



# RUIDOSO

*LIVING IN NATURE'S PLAYGROUND*

**ADOPTED  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2019**



**VILLAGE OF RUIDOSO**

**RESOLUTION 2019-36**

**WHEREAS**, the Village Council determined that the 2010 Comprehensive Plan needed to be replaced; and

**WHEREAS**, numerous public input meetings were held to review the draft goals and objectives; and


**WHEREAS**, the Village Council reviewed the draft goals and objectives; and

**WHEREAS**, the draft goals and objectives have been adjusted to incorporate the comments received from the public.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:**

1. That the 2010 Village or Ruidoso Comprehensive Plan is hereby replaced by the adoption of the 2019 Comprehensive Plan Goals and Objectives in its entirety.
2. That the 2019 Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, and Policies are attached hereto and made a part of this Resolution. These Goals, Objectives and Policies are intended only to provide the Village with policy guidance and are not listed in order of the Village Council's priorities.
3. That the Planning Commission, Workforce Housing Advisory Board, Library Advisory Board, Park and Recreation Advisory Board, Watershed Advisory Committee, Keep Ruidoso Beautiful, Utility Committee, and Village shall follow the implementation plan outlined in the goals and objectives and shall provide progress reports to Village Council of efforts to implement these goals and objectives.

Passed, Approved and Adopted this 12<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2019.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Lynn D. Crawford, Mayor

(SEAL)

Attest:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Irma Devine, Village Clerk



# VILLAGE OF RUIDOSO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

*The Comprehensive Planning process began in 2018 and was adopted in November 2019.*

## **Mayor**

Lynn D. Crawford

## **Village Council**

Councilor Rafael "Rifle" Salas  
Councilor Dr. Gary Jackson  
Councilor Joseph W. Eby  
Councilor Tim Coughlin  
Councilor Susan Lutterman  
Councilor John Cornelius

## **Village Management and Directors**

Timothy Dodge, Village Manager  
Ron Sena, Deputy Village Manager  
Debi Lee, Former Village Manager  
Samantha Mendez, Community Development Director  
James R. Baumann, Former Public Works Director  
Eric Boyda, Watershed Director  
Zach Cook, Village Attorney  
Dick Cooke, Forestry Director  
Irma Devine, Municipal Clerk  
Isaac Garcia, Waste Water Treatment Plan Director  
Kerry Gladden, Public Information Officer  
Rodney Griego, Parks and Recreation Director  
Darren Hooker, Police Chief  
Justin Huffmon, Director of Tourism  
Jeffrey Kaplan, General Services Director  
Fred Payton, Street Manager  
Adam Sanchez, Utilities Director  
Judy Starkovich, Finance Director  
Cody Thetford, Fire Chief

## **Planning and Zoning Commissioners**

Alan Briley  
Barton Byars  
Mark Flack  
Scarlet Kelly  
Ron Michelena  
Marianne Mohr  
Jonathan Tondino  
Chad Tucker  
Larry Wimbrow

## **Advisory Committee**

Elaine Allen, Lincoln County Commissioner  
George Bickert, Ruidoso Municipal Schools  
Ryan Carstens, ENMU-Ruidoso  
John Corneilus, Village Council  
Lynn Crawford, Mayor  
Timothy Dodge, Village Manager  
Robert Donaldson, Hubbard Foundation  
Dallas Draper, Lincoln County Commissioner  
Marilyn Duncan, Upper Canyon Lodging Co.  
Mike Dvorak, Zia Natural Gas  
Gordon Gray, Citizen Advisor  
Debi Lee, Former Village Manager  
Susan Lutterman, Village Council  
TJ Owen, Youth Advisory Council  
Frank Potter, Former Village Manager  
James Russ, Realtor  
Rifle Salas, Village Councilor  
Brad Trepton, Lincoln County Medical Center

## **Consultants**

### **Sites Southwest, LLC**

Phyllis Taylor, AICP  
Rosemary Dudley, AICP  
Madeline Sexton

### **Bridge Economic Development**

Alisa Pyszka  
Steven Pedigo

### **Bohannan Huston, Inc.**

Aaron Sussman, AICP  
Melanie Meroni  
Nisa Rascon-Pacheco

### **Rosemary Romero Consulting**

Rosemary Romero

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# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



NATURAL  
RESOURCES



ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT



LAND USE



HOUSING



COMMUNITY  
SERVICES



PARKS &  
RECREATION



TRANSPORTATION



UTILITIES



WATER  
RESOURCES



HAZARD  
MITIGATION



IMPLEMENTATION



# INTRODUCTION

## WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

The purpose of this Comprehensive Plan Update is to assess where Ruidoso is today and document what residents and community leaders in the Village want for the future. The Comprehensive Plan (the Plan) outlines the steps to achieve the community's vision through goals, policies, and measurable actions. The Comprehensive Plan serves as a guide for current and future decision making while identifying needs that support the Village's capital funding requests within an Infrastructure Capital Improvements Plan (ICIP). Additionally, the plan helps to build public support and consensus for Village projects and programs, document the purpose and need for Village policies, and make Village grant applications more competitive.

This Plan meets the State of New Mexico's comprehensive plan requirements. The State encourages communities to update their plans every five years to remain relevant and to be considered recent; these updates make the communities more competitive for state and grant funding.

The Village of Ruidoso is particularly interested in parks and recreational opportunities, economic development, and transportation; these topics drove the Plan. The rest of the chapters were aligned with these three topics. The other subjects have already been the focus or will be the focus of more detailed plans as noted in each chapter and illustrated in the flow chart (left).

The impetus for the Comprehensive Plan update is to create a year-round sustainable community...water, workforce, housing included.



# PHASES

## THE PLANNING PROCESS

The Plan was completed in three phases:

- 1** The first phase included a series of meetings with Ruidoso's leaders, community, and stakeholders in January 2019. The input from these meetings informed the second phase.
- 2** The assessment of current conditions and preliminary recommendations comprised the second phase; these findings and ideas were vetted with the community and leaders in April 2019.
- 3** In the third phase, the Comprehensive Plan Update was written building on the first two phases. The draft Plan Update was presented in October 2019 for community and stakeholder input. It was finalized and adopted in November 2019.





## WHAT WE HEARD

The community shared their vision for Ruidoso and what they would like to see improved.

## WHAT DO YOU ❤️ ABOUT RUIDOSO?



## WHAT AREAS ARE MOST IN NEED OF CHANGE?

### Economic Development

More than one-third of the comments related to economic development including: improving the cost of living, increasing the workforce, diversifying opportunities for employment, and improving the Midtown experience with longer restaurant hours and more events and nightlife.

37%

### Community Services

Slightly fewer than one-third of the comments related to improving or changing community services including: improving the quality of health care and education, building an indoor recreation center, and increasing activities for kids and seniors.

27%

### Transportation & Roads

The third-most popular comments related to improving or changing transportation and roads including: improving traffic through midtown during peak seasons, making roads more bikeable, and improving road conditions and signage.

12%

## VISION STATEMENT

The feedback we received during the community meeting visioning exercise prioritized the natural beauty, desirable climate, plentiful outdoor recreation opportunities, supportive community and friendly people in the small-town atmosphere, which should be represented in the Village's established vision statement on the following page.

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Ruidoso community established six guiding principles that represent the community priorities that emerged throughout the comprehensive planning process. These principles uphold the vision for Ruidoso. Each of the goals, policies, and actions in each chapter of this Plan supports at least one or more of these principles, and is referenced throughout the chapters with the six icons below. The actions that the community felt most strongly about are listed below each guiding principle and are developed in more detail in the Plan's chapters.



### SUPPORT OUR RESIDENTS

- *Increase affordable housing options for residents, employees, and students to retain young adults and attract families*
- *Create more activities for youth, families, and seniors*



### MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE OUR SMALL-TOWN FEEL

- *Continue efforts to revitalize and develop Midtown*
- *Encourage property maintenance*
- *Make it easy to walk and bike around town*



### TREASURE OUR NATURAL RESOURCES

- *Improve hazard mitigation by enforcing wildfire protection measures and educating residents and visitors*
- *Encourage sustainable practices through stormwater treatment, building codes, and waste management*

## LIVING IN NATURE'S PLAYGROUND...

Surrounded by Lincoln National Forest, freshwater lakes, rivers, and creeks, Ruidoso's natural landscape and climate draws people year round. Ruidoso is a tight-knit community of longtime residents, second-homeowners and loyal visitors—all of which play a vital role in the day-to-day business that takes place in the Village. Those who live and work here are proud to call it home. Those who visit come back time and again.



### IMPROVE UTILITIES INFRASTRUCTURE

- *Improve broadband service*
- *Increase water, sewer, and electrical infrastructure to accommodate peaks and growth*



### CREATE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR RECREATION

- *Develop an indoor recreation center*
- *Develop and link trails*



### DIVERSIFY OUR ECONOMY

- *Provide more living wage job opportunities*
- *Take advantage of ENMU and other resources for work-force training*
- *Support local and new businesses to build tourist economy and serve residents*
- *Create more year-round economic opportunities that take advantage of each season*



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Ski Apache

# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

## OVERVIEW

Public engagement shaped each phase of the comprehensive planning process. The meetings that took place during each of the three phases are described in the following pages. In addition to meetings, community members and business owners were encouraged to provide their input via two online surveys during the Winter/Spring of 2019. The surveys are summarized at the end of this chapter.

## PHASE 1

### Stakeholder Meetings

To begin the Comprehensive Planning process, the Village invited community members, leaders, and stakeholders to a series of topic meetings. On January 16 and 17, 2019, Sites Southwest, Bridge Economic Development, and Bohannon Huston, Inc. facilitated nine stakeholder round-table meetings with small groups with similar interests, one advisory committee meeting, and one community meeting. Details on each meeting are listed below.

The topics and groups for the stakeholder meetings included Economic Development, Village Staff, Local Organizations, Industry Growth, Recreation, Developers/ Brokers, Public Agencies, Land Use, Planning and Zoning, and Transportation. The purpose of these meetings was to learn what priorities Ruidoso's stakeholders have for the Village, hear what needs to be addressed in the Plan, and to supplement quantitative data. The following topics were addressed in nine stakeholder meetings:

- **Economic Development Partners Meeting:** The purpose of this group was to understand ongoing programs that support economic development and present Ruidoso Competitive Benchmarking (included in appendix).
- **Village Staff Meeting:** In order to align internal programs with economic development opportunities, we discussed economic development roles with Village department leaders.
- **Local Organizations Meeting:** This meeting was facilitated to understand the services provided, services lacking, and goals of local organizations in the community.





*Stakeholder meetings provided many ideas for improvements.*

- **Industry Growth Meeting:** The goal of this meeting was to understand the traded-sector industry growth opportunities that can pertain to the Village.
- **Recreation Meeting:** In order to understand the local demand for parks, sports facilities, and recreation (Village facilities and surrounding public land), this meeting was facilitated to discuss the current scheduling of parks, fields, and other facilities. Additionally, the conditions of existing buildings, parks, and trails were discussed to determine what is missing that people are asking for and how participants work with and share with public schools.
- **Developers/Brokers Meeting:** The purpose of this meeting was to understand real estate market opportunities and perceived barriers to growth.
- **Public Agencies Meeting:** The purpose of this meeting was to understand plans, policies and projects of other public agencies and the Mescalero tribe that will inform the Plan.
- **Land Use, Planning and Zoning Meeting:** This meeting aimed to receive Planning and Zoning Commissioners' and Village Staffs' insights into the requests that come before them and land use and planning issues to address in the Plan.
- **Transportation Meeting:** This meeting aimed to understand transportation needs in Ruidoso, including tourism-related challenges; issues related to neighborhood traffic calming; desired improvements for different travel modes (roadways, walking, biking, transit); and access to major destinations inside and outside of the Village.

### **Phase 1 Advisory Committee Meeting**

The first Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee Meeting was held on January 16, 2019 with the goal of educating the committee members on the purpose of the Comprehensive Plan, discussing their vision for Ruidoso and goals for the future, and identifying the issues that should be addressed in the Plan. The Committee members were selected by the Mayor and represent local businesses, institutions, Village staff, City Council, County Commission, and educators.



*Stakeholders provided input on specific topics in January 2019.*

Sites Southwest delivered a brief presentation and asked each member of the Committee to introduce him/herself and share what they believe to be the critical issues to address in the Comprehensive Plan. The Committee was encouraged to commit to staying involved throughout the process.

### Phase 1 First Community Meeting

The Village of Ruidoso hosted a community meeting to kick-off its Comprehensive Plan Update on January 16, 2019. This was a well-attended event with more than 150 people in attendance; 139 attendees signed in. The meeting agenda was as follows.

#### Meeting Overview and Presentation

The purpose of the meeting was to inform the community about the Comprehensive Plan Update and gather initial ideas that will be integrated into the Plan. Mayor Lynn Crawford was present to welcome the community and relay the importance of getting everyone's input. The consultant team gave a brief presentation on the purpose of the Comprehensive Plan, the topics it covers and provided a demographic and economic snapshot of where Ruidoso is today. Suzy Lawrence from the New Mexico State Tourism Department gave a short presentation on New Mexico True's tourism programs and the work of the Tourism Development Division. The mission of the Tourism Development Division is to support diverse and resilient local and rural economies through tourism. This great event ended with a motivational entertainer who concluded his presentation with a challenge to all stakeholders to participate in planning for the future of Ruidoso.

#### Visioning Exercise

Following the presentation, the attendees worked in groups to share their vision and ideas for Ruidoso and hear from others. The exercise helped the planning team understand what the community loves and values about Ruidoso and what the community would like to change about Ruidoso. To facilitate the discussion, each group was asked: **What do you love about Ruidoso?** and **What would you change about Ruidoso?** The Introduction includes the outcome of this exercise.



Mayor Lynn Crawford presents at the community meeting to kick-off the Comprehensive Plan effort.



“Ruidoso is a great place to live.”

Comprehensive Plan Community Meeting

More than 250 people participated in the visioning exercise at the first community meeting.

## PHASE 2

### Phase 2 Advisory Committee Meeting

The second Advisory Committee Meeting was held at the Ruidoso Convention Center on the afternoon of April 10, 2019. Sites Southwest and Bridge Economics led the meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to:

- Share the key findings from the Phase 1 meetings in January and preliminary survey results.
- Share preliminary recommendations from the draft Current Conditions Report and draft goals from the Economic Development Strategy.
- Hear Committee members' comments on the Current Conditions Report and Economic Development Strategy to be integrated into the Comprehensive Plan.

After a brief presentation to share the above-mentioned results, the Committee discussed them and provided direction on the draft Comprehensive Plan.

### Phase 2 Community Meeting

The second community meeting was held at the Ruidoso Convention Center on the evening of April 10, 2019. The purpose of the meeting was to share the key findings from the first Comprehensive Plan community meeting, preliminary survey results, preliminary recommendations and goals from the draft Current Conditions Report and Economic Development Strategy, and hear the community's comments on the Current Conditions Report and Economic Development Strategy so they could be integrated into the Comprehensive Plan.



Source: DiscoverRuidoso.com



Then City Manager Debi Lee welcomed the community to the meeting and stressed the importance of hearing from the community. Sites Southwest and Bridge Economics then gave a brief presentation on the key findings from January's meeting, the preliminary survey results, and recommendations from the Current Conditions Report, and the Economic Development Strategy. The community members visited topic stations that correlate with the Plan's chapters to share their ideas and concerns with Village staff.

After discussing the ideas at each station and offering new ones, participants voted on their preferences. The comments from each station as well as comment cards submitted by individual attendees have been incorporated into the goals, policies, and actions of each chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.

## PHASE 3

### Phase 3 Advisory Committee Meeting

Sites Southwest welcomed everyone and presented an overview of the Draft Comprehensive Plan to remind the Committee where they were now in the process and recap what we heard during the previous phases.

The meeting was then opened for discussion by Committee members to focus on the goals, policies, and actions they thought needed to be added or changed and if the Plan captures what was stated in the first meetings. Prior to adjourning, the Committee voted to approve all the comments expressed during the meeting.

### Phase 3 Community Meeting

The third community meeting was held on October 21, 2019 at the Ruidoso Convention Center. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the status of planning process and receive comments on the draft Comprehensive Plan so they could be shared with the governing body before the Plan's adoption. The meeting was kicked off with a brief welcome and agenda overview by Mayor Lynn Crawford. Keynote Speaker and the Director of New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration's Local Government Division, Donnie Quintana, then presented the importance of municipal financial planning. Sites Southwest presented a review of the Plan's timeline and a summary of what was shared during each phase.

Following the presentations, an open house was held at topic stations led by the Village's directors throughout the room. Attendees were asked to review the draft Comprehensive Plan's goals, policies, and actions and provide any additions or edits regarding each topic.

The community will continue to be involved and provide input as the goals, policies, and actions of this Comprehensive Plan are implemented.



*Participants provided ideas and shared priorities at the Parks and Recreation and Natural Resources Station.*



*Community members listen to the presentations at the third community meeting.*



*Community members discuss the plan with Village staff, directors and councilors.*

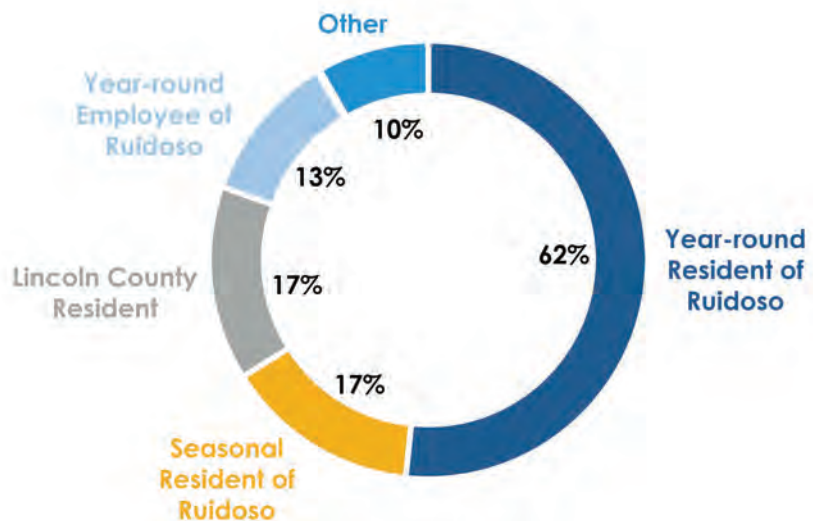
# COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS SURVEYS

## Community Survey

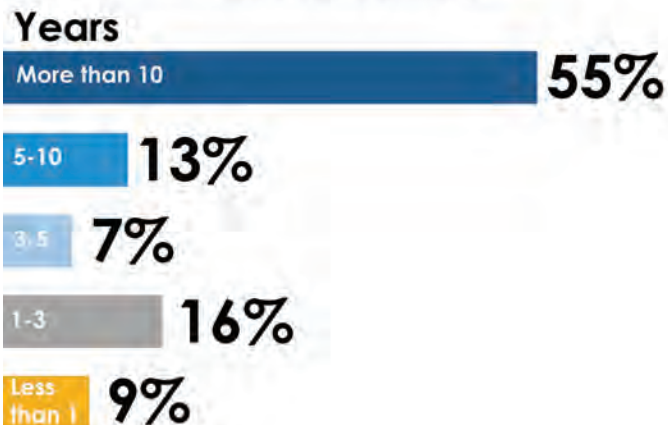
Two online surveys were posted for two months between March 18, 2019 and May 19, 2019 to collect community and business owners' input. The community survey had 34 questions and received 355 responses. 62 percent of the respondents were year-round residents of Ruidoso, 17 percent were seasonal residents of Ruidoso, 17 percent were Lincoln County residents, and 13 percent were year-round employees of Ruidoso. Additionally, 55 percent of respondents lived or worked in Ruidoso for more than 10 years. The primary age group that took the survey was between 55 and 64 years old. The following shows the demographics of the community survey respondents.

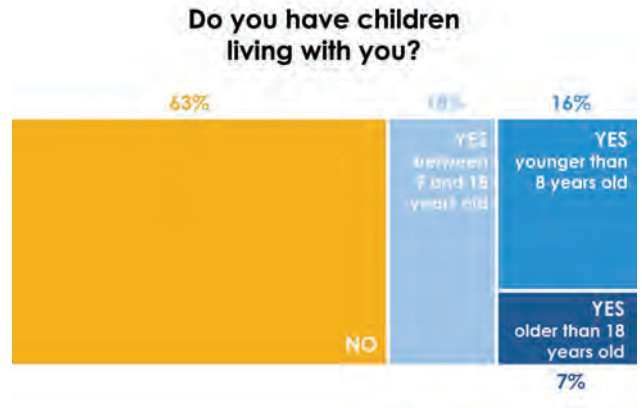
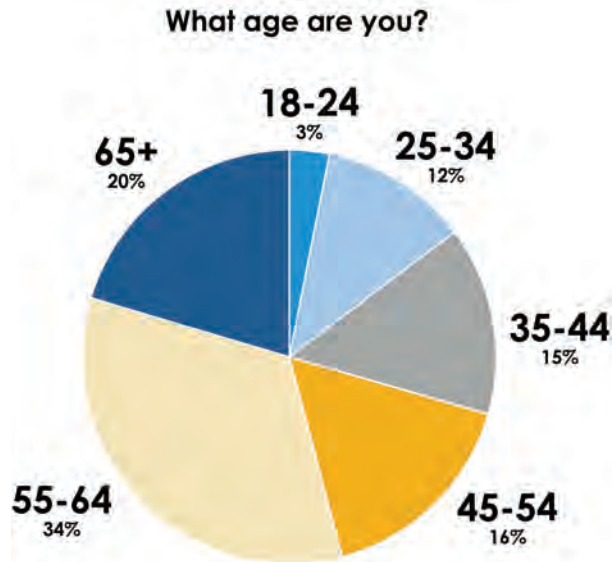


Type of Resident/ Employee



How long have you lived or worked in Ruidoso?





Many of the questions within the community survey were ranking questions. Two examples of the types of ranking questions that were asked are shown on the right.

Key community survey responses and results are noted throughout the Comprehensive Plan in corresponding chapters. To review the full survey responses, please refer to Appendix A.

**Business Survey**

The business survey had 36 questions and received 84 responses. 30 percent of respondents operated a retail business, 29 percent operated a professional service business, and 16 percent operated an accommodation business. Of all the business survey respondents, 66 percent have operated their business more than 10 years and 65 percent of respondents have between 0 and 15 employees in addition to the owner.

The results of this survey influenced the goals, policies, and actions described in the Economic Development Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.

**Example Survey Questions**

**How important are the Village assets to you?**

**Climate and nature**

- Very important
- Important
- Neutral
- Somewhat important
- Not very important

**The following improvements are needed to improve my quality of life:**

**Bike lanes, walking paths, and trails**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree



# COMMUNITY CHARACTER

## OVERVIEW

The Village of Ruidoso is located along United States Route 70 (US 70) and New Mexico State Road 48 (NM 48), 115 miles northeast of Las Cruces and 135 miles northeast of El Paso, Texas in south central New Mexico. The Village is situated on the eastern slope of the Sacramento Mountains, at the foot of Sierra Blanca Peak in Lincoln County. The unincorporated area of Alto is located just north of Ruidoso, and the City of Ruidoso Downs is located due east. Immediately south of the Village is Otero County and the Apache Tribe of the Mescalero Reservation.

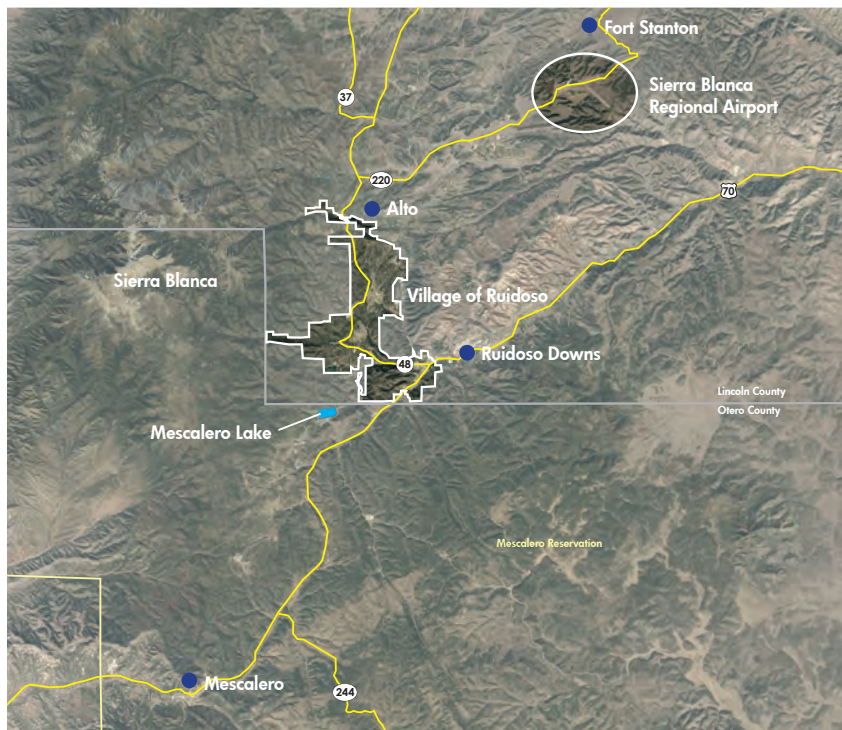
Surrounded by Lincoln National Forest, Ruidoso's natural beauty draws people from all over the United States with a concentration of visitors from New Mexico and Texas, as well as northern Mexico. Its wooded setting, winding mountain roads, rustic architecture, and meandering creeks and river make the scenic mountain village unlike any other place in the state.

### THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

*"It is important that Ruidoso keeps its character."*

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

**FIGURE 3-1. CONTEXT MAP**



## HISTORY

The community's history should be preserved and celebrated. Ruidoso's historical heritage contributes to the distinctive identity and character of the community's past, providing a record of history that is far more intriguing and understandable than the written record. Traces of human habitation date back 1,000 years. These first traces are attributed to the Jornada Mogollon peoples that are said to have inhabited this area from 1000 AD to 1687 AD.<sup>1</sup> Following the Jornada Mogollon peoples, Mescalero Apache tribes settled in Lincoln County in around 1400 AD, using the Sacramento Mountains for hunting and fishing purposes. During the 1540s, the first Spanish explorers crossed New Mexico, but never officially settled the area.

Ruidoso was first established in 1869 by Captain Paul Dowlin, when he constructed a mill along Rio Ruidoso. The town was then named 'Dowlin's Mill.' In 1885, Dowlin's Mill was renamed 'Ruidoso' after the river, Rio Ruidoso, which means noisy river. Ruidoso was incorporated as a Village in 1946.

Initially the economy was based on mining and ranching, however Ruidoso has a strong history rooted in tourism. In the 1930s, when the automobile became more widely available, horse racing, skiing, and other recreational opportunities attracted visitors from throughout the region. Starting in the 1940s and 1950s Ruidoso began to attract visitors from around the country to enjoy its mountainous environment. Upper Canyon was one of the first tourist-oriented areas to develop with small cabins and remains a historic destination for current visitors.

Ski Apache, previously name "Sierra Blanca Ski Resort," opened during Christmas 1961 and as one of the few ski resorts in southern New Mexico, it has boosted the local economy as a popular tourist destination. Since 1963, the resort has been owned and operated by the Mescalero Apache Tribe. In the 1970s, the Village experienced an influx of retirement homes, second homes, and resort-type cabins. This trend continues today, as the local economy is principally based on tourism supported by short-term rentals and recreation.

So many of Ruidoso's population are seasonal, which affects the Village's capacity to provide year-round services and puts demand on housing.

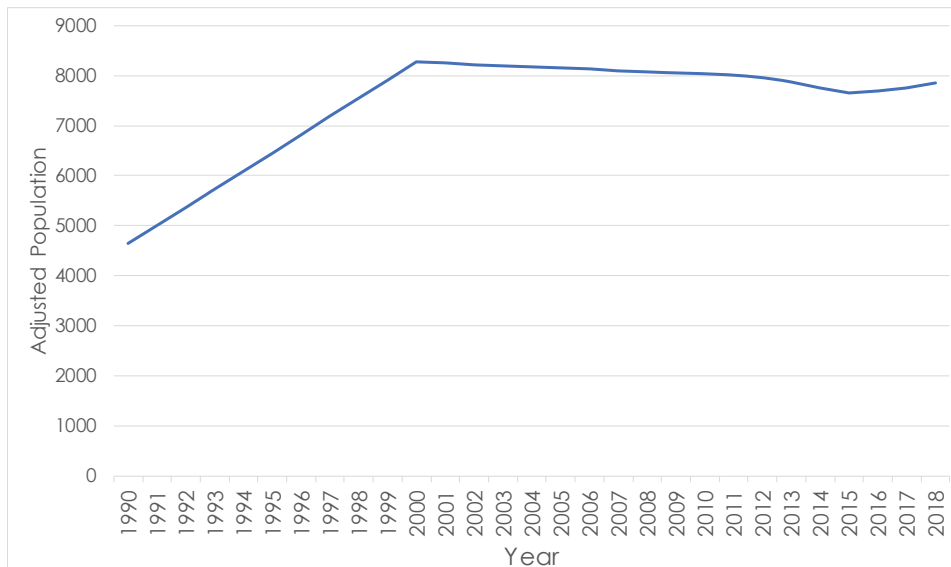
## POPULATION

Ruidoso is the largest municipality in Lincoln County. The Village's population increased from 1990 to 2000, but has decreased since then as shown in Figure 3-2. The chart is adjusted population due to possible inaccuracies in estimated data from the US Census. Ruidoso has the infrastructure for 30,000 people, but has a year-round population of fewer than 8,000. According to the most recent census updates, Ruidoso had a year-round population of 7,848 residents in 2019 based on official 2017 US Census estimates. The Village is a popular destination for tourists so the Village's

<sup>1</sup> Village of Ruidoso Affordable Housing Plan, 2015.

population can increase to 30,000 people during peak tourism months.

**FIGURE 3-2. VILLAGE OF RUIDOSO'S POPULATION**

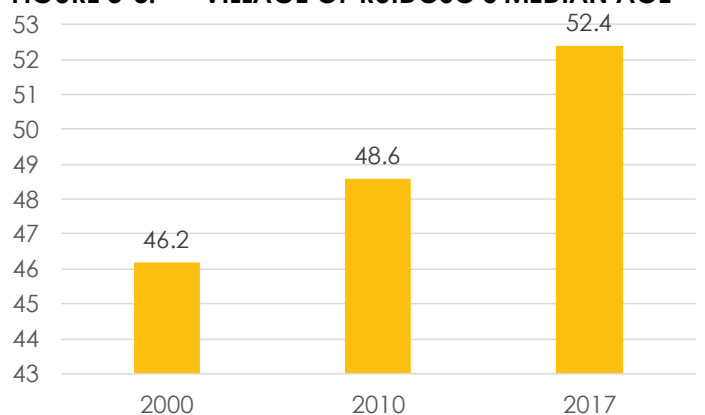


Source: US Census; 2000, 2010, American Community Survey, 2013-2017 5-year estimates

## AGE

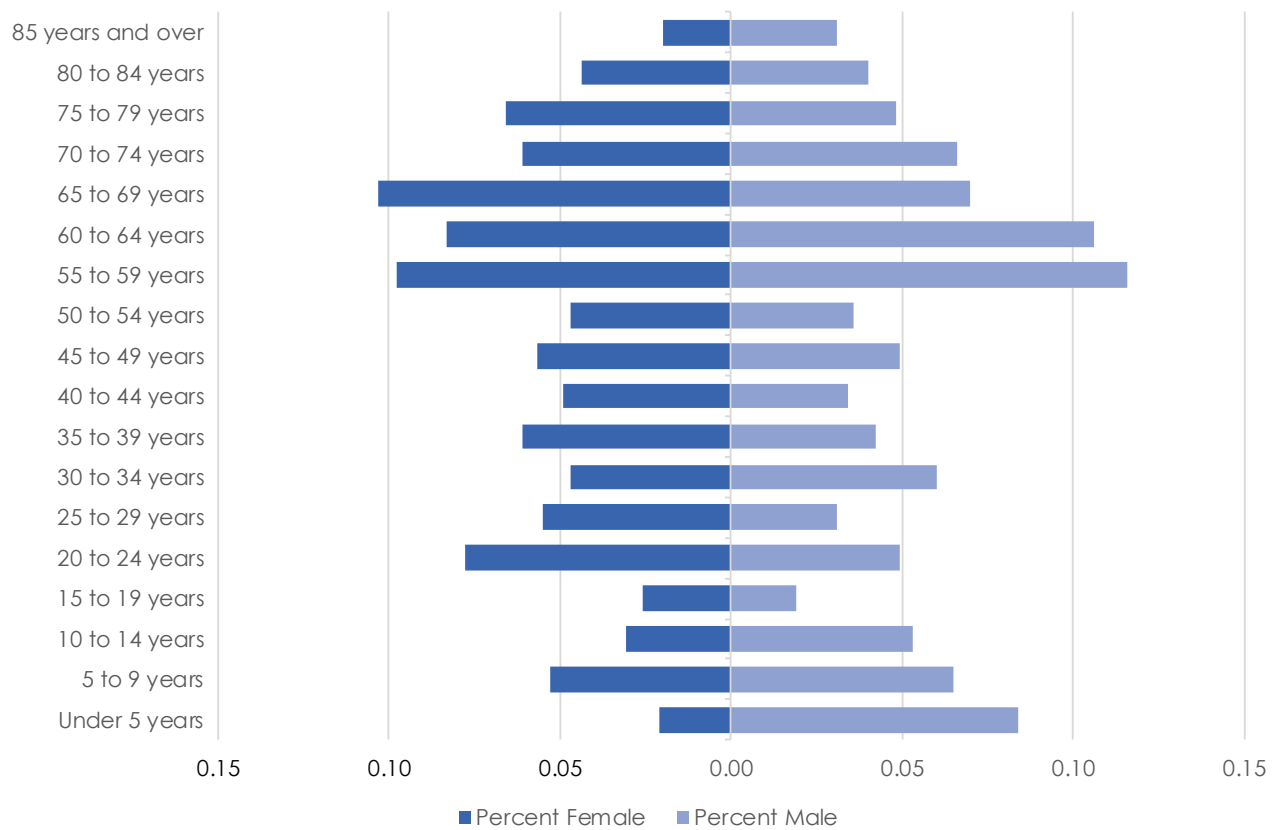
Ruidoso's population is steadily aging as shown in Figure 3-3. The median age has increased by 6.2 years from 2000 to 2017. In 2017, the largest age cohort in Ruidoso was between 55 and 59 years of age at 10.7 percent of the total population (see Figure 3-4). Ruidoso Downs immediately adjacent to Ruidoso has a younger population. The largest age group in 2017 was 30- to 34-year-olds at 12.2 percent. More than 50 percent (51.9 percent) of the population is older than 50 years old in Ruidoso, whereas only 29.6 percent of the population is older than 50 years old in Ruidoso Downs. Millennials (currently 23 to 38 years old) make up approximately 21 percent of Ruidoso's total population in 2017 according to the US Census' four age brackets ranging from 20- to 39-year-olds.

**FIGURE 3-3. VILLAGE OF RUIDOSO'S MEDIAN AGE**



Source: US Census; 2000, 2010, American Community Survey, 2013-2017 5-year estimates

**FIGURE 3-4. VILLAGE OF RUIDOSO AGE RANGE POPULATION IN 2017**

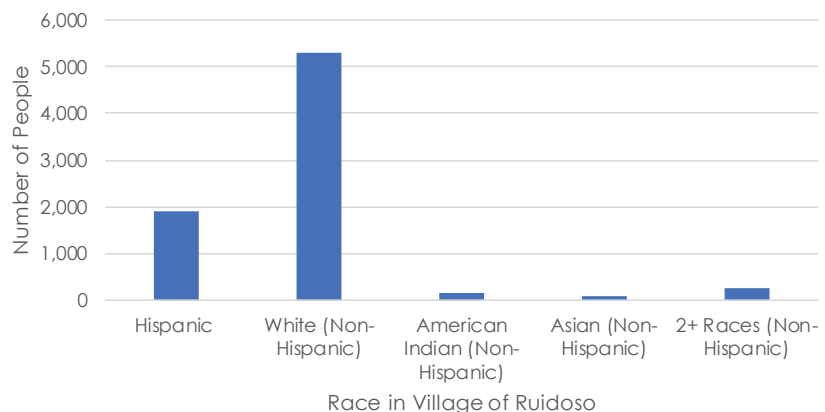


Source: American Community Survey 2017 5-Year Estimates

## RACE, ETHNICITY, NATIONALITY

Ruidoso's population is predominately White (Non-Hispanic) as shown in Figure 3-5.

**FIGURE 3-5. VILLAGE OF RUIDOSO RACE IN 2017**



Source: American Community Survey 2017 5-Year Estimates



# INCOME AND POVERTY

## Income

As shown in Figure 3-6, the median household income in Ruidoso has decreased by \$4,342 between 2010 and 2017 according to the American Community Survey (ACS) during that time. Following this trend, the per capita income, median family income, and mean family income have decreased by \$1,423, \$5,012, and \$11,851, respectively.

**FIGURE 3-6. VILLAGE OF RUIDOSO INCOME**

	New Mexico		Village of Ruidoso	
	2010	2017	2010	2017
<b>ACS 1-Year Estimates</b>				
<i>Median Household Income</i>	\$43,820	\$46,718	\$46,120	\$41,778
<b>ACS 5-Year Estimates</b>				
<i>Per Capita Income</i>	\$22,966	\$25,257	\$27,398	\$25,975
<i>Median Family Income</i>	\$52,565	\$57,436	\$60,156	\$55,144
<i>Mean Family Income</i>	\$66,508	\$76,126	\$79,069	\$67,218

Source: US Census; 2010, American Community Survey, 2013-2017 5-year estimates

## Poverty

Approximately 16 percent of the population in Ruidoso live in poverty. The national average is slightly less, at 14 percent and New Mexico's poverty rate is higher, at 20 percent. There are more females aged 35-44 living in poverty than any other demographic or age range.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, 47 percent of renters and 26 percent of owners are spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing, which compromises their ability to pay for other basic services, such as food and health insurance.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/ruidoso-nm/#economy>

<sup>3</sup> <https://affordablehousingonline.com/housing-search/New-Mexico/Ruidoso>

Eastern New Mexico University–Ruidoso is seeking to meet the needs of more Ruidoso students.

# EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

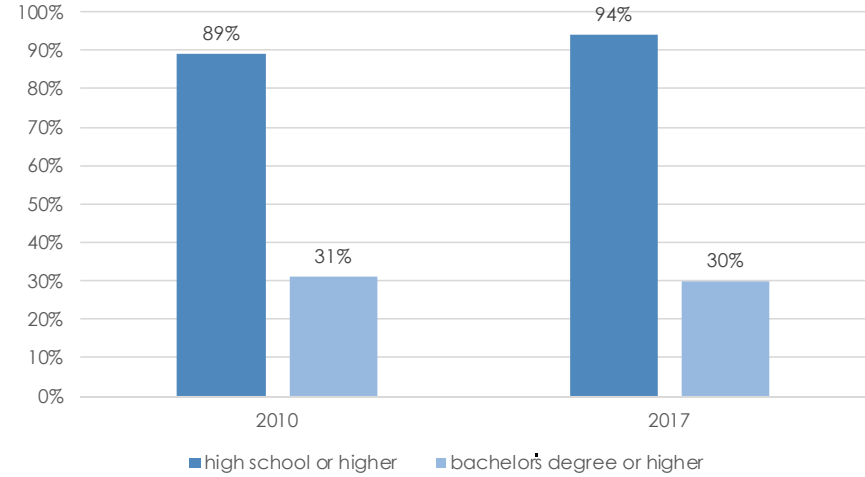
## High School Graduates

As shown in Figure 3-7, the percent of adults who are high school graduates or higher has increased by 5.7 percent within the years of 2000 and 2017. However, the percent of adults who have a bachelor's degree or higher has decreased by 1% in the seven-year span.

## University Enrollment

In 2018, there were 631 students enrolled at Eastern New Mexico University–Ruidoso, which was a slight increase from 2017, when the enrollment was 615 students.<sup>4</sup>

**FIGURE 3-7. VILLAGE OF RUIDOSO'S PERCENTAGE OF ADULTS WHO ARE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES OR HAVE BACHELOR'S DEGREES OR HIGHER**



Source: US Census: 2010, American Community Survey, 2013-2017 5-year estimates

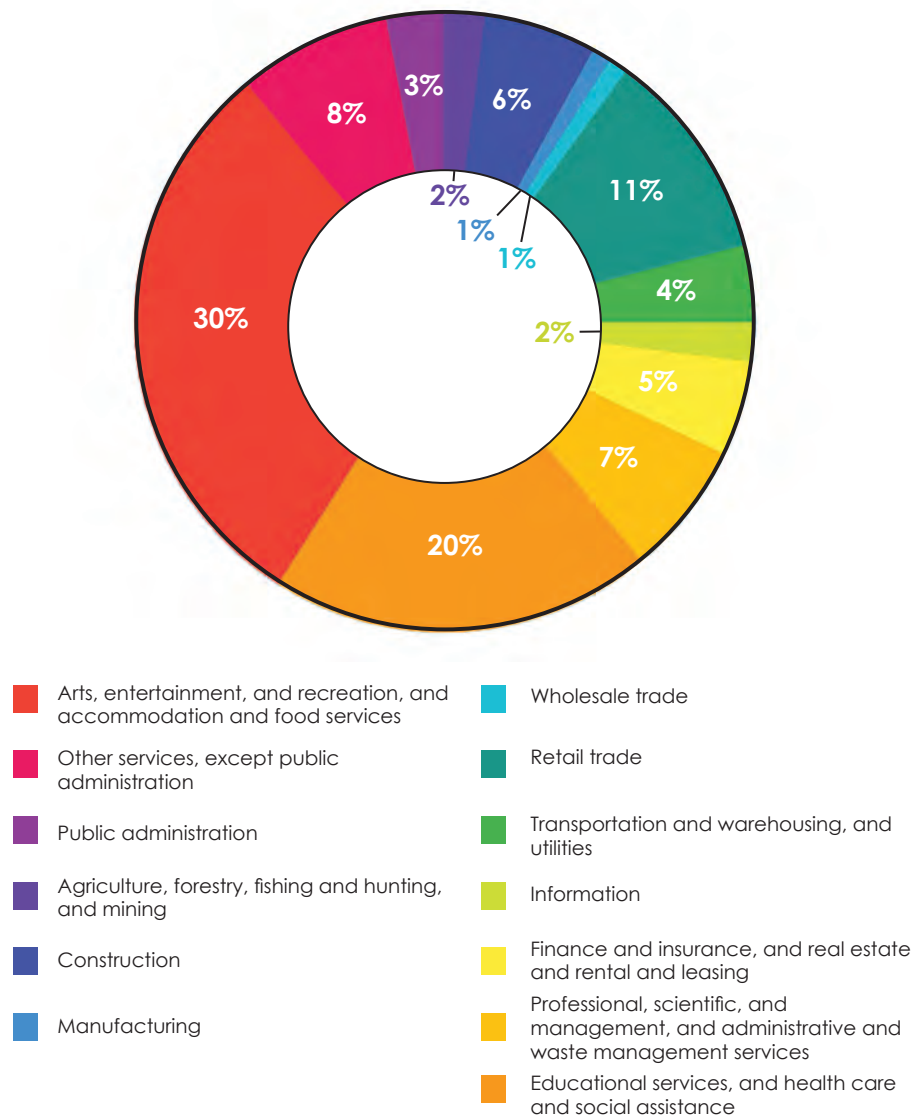
<sup>4</sup> <https://ruidoso.enmu.edu/enrollment-grows/>

## EMPLOYMENT

Thirty percent of Ruidoso residents are employed in the arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services industries, as categorized by the US Census and shown in Figure 3-8. The next largest category is educational services, and health care and social assistance with 20 percent of the of residents employed in these industries.

From discussions with stakeholders, the need for year-round employees is a concern.

**FIGURE 3-8. VILLAGE OF RUIDOSO EMPLOYED RESIDENTS BY INDUSTRY**



Source: US Census: 2010, American Community Survey, 2013-2017 5-year estimates



# NATURAL RESOURCES

## OVERVIEW

Ruidoso's natural setting and abundant resources are so much of what make it special. They are the assets that drive the Village's tourism economy and attract residents as well as visitors. Lincoln National Forest, Sierra Blanca, Moon Mountain, Rio Ruidoso, Alto and Grindstone lakes, and Carrizo, Cedar, Eagle, and Gavilan Canyon creeks are the Village's prime assets. This chapter describes Ruidoso's natural setting and resources and how to protect them.

## CURRENT CONDITIONS

### **Mountains and Forests**

Village forests are an integral part of the natural beauty of the area. Ordinances recognize the value of forested land and require protection of trees in developments and retention of the forested aspect throughout the Village.

- **Lincoln National Forest.** The Village of Ruidoso sits within the Smokey Bear District of Lincoln National Forest under the jurisdiction of the US Forest Service at an elevation of approximately 6,900 feet. The district's elevation ranges from 5,400 feet to 11,981 feet. The forest is home to a range of:<sup>1</sup>
  - Plant life: pine, juniper, spruce, fir, oak, maple, aspen, and high-elevation grasses
  - Wildlife: predominantly deer, elk, black bears, and smaller species such as squirrels and rabbits, and more than 200 species of birds

Lincoln National Forest encompasses the Sacramento Mountains, including Sierra Blanca, the White Mountain Wilderness, Capitan Mountains Wilderness, and numerous outdoor recreation opportunities.<sup>2</sup> It is also home to the popular Bonito Lake and Bonito Creek. In June 2012, the Little Bear Fire burned 44,330 acres (35,339 on Lincoln National Forest land).<sup>3</sup> The fire resulted in watershed damage and closure of Bonito Lake while it is being repaired.

### THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

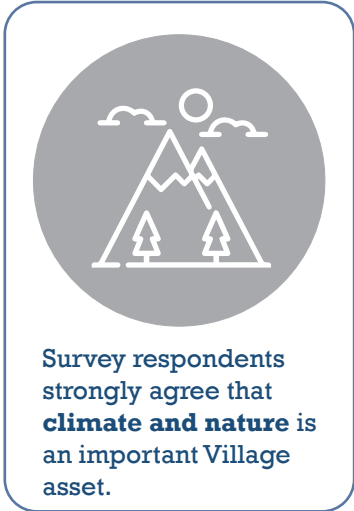
*"Keep Ruidoso the beautiful natural place it is."*

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

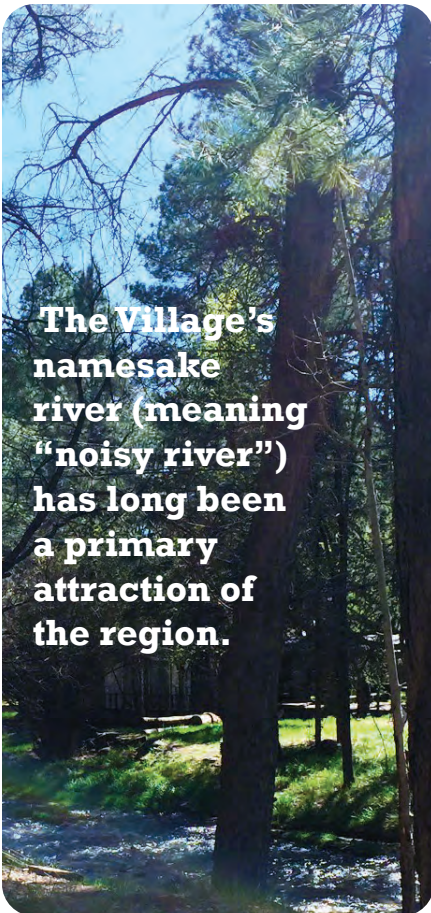
<sup>1</sup> <https://www.discoverruidoso.com/lincoln-national-forest>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.fs.fed.us/ivm/index.html>

<sup>3</sup> Little Bear Fire Summary Report, USDA, September 2013.



Comprehensive Plan Community Survey



Source: DiscoverRuidoso.com

- **Fort Stanton–Snowy River Cave National Conservation Area.** The Village's Sierra Blanca Regional Airport lies within the Fort Stanton–Snowy River Cave National Conservation Area (NCA), which is managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).<sup>4</sup> The NCA was established to conserve the historic and natural resources of Fort Stanton and its surrounding area. The Fort Stanton Cave is 31 miles long and the largest cave managed by the BLM. Snowy River, a passage within Fort Stanton Cave, is the longest cave formation in the world.
- **Sierra Blanca Mountains.** Sierra Blanca (White Mountain) peak dominates Ruidoso's western skyline, rising to an elevation of 11,981 feet.<sup>5</sup> As the southernmost 11,000-foot-plus peak in the US, Sierra Blanca is home to Ski Apache. The surrounding Sierra Blanca range is a sub-range within the larger Sacramento Range that extends 85 miles from Nogal in the north to the communities of Timberon and Piñon southeast of Alamogordo.
- **Moon Mountain.** Moon Mountain has a peak elevation of 7,335 feet. It is due east of the Village boundaries (see Figure 4-1). The property is owned by the New Mexico State Land Office. The Village will expand recreational opportunities on the site under a 25-year lease that expires in 2042. According to the Moon Mountain Recreation Master Plan (described in more detail in the Parks and Recreation chapter), the quality of the property for recreation, watershed management and wildfire protection could be improved with fuels management and restrictions on hunting and motorized vehicles.<sup>6</sup>

**Bodies of Water**

- **Rio Ruidoso.** Rio Ruidoso extends more than 30 miles from its headwaters on the flanks of Sierra Blanca Peak a few miles west of the Village. The Village's namesake river has long been a primary attraction of the region, resulting in development, both residential and commercial, along its banks. Carrying runoff from the surrounding mountains, and often subject to flash flooding during the summer monsoon season, the river's water level can vary significantly, and periodically jumps its banks. In 2008, a 100-year flood caused significant damage when runoff exceeded the defined channel and caused extensive damage to bridges, roads, and adjacent properties along the river. This event was declared a disaster. As has been the case since development along the river began, various methods have been implemented to control the river and keep it in its banks. These include ill-planned quick fixes such as gabion or shotcrete bank lining (used on almost four miles of riverbank) and adding or rebuilding private timber, block, and stone retaining walls that have caused the river to lose its natural character and begin significantly incising. The Village has recently used more naturalistic approaches and has committed to making improvements that are sensitive to the river health. Recent improvements include boulder grade control structures and armored, but vegetated bank protection to the channel and riverbank, and fish habitat structures at Two Rivers Park at the junction of Rio Ruidoso and Carrizo Creek. These were based on recommendations in the Rio Ruidoso Assessment (described later in this chapter).

4 <https://www.blm.gov/visit/fort-stanton-snowy-river-cave-nca>

5 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sierra\\_Blanca\\_\(New\\_Mexico\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sierra_Blanca_(New_Mexico)); <https://www.paulitas-newmexico.com/love-southwest-sierra-blanca-mountains-part-1/>

6 Village of Ruidoso Moon Mountain Recreation Plan, 2019

- **Alto Lake.** Located on the northern edge of the Village, Alto Lake is a man-made 17-acre off-channel storage reservoir that is periodically stocked with fish.<sup>7</sup> The reservoir was originally built in 1964 to provide a source for drinking water to the communities of Ruidoso and Capitan. Currently, the reservoir's primary purpose is for storage of water for use at the Village of Ruidoso's Alto Crest Water Treatment Plant; it no longer provides water for Capitan. The lake is a popular destination, especially during summer months and holiday weekends. It offers parking, restrooms, picnic areas, and non-motorized boating (permit required). The lake is surrounded by a 2-mile trail that follows Eagle Creek and passes two waterfalls (the trail is a recent improvement that was recommended in the Rio Ruidoso Assessment).
- **Grindstone Lake.** Located near the southwest edge of the Village, Grindstone Lake is an off-channel storage reservoir impounded by a concrete dam with a primary purpose of storing water for treatment at the Grindstone Water Treatment Plant. The lake is a water supply for residents of the Village, and the lake and surrounding property is an important area for recreation. The reservoir is stocked with rainbow trout and occasionally other fish. Non-motorized boats and trolling motors are allowed with a permit.<sup>8</sup> Wildlife, including bears, mule deer, elk, as well as many birds of prey are commonly seen from the lake's wildlife viewing area. Its recreational opportunities are described in more detail in the Parks and Recreation chapter.
- **Carrizo Creek.** Flowing from Mescalero Lake (south of Ruidoso), this perennial creek meets Rio Ruidoso at Two Rivers Park. In 2010, Carrizo Creek had the best fish habitat of all the streams in the area, including the Rio Ruidoso.<sup>9</sup> This prime fish habitat lies within a wide floodplain between Grindstone Canyon Road and Tomahawk Road. It serves as a hatchery and nursery for Brown Trout; as such barb-less hooks and careful catch and release is required.<sup>10 11</sup> It also has some damaged areas due to culverts, floodplain modifications, and grade modifications. However, the Rio Ruidoso Assessment notes that damage can be easily repaired.
- **Cedar Creek.** This perennial creek runs north-south through Paradise Canyon (parallel to Cedar Creek Drive throughout much of town) and flows into Rio Ruidoso at Midtown.<sup>12</sup> It is a popular recreation area with picnic areas and three campsites. The creek does not have enough water in most parts to sustain fish habitat. It has been impacted by development and stormwater runoff.
- **Eagle Creek.** Eagle Creek is perennial in the upper portion of the North Fork Eagle watershed,<sup>13</sup> and in the South Fork Eagle Creek watershed below Eagle Lake. Eagle Creek is ephemeral below the confluence of the North and South Forks.<sup>14 15</sup>

7 <https://www.ruidosoparksandrec.com/alto-lake>

8 <https://www.ruidosoparksandrec.com/grindstone-lake-trail-system>

9 Clothier, Van and Vrooman, Steve, Rio Ruidoso Assessment, 2010

10 <https://www.discoverruidoso.com/blog/fishing-in-ruidoso>

11 <https://www.visitruidoso.com/listing/carrizo-creek/>

12 Clothier, Van and Vrooman, Steve, Rio Ruidoso Assessment, 2010

13 Matherene, A.M., Myers, N.C., and McCoy, K.J., Hydrogeology of Eagle Creek Basin and Effects of Groundwater Pumping on Streamflow, 1969-2009, U.S. Geological Survey Scientific Investigations Report 2010-5205, Revised Nov. 2010

14 Territorial Engineer for the Territory of New Mexico, Report on the Hondo Hydrographic survey, 909

15 Mourant, W. A., Water Resources and Geology of the Rio Hondo Drainage Basin, Chaves, Lincoln, & Otero Counties: NM State Engineer Technical Report 28, 1963



Source: Mark Stambaugh

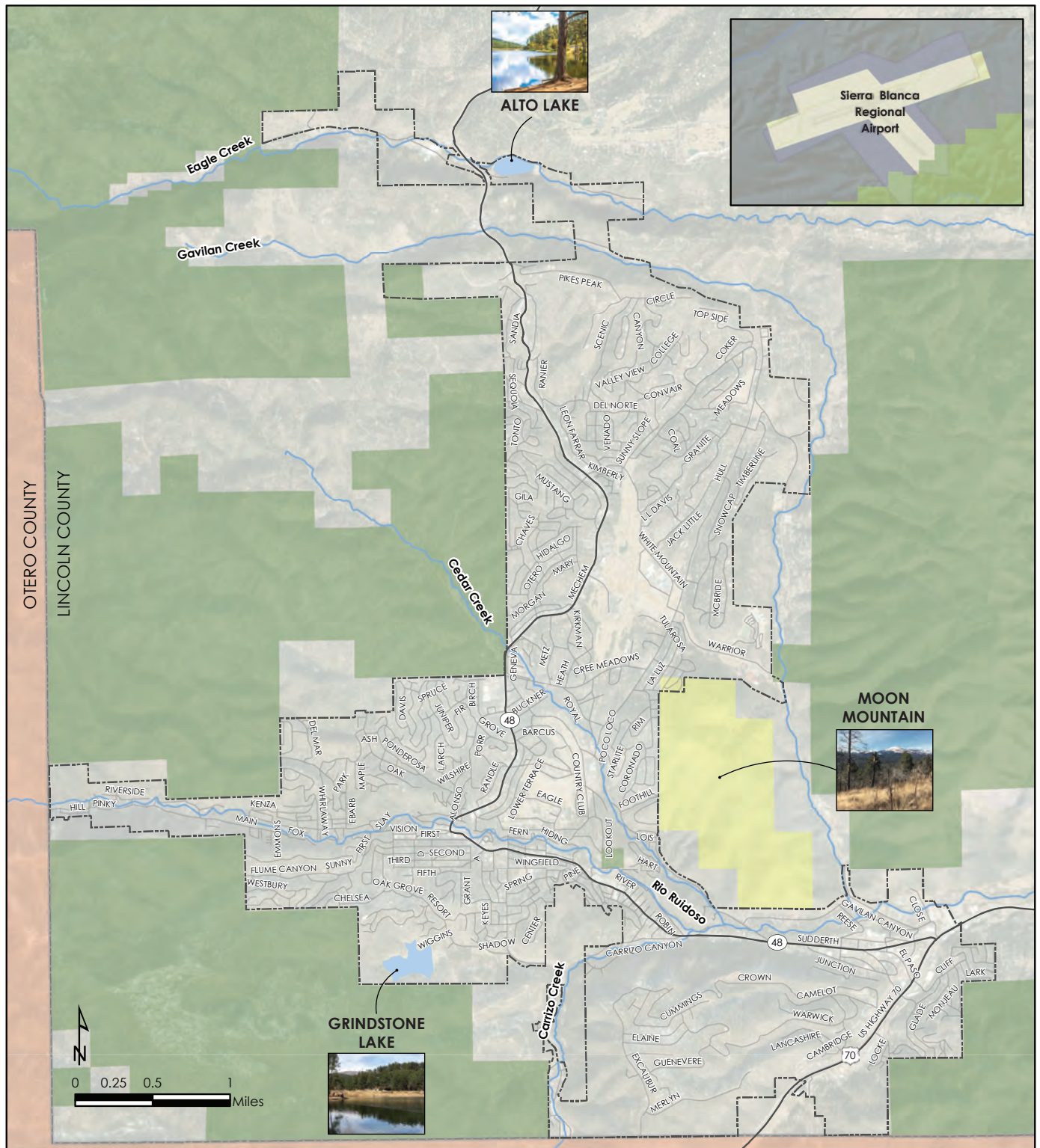
*Alto Lake and perimeter trail.*

### THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

*"Please don't over-develop our lakes."*

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

**FIGURE 4-1. NATURAL RESOURCES**



SOURCE: VILLAGE OF RUIDOSO, 2019

**LEGEND**

- VILLAGE OF RUIDOSO
- RIVERS AND CREEKS
- ROADS
- LAKES
- BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
- LINCOLN NATIONAL FOREST
- MESCALERO TRIBE
- STATE



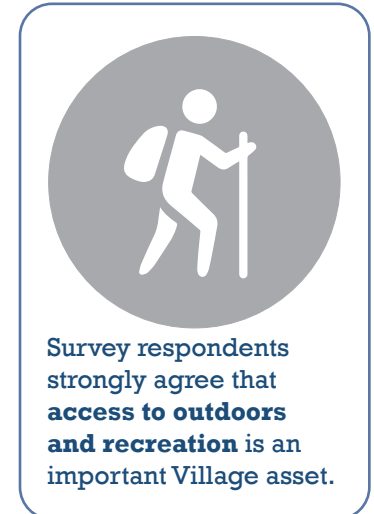
During periods of high runoff, the creek provides water to Alto Reservoir, and a bypass channel also conveys water around Alto Lake. Eagle Creek and the North Fork Eagle Creek wellfield are Ruidoso's primary source of water, providing approximately 70 percent of the Village's water.

- **Gavilan Canyon Creek.** This is a mostly intermittent creek located south of Eagle Creek and north of Cedar Creek, mostly outside of the Village limits except for a stretch south of Warrior Drive.<sup>16</sup> It also suffers from nearby development, runoff, illegal ponds, and trash. It runs near Ruidoso High School, which is above a natural spring (Bog Spring). The Village recently created a wetland area in the Bog Spring drainage next to Ruidoso High School that allows Gavilan Canyon Creek's natural ecosystem to work and provides a space for an outdoor education on watershed management and wetland restoration.

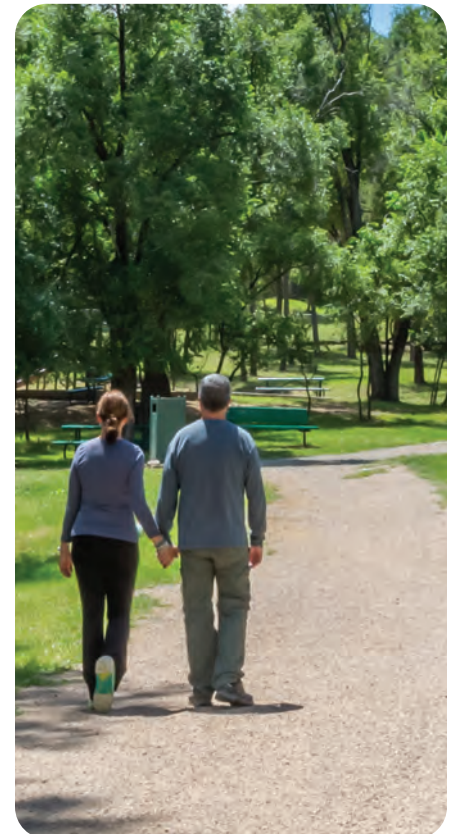
## CONSERVATION EFFORTS UNDERWAY

- **Wildland-Urban Interface.** Developed and partially developed areas in or near forestland, referred to as the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI), make up much of the Ruidoso area. They are particularly at risk of damage from fire. Development restrictions and vegetation management, described in the Hazard Mitigation chapter, are important to the protection of these areas.
- **Timber Management.** A Fuels Management Plan is currently being prepared by the New Mexico State Forestry Department and the Village of Ruidoso Forestry Department that will determine priorities for both forest health improvement and fire mitigation opportunities within Moon Mountain Recreation Area.
- **Environmental Stewardship.** The local non-profit organization, EcoServants, offers a year-long AmeriCorps program for youth to learn and practice environmental stewardship. The program addresses areas affected by the Little Bear Fire, promotes land ethic and invasive plant management, and repairs and builds miles of new trails every year.
- **Toss No Mas. Keep Ruidoso Beautiful** hosts an annual river clean up and cleans 7 miles along Ruidoso River, Carrizo Creek, Eagle Creek, Alto Lake, Grindstone Lake, and Bog Springs waterways.
- **Wayfinding.** The US Forest Service has initiated a Wayfinding Plan to help recreationists locate trails, natural resources, and other destinations on US Forest land. The Village should initiate a comprehensive wayfinding plan that guides visitors to the many natural attractions that Ruidoso and the region have to offer to help promote their safe and sustainable use.

<sup>16</sup> Clothier, Van and Vrooman, Steve, Rio Ruidoso Assessment, 2010



Comprehensive Plan Community Survey



Source: DiscoverRuidoso.com

*Access to Ruidoso's trails is a draw for locals and visitors.*

The Northern Sacramento Mountain Watershed and Forest Restoration Strategy identifies Ruidoso as one of the high priority areas for the protection of watershed and forestland .

## EXISTING PLANS AND POLICIES

- **Rio Ruidoso Assessment, 2010.** Stream Dynamics was contracted to perform the assessment of river conditions, cited throughout this chapter, as part of a consent agreement for construction of the Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant. The assessment reviewed the health of Rio Ruidoso and four tributaries: Carrizo Creek, Cedar Creek, Eagle Creek, and Gavilan Canyon Creek and recommended projects to improve the river. The findings from this assessment have been noted in the descriptions of the bodies of water above and its recommendations include ways to improve the floodplain, fish habitat, filtration, bank stability, river crossings, and the water table, and prevent flooding, runoff, and damage from adjacent grazing and development. The Village should consider acquiring property adjacent to its waterways to allow for waterway restoration, trail and river access, and flood control.
- **New Mexico Statewide Natural Resources Assessment, Strategy and Response Plan, 2010.** According to the statewide plan by New Mexico Forestry, Ruidoso rates high as one of the most important habitat areas in the state with high fish and wildlife priority. It rates medium for wildlife occurrence, medium/high for rare plant occurrence, medium for Threatened and Endangered Species Potential Habitat, high for The Nature Conservancy's Conservation Areas, and high for Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy's Key Areas. The plan also notes Ruidoso has a mixture of medium, medium/high and high ratings for its Forest Sub-model's Fish and Wildlife Priority, which is defined as forest area that provides habitat for plants and animals. The plan addresses the economic development potential associated with the state's natural resources. Ruidoso ranks high in economic potential, biomass availability, and recreation; it ranks medium to medium/high in timber availability, range production, and accessibility. In terms of forest health and susceptibility to insect and disease outbreaks, Ruidoso has a mix of low/medium, medium, and medium/high pockets.
- **Village of Ruidoso Source Water Protection Plan, 2014.** This plan was prepared by the Village of Ruidoso in conjunction with the New Mexico Environment Department Drinking Water Bureau in 2014. The plan assembles valuable information about Ruidoso's hydrogeology and water sources into a single document that serves as an important reference. The plan aims to provide a framework for protecting sources of drinking water from contamination.
- **Northern Sacramento Mountain Watershed and Forest Restoration Strategy, 2018.** Written by a subcommittee of the Greater Ruidoso Area Wildland-Urban Interface Working Group and the New Mexico Forest and Watershed Restoration Institute, the strategy focused on reducing fuels and restoring forest health in the Northern Sacramento Mountains. The Working Group is comprised of the US Forest Service, New Mexico State Forestry Division, Mescalero Apache Tribe, Village of Ruidoso Forestry Department, Upper Hondo Soil and Water Conservation District, Carrizozo Soil and Water Conservation District, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Little Bear Forest Reform Committee, Lincoln County Land and Natural Resources

### THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

*"Preserve our natural region."*

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

Advisory Committee, Lincoln County, EcoServants, Eastern New Mexico University—Ruidoso, and South Central Mountain Resource Conservation and Development Council. The strategy identifies Ruidoso as one of the high priority areas for the protection of watershed and forestland by:

- Reducing fuels
- Restoring forest health with forest treatments such as chemicals, controlled burns, thinning, and maintenance
- Establishing long-term partnerships to fund raise and raise awareness with the general public
- Creating a wood products industry that can make use of the forest's removed fuel/materials

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

“Living in nature's playground,” Ruidoso residents are surrounded by nature at its most beautiful and inspiring. The mountains, forests, and waterways are main attractions for tourists and residents; they make Ruidoso special. Protection of, and access to these resources should be paramount. In keeping with Sections 54-132 Residential Terrain Management, 54-132.1 Commercial Terrain Management, 54-133 Forest Management, and 54-135 Landscaping of Ruidoso's Code of Ordinances, all development, renovations, and roadway improvements can protect the waterways, forest, and natural environment, minimize erosion and the scarring of hillsides, control stormwater runoff, and maintain habitat. The following goals, policies, and actions should be implemented to maintain and enhance Ruidoso's natural resources:

### THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

“ I love the natural mountain beauty, the pines, the deer, the small town and friendly community.”

Comprehensive Plan Community Meeting

# Goal 1.

Ruidoso's watershed and waterways are healthy, clean, and thriving ecosystems.

**POLICY 1.1.** *Prioritize the maintenance, enhancement, and protection of Ruidoso's watershed, river, and creeks' health, wildlife habitat, ecosystems, and natural beauty when allocating Village resources and reviewing development proposals.*

**ACTION 1.1.A.** Create a watershed-based plan to ensure that the health of Ruidoso's watershed is prioritized in the Village's Capital Improvement Plan. Work with the state of New Mexico to make sure the Watershed Plan complies with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards, identify watershed areas, and establish metrics to protect each watershed area.

**ACTION 1.1.B.** Treat stormwater before reaching the river and creeks following the EPA's best management practices. Update ordinances to minimize the impacts of open culverts draining directly into waterways so waterways are not negatively impacted by development and street runoff and they are able to continue to be beautiful, natural resources.

**ACTION 1.1.C.** Update development standards to ensure new construction and renovation are not detrimentally impacting the waterways. Revise the Development Standards' Landscaping requirements (Sec. 54-135), the Grading, Drainage and Development Plan requirements (Sec. 54.283(d)(1)d1), and Drainage and Storm Sewer requirements (Sec. 54-285) so they clearly state how property owners should properly manage stormwater.

**ACTION 1.1.D.** Renovate existing infrastructure to mitigate impacts to waterways. Existing infrastructure (especially culverts/bridges) shall be renovated and gabion baskets should be removed to improve the health of Ruidoso's river and creeks. Implement grade control structures in waterways to prevent further incising.

**ACTION 1.1.E.** Seek state and federal river restoration funding, including the New Mexico River Conservation and Restoration Fund to implement capital projects.

**ACTION 1.1.F.** Conduct an inventory of all parcels in or abutting bodies of water, sensitive watershed, or waterways to determine which areas are undevelopable or unsafe for development per FEMA and flood plain. Identify riverbank and creek areas for acquisition.

**ACTION 1.1.G.** Create an acquisition plan to acquire undevelopable areas to allow for restoration, trail access, and flood control.

**ACTION 1.1.H.** Establish a public education campaign about these sensitive areas, how the public can help protect them and benefit from their protection.

### THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

*"Create connections to public lands."*

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

## Goal 2. Ruidoso's forests are healthy and support abundant ecosystems and wildlife.

**POLICY 2.1.** *Continue to work and collaborate with the US Forest Service, New Mexico State Forestry Department, Bureau of Land Management, the National Forest Foundation, the New Mexico State Land Office, Mescalero Apache Tribe, Bureau of Indian Affairs, the South Central Mountain Resource Conservation and Development Council, the Water Conservation Districts, and service organizations, such as EcoServants to maintain, protect and manage forests as a top priority.*

**ACTION 2.1.A.** Adopt and uphold the Fuels Management Plan for Moon Mountain prepared by the Village of Ruidoso Forestry Department. This plan, along with the Timber Management Plan prepared by the New Mexico State Forestry Department will determine priorities for both forest health improvement and fire mitigation. The New Mexico State Land Office will need to approve any vegetative manipulation project on Moon Mountain according to the lease agreement.

**ACTION 2.1.B.** Create and adopt a Trails Master Plan that specifies careful development and maintenance of trails that are sensitive to forest health.

**ACTION 2.1.C.** Expand a public education campaign about these sensitive areas, how the public can help protect them and benefit from their protection.

## Goal 3. Ruidoso's natural resources, habitat, and wildlife are protected and restored.

**POLICY 3.1.** *Prioritize the maintenance and enhancement of natural resources and coordinate development projects within the Village to mitigate impacts to natural resources.*

**ACTION 3.1.A.** Where possible, modify project activities that have the potential of negatively impacting sensitive plants, wildlife, and habitats to mitigate undesirable impacts.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

"Wildlife control needs to be addressed."

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

**ACTION 3.1.B.** Create a development review checklist that verifies new construction, renovation, zoning/land use changes, or roadway/utility improvements on public or private land follow the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and ordinance requirements.

**ACTION 3.1.C.** Increase regular enforcement of properties so the requirements of these sections are held to these standards throughout their lifetime.

**POLICY 3.2.** Uphold the Village's new wildlife feeding ban and continue to improve management of deer and elk population in the Village.

**ACTION 3.2.A.** Educate visitors and residents with dual language outreach about the health risks of feeding the animals and the driving risks they pose.

**ACTION 3.2.B.** Post signs along the roads warning drivers of the potential for wildlife crossing.

**POLICY 3.3.** Improve wayfinding to promote natural resource appreciation.

**ACTION 3.3.A.** Create a Wayfinding Plan for Ruidoso's and surrounding natural resources coordinated with the US Forest Service's wayfinding plan in place.

**ACTION 3.3.B.** Coordinate natural resource wayfinding with outdoor recreation destinations and commercial destinations.

**POLICY 3.4.** Improve habitat for non-nuisance, native wildlife, fish, and plants.

**ACTION 3.4.A.** Continue to utilize funding from National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grants, USFWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Big Game Habitat Enhancement Fund, Habitat Management and Access Validation Fund, Game Protection Fund, Habitat Stamp Program Fund, Native Plant Society of New Mexico grants, and EPA 319 funding to fund habitat protection and wildlife management.

**ACTION 3.4.B.** Improve habitat conditions while conducting development or improvements on public or private lands.

**ACTION 3.4.C.** Create list of habitat types that are decreasing at the landscape scale. Prioritize improvements of these habitats on public or private lands.

# Goal 4.

Environmental stewardship is embraced by the Ruidoso Community.

**POLICY 4.1.** *Promote environmental volunteerism and stewardship to all Ruidoso community members.*

**ACTION 4.1.A.** Improve communications with Ruidoso residents, businesses, and visitors about the benefits of maintaining sensitive habitats and the detriments of behavior that harms the natural environment and wildlife.

**ACTION 4.1.B.** Create a clearing house where all stewardship and volunteer opportunities are distributed so Ruidoso's residents, employees, business owners, and visitors can easily become involved.

**ACTION 4.1.C.** Initiate a campaign to promote environmental stewardship, volunteerism, and fire safety that involves family-friendly, community-building events to build community, stewardship, and awareness.

**POLICY 4.2.** *Promote nature programs for youth.*

**ACTION 4.2.A.** Build on EcoServants' and AmeriCorps' success at fostering environmental stewardship among Ruidoso's youth by improving access to trails and ensuring trails are environmentally sensitive.

**ACTION 4.2.B.** Seek funding from the State's new Outdoor Equity Fund to support nature programs for youth.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.hcn.org/articles/social-justice-new-mexico-lawmakers-focus-on-equity-in-the-outdoors>

WELCOME TO  
**WINGFIELD PARK**

Events Meadow & Trail

Park Hours: Dawn to Dusk

Parking in Designated Areas Only

Bathrooms Available

Village of Ruidoso Parks & Recreation

575-257-5030    [parksrec@ruidoso-nm.gov](mailto:parksrec@ruidoso-nm.gov)





# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## OVERVIEW

The focus of this chapter is to describe the local economy and how the Village can strategically prepare for land use and infrastructure investments that will support economic development across the Village. This chapter provides an overview of economic development trends, Village demographics, Ruidoso's industry strengths, and anticipated areas of employment growth. Recommendations are based on data research and interviews with economic development and tourism stakeholders, business owners, government officials, and real estate professionals across the community.

### Process

A separate economic analysis and recommended strategies document was prepared by Bridge Economics as a supplement to the Comprehensive Plan. The process and findings of that report are summarized here. The full report can be found in Appendix B. The philosophy behind this work is an economic development strategy devised by and for the community it serves. While looking at national and state trends and conducting a data analysis are important to determining trends, assets, and challenges, soliciting input from local businesses and community members gives this analysis much-needed context. To identify Ruidoso's economic development priorities, the following five steps were followed:

- **Examine national and state trends.** At the first site visit, the consultant team discussed with stakeholders the current national trends driving economic development and how they align with local development priorities and trends.
- **Benchmark and compare the Village to its peers.** Quantitative data regarding the community profile and demographics established a foundation of existing conditions. This contrast with peer communities provided context for assessing Ruidoso's strengths.
- **Conduct Discussions.** For a strategy to be inclusive – for the community, by the community – diverse voices and perspectives must be brought to the table. Extensive outreach in person via five stakeholder meetings, a digital survey, and community feedback on preliminary recommendations at an open house provided a variety of perspectives.

### THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

“We need to consider the residents that live and work here not just the tourists.”

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey



Many Midtown businesses are owned and operated by young entrepreneurs.

- **Identify Key Themes.** It is essential that areas for investment and growth are built upon shared principles and community values that are conveyed through survey responses and stakeholder meeting feedback. Consistent messages create key themes of focus and direction that are unique to the community.
- **Develop Goals and Objectives.** By developing a “playbook” of direction that includes priority goals and objectives, the Village can identify where they should focus time and monetary resources to most effectively foster business growth and expansion.

## CURRENT CONDITIONS

The key findings of the Economic Development Strategy prepared concurrently with this Comprehensive Plan shows some concerning trends in demographics and minimal investment in new construction. More recent trends discussed with the community indicate that these trends are reversing. Proactive efforts of the Village have created an environment where young, entrepreneurial natives of Ruidoso have returned home to energize their family businesses and/or start their own.

### Demographics

As described in the Community Character Chapter, Ruidoso is located in Lincoln County, New Mexico and is the largest community in the county and the key economic center. Ruidoso’s demographics were compared to ten western communities to which Ruidoso aspires, including: Aspen, Colorado; Bozeman, Montana; Buena Vista, Colorado; Durango, Colorado; Farmington, New Mexico; Moab, Utah; Park City, Utah; Sedona, Arizona; Taos, New Mexico, and Telluride, Colorado. The following outlines the key takeaways from the comparison:

- **Declining Population.** A village of approximately 7,800 full-time residents, Ruidoso has experienced a slight population decline (3 percent) since 2013. At the same time, nine of the above-mentioned communities have added residents, averaging a combined growth rate of 4 percent; the US as a whole has experienced a 3 percent growth rate.
- **Older Population.** Ruidoso’s median age is 52.4, ranking it as the second oldest population among the benchmark cities, just behind Sedona (58.7). The US average median age is 37.8.
- **Millennial Talent.** As communities outline their future economic development priorities, millennial talent is a coveted resource; they are the future workforce. Millennials make up 17 percent of the Village’s residents – 4 percent less than the US average but on par with Taos and double that of Sedona. In a positive direction for the Village, Ruidoso’s millennial population is up 14.7 percent since 2013.
- **Racial and Ethnic Makeup.** More than nine in ten Ruidoso residents identify as white, while the Village’s Hispanic population is fast-growing – up 14 percent since 2013. This is a positive aspect because communities that are diverse are more likely to attract young people. The growing Hispanic population counter-balances the aging demographic.
- **Immigrant Residents.** Nearly 10 percent of Ruidoso’s residents are foreign-born, ranking fifth among the benchmark cities.

## Income

As shown in the Employment section of the Community Character Chapter, Ruidoso's employed residents are employed in tourist-serving jobs. Ruidoso's residents have experienced ups and downs as it relates to median household income, family income, and individual wages as a community that relies predominantly on tourism to fuel its local economy. The following are key takeaways about Ruidoso's income metrics:

- **Median Household Income.** Ruidoso's median household income has declined 12 percent since 2013 to approximately \$42,000. At the same time, the US average increased 8.7 percent to \$57,652. The Village's median household income is nearly 27 percent less than the US average.
- **Per Capita Income.** Ruidoso's per capita income of \$25,975 ranks eighth among the benchmark cities, on par with Farmington, New Mexico and Buena Vista, Colorado.
- **Average Family Income.** Ruidoso's average family income has also decreased 5.2 percent since 2013 to \$70,884, while the US average grew 11 percent to \$95,031. Ruidoso's average family income is 25 percent less than the US average.
- **Individual Wages: Men versus Women.** Men working full-time in Ruidoso earn approximately \$42,000 annually – \$10,000 more than women in the Village (\$32,000).
- **Poverty Levels.** Ruidoso's poverty levels are below the US average: 7.7 percent of all families live below the poverty line and 10.8 percent of those with children. This ranks the Village among the middle of the benchmark communities.

## Educational Attainment

To compete in today's knowledge economy, talent matters. Educational metrics offer a look into capabilities of a community. Six in ten Ruidoso residents have a degree of some level – Associate's, Bachelor's, or graduate. A detailed analysis follows:

- **No High School Diploma.** Six percent of Ruidoso's residents (25 and older) do not have a high school diploma – 900 residents. This is half the national average of 12.7 percent.
- **High School Diploma.** One-third of Ruidoso's workforce only has a high school diploma (ranking second among the benchmark cities) – a share that has increased 26.4 percent since 2013.
- **Associate's Degree.** Thirty-four percent of Ruidoso's residents (2,000 residents) have an Associate's degree or some college – ranking fifth among the benchmark communities and above the US average (29.1 percent).
- **Bachelor's Degree or Higher.** Thirty percent of Ruidoso's residents have a Bachelor's degree or higher, ranking it seventh among the benchmark communities. Ruidoso has experienced a very small brain drain for educated talent: the share of residents with a Bachelor's degree or higher has decreased 1 percent since 2013.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1 percent is within the margin of error.



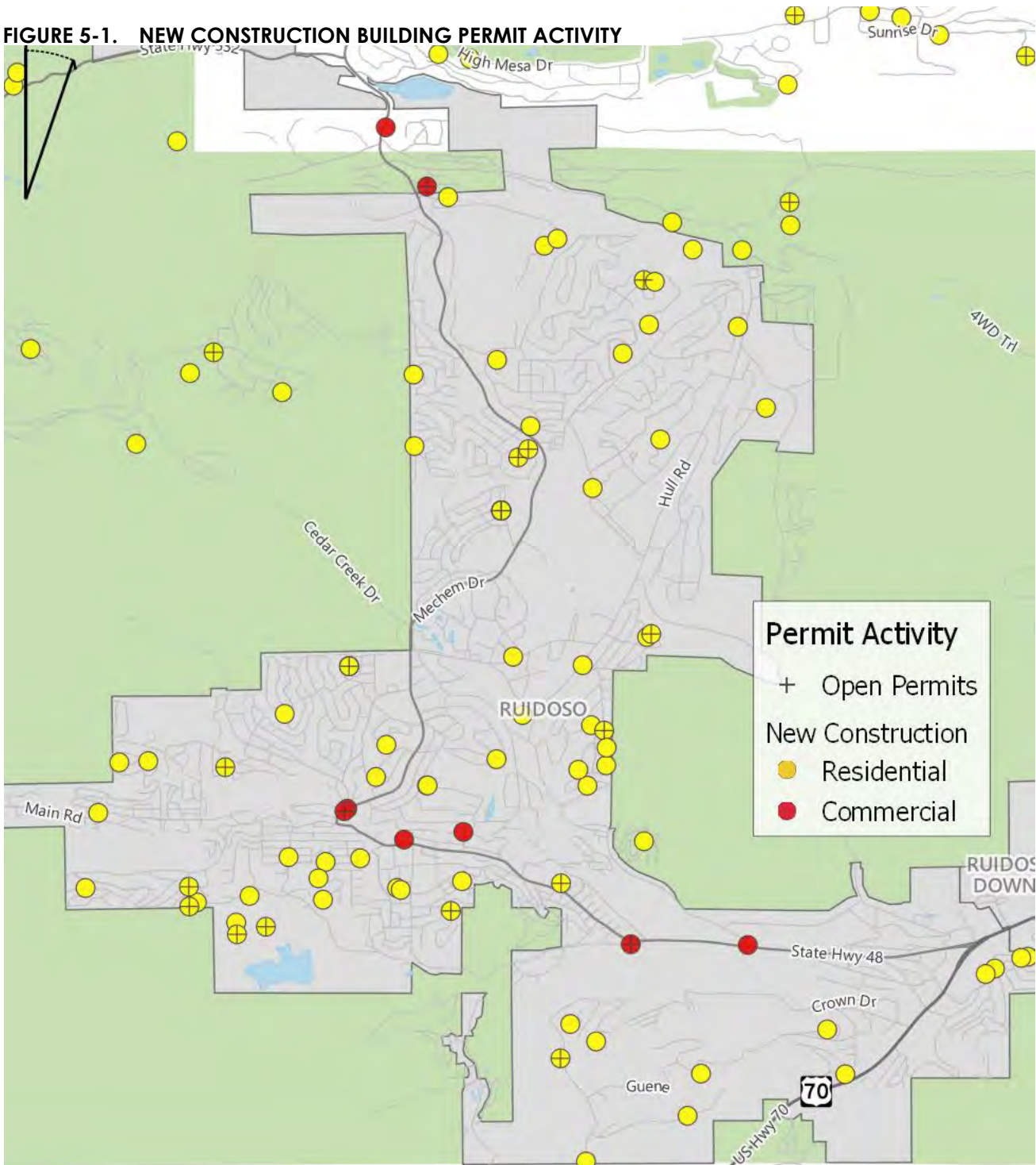
Survey respondents strongly agree that **family-wage jobs** are an important challenge the Village should address.

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

### New Construction

As indicated in the following figure most new construction since 2012 within the Village municipal boundary has been residential construction. 60 residential units were deemed “complete” between 2012 and 2018 within the Ruidoso limits. Another 18 are considered still “open” (i.e., they are still active permits). Only 4 permits are deemed complete for commercial properties in this time frame, although three remain open.

**FIGURE 5-1. NEW CONSTRUCTION BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITY**

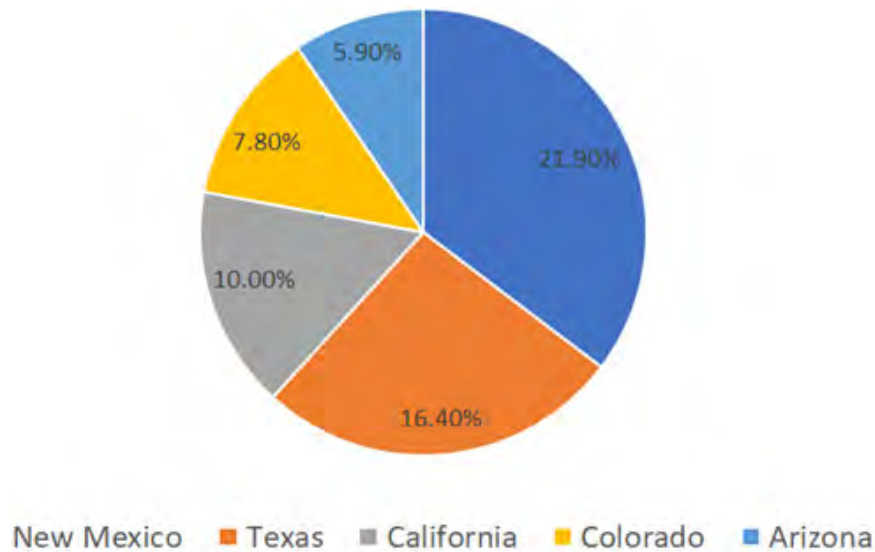


Source: Village of Ruidoso Permit History

## Tourism

The Village of Ruidoso is well established as a tourist destination, especially for visitors from West Texas. Additionally, while not documented by the Tourism Department, it is understood that a significant number of visitors originate from Mexico. While the community appreciates the income spent in the area, it is also burdened by significant spikes in population that require more public services than are available. This impact on the community is another reason why more diversification of the economy is important to alleviate a reliance on an economy that significantly stresses local services.

**FIGURE 5-2. ORIGINS OF NEW MEXICO OVERNIGHT VISITORS**



Source: New Mexico Tourism Department, 2018

Tourism spending in Lincoln County was more than \$200 million in 2016, with spending on second homes constituting 45 percent of the total. An additional \$61.9 million was spent on lodging, food and beverage related. Retail, with \$18.3 million in spending, accounted for 9 percent of the total, and recreation, with \$27.7 million in spending accounted for 14 percent of the total. Tourism represents 25 percent of employment in the County and 17.4 percent of labor income. Total tax receipts to County jurisdictions exceed \$25 million.<sup>2</sup>

### Outdoor Recreation

Ruidoso is a destination because of its incredible setting nestled amid national forests with immediate access to a wide range of outdoor recreation consisting of skiing, hunting and fishing, hiking, mountain biking and ATVs. According to the New Mexico's Department of Game and Fish, Lincoln County hosted 2,829 non-resident anglers and 1,807 non-resident hunters in 2013, which equates to \$8,872,425 annual spending in the county.<sup>3</sup> The area's

<sup>2</sup> Economic Impact of Tourism in New Mexico, 2016, Tourism Economics, Sept. 2017

<sup>3</sup> The Economic Contributions of Fishing, Hunting, and Trapping in New Mexico in 2013: A statewide and county-level analysis, Southwick Associates, 2014

## THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

“Promote tourism and attract business.”

Comprehensive Plan Community Meeting



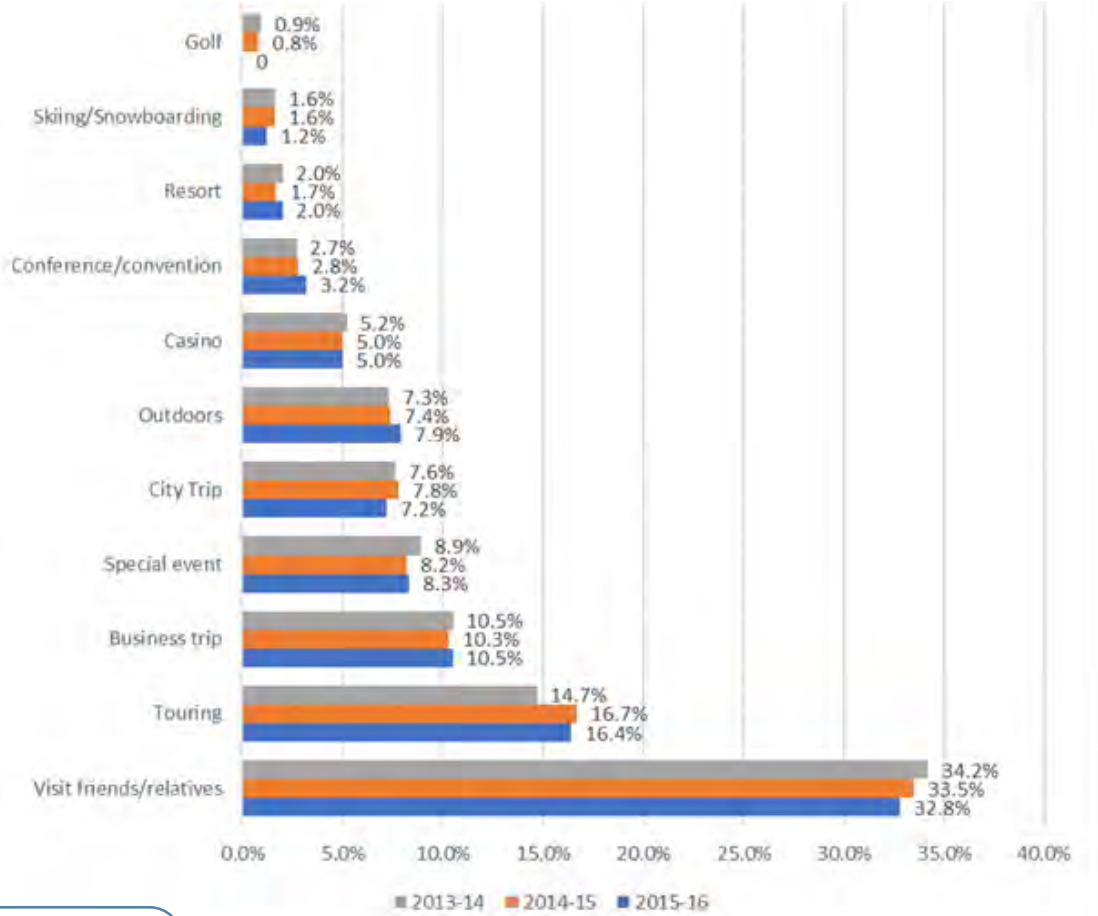
Source: DiscoverRuidoso.com

*Outdoor recreation tourism attracts races and tournaments that boost Ruidoso's economy.*


outdoor assets are important to celebrate and enhance as part of the community culture and a primary attraction for overnight stays.

Ruidoso's outdoor recreation assets are consistent with the top reasons people visit New Mexico and the increase in outdoor experiences as a top reason for overnight visits per the following figure.

**FIGURE 5-3. TOP REASONS FOR OVERNIGHT VISITS IN NEW MEXICO**



Source: New Mexico Tourism Department, 2018



**Survey respondents strongly agree that access to outdoors and recreation is an important Village asset.**

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

This focus on outdoor recreation aligns with current trends in that travel has become more 'experiential' at all income levels. The desire to have new experiences while on a trip is common among modern travelers, with 74 percent of Americans prioritizing experiences over material goods.<sup>4</sup> This trend also translates into business travel, as 75 percent of meeting planners say that their role involves more "experience creation" than it did just five years ago.<sup>5</sup> This desire for outdoor experience is outpacing other traditional tourist attractions such as casinos or golf.

4 <https://www.luxurytraveladvisor.com/running-your-business/stats-74-percent-americans-prioritize-experiences-over-products>

5 <https://www.cliffonts.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/IACC-2017-Meeting-Room-of-the-Future.pdf>

### Ruidoso Downs Race Track and Casino

Ruidoso Downs Race Track and Casino provides 15 weekends of live racing opening on Memorial Day weekend. This significant attraction has new owners after 30 years that have invested millions of dollars into the venue, renovating the venue and bringing in new event ideas.<sup>6</sup> The race track and casino serve as anchor for the summer tourism industry in Ruidoso and contribute to the significant amount of service sector jobs in the region. This amenity is one of the many elements that contribute to the robust and well-established tourism economy in Ruidoso. While an important regional tourist element, it should be noted that the market size of the Horse Racing Tracks industry in the US declined faster than the economy overall and has declined 0.6 percent per year on average between 2014 and 2019. Furthermore, total wages paid by the Horse Racing Tracks industry declined 1.1 percent per year on average over the five years between 2014 and 2019.<sup>7</sup> This suggests that the community should continue to embrace and support this asset, but not rely on it solely as an economic driver. The market trends for this industry show that diversifying the economy beyond tourism is important for the overall economic health of the Village.



Source: DiscoverRuidoso.com

Horse racing at Ruidoso Downs Race Track continues to attract visitors.

### Retail

The retail industry is always in flux. During the 20th century, there was a major shift from pedestrian-oriented main streets to auto-oriented centers and corridors. Today, ever-changing consumer preferences and online-shopping are among the major trends affecting retail. Online shopping is having a significant impact on “commodity retail” and caters to customers that want convenience (e.g., Amazon is not necessarily the best price). Retailers that continue to expand are discount stores such as Dollar General or high-end boutiques that provide an experience. The following table reflects how spending habits have shifted in light of online options, with spending declining in almost every category and a corresponding increase in spending at non-store retailers.

**FIGURE 5-4. UNITED STATES CHANGE IN PER CAPITA RETAIL SPENDING 2000-2016**

Kind of business	2016	2000	%Change
<b>Per capita spending, total</b>			
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	23.57%	26.69%	-3.12%
Furniture and home furnishings stores	2.30%	3.05%	-0.76%
Electronics and appliance stores	2.03%	3.03%	-1.00%
Building mat. and garden equip. and supplies dealers	7.19%	7.68%	-0.49%
Food and beverage stores	14.43%	14.91%	-0.48%
Health and personal care stores	6.73%	5.20%	1.53%
Gasoline stations	8.62%	8.37%	0.25%
Clothing and clothing access. stores	5.35%	5.62%	-0.27%
Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, and book stores	1.78%	2.27%	-0.49%
General merchandise stores	13.93%	13.55%	0.38%
Miscellaneous store retailers	2.52%	3.58%	-1.06%
<b>Nonstore retailers</b>	<b>11.55%</b>	<b>6.05%</b>	<b>5.50%</b>

Source: Retail Census 2018, Bridge Economic Development

<sup>6</sup> Ruidoso Downs kicks off first season under new ownership, OA online, May 2018

<sup>7</sup> Horse Racing Tracks industry in the US, IBIS World, 2019

### THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

“Incentives need to be offered to existing local businesses for improvement and growth.”

Comprehensive Plan Business Survey



Source: DiscoverRuidoso.com



Midtown's shops and restaurants draw tourists and visitors year round.

By contrast, retailers offering a special experience, or offering services that cannot be procured online, have the potential to thrive (you can't share a meal with a friend online). Other "retail" experiences include painting classes with wine, arcades, or breweries with live music. These retailers want to concentrate in a certain location to become a destination for customers to park once and explore an area. Creating a concentrated retail area that is a defined "place" is an important element for retailers as it is the key distinguishing element from online shopping. In addition to this destination trend, local food and beverage is typically demanding space that is 2,500 square feet to minimize risk and offset start-up costs that typically start at \$200,000. This small square footage is appropriate for existing ground-floor space and more cost-effective than rents required with new construction. Due to these costs, new local tenants will gravitate to existing buildings or former restaurant spaces to keep start-up expenses to a minimum. This is an advantage for established downtowns with older building stock.

Ruidoso's Midtown area is on trend with its emphasis on placemaking, creating a destination and a concentration of high-quality retail stores with local products.

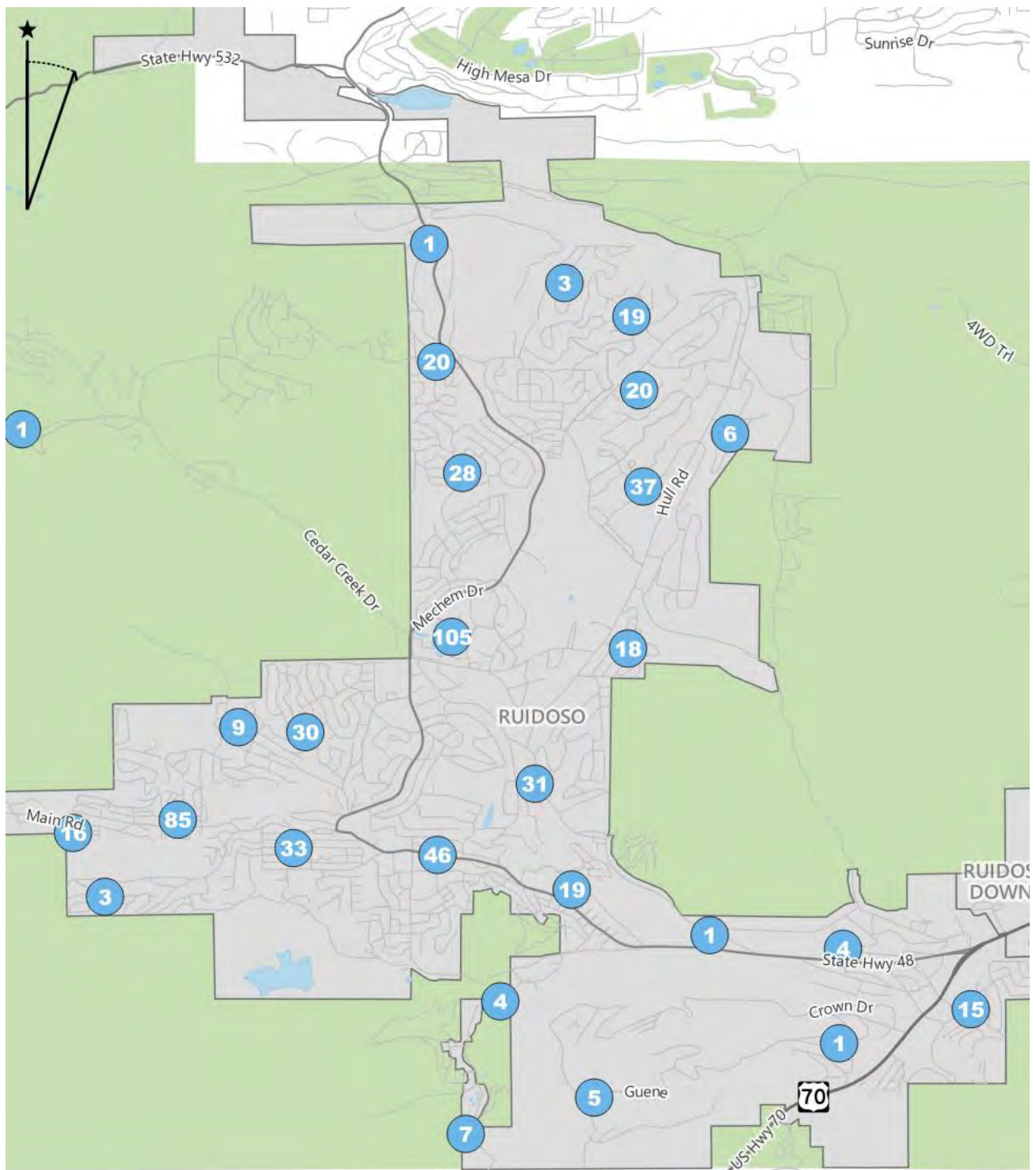
Despite its success in improving retail, especially for visitors, stakeholder groups suggest that tourist-oriented retail does not serve local families well. A focus on tourism has an impact on the businesses too, as the tourist customer base is seasonal rather than year-round. With a year-round customer base, the business cash flow is steadier and provides a more consistent income for employees, which allows them to be more reliable. Catering to local families and to visitors is not mutually exclusive. Tourists seek an "authentic" environment that reflects the local culture. Retail that focuses on the local community only expands the customer base as it consistently serves a year-round population and meets the desires of the tourist customer. Education of local retailers regarding this dynamic is important to increase wealth for business owners, but also meets the needs of the local community.

#### *Short-Term Vacation Rentals*

As with many communities with a strong tourism economy, Ruidoso has seen an increase in short-term vacation rentals. In response to this growth, the Village has brought on a full-time staff person to monitor the permitting of these uses. There are approximately 800 active short-term rental properties, which provides about 2,400 bedrooms. While the increase in rentals provides an income to the home owners and revenues for the Village, they ultimately serve as necessary asset to the tourism industry as alternative hotel space. The rentals themselves do serve as an economy.



**FIGURE 5-5. SHORT-TERM VACATION RENTAL CONCENTRATIONS**





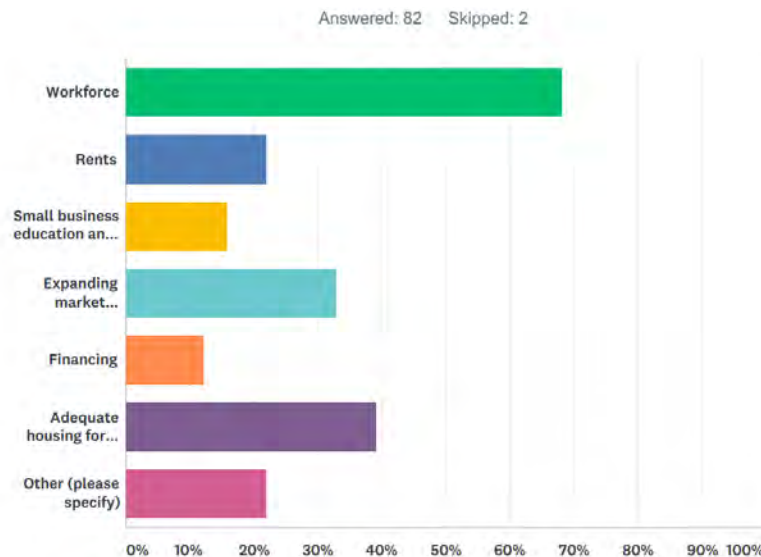
*Much of Ruidoso's housing is vacant and only used seasonally.*

On the other hand, short-term rentals are impacting home affordability for permanent Village residents. According to stakeholder interviews, there have been very few new homes constructed for permanent residents in recent years, which aligns with data showing that only seasonal housing has been built in Ruidoso since 2010.<sup>8</sup> With the lack of new year-round housing and conversion of existing homes into vacation rental properties, the local single-family home supply for permanent residents has been depleted. This is a significant impact in community that where 58 percent of the housing stock is vacant for seasonal use.<sup>9</sup> With constricted supply and consistent demand, home options will decrease and prices will increase, ultimately making it harder to retain and attract a workforce.

### Building and Retaining Talent

In developing the economic development strategy, a survey was distributed to business owners within the community. In response to the question, "What are your barriers to growth?" the most overwhelming response was "workforce". As with all other communities across the country, training locals is one of the most important actions a community can take to grow their economic base.

**FIGURE 5-6. BUSINESS SURVEY QUESTION: WHAT ARE YOUR BARRIERS TO GROWTH?**



As discussed above, the number one priority for businesses is the ability to retain and attract talent. As talent can go anywhere, it desires a "place" that consists of amenities (restaurants, entertainment, and retail) and access to outdoors in addition to a job. Ruidoso is fortunate to have a strong foundation for both of these elements to make an exceptional place that can set it apart from other communities across the country also working hard to retain and attract talent. Additionally, because of its size, Ruidoso offers the opportunity for aspiring talent—especially millennial

talent—the opportunity to connect with local business community and Village leadership to have an impact. Enhancing these elements of place—both physical and community—in conjunction with growing a diverse job base, is an important area of focus for the Village.

In addition to promoting quality of place as talent attraction, Ruidoso must also examine the training and on-ramp opportunities that it presents to prospective talent. A diverse, highly-skilled workforce is an important asset for any community. In order to weather the inevitable booms and busts of the economy, as well as cycles in the tourism sector, Ruidoso must provide skills training and pathways to job opportunities that offer residents (and prospective residents) to tap into the community's growing sectors of small-scale production, healthcare services and other industries. While this will not eliminate income stratification or workforce skills gaps, it will allow individual residents to achieve their full economic potential, thereby improving the Ruidoso's fiscal growth and sustainability for the future.

The Village of Ruidoso's educational assets, including the local school district and Eastern New Mexico University – Ruidoso Branch (ENMU–Ruidoso), can offer the training opportunities Ruidoso residents need to meet local workforce needs. In aligning these organizations, there is strong opportunity to build a local talent pipeline with Ruidoso students that want to stay in the community while preparing for a career. Ruidoso's educational institutions can create an obvious path from school and skills development to job placement.

#### *Ruidoso Municipal Schools*

Increasingly high schools across the country have recognized the importance of providing Career Technical Education (CTE) to foster alternative career paths in various vocations that do not require a four-year college degree. In keeping with that focus, the Ruidoso School District recently made a significant capital investment in a new “construction trades” class focused on wood and technology mechanical skills. According to Dr. George Bickert, Ruidoso Municipal Schools Superintendent, the class was filled within its first year. This speaks to the passion of the local student body and where they would potentially want to invest in career opportunities. It is important for the Village and other local stakeholders to convene ENMU–Ruidoso and local businesses to create a clear and direct pathway for these students to stay and thrive in Ruidoso. Both institutions are rising to this challenge through their own curriculum and dual enrollment options.

#### *Eastern New Mexico University – Ruidoso Branch*

As Ruidoso is an independent smaller region, it is important to retain as many locals as possible. ENMU–Ruidoso serves as an important resource to provide the skills and training for existing industries and alleviate the need for residents to leave the community for necessary training. One example is the local hospital, which struggles to attract and retain staff. Currently ENMU–Ruidoso is only able to provide nursing pre-certification



Source: VisitRuidoso.com

*Noisy Water Winery is an example of Ruidoso's thriving local business that is generating need for workforce skills in new sectors.*

#### THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

“Grow ENMU–Ruidoso.”

Comprehensive Plan Community Meeting



Source: Ruidoso.ENMU.edu



Source: Ruidoso.ENMU.edu

*ENMU-Ruidoso campus is expanding as are its workforce development program and opportunities.*

courses and students must go elsewhere to complete the training. If ENMU-Ruidoso had the training facilities to provide the full degree program, student would be more likely to remain in Ruidoso and support the local hospital.

As detailed in the following Goals, Policies, and Actions, aligning higher-education certification and programs is an important area of focus to improve job opportunities for existing residents to benefit from business growth of targeted sectors outlined below. Focused alignment of industry clusters and courses and training programs at ENMU-Ruidoso should be a priority for the community. ENMU-Ruidoso has several workforce-related initiatives in progress. The three-phase Nexus Project includes expansion into a renovated space next to its current building, re-purposing the current building for workforce programs and connecting the two spaces, and exterior accessibility improvements. ENMU-Ruidoso is working closely with the Village to ensure the programs they offer are relevant and helpful in building a stable workforce and giving people options to stay in Ruidoso for their education and training. Support for these initiatives and participation in new programs tailored to the community are important to the future of ENMU-Ruidoso and to the community.

### **Potential Traded Sector Industries**

When developing a strategy to foster a traded-sector economy, a community must understand the skills of the residents and the skills needed by businesses established in the area. The following information provides an overview of those two foundational assets, and the details of this analysis are in Appendix B.

#### *Occupational Clusters and Resident Skills*

There are three broad set of skills that drive today's economy: knowledge, service, and working sector. Ruidoso has a predominance of service sector jobs tied to retail and accommodations.

#### *Service Sector*

With such a large hospitality sector, six in ten Ruidoso workers (58.3 percent) have skills associated with the service sector – a share that ranks first among the benchmark communities included in the Economic Strategy and above the US average (41.5 percent). Ruidoso's service sector has increased 1.4 percent since 2013.

#### *Knowledge Sector*

Ruidoso's knowledge sector (27.7 percent) – workers with skills in technology, arts/ culture, professional services, and education – ranks tenth among the benchmark communities. For knowledge workers, Ruidoso has experienced a 29.2 percent decline in workers with these skills since 2013, at the same time the US has experienced a 9.8 percent increase in this segment of the workforce.


#### *Working Sector*

Approximately 420 Ruidoso residents make up the Village's working sector (14 percent) – with skills associated with production/ manufacturing, transportation, and maintenance. Ruidoso ranks seventh among the benchmark communities.

If the Ruidoso economy is going to diversify, focused attention on attracting new residents or training existing ones in the knowledge and working sectors will be very important as a strategy focus.

### Business Establishments

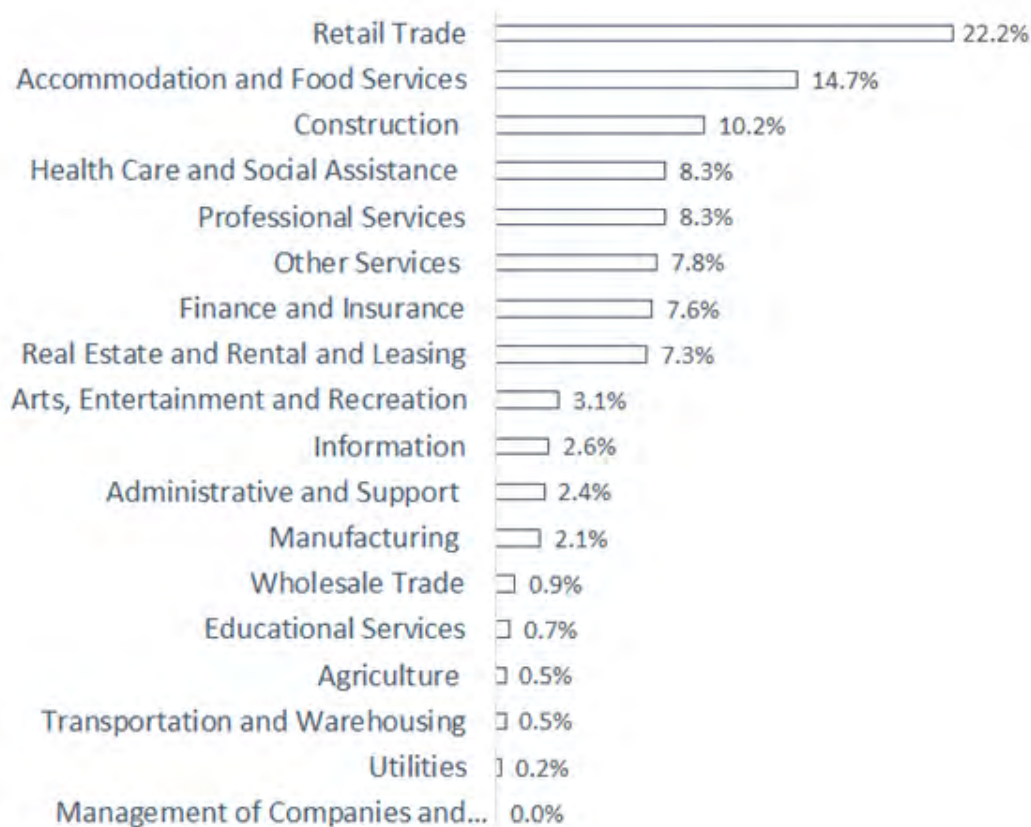
Ruidoso's small businesses provide employment for residents, and they help to create a destination experience for Ruidoso's visitors. From 2012 to 2016, Ruidoso experienced a 3.3 percent decline in the number of business establishments, while the US average was a 4.4 percent increase. While this trend has reversed recently, sustaining small businesses is critical to Ruidoso's economic health. The following is a look at the sectors making up Ruidoso's business establishments. The location quotient (LQ) can reveal what makes a particular region "unique" in comparison to the national average. If the number is higher than 1.0 then it suggests an industry strength in the region. Not surprisingly, the predominant strengths for Ruidoso pertain to industries tied to tourism, with the exception of agriculture. However, although agriculture may have a high LQ for Lincoln County, county business pattern shows very few people employed in that sector.



Survey respondents consider **Supporting existing small businesses** and **Training a skilled workforce** top priorities.

Comprehensive Plan Business Survey

**FIGURE 5-7. RUIDOSO BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS, 2016**



Source: US County Business Patterns 2016



Source: DiscoverRuidoso.com

Midtown shops feature retailers catering to the arts and recreation.

**Retail, Accommodations, or Food Service**

Four out of 10 Ruidoso's businesses (37 percent) are retail, accommodations, or food service establishments. Accommodations and food service establishments have declined 11 percent in the past five years, while the number of retail business has remained static. Among all of the benchmark cities, Ruidoso has the greatest share of retail businesses (22.2 percent).

**Arts and Recreation**

Arts and recreation businesses account for 3.1 percent of all Ruidoso establishments – nearly two times the US average. This reflects the connection to the outdoors and supports the tourism economy.

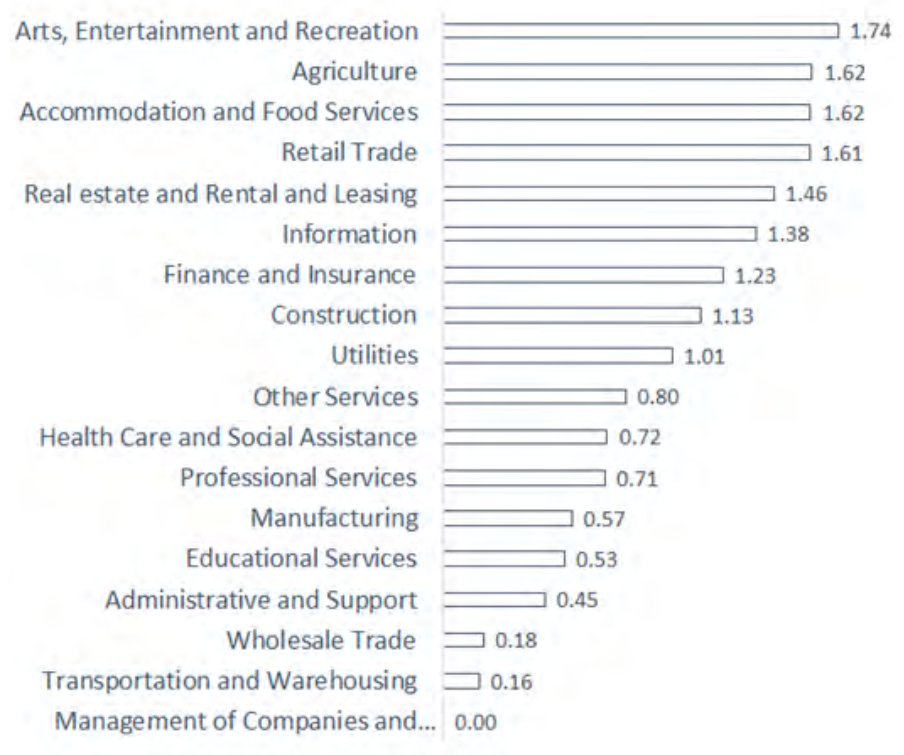
**Financial Services**

Among all of the benchmarks, Ruidoso ranks first for its share of financial services businesses (7.6 percent) compared to peer communities and well above the US average (6.1 percent). This reflects Ruidoso's role as the main business center in Lincoln County. As noted above, financial services are distinct from real estate services. Ruidoso ranks sixth for its share of real estate businesses (7.3 percent) compared to its peers and is above the US average (5.0 percent).

**Professional Services**

While Ruidoso appears to have a large share of this sector, compared to its peers the community is ninth out of ten and below the US average of 11.6 percent.

**FIGURE 5-8. RUIDOSO BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS BY LQ, 2016**



Source: US County Business Patterns 2016

### Aligning with State and Regional Opportunities

The State of New Mexico has identified the competitive clusters at a state and regional level based on employer strength, workforce and industry assets such as land and infrastructure. Southeastern New Mexico Economic Development District (SNMEDD) has preliminarily outlined some opportunity industries within their Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Identifying alignment between the state, region and local industry strengths is important to maximize future marketing and talent development across all levels of government. Furthermore, if the Village pursues federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant funds, it must show that it is focused on diversifying the economy toward traded-sector industries in alignment with the regional CEDS. Therefore, if the Village intends to utilize such resources, it is important to identify and focus on these types of businesses.

**FIGURE 5-9. STATE, REGIONAL, AND LOCAL INDUSTRY CLUSTER ALIGNMENT**

State of New Mexico Key Industries	SNMEDD Target Industries	Ruidoso Opportunity Clusters
Sustainable & Value-Added Agriculture	Sustainable & Value-Added Agriculture	<b>Sustainable &amp; Value-Added Agriculture</b>
Outdoor Recreation	Outdoor Recreation	<b>Outdoor Recreation</b>
	Light Manufacturing	<b>Light Manufacturing</b>
		<b>Health Care</b>
	Oil and Gas Production	<b>Professional Services/Remote Workers (tied to regional and state clusters)</b>
Aerospace & Defense	Military and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV)	
Digital & Emerging Media		
Sustainable & Green Energy	Alternative Energy	
Intelligent Manufacturing		

Source: Bridge Economic Development

### Rural Pathway Project

The State of New Mexico Tourism Department initiated the Rural Pathway Project to assist tourism stakeholders within New Mexico in developing existing tourism assets into opportunities that can support a broader economic base in the long term. The intent is to encourage a more resilient economy that leverages the tourism strength to create more economic opportunities through traded sector businesses. The following figure outlines how Ruidoso's current assets could expand into other industries with the development of certain tourism assets.

**FIGURE 5-10. RUIDOSO POTENTIAL TOURISM-TRADED SECTOR INDUSTRIES**

Tourism Sector	Traded Sector	Necessary Assets	ED Approach
Wineries and Local Food Products	Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water</li> <li>• Power</li> </ul>	Grow
	Food and Beverage Manufacturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial kitchen</li> <li>• Food cart culture</li> <li>• Small manufacturing space</li> <li>• Workforce Certification</li> <li>• Small business support</li> </ul>	
ATV/Biking/Hiking/Skiing	Small-scale niche manufacturing and repair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Power</li> <li>• Small manufacturing space</li> <li>• Cluster of similar types of companies</li> <li>• Workforce Certification</li> <li>• Small business support</li> </ul>	Grow
Access to Outdoors and Vibrant Downtown	Professional Services – remote commuting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broadband</li> <li>• Coffee shops/co-working space</li> <li>• Highly educated workforce</li> </ul>	Attract

Source: Bridge Economic Development

Beyond these sectors tied to the tourism industry, Ruidoso has additional opportunities to grow the economic base with the construction of the new of the Lincoln County Medical Center serving the broader region.

*Recommended Ruidoso Industry Clusters and Education Alignment*

Based on the above information, we recommend that Ruidoso focus on the following industry cluster development opportunities. The following matrix of education assets and example companies serves as a guide for future actions outlined under the Goals, Policies, and Actions section.





**FIGURE 5-11. RUIDOSO INDUSTRY CLUSTER AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ALIGNMENT**

Range of Opportunity	Industry		Ruidoso School District (RSD)		ENMU–Ruidoso		Example Companies
	Cluster	Type	Middle School	High School	Existing Program	Potential Program	
Near-Term	Outdoor Recreation	Traded			SBDC	N/A	Services related to skiing, hiking, fishing, biking
	Food and Beverage Manufacturing	Traded	Commercial Kitchen		Hospitality	Fermentation Certification	Winery, Cornerstone Bakery, Lost Hiker
	Construction	Local		CTE - wood/tech shop	SBDC	Apprenticeship	Local construction firms
	Craft/Light Manufacturing	Traded		CTE - wood/tech shop	Welding	Apprenticeship	Armstrong Welding and Fabrication
<b>UPON INVESTMENT IN BROADBAND and ENMU–Ruidoso</b>							
Future	Health Care	Local			Nursing Pre-Certification	Nursing Associates Degree	Lincoln County Medical Center
	Professional Services/ Remote workers	Traded			N/A	N/A	Remote Workers in Engineering - Texas Oil/Gas or Las Cruces Aerospace

Source: Bridge Economic Development

## KEY THEMES

In preparing the economic strategy, the Village hosted local stakeholders for two days of stakeholder interviews and small group discussions. These meetings were supplemented by the distribution of a digital survey, which received more than 80 responses. Appendix A provides a summary of the survey results. The following key themes emerged as important topics amongst stakeholders or were identified through research as unique assets to the Village that should be considered for Strategy development.

- **Outdoors and Environment.** This is overwhelmingly the most defining and cherished asset of Ruidoso. It is why people vacation there and choose to stay. Further embracing the outdoor beauty, clean air and climate, and experiential recreation is a significant advantage that should be leveraged to diversify the economic base.
- **“Homecomer” Population.** A homecomer is defined by Wendell Berry, the Kentucky writer and farmer, as someone who spent some time away, usually to pursue better opportunities in cities, and then choose to return to their rural roots. This is an emerging theme across rural and micropolitan communities across the country and should be embraced. Ruidoso is fortunate to be gaining a younger generation of residents that are bringing new ideas and energy to the



Source: DiscoverRuidoso.com

*The Midtown Association works to attract locals and tourists to Midtown.*

- community and should be encouraged and attracted.
- **Midtown Core.** The Midtown area is a charming element of the community that provides desired amenities such as restaurants and retail. Focused attention on supporting the existing businesses and catering to the local community is important. The Midtown Association is a MainStreet organization focused on the success of the Midtown Core.
- **Local Business Support.** Economic development strategies and coordinated programs to address all aspects of the local economy are vital to every community that wants to compete and expand. One of the barriers to this is the lack of reliable broadband, which not only inhibits the ability to diversify and grow the economic base, it is currently impacting existing businesses. Many retail stakeholders conveyed that they often have trouble running credit cards due to limited bandwidth. The Village has pursued and is continuing to pursue partnerships and options for improving broadband service. Other business support is described in the following section.

## SUPPORTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development creates wealth in the community and is primarily the role of the private sector. Great community development—making Ruidoso a better place to live and work, primarily by the public sector—is critical and a topic of most chapters of the Comprehensive Plan. However, community development is not enough. The Village has to have the fundamentals in place that make it possible to sustain successful businesses over the long term.

One of the findings of the Economic Development Strategy for Ruidoso is that, while there are organizations focused on specific aspects of the economy, there is no organization tasked with overall economic development. A key recommendation is to designate a champion for broader economic development. This could be an existing entity or a new organization, either public under the umbrella of the Village or a private non-profit like an Economic Development Corporation.

There are several models for how economic organizations work and work together. One is completely separate entities like what is in place now, with a new organization responsible for general economic development. At the other end of the spectrum is an umbrella organization of local economic development organizations. Other options fall in between, with some functions combined. There is typically a combination of public and private entities with strategic partnerships.

The missing link in Ruidoso is general economic development. The recommendation is to broaden economic development efforts to have a system in place that champions all aspects of economic and workforce development. The structure of the system will depend on funding, roles, public vs. private responsibilities and other factors unique to Ruidoso. The right solution for Ruidoso

should be determined with the participation of all stakeholders.

The figure below illustrates common economic development functions. The dark circles represent functions that are the responsibility of existing organizations. There are a number of gaps that should be addressed to support a more diversified economy.





Source: Ruidoso-NM.gov

*The Convention Center hosts events year-round, attracting locals and tourists.*

## FIGURE 5-12. COMMON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUNCTIONS

### Economic Development Organizations

Existing organizations and their stated missions are described below.

- **Midtown Association.** The mission of the Midtown Association is “to strengthen the downtown as the center of [Ruidoso] through concentrated efforts in organization, promotion design and economic vitality.” Its focus is on activities that benefit the Midtown District. By supporting streetscape improvements and investments in public gathering places, the Midtown Association promotes downtown as a desirable place for local residents and visitors.
- **Ruidoso Valley Chamber of Commerce (RVCC).** The RVCC focuses on the business climate of Ruidoso and the surrounding area. As advocates for local businesses, they seek to maintain an excellent business climate for their members. Under contract with the Village, they manage and operate the Ruidoso Visitor Center, which is co-located with the RVCC. The Chamber organizes three of the biggest annual events in Ruidoso—the Ruidoso Arts Festival in July, Aspenfest in October, and the Festival of Lights parade in December.
- **Village of Ruidoso Tourism Department.** The Ruidoso Tourism Office is responsible for promotion of Ruidoso as the premier resort destination in Southern New Mexico. Through its website and informational materials, the Tourism Department promotes Ruidoso and the region to potential visitors.
- **Ruidoso Convention Center.** The Convention Center is the front door to the community for many of Ruidoso’s visitors and plays a big role in impressions of the community. It is described in more detail in the Community Services Chapter.
- **ENMU–Ruidoso.** ENMU–Ruidoso is a comprehensive community college that offers associate and certificate programs and workforce development and training tailored to the needs of local employers. ENMU–Ruidoso offers online education through its partnerships with other colleges.
- **Small Business Development Center (SBDC).** The SBDC in Alamogordo serves Otero and Lincoln Counties, aiding emerging and existing businesses. Consulting services and training are provided in Alamogordo and at the satellite center located at ENMU–Ruidoso.
- **Southeastern New Mexico Economic Development District.** As a regional organization, SNMEDD focuses on capital improvements and capacity building for a region that includes Chaves, Eddy, Lea, Lincoln and Otero Counties. Through development of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Plan in partnership with its local government members, SNMEDD identifies regional strengths and needs and assists member communities with capital outlay and grants to strengthen their local communities.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

In order to prepare a community to proactively engage with rapidly changing trends, it must have a strategy in place. Without a strategy, efforts are often reactive, non-collaborative, and not connected for meaningful impact. For an economic development plan to succeed, numerous partners and organizations must be engaged and collaborate toward common goals. At the same time, it is essential for public and private entities to recognize that they are partners in economic development efforts, as one cannot be sustained without the other. To efficiently and effectively align goals, a community must understand, document, and achieve consensus on its vision, values, opportunities, and objectives, which is being done within the overall comprehensive plan.

The world's economy is changing rapidly. An established "playbook" provides enough broad goals to recognize opportunities when they arise. Clear direction regarding Ruidoso's roles will help determine projects that should be pursued and those that should be set aside. To effectively implement a strategy, it is as important to say "no" to certain opportunities as it is to say "yes" to others.

The Economic Development Strategy prepared in conjunction with the Comprehensive Plan is the broad framework for the Village going forward. It is important to annually revisit the Economic Development Strategy to determine where progress is being made and where other areas are deficient. It will be necessary to update the document every three to five years in keeping with the rapid pace of change in the economy.

The goals, policies, and actions of the Comprehensive Plan take the broad framework and insert immediate actions that can make a difference in the short term.

### THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

“We need to create a community that benefits both locals and tourists.”

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

# Goal 1.

Ruidoso has a diverse industry base that sustains the Village for the long term.

**POLICY 1.1.** *Identify an economic development champion.*

**ACTION 1.1.A.** Hire an economic development staff person or initiate an organization to collaborate among existing economic development organizations, private entities and with local government to implement the economic development strategy.

**ACTION 1.1.B.** Collaborate with SNMEDD and other stakeholders to review the strategy and coordinate local activities with regional strategies.

**POLICY 1.2.** *Think regionally in order to foster economic development at a regional scale.*

**ACTION 1.2.A.** Collaborate with Ruidoso Downs and other surrounding communities to discuss strategy and find mutually supportive approaches to economic vitality:

- Establish a regional team of key staff, business owners and/or elected leaders dedicated to economic development
- Share Ruidoso's Economic Development Strategy as a baseline to begin collaboration
- Identify regional businesses that fit into identified industry clusters
- Create list of targeted companies within industry clusters to visit regarding the potential to locate or expand into Ruidoso
- Regional team visits ten companies a year (generally one per month)
- Determine business barriers/opportunities

**ACTION 1.2.B.** Address barriers as a region by listing and defining barriers identified by businesses with costs if appropriate and meet with regional and state SNMEDD stakeholders to identify solution.

**ACTION 1.2.C.** Reassess taxing structure and compare to those in surrounding states to encourage private investment.

**ACTION 1.2.D.** Market the entire region by documenting quotes from CEOs as to why they like doing business in Ruidoso, list all businesses within each cluster and supporting regional assets, and create a regional marketing story centered on the region's economic development offering beyond tourism only.

**POLICY 1.3.** *Convene businesses in targeted industry clusters and define needs.*

**ACTION 1.3.A.** Embrace the outdoor recreation industry cluster:

- Work with the State of New Mexico to understand their definition of "outdoor recreation" and related programs
- Identify regional businesses that fit into the outdoor industry clusters
- Visit the companies to build awareness of the state focus and define barriers and opportunities.
- Define and close the gaps in the bike trail system.
- Partner with the state to actively promote the Ruidoso outdoor recreation cluster.

### **ACTION 1.3.B.** Convene industry focus groups:

- Convene a meeting at least once a year with businesses within each target cluster. Include industry associations, ENMU–Ruidoso, SBDC, and Ruidoso Municipal Schools at the meetings.
- Listen to businesses and document common needs.
- Identify competing local communities with each different cluster and what they do well. Visit the communities.
- Share information about new programs, such as Career Technical Education (CTE) training at Ruidoso High School (RHS) to enhance collaboration.
- Address business needs.

### **ACTION 1.3.C.** Help build broadband:

- Form a technical steering committee with key anchor institutions needing broadband like the Hospital, Emergency Medical Support, ENMU–Ruidoso, and Ruidoso School District to build on the Village's efforts.
- Determine potential public/private partnerships to overcome fragmentation and limited investment by current providers
- Define current limitations, strongest service, and barriers.
- Present a non-binding resolution to Village Council to clearly confirm buy-in and commitment to grant application.
- Technical steering committee works with SNMEDD to apply to federal EDA to fund a portion of for a broadband feasibility (\$80K) study that is needed to diversify economy and bring in professional services. (EDA typically only provides a 50 percent match, however if the community is distressed it could receive 80 percent. Data showing a declining population and income suggests that the community is distressed and should be presented to EDA).
- Work with other private and public partners to contribute funds so that the Village is not responsible for all the match (e.g., hotels, tribes, hospital, school district, etc.).
- Economic Development team reaches out to federal representative regarding access to grant programs: <https://www.usda.gov/reconnect> or Rural Digital Opportunity Fund.
- Apply for E-Rate funding through the Universal Service Administration Company to bring broadband to the public library.

### THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

“ We need more marketing and publicity about our natural gifts here. ”

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

## **POLICY 1.4.** *Grow local businesses.*

**ACTION 1.4.A.** Foster professional business industry cluster growth by sponsoring and supporting quarterly meet-ups of remote workers/professional startups. This encourages peer to peer networking and addressing problems within the industry. (Keep it exclusive to the professional industry. This is not intended for service providers to network/solicit business).

**ACTION 1.4.B.** Work with private developers or existing organization/institution to create office co-working space.

**ACTION 1.4.C.** Encourage more food and beverage manufacturing:

- Permit food carts in Midtown. This is low-risk and low-cost way for startups to enter the market and test new product. It also introduces diversity and vibrancy for customers.
- Collaborate with ENMU–Ruidoso to promote commercial kitchen for startups. Align use of kitchen space with ENMU–Ruidoso SBDC programs to guide new business through marketing and administration hurdles.
- Leverage expertise of Cornerstone Bakery to help train others in utilizing a co-packing facility for manufacturing and distribution.

**ACTION 1.4.D.** Encourage light/craft manufacturing by amending the Village zoning ordinance to allow new manufacturing space and by working with ENMU–Ruidoso to create a maker space in their facility.

## Goal 2.

Ruidoso has a well-trained workforce with the skills needed by Ruidoso businesses and institutions.

**POLICY 2.1.** *Prepare youth for economic opportunity.*

**ACTION 2.1.A.** Enhance youth access to Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) related occupations:

- Support and promote K-12 recent investment in CTE programs. Make regional businesses aware of programs to provide internships or tours.
- Work with K-12 and hospital to establish a career pathway program into health care
- Consider hosting a STEM fair in Midtown focused on showcasing CTE machining and construction projects.

**ACTION 2.1.B.** Engage youth with industry clusters:

- Encourage and support youth programs tied to outdoor recreation. This will begin to build a pipeline of talent for the industry as well.
- Encourage businesses in outdoor industry cluster to support K-12 sporting clubs (e.g., hiking, biking, skiing).
- Develop apprenticeship programs for construction industry, creating a career path for students from the RHS construction trades classes.
- Sponsor and support a culinary contest for kids that utilizes the school's commercial kitchen. Showcase competition in Midtown.



**ACTION 2.1.C.** Enhance the public library's ability to promote career readiness and entrepreneurship:

- Develop a series of programs and trainings at the library for teens and adults to support and promote career readiness and entrepreneurship.
- Provide resources and equipment to support career readiness and entrepreneurial pursuits at the public library. Examples include online job search resources and equipment for video creation and podcasting.

**POLICY 2.2.** Invest in ENMU–Ruidoso.

**ACTION 2.2.A.** Align industry with college programs:

- When meeting with industry clusters to determine necessary skills training, include ENMU–Ruidoso in meetings to develop curriculum as necessary.
- Encourage business owners to help craft and instruct skills programs.
- Support and promote Small Business Development Center (SBDC). Work with industry to tailor to specific needs such as restaurant management.

**ACTION 2.2.B.** Enhance campus assets:

- Support development of student housing for ENMU–Ruidoso students
- Support development of startup assets such as commercial kitchen to enhance culinary program or maker space to encourage craft manufacturing.
- Build broadband to allow for provision of nursing program and other advanced courses.

**POLICY 2.3.** Attract talent back to Ruidoso.

**ACTION 2.3.A.** Embrace the “homecomers”:

- Create a Task Force (including ENMU–Ruidoso) of diverse local residents that are the demographic make-up of the target audience.
- Task Force develops strategy for messaging, events and local engagement to attract desired group. Promote campaign with the high school and ENMU alumni database or utilizing LinkedIn Premium.

**ACTION 2.3.B.** Support families by investing in a recreation center with indoor pool to support families year-round, working with private developers to remove barriers to building more entry level single-family residential for families, and encouraging restaurants to cater to families through retail training.

### THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

“ Attract mid-range businesses to Ruidoso by having good internet infrastructure, training at the college for jobs people want, and create a task force to bring in more businesses. ”

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

# Goal 3. *Ruidoso provides for locals.*

## *POLICY 3.1. Continue to enhance Midtown.*

**ACTION 3.1.A.** Maximize the existing building stock by taking inventory vacant buildings. Work with building owners to determine if there are barriers to renting space and continue to support and invest in the storefront improvement program.

**ACTION 3.1.B.** Align retail and industrial clusters:

- Encourage new storefront tasting rooms, manufacturing production, outdoor recreation services in Midtown.
- Encourage breweries in Midtown.
- Promote and encourage a farmer's market that sells local produce and goods.

**ACTION 3.1.C.** Introduce year-round customers:

- Tailor retail to the year-round residents with consistent and quality service and product.
- Encourage development of office and co-working space in Midtown.
- Encourage market-rate apartment development in Midtown.

## *POLICY 3.2. Support local retailers and expand the Market.*

**ACTION 3.2.A.** Cultivate success for existing retailers:

- Hire a retail coach to help with store layout, window display and marketing to improve revenues. Michele Reeves with Civilis is recommended. As identified in the business survey in Appendix A, marketing is the most requested support.
- Have consultant educate retailers on the importance of collaboration regarding hours of operation and event promotion and engagement.
- Encourage restaurant management/culinary training for peak season
- Help create a succession planning program with SBDC to guide current owners into successful sales of businesses.

**ACTION 3.2.B.** Make it easy for new retailers to enter market by developing a How-to-Do Business Program/Guide for business owners that want to open a business in Ruidoso and developing a "match-making" database of retail businesses that have gone through succession planning as an investment opportunity to "homecomers" as a recruitment tool.

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# LAND USE

## OVERVIEW

This chapter describes Ruidoso's zoning, land uses, and development patterns and the goals, policies, and actions that can support the Village's vision for future development.

## CURRENT CONDITIONS

### Zoning

The Village of Ruidoso is 14.3 square miles. Fourteen zoning districts regulate the types of land uses allowed and standards for development as described in Figure 6-1 and 6-3.

#### *Residential Districts*

The vast amount of land is zoned R-1 for single-family detached homes. Forty large lots zoned as R-3 Multiple-Family Residential Districts (which allow up to 14 dwelling units/acre) are primarily located in the southeastern part of the Village and south of Sudderth Drive. A handful of R-4 High-Density Residential lots (which allow up to 20 dwellings per acre) are located along Mechem Drive, Meadows Drive, Jack Little Drive, Granite Drive, Racquet Drive, Lower Terrace Drive, and the southernmost corner of the Village on Carrizo Canyon Road. There is also one agricultural/residential zone (AR) that allows farmland with an associated farmhouse in the southeastern most corner of the Village. Short-term rentals are also allowed in residential districts, and many homes are second homes for seasonal use. A 2019 text amendment to the code allows accessory dwellings in all residential districts. These accessory dwellings are not permitted for short-term rental use.

#### *Commercial Districts*

The Village has four commercial districts, which are primarily flanking its main streets: Sudderth Drive, Mechem Drive, Vision Drive, Main Road, Gavilan Canyon Drive, US 70, and their cross streets. The districts include those meant to serve neighborhoods with local shopping centers (C-1), low-intensity commercial centers along arterials (C-2), the denser Midtown shopping district with shops closely spaced and residential uses allowed on upper floors (C-3), and heavy, construction-oriented businesses and services (C-4), which are only located along US 70 at the southern edge of the Village.

The vast amount of land in the Village is zoned R-1 for single-family detached homes.

### Other Districts

- **Planned Unit Development Districts.** The Village has two types of Planned Unit Development Districts (PUDs) that allow for more flexible standards and a mix of uses: PUD and M-PUD.
  - The PUD district allows a mix of housing and local commercial as permitted in the R and C-1 Districts; the Links at Sierra Blanca, the area surrounding Grindstone Lake, a small area on Country Club Drive, and large area west of Mechem Drive bounded by Avalanche Trail, which is vacant.
  - The M-PUD district allows any combination of land uses; there are two areas with such zoning: A small M-PUD site is located on Mechem Drive at the northernmost part of the Village, which is home to the Swiss Chalet; and a large area flanks State Highway 532, which includes the Alto Lake Dam area. The M-PUD around Alto Lake and Eagle Creek aims to restrict development in this sensitive watershed area.<sup>1</sup>
- **Industrial District.** There are only two parcels zoned as Industrial (I-1) in the Village; they are adjacent to one another in the northeast corner off Gavilan Canyon Road.
- **Sierra Blanca Regional Airport.** The airport is a publicly owned, public use airport owned and operated by the Village of Ruidoso and governed by Airport Hazard Regulations (Article V), by which all uses must abide.

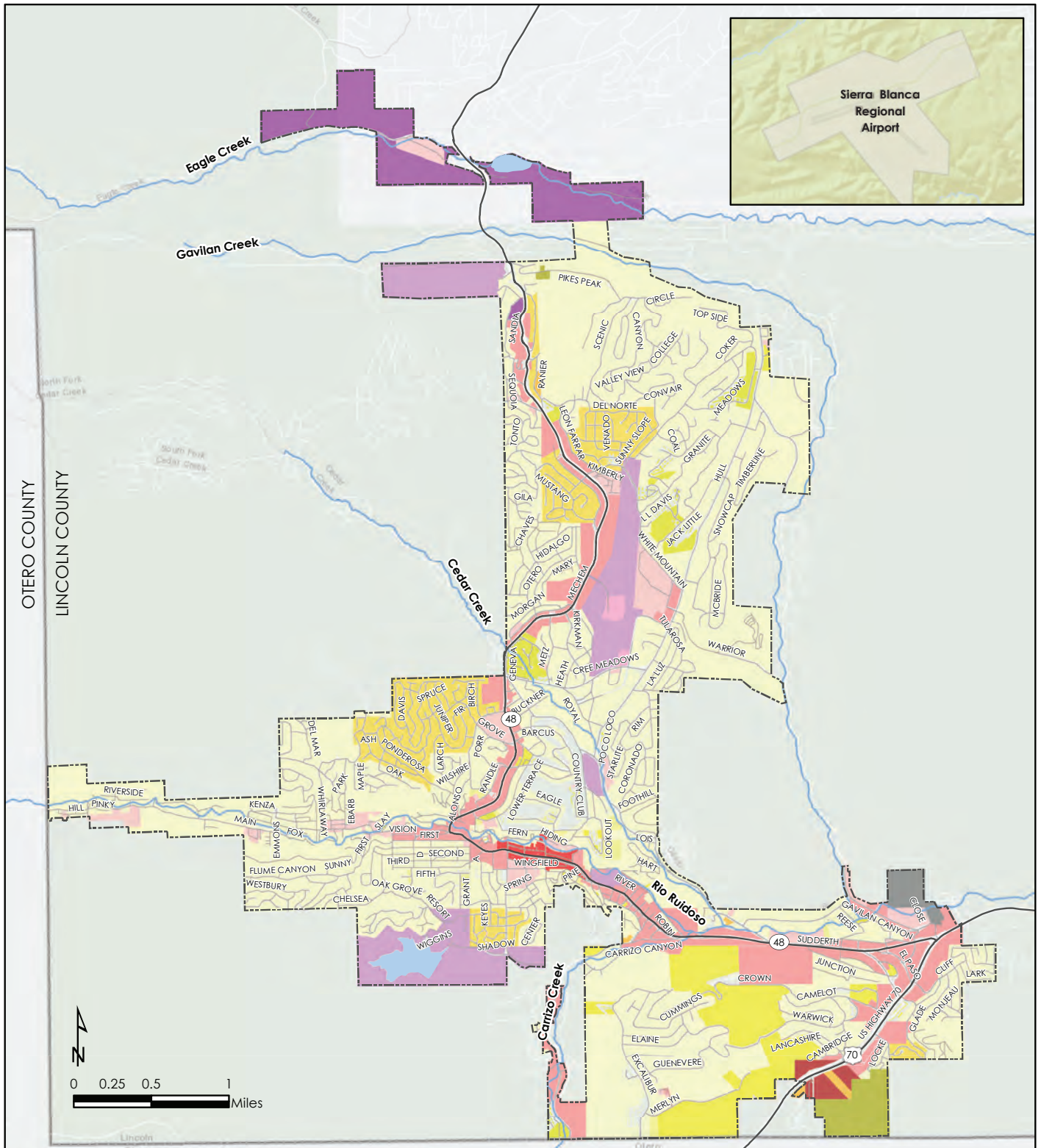


Source: DiscoverRuidoso.com

*Midtown has its own zone (C-3) to allow for more density.*

<sup>1</sup> Planning and Zoning Commission, Regular Meeting Minutes, AX01-001 Annexation, February 20, 2001, Governing Body, Village of Ruidoso, Regular Meeting Minutes, March 27, 2001, and Ordinance 2001-02.

**FIGURE 6-1. ZONING DISTRICTS**



SOURCE: VILLAGE OF RUIDOSO, 2019

**LEGEND**

- VILLAGE OF RUIDOSO
- RIVERS AND CREEKS
- ROADS

**COMMERCIAL**

- C-1
- C-2
- C-3
- C-4

**RESIDENTIAL**

- R-1
- R-2
- R-3
- R-4
- AR-1
- M-1
- M-2

**MIXED USE**

- PUD
- M-PUD

**INDUSTRIAL**

- I-1

## Land Use

### *Land Ownership*

In addition to the zoning districts that regulate which types of land uses are allowed in the Village, it is important to note there is a significant amount of land that is vacant, underutilized, and owned by US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and the Mescalero Apache Tribe. These uses are described below and shown on Figure 6-2: Land Use.

- **Vacant Land.** There is a significant amount of vacant land within the Village boundaries identified in the Village's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping although much of it is on steep terrain or in floodplains that is not suitable for development. Given the limitations that Ruidoso's terrain creates on development, vacant land should be reviewed for its potential to provide housing or other needed land uses.
- **US Forest Service.** The Lincoln National Forest surrounds Ruidoso and is managed by the US Forest Service. The Smokey Bear Ranger District of the Lincoln National Forest has its headquarters in Ruidoso on Mechem Drive.
- **Mescalero Apache Tribe.** Abutting Ruidoso's southern boundary is the Mescalero Apache Reservation in Otero County. Many of Ruidoso's visitors travel to Mescalero to visit the Inn of the Mountain Gods Resort and Casino. The Mescalero Apache Tribe also runs Ski Apache ski resort on land leased from the US Forest Service.
- **Bureau of Land Management.** The area surrounding the Sierra Blanca Regional Airport is owned by the Bureau of Land Management, which includes Fort Stanton National Conservation Area (NCA). Fort Stanton is operated by the State.

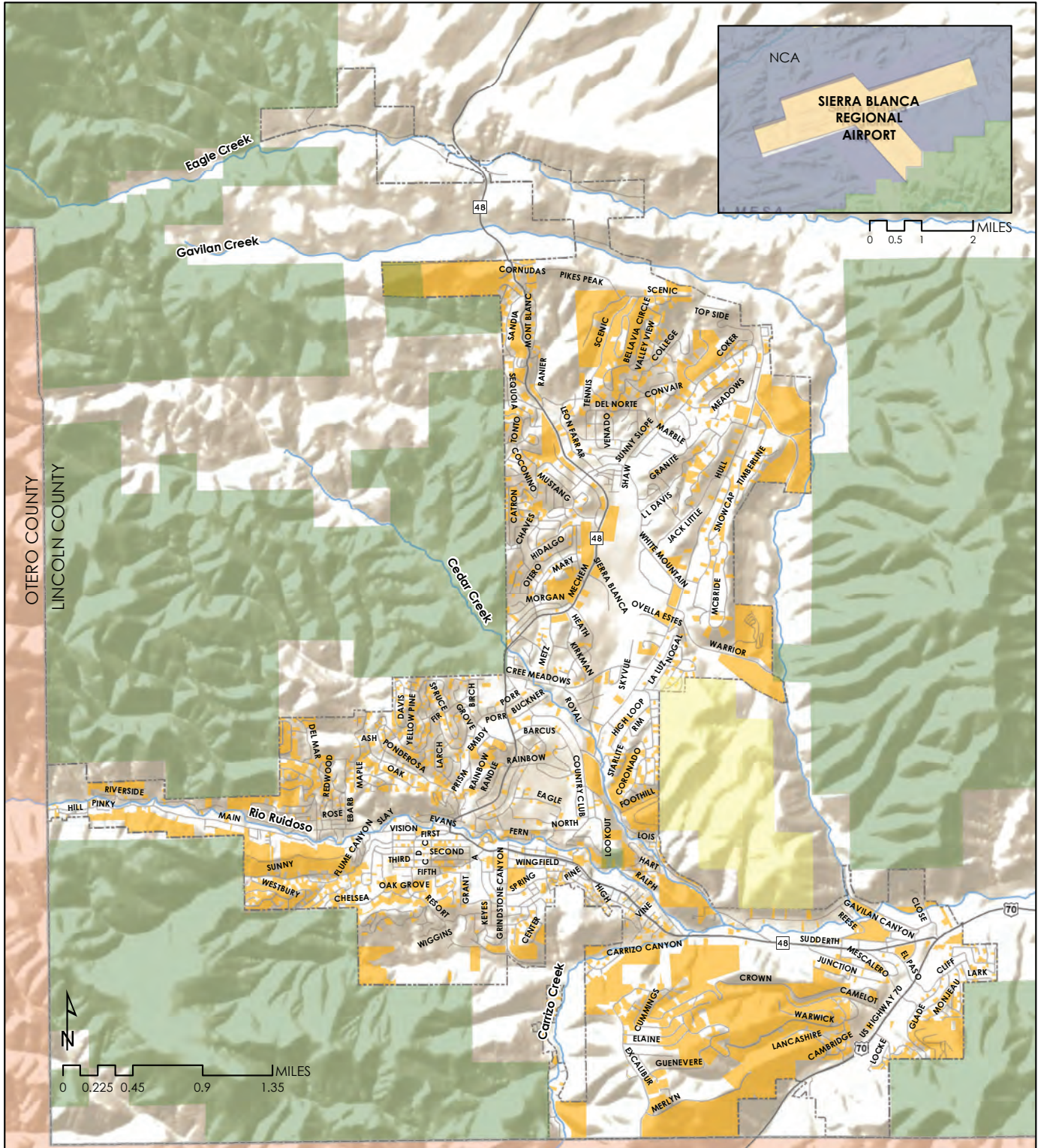


*The zipline at Ski Apache is a popular way to experience nature.*

Source: DiscoverRuidoso.com



FIGURE 6-2. LAND USE



SOURCE: VILLAGE OF RUIDOSO, 2019

LEGEND

- VILLAGE OF RUIDOSO
- RIVERS AND CREEKS
- VACANT
- BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
- LINCOLN NATIONAL FOREST
- STATE
- MESCALERO TRIBE

## THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

“It is important that people clean up their property.”

Comprehensive Plan Community Meeting

### Land Use Issues

Ruidoso's natural environment is an amazing asset, but it also puts significant constraints on available land for development due to sensitive watershed areas, slope conditions, and forestland. The land that is developable requires a careful look at whether it's being used for its highest and best use and whether Village land uses needs are being met.

- **Underutilized Land.** Vacant, unsightly, and underutilized properties, particularly evident along Sudderth and Mechem drives, were mentioned as detrimental to the Village's character; when buildings sit vacant or in bad condition, it sends the message that the Village is not open for business. In general, “failing infrastructure and aging buildings” are contributing to the challenges that the Village faces.<sup>2</sup>
- **Demand for Recreation Space.** The Village's existing fields and courts are being used by several groups for various sports, which complicates scheduling and limits playing time among locals and especially during tournaments in the Village. More sports fields (particularly outdoor fields) and a recreation center that can be used by multiple users throughout the day and night and throughout the seasons are a top priority for many residents. Recreation is described in more detail in the Parks and Recreation Chapter.
- **Demand for Manufacturing Space.** Stakeholders shared their need for small-scale manufacturing space, such as maker space for custom recreational equipment or clothing and commercial kitchens for food, wine, and spirits production in the Village. C-1, C-2, and C-3 should be updated to permit small-scale manufacturing as a conditional use. Stakeholders also identified Village-owned land near the airport as appropriate for manufacturing or industrial uses. It should be rezoned C-4 to accommodate an industrial park.
- **Demand for Quality Workforce and Affordable Housing.** There is a real demand for housing that Ruidoso's workforce, seniors, and young people can afford. Many of Ruidoso's employees, residents, and students cannot afford to live in Ruidoso. More affordable and workforce housing options are needed, such as accessory units, multifamily housing, and tiny homes. The City recently amended the code to allow accessory units in residential districts to provide more small, affordable units. Commercial districts C-1, C-2, and C-3 should be updated to permit residential (with no minimum number of units) and live/workspace. Housing is described in more detail in the Housing Chapter.
- **Village-Owned Land.** Because buildable land is scarce, one of the Village-owned land areas that may become available for other uses that help the local economy is The Links at Sierra Blanca Golf Course. The future use of this land should be studied in a master planning process to determine if it is suitable for accommodating some of the demands listed above.
- **Outdated Addressing.** The addressing system used to locate properties throughout the Village is outdated and makes it challenging for emergency response vehicles to find properties. Staff recommends the Village be readdressed for safety and efficiency purposes.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ruidosonews.com/story/news/local/community/2018/12/28/ruidoso-adopts-strategic-plan-lists-threats-goals/2435323002/>

**FIGURE 6-3. DESCRIPTION OF ZONING DISTRICTS**

ZONING DISTRICT	TOTAL ACRES	PERMITTED USES	RECOMMENDED CHANGES
<b>RESIDENTIAL</b>			
<b>R-1 Single-Family</b> (Max: 4 du/acre)	4,411	Single-family homes, parks	Reduce the minimum total lot size from 10,000 sf to 7,000 sf in undeveloped areas of R-1; this change does not apply to existing R-1 neighborhoods.
<b>R-2 Two-Family</b> (Max: 7 du/acre)	38	Single- and two-family dwellings, parks	Reduce the minimum total lot size from 9,000 sf to 3,500 sf. Reduce minimum lot area per unit requirement to 6,000 sf.
<b>R-3 Multiple-Family</b> (Max: 14 du/acre)	374	Two- and multi-family dwellings (≤6 units), parks	Reduce the minimum total lot size to 3,500 sf for two-family units and 5,000 sf for multi-family. Reduce minimum lot area per unit requirement to 2,000 sf.
<b>R-4 High-Density</b> (Max: 20 du/acre)	101	Multifamily and townhouse dwellings (≥4 ≤6 units), parks	No change.
<b>AR-1 Agricultural/Residential</b>	99	Farms, ranches, nurseries/greenhouses, parks	No change.
<b>M-1 Low-Density Mobile Home</b> (Max: 5 du/acre)	427	Mobile homes, single-family dwellings	Permit townhomes, and two- and multi-family dwellings; parks.
<b>M-2 Medium-Density Mobile Home</b> (Max: 10 du/acre)	16	Mobile homes, single-family dwellings	Permit townhomes, and two- and multi-family dwellings; parks.
<b>COMMERCIAL</b>			
<b>C-1 Neighborhood</b> (Max: 2,000 SF)	253	Commercial uses (stores, salons, galleries, offices, laundries, restaurants/bakeries), lodging	Permit residential; parks. Add small-scale manufacturing as a conditional use.
<b>C-2 Community</b> (No Max)	660	Same as C-1, plus banks, club, entertainment, medical, schools	
<b>C-3 Midtown</b> (No Max)	31	Same as C-2, plus a single residential apartment in a commercial structure	Permit residential on upper floors or behind commercial structures; parks. Add small-scale manufacturing as a conditional use.
<b>C-4 Heavy</b>	38	Uses selling, servicing and storing equipment, autos, materials, light industrial	Rezone the Airport C-4 or I-1; all uses must still abide by the Airport Hazard Regulations.
<b>OTHER</b>			
<b>I-1 Industrial</b>	46	Industrial, auto, storage, and agricultural uses with-out explosive materials	Rezone the Airport C-4 or I-1; all uses must still abide by the Airport Hazard Regulations.
<b>PUD Planned Unit Development</b>	515	Uses permitted in the R and C-1 Districts	No change.
<b>M-PUD Planned Unit Development</b>	393	Any combination of uses; it restricts development in sensitive areas	No change.

Note: du = dwelling units

## EXISTING PLANS AND POLICIES

In addition to the zoning code districts described in the previous section, the Village has the following two documents that affect land use decisions:

- **Village of Ruidoso Managers Report, 2018.** The annual Managers Report identifies areas of change and projects, such as land acquisition and land use changes.
- **Village of Ruidoso Strategic Plan, 2018.** The Village's annual Strategic Plan was completed in November 2018 and identified short-term and long-term goals and priorities.

According to these documents, the following land use improvements are underway:

- **Affordable Housing.** Workforce Housing Advisory Board voted to issue a request for proposals for qualified housing developers to develop the Village-owned property in Midtown with affordable housing. There are two funding sources that the Village can use: Low Income Housing Tax Credit and the National Housing Trust Fund.
- **Horton Complex.** The Village plans to move all Village offices into Horton Complex to create a centralized location for residents and builders to get permits and approvals.
- **Increase Campsites.** The Village's Strategic Plan identified the long-term goal of building campsites at Grindstone and Bonito lakes. A campsite is currently being constructed at Grindstone (see Parks and Recreation chapter).
- **Acquisition of Property.** Part of the Forest Thinning and Fire Mitigation Capital Outlay Project is focused on acquiring easements and rights-of-way to improve watershed health (See Natural Resources chapter).
- **Nob Hill Elementary School Re-Use.** There is an opportunity to partner with the school district at the old Nob Hill elementary school to house teachers.



*Campsites in and around Ruidoso are in demand.*

Source: FS.USDA.gov

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

The following goals, policies, and actions should be implemented to maintain and enhance Ruidoso's land uses, development, and quality of life for the community, including:

**Goal 1.** The Village's zoning is updated and supports a variety of land uses that meet current and future demand.

**POLICY 1.1.** *Ensure zoning ordinance is consistent and simple to follow.*

**ACTION 1.1.A.** Rewrite the zoning code.

**POLICY 1.2.** *Ensure zoning allows for more housing options.*

**ACTION 2.1.A.** Update zoning code to permit residential in the C-1 and C-2 commercial districts outright, and in C-3 above or behind commercial uses.

**ACTION 2.1.B.** Update zoning code to permit multifamily housing in mobile home districts to provide more housing options for Ruidoso's workforce.

**Goal 2.** Ruidoso's sensitive watershed is protected from development.

**POLICY 2.1.** *Ensure zoning protects sensitive, undevelopable environmental areas.*

**ACTION 2.1.A.** Create a zoning district or an overlay zone that restricts development in areas needing protection as determined by the inventory of undevelopable or land unsuitable for development (Action 1.1.F. in the Natural Resources Chapter) and specifies the types of uses and development allowed to protect the watershed, waterways, and sensitive habitats.

**ACTION 2.1.B.** Establish a public education campaign about these sensitive areas, how the public can help protect them and benefit from their protection.

## Goal 3. Building renovation and property redevelopment is incentivized.

**POLICY 3.1.** *Develop incentives for property owners to improve their buildings, façades/storefronts, and properties.*

**ACTION 3.1.A.** Create an easy step-by-step guide for property owners to complete improvements.

**ACTION 3.1.B.** Provide guidance for loan assistance for low interest loan program for property improvements, if the owner is low-income, or a low interest loan for building improvements or façade improvements in Midtown.

**ACTION 3.1.C.** Revise nuisance and abandonment ordinances to require nominal upfront fees rather than enforcement fines.

**ACTION 3.1.D.** Draft Clean and Lien Ordinance to give the Village a means to abate blighted properties by requiring property owners, trustees or beneficiaries holding legal entitlement of a property to pay a registration fee to the Village and to maintain their properties and prevent them from appearing abandoned.

## Goal 4. Ruidoso's limited buildable land is appropriately utilized.

**POLICY 4.1.** *Permit industrial uses, storage, and warehouses at or near the airport to support existing business and attract new business.*

**ACTION 4.1.A.** Update zoning around the airport to allow light industrial, warehousing, and other aviation related businesses (such as charter flights, aviation maintenance, aerial acrobatics, etc.) that abide by the Airport Hazard Regulations to promote regional economic development.

**ACTION 4.1.B.** Work with the Ruidoso Chamber of Commerce and business owners to determine the ideal conditions and locations for such space and the impediments to developing it.

# Goal 5.

Sustainable construction and renovations that have less impact on natural resources are promoted.

**POLICY 5.1.** *Establish the tools for builders to use sustainable construction materials and techniques in locations that have the least impact on natural resources.*

**ACTION 5.1.A.** Encourage builders to follow the standards of the Build Green New Mexico program.

**ACTION 5.1.B.** Encourage solar on all commercial and institutional buildings.

**ACTION 5.1.C.** Follow EPA's Energy Smart guidelines; water- and energy-conserving indoor fixtures.

**ACTION 5.1.D.** Identify opportunities for industrial symbiosis to allow construction to use another company's byproducts.

**ACTION 5.1.E.** Adopt a residential green building code that includes Actions 5.1.A. through 5.1.D. and detail incentives for property owners.

**ACTION 5.1.F.** Provide incentives for using sustainable building materials and practices, including repurposing building materials, such as rebates for following Actions 5.1.A. through D.

**ACTION 5.1.G.** Provide incentives for rehabbing existing structures that are already serviced with utilities and infrastructure, such as rebates.

**ACTION 5.1.H.** Develop a workforce training program to teach sustainable building technologies.

**POLICY 5.2.** *Prevent property from extended periods of vacancy or neglect.*

**ACTION 5.2.A.** Update Zoning Ordinance to require property be secured and maintained to a base level to maintain health and safety levels that discourages property owners from leaving buildings vacant.

**ACTION 5.2.B.** Restructure property tax rates to be higher on the land than the improvements.

**ACTION 5.2.C.** Work with property owners to keep their buildings in good repair through consistent code enforcement.

## **Goal 6.** The Village uses technology to improve emergency response and efficiencies across departments.

**POLICY 6.1.** Continue to utilize technology and develop the Village GIS capabilities by integrating data and mapping resources, including natural resources, existing land uses, property footprints, and addresses.

**ACTION 6.1.A.** Conduct a thorough update across all Village departments to update the Village GIS data base with available natural resource, land use, and hazard mitigation data.

**ACTION 6.1.B.** Establish the process and criteria for readdressing throughout the Village.

**ACTION 6.1.C.** Conduct a public education campaign about readdressing before it is done.

**ACTION 6.1.D.** Readdress all Village properties in coordination with all Village departments.

## **Goal 7.** Land use designations provide ample opportunities for community space.

**POLICY 7.1.** Update zoning to allow outdoor recreation, indoor recreation, and camping land uses in appropriate areas.

**ACTION 7.1.A.** Update Commercial Districts to permit parks, community centers, and recreation centers.

**ACTION 7.1.B.** In coordination with the Parks and Recreation goals, identify areas of the Village that could be used for recreation fields.

**ACTION 7.1.C.** In coordination with the Parks and Recreation and Natural Resources goals, identify appropriate locations for campgrounds/RV parking near trails and recreation destinations.



# Goal 8.

Ruidoso's rich and varied history is recognized and shared.

**POLICY 8.1.** *Enact a historic preservation ordinance to recognize the Village's history and historic landmarks.*

**ACTION 8.1.A.** Conduct a historic resource survey to identify significant buildings and sites.

**ACTION 8.1.B.** Develop a map and brochure of significant sites that tells the story of Ruidoso's rich past.

**ACTION 8.1.C.** Encourage property owners of historic sites to put up historic plaques.



SANCTUARY  
TAP ROOM  
& Event Center

**SANCTUARY**  
**ON THE RIVER**  
**TAP ROOM**

# HOUSING

## OVERVIEW

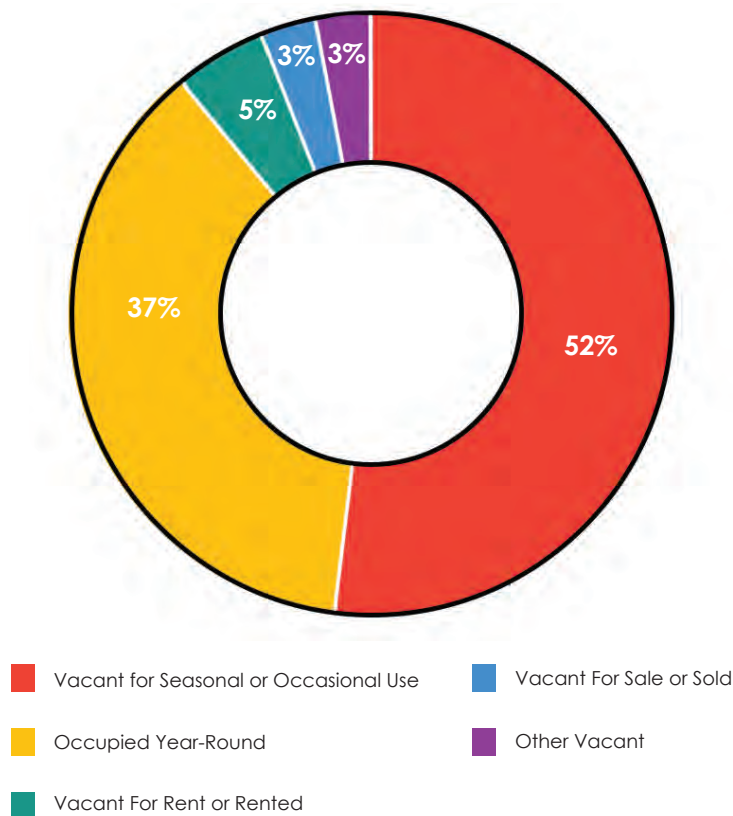
One of the central goals of comprehensive planning is addressing the need for adequate housing. The Village adopted its Affordable Housing Plan in 2015; its vision and goals are referenced in this chapter. The Comprehensive Plan will extend the analysis to address the community's need for market rate housing for permanent residents and the anticipated demand for seasonal housing.

## CURRENT CONDITIONS

### Housing Occupancy

As shown in Figure 7-1, more than half (52 percent) of housing in Ruidoso is vacant for seasonal or occasional use. Following that, 37 percent is occupied year-round. Eleven percent of housing in Ruidoso is vacant.

**FIGURE 7-1. HOUSING OCCUPANCY**

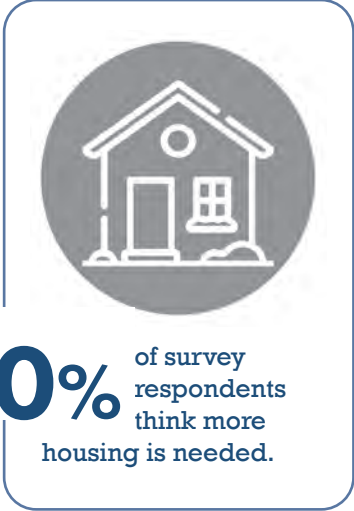


Source: US Census: 2010, American Community Survey, 2013-2017 5-Year Estimates



Source: DiscoverRuidoso.com

*The predominant housing type in Ruidoso in 2017 is single unit, detached houses at 64 percent of the total housing.*



Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

**Housing Tenure**

Over 78 percent of occupied housing units are owner occupied, and 21 percent are renter occupied. While a mix of housing types are needed, most people who live in Ruidoso year-round prefer to own their own homes.

**Housing Allowed by Zoning**

The Village's zoning districts dictate what types of housing is allowed within the Village limits. Most land in Ruidoso (4,411 acres) is zoned for single-family detached homes, which fits within the R-1 district (see Figure 7-2). Second units are allowed in single-family districts. The second-largest area (515 acres) that allows housing is the mixed-use planned unit development zoning district (PUD); the mixed-use planned unit development zoning district (M-PUD) occupies 393 acres. The PUDs are the most flexible of any district and allow any combination of residential and commercial types upon approval. It is notable that the PUD area in the north is vacant land and could be targeted for new housing opportunities. The third-largest area (427 acres) is zoned for low-density mobile homes (no more than 5 dwelling units per acre); this zone aims to allow for affordable homes. There is also a large area of land on the south side of the Village that is zoned R-3 and is vacant. This area also could be targeted for new housing.

**Existing Housing Stock**

According to the American Community Survey, 64 percent of housing in Ruidoso in 2017 is single unit, detached houses. Mobile homes comprise 18 percent of total housing. The remaining housing in Ruidoso accounts for 19 percent of the total, as shown in Figure 7-2.

**FIGURE 7-2. TOTAL HOUSING UNITS BY TYPE**

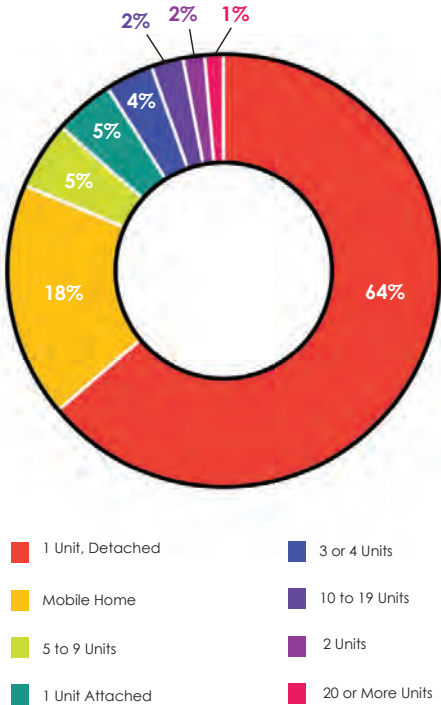
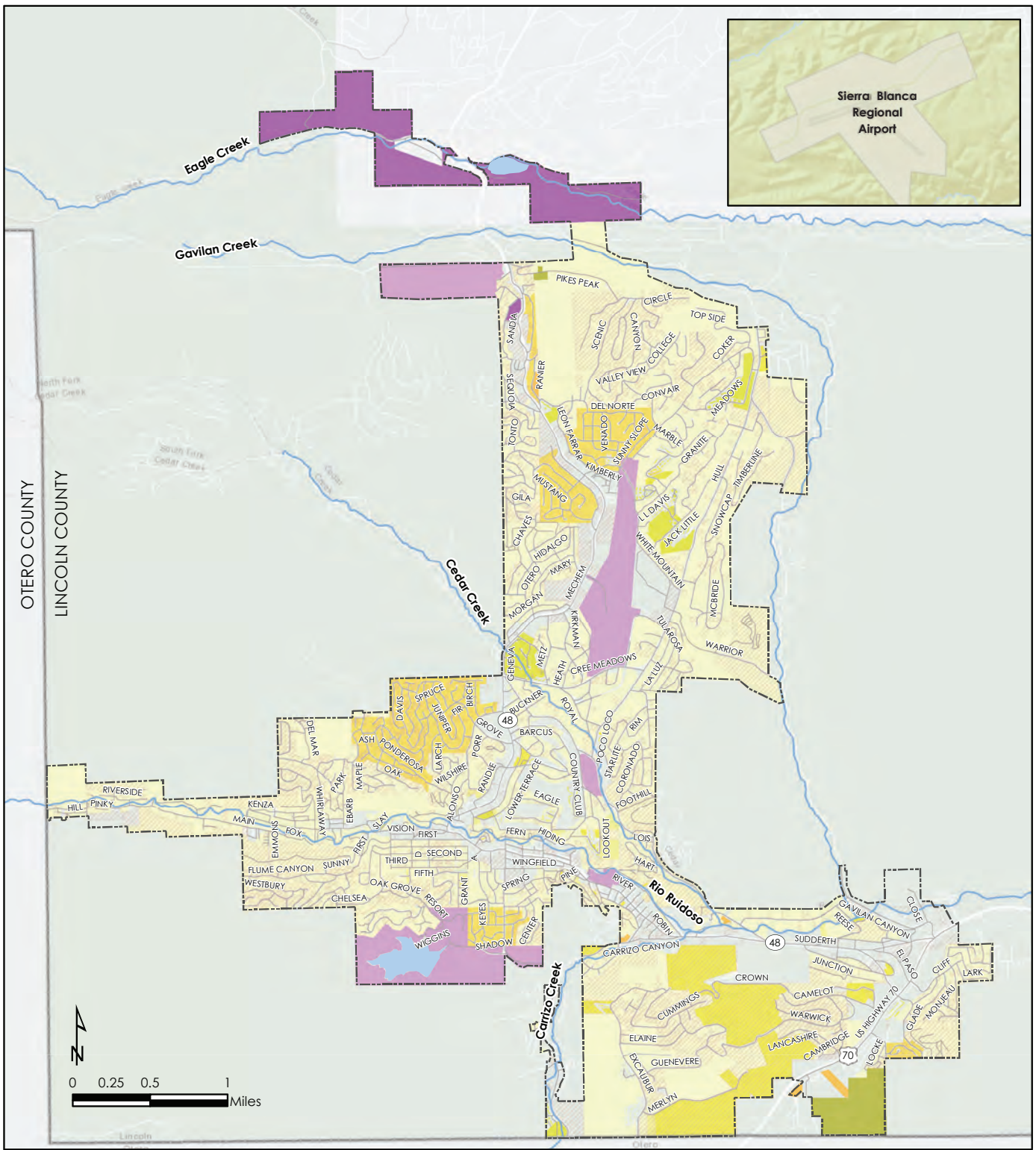


FIGURE 7-3. HOUSING ZONING DISTRICTS



SOURCE: VILLAGE OF RUIDOSO, 2019

LEGEND

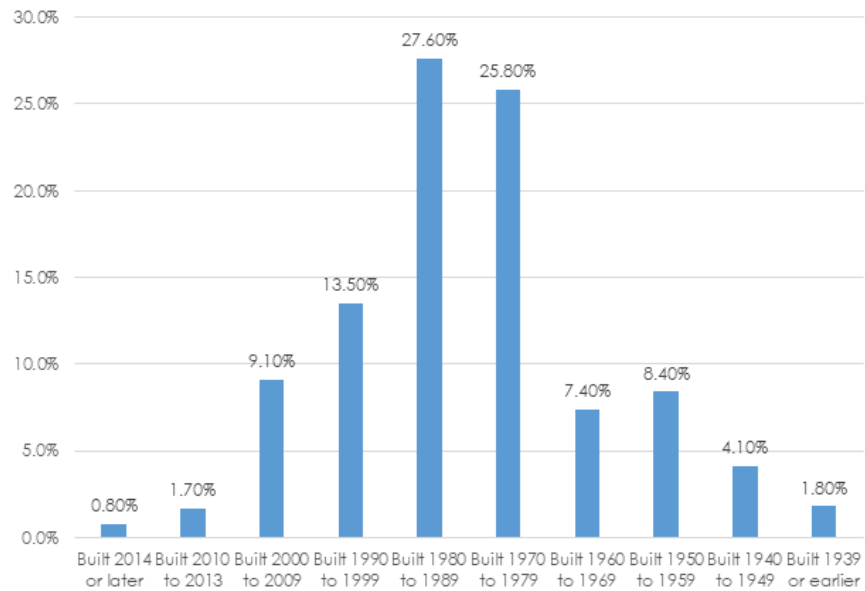
	VILLAGE OF RUIDOSO		R-1		R-3		AR-1		M-2		PUD		VACANT
	RIVERS AND CREEKS		R-2		R-4		M-1		M-PUD				
	ROADS												

The Affordable Housing Plan determined that the greatest need for rental housing is one- and two-bedroom apartments for households with incomes below 40 percent of area median income.

### Age of Housing Stock

More than half the housing stock in Ruidoso is at least 30 years old (built between 1970 and 1989), as shown in Figure 7-4. Only 11.6 percent of the housing stock was built after 2000. As shown in the Economic Development chapter, a small number of building permits have been issued in recent years and most of them have been for single-family vacation homes.

**FIGURE 7-4. AGE OF HOUSING STOCK, 2017**



Source: American Community Survey, 2013-2017 5-Year Estimates

### Household Characteristics

There are 3,102 total households in Ruidoso with an average household size of 2.49 people. The largest household type is households with one or more people that are 60 years and over. Families with children are 20.5 percent of all households. More than a third of households are single-person households. The Affordable Housing Plan noted that families have difficulty finding homes for year-round living, and the low percentage of families is partially attributed to the lack of suitable housing.

### Home Values

Figure 7-6 shows the home values in Ruidoso. In 2017, the median home value in Ruidoso was \$176,872.<sup>1</sup> The largest number of homes sold in 2017 were in the \$150,000 – \$199,000 range. Following close behind were the homes sold within the \$200,000 – \$299,999 range, and then the homes sold in the \$100,000 – \$149,999 range.

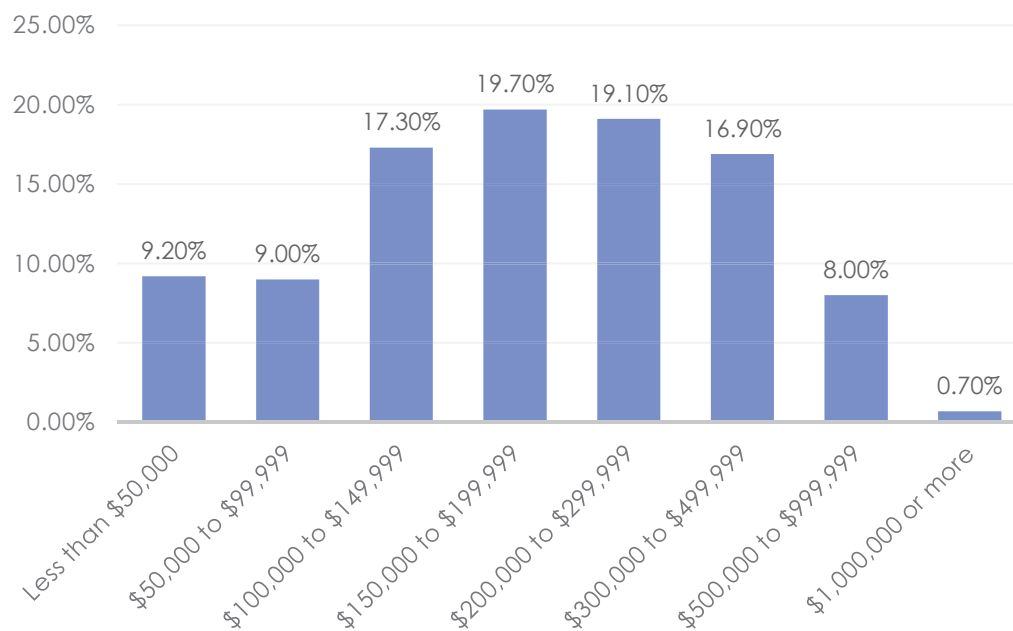
<sup>1</sup> www.neighborhoodscout.com

**FIGURE 7-5. HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS**

<b>TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS</b>	
Average Household Size (people)	3,102
<b>SELECTED HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE</b>	
Households with one or more people under 18 years	20.5%
Households with one or more people 60 years and over	60.1%
Householder living alone	33.4%
65 years and over	17.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

**FIGURE 7-6. VALUES OF HOMES SOLD IN 2017**



Source: American Community Survey, 2013-2017 5-Year Estimates



**53%** of survey respondents think more single-family housing is most needed despite the prevalence of single-family housing,

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

## Housing Needs

Ruidoso's housing needs are directly tied to Ruidoso's work force and hourly wage. According to the Village of Ruidoso Affordable Housing Plan, the maximum cost that households at 100 percent of the area median income (AMI) in Lincoln County could pay was \$190,000 in 2014; this figure represents the average household income resulting from the wage people working in Lincoln County and Ruidoso are expected to earn. Close to half (40 percent) of the units affordable to households with income below 80 percent of the AMI were condominiums in 2014. Because of the affordable housing shortage, 71 percent of people who work in Ruidoso cannot afford to live in the Village and commute from outside the Village.<sup>2</sup>

The Affordable Housing Plan determined that the greatest need for affordable rental housing is one- and two-bedroom apartments for households with incomes below 40 percent of area median income.

The Village of Ruidoso Affordable Housing Plan identifies the need for:

- Increasing the amount of affordable rental housing
- Adding single family homes with three or more bedrooms
- Improving senior housing and housing for people with disabilities
- Increasing rehabilitation and repair programs
- Adding more transitional housing, and emergency housing assistance

Market rate rentals and homes for families to buy are also needed. Higher quality rental housing for the area's workforce allows families who move to Ruidoso to find housing immediately while looking for a home to buy.

### Stakeholder Requests

Ruidoso's community and stakeholders have expressed concern with the current state of housing stock in the Village and have echoed the need for a variety of housing types:

- **More affordable/workforce housing options.** More than 46 percent of households who rent are cost burdened<sup>3</sup> in Ruidoso.<sup>4</sup> More affordable and workforce housing options are needed to support Ruidoso's workforce. The hourly wage restaurant and retail employees and others in the service industries directly affects what they can afford. Given the limited land available and that half the Village's housing is used for seasonal or occasional use, more multifamily housing or accessory units in single-family and two-family residential districts could be good solutions.<sup>5</sup> The Village's short-term rentals are needed for tourists, but there needs to be affordable housing available for people who live and work in Ruidoso year-round.

<sup>2</sup> [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57cf2dbf1b631b3eb2d911db/t/5b1aef-28f950b7c363860d8c/1528491827846/Ruidoso\\_Affordable\\_Housing\\_Plan.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57cf2dbf1b631b3eb2d911db/t/5b1aef-28f950b7c363860d8c/1528491827846/Ruidoso_Affordable_Housing_Plan.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Cost burdened is defined as "households who pay more than 30 percent of their gross income on rent."

<sup>4</sup> <https://affordablehousingonline.com/housing-search/New-Mexico/Ruidoso>

<sup>5</sup> US Census, ACS



- **Student Housing.** Similar to the needs of Ruidoso's workforce, ENMU–Ruidoso students need housing that is affordable. In addition, the community expressed a need for more housing options that would appeal to a younger demographic and allow Ruidoso's youth to stay in town after they finish high school.
- **Senior Housing.** Senior housing options, as well as senior in-home support options are limited in Ruidoso. The community expressed a need for more opportunities for housing for seniors. This could be addressed by multifamily housing, as well as accessory dwelling units, which would allow caregivers to live onsite in a separate dwelling unit or allow seniors to live in the smaller accessory units and rent their homes to families.
- **Market Rate Housing.** In communities where the supply of housing is constrained, it can be difficult to project the need for market rate housing. When families can't fund suitable housing they move elsewhere, artificially constraining growth.

### THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

“Affordable housing for working families is needed.”

Comprehensive Plan Community Meeting

### Existing Plans and Policies

- **Village of Ruidoso Affordable Housing Plan, 2015.** The purpose of this housing plan was to identify housing needs and barriers to housing development within the Village and propose goals and implementation steps aimed at addressing housing needs. The plan includes a community profile, housing needs assessment, land use and policy review, and goals, policies, and quantifiable objectives. The Village Council proposed to address the needs through policy and regulatory changes, development partnerships, assistance to non-profit housing providers, and funding/ financing that uses Village resources to leverage other public and private resources.
- **Short-term Residential Overlay District.** In 2017, the Village adopted an ordinance (Section 54-106) to allow short-term rentals in residential districts and to prevent impacts on residential neighborhoods. The ordinance was updated in March 2019 and requires a permit that is good for one year. It specifies that owners must make renters aware of Village rules and requirements regarding fire safety and code compliance and get gross receipts tax number certification and lodgers' tax registration number.
- **Accessory Dwelling Units.** The Village updated its zoning during the comprehensive planning process to allow accessory units in single-family residential districts. Accessory dwelling units (also referred to as granny units or in-law units) are small apartments on the same parcel of homes. They provide a viable and affordable option for workforce, student, caregiver, senior, or seasonal/ temporary housing. Incentivizing more accessory units was expressed by the community.
- **State Policies for Low Income Housing Tax Credits.** The New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority (MFA) administers the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program in the state and establishes policies and priorities for project selection. The LIHTC program provides incentives for private investment in the construction and rehabilitation of affordable housing. The state's Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP) lays out the criteria for project selection in New Mexico. The Village considers this program to be a primary means of achieving the housing goals of the Affordable Housing Plan and is pursuing development of rental housing in the Village. It will be important to align proposed projects with the QAP priorities. Lincoln County

The Village updated its zoning during the comprehensive planning process to allow accessory units in single-family residential districts.

### THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

“Make sure full-time residents can find reasonable housing.”

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

has been identified as an area of statistically demonstrated need in the past, but is not included in the 2019 QAP. Qualified Census Tracts must have 50 percent of households with incomes below 60 percent of the Area Median Gross Income (AMGI) or have a poverty rate of 25 percent or more. Difficult Development Areas (DDA) are areas with high land, construction and utility costs relative to the area median income and are based on Fair Market Rents, Income Limits, the 2010 census counts, and 5-year American Community Survey (ACS) data. When the QAP is updated, the Village should provide supporting information to include Lincoln County as a Tier 1 or Tier 2 area of need, possibly based on development difficulty. Lincoln County is listed as a DDA in 2019.

### Projects Underway

- **Affordable Housing.** Since the adoption of the Affordable Housing Plan in 2015, the Village sold vacant Village-owned parcels to create a trust fund and has identified locations that are appropriate for affordable housing. The Workforce Housing Advisory Board is using the Improvement Plan process to track the progress and the recommendations of the housing study. The Advisory Board voted to issue a request for proposals for qualified housing developers to develop the Village-owned property in Midtown with affordable housing and/or purchase Village property for best use development. As of summer 2019, the Village was in negotiations with a developer to build 72 affordable units. Twenty percent of these will be dedicated to people with low-to-moderate incomes; the remaining units will be dedicated to people with 50-70 percent of median income. The Village also planned and held a local housing fair in September 2019.
- **Workforce Housing.** At the New Mexico 2018 Housing Summit, Village leaders learned about historic tax credit and low-income tax credit projects. There is an opportunity to work with Ruidoso School District to redevelop their property located at Nob Hill Elementary into teacher housing provided by a school (referred to as a teacher-age).
- **Market Rate Housing.** The Village is currently in partnership with two developers to construct market rate housing in and near Midtown. Twelve market rate housing units over commercial are planned in Midtown. Nineteen single-family homes in a sub-division within a half-mile of Midtown are also being planned. The addition of these 103 units will begin to fill the demand for more housing options in the Village. Incentives to build mid-range housing will help continue the trend to meet the demand for homes for Ruidoso's middle-class residents.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

The following goals, policies, and actions should be implemented to support housing development and increase Ruidoso's housing options:

**Goal 1.** A variety of housing types and prices is available to meet the housing needs of Village residents. Continue to prioritize the acquisition of additional property appropriate for affordable and workforce housing.

**POLICY 1.1.** *Support the Village and Housing Advisory Board's work in identifying housing opportunity sites and developers to implement the Affordable Housing Plan.*

**ACTION 1.1.A.** Continue to acquire property appropriate as a Village contribution to housing that meets the production goals of the Affordable Housing Plan.

**ACTION 1.1.B.** Explore the potential for a community land trust on one or more Village-owned properties. Land would be held in perpetuity by the land trust, allowing for permanent affordability to qualified renters and buyers. For homeownership housing, residents can gain equity in the building, but profit is capped to maintain affordability.

**ACTION 1.1.C.** When planning for Village utility systems, make sure that Village utilities in prime infill/redevelopment areas have capacity to support higher densities.

**ACTION 1.1.D.** Consider an ordinance requiring purchasers or sellers of single family homes to properly connect to Village water and wastewater utilities prior to transfer of property.

**ACTION 1.1.E.** Participate in the next iteration of the State's QAP to ensure that Lincoln County is included as a Tier 1 or Tier 2 area of statistically demonstrated need, possibly because of its designation as a Difficult Development Area.

**ACTION 1.1.F.** Encourage local contributions to the New Mexico Housing Charitable Trust or to specific affordable housing project approved by MFA. A donor can get up to 90 percent of a contribution back through state tax credits and other deductions.

**POLICY 1.2.** *Encourage upgrades to dilapidated housing in Ruidoso to increase the habitable housing supply.*

**ACTION 1.2.A.** Partner with existing entities such as USDA and non-profit housing organizations that operate in Lincoln County to make qualified homeowners aware of low interest home rehabilitation loans and grants.

**ACTION 1.2.B.** Investigate the New Mexico Affordable Housing Charitable Trust as a source of funds for home weatherization or rehabilitation.

**POLICY 1.3.** *Encourage construction of new entry level housing to meet the needs of the Village's year-round workforce.*

**ACTION 1.3.A.** Work with potential builders to determine what the Village can do to make building in this price range feasible. Direct contributions are only possible to MFA approved affordable housing projects, but the Village can sell property at market rate, ensure that utilities are available to a property, remove regulatory barriers and in other ways create a positive environment for new development.

**ACTION 1.3.B.** Foster more affordable housing development by dedicating a portion of short-term rental fees to the affordable housing fund.

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# COMMUNITY SERVICES

## CURRENT CONDITIONS

### Existing Community Services

The Village of Ruidoso provides the following services for the Ruidoso community (See Figure 8-1 for locations):

- **Sierra Blanca Regional Airport.** The Sierra Blanca airport is a public airport owned and operated by the Village of Ruidoso. Located 15 miles from downtown Ruidoso, it has two runways, stores more than 100 aircraft, and accommodates more than 14,000 flights annually with an average of 39 flights per day.<sup>1</sup> Improved shuttle service to and from the airport has been identified as a need. See the Transportation Chapter for more information.
- **Community Center.** The Ruidoso Community Center (RCC) offers games (pool, ping pong, and shuffleboard), exercise programs, language lessons, art classes, breakfasts, weekly potluck lunches, and other activities for residents and hosts. The RCC provides free exercise equipment, a public computer, and Wi-Fi access and is available for rent for private events.<sup>2</sup> The community has expressed the need for more services and activities for families with young children, youth and seniors; a community recreation center dedicated to recreation and the local community, as well as seniors and youth has been requested throughout the comprehensive planning process. The community suggested the center could be located near the current dog park property and White Mountain Recreation Complex.
- **Convention Center.** The Ruidoso Convention Center provides flexible spaces, technology, catering services, free Wi-Fi, security for social events, copy, print, and fax, and helpful support staff. The Center has a spacious exhibit hall and six meeting rooms that can be broken down in various ways to create an intimate feel, depending on the event.<sup>3</sup> The Convention Center has been added to the Community Development Department.
- **Community Economic Development.** The Community Economic Development (CED) Department creates and implements policies that support business development and economic growth for the Village of Ruidoso.<sup>4</sup> In general, the community desires more efforts to support local businesses, tourism, and the community, including job opportunities,

### THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

“ We need an indoor recreation center with a year-round pool. ”

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

1 <https://www.ruidoso-nm.gov/airport-index>

2 <https://www.ruidoso-nm.gov/community-center>

3 <https://www.ruidosoconventioncenter.com/>

4 <https://www.ruidoso-nm.gov/community-economic-development-1>

workforce training, marketing support, broadband, and other local amenities and events. Specific economic development improvements are addressed in the Economic Development Chapter; specific land use changes are addressed in the Land Use Chapter. Specific improvements for recreation are addressed in the Parks and Recreation Chapter.

- **Forestry.** The Ruidoso Forestry Department provides recommendations on forest health issues, insect issues, recommendations on landscaping and other forestry-related issues to landowners within the Village. The Department also participates in numerous activities for public outreach on forestry-related issues, evaluates properties for landowners, and enforces fuels mitigation requirements. The Forestry Department's mission is "to address Ruidoso's forest health challenges and to protect this community's values at risk to the hazards of wildfire."<sup>5</sup> For more information, please refer to Hazard Mitigation Chapter of this Plan.
- **Library.** The Ruidoso Public Library provides a diverse and inclusive collection of print and digital resources, both youth and adult programs, and free meeting spaces for the community. Programs and services offered through the library include business and career support, concerts, book clubs, genealogy research, a family pass to state museums and historical sites, baby and preschool story times, elementary and teen clubs, special literacy celebrations, a language learning program, tutoring and homework help, and a wide variety of other events. Currently, the library employs seven full- and one part-time staff. Over 12,000 members hold library cards and check out more than 100,000 books, DVDs, and CDs annually. The Ruidoso Public Library has a Library Advisory Board that meets six times a year. The Friends of the Public Library, a volunteer organization, raises funds to support programming for the library.

### THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

*"Ruidoso's public library is a valuable asset and should be fully supported."*

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey



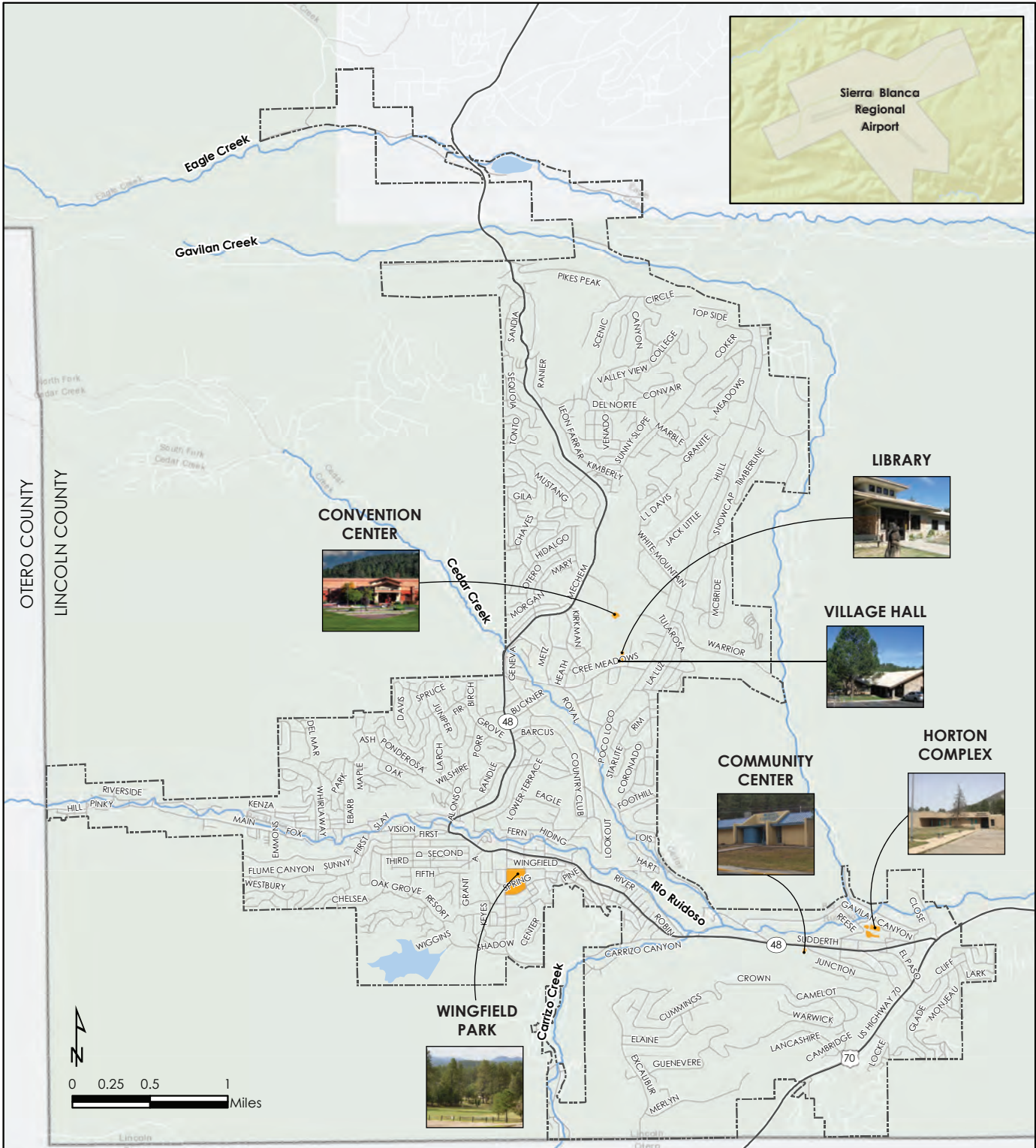
Source: [business.ruidosonow.com](http://business.ruidosonow.com)

*Ruidoso's library serves all sectors of the Village's population*

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.ruidoso-nm.gov/forestry>



**FIGURE 8-1. COMMUNITY SERVICES**



SOURCE: VILLAGE OF RUIDOSO, 2019

**LEGEND**

- VILLAGE OF RUIDOSO
- RIVERS AND CREEKS
- ROADS
- COMMUNITY SERVICES

## THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

*"Help the disadvantaged people of our community."*

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

- **Parks & Recreation.** The mission of the Village of Ruidoso Parks & Recreation Department is "to provide exceptional parks, facilities, programs and services that are designed to improve the quality of life for everyone who lives in or visits our beautiful mountain Village."<sup>6</sup> For more information, please refer to the Parks and Recreation Chapter of this Plan.
- **Community Development.** The Ruidoso Community Economic Development Department ensures development and land use plans that support sustainable, livable neighborhoods. The planning division works with the Village Council, Ruidoso Planning Commission, and citizens to help inform land use and development. For more information on land use and zoning, please refer to the Land Use Chapter of this Plan. The department also operates the airport, building permits, and inspection services to ensure compliance with local and state regulations and codes.<sup>7</sup> The required permits and inspections of residential and commercial construction and renovations are intended to improve public health and safety.
- **Regional Wastewater, Solid Waste, Utility Billing, and Water Conservation.** The public health and environment of the community is protected and enhanced by the Village's wastewater- treatment services, solid waste services, utility billing, water conservation program, water and sewer. For more information, please refer to the Utilities and Water Resource chapters of this Plan.
- **Street Works.** The Village of Ruidoso Streets Department helps efforts to repair, construct, and maintain Village alleys, streets, rights-of-way, signs, and drainage structures to ensure the proper flow of traffic; it assists all other departments in the case of an emergency.<sup>8</sup> For more information, please refer to the Transportation Chapter of this Plan.
- **Public Safety.** The Village of Ruidoso provides public safety services including fire, police, emergency preparedness, and municipal court. The Village of Ruidoso Police Department provides a diverse range of services including: 911 emergencies, record keeping, parking enforcement, specialty units, investigations, and a victim support team.<sup>9</sup> The Village and City of Ruidoso Downs will be consolidating dispatch 911 Services. For more information on emergency plans, please refer to the Hazard Mitigation Chapter of this Plan.
- **Citizen Complaint/Resolution Procedures.** The Village initiated a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) recently to assist the Village Council, staff, and citizens with complaints or requests to the Village. The primary purpose of the SOP is to document and track any complaint or concern and to ensure that every complaint is addressed and /or resolution was accomplished. The SOP provides a form to be completed so that staff can follow-up and verify if the citizen or requestor was communicated with and their request or complaint was addressed.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.ruidosoparksandrec.com/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.ruidoso-nm.gov/planning-zoning-1>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.ruidoso-nm.gov/street-department>

<sup>9</sup> <https://ruidosopolice.com/about>

In addition to the services provided by the Village, the following institutions service Ruidoso residents in partnership with the Village:

- **Ztrans Public Transportation.** Ztrans partners with the Village and Lincoln County to serve Ruidoso via a fixed “Red Route.” This route links Ruidoso to Ruidoso Downs, Capitan, and Carizozo twice a day on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday each week.<sup>10</sup>
- **Ruidoso Municipal Schools.** The Ruidoso Municipal School District (RMSD) owns and operates Ruidoso High School, Ruidoso Middle School, White Mountain Elementary School, Sierra Vista Primary School, and Nob Hill Early Childhood Center. The community identified the need for improvements to the quality of Ruidoso’s public schools and educational extra-curricular opportunities.
- **Eastern New Mexico University–Ruidoso (ENMU–Ruidoso).** The ENMU–Ruidoso campus is located on Mechem Drive in the center of the Village and offers associate and certificate programs and the first two years of a bachelor’s degree.<sup>11</sup> It offers a dual credit enrollment for Lincoln County high school students who enroll in ENMU–Ruidoso’s classes. The need to build ENMU–Ruidoso’s workforce training programs and connect them to established businesses and trade sectors in Ruidoso was identified throughout the comprehensive planning process.
- **Region 9 Education Cooperative.** The Cooperative provides Ruidoso and surrounding municipalities and school districts a range of services, including developmental services, home visiting programs, early head start, head start, educational services, and school-based health services.<sup>12</sup>
- **Chamber of Commerce.** The Ruidoso Valley Chamber of Commerce has a mission “to foster growth, development and prosperity for Ruidoso, Ruidoso Downs and the surrounding area.” The Commerce is governed by a member volunteer board and was incorporated in 1941.<sup>13</sup>
- **Ruidoso Mainstreet.** Ruidoso Mainstreet was founded to strengthen the downtown by providing organization, promotion, and design to provide economic vitality for the Midtown region.<sup>14</sup>
- **Presbyterian Medical Services and Presbyterian Healthcare Services.** The Lincoln County Medical Center provides a multitude of services for the Ruidoso region. It is currently owned by Lincoln County but is leased and managed by Presbyterian Healthcare Services.<sup>15</sup> The community has identified the need for improved healthcare, including better hospital services and attracting more quality providers into the region.

### THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

“Education needs to be addressed.”

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

### Community Boards, Commissions, and Committees

The Village of Ruidoso provides community boards that play an important role in improving the quality of life for Ruidoso residents

10 <http://www.ztrans.org/>

11 <https://ruidoso.enmu.edu/>

12 <https://www.rec9nm.org/>

13 <https://ruidosonow.com/about-2/>

14 <https://ruidosomainstreet.com/about>

15 <https://lincoln-county-medical-center.phs.org/about/Pages/default.aspx>

and visitors. The boards, commissions, and committees include the following:

- **Village Council.** The Village Council is Ruidoso's legislative body. There are six elected members. Besides enacting legislation, the Village Council approves the Village's budget and has oversight powers for the activities of Village agencies.<sup>16</sup>
- **Planning Commission.** The Village of Ruidoso Planning Commission holds a regular meeting every month and currently has eight members.
- **Lodger's Tax Committee.** The Lodger's Tax Committee meets once a month with eight current members.
- **Parks & Recreation Commission.** The Parks & Recreation Commission meets once a month with five current members.
- **Workforce/ Affordable Housing Advisory Board.** The Workforce Housing Advisory Board has eight current members. The Workforce Housing Advisory Board's mission is "to assist the Village administer its Affordable Housing Program, advocate relevant workforce housing opportunities, and shall be entrusted to review and make policy recommendations to the Mayor and Village Council."
- **Economic Development Committee.** The Economic Development Committee is responsible for shaping and implementing policies that promote a sustainable and prosperous future for the Village of Ruidoso. The following has been identified as economic development priorities for the Village: water remains the top priority; broadband connectivity; NM MainStreet for the Midtown District; affordable housing; tourism recreation making Ruidoso a destination; and quality of life services and programs.<sup>17</sup>
- **Development Review Committee.** The Development Review Committee meets monthly to discuss proposed business activity and planning cases. The responsibility of the Committee is to provide more clarity to land use issues, delivery of services, available utilities and development standards.
- **Watershed Advisory Committee.** Established in 2018, the Village of Ruidoso's Watershed Advisory Committee recognizes water as a precious resource and its protection as crucial to the Village as a whole. The Committee is comprised of leaders from the Village's Water, Parks and Recreation, Forestry, and Planning and Zoning departments to promote watershed projects, policy, and management.
- **Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant Joint Use Board.** The Joint Use Board oversees the Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant. In 2016, the Village of Ruidoso and City of Ruidoso Downs revised the 1974 joint powers agreement to include three members from the Village and two members from the City.
- **DWI Planning Council.** As a part of the state DWI Planning Affiliate, the Council works to use funds from DWI offenses for local needs.
- **Library Advisory Board.** This Board helps to direct, guide, and make recommendations for the library regarding resources, development, and direction.
- **Boys & Girls Club of Sierra Blanca.** Located in the former Ruidoso Middle School building, the Boys & Girls Club serves 125 kindergarten through high school students kids every day in afterschool programs.<sup>18</sup> It also offers a Summer Food Service Program. Both programs are tailored to each age group.

### THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

*"Ruidoso is in desperate need of adequate childcare."*

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.ruidoso-nm.gov/index-Village-officials>

<sup>17</sup> State of the Village, 2018 Report of Progress by Mayor Lynn Crawford

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.bgcsierrablanc.org>

- **Utilities Committee.** This committee meets quarterly and discusses the progress and number of projects that are in motion, as well as citizen requests for utility service.

In addition to these boards and committees, the following committees and community boards are volunteer community-based or non-profit organizations serving the community:

- Friends of the Library Board
- Keep Ruidoso Beautiful Committee
- Lincoln County Adult Literacy Board
- Village of Ruidoso Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) Committee
- Cemetery Board
- Joint Use Board (Ruidoso/ Ruidoso Downs)
- Green Tree Solid Waste Authority

### Annual Events

The Village hosts many annual events that attract residents and visitors throughout the year, including:

- Aspenfest Parade
- Vines in the Pines
- Last Month of the Season at Ski Apache
- Mountain Living Home & Garden Show
- 12 Hours in the Wild West
- AspenCash Motorcycle Rally
- Ruidoso Downs Race Track Season
- Ruidoso Pickleball Championships
- Smokey Bear Stampede
- Mescalero Apache Ceremonial Dances and Rodeo
- Lincoln County Art Loop Studio Tour
- Fort Stanton Live!
- Alto Artists Studios Tour
- Old Lincoln Days
- Ruidoso Antique Show
- Annual Golden Aspen Motorcycle Rally
- All American Gun and Western Collectible Show
- Annual Lincoln County Cowboy Symposium
- Christmas Jubilee
- Festival of Lights Parade and After Party
- Torch Light Parade and Dummy Gelunde Contest

**Survey respondents strongly agree that village festivals, events, and celebrations are an important Village asset.**

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

## EXISTING PLANS AND POLICIES

- **Village of Ruidoso Progress Reports.** The Village of Ruidoso 2017 and 2018 Progress Reports — State of the Village address community services by reporting Village accomplishments, the Village’s dedication to water conservation through specific measurable actions, public safety accomplishments, community services additions and actions (outlined below), and new public works and infrastructure projects. The following community service updates are described within the report:
  - Engaged in this community comprehensive planning process.
  - Implemented an improvement plan process to ensure implementation of the department's goals and objectives.
  - Enhanced and created the checklist for Development Review.

- Improved community facilities, including the swimming pool, Ruidoso Convention Center, and Wingfield Park.
- Established an adult literacy program with ENMU–Ruidoso and children’s storytime and activities at Ruidoso Library.
- Utilize 2016 Legislative Appropriations for New Mexico Aging & Long-Term Services.
- Streamlined the short-term residential rental registration process, reducing time to issue the permit working in collaboration with the Lincoln County Realtors, and implemented the collection of the Lodgers Tax on all Short-Term Rentals.
- **2018 Village of Ruidoso Manager’s Report.** The Village of Ruidoso Manager’s Report was drafted in November 2018 and lists recent projects underway, status reports from committees and boards, and other updates about community services within the Village.
- **2018 Village of Ruidoso Strategic Plan.** The Village of Ruidoso Strategic Plan identifies short-term and long-term objectives and goals, which influence the community services the Village provides, many of which address the requests of community members. The plans it identified are described in the following section.

#### Planned Improvements

The Village of Ruidoso’s planned improvements compiled from the 2018 Strategic Plan are listed below:

- Move into Horton Complex and consolidate offices and services along with courthouses in one location.
- Change Community Center back to Senior Center.
- Change internet providers.
- Improve Records Management System.
- Revise ordinances.
- Implement better maintenance for all buildings and track on a Village-wide schedule.
- Build a recreation complex to include sports fields and swimming pool.



The Village of Ruidoso plans to move into Horton Complex and consolidate offices and services along with courthouses in one location

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

The following recommendations should be implemented to improve Ruidoso's community services:

### Goal 1. Ruidoso offers community services for all its residents and employees.

**POLICY 1.1.** *Provide convenient community services to serve all of Ruidoso's residents and employees, especially those most in need.*

**ACTION 1.1.A.** Make community-related services easily accessible. Continue efforts to relocate Village services to the Horton Complex for one-stop permitting and services.

**ACTION 1.1.B.** Introduce improved records management system.

**ACTION 1.1.C.** Meet the community's recreation demand with more facilities. See Parks and Recreation Chapter.

**ACTION 1.1.D.** Meet the needs of seniors in the community center with appropriate programming.

**ACTION 1.1.E.** Track Village-owned building maintenance on a Village-wide schedule and expand asset management to additional departments.

**ACTION 1.1.F.** Implement digital work order system within departments with geographic or asset driven work processes.

**ACTION 1.1.G.** Expand and update the public library to provide more space that is modern, functional, and flexible for programs, meetings, and resources for community members of all ages. Landscape and improve the library's outdoor space to support programs and events requested by the community and to create revenue-generating spaces for the library.

**ACTION 1.1.H.** Make library resources more accessible to all through building and signage improvements, and through development of a home delivery service to homebound users.

**POLICY 1.2.** *Continue to strengthen existing healthcare options and educational systems.*

**ACTION 1.2.A.** Work with Presbyterian Healthcare and the community to determine which needs are not being met and identify solutions.

## **Goal 2.** Ruidoso's residents and businesses are engaged and active in community-building efforts.

**POLICY 2.1.** *Promote volunteerism among all Ruidoso's residents and businesses.*

**ACTION 2.1.A.** Create a central volunteer board to match needed services with interested community members.

**ACTION 2.1.B.** Link retirees with opportunities to help with Village community-building events and efforts, and community-serving facilities.

## **Goal 3.** Ruidoso's governance is transparent and regulations are easy to understand.

**POLICY 3.1.** *Maintain consistent, clear, and accessible regulations.*

**ACTION 3.1.A.** Regularly update ordinances for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and each other.

**POLICY 3.2.** *Prioritize clear, coordinated department policies and procedures.*

**ACTION 3.2.A.** Continue to hold regular meetings with all department leadership to maintain open communication, improved efficiencies and fewer redundancies.

**ACTION 3.2.B.** Implement Capital Improvement Plans for enterprise funds.

**ACTION 3.2.C.** Create comprehensive financial plans to coordinate O&M and capital investments.



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# PARKS AND RECREATION

## OVERVIEW

Ruidoso exists as it is today because of its beautiful natural setting and the recreational opportunities within it. These opportunities contribute to the local economy and quality of life that are so important to both residents and visitors to Ruidoso. As such, the Parks and Recreation section of the Plan is detailed and coordinated with the natural resources and economic development chapters of this report.

## CURRENT CONDITIONS

Ruidoso is known for its natural beauty and outdoor recreation opportunities. This section of the Plan inventories the area's recreation assets, including outdoor open spaces, sports fields, and parks, as well as indoor facilities. The Village of Ruidoso's Parks and Recreation Department operates 15 parks, sites, and open spaces, including trails, open space, parks, and recreation centers that total more than 1,140 acres. These amenities are described in detail in the department's Activities Guide 2018-2019, as well as the Parks, Facilities, and Locations Guide (2018).<sup>1</sup> They are summarized in the following sections grouped by recreation in nature (which makes up 80 percent of the Village's parkland) and parks and recreation centers. Some recreation areas outside the Village are included given their popularity as destinations for residents and visitors.

### Recreation in Nature

#### Water Recreation | Lakes, Rivers, Creeks

- **Alto Lake.** On the north side of town, Alto Lake is a popular recreation destination for non-motorized boating, fishing, and picnics. The recreation area totals 166 acres. It is the trailhead for Eagle Creek hiking trail, which leads to waterfalls. The lake is regularly stocked with fish and offers four picnic tables and vault toilets (see Figure 9-1).
- **Grindstone Lake.** This man made lake at the southwest edge of town offers Ruidoso's opportunities to swim, fish, hike, mountain bike and boat; it is a popular destination throughout the year for fishing. The area surrounding the lake offers concessions, picnic tables (22), vault and portable toilets, 18 plus miles of International Mountain Bike Association (IMBDA) designed mountain bike trails and a 27-hole disc golf course. Grindstone Lake also offers swimming, kayak and paddleboard rentals from Memorial Day through Labor Day and permits electric

<sup>1</sup> Activities Guide, 2018-2019 by the Village of Ruidoso Parks & Recreation Department and Parks, Facilities, and Locations Guide by the Village of Ruidoso's Parks and Recreation Department, 2018.

### THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

“Parks and recreation make Ruidoso special.”

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey



Alto Lake

Source: DiscoverRuidoso.com

Survey respondents believe recreation amenities are the most important type of non-residential development that is needed.

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

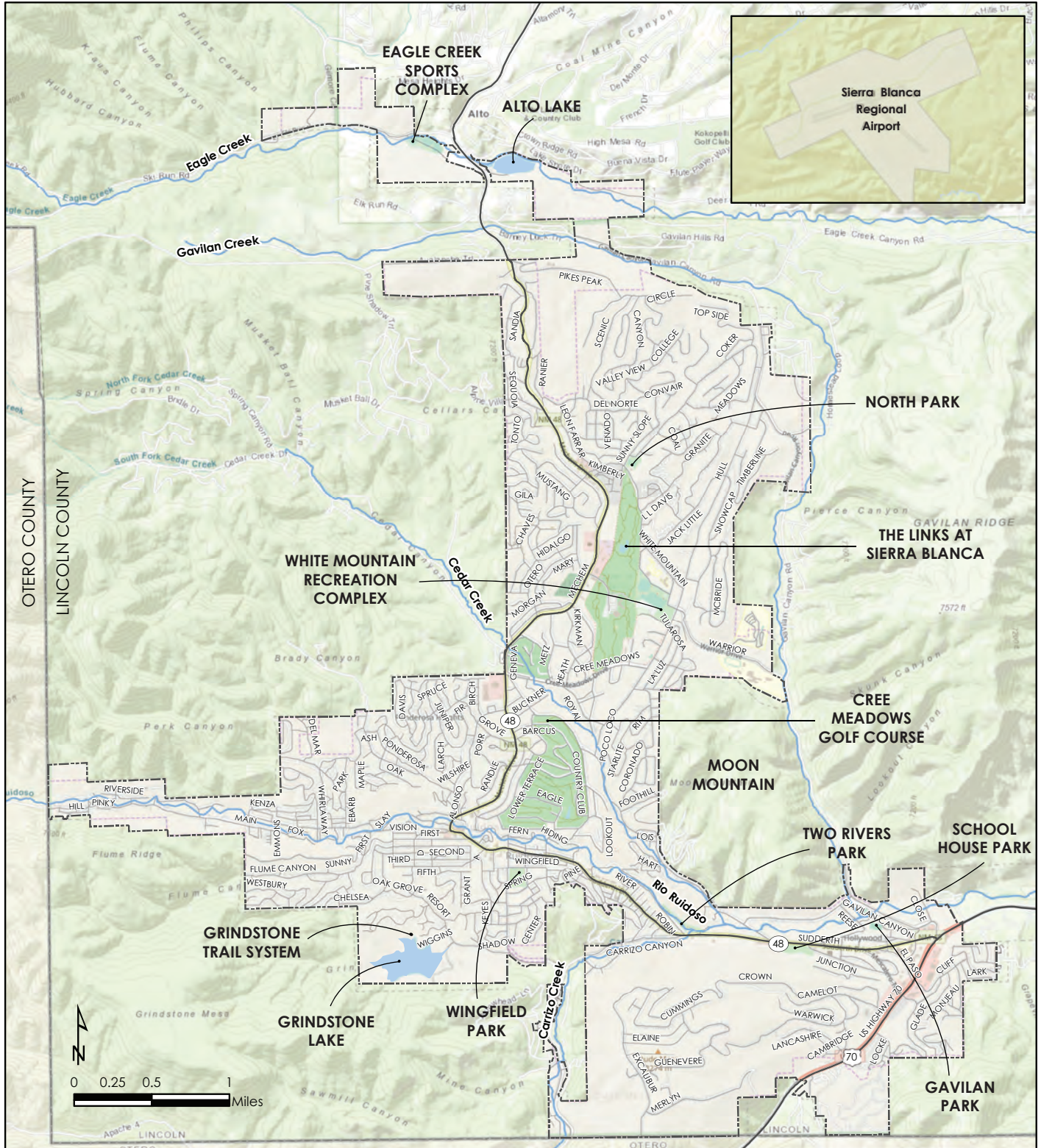
- trolling motors on boats. In total, it comprises 182 acres.
- **Rio Ruidoso.** As described in the Natural Resources chapter, the Ruidoso River is a great asset, however public access is very limited and continued degradation compromises its value as a resource. Two Rivers Park provides about a mile of access to the river, which attracts fishing. This area has had seen two separate fishing habitat projects with the hope of increase fishing opportunities for users. Another popular fishing area is where the Ruidoso River crosses Gavilan Canyon Road, which has a small shoulder on a bridge, which has a very large amount of fishing activity.
- **Bonito Lake.** Although outside of the Village, Bonito Lake is a popular destination for fishing, camping, and hiking. The water quality was affected in the Little Bear Fire, and the lake has been closed to visitors while it is being restored. It is expected to reopen in Spring 2020.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ruidosonews.com/story/news/local/community/2018/08/08/first-dredged-bonito-lake-material-ready-haul-away-aug-20/935026002/>



**FIGURE 9-1. VILLAGE OF RUIDOSO PARKS AND RECREATION**



SOURCE: VILLAGE OF RUIDOSO, 2019

**LEGEND**

- VILLAGE OF RUIDOSO
- PARKS AND RECREATION
- RIVERS AND CREEKS
- LAKES
- ROADS



The Links at Sierra Blanca

### Open Space

Ruidoso is surrounded by the Lincoln National Forest, and Moon Mountain abuts the Village on the east. Ruidoso's lakes are located in open space parks that offer water recreation and other amenities. Open spaces along Rio Ruidoso provides trails and access to adjacent parks. A summary of the opportunities in open space parks is summarized in Figure 9-2.

- Lincoln National Forest.** The Lincoln National Forest consists of three ranger districts: Sacramento, Smokey Bear and Guadalupe, totaling over one million acres. Ruidoso is surrounded by the southern part of the Smokey Bear Ranger District. Recreational opportunities close to Ruidoso are available throughout the year. Both of the forest's wilderness areas are located in the Smokey Bear District. Equestrian use and outfitter/guiding for hunting are common. A variety of trails are popular for mountain biking and hiking. Walking and biking trails near the Village have been developed through partnerships between the forest and local organizations. Ski Apache, the southernmost ski area in the United States, is located on the National Forest and the Mescalero Apache Reservation. Ski Apache offers snow sports during the winter and a zip line, hiking and mountain biking during warmer months.
- Moon Mountain.** Moon Mountain, comprised of 640 acres with a peak elevation of 7,182 feet, is just east of Ruidoso High School and the Village limits. This area includes additional acres of Village owned property that the water utility acquired for future wellfield development and watershed improvements. Fuels mitigation measures and forest health and management measures are currently being developed by the Village Forestry Department. Planned recreation opportunities have been identified in a master plan for the property, which is described later in this chapter. The emphasis is on outdoor recreation, including trails, a disc golf course and community observatory.

FIGURE 9-2. OPEN SPACE PARKS

	Type	Acres	Restrooms	Camping	Trails	Boating	Swimming	Picnic Area	Fishing	Disc Golf	Concessions
<b>Alto Lake</b>	Recreational Lake	166	X		X	NM*		X	X		
<b>Grindstone Lake</b>	Recreational Lake	182	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
<b>Moon Mountain</b>	Recreation Area	640			X					X	
<b>Rio Ruidoso</b>	River	N/A	X					X	X		
<b>Bonito Lake</b>	Recreational Lake	N/A		X	X			X	X		
<b>Lincoln National Forest</b>	National Forest	N/A	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		

NM\* = Total Non-Motorized

## Trails

There are over 40 miles of trails within the Village limits.<sup>3</sup>

- **Alto Lake Trail.** A 1-mile loop with natural surface starts and ends at the lake's parking lot.
- **Eagle Creek Trail.** A 2-mile loop that has two pedestrian bridge creek crossings and overlooks waterfalls.
- **Cedar Creek Fitness Trail.** Located off Mechem and Cedar Creek drives, the 1.3-mile trail is a popular destination for hiking and jogging. Dogs and bikes are not permitted. Parking is available at the Smokey Bear Ranger District Office.
- **Cedar Creek Trails.** There are 13 miles of trails with three trailheads for hiking, horseback riding, and mountain biking.<sup>4</sup> Considered moderate for mountain biking, there are some trails within the system exclusively for biking.
- **Grindstone Lake Trails.** More than 18 miles of trail, including three loops are open to hiking, horseback riding, and mountain/cross-country biking. The trail starts at Grindstone Lake, where it then climbs elevation to Grindstone Mesa.
- **Ruidoso River Trail.** Within Two Rivers Park is a 2.5-mile paved trail along the river. There is also a scenic overlook behind Midtown overlooking the river.
- **The Links at Sierra Blanca Trail.** Along the perimeter of The Links at Sierra Blanca property are several paved loops amenable for strollers and pedestrians, with distances ranging from 1 to 4.3 miles.<sup>5</sup> It is also home of the annual Turkey Trot in November. New exercise equipment along the walking trail that circles the perimeter of the Links at Sierra Blanca, which was funded by the Lincoln County Community Health Council and Presbyterian Healthcare Services.<sup>6</sup>
- **Wingfield Park Trail.** The centrally located park has two quarter-mile walking loops made with crushed gravel.

Refer to the Transportation chapter for further information about the trail system in relation to the overall transportation system.

Outside of the Village, Lincoln National Forest is home to many more trails easily accessible to Ruidoso's residents and visitors.<sup>7</sup>

- **Perk Ridge Trail.** This 4.8-mile loop is open to hiking, horseback riding, and dogs.
- **South Fork of Rio Bonito Trail.** North of town in an area damaged by the Little Bear Fire, this 11.4-mile hiking trail offers scenic views, wildlife sightings, and allows dogs on-leash.
- **Other trails.** In addition to the trails listed above, Lincoln National Forest offers miles of trails, including: Willie White and Wills Canyon Loop Trail; Sierra Blanca at Ski Apache Trail; Telephone Canyon; Miner's Road, Eagle Creek Loop; Lookout Mountain Loop Trail; Mills Canyon Trail to Monjeau Peak Trail; and Dry Mills Trail.

<sup>3</sup> Parks, Facilities, and Locations Guide, 2018, Village of Ruidoso's Parks and Recreation Department

<sup>4</sup> Activities Guide, 2018-2019, Village of Ruidoso Parks & Recreation Department

<sup>5</sup> Activities Guide, 2018-2019, Village of Ruidoso Parks & Recreation Department and Parks, Facilities, and Locations Guide, 2018, Village of Ruidoso's Parks and Recreation Department

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.ruidosoparksandrec.com/news-information/2019/2/8/new-gym-equipment-installed-at-thee-links-walking-path>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.discoverruidoso.com/blog/best-wildlife-trails-in-lincoln-national-forest?rq=cedar%20creek%20trail> and <https://www.alltrails.com/explore/trail/us/new-mexico/north-cedar-creek-trail>

In general, community survey respondents want to see the following:

- More parks and hiking trails
- Public golf courses
- Sports complex and baseball fields
- OHV trails
- Indoor recreation center
- Outdoor splash pad

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey



North Park

### Campgrounds

There are dozens of privately-owned RV campgrounds in and around Ruidoso, which are not in the Parks and Recreation Department's jurisdiction but offer space for visitor camping. The following campgrounds in the Lincoln National Forest are operated by the Smokey Bear Ranger District. Dispersed camping is also permitted on US Forest Service land.

### Public Campgrounds

- **Sam Tobias Memorial Group Campground (Cedar Creek Campground).** This campground is just west of the Village limits in Lincoln National Forest along Cedar Creek. It has three group campgrounds that can host 60 to 100 guests and offers drinking water, picnic tables, and vault toilets.<sup>8</sup>
- **Monjeau Lookout Camping Area.** Further north outside of town, Monjeau Lookout is on the National Register of Historic Places and offers RV and tent camping.<sup>9</sup>
- **Oak Grove Camping Area.** Near Monjeau Lookout, north of town, Oak Grove includes 30 tent and RV sites with fireplaces, vault toilets, drinking water, and picnic tables.
- **Southfork Campground.** Northeast of Monjeau Lookout, Southfork is one of the most popular camping areas given its proximity to Bonito Lake. It offers tent and RV campsites, picnic tables, toilets, and drinking water.
- **Skyline Campground.** Just south of Monjeau Lookout, Skyline offers tent camping, with picnic tables and toilets.
- **Three Rivers Campground.** At the base of Sierra Blanca, this campground is west of Ruidoso and includes sites for tents, RVs, picnic tables, toilets, drinking water, and the Three Rivers Trail trailhead.
- **Lakeside Campsites.** Building campsites at Grindstone and Bonito lakes are identified as long-term goals in the Village's 2018 Strategic Plan. The Village is currently building 22 primitive campsites and six RV Spaces at Grindstone Lake; they will be completed in 2019.

### Private Campgrounds<sup>10</sup>

- **Along the River RV Park.** 127 Hwy 37, Alto; [alongtheriverrv.com](http://alongtheriverrv.com); 575-336-4444
- **Apple Tree RV Park.** 593 E US 70, Ruidoso Downs; 575-378-4995
- **Arrowhead RV Park.** 25999 US 70, Ruidoso; [arrowheadmotelandrv.com](http://arrowheadmotelandrv.com); 888-547-6652
- **Bonito Hollow RV Park & Campground.** 221 Hwy 37, MM1 Alto; [bonitohollow.com](http://bonitohollow.com); 575-336-4325
- **Circle B RV Park.** 26514 US 70, Ruidoso Downs; [circlebrv.com](http://circlebrv.com); 575-378-4990
- **Deer Crossing RV Park (Adult 55+).** 27680 Don Mauricio, San Patricio; [deercrossingrvpark.com](http://deercrossingrvpark.com) 575-653-4838
- **Eagle Creek RV.** 159 Ski Run Road, Alto; [eaglecreekrvresort.com](http://eaglecreekrvresort.com); 575-336-1131
- **Eagle Lake Campground & RV Park.** County Road 532 (Ski Run Road); 575-464-3904
- **Hall's Hideaway RV Park.** 525 Gavilan Canyon, Ruidoso; 888-329-1220

8 <https://www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/lincoln/recarea/?recid=34216>

9 <https://www.ruidoso.net/visitor-information/outdoors/hiking/camping>

10 <https://www.discoverruidoso.com/rv-parks-campgrounds>

### THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

“We would like to see more recreation facilities for young and old alike... especially pickleball courts.”

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey



- **Horseman's Bunkhouse.** 417 Harris Lane, Ruidoso Downs; 575-802-3810
- **Lazy Days RV.** 26536 US 70, Ruidoso Downs; 575-378-8068
- **Little Creek RV Park.** 290 State Hwy 220, Alto; 575-336-4044; littlecreekrvpark.com
- **Mama Bear RV Park.** 214 W Smokey Bear Boulevard, Capitan; 575-354-2394
- **Midtown Mountain Campground.** 302 Mechem Drive, Ruidoso; 575-964-8555; midtownmountaincampground.com
- **Mountain High RV Park.** State Hwy 48 Alto; mthighrv.tripod.com; 575-336-4236
- **Pine Ridge RV Campground.** 124 Glade Road, Ruidoso; 575-378-4164
- **Rainbow Lake RV Resort.** 806 Carrizo Canyon Road, Ruidoso; rainbowlakecabinandriv.com; 575-630-2267
- **Recreation Village (Adult 55+).** 717 E. White Mountain Drive, Ruidoso; recreationvillagervpark.com; 866-608-2267
- **Riverside RV Park.** 298 Gavilan Canyon Road, Ruidoso; riversidervparkruidoso.com; 575-257-3428
- **Ruidoso Motorcoach Ranch.** 358 NM 220, Alto; ruidosomotorcoachranch.com; 575-336-4556
- **RV Resort.** 26039 US 70 Ruidoso; rvresortofruidoso.com; 575-257-2600
- **Sands Motel & RV.** 1400 Central Avenue, Carrizozo; 575-648-2989
- **Seeping Springs Trout Lake & RV.** 110 Seeping Springs Road, Ruidoso Downs; seepingspringsfishing.com; 575-378-4216
- **Shadow Ridge RV Park.** 16 US 70, Ruidoso; 575-257-2320
- **Silver Leaf RV Park.** 26610 US 70, Ruidoso Downs; 575-378-1855
- **Stone Mountain RV Resort.** 510 Hwy 37, Nogal; ruidoso-rvpark-campground.com; 575-354-0698
- **Twin Spruce RV Park.** 621 US 70, Ruidoso; twinsprucervpark.com; 575-257-4310



*Wingfield Park*



*Cree Meadows Golf Course*

### *Parks*

The Village of Ruidoso has eleven parks, which include seven athletic fields for baseball, softball, soccer, and football. Many park facilities are available for rent for sports and social events.<sup>11</sup>

- **Eagle Creek Recreational Sports Complex.** The 22-acre complex on the northwest edge of town has a concession stand, restrooms, a portable zipline, Ruidoso Winter Park (a snow play area in the winter), three lighted multi-use softball/baseball fields, and hosts adult men, women, co-ed, and youth leagues, including 50/70 Division of Little League Baseball, as well as tournaments, including the Softball US Specialty Sports Association (USSSA). It offers ten picnic tables.
- **Gavilan Field (Warrior Field).** Located on Gavilan Canyon Road on the southeast edge of town, the lighted field is owned by Ruidoso Schools, but is utilized by Parks and Recreation for local adult and youth leagues. These leagues consist of youth fast pitch softball, little league baseball, and kickball. It offers a concession stand, press box, and restrooms. It is home to the Minors and Majors Division of Little League baseball and is used for tournaments.
- **North Park Little League Baseball Field.** The park includes a baseball field, a lighted 16,000-square foot skate park, and bike pump track (with portable toilet) next to The Links at Sierra

<sup>11</sup> Parks, Facilities, and Locations Guide, Village of Ruidoso's Parks and Recreation Department, 2018



Survey respondents strongly agree that **access to outdoors and recreation is important to them.**

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey



School House Park Tennis Courts

Blanca walking trail and golf course. The baseball field is used by the Farm/T-Ball Divisions of Little League and is also rented for tournament use.

- **Ruidoso Dog Park.** Located just east of the convention center and south of the White Mountain Recreation Complex, this 1.6-acre fenced park allows dogs to run off-leash and offers three picnic tables.
- **Ruidoso Municipal Swimming Pool.** The Village pool is an outdoor pool located off Sudderth Drive east of Midtown and is available for all ages. It offers a concession stand, swim classes, season passes, water slides, and pool party rentals.
- **School House Park.** Located between Ruidoso Municipal Swimming Pool and the Community Center, this park provides four lighted tennis courts, restrooms, 23 picnic tables, a 2- to 5-year old play area, and two barbecue grills.
- **Two Rivers Park.** At the junction of Rio Ruidoso and Carrizo Creek, this popular park offers a paved trail along the river, a play area for 2- to 5-year old children, restrooms, 27 picnic tables, and 11 barbecue grills.
- **White Mountain Recreational Complex.** The 33.5-acre complex is Ruidoso's largest sports complex, with a concession stand, two restrooms, a sand volleyball court, eight pickleball courts, two tennis courts, six acres of multi-use fields that can be used for football, soccer, baseball, or open space, and 11 picnic tables. It accommodates the following sports and is rented for tournaments:
  - Ruidoso High School Warrior Baseball
  - Ruidoso Oso Professional Baseball
  - USSSA baseball and softball tournaments
  - Flag football playoff and championship games
  - Soccer
  - Spring and fall Little League soccer
  - University of Texas – El Paso football camp
  - High school boys and girls soccer
  - Pickleball tournaments
- **Kids Konnection.** Located in the White Mountain Recreational Complex, Kids Konnection has play areas for 2- to 5-year and 5- to 12-year old children, a basketball court, restrooms, and a picnic pavilion.
- **Wingfield Park.** Just south of Midtown, this 8-acre park serves as Midtown's central gathering place and hosts numerous events year-round in its event meadow. Special events include the Aspenfest Festival, Grindstone Trail Runs, Carnivals, and Brewdoso. Wingfield Park has restrooms, a playground for 4- to 12-year-olds, a large lighted pavilion, 20 picnic tables, interpretive signs, walking path, and a botanical garden.

#### Picnic Shelters/Pavilions

The Village of Ruidoso has eight picnic shelters/pavilions available for community use, including special events, parties and picnics. Like the sports fields, use of these shelters is secured through an online reservation form and reservation fee. Other parks in town have picnic tables without shelters, which are not included here.

- Kids Konnection
- School House Park (2 pavilions)
- Two Rivers Park Pavilions (4 pavilions with seating for groups of 12 to 30)
- Wingfield Park Pavilion (seats over 200 people)

FIGURE 9-3. PARKS INVENTORY

PARK	Acres	Restrooms	Sports Fields	Concession Stand	Swimming Pool	Zipline	Snow Play	Skate Park	Picnic Tables	Playground	Pickleball Courts	Basketball Court	Tennis Court
School House Park	8	X			X				X	X			4
Two Rivers Park	27	X							X	X			
Wingfield Park	8	X							X	X			
Eagle Creek Recreational Sports Complex	22	X	3 lighted	X		X	X		X				
Gavilan Field (Warrior Field)	2.7	X	1 lighted	X									
North Park LL Baseball Field	1		1					X					
White Mountain Recreational Complex -Ruidoso Dog Park -Kids Konnection	33	2	6-acre multi-use	X					X	X	8	X	2
<b>Total</b>	102.2												

*Indoor Recreation Facilities*

- **Community Center.** The Parks and Recreation Department oversees the community center. It is described in more detail in the Community Services chapter.
- **Ruidoso Municipal Swimming Pool.** The Village pool is located off Sudderth Drive east of Midtown and is available for all ages. It offers a concession stand, swim classes, season passes, water slides, and pool party rentals.
- **Horton Gymnasium (Boys & Girls Club).** The multiuse gym located within the Horton Complex offers volleyball, basketball, and pickle ball courts, has a concession stand and restrooms, and is used by home school families on a daily basis. It currently hosts the following activities:
  - Youth volleyball league
  - Co-ed lolleyball league
  - Adult open gym volleyball
  - Open gym basketball
  - Pickleball
  - Little League basketball
  - Braves Youth Wrestling Group
  - Lincoln County Home School Group

FIGURE 9-4. RECREATION CENTER INVENTORY

PARK	Type	Gymnasium	Arts and Crafts Rooms	Showers/ Dressing Rooms	Classrooms Meeting Rooms	Exercise Equipment	Exercise Rooms	Swimming Pool	Kitchen	Game Room	Computers/ Internet	Tennis Courts	Pickleball Courts
<b>Community Center</b>	Community Center		X		X	X	X		X	X	X		
<b>Horton Gymnasium (Boys &amp; Girls Club)</b>	Gymnasium	X											X
<b>Ruidoso Municipal Swimming Pool</b>	Swimming Pool			X				X					

*Recreation Programs*

The Village of Ruidoso offers a variety of classes at the municipal pool and community center. Private organizations offer a wide variety of adult and youth sports programs that are hosted at Village facilities.

**Swimming Pools.** The Ruidoso Municipal Swimming Pool is open from Memorial Day weekend through mid-August. Season passes and individual admission is available for swim and a swim/slide combination. The Village provides swim lessons at the municipal swimming pool for infants through intermediate swimmers.

**Ruidoso Community Center.** The Village offers a variety of programs at the community center, including golf lessons, bridge, exercise and fitness classes, dance lessons, table tennis, playgroups, language classes, crafts, computer assistance, playgroups and social activities. Facilities are available for drop-in use on a first-come, first-served basis.

**Sports Leagues**

Private sports leagues organize youth teams for baseball, soccer, and basketball. These leagues practice and play at Village parks and the Horton Gym as well as at facilities in other communities in Lincoln County. A partial list of private leagues and teams is as follows:

- **Ruidoso Little League.** The volunteer run Ruidoso Little League provides opportunities for youth baseball in Lincoln County. With an emphasis on fair play and sportsmanship, the little league has teams from ages 4 to 16. In Ruidoso, teams play at Eagle Creek Sports Complex, North Park and Gavilan Field. Additional fields are located in Capitan, Ruidoso Downs and Mescalero.

- **Lincoln County Youth Soccer League.** The volunteer run youth soccer league provides opportunities for youth ages 4 to 14 to participate in recreational soccer. Games and practices are held at the White Mountain Sports Complex. There were 22 teams in Spring Season 2019.
- **Ruidoso Little League Basketball (RLLB).** RLLB is a volunteer run organization that provides opportunities for youth from grades 1-8 to learn and play basketball. RLLT teams play at Horton Gym.
- **Ruidoso Pickleball Club.** The Pickleball Club has members of all ages. The club hosted two tournaments per year, and members travel to tournaments throughout the year. Members have open play on outdoor courts at the White Mountain Recreation Complex and at Horton Gym.
- **Ruidoso High Altitude Aquatics.** The Ruidoso High Altitude Aquatics are comprised of young swimmers who compete statewide; the club practices at the Ruidoso Athletic Club.

Village of Ruidoso-operated Sports Leagues include:

- **Youth Flag Football League.** The Youth Flag Football League is run for children ages 5 to 12 years old.
- **Youth Volleyball League.** The Youth Volleyball League is for children between 5 to 12 years old.
- **Youth Girls Fastpitch League.** This league is for girls 6 to 18 years old.

### *Tournaments*

Ruidoso's cool climate during the summer months make Ruidoso and Lincoln County a popular destination for tournaments in multiple sports. Tournaments bring a significant number of visitors to Ruidoso during the summer, contributing to the local economy.

USSSA baseball and softball tournaments are played at multiple fields in the Village, and the King of the Mountain Tournament uses fields throughout Lincoln County. The 13 USSSA tournaments bring up to 5,000 players and fans to Ruidoso almost every weekend during the summer and fall, from mid-May to October. Tournaments include:

- USSSA King of the Mountain Baseball Tournament (150 teams)
- USSSA Queen of the Mountain Softball Fastpitch Tournaments (120 teams)
- USSSA Fastpitch State Tournaments (40 teams)
- USSSA Slowpitch Softball Tournaments (220 teams)
- USSSA Williams Chiller Classic Softball Tournaments (120 teams)
- USSSA State Championship Men's E (25 teams)
- USSSA Fast Brawl Youth Baseball Tournament (66 teams)

### *Private/ Non-Profit Programs*

**Boys & Girls Club of Sierra Blanca.** The Boys & Girls Club of Sierra Blanca operates out of the old Ruidoso Middle School. They serve about 360 kids per year between kindergarten and high school ages by providing programs in arts and cooking skills, homework help and tutoring, sports/fitness/recreation, health and life skills, and character and leadership. The club also offers an at risk after school food program and a summer food service program that serve children meals throughout the year. The Club is a non-profit with a volunteer board of directors.

**Ruidoso Gymnastics Association.** The Ruidoso Gymnastics Association, located in Ruidoso Downs, provides gymnastics classes for all ages and levels of skill. Classes include a Mommy & Me class. Kindergym, and several skill levels from beginner to team levels.

**Rocks Boxing Club.** The Rocks Boxing Club is a non-profit that teaches the sport of boxing to youth in the Ruidoso area. The club practices in the Ruidoso Downs First Baptist Church.

**Ruidoso Athletic Club (RAC) Fitness Center.** The RAC is an 18,000-square foot fitness center. It is located in Midtown, Ruidoso and offers group fitness classes, personal training, an indoor heated fitness/ swimming pool, racquetball courts, and fitness equipment.

**Maxtime Fitness.** Maxtime Fitness has a 24-hour fitness center with fitness equipment, personal training, a nutritionist, and tanning. It is located at 1129 Mechem Drive, Ruidoso.

**Cree Meadows Golf Course.** Cree Meadows Country Club is a private golf facility that is open to the public. The facility offers local daily fee rates and has a variety of memberships available.

**Innsbrook Village Country Club Golf Course.** This private course offers nine holes over 715 yards with a par of 27 to its private residents. It is located within a mile from the center of Ruidoso.

### *Special Events*

In addition to tournaments and sports camps, Ruidoso is host to special events throughout the year, including runs and walks, mountain bike races, a motorcycle rally, parades and holiday events, Parks and Recreation Department staff coordinate a variety of events at Wingfield Park and other public spaces.

## **EXISTING PLANS AND POLICIES**

- **Moon Mountain Recreation Master Plan, 2019.** A recreation master plan was completed at the start of 2019 and honors the programs that were allowed in the lease, including hiking and mountain biking trails, a disc golf course, a community observatory, as well as parking and signage for these uses. During the planning process, the community debated which uses should be allowed on the mountain. Fuels management projects and forest health improvements will be implemented upon the completion of the Forest and Fuels Management Plan. The 2018 Strategic Plan and the Moon Mountain Master Plan identify the long-term goal of expanding Moon Mountain trails. Improvements on Moon Mountain are planned to include

new hiking and biking trails, and other recreation opportunities and amenities noted in the previous section.

- **Parks, Facilities, and Locations Guide, 2018.** The Village of Ruidoso's Parks and Recreation Department inventoried the breadth of parks, open spaces last year. Of the Village's 15 square-miles (9,600 acres), the department's park and open space system takes up 700 acres. This guide, along with the department's webpage and DiscoverRuidoso.com was referenced throughout this chapter to describe the recreation opportunities offered.
- **Village of Ruidoso Ordinance 2016-06: Parks and Recreation, Article II. Grindstone and Alto Lakes Rules and Regulations, 2016.** In 2016, the Village amended the lake rules at the request of the Parks and Recreation Commission to expand lake rules to Alto Lake. The ordinance allows concessionaires, non-motorized boating, and fishing in designated areas with the appropriate licenses during posted hours. The ordinance prohibits people and dogs from swimming and wading in Alto Lake; dogs are allowed on the lake surroundings provided they are on leash. People and dogs are allowed to swim in Grindstone during designated times and in designated areas.
- **Joint Use Agreements, 2011.** The Village and Ruidoso Municipal Schools entered into a joint use agreement to share joint use and responsibilities for utilities, and insurance at the White Mountain Recreational Complex, Gavilan Field, School House Park Tennis Courts, and the Horton Athletic Complex in order to provide more opportunities for community recreation. The Village is primarily responsible for the maintenance.
- **Village of Ruidoso Annual Budget.** The Village budget includes goals and objectives for the Parks and Recreation Department and the Municipal Swimming Pool. The goals and objectives in this Plan align with the goals and objectives of the budget.

## FUTURE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### *Level of Service Standards*

Benchmark data provided by the National Recreation and Parks Association and the Trust for Public Land were reviewed to see how Ruidoso's Parks and Recreation system compares to other communities nationally. It is clear from the analysis that Ruidoso is different from the typical community because of its setting and emphasis on outdoor recreation and tourism as economic drivers.

An assessment of Ruidoso's current parks, open space and trails system shows that 41 percent of Village residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park compared to the national average

**41%** of residents live within a 10 minute walk of a park.



National average **54%**

Source: The Trust for Public Land 10-Minute Walk Program




Ruidoso has **1,200** acres of park and open space.

of 54 percent. While this might be considered low in an urban environment, proximity to parks in Ruidoso is limited by steep terrain that is ideal for mountain living, but not conducive to neighborhood and community parks. Given the proximity of Ruidoso's neighborhoods to trails and the open space of the Lincoln National Forest, it is not essential that the Village pursue a goal of increasing park accessibility.

Ruidoso's parks are a significant component of the Village economic development strategy that focuses on tourism, tournaments, and seasonal training camps. When the population surges to 30,000 during a holiday weekend, the system can be taxed beyond its capacity.<sup>12</sup>

From the perspective of park land per person, Ruidoso has a higher than average park acreage. To a large degree, the number of acres of park land per 1,000 population is because of the large areas of open space, including Alto Lake and Grindstone Lake that serve both local residents and visitors. As a result, the Village parks staff manages significantly more parkland than is typical for a community of Ruidoso's size.



Ruidoso has **13.2** acres of developed parks per 1,000 permanent residents, but only **3.4** acres per 1,000 peak population.

When looking at developed park acreage, the Village manages 13.2 acres of developed park land per 1,000 local residents but only 3.4 acres of developed parks per 1,000 users when visitors and County residents from outside of the Village are factored in. As reported by NRPA for towns with a population of less than 20,000, the national median is 11.9 acres of developed community parks per 1,000 population and 18.9 acres for the upper quartile of communities. Ruidoso's park acreage is low, given the number of activities hosted in Ruidoso's parks, including tournaments and local sports leagues. Local residents compete for space, especially during the summer when there is a tournament almost every weekend.

From a recreation perspective, Ruidoso offers its residents more options than are typical for a community of its size and density. However, facilities and staff serve Lincoln County's population of 19,400 and a peak tourism season of 30,000 or more on a holiday weekend. Facilities exceed capacity at times because of the larger population served. Capital improvements that can relieve the stress on the system are identified below. Future needs are a combination of facilities to meet the year round needs of the local population and facilities that contribute to the Village's tourism economy.

<sup>12</sup> The Trust for Public Land 10-Minute Walk Program



# OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

## Staffing

The Parks and Recreation Department has a full-time staff of 15. The Village hires seasonal workers during the summer months. Seasonal employees primarily cover operations of the municipal pool and water park at Grindstone Lake. The Village has a difficult time hiring other temporary/seasonal workers during peak tourism season because of the high demand for seasonal workers across all of Ruidoso's tourism related industries. The Parks and Recreation Department's eight maintenance workers serve as event staff on weekends during the summer months in addition to their normal year-round duties. This staffing level is not adequate to manage heavy park use during special events and general park operations and maintenance during peak season.

Another consideration is that the parks and recreation facilities and recreational programs geared to local residents serve the entire County population of 19,400. Staffing for recreation programs, which is geared to a local population of less than 8,000 residents is serving a population of two and a half times that population.

Staffing should be increased to match the actual population served with consideration for revenue capture from park users from outside the Village to cover this expense as discussed below. Taking into account both local residents and visitors, a reasonable year-round full-time equivalent staffing level would be 20 to 22, with additional seasonal workers during the summer for the pool and water park. Future park expansion to accommodate additional year-round or seasonal activities will require a reevaluation of staffing needs.

## Funding

Revenues generated from park, recreation and event fees currently go into the Village general fund so that it is difficult to track these revenues and the rate of cost recovery. To enable the growth of the facilities and programs to support the Village's local service and tourism goals, the Village could consider establishing cost recovery goals, capturing a share of revenues generated by non-residents, and tracking revenue created by parks and recreation facilities and programs.

A comprehensive review of Parks and Recreation Department costs, fee structure, and revenue sources would help the Village identify areas that are suitable enterprise operations and make deliberate choices about services to local residents and cost recovery from non-residents.



Ruidoso has **15** Full Time staff positions.



Ruidoso spends **\$156** per capita on parks and recreation operations and maintenance.

### *Potential Financing Strategies*

- Review event costs compared to current application fees and other revenue sources associated with events. Event fees currently cover the cost of trash collection, but weekend staff overtime and maintenance expenses are not included in event fees. The Village currently taps Lodgers Tax revenues for capital improvements, but these funds are not allocated to operations and maintenance associated with events that draw visitors to Ruidoso. A review of costs and revenue sources would indicate where costs could be covered by the events rather than the general Village budget.
- Establish a cost recovery policy. Public recreation benefits both participants and the public, so it is typical that costs are shared by participants and the public. A cost recovery policy would establish goals for the balance between fees and public funding through the Village general fund or other sources. Pricing should fit the realities of the local market while maximizing participation. Cost recovery goals will vary by activity, with some activities being free and others capturing close to 100 percent of the cost of service.
- Review program participation and fees to determine whether a resident/non-resident fee structure would improve cost recovery. It is common for municipalities to have a multi-tiered fee structure that provides service to local residents for a basic fee but charges higher fees for certain facilities or activities to non-residents. Parks and recreation facilities and programs are used by an effective population that is much greater than just local residents, County residents from outside the Village and by visitors from outside of the County are a large share of park users and program participants. Tiered fees or direct support from other local governments in the County would enable the Village to improve service to all participants.
- Evaluate the potential for a recreation center that is set up as an enterprise fund. The water park at Grindstone Lake shows that this concept could be applied to other facilities that would be used by visitors. Visitor use during peak times could pay for most operations while local use during off-peak times could sustain the facility year-round.
- Evaluate enterprise opportunities for other facilities and programs. Because most parks and recreation facilities provide a public benefit, with a goal to maximize participation by local residents, cost recovery as through an enterprise fund is appropriate only where all, or a substantial portion of costs can be covered through fees. The Village can look to enterprise funds for those facilities and activities with the best potential to recover costs.
- Consider a designated Gross Receipts Tax (GRT) increment for recreation facilities. Municipalities are authorized to levy up to 1½ percent (6 quarters) in gross receipts tax. The tax can be levied by ordinance subject to a negative referendum or by going directly to election. A Municipal Local Option Gross Receipts Tax can be used for general purposes or dedicated for special purposes. For example, the City of Raton dedicates a quarter cent GRT to the debt for their aquatic center and for general maintenance and basic repairs of the pool. One caution is that if GRT revenues decrease, the designated increment may cover less of the cost than anticipated.

# CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Given the Village's popularity as a recreation destination, the capacity of its parks and recreation facilities is important to understand. There is a delicate balance between providing recreation opportunities and conserving the area's natural beauty and resources; the two should be planned to complement each other. Community members and Village staff have identified a number of capital improvements projects that meet future needs by serving local residents and visitors in a way that protects the surrounding open spaces.

## **Facilities to Meet Local Needs**

Community input received during initial focus groups and general public outreach activities indicate that Ruidoso has a wide variety of options for outdoor recreation and organized sports. These programs and facilities are set up to meet the needs of adults and school age children. However, there is a need for facilities that serve young families and children who are too young or do not participate in sports. Specific needs identified include play areas and indoor recreation for pre-school children.

### *Recreation Center/Complex*

Many village residents and stakeholders have expressed the desire for a recreation center includes indoor and outdoor amenities, and such a complex has been identified as a long-term goal in the Village's 2018 Strategic Plan. The scale and amenities to be included in an indoor recreation center would need to be discussed and carefully planned within the capacity of the Village budget. For example, the Genoveva Chavez Community Center (GCCC) in Santa Fe and the Durango Community Recreation Center (DCRC) in Durango, Colorado, were mentioned by community members as models of what people would like to see. To keep this in perspective, the annual operating budget for the GCCC in 2019 was \$4.7 million. The operating budget for the DCRC was \$2.6 million. The current budget for the entire Ruidoso Parks and Recreation Department is \$4 million. Both of these facilities generate revenue but are subsidized. The DCRC is able to achieve a 90 percent cost recovery through memberships, passes and rentals. It has 400,000 program participants over the course of a year. The GCCC revenues include a dedicated portion of the City's GRT, memberships, rentals and fees, and a subsidy from the general fund. Cost recovery from earned revenue for the GCCC is 40-45 percent.

Through discussions with Village Staff and the community, the logical location to develop this recreation center is at the existing White Mountain Recreational Complex, building off the amenities that are already in place. This amenity could be accomplished in conjunction with the sports fields expansion as shown in the conceptual plan for White Mountain Recreational Complex.

### *Wingfield Park Renovation*

The need for improved large event space was discussed during the comprehensive planning process. Wingfield Park is home to most large events and is located near Midtown. A conceptual plan was developed to show how Wingfield Park can be improved to better accommodate events and continue to serve as a neighborhood park as illustrated in Figure 9-5. Specific improvements shown in this concept include reconfigured parking and access, a new performance space, new play structures and walking paths.

The community gathering space in Wingfield Park is designed to meet local needs as well as supporting Midtown events.



*Moon Mountain*

### **Facilities to Serve Both Community Needs and Support Tourism**

#### *Moon Mountain*

Implementation of the Moon Mountain Recreation Master Plan completed in early 2019 is a priority. This project will result in multiple benefits for forest health and fire safety, expansion of recreational trails and the recreational facilities proposed in the master plan.

#### *Grindstone Lake*

The Village has improved recreation opportunities at Grindstone Lake to include camping and water recreation. This has increased the use of the lake, but the infrastructure needs to be upgraded to accommodate the increase in use. Needed improvements that better serve the community include accessibility improvements, expanded parking, additional amenities such as shade and seating, and infrastructure improvements to support the increased use of the park. A master plan that shows overall design and phasing is the first step.

#### *Trail Connections*

Active transportation options, as also described in the Transportation Chapter of the Plan, are desired by current residents and to accommodate visitors. Connecting existing trails, especially along the river and creeks so there are more ways to bike, run, and walk throughout the Village was a commonly expressed request. These outdoor recreation opportunities are also addressed in the Transportation Chapter.

Mountain biking is a popular year-round activity for both local residents and visitors. Both the public and Village staff pointed out that while trails in the open spaces surrounding the Village are expanding and improving, connections through the Village that better link the open space trails are essential to a fully functional trail system.

In addition to biking trails, there is a request for expansion of pedestrian improvements and walking trails through the Village to connect popular destinations, reduce demand for parking in primary retail areas and promote public health through walking.

**FIGURE 9-5. WINGFIELD PARK CONCEPTUAL PLAN**



**LEGEND**

- 1. EXISTING RESTROOM
- 2. NEW HANDICAP PARKING
- 3. CENTER STREET GATEWAY: The gateway to Wingfield Park will span the entry at Center Street and provide a grand monument.
- 4. ENTRY PLAZA: The entry plaza from Center Street will be the take off point for all the activities that Wingfield Park has to offer.
- 5. GRASSY AMPHITHEATER: The grassy amphitheater will almost double the number of people that Wingfield Park can hold and provide a grassy respite for visitors in between events at the park.
- 6. STAGE: The stage at Wingfield Park will offer Ruidoso a place for events, concerts, and village promotions as well as centerstage for family and corporate events and weddings.
- 7. STAGING AREA: This area will provide for parking for the park and the village center as well as a staging area for concerts and other events.
- 8. NATURAL WATERWAY: The drainage water that has plagued Wingfield Park’s grassy area will be rerouted and developed into a natural amenity using green stormwater infrastructure best practices to feed the newly planted riparian forest. Small check dams and biofiltration areas will increase water quality though controlling stormwater while sustaining the forested zone with harvested water.
- 9. BIO-RETENTION POND: The large biofiltration pond near the northwest edge of the grassy amphitheater will provide a learning garden for children and adults while controlling stormwater. This park feature should include interpretive signage and lookouts into the pond.
- 10. RUIDOSO BOTANICAL GARDEN: The just completed Ruidoso Botanical Garden will add another feature for visitors and village people alike.
- 11. EXISTING GROUP CANOPY STRUCTURE
- 12. WILDFLOWER MEADOWS: Wildflower meadows have been added to the ponderosa pine forest to increase Wingfield Par’s appeal and create a passive education zone for visitors.
- 13. EXERCISE EQUIPMENT ON PATH: The pathways and trails that become formalized will include exercise equipment. The potential also exists for the trail system in Wingfield Park to become a prescription trail.
- 14. SEATING AREA: Seating areas dot the trails in the park.
- 15. EXISTING ROAD: Center Street will be partially razed to connect village facilities east of the park to the park property and to increase the size of the grassy amphitheater while also improving drainage conditions at Wingfield Park.
- 16. TRAILS: Existing trails will be the start to creating a trail hierarchy with some pathways becoming hard surfaced and other more minor pedestrian paths utilizing crushed gravel.



*The redevelopment could accommodate a fishing lake with connection to open space and ball fields.*

Off-highway vehicles are a popular activity. This use could be accommodated on multi-use trails that are located and designed in a way to protect forest health.

A Trails Master Plan that will consider intended user types, destinations, and connectivity with existing trails should be created in conjunction with the USFS and BLM. In the meantime, the Village has been awarded design funding for three trail projects in Fiscal Year 2020. Completion of a master plan and trail design projects already funded are high capital improvements priorities.

*White Mountain Recreation Complex*

While scattered sites provide ballfields for baseball and softball tournaments in multiple locations in Ruidoso and surrounding communities, the White Mountain Recreation Complex helps the region accommodate larger tournaments and local sports teams at a central location. Expansion of this facility would help accommodate the increasing number of teams that participate in tournaments, fields for local leagues, and a centralized area for recreation.

This potential expansion will be part of a comprehensive look at reconfiguring the adjacent Village-owned property that operates as The Links Golf Course. The preferred alternative at this time is to maintain The Links' current operations as a golf course and improves the existing recreation complex. The Village will evaluate the golf course's feasibility in a Master Plan for the greater good of the community.

Options for future expansion of the White Mountain Recreation Complex could include:

**Option A:** Reconfigure the White Mountain Recreation Complex on the existing site to accommodate more recreation and stormwater treatment (See Figure 9-6, Option A).

**Option B:** Redevelopment of all or a portion of The Links to better support community and tourism needs (See Figure 9-6, Option B)

**Option C:** A combination of above options (See Figure 9-6, Option C).

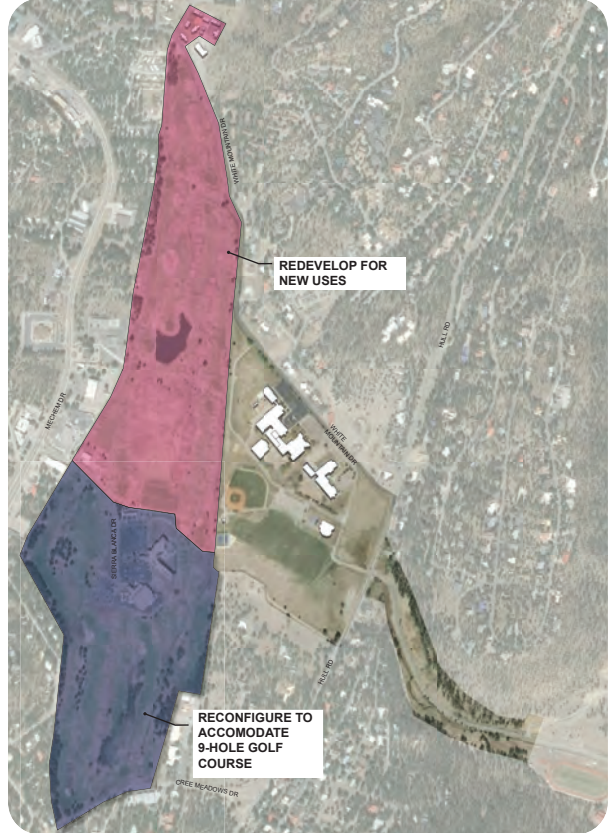
A conceptual plan was developed as a result of the negotiations concerning The Links property, which shows the potential for redevelopment of a portion of The Links to accommodate other uses, improve stormwater run-off, and reconfigure the golf course as a 9-hole course is shown in Figure 9-7. This is purely conceptual. A Master Plan for the White Mountain Recreation Complex would further explore expansion options on this site, including circulation options that connect Mechem Drive and Hull Road to address added congestion.

**FIGURE 9-6. WHITE MOUNTAIN RECREATIONAL COMPLEX REDEVELOPMENT OPTIONS**

**Option A**



**Option B**



**Option C**



FIGURE 9-7. WHITE MOUNTAIN RECREATIONAL COMPLEX CONCEPTUAL PLAN





### Fishing Opportunities

Fishing is one of the biggest draws to the area. Currently fishing takes place at Alto and Grindstone lakes, which are stocked. Alto Lake has a similar amount of traffic to Grindstone Lake, but an inadequate parking area cannot accommodate these visitors. By enlarging the parking area, the Village could relieve the impact of recreation traffic to this area.

The Ruidoso River and creeks are some of the Village's most prominent natural features. The Village should pursue the acquisition of property along the river and the creeks as opportunities arise that to improve access to the waterways as well as limiting development in the critical areas of the Village's watershed. In the Ruidoso River in particular, continued restoration of fish habitat and the river ecosystem would enhance this resource and recreational destination. Additionally, the Village should pursue public access easements and also look into opportunities to improve fishing habitat along the Rio Ruidoso in town, not just adjacent to public properties.



*Ruidoso Fishing Opportunities*

### Campsites and RV Parking

Sites for camping and RV parking are needed to expand on the sites already offered in the Village, surrounding communities and the Lincoln National Forest.

### A Comprehensive Branded Wayfinding System

Wayfinding is an important component of a successful destination community. The system provides visual cues that move people through the community to desired destinations. It guides people to places where they want to go and makes them aware of places that they might otherwise miss. In addition to guiding people, a wayfinding system is a visible way to reinforce Ruidoso's brand. A coordinated system of signage to direct visitors to recreational facilities as well as other local attractions is desired. Wayfinding signage should be easily recognizable to visitors. Wayfinding systems are determined through a wayfinding planning process that identifies destinations, the location of all signs and sign types, sign design and materials, sign messaging/content and a design hierarchy that ties in with the Village branding strategy.

## LEGEND

1. EXISTING HOTEL
2. EXISTING CONVENTION CENTER
3. TRAILS
4. POTENTIAL 9-HOLE GOLF COURSE
5. POTENTIAL GOLF CLUB HOUSE
6. POTENTIAL ROUNDABOUT / ENTRY FEATURE TO THE PARK
7. POTENTIAL PARKING WITH ADA PARKING
8. POTENTIAL BASEBALL COMPLEX WITH FOUR (4) ADULT FIELDS WITH 300' BASELINE, ONE (1) STADIUM WITH 300' BASELINE & BLEACHERS AND TWO (2) YOUTH FIELDS WITH 210' BASELINE
9. POTENTIAL MULTI-USE SPORTS FIELD / TRAINING FIELDS (BASEBALL/ SOCCER)
10. POTENTIAL BASEBALL COMPLEX WITH THREE (3) ADULT FIELDS WITH 300' BASELINE AND ONE (1) STADIUM WITH 300' BASELINE & BLEACHERS
11. POTENTIAL FISHING LAKE W/ CONNECTIONS TO OPEN SPACE AREAS
12. POTENTIAL NATURAL SMALL PEAKS WITH STONES
13. PROPOSED L BIO-RETENTION PONDS TO CAPTURE WATER
14. POTENTIAL NATURAL LANDSCAPE AREA W/ SERIES OF SMALL PONDS, STREAMS
15. POTENTIAL ROAD
16. POTENTIAL CONNECTION/INTERSECTION OF NEW ROAD TO EXISTING ROAD
17. POTENTIAL OVERFLOW PARKING
18. POTENTIAL WORKFORCE HOUSING
19. POTENTIAL SKATE PARK
20. EXISTING BASEBALL FIELD
21. POTENTIAL T-BALL FIELD WITH 175' BASELINE
22. EXISTING SCHOOL
23. POTENTIAL SOCCER/FOOTBALL FIELDS OR RECREATION COMPLEX
24. PROPOSED LAWN FIELDS WITH WETLAND AS TREATMENT FOR ANY RUNOFF POLLUTANTS

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

The following goals, policies, and actions should be implemented to maintain and enhance Ruidoso's parks and recreation facilities:

### Goal 1. Quality parks and recreation opportunities are available for Ruidoso residents and visitors.

**POLICY 1.1.** *Expand and enhance parks and recreation opportunities.*

**ACTION 1.1.A.** Confirm desired standards of service to guide decisions and prioritization of additional facilities.

**ACTION 1.1.B.** Identify future parks, recreation, and open space needs based on anticipated growth in population and tourism.

**ACTION 1.1.C.** Create and adopt a Trails Master Plan that specifies careful development and maintenance of trails that are sensitive to forest health. Locations for additional multi-use trails that allow mountain biking and Off Highway Vehicles (OHV) and biking and walking paths within town connecting to popular destinations should be identified (See Transportation Chapter).

**ACTION 1.1.D.** Develop a Recreation Center Master Plan to address the Village's indoor and outdoor facilities. This Master Plan should focus on or near the White Mountain Recreation Complex as shown in the White Mountain Recreation Complex Concept Plan and should assess circulation connections between Hull Road and Mechem Drive.

**ACTION 1.1.E.** Expand and improve Wingfield Park to accommodate current uses along with large events by reconfiguring parking and access, providing a new stage and performance space, new play structures, and walking paths as shown in the Wingfield Park Concept Plan. Continue to pursue events to be hosted at the park.

**ACTION 1.1.F.** Expand public fishing areas on Rio Ruidoso. By providing more public access to Rio Ruidoso and restoring fish habitat and the river's ecosystem, Ruidoso's namesake's value could be restored as both a natural resource and recreational destination.

**ACTION 1.1.G.** Identify locations for additional campsites and RV parking.

**ACTION 1.1.H.** Continue to research outdoor recreation opportunities that could benefit tourism and diversify the package of amenities offered in Ruidoso. These could include outdoor programs geared toward youth that benefit Ruidoso's families and the environment.

**ACTION 1.1.I.** Identify and seek grants that are available from the State's Outdoor Equity Fund from the New Mexico Office of Outdoor Recreation.<sup>17</sup>

**ACTION 1.1.J.** Develop a wayfinding plan that provides directions to all Ruidoso's recreation resources and is coordinated with wayfinding to all Ruidoso's destinations.

**ACTION 1.1.K.** Review staffing needs to provide adequate year-round staff for special events, year-round tourism, and routine operations and maintenance.

**ACTION 1.1.L.** As part of the Village's Comprehensive Financial Plan, set cost recovery goals, review fees, identify, potential enterprise operations, and determine appropriate funding sources for general operations, capital costs, and special events.

**ACTION 1.1.M.** Dedicate County Sales Tax to recreation. Given the popularity and draw of the region's recreational opportunities, get the voters' approval to dedicate a portion of the County Sales Tax to pay for capital improvements for recreation facilities and operations.

**ACTION 1.1.N.** Evaluate options related to agreements and partnerships with Ruidoso Municipal Schools, Boys & Girls Club, US Forest Service, Lincoln County, and Mescalero Apache Tribe.

**ACTION 1.1.O.** Develop a Grindstone Recreation Area Master Plan to assess community needs to include improving accessibility, parking, additional amenities and improving recreation infrastructure.

**ACTION 1.1.P.** Improve/update recreation infrastructure in all existing parks to better serve the needs of users.

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<sup>17</sup><https://www.hcn.org/articles/social-justice-new-mexico-lawmakers-focus-on-equity-in-the-outdoors>



48

→

Bus

→

Adobe

ADDITIONAL  
FOR  
→

CENTRAL



# TRANSPORTATION

## ROADWAYS AND GENERAL TRANSPORTATION CONDITIONS

The Village of Ruidoso transportation system is comprised of primarily rural and neighborhood roadways that connect the two main arterials through the Village: Mechem Drive and Sudderth Drive. Both roadways are part of NM 48, which is owned and maintained by the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT). US 70, another NMDOT facility, traverses the southeastern portion of the Village and provides connections to Tularosa and Alamogordo to the southwest and Roswell and destinations in Texas to the east.

Many of the Village-owned roadways are narrow two-lane facilities that are shaped and constrained by the local topography. Due to roadside swales and hilly embankments, widening roads or providing parallel facilities is generally costly and often impractical. As a result, options for travel across the Village are somewhat limited.

Despite the steep conditions of many roads, there is growing interest in alternative modes of transportation and reducing reliance on single-occupancy vehicles through the center of the Village. Part of this interest is borne of a desire for a broader range of economic activities, including recreational bicycling, as well as providing increased transportation options for residents and visitors.

### **Maintenance**

The Village of Ruidoso Roads Departments performs nearly all maintenance activities on Village roads, which makes Ruidoso unusual compared to communities of similar sizes. Activities include general road repairs, pavement preservation treatments, and snow removal. Maintenance activities are confined to roadways owned by the Village of Ruidoso; NMDOT maintains the roadways and sidewalks on Sudderth Drive and Mechem Drive, including all traffic signals, striping, and other roadway elements. The exception is for snow removal, which Village staff perform on Mechem Drive and Sudderth Drive under an agreement with NMDOT.

The Roads Departments follows current NMDOT standard specifications for highway and bridge construction on all maintenance and construction projects. Department needs include ongoing equipment replacement.

### THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

“ Potholes and road repair are needed. ”

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

# TRAVEL PATTERNS AND COMMUTING CHARACTERISTICS

The high levels of auto use among Village of Ruidoso residents is demonstrated by Census Bureau commuting data (see Figure 10-1). According to the 2013-2017 American Community Survey, more than 91 percent of Ruidoso residents commute to work by car, though a higher share of residents carpool than the state average. A relatively high share of employed residents of Ruidoso walk to work (3.7 percent).

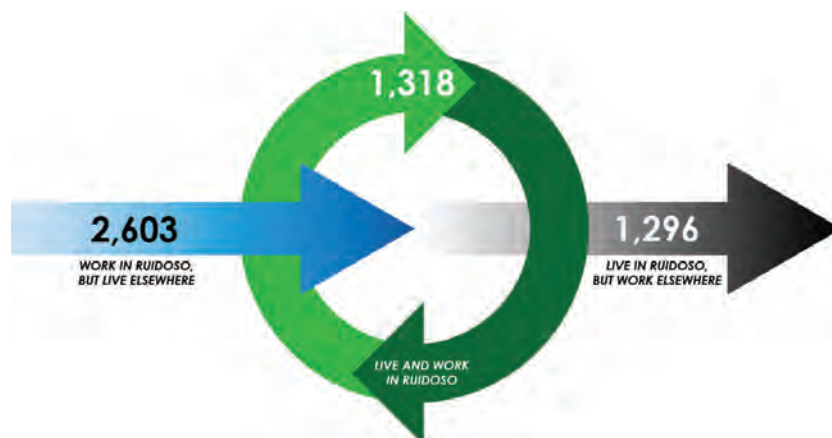
Ruidoso is something of a regional center for employment and approximately 3,900 individuals work within the Village of Ruidoso; however, only about half of the 2,600 employed residents also work in the Village (see Figure 10-2). Overall, about two-thirds of jobs located within the Village of Ruidoso are filled by individuals who reside outside of Village limits, creating a strain on the transportation system and increasing driving distances. While many employees prefer to reside and commute in from surrounding communities, at least part of the commuting distance is related to high housing costs within the Village.

**FIGURE 10-1. RUIDOSO COMMUTING DATA**

Mode	Village of Ruidoso	New Mexico
Drive Alone	75.9%	80.2%
Carpool	15.3%	9.8%
Walked	3.7%	2.1%
Work at Home	4.1%	4.8%
Other	1.1%	3.1%

Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey

**FIGURE 10-2. INFLOW-OUTFLOW COMMUTING PATTERNS**



# TRAFFIC ISSUES

## Midtown

Ruidoso is subject to high degrees of seasonal traffic congestion in the Midtown area (and throughout the Village), most notably during the summer and winter weekends and during the horse racing season at Ruidoso Downs. Many Ruidoso residents report avoiding the Midtown area altogether during these periods, and Village officials have observed queues of up to a half-mile to the west of the traffic light at Center Street and Sudderth Drive. Traffic signals along Sudderth Drive are owned and maintained by NMDOT (as shown in Figure 10-3), but the Village has a strong working relationship with the District 2 office and both jurisdictions have been able to respond to traffic demands through flexible and innovative signal timing practices. For example, staff has observed that converting the traffic signal at Center Street to a four-way flashing red is more effective in the peak tourist season than a standard all-way signal. However, the flashing red lights can create a hazard for pedestrians who must cross four lanes of traffic.

The Midtown area presents an unusual challenge where vehicle speeds are also higher than desired outside of the tourist seasons and traffic calming techniques, though not yet widely accepted publicly, have been introduced to address the issue. Techniques that have been applied include speed bumps and radar signs to alert drivers of their speeds.

## Secondary Roads and Bypass Routes

Some of the Village's secondary roads – including Gavilan Canyon Road, Hull Road, and Paradise Canyon Drive – are frequently used as bypass roads, especially when main roadways through Ruidoso become congested during the peak tourist seasons. However, these roadways also serve residential areas and Ruidoso community members have expressed a desire for traffic calming efforts along many of the Village's secondary routes. Measures, such as speed humps, have been applied on Buckner Drive and other secondary roadways.

## General Issues

Other traffic management issues include access to businesses along Sudderth Drive and Mechem Drive, including the Lincoln County Medical Center. Coordination with NMDOT over traffic impacts and turning movements associated with business access is ongoing.

## Ongoing Projects

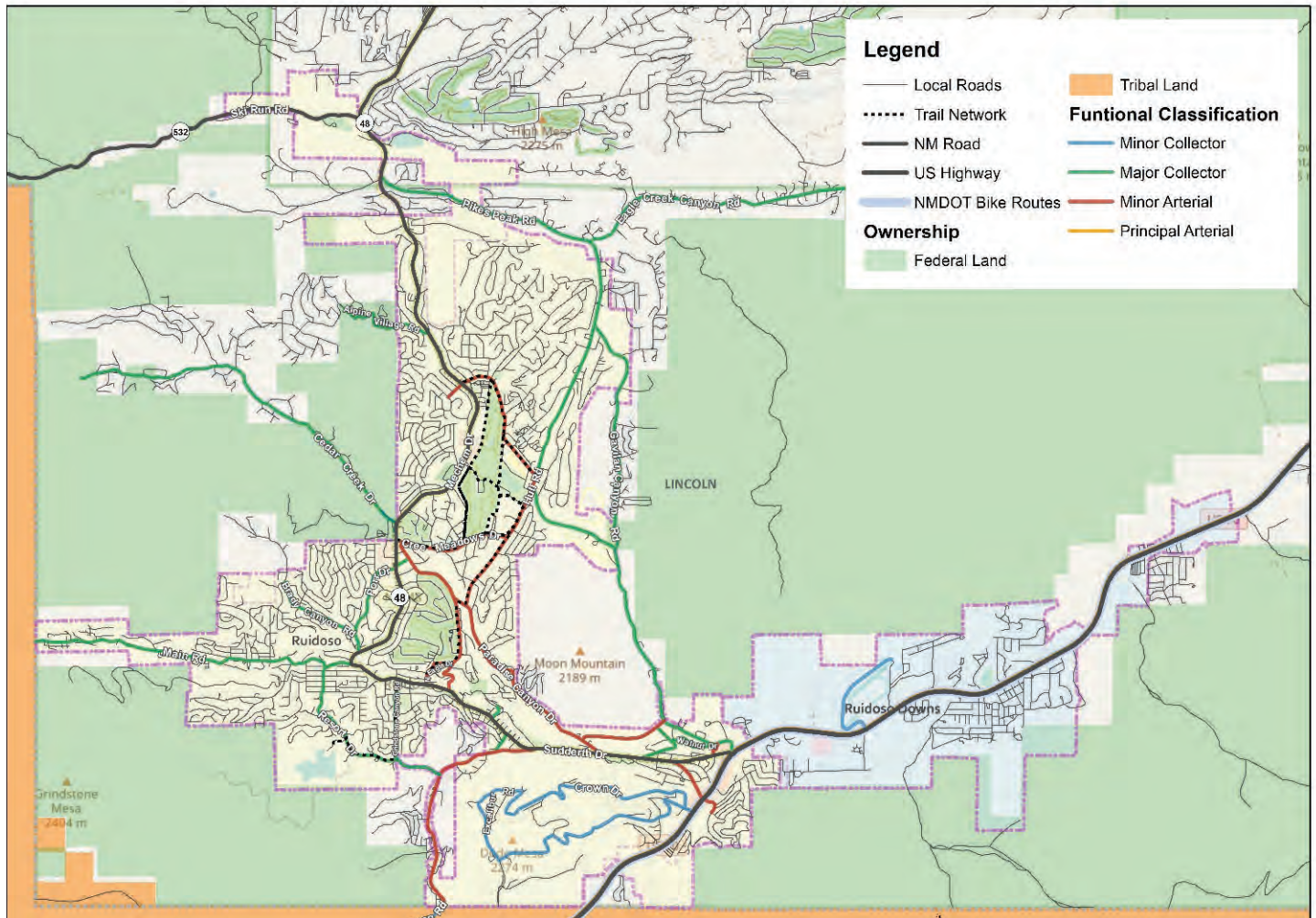
The intersection of Sudderth Drive (NM 48), US 70, and Gavilan Canyon Road presents recurring traffic challenges as multiple high-volume roadways converge in an offset design. A roundabout has been proposed for the site and an application to NMDOT for Congestion Mitigation Air Quality funding has been submitted to conduct a feasibility study.

## THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

“ More public transportation is needed. ”

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

**FIGURE 10-3. RUIDOSO ROADWAY NETWORK**



Source: Meroni

**THE COMMUNITY SAYS...**

“Create additional parking for Midtown.”

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

**PARKING MANAGEMENT**

Parking in the Midtown area is a recurring challenge during the peak seasons. Moreover, studies have shown that a significant share of traffic congestion in urbanized areas is attributable to motorists searching for parking spaces. In addition to on-street parking, the Village has attempted to address the problem by adding a series of public parking



*Ruidoso’s public parking lots are well marked.*

lots along side streets and adjacent to Sudderth Drive. The lots are well marked and offer a substantial number of spaces, and support a “park once and walk” philosophy in which residents and visitors can access multiple destinations without returning to their vehicles. Encouraging visitors—and recreational vehicles in particular—to utilize designated parking lots is an especially high priority.



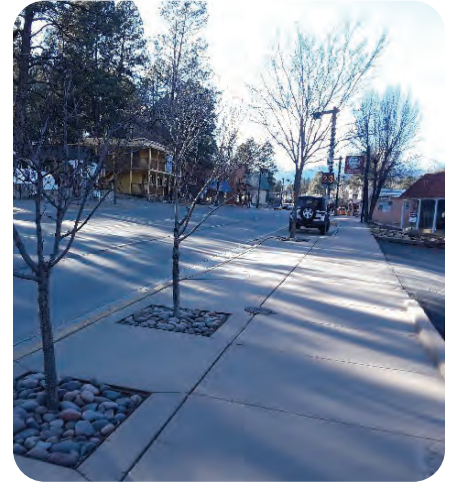
## BIKEWAYS AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

Participants in the Comprehensive Plan outreach process indicated a strong desire for more walking and biking options. Benefits include reduced reliance on single-occupancy vehicles and enhanced livability through greater transportation options and improved public health outcomes. Businesses and Village officials also recognize that additional means for visitors and residents to access Midtown and other shopping areas can help commercial establishments and reduce parking demand.

The Village adopted its Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan in 2017, which identifies the physical barriers in Village facilities that limit accessibility to individuals with disabilities and provides a schedule for removing barriers and improving pedestrian facilities to be in compliance with ADA. At present, infrastructure for active transportation modes is limited. Sidewalks within the Village of Ruidoso are located almost exclusively along Sudderth Drive and Mechem Drive. In the Midtown area, where pedestrian activity is heaviest, sidewalks are narrow in places and become crowded during the tourist seasons. Village officials and residents also indicate high levels of jaywalking. The frequency of crossing locations may need to be examined more closely to allow for crossing options at regular intervals, including between signalized intersections. Along secondary roads, the lack of pedestrian options leads to people walking along the streets.

Improving conditions for bicyclists emerged as a major issue in the Comprehensive Plan outreach process. However, introducing bike lanes or other infrastructure is challenging given the topography and design of most Village roadways; speeds and volumes on many Ruidoso roadways are too high for shared use facilities (i.e., sharrows but no bike lanes). A further challenge is that the primary routes through the Village are owned by NMDOT. On-street bike lanes are feasible on a limited number of roadways and would likely require a road diet with lane reductions on Sudderth Drive.

Creating an on-street bikeway network would likely involve a combination of shared use facilities, parallel routes to the main roads, and improved and expanded trails. Nevertheless, options exist for a network of bikeways comprised of multi-use trails and on-street facilities located along lower-volume secondary streets. Introducing bike lanes on Sudderth Drive was proposed by various participants in the Comprehensive Plan development process. Such an improvement would require further study and coordination with NMDOT.



*Widened sidewalks can offer space for landscaping and trees, street furnishings, and the amount of foot traffic needed in Midtown.*



*There is a striped path for pedestrians and bicyclists along Rio Street.*

## RECREATIONAL TRAILS

As described in the Parks and Recreation Chapter, the Village of Ruidoso offers a growing network of multi-use trails that mainly serve recreational purposes. The Village is considering building additional facilities and connections to enable their use for a wider range of trips. There are also numerous recreation trails and biking facilities on nearby federal lands, some of which pass through Village limits. Connections between trails would allow recreational bicyclists to access different trail networks without getting in a car, permit residents and visitors to travel more easily within Ruidoso, and provide an alternative option for accessing Midtown, thus alleviating some parking challenges. Connecting these facilities through a network on on-street bikeways and multi-use trails through the Village could also create further opportunities for recreational tourism.

### Ongoing Projects

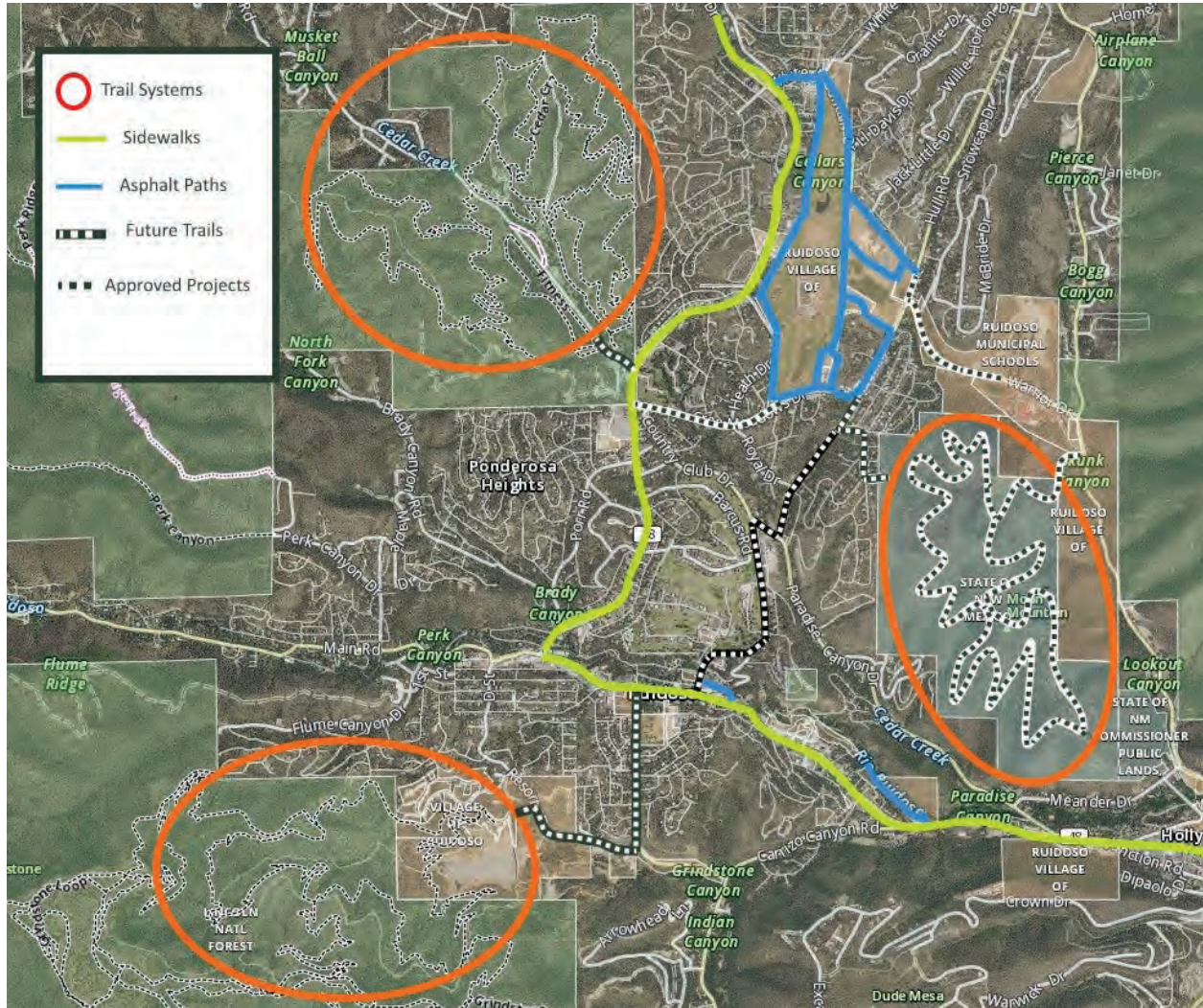
To ensure the expansion of the trails network takes place in a coordinated manner, the Village is pursuing a Trails Master Plan. That Plan should consider the intended users; major destinations that should be connected, including schools and community facilities; and integration with walking and on-street bicycling networks, including connections to the River Trail. The Village of Ruidoso has been awarded NMDOT FHWA Design Funding for three separate trail projects for Fiscal Year 2020, including a 0.6-mile trail along Cree Meadow Road from Village Hall to Mechem Drive. The Cree Meadows Trail would connect to the Links Trail and to the Sidewalks on Mechem Drive/State Highway 48. The Second Project Award is the Design of multiuse natural surface trails and signage on the Moon Mountain Tract. The third project funded is the design of the repaving of the entire Links Walking Trail.

## PUBLIC TRANSIT

ZTrans, based in Alamogordo, New Mexico, currently operates demand response service in the Ruidoso area and inter-city routes across the region and is considering fixed route service through the Village. ZTrans officials note that identifying routes and stop locations is made difficult by the lack of pedestrian facilities on most roadways.

Expanded transit service would provide benefits in terms of increased transportation options for Village residents, could bring workers into town from surrounding communities to access basic services and medical care, and would have the added benefit of reduced parking demand.

FIGURE 10-4. RUIDOSO AREA RECREATIONAL TRAILS



Source: Village of Ruidoso

## AIR TRAVEL

The Sierra Blanca Regional Airport, constructed in 1987, is classified as a commercial service airport that currently serves charter and private travel, including more than 100 flights per day during the summer months. Maintaining status as a commercial service is considered a priority, though such status requires additional standards, inspections, personnel training, and equipment, including Airport, Rescue, and Fire Fighting (ARFF) services. Village officials believe there is an opportunity to formalize charter or commercial services to regional destinations, similar to services offered between Taos, New Mexico and major markets in Texas.

The airport includes two runways:

- Runway 6/24, the primary commercial runway, can accommodate aircraft up to the size of a 737. Runway 6/24 features an Instrument Landing System (ILS), a ground-based system that provides guidance to pilots in times of low visibility. There is property available to extend the runway to the east.
- Runway 12/30 features a GPS landing system and is not a commercial service runway.

In addition to the two runways, the airport has a large apron area that requires a high level of maintenance. Airport officials have identified a need for additional hangars (several are owned by the Village, while others are privately-owned). The airport also features a development area to the west of the Runway 6/24, though the area is not currently served by taxi-lanes and access to the area is complicated by change in elevation.

## REQUESTED IMPROVEMENTS

Needs that emerged from the stakeholder group meeting include:

- Improve biking conditions
- Increase walkability
- Address left-turn movements
- Improve school access and safe conditions for youths
- Address emergency response during congested periods
- Improve trail connectivity
- Enhance public transit
- Manage speeds with traffic calming improvements

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

The following goals, policies, and actions should be implemented to maintain and enhance Ruidoso's transportation facilities:

### Goal 1. It is easy to walk and bike in the Village and to access Midtown without a vehicle.

**POLICY 1.1.** *Improve conditions for bicyclists throughout Ruidoso.*

**ACTION 1.1.A.** Conduct a Bikeways Route Study. The study should identify potential bikeways through the Village, including trail locations on-street connections, as well as design techniques that are appropriate for Village roadways.

**ACTION 1.1.B.** Conduct a Bikeshare Feasibility Study. The Village of Ruidoso should conduct a feasibility study to examine the appropriate scale, cost of operating, and the logistics associated with a bike share program. Potential station locations include the Main Road lodging area, Grindstone Lake recreation area, public parking sites, and Midtown.

**POLICY 1.2.** *Improve conditions for pedestrians across the Village.*

**ACTION 1.2.A.** Incorporate pedestrian pathways and sidewalks into Village of Ruidoso's roadway design standards.

**ACTION 1.2.B.** Evaluate additional pedestrian crossings along Sudderth Drive through Midtown.

### Goal 2. Ruidoso's recreational trails network is unparalleled across the state.

**POLICY 2.1.** *Expand the trail network. Pursue connections among existing facilities.*

**ACTION 2.1.A.** Create and adopt a Trails Master Plan in conjunction with USFS and BLM that specifies careful development and maintenance of trails that are sensitive to forest health. The plan should consider intended users; major destinations that should be connected, including schools and community facilities; various types of trail users; and integration with walking and on-street bicycling networks.

**ACTION 2.1.B.** Develop a Wayfinding Plan to make Ruidoso's residents and visitors aware of trail connections, destinations, and distances.

## **Goal 3.** Village and area residents have transit options.

**POLICY 3.1.** Continue partnerships with ZTrans.

**ACTION 3.1.A.** Develop fixed-route service.

**POLICY 3.2.** Support pedestrian improvements that enhance access to bus stop locations.

**ACTION 3.2.A.** Identify locations with the highest ridership to improve first.

**POLICY 3.3.** Improve shuttle service to and from the airport.

**ACTION 3.3.A.** Work with transportation providers to set up reliable service.

## **Goal 4.** Ruidoso is a safe and pleasant place to drive.

**POLICY 4.1.** Improve parking management.

**ACTION 4.1.A.** Create maps displaying public parking lot locations. An electronic version of map could be included in a visitor app, that identifies public parking sites, number of available spaces, and special vehicle accommodations, such as recreational vehicles.

**ACTION 4.1.B.** Consider implementation of paid parking in town at busy areas (such as Midtown).

**ACTION 4.1.C.** Evaluate the impact of a possible parking garage in Midtown on Rio Ruidoso.

**POLICY 4.2.** *Address traffic calming needs in an organized and objective manner.*

**ACTION 4.2.A.** Produce a Traffic Calming Guide. Identify the techniques that may be applied on Village roadways and the types of locations where those techniques are most appropriate. The guide should provide a clear decision-making process to aid Village staff in the implementation of traffic calming measures.

**ACTION 4.2.B.** Work with NMDOT to address safety at the “Y” intersection of Interstate 70 and Sudderth Drive, the southeast entrance into Ruidoso.

**POLICY 4.3.** *Pursue roadway design standards specific to the Village of Ruidoso transportation system.*

**ACTION 4.3.A.** Develop a street hierarchy that identifies which secondary routes should be high speed and higher volume roadways, and which roadways may be appropriate for traffic calming.

## **Goal 5.** Ruidoso reduces impacts of transportation on natural resources.

**POLICY 5.1.** *Develop transportation standards that minimize impacts to watershed health.*

**ACTION 5.1.A.** Create standards for waterway crossings that minimize impacts on the waterways.

**ACTION 5.1.B.** Create standards for stormwater management on parking areas and roadways utilizing concepts of low impact development (LID).

**ACTION 5.1.C.** Update driveway standards.





# UTILITIES

## WATER

### System Overview

The Village of Ruidoso has difficult mountainous geography requiring a largely decentralized system with various water treatment plants, tanks, and pressure zones. The numerous facilities are located throughout the Village in areas of moderate slope and with access roads. The large amount of facilities in the distribution system is based on significant variations in elevation, and high peak demands, and water right constraints. The redundant facilities ensure that topographically isolated areas are serviced. The water system is owned and maintained by the Village. Treated water is distributed by approximately 300 miles of pipeline.

The Village of Ruidoso water system consists of two water treatment plant (WTP) facilities: Alto Crest and Grindstone. The Alto Crest WTP is a package Aquarius conventional filtration WTP that was built in 1977 with a design capacity of 2 million gallons per day (MGD). The Grindstone WTP is a Trident system that was built in 1994, expanded in 1996, and includes four treatment trains each rated for 350 gallons per minute (gpm) or a total capacity of 2 MGD. The water system produces over 700 million gallons of water each year from the two WTPs and 11 wells. In addition to the WTPs and wells, the water system is comprised of 15 pumping stations, two diversions, two interconnects, 35 pressure reducing valves, and 13 storage tanks with 17,403,000 gallons of storage capacity. The water system currently has 7,504 active commercial and residential meters.

### Consumer Supply and Demand

There are approximately 8,000 year-round water customers in Ruidoso, but this number can surge seasonally to 20-30,000 during peak tourism periods. The population is not projected to grow substantially in the next 20 years and the Village has sufficient water rights to continue supplying its population in the foreseeable future if water management remains a priority. The challenge for the system is not the quantity of water available, but its conveyance to customers and the conditions on water rights permits. See the Water Resources section for discussion of long-term water supply.

### Existing Conditions and Basic Issues

Aging infrastructure is an issue as most of the Village's water systems were constructed in the 1970s and '80s. Aging infrastructure can lead to issues such as leakages or complete pipe failures. Areas of high pressure are a concern especially when

### THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

“ The infrastructure is in need of repair— I’m referring to roads, water, and sewage system in the Village proper.”

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

Survey respondents believe water, sewer, and electrical system improvements to meet peak demand is the most important type of improvement needed.

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

combined with aging infrastructure as they can be vulnerable points to pipe breakages. Through a general obligation bond to fund capital improvements, the Village is replacing leaking and outdated infrastructure at a rapid pace. This program is voted on every two years and has been supported by an overwhelming majority of voters.

A water audit conducted by the Village based on the 2014 American Water Works Association (AWWA) protocol revealed that 53 percent of water delivered to the distribution system was non-revenue water meaning that it was either an apparent loss or a real loss. Apparent losses are the result of unauthorized consumption, metering inaccuracies, or systematic data errors, while real losses are due to leakages at points in the system.

Transmission flexibility between the Alto, Grindstone, and Cherokee service areas is also a priority in order to offer redundancy in the system and make sure that water rights are available where they are needed. Specifically, redundancy ensures that in the event of an emergency where traditional water sources are not available, water can be acquired easily and moved efficiently from neighboring service areas.

#### **Policies and Recommended Improvements**

The 2018 Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) recommends the construction of potable water interconnections with both the City of Ruidoso Downs and the Alto Lakes Water and Sanitation (W&S) District. Both systems are in close proximity to the Ruidoso system, which minimizes the potential construction costs, and have enough capacity to provide significant volumes to the Village of Ruidoso system. These interconnections would also be mutually beneficial to the Ruidoso Downs and the Alto Lakes W&S systems as they have similar mountainous geography, common system challenges, and would allow for jurisdictions to purchase water from the Village of Ruidoso as needed. These interconnections would increase redundancy in the three systems.

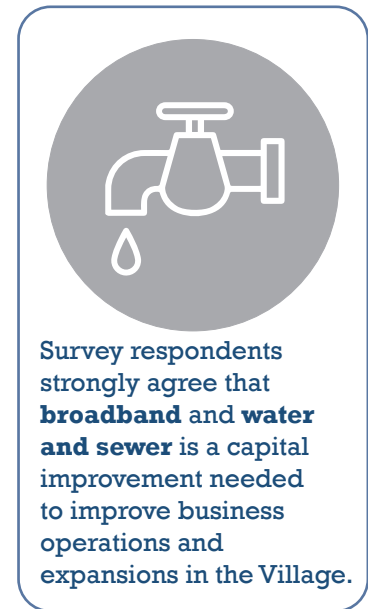
In addition, the 2016 Water Development Plan highlights areas that require improvement, mainly due to water rights and water supply concerns. Although Ruidoso has sufficient water rights, accessibility to these rights throughout the year can be a challenge. Improvements that aid in the ability to transfer water between the Eagle Creek and Rio Ruidoso Drainages would help to balance the withdrawal limitations in the individual watersheds. Furthermore, to continue to supply residents with water in the future, the system requires an increased ability to move water between the Alto, Grindstone, and Cherokee Service areas, as well as increased storage options to help balance water demands throughout the system.

In addition to the interconnection improvements and Water Development Plan recommendations, the following planned capital improvements are identified in the 2018 PER and funded through general obligation funds:

- Water tank replacement

- Improve surface water filtration systems
- Complete the construction of water laboratory facilities
- Commence the PRV upgrade project
- Increase the in-lab testing capability at water treatment plants
- Increase the water quality compliance testing within the system
- Construct system interconnection to provide for additional looping
- Construct regional metering to detect zones of excessive water loss
- Construct a pump station
- Construct water line replacements

Aging system components need to be replaced in a timely manner in order to keep the system in good functioning order and reliably supply customers. The Village has begun instituting measures to combat the high-pressure locations in the system, mainly adding pressure valves on the customer side of the meter connection in the high-pressure areas.



Comprehensive Plan Business Survey

## WASTEWATER SYSTEM

### System Overview

The system consists of 63 miles of interceptors, more than 700 manholes, and numerous other minor collector lines and service connection laterals. The wastewater treatment plant has a capacity of 2.7 MGD peak month average day flow. The Ruidoso Wastewater Treatment Plan still has additional capacity at current build out and has one additional bay to expand into to handle the 3.6 MGD design.

### Basic Issues

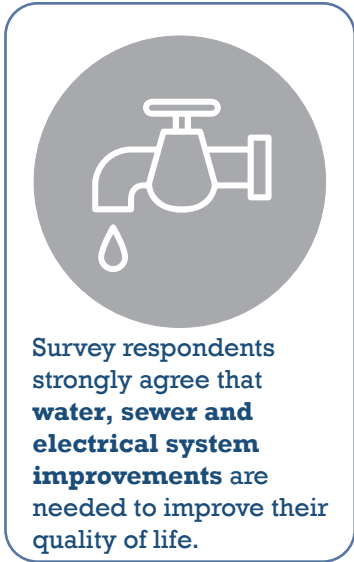
The overall issues described in the 2017 PER prepared by Molzen Corbin for the Village of Ruidoso are aging infrastructure, with the most pressing concerns currently being the lift stations and connecting the remaining residents to the system. Connecting the remaining residents to the system may be challenging due to the difficult topography in the area, which precludes some new connections to be collected by gravity, as well as the fact that existing on-site systems are owned and maintained by the residents themselves.

### Population/System Capacity

Not all residents of the Village of Ruidoso are connected to the wastewater treatment system. The 2017 PER estimates that although the population is not expected to increase in the next 20 years, the effort by the Village to connect existing residents to the infrastructure will increase service connections by 3,500 connections by the year 2036 with most of the connections (2,700) due to connecting on-site treatment systems to the grid and the remainder due to growth and seasonal housing.

### Existing Plans and Policies

- Village of Ruidoso Water Master Plan
- Village of Ruidoso Sewer Master Plan, April 2017



Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

## Policies and Recommended Improvements

### *Lift Stations*

According to the 2017 PER, the lift stations, connections to residents, and the system interceptors are the main priorities. Although rehabilitation efforts were undertaken by the Village in 2016 for lift stations that were critical or had equipment failures, it is expected that the lift stations will continue to need additional maintenance/replacement. See the 2017 PER for additional information regarding costs of improvements.

The preferred approach in the event that a lift station needs replacement is the use of gravity interceptors as appropriate. If gravity interceptors are not applicable as replacement options for certain lift stations, then rehabilitation is the next option, with complete replacement of the structure and equipment only recommended when deterioration is so severe that rehabilitation is not possible. A supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) system is also recommended to assist in monitoring and operating the lift stations.

### *Residential Connections*

Connections to residents are recommended to be a combination of gravity collection and low-pressure grinder systems depending on the situation at the connection. Gravity collection is the favored method, but a low-pressure grinder system is recommended where the geography is too difficult for gravity collection to function adequately. Additionally, many residential sewer connections were constructed using informal easements to connect their properties to the Village's utility infrastructure.

### *Capacity*

An increase in the capacity of the interceptors in the system is recommended but may be difficult based on the locations where the interceptors were originally constructed. Where the location of the current interceptors makes it difficult to replace using traditional open trench methods, trenchless methods are recommended. Where trenchless methods are inappropriate due to the limited capacity for size increase, depth of bury, or other factors affected by the original construction location of the pipe, parallel interceptors are recommended to provide the needed capacity.

### *General Maintenance*

Future improvements to the Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) would likely revolve around updating aging infrastructure as there is no current failure in the system. The WWTP is currently meeting its permitted effluent limits. It is also recommended that the replacement of component parts in the system is carried out as they reach their expected lifetimes in order to keep the system working effectively.

## OTHER SERVICES

### **Solid Waste**

The Village of Ruidoso provides solid waste services for its residents, including yard waste, and processes solid waste for communities across Lincoln County under contract. However, solid waste collection in Lincoln County is fragmented across multiple agencies. The result is poor understanding of waste disposal practices across the region and can lead to illegal dumping. While much of this occurs outside of Village limits, the practice of illegal dumping affects quality of life and aesthetic beauty of the area.

Overall, the Village of Ruidoso processes about 18,500 tons per year from more than 3,500 trash and recycling dumpsters as well as deliveries from Lincoln County. To dispose of solid waste, the Village of Ruidoso operates a transfer station located on Gavilon Canyon Road that is used to collect and transport waste to the Otero/Lincoln County Landfill in Orogrande, New Mexico. Over the last ten years, the volume of solid waste collected and disposed of by the Village has increased from about 8,500 tons per year to almost 11,000 tons, an increase of 28 percent. However, the fees collected by the Village have not increased, creating a strain on Village resources.

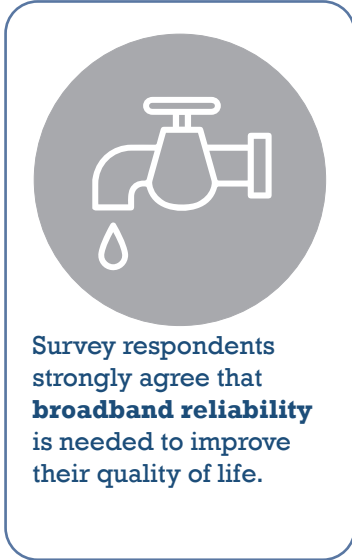
### **Recycling**

Recycling services are operated under contract with Greentree Solid Waste Authority and rely on residents and commercial businesses to deposit recyclable materials in the nearly 200 blue recycling dumpsters located throughout the Village. The Solid Waste department also works with the Village Forestry Department to collect and recycle green waste with a small fleet of grapple trucks.

The Village of Ruidoso offers a range of recycling programs Ruidoso that place increasing emphasis on reduce and reuse programs. The community now boasts a 45 percent diversion rate from landfill, one of the highest rates of recycling and diversion among New Mexico communities. However, the Village of Ruidoso, like most communities across the USA, has few viable commercial options for the sale of recycled paper and plastic products. Public/private agreements could be pursued for the use of recycled paper in lieu of plastics and local material recycling facilities that reduce the cost of shipping qualified material to urban centers.

On its website, the Solid Waste Department offers guidelines related to the disposal of the following recyclable materials:

- Plastics
- Steel cans
- Paper and paperboard
- Cooking oil containers
- Commercial cardboard



Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

### Policies/Objectives

- Improve coordination among waste collection agencies across Lincoln County
- Pursue a strategic plan related to solid waste and recycling that identifies potential efficiency improvements, capital investments, productive uses for recycled materials, and potential revenue generation opportunities related to solid waste

## DRY UTILITIES

### Broadband

#### System Overview

At the start of the planning process, most of the Village of Ruidoso had two internet providers: 1) TDS Telecom provided cable and fiber internet for residences and covered 92.6 percent of the Village of Ruidoso; and 2) Windstream provided DSL and Fiber internet to 90.2 percent of the residences in Village of Ruidoso.<sup>1</sup> More recently, the Village awarded a contract to Tularosa Basin. A grant is being used to connect the Ruidoso Public Library and Village Hall. Tularosa Basin will serve the Horton Complex. Eastern New Mexico University–Ruidoso Library and Ruidoso Public Library both provide publicly-funded internet access for the community.

#### Requested and Planned Improvements

Improving broadband access is a priority for Ruidoso community members and stakeholders due to intermittent service. The Village has identified improving broadband connectivity as a goal in its 2018 Strategic Plan and has taken steps during this process to improve it. The Village is committed to running fiber backbone by partnering with private sector to improve service. Research has shown that broadband in remote mountainous areas like Ruidoso only works when local governments form a consortium to back one supplier.

### Gas

#### System Overview

Zia Natural Gas provides service to 13,500 customers and to the entirety of Lincoln County. Gas usage usually peaks in the winter due to tourists visiting the Village and colder temperatures. The system can support current demand, and at present, Zia Natural Gas does not have any expansion plans. If the Village increases development in Gavilan Canyon, it would affect Zia's ability to meet demand.

#### Energy Efficiency Programs

Zia Natural Gas provides various energy efficiency programs including rebates for space heating, water heating, new construction, low income energy efficiency, and commercial energy.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [www.broadbandnow.com](http://www.broadbandnow.com)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.zngc.com/>

## Electric

### *System Overview*

Public Service Company of New Mexico (PNM) provides the Village of Ruidoso with electricity. Currently, PNM uses 17 percent renewable energy.

### *Energy Efficiency Programs*

PNM provides multiple programs and benefits for its customers. Some of the programs include Home Energy Checkups, a Refrigerator Recycling Program, Cooling & Heat Pump Rebates, Rebates on Swimming Pool Pumps, Home Lighting Discounts, and PNM Power Saver Programs. PNM also provides Quick Saver Customer Profiles summarizing what their customers do for improved energy efficiency to share with the public.<sup>3</sup>

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

The following goals, policies, and actions should be implemented to maintain and enhance Ruidoso's utilities:

**Goal 1.** Ruidoso has a reliable water system that meets long-term demands.

**POLICY 1.1.** *Ensure greater water system reliability and flexibility.*

**ACTION 1.1.A.** Further explore possible construction of potable water interconnections with the City of Ruidoso Downs and the Alto Lakes Water and Sanitation District to increase water system redundancies in region.

**ACTION 1.1.B.** Further diversify sources of water production.

**ACTION 1.1.C.** Explore the use of underground storage and recovery to expand conjunctive use water diversion strategies.

**POLICY 1.2.** *Continue to modernize and improve aging infrastructure in need of replacement or rehabilitation.*

**ACTION 1.2.A.** Follow recommended improvements of the Water Development Plan and engineering reports.

**ACTION 1.2.B.** Conduct a new system of preliminary engineering reporting to identify priority water utility projects for the next five to ten years.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.pnm.com/web/pnm.com/home>

**ACTION 1.2.C.** Complete and maintain an asset management plan.

## **Goal 2.** Quality sewer collections and wastewater service are provided throughout the Village.

**POLICY 2.1.** *Understand demand and capacity.*

**ACTION 2.1.A.** Monitor system capacity with growth forecasts so the Village can be prepared to meet current and future demand.

**ACTION 2.1.B.** Perform a rate study for commercial and residential uses to determine new sewer and wastewater rates.

**ACTION 2.1.C.** Monitor lift stations with supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) system and replace or rehabilitate those in need.

**POLICY 2.2.** *Expand service area.*

**ACTION 2.2.A.** Extend sewer to economically viable areas in accordance with the 2017 Sewer Master Plan.

## **Goal 3.** Reliable broadband services are available throughout the Village.

**POLICY 3.1.** *Improve broadband services throughout the Village to enhance the ease of doing business as well as attract visitors and new industries.*

**ACTION 3.1.A.** Form a consortium with neighboring municipalities to build capacity.

**ACTION 3.2.B.** Continue to look for opportunities to partner with the private sector to improve service.



# Goal 4.

Utilities are maintained and their capacity is updated.

**POLICY 4.1.** *Conduct regular reviews and update long-range plans to ensure the current utility systems can sufficiently meet demand.*

**ACTION 4.1.A.** Pursue Energy Conservation Strategies. Explore improvements or changes to management of system to reduce energy consumption.

**POLICY 4.2.** *Ensure private properties are connected to Village utilities.*

**ACTION 4.2.A.** Initiate a new ordinance that will require property owners of vacant lots to pay a vacant water/sewer fee. This will help the utilities to cover the initial cost as well as any required maintenance of that line or any components of that line to help to continue to provide a cost-effective service to the public. This will also help the Solid Waste Department collect fees on vacant lots.



LINVILLE  
National Forest  
RECREATION AREA  
CEDAR CREEK

# WATER RESOURCES

## WATER SUPPLY AND LONG-TERM PLANNING

The Village of Ruidoso water system is supplied by three surface water sources—Grindstone Reservoir, Upper Eagle Creek Diversion, and Alto Reservoir—in addition to various wells. The currently held water rights are 3,694.16 acre-foot per year or approximately 975,000 million gallons per year. In the 2017 fiscal year, 700 million gallons of water were treated and provided to customers.

Of the 16 water planning regions in New Mexico, Ruidoso falls in the Lower Pecos Valley Planning Region which roughly coincides with the lower reach of the Pecos River Watershed. The principal reference for water supply issues is the Lower Pecos Valley Regional Water Plan, first completed in 2001 by the Pecos Valley Water Users Association and updated in 2016. The principal aim of the Plan is to develop strategies to meet long-term regional water needs in the future.

### **Existing Conditions and Basic Issues**

Ruidoso has recently been under Phase 5 water restrictions due to the impact the Little Bear fire had on the Village's water rights. The watershed was altered due to the fire and caused a deterioration in the quality of the surface water, forcing the village to rely on only groundwater for an extended amount of time and using a significant amount of those water rights. Under Phase 5 restrictions, lawn watering is not allowed unless a resident is on a well and watering of vegetable plants and fruit trees is to be done by hand. Residents are also encouraged to conserve water during domestic use.

As related to source water, the main challenges identified by the 2014 Source Water Protection plan are drought, drought related variable groundwater levels, natural and manmade contamination, wildfires, and flooding. Drought is especially concerning in the Ruidoso region as it relates to the mandatory water debt to Texas even in years of drought, as well as a heightened probability of wildfire with dry vegetation caused by the drought. The Watershed Advisory Committee report should be consulted for recent information on water quality, current impairments on streams, and total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) in the area.

There are also several issues outlined in the updated 2016 Water Plan that currently impact the Lower Pecos Valley Region:

- Most of the water in the Pecos River Basin is in the lower basin and its use must comply with the 1948 Pecos River compact, specifically as relating to the amount of water rights available for use by the entities in the region.
- Drought can cause low flows in the Pecos which can make it difficult to meet project delivery requirements.
- Physical watershed management technique impacts on the net water supply are not yet quantified for practices that have been implemented.
- Continued compliance with the 2003 Pecos Settlement and the 1988 US Supreme Court Amended Decree.
- Stress on aquifers and impacts to the Pecos River from oil and gas development in the Capitan and Carlsbad basins.

### **Water Conservation Efforts**

The Water Conservation Plan (December 2015) identifies steps the Village of Ruidoso can take to ensure the Village remains a responsible steward of its water supplies. The purpose of the Water Conservation Plan is to “promote the efficient use of potable water supplies, reduce customer consumption, identify and reduce system non-revenue water and efficiency.” The Plan also asserts the need to track long-term trends in water usage. Specific efforts include replacement of leaking waterlines, an updated rate structure, and installation of new water meters. According to the Plan, these efforts are to be funded through general obligation bonds.

### **Policies and Recommended Improvements**

Specific proposed infrastructure capital improvement projects to address the basic water resource needs that regional stakeholders are interested in pursuing (as included in the updated water plan) are:

- Alto Dam Compliance and Improvements
- Water Storage Tank Improvements (for various tanks in the system)
- Drainage Improvements
- Fire Hydrant Replacement
- Water Infrastructure Improvements
- Water Maintenance Facility
- Alto Water Treatment Plant Upgrade
- New Wastewater Reuse Projects

The 2014 Source Water Protection Plan also names action items to assist in the protection of the water sources. These action items include:

- Testing water wells at specified intervals for general chemistry to be able to identify changes in groundwater chemistry.
- Measuring and reviewing water levels in supply wells.
- Performing a water audit, identifying and repairing leaks, upgrading aging drinking water infrastructure.
- Reviewing water usage data to determine if newly instated tiered rate structure encourages water conservation.
- Reviewing the water conservation webpage for possible improvements.

- Developing a formal outreach program to local schools.
- Exploring interest in developing a regional or county-scale Source Water Protection Plan.

#### **Existing Plans and Policies**

- PER for the Village of Ruidoso Regional Potable Water System Improvements, Stantec (5/21/18)
- Lower Pecos Valley Regional Water Plan, Pecos Valley Water Users Association (2016 update)
- Source Water Protection Plan, Village of Ruidoso and NM Environment Department Drinking Water Bureau (3/27/14)
- Water Conservation Plan (2015 and 2016)
- Grindstone O&M Manual (Adopted on 4/14/17)
- Alto O&M Manual (Adopted on 9/17/19)
- Village of Ruidoso Water Master Plan

## **STORM DRAINAGE AND WATERSHED MANAGEMENT**

The Pecos River watershed is composed of Upper and Lower reaches that make up the Pecos River Basin; Ruidoso falls within the lower reach which encompasses the area from Sumner Dam to the Texas state line. Forest management also has an impact on watershed management as it relates to forest fire risks, surface water runoff in terms of both water quantity and quality, and erosion. The Village maintains a Forestry Department, which is unusual for a community the size of Village but a reflection of the unique geography of the Village and the need to manage natural resources, including maintaining the mountain appeal of the community while mitigating risks due to wildfires.

#### **Existing Conditions and Basic Issues**

The main threat to the watershed in the Ruidoso area is wildfire and the ensuing consequences due to damage to the environment by the fire events. However, overgrown forests are the greatest threat to long-term water supply because this condition reduces groundwater recharge and surface water flow. As related to village water resources, areas near municipal water storage reservoirs and water treatment plants need to be particularly well-protected in order to ensure water quality and to limit impacts to infrastructure investments. In addition, upstream areas in the watershed need to be maintained to minimize the possibility of flooding and debris-flows after a fire event. Critical reservoirs in the vicinity of Ruidoso include Grindstone Lake, Alto Reservoir, and Bonito Lake. Of these, Grindstone Lake and Alto Reservoir provide surface water sources for Ruidoso, along with the Upper Eagle Creek Diversion.

#### **Policies and Recommended Improvements**

The North Sacramento Mountains Watershed and Forest Restoration Strategy aims to provide increased fire protection in the region by mitigating the threat of wildfires in wildland-urban interface areas where the vegetation is vulnerable to wildfires.

The recommended forest treatments outlined in the 2018 report include reducing fuel loads as well as keeping treated areas maintained in order to ensure healthy forests. These treatments can be done by mechanical means, by hand, by using chemicals, or by using fire. These recommendations are addressed in the Hazard Mitigation Chapter.

#### **Existing Plans and Policies**

- North Sacramento Mountains Watershed and Forest Restoration Strategy (April 2018)
- Village of Ruidoso Water Development Plan (2016)

## **GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS**

The following goals, policies, and actions should be implemented to maintain and enhance Ruidoso's water resources:

# **Goal 1.** Expand water production capacity and system redundancy while protecting natural resources.

### *POLICY 1.1. Diversify sources of water.*

**ACTION 1.1.A.** Evaluate and equip suitable production wells that are already permitted with the Office of the State Engineer.

**ACTION 1.1.B.** Repair, rehabilitate, or replace surface diversion structures to increase diversion reliability.

**ACTION 1.1.C.** Continue operating interconnection booster stations to allow water from various distribution areas to be moved to other locations in town.

### *POLICY 1.2. Maintain and modify existing infrastructure to optimize production and distribution systems.*

**ACTION 1.2.A.** Implement the Water Plan's recommendations. To ensure water supply is in compliance and of high quality, the Village should make the recommended improvements to water supply and storage infrastructure, including improvements to Grindstone and Alto Dams, water storage tanks, drainage, fire hydrants, the water lines, maintenance facilities, treatment plants, and reuse projects. Review and amend the Water Development Plan every five to ten years.

**ACTION 1.2.B.** Implement the Village's Water Conservation Plan. The Plan should be revised every five to ten years.

**ACTION 1.2.C.** Conduct annual AWWA water audits and Gallons Per Capita Day (GPCD) calculations.

**Goal 2.** The health of Ruidoso's wetlands and riparian ecosystems are improved and protected; water quality in area is protected or enhanced.

**POLICY 2.1.** *Strengthen wetland and riparian vegetation management.*

**ACTION 2.1.A.** In coordination with the Natural Resources chapter, develop a comprehensive strategy for vegetation management and watershed improvements to improve streams, rivers, riparian areas, and wetlands and watershed uplands.

**ACTION 2.1.B.** Identify funding for staffing and implementation of management strategy.

**ACTION 2.1.C.** Exclude riparian and drainage areas from the height of grass portion of property nuisances in Section 38-62 of municipal code.

**ACTION 2.1.D.** Reduce area along streams and rivers that can be manicured to no more than 20 feet per parcel.

**POLICY 2.2.** *Implement a stormwater management and drainage program.*

**ACTION 2.2.A.** Develop a Drainage Master Plan that identifies water flows and sites of recurring flooding, as well as storage facilities and potential improvements. Identify water quality improvements.

**ACTION 2.2.B.** Expand the reach of the stormwater demonstration projects. The Watershed Committee has developed demonstration projects to protect the health of the watershed. These projects should be implemented throughout the Village through coordinated efforts.

**POLICY 2.3.** *Protect or enhance source water quality.*

**ACTION 2.3.A.** Monitor and audit water supply wells and Surface water supplies. To ensure water quality is not compromised and usage rates fall within in normal ranges, conduct regular audits of water wells as recommended in the 2014 Source Water Protection Plan.

**ACTION 2.3.B.** Review and amend the Source Water Protection Plan every five to ten years.

**ACTION 2.3.C.** Develop special overlay zoning to implement development restrictions to protect source water protection areas.



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# HAZARD MITIGATION

Comprehensive Plans are required to include a section documenting hazard mitigation that is coordinated with local emergency management and wildfire protection plans. This chapter summarizes information regarding existing hazards and mitigation efforts and includes recommendations to consider that will improve mitigation success and emergency response.

## CURRENT CONDITIONS

### Service Area

The Village of Ruidoso is responsible for addressing hazards within the Village limits and has coordinated hazard mitigation efforts with Lincoln County and the following regional jurisdictions for more than 12 years:<sup>1</sup>

- US Forest Service
- Mescalero Apache Tribe
- Bureau of Land Management
- New Mexico State land, Forestry Division
- Capitan
- Corona
- Carrizozo
- Ruidoso Downs

As a result of coordinated efforts, government agencies have made efforts to reduce the risk of wildfire on public land and have helped landowners with similar efforts on private land throughout Lincoln County, including fuel reduction projects, establishing defensible space around structures, coordinated interagency cooperative burns, and Firewise training.

### Condition

Despite these ongoing efforts, the nature of Ruidoso, its proximity to forest land considered “heavy fuel loads,” make it a Wildland Urban Interface and its terrain, make the Village’s wildfire risk high and result in a NFPA Hazard Rating of “High.” However, the Village Forestry program in cooperation with the landowners have developed defensible space on approximately 90 percent of the properties with homes within the Village. These natural conditions, together with the lack of defensible space surrounding structures, fire hydrants, and sprinkler systems, and the prevalent use of

<sup>1</sup> Lincoln County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2017

### THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

*“Fire protection is important.”*

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

combustible building materials of homes, decks, and porches, and above-ground electrical utilities make wildfire the greatest hazard to the Village. Wildfires also increase the possibility of other hazards, including landslides and dam failure. Figure 13-1 illustrates the wildland-urban interface (WUI) areas, which are particularly threatened by wildfire.

In addition to wildfire, the Lincoln County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies the hazards that could impact Ruidoso as follows:

- **Floods.** Rio Ruidoso, which carries snowmelt from Sierra Blanca through Ruidoso is the Village's primary source of seasonal flash floods due to excessive runoff. Since the Little Bear Fire in 2012, areas outside of the floodplains have been impacted by flooding from Rio Bonito and Eagle Creek. Areas with a one percent annual chance of flooding (100-year floodplain) along Rio Ruidoso, Cedar Creek, and Carrizo Creek are shown in Figure 13-1.
- **Severe Weather.** High winds, thunderstorms, lightning, hail, winter storms, and extreme heat are potential hazards in Lincoln County. Of them, extreme heat has the lowest probability of affecting Ruidoso.
- **Drought.** As of 2017, Lincoln County was in its fifth year of drought and drought-like conditions are expected every other year based on statistical analysis.
- **Dam Failure.** Alto Lake Dam and Grindstone Canyon Dam are within the Village of Ruidoso's jurisdiction, however Lake Mescalero is near the Village and could have downstream impacts. If Lake Mescalero or Grindstone Canyon dams failed the resulting waterflow would increase Rio Ruidoso 40 feet above its banks throughout the Village of Ruidoso and Ruidoso Downs.<sup>2</sup> Both these dams have required Emergency Action Plans. There have been no dam failures in Lincoln County, however the State ranks these dams as high hazard potential due to the expected loss of life that could result from their failure.
- **Earthquakes.** The Alamogordo fault extends into Lincoln County, however the probability of earthquakes and subsequent landslides in the county is low.
- **Tornadoes.** Ruidoso has experienced tornadoes, but the probability is low; southeastern Lincoln County has a greater risk due to its wind conditions.
- **Hazardous Materials.** US Route 54 and Union Pacific Railroad are possible routes used to transport hazardous materials in Lincoln County, however, there have been no incidents to date and the probability is low.
- **Terrorism or Active Shooter.** The possibility of terrorist acts exists anywhere, but Ruidoso is not considered to be a probable location.
- **Communicable Disease Outbreak.** While it is not easy to predict where outbreaks will occur, historically Lincoln County has had fewer rates of outbreaks per capita than the state.

### THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

*"Enforce weed and grass control to make our Village Firewise!"*

Comprehensive Plan Community Survey

### Capacity

The Village and the agencies represented within the Greater Ruidoso Area have been working to address the threat of wildfire and improving education and fire restrictions, which remain real

<sup>2</sup> Lincoln County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2017

and constant threats given the Village's proximity to forestland. Village stakeholders have expressed their priorities for more wildfire and safety services, improved education around the threat of wildfire, and fuel management/fire restriction enforcement.

- **Village of Ruidoso Fire Department.** The Village currently has six fire fighters on duty every day, but as the Village grows the capacity will need to increase to provide adequate protection.<sup>3</sup> Staff is supported by Search and Rescue teams near Cedar Creek and Bonito Lake area if needed. Improved signage and education have helped prevent accidents and improve rescue efforts; they communicate where hikers/campers can go and what rules to follow. However, the US Forest Service has put a signage plan for Cedar Creek on hold. Given the high fire risks between March and June, fires and charcoal are prohibited; these fire restrictions need extra enforcement, which is difficult due to lack of education; when so many users are visitors who do not know the rules, signage, educational outreach, and enforcement is critical.
- **US Department of Agriculture Forest Service.** The US Department of Agriculture Forest Service's Lincoln National Forest is adjacent to the Village of Ruidoso's eastern and western boundaries. Within Lincoln National Forest there are three districts; the Smokey Bear Ranger District overlaps with the Village and assists in the Village's firefighting capacity.<sup>4</sup> To identify and address forest issues in the District and Lincoln National Forest, the Smokey Bear Collaborative comprised of area stakeholders was formed.

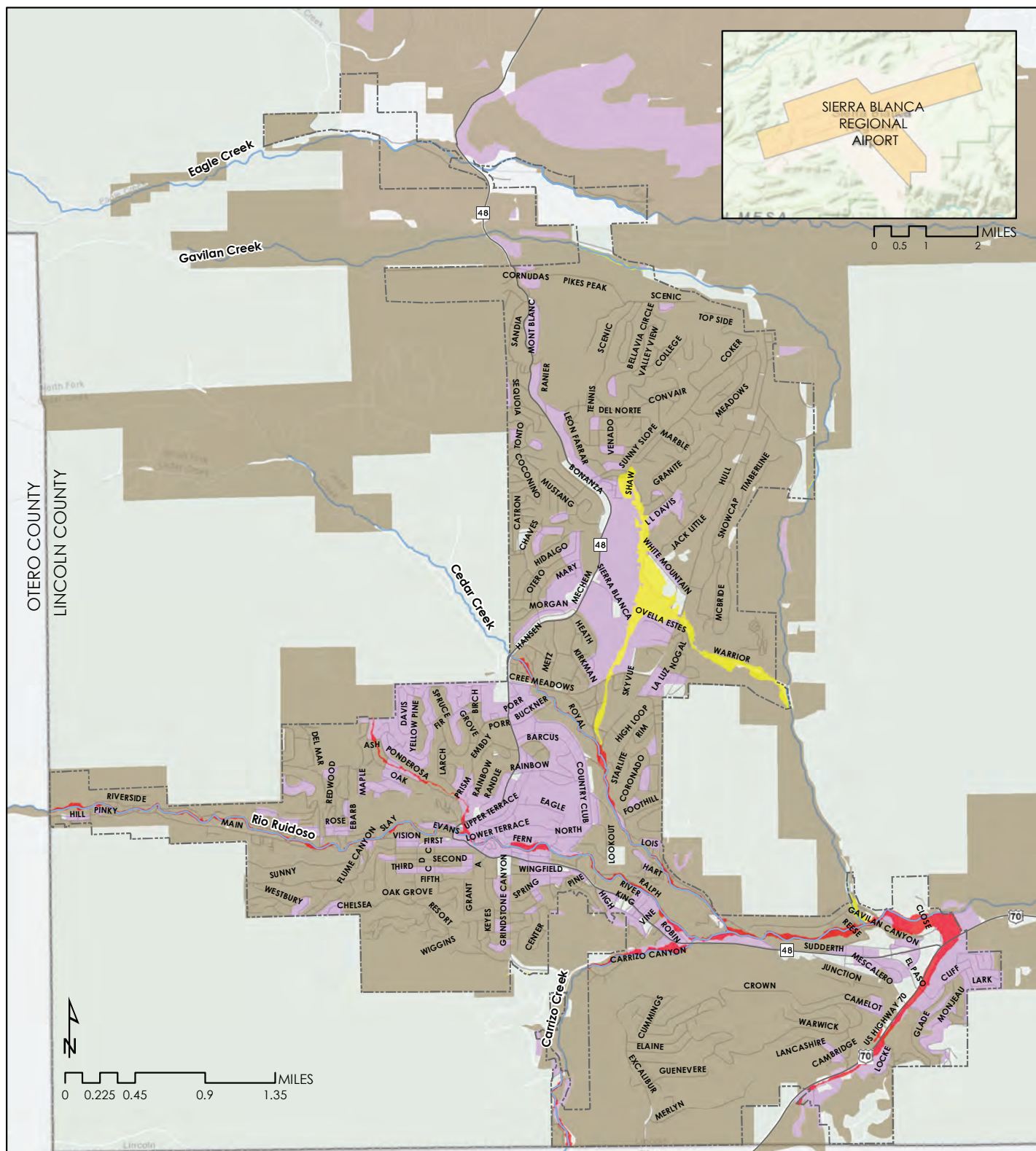


Source: Dianne L. Stallings/ Ruidoso News

<sup>3</sup> Village of Ruidoso Fire Department Assistant Fire Chief, Cody Wilson at Stakeholder Meeting January 16, 2019

<sup>4</sup> Lincoln County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2017

**FIGURE 13-1. HAZARD MITIGATION AREAS**



**LEGEND**

- VILLAGE OF RUIDOSO
- RIVERS AND CREEKS

**FLOOD ZONE**

- 100 - YEAR FLOOD PLAIN W/O BASE ELEVATION (A)
- 100 - YEAR FLOOD PLAIN (AE)

**WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE (WUI)**

- INTERFACE
- INTERMIX

- **Village of Ruidoso Department of Forestry.** In 2002, the Village became a Firewise community and initiated a planned progression of fuels reduction projects on both public and private property within the Village boundaries. The Village created its own Forestry Department in 2003, which led to the revision of fire-safety ordinances and an education program which includes Firewise workshops and demonstrations on how to make a home fire resistance on television. The Village was awarded a Firewise Community USA and a National US Forest Service Rural Communities Assistance Spirit award.<sup>5</sup>
  - **Hazardous Fuels Reduction.** The Village of Ruidoso is “high at risk for a catastrophic wildfire community” according to the Community Wildfire Protection Plan. There are approximately 13,500 acres within the Village limits and another 1,500 acres at the Sierra Blanca Regional Airport. Most of the Village-owned property is heavily timbered and adjacent to schools, subdivisions, water tanks, and other critical areas. There is about 580 acres of timbered Village-owned property at the Airport that has not been treated and is a threat to the investments at the airport. Ordinances were passed requiring fuels reduction on all properties within the Village boundaries. Since the initiation, the Village has systematically required landowners to thin their properties to reduce fuel concentrations subdivision by subdivision throughout the Village. In 2017, the first cycle of thinning was complete. The Village has managed to get approximately 90 percent of Village and private property within the Village thinned to Village Fuels Management Standards. The Forestry Department has established a 10-year rotational certification process to ensure compliance with the fuels management ordinances on all properties within the Village. From 2012 to the present, there has been a major bark-beetle infestation in the Village that has killed thousands of trees. Due to the mortality from the bark beetle and the natural reproduction of conifers and sprouting of alligator juniper, properties must be maintained to keep up with the natural fuels accumulation.
  - **Department of Forestry Web Resources.** The department has a webpage dedicated to tips homeowners can take to remove flammable material from around their homes in order to protect forest land and their properties from wildfire.<sup>6</sup> The webpage provides cost estimates, possible contractors who are qualified to clear and thin properties of dead trees and other flammable materials, and the requirements these contractors must meet. The department's webpage also has list of links that provide information on the Fuels Management Ordinance (also referred to as the thinning standards), presentations on Ruidoso's Wildland-Urban Interface, fire behavior, and management, and cost sharing opportunities and checklists for property owners to use in order to thin the trees on their properties and comply with the Fuels Management Ordinance.

<sup>5</sup> <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57cf2dbf1b631b3eb2d911db/t/580fbbb8b3db2b9be8ca3362/1477426107593/SWS+Ruidoso+case+study+2008+with+pics+%28updated+10-08%29.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.ruidoso-nm.gov/forestry>

- **Greater Ruidoso Area Wildland Urban Interface Working Group.** Involving Federal, State, Tribal, Local agencies and the public. The group is chaired by the Ruidoso Director of Forestry. The group was responsible for initiating mitigation recommendations for the Greater Ruidoso area that stretched from the Mescalero Apache reservation to Capitan to Lincoln and back to Ruidoso. This was a group that collaborated and produced the first Community Wildfire Protection Plan for the greater Ruidoso area in 2004. This plan established priorities for treatment and was the basis for the progression of the mitigation strategy for the Village of Ruidoso. Each agency had their own piece of the pie with the overall objective of protecting the populated parts of the area. The plan was updated and included in the 2014 update of the Lincoln County Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Another update is planned for 2019. The group remains active and has quarterly meetings for the purpose of collaboration on projects and assessing fuels mitigation needs. The group is very active in evaluating projects and community outreach activities.
- **Greater Ruidoso Area Wildland Urban Interface Working Group.** Involving Federal, State, Tribal, and local agencies, the group was responsible for implementing fire mitigation measures using the “best available science”, restoring and monitoring forest health, protecting communities, and engaging private investment in forest-based economies, maintaining high quality of life in forest areas, and sustaining real estate and tourism.

## EXISTING PLANS AND POLICIES

### *National Plans*

- **A Profile of Development and Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) in Lincoln County, New Mexico, 2019.** Taking data from across the country, this report compares Lincoln County’s wildland-urban interface to that of the state and western United States using 2010 data with a focus on WUI areas with homes. WUI is defined here as “private forestlands that are within 500 meters of public forestlands” and is also referred to as “fire-prone lands.” Although Lincoln County has the smallest amount of WUI area in the eleven western continental states (40 square miles total), it has the highest percentage of WUI with homes (32.5 percent). This is important because wildfire is considered “a natural disturbance” in forests and when it is suppressed over time to protect adjacent private property and homes, forest undergrowth or “fuel buildup” increases the probability of large, uncontrollable fires. More than one-third (36.1 percent) of Lincoln County’s homes are in the WUI and almost half (49.3 percent) of those are second homes. The report looks at the prevalence of second homes because more than \$1 billion is spent per year to protect homes from forest fires and “it puts the cost and danger of protecting homes into a context...are lives being risked, and billions of dollars being spent, to protect people’s vacation homes?” According to the report, the density of the homes is also a factor: the larger the lot size, the more it costs to protect them from fire; conversely, a dense subdivision is less costly since more homes are located within a smaller land area. Most notably, the report finds that Lincoln County ranks in the 91st percentile in the state when it comes to existing risk, which means it has a high amount of forested land where homes have already been built next to public forest land. This risk is costly and likely to become more costly if more homes are built in the WUI.





**Controlled  
burns help  
reduce fuels  
for possible  
wildfires.**

Source: USFS

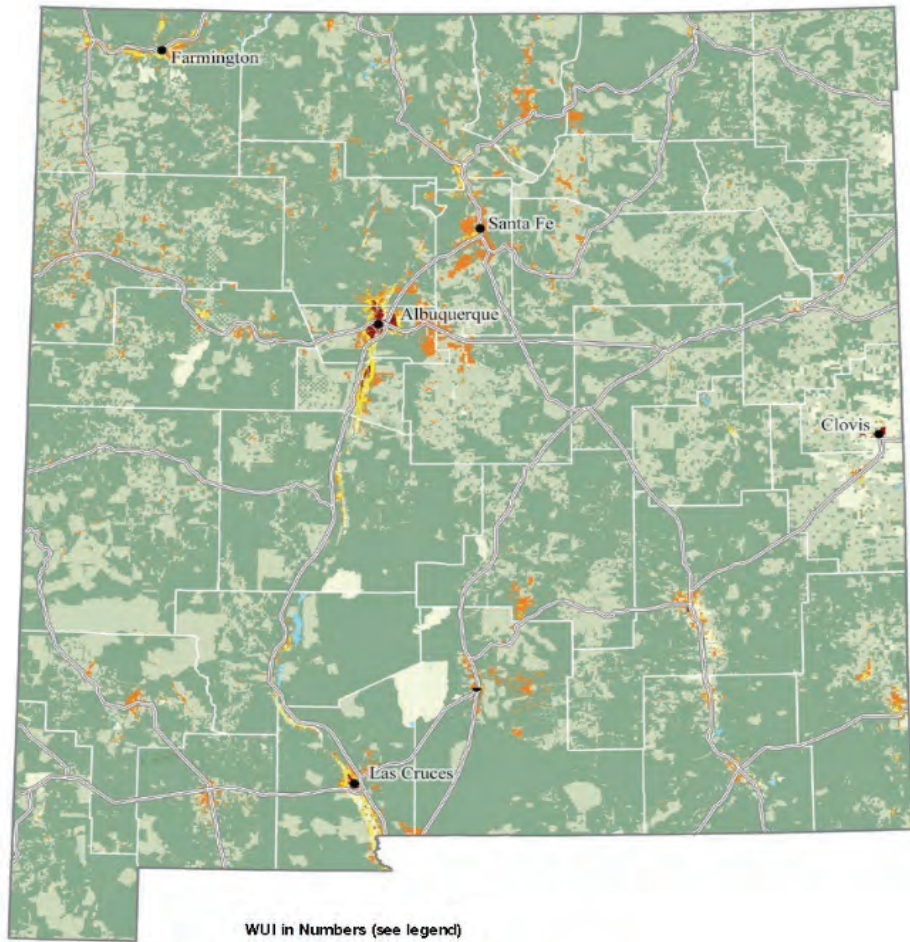
- **Fire Wise Plant Materials.** New Mexico State University in conjunction with the US Department of Agriculture, and the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department prepared a guide for homeowners to protect their home from wildfire risks by creating defensible space by planting and maintaining specific fire-resistant plants and trees.<sup>7</sup> The manual includes a detailed list of appropriate species, guidance for spacing between plants, and maintenance instructions. These recommendations are currently shared with all Ruidoso property owners.
- **The 2010 Wildland-Urban Interface of the Conterminous United States.** This report details the conditions and risks of the wildland-urban interface (WUI) areas; it defines WUI as “the area where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland.”<sup>8</sup> It stresses that the WUI is where wildfires have the greatest impact on people because fire can spread quickly from wildlands’ forest and grasslands into neighborhoods and homes. Unlike the Profile of Development and WUI report, it focuses on the environmental impacts that building next to wildlands has on wildlife and their habitat, in addition to the economic impacts. The trend to develop next to wildlands is leading to forest fragmentation and loss of habitat and an increase in domestic animals—both of which are interfering with native species and ecosystems, in addition to increasing the risks of wildfire threatening homes and people.

7 <http://www.emnrd.state.nm.us/SFD/FireMgt/documents/FireWisePlantMaterial-sNMSU.pdf>

8 <https://www.nrs.fs.fed.us/pubs/48642>

# New Mexico

Southwestern Region



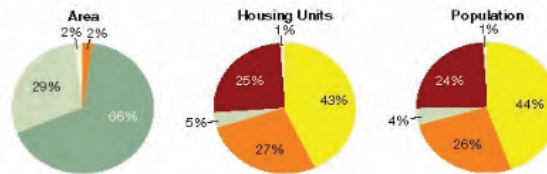
- Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI)**
- Interface
  - Intermix
- Non-WUI Vegetated**
- No housing
  - Very low housing density
- Non-vegetated or Agriculture**
- Low and very low housing density
  - Medium and high housing density
  - Water
- County border
- Highway

0 50 100 km

For more information on the maps and data presented here, please refer to page 20.

42

WUI in Numbers (see legend)



Source: The 2010 Wildland-Urban Interface of the Conterminous United States.

When compared to the rest of the country, New Mexico has one of the highest percentages of homes in the WUI relative to the total homes in the state (surpassed only by Wyoming, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and West Virginia.) The report identifies New Mexico as one of a handful of states that has greater than 80 percent of its seasonal homes located in the WUI. It acknowledges that such homes can be a good draw for tourism and related economies, but it also recognizes that seasonal homeowners can be harder to coordinate when it comes to maintaining their properties to reduce fire risk. Most notable is 70 percent of the state's population live in the WUI. The report's WUI map of New Mexico shows the Ruidoso area almost entirely as WUI area.

### State Plans

- **State of New Mexico Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2018.** This plan addresses hazard mitigation statewide and specifically notes the following hazards that could impact Lincoln County and the Ruidoso area:
  - **Dam Failure.** Within the Ruidoso area are Grindstone Canyon Dam, Alto Lake Dam, Bonito Lake Dam, Upper Rio Hondo Site No. 1 Dam, and Two Rivers Dam, all of which are considered to have high hazard potential.<sup>9</sup> The Little Bear Fire in 2012, which burned much of the Bonito Lake Dam watershed, has resulted in hydrologic problems.
  - **Land Subsidence.** Lincoln County is considered to have “highly to extremely hydrocompaction susceptible soils” on and near Capitan Mountains, Oscura Mountains and other solitary peaks.”<sup>10</sup>
  - **Tornadoes.** Lincoln County last experienced a significant tornado in 2017, which was accompanied by golf-ball sized hail.
- **Living with Fire: A Guide for the Homeowner, New Mexico, 2018.** To help New Mexican property owners “live more safely with the threat of wildfire,” the New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (New Mexico State Forestry Division and New Mexico Energy Conservation and Management Division), New Mexico Office of Emergency Management, Bureau of Land Management, and USDA Forest Service sponsored a descriptive guide illustrating how to better prepare and safeguard property from fire risks. The manual outlines the steps property owners should take to reduce the wildfire threat in four zones in and around the property: the access zone that allows emergency vehicles to locate the property, defensible space zone surrounding the structure, the built zone, and the interior zone. The Village of Ruidoso shares these recommendations with all Ruidoso property owners, along with several other publications distributed by Firewise.<sup>11</sup>

### County Plans

- **Lincoln County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2017 and 2018.** The latest Hazard Mitigation Plan is in compliance with the Stafford Act and the Disaster Mitigation and described in Capacity and Conditions sections earlier in this chapter.
- **Lincoln County New Mexico Community Wildfire Protection Plan Update, 2014 and 2019.**<sup>12</sup> The Lincoln County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) was last updated in 2019 with the support of the County, Village of Ruidoso, Smokey Bear Ranger District, Capitan District, Greater Ruidoso Area WUI Working Group, and Bureau of Indian Affairs. The Plan also serves as an update to the Greater Ruidoso Area CWPP. The plan documents completed fuel treatment areas, references the Village of Ruidoso’s fire safety ordinances (including forest thinning and fuel management), lists its goals and objectives, and makes recommendations for management. The plan also documents priority projects for thinning.

<sup>9</sup> [https://drought.unl.edu/archive/plans/GeneralHazard/state/NM\\_2018.pdf](https://drought.unl.edu/archive/plans/GeneralHazard/state/NM_2018.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> [https://drought.unl.edu/archive/plans/GeneralHazard/state/NM\\_2018.pdf](https://drought.unl.edu/archive/plans/GeneralHazard/state/NM_2018.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.emnrd.state.nm.us/SFD/Publications/PubsMain.html>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.emnrd.state.nm.us/SFD/FireMgt/documents/Rev2014LincolnCounty-CWPPUpdateFinal.pdf>

- **Lincoln County All Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2012.** This plan was the predecessor of and impetus of the 2017 Hazard Mitigation Plan and was the result of a multi-agency process in compliance with the Stafford Act and the Disaster Mitigation Act approved by FEMA in 2012. The 2017 plan serves as its update.

#### *Village Plans and Policies*

- **Village of Ruidoso Fire Ordinance (Ordinance 2009-01).** The Village of Ruidoso adopted its Fire Ordinance in 2009 to amend sections in Chapter 42, Fire Prevention and Protection of the municipal code. The ordinance addresses the penalties resulting from violations and the fees from such violations. It also addresses the requirements for fire safety inspections of buildings whenever a change in occupancy occurs; business registration or license is received; or building permit for construction or renovation is received, and the associated fees.
- **Village of Ruidoso Fuels Management Standards (Section 42-80).** These standards, also referred to as Ordinance 42-80, specify exactly what all properties within the Village limits must follow to minimize fire risk. The standards are categorized into zones according to their proximity to structures.
- **Village of Ruidoso Urban-Wildland Interface Code (Section 54-151).** The Village adopted its urban-wildland interface code (U/WIC) 2002 and was amended in 2004 and 2007. It addresses regulations to mitigate fire risks, including: 1-hour fire-resistive building materials; enclosed eaves, fascias, and soffits; forest debris removal; and references to the Fuels Management Standards (Section 42-80).
- **Community Forest Management Plan (2000).** The Village wrote and implemented a Community Forest Management Plan (CFMP) that then was used in developing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan in 2004. These plans resulted in ordinances which require property owners to reduce fire risks on their properties. The CFMP led to an increase in forest contractors and natural resource-related jobs.
- **Ready, Set, Go! Wildland Fire Action Guide and Other Publications.** The Village shares many guides to educate the public on fire mitigation online as well as at community events. The measures in these publications are part of the principles used in creating the 42-80 ordinance that property owners in Ruidoso are required to use for fuel mitigation within the Village. The Wildland Fire Action Guide was produced by the International Association of Fire Chiefs to help property owners prepare for wildland fire threats.<sup>13</sup> It provides guidance on creating defensible space around properties, creating a more fire-resistant “hardened” home, and includes a step-by-step checklist for homeowners to follow in case of a fire.
- **Village of Ruidoso Fire Restrictions.** The Village of Ruidoso’s Fire Department announces what level of risk the Village is experiencing on its website and categorizes the fires restrictions into levels I to III, with one being the least restrictive and III being the most restrictive.<sup>14</sup> Each level’s restrictions are listed in detail.
- **CallMeRuidoso.com.** The Village of Ruidoso’s website currently has an option for individuals to sign up for emergency notifications from Ruidoso Police and Fire via voice, text, and email messages.

<sup>13</sup> <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57cf2dbf1b631b3eb2d911db/t/590c8f-c06a4963faa86bfb88/1493995919710/Ruidoso+Wildland+Fire+Action+Guide.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.ruidoso-nm.gov/fire-restrictions>

- **Other Fire/Emergency Information.** The Village of Ruidoso's website also provides links to New Mexico Fire Information, Emergency Preparedness, Wildland Fire Action guide, and New Mexico Prevention Resources, and Smokey Bear Wildfire Protection on its Fire Department webpage.<sup>15</sup> The "Emergency Preparedness" links to another Village webpage that repeats some of the links on the Fire Department page and provides more links to sites that range from advice on reducing wildfire risks to agency websites, including FEMA Preparedness, [Ready, Set, Go!](#) (a national program that serves as resource for residents to prepare for a wildland fire), [Lincoln County Emergency Alert System](#) (another way citizens can sign up to be notified of emergency situations), [US Forest Service, New Mexico State Forestry](#), New Mexico Department of Homeland Security, [Firewise](#), and [Wildfire Safety](#).
- **Grindstone Canyon Dam Emergency Action Plan.** An Emergency Action Plan (EAP) was certified by the State Engineer in October 2016 for the purpose of "reduce the risk of human life loss and injury and to minimize property damage during an unusual or emergency event at Grindstone Canyon Dam." The plan identifies the potential impacted area, the steps to take during an event to determine emergency level, and includes an evacuation map if such an emergency were to arise.
- **Alto Lake Dam Emergency Action Plan.** An EAP was certified by the State Engineer in August 2017 for the Alto Lake Dam. It identifies the steps to take during an emergency as described above for Grindstone Canyon Dam, as well as the potential impacted area and evacuation map.
- **Moon Mountain Management Plan, 2018**

### Accomplishments & Planned Improvements

The 2016 Lincoln County Hazard Mitigation Plan lists the following projects:

- Public awareness campaign to increase education using public service announcements to share information about all types of hazards.
- Working with electrical providers to assure rights-of-way of are regularly maintained.
- Improving floodplain management by updating allowable land uses in floodplains, updating zoning, enforcing regulations, and controlling alternation to the floodplain and waterways, including filling, grading, dredging and any development that has the possibility of increasing chances of flooding.
- Improving the response process for emergencies and coordinating with Otero County and Mescalero Tribe on shared bodies of water.
- Protecting the public from manmade hazardous material spills by conducting a hazardous materials flow study.
- Establishing an early warning system that is cost effective and coordinated with other jurisdictions.
- The Village of Ruidoso has a prioritized plan for the continued fuels management maintenance of Village Property and Schedule for fuels management for maintenance of subdivisions. More than 1680 acres have been identified and prioritized for thinning within the Village.

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.ruidoso-nm.gov/ruidoso-fire-department/>

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

The following goals, policies, and actions should be implemented to maintain and enhance Ruidoso's hazard mitigation system:

### Goal 1. Ruidoso is well-prepared for emergencies.

**POLICY 1.1.** Uphold the Community Wildfire Protection Plan and continue to prioritize interjurisdictional cooperation and collaboration between the Village, Lincoln County, US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Mescalero Tribe, Ruidoso Downs, Carrizozo, and other agencies with jurisdiction over land. The Village is working with the State to ensure funding to continue forest thinning and fire mitigation efforts.<sup>21</sup>

**ACTION 1.1.A.** Confirm Appropriate Allowable Uses in Ruidoso and the Regional U/WIC and WUI.

**ACTION 1.1.B.** Identify additional fire protection regulations and enforcement to Village's existing Standards for Fire Safety and Fire Handling.

**POLICY 1.2.** Maintain private properties within the Village and Village-owned property to Ordinance 42-80 Fuels Management Standards.

**ACTION 1.2.A.** Bring all properties into compliance with the Fuels Management ordinance and ensure through a required certification process that they are periodically maintained so that they remain in compliance.

**ACTION 1.2.B.** Develop a certification notification program so landowners are notified 12 months prior to the certification expiration date so that they have time to do any needed work prior to the required Certification Inspection conducted by the Ruidoso Forestry Department.

<sup>21</sup> Capital Outlay Project No A18C2527 in Village of Ruidoso Mangers Report, 2018.

# Goal 2.

Residents are well-educated in wildfire safety.

**POLICY 2.1.** *Prioritize education and enforcement so residents understand the importance of defensible space and learn how to adapt their buildings and properties so that residential landscapes in high hazard areas maintain adequate zones of defensible space in the event of wildfire.*

**ACTION 2.1.A.** Utilize social media and local news outlets to keep residents and visitors aware of the risks of fire.<sup>22</sup>

**ACTION 2.1.B.** Simplify the choices and the links to resources available to help people respond to an emergency and provide all residents, businesses, and visitors clear and specific directions to follow so everyone knows the rules.

**ACTION 2.1.C.** Provide a comprehensive signage plan, educational outreach, and enforcement regarding emergencies.

In addition to these goals, policies, and actions, the following chapters include goals, policies, and actions with respect to natural and water resources, stormwater, drainage, and utilities that address hazard mitigation:

- Chapter 4: Natural Resources, Goal 1, Policy 1.1, Actions 1.1.A. and 1.1.C.
- Chapter 10: Transportation, Goal 5, Policy 5.2.
- Chapter 12: Water Resources, Goal 2, Policy 2.2, Actions 2.2.A. and 2.2.B.

<sup>22</sup> An example of a recent fire warning to Californians that provides resources to prepare for the threat of fire created by Cal Fire: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dcf8FRAqUww&feature=youtu.be>





# IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter provides the steps to implement the goals, policies, and actions of the Comprehensive Plan. The chapter is organized in three sections and describes the:

- Administrative requirements of the Comprehensive Plan
- Funding sources for implementing the Plan
- Actions needed to implement the Plan, along with responsibilities and time frame

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADMINISTRATION

Upon the Village of Ruidoso's Governing Body's adoption of the Comprehensive Plan Update, all land use regulations, development standards, and design standards of this Comprehensive Plan replaced those of the previous Comprehensive Plan.

All regular provisions of the Zoning Ordinance not amended by this Comprehensive Plan shall apply.

### **Relationship to Zoning Ordinance**

The Zoning Ordinance will be rewritten to be in accordance with the vision, goals, policies, and actions of this Comprehensive Plan. If there is a conflict between the regulations of the Zoning Ordinance and this Comprehensive Plan, the regulations provided herein shall prevail. Where direction is not provided in this Comprehensive Plan, the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance shall prevail.

### **Omission or Ambiguity**

The Community Development Director shall have the responsibility to interpret the provisions of this Comprehensive Plan.

If an issue or situation arises that is not sufficiently provided for or is not clearly understandable, those regulations of the Zoning Ordinance that are most applicable shall be used by the Director as guidelines to resolve the unclear issue or situation. This provision shall not be used to permit uses or procedures not specifically authorized by this Comprehensive Plan or the Zoning Ordinance.

If a use is omitted from the lists of those specified as permissible in each of the various zoning districts or if ambiguity arises concerning the appropriate classification of a particular use, the Director shall have the authority to make an interpretation as to whether the use should be allowed because it is similar to other allowed uses in a particular zoning district, or whether the use should not be allowed in any zoning district.

The Director may refer any matter for interpretation to the Planning Commission (Commission) for their consideration or the Director's interpretation may be appealed to the Commission. The Commission shall make the final decision on an interpretation. The Commission's decision may be appealed to the Village Governing Body.

#### **Amendments**

This Comprehensive Plan may be amended by the same procedure as it was originally adopted. Each amendment shall include all sections or portions of the Comprehensive Plan that are affected by the change. An amendment may be initiated by the Village Council, Planning Commission, Development Director, or private property owner, (or owner's authorized agent).

#### **Violations and Enforcement**

Any persons, firm, or corporation, whether a principal, agent, employee, or otherwise, violating any provisions of these regulations shall be subject to the penalties and provisions of the Village of Ruidoso's Code of Ordinances.

#### **Findings Regarding the Comprehensive Plan**

No division of land, use permit, site plan approval or other entitlement for use, and no public improvement shall be authorized in the Village of Ruidoso unless a finding has been made that the proposed project is in substantial compliance with the requirements of the Comprehensive Plan. Approval of all planning and building permits shall be contingent upon a determination of substantial compliance with the applicable provisions of this Comprehensive Plan and the Code of Ordinances.

#### **Comprehensive Plan Review/Update**

Review of the Comprehensive Plan should occur at intervals of five years thereafter.

## FUNDING SOURCES

This section describes the types of funding that may be available to implement the Comprehensive Plan. This section describes funding sources in four groups:

- Local funding sources
- State and federal sources
- Private and non-profit grants and loans
- Charitable grants and loans

### Local Funding Sources

#### *General Obligation (GO) Bonds/General Funds*

Agency: Village and/or Lincoln County (through the State)

Type: Capital Outlay

*Description:* The Village of Ruidoso and Lincoln County may seek GO Bond money or a direct appropriation for infrastructure costs using the County's existing general fund or by issuing new bonds to pay for capital improvements.

#### *Industrial Revenue Bonds*

Agency: Village of Ruidoso and/or Lincoln County

Type: Bond

*Description:* The Village of Ruidoso or Lincoln County can issue Industrial Revenue Bonds (IRB) for the expansion and relocation of commercial and industrial projects, such as utilities infrastructure. IRB financing is available for land, buildings, and equipment for headquarter office buildings, warehouses, manufacturing facilities and service-oriented facilities not primarily engaged in the sale of goods and commodities at retail. IRB-financed projects are exempt from ad valorem tax for as long as the bonds are outstanding and title to the project is held by the issuing agency. Bonds may be issued in different series with variable principal amounts, interest rates and maturities to accommodate the acquisition of assets with different useful lives.

#### *Local Gross Receipts Tax Option (LOGRT)*

Agency: Village of Ruidoso

Type: Tax Funds

*Description:* As part of the Local Economic Development Act (LEDA), residents in Ruidoso may vote to raise the local gross receipts tax to help fund additional economic development projects within the Village of Ruidoso. The tax is collected by the State as part of the statewide gross receipts tax and redistributed to the community for local projects. In general, LOGRT provides the community with a source of additional revenue to fund additional services or projects related to arts and cultural activities or revitalization projects.

#### *Gross Receipts Investment Policy (GRIP)*

Agency: Village of Ruidoso

Type: Tax Funds

*Description:* The Village of Ruidoso may pass a Gross Receipts Investment Policy (GRIP) ordinance that would allow property owners who develops his or her property to be reimbursed up to 50 percent of the owner's gross receipt taxes for infrastructure

development costs incurred by the property owner (such as water, sewer, and roadway improvements). The ordinance is intended to incentivize development in key areas. Both new retail and certain targeted commercial businesses are eligible for this reimbursement, which is distributed through a Village of Ruidoso-managed GRIP fund based on the total attributable direct sales gross receipt taxes paid by an eligible project.

#### *Lodgers Tax*

Agency: Village of Ruidoso

Type: Tax Funds

Description: The Village of Ruidoso may use the existing lodgers tax for promotion of Midtown attractions and events to visitors. The tax may also be used to acquire, establish, and operate tourist-related facilities, including outdoor recreation.

#### *Improvement Districts*

Agency: Village of Ruidoso

Type: Tax Funds

Website: [https://law.justia.com/codes/new-mexico/2006/nmrc/jd\\_ch3art33-1cb5.html](https://law.justia.com/codes/new-mexico/2006/nmrc/jd_ch3art33-1cb5.html)

Description: Improvement districts can finance the construction of public improvements on public property and rights-of-way. Assessment districts are intended to finance construction of physical improvements and can be used to stimulate manufacturing, industrial, commercial or business development. They can fund the following improvements:

- Streets
- Sidewalks
- Lighting
- Landscaping
- Sidewalks
- Storm or sanitary sewers
- Water supply and distribution facilities
- Gas and electric power
- Flood control and drainage improvements
- Parking

State law (Chapter 3, Article 22 NMSA) specifies that Improvement Districts can be authorized by the governing body using the provisional order method or petition method. All properties within the district determined to benefit from the improvement is subject to the improvement district property tax.

#### *Business Improvement Districts*

Agency: Village of Ruidoso

Type: Tax Funds

Website: <https://law.justia.com/codes/new-mexico/2015/chapter-3/article-63/>

Description: Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) are public-private partnerships to improve the economic vitality and revitalize a business district, provide services to businesses, and finance improvements within it. The Village of Ruidoso may create a BID to "promote its economic vitality and general welfare" pursuant to the Business Improvement District Act by petition of real property owners or business owners (subsequent to public

notice and a public hearing). All businesses or real property within the district that will benefit from improvements are subject to a fee determined by the governing body and specified in the BID ordinance, along with the list of improvements to be provided.

Typically, these include:

- Parking facilities
- Street and streetscape improvements (Street lighting, decorations, landscaping)
- Furnishings (benches, trash receptacles, fountains)
- Park and plaza improvements
- Security equipment or facilities
- Promotion of public events, tourism, and business activities
- Marketing and economic development, including retail retention and recruitment
- Security, sanitation, graffiti removal, street and sidewalk cleaning to supplement municipal services

### *Development Impact Fees*

Agency: Village of Ruidoso

Type: Developer fee

Website: [https://law.justia.com/codes/new-mexico/2006/nmrc/jd\\_ch5art8-3831.html](https://law.justia.com/codes/new-mexico/2006/nmrc/jd_ch5art8-3831.html)

Description: In accordance with the Development Fees Act, a development impact fee is charged by a municipality to the applicant in connection with approval of a development project for the purpose of defraying all or a portion of the cost of public facilities related to the development project. Other cities and counties around the state do this. The Village could require impact fees to pay for fire facilities, water and wastewater systems, parks and recreation facilities, and transportation if they are identified in the Village's Capital Improvements Plan.

Impact fees only apply to the increase in density or intensity when a development project replaces an existing building, or a building is demolished or destroyed. The Village could allow impact fee credits to be transferred from one property to another so long as it will support the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

Typically, the first step in development impact fees is preparation of what is commonly referred to as a nexus study. The Village is not allowed to require a proposed development to pay a development impact fee beyond the proposed development's proportionate share of the public improvement cost. The nexus study is the vehicle to determine that proportionate share.

Development impact fees could disincentivize development in the Village. However, impact fee revenue is a source of funding for implementation measures.

## **State and Federal Funding Sources**

### *Infrastructure Capital Improvements Plan (ICIP)*

Agency: Village of Ruidoso and/or Lincoln County (through State)

Type: Capital Outlay

Description: The Village of Ruidoso and County may also seek to fund infrastructure projects through their infrastructure capital improvements plans. Although funds are limited, these funds may be used as matching funds to secure larger grants and/or loans by outside agencies (e.g., matching road funds for a street reconfiguration on a state highway).

#### *Transportation Alternatives Program*

Agency: MPO/NMDOT

Type: Capital Outlay

Website: <http://dot.state.nm.us/en/Planning.html>

Description: The New Mexico Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is a Federal-Aid funding program. TAP funds can generally be used for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and activities, in addition to other projects, related to economic development, increased safety, and increased accessibility. The New Mexico Department of Transportation has a competitive process to afford TAP funds, based on how well each project proposal addresses the goals of the program.

#### *Cooperative Agreements Program (COOP) Local Government Road Fund*

Agency: NMDOT

Type: Capital Outlay

Website: <http://www.torcnm.org/downloads/Final%20Approved%20TorC%20Downtown%20Master%20Plan%2010.2014.pdf>

Description: The New Mexico Department of Transportation sets aside money each year for local government road improvements. This program assists local governments to improve, construct, maintain, repair, and pave highways and streets with matching funds from NMDOT.

#### *Small Cities Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)*

Agency: New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration

Type: Community Grant

Website: [http://nmdfa.state.nm.us/CDBG\\_Information\\_1.aspx](http://nmdfa.state.nm.us/CDBG_Information_1.aspx)

Description: In general, CDBG funding is intended to benefit low- and moderate-income populations with housing, social services assistance, economic development or public facilities that will serve neighborhoods that are predominantly low- and moderate-income households.

Funds are administered by the New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration with a \$500,000 grant limit per applicant. Five percent of matching funds must be provided by the applicant.

#### *Rural Business Development Grants (RBDG)*

Agency: USDA

Type: Community/Nonprofit Grant

Website: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-business-development-grants>

Description: Rural Business Development Grants are available to rural communities under 50,000 in population. Grant funds may be used to finance and facilitate the development of small, private, business enterprises which includes any private business which will employ 50 or fewer new employees and has less than \$1 million in projected gross revenues. Programmatic activities are separated into enterprise or opportunity type grant activities.

### *Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program*

Agency: USDA

Type: Community/Nonprofit Grant

Website: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities-direct-loan-grant-program>

*Description:* This program provides affordable funding to develop essential community facilities in rural areas. An essential community facility is defined as a facility that provides an essential service to the local community for the orderly development of the community in a primarily rural area, and does not include private, commercial or business undertakings.

### *Rural Community Development Initiative Grants*

Agency: USDA

Type: Community Grant

Website: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-community-development-initiative-grants>

*Description:* This program provides funding to help non-profit housing and community development organizations support housing, community facilities, and community and economic development projects in rural areas. To improve housing, community facilities, and community and economic development projects in rural areas. Rural Community Development Initiative grants may be used for, but are not limited to:

- Training sub-grantees to conduct:
- Home-ownership education
- Minority business entrepreneur education
- Strategic plan development
- Accessing alternative funding sources
- Board training
- Developing successful childcare facilities
- Creating training tools, such as videos, workbooks, and reference guides
- Effective fundraising techniques

### *Economic Development Administration (EDA) Grants*

Agency: EDA

Type: Community Grant

Website: <https://www.eda.gov/funding-opportunities/>

*Description:* Under this Funds from Operations (FFO), EDA solicits applications from applicants in rural and urban areas to provide investments that support construction, non-construction, technical assistance, and revolving loan fund projects under EDA's Public Works and EAA programs. Grants and cooperative agreements made under these programs are designed to leverage existing regional assets and support the implementation of economic development strategies that advance new ideas and creative approaches to advance economic prosperity in distressed communities. EDA provides strategic investments on a competitive-merit-basis to support economic development, foster job creation, and attract private investment in economically distressed areas of the United States.

### *New Mexico MainStreet*

Agency: New Mexico Economic Development Department

Type: Capital Outlay, LEDA, USDA, HUD, EDA, NMDOT, NMFA

Website: <https://www.nmmainstreet.org/>

Description: New Mexico MainStreet stimulates economic development in historic main street areas throughout the state. Ruidoso Midtown Association is a designated New Mexico MainStreet.

### *Metropolitan Redevelopment Area*

Agency: Village of Ruidoso

Type: Community grants, TIF, USDA/Rural Development, EDA, HUD

Description: The Village of Ruidoso could seek Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA) status for Midtown to improve vacant/underutilized properties and deteriorating buildings. New Mexico MainStreet helps communities with MainStreet designation become Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas (MRAs) and New Mexico Finance Authority provides funding for MRA plans. MRA are entitled to funding that supports:

- Land and building acquisition
- Demolition
- Zoning regulations
- Transportation improvements
- Cultural and community facilities
- Housing

Projects identified in MRA plans can use many of the funding sources already identified in this section including, CDBG (without meeting the low to moderate income criteria), HUD, USDA, and EDA grants, Revenue Bonds, TIF, property tax deferrals/credits, and NMMFA Low Income Housing Tax Credits.

### *Land and Water Conservation Fund*

Agency: Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

Type: Matching Grants; State Funds

Websites: <https://www.doi.gov/lwcf>; <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/lwcf/stateside.htm>; <https://www.fws.gov/endangered/grants/>; <https://www.fs.fed.us/managing-land/private-land/forest-legacy/>

Description: The LWCF federal program provides three types of grants:

- **LWCF State Grants Program:** the acquisition or development of public parks to create new outdoor recreation opportunities.
- **Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund:** Protect and conserve threatened and endangered species.
- **Forest Legacy Program:** Protect environmentally sensitive forest lands.

### **Private and Non-Profit Grants and Loans**

#### *NM Community Development Loan Fund (The Loan Fund)*

Agency: The Loan Fund

Type: Business/Organization Loan

Website: <http://www.loanfund.org/>

Description: The Loan fund is a private, non-profit lender that provides \$5,000 - \$500,000 loans to small businesses and non-



profits. The Loan Fund will finance equipment, inventory, building renovations, operating capital and business expansion expenses. As a private lender, the Loan Fund seeks to support low-income individuals and communities that need additional “bridge funding” to establish or expand their organizations.

#### *ACCION New Mexico*

Agency: ACCION New Mexico

Type: Business/Organization Loan

Website: <http://www.accionnm.org/>

*Description:* ACCION is small-scale micro-lender that makes loans to small businesses that may not qualify for traditional bank loans, and also provides business support services. Loans are primary intended for low-income borrowers and minority entrepreneurs. Since being founded in 1994, ACCION has financed the start-up or expansion of more than 2,300 new businesses in New Mexico with loans totaling more than \$23 million.

#### *The Public Project Revolving Fund (PPRF)*

Agency: New Mexico Finance Authority

Type: Community Loan

Website: <http://www.nmfa.net/financing/public-project-revolving-fund/about-the-pprf-program/>

*Description:* The PPRF is an up to \$200,000 revolving loan fund that can be used to finance public infrastructure projects, fire and safety equipment, and public buildings. Both market rate-based loans and loans to disadvantaged communities at subsidized rates are made from PPRF funds.

#### *New Markets Tax Credits*

Agency: New Mexico Finance Authority

Type: Business Loan

Website: <http://www.nmfa.net/financing/new-markets-tax-credits/>

*Description:* The New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) is designed to increase private investment to businesses and low income communities with poverty rates higher than 20 percent by providing a tax credit to investors in business or economic development projects. By making an equity investment in a Community Development Entity (CDE), an investor receives a tax credit against their federal income tax worth 39 percent of the total equity contribution. Community Development Entities are certified by the CDFI Fund. New Markets Tax Credits (NMTC) loan funds are intended to help business investment in low-income census tracts. The fund will help finance the development of commercial, industrial and retail real estate projects (including community facilities), and some housing projects. Loans for up to 25 percent of the project are available at low interest rates. NMTC loans are combined with other sources of funding that is secured by the applicant and managed by Finance New Mexico.

## Charitable Grants and Loans

### *Sponsorships*

Agency: Miscellaneous

Type: Donation

*Description:* Although they may often be considered insubstantial or time consuming, sponsorships from local businesses including banks, large retail chains, and other donors can be an effective way to raise money for small scale projects. Often, this is enough to fund facade improvements, basic building rehabilitation efforts, additional streetscape amenities (trees, furniture, etc.) and events. Some sponsorships may also involve the donation of materials or equipment.

### *Crowdfunding*

Agency: Miscellaneous

Type: Donation

*Websites:* many, including ioby.org; Kickstarter.com; Indiegogo.com; gofundme.com; StartSomeGood.com; Causes.com

*Description:* Crowdfunding is a way for individuals from around the world to pool their assets to fund projects or organizations they support. Most crowdfunding relies on internet platforms that allow donors to connect with projects they are interested in funding. Many such platforms are available; some more recent options include community-led initiatives that also include strategy assistance. Crowdfunding can be used to support a wide variety of projects that individuals feel are worthy of funding, including many of smaller-scale projects such as facade treatments, public art installations, a downtown wayfinding system, etc. Although donations amounts vary, they can be used as a supplement to larger funding sources. In some cases, these efforts can also be the impetus to moving a conceptual project to one that can be implemented.

### *McCune Foundation Grants*

Agency: McCune Charitable Foundation

Type: Community and Organization Grants

*Website:* <http://nmmccune.org/apply>

*Description:* The McCune Charitable Foundation awards grants to communities, non-profits, public schools, and government agencies that are engaged in community-based projects related to the Foundation's nine foundational priorities. This includes projects that build capacity in the non-profit sector, promote economic development, education and childhood development, healthcare, local food, the arts and community engagement, natural resources, urban design, and rural development are all considered. The average grant award is \$15,000, with some as large as \$25,000.

## HOW THE PLAN IS IMPLEMENTED

The Comprehensive Plan provides policy and direction for the Village of Ruidoso over a long-term time horizon. The actions outlined in the Comprehensive Plan create a framework and priorities so that Village leaders can make decisions that are consistent with the community vision expressed in the plan. The Implementation Matrix lists each goal, policy, and action identified in the Comprehensive Plan.

Upon adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, the Village of Ruidoso's leadership and governing body will engage in a Strategic Plan to develop a clear, coordinated procedure across departments, prioritize the actions, determine what is needed to be done to complete each action, identify the party and supporting parties that are responsible for implementing the action, confirm funding sources that can support it, and specify the time frame in which it should be accomplished. This process will require a Comprehensive Financial Plan to address cost of service impacts that implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and tourism will have on Village Departments as well as address revenue and spending to prepare the Village for long-term capacity.

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX**

GOAL/POLICY/ACTION	Description of Steps	Responsibility	Timing	Funding
<b>GOVERNING ACTIONS</b>				
Conduct a Strategic Planning process and create Improvement Plans to implement the goals, policies, and actions.	The Village of Ruidoso Manager and Directors will meet with the Governing Body to prioritize the Comprehensive Plan actions, identify a strategy to address them within each department, and evaluate the organizational structure of the Village.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village Manager's Office</li> <li>• Village Directors</li> <li>• Village Governing Body</li> </ul>	Immediate	
Conduct a Comprehensive Financial Planning process and write a Comprehensive Financial Plan.	The Village of Ruidoso Manager and Finance Director will work with financial consultants and the Village Directors to develop a Comprehensive Financial Plan that guides the Village's spending, revenues, and financial assets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village Manager's Office</li> <li>• Village Finance Director</li> <li>• Village Directors</li> </ul>	2020-2021	

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

GOAL/POLICY/ACTION	Description of Steps	Responsibility	Timing	Funding
<b>NATURAL RESOURCES</b>				
<b>Goal 1. Ruidoso's watershed and waterways are healthy, clean, and thriving ecosystems.</b>				
<b>Policy 1.1. Prioritize the maintenance, enhancement, and protection of Ruidoso's watershed, river, and creeks' health, wildlife habitat, ecosystems, and natural beauty when allocating Village resources and reviewing development proposals.</b>				
<p>Action 1.1.A. Create a watershed-based plan to ensure that the health of Ruidoso's watershed is prioritized in the Village's Capital Improvement Plan. Work with the state of New Mexico to make sure the Watershed Plan complies with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards, identify watershed areas, and establish metrics to protect each watershed area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the State to make sure the Watershed Plan complies with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards</li> <li>• Identify watershed areas.</li> <li>• Establish metrics to protect each watershed area.</li> </ul>	<p>Village Departments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watershed</li> <li>• Forestry</li> </ul>		
<p>Action 1.1.B. Treat stormwater before reaching the river and creeks following the EPA's best management practices. Update ordinances to minimize the impacts of open culverts draining directly into waterways so waterways are not negatively impacted by development and street runoff and they are able to continue to be beautiful, natural resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update ordinances to prohibit open culverts from draining directly into waterways so waterways are not negatively impacted by development and street runoff and are able to continue to be a beautiful, natural resource.</li> </ul>	<p>Village Departments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watershed</li> <li>• Forestry</li> <li>• Planning &amp; Zoning</li> <li>• Street Works</li> <li>• Solid Waste</li> <li>• Utilities</li> </ul>		
<p>Action 1.1.C. Update development standards to ensure new construction and renovation are not detrimentally impacting the waterways.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When the Village rewrites its zoning ordinance, the development standards should be reviewed and revised to protect waterways.</li> </ul>	<p>Village Departments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watershed</li> <li>• Forestry</li> <li>• Planning &amp; Zoning</li> <li>• Street Works</li> <li>• Solid Waste</li> <li>• Utilities</li> </ul>		
<p>Action 1.1.D. Renovate existing infrastructure to mitigate impacts to waterways. Existing infrastructure (especially culverts/bridges) shall be renovated and gabion baskets should be removed to improve the health of Ruidoso's river and creeks. Implement grade control structures in waterways to prevent further incising.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise the Development Standards' Landscaping requirements (Sec. 54-135), the Grading, Drainage and Development Plan requirements (Sec. 54.283(d) (1)d1), and Drainage and Storm Sewer requirements (Sec. 54-285) so they clearly state how property owners should properly manage stormwater.</li> </ul>			

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

GOAL/POLICY/ACTION	Description of Steps	Responsibility	Timing	Funding
Action 1.1.E. Seek state and federal river restoration funding, including the New Mexico River Conservation and Restoration Fund to implement capital projects.				
Action 1.1.F. Conduct an inventory of all parcels in or abutting bodies of water, sensitive watershed, or waterways to determine which areas are undevelopable or unsafe for development per FEMA and flood plain. Identify riverbank and creek areas for acquisition.				
Action 1.1.G. Create an acquisition plan to acquire undevelopable areas to allow for restoration, trail access, and flood control.				
Action 1.1.H. Establish a public education campaign about these sensitive areas, how the public can help protect them and benefit from their protection.				
<p><b>Goal 2. Ruidoso's forests are healthy and support abundant ecosystems and wildlife.</b></p>				
<p><b>Policy 2.1. Continue to work and collaborate with the US Forest Service, New Mexico State Forestry Department, Bureau of Land Management, the National Forest Foundation, the New Mexico State Land Office, Mescalero Tribe, Bureau of Indian Affairs, the South Central Mountain Resource Conservation and Development Council, the Water Conservation Districts, and service organizations, such as EcoServants to maintain, protect and manage forests as a top priority.</b></p>				
Action 2.1.A. Adopt and uphold the Fuels Management Plan for Moon Mountain prepared by the Village of Ruidoso Forestry Department. This plan along with the Timber Management Plan prepared by the New Mexico State Forestry Department will determine priorities for both forest health improvement and fire mitigation. The New Mexico State Land Office will need to approve any vegetative manipulation project on Moon Mountain according to the lease agreement.				

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

GOAL/POLICY/ACTION	Description of Steps	Responsibility	Timing	Funding
Action 2.1.B. Create and adopt a Trails Master Plan that specifies careful development and maintenance of trails that are sensitive to forest health.				
Action 2.1.C. Expand a public education campaign about these sensitive areas, how the public can help protect them and benefit from their protection.				
<b>Goal 3. Ruidoso's natural resources, habitat, and wildlife are protected and restored.</b>				
<b>Policy 3.1. Prioritize the maintenance and enhancement of natural resources and coordinate development projects within the Village to mitigate impacts to natural resources.</b>				
Action 3.1.A. Where possible, modify project activities that have the potential of negatively impacting sensitive plants, wildlife, and habitats to mitigate undesirable impacts. Action 3.1.B. Create a development review checklist that verifies new construction, renovation, zoning/land use changes, or roadway/utility improvements on public or private land follow the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and ordinance requirements.				
Action 3.1.C. Increase regular enforcement of properties so the requirements of these sections are held to these standards throughout their lifetime.				
<b>Policy 3.2. Uphold the Village's new wildlife feeding ban and continue to improve management of deer and elk population in the Village.</b>				
Action 3.2.A. Educate visitors and residents with dual language outreach about the health risks of feeding the animals and the driving risks they pose.				
Action 3.2.B. Post signs along the roads warning drivers of the potential for wildlife crossing.				

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

GOAL/POLICY/ACTION	Description of Steps	Responsibility	Timing	Funding
<b>Policy 3.3. Improve wayfinding to promote natural resource appreciation.</b>				
Action 3.3.A. Create a Wayfinding Plan for Ruidoso's and surrounding natural resources coordinated with the US Forest Service's wayfinding plan in place.				
Action 3.3.B. Coordinate natural resource wayfinding with outdoor recreation destinations and commercial destinations.				
<b>Policy 3.4. Improve habitat for non-nuisance, native wildlife, fish, and plants.</b>				
Action 3.4.A. Continue to utilize funding from National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grants, USFWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Big Game Habitat Enhancement Fund, Habitat Management and Access Validation Fund, Game Protection Fund, Habitat Stamp Program Fund, Native Plant Society of New Mexico grants, and EPA 319 funding to fund habitat protection and wildlife management.				
Action 3.4.B. Improve habitat conditions while conducting development or improvements on public or private lands.				
Action 3.4.C. Create list of habitat types that are decreasing at the landscape scale. Prioritize improvements of these habitats on public or private lands.				
<b>Goal 4. Environmental stewardship is embraced by the Ruidoso Community.</b>				
<b>Policy 4.1. Promote environmental volunteerism and stewardship to all Ruidoso community members.</b>				
Action 4.1.A. Improve communications with Ruidoso residents, businesses, and visitors about the benefits of maintaining sensitive habitats and the detriments of behavior that harms the natural environment and wildlife.				

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

GOAL/POLICY/ACTION	Description of Steps	Responsibility	Timing	Funding
Action 4.1.B. Create a clearing house where all stewardship and volunteer opportunities are distributed so Ruidoso's residents, employees, business owners, and visitors can easily become involved.				
Action 4.1.C. Initiate a campaign to promote environmental stewardship, volunteerism, and fire safety that involves family-friendly, community-building events to build community, stewardship, and awareness.				
<b>Policy 4.2. Promote nature programs for youth.</b>				
Action 4.2.A. Build on Ecoservants' and AmeriCorps' success at fostering environmental stewardship among Ruidoso's youth by improving access to trails and ensuring trails are environmentally sensitive.				
Action 4.2.B. Seek funding from the State's new Outdoor Equity Fund to support nature programs for youth.				
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>				
<b>Goal 1. Ruidoso has a diverse industry base that sustains the Village for the long term.</b>				
<b>Policy 1.1. Identify an economic development champion.</b>				
Action 1.1.A. Hire an economic development staff person or initiate an organization to collaborate among existing economic development organizations, private entities and with local government to implement the economic development strategy.				
Action 1.1.B. Collaborate with SNMEDD and other stakeholders to review the strategy and coordinate local activities with regional strategies.				



**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

GOAL/POLICY/ACTION	Description of Steps	Responsibility	Timing	Funding
<b>Policy 1.2. Think regionally in order to foster economic development at a regional scale.</b>				
<p>Action 1.2.A. Collaborate with Ruidoso Downs and other surrounding communities to discuss strategy and find mutually supportive approaches to economic vitality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a regional team of key staff, business owners and/or elected leaders dedicated to economic development.</li> <li>• Share Ruidoso's Economic Development Strategy as a baseline to begin collaboration.</li> <li>• Identify regional businesses that fit into identified industry clusters.</li> <li>• Create list of targeted companies within industry clusters to visit regarding the potential to locate or expand into Ruidoso.</li> <li>• Regional team visits ten companies a year (generally one per month).</li> <li>• Determine business barriers/opportunities.</li> </ul>				
<p>Action 1.2.B. Address barriers as a region by listing and defining barriers identified by businesses with costs if appropriate and meet with regional and state SNMEDD stakeholders to identify solution.</p>				
<p>Action 1.2.C. Reassess the taxing structure and compare to those in surrounding states to encourage private investment.</p>				
<p>Action 1.2.D. Market the entire region by documenting quotes from CEOs as to why they like doing business in Ruidoso, list all businesses within each cluster and supporting regional assets, and create a regional marketing story centered on the region's economic development offering beyond tourism only.</p>				
<b>Policy 1.3. Convene businesses in targeted industry clusters and define needs.</b>				
<p>Action 1.3.A. Embrace the outdoor recreation industry cluster:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the State of New Mexico to understand their definition of "outdoor recreation" and related programs</li> <li>• Identify regional businesses that fit into the outdoor industry clusters</li> <li>• Visit the companies to build awareness of the state focus and define barriers and opportunities.</li> <li>• Define and close the gaps in the bike trail system.</li> <li>• Partner with the state to actively promote the Ruidoso outdoor recreation cluster.</li> </ul>				

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

GOAL/POLICY/ACTION	Description of Steps	Responsibility	Timing	Funding
<p>Action 1.3.B. Convene industry focus groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convene a meeting at least once a year with businesses within each target cluster. Include industry associations, ENMU–Ruidoso, SBDC, and Ruidoso Municipal Schools at the meetings.</li> <li>• Listen to businesses and document common needs.</li> <li>• Identify competing local communities with each different cluster and what they do well. Visit the communities.</li> <li>• Share information about new programs, such as Career Technical Education (CTE) training at Ruidoso High School (RHS) to enhance collaboration.</li> <li>• Address business needs.</li> </ul>				
<p>Action 1.3.C. Help build broadband:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form a technical steering committee with key anchor institutions needing broadband like the Hospital, Emergency Medical Support, ENMU–Ruidoso, and Ruidoso School District to build on the Village's efforts.</li> <li>• Determine potential public/private partnerships to overcome fragmentation and limited investment by current providers</li> <li>• Define current limitations, strongest service, and barriers.</li> <li>• Present a non-binding resolution to Village Council to clearly confirm buy-in and commitment to grant application.</li> <li>• Technical steering committee works with SNMEDD to apply to federal EDA to fund a portion of for a broadband feasibility (\$80K) study that is needed to diversify economy and bring in professional services. (EDA typically only provides a 50 percent match, however if the community is distressed it could receive 80 percent. Data showing a declining population and income suggests that the community is distressed and should be presented to EDA).</li> <li>• Work with other private and public partners to contribute funds so that the Village is not responsible for all the match (e.g., hotels, tribes, hospital, school district, etc.).</li> <li>• Economic Development team reaches out to federal representative regarding access to grant programs: <a href="https://www.usda.gov/reconnect">https://www.usda.gov/reconnect</a> or Rural Digital Opportunity Fund.</li> <li>• Apply for E-Rate funding through the Universal Service Administration Company to bring broadband to the public library.</li> </ul>				
<p><b>Policy 1.4. Grow local businesses.</b></p>				
<p>Action 1.4.A Foster professional business industry cluster growth by sponsoring and supporting quarterly meet-ups of remote workers/professional startups. This encourages peer to peer networking and addressing problems within the industry. (Keep it exclusive to the professional industry. This is not intended for service providers to network/solicit business).</p>				
<p>Action 1.4.B. Work with private developers or existing organization/institution to create office co-working space.</p>				

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

GOAL/POLICY/ACTION	Description of Steps	Responsibility	Timing	Funding
<p>Action 1.4.C. Encourage more food and beverage manufacturing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permit food carts in Midtown. This is low-risk and low-cost way for startups to enter the market and test new product. It also introduces diversity and vibrancy for customers.</li> <li>• Collaborate with ENMU–Ruidoso to promote commercial kitchen for startups. Align use of kitchen space with ENMU–Ruidoso SBDC programs to guide new business through marketing and administration hurdles.</li> <li>• Leverage expertise of Cornerstone Bakery to help train others in utilizing a co-packing facility for manufacturing and distribution.</li> </ul>				
<p>Action 1.4.D. Encourage light/craft manufacturing by amending the Village zoning ordinance to allow new manufacturing space and by working with ENMU–Ruidoso to create a maker space in their facility.</p>				
<p><b>Goal 2. Ruidoso has a well-trained workforce with the skills needed by Ruidoso businesses and institutions.</b></p>				
<p><b>Policy 2.1. Prepare youth for economic opportunity.</b></p>				
<p>Action 2.1.A. Enhance youth access to Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) related occupations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and promote K-12 recent investment in CTE programs. Make regional businesses aware of programs to provide internships or tours.</li> <li>• Work with K-12 and hospital to establish a career pathway program into health care</li> <li>• Consider hosting a STEM fair in Midtown focused on showcasing CTE machining and construction projects.</li> </ul>				
<p>Action 2.1.B. Engage youth with industry clusters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage and support youth programs tied to outdoor recreation. This will begin to build a pipeline of talent for the industry as well.</li> <li>• Encourage businesses in outdoor industry cluster to support K-12 sporting clubs (e.g., hiking, biking, skiing).</li> <li>• Develop apprenticeship programs for construction industry, creating a career path for students from the RHS construction trades classes.</li> <li>• Sponsor and support a culinary contest for kids that utilizes the school's commercial kitchen. Showcase competition in Midtown.</li> </ul>				
<p>Action 2.1.C. Enhance the public library's ability to promote career readiness and entrepreneurship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a series of programs and trainings at the library for teens and adults to support and promote career readiness and entrepreneurship.</li> <li>• Provide resources and equipment to support career readiness and entrepreneurial pursuits at the public library. Examples include online job search resources and equipment for video creation and podcasting.</li> </ul>				

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

GOAL/POLICY/ACTION	Description of Steps	Responsibility	Timing	Funding
<b>Policy 2.2. Invest in ENMU–Ruidoso.</b>				
<p>Action 2.2.A. Align industry with college programs: When meeting with industry clusters to determine necessary skills training. Include ENMU–Ruidoso in meetings to develop curriculum as necessary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage business owners to help craft and instruct skills programs.</li> <li>• Support and promote Small Business Development Center (SBDC). Work with industry to tailor to specific needs such as restaurant management.</li> </ul>				
<p>Action 2.2.B. Enhance campus assets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support development of student housing for ENMU–Ruidoso students</li> <li>• Support development of startup assets such as commercial kitchen to enhance culinary program or maker space to encourage craft manufacturing.</li> <li>• Build broadband to allow for provision of nursing program and other advanced courses.</li> </ul>				
<b>Policy 2.3. Attract talent back to Ruidoso.</b>				
<p>Action 2.3.A. Embrace the “homecomers.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a Task Force (including ENMU–Ruidoso) of diverse local residents that are the demographic make-up of the target audience.</li> <li>• Task Force develops strategy for messaging, events and local engagement to attract desired group. Promote campaign with the high school and ENMU alumni database or utilizing LinkedIn Premium.</li> </ul>				
<p>Action 2.3.B. Support families by investing in a recreation center with indoor pool to support families year-round, working with private developers to remove barriers to building more entry level single-family residential for families, and encouraging restaurants to cater to families through retail training.</p>				
<b>Goal 3. Ruidoso provides for locals.</b>				
<b>Policy 3.1. Continue to enhance Midtown.</b>				
<p>Action 3.1.A. Maximize the existing building stock by taking inventory vacant buildings. Work with building owners to determine if there are barriers to renting space and continue to support and invest in the storefront improvement program.</p>				

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

GOAL/POLICY/ACTION	Description of Steps	Responsibility	Timing	Funding
<p>Action 3.1.B. Align retail and industrial clusters.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage new storefront tasting rooms, manufacturing production, outdoor recreation services in Midtown.</li> <li>• Encourage breweries in Midtown.</li> <li>• Promote and encourage a farmer's market that sells local produce and goods.</li> </ul>				
<p>Action 3.1.C. Introduce year-round customers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tailor retail to the year-round residents with consistent and quality service and product.</li> <li>• Encourage development of office and co-working space in Midtown.</li> <li>• Encourage market-rate apartment development in Midtown.</li> </ul>				
<p><b>Policy 3.2. Support local retailers and expand the Market.</b></p>				
<p>Action 3.2.A. Cultivate success for existing retailers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hire a retail coach to help with store layout, window display and marketing to improve revenues. Michele Reeves with Civilis is recommended. As identified in the business survey in Attachment A, marketing is the most requested support.</li> <li>• Have consultant educate retailers on the importance of collaboration regarding hours of operation and event promotion and engagement.</li> <li>• Encourage restaurant management/culinary training for peak season</li> <li>• Help create a succession planning program with SBDC to guide current owners into successful sales of businesses.</li> </ul>				
<p>Action 3.2.B. Make it easy for new retailers to enter market by developing a How-to-Do Business Program/Guide for business owners that want to open a business in Ruidoso and developing a "match-making" database of retail businesses that have gone through succession planning as an investment opportunity to "homecomers" as a recruitment tool.</p>				
<p><b>LAND USE</b></p>				
<p><b>Goal 1. The Village's zoning is updated and supports a variety of land uses that meet current and future demand.</b></p>				
<p><b>Policy 1.1. Ensure zoning ordinance is consistent and simple to follow.</b></p>				
<p>Action 1.1.A. Rewrite the zoning code.</p>				
<p><b>Policy 2.1. Ensure zoning allows for more housing options.</b></p>				
<p>Action 2.1.A. Update zoning code to permit residential in the C-1 and C-2 commercial districts outright, and in C-3 above or behind commercial uses.</p>				

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

GOAL/POLICY/ACTION	Description of Steps	Responsibility	Timing	Funding
Action 2.1.B. Update zoning code to permit multifamily housing in mobile home districts to provide more housing options for Ruidoso's workforce.				
<b>Goal 2. Ruidoso's sensitive watershed is protected from development.</b>				
Policy 2.1 Ensure zoning protects sensitive, undevelopable environmental areas.				
Action 2.1.A. Create a zoning district or an overlay zone that restricts development in areas needing protection as determined by the inventory of undevelopable land, developable land that needs natural resource protection, or land unsuitable for development (Action 1.1.F in Natural Resource's Chapter) and specifies the types of uses and development allowed to protect the watershed, waterways, and sensitive habitats.				
Action 2.1.B. Establish a public education campaign about these sensitive areas, how the public can help protect them and benefit from their protection.				
<b>Goal 3. Building renovation and property redevelopment is incentivized.</b>				
<b>Policy 3.1. Develop incentives for property owners to improve their buildings, facades/storefronts, and properties.</b>				
Action 3.1.A. Create an easy step-by-step guide for property owners to complete improvements.				
Action 3.1.B. Provide guidance for loan assistance for low interest loan program for property improvements, if the owner is low-income, or a low interest loan for building improvements or facade improvements in Midtown.				
Action 3.1.C. Revise nuisance and abandonment ordinances to require nominal upfront fees rather than enforcement fines.				

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

GOAL/POLICY/ACTION	Description of Steps	Responsibility	Timing	Funding
Action 3.1.D. Draft Clean and Lien Ordinance to give the Village a means to abate blighted properties by requiring property owners, trustees or beneficiaries holding legal entitlement of a property to pay a registration fee to the Village and to maintain their properties and prevent them from appearing abandoned.				
<b>Goal 4. Ruidoso's limited buildable land is appropriately utilized.</b>				
<b>Policy 4.1. Permit industrial uses, storage, and warehouses at or near the airport to support existing business and attract new business.</b>				
Action 4.1.A. Update zoning around the airport to allow light industrial, warehousing, and other aviation related businesses (such as charter flights, aviation maintenance, aerial acrobatics, etc.) that abide by the Airport Hazard Regulations to promote regional economic development.				
Action 4.1.B. Work with the Ruidoso Chamber of Commerce and business owners to determine the ideal conditions and locations for such space and the impediments to developing it.				
<b>Goal 5. Sustainable construction and renovations that have less impact on natural resources are promoted.</b>				
<b>Policy 5.1. Establish the tools for builders to use sustainable construction materials and techniques in locations that have the least impact on natural resources.</b>				
Action 5.1.A. Encourage builders to follow the standards of the Build Green New Mexico program.				
Action 5.1.B. Encourage solar on all commercial and institutional buildings.				
Action 5.1.C. Follow EPA's Energy Smart guidelines; water- and energy-conserving indoor fixtures.				
Action 5.1.D. Identify opportunities for industrial symbiosis to allow construction to use another company's byproducts.				

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

GOAL/POLICY/ACTION	Description of Steps	Responsibility	Timing	Funding
Action 5.1.E. Adopt a residential green building code that includes Actions 5.1.A through 5.1.D and detail incentives for property owners.				
Action 5.1.F. Provide incentives for using sustainable building materials and practices, including repurposing building materials, such as rebates for following Actions 5.1.A through D.				
Action 5.1.G. Provide incentives for rehabbing existing structures that are already serviced with utilities and infrastructure, such as rebates.				
Action 5.1.H. Develop a work-force training program to teach sustainable building technologies.				
<b>Policy 5.2. Prevent property from extended periods of vacancy or neglect.</b>				
Action 5.2.A. Update Zoning Ordinance to require property be secured and maintained to a base level to maintain health and safety levels that discourages property owners from leaving buildings vacant.				
Action 5.2.B. Restructure property tax rates to be higher on the land than the improvements.				
Action 5.2.C. Work with property owners to keep their buildings in good repair through consistent code enforcement.				
<b>Goal 6. The Village uses technology to improve emergency response and efficiencies across departments.</b>				
<b>Policy 6.1. Continue to utilize technology and develop the Village GIS capabilities by integrating data and mapping resources, including natural resources, existing land uses, property footprints, and addresses.</b>				
Action 6.1.A. Conduct a thorough update across all Village departments to update the Village GIS data base with available natural resource, land use, and hazard mitigation data.				



**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

<b>GOAL/POLICY/ACTION</b>	<b>Description of Steps</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Action 6.1.B. Establish the process and criteria for readdressing throughout the Village.				
Action 6.1.C. Conduct a public education campaign about readdressing before it is done.				
Action 6.1.D. Readdress all Village properties in coordination with all Village departments.				
<b>Goal 7. Land use designations provide ample opportunities for community space.</b>				
<b>Policy 7.1. Update zoning to allow outdoor recreation, indoor recreation, and camping land uses in appropriate areas.</b>				
Action 7.1.A. Update Commercial Districts to permit parks, community centers, and recreation centers.				
Action 7.1.B. In coordination with the Parks and Recreation goals, identify areas of the Village that could be used for recreation fields.				
Action 7.1.C. In coordination with the Parks and Recreation and Natural Resources goals, identify appropriate locations for campgrounds/RV parking near trails and recreation destinations.				
<b>Goal 8. Ruidoso's rich and varied history is recognized and shared.</b>				
<b>Policy 8.1. Enact a historic preservation ordinance to recognize the Village's history and historic landmarks.</b>				
Action 8.1.A. Conduct a historic resource survey to identify significant buildings and sites.				
Action 8.1.B. Develop a map and brochure of significant sites that tells the story of Ruidoso's rich past.				
Action 8.1.C. Encourage property owners of historic sites to put up historic plaques.				

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

GOAL/POLICY/ACTION	Description of Steps	Responsibility	Timing	Funding
<b>HOUSING</b>				
<b>Goal 1. A variety of housing types and prices is available to meet the housing needs of Village residents. Continue to prioritize the acquisition of additional property appropriate for affordable and workforce housing.</b>				
<b>Policy 1.1. Support the Village and Housing Advisory Board’s work in identifying housing opportunity sites and developers to implement the Affordable Housing Plan.</b>				
Action 1.1.A. Continue to acquire property appropriate as a Village contribution to housing that meets the production goals of the Affordable Housing Plan.				
Action 1.1.B. Explore the potential for a community land trust on one or more Village-owned properties. Land would be held in perpetuity by the land trust, allowing for permanent affordability to qualified renters and buyers. For homeownership housing, residents can gain equity in the building, but profit is capped to maintain affordability.				
Action 1.1.C. When planning for Village utility systems, make sure that Village utilities in prime infill/redevelopment areas have capacity to support higher densities.				
Action 1.1.D. Consider an ordinance requiring purchasers or sellers of single-family homes to properly connect to Village water and wastewater utilities prior to transfer of property.				
Action 1.1.E. Participate in the next iteration of the State’s QAP to ensure that Lincoln County is included as a Tier 1 or Tier 2 area of statistically demonstrated need, possibly because of its designation as a Difficult Development Area.				

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

GOAL/POLICY/ACTION	Description of Steps	Responsibility	Timing	Funding
<p>Action 1.1.F. Encourage local contributions to the New Mexico Housing Charitable Trust or to specific affordable housing project approved by MFA. A donor can get up to 90 percent of a contribution back through state tax credits and other deductions. Incentivize mid-range housing construction.</p>				
<p><b>Policy 1.2. Encourage upgrades to dilapidated housing in Ruidoso to increase the habitable housing supply.</b></p>				
<p>Action 1.2.A. Partner with existing entities such as USDA and non-profit housing organizations that operate in Lincoln County to make qualified homeowners aware of low interest home rehabilitation loans and grants.</p>				
<p>Action 1.2.B. Investigate the New Mexico Affordable Housing Charitable Trust as a source of funds for home weatherization or rehabilitation.</p>				
<p><b>Policy 1.3. Encourage construction of new entry level housing to meet the needs of the Village’s year-round workforce.</b></p>				
<p>Action 1.3.A. Work with potential builders to determine what the Village can do to make building in this price range feasible. Direct contributions are only possible to MFA approved affordable housing projects, but the Village can sell property at market rate, ensure that utilities are available to a property, remove regulatory barriers and in other ways create a positive environment for new development.</p>				
<p>Action 1.3.B. Foster more affordable housing development by dedicating a portion of short-term rental fees to the affordable housing fund.</p>				

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

GOAL/POLICY/ACTION	Description of Steps	Responsibility	Timing	Funding
<b>COMMUNITY SERVICES</b>				
<b>Goal 1. Ruidoso offers community services for all its residents and employees.</b>				
<b>Policy 1.1 Provide convenient community services to serve all of Ruidoso's residents and employees, especially those most in need.</b>				
Action 1.1.A. Make community-related services easily accessible. Continue efforts to relocate Village services to the Horton Complex for one-stop permitting and services.				
Action 1.1.B. Introduce improved records management system.				
Action 1.1.C. Meet the community's recreation demand with more facilities. See Parks and Recreation Chapter.				
Action 1.1.D. Meet the needs of seniors in the community center with appropriate programing.				
Action 1.1.E. Track Village-owned building maintenance on a Village-wide schedule and expand asset management to additional departments.				
Action 1.1.F. Implement digital work order system within departments with geographic or asset driven work processes.				
Action 1.1.G. Expand and update the public library to provide more space that is modern, functional, and flexible for programs, meetings, and resources for community members of all ages. Landscape and improve the library's outdoor space to support programs and events requested by the community and to create revenue-generating spaces for the library.				

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

<b>GOAL/POLICY/ACTION</b>	<b>Description of Steps</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Action 1.1.H. Make library resources more accessible to all through building and signage improvements, and through development of a home delivery service to homebound users.				
<b>Policy 1.2. Continue to strengthen existing healthcare options and educational systems.</b>				
Action 1.2.A. Work with Presbyterian Healthcare and the community to determine which needs are not being met and identify solutions.				
<b>Goal 2. Ruidoso's residents and businesses are engaged and active in community-building efforts.</b>				
<b>Policy 2.1. Promote volunteerism among all Ruidoso's residents and businesses.</b>				
Action 2.1.A. Create a central volunteer board to match needed services with interested community members.				
Action 2.1.B. Link retirees with opportunities to help with Village community-building events and efforts, and community-serving facilities.				
<b>Goal 3. Ruidoso's governance is transparent and regulations are easy to understand.</b>				
<b>Policy 3.1. Maintain consistent, clear, and accessible regulations.</b>				
Action 3.1.A. Regularly update ordinances for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and each other.				
<b>Policy 3.2. Prioritize clear, coordinated department policies and procedures.</b>				
Action 3.2.A. Continue to hold regular meetings with all department leadership to maintain open communication, improved efficiencies and fewer redundancies.				
Action 3.2.B. Implement Capital Improvement Plans for enterprise funds.				
Action 3.2.C. Create comprehensive financial plans to coordinate O&M and capital investments.				

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

GOAL/POLICY/ACTION	Description of Steps	Responsibility	Timing	Funding
<b>PARKS AND RECREATION</b>				
<b>Goal 1. Quality parks and recreation opportunities are available for Ruidoso residents and visitors.</b>				
<b>Policy 1.1. Expand and enhance parks and recreation opportunities.</b>				
Action 1.1.A. Confirm desired standards of service to guide decisions and prioritization of additional facilities.				
Action 1.1.B. Identify future parks, recreation, and open space needs based on anticipated growth in population and tourism.				
Action 1.1.C. Create and adopt a Trails Master Plan that specifies careful development and maintenance of trails that are sensitive to forest health. Locations for additional multi-use trails that allow mountain biking and Off Highway Vehicles (OHV) and biking and walking paths within town connecting to popular destinations should be identified (See Transportation Chapter).				
Action 1.1.D. Develop a Recreation Center Master Plan to address the Village's indoor and outdoor facilities. This Master Plan should focus on or near the White Mountain Recreation Complex as shown in the White Mountain Recreation Complex Concept Plan and should assess circulation connections between Hull Road and Mechem Drive.				
Action 1.1.E. Expand and improve Wingfield Park to accommodate current uses along with large events by reconfiguring parking and access, providing a new stage and performance space, new play structures, and walking paths as shown in the Wingfield Park Concept Plan. Continue to pursue events to be hosted at the park.				

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

GOAL/POLICY/ACTION	Description of Steps	Responsibility	Timing	Funding
Action 1.1.F. Expand public fishing areas on Rio Ruidoso. By providing more public access to Rio Ruidoso and restoring fish habitat and the river's ecosystem, Ruidoso's namesake's value could be restored as both a natural resource and recreational destination.				
Action 1.1.G. Identify locations for additional campsites and RV parking.				
Action 1.1.H. Continue to research outdoor recreation opportunities that could benefit tourism and diversify the package of amenities offered in Ruidoso. These could include outdoor programs geared toward youth that benefit Ruidoso's families and the environment.				
Action 1.1.I. Identify and seek grants that are available from the State's Outdoor Equity Fund from the New Mexico Office of Outdoor Recreation.				
Action 1.1.J. Develop a wayfinding plan that provides directions to all Ruidoso's recreation resources and is coordinated with wayfinding to all Ruidoso's destinations.				
Action 1.1.K. Review staffing needs to provide adequate year-round staff for special events, year-round tourism, and routine operations and maintenance.				
Action 1.1.L. As part of the Village's Comprehensive Financial Plan, set cost recovery goals, review fees, identify, potential enterprise operations, and determine appropriate funding sources for general operations, capital costs, and special events.				

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

GOAL/POLICY/ACTION	Description of Steps	Responsibility	Timing	Funding
Action 1.1.K. Dedicate County Sales Tax to recreation. Given the popularity and draw of the region's recreational opportunities, get the voters' approval to dedicate a portion of the County Sales Tax to pay for capital improvements for recreation facilities and operations.				
Action 1.1.L. Evaluate options related to agreements and partnerships with Ruidoso Municipal Schools, Boys & Girls Club, US Forest Service, Lincoln County, and Mescalero Tribe.				
Action 1.1.M. Develop a Grindstone Recreation Area Master Plan to access community needs to include improving accessibility, parking, additional amenities and improving recreation infrastructure.				
Action 1.1.N. Improve/update recreation infrastructure in all existing parks to better serve the needs of users.				

**TRANSPORTATION**

**Goal 1. It is easy to walk and bike in the Village and to access Midtown without a vehicle.**

**Policy 1.1. Improve conditions for bicyclists throughout Ruidoso.**

Action 1.1.A. Conduct a Bikeways Route Study. The study should identify potential bikeways through the Village, including trail locations on-street connections, as well as design techniques that are appropriate for Village roadways.				
Action 1.1.B. Conduct a Bikeshare Feasibility Study. The Village of Ruidoso should conduct a feasibility study to examine the appropriate scale, cost of operating, and the logistics associated with a bike share program. Potential station locations include the Main Road lodging area, Grindstone Lake recreation area, public parking sites, and Midtown.				



**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

GOAL/POLICY/ACTION	Description of Steps	Responsibility	Timing	Funding
<b>Policy 1.2. Improve conditions for pedestrians across the Village.</b>				
Action 1.2.A. Incorporate pedestrian pathways and sidewalks into Village of Ruidoso's roadway design standards.				
Action 1.2.B. Evaluate additional pedestrian crossings along Sudderth Drive through Midtown.				
<b>Goal 2. Ruidoso's recreational trails network is unparalleled across the state.</b>				
<b>Policy 2.1. Expand the trail network. Pursue connections among existing facilities.</b>				
Action 2.1.A. Create and adopt a Trails Master Plan in conjunction with USFS and BLM that specifies careful development and maintenance of trails that are sensitive to forest health.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The plan should consider intended users; major destinations that should be connected, including schools and community facilities; various types of trail users; and integration with walking and on-street bicycling networks.</li> </ul>			
Action 2.1.B. Develop a Way-finding Plan to make Ruidoso's residents and visitors aware of trail connections, destinations, and distances.				
<b>Goal 3. Village and area residents have transit options.</b>				
<b>Policy 3.1. Continue partnerships with ZTrans.</b>				
Action 3.1.A. Develop fixed-route service.				
<b>Policy 3.2. Support pedestrian improvements that enhance access to bus stop locations.</b>				
Action 3.2.A. Identify locations with the highest ridership to improve first.				
<b>Policy 3.3. Improve shuttle service to and from the airport.</b>				
Action 3.3.A. Work with transportation providers to set up reliable service.				
<b>Goal 4. Ruidoso is a safe and pleasant place to drive.</b>				
<b>Policy 4.1. Improve parking management.</b>				
Action 4.1.A. Create maps displaying public parking lot locations. An electronic version of map could be included in a visitor app, that identifies public parking sites, number of available spaces, and special vehicle accommodations, such as recreational vehicles.				

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

<b>GOAL/POLICY/ACTION</b>	<b>Description of Steps</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Action 4.1.B. Consider implementation of paid parking in town at busy areas (such as Midtown).				
Action 4.1.C. Evaluate the impact of a possible parking garage in Midtown on Rio Ruidoso.				
<b>Policy 4.2. Address traffic calming needs in an organized and objective manner.</b>				
Action 4.2.A. Produce a Traffic Calming Guide. Identify the techniques that may be applied on Village roadways and the types of locations where those techniques are most appropriate. The guide should provide a clear decision-making process to aid Village staff in the implementation of traffic calming measures.				
Action 4.2.B. Work with NMDOT to address safety at the “Y” intersection of Interstate 70 and Sudderth Drive, the southeast entrance into Ruidoso.				
<b>Policy 4.3. Pursue roadway design standards specific to the Village of Ruidoso transportation system.</b>				
Action 4.3.A. Develop a street hierarchy that identifies which secondary routes should be high speed and higher volume roadways, and which roadways may be appropriate for traffic calming.				
<b>Goal 5. Ruidoso reduces impacts of transportation on natural resources.</b>				
<b>Policy 5.1. Develop transportation standards that minimize impacts to watershed health</b>				
Action 5.1.A. Create standards for waterway crossings that minimize impacts on the waterways.				
Action 5.1.B. Create standards for storm water management on parking areas and roadways utilizing concepts of low impact development (LID).				
Action 5.1.C. Update driveway standards.				

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

GOAL/POLICY/ACTION	Description of Steps	Responsibility	Timing	Funding
<b>UTILITIES</b>				
<b>Goal 1. Ruidoso has a reliable water system that meets long-term demands.</b>				
<b>Policy 1.1. Ensure greater water system reliability and flexibility.</b>				
Action 1.1.A. Further explore possible construction of potable water interconnections with the City of Ruidoso Downs and the Alto Lakes Water and Sanitation District to increase water system redundancies in region.				
Action 1.1.B. Further diversify sources of water production.				
Action 1.1.C. Explore the use of underground storage and recovery to expand conjunctive use water diversion strategies.				
<b>Policy 1.2. Continue to modernize and improve aging infrastructure in need of replacement or rehabilitation.</b>				
Action 1.2.A. Follow recommended improvements of the Water Development Plan and engineering reports.				
Action 1.2.B. Conduct a new system of preliminary engineering reporting to identify priority water utility projects for the next five to ten years.				
Action 1.2.C. Complete and maintain an asset management plan.				
<b>Goal 2. Quality sewer collections and wastewater service is provided throughout the Village.</b>				
<b>Policy 2.1. Understand demand and capacity.</b>				
Action 2.1.A. Monitor system capacity with growth forecasts so the Village can be prepared to meet current and future demand.				
Action 2.1.B. Perform a rate study for commercial and residential uses to determine new sewer and wastewater rates.				
Action 2.1.C. Monitor lift stations with supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) system and replace or rehabilitate those in need.				

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

GOAL/POLICY/ACTION	Description of Steps	Responsibility	Timing	Funding
<b>Policy 2.2. Expand service area</b>				
Action 2.2.A. Extend sewer to economically viable areas in accordance with the 2017 Sewer Master Plan.				
<b>Goal 3. Reliable broadband services are available throughout the Village.</b>				
<b>Policy 3.1. Improve broadband services throughout the Village to enhance the ease of doing business as well as attract visitors and new industries.</b>				
Action 3.1.A. Form a consortium with neighboring municipalities to build capacity.				
Action 3.1.B. Continue to look for opportunities to partner with the private sector to improve service.				
<b>Goal 4. Utilities are maintained and their capacity is updated.</b>				
<b>Policy 4.1. Conduct regular reviews and update long-range plans to ensure the current utility systems can sufficiently meet demand.</b>				
Action 4.1.A. Pursue Energy Conservation Strategies. Explore improvements or changes to management of system to reduce energy consumption.				
<b>Policy 4.2. Ensure private properties are connected to Village utilities.</b>				
Action 4.2.A. Initiate a new ordinance that will require property owners of vacant lots to pay a vacant water/sewer fee. This will help the utilities to cover the initial cost as well as any required maintenance of that line or any components of that line to help to continue to provide a cost-effective service to the public. This will also help the Solid Waste department collect fees on vacant lots.				
<b>WATER RESOURCES</b>				
<b>Goal 1. Expand water production capacity and system redundancy while protecting natural resources.</b>				
<b>Policy 1.1. Diversify sources of water.</b>				
Action 1.1.A. Evaluate and equip suitable production wells that are already permitted with the Office of the State Engineer.				

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

<b>GOAL/POLICY/ACTION</b>	<b>Description of Steps</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Action 1.1.B. Repair, rehabilitate, or replace surface diversion structures to increase diversion reliability.				
Action 1.1.C. Continue operating interconnection booster stations to allow water from various distribution areas to be moved to other locations in town.				
<b>Policy 1.2. Maintain and modify existing infrastructure to optimize production and distribution systems.</b>				
Action 1.2.A. Implement the Water Plan's recommendations. To ensure water supply is in compliance and of high quality, the Village should make the recommended improvements to water supply and storage infrastructure, including improvements to Grindstone and Alto Dams, water storage tanks, drainage, fire hydrants, the water lines, maintenance facilities, treatment plants, and reuse projects. Review and amend the Water Development Plan every five to ten years.				
Action 1.2.B. Implement the Village's Water Conservation Plan. The Plan should be revised every five to ten years.				
Action 1.2.C. Conduct annual AWWA water audits and Gallons Per Capita Day (GPCD) calculations.				
<b>Goal 2. The health of Ruidoso's wetlands and riparian ecosystems are improved and protected; water quality in area is protected or enhanced.</b>				
<b>Policy 2.1. Strengthen wetland and riparian vegetation management.</b>				
Action 2.1.A. In coordination with the Natural Resources chapter, develop a comprehensive strategy for vegetation management and watershed improvements to improve streams, rivers, riparian areas, and wetlands.				
Action 2.1.B. Identify funding for staffing and implementation of management strategy.				

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

GOAL/POLICY/ACTION	Description of Steps	Responsibility	Timing	Funding
Action 2.1.C. Exclude riparian and drainage areas from the height of grass portion of property nuisances in Section 38-62 of municipal code.				
Action 2.1.D. Reduce area along streams and rivers that can be manicured to no more than 20 feet per parcel.				
<b>Policy 2.2. Implement a stormwater management and drainage program.</b>				
Action 2.2.A. Develop a Drainage Master Plan that identifies water flows and sites of recurring flooding, as well as storage facilities and potential improvements. Identify water quality improvements.				
Action 2.2.B. Expand the reach of the stormwater demonstration projects. The Watershed Committee has developed demonstration projects to protect the health of the watershed. These projects should be implemented throughout the Village through coordinated efforts.				
<b>Policy 2.3. Protect or enhance source water quality.</b>				
Action 2.3.A. Monitor and audit water supply wells and Surface water supplies. To ensure water quality is not compromised and usage rates fall within in normal ranges, conduct regular audits of water wells as recommended in the 2014 Source Water Protection Plan.				
Action 2.3.B. Review and amend the Source Water Protection Plan every five to ten years.				
Action 2.3.C. Develop special overlay zoning to implement development restrictions to protect source water protection areas.				

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

GOAL/POLICY/ACTION	Description of Steps	Responsibility	Timing	Funding
<b>HAZARD MITIGATION</b>				
<b>Goal 1. Ruidoso is well-prepared for emergencies.</b>				
<i><b>Policy 1.1. Uphold the Community Wildfire Protection Plan and continue to prioritize interjurisdictional cooperation and collaboration between the Village, Lincoln County, US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Mescalero Tribe, Ruidoso Downs, Carrizozo, and other agencies with jurisdiction over land. The Village is working with the State to ensure funding to continue forest thinning and fire mitigation efforts.</b></i>				
Action 1.1.A. Confirm Appropriate Allowable Uses in Ruidoso and the Regional U/WIC and WUI.				
Action 1.1.B. Identify additional fire protection regulations and enforcement to Village's existing Standards for Fire Safety and Fire Handling.				
<i><b>Policy 1.2 Maintain private properties within the Village and Village-owned property to Ordinance 42-80 Fuels Management Standards.</b></i>				
Action 1.2.A. Bring all properties into compliance with the Fuels Management ordinance and ensure through a required certification process that they are periodically maintained so that they remain in compliance.				
Action 1.2.B. Develop a certification notification program so landowners are notified 12 months prior to the certification expiration date so that they have time to do any needed work prior to the required Certification Inspection conducted by the Ruidoso Forestry Department.				
<b>Goal 2. Residents are well-educated in wildfire safety.</b>				
<i><b>Policy 2.1. Prioritize education and enforcement so residents understand the importance of defensible space and learn how to adapt their buildings and properties so that residential landscapes in high hazard areas maintain adequate zones of defensible space in the event of wildfire.</b></i>				
Action 2.1.A. Utilize social media and local news outlets to keep residents and visitors aware of the risks of fire.				

**FIGURE 14-1. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONT.)**

<b>GOAL/POLICY/ACTION</b>	<b>Description of Steps</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Action 2.1.B. Simplify the choices and the links to resources available to help people respond to an emergency and provide all residents, businesses, and visitors clear and specific directions to follow so everyone knows the rules.				
Action 2.1.C. Provide a comprehensive signage plan, educational outreach, and enforcement regarding emergencies.				



## **LET THIS PLAN GUIDE THE VILLAGE**

In order to continue to make progress towards achieving the vision laid out in this plan, it is recommended that all Village-initiated actions reference how they advance the vision, goals, policies, or actions of the Comprehensive Plan. Any progress on Comprehensive Plan goals, policies, and actions should be included in the annual State of the Village report that is submitted to the governing body.

