

# **Palisade, Colorado**

## **Comprehensive Plan**



**Four Corners Planning and Design**

May 15, 2007

# Table of Contents

<i>Chapter 1 Introduction</i>	<i>1-1</i>
Why Plan?	1-1
Creating the Plan	1-1
Community Roots	1-4
From the Past into the Future: Growth Trends	1-5
<i>Chapter 2 Community Character &amp; Design</i>	<i>2-1</i>
Geographic Setting and Community Form	2-1
Community Design	2-1
Desired Future Condition, Policies & Action Items	2-2
<i>Chapter 3 Land Use &amp; Growth Management</i>	<i>3-1</i>
Planning Sub-Areas	3-1
Analysis of Existing Land Use	3-2
Build-out Assumptions and Calculations	3-2
Alternative Growth Scenarios	3-9
Future Land Use Plan	3-9
Desired Future Condition, Policies & Action Items	3-15
<i>Chapter 4 Housing</i>	<i>4-1</i>
Introduction	4-1
Public Opinion About Housing	4-2
Desired Future Condition, Policies & Action Items	4-2
<i>Chapter 5 Economic Development</i>	<i>5-1</i>
Palisade and the Regional Economy	5-1
Palisade's Revenue Base	5-2
Tax Incentives to Attract New Businesses	5-3
Desired Future Condition, Policy & Action Items	5-5
<i>Chapter 6 Transportation</i>	<i>6-1</i>
Multi-Modal Transportation	6-1
Projected Traffic Volumes	6-1
Long Range Transportation Recommendations	6-2
Recommended Modifications	6-4
Desired Future Condition, Policy & Action Items	6-6
<i>Chapter 7 Infrastructure</i>	<i>7-1</i>
Introduction	7-1
Potable Water	7-1
Sanitary Sewer	7-2

Storm Water Drainage _____	7-3
Desired Future Condition, Policies & Action Items _____	7-4
<i>Chapter 8 Parks, Recreation &amp; Trails</i> _____	<i>8-1</i>
Quality of Life, Tourism, Economic Development _____	8-1
Public Support for Parks, Recreation and Trails _____	8-1
Current Planning Efforts _____	8-4
Inventory of Existing Parks & Recreation Facilities _____	8-4
Future Recreation Facilities _____	8-6
Recreation Advisory Committee Recommendations _____	8-7
Desired Future Condition, Policies & Action Items _____	8-9
<i>Chapter 9 Community Facilities &amp; Services</i> _____	<i>9-1</i>
Palisade Civic Center _____	9-1
Police Protection _____	9-1
Fire and Emergency Response _____	9-1
Public Works _____	9-2
Desired Future Condition, Policies & Action Items _____	9-3
<i>Chapter 10 Agriculture &amp; Open Space</i> _____	<i>10-1</i>
Agriculture and Quality of Life _____	10-1
The Agricultural Economy _____	10-1
Desired Future Condition, Policies & Action Items _____	10-5
<i>Chapter 11 Implementation</i> _____	<i>11-1</i>



# Chapter 1 Introduction

## Why Plan?

A Comprehensive Plan is an official public document designed to guide the future development or redevelopment of a community in order to create and maintain a desirable environment and to promote the public health, safety, and welfare. The plan is intended for use by public officials, citizens, and developers in making decisions about future development of the Town of Palisade and the surrounding area of Mesa County.

The plan addresses the relationships between the physical layout of the community, economic development, public facilities, the provision of government services and preservation of Palisade's agricultural character. The plan provides a framework for managing growth in a manner that attempts to preserve quality of life while fostering a healthy economy.

While the plan is an advisory document, it is the basis for revising existing regulations or enacting new regulations and for guiding project review recommendations. The plan affects new development and major expansions of existing development. Existing development is not affected by the plan, except that voluntary compliance with new policies is encouraged.

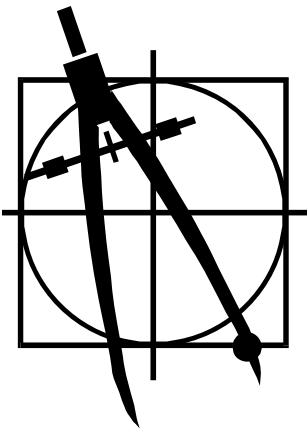
The plan recognizes that protection of individual property rights is a fundamental legal and philosophical principle of the nation, the State of Colorado, Mesa County, and the Town of Palisade. However, the plan also recognizes a common vision to preserve community character and environmental and scenic qualities, while enhancing economic opportunities and creating a more diverse economy. The plan attempts to strike an appropriate balance among individual property rights, the environment, and achieving the common vision.

## Creating the Plan

Planning is a process that involves many steps, culminating in the preparation of a plan with maps and text. The steps leading to this plan included: engaging the public through various techniques; collection and analysis of pertinent data; developing a vision statement and desired future conditions for each planning element; developing alternative growth management scenarios; selection of a preferred growth scenario; evaluation of policy options; and development of the Comprehensive Plan.

## *Engaging the Public*

Citizen participation in the planning process was encouraged throughout the study. Six methods were used to solicit public input: meetings with the Steering Committee, interviews with community leaders, informal gatherings at local restaurants, public workshops, a public opinion survey and posting numerous interim progress reports and other documents on the Town's website.





**The Steering Committee** consisted of residents of the Town of Palisade and Mesa County appointed by the Palisade Town Board. This committee functioned as the primary working-level citizens' group. It provided detailed comments on the community survey design and policy options and gave direction on how to conduct public workshops.

**Interviews with community leaders** comprising a cross section of Palisade area citizens were conducted to obtain their perspectives on issues that should be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan update. Also, these individuals were invaluable sources of information. A summary of the interviews is on file at the Palisade town Hall and is posted on the Town's website.

**Informal gatherings** were held at three local restaurants to provide an opportunity for the public to examine preliminary planning documents, including maps of existing land use. These gatherings also facilitated conversations between the Comprehensive Plan consultants, Town staff and individuals and small groups about issues addressed in the plan.

**Three public workshops** were held to solicit public input during the early, middle, and late phases of the planning process. Each workshop was preceded by an open house during which the public had an opportunity to view maps and other documents on display. The purpose of the first workshop was to present the results of the community survey, identify other issues and concerns not included on the survey, and to conduct a growth allocation exercise. This exercise provided citizen input about the general location and distribution of future residential growth.



At the second public workshop, land use and demographic data were presented along with several alternative growth management scenarios for public comment. The preferred growth management scenario and the draft Comprehensive Plan were presented at the third public workshop.

**A public opinion survey** was developed with assistance from Town officials and the Steering Committee. The survey was mailed to approximately 2,500 households in Palisade and the surrounding area. About 150 surveys were returned. The results of the survey are posted on the Town's website.

**The Town of Palisade's website** [www.townofpalisade.org](http://www.townofpalisade.org) includes numerous progress reports and other information pertaining to the Comprehensive Plan that were developed during the planning process. Reports were posted in an attempt to keep web visitors abreast of the progress of plan development.

## ***Collection and Analysis of Data***

Existing information and studies were reviewed and analyzed. Data was obtained from interviews with key individuals as well as written reports and statistics prepared by the Town, Mesa County, state and federal agencies and other organizations.

### *Land Use Inventory*

A parcel-based land use inventory of Palisade and the surrounding three mile plan area was conducted to identify and quantify various types of land uses and densities to serve as a basis for projecting future growth and developing alternative growth management scenarios.

### *Vision Statement and Desired Future Conditions*

Based on input obtained from the public participation process, a vision statement was developed, and statements of desired future conditions for each planning element were written to guide growth during the next 20 years. While the vision statement is broad and general, statements of desired future conditions reflect more specific values, issues and concerns. Desired future conditions, often called goals, are defined as long-term ideals or end products that are desired. Since they are ideals, desired future conditions are rarely fully achieved. Statements of desired future conditions were derived from citizens' expressions of special values, issues, concerns and needs stated or implied in interviews with community leaders, at informal gatherings at local restaurants, at the first public workshop, and in response to the community survey.

Statements of desired future conditions are presented with each planning element.

## A Vision for the Town of Palisade

---

Preserve and enhance the agricultural village atmosphere of Palisade while fostering tourism, economic growth and prosperity to create an attractive and vibrant community for residents and visitors.

## *Alternative Growth Management Scenarios*

Three alternative growth management scenarios were developed and presented to the Steering Committee for comment and then presented at the second public workshop for discussion and comment. The scenarios are described in detail in Chapter 3.

## *Preferred Growth Management Scenario and the Future Land Use Map*

Based on input from the Steering Committee and the second public workshop, a preferred growth management scenario and the draft Future Land Use Map were developed and presented to the Steering Committee and then to the public at the third public workshop.

## *Policies and Action Items*

Desired future conditions are achieved by developing and implementing policies that provide guidance to Town officials as well as individuals and businesses that seek a change in land use or propose new development.

- A policy is defined as a statement describing the general philosophy that guides decision making consistent with achieving a desired future condition.
- An action item is defined as a specific step that should be accomplished to implement a given policy.

The Steering Committee played a central role in developing and recommending policies and action items, which are presented with each planning element in following chapters.

## **Community Roots**

Considered the first identifiable human inhabitants of the region, the Fremont people traversed the valley during hunting and gathering trips and cultivated crops such as corn, squash and beans. After the Fremont disappeared around 1200 A.D., Ute bands, who were primarily hunters and gatherers attracted by the mild winters and proximity to abundant game, became the primary residents of the area. The Utes remained the dominant inhabitants until they were forcefully removed to Indian reservations in southwest Colorado and northeast Utah.

The U.S. government opened the Grand Valley for settlement in 1883. The Palisade area was recognized by early settlers as a favorable location for fruit growing and other agriculture. The first orchards were planted along Rapid Creek and an area now known as the Vinelands just east of Town. A flourishing agricultural industry emerged at the east end of the valley as water was diverted from the Colorado River to fill the extensive network of ditches and canals. Vineyards became an important segment of the agricultural industry but nearly disappeared in the 1930s due to competition from peach growers and from the pressures of Prohibition.

While orchards now remain the prominent agricultural feature of the area, grapes were again being planted by the late 1970s. In 1982, the Rocky Mountain Association of Vintners and Viticulturalists was formed to promote Colorado's emerging wine business. Wines from the Palisade area are highly regarded, and the wine industry has brought new businesses and tourism to the Palisade area.

Railroads were completed through Palisade in 1890, providing easy access for local fruit growers. Refrigerated railroad cars were the primary transportation method for shipping fruit until the late 1970s when truck transport became dominant.

Coal mining has played a significant role in the history of the Grand Valley. The Cameo mine area was opened in 1882, providing coal to the valley and to the nearby Public Service Company power plant. Although there are no active coal mines now, the shale oil boom of the 1980s stimulated growth in the area, and renewed interest in energy extraction further east could affect Palisade's future growth.

## From the Past into the Future: Growth Trends



During the past century, the population of the Town of Palisade has more than tripled from 900 in 1910, six years after it was incorporated in 1904, to approximately 2,800 in 2004, as estimated by the Colorado Office of Demography (COD). The Town's growth was stagnant until the 1970s. The 1970 population was only 874. By contrast, the population increased to 1,551 in 1980, an annual average growth rate of 7.8 percent. Growth slowed during the 1980s to an annual average rate of about 2.1 percent, resulting in a 1990 population of 1,874. The growth rate accelerated during the 1990s to about 3.8 percent per year, resulting in a 2000 population of 2,579. According to COD population estimates, the Town grew to a population of 2,802 by July 2004, a more modest annual average increase of about 2.2 percent.

This Comprehensive Plan also addresses the area surrounding Palisade, including the area within the water service area and a three mile radius, which is referred to as the three mile plan area.

The 2000 population of the three mile plan area (6,277), which includes the Town of Palisade, was estimated by aggregating 2000 U.S. Census block data. Future population growth in the extra-territorial area will impact the regional economy and some Town services. Growth of the Town's hinterland will also affect the amount of land needed for commercial land uses, most of which will continue to be located within the Town or newly annexed areas. Thus it is important to develop population projections for the extra-territorial area within the three mile plan area as well as for the Town.

Figures 1-1 and 1-2 present alternative population projections for the Town of Palisade and the three mile plan area, respectively. Given the uncertainty of future local, regional, national, and international events and conditions, it is preferable to present future population growth as a range rather than as a single number. Figures 1-1 and 1-2 show projected population growth from 2000 to 2025 under low, moderate and robust growth scenarios. Figure 1-1 also indicates historic growth for the Town from 1960 to 2000.



The three population growth scenarios are based on alternative average annual growth rates, which are derived from historical growth trends as well as projections developed by COD for Mesa County. The rationale for the each alternative growth rate is described below.

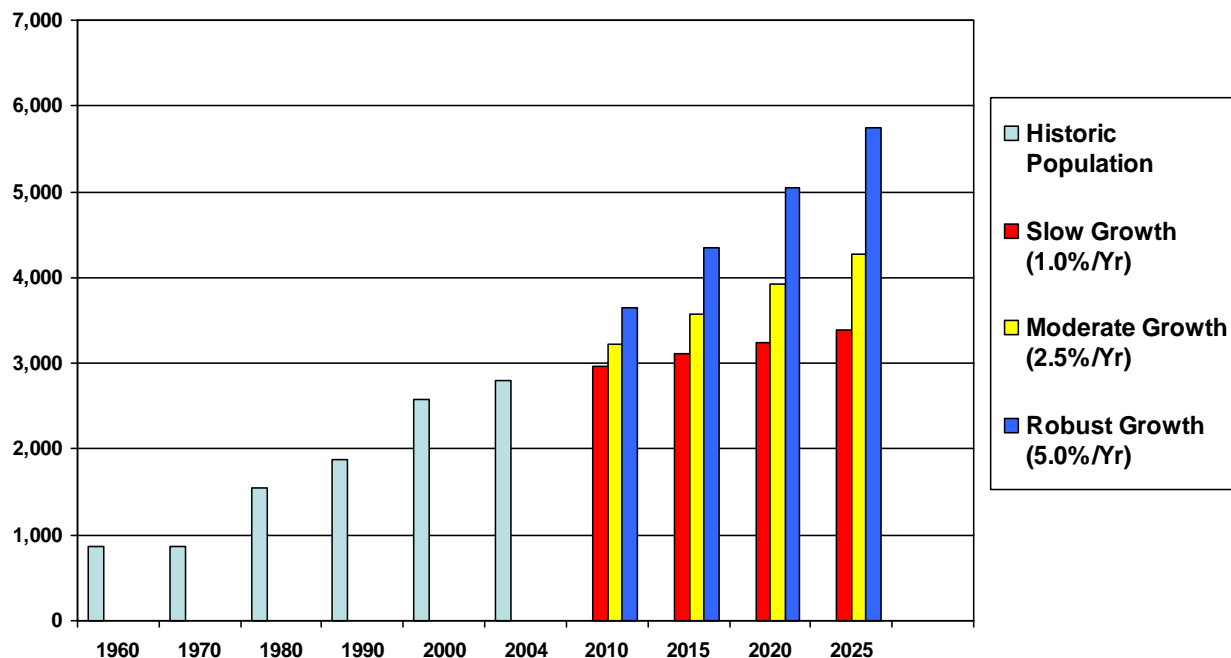
- **Low growth (1 % average annual growth rate)** – Between 1960 and 1970, the Town of Palisade experienced a net gain of only 14 persons, according to the U.S. Census, growing from 860 to 874, less than 1 percent annually. Between 1980 and 1990, the population of Mesa County grew from 81,530 to 93,145, an average annual increase of less than 1.5 percent. Based on COD estimates, the Town's population increased by only 1.3 percent from 2001 to 2002. Thus, it is possible, based on past and recent trends, that the Town of Palisade and the surrounding three mile plan area could experience slow growth during the next 20 years.
- **Moderate growth (2.5% average annual growth rate)** – Between 1980 and 1990, the Town of Palisade's population increased from 1,551 to 1,871, according to the U.S. Census, an average annual growth rate of 2.1 %. Between 1990 and 2000, the Mesa County population increased from 93,145 to 116,255, an average annual growth rate of 2.5 %. This growth rate continued from 2000 to 2004, according to COD, with the population of Mesa County increasing from 116,255 to 127,808. Furthermore, COD estimated that the Town of Palisade's population grew from 2,579 in 2000 to 2,802 in 2004, an average annual increase of 2.2 percent. Predicting an economic recovery in Colorado and a strong national economy, COD projects that Mesa County will grow to a population of about 203,000 by 2025, an average annual increase of 2.8 percent. Thus, it is possible, based on past trends and COD projections, that the Town of Palisade and the surrounding three mile plan area could experience moderate growth during the next 20 years.
- **Robust growth (5% average annual growth rate)** – Periods of robust growth have occurred in the past, according to the U.S. Census. Average annual growth rates for the Town of Palisade were 7.8 percent from 1970 to 1980 (874 to 1,551) and 3.8 percent from 1990 to 2000 (1,871 to 2,579). From 1970 to 1980, Mesa County grew at an average annual rate of 5.0 percent (54,374 to 81,530). Although such growth rates have not been sustained for more than ten years, it is possible, with the combination of Palisade's high quality of life and the impending retirement of Baby Boomers, that Palisade could experience robust growth during the next 20 years.

Based on past trends, it is probable that growth rates will fluctuate during the next 20 years. However, periods of low growth could be sustained if the state and national economies stagnate, resulting in fewer newcomers. A sharp increase in energy costs could cause retiring Baby Boomers to seek warmer locations. Conversely, periods of robust growth could be sustained with healthy state and national economies, a renewed shale oil boom, and continued preservation and

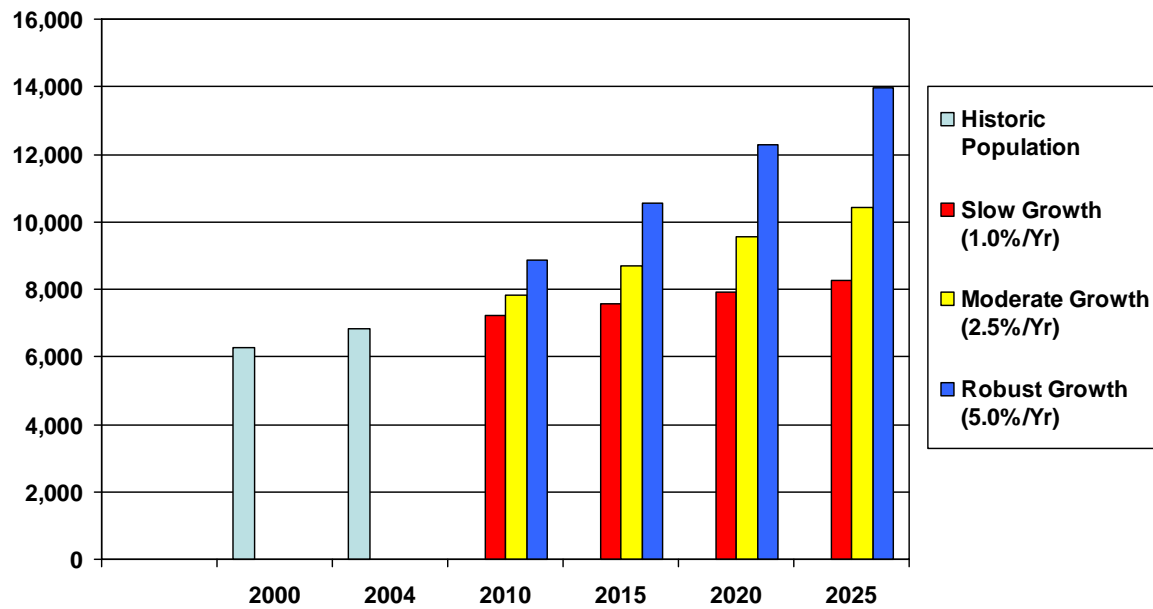
enhancement of Palisade's quality of life. With the hindsight of past growth trends and confidence that COD's projections for Mesa County are reasonable, it appears likely that net growth between now and 2025 will be in the moderate range.

However, uncertainty about actual future growth rates is a reason to present future population as a range rather than as a single number. Applying the alternative average annual growth rates to the Town of Palisade indicates a 2025 population ranging from a low of about 3,400 to a high of approximately 5,750 with a moderate rate totaling 4,300 (see Figure 1-1). Figure 1-2 indicates a range of 8,250 to 14,000 in 2025 with a moderate rate totaling 10,400 for the area within the three mile plan boundary.

**FIGURE 1-1**  
**TOWN OF PALISADE POPULATION, HISTORIC AND PROJECTED, 1960-2025**



**FIGURE 1-2  
PALISADE THREE MILE PLAN AREA POPULATION, HISTORIC AND PROJECTED, 2000-2025**





## Chapter 2 Community Character & Design

### Geographic Setting and Community Form

Palisade's unique geographical setting and its rich history create a strong sense of place and a special community character. Located at the eastern end of the Grand Valley, Palisade is surrounded by the palisades escarpment to the north, DeBeque Canyon to the northeast, Grand Mesa to the east, the Orchard Mesa uplift to the south. The Colorado River forms the eastern and southern boundaries of the Town and creates the widened expanse of the Grand Valley to the west.

The original platting of the Town center, bounded by First Street on the north, Peach Avenue on the west, Eighth Street on the south and Main Street on the east, preceded incorporation of the Town of Palisade on April 5, 1904. The initial method of platting included relatively small blocks with narrow lots and alleys. Development of these platted lots created a compact form in the Town center in which residences were located on the front portion of lots with outbuildings, often serving as garages, in the rear with access from alleys. A commercial area centered on Main Street and Third Street anchored the Town center.

Development of land surrounding the Town center, much of which occurred during the early 20th century, was consistent with the original platted area with narrow lot widths and 12-foot alleys. However, the newer blocks were generally much longer, sometimes creating traffic inefficiencies and a less consistent urban form. Most lots in the core area are less than ¼ acre. Most of this expanded Town center still retains the original historic Victorian architectural character and forms the heart of the proposed downtown Mixed Use District discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

Residential development expanded west toward Elberta Avenue and south of U.S. Highway 6 during the mid and late 20th century. More modern, suburban tract architecture mixed with some multi-family units became the preferred style compared to the Victorian character of the Town center. Highway-oriented commercial land uses line much of U.S. Highway 6 from the Colorado River west to Elberta Avenue.

### Community Design

The public opinion survey included several questions about community appearance and architectural standards. Most survey respondents felt that the Town's appearance was generally attractive. Respondents strongly agreed that Palisade's architectural diversity gives the Town character. However, most respondents did not favor adopting architectural standards in the land use code to preserve the Town's architectural character.

The Steering Committee advocated a range of community design options, including standards to require design elements for new development. In general, the Steering Committee reflected the preferences of survey respondents, except in a few locations, which are specified in the policy/action item section below.



*Victorian style homes on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street*

## Desired Future Condition, Policies & Action Items

### *Desired Future Condition*

The rural, village atmosphere, historic character, pedestrian scale and agricultural heritage of Palisade are preserved, restored and enhanced. New development and redevelopment in older parts of Palisade are visually compatible with historic character and pedestrian scale, and streetscapes are attractive.

### *Policies and Action Items*

**Policy 1.** Good design is appropriate in key areas of Palisade to preserve and enhance community character and to foster economic development. Action items to implement this policy include:

- a. Update the land use code to require design standards for new commercial development near I-70 Exit 42.
- b. Update the land use code to encourage design guidelines for all new or renovated buildings in the proposed downtown Mixed Use District (see Chapter 3).
- c. Coordinate with CDOT to beautify I-70 Exits 42 and 44 to make them more welcoming.

**Policy 2.** Encourage more aesthetic streetscapes such as street edge landscaping (including street trees), benches, gardens, ornamental light fixtures, hanging flower baskets, banners and works of art. An action items to implement this policy is:

- a. Coordinate with the Chamber of Commerce to develop a voluntary program with local businesses to beautify storefronts and adjacent sidewalks.



## Chapter 3 Land Use & Growth Management

### Planning Sub-Areas

The geographic area included in a municipal Comprehensive Plan typically covers more than the current corporate limits. The following planning sub-areas are briefly described below:

- Three Mile Plan Area
- Mesa County Land Use Plan within the Three Mile Plan Area
- Town of Palisade current corporate limits
- Palisade-Clifton Cooperative Planning Area (buffer)

#### *Three Mile Plan Area*

This Comprehensive Plan encompasses the area within a three mile radius of Palisade. In Colorado, statutory authority for developing three mile plans is found in C.R.S. 31-12-105(c). The three mile plan area includes the water service area and part of the buffer between Palisade and Grand Junction.

#### *Mesa County Land Use Plan*

Mesa County adopted an amended land use plan for the Palisade-East Orchard Mesa area in early 2006 after extensive public input by local residences and businesses. The plan establishes several land use districts surrounding Palisade, most of which preserve the rural, agricultural character. Allowed densities range from 35 acres per dwelling unit north, northeast and southeast of Palisade, to five acres per dwelling unit in the Vineland area and ten acres per dwelling unit on East Orchard Mesa. The plan also reinforces the rural character of the Palisade-Clifton buffer (see page 3-2) and establishes an urban reserve in the area between the present western Palisade limits and the buffer that encourages future urban densities, thus allowing Palisade room to annex new urban growth areas. The Future Land Use Maps show the location of most of these County land use districts, which are incorporated into this Comprehensive Plan. The urban reserve area is designated as the primary new growth area for Palisade (see preferred growth scenario and Future Land Use Maps).

#### *Town of Palisade*

The current Town boundary forms the geographic center of the three mile plan area. While it is appropriate to develop a plan that extends beyond the Town boundaries, the Town of Palisade has legal authority to control growth and development only within its corporate limits, including additional land it may annex. Development on land within the three mile plan area outside present and future corporate limits is under the authority of Mesa County. This Comprehensive Plan strongly recommends that the Town of Palisade and Mesa County develop an intergovernmental agreement whereby the County acknowledges and honors the

land uses and densities specified in the three mile plan area. Given that this plan incorporates all of the land use districts included in the recently amended Mesa County Land Use Plan (except for modifications to the urban reserve district), an intergovernmental agreement that meets the needs of the Town and the County should be relatively easy to achieve.

### ***Palisade-Clifton Cooperative Planning Area (Buffer)***

The Town of Palisade, the City of Grand Junction and Mesa County have developed a cooperative planning area to preserve the rural, agricultural character of a strip of land approximately one mile wide along the western part of the three mile plan area. The buffer is roughly bound on the west by 33 ¾ Road and on the east by 36.1 Road. This Comprehensive Plan recognizes the importance of the buffer to ensure that there is a permanent, visual separation between expanding urban areas to the west (Clifton-Grand Junction) and to the east (Palisade).



*View of buffer from Mt. Garfield*

## **Analysis of Existing Land Use**

A parcel-based land use inventory of Palisade and the surrounding three mile plan area was conducted during December 2005. The field survey was correlated with the Mesa County Assessor's parcel maps and data, particularly for parcels where it was difficult to determine the type of land use from the field survey alone. The purpose of the inventory was to identify and quantify various types of land uses and densities to serve as a basis for projecting future growth and developing alternative growth management scenarios. Existing Land Use Maps of the three mile plan area and the core area were prepared which delineated the types of existing land uses, and tables were created summarizing the data.

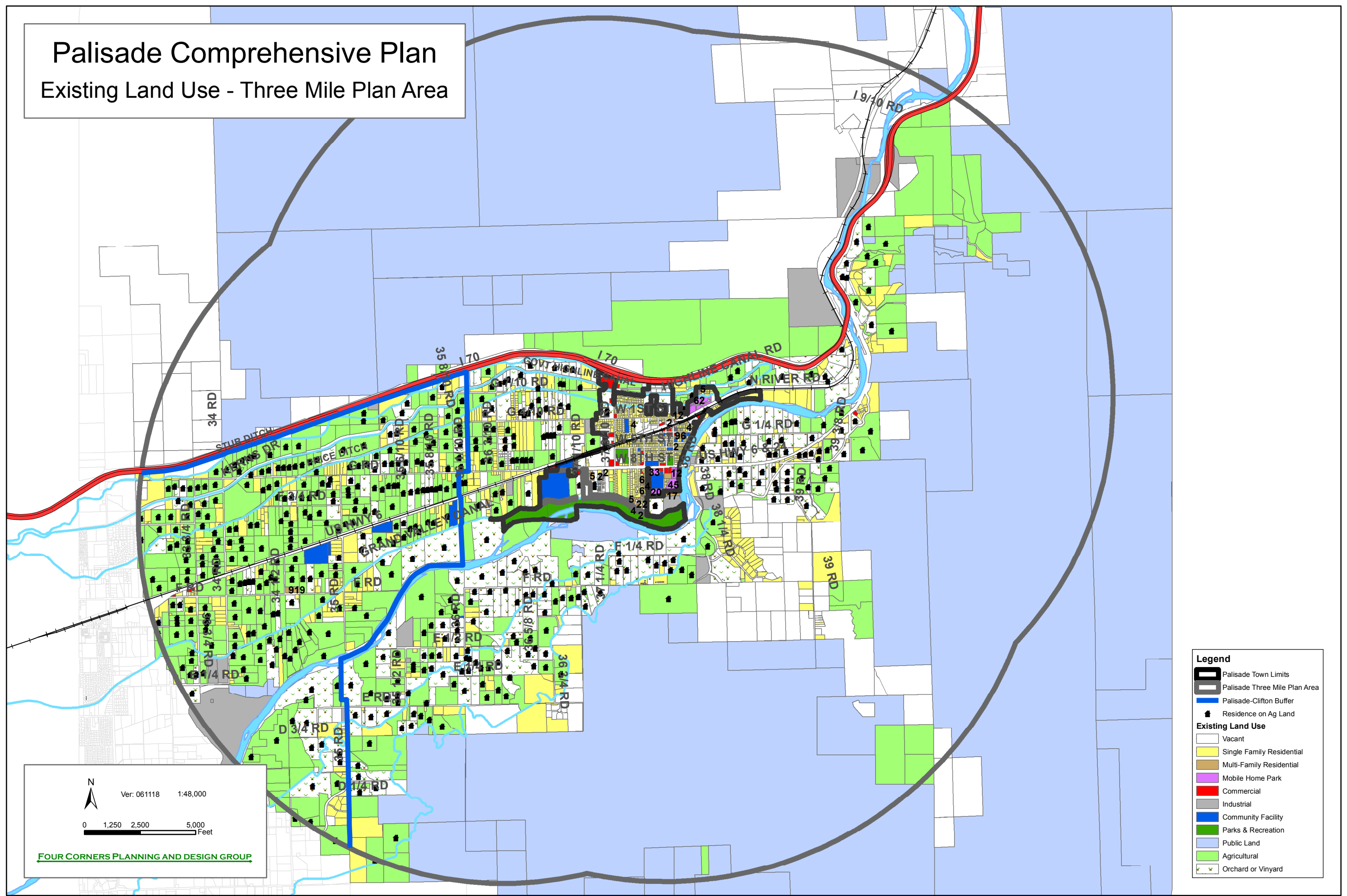
## **Build-out Assumptions and Calculations**

This section analyzes residential and commercial build-out potential of vacant land based on densities allowed by the Town of Palisade's current land use code and the recently amended Mesa County Comprehensive Plan (for areas within the three mile plan area outside the current Town limits). A build-out analysis estimates the total population (or dwelling units or commercial square footage, etc.) of an area based on assumptions about allowable density. Residential build-out analysis, for example, identifies the supply of developable land, identifies development densities by location, calculates the number of new housing units, and then multiplies housing units by estimated number of people per unit to obtain the total potential population of the land. The build-out population of an area is the hypothetical capacity based on assumptions about allowable densities, which might or might not occur in the future. By contrast, a projection combines this supply of land and associated population with the anticipated regional demand for population for a particular time frame.



# Palisade Comprehensive Plan

## Existing Land Use - Three Mile Plan Area



- Legend**
- Palisade Town Limits
  - Palisade Three Mile Plan Area
  - Palisade-Clifton Buffer
  - Residence on Ag Land
- Existing Land Use**
- Vacant
  - Single Family Residential
  - Multi-Family Residential
  - Mobile Home Park
  - Commercial
  - Industrial
  - Community Facility
  - Parks & Recreation
  - Public Land
  - Agricultural
  - Orchard or Vinyard



Ver: 061118 1:48,000

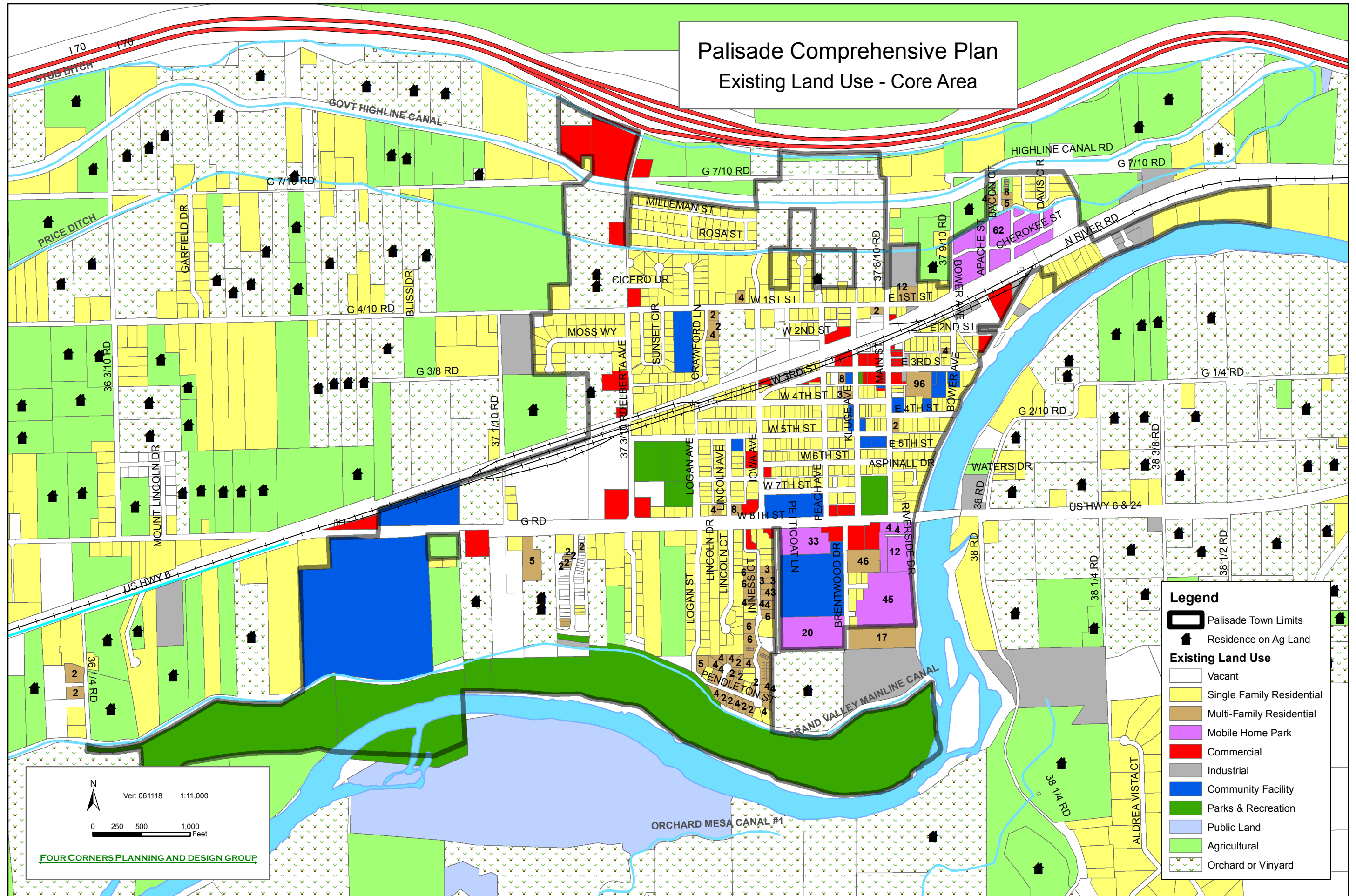
0 1,250 2,500 5,000 Feet

FOUR CORNERS PLANNING AND DESIGN GROUP



# Palisade Comprehensive Plan

## Existing Land Use - Core Area



### *Residential Build-out Potential*

Vacant parcels within the entire three mile plan area were identified based on field observations and the Mesa County Assessor database. The acreage of each vacant parcel was obtained from the database and aggregated by general geographic area.

- Current Palisade Town limits
- Palisade water service area
- West, outside water service area but east of the Palisade-Clifton buffer
- Total three mile plan area

Table 3-1 summarizes build-out potential for the geographic areas listed above, expressed as new housing units, new population and total population.

**TABLE 3 - 1**  
**RESIDENTIAL BUILD-OUT POTENTIAL WITHIN 3 MILE PLAN AREA**  
**(Based on Current Zoning)**

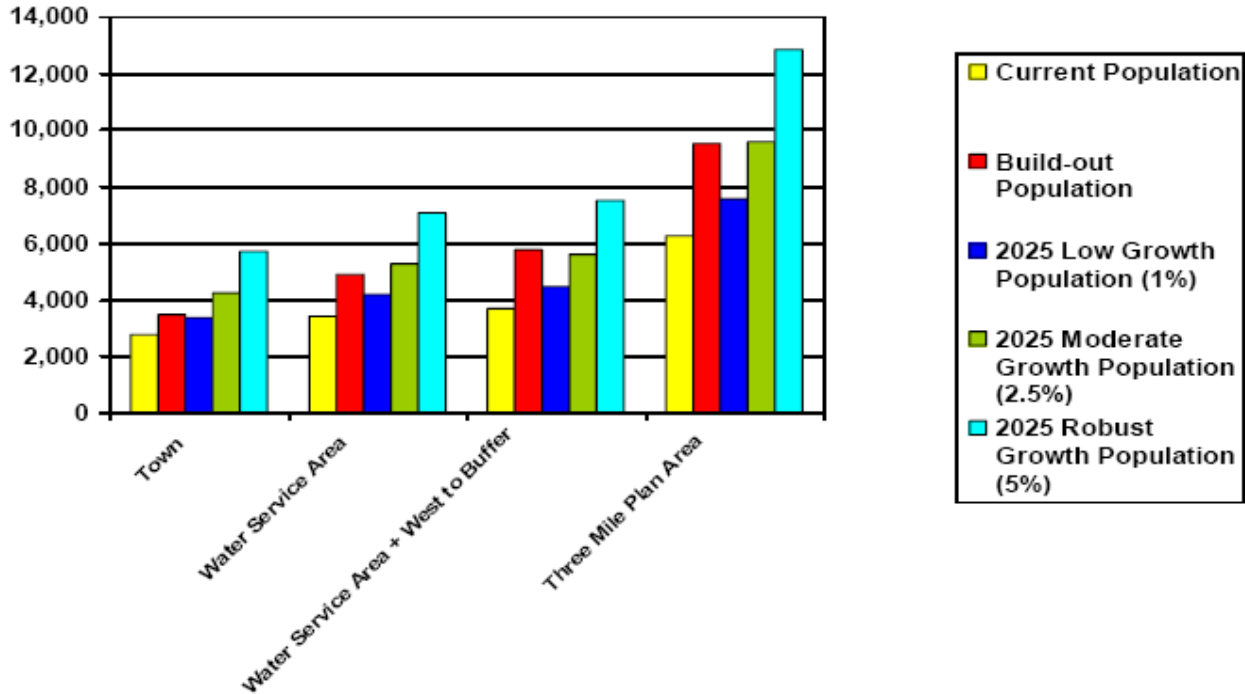
Area	New Housing Units	New Population*	Total Population
Town	243	668	3,470
Water Service Area	576	1,584	4,879
Water Service Area Plus Area West To Buffer	904	2,485	5,780
Total 3 Mile Plan Area	1,191	3,276	9,549

\*Assumes average household size of 2.75 people

### *Comparison of Residential Build-out Potential with Alternative Population Projections*

Figure 3-1 shows a graphic comparison of the build-out potential based on the existing Town zones and County land use districts and the three alternative population projections for 2025: low growth (1% annual average), moderate growth (2.5% annual average) and robust growth (5% annual average). For the current Town limits, Figure 3-1 shows that residential build-out potential under current zoning densities would only accommodate a low growth rate. For the other regions shown in Figure 3-1, residential build-out potential would approximately accommodate a moderate growth rate, but not a robust growth rate.

**FIGURE 3 – 1**  
**COMPARISON OF CURRENT POPULATION, BUILD-OUT POPULATION AND GROWTH PROJECTIONS BY AREA**



### *Commercial and Industrial Build-out Potential*

This section analyzes current and future demand for commercial/industrial space and the supply of land available to accommodate future demand.

**Demand for Commercial/Industrial Space** - Square footage of commercial and industrial uses per person is an indicator of demand for commercial/industrial space in a community as well as an indicator of the relative economic independence of an area. During the past decade, the Comprehensive Plan consultant analyzed commercial/industrial space in other communities. Fruita, which is in the economic shadow of Grand Junction, had 90 square feet of commercial/industrial uses per person within its three mile plan area and 71 within the city limits. By comparison, communities that serve as the central market area for a larger region have more commercial/industrial square footage per person: 170 for Pagosa Springs and 215 for Gunnison, for example.

As seen in Table 3-2 and the narrative below, Palisade like Fruita has a relatively small amount of commercial/industrial square footage per person, probably due to the regional economic dominance of Grand Junction. Based on Mesa County Assessor data, square footage for various categories of commercial and industrial uses within the three mile plan area was aggregated. Table 3-2 indicates the aggregated square footage for various types of commercial and industrial buildings.

**TABLE 3 - 2**  
**COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL PARCELS**

Type of Use	# of Parcels	Aggregate Building Size (Sq. Ft.)
Merchandise	16	57,805
Lodging	2	9,627
Office	4	9,122
Special Purpose	15	49,367
Multi-use	5	34,648
Warehouse/Storage	18	162,016
Contracting Service	2	7,680
Totals	62	330,265

With an estimated 2000 population of 6,273 in the three mile plan area, the amount of commercial/ industrial space is approximately 53 square feet per person (330,265 square feet divided by 6,273 people). Most of the parcels (54 of 62) in commercial/industrial use are located within the Town limits. With an estimated population of 2,802 within the Town limits, the amount of commercial/industrial space is approximately 97 square feet per person (270,926 square feet divided by 2,802 people).

Assuming for planning purposes that the demand for future commercial/industrial square footage within the entire three mile plan area can be estimated based on 53 square feet per person, the amount of commercial/industrial space needed by 2025 in the entire three mile plan area for each alternative growth scenario is as follows:

- Low growth (1% annual average) – 7,590 people x 53 sq. ft./person = 402,270 sq. ft.
- Moderate growth (2.5% annual average) – 9,566 people x 53 sq. ft./person = 506,998 sq. ft..
- Robust growth (5% annual average) – 12,860 people x 53 sq. ft./person = 681,580 sq. ft.

**Supply of Commercial/Industrial Land --** There are 26.93 vacant acres (1,173,071 square feet) currently zoned B-1 or B-2 within the Town of Palisade. Mesa County has zoned several parcels zoned C-1 near I-70 Exit 42 adjacent to land zoned B-1 by the Town. These parcels in the County total 21 acres (914,760 square feet), which, when combined with commercially-zoned land in the Town, amount to 47.93 acres (2,087,831 square feet) of vacant commercial land under current zoning. Based on existing land use patterns, it cannot be assumed that all vacant commercial land will be fully occupied by buildings. Except for some downtown parcels, most commercial and industrial lots allocate space for parking, landscaping or outdoor storage.

The portion of a lot occupied by buildings relative to total lot size is typically expressed as a floor area to lot size ratio, commonly referred to as a floor area ratio (FAR). This ratio is an indicator of the relative efficiency of use of the land. For example, a FAR of 0.1 indicates that only one-tenth of a parcel is occupied by a



*Peach warehouse on East Orchard Mesa*

building. A FAR of 0.5 indicates much higher land use efficiency – half of a parcel occupied by a building. In urban areas, including downtown Palisade, some parcels have a FAR of more than 1.0, usually indicating buildings with two or more floors.

The FAR for the various categories of commercial/industrial land uses in Palisade are presented in Table 3-3, which indicates the ratio of aggregate building square footage to aggregate parcel area per category.

The aggregate FAR for all commercial/industrial uses within the three mile plan area is 0.121, which means that average lot coverage by buildings is only 12 percent of lot size. The low FAR is caused by several very large parcels outside the Town limits (see Table 3-3 footnotes). For the 54 of 62 commercial/industrial parcels located within the Palisade Town limits, the FAR for these parcels is 0.213 (270,926 building square feet divided by 1,274,383 square feet of land).

If a FAR of 0.20 is applied to current vacant commercial parcels within the Town and in the County near I-70 Exit 42, there is space for approximately 417,600 additional commercial/industrial square feet, which, when added to the existing 330,265 commercial/industrial square feet amounts to a build-out potential supply of about 748,000 square feet.

**TABLE 3 - 3  
COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL FLOOR AREA RATIOS BY CATEGORY**

Type of Use	Aggregate Building Square Feet	Aggregate Parcel Area (sq. ft.)	Floor Area Ratio
Merchandise	57,805	361,702	0.160
Lodging	9,627	56,678	0.170
Office	9,122	66,429	0.137
Special Purpose	49,367	845,217	0.0581
Multi-use	34,648	89,209	0.388
Warehouse/Storage	162,016	1,104,253	0.1472
Contracting Service	7,680	212,053	0.0363
Totals	330,265	2,735,541	0.121 <sup>4</sup>

**Conclusions --** Based on the above assumptions and calculations, it appears that there is a sufficient supply of land now zoned B-1 and B-2 in the Town and C-1 in the County near I-70 Exit 42 to accommodate 2025 demand for commercial/industrial square footage for low growth, moderate growth and robust growth scenarios.

<sup>1</sup> Includes a parcel with building sq. ft. of 11,280 and parcel sq. ft. of 466,983, resulting in a FAR of only 0.024 for this parcel. The average FAR for other Special Use parcels is 0.101.

<sup>2</sup> Includes a large agricultural parcel (702,000 sq. ft.) with a fruit warehouse (35,960 sq. ft.), resulting in a FAR of only 0.051 for this parcel. The average FAR for other Warehouse/Storage parcels is 0.313.

<sup>3</sup> One of the two parcels has a building with 1,103 sq. ft. on a parcel with 172,263 sq. ft., resulting in a FAR of only 0.006. The remaining parcel has a FAR of 0.165.

<sup>4</sup> The FAR for all parcels excluding the three parcels described in footnotes 1 and 2 above is 0.202.



## Alternative Growth Scenarios

Alternative growth scenarios represent differing visions about how a community should grow. These visions were expressed by the public in several venues: interviews with approximately 30 community leaders; a written survey completed by approximately 150 households; informal gatherings at Palisade restaurants; and the first public workshop. Three scenarios were developed to explore the probable development patterns resulting from those differing visions. The three scenarios are:

1. **Scenario 1 – Existing Rules:** This scenario is based on densities allowed by the current Palisade Land Use Code and the Mesa County Comprehensive Plan.
2. **Scenario 2 – Concentrated Growth:** Most new growth for this scenario is concentrated within the current Town limits and between the western Town limits and the Palisade-Clifton buffer.
3. **Scenario 3 – Dispersed Growth:** This scenario minimizes new growth within the current Town limits and locates most new development to more sparsely settled areas surrounding the Town.

The three alternative growth scenarios were presented to the Steering Committee for review before presentation to the public at the second public workshop. The Steering Committee felt that the scenarios represented a range of appropriate alternatives and agreed that they could be presented to the public. Although the public asked poignant questions about specific aspects of the scenarios, there was not a clear indication of preference. **The Steering Committee met again for the express purpose of selecting a preferred scenario and, by consensus, chose Scenario 2 – Concentrated Growth, with some modifications as described below.**

## Future Land Use Plan

The future land use plan, which is the preferred growth scenario, is derived from Scenario 2 – Concentrated Growth. **The preferred scenario adopts the village concept featuring a strong downtown core and other smaller commercial nodes to serve both residents and visitors.** Most new growth is concentrated within the present Town limits or in the area west of Town east of the Palisade-Clifton buffer. This scenario attempts to preserve the agricultural character of the community, while accommodating future residential and commercial growth and encouraging an economically healthy, vibrant downtown.

The goal of the preferred scenario is to make Palisade look, feel and act like a village. A traditional village consists of a mix of various land uses in close proximity compared to rigidly separated land uses typical of post-World War II zoned communities. A community like Palisade looks like a village when it preserves, restores and enhances its core area with a mix of retail, office and a variety of housing types ranging from single family to multi family with compatible designs and a wide range of prices and rents. A community like Palisade looks like a village when it maintains the rural appearance and agricultural heritage around its edges.



*Main St. and 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave – the village center*

A community feels like a village when it enhances the walkability of the entire community and creates a pleasant ambiance, such as tree-lined streets, flowers, benches along sidewalks, art and attractive signs throughout the community, especially in the village center. And a community acts like a village when it promotes the existing friendly spirit of its citizens, especially toward visitors and new businesses, preserves and expands community events and celebrations and promotes local produce and products, such as farmer's markets.

The Future Land Use Maps for the preferred scenario (see Future Land Use Map – Three Mile Plan Area and Future Land Use Map – Core Area) have the following land use classifications and features.

**Agricultural/Residential 5:** One (1) residential unit per five acres minimum lot size. This land use district is primarily located west of the present Town limits north of G.4 Road. Most of the parcels in this area are five or more acres and occupied by orchards or vineyards. A goal is to preserve the rural/agricultural character and the economic viability of orchards and vineyards. Value added and product sales associated with agriculture, such as wineries and fruit stands, are encouraged in this district. Also, some of the most productive land is located in this area, which apparently benefits from the warming effect of the nearby Bookcliffs. This area defines Palisade's visual character as seen from I-70 and functions as a gateway from the west.

**Agricultural/Residential 2.5:** One (1) residential unit per 2.5 acres minimum lot size. Most of this district is located within or adjacent to the present Town limits, and many of the parcels within this district are now zoned AFT 2.5. This district reflects current Town policy to allow and encourage orchards and vineyards within Town boundaries. As with the Agricultural/Residential 5 District described above, value added and product sales associated with agriculture, such as wineries and fruit stands, are encouraged. Most of these parcels are located in the northern part of Town with the best growing conditions. Many former orchards south of U.S. Highway 6 have been developed low density or medium density residential. Given that this trend is likely to continue, the few remaining orchards in this area are designated for residential uses on the Future Land Use Map. In fact, development proposals on three agricultural parcels have recently been submitted to the Town for approval.

**Low Density Residential:** Three and one-half (3.5) residential units per acre maximum density. Most of this district within the present Town limits is currently zoned R1, which allows up to 3.5 units per acre. As explained above, some parcels now zoned AFT 2.5, most of which are located south of U.S. Highway 6, are shown as low density residential on the Future Land Use Map. Most of the area west of the present Town limits and south of G.4 Road, now in rural/agricultural uses, is designated as low density residential. Three parcels are designated as Transfer of Development (TDR) receiving zones. In exchange for buying development rights on nearby agricultural land, thereby preserving its rural character with conservation easements, receiving area parcels (which would have urban services) would be allowed to double density to 7 units per acre. These parcels are shown on the Future Land Use Map and described below:

- 38.4 acre parcel located between G.4 and G.7 Road, adjacent to the western Town boundary. This parcel is classified as agricultural by the Mesa County Assessor, but only about five acres are occupied by an orchard; the rest is vacant. A neighborhood park (3 -5 acres) is shown on this parcel on the Future Land Use Map (see below for more details). After deducting park land, this parcel could support approximately 120 units at 3.5 units per acre and about 240 units at 7 units per acre (medium density residential).
- 9.5 acre parcel located on G.4 road immediately east of the parcel described above. An orchard is now located on this parcel, but it is zoned R3 (11 units per acre). High density residential on this parcel would be incompatible with surrounding R1 densities (3.5 units per acre).
- 10.5 acre parcel located on 37.1 Road, with the railroad tracks forming its southern boundary. The large vacant parcel south of the railroad tracks is designated for new commercial development. A residence with a yard now occupies about 1.5 acres in the northwest corner of the parcel, leaving approximately 9 vacant acres for possible future development. This parcel could support 31 units and 62 units at R1 and R2 densities, respectively.

**Medium Density Residential:** Seven (7) residential units per acre maximum density. This density corresponds to the Town's R2 zone, which typically consists of Town homes/condominiums. Several parcels south of U/S. Highway 6 now in agricultural use are designated as medium density residential in order to provide locations for future Town homes. Also, three parcels discussed above could be developed as medium density residential with TDR.

**High Density Residential:** Eleven (11) residential units per acre maximum density. This density corresponds to the Town's R3 zone. The Future Land Use Map does not specify additional high density areas, except within the Mixed Use District (see below) where apartments and condominiums will support the village concept of a walkable community.

**Mobile Home Park:** Existing mobile home parks are indicated on the Future Land Use Map, with no provisions for additional such facilities. It is quite possible that, within the 20 year time frame covered by the Comprehensive Plan, owners of some of the mobile home parks may seek to redevelop them in more lucrative uses.

**Mixed Use:** Two Mixed Use Districts are shown on the Future Land Use Map: the downtown area; and the vicinity of the old Mount Garfield School. Mixed Use Districts feature a combination of residential, commercial and office uses, often on the same parcel, such as stores on the ground floor with apartments/condominiums on the upper floor(s). The primary intent of the Mixed Use District is to encourage commercial uses with residential uses in close proximity to support a vibrant, walkable community. These Mixed Use Districts are essential to the village concept and borrow from the traditional way that communities were organized prior to widespread motorized travel. It is important to incorporate design standards in the land use code to ensure that new development and



redevelopment is architecturally compatible with a traditional village concept. Residential densities can vary from low density (3.5 units per acre or less) to high density (up to 11 units per acre).

**Residential Mixed Use:** Two Residential Mixed Use Districts are shown on the Future Land Use Map: the older section of the Town south of the railroad tracks, north of U.S. Highway 6 outside the Mixed Use Districts; and the First Street corridor north of the tracks. This district allows for and encourages residential mixed uses within homes, such as artisans/artists and tourist- related retail uses. The land use code should be amended to specify rules and criteria for home occupations and residential businesses. The intent of residential mixed uses is to encourage economic activity that enhances the Town's retail and tourism base without detracting from the Town's residential character.

**Commercial – Agricultural/Lodging:** An area located near I-70 Exit 42, a major gateway into Palisade, is designated on the Future Land Use Map for special types of commercial activity intended to be compatible with the Town's rural and agricultural character while encouraging increased tourism. Two wineries surrounded by vineyards are now located in this area. Similar uses are encouraged on vacant land, which could include a tastefully designed lodging establishment that would be compatible with agricultural surroundings.

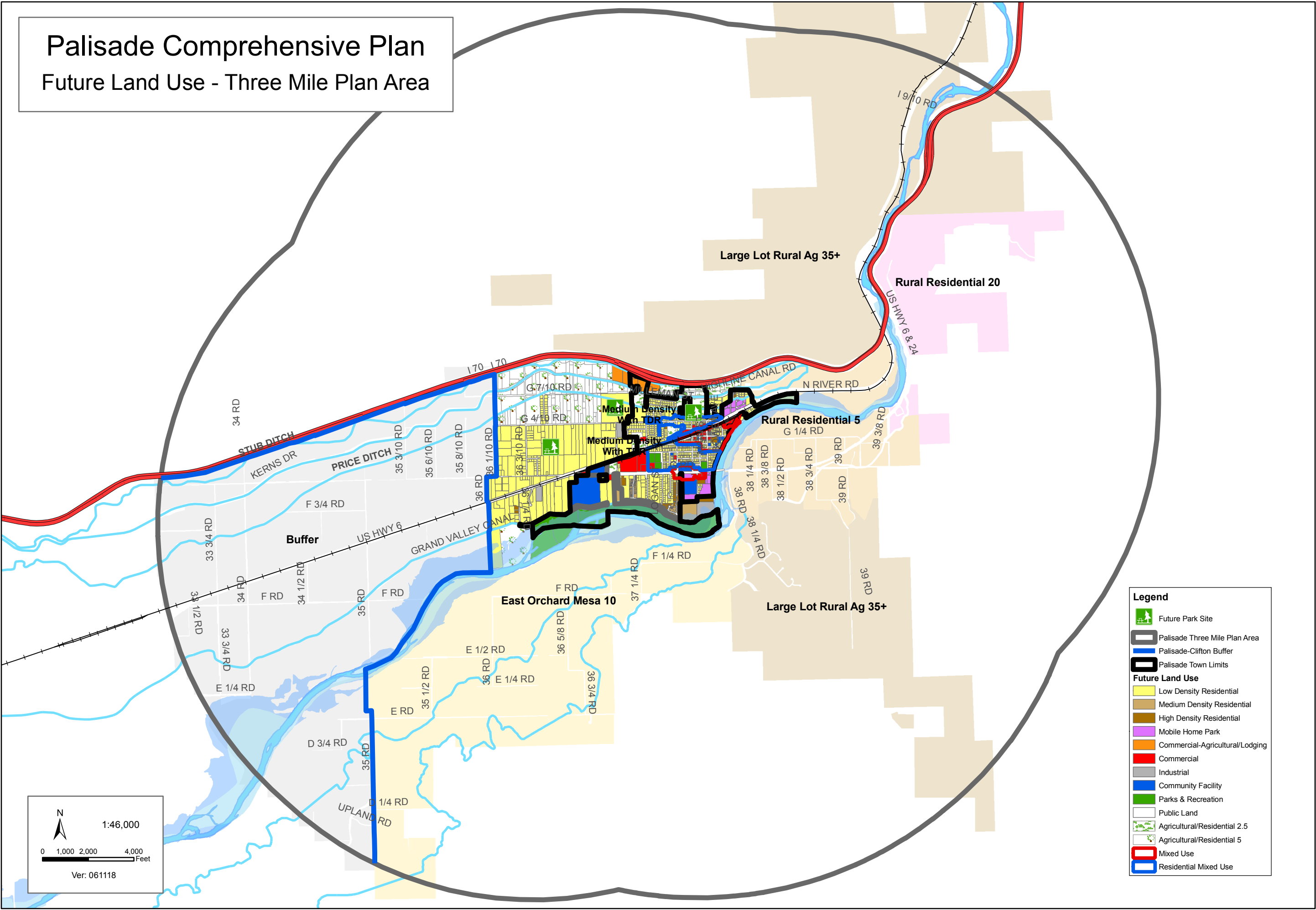
**Commercial:** Most of the commercial areas designated on the Future Land Use Map are located within the Mixed Use Districts and the Residential Mixed Use Districts, except for several existing establishments located on Elberta Street and U.S. Highway 6. A major new commercial area is designated on two vacant parcels, totaling nearly 20 acres, west of Palisades National Bank on U.S. Highway 6.

**Light Industrial:** Existing light industrial uses are shown on the Future Land Use Map, with no provisions for additional industrial areas. Such uses include storage units, some of which are located in the downtown Mixed Use District. It is possible that some of these uses could be redeveloped as commercial/tourism facilities, particularly in mixed use areas.

**Parks and Recreation:** The four existing parks are shown on the Future Land Use Map. Future neighborhood park sites (3-5 acres) are also designated in three locations: (1) north of First Street on a parcel outside the present Town limits now occupied by an orchard; (2) on the 38 acre parcel described above under low density residential; and (3) west of the present Town limits in the middle of the Low Density Residential District. Although Palisade has large park acreage for its size, primarily due to Riverbend Park, small neighborhood parks similar in size to Palisade Park may be needed north of the railroad tracks and in newly developing areas.

# Palisade Comprehensive Plan

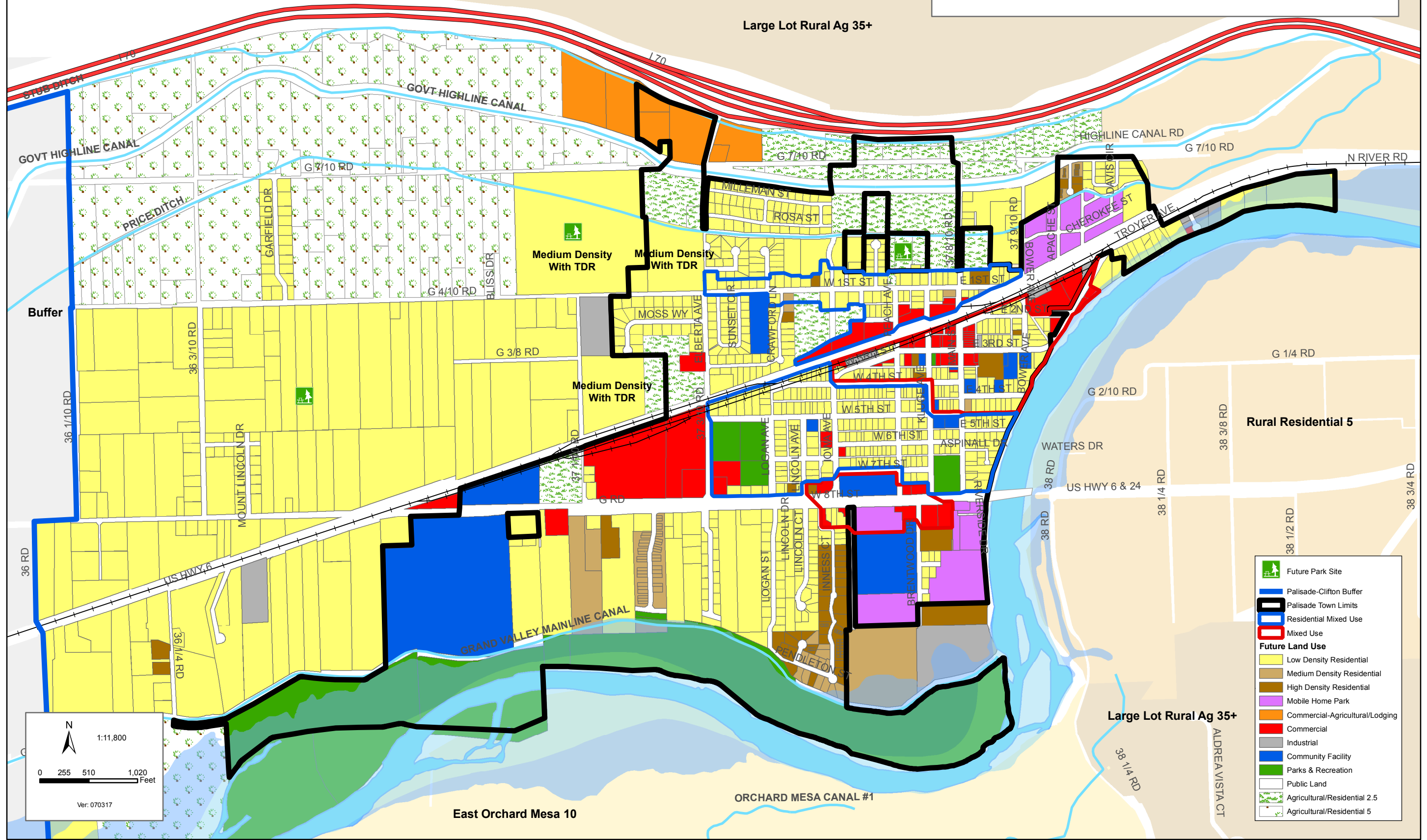
## Future Land Use - Three Mile Plan Area



# Palisade Comprehensive Plan

## Future Land Use - Core Area

Large Lot Rural Ag 35+



- Future Park Site
- Palisade-Clifton Buffer
- Palisade Town Limits
- Residential Mixed Use
- Mixed Use
- Future Land Use**
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Mobile Home Park
- Commercial-Agricultural/Lodging
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Community Facility
- Parks & Recreation
- Public Land
- Agricultural/Residential 2.5
- Agricultural/Residential 5

N

1:11,800

0 255 510 1,020 Feet

Ver: 070317

East Orchard Mesa 10

Large Lot Rural Ag 35+

ORCHARD MESA CANAL #1

Rural Residential 5

## Desired Future Condition, Policies & Action Items

### *Desired Future Condition*

Growth and development are managed to preserve and enhance the quality of life that makes Palisade an attractive place to live and visit. The downtown core is revitalized as a walkable village center with a well-designed mix of residential and commercial uses that serve both residents and visitors. Edges of the community are clearly defined by surrounding agricultural land and future growth is concentrated within the present Town boundaries and west of Town to the Palisade-Clifton buffer.

### *Policies and Action Items*

**Policy 1.** Downtown should become a mixed use area with single family and multi-family residences, offices and retail establishments that serve the needs of residents and tourists. An action item to implement this policy is:

- a. Amend the land use code to include a new Mixed Use District in the downtown area with appropriate land uses and design guidelines (see area designated on Future Land Use Map).

**Policy 2.** Create a Town plaza in the downtown vicinity.

**Policy 3.** The area in the vicinity of the old high school site should be redeveloped as mixed use. Redevelop the site and the surrounding area (see Future Land Use Map) as mixed use. An action item to implement this policy is:

- a. Amend the land use code to include a new Mixed Use District in the old high school site area with appropriate land uses and design guidelines (see area designated on Future Land Use Map).

**Policy 4.** Two areas in the older part of Palisade outside the Mixed Use Districts (see Future Land Use Map) should be designated as Residential Mixed Use to encourage small scale retail/artisan/tourist uses without detracting from the area's residential character. An action item to implement this policy is:

- a. Amend the land use code to include new Residential Mixed Use Districts with appropriate land use, design, signage and traffic/parking standards.

**Policy 5.** The vacant parcels west of Palisades National Bank should be developed as either auto-dependent retail, mixed use or as a village concept.

**Policy 6.** Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) is a viable concept to preserve rural and agricultural land near Palisade. An action item to implement this policy is:

- a. Develop a TDR program in cooperation with Mesa County.

**Policy 7.** For the area near I-70 Exit 42, encourage commercial development on vacant or undeveloped land that is consistent with preserving the agricultural character and an attractive entry into Palisade. An action item to implement this policy is:

- a.** Amend the land use code to include design standards for new development or redevelopment of land near I-70 Exit 42.

**Policy 8.** The development of land within the three mile plan area outside the Town's corporate limits should be governed by an intergovernmental agreement between the Town and Mesa County. An action item to implement this policy is:

- a.** Develop an intergovernmental agreement with Mesa County to ensure that Mesa County honors the Palisade land use districts and densities specified in unincorporated areas within the three mile plan area when reviewing and approving development proposals.



## Chapter 4 Housing

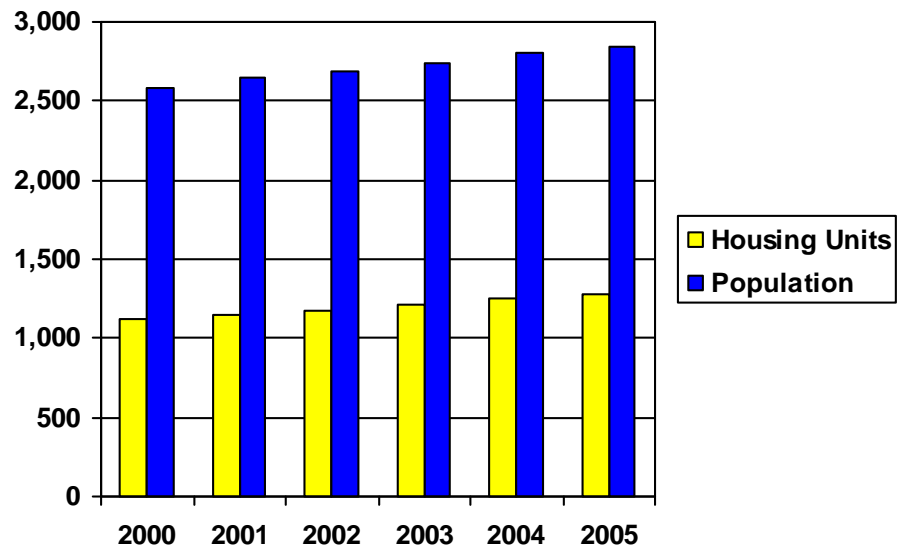
### Introduction

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, there were 1,128 housing units in the Town of Palisade, of which 637 (56 percent) were single family units, 280 units (25 percent) were in multi-family structures and 211 (19 percent) were mobile homes. Of the 1,057 occupied housing units, 651 (62 percent) were owner occupied and 406 (38 percent) were renter occupied. In 2000, the age of the housing stock was as follows:

- Built 1990 – 2000: 198 (18 percent)
- Built 1970 – 1989: 443 (39 percent)
- Built 1940 – 1969: 221 (20 percent)
- Built 1939 or earlier: 266 (23 percent)

According the Colorado Office of Demography (COD), the estimated number of housing units has increased to 1,282 as of 2005, an annual average growth rate of about 2.25 percent. Figure 4 -1 shows the increase in estimated population and housing units for the Town of Palisade from 2000 to 2005.

**Figure 4 – 1**  
**Population and Housing Increases, 2000 - 2005**





## Public Opinion About Housing

The public opinion survey included several questions about housing. In response to the question “What lot sizes are appropriate for new residential subdivisions?”, 52 preferred lot sizes less than  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre, 74 preferred lots between  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre and  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre, 44 preferred lots between  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre and 1 acre and 34 preferred lots larger than 1 acre.

In response to the question “Is there a need for affordable housing in Palisade?”, 59 answered yes, 65 answered no and 24 answered don’t know. In response to the question “Should the Town of Palisade play a role in creating more affordable housing?” 32 answered yes, 47 answered no and 28 answered don’t know. The collective preferences of the Steering Committee were consistent with the results of the public opinion survey.



*Subdivision south of U.S. Highway 6*

## Desired Future Condition, Policies & Action Items

### *Desired Future Condition*

The housing stock consists of an adequate supply of diverse housing types of good quality construction that is compatible with community character, with a wide price and rental range sufficient to house all income levels and age groups.

### *Policies and Action Items*

**Policy 1.** The private sector should determine the mix of housing styles and price ranges based on market conditions, without intervention by Town government.

**Policy 2.** Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are encouraged as a way to provide affordable rental units and to provide rental income to owners of residential property. An action item to implement this policy is:

- a. Modify the Land Use Code to allow for new accessory dwelling units (ADUs) or the conversion of existing small structures, such as garages, to ADUs.

**Policy 3.** Encourage mixed use developments (housing and commercial), including conversion of 2nd floors of downtown buildings to apartments/condominiums. An action item to implement this policy is:

- a. Modify the Land Use Code to allow mixed use developments in appropriate locations (see policies and action items for Chapter 3).



## Chapter 5 Economic Development

### Palisade and the Regional Economy

The Town of Palisade and the surrounding area have historically been an agricultural community with the Town core supporting the needs of the nearby residents and agricultural operations. Orchards, vineyards and other agricultural uses continue to support the local and regional economy. Fruits produced locally include the area's renowned peaches, as well as apples, apricots, cherries, grapes pears and plums. Field crops include alfalfa, corn and barley. As described in more detail in Chapter 10, the wine and spirits industry has expanded significantly during the past 20 years.

Palisade is located only about 12 miles from downtown Grand Junction and about five miles from major shopping areas in Clifton, an unincorporated part of Mesa County. With the construction of several hundred new housing units during the past two decades and more now being built or recently approved, Palisade has experienced a transition from a primarily rural, agricultural-based community to a bedroom community for Grand Junction.

Local businesses provide services such as groceries, convenience stores with gasoline pumps, a newspaper, hardware, car repairs, a car wash and dental, pharmaceutical and banking services, a limited selection of restaurants and locally produced wine and spirits. However, most residents travel to Clifton or Grand Junction for other, usually more expensive items and services, such as clothing, sporting goods, automobiles, entertainment and major grocery shopping. See Chapter 3 for a detailed analysis of commercial and industrial land use in Palisade and the three mile plan area.

With most residents employed outside Palisade and much of their incomes expended elsewhere, Palisade's economic health is interdependent with the vitality of Mesa County's economy. Since the shale oil bust during the mid-1980s, the economy of Mesa County has recovered. According to the Colorado Office of Demography, estimated employment in Mesa County has grown from 43,702 in 1985 to 67,602 in 2000, an increase of 54.7 percent or about 3.6 percent annually.

Employment by economic sector has shifted since the mid 1980s, with significant growth in construction, manufacturing and services and a decline in mining and agriculture. Figure 5-1 shows employment by economic sector for Mesa County in 2000 and the percentage of total employment for each sector. Wholesale and retail trade and services combined comprised 56.5 percent of total employment.



*Vacant commercially zoned land west of Palisades National Bank*



TABLE 5 - 1  
EMPLOYMENT BY ECONOMIC SECTOR, MESA COUNTY, 2000

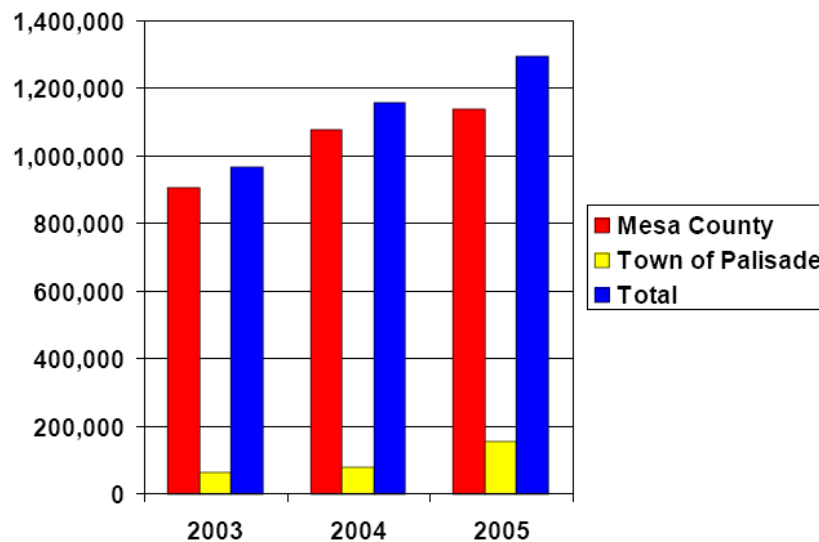
Economic Sector	# Employees	% of Total
Agriculture	2,546	3.8
Mining and Extractive Industries	549	0.8
Construction	6,214	9.2
Manufacturing	4,501	6.7
Transportation, Communications and Utilities	3,476	5.1
Wholesale and Retail Trade	15,982	23.6
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	3,618	5.4
Services	22,235	32.9
Government	8,481	12.5
Total	67,602	100

## Palisade's Revenue Base

Anticipated revenue for the general fund for 2006 is \$2,629,814, according to the budget submitted to the Town Board on November 2, 2005, an increase of about 14 percent over 2005 general revenue. Taxes and permits account for about 67 percent of total revenue and intergovernmental transfers comprise about 22 percent of revenue for 2006.

Of the approximately \$1,750,000 in tax revenue, the major components are the County sales tax (69 percent), property tax (14 percent) and the Town sales tax (9 percent). Under a complex formula, Mesa County shares some of its sales tax revenue with municipalities in the County. Without this source of revenue, it would be very difficult for the Town of Palisade to survive as a municipality. Total sales tax collections have been strong during the past several years. As shown in Figure 5-1, sales tax revenues have increased by about 34 percent from 2003 to 2005. Although a small share of sales tax revenue, the Town sales tax more than doubled from \$63,000 in 2003 to \$156,000 in 2005.

FIGURE 5 - 1  
SALES TAX REVENUE, 2003 - 2005



## Tax Incentives to Attract New Businesses

There are a variety of federal and state tax incentives to help attract new businesses and to assist existing businesses. This section describes the degree of support by Town residents to expand the economy and to pursue tax incentives as a means to increase Town revenue and provides a summary of available tax incentives.

### *Public Opinion about Tax Incentives and the Economy*

The community survey included several questions about promoting business growth through tax incentives. Survey respondents strongly supported incentives. In response to the question “Should the Town of Palisade promote business growth?”, 114 answered yes, 28 answered no and 2 answered don’t know. In response to the question “Would you support incentives to encourage new businesses to locate in Palisade?”, 92 answered yes, 32 answered no and 13 answered don’t know. In response to the question “Would you support incentives to encourage existing businesses to expand?”, 97 answered yes, 24 answered no and 13 answered don’t know. In response to the question “Would you support incentives to encourage agri-business (orchards, vineyards, wineries)?”, 104 answered yes, 17 answered no and 11 answered don’t know. In response to the question “Would you support incentives to encourage agri-tourism (tours of orchards, vineyards, wineries)?”, 107 answered yes, 17 answered no and 13 answered don’t know.

Many of the community leaders who were interviewed also supported a proactive approach to growing the local economy. Most of them advocated developing a niche market that caters to tourists, which would include more upscale lodging, arts and crafts shops, more wineries, restaurants, gift shops and marketing the area’s beauty and outdoor activities, such as trails and the proposed Whitewater Park. A vibrant downtown was considered vital to improving the economy and the Town’s tax base.

### *Types of Tax Incentives*

Here are two working definitions of incentives excerpted from the professional literature.

1. Incentives are programs with budgeted and allocated public dollars that are directly or indirectly invested in activities of businesses.
2. Incentives are economic development programs that assist businesses without providing direct financial assistance. Examples could include provision of public infrastructure or tax policies.

More specific examples of indirect incentives include tax incentives and grants or loans from state and federal agencies (such as the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade or the U.S. Economic Development Agency) to local governments to support business investment and development. For instance, the City of Fruita and Mesa County were awarded a \$15,000 EDA grant in 2000 to prepare an economic development plan for the obsolete shale oil refinery west of Fruita. On the basis of the plan’s recommendations, EDA then

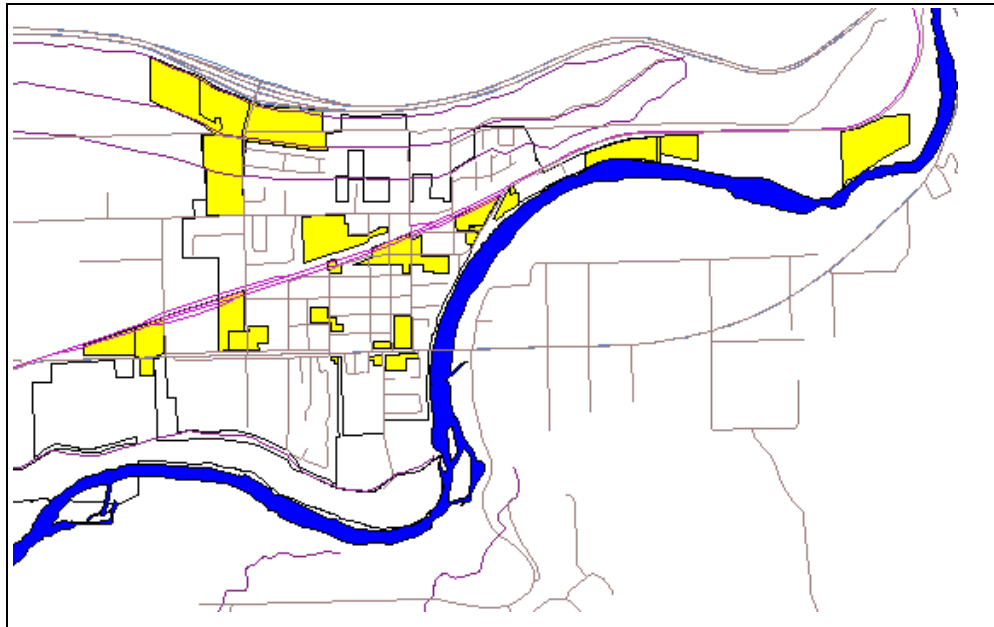
awarded a grant for \$50,000 to prepare a detailed engineering design of water and sewer extensions to the refinery area, which led to a \$500,000 grant to actually install the infrastructure.

Perhaps the most commonly used incentives are tax incentives. Part of Palisade is designated as an Enterprise Zone, which qualifies certain eligible businesses for tax credits and other incentives (see Figure 5-1 for a map of Enterprise Zones). In general, the Enterprise Zone roughly corresponds to commercial and industrial uses in Palisade. Also, the site of the proposed Whitewater Park east of Town has been designated as an Enterprise Zone. Enterprise Zone tax credits and incentives are explained in detail at <http://www.advancecolorado.com/enterprise-zone/EZ-Tax-Credits.cfm>

Examples include:

1. **Investment tax credits:** Businesses making investments in equipment used exclusively in an Enterprise Zone may claim a credit against their Colorado income taxes equal to 3 percent of the amount of the investment.
2. **\$500 job tax credit:** Businesses hiring new employees in connection with a "new business facility" located in an Enterprise Zone may claim a tax credit against state income taxes of \$500 for each such employee. An expansion of an existing facility may be considered a "new business facility" if the expansion adds at least 10 employees or a 10 percent increase over the previous annual average, if it is at least \$1 million in investment, or, if less, at least doubles the original investment in the facility.
3. **Double job tax credit for agricultural processing:** An additional credit of \$500 per new business facility employee may be claimed by businesses which add value to agricultural commodities through manufacturing or processing.
4. **Credit to rehabilitate vacant buildings:** Owners or tenants of commercial buildings in an Enterprise Zone that are at least 20 years old and have been vacant for at least 2 years may claim a credit of 25 percent of the cost of rehabilitating each building. The credit is limited to \$50,000.
5. **Local government tax incentives:** Any municipality, County, or special district within an Enterprise Zone is authorized to negotiate with individual taxpayers who have qualifying new business facilities (a) an incentive payment or property tax credit equal to not more than the amount of the increase in property tax liability over pre-enterprise zone levels; and (b) a refund of local sales taxes on purchases of equipment, machinery, machine tools, or supplies used in the taxpayer's business in the Enterprise Zone.

Regarding #5 above, the Town of Palisade could choose to give special tax treatment to new production manufacturing businesses, for example, rather than to new retail businesses, or it could favor existing businesses that expand, or provide special treatment to all three. For example, regarding a policy to encourage liner buildings along the railroad tracks (see Action Item i. below), the Town could work with Enterprise Zone officials to rehabilitate older buildings for this purpose (see #4 above).



**Figure 5-1**  
**Palisade Enterprise Zones**

## Desired Future Condition, Policy & Action Items

### *Desired Future Condition*

Agriculture, tourism and recreation are major components of a strong and sustainable year-round economy that is maintained through cooperation between local businesses, the Town of Palisade, Mesa County and state and federal agencies. Anchored by a healthy, vibrant downtown, the local economy enhances Town tax revenues, serves basic needs of residents and provides goods and services that attract tourists while maintaining Palisade's agricultural village atmosphere.

### *Policy and Action Items*

**Policy 1.** Work with the Chamber of Commerce and other economic development groups to attract new businesses and to improve promotion of Palisade, including downtown and peach/wine festivals. Action items to implement this policy include:

- a. Create additional festivals, such as the peach and wine festivals, to attract tourists to Palisade.
- b. Create additional events/festivals to attract more tourists to downtown.
- c. Prepare a detailed downtown development plan.

- d.** Provide incentives to encourage new retail businesses.
- e.** Provide incentives to encourage new lodging businesses.
- f.** Provide incentives to encourage existing businesses to expand.
- g.** Provide incentives to encourage new agri-business (orchards, vineyards, wineries).
- h.** Provide incentives to encourage agri-tourism (tours of orchards, vineyards, wineries).
- i.** Provide incentives to encourage new buildings and major renovations of existing buildings (particularly industrial/distribution facilities) along the railroad tracks to function as “liner buildings” to mitigate the visual and audio impacts of trains.
- j.** Revise the Land Use Code to eliminate the existing B-2 zone and replace it with a new business/industrial zone that allows light manufacturing as a use-by-right.



## Chapter 6 Transportation

### Multi-Modal Transportation

As part of the Grand Junction metropolitan area, Palisade is served by many modes of transportation, including air travel via Walker Field Airport, Amtrak, which provides daily service to points east and west from the historic railroad station in Grand Junction, Union Pacific Railroad, which provides freight service, and Greyhound Bus Line operating from Grand Junction. Located along U.S. Highway 6 and I-70, Palisade is intrinsically linked to Grand Junction and well-connected to other parts of Colorado and the United States via these vehicular arteries. I-70 Exits 42 and 44 provide easy access to Palisade from the west and east, respectively.



The Grand Valley Transit System became fully operational in 2000 and provides bus service from Palisade to various locations west, including Coronado Plaza in Clifton, Orchard Mesa, Grand Junction, Mesa State College, Mesa Mall and Fruita. This public transit system focuses on meeting the needs of the elderly, the economically disadvantaged and those who are mobility impaired. Through Dial-a-Ride, the service area is expanded, providing means for citizens in outlying areas to reach the fixed bus routes.

Past drafts of a Comprehensive Plan (1998 and 2004, neither of which were adopted) recommended that the “Town should remain interested in a future rail connection between Palisade and Grand Junction... While such a mode of transportation may not be economically feasible today, future air quality concerns and the price of petroleum may necessitate changes in the way people move about.”

Although most of the pedestrian and bicycle trails within and near Palisade are oriented toward recreational use, there are opportunities to connect Palisade with Grand Junction via the Colorado River Trail and construct bike lanes on some roads which will be widened as new development occurs west of the present corporate limits. Trails are discussed in more detail below and in Chapter 8.

### Projected Traffic Volumes

A transportation engineer performed an analysis of future traffic volumes and road improvement needs based on existing information and projected distribution of new development at build-out in areas identified for future growth on the Future Land Use Map (see Chapter 3). Most new growth is expected to occur between the present corporate limits west to the Palisade – Clifton buffer.

Table 6-1 shows projected residential units in the future growth area, average daily trips and AM and PM peak hour trips by sub-area. If commercial development supporting employment does not occur in Palisade at a similar rate as residential development, commuter trips toward Grand Junction can be expected to increase. It is noted that some commercial development is expected, particularly on vacant parcels zoned commercial on U.S. Highway 6 west of Palisades National Bank and on vacant commercial parcels near I-70 Exit 42.

Table 6-1  
TRIP GENERATION IN FUTURE GROWTH AREAS

Trip Generation	Residential Units		Traffic Volumes		
	Low Density	Medium Density	AM	PM	ADT
North of G 4/10 Road, west of Elberta	123	310	228	291	2,994
North of Railroad Tracks, west of Elberta	730	57	573	768	7,320
South of US 6	296		222	299	2,833
	1,149 dwelling units	367 dwelling units	1,023 trips	1,358 trips	13,147 trips

AM - AM Peak Hour Traffic  
PM - PM Peak Hour Traffic  
ADT - Average Daily Traffic

## Long Range Transportation Recommendations

Some of the recommendations described below may not be achievable during the 20 year time frame covered by this Comprehensive Plan. All of these recommendations are nevertheless included in case priorities change and/or funds for implementing the more expensive improvements become available. Figure 6-1 shows the location of these long range improvements.

### *Regional Transportation Improvements*

**Railroad Overpass** – Palisade is significantly impacted by the railroad line that effectively bisects the Town. This creates challenges in the areas of transportation and emergency services. While a grade-separated crossing at one strategic location would be desirable, cost estimates in the millions of dollars probably make this an unrealistic expectation over the next 50 years. A major negative impact is the noise associated with passing trains and the sounding of horns and whistles as trains approach the crossings of five intersections in close proximity. Areas along the tracks have limited suitability for desirable land uses, and esthetically unpleasing sites are the result. Potential land uses along the tracks are addressed in Chapter 5

The following steps should be taken to enhance safety, minimize noise and improve esthetics:

- Work with the Union Pacific Railroad to minimize prolonged stopping of trains across intersections and the closing of multiple crossings.
- Communicate with Union Pacific management about the problem of train horn noise and ask that engineers be encouraged not to exceed the federal standard for blowing whistles.
- Develop emergency response plans that prescribe alternate routes and means to contact train engineers in order to move trains during an emergency.
- Consider landscaping and visual improvements at critical sites along the tracks.



- As funds allow, continue to pursue establishment of a “Quiet Zone”. Take actions to improve crossing signalization to reach safety levels that facilitate creation of such a zone which, under federal regulations, allows elimination of the requirement that horns are blown at each crossing.

**East/West Corridor Capacity** – Suburban traffic commuting between Palisade and Grand Junction is restricted to the I-70 and Highway 6 corridors, with all commuter traffic funneling through the I-70/Elberta Ave interchange using Highway 6. Congestion at these locations will increase in the future, with a subsequent increase in travel times. Long range recommendations to increase east/west corridor capacity include:

- I-70: Interchanges in urbanized areas are generally spaced at two to three mile intervals. It may be advisable to identify an interchange location between Clifton and Palisade to relieve future congestion. This is a very long term recommendation, probably outside of 2025 horizon.
- Highway 6 – It is advisable to plan for future increase in the capacity of the corridor to serve commuters from Palisade to I-70B.

Any of the above regional facilities would be of most benefit to Palisade and would need support of the Town to secure regional financial resources for construction. Early planning is essential.

### ***Local Thoroughfare Network***

Proposed extensions to the local roadway network prepared by Mesa County and others were reviewed from the maps and figures provided. It appears that all of these extensions would be needed to support future development. Additional suggestions are noted, as follows:

- Potential new or improved north/south roadway corridors should provide direct connections between Highway 6 and G 7/10 Road, if possible. Potential new or improved east/west corridors should connect 36 3/10 Road with Elberta Avenue, and with a new western north/south arterial or collector, if possible.
- Improve the intersection at U.S. Highway 6 and Elberta Avenue. Consider constructing a roundabout.
- Northwest quadrant of Town (west of Elberta Avenue and north of U.S. Highway 6) – Consider constructing a new roadway to Collector or Minor Arterial standards (possibly including Class II bike path) or improving G 7/10 Road from Elberta Avenue westward to the buffer, then south to U.S. Highway 6 to provide a direct connection between Elberta Avenue and Highway 6. Access points should be limited to public roadways.
- G 7/10 Road/Elberta Avenue Intersection and G 4/10 Road/Elberta Avenue Intersection – Future traffic loading on these



intersections will intensify with forecast development. Improvements, including widening and signalization should be expected.

- Development of an Access Management Plan on Elberta Avenue and U.S. Highway 6 is very desirable.
- Consider aligning Road G 7/10 at Elberta to create one four-leg intersection instead of the current two three-leg intersections.
- Realign, improve and extend G 7/10 south of I-70 toward the east – End the collector facility at a logical terminus in the east. (Note that requests for changes in land use could result because this would become a corridor visible from I-70 and highly desirable by commercial development.)
- For development between Highway 6 and G 4/10 Road, encourage trips to use G 4/10 Road to access Elberta Avenue instead of accessing U.S. Highway 6 directly from the north. This will minimize and help manage the number of major at-grade railroad crossings.
- A frontage road adjacent to the railroad tracks is desirable, but its eventual crossing of the railroad tracks should either be grade-separated or provide plenty of stacking distance and be at a 90 degree angle with the tracks.
- For the planned north/south connection shown at the end of G 3/8 Road, consider extending to north of G 7/10 Road.

### ***Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation***

The pedestrian and bicycle route plan provided by Mesa County was reviewed and the following comments are offered:

- Consider incorporating Class II bikeways (striped lanes) with any new roadway design.
- The current plan as provided by the County shows stub routes, where the pedestrian/bicycle paths lack connectivity to other facilities. Consider means to provide pedestrian and bicycle path connectivity at: G Road west, Elberta Avenue north, and U.S. Highway 6 or proposed frontage road.



### ***Recommendation Modifications***

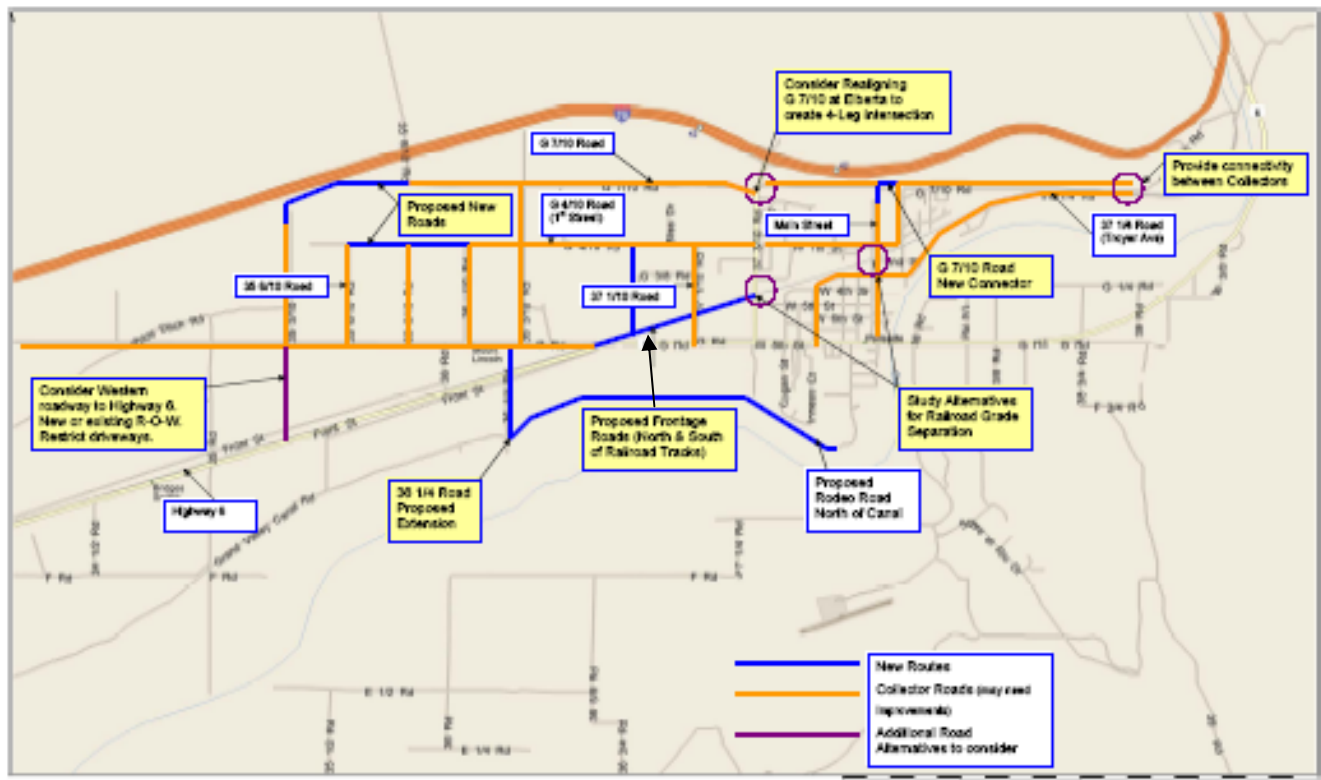
Some of the long range recommendations described above may not be appropriate within the 20 year time frame of this Comprehensive Plan. The following modifications are offered based on the road network needed to serve future growth areas as described in Chapter 3 and other considerations.

- Given that the Future Land Use Map (see Chapter 3) recommends preservation of the rural, agricultural character of land north of G4/10 Road, it is not appropriate at this time to recommend

improvements to G7/10 Road west of Elberta Avenue. However, preservation of the existing rural densities in this area is dependent on the political will of Mesa County and future leaders of the Town of Palisade. Given proximity to I-70, it is possible that future growth pressure could result in higher densities north of G4/10 Road. If so and if the Palisade-Clifton buffer survives long range growth pressures, it may ultimately be advisable to designate the area north of G4/10 Road as a future growth area rather than to alter allowable densities in the buffer.

- 36 1/10 Road north of U.S. Highway 6 and 36 Road south of the highway form the easterly boundary of the buffer. Unless the buffer changes, improvements shown in Figure 6-1 for 35 3/10 Road, 35 6/10 Road and 35 9/10 Road are not needed during the 20 year time frame of this plan.

**Figure 6-1**  
**Long Range Transportation Improvements**



## Desired Future Condition, Policy & Action Items

### *Desired Future Condition*

The transportation system promotes safe vehicle and multi-model transportation options for residents and visitors, including pedestrian and bicycle circulation through an interlinking network of sidewalks and trails and provides for the efficient distribution of goods and services. Parking in the downtown area is adequate for residents, businesses and visitors, and a public transit system provides an appropriate level of service within Palisade and between Palisade and Grand Junction.

### *Policy and Action Items*

**Policy 1.** The Town of Palisade will coordinate with other entities to obtain funding and approval for various transportation improvements. Action items to implement this policy include:

- a. Coordinate with Mesa County and CDOT to make appropriate road and other improvements described above.
- b. Install better signs with a map of major roads advertising Palisade at I-70 Exits 42 and 44 and along the U.S. Highway 6 corridor.
- c. Coordinate with the Grand Valley Transportation System to develop a bus loop route in Palisade connecting downtown and the three other major commercial areas.
- d. Coordinate with the Grand Valley Transportation System and the railroad to develop a rail commuter/tourist train from Palisade to Grand Junction and Fruita.
- e. Coordinate with the railroad and Mesa County/CDOT to install gates across rail crossings near Palisade that presently do not have gates.
- f. Coordinate with CDOT to develop plans for a roundabout at the intersection of Elberta Avenue and U.S. Highway 6.



## Chapter 7 Infrastructure

### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to determine whether the major infrastructure systems operated by the Town – potable water, sanitary sewer and stormwater drainage – have the capacity to serve future development. The irrigation water system, most of which is provided by private ditch companies, is described in the agriculture chapter. Roads are addressed in the transportation chapter.

### Potable Water

The Town of Palisade owns and operates a potable water supply system that consists of a water treatment plant (WTP) located northeast of Town adjacent to Rapid Creek, raw water sources and a distribution system. The raw water system diverts water directly from Rapid Creek, Cottonwood Creek, several springs within these basins and Kruzen Springs. The system consists of five reservoirs, including Cabin Reservoir, which is the primary water source for the WTP. The Town owns more than 3,000 acres within its watershed.

Treated water from the WTP is stored in an existing 2.5 million gallon storage reservoir and the WTP has a capacity of 2 million gallons per day (mgd). According to the Public Works Director, current average daily consumption is about 0.5 mgd and the peak average is 0.8 mgd. Thus, the peak average could increase by a factor of 2.5 before approaching the WTP capacity of 2 mgd. Furthermore, the capacity could be increased to 3 mgd with the addition of a filtration system.

With recently completed repairs (see next paragraph), the WTP appears to have the capacity to serve an expanded Town population beyond 2025, even if the robust growth scenario occurs (see Chapter 3). The current estimated population of the water service area is about 3,450. Under the robust growth assumption of five percent per year, the Town's 2025 population (including future annexed areas) will be approximately 7,500, an increase by a factor 2.17 over the current water service area population.

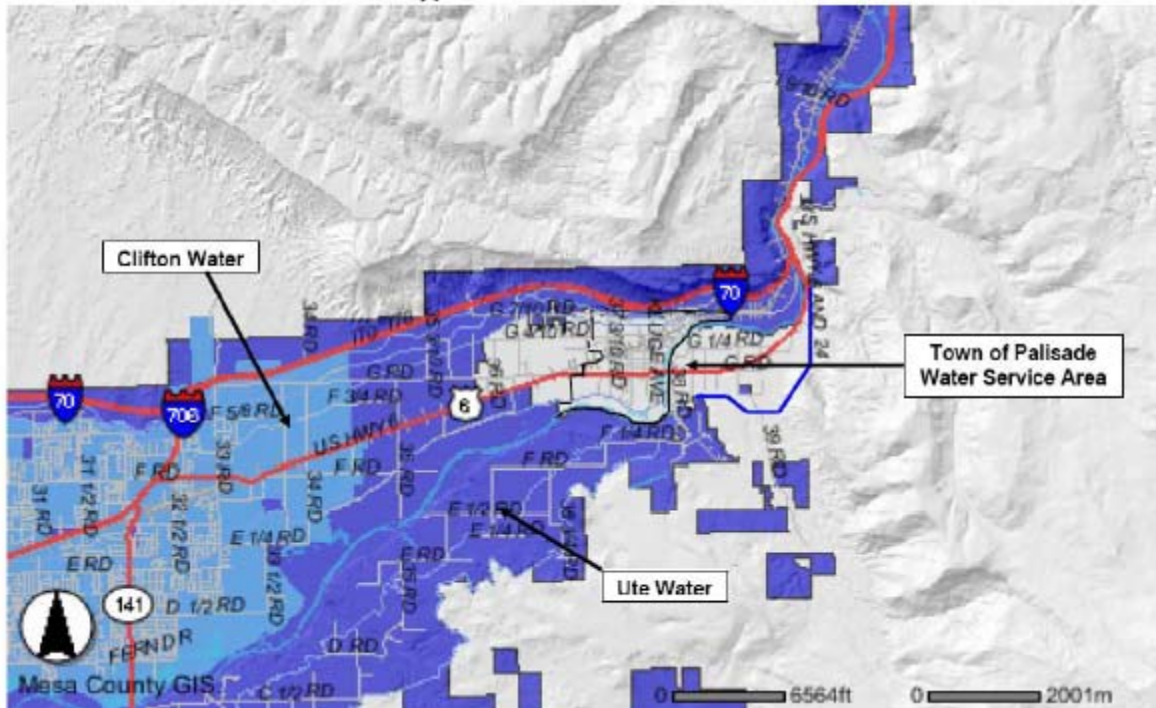
In September 2004, the drinking water standard for turbidity was exceeded from the treatment and storage tank system, resulting in a shutdown of the system and temporary provision of water by the Ute Water Conservancy District. The Wright Water Engineers (WWE) study analyzed several alternatives, and the Town chose to rebuild the system and retain its ability to serve its customers. The Town recently calculated that unaccounted water in the distribution system amounted to 32 percent of total volume provided by Ute Water. The Town subsequently hired a consultant to locate and identify the major distribution lines that were leaking. That report is included as an appendix in the WWE study.

The Town's water service area extends beyond present municipal limits to include the Vineland area east of Town and the area west of Town (see Figure 7-1). A more detailed map of the Town's watershed and service area is provided in the WWE study and is incorporated by reference in this Comprehensive Plan. Figure



7-1 also shows other water service providers within the three mile plan area, which include Ute Water and the Clifton Water District. Most of the developable private

**Figure 7-1 Water Districts**



land within the planning area, except for parts of the area southeast of Town, is served by one of the water providers.

## Sanitary Sewer

The Town of Palisade owns and operates a sanitary sewer system that consists of aerated lagoons located at the east end of Riverbend Park. According to the Public Works Director, the sewer lines are fairly adequate, especially newer lines in the southwestern part of Town. The sewer service area is approximately co-terminus with current Town boundaries.

Sewage effluent levels have increased slightly during the past several years, up from a daily average of 245,000 gallons in June 2004 to a daily average of 284,000 in November 2005. Under state law, plans must be in place for expansion when effluent levels reach 80 percent of capacity. According to Town officials, the 201 sewer service boundary includes Clifton.

The Public Works Department is developing better data to determine current organic loading amounts. Tests are now being conducted four times per month, and an engineering firm is analyzing the data. Preliminary data indicates that the rating for hydraulic and organic limits may be low, meaning that the STP has more capacity than previously estimated. The STP is currently operating at approximately 50 percent of hydraulic capacity. According to the Public Works Director, a doubling of the population served by the STP would push the 80



percent threshold, triggering the need to plan for STP upgrade or tying in to the Clifton STP.

Under low growth and moderate growth scenarios (see Chapter 3), the STP appears to have the capacity to serve an expanded Town population beyond 2025. The current estimated population of the sewer service area is about 3,000. Under the moderate growth assumption of 2.5 percent per year, the Town's population (including future annexed areas) will be approximately 5,600, an 86 percent increase over current population. However, if robust growth at 5 percent annually occurs, the Town's population will be approximately 7,500, or a 150 percent increase over the current sewer service area population. The STP will likely exceed the 80 percent threshold well before 2025 under the robust growth assumption.

The estimated cost to connect to Clifton is \$6.4 million for a tap fee plus \$5 million for infrastructure, for a total of \$11.4 million. The estimated cost to build a mechanical STP is \$6 million. Locating the new STP further downriver at the west end of Riverbend Park may reduce the number of lift stations needed, particularly in future growth areas west of Town. Connecting to Clifton might increase growth pressure in the buffer. Also, it may be necessary to expand the service area to the Vineland area, as some of the septic systems may be in danger of failing.

## **Stormwater Drainage**

The Town has marginal stormwater and drainage facilities to protect the Town during periods of precipitation. Existing stormwater facilities are limited to First Street east of Elberta Avenue, the west end of Second Street, Third Street between Peach and Iowa Avenues, along portions of the frontage road that parallels U.S. Highway 6, and a drainage canal next to a section of the railroad tracks that is operated by the Grand Junction Drainage District. The Drainage District is a special district with authority to levy taxes and control drainage access to its facilities. With the cooperation of this district, a major drainage system has been installed along First Street, then south to the drainage system along the railroad tracks. This system picks up the runoff from north of First Street to Price's Ditch and from east of Main Street to Elberta Avenue.

As the Town continues to grow and develop, particularly as it eventually expands to the west, drainage problems will become a bigger and more expensive problem. While the Town requires new subdivisions to install drainage infrastructure, the Town needs a stormwater management plan to address the issue on a system-wide basis. With such a plan in place, new development can be required to provide a drainage study to evaluate the potential impact on the entire system, and the Town can require new development to pay its share of the costs to mitigate the off-site runoff it creates. The Town has adopted, by reference, the Stormwater Management Manual adopted by Mesa County and the City of Grand Junction.



## Desired Future Condition, Policies & Action Items

### *Desired Future Condition*

Sanitary sewer, water, irrigation, and drainage systems are designed, sized and located in appropriate areas to support existing development and future growth areas as specified in this Comprehensive Plan. The Town of Palisade continues to own and operate its water supply system, providing high quality water for residents and businesses.

### *Policies and Action Items*

**Policy 1.** New development shall pay the full cost of extending water and sewer service, including lines/lift stations adequately sized to serve additional development projected to occur in the future.

**Policy 2.** The Town of Palisade shall expand its water service area to correspond to new growth areas identified on the Future Land Use Map.

**Policy 3.** The Town of Palisade shall expand its sewer service area to correspond to new growth areas identified on the Future Land Use Map.

**Policy 4.** The following principles shall be considered by the Town of Palisade when evaluating the expansion or relocation of the sewage treatment plant: (1) cost to the Town and to customers; (2) the ability to best serve future growth areas as well as the existing service area; and (3) the impact on preserving the rural character of the Palisade-Clifton buffer. An action item to implement this policy is:

- a. Conduct a detailed engineering study to determine the best alternative to expand or relocate the sewage treatment plant.

**Policy 5.** The Town of Palisade shall coordinate with appropriate health officials and private property owners to eliminate septic systems within the sewer service area.

**Policy 6.** The Town of Palisade shall coordinate with appropriate irrigation district officials and private property owners to extend irrigation to all Town parcels.

**Policy 7.** New development shall pay its share of the costs to mitigate the off-site runoff it creates. Action items to implement this policy are:

- a. Develop a comprehensive drainage and stormwater management plan.
- b. Participate in the 5-2-1 Drainage Authority and support the implementation of sufficient fees valleywide to provide administration of stormwater management regulations, implementation of flood mitigation measures and construction of flood mitigation facilities.



## Chapter 8 Parks, Recreation & Trails

### Quality of Life, Tourism, Economic Development

Palisade's location in a beautiful, verdant valley surrounded by towering cliffs and orchards contributes to a high quality of life for residents and visitors. This natural setting is enhanced by recreational opportunities at Town parks and other facilities, and less structured activities, such as strolling along a trail or relaxing on a park bench.

The Town of Palisade has great potential to expand recreational opportunities and other leisure pursuits to serve present and future residents and to attract more tourists, thus increasing the Town's economic base. The proposed Palisade Whitewater Park will likely draw kayakers and other boaters. An expanded trail system connecting Palisade with nearby public land accessing the Bookcliffs and Grand Mesa could make the area a major destination for mountain bikers. The expansive Riverbend Park with its existing facilities, new boating opportunities and future riverfront trail linkages could become an important regional facility.

### Public Support for Parks, Recreation and Trails

The community survey conducted as part of the Comprehensive Plan process included questions about parks, recreation and trails. The results of the survey are posted on the Town's website at [www.townofpalisade.org](http://www.townofpalisade.org). Public support for recreational activities and facilities was indicated in the following responses:

Does Palisade need a recreation program?

Yes – 80

No – 25

Don't Know – 41

What recreation activities should the Town offer? Suggestions included:

- Kids' programs/low cost programs for kids
- Arts and crafts, ceramics, art and drama, painting
- Basketball, volleyball, softball, senior softball, adult softball, T-ball, soccer, tennis, badminton, golf, miniature golf course, disc golf running/walking/ biking clubs, ping pong, darts, horseshoes, shuffle board
- Tennis lessons for kids
- Gym classes, health club, exercise classes, weight lifting
- Town leagues
- Self defense
- Swimming
- Summer activities
- Museum

- Senior center
- Fishing
- Water park activities
- Light on tennis court
- Nature appreciation
- Card clubs, bingo, chess
- Cooking classes
- Environmental parks
- Access to a gym in winter
- Yoga
- Programs for people with disabilities
- Senior/kid collaborative
- Dance
- Daycare for kids
- Continue Palisade Classic
- Bike safety
- Help the VBS in local churches
- Need adequate community and financial support
- Dinner theater complex
- Movie theater
- Arcade/bowling alley
- Dog training course
- Community building
- Pocket parks throughout Town

What new facilities should be added to Riverbend Park?



*Riverbend Park*

- More grass and trees, expand grassy area to west, improve landscaping
- Improve event area
- Activities center
- Better access
- More trails, longer trail, connect trail to Grand Junction
- Leased RV park with dump/ overnight facility, RV area in west end
- Bathroom in dog leash-free area/west part of park/along river trail

- Stage with electricity and lights for bands
- Kids activities
- Covered eating places
- More playground equipment, larger playground, playground toys
- Boat rentals
- Gallery space
- Drinking fountain
- Extended bike path
- Cleanup swampy, buggy parts
- Basketball, volleyball, sand volleyball
- Improve horseshoe pits
- Better fishing
- Grills
- Community gardens
- Crushed gravel-low impact surface running trails
- Electricity
- More pavilions, music gazebo
- Info kiosk and signs
- Public service structure
- Restore historic POW camp, historic museum
- Improve design with a master plan
- Anti-mosquito spray
- New swimming pool
- Golf course, par 3 golf course

Does Palisade need more trails?

Yes – 83      No – 32      Don't Know – 28

What types of trails would you like to see? (Choose all that apply)

- Unpaved trails to Book Cliffs – 69 responses
- Unpaved trails to Grand Mesa – 67 responses
- Bike lanes on road shoulders – 56 responses
- Paved bike trails away from roads – 53 responses
- Separated bike trails in roads right of ways – 29 responses



*Trail at Riverbend Park*



*Mt. Garfield Trail*

- Unpaved trails in Town – 24 responses
- Other suggestions included: re-open access to Stagecoach Trail; trails along canals; horse trails; river trail to Grand Junction and Island Acres; sidewalk/bike lanes on 38 Road (access to East Orchard Mesa)

In addition to the above survey responses, many community leaders who were interviewed supported expanded recreational programs and facilities and recognized their potential to enhance economic development.

## Current Planning Efforts

In response to residents' expressed desires for a Town recreation program, the Town Board appointed a Recreation Advisory Committee (RAC) to address parks, recreation and trail needs. The mission of the RAC, according to members who were interviewed is to:

- Develop a parks master plan
- Develop recreation programs and guidelines
- Develop traditional and non-traditional parks and trails
- Develop an in-Town bike system, including bike lanes
- Maintain existing parks
- Involve the community in recreation programs – a goal is to serve people who live in Palisade as well as tourists

While the Town has various facilities (see inventory below), it does not have any programs, although there is a Little League not run by the Town. There are many trails near Palisade, most of which are not mapped. The RAC is working with BLM to map trails using GPS equipment and has met with BLM to discuss trails on BLM land. BLM indicated that the Town's proposals for these trails should include a statement of need in a planning document. Although this chapter of the Comprehensive Plan is not a detailed parks, recreation and trails master plan, this chapter does identify the need for trails and includes a map that shows desired trail locations.



*Peach Bowl Park*

A Mesa County Trails Plan is currently being prepared under a grant from the National Park Service. The trails component of this Comprehensive Plan will be forwarded to the NPS to be included in the Countywide plan.

## Inventory of Existing Parks & Recreation Facilities

For a Town of its size (approximately 2,800 people), Palisade has ample amount of park land. With its four parks, especially the 115 acre Riverbend Park, Palisade has about 44 acres of parks per 1,000 people, greatly exceeding the park acreage per 1,000 people of most other communities. If playgrounds, ball fields and open space of the three schools within the three mile plan area are included, there are approximately 28 acres per 1,000 people based on the 2000 population of 6,277 in the three mile plan area. Public lands north, east and south of Town provide additional recreational opportunities.

However, the parks are not evenly distributed throughout the community and the large size of Riverbend Park skews the average. There are no parks north of the railroad tracks. Table 8-1 compares Palisade area facilities with national and area park standards and summarizes features of existing facilities.

**TABLE 8 - 1**  
**COMPARISON OF PARK STANDARDS AND PALISADE AREA FACILITIES**

<b>Park Standards<sup>5</sup></b>				<b>Palisade Area Facilities</b>		
<b>Park Type</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Acres Per 1,000 People</b>	<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Park Name</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Existing Facilities</b>
Regional Park	30+ acres	15.0	10 mile radius	Riverbend Park	114.2 acres	Large pavilion, large shelter, restrooms, Frisbee golf, trails
Community Park	15-30 acres	3.5	2 mile radius	Palisade High School	29 acres of ball fields/ open space	Includes school with gym
				Mount Garfield Middle School	17 acres of ball fields/open space	Includes school with gym
Neighborhood Park	3-15 acres	2.0	$\frac{1}{2}$ mile radius	Peach Bowl Park	7.85 acres	2 shelters, playground, tennis courts, baseball field, outdoor swimming pool
				Taylor Elementary School	6.3 acres of playground/ ball fields	Includes school with gym
Mini and Specialty Park	Under 3 acres	1.5 acres	$\frac{1}{4}$ mile radius	Palisade Park	2.5 acres	2 shelters, a skateboard park and the Veterans Memorial Community Center
				Independent Park	0.1 acres	Benches
Miscellaneous				Veterans Memorial Community Center	8,924 sq. ft.	Meeting rooms, large all-purpose hall
				River Trail		Paved trail along Colorado River throughout most of Riverbend Park

<sup>5</sup> Standards listed in *The Athletic Institute and American Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation*, Revised and modified based on *Fruita Community Plan 2020*



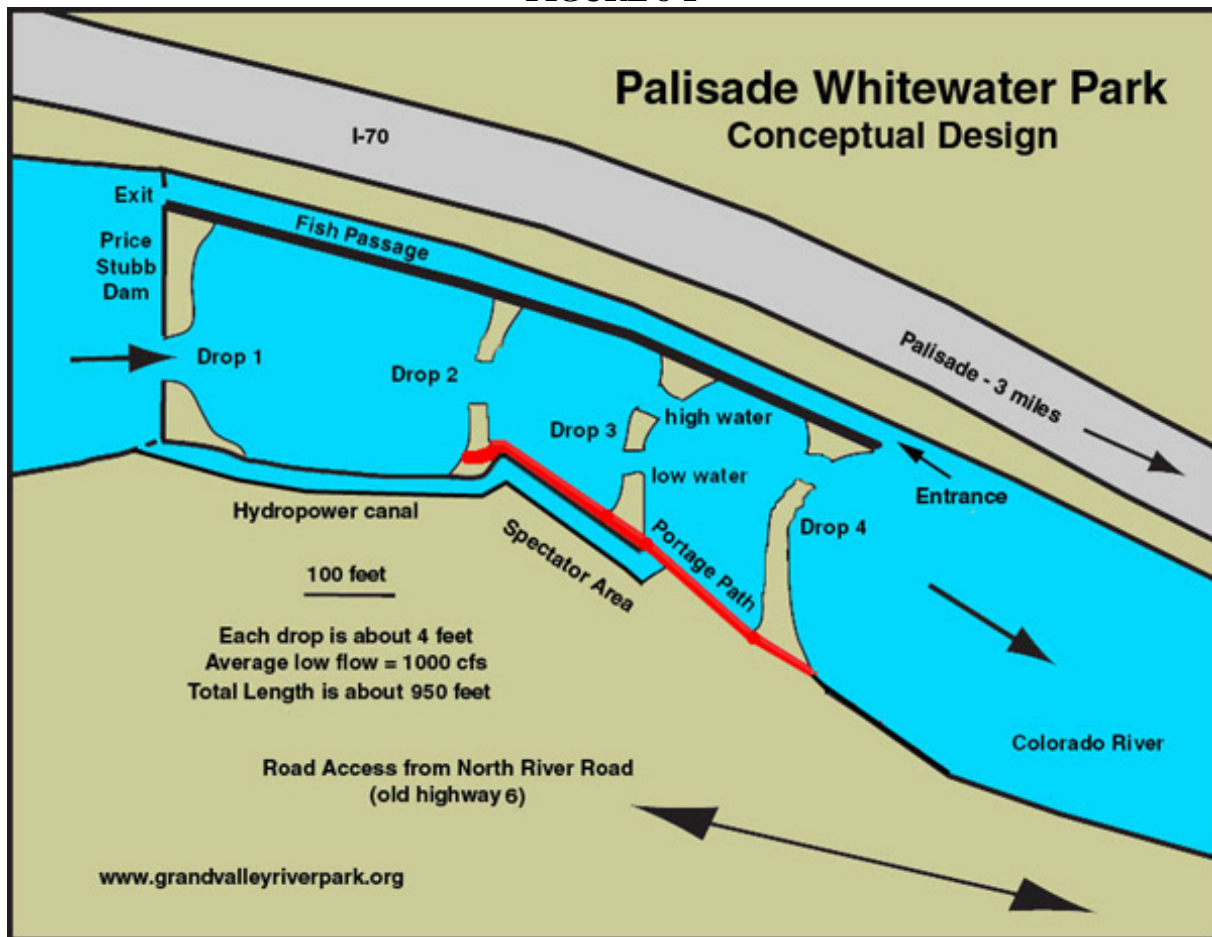
## Future Recreation Facilities

### *Palisade Whitewater Park*

The proposed Palisade Whitewater Park (see Figure 8-1), to be located approximately 3 miles upstream from Palisade on the Colorado River, is part of a planned fish passage project to be constructed by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (BOR). This park will be part of a series of facilities called the Grand Valley River Park.

In June 2006 BOR announced that the local cost share to build the Preferred Alternative of fish passage with recreational features would be about \$2.5 million, not \$400,000 to \$600,000 listed in the Final Environmental Assessment. After raising \$600,000 over a period of two years, local sponsors are attempting to secure additional funds as of November 2006. It is thus uncertain if and when the whitewater park will be constructed.

FIGURE 8-1





### ***Future Park Sites and Trails***

The Parks and Trails Map shows the location of existing park and recreation facilities within the three mile plan area, including schools. The map also shows approximate locations of trails recommended by the Recreation Advisory Committee and three proposed new neighborhood parks:

- North of downtown within an enclave in the County. This new park would serve the existing residential area north of the railroad tracks.
- West of Elberta Avenue, north of G.4 road. Located on a parcel designated on the Future Land Use Map as a transfer of development receiving area, this park would serve new residences.
- In the future residential growth area West of Elberta Avenue and south of G.4 road.

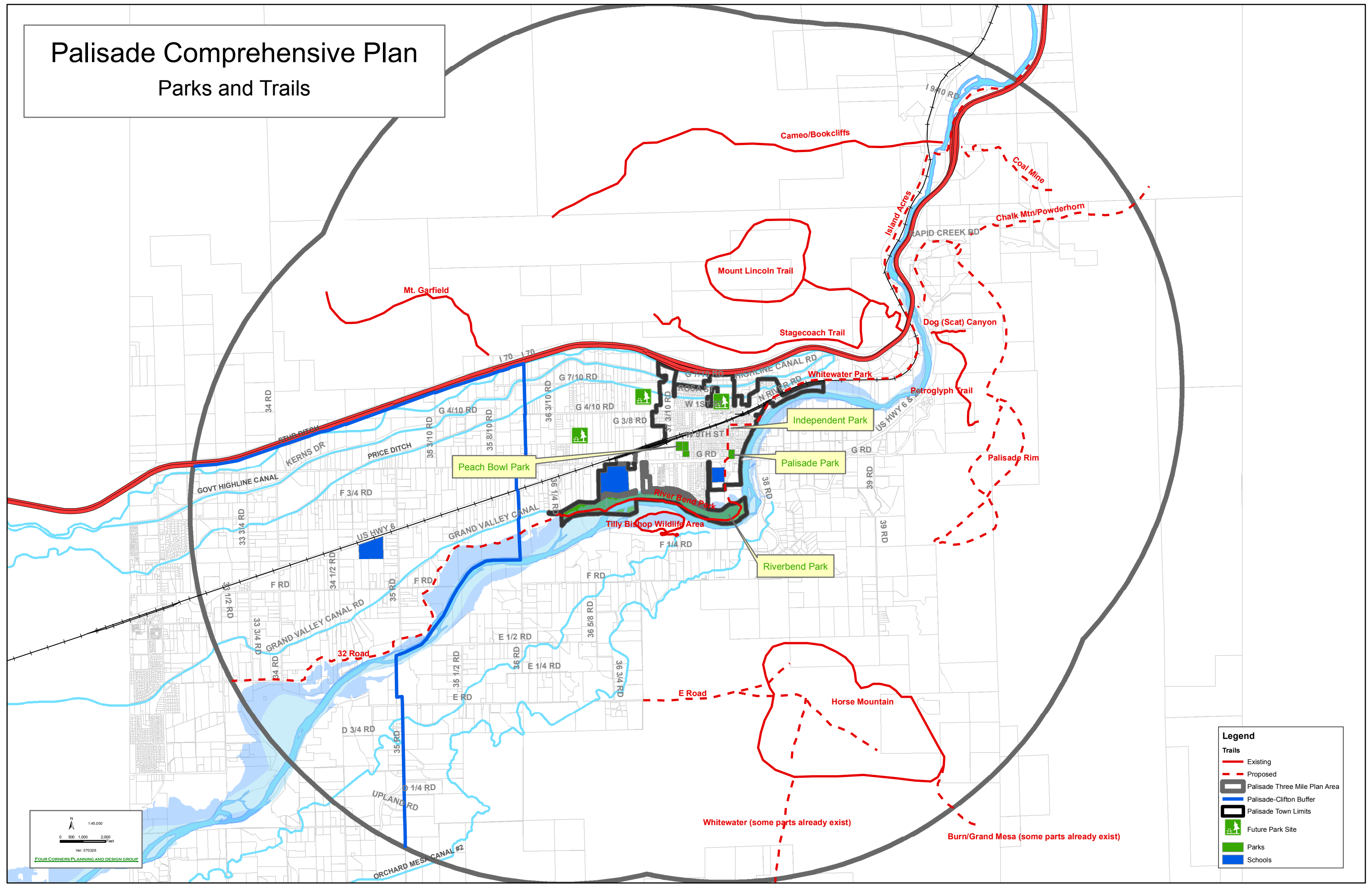
### **Recreation Advisory Committee Recommendations**

Foremost among the RAC's recommendations is to develop a parks master plan. Such a plan would ideally establish priorities and costs for new parks, improvements to existing parks, recreation programs and new trails. Needed new facilities identified to date include:

- Upgrade the skateboard park to a concrete facility
- Improve access to the Stagecoach Trail and develop parking at the trailhead
- Develop a trail to the top of Grand Mesa
- Extend the river trail in Riverbend Park to Grand Junction
- Build an outdoor amphitheater to serve as a venue for performances at festivals
- Build additional restrooms at Riverbend Park
- Install lighting for tennis courts and ball fields at Peach Bowl Park
- Make improvements to better serve seniors at Independent Park
- Designate trails along irrigation ditches
- Provide better access to trails on nearby public lands
- Conduct a study to evaluate remodeling the Community Center
- Conduct a study to evaluate constructing a recreation center
- Cover the swimming pool to make it an indoor facility

# Palisade Comprehensive Plan

## Parks and Trails



**Legend**

**Trails**

- Existing
- Proposed

Palisade Three Mile Plan Area

Palisade-Clifton Buffer

Palisade Town Limits

Future Park Site

Parks

Schools

N

1:45,000

0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet

Ver: 070326

FOUR CORNERS PLANNING AND DESIGN GROUP

## Desired Future Condition, Policies & Action Items

### *Desired Future Condition*

The Town of Palisade provides a variety of park facilities and programs to enhance recreation opportunities for residents and visitors of all ages. There is an extensive trail system that is safe and pleasant and serves as a non-motorized transportation network and a recreational amenity, connecting to surrounding public lands.

### *Policies and Action Items*

**Policy 1.** The Town of Palisade supports the efforts of the Recreation Advisory Committee to develop a Town recreation program of reasonable scale and scope. Action items to implement this policy include:

- a. Develop a parks and recreation master plan.
- b. Develop a plan to recommend improvements to the Community Center (could be part of a parks and recreation master plan).
- c. Develop a trails plan (could be included as an element in the parks and recreation master plan).
- d. Work with the local Chamber of Commerce and other groups to publicize and promote the new whitewater park as well as existing Town parks.

**Policy 2.** The Recreation Advisory Committee should continue to work with BLM to explore possibilities for promoting camping on BLM land near Palisade and to develop better/more trail access to BLM land.

**Policy 3.** The Town of Palisade encourages the development of a well designed campground in an appropriate location on private land near Palisade.

**Policy 4.** The Town of Palisade will coordinate with the Mesa County in the development of a countywide trails plan.



## Chapter 9 Community Facilities & Services

The Town of Palisade provides basic municipal services to residents and businesses and maintains facilities and a staff to carry out these services. Some of these services and facilities are described in other chapters of this Comprehensive Plan. Roads and traffic are discussed in Chapter 6, Transportation. Water supply, the sanitary sewer system and storm water drainage are described in Chapter 7, Infrastructure, and Chapter 8 discusses parks recreation and trails. The Town also owns and maintains the Town Hall, the fire station/public works buildings and lots, a cemetery, located west the Town limits on U.S. Highway 6 and a parking lot near Family Food Town.

### Palisade Civic Center

The Town Hall, the fire station/public works buildings are located adjacent to each other. The Town Hall, which houses the Town administrative offices and the Police Department, is overcrowded with inadequate parking, the fire station, which is mostly manned by a volunteer force, has no overnight accommodations, and the public works offices, buildings and yard are inadequately sized.

The Town is planning to build a new fire station in another location and has a long range plan to fund such a move (see Policy 1 below).



*Palisade Town Hall*

### Police Protection

The police force consists of seven professionals: a full-time police chief, a police sergeant, four officers and an administrative assistant. In addition, there are six reserve officers. The Police Department is equipped with six patrol cars and other law enforcement hardware. This department operates out of Town hall. As the population of the Town increases and the area within the corporate limits expands with new annexations, the department will need additional officers to protect more people and businesses and to provide 24 hour coverage.

### Fire and Emergency Response

The Palisade Fire Department provides fire protection and emergency medical services. Through a contract with the Palisade Rural Fire District, the department extends those services to surrounding rural areas. The department consists of two professionals and 25 volunteers. Figure 9-1 shows the service area of various fire districts in the Palisade area.

The fire department has its own station located adjacent to and east of the Town Hall housing two ambulances and the training room. The fire apparatus area is housed in the north four bays of the public works building, with a wall separating public works offices and work area, all sharing the same parcel of land. As stated above, the site is quite crowded and may not be adequate to serve the projected increased population and expanded service area.

Fire fighting equipment includes two pumper trucks, one 55 foot aerial apparatus, one rescue unit, and two ambulances, which are all housed in heated buildings. A



*Palisade Fire Station*

water tender and one brush truck are in service but due to space constraints are not housed in a heated building.

Each member of the fire fighting unit is outfitted with modern protective clothing and personal equipment meeting the standards of NEPA. All firefighters maintain training complying with state standards set by the Colorado Division of Fire Safety, and maintain EMT training per the Mesa County EMS Resolution and state requirements.

An effort is being made to consolidate valley-wide fire and emergency medical response. A consolidated approach would help to reduce overlapping administrative costs, would provide better coordination of response to emergencies, would ensure a more consistent level of training and certification for fire and emergency personnel, and should reduce overall costs.

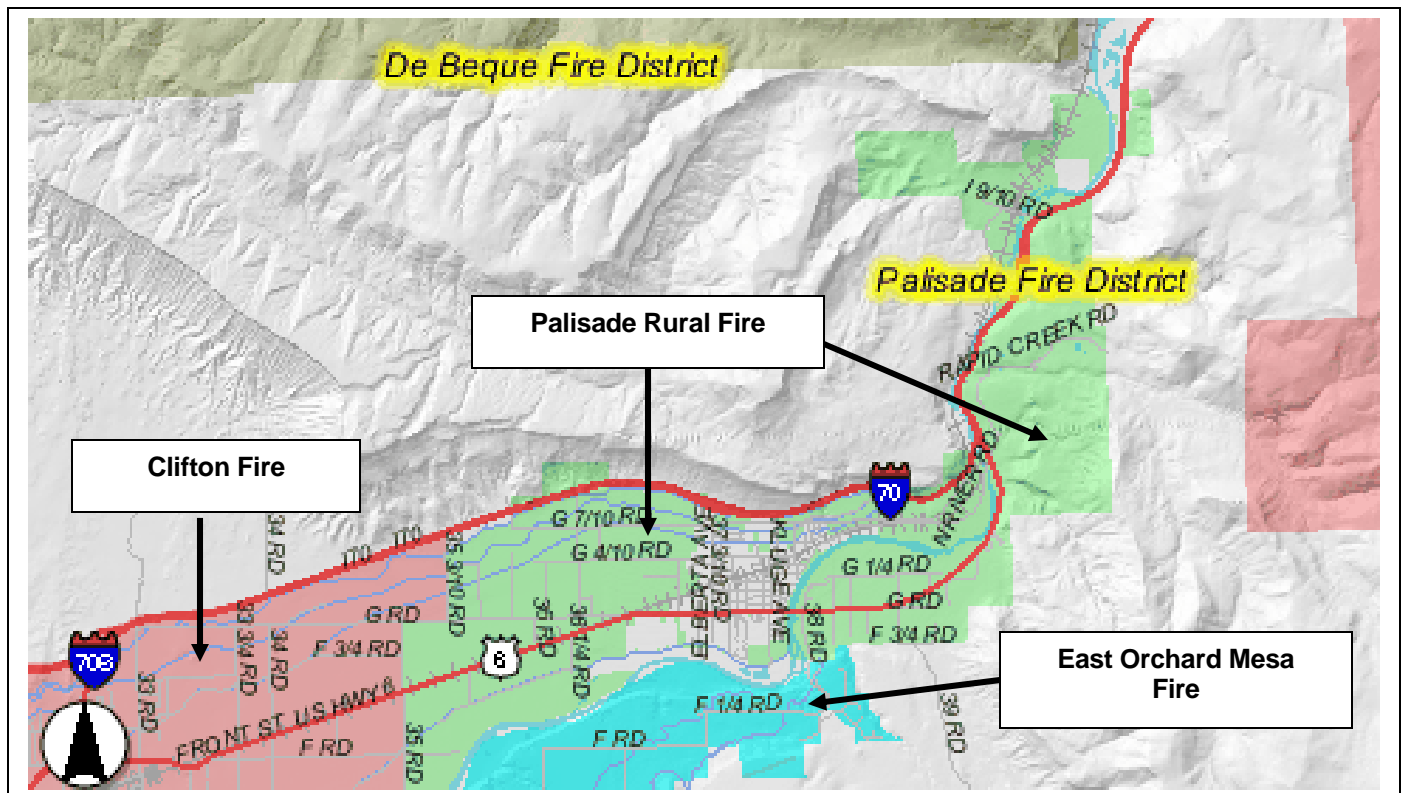


Figure 9-1 Fire Districts

## Public Works

The Public Works Department offices are housed in a building on the civic center property that also serves as a shop and storage area, including fire fighting equipment. From this relatively small facility, the Public Works Department administers a variety of services, including potable water, sewage disposal, parks and road maintenance, maintaining the community center and the Town-owned cemetery, located several miles west of the corporate limits.

## Desired Future Condition, Policies & Action Items

### *Desired Future Condition*

Adequate government services and facilities are provided at the lowest appropriate levels of taxation to serve present and future residents, visitors and businesses.

### *Policies and Action Items*

**Policy 1** – The Town Hall is an important anchor in downtown Palisade and may remain at its present location, but the fire station and the public works office/yard should be moved to more suitable locations outside the downtown mixed-use district, and the site should be redeveloped with land uses more compatible with a mixed use village. Action items to implement this policy include:

- a. Conduct a facilities study to evaluate alternative locations and associated costs for the fire station and the public works office and yard and select preferred alternative sites for each facility. The study should also address long range space needs of Town Hall, including parking.
- b. When relocation of the fire station and public works facilities is underway, coordinate with the private sector to sell or lease space not needed for Town Hall expansion to ensure that the site is redeveloped in a manner compatible with the purpose of the downtown Mixed Use District (see Chapter 3).

**Policy 2.** Analyze the use of the Town-owned parking lot near Family Food Town.

**Policy 3** – Fire hydrants with adequate flow to serve the fire protection needs of residents and businesses shall be installed and maintained. An action item to implement this policy is:

- a. Analyze the Land Use Code to ensure that adequate fire protection is provided through the subdivision review process.





## Chapter 10 Agriculture & Open Space

### Agriculture and Quality of Life

Agriculture is an important part of Palisade's history, community character and quality of life. The visual landscape of the valley bottom below the towering Bookcliffs and Grand Mesa is dominated by orchards, vineyards, other crops and open range land, providing an impression of open space punctuated by the more densely settled area within the Town limits. Figure 10-1 shows parcels in agricultural land use, including prime agricultural parcels, according to the Mesa County GIS database. It is important to distinguish between prime and non-prime agricultural parcels when designating areas for potential future growth. Given the preferences of the Palisade community, it may be appropriate to avoid residential subdivisions or any other non-agricultural development on these prime parcels. Figure 10-2 shows the area served by the four irrigation districts located in the Palisade vicinity.



The Mesa Land Trust holds conservation easements on 44,000 acres of land on more than 90 properties. Figure 10-3 shows conservation easements in the Palisade area. There are currently 25 parcels under conservation easements within the three mile plan area totaling 343.8 acres. There are three general locations: (1) north of Town, south of I-70 (6 parcels totaling 35.5 acres); East Orchard Mesa (7 parcels totaling 107.5 acres); and the buffer (12 parcels totaling 200.8 acres). Federal and state tax deductions are allowed for donation of conservation easements.

### The Agricultural Economy

Although agriculture provides much of the pastoral quality of the landscape, agriculture represents a very small part of Mesa County's economy. According to the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE), total wages from crop production in 2005 were \$7,470,616, only 0.4 percent of total Mesa County wages of \$1.756 billion. Average employment for crop production in 2005 was 410 workers, 0.7 percent of total Mesa County employment of 55,560 for all occupations. Average annual wage for crop production workers in 2005 was \$18,200 compared to the average Mesa County wage of \$31,616 for all occupations.

Given that much of Mesa County's agriculture is located in the Palisade area, including East Orchard Mesa, the relative importance of agriculture appears to be much greater in Palisade. However, a more detailed geographic breakdown of wage and employment data is not available from CDLE.

CDLE data shows a significant seasonal fluctuation in the number of crop production workers, ranging from a low of 251 in January 2005 to a high of 645 in August 2005. Figure 10-1 shows this monthly variation. The data suggests that there may be a need for seasonal housing of some crop production workers.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture 2002 Census of Agriculture, there were 1,599 farms in Mesa County, occupying a total of 385,555 acres (down four percent from the 1997 acreage) and the average farm size was 241 acres compared





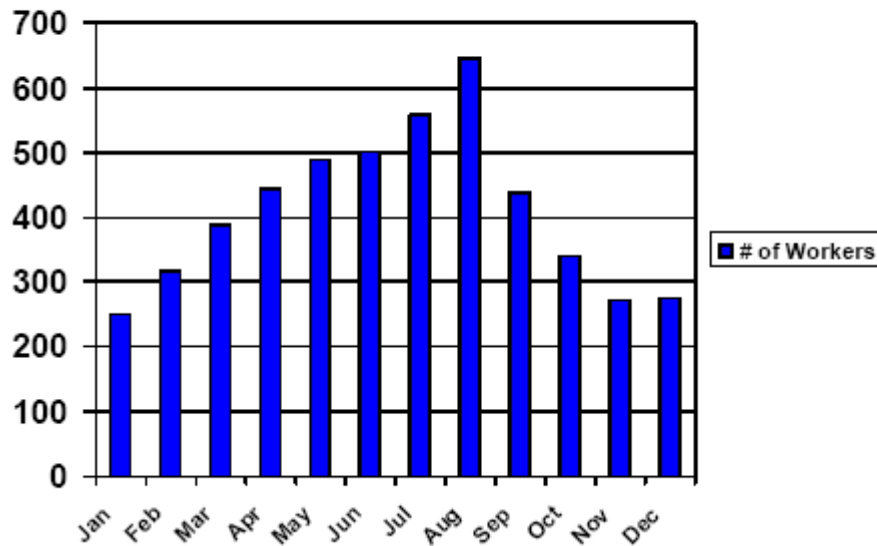
*Vineyard near downtown*

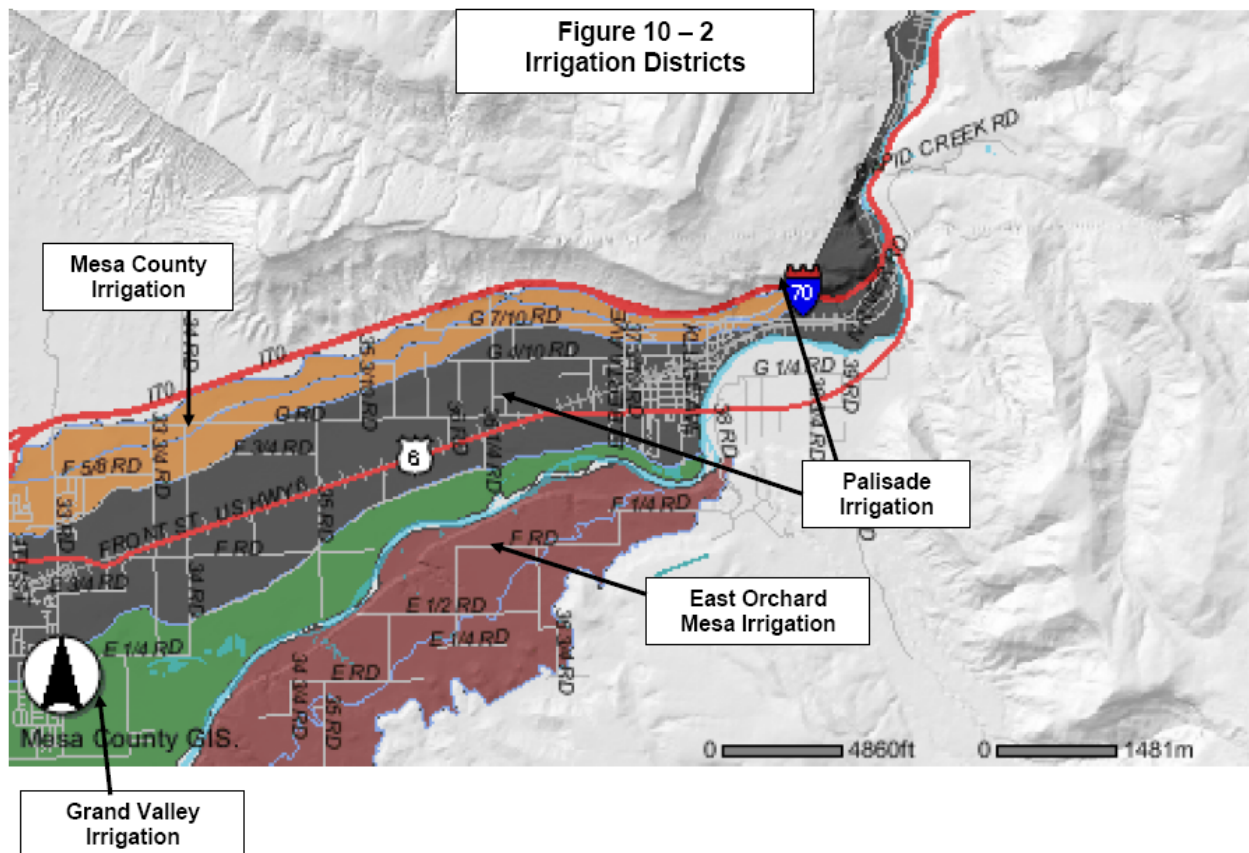
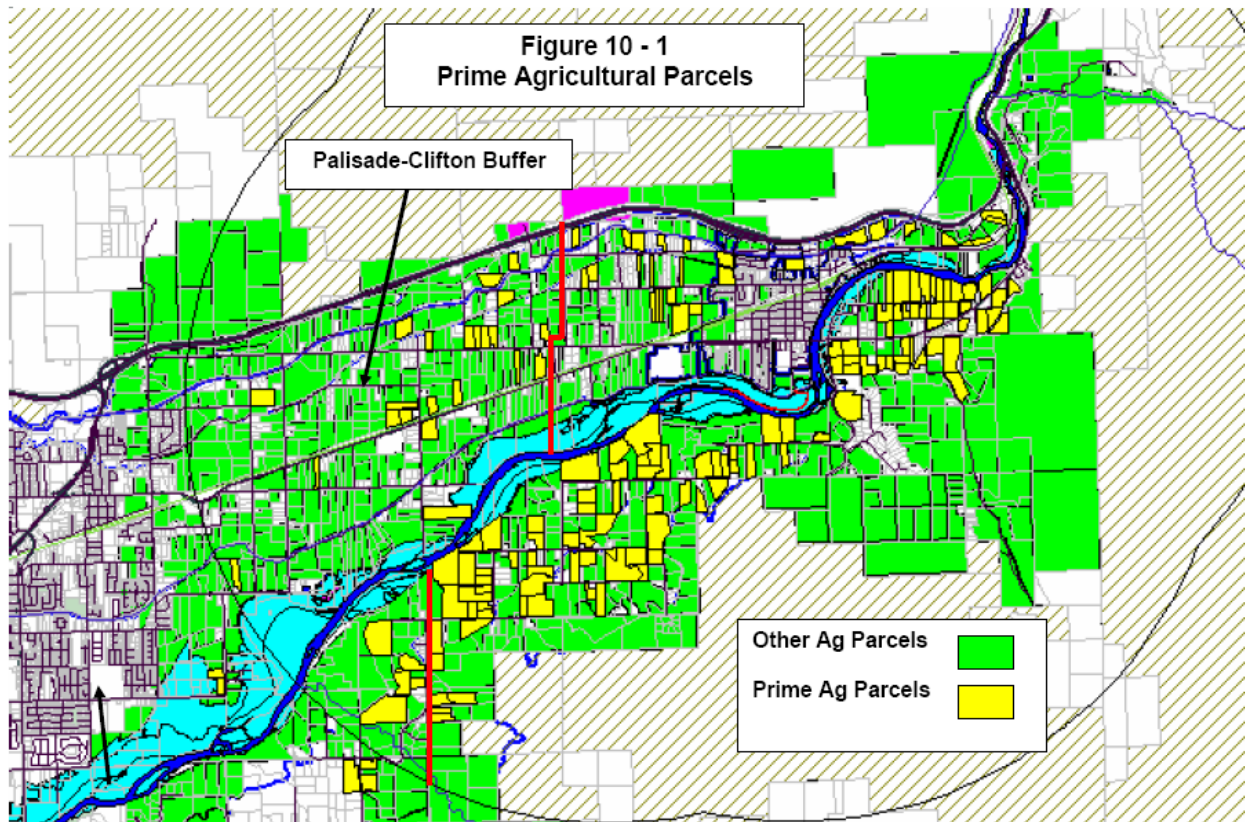
to an average size of 251 acres in 1997. However, the fairly large average size is skewed by the small number of very large farms. The size distribution by size category indicates that about two-thirds of the farms are less than 50 acres, which is typical for farms in the Palisade area. The nature of fruit and wine production are such that smaller parcels are more economically viable than similarly sized parcels used for other crops.

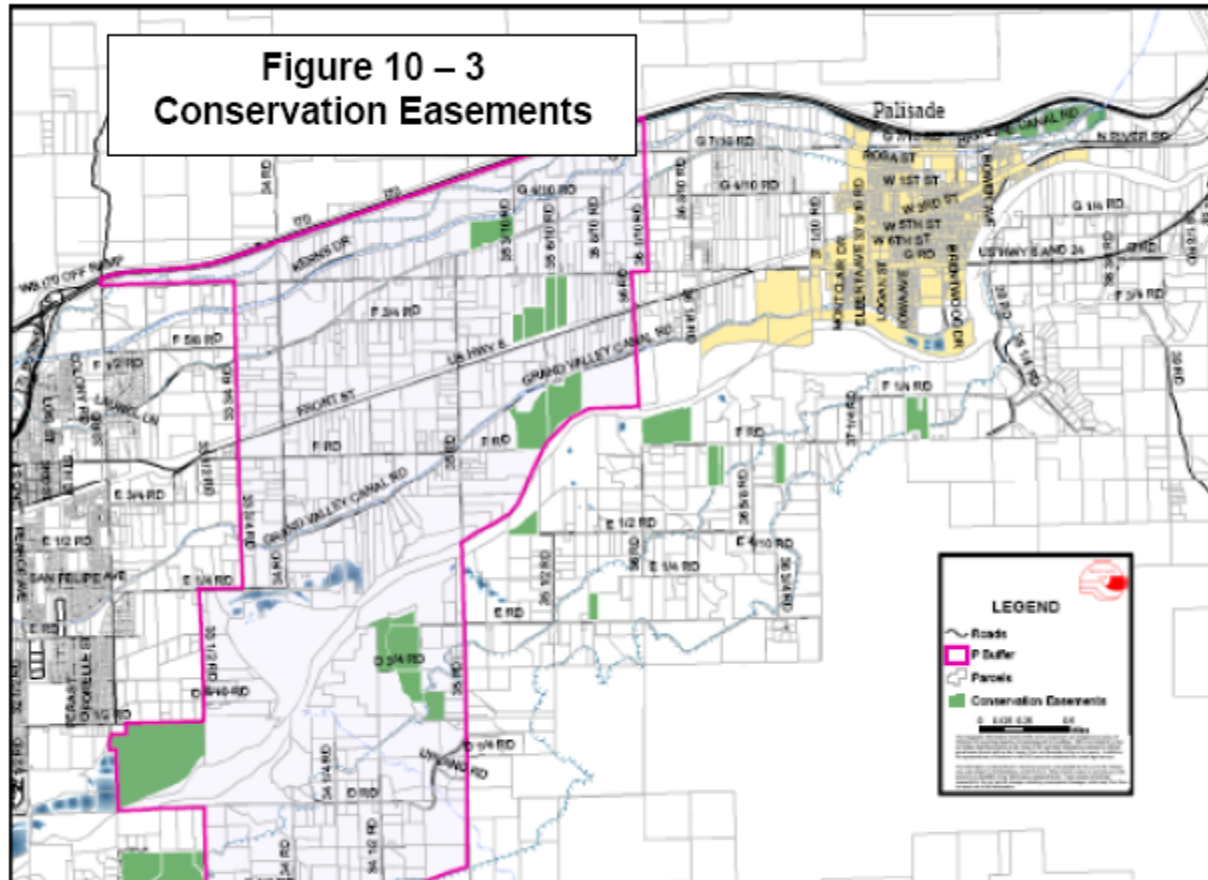
Pasture occupies approximately 51 percent of Mesa County farm acreage, cropland occupies 31 percent and the remainder is in woodlands or other uses. The 2002 Census of Agriculture also indicated that Mesa County ranked first among all counties in Colorado in value of sales for fruit, tree nuts and berries.

During the past 20 years, the wine industry has expanded in Mesa County. An area bordered by Fruita on the west and Palisade on east has been designated as the Grand Valley American Viticultural Area (GVAVA), established under the rules of the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. The GVAVA is home to 15 wineries, about 75 percent of Colorado's total number of wineries.

**FIGURE 10 – 1**  
**Monthly Distribution of Crop Production Workers, Mesa County, 2005**







## Desired Future Condition, Policy & Action Items

### *Desired Future Condition*

Recognizing that agriculture is important to Palisade's heritage, economy, agri-tourism and rural character, agriculture is preserved and enhanced through creative ways to maintain working farms.

### *Policy and Action Items*

**Policy 1.** Encourage the long-range protection of agriculture in and near Palisade. Action items to implement this policy include:

- a. Continue and expand opportunities for community farmers markets.
- b. Coordinate with farmers and the Mesa Land Trust to encourage farmers to voluntarily place conservation easements on agricultural land.
- c. Continue to encourage and enhance promotion of agri-tourism events and direct farm marketing opportunities through coordination with the Chamber of Commerce, the Grand Junction Visitor and Convention Bureau and the agricultural community.



## Chapter 11 Implementation

This Comprehensive Plan is designed to guide future growth and development of the Town of Palisade. **The plan is an advisory document only and does not have the force of law.** While the policies contained within the plan should serve as a basis for reviewing future development projects, such policies are more effectively implemented by incorporating them into law (an ordinance, for example).

The plan contains numerous action items designed to achieve stated policies. In the preceding chapters, the action items are organized by subject. Table 11 – 1 lists the action items by priority, indicates a time frame to accomplish each action item, and provides possible resources.

**TABLE 11 - 1  
ACTION ITEMS PRIORITIES AND SCHEDULE**

	Action Item Priorities	Time Frame	Comments	Information/ Resources
1.	Adopt the Comprehensive Plan	Winter 2007	The Palisade Planning and Zoning Commission should adopt the plan. While Colorado statutes do not require adoption by elected officials, the plan will have more legitimacy and therefore is more likely to be implemented if the Town Board also adopts the plan.	Colorado State Statutes
2.	Revise the Land Use Code to implement various sections of the Comprehensive Plan. Specific items to be addressed include:	Spring 2007	The consultant team that prepared the Comprehensive Plan is also under contract to update the Land Use Code.	
	A. Designate a new Mixed Use District in the downtown area and the old high school site area with appropriate land uses and design guidelines.			
	B. Designate new Residential Mixed Use Districts with appropriate land use, design, signage and traffic/parking standards.			
	C. Require design standards for new commercial development near I-70 Exit 42.			
	D. Encourage design guidelines for all new or renovated buildings in the downtown Mixed Use District.			
	E. Allow for new accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and the conversion of existing small structures, such as garages, to ADUs.			
	F. Allow mixed use developments in appropriate locations.			



**TABLE 11 - 1**  
**ACTION ITEMS PRIORITIES AND SCHEDULE**

	Action Item Priorities		Time Frame	Comments	Information/ Resources
	<b>G.</b>	Eliminate the existing B-2 zone and replace it with a new business/industrial zone that allows light manufacturing as a use-by-right.			
	<b>H.</b>	Ensure that adequate fire protection is provided through the subdivision review process.			
<b>3.</b>	Develop an intergovernmental agreement with Mesa County to ensure that Mesa County honors the land use districts and densities specified in unincorporated areas within the three mile plan area when reviewing and approving development proposals.		Spring 2007	The City of Fruita and Mesa County have such an agreement. The Town of Palisade, Mesa County and the City of Grand Junction have an agreement governing development in the buffer.	Relevant intergovernmental agreements.
<b>4.</b>	Conduct a facilities study to evaluate alternative locations and associated costs for the fire station and the public works office and yard and select preferred alternative sites for each facility. The study should also address long range space needs of Town Hall, including parking		2008		Department of Local Affairs (DOLA)
<b>5.</b>	When relocation of facilities such as fire, police or public works is underway, coordinate with the private sector to sell or lease space not needed for Town Hall expansion to ensure that the site is redeveloped in a manner compatible with the purpose of the downtown mixed use district.		2008		
<b>6.</b>	Develop a parks recreation and trails master plan to include a plan to recommend improvements to the Community Center		2008		DOLA, Go Colorado (GOCO)
<b>7.</b>	Conduct a detailed engineering study to determine the best alternative to expand or relocate the sewage treatment plant.		2009		Colorado Department of Health (CDH)
<b>8.</b>	Develop a comprehensive drainage and stormwater management plan.		2009		CDH, DOLA
<b>9.</b>	Participate in the 5-2-1 Drainage Authority and support the implementation of sufficient fees valleywide to provide administration of stormwater management regulations, implementation of flood mitigation		2009		

**TABLE 11 - 1**  
**ACTION ITEMS PRIORITIES AND SCHEDULE**

	Action Item Priorities		Time Frame	Comments	Information/Resources
	measures and construction of flood mitigation facilities				
10.	Prepare a detailed downtown development plan, including design alternatives for a downtown plaza.		2010	A plaza is an important design element for a revitalized village center.	DOLA
11.	Work with the Chamber of Commerce and other economic development groups, including state and federal agencies to:			See discussion of Enterprise Zones and various tax incentives in Chapter 5.	Palisade Chamber of Commerce, DOLA, U.S. Economic Development Administration
	A.	Create additional festivals, such as the peach and wine festivals, to attract tourists to Palisade.	2008		
	B.	Create additional events/festivals to attract more tourists to downtown.	2008		
	C.	Develop a voluntary program with local businesses to beautify storefronts and adjacent sidewalks.	2008		
	D.	Continue and expand opportunities for community farmers markets.	2007	The proposed Palisade Market would make use of vacant or underdeveloped areas along the railroad tracks to erect pole barn or other inexpensive structures to serve as a central outlet for locally grown and manufactured food products as well as arts and crafts. The Palisade Market could be a destination for local and regional shoppers and out of Town tourists. These buildings could also function as railroad "liner buildings".	
	E.	Publicize and promote the new whitewater park as well as existing Town parks.	2007		
	F.	Provide incentives to encourage new retail businesses.	2007		
	G.	Provide incentives to encourage new lodging businesses.	2007		
	H.	Provide incentives to encourage existing businesses to expand.	2007		
	I.	Provide incentives to encourage new agri-business (orchards, vineyards, wineries).	2007		
	J.	Provide incentives to encourage agri-tourism (tours of orchards, vineyards, wineries).	2007		
	K.	Provide incentives to encourage new buildings and major renovations of existing buildings (particularly industrial/distribution facilities) along the railroad tracks to function as "liner buildings" to mitigate the visual and audio impacts of trains.	2007		



**TABLE 11 - 1**  
**ACTION ITEMS PRIORITIES AND SCHEDULE**

	Action Item Priorities		Time Frame	Comments	Information/ Resources
12.	Coordinate with farmers and the Mesa Land Trust to encourage farmers to voluntarily place conservation easements on agricultural land		2008 and ongoing		Mesa Land Trust
13.	Develop a transfer of development rights program in cooperation with Mesa County.		2011	The City of Fruita and Mesa County have developed an intergovernmental TDR program.	City of Fruita, Mesa County
14.	Coordinate with CDOT and / or Mesa County to accomplish the following:				CDOT, Mesa County
	A.	Make appropriate road and other improvements needed to serve future growth areas.	When growth occurs		
	B.	Beautify I-70 Exits 42 and 44 to make them more welcoming.	2009		
	C.	Install better signs with a map of major roads advertising Palisade at I-70 Exits 42 and 44 and along the U.S. Highway 6 corridor.	2009		
	D.	Install gates across rail crossings near Palisade that presently do not have gates.	2020		
	E.	Upgrade railroad crossings to meet the criteria for a quiet zone.	2020		
	F.	Develop plans for a roundabout at the intersection of Elberta Avenue and U.S. Highway 6.	2011		
15.	Coordinate with the Grand Valley Transportation System to develop a bus loop route in Palisade connecting downtown and the three other major commercial areas.		2012		Grand Valley Transportation System
16.	Coordinate with the Grand Valley Transportation System and the railroad to develop a rail commuter/tourist train from Palisade to Grand Junction and Fruita.		2020		Grand Valley Transportation System, railroad