



General plan update working group meeting # 2, 5:30 PM, Monday, 9-13-2010, Grand County Library

AGENDA

- Review general plan process and role of the working group.
- Overview of plan topics by meeting date
- Review discussion and draft language for Diverse and Prosperous Economy plan topic
- Additional ideas for Diverse and Prosperous Economy
- Discussion of natural hazards
- Begin discussion on county role in preserving water quality

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DIVERSE AND PROSPEROUS ECONOMY **DRAFT PLAN LANGUAGE**

Following are some draft goals and strategies based on discussion at the 8-26-2010 working group meeting that will eventually land in the *Diverse and Prosperous Economy* section of the plan. Please review and be ready to comment or suggest changes/deletions/additions.

Goal DPE1- Promote business sustainability and diversity and make the county attractive for a wide range of sectors including education, technology, information and light industries.

Strategy DPE1.1 - Staff a county economic development coordinator to support public economic development projects, obtain state and federal economic development funding, and to facilitate businesses or organizations seeking to move into or expand in Grand County.

Goal DPE2- Facilitate business development with development standards and review processes that are clear, predictable, consistent, fair, timely, and cost effective.

Strategy DPE2.1 - Examine land use development application procedures to find opportunities to reduce the times an applicant is required to appear before a review or decision-making body at a public meeting.



Strategy DPE2.2 - Review the land use code to ensure that standards and processes are clear and change those that have contributed to confusion and/or disagreements about interpretations of code language.

Goal DPE3- Support the development and management of infrastructure necessary for a sustainable local economy.

Strategy DPE3.1 Support and participate in drinking water and wastewater infrastructure planning.

Strategy DPE3.2 Support and participate in efforts to bring electricity along the I-70 corridor.

Questions for discussion:

The vision statement for Diverse and Prosperous Economy call for achieving more economic self-sufficiency by producing:

- Local food
- Local energy

Do we need goals and strategies giving further guidance for achieving these vision statements?
What would be the county's role in promoting this type of self-sufficiency?

TOPIC MATERIALS: NATURAL HAZARDS

It is typical for counties to have regulations steering development away from natural hazards. Natural hazards include the 100 year floodplain and other areas prone to flooding, wildfire, geo-hazards (rockfall, landslides, debris flows, avalanches, soil shrink/swell, steep slopes).

While the Grand County Land Use Code addresses natural hazards directly, the adopted 2004 General Plan is vague on the topic of natural hazards and does not offer clear guidance or policy backing for the regulations and incentives in the land use code. The purpose of today’s discussion on natural hazards is to get input from the group about whether the county’s approach for addressing natural hazards under the land use code is the right approach. Regardless of whether the group decides today’s approach is working or wants to see changes, we need to get some language in the general plan that provides policy backing for regulations in the land use code.

We will use the natural hazards spectrum (sound familiar?) to frame a discussion about whether the group would like the general plan to call for any changes to the current approach.

Below is a spectrum of possible approaches used by Utah Counties and other rural communities in the West. Ultimately, we need the working group to help us gauge whether the county sits on the appropriate portions of this spectrum. This will provide us the input we need to craft goals and strategies on natural hazards for the general plan.

Natural Hazards Planning Spectrum

No regulations , natural hazard mitigation is up to the land owner.
Incentives for leaving natural hazard areas undeveloped
Mitigation required for building in natural hazard areas.
Avoid natural hazards unless no other option exists on site –and- mitigation required for building in natural hazard areas.
Development may be prohibited in areas of high or extreme natural hazards.

Here is where Grand County sits on the spectrum of county natural hazards planning today:

Scope of current regulations: In the county, floodplain regulations apply to all new construction requiring a building permit, but geologic and wildfire regulations only apply to new subdivisions and other land development projects.

Incentives for leaving natural hazard areas undeveloped are created by density bonuses for preserving open space and by open space standards calling for preservation of “constrained lands” that include 30%+ slopes, floodplain, and “unmitigatable geo-hazards”.

Approach in the current land use code:

- Floodplain: Avoid floodplain and mitigation required for building in them.
- Geologic: Avoid geo-hazards and mitigation required for building in them.
- 30% + Slopes: Avoid 30%+ slopes and mitigation required for building on them.
- Wildfire: Avoid wildfire areas and mitigation required for building in them.

Current Grand County Approach on the Natural Hazards Planning Spectrum

No regulations, natural hazard mitigation is up to the land owner.

Incentives for leaving natural hazard areas undeveloped

Mitigation required for building in natural hazard areas.

Avoid natural hazards unless no other option exists on site –and- **mitigation required** for building in natural hazard areas.

Development may be prohibited in areas of high or extreme natural hazards.

Questions for discussion:

Is Grand County in the appropriate place on the natural hazards planning spectrum?

Some suggestions on natural hazards from RPI Consulting:

- Improve base mapping for natural hazards planning.

- Clearly define which geologic hazards are most important to regulate and focus efforts on those. Because of their repetitive nature landslides/debris flows, rock fall are the hazards most commonly addressed by planning regulations. One way to do this would be to officially rank natural hazards.
- Steep slope regulations address multiple values: concerns about slope instability, storm water management/water quality, and scenic impacts, so the general plan should reference slope regulations as a strategy for goals about these values. We can do this as we proceed through the list of topics.

TOPIC MATERIALS: WATER QUALITY

The water quality discussion will be expanded at the next meeting, but we need to spend some time thinking about the role of the county government in protecting water quality in light of the layers of state and federal agencies that hold most of the authority to regulate water quality.

Regulatory structure: Grand County plays a relatively narrow role in the regulation of water quality. There are at least 5 State agencies and 2 federal agencies that set policy and regulate water quality in Grand County. Study the diagram on the following page and come prepared to answer the following questions:

Questions for discussion

Are there other important state or federal agencies that influence water quality that I have missed?

Are there roles that the county plays currently in protecting water quality that I have not accounted listed?

Protection of water quality is a long standing goal in the community. How can Grand County align its planning efforts with the functions and expertise of the state and federal agencies, who regulate and enforce water quality, to ensure that local water quality is not degraded?

One well-supported draft vision statement developed from the July vision event and key pad polling verification session contemplates a watershed management approach for the future:

"Comprehensive management of aquifers and watersheds ensures plenty of high-quality water.

Land owners, land managers, local governments, and water/sewer service providers work in partnership to manage watersheds to maintain or enhance water quality and quantity for current and future generations."

