The following items will be presented at this public hearing of the Fruita Planning Commission for their consideration. The Planning Commission will formulate a recommendation that will be forwarded to the Fruita City Council. If you have an interest in an item on the agenda, please call (970) 858-0786 or come to the Planning & Development Department office located at 325 E. Aspen Avenue to review the information in the file. If you have a concern with an item on the agenda, your appearance at both hearings is encouraged to ensure your concerns are accurately represented or you can write a letter detailing your concerns and submit it to the Planning & Development Department prior to the meetings. Physically disadvantaged persons, who wish to obtain information or need assistance in attending the public hearing, may call (970) 858-0786. The hearing impaired may call Relay Colorado at 1-800-659-2656, or visit our website: www.fruita.org

General Rules
Land use public hearings are similar to a court proceeding. Proper procedures will ensure a fair hearing for all and allow the land use items to be acted on in a timely manner. In the interests of time and to assure a fair hearing for everyone, the following rules will be followed:

1. There will generally be a 15-minute presentation (maximum) by the applicant.
2. Individual speakers will normally be limited to 3 minutes each.
   (Additional comments may be submitted in writing.)
3. The applicant will then have a rebuttal time of approximately 5 minutes.

Each person wishing to speak will raise their hand and be recognized by the Chair and asked to come forward and speak into the microphone stating their name and address. The purpose of a land use hearing is to have the facts of a case presented in a manner that will assist the decision-makers in making a fair, legal, and complete decision. The hearing is a fact-finding forum by unbiased decision-makers. Unruly behavior, such as booing, hissing, cheering, applause, verbal outbursts, or other inappropriate behavior, detract from the hearing and will not be permitted.

A. CALL TO ORDER
B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
C. AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA
   None.
D. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA
E. WITHDRAWN ITEMS
   None
F. CONTINUED ITEMS
   None
G. CONSENT ITEMS

1. Application #: 2019-38
   Application Name: Vic’s Place VRBO
   Application Type: Conditional Use Permit
   Location: 825 E. Ottley Avenue
   Zone: Community Residential (CR)
   Description: This is a request for approval of a Conditional Use Permit for a Vacation Rental by Owner (Bed And Breakfast) in a Community Residential zone.
2. Application #:  2019-43
Application Name:  Cook Short Term Rental
Application Type:  Conditional Use Permit
Location:  157 South Orchard Street
Zone:  Community Residential (CR)
Description:  This is a request for approval of a Conditional Use Permit for a Vacation Rental by Owner (Bed And Breakfast) in a Community Residential zone.

3. Application #:  2019-44
Application Name:  Village at Country Creek North
Application Type:  Preliminary Plan
Applicant:  Sunshine of the Redlands
Location:  1176 18 Road
Zone:  Community Residential (CR)
Description:  This is a request for approval of a Preliminary Plan for 12 single family detached residential lots on approximately 3.4 acres.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: November 12, 2019 Planning Commission meeting

H. HEARING ITEMS:
None

I. OTHER BUSINESS
1. Community Development Activity Reports.
   a. Fruita In Motion: Plan Like A Local Comprehensive Plan
2. Visitors and Guests.
3. Other Business.

ADJOURNMENT

RULES OF PROCEDURE
1. THE HEARING IS OPENED BY THE CHAIR OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
The Chair reads the item on the agenda.
2. THE STAFF PRESENTS THE STAFF REPORT
The Fruita City staff present their reports.
3. THE PETITIONER SUMMARIZES THE PROJECT
The petitioner or his/her representative is asked to present the proposal. Presentations should be brief and to the point, but covering all of the main aspects of the project.
4. PUBLIC COMMENTS
People speaking should step up to the microphone and speak clearly, stating their name and address. They should be brief and to the point and try not to repeat what others have said. The Chair asks for those in favor of the item to speak and then those opposed to the item to speak. Any others who wish to speak are then asked to come up to the microphone.
5. REBUTTAL
The Chair asks for the petitioner’s rebuttal. During this brief time, the petitioner should address the major questions raised by the public and the Commission.
6. THE HEARING IS CLOSED TO PUBLIC COMMENTS AND THE ITEM IS DISCUSSED
The Chair closes the public hearing to public comments. No further comments from the public are allowed at this time. The Commission discusses the item and may ask the petitioner, staff or members of the public to come back to the microphone to answer questions.
7. VOTE
The Chair asks the Commission for a motion on an item. After the motion is seconded, the Chair asks for a discussion on the motion. The motion may be amended and if it is amended, the Commission votes on whether to accept the amendment. After discussion and consideration of any amendments, the Commission votes on the motion. If the motion fails, or if there is a tie vote, another motion may be made and voted on using the same procedure. In addition to recommending an item be approved, approved with conditions or denied, the Commission may also table an item or continue an item to a later date.

8. FOLLOW UP
The Planning Commission’s decision is forwarded to the Fruita City Council. Once a project is approved by the City Council it must be revised to reflect all the conditions placed on it by the City Council before documents are recorded and/or building permits are issued. If the project fails to meet the Fruita Land Use Code time limits for final documents, the project approval of the project lapses and the project must be resubmitted.

9. The Planning Commission may also continue a project, or deny a project. At the request of the Planning Commission, the City Council may continue a scheduled public hearing to allow the Planning Commission more time to consider or reconsider the application.
A. CALL TO ORDER

Seven Planning Commissioners were in attendance. (Justin Gollob, JP Nisley, Mel Mulder, Jesse Fabula, Whitney Rink, Cullen Purser, and Patrick Hummel were present).

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

JP Nisley led the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

Mr. Dan Caris said that there was an amendment to the agenda. Hearing Item 2019-33 Richwood Avenue VRBO Conditional Use Permit application had been withdrawn. They had received a letter from the applicant’s representative to withdraw the application in its entirety. The HOA had amended the covenants and the covenants as amended, recorded on November 8 and the establishment of the covenant was November 1 and would not create a clear path with the restriction it placed on short term rentals. They recommended moving this item to the Withdrawn Items.

COMMISSIONER PURSER MADE A MOTION TO MOVE APPLICATION 2019-33 RICHWOOD AVENUE VRBO CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO THE WITHDRAWN ITEMS.

COMMISSIONER NISLEY SECONDED THE MOTION.

MOTION PASSED 7-0 IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION.

D. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AS AMENDED

COMMISSIONER RINK MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED

COMMISSIONER GOLLOB SECONDED THE MOTION.

MOTION PASSED 7-0 IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION.

E. WITHDRAWN ITEMS

COMMISSIONER HUMMEL MADE A MOTION TO WITHDRAW HEARING ITEM 2019-33 RICHWOOD AVENUE VRBO CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION.

COMMISSIONER MULDER SECONDED THE MOTION

MOTION PASSED 7-0 IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION.

F. CONTINUED ITEMS

None

G. CONSENT ITEMS

Application #: 2019-36
Application Name: 282 N. Mulberry Street VRBO  
Application Type: Conditional Use Permit  
Location: 282 N. Mulberry Street  
Zone: Community Residential (CR)  
Description: This is a request for approval of a Conditional Use Permit for a Vacation Rental by Owner (Bed And Breakfast) in a Community Residential zone.

Application #: 2019-37  
Application Name: The Ditto House VRBO  
Application Type: Conditional Use Permit  
Location: 717 E. Pabor Avenue  
Zone: Community Residential (CR)  
Description: This is a request for approval of a Conditional Use Permit for a Vacation Rental by Owner (Bed And Breakfast) in a Community Residential zone.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

October 8, 2019 Planning Commission meeting

COMMISSIONER NISLEY MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA

COMMISSIONER PURSER SECONDED THE MOTION

MOTION PASSED 7-0 IN FAVOR TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AND 5-0 IN FAVOR OF APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES. COMMISSIONER MULDER AND COMMISSIONER FABULA ABSTAINED FROM VOTING ON APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES DUE TO THEIR ABSENCE AT THE LAST MEETING.

**H. HEARING ITEMS**

Application #: 2019-41  
Application Name: Transportation Impact Fee  
Application Type: Land Use Code Amendment  
Description: This is a request for approval amending Chapter 19 of Title 17, of the Fruita Municipal Code concerning payment of impact fees, use of impact fees and transportation impact fees.

Commissioner Fabula explained how the procedure for Hearing Items. He also let the audience know that they will be limited to a three-minute time limit. He asked if anyone in the audience was there representing a group, multiple people or an organization.

There was.

He said that because of they were, they would show lenience to their three-minute time limit because they were representing a larger group. He reminded them that the Planning Commission will serve as a recommendation to the Fruita City Council who will hear these items at a separate public hearing. He then opened the hearing for application 2019-41 Transportation Impact Fee.
He read the description out loud. He noted that the applicant for this application was the City of Fruita.

Mr. Dan Caris, Planning and Development Director for the City of Fruita and Mr. Sam Atkins, City Engineer went up to give the presentation. They introduced themselves and presented a Power Point presentation. He said that this was a City sponsored Land Use Code Amendment that is going through the ordinance process to amend an entire chapter within the Land Use Code chapter 19. He said that they are proposing to repeal the entire chapter 19 and replace it with the ordinance that is in the packet. He said that in the staff report there is those embedded conventional strike through and additions that are in red that serve as the elements within that chapter that did get amended as proposed by the staff. Mr. Caris proceeded to introduce the Land Use Code Amendment.

Slide 1 – Introduction

Mr. Caris talked about the reason this amendment was before them.

Slide 2 – Project Description
► The purpose of this Land Use Code Amendment is to consider amending Chapter 19 of Title 17, of the Fruita Municipal Code concerning payment of impact fees, use of impact fees and transportation impact fees.
► In 2018, the local governments of Fruita, Grand Junction, Palisade, and Mesa County solicited a consultant to complete a county-wide transportation impact fee study to provide guidance on an appropriate fee structure that is equitable and uniform for all jurisdictions. The resulting transportation impact fee study was presented to the Fruita City Council on December 5, 2018 by the consultant Clancy Mullen with Duncan Associates. The previous was prepared for the respective jurisdictions in similar fashion back in 2002, with the individual agencies in the Grand Valley adopting variations of the fees proposed at that time. Some of the jurisdictions have adjusted the fees for inflation over the last several years.

Mr. Caris added that in 2002 they contemplated regional and nonregional fees. He said that was not the case on the study that Duncan and Associates performed this time. He mentioned that other communities there has been alternative processes that people have gone through in both in Grand Junction and Palisade and now Fruita. Some of the municipalities that took part in this update to the fee study have taken this matter up and some have not.

Slide 3 – Legal Notice
17.01.120 (C) Public Notices
► When a proposed amendment to the zone district regulations pertains to an entire zone district or all zone districts, notice shall be given only by publication in a newspaper of general circulation within the city, at least 15 days prior to the public hearing and posting of the notice at least five (5) days prior to the hearing at the Fruita City Hall, 325 East Aspen, Fruita, CO 81521, with no posting on any specific property or mailing required.
► Legal Notice in Paper-10/09/2019 (34 days prior to Planning Commission Meeting)
► Posted Legal Notice-10/07/2019 (36 days prior to Planning Commission Meeting)
Mr. Caris said that they had sent the ordinance out around a month prior to the Planning Commission meeting to the stakeholder’s groups throughout the valley and some are in the audience today. He went on that they had this well in advance and it afforded them to have some conversations with respect to any clarifying questions and there was a lot of public outreach that took place. He said that there were letters from those industry groups in the packet. Mr. Caris said that they had been accessible to those groups and wanted to be open and transparent as they went through the process. There had been a lot of conversations about the streets policies, what they did in 2002, the methodology that established the study that is recognized was performed by Duncan and Associates in 2018. Mr. Caris said that Sam Atkins is going to go through and give them some of the critical changes and to give them some context as to what happened in 2002, what is happening today and walk them through the process. He said that before Mr. Atkins spoke, he wanted to make it clear that the impact fees are a very specific section within the Colorado Revised Statutes. He said that local governments were within their statutory authority to place costs of public improvements for community facilities or for other infrastructure related facilities onto development through the development process. Mr. Caris continued that one of the mechanisms that local governments throughout the state of Colorado is impact fees. They see impact fees with School Land Dedication, Parks Open Spaces and Trails, and with Transportation Impact. He said that these are not to be used on any existing deficiency.

Slide 4 – Industry Outreach
- Over the last year, the City of Fruita staff presented before numerous agencies regarding the updated TIF Study.
- Most recently, the City staff met with the Fruita Chamber of Commerce, AMGD (Associated Members of Growth & Development) and members of the Home Builders Association of Western Colorado.
- In many of those discussions, there has been representation on both sides that capacity projects are crucial to keep the transportation network conducive for future growth.

He said that before Mr. Atkins spoke, he wanted to make it clear that the impact fees are a very specific section within the Colorado Revised Statutes. He said that local governments were within their statutory authority to place costs of public improvements for community facilities or for other infrastructure related facilities onto development through the development process. Mr. Caris continued that one of the mechanisms that local governments throughout the state of Colorado is impact fees. They see impact fees with School Land Dedication, Parks Open Spaces and Trails, and with Transportation Impact. He said that these are not to be used on any existing deficiencies that are within the transportation network solely to offset impacts that are pertinent to the application that is before the City. He said that you can’t use any of the impact fee revenue to absorb any of those existing deficiencies that are within your grid and address them in a retroactive standpoint. It is purely what is happening today and go forward. The funding of those capital facilities is well within the purview of impact fees under the statute but is something to help facilitate not creating a situation where the last individual is in pace for all the improvements. It is stretched over several projects that then goes to address capacity related projects either at a later date or during the course of the subdivision process.

Slide 5 – Legal Nexus
Local governments often place the costs of public improvements and community facilities required to serve new development onto the development itself through the land use approval process.

- One of the mechanisms by which local government may recoup the costs of new development is through the imposition of impact fees pursuant to §29-20-104.5.
- Colorado courts have found, and the General Assembly has subsequently codified in the impact fee statute, that all impact fees must be reasonable.
- Under Colorado law, an impact fee is intended to offset the impacts of new development on existing infrastructure and capital improvements and fund construction of future capital improvements that will be necessary to serve the new development.

City attorney Mary Elizabeth Geiger interjected that before Mr. Caris left the slide that he needed to address the second bullet that the fees needed to be reasonable. That is the point of the 2018 Duncan Study was to go through that and to use those experts in transportation and traffic to give you that framework for coming up what is reasonable. Mr. Caris then said that one of the important distinctions today is that you can’t look at the fabric of your transportation network and say it will be X because that seems reasonable. You need some nexus to support what is well within your right as a local government and in the study, it speaks specifically to affording local government’s ability to go up to 100% of what is recommended. Not to exceed the 100% but that those are the impacts.

Slide 6 – Duncan Study
- 2002 Study Fee $2,854 and updated to $3,200 per DU (Base Fee)
- Inflation on CDOT Construction Cost Index is 246% over the 2002-2018 period
- 2018 Study Fee $6,763
  - Trip Lengths (USDOT National Household Travel Survey, 2017)
  - Projects Were Recent City of Grand Junction/Mesa County
  - Cost Per Additional Lane Mile- Related that to Vehicle Trips/Trip Lengths
  - Used VMC/VMT of 1.0 (2002 study used 1.5)
  - Right of Way Excluded from 2018 Study
  - Regional/Non-regional Roadway Designation Eliminated for 2018

Mr. Sam Atkins spoke about Slide 6. He said that in 2002 the original study was commissioned the fee amount was $2854 for a single-family residence. That was the basis for all other fees. He continued, later the City of Fruita, by inflationary reasons, upped that number to $3200 and it has remained that way for quite some time. He pointed out the inflation on the CDOT Construction Index. He said that they will see some charts that relates to what they were proposing. He said that the fee from the 2018 Study is $6763. He then described some of the important in the 2018 Study, which he read from the bullets under that category on the slide. He said that things were not proportional, that some things were a little bit higher or little bit lower. He said that trip lengths were adjusted. He mentioned that the projects that were used to base the dollar amounts for construction costs were provided by the City of Grand Junction and Mesa County. Grand Junction provided the urban level projects where you would have curb, gutter and sidewalk. Mesa County’s projects tended to be lane width shouldering those kinds of things. Those were bid projects, constructed projects within those municipalities for those government entities. He
said that established a cost per lane mile or capacity and it related back to vehicle trips and trip lengths. He said that the original study used a VMC/VMT, vehicle mile capacity in the system to vehicle mile traveled, they used a 1.5 meaning that there was a 50% extra capacity built into the 2002 Study. That was eliminated. There was discussion with the Tack Group, RTPO and Duncan and Associates on whether or not that should be inflated. He said it just seemed like they should be establishing that number to full capacity and not overinflating. Overinflating would have increased these fees. The Right of Way was excluded from the 2018 Study. Meaning that they can’t take Right of Way from a project if you have a project adjacent to 18 ½ Road, they have 25 feet of Right of Way, they need 60 feet so they would need the additional half Right of Way from them. He said they normally take that from them in the subdivision process and the platting. In order to prevent a double taking, you can’t charge them the cost of Right of Way acquisition and take their Right of Way from them. That has been excluded from the 2018 Study. He said the Regional / Non-regional Roadway Designation was eliminated. He said that the original $2854 dollar amount had a regional component to it, where a portion of the fees would go into this regional fund and then they would construct those funds for a more regional road project that might overlap municipalities. He said that no one was putting money into that pot, they were all keeping it to themselves and using it for their own use. It got eliminated. The values are based on the improvements.

Slide 7 – Duncan Study Graphs

Figure 1 – Existing Transportation Impact Fees in Mesa County
Figure 2 – Comparison of Current and Updated Transportation Impact Fees

Sam Atkins described the graphs. He said that multi-family was based on the 69% of single family, all of those are proportioned lower. He said that the City of Fruita is higher because they were the only ones to adjust that amount. He also said that if you look at the commercial fees, the City of Fruita was lower because they established that they were only going to charge 50% for commercial impact fees. He pointed out figure 2 showed a comparison of current and updated Transportation Impact fees. He continued that for the same categories, the yellow value is the 2002 study and the blue value is the 2002 study inflated to the 246% and the orange is the 2018 updated. When the inflated values are compared to the updated, they are relatively close. If you look at retail and you look at industrial those are little bit skewed and a lot of that has to do with the trip lengths and vehicle trips. He then went on to talk about the fees. The 2018 updated fees along with the old fees side by side and then we have a factor or multiplier in the difference columns on the far right. He showed all of the categories that were shown in the study.

Slide 8 – Duncan Study 2002 – 2018 Comparison

Mr. Atkins went on to talk about the fees. The 2018 updated fees along with the old fees side by side and then we have a factor or multiplier in the difference columns on the far right. He showed all of the categories that were listed in the study. He mentioned that Animal Hospital/Vet and Public / Institutional were categories that were not in the original study and that had been added so there is no old fee to compare. He said that Single-Family detached is $6763 compared to $3200. For Single-Family and Multi-family it is 2.1 times greater than what it was. He said that all other items are increased to the value of the proposed 2018 study. He said that
since they were at a 50% reduction the fees line up about 2.1 times in Single-Family the value of the commercial fees, if they stayed proportional with trips and trip lengths would be about 4.2 – 4.3 times. He said that if you looked at the right some of those values are 4.5 for Mobile Home / RV Park down to a mini warehouse at 3.8. The lowest one is the warehouse, 1.5 times higher and the highest one is the movie theater at 5.0 times. The new fee column where they have the $6763, you can see those fees based on primarily 1000 square foot. Hotel/motel is based on rooms, golf course is based on a per hole value. All other items are based on 1000 square foot of building space. He said that you can see that some of these are pretty high, the ones that are 4.6 and above are bank and drive-in at $18,365 per 1000 square foot of bank building. Convenience store with gas sales $26,395, movie theater $33,028, restaurant and restaurant drive-through are $33,203 and $14,975 as seen on the slide. He said that all of these are based on the actual cost of the impact based on the travel miles and the amount of trips.

Slide 9 – Duncan study 2002-2018 Comparison chart
This slide showed the Transportation Impact Fee Comparison with Offsite Improvements. It showed current developments, the number of lots, Offsite Improvements, the current TIF Fee at $3200.00, Offsite Credits and the TIF Fee at $6763.00.

Mr. Atkins said that they don’t actually have any of the commercial properties that had built off-site improvements. In comparing the off-site improvements to the most recent residential subdivisions, you can see that there is Oak Creek Estates, Pinewood, Soren Estates, Aspen Village, Adobe Falls II, Adobe View North and Grand Valley Estates II. They had varying number of lots associated with them. You can see that the off-site improvements, the first one and the last three (on the slide) had off-site improvements that were required and the other three just shows the $3200 times the number of lots and then what their fee would be for the $6763 times the number of lots. He said that Pinewood Estates at 10 lots $32,000 with the new fee it would be $67,630. Going to the ones that did have off-site improvements, if you go to the column that says off-site credit, that is the value of their guarantee for their improvements. He said that theoretically that was their cost. They established that cost and that is the credit that they received. Oak Creek Estates, with their original fee, had a credit up to their $86,400. Their off-site cost was $178,153.70. If they used the new fee, their fee would have been $182,601 and it would have been a wash. There would have been an additional fee of $4500. He continued, that the examples that they have so far would suggest that on those corner lots Oak Creek Estates, Grand Valley Estates II, that the fees will cover the cost of those improvements. The developers won’t be paying any additional amount. Whereas right now Oak Creek Estates paid about $90,000 more for constructing those improvements over what the fees would be.

Slide 10 – Street Policy / Time of Payments
► Current Policy
► Developer to Pay for Cost of Half-Street Improvements to any Frontage to Collector Roadway
► Developer to Pay for any Additional Impact Offsite
► Credit up to Amount of Fee Given Towards Improvements
► Residential/Commercial Pay at Time of Planning Clearance (2015 Code Amendment)
Proposed Policy

- Developer to pay for only impact from Development
- Includes Offsite Improvements
- Offsite Improvements Cost to Developer Limited to the Amount of Impact Fee
- If Offsite Improvements Cost is More than Fee, City to Use Other TIF to Fund
- Residential – Payment at Final Plat per Filing
  - The City Cannot Wait for the Last Unit to have Collected the Total of Fees as the Projects Cannot be incrementally Constructed
- Commercial – Payment at Planning Clearance

Mr. Atkins addressed the timing and policy of the payments. He said that the current policy is that the developer would pay for all of the half street improvements along their frontage to any of the collector and above road designations and they would also pay for the additional impact if there was an off-site not adjacent but potentially an improvement that would be required where there was a turn lane that was required because of the impacts of their development. They do get credit up to the amount of the fee, so if it is 10 lots and it is $32,000, if they spent $150,000, they would get credit for the 32 and would not pay any impact fees. He said that the residential and commercial pay their impact fees at the time of planning clearance. Mr. Atkins said that this was a 2015 change to the code credit 2015 residential paid the fee at time of plat. The proposed policy is that the developer would only pay for the impacts from the development. What they are saying is, if they had those off-site improvements and they exceeded the amount of the fee that they would only construct the amount of the fee or if the construction required more dollars than that then the City would contribute the dollars from the impact fee fund. They don’t have a loser lot if they had a corner lots that required additional improvements over those costs. At the time of the payment what they are requesting is that they pay upfront at the time of plat again instead of at the time of planning clearance. The reason for that is that they don’t construct things incrementally. If they were to get $6700 they are not going to go out there and spend $6700 on roadway improvement and then wait for the next house to come in and say that we have another impact. They build the entire thing. Getting the money upfront would be the way for them to construct these projects and be ready for the impacts when they come. He said that the commercial payment would be at the time of planning clearance as it is now. They are only talking about the payment at time for residential.

Mr. Caris asked Sam to go into more detail about what is off-site as opposed to on-site.

Mr. Atkins said that when you are talking about on-site you are talking about the roads that are platted as part of the subdivision internal to the subdivision. He said that if you took Oak Creek for an example, all of the roads that are north and west of K.4 and 18 ½ Road are on-site. Offsite road designation would be K.4 and 18 ½ (or Freemont). He continued that other jurisdictions have called those differently. They are calling the adjacent roads that are the collector roads off-site roads. Those are the roads that will be eligible for credits.

Slide 11 – Review of Land Use Code Requirements

- Section 17.13.070.B of the Land Use Code (2009, as amended), states that amendments to the Land Use Code may be made upon a finding that the amendment is consistent with the City's goals, policies and Master Plan.
The Community Plan 2008 (Master Plan) is the City’s long-range guiding document that was adopted by the City Council based on public input and professional guidance. The Plan Foundation states that the Master Plan is a “…framework for managing new growth in a manner that attempts to preserve outstanding quality of life while fostering or enhancing a healthy economy.”

- Require all developments to demonstrate the provision of adequate infrastructure.
- Develop measures that would ensure new development contribute to the cost of providing new public services.
- Ensure necessary infrastructure is in place to support new development and enhance the community.
- Strive to have new growth pay its own way with implementation and maintenance of impact fees and other tools.
- Uses infrastructure and resources efficiently.
- Decreases infrastructure costs for the City.

Mr. Caris spoke. He said that one of the items that is important to consider is that within the Land Use Code right now, they don’t have what the Planning Commission usually sees which is a set of approval criteria. Often times could be seven items, or it could be four items or it could be a number of elements that need to be considered as a part of lack of finding of facts for whether or not an application is conducive to move forward and receive a recommendation of approval. He continued that for a Land Use Code amendments the Land Use Code gives us the direction to contemplate section 17.13.070 (B) which is amendments to the code may be made upon the finding that they are consistent with the City goals, policies and Master Plan. He said that this is relevant to the Municipal Code in its entirety because there are subsequent policies that provide direction for other elements that are within the Municipal Code. Specific to the Land Use Code it is really the Comprehensive Plan that is the Master Plan, that is the roadmap that is the grassroots community document that provides the context for how land use and growth should be considered as it gets enacted via ordinance or by law in the Land Use Code. He said that this is a little bit different from the standpoint that it is just one item to consider for a Land Use Code amendment. They extrapolated out some elements that are existing within their 2008 Community Plan. He wanted to make it clear that they are in the middle of proposing/adopting a new Comprehensive Plan. He said that it is Staff’s perspective that many of the elements that are imbedded that will be proposed at a later date before the Planning Commission and the Council are very similar with respect to infrastructure or public facilities. He said that as you can see on the slide that there is a number of bullets that lend itself to elements that are within that 2008 Community Plan. He said that there is a want, wish or desire for us to not fall behind. He continued that this is a common theme that the Community Plan and it means a lot of different things. It could mean multi-modal facilities, capacity related elements to the grid or the street classification that are collector or above. The common theme is to strive to continue to promote well managed growth where there is no tilting on either side of the spectrum that creates an imbalance within the community. All those bulleted points (on the slide) are a part of the Master Plan that serves as the guiding document now and he would contend that many of these will likely make their way into the new proposed Comp Plan with respect to land use and growth. He just wanted to make sure that that sort of framework is still intact today and serves as the roadmap for future Land Use Code amendments. He said that for the sake of the audience that when a community goes
through a comprehensive planning process, they use that as the trampoline to go into amending
the Land Use Code. He said that they believe that this nexus is met with some of the comments
that have been made through the public process for both plans. One is not completely separate or
tangential from one another as far as the direction that they are heading as a community.

Slide 12 – Public Comment / Questions & Staff Recommendation

- **Public Comment**
  - Compare with other jurisdictions
  - Timing
  - Phasing
  - Land use Subcategories/Consolidation
  - Study does not include any benefits/added value through sales tax generation
  - Re-evaluation

- **Staff Recommendation**
  - Staff recommends approval of the proposed Land Use Code Amendments
    concerning payment of impact fees, use of impact fees and transportation impact
    fees.

Mr. Caris said that one of the things he thought was important place into the Power Point
presentation that they did receive public comment. He continued that the ordinance was out for
public consumption with some advance time to digest. These don’t represent all of the themes
within the letters that they had received but it is their responsibility as Staff to be transparent
about what the concerns are from the public. There was a question that has been raised with
regards to if they get too out of whack comparable to other jurisdictions is there going to be
preferred places to do projects and we will fall out of balance with what our other community
partners are with respect to local governments. That shadow can get cast across Western
Colorado not just the Grand Valley and is a part of charts that are within the Duncan Study. He
said it is in the details from the development community’s perspective on phasing in impact fees
and not taking one big significant jump, the timing that the impact fees get paid which is
something that is different about this ordinance. He continued, that they had the policy previous
to 2015 where they paid at the time of final plat. He added one caveat with that, it is not the
entire subdivision, it is the platting of the filings of the subdivision. He gave an example, if you
have a 300-lot subdivision you don’t pay 300 times the $6763, you pay for the filing. If you
have a 40-lot filing, you pay that 40 lots times $6763. He said that there are other elements that
had been discussed in other jurisdictions with regards to the consolidation of land use categories.
That is other community’s purgative however just from a generally acceptable practices they
believe that they don’t have 100 different land use categories. There is only a handful and they
believe that they are representative of both the residential and the commercial side. The biggest
one that he has heard in some of the offline conversations that they had with other jurisdictions
and other community members and members of the development community is this impact fee
study just addresses the impacts. It doesn’t talk about any of the other revenue generating
sources that come from residential and commercial development. He said that one is
quantitative, and one is qualitative. It is tough to put those together and come up with something
that is a very defensible document. The reality of the situation as the study has articulated is that
the impacts are the impacts that development and are representative of what happens at that point
in time. That is generally how they get presented as they move forward through processes in
certain communities and then the last one would be the commitment for the community decision
making bodies to reevaluate those fees early and often so that they don’t end up in the same situation that we are in right now where we did something in 2000. We did a study in 2002, implemented in 2004 and then waited 15 years. And then you are taking pretty significant steps in the future. He continued that is at least when the staff reads through those letters, those are the elements that we have heard from stakeholder groups or community members as far as their concerns with the study. He said that they tried to craft the ordinance in a fashion where it wasn’t the last person in the end that pays for everything and that it gets proportioned out for the impacts that are specific to that project and that is why, Planning Commissioners, Staff has recommended approval of the proposed Land Use Code amendment concerning the payment of impact fees, the use of the impact fees and the Transportation Impact Fees more conventionally known as Chapter 19 within our Land Use Code. Mr. Caris concluded the presentation.

Commissioner Fabula thanked Mr. Caris and Mr. Atkins for the presentation. He opened up the meeting to public comments. He thanked the public for coming to the Planning Commission hearing. He explained the role of the Planning Commission was to make recommendations to City Council concerning land use applications in accordance with the requirements of the City’s Land Use Code Title 17 of the Fruita Municipal Code, the design and engineering specifications as well as the 2018 Community Plan. He explained the meeting began with City Staff presenting their analysis and then they would move into the public comment portion. He reminded the audience that they needed to state their name and address. He told them to address their comments to the Planning Commission. He said that they would note some of the key points that they had, and they would be sure to ask some of those questions of the applicant or City. He told them to try not to engage with them (the City) or shout backward to the audience, to bring their comments forward. He said that they liked to hear from everyone and wanted to hear their concerns. He reminded them that time was limited so be sure to keep comments brief, but he wouldn’t be strict. He said that they wanted to hear their side of the story but if they talked about things that had already been talked about, he would remind them of the 3-minute time limit. He told them to remember to quorum and that this was a public meeting. He opened up public comment and asked the attendees if anyone wanted to speak.

Ms. Kelly Maves who lives at 1988 J Road. She said that she was coming to them as a realtor for almost 17 years. She said that her husband is a builder in the community, she is a landowner, property owner in Fruita. She said that she is also the President of the Housing and Building Association of Western Colorado. She said that she had been aware of the proposed fee increase by the RTPO for about 9-10 months. She said that immediately upon hearing of Fruita looking to enact it, they, as a group contacted Fruita and wanted to sit down with them because she thought there was some key details that were missed in the study that were skirted over. Their concern was for the economic stability of the community. They were looking for the economy currently and the economic growth in the future. She said that she was going to be speaking about the effect or the potential effect on housing because that is what she does. She said that she believed the commercial effect could be even more of a problem. She continued that as you know or may not know, the home values are currently at record highs in the Valley and that includes in Fruita. She said that median wages in Mesa County are about $48,000 a year. She said she spoke to a lender and that means that with the median wage, your average wage earner, they could afford a home that is about $215,000. She said she ran some numbers here in Fruita since January 1, there has been 367 homes that have sold with an average sales price of
She said that there is a big disparity, a big difference between your average wage earner and what houses are selling for in Fruita. She said she looked at active homes right now, she said that there were 64 active homes in Fruita and none that are $210,000 that are stick built. She continued, that there are affordability issues and that by adding these fees on top of that just exacerbates the issue. She said that in their conversations with the City of Grand Junction and one of the comments and questions that they heard was what difference does $3,000-$5,000 make when you are looking at a $300,000 house? She said that it does make a difference. She said that in the past couple of days she has been working with a client who put an offer in on a property. It was at the very top of their budget because when you are looking at these average wage earners and you are looking at a $300,000 house everything is at the top of their budget already. She said that their negotiation quote was about $5000 difference. You would think that they could just up their budget and go the extra $5000 but they couldn’t. They could not get qualified for another $5000 to be able to buy this house that they wanted to buy. In addition to that she wanted to touch on appraisals. She said that appraisals are based on past sales not fees that are coming up. They are not based on projections. When appraisers are looking at past property sales, they are not going to be considering that this house will be more because the fees have gone up considerably. She said that she was looking at the website for Duncan and Associates who prepared the study for the RTPO and there is a quote on there that she thought was interesting. She continued, In the short term impact fees may cause a slight increase in housing costs if the local real estate market allows the builder to shift that cost forward to the buyer, however, it is more likely in the long term that the cost will be shifted backwards to landowners in the form of lower prices that may be then for undeveloped land. She said that this hurts consumers and hurts the community, it is a big deal. She said that the industry isn’t saying no, they have had lots of meetings about this as an industry, as a stakeholder group including one on April 17 with the City. She said that nobody is saying no, they are saying not so much and not so fast. Let’s do it in a way that is smart and a way that the community can absorb the cost that the housing market can absorb the cost and it is not such a shock. She wanted to point out on the thing for commercial is the drive thru restaurant at $25,000 per 1,000 square feet. What do you think that difference would be for Einstein Bagels that just came in? All of this now has to be paid up front as plat rather than planning clearance or permit for a single-family home. That impact doesn’t happen to a subdivision until the homeowners start moving in. It doesn’t make any sense to make the developer pay those costs all up front when there is no impact at that point. Let’s do it at the time of planning clearance or permit in a way that makes sense so that it is not as much as a burden on the developer either when they are trying to do nothing but grow the community. She said that she ventures to guess that the businesses within the City would also be concerned about the cost of housing. Just because chances are their looking at that average wage earner as their employee. She said that was all she had.

Commissioner Fabula thanked her.

Mr. Ron Abeloe who is a builder he owns property in Fruita and lives in Grand Junction. He wanted them to consider a few things, there were a number of points he wanted to make. He said that he has been involved in this process for a year. He said that one of the big problems with the Duncan study is it doesn’t consider the recurring revenue streams that are generated by growth. Whether they are residential or commercial, but he will focus on commercial. He said that every new commercial enterprise provides a number of benefits to the community that are not taking
any considerations, some of them are financial. He continued, that any business that generates
sales tax revenue back to the City, that revenue stream will recur continuously for the life of the
structure or business or the business that occupies that structure at a later date. None of that is
taken into account in the Duncan study of the impacts. It only says what the cost of the impact
is, and it doesn’t say what the benefit of the impact is. He submitted to them that the impact far
outpaces their impact. He said that the issue comes in with that revenue, that revenue comes
over time but the impact comes prior to the revenue. He said that is where the need for an impact
fee. He continued, the impact fee is based on 100% of the impact and no revenue return which is
not accurate. The fact is that businesses will be returning that revenue to the City from the day
that they open their doors. That is why they think that the fees are too high. He said that another
thing that he put out to either Staff or the Planning Commission and City Council is that you
should model those fees against the businesses that you have here in the City that you enjoy, that
you would like to see more of or that you would like to see expand. He said that you will see
some eye-opening figures. Then you have to ask yourself would that prevent those businesses
from coming here or expanding? The answer is a profound yes in many of the categories. For
instance, if you were to take just the drive through restaurant or a gas station and model it after
those existing businesses you have here now, those number would be exorbitant. Who they hurt
the most is not a national chain or a large regional group of businesses, it is the hardest on the
independent businessman, the small businessman, the businessperson in the community that
wants to expand. He said that their revenue sources and resources are much more limited than
those of larger businesses. It hurts the local businesses the most. This is something else to
consider. He continued, that this community has a number of small businesses in it, as does most
of the valley. It would be very difficult for them to pay those fees. The last thing he asked them
to consider is phasing in of the fees. By phasing in the fees over a period of time rather than
them all coming January 1, that they phase in partially over time it would help ease the appraisal
problem. That would give the values of the past sales a chance to keep up with the fees.

Commissioner Fabula thanked him.

Ms. Rebekah Scarrow who lives at 109 E. Lexington went up to testify. She said that she, Kelly,
and Ron had been working together on this for a little while. She said that she echoes their
comments. She continued that she agrees to phase in fees over time. She realized that the
Duncan study used CDOT for their example of how much the price increases are; however, she
was thinking that Elam Construction would be a better local comparison. She called Elam and
using one of their estimators that has been around since 2000 they came up with a 4% per year
estimated increase of asphalt costs since 2000. For the record she said she submitted comments,
she is the facilitator of the Associated Members of Growth and Development as well as a realtor
here in town. The review comments did have the fee schedule that was proposed by the industry,
this should be in your comments. She said that this is a different schedule and it does show
comparisons between what the Duncan Study and the what staff is recommending versus what
the industry is recommending. She continued that this is what she will be comparing to, that 4%
was given by Elam Construction, their conversation is reflected right around that same range that
the industry is proposing. She said that speaks to the reasonableness. She said that their costs
here on the Western Slope versus the front range cost. She is asking the Planning Commission to
recommend a fee structure that will not stop businesses from developing in Fruita. She said she
went to high school with Kelly’s husband from Fruita, she has seen businesses not come to
Fruita. There have been times when they don’t come. She said that Einstein’s opening is wonderful. She said that we have a drive through Subway, that is amazing. All of these businesses are coming here now. She said that she is frightened that increasing the fees being proposed like this at 500% for a movie theater as well as Mr. Caris referred to making sure that we on the same board with other jurisdictions so that there is no favoritism, if someone is looking that business decision between do I put this movie theater on the 24 Road corridor and pay this much in impact fees or in Clifton on 32 Road for this much impact fees or right here off of the interstate in Fruita for this much. She said it is going to be a business decision. She realizes that maybe this doesn’t count that much on paper when there is 25 different land use classifications and different amounts but when it comes down to the business as well it is going to make a big difference in where they choose to be. She reiterated what Ron said regarding it being implemented over time versus all at once. She is requesting that we could have more conversations with Staff so that they can come back and come together as one. She said that Mr. Caris was great in getting them the ordinance in a month in advance. She said that they appreciated that. She continued that having the conversations in person, they had a couple of those earlier this year but having a couple more just before they got together in front of City Council with a joint effort would be very helpful in making sure that their best interests in the community is what it is about. She said that as she stated in her review comments, the current fees are 300% of other communities that their industry has hired a private study, the Metro Study, and they compared this with other jurisdictions including Montrose, Gunnison, Pueblo and Sterling. She said that Fruita is currently 300% more than those other communities without this increase. She questions if this is reasonable and she hopes that they question that too. Ms. Scarrow said that the Duncan Study from 2018 says that Fruita should charge more than Boulder County, Jefferson County, Fort Collins, and all 12 other counties in their study. This is the highest red column, the highest fees across all others that were compared. Mesa County can’t really afford to charge more than the front range for these impact fees. She said that if a developer needs to pay these at plat for larger development, they are asking for hundreds of thousands of dollars it will likely limit the large subdivisions. If that is what the City of Fruita wants to do, then this is the way to go to ask for that to be paid at plat. If you want 3 lots, if you want that smaller development that might be ok. When you are talking a 40 lots or 200 lots, that developer will have a very difficult time paying it at plat and ideally going back to clearance when a house is going to be built as Kelly said, the house is not built then it doesn’t impact.

Ms. Jennifer Seal went up to speak. She said that she is the Executive Director of the Fruita Chamber of Commerce. She said that the Chamber is located at 432 E. Aspen Avenue. She wanted to thank them for allowing her to speak and in their packet, there is a letter from them that outlines some of their concerns and a recommendation. In addition, they will also see a letter from one of their Chamber members the Imondi Wake Zone. They have also submitted a letter that how these fee increases will affect them. She continued that over the last few months the City of Fruita staff specifically City Manager Mike Bennett and Dan Caris had been extremely helpful in discussing this issue and answering questions and presenting information both to their Urban Affairs committee and their board of directors. They have heard from the groups that have already spoken this evening; they went to talk to them as well to help provide the other side with additional information for those groups to consider. They thought it was important for the Urban Affairs and their board of directors and the Chamber in general to understand this issue. It is complicated and there are a lot of details, so they wanted to be sure to
take time to understand them. They appreciated everybody taking time to do that. She said that as you can see from their letter, they recognize and understand the challenge facing the study. The costs increasing and the fees haven’t increased for a number of years, however their primary concern is jumping from such a low fee that was set years ago to such a high fee in just one year. That is a primary concern. She said that the Fruita business community really relies on them to speak up for businesses and to strengthen the community. She said that in this particular case they are concerned about the significant jump in the commercial fee and how that will impact the growth in Fruita. Whether it is a small business that dreams of expanding or a new business just starting up this increase in just this one fee will impact whether their projects move forward, if they are delayed or if they get revised. What is best for the businesses here is to have support and the ability to grow not adding additional fees and such a harsh fee in just one of the areas. She said that when new members join the Chamber and ask about the business culture here in Fruita. She says that it is an incredibly supportive place and the community rallies around the businesses. The opening of a new business is exciting for everyone, it is a really big deal, and everyone wants to go visit the new business that comes here. Additionally, the Comprehensive Plan that the City is working on closely with the community and the businesses including the Fruita Chamber has been a great document for us to work on this year and it talks about the support and strengthening the business community. That is something that they agree with. Ms. Seal said that the sales tax that is generated from the businesses also contributes to a strong economy and they are concerned about the fact that this impact fee on the commercial side goes up by a factor of 4-5 times for a 1,000 square feet in the chart. They ask that the Planning Commission consider a phased in approach allowing for smaller increases over time. They that they consider different rates in developed areas such as downtown and Kokopelli Business Park already have the improvements, the street improvements and things that are already built in those places to encourage businesses to go to those areas. Is there something that can be done to lower those fees in certain areas to continue to encourage business growth there? Also, to consider are the economy, what is happening with the economy, if they are able to do a phased in approach is there some evaluations. That would go a long way where they can look how things are going forward in Fruita, the Grand Valley, and Nationwide. Please take that into consideration to grow the fees over time. She said that increasing fees substantially is not the way to move forward and they please ask that they consider some sort of alternative recommendation to make to City Council instead of recommending the full fee implemented at this time.

Commissioner Fabula thanked her.

Ms. Stacey Mascarenas representing Lower Valley Hospital Association also known as Family Health West at 228 N. Cherry Street. She said that Family Health West, Lower Valley Hospital Association has been a part of the Fruita community since 1946. In 2008 they built a replacement hospital, 16 beds, 45,000 square feet. In 2017 they added an additional 20,000 square feet with the maximum capacity of beds is 25. In 2019 they just opened up a 20,000 square foot medical center. She said that they were not exempt from paying fees. They are looking at expanding their pediatric therapies and looking at opening an autism center which would be an additional 20,000 square foot building. They are also looking at building a rural access clinic that would be another 20,000 square feet. She continued that this is substantial when you are looking at computing some of these figures, their impact fee would go from a 20,000 square foot building at $110,000 to over a half a million dollars. She said that they are
proud of the fact that they are truly one of the first and remain a community hospital. The hospital was built by the Fruita community. She said that they have maintained a community board hospital, they receive no tax benefit, they don’t pay taxes as they are tax exempt, but they are not a district. They have never asked the community for tax dollars; they are very proud of that fact and they are going to remain that way. She said that St. Mary’s is part of a huge conglomerate, they have billions just in their capital. Community Hospital looked at national insurance changes that are looking at affiliating with them. She said that they don’t have that. They are truly a Fruita community hospital. How this would impact them is that they may not be able to do those things. They are meeting the health care needs of the valley. Their pediatrics, their elderly, they are categorized as a critical access hospital which means that they can treat folks longer for a lesser amount of money versus St. Mary’s or Community. She continued that as far as impact, this would have a severe impact to what they can do and how they can grow and how they can meet the needs of the citizens. They will also be speaking to the City Council. She said that when you think about impact it doesn’t help our local health care system that we hold so dear.

Commissioner Fabula thanked her for her comments.

Mr. Ed Conway who lives at 1681 P Road went up to speak. He said that their business address is at the top of their agenda. He is a small business owner here and their office is right down the hall because you don’t have anything for them. He said that he had to wait months to get a desk at Fruita Works. He asked if this was the answer? He said that he supported Jennifer at the Chamber of Commerce and our community. He said that it is small business telling them that this isn’t what they really want to do. He admitted that they needed to grow a little bit. He said that they were transplants from New York. He said that they came here with a dream, don’t kill it.

Commissioner Fabula thanked him.

Ms. Nicole Bernal Ruiz went up to speak she said that she is a realtor at Robinson Homes Realty and she and her husband have Alta Home Builders. They are building in Soren Estates and Gewont Townhomes. They have been the only new construction available in Fruita in the $200-$300,000 range in the last year. She grew up here, her family is from here, she graduated from Fruita Monument High School. She wants Fruita to be accessible to people from the valley. She is sad that that means a new home in the $300,000 range. She says that this isn’t not accessible for a lot of people and she knows that from working with buyers. Even people who are retiring from great jobs that she has been working with the last couple of months. She said that $350,000 is really pushing it for a lot of people. For them as a small builder building in Fruita has helped them to grow their business. One of the reasons they were able to jump from building a couple homes a year to having several going at the same time we were able to purchase lots at a reasonable price. The cost of land is exorbitant. She said when people come for their homes in Soren Estates and they want them to build them somewhere else in Fruita, they can’t because those lots cost $90-$105,000 for the same size lots. There is already a lot of cost for the builder especially if it is a small builder and their pockets are not that deep to be able to absorb all of those costs. She says that she can’t speak to the numbers, she understood that costs had to go up, she understands that they as businesspeople need to contribute to the social impacts and the costs
of what their business growth generates for the community that they live in. She just says to not make it unobtainable for the little guy. There are only a few builders that are big enough can absorb several more thousand dollars costs on their projects. It can put the little guy out of the possibility. She said about the Gewont Townhomes project which they partnered with the landowner on and the person that did all of the development. It took him almost a decade to get to a spot where now his project is finally being built out. She is thinking about him if he were facing those fees that kind of increase would he ever see anything new being built in Fruita?

Commissioner Fabula thanked her and asked the public if there were any other comments.

Ms. Kodi Imondi went up to speak. Her business, The Imondi Wakezone, is at 1583 Cipolla Road. She is a Fruita Monument graduate and the lead developer of the Fruita Business Park. She said that making it aware to the businesses that have come into the business park in the last three years are locally owned businesses. Wakezone, FHE and Monument Powder Coating Company thousands of dollars makes a big difference for all of them. She says that she has three strong leads now that are all locally owned as well. Fruita has a small business dream. She said that the business park is growing, and the structures are in.

Commissioner Fabula asked if there was any further public comment?

There was none.

Commissioner Fabula closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

Commissioner Nisley wanted to talk about the phasing in of development and the capital outlay a developer would have to go through to get a development going as it is today compared to what the impact is going to be in the future. He asked Mr. Caris to go through the process. He said that if he was a developer, if he bought a piece of land, he is getting a loan to finance his development at what point and how much outlay is he going to have to get from the lender and at what times? You have the SIA agreement, the impact fees for the planning clearance before he even sells the first lot. What impact does that have on the risks to the bank and how will this impact be considered?

Mr. Caris said that the collection of fees at planning clearance versus collecting them at final plat they would have an impact on the overall capital outlay for the developer, however, what is not mentioned a lot is the relationship between a 10-lot subdivision or a 30-lot subdivision. Sometimes the 30-lot subdivision wouldn’t have any transportation impacts. He continued, that procedurally an applicant comes in for a preapplication meeting, with the City of Fruita staff, they give them a packet, the SIA (Subdivision Improvements Agreement) is in it and it is the summation of all of the impact fees, once the project is approved and they go through the final plat stage which is after they get all of the entitlements and the Planning Commission is hearing an application on a subdivision, then the final plat process which is administrative with the exception of the improvements agreements it is at that point in time where the payment for the Transportation Impact Fee for residential development is being proposed to be collected. He said that it is not the entire project. Big subdivisions versus small subdivisions many have attached filing plans that are associated with those.
Commissioner Nisley said that his point is that if a banker wants to loan on a subdivision they are going to have to do the loan twice because he has to hold that much money in guarantee for that agreement plus they are doing the construction so the money is being thrown at it twice. He thinks that they are increasing the risk. He talked about financial feasibility for any new development. He said that he is a commercial real estate appraiser and he sees a lot of deals with new construction. What is financially feasible, how much do I need to rent this building to justify new construction and what is that difference? He has an office on Horizon Drive, and he would love to be in Fruita and he went to a builder and asked him what he could do to build a multi-tenant office building in Fruita? He said that after running the numbers that there is a big discrepancy by adding this fee.

Mr. Caris asked if that was all new construction?

Commissioner Nisley said yes.

Mr. Caris confirmed that it was not existing.

Commissioner Nisley confirmed this. He wanted to point out the financial feasibility of it. He said that most people would agree that Fruita has an affordable housing issue. He doesn’t see how this will help that. He said that the day the employees downtown can afford to live in Fruita, he feels that there is a cultural problem. He continued, he talked about the economic development efforts and new commercial development such as Einstein coming in and that they are just looking at Grand Junction, Fruita, or Clifton. Now they are looking at Montrose or Delta. He gets questions on rental market rates for Montrose. He thinks we are going to lose if we do this. He is an appraiser and understands that appraisals might not come in but thinks this is a short-term problem. He thinks that appraisers can make a market conditions adjustment. These are his concerns and he felt that not so much and not so fast comment was well taken.

Commissioner Mulder said that he knew that the City of Fruita had been working on this for about 8 months. These numbers did not come out of the air. He recognized that the people that came to speak were all small businesspeople and part of the small business community and they brought things before the Commission that are real and will affect their lives and their livelihood in the City of Fruita, but that they don’t start a project without the money upfront. He said that the City of Fruita has been doing projects without the money upfront. He felt that the number were realistic. He also said that they all have participated in the public forums that the City of Fruita has held to get these numbers. He said that he didn’t feel that these fees interfered with the Master Plan. The Master Plan supports that growth pay its own way and he said that this has not always happened. They are trying to correct this at it stands right now. He said that he understood their concerns. He said that he doesn’t have the money to put down on a single-family dwelling at the final plat, but he knows what it is going to take and what he has to have before beginning. He said that he sympathized with them, from Stacy’s hospital figures to the man that needed a desk and an office space. He felt that this wasn’t the City of Fruita’s fault. He felt that the figures presented were honest figures and that the City of Fruita has been honest with the money in the past and if they say the impact fee is this much money from your project then they impact needs to be billed. He asked for clarity on acceleration/deceleration lanes are
the developer’s responsibility, but road widening would become part of the impact fee. He asked Mr. Atkins if this was correct.

Mr. Atkins responded that it would depend on the need for the accel/decel lane. Was it a result of the project? He said that Iron Wheel is a good example. The turn lanes were required for the project and had nothing to do with the traffic and congestion on 19 Road, it was access into their site. He continued that if it was a capacity issue that was a regional issue then those would get credit towards the impact fees. If it is specific to the project, it would not get credit.

Commissioner Mulder asked if the figures were honest.

Mr. Caris, Mr. Atkins and Mr. Haley all responded that it was.

Commissioner Mulder asked them if they felt the small business community had an honest issue.

Mr. Caris asked if they are going into new construction or an existing facility. If they are going into existing inventory the price per square foot is different than new construction. If the building is already there, they will not be paying a Transportation Impact Fee unless the use is changing that is warranting additional traffic. He continued that he zero sum relationship between unilaterally businesses across the front have costs that go up it is in the details. Are they building, are they adding on, are they renovating a house and making it a shop? He said that those businesses may not have to endure this cost immediately, they have to build or perform based off of the policies today. Having it not change all the time or having big leaps as far as the impact fees are concerned is a policy thing. Revisiting it early and often and making sure the impacts don’t outweigh the cost of construction. He said that an important point is that the construction costs have gone up for us too. They are asking the development community to construct independent of what those fees are. He said let’s call the cost the cost and pay it at the time of final plat and if they are improvements supersede the impact fees, then they pick up the tab.

Commissioner Mulder commented that he believed that City staff was is very capable of coming up with recommendations that they can work with. He believed that the numbers were honest. With this in mind, he felt that they needed to move forward with it.

Commissioner Fabula asked what the potential motions could be.

Mary Elizabeth Geiger answered that they are moving to recommend as presented. She reminded them that Council will be hearing this as their own public hearing. Some of the themes and concerns that people have raised can be highlighted for Council for them to take a look at. She said that the adoption of fees has to be reasonable and that was the purpose of the study. To come up with a different number without having that background, that study and expertise behind it, they can’t really say that they don’t like the fee as presented and they know the fee they have is too low so let’s find something in the middle. She felt that this wouldn’t pass the reasonable test. She reminded them that impact fees can only pay towards the future. It can not be used to backfill. The fee has low for a long time. To adopt something, to phase it in it can still be creating a hole.
Commissioner Fabula thanked her. He then asked how the City has been struggling to pay for these improvements under the current low fees?

Mr. Caris said that with regards to residential development it is hard to do capacity related projects where you are doing intersection improvements or adding additional lane mile of capacity like a center turn lane. It is tough to do that after everybody already there. The difficult part from a municipal financial perspective is that if you get 10 homes a year in this development, 5 homes a year at the next development, 6 homes in the other development, this kind of absorption. How do you do this after all 100 homes are built and then they have to rip the roads up? Add a center lane or turn lanes or other capacity related projects, from that perspective this is difficult. This was a challenge created in 1995, 1990, these have always been present. He continued that trying to figure out how to charge an impact fee that does the most for the transportation network, those collector roads and above, where they are not collecting $3200 for 10 years and having $320,000 that is really $200,000 of future dollars. There is an inflation associated with construction costs and there is a cashflow issue. The impacts happen in the future and they don’t have the money in the future or today in order to do those projects or the impacts happen today and then they have 10 years to do those projects.

Mr. Akins spoke about the Capital Plan. He said that in the Capital Plan they identified about $100,000,000.00 in capacity related roadway projects. He continued, 19 Road, 18 ½ Road, the intersections of all of the major 15, 16, 17 numbered intersections on the highway, those numbers come up to that figure. He said that they have not been keeping up to the degree that they should. If you look at what is happening at 19 and 18 Roads and that Freemont Street doesn’t go through, it is spotty half street improvements based on development with trail mixed in. They went through the process of prioritizing all of their Capital Projects, not just capacity, this last year where they were ranked based on ten different categories. This identified 1-60 projects. He said that they identified the top 10 projects, then the next 10. Freemont Street rose to the top of the list. He said that next year they have just shy of $3,000,000 worth of Capital Improvement Projects and they are 100% roadway related. He said the big one is K.4 Road. He continued that they had $800,000 in their Transportation Impact Fee fund. They are using $250,000 of that towards K.4 Road which is costing $2,000,000. They are relying on successfully getting a $1,000,000 grant from DOLA, but if that doesn’t go through then neither does the project. He said that the funds do matter. He said that they are every 2-3 years of successfully getting a grant. They can’t always get grants to offset costs. The capacity projects that he knew of before he worked for the City was the Pine Street reconstruction from Little Salt Wash to the highway, the Ottley construction in the Pine Street area and west of Coulson out to the Coop, these were capacity related projects. He said to keep pace with what is happening with the growth that they are seeing on the east side of town, they have a lot of potential projects in that Freemont and 19 Road, J and J.2 Roadways.

Mr. Haley addressed the question. He said that from a philosophy perspective, since 2001 the City of Fruita had established an impact fee and that fee was known to not be able to cover all of the costs for growth. As a part of the annexation process and the development approval process would require a higher level of off-site improvements from that developer. They would require all of the frontage along that property plus some offsite improvements to help with those incremental capacity needs. He said that this proposal and the newer fees are trying to balance
that because those impacts and those offsite improvements weren’t always directly tied to the impact that was being generated by the development. If those impact fees are covering those costs for what they feel is a direct nexus to those impacts they are proposing that they put in what their impacts would cost.

Commissioner Fabula said he is looking at these fee changes and he is looking at the chart that shows the old fees, the new fees and the multiplier and he is reading down the list and he noted the ones that are going up by 3.9 or 4.6. Why is that magnitude of change so big? Is it because the fees are so drastically low to begin with that they need to catch up?

Mr. Caris said that he was speaking to the Land Use Categories that are commercially related that are per 1,000 square feet. This is a direct result of doing 50% of the fee in 2002. He said that if he looked at the single family residential detached it goes up by 2.1, same with the multi-family. He said that they did not do that 50% reduction for those. He continued, the reason that you see 3.9 and 4.1 is because they have doubled per what the 2002 study recommended and that is why those multipliers. Those have been the costs over the last 15 years that if the fees were adopted as presented in 2002 would have just doubled in that 15-year period similar to the residential numbers.

Commissioner Fabula mentioned the comment from the hospital and the cost of one of their additions, is that reasonable to expect for that to happen?

Mr. Caris said that at the 20,000 square foot example, he asked if it was reasonable to require that price increase for the impact? He said that he would contend that the Duncan Study associates a methodology of the vehicle miles of capacity and the trip generation to get those numbers and those factors are real. They are real for Montrose, Littleton, Fort Collins and all of those places that were used as an example. The relationship with the impact fee and the projects that are happening or not happening, he can’t speak to that as he does not know the intricacies of the budget of the hospital. He said that he does know the people over there and similar to the City of Fruita, they are trying to stretch their budget the same way everybody else is. He feels that it is important to be sensitive to the business community but who pays for it? If that relationship to that business and those dollar amounts doesn’t happen, it doesn’t mean that the projects go away. They still have to be done and at what point in time does that happen? One of the discussion that has taken place in the stakeholder’s groups is that the larger community as a whole should be a part of the funding strategy of overcoming those construction costs. He continued, the difficult part for Fruita is for businesses how long do those policies need to be enacted to be effective. He said you see $100,000,000 today, what is that 15 years from now with the reduction in those fees. They are throwing around 100% in cost increase and they don’t go up just on the private sector, they go up on the public sector as well. They have already seen that on some of the Capital projects.

Ms. Geiger wanted to remind the Commission that in the ordinance the provision remains in there that has been in there that any individual project can go before Council to petition for a waver in reduction in fees. She said that their concern for the hospital, that may be the perfect project for Council to consider this. It is not like you have to pay it all or your out.
Commissioner Rink she said that she does not work in the building industry, she works in the automotive sphere and she knows that there they experienced additional fees and expenses. She understands that a road costs are part of that too, this is not unique to the private sector. She said that at a certain point when you look at a new fee will they choose to do business there. That is what she feels a lot of the people there are struggling with. She said that in a lot of meetings that they sit in and with Fruita’s vibe overall, they like to pride themselves on the smaller, funky individualized businesses that they have. They don’t want to be just box commercial. She said that $1,000s of dollars do make a difference and price people out. But she also understands that you have to use numbers and be reasonable and project into the future, hence the Duncan Study. She understands that they are looking at things like miles per trip, an average of a demand for different institutions and land uses and whether that has gone up or down. She asked if these were all national averages or specifically to the Grand Valley or even Fruita?

Mr. Atkins said that this is national averages. He said they took the grid and took the whole valley and used all of the major roads as a total vehicle miles, so they did some localized.

Mr. Caris said that by the whole valley, not the entire unincorporated area.

Commissioner Rink said that in an effort to conceptualize this, in 2002 versus now there used to be regional versus only in Fruita projects. Are they talking about trips even though Fruita is largely a bedroom community, are they counting trips that go outside of Fruita or just the travel that happens within Fruita and the impact therein?

Mr. Caris said he didn’t believe that was contemplated in the study. It was conducted on a regional basis. They were comparing apples to apples for all of the jurisdictions with the exception of not contemplating the regional fee where there are additional resources to do projects.

Commissioner Rink said that seemed smart. She said the big ones are commercial and single family detached that they are looking at. She said that she understood that the money has to come from somewhere and if not the developer then at some point it will be the taxpayer. She wonders if there are some other reasonable numbers could be arrived at that could feel like a more reasonable burden to them. She said that she thought about the newspaper article in the Daily Sentinel a couple of weeks ago that was talking about Rocky Mount, one of the big prized tenants going in at Las Colonias and then the deal wasn’t what they thought it was. She wouldn’t want to see Fruita drumming up enthusiasm and then the deal isn’t what the deal was, and people go away and don’t come to Fruita. You can refurbish buildings but at some point, there will have to be new development. She said that they all want nice roads. She said it says that it is supposed to pay its own way and they are not allowed to pay for past development, it is for that development. She asked, with houses from different developments, what is the straw that breaks the camel’s back and how is that development not needing to pay for future developments or the last three that all went in a similar area?

Mr. Caris clarified what she was asking, at what point does it become infeasible to still do those corridor-like projects with enough money.
Commissioner Rink said yes, like when you need to fold in a new lane or widen a road. Was it the six houses before or is it the four that come after it?

Mr. Caris said that 150 feet of frontage along a piece of property doesn’t warrant the generalization of the 5 here, 6 there, 10 there. He said that this wouldn’t warrant doing a quarter mile in a type of half street improvements to get out in front of the development. It is the massing of dollars to complete streets or to add the capacity for sections. He said that you could think about it in quarter mile sections or half mile sections like trying to get to a point in achieving critical mass to go and do it. There is also the scenario of does it line up with everything else. Is it a 2- or 5- or 10-year project? A lot of times there is a lot of juggling that goes into that. An elementary school is happening so K.4 Road is a total game changer and they are using funding strategies to make it work. He said that he didn’t believe that this is the silver bullet that solves all of it. There is still a funding strategy that needs to be addressed in order to do those $100,000,000 worth of projects.

Commissioner Rink talked about road development that happens with developments. She asked how much of the City’s overall budget goes towards Capital improvements in paying for roads right now?

Mr. Caris said that in the last ten years they have been doing a lot of supplemental appropriations to pay for Capital projects out of fund balance. They have $500,000 that is budgeted for maintenance. Those are overlays, chip and seal type projects that a lot of times when they are doing a corridor that money gets folded in like K.4 Road in order to do the project and then overlay it. They would use some of those maintenance related dollars. He continued, that is not always the case with capacity which is what this is about. That is the most recent example of what everybody can look at as far as pulling funding resources to then do a project.

Commissioner Rink asked what percentage of your budget is that roughly?

Mr. Caris said that they had about a $9,000,000 budget, they are talking about a 4-5% range.

Commissioner Rink asked if that was a reasonable portion to be allocated for Capital improvements of a city budget?

Mr. Caris said that they needed to come up with a complete funding strategy for Capital projects down the line. This is a part of that.

Commissioner Rink pointed out that in 2002 Duncan did their last study and it is now 2019, almost 20 years later doing another study. You said that they prioritized these Capital Improvement projects every ten years basis. Did we see this coming?

Mr. Caris said yes. He said that he thinks that every community in the Valley recognized that there were either going to do a significant amount of deficits spending in order to overcome this or it was going to have to be part of a larger community asked to overcome it down the line. This has been the case in some communities with sales tax measures or with Tabor overrides that could take a crack at the existing deficiencies. This doesn’t solve that it just solves the future
capacity projects that they could endure of locations that are unknown to them that will be proposed tangential from what seems like might develop out in certain areas over time. It is tough to plan for those. He questioned, do your policies create existing deficiencies that they have to continue to spend money out of General Fund or create larger percentages within the General Fund that go towards those capital facilities? That has really been the question for every community that has taken this up with the Duncan study. Are portions of state dollars as it is becoming more competitive with state grants, they don’t have the money to do this and there is a problem. So does Fruita, Grand Junction, Palisade, and Mesa County. This is not the first and last step. This is many steps going forward to try to come up with a rationale that makes this work.

Commissioner Rink asked if they currently have debt specifically associated with road development and what the impact fees would cover?

Mr. Caris said that they don’t have any outstanding bond issues or elements that are going towards these projects. That is a tool that communities use to overcome long lasting issues. He continued that the tricky part is that with impact fees specific to development, it is difficult to underwrite those numbers because they are market driven. You can’t take a rec center that has 600 people signed up for a monthly fee, get a couple of months behind you and then have an underwriter forecast some debt so you can service a bond election. Back in 2006 and 2007 they had 300 building permits a year and now they have 75-100 but two years ago they had 34.

Ms. Geiger said that earlier they said that they had $800,000 in the impact fee fund right now and they are taking $250,000 of that for K.4 Road and then going for a grant. She said that it isn’t debt that they need to repay back on a bond issue, but the impact fee bucket is not full enough and it will come out of the General Fund. Then what are you not able to pay out of the General Fund now that you had to take money for roads? That is the point of the study is to set the City up in a way that the roads will have a bigger bucket to pull from and not having to pull from those other parts of the City budget.

Commissioner Rink said that she understood that the roads need to be built and they are more expensive just like everything else and they have to find a way. She wonders if the existing figures have been out there for two decades if there could be some kind of phasing or some kind of additional notice. She mentioned affordable housing and she didn’t know how they could reconcile both things with them paying their additional costs as well.

Ms. Geiger said one thing to bear in mind with the charts and increases going to 4-5 times, the point that Mr. Caris made earlier when the 2002 study came out the City went with something close to the recommendation for single family homes but decided to go 50% for commercial. Waiting 17 years to do another study is too long and they got behind. Think about the fact that they went 50% the last time. Now the recommendation appears to have gone up 4% is really double over a 17-year period. You don’t just keep creating that cycle.

Mr. Caris said that the point is well taken from the private sector with regards to the single biggest err is that they didn’t do anything for any consumer price indexing or any inflation for 17 years. That would make this less painful. The municipalities across the valley has to own that
error. He said it is a fair statement to say now all at once because of an error that was ascertained back 17 years ago, they are sensitive to that. He said that is fair for the private sector to say.

Commissioner Rink said maybe not 4 or 5 times, but maybe 2 times for single family detached, this is mostly what Fruita is single family detached with a little commercial that they are trying to drum up and bolster. She said that even doubling that would make it add up almost to $7,000 from $3200. She said the fees used to be on the higher side. She said that it looked like in 2002 they adopted lesser fees than what their recommendation was at the time. Is it on the table to do something similar or it wasn’t enough?

Mr. Caris responded that one of the things that Ms. Geiger pointed out earlier that is an important point because it hasn’t been clear for other processes that have happened in other parts of the Valley is that the reasonable test is that you really have to look at the study and say those are the facts that we can’t absorb that or we can absorb that over this period of time. He said that the way that this is set up is that they are afforded the ability from a recommending standpoint and then the Council similarly from enacting that ordinance and voting on it. They can go up to that 100%, they don’t have to but realize the next paragraph is that revenue credits out of the General Fund and some other sort of appropriation to overcome those long term. He said that they study is the legal nexus, but this is policy making. It is a legislative action where what is before them is a recommendation. From a Staff perspective they want that nexus to be made and for those projects to be able to commence and take place. That is the most that you can enact to recommend Council to enact. He acknowledged that other communities have done other things with regards to proportions of that. He said that it is on the table as far as those things are concerned but not reflected in their recommendation but that is the framework of the language that they have to stay in.

Ms. Geiger said that Council will be the ones deciding what to adopt and how to adopt it. She continued that as far as the recommendation went, if they were to recommend something less than what the study is recommending then they would need to have that reasonable basis for why you are recommending less. She said that they have the expertise of the study, she cautioned them to make sure that they had the reasonable basis. She understood that a lot of people brought a lot of information through public comment but whether or not they are experts in that field and if that is enough to meet that legal test. She did think that it was appropriate to highlight the concerns that were raised and if the Commission felt that those were concerns that they had, have the recommendation with a condition.

Commissioner Purser commented that with a condition, but no is not an appropriate answer.

Ms. Geiger said that one of their options is a no recommendation, that would be to not raise fees at all.

Commissioner Purser talked about his trust in Staff and the research, he said that he knew that the numbers were accurate, he thought this was a hard one and it will continue to be hard. He said that it would be wrong for them to continue a bad decision and throw it off to the next iteration of decision makers. He said that he is looking at the Transportation impact fee comparisons with the new fees and the old fees and he said that he knows that the numbers were
not arbitrary, that they are general numbers that even out to an accuracy. He also knows that if they give a yes to this, they are saying what their values are very specifically to the chart. He continued, that they say we want this, we don’t want that, and they could use this if they wanted to limit development, they could go down this path. He said that they can’t change these numbers and it is not like that. These are numbers that are a representation of a study, not somebody’s opinion. If they adopt this, they are saying to the community what their values are. He continued that a community can’t make money where there is no money, but a community can subsidize based on their values. He didn’t feel that this represents their values when they have been reaching out to people to come out to Greenway Business Park and they we have said come and then please leave. He thinks that will send a message and it will be a confusion of values. He asked who pays for it, this is the question. He feels that this question should be explored further. If they say no to this, then it becomes money that gets pulled out of the General Fund and other things don’t get paid for. He said he felt that we are a very creative town and they may be able to come up with other solutions. He said that they were also a scrappy town that can live without this because this is a greater value to them. He did hear that applicants can petition, which is a safeguard that he feels comfortable with. He feels confident that the hospital could present that this and say that this is a problem and one of the biggest employers in Fruita can be. He trusted that this was a safeguard if they were to vote yes but he thinks would happen is that it would be a difficult thing for the voting structure of government. He said that they are trying to have a clear matrix that makes it fair, but it is a hard thing to do. He thinks it will burden the representative government; everybody may not want this to be the way in which they take care of the problem of the things that have to be paid for. He is interested in another creative way solution. He also sees a difficulty in the matrix and gave an example of a drive through soda shop. He would like to see some really specific subcategories.

Ms. Geiger said that she thought from comments that she was hearing, that circling back to a question that Commission Rink had about what their choices were. She said that in 2002 the City adopted a lesser percentage of what the study recommended. She said that what she is hearing is that people are 100% comfortable with this jump but understand that there is a basis behind it that there is a need for some sort of increase because it has been a long time without one. She said that 50% seemed too low last time and it seems that it got the City into a hole. Maybe there is a medium of 75% of what the study was recommending, 60% with the reason with that being to lessen the impact on small local businesses. She said that they needed to tie that reasonableness back to it. She said that this was something that they could consider if that is what the Commission felt more comfortable with it. She reminded them that this was a recommendation to City Council and that they would be having their own public hearing and vote on it.

Commissioner Hummel he asked if this could be split between residential and commercial, can they have a graded approach percentage wise increase to get to that 100% of recommended in a 3-4-year time period and adopt as recommended residential in full?

Mr. Caris said that they could look at those as different, but he said that what he thinks Ms. Geiger is saying is they had generally just accept if they were going to use the reasonable claim within the statute they have to accept the study to be material to create that nexus. Whether they think that small business could absorb 75% or 50% that has to be clearly tied to the study. He
asked if they were talking about transportation or economic development in general? Is it trying to be inviting through incentives and they are using this as the vehicle to incentivize? He said that there are other vehicles to incentivize in the eye of developers for both residential and commercial sphere. He said for them to not feel like they have to set policy to promote small business growth and this is the only option. He mentioned that they could direct Staff, this is not the only option afforded to them. He said that there are other creative ways to incentivize small business growth besides taking a core service of government and trying to use it.

Commissioner Hummel said that he agreed with the numbers and the study. He said that being an architect and being in the construction industry in the area it is hard to argue with the numbers or the consultant who is reputable and has been doing this for a long time. He said that they are put in a tough spot to make the decision. He said that they have been kicking the can down the road, the County didn’t approve the full 2002 study and they could end up putting the burden on the taxpayer. They will ask them for a bond issue or ask for a sales tax increase. He doesn’t want to do that and doesn’t think that would be fiscally responsible of them.

Commissioner Gollob said that he appreciated the meeting attendee’s commitment to this. He said that he had some questions. He asked Ms. Geiger to remind them of what their mandate was, not the entire process. He said that he understood that they were one part of a much larger process which began with community outreach, due diligence by the Staff, the Planning Commission to review the documents to see if there is a reasonableness and then it moves onto the City Council. In terms of making decisions, they were one part of the decision-making process. He just wanted to make that clear especially when they are hearing powerful testimony such as an autism center and not wanting to be a barrier for something like that. At this point he says he goes back to their process. He asked, what is their mandate here tonight with this proposal before them?

Ms. Geiger answered that what they have before them is a proposed ordinance to adopt the fees as found by the Duncan Study. They would be recommending action to Council to adopt that as presented. She continued, to adopt it and this would cut into the reasonableness definition as they have talked about. They could start slicing it by adopting it for the residential only in full and then a percentage for the commercial. Saying no if they don’t believe the study at all. It is a recommendation to Council.

Commissioner Gollob said that their mandate based on what decision-making process? He said that for example, when they get housing applications it is a pretty clear checklist. They don’t have that checklist with this. What should they be thinking about in terms of this decision-making process? He said that Mr. Caris laid out a few things, consistent with City goals and the Master Plan as those things in which they should consider.

Ms. Geiger responded that she wanted Mr. Caris to put that slide back up. She said that they should be thinking about the Master Plan, the Comp Plan, and this rolls back to themes that they have heard before. She understood that they were going through a process of changing the Comp Plan and one thing that has gone through that has been that development pay its way.
Commissioner Gollob said that requiring that developments that demonstrate provision or adequate infrastructure, ensuring necessary infrastructure, decreased infrastructure cost for the City. The second question he had was if Council was held to the same reasonableness test that they were asking them to adopt tonight or do they have more flexibility?

Ms. Geiger answered that whatever decision that Council makes will also need to comply with the statutory requirement of reasonableness. They will be held to the same standard.

Commissioner Gollob asked if they think something is too high if that would meet the reasonable test?

Ms. Geiger cautioned him that it does not. She said that they needed to start with the Duncan Study as the basis and if they believe that it too high, what would the basis be for that?

Commissioner Gollob asked about citizen input, would that be basis?

Ms. Geiger said that citizen input would factor into their decision, but it should not be, unless there has been an expert report associated with it, their sole basis.

Commissioner Gollob said that should have been upfront at the meetings at the formation of this policy and that citizen input would have been throughout this process, not at the end.

Ms. Geiger referred to what someone said earlier that they were not an expert in building and development that this feels too high to them. She said that this would not pass the reasonableness test. She continued that they did hear from some folks from the public that are in the development business, the real estate business, etc. She said that the Duncan Study went into some real details on actual traffic only to get to a traffic impact number. They are looking perceived impacts on development. She said it is hard to mesh the two together because what they are recommending is a Traffic Impact fee not an economic driver.

Commissioner Nisley asked if the Metro Report qualify or meet the test of reasonableness?

Commissioner Gollob said that it was the comparison of other jurisdictions.

Mr. Caris said that he thought the Metro Study was supplemental information to prove a point that is a larger narrative. He said that there were several communities that they compared to. He said that they would have no idea what those community’s street policies are. He said what if Pueblo, Sterling, or Montrose had no impact fee, but they pay everything that came up on the traffic study?

Commissioner Gollob asked Mr. Caris, the one graph that jumped out at him and has been a focus of the public input was that comparison study. He wanted Mr. Caris to provide context for why the red bar, at least on the residential side not on the commercial side, is so much larger than the others. He wanted reasons why this was.
Mr. Caris said that one of the biggest examples of why is that the lions share of the communities might have lower fees is because they have a lot of density. That could be a scenario at play. Another scenario is that they haven’t taken the issue up in quite some time. Would they be more similar to what is being proposed today if they were going through this type of ordinance process similarly to what we are going through? The relationship between alternative funding sources that they have contemplated, for example, some of those communities could be built out. They could have supplemental funding approaches for urban renewal or a whole host of other issues that are necessarily context to validate that as their nexus to achieve reasonableness.

Commissioner Gollob pointed out table 3, Transportation Impact Fees in Colorado. The study/adoption year doesn’t necessarily mean that the fee that they are seeing in Boulder for a single family per unit at $3700, that doesn’t mean that it was put into place in 2017. That was when it could’ve been studied to see what it was, but that fee could’ve been adopted in 2005.

Mr. Caris said that was correct.

Commissioner Gollob said that it may not be the current fees it is just what it was when they studied.

Mr. Caris said that this was a survey of what was out there.

Commissioner Gollob said that he was left asking himself several questions with why they were here today which was part of a mechanism which is a recommendation to City Council. He asked if the fees were too low. He said that nobody there was defending that the fees stay the same. The answer was clearly yes. Then he asked what was a reasonable proposal? He said that the comparison to other communities seems to be the one that garners a lot of attention, but he wonders if they could be that far out of whack with other communities. Is that a good comparison? He felt it was a fair comparison to a certain extent but there were a lot of qualifications to it. Then he said that he is looking at what was recommended in 2002 and what it would have been inflated to today and if you looked at the percent change a lot of those numbers are negative numbers not in the positive. He then is left with what is a reasonable fee or an alternative fee and he didn’t know, and he felt that he couldn’t challenge the Duncan Study. Is a feeling that it is too low, is that a reasonableness test? He said that he is stuck with a conundrum, where does he move with it? He said that he did not have a viable reasonable alternative. He said that he had the data, witness testimony that he valued, but not an alternative besides a defensible document that could be put through as a way of supporting this issue. He came to the point that if they recommended this to Council that this is the worst-case scenario. He continued, that Council could lower it if they felt in their judgment that these fees were too high. Did he feel that right now he had enough information to put a stop to it to send City Council a significant signal that they were against it? He didn’t feel he could with the information given and without having a reasonable alternative. He said that they were given information. He said it seems that there is support to it and with the proposal and the witness testimony it adds a lot of weight to this decision, but they are one piece to the decision-making body. He asked if this was a viable proposal to be able to pass this along to the next level to see if they agree with it as well and find some common ground. He said that he did not have an
alternative and no one has said to keep the fees as they are. He said he was happy to hear any counter arguments, but he is not sure what that proposal would be, drop it 25%, 10%, or lower.

Commissioner Fabula asked the Commissioners if they had any other comments or thoughts.

Commissioner Nisley said that without some sort of legal nexus to change it by a certain percentage, it is either a yes or a no vote. He asked if this was correct?

Mr. Caris said Ms. Geiger responded to scenarios that were being posed such as too high or that they can’t absorb this and he said that this is what he thought she was speaking to when she was saying that this was not a nexus, it is not that there cannot be one out there that fits that.

Commissioner Nisley said that he didn’t think it would be appropriate for him to say 25% less than what was proposed because he didn’t have a legal reasonableness for that statement.

Ms. Geiger said she and Mr. Caris were trying to gauge people’s comfort level and she thinks finding that magic percentage number was going to be difficult because they didn’t have a study that breaks it down into that. She continued that one thing to consider a recommendation to Council for approval but with a consideration as to what is the percentage that economic development and sales tax could absorb to come up with that reasonable lower factor. She said as Commissioner Gollob was saying that they were not the ultimate decision maker, they are making a recommendation. That give them a direction that they can consider, maybe they say no and they adopt it in full or let’s find that reasonableness percentage that economic development and sales tax could absorb.

Mr. Caris said that the only other thing that would make sense is that they have been presented the fee in its entirety with respect to residential and commercial. He said that they have also been presented with the policies that are behind the ordinance. He said that there has been discussion about phasing, with commercial and residential, there has been questions about what sort of value does this add that is not considered in the study, and a commitment to reevaluate this early and often and a whole host of other things that play into that total policy itself. He said that if they didn’t feel prepared to do percentages because they don’t have enough context, there is a number of elements that are within the ordinance that are just as heavily tied to the actual fee itself and then possibly present a caveat that they could not arrive at a percentage but they think that sales tax or economic development does provide something of a delta between what is proposed and what they felt the Council could decide. He said that those were options that were afforded to them. He continued that it is the entire policy at play.

Commissioner Gollob asked if Council would have access to the transcript from tonight as well as the public testimony?

Mr. Caris said that they will have the minutes.

Commissioner Nisley confirmed that it would be possible if they said that they agreed with the fee increase but they wanted it phased in over a four-year period. He asked if they wouldn’t need a reasonable basis if they were agreeing with the fee?
Mr. Caris said yes that this was just absorption, that it needs to be absorbed over a period of time and that they recognize that there will be percentage deficits from the projects that happen between year 1 and year 4 but they believe that the economic development or sales tax generation can cover that in that period of time. He said that it needs to be tied to something not independent tangential thoughts. He said that they can see that they think in 4 years it can be absorbed and these are the reasons why.

Commissioner Gollob said that they could recommend approval but that the Council examine ways to balance the needs of the business community with the realities of the Transportation Impact Fee.

This was confirmed by Ms. Geiger.

Commissioner Fabula said that this was a challenge. They see developers come in and inevitably there is a community member down or across the street complaining about the impact to the roads. He said that they did a survey and asked what the biggest issue was in Fruita and everyone said it was traffic.

Commissioner Gollob said that in these cases he leans into process, a linear development of it. He said that they hear the community, that they would not like to see this in front of Council as this is a hard yes, but that there are issues that were raised tonight that they would like the Council to also be aware of as significant issues and opening that conversation from their end. Is that a defensible outcome where they have those messages attached to it?

Mr. Caris said that those were the caveats, the conditions that they are saying they would make a recommendation to Council for yes but conditioned on wanting to evaluate A, B and C. He addressed Commissioner Nisley in regard to the phasing. He said that you can’t come up with 4 and then have no supplemental basis for that. If that was the hypothetical number, it would pass the reasonable test to say that he believed it could be absorbed over that period of time.

Commissioner Gollob said that if he were to take a big swipe at this, instead of going directly down into very specific things like phasing and time of plat, he would instruct Council to be sensitive to the future of economic development in the Valley and to see if this fee would have a negative impact on economic development. He said what they have talked about was largely been a big umbrella of economic development impacts. He talked about the balance of digging ourselves out of a hole and the fees in terms of the impact on economic development.

Commissioner Purser said that he recognizes that they have a hole that they did not take care of and that they must at some point do that. He also heard too much, too fast and he agreed with that. He wanted a solution and a recommendation that addresses that. He wants to recommend yes that they do have to solve the problem if it impacts the community that they have been trying to nurture, he does not want a decision made without creating a solution for that or a compensation or another mechanism of economic development. He said that he was not sure that could happen next month.
Commissioner Nisley asked if it made sense to vote on the motion as is and then move forward at that point?

Mr. Caris said that there were several options available to them. He said that one of them from a procedural standpoint that the Chair might consider is to get a position from the Planning Commissioners to start to craft the deliberation around a motion and they could help them craft that based off of the direction that the Chair is receiving.

Commissioner Fabula asked for a motion to approve with a strong recommendation that the City Council be sensitive and look into the economic impact of this.

Commissioner Mulder said that they were sitting up there as Planning Commission members and they have been offered not a multiple-choice test but of one question, one answer test. He said that they have discussed to the extent that perhaps some of them are in favor of going forward with it as it is as opposed to saying to City Council that they can make the decision. He says that he respects all of their opinions, but they did not offer a multiple-choice question and they could have. He said that he was pretty sure that City Council is going to spend a great deal of time going through their comments and coming up with their own comments and make a legitimate decision on how this should go forth.

Commissioner Gollob said that was the basis of his comments that they were part of a process and this is the worst-case scenario and that is the good news. He said that he doesn’t have an alternative to the reasonableness test. Given that, his view is to move this on to the Council with the hope that they will review their transcripts from tonight and look at the feedback on those different processes. He said to move it on to the Council as is without adjustments to the numbers.

Commissioner Fabula asked if anyone wanted to give a sample of a motion they might want to see? He said that they sample motion was a motion for approval and an encouragement that the Council review this meetings transcripts and take all matters into consideration. He asked if that met everyone’s needs or if someone wanted to word this differently?

Commissioner Rink reiterated that they needed to use some sort of reasonable basis. She questioned if the Duncan Study applies to Fruita. She understood that there needed to be some basis of math, but she didn’t know how to get around that.

Commissioner Purser said that he wanted a strong recommendation and wanted to encourage them all to please think about this.

Commissioner Mulder said that they could vote to not approve this and send it to City Council.

Commissioner Purser said that if he was to vote that he would also have to address the City. It is a no with conditions or a yes with conditions.
Commissioner Hummel said he would like to send it to City Council as is and he would like to see a vote. He said let them see the transcript, there will be discussing around a table and they will have the same concerns and the same testimony.

Commissioner Gollob asked for direction of making a motion.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOB MADE A MOTION TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF 2019-41 TRANSPORTATION IMPACT FEE LAND USE CODE AMENDMENT WHICH IS A REQUEST FOR APPROVAL AMENDING CHAPTER 19 OF TITLE 17 OF THE FRUITA MUNICIPAL CODE CONCERNING PAYMENTS OF IMPACT FEES, USE OF IMPACT FEES AND TRANSPORTATION IMPACT FEES.

COMMISSIONER HUMMEL SECONDED THE MOTION

MOTION PASSED 5-2 IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION

Other Business

There was none.

Adjournment 9:58 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Kelli McLean
Planning Technician, City of Fruita
Application #: 2019-38
Application Name: Vic’s Place VRBO
Application Type: Conditional Use Permit
Representative: William Barlow
Location: 825 E. Ottley Avenue (Rear House)
Zone: Community Residential
Description: This is a request for approval of a Conditional Use Permit for a Vacation Rental by Owner (Bed And Breakfast) in the Community Residential zone.

Project Description:

The subject property contains a 1,696 square foot detached single-family dwelling unit on an approximately 4.9-acre lot located behind the Country Village Mobile Home Park on East Ottley Avenue. The property owner has requested a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to use the property for a vacation rental by owner.

The entire home is intended to be available for rent on a less than month-to-month basis. The Land Use Code defines this type of use as a Bed & Breakfast which requires a CUP in the Community Residential (CR) zone.

Surrounding Land Uses and Zoning:

Surrounding zoning consists of Community Residential and Community Services & Recreation. Land uses to the south of the subject property are single family detached mobile home dwelling units. To the east of the subject property is the Little Salt Wash Park.
LAND USE/ZONING MAP
Review of Applicable Land Use Code Requirements:

Table 17.07.060(F) of the Land Use Code requires a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for Bed & Breakfast type of land use in the Community Residential zone. The Land Use Code defines a Bed & Breakfast as a facility of residential character that provides sleeping accommodations with or without meals for hire on a day-to-day basis with no more than four guest rooms. It is not required to be owner occupied.
Section 17.07.070, Supplemental Zoning Regulations and Standards, Section A, identifies conditions and standards that must be met for a Bed & Breakfast use:

1. Where the applicable zoning district allows bed and breakfast uses as a Conditional Use, the use must be a residential dwelling that contains no more than four (4) guest bedrooms where overnight lodging, with or without meals, is provided for compensation. Bed and Breakfast uses with more than four (4) guest bedrooms are considered hotels or motels;

   The entire dwelling unit is intended to be used as the Bed and Breakfast. According to the Mesa County Assessor, this house contains 3 bedrooms and 1 bathroom. This criteria has been met.

2. Kitchen and dining facilities in bed and breakfast dwellings may serve only residents and guests and shall not be operated or used for any commercial activity other than that necessary for bed and breakfast purposes;

   The applicants are aware that the kitchen and dining facilities may only serve the guests even though this is not directly expressed in the project narrative. This criteria can be met.

3. The bed and breakfast use shall not change the residential character of the dwelling if located in a residential zone or area;

   The applicant specifically expressed that there will be no change to the residential character of the subject property in the project narrative. This criteria can be met.

4. In residential zones (including residential developments in the CMU zone), there shall be no advertising display or other indication of the bed and breakfast use on the premises other than a sign that is in compliance with the provisions of Chapter 17.41;

   Chapter 17.41 of the Land Use Code permits an Address or Identification Sign, identifying the address and/or the occupants of a dwelling unit or of an establishment, with a maximum size of two square feet and a maximum height of four feet for a sign in this zone. No illumination of this sign is permitted. There are no signs on the subject property at this time.

   The Sign Code requires that signs be reviewed in conjunction with the Conditional Use Permit. The project narrative addressed signage by saying that there will be no signs on the property for advertisement purposes. If a sign were to be proposed, there would need to be an amendment to this Conditional Use Permit. Amendments to CUP’s require hearings by both the Planning Commission and City Council. This criteria is not applicable because no sign is being proposed at this time.
5. **A minimum of one parking space per guest bedroom and resident bedroom shall be required. Screening may also be required;**

It appears that this property has at least 3 off street parking spaces as required. The project narrative states that the property offers a private parking area that measures 103 feet by 18.5 feet. Additionally, there are open areas around the yard and in front of the yard that could be utilized for parking without use of or interference to through streets or right of ways. No screening is recommended by Staff. **This criteria has been met.**

6. **The bed and breakfast facility shall comply with all Building Codes adopted by the city;**

The dwelling unit was originally constructed in 1972 according to the Mesa County Assessors website. There appears to have been a gas line added for a gas dryer in 1992. It appears that the required building permits for this gas line addition were obtained and meet the current building codes. It does not appear that there are any outstanding building permits. **This criteria has been met at this time.**

7. **It shall be the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate that the relevant subdivision's declarations, covenants, conditions or restrictions allow for a bed and breakfast use and/or associated signing; and**

There does not appear to be any covenants associated with this property. All property owners within 350 feet of the subject property have been notified of this CUP application. At this time, staff has received no written public comments regarding this application. **This criteria has been met at this time.**

8. **Where a bed and breakfast use is subject to Conditional Use Permit approval, any existing or proposed uses in addition to that of a dwelling unit (e.g. home occupation, accessory dwelling unit, etc.) are considered as part of the conditional use review.**

Staff is unaware of any other existing or intended use of this property other than as a dwelling unit and/or as a short-term rental as proposed by this CUP request.

Based on this information, this CUP request for a Bed & Breakfast **meets or can meet the supplemental zoning regulations and standards** of the Land Use Code.

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Chapter 13 of the Land Use Code identifies the approval criteria that must be considered for Conditional Use Permit (CUP) requests. The Code defines a CUP as a use which, because of its unique or varying characteristics, cannot be properly classified as an allowed use in a particular zone district. After due consideration, as provided for in
Section 17.13.040 of the Land Use Code, of the impact upon neighboring land and of the public need for the particular use at a particular location, such conditional use may or may not be approved.

According to Section 17.13.040 (C) of the Land Use Code, a Conditional Use Permit may be granted for a conditional use in a particular zone provided the City Council finds as follows:

**Section 17.13.040, Conditional Uses, of the Land Development Code requires that a conditional use be approved after considering the following:**

1. **The proposed use is consistent with the provisions and purposes of this Title, with the purposes of the zone in which it is located, and with the city's Master Plan;**

   Based on this review, the proposed conditional use can be consistent with the provisions and purposes of this Title (the Land Use Code), which is to promote the health, safety and welfare of the present and future inhabitants of the community, and with the purposes of the Community Residential zone, which is to allow for moderate density single-family neighborhoods. If the supplemental zoning regulations and standards (identified above) are met along with the approval criteria for CUPs, this criterion can be met. The Land Use Code is one of the main documents used to implement the goals and policies of the City's Master Plan.

2. **The proposed use is compatible with existing and allowed uses surrounding or affected by the proposed use, pursuant to the criteria in Section 17.07.080;**

   Section 17.07.080 requires that a proposed development be compatible with adjacent properties, considering both existing and potential land uses on adjacent properties. For all land uses, “compatibility” is provided when a proposed land use can coexist with other existing uses in the vicinity without one use having a disproportionate or severe impact on the other use(s). The city decision-making body may consider other uses existing and approved and may consider all potential impacts relative to what customarily occurs in the applicable zone and those which are foreseeable, given the range of land uses allowed in the zone. The review authority may require conditions of approval to promote compatibility between a proposed use and existing uses in the vicinity to ensure compatibility.

   Although there are no short term rentals nearby, it appears that this proposed vacation rental can be compatible with surrounding land uses. Compliance with the regulations for vacation rentals should allow this business to coexist with other existing houses in the area without having a disproportionate or severe impact on the neighborhood. This criterion can be met.
3. **The proposed use will not materially endanger the public health or safety; and**

Staff received review comments from the Lower Valley Fire District (LVFD) about concerns with access to the subject property in the case of an emergency. Since there are concerns from the LVFD, Staff encourages the applicant to develop an emergency plan (this plan should be available to all guests) in case issues arise and work with the LFVD on any solutions they may have in order to address concerns.

The property does not take direct access from Ottley Avenue but does have a recorded (reception #1520402) access easement through the Country Village Mobile Home Park. However, since it doesn’t appear that the use itself will materially endanger the public health or safety, Staff does believe this criteria can be met.

If the Conditional Use Permit is approved, Staff and the LVFD recommend that all guest bedrooms contain carbon monoxide and smoke alarms.

4. **Public services and facilities including, but not limited to, transportation systems, wastewater disposal and treatment, domestic water, fire protection, police protection, and storm drainage facilities are adequate to serve the proposed use.**

Public services and facilities have been available to this property and will continue to be available to this property while it is used as a vacation rental with the exception of any dedication right-of-way. The subject property has access through the mobile home park via an easement agreement. The city is not part of this agreement as it’s between private property owners. Any impacts related to the proposed use are not expected to be any greater than those generated by a single-family residence. This criterion has been met.

Based on this information, this requested Conditional Use Permit has met or can meet all approval criteria for Conditional Use Permits and all supplemental zoning standards.

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**Legal Notice:**

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Fruita Planning Commission will hold a public hearing Tuesday, January 14, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. at the Fruita Civic Center, 2nd Floor Council Chambers, 325 E. Aspen Avenue. The following item will be presented at the public hearings. The Planning Commission will formulate a recommendation, which will be forwarded to the Fruita City Council. If the item listed below is acted on by the Planning Commission, the Fruita City Council will hold a public hearing on this same item on Tuesday, February 4, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. at the Fruita Civic Center, 2nd Floor Council Chambers. If you have an interest on the item please call 858-0786 or come to the Planning & Development Department office located at 325 E. Aspen Avenue to review the information in the file. Your appearance at both hearings is encouraged to ensure your concerns are accurately represented or you can write a letter outlining your concerns and submit it to the Planning & Development Department.

Application # 2019-38
Application Name Vic’s Place VRBO
Application Type Conditional Use Permit
Location 825 E. Ottley Avenue
Zone Community Residential (CR)
Description This is a request for approval of a Conditional Use Permit for a Vacation Rental by Owner (Bed And Breakfast) in a Community Residential zone.

Physically disadvantaged persons who wish to obtain information or need assistance in attending the Public Hearing, may call (970) 858-0786, the hearing impaired may call Relay Colorado at 1-800-659-2656, or visit our website: www.fruita.org

Review Comments:

- Lower Valley Fire District expressed concerns about responding to emergencies to the subject property.

- Conditions of approval by Staff:
  1. Lodger’s tax be paid to the City of Fruita pursuant to Chapter 3.18 of the Fruita Municipal Code.
  2. Maintain a current City of Fruita business license.
  3. Limited to 4 bedrooms.
  4. All bedrooms shall contain fire and carbon monoxide alarms.
  5. Annual review of the Conditional Use Permit by the Fruita Code Compliance Officer.
  6. Compliance with all laws and regulations as applicable.

Public Comments:
No written public comments have been received regarding this application at this time.

Staff Recommendation:
Because all of the approval criteria for Conditional Use Permits and all supplemental zoning standards and regulations either are or can be met, staff recommends approval of the proposed Bed & Breakfast with the condition that all review comments are met before the business becomes operational.

LAND DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION

Project Name: Vic's Place, VRBO
Project Location: 825 E. Ottley Avenue, Bear House, Fruita, 81521
Current Zoning District: Requested Zone:
Tax Parcel Number(s): 26A-084-00-080 Number of Acres: 4.88
Project Type: VRBO Bed and Breakfast

Property Owner: Max V. Barlow
Property Owner: Melissa M. Barlow
Address: 825 E. Ottley Avenue
City/State/Zip: Fruita, Co. 81521
Phone: Fax:
E-mail:

Developer: Contact:
Address: City/State/Zip:
Phone: Fax:
E-mail:

Please designate a representative as the coordinator for this application. The representative should attend all conferences/hearings, will receive all correspondence, and communicate all information to the property owners.

Owner Rep: William V. Barlow
Contact: Address:
City/State/Zip: Phone: Fax:
E-mail: barlow.leslie82@gmail.com

Engineer:
Contact:
Address:
City/State/Zip: Phone: Fax:
E-mail:

This Notarized application authorizes the owner's representative, if designated, to act on behalf of the property owners regarding this application.

The above information is correct and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Name of Legal Owner: William V. Barlow
Signature: Date: 10-4-19

Name of Legal Owner: William V. Barlow
Signature: Date: 10-4-19

Name of Legal Owner: William V. Barlow
Signature: Date: 10-4-19

STATE OF COLORADO)
) ss
COUNTY OF MESA )

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this 44th day of October, 2019.

My Commission expires: May 12, 2023

Kelli McLean
Notary Public -- State of Colorado
Notary ID 20141015506
My Commission Expires May 17, 2022
City of Fruita

Conditional Use Permit Application

825 East Ottley Avenue, Rear House, Fruita, Co. 81521

Vic’s Place VRBO

Project Narrative

The goal of this project is to provide Fruita visitors a private and comfortable space to relax as they vacation or fulfill a temporary work assignment. This property is within walking distance of downtown, Fruita, entertainment and attractions. It is also within an hour driving distance of most recreation attractions that surround our beautiful area. The property is completely furnished and provides several amenities that allow families to enjoy a carefree stay.

Project Compliance, Compatibility, and Impact:

- The proposed property is a single-family ranch-style house that includes a large fenced yard and 4.88 acres on the North-East corner of an older trailer park. The property, itself, is not a part of the trailer park. It is adjacent to the trailer park, and utilizes the same access road/right of way. This property is currently zoned “CR” (Community Residential) and is eligible for a Bed & Breakfast (1-4 guests per room) per Section 17.07.060 of the Fruita Land Use Zoning Table in the Fruita Land Use Code.
- The proposed use will not materially endanger the public health and safety.
- The proposed condition use will maintain its compatibility with adjacent properties and will not detract from the surrounding homes nor will it have a severe or disproportionate impact on other uses.
- The property offers a private parking area that measures 103 feet by 18.5 feet. In addition, there are open areas around the yard and in front of the house that can be utilized for parking without use of or interference to through street and right-of-way. This meets the standards set forth in the Fruita Land Use Code 17.07.070.
- There will be no change to the residential character of the residence.
- Use of this property is expected to be lower than a full-time occupant’s use of the residence; including, but not limited to utilities and use of public service roads. Police and fire will not require any more attention with this permit.

Other Pertinent Information:

- There will be no signs on the property for advertisement.
- Rentals will typically range from 2 to 60 days.
- Renters will need to provide valid credit card in order to reserve the property and are screened through AirBnB and HomeAway before a reservation is accepted.
- A list of rules and regulations, along with contact information is posted in the property for all renters.
- The owner/property managers, Bill and Leslie Barlow, are the point of contact for all renters.
Thanks for checking. We don’t have any issues with it.

Hey Dave,

Hope all is well. I didn’t know if you had a chance to review this application/project but just thought I’d check in to see if you had any comments or saw any issues with it? Attached is an aerial photo, this is the property in the very rear of the Mobile Home Park on Ottley Avenue, the use proposed is for a Short Term Rental/VRBO.

Call me if you have any questions.

Thanks!

HENRY HEMPHILL  
CITY PLANNER  
CITY OF FRUITA  
970-858-0786
December 4, 2019

Fruita Planning Department
325 E. Aspen Avenue
Fruita, CO 81521

Re: Comments for 2019-38 Vic’s Place VRBO

1. Fire extinguisher, carbon monoxide detector and smoke detector/fire alarms must be in place.

2. There does not appear to be a dedicated driveway to 825 E. Ottley. LVFD has a concern that vacation renters would not know how to report access in an emergency and if 911 dispatch sends fire or police to 825 E. Ottley it could delay the response while figuring out access that access is through the trailer park.

Richard Pippenger
Fire Marshal
Kelli McLean

From: Darrell Bay <darrell.bay@mesacounty.us>
Sent: Wednesday, November 27, 2019 10:15 AM
To: Kelli McLean
Subject: Re: 2019-38 Vic’s Place VRBO

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Kelli,
MCBD has no objections.
If inspections are required a building permit must be obtained prior to the inspection.
Thanks

Darrell Bay
Building Official
970-244-1651

On Tue, Nov 26, 2019 at 2:41 PM Kelli McLean <kmclean@fruita.org> wrote:

Hello,

Please send us your review comments for project 2019-38 Vic’s Place VRBO by Tuesday, December 17. I have included a link to the project below for your convenience.


Thank you!

KELLI MCLEAN
PLANNING TECHNICIAN
CITY OF FRUITA
970-858-0786

FRUITA
COLORADO
Planning & Development Department
Staff Report
January 7, 2020

Application #: 2019-43
Application Name: Cook Short Term Rental
Application Type: Conditional Use Permit
Representative: Ryan Cook
Property Owner: Renee Cook
Location: 157 S. Orchard Street
Zone: Community Residential
Description: This is a request for approval of a Conditional Use Permit for a Vacation Rental by Owner (Bed And Breakfast). The Fruita Land Use Code requires a Conditional Use Permit to operate a Bed and Breakfast in a Community Residential zone.

Project Description:

The subject property contains a 1,556 square foot detached single family dwelling unit on an approximately .17-acre lot located on South Orchard Street northwest of the intersection of East McCune Avenue and South Orchard Street. The property owner has requested a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to use the property for a vacation rental by owner.

The applicant is proposing to rent, on a less than month-to-month basis, an attached 393 square foot mother-in-law suite that includes one-bedroom, full kitchen and bathroom. The Land Use Code defines this type of use as a Bed & Breakfast which requires a CUP in the Community Residential (CR) zone.

Surrounding Land Uses and Zoning:

Surrounding zoning consists mostly of Community Residential with one PUD zoned property. Most land uses surrounding the subject property are single family detached dwellings with the exception of one property that consists of multi-family units to the east. There are similar types of uses (Bed & Breakfasts or Short-Term Rentals) nearby.
Review of Applicable Land Use Code Requirements:

Table 17.07.060(F) of the Land Use Code requires a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for Bed & Breakfast type of land use in the Community Residential zone. The Land Use Code defines a Bed & Breakfast as a facility of residential character that provides sleeping accommodations with or without meals for hire on a day-to-day basis with no more than four guest rooms. It is not required to be owner occupied.

Section 17.07.070, Supplemental Zoning Regulations and Standards, Section A, identifies conditions and standards that must be met for a Bed & Breakfast use:

1. Where the applicable zoning district allows bed and breakfast uses as a Conditional Use, the use must be a residential dwelling that contains no more than four (4) guest bedrooms where overnight lodging, with or without meals, is provided for compensation. Bed and Breakfast uses with more than four (4) guest bedrooms are considered hotels or motels;

The request from the applicant is to rent out the portion of the dwelling unit that is considered the mother-in-law suite, or accessory dwelling unit, portion. This portion contains 1 bedroom. This criteria has been met.

It should be noted that the entire dwelling unit, including the attached accessory dwelling unit, contain 4 bedrooms all together.

2. Kitchen and dining facilities in bed and breakfast dwellings may serve only residents and guests and shall not be operated or used for any commercial activity other than that necessary for bed and breakfast purposes;

The applicants are aware that the kitchen and dining facilities may only serve the guests even though this is not directly expressed in the project narrative. This criteria can be met.

3. The bed and breakfast use shall not change the residential character of the dwelling if located in a residential zone or area;

Staff believes that the residential character of this property will not change because the application doesn’t propose any changes to the residential character of the dwelling unit. The property will be owner occupied and states that they will be the caretakers for the property monitoring noise, litter, and loitering. Additionally, the applicants stated in the project narrative that they will be taking care of the yard, snow removal and garbage removal. This criteria can be met.

4. In residential zones (including residential developments in the CMU zone), there shall be no advertising display or other indication of the bed and
breakfast use on the premises other than a sign that is in compliance with the provisions of Chapter 17.41;

Chapter 17.41 of the Land Use Code permits an Address or Identification Sign, identifying the address and/or the occupants of a dwelling unit or of an establishment, with a maximum size of two square feet and a maximum height of four feet for a sign in this zone. No illumination of this sign is permitted. There are no signs on the subject property at this time.

The Sign Code requires that signs be reviewed in conjunction with the Conditional Use Permit. The applicants addressed signs in their project narrative that states there would be no advertising nor signs in the yard promoting Airbnb or VRBO. Therefore, no signage is being proposed. If a sign were to be proposed, there would need to be an amendment to this Conditional Use Permit. Amendments to CUP’s require hearings by both the Planning Commission and City Council. This criteria is not applicable because no sign is being proposed at this time.

5. A minimum of one parking space per guest bedroom and resident bedroom shall be required. Screening may also be required;

Since the primary dwelling unit contains 3 bedrooms and the accessory unit contain 1 bedroom, 4 total off street parking paved parking spaces are required under this approval criteria.

The applicant states in the project narrative that there is ample off street parking with 3 spaces in the front and driveway and an additional 4 parking spaces in the side yard. It appears that one of the Site Plan renderings show off street parking being proposed in the front yard. Staff does not support parking vehicles in the front yard area which has not been historically designated as parking and this should not be considered as an appropriate off street parking spot. However, there does appear to be enough off-street parking to meet this criteria. No screening is recommended by Staff. This criteria has been met.

6. The bed and breakfast facility shall comply with all Building Codes adopted by the city;

The dwelling unit was originally constructed in 1961 according to the Mesa County Assessors website. Also according to the Mesa County Assessors website, the subject property underwent a remodel in 1995, added a detach garage in 2010, solar added in 2012, and an attached mother-in-law suite added in 2018. All required building permits were obtained and passed inspections. It does not appear that there are any outstanding building permits. This criteria has been met at this time.
7. It shall be the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate that the relevant subdivision's declarations, covenants, conditions or restrictions allow for a bed and breakfast use and/or associated signing; and

There does not appear to be any covenants associated with this property. All property owners within 350 feet of the subject property have been notified of this CUP application. At this time, staff has received no written public comments regarding this application. Staff believes this criteria is not applicable.

8. Where a bed and breakfast use is subject to Conditional Use Permit approval, any existing or proposed uses in addition to that of a dwelling unit (e.g. home occupation, accessory dwelling unit, etc.) are considered as part of the conditional use review.

Staff is unaware of any other existing or intended use of this property other than as a dwelling unit and/or as a short-term rental as proposed by this CUP request.

Based on this information, this CUP request for a Bed & Breakfast meets or can meet the supplemental zoning regulations and standards of the Land Use Code.

Chapter 13 of the Land Use Code identifies the approval criteria that must be considered for Conditional Use Permit (CUP) requests. The Code defines a CUP as a use which, because of its unique or varying characteristics, cannot be properly classified as an allowed use in a particular zone district. After due consideration, as provided for in Section 17.13.040 of the Land Use Code, of the impact upon neighboring land and of the public need for the particular use at a particular location, such conditional use may or may not be approved.

According to Section 17.13.40.C of the Land Use Code, a Conditional Use Permit may be granted for a conditional use in a particular zone provided the City Council finds as follows:

Section 17.13.040, Conditional Uses, of the Land Development Code requires that a conditional use be approved after considering the following:

1. The proposed use is consistent with the provisions and purposes of this Title, with the purposes of the zone in which it is located, and with the city's Master Plan;

Based on this review, the proposed conditional use can be consistent with the provisions and purposes of this Title (the Land Use Code), which is to promote the health, safety and welfare of the present and future inhabitants of the community, and with the purposes of the Community Residential zone, which is to allow for moderate density single-family neighborhoods. If the supplemental zoning regulations and standards (identified above) are met along with the
approval criteria for CUPs, this criterion can be met. The Land Use Code is one of the main documents used to implement the goals and policies of the City's Master Plan.

2. **The proposed use is compatible with existing and allowed uses surrounding or affected by the proposed use, pursuant to the criteria in Section 17.07.080;**

Section 17.07.080 requires that a proposed development be compatible with adjacent properties, considering both existing and potential land uses on adjacent properties. For all land uses, “compatibility” is provided when a proposed land use can coexist with other existing uses in the vicinity without one use having a disproportionate or severe impact on the other use(s). The city decision-making body may consider other uses existing and approved and may consider all potential impacts relative to what customarily occurs in the applicable zone and those which are foreseeable, given the range of land uses allowed in the zone. The review authority may require conditions of approval to promote compatibility between a proposed use and existing uses in the vicinity to ensure compatibility.

Although there are short term rentals nearby, it appears that this proposed vacation rental can be compatible with surrounding land uses. Compliance with the regulations for vacation rentals should allow this business to coexist with other existing houses in the area without having a disproportionate or severe impact on the neighborhood. This criterion can be met.

3. **The proposed use will not materially endanger the public health or safety; and**

Use of the attached mother-in-law suite for a vacation rental is not expected to endanger the public health or safety. Staff recommends that all guest bedrooms contain carbon monoxide and smoke alarms. This criterion can be met.

4. **Public services and facilities including, but not limited to, transportation systems, wastewater disposal and treatment, domestic water, fire protection, police protection, and storm drainage facilities are adequate to serve the proposed use.**

Public services and facilities have been available to this property and will continue to be available to this property while it is used as a vacation rental. The impacts are not expected to be any greater than those generated by a single-family residence. This criterion has been met.

Based on this information, this requested Conditional Use Permit meets or can meet all approval criteria for Conditional Use Permits and all supplemental zoning standards.
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Fruita Planning Commission will hold a public hearing Tuesday, January 14, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. at the Fruita Civic Center, 2nd Floor Council Chambers, 325 E. Aspen Avenue. The following item will be presented at the public hearings. The Planning Commission will formulate a recommendation, which will be forwarded to the Fruita City Council. If the item listed below is acted on by the Planning Commission, the Fruita City Council will hold a public hearing on this same item on Tuesday, February 4, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. at the Fruita Civic Center, 2nd Floor Council Chambers. If you have an interest on the item please call 858-0786 or come to the Planning & Development Department office located at 325 E. Aspen Avenue to review the information in the file. Your appearance at both hearings is encouraged to ensure your concerns are accurately represented or you can write a letter outlining your concerns and submit it to the Planning & Development Department.

Application # 2019-43
Application Name Cook Short Term Rental
Application Type Conditional Use Permit
Location 157 South Orchard Street
Zone Community Residential (CR)
Description This is a request for approval of a Conditional Use Permit for a Vacation Rental by Owner (Bed And Breakfast) in a Community Residential zone.

Physically disadvantaged persons who wish to obtain information or need assistance in attending the Public Hearing, may call (970) 858-0786, the hearing impaired may call Relay Colorado at 1-800-659-2656, or visit our website: www.fruita.org

Review Comments:

- No reviewer expressed concerns over the proposed application.
- Conditions of approval by Staff:
  1. Lodger’s tax be paid to the City of Fruita pursuant to Chapter 3.18 of the Fruita Municipal Code.
  2. Maintain a current City of Fruita business license.
  3. Limited to 1 bedroom.
  4. All bedrooms shall contain fire and carbon monoxide alarms.
  5. Annual review of the Conditional Use Permit by the Fruita Code Compliance Officer.
  6. Compliance with all laws and regulations as applicable.
Public Comments:

No written public comments have been received regarding this application at this time.

Staff Recommendation:

Because all of the approval criteria for Conditional Use Permits and all supplemental zoning standards and regulations either are or can be met, staff recommends approval of the proposed Bed & Breakfast with the condition that all review comments are met before the business becomes operational.

LAND DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION

Project Name: Ryan & Renee Cook
Project Location: 157 S. ORCHARD, FRUITA, CO
Current Zoning District: Requested Zone:
Tax Parcel Number(s): 2607 - 17 - 10 - 013 Number of Acres: 4.17
Project Type: Zoning Use Permit

Property Owner: Renee Cook
Property Owner: Developer: Ryan Cook
Address: 157 S. ORCHARD City/State/Zip: FRUITA, CO 81521
Phone: 970.589.7713 Fax: Phone: 970.589.7713 Fax:
E-mail: RyanClayCook@gmail.com E-mail: RyanClayCook@gmail.com

Please designate a representative as the coordinator for this application. The representative should attend all conferences/hearings, will receive all correspondence, and communicate all information to the property owners.

Owner Rep: Ryan Cook
Contact: Ryan Cook
Address: 157 S. ORCHARD City/State/Zip: FRUITA, CO 81521
Phone: 970.589.7713 Fax:
E-mail: RyanClayCook@gmail.com

This Notarized application authorizes the owner’s representative, if designated, to act on behalf of the property owners regarding this application.

The above information is correct and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Renee S. Cook 10/21/19
Name of Legal Owner Signature Date

Name of Legal Owner Signature Date

Name of Legal Owner Signature Date

STATE OF COLORADO) ss.
COUNTY OF MESA  )

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this 21st day of Oct, 2019.
My Commission expires: June 20, 2023 Notary Public

APRIL MARIE VAUGHAN
NOTARY PUBLIC - STATE OF COLORADO
NOTARY ID 20194023639
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES JUN 20, 2023
Project Narrative for Conditional Use Permit

We are applying for a conditional use permit to operate a short term rental in accordance to those listed in Airbnb & Vacation Rentals By Owners.

The property is located at 157 South Orchard Street. This is a single dwelling owner occupy house with an attached, under the same roof, Mother in Law Suite (added in 2018). The parcel and tax key is 2697-171-16-013. This is .17 acre lot.

Our main house is a 1000 square foot 3 bedroom house. My family of 4 currently live in the main house.

Our rental is a 393 square foot all self contained apartment, including a full kitchen, shower & all appliances. The suite has 1 bedroom & living room for beds. The rental would not allow more than 4 occupants and most likely to cater to 2 occupants. There will be normal usage of utilities during rent.

The addition was built in 2018 to current Mesa building standards, for our mom & mother in law. Unexpectedly, she passed away this September 2019. This addition was never intended for an AirBnB, a business or anything such. We now have a huge void on our property. We feel blessed to have this space and feel we need to fill it. We also believe this would benefit our local community & economy with a positive impact.

Our homeowners insurance Farmers Insurance covers our house and any short term rentals on our property.

We have ample parking with 3 spaces in front yard & driveway and 4 parking spaces down side yard & in back. There will be no impact on traffic flow or parking.

This is an owner occupy, so we be the caretakers for property. There will be no littering, loitering or excess noise, since we will be monitoring for that. We will take care of all yard, snow & garbage removal. All building codes are up to date. Quite times will be from 10:00pm-7:00am. There is no HOA in our neighborhood.

Guest will be asked to parked in designated driveway area. If vehicle is too long, we have additional off road parking in back.

There will be no advertising nor signs in yard promoting Airbnb or VRBO. We will advertise through Airbnb & VRBO.

We have spoken with many neighbors and they are very supportive of this project.

Christian at 169 South Orchard
Kenton Seth at 151 South Orchard
Ron & Lena at 141 South orchard

We love Fruita & all it has to offer. We think this will help enhance our local community as well as show our love for this town to our guests. Thank you for the consideration.
November 20, 2019

Fruita Planning Department
325 E. Aspen Avenue
Fruita, CO 81521

Re: Comments for 2019-43 1575 Orchard Street -Cook VRBO

1. Fire extinguisher, carbon monoxide detector and smoke detector/alarms must be in place and operational.

Richard Pippenger
Fire Marshal
Kelli McLean

From: Darrell Bay <darrell.bay@mesacounty.us>
Sent: Friday, November 22, 2019 4:58 PM
To: Kelli McLean
Subject: Re: 2019-43 Cook Short Term Rental

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Kelli,
MCBD has no objections.
If inspections are required a building permit must be obtained prior to the inspection.
Thanks

Darrell Bay
Building Official
970-244-1651

On Thu, Nov 14, 2019 at 3:11 PM Kelli McLean <kmclean@fruita.org> wrote:

Hello,

Please send us your review comments for project 2019-43 Cook Short Term Rental by Thursday, December 5. I have attached the link below for your convenience.


Thank you!

KELLI MCLEAN
PLANNING TECHNICIAN
CITY OF FRUITA
970-858-0786

FRUITA COLORADO
Application #: 2019-44  
Project Name: Village at Country Creek North  
Application: Preliminary Plan  
Representative: Sunshine of the Redlands  
Location: 1176 18 Road  
Zone: Community Residential (CR)  
Request: This is a request for approval of a Preliminary Plan application to subdivide approximately 3.48 acres of land into 12 single family detached residential lots.

**Project Description:**

This is a request for approval of a Preliminary Plan application to subdivide approximately 3.48 acres of land into 12 single family detached residential lots in the Community Residential zone. Lot sizes range between 7,050 to 12,482 square feet and access to the subdivision is proposed from Periwinkle Lane on Snowdrop Court. In 2015 when Village at Country Creek Filing 5 was completed, a Tract of land was set aside with the purposes of access to the subject property. The majority of the lots will take access from Snowdrop Court, while up to 2 lots will take access from a shared driveway to the north. Additionally, a trail connection from Snowdrop Court to the sidewalk on North Pine Street (18 Road) is proposed through Tract A. This Tract is also the location of an onsite detention pond and is proposed to be maintained by the Village at Country Creek Patio Home Association. It should also be noted that this subdivision is proposed to be incorporated into the Village at Country Creek Patio Home Association.

**Surrounding Land Uses and Zoning:**

Land uses surrounding the subject property consist of mostly residential. Zoning surrounding the subject property is Agricultural Forestry and Transitional (AFT- County zoning) to the north, Large Lot Residential (LLR) to the northeast and Community Residential to the east, south and west.
2019 Zoning Map

2019 Aerial Photo
Review of Applicable Land Use Code Requirements:

MAJOR SUBDIVISION PRELIMINARY PLAN

Section 17.15.070.C of the Land Use Code requires the following approval criteria to be considered for Preliminary Plan applications in addition to compliance with all approval criteria required to be considered for Sketch Plan applications:

1. Adequate resolution of all review comments,

   As discussed below, it appears that review comments can be adequately resolved without a significant redesign of the proposed development. This criterion can be met if all review comments are resolved with the Final Plat application.

2. Compliance with conditions of approval on the Sketch Plan, if any.

   No Sketch Plan application was submitted or required for this proposed development. This criterion does not apply.

The following are the approval criteria that must be considered for Sketch Plan applications:

1. Conformance to the City of Fruita’s Master Plan, Land Use Code, Design Criteria and Construction Specifications Manual and other city policies and regulations;

   With some changes, the proposed development can be in conformance with the city's Master Plan, Land Use Code, and all other city policies and regulations based on the more technical responses as expressed in the Consolidated Review Comments included with the Staff Report.

   It should be noted that since the proposed subdivision will be incorporated into the existing Village at Country Creek Patio Home Association, that the School Land Dedication impact fee will not apply since the CC&R’s restrict occupants of the dwelling units to 55 years and older. This meets section 17.19.110 (C) (3) of the Land Use Code.

   Review comments from the City Engineer, Planning & Development Department, Xcel Energy, Ute Water, Grand Valley Drainage District, and Lower Valley Fire District address technical issues within the development and are attached with this Staff Report. If these issues are adequately resolved with the Final Plat application, then this criterion can be met.

2. Compatibility with the area around the subject property in accordance with Section 17.07.080;
Section 17.07.080 of the Code states that for all land uses, “compatibility” is provided when a proposed land use can coexist with other existing uses in the vicinity without one use having a disproportionate or severe impact on the other use(s). The city decision-making body may consider other uses existing and approved, and may consider all potential impacts relative to what customarily occurs in the applicable zone and those which are foreseeable, given the range of land uses allowed in the zone.

There are many single family houses in this area, many of which are on various sized lots ranging from 7,000 square feet to nearly 9 acres. The proposed single family detached residential subdivision proposes lots that are over the 7,000 square foot minimum for the Community Residential zone. In addition to surrounding land uses and zoning, the incorporation of this subdivision into the Village at Country Creek Patio Home Association should strengthen compatibility with the surrounding development and allow this 12 lot subdivision to transition into the Village at Country Creek subdivision effectively. This criterion has been met.

3. Adequate provision of all required services and facilities (roads, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, parks, police protection, fire protection, domestic water, wastewater services, irrigation water, storm drainage facilities, etc.);

The Village at Country Creek requests that due to the nature of the development being a 55 and older community, that they limit their accesses to the current locations at Sunrose and Primrose Lanes. Typically, a development would be required to construct a 3rd access once the development reaches 75 residents. The basis for that number is the number of trips generated by the units. ITE has defined the trip rates for residential units at approximately 10 trips per day per unit. This would suggest that our threshold for a 3rd access would be at a point where there are approximately 750 trips. Late in 2019, a speed study was conducted within VCC to determine if there were any speed issues. This was at the request of the VCC HOA. As part of the study, the ADT was determined. The ADT’s for Primrose and Sunrose Lanes were 329 and 195, respectfully for a total of 524. By rough count, there are 185 units that have been built with an additional 41 units platted. With the proposed new 12 lots for this subdivision, the total lots would be 238. Prorating future trips to full buildout would suggest that the VCC including the 12 proposed lots would generate 674 trips which falls under the 750 threshold.

If all review comments and issues identified in this Staff Report are adequately resolved with the Final Plat application, this criterion can be met.

4. Preservation of natural features and adequate environmental protection;

The project narrative states that, “natural features will be preserved to the largest extent possible.” There appears to be some trees on the subject property that are proposed to be kept and pruned. These trees are within Tract A and will be maintained by the Village at Country Creek Patio Home Association.
Any stormwater management issues must be addressed and sedimentation and weed controls will be required as part of the construction process.

This criterion can be met.

5. **Ability to resolve all comments and recommendations from reviewers without a significant redesign of the proposed development.**

Although some redesign will be required in order to meet the minimum requirements of the Land Use Code and other city regulations, it does not appear that resolving concerns necessarily leads to a significant redesign of the development that would require another Preliminary Plan review.

Review comments from City Engineer, Planning & Development Department, Xcel Energy, Ute Water, Grand Valley Drainage District, and Lower Valley Fire District address technical issues within the development and are attached with this Staff Report. If these issues are adequately resolved with the Final Plat application, then this criterion can be met.

Based on this information, the approval criteria that must be considered for Preliminary Plan applications either has been met or can be met if all review comments and issues identified in this Staff Report are adequately resolved with the Final Plat application.

**Legal Notice:**

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**NOTICE OF LAND DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION**

The Fruita Planning Commission will hold a public hearing **TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2020 AT 7:00 P.M.** at the Fruita Civic Center, 2nd Floor Council Chambers, 325 E. Aspen Avenue. The following item will be presented at the public hearings. The Planning Commission will formulate a recommendation, which will be forwarded to the Fruita City Council. If the item listed below is acted on by the Planning Commission, the Fruita City Council will hold a public hearing on this same item on **TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2020 AT 7:00 P.M.** at the Fruita Civic Center, 2nd Floor Council Chambers. If you have an interest in an item on the agenda, please call 858-0786 or come to the Planning & Development Department office located at 325 E. Aspen Avenue to review the information in the file. Your appearance at both hearings is encouraged to ensure your concerns are accurately represented or you can write a letter outlining your concerns and submit it to the Planning & Development Department.

Application #: 2019-44
Application Name: Village at Country Creek North
Application Type: Preliminary Plan
Applicant: Sunshine of the Redlands
Location: 1176 18 Road
ZONE: Community Residential (CR)

DESCRIPTION: This is a request for approval of a Preliminary Plan for 12 single family detached residential lots on approximately 3.4 acres.

Physically disadvantaged persons who wish to obtain information may call (970) 858-0786. The hearing impaired may call Relay Colorado 1-800-659-2656, or visit our website: www.fruita.org

**Review Comments:**

All review comments received are included with this Staff Report. All review comments must be adequately resolved with the Final Plat application.

**Public Comments:**

No written public comments have been received regarding this application at this time.

**Staff Recommendation:**

Staff recommends approval of the Village at Country Creek North Preliminary Plan with the condition that all review comments and all issues identified in the Staff Report are adequately resolved with the Final Plat application.

**Fruita Planning Commission: January 14, 2020**

**Fruita City Council: February 4, 2020**
Application Type: Preliminary Plan
Application Name: Village at Country Creek North
Application Number: 2019-44
Location: 1176 18 Road
Zone: Community Residential

Pre-Application meeting: 7/10/2019
Application submitted: 11/27/2019
Application sent out for review: 12/6/2019
Legal Notice –
Planning Commission: 1/14/20
City Council: 2/4/20

This is a review of a Preliminary Plan application to subdivide approximately 3.48 acres of land into 12 single family detached residential lots. The subdivision also includes 4 Tracts over approximately .425 acres and approximately 0.516 acres of dedicated ROW.

**GENERAL:**

1. An updated Title Policy will need to be submitted with the Final Plat application.
2. How tall is the retaining wall in Tract A?
3. Section 17.29.030 (B) (7) states that Trails will be required to be paved in most circumstances. Staff is strongly encouraging that the trail contained in Tract A be paved. This could be similar to the trail connection between 18 Road and Marigold Avenue.
4. Clearance on the sides of the trail in Tract A must be at least 3 feet.
5. Since Tract B will act as a shared driveway to Lots 7 and 8 and possibly Lot 6 it should be noted that Section 17.43.050 (C) (2) (b) states that there is no parking allowed on shared driveways, and that for the Lots accessing from a shared driveway, one additional off-street parking space is to be provided.
6. Extend the sidewalk along 18 Road.
7. To discourage unexpected issues, please provide bollards at the ends of the trail on Tract A.
8. Please confirm that the existing home on the lot will be removed.
9. Has there been talk about replacing the existing fencing along the west property lines? Looks like a mix of wire fencing and electric fencing.

10. The electrical transformer box in the southwest corner of Lot 1 needs to be relocated if possible. This could result in an unusual situation for the future home owner.
PROJECT: The Village at Country Creek – North

Petitioner: John Moir

Engineer: Rolland Consulting Engineers, LLC
Eric Slivon, 243-8300

Reviewer: Sam Atkins

Date: December 21, 2019

REVIEW TYPE: ___ Minor Subdivision    X Major Subdivision
(Check One) ___ Lot Line Adjustment    ___ Final Plat
___ Site Design Review    ___ Conditional Use Permit
___ Other: PUD Guide Amendment

REVIEW COMMENTS

1. General: This project consists of the subdivision of twelve (12) single family lots on 3.29 acres and is intended to become a part of the Village at Country Creek Townhome’s HOA.

2. Plat:
The plat has a callout along the west property line as a 10’ ft Drainage Easement at Lot 5 and then both a Drainage and Irrigation easement on Lot 1. Can you consolidate that to be that same?

3. Construction Drawings:

Current standards required the pedestrian connections to be concrete.

The City does not want to be responsible for potential damage to the private drive in Tract B when cleaning the sewer main. Options for Lot 7 and 8 sewer services are either install an additional manhole in the asphalt prior to the lip of gutter creating a private line from the manhole at the lip of gutter to Manhole D, or terminate Manhole D in the asphalt and run both sewer service lines from the cul-de-sac through Tract B.

The water service for Lot 7 shall not cross into Lot 8. Make sure the service and meter can be installed in Tract B/Lot 7.

Call out 4-inch waterline in profile view on sheet 9 where applicable.

Where will the mail delivery be located?
Show the street light locations on the plan.

Call out the street signs and stop sign and where needed no outlet/dead end.

**Subdivision Improvements Agreement:** SIA Exhibit B will be reviewed after first round of comments.

Transportation Impacts Fees will be at the rate at the time of planning clearance for each lot. The Chip Seal Fee is $3.85/sy. Please provide the total square yards of asphalt pavement for fee calculation.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Public Works Department and Engineering Department recommend approval of this Final Plat Plan for this Major Subdivision upon satisfactory response to the comments above.
Grand Valley Drainage District

The district has reviewed the proposed project. We have contacted the engineer: GVDD will accept the outfall from the proposed detention facility at the rates calculated in the drainage report. The District will require a Discharge License for the detention pond. The proposed pipe from the detention pond to GVDD’s manhole will be a private drain and not maintained by the District.

Lower Valley Fire District

Install fire hydrant at intersection of Snowdrop Court and Periwinkle Lane. Ref: Section C103 as amended of Appendix C of the IFC.

Cul-de-sac diameter driving roadway is to be 96 feet. Do not include sidewalks as part of the road surface. Ref: Appendix D of the IFC.

Mesa County Building Department

MCBD has no objections to this project.

The following must be provided to our office in paper form

The city approved Soil report, Drainage plan & TOF tabulation sheet

Ute Water

Village at Country Creek North
• Show dry utilities for further review and coordination of utility placement.
• Eliminate the 45° bend as shown at STA 44+46.00 show C & BO restrain pipe 23’ to the south of line terminus.
• Call out existing service to be abandon and capped at main.
• Show water main on sheet 8 between STA 1+00 and 0+20 to follow grade contour to maintain proper bury depth.

Xcel Energy

I see a couple of conflicts with transformer location and water meter location. Possible lot #1 and tract A. Lot 12 is another one that we should look into as well.

Mesa County Surveyor

Village at Country Creek Filing North - 1st Review
12/19/2019

County Surveyor – Scott Thompson

Sheet 1
1. In the third paragraph, third line, easterly is misspelled
2. In line 5 of the description the bearing S79°42’21”W should be S79°42’21”E
3. A Community Development Director’s certificate may be required – verify with planning

Sheet 2
1. The adjoiner information west of the boundary should be William M Vidmar
2. South of the boundary there is an IRR BOX shown, this should be removed from the plat
3. There is a topographic symbol near the northwest corner that should be removed
4. Found or set monuments with a durable cap and license number should be indicated for all boundary corners
5. The west line of Tract C needs annotation
6. Sufficient annotation to locate the diagonal portion of the 15’ drainage easement within Lot 1 should be provided

See the redlined plat
LAND DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION

Project Name: Village at Country Creek North
Project Location: 18.5 and K Roads
Current Zoning District: Community Residential Requested Zone: Same
Tax Parcel Number(s): 2697-092-00-711 Number of Acres: 3.3
Project Type: Continuation of Village at Country Creek (townhomes and single family homes)

Address: PO Box 516 Contact: John Moir
City/State/Zip: Fruita, CO 81521 City/State/Zip: Fruita, CO 81521
Phone: 970-858-1226 Phone: 970-858-1226
Fax: Fax: 
E-mail: moir28@gmail.com E-mail: moir28@gmail.com

Please designate a representative as the coordinator for this application. The representative should attend all conferences/hearings, will receive all correspondence, and communicate all information to the property owners.

Owner Rep: John Moir Engineer: Rolland Consulting Engineers
Address: 278 N. Mesa St. Contact: Eric Slivon
City/State/Zip: Fruita, CO 81521 City/State/Zip: Grand Junction, CO 81507
Phone: 970-858-1226 Phone: 970-243-8300
Fax: Fax: 
E-mail: moir28@gmail.com E-mail: eric@rcegj.com

This Notarized application authorizes the owner’s representative, if designated, to act on behalf of the property owners regarding this application.

The above information is correct and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Name of Legal Owner Signature Date

STATE OF COLORADO
) ss.
COUNTY OF MESA

JESSICA VARLEY
NOTARY PUBLIC
STATE OF COLORADO
NOTARY ID 19974023975
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES JULY 27, 2020

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this 23rd day of November, 2019.

My Commission expires: July 27, 2020
Notary Public
Subdivision Application/Narrative

Preliminary Plat

For

THE VILLAGE AT COUNTRY CREEK NORTH
Village at Country Creek North

Petitioner & Owner: Sunshine of the Redlands, John Moir
278 North Mesa St.
Fruita, CO 81521
Ph. (970) 858-1226
e. moir28@gmail.com

Engineer: Rolland Consulting Engineers, Eric Slivon
405 Ridges Blvd #A
Grand Junction, CO 81507
Ph. (970) 243-8300
e. eric@rcgj.com

Parcel # 2697-092-00-711

Project Introduction
This is a proposed project to be annexed into Country Creek Patio Home Association as a part of Village at Country Creek.

Property Description
The property contains approximately 3.3 acres on the east side of 18 Road, just south of L Road. It is bordered on the east by Village at Country Creek Filing #4, on the west by low density agricultural use and on the north by the Grand Valley Canal. The property slopes gently uphill to the northeast, with a few locations around the canal that are slightly steeper.

Development Design
The Final Plat for VACC N includes the following:
- 3.3 Acres
- 12 Single Family Home Lots
- Extension of the pressurized irrigation system throughout the development.
- Open space along the Grand Valley Irrigation Canal and as a buffer between neighboring properties. The open space will be irrigated and landscaped and will be maintained by the Country Creek Patio Home Association.
- Tracts A, C and D dedicated to Country Creek Patio Home Association and set aside for open space, public access and trail easements.
- Tract B dedicated to Country Creek Patio Home Association as a shared driveway for Lots 7 & 8.
- An extension of standard residential sub-collector streets (44’ ROW), all with curb, gutter and sidewalk, as per Fruita City Standards.
- Snowdrop Court would extend from the intersection of Periwinkle Lane to the west and north ending in a cul de sac.

The Village at Country Creek is an example of what this filing will look like. There will be an extension of the master irrigation system into this filing, providing for pressurized irrigation throughout the community.
The single street (Snowdrop Court) is designed to City of Fruita standards. The street system allows for efficient and safe traffic circulation while providing easy access for emergency vehicles. Snowdrop Court within VACC N shall meet the sub-collector street standards of a 44’ ROW, with 28’ of mat, and a drive-over curb, gutter and sidewalk. The east-west oriented Tract A will provide a pedestrian corridor from 18 Road to Snowdrop Court on the east. Tract D will provide an additional trail connector from the end of Snowdrop Court to the east to an existing trail within the Village at Country Creek.

Already constructed as part of Village at Country Creek is a de-silting basin that is located on high ground south of the canal. This places it in close proximity to the irrigation water source (Grand Valley Irrigation Canal) and feeds two irrigation pump houses, one located along 18 Road and the other, alongside the de-silting basin on the northwest corner of Filing 4. This will provide easy access to irrigation water for this additional filing.

A water quality basin is designed along the southern border of the property within Tract A. This design takes into consideration the runoff from this development. When the basin is completed, it will be fully replanted with grass and the surrounding area revegetated.

The total open space dedication set aside is approximately .425 acres (or 12.5%), adding to the aesthetics of the subdivision.

Meeting Performance Standards

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPACT

The land uses in the surrounding area are transitional urban to rural, with residential subdivisions to the north, south, east and west. According to the land use plan developed by the City of Fruita, Community Plan 2008, the future use of this area is to be a mixture of community residential (4 units/acre) and rural agricultural. The design for this retirement community concept fits well with the City of Fruita’s Community Plan and offers a unique lifestyle alternative to retired people throughout the Grand Valley.

As an extension of the Village at Country Creek, this community is designed for persons 55 and better. The target market has a minimal impact on schools and provides Fruita with an “aging in place” retirement concept. Living within the first six phases, we have a diverse group of people, some still working jobs; others are only part time residents. The current residents are very pleased with the community as it has the feel of a friendly neighborhood.

Each lot accommodates one single family home with garage space for two vehicles as well as sufficient driveway space to accommodate off street parking for another two vehicles. The target price for these units is between $300,000 to $350,000.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

This filing includes 12 new homes and four tracts of dedicated open space. Tract A, C and D include nearly 17,533 square feet and will be dedicated to the PHA as additional open space. Tract B is 980 square feet, is also dedicated to the PHA, and will provide for access off of the end of the cul de sac for the northern two units.
SCHOOL IMPACT FEES
Being a residential neighborhood for retirees only, this community puts no burden on the school district. In all previous filings there have been no school impact fees paid to the school district; similar treatment is proposed for this filing.

TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC
The principal entries to the existing subdivision (Village at Country Creek) are off of 18 Road located at K.6 Road with the second entrance approximately 500 feet further to the north along 18 Road. All internal street cross-sections and pedestrian paths are consistent with City of Fruita standards. Trail heads are being provided which link 18 Road to the sidewalks along the internal street layout. An additional trail at the mid-block location provides access to other pedestrian trails within Village at County Creek.

PHASING PLAN
This is a single filing development and would become the eighth actual phase within Village at Country Creek. This would bring the total residential unit count to 241.

SEWER
This project connects to the City of Fruita sewer system. Sewer lines have been laid in Periwinkle Lane and the sewer line from Snowdrop Court would flow into this line.

WATER
This project is connected to the Ute Water system in the City of Fruita. An 8” water line extends along 18 Road and there are feeds to the east in Sunrose Lane, Periwinkle Lane and Primrose Lane, looping the system. A single 4” line will extend west and north along Snowdrop Court and provide water service and fire flow into this filing.

DRAINAGE
The drainage on the site is split on either side of Snowdrop Court and then flows to the southwest corner to the detention facility along the south side of Snowdrop Court. All drainage on the property, in excess of historic, is detained on site in this detention area. The collected storm water is then released at historic rates into an existing 12” Grand Valley Drainage line that extends up to the southern edge of the property. This line then runs along 18 Road and eventually flows west and south into Little Salt Wash.

FLOOD HAZARD
According to the FEMA maps, the entire site is out of the 100-year flood plain.

LANDSCAPING
The landscaping for Village at Country Creek has been designed with the intention of creating a friendly environment without creating an undue burden for maintenance. Trees have been planted along all interior roads so as to create some shaded canopies, shrubs have been chosen which flower during the different seasons and lawn areas have been minimized.

IRRIGATION
Irrigation water is provided by the Grand Valley Main Line Canal. There are presently 49 shares of water belonging to the PHA to irrigate 54 acres (gross) developed or under development within Village at Country Creek. Of these 54 acres, approximately 35% (19 acres) is or will be under irrigation, with the remainder in streets, sidewalks, driveways, homes and open space along Little Salt Wash. Sunshine of the Redlands will transfer 2
additional shares to Village at Country Creek for this filing which will increase total irrigated acres to around 20 acres with 51 shares.

A de-silting basin has been constructed near the Grand Valley Canal to provide for water storage and settling of the silts in the irrigation water. A pressurized irrigation system is designed for the entire project, incorporating remote controllers with approximately 140 zones at build out. Connections will be made into that system along Periwinkle Lane, creating a looped system and providing for flows throughout VACC N. The pumping stations along 18 Road and the Grand Valley Canal provide for a consistent flow of approximately 400 GPM at 65 PSI. The system is capable of serving this new filing of approximately 50,000 square feet of irrigated lawns and shrubs along the existing irrigation needs.

FIRE PROTECTION
This project has been designed to meet the standards necessary to provide fire flow for the Lower Valley Fire Protection District. All comments from Lower Valley will be incorporated into the final design.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION
Since there are no historic structures or sites on the property, this standard is not applicable.

NOISE, DUST AND ODOR
This residential development project is being constructed in a single filing and will require minimal ground disturbance. Ground disturbance to natural ground covers, such as along the edge of the canal, will be minimized. The project will also comply with all appropriate local, state and federal air emission and noise statutes. Erosion and sedimentation controls will be in use during and after construction in accordance with the State of Colorado Storm Water Management requirements and in accordance with the Storm Water Management Plan.

NATURAL FEATURES/ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
Natural features will be preserved to the largest extent possible. The only area of concern would be along the northern edge where the property borders the canal.

SOILS AND GEOLOGY
The Huddleston-Berry soils report reveals this site has fewer issues than the average in the Fruita area. The areas of shale will be below underground utilities. The report points out possible problems if an irrigation system is not monitored. We are providing a Country Creek PHA maintained irrigation system, carefully monitored for adequate delivery of water to the different zones. This system will help to minimize soil moisture fluctuations and maintain soil stability.

DECLARATION OF COVENANTS, CONDITIONS AND RESTRICTIONS
The Covenants for this new filing will be administered by the Country Creek PHA. There is currently a Board of Directors made up of six residents and the developer. The covenants address the issues of common area maintenance and the fair assessments of those costs, the 55 and older age restriction, architectural control standards, and the enforcement of all the restrictions. A supplement to those covenants has been approved
by the residents as per the Declaration and Bylaws and will be recorded, adding VACC N to the existing PHA.

MARKETING AND IMPACT OF A RETIREMENT COMMUNITY

Traffic Impact

It is important to note that according to statistics from the Institute of Transportation Engineers, traffic generated from retirement communities is usually only 55% of that of a standard subdivision. Our experience within the existing filings has been that (excluding construction traffic) the Village resident averages about three trips per day.

Economic Impact on the City of Fruita

Studies have shown that there is a very positive economic impact from retirement housing on communities. First, retirees have a steady source of income based on savings, retirement accounts, pension funds, etc. Second, in general, most retirees do the largest portion of their shopping locally. Third, they have relatively little impact on schools (many dedicate time doing volunteer work), and add very little additional load to the police department. This subdivision represents a potential source of property and sales tax revenue yet the residents exert only modest demands upon the services of the City of Fruita.
TO: FRUITA PLANNING COMMISSION  
FROM: PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
DATE: JANUARY 14, 2020  
RE: FRUITA IN MOTION: PLAN LIKE A LOCAL

BACKGROUND

This coversheet is to provide the Planning Commission background information for the Fruita In Motion: Plan Like a Local Comprehensive Plan. The items contained within the packet are not in final draft form with graphics, maps, community profile, community character look book, and miscellaneous supporting documents not included. The elements in the packet are considered more of the “core” of the plan in raw text which shape the plan vision, goals, policies, and actions. Planning Commissioners should also note that there are several track changes that represent comments from the December 12, 2019 workshop. Also included are clean versions of the Future Land Use map and Future Transportation map accompanied with duplicated maps with edits. Those proposed changes will need discussion prior to placing the document in final design. Staff will provide a spreadsheet of all changes that need discussion prior to the Planning Commission hearing.

In an effort to complete the Fruita In Motion: Plan Like a Local documents, any feedback from this January 14, 2020 Planning Commission meeting will be discussed at a joint City Council and Planning Commission workshop on January 28, 2020 with the anticipation to have the plan in final form for the February 4, 2020 City Council meeting.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

The Planning Commission needs to provide a motion for recommendation to the City Council.
Chapter 1: Introduction

Fruita is an exceptional community. Throughout this comprehensive plan process, residents brought up how much they love living in Fruita, its small-town character, and their desire to preserve the community’s most desirable qualities into the future. This plan starts by declaring what makes Fruita special. In turn, these community values are the foundation of the plan – shaping the plan vision, goals, policies, and actions. The following list represents what Fruita residents value about their community.

Community Values

1. Fruita is a place where you run into neighbors, friends, and acquaintances at local stores and restaurants, parks, and the community center.
2. Fruita is a place where children, adults, and the elderly feel safe walking and biking to schools, parks, or downtown.
3. Family-friendly events and festivals are well-attended and gather the community.
4. Fruita is a community where people are invested and constantly work to make the community better.
5. Fruita residents appreciate the stunning natural beauty surrounding the city.
6. Fruita has incredible access to outdoor recreation. This access supports local businesses and fosters an active, healthy community that inspires visitors to come play like a local.
7. Fruita is funky and has a vibrant downtown filled with small businesses.
8. Farming is a part of Fruita, from the agricultural lands surrounding the city, to the farmers market that takes place downtown.
9. Fruita is innovative and open-minded – the government and its residents are willing to try new things.
10. Fruita takes a community-first approach – the City prioritizes residents in making decisions.
11. Fruita provides quality services efficiently to its residents and businesses.
12. Fruita is a distinct community – geographically separate from others in the Grand Valley.

Plan Vision

These values lead to the following vision for the City of Fruita:

“The City of Fruita values quality of place. It’s an inclusive city, with a small-town feel and vibrant downtown, surrounded by public lands. People love to live, work, and play in Fruita because the city facilitates community, safe neighborhoods, family-friendly events, and walking and biking. The city governs in a way that’s responsive to its citizens and prioritizes high-impact services and projects. Fruita fosters a fun and funky ambiance around the arts, agriculture, and recreation.”
The community values and vision were informed by the Fruita City Council strategic outcomes. In 2014, City Council developed the strategic outcomes (see adjacent) to guide council and ensure that actions and policies that council enacts align. The community values in this plan evoke many of the same ideas and priorities as these strategic outcomes and ensure that the comprehensive plan stays true to both the council and the community’s visions for Fruita.

Plan Organization
This plan begins with Chapter 1, which describes the community values that inform all elements of the plan. From these, an overarching vision statement describes what Fruita wants to be in the future. Chapter 2: Community Snapshot offers the necessary context around where Fruita is today and trends that will influence its future. The remaining chapters of the plan are the plan topic areas, where specific goals, policies, and actions are laid out. These six topic areas or chapters are:

- Chapter 3: Land Use, Growth, and Community Character
- Chapter 4: Economic Development
- Chapter 5: Parks, Health, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails
- Chapter 6: Transportation
- Chapter 7: Infrastructure and Services
- Chapter 8: Education, Arts, and Cultural Resources

Each chapter has a specific vision statement for that topic area that nests within the plan’s overarching vision statement. Each chapter vision has several goals underneath it, broad primary outcomes and strategies for how the city can achieve that vision. The policies and actions to work towards the goal are listed below each goal.

Plan Themes
The goals, policies, and actions of the plan are intended to support and preserve the community values. Based on these values, the following key themes emerged in the goals, policies, and actions of the plan:

Efficient Development
The City of Fruita encourages infill over sprawl and development within the existing city limits and Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). Efficient development reduces the demand for infrastructure and city services, supports community connectivity, and encourages a thriving downtown core.

Community First, Tourism Second
The City of Fruita prioritizes its residents and provides them a high quality of life. Tourists are attracted to Fruita for this, and the opportunity to “play like a local.”

A Thriving Downtown
The City of Fruita supports a thriving downtown with strong local businesses, an inviting streetscape, and events and places that encourage the community to gather. Flexible design standards support creative uses of downtown spaces, and higher-than-existing surrounding residential densities creates a variety of housing units and types for residents to frequent businesses.
Connectivity
It is easy for vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians to get around Fruita and to visit local destinations. The City of Fruita offers a safe, intuitive, and well-connected on- and off-street trail network for pedestrians and cyclists.

Strategic Economic Development
Fruita’s approach to economic development focuses on expanding existing businesses while also making Fruita an attractive place to live and do business. Rather than compete with Grand Junction, Fruita is strategic in recruiting businesses that are well-suited for the Fruita community.

About this Comprehensive Plan
The Comprehensive Plan is the city’s guiding document towards land use and other community development decisions. According to the Colorado State Statures Section 31-23-206, “it is the duty of the [planning] commission to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the municipality, including any areas outside its boundaries, subject to the approval of the governmental body having jurisdiction thereof [city council].” According to the stature, a master plan, or a comprehensive plan for the City of Fruita, is an “advisory document to guide land development decisions,” and is not binding, unless incorporated into land use regulations. In Fruita, the land use code states that city intends for the planning policies of the comprehensive plan to be incorporated into the land use code.

The plan also provides guidance for city departments and boards: a vision to work towards and goals, actions, and policies to get there. The plan’s policies and actions include funding strategies for achieving the goals or pursuing other actions, to ensure that all elements of the plan can be implemented as appropriate.

The following chart shows how different entities should use this plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entity</th>
<th>Intended Plan Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City Departments</td>
<td>Budgeting, capital improvements, applying for grants, intergovernmental coordination and partnerships, prioritizing, seeking new sources of funding, future planning efforts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Council</td>
<td>Reviewing development proposals, budgeting, approving funding sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Commission</td>
<td>Reviewing development proposals, updating the land use code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developers</td>
<td>Understanding appropriate types of and locations for development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While residents’ use of the plan may be limited, the plan, with its associated public process, is derived from their vision and values, and represents their direction to the city in making decisions.

Update 2020
This plan is an update of the 2008 Community Plan, to better reflect where the city is today and its desired growth into the future. To better understand the changes the city has seen since 2008, see
Chapter 2: Community Snapshot. An update should remove already met goals and implemented policies and actions, and establish new policies based on the current community values and new opportunities and challenges. Several of the 2008 plan’s visions policies and actions were retained in this plan, although funding and implementation strategies were added to ensure that the city would be able to implement them in the coming decade. Other actions and policies were modified to match the new plan vision and goals. Comprehensive plans are typically revisited every ten years in order to ensure alignment with the community’s vision and adjust as necessary.

Public Process

*Fruita in Motion: Plan like a Local* speaks to the community’s significant role in the planning process. Residents helped shape every element of the plan, from sharing what they valued about Fruita and identifying issues for the plan to address, to reviewing drafts, and providing feedback on goals and policies. The process reached a large swath of the community, through traditional outreach (open houses, an advisory committee) and meeting people where they are, with booths at farmers markets, the art stroll, and other city events and the draft plan tour, where city staff met with HOAs and other local groups to share the plan and hear input from the community. A summary of the plan public engagement is below.

- **Plan Advisory Committee** – a group consisting of local residents, council members, business owners, and developers met frequently during the process to provide input, feedback, and review initial ideas.
- **Stakeholder Discussions** – the planning team held stakeholder discussions in March 2019 to gather initial ideas about community values and pressing issues from those deeply involved in the community. The planning team met with local service providers, developers, education officials, the livability commission, business owners, and economic development groups.
- **Kickoff Open House** – the planning team held a Kickoff Open House at the Fruita Community Center on May 23, 2019. The open house informed the general public about the comprehensive plan and process and asked residents to provide feedback on the last ten years in Fruita, Fruita’s place in Mesa County, Downtown, the community values, the plan vision statement, and pressing issues. The event drew approximately 100 Fruita residents.
- **Design Workshop** – the planning team held a design workshop on August 22, 2019 with members of the plan advisory committee, city council, and planning commission. The workshop asked participants to think critically about the existing design standards and envision downtown, the 6/50 highway corridor, and the transition zones beyond.
- **Presence at local events: Farmers Markets, Art Stroll**
- **Draft Plan Party** – The planning team held a Draft Plan Party on October 3, 2019 to share the draft comprehensive plan with the public. The event, held at Civic Center Park, informed attendees about the plan’s values and vision, key themes, future land use map, and topic areas. Attendees provided feedback through write-in question responses, dot exercises, and a prioritization dollar exercise. Members of the planning team and advisory committee were available for smaller discussions with attendees as well. 112 people signed in and an estimated 150 people attended.
- **Plan Road Show** – The Planning and Development Director and the City Manager presented the Draft Plan before the Fruita Chamber of Commerce, the Mesa County Planning Commission, the...
Fruita Rotary Club, the Fruita Lions Club, and held additional Open Houses at various schools throughout the community.

- **Plan Adoption** – A joint meeting between the Advisory Committee, the Planning Commission and City Council was held on December 12, 2019. This meeting discussed all the feedback received from the Draft Plan Party, the Road Show, and from various meeting attendees. The Planning Commission reviewed the edited draft plan on January 14, 2020 and held a joint workshop with city council on January 28, 2020. The final plan was adopted by council on February 4, 2020.
Chapter 2: Community Snapshot and Trends

This plan must suit the needs of the current Fruita community and remain relevant as the city changes and grows in the future. Thus, a thorough analysis of city and regional demographic and economic trends was conducted for this plan. This data-driven approach has informed many elements of this plan, from the future land use goals, to economic development strategies and education policies. Key takeaways are presented below, with a full report available as Appendix X.

Economic growth in Mesa County is accelerating, countering a long trend of slow growth. In 2018 and 2019, Mesa County experienced job growth over 3% per year. Job growth over the past decade has been concentrated into the last few years. Since 2010, Mesa County has added 7,000 jobs, with about two-thirds of those since 2016. Some of this growth is the result of people, businesses, and jobs relocating from Colorado’s Front Range to Mesa County and its lower cost business and housing environment.

Mesa County’s recent population growth has been concentrated in Grand Junction and unincorporated Mesa County. Mesa County added nearly 6,500 people since 2010 with 4,700 in Grand Junction, 1,100 in unincorporated areas, and nearly 600 in Fruita. From 2010 through 2018, most of Mesa County’s population growth—nearly 90 percent—has occurred in Grand Junction and unincorporated Mesa County. Grand Junction’s population is growing faster as well, with 1% annual population growth from 2010-2018, compared to Fruita’s at 0.6% annually.

Housing growth in Mesa County is accelerating, but Fruita’s housing stock is growing relatively slowly. Grand Junction issued an average of 280 new construction building permits annually from 2010 to 2018. In 2018, there were nearly 500 new housing starts there. In Unincorporated Mesa County, there were nearly 200 new housing starts annually during this time period and nearly 300 in 2018. In contrast, Fruita has issued an average of 62 new construction building permits per year, with 95 in 2018.

Fruita has a higher concentration of young families than the county as a whole. Fruita’s population has a comparatively younger median age and a larger average household size than Mesa County. The city is seen as very desirable for young families in the county. However, older residents are becoming a larger percentage of city residents, as retirees flock to the area for its desirable climate and community amenities.

Mesa County’s economy is showing signs of a sustained recovery and diversification. Following the 2008 recession, Mesa County shifted away from its historic reliance on energy extraction. The county’s unemployment rate, 11% at the peak of the recession, has dropped to 4.1%. Since 2010, health care has been one of the fastest growing industries in the county, although this aligns with the national trend. Manufacturing is currently a notable growth industry with firms moving to the area due to limited and expensive real estate in the Colorado Front Range. Mesa County has a diverse mix of manufacturing firms making products ranging from machinery, food and beverages, outdoor recreation equipment, aerospace components, electronics, and textiles. Manufacturing’s growth speaks to the
county’s relatively affordable real estate compared to other parts of the state and pool of skilled workers that may have previously worked in oil and gas.

Fruita’s mix of jobs is a reflection of its recreation appeal and its function as a suburb of Grand Junction, with many commuting residents. Fruita’s economy is similar to Mesa County’s but with higher concentrations of jobs in tourism and related leisure industries including restaurants, hotels, and retail. This is characteristic both of a suburban community and of a recreation gateway community. The majority of Fruita’s employed residents work in Grand Junction, approximately 60 percent. About 15 percent of Fruita’s employed residents work in the City.

Fruita has some of the highest home prices in Mesa County and home prices are appreciating rapidly. The average home price in Fruita was $328,000 YTD 2019. In Grand Junction, the average price was $225,000 in June 2019. Price appreciation has been rapid, with nearly 10 percent annual growth in Fruita over the last four years. These figures represent mostly re-sales of existing homes. New construction pricing in Fruita is in the $350,000 to $400,000 range compared to the mid $200,000s for a similar product in Grand Junction.

Housing affordability is a growing issue in Fruita and Mesa County, in general. Affordability issues are greatest among renters in Fruita, with about half of all renters paying more than 30 percent of their income towards housing costs. This is defined as being cost burdened, wherein a household is paying too much towards housing.

The rental supply in Fruita is extremely limited with essentially zero vacancy, allowing landlords to charge higher rents. The percentage of renters in Fruita has increased, even though most housing being built is in the form of single-family homes. Some people may be renting single family homes by choice; for others it may be the only option and they would prefer a lower cost option such as an apartment or duplex.

Housing affordability issues affect the ability of local businesses to attract and retain employees. This is a threat to economic sustainability if left unchecked.

These findings point to key areas for the city to address through this plan. This plan seeks to address managing growth at the edges and encouraging development within the city, supporting affordable housing to retain the local workforce, and working with Grand Junction on economic development while promoting a Fruita-specific brand to attract companies that are a good fit.
• There has been good balance of residential development and commercial development over the last ten years. With Grand Junction as a nearby commercial center, the development pressure in Fruita is primarily for housing, not for retail or office space.

• Affordable housing is becoming an issue as housing prices rise. Median housing prices have gone from $247,865 in 2016 to $328,048 in 2019. There are very few options for those looking to rent, live in smaller houses, or live in multifamily dwellings.

• Tourism in both Fruita and the Grand Valley region has increased – drawing visitors, second homeowners, and short-term rental investors. These trends are starting to affect the character of the community and the real estate values.

• The State Highway 6/50 corridor continues to be an unattractive gateway into Fruita.

• Fruita adopted the 2015 Mesa County Hazard Mitigation Plan as the multi-hazard mitigation plan for the City of Fruita. The plan identified floods and wildfires as high level hazards for the city of Fruita.

Community Process and Analysis

Public Engagement

Community engagement surrounding this topic was robust. The FLUM, and the goals and policies in this chapter were discussed at length, vetted by various groups, and tackled from different angles.

• Three Advisory Committee meetings focused on land use (June 13, June 20, and September 12, 2019). The first one was to discuss ideas and considerations for Fruita's growth. The second meeting was to provide feedback on the draft chapter and FLUM. The main themes were to: keep a rural edge so that Fruita is separate from Grand Junction; protect and enhance downtown as the heart of the community; avoid sprawl, especially eastward towards Grand Junction; and to add housing diversity.

• An Open House was held on May 23rd, 2019 where participants were asked where Fruita should and shouldn’t grow, where the city should be improved, and where it felt you “arrived” in Fruita. Participants were concerned about growth at the northern and eastern edges of the city and wanted to promote growth downtown, in the commercial area south of I-70, and in the industrial wedge between I-70 and State Highway 6/50 heading westward. The areas most in need of improvement were the State Highway 6/50 corridor.

• A Draft Plan Party Open House was held on October 3rd, 2019. This event shared the draft Future Land Use Map, and goals, actions and policies for land use, growth and community character. A draft Downtown Subarea map was revealed with activities for participants to choose what housing types were appropriate for each subarea and whether they agreed with the future direction of each subarea.

• A Community Character Workshop was held on August 22, 2019. Members of the Fruita in Motion Advisory Committee, Planning Commission, City Council, and the Downtown Advisory Board were invited to participate. The purpose of the workshop was to understand the constraints of the existing land use code and design standards, envision a future character for the downtown, and to define where the boundaries of downtown should be.
Land Use Analysis

- The observed building density of built-out neighborhoods was compared to what is permissible by existing zoning standards in the Land Use Code at the time this plan was written. 2019DMU densities are well below the zoning maximums with 3.8 buildings/acre observed, compared to the 12 dwelling units/acre permitted. Residential densities in the community residential (CR) zone district are relatively in line with the established maximum, at 3.62 dwelling units per acre compared to the 4-6 units allowed. Beyond the community residential, the other zoning districts tend to be very low density, well below their maximums.

Table X. Observed Residential Densities under 2019 Land Use Code

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone District</th>
<th>Zone District Name</th>
<th>Maximum Residential Density allowed by zoning</th>
<th>Observed Densities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AR</td>
<td>Agriculture Residential</td>
<td>0.1 du/acre</td>
<td>Not enough data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RE</td>
<td>Rural Estate</td>
<td>0.3-0.5 du/acre</td>
<td>0.3 bldgs/acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RR</td>
<td>Rural Residential</td>
<td>1-2 du/acre</td>
<td>0.13 bldgs/acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CR</td>
<td>Community Residential</td>
<td>~4-6 du/acre based on min lot size</td>
<td>3.62 bldgs/acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LLR</td>
<td>Large Lot Residential</td>
<td>3 du/acre</td>
<td>1.39 bldgs/acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFR</td>
<td>South Fruita Residential</td>
<td>2-3 du/acre</td>
<td>0.28 bldgs/acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DMU – Core</td>
<td>Downtown Mixed Use - Core</td>
<td>12 du/acre</td>
<td>3.8 bldgs/acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DMU – Outside Core</td>
<td>Downtown Mixed Use – Outside Core</td>
<td>12 du/acre</td>
<td>3.8 bldgs/acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMU – Comm</td>
<td>Community Mixed Use Commercial Development (including Mixed Use Buildings)</td>
<td>2-5 du/acre</td>
<td>1 bldg total observed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMU – Res</td>
<td>Community Mixed Use Residential Development</td>
<td>2-5 du/acre</td>
<td>Not enough data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GC - NR</td>
<td>General Commercial – Non-Res</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GC – MF</td>
<td>General Commercial – Multifamily Residential</td>
<td>Depends</td>
<td>Not enough data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>Monument Preservation</td>
<td>1 du/2 acres</td>
<td>Not enough data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSR</td>
<td>Community Services Recreational</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUD</td>
<td>Planned Unit Development</td>
<td>Depends</td>
<td>0.71 bldgs/acre</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Observed densities are based on residential buildings, while the residential densities are based on dwelling units. Given that most residential buildings in Fruita are single family homes, it is expected that real densities, in terms of dwelling units, would be slightly higher.

- The planning team calculated the capacity for new housing within the city limits and within the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) boundary from the acreage of vacant parcels (as recorded in the county GIS files). Within the city limits, there are almost 600 vacant acres, offering almost 3,000 potential dwelling units if developed at 5 dwelling units/acre. Including land up the previous UGB, there are over 2,600 vacant acres, for potentially over 13,000 housing units at 5 dwelling units/acre.

- The following map shows existing land uses within the city limits. Commercial uses are concentrated in downtown, the Kokopelli Business Park, and along the State Highway 6/50.
The golf course is also classified as commercial. Residential development extends outward from the commercial areas, largely to the north west and east of downtown. Condos, duplexes, triplexes, and multi-family are scattered throughout the residential areas but are few and far between. Agricultural lands exist on the outskirts of residential development and industrial lands are located on the western edge of the city. Exempt properties, largely parkland and other public institutions are well dispersed through the city. In downtown, the land area is 51% commercial and 49% residential.

The following map shows the city's built-out parcels by year of construction. Early development largely occurred in the downtown area, with development emanating outward from there over time. 2001-2010 was a major decade for residential growth to the northwest, north, east, and south. Minimal development has occurred since 2010, with small developments constructed on the edges of the city.
The planning team conducted an audit of the downtown design standards to understand how existing development aligned with those standards and the opportunities and constraints of the standards going forward.

- The following map shows lot coverage in the downtown area. High lot coverages are allowed in the existing LUC (90% in DMU core, 80% in GC, and 60% in DMU outside the core). However, lot coverages are typically well below those maximums except along Aspen Street east of Circle Park. Of residential parcels, 97% have under 60% lot coverage, with the vast majority under 25%. Commercial developments also tend to have a low lot coverage percentage, with almost 50% below 25% coverage.
The following map shows lot sizes in the downtown area. Most residential lots in the downtown are between 3,000 and 7,000 SF. Duplexes and multifamily units are not allowed on those lots, with duplexes requiring a 7,500 SF and multifamily requiring 10,000+ SF. Only 26% of lots are above 10,000 SF. The average residential lot is 0.16 acres, typically allowing for one to two units per lot. The commercial lots in the DMU core are either modest size (3,000-7,000 SF – 38%) or larger (above 10,000 SF – 44%). With an average lot size of .34 acres, four units could typically be included per lot for a multifamily development.
The following map shows the allowed building heights in Fruita. At present, 35’ tall buildings are allowed in the DMU, CMU, and GC districts, with 5 stories allowed in DMU core if it is residential over commercial and not within 100’ of residential. As shown on the map, there are limited places where five stories would be permissible. There has not been significant interest in constructing taller buildings in downtown Fruita and the tallest building in downtown today is about 30’.

The following massings show allowed building types in Fruita based on the design standards and identify potential issues.

- In the DMU core, five stories are allowed, with a 3rd story setback required, creating a “wedding cake effect” that limits creativity. A setback is not required and along a narrow sidewalk, that can lead away from “pedestrian-friendly” design. With a maximum density of 12 dwelling units/acre, it would be difficult to build to five stories and utilize the lot.
The model shows a DMU core structure in a transition area, where a five-story building feels out of place next to smaller residential units.
• Conclusions:
  o The current build-out of residential densities well below the densities allowed for and intended by each zoning category contributes to an inefficient development pattern. City service provision (sewer, roads, etc.) is more fiscally prudent at higher density levels. Especially in the DMU area, more dwelling units/acre would create more housing that is within walking distance of shops, restaurants, parks, and civic spaces.
  o The vacant parcel analysis shows that there is more than enough land within both the existing city limits and the UGB for Fruita to “growth from within” rather than continue to expand beyond its borders.
  o The existing land use analysis shows the core commercial areas in the center of the city surrounded by primarily single-family residential neighborhoods and agricultural uses on the outskirts. The main ideas in this plan are not intended to change this pattern, but to enhance and modify the land uses that currently exist.
  o The map showing the age of all buildings within the city shows that very little development has occurred in the downtown since the 1970s. To ensure that Fruita continues to be vibrant, encouraging and allowing new development redevelopment in the downtown is essential.
  o The analysis of lot coverage shows that buildings within the DMU could expand their lot coverage under the existing code. This means there is potential for additional residential units or commercial space through redevelopment or upgrades to existing buildings.
  o The lot size requirements for various types of development make it hard to build housing types other than single-family homes unless it is on a very large lot. This plan encourages a diversity of housing options. Changes to the Land Use Code to allow different housing types on various lot sizes will help remedy this issue. Set-back requirements and other dimensional standards should be re-examined.
  o Even though it is allowed by code, there are no buildings in the DMU over 30-35’ tall. Other constraints in the code such as dwelling unit densities and mixed-use requirements (residential over commercial) may be responsible for this. Perhaps other criteria (form, design, etc.) should be substituted for height restrictions in the 2020 land use code update.
  o The planning team analyzed conceptual buildings that meeting the existing Level 2 design standards. The allowed buildings do not necessarily fit with the desired character for Downtown Fruita. A re-examination of building types for the downtown both in this plan and the 2020 Land Use Code update will help resolve this issue.

Vision
Fruita is a distinct city within the Grand Valley. It is an efficiently laid-out community with small-town character situated among agricultural lands and a breathtaking desert landscape. It has a thriving downtown vibrant with businesses, residents, and civic gathering spaces. Surrounding the downtown are well-connected neighborhoods that provide a variety of housing sizes, types, and styles.
Future Land Use Map (FLUM) and Future Transportation Map (FTM)

The Future Land Use Map provides the basis for guiding the type, intensity, and location of different land uses within the current and future city limits. It is a spatial representation of the concepts and ideas discussed throughout the planning process. The goal of this map is to turn the Community Values (from Chapter 1) and the Land Use Vision for the Future into changes on the ground. It will lay the groundwork for future neighborhoods, a thriving downtown, a rural city edge, and a revitalized State Highway 6/50 corridor. Recommendations for potential re-zonings or changes to the land use code within existing zoning categories may follow from the implementation of this Future Land Use Map.

The Future Transportation Map complements the Future Land Use Map by highlighting specific road corridors that will need to be improved in the future to enhance circulation, create safe walking and biking routes, and supplement the land use policies and core concepts contained in this chapter.

Core Concepts of the Future Land Use Map and Land Use Policy

- **Edges.** An urban-rural edge defines Fruita as a freestanding community separate from Grand Junction. Edges discourage sprawling growth, encourage the preservation of rural areas, and allow for a more efficient use of infrastructure and urban services. Undeveloped parcels within the edge are encouraged to develop at higher densities than beyond the edge where rural densities are desired. An Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) depicts where moderate density development ends and rural density development starts.

- **Corridors.** Roads, sidewalks and off-street trails contribute to the sense of small-town character and a high quality of life by ensuring safe travel throughout Fruita. Recognizing that land use and transportation policies have a strong connection to each other, the Future Transportation Map identifies transportation corridors that have different priorities: Downtown Enhanced, Multi-Modal, Safe Route to School, and Enhanced Arterials. Each corridor type is chosen due its surrounding land uses, destinations along the corridor, and its existing ROW width. This plan also identifies high priority future roadways (such as Future Collectors) that will need to be completed as Fruita grows and neighborhoods continue to develop at the city’s edge.

- **Downtown Flexibility.** Very few buildings have been built or parcels redeveloped downtown since 1970. The existing design standards are onerous to development. Creating more flexibility in what types of building forms are allowed may spur both development and redevelopment, encouraging new businesses and homes downtown while maintaining community character.

- **Infill.** The Future Land Use Map prioritizes infill over sprawling residential development at the edge of the city limits. The policies in this plan aim to spur residential development within the existing city limits and UGB. It aims to transform the State Highway 6/50 corridor by allowing and encouraging multifamily housing on parcels and blocks adjacent to this corridor.

- **Strengthen Existing Commercial Areas.** During the public process, many expressed a strong desire to not let commercial sprawl occur between Fruita and Grand Junction, and rather to focus on the existing commercial areas in the center of the city. The market analysis shows that there isn’t a huge need for additional commercial space within Fruita. Therefore, the policies in this plan aim to support the existing commercial areas and the businesses within those areas.
Land Use Category Descriptions for Future Land Use Map

Downtown
The Downtown land use category contains a mix of building types and uses. The intent is for the area to be a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented commercial and residential area and act as the civic heart of the community. Mixed-use development, such as commercial on the ground floor and residential above the ground floor, is encouraged within this area. Or alternatively, a block could contain commercial uses next to residential uses. Rather than have a maximum density allowed for this area, design criteria, use, and urban form should be considered instead, with dense housing (up to 12 units per acre). Allowing a mix of housing sizes, types, and styles encourages keeping Fruita’s “funky” character and while giving flexibility to builders. Inviting streetscapes and multi-modal corridors are a priority in this area to encourage walking and biking to and from downtown destinations.

R 4-8 (Residential)
The R 4-8 Residential land use category is intended for undeveloped areas where public infrastructure and services are available and proximal. This land use is also recommended for developed or semi-developed areas that are built out at a minimum of 2 units per acre. In areas that are currently built out at below the minimum density of this zone, it is expected that the minimum density (4 units per acre) is achieved when redevelopment occurs. This plan recognizes that many already-developed areas will remain in their current form for decades to come. However, there are still re-development opportunities throughout the city. In areas designated as R 4-8, there should be a clear and easily recognized pattern with a regular order to the lots and a recognizable geometry to the spaces between buildings. Innovative neighborhood designs in this land use category are encouraged. Neighborhoods in this area can be developed up to 8 units per acre using a density bonus program in order to incentivize developers to provide amenities such as parks and trail connections and different types of housing. Rather than a complex bonus density program to get up to the maximum allowed density, the new Land Use Code should outline the requirements so that up to 8 units/acre can be done as a use-by-right.

R 2-5 (South Fruita Residential)
The R 2-5 Residential land use category is intended for residential neighborhoods south of I-70. Much of this land is already built out at 1-4 units per acre. Being next to the river, some of this area is in the 100-year floodplain and not suitable for higher density development. Additionally, the access to the area from the rest of Fruita is constrained to Highway 340 and a frontage road that crosses under I-70 at 20 Road.

Rural Residential
The Rural Residential land use category is intended to retain rural character outside of the Fruita city boundary. This designation also functions as a transitional area between increased development and open and resource lands. Continued use of these areas for agriculture is encouraged. The recommended gross density (1 unit per 5-10 acres) can be flexibly applied to result in a variety of lot sizes, with the ultimate goal of retaining some larger parcels for resource preservation or agricultural uses. City sewer will not be provided to these lots. At the recommended density, should these areas be developed in the far future, it will be easier to redevelop than a more sprawling pattern of 1 to 2 units per acre. Clustering-type developments are not encouraged in this land use category.

Monument Preservation
Do we want to add another category for the very southern end of the city (see FLUM comments)
Industrial
The purpose of this land use category is to encourage non-polluting industrial, manufacturing, warehousing, and research and development activities designed to meet acceptable state and locally established standards for noise, dust, effluent (e.g., sewage pre-treatment), odor, and other impacts typically associated with industrial uses.

C-1 (Commercial)
This land use category is intended for land uses that are compatible with the future vision for the State Highway 6/50 Corridor as discussed in this plan. As a heavily traveled corridor for residents, local-serving businesses such as restaurants, retail sales and services are encouraged. Multi-family residential is also encouraged in this zone, especially on side streets adjacent to the highway corridor. Allowed lot sizes may be smaller than the C-2 category with lesser parking requirements. Maintaining walkability and safe bicycle access while also controlling vehicular access from Highway 6/50 is a key consideration for lots in this area. For lots adjacent to the highway itself, an attractive frontage will help improve the character of this corridor.

C-2 (Commercial)
This land use category is envisioned for commercial uses that may not be as compatible with Downtown Fruita. Hotels, offices, restaurants, and retail are encouraged in this area. With good I-70 access, this area is envisioned as serving both residents, tourists, and pass-through traffic. Lots in this area may be larger than in C-1 and have more parking available.

Community/Recreation
This category includes schools, parks, and the Community Center. It also includes state parks and preserved areas that are located within the city limits but are controlled by state or federal agencies.

TRD “To Be Developed” Innovation/Flexibility Zone
This category is currently zoned industrial but has close proximity to both downtown and commercial areas. It has a recently completed paved trail that runs through it, connecting the downtown area and northern nearby neighborhoods to the Colorado River and recreation opportunities on the south side of the highway. The area still has many barriers to development such as limited road access. It may take a large master development in order to overcome the cost of these barriers. Live/work space and light manufacturing/retail co-spaces are some of the ideas imagined for this area. Innovative multi-family residential could also be appropriate in this area. This area could be considered for multiple types of underlying zoning to give it maximum flexibility for development.

Goals
#1. Remain a “freestanding” community within Mesa County, with distinct municipal borders and a clear separation from other communities in the Grand Valley.

Why? A distinct border contributes to Fruita’s identity as a small town separate from other communities in the Grand Valley. An “edge” where one side is more developed, and the other side is more rural allows for a clear understanding of where development is appropriate and where agricultural lands, open space, and preservation are prioritized. Additionally, a boundary contributes to more efficient development, directing growth to where there is already transportation infrastructure and services such as water and sewer.
Policies

A. Continue to have an Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) policy that defines desired densities and land uses surrounding the city. This policy is redefined in this plan through the FLUM.
B. Collaborate and coordinate with Mesa County on land use decisions within the Three Mile Planning area and the area beyond Fruita’s city boundary but within the UGB.
C. Approve annexation of parcels within the UGB at the desired densities as described in the FLUM. Annexation should help ensure that new development at the edge of the city (or county parcels within the city) is consistent with the goals and policies of this plan.
D. Encourage the conservation and preservation of agricultural lands and open space surrounding the city. Consider the purchase of open lands, the use of conservation easements, and cluster development as tools to preserve the rural lands outside of Fruita.

Actions

A. Propose and negotiate an intergovernmental agreement with Mesa County to maintain and/or redefine the “rural edge” low density zoning beyond the Fruita city limits and UGB. Collaborate on an update to the Rural Planning Area Future Land Use Plan for Mesa County as it pertains to the areas that surround Fruita.
B. Reconsider the value of zoning categories that allow between 1-3 units/acre (LLR, SFR, RR) and consider allowing either higher densities (4-8 units/acre) or lower densities (1 unit/10 acres) in these areas to create a more efficient development pattern with a more distinct edge.
C. Do not provide city services (sewer, road improvements) beyond the UGB. For developments between the city limits and the UGB, ensure that the provision of services aligns with the goals and policies in this plan.
D. Consider de-annexing developments beyond the UGB.

C.E. Develop a list of “triggers” or special circumstances that would dictate either expanding the UGB beyond that depicted in the FLUM or providing sewer and road improvements beyond the UGB boundary.

#2. Prioritize infill development over development at the edge of the city limits.

Why? There is enough vacant and undeveloped land within the city limits and the UGB to absorb the growth that is projected over the next ten to twenty years. Development within the city boundary is less costly for both the developer and those providing infrastructure and services such as sewer and roads. Residential development within the city will be able to take advantage of existing nearby roads, parks, trails and community resources. Infill development will create more customers for the existing downtown and commercial centers, rather than customers for sprawling, highway commercial developments. Infill development at a minimum of 4 dwelling units/acre will likely produce more affordable housing products than what has typically been built over the last ten years.

Policies

A. Advocate for design flexibility in building heights and densities for infill parcels in the Downtown land use area. Allow for different bulk standards for different types of housing products. Allow for innovative site plans such as alley-loaded, courtyard style, and multi-family of various architectural styles.
B. Consider bonus densities (up to 2 units per acre) allowing up to 8 units/acre for residential development outside of Downtown. Additional density would be awarded in a
new development for performance on the following measures: location (proximity to city center), amenities (open space, trail connections), size and diversity of housing types, and alternative street sections that meet certain criteria.

**C.** Consider annexing county enclaves to get land use jurisdiction over these areas and bring them up to City of Fruita standards (roads, sewer, water) and zoning densities.

**C.D.** Promote commercial infill especially in the Downtown and C-1 zones. Encourage buildings to have higher lot coverages, attractive street frontages, and safe bicycle and pedestrian access.

**Actions**

A. Adopt the land use categories from this plan into the Land Use Code and rezone accordingly.

B. Rewrite the Design Standards chapter of the Land Use Code to allow enough flexibility to encourage more infill development.

B.C. In the Land Use Code, allow for more flexibility in each category by-right, or with administrative review.

C.D. Communicate frequently with the development community regarding what the barriers are to infill development and what would be helpful to overcome these barriers. Start hosting a “Design and Development Roundtable” to make a regular open meeting where community members can discuss character and design ideas for the city.

D.E. Identify vacant land or foreclosed properties within city limits and/or UGB and consider buying and then providing this land at low or no-cost to developers as an infill incentive or for affordable housing.

#3. Build upon the success of Fruita’s downtown as the social and civic hub of the community. Work towards improving existing civic spaces, parks, and streetscapes to be inviting to residents and visitors of all ages; creating more local businesses, and expanding residential options within the walkable, historic downtown area.

Why? Fruita’s downtown is the heart of the community with beloved shops, restaurants, and civic spaces. Community members value seeing each other downtown and supporting local businesses. Additionally, downtown densities are far below what the zone district allows. Higher density infill development that helps achieve the allowed densities will contribute to an even more vibrant downtown, with more nearby, walking-distance residents that can support more small businesses.

**Policies**

A. Adopt the Downtown Subareas Plan (Appendix to this plan) as a way to express the desired character for different areas of Downtown. This would take the place of the “Core” versus “Outside Core” distinction that exists presently.

B. Consider a Downtown Business Improvement District (BID) or Urban Renewal Authority (URA) in Downtown Fruita as a way to support Downtown businesses and infrastructure improvements.

C. Establish a dedicated funding source and program for downtown streetscape and park improvements and building upgrades.

D. Consider a Downtown overlay that would expand compatible commercial uses beyond the Downtown along the street corridors of Aspen, Cherry, Pabor, and Maple.
**Actions**

A. Rewrite the Design Standards chapter of the Land Use Code to encourage Downtown development of the types of buildings desired by the community that are appropriate in each Downtown Subarea. Heights, setbacks, and lot coverage dimensions may be slightly different for each Subarea.

B. Amend the Land Use Code to only allow three to four story buildings (down from five) and only in particular Downtown Subareas.

C. Implement the following key downtown park and civic space projects, incorporating kid-friendly elements:
   - **Circle Park Improvements.** Establish an implementable action plan to complete improvements to Circle Park in the next 5 years. This key public space is the center of Downtown, and therefore the community. Follow concepts from the Downtown Streetscapes Improvement Plan and revisit components, as necessary, based on today’s goals and desires for the community.
   - **Other Downtown Park Improvements.** Establish a programming plan for downtown parks to ensure that each park includes unique functions. Determine if any programming elements are missing from downtown and if so, where they should be placed. Encourage publicly accessible open spaces in new development, especially in key areas where access to open space is lacking (refer to map for potential locations.) Improve access and encourage shared use of school grounds in downtown for residents to use in off-hours.
   - **Downtown Enhanced Street Improvements.** Mesa Street, Pabor Avenue and Aspen Avenue are defined as “Downtown Enhanced Corridors.” Since Aspen Avenue has had recent improvements, focus on Mesa Street and Pabor Avenue. Include traffic calming elements, continuous and comfortable sidewalks, and safe bicycle facilities.
   - **Multi-Modal Corridor Improvements.** Cherry and Maple Streets are key streets that border downtown. Cherry Street is a gateway to downtown from I-70. Additions such as rhythmic lighting with banners, public art in the median, and other pedestrian and bicycle improvements should be considered. Maple Street is a transition street between downtown and adjacent residential neighborhoods. Features such as wider, consistent sidewalks, safe bike facilities, and wayfinding and signage are recommendations.

#4. Allow and encourage a diversity of housing types to fit the needs of the Fruita community and provide the diverse “funky” character that is treasured by residents.

Why? Fruita’s housing stock is getting more homogenous and more expensive. As a community that prides itself on being inclusive, this ethos should extend to providing types of housing for people of different ages, income ranges, family structures, and aesthetic preference. Allowing and encouraging more apartments and/or townhomes in appropriate locations could contribute to more affordable housing options.

**Policies**

A. Update the Land Use Code to encourage a diversity of housing types in both Downtown and residential districts
B. Consider reducing lot size minimums for some of the residential zone districts as a way to encourage smaller more affordable housing units and add density that is in scale with Fruita’s existing character.
C. Work with the Grand Junction Housing Authority, Housing Resources of Western Colorado, Habitat for Humanity, and other nonprofit, low/moderate income housing agencies to identify potential affordable housing opportunities for Fruita residents.

**Actions**

A. Examine which density caps and dimensional barriers are prohibiting building types that may be desired by the community both in Downtown and in other land use areas.
B. Change the Land Use Code to allow more than 12 units/acre for apartment buildings in appropriate locations.
C. Undertake a Housing Needs Assessment to more fully understand the housing needs and gaps for different groups of people within the Fruita community.

#5. Encourage and support commercial uses in existing commercial areas.

**Why?** Fruita has three distinct commercial areas: Downtown along Aspen Avenue, the commercial district along State Highway 340 south of Interstate 70, and the State Highway 6/50 Corridor. Through the public engagement process, community members expressed concerns about commercial continuing to sprawl between Fruita and Grand Junction. Additionally, the market analysis completed for this plan shows that additional office/retail acreage is not in demand.

**Policies**

A. Collaborate with the Grand Junction Economic Partnership and the Business Incubator Center to match appropriate businesses within Fruita’s existing commercial spaces.
B. Continue to collaborate with the Chamber of Commerce and other organizations to foster a positive business culture in Fruita.

**Actions**

A. Update the Land Use Code to divide General Commercial into two commercial zones, one that is appropriate for the State Highway 6/50 Corridor and one that is appropriate for South Fruita.
B. Continue to define the underlying zoning for the Innovation/Flexibility area as identified on the FLUM in the Land Use Code update.
C. Work with City Market to upgrade or expand their Fruita store.

#6. Revitalize the State Highway 6/50 Corridor as an important gateway to the community.

**Why?** This corridor has historic significance for the community. It features the railroad and iconic grain elevator and serves as the primary regional thoroughfare for locals. This corridor has incredible visibility and potential for land use changes to help revitalize the corridor and improve access to downtown and regional trails.

**Policies**

A. Create a State Highway 6/50 Corridor Plan that envisions upgrades to the transportation corridor as well as land uses along both sides of the corridor. Use the ideas in this plan as a starting point.
B. Collaborate with the Mesa County RTPO and CDOT to advocate for changes on the State Highway 6/50 corridor that fit the vision and goals in this plan.

**Actions**

A. Update the commercial zoning along the corridor to reflect the desired uses (multifamily, local-serving businesses, retail and personal services.)

B. Update the Design Standards chapter of the Land Use Code to encourage unique architecture and a mix of uses in this area.

C. Create a streetscaping plan for the roadway from Grand Avenue to Coulson Street that:
   a. Implements the missing multi-modal link from Grand Avenue to Coulson Street. Determine the best design solution for this section based on available right-of-way and future land use potential.
   b. Introduces gateway design features and wayfinding signage at key streets such as Coulson, Mesa, and Maple Streets.
   c. Includes beautification elements such as landscaping, lighting, appropriate street furniture, and public art.

#7. Ensure that development is compatible with the natural landscape and hazard areas and limit the risks of hazards to people and property.

**Why?** The Fruita area has many sensitive natural resources. The following policies ensure that future development is located away from the most sensitive areas and all development review processes consider hazards and natural resources.

**Policies**

A. Discourage development within the 100-year floodplain as defined and mapped by FEMA or state or local floodplain management entity, whichever has been done most recently.

B. Place appropriate buffers and setbacks between environmental resources (i.e., canals and drains; washes and creeks and wetlands; and the Colorado River) and proposed development to ensure that the proposed development does not degrade the existing habitat or interfere with environmental resources.

C. Proposed land uses or development identify hazardous areas, i.e., floodplains, drainage areas, steep slope areas, geologic fault areas, and other areas hazardous to life or property.

D. Development is not allowed in hazardous areas, to minimize the risk of injury to persons and loss of property, unless appropriate mitigation measures are taken.

E. Proposed land uses or development address soil, erosion, and surface geologic characteristics of the development site through proper design, engineering, and construction.

F. If sensitive resources are disturbed, such as wetlands, compensate by on-site or off-site wetland restoration of equal or greater amounts.

G. Protect buffers and setbacks in perpetuity through development agreements by donating or selling the land, or a conservation easement on the land, to an accredited land trust or relevant public agency.

H. Maintain the visual integrity of Fruita’s landscape by identifying distinctive scenic or topographic features, such as ridgelines or unique vegetation, and either avoiding them or using innovative design techniques to integrate them cohesively into new development.
I. Strengthen partnerships towards hazard mitigation with the Lower Valley Fire District, RiversEdge West, Grand Valley Irrigation Company.

J. Collaborate with the BLM, Mesa County, and Grand Valley communities to identify regional solutions to hazards. Continue to work with Mesa County on hazard mitigation planning and response and work to update the 2015 Mesa County Hazards Mitigation Plan as necessary.

**Actions**

A. Update the Land Use Code to establish regulations for stormwater discharge to minimize the detrimental effects of filling and disposal of debris along washes and creeks.

B. Evaluate the Big Salt Wash drainage structures under US 6, I-70, and the railroad as their suitability in serving as trail underpasses during non-flood periods.

C. Address gaps identified in the 2015 Mesa County Hazards Mitigation Plan Fruita Capacity Assessment including a formalized public information program around hazards and ensuring that all critical facilities are protected.

D. Update the Land Use Code with any new best practices and standards for flood provisions to minimize public and private losses and promote public health and safety.
Economic Development DRAFT

Introduction
This Chapter provides guidance on economic development, and on the relationship between the land use and community character aspects of the Plan and the long-term economic health of Fruita.

Economic Development Definitions
Economic development has a broad meaning encompassing all of the activities a community engages in to advance the economic and social well-being of its residents. Some activities like business recruitment and retention or providing incentives are very specific economic development actions. More broadly though, many community development areas are also important to economic development as illustrated below. Fruita takes this broad view of economic development and recognizes the importance of building a strong community in its long-term economic success and resilience.

There are three general approaches to economic development described below. Many communities use a combination of each approach, but with more emphasis in one area depending on the local needs and context.

- **Recruit and incentivize** – This is a traditional approach in which economic development staff and city officials proactively market their community to businesses and work to attract new growing or existing businesses to their community. Often this approach is combined with an incentives program which requires a commitment of financial resources or a willingness to contribute a portion of new revenues generated by an employer back to the employer, often to assist with real estate or relocation costs. Recruiting and incentivizing can be a low probability but high reward effort.

- **Place-based or amenity driven** – In this approach, a community places most of its efforts on building a desirable community in which to live and do business. The focus is largely on community development – schools; parks, open space, and recreation; cultural facilities; aesthetics; and overall quality of life. The theory is that businesses, high skilled workers, and entrepreneurs will seek places
where they want to live and work, and economic growth will stem from this concentration of talent and ideas. There is truth to the effectiveness of this place-based strategy in the knowledge-based economy. When this is the sole approach however, it can ignore the needs of local businesses. It also can focus on the needs of higher wage and income workers resulting in an exclusive community.

- **Economic gardening** – This approach recognizes the fact that most job growth comes from the expansion of existing businesses. It also focuses on supporting new business formation and entrepreneurship. It is a “grow from within” strategy that focuses on leveraging unique local strengths and opportunities. Economic gardening also incorporates place-based aspects and therefore has some overlap with a place-based strategy.

Stakeholders in the Comprehensive Plan process and City Staff have indicated that Fruita’s economic development approach should be a combination of economic gardening, place-based economic development, but with strategic targeted recruiting as opportunities present themselves.

**Context and Update**
Since the 2008 Plan, several important trends and changes have emerged as summarized below.

- **Resurgence of job growth** – Mesa County had a slow recovery from the Great Recession. In 2009, there were 61,900 jobs which fell to 58,000 in 2010. Mesa County added approximately 7,000 jobs since 2010, however 4,500 (just under two-thirds) of the new jobs were added between 2016 and the second quarter of 2019 indicating the acceleration in growth that is occurring.

- **Diversifying economy** – Extractive industries (oil and gas and mining) have been historically the primary economic drivers in Mesa County and along the Western Slope. Employment in extractive sectors have been declining since 2010, with a loss of over 400 jobs. The largest industries in Mesa County are education and health services comprised mainly of health care jobs. This sector grew by nearly 2,000 employees since 2010 accounting for 44 percent of new jobs. In addition, manufacturing has gained approximately 500 jobs and is poised for continued growth with outdoor and precision manufacturers expanding to and within Mesa County.
Retail evolution – Since the previous 2008 Plan, the retail industry has undergone a downsizing and transformation resulting from the rise of e-commerce. The year 2017 was labeled by the industry as the “Retail Apocalypse” when there were a record number of store chain and brand closings and bankruptcies. In Colorado municipalities, sales tax often comprises about two thirds of General Fund revenues; it is 54 percent of the General Fund. Attracting major retail anchors was often a central part of local economic development in many communities. The 2008 Plan included recommendations on attracting anchor retailers as well. Retail recruitment is increasingly competitive, as the number of major stores who are actively expanding has been reduced dramatically. The market is also shifting to food and beverage including dining out and congregating in coffee shops, casual eateries, and breweries. Operating a successful retail business now requires strong skills in merchandising, activity/experience programming, and marketing to compete.

Dual economic roles – Fruita has two roles within Mesa County and Western Colorado. Part of Fruita’s growth has been as a desirable bedroom community to Grand Junction. The majority of employed Fruita residents work in Grand Junction—between 55 to 60 percent. Fruita is also an international destination for mountain biking and cycling and is a gateway or jumping off point for Colorado National Monument; Moab and other Utah national parks. These visitors have economic impacts in local restaurants, hotels, short term rentals, and bike shops and other specialty retailers. For the many visitors who camp however, their economic impacts are lower. Fruita has developed brand and community identity around mountain biking due to the quality of the riding.

Large and expanding employers – A few large employers have located in Fruita. FHE is a manufacturing firm that designs highly specialized equipment for the safety of oil, gas, and mining drilling operations. FHE is expanding and adding approximately 100 jobs in Fruita. Family Health West has been in Fruita for over 60 years providing health care and employs over 280 people. Colorado Canyons Hospital is owned by Family Health West and provides a full-service hospital and emergency department in Fruita.
Fiscal sustainability – As Fruita has grown and matured it has assembled more infrastructure that needs to be maintained including roads, trails, parks, and a new recreation center. Due to Colorado’s tax structure under the Gallagher Amendment, residential property generates about a third of the property tax on the same value as commercial property and often does not cover its full cost of services. Commercial property is assessed at a higher rate and is needed to balance out the costs and revenues of growth. Fruita needs to strategically pursue commercial development opportunities while at the same time managing the costs of residential growth. Commercial development also generates important sales and lodging tax revenues.

Community Process and Analysis
Public Engagement
Several economic themes were identified in the engagement process with the plan advisory committee, business owners, and the public.

- **Workforce** – Local businesses are experiencing a shortage of workers especially in retail, food and beverage, and tourism sector jobs. This affects customer service and visitors’ and residents’ experience at local businesses. The availability and cost of suitable rental housing was cited as a major factor.
- **Downtown** – Many in the community desire a more vibrant downtown with a larger mix of business, particularly restaurants, plus activities for children and families.
- **Grocery and Food Stores** – The community would like to see improved grocery and food store options in Fruita. The City has one full-service supermarket now.
- **Living wage jobs** – More good paying jobs are needed in Fruita to offer opportunities beyond service and tourism economy jobs.
- **Quality of life and community character** – People value Fruita’s identity and quality of life. If or as the community grows, it will need to ensure that City revenues keep up with growth in order to maintain a high quality of life. Quality commercial development is needed to help balance the City’s revenues.
Strengths, Challenges, and Opportunities

Fruita’s economic development strategy is also informed by an evaluation of strengths and opportunities and challenges summarized below.

**Strengths and Opportunities**

- **Growing region** – Mesa County’s economy and population are growing. Managed well, Fruita can leverage the growing economy and population to achieve community benefits and goals.
- **High quality of life** – Economic developers have stated that business owners moving to the Grand Valley often live in Fruita even if their business is in Grand Junction or elsewhere. The lifestyle, quality of life, and schools are major attractors in Fruita.
- **Brand and identity** – Fruita’s brand may be attractive to businesses in the outdoor products and services industries as consumers, especially young consumers, are increasingly interested in brands that are compatible with their identity and values. Other successful brands have associated themselves with their host communities as part of their marketing strategy such as Smartwool and Moots Cycles (Steamboat Springs, CO); Simms Fishing and Oboz Shoes (Bozeman, MT); New Belgium Brewers (Ft. Collins, CO); and Mountainsmith (Golden, CO).
- **Direct interstate access** – Fruita and the Fruita Business Park have direct access and excellent visibility from I-70. Buildings with highway visibility can showcase their logos and presence in Fruita. Proximity to the interstate also facilitates shipping and truck access.
- **Business Park** – The Fruita Business Park is roughly 100 acres between US-50 and I-70 on the west side of Fruita. It has full utilities available including fiber optic and three phase heavy power. These sites are excellent opportunities for attracting employment in good paying economic base industries, and for diversifying the City’s tax base away from residential development.
- **Downtown** – Fruita has a downtown that can be strengthened into a more vibrant center of the community and component of its identity. There has been a trend of suburban communities trying to create new downtown areas when none existed; Fruita already has a recognized center of the community to build on.

**Challenges**

In implementing a community plan, it is useful to consider market-based challenges or constraints so that efforts and resources can be prioritized to achieve realistic goals and outcomes.

- **Proximity to Grand Junction** – As a larger community with a larger labor force at the center of the region, Grand Junction has approximately 90 percent of the commercial real estate in retail, office, and industrial space. Cities tend to attract the most development due to the economic principle of agglomeration in which jobs and development catalyze additional jobs and development. With a larger population and workforce than Fruita, Grand Junction is a more competitive location for most retail and commercial development. Fruita should therefore be strategic and target businesses that fit Fruita’s identify and local market.
Development costs and feasibility – Today for many businesses considering Fruita it has been more cost effective for them to lease existing buildings in and around Grand Junction than to build a new building in Fruita. There has been a large inventory of vacant industrial buildings as the energy industry has contracted, and lease rates are competitive. This inventory is absorbing however, and demand will trigger the need for new construction. In Fruita, developers are not building speculative space as it is not yet a major proven location for office and industrial space due to the agglomerations in Grand Junction. A business that wants to locate in Fruita however because of the identity and brand may look at these economics differently. In downtown, small businesses cannot afford the rents needed to support the construction of new space.

Community Scale – Fruita is a small community with a small labor force at the edge of the Grand Valley region. It will struggle attracting large employers who require access to a large labor force. This is not so much a constraint as a recognition that Fruita should prioritize its efforts and focus on attracting small businesses and growing existing businesses in Fruita.

Downtown Critical Mass – To be more vibrant and create a stronger draw and center for locals and visitors, the number of businesses in Downtown needs to be expanded. “Critical mass” refers to the co-location of a sufficient number of businesses and activities in a downtown to create a stronger draw that results in people visiting downtown more frequently and spending more time there during their visits. To achieve critical mass in downtown, a combination of economic and community development efforts are needed to attract and grow businesses and improve the physical and real estate development environment. To achieve critical mass, a minimum of 3 to 6 blocks of contiguous ground floor retail/commercial and mixed-use space is recommended, on both sides of the street.
**Goals and Policies**

1. **Fund and implement the Downtown Streetscape Improvements Plan.**

   Why? Public investment to improve the look and feel of a downtown can encourage private investment in the form of new businesses, new development, and improvements to existing buildings. Downtown Fruita would benefit from investments to manage parking, improve the streetscape, and add amenities (benches, play/entertainment features for families, landscaping). Reconfiguration of the paving and travel lanes surrounding Civic Center Memorial Park could create new development parcels or improve customer access to the area which may strengthen business conditions around the Park and create a perception of a larger Downtown, as the current configuration creates a perceived barrier or separation.

2. **Explore formal organization and funding and financing options for Downtown.**

   Why? Implementing the Improvement Plan will be costly. The City’s General Fund and Capital Funds are already overcommitted in capital project and maintenance needs. There are funding and financing tools that could be used to invest in the Downtown area. A more formal organization of Downtown business advocates could also work with the City on Downtown management, marketing, real estate, and business development efforts.

**Policies**

   a. Explore the feasibility of establishing a Business Improvement District, Downtown Development Authority, or Urban Renewal Area.

      i. A Business Improvement District (BID) can collect property tax and assessments on commercial property within the district upon approval through a vote of affected property owners. It is a separate political subdivision with the capacity to construct and maintain facilities as well as assume marketing and promotion activities. BID’s may authorize the construction and maintenance of a range of public improvements (streets, sidewalks, drainage facilities, decorative structures and art, parking facilities, public meeting facilities). BID’s may also provide a range of economic development and promotion activities such as marketing, special events, business recruiting, security, and design review. A BID can also be used to complement URA’s and DDA’s, as neither of those entities is authorized to oversee marketing and promotion programs.

      ii. Tax increment financing can be used through either a Downtown Development Authority (DDA) or Urban Renewal Authority or URA (in an Urban Renewal Area). In tax increment financing a base level of tax revenue is set at a defined date and any new tax revenue resulting from new development, new businesses, or property value appreciation is directed to the Authority for a period of 25 to 30 years. These are powerful financing tools when established and used strategically. The revenues and associated financing proceeds (bonds or a loan) can be used to build improvements and rectify blighted conditions. There are pros and cons to both types of Authorities that can be evaluated in more detail at the appropriate time. Both are widely used in Colorado.
b. Consider a formal program to reimburse or waive impact fees on new buildings and expansions in Downtown. This would help incentivize development and redevelopment by lowering development costs.

c. Establish a revolving loan (low interest) or grant fund for assisting with Downtown business real estate costs. Eligible costs could be renovating or expanding existing space, façade and sidewalk improvements, and rebating (or waiving) impact fees.

3. Work with City Market representatives and other property owners and businesses to expand and improve food and grocery shopping options in Fruita.

Why? Stakeholders in the plan process expressed desire for better and more options for food shopping in Fruita to reduce shopping trips to Grand Junction. Having quality grocery stores is a factor in quality of life as well.

Policies

a. Work with City Market representatives on options for renovating, expanding, or possibly relocating.

b. Support any efforts to establish a specialty foods store or market in Downtown.


Why? Fruita is part of the Grand Valley economy and can compete for many of the same targeted industries. GJEP has adopted 7 targeted industries which are the focus of its marketing, recruitment, and retention efforts:

- Agriculture, Food and Beverage;
- Aviation and Aerospace;
- Energy and Renewables;
- Information and Creative Technology;
- Medical and Healthcare; and
- Outdoor Recreation (largely manufacturing, and product design and marketing)

Fruita can attract many of these industries as well. Fruita needs to be involved in the regional discussions and updates on economic development to keep abreast of opportunities and local trends. It also shows Fruita’s interest in building and maintaining good relationships with its neighboring jurisdictions.

Action

A. Clearly define the City’s relationship with GJEP and the mutual expectations each have of each other.

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5. **Continue refining Fruita’s strategy and targeted business types for proactive marketing and recruiting. However, balance recruiting and marketing with essential community development activities and supporting local businesses.**

Why? Some amount of marketing and recruiting could be worthwhile for Fruita to continue building name and place recognition, especially among outdoor products brands and services. Business recruiting however is a high effort and low probability endeavor. Fruita can continue its targeted work in this area and determine the appropriate balance given staff and financial resources.

**Actions**

a. Consider refining the GJEP targeted industry list to a shorter and more specific list of business types that Fruita is interested in attracting. Tying this short list to the community’s values and identity would help further focus recruitment efforts.

6. **Define an incentives policy appropriate for targeted industries and specific areas of the City.**

Why? Fruita could use limited and targeted incentives to help attract and expand businesses (and associated real estate) in the Business Park and Downtown.

- Incentives in the Business Park and for other economic base employers could include tools such as personal property tax rebates, sales and use tax rebates or sharing, and/or impact fee waivers or reimbursements.
- In the Downtown area, the incentive structure could utilize tax increment financing, low interest loans or grants, as well as impact fee waivers or rebates. Consider formal programs to assist businesses.

**Actions**

a. Determine the incentive types and tools to be used in specific areas of the City.

b. Define criteria for receiving each incentive (e.g. job wage levels, construction quality, public benefit requirements, overall tax base contribution and payoff, etc.)

c. Establish a rigorous review process for incentive requests following best practices. In particular, consider a “but for” test for tax increment financing wherein a project would not proceed “but for” the public investment. Ensure that public benefit requirements are met, particularly with tax increment financing.

d. Promote Fruita and Mesa County as an Enterprise Zone
7. **Support local business growth through business retention and support programs and assistance with real estate.**

   Why? Existing local businesses are often the greatest source of job and economic growth.
   
   a. Within the context of an incentives, loan, or grant program, define a means and criteria of assisting with renovation, expansion, and redevelopment costs for businesses in Downtown and the Business Park.
   
   b. Conduct regular business outreach to determine if there are issues the City can assist with to help expand and retain local businesses.
   
   c. Promote the programs managed by the Grand Junction Incubator and GJEP including their several revolving loan funds, the Maker Space, and Business Incubator Center which provides coaching, advising, and mentoring.

8. **Reserve areas for commercial development towards long term growth.**

   Why? Fruita has a strong residential market and may experience pressure to rezone important commercial land to allow for residential development. Fruita, like other cities, needs to think long term about its fiscal sustainability and ensuring that there are opportunities for future commercial development is part of this strategy. A strong tax base is needed to keep up with the infrastructure, maintenance, amenities, and high-quality municipal services needed to maintain quality of life.

   **Actions**
   
   A. Every five to ten years assess the commercially-zoned land within the City and the Three Mile Plan area against market conditions and assess whether the amount of space is appropriate.

9. **Support flexibility in zoning and the development of diverse housing types as part of an economic sustainability strategy.**

   Why? The availability of workforce housing is now an economic development issue in Fruita. Additionally, businesses are looking for the right fit in terms of buildings, land, and space to move, expand, or start businesses. Fruita has an opportunity today to get ahead of the problem before costs rise further. Fruita can look to the experience of high cost mountain resort towns to observe the risks of waiting too long to act. Local businesses are experiencing workforce shortages. The Land Use chapter of this plan contains strategies and policies on increasing the diversity and supply of housing in Fruita. For workforce housing, emphasis is on market rate and affordable (income restricted) rental housing and attainably priced ownership housing. For commercial spaces, Land Use Code changes can lay the groundwork for being an attractive place for a new or existing business. Flexibility in the design and types of buildings that can be built would be a business-friendly approach.

   **Policies**
   
   A. Support changes in the Land Use Code update that will promote a business-friendly environment
   
   B. Support changes in the Land Use Code update that will promote a diversity of housing types that will keep existing residents in Fruita and attract future employees.
10. **Align City budget priorities with community and economic development values.**

Why? The City implements policy through its budgeting and spending priorities. The City should annually review its capital projects and operations funding priorities for conformance with this Plan.
Chapter 5: Parks, Health, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails

Introduction
This chapter includes a vision as well as goals, policies, and actions to guide parks, health, recreation, open space, and trails in and around Fruita. The ideas contained in this chapter were developed from: conversations around the current state of recreation and upcoming needs, an analysis of existing parkland, and community engagement. This chapter includes the Future Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Trails, and Connectivity Map, informed by past planning, recent growth, and emerging needs.

Context and Update
In the past ten years, the City of Fruita has elevated its recreational offering and partnerships. With a new community center, the city now holds a wide range of recreational programming. The city’s programs and events bring the community together and draw people to the City. Fruita has also taken a leading role in efforts to enhance the surrounding trail systems and regional connectivity.

- The Community Center opened in 2011. This has completely changed the recreational landscape of Fruita. Through the center, the City has been able to vastly expand its recreational programming for all ages, from youth to seniors. The center includes a gymnasium, senior center, library, meeting space, indoor and outdoor pools, and fitness spaces.
- The City has expanded the number of events it holds and the number of local events that come through. This increase has placed pressure on existing event space (Civic Center Park) and outside groups have expressed interested in holding larger events in Fruita. However, the City does not have the appropriate facilities to accommodate those events.
- The City has not acquired or developed parks as proscribed in the 2008 Community Plan and 2009 Parks, Open Space, and Trails (POST) plan. If development continues around the perimeter of the city, acquisition of land for parks will be vital. The City acquired five acres of land adjacent to Little Salt Wash Park for future expansion.
- Several new parks facilities have been completed in the past ten years on previously owned lands: Fruita Riverfront Park (Disc Golf Course), Fruita Bike Park. Residents have requested new types of park facilities such as a dog park, upgraded skate park, and pickleball courts.
- The City currently provides 1.94 acres of neighborhood parks per 1,000 residents (including the three city-maintained pocket parks and five acres of Little Salt Wash that acts as a neighborhood park). This is below the standard of 4.0 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents established in the 2008 plan.
- According to the Trust for Public Land, 76% of Fruita residents are within a 10 minute walk of parkland. However, only 3% of land within City limits is parkland – the national average is 15%. City parks are important, even if Fruita is lucky to be surrounded by public land which provides additional recreation opportunities.
- Funding proved to be a major obstacle in implementing many of the actions and policies of the 2008 community plan and the 2009 POST plan.
- The City’s parks and recreation impact fee was created 10 years ago, but the city has significantly increased what they provide since that time. The current POST impact fee is $1,850 per new dwelling unit constructed.
The City has completed numerous new trail segments including the Kokopelli Trail, the Colorado Riverfront Trail, Monument View, and a short section of the Lower Little Salt Wash Trail (about 10 miles of new paved trails) thanks to grants and partnerships with the Colorado Riverfront Commission, Grand Junction, Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), and CDOT. The City has not been able to develop the wash/irrigation canal trail system as outlined in the POST plan.

Many of the washes are in need of maintenance and there is uncertainty around who is responsible and how maintenance is provided.

The City has supported and funded regional trail projects on public lands, namely BLM lands at 18 Road and at the Kokopelli trailhead. A Fruita Trails Initiative group was recently founded as an informal group for the local mountain bike trail systems.

The Parks and Recreation department recently began initiatives around community health in partnership with the school district and Mesa County Public Health department.

Parks and Recreation is one of the city’s highest rated departments. However, staff is becoming concerned about being able to maintain facilities as programming, events, and facilities expand.

The City has a lot of big recreation projects planned for the future and needs to prioritize and budget for them in the short, medium, and long-term.

The City has received a grant to support an update to the POST plan in the coming year, 2020. This plan will be known as the Parks, Health, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails (PHROST) plan.

**Community Process and Analysis**

The planning team analyzed residents’ distance to parks and the park acreage per 1,000 residents. These analyses found that most residents live relatively close to a park, but there is limited park acreage for the city’s residents. The city has 1.94 acres of parkland for a 1,000 residents, well below the standard of 4.0 set in the 2008 Community Plan and the 9.5 acres on average as reported in the 2016 National Recreation and Park Association Field Report.

The Trust for Public Land’s Parkscore analysis was used as well. Parkscore, a nationwide analysis of city park systems, found that 76% of Fruita’s residents live within a 10 minute walk of a park. This is well above the national average of 54% within a 10 minute walk. Only 3% of Fruita’s city land is used for parks and recreation compared to the national median of 15%. The following map identifies where parks are located and high priority areas for adding parks.
The Plan Kickoff Open House touched on topics contained in this chapter. Lots of attendees mentioned the walkability, recreation opportunities, outdoor recreation access, community center, and events as elements of Fruita they really value. In terms of issues, many residents marked “difficult to bike” as an issue and a small number also named “difficult to walk” and “parks” as issues. Others brought up overcrowding at the community center, crossing I-70 on foot or bike is challenging, and the lack of connections to the bike park. Many felt Fruita should be known as the recreation center of the Grand Valley.

The plan advisory committee and livability commission met to discuss the vision, goals, and policies for this chapter.

Vision
The City of Fruita leads the Grand Valley in parks, health, recreation, open space and trails. The City provides unparalleled recreational programming and events, well-maintained parks and recreational facilities that are accessible to all residents, and a well-connected network of bike and pedestrian facilities. The City drives local efforts for world-class outdoor recreation opportunities and regional connectivity. The recreational programming, events, and outdoor recreation opportunities bring the community together around an lifestyle to positively impact the community’s health. The City takes initiative to protect the natural environment within and surrounding Fruita.

Goals
#1. Put on recreational programming and events that provide opportunities for residents to be mentally, physically, and socially active.
Why? Supporting residents active and healthy lifestyles and holding events and programs where residents can gather is a key priority for the city. However, there are concerns about accessibility, sufficient funding and facilities, and the appropriate balance of events. Many of these items will be further explored in the upcoming PHROST plan.
Policies

A. Provide recreational programming and events that are accessible for all ages and financial backgrounds.
B. Clearly communicate to the community what recreational offerings are available.

Actions

A. Explore opportunities for new event space will enhance the appeal of Fruita for events. Ensure that the new space has connectivity to downtown and other key destinations.
B. Develop standards and solicit feedback to ensure that recreational programming meets the needs of all residents.
C. Through the PHROST Plan, identify a funding source for recreational programming and develop a cost recovery model. Create a program pricing model for programs and events that encourages participation while achieving set cost recovery ratios. Set higher cost recover ratios for specialized/individualized programs and lower cost recovery ratios for community-based and benefit programs.
D. Consider increasing or restructuring the POST impact fee to incorporate and provide necessary funding for recreational programming and events.
E. Develop and provide informational resources to the community on events, programs, and facilities. This includes, but is not limited to, trail maps, activity guides, and enhanced electronic resources such as websites, social media, and interactive maps.
F. Look for alternative locations to host programs and events. Work with schools as places for events and programming.
G. Develop a continual vetting process for new and existing events.
H. Analyze the capacity of Civic Center Park for events in terms of frequency and size of events.
I. Address the limited recreational facility space for hosting and providing programming through feasibility studies of a Fruita Community Center expansion, fieldhouse, and additional athletic fields.

#2. Invest in the health of the local community and make a positive impact through programming initiatives, partnerships, and infrastructure.

Why? The City of Fruita, in supporting healthy lifestyles for its residents, has recently started developing initiatives and partnerships around community health. This plan offers initial policies and actions for the City before health-related guiding principles, policies, and initiatives are fully developed through the PHROST plan. Supporting community health in Fruita extends across many of the plan topics, such as walkability and education.

Policies

A. Continue partnerships with the school district, Family Health West, and Mesa County Public Health and identify opportunities for new partners. Consider forming a coalition with those partners to tackle health issues in the city.
B. Ensure that recreational programming is accessible to all residents (location, cost, timing, etc.).
C. Ensure that health initiatives and other recreational programming engage all ages, especially older youth (13-18).
D. Collaborate with the Community Alliance for Education and Hunger Relief, the Mesa County Leadership Forum on Hunger, and other partners to ensure that all Fruita residents have access to enough food for an active and healthy life.

E. Support the Mesa County Public Health Department and its Child Care 8,000 initiative in seeking to increase the number of available spaces for childcare in the county.

**Actions**

A. Develop guiding principles, policies, and initiatives to promote health through the PHROST plan.

B. Develop initiatives that encourage healthy habits among residents.

C. Develop measurable goals around health through the PHROST plan.

D. Develop pedestrian and bicycle facilities to encourage residents to walk and bike.

E. Find a funding source for health initiatives and pursue grants to supplement funding.

#3. Enhance the city’s trail system to allow residents and visitors to walk and ride safely within the city and to surrounding trail systems.

**Why?** Fruita residents value their access to outdoor recreation and ability to walk and bike safely around the city. The city should act as a trailhead, where residents and visitors can easily walk/ride out their door to surrounding trail systems or city destinations. This has been a key focus for the city with many connectivity enhancements in the past decade. However, further enhancements are essential to plan for and implement over the coming decade. The map in this chapter showcases future trail, connectivity and recreation ideas.

**Policies**

A. Encourage new schools to be located on well-connected parcels and develop safe routes to the new and existing schools.

B. Continue to collaborate on regionally important trail projects with the BLM, One Riverfront, and COPMOBA.

B.C. Continue to develop the primary trail system within the City of Fruita as identified on the 2009 POST plan, this plan, and the 2020 PHROST plan.

**Actions**

A. Develop wash and irrigation canal trails to enhance local connectivity. Work with oversight agencies to secure easements.

B. Prioritize major trail projects through the upcoming PHROST plan (i.e., connection to North Fruita Desert Trails, bridge over I-70, wash and irrigation canal trails). Base prioritization on level of improvement to community connectivity.

C. Improve access to Snooks Bottom and McInnis Canyon through bridges and other connectivity projects.

D. Integrate off-street trails with on-street trails and bike routes and add wayfinding signage.

E. If development expands at the perimeter of the city, expand the trail system to connect the new neighborhoods. Add infrastructure on State Highway 6/50 to accommodate a multi-use trail safely separated from the road.
#4. Strengthen outdoor recreation in greater Fruita through partnerships, funding, and city facilities.

Why? The Fruita area is renowned for its outdoor recreation opportunities. While most opportunities are outside the city limits, it is important for the city to support and maintain the opportunities for its residents, visitors, and economy. These efforts should not detract from Fruita’s community-first ethos.

**Policies**

A. Actively partner with the BLM, USFS, CPW, COPMOBA, and local businesses to support the trail and river-based outdoor recreation opportunities on surrounding public lands.

B. Support outdoor recreation initiatives with the potential for economic development.

C. Fund trail development, a trail maintenance crew, and trail studies/plans for to maintain and enhance local trail systems.

D. Make the city the trailhead for the surrounding outdoor recreation opportunities. Continue to maintain area trailheads but focus on strong connectivity to bike or walk from the city.

D.E. Continue to develop partnerships to make Mountain Properties open to the public for outdoor recreation. Explore alternate opportunities to manage the Mountain Properties.

**Actions**

A. Formalize the Fruita Trails Initiative into an organization that works to support the trail systems and connect them to the City of Fruita.

B. Explore a funding source that supports outdoor recreation initiatives such as a lodging tax. Continue to be creative around funding for these initiatives.

#5. Ensure the city’s parks and recreational facilities are a well-maintained, accessible resource of active and passive recreation spaces for all residents.

Why? Parks and recreational facilities are important spaces for Fruita residents to be active and gather. The City of Fruita is below the national standards in terms of parkland and existing facilities are overtaxed. As the city continues to develop and grow, proving sufficient parks and recreational facilities and expanding existing facilities will be increasingly important.

**Policies**

A. Develop new neighborhood and community parks and upgrade existing to provide sufficient parkland within an easily accessible distance for all residents.

B. Continue to encourage development to include pocket parks, open space areas, and connector/secondary trails. These pocket parks should be open for community use but maintained through the HOA, with the maintenance plan incorporated in the development review. The City will then primarily focus on community and neighborhood parks, open space, and the trail system. In the development review, ensure that the pocket parks are usable space that will be enjoyed by the development’s residents.

C. Maintain the high quality and high citizen rating for the parks and recreational facilities of Fruita.

D. Be proactive to acquire land as development occurs or beforehand for parkland.

E. Develop new parks and update existing parks taking the irrigation demand and water conservation into account.

F. Locate new parks along washes or other areas with strong connectivity to local neighborhoods and work to enhance connectivity to existing parks.

G. Continue working with the school district to share and develop recreational spaces as needed.
H. In the Land Use Code Update, explore adjusting the impact fee and fee-in-lieu to further support the development of parks.

**Actions**

A. Consider raising or restructuring impact fees in order to fund the development of new parks and the upgrading and maintenance of existing parks.
B. Explore opportunities to expand the community center or develop a new indoor facility to meet existing and future demand.
C. Explore opportunities for a new community park and athletic fields with lighting and a synthetic surface.
D. Actively seek new funding sources for park development and maintenance, especially through grants.
E. Further understand the Fruita parks and recreational needs through the public engagement process of the PHROST plan.
F. Explore the potential of public-private partnerships, foundational support, and other donations for the development of future parks.

#6. Preserve the natural features of the city and surrounding landscape through partnerships with local land managers and organizations.

**Why?** The City of Fruita has important natural features both within and beyond the city limits. Preserving and protecting these natural features is a key responsibility of its residents. Especially for the features beyond the city limits, working with partners is essential.

**Policies**

A. Conserve water quality, natural hydrology and habitat, and preserve biodiversity through conservation of the Colorado River, major stream corridors and washes, as well as associated wetlands, floodplains, drains, and riparian areas as important green spaces, wildlife habitat, waterway corridors, and trail linkages.
B. Actively manage the washes by determining a who at the city should be responsible for this, allocating resources, securing easements to clean up the washes, stabilizing the banks, and maintaining the washes. Work closely with RiversEdge West, Grand Valley Drainage District, and private landowners.
C. Protect sensitive resources by preserving natural buffers from the edge of natural features or 100-year floodplain (whichever is greater). Recommended buffers include: Ponds, creeks, streams, drainages, canals, and wetlands at 50 feet; Adobe Creek, Reed Wash, Little Salt Wash, Big Salt Wash, rare, threatened, or endangered wildlife habitat at 100 feet; the Colorado River at 300 feet.
D. Protect sensitive areas and other important resource values within Fruita’s Three Mile Planning Area. These may include:
   a. Lands that are constrained due to environmental sensitivity or geologic hazards
   b. 100-year floodplains designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
   c. Lands with important scenic values or that contribute to the visual quality of Fruita
   d. Lands with important cultural and historic values
   e. Rare vegetation
   f. Wetlands
g. Severe slopes  
h. Land with important wildlife habitat or other natural value such as nesting and production areas  
i. Winter ranges, feeding areas, and concentration areas for threatened and endangered species, species of special concern, or indicator species  
j. Wildlife movement corridors  
k. Lands that have important recreational values  

E. Work closely with regional land managers (CPW, BLM, Mesa County) to preserve natural features in the lands surrounding Fruita  

**Actions**  

A. **Consider implementing a drainage fee that would create an enterprise utility fund to pay for some of the policies listed under this goal.**
Chapter 6: Transportation

Introduction

This chapter includes a vision as well as goals, policies, and actions to guide Fruita’s transportation infrastructure planning and implementation. The ideas contained within this chapter are developed from: conversations on gaps, safety concerns, and other pressing needs; an analysis of the existing street and bike-ped network, a review of existing area transportation-related plans; and public meetings to discuss key corridors and priorities for improvements. This chapter includes the Future Transportation Map which highlights important driving and pedestrian routes around the city.

Context and Update

What has happened in the past ten years? What are the pressing issues?

- The 2013 Land Use Code Update lowered downtown parking requirements. South of I-70, the parking minimums are higher for commercial properties and are frequently exceeded.
- A 2017 study of downtown parking found that there is ample parking around downtown.
- The City completed a Pedestrian Bicycle Circulation Study in 2011 and has been able to implement many of the projects.
- Following the financial crisis and facing slow growth, in 2008, the Public Works department had a constrained budget yet still used reserves to fund projects that had a lot of momentum.
- The 2008 Community Plan Land Use Framework encouraged development in areas that required significant new infrastructure, including roadways.
- The 2008 Community Plan designated certain roadways as Enhanced Travel Corridors but did not fully define that term. No enhancements were made to those corridors.
- The City completed a Gateway Enhancements and Wayfinding Plan in 2016. The City has implemented wayfinding around the interstate interchange and the hospital/community center. Additional wayfinding signage may be needed around downtown and Little Salt Wash Park.
- Traffic is well dispersed through the City. However, as traffic increases, close attention will be paid to certain intersections to maintain traffic flow.
- A study of State Highway 6/50 found that the highway would have adequate capacity going forward. The highway does have issues at some intersections, where a turn lane may be necessary. The highway could also be enhanced through beautification projects. CDOT has a large Right-of-Way to make such changes and enhancements.
- The 2008 Community Plan named 19 Road as an enhanced travel corridor. However, the full build out of 19 Road is unlikely to happen in the next 10 years. As it builds out, it may take on a more arterial like form in the southern portion while remaining more like a rural collector in the northern portion. Managing the evolving cross-section of this road as development occurs will be important.
- A new elementary school is being constructed near the intersection of 18.5 Road and K.4 Road. Enhanced bicycle and pedestrian facilities will be needed on both roadways. K.4 Road currently has no pedestrian facilities and 18.5 does have sidewalks in some sections, but the road is not fully built out. In existing sections, residential driveways back out onto the sidewalk.
- The existing I-70 interchange area is challenging for both vehicles and pedestrians/cyclists. State Highway 340 across the interstate has more traffic than it was designed for and there is little...
space for pedestrians and cyclists on the bridge. Vehicular circulation around the interstate is also challenging, especially towards State Highway 6/50 is hard. CDOT has not planned for new interchanges through Fruita.

- The City needs to replace the bridges over Little Salt Wash and repave many road sections throughout the city. This presents an opportunity for restriping with bicycle and pedestrian accommodation.
- The City adopted a Downtown Streetscape Improvements Plan in 2013. The City did improve a few blocks of Aspen Street but that was very expensive, and funding has not been available to implement other items in the plan.
- The City developed a designated truck route map. Trucks are only allowed to use State Highway 6/50, 16 Road, and 19 Road.
- In 2018, a study was conducted on the appropriate level of transportation impact fee for new development in the county and its municipalities. The City and county have not raised the impact fee yet and discussions are ongoing. As it currently stands, the impact fee does not fully cover the costs of improvements.
- City Council has encouraged the Public Works department to prioritize maintenance of existing infrastructure over new construction. Recent new construction has been funded by grants and there is concern towards funding new projects in the future, as grants are not a consistent funding source. These new projects, once completed, will add to the City’s maintenance load as well.
- The City has a long list of maintenance project but is not keeping pace with the projects at the current rate of funding.
- A Safe Routes to School audit was conducted of Shelledy Elementary, Rim Rock Elementary, and Fruita Middle School in 2016. The audit found that a high percentage of students received rides to school, with few students carpooling. At Fruita Middle School, near downtown, few students biked to and from school, and many students walked home but drove in the morning. Traffic around the schools is increasingly an issue, with school drop-off and pick-up times aligning with peak commuting periods. The Safe Routes to School audit suggested intersection and sidewalk improvements for the City to complete.

Community Process and Analysis

The advisory committee discussed the Future Transportation Map and other important transportation priorities. Committee members expressed that connectivity, wayfinding, and enhancements to State Highway 6/50 must be important elements of this chapter.

An open house was held where participants were asked about issues facing Fruita and areas in need of improvement. “Difficult to bike” was a top issue among participants. A moderate number of participants selected “traffic” and “parking” as issues, with very few participants selecting “difficult to walk.” Areas marked as in need of transportation improvements included the State Highway 6/50 corridor just east of Cherry Street, the intersection of 19 and K Road, and along Highway 340 near the Colorado River crossing.

The planning team analyzed the existing conditions of the city’s roadways in terms of level of traffic and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The analysis identified key roads, sidewalks and trails that would make the city easy to get around on foot, by bike, or by car. The planning team also reviewed past
transportation studies and reports to incorporate previously identified gaps and recommendations under a comprehensive vision and develop implementation strategies.

**Vision**
The City of Fruita has well-maintained and safe roadways, intersections, sidewalks and trails. It has a transportation system that balances access and mobility through multimodal improvements on existing roads as well as coordinated planning with new development. Transportation facilities contribute to the character of the community by providing inviting streetscapes, off-street connections, and attractive gateways to the community.

**Mobility is how far you can go in a given amount of time. Accessibility is how much you can get to in that time.**

**Goals**

#1. **Design the city’s streets for their level of traffic, adjacent land uses, and connectivity context.**

Why? Fruita’s grid system allows people to get around the city easily. Residents especially value feeling safe while walking and biking to schools, parks, and downtown. The following designated streets are intended to facilitate safe walking and biking, with easy vehicular travel as well.

**Policies**

A. **Downtown Enhanced Corridor**– these corridors have slow speeds through traffic calming projects, easy access to downtown businesses, good sidewalks and bike facilities (Mesa St., Pabor Avenue, Aspen Avenue)

B. **Safe Route to School** – this corridor along 18.5 road, includes traffic calming, good sidewalks and bike facilities (18.5 Road/Fremont Street). Many schools are along this route so it was identified as a key street for safe walking and biking.

C. **Multi-modal Corridor** – These streets supports higher vehicular traffic volumes, bikes, and pedestrians, and often connect to off street trails. (Highway 340/Cherry Street, Mesa north of Ottley, Aspen west of the circle, Maple Street/17 ½ road, Pine Street/18 road, Ottley Road)

D. **Enhanced Arterial** – This designation is given to Highway 6/50. It is envisioned to feature safe intersections, easy access to and from side streets, and beautification through landscaping and hardscaping.

E. **Future Collector** – existing truck routes that will be built out as development occurs around it. Corridor plans should be completed for each road corridor to ensure they develop as envisioned rather than in a haphazard manner.

**Actions**

A. Establish minimum construction standards and cross-sections for trail and bike lanes.

B. Conduct a circulation study of the City in light of the land use changes associated with this comprehensive plan in 2020. A goal date would be 2025. Incorporate new design standards and cross sections into the updated Land Use Code.
#2. Create and maintain safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists to go from their door to local destinations (school, downtown, the Community Center, local parks, Kokopelli Business Park, and local trail systems).

Why? Residents explicitly stated the ability to walk and bike safely to local destinations as a key community value. This goal and the subsequent policies and actions are measures the city can take towards preserving and further strengthening this community value. While residents appreciate the existing walkability and bike-ability, physical improvements and programs are necessary to create a fully connected network and encourage safe behavior from pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists.

Policies
A. Encourage the provision of bicycle and pedestrian facilities in existing developments and require them to be included as an integral element of transportation plans for new developments.
B. Support educational programs to enhance cyclist safety such as motorist awareness programs and K-12 bike education programs.
C. Encourage off-street trails within new developments with connections to existing or proposed trails.

Actions
A. Develop wash and irrigation canal trails to enhance local connectivity. Work with oversight agencies to secure easements where development has already occurred. For new development, ensure that these easements are dedicated during the site planning process.
B. Create policy to encourage bicycle accommodations when restriping a roadway in consideration of expected use.
C. Consider additional measures to keep up with sidewalk maintenance (increase match, etc.) such as local block-by-block beautification competitions, enforcement, etc.
D. Add design amenities to improve the safety and comfort of all road users, with a particular focus on behaviors and attitudes that cause motor vehicle/bicycle crashes.
E. Continue implementation of the 2011 Fruita Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation Study.
F. Integrate on-street trail system with off-street trail system.
G. Explore bicycle and pedestrian improvements south of the interstate in the PHROST plan.
H. Update Land Use Code to consider alternative street sections in conjunction with other provided amenities in development review.
I. Maintain and update a city connections map that includes safe existing routes (off-street trails and designated on-street routes) with trail type. This would be appropriate as part of the 2020 PHROST Plan effort. Currently some routes are on transportation maps and others are on trail maps.

#3. Make Downtown pedestrian-oriented and easy for visitors and vehicles to navigate.

Why? Throughout the planning process, residents expressed their love for downtown and its friendly and welcoming atmosphere. They appreciated the public art, running into neighbors and friends, and the busy, active feeling of Aspen Avenue. The following policies and actions seek to preserve that experience and make downtown more conducive and pleasant to walk around.

Actions
A. Implement the Downtown Streetscape Improvements Plan. Additional actions around this plan are in Chapters 3 and 4.
B. Implement parts or all of the 2016 Gateway Enhancement and Wayfinding Plan.
   B.C. Add wayfinding signage downtown and on designated bicycling and walking routes through the City to lead to destinations and connect the on and off-street networks.
   C.D. Explore parking solutions to support a park once strategy and pleasant walking experiences in downtown (i.e., fee-in-lieu, shared parking lot).

#4. Support safe and efficient circulation through the city from I-70 and along State Highway 6/50.
Why? The two major transportation corridors of Fruita, I-70 and State Highway 6/50, currently present challenges to circulation for residents and visitors. For pedestrians and cyclists, crossing I-70 along Highway 340, the only option, is dangerous. North of I-70, it is not straightforward to get from Highway 30/Cherry Street to State Highway 6/50. Access to Highway 6/50 is difficult from many of its cross-streets and the streetscape is lacking. During the planning process, residents frequently brought up improving Highway 6/50 and the interstate interchange area as community priorities.

Policies
   A. Collaborate with CDOT on future planning, including upgrades to the I-70 interchange and possible future interchanges, State Highway 6/50 access control.

Actions
   A. Explore a bicycle/pedestrian overpass over I-70, either near Highway 340 and/or near the High School.
   B. Enhance vehicular circulation near the interchange for those accessing Highway 6/50.
   C. Enhance the pedestrian/cyclist facilities on the current Highway 340 bridge over the interstate.
   D. Create a State Highway 6/50 Corridor Plan that includes how to better interface with the I-70 interchange, streetscape enhancements, and access and intersection improvements.

#5. Maintain existing transportation infrastructure and services. Implement new transportation infrastructure, as appropriate.
Why? The city has both a long list of deferred maintenance and new infrastructure projects on the horizon. In recent years, limited funding has made completing maintenance projects and implementing new projects and plans challenging. The following policies and actions are strategies to allow the city to provide well-maintained and new transportation infrastructure.

Policies
   A. Continue to monitor traffic volumes and add traffic control devices as necessary.
   B. Work through deferred maintenance projects to be able to be more proactive with respect to maintenance.
   C. Continue to support the Grand Valley Transit dial-a-ride service for seniors in Fruita.
   D. Continue to support the Grand Valley Transit Fruita route and look for ways to encourage ridership.

Actions
   A. Restructure the Transportation Impact Fee to provide adequate funding for transportation impacts associated with development.
B. Examine the Gateway Plan, Bicycle and Pedestrian Circulation Study, and Downtown Streetscape Improvements Plan to identify small project phases that can be implemented as funding allows.

C. Update the Land Use Code to encourage new development in areas with fewer road construction demands.

D. Use the PHROST plan to identify and prioritize off-street connectivity routes.

E. Update Land Use Code to require EV charging stations at larger commercial businesses.
Services and Infrastructure

Introduction
This chapter includes a vision as well as goals and policies to address services and infrastructure within and surrounding Fruita. The ideas contained within this chapter were developed from conversations with relevant departments and service providers, reflections on past and current opportunities and challenges, and public meetings to vet the goals and policies contained within.

Context and Update
What is different now than 10 years ago? What has been accomplished? What has changed? What worked and what didn’t?

- A new wastewater treatment plant was constructed on the west side of the city. However, development pressure is greatest on the east side. A new trunk line was completed eastward to serve the Iron Wheel development and other developments along 19 Road.
- City departments collaborate well with each other and regional partners (CPW, Lower Valley Fire District, BLM, etc.)
- Current impact fees are higher for residential development than commercial; however, this has not spurred significant commercial development.
- The Public Works department upgraded electrical wiring downtown to limit the need for generators during events.
- The Lower Valley Fire District works closely with the City and is hoping to achieve a Class 3 ISO rating.
- Maintaining the mountain water system is becoming increasingly expensive for Public Works.
- After the 2008 recession, the Public Works department had a constrained budget and used reserves to fund the projects with a lot of momentum.
- Fruita is considered a very safe community and it is why many people choose to live here.

Community Process and Analysis
The planning team met with the city Public Works Department, Mesa County, Lower Valley Fire District, and the Fruita Police Department to discuss infrastructure and service needs in the area. An audit of the 2008 plan was completed to bring relevant goals and policies forward into this plan while leaving irrelevant or completed goals out.

Vision
Fruita provides efficient and effective public services to its residents and businesses. Service providers and agencies both within the city and beyond its borders collaborate towards regional goals. Infrastructure is planned in accordance with the city’s land use and transportation goals and policies.
Goals

#1. Provide services efficiently to residents through collaborations with local entities and regional partnerships (Grand Valley Irrigation Company, Lower Valley Fire District, Ute Water Conservancy District, Mesa County etc.)

Why? The community values that Fruita provides quality services efficiently to its residents and businesses. However, the city is not responsible for many of these key services (i.e., water, fire protection, etc.) and must work with the local entities and other regional partners that provide those services.

Policies

A. Continue to seek ways to capitalize on the mountain water system and have it pay for its maintenance. Consider fee-based recreation or irrigation options.

B. Maintain the irrigation distribution system and expand where appropriate in collaboration with the Grand Valley Irrigation Company.

C. Encourage the connection of neighborhoods to centralized water and wastewater providers. Do not encourage separate metro districts that provide their own services.

D. Maintain long-term infrastructure expansion plans, which will indicate where growth can be most efficiently accommodated and what the associated costs are.

E. Participate in conversations with regional partners (water district, fire district) to advocate for Fruita’s needs and to collaborate on regional issues and solutions.

#2. Require new developments support the efficient provision of infrastructure and services.

Why? The primary goals of this plan are to promote efficient development and infill in order to keep Fruita from sprawling, especially eastward towards Grand Junction. Providing services to new homes and businesses in existing neighborhoods and to nearby new neighborhoods is much less expensive for the community than providing services to lower density sprawling neighborhoods.

Policies

A. Encourage developers and landowners to landscape with low-water plants and to develop sustainable, energy-efficient buildings.

B. Ensure development impact fees are adequate to support the community’s need for upgraded infrastructure.

C. Do not provide infrastructure to development beyond the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). Collaborate with Mesa County to keep development beyond the UGB at a low density that will not need urban-level services.

D. New developments within the UGB should demonstrate the provision of adequate infrastructure during the subdivision and site plan review process.

E. Ensure that new development pays its own way and does not burden the existing community with additional capital or operating costs. Ensure that new annexations at the city’s edge share appropriately in the costs of connecting all utility, park, drainage, pedestrian and road systems.

F. Consider shouldering more of the infrastructure cost of inholding annexations that are proposed to be developed at the appropriate density as recommended by the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) as a way to encourage infill.
G. Avoid “leapfrog” developments that leave discontinuous street and utility systems. Consider annexation proposals on the basis of the logical and cost-effective extension of utilities, pedestrian connections, parks, drainage and road systems. Also consider the fiscal burden of the annexation in terms of major capital investments that would be needed by the city (wastewater, roads).

#3. Keep existing infrastructure well-maintained by prioritizing maintenance projects over new infrastructure.

*Why? The city has both a long list of deferred maintenance and new infrastructure projects on the horizon. In recent years, limited funding has made completing maintenance projects and implementing new projects and plans challenging. The following policies and actions are strategies to allow the city to continue to provide well-maintained infrastructure, with new infrastructure added as appropriate.*

**Policies**

A. In all city department planning, fund maintenance in the short, medium, and long term as much if not more than budgeting for new project.
Education, Arts, and Historic Preservation

Introduction
This chapter includes a vision as well as goals and policies to address education, the arts, and cultural resources within the City of Fruita. The ideas contained within this chapter were developed from conversations with various stakeholders in the community, reflections on past and current opportunities and challenges, and public meetings to vet the goals and policies contained within.

Context and Update
What is different now than 10 years ago? What has been accomplished?

- Pabor Day and the Fruita History Fair are an annual celebration, begun in 2013, to inform residents and visitors about the city’s past.
- The Historic Preservation Board has inventoried many of the historic buildings around Fruita, with the exception of downtown buildings.
- Funding has proved a barrier to the preservation and/or restoration of many of Fruita’s historic buildings.
- The Arts and Culture Board was founded in 2008 to create and enhance art and culture in the City of Fruita. The board began as an advisory board but has become a working board in order to raise funds for the arts in Fruita. The board primarily raises funds through the annual Arts Stroll.
- The board works to bring the arts, in all forms, to the residents and visitors of Fruita and support the local arts community. The board is leading initiatives around murals, art education scholarships, and adding artwork at the Community Center and other local buildings.
- The City has installed public art on Aspen Street in conjunction with other streetscape improvements and as funds become available.
- The grain elevator was painted in 2016 to serve as a gateway into Fruita.
- The new Community Center has become a space for after school enrichment and senior programs.
- Arts education programs in the city are relatively limited but expanding. The City is starting to offer programs and there may be opportunities to expand school students’ participation in the City arts offerings.
- There are limited public venues for the performing arts in Fruita.
- The schools in Fruita are highly regarded but also overcrowded. Fruita’s schools serve students from the city and the surrounding communities.
- An increasing number of Fruita school students are on free or reduced lunch.
- The school district is building a new elementary school in Fruita near the intersection of K.4 Road and 18.5 Road.
- The Mesa County Regional Transportation Office and City of Fruita conducted a “Safe Routes to Schools” audit of Fruita Middle School, Shelledy Elementary, and Rim Rock Elementary in 2016. The audits identified walk routes and students’ frequent mode of transit to school, surveyed parents, and suggested solutions. The audits found that a high percentage of students ride to school in a family vehicle typically due to distance and traffic along the route.
- The Fruita Youth Action Council was formed to provide youth input on community issues and programming, support area schools, and promote activities, programs, and events among youth.
The council also advises on the Fruita Youth Initiative, a new community effort to decrease youth substance use and promote mental health awareness.

Community Process and Analysis
Representatives of the Arts and Culture Board, Historic Preservation Board, and the education community were actively involved in the planning process. Each group reviewed the 2008 plan, described what has changed, and provided current priorities and funding needs.

Vision
Historic preservation, the arts, and educational opportunities enrich the lives of Fruita residents of all ages and preserve what makes Fruita special: its landscape, family-friendly community, artistic talent, and heritage.

Goals
#1. Keep Fruita’s history alive through the preservation of historic structures and education to teach residents and visitors about the area’s past. Identify new funding sources towards historic preservation and education.
Why? Honoring the past is in Fruita’s motto. The city has many historic structures and a rich history to share with residents and visitors. These policies and actions are intended to help preserve and restore historic buildings and support educational opportunities related to Fruita’s history.

Policies
A. Ensure that the updated design standards in the Land Use Code support architecture and development that would be compatible with Fruita’s historic structures and character.
B. Provide incentives for the restoration of historic buildings, through the use of grants and other funding sources.
C. Prioritize and provide funds for historic restorations that positively contribute to Fruita’s character such as Circle Park or the downtown core.
D. Promote and educate visitors about Fruita’s history and historic resources. This includes events, interpretive signage and walking tours, and supporting new and existing museums.

Actions
A. Explore the creation of a historic district to allow for board review of restorations of Fruita’s historic buildings and projects adjacent to historic sites in order to maintain the character.
B. Explore additional funding sources to facilitate restoration projects and incentivize re-use over teardowns, such as a lodging tax.
C. Utilize the historic preservation board to inventory downtown historic buildings. Explore grant opportunities to conduct a full assessment of downtown structures.
D. Develop a cultural/historic tourism brochure and webpage that promotes cultural and historic tourism in the area.
E. Nominate properties for the local, state, or national historic register.
F. Partner with public and private organizations that could assist in identifying and preserving Fruita’s historic structures. Potential organizations include Colorado Historical Society, Colorado Historical Foundation, Colorado Preservation, inc., Colorado Archaeological Society, or the Colorado Council of Professional Archaeologists.
#2. Celebrate the artistic talent and heritage of the community through public art, performances, educational programming, and festivals.

Why? Fruita has a talented local arts community and a rich cultural heritage to share with residents and visitors. The following policies and actions seek to provide greater financial support, to enhance the visibility and accessibility of the arts, and to engage residents in arts programming.

**Policies**

A. Include public art funding in streetscape and new facility projects.
B. Engage the Arts and Culture Board and the City to work on public art installations and future maintenance.
C. Display art and support artists whose work celebrates the community identity, scenery, and city heritage (i.e., dinosaurs, agriculture, recreation).
D. Work with the school district to support arts education in schools and explore opportunities to include students in art programming and installations around the city.
E. Work with the Parks and Recreation department on arts programming for residents of all ages.
F. Work to expand fundraising for the arts in Fruita through grant applications, arts and culture board fundraisers, foundations, and a dedicated funding source.
G. Provide incentives and encourage collaboration among businesses and private organizations to use existing facilities for events and educational programming.

**Actions**

A. Add public art across the city, including extending art south of the interstate. Key focus areas include the SH-340 roundabout, Welcome Center, the Dinosaur Journey Museum, and the bike paths.
B. Explore opportunities to better integrate local art into existing festivals and for new arts-related festivals and fundraisers.
C. Explore the feasibility of a dedicated community space for visual and performing arts with spaces for classes, studios, display, and indoor events.
D. Inventory and publicize the public art and art events around the city online and through brochures.
E. Explore a requirement in the Land Use Code for public art in larger commercial and residential developments.
F. Explore obtaining Colorado Creative District Certification from Colorado Creative Industries (CCI) for an area(s) of Fruita that meets certification guidelines.

#3. Support excellent school education and educational facilities in Fruita that integrate with the community

Why? The schools in Fruita are highly regarded and a reason many people choose to move to Fruita. The city must work with the district to maintain the high quality of education. Given the schools’ desirability and potential population growth in the area, new schools may be necessary. These schools should be located carefully and easy to walk and bike to. In addition, school recreation facilities present a key opportunity for the city Parks and Recreation department.

**Policies**

A. Encourage the school district to improve the education system by supporting a high level of education programs, staff retention, training, and citizen involvement.
B. Support the school district in improving and expanding Fruita’s schools as necessary to keep pace with the growing student population and provide high quality facilities.

C. Work with the school district to select appropriate locations for new schools in Fruita. New schools should be located near residential neighborhoods and with the potential for multi-modal connectivity.

D. Provide appropriate bicycle and pedestrian facilities and safety features to support walking and biking to new and existing schools.

E. Work with the school district to develop school recreational facilities that can meet the needs of the city’s parks and recreation department and departmental programming.

#4. Provide educationally enriching opportunities for residents of all ages.
Why? The following policies for lifelong learning support high quality of life, community engagement, and economic development for the city. Early childcare opportunities improve long-term educational attainment and encourage greater parental participation in the workforce.

Policies

A. Continue to provide educational programming through the senior center.

B. Hold programming to support the health and wellbeing of Fruita’s youth through the Youth Initiative and Youth Action Council.

C. Offer educational programming to make Fruita’s recreational and cultural resources accessible to residents of all ages (i.e., learn to mountain bike, archaeological programs).

D. Support ample, affordable early learning and childcare centers for city residents.
# Acknowledgements

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Chapter 5: Parks, Health, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails

Introduction

This chapter includes a vision as well as goals, policies, and actions to guide parks, health, recreation, open space, and trails in and around Fruita. The ideas contained in this chapter were developed from: conversations around the current state of recreation and upcoming needs, an analysis of existing parkland, and community engagement. This chapter includes the Future Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Trails, and Connectivity Map, informed by past planning, recent growth, and emerging needs.

Context and Update

In the past ten years, the City of Fruita has elevated its recreational offering and partnerships. With a new community center, the city now holds a wide range of recreational programming. The city's programs and events bring the community together and draw people to the City. Fruita has also taken a leading role in efforts to enhance the surrounding trail systems and regional connectivity.

• The Community Center opened in 2011. This has completely changed the recreational landscape of Fruita. Through the center, the City has been able to vastly expand its recreational programming for all ages, from youth to seniors. The center includes a gymnasium, senior center, library, meeting space, indoor and outdoor pools, and fitness spaces.

• The City has expanded the number of events it holds and the number of local events that come through. This increase has placed pressure on existing event space (Civic Center Park) and outside groups have expressed interest in holding larger events in Fruita. However, the City does not have the appropriate facilities to accommodate those events.

• The City has not acquired or developed parks as proscribed in the 2008 Community Plan and 2009 POST plan. If development continues around the perimeter of the city, acquisition of land for parks will be vital. The City acquired five acres of land adjacent to Little Salt Wash Park for expansion.

• Several new parks facilities have been completed in the past ten years on previously owned lands: Fruita Riverfront Park (Disc Golf Course), Fruita Bike Park. Residents have requested new types of park facilities such as a dog park, upgraded skate park, and pickleball courts.

• The City currently provides 1.94 acres of neighborhood parks per 1,000 residents (including the three city-maintained pocket parks and five acres of Little Salt Wash that acts as a neighborhood park). This is below the standard of 4.0 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents established in the 2008 plan.

• According to the Trust for Public Land, 76% of Fruita residents are within a 10 minute walk of parkland. However, only 3% of land within City limits is parkland – national average is 15%. Of course, few municipalities are surrounded by public land as Fruita is.

• Funding proved to be a major obstacle in implementing many of the actions and policies of the 2008 community plan and the POST plan.

• The City’s parks and recreation impact fee was created 10 years ago, but the city has significantly increased what they provide since that time. The current POST impact fee is $1,850 per new dwelling unit constructed.

• The City has completed numerous new trail segments including the Kokopelli Trail, the Colorado Riverfront Trail, Monument View, and a short section of the Lower Little Salt Wash Trail.
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(about 10 miles of new paved trails) thanks to grants and partnerships with the Colorado Riverfront Commission, Grand Junction, Great Outdoors Colorado, and CDOT. The City has not been able to develop the wash/irrigation canal trail system.

- Many of the washes are in need of maintenance and there is uncertainty around who is responsible and how maintenance is provided.
- The City has supported and funded regional trail projects on public lands, namely BLM lands at 18 Road and Kokopelli. A Fruita Trails Initiative group was recently founded as an informal group for the local mountain bike trail systems.
- The Parks and Recreation department recently began initiatives around community health in partnership with the school district and Mesa County Public Health department.
- Parks and Recreation is one of the city’s highest rated departments. However, staff is becoming concerned about being able to maintain facilities as programming, events, and facilities expand.
- The City has a lot of big recreation projects planned for the future and needs to prioritize and budget for them in the short, medium, and long-term.
- The City has received a grant to support an update to the POST plan in the coming year. This plan will be known as the Parks, Health, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails (PHROST) plan.

Community Process and Analysis

The planning team analyzed residents’ distance from parks and park acreage per 1,000 residents. These analyses found that most residents live relatively close to a park, but there is limited park acreage for the city’s residents. The city has 1.94 acres of parkland for a 1,000 residents, well below the standard of 4.0 set in the 2008 Community Plan and the 9.5 acres on average as reported in the 2016 National Recreation and Park Association Field Report.

The Trust for Public Land’s Parkscore analysis was used as well. Parkscore, a nationwide analysis of city park systems, found that 76% of Fruita’s residents live within a 10 minute walk of a park. This is well above the national average of 54% within a 10 minute walk. Only 3% of Fruita’s city land is used for parks and recreation is used for parks and recreation, compared to the national median of 15%. The following map identifies where parks are located and high priority areas for adding parks.

The Plan Kickoff Open House touched on topics contained in this chapter. Lots of attendees mentioned the walkability, recreation opportunities, outdoor recreation access, community center, and events as elements of Fruita they really value. In terms of issues, many residents marked “difficult to bike” as an issue and a small number also named “difficult to walk” and “parks” as issues. Others brought up overcrowding at the community center, crossing I-70 on foot or bike is challenging, and the lack of connections to the bike park. Many felt Fruita should be known as the recreation center of the valley.

The plan advisory committee and livability commission met to discuss the vision, goals, and policies for this chapter.

VISION

The City of Fruita leads the Grand Valley in recreation. The City provides unparalleled recreational programming and events, well-maintained parks and recreational facilities that are accessible to all residents, and a well-connected network of bike and pedestrian facilities. The City drives local efforts for world-class outdoor recreation opportunities and regional connectivity. The recreational programming, events, and outdoor recreation opportunities bring the community together around a healthy, active lifestyle. The City takes initiative to protect the natural environment within and surrounding Fruita.

Goal #1. Put on recreational programming and events that provide opportunities for residents to be mentally, physically, and socially active.

WHY?

Supporting residents active and healthy lifestyles and holding events and programs where residents can gather is a key priority for the city. However, there are concerns about accessibility, sufficient funding and facilities, and the appropriate balance of events. Many of these items will be further explored in the upcoming PHROST plan.

POLICIES

A. Provide recreational programming and events that are accessible for all ages and financial backgrounds.

B. Clearly communicate to the community what recreational offerings are available.

ACTIONS

A. Explore opportunities for new event space will enhance the appeal of Fruita for events. Ensure that the new space has connectivity to downtown.

B. Develop standards and solicit feedback to ensure that recreational programming meets the needs of all residents.

C. Through the PHROST Plan, identify a dedicated funding source for recreational programming or a better cost recovery model. Dedicate a program pricing model for programs and events that encourages participation while achieving set cost recovery ratios. Set higher cost recovery ratios for specialized/individualized programs and lower cost recovery ratios for community-based and benefit programs.

D. Consider increasing or restructuring the POST impact fee to incorporate and provide necessary funding for recreational programming and events.

E. Develop and provide informational resources to the community on events, programs, and facilities. This includes, but is not limited to, trail maps, activity guides, and enhanced electronic resources such as websites, social media, and interactive maps.

F. Look for alternative locations to host events. Work with schools as places for events and programming.

G. Develop a vetting process for new events through the PHROST Plan.

H. Analyze the capacity of Civic Center Park for events in terms of frequency and size of events.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

SIDEBAR
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