



GENERAL PLAN

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. PLAN INTRODUCTION

The Green River City General Plan, referred to herein as the "Plan," is the vision of both short and long-range goals to guide the growth and development of the City. It contains goals, policies, and action plans for Green River's future direction, community character, land use, open space and growth management, as well as the quality of life of the citizens.



The Plan is intended to be an effective working tool employed by the City in making community decisions and achieving planning goals. The City Council and Planning Commission should refer to this General Plan before making decisions regarding changes to ordinances or zoning. Coordination with other regional government agencies on local land issues is key to the effective implementation of this plan.

Utah State Code, Section 10-9a-401 requires that "each municipality shall prepare and adopt a comprehensive, long range general plan for: (a) present and future needs of the municipality, and b) growth and development of the land within the municipality." Three elements are required by the state to be included in the general plan: 1) Land Use, 2) Transportation, and 3) Moderate Income Housing. Additional elements are also allowed, and "the municipality may determine the comprehensiveness, extent, and format of the general plan."

In addition to the above mentioned three required elements, this plan includes planning for Economics, Parks and Recreation, and Public Services.

The value of the General Plan is only as good as the support that it gets from the leadership and the citizens of the City. This Plan utilizes some elements from the previously approved plan and was created using input from the public, as well as the input of an advisory committee which included citizens, City staff, and

Key Points:

- Introduction
- Implementation
- Amendments
- History of Green River
- Our Vision
- Physical Description
- Community Character
- Population
- Overall Goals

The purpose of the General plan is to provide a blueprint to guide the growth and development of the City.



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members of the Planning Commission and the City Council. Even with this input, the ultimate long-term support and success of the Plan must come from the community as a whole.

Plan Update

The process to update the Green River City General Plan began in late 2013. The update objective was to refresh the current document so that it will continue to serve as a guide and reference for the community in the future.

A public survey was distributed during February of 2014, through mailings and online, to determine community concerns and the level of support for various City programs and projects. Many of the results and directions of this survey are reflected in this current update. Assisted by Utah Community Planners, the City held community and stakeholder planning workshops, to allow residents an opportunity to provide input to the community planning process. Along with the advisory committee meetings, a joint planning work session was also held with the Planning Commission and the City Council.



Key issues garnering interest and support through the various community groups and public participation included the need for:

1. Increased efforts in economic development
2. More recreation facilities and programs
3. Improved communication between the City and residents
4. More street and sidewalk improvements
5. Beautification of Main Street and Broadway
6. Zoning enforcement / clean-up of properties
7. More housing options
8. Development of trails and the River Walk
9. Increased marketing for tourism, more events

(See Appendix A, Public Participation Results and 2014 General Plan Survey Results)

Plan Update Adoption

Following review and revisions, public hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council were held. The Plan, as presented here, was adopted by the Green River City Council on September 9, 2014.



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1.2. IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the Plan comes through working documents, such as the zoning and land use codes, capital improvement programs, City budgets, and other ordinances, resolutions and studies deemed appropriate by the City Council.

1.3. AMENDMENTS

To preserve the integrity of the Plan and to ensure that it reflects the changing needs of residents, it is City policy that the Plan shall receive a comprehensive review at least once every five years to keep the policies and programs consistent with changing trends and conditions. All re-zones, improvement programs, and ordinance changes concerning development shall be in harmony with the Plan. Any amendments to the Plan should:

- Be in harmony and consistent with City land use ordinances,
- Be in the best interest of the City,
- Promote the general welfare of the community, and
- Maintain or improve the quality of life for the citizens of Green River.

1.4. HISTORY OF GREEN RIVER

Green River's Community is situated in a valley wherein the Green River flows between low banks for several miles of wild and rugged canyon walls. This site was important to many travelers long before becoming a settlement, as it is the most accessible crossing point of the Green River from the Uintah Basin far to the north, to the high and inaccessible canyon walls far to the south.

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Recent discoveries at Range Creek have shown a large Fremont Indian culture in the area, which flourished from the 7th century to about the 13th century. In later centuries, the river basin was home to the Shoshone and Ute peoples, both nomadic hunters. The Green River was known to the Shoshone Indians as the Seeds-kee-dee-Agie, or Prairie Hen River. This name was widely used by the mountain men of the area. In 1776, the Spanish friars, Dominguez and Escalante, named it the Rio de San Buenaventura, but the river was later known to Mexicans as the Rio Verde. This connection with the Spanish led to the Green being known for a short time as the Spanish River, but by the time of William Henry Ashley's exploration in 1823, the name "Green River" was a common use. Accounts vary as to why the river is called the Green. John C. Fremont thought the name came from the abundance of vegetation in a remote high desert landscape. Others suggest that it was named for one of Ashley's party.



The river was forded about three miles upstream from the present city, and was the crossing point of the famous Spanish Trail, a trade route in active use between 1830-1840 between Santa Fe and Los Angeles. The river was explored by John C. Fremont in the 1840's and Fremont corrected the cartographic error that the Green actually drained the Great Salt Lake. It was also used during the railroad survey in 1853 under the direction of Captain John W. Gunnison. In 1869, the river was surveyed and mapped by John Wesley Powell as part of the first of his two expeditions to the region.

Settlement began in the late 1870's in the form of a ferry crossing called Blake Station on the overland mail route between Salina, Utah, and Ouray, Colorado. In 1876, a Mr. Blake set up a ferry on the East side of the river and a way station. It became a stopover for travelers with a ferry for transporting people, supplies, and animals across the river.

John Wesley Powell on Green River.
Photo courtesy of Utah Historic Society.



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The first permanent settlers were the families of Thomas Farrer (pronounced "Fair") and Mathew Hartman. The completion of the Denver and Rio Grande Western railway in 1883 made Green River a shipping point for livestock and mining supplies. The west side of the river became known as Greenriver (later changed to Green River) and the east side of the river became known as Elgin, and is still referred to by that name.

With the coming of the railroad, the town quickly went from a small farm hamlet to a boom town with workers coming to build the bridge and the road bed for the railroad. After completion of the railroad, Green River became a fueling, watering stop for the railroad, with switching yards and engine sheds. A hotel, called the Palmer House was built and became the scheduled meal stop for trains from both directions for many years.

Green River enjoyed the railroad boom until 1892, when the railroad transferred most of its operations to Helper. The population of the town declined significantly.

Incorporated on May 1, 1911, Green River has experienced several booms and busts. Uranium was mined in the 20's through the 50's, but ended when the government price supports failed.

The Green River Launch Site was established in the 60's and contributed to a short-lived prosperity until it was decommissioned in the 70's. Several trucking companies hauled ore from mines in the Four-Corners Mining District west of Green River, the San Rafael Swell, the Henry Mountains, and the area that is now Lake Powell. Agricultural activities came and went, from peach orchards to lettuce fields, but all that has remained is corn, alfalfa, and our world-famous melons.

The U.S. Air Force built the Green River Launch Complex, just outside of Green River, 1964. It was an annex of the U.S. Army's White Sands Missile Range. From 1964 to 1973 the U. S. Air Force launched



The Palmer House restaurant and hotel.



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141 Athena Missiles from the Green River launching area, near the Crystal Geysir as part of research to improve nuclear missiles.

Because of Green River's unique position as a crossing point, it has endured boom and bust cycles to remain an essential center for commercial and recreational travel services.

1.5. OUR VISION

As a community, we appreciate a quality rural lifestyle. We will strive to preserve our history and historical values. We will encourage cooperation in the business community, resulting in a vibrant environment for growth and increasing local productivity and prosperity. We promote prudent utilization of all our resources, open space, water, and transportation. We encourage recreational activities for all ages, and are undertaking the challenge of promotion of this vital industry.

1.6. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Green River is located on the banks of the Green River, after which the City is named. The San Rafael Swell region is to the west of Green River, while Canyonlands and Arches National Parks lie to the south. Today located exclusively in Emery County, it was split between Emery and Grand Counties until 2003, when Emery County's boundaries were expanded. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the city has a total area of 12.6 square miles.

Green River's seasonal climate temperatures are moderate, with some spikes on summer and winter seasons.



1.7. COMMUNITY CHARACTER



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Green River's Main Street businesses are generally travel-oriented, such as motels, restaurants and gas/convenience stores. The outlying area is typically farming and ranching. Recreation is centered on river rafting and off-highway vehicle trails. Previous planning sessions have indicated a strong desire of the community to retain and enhance the rural atmosphere of the Green River Valley. The goals of this plan are in harmony with this objective, while also promoting economic development and growth.

1.8. POPULATION

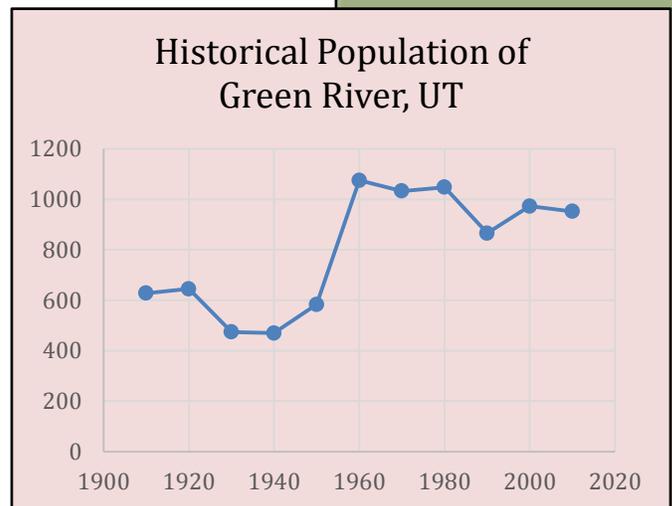
The City of Green River has experienced several "boom and bust" cycles over the years. The most influential was when the White Sands

Missile Range, Green River Launch site, was operational from about 1960 through 1980. Population spiked from about 600 to about 1100 in just ten short years. After the close of the launch site the population dropped dramatically, and since has experience a gentle growth pattern.

Previous indicators of future growth for Green River have not proven out. Projections for growth on Green River are difficult because there are really no geographical limitations to a large growth in the future, but there are also no economic indications of large future growth. In that several variables will determine how the city grows into the future, the projections are shown here using three potential growth rates, at 1%, 2.5% and 4% per decade.

The most recent demographic data available from the U.S. Census 2010 in most categories is represented below (see census data at www.factfinder2.census.gov). Although some increases and changes have occurred since the year 2010, the demographic profile from that census still offers a good representation of the Green River community in many categories.

Census	Pop.	%±
1910	628	—
1920	645	2.70%
1930	474	-26.5%
1940	470	-0.8%
1950	583	24.00%
1960	1,075	84.40%
1970	1,033	-3.9%
1980	1,048	1.50%
1990	866	-17.4%
2000	973	12.40%
2010	952	-2.2%
Est. 2012	949	-0.3%





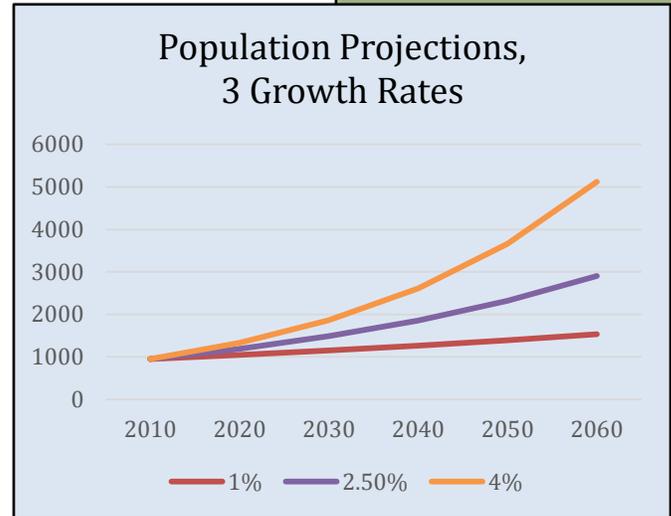
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Population Demographics

- 40.4% residents are single, 59.6% are married.
- 90.3% of the population graduated high school or have a GED. 10.7% have college degrees.
- The races making up the largest parts of the population are: White, 79.2%, Hispanic, 21.4%, and two or more races, 0.7%.
- Residents are 50.9% male and 49.1% female.
- 96.8% were born U.S. citizens, while 3.2% were born outside of the country.
- Average household size is 2.86

Economy

- Of workers, 90.6% commute under 25 mins, 0% travel 25-45 mins, and 9.4% have a commute over 45 mins.
- The average worker works 41 hours a week.
- At the time of the last census, unemployment rate was 4.4%.
- Median worker income is \$20,066. The national average is \$29,701.



OVERALL GOALS

Chapter 1: OVERALL GOALS *(See associated chapter for more detail)*

1. Maintain a good balance of land uses and zoning. *(Chapter 2)*
2. Provide for community improvement and beautification. *(Chapter 2)*
3. Preserve open spaces for recreation and wildlife. *(Chapter 2)*
4. Provide more opportunity for more jobs, including new and local expanding businesses. *(Chapter 3)*
5. Create and follow an Economic Development Plan. *(Chapter 3)*
6. Promote tourism to the city and the region. *(Chapter 3)*
7. Maintain and update the Transportation Master Plan. *(Chapter 4)*



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| 8. Provide improved opportunities for housing. <i>(Chapter 5)</i> |
| 9. Maintain and update the Housing Master Plan. <i>(Chapter 5)</i> |
| 10. Prepare and maintain a Parks and Recreation Master Plan. <i>(Chapter 6)</i> |
| 11. Plan for and maintain public improvements and facilities. <i>(Chapter 7)</i> |
| 12. Provide adequate storm water drainage throughout the community. <i>(Chapter 7)</i> |
| 13. Support the improvement of emergency services. <i>(Chapter 7)</i> |
| 14. Improve communication with residents. <i>(Chapter 7)</i> |