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Introduction

This Comprehensive Plan, “Rangely: Building on Diverse Opportunities from Scenic Settings and Resource Wealth”, is a 20-year plan (2004-2024) designed to articulate a vision of how Rangely can manage and promote future changes in the community that will sustain existing features of value and enhance the overall quality of the community for its citizens. The Comprehensive Plan establishes basic policy and provides a flexible framework of potential strategies for positioning the Town to address the conditions it will face in the near future. The Plan is designed to offer a wide range of options and it is possible that all, or none, of the strategies may succeed. Most likely some strategies will succeed and some will not. Therefore the Plan must be understood as a conceptual range of possibilities and revised as new information and conditions change.

The plan includes a discussion of the “basic building blocks” that can be considered the essential “elements” of this place at this time. Section two discusses these key aspects and includes topics such as transportation, housing, demographics, capital facilities, utilities, environmental quality, economics, and community and human development. This information has been used in analysis of the situations the Town may face in the future. It is the foundation on which the reasoning, for the strategies recommended in this plan, are built. The very point of the planning process is to identify ways to move Rangely forward in a positive and progressive manner while also maintaining those features and values that define the community. Choices among policy directions and the weighing of priorities have been made on the basis of publicly expressed values and beliefs. The basic features and characteristics for the community of the future were expressed in discussion during development of this plan and are the basis for the “Vision and Themes”. This is the premise on which the strategies and policies in the plan are built. The ideas in this plan were developed through long discussion, debate, and the creative thinking of Rangely citizens working with town staff and elected officials.

Purpose and Implementation

This plan is intended to outline activities for the betterment, health, and longevity of the Town of Rangely over the next twenty years. Some of the strategies listed and their related projects, if implemented on adoption, would take twenty years to come to full fruition. This future cannot be achieved all at once. Over the life of the plan, change (growth or decline) will likely occur at a different pace, pattern, and sequence than is currently understood. Therefore, the best this plan can offer is a point of departure on a path toward a more positive future and a well-educated guess about how to accommodate people and conditions that cannot be known in advance. An effective plan must be flexible enough to succeed within a range of likely conditions. It must be accommodating enough to be adjusted as conditions and strategies succeed or fail. It must maintain a steady aim at the ultimate goals as articulated in the Vision Statement.

It is the responsibility of Town staff to implement to the best of their ability the strategies, policies, and goals outlined in this plan. The plan is a conceptual point of departure in building a better future. Therefore on a yearly basis Town staff are to provide a year-end report on the overall status of the plan, its implementation, and a set of recommended changes. Based on the findings outlined in this report, the Planning Commission will revise the plan as necessary, following an appropriate public involvement process, and submit it to the Town Council for re-adoption.

Vision

Rangely is a small community located in an area of geologic and ecological beauty on which its character, recreational opportunities, and economy are built. It is a place facing change as the sustainability of the finite natural resource base diminishes and progress alters world priorities. It is a town that has a strong set of public values that are reflected in its rich history, strong infrastructure base, family values, institutions, and low crime rate. It is a community ready to face change by employing a positive attitude toward growth and natural resource development as long as the qualities of rural life and landscape are not sacrificed. It is a home where visitors can become neighbors and children have the option of a complete education through college; because of, and for these reasons we affirm that:

- we aspire to have a friendly small-town that is crime and drug-free, that promotes and is a good place to raise healthy families, and is nurturing of these aspects as it changes;
- we have rich natural resources that have to be properly managed for multiple uses and that must be developed in an environmentally and ecologically sound and sustainable manner;
- we shall be true to our economic roots and foster an environment conducive to the continued health of these industries while recognizing other diverse economic opportunities are needed to keep the town in a healthy state;
- we are blessed with available and abundant water resources and will use, protect, and appreciate them responsibly;
- we require and desire to develop a thriving, sustainable, diverse commercial sector;
- we possess and must continue to develop our outstanding, accessible health-care system that promotes the well being of all citizens;
- we will continue to expand our partnerships and gather together to maintain and improve the schools and college as central assets of the community;
- we need to continue our strong support for educational opportunities and expand the region's understanding of our exceptional vocational offerings;
- and that we shall continue to build on our rich variety of social, historical, cultural, and recreational amenities.

It is for these reasons that we recognize the uniqueness of this place and that we will rise to the challenges set before us and implement the strategies outlined in this plan for continued success of the community.



Themes and Strategies

From the many discussions that contributed to the development of the Comprehensive Plan, a simple set of five general themes were developed. For each of these themes a discrete set of strategies have been selected to implement a program to fulfill the objectives described in the Vision Statement:

- I. A Place to Call Home: Continue to develop options for housing, education, and maintain the qualities of a small rural town.
 - Build Out and Redevelopment: Focus on finishing existing laid out lots and subdivisions, build into vacant lots, and remodel or remove substandard housing to improve the housing market.
 - Downtown: Continue to develop programs for the beautification of the commercial area of Town, replacement of dead and dying trees with a diversity of types, clean up substandard lots and design features that promote pride and respect.
- II. Coming Together: Work on bringing organizations and people together so they can share resources and information to expand fiscal resources and local development opportunities.
 - Living Laboratory Feedback Loop: Use cooperative approaches that benefit more than one agency and agenda to expand on resources and opportunities. For example, the town could provide capital for redevelopment and then have the college building trades program do some of the work, benefiting both agencies and internalizing the fiscal resources in the local economy.
- III. Preserving and Building on the Qualities of Place: Understand the power of the land and its resources, and their appeal to the community and people in general, and develop recreational and access amenities for these resources.
 - Building on Place: Develop centers (fishing access, visitor's center, museum, maps, trails, etc) for those in the community and visitors to explore and appreciate the resources of the area.
 - Access to the River: Expand public access to the river so that the multiple values that can be achieved through preservation, park development and boating use, are available.
 - Scenic Vista Golf and Equestrian Park: Develop opportunities to expand utilization of Rangely's regionally respected golf course and redevelop Equestrian Park.
- IV. Diversity in Long-term Options: Develop large-scale economic drivers that will replace the loss of jobs resulting from resource depletion and global change.
 - Build Out Energy: Develop power facilities using clean coal technology using available land, coal, and water resources.
 - Manage the Waters: Establish additional water storage capacity to further manage and utilize the water resources of the White River for industrial energy related projects.
- V. Relationship to the Rest of the World: Open up transportation options that better position Rangely as a base for the development of the energy resources of the region.
 - Access to the Industry: Create an east west access through the Cathedral Bluffs to change traffic patterns in and out of the Piceance Basin and shorten travel times.

These core strategies are the approaches that will be implemented by adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. Section 3 explains the process of discovery and selection of the strategies, and describes each in greater detail. It is recommended that the Town revise its Mission Statement as reflected in Section 4 to match the objectives of this plan.

Description of Plan Methodology and Approach

The goal of this plan is to communicate and outline a series of intents. The conventional practice of listing options within the plan, such as a “no action alternative”, a “moderate action” alternative”, and a “high growth scenario” have not been followed in construction of this document. Rangely has a history of master/comprehensive planning (the comprehensive plan is considered the master plan) and the question of whether to plan or not is not relevant. In initial meetings with the Town Council and kickoff public meetings, there was general agreement that planning to do nothing is planning to fail. Therefore, a strategic planning approach has been employed. In this plan all possible avenues have been explored. The most outlandish concepts have been proposed and discussed as well as the most subtle and benign. Each of these ideas has been mulled over, and those offering the most promise and in keeping with the Vision Statement, have been formed into themes and strategies. The objective has been to discover and adopt a set of measures (vision, themes, strategies, policies, goals and projects) that will promote the development of a climate of prosperity and provide a framework for implementing the right actions to carry Rangely toward a sustainable and healthy future.

History of Comprehensive Planning in Rangely

Adoption Date	Author	Type
1965	Ken R. White Company	1st known Master Plan
1976	Gulf Oil Real Estate Development Company (Goredco)	New Master Plan
1983	Town of Rangely	New Master Plan
1994	Town of Rangely	Plan Amendment
2004	Town of Rangely	New Comprehensive Plan

In 1994, the 1983 plan was updated. The basis for the update was that several factors suggested an update of the Master Plan was needed. As stated in that plan, the 1994 Plan promulgated the following strategies should be followed:

- Slow and Steady Growth. It is unlikely that rapid growth will occur in the immediate future. Planning should accommodate a slow and steady growth.
- Quality of Life. People have choices, unlike in boom times, on where they wish to live. Amenities, such as an attractive downtown and the quality of life, are vital.
- Fiscal Austerity. Funds are not as freely available as they were. The Town and Districts must out of necessity, share facilities and carry out programs and projects jointly.
- Predictable Zoning. Zoning maps and regulations should be easy to understand and predictable so that an investment by a person in his property is reasonably safe.
- Program Goals. Traditionally, the Master Plan of Development has dealt with physical facilities and land use. Of equal importance are programs and goals that complement such physical facilities and land use.

These strategies have been recognized in this plan, and where appropriate, carried forth into this new plan.

The 1994 Plan was updated in part because the 1976 Plan was updated in 1983 during the height of the boom associated with development of the Deserado Mine by Western Fuels Corporation and the construction of the electric railroad to haul coal from mine the Deseret's Bonanza power generation plant in Utah. At the same time, the Town anticipated substantial impact from projected oil shale facilities in Rio Blanco County and over the line in Utah.

The 1983 update replaced a Master Plan prepared in 1976 by the Gulf Oil Real Estate Development Company (GCREDCO). Many of the assumptions in that plan became invalid. Growth was anticipated to reach 25,000 persons under optimum conditions and 12,590 persons on development of the oil shale tracts and power plant. These developments were foreseen to be imminent at the time. Such rapid growth did not occur; nevertheless the 1983 assumed substantial population growth, although on a reduced scale.

The 1976 Plan replaced the 1965 Plan, which found a Rangely in its infancy, struggling with questions of infrastructure, facilities, and a loss of tax base due to the shopping patterns of its residents. The Town of 2004 may in some ways be a closer relative to the Town of 1965 than any other. In the conclusions of the 1965 Plan it states "Rangely's future is difficult to predict" and it still is.