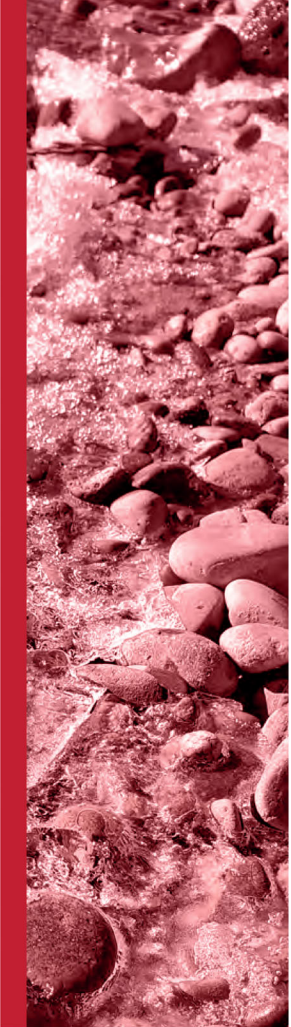


Existing Conditions Summary



Contents

- MASTER PLAN INTRODUCTION
- WHO ARE WE?
- WHERE ARE WE TODAY?
- WHERE SHOULD WE GO, TOGETHER?






Introduction

What is Mesa Together?

Mesa Together is a Master Plan that will address the changes and opportunities in the County and help share the vision and tools for the future. All members of the Mesa County community are invited to be a part of each step of the transparent and inclusive process:



**Who are
we today?**



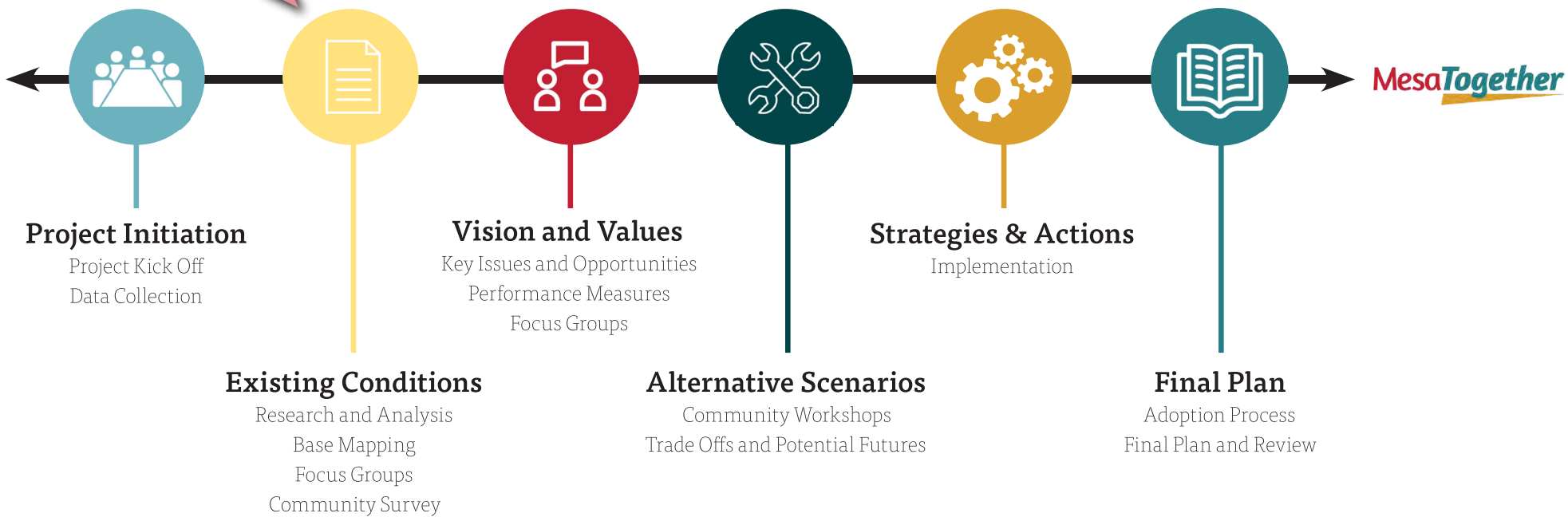
**Where are
we going?**



**Where should
we go
together?**

Process

WE ARE HERE



Why do we have a Master Plan?

Since the last Master Plan for Mesa County...



2010 - 2020:
8,000+ population
increase



5.9%
population growth
over 10 years



Industry
shifts



Expanding
economic and business
development



Development
pressures on
agricultural land

Source: Colorado State Demographer, 2020

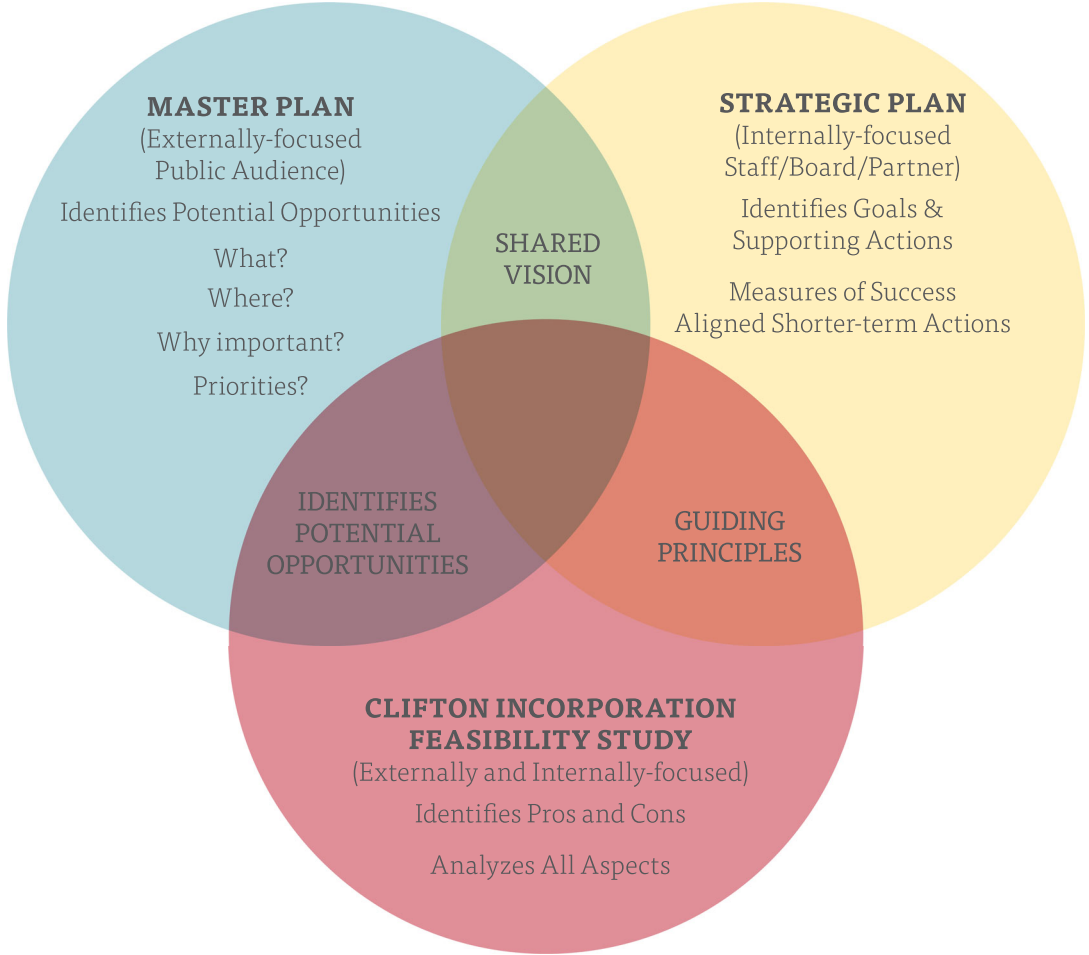
A Master Plan is...

- A strategic guidebook for policy decisions and priorities
- An integration of existing planning work
- A long-range tool for planning, policy, financing + action
- A reflection of the community's desires
- Aspirational to establish goals
- Required by State Statute

A Master Plan is not...

- Zoning
- A set of land use code standards
- Detailed budget document
- Specific regulations, requirements or ordinances

Current Planning Efforts



Existing Plans

Clifton Fruitvale
Community Plan

Community Health
Needs Assessment

Gateway Rural
Community Plan

Glade Park

Grand Valley
2045 RTP Update

Loma
Community Plan

Mack
Community Plan

Mesa County
Community Wildlife
Protection Plan

Mesa County
Resource
Management Plan

Mesa County Hazard
Mitigation Plan

Mesa County
Mineral and Energy
Master Plan

Mesa County
Land Use and Rural
Planning

Whitewater
Community Plan

Mesa/Powderhorn
Plan



Who Are We?

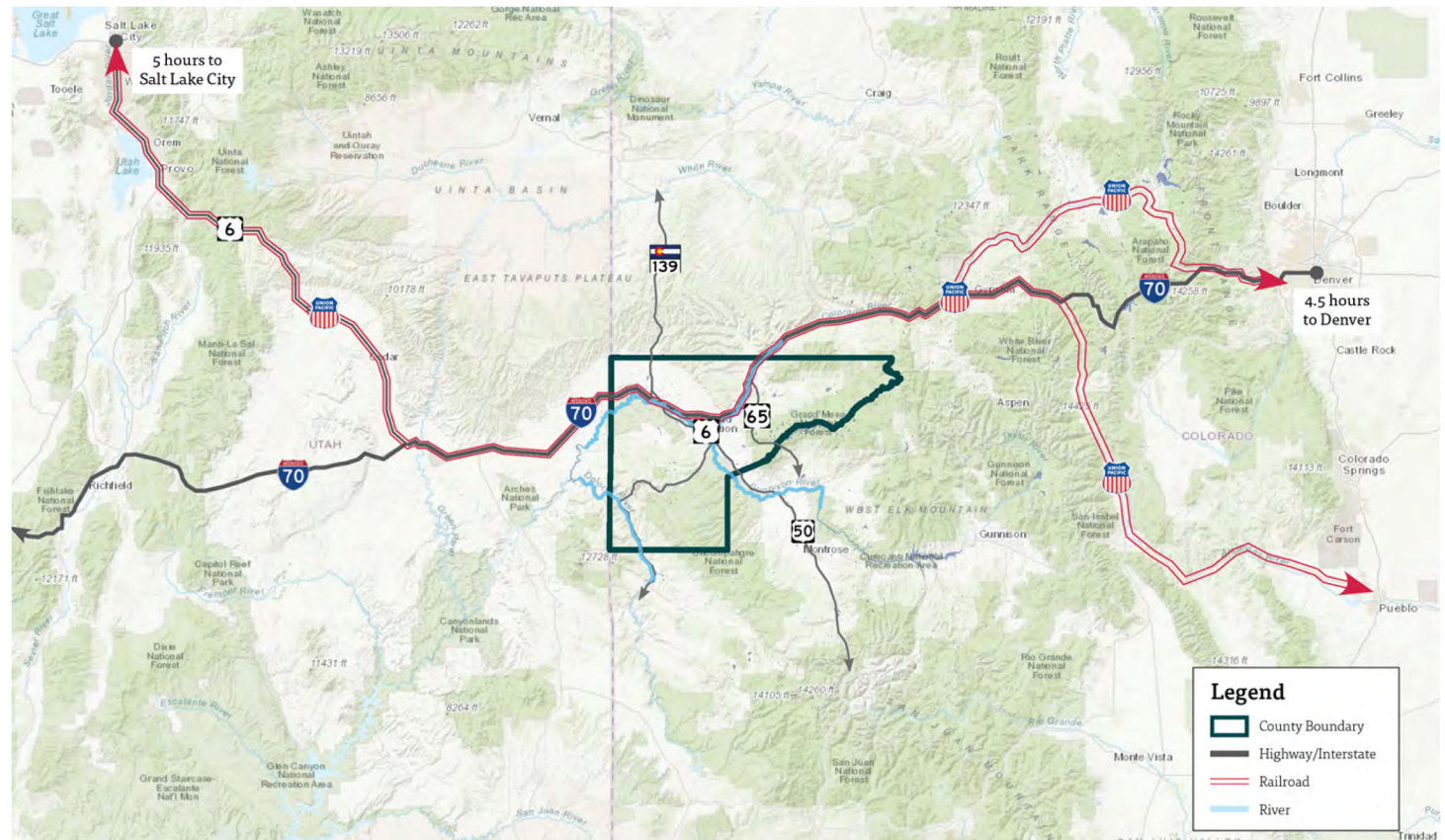
Key Understanding

Regional transportation networks have played a major role in the development of Mesa County over the past century.

Rail and Interstate access provides a regional hub for goods and services.

Mesa County is a healthcare and economic destination for much of the Western slope and parts of Utah.

Context



Key Understanding

The Communities of Mesa County

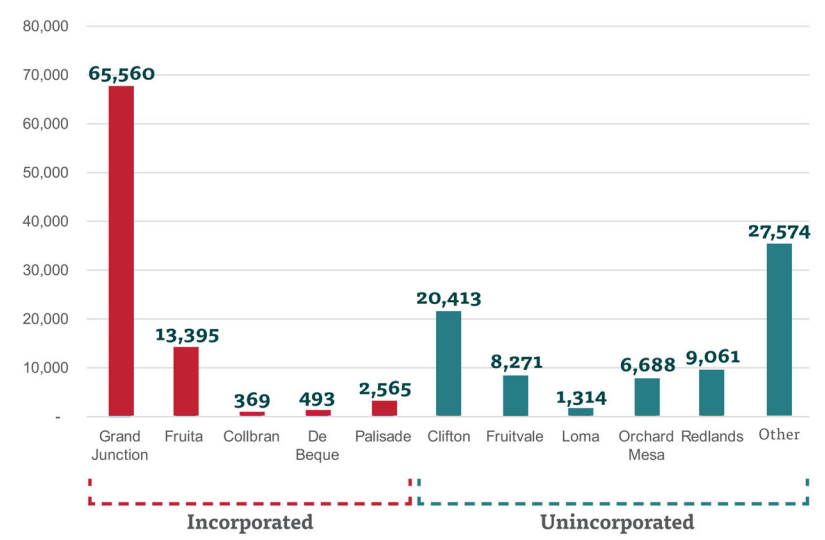
Mesa County contains two cities, three towns, five census-designated places, and multiple unincorporated neighborhoods.

A significant amount of residents reside in unincorporated areas.

- 73,321 residents, or 47.1% of the total population, in 2020.
- 82,382 residents in incorporated municipalities, equating to 52.9% of the total county.

Source: 2020 Decennial Census

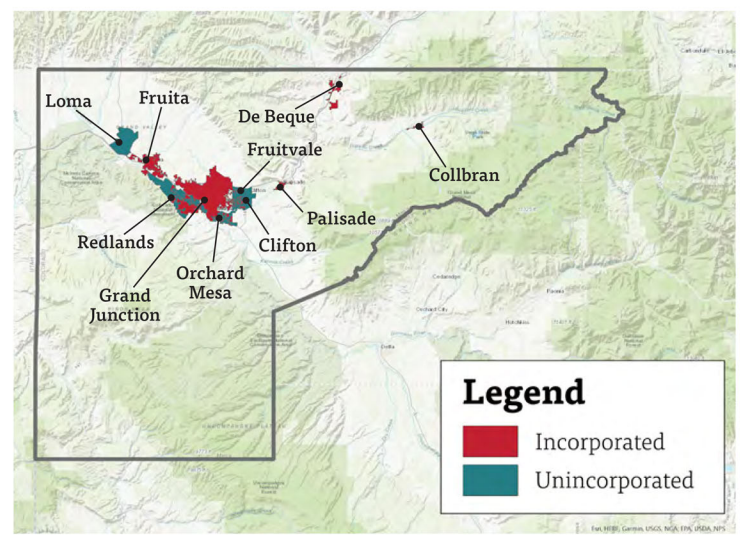
Mesa County Population Total: 155, 703



Grand Junction has the largest population in Mesa County.

Source: 2020 Decennial Census

Clifton has the largest population in unincorporated Mesa County.



*The following are additional unincorporated areas, but are not included due to lack of census data: Molina, Mesa, Powderhorn, Glade Park, Gateway, Unaweep Canyon, Whitewater, Kannah Creek

Key Understanding

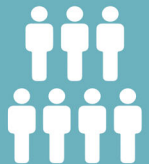
Population Growth

Growth has slowed over the past 10 years to 5.9% (2010-2020) from 26% (2000-2010).

Source: Colorado State Demography Office, 2021

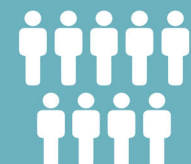
Grand Junction, Fruita and unincorporated areas are gaining population while Palisade, De Beque and Collbran have lost population.

Historic Growth



Mesa County 2010:
147,155 population

Source: Colorado State Demography Office, 2021



Mesa County 2020:
155,703 population

8,548 increase (855+/year)

Source: 2020 Decennial Census

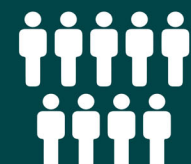
Projected Growth



Mesa County 2030:
178,153 population

22,450 increase (2,245+/year)

Source: Colorado State Demography Office, 2021



Mesa County 2050:
226,584 population

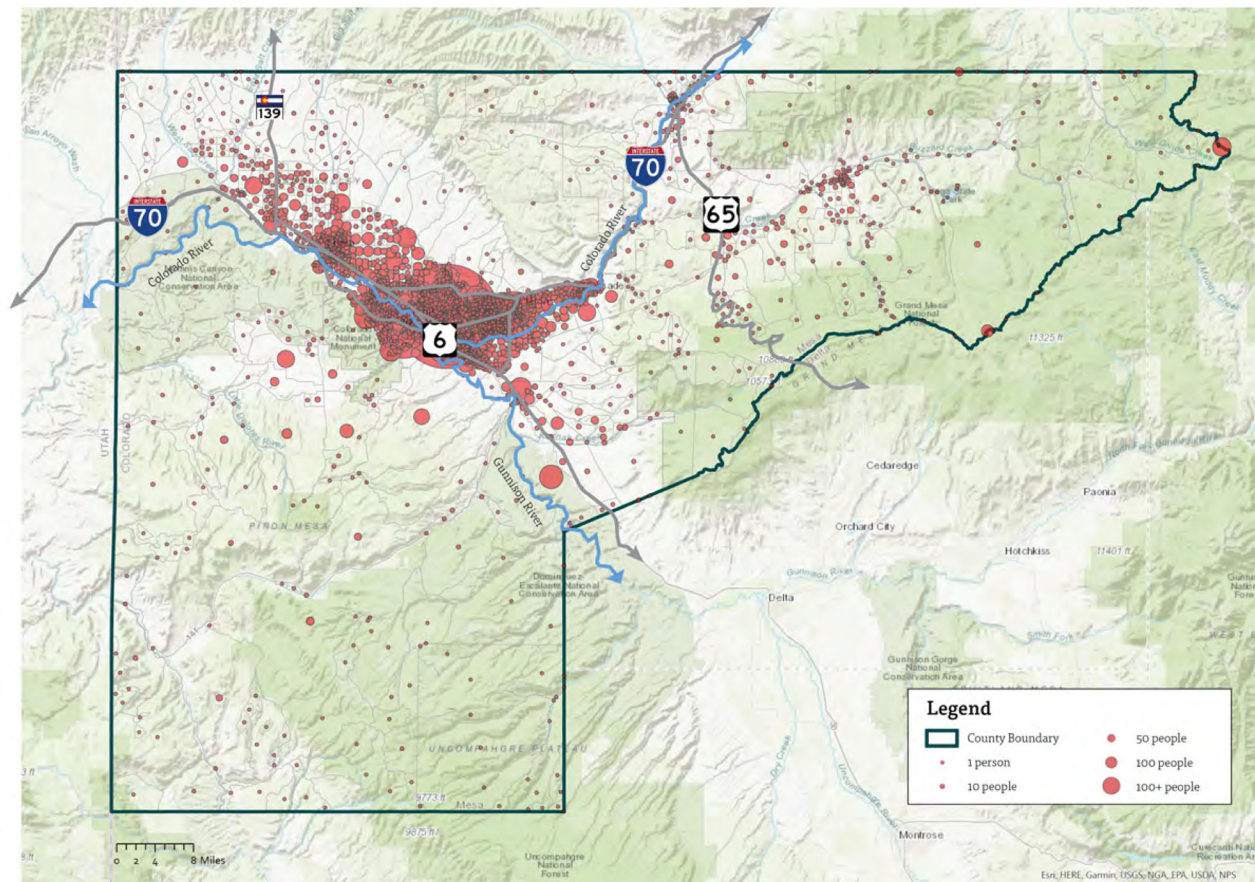
48,431 increase (2,422+/year)

Source: Colorado State Demography Office, 2021

Key Understanding

Higher densities of population are located along transportation and river corridors.

Population Density per Census Block



Source: US Census, 2020

Key Understanding

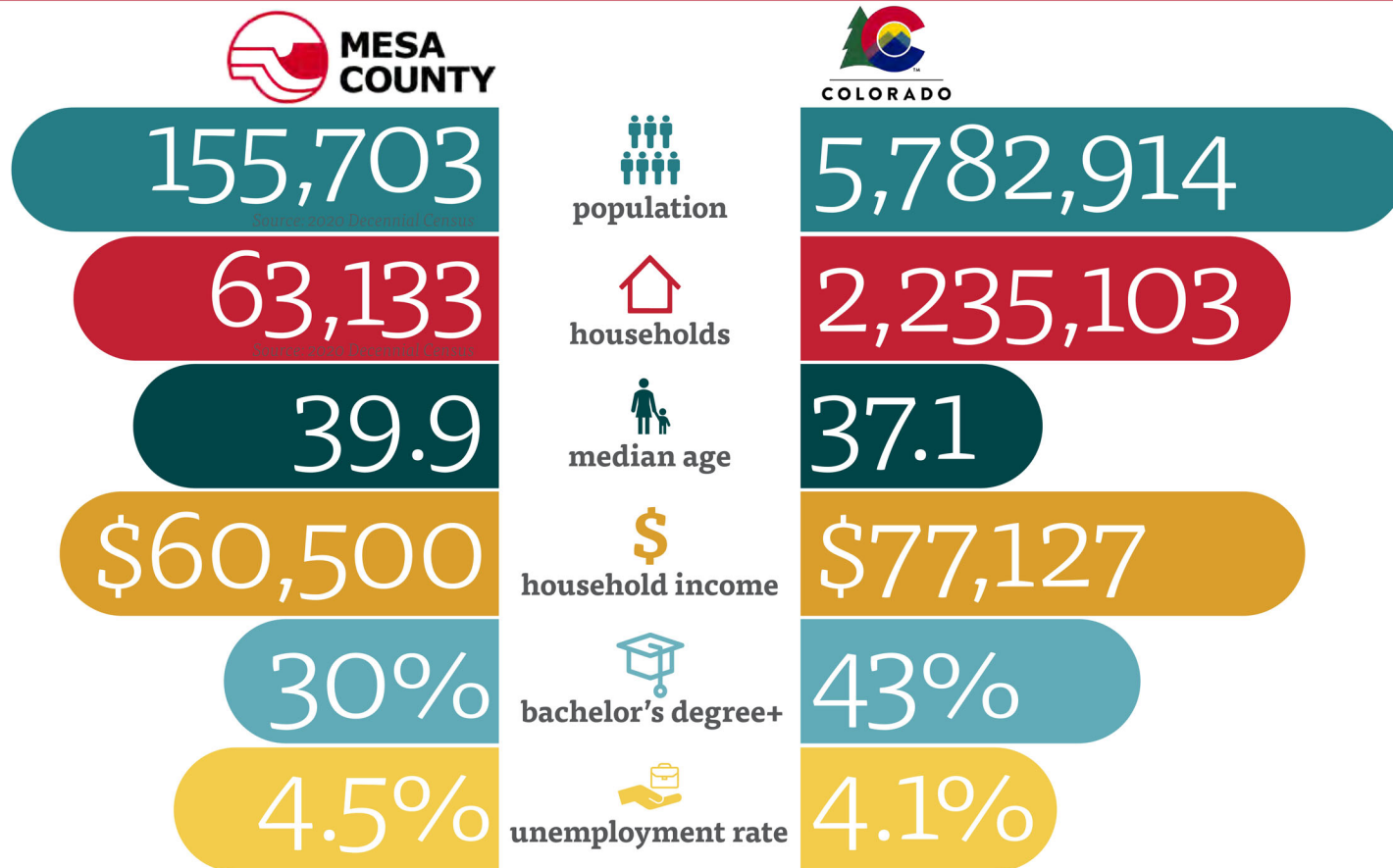
Mesa County has an older population than the State. This population has been increasing since 2015.

Clifton and Fruita are lower in age, consistent with their comparatively high share of family households with children under 18.

Source: United States Census, 2015-2019

Mesa County has lower levels of educational attainment than the State or National average.

Demographics



Source: US Census (2020), American Community Survey (2019), Colorado State Demography Office, US Bureau of Labor Statistics

Demographics

Key Understanding

Clifton has the lowest median household income.

Redlands and De Beque have the highest median household income.

Clifton and Grand Junction have the highest number of households.

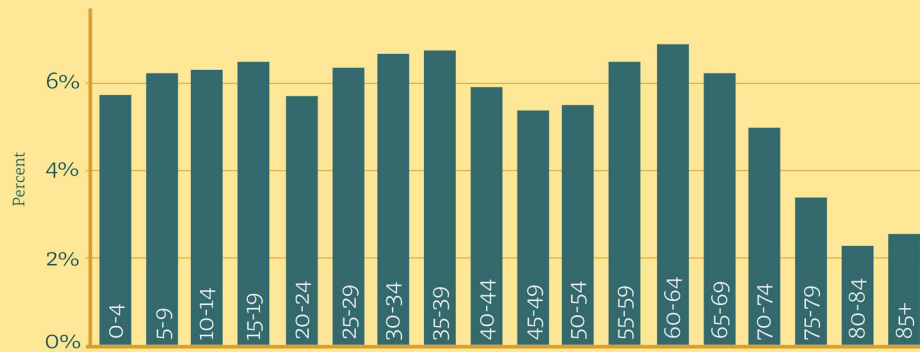
Collbran, De Beque and Loma have the smallest number of households.



63,133 households

Median household size: 2.5

Source: 2020 Decennial Census

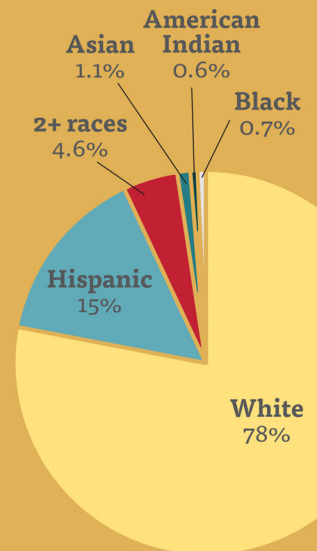


Median age is 39.9. The largest age group is in the 60-64 range.

Source: US Census, 2020



Race





Where Are We Today?

Land Use

Housing

Natural Resources, Energy and Resilience

Open Space, Recreation and Agriculture

Transportation + Mobility

Economy

Land Use

Trends

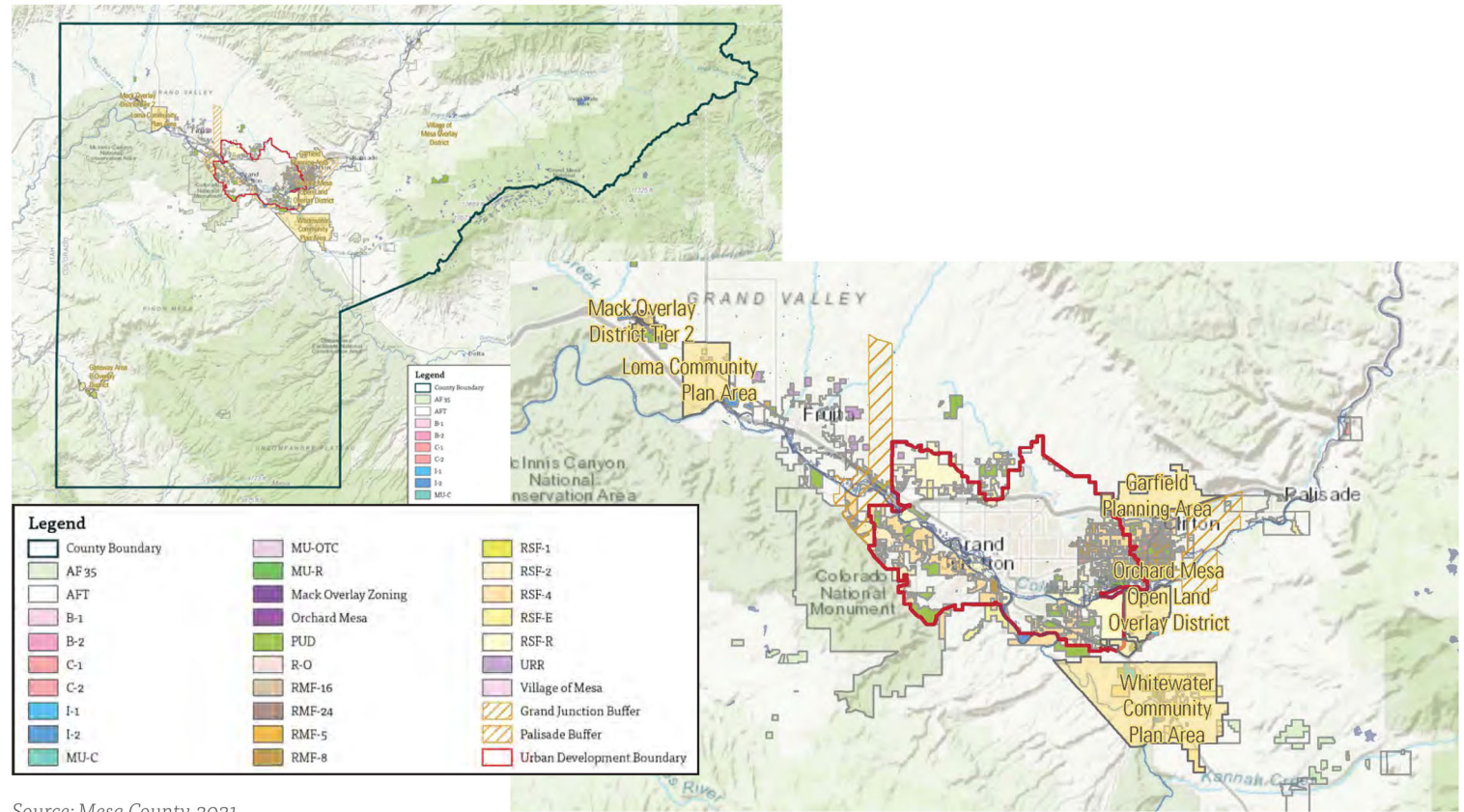
- 72.7% of lands are federally owned/managed.
- Residential and commercial land uses are primarily located along the I-70 and the Colorado River corridor.
- Mesa County's unincorporated areas land uses have changed at a much slower rate than the incorporated areas.



Key Understanding

Unincorporated Mesa County could potentially capture more or less of the growth, depending on its land use policies and market drivers.

Existing Zoning



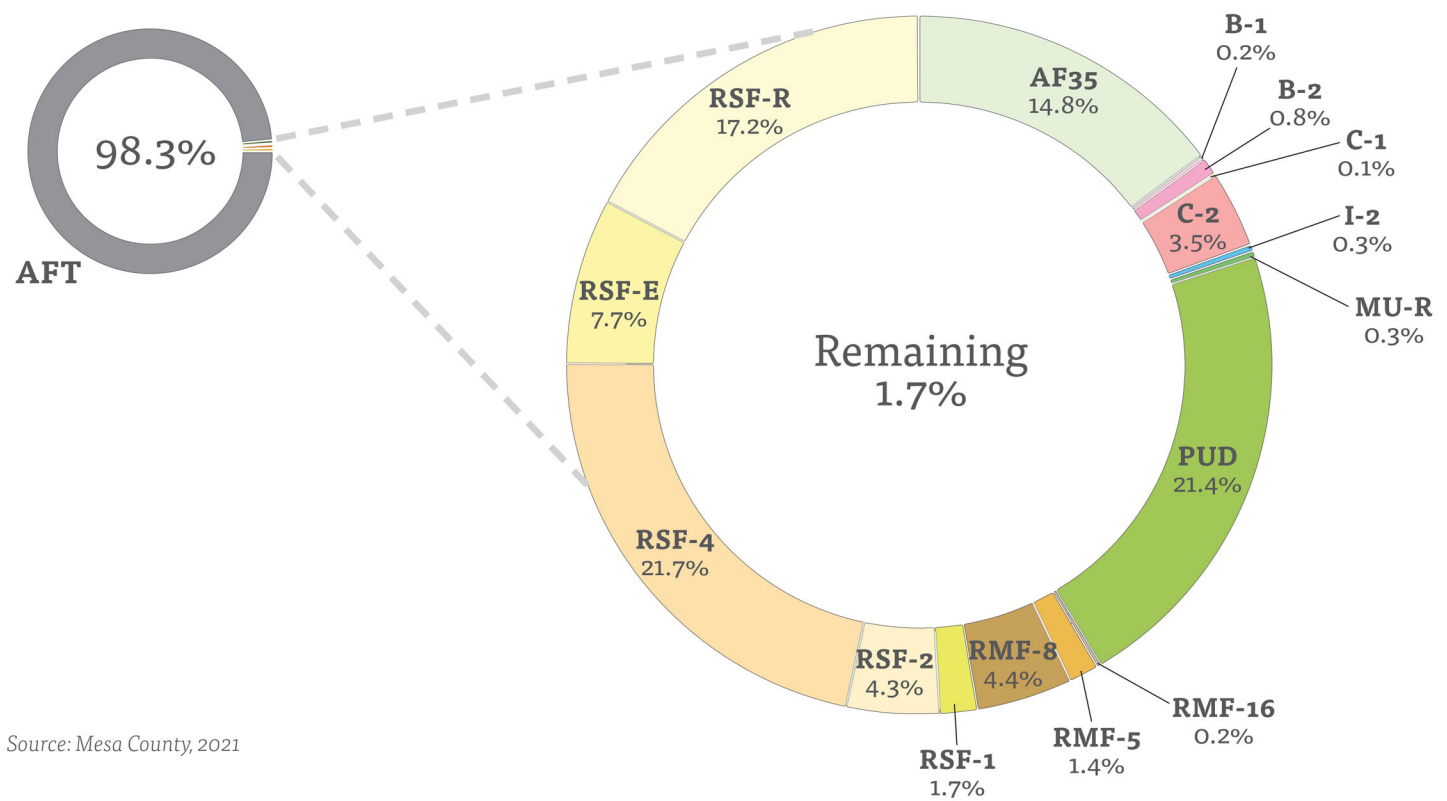
Source: Mesa County, 2021

Existing Zoning (Percent Acres)

Key Understanding

Mesa County primarily consists of the Agricultural, Forestry, Transitional District (AFT) (98.3%).

The remaining land not zoned Agricultural, Forestry, Transitional District (AFT) primarily consists Single Family Residential.



Source: Mesa County, 2021

Zoning Districts	
Rural Zoning Districts	
Agricultural and Forestry District (AF-35)	Land for the protection and continuation of agriculture and forestry observations and the preservation of environmentally sensitive lands.
Agricultural, Forestry, Transitional District (AFT)	Agricultural operations and very low-density single-family residential development.
Residential Zoning Districts	
Residential Single Family - Rural (RSF-R)	Low-intensity agricultural operations and very low-density single-family uses on large parcels.
Residential Single Family - Estate (RSF-E)	Low-density, single-family residential development
Residential Single Family - 1 District (RSF-1)	Medium-low density single-family and duplex residential development
Residential Single Family - 2 District (RSF-2)	Medium-low density single-family and duplex residential development
Residential Single Family - 4 District (RSF-4)	Medium-density single-family and duplex residential development
Residential Single Family - 5 District (RSF-5)	Medium-density single-family, duplex and low-density multi-family residential development
Residential Single Family - 8 District (RSF-8)	Medium-high-density single-family, duplex and multi-family residential development
Residential Single Family - 12 District (RSF-12)	Medium-high-density duplex, multi-family residential development
Residential Single Family - 16 District (RSF-16)	Medium to high-density, multi-family residential development
Residential Single Family - 24 District (RSF-24)	High-density, multi-family residential development
Mixed Use - Residential (MU-R)	A mix of high-density multi-family residential and commercial uses.
Urban Residential Reserve District (URR)	Low density, single-family residential development. Subdivided lots are grouped with a larger lot reserved for future development.
Urban Nonresidential Zoning Districts	
Residential Office District (R-O)	Very low-intensity office uses on small sites in or near residential areas or between residential and commercial areas
Limited Business District (B-1)	Low-intensity neighborhood service and office uses
Concentrated Business District (B-2)	Concentrated retail, service and office uses in community downtown settings.
Limited Commercial District (C-1)	Retail, service, and office uses conducted entirely indoors.
General Commercial District (C-2)	Moderate-to high-intensity commercial uses
Limited Industrial District (I-1)	Light manufacturing uses within enclosed structures or developments
General Industrial District (I-2)	Heavy and concentrated fabrication, manufacturing and industrial uses
Mixed Use - Commercial District	Mix of commercial and high-density multi-family residential uses
Mixed Use - Old Town Clifton District (MU-OTC)	Mix of residential and commercial uses

Source: Mesa County, 2021

Housing

Trends

- Over the 2010-2020 period, Mesa County housing units have increased by 7.6%, or 4,763 units, to 67,407 total units.
- Housing units have grown somewhat slower in the unincorporated county (up 5.1%, or 1,498 units, in 2010-2020).
- The unincorporated part of Mesa County had 46% of the county's total housing units in 2020.
- The number of vacant, unoccupied housing units has declined countywide from 2010 to 2020.
- The average number of persons per household edged down slightly over the past decade countywide.

Source: 2020 Decennial Census

**67,407 Total
Units in Mesa
County:
63,133 occupied
+ 4,274 vacant**

30,800 in Unincorporated Mesa
County (46%)

Source: 2020 Decennial Census



\$372,000

Median Home Sales Price

(Jan/Feb 2022)

Source: <https://thebusinesstimes.com/mesa-county-real-estate-trends-continue>

MesaTogether

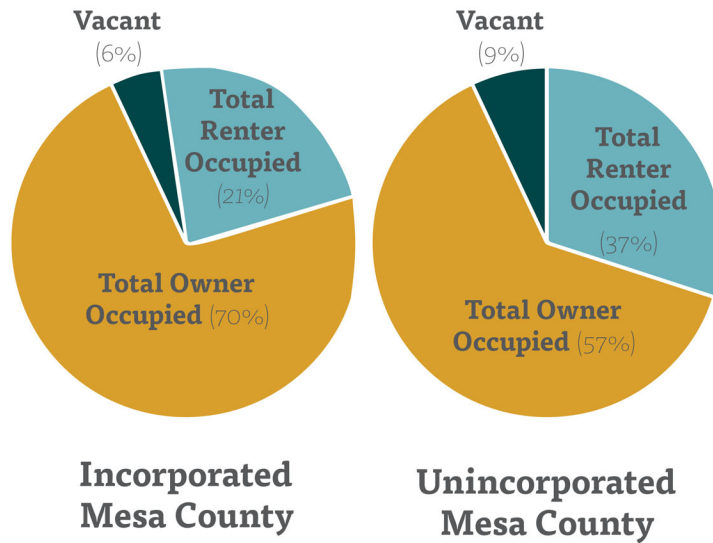
Housing Tenure and Type

Key Understanding

Unincorporated Mesa County has a higher share of single-family detached units than the municipalities.

Clifton has a high share of mobile homes.

Redlands and Fruitvale have high shares of single family detached units.



Source: American Community Survey, 2015-2019



69%

Single Family Residential



21%

Attached Residential



10%

Mobile Homes

Source: American Community Survey, 2015-2019

Natural Resources, Energy and Resilience

Trends

- Drought, fire, and flood pose a significant risk hazards for the future.
- Water rights and irrigation needs may impact water availability.
- Tourism and resource extraction may impact natural lands, habitats, and environmentally sensitive areas.

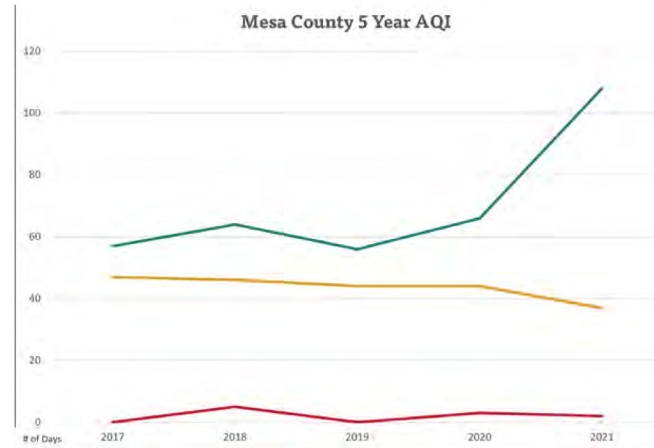


Air Quality

Key Understanding

Air quality is a growing concern.

Wildfires can diminish air quality and can cause health issues to varying degrees.



Year	AQI Median	# Days of PM 2.5	# Days Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups
2017	47	57	0
2018	46	64	5
2019	44	56	0
2020	44	66	3
2021	37	108	2

Source: EPA Air Quality Index Report

Key Understanding

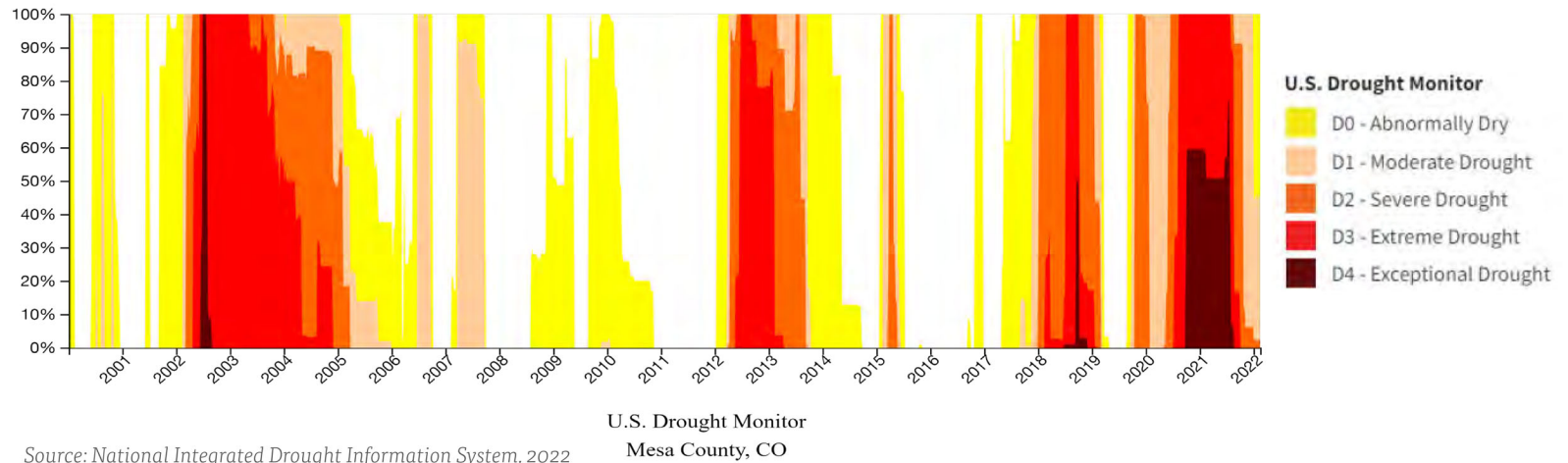
Drought & Hazards

As of February of 2022, roughly 65,000 people in Mesa County were affected by drought.

Drought occurrences were most severe in 2002-2005, 2012-2013, and 2018-2021.

Erosion potential is highest along the mountainous portion of I-70 and the north and northeast portions of the county.

Source: National Integrated Drought Information System, 2022



Hazards in Mesa County (High Hazard Potential Only)			
Hazard Type	Occurrence	Magnitude/Severity	Hazard Level
Wildfire	Highly likely	Limited	High
Flood	Highly likely	Critical	High
Landslide/Rockfall	Highly likely	Critical	High

Table is based on past events, impacts, and future probability of each of the hazards.
Source: Mesa County Hazard Mitigation Plan

Key Understanding

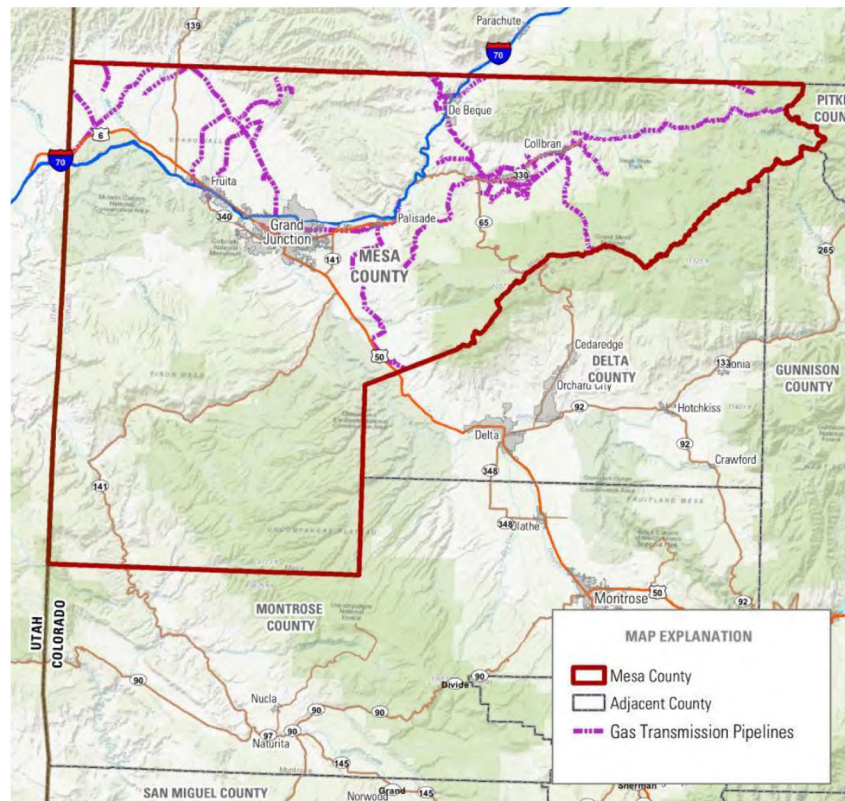
The energy industry has historically played a significant role in Mesa County.

Residents get their energy from Xcel Energy, Grand Valley Power, Black Hills Energy and Propane Providers

There are roughly 60,000 accounts in Mesa County, mostly gas and electric.

Natural gas pipelines connect Mesa County to major markets.

Energy - Utilities



Source: Mesa County Resource Management Plan, 2020

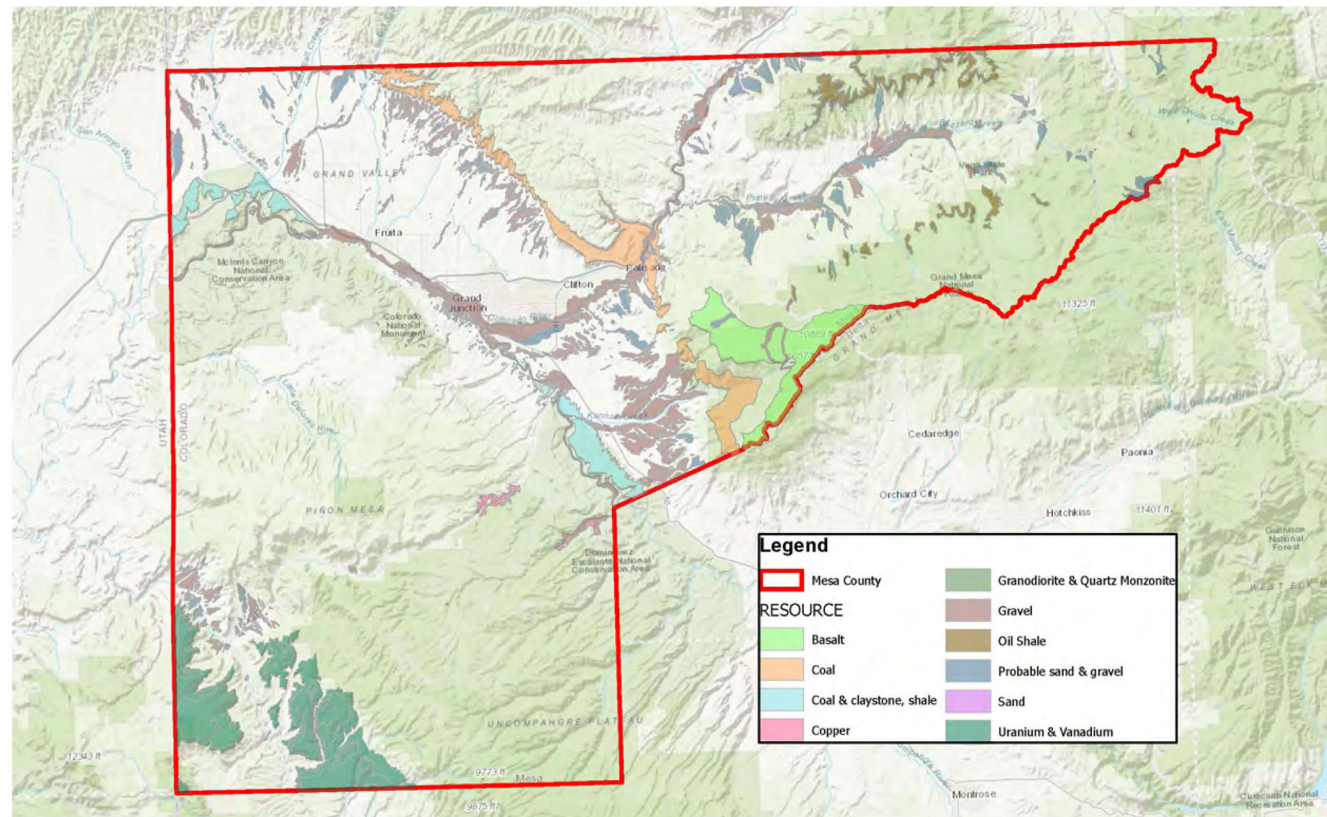
Key Understanding

The most common minerals in the County are gravel and uranium.

Coal deposits are primarily found along the northern mountains of the county, though active mining has been minimal in the recent past.

Most fossil fuels in Mesa County are rich in natural gas with limited liquid oil due to the geology of the basin.

Mineral Resources



Source: Mesa County Planning and Economic Development Department

Open Space, Recreation and Agriculture

Trends

- Focus groups indicated natural lands are prioritized by many Mesa County residents.
- Tourism and resource extraction can occur in and proximate to environmentally sensitive areas.
- The county has over 10,000 miles of recreational trails on a variety of properties.
- One recent highlight in the outdoor recreation economy is the Palisade Plunge and is predicted to bring as much as \$5 million in visitor spending to Mesa County.
- As of the 2017 agricultural census, there were 2,465 farms in the County (+9% since 2012) representing 342,534 acres of land (-11% since 2012). The average size of farms was 139 acres (-19% since 2012), indicating a shift to smaller farms over the period.

Source: United States Department of Agriculture, 2017

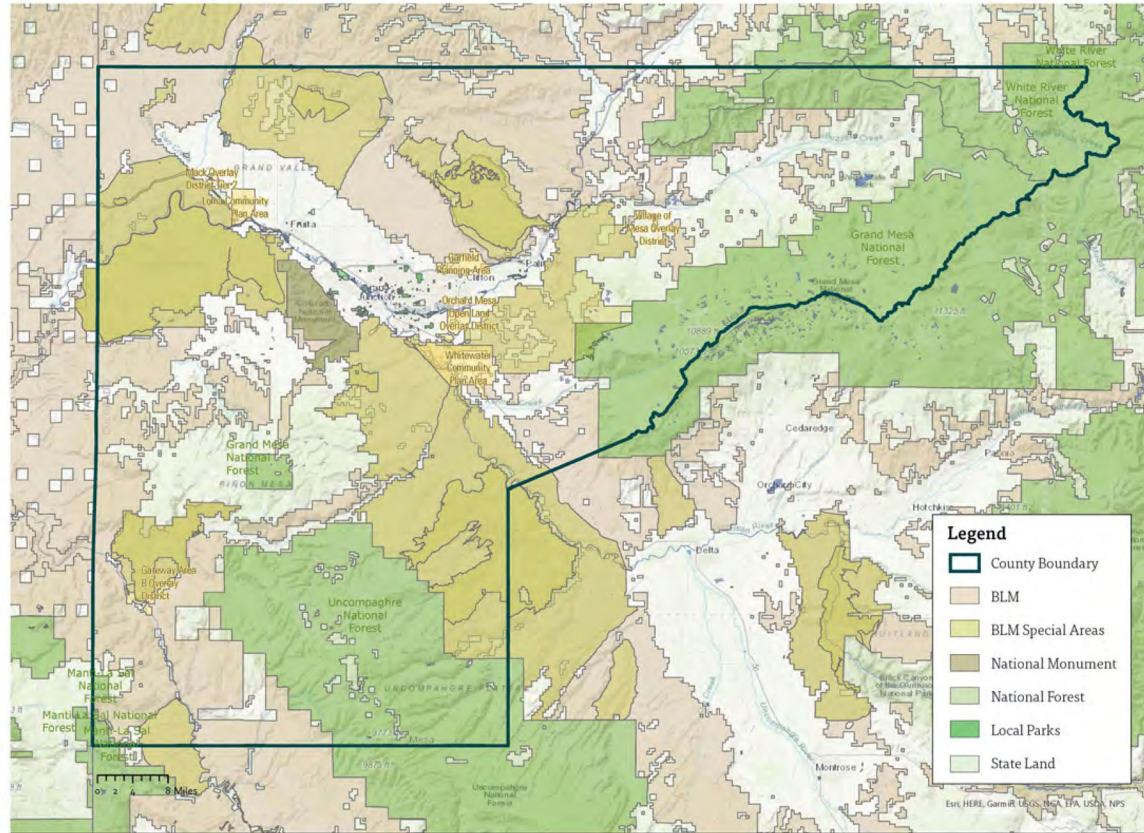
Key Understanding

72.7% of lands are federally owned/managed.

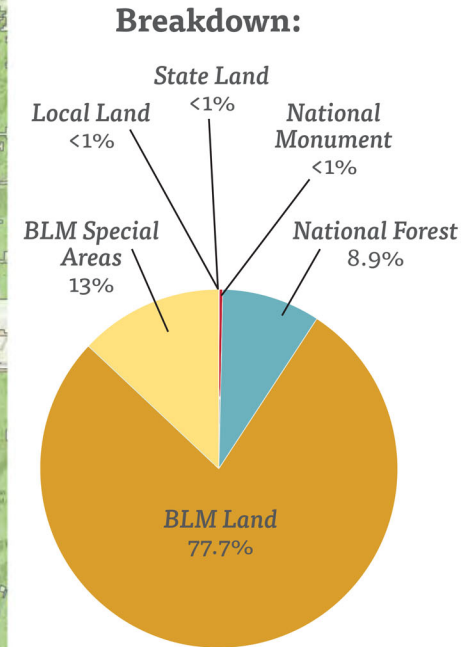
3,729 acres are state lands.

935,000 acres are federal mineral estates.

Public Land



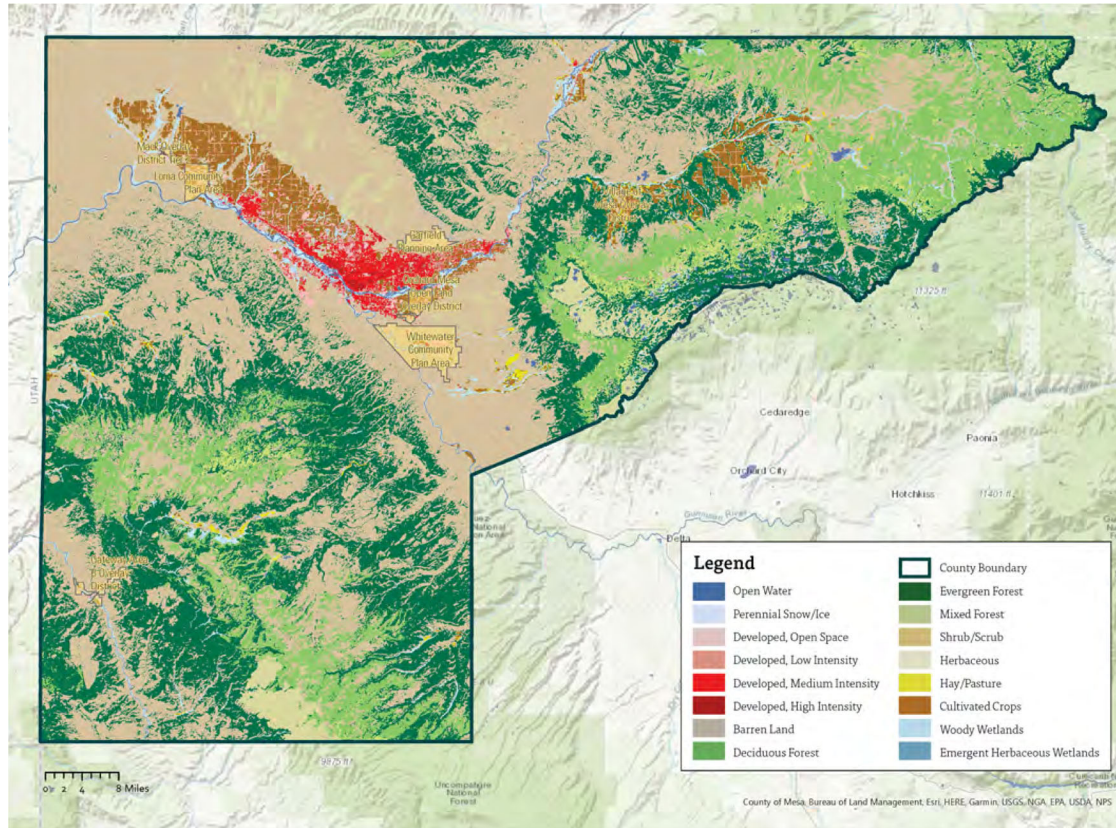
Source: Mesa County, 2021



Key Understanding

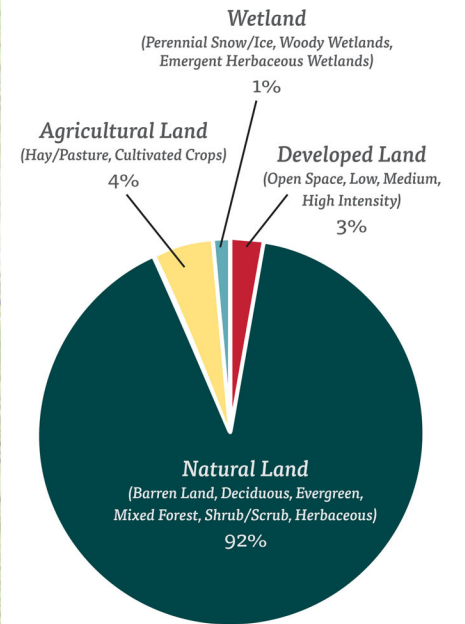
A significant portion of Mesa County is undisturbed open lands and natural areas.

Land Cover



Source: National Land Cover Dataset, 2019

Breakdown:



Source: National Land Cover Dataset, 2019

Key Understanding

Mesa County represents 1% of state agriculture sales.

There has been a 9% increase in the number of farms from 2012 to 2017

Average size of farm in acres has decreased by 19% from 2012 to 2017

Source: United States Department of Agriculture, 2017

Agriculture



2,465 farms

Average size of farm: 139 acres

49%

CROPS

51%

LIVESTOCK

\$22,239,000

Fruits, tree nuts berries

\$9,249,000

Other crops and hay

\$5,639,000

Grains, oilseeds, dry beans, dry peas

\$5,431,000

Nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, sod

CROP SALES 2017

\$27,989,000

Cattle and calves

\$897,000

Horses, ponies, mules, burros, donkeys

\$214,000

Other animals and animal products

\$148,000

Hogs and pigs

LIVESTOCK SALES 2017

Source: United States Department of Agriculture, 2017

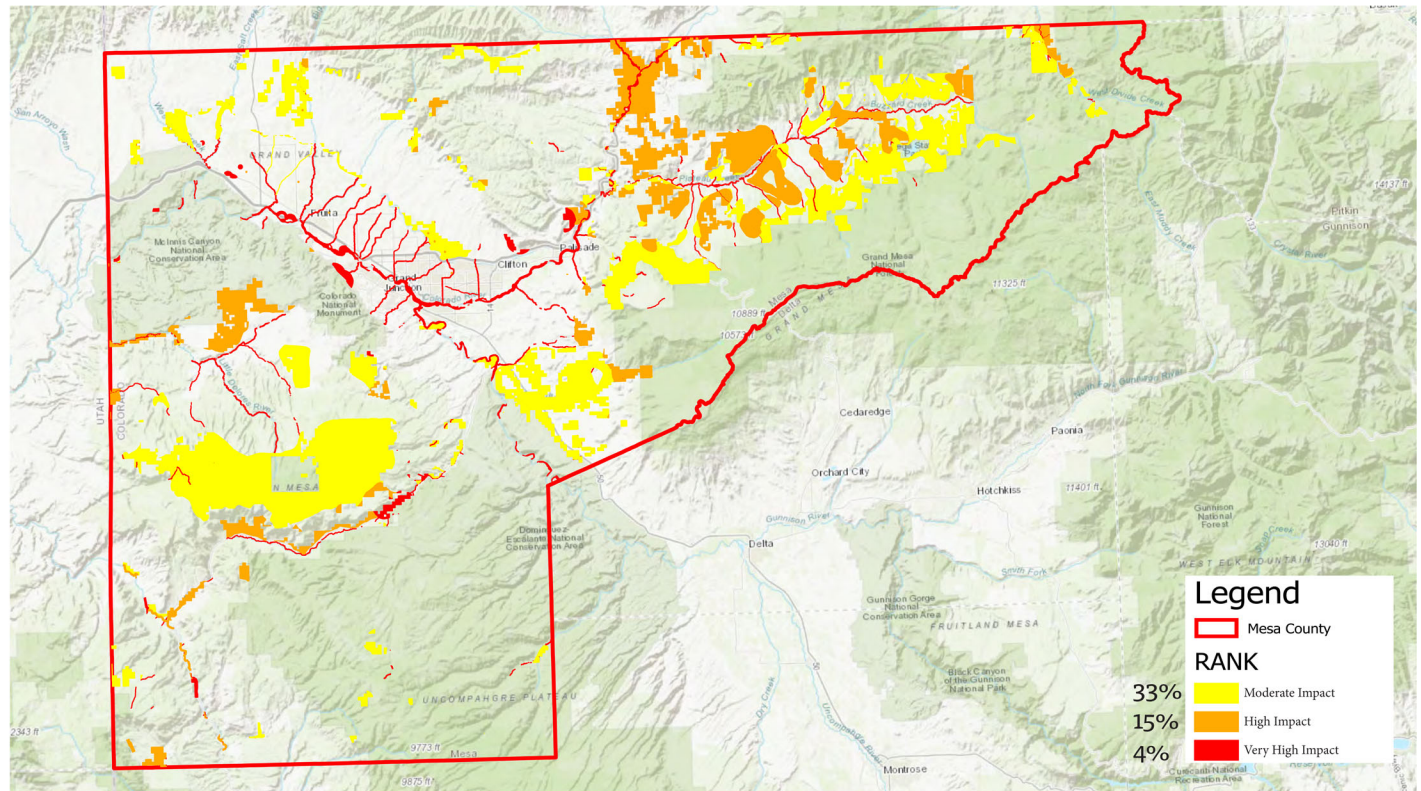
Key Understanding

Potential impact to habitats identifies locations where disturbances to the land will impact the likelihood of species sustaining and reproducing over time.

High potential impact includes much of the land along rivers and streams.

The Mesa County Resource Management Plan identifies additional considerations that inform this effort.

Natural Resources - Wildlife Areas



Source: US Fish and Wildlife Service

Natural Resources - Wetlands and Water

Key Understanding

Water supply is a critical issue for Mesa County.

Snowpack plays a critical role to the streams and tributaries leading to the Colorado River.

Groundwater is linked with four regional aquifers of the Colorado plateau.

Wetlands are concentrated along rivers and in some upper montane areas in the eastern portion of the County.

The Upper and Lower Colorado basins provide the majority of river water to the region and there are 4 major aquifers providing groundwater.

As of 2016, there were 2,431 water wells inventoried in Mesa County, with 59% being domestic household use.

Source: Geology and Groundwater Resources of Mesa County, Colorado

Resource Type	Percentage of Mesa County	Resource Area
Freshwater Emergent Wetlands	0.53%	11,309 acres
Forested Scrub Shrub Wetlands	0.25%	5,299 acres
Freshwater Pond	0.16%	3,397 acres
Lake	0.17%	3,719 acres
Riverine	1.71%	36,551 acres

Source: Mesa County GIS Department

Transportation & Infrastructure

Trends

- The growing retired population will likely change travel demands for those who no longer drive or commute. *Source: Colorado State Demographers Office*
- The current economic diversification of tourism, education, and healthcare industries taking place may change travel demands. *Source: GVRTP 2045*
- Remote work may change off-peak travel times and commuting.
- Emerging technologies, such as autonomous vehicles and on-demand transportation may have an impact on travel patterns. *Source: GVRTP 2045*
- An emphasis on multimodal connections, biking, walking, and transit has been associated with increased economic development in peer communities around the country. *Source: www.pedbikeinfo.org/factsfigures/facts_economy.cfm*
- More than 500,000 passengers traveled through Grand Junction Airport in 2019, breaking half a million passengers for the first time. *Source: Grand Junction Airport*

Key Understanding

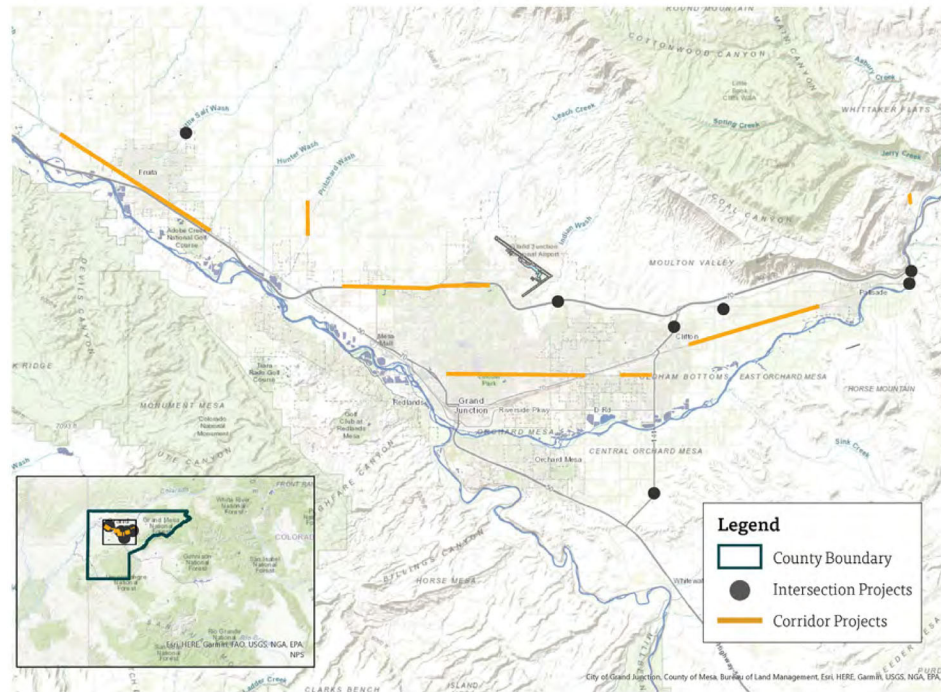
Changes in population, economic conditions, land use, and demographics are among the major drivers of transportation needs.

The economic contribution of the airport to the regional economy is estimated at \$710 million.

Transportation Future

Future Transportation Infrastructure Improvements:

Mesa County has several intersection improvements, corridor enhancements, and bridge improvements identified in the Capital Improvements Program that are a significant priority for the county. These projects are shown in the figure below.



Source: Fehr & Peers (mapped from various previous plans. GVRTP, Fruita Circulation Plan, CIP)

Corridor Improvements:

North Avenue from 1st Street to I-70B

US-6A

US-6C

I-70B from 24 Road to 15th Street

Cameo Road

E Road from Agape Way to 31 Road

22 Road from I Road to J Road

North River Road

Intersection/Bridge Improvements:

I-70B and F ½ Road

29 Road Interchange: Studying a new interchange at I-70 and 29 Road

SH-141 and Springfield Road

End of North River Road at Colorado River

34 Road south of G Road

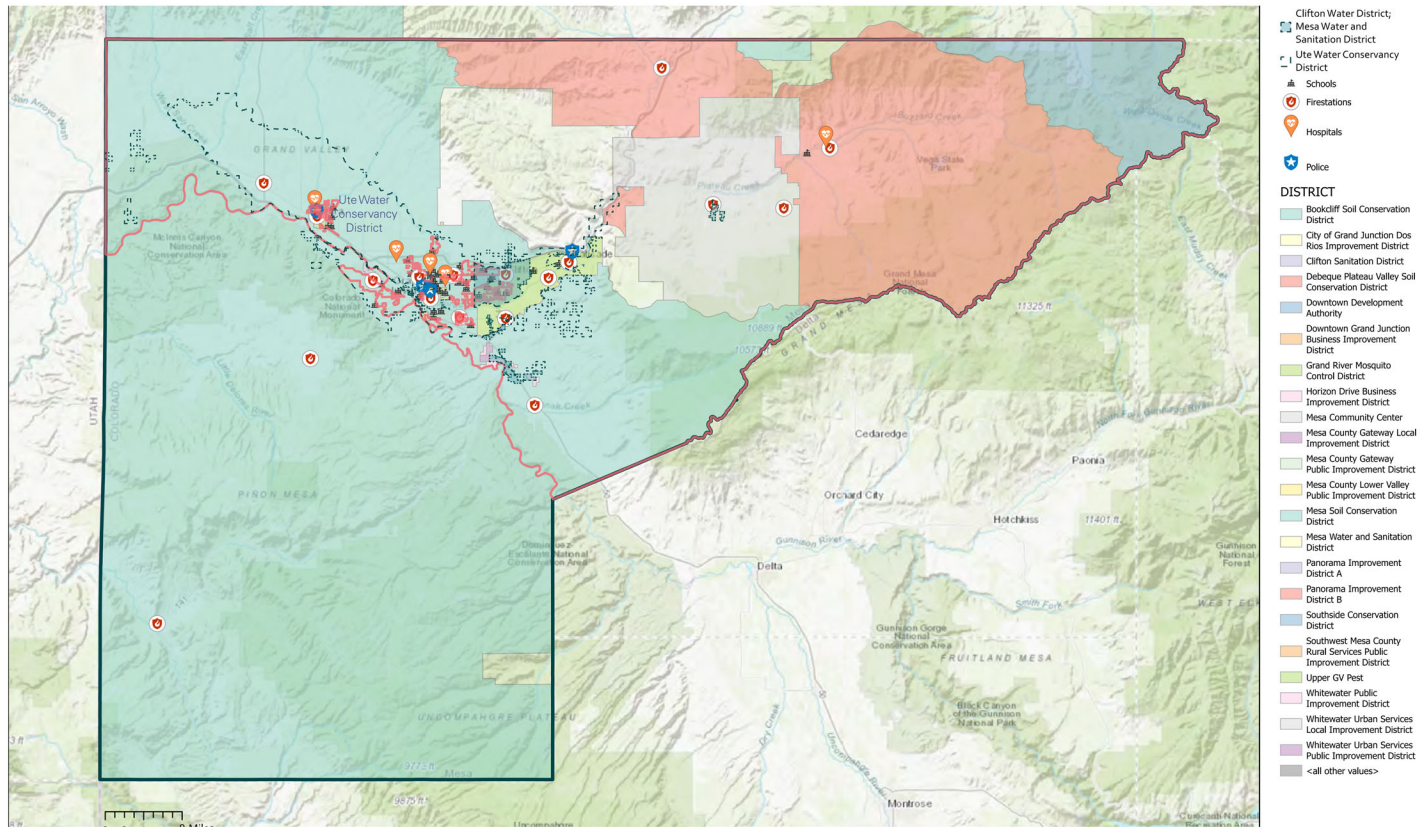
185 Road and K.99 Road

Key Understanding

The County provides roads and road maintenance.

Services are provided to unincorporated areas through Special Districts and Improvement Districts.

Services and Public Facilities



Source: Mesa County, 2021

Economy

Trends

- Competitive economic strengths include anchor institutions such as the Airport, Colorado Mesa University, and health care facilities, as well as the relative affordability of housing and cost of living.
- Mesa County has experienced a number of boom/bust economic cycles over the past several decades. Energy and construction sectors have been particularly cyclical.
- After a slow growth post-recession over the past decade, Mesa County is projected to experience substantial job growth going forward.
- Jobs within the City of Grand Junction currently accounts for approximately 75% of Mesa County's jobs.
- The State Demographer projects growth from 77,598 jobs in 2020 to 93,027 jobs in 2030 and 104,829 jobs in 2040.

Source: Colorado State Demography Office, 2020

2020 employment estimates for selected basic industry sectors:

Agribusiness: **2,987 jobs**

Mining/oil and gas: **1,447 jobs**

Manufacturing: **2,313 jobs**

State and federal government: **4,548 jobs**

Tourism: **3,986 jobs**

Regional center / national services: **12,745 jobs**

Retirees: **7,973 jobs**

Source: Colorado State Demography Office, 2020

Key Understanding

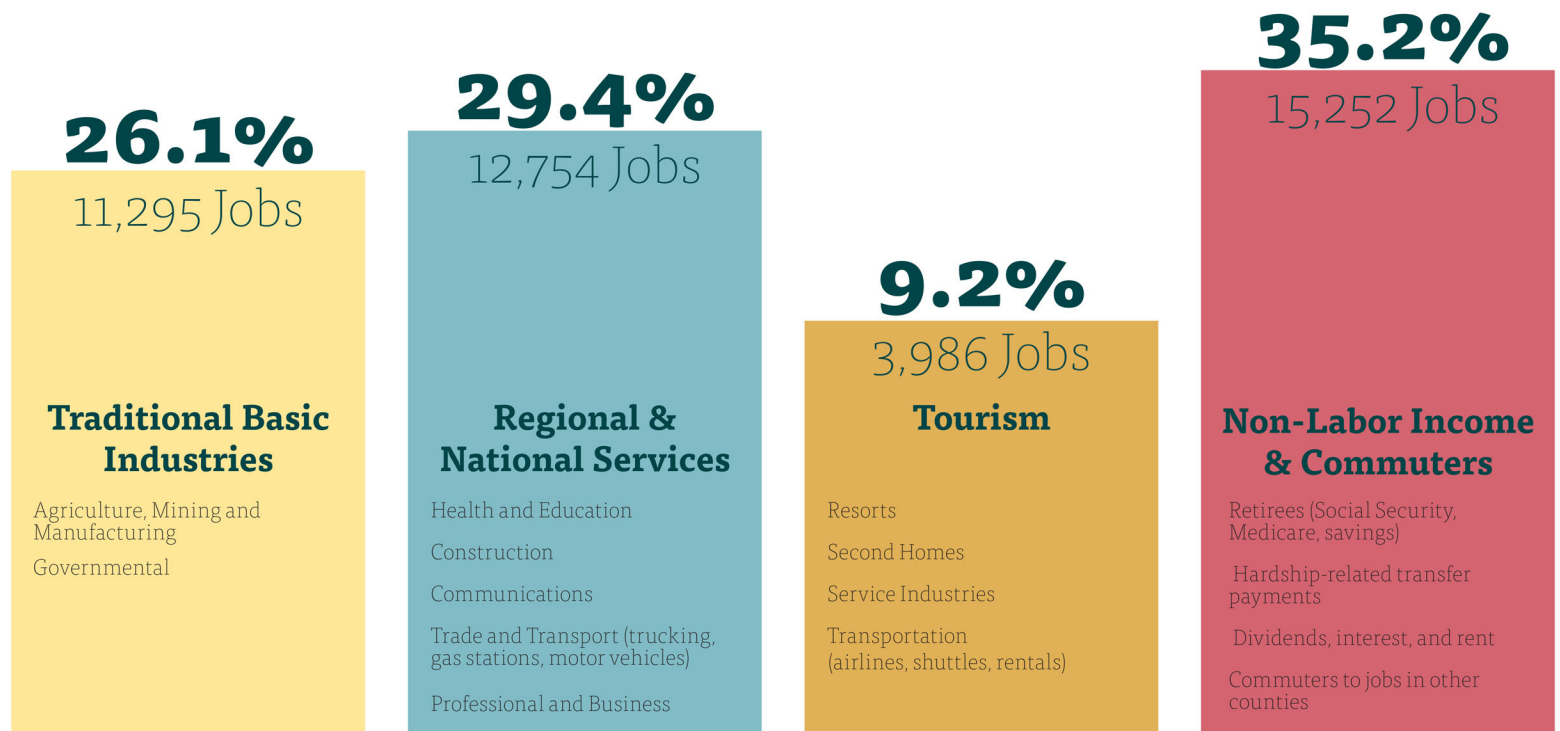
Economic Base

Mesa County has a diverse economic base, spread across several sectors.

Tourism related jobs dropped by 11.3% in 2019-2020 due to COVID.

Regional and national services grew the most over the past 5 years.

Source: Colorado State Demography Office, 2020



Source: Colorado State Demography Office, 2020

Tourism

Key Understanding

53% of tourists are from outside Colorado, including 4% from outside the country.

95% of visitors come for leisure.

Visitor lodging contributes to \$230 million to the economy and food service contribute \$72 million.

Mesa County tourism spending generated \$464 million in economic impact.

What brings visitors to Mesa County?



Colorado National Monument



Wineries, museums, cultural activities, concerts, festivals, and special events



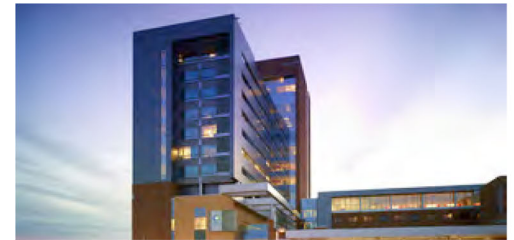
Mountain biking in Fruita, Grand Junction and Palisade



Visiting public lands, skiing, hiking, OHV, boating and hunting



Colorado Mesa University



Hospital and other health care

Source: Colorado State Demography Office, 2020



Where Should We Go, Together?

A Snapshot: Where should we go, together?

ITEMS LISTED BELOW ARE SUGGESTIONS BASED ON FOCUS GROUP CONVERSATIONS. ADDITIONAL ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES WILL BE DEVELOPED IN FUTURE PHASES OF THIS PLAN.

Land Use

- Balance future growth with rural and natural assets.
- Growth patterns that support neighborhood level services
- The ability of unincorporated communities to be proactive in the face of growth and community connectedness

Open Space, Recreation and Agriculture

- Identify recreation assets that support the economy with strategies to keep the land from being 'loved to death'
- Preservation and restoration of agricultural and natural lands

Housing

- Housing attainability and increased supply to meet demand, providing safe, adequate housing to all residents.
- Balancing the needs for future growth with access to transportation and local services

Transportation and Infrastructure

- An aging population will shift transit patterns and demand
- Multimodal planning for neighborhood connectivity and increase in transit options
- Adequate provision of services for the large number of unincorporated residents

Natural Resources, Energy and Resiliency

- Hazard mitigation planning to identify proactive solutions for fire and floods
- New energy practices to be more resilient to economic changes

Economy and Tourism

- Diversification of workforce will drive policy and regulations to support rural values and the realities of a changing workforce
- An aging population will shift the workforce
- Workforce development, local employment and capitalizing on current trends for tourism, technology, and local service for the future

Next Steps

A photograph of two people looking at a survey board titled "Shaping Aspen's Built Environment RESIDENTIAL BUILDING". The board lists "RECREATION RENOVATION" and "TRAIL AND WALKWAY CONSTRUCTION WAITS".

**Community Wide Survey
Open Now!**

A photograph of a scenic river flowing through a wooded area with mountains in the background.

**Scenario Planning
Spring 2022**

A photograph of a group of people gathered around a table, looking at a large map or plan.

**Community Workshops
Summer 2022**

Take the online survey! www.MesaSurvey.com

Thank you.



**MESA TOGETHER: Existing Conditions Summary
PRESENTATION TALKING POINTS**

TOPIC		SPEAKING POINTS
What is Mesa Together?		
Contents- Page 2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hello and Introductions • Today we will, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review what this project is and what to expect. ○ Share what we are learning from research and from focus group conversations. ○ Provide a snapshot of key data and analysis from different elements plan. ○ Wrap up with next steps.
What is Mesa Together?- Page 4		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This plan will bring the community together around future vision. • It is a strategic guidebook to guide policy and decision making toward that future. • We will look at land use patterns, population, economic drivers, environmental factors, and transportation needs. • The plan is not zoning code, detail budgets or policy. • A Comprehensive Plan (or in this case a Master Plan) is a state requirements to promote broad community values, a planning process for orderly growth and development, balancing competing demands in the built and natural environment and consider regional impacts.
Process- Page 5		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This project will take place in three phases. • We are currently in phase 1, working through research and analysis for the different elements of the plan. • This presentation will share a high-level understanding of Mesa County, today. • Our understanding will inform the vision and goals for the future.
Purpose of the Master Plan- Page 6		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The previous Master Plan is 25 years old. • A lot has happened! Changes in population, the economic cycle with a recession, boom and busts of oil and gas, changes from COVID, and the regional being on the map as a recreation destination.
Current Planning Efforts- Page 7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The County also has a concurrent effort to support the internal operations for the Mesa County organization and drive strategic initiatives. • This effort will identify synergies with the Strategic Plan and the Clifton Incorporation Feasibility Study.
Previous Plan Review- Page 8		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We recognize the work that has been done to date will set the foundation for this effort. • We reviewed 14 different plans including community plans, transportation plans, energy and wildfire plans and community health assessment.
Who are We?		
Regional Context- Page 10		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mesa County is located along the Western Boundary of Colorado, the largest metropolitan area on the Western slope, centrally located between Salt Lake City and Denver. • Major throughfare (I-70) and rail transit has played a significant role in the region for access and connectivity.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The historical role of the rail, in addition to the Interstate means the region serves an important transportation role for manufacturing and distribution of goods. The Grand Junction airport is also an important regional asset that has seen significant increase to travel in recent years. The confluence of the Colorado River and Gunnison River, as well as the Grand Mesa, Bookcliffs, and Colorado National Monument provide a scenic setting and a draw for recreation.
<p>The Communities of Mesa County- Page 11</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The County includes two cities, three towns, five census areas and several unincorporated neighborhoods. Grand Junction has the largest of the County's municipalities population in 2020, followed by Fruita, Palisade, De Beque and Collbran. Mesa County currently has substantial population in both unincorporated areas and incorporated municipalities. 47% of the population lives in unincorporated areas and 53% in incorporated municipalities.
<p>Population Growth- Page 12 and Page 13</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mesa Co. has experienced moderate growth from 2010 to 2020 (5.9%), down substantially when compared to the previous decade 2000-2010 (26%). Most growth has been to the City of Grand Junction and The Town of Fruita. Palisade, De Beque and Collbran have seen a net loss of population. Unincorporated Mesa Co. has seen 25% growth in the past decade, which is slightly less than the early 2000s-32% from 2000-2010. This planning effort is important to guide future growth in the coming decades. The population change map from the State demographer indicates growth on the front range in red. Mesa County and Garfield County have accommodated a significant portion of the growth on the Western Slope.
<p>Population Density Per Census Bloc- Page 14 Demographics- Page 15 and Page 16</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Much of the population in Mesa County are living along the I-70 and Hwy 50 Corridors, the more developed urban areas. Mesa County's median age is older than the state average, which has been steadily increasing since 2016. Fruita and Clifton have slightly lower age demographics (32 and 37 respectively), while Redlands and De Beque are the higher age demographics (53 and 51 respectively). Overall, lower levels of educational attainment than the State of CO, and there is concern expressed in focus groups that CMU graduates don't stay to live and work in the County. Overall, there are 63,133 households in all of Mesa County, predominantly in Clifton and Grand Junction. 15% of Mesa County is Hispanic/Latino, slightly lower than the Colorado State average of 21%.
<p>Mesa County Today.</p>	
<p>Land Use- Page 18</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A desire expressed in the focus groups was a need to preservation rural character while also providing additional housing and encourage economic growth.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a sense for additional business expansion as well as recreation and tourism and opportunities. • Current growth is centralized along the I-70 and river corridors, with agricultural and natural lands making up 90% of the county.
Existing Zoning- Page 19, 20, 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The categories in the current zone district reflect existing land uses only and do not reflect past cauterizations or future land uses. • There are 24 zone districts, with 12 being in the residential category for varied levels of density, 2 for natural areas, and 10 for commercial and industrial areas. • The existing zoning will be reviewed in this master planning process for alignment with future land use goals. • Code changes may be needed as an outcome of this process to implement zone districts in alignment with new goals and objectives.
Housing- Page 22 and 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mesa County housing units have increased by 7.6% over the past decade. • Housing prices have risen significantly over the past years. • Housing units have grown slower in the unincorporated county than in the municipalities. • Many of Mesa County's housing units are owner-occupied. • Unincorporated Mesa County had a higher share of owner-occupied units than the municipalities and a lower share of renter-occupied units and the housing stock skews heavily to single-family detached units and mobile homes in the unincorporated area. • The Clifton community had a comparatively high share of renter-occupied units.
Natural Resources, Energy and Resilience- Page 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mesa County is named after the many renowned mesas within the area. • The ecoregions of Mesa County include the Colorado Rocky Mountains, the Colorado Plateau, and the Utah High Plateau. • The Metropolitan area is surrounded by the Colorado National Monument and the Grand Mesa National Forest. Because of this, tourism has increased over the past decade. • Water availability, drought conditions and fire risk will impact considerations for future planning.
Air Quality- Page 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality was a growing concern in the sustainability and resiliency focus group. Notably, wildfires have diminished air quality. • Mesa County residents were exposed to unhealthy levels of ground level ozone for zero (0) days in 2016.
Drought and Hazards- Page 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While an increase in drought severity within the planning horizon is uncertain, it remains likely that drought conditions will be persistent for significant time periods and that Mesa County will experience ongoing drought impacts. • Erosion and associated rockfall remain a threat for a significant portion of the County, specifically the mountainous portion of I-70 and the north and northeast portions of the County.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mesa County is high risk for fire due to drought conditions as well as flooding. • Natural disaster management incorporates strategic preparation and response to disasters and includes a systematic approach to disaster prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery.
Energy – Utilities- Page 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy has long played a significant role in Mesa County, and its characteristics reflect the opportunity to continue to engage with energy resources in the future. • The plentiful sunshine and relative scarcity of potential wind resources have led to residents and businesses utilizing solar photovoltaics. • Xcel Energy (“Xcel”) is the largest electric and natural gas providing utility in Mesa County by total energy. Grand Valley Power provides electricity to more rural Mesa County, and companies such as Source Gas provide natural gas to customers in non-Xcel Energy territory.
Mineral Resources- Page 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fossil fuel extraction in Mesa County is primarily natural gas with some pockets of oil. • The robust pipeline infrastructure ensures efficient movement of resources to market.
Open Space, Recreation and Agriculture – Page 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We learned through focus groups that residents enjoy and recreation in Mesa County, with over 10,000 miles of trails and access to open BLM lands and recreational areas. • As the population of Mesa County increases, there will be consideration to future planning for recreation and resource extraction. • Proper management of natural resources will be considered to ensure future generations will have access to resources. • Agricultural uses, primarily crops and livestock, are important to the County.
Public Land- Page 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 72.7% of lands are federally owned/managed, a significant portion is of which is managed by the Bureau of Land Management. • There are 3,729 acres are state lands. • 935,000 acres of federal mineral estates.
Land Cover- Page 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only about 3% of the land area of Mesa County is considered ‘Developed’. • 4% of the land area is considered agricultural. • The remaining land area is made up of natural lands including forests, scrub growth lands, and wetland areas.
Agriculture- Page 32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture is an important economic driver. Mesa County accounts for about 1% of agricultural sales. • The primary agricultural uses are crops and livestock.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The total number of farms have increased but have shifted to smaller farm sizes.
Natural Resources- Wildlife Areas- Page 33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mesa County Resource Management Plan outlines detailed assessment and classifications for wildlife in Mesa County. Areas for potential high impact, where disturbance would impact a species sustaining over time, are located along the creeks, streams, and rivers throughout Mesa County,
Natural Resources- Wetlands and Water- Page 34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The of the Colorado and Gunnison Rivers are important regional waterways. Water is an important consideration for Mesa County to balance agriculture needs with providing water for future households.
Transportation- Page 35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transportation in Mesa County is impacted by I-70, Hwy 50, the river and rail corridors, and the Grand Junction Airport. The internal roadway network is important for connecting those living in rural areas to the goods and services offered in more developed areas of the County. Focus groups expressed the need for multimodal connectivity, including transit, connected bike networks, and walking routes, especially in unincorporated areas with higher densities of population.
Transportation- Page 36	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are several future projects in Mesa County based on the current Capital Improvements Plan.
Services and Public Facilities- Page 37	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mesa County provides services for a large population of unincorporated residents through special district, including waste and refuse, sanitation, and water services. Since these are services typically provided by municipalities, special districts have been set up in areas of higher density populations
Economy- Page 38	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Economy has been diversifying from traditional boom and bust cycles related to oil and gas to include more national and regional services and tourism. Mesa County's growing economic diversification may help to moderate economic fluctuations in the future by reducing dependence on a single industry. Colorado State Demography Office projects job growth across all basic industry groups: traditional basic industry jobs (combination of agribusiness, manufacturing, state/federal government, mining/oil & gas), regional and national services, tourism, retiree-generated jobs.
Economic Base- Page 39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The competitive strengths of the region include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Airport, CMU, and healthcare facilities Affordability of housing and cost of living Location along major Interstate and relative populous on the Western slope

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industries that sell goods or services outside the local area are considered the base of the economy; these “Basic Industries” are responsible for existence of the local economy as they bring in outside dollars to the community. This has implications countywide for transportation infrastructure, housing, public finance, and related to planning.
<p>Recreation and Tourism- Page 40</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tourism has had a growing economic impact over the past decade. Tourism accounts for 10% of the jobs in Mesa County and was down by 11.3% from 2019 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. These jobs will rebound as the tourism economy improves in Mesa County and in Colorado. Attractions to the area include natural lands such as the Mesa and Monument, recreation, especially biking. Colorado Mesa University and Healthcare services also contribute to tourism by attracting people from across the Western slope and parts of Utah.
<p>Where Do We Go Together?</p>	
<p>Snapshot: Where do we go, together? – Page 42</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on what we have learned through analysis and heard from focus groups, we have identified some themes to serve as a framework for the Master Plan elements. Looking ahead, there are ideas emerging that will be important for the Master Plan to address in the next phases of the project. We are excited to learn more about what is important to you and the Mesa Community to help refine and add to these ideas.
<p>Next Steps- Page 43</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take the survey! Tell your friends to take the survey! The current survey will also serve as an important touchpoint of understanding the communities’ values for the future. The Survey will be available until Friday, April 22. Following the survey, we will look at growth scenarios for how to address future planning to share with you and the Mesa Community in summer of this year.