

Memorandum

To: Board of County Commissioners and County Manager
From: Kristy Winser, Planning Director
Date: December 1, 2022
Subject: Land-Use related items to share with the Town of Hayden

At the request of the County Manager, I would like to provide the following update regarding Land-Use related items to share with the Town of Hayden in place of not being present as I have a Planning Commission meeting and am unable to attend the joint session.

There are three items of importance to update the Town associated with the adoption of the Master Plan. Staff intends to coordinate and schedule time with the Town to present these items listed below in the first quarter of 2023 formally. However, this memo intends to highlight those of matters of interest to the Town.

Master Plan:

While the 2022 Master Plan builds on the successes of the 2003 Master Plan on which it is based, it has been substantially changed to reflect current issues and concerns. New concepts and terminology were also introduced, and topics such as housing, sustainability, water, and pressures on recreational areas were given added emphasis. The policies in the plan will inform decision-making and implementation moving forward, and direct how the County develops.

Specifically, and how these changes impact the Town of Hayden, the 2003 Routt County Master Plan was successful at directing growth to “growth centers” and avoiding dispersed development in rural, unincorporated areas. While the sentiment behind that Plan’s future land use framework is carried through this Plan as a guiding principle, a new framework has been developed to clarify the concept.

This new framework, called Future Growth Areas, defines three distinct Tiers of areas suitable for different types of growth in the County. The three tiers are as follows:

- Tier 1: Incorporated Municipal Growth Centers
- Tier 2: Targeted Growth Areas (unincorporated)
- Tier 3: Small Established Communities (unincorporated)

The Town of Hayden is a Tier 1 area and unincorporated area within Hayden’s Three-Mile Plan, Tier 2: Targeted Growth Area.

Tier 2: Targeted Growth Areas include select lands located in unincorporated areas such as Stagecoach, West Steamboat Springs and the unincorporated area within Hayden’s Three-Mile Plan. These areas may accommodate future growth in the County based on acceptable

development review criteria for each area, infrastructure development, and consistency with prescribed sub-area plans for the specific area.

Update of the County's Regulations:

Now that the 2022 Master Plan has been adopted, the County's Zoning and Subdivision Regulations, which provide the means of enacting the goals and policies of the Master Plan, are outdated and must be revised. Routt County requests proposals from qualified firms with the necessary technical expertise to facilitate the comprehensive review and revision of the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations for the unincorporated areas of Routt County, Colorado, to align them with the recently adopted 2022 Routt County Master Plan.

Once a conceptual framework has been developed, the proposed new and amended regulations and standards will need to be publicly vetted and refined, if necessary, in response to community input. The consultant will be expected to design and conduct a thorough community outreach program.

Our public engagement timeline will start early next year and considers in-person and remote meeting options, community meetings held in all geographical areas of the County (North Routt, South Routt, West Routt, and in Steamboat Springs) and with various stakeholders to ensure that the full spectrum of County residents can provide input. We look forward to input from the Town of Hayden as well.

Large Scale Solar Project Update:

Several policies in the Master Plan support sustainability and climate action policies through renewable and green energy.

The County has been approached by several solar developers interested in constructing a utility-scale (utility-scale is larger than 40 acres) solar garden south of the Hayden Station. These locations primarily range from CR 27 on the east end to approximately the CR 59 and 61 intersection on the west end. Routt County's solar regulations must be updated to review this use adequately. As soon as we get the consultant on board who will assist us in amending the regulations, we will prioritize this topic so that the new regulations can be in place before the developers apply.

We have had many conversations with interest groups and could provide feedback on the topic. These include CPW, Community Ag Alliance, YVEA, CMC, NRCS, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Steamboat Ski Area, CO Solar, Storage Association, and other counties. As we update the regulations, we will be conducting outreach to help get the word about this new land use to the public realm and to provide education on the topic.