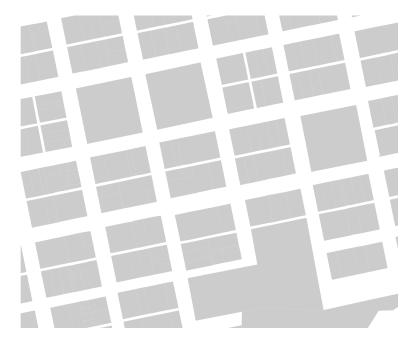




# COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN APPENDICES

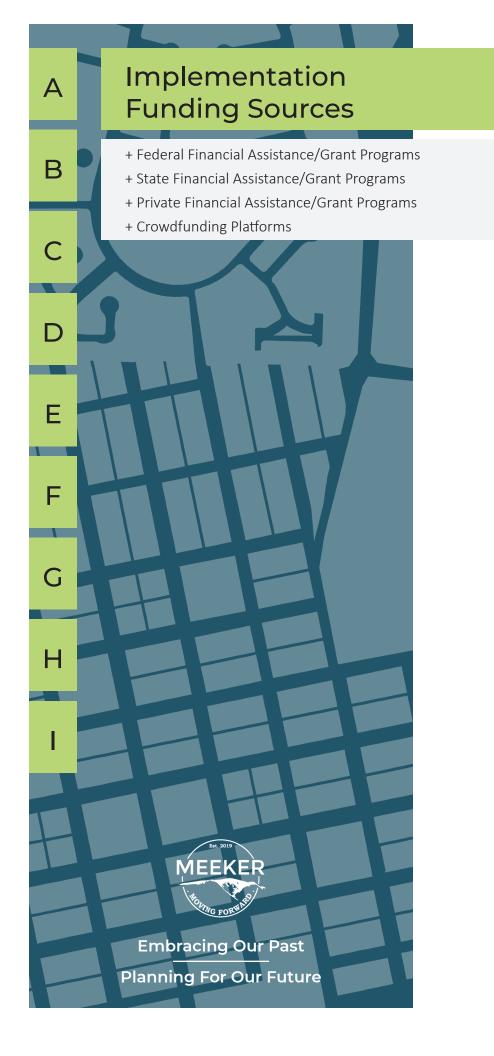
Adopted: February 2021



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The Community Master Plan recommends a multi-pronged approach for implementing the Plan. The goal of this approach is to compile a number of financial resources from various sources and help keep implementation from being reliant on a sole source of funding. Furthermore, the successful accrual of multiple financial resources could enable Meeker to move forward on a number of implementation projects in the near-term.

The Plan notes that there are a number of Federal, State and Private financial assistance/grant programs for Meeker to explore, which could assist with funding implementation efforts. Listed on the following pages are a number of financial assistance/grant programs to be considered. Information about potential options for crowdfunding implementation projects is also offered.

NA	ME OF PROGRAM/GRANT	DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM/GRANT
1.	Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)	The HSIP is a Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) that funds highway safety projects aimed at reducing fatalities and serious injuries.
	For More Information: https://www.codot.gov/library/traffic/hsip	Bicycle and pedestrian projects (ex. bike lanes, bike parking, crosswalks and signage) are eligible for HSIP funding.
	OR Traffic & Safety Engineering	Any improvements funded by HSIP <b>MUST USE</b> crash data to demonstrate that there is a safety issue that the improvements will help to address.
	303.757.9662	Colorado's HSIP funds are administered by the Safety and Traffic Engineering (S&TE) branch of the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT).
2.	USDA Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program (CFDLG) For More Information: https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/ community-facilities-direct-loan-grant- program/co OR	The USDA's CFDLG Program, in Colorado, is a program that offers affordable funding to develop essential community facilities in rural areas (a place with less than 20,000 residents). An essential community facility is defined as "a facility that provides an essential service to the local community for the orderly development of the community in a primarily rural area, and does not include private, commercial or business undertakings." Funds can be used to purchase, construct, and/or improve essential community facilities, purchase equipment and pay related project expenses.
	Sallie Clark   USDA State Director	The programs funding priorities are:
	720.544.2903	• Small communities with a population of 5,500 or less.
		• Low-income communities having a median household income below 80% of the state non-metropolitan median household income.
3.	USDA Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG)	The USDA's RBDG is a competitive grant designed to support targeted technical assistance, training and other activities leading to the development or expansion of small and emerging private businesses in rural areas that have fewer than fifty (50)
	For More Information: https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/ rural-business-development-grants	employees and less than \$1 million in gross revenues. Programmatic activities are separated into enterprise or opportunity type grant activities.
	OR	Grant requests can be for \$10,000 to \$500,000.
	Sallie Clark   USDA State Director 720.544.2903	

#### Federal Financial Assistance/Grant Programs

#### State Financial Assistance/Grant Programs

NAME OF PROGRAM/GRANT	DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM/GRANT
<ol> <li>Energy/Mineral Impact Assistance Fund (EIAF) Grant</li> </ol>	The EIAF is administered through the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA). EIAF funds can be used for a variety of public purposes including planning, engineering and design studies. EIAF funds funds can also be used for capital projects.
For More Information: https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/ dola/energymineral-impact- assistance-fund-eiaf	<ul> <li>Administrative Planning Grant requests can be for up to \$25,000.</li> <li>Tier 1 Grant requests can be for up to \$200,000.</li> </ul>
OR	• Tier 2 Grant requests can be for amounts over \$200,000 but not more than \$2,000,000.
Kimberly Bullen 970.248.7333 kimberly.bullen@state.co.us	All grants require a 50/50 match, unless financial circumstances warrant a reduction.

A-2 | Appendix A: Implementation Funding Sources

#### State Financial Assistance/Grant Programs (continued)

NA	ME OF PROGRAM/GRANT	DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM/GRANT			
2.	Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) For More Information:	The REDI program aims to help rural communities in Colorado comprehensively diversify their local economy. The most successful REDI applications are those from towns/cities with fewer than 20,000 people and with projects that are designed to strengthen their community through investments in the local economy and facilitate the diversification of local industries.			
	https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/ dola/rural-economic-development- initiative	There are three (3) types of projects eligible for REDI funding:			
	OR Trish Thibodo 970.248.7311 trish.thibodo@state.co.us	<ol> <li>Local Government Economic Planning Grants Eligible projects include those that result in a plan that will help to diversify the local economy, such as strategic plans, engineering plans, land use feasibility, and/or marketing studies. Consulting services for specific project implementation are also eligible.</li> </ol>			
		Grant requests can be for up to \$100,000.			
		<ol> <li>Infrastructure Grants that Support Economic Diversification Eligible projects include those that result in infrastructure that supports the diversification of the local economy, such as facility expansion, business incubators, or industrial park infrastructure.</li> </ol>			
		Grant requests can be for up to \$500,000.			
		3. Grants that Support the Growth & Development of Rural Entrepreneurial Eco-systems Eligible projects include those that support community, economic or workforce development. Projects that support entrepreneurship, leverage private investment or public/private partnerships (e.g., innovation centers, co-working spaces, maker-spaces, business expansion and scaling up) could be eligible.			
3.	Colorado Tourism Office (CTO) Co-ops & Grants	The CTO has a number of programs available to support a community's destination marketing efforts. Those include:			
	For More Information: https://industry.colorado.com/co- ops-grants OR	<ul> <li>Co-Ops. The CTO has created a variety of partnerships to help the Colorado tourism industry leverage their dollars to greater effect. These Co-ops include: (1) Digital Media Co-op Advertising; (2) Social Media Co-op Advertising; (3) User Generated Content Co-op with Crowdriff; and, (4) Digital Marketing Attribution &amp; Research via Arrivalist.</li> </ul>			
	Dave Fluegge   Social Media Co-op Advertising dave.fluegge@colorado.com	<ul> <li>Marketing Matching Grants. The CTO provides funding to non-profit organizations, municipalities or counties for the purpose of promoting the state or a region as a tourism destination and is intended to increase overnight stays and visitation beyond 50-miles.</li> </ul>			
	Natasha Kubura   User Generated Content Co-op natasha.kubura@crowdriff.com	Marketing Match Grant requests can be for up to \$25,000. There is a minimum 1:1 cash match required.			
	Charles Lewis   Digital Marketing Attribution & Research Co-op	Small Marketing Matching Grant requests can be for up to \$10,000. There is a minimum 1:4 cash match required.			
	charles@arrvialist.com	• Tourism Development Grants. The CTO provides funding to non-profit organizations,			
	John Reiss   Digital Marketing Attribution & Research Co-op john@arrivalist.com	municipal or county governments for the purpose of supporting projects that contribute to the development of Colorado's tourism industry. Funding will go to projects that target the technical development of tourism and support NEW efforts and initiatives. These grants are			
	Elizabeth O'Rear   CTO Senior Manager of Grant Programs elizabeth.orear@state.co.us	competitive and are awarded annually. Grant requests can be for up to \$15,000. There is a minimum cash match of 25%.			
4.	Safe Routes to School (SRTS)	Colorado's SRTS program uses a comprehensive approach to make walking and biking routes to school safe for children.			
	For More Information: https://www.codot.gov/programs/ bikeped/safe-routes OR	The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) administers Colorado's SRTS program. SRTS funding can be used for education and infrastructure that enable children to walk and bike to school safely.			
	Colorado Safe Routes to School 303.757.9822 dot srts@state.co.us				

#### State Financial Assistance/Grant Programs (continued)

NA	ME OF PROGRAM/GRANT	DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM/GRANT
5.	Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) Grant Programs	Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) offers a variety of grant programs that can be used to fund outdoor recreation and land conservation projects in the state of Colorado. Relevant GOCO grant programs include:
	For More Information: http://www.goco.org/node/60 OR	<ul> <li>Local Government Parks &amp; Recreation Grants (http://www.goco.org/node/60)</li> </ul>
	303.226.4500 info@goco.org	<ul> <li>Youth Corps Grants (http://www.goco.org/grants/apply/youth-corps)</li> </ul>
		<ul> <li>Habitat Restoration Grants (http://www.goco.org/grants/apply/habitat-restoration-grants)</li> </ul>
		<ul> <li>Stewardship Impact Grants (http://www.goco.org/grants/apply/stewardship-impact-grants)</li> </ul>
6.	Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) Grant Programs For More Information: https://cpw.state.co.us/aboutus/ Pages/GrantPrograms.aspx OR CPW Grants Unit DNR_CPW_Grants@state.co.us	CPW has a number of programs to help fund projects developed or led by outside (non-CPW) personnel or groups. Programs are available to help communities: (1) build regional and local trails; (2) improve fishing opportunities; (3) with wildlife rehabilitation efforts; (4) with off-highway vehicle (OHV) trail maintenance; (5) establish, improve or expand shooting ranges, including archery; (6) enhance trails and amenities for snowmobile users; and, much more. Focus areas, eligibility requirements, matching fund requirements and other aspects of CPW's grants vary for each program.
7.	Rural Technical Assistance Program (RTAP) For More Information:	RTAP, formerly Colorado Blueprint 2.0, is a compilation of technical assistance initiatives offered by the Colorado Office of Economic Development & International Trade (OEDIT). RTAP's initiatives are aimed at enhancing economic development strategies in Colorado's rural communities. RTAP technical assistance programs relevant to Fairplay Forward include:
	https://choosecolorado.com/ programs-initiatives/rural-technical- assistance-program/	• CRAFT Studio 201. CRAFT Studio 201 provides customized support for communities or regions wishing to advance a specific tourism-related goal or strategy.
	OR oedit.info@state.co.us 303.892.3840	• Coworking 101. For Coworking 101, OEDIT partners with Proximity Space (https://www. proximity.space/) and Startup Colorado (https://startupcolorado.org/) in a two-phase initiative to: (1) provide communities with a comprehensive overview of coworking as a business and community asset; and, (2) work to identify end-users.
		• Certified Small Business Community (CSBC). The CSBC Initiative is offered by the Colorado Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network and works to assist rural communities with taking their entrepreneurship promotion and retention to the next level. Selected communities will receive a "Certified Small Business Community" designation to help promote themselves as great place to "Work, Live and Play" in Colorado.
		• Film Festival Initiative. The Colorado Office of Film, Television and Media (COFTM) will partner with a limited number of communities to plan and organize a niche festival in their region. The COFTM team will partner with Colorado film festival experts, and provide consultation to help these communities determine how regional interests might be parlayed into a successful, annual event.
8.	Colorado Brownfields Partnership	The Colorado Brownfields Partnership provides access to a number of state programs that support local efforts to assess and/or cleanup community brownfields sites. Those programs include:
	http://coloradobrownfields.org/ OR Jesse Silverstein 303.991.0074	<ul> <li>Brownfields Site Assessments (https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/brownfields-site-assessments)</li> </ul>
		<ul> <li>Voluntary Cleanup and Redevelopment Program (https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/voluntary-cleanup)</li> </ul>
		<ul> <li>Revolving Loan Fund (https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/brownfields-revolving-loan-fund)</li> </ul>
		<ul> <li>Grants &amp; Tax Credits (https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/brownfields-state-incentives)</li> </ul>

#### Private Financial Assistance/Grant Programs

NA	ME OF PROGRAM/GRANT	DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM/GRANT
1.	AARP Community Challenge Grant For More Information:	The AARP Community Challenge grant program is part of AARP's nationwide "Livable Communities" initiative. AARP's grant program is intended to help communities make immediate improvements and jump-start long-term progress in support of residents of all ages.
	https://www.aarp.org/livable- communities/community-challenge/ OR CommunityChallenge@AARP.org	Grant funds can be used for projects related to: creating vibrant public spaces; delivering a range of transportation and mobility options; supporting the availability of a range of housing options; or, the demonstration of the tangible values of being a "Smart City" (i.e., using data to increase quality of life).
		The grant program is open to: 501(C)(3), 501(C)(4) and 501(c)(6) nonprofit organizations; government entities; and, other types of organizations considered on a case-by-case basis.
		Grants can range from several hundred dollars for smaller short-term activities to several thousand for larger projects.
2.	National Association of Realtors (NAR) Placemaking Program and	This grant is intended to fund the creation of new, outdoor public spaces and destinations in a community. Grant funding is only available to state and local REALTOR® Associations.
	Grant	There are two levels of grants, Level 1 and Level 2:
	For More Information: http://www.realtorparty.realtor/ community-outreach/placemaking OR Holly Moskerintz	• Level 1 Grants Grant funds can be used for demonstration and temporary projects to provide an opportunity to test the viability of long-range plans and investment initiatives that increase community livability and downtown revitalization. The intent is that these types of projects will lead to permanent projects.
	202.383.1157 hmoskerintz@realtors.org	Level 1 Grant requests can be for up to \$1,500.
		<ul> <li>Level 2 Grants         Grant funds can be used to fund the creation of new public spaces and destinations in a         community accessible to everyone and open at all, or most, times. The grant focuses on         "lighter, cheaper, quicker" placemaking projects, which can be built under a year and cost         less than \$200,000.</li> </ul>
		Level 2 Grant requests can be for up to \$5,000.
		An association can be approved for one (1) Level 1 and one (1) Level 2 grant per year.
3.	Home Depot Community Impact Grant Program	The Home Depot Foundation offers grant awards to tax-exempt public service agencies in the U.S. and 501(c)(3) organizations (recognized and in good standing with the IRS for a minimum of one (1) year) that are using the power of volunteers to improve the community.
	For More Information: https://corporate.homedepot.com/ grants/community-impact-grants	Grants are given in the form of The Home Depot gift cards for the purchase of tools, materials, or services and are required to be completed within six (6) months of approval date.
	OR THDF_CIG@homedepot.com	Grant requests can be for up to \$5,000.
4.	National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Our Town Grant	Our Town is the NEAs' creative placemaking grants program. Through project-based funding, NEA supports projects that integrate arts, culture, and design activities into efforts that strengthen communities by advancing local economic, physical, and/or social outcomes.
	For More Information: https://www.arts.gov/grants- organizations/our-town/grant- program-description OR OT@arts.gov	These projects require a partnership between a local government entity and nonprofit organization, one of which must be a cultural organization; and should engage in partnership with other sectors (such as agriculture and food, economic development, education and youth, environment and energy, health, housing, public safety, transportation, and workforce development).
		Matching grants range from \$25,000 to \$200,000, with a minimum cost share/match equal to the grant amount.

#### Private Financial Assistance/Grant Programs (continued)

NA	ME OF PROGRAM/GRANT	DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM/GRANT
5.	Gates Family Foundation For More Information: https://gatesfamilyfoundation. org/strategic-priorities/vibrant- communities/ OR	<ul> <li>The Gates Family Foundation offers a number of grant opportunities. One of the foundation's strategic priorities is "Vibrant Communities." Under this priority, the Gates Family Foundation offers grants for:</li> <li>Multi-Modal Mobility</li> <li>Placemaking</li> </ul>
	Lisa Rucker 303.722.1881 Irucker@gatesfamilyfoundation.org	<ul> <li>Economic Opportunity</li> <li>Community Planning</li> <li>Informed Communities</li> </ul>

Food Systems

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#### **Crowdfunding Platforms**

CROWDFUNDING PLATFORM		DESCRIPTION OF PLATFORM	FOR MORE INFORMATION		
1.	Patronicity	Patronicity is an organization that works with communities to create online crowdfunding campaigns for public improvement projects. These campaigns not only provided valuable income for projects (that may be beyond the budgets of cash- strapped municipal governments) but also provide incredible community building experiences that bring people together in support of improving the livability of their community.	https://www.patronicity.com/#!/		
2.	loby	loby stands for "in our backyards," but it also stands for taking care of each other, for civic participation, and for trusting neighbors to know what's best for the neighborhood. loby is an organization that gives local leaders the ability to crowdfund the resources they need to build real, lasting change from the ground up. Their crowdfunding platform helps connect local leaders with support and funding from their communities.	https://www.ioby.org/		
3.	Plumfund	Plumfund's fundraising website allows anyone to raise money online for community projects. It's simple: (1) create a Plumfund campaign; (2) spread the word; and, (3) start collecting funds. Plumfund offers no platform fees and very low transaction fees.	https://www.plumfund.com/ community-crowdfunding/		
4.	StartSomeGood	StartSomeGood is an organization that supports your cause- driven crowdfunding efforts, innovative partnerships and social entrepreneur education. Whether big or small, if you have an idea to change your world, or want to support people who do, StartSomeGood can help. StartSomeGood will work with you to refine your story, identify your target market and plan your outreach strategy.	https://startsomegood.com/		
5.	WeFunder	WeFunder enables people to invest in local startups and/or businesses with the hope that, that investment will earn a return. WeFunder allows you to decide which companies are worthy of funding. If the business does well, you may make money. On the other hand, if it doesn't do well, you may lose money.	https://wefunder.com/		



## CREATION OF THE MEEKER URBAN RENEWAL AUTHORITY (MURA)

The Town of Meeker established the Meeker Urban Renewal Authority (MURA) by Resolution (Resolution No. 01-2017) on February 21, 2017. The Resolution recites that Colorado Urban Renewal Law, Sections 31-25-101, et Seq., of the Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.), provides for the creation, organization and operation of an urban renewal authority for the Town of Meeker, Colorado. The boundaries of the MURA are described as the "annexed territory of the Town of Meeker."

In support of establishing the MURA, a "Conditions Survey" was conducted in February 2017 by the consulting firm Ricker-Cunningham. The focus of the Conditions Survey was downtown Meeker and not the entire annexed territory. The purpose of the Conditions Survey was to document and determine whether ten (10) of the required conditions (set forth in Section 31-25-103(2) of the C.R.S.) exist in Meeker to qualify as a "blighted area" for purposes of establishing an Urban Renewal Authority.

Ultimately, it was found that one or more blighted areas existed in Meeker and that the rehabilitation, conservation, development, and/or redevelopment of these areas was necessary to protect the health, safety, and/or welfare of the town's residents. The MURA was created to address these areas of blight.

Upon establishment of the MURA, a nine-member board was appointed. This board comprised, Meeker Trustees, a Rio Blanco County Commissioner, a representative from the RE-1 School District, and a member representing the interests of other special taxing districts in Meeker. Meeker's Town Administrator was selected as the executive director for the MURA.

A series of MURA Board meetings were held between April and October 2017. During this time, the MURA Board adopted bylaws and prepared a request for Statements of Qualifications (SOQ) to solicit proposals from qualified real estate development firms. The objective of the SOQ was to find a firm or individual to assume operational responsibility for the "Meeker Adventure Center." The ultimate goal was to establish a public-private partnership to operate an outdoor shooting sports facility. The focus of the project was economic development to support existing outfitters and to draw new outdoor recreation businesses to the area. \$2 million of seed money was proposed to get the project off the ground. Seed money was to be matched with private funds raised by others. The \$2 million was to be raised via tax increment financing (TIF) (a financial tool available to the MURA) based upon a project pro forma for the facility.

The Meeker Adventure Center project did not move forward and it appears that the MURA Board has not met since October 2017. However, the MURA and its TIF structure remain in place. Meeker is fortunate to have this financing mechanism available for future qualifying projects. The town would be wise to explore how to best use the MURA support implementation of the Community Master Plan.

## WHAT IS TAX INCREMENT FINANCING (TIF)?

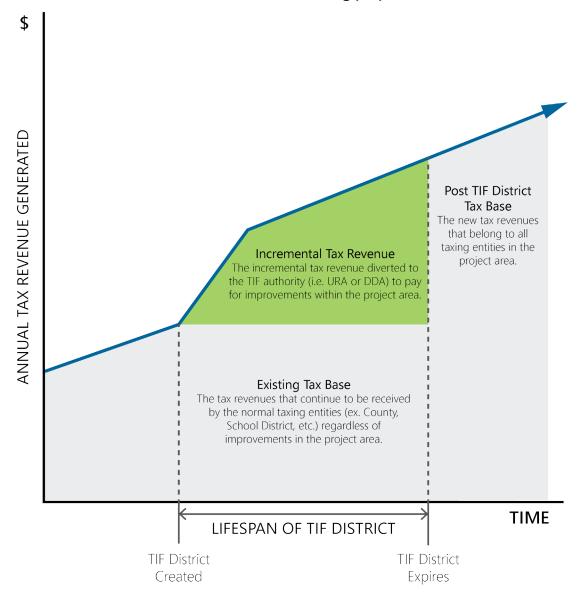
As noted, the MURA has the authority to use a financial tool known as Tax Increment Financing (TIF). TIF is a process by which the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) can use a portion of future tax revenue from a defined area/district to fund a variety of projects and/or programs in that area.

TIF is one of the most powerful local tools for funding a range of public improvements, such as public space improvements, streetscape improvements, affordable housing and economic development initiatives. The potential to generate TIF revenue depends on growth in taxes as a result of private investment and expanded economic activity, like sales, within the boundaries of an established TIF District over the lifespan of the district (usually 25-years for a URA). The rate and scale of that growth is directly related to the amount of tax increment that is generated. Thus, TIF districts work best if they are paired with regulatory changes that support private investment.

When a TIF district is established, an "Existing Tax Base" is determined by calculating the total amount of existing property and/or sales tax revenue generated within the proposed district. The Existing Tax Base

continues to be paid to the existing taxing entities (e.g., County, School District, Recreation District, etc.), while the increment, called the "Incremental Tax Revenue," goes to the TIF Authority (i.e., Urban Renewal Authority (URA) or Downtown Development Authority (DDA)) for a specified period of time- usually 25 to 30 years. Often the Incremental Tax Revenue is used to payback bonds issued by the TIF Authority to finance projects and/or programs. It should be noted that while there is no increase in tax rates resulting from TIF, increased property values do often result, which in turn can produce property tax increases.

At the end of the TIF district's life span, all tax revenues, called the "Post TIF District Tax Base," are distributed among all taxing entities in the district. Over the long term, these entities benefit because once the TIF district expires, they receive the additional tax increment resulting from the investments made in the district.



#### How Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Works

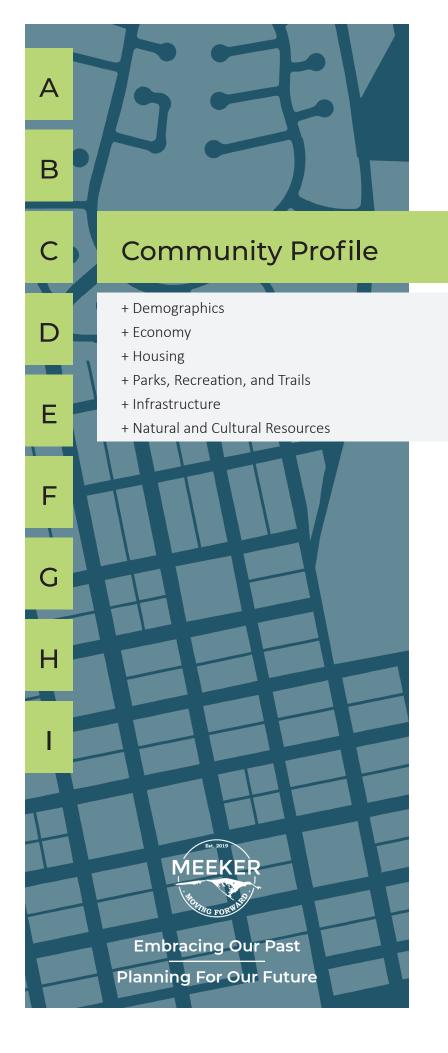
## WHAT IS AN URBAN RENEWAL AUTHORITY (URA)?

The following table offers an overview of Urban Renewal Authorities (URAs) in Colorado. The table describes a URA's purpose, available financing tools, and regulatory powers.

00	erview of Ordan Renewal Authorities (ORAS) in Colorado		
Background/Summary	Established to eliminate blighted areas for development or redevelopment by purchasing, rehabilitating and selling land for development.		
Focus	Real estate development, rehab financing, infrastructure.		
Formation Steps	Finding of blight; Petition by 25 electors; Council resolution. Separate approval for projects within the authority.		
Assessment Method	TIF on property and/or sales tax.		
2 /2	Can generate sales and/or tax increment to finance future development.		
Pros/Cons	Can be controversial.		
Governance	5- to 11-member board appointed by the Board of Trustees.		
Condemn Property?	Yes.		
Operate Facilities?	Yes.		
Levy Property Tax with Voter Approval?	No, but can use TIF.		
Levy Sales Tax with Voter Approval?	No, but can use TIF.		
Assess Cost?	No.		
lssue GO Bonds w/ Voter Approval?	Bonds secured by tax increment.		
Issue Revenue Bonds?	Yes.		
Issue Special Assessment Bonds?	No.		
Colorado Revised Statute (C.R.S.) Cite	31-25-101 et seq C.R.S.		

Overview of Urban Renewal Authorities (URAs) in Colorado

Data Source(s): Progressive Urban Management Associates (P.U.M.A.) and Spencer Fane Britt and Browne LLP



## DEMOGRAPHICS

	Estin	nates	Projections		Average Annual	Average Annual	Average Annual
	2000	2010	2020	2030	% Change (2000-2010)	% Change (2010-2020)	% Change (2020-2030)
Town of Meeker	2,234	2,452	2,280	2,394	+ 0.7%	- 0.03%	+ 0.4%
Town of Rangely	2,097	2,349	2,288	2,402	+ 0.8%	+ 0.4%	+ 0.4%
Unincorporated Rio Blanco County	1,638	1,816	1,747	1,834	+ 0.8%	- 0.03%	+ 0.4%
Rio Blanco County	5,969	6,617	6,315	6,631	+ 0.8%	+ 0.01%	+ 0.4%
Planning Region 11 <sup>1</sup>	201,159	247,167	263,523	304,128	+ 2.1%	+ 0.7%	+ 1.42%

#### Population Projections Estimate Limited Growth

<sup>1</sup>Planning Region 11 includes: Garfield County; Mesa County; Moffat County; Rio Blanco County; and, Routt County. Data Source(s): Colorado State Demography Office

The State Demography Office (SDO) projects that Meeker may experience limited population change over the next 10 years. The projections estimate an increase of 114 people between 2020 and 2030 (i.e., a growth rate of 0.4%). This would account for roughly 36% of the total population increase projected for all of Rio Blanco County over that same period. By contrast, total population in Planning Region 11 is anticipated to increase by 40,605 people, between 2020 and 2030. Meeker's projected growth would account for 0.3% of the region's change.

## Generational Shifts

	% of Rio Blanco County's Estimated & Projected Total Population (2010-2035)	Percent Change (2010-2020)	Percent Change (2020-2035)	<b>Total Change</b> (2010-2035)
GENERATION Z Born after 1997	20.5% (2010) 31.9% (2020) 49.4% (2035)	+ 11.4%	+ 17.5%	+ 28.9%
MILLENNIALS Born between 1981-1996	20.7% (2010) 19.8% (2020) 22.0% (2035)	- 0.9%	+ 2.2%	+ 1.3%
GENERATION X Born between 1965-1980	17.4% (2010) 18.0% (2020) 15.2% (2035)	+ 0.6%	- 2.8%	- 2.2%
BABY BOOMERS Born between 1946-1965	28.9% (2010) 23.7% (2020) 12.4% (2035)	- 5.2%	- 11.3%	- 16.5%
SILENT GENERATION Born between 1928-1945	10.7% (2010) 6.3% (2020) 1.0% (2035)	- 4.4%	- 5.3%	- 9.7%

Data Source(s): Colorado State Demography Office; and, Pew Research Center

Meeker, like many other places in the United States, can expect to see shifts in the generational composition of the community over the coming years. This is important to recognize and understand as different generations have different wants and needs, which drive decisions about where to live. For example, a 2019 survey<sup>1</sup> of 1,000 "Gen Z'ers" (conducted by Homes.com) found the following to be key factors behind their choosing a place to call home:

- 1. Proximity to Work
- ...71% of respondents
- 2. Living near Friends and Family

....52% of respondents

3. Urban Location

of respondents

...25%

4. Proximity to Shopping

of respondents

5. Access to Nightlife

...12% of respondents

In 2018, AARP conducted a similar type of survey (Home and Community Preference Survey<sup>2</sup>) that found the following to be "extremely important" or "very important" to people 50 and older (i.e., Baby Boomers and the Silent Generation):

- 1. Policies that ensure older adults can have an equal opportunity to work for as long as they want or need to regardless of their age.
- 2. Jobs adapted to meet the needs of people with disabilities.
- 3. Affordable housing options for older adults of varying income levels.
- 4. Special transportation services for older adults and people with disabilities.
- 5. A range of flexible job opportunities for older adults.

6. Job training opportunities for older adults who want to learn new job skills or get training in a different field of work.

By working to be a more inclusive, age-friendly community with amenities and services for all ages, Meeker should be able to accommodate "aging in place," as well as the retention and attraction of younger people and families. Growing the younger demographic is important as this will be the next generation of workers and consumers in Meeker.

Footnotes:

- <sup>1</sup>"A New Generation of Homebuyers is Here: Meet Generation Z"
- (https://www.homes.com/blog/2019/06/meet-generation-z/)





...62% of respondents

...61% of respondents

...59% of respondents



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>"2018 Home and Community Preferences: A National Survey of Adults Ages 18-Plus." (https://www.aarp.org/research/topics/community/info-2018/2018-home-community-preference.html)

#### Projected Declines in Rio Blanco County's Working Age Population

	% of Rio Blanco County's Estimated & Projected Total Population (2010-2035)					
Age Range	2010 (Estimates)	2020 (Projections)	2035 (Projections)	Change (2010-2020)	Change (2020-2030)	Total Change (2010-2030)
Under 16	23.0%	22.3%	21.7%	- 0.7%	- 0.6%	- 1.3%
16-30 <sup>i</sup>	20.0%	17.0%	17.3%	- 3.0%	+ 0.3%	- 2.7%
31-64 <sup>i</sup>	44.7%	45.0%	43.7%	+ 0.3%	- 1.3%	- 1.0%
65 & Older <sup>ii</sup>	12.3%	15.7%	17.3%	+ 3.4%	+ 1.6%	+ 5.0%

<sup>1</sup>16-64 is considered to be the "Working Age Population." <sup>ii</sup>65 & older is considered to be the "Retirement Age Population."

Data Source(s): Colorado State Demography Office

The table above shows that the percent of Rio Blanco County's total population considered to be "Working Age" (i.e., 16-64 years old), is projected to decline by roughly 3.7% over the next 15 years. By contrast, the percent of the total population that falls into the "Retirement Age" (i.e., 65 and older) is projected to increase by 5% over that same period. This is concerning as access to skilled and unskilled labor in Meeker is currently a major challenge and the projected decrease in the county's overall working age cohort could further exacerbate this issue. Furthermore, the projected increase in retirees could result in greater demands on local businesses and services that might struggle to find employees.

## ECONOMY

I.

## Potential Long-Term Economic Impacts of COVID-19

While it is still too early to know for sure what long-term economic trends will emerge as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the following are some theories pulled from recent reports and articles published by the Brookings Institution (https://www.brookings.edu/research/how-covid-19-will-change-the-nations-long-term-economic-trends-brookings-metro/) and the Los Angeles Times (https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2020-04-17/post-pandemic-world-u-s-economy-totally-different). As time moves on, attention should be given to the trends that emerge in the post pandemic economy. Understanding these trends and their applicability to Meeker will be important to the development of a strong and diverse local economy.

- With many companies and individuals forced into telecommuting during the COVID-19 pandemic, many have learned that a lot can be done effectively over the internet. If this telecommuting trend sticks around over the long-term it could present opportunities for rural communities to attract a greater range of location-neutral workers and industries. Moreover, if many workers continue to work from home, there could be a permanent reduction in the demand for oil with fewer people commuting.
- A 10-year commercial lease in a single-use building will no longer be standard. Seasonal retailers were already experimenting outside of the big box, including markets and pop-ups in flexible spaces. Office tenants were doing the same through WeWork and other co-working spaces. In addition to new formats and lease terms, profit-sharing leases will become an increasingly important tool to help new businesses get started, survive slowdowns, and provide a return to landlords who invest in their tenants' success.
- For commercial real estate and local governments, food retail will only continue to grow in importance. Restaurants, in whatever format, will continue to be a growing share of tenants and sales tax generators as other storefronts are impacted by tariffs and e-commerce oligopolies. And the more Americans eat out, the more proximity to food retail will shape office and residential tenant demand, as well as home sales.

- The Great Recession eroded savings, so many older workers stayed in their job out of necessity. It is possible we will see an acceleration of this trend after the pandemic.
- For large corporations, business leaders and strategists say that the pandemic will accelerate the trend away from dependence on global supply chains. That may make the U.S. economy more self-reliant and bring home some jobs, but it will also impose new costs on businesses and higher prices on consumers. More domestic production means higher costs and higher prices. Those in turn will lead to demands for higher wages, even for the least skilled workers, along with more labor and political strife.

## The Changing Economy

In recent years, a number of research efforts have studied the evolution of the economy in the United States. Excerpts from select research efforts, which are believed to be relevant to the Town of Meeker, are presented below. The insights offered below could help to inform Meeker's work to develop strategies for diversifying and bolstering the local economy.

*"The Economics of Place: The Value of Building Communities around People."* In 2011, the Michigan Municipal League published a book titled, "The Economics of Place: The Value of Building Communities Around People." This book presents a table on page 47 that offers a comparison of the "Old Economy" and the "New Economy" with respect to place. That table has been recreated and is provided below.





	KEY FEATURES OF THE "OLD ECONOMY"	KEY FEATURES OF THE "NEW ECONOMY"				
1.	Being located in an inexpensive place to do business was key.	1.	Being rich in talent and ideas is key.			
2.	Attracting companies was key.	2.	Attracting educated people is key.			
3.	A high-quality physical environment was a luxury, which stood in the way of attracting cost-conscious businesses.	3.	Physical and cultural amenities are key in attracting knowledge workers.			
4.	Success = fixed competitive advantage in some resource or skill. The labor force was skills dependent.	4.	Success = organizations and individuals with the ability to learn and adapt.			
5.	Economic development was government-led. Large government meant good services.	5.	Bold partnerships with business, government, and nonprofit sector lead change.			
6.	Industrial sector (manufacturing) focus.	6.	Sector diversity is desired, and clustering of related sectors is targeted.			
7.	Fossil fuel dependent manufacturing.	7.	Communications dependent, but energy smart.			
8.	People followed jobs.	8.	Talented, well-educated people choose location first, then look for or create a job.			
9.	Location mattered (especially relative to transportation and raw materials).	9.	Quality places with a high quality of life matter more.			
10.	Dirty, ugly, and a poor-quality environment were common outcomes that did not prevent growth.	10.	Clean, green environment and proximity to open space and quality recreational opportunities are critical.			
11.	Connection to global opportunities not essential.	11.	Connection to emerging global opportunities is critical.			

Data Source(s): "The Economics of Place: The Value of Building Communities around People" published by the Michigan Municipal League (2011)

Additional information can be found by visiting: https://www.economicsofplace.com/

*"Place Value: How Communities Attract, Grow and Keep Jobs and Talent in the Rocky Mountain West."* A 2015 study prepared by Community Builders, titled "Place Value: How Communities Attract, Grow and Keep Jobs and Talent in the Rocky Mountain West," identified a number factors relevant to the strength of economies in rural western communities. The findings of the study were based on a survey of nearly 1,000 employers and community members in Colorado, Idaho, Montana and Wyoming. Key findings from the study include:

• Jobs Follow People. Many business owners (70% of those surveyed via the study) establish residence in a community first, and then decide to start a business at a later date.

Interestingly, the 2018 Town of Meeker Business Survey conducted by RPI Consulting, LLC found that 62% of respondents started their business from scratch; 19% of respondents reported purchasing or becoming an owner of an existing business in Meeker; and the remaining 19% of respondents stated they became an owner or manager through other means such as franchising or by appointment.

- Community Quality is a Top Priority for Businesses and Residents. In selecting a location to live, the most highly considered factor for business owners and community members was the overall quality of the community.
- Being in a Place that Can Attract Talented Employees is Important to Growing Businesses. 68% of business owners surveyed, with unfilled positions, said that the ability to attract or retain talented employees was an important factor in choosing their business location.
- People on the Move are Looking for Great Places. When making relocation decisions, people consider both the quality of the community and job opportunities. 44% of survey respondents felt that job opportunities and the quality of the community were equally important factors in their decision to relocate. Just 17% of respondents indicated that job opportunities were the most important consideration.
- People are Willing to Sacrifice Salary for the Ideal Community. 83% of survey respondents favored "living in an ideal community with a lesser salary" over "living in a community that's less than ideal with a high salary." Safety, open space and trails, access to recreation, neighborhood character, and short commute times are all highly rated factors that people consider when deciding where to live.
- Housing Costs are a Concern for Businesses and Employees. 60% of business owners surveyed felt that housing costs had some impact on the ability to attract employees. That number jumps to 76% for business owners that are hiring.

A copy of the Community Builder's study can be found here: https://communitybuilders.org/uploads/Reports/PlaceValue\_11lowresa.pdf

*"Rural Economic Resiliency in Colorado: Study of Factors Impacting Resiliency."* In 2016, the Colorado Office of Economic Development & International Trade (OEDIT) prepared a study titled, "Rural Economic Resiliency in Colorado: Study of Factors Impacting Resiliency." In preparing this study, OEDIT conducted thirteen (13) focus groups with community leaders from ten (10) rural Colorado counties, which included Chaffee County, Crowley County, Garfield County, Kiowa County, La Plata County, Las Animas County, Moffat County, Montrose County, Morgan County, Ouray County, Rio Grande County, Routt County, and Washington County. Community leaders were asked to assess their county's economic resiliency, and identify factors that either contributed to or hindered it. Many of the key findings from OEDIT's study mirror the findings from the 2015 Community Builder's study.

Recurring factors that community leaders identified as important to economic resiliency included:

- Quality of Life. The "quality of life" offered in smaller rural communities was a factor that drives people to stay and continue to work even when they could leave for opportunities to earn a higher salary.
- Industry Diversity. Focus group participants identified having a diverse set of industries within a community

as being key to economic resiliency. Heavy dependence on a single industry creates economic uncertainty within a community, especially during times of economic downturn. Focus group participants expressed that from their perspective economic resiliency is a community's ability to rebound from a slowdown in its primary industry and to adapt to take advantage of a changing economic environment. Building employment in industries such as, health care, retail, education, and government were identified as potential opportunities to provide a buffer when a primary industry experiences a slowdown.

- **Community Leadership.** Many focus group participants expressed that strong community leadership was a key factor for long-term economic success. The different types of leadership included political leaders such as mayors and town councils, business leadership, and community collaboration. In order for a community to be resilient, focus group participants expressed that leadership must be forward thinking and open to change.
- Education and Health Care. Education and health care systems were frequently discussed among focus groups as factors necessary for a resilient community. Having quality schools and modern, easy-to-access medical facilities are important to community success and are important for attracting new families to an area. In addition, schools and hospitals are employers, providing jobs that are in demand even during challenging economic times.
- Transportation Access. Transportation, including proximity to highways, access to rail lines and airports, and public transportation options, was identified as another key factor contributing to economic resiliency. Accessible transportation systems allow for easier tourist/visitor access to a community, as well as an indirect impact from those who pass through to nearby destinations. Transportation (especially rail and air) helps to create opportunities for industry in a community as businesses are able to export their goods, and convenient transportation is available for their employees.

Community leaders also assessed certain factors that hindered economic resiliency. These included:

- Housing Availability and Supply. In order for rural counties to become more economically diverse, multiple focus group participants emphasized the need to grow existing small businesses and attract other businesses to the community. However, certain factors limit rural counties from being attractive to outside business. One of the major issues hindering business growth is a lack of affordable housing options for employees. Although home prices within many rural communities are reasonable for incoming retirees and second-home buyers they are not for low- to mid-wage earners who are needed to fill many of the local jobs.
- Labor Market. Nearly every focus group identified challenges related to the pool of available labor. Some communities have a significant shortage of skilled workers, while others have the challenge of not having an adequate number of jobs and too many overqualified workers.
- Childcare. The availability of childcare is a difficulty faced by many working families as it is either costprohibitive or unavailable in many areas. Thus, it makes more economic sense for parents to stay home and care for their children rather than work, thereby lowering income and employment within the community. OEDIT's study suggests that the addition of affordable childcare options within rural communities could serve to attract new families to the region, as well as allow parents to participate in the local workforce.
- Youth and Family Retention. Rural communities have often had a difficult time retaining younger generations for a number of reasons, including wages, education, and social issues. Communities depend on younger, more educated workers and leaders to grow and survive. Within many rural counties, a disconnect exists between the skill of the workforce and the type of worker that employers need. While many young people graduate high school in their communities and desire to extend their skills by going to college, there is little to bring them back after graduation. It was noted in OEDIT's study that community leaders believe that attempts to retain youth must begin at a young age, rather than waiting until they are in high school.
- Smart Growth. Focus group participants expressed the need for their county to grow to survive. However, the question of how to facilitate growth was difficult to answer. Common words used to describe the desired type of growth were "slow," "controlled," "smart," and "managed." Another growth-related challenge identified is bringing new businesses while convincing existing businesses to stay. The issue of broadband access was

identified by focus group participants. Broadband was mentioned as a top business requirement during many of the discussions; broadband would allow companies to stay connected even in more remote locations and offer an appealing factor to "location-neutral" businesses.

A copy of OEDIT's study can be found here: https://choosecolorado.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Resiliency-StudyUpdated.pdf



#### Key Findings From An Analysis of Local Economic Data

Based on an analysis of the economic data compiled for the Town of Meeker and Rio Blanco County, the following findings were identified as being important to the community's economic planning efforts. Note that this is by no means an exhaustive list.

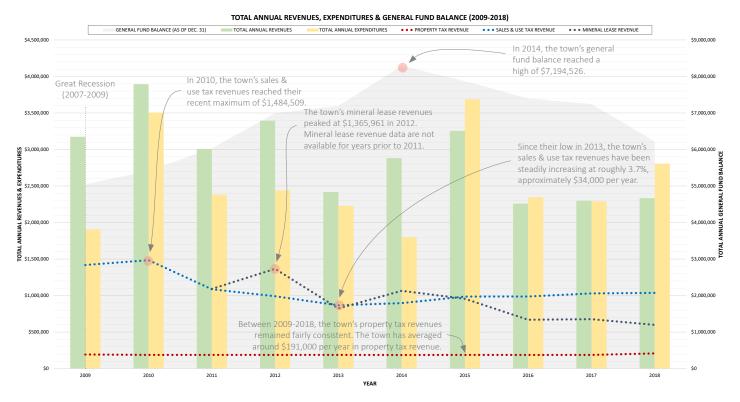
- Meeker needs to find a way to develop a diverse, year-round economy. An economy that is less susceptible to boom/bust cycles and seasonal fluctuations.
- Meeker has a great quality of life and terrific amenities (e.g., Pioneers Medical Center, the Meeker Recreation Center and Recreation & Park District, schools, airport, high-speed internet, the White River, trails, history, authenticity, natural scenery, etc.) for a community its size. According to recent studies, many of these attributes are what people/businesses are looking for and therefore, they could serve as economic drivers for the town.
- For local businesses in Meeker to succeed and prosper, something(s) needs to be done to encourage more people need to spend their dollars in Meeker. There are a number of options that could be pursued including:
  (1) A buy local campaign; (2) offering goods and services in Meeker to a broader market via the internet; (3) growing the number and types of events in Meeker; (4) enhancing and promoting Meeker's tourist attractions; and, (5) develop an economy with year-round activity.
- Growing the local population and/or number of people in Meeker with disposable income could help to increase the customer base for local businesses.
- Meeker benefits from outstanding high-speed fiber optic broadband infrastructure, which is an essential asset for technology firms, telecommuters, and other location-neutral businesses and occupations. Meeker's broadband sets it apart from many other Colorado communities and the town could capitalize on this by using it to attract technology firms, telecommuters and other location-neutral industries.
- Meeker has a higher relative concentration of jobs in: (1) Mining; (2) Utilities; (3) Public Administration; (4) Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting; (5) Arts, Entertainment & Recreation; (6) Educational Services; and, (7) Construction. The concentration of these jobs could serve as an opportunity to develop certain types of industry clusters in Meeker.
- With plentiful public lands, abundant oil, natural gas, coal and sodium bicarbonate reserves, and a skilled local workforce, Rio Blanco County should anticipate continued investment in natural resource extraction industries. However, many of these industries are subject to factors outside of the county's/town's control and therefore boom/bust cycles should be anticipated.
- Meeker is surrounded by a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities that draw tourist to the area and present a variety of opportunities to grow the town's tourism and outdoor recreation industries. Meeker also has a strategic opportunity to attract outdoor recreation businesses, such as archery equipment manufacturers, fly fishing equipment manufacturers, and gun/ammunition manufacturers.
- The Meeker Airport is an important and unique local amenity that does not currently seem to be reaching its full potential. The Aviation Flight Program at Colorado Northwestern Community College could be expanded to the Meeker Airport and function as an anchor for a cluster of aviation-related businesses.

- Meeker's Urban Renewal District is not currently being utilized and could serve as an important source of funding for local economic development initiatives.
- Having a person or persons who is dedicated to overseeing, coordinating and implementing Meeker's economic development efforts will be crucial to making things happen. The town could consider creating a new position that would be tasked with implementing the local economic development initiatives. This position could also be tasked with collaborating with the county's economic development department to ensure that the town and county economic development efforts are aligned and complementary. Funding for this position could potentially come from Meeker's Urban Renewal District.
- Meeker needs to find a way to retain and attract younger people and families. Younger demographics are the next generation of workers in Meeker. With that said, it is also important for Meeker to be an inclusive, age-friendly community with amenities and services for all ages.
- Access to skilled and unskilled labor in Meeker has been identified as a major challenge. Partnerships and collaboration with local schools, CNCC, etc. could help in coming up with strategies for retaining and/or attracting skilled/unskilled workers in Meeker.
- Limited availability of childcare; limited availability of higher education options, vocational schools, and/or training opportunities; and, a limited supply of quality housing at a range of price points in Meeker present challenges. Strategies to address these limitations need to be incorporated into efforts to plan for Meeker's future.



#### Town of Meeker Revenue, Expenditure, and General Fund Balance Trends

The following figure depicts changes that have occurred to the Town of Meeker's annual revenue, expenditures and general fund balance between 2009 and 2018. This figure helps to provide an overall picture of the town's fiscal situation over the past decade.



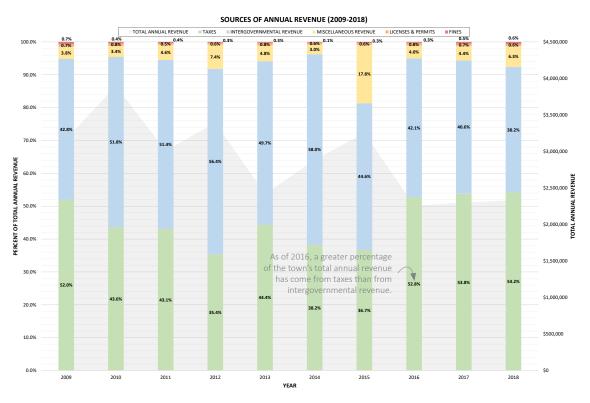
#### Town of Meeker Total Annual Revenues, Expenditures & General Fund Balance Trends (2009-2018)

Data Source(s): 2010 and 2012-2018 Town of Meeker, Colorado "Financial Statements and Independent Auditor's Report"

*Town of Meeker Sources of Revenue.* According to the Town of Meeker's 2020 Budget, the town receives revenue from the following sources:

- Taxes & Intergovernmental Revenue. This category includes: (1) Property taxes from the town's mill levy of 9.781; (2) Funds from the county's road and bridge assessment; (3) Taxes and fees from motor vehicles; (4) Sales & use taxes; (5) Revenue from the Highway Users' Tax Fund (HUTF); (6) Funds from the state's cigarette tax; (7) Fees paid by franchises operating under/over the town's rights-of-way; (8) The local telephone service tax; (9) Funds from the state's severance tax; and, (10) Taxes paid by energy companies operating on federal lands.
- Miscellaneous Revenue. This category includes: (1) interest earned on the town's general fund reserve; (2) fees for vehicle inspections, accident reports, research, etc.; (3) fees for weed abatement/removal; and, (4) charges for making copies, maps, etc.
- Licenses & Permits. Fees collected for liquor licenses, building permits, land use application fees, dog licenses and impoundment.
- Fines. Fines and surcharges assessed for municipal code and traffic violations that occur in Meeker. The town also receives a portion of county court fines.

The figure below illustrates the changes in the town's revenue sources between 2009 and 2018.



#### Town of Meeker Revenue Trends (2009-2018)

Data Source(s): 2010 and 2012-2018 Town of Meeker, Colorado "Financial Statements and Independent Auditor's Report"

As noted in the above figure, as of 2016, a greater percentage of the town's total annual revenue comes from sales and property taxes than it does from intergovernmental revenue. This could be indicative of less oil and gas revenues being brought in by Rio Blanco County. As a result of the decline in intergovernmental revenues, the town is becoming increasingly reliant on its tax revenues.

## Meeker Market Analysis and Opportunity Assessment

*Overview of 2019 Market Analysis and Opportunity Assessment.* In 2019, RPI Consulting, LLC performed an analysis of the retail market in the Town of Meeker, as well as the retail market for the "Meeker Market Area." The Meeker Market Area is described as the area that includes the Town of Meeker, as well as the portions of unincorporated Rio Blanco County roughly within thirty (30) miles of Meeker. This is the area in which the majority of Meeker's customers live and these residents provide Meeker with its year-round sales. RPI Consulting's work culminated in the 2019 "Market Analysis and Opportunity Assessment" a copy of which can be found here: https://meekerchamber.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/MarketAnalysisAndOpportunitiesAssessmentMeekerMainStreet-01-24-2019.pdf

*Retail Leakage in the Town of Meeker and the Meeker Market Area.* RPI's study found that there are a number of retail categories with "leakage." Leakage indicates that resident needs are not being met locally. In other words, residents are shopping outside of Meeker and/or are shopping online. Retail leakage represents opportunities for: (1) existing businesses to expand and diversify their offerings; and, (2) new businesses to open in order to satisfy local demands. The following table provides an overview of the types of businesses in the Town of Meeker and the Meeker Market Area that are experiencing leakage.

Business Type	Town of Meeker Leakage	Meeker Market Area Leakage	Retail Category Description
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	\$0	\$3,827,958	Automobile Dealers; Other Motor Vehicle Dealers (ex. RV, Motorcycle, ATV, Boat); Auto Parts; Accessories; and, Tire Stores.
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	\$875,314	\$1,491,754	Household Furniture; Baby Furniture; Outdoor Furniture; Office Furniture; Flooring; Window Coverings; Bath Shops; Kitchen Ware; Linens; Glassware; China; and, Picture Frame Stores.
Electronics & Appliance Stores	\$883,816	\$1,520,363	Household Appliances; Appliance Repair; Sewing Machines; Vacuums; TVs; Stereo Equipment; Computer Stores; Photography Equipment; Mobile Phones; and, Video Games.
Building Materials, Garden Equipment & Supply Stores	\$390,515	\$1,284,254	Home Centers; Paint & Wallpaper Stores; Hardware Stores; Outdoor Power Equipment; Nurseries; Garden Centers; and, Farm Supply.
Food & Beverage Stores	\$3,594,978	\$2,615,293	Grocery Stores; Supermarkets; Meat Markets; Fish/Seafood; Fruits and Vegetables; Baked Goods; Confections and Nuts; Spices; Gourmet Foods; Dairy; Coffee and Tea; and, Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores.
Health & Personal Care Stores	\$42,488	\$1,632,291	Pharmacies/Drug Stores; Cosmetics; Beauty Supplies; Optical Goods; Health Supplements; Hearing Aids; and, Home Medical Equipment.
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	\$702,254	\$1,413,612	Clothing; Clothing Accessories; Wig Stores; Neckwear; Costume Shops; Bridal Stores; Swimwear; Uniform Supply; and, Shoe Retailers.
General Merchandise Stores	\$3,957,344	\$7,274,181	Department Stores excluding Leased Departments (ex. Stores with multiple consumer merchandise lines, and Non-discount department Stores); and, Other General Merchandise Stores (ex. Dollar Stores, General Stores, Catalog Showrooms, and Variety Stores).
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$374,302	\$1,246,717	Florists; Office Supplies; Stationery & Gift Stores; Used Merchandise Stores; and, Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers.
Nonstore Retailers	\$491,546	\$913,187	Internet and Catalog Retail; Vending Machine Operations; and, Direct Selling Establishments (i.e., Merchandise Sold Direct to Customer Via In-House, Truck Sales, and Portable Stalls).
TOTALS	\$11,312,557	\$23,219,610	

Data Source(s): 2019 Market Analysis and Opportunity Assessment

*Retail Surplus in the Town of Meeker and the Meeker Market Area.* RPI Consulting's 2019 study found that in addition to retail leakage, there are also retail surpluses that exist because sales within the Town of Meeker/ the Meeker Market Area exceed the spending (demand) generated by the town's residents/the residents of the Meeker Market Area.

Surpluses are likely the result of regional residents, passers through and/or tourists making purchases at Meeker businesses/businesses in the Meeker Market Area, which result in sales exceeding the local demand. The following table offers information regarding the business in the Town of Meeker/the Meeker Market Area that experience surpluses.

Business Type	Town of Meeker Demand	Town of Meeker Sales	Town of Meeker Surplus	Meeker Market Area Demand	Meeker Market Area Sales	Meeker Market Area Surplus
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	\$6,875,264	\$7,698,727	\$823,463	-	-	-
Gasoline Stations	\$3,025,659	\$9,616,095	\$6,590,436	\$5,409,148	\$16,263,305	\$10,854,157
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	\$1,006,276	\$1,781,956	\$775,680	\$1,746,674	\$2,059,592	\$312,918
Food Services & Drinking Places	\$2,758,261	\$3,522,251	\$763,990	\$4,699,089	\$5,010,160	\$311,071
TOTALS	\$13,665,460	\$22,619,029	\$8,953,569	\$11,854,911	\$23,333,057	\$11,478,146

Data Source(s): 2019 Market Analysis and Opportunity Assessment

By comparing the Town of Meeker's retail surplus (\$8,953,569) with its retail leakage (\$11,312,557), it is found that the surplus sales in Meeker help to offset a significant portion of the sales lost to leakage. However, there is still a net loss in sales of around \$2,358,988. Moreover, the net loss in sales for the Meeker Market Area is approximately \$11,741,464.

*Strategies and Recommendations.* The following table presents the strategies and recommendations included in the 2019 Market Analysis and Opportunity Assessment. These recommendations and strategies draw from the results of the 2018 Business Survey (conducted as part of RPI Consulting's work) and build on past economic development and downtown planning efforts.

Recommendation/Strategy		Description		
1.	Develop and implement a downtown business recruitment strategy and marketing materials.	Develop a strategy to target successful, independent retailers, restauranteurs, other businesses in the region and entrepreneurs who have business ideas or replicable business models that would fit in downtown Meeker.		
		According to responses to the business survey, 70% of respondents selected general retail/ shopping as a type of business needed downtown and 65% selected entertainment. Other viable business opportunities included those that will support the growing outdoor recreation industry.		
		The first step is to identify the types of businesses to target and establish a set of leads. The next steps are to build marketing materials and messaging to generate interest and meet with responsive businesses. The recruitment package could promote available commercial properties in the downtown area, tax credits, market information, lifestyle and other assets in Meeker.		
2.	Research best practices for succession planning.	Seventy-five percent (75%) of downtown Meeker businesses surveyed are unsure of/do not have a succession plan. Succession plans are a critical component to lasting, vibrant rural business environments.		
		Research opportunities for trainings and classes focused on helping local businesses develop succession plans or exit strategies. Identify economic development organizations that are already working on providing such trainings, such as the Associated Governments of Northwest Colorado (AGNC) and build from those efforts.		

Rec	ommendation/Strategy	Description				
3.	Increase sales and improve vitality of the downtown.	Respondents to RPI's business survey indicated low sales volumes from January through May; 45% of respondents said they struggle with insufficient sales overall.				
		Strategies to increase current sales revenue include:				
		1. Adopt more customer-friendly business hours.				
		2. Provide businesses with targeted, one-on-one technical assistance/training.				
		3. Address capital/financing needs.				
		Customer-Friendly Business Hours. Encourage businesses to test staying open later by organizing and coordinating "open in the evening" events. Approximately 75% of downtown business customers are local/regional residents, many of whom are commuting to and from Meeker for work throughout the week. Extending hours beyond 5:00 p.m. on weekdays can improve the vitality of downtown Meeker.				
		Technical Assistance/Training. The top business training needs identified in the business survey included: (1) finance/taxes; (2) marketing; and, (3) customer service. Technical assistance may also be provided on a one-on-one basis to help businesses address current retail leakage by diversifying the products/services they offer and maximizing current customers.				
		Capital/Financing Needs. Addressing business finance needs can help businesses expand and/ or diversify. Specific finance needs referenced in the business survey responses included: (1) business operating loans; (2) small business loans; and, (3) equipment loans. Ensuring business owners have the resources needed to be and remain successful is critical to sustaining a vibrant downtown.				
4.	Capture spending in downtown from special event attendees.	Coordinate and market downtown retail-centric events, activities, promotions and parking during special events held in or near town (e.g., Wagon Wheel OHV Rendezvous, Meeker Classic Sheepdog Trials, Rinehart's R100 Tournament) in order to draw attendees downtown. Continue to support existing events and recruit new special events in Meeker that will spur activity in the downtown.				
5.	Secure an entertainment enterprise in the downtown area.	Sixty-five percent (65%) of businesses surveyed said more entertainment is needed in downtown Meeker. Furthermore, the Better City Industry Cluster analysis identified arts and entertainment industries as a viable means to spark economic activity in Meeker. Entertainment venues provide regular, ongoing entertainment and educational opportunities that attract residents and visitors and often become downtown "anchors" (anchor institutions are those that are community owned/operated and generate measurable economic impacts).				
		Successful Colorado examples include: the Sherbino Theater in Ridgway; the Creede Repertory Theatre; the Backdoor Theatre in Nederland; and the Magic Circle Theatre in Montrose. These venues offer a wide range of entertainment including productions, concerts and movies. They often operate seasonally or part-time, under a non-profit organization.				
6.	Increase art-related business startups in downtown.	A developed arts industry differentiates the community, supports tourism and increases economic vitality. Downtown Meeker has an arts industry presence through the Meeker Arts and Cultural Council.				
		The first step to strengthen the arts industry cluster (i.e., a geographic concentration of arts- related businesses and institutions) is to identify and activate the local innovators, artists/ creators, musicians and others who have business ideas that will fit well in the downtown area. The second step is to connect these individuals with the business development services and resources needed to launch a startup.				
		Additional art industry business startup support may include local incentives and assistance to secure a business location (e.g., facilitate space-sharing agreements) or development of a makerspace where equipment and tools are available in a communal, rentable space. The Colorado Creative Industries Career Advancement Grant may be a valuable resource to remove capital barriers for creative entrepreneurs to begin a commercial business.				
7.	Increase access to downtown public restrooms.	Public restrooms encourage through traffic to stop. Locate public restrooms in the downtown area with signage visible from Market Street/Highway 13.				

Recommendation/Strategy		Description				
8.	Offer training for business owners on digital marketing best practices.	Work with local businesses to provide group or one-on-one training on how to best utilize digital marketing (e.g., websites, email, advertisements, social media) to help their business. A training will ensure that businesses not only have social media accounts, but that they are using them to their fullest. It is recommended that this training include identification of a social media goal(s) (e.g., gain new customers, build brand identity, increase customer service), choosing the right platform, identifying a target audience, what content to provide and more.				
		The business survey results show that 91% of respondents use Facebook, 17% use Instagram, and Google, Twitter, and Yelp are each used by 4% of survey respondents. Familiarity and proper use of social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Yelp, etc.) can have significant impact on a business, help them gain recognition and showcase a good reputation.				
		Three quarters of the survey respondents indicated a desire for specific trainings to assist them in their business. 52% of respondents are interested in finance/tax training; 48% are interested in marketing training; 24% would like customer service training; and, 19% would like computer training.				
9.	Consider establishing a staffed position focused on downtown.	This position would focus on advancing Meeker Main Street Program initiatives and connect existing and prospective businesses with the resources they need. Meeker leadership would need to evaluate organizational and logistical considerations to determine the details of staffing this part-time or full-time position.				
		The 2018 Business Survey showed that 90% of respondents face business challenges, only 10% of respondents cited "no major challenges". Top challenges listed by business survey respondents included: (1) employment/hiring challenges (50%); (2) seasonal swings in revenues (50%); (3) not enough volume of sales (45%); and, (4) lack of supply/affordability in workforce housing (20%).				

Data Source(s): 2019 Market Analysis and Opportunity Assessment

## Focus Group Sessions, Business Owner Interviews, and Meeker Community Survey Results

*Focus Group Sessions.* Below are select highlights from discussions that were held with focus groups in the fall of 2019 and spring of 2020:

- In the 1960's Meeker was self-sufficient in terms of businesses. Everything people needed was available in the community. That has changed. Now, people do most of their shopping in other communities (e.g., Rifle for Wal-Mart, City Market, etc.) and/or online. Sales tax leakage is a big issue.
- The most difficult time for businesses is November to April. Meeker needs more to do and see in the winter. A goal would be to NOT have to rely on tourists to survive during the winter. We need to develop a strong, year-round economy in Meeker.
- Access to skilled and unskilled labor is a big challenge. CNCC could be a resource for people wanting to pursue higher education and/or learn a trade. Meeker could have a building trades center or incentivize apprenticeships in building trades. We need to get youth input on job training programs.
- Community events do help some local businesses but many businesses are unable to sustain themselves on event and tourist activity alone.
- Shipping is a challenge. There is no rail or truck shipping to/from Meeker.
- What facilities does Meeker have? How can we take advantage of Meeker's existing facilities? Develop an inventory; determine what activities are appropriate at different facilities; and, work to showcase/highlight these facilities.
- Jobs are needed so that our youth can return to Meeker to work. Only a small percentage of our youth return to Meeker after college and they typically return after they've started a family.
- Tap into community events in neighboring communities (e.g., winter/summer events in Steamboat).

- Ranching brings new dollars into Meeker and Rio Blanco County.
- Local ranchers work seven (7) days a week and they do not have time to spend their dollars elsewhere. Most of their money is spent in Meeker and/or Rio Blanco County.
- Younger members of ranching/farming families often come back to Meeker to continue the family business.
- Explore opportunities to build upon existing base industries, such as agriculture. There could be an opportunity for a sheep reproductive facility and/or wool testing facility in Meeker. Also opportunities for value-added businesses, such as manufacturing and sale of wool products in Meeker.
- Ag-tourism could be an opportunity but there are concerns about potential negative backlash from tourists who don't like what they experience while on a ranch or farm.
- Meeker wants to hold on to what they have- the pristine outdoors. Need to balance tourism with retaining the qualities of uncrowded trails and public lands.
- Many communities miss the mark on their history... Meeker hits the mark. Meeker has a secret treasure (in its history).
- Heritage tourism could be a key opportunity for Meeker. There should be focus on historical tradesblacksmithing, agriculture, carpentry, all of the elements of living off the land.
- Meeker needs more affordable housing- under \$200,000. Some employers have a hard time attracting and/or retaining employees due to the lack of quality/affordable housing options. Attractive mobile home parks need to play a role in the affordable housing conversation.
- The appearance of Market Street/Highway 13 needs to be addressed. Meeker needs a "WOW factor" along the highway so that people stop and spend time exploring all that Meeker has to offer.
- Make sure that economic development ideas are sustainable.

*Business Owner Interviews.* Western Slope Consulting conducted several interviews with Meeker business owners. Key findings from those interviews are offered below:

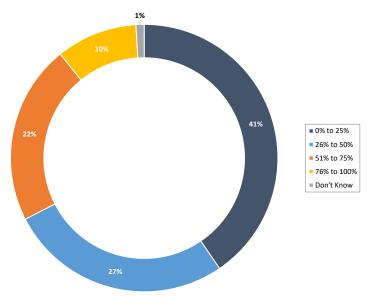
- There are not enough people living in Meeker is to support local businesses and/or there are not enough people with disposable income to spend at local businesses. People don't open businesses in Meeker because it is too risky. There isn't a large enough customer base/not enough traffic.
- It seems that there is increasing interest in growing Meeker, yet at the same time, a resistance to that very thing. Is growth inevitable or will it be intentionally stifled? This uncertainty might make investing in Meeker feel risky.
- A significant portion of the community goes out of town to shop (e.g., Grand Junction, Rifle for Wal-Mart and City Market, Gypsum/Eagle for CostCo, etc.). They buy everything they need outside of town and don't spend money locally.
- It would be nice to have access to models/data that estimate the ACTUAL need for certain goods and/or services in Meeker. Just because people say there is a need, does not mean that the need is great enough to enable a business or businesses in that field to succeed. We were asked to provide one of our suppliers with an estimate of the local market before we were able to sign a contract with them. There was no data available so I had to make my "best guess" of the demand for our services.
- Efforts to bring tourists to Meeker are helpful because they lessen dependence on local residents. Every business will say that they 'live' for the summers. However, don't make the mistake of thinking that more weekend events is the answer. More Sheepdog Trials, R100, Wagonwheel, Farmer's Markets, will not solve Meeker's economic challenges.
- Certain types of community events (e.g., downtown events) do help local businesses. However, events that

are located out of town and/or have "self-contained" participants don't seem to offer much benefit to local businesses. It might be helpful for these types of events to encourage people to visit businesses in Meeker.

- Access to the public lands around Meeker is often unclear- Which public lands are available for which activities? Who do you check with about certain areas of use: Forest Service, Parks & Wildlife, State, County, Town, etc? It would be helpful to have a central location with information about the public lands surrounding out town. This could also help the public feel more confident in planning outdoor activities and/or local travel amenities.
- Advertising feels like a challenge, since people won't frequent your business if they don't know about it. Word of mouth does go along way in northwest Colorado, but it is slow. Perhaps there could be an electronic billboard in town that informs people about local businesses? Maybe the Chamber could consider collaborating with a network of advertisers throughout western Colorado and/or a network of national tourism advertisers?
- Need signage that directs traffic into downtown/Meeker's historic core. Signage should identify downtown as a historic area.
- Walk-in traffic for downtown businesses is important but also a challenge.
- Seems like more collaboration among downtown businesses could be beneficial.
- Rumor has it that Meeker has some of the most lenient regulations on food stamps and government benefits for low income families. That may be why we have an influx of people moving here who rent or receive government subsidies. These folks have limited disposable income and are not likely to spend money at many of the local shops in Meeker.
- Meeker needs a 'draw', such as an activity or a natural phenomenon ,that people will drive 2+ hours for and stay in town for 3+ hours. Examples of a 'draw' include: (1) a climbing gym (e.g., Woodward (https://www. hrhrivieramaya.com/woodward.htm)); (2) permitted floating down the river; (3) bike trails that are marketed better; or, (4) entertainment venues (e.g., a bowling alley, movie theatre, etc.). We need to give out of town people a reason to stay overnight and bring their families, friends, etc.
- More in-town public river access; more trails for bicycles; and, more OHV trails that connect the town with our extensive trail system, without having to drive on main, paved roads would be of great benefit to our business. While the OHV connector trail is a great start, it would be incredible to have more, off-pavement connector trails that head out in all directions from Meeker.

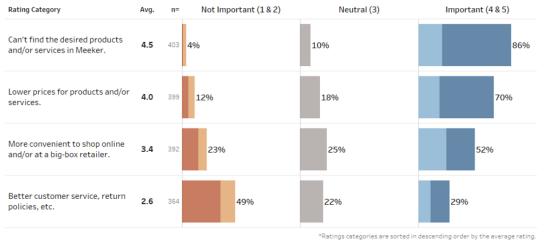


**2019 Meeker Community Survey Results.** The 2019 Meeker Community Survey asked several questions aimed at gathering feedback from the community about their shopping habits, as well as ideas that people have for enhancing Meeker's economy. The responses to those questions are provided on the following pages.



Approximately How Much of Your Household Shopping is Done in Meeker?

Data Source(s): 2019 Meeker Community Survey



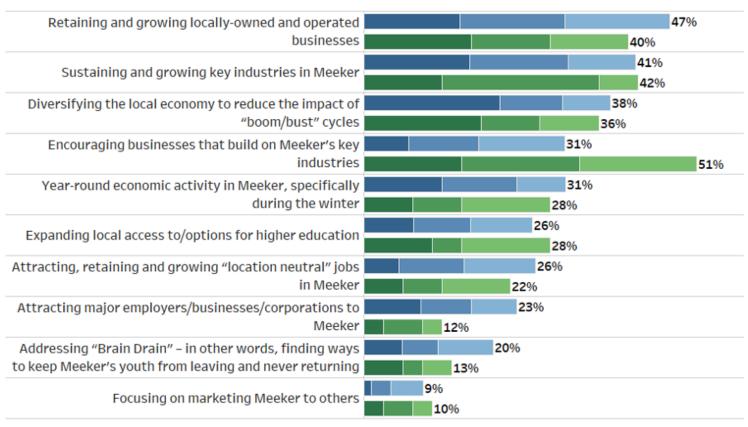
#### How Important Are the Following Factors in Your Household's Decision to Shop Outside of Meeker?

Data Source(s): 2019 Meeker Community Survey

As depicted in the figures above, 68% of the 400 or so respondents to the Meeker Community Survey do 50% or less of their shopping in Meeker. The top two reasons that people chose to shop outside of Meeker include: (1) they are unable to find the products and/or services that they need in Meeker; and, (2) they can find lower prices for goods and/or services outside of Meeker.

The figure and table on the following page offer the results of the survey questions that asked community members to provide input on what exactly they think needs to be done over the next 10-15 years to enhance Meeker's economy. According to the survey responses, the majority of respondents would like to see Meeker work to: (1) retain and grow locally-owned and operated businesses; (2) sustain and grow key industries (i.e., Agriculture; Natural Resource Extraction; Tourism; Education; Health Care; Government) in Meeker; and, (3) diversify the local economy to reduce the impact of "boom/bust" cycles.

As far as specific ideas that community members have for strengthening the Meeker's economy, those include: (1) more shopping and/or dining options in town; (2) expanding educational/training opportunities in Meeker; (3) natural resource extraction businesses/industries; (4) agricultural based businesses/industries; and, (5) recreation activities, amenities, etc. Refer to Table 5.



Top (3) Three Actions That You Think Should Be Pursued to Strengthen Meeker's Economy over the Next 10-15 Years

Data Source(s): 2019 Meeker Community Survey

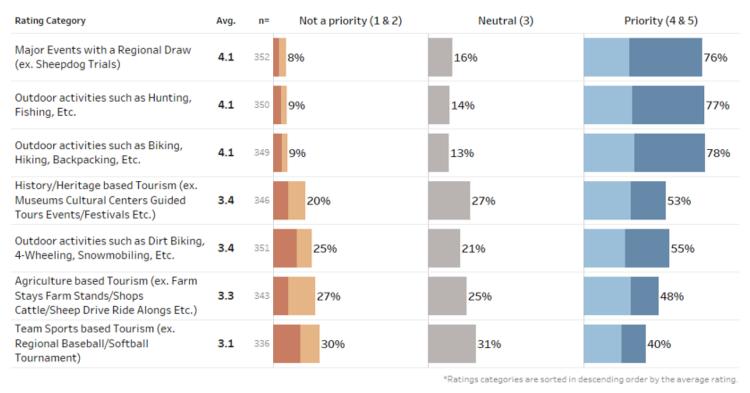
#### Specific Ideas for Strengthening the Local Economy

Respondent Lives in Meeker	Respondent Lives in Rio Blanco County
1. More Shopping and/or Dining Options	1. Expand Educational/Training Opportunities
2. Natural Resource Extraction Businesses/Industries	2. Agricultural based Businesses/Industries
3. Recreation Activities, Amenities, Etc.	3. More Shopping and/or Dining Options
4. Marijuana Businesses/Industries	4. Activities, Amenities, Services, Etc. for Seniors
5. Activities, Amenities, Services, Etc. for Youth	5. Manufacturing
6. Expand Educational/Training Opportunities	6. Recreation Businesses/Industries
7. Activities, Amenities, Services, Etc. for Seniors	7. Tourism
8. Entertainment (e.g., Movie Theater, Bowling Alley)	8. Enhance/Support Local Businesses
9. Manufacturing	9. Lower Cost Goods/Services
10. Enhance/Support Local Businesses	10. Recreation Activities, Amenities, Events, Etc.

Data Source(s): 2019 Meeker Community Survey

Tourism comes up frequently in discussions regarding Meeker's economy. The Meeker Community Survey explored the types of tourism that the community thought would be most appropriate for Meeker. The types of tourism that survey respondents identified include: (1) major events with a regional draw (e.g., The Meeker Classic); (2) outdoor activities such as hunting, fishing, etc.; and, (3) outdoor activities such as biking, hiking, backpacking, etc.

#### Types of Tourism that Meeker Should Focus On Over the Next 10-15 Years



Data Source(s): 2019 Meeker Community Survey

## Overview of Meeker's Broadband Infrastructure

Meeker benefits from outstanding high-speed fiber optic broadband infrastructure, which is an essential asset for technology firms, telecommuters, and other location-neutral businesses and occupations. The table below provides a comparison of Meeker's broadband to that of other, larger communities in Colorado. These larger, more urban communities were selected because cities commonly have better/faster broadband than do rural communities. However, as illustrated in the table, Meeker's broadband exceeds that of major Colorado cities, such as Denver and Boulder. This sets Meeker apart from other Colorado communities and makes the town wellsuited to support technology firms, telecommuters and other location-neutral industries.

	Avg. Download Speed	Comparison to Statewide Avg. Download Speed (73.5 Mbps)	Comparison to Nationwide Avg. Download Speed (65.4 Mbps)	Avg. Cost per Mbps	Approximate Percent of Residents With Access to Multiple Wired ISPs
Town of Meeker	128.5 Mbps	+ 55 Mbps	+ 63.1 Mbps	\$0.59	63%
City of Steamboat Springs	55.5 Mbps	- 18 Mbps	- 9.9 Mbps	\$0.67	80%
City of Glenwood Springs	97.0 Mbps	+ 23.5 Mbps	+ 31.6 Mbps	\$0.62	81%
City of Grand Junction	52.2 Mbps	- 21.3 Mbps	- 13.2 Mbps	\$0.49	96%
City of Boulder	109.1 Mbps	+ 35.6 Mbps	+ 43.7 Mbps	\$0.53	90%
City of Denver	70.2 Mbps	- 3.3 Mbps	+ 4.8 Mbps	Data Not Available	96%

Data Source(s): Broadbandnow.com

## Economic Drivers: An Analysis of Rio Blanco County's Base Industries

Industries/businesses that sell goods or services outside of a defined area (i.e., a town, a county, etc.) are considered the base of a local economy. These "Basic/Base Industries" are responsible for the existence of the economy as they bring in dollars from outside of the community. Base industries generate secondary jobs that are classified as either "Indirect Basic" or "Local Resident Services."

**Direct Basic Jobs.** These jobs bring in dollars from outside the community. In other words, income is derived from outside sources, such as the export of goods or services, sales to tourists, etc. Without the continual infusion of outside dollars provided by direct basic jobs, money would drain away from the local economy as a result of imported goods and services being purchased.

**Indirect Basic Jobs.** These are jobs in the community that result from basic/base industries purchasing goods or services necessary for their operations. For example, ranchers purchasing tires for their vehicles from local tire shops.

**Local Resident Services Jobs.** These jobs, also known as "induced jobs," are generated as earnings are spent locally on goods and services, such as food, recreation, health care and taxes. These jobs include: waiters & waitresses; fly fishing guides; public school teachers; and, police officers.

The Colorado State Demography Office (SDO) performs an analysis of base industries for all Colorado counties as part of its efforts to estimate and forecast population and employment in the state. The SDO measures direct basic jobs for the following four (4) categories:

- **1. Traditional Base Industries.** Agribusiness, mining, manufacturing and state/federal government comprise the sectors of "Traditional Base Industries." These industries have been around for many years (e.g., 100+ years) and produce goods that are sold almost entirely outside the region.
- **2. Regional Center/National Services.** These are industries primarily engaged in the provision of services to a region or the nation. Industries in this category include: construction; communications; trade & transportation; professional & business services; financial, insurance & real estate services; and, education & health services.
- **3. Tourism.** These are industries with activities related to tourism and those that benefit from tourist spending. This category includes trip-related expenditures made by visitors, as well as the construction and upkeep of second homes.
- **4. Households.** This is a catch-all category. It includes jobs supported by personal income derived from outside of the region, such as: dollars that come from transfer payments; money earned at a prior point in time (i.e., savings); dollars that commuting workers earn outside of the region but spend locally; and, unearned income from assets, such as, dividends, interest and/or rents.

As of 2018, the largest source of direct basic jobs in Rio Blanco County was Traditional Base Industries (34.6%), followed by Households (14.2%), Regional Center/National Services (11.1%), and Tourism (6.8%). Going a level deeper:

- Within the **Traditional Basic Industries** category, the largest sub-sector was mining (12.9% of direct basic jobs), followed by agribusiness (11.1%), government (9.6%) and manufacturing (1.0%).
- Within the **Households** category, retiree spending supported the largest share of direct basic jobs (9.2%), followed by other household income (3.2% of direct basic jobs) and, transfer payments (2.4% of direct basic jobs).
- Within the **Regional Center/National Services** category, the largest sub-sectors were education & health services (8.7% of direct basic jobs) and construction (1.5% of direct basic jobs).
- Within the **Tourism** category, resorts accounted for 5.0% of direct basic jobs, followed by second homes (0.8%), and service employment and transportation employment (both at 0.5%)

#### Direct Basic, Indirect Basic and Local Resident Services Jobs in Rio Blanco County (2010 vs. 2018)

*NOTE: Orange text = a growing base industry	No. of Jobs (2010)	% of Total Employment (2010)	No. of Jobs (2018)	% of Total Employment (2018)
Traditional Base Industries (Total)	1,582	38.6%	1,288	34.6%
Agribusiness	358	8.7%	415	11.1%
Mining (Mining operations; mining support activities; quarries; and, oil & gas wells)	820	20.0%	480	12.9%
Manufacturing (All activities related to manufacturing, except for agricultural processing)	52	1.3%	36	1.0%
Government (Federal/State) (Includes Federal/State ownerships regardless of activity; higher education; and, military activities)	352	8.6%	357	9.6%
Regional Center/National Services (Total)	431	10.5%	415	11.1%
Construction (Construction of buildings; engineering projects; and, preparing sites for new construction)	66	1.6%	56	1.5%
<b>Communications</b> (Industries within the North American Industry Classification System Information (9000) sector)	13	0.3%	0	0.0%
Trade & Transportation (Non-agriculture related wholesale, warehousing & storage; and, truck & rail transportation)	28	0.7%	23	0.6%
Professional & Business Services (Scientific research & development; and, computer systems design)	26	0.6%	7	0.2%
Financial, Insurance & Real Estate Services	7	0.2%	4	0.1%
Education & Health Services (Includes private education and health care services)	291	7.1%	324	8.7%
Tourism (Total)	301	7.3%	252	6.8%
Resort (Includes resorts, attractions, lodging, etc.)	223	5.4%	186	5.0%
Service Employment (Includes dining, shopping, entertainment, etc.)	21	0.5%	18	0.5%
Transportation Employment (Includes airfare, car rental, gas, etc.)	20	0.5%	17	0.5%
Second Homes (Includes construction, upkeep, sales, etc.)	37	0.9%	31	0.8%
Households (Total)	104	2.5%	529	14.2%
Retirees (Earnings and employment associated with retiree expenditures on local resident services)	201	4.9%	342	9.2%
<b>Commuters</b> (Earnings and employment associated with dollars earned outside of the region but spent locally)	- 225	- 5.5%	- 20	- 0.5%
Transfer Payments (aka Public Assistance) (Medicaid; Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC); Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); and, Unemployment Insurance Compensation)	63	1.5%	88	2.4%
Other Household Income (Earnings and employment associated with unearned income received from dividends, interest and rents)	65	1.6%	119	3.2%
DIRECT BASIC JOBS (TOTAL)	2,418	59.0%	2,484	66.7%
Indirect Basic Jobs (Total)	238	35.2%	233	27.1%
Local Resident Services Jobs (Total)	1,441	5.8%	1,009	6.3%
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT (ALL INDUSTRIES)	4,101	100%	3,725	100%

Data Source(s): Colorado State Demography Office

### Rio Blanco County Employment and Earnings Trends By Industry

According to data from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) and State Demography Office (SDO), Rio Blanco County's industry mix shifted between 2001-2018, as have some the county's fundamental economic drivers. According to data from the BEA and SDO, the following industries experienced a decrease in their share of total annual jobs and wages in Rio Blanco County:

- Mining, including Quarrying & Oil/Gas Extraction (2000). In 2001, this sector accounted for 14.3% of total jobs in Rio Blanco County, decreasing to 12.2% by 2018 (a change of -2.1%). Furthermore, in 2001, Mining, including Quarrying & Oil/Gas Extraction (2000) accounted for 33.1% of total earnings in Rio Blanco County. However, by 2018, this decreased to 29.4% of total earnings (a change of -3.7%).
- **Retail Trade (7000).** The share of total jobs from Retail Trade (7000) decreased by 1.6% between 2001 and 2018. Similarly, the share of total wages from Retail Trade (7000) declined by 2.2%.
- Accommodation & Food Services (13015). The share of total jobs in Rio Blanco County from Accommodation & Food Services (13015) decreased by 1.8% between 2001 and 2018. By contrast, the share of total annual wages from Accommodation & Food Services (13015) increased by 0.1%, indicating a substantial increase in the average annual wage for this sector.
- Other Services, except Public Administration (14000). The share of total jobs attributed to this sector decreased by 1.2% between 2001 and 2018. By contrast, the share of total wages from this sector remained steady at 2.2%.
- **State Government (15020).** The share of jobs in Rio Blanco County from State Government (15020) decreased 2.3% between 2001 and 2018. Insufficient wage data were available to calculate the share of total annual wages attributed to this sector.

By contrast, economic activity in Rio Blanco County resulted in the proportionate share of jobs and earnings increasing for a variety of sectors during the 2001-2018 period, including:

- Agriculture (1000). The share of total jobs from Agriculture (1000) increased by 0.8%, while at the same time the share of total annual wages from Agriculture (1000) increased by 0.1%.
- **Transportation & Warehousing (8000).** Transportation & Warehousing's (8000) share of total jobs in Rio Blanco County increased from 1.6% to 2.6% (an increase of 0.9%). The sectors share of total annual wages also grew by 1.5%.
- **Real Estate Rental & Leasing (10150).** This sector saw its share of total jobs grow by 1.0%. However, this sectors share of total earnings decreased by 0.2%.
- Administrative & Waste Services (11050). This sector saw its share of total jobs grow by 3.0% and its share of total annual wages increase by 4.0%.
- Health Care & Social Assistance (12015). This sector experienced modest growth in its share of total jobs in Rio Blanco County, growing from 1.7% to 2.3% (an increase of 0.6%). By contrast, Health Care & Social Assistance saw substantial growth in its share of total annual wages, increasing from 6.6% to 10.9% (an increase of 4.3%).
- Local Government (15030). This sector saw a substantial uptick in its share of total jobs in Rio Blanco County, growing from 20.8% to 25.5% (an increase of 4.7%) between 2001 and 2018. Local Government (15030) also saw its share of total annual wages increase by 3.0% during this period.

Combined, these patterns suggest an evolution towards an economy in Rio Blanco County with a growing share of service providing industries and decreasing share of goods producing industries.

#### Changes in Total Annual Employment and Earnings by Industry in Rio Blanco County (2010-2018)

	changes	ii iutai	Annua	Linbioa	inent a		ings by	industry in K		III (2010-20	10)		
NORTH AMERICAN INDUSTRY CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM (NAICS)			MATED A S BY IND			ARE OF T			VERAGE ANNUA AGE BY INDUST			ARE OF T NUAL W	
SECTOR NAN CODE		2001	2018	Change in Jobs	2001	2018	% Change	2001	2018	Change in Earnings	2001	2018	% Change
Agriculture (1	000)	368	399	+ 31	9.9%	10.7%	+ 0.8%	\$31,980	\$50,680	+ \$18,700	1.6%	1.7%	+ 0.1%
Mining, includ Quarrying & Q Extraction (20 Construction	Dil/Gas	533	456	- 77	14.3%	12.2%	- 2.1%	\$50,702	\$96,831	+ \$46,129	33.1%	29.4%	- 3.7%
Construction	(4000)	291	263	- 28	7.8%	7.1%	- 0.8%	\$30,698	\$57,801	+ \$27,103	7.0%	8.1%	+ 1.2%
Manufacturin	g (5000)	41	40	- 1	1.1%	1.1%	0%	\$19,462	\$36,420	+ \$16,958	0.8%	1.0%	+ 0.2%
Retail Trade (7	7000)	299	238	-61	8.0%	6.4%	- 1.6%	\$17,211	\$22,608	+ 5,397	5.2%	3.0%	- 2.2%
Wholesale Tra	ade (6000)	25	(ND)	-	0.7%	-	-	\$49,558	(ND)	-	1.6%	(ND)	-
Transportatio Warehousing		61	96	+ 35	1.6%	2.6%	+ 0.9%	\$42,761	\$68,576	+ \$25,815	2.3%	3.8%	+ 1.5%
Utilities (3000	))	36	49	+ 13	1.0%	1.3%	+ 0.3%	\$49,166	\$104,416	+ \$55,250	2.3%	3.5%	+ 1.3%
Information (	9000)	19	14	- 5	0.5%	0.4%	- 0.1%	\$33,447	\$42,166	+ \$8,719	0.8%	0.4%	- 0.4%
Finance & Ins (10000)	urance	65	43	- 22	1.7%	1.2%	- 0.6%	\$32,753	\$40,254	+ \$7,501	2.2%	1.2%	- 1.0%
Real Estate, R Leasing (1015		52	91	+ 39	1.4%	2.4%	+ 1.0%	\$25,993	\$33,068	+ \$7,075	0.7%	0.5%	- 0.2%
Professional, 5 & Technical So (11000)		108	97	- 11	2.9%	2.6%	- 0.3%	\$20,701	\$46,494	+ \$25,793	1.2%	1.2%	0%
Management of Companies Enterprises (1	&	(ND)	(ND)	-	-	-	-	(ND)	(ND)	-	(ND)	(ND)	-
Administrativ Services (110		65	178	+ 113	1.7%	4.8%	+ 3.0%	\$22,409	\$54,518	+ \$32,109	1.1%	5.1%	+ 4.0%
Educational S (12000)	ervices	(ND)	(ND)	-	-	-	-	(ND)	(ND)	-	(ND)	(ND)	-
Health Care & Assistance (12		63	84	+ 21	1.7%	2.3%	+ 0.6%	\$23,088	\$46,124	+ \$23,036	6.6%	10.9%	+ 4.3%
Arts, Entertain Recreation (1		54	60	+ 6	1.5%	1.6%	+ 0.2%	\$14,517	\$21,600	+ \$7,083	0.5%	0.4%	- 0.1%
Accommodat Food Services		268	202	- 66	7.2%	5.4%	- 1.8%	\$8,840	\$22,301	+ \$13,461	2.9%	3.0%	+ 0.1%
Other Service Public Admini (14000)		188	144	- 44	5.1%	3.9%	- 1.2%	\$26,211	\$50,375	+ \$24,164	2.2%	2.2%	0%
Federal Gover & Military (15 15014)		98	83	- 15	2.6%	2.2%	- 0.4%	\$39,936	\$72,436	+ \$32,500	4.3%	3.4%	- 1.0%
State Governm (15020)	nent	308	223	- 85	8.3%	6.0%	- 2.3%	(ND)	\$49,452	-	(ND)	5.6%	-
Local Governi (15030)	ment	774	949	+ 175	20.8%	25.5%	+ 4.7%	\$23,036	\$39,000	+ \$15,964	22.7%	25.7%	+ 3.0%
	TOTALS	3,722	3,727	+ 5	100%	100%	-	\$77,237,697	\$142,035,227	+ \$64,797,530	100%	100%	-

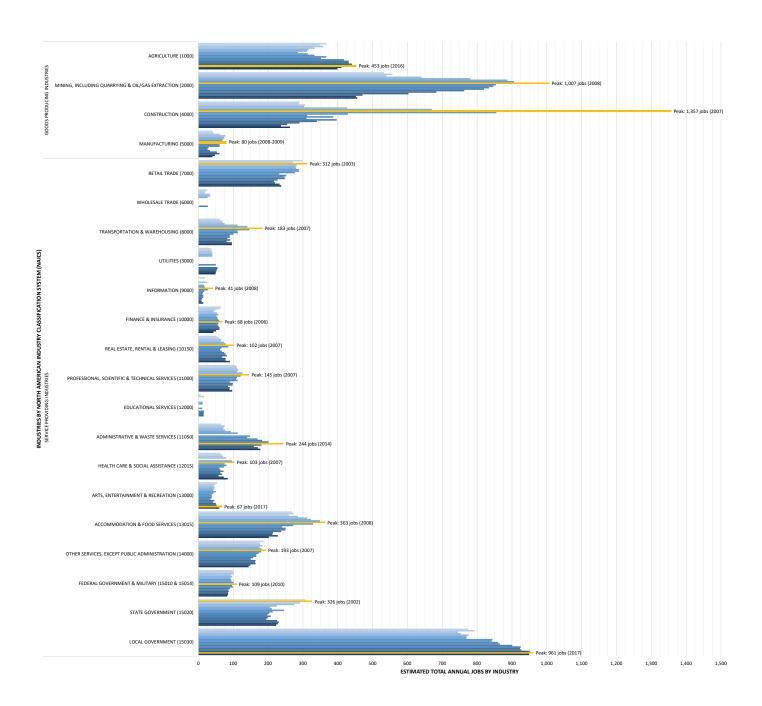
Data Source(s): U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis; and, Colorado State Demography Office

GOODS PRODUCING INDUSTRIES

#### Estimated Total Annual Jobs By Industry in Rio Blanco County (2001-2018)

ESTIMATED TOTAL ANNUAL JOBS BY INDUSTRY (2001-2018)

 2001
 2002
 2003
 2004
 2005
 2006
 2007
 2008
 2009
 2010
 2011
 2012
 2013
 2014
 2015
 2016
 2017
 2018



Data Source(s): Colorado State Demography Office

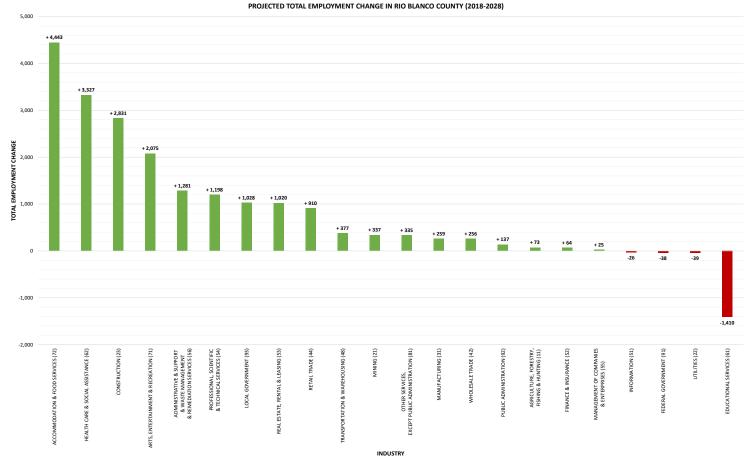
The following table presents a listing of NAICS Sectors and Sub-Sectors. This information is included in order to provide greater detail regarding the composition of NAICS Sectors analyzed in this document.

NAICS Code	NAICS Sector Name	NAICS Code	NAICS Sector Name
1000	Agriculture	10150	Real Estate
1010 1020	Crops an livestock production Farm services	10200	Real estate
2000	Mining	11000	Professional, Scientific & Technical services
2010 2020 2030	Oil and gas extraction Mining (except oil and gas) Support activities for mining	11020	Professional, scientific and technical services
3000	Utilities	11050	Administrative, Support, Waste Management & Remediation Services
3030	Utilities	11090 11100	Administrative and support services Waste management and remediation services
4000	Construction	12000	Education
4010 4020 4030	Construction of buildings Heavy and civil engineering construction Special trade contractors	12010	Private educational services
5000	Manufacturing	12015	Health Services
5010 5020 5030 5050 5050 5060 5070 5080 5090 5100 5110 5120	Wood product and furniture manufacturing Nonmetallic mineral product manufacturing Primary and fabricated metal manufacturing Machinery manufacturing Computer and electrical equipment manufacturing Motor vehicle and transportation manufacturing Miscellaneous manufacturing Food and beverage product manufacturing Textile mills and product, apparel and similar manufacturing Paper and printing manufacturing Chemical manufacturing Plastics and rubber products manufacturing	12020 12030 12040 12050	Ambulatory health care services Hospitals Nursing and residential care facilities Social assistance
6000	Wholesale Trade	13000	Arts, Entertainment & Recreation
6010	Wholesale Trade	13010	Arts, entertainment and recreation
7000	Retail Trade	13015	Accommodation & Food Services
7010 7020 7030 7040 7050 7060 7070 7080 7080 7090 7100	Motor vehicle and parts dealers Furniture, electronics, appliances and home furnishings Food and beverage stores Health and personal care stores Gasoline stations Clothing and clothing accessories stores Sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores General merchandise stores Miscellaneous store retailers Nonstore retailers	13020 13030	Accommodation Food services and drinking places
8000	Transportation & Warehousing	14000	Other Services, except Public Administration
8010 8020 8030 8040 8050 8060 8070 8070 8080 8090	Air transportation Rail transportation Truck transportation Support activities for transportation Transit and ground passenger transportation Pipeline transportation Scenic, sightseeing and water transportation Couriers and messengers and postal service Warehousing and storage	14010 14020 14030 14040	Automotive and other repair and maintenance Personal and laundry services Religious, civic, professional and similar membership organizations Private households
9000	Information	15000	Government
9010 9020 9030 9040	Publishing industries Motion picture and broadcasting, except internet Telecommunications ISPs, search portals and data processing	15010 15020 15030 15040	Federal government, civilian Military State government Local government
10000	Finance Activities		
10010 10020 10030	Monetary authorities and credit intermediation Securities, commodity contracts and other financial investments Insurance carriers, funds, trusts and other financial vehicles		

Data Source(s): Colorado Demography Office

# Rio Blanco County Employment Projections

The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment provides an online "Labor Market Information" tool that offers employment projection data for counties in Colorado. This tool was used to develop 2018-2028 employment projections for Rio Blanco County. The results of this work are shown in the figure below. The Labor Market Information tool can be accessed by visiting: https://www.colmigateway.com/vosnet/lmi/default.aspx?pu=1&plang=E



#### Projected Total Employment Change in Rio Blanco County (2018-2028)

Data Source(s): Colorado Department of Labor & Employment; and, Labor Market Information

According to the employment projection data for Rio Blanco County, the following industries are anticipated to experience the greatest job growth between 2018 and 2028: (1) Accommodation & Food Services (+ 4,443 jobs); (2) Health Care & Social Assistance (+ 3,327 jobs); (3) Construction (+ 2,831 jobs); (4) Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (+ 2,075 jobs); and, (5) Administrative & Support & Waste Management & Remediation Services (+ 1,281 jobs).

By contrast, the following industries are projected to experience a decrease in employment: (1) Educational Services (- 1,410 jobs); (2) Utilities (- 39 jobs); (3) Federal Government (- 38 jobs); and, (4) Information (- 26 jobs).

## Potential For Industry Specialization In Rio Blanco County

A location quotient (LQ) is an analytical statistic that measures a region's industry concentration relative to a larger geographic area. In this case the region is Rio Blanco County and the larger geographic area is the State of Colorado. An LQ is computed as an industry's share of a regional total for some economic statistic divided by the industry's share of the state's total for the same statistic.

LQs are numerical values above zero. Industries in Rio Blanco County with LQ values greater than 1.0 have a higher relative employment concentration when compared to Colorado as a whole. This can indicate that the industry is an exporter of goods or services. An LQ value equal to 1.0 means that the share of employment in the industry in the county is equal to the share of that industry's employment statewide. By contrast, industries in Rio Blanco County with an LQ value less than 1.0 have a lower relative employment concentration when compared to the rest of the state. An LQ value under 1.0 can also indicate that the industry in the county is likely to be driven by the consumption of goods or services.

	Lo	cation Quotient (L	Q)	Change in LQ
Industry	2000	2010	2019	(2000-2019)
Mining	31.62	23.16	17.54	- 14.08
tilities	3.01	2.43	3.1	+ 0.9
Public Administration	2.68	2.19	2.69	+ 0.1
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	1.58	1.98	1.98	+ 0.4
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	1.42	1.16	1.79	+ 0.37
Educational Services	2.08	1.03	1.29	- 0.79
Construction	0.85	1.33	1.13	+ 0.28

Data Source(s): Colorado Department of Labor & Employment; and, Labor Market Information

As shown in the figure on the following page, when compared to the state as a whole, Rio Blanco County (in 2019) has a higher relative concentration of jobs in: (1) Mining (LQ: 17.54); (2) Utilities (LQ: 3.1); (3) Public Administration (LQ: 2.69); (4) Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting (LQ: 1.98); Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (LQ: 1.79); Educational Services (LQ: 1.29); and, Construction (LQ: 1.13).

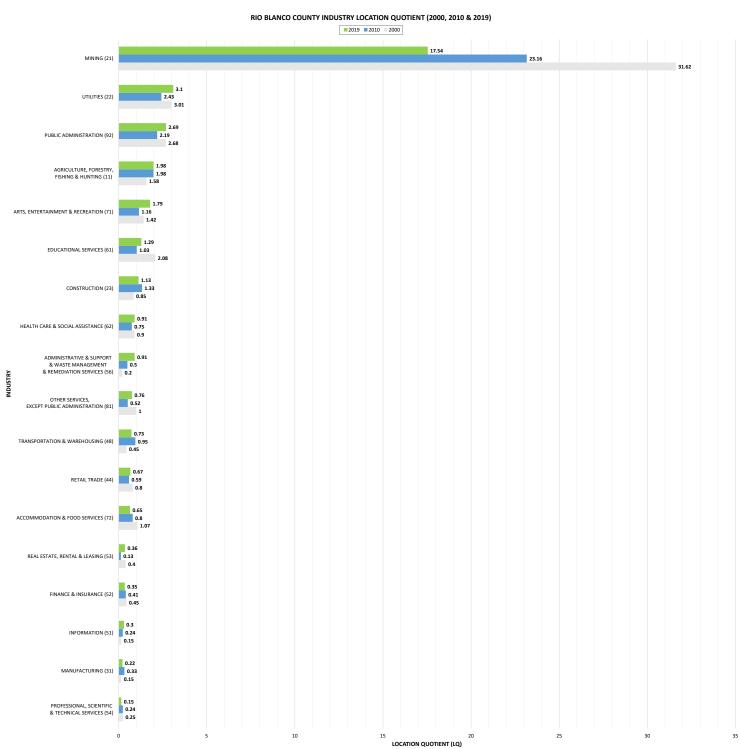
Declines in mining jobs between 2000 and 2019 have reduced the degree to which Rio Blanco County has a concentrated cluster of the industry. The concentration of educational services jobs has also declined between 2000 and 2019, which is assumed to be the result of a loss of jobs in this industry. Utilities, Public Administration, Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting, Arts, Entertainment & Recreation, and Construction have experienced an increase in their relative concentration between 2000 and 2019.





photo by Kirby Winn

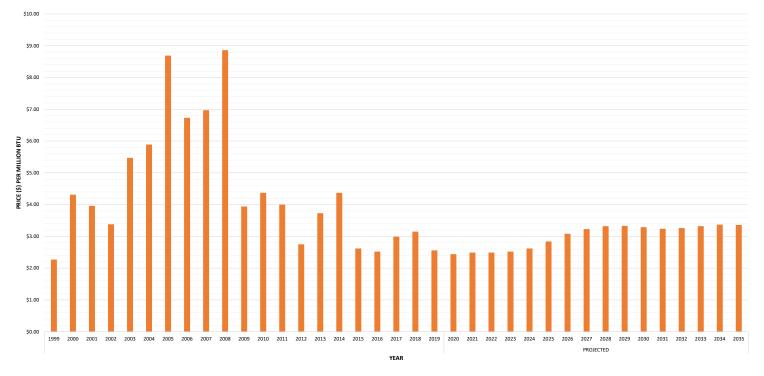
#### Rio Blanco County Industry Location Quotient (2000, 2010 & 2019)



Data Source(s): Colorado Department of Labor & Employment; and, Labor Market Information

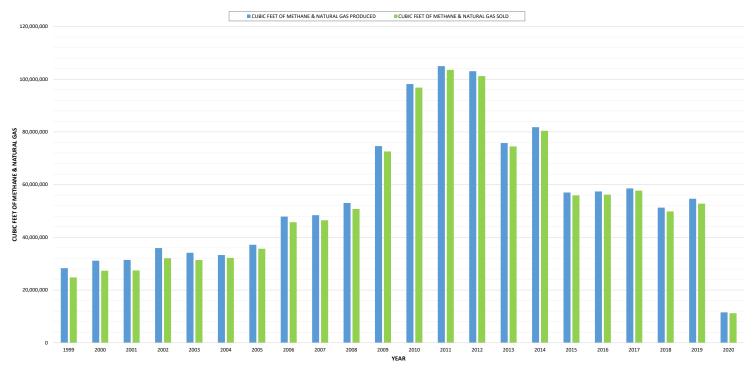
# Overview of the Oil & Gas Industry in Rio Blanco County

Data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (COGCC), and the State Demography Office (SDO) were used to create the following graphs. These graphs illustrate the relationship between: national oil and natural gas prices; oil and natural gas production and sales in Rio Blanco County; and, mining employment in Rio Blanco County.



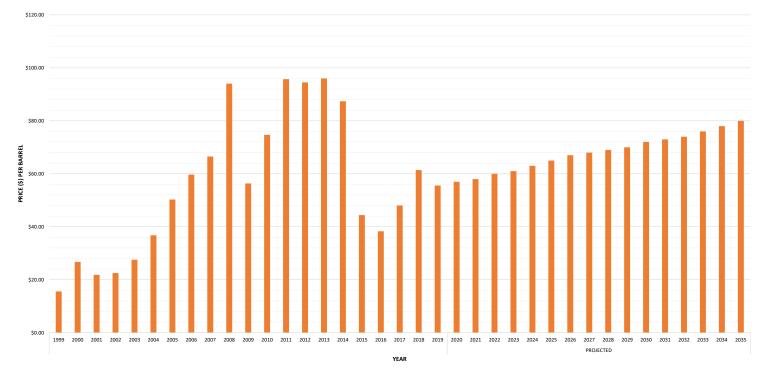
Actual & Projected Annual U.S. Natural Gas Spot Price at Henry Hub (1999-2035)

Data Source(s): U.S. Energy Information Administration



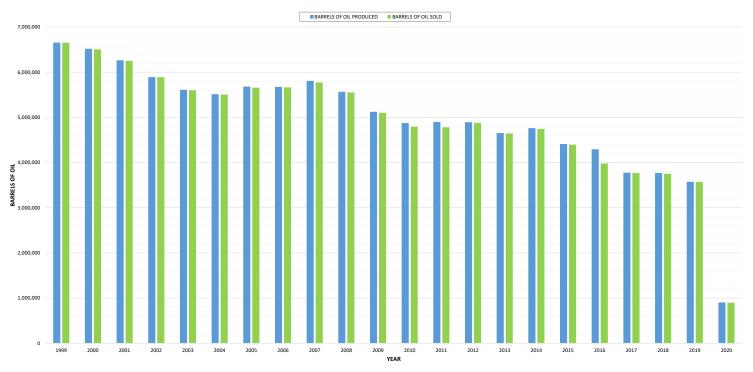
#### Annual Coalbed Methane & Natural Gas Production & Sales in Rio Blanco County (1999-2020)

Data Source(s): Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission



Actual & Projected Annual U.S. Crude Oil Price (1999-2035)

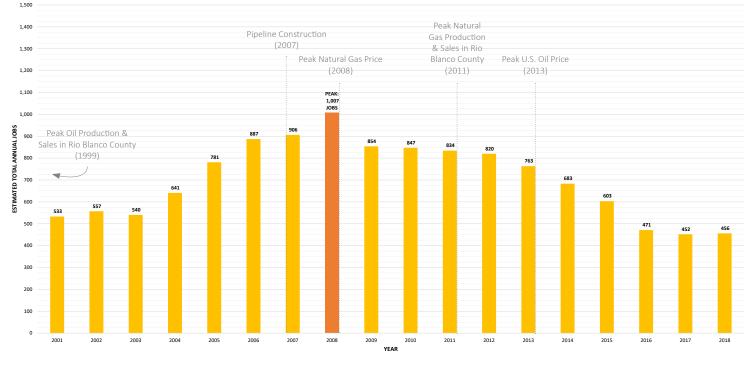
Data Source(s): U.S. Energy Information Administration



#### Annual Crude Oil Production & Sales in Rio Blanco County (1999-2020)

Data Source(s): Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission

#### Estimated Total Annual Mining Jobs (including Oil & Gas Extraction) in Rio Blanco County (2001-2018)



Data Source(s): Colorado State Demography Office

In comparing the previous graphs, it is challenging to identify correlations between national oil and natural gas prices; oil and natural gas production and sales in Rio Blanco County; and, mining employment in Rio Blanco County. It does appear that peak mining employment in Rio Blanco County coincided with the peak in national natural gas prices. However, pipeline construction also coincided with peak mining employment in Rio Blanco County and is likely attributed for the increase in mining jobs.

As shown in the second graph on page C-29, production and sales of coalbed methane and natural gas peaked in Rio Blanco County in 2011. Since 2011, the production and sale of coalbed methane and natural gas in Rio Blanco County has been declining.

The second graph on page C-30 depicts that within the past 20-years, oil production and sales in Rio Blanco County reached their maximum in 1999. Ever since, oil production and sales in the county have been steadily declining.

The following table presents a detailed breakdown of the total volume of natural gas and oil produced and sold by Rio Blanco County between 1999 and 2020. The table also provides information about Rio Blanco County's contribution to the total volume of natural gas and oil produced and sold by Colorado during the same time frame.

COALDED METHANE & NATURAL GAS						0		
YEAR	Total Volume Produced by Rio Blanco County	Share of Colorado's Total Volume Produced	Total Volume Sold by Rio Blanco County	Share of Colorado's Total Volume Sold	Total Volume Produced by Rio Blanco County	Share of Colorado's Total Volume Produced	Total Volume Sold by Rio Blanco County	Share of Colorado's Total Volume Sold
1999	28,294,991	3.76%	24,789,625	3.41%	6,655,101	33.78%	6,651,571	33.95%
2000	31,142,588	3.89%	27,340,164	3.54%	6,518,049	32.56%	6,504,185	32.87%
2001	31,434,241	3.70%	27,446,455	3.34%	6,263,557	31.01%	6,252,144	31.23%
2002	35,922,368	3.78%	32,069,461	3.50%	5,890,453	28.63%	5,888,113	28.86%
2003	34,155,253	3.29%	31,403,324	3.12%	5,609,718	25.97%	5,599,358	26.13%

# Volume of Coalbed Methane & Natural Gas and Oil Produced and Sold in Rio Blanco County (1999-2020)

COALBED METHANE & NATURAL GAS<sup>1</sup>

#### Volume of Coalbed Methane & Natural Gas and Oil Produced and Sold in Rio Blanco County (1999-2020) (continued)

COALBED METHANE & NATURAL GAS <sup>1</sup>					OIL <sup>2</sup>			
YEAR	Total Volume Produced by Rio Blanco County	Share of Colorado's Total Volume Produced	Total Volume Sold by Rio Blanco County	Share of Colorado's Total Volume Sold	Total Volume Produced by Rio Blanco County	Share of Colorado's Total Volume Produced	Total Volume Sold by Rio Blanco County	Share of Colorado's Total Volume Sold
2004	33,293,511	3.03%	32,212,995	3.02%	5,511,799	24.41%	5,504,599	24.61%
2005	37,184,265	3.22%	35,672,237	3.18%	5,680,818	24.45%	5,658,109	24.65%
2006	47,868,510	3.78%	45,760,961	3.73%	5,673,842	23.09%	5,662,504	23.38%
2007	48,429,281	3.53%	46,482,892	3.50%	5,808,149	22.15%	5,772,263	22.47%
2008	53,045,201	3.41%	50,752,949	3.37%	5,566,165	18.58%	5,551,688	18.58%
2009	74,630,755	4.66%	72,585,930	4.68%	5,124,430	16.85%	5,100,196	16.95%
2010	98,188,087	5.91%	96,829,557	6.00%	4,874,065	14.74%	4,793,853	14.66%
2011	104,981,160	6.18%	103,571,304	6.30%	4,898,980	12.41%	4,779,954	12.28%
2012	103,049,048	5.97%	101,210,274	6.07%	4,892,710	9.86%	4,878,362	9.98%
2013	75,785,899	4.65%	74,499,354	4.73%	4,652,698	7.02%	4,642,609	7.02%
2014	81,804,872	4.98%	80,446,315	5.06%	4,760,597	4.98%	4,741,493	4.98%
2015	57,018,009	3.37%	55,909,263	3.41%	4,409,566	3.58%	4,394,849	3.58%
2016	57,412,890	3.37%	56,213,158	3.40%	4,292,619	3.62%	3,978,381	3.36%
2017	58,574,555	3.36%	57,739,822	3.41%	3,775,827	2.77%	3,769,837	2.76%
2018	51,282,663	2.77%	49,834,647	2.77%	3,770,362	2.20%	3,752,096	2.19%
2019	54,648,565	2.75%	52,783,767	2.73%	3,573,327	1.86%	3,568,198	1.85%
2020 <sup>3</sup>	11,535,867	2.16%	11,207,395	2.15%	902,608	1.90%	895,300	1.88%

NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Natural gas volume measured in cubic feet (cf).

<sup>2</sup>Oil volume measured in barrels (bbl).

<sup>3</sup>2020 Production and sales data only available through April 2020.

Data Source(s): Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission

A 2018 study titled, "Economic Contribution of the Oil and Gas Industry in the Piceance Basin," was prepared by Colorado Mesa University (CMU). Included in the study is information regarding the economic impact of natural resource extraction industries in Rio Blanco County. The table below provides excerpts from this study that are relevant to Rio Blanco County. A copy of the CMU study can be found here: https://www.coloradomesa.edu/energy/ documents/economic-contribution-of-oil-and-gas-in-the-piceance.pdf

#### Relevant Excerpts from 2018 CMU Study - "Economic Contribution of the Oil and Gas Industry in the Piceance Basin"

1.	% of Total Wages in Rio Blanco County	In 2017, oil and gas wages accounted for roughly 14% of total wages in Rio Blanco County.				
2.	Estimated Changes in Rio Blanco County Employment per Rig	It is estimated that Rio Blanco County experiences a change of 16 jobs per rig.				
3.	Impact of Natural Gas Price Changes on Rig Count in the Piceance Basin	It is estimated that for every dollar (\$1) change in the price of natural gas there is a resulting change of 8.8 rigs in the Piceance Basin.				
4.	Direct Distribution in Rio Blanco County <sup>1</sup>	Direct distribution to local government budgets: \$501,205.	Direct distribution to counties and municipalities from FML: \$2,541,659.	Direct distribution to school districts from FML: \$216,041.		
5.	State Public School Fund Federal Mineral Lease (FML) Local Proportion	Total school funding in Rio Blanco County: \$3,395,585.	Proportion of Rio Blanco County school funding from FML: \$53,404 (1.6%).	Proportion of Rio Blanco County school funding from oil and gas: \$40,010 (1.2%).		
6.	Rio Blanco County Ad Valorem Property Taxes Received from Oil and Gas Production in 2017	\$9,655,318				

NOTES:

<sup>1</sup> Direct distribution is money from both severance and Federal Mineral Lease (FML) that is distributed to the county, municipalities, and school districts based on certain formulas. These revenues come from the State severance tax receipts and the FML non-bonus payments. There are three types of direct distribution: (1) direct distribution to local government budgets from severance taxes; (2) direct distribution to counties and municipalities from FML; and, (3) firect distribution to school districts from FML.

Data Source(s): Economic Contribution of the Oil and Gas Industry in the Piceance Basin (2018) (https://www.coloradomesa.edu/energy/documents/economic-contribution-of-oil-and-gas-in-the-piceance.pdf)

# Overview of Tourism & Outdoor Recreation In Meeker, Rio Blanco County, and Colorado

*Meeker Visitor Profile.* The Rio Blanco County Department of Economic Development & Public Relations has recently contracted with See Source, LLC to collect data for visitors to Rio Blanco County, Meeker, Downtown Meeker, Rangely, Downtown Rangely, Up River and the Dinosaur Welcome Center. Visitor data is currently only available for June, July, August and September of 2019. Excerpts of these data are presented in the tables below. This data could be helpful in the town's efforts to grow its tourism sector.

#### Top Ten Points of Origin for Visitors to Meeker (June-September, 2019)

Point of Origin	Number of Unique Visitors to Meeker
1. Grand Junction, CO	7,120
2. Edwards, CO	4,741
3. Denver-Aurora, CO	3,177
4. Greeley, CO	969
5. Montrose, CO	709
6. Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, AZ	705
7. Vernal, UT	433
8. Boulder, CO	417
9. Fort Collins-Loveland, CO	292
10. Casper, WY	276
10. Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX	276
	Data Source(s): Rio Blanco County: and See Source LLC

Data Source(s): Rio Blanco County; and, See Source, LLC

#### Top Ten Interest Categories for Visitors to Meeker (June-September, 2019)

Interest Category	Average Percent of Meeker Visitors that Have Visited the Specified Category of Establishment or Attraction
1. Park	25.3%
2. Movie Theater	10.7%
3. National Park	8.4%
4. Brewery	7.0%
5. Campground	6.1%
6. Golf Course	5.5%
7. Motel	4.4%
8. Hot Spring	4.4%
9. Arcade	4.3%
10. Baseball Stadium	3.9%

Data Source(s): Rio Blanco County; and, See Source, LLC

*Economic Impact of Overnight Travel in Rio Blanco County.* Dean Runyan Associates has prepared a number of studies, on behalf of the Colorado Tourism Office, that explore the economic impact of overnight travel in Colorado. These studies include data specific to the economic impact of overnight travel on Rio Blanco County. Data complied from the studies are presented in the table on the following page. Copies of the studies prepared by Dean Runyan Associates can be found here:

- Colorado Travel Impacts: 1996-2015p (https://www.colorado.com/sites/default/master/files/Dean%20Runyan%20Eco%20Impact%202015%20FINAL\_0.pdf)
- Colorado Travel Impacts: 2000-2018p (http://www.deanrunyan.com/doc\_library/COImp.pdf)

	Travel Spending (in millions of dollars)	Earnings (in millions of dollars)	Employment (number of jobs)	Local Taxes (in millions of dollars)	State Taxes (in millions of dollars)
2000	\$10.3	\$4.6	287	\$0.2	\$0.3
2002	\$10.0	\$4.4	203	\$0.3	\$0.3
2004	\$14.1	\$6.4	284	\$0.4	\$0.4
2006	\$12.3	\$5.3	213	\$0.3	\$0.3
2008	\$17.0	\$7.7	261	\$0.5	\$0.5
2010	\$13.7	\$7.2	220	\$0.4	\$0.4
2012	\$14.5	\$6.6	225	\$0.4	\$0.4
2013	\$15.7	\$6.9	230	\$0.4	\$0.4
2014	\$14.5	\$6.2	207	\$0.4	\$0.4
2015	\$12.6	\$5.8	183	\$0.4	\$0.4
2016	\$13.4	\$6.4	212	\$0.4	\$0.4
2017	\$15.4	\$7.0	232	\$0.4	\$0.4
2018	\$13.0	\$5.7	201	\$0.4	\$0.4
CHANGE 2000-2018	+ \$2.7	+ \$1.1	- 86	+ \$0.2	+ \$0.1

#### Rio Blanco County Overnight Travel Impacts (2000-2018)

Data Source(s): Colorado Travel Impacts: 1996-2015p (2016) (https://www.colorado.com/sites/default/master/files/Dean%20Runyan%20Eco%20Impact%202015%20FINAL\_0.pdf); and, Colorado Travel Impacts: 2000-2018p (2019) (http://www.deanrunyan.com/doc\_library/COImp.pdf)

*Economic Impact of Hunting in Rio Blanco County.* In the Colorado Parks and Wildlife study, "2017 Economic Contributions of Outdoor Recreation in Colorado," an estimate for the economic impact is provided for each county in Colorado. The table below presents the economic impact data included in this study for Rio Blanco County.

#### **Economic Impact of Hunting in Rio Blanco County**

County	Output (\$ thousands)	Labor Income (\$ thousands)	GDP Contribution (\$ thousands)	State/Local Taxes (\$ thousands)	Federal Taxes (\$ thousands)	Jobs
Rio Blanco County	\$9,433	\$4,741	\$5,086	\$1,229	\$708	172

Data Source(s): 2017 Economic Contributions of Outdoor Recreation in Colorado

*Outdoor Recreation in Rio Blanco County.* In 2019, RPI Consulting, LLC prepared an "Outdoor Recreation Enterprise Platform Feasibility Study" on behalf of Rio Blanco County. As part of this effort, RPI Consulting reached out to 42 businesses in Rio Blanco County that are involved in outdoor recreation. A total of 19 businesses/entrepreneurs responded. The following table provides a synopsis of the themes that emerged from RPI Consulting's interviews with these businesses.

#### Themes from 2019 Outdoor Recreation Business Interviews

Theme	Description
1. Capacity for Expanding Volume and/or Offerings	Most of the capacity and interest for expanding volume and offerings are in the summer months. Winter opportunities also exist, but there are more challenges to overcome such as access, plowing, and creating a reputation as a winter destination, which will require more deliberate activation of Rio Blanco County as a winter activities hub.
	The summer season is an immediate opportunity as the area already has established summer activities. Opportunities in the summer include increasing occupancy of on-site lodging and facilities, summer guided trips (OHV, pack trips and hiking), summer camps, outdoor schools, equipment rentals, OHV, biking, stand up paddle boarding and fishing.

#### Themes from 2019 Outdoor Recreation Business Interviews (continued)

Theme	Description
2. Customer Channels and	A majority of interviewees stated that many of their customers are repeat
Current Market Segments	customers, coming year after year. This indicates that the marketing goal is to get more first-time customers to take a chance and visit, because once they come, they tend to become repeat customers.
	Outfitters highlighted the success of getting customers from the Colorado Outfitters Association (COA) directory and referrals. The COA website offers a filter that allows a prospective customer to select the geography, amenities, and services they want and narrows down the outfitters to those that meets their needs. If the potential customer wants more contact, they can call the COA and explain what type of services they want and the COA will email the request to all the outfitters, who can then contact the potential customer directly. Interest in a similar program exists for a county-wide outdoor recreation website with filters for activities and the option for referrals to specific businesses.
	Rio Blanco County is a destination booked in advance, repeat customers often book their next trip for the following year before they leave to return home from their current trip. Because of the distance travelled and the nature of the outdoor recreation offerings in the county, most visitors book multi-day trips, staying overnight at lodges, hotels, bed & breakfasts, and camping. Several of the OREC businesses have online booking, but many require a phone call or email to ask about available dates. Not all of the lodging has online booking.
3. Capacity for Expanding Volume and/or Offerings	Most of the capacity and interest for expanding volume and offerings are in the summer months. Winter opportunities also exist, but there are more challenges to overcome such as access, plowing, and creating a reputation as a winter destination, which will require more deliberate activation of Rio Blanco County as a winter activities hub.
	The summer season is an immediate opportunity as the area already has established summer activities. Opportunities in the summer include increasing occupancy of on-site lodging and facilities, summer guided trips (OHV, pack trips and hiking), summer camps, outdoor schools, equipment rentals, OHV, biking, stand up paddle boarding and fishing.
4. Linkages and Networking	The outdoor recreation industry, specifically outfitters, are a long-established business in the county and many businesses in this industry have worked together for years. There are informal networks among outfitters and lodges that offer referrals and coordinate activities. However, this informal networking is limited in scope to day-to-day operations.
	A formal, county-wide network of businesses in the outdoor recreation industry could greatly enhance the communication and cooperation among outdoor recreation businesses. This network could encourage and coordinate extended visits and multi-activity vacations. There are opportunities for packaged trips with activities from more than one business (e.g., spend a day horseback riding, and another day fishing, while some of the party goes on a guided OHV ride). These are potential opportunities that could happen if there is a simple strategy for customizing a vacation.
5. Need for Marketing	Overall, businesses expressed interest and support for collective marketing. Multiple businesses acknowledged that they should be doing more to market their business, however there were various challenges that constrained their ability to accomplish this goal. Limitations include:
	<ul><li>Lack of time</li><li>Cost of marketing</li><li>Lack of knowledge/experience in marketing.</li></ul>
	Collective marketing could alleviate these constraints. Even the businesses who are already marketing on their own could benefit from collective marketing, it could reduce their costs and increase their visibility.

Themes from 20	19 Outdoor Recreation Business Interviews (continued)
Theme	Description
6. Business Opportunities	Existing businesses were asked what opportunities exist for expansion or new businesses related to outdoor recreation in the county. The opportunities identified include:
	<ul> <li>Outdoor Recreation Businesses</li> <li>Snowmobile rental/guide/repair</li> <li>OHV rental/guide/repair</li> <li>Bicycle retail/repair/rental</li> <li>E-Bike related</li> <li>Tubing</li> <li>Summer activities and trips</li> </ul>
	Outdoor Recreation Support Services <ul> <li>Lodging</li> <li>Glamping</li> <li>Restaurants</li> <li>Bar/"Brewpub"</li> </ul>
	Other <ul> <li>Insurance pool</li> <li>Extended business hours during events</li> </ul>
7. Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Needs	Responses to this question found that rather than a need for new infrastructure, there is a need for improved maintenance of existing assets:
	• Need for clear rules and instruction, as well as improved access to assets.
	<ul> <li>Signage, maps and clear communication about regulations are all desired. Anecdotal evidence shows a lack of knowledge about where and how to park, public access points to federal lands and the river when it is bordered by private land, and trail use etiquette.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Trail maintenance is an on-going need (e.g., clearing downed trees, rehabilitating eroded sections, etc.)</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Winter trail access and maintenance for multi-users is needed in order to make winter activities more viable.</li> </ul>
8. Challenges and Limitations	<i>Employees.</i> Difficulty keeping employees due to the seasonal nature of the work. High turnover annually, training new employees each year. Having the desire to expand season/services but limited by the staff capacity or availability. Turning away customers due to a lack of staff capacity to serve more than the current workload.
	<i>Lodging.</i> Lodging is at or near capacity throughout the county during the hunting season.
	<i>Regulations.</i> Several agencies are involved in the permitting and access to public lands.
	Seasonal Operations. This is a challenge for some while others have chosen to embrace the seasonal nature of operations. Many businesses expressed an interest in expanding operations in the summer and/or winter. The summer is a live opportunity that business owners can take advantage of immediately. Winter offers a world of possibility, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling, are all opportunities waiting to be activated.

One of the challenges for seasonal expansion is the need to market and attract a new customer segment, this can be daunting and take time, but the collective marketing and incubator services could expedite this process.

Data Source(s): 2019 Outdoor Recreation Enterprise Platform Feasibility Analysis- Rio Blanco County

*Outdoor Recreation in Colorado.* According to Colorado's "2019 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)," in 2017, outdoor recreation in Colorado contributed:

- \$62.5 billion in economic output
- \$35.0 billion in Gross Domestic Product (10% of the entire state GDP)
- \$9.4 billion in local, state and federal tax revenue
- 511,000 jobs in the state (18.7% of the labor force) a majority outside of Metro Denver

The 2019 SCORP goes on to identify the Top 15 outdoor recreation activities in Colorado based on annual spending. Those activities include:

Type of (	Outdoor Recreation Activity	Туре	e of Outdoor Recreation Activity	Туре	e of Outdoor Recreation Activity
	iing (Alpine/Tele) and owboarding	<ol> <li>Wildlife Viewing*</li> <li>(Bird watching was a separate category)</li> </ol>		11.	Horseback Riding
2. Hik	king/Backpacking	7.	Fishing	12.	Mountain Biking
3. Ter	nt Camping	8.	Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) or 4-Wheeling/Motorcycling	13.	Rock Climbing
4. RV	'Camping/Cabins	9.	Road Biking	14.	Golfing
5. Jog	gging/Running (Outdoors)	10.	Snowshoeing/Cross-Country Skiing	15.	Canoeing/Kayaking

#### Top 15 Outdoor Recreation Activities Based on Annual Spending

Data Source(s): 2017 Economic Contributions of Outdoor Recreation in Colorado

2017 and 2018 data from Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), indicate that 92% of Coloradans exercise outdoors and 64% of Coloradans use local parks, open space or trails one (1) or more times per week. Out of the many outdoor recreation opportunities that Colorado has to offer, the top (10) ten activities among Coloradans are presented in the table below.

Тур	e of Recreation Activity	% of Coloradans who Participate	Туре	e of Recreation Activity	% of Coloradans who Participate		
1.	Walking	74%	6.	Playground Activities	28%		
2.	Hiking	52%	7.	Running	28%		
3.	Picnicking	32%	8.	Skiing	27%		
4.	Camping	32%	9.	Wildlife Viewing	26%		
5.	Fishing	29%	10.	RV Camping	26%		

#### **Outdoor Activity Participation**

Data Source(s): 2017 Economic Contributions of Outdoor Recreation in Colorado

## The Meeker Airport

According to the August 2019 draft of the Meeker Airport Coulter Field (EEO) Master Plan, prepared by TO Engineers...

"Economic impacts for Meeker Airport Coulter Field include a total employment of 61 with a total annual payroll of \$2,478,900 resulting in a total annual output of \$5,963,101. Additionally, Colorado benefits from tax revenues derived directly from airport supported activities both on and off the airports. By far, the largest tax revenue contributor is sales tax collected from visitors on lodging, rental cars, restaurants, and retail items.

Sales taxes are also collected when purchases are made by employees whose jobs are supported by airports or employees who work at visitor supported establishments such as hotels and restaurants. Sales tax is also collected in connection with capital investment activity and air cargo commerce, as well as from employees in these sectors

when they make taxable purchases. Annual local and state taxes linked to the operation of Meeker Airport Coulter Field totaled \$150,900."

Upon review of recent county budgets, it appears that total expenditures at the Meeker Airport exceed total revenues.

Meeker A	irport Total Expend	ditures vs. Total Reve	enues (2017-2020)	
	2017 (Actual)	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Estimated)	2020 (Budgeted)
Rent Revenue	\$3,451	\$-	\$1,700	\$1,700
State Aviation Fuel Tax	\$9,056	\$9,045	\$6,000	\$6,000
TOTAL REVENUES	\$12,507	\$9,045	\$7,700	\$7,700
Staff (FTE)	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.03
Salaries & Wages	\$2,727	\$2,048	\$4,500	\$1,669
Employee Benefits	\$220	\$166	\$360	\$132
Supplies	\$169	\$933	\$1,000	\$1,000
Airport Insurance	\$1,607	\$1,562	\$2,000	\$2,500
Purchased Services	\$7,845	\$5,614	\$6,600	\$15,400
Contract Services	\$42,000	\$42,000	\$42,000	\$42,000
Utilities	\$9,408	\$9,128	\$9,100	\$9 <i>,</i> 555
Repair/Maintenance Buildings	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-
R&B Interfund Services	\$4,646	\$-	\$7,200	\$8,000
W&P Interfund Services	\$4,691	\$1,226	\$4,635	\$6,000
Fleet Management Charges	\$5,780	\$2,304	\$6,000	\$6,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$79,093	\$64,981	\$83,395	\$92,256
			Data	Sourco(c), Pio Planco Co

Data Source(s): Rio Blanco County

# HOUSING

# Summary of Factors Contributing to Colorado's Housing Challenges

In 2018, Shift Research Lab prepared a study titled, "Exploring Colorado's Housing Affordability Challenges in All of Their Complexity." The study was "...designed to identify, analyze and synthesize the multiple and interrelated contributing factors to Colorado's housing challenge." The factors identified in the study were: (1) The Market; (2) Consumer Preference; (3) Labor: Employment & Wages; (4) Labor: Impact on Construction; (5) Labor Productivity; (6) Land; (7) Materials; (8) Regulations; and (9) Other Factors. A summary of each of these factors is provided below. This information has been included in order to help provide some broader context for Meeker's housing challenges.

#### Factors Impacting Housing Affordability in Colorado



#### The Market

Colorado's housing affordability challenge is first and foremost one of supply. The state's housing market is experiencing, and is projected to continue to experience, excess demand, record low vacancy rates, and quite possibly deficits of housing units. The market environment suggests that without meaningful increases in the supply of housing, high housing prices will persist.

#### Consumer Preference

Shifts in consumer preference, whether perceived or real, have significantly impacted the final price of housing in Colorado. If it is true that supply responds to demand, the new supply of housing reflects a shift in preference in favor of larger, fancier and more amenity-rich residences. It is reasonable to consider whether demand is driving supply for the changes in housing or vice versa, but the result is the same. The HGTV lifestyle phenomena has infiltrated all facets of what homes should look like, and, in most cases, imposes a very real cost. Changes in consumer preferences are driving up prices in Colorado more than the base price of raw materials.

## **Building Materials**

Over the past ten (10) years, most basic building material costs have demonstrated little inflation. Instead, materials are contributing to the increased price of housing largely due to a shift in consumer preferences and the industry's response. Preferences for larger homes and premium finishes, or perhaps the perception of such on the part of developers, have contributed more to the cost of construction than the general level of inflation in basic building materials.

#### Materials represent 29% of costs for constructing a new single-family home.

## Labor: Employment & Wages

Statewide, 2016 employment of general contractors and homebuilders was 18.8% smaller than it was in 2001 and 23% smaller than it was in 2006. Real average weekly wages are down 1.9% from 2001 levels and 6.4% from 2006 levels. By comparison, real wages for all private sector employment in Colorado are up 5.51% since 2001 and 0.67% since 2006.

While the levels of labor in building construction are lower than earlier in the 2000s, compared to overall wage pressure in Colorado, residential building construction has experienced less wage growth since 2001 and 2006 than total private employment. In fact, real average weekly wages in the sector are still below their 2001 and 2006 levels. Drilling down into the individual trades presents stronger evidence of a labor shortage. The data for the specialty trades indicate wage pressure in excess of the broader economy for almost all trades, particularly when measuring from a base year of 2006. The wage data suggest that the labor shortages affecting construction are in the specialty trades rather than in homebuilding and contractor activities.

## Labor: Impact on Construction

Data suggest that the labor shortage, particularly in the specialty trades, likely is having a direct effect on the cost of housing construction. However, there is less evidence that the lower levels of employment are having an effect on the amount or timing of building, even as production returns to near prerecession levels.

In 2016, the ratio of residential contractor and homebuilder labor to housing unit built was up 46% statewide from 2001 and was almost equal to 2007 levels. Similarly, the ratio of residential trade labor to housing unit built was above both its 2001 and 2007 levels.

By all measures, there is more labor per unit built currently than there was either at the beginning of the century or just before the Great Recession. However, it must be noted that these statewide statistics reflect a lower level of statewide building in 2016, than in 2007, but a higher level of regional building in the Denver area where the majority of Colorado's residential construction activity occurs.

#### Labor: Productivity

Compared to other major sectors of the economy, construction has achieved the least in terms of productivity gains. This is true if productivity gains are measured over the last decade or the last seven decades.

One standard for measuring productivity is real gross value added per labor hour worked (i.e., a measure of the value of the output that is created per an incremental hour of labor input). By applying this measure to the current construction industry, it is found that the industry fails to achieve 2007 productivity levels and by far underperforms all other major industrial categories. The McKinsley Global Institute applied this same measure of productivity to the United States' agriculture, manufacturing, wholesale and retail, mining and construction industries starting with the post-WWII year of 1947 and ending in 2010. Their findings, reported in "Reinventing Construction: A Route to Higher Productivity<sup>1</sup>", show that overall industrial productivity has increased 330 times, with agriculture leading the way (agricultural productivity has increased by a factor of 1,600). However, over that same period of time, this measure is flat for construction.

Construction has enjoyed virtually no gains in labor productivity in more than half a century. In a housing market that needs more supply, productivity improvements are critical. The inability of the industry to harness productivity gains and the resulting inefficiencies are contributing to the lack of housing affordability.

#### Footnote:

<sup>1</sup>https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/McKinsey/Industries/Capital%20Projects%20and%20Infrastructure/Our%20Insights/Reinventing%20construction%20through%20a%20 productivity%20revolution/MGI-Reinventing-construction-A-route-to-higher-productivity-Full-report.ashx

#### Labor represents 21% of costs for constructing a new single-family home.

#### Available Land

Land, whether vacant or under some previous use, is the basis of supply for new development, and its availability varies greatly from place to place in Colorado. Availability of land zoned for residential development effectively acts as the development runway, allowing developers or builders to proceed quickly to construction. This "use-by-right" inventory avoids the heavy regulatory process of reentitlement or rezoning, thereby reducing costs, including time and money, on a project.

Colorado has an abundance of land. However, land that is currently zoned for new residential development is in limited supply. Limited land supply, coupled with household demand, has resulted in land valuations that have risen measurably since 2010, led by a significant jump in multi-family rental properties. Without some of the constraint on labor, land would most likely assume a larger share of the market's price pressure. But the real pressure is yet to come. Unless land is preemptively rezoned for residential development, developing unentitled land will likely become a more expensive proposition.

#### Land represents 18% of costs for constructing a new single-family home.

#### Profit

• The target rate of return for real estate development varies by product type and market. Shift Research Lab's study assumed a target rate of return of 9%.

## Profit represents 9% of costs for constructing a new single-family home.



#### Local Regulations & Fees

In real estate, time is money, so land that is zoned for its intended use enables developers or builders to get right to the business of building, and ultimately new housing for residents. However, not all residential projects begin with land that is properly zoned. In some instances, developers may have to purchase land zoned for uses other than residential, which in turn necessitates a rezoning process before building permits can be issued.

Rezoning processes can be both time consuming and expensive. Navigating complex codes, lengthy application review processes, and opportunities for adjacent property owners to initiate legal challenges can significantly delay the rezoning of land. Furthermore, rezoning processes often require the involvement of technical experts such as attorneys, land use planners, etc. The involvement of these professionals can be expensive and drive up costs associated with a residential development. The implications of having to rezone land can be two-fold: (1) limits the ability of developers to deliver new housing units to the market in a timely manner; and, (2) increases prices for homebuyers and renters.

Many jurisdictions assess impact fees and tap fees on new residential development. The number and magnitude of these fees has a direct impact on the final costs of the homes being constructed.

#### *Regulations represent 4% of costs for constructing a new single-family home.*

#### **OTHER FACTORS:**



#### Construction Defects Legislation

Construction defects legislation, which impacts for-sale multi-family projects (i.e., condominium projects), is merely part of the housing affordability story in Colorado, and upon exploration appears to be less of a factor than previously thought. Based on data from a 2017 study<sup>1</sup>, it is unclear if construction defects legislation has had a material influence on developers choosing not to build condominiums. As the housing market entered the "Great Recession," condominium starts fell off along with townhomes and single-family units. Lackluster post-recession recovery in the condominium market was countered with an uptick in apartment development, as a windfall of renters emerged in the aftermath of the foreclosure crisis. This was followed by an influx of single-headed households drawn to the opportunities of Denver's recovering market.

#### Footnote:

 ${}^{1} https://www.commonsensepolicyroundtable.org/restrictions-supply-affordable-entry-level-housing-colorado/$ 

# As the Influx of Apartment Development Stabilizes, Condominium Development Will Need to be able to Proceed in a More Cost-Effective Manner

In theory, Colorado House Bill 1279 (adopted in 2017) and the 2017 Colorado State Supreme Court ruling on Vallagio at Inverness Residential Condominium Association v. Metro Homes, Inc., will temper not only insurance costs, but the lesser understood expenses resulting from the state's Construction Defects Law. Such expenses may include hiring third party inspectors and managers (in an effort to ensure material installations are code compliant), as well as additional contingency to cover legal expenses in the event a Homeowners Association (HOA) took action against a builder/developer. Time will tell if Colorado's housing market will have to make up for lost production of condominium units. There do appear to be rental properties that are converting to for-sale units (i.e., condominiums) once the Construction Defects Law seven-year statute of limitation has passed. This emerging trend has the potential to help further diversify the mix of housing across the state.

OTHER FACTORS:



## Impact of Investor-Owned Properties

It is well known that investors entered the housing market in the aftermath of the "Great Recession." But what role do these investors play? In an effort to gain further insight to this question, Shift Research Lab analyzed property records in the seven-county Denver metro region. They found that in 2016, approximately 4%, or almost 35,000 single-family properties, were held in an LLC or LLP. LLC's or LLP's often serve as a proxy for investor-controlled properties.

Shift Research Lab's performed a comparison between investor inventories and resale inventories in the Denver metro area. This comparison found that the investor inventory amounts to approximately five times (5x's) the listed inventory (i.e., resale inventory). Therefore, in a small way, investor-owned properties have reduced the opportunity for more properties to be active in the marketplace.



#### Bank Lending/Interest Rates for Builders & Developers

While historic low interest rates are being advertised for homebuyers, it is less clear if lending, and therefore interest rates, is favorable for the cross-section of builders and developers. While the Shift Research Lab study did not delve into this, further investigation is warranted in order to better understand the role financing plays in the ability for smaller firms to deliver cost-efficient housing units, or to deliver housing units at all. Uneven access to financing can only exacerbate this issue, further limiting the number of developers and builders that might be able to provide much-needed housing to meet the market demand.



#### Local Policies

How many times, have you driven by an empty parking lot or structure? These parking facilities are often built to satisfy off-street parking requirements, which many municipalities impose on development projects. In recent years, off-street parking requirements have come under scrutiny as awareness of the negative impacts that these requirements can have, has grown. There are numerous examples of residential projects that have been unable to maximize use of a building site due to off-street parking requirements and in turn, the cost of the housing units built increased. Great opportunity exists in local policy reform, and modifying off-street parking requirements is one that could render very real cost savings and contribute to a more cost-efficient housing market.

#### Comprehensive Understanding of Economic Development Efforts

While it wasn't explored in detail in the Shift Research Lab study, economic development announcements seem to disproportionately emphasize high-paying executive roles and the perceived impacts that these will have on demand in the housing market. In these announcements about new firms relocating or expanding operations, only the high-paying positions appear to be featured, leaving a lack of understanding of the full impact that the new primary jobs may have on the market. Clearly, the employees holding these featured positions have to get their cars serviced, dry cleaning done, and be waited on at their favorite restaurants. All of this contributes to a multiplier, or ratio, of how many service-based occupations must exist to support the lifestyle of those who are featured in the economic development headlines. These service workers have to live somewhere, but what can they afford?

#### Other factors represent 11% of costs for constructing a new single-family home.

Data Source(s): www.shiftresearchlab.org/housing

In addition to identifying the factors that contribute to Colorado's housing challenges, Shift Research Lab's study also offers a "call to action," that is "...designed to encourage all Coloradans to embrace a new way of thinking about Colorado's housing challenge while recognizing the need to maintain and expand the important programs, policies, and efforts currently underway." The suggested action areas offered in the study are presented in the table on the following page.

- Labor
- To the extent the labor shortage is affecting supply of housing:
  - Identify areas of labor shortage and expand training apprenticeship programs.
  - Advocate for immigration policy that is consistent with the need for skilled trades.
  - Explore programs to bring alternative sources of labor to the market, such as employing crews from the correctional system in a manner similar to Colorado Correctional Industries' SWIFT program.
  - Explore ways to expand labor productivity and bring more supply to the market by using methods such as factory-built modular housing. Currently both regulation and perception are barriers to these sorts of innovations in building. The legislature should form a committee to study and address these and other barriers to factory-built housing or other productivity-enhancing innovations in building. This inquiry should be inclusive of solutions for primary residences, as well as accessory dwelling units.
  - Communicate the true impact of major economic development announcements by accounting for the secondary jobs created by new primary jobs. This will help to raise awareness and call attention to the number of additional workers, generally in lower paying occupations, who will demand housing as a result of the newly created economic activity.

#### **Enhancements of Capital Resources**

- Identify and promote opportunities for social impact capital investments that will enhance the ability to bring more supply to the market.
- Expand investable opportunities in private and/or public-private partnership cost abatement vehicles, such as community land trusts and pilot projects.



#### Innovations in Infrastructure Provision

- Expand Colorado's housing options through strategic infrastructure investments statewide, such as broadband, that make other regions of the state economically viable and thus more attractive for housing.
- Explore innovations in shared parking as a means of reducing the burden that parking regulations place on new development. This option is particularly viable in regions and communities working to concentrate development along transit corridors.



## Policy

- Monitor trade policy for actions that would increase the price of building materials. Coordinate with relevant state agencies, and if appropriate advocate for, trade policies that will not increase the price of those materials.
- Consider a restructure of the Colorado Senior Property Tax Exemption to eliminate the requirement for ten (10) years of ownership. This should reduce the incentive for seniors to remain in homes they would rather sell but for the loss of the exemption and as a result bring additional inventory and a more healthy "churn" to the resale market.
- Continue to monitor the impact of the changes to Colorado's construction defect laws to evaluate whether those changes have been successful at increasing the inventory of condominium property at more affordable price points.
- Evaluate the impact of the current federal tax reform on housing in Colorado and recommend state-level policy changes, if appropriate.
- Reach out to other areas, particularly the San Francisco/Bay Area for lessons learned. Explore ways to incorporate those lessons into local and/or statewide housing policy.

# Key Findings From An Analysis of Meeker Housing Data

According to the data compiled, a number of imbalances in the home-ownership and rental markets were identified, and are summarized as follows:

- There is a shortage of quality for-sale housing in Meeker due to an aging housing stock and lack of new construction. As a result, many would be buyers are being pushed into the rental market. Specifically, middle-and higher-income households are choosing to rent though they could afford to purchase a home.
- Between 2010 and 2018, Meeker's share of renter-occupied units vs. owner-occupied units has, on average, been 5% higher than the state as whole. This is likely a result of the transient nature of employees who work in the natural resource extraction industries and may prefer renting over buying a home.
- Meeker has a higher share of "missing middle" housing types (i.e., 2-19 units) than Grand Junction, Craig, Rangely, and the state as a whole. This may indicate that construction of these types of housing (such as townhomes or duplexes) would be compatible with some existing neighborhoods in Meeker.
- According to the 2016 Downtown Housing Feasibility Study, based on "...conversations with local real estate professionals, most of the single-family homes available for rent are owned by local residents. Many single family home rentals are owned by current or former residents of Meeker who purchased their homes in peak times for top dollar. In this case, owners will opt to rent out their homes until they can sell and break even rather than sell for a loss." This dynamic contributes to an unusually large share of single-family homes being used as rentals in Meeker.
- Between 2005 and 2019, average home sales prices in Meeker peaked in 2007 at approximately \$207,102. Sales prices subsequently declined during the "Great Recession," bottoming out in 2011. Prices then began to rebound in 2014. Since 2014, total home sales, median sales prices and average sales prices in Meeker have been trending upwards.
- 2019 median sales prices indicate that for-sale housing in Meeker is more "affordable" than in unincorporated Rio Blanco County and Western Colorado as a whole. For-sale housing is consider to be "affordable" if a household spends 28% or less of their annual income on mortgage principal and interest payments.
- There is likely strong demand for construction of new housing aimed at households with annual incomes in the range of \$50,000-\$100,000.
- There is a healthy supply of rental housing affordable to households with income levels between \$35,000-\$50,000), but a shortage of rental units affordable to very low-income households (i.e., income levels of \$15,000 or less).

# R

# Local Housing Stock and Vacancy Rates

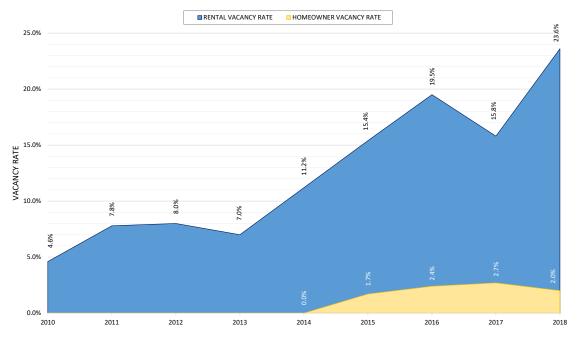
**Total Housing Units.** The estimated total number of housing units in Meeker grew by 11.8% between 2010 and 2018, rising from 1,205 to 1,347 units (i.e., + 142 homes). This growth rate is higher than both the county-wide housing rate of 5.4% and the statewide rate of 8.1%.

**Vacant Housing Units.** There is a high overall vacancy rate in Meeker. As of 2018, it is estimated that 327 of the approximately 1,347 housing units in Meeker are vacant (i.e., approximately 24% of Meeker's housing stock).

Homeowner & Rental Vacancy Rates. Vacancy rates in Meeker are estimated to have increased significantly since 2010, when homeowner vacancy rates were as low as 0% and rental vacancy rates were at around 4.6%. Current estimates (2018) indicate that homeowner vacancy rates are at 2% and rental vacancy rates are at 23.6% (refer to the figure on the following page). The substantial increase in the rental vacancy rate is likely attributable to the decline in oil and gas employment in the region.

By comparison, between 2010 and 2018, the statewide homeowner vacancy rates were, on average, 1.8% and rental vacancy rates were, on average, 5.8%. According to the 2016 Downtown Housing Feasibility Study, "Rental vacancies have been trending downward in the United States from a high of 11% in 2009 down to 7% today. The average rental vacancy rate in the Western United States is 4.9%. In hard economic times, rental vacancy tends to be the first metric to spike because of its transient nature."

The 2018 study, "Exploring Colorado's Housing Affordability Challenges in All of Their Complexity," notes that 5% vacancy rates are "... generally considered healthy for a housing market." Therefore, while Meeker's rental vacancy rates may be high, the town's homeowner vacancy rates of between 0% and 2.7% could be indicative of a tight market for those looking to purchase homes.



#### Estimated Homeowner & Rental Vacancy Rates in Meeker | 2010-2018

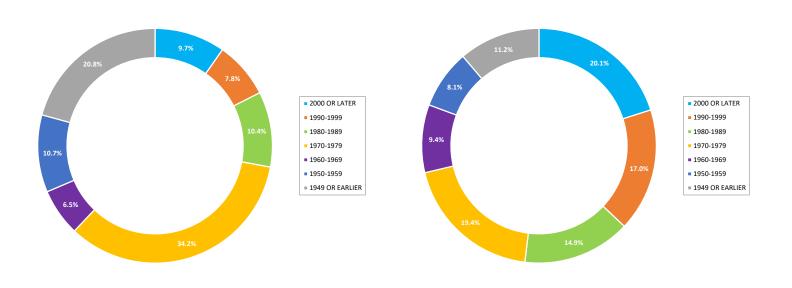
Age of Housing. Upon examination of Meeker's housing stock, it is estimated that the largest share (34.2%) of homes were built in the 1970's. The next largest share, 20.8% of homes, were built in 1949 or earlier. The 1980's and 1950's represent the next sizeable shares of Meeker's housing stock, with each decade accounting for approximately 10% of the town's housing. The 1990's and 1960's account for approximately 7.8% and 6.5% of Meeker's housing, respectively. Only 9.7% of homes in Meeker (roughly 131 units) were constructed within the last twenty years (i.e., 2000-2020). Refer to the figures on the following page for a graphic breakdown of the age of housing in Meeker.

By comparison, roughly 20.1% of the statewide housing stock was constructed in the last twenty years (i.e., 2000-2020). The next largest share of homes, 19.4%, was built in the 1970's. This is followed by 17% of homes in Colorado being built in the 1990's, 14.9% in the 1980's, 11.2% in 1949 or before, 9.4% in the 1960's, and 8.1% in the 1950's.

The 2016 Downtown Housing Feasibility Study, prepared by Better Cities on behalf of the town, found that as a result of Meeker's older housing "... the housing stock available for sale is generally overpriced and outdated. Anecdotal evidence suggests that would-be buyers end up renting until either a turnkey house is listed (something that has been remodeled) at a reasonable price, or a non-turnkey house is listed at a price which would allow buyers to afford remodeling." The study also found that while "Anecdotal evidence suggests that although plenty of old homes need replacing, buyers lack the resources to do so."

Data Source(s): 2010-2018: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

#### YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT | MEEKER



Data Source(s): 2010-2018: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

# Types of Housing

**Overall Diversity of Meeker's Housing Stock.** Communities with a wide range of housing options offer more opportunities for a wide range of people to live there. Based on an analysis of 2010-2018: American Community Survey 5-year estimates (refer to the table on the following page), Meeker was found to have the lowest share of large apartment buildings (20-units or more) when compared to the state as a whole (10.1%), the Town of Rangely (9.1%), City of Grand Junction (7.3%), and City of Craig (6.8%). However, Meeker was found to have a higher share of housing units (20.7%) that would fall within the "missing middle" classification (i.e., 2-19 units) than does Grand Junction (17.2%), Rangely (15.8%), the state (15.7%), or Craig (12.5%). Many communities are working to incorporate "missing middle housing" in order to diversify local housing options so Meeker is doing well in this regard. This might also imply that additional "missing middle" housing development in Meeker would be compatible with some existing neighborhoods.

**Mobile Homes.** When compared to surrounding communities and the state as a whole, it is estimated that Meeker has the second highest share of mobile homes (7.4%). The City of Craig is the only place with a larger share of mobile homes at 16.3%. The 2016 Downtown Housing Feasibility Study notes that, "Higher rates of mobile homes are usually seen in extraction-based economies which house higher percentages of temporary workers." While mobile homes often carry a stigma, it is important to note that they do provide an important source of housing and help to diversify local housing options. Mobile home parks can be regulated in such a way so as to not create aesthetic issues.

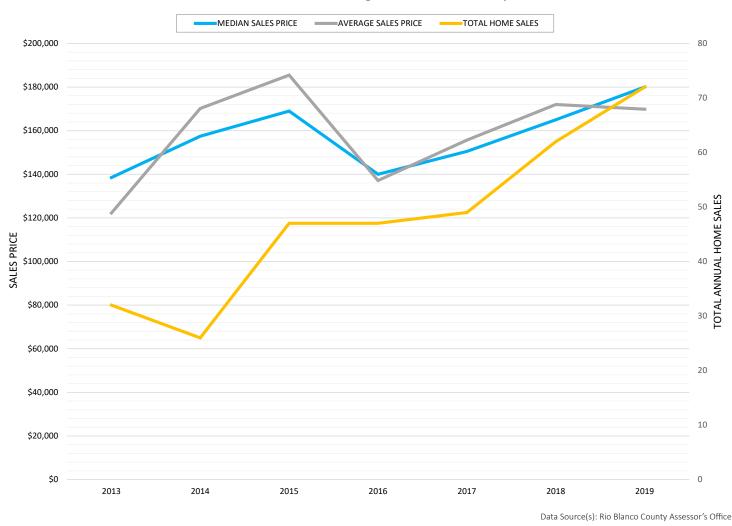
**Ratio of Single-Family to Multi-Family Homes.** The overall split between single-family and multi-family housing in Meeker is similar to the statewide ratio. Meeker's housing stock is approximately 69.5% single-family homes and 22.8% multi-family housing. Colorado's overall housing stock is approximately 69.9% single-family homes and 25.8% multi-family housing.

1-UNIT (DETACHED/ATTACHED HOUSING)       2 to 4-UNITS (ATTACHED HOUSING)       5 to 19-UNITS (ATTACHED HOUSING)       20-UNITS or MORE (ATTACHED HOUSING)       MOBILE HOMES (DETACHED HOUSING)         Image: Comparison of the state	BOAT, RV, VAN, ETC.
No.         No. <th>0.3%</th>	0.3%
Image: Ward with the second	0.6%
Pgg         A	0.2%
Here         Here <th>0.6%</th>	0.6%
Image: Notice of the state of the	0.1%
OPPOD         Image: Constraint of the second s	0.1%



# Home Sales Trends

Home Sales Price Trends in Meeker. Between 2005 and 2019, average home sales prices in Meeker peaked in 2007 at approximately \$207,102. Sales prices subsequently declined during the "Great Recession," bottoming out in 2011. Prices then began to rebound in 2014. Since 2014, total home sales, median sales prices and average sales prices in Meeker have been trending upwards (refer to the figure below). These are positive indicators for the local housing market. High sales volume is generally followed by higher sales prices. Therefore, if current trends continue, Meeker may experience increasing home prices over the coming years unless the COVID-19 pandemic adversely effects the local housing market.



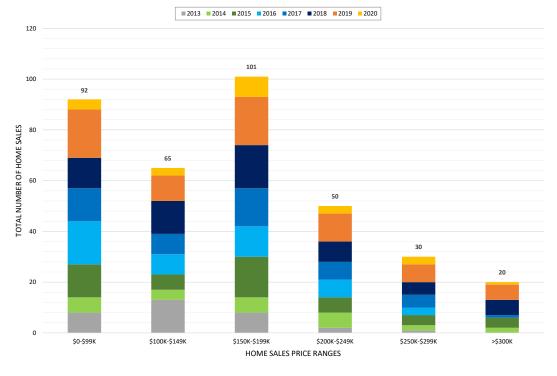
Annual Home Sales & Median/Average Sales Price in Meeker | 2013-2019

**2019 Home Sales.** Data provided by the Rio Blanco County Assessors Office indicate that in 2019, there were a total of 72 residential sales in Meeker. The median sales price was \$180,000, while the average sales price was \$169,843. Local realtor interviews suggest a median sales price of around \$210,000, but that does include sales in the county where prices tend to be higher.

30 of the 2019 residential sales in Meeker fell within the price range of \$150,000-\$249,000. 29 sold for \$149,000 or less and 13 sold for \$250,000 or more. 2019 sales in Meeker are similar to local sales trends between 2013 and April 2020. During this period, 157 homes sold for \$149,000 or less, 151 sold for between \$150,000-\$249,000, and 50 sold for \$250,000 or more (refer to the first figure on the following page).

Of the 72 homes sold in 2019, 82% were built between 1885-1999 and 18% were built between 2000-2018. The median sales price of homes built between 2000-2018 was \$263,000 and \$161,500 for homes built before 2000. Between 2013 and April 2020, roughly 25% of the homes sold in Meeker were built between 2000-2018, while

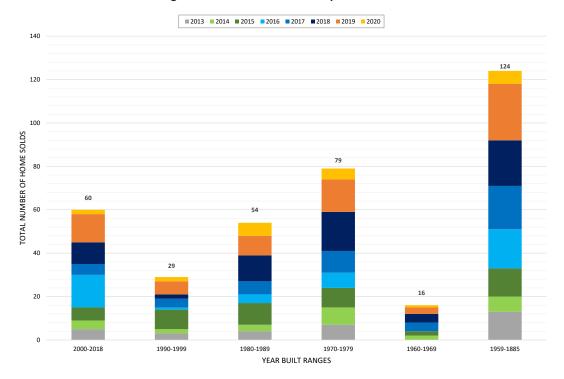
83% of the homes sold were built between 1885-1999 (refer to the second figure below). Of the homes built between 1885-1999, approximately 41% were built in 1959 or earlier.



#### Meeker Home Sales Price Ranges | 2013-2020<sup>1</sup>

NOTES:

<sup>1</sup>2020 sales data from the Rio Blanco County Assessor's Office only available through April 24, 2020. Data Source(s): Rio Blanco County Assessor's Office



#### Age of Homes Sold in Meeker | 2013-2020<sup>1</sup>

NOTES:

<sup>1</sup>2020 sales data from the Rio Blanco County Assessor's Office only available through April 24, 2020. Data Source(s): Rio Blanco County Assessor's Office



#### **Housing Tenure**

% Owner-Occupied Units in Meeker. As of 2018, approximately 61.9% of homes in Meeker were owneroccupied, 3% lower than Colorado as a whole (64.9% of units were owner-occupied). Historically, Meeker has had a lower share of owner-occupied units than the rest of Colorado. Between 2010 and 2018, the percent of owner-occupied units in Meeker was, on average, 5% less than the state (refer to the figures on the following page).

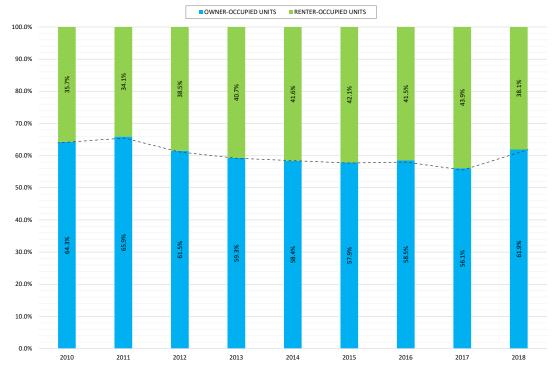
% Renter-Occupied Units in Meeker. In contrast, Meeker has typically had a higher percent of renter-occupied units than Colorado as a whole. Between 2010 and 2018, the percent of renter-occupied units in Meeker was, on average, 5% greater than that of the state (refer to the figures on the following page).

Why Does this Matter? According to the 2016 Downtown Housing Feasibility Study, the trend in Meeker of a higher percent of renter-occupied units could be indicative of the following:

- **1. Existing homes are not sufficient for buyer's needs.** Either home prices are too high or the homes for-sale are of insufficient quality, causing buyers to rent until either prices come down, or more turnkey homes become available.
- **2. There is a lack of new home construction.** Without new homes being added to the local housing market, buyers are limited to the existing for-sale inventory in Meeker. Fewer options to buy may be pushing would-be buyers to rent and/or perpetuating the local housing market squeeze.
- **3. The pool of potential buyers is low.** Would-be buyers are either not in a financial position to buy, due to poor credit or low wages, or are opting to rent due to temporary work. Extraction-rich economies, with more dramatic boom-bust cycles, tend to produce higher-than-average temporary jobs.
- 4. Many homeowners have become unintentional landlords. Homeowners that have relocated outside of the community to find employment elsewhere have not been able to sell their homes due to limited demand for housing caused by local economic conditions. These homeowners choose to rent out their homes until such time that market demand can accommodate a sale.

The qualitative and quantitative evidence gathered for the 2016 Downtown Housing Feasibility Study suggest that the reason for lower rates of homeownership in Meeker is likely due to factors 1 and 2, more so than it is to factors 3 and 4. Although Meeker has tended to have a higher share of temporary jobs in Meeker (when compared to Colorado's average), the housing data in other extraction-rich economies suggest that temporary work would not have such a dramatic affect on homeownership rates as those displayed in Meeker.

#### % Owners vs. Renters in Meeker | 2010-2018



Data Source(s): 2010-2018: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

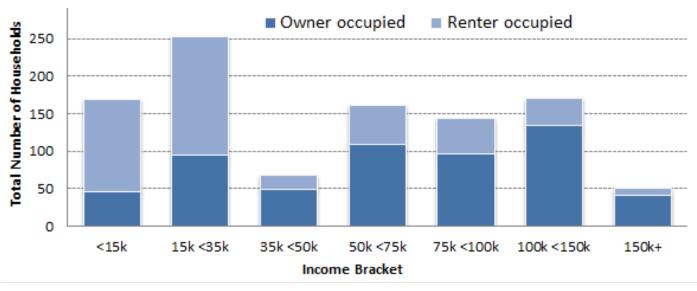


#### % Owners vs. Renters in Colorado | 2010-2018

Data Source(s): 2010-2018: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

A Higher Percent of Middle to Higher Income Households in Meeker are Renting. While middle- and higherincome households are more likely to own their home then rent, a surprisingly high share of these households in Meeker, with incomes between \$50,000 and \$100,000, are renting (refer to the figure on the following page). Housing tenure in these income brackets are estimated to be 67% owner-occupied and 33% renter-occupied. Renter households in these income brackets may be looking for a product not currently supplied by the market, as noted on the previous page.

#### Tenure by Household Income in Meeker



Data Source(s): Cascadia Partners Calculations Using Envision Tomorrow, Balanced Housing Model

#### "Affordability" of For-Sale Housing In Meeker

What Does "Affordable" Actually Mean? First, let's define "affordability." Affordability is often defined as a household spending 28%, or less, of their annual income on mortgage principal and interest payments. 28% of a household's annual income is a standard used by many lenders.

How Does Housing Affordability in Meeker Compare to Other Places in Colorado? Based on the above definition of affordability, a housing analysis was performed for Meeker, Rangely, unincorporated Rio Blanco County and Western Colorado (i.e., the 3<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District). The results of this analysis are presented in Table 4 and can be used to better understand how affordable it is to live in Meeker versus other places in Western Colorado. In 2019, median sales prices in Meeker were higher (+ \$60,000) than those in Rangely. However, they were lower (- \$145,000) than median sales price in unincorporated in Rio Blanco County, and lower (- \$89,000) than the overall median sales price in Western Colorado.

#### Comparison of Meeker's Housing "Affordability" with Rangely, Unincorporated Rio Blanco County and Western Colorado

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	TOWN OF MEEKER	TOWN OF RANGELY	UNINCORPORATED RIO BLANCO COUNTY	WESTERN COLORADO <sup>1</sup>	
2019 RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY MEDIAN SALES PRICE	\$180,000	\$120,000	\$325,000	\$269,000	
AVERAGE AGE OF RESIDENTIAL	55	37	40	Data	
PROPERTY SOLD IN 2019	years old	years old	years old	Not Available	
INCOME NECESSARY TO	\$36,300	\$24,214	\$65,571	\$54,257	
"AFFORD" HOUSING <sup>2</sup>	per year	per year	per year	per year	
% OF RIO BLANCO COUNTY	<b>46%</b> of \$78,800	31%	83%	69%	
2019 AREA MEDIAN INCOME (AMI) <sup>3</sup>		of \$78,800	of \$78,800	of \$78,800	

#### NOTES:

Data Source(s): Rio Blanco County Assessor's Office; Colorado Association of Realtors; and U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development

<sup>1</sup>"Western Colorado" is the 3rd Congressional District. 2019 real estate data for the 3rd Congressional District was obtained from the Colorado Association of Realtors.

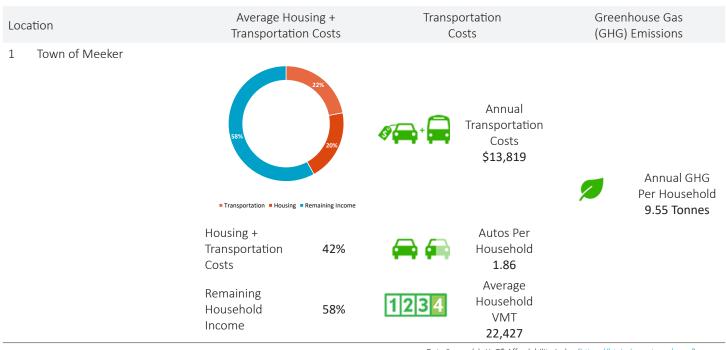
<sup>2</sup>The income necessary to "afford" housing was calculated by approximating monthly mortgage payments. The monthly mortgage payment amounts include principal interest and private mortgage insurance (PMI) but <u>DO NOT</u> take into account homeowner's insurance, property taxes or, homeowner association (HOA) dues. The monthly mortgage payment amounts assume a 10% down-payment and, a 30-year fixed rate mortgage with an interest rate of 3.94% (2019 Average Annual Interest Rate per FreddieMac). The monthly mortgage payment amount, including PMI, was calculated using the Zillow.com Mortgage Calculator (www.zillow.com/mortgage-calculator/).

<sup>3</sup>Per the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), the 2019 Area Median Income (AMI) for Rio Blanco County was \$78,800.

How Affordable is it to Live in Meeker if Housing + Transportation Costs are Combined? Traditionally, housing alone has been deemed "affordable" if it accounted for no more than 28% of a household's income. The H+T<sup>®</sup> Affordability Index (https://htaindex.cnt.org/map/), an online resource, combines transportation costs- usually a household's second-largest expense- with housing costs to demonstrate that although the cost of housing may be less in certain places, when transportation costs are added in, the places with lower housing costs are not necessarily more affordable.

While people may live in areas where the cost of housing is lower, their home may be located far from job opportunities, amenities, etc. and therefore they may end up spending more on transportation to reach their destinations. Therefore, combining housing and transportation costs provides a more comprehensive perspective on affordability. Another factor to consider is greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that result from household automobile use. The more households that drive the greater the GHG's that are typically emitted by these households.

The table below presents select data sourced from the H+T<sup>®</sup> Affordability Index. The data includes: (1) Average Housing + Transportation Costs; (2) Transportation Costs; and, (3) Greenhouse Gas Emissions for Meeker. The H+T<sup>®</sup> Affordability Index establishes "Average Housing + Transportation Costs" by dividing average housing and transportation costs in a community by that community's representative income. This is done in order to illustrate the % of a typical household's income that is spent on housing and transportation expenses.



#### Summary of Housing + Transportation Costs & Greenhouse Gas Emissions for Meeker

Data Source(s): H+T® Affordability Index (https://htaindex.cnt.org/map/)

# Availability and Affordability of For-Sale Housing

According to the 2016 Downtown Housing Feasibility Study, when a potential buyer enters the Meeker housing market, he or she is faced with four options:

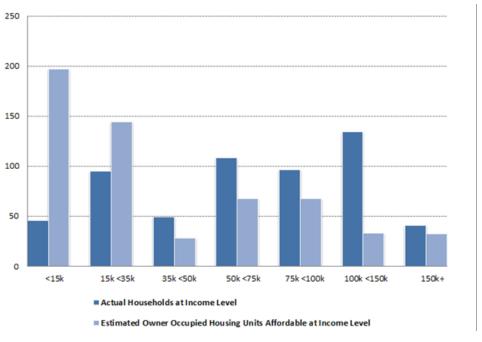
- **1. Buy A Turnkey Property.** Since homebuyers often don't have the time or resources available to build a new home or remodel an old one, buying a turnkey home is the most ideal situation. However, if turnkey homes are not available for-sale at a reasonable price, these buyers may choose to settle for other options or rent until a reasonably priced turnkey home becomes available.
- 2. Buy a Non-Turnkey Property and Remodel. Another option for homebuyers is to purchase a "fixer-upper" and renovate it to suit their needs. In this scenario, homebuyers have to factor in remodeling costs (which vary drastically from home to home) in addition to the purchase price. It is likely that the purchase price and remodel costs will result in total costs that are near or above the price of a turnkey home. Furthermore, buying and remodeling a non-turnkey home can be more difficult logistically–often requiring special financing, significant time and inconvenience, and temporary housing elsewhere.
- **3. Buy an Outdated Home and Don't Remodel.** While many of the homes listed for-sale in Meeker may be livable, they are likely aesthetically outdated. Furthermore, the age of the local housing stock likely indicates a higher probability of deferred mechanical and structural maintenance. A relatively high sales volume in the market suggests that most homebuyers are either snatching up turnkey properties when they become available, or are settling for outdated homes. In many cases, renting is still more attractive than buying an outdated home.
- 4. Buy a Lot and Build a New Home. The 2016 Downtown Housing Feasibility Study found that the economic drivers required to warrant new construction are largely absent in Meeker. The study also found that the lack of local contractors and isolated nature of Meeker results in high construction costs. For example, building a 1,600 square foot home on a 0.19 AC parcel near the Recreation Center would cost \$19,900 for the land and roughly \$192,000 in construction costs (\$120/SF) totaling \$212,000 or \$132 per square foot. In this scenario, it is likely that a potential buyer would opt to rent and wait for a turnkey property to enter the market at \$93-97 per square foot, rather than spend \$132 per square foot and build a new home.

In regards to for-sale housing, the 2016 Downtown Housing Feasibility Study concluded that the average buyer entering the Meeker market is looking for a remodeled single family home in the \$93-97 per square foot range or cheaper. Other alternatives, such as new construction, living in an old house, or remodeling an old house, prove to be undesirable in one way or another. When there aren't adequate turnkey options available for a reasonable price, most would-be buyers end up renting until a reasonably priced turnkey option becomes available. Based on the abnormally high number of renters in the Meeker market, it is clear that these turnkey homes are entering the market much too infrequently to keep up with demand.

**Potential Market for New For-Sale Housing.** As depicted in the figure on the following page, Meeker has a significant oversupply of for-sale housing at prices that are affordable to those earning less than \$35,000. This is consistent with the findings from the 2016 Downtown Housing Feasibility Study in that Meeker's housing stock is aging and there is a lack of newer homes being built that would be affordable to households in the middle- or upper-income brackets

Moreover, the figure on the following page illustrates that there are a greater number of households at income levels between \$35,000-\$150,000+ than there are owner-occupied housing units affordable to those households. Therefore, there is likely strong demand for construction of new housing aimed at those households, with an emphasis on housing for households with annual incomes that fall in the range of \$50,000-\$100,000. It is worth noting that one of the key findings of the 2016 Downtown Housing Feasibility Study was "... the average buyer entering the Meeker market is looking for a single family home in the \$93-97 per square foot range or cheaper."

#### Comparison of Owner Household Incomes with Owner-Occupied Units Affordable at Each Income Level in Meeker



Data Source(s): Cascadia Partners Calculations Using Envision Tomorrow, Balanced Housing Model

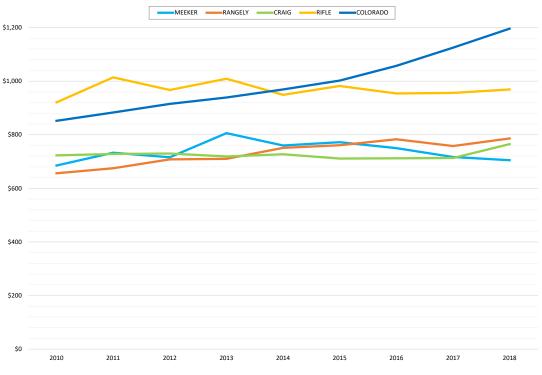
## Availability and Affordability of Rental Housing

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**Rental Housing Rate Trends.** Between 2010 and 2018, it is estimated that Meeker's median gross monthly rent increased from \$685 to \$705 (+ \$20). During this period, median gross monthly rent in Meeker peaked in 2013 at roughly \$806. When compared to the Town of Rangely, City of Craig, City of Rifle, City of Grand Junction and Colorado as a whole, Meeker seems to have experienced the smallest increase in median gross monthly rent between 2010 and 2018. Median gross monthly rent in Craig increased by \$42, by \$48 in Rifle, by \$130 in Rangely, by \$142 in Grand Junction, and by \$344 statewide (refer to the first figure on the following page).

Meeker's high rental vacancy rates and nominal changes in median gross rental rates suggests that landlords are keeping rents low in order to retain and attract renters, despite there still being a fairly large pool of renters in the market.



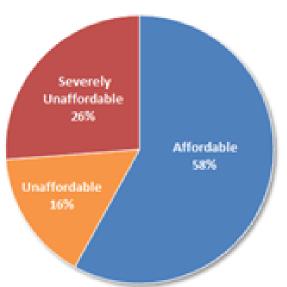


Median Gross Rent Trends | 2010-2018

Data Source(s): 2010-2018: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

**Rental Housing Needs Based on Household Income.** As shown in the figure on the following page, rental housing units affordable to households earning \$35,000-\$50,000 are plentiful, far exceeding the number of households in Meeker that fall within that income range. This is also reflected in the overall affordability of rentals in Meeker, with 58% of renters living in homes affordable at their income level (refer to the figure below).

However, there does appear to be an under supply of rental housing for those in the community that have an annual household income of less than \$15,000. It is estimated that 26% of rental households in Meeker are living in homes that are severely unaffordable to them (refer to the figure below). Some form of subsidized rental housing is commonly necessary to serve households with income levels less than \$15,000 per year.



#### **Rental Housing Affordability in Meeker**

Data Source(s): Cascadia Partners Calculations Using Envision Tomorrow, Balanced Housing Model

**Higher Income Households In Meeker Seem to be Occupying Rental Units Affordable to Lower Income Households.** The second figure on the previous page illustrates that households earning annual incomes of \$50,000, or greater, appear to be renting units that are affordable to lower income households. This might be a result of one, or a combination of, the following factors:

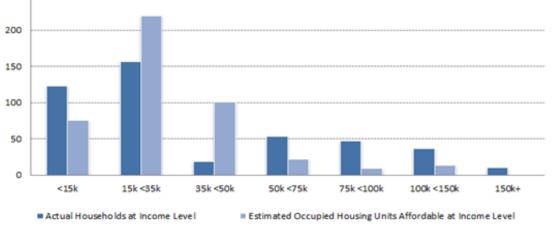
1. Limited housing ownership options available to these higher income households.

- 2. Limited availability of higher-end/more expensive rental units for higher income households to rent.
- 3. Higher income households looking to save on what they spend on housing.

One of the challenges resulting from this market dynamic is that it limits the availability of rental units affordable to lower income households, which may in turn be pushing these households to rent units that are available but unaffordable to them.

Interestingly, the 2018: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates indicate that 41.7% of renter households in Meeker are paying less than 15% of their income on gross rent. By contrast, in the rest of Colorado, 10.6% of renter households are paying less than 15%. Across the United States this number is 12.8%. This implies that there are plenty of qualified homebuyers in Meeker's rental market who are choosing not to purchase homes for reasons not related to income.

**Potential Market for New Rental Units.** According to the data presented in the figure below, there may be demand in Meeker for new, higher-end rental housing, or renovation of low-cost rental housing, in order to cater to rental households that could afford slightly more expensive units and are not interested in buying a home.



#### Comparison of Rental Household Incomes with Renter-Occupied Units Affordable at Each Income Level in Meeker

Data Source(s): Cascadia Partners Calculations Using Envision Tomorrow, Balanced Housing Model

# Short-Term/Vacation Rentals

What Impact do Short-Term/Vacation Rentals Have on Housing in Meeker? In recent years, short-term/vacation rentals have become a topic of debate in Colorado. Common arguments made for or against short-term/vacation rentals include:

- Short-term/vacation rentals take away housing units that are needed for local residents.
- Short-term/vacation rentals are necessary because they enable local residents to afford housing.

Table 9 presents data for short-term/vacation rentals in Meeker. Based on the data, it appears that the popularity and impact of short-term/vacation rentals in Meeker is nominal.

Summary of Short-Term/Vacation Rentals in Meeker							
Estimated Number of Short-Term/Vacation Rentals	Estimated Number of Total Housing Units	Estimated % of Housing Stock Used for Short-Term/Vacation Rentals	Are Short-Term/Vacation Rentals Specifically Regulated?				
7	1,347	0.5%	No				

Data Source(s): AirDNA (www.airdna.co), 2010-2018: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; and, Town of Meeker

# Potential to Accommodate A Variety of Housing Options At A Range Of Price Points

Cascadia Partners developed several housing prototypes to inform discussions about housing in Meeker. The purpose of this work was to illustrate the costs associated with constructing different types of new housing in Meeker, as well as the "affordability" of those housing options. Some of the housing options analyzed currently exist in Meeker, while others do not as a result of economic and/or regulatory factors. The results of this work are presented on the following pages.

It is important to note that land acquisition costs were not factored into the sales price of the different housing options and that the following key assumptions were made:

	Cost Type	Cost
ts	Residential Detached Construction	\$120-\$130 per SF
Costs	Residential Attached Construction	\$135-\$150 per SF
Hard	Garage-to-Accessory Dwelling (ADU) Conversion	\$80 per SF
	Cost Type	% of Hard Costs
Costs	Impact Fees	3-5%
0		4 50/
Soft C	Property Taxes	1.5%

The following table presents an analysis of six (6) housing options (new construction). This information is to be used to inform and guide discussions around the future of housing in Meeker and the types of housing that should be accommodated in the town's Land Use Code.

Housing Type	No. of Units	Unit Size	Sales Price (Min.)	Mortgage Payment (Min.)	Who In Meeker Can Afford This Type of Housing?	% of Area Median Income (AMI) for 2-Person Family
Large Lot Single-Family Home	1	2,400 SF	\$400,000	\$2,267/ month	<ul> <li>Oil and Gas Worker (Income: \$77,293/year)</li> </ul>	109%
Small Lot Single-Family Home	1	1,400 SF	\$280,000	\$1,587/ month	<ul> <li>Oil and Gas Worker (Income: \$77,293/year)</li> </ul>	85%
					<ul> <li>Truck Driver (Income: \$56,310/year)</li> </ul>	
Townhomes	4	1,200 SF	\$225,000	\$1,275/ month	<ul> <li>Oil and Gas Worker (Income: \$77,293/year)</li> </ul>	76%
					<ul> <li>Truck Driver (Income: \$56,310/year)</li> </ul>	
					<ul> <li>IT Specialist (Income: \$42,166/year)</li> </ul>	

Housing Type	No. of Units	Unit Size	Sales Price (Min.)	Mortgage Payment (Min.)	Who In Meeker Can Afford This Type of Housing?	% of Area Median Income (AMI) for 2-Person Family
Cottage Court	5	900 SF	\$180,000	\$1,020/ month	• Oil and Gas Worker (Income: \$77,293/year)	61%
					• Truck Driver (Income: \$56,310/year)	
					<ul> <li>IT Specialist (Income: \$42,166/year)</li> </ul>	
					<ul> <li>Insurance Agent (Income: \$37,014/year)</li> </ul>	
Small Apartment Building (8-plex)	8	575 SF	N/A	\$855/ monthly	<ul> <li>Oil and Gas Worker (Income: \$77,293/year)</li> </ul>	51%
				rent (min.)	<ul> <li>Truck Driver (Income: \$56,310/year)</li> </ul>	
					<ul> <li>IT Specialist (Income: \$42,166/year)</li> </ul>	
					<ul> <li>Insurance Agent (Income: \$37,014/year)</li> </ul>	
Garage-to-Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)	1	650 SF	N/A	\$550/ monthly	<ul> <li>Oil and Gas Worker (Income: \$77,293/year)</li> </ul>	38%
Conversion				rent (min.)	• Truck Driver (Income: \$56,310/year)	
					• IT Specialist (Income: \$42,166/year)	
					<ul> <li>Insurance Agent (Income: \$37,014/year)</li> </ul>	



Large Lot Single-Family Home. Large lot single family homes are a common housing type in Meeker. They typically exist on lots larger than 7,500 square feet and feature 3 or more bedrooms. Newly constructed homes tend to be affordable only to the highest paid workers in Meeker.



**Small Lot Single-Family Home.** Small lot single family homes are less common than those on larger lots. These homes are typically smaller in total square footage and exist on smaller lots closer to Meeker's downtown. While somewhat more affordable, they are still out of reach for many Meeker residents.



Townhomes. Townhomes have not been built in Meeker for some time, though some examples do exist. Townhomes typically feature common walls and smaller units.



**Cottage Court.** Cottage court developments are clusters of smaller detached homes on a single lot with common space between. While increasingly common, this type of development has yet to be done in Meeker. Given the smaller unit sizes, these type of development provides housing that is more affordable than other types of detached homes.



Small Apartment Building (e.g., 8-plex). Small apartment buildings, such as the example shown, could provide traditional multi-family housing or assisted living for seniors. Small, relatively affordable apartments could be feasible in Meeker, but would require changes to the local zoning ordinance to be built.



Garage-to-Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Conversion. Conversion of existing detached or attached garages to dwelling units is a low-cost way to increase housing supply. These conversions can be easily financed by homeowners and undertaken by local contractors. Such units need very low rents to provide a financial benefit to homeowners.

What is Area Median Income (AMI)? Every year, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), produces estimates of area median income (AMI) by household size for every county in the United States. The 2020 AMI for Rio Blanco County is \$83,400. This measure helps to define the types of housing that are affordable to different levels of income, as well as different family types.

## HUD Income Limits for Rio Blanco County, CO (by AMI and Family Size)

AMI	1-Person Family	2-Person Family	3-Person Family	4-Person Family
30% (Extremely Low Income Limits)	\$17,500	\$20,000	\$22,500	\$26,200
50% (Very Low Income Limits)	\$29,200	\$33,400	\$37,550	\$41,700
80% (Low Income Limits)	\$46,700	\$53,400	\$60,050	\$66,700
100%	\$58,375	\$66,750	\$75,063	\$83,375

Data Source(s): U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

### Affordable Rents and Mortgage Payments for Rio Blanco County, CO (by AMI and Family Size)

AMI	1-Person Family	2-Person Family	3-Person Family	4-Person Family
30% (Extremely Low Income Limits)	\$438	\$500	\$563	\$655
50% (Very Low Income Limits)	\$730	\$835	\$939	\$1,043
80% (Low Income Limits)	\$1,168	\$1,335	\$1,501	\$1,668
100%	\$1,459	\$1,669	\$1,877	\$2,084

Data Source(s): U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

#### Affordable Housing Prices in Rio Blanco County, CO (by AMI and Family Size)

AMI	1-Person Family	2-Person Family	3-Person Family	4-Person Family
30% (Extremely Low Income Limits)	\$77,185	\$88,212	\$99,238	\$115,558
50% (Very Low Income Limits)	\$128,789	\$147,314	\$165,618	\$183,922
80% (Low Income Limits)	\$205,975	\$235,526	\$264,856	\$294,187
100%	\$257,469	\$294,407	\$331,073	\$367,734

Data Source(s): U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

# PARKS, RECREATION, AND TRAILS

# **A**

# Meeker's Park System

The Town of Meeker's Park System comprises ten (10) parks. Information about these parks can be found in the table below. In 2012, the Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation & Park District (ERBM) signed a 30-year lease with the Town of Meeker to manage, maintain, and improve (as needed) the following town-owned parks: (1) 11th Street Park; (2) 12th Street Park; (3) 6th Street Park; (4) Circle Park; (5) Sage Hills Park; and, (6) Town Park. This partnership between the town and ERBM has been well received by the community.

Parl	< Name	Owned By	Maintained By	Acreage	Brief Description
1.	McHatton Park (820 11th St)	Town	ERBM	0.8	McHatton Park is a neighborhood park located in the west side of Meeker. This parks only amenity is a basketball court.
2.	Foothills Park (1106 Pinyon St)	Town	ERBM	0.5	A block to the south of the McHatton Park sits Foothills Park. This pocket park includes a small playground area and benches.
3.	6th Street Park (711 6th St)	Town	ERBM	2.9	The 6th Street Park is one of the larger parks located in Meeker's core. The park features a large multi-purpose turf area and a baseball backstop.
4.	Circle Park (1 South 5th St)	Town	ERBM	7.5	Circle Park is located at the south end of 5th Street. This park sits along the southern edge of the White River. Circle Park is currently being renovated and will soon offer: a pond; a looped walking path; a new pavilion; and, improved river access.
5.	Phillip & Dorcas Jensen Memorial Park	ERBM	ERBM	57.3	This park serves as a natural open space area and is bordered by public lands (i.e., BLM lands) on the west and north. The park offers roughly seven-miles of trails, a one-way bike flow course, and BLM access.
6.	Paintbrush Park (101 Ute Rd)	ERBM	ERBM	21.4	Located adjacent to the Meeker Recreation Center, Paintbrush Park is one of Meeker's regional parks. This park features: a playground area; picnic/shade shelters; baseball and softball fields; all-season restrooms; a basketball court; archery range; and, a community garden.
7.	Sage Hills Park (1315 Sage Ridge Rd)	Town	ERBM	0.8	Located in the Sage Hills neighborhood, this park offers spectacular views from its highest point. The park has limited amenities, which include an open turf area.
8.	Sanderson Hills Park (1091 Sanderson Dr)	Town	Town	3	Located in the Sanderson Hills neighborhood, this park offers: a playground; picnic areas; all-season restrooms; an open turf area/soccer field; looped walking path; trailhead access to Phillip & Dorcas Jensen Memorial Park; and, a parking lot.

#### Summary of the Town of Meeker's Park System

Par	k Name	Owned By	Maintained By	Acreage	Brief Description
9.	Town Park (20 South 4th St)	Town	ERBM	5.7	On the north side of the White River, across from Circle Park, sits Town Park. This park has mature evergreens, shade trees, and a picnic/shade shelter that accommodates large community gatherings. Other amenities available at Town Park include: a playground; walking path; restrooms; river access; a sand volleyball court; a basketball court; open turf areas; and, a large parking lot/RV camping.
10.	Ute Park	Town	Town	115	Ute Park is a wonderful, unique, and cherished public space located in the west end of Meeker. The park comprises approximately 115-acres, trailheads to BLM lands, and serves as a venue for annual events such as the Meeker Classic Sheepdog Championship Trials. During the MMF planning process, the community was engaged in developing ideas for potential improvements to Ute Park. The outcome from this engagement was the concept for Ute Park included in the Community Master Plan.

## Summary of the Town of Meeker's Park System (continued)

#### **TOTAL: 212-ACRES**

Data Source(s): 2012 Recreation, Trails, and Parks Master Plan; Town of Meeker; and, ERBM Recreation & Park District



# Local Community Spaces and Recreation Facilities

The following table presents an overview of the community gathering spaces and recreation facilities in Meeker that are available to the town's residents.

Faci	lity	Owned By	Maintained By	Brief Description
1.	Meeker Recreation Center (101 Ute Rd)	ERBM	ERBM	This popular center is used by all age groups within the community, as well as by visitors outside of the Meeker area. The center offers a pool, fitness room, and multi-purpose room.
2.	Rio Blanco County Courthouse Lawn	Rio Blanco County	Rio Blanco County	The historic Rio Blanco County Courthouse is located on Main Street in downtown Meeker. In front of the courthouse is an open turf area shaded by a number of mature trees. The courthouse lawn offers space for outdoor concerts, celebrations, and community gatherings.
3.	Rio Blanco County Fairgrounds	Rio Blanco County	Rio Blanco County	<ul> <li>The Rio Blanco County Fairgrounds are located south of the Meeker Recreation Center.</li> <li>Outdoor Amenities: A multi-use field.</li> <li>Indoor Amenities: The 4-H Community Center provides indoor space for gatherings, meetings, demonstrations, and events.</li> </ul>
4.	Meeker Elementary School (Ute Rd)	RE-1 School District	RE-1 School District	<ul> <li>The Meeker Elementary School is located immediately to the west of the Meeker Recreation Center.</li> <li>Outdoor Amenities: Outdoor amenities at Meeker's elementary school include playground areas, a court area, and open turf areas.</li> <li>Indoor Amenities: The Meeker Elementary School offers a state-of-the-art gymnasium for community recreational events and a multi-purpose room for community gatherings.</li> </ul>

### Summary of Local Community Gathering Spaces and Recreation Facilities

Summary of Local Community Gathering Spaces and Recreation Facilitie	es (continued)
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Faci	lity	Owned By	Maintained By	Brief Description
5.	Barone Middle School (Bob Tucker Dr)	RE-1 School District	RE-1 School District	Outdoor Amenities: The Middle School is located on a large site and provides open turf areas, a playground area, and tennis courts. Indoor Amenities: The gymnasium at Barone Middle School is available for school physical education and recreation programs.
6.	Meeker High School (550 School St)	RE-1 School District	RE-1 School District	Outdoor Amenities: The High School provides a football field, competitive track, and large open turf areas. Indoor Amenities: The High School offers a full-size, regulation gymnasium with bleachers. The High School also provides an auditorium/theater for community performances.
7.	School Administration Building	RE-1 School District	RE-1 School District	Outdoor Amenities: Amenities include open turf areas, large, mature trees, and a parking lot. Indoor Amenities: The building's classrooms and gymnasium are available for community use.
8.	Fairfield Center	Rio Blanco County	Rio Blanco County	The Fairfield Center provides indoor space for community events and celebrations. The Center has a large multi-purpose room with adjoining kitchenette.
9.	Meeker Public Library (490 Main St)	Regional Library District	Regional Library District	Meeker's public library features a large multi-purpose room that can be reserved for community events.
10.	Meeker Golf Course (903 County Rd 13)	Town	ERBM	Outdoor Amenities: 9-hole public golf course. Indoor Amenities: Clubhouse with restrooms.

Data Source(s): 2012 Recreation, Trails, and Parks Master Plan; Town of Meeker; and, ERBM Recreation & Park District

# Meeker's Trail System

The following table offers a summary of the non-motorized trails that can be accessed from town. In total, Meeker has approximately 15.4-miles of trail.

Trail	Approximate Mileage	Average Grade	Trail Type
BLM Access Trail	0.2	-	Singletrack
China Wall Trail	4.0	7%	Singletrack
China Wall Connector	0.8	-	Singletrack
East Ridge	1.3	7%	Singletrack
Hidden Valley Trail	2.5	4%	Singletrack
Lion Canyon Trail	2.0	3%	Doubletrack
Lion Canyon Road	0.8	10%	Doubletrack
Lion Canyon Ridge Road	1.6	4%	Doubletrack
Meadow Loop	0.6	2%	Singletrack
Meeker Flow	0.5	9%	Singletrack
Pinyon Trail	0.8	4%	Singletrack
Sage Hills Trail	0.3	-	Singletrack

### Summary of the Town of Meeker's Trail System

## TOTAL: 15.4-MILES

Data Source(s): Town of Meeker; and, MTB Project (https://www.mtbproject.com/directory/8011966/meeker)

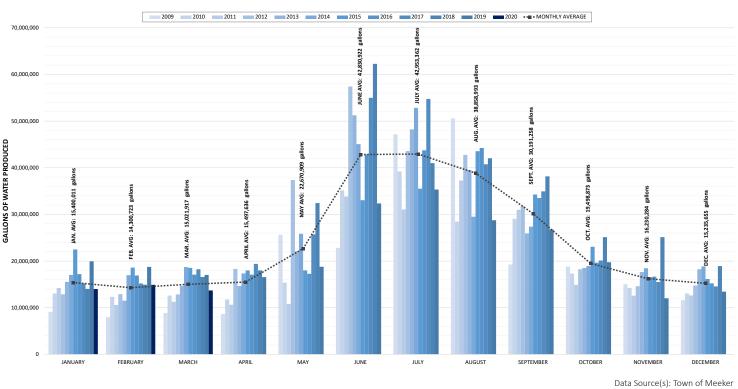
According to MTB Project (www.mtbproject.com), the Town of Meeker serves as the trailhead for "The Ute Trail." This trail is a roughly 81-mile trail that utilizes portions of the historic Ute Trail between Meeker and Glenwood Springs. This trail appears to be primarily doubletrack and has an average grade of 4%.

# **INFRASTRUCTURE**

# Meeker's Water System

Meeker's water system currently has the ability to produce a maximum of four (4) million gallons of water per day. The current average daily water production in Meeker is 71,000 gallons (roughly 1.8% of the water system's maximum).

Peak monthly water production in Meeker occurs during the summer months (June-August). This is not uncommon and is likely attributed to outdoor watering.



#### Total Monthly Water Production (2009-2020)



The Town of Meeker's wastewater system is owned, operated, and maintained by the Meeker Sanitation District. The Meeker Sanitation District was established in 1961. The Sanitation District is responsible for approximately 20-miles of sewer main pipe in Meeker, as well as the Meeker Sewer Treatment Plant.

Currently, the maximum amount of daily sewage treated by the Meeker Sewer Treatment Plant is 0.150 million gallons. The Sewer Treatment Plant has a maximum capacity of 0.99 million gallons per day, so the plant is at roughly 15.2% of capacity on a peak day.



The Town of Meeker owns and maintains about 39.8 miles of road.

Colorado State Highway 13 (SH-13) serves as Meeker's regional transportation connection. According to crash data from the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) there have been 23 Crashes (5 resulting in Injury and 1 resulting in a Fatality) along SH-13, in Meeker, between 2008 and 2018. In 2019, the average speed of vehicles traveling along SH-13 in Meeker was 41 MPH.

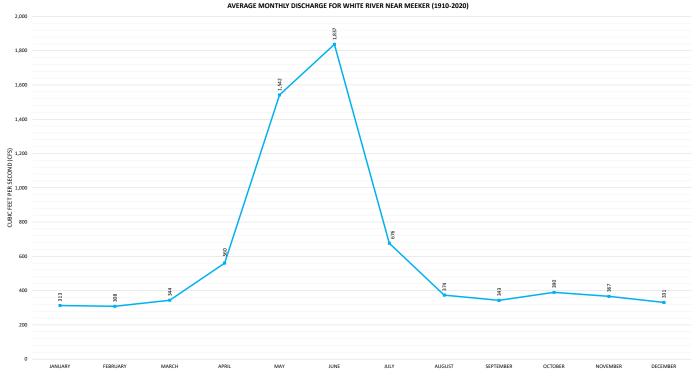
The current (2018) level of congestion (i.e., volume/capacity ration) for SH-13 in Meeker is 0.46. The projected level of congestion for SH-13 in Meeker, by 2035, is 0.72. Typically, a V/C ratio of 0.8 or less indicates that a road is not congested.

CDOT data indicates that 10.5% of the current (2018) SH-13 annual average daily traffic (AADT) in Meeker is heavy truck traffic. CDOT projects that this percentage will remain the same over the next 15 or so years (i.e., 2035.

# NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

## The White River

The White River is one of Meeker's beautiful and highly valued natural amenities. The figure below offers information regarding the average monthly discharge (i.e., cubic feet per second (CFS)) for the White River near Meeker.



#### Average Monthly Discharge for the White River Near Meeker (1910-2020)

Data Source(s): US Geologic Survey

The following tables offer information about historic sites and buildings in and around the Town of Meeker. These tables are to be used in conjunction with the Historic Buildings Map included in Appendix D.

	SITE NO.	HISTORIC NAME	SITE ADDRESS	YEAR BUILT	YEAR LISTED
-	5RB.53	Duck Creek Wickiup Village	36 miles south of Meeker	-	1975
-	5RB.982	Battle of Milk River Site	Thornburgh Rd (17 miles northeast of Meeker)	1879	1975
<b>₽</b> ₽	5RB.983	St. James Episcopal Church	368 4th St	1890	1978
-	5RB.3575	Coal Creek School	617 County Rd 6	1892	2014
<b>9</b> <sup>2</sup>	5RB.985	Hotel Meeker	560 Main St	1896	1980
<b>9</b> 8	5RB.2245	I.O.O.F. Lodge- Valentine Lodge No. 47	400 Main St	1897	2014
-	5RB.2376	Hay's Ranch Bridge	County Rd 127	1901	1985

<b>Buildings</b> and	Sites Listed Or	The National	Register of	<b>Historic Places</b>
Dunungs and	Siles Listed Of	i ine wational	Register Of	instone riaces

Data Source(s): History Colorado (www.historycolorado.org)

#### Buildings and Sites Listed On The Colorado State Register of Historic Places

	SITE NO.	HISTORIC NAME	SITE ADDRESS	YEAR BUILT	YEAR LISTED
<b>9</b> <sup>4</sup>	5RB.2242	J.W. Hugus Co. Building	594 Main St	1911	1991
<b>9</b> <sup>5</sup>	5RB.2667	Rio Blanco County High School	555 Garfield St	1924	1993

Data Source(s): History Colorado (www.historycolorado.org)

## Eligibility of Historic Buildings in Meeker

	SITE NO.	HISTORIC NAME	ORIGINAL OWNER NAME	SITE ADDRESS	YEAR BUILT	NR	SR	NRD	SRD	NEEDS DATA
<b>9</b> 6	5RB.2247	Army Officers Quarters	-	545 Park Ave	1879	x	Х			
₽7	5RB.2248	Army Officers Quarters	-	565 Park Ave	1879	X	Х			
<b>9</b> 8	5RB.2249	Army Officers Quarters	-	587 Park Ave	1879	Х	Х			
<b>9</b> 9	5RB.6523	-	Ruben S. Ball	1143 Main St	1885					
<b>9</b> 10	5RB.4380	-	H. J. Miner	449 Park Ave	1886			х	х	
<b>9</b> 23		-	F. N. Johantgen & Henry Wildhack	614 Water St	1888					Х
<b>9</b> <sup>12</sup>	5RB.2666	James Lyttle House	-	715 Park Ave	1889					
PB		Rueben Oldland House	-	487 Park Ave	1890	x	Х	х	х	
<b>9</b> <sup>23</sup>		-	Edward Sanderson	1085 Main St	1891					Х
<b>₽</b> <sup>®</sup>		-	Harry Niblock	865 Main St	1895		Х			
<b>9</b> £3	5RB.4383	J. J. Donnelly House	-	907 Park Ave	1895		Х			Х
<b>9</b> <sup>1</sup>	5RB.4386	-	Almon Durham	625 Garfield St	1898	X	Х			

#### Eligibility of Historic Buildings in Meeker (continued)

	SITE NO.	HISTORIC NAME	ORIGINAL OWNER NAME	SITE ADDRESS	YEAR BUILT	NR	SR	NRD	SRD	NEEDS DATA
<b>9</b> <sup>13</sup>	5RB.6529	-	Eva Mathews	780 Water St	1898		х			
P®	5RB.2669	-	Meeker Methodist Church	809 Park Ave	1899					
<b>9</b> <sup>20</sup>	5RB.4405	-	E. E. Fordham	511 Cleveland St	1900	Х	х			
<mark>ଚ</mark> କ୍ଷ	5RB.4382	-	H. P. Hulett	785 Park Ave	1900			x	x	
<b>9</b> <sup>22</sup>	5RB.6527	-	George Stone (possible)	1240 Park Ave	1900	Х	х			
<b>9</b> <sup>23</sup>	5RB.6516	-	J. H. Beard or Eva Redpath	1191 Garfield St	1900		х			Х
<b>9</b> <sup>23</sup>	5RB.6518	-	J. M. Thayer	767 Main St	1902					
<b>9</b> <sup>25</sup>	5RB.6522	-	E. P. Grove	1135 Main St	1902					
<b>9</b> <sup>23</sup>	5RB.6511	-	Henry J. Hay	540 5th St	1903		х			
<b>9</b> <sup>27</sup>	5RB.6521	-	D. A. Edwards	1128 Main St	1903					
<b>9</b> <sup>23</sup>	5RB.4381	-	H. A. Wildhack	425 Park Ave	1903			х	х	
<b>9</b> 29	5RB.6512	-	Rueben S. Ball	677 8th St	1904			х	х	
<b>9</b> <sup>80</sup>	5RB.6517	-	H. N. Dreyfus	112 Main St	1904					
<b>9</b> 81	5RB.4396	Seventh Day Adventist Church	-	1033 Main St	1906					
<b>9</b> <sup>52</sup>	5RB.4384	Isaac Baer House	-	835 Garfield St	1908					X (for SR)
<b>9</b> <sup>89</sup>	5RB.6525	-	J. W. Hugus & Newton Major	788 Park Ave	1908					
<b>9</b> <sup>23</sup>	5RB.4395	Keel House	-	1011 Main St	1910					
<b>9</b> <sup>89</sup>	5RB.4392	Simms House	-	657 Cleveland St	1912					
<b>9</b> <sup>83</sup>	5RB.6526	-	Eliza J. Taylor	1042 Park Ave	1913					
<b>9</b> <sup>27</sup>	5RB.4397	John Neal House	-	613 Park Ave	1918		х	х	х	
<b>9</b> <sup>83</sup>	5RB.6524	-	Edmund Pauls	683 Park Ave	1918			х	х	
<b>9</b> 89	5RB.6515	-	Emma O. Saltmarsh	790 Garfield St	1920					
<b>9</b> <sup>40</sup>	5RB.6514	W. Simms House	-	616 Cleveland St	1930		х			
<b>9</b> 41	5RB.6513	-	Dr. Bert White	490 9th St	1932					Х
<b>9</b> <sup>42</sup>	5RB.2243	Rio Blanco County Courthouse	-	565 Main St	1935					
<b>9</b> <sup>43</sup>	5RB.2244	Meeker Elementary School	-	455 Main St	1939	Х	х			
		I	I							

NOTES:

Data Source(s): 2009 Town of Meeker Historic Resource Survey; and, 2013 Meeker Site Visit Report

NR: Eligible for the National Register of Historic Places | NRD: Eligible for a National Historic District

SR: Eligible for the Colorado State Register of Historic Places | SRD: Eligible for a State Historic District.

# The Meeker Historic District

Pursuant to a 2015 History Colorado Office of Archaeological & Historic Preservation study, and the subsequent award of a State Historical Fund grant (to the Town of Meeker and the Rio Blanco County Historical Society), the Meeker National Register Historic District Task Force submitted a nomination to the State Historic Preservation Commission for the establishment of a Historic District in downtown Meeker. Following an extensive review, the commission approved the nomination, and in 2019, the Meeker Historic District was created. The district is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/index.htm).

Meeker's Historic District encompasses roughly eleven city blocks that includes the historic downtown commercial core and sections of the adjacent residential neighborhood. As platted in 1885, these include blocks 1, 2, 6-10, and 24. The district also includes two city blocks (designated as the "Parade Grounds" and as the "Center of Town"), which are currently occupied by the Rio Blanco County Courthouse (built in 1935) and the former Meeker Elementary School (built in 1938-1939). These two blocks served as the parade ground for the U.S. Army's "Camp on White River" that existed in Meeker between 1880 and 1883, and later as the town park until the county courthouse was built in 1935. Meeker's Historic District is bordered on the north by the alley between Park and Garfield streets, on the east by 4th Street, on the south by the alley between Main and Market streets, and on the west by 7th and 8th streets.

**The District's Buildings**. Meeker's Historic District comprises fifty-two (52) buildings. Thirty-one (31) buildings are considered "contributing," while twenty-one (21) are considered to be "non-contributing." Dates of construction in the district range from 1880 to 2011, with only five (5) buildings constructed after the period of significance that ended in 1967. Sixteen (16) of the noncontributing buildings date from the period of significance, but have been altered to such an extent that they no longer convey a sense of their historic significance. Two (2) of the contributing buildings are individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places: (1) the International Order of Oddfellows Building at 400 Main Street (NRIS: 14000060; 5RB.2245); and, (2) the Meeker Hotel at 560 Main Street (NRIS: 800009235RB.985). One (1) contributing building is listed on the State Register of Historic Properties: the Hugus Block/A. Oldland & Company Building at 594 Main Street (5RB.2242).

The Historic District's three (3) oldest buildings were built in 1880 as part of the U. S. Army's "Camp on White River," and are notable examples of "piece-sur-piece" Pioneer Log construction. Elsewhere, the district includes twenty-three (23) commercial buildings, nineteen (19) single-family dwellings, one (1) multi-family dwelling, and six (6) governmental/institutional buildings. The commercial buildings form the core of Meeker's downtown business district and primarily display attributes of Late 19th Century and Early 20th Century commercial styles of architecture. These are mostly rectangular-shaped one- and two-story buildings that front directly onto the wide concrete sidewalks along Main Street and 6th Street. Residences within the district include examples of Late Victorian, Classic Cottage, Bungalow, Craftsman, Minimal Traditional, Modern Movement, and Ranch styles and types of architecture. The district's governmental/institutional buildings include: (1) the Rio Blanco County Courthouse; (2) the former Meeker Elementary School; (3) the Meeker Public Library; (4) the Meeker Post Office; (5) the Rio Blanco County Heritage Culture Center; and, (6) the Masonic Temple. The courthouse and former Elementary School are both notable examples of the Late 19th and Early 20th Century American Movements/ WPA Rustic style of architecture.

Each of the contributing buildings, within Meeker's Historic District, are listed on the Colorado State Register and the National Register of Historic Places as components of the district. It is worth noting that there are tax credits available to the owners of said historic buildings. The State Historical Fund offers competitive grants for the preservation/renovation of eligible structures. Other philanthropic grants and funding resources may also be available for building renovations and/or historic preservation efforts in Meeker.

# **Reference Maps**

+ Existing Land Uses

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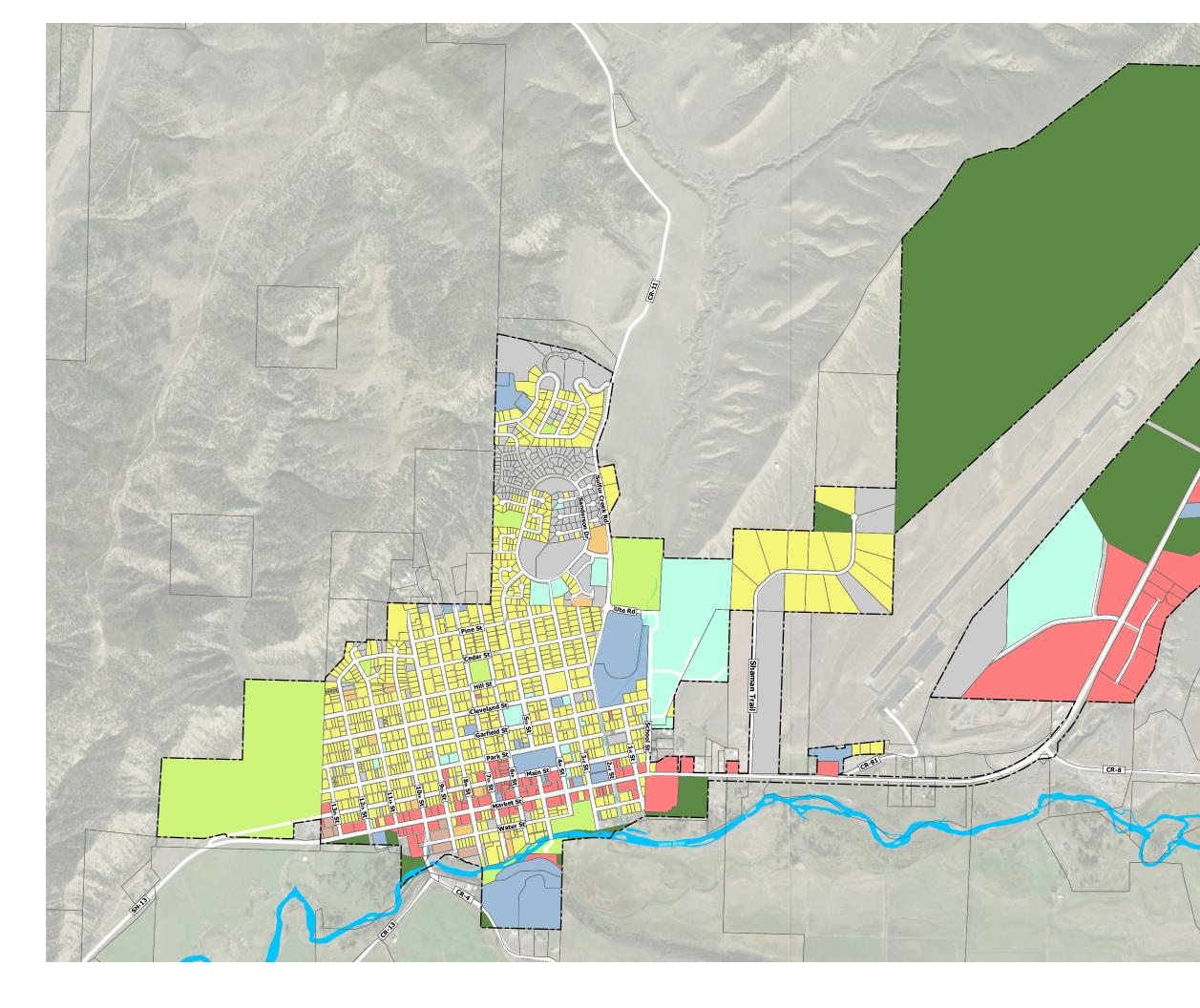
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- + Existing Infrastructure
- + Historic Buildings and Sites
- + Natural Hazard Areas
- + Wetland Areas
- + Wildfire Risk Areas
- + Wildland Urban Interface Risk Areas
- + Soil Characteristics
- + Wildlife Habitat Areas | Birds
- + Wildlife Habitat Areas | Mammals
- + Wildlife Habitat Areas | Fish & Amphibians
- + Parks, Recreation, and Trails

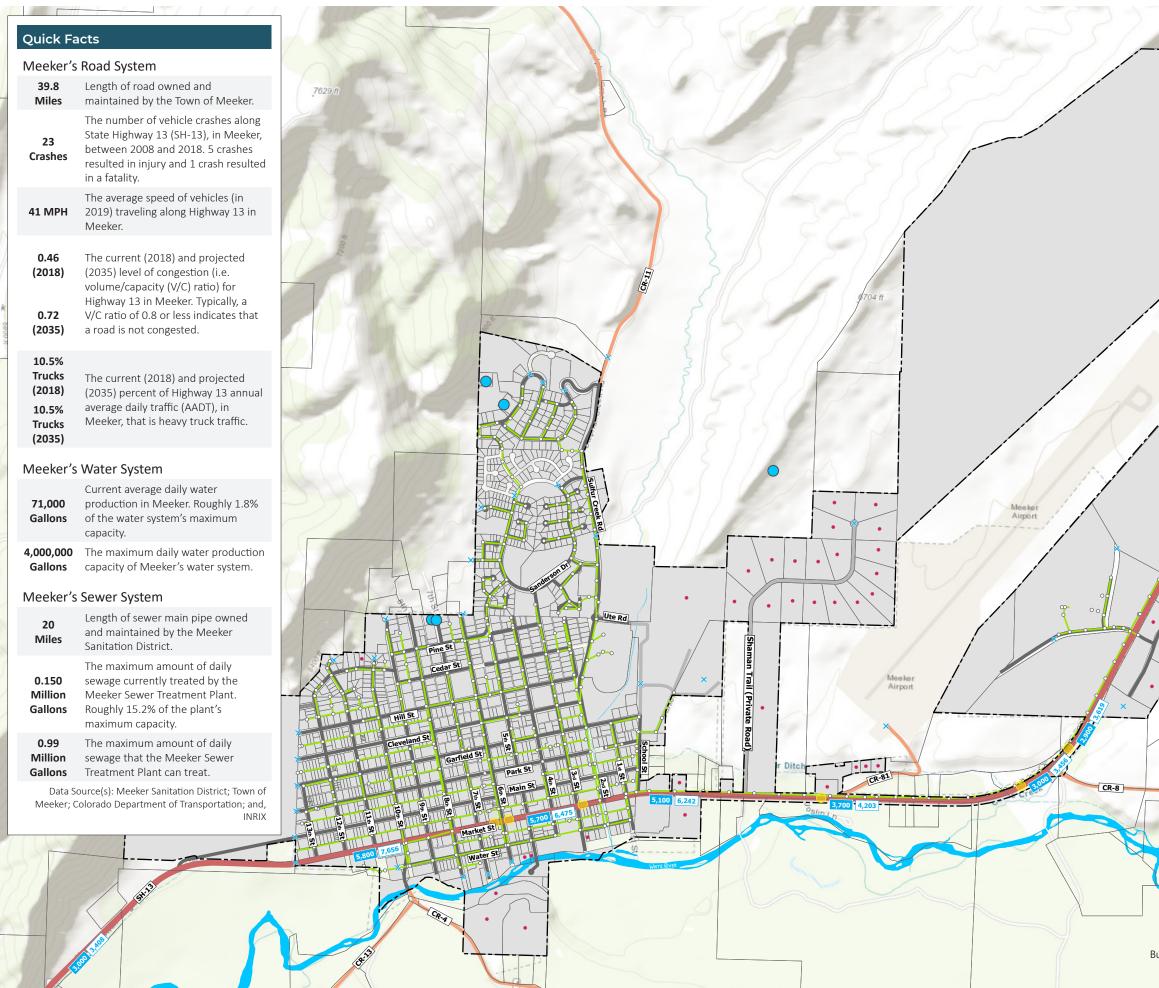




## Existing Land Use Map

CR-15

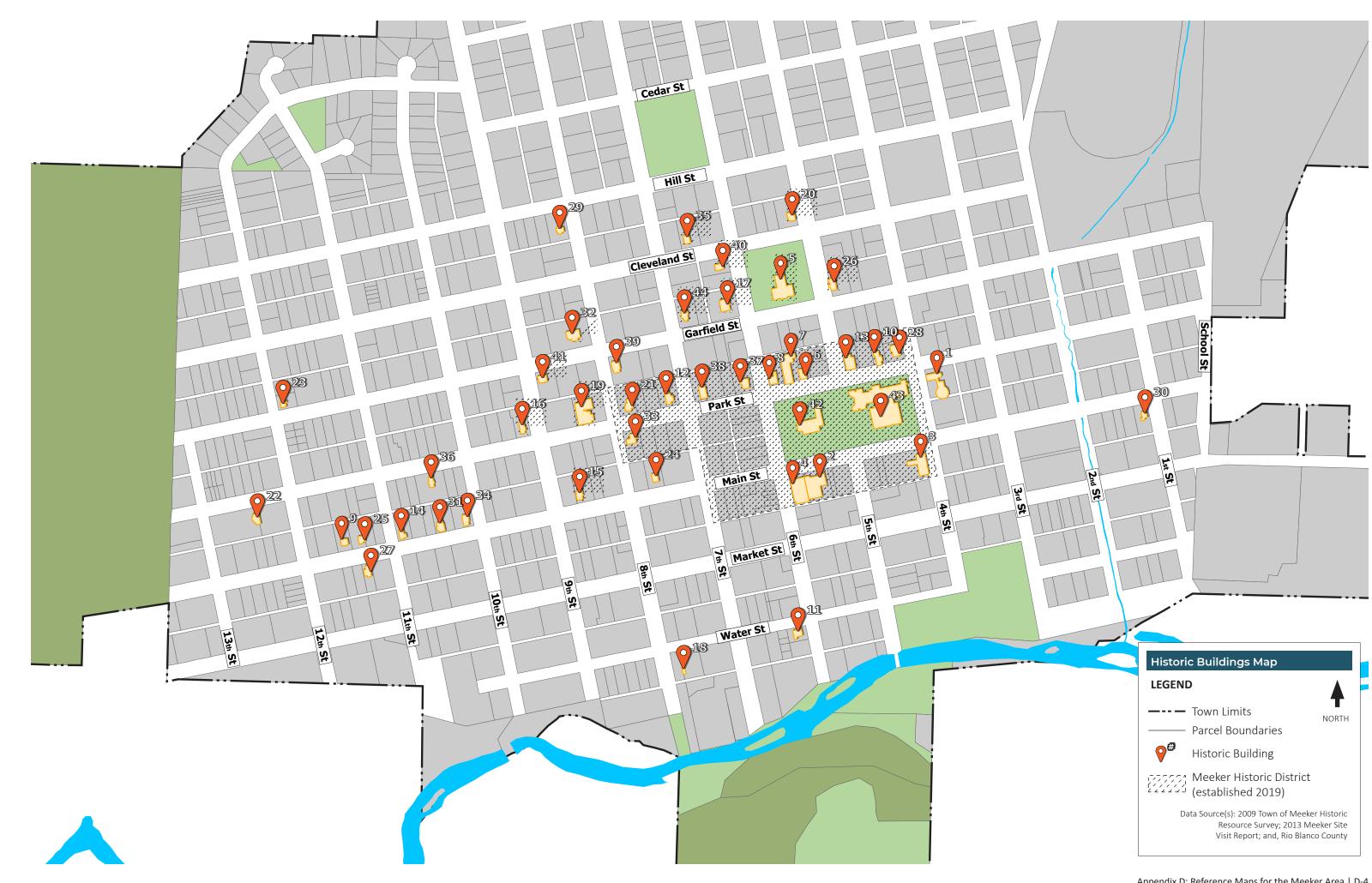
# LEGEND T —--— Town Limits NORTH — Parcel Boundaries Agricultural Uses Civic/Government Uses Commercial Uses Institutional Uses Mobile Homes Multi-Family Residential Uses Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Areas Single-Family Residential Uses Vacant Properties Data Source(s): Rio Blanco County Assessor's Office

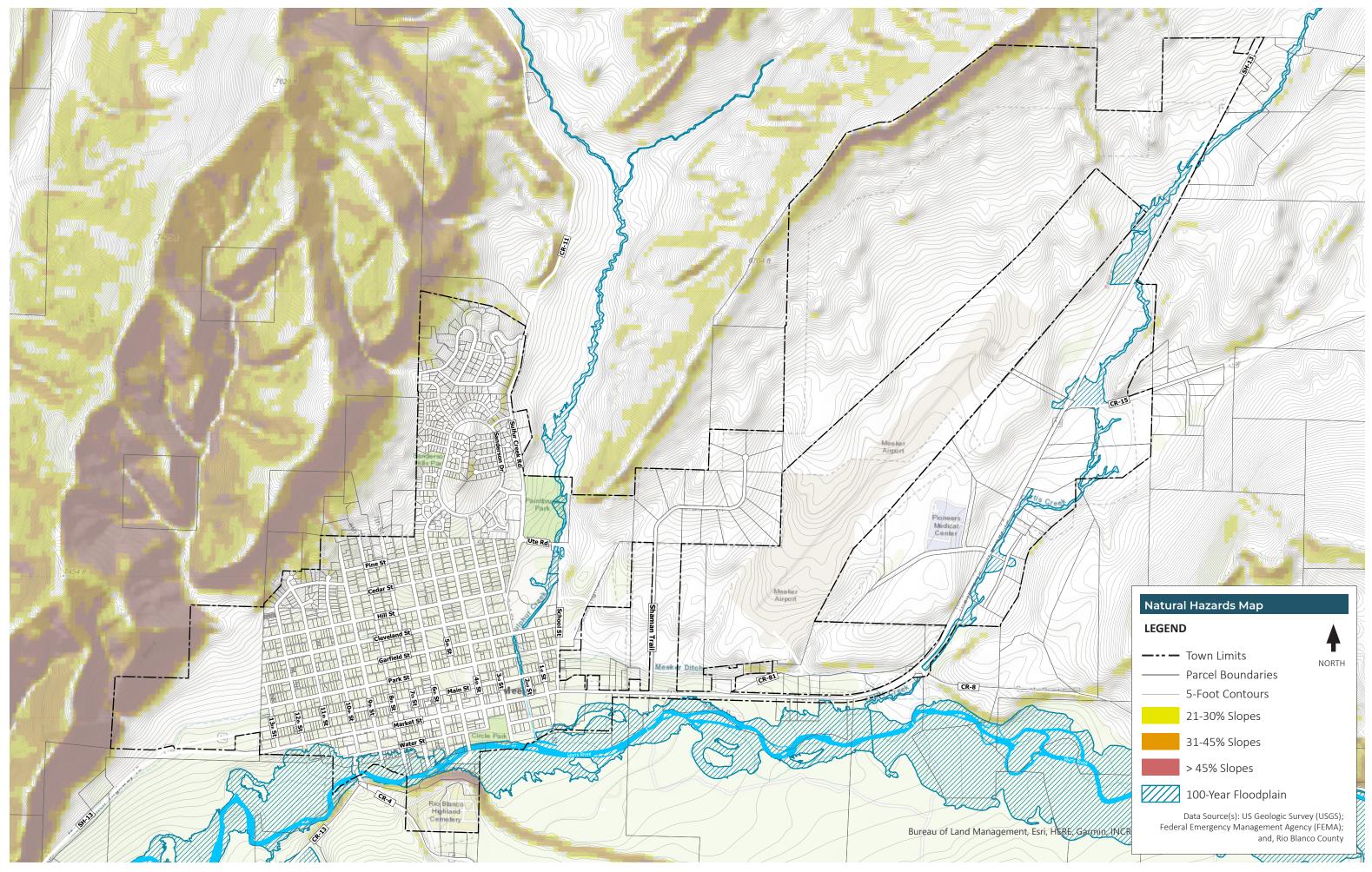


## LEGEND **——** Town Limits NORTH Parcel Boundaries Sanitation District Manhole 0 Property Served by On-Site Wasterwater Treatment System (OWTS) Approximate Extent of X Meeker's Water System

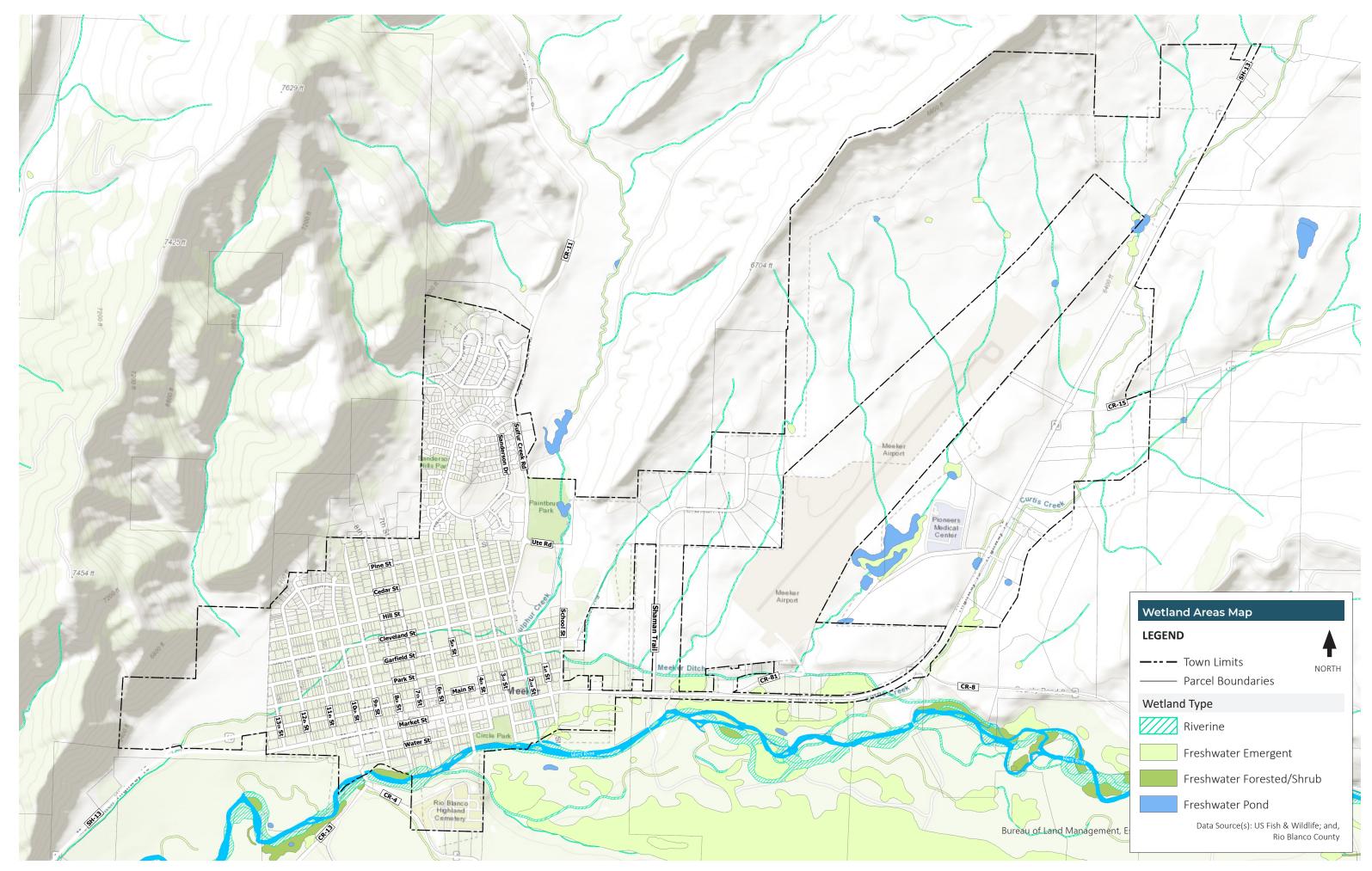
**Existing Infrastructure Map** 

Sanitation District Sewer Line Town Water Tank Private Street Town-Owned Street County-Owned Street State-Owned Street CDOT Traffic Station 2019 Average 5,500 Annual Daily Trips (AADT) 2035 Projected Average 7,500 Annual Daily Trips (AADT) Data Source(s): Meeker Sanitation District; Rio Blanco County; and, Bureau of Land Management, Colorado Department of Transportation





Appendix D: Reference Maps for the Meeker Area | D-5



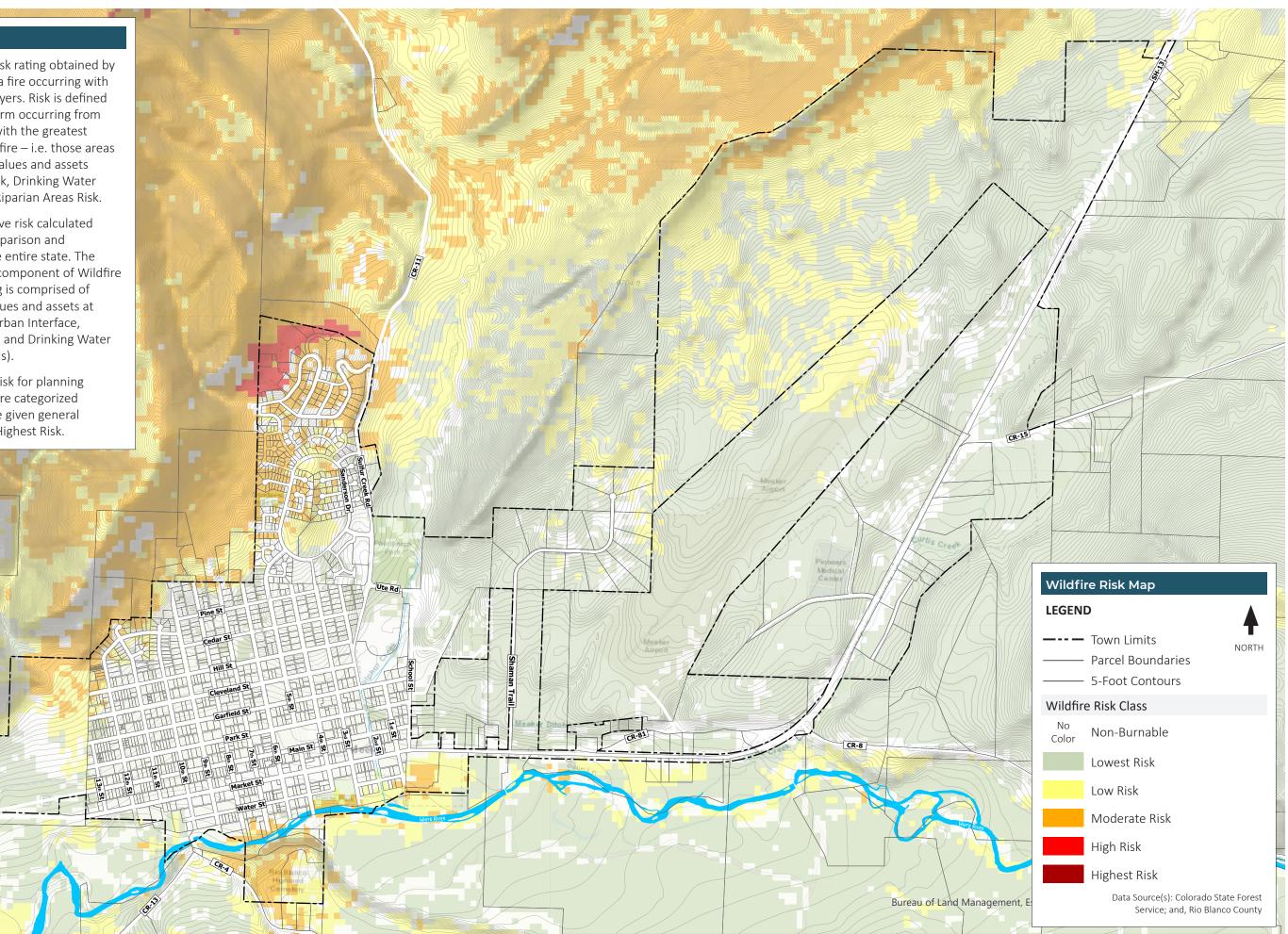
Appendix D: Reference Maps for the Meeker Area | D-6

## Wildfire Risk Index

Wildfire Risk is a composite risk rating obtained by combining the probability of a fire occurring with the individual values at risk layers. Risk is defined as the possibility of loss or harm occurring from a wildfire. It identifies areas with the greatest potential impacts from a wildfire – i.e. those areas most at risk- considering all values and assets combined together – WUI Risk, Drinking Water Risk, Forest Assets Risk, and Riparian Areas Risk.

Since all areas in Colorado have risk calculated consistently, it allows for comparison and ordination of areas across the entire state. The Values at Risk Rating is a key component of Wildfire Risk. The Values at Risk Rating is comprised of several inputs focusing on values and assets at risk. This includes Wildland Urban Interface, Forest Assets, Riparian Assets and Drinking Water Importance Areas (watersheds).

To aid in the use of Wildfire Risk for planning activities, the output values are categorized into five (5) classes. These are given general descriptions from Lowest to Highest Risk.



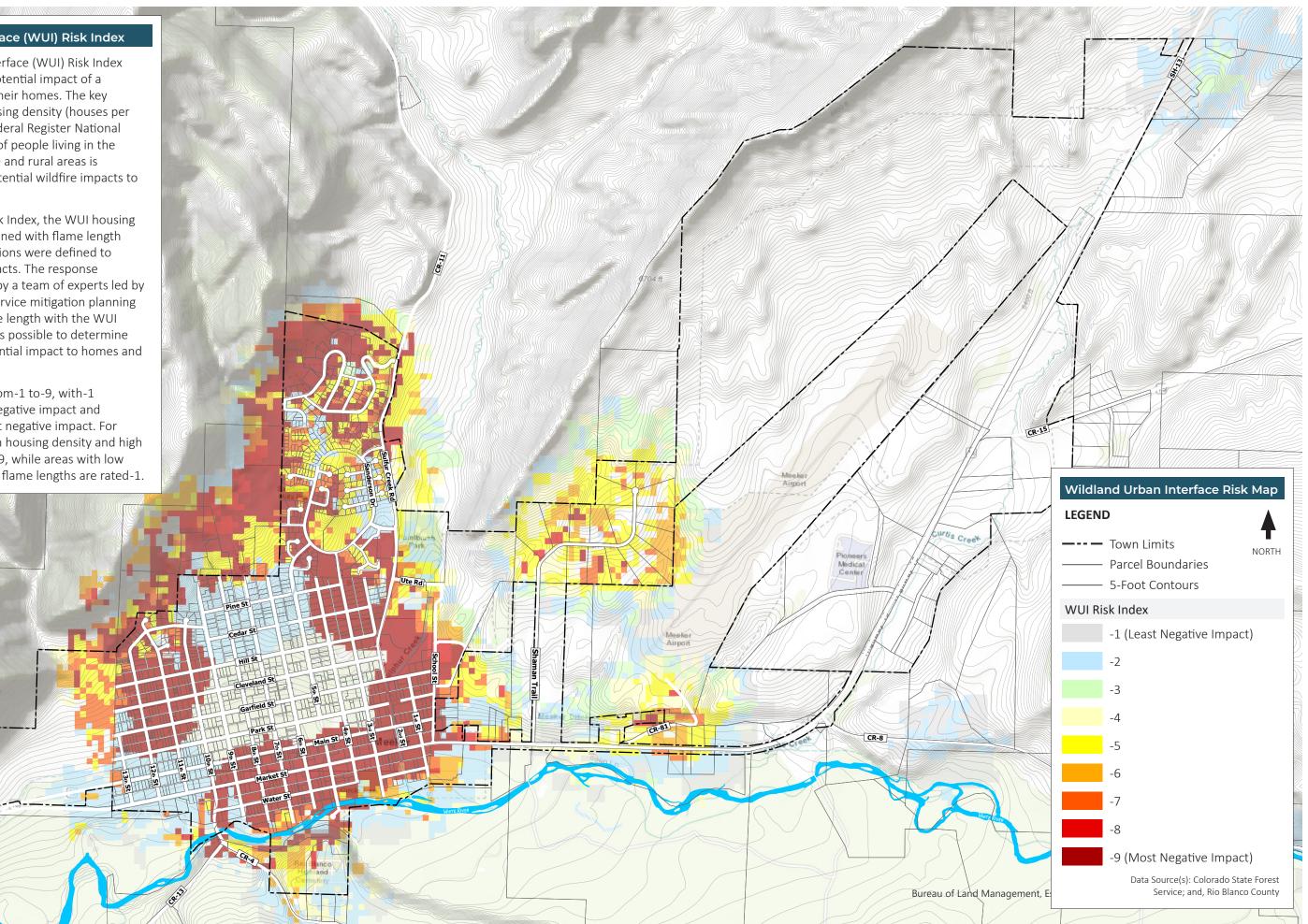
Appendix D: Reference Maps for the Meeker Area | D-7

## Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Risk Index

The Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Risk Index layer is a rating of the potential impact of a wildfire on people and their homes. The key input, WUI, reflects housing density (houses per acre) consistent with Federal Register National standards. The location of people living in the wildland-urban interface and rural areas is essential for defining potential wildfire impacts to people and homes.

To calculate the WUI Risk Index, the WUI housing density data were combined with flame length data and response functions were defined to represent potential impacts. The response functions were defined by a team of experts led by Colorado State Forest Service mitigation planning staff. By combining flame length with the WUI housing density data, it is possible to determine where the greatest potential impact to homes and people is likely to occur.

The range of values is from-1 to-9, with-1 representing the least negative impact and -9 representing the most negative impact. For example, areas with high housing density and high flame lengths are rated-9, while areas with low housing density and low flame lengths are rated-1.



Soil Descriptions Abor Clay Loam 1 (5-30% slopes) 5 Badland Blazon, Moist-Rentsac Complex 10 (8-65% slopes) Borollic Calciorthids-Guben Complex 11 (6-50% slopes) Dollard Silty Clay Loam 30 (8-15% slopes) Dollard Silty Clay Loam 31 (15-40% slopes) 32 Fluvaquents, Frequently Flooded 33 Forelle ILoam (3-8% slopes) 34 Forelle Loam (8-15% slopes) 38 Guben Loam (0-3% slopes) 39 Guben Loam (3-8% slopes) Jerry-Thornburgh-Rhone Complex 45 (8-65% slopes) 47 Kobar Silty Clay Loam (0-3% slopes) Kobar Silty Clay Loam (3-8% slopes) Kobar Silty Clay Loam (8-15% slopes) Mergel-Redthayne-Dollard Complex (8-65% slopes) 60 Patent Loam (0-3% slopes) Patent Loam (3-8% slopes) Patent Loam (8-15% slopes) 63 Patent Loam (15-25% slopes) 71 Redrob Loam

78 Rock Outcrop

79 Shawa Loam (1-3% slopes)

80 Shawa Loam (3-8% slopes)

81 Shawa Loam, Wet (0-5% slopes)

**91** Torriorthents-Rock Outcrop Complex (15-90% slopes)

100 Work Loam (1-3% slopes)

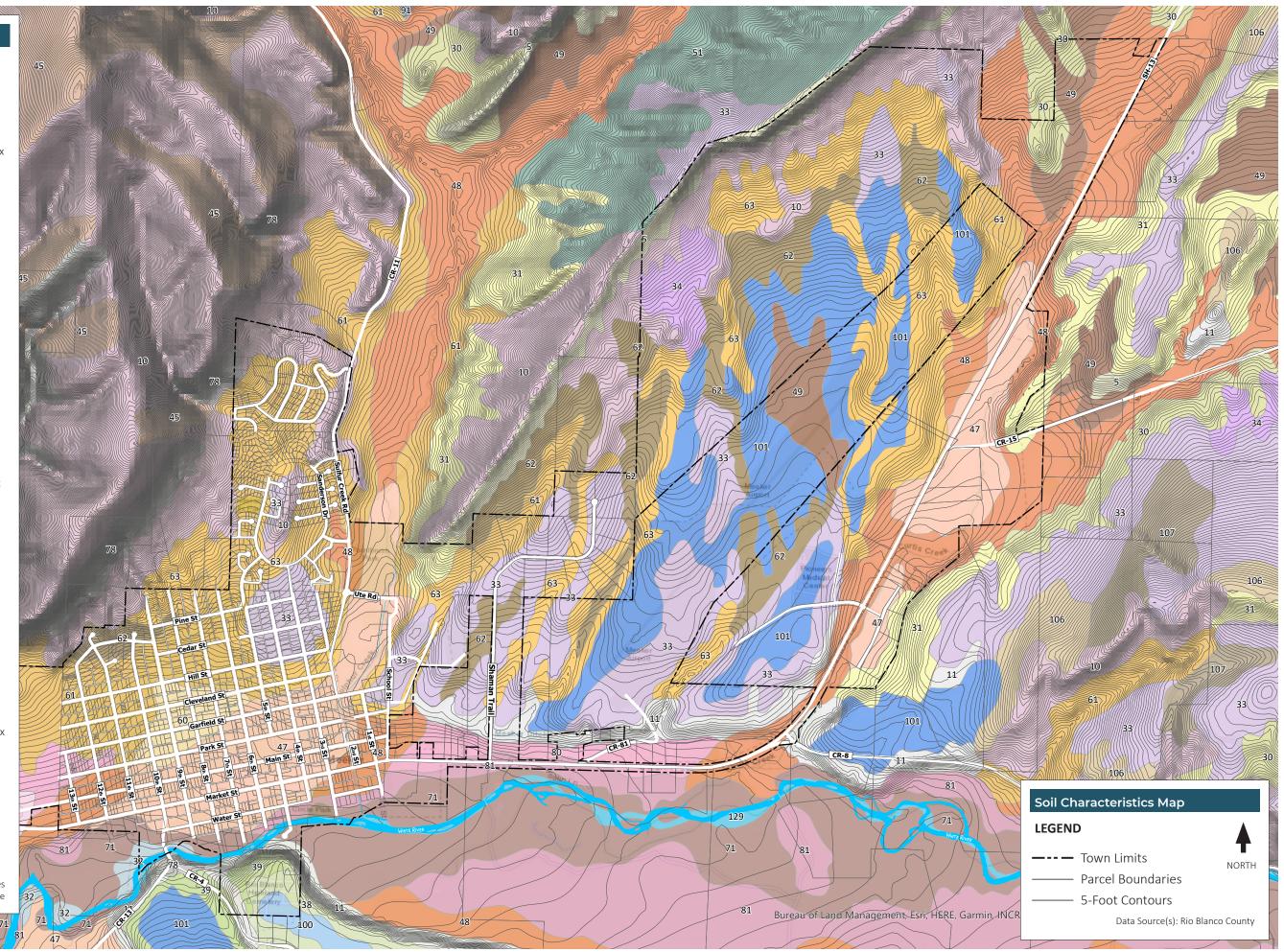
101 Work Loam (3-8% slopes)

**106** Zoltay Clay Loam (3-8% slopes)

107 Zoltay Clay Loam (8-15% slopes)

129 Water

Data Source(s): Natural Resources Conservation Service



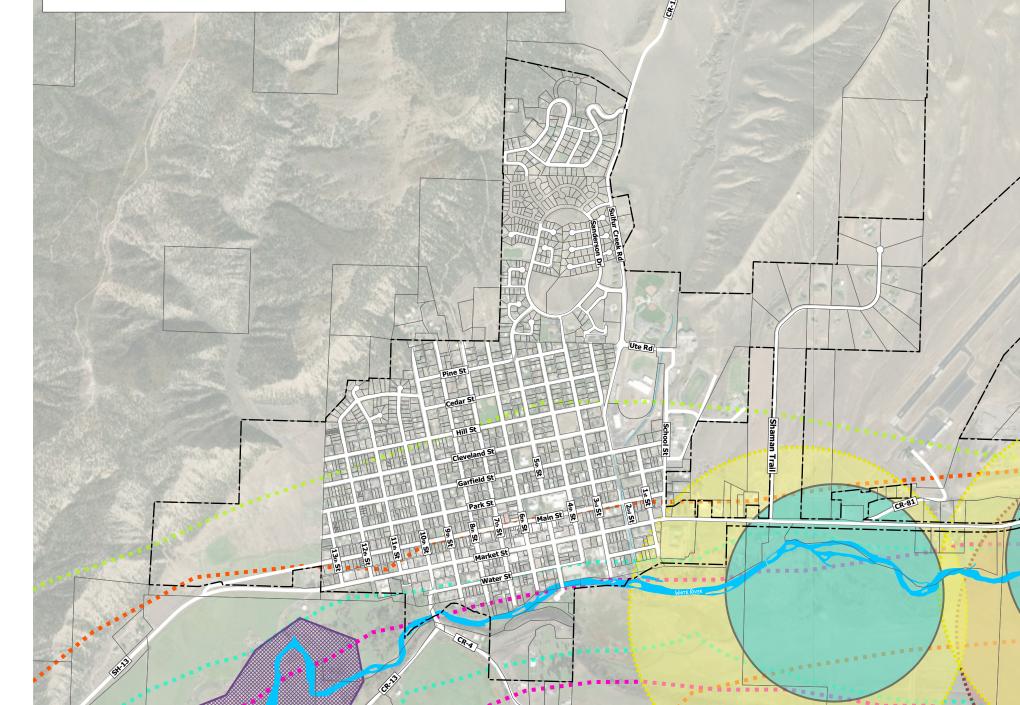
Appendix D: Reference Maps for the Meeker Area | D-9

## High Priority Habitat Descriptions

Bald Eagle Active Nest Sites	Areas showing a 0.25-mile buffer zone or a 0.5-mile buffer zone around specific location(s) in which a pair of Bald Eagles has at least attempted to nest within the last five (5) years. Any nest location that can be directly tied to courtship, breeding, or brooding behavior is considered active.
Bald Eagle Roost Sites	Areas showing a 0.25-mile buffer zone around Bald Eagle (Haliaeetus leucocephalus) roost sites in Colorado. Roost sites are defined as groups of (or individual) trees that provide diurnal and/or nocturnal perches for less than fifteen (15) wintering bald eagles. These trees are usually the tallest available trees in the wintering area and are primarily located in riparian habitats.
Bald Eagle Winter	Areas (trees, islands, etc.) within an existing winter range where Bald Eagles

concentrate between November 15 and March 15. These areas may be **Concentration Area** associated with roost sites.

Data Source(s): Colorado Parks & Wildlife



# Wildlife Map | Birds

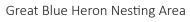
## LEGEND



. . .

**——** Town Limits





Bald Eagle Roost Site

Bald Eagle Nest Site: Active

Bald Eagle Nest Site: In-Active

Bald Eagle Winter Concentration Area

Canada Geese Brood Concentration Area

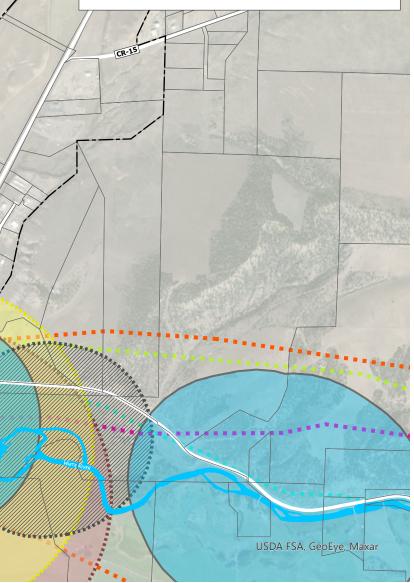
Canada Geese Production Area

••••• Wild Turkey Winter Concentration Area

••••• Wild Turkey Production Area

Data Source(s): Colorado Parks & Wildlife; and, Rio Blanco County

NORTH



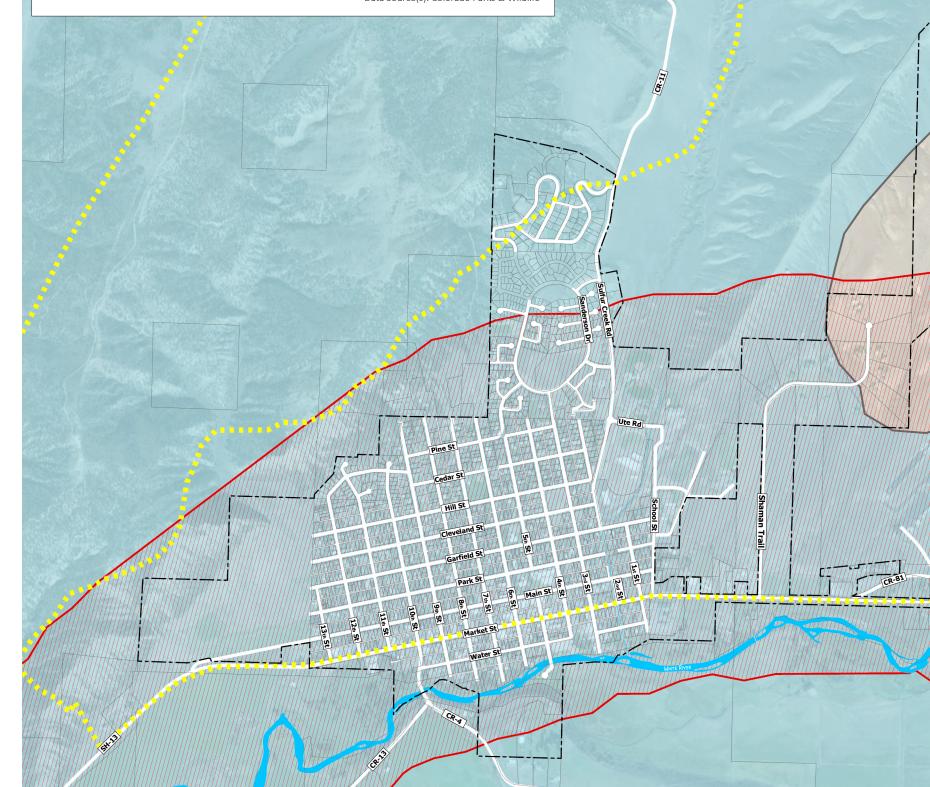
## High Priority Habitat Descriptions

Mule Deer Migration Corridor	A specific mappable site through which large number of animals migrate and loss of which would change migration routes.
Mule Deer Severe Winter Range	Defined as that part of the overall range where 90% of the individuals are located when the annual snowpack is at its maximum and/or temperatures are at a minimum in the two (2) worst winters out of ten (10).
Mule Deer Winter	Defined as that part of the winter range where densities are at least 200%

**Concentration Area** 

Data Source(s): Colorado Parks & Wildlife

greater than the surrounding winter range density during the same period used to define winter range in the average five (5) winters out of ten (10).



Wildlife Map | Mammals

## LEGEND

CR-8

CR-15



**——** Town Limits — Parcel Boundaries



Mountain Lion-Human Conflict Area



Mule Deer Migration Corridor

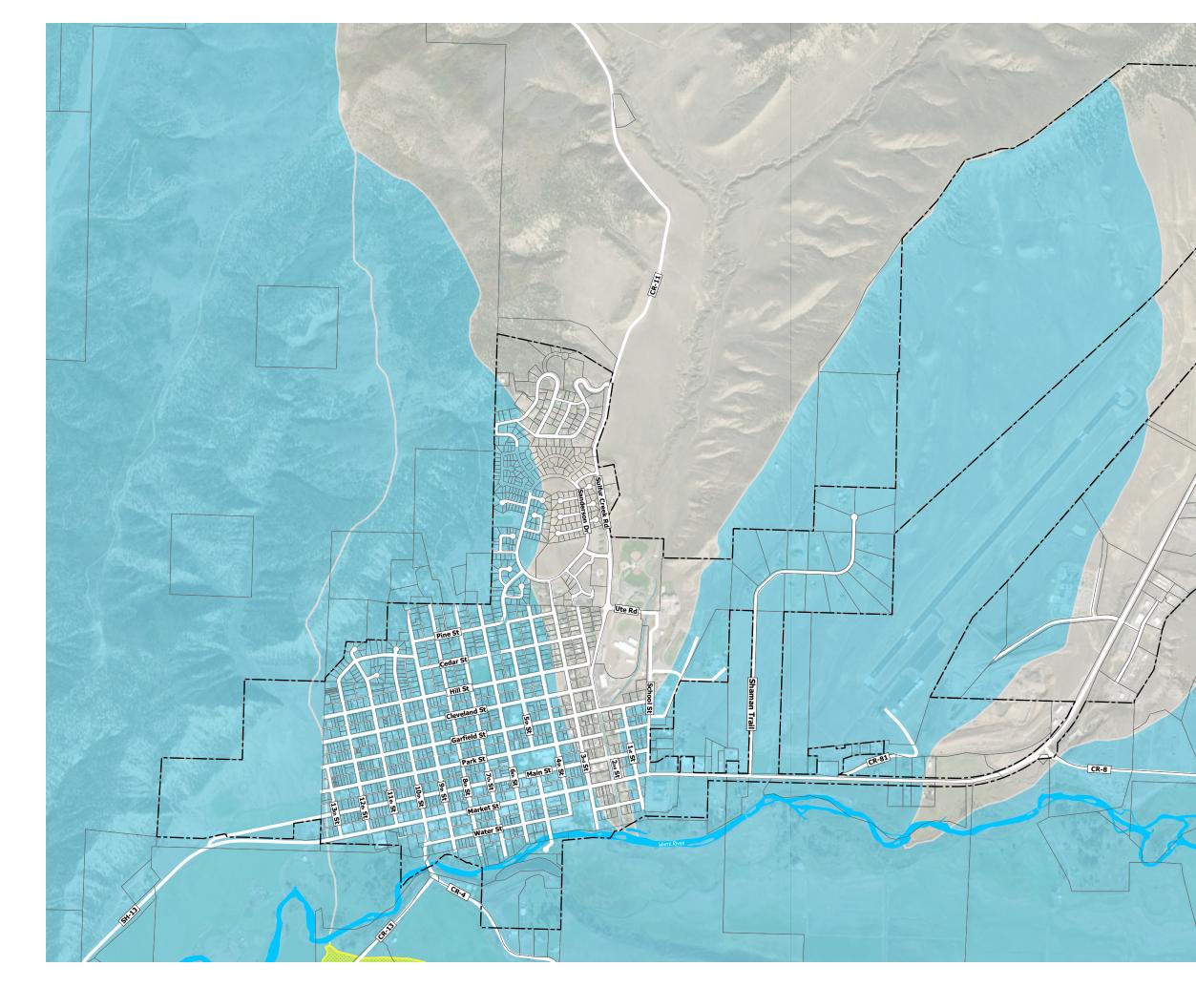
Mule Deer Severe Winter Range

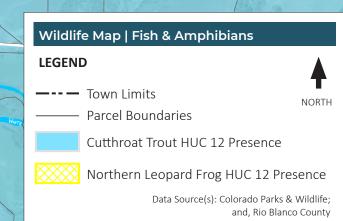
Mule Deer Winter Concentration Area

Data Source(s): Colorado Parks & Wildlife; and, Rio Blanco County

Т

NORTH



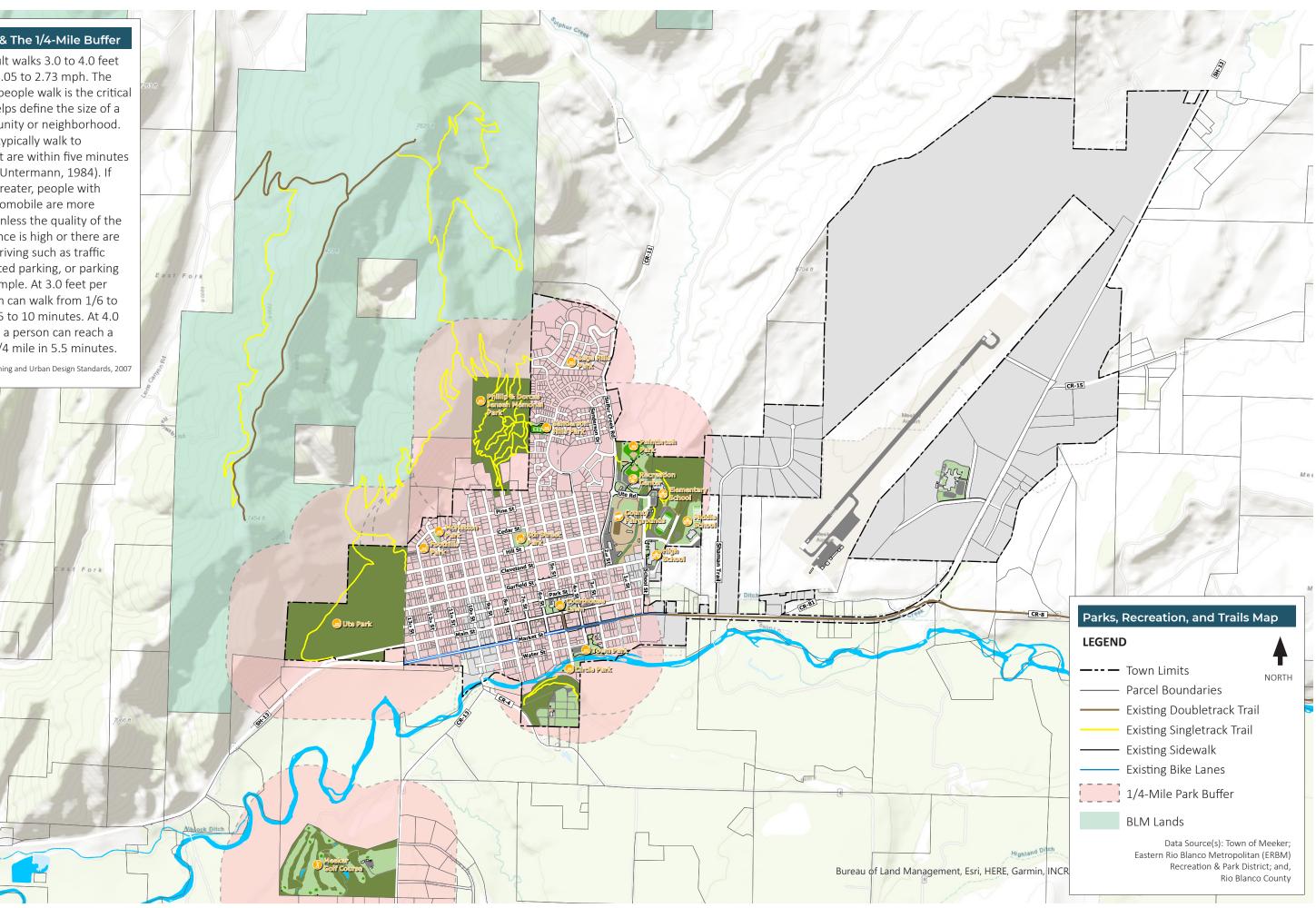


CR-15

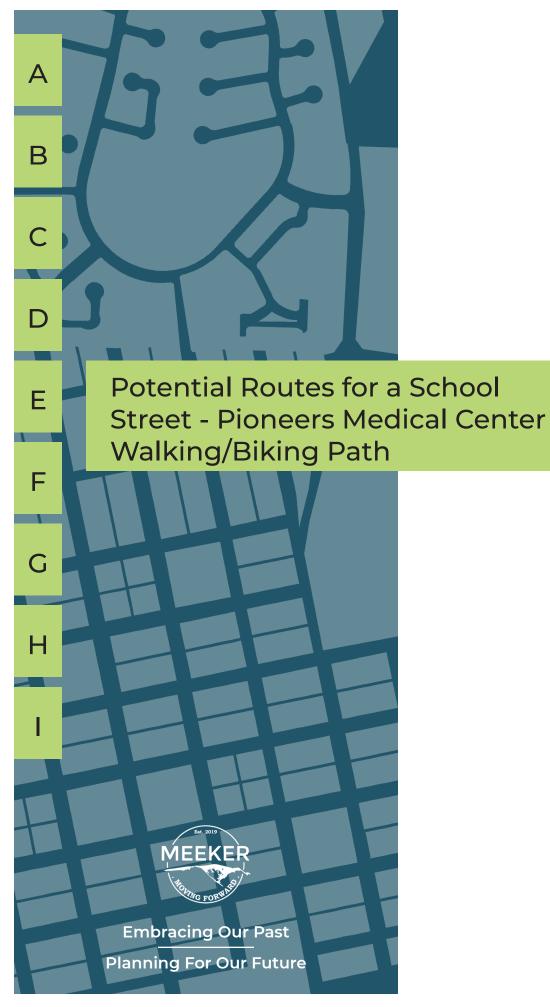
## "Walkability" & The 1/4-Mile Buffer

The average adult walks 3.0 to 4.0 feet per second, or 2.05 to 2.73 mph. The speed at which people walk is the critical measure that helps define the size of a walkable community or neighborhood. Most residents typically walk to destinations that are within five minutes of their homes (Untermann, 1984). If the distance is greater, people with access to an automobile are more likely to use it, unless the quality of the walking experience is high or there are constraints on driving such as traffic congestion, limited parking, or parking charges, for example. At 3.0 feet per second, a person can walk from 1/6 to 1/3 of a mile in 5 to 10 minutes. At 4.0 feet per second, a person can reach a destination of 1/4 mile in 5.5 minutes.

Data Source(s) : Planning and Urban Design Standards, 2007



Appendix D: Reference Maps for the Meeker Area | D-13



# POTENTIAL ROUTE A

NOTES:

 $^{1}\mbox{The design and construction of new and/or enhanced crossings of State Highway 13 will require approval by the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT).$ 

<sup>2</sup>The design and construction of an 8 ft. wide paved path that follows the alignment of the existing Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) trail will need to be coordinated with Rio Blanco County and the CDOT. The portion of the paved path that follows the alignment of the existing OHV trail is intended to remain open to OHVs.

<sup>3</sup>The width of the right-of-way or easement for County Road 81 needs to be clarified to better understand the feasibility of routing the 8 ft. wide paved path along the northside of the road. The design and construction of an 8 ft. wide paved path along the northside of County Road 81 will need to be coordinated with Rio Blanco County.

<sup>4</sup>It is understood that the FAA is against "thru-fence traffic." If possible, the goal would be to route the 8 ft. wide paved path along the eastern boundary of the Meeker Airport property in order to avoid any issues with the airport fence. The design and construction of an 8 ft. wide paved path along the eastern boundary of the Meeker Airport property will need to be coordinated with Rio Blanco County.









# POTENTIAL ROUTE B

## NOTES:

"The design and construction of a 8 ft. wide paved path within the State Highway 13 right-of-way will require approval from the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT). If approved, construction of the bike path will require a permit from CDOT unless implemented via a Local Agency partnership with CDOT. CDOT will require that the bike path be owned and maintained by the Town of Meeker. The bike path could become buried in snow and ice when the westbound lane(s) of State Highway 13 is plowed. Therefore, the design of the bike path will need to address drainage and maintenance. The design of the bike path should also explore options for maximizing separation from State Highway 13 to minimize impacts from highway snow removal.

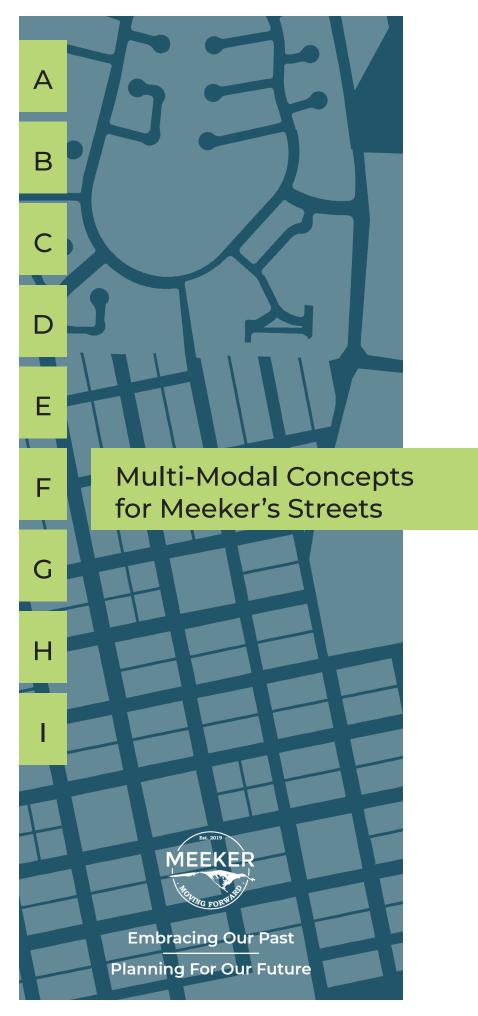
<sup>2</sup>Routing the bike path along the northside of State Highway 13 will result in the path crossing numerous County Road, business, and residential accesses. CDOT will require that each of these crossings to have curb cuts, ADA accessible ramps/ grades, and shared path signage/ pavement markings to reduce conflicts between path users (i.e., cyclists, pedestrians, etc.) and vehicles making turning movements at these highway access points.



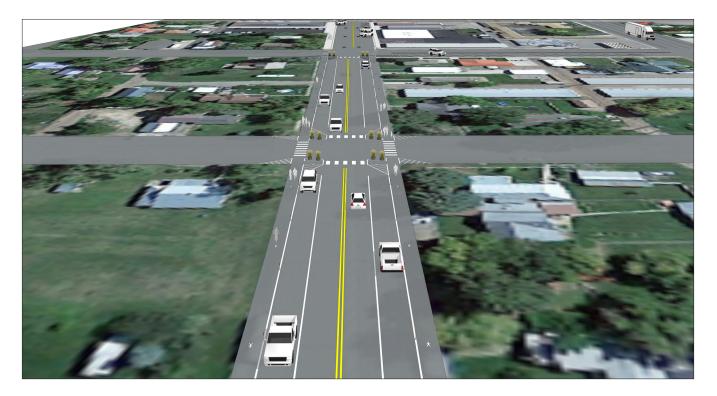


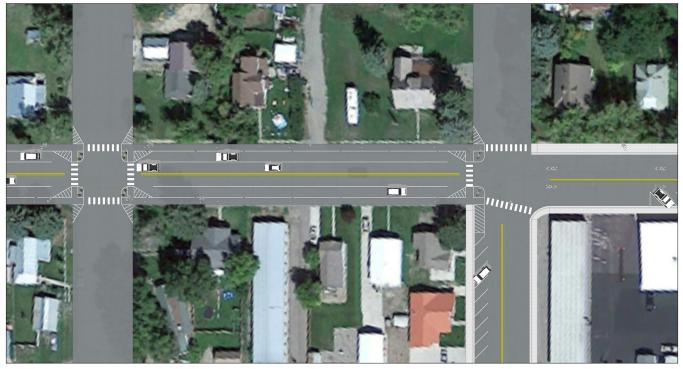


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# MULTI-MODAL CONCEPT FOR STREET WITH 50-FEET OF ASPHALT





### Key Characteristics:

- Street striping and installation of flexible bollards to create 6-foot wide pedestrian/bicycle lanes on both sides of the street.
- Street striping to delineate 9-foot wide parallel, on-street parking lanes on both sides of the street.
- Street striping to create narrower 10-foot wide driving lanes.
- Curb extensions and crosswalks (where they do not exist) painted at street intersections.
- Removable features (e.g., planters) placed at intersections to enhance the aesthetics of the street corridor.

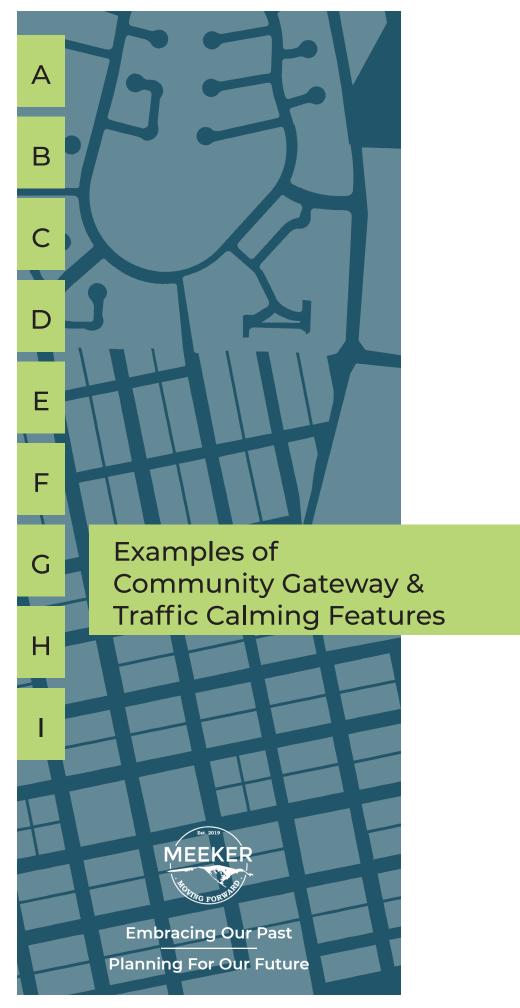
# MULTI-MODAL CONCEPT FOR STREET WITH 40-FEET OF ASPHALT



### Key Characteristics:

- Street striping and installation of flexible bollards to create a 6-foot wide pedestrian/bicycle lane along one side of the street.
- Street striping to delineate 7-foot wide parallel, on-street parking lanes on both sides of the street.
- Street striping to create narrower 10-foot wide driving lanes.
- Curb extensions and crosswalks (where they do not exist) painted at street intersections.
- Removable features (e.g., planters) placed at intersections to enhance the aesthetics of the street corridor.

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# COMMUNITY GATEWAY EXAMPLES

#### Raised Landscaped Medians with Gateway Signage | US Highway 40 (US-40)

The Town of Winter Park, Colorado obtained permission from the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to construct landscaped medians on US-40 as part of their efforts to establish community gateways at the southern and northern edges of town.

A concern that is often raised when exploring the feasibility of highway medians is the potential impact that they could have on snow plowing operations. According to bestplaces.net, Winter Park receives, on average, 187-inches of snow per year. Therefore, it can be inferred that it is possible to design and construct landscaped highway medians in snowy environments without hindering snow plowing operations.



#### Community Message Board & Stone Monuments | US Highway 6 (US-6)

The Town of Dillon, Colorado has installed an electronic message board and stone monuments along US-6. The Town of Dillon uses this message board to share community news, information about local events, etc.

Discussions about a similar type of sign along Market Street (SH-13) were had during the Meeker Moving Forward process. Additionally, stone monuments along SH-13 and Main Street have been suggested as a way to enhance Meeker's existing gateway features.

If the Town of Meeker chooses to pursue a community message board and/or stone monuments, it is recommended that the Town of Dillon be contacted to understand the process they went through construct these features.



#### Solar Street Lights | Colorado State Highway 9 (SH-9)

The Town of Alma, Colorado worked with CDOT to install solar powered, dark-sky compliant street lights as part of the town's effort to enhance their Main Street (i.e., SH-9).

Solar street lights offer a number of benefits, including:

- 1. Capable of being installed in locations without access to wiring/electricity.
- 2. Reduce the amount of electricity consumed by a municipality.
- 3. Offer an opportunity to showcase a community's sustainability efforts.

If the Town of Meeker opts to pursue solar powered street lighting along Market Street, it is recommended that the Town of Alma be contacted to understand their experience with CDOT and with this type of lighting.



# TRAFFIC CALMING EXAMPLES

#### Mid-Block Crossings & Rapid Flashing Beacons | Colorado State Highway 24 (SH-24)

CDOT and the Town of Buena Vista, Colorado recently installed safety improvements on SH-24. These safety improvements included mid-block crossings and Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB). The benefits of these improvements include:

- 1. The mid-block crossing offers a safe refuge for pedestrians and bicyclists crossing SH-24. This especially important for children and seniors who may not be able to cross the full width of the highway very quickly.
- 2. RRFB's can significantly increase drivers yielding to pedestrians and bicyclists crossing the highway at designated locations.
- 3. The unique nature of the RRFB's stutter flash helps to elicit greater response from drivers.



#### Curb Extensions (aka Bulb-Outs) | Colorado State Highway 6 (SH-6)

The Town of Silt, Colorado obtained permission from CDOT to construct curb extensions along SH-6. It can be assumed that these curb extensions were installed in an effort to improve the safety of SH-6 in Silt's downtown. The safety benefits of curb extensions include:

- 1. Narrowing the perceived width of the street, which can help to reduce traffic speeds.
- 2. Shortening the crossing distance for pedestrians. This is especially important for young children, elderly, and the disabled who may need more time to cross a street.
- Improving sight lines at intersections by enabling motorists to see pedestrians at street crossings and pedestrians to see approaching vehicles.



#### Curb Extensions, Raised Medians, and Pedestrian Refuge Islands | US Highway 40 (US-40)

In an effort to improve highway crossing safety, slow traffic speeds, and enhance the downtown area, the Town of Fraser recently worked with CDOT to install raised landscaped medians, curb extensions, and pedestrian refuge islands along a portion of US-40.

The combination of curb extensions and raised medians work to reduce the perceived width of US-40, which in turn helps to slow the speed of vehicles along this section of highway. Moreover, landscaping in the medians works to enhance the aesthetics of US-40 in Fraser's downtown.

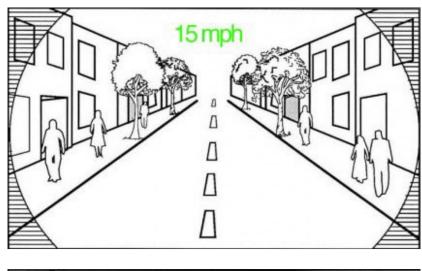
In addition, the combination of curb extensions and pedestrian refuge islands, at select intersections, facilitates safer and more convenient crossing of the highway by pedestrians, bicyclists, etc.

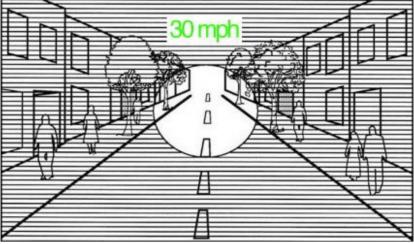


Street design, especially in downtown settings, is essential to slowing traffic speeds and creating an environment where people feel safe and comfortable walking and biking. While speed limits and enforcement can be effective tools, they are, for the most part, band-aids for poorly designed streets. Drivers often go the speed that a street is designed for, despite the speed limit.

The diagrams on the right depict a driver's "cone of vision," which varies based on the speed they are traveling. At 15 mph, a driver has broader awareness, whereas at 30 mph their "cone of vision" narrows drastically. Furthermore, the severity of injuries resulting from a crash between a pedestrian and vehicle increases with the speed that the vehicle is traveling (refer to the table below for additional information).

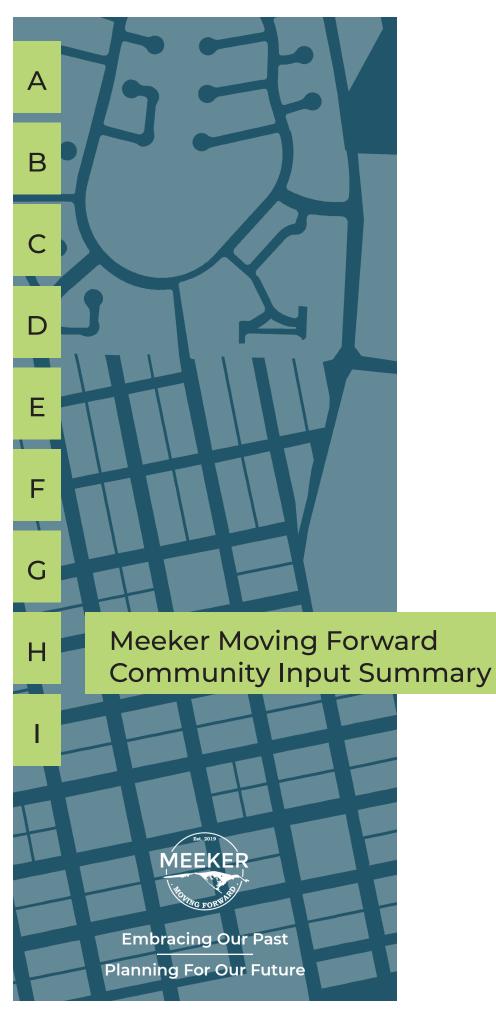
Properly designed streets (i.e., streets designed for slower speeds) are essential to creating a downtown that is safe and comfortable for pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles.





Chance that the pedestrian...

		Is Uninjured	ls Injured	Dies
Vehicle	20 mph	30%	65%	5%
Speed	30 mph	5%	50%	45%



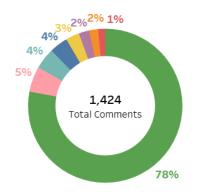
# Where Did the Values, Vision, Goals, Policies, and Actions Come From?

The Meeker Moving Forward outreach and engagement efforts resulted in a large body of input/data from the community. Comments offered via various online surveys, the Meeker Community Survey, youth surveys, Pop-Up events at the Farmer's Market, Rio Blanco County Fair, and Fall Fest, community meetings, and focus group sessions were carefully recorded and analyzed by Western Slope Consulting and RRC Associates. The analysis of these comments helped to better understand local opinions and ideas. The analysis was also used in crafting the Values, Vision, Goals, Policies, and Actions for Meeker's Community Master Plan.

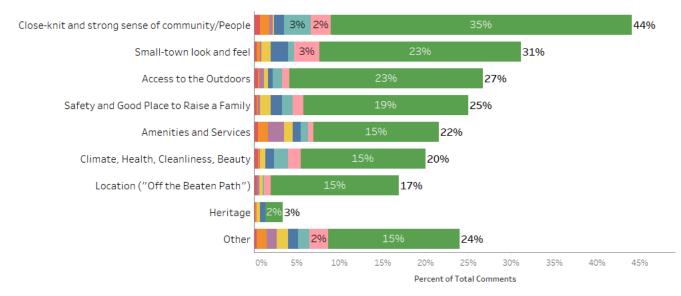
# 

### **Community Values & Vision for Meeker**

During Phase I of the Meeker Moving Forward process, community members were asked to offer their input on what they like/love/cherish about living in Meeker. Community responses to this question were gathered via a number of different venues, the breakdown of which is illustrated in the following figure:



The purpose of gathering this input was to try and understand/identify the community's values. In other words, what the community's core beliefs/principles are. This is important as community values provide the foundation for Meeker's vision, shape Meeker's culture and reflect what the community cares most about. In analyzing the responses to this question, Western Slope Consulting and RRC Associates worked to identify themes that they believed captured the essence of the comments, which in turn enabled the comments to be categorized. A breakdown of the themes identified and the number of comments citing each theme can be found in the following figure:



#### What Do You Like/Love about Meeker: Common Themes

Data Source(s): RRC Associates

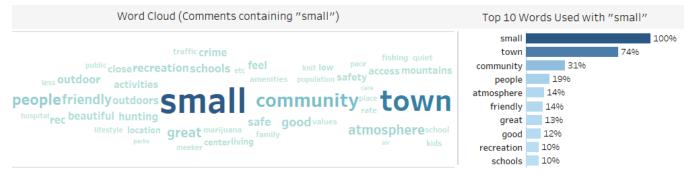
The Meeker Community Survey collected 1,134 open-ended comments in response to the question "List the TOP (3) THREE things that you like/love about living in Meeker." Western Slope Consulting and RRC Associates further probed these comments in order to better understand the key words commonly used to describe what respondents "like/love" about living in Meeker. The results of this analysis found that 32% of the 1,134 comments used the word "small" when describing things what people "like/love" about living in Meeker. This was followed by the words "town (30%)," "community (29%)," "people (27%)," "friendly (15%)," "outdoors (13%)," and, "safe (10%)". As shown on the following pages, the consultant team then examined other words used in conjunction with some of these key words (ex. "small"). This analysis enabled Western Slope Consulting and RRC Associates to analyze the key words in the context of the comment/phrase they were used in.



Words are sized by the percent of comments that used a particular word.

#### "SMALL": Small-town Atmosphere/Feel

(Key words: small town, small community, small population, small schools)



Words are sized by the percent of comments that used a particular word.

#### Sample Responses with the word "SMALL"

- "Meeker's small town, laid back, close knit, caring values and atmosphere."
- "Small friendly community."
- "Small town character/atmosphere"
- "Small town livability with great infrastructure (schools, hospital, parks, roads, broadband, etc.)."
- "Small town, everyone is familiar."
- "Small town safety."
- "I like the **small** town."
- "Small community with great people."

#### "COMMUNITY": Sense of Community

(Key words: community events, community involvement, community support, friendly community)



Words are sized by the percent of comments that used a particular word.

#### Sample Responses with the word "COMMUNITY"

- "Everyone makes you feel like you are part of the **community**."
- "Tight community."
- "Friendly community."
- "The help from the **community** when needed."
- "Knowing your neighbors/friendly involved community."
- "Strong sense of community."
- "People/community."
- "Community involvement in activities."

### "PEOPLE": Friendly People; Not too Many People

(Key words: good people, know lots of people)



Words are sized by the percent of comments that used a particular word.

#### Sample Responses with the word "PEOPLE"

- "Friendly people."
- "Good **people** and rural life."
- "The **people** everybody is friendly and kind and I feel safe at night."
- "The community as a whole- people are always willing to help."
- "Small town good people."
- "People with similar values."
- "Usually the **people** are very respectful and friendly."
- "Meeker's quaint, quiet, lack of hustle and bustle, knowing most **people**, kids are open and polite."

#### "SAFE/SAFETY": Safe Community

(Key words: safe town, safe place, safe place to raise kids, low crime)

#### Word Cloud (Comments containing "safe") Top 10 Words Used with "safe" safe 100% 48% community mountains kids easy countryside 38% open rec surrounding recreation town outdoorgreat live raise lifestyle people 3396 small friendly traffic Sa place 2396 small place access community friendly 2396 clean drugs mee family opportunities time activities population feel people 15% caring center quiet children 15% town feel 13% access family 13%

Words are sized by the percent of comments that used a particular word.

#### Sample Responses with the word "SAFE"

- "Safe place to let kids play."
- "Feeling of 'safety' you're secure."
- "Great, safe place to raise kids."
- "Small safe town where people care."

- "The **safety** the town provides."
- "Safety/secure place to live."
- "The safety and security of knowing your neighbors."
- "Safe, low crime, great law enforcement."

#### "OUTDOORS": Access to Outdoor Recreation

(Key words: outdoor activities, outdoor access, outdoor living, outdoor opportunities, outdoor recreation)



Words are sized by the percent of comments that used a particular word.

#### Sample Responses with the word "OUTDOORS"

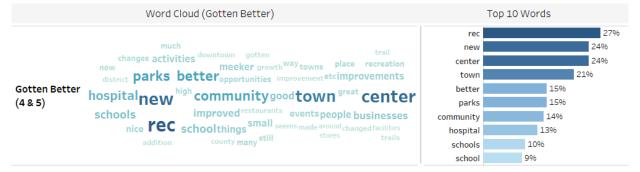
- "Tons of opportunity for **outdoor** recreation."
- "The location- mountains, **outdoor** life."
- "Easy/close accessibility to **outdoor** activities."
- "Proximity to National Forest and other **outdoor** features."
- "The area and proximity to **outdoor** activities."
- "Outdoor activities. Fishing, 4-wheeling, hiking, etc."
- "Rural environment with associated **outdoor** activities and opportunities."
- "Proximity to great **outdoor** experiences."

While the analysis of comments to support the development of the Values and Vision was the deepest analysis performed, a similar analysis was conducted for open-ended responses to the question from the Meeker Community Survey asking "Why Meeker has gotten better or worse over time?" The survey collected 329 open-ended comments in response to this question: 143 comments from people who said Meeker has gotten better; 99 comments from people who said it has stayed the same; and, 71 comments from people who said it has gotten worse. The analysis of these comments was used to better understand themes related to what people think has made Meeker a better or worse to live. This in turn supported the draft vision and goals. In other words, the vision and goals work to maintain the things that are making Meeker better and work to address the things that have made Meeker worse.

How has Meeker changed as a place to live since you've lived	In a few words, why do you say that?						
here?	Word Cloud:	Top 10 Words					
Gotten Better (4 & 5) (143 comments)	towns changed good recreation gotten etc improved opportunities stores schools events place activities made changes hospital trails new businesses better community things county town high people center district trail rec parks great school downtown growth meker much restaurants improvements small nice improvement addition seems	rec new center town better parks community	27% 24% 21% 15% 15% 15% 14%				
3 - Stayed the Same (99 comments)	nice oldlive <b>New</b> businesses love downtown noticed little shopping rec lost business community growth change year changes changed us still place just meeker seen years 3.1 nothing people much since havent townmoved hasnt long less major bettergetten dont	new changed meeker nothing growth town change	15% 13% 12% 12% 11% 10% 10%				
Gotten Worse (1 & 2) (71 comments)	days stillsmall new county moved etc home district changed business even stores much fewer good like need community meeker many recreation residents businesses school town grocery 3 people kids government places work jobs now fun	businesses less town people many stores work	27% 24% 23% 20% 17% 11% 11%				

Words are sized by the percent of comments that used a particular word.

#### How Has Meeker Gotten Better?



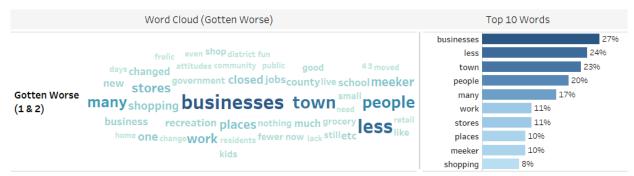
Words are sized by the percent of comments that used a particular word.

#### Sample Responses for How Meeker Has Gotten Better

- "There has been lots of money invested in the community with schools, county buildings, infrastructure, and roads to name a few. That were much needed."
- "Rec. Center was a huge improvement as well as the new parks and community involvement and activities."
- "Addition of the Rec. center and their community programs. The new town center and the ability to hold community events there."
- "More opportunities for youth, booming health care."
- "Rec. district continues to improve, more small businesses opening up creating a better quality of life."
- "The rec. district and the addition of the myriad of activities have made it better. There is always room for improvement."

Respondents cited new and improved infrastructure as a primary reason for Meeker having improved. The Recreation District/Center, hospital, parks, schools, Justice Center, jail, and broadband internet were commonly mentioned.

#### How Has Meeker Gotten Worse?



Words are sized by the percent of comments that used a particular word.

#### Sample Responses for How Meeker Has Gotten Worse

- "Businesses are closing. Dining options are dwindling. Work opportunities are drying up."
- "More places are shutting down. Everyone jacks up the prices for hunters but forget it is the town that supports them year around. Less events happening. No longer see patrols on highway 13 and have been run off the road multiple times. Not many people my age here."
- "Fewer places to eat. Less higher paying jobs. Feels like we are going away."

- "Fewer businesses and people."
- "Shopping is a problem. Everyone say's 'shop at home' but then provides little to shop for. Not enough competition in the stores either."
- "When people worked 5 days per week they didn't 'run' out on Meeker for 3 days of fun and frolic, along with shopping, etc. They had more commitment to the community."

Among those who said that Meeker has gotten worse, a decline in the local economy and a decrease in the number of local businesses were the most cited reasons, accounting for roughly half of these comments.

### Goals, Policies, and Actions

To kick-off Phase II of Meeker Moving Forward, Western Slope Consulting, LLC worked with the MMF Committee to develop a draft vision and goals for the Community Master Plan. The committee's efforts were rooted in the input from the community collected via various online surveys, the Meeker Community Survey, youth surveys, Pop-Up events, community meetings, and focus group sessions. This helped to ensure that the draft vision and goals reflected the community's aspirations for Meeker. Offered below is the verbatim input that the MMF Committee offered for crafting the draft vision and goals for the Plan:

#### Components of the Vision for Meeker

- Clean vibrant downtown.
- All of Meeker's infrastructure is connected via multi-modal forms of transportation.
- Meeker has a brewery or other social establishments.
- Tennis courts!!!
- Meeker is a safe place for kids to bike and walk.
- A place kids want to come back to.
- Safe place to raise a family.
- Meeker is a wonderful place to have and raise a family. Meeker has a good school system.
- Small town.

- Meeker is a peaceful, fine & clean community!
- Meeker is a claim, healthy and still beautiful community.
- Meeker is a great place to visit & relax & get out of the rat race!
- Small town look and feel. Laid-back.
- Meeker is a place to see our Ag still at work.
- Off the beaten path.
- A great place to live-raise family, love small town, caring, safe, live.
- The great lifestyle- of the industries that have made us what we are.
- A self-sustainable community.

#### Components of the Vision for Meeker (continued)

- Our unique feeling of small hometown.
- Meeker has not lost any population.
- We value our community amenities. College & community are connected with powerful partnerships that keep & attract learners of all ages, but especially 18-35 year olds.
- Businesses in Meeker flourishing, no vacancies.
- Keep it clean & safe for our children.
- Meeker is a happy clean town is able to take care of its folks (rec district, fire/EMS, hospital, learning and raising children).
- Still a small close-knit community with successful small locally owned businesses.
- Vibrant downtown with viable economic drivers (stores, people, etc.).
- Economically stable community with diverse variables for employment opportunities.
- Meeker has provided business owners to achieve a comfortable living all while being- remaining "small".
- Still small community but with an increased population base of say 200-300 more residents.
- Community support of local businesses.
- A place for young families thrive alongside an aging population that has housing to accommodate them.
- Meeker is a hidden gem not all know about.

- Juicy Lucy's north! What a great use of the historic Hugus building.
- Meeker's future is rooted in its old West heritage culture/ parents. Emphasize appeal to domestic and international tourism.
- A Hallmark movie, small town community.
- Meeker is a vibrant livable community within our expansive natural world.
- I love to float the river! So glad we have a new outfitter providing that service.
- People live here for what we currently have.
- We value newcomers and welcome new ideas.
- You can have it all in Meeker.
- They like the safety, peace and quite, small town.
- We value our water resources and will protect the White River for future generations to enjoy.
- You don't have to compromise small-town community for big-city convenience.
- A 3-5% increase in population.
- Meeker is a small community with high quality amenities.
- We value our access to outdoors & local recreational opportunities. People are drawn to the area where everyone can play.

#### **Ideas for Arts & Culture Goals**

- Arts & culture, public art.
- Meeker has more music & theater productions year-round for all ages.
- Concerts for younger people.
- Meeker community concerts performing arts, cowboy poets.
- Bench trail.
- Trailing the sheep.
- International cultural exchange e.g., Mongolian rodeo & music (throat singers, horse head fiddle players).
- Downtown art district expanded with more sculptures and outside paintings.
- Expand CNCC or some other form of higher education opportunities that include the fine arts.
- Develop opportunities to visit historical sites- tours: cowboy, Indian, public lands- private lands.

- Acting & arts camps during summer.
- Continue bringing in different forms of entertainment music, dance, other cultural experiences.
- Play to our strengths e.g., Ag/wildlife/tourism/hunting.
- Develop all kinds of "art"/bring to Meeker cowboy & other poets, local art placed around town, concerts, photo competitions, etc.
- Continue to work with the history of the county
- Meeker supports a robust school arts program that nurtures diverse culinary, visual and preforming art skills.
- Meeker supports a vibrant and diversified community of artists.
- Meeker attracts and supports practitioners in the healing arts.
- Meeker does not default to cows and cowboys on anything and everything we do arts and culture-wise.

#### **Ideas for Available Services Goals**

- Daycare.
- Youth programs, teen/youth entertainment.
- Higher education.
- Trade schools.
- Create opportunities for connected services e.g., those that bring people & resources together.
- UPS/FedEx.
- Drycleaners, stores: basics (shoes), food.

- We have great programs for youth, and seniors currently.
- Meeker is a walkable community with safe pedestrian access for in-town basic needs such as banks, dentists, drug stores and healthy food.
- Meeker offers a full-service day care for working parents.
- Our medical and veterinary service along with food needs are good
- Meeker is a community where the public supports policies that care for the needs of all ages, incomes and abilities.
- Meeker's snow plow drivers don't act like they're in a NASCAR race.

#### **Ideas for Collaboration & Civic Involvement Goals**

- Collaboration consolidation of communities & agencies.
- Civic- increase in #of active people. Fewer meetings. More engagement opportunities e.g., streaming meetings. Crowdsourcing social.
- Respect from town people for private land owners to understand 4000 acres on the river is the landowners back yard.
- Meeker is a community that "knows no stranger" and adopts new ideas that enhance the quality of life for all and not a select demographic.

#### Ideas for Community Appearance/Aesthetics Goals

- Fill now empty buildings with viable businesses.
- Improve the appearance of Market Street.
- Murals, etc.
- Keep the old hometown look.
- Keep a claim town with what we have.
- Modernizing the codes.
- Fix up hotel.
- Fix mural.
- Spruce up downtown buildings.
- Focus on Highway 13 entrances, clean it up.

- Meeker doesn't have fifteen different agencies doing the exact same thing because they can't figure out how to put aside the "we can do it better than they can" mentality.
- Need to share equipment between towns and county.
- Meeker is a community that takes the long view and understands that what was isn't and what is wont be.
- Meeker does a better job of breaking down social barriers so collaboration can occur between different social groups.
- Clearly created, defined, and enforced municipal code.
- Town is clean, no trash, clean river but still has small town feel.
- Our community appearance is wonderful. People comment all the time how nice it is to have a clean town with no legal pot shops and they love that we do not look like all other small towns. Keep our history!!!!!!
- Meeker is a clean community with few code violations and tidy streets.
- Market Street makes people want to stay, not drive through as fast as they possibly can on the way to a ski resort.
- Keep marijuana shops out and we will keep the beautiful appearance we have.
- Meeker is a community with great gathering places that bring people together to mix and mingle.
- Meeker grows enough as a community to move away from putting cowboys on everything as "art". If we're going to be "Western", let's at least make it aesthetically pleasing.
- Market Street has a better appearance & cleaner.

#### Ideas for Growth, Planning & Design Goals

- Better connectivity on roads i.e., link Sage Hills & Sanderson. One way in/out.
- Simplify regulations to courage new development.
- Maintain current level of available services & infrastructure & utilities.
- Develop connections between in town and out of town via walking/biking pathways e.g., hospital- requires easements. Connectivity.
- Market maker! We have much to sell. Hire economic development staffer.
- Develop connections between Main Street, market Street & River.
- Develop more age friendly community including services, housing, activities.
- Code enforcement. Updated, focus? Results.
- Focus on Ute Park as location for a yet unknown catalystgrowth.
- Catalyst for growth- college.

- Encourage infill e.g., downtown, residential.
- Smart small growth that provide jobs in something other than retail.
- Meeker is a community that strives to grow in-ward before taking more green spaces on the outer edges (sprawl) of the community.
- Meeker supports small businesses more than gargantuan government entities.
- The assisted living prior to full on care is a wonderful idea for some developer to build.
- Meeker is a community that has absorbed and improved empty residential structures while incentivising adaptive reuse of our large commercial structures.
- Meeker diversifies enough economically that 70% of our population doesn't have to work for a government agency just to get a decent wage AND enough that we're not completely dependent on oil and gas or extraction.
- Publicity stunts.
- Attracting location neutral businesses & families.

#### **Ideas for Housing Goals**

- Group-senior housing. Boomers #. Similar to Fairfield Center. Walbridge Wing.
- Independent living community complex near PMC, developer initiate.
- Expansion of Walbridge- independent common maintenance, assisted- next level, full nursing.
- Revise existing housing inventory.
- Age in-place center, patio homes & assisted living.
- Improve short-term housing options.

- Meeker offers affordable housing that isn't falling apart at the seams.
- There may be a small amount of older people who want the homes you were talking about but most would rather live in an semi assisted living
- Meeker creates a livable community utilizing public/private partnerships (3Ps) and removes barriers for redevelopment of obsolete commercial and residential structures.
- Meeker addresses some of the terrible conditions of homes and apartments in town and ensures the safety of residents who live there.
- Homes are affordable, people need to realize you can not have a castle for your first home. We do not need more low income people who do not want to work live in the county.
- Meeker is a community with pocket neighborhood developments that are walkable to basic services.

#### Ideas for Infrastructure & Utility Goals

- Warehousing, storage, logistics.
- Keep up with technology for existing utilities.
- Protect high quality water, air, affordability of energy.
- Meeker is a connected small town with safe walking and biking routes that allow citizens to access amenities without driving a vehicle.
- Meeker promotes their broadband capabilities in numerous ways.
- Meeker is a community with relatively little visual pollution of overhead wires and non dark sky compliant street lighting.

#### Ideas for Infrastructure & Utility Goals (continued)

- Rest area on market Street with dog park. Pedestrian flyway e.g., Bridge over Market Street.
- This is a question for our electric and town people. It does appear we spend money things like a company like you all and should possible be spending it on infrastructure repairs.

#### **Ideas for Local Economy Goals**

- Collaborative Learning Center for enrichment & workforce training.
- Local economy- no empty storefronts, influx of location neutral residents.
- Meeker has job opportunities for high school & college age people.
- Opportunities for vocational education.
- Sales tax to sustainable base.
- Businesses have what they need to expand market share outside of the town.
- Meeker has a production facility that provides sustainable product for Amazon.
- Vocational training to support local economy.
- A variety of stores.
- Add daycare.

#### **Ideas for Natural Environment Goals**

- We have it. Maintain it. Steward it. Engage with the Feds/ State/seat at the table.
- Concerns OHV overly aggressive with wildlife, sheep, cattle.
- Work closely with Forest Service & BLM to keep recreation under control to save wildlife & Ag & CPW.
- We have a good balance of wildlife, livestock and recreation on the public lands. A lot of money and effort has gone into promoting recreation and we do not need more.
- River preservation.

• Meeker ensures the town's water is safe and clean and the water treatment plant is consistently doing a good job.

- Actively pursue new business ventures.
- Trade schools & apprenticeships.
- Need businesses that export goods out of Meeker.
- Trade school could help housing, students build houses.
- No one will be able to compete with the 4 day work and school week the county and towns have made. People use to say home.
- Meeker supports the "maker" economy with a Made In Meeker program that creates an economic gardening program allowing local residents to grow and prosper in an otherwise weak sales environment.
- Meeker unchains itself and its economy from oil and gas.
- We are blessed to have a great grocery, livestock feed/ clothing store, the dollar store and wonderful gift shops along with two great parts houses. However you are not going to compete with Amazon or other on line shopping so maybe we should focus on an industry that will work with what we currently have and not more recreation.
- Meeker curates public/private partnership opportunities to enhance a value-added strategy for local ranching interests.
- Meeker provides tourism opportunities with a unique flavor, things you can't find anywhere else, events that are run with excellence and are not just sad excuses to spend money on washed-up country singers and getting day drunk with your buddies.
- Meeker encourages infill development and public access to open lands.
- Support environmental protections over subsidies for billion dollar oil and gas companies.
- The OHV are tearing up our public lands. they have a right to be there but we sure do not need more of them
- Meeker supports a "fire-wise" program that educates residents and assists in the removal of excessive fuel for fires near residential structures.
- Wildlife management preservation.

#### Ideas for Natural Environment Goals (continued)

• Maintain the untarnished feel of the wilderness surrounding us. If managed effectively, I think this is possible, but we don't want a Hanging Lake-type situation on our hands. Responsible growth.

#### Ideas for Parks, Open Space, Recreation, and Trails Goals

- We live in a county that 70% public lands we do not need more open space, parks, trails
- Meeker has trail and park options that allow safe off leash hiking and playing with pets i.e., (not shared with mountain bikes, OHV's and fenced dedicated parks).
- Continue to develop trails that can be used by visitors and residents alike.
- We have more than enough of this with in the town and on the edge. As far as your push to have the river please keep in mind people own most this land and they need it for their lively hood.

- Work with BLM, Forest Service to educate citizens in taking care of the land.
- Diversify our recreation to include a wider variety of options. Meeker doesn't appear super friendly toward anything but OHVs. Mountain biking, backpacking, appealing more to people who enjoy the wild for the wild and not just people who enjoy vroom vrooming through the forest in overgrown Fisher Price coupe cars as quickly as possible would be nice.
- Connect trails North & South of River.
- Meeker supports trail linkages that do not have an impact on the view shed, are easy to access and provide trail head parking.

#### Ideas for Transportation/Mobility Goals

- Connectivity of non-motorized travel.
- Parking at Ute Park to make it easier to use parking and hiking, biking, trails.
- Connect transportation links- Uber, Lyft for those without vehicles- elderly, use, tipsy taxi, night escort, night ride, night way.
- Conquer Highway 13 barrier, town is separated.
- Coordinated availability of public transport to neighboring communities.
- Expanded public transit options to/from places within town and locations out of town. Uber, Lyft.
- Meeker has a complete system of sidewalks and crosswalks for safe, convenient walk ability.
- Connectivity through town using bikes and walking.

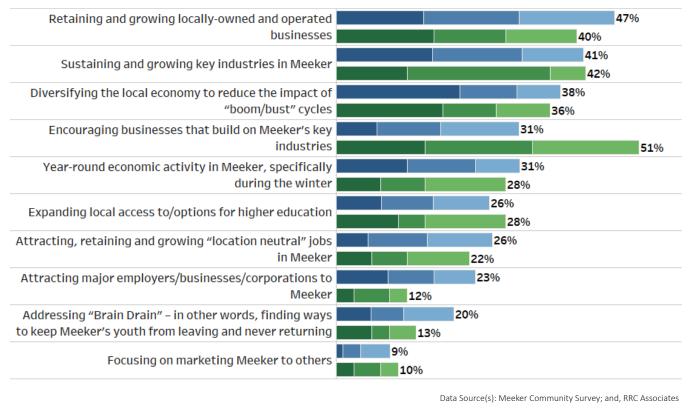
- Parking at Ute Park.
- Connectivity of our streets & sidewalks to infrastructure.
- To me this is not a concern crossing the highway that is not that busy except a couple times a year I do not feel is cost effective to spend more money on all this.
- Meeker enforces snow removal on designated "safe routes" for pedestrians.
- River access without having a near-death experience on Market Street.
- As far as access to airport there is good access. I do not feel this is an issue
- Meeker maintains (year-round) public alleys that are the only access point to residential structures.
- Uber/Lyft, increase public transportation.

With the input from the MMF Committee, and the community, in hand, Western Slope Consulting drafted the vision and goals for the Community Master Plan. The draft vision and goals were shared with the MMF Committee and the community for feedback. Feedback from the committee and the community were used to prepare the final version of the vision and goals that are presented in Community Master Plan.

Following the preparation of the vision and goals, Western Slope Consulting worked with the MMF Committee to develop policies and actions to be included in the Community Master Plan. The policies work in conjunction with the goals of the Plan to describe a strategic focus and direction for the town; while the actions recommend specific projects and programs to be implemented. Embedded in the input from the community were many ideas for specific actions to be taken. Offered below are several summaries that highlight findings from the analysis of the this input that provided key direction for the actions included in the Plan.

#### **Priorities for Strengthening Meeker's Economy**

Question 9: From the list below, please identify the TOP (3) THREE actions that you think should be pursued to strengthen Meeker's economy over the next 10-15 years.



 Legend

 Respondent Lives in Meeker
 First Rank
 Second Rank
 Third Rank

 Respondent Lives Outside of Meeker (Rio Blanco County/Other)
 First Rank
 Second Rank
 Third Rank

#### Ideas for Improving Meeker's Economy

Respondent Lives in Meeker	Respondent Lives Outside of Meeker (Rio Blanco County/Other)
1. More Shopping and/or Dining Options	1. Expand Educational/Training Opportunities
2. Natural Resource Extraction Businesses/Industries	2. Agricultural based Businesses/Industries
3. Recreation Activities, Amenities, Events, Etc.	3. More Shopping and/or Dining Options
4. Marijuana Businesses/Industries	4. Activities, Amenities, Services, Etc. for Seniors
5. Activities, Amenities, Services, Etc. for Youth	5. Manufacturing
6. Expand Educational/Training Opportunities	6. Recreation Businesses/Industries
7. Activities, Amenities, Services, Etc. for Seniors	7. Tourism
8. Entertainment (ex. Movie Theater, Bowling Alley)	8. Enhance/Support Local Businesses
9. Manufacturing	9. Lower Cost Goods/Services
10. Enhance/Support Local Businesses	10. Recreation Activities, Amenities, Events, Etc.
	Data Sourco(s): Mooker Community Survey

Data Source(s): Meeker Community Survey

#### **Tourism Priorities**

Question 11: There are difference types of tourism that Meeker could focus on over the next 10-15 years. Please rate the following options based on whether or not you think they should be a priority for Meeker.

Rating Category	Avg.	n=	Not a priority (1 & 2)	Neutral (3)	Priority (4 & 5)
Major Events with a Regional Draw (ex. Sheepdog Trials)	4.1	352	8%	16%	76%
Outdoor activities such as Hunting, Fishing, Etc.	4.1	350	9%	14%	77%
Outdoor activities such as Biking, Hiking, Backpacking, Etc.	4.1	349	9%	13%	78%
History/Heritage based Tourism (ex. Museums Cultural Centers Guided Tours Events/Festivals Etc.)	3.4	346	20%	27%	53%
Outdoor activities such as Dirt Biking, 4-Wheeling, Snowmobiling, Etc.	3.4	351	25%	21%	55%
Agriculture based Tourism (ex. Farm Stays Farm Stands/Shops Cattle/Sheep Drive Ride Alongs Etc.)	3.3	343	27%	25%	48%
Team Sports based Tourism (ex. Regional Baseball/Softball Tournament)	3.1	336	30%	31%	40%
				Data Source(s): Meeker Co	mmunity Survey; and, RRC Associates
			Legend		
5: High	Priorit	у	4 3	2 1: Not a Pric	prity

#### **Housing Priorities**

**Question 13:** Thinking about local housing needs now, and in the future, what priority do you give to the following housing options for Meeker?

Rating Category	Avg.	n=	Not a priority (1 & 2)	Neutral (3)	Priority (4 & 5)
Housing for Seniors (ex. Smaller Single-Level Homes, Ass Living Facilities, etc.)	isted 4.0	344	8%	19%	73%
Single-Family Homes on Large Lots (Lots > 7,500 square	feet) <b>3.4</b>	331	25%	23%	52%
Single-Family Homes on Small Lots (Lots < 7,500 square f	feet) 3.2	334	30%	23%	47%
Cottage Courtyard Housing (i.e. A grouping of smaller ho that face a central court/greenspace instead of the stree		321	52%	23%	25%
Duplexes/Triplexes/Fourplexes (i.e. Buildings with 2-4 un	nits) <b>2.3</b>	319	57%	27%	16%
Apartments	2.3	327	61%	22%	17%
Manufactured Homes/Tiny Homes	2.2	325	62%	21%	18%
Townhomes/Rowhomes	2.2	325	63%	20%	17%
Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) (ex. Apartment above a garage Apartment in a basement Etc.)	1.9	312	74%	14%	12%
				Data Source(s): Meeker Comm	unity Survey; and, RRC Associates
			Legend		
5: High Priority	4		3 2	1: Not a Priorit	У

#### **Business Space Priorities**

Question 14: Thinking about the current, and future, needs for business space in Meeker, what priority do you give to the following types of development?

Rating Category	Avg.	n=	Not a priority (1 & 2)	Neutral (3)	Priority (4 & 5)
Re-Use/Re-Purposing of Existing Buildings for Businesses	4.4	353	3%	12%	85%
Small-Scale Commercial Development (Space for local shops, restaurants, offices, etc.)	3.5	341	16%	28%	56%
Light Industrial Development (Space for small-scale manufacturing, contractors yard, etc.)	3.1	336	29%	29%	42%
Live/Work Development (A mix of commercial & residential development)	3.0	338	34%	30%	36%
Light Industrial Mixed-Use Development (A mix of light industrial and residential development)	2.8	331	39%	32%	29%
Large-Scale Commercial Development (Space for big-box stores, a shopping center, etc.)	2.2	346	68%	16%	16%
				Data Source(s): Meeker Comm	unity Survey; and, RRC Associates
			Legend		
5: High Priority		4	3 2	1: Not a Priorit	У

#### **Recreation Priorities**

**Question 15:** The Town of Meeker and Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation & Park District (ERBM) work collaboratively to develop, operate and maintain various facilities/services in Meeker. From the list below, please identify the TOP (5) FIVE items that you think need to be pursued over the coming years to enhance recreational opportunities in Meeker.

Top Priority	
1. River Corridor Enhancements.	28%
(ex. Improved in-town public access to the White River; In-river recreation features for tubing, kayaking, stand-up paddle boarding, etc.)	29%
2. Winter time outdoor activities such as cross sountry skiing, iso skating, etc.	13%
2. Winter time outdoor activities such as cross-country skiing, ice skating, etc.	13%
3. Ute Park Enhancements.	9%
	5%
4. Cumpacium / multi-use / gumpactic space at the Respection Conter	7%
4. Gymnasium/multi-use/gymnastic space at the Recreation Center.	11%
5 Expansion and/or onhancement of trail systems for non-motorized outdoor activities	7%
5. Expansion and/or enhancement of trail systems for non-motorized outdoor activities.	7%
6. Fenced Dog Park.	8%
	5%
7. Town of Meeker and/or ERBM more involved with sustaining the local golf course.	6%
	11%
8. Expanded fitness space at the Recreation Center.	5%
o. Expanded infless space at the Necleation Center.	2%



A number of meetings with the MMF Committee were held to review and refine the policies and actions of the Plan. The final draft of the policies and actions were included in the draft of the Community Master Plan that was made available for public review/input in September 2020. Feedback on the draft of the Plan was used to prepare the final draft that was made available for public review/input in September 2020.

## Area Specific Concepts

The Area Specific Concepts presented in the Community Master Plan emerged from the breadth of input offered by the community over the course of the Meeker Moving Forward process. Specific attention was given to gathering input on what people wanted to see happen with Ute Park, one of the key public spaces in Meeker. A summary of the roughly 350 comments collected regarding the future of Ute Park is offered in the following table. This input was used to craft the concept for Ute Park that is included in the Community Master Plan.

Category% of CommentsCategory% of Comments1. Buildings29.6%2. Grounds25.4%	ľ			
1 Ruildings 29.6% 2 Grounds 25.4%	Category	% of Comments	Category	% of Comments
Venue for concerts/community events       10%       Parking       8%         Permanent bathrooms/potable water       9%       Limit or eliminate use as a pasture       6%         Picnic/social/covered area       3%       Shade trees       4%         Playground area       3%       Better lighting       2%         Visitor center       2%       Improved landscaping/weed maintenance       2%         Indoor facility (larger than Fairfield Center)       1%       Develop trailhead areas       1%         Maintain open spaces       1%       Numeration open spaces       1%         Outdoor gym       1%       Outdoor gym       1%	Permanent bathrooms/potable water Picnic/social/covered area Playground area Visitor center	9% 3% 3% 2%	Limit or eliminate use as a pasture Shade trees Better lighting Improved landscaping/weed maintenance Develop trailhead areas Maintain open spaces RV park/camping	6% 4% 2% 1% 1% 1%

### Ideas for Improving/Enhancing Ute Park

lucus	, lot improving/ Linia	neing ote Fank (continuea)	
Category	% of Comments	Category	% of Comments
3. Outdoor Recreation Opportunities Cross-country skiing Fenced dog park Amenities/activities for youth Disc/frisbee golf course 3D archery range Amenities/activities for equestrians Preserve area for Sheepdog Trials Camping Rifle/pistol range	<b>15.7%</b> 5% 2% 2% 1% 1% 1% 1% 1% 1% 1% 1%	<b>4. Trails</b> Accessible, connected & signed trail system Walking trails Biking trails Trail to Lobo Mountain	14.5% 10% 6% 3% 1%
5. Sports Fields Baseball/softball fields Basketball, tennis, volleyball courts	<b>4.4%</b> 4% 1%		

Ideas for Improving/Enhancing Ute Park (continued)

Data Source(s): Online Surveys; Meeker Community Survey; Youth Surveys; Pop-Up Events; Community Meetings; and, Focus Group Sessions



## Incorporating Ideas from Previous Plans and Studies

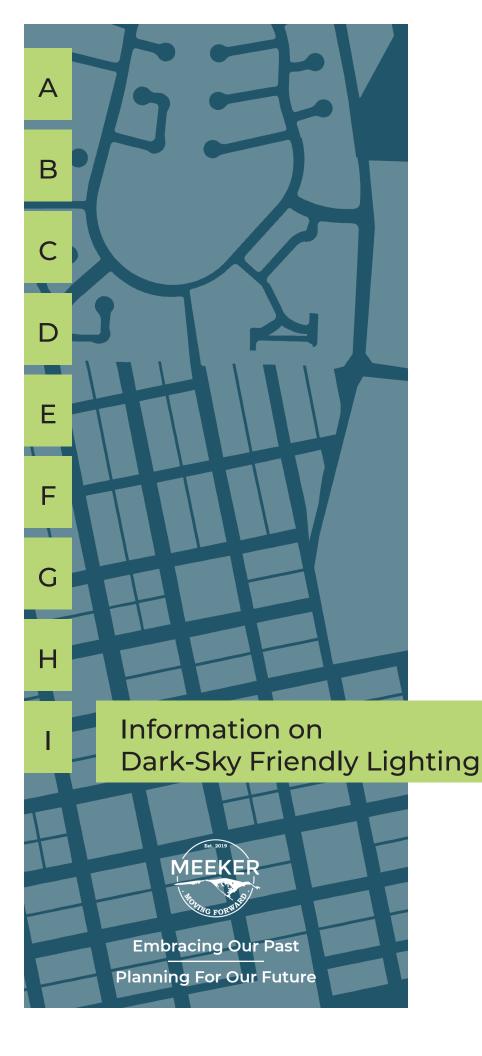
In addition to analyzing input from the MMF Committee, stakeholder groups, and the community, a review of relevant plans and studies that had previously been prepared for Meeker and Rio Blanco County was conducted. The focus of this analysis was primarily on identifying specific actions/tasks set forth in these plans and studies.

While these documents offered limited value for developing the vision and goals of the Meeker Community Master Plan, they did offer a number of policies and action items that were used to inform the policies and actions incorporated into the Plan.

The plans and studies reviewed include:

- 2019 Meeker Market Analysis & Opportunity Assessment
- 2019 Placemaking Strategy
- 2018 Meeker Comprehensive Plan Assessment
- 2017 Meeker: Project 45 Strategic Plan
- 2016 Downtown Housing Feasibility Study
- 2016 Meeker 3-Year Marketing Plan
- 2012 Meeker Chamber of Commerce SWOT Analysis
- 2006 Meeker Comprehensive Plan

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# Dark-Sky Friendly Model Lighting Ordinance

The topic of dark-sky friendly lighting emerged a number of times in discussions during the MMF planning process. It was noted that this type of lighting could help to: (1) enhance the quality of lighting for streets, buildings, landscaping, etc. in Meeker; (2) help to preserve the visibility of Meeker's star-filled night skies; (3) offer opportunities to strengthen and diversify the local economy; and, (4) help the community become more energy efficient (which in turn could help the community save money on utilities).

The International Dark Sky Association (IDA), in collaboration with the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA), has developed a Model Lighting Ordinance (MLO). The MLO is flexible so that it can be tailored to individual communities. It is also designed to educate community members on appropriate lighting types and help municipalities develop outdoor lighting standards that reduce glare, light trespass, and sky-glow. A growing number of municipal, county, and state governments are adopting dark-sky lighting standards to improve energy efficiency and provide high-quality outdoor lighting that greatly improves the appearance of night-time venues for the enjoyment and benefit of community members.

It is recommended that the MLO be considered for adoption by the Town of Meeker. It also recommended that Rio Blanco County and the Town of Rangely also consider adoption of the MLO. County-wide adoption of the MLO would provide for consistency in local lighting regulations, as well as work to enhance outdoor lighting throughout the county. This may ultimately permit Rio Blanco County, the Town of Meeker, and the Town of Rangely to achieve a dark-sky friendly designation. This designation could help to strengthen and diversify the local tourism economy, as well as promote economic development by protecting the scenic and aesthetic qualities of the county, Meeker, and Rangely.

A copy of the IDA's MLO can be found here: https://www.darksky.org/our-work/lighting/public-policy/mlo/

# Installing Dark-Sky Friendly Lighting in Downtown Meeker

The White River Electric Association (WREA) has worked to replace many of the obsolete street luminaires in Meeker with warm-white LED cutoff luminaires. The LED cutoff luminaires direct light downward and eliminate light trespass and sky-glow. This serves to enhance the visual appearance of streets, foliage, building colors, and substantially reduces the high-cost of inefficient and obsolete lighting technology.

In Meeker's downtown area, there remain a number of obsolete, high-glare, mercury vapor acorn globe luminaires. These luminaires are inefficient, offer poor lighting, and contribute to sky-glow and light trespass (this is most notable when snow or rain is falling and the downtown area is covered in a cloud of light). Moreover, the bluish-green light emitted by these luminaires does not accurately reflect the natural color of skin tones, foliage, paint pigment, stone structures, etc. The human eye responds most favorably to full spectrum sunlight which LED light sources most closely resemble.

It is recommended that the town explore options for replacing the mercury vapor acorn globe luminaires, in the downtown area, with state-of-the-art, dark-sky friendly luminaires that: (1) are energy efficient; (2) low maintenance; (3) provide excellent, glare-free, non-light trespass and sky-glow; and, (4) enrich the visible features and natural colors in downtown Meeker. Replacement of the 1985-era globe luminaires would be a highly visible enhancement and could have an immediate impact on the quality of the experience in Meeker's downtown.

A possible replacement option to consider is the Mozart<sup>®</sup> LED cut-off warm-white luminaire. Additional information about this luminaire can be found here: http://www.usaltg.com/Downloads/PDF/MOZ-LED.pdf

It is estimated that replacement of the downtown area's one-hundred and thirty-five (135) mercury vapor luminaires with dark-sky friendly LED cutoff luminaires would be around \$203,000 (approximately \$1,500 per luminaire). It is possible that this cost could be re-cooped by the reduction in energy operating costs over a

roughly two-year period. Moreover, if service labor and replacement lamp expenses incurred by WREA were included, the cost recovery period could drop to less than twenty (20) months. Currently, WREA pays these costs as part of their franchise agreement with the Town of Meeker.

Replacement of the globe luminaires in Meeker's downtown area could be achieved via local and/or state financial assistance programs and/or partnerships with WREA, Project 45, etc.