

**TOWN OF MANCOS  
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING  
March 15, 2023  
7:00 p.m.**

**Agenda**

- A. Call to Order
- B. Pledge of Allegiance
- C. Roll Call
- D. Approval of the Agenda
- E. Approval of the minutes of February 15, 2023
- F. Audience Business
- G. Announcements
- H. Discussion and Action Items
  - 1. Department of Local Affairs Main Street Program Information
  - 2. Comprehensive Plan Chapters 5 & 6 Final Review
  - 3. Comprehensive Plan Chapters 7 & 8 Draft Review
- I. *Items for April 19, 2023 Agenda*
  - 1. *Comprehensive Plan Chapters 7 & 8 Final Review*
  - 2. *Comprehensive Plan Goals Chapters 9 & 10 Draft Review*
  - 3. *Design Review Guidelines*
- J. Adjournment

Town of Mancos  
Planning & Zoning Commission  
February 15, 2023

A .Call to Order: Chairman Peter Brind'Amour called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

C. Roll Call: present-Peter Brind'Amour, Catherine Seibert, Carol Stout, Alternate Ann Coker, Mayor Queenie Barz, Trustee Nick Manning, Town Administrator Heather Alvarez, Deputy Clerk Georgette Welage

D. Approval of the Agenda: Carol Stout made the motion to approve the agenda of February 15, 2023. Cathy Seibert seconded the motion. Motion carried.

E. Approval of the minutes of November 16, 2022: Cathy Seibert made the motion to approve the minutes of November 16, 2022. Carol Stout seconded the motion. Motion carried.

F. Audience Business

none

G. Announcements

Grants are taking up a large portion of staff time. The fiber project is extremely time consuming. CDOT will manage the sidewalk project if the town can obtain funding for the portion without sidewalks. The building to house the Marshals Office is seeking funding. At the present time most funding for Law Enforcement is for mental health issues not structures. Materials for the Water Tank should be on site this summer. The Water Plant is basically completed. The Board did approve the Trails Master Plan. The Public Works Department is doing a great job removing snow. CO Rural Water Source Water Protection Plan is working on a plan for free which will be brought to P&Z when complete.

## H. Discussion and Action Items

1. Comprehensive Plan Chapters 3 & 4 Final Review. The Commission reviewed the entire document. Staff will review for spelling and formatting

Each page of the Comprehensive plan has been numbered.

2. Comprehensive Plan Chapters 5 & 6 Draft Review

Each page of the Comprehensive plan has been numbered. This item is on the P&Z Agenda dated March 15, 2023. Staff will review for spelling and formatting.

## I .Items for March 15, 2023 Agenda

1. Comprehensive Plan Chapters 5 & 6 Final Review

2. Comprehensive Plan Goals Chapters 7 & 8 Draft Review

## Adjournment

8:39 p.m.

---

Peter Brind'Amour, Chairman

---

Georgette Welage, Deputy Clerk

# ***STAFF REPORT***

To: Members of the Planning and Zoning Commission  
From: Heather Alvarez, Town Administrator  
Date: March 15, 2023  
Re: Department of Local Affairs Main Street Community Program

## **Recommendation**

Requesting Commission Feedback

## **Background/Discussion**

At the last meeting, staff was instructed to bring information about DOLA's Main Street Program to this meeting.

A link to more information on the program may be found here: [Main Street Approach | Department of Local Affairs \(colorado.gov\)](#)

Does the Commission wish to keep this as a goal in Chapter 6 under Community and Economic Development?

## **Attachments**

None

# ***STAFF REPORT***

To: Members of the Planning and Zoning Commission  
From: Heather Alvarez, Town Administrator  
Date: March 15, 2023  
Re: Comprehensive Plan Chapters 5 & 6 Final Review

## **Recommendation**

Requesting Commission Feedback

## **Background/Discussion**

Attached are Chapters 5 & 6, including goals, for your final review and approval.

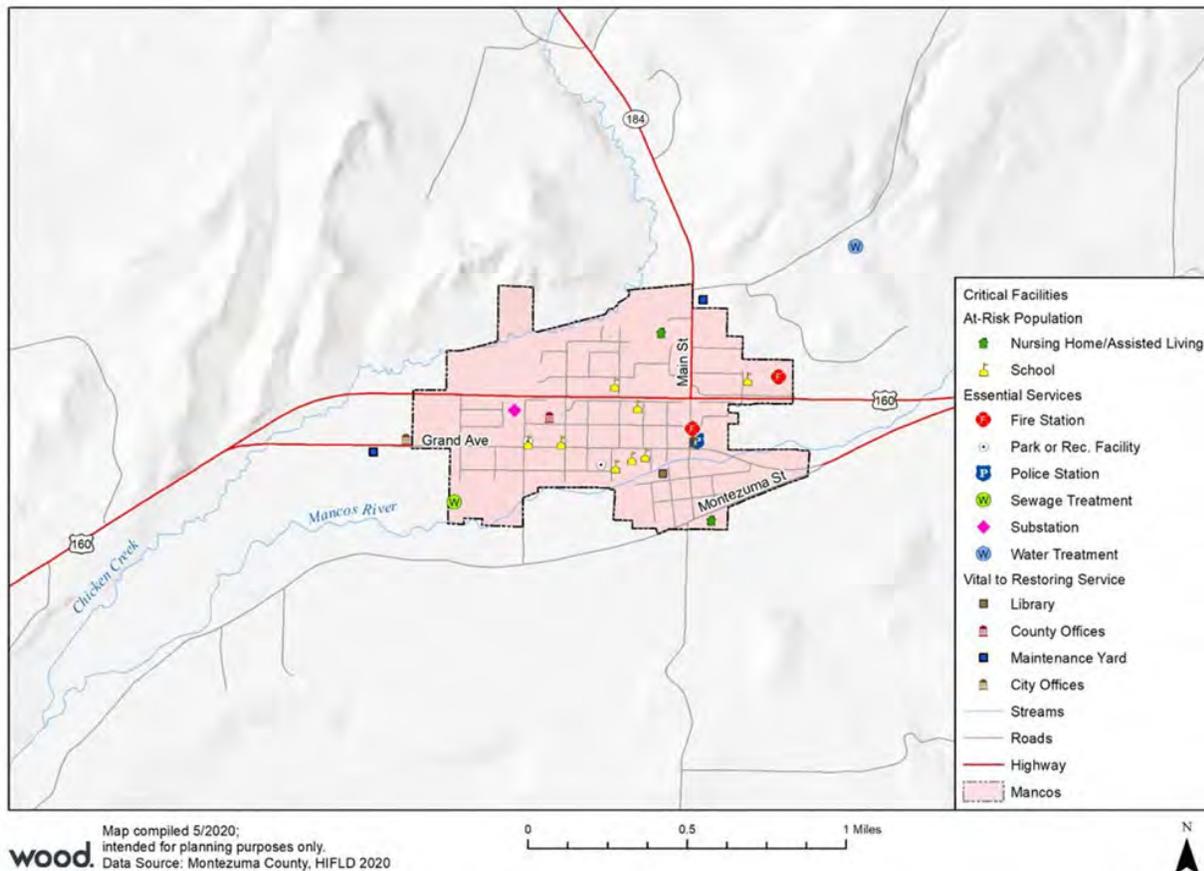
These documents do include formatting, so please let us know of any changes.

## **Attachments**

Comprehensive Plan Chapters 5 & 6

## 5.0 Infrastructure and Services





## 5.1 Infrastructure Regional Context, Data and Trends

### 5.1.1 Water

The Town of Mancos gets its potable water from the West Mancos River. In 2022 the Town began updating its Source Water Protection Plan. The Plan assessed current water quality and quantity conditions within five miles upstream of the Town's water intakes at Jackson Gulch and the West Mancos River (Mancos Source Water Protection Area), and recommended actions for the Town to take in order to protect and enhance water quality.

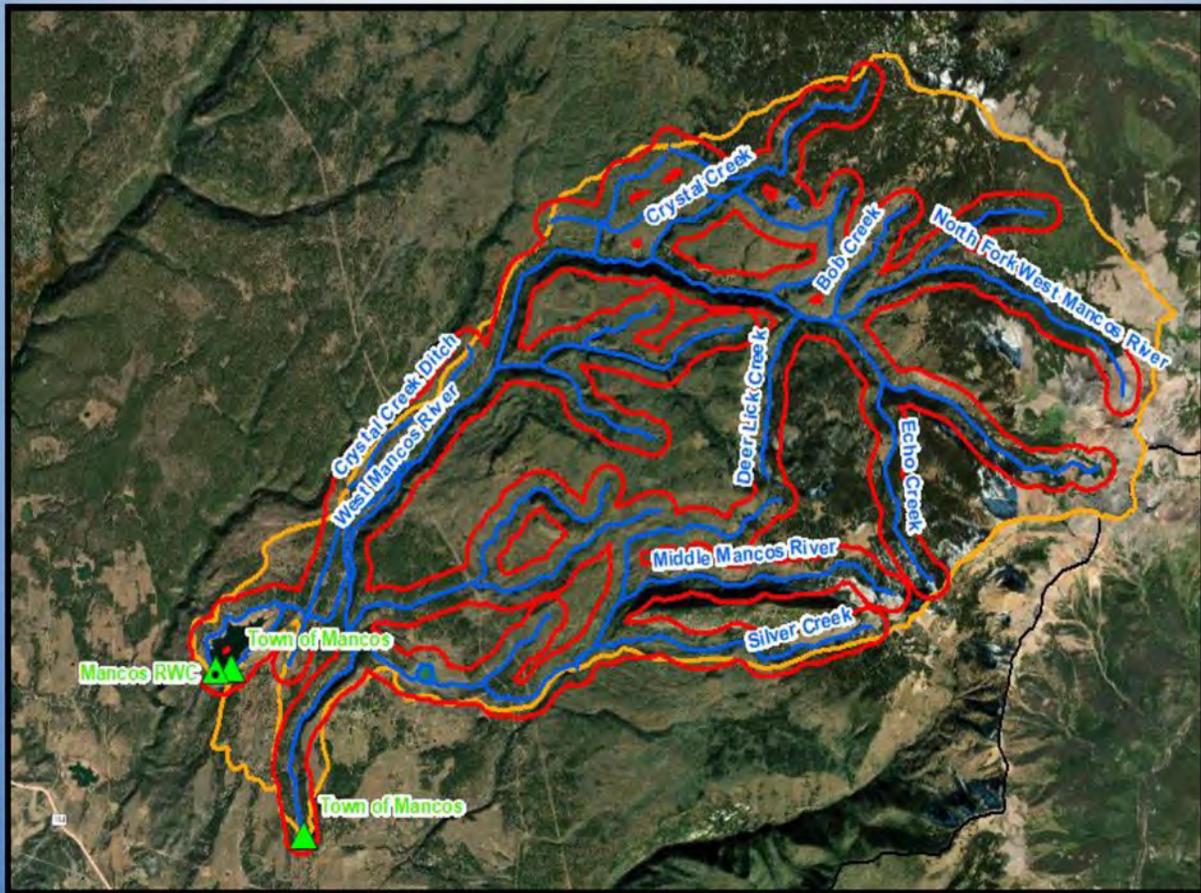
The study showed that the West Mancos River is in relatively good hydrologic condition within the Mancos Source Water Protection Area. Currently, the stream meets the state's water quality standards for providing habitat for cold water aquatic plant and animal species. Activities identified as having the potential to diminish water quality within the Mancos Source Water Protection Area include transportation, livestock grazing, mining, oil and gas development, timber harvesting, forest fires, and high impact recreational activities.

The Town of Mancos' point of diversion along the West Mancos River consists of a head gate that diverts water into two settling ponds. The intake and settling ponds are situated on a private ranch where cattle graze during the spring and summer months. Distribution

pipes transmit raw water from the ponds to the Town's water treatment plant approximately one mile down-gradient.

As of 2022, the Town has water rights to 1.6 cubic feet per second, or 1,034,107 gallons per day in the West Mancos River. The Town stores water in the Jackson Gulch Reservoir which it occasionally uses when turbidity in the Mancos River is high. For the purpose of irrigation, the Town has rights along the Mancos River near Cottonwood Park.

### 2022 Source Water Protection Areas



#### 5.1.2 Utilities

The Town of Mancos provides water and sewer service to residents and businesses within the Town's limits. Utility services that are available, but not provided directly by the Town of Mancos, are made available through franchise agreements with utility service providers. Franchise agreements allow utility providers such as cable, telephone, gas and electric companies to use Town rights-of-way to distribute their services to customers within Town limits.

#### Water Treatment

The majority of the Town's water system is generally in good condition. Relatively recent upgrades have been constructed at the Water Treatment Plant including a new storage tank. Several of the higher priority improvement projects have already been budgeted and identified. Currently, the Town has 330,000 gallons of storage for treated

water and has secured funding for an additional 450,000-gallon storage tank in order to meet the current and future needs of the Town over the next 40 years. The new tank will be installed in 2023.

The Town's existing water treatment plant can treat approximately 700,000 gallons per day (gpd). Thus, the current treatment plant can treat enough water to satisfy the average daily usage for up to 2050 people plus fire flow. The last Preliminary Engineering Report: Mancos Water System Improvements in 2009 makes recommendations based on the population of Mancos growing at a rate of 2.5 percent annually, which is higher than the Town's actual growth rate of 1.9% over the last decade. Using the 2.5 percent growth rate, the current plant should be adequate to meet average demand until 2028. During peak usage days, usually in the summer when irrigation and tourism use is high, the maximum average daily use is 480 gpd per capita. The existing water treatment plant can supply the maximum average daily demand of 645,000 gallons but cannot supply the additional 270,000 gallons recommended for fire flow during peak days.

Consumer behavior also plays an important role in water conservation. The Town can encourage water conservation through a graduated water rate structure by increasing the rate charged per unit as usage goes up. The Town can also consider adopting more restrictive land use codes in order to encourage water-wise landscaping.

### **Wastewater**

The majority of the Town's wastewater system is generally in good condition. The Town has recently upgraded the Wastewater Treatment Plant and is in the process of placing the facility on-line and decommissioning the lagoon system. The wastewater treatment plant currently treats 80,000 gallons per day (gpd) of effluent. As the lagoon system is inadequate for treating that level of wastewater, the Town of Mancos is in the process of making capital improvements to the wastewater infrastructure. The new plant will be able to treat 200,000 gpd that will be capable of serving 3252 people which is more than adequate for treating effluent for the Town over the next 20 years at the current growth rate of 1.9 percent annually, or at the more rapid growth rate of 2.5 percent annually. The Town is moving ahead with a new Multi-Stage Activated Biological Process (MSABP) plant that is designed to handle 200,000 gpd of water and 584 pounds of biological oxygen demand per day. The new plant's treatment technology will take up a significantly smaller site footprint, allowing room for expansion if necessary.

The Town's original sewer collection system is composed of vitrified clay pipe embedded in rocky soils. The estimated useful life for vitrified clay pipe is 100 years, and the age of the sewer mains south of Highway 160 is approximately 60 years. While the vitrified clay pipes should have a few good decades left in them, the joints connecting pipe sections have been known to have issues. The sewer mains north of Highway 160 are approximately 30 years old, except for a few segments replaced in 2008. A majority of the newer collection lines are sufficient in diameter to handle an increase in flow from future projected growth. Depending on where growth occurs, the older lines north of Highway 160 and east of Highway 184, and the lines south of Grand Avenue will need to be replaced with larger diameter pipes in order to accommodate growth.

### **5.1.3 Stormwater Drainage**

The Town's Stormwater System is relatively sparse which is not uncommon for smaller towns. Stormwater is generally conveyed through the street and storm sewer system and directly discharges to the Mancos River or Chicken Creek. Contamination of surface water runoff can degrade the water quality of the Mancos River. Polluted runoff occurs when contaminants are conveyed to water bodies via rainwater, snow melt or irrigation practices without being filtered first. Impervious surfaces such as paved roads, rooftops and parking lots reduce the ability for surface water to percolate and filter into the groundwater table. In order to reduce contamination from runoff, the Town can manage stormwater through land use regulations for new development and infrastructure improvements.

With the exception of a small portion of Grand Avenue and Main Street, drainage systems on the south side of the Town of Mancos are either primitive or non-existent. As the majority of south Mancos has gravel streets, and therefore no curb and gutter, runoff tends to pool at intersections and driveways. Some of the streets are crowned to provide a drier driving surface, but most areas have insufficient drainage ditches to effectively direct run-off to the Mancos River. The Town will develop a Stormwater Master Plan to address current needs and address future land use, as well integrate into the Master Paving Plan.

### **5.1.4 Streets**

Of the Town-owned streets, approximately 80% are gravel. With a few exceptions, the Town's roads are in fair to good condition. It is understood that the Town is carefully considering whether to pave some or all of these streets and understands that some local residents are resistant to this change. The gravel streets can continue to perform with continued maintenance and therefore paving the gravel streets is a choice rather than a necessity. While historical costs to maintain the gravel streets was not available and the projected cost to maintain paved roads has several variables that would need to be determined for a true lifecycle analysis, it is estimated that the cost of maintaining paved streets would be comparable to maintaining gravel streets. The significant difference is the initial capital cost to pave a street. It should be noted that the necessary equipment, expertise, and staff time differ between paved streets and gravel streets and investment in all three areas will likely be necessary regardless of the alternative selected. These considerations, as well as many other considerations can be captured in a Master Pavement Plan.

### **5.1.5 Buildings**

The Town has 3 primary buildings (excluding water and wastewater system buildings) including Town Hall/Marshall's Office, the Community Center, and Public Works. All buildings are showing signs of normal wear and tear but are performing well, considering their respective ages.

The Town's administrative offices and council chamber are held in the Town Hall, a 9,586 square foot building. The building underwent a major remodel in 2002 which included an addition to house the council chamber, as well as adding features in compliance with ADA standards to increase the building's accessibility.

The Mancos Community Center is a 4,356 square foot building that had historically been home to an auto dealership and garage as far back as 1913 (The RGS Story: Volume VIII). The building was extensively remodeled in 2004 with assistance from the Department of Local Affairs and USDA Rural Development. The Community Center has a commercial grade kitchen, ADA accessible rest rooms, a banquet room and a foyer, and is available for use by community members and organizations for regular and special events.

In 2010 the Town was granted a total of \$31,780 in federal funding by the Governor's Energy Office to cover the full costs of replacing the existing conventional lighting with high efficiency lighting systems, upgrading the climate controls, and improving the weatherization of the Mancos Town Hall and the Community Center. Based on an energy audit of the two buildings which used energy usage data from 2008, these efficiency measures will save the town an average of \$4,414 per year on gas and electrical bills.

## **5.2 Services Regional Context, Data and Trends**

### **5.2.1 Health Care**

Traditional and alternative health and wellness services are available through several private and non-profit providers. The Mancos Valley Health Center is located in Mancos and offers primary care outpatient services. The nearest in-patient and emergency provider is Southwest Memorial Hospital, located approximately 20 minutes from Mancos, in Cortez. Mercy Regional Medical Center in Durango, another in-patient and emergency provider, is approximately 35 minutes from Mancos. Both Mercy and Southwest Memorial also provide out-patient, wellness and primary care services to their patients. Long-term in-patient care is available in Town through Valley Inn Nursing Home. Montezuma County Public Health offers immunizations, public health education, blood pressure monitoring, nutritional supplementation for pregnant women and case management for patients with long-term chronic illnesses. Mental health care is available through Axis Health Systems in Cortez and Durango.

### **5.2.2 Social Services**

Social services in Mancos are administered by Montezuma County. The County provides local services for seniors at the Mancos Senior Center, located in the Mancos Masonic Lodge. Senior services include meal delivery, public transportation, dental care, educational programs concerning issues affecting seniors, social programs and health insurance assistance.

### **5.2.3 Public Safety and Emergency Response**

The Mancos Marshal's Office provides up-to-date professional law enforcement to all citizens in the Mancos community, including crime prevention and detection services, criminal apprehension and prosecution of perpetrators, public safety education, traffic safety, and municipal code enforcement. The Marshal's Office also coordinates with the Montezuma County Office of Emergency Services regarding emergencies arising from man-made and natural disasters and pandemics. Construction of a new town facility Marshal Office in 2023 ensures that Town residents and the Marshal's Service will have access to the most updated law enforcement capacities.

The Mancos Valley Fire Protection District (MVPD) provides emergency response to situations affecting life and property. The MVPD is funded in part by a mill levy on

properties within the district and is manned by volunteer fire fighters and Emergency Medical Technicians. The MVPD offers fire protection and emergency response.

#### **5.2.4 Education**

The Mancos School District Re-6 provides quality public education to elementary, middle and high school students within the District's region. The total enrollment for the 2022-23 school year was 515 students. The District has completed major upgrades to its facilities in recent years, including the addition of a performing arts complex and sports fields. Future growth of Mancos will impact the class sizes and put pressure on the facilities themselves. The Town is working closely with the district to help manage current and future growth. As predicted, the upgrades performed have increased enrollment from out of the district with 25% of students coming from areas in the surrounding county.

In 2022, the Mancos School District launched its career pathways programs to support local workforce development. Students enrolled are offered the opportunity to earn certifications and college credit in fields such as business and entrepreneurship, welding, culinary arts, drone aviation, healthcare and teacher education.

The Four Corners Region has options for higher education and workforce development. Southwest Colorado Community College, a campus of Pueblo Community College, is located approximately 10 miles west of Town. Southwest Colorado Community College offers a number of post-secondary educational opportunities including associate degrees and certificate programs. Fort Lewis College is a public liberal arts college approximately 30 miles from Mancos in Durango, CO. Fort Lewis offers Bachelors of Arts and Science degrees, as well as certificate programs. In addition to the classroom experience, many colleges and universities offer accredited undergraduate and graduate degree programs online.

#### **5.2.5 Public Library**

In the summer of 2009 the Mancos Public Library opened the doors to its new, state of the art LEED certified building at 211 W. First Street. The Library offers books, audio and movie recordings available for checkout to library members. Meeting room space, computer access, periodicals, databases and reference materials are also available. Additionally, the Library hosts a variety of workshops and reading programs, including the Tech Connect series and Storytime. The Mancos Public Library District is funded in part by a mill levy on properties within the Library District. Additional funding comes from grants and donations from individuals and organizations such as the Friends of the Mancos Library.

#### **5.2.6 Communication**

Local access to state-of-the-art information technology is a priority for the Town of Mancos. High speed, high-capacity communication systems are critical for businesses, institutions and individuals that wish to utilize the latest technology. Thus, the Town has been participating with other area governments on a regional fiber-optic installation upgrade. Once installed, the fiber-optic backbone will give the community's businesses, institutions and residents similar communication advantages to those in larger, more centralized metropolitan areas.

### **5.2.7 Administration**

Each department within the Town of Mancos has a director who oversees the administration of their department, and in turn, is overseen by the Town Administrator.

The Town Administrator is the chief operating and administrative officer and is responsible for overseeing the daily operations of Town, in an efficient manner. The Administrator makes recommendations to the Town Board of Trustees on public policy, personnel, operations and administrative decisions. The Administrator prepares the annual operating budget which guides program expenditures throughout the fiscal year, and makes recommendations for the planning of long-term capital improvements. Town administrative positions are appointed and work at the pleasure of the Town Board of Trustees.

The Public Works Director oversees the operation and maintenance of the Town's roads, alleys, along with water and sewer distribution systems. The Town's Public Works Operator oversees the operations and maintenance of the Town's drinking water treatment plant and wastewater treatment plant and ensures compliance with state and federal water quality standards.

The Building Department includes the land use code administrator and the building inspector, who together, review building permit applications and ensure that all construction activities are in compliance with all applicable codes.

The Town Marshal's Office provides law enforcement and safety services in accordance with local, state, and federal laws, regulations and initiatives.

The Town Clerk and Treasurer's Department is responsible for keeping records of all public meetings and official Town documents in compliance with Colorado Record Retention Policy and Colorado Sunshine laws. Additionally, the Clerk and Treasurer's Department processes all licenses, fines, citations, processes all payments and receipts, participates in annual audits and annual budget preparation, and coordinates all financial reporting required by granting agencies, state regulators, and insurance providers.

In addition to routine operations, staff and special committees often participate in the facilitation of community special events.

Finally, the Community and Economic Development department works closely with local anchor institutions, community non-profits, and regional economic development partners to enhance economic opportunities in the Town and plan for future job growth and workforce development needs.

### **5.3 Goals, Objectives and Actions**

#### **5.3.1 GROWTH AND PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES GOAL: PROVIDE SAFE, EFFICIENT AND AFFORDABLE UTILITIES and SERVICES TO MANCOS RESIDENTS**

##### **Constraints and Issues**

- The costs of upgrading, operating and maintaining quality public infrastructure and services to accommodate growth.

---

##### **Objective #1: Require new development to cover its fair share of growth's impacts**

---

##### **Actions**

- Regularly review and update impact fees to maintain quality public facilities and infrastructure in order to minimize the burden to existing Town residents and businesses.
- Regularly review and update service fees and fine schedules in order to ensure that the Town can meet the demand for a high level of quality services.
- Review and revise the Mancos Land Use Code to require that new developments provide the resources necessary to adequately cover the costs of upgrading, extending, operating and maintaining public facilities as a result of the increases in demand resulting from new development.
- Develop a phased street pavement plan for the Town's unpaved roads that recommends several options, estimates their costs, and identifies potential sources of funding.
- Move county and Town maintenance shops to facilities outside of residential districts.

---

##### **Objective #2: Encourage quality, cost-effective services that enhance the lives of Mancos residents**

---

##### **Actions**

- Promote coordination and cooperation among all area law enforcement and emergency response agencies.
- Provide responsive, high quality services to all residents.
- Support cost-effective upgrades in telecommunications infrastructure that connect to the Mancos community.

### **5.3.2 RAW WATER GOAL: SUPPLY SUFFICIENT AMOUNTS OF SAFE, HIGH QUALITY WATER TO MEET THE NEEDS OF TOWN RESIDENTS**

#### **Constraints and Issues**

- High impact activities within the Mancos Source Water Protection Area.

---

#### **Objective #1: Strengthen and protect Mancos' raw water supply and delivery system**

---

##### **Actions**

- Seek cooperative relationships with other water agencies, local, state and federal, as well as law enforcement agencies, to protect, enhance and provide physical security for the Town's water delivery system.
- Adopt the Mancos Sourcewater Protection Ordinance and create the necessary intergovernmental agreements with Montezuma County, the US Forest Service and other appropriate state, local and federal agencies to ensure that the Ordinance is effectively enforced.
- Discourage land use activities around the Town's raw water storage facilities that have a foreseeable risk of contaminating water in these facilities.
- Protect all water rights owned by the Town.
- Investigate options to acquire additional water rights through lease or purchase.
- Participate in regional watershed stakeholder groups.
- Implement recommendations outlined in the Mancos Source Water Protection Plan.
- Work in collaboration with the County, Forest Service and the Mancos Fire Protection District on fire prevention measures in the Mancos watershed.

---

#### **Objective #2: Promote the use of non-potable water systems where economically and physically viable to maximize the use of the Town's water rights and minimize the impact on the water treatment plant**

---

##### **Actions**

- Develop non-potable water system plan that explores the feasibility of a phased and community-wide non-potable distribution system to reduce the demand of treated water and the impact on the water treatment plant.
- Encourage non-potable systems in new development by offering an equitable financial incentive for developers to invest in the addition of a non-potable water system.

### **5.3.3 TREATED WATER GOAL: SUPPLY SUFFICIENT AMOUNTS OF SAFE, HIGH QUALITY DRINKING WATER TO MEET THE NEEDS OF TOWN RESIDENTS**

#### **Constraints and Issues**

- Old and inadequately designed distribution system.
- Increases in drinking water standards can create unfunded mandates for treatment.
- Inadequate storage capacity to meet the needs of Town during a fire emergency.

---

#### **Objective #1: Protect and improve the Town's drinking water distribution system**

---

##### **Actions**

- Create capital improvement plan that addresses needs for the water distribution system and is updated at least every 5 years.
- Replace old meters with new remotely read meters.
- Replace water mains that are approaching or have outlived their expected life span.
- Replace old water mains that are too small to meet projected growth.
- Replace water valves that are approaching or have outlived their expected life span.
- Regularly implement preventative valve maintenance on all mains and hydrants.
- Ensure that adequate carrying capacity is provided on water distribution extensions.

---

#### **Objective #2: Protect and improve the Town's drinking water quality**

---

##### **Actions**

- Create and regularly update a capital improvement plan that projects the needs and estimated costs for water system improvements and increases in regulatory drinking water quality standards in order to plan for the financing of necessary improvements.

---

#### **Objective #3: Protect and improve the Town's drinking water quantity**

---

##### **Actions**

- Ensure that the Town's water system has adequate storage for domestic use and fire flow protection.
- Continue to monitor water user fees to promote water conservation.
- Develop incentives to encourage water conservation.

### **5.3.4 WASTEWATER GOAL: PROMOTE HIGH WATER QUALITY DOWNSTREAM OF TOWN**

#### **Constraints and Issues**

- Old and inadequately designed collection system.
- Increasingly stringent effluent discharge standards can create new mandates for wastewater treatment.

---

**Objective: Provide adequate and cost-effective wastewater facilities to accommodate the build-out of the Town's growth management where appropriate**

---

#### **Actions**

- Create and regularly update a capital improvement plan that projects the needs and estimated costs for wastewater system improvements and increases in regulatory effluent discharge standards in order to plan for the financing of necessary improvements.
- Ensure that adequate carrying capacity is provided on wastewater collection extensions.
- Create and enforce an industrial pre-treatment program to reduce harmful pollutants from entering the wastewater treatment system.
- Continue efforts to identify, reduce and remove inflow and infiltration sources within the existing wastewater system.
- Replace mains that are approaching or have outlived their useful lifespan.
- Install manholes at more frequent and appropriate intervals in order to improve maintenance access.

### **5.3.5 STORMWATER GOAL: PROVIDE A DRAINAGE SYSTEM THAT KEEPS ROAD AND SIDEWALK SURFACES DRY AND IMPROVES THE WATER QUALITY IN STREAMS AND CREEKS**

#### **Constraints and Issues**

- Lack of Town-wide stormwater management system.
- Increasing water quality regulations for stormwater discharge.
- Undirected surface runoff and low porosity of soils.

---

#### **Objective #1: Reduce the impact of surface water flows on traveled ways**

---

##### **Actions**

- Create ditches on both sides of all streets and install drainage pans where appropriate.
- Create capital improvements plan that addresses needs for stormwater drainage improvements and is updated at least every 5 years.
- Develop a stormwater master plan that includes an assessment of surface runoff, recommends drainage system designs, and identifies sources of funding to implement the plan.

---

#### **Objective #2: Reduce pollution of water bodies from surface runoff**

---

##### **Actions**

- Adopt a riparian setback overlay zone in the land use code to protect vegetation that stabilizes banks and filters out harmful contaminants along water bodies.
- Require new planned unit developments to submit an impervious cover analysis that assesses water quality impacts as part of their approval process.
- Encourage cluster developments through mechanisms like zoning or density bonuses in order to reduce impervious surfaces and increase open spaces and groundwater infiltration.
- Where feasible, incorporate landscaped filter strips between impervious surfaces in order to provide areas for water to filter into the ground.

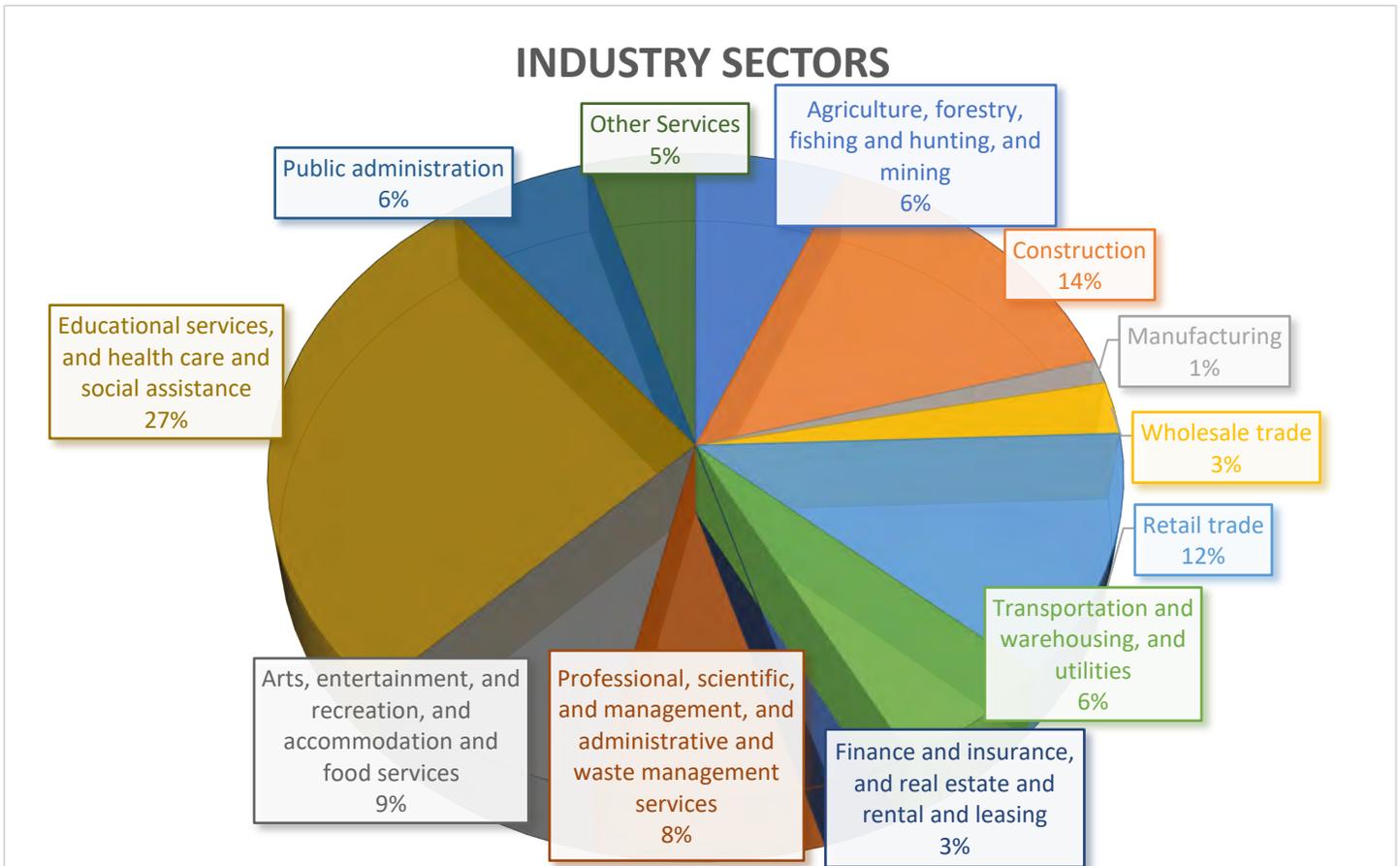




### 6.1. Regional Context, Data and Trends

The Town of Mancos has a committed Community and Economic Development Department. The primary focus of this resource is to create and retain jobs which will increase the quality of life for the Town's residents. Mancos has a variety of businesses for a community its size. A majority of enterprises in Mancos are locally owned, including art galleries, restaurants, health care facilities, lodging amenities, cottage industries, mom-and-pop retailers, and entertainment establishments. Mancos businesses still serve the surrounding Valley's agricultural and ranching communities that helped build the Town over a century ago, as well as its residents and visitors to the region's archaeological, natural, and cultural attractions. In recent years an active artists' community has evolved and gained national and international attention through the development of the Mancos Creative Arts District.

88% of respondents to the 2022 Mancos Community Survey rate local job creation with livable wages as most important over the next 10 years. Historically, Mancos' two primary economic drivers were agriculture and tourism. The agricultural, cottage and creative industries complement each other by contributing to the Town's western small-town appeal. The area's rural setting, proximity to a variety of natural landscapes, cultural heritage and western small-town character are assets which many local businesses depend on, but the local economy is beginning to change as the below chart demonstrates.



Source: 2020 US Bureau of Census, American Community Survey

Census data indicate the most common employment sectors for those who live in Mancos are now health care and social assistance, construction, and then retail trade. The highest paying industries in Mancos by median earnings, are wholesale trade, other services except public administration, transportation, warehousing, and utilities. According to the 2020 Census, from 2019 to 2020, employment in Mancos, CO declined at a rate of -8.5%, from 753 employees to 689 employees. Unemployment rates are slightly higher than county and state rates.

Another economic driver important to the community is commuter income. Mancos' proximity to employment based near Durango and Cortez, as well as its relative affordability compared to the cost of living in both cities, make it an attractive option for those wanting to own property and are willing to commute 30 minutes or more to work. According to the most recent census data, using averages, employees in Mancos, CO have a shorter commute time (26.3 minutes) than the normal US worker (26.9 minutes). Additionally, 0.954% of the workforce in Mancos, CO have "super commutes" in excess of 90 minutes. According to the Mancos Community Survey in 2021, 57.9% of respondents indicated they travel to work by private car. Census data estimates that approximately 5% of Mancos residents worked from home.

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that in 2020 there were 3,707 wage and salary workers commuting out of Montezuma County for work, aiding in the transitioning of the town into a "bedroom community". This change has implications on the cost of housing, with higher demand increasing costs that put once affordable home ownership and rentals out of reach for some residents. The growth also places enhanced demands on the Town and its services. Mancos residents working outside the community contribute to the local economy by spending the income they earn outside of Town locally, but there are opportunities to utilize data to understand the amount of money being spent by commuters in the areas in which they work and increase the targeted recruitment of new businesses in the Town to meet those consumer needs, helping to bring in revenues critical to keep up with the increased service demands of the Town's residents both old and new.

## **6.2 Workforce Development**

According to the International Economic Development Council, one of the main complaints of local businesses in the country today is the lack of a trained workforce. It is a focus for the Town to commit resources to an eco-system of partnerships and connect businesses to these networks to meet their needs. Workforce training and education is available regionally to help meet the needs of current and future populations. The Town of Mancos is within a 30-minute drive from a variety of educational and technical training institutions., Fort Lewis College offers baccalaureate and Master's degrees in a variety of disciplines. Pueblo Community College offers a number of associate degrees and vocational training in areas that include health care, mechanics, computer science, building weatherization, solar energy, and business administration, and can tailor trainings and certifications based on employer needs. Increasingly, a number of accredited higher education institutions are offering degree courses online, that will add to the overall livability of rural communities that historically

have suffered from a technological gap in comparison with urban communities. The local school district is also seeking opportunities to help support students to earn certifications and earn college credits in variety of career development areas.

### **6.3 Economic Development and Sense of Place**

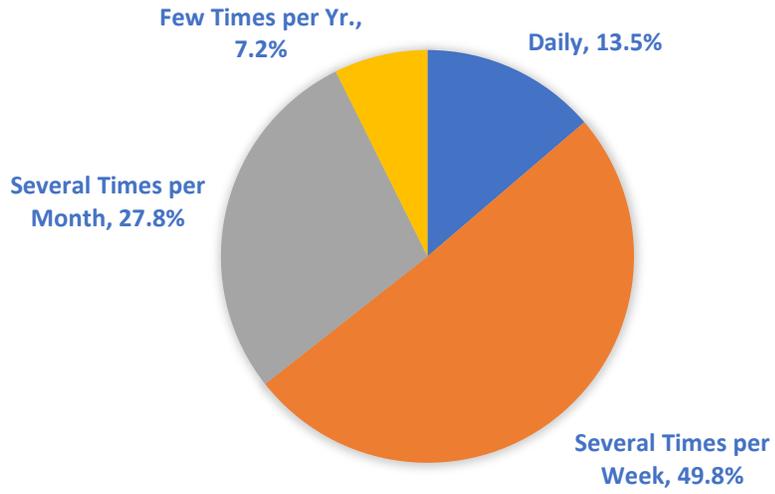
The residents of the Mancos Valley strongly adhere to a buy-local-first mentality. In the most recent Community Survey, development of local jobs with livable wages ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> overall in priorities for next 10 years. In the same survey, the top three economic development projects selected in order of preference from highest to lowest were aiding locally owned businesses (retention and expansion), make the town attractive to outside businesses to relocate (recruitment), and revitalize the downtown business district on Grand Avenue. In 2022 the Town received a grant from the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) and partnered with the local business in the downtown corridor to update their facades, a project that proved to be successful and popular.

Through the efforts of the Community and Economic Development department in the coming years, the Town will work with local partners, such as the Region 9 Economic Development District, the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Ft. Lewis College, the Mancos Valley Chamber of Commerce, and the Mancos Creative Arts District to provide the tools and technical assistance that local businesses request. The town will also work with economic development organizations that have the expertise to help develop the data necessary to both understand the context of what new businesses the regional population would support and how to best target those for sectors utilizing an entrepreneur-led economic development philosophy.

The availability of locally produced goods and locally supplied services are vital components of a vibrant local economy. Niche manufacturers - local small-scale producers of goods sold wholesale or on-site - provide skilled job opportunities and add to the diversity of products available for purchase in Town such as: hand-crafted food and beverages, household items, outdoor recreation, creative industries and apparel. Cottage industries which are operated from within residences allow residents to work at home, as well as enable consumers to purchase goods and services. While these types of local businesses are vital to provide goods and services to local residents, it is also important for the Town to focus on support for businesses that export their products to bring new money into the community which will increase the overall economic resilience by diversifying the economic base.

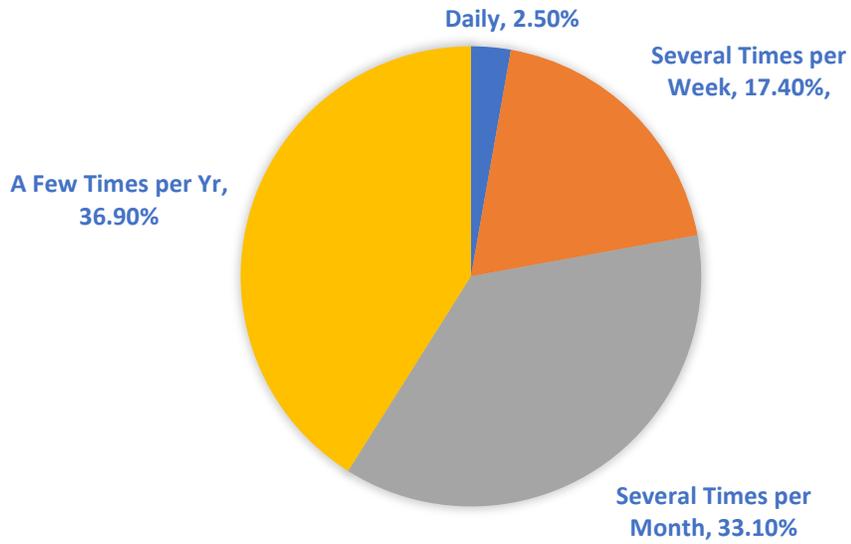
According to the 2022 Mancos Community Survey, 49.8% of the 237 respondents indicated they shop for necessities (gas, food or beverages) several times per week. In the same survey, 17.4% said they shop for discretionary (nonessential items) weekly. In both circumstances, there are opportunities to grow existing and new businesses.

### NECESSITIES



Source: Mancos Community Survey 2022

### DISCRETIONARY ITEMS



Source: Mancos Community Survey 2022

## **6.4 Community and Economic Attributes**

The Mancos community values of its rich cultural and historic character. Registered historic buildings including the Mancos Opera House which was recently renovated to address ADA accessibility, the Bauer Bank Building, Mancos High School Building and the Mancos Common Press (Mancos Times Building) offer a unique downtown experience and act as cornerstones for the developing creative industries on Main Street and Grand Avenue. The Town recognizes that the numerous galleries, shops and performing arts venues are a part of the Town's economic development and seeks opportunities to partner with historic building owners and non-profits to increase awareness and promote the business offerings. It is important to support and enhance the downtown area to create a sense of place that will continue to spawn creativity and attract local and out of town visitors.



Historic Mancos High School building circa 1920

The Mancos community hosts a number of special events throughout the year. Celebrations such as festivals, gallery walks, farmers' markets, and concerts attract visitors and bring together residents from around the region. These special events provide opportunities for the community to showcase the qualities that make it unique, as well as provide amusement, entertainment, and opportunities to reconnect with friends and neighbors.

Events have direct impact on the local economy and add to the overall interest and quality of life of the community, which in turn makes Mancos a desirable place to live.

The Town frequently partners with local non-profits to utilize parks, streets, and the community center to host these events. Examples include Mancos Days, Burro Fest and Grand Summer Nights Gallery Walks. The renovation of the Mancos Opera House opens new opportunities to host performance arts and films.

## **6.5 Mancos Economic Development Partners**

The Mancos Valley Chamber of Commerce plays an important role in the local business community by offering members promotion and helps develop and host events. The Chamber also plays a critical role in partnership with the Town to communicate with businesses about their needs to bring training and technical assistance. The Town directs a percentage of the local sales tax to the Chamber in recognition of their efforts to bring events and economic development to the Town.

The Mancos Creative District (MCD) represents the substantial number of artists that live and do business in the local community. Artist sells their work in the galleries that line the main business corridor and there are many experiential opportunities for residents and visitors to take classes. The Town partners with MCD to help understand the needs of the artist community, partners on public art installations and directs a percentage of the local sales tax to the organization in recognition of the impact it has on the overall economic vitality of the community and the downtown businesses. Planning is on-going to provide the Town with a Public Art program which will guide visitors to different art installations in Town and the surrounding valley once completed.

Region 9 Economic Development District of Southwest Colorado, Inc. (Region 9 EDD) works cooperatively with the private and public sectors to enhance the economic conditions in the area and improve economic prosperity. Region 9 EDD offers a revolving loan program for "gap" financing to assist small business retention, expansion, and job creation. They also offer a micro-enterprise loan program for loans up to \$100,000 for qualifying small businesses with five or fewer employees. In addition to loan programs, Region 9 EDD administers the Colorado Enterprise Zone Tax Credit program, publishes the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) to assist local communities with regional economic development strategic planning and technical assistance and helps to administer different State and Federal programs. Region 9 EDD often partners with community organizations, governments, and the private sector to assist in the development of special projects that result in job creation/retention and the economic expansion of the community or enterprise. They provide regional support and resources addressing broadband, housing and transportation development in Mancos and the surrounding area.

The Southwest Colorado Small Business Development Center (SBDC) offers confidential, objective services to help businesses succeed. The SBDC, located at Fort Lewis College in Durango, provides assistance to all existing small businesses and others who need help in developing their ideas. The territory served by this location includes Archuleta County, Dolores County, La Plata County, Montezuma County, San Juan County, Southern Ute Indian Tribe, and Ute Mountain Ute Indian Tribe.



## **6.6 Goals, Objectives and Actions**

### **6.6.1 DOWNTOWN GOAL: ASSURE AN ATTRACTIVE and FINANCIALLY STRONG DOWNTOWN DISTRICT**

#### **Constraints and Issues**

- Under-utilization of the central business district.
- Lack of an organized effort to expand business activity in the Downtown.

---

#### **Objective #1: Assist in the development of a “Main Street” program for the Downtown District**

---

#### **Actions**

- Work with the Department of Local Affairs to become a “Main Street” community.
- Organize “Main Street” businesses and other Downtown stakeholders to develop a “Main Street” marketing and improvements plan.

---

#### **Objective #2: Improve the overall vitality of the Downtown Commercial Core**

---

#### **Actions**

- Identify potential paths, trail routes and bicycle lanes that link Downtown to Town Parks, neighborhoods, Mancos State Park, Mesa Verde and public lands.
- Develop a wayfinding plan that includes potential sources of funding for signage.
- Identify, design and construct streetscape improvements that would make Downtown a more pedestrian friendly and desirable place to visit and shop.
- Identify retail and office businesses that would complement and diversify the existing business mix in Downtown.
- Continue to support special events that take place Downtown.
- Work with property owners to designate their properties as historic landmarks.
- Work with the State Historic Fund and other preservation organizations to help provide technical and financial assistance to property owners to restore, rehabilitate, renovate and preserve historic buildings in Downtown.
- Collaborate with the artist community in the development of aesthetic enhancements for the downtown which may include, but are not limited to: decorative benches, landscaping, sculpture installations, murals and mosaics, as well as displays of historic wagons and place-markers.

## **6.6.2 LOCAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT GOAL: PROMOTE CONDITIONS FOR A VIBRANT, SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS COMMUNITY**

### **Constraints and Issues**

- Need for increased awareness of local business opportunities.

---

### **Objective: Pursue an aggressive business development posture by collaborating with the business community**

---

### **Actions**

- Encourage frequent meetings between the Board of Trustees, the Mancos Valley Chamber of Commerce and other economic development entities to discuss issues and seek opportunities to partner towards achieving common goals.
- Work with the Small Business Development Center, Region 9 Economic Development District and Economic Development Area Partnerships to attract businesses and industry.
- Actively participate with adjacent communities and area attractions in order to help support the economic vitality of the region as a whole.
- Establish a marketing plan to broaden the customer base of existing local businesses.
- Maintain and enhance an efficient, timely and predictable development review and building permit process.
- Create a point of contact to centralize the dissemination of information for businesses and patrons.
- Consider the use of incentives, special districts, authorities and other appropriate mechanisms to promote and develop economic resources for the Town.
- Brand and market the Town's image through internet, newsletters, press releases and other media.
- Encourage the recruitment of businesses that support the Town's economic base and create primary jobs for Town residents.
- Promote the tax credit and other benefits available to companies who do business in Mancos through the Enterprise Zone program.
- Examine revenue sharing potential with neighboring communities.
- Support Mancos' creative industries through increasing and promoting opportunities and events that showcase local creative endeavors.
- Conduct a risk assessment that analyzes the impacts of climate change on the local economy.

### **6.6.3 RETAIL BUSINESSES GOAL: SUPPORT A THRIVING, DIVERSE RETAIL SECTOR THAT MEETS THE RETAIL NEEDS OF RESIDENTS AND VISITORS**

#### **Constraints and Issues**

- Retail leakage, i.e. the loss of potential sales revenue due to purchases made outside of the community.

---

**Objective: Retain and expand local businesses, and attract retail establishments to increase revenues and create local jobs**

---

#### **Actions**

- Designate sufficient land area on the Future Land Use Plan to accommodate commercial uses that complement and strengthen the Town's retail market.
- Promote available commercial sites by creating and maintaining a "commercial sites" availability map and database that contains detailed information on vacant commercial sites for potential businesses.
- Promote Mancos' Enterprise Zone to businesses to encourage development in the older and core commercial areas of Town.
- Designate land use areas to accommodate businesses in the retail categories that are experiencing the largest leakage.
- Participate in "buy local" campaigns.
- Conduct a "leakage" impact analysis.

# ***STAFF REPORT***

To: Members of the Planning and Zoning Commission  
From: Heather Alvarez, Town Administrator  
Date: March 15, 2023  
Re: Comprehensive Plan Chapters 7 & 8 Draft Review

## **Recommendation**

Requesting Commission Feedback

## **Background/Discussion**

Attached are Chapters 7 & 8, including goals, for your first review and approval.

Please review the content of the document for changes and updates. Formatting will be finalized when all track changes and Commission suggestions have been incorporated.

You will see and review the final drafts at the next Planning Commission meeting.

## **Attachments**

Comprehensive Plan Chapters 7 & 8

7.0



# Housing



A variety of quality housing is crucial to the vibrancy and vitality of a diverse community. The issues with attainable housing impact nearly every facet of our resident's lives including employment opportunities, economic development, health care, education, and transportation. Lack of available housing stock creates higher prices for rentals and ownership, which has come to a critical mass in Colorado and in our region of the state. Mancos is starting to see the impacts of the attainable housing crisis, with low inventories and high prices as people who work in Durango and Cortez are seeking housing they can afford. Residents of Mancos feel a mix of different housing solutions would be appropriate. In the 2022 Community Survey, 74% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed the Town should allow more mixed-use commercial and residential buildings, 64% said the Town should allow for more accessory dwelling units (AUDs) and 56% feel the Town should allow more multi-family buildings (5 or more living units).

In a 2021 Housing Assessment by the Root Policy Center through the Southwest Council of Governments, the predicted housing development need for Montezuma County is 220 new housing units over the next three to five years, with the needs specifically in Mancos being five permanent new units per year for the next five years to meet the workforce demands. With new housing development and population growth there are also concerns with water availability, Town facilities, public safety, health care and schools being sufficient to meet new demands.

There continues to be robust conversation about the Town's role in housing development with roughly 21% saying in the community survey the private market should dictate the rate of growth overall. However, it's become increasingly clear that state and local governments can play a role in encouraging development to meet the future demands, whether it be in changes to land use code to incentivize attainable housing development, accessing grant funding to help bring the costs of new development down or partnering with local non-profits and businesses to develop new units. While the Town has no intention of managing or owning housing directly, action can be taken to ensure the anticipated growth is managed allowing people to live, work and thrive in the region, using novel and successful examples from other parts of rural and mountain areas of the state as guides for what might be possible.

According to the 2010 Mancos Community Survey the majority of Mancos Valley residents agree. The survey results indicate an overall desire for more apartments, condominiums, accessory dwelling units, residential units in commercial buildings, and a percentage of homes in new developments set aside for deed-restricted housing to ensure the availability of permanently affordable housing stock.

## **7.1 Regional Context, Data and Trends**

### **7.1.1 Housing Stock**

~~According to the 2010 US Census the Town of Mancos had 608 housing units. Of these, the Montezuma County Assessor's Office estimates that 401 are single family homes. Approximately 55 of the 401 single family homes are single-wide manufactured homes.~~

According the 2017 Mancos Housing Needs Assessment by Prior and Associates, Mancos is a predominately single-family residential community that was initially developed in the in the 19th century. Ninety-two percent (92%) of the residential units are single-family homes or mobile homes. Seventy-one percent (71%) of the units were built between 1970 and 2010. About one-sixth of the units were constructed before 1940. However, there has been limited construction since 2010. In the last census in 2020, only 3.8% of the total housing units in town have been built since 2010. There are platted subdivisions in town limits that are ready for development with access to municipal and private utilities. According to the Town's Planning Department records, 3 building permits for new construction were issued for zoned residential single-family housing units in 2021. Five were issued in 2022 with two of those issued for duplexes and one for a tri-plex. Any development of more than 4 attached living units (quad-plex) is considered multifamily and would need development in the appropriate zone. There were no multifamily permits issued in either year. The Town's Planning Department can work with residents and developers to understand land use codes and can provide basic information on what land may be available for development.

~~Mancos has roughly 207 housing units in multifamily complexes. These include four trailer parks that rent spaces for approximately 67 single-wide trailers. The remaining multifamily housing is divided among four apartment complexes, a nursing home, and several accessory dwelling units. Three of the four apartment complexes participate in affordable housing programs.~~

~~The age of Mancos' housing stock is relatively diverse. Twenty-six percent of Mancos' single family homes were built in the past 20 years. And according to the Montezuma County Assessor's Office, 96 percent are in average or better condition. The majority of the remaining 74 percent were built over a century, between the 1890s and 1980s.~~

### **7.1.2 Occupancy Characteristics**

~~The renter-occupancy rate for single family homes in Mancos has remained relatively constant over the past decade. In the 2000 US Census 35.4 percent of Mancos' single family homes were occupied by renters. In May of 2011 approximately 34 percent of the Town's single family homes were renter occupied (based on out of Town property owners with out-of-town addresses in the Montezuma County Assessor's property tax records). During the 2010 US Census 62 housing units were recorded as vacant.~~

According to the 2020 Census, trends in renter occupancy have shifted since 2000. Both the 2000 and 2010 census reported that nearly 34% of the single-family units in Mancos were renter occupied. That number has shifted to 50.5% of the single-family market, indicating a shift in demographics and costs to purchase homes.

Part of the shift in the rental market in recent years has been to vacation rentals, commonly referred to as short-term rentals. These rentals take up units that could otherwise be used for long-term rental housing, which has exacerbated the housing crisis. Many municipalities in rural areas close to tourist destinations are taking steps to curb this trend, and Mancos is no exception. In 2022, the Town instituted changes to its municipal code and capped the total number of short-term rentals allowed within Town limits through a business permitting process. There are also rules around local ownership of these units to help cut down on housing speculation, which increases the costs to purchase homes for local residents and makes it difficult to compete with buyers that can pay for the home with cash. Under the current ordinance, if the short-term rental is located in zoned residential the owner must live on the property and utilize an accessory dwelling unit for this purpose. If the short-term rental is located in a mixed-use zone, the owner must live in the 81328-zip code.

### 7.1.3 Housing Costs

Though it has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the housing crises that Mancos and Colorado faces are not new. For decades, the lack of affordable housing has impacted Colorado businesses, hindered employment because of a lack of workforce housing, and exacerbated inequities for communities of color, rural and resort communities that experience higher costs to develop land into housing. The Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) requires that affordable housing be defined at 120% of average median income (AMI) or less. In Montezuma County, 120% of AMI is approximately \$72,000 annually with a maximum affordable home price of roughly \$370,000. In Montezuma County, 80% of AMI is approximately \$50,000 and the maximum affordable home price at this income range is roughly \$250,000 (at 3.35% interest rate with a 30-year mortgage, 10% down payment, and 20% of the monthly payment set aside for insurance, HOA fees, and taxes). Some communities also go further and establish a lower AMI percentage for rental units, typically in the 60% of AMI range. DOLA uses a Housing Bridge graphic to illustrate the typical range of affordability:

## Housing Bridge



Used with permission of McCormick and Associates, Inc.

As reported by the Colorado Association of Realtors, there has been a steep rise in housing prices since 2017 as compared with the surrounding county overall. Year-to-Date as of December 2022, the median home sales price in Mancos increased 14.8%.



Source: [Colorado Association of Realtors](#)

According to the Division of Housing and the Colorado Housing Finance Authority, Colorado has a shortage of nearly 121,000 affordable rental units, and the nearly half of all Colorado renters are considered cost burdened, spending more than 30% percent of a household's monthly income on housing, with an additional 24% being severely cost burdened, spending more than 50% of a household's monthly income on housing. Mancos needs more housing that is affordable under this definition, with over 50% of rentals and nearly 24% of mortgages falling outside of this affordability designation at the time of the last census.

The average home price in the state increased 130% from 2011 to 2021. Statewide, the median price increased an additional 7% from January to February 2022 and the median price is now \$555,540, a 90% increase over March 2021. The townhouse and condominium market also reached a new pricing level in February 2022 and now stands at \$402,390, which is an increase of 17% from February 2021. Six out of ten Colorado households are unable to afford the average priced home. As of December 2022, the average home price in Mancos was \$613,686.00, up 28% in a year according to data provided by the Four Corners Realtor Association. Development of new housing will help to bring down these prices, but the readjustment of interest rates after post-pandemic lows will continue to impact home purchases for low- and middle-income residents.

Despite the decrease in affordability, Cortez, Dolores, and Mancos are the most affordable places to live in the 5-county region of Montezuma, Dolores, La Plata, San Juan and Archuleta Counties according to the most recent Region 9 Living Wage Report

published in 2022. Using housing costs specific to each community they found that Pagosa Springs is the most expensive community in the region for a family of four (\$21.97 per hour for each working adult) due to the high cost of housing. Cortez and Mancos are the least expensive communities for a family (\$17.07 per hour for each working adult). Rental rates for housing in Montezuma County are among the lowest in the region, based on Fair Market Rent estimates. However, 8% of the service jobs in Montezuma County support tourism in accommodations (lodging) and food services with an average annual wage of \$19,966.15 Across all industries the average annual wage is \$39,804. This is only 56% of the estimated livable wage (\$71,292) for a family of four (two working adults, a preschooler and one school age child).

Cortez, Dolores, Mancos, Unincorporated	(1bdr)	(2bdr)	(2bdr)
MONTEZUMA COUNTY MONTHLY COSTS (1)	Adult	Adult + Preschooler	2 Adults + Preschooler + School-age
Housing (2)	\$ 850	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
Childcare (3)	\$ -	\$ 998	\$ 1,247
Utilities (4)	\$ 222	\$ 222	\$ 222
Food	\$ 298	\$ 439	\$ 871
Transportation	\$ 296	\$ 304	\$ 585
Health Care	\$ 227	\$ 634	\$ 748
Miscellaneous	\$ 270	\$ 438	\$ 620
Taxes	\$ 376	\$ 731	\$ 1,081
Earned Income Tax Credit (-)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Childcare Tax Credit (-)	\$ -	\$ (50)	\$ (100)
Child Tax Credit (-)	\$ -	\$ (167)	\$ (333)
<b>SELF SUFFICIENCY WAGE</b>			
Hourly Wage (5)	\$ 14.43	\$ 25.85	\$ 16.88
# of jobs at minimum wage (\$12.56)	1.15	2.06	1.34
Monthly Costs	\$ 2,539	\$ 4,549	\$ 5,941
Annual	\$ 30,468	\$ 54,588	\$ 71,292

Source: Region 9 Living Wage Report 2022

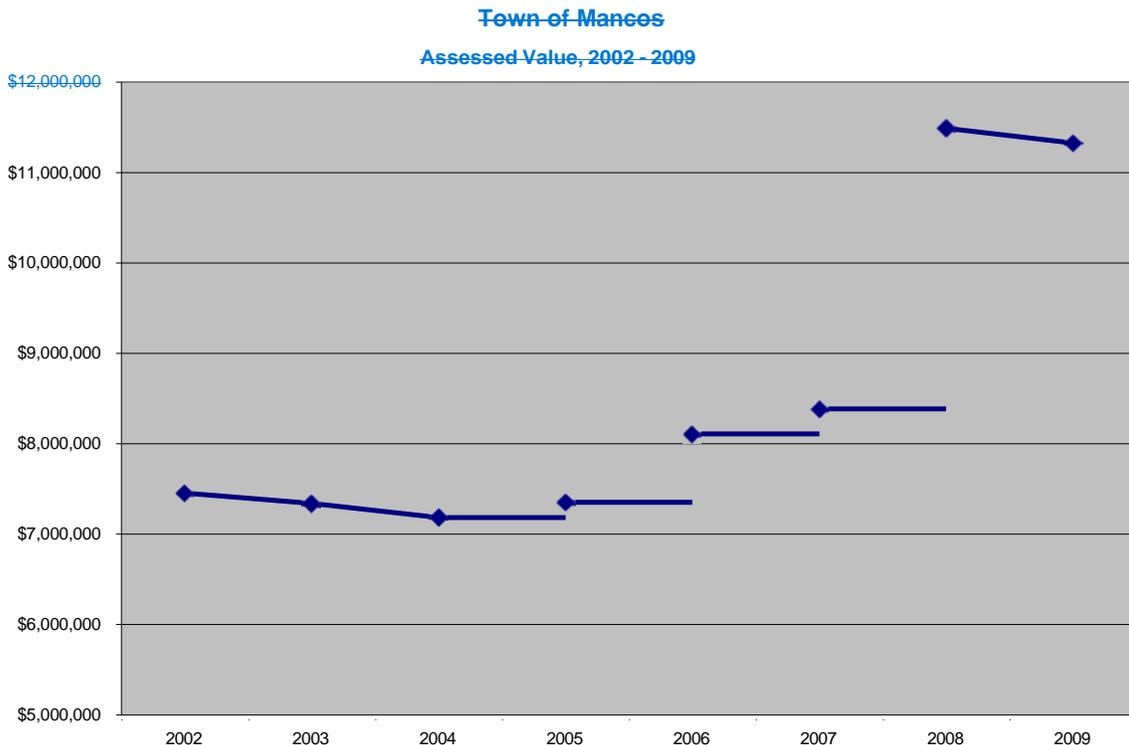
The median purchase price for a single family home in Mancos has been declining since 2007. The median price for a home in 2007 was \$210,000. Half of the homes during that time period sold for less than \$210,000, and half of the homes sold for more. The median price for a single family home dipped by 12 percentage points in 2008 to \$184,000. Median purchase prices declined again by 5 percentage points in 2009, and another 5.7 percentage points in 2010, to \$165,000.

With the lack of available credit for home-ownership, increase in foreclosures, and decline in investor confidence in the real estate market, it is unlikely that home prices will rise in the near future. Instead, it is predicted that the demand for quality, affordable rentals will rise.

According to the Region 9 Economic Development District's "Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy: Update 2011," (CEDS) and the "2008 Southwest Colorado Index," there is a regional shortage of open-market rental housing below \$800 a month. HUD studies suggest that home rent should not exceed 30 percent of one's household income. Those spending more than 30% of their household income on rent are considered overburdened. Thus, in order to afford a home for \$800 a month, a household must earn a minimum of \$32,000 a year.

Mancos' housing market has had a strong relationship to the housing market in the nearby community of Durango. Thirty-one percent of the 2010 Mancos Community Survey respondents stated that they live in Mancos because it is more affordable than nearby communities. Because the median home price in Mancos is higher than in Cortez, Dolores and unincorporated Montezuma County, it is safe to assume that respondents were referring to Durango, as Durango is the only nearby community with median home prices higher than Mancos.

While Mancos has more affordable options than Durango for those who are looking to purchase a home, the same cannot be said for those choosing to rent. Durango has a wide variety of available housing rental options at differing price points, whereas there is a continual shortage of rental units in Mancos. This is particularly true for those who cannot afford more than \$800 a month in rent according to the 2010 Montezuma County Housing Needs Study. If the demand for rentals continues to grow as predicted, Mancos' current housing stock will not be able to meet the demand.



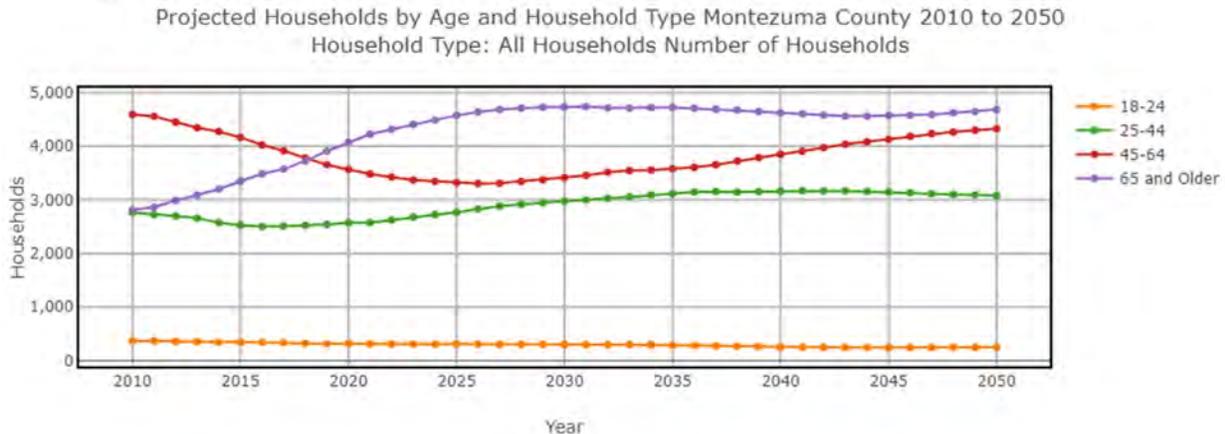
Courtesy of the Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Currently, there are 50 vacant buildable lots in Mancos' Single Family zone district. Another 45 lots are platted in the Single Family zone district, but as of the Plan's adoption, these lots do not have adequate access, nor do they have utilities including water, sewer, electric and natural gas. There are only eight vacant buildable lots in the Highway Business zone district. The Highway Business district allows mixed commercial and residential, as well as multi-family uses. From 2001 through 2010 the Town issued an average of 4 to 5 building permits for single family houses per year. If housing construction continues at this rate, without zoning changes or future annexations, the remaining single family buildable lots will be built out by 2022. According to the 2010 US Census, the average household size in Mancos is 2.31. Using this figure, Mancos' population will likely increase by approximately 115 people at full build-out.

## 7.2 Housing and Sense of Place

According to the Region 9 CEDS the cost of living in Mancos actually went down by 12 percent from the cost of living in 2007, due in part to a reduction in costs of housing. At the same time real wages declined and unemployment levels increased, generally negating any positive effects of the reduction in the cost of living.

### Demographic changes



Source: Department of Local Affairs, State Demographers Office

As demonstrated by the above projected households by age until 2050 provided by the state demographers office, the Town's population is aging, and the number of residents 65 and older will outpace all other age groups. The town will need to plan for these resident's housing needs, including having housing designed to meet their physical needs and fixed income levels. The number of residents nearing the end of their careers will also increase overtime. Both of these populations most likely will not have children in the home, meaning that large single-family dwellings may not be preferred for development. Attached single-family units, along with multi-family units need to be part of the overall housing development plan to ensure there is sufficient options for the aging population.

## **7.3 Goals, Objectives and Actions**

### **7.3.1 HOUSING GOAL: INCREASE THE DIVERSITY OF HOUSING STOCK**

#### **Constraints and Issues**

- Shortage of quality affordable rental houses.
- Lack of housing that meets the needs of a diverse community.
- Rising costs of home energy consumption.
- Limited number of buildable lots in the single family zone district.

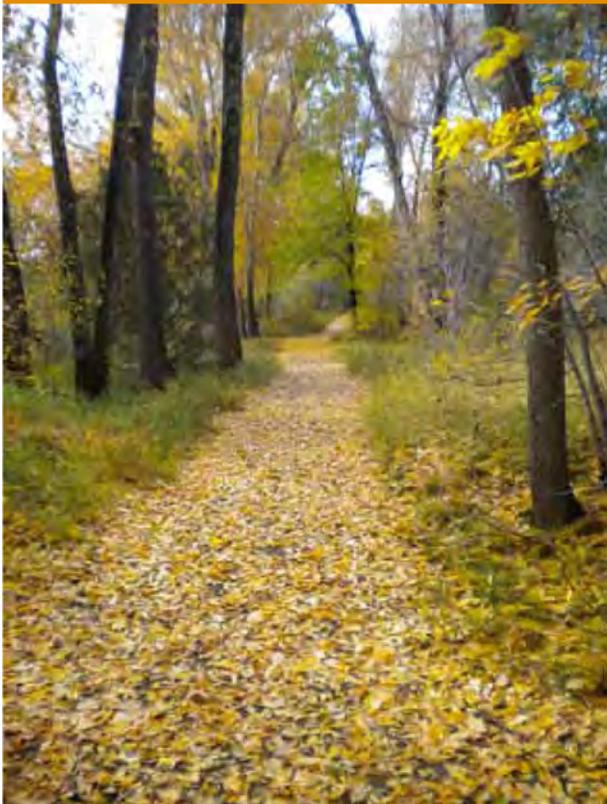
---

**Objective: provide a variety of housing types, sizes and prices that are attractive and meet the diverse needs of the community**

---

#### **Actions**

- Amend the Land Use Code to encourage mixed use and high-density housing in areas that don't adversely impact single family neighborhoods.
- Adopt standards that require new developments to incorporate universal accessibility design features.
- Consider adopting planned unit development regulations that require a percentage of developed housing to be deed restricted in order to guarantee that a portion of the housing development will remain permanently affordable.
- Adopt green building codes and standards that require new developments to meet energy efficiency standards.
- Consider amending the land use regulations to allow accessory dwelling units and in-law quarters in single family residential zones.
- Participate in programs that provide assistance to homeowners in making efficiency, weatherization and accessibility improvements.



The Town of Mancos recognizes and is committed to investing in safe and healthy outdoor recreational amenities. The Town's parks, trails, recreation programs, and open space areas are essential elements that enhance the quality of life for the Mancos community and its visitors. Mancos's Parks and Recreation Department strives to provide a range of passive and active recreational opportunities to meet the needs of the entire community throughout the four seasons.



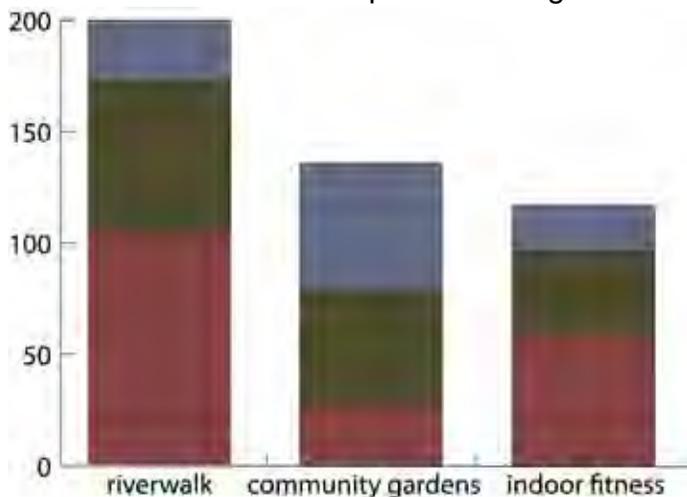
In addition to improving the wellbeing of Mancos residents, the Town's recreational amenities attract visitors and residents of the greater Mancos region, and therefore contribute to the community's economic health. Just a few miles to the north are the Chicken Creek Cross Country Ski Area that links to the Colorado Trail, the San Juan National Forest and Mancos State Park, providing cross-country skiing, hiking, mountain biking, hunting and fishing opportunities. Due to its proximity to a variety of historic, cultural and natural resources, Mancos is a central hub for recreational activities.

This section is organized into four separate subsections: Parks, Recreation, Trails and Open Space. Using feedback from the 2011 Mancos Community Survey, as well as information gleaned from US Census data, the individual subsections address the goals, objectives and recommended actions to meet the needs of the current and future community.

## 8.1 Parks

### 8.1.1 Regional Context, Data and Trends

There are approximately 23 acres of parks and open space within the Town of Mancos. The oldest Town park is Boyle Park, that was donated to the Town by the Boyle family in 1919 and is home to the Town's old jail. Since then, a number of improvements have been made to the park including



a softball field, playground features, covered picnic shelters, landscaping and restrooms. Boyle Park sits on the eastern end of Town, adjacent to the downtown commercial core, and provides a venue for multiple community functions and events, including family reunions, private parties, the Mancos Burro Fest, Mancos Days, and in 2010 was host to the annual Colorado Rural Philanthropy Days.

In 1998 the Town purchased 13 acres on

the west end of Town and built its first open space park, Cottonwood Park. Cottonwood consists of a nature trail loop that runs along the perimeter of the park and adjacent to the Mancos River as it exits Town. Cottonwood Park is host to a number of community events, including outdoor music concerts.

### **Skate Park**

The Town owns and maintains a 7,500 square foot skate park on the southeast corner of Spruce and Railroad Avenues. The Skate Park was built in cooperation with community interest groups to meet the needs of local youths. The Skate Park has a number of ramps as well as a shaded seating area and landscaped gardens.

### **Neighborhood Parks**

The Town of Mancos owns and maintains several landscaped "pocket parks" or neighborhood parks, including Pioneer Park and the greenway along Sunset Avenue in the Creekside development. Neighborhood parks are typically small in size, usually occupying no more than one lot, and contain amenities that provide repose. Pioneer Park is a 5,227 square foot park on the northeast corner of Mesa Street and Grand. Pioneer Park's bench offers opportunity for solitude and rest on the edge of the historic downtown commercial core.

### **Northside Park~~Future Parks~~**

In 2008 a 4 acre parcel in the Creekside Subdivision was dedicated to the Town. The Creekside parcel sits along the southern bank of Chicken Creek and contains wetlands and riparian habitat. Playground amenities, including artificial turf, a shade structure and picnic bench are located here based on comments expressed by the community in the 2010 Community Survey and at community visioning workshops. Opportunities for constructing a nature trail on this land will be investigated as part of the Mancos Community Trails Planning. ~~The developer of the Creekside subdivision is required to build a pedestrian pathway before the second phase of the subdivision is approved. Additionally, the need for a park with playground equipment in the residential neighborhoods north of Highway 160 have been expressed by the community in comments made in the 2010 Community Survey and at community visioning workshops.~~



## **8.2 Recreation**

The Mancos ~~Parks and Recreation Department~~community offers year-round activities and programs for all Mancos area residents, including organized team sports, fitness classes, outdoor education, arts and crafts, ~~Summer Safety Day~~, and hunter safety courses. ~~Soccer, basketball, T ball, kickball and volleyball sports programs are offered in Boyle Park during the spring and summer months. The Town also provides swimming programs in the summer at the Cortez Municipal Pool. D~~Several organizations in Town offer uring the fall and winter seasons, the Parks and Recreation Department holds after school activity programs for school aged youth. Recreational activities for all ages are held throughout the year in the Mancos Community Center. The Community Center provides a valuable venue for local fitness classes including yoga, pilates, aerobics, ballroom dancing and marshal arts.

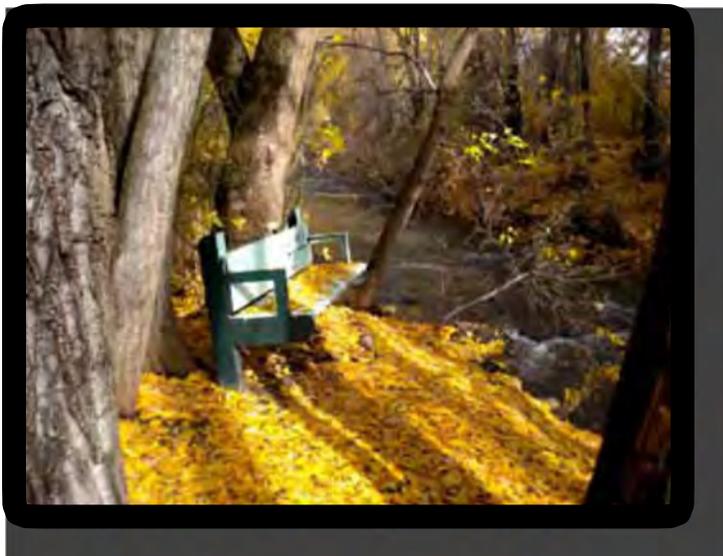


### **8.3 Trails**

For over ~~three~~four decades the Mancos community has discussed the need for trails. In recent years several efforts have been undertaken to create trail segments on school property and within Town parks. The Town of Mancos ~~is currently in the process of creating~~has created a comprehensive trails plan that will identify opportunities to link existing trail segments via future trails to cultural, recreational and natural assets. The resulting trails will encourage healthy modes of transportation and recreation via safe non-motorized routes, thereby increasing the overall health and safety of the community.

Despite its prime location, the Town of Mancos has no trail links to the nearby cultural, recreational and natural amenities. Well designed and planned connections within Town and to neighboring public lands would encourage residents and visitors to utilize the variety of cultural and recreational resources within hiking and biking distance of each other. Trail heads within Town would also help to capture visitors passing through on their way to the region's abundant attractions.

The 2010 Mancos Community Survey identified the Mancos Riverwalk as the top priority for recreation projects. Upon completion, the Riverwalk Trail will follow the Mancos River as it flows through Town, connecting Boyle Park, the downtown historic district, the Mancos Public Library, the Mancos Elementary, Middle and High Schools, and Cottonwood Park. The Riverwalk will preserve public access to the Mancos River, reduce conflict between users and residents by locating routes and access points in use-compatible areas, increase opportunities for bird watching, enhance opportunities for fishing, and provide opportunities for outdoor education. Linking neighborhoods and parks to downtown businesses will stimulate the local economy by providing recreational amenities that will attract residents and visitors to the historic business district.



#### **8.3.1 Trails and Sense of Place**

Opportunities abound for cultural learning and heritage tourism along trails in the Mancos Valley. Archeological evidence suggests that humans have settled in the Mancos Valley region for at least the past 1,400 years. Identifying opportunities to connect the Town of Mancos to Mesa Verde National Park's Visitor Center and restore segments of the historic Old Spanish Trail and Rio Grande Southern Rail Grade are essential elements of the Mancos Community Trails Planning

Project.

#### **8.4 Open Space and Greenway Corridors**

One hundred and thirty-five respondents to the 2010 Mancos Community Survey picked "protect wildlife, wetlands and river habitats" as one of their top three priorities, making open space protection the second highest priority for environmental projects. Open spaces are relatively undeveloped areas of land with natural, scenic, cultural, hydrologic, recreational or ecological value. These areas can be used to promote wildlife and vegetation biodiversity, protect rare or unique plant and animal habitats, preserve wildlife migration corridors, and protect and improve water quality. They can also provide cultural, educational and passive recreational opportunities by providing protected public access to natural habitats, waterways and cultural resources such as historic agricultural lands or archaeological sites.

Greenway corridors are open space areas that border waterways. These areas can provide critical buffers which protect wildlife habitat and public access to waterways. Additionally, if managed properly, greenway corridors can provide critical protection of water quality by allowing plants and soils to filter out harmful chemicals and nutrients as water flows from nearby private lands into watercourses. Likewise, shade from trees and shrubs adjacent to waterways lower the temperature of water and the rate of evaporation, thereby improving water quality for aquatic species and habitat downstream.

The Town of Mancos has one dedicated open space natural area, the ~~13-acre~~13-acre Cottonwood Park on the southwest end of Town. Cottonwood Park is home to its namesake, the native cottonwood tree, as well as natural grasses, shrubs and a segment of the Mancos River. On Mancos' northern edge are another four acres of natural area known as Creekside that is owned by the Town. Creekside is dominated by wetlands created by the seasonal flows of Chicken Creek and is suitable for open space preservation as a greenway corridor.

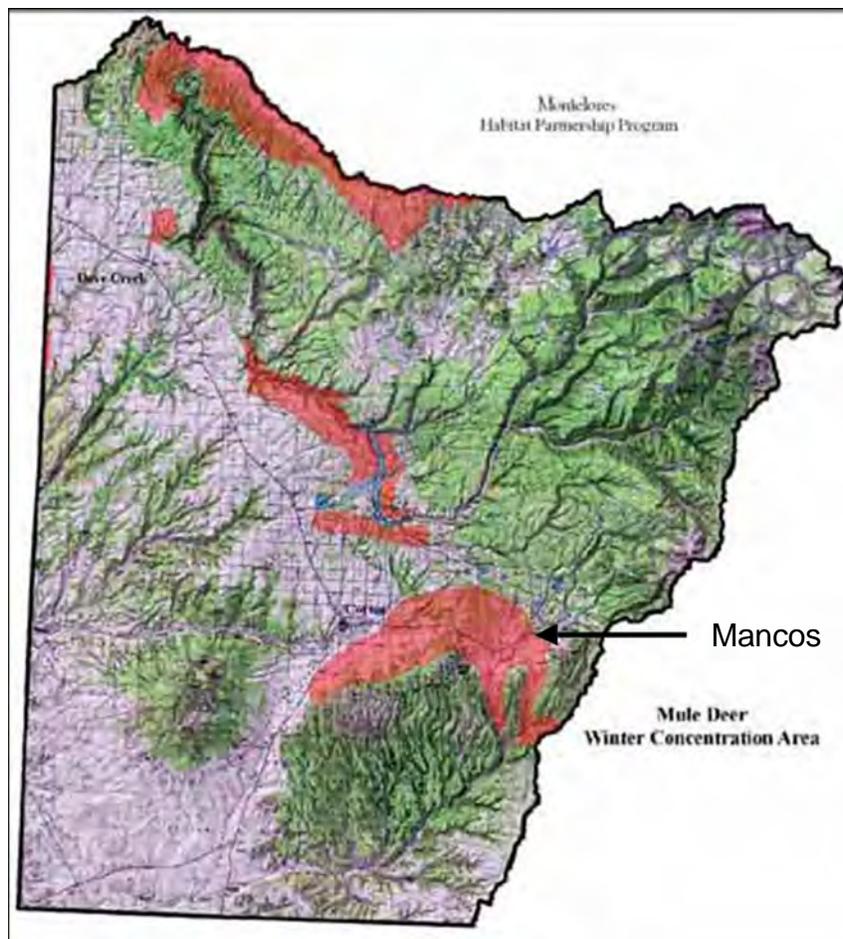
The Town itself is surrounded by privately owned agricultural lands. Several properties, including the 120 acre Humiston Farm directly south of Town have conservation easements which preserve them as agricultural or natural lands in perpetuity. Just beyond the Valley's



rural residential and agricultural lands lie the San Juan National Forest, Mesa Verde National Park, Mancos State Park and Menefee Mountain Wilderness Study Area, each no more than six miles from Town.

During the fall months many mule deer and elk herds travel down from higher elevations to winter in the Mancos region. In the spring, these herds begin their journey back up to the higher altitudes to their calving grounds. Privatization, subdivision and development of lands can disrupt these migratory patterns and increase conflicts between landowners and wildlife. According to a ~~recent~~ report conducted by the Montelores Committee's Habitat Partnership Program, mule deer and elk populations were significantly higher forty to fifty years ago. But because much of the native shrub land habitat that existed back in the 1950s and 1960s has since been converted to agricultural lands, there is barely enough habitat to support the current mule deer and elk populations (Montelores Habitat Management Plan, 2010-2014).

**MAP: MULE DEER WINTER CONCENTRATION AREAS**



*Colorado Wildlife Commission (July 10, 2010). Montelores Committee Habitat Partnership Program: Habitat Management Plan.*

## **8.5 Goals, Objectives and Actions**

### **8.5.1 PARKS GOAL: PROVIDE CLEAN, SAFE, ACCESSIBLE PARK FACILITIES THAT ENHANCE THE HEALTH, WELL-BEING, AND NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE OF THE COMMUNITY**

---

**Objective: Continue to provide a high level of quality amenities to residents and visitors**

---

#### **Actions**

- Continue to maintain and improve playground equipment, ball fields, landscaping and other park amenities in collaboration with Great Outdoors Colorado and other funding agencies.
- Ensure that parks are accessible to all Mancos residents and visitors by incorporating universal accessibility standards within the Town's park system.
- Incorporate a variety of park and playground amenities to meet varying physical abilities and age groups.
- Revise the land use code requirements for subdivision regulations to eliminate the allowance of un-buildable lands as counting towards the land dedication minimum requirements.
- Preserve and restore existing park features such as the Boyle Park roundhouse and performance pavilion, that are iconic park features for multiple Mancos generations.
- Increase the capacity of volunteers and community groups by providing opportunities for ways to increase participation in Town parks, such as landscaping classes, and memorial gardens.

## **8.5.2 RECREATION GOAL: ENCOURAGE A HEALTHY COMMUNITY ENRICHED BY A VARIETY OF PHYSICAL AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES**

---

**Objective: Provide a broad range of recreational activities and programs to meet the needs of Mancos' diverse community**

---

### **Actions**

- Collaborate with senior center, public schools, Mancos Library, community organizations and individuals to plan and implement recreational programs that meet the needs of the entire community.
- Regularly evaluate program fees and other sources of funding to make sure that they are sufficient to cover the costs of programs in order to ensure that recreation programs are available for all residents and continue well into the future.
- Continue to provide assistance to volunteer-operated programs in order to increase volunteer participation and volunteer capacity.
- Continually evaluate and improve existing recreational programs, and develop new programs as needed.
- Obtain means of transportation in order to increase recreational opportunities for Mancos residents by providing access to recreational assets and facilities within the region that don't currently exist in the Town.
- Continue to coordinate and collaborate with schools, the senior center, the public library and other organizations to share facilities and increase access to programs.
- Develop and implement an outreach program to increase awareness of Mancos' recreational programs and opportunities.

### **8.5.3 TRAILS GOAL: PLAN FOR A SYSTEM OF INTERCONNECTED TRAILS BETWEEN THE TOWN'S AND THE REGION'S RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL AMENITIES**

---

#### **Objective: Develop a comprehensive trails plan**

---

##### **Actions**

- Identify community and cultural assets and opportunities for trail routes between assets.
- Identify and collaborate with stakeholders in order to minimize potential conflicts between trail users.
- Solicit feedback from residents, citizens and special interests.
- Identify options and cost estimates for attaining permanent public access to route scenarios.
- Develop conceptual design and engineering elements and estimate construction costs for route scenarios.
- Prepare wildlife, environmental and archaeological studies per route scenario.
- Research potential funding resources and partnerships for plan implementation.
- Develop maps of preferred and alternate trail route scenarios and trail heads.
- Plan for phasing for acquisition and construction of preferred trail routes.
- Inventory private and public property, and existing easements and covenants along preferred trail routes.
- Develop preliminary cost estimates for access, construction and maintenance for preferred route scenarios.
- Consider revising the land use code to require trail easements as a condition to any development approval on properties adjacent to water bodies.

#### **8.5.4 OPEN SPACE GOAL: PROTECT REGIONAL BIODIVERSITY IN PERPETUITY**

---

##### **Objective: Preserve native vegetation and wildlife habitat**

---

##### **Actions**

- Conduct riparian and wetland habitat studies that inventory lands critical to sustaining regional wildlife.
- Promote the conservation of critical wildlife habitat through permanent measures such as conservation easements.
- Revise the Land Use Code to encourage open space land dedication and conservation easements.
- Revise the Land Use Code to include wetland preservation overlay zones.
- Revise the Land Use Code to include riparian preservation overlay zones.
- Develop an open space plan that identifies open spaces, greenway corridors and agricultural lands with value to the community and recommends strategies for conservation, such as purchasing development rights and fee simple acquisition.