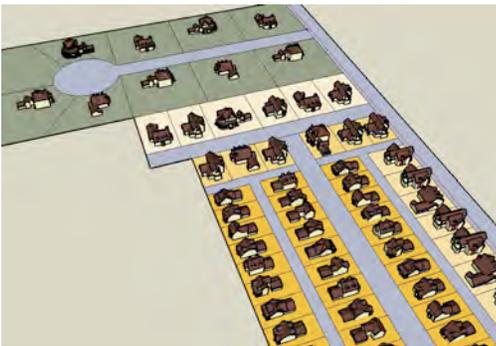


Figure 58: The Comprehensive Plan promotes a gradual transition of residential densities, or “feathering”, from high-densities around the Downtown and other mixed-use centers to relatively low residential densities radiating outwards.

DENSITY OBJECTIVES

1. To encourage housing variety, the Comprehensive Plan uses “average” densities in most **land use designation**. Property owners and developers should assume entitlement to the lower end of the density range. Property owners may increase density by providing public benefit. In determining appropriate density, the Planning Commission and City Council will take into account a projects design, how and where density is proposed on the property (i.e. building locations) the inclusion of affordable housing and compatibility with adjacent land uses. (The **Mixed-Use Downtown, Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial, Very Low-Density** and **Ultra Low-Density** mixed-use and residential land use designations are exceptions to the “average-density” requirement.)
2. The City encourages neighborhoods with housing choices that will avoid enclaves of single-family income levels and allow residents to remain in the neighborhood as their life stages change; single, married, raising children, “empty nesters, retirees. This includes young families, families with single heads of households, large families, people with disabilities, the elderly, and **low and moderate-income households**.

4.5 ENSURE APPROPRIATE LAND USE TRANSITIONS

FEATHERING DENSITIES

Rifle promotes a gradual transition of residential densities, or “feathering”, from high-densities around the **Downtown** and other mixed-use centers to relatively low residential densities radiating outwards. Under the philosophy of feathering densities, adjacent properties are no more than one category higher or lower in density. For example, medium-density developments may be adjacent to high-density or low-density, and serve as a buffer between them. Creating high-density areas adjacent to very low-density areas should be avoided. When large density “jumps” cannot be avoided, they need to be mitigated by creating buffer transitions, such as: increased setbacks between the uses, gradual changes in building mass, significant landscape planting, etc. Residential uses adjacent to commercial, industrial, or business uses should generally be designated as medium or higher densities.

4.6 REVISE THE LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT CODE TO SUPPORT THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Although the City's Land Use and Development Code has been amended with the best of intentions over its life, the code has evolved into a piecemeal statute that can be very challenging to administer. Additionally, the code will not allow for the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. A new code

LAND USE TRANSITION OBJECTIVES

1. Density transitions between adjacent properties should be gradual, **not exceeding one density category** of the Comprehensive Plan. Where density transitions are greater than one category difference, or differences in land uses on opposite sides of a street, the transition is to be accomplished within the property, or mitigated through similar building design, increased setbacks, landscape buffering, or other means acceptable to the City of Rifle.
 - a. Add “feathering of densities” and “mitigation of different land uses that are separated by roads” to the conditions of project review.
 - b. Do not permit “spot zoning” which is the zoning of small areas of land for uses that are not in harmony with the current zoning and the [Future Land Use Map](#) for the area, especially if a small area is rezoned in a way that does not conform to the surrounding neighborhood.
2. Densities will “feather” or gradually transition, from higher densities nearer to central business district to lower densities at the municipal boundary.

is needed to create a consistent, easy to use, read and administer document that will better support and implement the Comprehensive Plan.

Rifle should update its Land Use and Development Code and begin rezoning properties to conform with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. This can occur incrementally with the intent of creating a final document that would clearly convey Rifle's land use regulations. This task will eliminate guesswork about which regulations apply and what permits are required and ultimately can create an easier atmosphere in which to bring about quality projects while also easing staff administration.

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT CODE UPDATE OBJECTIVES

1. Start by creating development standards within the Planned Urban Development (PUD) process to permit a mix of densities in any zone. Eventually, after gaining experience with mixed-density development issues, amend the code to allow, as a use-by-right, a mix of residential densities (resulting in a designated average minimum density).
2. The code can be updated in phases but should create a final “one-stop” document that combines the revised zoning, subdivision regulations, building codes and design guidelines into a streamlined development review while bringing about higher quality projects.

3. Rewrite Rifle's current code to reflect the [Comprehensive Plan Objectives](#) and land uses identified on the [Future Land Use Map](#).
 - a. Explore the creation of two new zones to protect the [Urban Planning Reserve: “Very Low-Density and Ultra Low-Density”](#). These zoning designations combined with [clustering techniques](#) are intended to preserve farmland, environmental resources, act as reserve of land for future urban development, and encourage subdivision design that fits into the rural landscape.
 - b. Include form-based codes for the [Downtown, Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial](#) and [Mixed-Use Business/Light Industrial](#) land uses.
 - c. Remove obstacles to mixed-use development and redevelopment:
 - i. Ensure that pedestrian connectivity, safety and convenience and other multimodal transportation options are incorporated into mixed-use areas.
 - d. Ensure consistency with the density ranges identified in the [Land Use Designations](#) including the [average-density](#) concept that for some flexibility in the application of density.
 - e. Reduce land use nuisance in and unsightly appearance of industrial areas;

produce productive industrial areas:

- i. Prohibit restaurants, hotels, common household goods, personal service, medical offices, in light industrial and industrial zoning districts unless said uses are included in a master planned development approved by the City.
 - ii. Permit gas stations and truck stops in light industrial.
 - iii. Include performance standards for heavy equipment usage, outdoor storage, truck servicing, equipment leasing, etc.
- e. Include **Design Guidelines**. Work with landscape architect/planning firm to develop design guidelines for:
- i. **Downtown** to
 - 1. Ensure a consistent architectural character in Downtown Rifle.
 - ii. **Key Corridors** to
 - 1. Protect highly traveled Key Corridors from visual blight associated with outdoor storage and heavy equipment servicing.
 - 2. Include street trees, buildings frontage on the corridors, screened surface parking and consolidated signage.

iii. **Mixed-use centers** to

- 1. Mandate the proper placement of parking lots, pedestrian amenities clustering of buildings in commercial and mixed-use land uses.

iv. **Industrial uses** to

- 1. Include streetscape and visual / physical buffering of industrial businesses from adjacent land uses and the general public. Existing businesses will be required to comply.

f. Update subdivision standards

- i. Require minimum 5-foot sidewalks (attached and detached) in all new residential developments.
- ii. Require adjacent developments to have **interconnected streets**.
- iii. Require that all proposed subdivisions and major construction projects shall include a **geologic/soils** report addressing site conditions.

g. Prepare a zoning map amendment to **reduce overall densities on hillsides**. The zoning map amendments will indicate the areas intended to be preserved ("sending" portions) and the areas intended to "receive" the clustered density.

h. Research and formulate ordinances (such as transfer of density or development rights, and other **Open Space Preservation Techniques**) to encourage clustering comes on the portion of properties not on steep hillsides.

- i. Assure that zoning provides adequate protection to **wetlands**.
- j. Prepare ordinance requiring that all proposed subdivisions and major construction projects shall include a geologic / soils report addressing site conditions.
- k. Developers shall be required, in the subdivision development process, to provide accurate FEMA floodplain data as it pertains to the development. The City's Planning Department shall review current submittals to evaluate the appropriate timing in the planning process that this data will be required.
- l. Require development applicants to address plant and animal resources and habitat areas, particularly in association with Rifle and Government Creeks, the Colorado River and other potential habitat areas, to minimize the effect of development and encourage habitat preservation.

4 Key Principles to Guide Future Development

Community Form and Design

Urban Containment - A Tiered Approach

Annexation

COMMUNITY FORM AND DESIGN



Figure 59: Post office building

The Community Form and Design section of the Comprehensive Plan seeks to answer the following question: what are the essential principles for designing the physical components of the City --the buildings, the land uses, the open space, the layout of roads --so that the end product is a vibrant and sustainable community? The Community Form section begins at the neighborhood describing the necessary ingredients of a successful neighborhood. The next section, Site and Building Design, investigates the necessary components of individual sites and buildings, describing the principles of design that make for vibrant streetscapes.

4.7 TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN - THE OLD IS NEW AGAIN

Rifle's original town site was platted with a grid of streets, alleys and a mix of uses and densities. This community form helped create Rifle's tight-knit community. Residents could easily walk downtown where all of their basic consumer needs could be met. Drugstores, clothing stores, grocery stores, hardware stores, and other consumer goods could be found in the Downtown. Neighbors saw each other on the streets often. This Comprehensive Plan advocates for a land use pattern similar to that found in Rifle's historic core.

After World War II, this traditional approach to town planning evolved into modern suburban concepts. Instead of a mixing of uses and densities, zoning codes began to mandate single-use and uniform-density districts. Each land use—residential, commercial, offices, civic—was isolated from others, often without any consideration of the whole. In many cities, suburban shopping malls and strip centers became the focus of commerce and sapped the vitality out of the downtown area. The downtown gradually ceased to be the focal point of the community.

The costs of this kind of suburban development are now apparent—high infrastructure costs, sprawl that eats up farmland and drains city budgets, a weakened downtown shopping district, neighborhoods that lack vitality and transportation options that are limited to the automobile.

The wisdom inherent in the old form of community development is apparent. It represents compact, human-scaled development that fosters healthy, diverse, balanced communities—and it is surprisingly similar to the original patterns that were followed in the older parts of Rifle.

4.8 KEY PRINCIPLES OF TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN¹

1. CREATE COMPACT AND COMPLETE NEIGHBORHOODS

This means that residences are within walking distance of meeting their daily needs—schools, daily-needs shopping, offices, and recreation. Compact, pedestrian-friendly, and diverse neighborhoods should offer a range of housing types and price levels. This brings people into contact with their neighbors, strengthening the interpersonal and civic bonds of the community. New development should encourage connections to other neighborhoods to avoid isolation.

2. DEVELOP MIXED-USE COMMERCIAL CENTERS ADJACENT TO EACH NEIGHBORHOOD

Residential areas should be within a 10-minute walking distance of mixed-use commercial centers. These centers contain a mix of uses that include shopping, entertainment, offices, housing, and civic facilities essential to the daily life of the residents. While they are medium to high-density, they avoid the appearance of strip malls. Mixed-use centers have a focus on [General Urban Design Principles](#).

3. UTILIZE PEOPLE-ORIENTED ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

Buildings should be broken-up to avoid large box-

¹ Rifle's *Planned Unit Development Standards* have incorporated many Traditional Neighborhood Design Principles.

like structures. Design elements should be selected that integrate with the surroundings and be carried out throughout the entire project. Residential streets should be faced with windows, balconies, doors, and porches, allowing residents to watch over their neighborhoods, rather than a continuous row of garage doors. This provides “eyes on the street” at all hours to promote safety. Alley-loaded residences improve the streetscape by reducing the number of driveways that interrupt the sidewalk, putting the emphasis on people in-lieu-of cars.

4. UTILIZE APPROPRIATE PARKING PLACEMENT AND DESIGN

Parking will be accommodated, but not in large parking lots that front the street. Rather, shall be provided on the sides and behind buildings in smaller lots broken up by shade trees and landscape islands. Parking structures should be placed where they can be disguised and integrated into buildings. Mixed-use developments are encouraged because they can reduce parking needs through shared parking arrangements where different uses have complementary parking needs (residential uses in the evening and night, office during the day).

5. INCLUDE A GRID-PATTERN OF “COMPLETE STREETS”

Streets must accommodate necessary traffic levels, but they must also respect pedestrians, bikers, and foster a pleasant living environment. Gridded streets disperse traffic more evenly by offering multiple options to a driver, and they reduce trip distance by

providing more direct routes. An interconnected network of streets with detached sidewalks will encourage walking and reduce the number and length of automobile trips, and conserve energy. Walkable streets enable neighbors to get to know each other and allow independence to those who do not drive especially the elderly and the young. Curb cuts should be limited to avoid dangers to pedestrian and bike traffic, and turning motions that snarl vehicle traffic. Alleys, shared driveways and shared parking lots can be created through thoughtful design that reduces the number of needed curb cuts.

6. MAKE PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND AMENITIES THE FOCAL POINTS OF THE COMMUNITY

Civic and public uses should be embedded into neighborhoods, not isolated in remote, single-use complexes. Put city halls, libraries, public plazas, schools, and other civic in uses prominent locations in the community, to strengthen community identity and the culture of democracy. Locate benches, street trees and public plazas to encourage civic celebrations. Schools in particular must be located so that children can walk or bike to school.

7. INTEGRATE PARKS AND OPEN SPACE INTO NEIGHBORHOODS

A range of parks, from tot-lots and landscaped trail networks, to ball fields and community gardens, should be distributed within neighborhoods with a design and placement that encourages frequent use. Parks and trails should be located within the

heart of neighborhoods, rather than on the edge of neighborhoods, sandwiched between fences and busy collector streets. Agricultural / conservation areas and open lands should be used to define and connect different neighborhoods and districts. The natural terrain, drainages, and native vegetation of the community should be preserved with superior examples contained within parks or greenbelts.

8. INCLUDE ABUNDANT WATER-WISE STREET TREES AND LANDSCAPING

Landscaping is more than an aesthetic development feature. Proper use and placement of trees mitigate heat-island effects associated with parking lots and streets. The elimination of these heat-islands reduces summer energy costs. Additionally, landscapes can mitigate stormwater impacts if properly placed and planted. Finally, landscaping should uti-



Figure 60: The City and the Garfield County Library are working together to create a new building that combines both the Rifle branch and City hall facilities. The new building will serve as a focal point for downtown redevelopment and help strengthen community identity.

lize xeric planting methods and low-water use plants.

4.9 SITE AND BUILDING DESIGN

Although "design" can be an amorphous term, good design is critical to implementing the Comprehensive Plan. This section offers some basic answers to the questions: What is good site and building design? And what guidelines or standards should Rifle adopt to ensure good design is implemented?

GENERAL URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

General site design principles answer the following questions: How does the physical layout of the site relate to public and other private properties? Where is the parking located? How does the building relate to the street? How does the layout of the site relate to adjacent buildings?

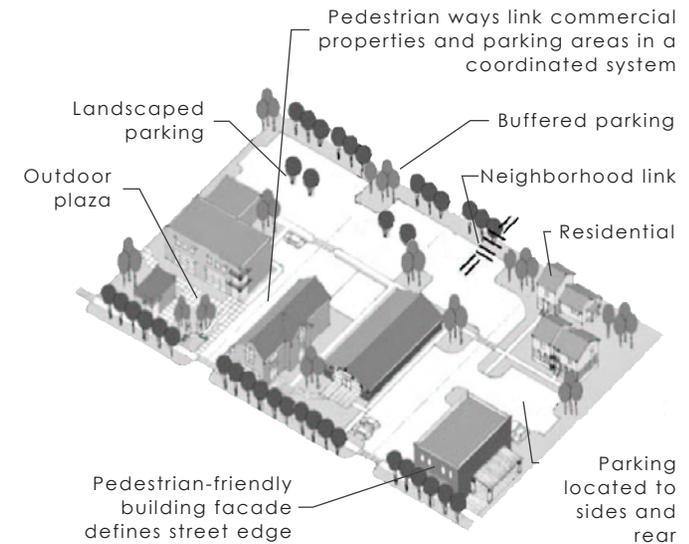
The Comprehensive Plan establishes a number of principles to encourage good urban design. These



Figure 61: Xeric planting methods and low-water use plants provide rich landscape alternatives.

guidelines apply to mixed-use, commercial, medium and high-density residential land use categories as well as key roadways. General Urban Design Principles include:

- ☞ Creating a pedestrian-oriented streetscape
- ☞ Accommodating automobile traffic
- ☞ Locating parking at the rear or side of buildings
- ☞ Making the building the focal point of the site by locating it close to the sidewalk
- ☞ Landscaping or patios in the front that add to the visual interest of the streetscape
- ☞ Creating "complete streets"
- ☞ Avoid cookie-cutter or one-size-fits-all solutions



GENERAL URBAN DESIGN OBJECTIVES

1. New development in mixed-use, commercial as well as medium-density and high-density residential land use designations should incorporate General Urban Design Principles to maximum extent possible.

GENERAL URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

Design guidelines help fit a neighborhood, a site or a building into the City in a way that complements the City as a whole while providing maximum design flexibility. They are most effective and desired by developers when they provide predictability. The design guidelines in this section will help Rifle create a consistent and cohesive architectural form that in turn produces vibrant public spaces for all of Rifle's Citizens to enjoy.

Rifle will use the guidelines to:

- ☛ Help reinforce the character of its historic area and protect its visual aspects.
- ☛ Improve the quality of growth and development.
- ☛ Protect the value of public and private investment, which might otherwise be threatened by the undesirable consequences of poorly managed growth.
- ☛ Preserve the integrity of its historic area by discouraging the construction of buildings that imitate undesired period styles.

- ☛ Indicate which design approaches Rifle encourages as well as which it discourages.
- ☛ Provide an objective basis for the decisions of the design review board.
- ☛ Serve as a tool for designers and their clients when making preliminary design decisions.
- ☛ Increase public awareness of design issues and options.

GENERAL URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINE OBJECTIVES

1. Rifle will work with a design consultant to *establish a thorough and enforceable design guideline package* for Rifle's mixed-use, commercial, medium and high-density residential land uses.
 - a. Establish **downtown standards and design review program** which implements the **Downtown Master Plan**.
 - b. Establish *mixed-use and commercial* design guidelines for landscape, pedestrian and building orientation, and signage that are based on **General Urban Design Principles**.
2. Rifle will work with a design consultant to establish design guidelines that ensure **Key Corridor** design standards include buildings fronting on the corridors (building back should not "front" key corridors), screened surface parking and consolidated signage.

3. Rifle will work with a design consultant to establish guidelines that ensure *Industrial and Light Industrial* areas are orderly or screened from major thoroughfares.

DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

Design guidelines will help ensure the Downtown perpetuates its inviting atmosphere. The City will ensure that design guidelines are adhered to, and not ignored by instituting a three-step process:

1. Create a design ordinance
2. Create a design review board
3. Create design guidelines

These three elements are essential and in many ways mutually dependant. In the absence of supplementary design guidelines, the review ordinance and decisions by the review board, however reasonable, are subject to legal challenge. In the absence of an ordinance, design guidelines, however well intentioned, are all too easily ignored.

A Downtown Design Advisory Board will provide peer review for development taking place in the highly visible locations. Design Review Advisory Board members will review the design of the proposed structures / renovations within Downtown Rifle for compliance to the Downtown Design Guidelines and make recommendations to Planning Commission.

The composition of this board will be key in bringing

quality projects to fruition. Ideally, this group should be comprised of concerned residents and business owners who are peers of the applicant and have a marked interest in improving the overall quality and consistency of projects developed with Rifle's Downtown.

A design review ordinance controls aesthetic matters not covered by zoning laws or building codes. A design ordinance establishes the community's right to regulate visual quality.



Figure 62: Historic Post Office

DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINE

OBJECTIVES

1. Downtown design guidelines should be incorporated into a design review ordinance used as the foundation by which the Downtown Design Advisory Board reviews development proposals.
2. The Rifle City Council should create a Downtown Design Advisor Board to evaluate proposed new construction and building modifications in Downtown Rifle; consider requesting the Downtown Development Authority take on this role.
3. City Planning Director to conduct work sessions necessary to establish the Downtown Advisory Board district guidelines.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

This section provides an example of architectural guidelines which should be considered when crafting Rifle's design guidelines.

Rifle has examples of historic buildings that have stood the test of time, such as the Midland, the United States Post Office and McLearn Buildings. They were built with materials that have aged well, and with continued upkeep can continue to be admired by future generations. The style of these buildings has a timeless quality; even though they were built several generations ago they continue to be broadly admired for their aesthetic qualities.

Architectural styles come and go. The Comprehensive Plan recommends design guidelines avoid an overdone focus on specific styles and instead focus on those elements of good architectural design that have been proven over time. Design guidelines should focus on creating buildings that will be enjoyed by the next generations.

The following guidelines describe the elements essential to good architectural design:

☛ The façade

- * Buildings should be broken up both horizontally and vertically by the use of a variety of architectural techniques, colors and materials.
- * Building materials should consist of durable, long lasting materials that will keep a good appearance over time.
- * Building entrances should be designed to be visually prominent with distinguishing façade variations, recesses, projections, or other integral building forms.
- * Building frontages should exhibit human-scale detailing on the ground floors.
- * All sides of a building should express consistent architectural detail and character.

☛ Windows

- * Depending on the location, a high percentage of the façade that faces a street should be composed of transparent materials.
- * Windows should be deep set and utilize mullions (structural elements that divide adjacent windows).

☛ Roofs

- * Use of "false fronts" / parapets on commercial buildings is encouraged to screen flat roofs.

- * False fronts should be designed to screen mechanical and HVAC equipment from the street level.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN GUIDELINE OBJECTIVES

1. The City should consider the costs / benefits of establishing an ordinance to proactively facilitate storefront rehabilitations – such as a rebate of project costs.
2. Explore the recruitment of local banks / financial institutions to create a low-interest loan pool for business façade improvements.
3. Establish a façade grant program to induce owners to improve their buildings.
4. To facilitate quality (re)development, the City should consider the costs / benefits of recruiting (local) architects / designers to provide design / technical assistance to local businesses.

LANDSCAPE DESIGN GUIDELINES

This section provides an example of landscape guidelines which should be considered when crafting Rifle's design guidelines.

The city will benefit from the adoption of a detailed package of landscape development standards. The intent of such standards is to preserve Rifle's special character, and integrate and enhance new development by promoting quality landscape design that:

- ☞ Reinforces the identity of the community and each neighborhood.
- ☞ Provides tree-lined streets in dense urban areas. Urban areas include **Key Corridors**, **Downtown Rifle**, **Commercial Land Uses** and any residential development greater or equal to the **Medium-Density Residential** land use. Include tree standards for canopy coverage, low-water use and variation in the tree type as a precaution against disease.



Figure 63: Tree-lined streets in specific areas will help anchor new buildings and provide shade for pedestrians.

- ☞ Anchors new buildings in the landscape.
- ☞ Provides shade in paved and hardscape areas.
- ☞ Preserves existing trees, uses water conservation techniques and encourages the planting of native species (when appropriate).

LANDSCAPE DESIGN GUIDELINE OBJECTIVES

1. The City supports the establishment of landscape development standards for universal application.
2. Rifle will engage landscape architects in the creation of unique and enforceable landscape design standards for the City of Rifle.
3. Landscape design standards will encourage strong adherence to xeric landscape methods.
4. Where appropriate, steps should be taken to utilize existing native vegetation in-lieu-of over lot grading.

4

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URBAN CONTAINMENT A TIERED APPROACH

4.10 TIER 1 PRIORITY GROWTH AREA

The Tier 1 lands are areas adjacent to the existing city boundaries where the City will prioritize annexation and extension of municipal services. Tier 1 includes the major development areas that have already been contemplated for development, such as RimRock, most of Bryce's Valley, The Farm, Powers Ranch and the Airpark.

4.11 TIER 2 SECONDARY GROWTH AREA

The Tier 2 Growth Area represents a second ring of development that would be logical areas for Rifle to grow after the build out of Tier 1. Except for the development proposed for the **Mamm Creek Interchange**, Tier 2 areas are those where infrastructure can be easily extended from Tier 1 developments.

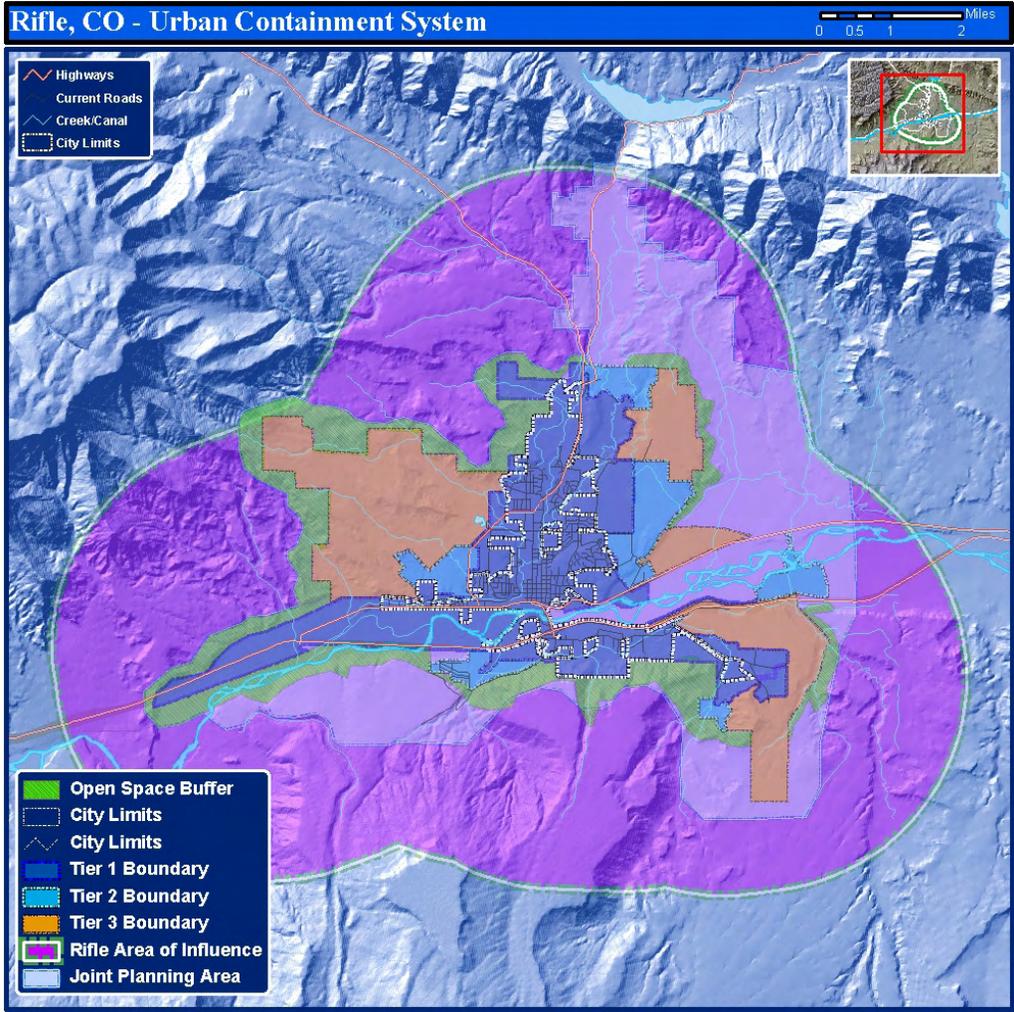


Figure 64: Rifle's Urban Containment System Map
Click the image to view the future land use map in more detail.

4.12 TIER 3 RURAL CONSERVATION / URBAN PLANNING RESERVE

The Rural Preservation / Planning Reserve, Tier 3, represents a tertiary ring of development that would be logical areas for Rifle to grow after the build out of Tier 2. Tier 3 land uses are long-range in their scope and timeframe. The designated land uses encourage **clustered growth** options (i.e., **clustered development**) that allow very long-term future urban development (i.e. higher density developments if and when the City land uses reach buildout). Tier 3 lands are areas of geographically focused investment where the City will prioritize the funding of capital improvement projects (CIP) after Tier 2 triggers have been met.

CATEGORIES:	LAND USES	TIER 1	TIER 2	TIER 3	TIER 1	TIER 2	TIER 3
Commercial	COM, RC	77	121	150	158	208	244
Business	MUB, MUBLI	260	260	283	308	325	529
Mixed-Use Commercial	MUCC, MUDT, MUNC	165	186	190	280	307	311
Industrial	IND, LI	1160	1220	1840	1536	1596	2243
Low-Density Residential	LDR, ULDR, VLDR	1020	1741	4160	1456	2296	4724
Medium-Density Residential	MDR	357	436	534	534	626	727
High-Density Residential	MURU, MURN	244	288	288	328	372	372
				These columns evaluate those lands likely to be developable in the planning horizon.	These columns evaluate the town as a whole (i.e., if all lands were built-out)		

Table 1: Land Use per Tier (units = acres)

4.13 RIFLE'S OPEN SPACE BUFFER AND AREA OF INFLUENCE

In order to deal with growth outside of its boundaries, Rifle has created an open space buffer and a strategy to address growth within its Area of Influence. In both areas, Rifle hope to severely limit or eliminate development pressure and push development within its city limits. For more on the Open Space Buffer see **BLM – interface**, for more information on Rifle's Area of Influence see **County Zoning in the Area of Influence (AOI)**.

URBAN CONTAINMENT OBJECTIVES

1. The City promotes compact and contiguous development growth patterns that can efficiently be served by public services and seeks to preserve open spaces, agricultural lands, and environmentally sensitive areas that are not currently suitable for urban development.
2. The City will annex properties for which there is a significant public benefit (i.e. properties providing affordable housing, water rights, real estate transfer fees or commercial properties with positive sales tax implications).
3. The City will discourage growth outside of the current development tier ("leap frog" development) until that growth tier is at least 75-percent

Table 2: Future population estimate, per tier*

	LOW DENSITY	HIGH DENSITY	AVERAGE
Tier 1	27000	50000	38500
Tier 2	33000	63000	48000
Tier 3	37000	70000	53500

* Population estimates are applied to vacant buildable parcels and will vary depending on the density applied, the amount of buildable land and the amount of infill development. Population estimates do not include Rifle's current population.

built out within the land use type being proposed (e.g. industrial; commercial; low-density residential; medium-density residential; high-density residential; and mixed-use land uses). See Table 1 for the total amount of growth per category in each tier. Proposed development extensions outside the current tier that do not meet the above conditions may be considered by the City, however the developer should expect the following:

- a. Development will be required to **pay full cost of all infrastructure improvements necessary** to serve a project with no cost recovery agreement.
 - b. Development will receive zero impact fee credit for improvement costs.
 - c. Development will compensate the appropriate agency for providing services outside of the Tier 1 Priority Growth Area (e.g. police, waste recovery, fire, school bussing and infrastructure maintenance costs).
4. Through the building permit system, add reports to track buildout in each tier for basic land use types (e.g. industrial; commercial; low-density residential; medium-density residential; high-density residential; and mixed-use land uses). Compare to capacities identified in Comprehensive Plan and calculate % of thresholds. Report annually to Council and Planning Commission.

- 4 Key Principles to Guide Future Development
 Community Form and Design
 Urban Containment - A Tiered Approach
 Annexation

ANNEXATION

4.14 GENERAL ANNEXATION CRITERIA

As part of its ongoing effort to plan and prepare for responsible growth, Rifle has identified certain territory outside of and contiguous to its present boundaries which could, at some future time, reasonably be considered for annexation into the City. These potential annexation areas are shown in the [Urban Containment Map](#). Areas included in an annexation petition must fall within the Tiers (1, 2 or 3). Although land proposed for annexation may be located within the Rifle Urban Containment System, there is no guarantee that the annexation request will be approved by the City. Per state law, annexations must be one sixth contiguous to the corporate limits of the City.

Rifle has a rural agricultural history, but is rapidly growing in population and the demand for housing is high. The City encourages commercial and industrial uses that will benefit its growing population. Land uses in areas to be annexed should be compatible with this Comprehensive Plan and the [Future Land Use Map](#).

To assure that growth does not place undue cost burdens on the City, the City will put emphasis on Tier 1 annexations where services can be incorporated into the existing City utilities.

The City shall not favor the annexation of areas for which it does not have the capability or the intention of providing municipal services, with the exception of utility services that are not provided by the City but are provided by other entities in the areas proposed to be annexed and the [Mamm Creek Interchange](#).

4.15 EXTENSION OF MUNICIPAL SERVICES IN UNINCORPORATED AREAS

In areas where municipal services are not presently extended, services will be extended at the City's discretion. Extensions of municipal services shall comply with all City ordinances, policies and standards. The costs and expenses of capital improvements, such as utilities, streets, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, storm drain systems, and other improvements deemed necessary shall be borne by the developer as development within the area occurs.

When annexation is approved, the newly annexed area shall receive the following services:

- ☛ Fire protection
- ☛ Police protection
- ☛ Potable water delivery and waste water collection

- ☞ Maintenance of dedicated City (public) streets
- ☞ Parks and trails
- ☞ Public schools
- ☞ Other City services generally provided to other areas of the City at the time of annexation

An annexation agreement may be prepared between the City and future developers outlining specific requirements relating to potable water, wastewater, storm water drainage, transportation, parks, and other specific improvements prior to annexation approval.

An approved annexation petition will allow developers of the annexed property to connect to City facilities, provided that all infrastructure proposed to be connected meets City standards and specifications and complies with all applicable development and land use ordinances.

Rifle will not extend urban services to unincorporated areas outside of the Urban Containment System (future annexation area) EXCEPT for unique circumstances such as protection of agricultural lands and open space or to facilitate economic development opportunities.

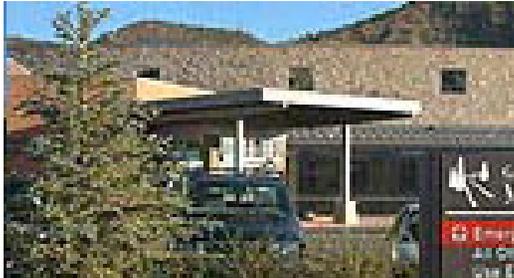
ANNEXATION OBJECTIVES

1. Areas included in an annexation petition must fall within one of the three - **tiered areas** designated for potential future annexation.
2. Current land uses in annexed areas must be compatible with this Comprehensive Plan, the City's Land Use and Development Code, and the **Future Land Use Map**.
3. In considering an annexation request, the City will look favorably upon an annexation proposal which:
 - a. Are in the Tier 1 area identified on the Comprehensive Plan.
 - b. Eliminates and/or does not create islands or peninsulas of unincorporated territory.
 - c. Consolidates overlapping functions of government.
 - d. Promotes efficient delivery of services;
 - e. Encourages the equitable distribution of community resources and obligations.
 - f. Minimizes negative tax consequences for property owners within the area to be annexed, as well as the property owners already within the City.
4. Wherever practical, new City boundaries should conform to the boundaries of special service districts or other taxing entities.
5. The City of Rifle does not intend to annex territory for the sole purpose of acquiring revenues.
6. The costs and expenses of capital improvements, such as utilities, streets, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, storm drain systems, and other improvements deemed necessary in the annexed area, shall be **borne by the developer** as development within the area occurs.
7. The City to work with county to assure that infrastructure in future annexation areas is developed to City Standards.

THE ENERGY VILLAGE
REGIONAL CENTER FOR CULTURE / COMMERCE
DOWNTOWN RIFLE: A CENTER FOR ENTERTAINMENT, RETAIL, AND URBAN LIVING
RIFLE - A "RIVER" TOWN

INTRODUCTION

Rifle has taken the initiative in defining its economic future by commissioning several studies that have identified economic opportunities for the City. In 2005, Vandewalle and Associates performed an Economic Opportunities Assessment. In 2008, BBC Research Consultants produced A Case Study of Community Renewal, Growth and Change in Northwest Colorado, a report that projected growth and economic conditions thirty years into the future. In 2009, Rifle completed a Downtown Master Plan to guide downtown redevelopment. The following "big ideas" incorporates those plans and studies and continuing work of the City Council and Staff to plan for a diverse economic base that buffers the City from the boom and bust cycle common to the energy extraction industry.



5

- The Energy Village
- Regional Center for Culture / Commerce
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AN ENERGY VILLAGE

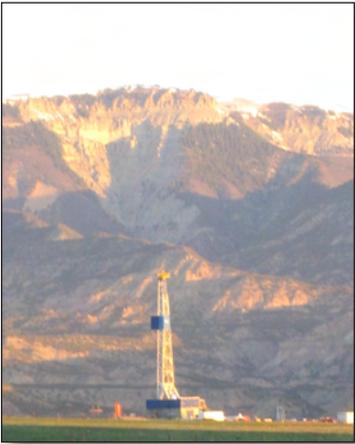


Figure 65: Rifle's energy village concept will use renewable energy to bridge its current oil and gas boom and create a bio-mass and distributed energy future.

In 2005 City Council adopted the **Rifle Economic Opportunities Assessment**, which included a vision of Rifle as an “Energy Village”—*a community that bridges the gap between the current fossil-fuel economy and the evolving renewable energy economy*. Since that time, the City of Rifle has taken a leadership role in implementing the Energy Village vision—investing resources in a diverse economic base through:

- ☛ Construction of the largest municipal solar array in Colorado (1.7 megawatts that powers a wastewater reclamation facility).



Figure 66: One of the first efforts the City took to create an “Energy Village” was the installation of a 2.3 MW solar power plant that supplies the energy for a pump system that diverts water from the nearby Colorado River to Rifle's water treatment plant

- ☛ Involvement with the Garfield-New Energy Communities Initiative.
- ☛ Construction of energy-efficient facilities.
- ☛ Purchase of energy efficient vehicles.
- ☛ Development of the **Energy Innovation Center** concept—a 160 acre, city-owned, renewable energy industrial park.

Going forward, the City of Rifle has many advantages that make leadership in renewable energy a natural role, including:

1. Access to funds and resources from regional, state, and national sources.
2. The opportunity to coordinate with a variety of community partners.
3. The ability to use City codes, operations, facilities, and planning to implement and publicize the Energy Village vision.

The City of Rifle intends to become a leader in energy efficiency and green building technologies that will help protect Rifle from volatile energy prices, keep money in the local economy, and attract the kind of people and businesses that will contribute to a sustainable economic base.

Only through collaboration can opportunities to implement the Energy Village be identified. Rifle will establish partnerships with key community partners to help identify implementation opportunities.

ENERGY VILLAGE OBJECTIVES

1. Plan and implement the **Energy Innovation Center** concept.
2. Implement and continue to develop public/private Energy Village partnerships objectives to bridge the gap between petroleum-based energy and sustainable energy sources including:
 - a. Offer energy audits to all City Departments to encourage energy-efficient and sustainable practices in operations, facilities, and planning. Audits should concentrate on energy efficiency steps that helping reduce operation cost and energy consumption.
 - b. Encouraging the Business and Industrial Sector to pursue business development and job creation in renewable energy, energy-efficiency and sustainable industries. Offer training to the development community (architects, HVAC installers, solar installers, HERS raters, etc.) that focuses on the practical aspects of energy-efficient building design.
 - c. Working with the Building and Development Community to increase the energy-efficiency and sustainability of homes, businesses, and neighborhoods.

- d. Encouraging the Rifle Community At-Large to create partnerships to engage the wider Rifle community in the Energy Village vision - our schools, clubs, non-profits, and others.
 - e. Continuing to develop the partnerships with the Governor's Energy Office to advance all Energy Village objectives.
3. Encourage energy audits and energy efficiency upgrades (e.g., insulation) for existing building stock.
 4. Adopt high energy efficiency standards for new development.



Figure 67: Energy Innovation Center
Click on the image to view the Future Land Use Map

A REGIONAL CENTER FOR CULTURE AND COMMERCE

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BBC Research and Consulting's study of the economic future of the region entitled the **Northwest Colorado Socioeconomic Analysis and Forecasts** demonstrated the need for growth proximate to the Upper Colorado River Valley's three major industries: outdoor recreation, tourism, and energy. With many other cities in the region effectively built-out, Rifle has an opportunity to fill this "market" and provide the amenities of a mid-sized city that are lacking in the region—a vibrant, urban downtown; a robust parks and trails system; local, regional and national shopping opportunities; and a choice of housing types and living environments. Furthermore, there is a market for a city within commuting distance to world-class resorts in the Vail and Roaring Fork Valleys that retains an affordability lacking in the resort towns.

Rifle is uniquely situated to take advantage of this opportunity. Rifle is within an hour drive of the Vail and Roaring Fork Valleys, and is at the center of the oil and gas industry. Rifle has the developable land and water rights to support a mid-sized city. Rifle's downtown has the opportunity for redevelopment into a vital mixed-use urban center, within a landscape that preserves the traditionally western lifestyle that forms Rifle's heritage. Taking all of these attributes into account Rifle is uniquely situated to become the employment, retail, entertainment, and cultural center for the Upper Colorado River Valley.

REGIONAL CENTER OBJECTIVES

1. Position Rifle as the regional economic center for the Upper Colorado River Valley.
2. Attract a diverse base of industries and businesses that provide high-skilled, high-wage labor and reduce reliance on a single industry while ensuring a sustainable and long-lasting sales tax base.
3. Attract a wide array of national and local retailers to make Rifle a commercial hub of the region.
4. Carefully and continually evaluate the need to entitle and/or annex high-quality industrial and business sites.
5. Support the concept of an "Incubation Center" at the Colorado Mountain College to provide educational opportunities for Rifle residents and serve as innovation incubator for local businesses.
6. Promote the Rifle-Garfield County Airport as a regional travel center.
7. Support the creation of senior and retirement related businesses and facilities.
8. Support the creation of a new recreation center and a health and wellness center.
9. Explore whether the city can/should provide incentives to attract retail and commercial development to Rifle (such as sales tax sharing and public infrastructure investments).

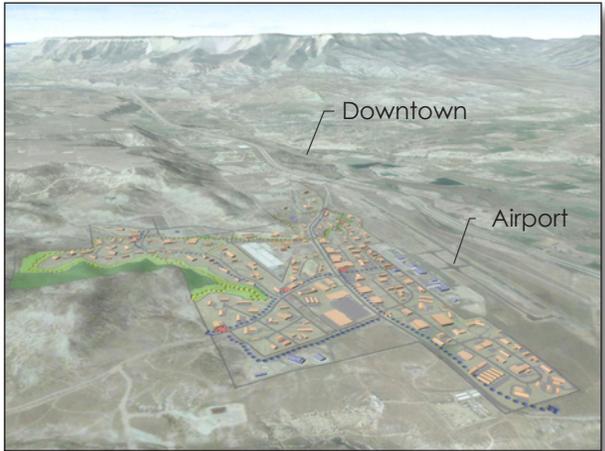


Figure 68: The expansion of the Garfield County Airport and growth of the surrounding Rifle Airpark will help position Rifle as a regional economic center

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DOWNTOWN RIFLE - A CENTER FOR ENTERTAINMENT, RETAIL AND URBAN LIVING

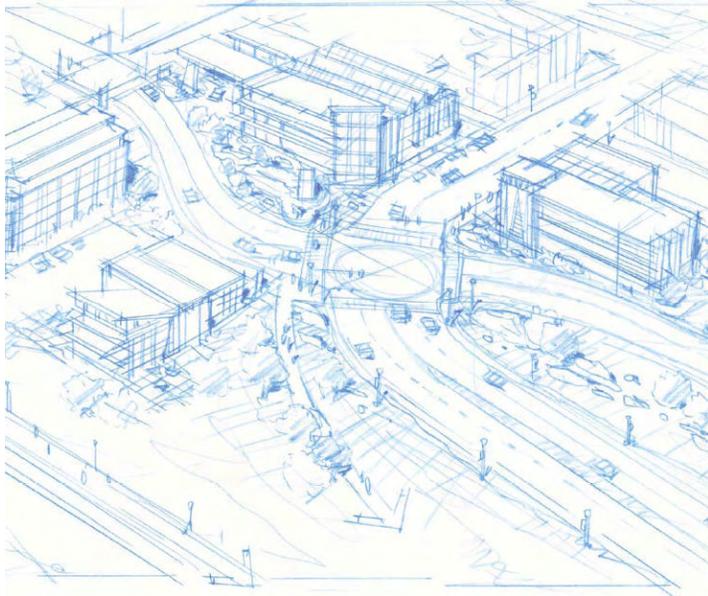


Figure 69: The Downtown Master Plan seeks to position Rifle as a regional center. Source: Vandewalle & Associates, Inc.

Downtown Rifle's central location at the junction State Highway 6 / 24 and State Highway 13, adjacent to the Interstate 70 Main Rifle Interchange, positions it to become the heart of entertainment, retail and urban living on the Western Slope. The Downtown Master Plan, adopted by the City in 2008, envisions a high-density, mixed-use character. Some locations may be appropriate for buildings up to 8 stories, while Rifle's historic core will retain the two- or three-story character that defines it today. This density will provide the residential capacity necessary to support a strong commercial component that includes a diversity of shopping, amenities, and daily needs. The Downtown Master Plan lays out general guidance to help the city grow while maintaining attractive and functional urban design.

Downtown Rifle is the logical location for offices, businesses, and residences. A vibrant, attractive downtown with access to the Rifle Creek Greenway will make the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods desirable places to live, work and play.

For more information on Downtown Rifle, see the Downtown Rifle Subarea.

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- The Energy Village
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RIFLE - A "RIVER" TOWN



Figure 70: The *Main Rifle Interchange* will require a master plan that takes advantage of the river setting. The *East Gateway Subarea Plan* oriented development to take advantage of the river viewshed.

The Colorado River has been a largely overlooked natural asset for Rifle. The river corridor can serve as a natural amenity attracting tourists and as a unifying feature for residents and businesses. Symbolically, the Colorado River is a dividing line between historic Rifle and the new Rifle along the Interstate. The architecture and planning around the river should be unique, but it must have unifying features and common elements on both sides. The existing bridge for vehicular traffic and the older steel bridge should be retrofitted to encourage pedestrian traffic and establish the river corridor as a gateway piece to the downtown.

"RIVER TOWN" OBJECTIVES

1. Promote the image of Rifle as a "River Town".
 - a. Support recreational opportunities involving the Colorado River.
 - b. Connect Rifle to the Colorado River with a system of trails and parks.
 - c. Buildings on the south end of Downtown Rifle should be oriented to take advantage of the river corridor viewsheds.
 - d. Property adjacent to the Colorado Department of Transportation's (CDOT) rest area will be master planned in a manner that takes advantage of the river setting, proximity to Downtown Rifle and the Interstate 70 Corridor.



Figure 71: The City seeks to ensure future development throughout the City takes advantage of proximity to the Colorado River. For more information on the Colorado River, see the *Hydrology* section.

A HIGHLY LIVEABLE COMMUNITY

<p>IMPROVE FIRST IMPRESSIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.1 Create Entryway Identification at Key Entry Points 6.2 Improving Key Corridors 6.3 Plant City-wide Street Trees <p>INFRASTRUCTURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.4 Public Services / Utilities <p>SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.5 School Locations and Municipal Planning 6.6 School District / Parks and Recreation Department Shared Facilities, Co-Location and Maintenance Agreement 6.7 Relocation of Esma Lewis Middle School 6.8 Safe Routes to School 6.9 The Garfield School District 6.10 Higher Education 6.11 Growth and Schools <p>EMERGENCY SERVICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.12 Law Enforcement 6.13 Fire Protection / Emergency Medical Services (EMS) 6.14 Central Dispatch Center 	<p>PARKS, RECREATION, AND TRAILS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.15 Rifle Parks and Recreation Today 6.16 Park Types 6.17 Parks and Schools 6.18 Park Dedications / Impact Feeds 6.19 Local and Regional Trails <p>AFFORDABLE HOUSING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.20 A Range of Housing Types and Prices 6.21 Existing Housing Stock/Affordability 6.22 Regional Housing Strategy 6.23 Redevelop Dilapidated Housing/ Promote Mixed-Use Development <p>TRANSPORTATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.24 Key Roadways in Our Community 6.25 Rifle Transportation Master Plan 6.26 Key Transportation Principles <p>PROTECTING NATURAL RESOURCES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.27 Topography / Geologic Hazards 6.28 Hydrology 6.29 Wetlands 6.30 Wildlife Ecosystems / Vegetation <p>OPEN SPACE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.31 Agricultural Lands 6.32 Public Lands 6.33 Open Space Preservation Techniques
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INTRODUCTION

What does it mean to create a highly livable community for the citizens of Rifle? A highly livable community needs quality infrastructure systems (e.g. water, wastewater, sanitation and storm sewer systems that ensure a healthy water supply). It needs a quality school system, an efficient and multimodal transportation system and a variety of affordable housing options. It needs parks and recreation facilities that offer healthy and fun lifestyle choices, and a highly livable community requires the protection of the surrounding natural resources and environment.

The following chapter details how the City can plan for each of these critical components and integrate them into a realistic plan of action.



- 6**
- Improve First Impressions
 - Infrastructure
 - Schools
 - Emergency Services
 - Parks, Recreation, and Trails
 - Affordable Housing
 - Transportation
 - Protecting Natural Resources
 - Open Space

IMPROVE FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF RIFLE

6.1 CREATE ENTRYWAY IDENTIFICATION AT KEY ENTRY POINTS

Citizens who attended the comprehensive plan workshops identified the need to improve Rifle's image and visibility. It was also suggested that Rifle develop an individual, unique identity. Entry signs are a relatively small capital investment that can yield big results. The signs should be designed as "a package" or "family of signs". This means that materials, colors and text styles on signs should have a similar look and feel. By doing so, the signs will have a uniformity while not being overly rigid or conforming. The signs should be constructed of permanent materials and incorporate the City logo and or City name. The following specific projects and implementation strategies can greatly improve Rifle's image and identity:

- **Mamm Creek Interchange:** Capitalize on outstanding views of the Roan Plateau with "gateway" entry signage in association with aesthetic upgrades of this highly visible bridge over Interstate 70.
- **Rifle Roundabouts:** New roundabouts (under construction) on the south and north exits of the **Main Rifle interchange** will not only improve traffic flows, will be generously land-

scaped, and will incorporate public art installations.

- **Rifle Creek Bridge on State Highway 6:** The Bridge is a natural "gateway" to Downtown Rifle from the west on State Highway 6. Incorporate pedestrian way, aesthetic bridge upgrades, lights, and banners.
- **State Highway 13 (North Rifle Entry):** A "Welcome to Rifle" sign should greet travelers as they enter the City.
- **The West Rifle Interchange, the Northwest Colorado Gateway:** Install Interstate 70 signage to emphasize that State Highway 13 is one of the only Western Colorado Highways that accesses Northwest Colorado.

The **Future Land Use Map** has each gateway identified.

GATEWAY IDENTIFICATION OBJECTIVES

1. Commission graphic artist or signage consultant to confirm gateway locations and develop design concepts and cost estimates.
2. Work with Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to install signage at Mamm Creek and West Rifle interchanges.
3. Explore corporate sponsorship for signage program.
4. Make a comprehensive effort to coordinate graphic imagery used to market Rifle, including logos and signs.

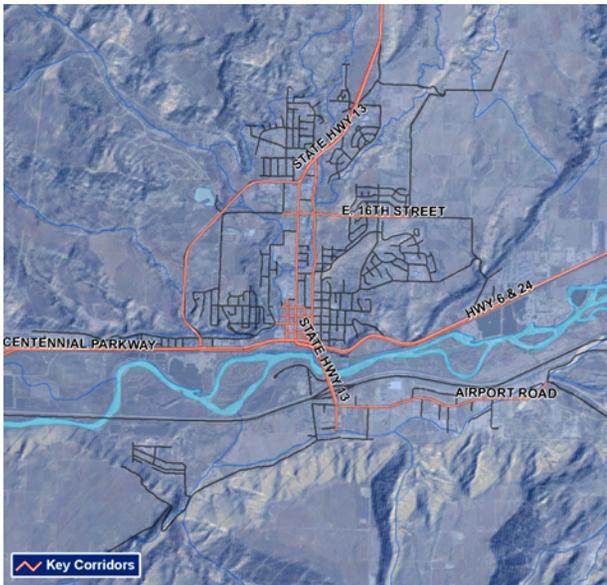


Figure 72: Rifle should protect its key corridors from unsightly land uses and ensure these thoroughfares protect the City's image

6.2 IMPROVING KEY CORRIDORS

First impressions at strategic gateways are imperative, but lasting impressions are created as people travel through the city. Throughout the City, highway and arterial corridors welcome visitors to the City while creating a distinctive identity. Rifle should protect its key corridors from unsightly land uses and ensure these thoroughfares protect the City's image.

Rifle's Key Corridors include:

- ☞ Airport Road
- ☞ Centennial Parkway (aka State Highway 6 & 24)
- ☞ Railroad Avenue
- ☞ State Highway 13
- ☞ Whiteriver Avenue
- ☞ 16th Street
- ☞ The Interstate 70 Interchange Areas
- ☞ Taughenbaugh Boulevard
- ☞ The entire Downtown street network

KEY CORRIDOR OBJECTIVES

1. To protect the City's image key corridors should include:
 - a. **Street trees and landscape**
 - b. Buildings fronting on the corridor (building back should not "front" key corridors)
 - c. Screened surface parking
 - d. Consolidated signage
2. Rifle must ensure adequate resources to maintain street trees and landscape.

6.3 PLANT CITY-WIDE STREET TREES

Street trees are more essential to the atmosphere, charm and value of a place than most people realize. To grasp their importance, think about the difference between an older residential streets like East Avenue in Rifle versus a subdivision without any street trees. The trees provide a sheltered, comfortable feeling that is irreplaceable yet takes decades to reach full maturity. That is why it is essential to begin planning for street trees now - so that future residents will enjoy the benefits.

A citizen-led street tree planting initiative would be one way to promote street trees in areas where they were not included when originally developed. Rifle residents can literally "plant a seed" for their children. For relatively low initial and maintenance costs, the City can develop a tree-planting program bringing welcomed shade, bird and wildlife habi-

tat, citizen participation, pride and ownership and aesthetic beauty to current and future citizens of Rifle. For more information about street trees, see [landscape standards](#).

STREET TREE OBJECTIVES

1. In conjunction with Arbor Day or a local spring or fall festival provide street tree seedlings or 'whips' to residents with planting directions. Modeled after Denver's "Park People" program, which donates thousands of trees annually for volunteer planting.
2. Install irrigation and street trees in visible locations on major streets as City budgeting permits.

- 6
- Improve First Impressions
 - Infrastructure
 - Schools
 - Emergency Services
 - Parks, Recreation, and Trails
 - Affordable Housing
 - Transportation
 - Protecting Natural Resources
 - Open Space

INFRASTRUCTURE

As the extraction industry grows and Rifle's population increases, utility infrastructure must keep pace with development. The City is facing the need to expand services to accommodate growth, but faces the risk that growth may not materialize to **pay for the infrastructure** that was built to prepare for it. Thus, this section identifies how the City can proceed carefully when planning and funding new infrastructure.

INFRASTRUCTURE OBJECTIVES

1. Design, build & maintain infrastructure and services for Rifle's citizens in the most cost-effective manner possible.
2. Carefully evaluate impacts of new development and mitigate them.
3. Ensure that the City has adequate facilities for all new development.

6.4 PUBLIC SERVICES / UTILITIES

A frequently accepted assumption is that more development will increase the real estate tax base and therefore augment the municipal budget. While additional tax revenues are generated as growth occurs, **the cost of new services demanded by residents often outpaces the tax income**. This is particularly true in communities where residential growth exceeds commercial development, and in towns that attract families with school-age children.

At present, demands for community services in Rifle do not exceed the existing supply. These services, which include utilities, schools, fire, and police protection, were extended and supplemented during the oil shale boom era and have been incrementally upgraded since that time.

CURRENT AND PROJECTED WATER SUPPLY

Like many Western communities, Rifle's growth is tied to the availability of water. Due to the low annual precipitation rate (14 inches / year), water is Rifle's most precious resource.

The City of Rifle has developed extensive water facilities within much of the Comprehensive Plan study

area. The existing service area of Rifle's Water and Wastewater Utility System generally coincides with the boundaries of the City and is considered adequate to serve existing sources as well as additional growth. The Utility presently provides water from two locations. The main water production facility is located at Graham Mesa Water Treatment Plant and a second production facility approximately one mile southwest of the City at Beaver Creek. Current City demand of the Graham Mesa Water Treatment Plant is approximately 4.5 million gallons/day (MGD) during summer months and 0.90 to 1.2 MGD during the winter months. The City upgraded the capacity at the facility in the early 1990's to accommodate future demand. This facility is now over 30 years old, cannot meet present regulations at 7.5 MGD and is due for replacement with a modern water purification facility. The Beaver Creek Water Plant, located south of the Colorado River, supplies about 400,000 gallons per day and has a 500,000 gallon storage tank. Currently it provides service to the Rifle Village South community and the Airport Road service area.

During the late 70s and early 80s, facilities were upgraded in tandem with residential and commercial growth. Not only were utility services granted to serve new development near the city boundaries, but were expanded to unincorporated developments as well. While the water treatment facilities are equipped to serve existing development, various legal and physical supply challenges impede expansion of infrastructure beyond the current system limits. In particular, pressure zone limitations posed

by topographic relief will obstruct water distribution in areas of higher elevations. Residential neighborhoods that are located on upland mesas, such as Highlands East, will continue to require a pumping system that creates added maintenance and operational costs, which can be accommodated by a fee structure where this occurs.

To ensure appropriate distribution and adequate amounts of water, the City has developed a computer model for determining impacts and capacity deficiencies based on anticipated demands. The City requires that new development determine levels of use and address impacts. The model has identified a number of deficiencies that concern

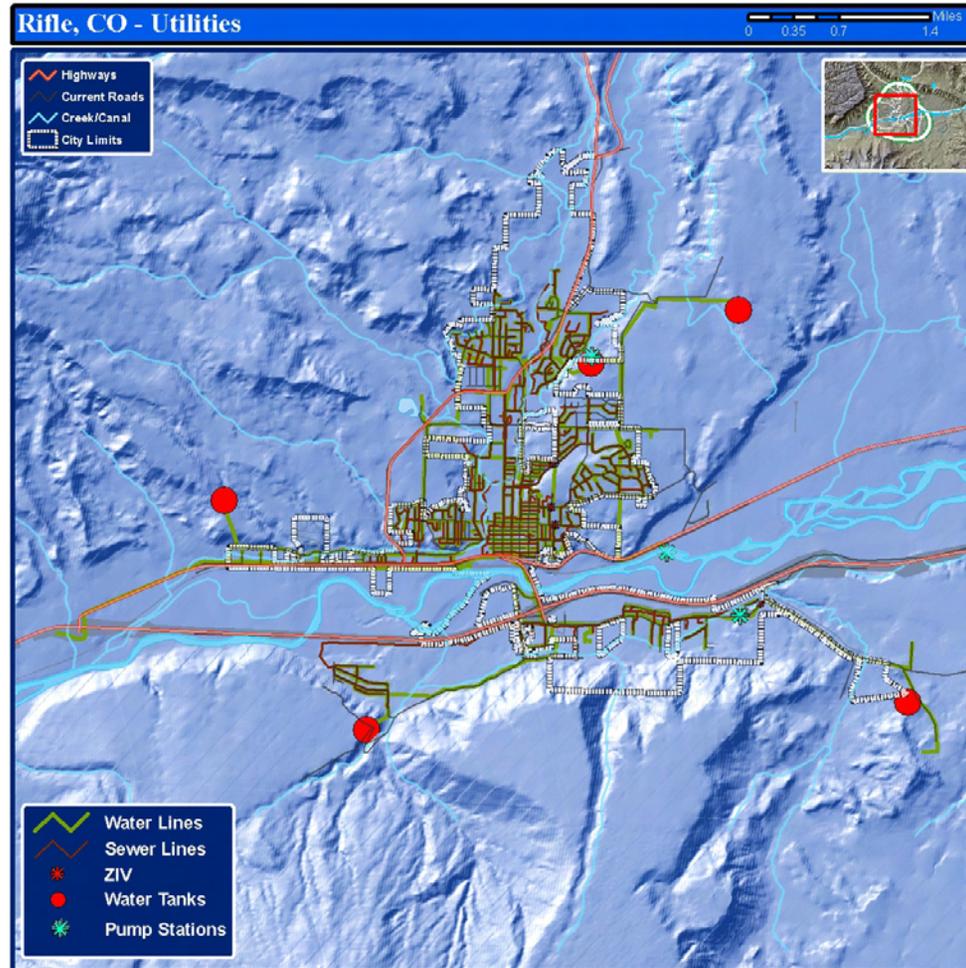


Figure 73: Waterline Map

water distribution, for example in the vicinity of West Second Street and **State Highway 6/24**, as well as other more isolated areas. These deficiencies will be corrected in the future. The city of Rifle currently has adequate raw water rights to support a community of approximately 25,000 (7.5 MGD) people. It is Rifle's policy to continue to acquire additional water rights as development continues.

To assure that new development is "**paying its own way**" it must provide to the City adequate water rights to serve the development. This may be done via water transfers or fee-in-lieu, this gives the City the flexibility to purchase and or transfer water rights.

Water conservation measures will be needed to ensure that available water sources can support growth as it occurs. In Rifle, the most significant water reduction can come through landscaping practices conducive to an arid climate. Three strategies:

- Evaluate using "raw water" (less than fully treated water) for irrigation.



Figure 74: Xeriscape is an attractive landscape alternative that reduces water consumption in Rifle's arid climate.

- Limit the size of irrigated lawns on residences.
- Increase the use of low-water (xeric) landscape materials.

WATER OBJECTIVES

1. New development must provide adequate water rights to serve itself and properties annexing to Rifle will dedicate groundwater rights to the City.
2. The City should implement the water conservation measures identified in the City of Rifle "Water Conservation Plan", including, but not limited to:
 - a. Adopting water conservation measures including "Xeriscape" landscape design principles and a reduction turf grass or irrigated areas.
 - b. Installing of water-saving plumbing.
 - c. Installing irrigation control systems that respond to weather and reduce water runoff.
 - d. Encouraging users of large amounts of water for landscaping and other exterior purposes to use "secondary" irrigation water rather than potable water.
3. Design and construct water plant to process Colorado River water for known future water needs as well as to improve water quality for current water users.

4. Offer continuing education to plant operators and O&M crew.
5. Continually evaluate energy use, system efficiency, water quality improvements, and rate structure equity.
6. Develop a tiered rate structure to encourage water conservation and considered use of this most precious resource.

WASTEWATER

The City of Rifle currently operates two wastewater treatment plants. One is the "North Wastewater Plant" west of the downtown approximately 1 mile on the south side of **West Centennial Parkway**, and the second is the "South Wastewater Treatment Plant" south of Interstate 70 and west of **Taughenbaugh Boulevard**. Both plants are aerated lagoon type plants and are adequate for today's wastewater needs. It is projected growth, however, that they cannot accommodate. The two existing plants are outdated in their effluent water quality protection.

A new mechanical treatment plant is being constructed on the 140 acre, City-owned west Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action (UMTRA) site. This plant is proposed to be in operation by fall of 2009. The new mechanized treatment plant will be designed to treat up to 2,000,000 gallons per day (MGD). At a 4.5 % growth rate, this capacity will provide approximately 12-15 years of service to the City before an additional 2.0 MGD expansion would be necessary.

The new treatment facility will meet stricter requirements for the Colorado River endangered species protection as set forth by the Colorado Department

WASTEWATER OBJECTIVES

of Health and Environment.

1. Provide environmentally sound and efficient collection and reclamation of municipal wastewater.
2. Utilize state-of-the art treatment techniques.
3. Evaluate and maintain sewer mains in a timely manner.
4. Provide continuing education to plant operators and O&M crew.
5. Evaluate options for the expansion of wastewater service for Rifle's planning area.

SANITATION OBJECTIVES

1. Investigate cost effective and efficient ways for the City to improve and promote easier recycling (e.g. curbside recycling).

SANITATION

The City of Rifle operates a Sanitation Department with an operating budget of approximately \$465,000 for 2006. The Sanitation Department is operated as an enterprise fund and is not funded through the general fund of the City.

There are currently 1.6 full time employees in the Sanitation District. Trash pick up occurs 4 days a week. This system can be expanded to five days a week when demand arises. Weekly "special" pick ups occur on an on-call basis. This happens 48 weeks of the year. Categories for these special pick ups follow:

- ☞ tires, batteries and oil
- ☞ appliances (these items are deposited at the landfill)
- ☞ furniture (these items are deposited at salvage yard)
- ☞ yard debris

The City operates one recycling center. It is a drop off center. Currently, people must sort, drive their recyclables to this center and drop them off in various bins. Waste Management collects the recycle containers and transports them to their center in Grand Junction.

STORM DRAIN, RUN-OFF AND WATER RETENTION

Run off occurs when precipitation hits impermeable or saturated surfaces. Run-off can cause a number of problems including erosion, flooding, etc. Storm drains help reduce the impacts of impermeable surfaces by strategically routing run-off. Retention ponds help to reduce the cumulative impact of run-off by storing some of run-off on site.

STORM DRAIN, RUN OFF AND WATER RETENTION OBJECTIVES

1. Manage stormwater to protect against property loss and ensure compliance with federal water quality standards and FEMA floodplain regulations.
2. Carefully, evaluate and monitor development activities along Government Creek, Rifle Creek, Hubbard Gulch, and below mesas in south Rifle.

SCHOOLS

- 6
- Improve First Impressions
 - Infrastructure
 - Schools
 - Emergency Services
 - Parks, Recreation, and Trails
 - Affordable Housing
 - Transportation
 - Protecting Natural Resources
 - Open Space

6.5 SCHOOL LOCATIONS AND MUNICIPAL PLANNING

As residential prices typically increase with increased proximity to schools, they have a major, and sometimes detrimental influence on community form. School districts will often reduce capital costs by developing new facilities on cheap land. Cheap land is located at the urban fringe, therefore schools develop at the urban fringe. New schools facilities increase proximate residential demand. Providing services to these newly desirable areas increases municipal capital and maintenance fees. This "leap-frog" development is in direct conflict with the desired sustainable development pattern the City wants to achieve.

A key principle of community form in Rifle is the creation of **traditional neighborhoods**. One component

of traditional neighborhoods is the planning and locating of schools throughout residential neighborhoods so schools become walkable.

Other desirable school site characteristics include:

- ☛ Central to population served to minimize travel time.
- ☛ Next to parks and open space (especially at the elementary level for outdoor learning).
- ☛ Elementary and middle school sites within residential developments.
- ☛ Infrastructure next to the site, including street, gas and electric, water, sewer, storm water, police and fire protection services.
- ☛ No geotechnical or floodplain constraints.

- ☛ Relatively flat, rectangular sites.
- ☛ Elementary and middle schools on collector streets.
- ☛ High school sites on collector or arterial streets.
- ☛ Linkages with pedestrian trail systems.

In the comprehensive plan process Rifle examined City's population at buildout and approximated the number of school facilities required to serve that population. The City then located the approximate number of school necessary. The **Future Land Use Map** has general locations where schools are desired.

SCHOOL	GRADE	ENROLLMENT FALL 2006	PROJECTED 2007 (4% GROWTH)	CAPACITY
Graham Mesa Elementary	K-4	n/a	n/a	n/a
Wamsley Elementary	K-4	495	515	425
Highland Elementary	K-4	505	525	500
Rifle Middle School	5-8	718	747	750
Rifle High School	9-12	721	695	900

Table 3: School Information Summary

6.6 SCHOOL DISTRICT / PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT SHARED FACILITIES, CO-LOCATION AND MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT

A school primarily function is education, a parks and recreation department's primary function is the provision of parks and recreation, facilities and services. The City should work with Garfield School District to co-locate schools and parks and create shared facilities and maintenance agreements that keep each focused on its primary function. This will help create operational efficiency and reduce costs.

6.7 RELOCATION OF ESMA LEWIS MIDDLE SCHOOL

Esma Lewis Middle School is currently situated in Downtown Rifle. As Rifle's Downtown grows, dense residential development and expanded multimodal circulation options are integral to its success. One option anticipates the Esma Lewis Middle School

Figure 75: The City anticipates the relocation of Esma Lewis Middle School out of Downtown Rifle to make room for residential development



transition out of Downtown Rifle. If that were to occur, the City would like to see the facility replaced with more appropriate urban residential land uses and a small "urban", i.e. two-story, elementary school. As the High School seeks another location, the City recommends Graham Mesa as an ideal location for the new High School and locating the middle school on the old high school site.

6.8 SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Safe routes to school is a national program with sustained efforts by parents, other community members, community leaders and local, state, and federal governments to improve the health and well-being of children by enabling and encouraging them to walk and bicycle to school. There is more information on this program and the application of the program principals in Section [Funding Potential / Resources](#).

6.9 THE GARFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Garfield School District No Re-2 currently operates ten schools in the Rifle-Silt-New Castle Trade Area. Within the City of Rifle, the District operates five schools.

6.10 HIGHER EDUCATION

In addition to public schools, Colorado Mountain College provides adult education programs in vocational and technical training.

6.11 GROWTH AND SCHOOLS

Growth in Rifle has resulted in overcrowded schools. Between 2001 and 2007 enrollment grew by 17 percent. Growth has increased the assessed valuation that enabled the district to pass bonds for capital improvements.

Growth is also taxing the schools in other ways. With energy-related jobs often paying more than school jobs, many school maintenance staff and bus drivers are shifting to the oil and gas industry and the district is finding it more difficult to attract workers. As housing costs rise, recruitment of teachers is becoming increasingly difficult.

SCHOOL OBJECTIVES

1. Ongoing collaboration and regular communication with the Garfield School District No Re-2 is beneficial to the City of Rifle for purposes of locating future school sites so that selected locations best meet the needs of the district and the City.
2. The City will cooperate with the Garfield RE-2 School District to plan future school facilities, helping to predict road and utility needs. To that end the City shall assist the School Districts in identifying and reserving land for school facilities so as to reduce the need for school acquisition and construction before development.

3. To reduce costs of both schools and parks the City will explore joint development of school sites (elementary, middle and high schools) for neighborhood parks, when public accessibility meets the neighborhood's needs.
4. The City will work with the Garfield RE-2 School District to create facility uses and maintenance agreements with the goal of reducing overall cost and increasing efficiency.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

- 6
- Improve First Impressions
 - Infrastructure
 - Schools
 - Emergency Services
 - Parks, Recreation, and Trails
 - Affordable Housing
 - Transportation
 - Protecting Natural Resources
 - Open Space

6.12 LAW ENFORCEMENT

As Rifle has grown the law enforcement staff has been increased in recent years. The City of Rifle Police Department maintains a staff of 17 persons; including the Chief, a lieutenant three sergeants, one detective and eleven patrol officers.

Rifle has a high percentage of commuting labor force which can contribute to a less stable community and can deprive neighborhoods of their “self-policing power.” Commuters often leave early, arrive back in Rifle late and lack identification with their home or their work location. They spend the majority of their time in the location of employment, yet they neither contribute to the tax base nor send their children to school in those communities. Little time is available to participate in activities that add to the cohesiveness of the community at large. Not only does neighborhood surveillance depreciate, but the number of “latch key” youth has increased which may attribute to a rise in juvenile crime. Concerns that pose potential law enforcement problems include:

- ☞ Policing **medium and high-density developments** where historically poor design has led to increased criminal activity.

- ☞ Lack of residential neighborhoods to “self-police” due to the high number of commuters.
- ☞ High number of temporary renters lack civic responsibility and feeling of ownership in the community.
- ☞ Enclaves and concentrated areas of low-income housing developments.
- ☞ Alcohol and drug use / abuse in the community.

6.13 FIRE PROTECTION / EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS)

Fire protection and emergency medical services – including ambulance services- for Rifle is provided by a “combination department”. That department has 17 full-time firefighter/emergency medical technicians (EMT), and with 40 volunteers and furnishes service. This force serves a large area that extends beyond the current City boundaries for a total of 411 square miles. The District operates a main station at 1850 **Railroad Avenue**. An unstaffed second station at the Rifle-Garfield County Airport (This is inter-agency fire station which by an intergovernmental agreement allows use by the BLM and Forest service firefighters) is used primarily for equipment storage.

Major fire safety issues pertain to road access and route options. Concerns that pose potential emergency access problems include:

- ☞ Increased traffic generated by retail business community along **Airport Road**.
- ☞ Existing City ladder truck does not meet the needs of new retail development on Airport Road (Wal-Mart, La Quinta).
- ☞ Dramatic increase in “simultaneous multi-calls” (will eventually require an additional station and associated personnel).
- ☞ Traffic congestion along Railroad Avenue, (emergency crews are instructed to use the bypass as alternate route).
- ☞ Uncontrolled, singular access to residential areas from Railroad Avenue.
- ☞ Unmaintained access to Grass Mesa rural residential areas.
- ☞ Cul-de-sac street patterns.
- ☞ Singular access to Rifle Village South residential area.

Other safety issues are related to wildlife hazards. Although the country has adopted wildfire regulations, the local fire district is responsible for providing area protection. The greatest areas of wildfire hazard often occur near the interface of developed and agricultural sagebrush rangeland.

6.14 CENTRAL DISPATCH CENTER

Rifle is home to the Garfield County Emergency Communication Authority. This critical service provider was established in 2001 and is funded by a county-wide sales tax and 911 surcharges. The Authority is governed by a 7-member executive board and a 16- general member board. The Rifle-based Emergency Communication Authority staff of 23 handles approximately 100,000 calls on an annual basis. These calls can originate from any of the municipalities within Garfield County and range from police and fire emergencies to various kinds of non-emergency calls. In Rifle, the authority has been responsible for generating reverse 911 calls for events such as water main breaks or evacuations.

PARKS, RECREATION, AND TRAILS

- 6
- Improve First Impressions
 - Infrastructure
 - Schools
 - Emergency Services
 - Parks, Recreation, and Trails
 - Affordable Housing
 - Transportation
 - Protecting Natural Resources
 - Open Space

Parks and Recreation are important aspects of a healthy community. As Rifle grows it will experience increasing demand for parks, open space and trails. These three components provide a framework for future development as well as an interconnected “green space” that binds the community. They are also an effective economic development tool. Recreation events can even be a source of revenue and recognition for a community as they bring visitors to town (e.g. softball tournaments, golfing and children’s sports leagues).



Figure 76: Parks are an essential component of a healthy and desirable community

The City of Rifle enjoys a special setting of natural resources and recreational opportunities. During summer months, the mountains and mesas that lie to the north and west offer diverse opportunities for participation in water sports, hiking, and camping. Winter activities include cross-country skiing and snowmobiling. During the fall waterfowl, deer, and elk hunting activities attract hunters.

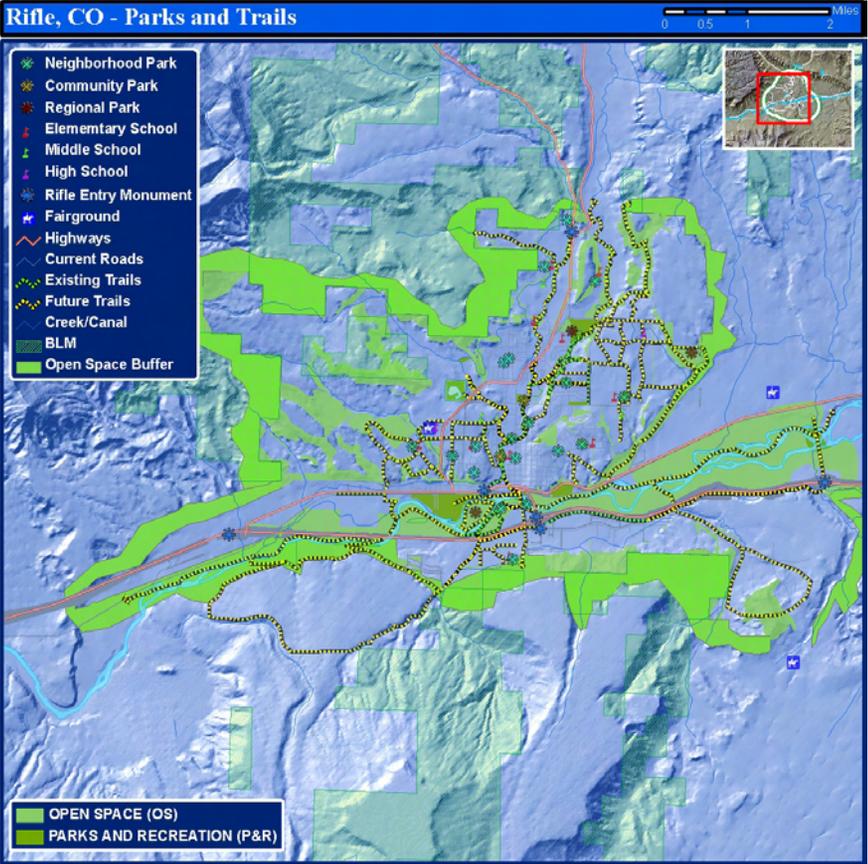


Figure 77: Parks and Trails in and around Rifle
Click the image to view the Future Land Use Map in detail.

6.15 RIFLE PARKS AND RECREATION TODAY

The City's parks and recreation mission¹ is:

"To put forth the highest level of parks, programs, facilities, and services necessary to establish Rifle as a premier community on the Western Slope"

The six primary goals for the Rifle Parks and Recreation Department to accomplish:

1. Promote healthy lifestyles through year-round recreational and leisure opportunities.
2. Complete, landscape and beautify all parks.
3. Complete trail system to provide safe transportation throughout our community.
4. Insure a rational and balanced investment of park and recreation funds for recreation programs, parks, trails, open space and reserves.
5. Provide facilities capable of offering efficient customer service and facility maintenance.
6. Partner with other organizations and groups to improve and expand park and recreation opportunities.

Park and recreation facilities within the community of Rifle have developed over several decades. The City Parks and Recreation Department oversees a wide range of facilities, from developed urban parks and open spaces to more remote, wilderness areas.

¹ *City of Rifle Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Strategic Plan of 2008*

Rifle's main urban recreation facilities include Metro Park and the newly developed Deerfield Park. These facilities are designed to accommodate specific uses such as baseball, soccer, tennis, and swimming. Future expansion of the system includes additional phases of the Deerfield complex. Approximately ten miles north of Rifle, the City manages Rifle Mountain Park which is well known for its excellent rock climbing and hiking trails.

The City is currently studying the feasibility of a new community center that could become an "integrated health care facility" that would share costs of facilities and programs with a local medical center.

A 1-cent sales tax for Parks and Recreation projects was passed by a wide margin in November of 2005. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and the City Council jointly prioritize and allocate these funds to Rifle parks and recreation projects. This has been a productive source of funds and will be an ongoing tax revenue stream for the department. This fund has already yielded some significant improvements:

- ☛ Park signs in all city parks
- ☛ Pool improvements
- ☛ Action Skateboard Park at the southeast corner of Metro Park
- ☛ Scoreboards in Deerfield Park
- ☛ Playgrounds in Heinze, Davidson and Deerfield Parks
- ☛ Playground Surfacing made from recycled tires

- ☛ Picnic Shelters at Davidson Park
- ☛ Traveller Bus has increased participation in the senior trips program
- ☛ Sunlight Winter Sports Bus
- ☛ Rec Round Up ads to keep citizens informed
- ☛ New Employee – A recreation coordinator for the aquatics position was hired
- ☛ Library donation to the Summer reading program

6.16 PARK TYPES

POCKET PARKS

Pocket parks are located in a dense and high intensity urban environment. They are typically under an acre in size. Pocket parks provide shade and sitting areas and may contain a water feature, a monument, or art. Pocket parks provide a desirable location for relaxing in the urban environment and opportunities for the public to gather. Pocket parks are not located on the [Future Land Use Map](#), but will be located throughout [Downtown](#) as it redevelops.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Neighborhood parks, typically 3 to 5 acres in size, are usually within walking distance from the population they serve. Neighborhood parks usually include an interior trail, which connects to the neighborhood served, a playground with an open play area, a pavilion, a minimal parking area, a basketball court

and/or sand volleyball. Neighborhood parks usually have a much more intensive day-to-day use than community parks. General neighborhood parks locations are shown on the [Future Land Use Map](#) and should be planned and constructed in conjunction with each neighborhood/subdivision. Neighborhood parks should be [co-located with elementary schools](#).

COMMUNITY PARKS

Community parks, typically 10 to 15 acres in size, are “drive-to” parks that usually provide neighborhood park facilities as well as larger intense recreational facilities, such as athletic complexes or large swimming pools. They may include natural areas for outdoor recreation such as walking, viewing, sitting or picnicking. There may be any combination of the above, depending upon site suitability and community needs. Note that community parks often serve dual purposes; these areas also function as neighborhood parks for residences within walking distance. These community parks should connect to the proposed trail network.

REGIONAL PARKS

Regional Park is a term used for an area of land preserved for its natural beauty, historic interest, or another reason. The Comprehensive Plan suggests two new regional parks proposed in Rifle. The first new regional park is proposed on the eastern side of Graham Mesa and suggested for acquisition and construction when Tier 2 develops, the second is located on an Island in the Colorado River between the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) rest area and Downtown.

6.17 PARKS AND SCHOOLS

For economy of use, parks and recreation facilities should be developed adjacent to, or in conjunction with schools. The cost of development and maintenance should be shared between the School District and the City.

The City should work with the School District to create shared facilities, co-location and maintenance agreements. (See [Section 6.7](#))

6.18 PARK DEDICATIONS/IMPACT FEES

To quantify park needs many communities adopt Level-of-Service (LOS) standards. LOS standards, usually in the form of acres-per-thousand population, allow a municipality to project park needs as the population grows. To assure that park facilities needed by new growth don't place an undue financial burden on existing residents, the City requires either a dedication of parkland or payment of a fee instead of dedication (a fee-in-lieu). The City accumulates park land and impact fees and uses them to create parks to serve the new residents. Park impact dedication/fees are assessed when building permits are issued. Until recently the fee assessed was approximately \$500 per household. The City is currently updating this fee. The suggested update is to increase the impact fee in lieu of dedication to approximately 1500.00 to achieve an overall desired LOS of approximately 9 acres per thousand.

6.19 LOCAL AND REGIONAL TRAILS

LOCAL AND REGIONAL MULTI-USE TRAILS

Rifle currently has a limited system of trails. To respond to public interest in a broader system to service a wide variety of users, the City has developed a trails plan that links schools, public services, commercial areas, neighborhoods, and parks. The trail standard will serve walkers, hikers, joggers, and bicyclists. New development is expected to provide their portions of the trail system (i.e., major trail routes if indicated on a parcel or connectors to link their development to the major trail routes).

Currently, a trail runs next to Rifle Creek from 3rd to 9th streets and [16th Street](#) to Deerfield Park (30th Street). The proposed Rifle Creek Trail will eventually connect Downtown Rifle to Rifle Falls. Other trails are proposed, such as connecting along Rifle Creek to Bryce's Valley. The “Lower Valley Trailway” is planned to be an inclusive trail and natural area corridor along the Colorado River from West Glenwood Springs to the county line west of Parachute. (See the “[Lower Colorado River Valley Trail and Corridor Action plan and Guidelines](#)” dated January 2003). It has been incorporated into the Rifle Comprehensive Plan.

(For additional information see “[Planning your multi-use trail](#)” in the Appendix.)

PARKS, RECREATION AND TRAIL

OBJECTIVES

1. The City of Rifle will promote healthy lifestyles through year-round recreational and leisure opportunities.
 - a. Complete, landscape and beautify all existing parks.
 - b. Complete the urban trail system to provide safe transportation throughout our community.
 - c. Promote the use of river, creek and irrigation ditch corridors as linear greenways and passive recreation areas.
 - d. Explore with ditch and irrigation companies and or other pertinent parties ways to incorporate trails and pathways along those waterway systems, as identified in the Comprehensive Plan.
 - e. Create logical Multi-use trail connections networked to the regional trail system, utilizing ditches and irrigation channels when needed, to connect neighborhoods to parks, open space and other community facilities as indicated in the [Future Land Use Map](#).
 - f. Develop trail standards and requirements for new residential and commercial developments.
 - g. Work with the School District to, whenever possible, collocate schools and parks.
2. All new developments will provide diverse recreational opportunities for all ages, in aesthetically pleasing settings, while minimizing overcrowding and overuse and ensuring the City has ample trail connections. Development applications will:
 - a. Plan for greenways and trails through the center of neighborhoods rather than along collector and arterial streets.
 - b. Provide finished neighborhood park facilities, or the equivalent fee-in-lieu, to meet the demand created by new residents.
3. Rifle supports the Lower Colorado River Valley (LoVa) Trail and River Corridor– Action Plan and Guidelines Document and will work with partner communities towards implementation. City parks and recreation department staff will coordinate and participate with the regional effort to bringing the LoVa trail planning effort to fruition. City staff should be stay in continual contact with this trails group regarding project process.
4. Insure a rational and balanced investment of park and recreation funds for recreation and sports programs, parks, trails, open space and reserves.
 - a. Equitably share the cost of future parks between existing and future residents.
 - b. Provide facilities capable of offering efficient customer service and park maintenance.
 - c. Partner with other organizations and groups to improve and expand Park and Recreation opportunities (school district, Garfield County, etc.).
5. Update the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan to be consistent with the objectives of this plan.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- 6**
- Improve First Impressions
 - Infrastructure
 - Schools
 - Emergency Services
 - Parks, Recreation, and Trails
 - [Affordable Housing](#)
 - Transportation
 - Protecting Natural Resources
 - Open Space

Economic sustainability is an important goal for Rifle, which has recently seen an increase in employment in the area due to the resurgence of the natural gas and oil shale industries in both Garfield and Rio Blanco counties. Garfield County in general and Rifle specifically, are projected to be major recipients of the growth associated with this energy development.

Due to less expensive housing costs and the quality of life in Rifle, a significant number of Rifle residents currently commute to Glenwood Springs and the Roaring Fork Valley. As this trend increases Rifle's citizens will demand more retail and services. To strengthen the economy, Rifle intends to create more opportunities for people to live and work in the community and to create a range of housing types and prices. Housing affordable to future employees is an important component of Rifle's economic development strategy.

6.20 A RANGE OF HOUSING TYPES AND PRICES

A range of housing options is needed to support the growing and changing needs of current and future Rifle residents and employees. Several factors contribute toward the importance for a variety in type and pricing of rental and for-sale housing:

- Residents participating in the key pad interview conducted as part of the comprehensive plan process noted that the cost of housing for current residents and employees was one of the most critical (23% of respondents) or more serious problems (55%) facing Rifle.
- Employers indicated that the cost of housing was affecting their ability to recruit and retain employees; this was a particular concern among educators and health care professionals.

The unincorporated county experienced the largest percentage increase in single-family home prices between 1999 and 2005, at 67.8 percent. New Castle and Silt followed second at a respective 59.1 percent and 57.5 percent increase. Remaining areas experienced slower rates of appreciation than

Table 4: 2000 Census – Housing Types

	Owner		Renters	
	Number	Percentage	Numbers	Percentages
TOTAL	2,546			
Owner Occupied	1,530	60.1%	1,016	39.9%
1, detached	1,136	74.2%	199	19.6%
1, attached	23	1.5%	97	9.5%
2 units	15	1.0%	110	10.8%
3 or 4	22	1.4%	340	33.5%
5 to 9	19	1.2%	130	12.8%
10 to 19	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
20 to 49	0	0.0%	15	1.5%
50+	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Mobile Home	309	20.2%	35	3.4%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	6	0.4%	12	1.2%

Figure 78: 2000 Census - Housing Types

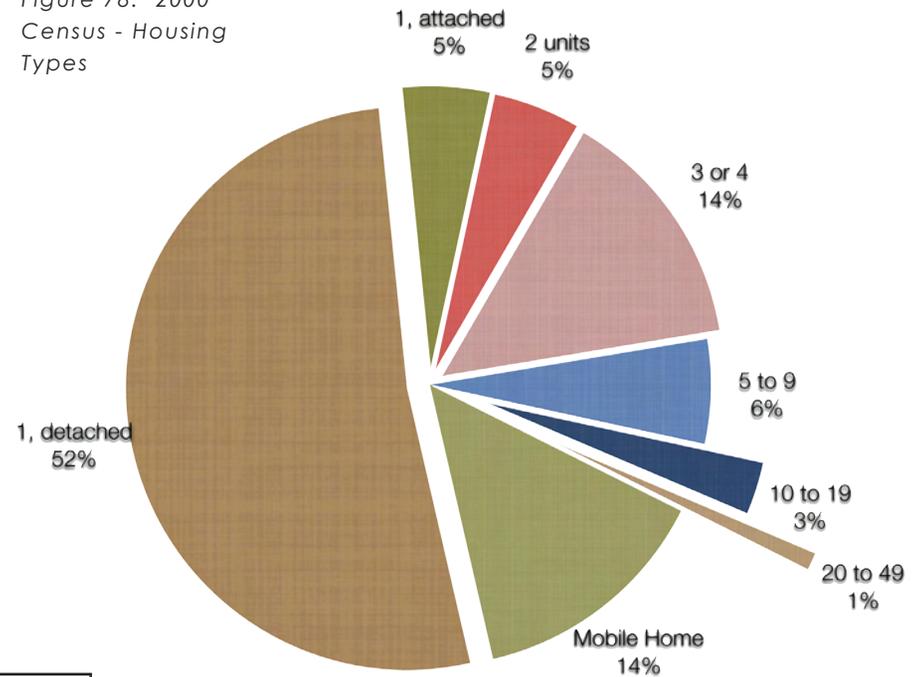


Table 5: Percent Change in Median Single Family Home*

Garfield County	Carbondale	Glenwood Springs	New Castle	Silt	Rifle	Parachute/Battlement Mesa	Unincorporated
47.9%	43.4%	41.3%	59.1%	57.5%	37.9%	33.3%	67.8%

*Single Family homes include mobile and manufactured homes on owned land.

the County on average, with prices increasing about 43.4 percent in Carbondale, 41.3 percent in Glenwood Springs, 37.9 percent in Rifle and 33.3 percent in Parachute/Battlement Mesa.

The 2000 Census found that the majority of units in Rifle were single-family homes (52% detached and 5% duplexes). Mobile homes made up 14% of the housing stock in Rifle, with 4% of units consisting of 10

or more units. New residential development should contribute to this diversity in existing housing stock, with the exception of additional mobile homes, of which there is sufficient supply.

A multi-faceted strategy is needed in order to comprehensively address housing equitably and in a manner that meets current and future housing demand. This includes methods to ensure new residen-

tial development provides a range of housing types and prices that will support moderate to middle income households. Involvement and cooperation of the private sector, local and county governments, employers, non-profit agencies, local housing authorities and residents themselves are important components of a multi-faceted strategy.

A RANGE OF HOUSING TYPES AND PRICES OBJECTIVES

1. Support housing development and program strategies that provide a supply of workforce and market rate housing that meets the economic and social needs of Rifle.
 - a. Encourage residential development that supports the spectrum of housing needs in the community, including seniors, first time house buyers and entry-level to mid-level employees through the provision of a variety of housing types, prices, styles and sizes.
 - b. Increase housing choice by exploring strategies that encourage **mixed-use** and mixed-income development.
 - c. Maintain and update information about local employment, wages and housing costs to monitor, over time, how residential development is responding to the City's housing objectives and to the employment opportunities in the area.
 - d. Inventory, analyze, and prioritize vacant or underutilized sites that are suitable for development or redevelopment to support housing that would benefit Rifle employees and residents.
 - e. Pursue strategies to support more affordable housing development, including:
 - i. Fee waivers for affordable housing projects.
 - ii. Soliciting available State, Federal, and other appropriate grant funding for the construction or rehabilitation of housing that is affordable to low to middle income households.
 - iii. Use of private financing for the construction and purchase of housing units.
 - iv. Land banking, use of federal and state tax credits and private activity bonds.
 - v. Partner with local employers to create employer assisted housing programs and developments. These may include master leasing units for employees and creating incentives for employees to purchase homes including down payment assistance, shared equity programs and first-time home buyer training.
 - f. Explore a package of incentives to encourage new residential development that will meet the needs of Rifle employees. These may include fee waivers, density bonuses, fast tracking and master plan project approvals.
 - g. Develop housing program guidelines and requirements to ensure that housing developments contribute to the character and image of the community.
 - h. Support housing proposals that are well situated relative to employment in Rifle, and shopping, child care, schools, transit, social, and recreational amenities.
 - i. Encourage development of the following housing types:
 - i. Housing that is attainable for low to middle income households, including rental and ownership opportunities.
 - ii. Senior housing for persons age 55 or older, including rental housing, smaller for-sale housing units and residential facilities that offer support services.
 - j. Monitor the effects of regulations, ordinances, codes, and standards on development costs to ensure that bureaucratic policies do not hinder the availability and affordability of needed housing or accessibility to housing programs.
 - k. Encourage measures at the City level to streamline processes for proposed developments that include affordable housing, senior or other special needs housing, and qualified rental housing.
 - l. Evaluate provisions for accessory dwelling units in single-family areas to determine how additional residential units might be added to the community.
 - m. Encourage entities involved with homebuyer training in Garfield County to provide services to Rifle residents and employees.

6.21 EXISTING HOUSING STOCK/ AFFORDABILITY

Conserving and maintaining existing housing enhances the overall livability of the neighborhood and contributes to a sense of community well being. The mix of housing types and prices in existing neighborhoods provides housing opportunities for seniors, entry-level employees, essential workers and young adults who have grown up in the community. Many single-family homes in Rifle are older and may need rehabilitation to improve livability and overall appearance. Several approaches may be pursued to maintain existing housing, including:

- Creating agreements with the Garfield County Housing Authority and/or Mountain Regional Housing to acquire existing housing within the community. This agency could acquire and rehabilitate existing housing to enhance its overall appearance and usefulness to residents;
- Actively pursuing the redevelopment of the older mobile home parks in Rifle. Consider establishing an Urban Renewal District in the areas where these parks are located and encourage their redevelopment with a mixed-use, retail, commercial, residential uses. Require a portion of the newly developed housing units be affordable to entry-level workers and seniors with incomes that are 60% or less of the Area Median Income (AMI).

- Create a rehabilitation loan program that could be used to repair homes with major code violations and provided needed livability improvements. A loan program would require that the loans be repaid over time or at the time a home is sold. In this way, the funds can revolve, and be used for other homeowners. Local Housing Authorities and various non-profit organizations provide rehabilitation programs.

- iii. Discouraging housing deterioration.
- iv. Exploring the various means by which private and public investment can contribute to housing rehabilitation.
- v. Supporting community organizations involved in housing rehabilitation activities.
- vi. Encouraging the removal of sub-standard units when they cannot be rehabilitated.

EXISTING HOUSING STOCK / AFFORDABILITY OBJECTIVES

1. Conserve and maintain Rifle's existing housing stock and residential neighborhoods.
 - a. Increase the number of multi-family rental housing units in Rifle to increase housing affordability and improve the jobs to housing ratio.
 - b. Discourage new development that would displace existing housing worthy of retention.
 - c. Improve and maintain the quality of existing housing stock while preserving affordability by:
 - i. Ensuring that housing meets all applicable code requirements.
 - ii. Encouraging maintenance of safe housing through an a stock inspection program.

6.22 REGIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY

Housing is recognized as a regional issue. To date, many housing discussions have taken place through Healthy Mountain Communities and Garfield County. As the region continues to pursue economic development opportunities, there will be increased pressure on communities such as Rifle to provide housing for those employed outside of the city. The study completed by BBC for the Rifle Comprehensive Plan found a decline in the percent of residents who live and work in Rifle, which is largely attributed to out-commuting for work. According to the 2004 Travel Patterns Study completed by RRC Associates, 27% of Garfield County employees live in Rifle.

Table 6: Where Garfield County Workers Live: 2004 Place of Work

Place of Residence	Place of Work		
	Garfield County overall	Carbondale, Glenwood Springs	New Castle, Silt, Rifle, Parachute
Rifle	26.7%	16.5%	46.3%
Glenwood Springs	25.4%	35.6%	5.6%
Carbondale	12.8%	17.6%	3.9%
New Castle	11.5%	15.3%	8.9%
Parachute	11.1%	2.0%	24.9%
Silt	7.6%	7.4%	7.4%
Outside of Garfield County	4.9%	5.5%	3.0%
Total workers (2005)	24,574	17,864	6,708

Source: 2004 Travel Patterns Employee Survey

REGIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY

OBJECTIVES

1. Foster regional housing strategies to benefit Rifle and the surrounding communities.

REDEVELOP DILAPIDATED HOUSING / MIXED - USE OBJECTIVES

1. The City supports redeveloping sites that could provide a mix of housing and other uses.
 - a. Identify sites that are appropriate for redevelopment.
 - b. Explore potential partnerships with non-profit and private sector developers to redevelop sites for mixed-use.
 - c. Require that residents who may be displaced due to the redevelopment are given priority for housing that is constructed as part of a mixed-use project.
 - d. Explore options to mitigate impacts on residents who may be displaced as a result of redevelopment.
 - e. Identify incentives that would be appropriate to encourage the redevelopment of key sites.

6.23 REDEVELOP DILAPIDATED HOUSING / PROMOTE MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT

Rifle has several sites that are appropriate for mixed-use development and are currently residential uses. Among them are manufactured housing parks; some of which are in dire need of attention and others that are in good condition. Given their locations and the condition of the properties, redevelopment of these sites to a mixed-use development pattern is appropriate. This would create additional retail/commercial space, with housing integrated within or adjacent to the development. Redevelopment of these areas would support economic development objectives as well as provide additional housing in areas that are well situated relative to services. Care needs to be exercised when considering redevelopment; however, as the existing housing is affordable and it is likely that current residents would be displaced as a result of this action.

Table 7: Affordable Housing Program Table

Source: RRC Associates and McCormick and Associates, Inc.

	Program	Program Description	Public Administrative Responsibilities	Types of Units Produced	Political or Legal Issues	Considerations & Unintended Consequences
I N C E N T I V E S	Density Bonus	Provisions allowing an increase in density if all or part of the increased density is made affordable to a defined household/income group	Administration of zoning and deed restrictions	Single-family or multi-family / MF more likely if price controls are required	Nexus not required/ Rural housing perception, N.I.M.B.Y./ (Stipulating maximum bonus might help mitigate political issues)	Must have low ceilings on allowed density to motivate developers to pursue incentives. Price controls are perceived as disincentive by the private sector. Without price controls low-income, seasonal and entry level housing needs are unlikely to be met
	Annexation Policies	With cooperative policies between the County and local municipalities, developers may seek annexation to increase development potential. Because municipalities have broad discretion with annexations, policies can require that provision of affordable housing	Develop and enforce an annexation policy and affordable housing requirements	Multi-family and single-family homes	Comprehensive plan should support modestly priced housing/ Requires a high level of cooperation with the county	This program is not popular among land-owners
	Accessory Units	Optional, small second units attached to or within single-family units	Administration of zoning and deed restrictions	Small apartments	Growth rate & quality of life concerns (may be addressed w/size & occupancy regs.)	Should be deed restricted/occupancy enforcement will be difficult

Table 6: Affordable Housing Program Table, cont'd

Source: RRC Associates and McCormick and Associates, Inc.

	Program	Program Description	Public Administrative Responsibilities	Types of Units Produced	Political or Legal Issues	Considerations & Unintended Consequences
EXACTIONS	Inclusionary Zoning Requirements	Mandatory inclusion or set-aside of affordable housing units (usually the same type or similar to other units in development). Program may allow cash-in-lieu or off-site housing as an option for compliance	Administration of zoning and deed restrictions	Single-family, Multi-family/ Primarily owner-ship housing	Nexus may not be required/ Only impacts development community/ Rent control implications Limited only by political & economic tolerance, and "takings" rulings	Locational issues include transportation impacts and achieving a desirable socio-economic mix within developments. Also difficult to achieve in subdivisions of large acreages
	Residential Employee Generation Mitigation	Requirement for residential development to provide housing or fees-in-lieu for some portion of short-term and long-term employment positions created by the development	Administration of zoning and/or deed restrictions. Allocation of funds if those are collected	Accessory Units, Multi-family units	Ties housing requirements to new growth. Nexus must be established. Funds must be earmarked	When mitigation is provided on-site, attention must be provided to locational issues and compatibility of housing
	Commercial Employee Generation Mitigation	Zoning provisions that require commercial development, including lodges, to provide funds or housing to meet some portion of identifiable impacts of new development. (15% to 60% range common)	Administration of zoning and/or deed restrictions. Allocation of funds if those are collected	Multi-family	Nexus required. Development pays its way, and contributes housing for new demand generated. Earmarking of funds required	Possible mass and scale consequences/ Site suitability issue (Local residents may not want to live among short-term accommodations)

Table 6: Affordable Housing Program Table, cont'd

Source: RRC Associates and McCormick and Associates, Inc.

	Program	Program Description	Public Administrative Responsibilities	Types of Units Produced	Primary Group Served	Political or Legal Issues	Considerations & Unintended Consequences
REVENUE GENERATION	Fees-based Programs Whistler, B.C. San Diego, CA Basalt, CO	Using dedicated fee-based funding sources to fund a housing trust fund (e.g. linkage fees, business license fees)	Administration of fund allocation and program compliance	Most likely limited to multi-family	Affordable rentals, Entry level housing to buy, seasonal employers, singles, couples, young families	Nexus standards apply/ Increased spending is subject to Tabor/ Multiple funding sources can spread burden through community	Tendency to use funds for low and moderate income groups/ Middle income & families needs might not be met (unless complemented with other programs)
	Tax-based Boulder, CO residential and non-residential development plus property tax	Using dedicated tax-based funding sources to fund a housing trust fund (e.g. sales tax, housing excise tax, head tax, property tax)	Administration of fund allocation and on-going program compliance	Most likely limited to multi-family and small single-family	Affordable rentals, Entry level housing to buy, seasonal employers, singles, couples, young families	Increased spending is subject to Tabor – may require a vote of people/ Multiple funding sources can spread burden thru community	Tendency to use funds for low and moderate income groups/ Middle income & families needs might not be met (unless complemented with other programs)
COLLABORATION	Employer Assisted Housing	Direct assistance to employee in form of down payment or rent subsidy. Other assistance would increase supply by providing land, equity, low interest loans for units	Primarily a catalyst to encourage local employers to participate	Both rental and for-sale housing	Low –Moderate to middle income households	Educating employers about assistance options	Should the housing be for all employees in a given area or only available to those employed by participating employers?
	Public-Private Partnerships	A variety of methods exist for public and private entities to jointly develop affordable housing. For example, tax exempt financing can be provided for a non-profit, project-specific corporation formed under Internal Revenue Tax Code No. 63-20. Employers can participate with subordinate financing	Sponsorship of formation and issuance of revenue bonds (no general obligation)	Multi-family, Rentals	Low & middle income households. Seasonal workers (up to 50% of units may be master leased)	Projects are tax exempt. Impacts to school district and other taxing authorities	No public staffing required. Sponsoring government controls the board of the corporation

Table 6: Affordable Housing Program Table, cont'd

Source: RRC Associates and McCormick and Associates, Inc.

	Program	Program Description	Public Administrative Responsibilities	Types of Units Produced	Primary Group Served	Political or Legal Issues	Considerations & Unintended Consequences
PRESERVATION	Affordable Housing Deed Restrictions	<p>Typical elements of deed restrictions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A requirement that the occupants use the unit as a primary residence • A limitation that the unit can not be rented on a short-term basis • A requirement that the unit be occupied by an employee working at a local business • A cap on equity appreciation • A time frame of applicability, usually for an extended period of time 	Administer deed restrictions. Verify compliance on an on-going basis. Enforce as necessary. May be done by Housing Authority or Non-profit	Applies to all affordable housing	Benefits all income levels, as the housing is restricted	Consistency is primary benefit for the region. Cap on resale price can be controversial; however, studies on long-term appreciation rates document need	Limit on equity appreciation limits move-up potential for home buyers
	Buy-Down Program	Local government acquisition and resale of housing units. Prior to resale, government deed restricts unit, limiting occupancy to local employees and potentially limiting future resale value. Subsidy required to account for value of deed restriction	Purchase and resale of units. Manage funds for program. Administer deed restrictions	Focus can be set on any unit type	Depending on extent of subsidy, can target any income level	Few, as impacts to community are less than conventional projects	Requires significant staff time to negotiate acquisitions and sales

TRANSPORTATION

- 6
- Improve First Impressions
 - Infrastructure
 - Schools
 - Emergency Services
 - Parks, Recreation, and Trails
 - Affordable Housing
 - [Transportation](#)
 - Protecting Natural Resources
 - Open Space

Creating a framework of transportation options that includes a diversity of modes is essential for providing effective mobility within the community. Of primary importance are integrated roadway networks that improve mobility, reduce vehicular congestion and conflict, and provide multiple alternatives for travel to local destinations. The inclusion of alternative transportation options that includes recreational and commuter bicycle routes, pedestrian circulation systems and ride-share facilities will help balance transportation choices and reduce dependency on the automobile.

An examination of the more historic portions of Rifle reveals a grid system transportation network that provides excellent user distribution and ease of understanding. During more recent years, land use patterns have changed with the introduction of cul-de-sacs, strict hierarchical and curvilinear road systems, and "enclosed" neighborhood developments that limit or prohibit access to adjacent properties. Other patterns observed in commercial and industrial areas reveal development along the major roads with individual curb cuts and multiple access points. In addition, the constraints of topography, drainages, and the lack of implementation of needed roadway improvements over time have ren-

dered a severely deficient system of collector roads and secondary linkages. The majority of city traffic is funneled onto **Railroad Avenue** and **State Highway 13**, a condition that not only creates an inordinate amount of vehicular congestion, but causes an extensive safety liability.

6.24 KEY ROADWAYS IN OUR COMMUNITY

INTERSTATE 70 (I-70)

The Interstate 70 corridor that passes south of Rifle provides the most important transportation link for commuters and visitors. Although three interchanges have been constructed near the City, the interchange at State Highway 13 receives the majority of use. It serves both commuters and tourists. Although Interstate 70 serves as the primary east-west route, State Highway 6/24 continues to serve as a major east-west local arterial.

RAILROAD AVENUE / STATE HIGHWAY 13

Railroad Avenue (State Highway 13) is the major north-south arterial that connects the southern area of Rifle to the downtown and north Rifle. Railroad

Avenue is characterized by two lanes, a center turn lane, and random parallel parking. This thoroughfare serves Downtown Rifle, commercial-strip enterprise areas, three educational facilities, and residential neighborhoods. The frequency of vehicular collisions, congestion, and pedestrian conflicts has prompted concerns for safety.

The lack of alternative north-south routes in the urbanized valley creates a hazard in the event of a disaster, such as fire or a major accident. The improvement of parallel routes, such as White River Avenue, and a more interconnected street system would assist to relieve congestion and increase circulation along Railroad Avenue.

STATE HIGHWAY 13 BYPASS

The State Highway 13 Bypass functions as a major detour, and affords an alternative arterial route that connects the north and south areas of town. The road circumnavigates the City to the west, and primarily serves commuters, truck traffic, and visitors that are traveling from I-70 to destinations north of the City.

EAST / WEST ROUTES

Gaps in the existing east-west roadway network increase the length and time of travel as well as difficulty of navigation through congested collector streets. Topographic constraints make it difficult to address this east-west deficiency. Numerous east-west streets terminate at or near the intersection of **Railroad Avenue** and permit few routes that cross this main corridor.

State Highway 6/24 serves an increasing amount of truck and localized traffic. Portions west of State Highway 13 have a frontage road which reduces traffic congestion and intersection hazards. However, the highway has no provisions for pedestrians or bikers.

Many area residents commute to work beyond the City up valley and to Grand Junction. Some residents carpool and have formed an informal park-and-ride on the southeast corner of State Highway 13 and State Highway 6/24. This location provides easy access to Interstate 70, minimizes parking impacts on the rest of the community, but due to the lack of landscaping, does not provide an attractive image at the entrance to the City. In the long-term future, Rifle should explore Transit Oriented Development and a potential structured Park-and-Ride at this location.

6.25 RIFLE TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN

The Rifle Transportation Master Plan projects transportation improvements needed 2025. It identifies system-wide improvements, prioritizes improvements, and provides a financial plan for implementation to guide the City's capital improvements planning.

In most cases the Transportation Master Plan is the governing document regarding roadways in the City. In accordance with the Transportation Plan, the City can:

- ☞ Deny development that would preclude proposed roads.
- ☞ Require developers to locate internal streets consistent with the Transportation Master Plan.
- ☞ Require developers to construct new roads, and improve existing roads, if justified by the anticipated traffic impacts of proposed developments.
- ☞ Limit access to arterial streets.

The Comprehensive Plan has identified additional road connections not identified in, as well as contradictions with, the Transportation Master Plan recommendations:

1. The East Bypass Road from County Road 291 to **State Highway 6**. A bypass road of this nature inevitably becomes a catalyst for significant amounts of development on both sides

of this roadway. This roadway is proposed so far to the east- tying into the **Mamm Creek Interchange** that public services for this new growth would be cost prohibitive to the City of Rifle. Also, it is realized that over the next 20 year-planning period, projected growth can be accommodated with infill and "close-knit" development patterns identified in the Comprehensive Plan's **Urban Containment** system. And lastly, the significant costs and phasing of such a roadway will be too much to bear for the surrounding citizenry.

2. A proposed collector road connecting County Road 223 to the proposed East Bypass Road. Due to the reasons listed above, the proposed collector road connecting County Road 223 to the proposed East Bypass Road also does not seem to be a valid concept at this time in the comprehensive planning process.

6.26 KEY TRANSPORTATION PRINCIPLES

ROAD CONNECTIVITY

As Rifle grows, connectivity becomes increasingly important. Current development practices tend to emphasize individual projects isolated from each another. The City intends to hold developers to task for communicating and coordinating their projects with adjacent developments.

The City of Rifle promotes "seamless" adjacent development projects. Adjacent development proj-

ects are seamless when roads, trails, utility, drainage and open space easements are coordinated and are interconnected with each other.

MODIFIED GRID ROAD SYSTEM

There is growing appreciation for merits of the **traditional street grid**. For example, a grid system provides multiple routes through a community, allowing traffic to adjust if a particular route becomes congested. This generally equalizes traffic over the whole road grid rather than concentrating congestion on a few streets, which then become undesirable for residential use.

Double frontage lots result when developers orient the back of homes onto collector streets and install privacy walls at the rear lot line to block out noise. This creates the need to construct another local street in the front of the house, thus creating a home with double or two frontages. While this may result is a quieter setting for residents of this home, double frontage lots tend to be more expensive and create an impersonal and undesirable collector street for the walking public. Even with attractive landscaping, these streets have no appeal for walkers, they encourage speeding and have no front porch with “eyes on the street” that provides a community with a grass roots deterrent to crime. Design solutions to avoid double frontage lots are:

1. Increasing the setback from collector streets allowing houses to front on the street (with driveway access to each house via a rear drive or alley).

2. Fronting houses on local streets perpendicular to collector streets, thus facing the side yards towards the collector streets.
3. Creating a landscape median in the collector streets with shade trees to soften the impact of the street.
4. Increased residential setbacks and width to allow for circular drives.

Residential collector streets can be made more livable through the traditional use of larger residential setbacks, designing streets as boulevards with medians, and promoting alleys to allow parking from the rear of these homes.

FUTURE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

As Rifle grows the number of cars will increase and the need for a public transportation system will become apparent.

The City Planning Department will need to coordinate with the Roaring Fork Transportation Agencies' (RFTA) to expand the existing service into new growth areas of Rifle. See the **“Funding Sources”** section of this plan for more information.

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIANS

As the City grows, employment and shopping will locate in close proximity to residences. This will increase the possibility of walking and bicycling. Safe convenient pedestrian and bicycle routes must be provided so people will be encouraged to take

advantage of mixed-use proximity, including both on and off-street bike lanes. For specific roadway improvements and other roadway connections please see the **Subarea** section of this plan.

TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVES:

1. The Transportation Plan should be updated to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan to assure traffic capacity is consistent with the land uses projected.
2. Provide an efficient, cost-effective and safe road system to meet the City's needs for convenient movement of people, goods and services throughout the comprehensive planning area without excessive congestion and at appropriate speeds.
 - a. Design streets to ensure vehicle travel through residential neighborhoods at slow, safe speeds.
 - b. Generally arrange local streets to provide multiple routes through a neighborhood.
 - c. Prohibit City cul-de-sacs except where topography prohibits through streets.
 - d. Encourage an interconnected street network that prevents congestion on major roads.
 - e. Carefully evaluate points of access granted to major roadway corridors, particularly to those corridors moving traffic

- north and south.
- f. Require adjacent developments to have interconnected streets.
 - g. Encourage the upgrade of neighborhoods (streets, sidewalks, lighting) in the older areas of the City.
3. New developments applications will be required to address an demonstrate the following.
 - a. How they will improve intersections on collector and arterial road intersections to maintain not less than a level-of-service "D" (less than 40 seconds average wait at an intersection) during peak hours.
 - b. How they will coordinate with adjoining developments to provide connectivity of streets, trails (off street trails and/or detached sidewalks), utilities and drainage and open space easements. This connectivity will provide multiple routes for vehicles, pedestrians and emergency vehicles through each neighborhood.
 4. Create and expand safe, affordable, interconnected and convenient transportation alternatives for the residents of Rifle.
 - a. Expand opportunities for public transportation.
 - i. Identify steps for expanding routes for the Roaring Fork Transportation Agencies' (RFTA) Grand Hogback Bus Route and take steps to encourage up-valley commuters to use RAFTA by improving the bus stops in Rifle.
 - ii. Explore incorporation of a Transit Oriented Development in Downtown Rifle, use the current impromptu park and ride as the approximate location.
 - iii. Consider public transportation between north and south Rifle.
 - b. Evaluate "Complete Streets" Guidelines -- streets that accommodate multiple means of transportation in their design including mass transit, bicycles and pedestrians—within major transportation corridors.
 - c. Ensure sidewalks and or trails in new developments are sufficient both within the development and in connecting to outside pedestrian and bike networks.
 - d. Streets, pedestrian paths and on and off-street bike paths should contribute to a system of connected, interesting routes to all destinations.
 5. Require future development to mitigate off-site traffic impacts caused by development. (i.e., intersections, road paving and/or lane improvement).
 6. The City discourages residential developments that generate "double frontage" lots, which result in rear walled yards facing a collector or local street.
 7. The City promotes the use of alleys for rear loaded parking and trash removal.
 8. Update Transportation Master Plan.
 - a. To reflect the Comprehensive Plan. Strategize implementation methods to incorporate Transportation Objectives itemized here and assure that the road system balances with anticipated land uses.
 - b. To incorporate recommended transportation practices from the recently published "Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities" by the Institute for Transportation Engineers (ITE).

PROTECTING RIFLE'S NATURAL RESOURCES

- 6
- Improve First Impressions
 - Affordable Housing
 - Infrastructure
 - Transportation
 - Schools
 - Protecting Natural Resources
 - Emergency Services
 - Open Space
 - Parks, Recreation, and Trails

Residents of the Upper Grand Valley of the Colorado River are blessed with a temperate year around climate, excellent agricultural lands, extensive outdoor recreation opportunities on nearby public lands and vast areas of natural habitat for native wildlife.

6.27 TOPOGRAPHY / GEOLOGIC HAZARDS

Throughout the Rifle area, a rich physical landscape provides both wonderful visual amenities and natural resources. These attributes are highly valued by both residents and visitors, as they establish unique character and a strong sense of place. Therefore, the preservation of the area's natural and scenic resources is critical to the quality of life and economic viability of Rifle.

Situated in a narrow valley near the confluence of the Colorado River and Rifle Creek, the City is defined by escarpments that rise above the valley floor to semi-arid upland mesas. These walls create a unique sense of enclosure and form a major separation between the river and creek bottom lands and upland mesas. Further to the west, the prominent Bookcliffs form a memorable backdrop, rising a total of 2,100' from the river valley to over 7,500' in eleva-

tion. Rifle Falls State Park is located 14 miles north of the City, with falls that spill over a limestone cliff. The gently sloping verdant plateaus of the Taughenbaugh, Flatiron, and Grass Mesas provide an impressive foreground to Battlement Mesa, which climbs to over 10,000' south of Rifle. To the east, Graham Mesa supports expansive agricultural pastures for livestock grazing. To the north, exceptional distant views of Grand Hogback Ridge and mountain peaks of the White River National Forest can be observed.

TOPOGRAPHY / GEOLOGIC HAZARD OBJECTIVES

1. Development is strongly discouraged in areas where soil problems, such as erosion, shrink-swell potential, and other possible building limitations, are present unless geotechnical studies can demonstrate methods and techniques to mitigate problems during and after construction.

HILLSIDE DEVELOPMENT / SCENIC RESOURCES

The topography in the City of Rifle is comprised of riparian drainages, slopes, ridgelines, and upland mesas. The diversity of landforms that rise from river valley and creek drainages exposes interesting geologic formations and creates significant natural landmarks. However, these land forms pose some geologic and natural hazards, and create potential constraints to development.

The most prevalent geologic and slope hazards related to development are slopes in excess of 30%. These areas are prone to rock falls and active landslides and require detailed geotechnical investigation prior to development. The drainages and side slopes of Graham, Hubbard and Prefontaine Mesas to the north, as well as Taughenbaugh, Grass, and Flatiron Mesas to the south, pose development hazards, though the majority of these lands remain undeveloped.

Within the incorporated boundaries of Rifle, numerous homes and accessory structures have been built along the ridgeline and mesa edges that define the upland mesas. Buildings constructed along these edges not only require additional engineering for stability, but detract from the visual quality of the area.

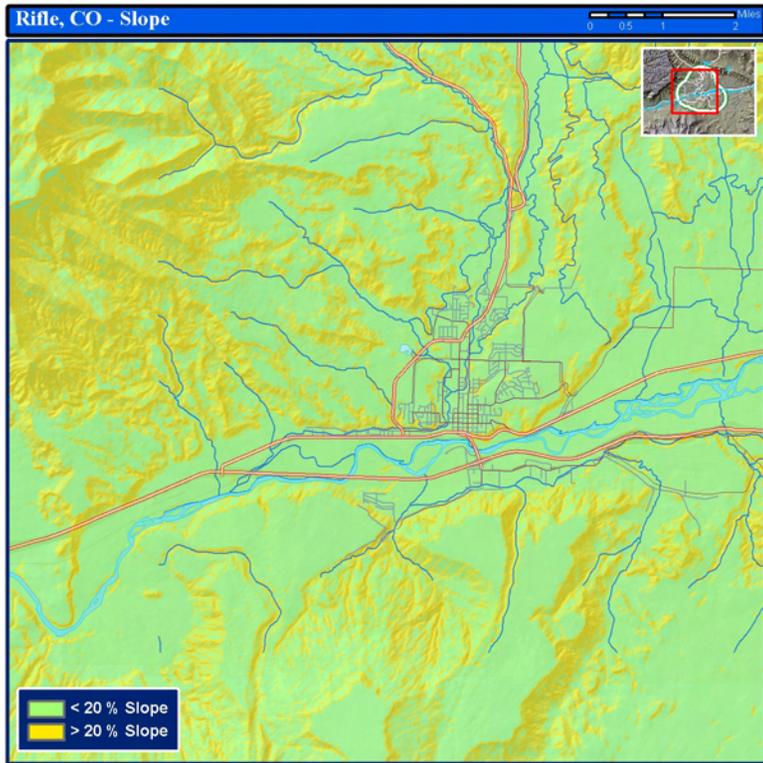


Figure 79: Slopes and topography in and around Rifle
Click the image to see the Future Land Use Map in greater detail.

Steep slopes present a number of difficult problems when subject to development: rock fall, scarring, slope failure, erosion / storm water control and traffic access. In addition to these public safety concerns, development on steep slopes also creates a significant negative impact to the important visual character that defines the community.

Scenic resources can be defined as areas of high visual quality which range from open valleys and irrigated fields to unique and memorable landforms. New developments should capitalize on these scenic vistas and their developments should compliment these views rather than detract from them.

HILLSIDE DEVELOPMENT / SCENIC RESOURCE OBJECTIVES

1. When appropriate, high points that offer scenic vistas should be preserved as open space. New development or redevelopment should be reviewed as to the visual impact and maintenance of key view corridors.
2. Where hillsides are in private ownership and development rights exist, the City will reduce the impact of development on steep hillsides through measures such as low-density zoning, **cluster or transfer of development rights**.
3. Public safety must be preserved by assuring that stability is properly maintained on any development of hillsides and/or slope and that problem soils are properly mitigated.
4. The aesthetic qualities of hillsides shall be preserved by minimizing the amount of hillside excavation and requiring that where hillside excavation occurs, cuts are fully reclaimed to a natural appearance.

6.28 HYDROLOGY

FLOODPLAINS

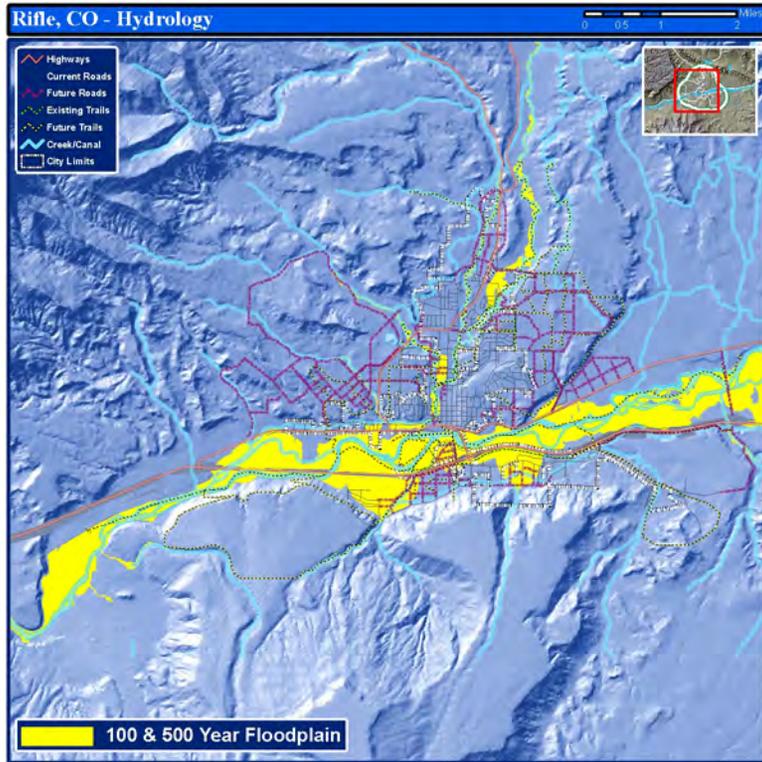


Figure 80: Hydrology in and near Rifle
Click the image to see the Future Land Use Map in greater detail.

THE COLORADO RIVER

Until 1923, the Colorado River was called “Grand River”. As a result, there are many “Grands” in the region: Parachute was originally called “Grand Valley”, Grand Junction was named for the junction of the “Grand” and Gunnison Rivers, residents of Rifle are said to live in the Upper Grand Valley of the Colorado River.

The Colorado River has obvious aesthetic, recreational, and ecological values. The river is a prominent entry into many communities and has untapped potential for tourists and other aesthetic attractions.

East and west of Rifle, the river widens, and meanders through shallow gentle sloping bottom lands. Open grasslands extend beyond the riparian vegetation and support farming and grazing. Mature groves of cottonwood trees and dense vegetation contribute to the riparian character.

Closer to the city, mesa landforms constrict the river and accelerate the flow of water, creating Class 2 and Class 3 rapids. As the Colorado approaches Rifle it becomes a tourist attraction, an aesthetic amenity, a greenway corridor, as well as a place to fish. A Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) rest area is located at the **Main Rifle Interchange** and is routinely used as a put-in or take-out for boaters and serves as an information center for downtown Rifle and the parks in the vicinity. For more information on Rifle’s river orientation, see **Rifle - A River Town**.

Floodplains are nature’s way of dissipating the energy of the recurrent flooding of rivers. When floodwaters exceed the capacity of the primary channel, the river overflows its banks and spills out onto a broad terrace referred to as the floodplain. As the water spreads out, it slows down and its erosive force is greatly diminished. When floodplains are artificially restricted, such as by adding fill for development or the construction of levees, the river is not allowed to expand and slow down and it retains and increases its energy, which results in greater downstream flooding and bank erosion (exceeding the armoring capacity of the bank vegetation), a process that is very difficult and expensive to reverse.

Over the past century, Rifle Creek had been subject to flooding. In the 1920’s Rifle Creek spilled its banks and washed out the 3rd Street Bridge in downtown Rifle. The Rifle Gap Reservoir was constructed in the late 1960s for irrigation purposes – not flood control. Therefore, when the reservoir is full, occasional high water producing storm events can spill waters over the dam. These events can subject Rifle Creek to periodic flooding.

Government Creek is free flowing and subject to flooding to this day. In 1993, it is assumed that a 500-year storm event took place over the headwaters of the Creek in Rio Blanco County to the North of Rifle. The flood waters carried a truck downstream where it struck and damaged a bridge abutment at the Rifle Creek confluence.

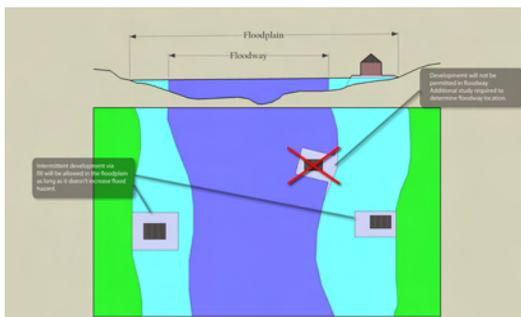


Figure 81:
Floodplain
Diagram

Hubbard Gulch, west of the City, periodically sees flash flooding. In the spring of 2003, Hubbard Gulch experienced flash flooding that transferred volumes of water through the western part of the City and eventually into the Government and Rifle Creek drainages. Minor damage was reported in this event.

On the south side of Interstate 70 are two large mesas, Grass and Taughenbaugh. Grass Mesa, to the east, has a natural occurring gulch, named Ramsey Gulch, which drains the surface of the mesa. Taughenbaugh Mesa, to the west, also has a larger, natural occurring gulch, named Helmer Gulch, which drains the surface of this mesa. These drainages are unique to mesa country in the western states in that they create flooding by draining waters from higher elevations to lower lying areas. Typically, floods occur when water volumes rise to exceed the bank capacity of the respective water body channel.

This "flooding from above" will impact developable lands below both gulches. The City must pay special attention and carefully review development proposals that lie in the path of these alluvial floodplains.

For community health, safety and welfare reasons, development in the floodplain should be limited to uses such as open space, parks, golf courses, and trails. In addition to their natural flood storage and energy-dissipation function, floodplains provide the community a series of connecting open areas used for passive outdoor recreation, education, and wildlife habitat. They also provide a unique opportunity for the community to preserve riparian areas for future generations.

The floodplain data that is currently provided to the City via Garfield County is in a Geographic Information System (GIS) format. The nature of this data is that it is "broad-brushed" and acceptable for planning purposes but not accurate enough for specific site development. As individual developments are proposed, it is strongly recommended that these developers provide to the City accurate Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) generated flood information for their projects.

FLOODPLAIN OBJECTIVES

1. Development will not be permitted in the floodway.
2. The City's policy is to discourage any development within the 100-year floodplain. Exceptions can be made for uses compatible with periodic flooding, such as trail systems, golf courses, and other public or private uses that will permit the free passage of floodwaters.
3. Development should be set back at least 50 feet from top of canals, irrigation ditch banks and from the mean high water line of water bodies, both natural and man-made, to maintain natural buffers.
4. The City encourages preservation of natural washes, streams and rivers, and discourages the channelization of natural drainage ways.
5. Area within Rifle's watershed requires all development be done in compliance with Rifle's Watershed Development Ordinance.

6.29 WETLANDS

Wetland areas are found throughout the Colorado River riparian area and along Rifle and Government Creeks. Jurisdictional wetlands (impacts of over ½ acre) are protected by federal law administered by the US Army Corps of Engineers. Wetlands are areas of special environmental value: they are ground-water recharge areas; they support a rich variety of plant species; they are an important source of food and habitat for both fish and wildlife. They perform an important function filtering runoff before it reaches water bodies. Wetlands can also provide unique and pleasant open space opportunities, particularly in a dry western environment.

WETLAND OBJECTIVES

1. The City will take all practical steps to help preserve significant wetlands from development.
2. The City will work with the Corps of Engineers to prevent wetland encroachment by public or private projects.
3. Land use proposals that could have adverse impacts on significant wetlands shall be modified to eliminate or adequately mitigate such adverse impacts.
4. Explore the potential of an "advance identification" of wetlands, especially in areas associated with the Colorado River riparian area and Rifle and Government Creeks.

6.30 WILDLIFE ECOSYSTEMS / VEGETATION

Wildlife resources and habitat are both a product of land form, vegetation, and water resources within the valley and surrounding uplands. Many of the lands in and around Rifle exhibit conditions that provide excellent areas for wildlife migration, productions, cover, and foraging.

ELK/DEER

The area around Rifle, Meeker, and Craig sustains some of the largest herds of elk and mule deer in the state and are managed as several different herds. Northeast of Rifle, the Flattops Wilderness (White River National Forest) supports some of the most famous elk populations in the world. To the northwest, Piceance Creek Basin is one of the largest migration corridors of mule deer in North America. The mesa lands surrounding Rifle, as well as the open areas of North Rifle, support large numbers of these big game species. Importantly, Rifle and its surrounding public lands provide both winter range and severe winter range habitat for both the elk and mule deer herds. These critical winter ranges are vital to supporting both elk and mule deer herds and if this winter range is lost to development, declines in these animal populations is possible.

Rifle's future land use plan expressed on the [Future Land Use Map](#) avoids both Elk and Deer winter range and critical habitat where possible. In a few areas, our land use encourages development in these areas. In all cases, habitat fragmentation has been avoided.

ELK AND DEER OBJECTIVES

1. Where possible the City will avoid Elk/Deer winter range and severe winter range habitat.

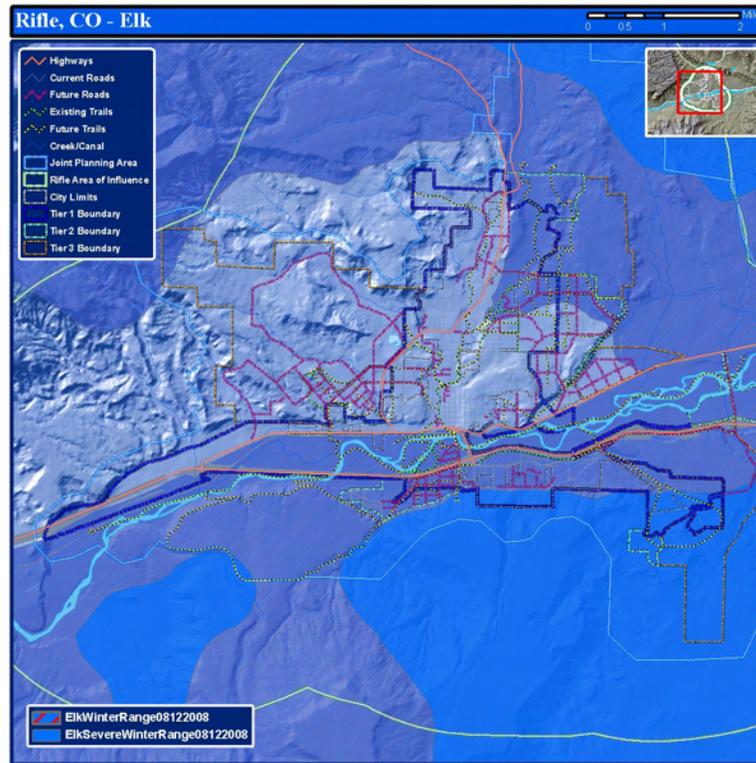


Figure 82: Elk Winter Range
Click the image to see the Future Land Use Map in greater detail.

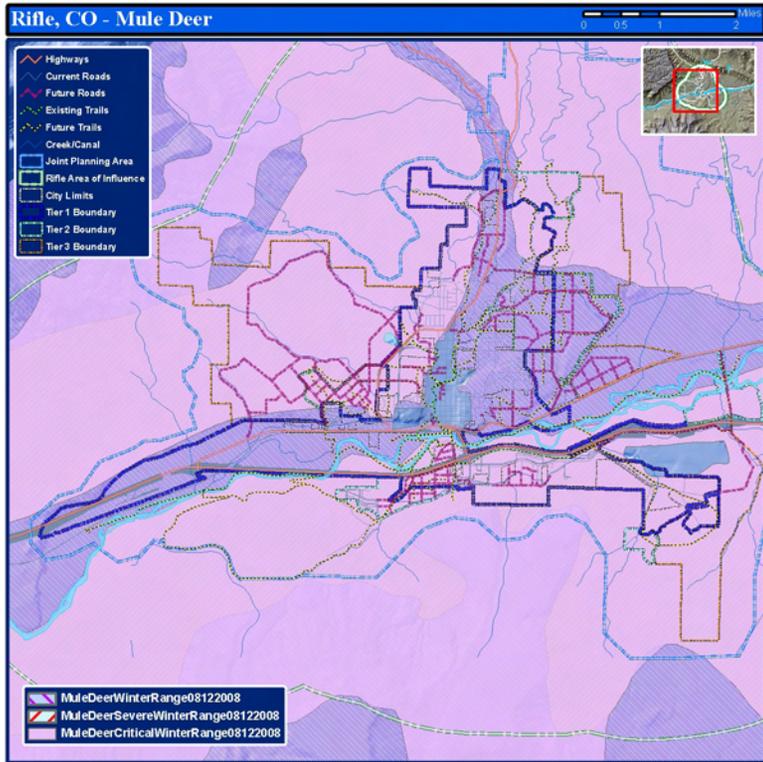


Figure 83: Mule Deer Winter Range
Click the image to see the Future Land Use Map in greater detail.

WATERFOWL/RAPTORS

The Colorado River corridor comprises an interacting assemblage of plants, animals and aquatic communities that are directly or indirectly associated with water-related factors. The diversity, density, and form of riparian vegetation contribute to the high level of productivity associated with these systems. The river, with its adjacent riparian landscape, supports more species than any other habitat in the area. Small mammals, reptiles and amphibians found along the river corridor are a key link in the animal food chain that exists in and along the Colorado River. Foraging opportunities along the stream are exceptional for raptors such as eagle and red-tailed hawk, and the aquatic habitat for canadian goose and other waterfowl is essential. Of great importance are traditional rookeries and nesting sites that have been used for over 80 years by bird species such as bald eagle and heron. Smaller riparian areas and creek drainages provide more secluded habitat for particular species such as the great horned owl, turkey vulture, and wild turkey.

WILDLIFE ECOSYSTEM / VEGETATION OBJECTIVES

1. Unique or distinctive natural feature and systems, critical wildlife habitats, and wetlands are important to maintain the balance of ecological systems and other environmental resources. The City promotes preservation and protection of these areas and advocates for sound conservation practices.
2. Community growth should respect and incorporate existing environmental constraints and opportunities to assure that new development and redevelopment harmonizes with the area's natural and human-made environment.
3. City staff to coordinate with Garfield County, State and Federal officials and agencies responsible for assessing environmental impacts of development proposals. A special emphasis should be placed on mapping and precluding development in key winter range and severe winter range habitats of the elk and mule deer populations.

OPEN SPACE

6	Improve First Impressions Infrastructure Schools Emergency Services Parks, Recreation, and Trails	Affordable Housing Transportation Protecting Natural Resources <u>Open Space</u>
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Open space includes land publicly preserved from development. Although Rifle is surrounded by vast open lands, permanent, accessible open space within the community is equally important to quality of life. Open space is not land left over after development, or land waiting to be developed. It is an essential element of the character and livability of the City. Generally Open Space land cover falls into four categories:

1. Land containing high ecological value
2. Hazards
3. Recreation
4. Agriculture – a transitional use

In contrast to the majority of recreation destinations that are located outside of Rifle, the recreational resources of the Colorado River are proximate to the City. This linear river corridor and associated wetland/riparian environment provide great opportunities for participation in canoeing, kayaking, fishing, and wildlife observation. Recently, a joint effort between the Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) and Rifle rendered the installation of a raft and

canoe ramp south of the **State Highway 13** Bridge in response to heightened interest.

In addition to active recreation, the Colorado River affords varied opportunities for wildlife observation, fishing, and environmental education. Although fishing areas are plentiful upstream, the majority of land near Rifle remains privately owned, thereby obstructing legal entry. As part of the “**Fishing is Fun**” program, CDOW is currently engaged in the process of easement acquisition along portions of the Colorado River proximate to Rifle.

Areas that may be preserved as permanent open space include areas with natural hazards (i.e. floodplains, areas of steep slopes), areas of ecological importance and agricultural lands.

6.31 AGRICULTURAL LANDS

Farming and ranching has existed in Rifle for over a century. Upland mesas and valleys have been used primarily for grazing, while river valleys supported farming. The irrigated fields and grasslands reflect the local heritage and historical patterns of settlement.

As a resource, agriculture provides several public benefits:

- ☛ It is an on-going industry that supports a number of families and secondary businesses.
- ☛ It has aesthetic values associated with managed open land, a rural lifestyle and a heritage of self-sufficiency.
- ☛ There is value to the potential of local food production related to self-sufficiency of the region.

Although Rifle has a rich agricultural heritage, there are significant growth pressures that give higher values to the land for non-agricultural uses. Rifle will likely not be able to preserve large agriculture lands within its borders. Through compact development and the avoidance of leap frog development, however, Rifle can delay the change of agricultural uses to urban uses within its **Urban Containment** system. Clough Ranch and Tybar Ranch will be preserved the longest. On a smaller scale, however, agriculture can be integrated into developments through cooperative farms and urban gardens.

As development encroaches into agricultural areas, conflicts arise about farming practices, farm equipment on roads, and smells. Even “right to farm” legislation doesn’t seem to protect the viability of agriculture. The goal of the Comprehensive Plan is find a balance between smart growth and agricultural preservation in and around Rifle. This is primarily accomplished through the Urban Containment System that phases growth into the surrounding areas.

6.32 PUBLIC LANDS

Over one million acres of nearby public lands provide diverse open landscapes, wildlife habitats, and a variety of recreational opportunities that attract locals as well as visitors throughout the year. The bulk of the federally owned lands that surround Rifle are managed by the **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)**.

Portions of Hubbard Mesa to the northwest of Rifle receive a high concentration of use, mostly from Rifle residents. In recent years, inappropriate recreational use of this area has begun to threaten significant natural resource values. In particular, off-road vehicular recreation has denuded vegetation, created disturbance of wildlife, degraded visual quality, and generated concerns for safety.

It is the mission of the BLM to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. Public lands are increasingly viewed from the perspective of the recreational opportunities they offer, their cultural resources, and—in an increasingly

urban world—their vast open spaces. However, they also have a high demand by traditional land uses such as grazing, timber production, and mining. The **Future Land Use Map** has an **Open Space Buffer** which rings much of the City’s **Tier 3** and is primarily composed of BLM lands.

6.33 OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION TECHNIQUES

Techniques to assist in open space preservation include:

- **Cluster development:** concentrating development on smaller lots on a part of a single property leaves a portion of the land undeveloped without sacrificing development rights. To be successful, cluster development usually requires adequate incentives, such as a density bonus. The base density has to be low enough that the bonus is truly an incentive, and the incentive density has to be low enough that the development does not undermine the rural character, or require urban levels of service.
- **Transfer of Development Rights (TDR):** allowing a landowner to transfer density from one property to another, keeps one of the properties undeveloped without giving up development rights. A TDR system is similar to clustering but is applied to non-contiguous parcels owned by a single party.

- **Purchase of Development Rights (PDR):** allows one land owner to purchase density from another land owner and provides remuneration to the selling land owner in exchange for keeping their land open. The PDR process requires designated “sending” and “receiving” areas. Since it is sometimes difficult for the selling and purchasing parties to find a workable price, PDR works best when there is a central party (such as the County) to act as central clearing house that buys and sells the development rights. Density increases or “bonuses” may be necessary to incentivize PDRs.

- **Purchasing conservation easements:** An easement is a legal restriction on the use of all or a portion of a particular property. Selling a conservation easement allows an owner to be compensated for development potential that is being given up. There are tax benefits that also accrue to the selling party. Conservation easements are used for a wide range of public goals such as land and scenic conservation and agricultural preservation. Because some underlying uses (such as agricultural use) are retained by the seller, conservation easements can normally be purchased for lower cost than the purchase of the entire parcel (the “fee”). Conservation easements are typically purchased by either a public agency or by a nonprofit organization such as a land trust.

- **Voluntary dedications**

- **Acquisition** (when revenues are sufficient)
- **Right-to-farm legislation:** if strictly enforced and publicized, right-to-farm legislation can provide some protection for farmers from nuisance complaints from residential neighbors.

Partners in open space preservation may include:

- City of Rifle
- Garfield County
- State of Colorado
- Trust for Public Land
- Farm and ranch lands protection program (USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service)
- American Farmland Trust
- Aspen Land Trust
- Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO)

The most effective way to coordinate these entities is with an overall plan and strategy. An Open Space Plan will also help focus the City's efforts and assure the public that resources are preserved in the most cost-effective way.

As Rifle grows, open space will become even more valued. By taking measures now to identify and begin to preserve community open space; Rifle will preserve its natural assets for current and future residents to enjoy.

OPEN SPACE OBJECTIVES

1. Land designated as Open Space on the **Future Land Use Map** will be acquired through dedication, donation or acquisition and preserved permanently free from development, left in a natural state and/or used for recreational uses such as parks and pedestrian or bicycle trails.
2. Rifle is surrounded by **BLM lands**. BLM lands are not perpetually open lands; they can be disposed of for future development. The **Future Land Use Map** establishes a ring of Open Space just outside of **Tier 3** that serves to inform the BLM of the City's intention for that land to remain open into the foreseeable future.
3. Open space designations will be used to preserve:
 - a. Land containing high ecological value.
 - b. Land containing natural hazards.
4. New development will assure the continuity of irrigation systems needed for on-going ecological integrity and agricultural uses.
5. Work with Garfield County, GOCO and others to explore common interest and programs regarding open space.

7 INFLUENCING EXTERNAL FORCES

CHALLENGE OF RAPID GROWTH

7.1 The Challenge of Rapid Growth and the Need for Inter-Governmental and Industry Cooperation

REGIONAL PLANNING COOPERATION

7.2 County Zoning in the Area of Influence (AOI)

BLM INTERFACE

ENERGY INDUSTRY

7.3 Natural Resource Extraction

GARFIELD COUNTY FAIRGROUND

GRAVEL MINING AND RECLAMATION



THE CHALLENGE OF RAPID GROWTH

7

- The Challenge of Rapid Growth
- Regional Planning Cooperation
- BLM Interface
- Energy Industry
- Garfield County Fairground
- Gravel Mining and Reclamation

7.1 THE CHALLENGE OF RAPID GROWTH AND THE NEED FOR INTER-GOVERNMENTAL AND INDUSTRY COOPERATION

To illustrate the challenges that come with growth, especially rapid growth, consider the following sequence: The influx of energy extraction workers faster than the housing supply causes an increase housing prices. As housing prices increase illegal hot-bunk houses and overcrowding increase. The increase in housing, in turn, requires the extension of infrastructure and City services. Where costs of infrastructure are theoretically paid for by sales tax and property tax, these revenue sources will not materialize until after the infrastructure and services are in place to serve that growth. As a result, the cost is either born by increased taxes on the community, or through alternative funding such as impact fees. The lag between costs and revenues of growth are shown in shown in Figure 80 Infrastructure / Capital Revenue Delay.

Growth presents both challenges and opportunities that Rifle must address in order to continue to be a

great place to live. Rifle must take adequate steps to accommodate and harness this growth so Rifle can sustain and improve the quality of life for all of its citizens.

For more information, see the BBC report "[A Case Study of Community Renewal, Growth and Change in Northwest Colorado](#)".

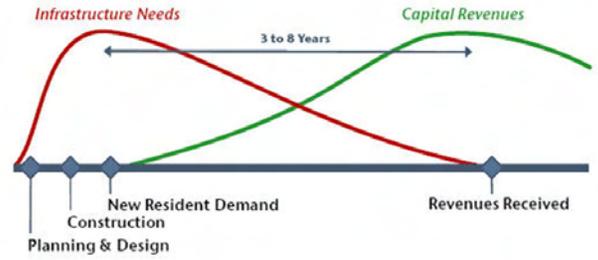


Figure 84: Infrastructure / Capital Revenue Delay

RAPID GROWTH OBJECTIVES

1. Regularly review the City's impact fees to ensure they account infrastructure (e.g. water, sewer, roads, parks) attributable to new growth.
2. Create a regional committee to solving difficult challenges and ongoing technical and financial support from state and federal sources, to help Rifle and the region capitalize on its current and projected growth, maintain economic diversity and develop a high quality, sustainable community.

REGIONAL PLANNING COOPERATION

- 7
- The Challenge of Rapid Growth
 - Regional Planning Cooperation
 - BLM Interface
 - Energy Industry
 - Garfield County Fairground
 - Gravel Mining and Reclamation

In 2007 Rifle entered into an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with Garfield County regarding joint planning and review. The IGA has fostered an environment of trust and mutual respect and forms the foundation of the strong working relationship the City maintains with the County.

New joint planning arrangements have been formulated over the last five years, but not yet adopted. With new waves of development anticipated for Rifle and Garfield County, it is time to expand the joint planning review capabilities afforded by the current City/County IGA. With a more robust IGA, the City intends to provide more predictability to the County, property owners and the development community as to which areas will urbanize first and which areas will remain rural. This revised IGA will be essential in coordinating short and long-term planning efforts by guiding growth in a deliberate and rational pattern.

A timely and comparable IGA can be found between the Town of Ridgeway and Ouray County. Key elements of this IGA that are recommended for implementation between the City of Rifle and Garfield County are as follows:

- ☛ Include in the joint planning area those lands within the Rifle Area of Influence (AOI).
- ☛ Create a Joint Planning Board to review projects proposed for unincorporated lands within the AOI that are 10 acres or greater in size. The Joint Planning Board should include representatives from the City of Rifle Planning Commission and the Garfield County Planning Commission. This board would function like a typical planning commission by reviewing development proposals and making recommendations to the County Commissioners.
- ☛ The County should amend / update its official zoning map to reflect the City of Rifle designations within the AOI.
- ☛ Projects in the unincorporated portions of the three-tiered urban containment area shall be developed under City of Rifle regulations such as development and parking standards; signage, landscaping, lighting, right of way dedication and design guidelines.
- ☛ Developments within the AOI but outside the three-tiered urban containment area that

comply with existing County zoning (use-by-right) would not be subject to review by the Joint Planning Board.

- ☛ Specify a process for amending the Rifle's Urban Containment system area and the AOI.
- ☛ Stipulate a review of the IGA after the first year with the allowance to fine-tune the agreement as necessary. After that, the agreement should be reviewed every two years with a report to both parties.
- ☛ The term of the IGA should be at least five years from execution and automatically renewed in five-year increments unless either party notifies the other of desired modifications or desire to terminate. If the IGA is terminated, pending development applications would be processed under Garfield County standards.

The City should make every effort to coordinate its planning efforts with other regional planning efforts, such as those being undertaken by the Bureau of Land Management and other local, state and federal entities.

7.2 COUNTY ZONING IN THE AREA OF INFLUENCE (AOI)

Rifle's approach to dense urban development if done in cooperation with the low-density development in the County may offer an opportunity for preservation of agricultural and ranch lands and could be an example that neighboring communities may follow, thereby preserving unincorporated agricultural areas and ranch lands throughout the Grand Valley.

There are many existing agricultural areas outside the City boundary, but still within the Area of Influence. County agricultural zoning in this area permits 1 unit per 2 acres. This poses unique problems:

1. Two-acre lots do not typically support cost-effective agriculture.
2. At a density of 1 unit per 2 acres, the AOI has the potential to absorb a significant amount of development. The resulting spread out development pattern will greatly increase traffic in and around Rifle, without comparable mitigation. This density of development will also require higher, per house, levels of maintenance for public infrastructure and services (re-paving roads, snow removal, dust suppression, police protection, etc.) than are traditionally provided for rural areas.

It is a goal of the City of Rifle to foster cost-effective growth in the City and in the surrounding area. The Comprehensive Plan focuses growth inward with the objective of keeping the areas surrounding the City in agricultural uses as long as possible. To this end, the City encourages that the area immediately east of Graham Mesa, north of [State Highway 6](#), be designated by the County for densities at 1 unit per 35 acres. This will encourage development within the City and preserve a rural feel between communities. A higher density that preserves larger areas of lands is encouraged. A density up to 1 unit per 20 acres is allowable if a development is clustered on 25% of the land.

As Rifle's energy development grows, land in the County's agricultural/industrial zone is often utilized for unsanctioned equipment storage. While the City supports the energy development industry, the appearance of these facilities has a decidedly negative impact on this entrance to the City. To help improve the City's image, the City encourages that these uses be relocated or screened from public views.

REGIONAL PLANNING COOPERATION OBJECTIVES

1. The City supports a Joint Planning Board consisting of City Planning Commission members and County Planning Commission members to review developments greater than 10-acres in size and located in Rifle's area of influence until such time that the City annexes the corridor. The IGA will help:
 - a. On [State Highway 6](#) to:
 - i. Promote large setbacks (100 ft or greater) accompanied by naturally landscaped berms to shield development from highway travel.
 - ii. Consolidate access points to reduce potential conflicts.
 - iii. Cluster development to reduce the appearance of one long strip of retail.
 - iv. Discourage disorderly industrial storage facilities.
 - b. County agricultural areas in the Rifle Area of Influence:
 - i. Should be developed at a base density of 1 unit per 35 acres or cluster for a density of up to 1 unit per 20 on 25% of the land.
2. The City will cooperate with, and participate in regional planning efforts, especially those

that are directed toward efficient use of resources and cost-effective development of public infrastructure (i.e., roads and utilities).

3. The City will consider regional implications in decisions regarding major capital improvements.
4. Once established, the IGA shall be updated on a regular basis to stay consistent with Rifle Future Land Use Map updates.
5. City planning staff to coordinate with Garfield County to establish a revised IGA and a Joint Planning Commission.
6. Evaluate the need for, and potential application of programs with incentives to preserve open space and agricultural lands such as clustering development, transfer of development rights and conservation easements.
7. Require that development applications address protection of ditch easements and their associated rights.
8. Work with Garfield County to rezone areas within the Area of Influence.

BLM INTERFACE

7

The Challenge of Rapid Growth
Regional Planning Cooperation
BLM Interface
Energy Industry
Garfield County Fairground
Gravel Mining and Reclamation

A substantial area of the land surrounding the City is managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Throughout the west, as municipalities grow adjacent to BLM managed land, the BLM develops Urban Interface Plans that recommend disposal of lands for urban growth. The City has designated an open space ring around the City that coincides with BLM lands as to indicate that as the City grows it does not want the BLM to consider disposal of lands in these areas.

For more information on how the land use policies and the BLM, see Rifle's [Open Space Buffer](#) and [Area of Influence](#).

BLM INTERFACE OBJECTIVES

1. Work with the BLM to keep areas designated open space non-urbanized.

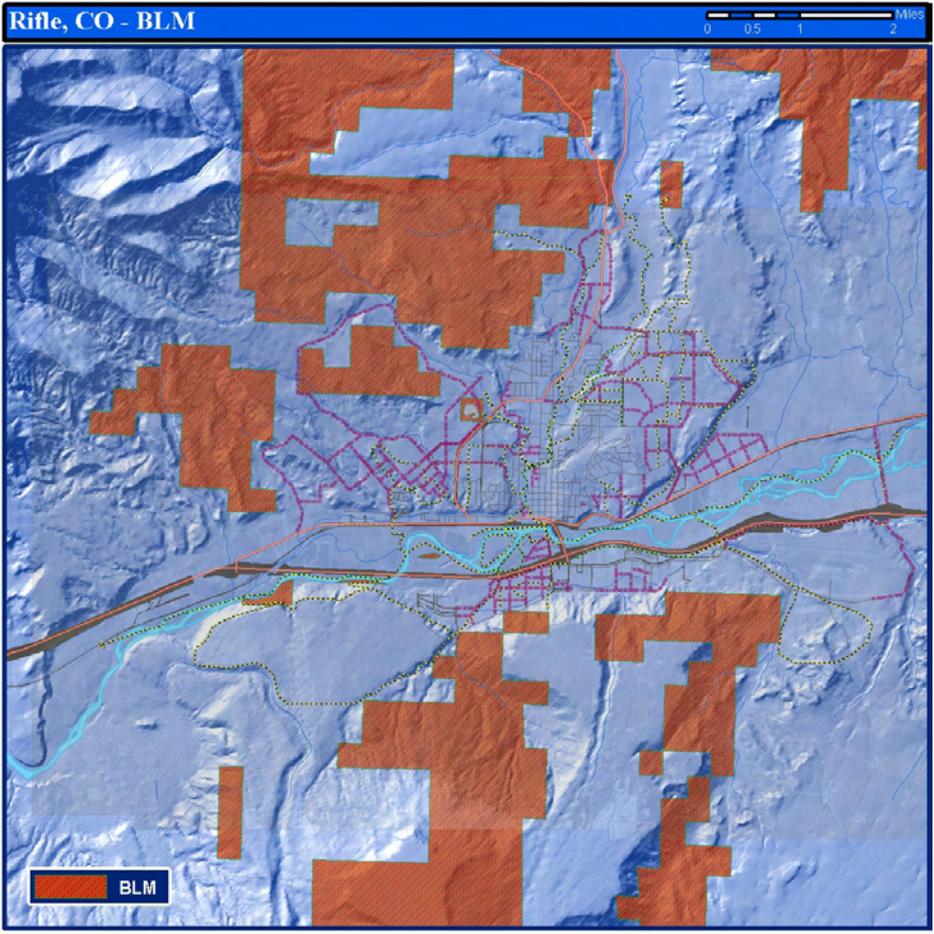


Figure 85: BLM land around Rifle

ENERGY INDUSTRY

- 7
- The Challenge of Rapid Growth
 - Regional Planning Cooperation
 - BLM Interface
 - Energy Industry
 - Garfield County Fairground
 - Gravel Mining and Reclamation



7.3 NATURAL RESOURCE EXTRACTION

Rifle is at the center of a reemerging energy exploration and extraction industry. The Roan Plateau, located a few miles northwest Rifle and 3,500 feet above the Colorado River Valley, contains large amounts of natural gas and oil shale deposits. Planning for the economically recoverable energy sources for uses such as heat, energy and power can lead to an economically sustainable plan.

With technological breakthroughs in deeper drilling and fracturing, and federal tax credits to explore new technology, the tighter sands formations underlying central Garfield County became feasible to exploit. Drilling along Interstate 70 began in the middle 1990's and started intensifying around 2005. The transfer of the Navel Oil Shale Reserve and leasing of portions of that property began in 1999 and continued into this century. Other leasing of BLM lands in the area accelerated as well. 91% of all BLM public lands within Colorado are leased or are available for leasing.

UNDERSTANDING THE NATURAL GAS INDUSTRY

Natural gas drilling differs from other energy industries in that there isn't a specific mine, or mine mouth-portal, or a power plant location. The resource is very dispersed, as are the activities to extract it.

The industry has been volatile in the past. Historically, it has been subject to the prices for the product at the global level, transmission capabilities, and federal policy determinations.

A natural gas rig in constant development will bore 2 wells a month, ideally, but there is down time for moving, repositioning, and there may be constraints on operation from weather and wildlife constraints. Rigs are precious, and if they can't operate at higher altitudes or given timing constraints, they are typically moved to where they can be productive year round.

Typical rig operations also lend themselves to transience, as many rig subcontractors are used to operating in more remote areas with few amenities. Crew scheduling often consists of shift structuring where employees work long days for 7-14 days,

and then get 5-10 days off, allowing them to work on site, but return to a distant home. Rigs typically rotate three crews, and work 24/7. As a result, crews seek more transient quarters or RV sites while working in the area and may never move their families or record a local address as a place of residence. This competition for RV sites and motel rooms has already created some tensions between tourist related business and the industry in the Silt, Rifle, and Parachute areas.

Industry sources agree that as the industry matures in the area, and the prospects for longer term employment increase, more subcontractor crews may tend to move to local communities and set up residence.

THE OIL SHALE PROSPECT

The largest known oil shale deposits in the world are in the Green River Formation, which covers portions of Colorado, Utah and Wyoming. Most of the Colorado portion is in Rio Blanco County, but parts are in Garfield County. Estimates of the oil resource within the Green River Formation range from 1.5 to 1.8 trillion barrels. Not all resources in place are recoverable. The midpoint of estimated recoverable oil shale resources, 800 billion barrels, is more than triple the proven oil reserves of Saudi Arabia. Present U.S. demand for petroleum products is about 20 million barrels per day. If oil shale could be used to meet a quarter of that demand, 800 billion barrels of recoverable resources would last for more than 400 years. Figure 82 shows oil shale reserves per acre in the Western United States.

Near term oil shale development is considered unlikely, although some testing and process experimentation will continue. Large-scale oil development could potentially stimulate a significant increase in the populations of Rio Blanco and Garfield Counties. Even a relatively small development effort, such as might occur during the construction of a few initial commercial plants would result in a large population influx. Rapid population growth could potentially stretch the financial ability of local communities to provide necessary public services and amenities. A large scale oil shale project would require a full re-evaluation of this.

ENERGY INDUSTRY OBJECTIVES

1. Positioning Rifle to take advantage of its place in the energy industry.
2. Working with Energy Industry to help mitigate impacts on the community and fund special projects.
3. Use severance taxes to help diversify the economy, especially to strengthen the renewable energy industry.

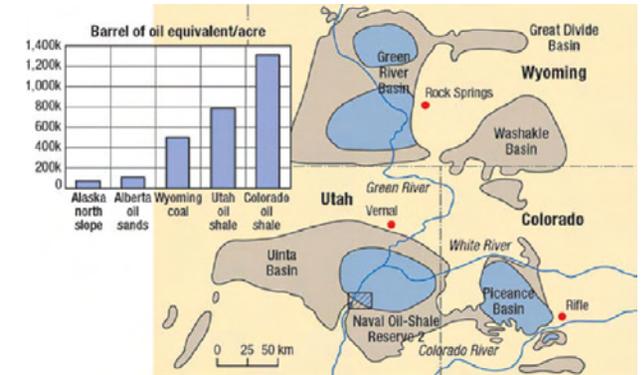


Figure 86: Oil Shale Deposits in the Western United States
Source: *Hopes For Oil Shale are Revived*, www.worldoil.com

GARFIELD COUNTY FAIRGROUND

- 7
- The Challenge of Rapid Growth
 - Regional Planning Cooperation
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 - Energy Industry
 - Garfield County Fairground
 - Gravel Mining and Reclamation

Just north of the Esma Lewis Middle School campus is the Garfield County Fairgrounds. The original fairgrounds site has been subdivided to allow for County Health and Human Services buildings to be built on the north end, while existing fairgrounds and pavilions remain to the south. The Garfield County Fairgrounds is a historic complex, completed in the 1930's, that serves as an important economic and cultural asset to the City. Completed as a Work Progress Administration project, the fairgrounds is critical to the City and recognizes the significance of agriculture and ranching in the area and supports the education and continuation of these professions throughout Rifle and Garfield County.

The City has for some time been concerned with the fairground location in the middle of Rifle's Downtown and on its busiest commercial corridor. The fairgrounds programming is limited by acreage and absence of parking. Additionally, the central location of the fairgrounds property could be more effectively used to accommodate a relatively dense mixed-use center to assist Rifle in accommodating projected population increases in a manner that would protect the agricultural and ranch lands the fairgrounds represents.

At a public meeting held for the Rifle Comprehensive Plan on May, 24th, 2006, the public was asked "What would be the best location for the Garfield County Fairgrounds during the next 20 years?".

Three options were proposed and the results of that survey were:

1. The fairground would remain in its current location (46% of respondents).
2. The fairground would be relocated to the west Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action (UMTRA) site (4% of respondents).
3. The fairground would be relocated south of the airport redevelopment area (50% of respondents).

The area to the south of the airport redevelopment area is isolated from residents yet will have good access from **Airport Road** and the **Mamm Creek Interchange**. It can accommodate a larger facility and expanded events. The site contains rolling hills with beautiful views. Plus, it lacks adjacent residential units that often classify large rodeos and the traffic they generate as a nuisance. There may be other suitable areas within Rifles sphere of influence suitable for fairground activities.

The City acknowledges that the relocation of the fairgrounds would be an expensive venture. Relocating the fairgrounds will likely be the result of a public/private redevelopment partnership. The city would like the fairgrounds to remain within city limits, but eventually at a new and expanded location.

Since that public meeting, the City has been contacted by a major property owner willing to locate the fairgrounds. The location is on the **State Highway 13 Bypass** and relatively flat. The City has also



Figure 87: Citizen's Fair Ground Concerns

**INFLUENCING
EXTERNAL FORCES**

7

- The Challenge of Rapid Growth
- Regional Planning Cooperation
- BLM Interface
- Energy Industry
- Garfield County Fairground
- Gravel Mining and Reclamation

GRAVEL MINING AND RECLAMATION

The City of Rifle seeks to mitigate negative impacts during and after mineral extraction. This includes minimization and elimination of the negative visual and operational effects of mining on the gateways and biological systems. Rifle encourages land uses that recognize the environmental sensitivity of the land.

Any gravel operation will protect watersheds and floodplains and minimize the impact of any mining on the environment and surrounding Rifle gateways.

GRAVEL MINING AND RECLAMATION OBJECTIVES

1. The City adopts the guidance outlined in the County's proposed regulations and policies for gravel extraction operations drafted in November 2007 entitled, "Goals, Objectives, Policies & Regulations Regarding Gravel Extraction Operations."
2. The County's proposed regulations outline a regulatory framework that ensures mining activities limit their adverse affect on environmental and visual quality, and reduce potential land uses and traffic impacts. In addition to these regulations, the City will discourage any gravel mining operations, which contain crushing, asphalt processing or concrete operations between **Mamm Creek Interchange** and **Main Rifle Interchange**.

Objectives

O1.1 General Comprehensive Plan	O1.20 Development Pattern	O1.43 Storm Drain, Run off and Water Retention
O1.2 Residential Land Use	O1.21 Fiscal Impact	O1.44 School
O1.3 Commercial Land Uses	O1.22 Mixed Use Neighborhood	O1.45 Parks, Recreation and Trail
O1.4 Mixed-Use Community Commercial	O1.23 Density	O1.46 Range of Housing Types and Prices
O1.5 Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial	O1.24 Land Use Transition	O1.47 Existing Housing Stock / Affordability
O1.6 Regional Commercial	O1.25 Land Use and Development Code Update	O1.48 Regional Housing Strategy
O1.7 Mixed-Use Business	O1.26 General Urban Design	O1.49 Redevelop Dilapidated Housing/Mixed-Use Development
O1.8 Mixed-Use Business / Light Industrial	O1.27 General Urban Design Guidelines	O1.50 Transportation
O1.9 Light Industrial	O1.28 Downtown Design Guidelines	O1.51 Topography / Geologic Hazard
O1.10 Industrial	O1.29 Architectural Design Guidelines	O1.52 Hillside Development / Scenic Resource
O1.11 Subarea	O1.30 Landscape Design Standards	O1.53 Floodplain
O1.12 Downtown	O1.31 Urban Containment	O1.54 Wetland
O1.13 Central Rifle	O1.32 Annexation	O1.55 Elk and Deer
O1.14 North Rifle Future Land Use	O1.33 Energy Village	O1.56 Wildlife Ecosystem / Vegetation
O1.15 East Rifle Future Land Use	O1.34 Regional Center	O1.57 Open Space
O1.16 East Rifle Gateway Future Land Use	O1.35 "River Town"	O1.58 Rapid Growth
O1.17 South Rifle Future Land Use	O1.36 Gateway Identification	O1.59 Regional Planning Cooperation
O1.18 West Rifle Gateway Future Land Use	O1.37 Key Corridor	O1.60 BLM Interface
O1.19 West Rifle - Clough Ranch Future Land Use	O1.38 Street Tree	O1.61 Energy Industry
	O1.39 Infrastructure	O1.62 Gravel Mining and Reclamation
	O1.40 Water	
	O1.41 Wastewater	
	O1.42 Sanitation	

01.1 GENERAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

1. All zoning and land use decisions, including the development of streets, parks, utilities and the provisions of public services shall be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Future Land Use Map.
 - a. In the next 18 months, amend the **Zoning Ordinance** and map to bring it into conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.
 - b. Incorporate the **Future Land Use Map** and **Objectives** into the review process (submittal requirements, review criteria) for land use decisions and infrastructure planning.
 - c. Make the Comprehensive Plan available to all groups/individuals participating in Rifle's land use decision-making process.
2. The Comprehensive Plan will be reviewed annually and updated every five years; updates will occur more frequently when necessary.
 - a. All City departments will create an annual to do list of action items consistent with the Comprehensive Plan in order to activate the Comprehensive Plan.
 - b. Set a date for the next annual review of the Comprehensive Plan.
 - c. Regularly budget funds for future Plan updates.

01.2 RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

1. Each residential land use designation is ac-

companied by a "dwelling units per acre" figure. Property owners and developers should not assume entitlement to the higher end of the density range when the City assigns zoning. The appropriate density for a development will be determined on a case-by-case basis based on the evaluation of the impacts to City infrastructure and surrounding neighborhoods; aspects influencing allowable density include traffic impacts, project design, how and where density is proposed on the property (i.e. building locations) and compatibility with adjacent land uses. Providing substantial public benefit (e.g. pedestrian amenities, street trees, etc.) will help a project increase its appropriate density.

2. In the "**Very Low-Density** and **Ultra Low-Density**" land use designations (1 DU per 5 acre and 1 DU per 20 acres, respectively), **cluster development** is encouraged for the purpose of maximizing the use of urban infrastructure and the preservation of open space.
3. Multi-family residential buildings should be broken-up architecturally, to avoid a box-like appearance.
4. Encourage dwelling unit design that will blend various residential types seamlessly (e.g., small apartments can be designed to blend inconspicuously into low-density neighborhoods).
5. Residential neighborhoods should be designed to include an integrated mix of housing types that include **a mix and range of densities** (e.g. single-family, townhomes, accessory dwelling

units, apartments, condos).

6. Residential neighborhoods should be designed so garage doors do not dominate streetscapes.
7. The City supports and encourages **affordable housing** dispersed throughout the community, not concentrated in one area. Every effort should be made to blend affordable housing with housing designed for a higher-income market. Through the use of similar exterior materials, windows and building forms. Multi-family housing should not be segregated or isolated.
8. Allow large development projects with multi-year build-out schedules to incorporate entitlement processes that can react to market conditions related to housing.

01.3 COMMERCIAL LAND USES

1. Rifle will discourage typical strip commercial development. Instead, Rifle will encourage all commercial development to develop in clusters that promote pedestrian traffic enabling the shopper to park once to shop at many stores.
2. Parking placed beside or behind buildings in order to reduce the visual blight of parking lots and to facilitate pedestrian use.

01.4 MIXED-USE COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL

1. Incorporate a mix of uses, including retail, residential and office in traditional development patterns.

2. Encourage residential uses to be mixed with Community Commercial.
3. Carefully manage the amount of land designated as Mixed-Use Community Commercial. These land uses can only occur at very specific locations within Rifle and should not compete with land use activities that can occur in other areas.
4. Avoid traditional strip-mall type development by providing pedestrian amenities, generous landscaping, clustering buildings and locating parking to the side or behind buildings. One double-sided row of parking fronting the major street is usually enough.
5. Adjacent residential areas should follow General Urban Design Principles.

O1.5 MIXED-USE NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL

1. A modest amount of Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial uses is encouraged in residential areas to increase convenience and reduce the need for cross-city travel. These nodes should be placed in appropriate locations (on busy streets or intersections) and should be compatible with (or appropriately buffered from) the surrounding neighborhood(s). They should also be placed in transitional areas between **Regional Commercial** and **Mixed-Use Community Commercial** and lower-density residential areas.

O1.6 REGIONAL COMMERCIAL

1. Commercial and business development along Interstate 70 should have a pleasing appearance as viewed from the Interstate. Facades facing the Interstate should have finish materials and landscaping similar in quality to building fronts.
2. Regional commercial centers are large traffic generators and should locate near major collectors, arterial or Interstates.
3. The transition between regional commercial uses and other less intensive uses, especially residential uses, should be carefully planned. Smaller commercial uses should be clustered around larger big-box stores and integrated into a mixed-use setting that utilizes General Urban Design Principles.

O1.7 MIXED-USE BUSINESS

1. Major employment centers and other large traffic generators should locate near arterial roads and Interstate 70 exits.
2. The City encourages limited residential uses in the Mixed-Use Business land use where appropriate. Any residential component will require providing amenities where mixed-use residential is located.

O1.8 MIXED-USE BUSINESS / LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

1. MUBLI is a transition zone which helps transition industrial uses to residential. Uses will transition from industrial adjacent to residential and commercial uses adjacent at major thoroughfares.
2. MUBLI will utilize **General Urban Design Principles**.
3. The City encourages limited residential uses in the Business land use where appropriate.

O1.9 LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

1. To reduce the over-production of commercial land uses and encourage higher quality commercial throughout the community, Rifle prohibits restaurants, hotels, common household goods, personal service, and medical offices in light industrial and industrial land uses unless said uses are included in a master planned development approved by the City. Gas stations and truck stops shall be permitted in light industrial.

O1.10 INDUSTRIAL

1. Separate industrial development from residential and commercial uses by a natural, physical or land-use buffer that gradually transitions from one land use type to the next.
2. Visually and physically buffer industrial developments requiring large outdoor storage yards or outdoor work areas from major collector or arte-

rial roads and residential areas.

01.11 SUBAREA

1. Refine and update the subarea boundaries.
2. Prioritize the subareas, which will come first.
3. Create subarea plans for the identified subareas.

01.12 DOWNTOWN

1. Ensure the Downtown has predictable and appropriate development codes.
2. Support vision of pedestrian-oriented, high-density, mixed-use core to serve as the economic and cultural heart of Rifle.

Culture and Design

- CD1. Preserve Historic Properties and areas like the Midland Building, the Rifle Creek Theater, and the Post Office.
- CD2. Celebrate Rifle's citizens and history using unique elements in public spaces.
- CD3. Provide a wide variety of activities in the Downtown, i.e. library, city hall, community meeting places, schools, open spaces/plazas and places of worship.
- CD4. Use public buildings and projects as catalysts and examples for the private development

community to emulate good design and high aesthetic standards.

- CD5. Encourage and assist non-profit organizations or neighborhood groups to stage events and activities in the Downtown (e.g. farmers market, year-round seasonal fairs / events) to strengthens the community's "social infrastructure" and generate return visits.
- CD6. Work to create compelling, informative, and consistent signage throughout the Downtown to tell the story of Rifle, using the Centennial Park signage as a model.
- CD7. Explore the possibilities of the visibility of the downtown from the interstate. A marquee building downtown would alert passers-by that the core of Rifle is north of the interstate, making it more likely people would visit Rifle's historic commercial core.

Residential

- R1. Encourage dense residential housing in and around the Downtown to provide more patrons within walking distance of downtown businesses.

Mixed-Use

- MU1. Seek a full range of housing types and work places, where diverse ages and classes are integrated.
- MU2. Encourage a mix of businesses, residences,

and civic uses, such as a Health and Wellness Center that promotes both day and nighttime activities in the Downtown.

- MU3. Preserve the opportunity to locate small and medium-sized retail establishments at street level by preventing non-complementary uses from dominating the streetscape. Careful evaluation of retail conversion to other uses should occur.
- MU4. Provide local, everyday services that will make the Downtown livable, such as pharmacies, home decorating, salons, dry cleaners, and pet groomers. This also helps provide a "Rifle" character and avoids a "could-be-anywhere" commercial mix.
- MU5. Follow and implement the Downtown Master Plan.
 - a. Obtain first right of refusal for the City for key redevelopment properties.
 - b. Redevelop Valley Lumber site into major entertainment and high-density, mixed-use destination.
 - c. Develop Martin property into high-density residential center.
 - d. Connect Park Avenue to **State Highway 6 / 24**.
 - e. Make State Highway 6 / 24 an urban pedestrian oriented street connected to the Downtown, not just a transportation corridor.
- MU6. Use City resources to support the develop-

ment of a strong Downtown.

- a. Create a 3-D Downtown Development Review Process that expedites the entitlement process while still providing careful public oversight.
- b. Use the Urban Renewal Authority to share in the cost of infrastructure.
- c. Consider the creation of a parking district in the Downtown to bring multiple facilities under common management and create greater efficiencies.

MU7. "Feather" densities down as the Downtown transitions to lower density residential.

01.13 CENTRAL RIFLE

1. Encourage the Fairgrounds property to redevelop, include mixed-use and a mixture of housing types.
 - a. Prior to any redevelopment of the fairgrounds a master-plan will be developed. The master plan will include a street which connects Park Avenue to Railroad Avenue.
 - b. Provide pedestrian oriented streetscape with mixed-use along Railroad Avenue.
2. Encourage the redevelopment of the middle school property to increase downtown traffic options, relieve congestion and increase housing density.
 - a. Continue West Avenue north to connect

with Railroad Avenue at 9th Street.

- b. Connect 7th Street from Railroad Avenue to West Avenue.
- c. Encourage an urban (two-story) elementary school in area to retain a school location in Central Rifle.
3. On the west side of Railroad Ave at 10th Street, create a gateway into Centennial Park to ensure travelers on Railroad Avenue have a visible "window" into Rifle's major urban park.
4. Encourage redevelopment of Park Avenue neighborhood into a high-density residential neighborhood that orients towards, e.g. ensures that design is a consideration on the park side of development, and takes advantage of the park.
 - a. Integrate redevelopment into the urban core.
 - b. Provide pedestrian connections to Centennial Park.
 - c. Where feasible, Park Avenue will connect to other roads.
 - d. Be aware of the constraints that the floodplain puts on this area.
5. Investigate the connection from Trapper Hollow/ Stillwell Avenue to high school/Gentry property. Depending upon physical constraints this connection may range anywhere from an official pedestrian and bike connection to a street.
6. Investigate the provision of matching grants to

restore historic buildings in Old East Rifle.

01.14 NORTH RIFLE FUTURE LAND USE

1. Over the next 20 year planning period, highly visible and centrally located light industrial properties in the North Rifle Subarea will likely be rezoned to a retail/commercial land use similar to adjacent zoning. The relocation of industrial uses will benefit the City by increasing sales on a highly visible location more suited to commercial development. The City will work with businesses to investigate appropriate relocation incentives that will encourage the light industrial businesses located near the intersection of State Highway 13 bypass and Railroad Avenue to move to newly annexed and expanded light industrial areas.
2. The City will create safe pedestrian crossings of State Highway 13 including a potential grade separated crossing for a future multiuse trail that follows Government Creek and intersecting State Highway 13 just north of the Whiteriver Avenue/State Highway 13 intersection.
3. The City will work with Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to provide transportation connections across State Highway 13 at key locations.
4. The City will encourage community gardens or Community Supported Agriculture operations to be included in new development.
5. New development will participate in the provi-

sion of key transportation improvements identified in the Comprehensive Plan, including but not limited to the extension of Fairway Avenue, extension of Acacia Avenue, improvement of Whiteriver Avenue, completion of Rifle Creek Trail, and other improvements identified by the CDOT [Access Control Plan](#).

6. Encourage landscaping and street tree improvements in Deerfield and Palomino Park areas, including on Acacia Avenue, 24th Street and Howard Avenue.
7. Mitigate future high traffic levels (especially truck traffic) on State Highway 13 by instituting a landscape buffer on both sides of the highway and orienting development towards parallel street networks that will serve as the major commercial corridors for the area. Ensure that these commercial streets are pedestrian friendly and have streetscapes that incorporate [General Urban Design Principles](#). Well-landscaped parking lots are encouraged to locate along State Highway 13.
8. Facades facing the State Highway 13 should have finish materials and landscaping similar in quality to building fronts.
9. Mitigate the sound of truck traffic by passing a local ordinance restricting the use of Engine Compression Brakes to emergency situations and posting the ordinance along the highway.

01.15 EAST RIFLE FUTURE LAND USE

1. Connect Graham Mesa to [State Highway 6](#) with a new street that will lessen congestion in Central Rifle.
2. Ensure a gridded network of streets in Undeveloped Graham Mesa.
3. Encourage a network of off street multi-use paths that meander through residential neighborhood and connect commercial, employment and recreational destinations.
4. Upgrade Colorado Route 293 to accommodate increased traffic demand in and out of the mesa.

01.16 EAST RIFLE GATEWAY FUTURE LAND USE

1. Any development in the [Main Rifle Interchange](#) area must develop via the [East Gateway Subarea Plan](#). If an alternative development scheme is desired, a new Master Plan for the entire Main Rifle Interchange area must be developed.
2. Protect the Colorado River bottom from gravel extraction.
3. Support continuation of trail system and recreational opportunities on Colorado River, including the development of an urban trail network at the Main Rifle Interchange.
4. Redevelop the East Rifle Center.

5. Through a City/County intra-governmental agreement, create an overlay to ensure proper setbacks/buffering in the [State Highway 6](#) corridor until such time that the City annexes the corridor.
 - ✱ Large setbacks (100 ft or greater) accompanied by naturally landscaped berms are required to shield development from highway travel.
 - ✱ Consolidate access points to reduce potential conflicts.
 - ✱ [Cluster development](#) will be encouraged in order to reduce the appearance of one long strip of retail.
 - ✱ Discourage disorderly industrial storage facilities.

01.17 SOUTH RIFLE FUTURE LAND USE

1. Strictly limit the residential and commercial uses that occur on the eastern end of [Airport Road](#).
2. Take advantage of the Powers Ranch frontage on the interstate with a business park or retail project.
3. Rifle encourages the redevelopment of property along Garden Lane.
4. The City will follow the [Airpark Master Plan](#).
5. Access along Airport Road will be consolidated whenever possible. New development will use combined access points.

6. Investigate the location of a **Community Park** with ball fields and picnic facilities to serve the residents of South Rifle and the whole community.
7. Support continuation of trail system and recreational opportunities on Colorado River.

01.18 WEST RIFLE GATEWAY FUTURE LAND USE

1. Support development of the Biocorridor and Energy Innovation Center concepts.
2. Support creation of an regional commercial node at **West Rifle Interchange**.
3. Support continuation of trail system, including the **LoVa Master Plan** and recreational opportunities on Colorado River.
4. Encourage a design standards for properties along the **State Highway 6 / 24** corridor, including:
 - a. Preserve rural feel of the Highway 6 entry-way into town.
 - b. Encourage **cluster development** with common access points.
 - c. Encourage landscaping of median between Access Road and State Highway 6 / 24.
5. Ensure that the Colorado River corridor is protected from **gravel mining operations** and incompatible development.

01.19 WEST RIFLE - CLOUGH RANCH FUTURE LAND USE

1. Any development in the South Clough Neighborhood will be master planned with a traditional street grid. The master plan will include a road connection between the State Highway 24/Bypass intersection and Summit Drive. The master plan will also include a new elementary school located in the South Clough Ranch Neighborhood. Urban infrastructure west of the bypass has not yet been considered by the City of Rifle. Any development would require a significant analysis to determine the feasibility and capacity of extending city infrastructure.
2. If and when development occurs in West Rifle, the City will encourage cluster development in North Clough Ranch to preserve a variety of open lands and help preserve lands for future urban development.
3. Define trail corridors, parks and important open spaces for intermediate and future urban development.

01.20 DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

1. The City opposes leapfrog development. There will be rare occasions when leap frog development is permitted; however, the City will require the developer to relieve the City of any increase in cost of services including additional infrastructure maintenance and public service (e.g. fire,

police, trash, snow removal) costs. The City will review projects on a case-by-case basis and approve or deny the projects at its own discretion.

2. The City will only **annex** properties that benefit Rifle (e.g., providing affordable housing, water rights, new employment opportunities, or commercial properties with positive sales tax implications).
3. Follow the **tiered urban containment program** to ensure that new growth in Rifle occurs in a planned and logically sequenced manner.

01.21 FISCAL IMPACT

1. Allow efficient and prudent extensions of infrastructure in a manner that ensures new growth pays its own way and considers both taxpayers and users; new developments should pay the costs for new on-site and off-site public infrastructure.
 - a. Create a system that evaluates the total City costs incurred to provide services to new developments.
 - b. Ensure the planning and development review process fairly allocates, and assesses the cost of the utilities and services that will be required to serve existing and new development. The cost of long-term maintenance for non-contiguous developments must be included.
 - c. Reevaluate the existing impact fee structure

to ensure there is an equitable distribution of cost identified for new development.

01.22 MIXED USE NEIGHBORHOOD

1. While the City encourages mixed-use where appropriate, the first priority for a mixed-use shopping and entertainment district is downtown. Rifle recognizes that there are many different kinds of mixed-use, and that "downtown mixed-use" should not necessarily be replicated in other locations.
2. Encourage pedestrian-oriented design that promotes an enjoyable shopping experience, longer visits, and "cross-shopping" through sidewalk level shops and restaurants, wide sidewalks and appropriately-scaled architecture.
 - a. Ensure buildings create comfortable "outdoor rooms" for streets and plazas (neither canyon-like nor too open) by striving for an overall 1:1 ratio between building height and street R.O.W. width.
 - b. Make building frontage permeable on commercial uses - connect the inside of the buildings and the sidewalk with doors and windows.
3. Mixed-use buildings should be flexible and responsive to the marketplace. To encourage this, the City shall, where appropriate, focus more on the form and design of buildings rather than narrowly prescribing uses.

4. Retail and restaurants should be emphasized on first level. Office uses on the first-level of buildings are secondary.
5. All commercial uses must be compatible with residential uses if mixed vertically.
6. Provide regulatory incentives that facilitate land assembly to support mixed-use Comprehensive Plan recommendations. This may involve the City purchase and assembly of separate parcels to create new development opportunities.
7. Encourage a mix of uses and/or a range of densities to foster a vibrant sense of place.
 - a. Create a diversity of housing choices within new designated neighborhoods or zoning districts.

01.23 DENSITY

1. To encourage housing variety, the Comprehensive Plan uses "average" densities in most **land use designation**. Property owners and developers should assume entitlement to the lower end of the density range. Property owners may increase density by providing public benefit. In determining appropriate density, the Planning Commission and City Council will take into account a projects design, how and where density is proposed on the property (i.e. building locations) the inclusion of affordable housing and compatibility with adjacent land uses. (The **Mixed-Use Downtown, Mixed-Use Neighbor-**

hood Commercial, Very Low-Density and Ultra Low-Density mixed-use and residential land use designations are exceptions to the "average-density" requirement.)

2. The City encourages neighborhoods with housing choices that will avoid enclaves of single-family income levels and allow residents to remain in the neighborhood as their life stages change; single, married, raising children, "empty nesters, retirees. This includes young families, families with single heads of households, large families, people with disabilities, the elderly, and **low and moderate-income households**.

01.24 LAND USE TRANSITION

1. Density transitions between adjacent properties should be gradual, **not exceeding one density category** of the Comprehensive Plan. Where density transitions are greater than one category difference, or differences in land uses on opposite sides of a street, the transition is to be accomplished within the property, or mitigated through similar building design, increased setbacks, landscape buffering, or other means acceptable to the City of Rifle.
 - a. Add "*feathering of densities*" and "*mitigation of different land uses that are separated by roads*" to the conditions of project review.
 - b. Do not permit "spot zoning" which is the zoning of small areas of land for uses that

are not in harmony with the current zoning and the **Future Land Use Map** for the area, especially if a small area is rezoned in a way that does not conform to the surrounding neighborhood.

2. Densities will “feather” or gradually transition, from higher densities nearer to central business district to lower densities at the municipal boundary.

01.25 LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT CODE UPDATE

1. Start by creating development standards within the Planned Urban Development (PUD) process to permit a mix of densities in any zone. Eventually, after gaining experience with mixed-density development issues, amend the code to allow, as a use-by-right, a mix of residential densities (resulting in a designated average minimum density).
2. The code can be updated in phases but should create a final “one-stop” document that combines the revised zoning, subdivision regulations, building codes and design guidelines into a streamlined development review while bringing about higher quality projects.
3. Rewrite Rifle’s current code to reflect the **Comprehensive Plan Objectives** and land uses identified on the **Future Land Use Map**.
 - a. Explore the creation of two new zones to

protect the **Urban Planning Reserve**: “**Very Low-Density** and **Ultra Low-Density**”. These zoning designations combined with **clustering techniques** are intended to preserve farmland, environmental resources, act as reserve of land for future urban development, and encourage subdivision design that fits into the rural landscape.

- b. Include form-based codes for the **Downtown, Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial** and **Mixed-Use Business/Light Industrial** land uses.
- c. Remove obstacles to mixed-use development and redevelopment:
 - i. Ensure that pedestrian connectivity, safety and convenience and other multi-modal transportation options are incorporated into mixed-use areas.
- d. Ensure consistency with the density ranges identified in the **Land Use Designations** including the **average-density** concept that for some flexibility in the application of density.
- e. Reduce land use nuisance in and unsightly appearance of industrial areas; produce productive industrial areas:
 - i. Prohibit restaurants, hotels, common household goods, personal service, medical offices, in light industrial and industrial zoning districts unless said uses are included in a master planned devel-

opment approved by the City.

- ii. Permit gas stations and truck stops in light industrial.
- iii. Include performance standards for heavy equipment usage, outdoor storage, truck servicing, equipment leasing, etc.
- e. Include **Design Guidelines**. Work with landscape architect/planning firm to develop design guidelines for:
 - i. **Downtown** to
 1. Ensure a consistent architectural character in Downtown Rifle.
 - ii. **Key Corridors** to
 1. Protect highly traveled Key Corridors from visual blight associated with outdoor storage and heavy equipment servicing.
 2. Include street trees, buildings frontage on the corridors, screened surface parking and consolidated signage.
 - iii. **Mixed-use centers** to
 1. Mandate the proper placement of parking lots, pedestrian amenities clustering of buildings in commercial and mixed-use land uses.
 - iv. **Industrial uses** to
 1. Include streetscape and visual /

physical buffering of industrial businesses from adjacent land uses and the general public. Existing businesses will be required to comply.

- f. Update subdivision standards
 - i. Require minimum 5-foot sidewalks (attached and detached) in all new residential developments.
 - ii. Require adjacent developments to have **interconnected streets**.
 - iii. Require that all proposed subdivisions and major construction projects shall include a **geologic/soils** report addressing site conditions.
- g. Prepare a zoning map amendment to **reduce overall densities on hillsides**. The zoning map amendments will indicate the areas intended to be preserved (“sending” portions) and the areas intended to “receive” the clustered density.
- h. Research and formulate ordinances (such as transfer of density or development rights, and other **Open Space Preservation Techniques**) to encourage clustering comes on the portion of properties not on steep hillsides.
- i. Assure that zoning provides adequate protection to **wetlands**.
- j. Prepare ordinance requiring that all proposed subdivisions and major construction projects shall include a geologic / soils report

addressing site conditions.

- k. Developers shall be required, in the subdivision development process, to provide accurate FEMA floodplain data as it pertains to the development. The City’s Planning Department shall review current submittals to evaluate the appropriate timing in the planning process that this data will be required.
- l. Require development applicants to address plant and animal resources and habitat areas, particularly in association with Rifle and Government Creeks, the Colorado River and other potential habitat areas, to minimize the effect of development and encourage habitat preservation.

01.26 GENERAL URBAN DESIGN

- 1. New development in mixed-use, commercial as well as medium-density and high-density residential land use designations should incorporate General Urban Design Principles to maximum extent possible.

01.27 GENERAL URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

- 1. Rifle will work with a design consultant to *establish a thorough and enforceable design guideline package* for Rifle’s mixed-use, commercial, medium and high-density residential land uses.
 - a. Establish **downtown standards and design**

review program which implements the **Downtown Master Plan**.

- b. Establish *mixed-use and commercial* design guidelines for landscape, pedestrian and building orientation, and signage that are based on **General Urban Design Principles**.
- 2. Rifle will work with a design consultant to establish design guidelines that ensure **Key Corridor** design standards include buildings fronting on the corridors (building back should not “front” key corridors), screened surface parking and consolidated signage.
- 3. Rifle will work with a design consultant to establish guidelines that ensure *Industrial and Light Industrial* areas are orderly or screened from major thoroughfares.

01.28 DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

- 1. Downtown design guidelines should be incorporated into a design review ordinance used as the foundation by which the Downtown Design Advisory Board reviews development proposals.
- 2. The Rifle City Council should create a Downtown Design Advisor Board to evaluate proposed new construction and building modifications in Downtown Rifle; consider requesting the Downtown Development Authority take on this role.
- 3. City Planning Director to conduct work ses-

sions necessary to establish the Downtown Advisory Board district guidelines.

01.29 ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. The City should consider the costs / benefits of establishing an ordinance to proactively facilitate storefront rehabilitations – such as a rebate of project costs.
2. Explore the recruitment of local banks / financial institutions to create a low-interest loan pool for business façade improvements.
3. Establish a façade grant program to induce owners to improve their buildings.
4. To facilitate quality (re)development, the City should consider the costs / benefits of recruiting (local) architects / designers to provide design / technical assistance to local businesses.

01.30 LANDSCAPE DESIGN STANDARDS

1. The City supports the establishment of landscape development standards for universal application.
2. Rifle will engage landscape architects in the creation of unique and enforceable landscape design standards for the City of Rifle.
3. Landscape design standards will encourage strong adherence to xeric landscape methods.
4. Where appropriate, steps should be taken to

utilize existing native vegetation in-lieu-of over lot grading.

01.31 URBAN CONTAINMENT

1. The City promotes compact and contiguous development growth patterns that can efficiently be served by public services and seeks to preserve open spaces, agricultural lands, and environmentally sensitive areas that are not currently suitable for urban development.
2. The City will annex properties for which there is a significant public benefit (i.e. properties providing affordable housing, water rights, real estate transfer fees or commercial properties with positive sales tax implications).
3. The City will discourage growth outside of the current development tier ("leap frog" development) until that growth tier is at least 75-percent built out within the land use type being proposed (e.g. industrial; commercial; low-density residential; medium-density residential; high-density residential; and mixed-use land uses). See **Table x.x** for the total amount of growth per category in each tier. Proposed development extensions outside the current tier that do not meet the above conditions may be considered by the City, however the developer should expect the following:

- a. Development will be required to **pay full cost of all infrastructure improvements**

necessary to serve a project with no cost recovery agreement.

- b. Development will receive zero impact fee credit for improvement costs.
 - c. Development will compensate the appropriate agency for providing services outside of the Tier 1 Priority Growth Area (e.g. police, waste recovery, fire, school bussing and infrastructure maintenance costs).
4. Through the building permit system, add reports to track buildout in each tier for basic land use types (e.g. industrial; commercial; low-density residential; medium-density residential; high-density residential; and mixed-use land uses). Compare to capacities identified in Comprehensive Plan and calculate % of thresholds. Report annually to Council and Planning Commission.

01.32 ANNEXATION

1. Areas included in an annexation petition must fall within one of the three - **tiered areas** designated for potential future annexation.
2. Current land uses in annexed areas must be compatible with this Comprehensive Plan, the City's Land Use and Development Code, and the **Future Land Use Map**.
3. In considering an annexation request, the City will look favorably upon an annexation proposal which:

- a. Are in the Tier 1 area identified on the Comprehensive Plan.
 - b. Eliminates and/or does not create islands or peninsulas of unincorporated territory.
 - c. Consolidates overlapping functions of government.
 - d. Promotes efficient delivery of services;
 - e. Encourages the equitable distribution of community resources and obligations.
 - f. Minimizes negative tax consequences for property owners within the area to be annexed, as well as the property owners already within the City.
4. Wherever practical, new City boundaries should conform to the boundaries of special service districts or other taxing entities.
 5. The City of Rifle does not intend to annex territory for the sole purpose of acquiring revenues.
 6. The costs and expenses of capital improvements, such as utilities, streets, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, storm drain systems, and other improvements deemed necessary in the annexed area, shall be **borne by the developer** as development within the area occurs.
 7. The City to work with county to assure that infrastructure in future annexation areas is developed to City Standards.

01.33 ENERGY VILLAGE

1. Plan and implement the **Energy Innovation Center** concept.
2. Implement and continue to develop public/private Energy Village partnerships objectives to bridge the gap between petroleum-based energy and sustainable energy sources including:
 - a. Offer energy audits to all City Departments to encourage energy-efficient and sustainable practices in operations, facilities, and planning. Audits should concentrate on energy efficiency steps that helping reduce operation cost and energy consumption.
 - b. Encouraging the Business and Industrial Sector to pursue business development and job creation in renewable energy, energy-efficiency and sustainable industries. Offer training to the development community (architects, HVAC installers, solar installers, HERS raters, etc.) that focuses on the practical aspects of energy-efficient building design.
 - c. Working with the Building and Development Community to increase the energy-efficiency and sustainability of homes, businesses, and neighborhoods.
 - d. Encouraging the Rifle Community At-Large to create partnerships to engage the wider Rifle community in the Energy Village vision - our schools, clubs, non-profits, and others.
 - e. Continuing to develop the partnerships with

the Governor's Energy Office to advance all Energy Village objectives.

3. Encourage energy audits and energy efficiency upgrades (e.g., insulation) for existing building stock.
4. Adopt high energy efficiency standards for new development.

01.34 REGIONAL CENTER

1. Position Rifle as the regional economic center for the Upper Grand Valley.
2. Attract a diverse base of industries and businesses that provide high-skilled, high-wage labor and reduce reliance on a single industry while ensuring a sustainable and long-lasting sales tax base.
3. Attract a wide array of national and local retailers to make Rifle a commercial hub of the region.
4. Carefully and continually evaluate the need to entitle and/or annex high-quality industrial and business sites.
5. Support the concept of an "Incubation Center" at the Colorado Mountain College to provide educational opportunities for Rifle residents and serve as innovation incubator for local businesses.
6. Promote the Rifle-Garfield County Airport as a regional travel center.

7. Support the creation of senior and retirement related businesses and facilities.
8. Support the creation of a new recreation center and a health and wellness center.
9. Explore whether the city can/should provide incentives to attract retail and commercial development to Rifle (such as sales tax sharing and public infrastructure investments).

01.35 “RIVER TOWN”

1. Promote the image of Rifle as a “River Town”.
 - a. Support recreational opportunities involving the Colorado River.
 - b. Connect Rifle to the Colorado River with a system of trails and parks.
 - c. Buildings on the south end of Downtown Rifle should be oriented to take advantage of the river corridor viewsheds.
 - d. Property adjacent to the Colorado Department of Transportation’s (CDOT) rest area will be master planned in a manner that takes advantage of the river setting, proximity to Downtown Rifle and the Interstate 70 Corridor.

01.36 GATEWAY IDENTIFICATION

1. Commission graphic artist or signage consultant to confirm gateway locations and develop design concepts and cost estimates.

2. Work with Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to install signage at Mamm Creek and West Rifle interchanges.
3. Explore corporate sponsorship for signage program.
4. Make a comprehensive effort to coordinate graphic imagery used to market Rifle, including logos and signs.

01.37 KEY CORRIDOR

1. To protect the City’s image key corridors should include:
 - a. **Street trees and landscape**
 - b. Buildings fronting on the corridor (building back should not “front” key corridors)
 - c. Screened surface parking
 - d. Consolidated signage
2. Rifle must ensure adequate resources to maintain street trees and landscape.

01.38 STREET TREE

1. In conjunction with Arbor Day or a local spring or fall festival provide street tree seedlings or ‘whips’ to residents with planting directions. Modeled after Denver’s “Park People” program, which donates thousands of trees annually for volunteer planting.
2. Install irrigation and street trees in visible loca-

tions on major streets as City budgeting permits.

01.39 INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Design, build & maintain infrastructure and services for Rifle’s citizens in the most cost-effective manner possible.
2. Carefully evaluate impacts of new development and mitigate them.
3. Ensure that the City has adequate facilities for all new development.

01.40 WATER

1. New development must provide adequate water rights to serve itself and properties annexing to Rifle will dedicate groundwater rights to the City.
2. The City should implement the water conservation measures identified in the City of Rifle “Water Conservation Plan”, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Adopting water conservation measures including “Xeriscape” landscape design principles and a reduction turf grass or irrigated areas.
 - b. Installing of water-saving plumbing.
 - c. Installing irrigation control systems that respond to weather and reduce water runoff.
 - d. Encouraging users of large amounts of

water for landscaping and other exterior purposes to use "secondary" irrigation water rather than potable water.

3. Design and construct water plant to process Colorado River water for known future water needs as well as to improve water quality for current water users.
4. Offer continuing education to plant operators and O&M crew.
5. Continually evaluate energy use, system efficiency, water quality improvements, and rate structure equity.
6. Develop a tiered rate structure to encourage water conservation and considered use of this most precious resource.

01.41 WASTEWATER

1. Provide environmentally sound and efficient collection and reclamation of municipal wastewater.
2. Utilize state-of-the art treatment techniques.
3. Evaluate and maintain sewer mains in a timely manner.
4. Provide continuing education to plant operators and O&M crew.
5. Evaluate options for the expansion of waste water service for Rifle's planning area.

01.42 SANITATION

1. Investigate cost effective and efficient ways for the City to improve and promote easier recycling (e.g. curbside recycling).

01.43 STORM DRAIN, RUN OFF AND WATER RETENTION

1. Manage stormwater to protect against property loss and ensure compliance with federal water quality standards and FEMA floodplain regulations.
2. Carefully, evaluate and monitor development activities along Government Creek, Rifle Creek, Hubbard Gulch, and below mesas in south Rifle.

01.44 SCHOOL

1. Ongoing collaboration and regular communication with the Garfield School District No Re-2 is beneficial to the City of Rifle for purposes of locating future school sites so that selected locations best meet the needs of the district and the City.
2. The City will cooperate with the Garfield RE-2 School District to plan future school facilities, helping to predict road and utility needs. To that end the City shall assist the School Districts in identifying and reserving land for school facilities so as to reduce the need for school acquisition and construction before develop-

ment.

3. To reduce costs of both schools and parks the City will explore joint development of school sites (elementary, middle and high schools) for neighborhood parks, when public accessibility meets the neighborhood's needs.
4. The City will work with the Garfield RE-2 School District to create facility uses and maintenance agreements with the goal of reducing overall cost and increasing efficiency.

01.45 PARKS, RECREATION AND TRAIL

1. The City of Rifle will promote healthy lifestyles through year-round recreational and leisure opportunities.
 - a. Complete, landscape and beautify all existing parks.
 - b. Complete the urban trail system to provide safe transportation throughout our community.
 - c. Promote the use of river, creek and irrigation ditch corridors as linear greenways and passive recreation areas.
 - d. Explore with ditch and irrigation companies and or other pertinent parties ways to incorporate trails and pathways along those waterway systems, as identified in the Comprehensive Plan.
 - e. Create logical Multi-use trail connections

networked to the regional trail system, utilizing ditches and irrigation channels when needed, to connect neighborhoods to parks, open space and other community facilities as indicated in the **Future Land Use Map**.

- f. Develop trail standards and requirements for new residential and commercial developments.
 - g. Work with the School District to, whenever possible, collocate schools and parks.
 - h. Use parks and trails to preserve significant wetlands and wildlife habitat from developments.
2. All new developments will provide diverse recreational opportunities for all ages, in aesthetically pleasing settings, while minimizing overcrowding and overuse and ensuring the City has ample trail connections. Development applications will:
- a. Plan for greenways and trails through the center of neighborhoods rather than along collector and arterial streets.
 - b. Provide finished neighborhood park facilities, or the equivalent fee-in-lieu, to meet the demand created by new residents.
3. Rifle supports the Lower Colorado River Valley (LoVa) Trail and River Corridor– Action Plan and Guidelines Document and will work with partner communities towards implementation. City parks and recreation department staff will coordinate and participate with the regional effort to bring-

ing the LoVa trail planning effort to fruition. City staff should stay in continual contact with this trails group regarding project process.

- 4. Insure a rational and balanced investment of park and recreation funds for recreation and sports programs, parks, trails, open space and reserves.
 - a. Equitably share the cost of future parks between existing and future residents.
 - b. Provide facilities capable of offering efficient customer service and park maintenance.
 - c. Partner with other organizations and groups to improve and expand Park and Recreation opportunities (school district, Garfield County, etc.).
- 5. Update the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan to be consistent with the objectives of this plan.

O1.46 RANGE OF HOUSING TYPES AND PRICES

- 1. Support housing development and program strategies that provide a supply of workforce and market rate housing that meets the economic and social needs of Rifle.
 - a. Encourage residential development that supports the spectrum of housing needs in the community, including seniors, first time house buyers and entry-level to mid-level employees through the provision of a variety

of housing types, prices, styles and sizes.

- b. Increase housing choice by exploring strategies that encourage **mixed-use** and mixed-income development.
- c. Maintain and update information about local employment, wages and housing costs to monitor, over time, how residential development is responding to the City's housing objectives and to the employment opportunities in the area.
- d. Inventory, analyze, and prioritize vacant or underutilized sites that are suitable for development or redevelopment to support housing that would benefit Rifle employees and residents.
- e. Pursue strategies to support more affordable housing development, including:
 - i. Fee waivers for affordable housing projects.
 - ii. Soliciting available State, Federal, and other appropriate grant funding for the construction or rehabilitation of housing that is affordable to low to middle income households.
 - iii. Use of private financing for the construction and purchase of housing units.
 - iv. Land banking, use of federal and state tax credits and private activity bonds.
 - v. Partner with local employers to create employer assisted housing programs and developments. These may include

master leasing units for employees and creating incentives for employees to purchase homes including down payment assistance, shared equity programs and first-time home buyer training.

- f. Explore a package of incentives to encourage new residential development that will meet the needs of Rifle employees. These may include fee waivers, density bonuses, fast tracking and master plan project approvals.
- g. Develop housing program guidelines and requirements to ensure that housing developments contribute to the character and image of the community.
- h. Support housing proposals that are well situated relative to employment in Rifle, and shopping, child care, schools, transit, social, and recreational amenities.
- i. Encourage development of the following housing types:
 - i. Housing that is attainable for low to middle income households, including rental and ownership opportunities.
 - ii. Senior housing for persons age 55 or older, including rental housing, smaller for-sale housing units and residential facilities that offer support services.
- j. Monitor the effects of regulations, ordinances, codes, and standards on development costs to ensure that bureaucratic policies do

not hinder the availability and affordability of needed housing or accessibility to housing programs.

- k. Encourage measures at the City level to streamline processes for proposed developments that include affordable housing, senior or other special needs housing, and qualified rental housing.
- l. Evaluate provisions for accessory dwelling units in single-family areas to determine how additional residential units might be added to the community.
- m. Encourage entities involved with homebuyer training in Garfield County to provide services to Rifle residents and employees.

01.47 EXISTING HOUSING STOCK / AFFORDABILITY

- 1. Conserve and maintain Rifle's existing housing stock and residential neighborhoods.
 - a. Increase the number of multi-family rental housing units in Rifle to increase housing affordability and improve the jobs to housing ratio.
 - b. Discourage new development that would displace existing housing worthy of retention.
 - c. Improve and maintain the quality of existing housing stock while preserving affordability by:

- i. Ensuring that housing meets all applicable code requirements.
- ii. Encouraging maintenance of safe housing through an a stock inspection program.
- iii. Discouraging housing deterioration.
- iv. Exploring the various means by which private and public investment can contribute to housing rehabilitation.
- v. Supporting community organizations involved in housing rehabilitation activities.
- vi. Encouraging the removal of sub-standard units when they cannot be rehabilitated.

01.48 REGIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY

- 1. Foster regional housing strategies to benefit Rifle and the surrounding communities.

01.49 REDEVELOP DILAPIDATED HOUSING / MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT

- 1. The City supports redeveloping sites that could provide a mix of housing and other uses.
 - a. Identify sites that are appropriate for redevelopment.
 - b. Explore potential partnerships with non-profit and private sector developers to redevelop sites for mixed-use.

- c. Require that residents who may be displaced due to the redevelopment are given priority for housing that is constructed as part of a mixed-use project.
- d. Explore options to mitigate impacts on residents who may be displaced as a result of redevelopment.
- e. Identify incentives that would be appropriate to encourage the redevelopment of key sites.

01.50 TRANSPORTATION

1. The Transportation Plan should be updated to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan to assure traffic capacity is consistent with the land uses projected.
2. Provide an efficient, cost-effective and safe road system to meet the City's needs for convenient movement of people, goods and services throughout the comprehensive planning area without excessive congestion and at appropriate speeds.
 - a. Design streets to ensure vehicle travel through residential neighborhoods at slow, safe speeds.
 - b. Generally arrange local streets to provide multiple routes through a neighborhood.
 - c. Prohibit City cul-de-sacs except where topography prohibits through streets.
 - d. Encourage an interconnected street net-

- work that prevents congestion on major roads.
- e. Carefully evaluate points of access granted to major roadway corridors, particularly to those corridors moving traffic north and south.
- f. Require adjacent developments to have interconnected streets.
- g. Encourage the upgrade of neighborhoods (streets, sidewalks, lighting) in the older areas of the City.

3. New developments applications will be required to address an demonstrate the following.
 - a. How they will improve intersections on collector and arterial road intersections to maintain not less than a level-of-service "D" (less than 40 seconds average wait at an intersection) during peak hours.
 - b. How they will coordinate with adjoining developments to provide connectivity of streets, trails (off street trails and/or detached sidewalks), utilities and drainage and open space easements. This connectivity will provide multiple routes for vehicles, pedestrians and emergency vehicles through each neighborhood.
4. Create and expand safe, affordable, interconnected and convenient transportation alternatives for the residents of Rifle.
 - a. Expand opportunities for public transporta-

- tion.
 - i. Identify steps for expanding routes for the Roaring Fork Transportation Agencies' (RFTA) Grand Hogback Bus Route and take steps to encourage up-valley commuters to use RAFTA by improving the bus stops in Rifle.
 - ii. Explore incorporation of a Transit Oriented Development in Downtown Rifle, use the current impromptu park and ride as the approximate location.
 - iii. Consider public transportation between north and south Rifle.
- b. Evaluate "Complete Streets" Guidelines -- streets that accommodate multiple means of transportation in their design including mass transit, bicycles and pedestrians—with-in major transportation corridors.
 - c. Ensure sidewalks and or trails in new developments are sufficient both within the development and in connecting to outside pedestrian and bike networks.
 - d. Streets, pedestrian paths and on and off-street bike paths should contribute to a system of connected, interesting routes to all destinations.
5. Require future development to mitigate off-site traffic impacts caused by development. (i.e., intersections, road paving and/or lane improvement).
 6. The City discourages residential developments

that generate “double frontage” lots, which result in rear walled yards facing a collector or local street.

7. The City promotes the use of alleys for rear loaded parking and trash removal.
8. Update Transportation Master Plan.
 - a. To reflect the Comprehensive Plan. Strategize implementation methods to incorporate Transportation Objectives itemized here and assure that the road system balances with anticipated land uses.
 - b. To incorporate recommended transportation practices from the recently published “Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities” by the Institute for Transportation Engineers (ITE).

01.51 TOPOGRAPHY / GEOLOGIC HAZARD

1. Development is strongly discouraged in areas where soil problems, such as erosion, shrink-swell potential, and other possible building limitations, are present unless geotechnical studies can demonstrate methods and techniques to mitigate problems during and after construction.

01.52 HILLSIDE DEVELOPMENT / SCENIC RESOURCE

1. When appropriate, high points that offer scenic vistas should be preserved as open space.

nic vistas should be preserved as open space. New development or redevelopment should be reviewed as to the visual impact and maintenance of key view corridors.

2. Where hillsides are in private ownership and development rights exist, the City will reduce the impact of development on steep hillsides through measures such as low-density zoning, cluster or transfer of development rights.
3. Public safety must be preserved by assuring that stability is properly maintained on any development of hillsides and/or slope and that problem soils are properly mitigated.
4. The aesthetic qualities of hillsides shall be preserved by minimizing the amount of hillside excavation and requiring that where hillside excavation occurs, cuts are fully reclaimed to a natural appearance.

01.53 FLOODPLAIN

1. Development will not be permitted in the floodway.
2. The City's policy is to discourage any development within the 100-year floodplain. Exceptions can be made for uses compatible with periodic flooding, such as trail systems, golf courses, and other public or private uses that will permit the free passage of floodwaters.
3. Development should be set back at least 50 feet from top of canals, irrigation ditch banks and from the mean high water line of water bodies, both natural and man-made, to maintain natural buffers.

01.54 WETLAND

1. The City will take all practical steps to help preserve significant wetlands from development.
2. The City will work with the Corps of Engineers to prevent wetland encroachment by public or private projects.
3. Land use proposals that could have adverse impacts on significant wetlands shall be modified to eliminate or adequately mitigate such adverse impacts.
4. Explore the potential of an “advance identification” of wetlands, especially in areas associated with the Colorado River riparian area and Rifle and Government Creeks.

01.55 ELK AND DEER

1. Where possible the City will avoid Elk/Deer winter

range and severe winter range habitat.

01.56 WILDLIFE ECOSYSTEM / VEGETATION

1. Unique or distinctive natural feature and systems, critical wildlife habitats, and wetlands are important to maintain the balance of ecological systems and other environmental resources. The City promotes preservation and protection of these areas and advocates for sound conservation practices.
2. Community growth should respect and incorporate existing environmental constraints and opportunities to assure that new development and redevelopment harmonizes with the area's natural and human-made environment.
3. City staff to coordinate with Garfield County, State and Federal officials and agencies responsible for assessing environmental impacts of development proposals. A special emphasis should be placed on mapping and precluding development in key winter range and severe winter range habitats of the elk and mule deer populations.

01.57 OPEN SPACE

1. Land designated as Open Space on the **Future Land Use Map** will be acquired through dedication, donation or acquisition and preserved permanently free from development, left in a natural state and/or used for recreational uses

such as parks and pedestrian or bicycle trails.

2. Rifle is surrounded by **BLM lands**. BLM lands are not perpetually open lands; they can be disposed of for future development. The **Future Land Use Map** establishes a ring of Open Space just outside of **Tier 3** that serves to inform the BLM of the City's intention for that land to remain open into the foreseeable future.
3. Open space designations will be used to preserve:
 - a. Land containing high ecological value.
 - b. Land containing natural hazards.
4. New development will assure the continuity of irrigation systems needed for on-going ecological integrity and agricultural uses.
5. Work with Garfield County, GOCO and others to explore common interest and programs regarding open space.

01.58 RAPID GROWTH

1. Regularly review the City's impact fees to ensure they account infrastructure (e.g. water, sewer, roads, parks) attributable to new growth.
2. Create a regional committee to solving difficult challenges and ongoing technical and financial support from state and federal sources, to help Rifle and the region capitalize on its current and projected growth, maintain economic diversity and develop a high quality, sustainable commu-

nity.

01.59 REGIONAL PLANNING COOPERATION

1. The City supports a Joint Planning Board consisting of City Planning Commission members and County Planning Commission members to review developments greater than 10-acres in size and located in Rifle's area of influence until such time that the City annexes the corridor. The IGA will help:
 - a. On **State Highway 6** to:
 - i. Promote large setbacks (100 ft or greater) accompanied by naturally landscaped berms to shield development from highway travel.
 - ii. Consolidate access points to reduce potential conflicts.
 - iii. Cluster development to reduce the appearance of one long strip of retail.
 - iv. Discourage disorderly industrial storage facilities.
 - b. County agricultural areas in the Rifle Area of Influence:
 - i. Should be developed at a base density of 1 unit per 35 acres or cluster for a density of up to 1 unit per 20 on 25% of the land.
2. The City will cooperate with, and participate in regional planning efforts, especially those that

are directed toward efficient use of resources and cost-effective development of public infrastructure (i.e., roads and utilities).

3. The City will consider regional implications in decisions regarding major capital improvements.
4. Once established, the IGA shall be updated on a regular basis to stay consistent with Rifle Future Land Use Map updates.
5. City planning staff to coordinate with Garfield County to establish a revised IGA and a Joint Planning Commission.
6. Evaluate the need for, and potential application of programs with incentives to preserve open space and agricultural lands such as clustering development, transfer of development rights and conservation easements.
7. Require that development applications address protection of ditch easements and their associated rights.
8. Work with Garfield County to rezone areas within the Area of Influence.

01.60 BLM INTERFACE

1. Work with the BLM to keep areas designated open space non-urbanized.

01.61 ENERGY INDUSTRY

1. Positioning Rifle to take advantage of its place in

the energy industry.

2. Working with Energy Industry to help mitigate impacts on the community and fund special projects.
3. Use severance taxes to help diversify the economy, especially to strengthen the renewable energy industry.

01.62 GRAVEL MINING AND RECLAMATION

1. The City adopts the guidance outlined in the County's proposed regulations and policies for gravel extraction operations drafted in November 2007 entitled, "Goals, Objectives, Policies & Regulations Regarding Gravel Extraction Operations."
2. The County's proposed regulations outline a regulatory framework that ensures mining activities limit their adverse affect on environmental and visual quality, and reduce potential land uses and traffic impacts. In addition to these regulations, the City will discourage any gravel mining operations, which contain crushing, asphalt processing or concrete operations between **Mamm Creek Interchange** and **Main Rifle Interchange**.

RIFLE'S CONTEXT

- 9.1 Rifle's History
- 9.2 Past County Population Growth and Future Projections
- 9.3 Rifle Demographics

FUNDING RESOURCES

- 9.4 Sonoran Institute
- 9.5 Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT) - Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) (Administered through Garfield County)
- 9.6 Great Outdoors Colorado

- (GOCO)
- 9.7 Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA)
- 9.8 United States Department of Transportation (USDOT)
- 9.9 Colorado Division of Reclamation Mining and Safety (DRMS)
- 9.10 National Parks Service
- 9.11 Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program
- 9.12 Land and Water Conservation Fund
- 9.13 Federal Brown Fields Grants
- 9.14 Commuting Benefits - Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

- 9.15 Department of Justice "Weed and Seed" Grant
- 9.16 Department of Wildlife - "Fishing is Fun" Program
- 9.17 Federal Grant Opportunities @ Grants.gov
- 9.18 Colorado Housing and Finance Authority

AFFORDABLE HOUSING FUNDING PARTNERS

PLANNING YOUR MULTI-USE TRAIL



RIFLE'S CONTEXT

- [Rifle's Context](#)
- [Funding Resources](#)
- [Affordable Housing Funding Partners](#)
- [Planning Your Multi-Use Trail](#)

9.1 RIFLE'S HISTORY

The early history of Rifle and surrounding small towns along the Colorado River valley is similar to other migrations of people to the West. Although interest in minerals and other natural resources within the region has risen and fallen during the course of a century, most settlers and emigrants chose the valley "for a piece of good earth that allowed them to establish roots and a good home."

Among the first Europeans who visited the region were Franciscan Spanish friars who ventured westward in 1776. Nearly a century later, Major John Wesley Powell explored the Colorado River as well as the adjacent territory, and developed a comprehensive survey of geography, geology, ethnography and natural history of the region. His work enticed other engineers and explorers to visit the region in hopes of discovering mineral wealth. Soon, geologists documented the abundance of area minerals, such as coal and precious metals, and attracted entrepreneurs to areas around Garfield County. In addition, miners and homesteaders who sought bonanza strikes like those at Leadville and Aspen eventually drifted to the West in hopes of more success. Disap-

pointed by the short-lived euphoria of extracting carbonate and other minerals, miners began to seek a more permanent way of living.

Settlers near Rifle first described the area between the Colorado River and the Grand Hogback as "Cactus Valley" since the ground was covered in dense prickly-pear and low-growing cacti vegetation. However, the mild climate afforded a lengthy growing season, and the area was deemed suitable for irrigation and agrarian cultivation. In need of a more developed trade center, the Town of Rifle was settled in 1882. Because of isolation of the communities and lack of passable wagon roads during winter and spring seasons, the town evolved as a self-sufficient community. The bottom lands of creeks and streams provided organically rich alluvial soils, while mesas above afforded opportunities for livestock grazing. The town grew considerably when the railroad was constructed in 1893, and was officially incorporated in 1905.

In addition to the prospects of becoming wealthy through mineral extraction, the forested lands surrounding Rifle drew numerous settlers and visitors for a variety of reasons. The abundance of timber that covered the upper elevation slopes convinced

the federal government to establish the White River Plateau Timberland Reserve in 1891, the nation's second oldest federal forest reserve. Furthermore, this Reserve and adjacent territory provided habitat to one of the most diverse and abundant game populations in the West and the allure of hunting attracted visitors to the region. More recent history testifies to the investigation for other types of natural resources for economic gain. The exploration and extraction of fossil fuels in Garfield County had involved a century-long pursuit. In spite of the fact that initial discovery of these resources during the late 19th and early 20th centuries was stimulated by an appetite for various hard rock oil-based minerals, it was the thirst for oil that created the "big boom" of the 1970's due to OPEC strengthening its grip on the US energy reserves. In response to the "energy crisis", this area eventually produced 25 boomtowns along the Western slope in Colorado. Proximity to oil shale, natural gas, or coal was the only prerequisite for enabling unbridled growth and expansion of communities.

As with many smaller boomtowns, Colorado boomtowns such as Rifle are characterized by rapid growth and economic dependence on the extrac-

tion of natural resources. Companies that began oil shale projects in the 1970s required immediate housing and support services for hundreds of people who descended to the area. In anticipation of higher revenues, building trades and commercial suppliers relocated to oil shale mining areas and borrowed money at high interest rates in expectation that their investments would succeed in the short term. Following in the footsteps of the construction industry, a diversity of services, retail, and wholesale enterprise were established. Many area ranchers sold their properties to developers to supply needed lands.

Recurring evidence of financial instability associated with singular extractive economies and economic booms is another chapter of Western mining. In late 1981 and early 1982, tremors of doubt began to filter through the boomtown euphoria. On Sunday, May 2nd, 1982, Exxon, the major oil shale industry in the region, announced the closing of the project and operations near Rifle. Within the following months, construction ceased and numerous business people and residents quietly vacated the town. By the end of 1982, over 200 businesses had gone under in Rifle alone, and many ranchers, under default rules, received most of their property back.

Although the oil shale bust was a tragedy, it was not as detrimental to the extent it could have been. Since the mining industry was directly responsible for urban growth, conservative leaders and the community of Rifle demanded that energy enterprises “pay their own way” by financing portions of this growth. Agreements between the City of Rifle and

oil shale industries included the establishment of a trust fund for capital improvements, modernization of utility infrastructure, and upgrade of the road system. Several new municipal facilities were constructed and enhancements were made during the boom era which included the City Hall, the Rifle Bypass, the library and park lands.

Rifle's economy has stabilized after 25 years; however, many resident workers must commute up valley for employment. Now the City is seeking greater economic development, while recognizing the importance of an economically diverse job market.

9.2 PAST COUNTY POPULATION GROWTH AND FUTURE PROJECTIONS

Since 1980 the Garfield county has grown from 22,514 to an estimated 51,539 today. That is roughly 1000 people a year.

Between 1970 and 2006 the population of this area has grown from 33.9% of the County residents to represent 43.6% of Garfield County. Today, Rifle is estimated to have the highest population in Garfield County at 9055.

9.3 RIFLE DEMOGRAPHICS

AGE

The most dominant age groups in Rifle fall into two categories: persons of ages 25 to 34 (16.6% of total population) and persons of ages 35 to 44 (17.7% of

total population). The median age of Rifle residents is 30.9 years of age.

FAMILY SIZE

The average family size in Rifle is 3.22 persons. This is above the national average of 3.14 persons in the average family.

EDUCATION

85% of Rifle residents over 25 years in age is a high school graduate or obtained some form of higher education. This number is higher than the national average of 80.4%. However, only 13.4% of Rifle residents have obtained a Bachelor's degree of higher. This is much lower than the national average of 24.4%.

MINORITY POPULATIONS

Rifle residents are largely Caucasians at 91.5% of the population. The Hispanic /Latino population constitutes 16.3% of the local population.

MEDIAN INCOME

Rifle's median family income is \$48,714 (1999 dollars). 57.5% of Rifle's homes are owner occupied. 6.4% of Rifle's residents are below the poverty level.

WORKING / COMMUTING CHARACTERISTICS

73.4% of Rifle residents over age 16 are in the labor force. The mean travel time to work for the average Rifle resident is 30.1 minutes.

FUNDING RESOURCES

Rifle's Context
Funding Resources
Affordable Housing Funding Partners
Planning Your Multi-Use Trail

9.4 SONORAN INSTITUTE

The Sonoran Institute works with communities to conserve and restore important natural landscapes in Western North America, including the wildlife and cultural values of these lands. The Institute's efforts create lasting benefits, including healthy landscapes and vibrant livable communities that embrace conservation as an integral element of their economies and quality of life. The Sonoran Institute is a not-for-profit 501c3 organization.

Clark Anderson, Director
 Western Colorado Legacy Program
 817 Colorado Avenue, #201
 Glenwood Springs, CO 81601
 Email: canderson@sonoran.org
<http://www.sonoraninstitute.org>
 Phone: (970) 384-4364

GARFIELD COUNTY NEW ENERGY COMMUNITIES PARTNERSHIP

Colorado Governor Bill Ritter awarded a \$1.6 million grant to a partnership of local governments and nonprofits in Garfield County in October 2008 as part of the state's New Energy Communities Initiative. As one of the project partners, the Sonoran

Institute is working on aligning local land use policies with energy efficiency goals. Their work will promote energy-efficient land use patterns and development practices to reduce transportation-related energy demand and community carbon footprints. They provide policy analysis, model codes and workshops to local officials to clarify the role of land use planning in creating a clean energy future.

The partnership that led to the successful proposal was spearheaded by the work of CLEER (Clean Energy Economy for the Region), a local nonprofit group working on all aspects of sustainable energy in Garfield and Pitkin Counties. To learn more about CLEER or Garfield County's New Energy Communities initiative, visit <http://www.cleanenergyeconomy.net>.

COMMUNITY ENERGY FUTURES INSTITUTE

The Sonoran Institute's Community Energy Futures Institute (CEFI) assists community teams create a local vision for independence from fossil fuels and foreign sources and introduces them to alternative energy strategies appropriate to a sustainable future.

CEFI also helps participants develop skills in organizing, community engagement and action planning. They learn to successfully design and implement a

sustainable community energy plan that includes efficiency and cost savings, use of renewable energy sources, and improvements to conventional energy-use, transportation and building practices. The next CEFI is being planned for late 2009 or early 2010. Please contact the Institute to receive a notice about this workshop.

CEFI's objectives are to:

- * Encourage responsible development of conventional and alternative energy resources
- * Apply both science and local knowledge to address conservation and community needs
- * Build local awareness and support for energy conservation and sustainability
- * Provide assistance and expertise for local efforts to create vibrant communities while protecting natural areas
- * Help form partnerships that emphasize collaboration in achieving community goals

CEFI provides participants with knowledge and skills to:

- * Determine baselines and goals

- * Engage and communicate effectively with their communities
- * Access financial and technical resources
- * Develop winning public and private partnerships
- * Use all energy resources effectively

9.5 COLORADO OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE (OEDIT) - COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS (CDBG) (ADMINISTERED THROUGH GARFIELD COUNTY)

The Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT) strengthens Colorado's prospects for long-term economic growth by providing broad-based support to Colorado businesses.

The Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT) fosters a positive business climate that encourages quality economic development through financial and technical assistance provided in support of local and regional economic development activities throughout the State of Colorado. They allocate federal CDBG funds that are set aside for business finance projects. Loans, loan guarantees, equity investments or, under special circumstances, grants may be available for projects that create or retain jobs principally for the benefit of low/moderate income persons.

COLORADO ENTERPRISE ZONES

Colorado's Enterprise Zone program provides tax incentives to encourage businesses to locate and expand in designated economically distressed areas of the state. Rifle is located in the Northwest Enterprise Zone. Businesses located in Rifle may qualify for up to ten Enterprise Zone Tax Credits and/or Incentives that encourage and reward job creation and investment.

Office of Economic Development and International Trade
1625 Broadway, Suite 2700 / Denver, CO 80202
Phone: (303) 892.3840 / Fax: (303) 892-3848

9.6 GREAT OUTDOORS COLORADO (GOCO)

In 1992, Coloradoans took a major step toward preserving their state's outdoor heritage by voting to create the Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) Trust Fund, which now forms Article XXVII of the Colorado Constitution. The "GOCO" Amendment dedicates a portion of state lottery proceeds to projects that preserve, protect, and enhance Colorado's wildlife, parks, rivers, trails, and open spaces. Since it began awarding grants in 1994, GOCO has awarded almost \$549.8 million for more than 2,700 projects throughout the state.

GOCO receives 50% of the proceeds from the Colorado Lottery, its only source of funding. The remainder of lottery proceeds is divided between the Conservation Trust Fund and Colorado State Parks. GOCO's funding is capped at \$35 million a

year adjusted for inflation (\$53.1 million in Fiscal Year 2008); if GOCO's share exceeds that amount, the remainder goes into the State Public School Fund. For current information on Amendment XXVII of the Colorado Constitution and grant opportunities, visit the website.

Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO)
1600 Broadway, Suite 1650 /Denver, Colorado 80202
Phone: (303) 863.7522 / Fax: (303) 863-7517
<http://www.goco.org>

9.7 COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL AFFAIRS (DOLA)

DOLA is the initial and primary point of contact where local communities work in partnership with the state. The Agency provides both technical and financial assistance to local municipalities. The Local Government Financial Assistance (LGFA) service, located within DOLA, manages a number of grant and loan programs within the Department of Local Affairs specifically designed to address public facility and service needs. Through coordination and outreach with the department's field offices, grant and loan resources are distributed on both a formula and discretionary basis depending upon applicable state statutory provisions, federal requirements and/or program guidelines. LGFA oversees application, contract and payment distribution processes, develops partnerships with federal funding agency providers and conducts training sessions for local government grantees in project administration activities.

DOLA provides financial assistance in the following areas: Community Development Block Grants, Community Services Block Grants, Conservation Trust Fund, Direct Distribution, Disaster Relief, Downtown Development Program, Energy and Mineral Impact, Gaming Impact, Heritage Grants / Smart Growth, Housing, New Energy Communities Initiative, Search and Rescue, Volunteer, Firefighter Pension and Waste Tire Recycling.

To learn more and review updated information please see: <http://www.dola.state.co.us>

Jack Kirtland
222 S. 6th St., Rm. 409 / Grand Junction, CO 81501
Phone: (970) 248-7333 / Fax: (970) 248. 7317
Email: jack.kirtland@state.co.us

COLORADO STATE DIVISION OF HOUSING

The Colorado State Division of Housing administers the housing grants available through DOLA

It allocates and administers several federal programs, in addition to some local state initiatives. Examples of some of these programs include: CDBG funds for non-entitlement areas. Non-entitlement areas include those units of general local government which do not receive CDBG funds directly from HUD as part of the entitlement program. CDBG program funds are a funding tool that is to be used to develop viable communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment and by expanding economic opportunities, principally for persons of low- and moderate-income. The State must ensure that at least 70 percent of its CDBG grant funds are used for activities that benefit low- and moderate-

income persons over a one-, two-, or three-year time period selected by the State. Activities that are eligible for CDBG funding include:

- * acquisition of property for public purposes
- * construction or reconstruction of streets, water and sewer facilities, neighborhood centers, recreation facilities
- * other public works

HOME

HOME is a federal block grant program that provides formula grants to States and localities—often in partnership with local nonprofit groups—to fund a wide range of activities that build, buy, and/or rehabilitate affordable housing for rent or homeownership or provide direct rental assistance to low-income people. HOME is the largest Federal block grant to State and local governments designed exclusively to create affordable housing for low-income households and it requires a 25% match. The HOME program is flexible in how funds are used; however, they must result in increased housing for low to moderate income households.

For more information see:
<http://www.dola.state.co.us/cdh/index.html>
Bill Whaley / Phone: (970) 248-7302
Email: bill.whaley@state.co.us

9.8 UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (USDOT)

Congress enacted the Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (Safetea-lu) in 2005 to fund transportation programs throughout the United States until 2009. It is likely that Congress will reauthorize this bill in October with 2009 funding levels.

The Federal Highway Administration administers the money distributed through Safetea-lu for bike and pedestrian transportation programs, including Safe Routes 2 School and the Recreational Trails program. In Colorado, Safe Routes 2 School and non-recreational trails money is routed through the State department of Transportation while money for Recreational Trails is routed through the state parks system.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAM

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs are sustained efforts by parents, other community members, community leaders and local, state, and federal governments to improve the health and well-being of children by enabling and encouraging them to walk and bicycle to school. SRTS programs examine conditions around schools and facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that improve safety and reduce traffic and air pollution in the vicinity of schools. As a result, these programs make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative thus encouraging a healthy and active

lifestyle from an early age.

In July 2005, Congress passed federal legislation that established a national Safe Routes to School program. The program, which was signed into law in August 2005, will dedicate a total of \$612 million towards SRTS from 2005 to 2009. Funds are distributed to states in proportion to the number of primary and secondary school students in the state, with no state receiving less than \$1 million per year

For more information see:

<http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/>

Lenore Bates / Safe Routes to School Coordinator
Colorado Department of Transportation
4201 E. Arkansas Avenue - Shumate Bldg.
Denver, CO 80222
Phone: (303) 757-9088
Email: Lenore.bates@dot.state.co.us

RECREATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM

The Colorado State Recreational Trails Grant Program funds projects for large recreational trail grants, small recreational trail grants, trail planning, and trail support grants. This program is a partnership among Colorado State Parks, Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), the Colorado Lottery, the federal Recreational Trails Program (RTP), the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF).

For more information included ways to apply for the funding see the Colorado State Parks website

<http://parks.state.co.us/Trails>
Colorado State Trails Program
13787 S. Highway 85 / Littleton, CO 80125

Phone (303) 791-1954
Email: trails@state.co.us

BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN FUNDING

Safetea-lu has a number of funding sources that can help with the construction of bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The funding for those programs is distributed by the federal government to state department of transportation.

For more information see: <http://www.dot.state.co.us/BikePed/>

Colorado Department of Transportation
Bicycle/Pedestrian Program
4201 E. Arkansas Ave. DTD / Denver, CO 80222
Phone: (303) 757-9982
Email: bicycleinfo@dot.state.co.us

USDOT administers funding resources for a variety of programs.

9.9 COLORADO DIVISION OF RECLAMATION MINING AND SAFETY (DRMS)

This division is responsible for mineral and energy development, policy, regulation and planning. The division is comprised of the Office of Mined Land Reclamation and the Office of Active and Inactive Mines.

DRMS Program - The Office of Mined Land Reclamation issues reclamation permits from either the Minerals Program or the Coal Program. Together, these two programs regulate mining and reclamation

activities at coal, metal, aggregate and other minerals mines. Their primary objective is to review mining and reclamation permit applications and to inspect mining operations to make sure that reclamation plans are being followed. For more information, see mining.state.co.us.

1313 Sherman St., Rm. 215 / Denver, CO 80203
Phone: (303) 866-3567 / Fax: (303) 832-8106

9.10 NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE

The National Parks service offers planning and technical services to local governments and non-profits through the Rivers Trails and Conservation Assistance Program as well as the Land & Water Conservation Fund.

9.11 RIVERS, TRAILS AND CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE (RTCA) PROGRAM

RTCA provides assistance to nonprofit organizations, community groups, Tribes or Tribal governments, and local or state government agencies. This assistance includes:

- * Building partnerships to achieve community-set goals
- * Assessing resources
- * Developing concept plans
- * Engaging public participation
- * Identifying potential sources of funding
- * Creating public outreach

- * Organizational development
- * Providing conservation and recreation information

Past RTCA project examples include trails and greenway planning; open space protection; river conservation; watershed planning; rail-trail conversions; and urban greening. By working side by side with grassroots groups and local governments in communities throughout the country, the National Park Service is building a nationwide system of parks, open spaces, rivers, and trails.

For more information see:

<http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/index.htm>

Alan Ragins, Program Manager (CO, WY)
Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance
National Park Service
P.O. Box 25287 / Denver, CO 80225-0287
Phone (303) 969.2855 / Fax (303) 987.6676
Email: alan_ragins@nps.gov

9.12 LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

Land and Water Conservation Fund is a federal fund provided through the National Parks Service and managed by the Colorado Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation. This fund provides for acquisition and development of public lands to meet the needs of all Americans for outdoor recreation and open space.

For more information, see

<http://parks.state.co.us/Trails/LWCF>

LWCF Grant Process

Lori Malcolm, State Trails / LWCF Program Manager
Colorado State Parks
13787 S. Highway 85 / Littleton, CO 80125
Phone: (303) 791-1957 ext. 131
Email: lori.malcolm@state.co.us

9.13 FEDERAL BROWN FIELDS GRANTS

Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Brownfields Program provides direct funding for brownfields assessment, cleanup, revolving loans, and environmental job training. To facilitate the leveraging of public resources, EPA's Brownfields Program collaborates with other EPA programs, other federal partners, and state agencies to identify and make available resources that can be used for brownfields activities. In addition to direct brownfields funding, EPA also provides technical information on brownfields financing matters.

For more information, see www.epa.gov/brownfields/pilot.htm

US Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization
Mail Code 5105 T
1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW / Washington, DC 20460
Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization
Phone: (202) 566-2777 / Fax: 202-566-2757

9.14 COMMUTING BENEFITS - INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE (IRS)

Through a tax relief program, employers are able to offer their employees pre-tax commuting benefits. Program participants may use the benefit to commute to work on bikes, transit passes or commuter highway vehicles, or apply to qualified parking exemptions.

- * \$120 per month for combined commuter highway vehicle transportation and transit passes.
- * \$230 per month for qualified parking.
- * \$20 per qualified bicycle commuting month.

For more detailed information on how these rules apply to individual situations please see Commuter Benefits in the IRS code: <http://www.irs.gov/index.html>

CommuterChoice.com
c/o Association for Commuter Transportation
P.O. Box 15542 / Washington, DC 20003-0542
Phone: (202) 393-3497 / Fax (202) 546-2196
Email: info@commuterchoice.com

9.15 DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE "WEED AND SEED" GRANT

Weed and Seed, a community-based strategy sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), is an innovative, comprehensive, multi-agency approach to law enforcement, crime prevention, and community revitalization. The Original Aurora Renewal is one local example of a successful Weed and Seed program. Original Aurora Renewal (OAR) was suc-

successful in receiving a Department of Justice “Weed and Seed” grant of 1 million dollars over a five year period. This grant makes specific areas of Original Aurora eligible for technical assistance and a variety of community development resources.

Weed and Seed is designated to “weed out” crime and other negative elements in neighborhoods by “seeding” communities with resources and services to improve the quality of life.

For more information on Weed and Seed grants please contact the Department of Justice directly or the OAR program at:

Department of Justice Programs
US Department of Justice
810 Seventh Street NW
Washington, DC 20531

Original Aurora Renewal (OAR)
9831 E. Colfax Ave. / Aurora, CO 80010
Phone: (303) 739-7929
Email: renewal@auroragov.org

9.16 DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE – “FISHING IS FUN” PROGRAM

For nearly two decades, the Fishing Is Fun (FIF) Program has been an important and effective cooperative effort to enhance Colorado’s fishing resources. This unique program involves local communities in a three-way partnership with the Colorado Division of Wildlife and Federal Sportfish Restoration Act monies. \$21 million has been awarded through the Fishing

Is Fun program to more than 270 projects in nearly every county in the state. Grants have ranged in size from \$1,000 to \$400,000. Fishing Is Fun projects have helped increase annual angler recreation days in Colorado by an estimated 1,800,000 days.

For more information, see <http://wildlife.state.co.us/Fishing/ResourcesTips/FishingIsFunProgram>

Sherman Hebein /
Northwest Region Office
711 Independent Avenue / Grand Junction, CO
81505

John Alves
Monte Vista Service Center
0722 S. Co. Road 1 East / Monte Vista, CO 81144

Phone (970) 255.6100

9.17 FEDERAL GRANT OPPORTUNITIES @ GRANTS.GOV

Grants.gov is a single, authoritative source for information on, and the ability to apply for, all federal grant opportunities - all 26 federal grant-making agencies, and more than 900 grant programs. Grants.gov enables grant-making agencies and the grant community to come together to make grants management easier and more efficient for everyone. Grant applications are easy to download and simple to submit.

For more information see <http://grants.gov>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W. / HHH Building
Washington, DC 20201

9.18 COLORADO HOUSING AND FINANCE AUTHORITY

CHFA is a self-sustaining public enterprise with a mission to finance the places where people live and work in Colorado. CHFA was created in 1973 by the Colorado legislature to address the shortage of affordable housing in the state. Since then, CHFA has established itself as a leader in the affordable housing industry by financing single family mortgages to qualifying homebuyers and facilitating development of multifamily apartment units for low and moderate income residents. Since 1982 CHFA has also been making loans to Colorado-owned small and medium sized businesses.

CHFA’s programs include first time homebuyer mortgages, free homebuyer education and money management classes (both online and in-person), allocation and oversight of the federal low income housing tax credit program for affordable rental housing, and loan programs for businesses that wish to grow their operations. For the most current information on CHFA’s specific offerings, visit their website at <http://www.chfainfo.com>

AFFORDABLE HOUSING FUNDING PARTNERS

Rifle's Context
 Funding Resources
Affordable Housing Funding Partners
 Planning Your Multi-Use Trail

Funding Partners is a Community Development Finance Institution (CDFI) that is located in Fort Collins. This group has formed partnerships with agencies in the area, including Mountain Regional Housing. Their programs are available to organizations and local banks located outside the Fort Collins area. Following is a brief description of their program services.

HOUSE TO HOME OWNERSHIP PROGRAM (H2O)®

The House to Home Ownership Program® is a revolving loan fund that provides loans to first-time homebuyers for down payment and closing cost assistance up to 5% of the home purchase price. Homebuyers must earn 80% of the Area Median Income or less to qualify for the loan.

COLORADO MOUNTAIN HOUSING COALITION (CMHC)

The Colorado Mountain Housing Coalition is a not-for-profit cooperative effort to make the dream of home ownership a reality for qualified residents of participating mountain counties. In cooperation with Funding Partners, funds are made available to qualified families. In Garfield County, the partner is Mountain Regional Housing Corporation.

DOWN PAYMENT ASSISTANCE (MRHC)

The Mountain Regional Housing Corporation (MRHC) has assembled financial resources to help persons buy homes in Garfield, Pitkin, and Southwestern Eagle Counties. These resources consist of three down payment assistance programs which are low interest, below market 2nd mortgage loans. Each one has different features and eligibility requirements. MRHC Down Payment Assistance Loan Programs are administered in cooperation with Funding Partners for Housing Solutions

MAMMEL AFFORDABLE HOUSING LOAN FUND (MAHLF)

Entities that develop, rehabilitate, acquire or otherwise preserve affordable housing units may be eligible to apply for funding under the MAHLF program. The MAHLF program is designed to be highly adaptive to requirements of the individual project, where loan structure, term and pricing are established according to an assessment of several factors.

Funding Partners Contact Information:

Joe Rowan
 214 South College Avenue, 2nd Floor
 Fort Collins, CO 80524
 Phone: (970) 494-2021 / Fax: (970) 494-2022
 Email: joe@fundingpartners.org

Mountain Regional Housing Corporation:
 Susan Shirley
 Mountain Regional Housing Corp
 P.O. Box 2001 / Carbondale, CO 81623
 Phone: (970)963-9606
 Email: susan@housingcommunity.org
<http://www.housingcommunity.org/>

[Rifle's Context](#)
[Funding Resources](#)
[Affordable Housing Funding Partners](#)
[Planning Your Multi-Use Trail](#)

PLANNING YOUR MULTI-USE TRAIL*

Multi-use trails are popular amenities in any community. Unlike backcountry hiking trails or designated bike routes, multi-use trails accommodate many types of users – including walkers, joggers, bicyclists, people with disabilities, cross-country skiers, equestrians, and others – to share a trail corridor collectively.

The linear corridors from which multi-use trails are formed are generally flat and frequently run along rivers, streams and irrigation canals. Because of the continuous, linear nature of these corridors, they link abundant resources to each other. These make ideal candidates for future trail systems. However, liability concerns make many ditch companies reluctant to permit usage of ditch easements for public access. Some communities have overcome this obstacle by extending the City's liability coverage to include trails along ditches and/or assisting ditch companies in fencing the ditch from the adjacent trail.

For more information on Rifle's multi-use trails, see [Local and Regional Multi-Use Trails](#).

* *Trails for the Twenty-First Century – Planning, Design, and Management Manual for Multi-Use Trails*

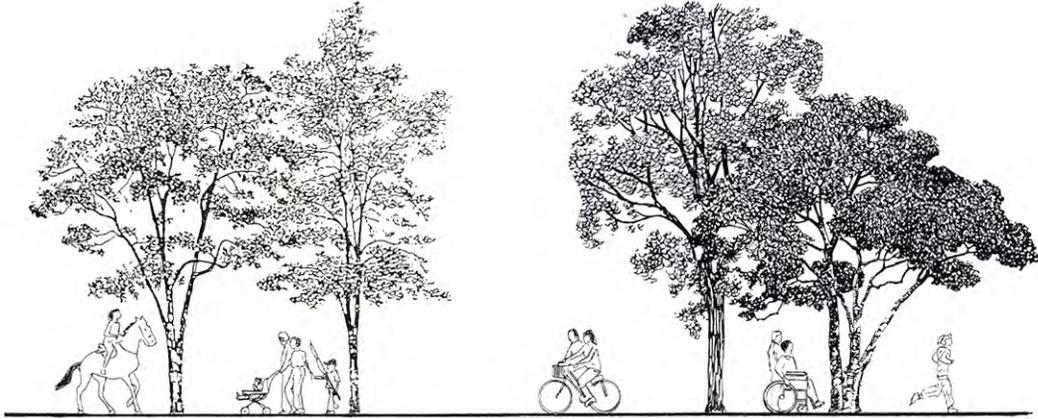
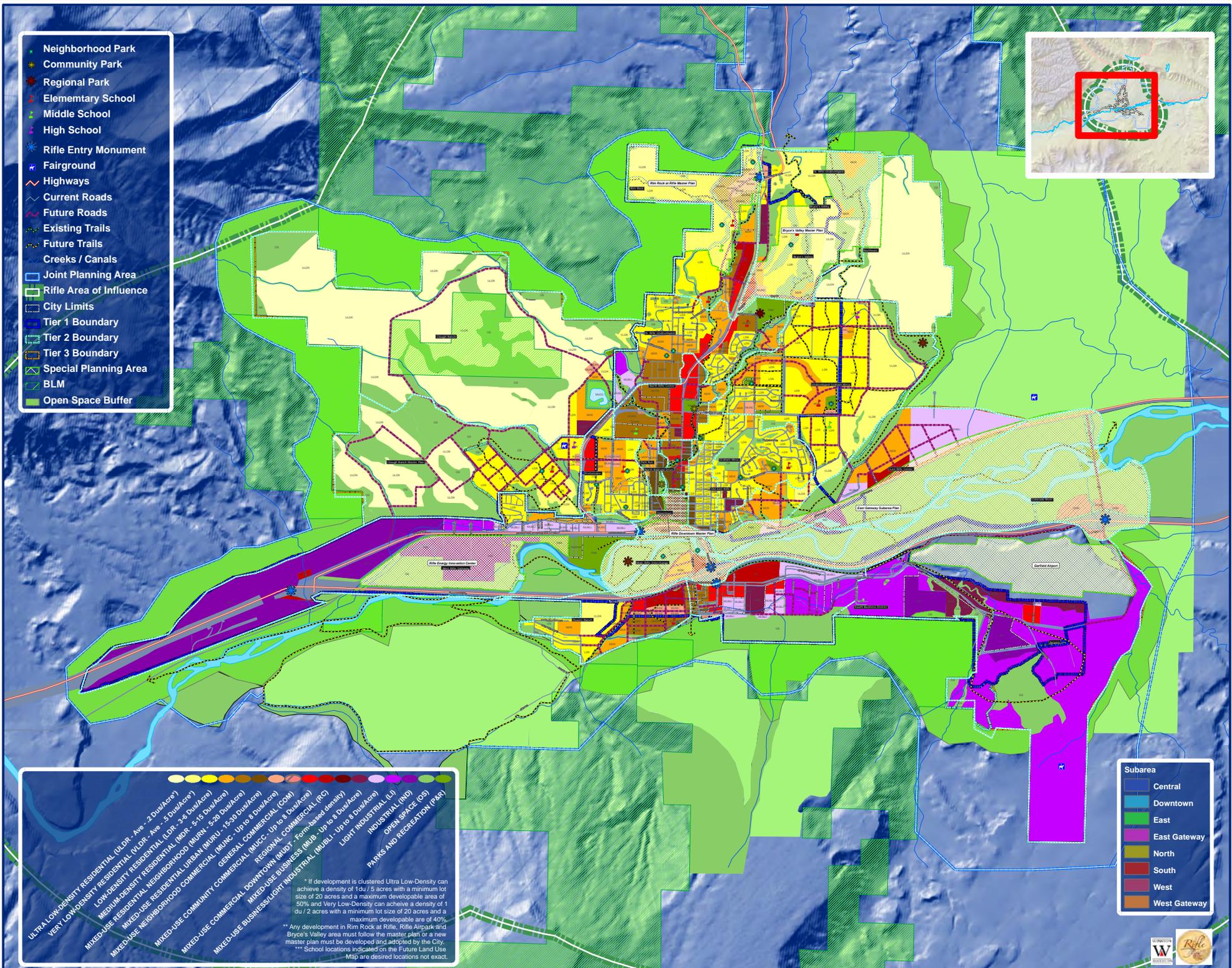


Figure 89: Figure 85: Multi-use trails accommodate many types of users: walkers, joggers and bicyclists

- Neighborhood Park
- Community Park
- Regional Park
- Elementary School
- Middle School
- High School
- Rifle Entry Monument
- Fairground
- Highways
- Current Roads
- Future Roads
- Existing Trails
- Future Trails
- Creeks / Canals
- Joint Planning Area
- Rifle Area of Influence
- City Limits
- Tier 1 Boundary
- Tier 2 Boundary
- Tier 3 Boundary
- Special Planning Area
- BLM
- Open Space Buffer



- ULTRA LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (ULDR - Ave - 2 Dba/Acre)
 - VERY LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (VLDR - Ave - 5 Dba/Acre)
 - LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (LDR - 3-6 Dba/Acre)
 - MEDIUM-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (MDR - 5-9 Dba/Acre)
 - MIXED-USE RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD (MURK - 5-20 Dba/Acre)
 - MIXED-USE RESIDENTIAL URBAN (MURU - 1-30 Dba/Acre)
 - MIXED-USE NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL (MNUC - Up to 8 Dba/Acre)
 - MIXED-USE COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL (MUKC - Up to 8 Dba/Acre)
 - MIXED-USE COMMERCIAL DOWNTOWN (MUDT - Form-based density)
 - MIXED-USE BUSINESS LIGHT INDUSTRIAL (MUBL - Up to 8 Dba/Acre)
 - REGIONAL COMMERCIAL (COM)
 - GENERAL COMMERCIAL (GCM)
 - REGIONAL COMMERCIAL (RC)
 - LIGHT INDUSTRIAL (LI)
 - INDUSTRIAL (IND)
 - OPEN SPACE (OS)
 - PARKS AND RECREATION (PAR)
- *** If development is clustered Ultra Low-Density can achieve a density of 1du / 5 acres with a minimum lot size of 20 acres and a maximum developable area of 50% and Very Low-Density can achieve a density of 1 du / 2 acres with a minimum lot size of 20 acres and a maximum developable area of 40%.
- *** Any development in Rim Rock at Rifle, Rifle Airpark and Bryce's Valley area must follow the master plan or a new master plan must be developed and adopted by the City.
- *** School locations indicated on the Future Land Use Map are desired locations not exact.

- Subarea Central
- Subarea Downtown
- Subarea East
- Subarea East Gateway
- Subarea North
- Subarea South
- Subarea West
- Subarea West Gateway

