



## **Master Plan Update**

### **Organizational Discussion on Scoping for the Master Plan Update**

#### **Phase One (Cont.) with Planning Commission**

#### **Recent Discussion**

A Master Plan report was presented at a joint meeting on March 7, 2019 to discuss the status of the Master Plan and to provide staff comments regarding the need for a Plan update. Minutes from that discussion are attached.

#### **Phase One:**

A follow up to the Joint Meeting discussion was scheduled April 18<sup>th</sup> with the intent to gather input from Planning Commission to help determine the areas of focus for an update of the Master Plan as Phase One of the process. At that time, Planning Commission wasn't clear on the intent or goal of the discussion and requested that the discussion be rescheduled.

The goal of this discussion is to identify elements in the Plan that are in need of update or would be included in the scoping/update list for the discussions with the community. To help create this list, staff presented the status of action items in the plan and a list of possible amendment items that was compiled by staff and Planning Commission. The full staff packet that includes the action items and minutes from that discussion are attached to this memo. For the purpose of this discussion, staff is only including the list of possible amendments and want to add your input on what should stay, be revised, deleted, or included as additional elements. Next steps would be to take this list to the community for input. It is anticipated that the list will be reviewed to ensure the scope of services is an accurate reflection of community values. It will also tell us how big of an amendment process will be necessary.

#### **Discussion of possible amendment items:**

The following list 1-15 summarizes the items either not currently addressed in the Master Plan or that should be revisited. Two items identified by Planning Commission, wildlife and the linkage between communities, are included in the list. The other items were suggested by staff. Comments received by two community members are also attached to this memo for your consideration.

1. Modernize the language, maps, and pictures.  
**Staff Comment: The Master Plan is over 16 years old. Since adoption of the Plan, names of agencies and information such as sub-area plans have changed. Maps and pictures should be modernized as well.**
2. Review action items and modify as necessary.  
**Staff Comment: Staff provided an overview of the action items and status of each above. This information should be included in the Plan update.**
3. Analyze policies that guide locals and workforce housing in the unincorporated County.  
**Staff Comment: These policies should be reviewed every five years to evaluate existing community goals, assess current programs and resources, and identify needs and gaps in provisions for affordable housing. The goals and objectives should accurately reflect the community vision and align with strategic initiatives set by the County.**
4. Consider goals and policies that address climate change.  
**Staff Comment: Policies regarding climate change are addressed throughout the plan indirectly with their emphasis on limiting urban sprawl, and protecting our natural resources with development that limits impact on the environment. A more modern plan considers this reality in a comprehensive and direct manner in response to climate change concerns.**
5. Address the current expectations associated with the telecommunication industry.  
**Staff Comment: Telecommunication Standards are addressed in the Routt County Zoning Regulations but not in the Master Plan. Most new applications for telecommunication facilities are not compatible with visual impact policies in the plan. Policies should be considered that support broadband expansion efforts in rural areas of the County while addressing the community's stance on maintaining rural character.**
6. Include guidance for making variance decisions (Board of Adjustment).  
**Staff Comment: Section 3.4 of the Zoning Regulations establishes guidelines, duties and Standards for Variance decisions. There are currently no policies in the Master Plan that provide support for these land use decisions.**
7. Include demographics and growth trends.  
**Staff Comment: While such information is available on the State Demographer's website, currently there is no demographic information or growth trend information in the plan used to support the goals, policies or action items. Staff acknowledges that current demographics and growth trends need to be assessed to answer the questions: Where is the appropriate location for future growth and development in the County? Is development within the designated Growth Centers and Stagecoach enough to support current trends? Are there other areas such as the Steamboat II Metro District area, Phippsburg, and Milner that may be good options to consider for growth?**
8. Address recreation and tourism pressures.  
**Staff Comment: Increasing pressures from a growing population and tourism industry may challenge the applicability of certain policies in the plan. The County has identified certain land uses outlined in the regulations on the Uses by Zone District Chart that may be considered appropriate outside of Growth Centers through use permits. Staff acknowledges the important role that recreation and tourism play in the economic viability of the County and as a tool in helping to preserve its agricultural operations. Staff also recognizes that balancing these operations at sustainable levels, while supporting the local economy, is challenging. There are some new land use trends in recreation and tourism that could be**

considered under an updated Plan that are in sync with a changing community while continuing to maintain rural character.

9. Describe appropriate intensity of use to avoid the commercialization of the A/F zone.  
**Staff Comment: Historically, land uses such as short-term rentals, workforce housing, and some recreational operations have been viewed as the commercialization of land in the Agricultural/Forestry zone district, and not consistent with the adopted Master Plan. Over the past few years, staff has heard community comments that the County should do more to address certain problems while maintaining the Plan's overall vision of protecting the rural character.**
10. Include parameters to address the cumulative impacts of development and multiple land uses.  
**Staff Comment: The 2003 Plan offers little mention of the cumulative impacts associated with the increasing number of approved permits in rural Routt County. Policies that ensure a more consistent evaluation of acceptable intensities and cumulative impacts of all land uses could be given more emphasis.**
11. Update wildlife information to reflect the current conditions.  
**Staff Comment: Routt County's open lands and critical wildlife habitats are paramount to the health and identity of the County. Policies that protect and manage our resources are addressed in the Plan but should be reviewed for effectiveness, as development pressures potentially threaten these resources.**
12. Ensure oil & gas policies are compatible with COGCC standards.  
**Staff Comment: Policies should be reviewed so that they associate the current community expectations with the latest COGCC standards and changes in State law.**
13. Address transportation and connectivity between Growth Centers.  
**Staff Comment: Although policies supporting transportation and connectivity are identified in Plan, they should also be reviewed to determine if they remain appropriate and reflect changes in our community over the past 20 years.**
14. Reformat to make the Plan more user-friendly on the internet.  
**Staff Comment: This is recommended and can be done in sync with the county-wide website improvements and update.**
15. Address Public Health in the Plan. Overarching goal and policy typically address the communities' health priorities and provide the broad vision for supporting health in the County. Elements that are often addressed are physical and mental health, social well-being, and the environment which are valued, supported, and accessible to all.  
**Staff Comment: This is a recommendation by the Environmental Stewardship Management Team (EMST) for the County. The committee was organized to meet strategic initiative goals set by the County Commissioners.**

## Next Steps

Staff anticipates a kick-off for the Plan amendment to begin in the summer of 2019 with completion depending upon the scope of necessary revisions.