

**AGENDA  
OURAY COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION WORK  
SESSION**

November 7, 2023 2:00 – 4:00 pm  
Meeting to be held at the Ouray County Land Use Office  
111 Mall Road, Ridgway, Colorado

**Zoom Log In Info:**

**On the web: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87869583158>**

**Via telephone: 1 719 359 4580**

**Meeting ID: 878 6958 3158**

**A. 2:00 – Work Session: Master Plan**

- a. The Planning Commission will hold a work session to discuss an update to the County Master Plan. The purpose of this work session is to discuss the data received from the City and Town and to plan for the December 5 work session with the BOCC.

**B. Old Business**

**C. New Business**

**D. 4:00 – Adjourn (approximate)**

## November 7 Presentation Outline

### Overall Approach

1. Public engagement
2. Document existing conditions
3. Define capacity for growth
4. Evaluate scenarios for growth
5. Develop plan strategies and policies
6. Complete plan development

### Strong and Detailed Planning Commission Involvement

- Scoped 6 planning commission meetings over 17 months but will have 11 during 2023.
  - Feb 21
  - March 7
  - April 13
  - April 25 Town Hall Meeting
  - May 10
  - July 18
  - Aug 15
  - September 12
  - October 19
  - November 7
  - November 14
  - December 5
- During scope development Planning Commission requested an early survey to find out what the public's attitude was regarding topics to address in the Master Plan Update
- Used April 25 Town Hall Meeting (1 of 4 originally scoped) to present initial existing conditions information and obtain input on public attitudes that might inform the content of the early survey.
- Planning Commission requested a more extensive survey than originally envisioned. It was initiated June 1 and closed June 21. Results:
  - Number of respondents = 674
  - Age distribution of respondents = under 24 – 0.30%, 25 to 34 – 4.03%, 35 to 44 – 11.04%, 45 to 54 – 16.72%, 55 to 64 – 16.72%, 65 to 74 – 30.45%, 75 or older – 14.48%
  - Spatial distribution of respondents = Ouray – 18%, Ridgway – 30%, Rural County – 52%
- Planning Commission reviewed content on August 15 with consensus to address two additional topics in some form during the update process
- One of the results of the more extensive town hall meeting and survey feedback is that we have a robust level of public input that goes substantially beyond just defining what topics to address in the update. The input from those activities has been supplemented by input at the Planning Commission's work sessions, comments posted on the project website, and emails/letters sent to the County.

## **Observations and Preliminary Findings**

- **Recent Trends**
  - Population
  - Traffic
  - Housing Development
  - Economy
  - Limited deep dives into existing conditions to what may be needed later to address specific topics
  - Priority and sequencing of topics to address to be set at December 5 meeting
- **Capacity for Growth**
  - Affordable/Workforce Housing
  - October 19 meeting with city and town provided insight into housing capacity for growth and strategies to address housing issues
  - Roads
  - Sewer
  - Water
  - Meeting Dec 5 to confirm water capacity (Dallas Creek Water, Tri-County Water, Co's...)
- **Future Scenarios**
  - Current Path
  - Strong support for most of the current path
  - Principal issue seems to be sustainability while maintaining rural character and scenic beauty
  - No clearly defined alternative path; just desire to address key issues like affordable housing, road maintenance, and economic diversification
- **Schedule**
  - Overall target was completion in July 2024
  - Initial survey took longer than anticipated/scoped, however was hugely successful.
  - The last three meetings have each had fruitful discussion that suggests because we are now clear on the topics to be addressed, we can move expeditiously through the process of evaluating and updating topic level content for the master plan. We are aiming to keep the original completion date of July 2024.
  - Because we spent so much time and so many meetings getting to this point, we have used more of the budget than originally scoped. If we focus on regular planning commission work sessions, we may avoid a budget crunch. This would mean having a much simpler process for any potential second survey or focus group meetings.

From: **Patrick Willits** >

Date: Fri, Oct 27, 2023 at 3:13 PM

Subject: [FORWARDED @[ouraycountyco.gov](mailto:ouraycountyco.gov)] TLR: Master Plan Comments:  
Recreational Element

To: Hannah Hollenbeck <[hhollenbeck@ouraycountyco.gov](mailto:hhollenbeck@ouraycountyco.gov)>

Cc: Kevin Chismire, BobandKaren Risch, Bev Rich, Randy Parker, Gary Roberts >, Donald Paulson >, Steve Boyle >, Rachel Griego >, Mike Nadiak >, Ben Tisdell

**TO: Ouray County Planning Commission  
C/O Mark Castrodale**

CC: BOCC c/o Hannah  
OCHS c/o Kevin Chesmire  
SJCHS c/o Beverly Rich  
TLR Board of Directors

**FROM: Pat Willits- the Trust for Land Restoration (TLR)**

**SUBJECT: Comments for the Recreational Element to the Master Plan Update**

Dear Honorable Ouray County Planning Commissioners,

Thank you for all the good work you do for the betterment of Ouray County. As you embark upon preparing the Recreational Component to the Ouray County Master Plan, we ask you to keep in mind what may seem so obvious that it may be easy to overlook: the High Country of Ouray County, from the Uncompahgre Plateau to the Sneffels Range to Red Mountain Pass to the Cimarrons, is incredibly precious and special, and is among the most scenic and spectacular of mountains in the entire world.

That said, over the last dozen years or so we have all seen increased use and increased human impacts to almost all parts of the High Country that threaten many of the characteristics that we treasure and help make Ouray County special, including wildlife diversity, hiking and camping, safe travel both on and off the pavement, and enjoyment of our County's many historical treasures. And while we know there are a variety of organizations, individuals and entities that are concerned with many of the issues and impacts that threaten the integrity of Ouray County's High Country, it is the preservation and protection of Ouray County's historical remnants and treasures that we at the Trust for Land Restoration(TLR) and our partners, the Ouray County Historical Society(OCHS) and the San Juan County Historical Society (SJCHS), are most concerned.

We urge the Planning Commission to include a recognition of the value of preserving cultural and historic resources in its Master Plan as a benefit to tourism, public education, open space protection, and the local economy

We would like to see the Master Plan recognize that the County of Ouray owns four properties in the Red Mountain Mining District that contain important remnants of Colorado's mining heritage, including the Ironton Townsite, the Garard property, the Corkscrew Turntable and the Idarado Houses, that deserve special attention of County government, as the property owner, now and into the future.

We are also concerned with the preservation of historic structures on private land in the High Country. It is our understanding the Ouray County Code requires private landowners obtain permits to remove or demolish historic structures on private property. While nobody likes added bureaucracy, we feel this is a reasonable requirement and important to maintain. In addition, some counties in Colorado, including San Miguel, Pitken and San Juan, have limits to the size of homes and cabins that can be built in the backcountry. While it may be controversial, we suggest this be considered in Ouray County.

That said, there are a number of world-class historic structures in Ouray County that sit on lands of the United States, administered by the US Forest Service. Over the years, depending on budgets, priorities and staff, the Forest Service has either been aware, active and engaged in protection and preservation of cultural and historical resources found on public lands, or almost entirely absent and unaware, or somewhere in-between. Lately, for the last several years, it seems as if the Forest Service has been mostly absent and unaware of the historical assets it is responsible to help monitor and maintain, at least as it relates to those found in the Red Mountain Mining District, Realizing there are many intersections of interest that might be mentioned or addressed in the County's Master Plan in which the County of Ouray and the US Forest Service engage, including wildlife, forest management, wildfire, roads, public use, trails and camping, we suggest historic preservation be added to that list. In that vein, We stand at the ready to help Forest Service staff reacquaint themselves with that which it is charged with protecting.

As mentioned above, the County owns four properties of historical significance in the Red Mountain Mining District that, taken together, vividly tell much of the story of southwest Colorado's mining past and colorful history in a way the written word cannot adequately convey. TLR, and our partners OCHS, and SJCHS are all proud of the integral role we have played in helping the County acquire those properties, and monitor and maintain them, but there are limits to our effectiveness, and a question as to how much longer aging volunteers will be around to do the job most other counties in Colorado pay staff to do. With this in mind, and as visitation and impacts to these properties has increased dramatically in recent years and will continue to increase, we recommend the Master Plan adopt as goals:

- 1) Ouray County Sheriff's Office be educated and engaged to help patrol and monitor activities at County-owned sites; and

2) Ouray County government regard all its publicly- owned assets, including those mentioned above and Top of the Piones near Ridgway, as County Parks, and plan for the dedication of some amount of paid staff time to help monitor and maintain them.

The historical assets found in the High Country of Ouray County are of national significance and are irreplaceable. Volunteers have helped protect and preserve these assets to date, but we most sincerely believe and advocate for a greater local governmental role in ensuring the protection of these assets in the years going forward. We stand ready to help with that evolution.

Sincerely and with Great Admiration for the work you do,

Pat


--

*Patrick Willits*

*The Trust for Land Restoration*

[www.restorationtrust.org](http://www.restorationtrust.org)

*Ridgway CO 81432*

New Comment[Comment or Question] created on project: Ouray County Master Plan Update [95FC43] External Inbox X 



noreply@socialpinpoint.com [Unsubscribe](#)  
to me, [redacted]

9:34 AM (3 hours ago)   

The following Comment from [edwardbovy@\[redacted\]](#) was posted regarding the project: Ouray County Master Plan Update

*The same issue applies to CR5 with the subdivision of one 640acre parcel into 19 35-acre parcels. The scenic quality along one stretch draws massive numbers of people, particularly in the fall. CR5 is extremely narrow in many places and as development occurs there, there will be convoys of subcontractors and oversized trucks meeting visitors and residents alike. It is a predictable mess and safety hazard. The meadow across from the former "Radio Dog Ranch" would make an excellent county park.*

[Review The Comment Now](#)

## Ouray County Density Buildout Estimates

### Numbers Developed for Master Plan Update

**Note:** *Numbers are estimates only to be used as a discussion starter. Numbers are based on current zoning in the City, Town, and County which is subject to change!*

---

#### **UNINCORPORATED COUNTY**

- South Mesa Zone - Subdividable 35-acre lots: + 108 dwelling units + possible ADU's
- South Slope Zone – Subdividable 35-acre lots: + 54 dwelling units + possible ADU's
- North Mesa Zone – Subdividable 25-acre Lots: + 282 dwelling units + possible ADU's
- Log Hill Village – Fully platted. #300 existing dwelling units, + 61 possible additional.
- Fairway Pines/Divide Ranch – Current Homes - #141, + possible #330 Additional DU's.
- All Vacant Land Zoned 1-Per-35: Appx. 117,000-acres / 35-acres = possible additional 3,350 35-acre parcels or additional homes + possible ADU's.

#### **CITY OF OURAY**

- Appx. #700 existing dwelling units + possible #200 additional dwelling units.
- City states water/sewer services good for this number of units.

#### **TOWN OF RIDGWAY**

- Appx. #600 current dwelling units + possible additional #1900 dwelling units.
- Town states water/sewer services good for this number of units.