

Press Release

Board of County Commissioners Ratify Updated Master Plan

Steamboat Springs, CO, August 30, 2022 – Routt County commissioners voted unanimously to ratify the Routt County Master Plan during today’s work session. Through community outreach, technical assistance and robust conversations, Routt County was able to develop a Master Plan that reflects the needs and desires of the community. The Master Plan also includes an Implementation Matrix that outlines tactics that the County, municipalities and other groups need to take in order to transform policy into action.

Beth Melton, Chair of the Routt County Board of County Commissioners expressed her gratitude to Steve Warnke of the Planning Commission. “I want to thank you for your leadership of the Planning Commission, helping us all get all this moving in the right direction because I really think it has been a partnership... this is something we should all be proud of, where we’ve come.”

The Planning Department drafted the new Master Plan, to replace the 2003 Master Plan, with the support of a planning consultant, Cushing Terrell and a grant from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA).

Community outreach started in 2019, but the onset of COVID-19 delayed the process. The Community Engagement Plan included community meetings, public open houses (both virtual and in person), community surveys and focus groups. A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), comprised of community leaders and local subject-matter-experts, was created to discuss topics that ranged from changes in growth and land-use, to community health and wellness, and sustainability and resiliency. In addition, a Leadership Summit was hosted to include subject matter experts in Routt County history, Health, Wellness, Equity, Housing/Jobs Balance Nobility Trends, Agriculture/Open Lands and Sustainability/Resiliency.

The community made it clear that there were topics like preserving open space, supporting agricultural and ranching, avoiding rural sprawl, and rules about natural resources from the 2003 plan that needed to remain in the updated plan. The feedback also highlighted priorities that weren’t seen in the previous plan that the community wanted to see. Priorities like historic preservation, climate action and the addition of policies about alternative energy, transportation with an emphasis on biking and walking, public health and equity, and the formation of designated growth areas.

Based on the input received, the following principles were developed to guide the Master Plan:

1. Protect our open spaces, forests, rivers, lakes, and wildlife.
2. Conserve and preserve our rural, western, agricultural heritage.
3. Direct growth to Municipalities and other Targeted Areas.
4. Provide equitable mobility options.

The now ratified Master Plan communicates the vision and priorities of the Routt County community for the future. It is advisory in nature, provides general policy direction, and guides decision-making. Included in the Plan is an Implementation Matrix that will be used by County staff, leadership and other community stakeholders, as an implementation plan and next steps.

“Thanks to all of you. Thanks to Cushing Terrell. Most of all, thanks to the community for involving themselves the way that they did. I have no complaints about this plan. I am excited about the next steps,” said Routt County Commissioner Tim Corrigan.

Outreach regarding the ratified plan will take place in September, and the process to update Routt County’s Zoning and Subdivision Regulations will begin in late fall.

Find more information about the Routt County Master Plan for the Community at <https://www.navigateyourroutt.com/>.

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