



PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

DELTA COUNTY MASTER PLAN UPDATE

MAY 2017

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Project Purpose

OUR CHALLENGES

Delta County is a unique place in Colorado with a good balance of the old and new west. We have a strong agricultural industry with family ranches and farmers. We are blessed with diverse natural assets from deserts to mountaintops, both with abundant recreation opportunities. We are lucky to live in a place where you slow down and say hello to your neighbors.

However, our community is not without its challenges. Following steady growth during the 1990's and early 2000's, the Great Recession of 2007 shifted our trends the other direction. We've seen a significant decrease in employment, especially in the mining sector. Many of our neighbors are struggling to make ends meet and the percent of our kids on free and reduced lunch has risen to 56.5%. The lack of opportunity has driven some to go elsewhere. We have been working hard to diversify our local economy and make our communities stronger. Early successes include the expansion of broadband, expansion of some local businesses, new businesses choosing to locate here and investments in infrastructure and our downtowns. The slight decline in our population due to job losses has been offset by an influx of new residents – both retirees and young families – who are attracted to Delta County for the high quality of life.

The question for us as a community is: *How do we create opportunities for everyone to thrive while protecting the things that make Delta County unique?* The Planning Commission believes it is time our community comes together to have a frank discussion about our future. We have a choice. We can continue to be reactive or we can work together to maintain what we love about living here while building a more prosperous future.

THE DELTA COUNTY MASTER PLAN

To initiate this important discussion, the County is conducting a community dialogue, guided by RPI Consulting, to update the Delta County Master Plan. A master plan provides the overall vision for how the built environment – infrastructure, housing, transportation, recreation, business and industry – support and complement the other less tangible aspects of community – the economy, health, the environment, and quality of life. Our current land development policies are not serving our community well. Businesses and individuals looking to invest in our community face an unpredictable process. As a County, we need development policies that are fair, predictable, and based on our shared vision for the future.

This community process will:

- Identify community concerns and hopes for the future.
- Define a vision and goals we want to work towards.
- Map suitability of areas for future development by assessing existing development, infrastructure, natural resources and hazards, soils, transportation systems, and more.
- Define what type of development is appropriate, where that development should happen, and how it should occur in a way that is consistent with our vision.



The result of this project will be:

- An updated Delta County Master Plan that will include two components:
 - Our vision and goals for the future
 - A Future Land Use Map and Plan (FLUP)
- A land use code assessment.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

We are committed to providing opportunities for public participation and will apply the following guiding principles:

- **Be Authentic:** The purpose of this project is to generate grassroots community ideas and opinions about the future of Delta County.
- **Be Inclusive:** Public engagement opportunities are open to all and are designed to reflect the demographics and diversity of the County's entire population.
- **Be Transparent:** We will provide transparency about the project's sponsorship, purpose, design, and how decision makers will use the community's input.
- **Be Committed to Openness & Learning:** We do not have a predetermined outcome. County leadership, as well as community participants, commit to being respectful of the diversity of opinions that exist in the community, listen to each other, and open to and willing to explore all ideas.
- **Support Informed Participation:** Participants will have access to information and/or expertise that will support their ability to participate successfully.

Engagement Objectives

The purpose of our public outreach opportunities is to:

- Inform community members about the project—it's purpose, background and direction.
- Gather input about what residents value in our community.
- Identify and discuss important issues that need to be addressed.
- Provide information about potential solutions and strategies for action.
- Gather input from the community about community priorities for action.

Engagement Strategies

The following types of engagement methods will be used to get residents involved.

- **Stakeholder Interviews** to provide RPI background during project start-up on community issues, concerns, and hopes for the future from targeted community members.
- **Property Owner Drop-ins** to discuss property owners' issues and concerns in a more informal setting.
- **Online Submissions** that include opportunities for residents to submit ideas and engage in discussions through an online forum and Facebook.
- **Community Meetings** intended to promote resident discussion, shared learning and decision making.

- **Community Questionnaires** to solicit community opinion on issues, concerns, hopes for the future, and priorities for action.
- **Public Hearings** prior to adoption of final plan.

Process Summary



Outreach Methods

To reach out and inform the community about the project, the following communication tools will be used. We hope you will help us spread the word to your friends, neighbors, and colleagues.

- **Project Website** with information about the project, engagement opportunities, a project calendar, and project documents.
- **Email Distribution Lists** to notify of upcoming opportunities to be involved and provide project updates.
- **Media Announcements** on Facebook, radio, community notification boards, and the newspaper will provide announcements of progress and upcoming events.

PROJECT LEADERSHIP

The Planning Commission in Delta County is a nine-member board appointed by the County Commission. By state law, the Planning Commission is responsible for the development and adoption of a community's master plan. The Planning Commission consists of the following members:

1. Kim Shay, At Large
2. Angela Mackey, At-Large
3. Tony Prendergast, Crawford Area
4. Steve Shea, Delta Area
5. Steve Schrock, Delta Area
6. Bob Stechert, Leroux Creek Area
7. Jennifer Sanborn, Paonia Area

8. Layne Brones, Upper Surface Creek Area
9. Dick Disner, Chairman, Upper Surface Creek Area

The master planning process is being coordinated by the following Delta County staff:

- Robbie LeValley, County Administrator
- Elyse Casselberry, Community & Economic Development Director
- Kelly Yeager, Contract Planner

Delta County is being supported by RPI, a planning consulting firm based in Durango, Colorado.

PARTICIPANTS

We will reach out to County residents by reaching out to different sectors within Delta County including, but not limited to:

- Arts & cultural organizations
- Agricultural community
- Business community
- Civic groups
- Community & economic development organizations
- Conservation & water organizations
- Faith community
- Large property owners
- Municipal governments
- Nonprofit sector
- Public health organizations
- Real estate & developers
- Recreation groups
- Social services agencies
- Town residents
- Tourism sector
- Underrepresented voices from youth, immigrants, lower income, and working families.
- Youth & education

PUBLIC INPUT DOCUMENTATION

All public comments will be collected, summarized, and posted to the project website.