



San Miguel County
East End | Master Plan

2023 San Miguel County East End Master Plan

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- Joint Letter from BOCC Chair and PC Chair (To be added with final draft)

Ch 1: Introduction

Introduction

- Chapter 1 introduces the San Miguel County East End Master Plan, including a brief history of the region and planning boundary, and outlines the purpose and intent of the plan.

San Miguel County East End is a special place where communities coexist in the valleys and mountains of a worldclass hub of year-round outdoor adventures. Through the strength of community connections, it celebrates remote mountain living while maintaining a down to earth and vibrant vibe. The region encompasses numerous public lands and high-country areas boasting wildlife, nature, and stunning mountain peaks and providing accessibility to natural areas. The people have a great love for their home – they appreciate the walkability of their towns, the spectacular views, and the sense of community where people know and support one another. This love is evident in the community’s passion for protecting both people and place.

Amid the beauty of this area, there is a growing tension between increasing housing costs, the need for affordable housing and essential services, and the desire to preserve the natural environment. There are concerns about growth in annual visitation, human impacts on natural areas and recreational spaces, and the effects of climate change. There is also an interest in increasing transit services with extended hours of service to better connect the region and those who live throughout the incorporated and unincorporated areas of the East End.

After over 30 years, San Miguel County is developing a comprehensive update to the 1989 Telluride Regional Area Master Plan. The San Miguel County East End Master Plan begins with the 1989 plan’s goals and objectives mostly realized. As the community embarks on the implementation of the updated plan, it is important to think forward to the next 30 years, and what topics and physical areas will be relevant. A key adjustment from the 1989 plan is the expansion of the planning boundary to account for areas of growth from the last 30 years, and identifying areas where additional land preservation



1989 Telluride Regional Area Master Plan Goal – Preservation of Community

Maintain and enhance the distinctive sense of community which is present in the Telluride Region Area today. The essence of this sense of community is the small town way of life against the mountain backdrop. It includes the concept of neighbors sharing their successes and failures and helping each other to meet real human needs. It also means preserving the sense of smallness in the scale and style of man's impact upon the historic Town of Telluride and the majestic mountain setting.

measures should be made to preserve the character and beauty of the area. This allows a holistic approach to planning for the future of the East End of San Miguel County.

The San Miguel County Comprehensive Development Plan (“CDP,” 1978, as amended), of which the East End Master Plan is a part, notes that the County is divided into “community or ‘regional’ areas where common values and problems based on economy, topography, and community identity could be handled in more detail. . .” The CDP notes that a sense of community may exist within each region, and was one of the key factors in the decision to include the entirety of the East End in this plan.

What does this plan include?

The San Miguel County East End Master Plan incorporates elements related to climate change, preservation of natural areas, economic development, land use, community growth, equity, transportation, and recreation. It is divided into five chapters that present the plan vision, a snapshot of existing conditions, anticipated growth and a future land use plan, and the plan’s guiding themes supported by strategies for implementation.



Guiding Themes of the Plan

The guiding themes emerged from the community vision and engagement process.

- Housing Access
- Climate Change and Resiliency
- Balanced and Sustained Natural and Built Environments
- Diverse and Resilient Economic Opportunity
- Expanded Transportation Options
- Varied Recreational Options
- Vibrant Arts and Culture
- Connected, Cooperative, and Welcoming Community



What is a Master Plan?

A Master Plan is...

- A formal planning document and strategic policy instrument that helps guide policy decisions and priorities by reflecting the community's vision and goals.
- A long-range planning tool that integrates existing planning work while looking to the future.
- A tool used by staff and elected officials in the decision-making process.
- A vision document representing the aspirations and intentions of the East End community.

About San Miguel East End

The area known today as San Miguel County was originally inhabited by the Ute peoples. Multiple Ute bands occupied the area, including the Weenuche, or “long time ago people,” and the Uncompahgre band of Ute Indians. These Indigenous peoples hunted the higher elevations of the San Juan Mountains in the summer and took refuge in lower river valleys in the winter. The Ute peoples lived on and stewarded this remote area of what was becoming the expanding United States until they were forcibly removed from their lands within San Miguel County in 1881.

Spanish explorers passed through San Miguel County in 1765 during an expedition led by Juan Rivera in search of rumored silver deposits in the mountains. The area's mineral riches were more fully unearthed approximately 100 years later, with prospectors finding seams of gold and silver within the mountains.



This discovery prompted the U.S. government to sanction the removal and relocation of the Ute peoples to the State of Utah and other portions of western Colorado, areas that became known as the Uintah-Ouray Reservation and Southern Ute Reservation, respectively. San Miguel County is the ancestral lands of the Ute peoples. In 2014, San Miguel County passed Resolution 2014 - 011 offering a formal government to government apology to the Uncompahgre Utes for their forced removal. This apology is included here to recognize the continued importance of understanding why and how the current community is able to call this special place home. As stated in the Resolution, "San Miguel County apologizes to the Uncompahgre Ute people and their descendants for their forced removal from western Colorado in 1881 and their relocation to Utah. The county also extends a formal apology, government to government, to the Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation, representing the Uncompahgre Ute descendants, now residing in Utah."

Mining History in Ophir and Telluride

As communities that were established with early mineral development exploration, the Towns of Telluride and Ophir have a high proportion of older housing stock that was built before 1939. The Town of Telluride is designated as a National Historic Landmark District due in part to the historic character of these buildings and its significant contribution to the history of the US.

In the mid- to late-1870s, thousands of miners came to the area, staking claims in the Marshall Basin (northeast of Telluride) and along the San Miguel River. The Sheridan, Pandora, and Smuggler Mines were developed to extract gold, silver and other minerals, and the Rio Grande Southern Railroad was built in 1891 and delivered minerals to nearby Durango for smelting. The Town of Telluride, whose name is derived from the rare element tellurium, was incorporated in 1878 (originally called Columbia) and had power lighting streets, homes, and mines by 1891. The area survived the silver crash of 1893 and World War 1 but continued developing with discoveries of other minerals such as lead, copper and zinc until the decline of mining in the mid-20th century. By the 1950s, all of the regional mines were consolidated into the Idarado Mining Company; the mines

finally closed in 1978. The Rio Grande Southern Railroad ceased operations in 1952, and the tracks were removed and the right-of-way abandoned.

The Telluride Region grew as a recreation and cultural destination with the opening of the Telluride Ski Area in 1972, which then extended to Mountain Village in 1975. Arts and music festivals support the cultural richness of the area with several notable events dating back to the 1970s including the Telluride Bluegrass Festival, the Telluride Film Festival, and the Telluride Chamber Music Festival to name a few. Other recurring arts and music festivals include the Telluride Plein Air Festival, Telluride Jazz Festival, Telluride Mushroom Festival, and Blues & Brews Festival. As the area developed, a handful of local leaders led the creation of the area's foundational 1989 Telluride Regional Area Master Plan. This plan laid the groundwork for the growing resort area to support a number of small "satellite pods of clustered development" connected by a regional gondola. This plan has largely come to fruition. Since that plan's adoption, notable changes have included the establishment of Lawson Hill, the incorporation of the Town of Mountain Village, and the acquisition of the Valley Floor by the Town of Telluride. The San Miguel County Land Use Code was adopted in 1991 to implement the 1989 plan.



Today the regional gondola carries three million passengers annually and serves as a transportation spine between the region’s highest visited hubs. The gondola is an example of creative problem-solving for environmental protection and safety. Taking a transportation solution that is comfortable and easy to navigate for skiers and applying it to day-to-day travel lessens the demand for single-occupancy vehicles traveling the seven miles between Telluride and Mountain Village. This solution has a significantly smaller environmental impact compared to the same number of trips made by vehicle in an area with environmental constraints.

Planning Area

Regional Context

The East End planning area is located within the easternmost section of San Miguel County (Figure 1). The plan boundary expands upon the 1989 Telluride Regional Boundary to include the entire eastern portion of San Miguel County (Figure 2). The Town of Telluride, Town of Mountain Village and Town of Ophir are contained within the plan area. These incorporated towns support the core populations of the East End and, though the plan does not provide land use plans or policies for them, they are critical to consider in the effort. A significant portion of the plan boundary is natural public lands owned by the United States Forest Service (USFS) and covers approximately 73 percent of the eastern and southern areas of the East End.

73%
of the plan area is Uncompahgre and San Juan National Forest lands, publicly owned by the United States Forest Service (USFS).

The unincorporated areas within the East End include the following subdivisions or planned unit developments (PUDs). These existing approvals are anticipated to remain mostly unchanged.

- Aldasoro Ranch
- Alta
- Ames
- Gray Head
- Hidden Lakes
- Hillside
- Elk Run
- Idarado Legacy
- Last Dollar
- Lawson Hill
- Lawson Hill Ilium
- Meadows at Deep Creek
- The Preserve
- Raspberry Patch
- San Bernardo
- Ski Ranches
- Sunnyside Ranch
- Trout Lake



Figure 1 Regional Context Map

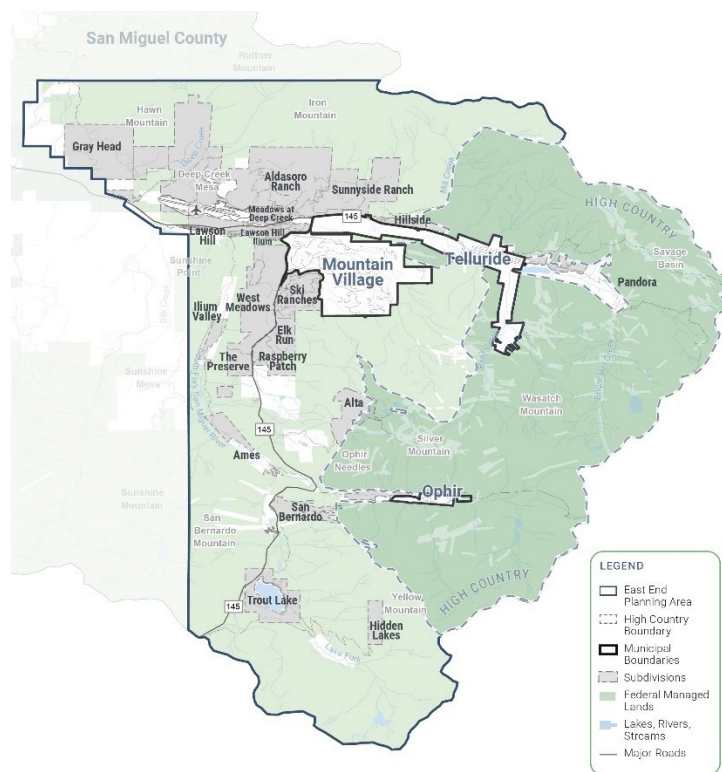


Figure 2 East End Planning Area Map

Plan Purpose

Why is it needed? Why do this now?

This plan will replace the 1989 Telluride Regional Area Master Plan and area growth boundary, both of which are over 30 years old, and most of the development envisioned in the Telluride region has occurred. Effective planning for the future of the San Miguel East End region requires new approaches and tools to manage growth, as well as a broader look at land use, development, and natural resource protection. Due to the success of regional coordination from local leaders, many of the plan’s recommendations have been implemented, such as protecting and developing affordable housing and zoning pursuant to LUC Section 5-305 Affordable Housing PUD Zone District and LUC Section 5-324 Community Housing Zone District and preventing development in environmentally sensitive areas.



The San Miguel County East End Master Plan considers the issues facing the community today - population growth, environmental conservation, housing challenges, transportation needs, industry shifts, preservation of community, and threats and stressors stemming from climate change.

Importance of guiding growth

It is often said that an individual's future quality of life depends on the choices they make today. The health of a community is no different. The plan is a shared vision for future decision making, providing guidance on needed multi-modal transportation investments, strategies for housing community members at a range of income levels, critical areas to be preserved as natural spaces, tools for economic success, and resiliency in the face of a changing climate.

Change within the plan area is inevitable, which is why it is important to understand where growth pressures might occur and what type of development should be encouraged in the East End. The plan area allows for a broader look at issues and impacts that extend beyond the existing developed areas in order to be intentional about future growth and natural environment preservation efforts. It allows for a holistic approach to planning, recognizing the region's interconnectedness.

How to Use this Document

This plan provides a unified vision for the San Miguel County East End to navigate the changes and growth within the planning area. It incorporates our community's vision for the future, guiding future land use opportunities and development. It is important to note that this document is intended to guide future land development and policies but is not a regulatory document.

Relationship to other plans

A foundational component of the plan process is assessing previous and current planning efforts aligning with the East End. Key planning efforts that have informed this plan are identified in this section, and the plan incorporates key policy ideas from these plans.

- **Telluride Regional Area Master Plan (1989)**: Adopted as an element of the San Miguel County Comprehensive Development Plan, this plan is a roadmap for public participation, policy statements and land use programs and focuses on community goals, desires, values and ideals for the Telluride Regional Area. Plan topics included future land use, environmental quality, scenic quality, preservation of community, affordable housing, transportation, public and institutional uses, utilities, economic development, recreational facilities and amenities, and trails.
- **San Miguel & Ouray County Regional Climate Action Plan (2021; adopted 2023)**¹: Sets the groundwork for regional collaboration related to climate action. The plan seeks to advance programming and projects that pursue environmental, economic and socially beneficial solutions, specifically around climate action over the next ten years throughout the region. The Climate Action Plan was adopted by the San Miguel County BOCC in Resolution #2023-04, which also establishes greenhouse gas reduction targets.

¹ <https://www.sanmiguelcountyco.gov/701/Building-Climate-Resilience>



- **The Mountain Migration Report (2021)²**: Identifies trends and data collected from six western-slope mountain communities during and the COVID-19 pandemic. The report seeks to understand the migration of people from cities to mountain resort communities during this time, and outlines opportunities for mountain communities to address housing and employment needs that have resulted from the changing demographics during the COVID-19 pandemic. (Northwest Colorado Council of Governments; Eagle, Grand, Pitkin Routt, San Miguel and Summit Counties)
- **The Impacts of Affordable Housing on the Telluride Area Economy & Community (2019)³**: Addresses the importance of affordable housing needs and highlights economic and community benefits that the existing stock of deed-restricted homes for employee and year-round resident households has had on the Telluride area. (Trust for Community Housing)
- **San Miguel County Housing Needs Assessment (2018)⁴**: Serves as a guide for understanding trends in housing targets and includes an economic and demographic framework, housing inventory, market conditions summary, survey and findings, housing issues and gaps, and a summary of prior studies.
- **Colorado Water Conservation Board Basin Implementation Plan (BIP) (2021)**: Works as a consistent statewide framework for examining future water supply and demand under different scenarios. The plan study area falls within the [Southwest Basin Implementation Plan](#) (BIP). The Southwest BIP projects variable water usage levels based on future operating conditions. The report uses five alternative planning scenarios to gauge water demand and availability.

Role of the plan within county governance

The San Miguel County East End Master Plan is an official public document that is adopted by the County's Planning Commission. Master plans / comprehensive plans are required by the State of Colorado and should reflect community values and provide a planning process that guides growth and development while also considering regional impacts. While the state requires these plans, there is no prescribed format and local governments are given wide latitude to include topics and issues that are relevant to their communities. The state does require that recreation and tourism considerations are included. These topics are addressed throughout the San Miguel County East End Master Plan.

The plan applies only to the unincorporated areas of eastern San Miguel County. It also provides guidance for regional coordination between various agencies including towns, federal land managers, and transportation entities that provide planning and other services throughout the county.

The plan is an update and replacement to the 1989 Telluride Regional Area Master Plan.

² <https://www.nwccog.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Mtn-Migration-Report-FINAL.pdf>

³ <https://www.sanmiguelcountyco.gov/DocumentCenter/View/6351/Impacts-of-Workforce-Housing-TCH-2019-PDF>

⁴ <https://www.sanmiguelcountyco.gov/DocumentCenter/View/6349/San-Miguel-County-Housing-Needs-Assessment-2018-PDF>



Ch 2: East End Vision and Community Process

- [Chapter 2](#) explains the vision and goals for the plan document while incorporating what we learned from the community through the engagement process.

Future Vision

What is a Vision Statement?

The vision is an overarching aspirational statement for the future of Eastern San Miguel County. The vision has been crafted to reflect community during focus groups, pop-up events, a community-wide survey, and open houses.

Eastern San Miguel County is a forward thinking, connected, and caring community. We embrace big ideas and new concepts and endeavor to lead by example. Our local history of innovation and stewardship rooted in tradition creates a culturally rich and supportive community - from protecting the natural environment to supporting longtime and new residents. We are adaptive and creative and aspire to use technology, inspiration from our past, effective policies, and regional coordination to advance green energy opportunities, environmental resiliency, and climate change mitigation and

adaptation. We endeavor to strike a balance between supporting new growth and maintaining the natural and community character that makes our region so special. We are an outdoor recreation hub and seek to maintain recreational infrastructure while preserving open spaces. We are proud of our home and remote Colorado lifestyle and are committed to being a welcoming place now and into the future.

Key Themes

The following eight themes guide the recommendations framework for the San Miguel County East End Master Plan. It is important to note that the themes are not listed by priority.

- Housing Access
- Climate Change and Resiliency
- Balanced and Sustained Natural and Built Environments
- Diverse and Resilient Economic Opportunity
- Expanded Transportation Options
- Varied Recreation Options
- Vibrant Arts and Culture
- Connected, Cooperative and Welcoming Community

Visioning Process

Process

The process to create the San Miguel East End Master Plan began in the fall of 2022 with an inventory of existing conditions and a series of focus groups. Pop-up events were held in December and a survey was available in early 2023. These community engagement activities provided guidance for the initial plan framework, including a draft vision statement and topical goal statements. These drafts, along with a detailed mapping exercise, were presented to the community in the spring of 2023. A draft plan, based on input from the community, was presented in **August 2023**, with the final plan completed in **XX 2023**.



Throughout the process, an advisory group provided key guidance and feedback to ensure the plan and process reflect our community.

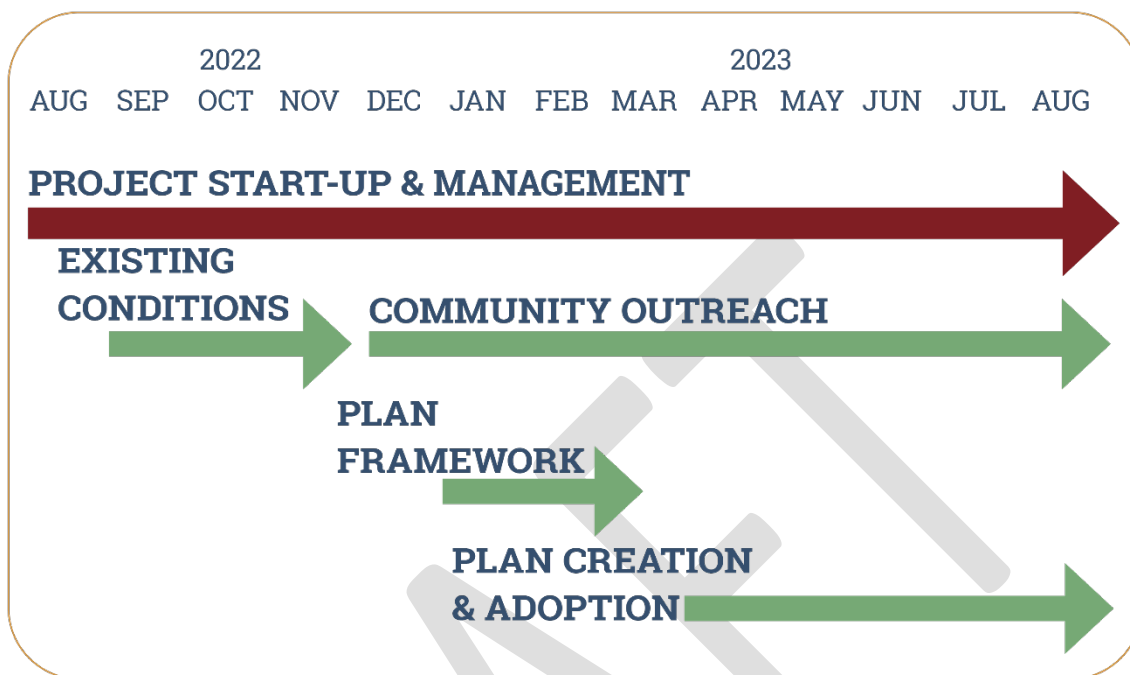


Figure 3 Project Timeline

Community Engagement

Throughout the plan's development, there have been multiple engagement events and opportunities for public input. This collective input resulted in the plan's content and overall vision.

The development of the plan incorporates the following:

- Five (5) topical focus groups
- Four (4) pop-up events with 150+ participants
- Eight (8) Advisory Board meetings with 13 members representing diverse perspectives and industries
- Survey with 1,095 recorded responses
- Two (2) public open houses with 100+ participants

Why is community engagement important to our process?

The voices of the community - from County leadership to small business owners to families - are an essential piece of the story of San Miguel County.

The following goals were developed through the process and were critical in shaping the engagement approach:

- Inform the community about the plan process



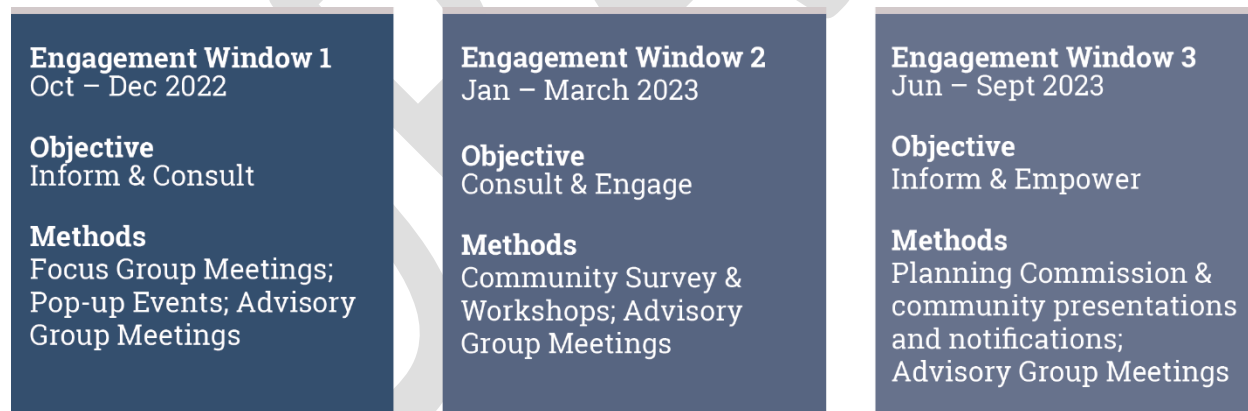
- Consult community members to gather an understanding of the values, needs, issues, and opportunities within the San Miguel East End
- Involve those that are representative of diverse opinions and insights of the community
- Collaborate to develop actions that are reflective of community needs and desires
- Educate the community on the outcomes of the plan
- Build momentum and empower action for implementation

How did we connect plan contents to community perspectives?

Each engagement effort began by presenting technical information and identifying specific goals, issues, or challenges. Community members reviewed materials such as community demographics, summaries of what the project team had heard to date, and objectives and policies of previous planning efforts prior to answering questions or providing feedback. Presenting technical information and seeking personal feedback allows for outreach to be grounded in a shared understanding of the topics the community engagement aims to address and the ability to focus feedback on critical issues.

Engagement Process

The community engagement process was completed in “windows” rather than singular events. Understanding that outreach cannot be a one size fits all approach, seeking feedback through a variety of means allows similar information to be gathered in ways in which community members feel most comfortable. For instance, “What type of development and where?” was asked in both an online community survey and in-person community open house format. Multiple methods were used within each window, as depicted below, to reach community members and understand their diversity of interests.



Each engagement window included specific efforts to hear from the Latino/a/e community, such as translation of all English materials into Spanish and the availability of Spanish-speaking facilitators at all events. Information about events was also posted in Spanish and in areas throughout the community with direct communication about activities conveyed by trusted community members. Despite these efforts, fewer Latino/a/e community members participated in the engagement activities than the area’s demographics. Advisory group members provided critical feedback about how to layer in concerns and opportunities from this portion of our community in the plan. Additionally, targeted outreach to the Latino/a/e community was encouraged as portions of the plan are implemented by the County and its partners.



Engagement Summary

Engagement Window 1

The first engagement window included five topical focus groups and multiple pop-up events throughout the planning area. The objective of these events was to gain project visibility and inform community members about the plan process and have targeted conversations with stakeholders to gain an initial understanding of values, needs, issues, and opportunities related to important plan topics.

Focus Groups: Five focus groups were held from November 7 - 9, 2022. Over 30 people participated in each 1-hour focus group, including invitees considered subject matter experts in their respective fields, as well as community members. The planning team gave a brief presentation describing the plan process and existing conditions in the planning area, then asked the groups a series of questions via an online interactive platform (Mentimeter). Multiple choice and open-ended questions were asked to get a better understanding of opportunities and challenges across the five topic areas:

- Tourism, Recreation & Visitors
- Housing Considerations
- Environmental Stewardship & Priorities
- Mobility & Transportation
- Equity, Inclusion & Livability

Pop-ups: A total of four pop-up engagement events were held on December 7, 2022. The pop-up events were held in various places throughout the County with high foot traffic on a weekday. The outreach concluded with a three-hour event during Telluride's popular Noel Night, where businesses offer discounts and specials for the holiday season and draw people from around the region. Pop-up events were advertised via an email and print, radio, and social media campaign that was initiated the week prior to the events. The engagement materials were provided in both English and Spanish, and a Spanish translator was present during all events. A youth engagement activity was also provided.

What We Learned

Community members love the scenic natural beauty of the area and its amazing features, including the San Juans, the Mesas, and the intact wildlife corridors. The majestic nature of the box canyon, the fresh air and the wide-open spaces attract both residents and visitors alike. Conservation and respect for the natural world are paramount.

People also expressed love for the area's walkability, funky and quirky lifestyles, the festivals and music scene, access to outdoor recreation (especially skiing) and active lifestyles, and work/life balance. A sense of safety and a small-town atmosphere also make the county a special place, along with the history of the area, civic engagement, and lack of sprawled development.

Top areas of focus for the plan include environmental stewardship, managing growth, affordable housing, and essential services.



Housing Access: Participants expressed support for affordable housing options in more places than currently developed, more rental housing, and allowing more housing density.



Climate Change and Resiliency: Participants shared their thoughts that the County should focus resources on addressing and mitigating the impacts of climate change, including water scarcity, wildfire, and wildlife habitat loss.



Expanded Transportation Options: Participants indicated that investments that enable walking and biking are needed and expanding transit services is favorable.

Engagement Window 2

The second engagement window included a community-wide online survey and multiple community open houses. The objectives of these events were to gain a representative understanding of opinions and insights, to gather feedback on future land uses in the planning area, to understand desired priorities for key topics such as economic development, growth, affordable housing strategies, and environmental preservation, and to solidify the plan's vision statement, goals and the initial formulation of policies.

Survey: The San Miguel County East End Master Plan Community Survey was conducted online from February 13 through March 6. The survey was hosted via the Qualtrics XM survey platform. The survey was accessible via a link on San Miguel County's East End Master Plan website and distributed through a robust advertisement campaign, including newspaper and radio ads, on the County's social media platforms, via email, and through physical flyers. Advertisements and the survey were both provided in English and Spanish.

The survey captured feedback from 1,095 respondents representing a cross-section of community members.

Community Open Houses: Two community open house events were held on March 21, 2023, in the Wilkinson Public Library in Telluride. Open house events were advertised via email and print, radio, and a social media campaign for several weeks prior. The engagement materials were provided in English and Spanish, and a Spanish translator was present during all events. A youth engagement activity was also provided.

What We Learned

Survey responses underscored feedback from the pop-up events, identifying the most important topics of focus for the plan to be topics related to community – affordability/cost of living, housing opportunities, and access to healthcare (mental and physical) – followed by environmentally related topics - access to nature and outdoors and environmental preservation. Climate action and adaptation, preservation of mesas and high country, access to community facilities, and sustainability were also identified as important areas of focus. Overall, the feedback reflects that there is a desire to both preserve the environment and natural aspects that make this area so special, while also supporting community members' ability to live in the area.

When asked what our community wants Eastern San Miguel County to be known for, the top responses were being an outdoor recreation hub and a forward-thinking community. Participants also valued being



a connected and caring community, preserving local history and heritage, welcoming a culturally and demographically diverse community, and providing transportation options.

Future Land Use Mapping: During the Open House Events, participants were asked to place stickers identifying where they would like to see different elements throughout the East End. There were four maps covering land uses, housing, transportation, and parks / open spaces. The maps reflected areas that are more and less suitable for development based on existing environmental constraints and existing development patterns and policies. In summary:

- Residential, commercial, and parks, open spaces, or conservation areas were identified most frequently.
- Affordable housing was identified in all geographic areas.
- Housing types identified most frequently are those that that can yield density, including accessory dwelling units (ADUs), multifamily housing, townhomes, and affordable housing for rent and for sale.



Connected, Cooperative and Caring Community: Participants identified that the critical social, demographic, and economic issues that should be addressed in this plan included housing affordability, the impact of tourism on permanent residents, sustainability, and providing services for aging populations.



Housing Access & Diverse and Resilient Economic Opportunity: When asked “which do you think San Miguel County economic development efforts should be most focused on,” participants most often chose “increase the supply of affordable and workforce housing,” revealing the impact that housing affordability is having on the local workforce and businesses.



Expanded Transportation Options: Participants shared that the transportation investments most needed are multi-use paths for walking, biking, more comfortable/safe walking conditions, more frequent transit service, and expanded transit hours.



Varied Recreation Opportunities: Participants most frequently identified the need for conservation areas, trailhead improvements, and dispersed and developed camping opportunities. Concerns regarding degradation of natural areas due to overuse were also mentioned.

Engagement Window 3

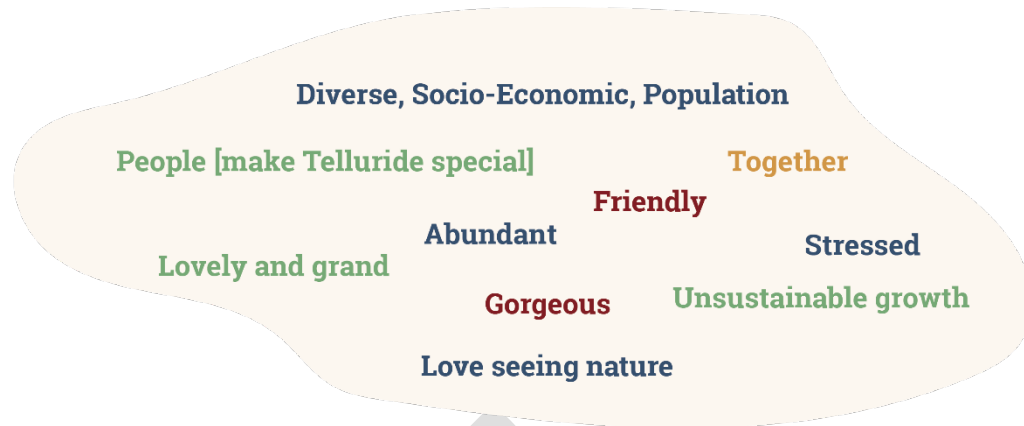
Content forthcoming following plan sharing.

Community Voices

The voices of our community have laid the foundation for this plan. The following pages identify key ideas and sentiments that we heard throughout the process.



What word would you use to describe Eastern San Miguel County today?



What word or phrase best describes your vision for Eastern San Miguel County in the future?



Eastern San Miguel County's greatest challenges are (reported verbatim):

- “Supporting the workforce and residents of the area, adapting to a changing climate, creating a resilient community.”
- “The effects of population growth/changing demographics: less affordable housing, the stress on the environment when people want to develop wild lands, the lack of adequate resources to sustain our current population, much less a growing one (transportation, parking, affordable quality food, health care...).”
- “The constant threat of development, ruining open quiet spaces.”
- “The community being driven out by development and loss of housing opportunities.”



- “Stopping development, overuse of natural resources, cost of living and affordable housing for workers, especially educators, traffic.”
 - “Small med center, lack of collaboration between employers and available early childhood educators, affordable housing, access to affordable high-quality food.”
 - “How to develop better without damaging the environment.”
 - “Number of people living and visiting are making it challenging to be in harmony with Nature, or feel a sense of community.”
 - “The fact that Telluride doesn't have enough housing for employees and people have to live elsewhere and commute.”
 - “Access and available clean drinking water. Water rights.”
 - “Access to affordable housing. Prioritizing the local community, not just tourism. Climate change.”
 - “Achieving climate action goals in light of increasing tourism, economic pressure for growth, and remote location making economy of scale for projects difficult.”
 - “Affordability and cost of living and therefore workforce issues, too many resources available (not streamlined or easy to navigate), and lack of mental and physical health care.”
 - “Affordability, becoming overrun with second homes and ultra wealthy, access to mental healthcare and stronger general healthcare, housing, traffic, losing its some of its character/authenticity/charm.”
 - “Affordable housing and people living in houses that sit empty in town. Preserving the little nature that we have left in town. Access to affordable, organic and local food. Transportation, traffic and unsustainable growth. Diversity. Having more opportunities for locals to have businesses in town.”
 - “Affordable housing, high cost of living, Highway 145 & Highway 62 traffic, preservation of the natural environment from overuse, lack of jobs that pay well enough to actually live in San Miguel County.”
 - “Keeping it wild.”
 - “Limiting the growth of the box canyon beyond what it can sustain.”
 - “Maintain open space and natural beauty, affordability.”
 - “Maintaining a diverse culture and workforce.”
 - “Balancing visitation with the area's physical, environmental and social capacity.”
-

Ch 3: San Miguel County East End today

- [Chapter 3](#) explores the regional context of San Miguel County East End, including an overview of the region's demographics.

Introduction

The San Miguel County East End boundary incorporates the eastern portion of San Miguel County and encompasses approximately 114 square miles of varied terrain. As a remote area known for its



unparalleled natural beauty, many of San Miguel County’s most notable features are its natural lands and recreational assets, including portions of the San Juan Mountain Range, the Telluride Ski Area, and the Uncompahgre and San Juan National Forests. The Mount Sneffels Wilderness lies to the north of Telluride, while the Lizard Wilderness is to the south above Trout Lake. Sheep Mountain, Vermillion Peak, Lookout Peak and Telluride Peak mark the south and east edges of the county, while Whipple Mountain, Ruttner Mountain, Iron Mountain, Campbell Peak, Dallas Peak, and Mendota Peak are to the north, to name just a few. 4x4 mountain passes - Imogene Pass, Black Bear Pass and Ophir Pass – connect the area to the east, and the area boasts access to a handful of Colorado’s infamous “14ers” within the adjacent wilderness areas. Approximately 73 percent of the East End are areas of federally managed lands.

Developed areas include three incorporated cities (the Town of Telluride, the Town of Mountain Village, and Ophir), eight unincorporated communities, and 18 subdivisions.

Demographics



POPULATION



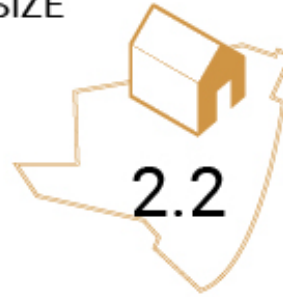
5,574

POPULATION ANNUAL GROWTH RATE 2022-2027



0.9%

HOUSEHOLD SIZE



2.2

MEDIAN AGE

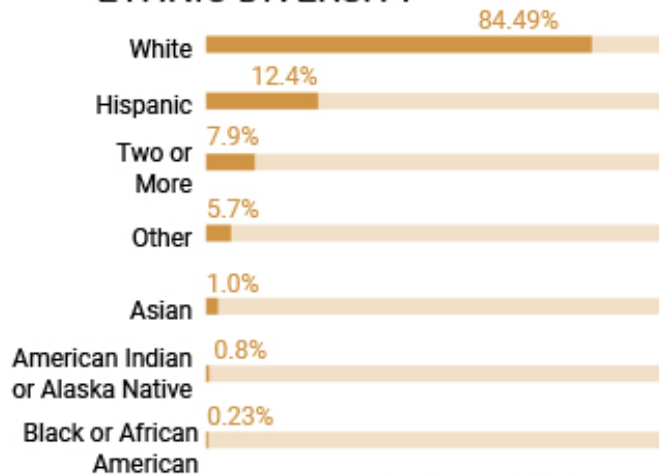
40.5

\$84,823

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

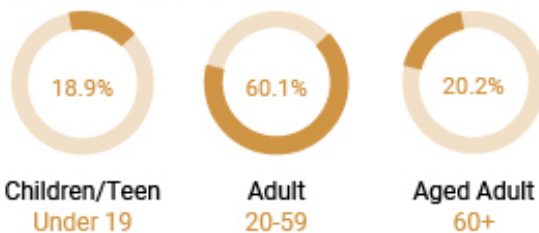
San Miguel County Master Plan Area

ETHNIC DIVERSITY



Source: ESRI Race & Ethnicity, 2022.

AGE DISTRIBUTION



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Esri forecasts for 2020 and 2027 Geography. American Community Survey, 2020. ESRI 2020 Demographics. State of Colorado Demographer, 2022.

Figure 4 Page of Demographic Highlights



People Who Live or Stay in More than One Place

People living away most of the time while working, such as people who live at a residence close to where they work and return regularly to another residence, are counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If they cannot determine a place where they live most of the time, they are counted where they are staying on Census Day. People who live or stay at two or more residences (during the week, month, or year), such as people who travel seasonally between residences (for example, snowbirds), are counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If they cannot determine a place where they live most of the time, they are counted where they are staying on Census Day.

www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial/2020/program-management/memo-series/2020-memo-2018_04-appendix.pdf

Population

At approximately 5,574 people, the East End population makes up around 68 percent of the County population. The Town of Telluride is the most densely populated area within the region, with over 100 people per square mile. The Town of Mountain Village is the next most populated area, with between 40 and 100 people per square mile. Ophir and the unincorporated areas host fewer than 40 people per square mile, with large portions of federally managed lands mixed throughout the East End (see Figure 11).

While the plan area population represents 68 percent of the total County population, it is important to acknowledge that many mountain communities, especially those with distinct seasons and popularity with tourists, see spikes in the population at certain times of the year, whether it be visitors, part-time residents or seasonal workers. Census and ESRI (a map-based analytics program) defines “total population” as residents who live and sleep in a specific location most of the time. The total population does not include second-home owners or short-term renters causing population counts to seem lower than people might experience during the summer and winter seasons. According to lodging data for the 2022-2023 season, there are 1,283 lodging units in the Towns of Telluride and Mountain Village (Telluride Tourism Board, 2023 Key Data).

To get a more detail on the nuanced nature of seasonal fluctuations, the total number of part-time residents can be estimated by taking the number of vacant housing units and multiplying it by average household size. As Table 1 illustrates, the Town of Mountain Village, Town of Telluride, and the plan area include significant part-time resident populations.

Table 1 Part-time Population. Source: ESRI.

2022 Housing	Ophir	Town of Mountain Village	Town of Telluride	East End Plan Area
Total Housing Units	81	1,703	2,259	4,994
Vacant Housing Units	4	1,047	1,044	2,472
Avg Household Size	2.61	1.90	2.20	2.21



Total (Full-time) Population	202	1,246	2,671	5,574
Part-time Population Estimate (100%)*	10	1,990	2,296	5,463
Part-time Population Estimate (60%)*	6	1,194	1,378	3,278
Estimated Population	212	3,236	4,967	11,037

* Part-time population at 100% assumes part-time residents are present throughout the year. Part-time population at 60% assumes part-time residents are present at different times of the year. These are approximate counts.

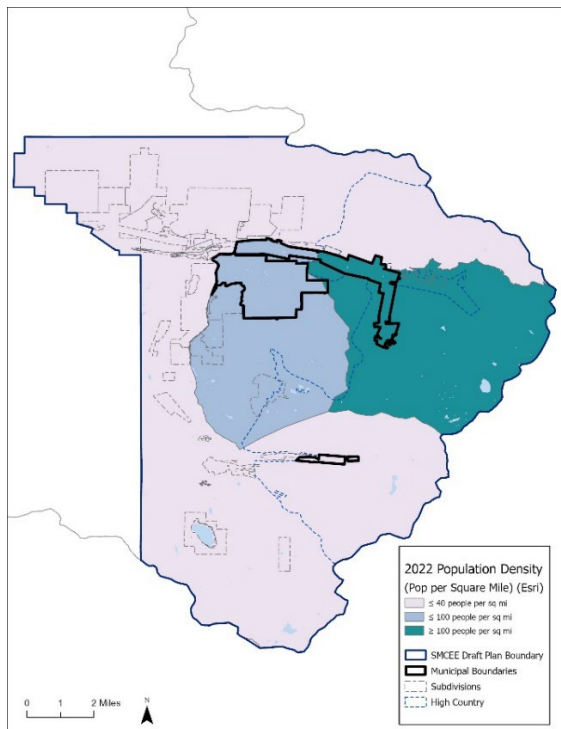


Figure 5 Population Density (2022)

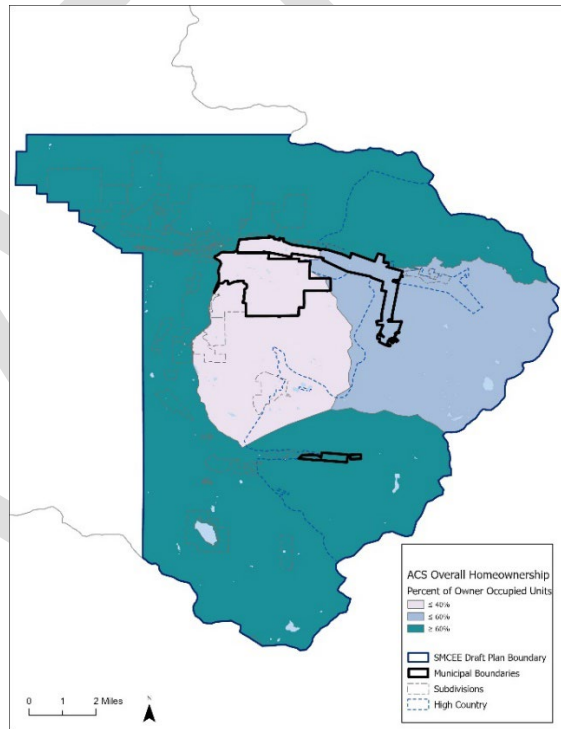


Figure 6 Homeownership (2022)

Median Household Income & Area Median Income

The plan area’s median household income is \$84,823, slightly higher than the state median (\$84,521) and slightly lower than San Miguel County (\$86,501). Proportionally, the Town of Mountain Village and Telluride have the highest percentage of residents earning \$200,000 or more per year (15 percent). More than half (58 percent) of residents in the plan area make less than \$100,000; 28 percent earn less than \$50,000.



Area median income (AMI) is the midpoint of a region's income distribution – half of the households earning more and half earning less. The AMI for San Miguel County is \$104,800 and \$105,800 for the state. This is important because the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) uses this measure to determine whether families are eligible for certain affordable housing programs. HUD considers those making less than 80% of AMI as moderate-income households, less than 50% as very low-income households, and those making less than 30% of AMI as extremely low-income households.

Race/Ethnicity

Based on the 2020 Census, the current population of eastern San Miguel County is 84.4 percent of residents who identify as white; 12.4 percent who identify as Hispanic (Latino/a/e); 7.9 percent report as two or more races; 5.7 percent identify as other; and one percent identify as Asian. Less than one percent of residents identify as American Indian or Alaska Native (0.8 percent), Black or African American (0.23 percent), or Pacific Islander (0.02 percent) (U.S. Census, 2020). The Town of Mountain Village is the most racially diverse area within the study area (see Figure 6). It is further estimated that about one-third of the region's workforce is Hispanic or Latino/a/e. As many commute in from other communities or counties, it is important to recognize how the commuting workforce might shift daytime demographics and recognize the diversity of the workforce population in addition to those who reside in the planning area.

It is acknowledged that census data is potentially not reflective of the presence of people who identify as Latino/a/e in the region due to challenges in census outreach during the COVID-19 pandemic and with changes in immigration policies that disproportionately affected those with ancestral ties to the global south. Using the existing enrollment data from the Telluride School District, an estimated 20.88% of the registered students identify as Hispanic (Latino/a/e), and English language learners was 15.34% (Colorado Department of Education data 2020 – 2021). This indicates a potential undercount in the 2020 Census of Hispanic (Latino/a/e) community members.

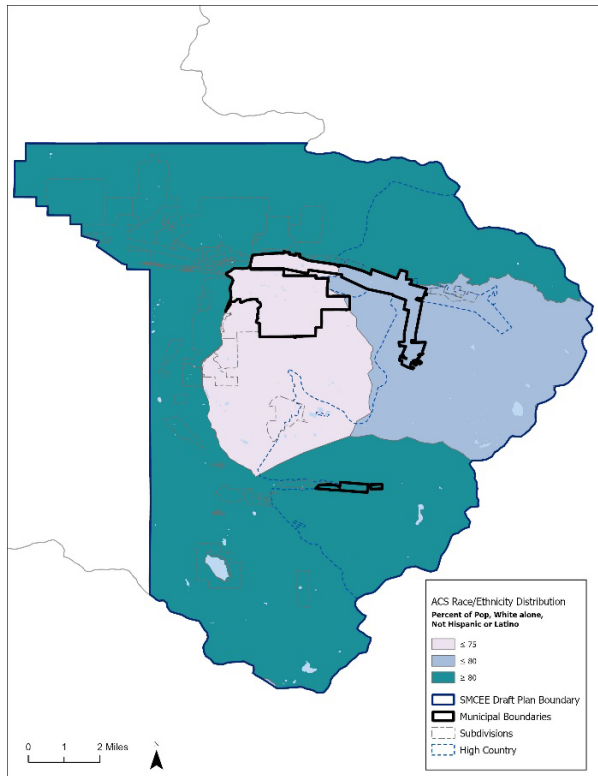


Figure 7 Race/Ethnicity Distribution (2020)

Age

The median age in the plan area for 2022 is 40.5. Most residents in the plan area are between the ages of 20 and 59 years old. The current age grouping is 18.9 percent of residents under 19 years old, 60.1 percent are between 20 and 59 years old, and 20.2 percent are 60 years old and above. The median age is under 34 years old in the Town of Mountain Village, between 35 and 44 years old in the Town of Telluride, and between 45 and 58 years old in the surrounding unincorporated areas and the Town of Ophir (see Figure 7).

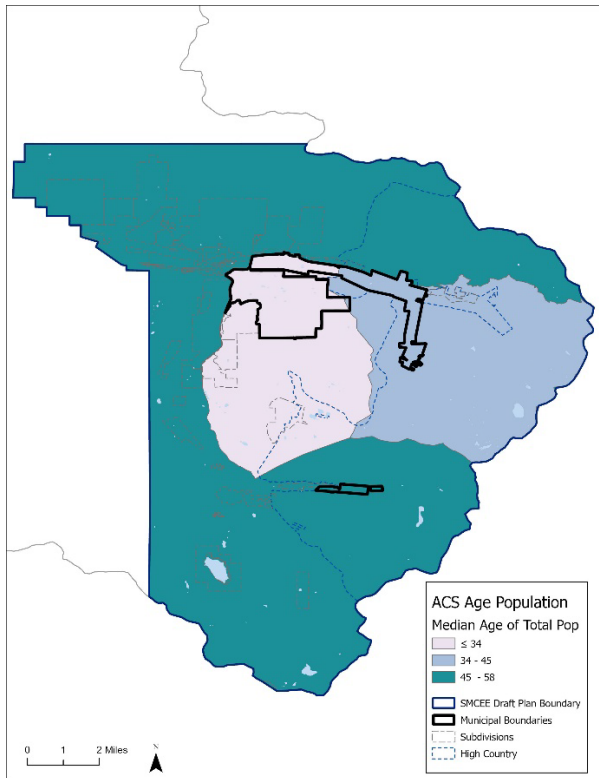


Figure 8 Median Age (2022)

Education

A little over half of the population within the plan area has a Bachelor's or Graduate/Professional degree (50.5 percent), notably higher than the state (30.4 percent). A large portion of those with a college degree live in the Town of Telluride, with 55.6 percent of the population over 25 years old holding a college degree.

Transportation Context

Primary regional transportation corridors include Highway 145, running east to west into Telluride and south past Ophir and Trout Lake to Lizard Head Pass, and the electric gondola, which links the Town of Telluride and Mountain Village through a 13-minute ride. The gondola is the first and only free public transportation system of its kind in the United States and serves both recreational and day-to-day commuting purposes (Image 1). The gondola operates seven days a week, from 6:30 a.m. to midnight. Serving three million passengers annually and powered by wind energy, the gondola plays an important role in reducing the region's greenhouse gas emissions and reliance on fossil fuels.



Image 1 Homework on the Gondola



The area is also served by the San Miguel Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART), with services to Telluride, Mountain Village, Placerville, Lawson Hill, Two Rivers, Sawpit, and Ilium and outside the planning area (Rico, Norwood, Redvale, Naturita, and Nucla). SMART is a small transit authority that was formed in 2016 in an effort to consolidate existing regional services that were funded and operated separately throughout the various communities in the county.

Local and Regional Economy

Tourism in Telluride

Per the Telluride Tourism Board's Annual Report (2022), the Town of Telluride hosted approximately 178,000 unique visitors in 2022 (Town of Telluride Annual Report, 2022).

Tourism generated approximately \$9 million in taxable revenues in 2022, a 12 percent increase from 2021. According to the "Destination Central Reservation," consumed stays in 2022 totaled \$505,887.

Approximately 47 percent of visitors stay for longer than six days and only 10 percent make the visit a day trip.

The area is known as a recreation and festival mecca. Notable tourism events contribute to the area's sense of identity as a place for creativity and outdoor adventure, and include the Telluride Ski Area, the Telluride Bluegrass Festival, the Blues & Brews Festival, and Mountainfilm.

According to a 2018 Regional Economic Analysis conducted by RRC Associates and the CU Business Research Division for Montrose, Ouray, and San Miguel Counties, tourism in the three-county area is associated with 8,068 jobs, \$271 million in labor income, and \$886 million in output. Tourism in this study was defined as visitor trips and second home construction and upkeep. Reportedly 56 percent of this output is supported by San Miguel County. The report notes that approximately 47 percent (2,938) of jobs in San Miguel County can be attributed to tourism. This report was generated before the COVID-19 pandemic, which created an unprecedented disruption to travel patterns, tourism, and the economy, notably in remote areas of the western United States. One of the changes during and after the pandemic

includes the ability to work remotely, a significant factor for newcomers and part-time residents deciding to stay longer in more remote areas.

Businesses

Of the 622 businesses in the plan area, the Town of Telluride contains more than half and the Town of Mountain Village less than a quarter, indicating that more than 100 businesses are located within the unincorporated county (ESRI SIC Business Profile, 2022).

The largest employment sector in San Miguel's East End is the services industry, comprising 35 percent of jobs. Services include hotels and other lodging establishments, as well as healthcare, education, legal, and engineering professional services. Following the services industry, 10-20 percent of the area's labor force is supported by finance/insurance, real estate, and retail trades.

The daytime population for the plan area is 6,928 people and includes 68.0 percent of workers and 32.0 percent of residents (ESRI Daytime Population Workers & Residents, 2022).



Health Care / Services

Hallmarks of a healthy community include not just the absence of disease or illness, but also access to resources that enable one to live a healthy lifestyle. This includes clean air and water, open space and recreation, fresh food options, and health care.

The U.S. News and World Report, in collaboration with the Aetna Foundation, measures community health using 89 metrics across 10 health and health-related categories, including population health (access to care, behaviors, conditions, outcomes, mental health); equity (education, health, income, and social equity); education (educational achievement, infrastructure, and participation); economy (employment, income, opportunity); housing (affordability, capacity, quality); food and nutrition (food availability, nutrition); environment (air and water, natural environment, hazards); public safety (crime, injuries, public safety capacity); community vitality (community stability, social capital); and infrastructure (community layout, transportation). San Miguel County ranks 90th out of approximately 3,000 counties across the United States. Out of the ten categories, San Miguel County ranks highest (95 out of 100) in food and nutrition and lowest, (22 out of 100) in housing. San Miguel County ranked sixth in the same report in 2021, credited to “equitable access to healthcare and necessary inclusivity in pandemic response⁵”. This index reflects the role that critical plan topics, such as housing, equity, land use patterns, and transportation, have on community health outcomes in San Miguel County.

Table 2 San Miguel County Health and Wellness Score, 2022. Source: U.S. News & World Report

San Miguel County Health and Wellness Score									
Population Health	Equity	Education	Economy	Housing	Food & Nutrition	Environment	Public Safety	Community Vitality	Infrastructure
88	50	78	65	22	95	77	87	81	64

Community health providers in eastern San Miguel County include the Telluride Regional Medical Center (TRMC) and several clinics and non-profit organizations providing general health, mental health, domestic violence and sexual assault, and other social services. Feedback indicates that there are gaps in health and wellness services in San Miguel County.

Environment

The East End includes several significant conservation areas, open space and protected lands. The high-country boundary defined by the San Miguel County Zoning consists of 26,250 acres,



Image 2 The Valley Floor

⁵ San Miguel County News Release, 2021 <https://www.sanmiguelcountyco.gov/AlertCenter.aspx?AID=San-Miguel-County-Ranked-6th-in-Healthie-302>



around 36 percent of the eastern and southern portions of the area. It includes a number of mining claims, most of which are not accessible by roads. Many claims have been acquired by or transferred to the USFS, while some are owned by Idarado Mining Company, TSG, or the Town of Telluride, as well as individuals.

The high-country boundary includes Savage Basin, Blue Lake Basin, and Marshall Basin, which are important watersheds for the region. Notable peaks contained the area include Wasatch Mountain, La Junta Peak, Ballard Mountain, Ingram Peak, Silver Mountain, Ophir Needles, and Yellow Mountain to the south and Mendota Peak, Ajax Peak, and Greenback Mountain to the north. Other notable peaks outside the high country include Iron Mountain, Hawn Mountain, Campbell Peak, San Bernardo Mountain, and Yellow Mountain. Additionally, approximately 52,836 square acres are federally managed lands, around 73 percent of the East End. The “Valley Floor” is a focal point of conservation significance in the area stretching from CO 145 on the west to the Town of Telluride, containing 570 acres.

Natural Hazards and Wildfire

Much of the region has a slope of 30 percent or greater. This significantly increases the potential for natural hazards, including landslides, avalanches and soil erosion.

Wildfires are also a concern. While most fire risk within the East End is fairly low, according to the Colorado State Forest Service Wildfire Risk Public Viewer, San Miguel County as a whole is within a very high fire risk.

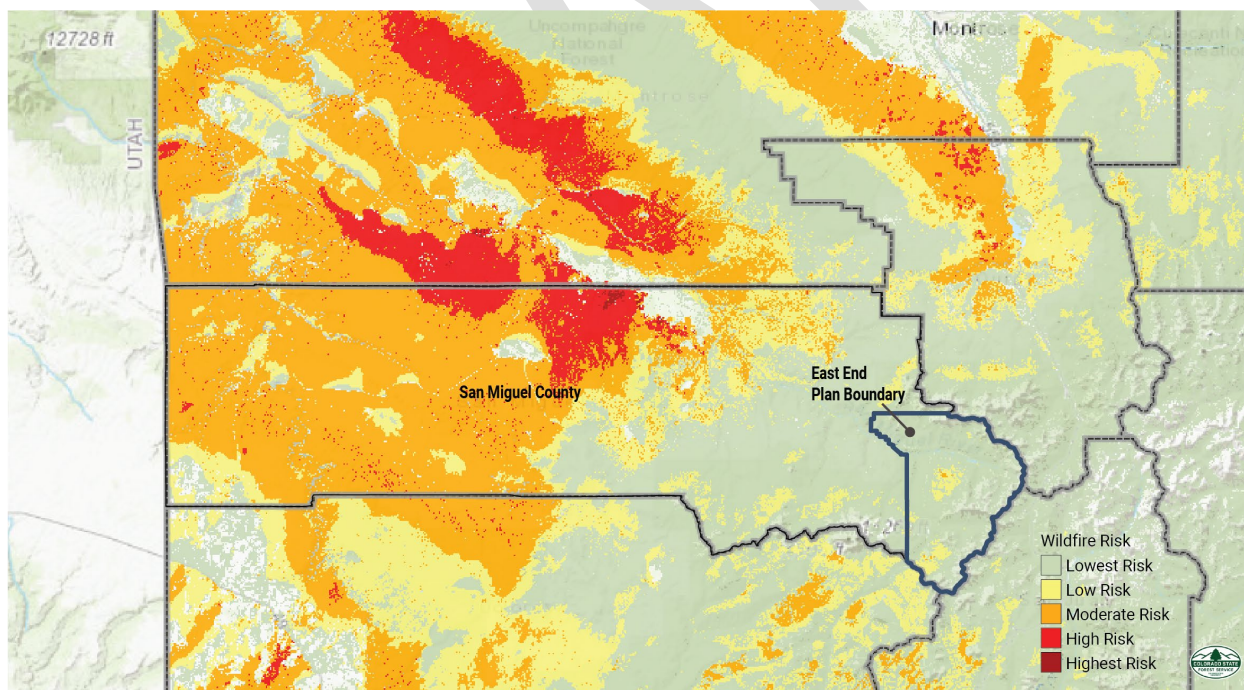


Figure 9 Wildfire Risk, Colorado Forest Atlas



Areas such as Mountain Village, Ophir, and Trout Lake are highlighted with the most risk from wildfire. It is important to note that influences from climate change, water resources and other natural hazards increase the risk of wildfires in the region.

Watersheds and River Corridors

The East End is part of the San Miguel Upper Colorado-Dolores Subbasin watershed, with the Uncompahgre Gunnison Subbasin Watershed bordering to the northeast. The most prominent rivers are the San Miguel River and South Fork San Miguel River. The San Miguel River's headwaters originate in the upper basins above Telluride, from Bridal Veil, Ingram, and Marshall Creeks. The river runs through the Town of Telluride and the Valley Floor westward, and then parallel to CO Highway 145. The South Fork San Miguel River originates at the confluence of Howards Fork and Lake Fork and runs north from Ames along County Road 63K through Ilium to the San Miguel River.

Primary wildlife in the region:

- **Bald Eagles** (along the South Fork San Miguel River)
- **Black Bears** (Whole region)
- **Elk** (Migrations and highway crossings, whole region)
- **Mountain Lions** (Whole region)
- **Mule Deer** (Migrations and highway crossings)
- **Osprey** (Foraging Area, Trout Lake)
- **Peregrine Falcon** (Potential Nesting, Deep Creek Mesa)
- **River Otter** (San Miguel River, Bilk Creek)
- **Wild Turkey** (Ilium, valley floor, Mountain Village, Wasatch Mountains)
- **Fringed, Little Brown, Long Legged, Small footed Myotis** (Whole region)
- **Band-tailed Pigeon** (Breeding range, whole region).

Wildlife Habitats

The East End is home to an abundant amount of wildlife such as elk, black bears, mountain lions and a variety of birds, bats and fish. Many of the wildlife species use this region for both year-round and winter habitats, breeding areas, and migration routes⁶.

Visitor Use Management Tactics

Like many mountain resort communities that experience high influxes of visitors at certain times of the year, the Town of Telluride has initiated a Destination Stewardship plan, which includes an advertisement and communication campaign focused on messaging related to Leave No Trace principles and how to recreate responsibly. These efforts are meant to mitigate the impacts that high visitation in natural areas can have. The Destination Stewardship efforts include messaging on the Telluride.com website, a social media campaign targeting locals and visitors within a 45-mile radius of Telluride, and people researching or planning a

visit to Telluride through TripAdvisor.

⁶ Colorado Parks & Wildlife species data (arcgis.com)



Ch 4: Looking towards the Future

- **Chapter 4** works to understand the future of San Miguel County East End, including future population growth and development.

Understanding Growth in East End

Population Growth

Population projections from the Colorado State Demographer’s Office predict that San Miguel County as a whole will increase by 2,755 persons, or 34 percent, by 2040. The number of households in the plan area increased by 0.9 percent between 2010 and 2022.

According to ESRI Business Analyst, population growth within the plan area will total 591 people between 2022 and 2027. Table 1. highlights population information for each of the selected geographies.

Why is San Miguel County hard to count?

- Census Count is held in April during offseason and when seasonal worker population is turning over.
- Some populations do not want to be counted.
- The Census is distributed by mail or counted by home visits and is based on where dwellings are located, some of which are not accessible by vehicle year-round or may be very remote.
- Very high number of vacant dwellings (second homes, lodging units).

Population Trends 2010-2040

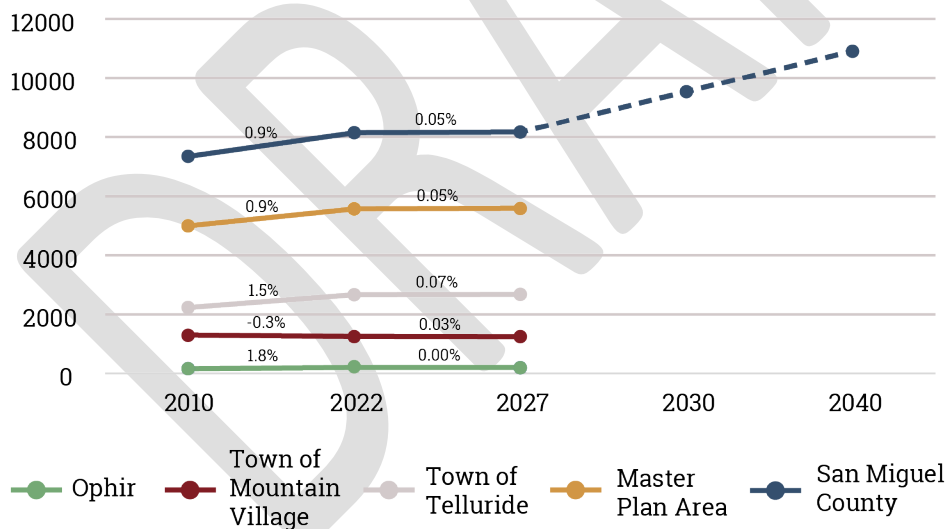


Figure 10 Population Trends, 2010-2040. Source: ESRI



Housing

Based on 2022 ESRI data, the plan area has a total of 4,994 housing units. Of these housing units, 4,043 are within the Towns of Ophir, Mountain Village, and Telluride, with the remaining 951 units being in the portions of the study area that fall within unincorporated San Miguel County. Of the 4,994 units in the study area, only 2,523 units are occupied, meaning that “the persons living in the unit must consider it their usual place of residence or have no usual place of residence elsewhere” (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021; U.S. Census Bureau, Subject Definitions). Of those, about 1,300 units, or over half of the occupied units, are deed-restricted, requiring occupancy by qualified employees who work in the region. The remaining 2,471 units are classified as vacant, meaning that the unit is “entirely occupied by persons who have a usual residence elsewhere” or that no one was living in the unit at the time of the census response or interview. This excludes occupants that are temporarily absent (ibid).

Housing Affordability Needs and the Supply of Deed Restricted Housing

Approximately 42 percent of households within San Miguel County fall within one of HUD’s definitions of extremely low income, moderate low income, or moderate-income households (13 percent, 15 percent, and 14 percent, respectively).

According to the 2018 Housing Needs Assessment, the existing need at that time was 441 additional housing units. The study estimated an additional 325 units would be needed by 2026. Between 2011 and 2022, 168 deed-restricted units were built.



Nearly half (49.48%)
of homes are owned by
second homeowners,
and remain vacant for more
than half of the year.

The housing stock has a healthy proportion of multifamily options. The high instance of multifamily units is increasingly common for mountain resort communities with a large proportion of second homeowners, and the majority of the area’s deed-restricted units are multi-family buildings. However, having a housing stock disproportionately made up of multifamily units may have implications for longtime residents or families that may desire larger housing units not available in multifamily construction. On the other hand, concentrating growth through multifamily construction has many positive benefits, such as increasing the population and tax base while preserving open space and reducing land and infrastructure costs. It can also be more cost-effective to build. Also, if designed with street connectivity and access to transit, it can create opportunities for successful transit investments and walkable neighborhoods.



51% of the area's housing stock is multi-family housing



48% is classified as single-family homes



Less than 1% is classified as mobile homes

Land Use

Much of the East End boundary is federally managed lands owned by the U.S. Forest Service, around 73 percent. Housing makes up 10 percent of the East End within incorporated and unincorporated areas. Four percent is mixed-use, and one percent is commercial. (Table 3).

The percentage of housing and commercial areas within incorporated areas is higher than in unincorporated. Housing makes up four percent of the unincorporated areas. The commercial areas are less than one percent (0.3 percent). Almost all the mixed-use (four percent) and all industrial areas are within unincorporated areas. (Table 4)

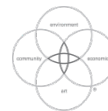


Table 3 Percent of Land Use - Unincorporated and Incorporated

Parcels within the SMCEE Boundary Area	Acres	Percent
Residential	7508	10%
Mixed Use	3094	4%
Commercial	945	1%
Industrial	42	0.1%
Agricultural	4291	6%
Natural Resources	2120	3%
Vacant Land	3285	4%
Exempt	9030	12%
Contiguous	98	0.1%
Unidentified (Public Lands)	47594	61%

Table 4 Percent of Land Use - Unincorporated Area

Parcels within Unincorporated Area	Acres	Percent
Residential	3,067	4%
Mixed Use	3,089	4%
Commercial	208	0.3%
Industrial	42	0.1%
Agricultural	4,291	6%
Natural Resources	2,120	3%
Vacant Land	2,162	3%
Exempt	7,737	11%
Contiguous	76	0.1%
Unidentified (Public Lands)	47,268	67%

Development Trends

Since the time of the 1989 Telluride Regional Area Master Plan, the use and density of almost all unincorporated land in the East End have been established or approved through community actions and land use processes:

- Lawson Hill PUD developed (1991)
- Aldasoro Ranch developed (1993-95)
- Mountain Village incorporated (1995)
- Idarado/Pandora PUD platted (2004)
- West Meadows – 35-acre parcels (was originally contemplated as high-density housing for 2,107 people (1993-2005))

About the Land Use Data

Tables 3 and 4 represent Land Use data from the County Assessor, which indicates how a property is used. It is not reflective of zoning. There may be minor discrepancies.

- Residential: Parcels that have homes on them.
- Mixed Use: Parcels that contain more than one different type of development, such as housing and office or office and retail.
- Commercial: Parcels that contain a business, warehouse, or shop, such as a restaurant, office, or retail store.
- Industrial: Parcels that are used for manufacturing or fabrication, such as gravel pits or power plants.
- Agricultural: Parcels used as a farm or ranch or for conservation purposes.
- Natural Resources: Parcels that are largely undeveloped or may be used for resource extraction, such as mining or timber harvesting.
- Vacant Land: Parcels that are not currently developed or used.
- Exempt: Parcels that are government entities, non-profit organizations/corporations, or privately owned companies exempt from property taxes.
- Contiguous: Parcels that are located on the same lot or contiguous lots under the same ownership as the principal use or structure.
- Unidentified: Parcels that are owned and managed by the U.S. Forest Service.



- Valley Floor - conserved as open space (was originally contemplated as high-density housing for 1,770 people (2002-08))

Future Growth

Where should county growth occur?

The San Miguel East End planning area has significant environmental constraints that would not be suitable for development and should be protected. These include federally managed lands, conservation easements and protective zoning such as parks and open spaces, and environmentally sensitive lands such as wetlands and areas with slopes that exceed 30 percent. Additionally, the East End hosts several existing subdivisions and entitled Planned Unit Developments (PUDs), which have a previously determined density and land use allocation, and have been significantly developed. *For these existing PUDs and subdivisions, additional development or development that is different than what is currently entitled is not contemplated at this time, but the County would be open to proposals that increase density for housing local residents and employees. PUDs and subdivisions that are not yet developed may be open to consideration of alternate development proposals.*

Growth Challenges

Areas shown in orange contain the following environmental constraints:

- Federally managed lands (U.S. Forest Service)
- Slopes that are 30 percent or greater
- High Country Boundary
- Pandora Mill
- Mining claims
- Open Space (may not include lands protected by non-County agreements; open space parcels within subdivisions are not mapped due to scale)
- Conservation easements

Areas in gray show unincorporated Towns, which are subject to local land use controls and are outside the purview of this planning effort.

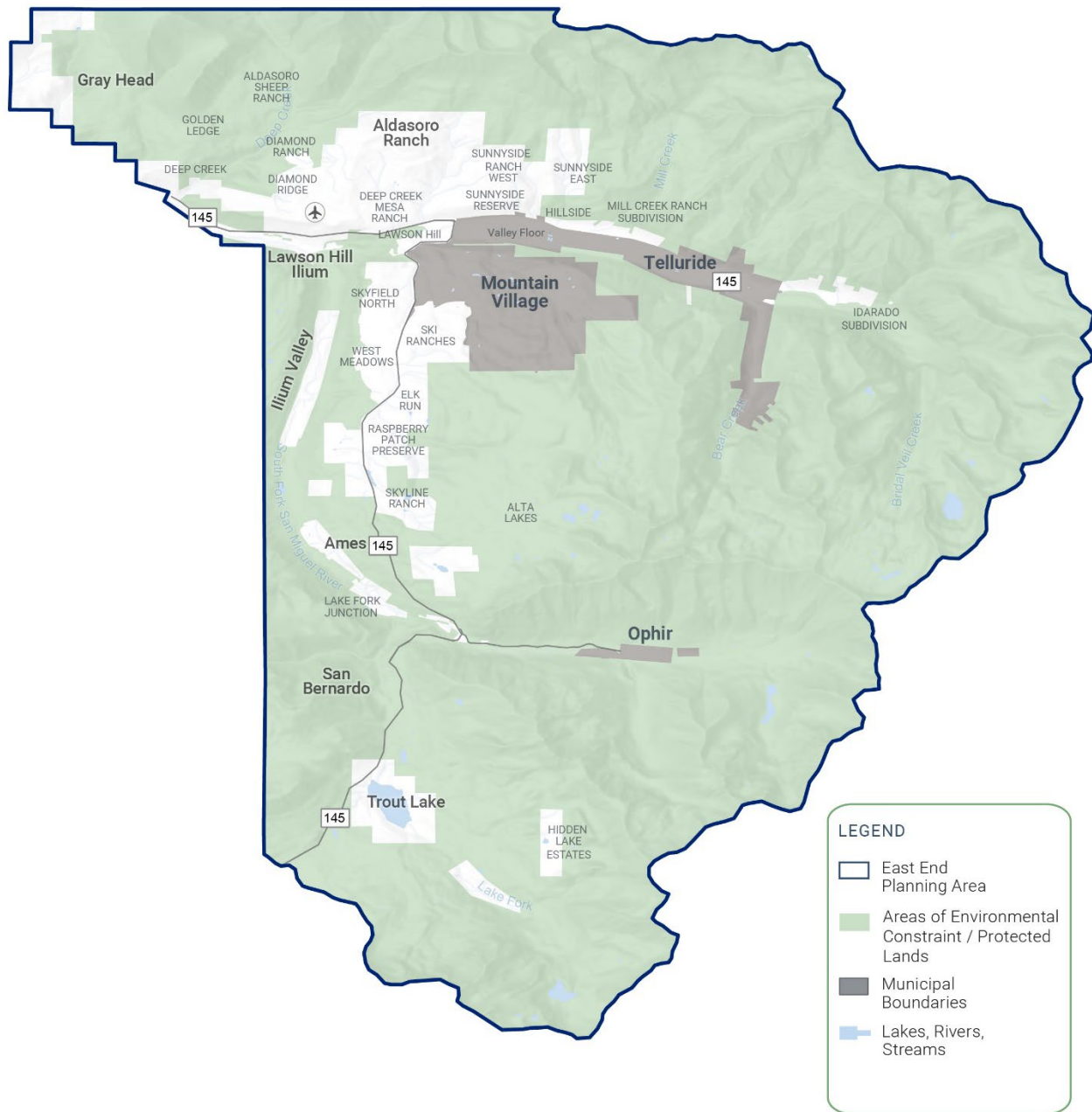


Figure 11 Areas of Environmental Constraints and Protected Lands

- Growth Analysis

Building on the Environmental Constraints (Figure 11), the Potential Planning Areas map (Figure 12) displays existing approvals in subdivisions and PUDs in gray. For purposes of this plan, the assumption has been made that most of these subdivisions and PUDs will not be redeveloped, and will remain at their currently entitled density. However, should changes to an existing subdivision or PUD be proposed that would increase density and support adding to the housing stock for local residents or workers, or otherwise meet community needs, the County could consider that request.



Areas in white generally do not have environmental constraints or existing entitlements and are, therefore, areas for potential development within unincorporated San Miguel County.

Land Use

The following land use types are recommended for the San Miguel County East End Master Plan:

- Residential Low
- Residential Medium
- Residential High/Mixed Use
- Commercial/Industrial
- Public/Institutional
- Conservation Area
- Parks and Open Space

DRAFT



Future Land Use Opportunities

- Residential Low (RL) - (1 unit per 7-35 acres)
- Residential Medium (RM) - (1 unit per 1-7 acres)
- Residential High/Mixed Use (RH/MU) - (1 unit per acre or less)
- Commercial/Industrial (C/I)
- Public / Institutional (P/I)
- Conservation Areas (F) - (1 unit per 1-7 acres)
- Parks and Open Space (P/OS)

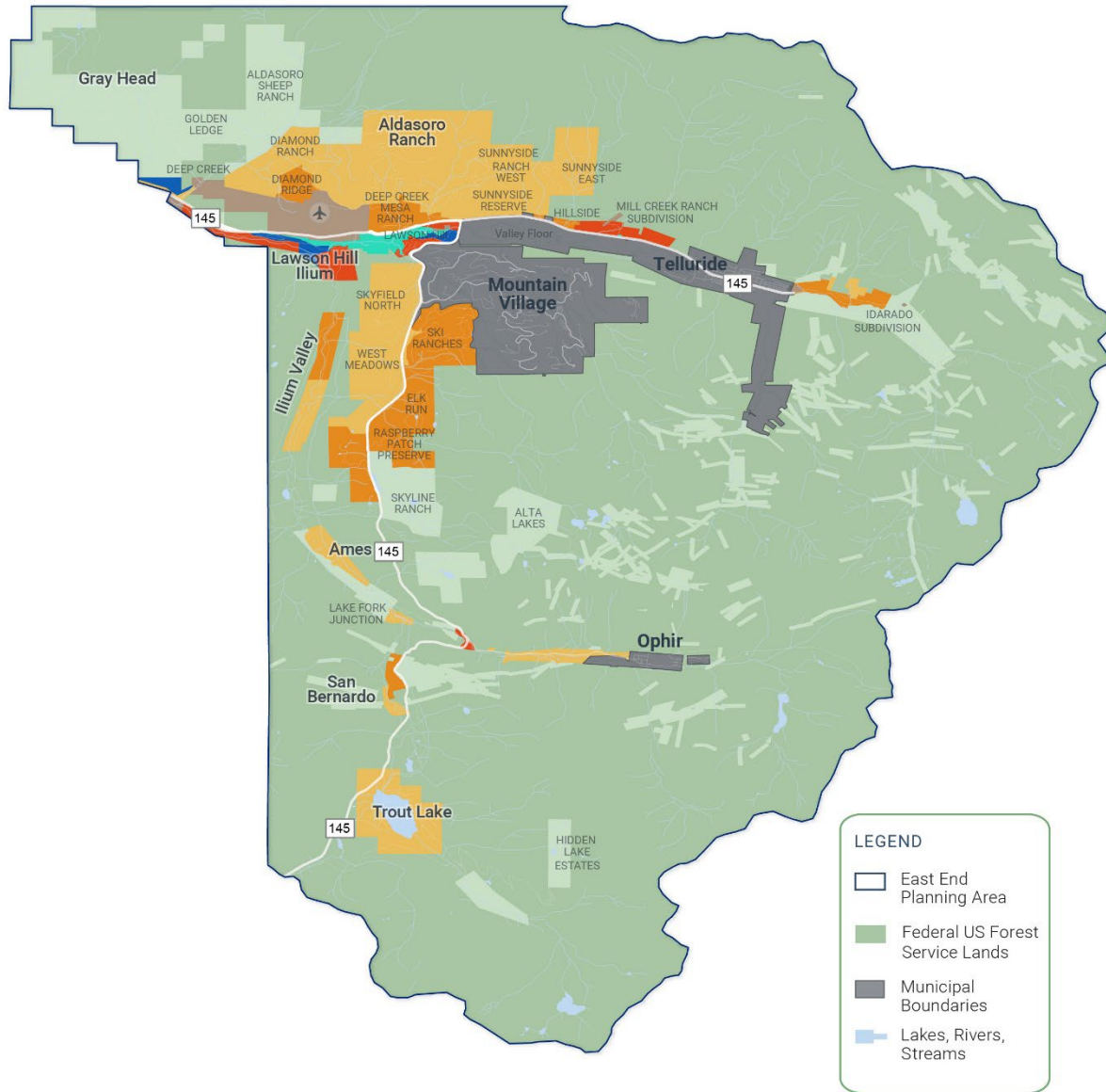


Figure 12 San Miguel County East End Future Land Use Map



Table 5 Land Use Categories

<p>Residential Low</p> <p>The Residential Low land use category includes residences that are situated in areas that have an average parcel size of seven to 35 acres. Single-family homes are the most common type of development in this category. Accessory dwelling units are encouraged. Higher densities are appropriate for development that will provide housing for people who live and work in the local communities, and where adequate public services are available.</p>	Standards	
	Current Zone Districts	Low Density (LD), Affordable Housing Planned Unit Development (AHPUD), Low Density Residential (LDR),
	Land Use Adjacencies	Generally appropriate to be adjacent to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential Medium • Residential High/Mixed Use • Public/Institutional • Conservation Area • Parks and Open Space
	1989 Land Use Category	Low Density Residential Cluster
	Proposed Zone Districts	Low Density (LD), Affordable Housing Planned Unit Development (AHPUD), Community Housing (CH)
<p>Residential Medium</p> <p>Residential Medium applies to properties with an average parcel size of one to seven acres. Single-family homes are the most common type of development in this category. Accessory dwelling units are encouraged. Higher densities are appropriate for development that will provide housing for people who live and work in the local communities, and where adequate public services are available. Limited neighborhood-serving uses may be included.</p>	Standards	
	Current Zone Districts	Medium Density (MD), Affordable Housing Planned Unit Development (AHPUD), Low Density Residential (LDR)
	Land Use Adjacencies	Generally appropriate to be adjacent to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential Low • Residential High/Mixed Use • Commercial/Industrial • Public/Institutional • Conservation Area • Parks and Open Space
	1989 Land Use Category	Medium Density Residential Cluster
	Proposed Zone Districts	Medium Density MD, Low Density Residential (LDR), Affordable Housing Planned Unit Development (AHPUD), Community Housing (CH)
<p>Residential High /Mixed Use</p> <p>Residential High/Mixed Use applies to properties developed with a density of more than one unit per acre, mixed-use developments, and Planned Unit Developments on large parcels. Development is served by community water and wastewater systems. This category is meant to support high density, clustered, mixed-use development. Developments may include commercial uses that are primarily community-serving.</p>	Standards	
	Current Zone Districts	High Density (HD), Affordable Housing Planned Unit Development (AH) (PUD), Mixed Use Development (MXD), Mobile Home (MH)
	Land Use Adjacencies	Generally appropriate to be adjacent to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential Low • Residential Medium • Commercial/Industrial • Public/Institutional • Parks and Open Space



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation Area
	1989 Land Use Category	High Density Residential Cluster
	Proposed Zone Districts	High Density (HD), Community Housing (CH), Affordable Housing Planned Unit Development (AHPUD), Mixed Use Development (MXD), Mobile Home (MH)
<p>Commercial/Industrial</p> <p>Commercial land use types accommodate uses such as food, beverage, and entertainment uses, indoor and outdoor recreation, office and business professional uses, retail sales, vehicle and equipment services, and visitor accommodations. It can also accommodate warehouse buildings, industrial art spaces, breweries, and flex spaces.</p> <p>Industrial uses typically have a larger footprint and generally includes employment-focused developments. Examples include construction shops and yards, resource extraction, logging, mining, waste and salvage, energy generation and distribution activities, and manufacturing and production, as well as distribution centers, logistics facilities and other low impact manufacturing or industrial uses.</p> <p>Because of the topography and existing land use patterns of the Plan area, some Commercial/Industrial uses may be located in close proximity to residential uses. Commercial/Industrial uses may generate noise, dust, light and vibrations; care should be taken to mitigate impacts.</p>	Standards	
	Current Zone Districts	Low Intensity Industrial (I), Heavy Commercial (HC)
	Land Use Adjacencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential Low • Residential Medium • Residential High/Mixed Use • Public/Institutional • Parks and Open Space
	1989 Land Use Category	Commercial
	Proposed Zone Districts	Low Intensity Industrial (I), Heavy Commercial (HC), Mixed Use Development (MXD)
<p>Public/Institutional</p> <p>This land use category is reserved for buildings and facilities used to provide public services. This can include uses such as wastewater treatment facilities, utility buildings, emergency response centers, transit facilities, airports and fields and the like. A range of institutional and semi-public uses are also allowed such as schools, hospitals, libraries, community centers, religious institutions, public safety facilities, etc. Public/Institutional properties may also include accessory housing for essential personnel and emergency responders.</p>	Standards	
	Current Zone Districts	Public (PUB)
	Land Use Adjacencies	Public/Institutional uses are appropriate adjacent to all development types.
	1989 Land Use Category	Public and Institutional
	Proposed Zone Districts	Public (PUB)
<p>Conservation Area</p> <p>The purpose of the conservation area is to preserve large, environmentally sensitive and/or ecologically valuable lands for</p>	Standards	
	Current Zone Districts	Open Space (OS), Forestry, Agriculture and Open (F), High Country Area (HCA)



<p>resource, agricultural, open space, and recreational purposes. Areas of historic mining and industry are also supported in this category. Development is limited or discouraged in this category unless it explicitly supports the aforementioned purposes. Conservation easements are encouraged to further protect the natural setting and unique conservation values such as agriculture, wildlife habitat, watersheds, recreation and scenic views. The Conservation area includes mining claims, agricultural lands, and 35-acre subdivisions. It also overlays public lands, primarily US Forest Service.</p>	Land Use Adjacencies	<p>Conservations areas are appropriate adjacent to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential Low • Residential Medium • Residential High/Mixed Use • Parks and Open Space • Public/Institutional
	1989 Land Use Category	Open Space
	Proposed Zone Districts	Open Space (OS), High Country Area (HCA), Forestry, Agriculture and Open (F)
<p>Parks and Open Space</p> <p>This land use category includes a variety of parks and open space typologies including regional parks, community parks and neighborhood parks. Large entertainment venues and/or community centers are appropriate in some Parks and Open Space areas. However, areas preserved for wildlife and conservation should not include such uses. Park properties may also include accessory housing for essential personnel and emergency responders. Parks and Open Space properties are mostly publicly owned, and this classification does not include open space parcels located within subdivisions.</p>	Standards	
	Current Zone Districts	Park (P)
	Land Use Adjacencies	Parks and open spaces are appropriate adjacent to all development types.
	1989 Land Use Category	Open Space & Parks
	Proposed Zone Districts	Park (P)

Ch 5: Themes and Strategies

- Chapter 5 is the framework for the plan’s Guiding Themes, Goals, actions and priority investments intended to guide future policies, programs, and partnerships.

The plan Vision, Themes and Goals have been crafted to reflect community feedback and have been informed through identifying challenges and opportunities throughout the plan process.

About the Plan Themes, and Goals

Supporting the plan’s vision statement are eight themes which serve as areas of focus. Each theme contains a goal statement intended to guide policies, programs, and partnerships (actions). Actions are further supported by specific, implementable priority investments. Each are intended to help the community achieve the plan Vision.

- **Theme:** A topical focus
- **Goal:** A forward looking vision statement
- **Action:** A proposed policy, program, partnership, or investment



- **Priority Investment:** Potential methods of achieving recommendation or a recommendation's constituent steps for implementation

Vision Statement

Eastern San Miguel County is a forward thinking, connected, and caring community. We embrace big ideas and new concepts and endeavor to lead by example. Our local history of innovation and stewardship rooted in tradition creates a culturally rich and supportive community - from protecting the natural environment to supporting longtime and new residents. We are adaptive and creative and aspire to use technology, inspiration from our past, effective policies, and regional coordination to advance green energy opportunities, environmental resiliency, and climate change mitigation and adaptation. We endeavor to strike a balance between supporting new growth and maintaining the natural and community character that makes our region so special. We are an outdoor recreation hub and seek to maintain recreational infrastructure while preserving open spaces. We are proud of our home and remote Colorado lifestyle and are committed to being a welcoming place now and into the future.

Key Themes

The following eight Themes guide the recommendations framework for the San Miguel County East End Master Plan. It is important to note that the themes are not listed by priority.

- Housing Access
- Climate Change and Resiliency
- Balanced and Sustained Natural and Built Environments
- Diverse and Resilient Economic Opportunity
- Expanded Transportation Options
- Varied Recreation Options
- Vibrant Arts and Culture
- Connected, Cooperative and Welcoming Community



Housing Access

Goal Statement: *Eastern San Miguel County strives to be a place where housing opportunities exist for community members with different socioeconomic status and backgrounds. San Miguel County and*



private partners support the creation of affordable and workforce housing within the region and promote diversity in housing choice. In order to support the long-term economic vitality and sense of community in the region, the County is committed to making an effort to ensure housing is located near multi-modal transportation networks and job centers, and supports equitable access to jobs, educational opportunities, healthcare, and other essential services.

Housing as a Community Identified Focus

When asked what the most important topics are to focus on in the master plan, 29 percent of respondents indicated “housing opportunities” and 43 percent chose “affordability/cost of living.” Based on a 2018 survey conducted for the San Miguel County Housing Needs Assessment, the number of residents who believe affordable housing is the critical problem in the region has increased from 15 percent in 2011 to 39 percent in 2018.

Community feedback reflects that San Miguel County values a diversity of housing options that meet a wide range of needs. With an average home sale price of \$3.5 million in 2023 in Telluride (LIV Sotheby’s Telluride Micro Market Report, 2023), market-rate housing in San Miguel County is unattainable for many, especially those in the service industry, public sector, outdoor recreation, and arts - industries that make up large segments of the economy. According to the 2018 San Miguel County Housing Needs Assessment, the cost of housing has resulted in an increase in the number of jobs people hold in the region. On average, local workers had 15 percent more jobs per person in 2018 than previously recorded in 2011 (San Miguel County Housing Needs Assessment, 2018). Addressing affordable housing strengthens community resiliency and is critical to maintaining the livability of the area and its economic success.

With approximately three-quarters of the jobs in the area located in Telluride and Mountain Village, these communities significantly influence the San Miguel County East End planning area. Between 2021 and 2022 single-family homes in Telluride increased in value by 68 percent and condominiums and townhomes saw an 80 percent increase (Liv Sotheby’s Telluride Micro Market Report, 2022). Overall, every community in San Miguel County saw a strong rise in demand from 2021 to 2023. Rising appreciation values, lessening inventory, and a fast-paced market resulted in most listings lasting an average of 137 days on market in 2022 compared to 248 days just one year earlier (2021). This has put housing further out of reach for many local residents. The continued economic success of the region means addressing the housing affordability challenge and coordinating regionally to connect workers to jobs.



	THEME: HOUSING ACCESS	Investment	Responsibility	Timing	Initiated	Completed	Action Summary
	PLAN / STUDY						
1	Update the regional housing needs assessment and update the county's existing workforce housing policies to ensure new housing meets the community needs in terms of unit type and price point.	Medium	County, Housing Authority, Municipalities				
2	Identify the full suite of potential projects that might be feasible, including private and government-led initiatives.	Medium	County, Housing Authority, Municipalities, Private Partners				
3	Add to the local land bank by identifying and acquiring properties suitable for the development of housing.		County, Housing Authority, Municipalities, Partner Organizations				
4	Develop a strategic plan for creating special limited public-private partnerships that include private developers, local housing authority(ies), economic development agencies, municipalities, and others to build local development expertise and share risk and return for affordable and community housing projects.	High	County, Municipalities, Private Developers				
5	Study opportunities to provide or partner on the creation of rental and sale housing that is affordable to the “missing middle” that are typically at 120% - 200% AMI.	Medium	County, Housing Authority, Municipalities				



6	Study the role of the housing authority to clearly identify the tasks and responsibilities and the resources needed to effectively accomplish them.	Medium	County Community Development, Housing Authority, Municipalities				
POLICY							
7	Partner with local water providers regarding water access and availability for future development, with a focus on service to affordable and workforce housing units.	Low	County, All Water Providers				
8	Undertake code updates to allow reduced parking for housing projects that are located within ¼ of a mile of a transit stop and that include a sidewalk or all-weather trail connection.	Low	County Community Development				
9	Prioritize affordable housing opportunities for the local workforce within the education system, healthcare, and other essential services to ensure these businesses and services can remain in the community.	High	County, Housing Authority				
10	Continue to implement zoning and regulations that are primarily intended to provide housing for people who work within the Telluride R-1 School District.	Medium	County Community Development				
11	Assess current permit and land use review processes and development fees for 100% affordable housing	Medium	County Community Development				



	projects to identify regulatory barriers and adjust processes.						
12	Allow accessory dwelling units by right in all residential zone districts and permit duplexes and multi-family developments through administrative review in medium and high-density zone districts, where services are available and systems have capacity.	Low	County Community Development				
13	Expand opportunities to create live-work dwelling units as an accessory use in commercial uses.	Low	County Community Development				
14	Review and amend zone districts to remove barriers to the creation of affordable, employee and community housing, including reducing or eliminating minimum dwelling unit sizes, minimum lot width, area sizes, parking requirements and other development standards.	Low	County Community Development				
15	Allow the rezoning of properties to zone districts that will accommodate affordable, employee and community housing in all areas that can be adequately served by water, wastewater, transportation, and other services.	Medium	County Community Development				
16	Continue requiring affordable or workforce units be incorporated into any new subdivision, commercial or industrial development, and multi-family projects.	Low	County Community Development				
17	Implement Land Use and Building Code updates to allow alternative dwellings such as tiny homes (See HB 1242) and cohousing developments.	Low	County Community Development				



18	Continue requiring payment of employee housing mitigation fees that are adequate to cover the gap between housing affordable to people earning 100% AMI and market rate housing, to be used for the development of housing.	Medium	County				
19	Evaluate existing developments with respect to water and waste water capacity and traffic generation to determine where capacity exists to add additional housing as infill.	Medium	County, Water Providers, HOAs				
FACILITATE / COORDINATE							
20	Work with private developers and property owners to expand housing opportunities in Eastern San Miguel County. This could include land swaps, transfer of development rights, and other methods.	High	County, Municipalities, Private Developers				
21	Coordinate long term lease agreements for rentals that serve institutional and non-profit users.	Medium	County, Housing Authority				
22	Address seasonal needs versus long term needs by partnering with ski-based tourism companies, the U.S. National Forest Service, and others.	Medium	County, Housing Authority				
23	Coordinate the use of funding from the Innovative Housing Incentive Program through the Colorado Office of Economic Development to incentivize the production of modular and other types of manufactured homes (see HB 1282).	Low	County, Housing Authority				
24	Work with special districts that have unique needs for housing essential employees and first responders to create housing that meets their needs.	High	County, Special Districts, Housing Authority				



25	Coordinate the use of the state's Middle Income Access Program to finance rental units affordable to households earning between 80% and 120% of the local area median income (see SB 146).	Low	County, Housing Authority				
	CONSIDER / EXPLORE						
26	Evaluate the benefits and challenges to consolidation or coordination of housing mitigation requirements in the county, Telluride, and Mountain Village to enable a regional approach to addressing housing supply.	High	County, Municipalities, Housing Authority				
28	Consider amending short-term rental regulations to help retain long-term housing while providing some temporary rentals.	Low	County				
29	Explore supporting revolving loan funds that fund first time home buyer programs.	High	County				
30	Consider establishing assistance programs, including grants and loans, to assist with fees related to the construction of deed-restricted housing.	High	County, Housing Authority				
31	Develop real time monitoring of occupancy, unit types, and other housing data.	Medium	County, Housing Authority				
32	Evaluate processes for building permits and land use reviews to help expedite development that includes affordable or workforce housing.	Low	County Community Development				
33	Develop incentives encouraging ADUs to be deed-restricted to house a local working resident (with or without an AMI requirement). Explore development incentives to encourage owners to rent ADUs to local employees.	Medium	County Community Development, Housing Authority				



34	Consider the needs of senior citizens when developing housing projects, to allow long-term residents to remain in the community and continue to contribute.	Low	County, Housing Authority, Partners				
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Climate Change and Resiliency

Goal Statement: *Eastern San Miguel County faces future climate shifts with a spirit of resilience, creativity, and innovation. The community and county government seek to preserve and protect the scenic and environmental qualities that make Eastern San Miguel County special now and for future generations through proactive and intentional countywide policies focusing on restoration and rewilding efforts, reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and waste, and sustainable land use regulations. This includes maintaining the high country designations, implementing policies to protect clean air and water, tracking energy use and emissions, increasing wildlife habitat, supporting and expanding county and local open spaces, and focusing on protecting public lands throughout our region. In collaboration with partners, the County will continue to identify ways to support community members with tools to bounce back from adversity, address and mitigate impacts from climate change, reduce the risk of natural disasters, and provide planned responses to emergencies.*

The projected effects of climate change in San Miguel County range from rising temperatures, a reduced snowpack, increased number of wildfires, wildlife habitat loss, and diminishing freshwater resources. A changing climate has serious implications for the community, including the potential to see less snow and therefore fewer opportunities to enjoy winter sports like skiing and snowshoeing. As a winter tourist destination that sees significant sales tax and other revenue from tourism, the potential economic impacts of climate change must be considered. Similarly, increasingly warmer winter and summer months impacts the availability of water, overall stream flows, and can increase the danger for wildfires.

The community indicated concern about vulnerability to natural disasters, particularly related to water scarcity, landslides/mudslides/rockfall, and wildfire. These phenomena occur more frequently as our climate changes, and action is needed to plan for them. Fifty-four percent of survey respondents indicated wildfire as the main natural hazard the county's protection efforts should prioritize.

Regional collaboration to address climate action in the county is led by EcoAction Partners and the Sneffels Energy Board. This Board has created a Regional Climate Action Plan for San Miguel and Ouray Counties (2021) with the objectives of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and consumption of valuable natural resources in the region. The plan establishes a goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 50 percent in 2030 and by 90 percent by 2050. The Board of County Commissioners adopted this goal in BOCC Resolution No. 2023-04. The San Miguel Power Association has established a goal to provide 80 percent renewable energy by the year 2030.

The San Miguel County East End Master Plan has used this plan as a foundation, identifying the goal statement and action items as a means to support these initiatives. Building energy use accounts for almost 50 percent of overall emissions in San Miguel County (Regional Climate Action Plan, 2021), pointing to land use and building regulations as impactful solutions.



	THEME: CLIMATE CHANGE AND RESILIENCY	Investment	Responsibility	Timing	Initiated	Completed	Action Summary
	PLAN / STUDY						
1	Create a Wildfire Mitigation and Resiliency Plan to encourage awareness of wildfire risk in future planning.	Medium	County				
2	Consider the Hazard Vulnerability Assessment (San Miguel County Emergency Operation Plan) within the East End boundary (https://www.sanmiguelcountyco.gov/DocumentCenter/View/8564/SMC-Emergency-Operations-Plan-Adopted-June-8-2022-PDF?bidId= page 14) and identify strategies and action steps for implementation.	Medium	County				
3	Develop, adopt, implement, and enforce a San Miguel County Drought Mitigation Plan that outlines strategies for water conservation at the individual and system levels.	Medium	County				
4	Implement the San Miguel and Ouray County Regional Climate Action Plan with the goal of a 50% reduction in our GHG emissions by 2030 and a 90% reduction by 2050 with a 2010 GHG emissions baseline. (BOCC Resolution No. 2023-04)	Low	County				
5	Create a Wildlife Corridor Plan to identify and create strategies to protect wildlife corridors.	Medium	County				
6	Identify review process and criteria to evaluate development proposals and their impacts on the watershed and river corridor.	Medium	County				
	POLICY						



7	Encourage the use of renewable energy in new development and major renovations. Encourage designing new projects to be net zero where appropriate.						
8	Develop zero-waste programs for construction.						
9	Develop land use strategies that will reduce worker commuting, tourism and business travel, thereby reducing vehicle miles traveled, road congestion, and associated GHG emissions.						
10	Establish wildfire mitigation assistance programs for neighborhoods as well as property owners.						
11	Support the efforts of West Region Wildfire Council to promote wildfire preparedness, prevention and mitigation education throughout the East End.		County, Partners				
12	Work with local land management partners to reduce wildfire hazard and improve land health.						
13	Adopt Land Use and Building Codes regarding wildfire hazard mitigation.						
14	Support homeowners in distributing renewable energy to the grid (see SB19-236: Sunset Public Utilities Commission).	Low	County				
15	Continue to provide a streamlined review for solar panels on individual properties (roof and ground mounted).	Low	County				
16	Support and communicate opportunities to community members regarding participation in the state administered Residential Energy Upgrade (RENU) loan program.	Low	County				



17	Receive energy building code training and technical assistance from the Colorado Energy Office (CEO) to adopt new codes that help achieve clean energy goals.	Low	County				
18	Adopt one of the three most recent versions of the International Energy Conservation Code (ICC) when updating any building code.	Low	County				
19	Support and transition electrification of residential and commercial buildings and improved building efficiency through incentives and codes (See San Miguel and Ouray County Regional Climate Action Plan and incentives available through the Federal Inflation Reduction Act).	Low	County				
20	Implement a compostable material strategy for festivals and events to decrease waste. Expand to restaurants and businesses.	Medium	County, Municipalities				
21	Implement a community-wide composting program for residents and businesses	Medium	County, Municipalities				
22	Explore public-private partnerships for advancing renewable energy projects.	Medium	County; Private Land Owners; San Miguel County Power Authority				
	FACILITATE / COORDINATE						
23	Work with local businesses to understand waste consumption levels and awareness.	Low	County, Businesses				



23	Partner with other governmental agencies to identify biological indicators of climate change sensitivity and response, especially high risk/high value species and habitats for monitoring or intervention. Identify thresholds, plausible alternative states, pathways, and triggers for climate-sensitive species and habitats.	High	County, Municipalities, USFS				
24	Coordinate with Colorado Water Plan Grants (CWCB) regarding "Colorado Growing Water Smart (CGWS)" for land use and water planning. https://cwcb.colorado.gov/funding/colorado-water-plan-grants	Medium	County, Water Providers				
25	Continue support for the local disaster preparedness, response and recovery efforts in the Colorado Emergency Preparedness Assessment (CEPA).	High	County				
26	Consult land and fire management partners to implement restrictions on development in high wildfire zones.	Medium	County				
27	Continue to work with private property owners to acquire lands that contain mining claims and/or designate them as conservation easements.	High	County				
CONSIDER / EXPLORE							
28	Explore opportunities to transition electric supply to renewable energy sources.	High	County, San Miguel Power Association				
29	Explore opportunities for a regional revolving loan fund for infrastructure upgrades and smart grid investments.	High	County, Municipalities, San Miguel Power Association				



30	Explore rewilding efforts to help recover natural systems and native vegetations	Medium	County, CPW, USFS, Private Land Managers				
31	Explore new land management strategies that increase carbon sequestration and storage in the East End, such as reforestation, restoration, conservation, and natural climate solutions.	Medium	County, CPW, USFS, Private Land Managers				

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Balanced and Sustained Natural and Built Environments

Goal statement: *Eastern San Miguel County supports a thriving and sustainable local community through responsible and sensitive development planning and initiatives, while also ensuring environmental resources are protected. Eastern San Miguel County recognizes its environmental assets and is committed to protecting wildlife, water supply, and the high quality of life that is associated with access to the region's pristine natural environment. We also recognize the critical importance of providing a place for local residents to live with dignity and have access to essential services, and that development is needed to facilitate housing and other needs. This is balanced through careful management of infrastructure resources and transparent development and application of land use regulations.*

The people of San Miguel County express a great love of this place. They appreciate the stunning views, the recreational access, and the small-town feel. Perhaps the greatest conundrum within the San Miguel County East End Master Plan is addressing the tension between the need for housing and essential services to sustain the community into the future and the desire to preserve the natural environment and what makes the area special.

Community feedback often reflected this conflict, with people listing the greatest planning challenges as both “housing needs” and “keeping San Miguel wild” in the same sentence. This plan seeks to balance these different feelings by combining the protection of the natural environment with identifying opportunities for new growth to support the community. Much of this has to do with identifying the type of growth our community supports and the geographic areas we strive to protect. In terms of land uses, the community consistently identified housing as a land use that should be supported. When asked what land use types are appropriate and where, residential uses, and more specifically affordable housing, were identified in all geographies throughout the planning area. Housing types that were identified most frequently as being appropriate options within or adjacent to existing developments are those that are typically denser, including accessory dwelling units (ADUs), multifamily housing, townhomes, and affordable housing for rent and for sale.

The Future Land Use Map identifies the land uses that are most appropriate in the East End. This can be thought of in terms of areas of stability and areas of change. Figure 13 Areas of Stability identifies the areas of change and areas of stability, which is important in articulating the areas we want to protect and those areas that may be appropriate for development.

Areas of stability are areas of state and federal land, the High Country Area, and areas with significant environmental constraints such as wetlands and water bodies, areas of 30% slopes, and areas that have potential hazards. Community feedback reflected the need to conserve natural areas around Deep Creek, Trout Lake, San Bernardo Mountain, and Lake Fork. Areas of change are lands in incorporated towns, existing unincorporated communities and surrounding areas that could support growth. A key consideration in the areas of potential change is that water and sanitation services are a prerequisite for any new development. This could be provided by connecting to existing or new water and sewer systems, or by utilizing on-site water and septic systems.

As the East End continues to grow, it is critical that we consider the types of land uses that are needed to support a thriving local community. The land use code and development review processes can be used to support the uses we want to see more of and to support preservation of natural areas that



should be preserved. The goal and action items seek to strike this balance and support both conservation and development into the future.

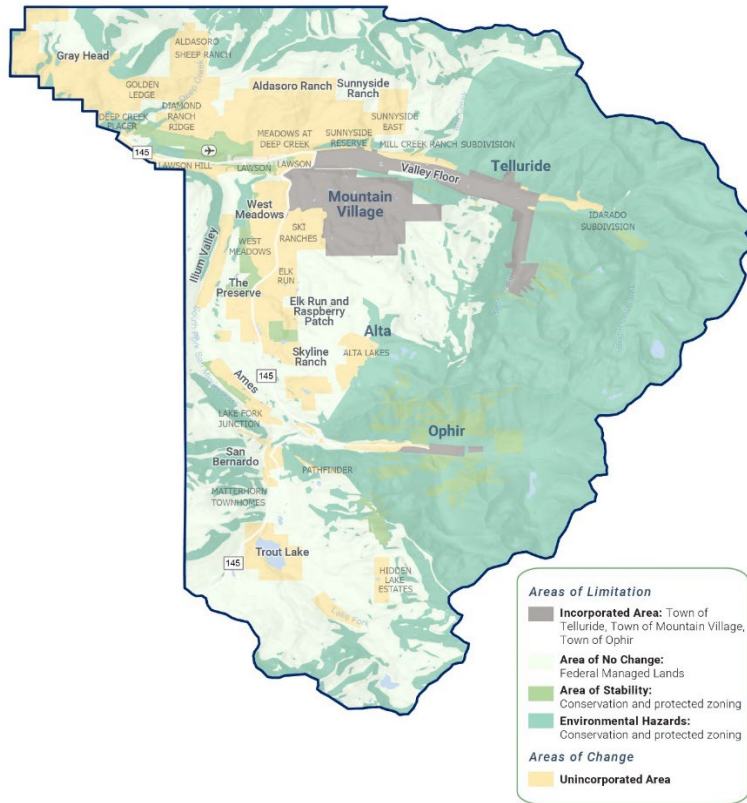


Figure 13 Areas of Stability



THEME: BALANCED AND SUSTAINED NATURAL & BUILT ENVIRONMENTS							
	Investment	Responsibility	Timing	Initiated	Completed	Action Summary	
PLAN / STUDY							
2	Study a County-only transferable development rights program or cluster development standards to preserve open natural lands that have conservation value and enable development in areas that may be more appropriate.	Medium	County				
1	Create a Green Infrastructure plan that identifies a network of natural areas, including bodies of water, to promote conservation and open space planning.	Medium	County				
4	Identify important habitat corridors that should be preserved or enhanced on a landscape scale based on wildlife movement, biodiversity hotspots, and green infrastructure gaps.	Medium	County, Municipalities, Land Managers, CPW				
POLICY							
3	Update the land use code to allow more density and development where services are or can be provided in order to reduce pressure on natural lands that should be preserved.	Medium	County Community Development				



4	Offer the opportunity to subdivide land into a greater number of lots or allowable units in exchange for more land preserved as open space. Require developments to be clustered to preserve large tracts of undisturbed land.	Low	County Community Development				
5	Support smaller lot sizes in the East End to enable a more efficient and compact development pattern in order to preserve natural lands and minimize the overextension of infrastructure.	Low	County Community Development				
6	When development occurs, ensure it is sited to preserve key natural features, avoid steep slopes, avoid wetlands, and implement best management practices related to fire and hazard mitigation	Medium	County Community Development				
7	Develop design standards to address development siting in a way that seeks to preserve the rural character and environmental integrity of the site.	Medium	County Community Development				
8	Require tree and vegetation planting and landscaping that is appropriate for specific ecological zones and fire mitigation practices on public and private lands.	Medium	County Community Development				



9	Implement waterwise and other water reduction policies in land development code. Encourage use of alternative water systems, i.e., rainwater, graywater, etc.	Medium	County				
10	Implement recommendations and policies in the Regional Climate Action Plan, Community Wildfire Protection Plan, and All-Hazard Mitigation Plan.	Medium	County				
11	Continue to include view protection and scenic corridor policies and standards in Land Use review.						
12	Continue the Payment for Ecosystems Services (PES) program to incentivize preservation to ecological value to lands.	Low	County				
13	Implement a hazard overlay zone to describe vulnerable areas with the most significant threat.	Low	County				
14	Incorporate policy limitations on areas not suitable for development where hazards are a greater risk.	Low	County				
15	Cooperate with water providers to establish and implement source water protection measures.		County, Municipalities, Idarado				
16	Retain the relatively underdeveloped character of the backcountry areas while allowing for low impact development consistent with the type of residential		County				



	development that historically occurred in the area, typified by lack of maintained and improved roads, and little or no utilities or infrastructures.						
17	Encourage efforts to preserve high country land through conservation easements with land trusts or by sale, transfer, or land exchange to a public land management agency.		County, USFS, Land Trusts				
18	Support Dark Sky initiatives.		County, Municipalities, Organizations				
19	Continue High Country protections in order to retain the relatively undeveloped character of backcountry areas while allowing low impact residential development that is compatible with the environment, and does not negatively impact recreational opportunities and natural resources.		County				
	FACILITATE / COORDINATE						
20	Partner with local water providers to track and understand water access and availability for future development in the East End.	Medium	County, Water Providers				
21	Work with property owners to secure public access easements to create continuity and connectivity	Medium	County, Private Property Owners				



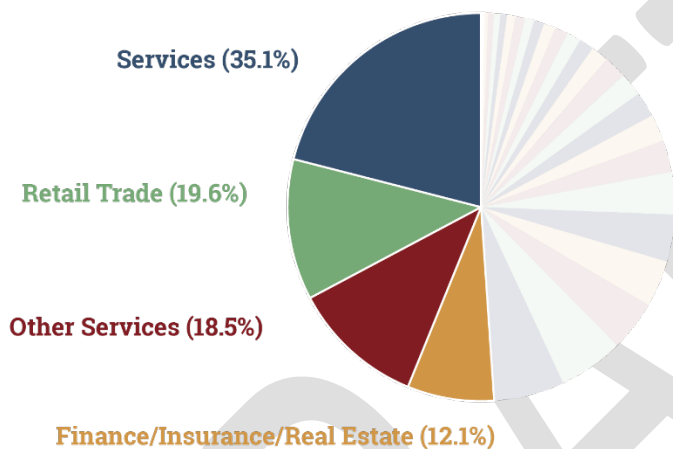
	throughout the natural environment.						
22	Support efforts of organizations that focus on water security and watershed ecological health.	Low	County, water organizations				
	CONSIDER / EXPLORE						
23	Explore building code amendments that can encourage or require the development of sustainable and energy-efficient buildings to reduce the environmental impact of development.	Low	County Community Development				
24	Consider adopting floor area limitations in the county to limit the impacts of large homes / development	Medium	County Community Development				



Diverse and Resilient Economic Opportunity

Goal statement: *We strive to ensure that community members in San Miguel County are supported throughout all stages of life with access to robust supportive services in childcare, education, and healthcare. San Miguel County seeks to maintain a stable workforce by supporting businesses and employers, linking resources for job training and education, supporting intergenerational learning, upholding inclusive housing policies, connecting people to jobs and services through transit options, and supporting efforts for employment and economic diversification. The County engages its community to understand and adapt to climate change as it affects the regional economy and quality of life.*

The largest employment sectors in San Miguel County are driven by tourism.



As a remote mountain community that is heavily dependent on services that tend to contract in a poor economy, San Miguel County can be more vulnerable to shifts or disruptions in the broader global marketplace. Diversification is one tool to address economic vulnerability. Collaborating with local businesses and encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship is one way to support continued economic development into the future. Other tools include creating a localized tourism plan to identify strategies for sustaining year-round employment through harnessing the momentum of the high season while thinking about off-season challenges.

Similarly, diversifying our economy can help safeguard it against the uncertainties of climate change and the impacts it can have on our outdoor economy. Understanding and tracking the impacts of climate change will enable the county to be more nimble when addressing its economic impacts. The County can also work with major industry providers, such as the energy sector, to support growth in the renewable energy sector.

In-person higher education opportunities are currently not available within San Miguel County. The County can support skills advancement and training through specialized programs, in coordination with local businesses and state resources. These can be planned around specific needs of the local workforce, creating opportunity for personal growth and local talent and skills retention.



When asked to identify the most important economic development topic for the county to focus on, survey respondents selected the supply of housing, support for essential services, and supporting all forms of transportation mobility. As seen in these responses, a thriving economy is heavily dependent on community connections and services, housing, and reliable and efficient transportation. These are addressed under their respective themes.

The goal statement and action items focus on harnessing the unique local talents of the region and supporting their growth.

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	THEME: DIVERSE & RESILIENT ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY	Investment	Responsibility	Timing	Initiated	Completed	Action Summary
	PLAN / STUDY						
1	Explore the potential of large-scale, regional renewable energy generation and storage projects, such as community solar gardens (see HB19-1003: Community Solar Gardens Modernization Act).	Medium	County, Municipalities, Business Community, SMPA, Tri-State				
2	Develop a sustainable tourism plan to identify strategies for preserving and protecting community character and the natural environment while continuing to offer unique tourism experiences.	High	County, TSG, Municipalities, Visitor Services				
3	Consider identifying 2-4 "key industries" that make San Miguel County's East End unique and showcase the inherent knowledge and values of the local population. Develop economic development strategies that attract and invest in these sectors and their supply chains and support "spillover" services to create a diverse business/industry hub.	High	County, Municipalities, Business Community, Visitor Services,				
	POLICY						



4	Create flexibility within the land use code to allow opportunities for manufacturing, makerspaces, and other spaces that support the development of innovative technologies (such as for renewable energy, healthcare, outdoor recreation, etc.) and other business needs.	Medium	County Planning Department				
5	Implement housing diversification through updates to the land use code and projects to achieve it (see also Housing Access and Balanced and Sustained Natural and Built Environment).	Medium	County, Housing Authority				
6	Support opportunities to create and improve multi-modal infrastructure that connects housing and jobs (see also Expanded Transportation Options).	High	County, SMART				
FACILITATE / COORDINATE							
7	Partner with Region 10, a partner of the U.S. Economic Development Administration, to foster an integrated regional entrepreneurship program. This could include creating mentor networks, supporting co-working spaces, business competition and boot-camp activities that provide business	Medium	County, Business Community, Telluride Foundation				



	and leadership training for start-ups and expanding local businesses.						
8	Increase local use of Region 10 Business Loan Fund by connecting businesses with regional representatives.	Medium	County, Business Community				
9	Coordinate County government efforts and resources to increase access to services that improve individual economic outcomes, such as childcare, health services and job training.	Medium	County				
10	Increase local use of West Central Colorado SBDC services and resources through sharing information about relevant opportunities with businesses and community partners.	Medium	County, Business Community				
11	Work with Colorado's Department of Local Affairs' (DOLA) Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) to support small business start-ups, technology incubators and other locally driven economic development projects.	Medium	County, Business Community				
12	Support opportunities for municipalities to receive training and technical assistance through the USDA Rural Business Development Grant for	Medium	County, Business Community				



	supporting small business development and expansion.						
13	Support regional educational opportunities that focus on job training for locals.	Medium	County, Business Community, Educational Groups				
14	Work with higher education institutions to establish remote learning opportunities for people seeking further education.		Organizations				
CONSIDER / EXPLORE							
15	Explore the creation of a county Brownfield Agency and associated TIF district to incentivize redevelopment and/or remediation of brownfield areas.	High	County				
16	Consider creation of a regional chamber of commerce to support the business community.	Medium	Business Community, County				



Expanded Transportation Options

Goal Statement: *Eastern San Miguel County’s multi-modal transportation network will continue to be updated and improved to provide transit service with more frequency and places served, multi-use paths for walking and biking, and electric vehicle infrastructure. The County promotes development patterns and design that create comfortable and safe walking and biking conditions. San Miguel County works with regional partners to sustain a connected road network to promote an efficient transportation system that aids the community in times of emergency, while respecting topography and the character of remote areas.*

Eastern San Miguel County has a robust transportation framework that provides opportunities to use different modes. The gondola connects Telluride and Mountain Village, and trails exist within individual communities. San Miguel Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART) runs transit services throughout the East End, but not always at the frequency needed to meet the demand from shift workers.

The transportation road network is constrained by the area’s natural topography that has dramatic change from mountain ranges to canyons. Highway 145 is the only paved road connection into the area and does not currently include space for a dedicated bike lane or transit lane. This means that workers who commute into the East End from elsewhere in San Miguel County or from the surrounding counties are currently limited in their transportation options and are often required to commute by car due to the limited transit hours and destinations. Housing affordability has a direct nexus to transportation demand - the number of employees commuting from outside the county accounted for 30 percent of total employment in 2018, which is an increase from 19 percent in 2000 and 25 percent in 2004 (San Miguel County Housing Needs Assessment, 2018).

When asked what the biggest concerns are related to growth in San Miguel County, 20 percent of respondents chose increased traffic and delays. Community members have expressed that they have daily challenges with congestion on Highway 145 and a need for expanded hours and more frequent transit service. The goal statement and action items focus on expanding transportation options to provide increased levels of transit service and comfortable conditions for walking and biking.



	THEME: EXPANDED TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS	Investment	Responsibility	Timing	Initiated	Completed	Action Summary
	PLAN / STUDY						
1	Study the feasibility of developing a gondola connection from Lawson Hill and Ilium Valley to Telluride and/or Mountain Village.	High	County, Municipalities, SMART				
2	Conduct a corridor study for treating Highway 145 as a multimodal corridor that supports frequent transit, pedestrians, biking, and other micro transportation methods.	High	County, SMART, CDOT				
3	Study the feasibility of micro-transit solutions, such as vanshare, ride share, and car share.	Medium	County, Municipalities, SMART				
4	Support SMART in a regional transit study that identifies the most needed stops to connect people to destinations.	High	County, Municipalities, SMART				
5	Conduct an East End pedestrian and bicycle study to identify opportunities for multi-use all-weather pathways along all major routes.	Medium	County				
6	Work with CDOT and SMART to reduce Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) and Average Daily Trips (ADT), improve Level of Service (LOS), and reduce congestion on area roads.	High	County, SMART, CDOT				
7	Develop an electric vehicle readiness plan including charging and alternative fuel options.	Medium	County, Municipalities, SMART, San Miguel Power Authority				



	Study methods to reduce heavy truck traffic in the region.	Low	County, Municipalities, SMART, Businesses				
	POLICY						
8	Establish flexible front setback allowances that will encourage multi-family, mixed-use, and commercial developments that create a strong interaction with the street edge and support walkability.	Low	County				
9	Implement land use policies that support infill and new development within existing infrastructure and development patterns to reduce transportation demand. (See also Balances Natural and Built Environment and Future Land Use Map)	Low	County				
10	Design surface parking lots and drives for all commercial, mixed-use, multi-family and industrial development to emphasize pedestrian and bicycle access, and to minimize the visibility of parking when possible.	Low	County				
11	Incentivize the building of electric vehicle car charge stations with new and existing commercial, lodging, and service developments. Include consideration of electric vehicle charging in development reviews.	Medium	County				
12	Support the use of multi-use all-weather pathways in a way that supports the safety of walkers and bikers of all ages and abilities, including e-bikes.	Medium	County				
	FACILITATE / COORDINATE						



13	Coordinate with regional entities to identify a responsible entity for the funding and oversight of gondola replacement and ongoing operations and maintenance. The current agreement ends in 2027.	High	County, Municipalities, SMART, TMVOA, TSG				
14	Work with SMART to increase transit hours, including later evening and earlier morning service.	Medium	County, Municipalities, SMART				
15	Work with SMART, municipalities, and CDOT to increase transit availability during high traffic work hours.	Medium	County, Municipalities, SMART, CDOT				
16	Work with SMART, municipalities and CDOT to establish intercept parking lots at important nodes to further reduce single-vehicle commuting.	Medium	County, Municipalities, SMART, CDOT				
17	Work with SMART and CDOT on the conversion of buses to an electric vehicle fleet.	Medium	County, Municipalities, SMART, CDOT				
18	Coordinate with SMART to implement transit lines or transit options to San Bernardo, Trout Lake and Ophir.	Medium	County, Municipalities, SMART				
19	Work with SMART to improve connections to outlying areas like Norwood, Nucla/Naturita, Montrose, Ridgeway/Ouray and Rico.	High	County, Municipalities, SMART				
20	Coordinate with jurisdictions for regional bikeshare program. Consider including e-bikes in the fleet.	Medium	County, Municipalities, SMART				
21	Work with utility providers to invest in electric vehicle infrastructure that is coordinated with the grid (see SB19-077 Public Utility Implementation of an Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Program).	Medium	County, Municipalities, SMART, San				



			Miguel Power Authority				
22	Coordinate with private employers and SMART on a subsidized bus pass system for commuters.	Low	County, Municipalities, SMART, Businesses				
23	Develop shuttle systems to serve area trailheads and recreation areas to reduce congestion and parking impacts.	High	County, Municipalities, USFS, SMART				
24	Coordinate with SMART on outreach and education efforts around using public transit.	Low	County, Municipalities, SMART				
25	Support CDOT's regional bus service as another means by which commuters and visitors can travel.	Low	County, SMART, CDOT				
CONSIDER / EXPLORE							
26	Consider incentivizing rideshare employment and use of electric vehicles by companies such as Uber and Lyft (see SB19-239: Address Impacts of Transportation Changes).	Medium	County, Municipalities, SMART				
27	Explore expanding shuttle / transportation partnerships for tourism travel to and from airports to reduce rental car demand.	Medium	County, Municipalities, SMART				



Varied Recreation Options

Goal Statement: *Parks, trails, and associated recreational infrastructure in Eastern San Miguel County will be maintained and supported, balancing recreation access with the long-term viability of ecological and cultural conditions. To facilitate healthy lifestyles, San Miguel County and public and private partners will continue to work to provide year-round recreational opportunities, diversify programing and resources for all, and upholding sustainable recreation practices.*

Known worldwide as an outdoor recreation mecca, it is difficult to overstate the role that recreation plays in the lives of the San Miguel County community. Abundant backcountry, pristine wilderness, open mesas, and world-class skiing are a few of the attributes people list when asked how to describe this place. San Miguel County operates a Parks and Open Space program that includes county fairgrounds, parks, trails, open space, and historic preservation. The county works in partnership with the municipalities, US Forest Service, and Colorado Parks and Wildlife Department to maintain an interconnected system of recreation options.

Challenges that the community foresees related to the future of outdoor recreation in Eastern San Miguel County include maintaining existing recreational infrastructure, impacts to recreation amenities from overuse, outdoor user education, concern about fires and impacts to trails and natural areas, diminishing snowpack and impacts to winter sports, and added pressure to search and rescue through increased use of the backcountry. Considering the link between tourism and recreation-based economy with the impacts these economies have on the natural environment and enjoyment of the outdoors is important to our community. As we look to the next 30 years, it is critical that outdoor recreational opportunities are thoughtfully managed and address these key community concerns.

The goal and action items seek to address the needed balance between supporting access of recreational assets and preserving the qualities that make San Miguel County's natural areas so spectacular.



	THEME: VARIED RECREATIONAL OPTIONS	Investment	Responsibility	Timing	Initiated	Completed	Action Summary
	PLAN / STUDY						
1	Evaluate areas most appropriate for recreational use through creation of a county-wide recreation master plan.	Medium	County, USFS, BLM, Telluride Mountain Club, Telluride Ski & Golf				
2	Study opportunities to provide recreational programs that are accessible to a range of users with varying levels of mobility and ability while ensuring that the use type is appropriate for the trail's physical and natural context.	Medium	County, User Groups				
	POLICY						
3	Prioritize implementation of recreational options that minimize disruption to critical habitats and natural features.	Low	County, Municipalities, Telluride Mountain Club, Telluride Ski & Golf				
4	When planning new parks, open spaces, and trail connections, seek	Low	County, Municipalities				



	to implement existing County and Town recreational plans.		, Telluride Mountain Club, Telluride Ski & Golf				
5	Design and maintain recreational infrastructure that minimizes the impact on the environment, such as hiking trails that follow natural contours and utilize native vegetation.	Medium	County, Municipalities, USFS, Private Landowners / Developers				
6	Preserve public access to public lands throughout the East End, including by working with private landowners for access easements.	Medium	County, USFS, Municipalities, Private Landowners				
7	Include habitat conservation, wildfire mitigation, and native species biodiversity as priorities in recreational investments.	Medium	County				
8	Expand the trail network to connect to local bus routes and the Gondola, and provide connections between other trails and destinations.	Medium	County, Municipalities, USFS, Telluride Mountain Club, Telluride Ski & Golf				
	FACILITATE / COORDINATE						



9	Work with businesses and community organizations to educate visitors on ways to responsibly enjoy the outdoors.	Low	County, USFS, Municipalities , Private Businesses				
10	Facilitate the use, enjoyment, discovery, and stewardship of recreational assets for community members of all abilities.	Low	County, Private Businesses, USFS, Municipalities				
11	Coordinate with municipalities to expand the four-season trail network.	Medium	County, Municipalities				
12	Work with USFS and other governmental agencies to increase camping opportunities for dispersed and developed camping. Prioritize developed camping to minimize environmental impacts.	Medium	County, Municipalities , USFS				
CONSIDER / EXPLORE							
13	Consider establishing a program to monitor and assess the impact of recreational activities on the environment.	Medium	County, Municipalities , USFS, CPW				
14	Explore the creation of a system to cooperate with federal and private land managers in the County to establish coordinated public access strategies and manage recreational impacts.	Medium	County, USFS, Private Land Managers				



15	Consider strategic placement of entrances and wayfinding to parks, open spaces, and trails to encourage use of multi-modal transportation.	Medium	County, USFS				
16	Explore trailhead maintenance and improvements.	Medium	County, USFS				
17	Develop shuttle systems to serve area trailheads and recreation areas to reduce congestion and parking impacts.		County, USFS, Municipalities, SMART				

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Vibrant Arts and Culture

Goal Statement: *Arts and culture in Eastern San Miguel County is known worldwide. The community supports an appreciation of the arts and fosters representation of its local identity through a vibrant, locally managed festival and music scene, accessible creative outlets, and protection of the natural environment to inspire current and future creators. Areas of historic interest are honored through preservation and interpretation efforts.*

Part of what makes San Miguel County such a great place to live is its arts and culture. From the iconic festivals, the great music scene, quality food, and community members that embody a maker mentality, this remote area of Colorado is known for its funky feel.

The community embraces the arts and several initiatives, such as Telluride Arts, a local non-profit in existence since 1971, work to “elevate and promote a culture of the arts” in the local community. The County can work with such partners and programs, supporting artistic expression while fostering a reflection of our local identity.

With a deep-rooted appreciation for the arts and culture, we can inspire current and future creators to push boundaries, celebrate diversity, and contribute to the cultural legacy of the region. These opportunities should be available to local students and artists, enabling them to pursue art while continuing to call the East End home.

It is important that we understand and appreciate our past. Through thoughtful preservation, interpretation, and educational efforts and recognition of the Ute bands who came before, we can ensure that future generations can learn from and connect with the stories that have shaped our community.

Within its land use controls, the County can preserve and honor local historic spaces, support events to celebrate local culture and identity, make spaces and stories accessible to the public, and coordinate initiatives to support artistic events that create a local, regional or national draw.



	THEME: VIBRANT ARTS & CULTURE	Investment	Responsibility	Timing	Initiated	Completed	Action Summary
	PLAN / STUDY						
1	Create an arts and culture road map throughout the County, identifying unique districts and areas that celebrate the East End's history and arts culture.	Medium	County, Municipalities				
2	Promote arts and culture through education, marketing and events. Consider coordinating between and across governmental entities and organizations.	Low	County, Municipalities, Arts Organizations				
	POLICY						
3	Maintain historic and cultural assets that are representative of and supportive of San Miguel County's history and sense of place.	Medium	County, Historic Commission				
	FACILITATE / COORDINATE						
4	Work with the arts community to increase participation of local artists and community members in festivals to showcase local talent and ensure local artists benefit from these events.	Medium	County, Municipalities, Arts Organizations				
5	Support new and existing arts programs to encourage youth involvement in the arts.	Low	County, Arts Organizations				
6	Support new and existing programs and events that recognize and celebrate the region's cultures.	Low	County, Organizations				



7	Encourage commercial and mixed-use developments and businesses to incorporate art through murals, design, sculpture, installations, etc.	Low	County Community Development				
8	Continue to use transportation and accommodation strategies during large festival times to help minimize the impact from the influx of people and traffic.	High	County, Municipalities, SMART				
	CONSIDER / EXPLORE						
9	Continue to grow and support the historic preservation program to preserve important history and culture in San Miguel County, including the history of the Uncompahgre Utes.	Medium	County, Historic Society				
10	Explore cultural heritage interpretation, events, programs, and educational efforts that celebrate and promote local historic landmarks, history, and traditions.	Medium	County, Historical Museum				
11	Consider opportunities to incorporate art within parks, open spaces, and trail system, such as through creative mapping or wayfinding, to support the local arts community.	Medium	County, Arts Organizations				
12	Explore opportunities to promote environmental conservation efforts through public art installations that raise awareness about the natural beauty of the region and the importance of protecting it.	Medium	County, Arts Organizations				



Connected, Cooperative and Welcoming Community

Goal Statement: *Individual towns within Eastern San Miguel County maintain their unique qualities, sense of place, and small-town atmosphere. The County strives to work with partners to enable access to quality schools and education, healthcare, public facilities, services for aging populations, bilingual resources, and recreation spaces for our community. The County and Towns within the eastern region continue to work together to develop and sustain a framework of cooperative and inclusive services, infrastructure, resources, and regulatory practices, and take a coordinated approach to growth management and mitigating impacts of tourism.*

As a worldwide destination, San Miguel County is challenged with maintaining a balanced perspective to address the opportunities and impacts of being a place that supports both locals and visitors. Our small-town, rural and natural character is crucial to fostering a strong community bond and a shared sense of identity. Creating places where all community members feel safe to gather and exchange ideas will support this goal.

Community feedback reflected challenges such as cultural and language barriers limiting employment opportunities and advancement. As a community with a large percentage of Hispanic and Latino/a/e residents, it is important that Spanish-language information is available for our community. Expansion of these services to ensure that language is not a barrier to accessing opportunities is a key implementation goal of this plan.

The region has limited access to key services such as healthcare, grocery stores, and childcare, an issue that was raised throughout the community engagement process. Increasing access to essential services for people of all ages is important to ensure the long-term health of our community. With this in mind, facilitating access to comprehensive services will help ensure that the well-being of our residents is prioritized.

Similarly, the county should be a place where well-rounded educational opportunities exist for our young people. From childcare services to traditional K-12 education to unique educational offerings, a comprehensive education with opportunities to expand horizons is essential for the success of our community's future.

The San Miguel community is engaged and passionate about the future. The planning process brought forth a call to be as open, inclusive, and transparent as possible. Establishing a framework for outreach that is centered on community and seeks to bring forth voices of those who are traditionally underrecognized in decision-making processes is key to instilling trust and empowering the community to work together to steward their shared future.



THEME: CONNECTED, COOPERATIVE, & WELCOMING COMMUNITY		Investment	Responsibility	Timing	Initiated	Completed	Action Summary
PLAN / STUDY							
1	Work with municipalities to study the impacts of tourism on the local community and implement programs to mitigate those impacts. Examples could be coordinating special events / festival approval processes and aligning policies related to parking and traffic management.	High	County, Municipalities, TSG, Visitor Services				
2	Study the needs of the aging population in a "Master Plan for Aging" and consider opportunities to enable people to age in place in Eastern San Miguel County. Examples include access to transportation and healthcare, economic security, and housing opportunities.	Medium	County Health and Human Services, SMART				
3	Establish a model for community engagement that can be implemented for all county-led initiatives. Commit to providing all information and materials in Spanish and working with trusted community partners to disseminate information and facilitate dialogue around planning topics and implementation of this master plan.	Medium	County				
POLICY							



4	Enhance signage and County communications to effectively communicate with diverse demographics, including the visually impaired, deaf and hard of hearing, as well as people who speak different languages.	Medium	County				
5	Support community organizations and programs that provide bilingual education in the community and bridging the divide between English-speakers and Spanish-speakers.	Low	County				
6	Support community-based programs and businesses that focus on supporting youth and teens.	Low	County, Schools, Youth non-profits				
7	Invest in facilities and infrastructure that promote community connections and opportunities to gather.	Medium	County				
8	Support access to essential services, such as grocery stores, health care, small-scale retail, dining, schools, and community spaces in each community across Eastern San Miguel County.	Medium	County Community Development, SMART				
	FACILITATE / COORDINATE						
9	Work with municipalities and organizations to ensure community needs are being met through a coordinated framework of services.	Medium	County, Municipalities, Organizations				



10	Provide bilingual resources and services to support the diverse cultural backgrounds of the community, including translation services and cultural events that promote understanding and respect for different traditions and customs.	Medium	County, Bright Futures Tri County				
11	Foster a culture of transparency and open communication by regularly sharing information about County initiatives, projects, and decisions with community members.	Low	County				
12	Foster community connections and engagement by regularly holding public forums to provide opportunities for residents to voice their concerns and ideas on how to improve their community.	Low	County				
CONSIDER / EXPLORE							
13	Consider the creation of a Community Connections Council or Advisory Board to provide a conduit for bringing new ideas to County leadership on how to ensure all community members feel welcome.	Medium	County, Tri County				
14	Consider regular surveys of both visitors and local residents and workers regarding impacts on the community.	Low	County, Municipalities , Tourism Board				



	Create and support spaces for the community to gather.	Low	County, Municipalities				
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